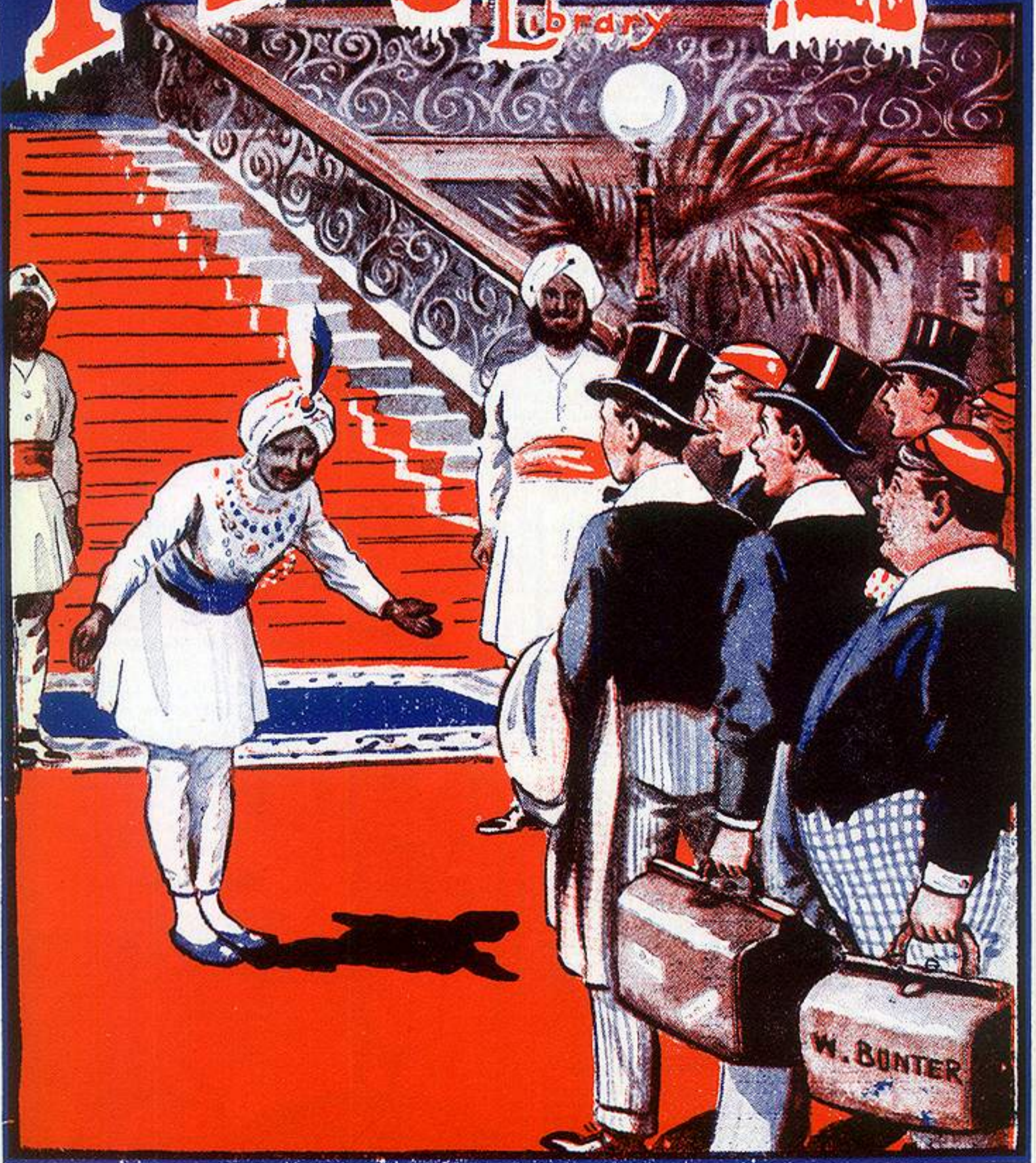


Grand Enlarged Christmas Number!

The Magnet 2^d Library



INKY IN ALL HIS GLORY!

(The Magnificent Scene when Harry Wharton & Co. arrive as Hurree Singh's guests for Christmas.)

No. 723. Vol. XX.

Week Ending December 17th, 1921.

The Editor's Chat



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.

My Christmas Message!

FIRST of all, I must wish you all A Merry Christmas. This is the time of the year when everyone is full of good wishes, and I assure every one of my thousands and thousands of chum-readers of this paper that my wishes are very sincere. I shall think of you all on Christmas Day, and shall trust that you are all having as good a time as myself.

If the MAGNET LIBRARY helps you to make this Christmas the most enjoyable you have known, I shall feel that all the work I have put in has not been in vain. I am immensely pleased with the Christmas Number of the "Greyfriars Herald," and it is indeed worthy of the place it occupies in our paper, and I think the Famous Five have backed up extremely well, although we could only let them have three pages for this week.

Our thanks are due to Mr. Richards for a most splendid story. Our author who writes the adventures of Herlock Sholmes was caught in a very humorous

mood, and he has given us a story which is certain to bring roars of laughter to all my readers' lips.

I might add that when sending his story to me, Mr. Frank Richards wished me to once more assure all his friends that they have his very best wishes for a Merry Christmas. He tells me he always knocks a year off his age at Christmas time—he is still heart and soul with the boys! Mr. Chapman, too, sends his greetings to you all, and I and my staff most heartily endorse all their good wishes.

Have a good time, boys and girls, and let this Christmas be nothing but a time of joy and goodwill.

Next Monday's grand, complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. will be entitled:

"FAITHFUL TO HIS FRIEND!"

By Frank Richards.

In this story we hear of Tom Redwing, who meets a very old friend who is in adverse circumstances. This friend has to stand many trials—but he does not stand them alone. Tom Redwing,

remaining faithful to his friend, is a tower of strength, and assists very largely in removing the trouble which envelopes his friend.

This is a splendid story, full of human interest and adventure, and I strongly advise all my friends to order their copy of the MAGNET LIBRARY well in advance.

Harry Wharton & Co. promise a special Pantomime Number of the "Herald," and that, I am sure, will be crammed full of fun and thrills. I hear, too, that Harry Wharton & Co. are changing the front page of the "Herald." I shall be interested to see what form the change takes.

OUR POSTCARDS.

In the first place, I must ask readers who have sent in their coupons to exercise patience—it is impossible to get the cards to readers within two hours of receiving their letters, as some seem to think is possible! I have managed to keep pace with the demand so far, and I do not think readers have had to wait more than a day or so for the reward of their efforts to obtain new readers for this paper.

I shall again publish a coupon next week, which has only to be filled up according to the instructions for postcard portraits of your favourite characters to be sent you.

I wish to thank all readers who have written to me praising the portraits. I am sorry I cannot possibly write to such readers by post. I want to get the cards off to readers who have qualified for them! Thank you, boys and girls, and I hope your pleasure is as great as mine!

Once more, a very Merry Christmas to all my readers.

Your Editor.

A Model STEAM ENGINE

Complete, ready for work, 15/-, 21/-, & 33/- Rails, 6d. per length. Post extra 1/- ELECTRIC LIGHT! Battery, Switch, Wire, Lamp, Holder, Reflector, Instructions, etc., 4/6; postage 6d. Larger size, 8/6; postage 9d. SMOOKING COIL! Set of Parts for making, 1/9. Battery Parts, 1/6; postage 3d. each. Electro Magnet, 9d.; postage 3d. (Lifts 1 lb.) Box Electrical Experiments, 5/-; postage 6d. Special Cheap Telephone Set, complete, 1/6; postage 4d. (Catalogue 4d.) 4-Volt Dynamo, 12/6. SEND NOW!
The HANSON'S SMALL POWER Co.
7, 98 24 Queens Road, Aston, Birmingham.



FREE FUN! Our Funny Novelty, causing roars of laughter, FREE to all sending 1/- for 70 Cute Conjuring Tricks, 12 Jolly Joke Tricks, 6 Catchy Coin Tricks, 5 Cunning Card Tricks, 5 Mystifying Magic Tricks, 250 Riddles, 18 Games, 10 Funny Readings, 5 Funny Recitations, 21 Monologues, 73 Toasts, 52 Wealth Secrets, Easy Ventriloquism Secret, and 1,001 Stupendous Attractions. Thousands delighted! Great Fun!—G. HUGHES, 15, Wood St., Edgbaston, Birmingham.

SHORT OR TALL?—Which are you, and which would you like to be? A deficiency in height can rapidly be made good by the Girvan Scientific Treatment. Students report from 2 to 5 inches increase. Successfully practiced by business men, actors, soldiers, and all to whom height and appearance count. Send a postcard for particulars and our £100 guarantee to ENQUIRY DEPT. A.M.P., 17, STROUD GREEN ROAD, LONDON, N. 4.

IDEAL PRESENT FOR CHRISTMAS!—Home Cinematographs from £1; with Automatic Re-Winder, from £1. Accessories, Standard Films, Illus. Cat. Free.—Desk E. Dean Cinema Co., 34, Drayton Avenue, London, W. 13.

LEARN DUTTON'S 24-HOUR SHORTHAND.

First Lesson Free.—DUTTON'S COLLEGE, Desk 303, SKEGNESS.

RARE STAMPS FREE!—Send 6d for Zanzibar Pst.—55 Stamps—Zanzibar, INHAMBANG, HYDERABAD. Receive Free 5 Ukraine. (Catd. 6/6.) Abroad, 9d.—BROOKS, 43, Edward Street, Camberwell, England.

CONJURING.—Illustrated Catalogue of Tricks, Jokes, Puzzles, 3d.—ECLIPSE NOVELTY CO. (Dept. L), FRANCIS TERRACE, LONDON, N. 12.

All applications for Advertisement space in this publication should be addressed to the Advertisement Department, UNION JACK SERIES, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

THE SMILE PRODUCER



No better sight than to see a kiddie eating plenty of Sharp's Super-Kreem Toffee—the sweet that contributes valuable nutri-

ment to the young, growing body—the sweet that the children love. Was ever such a tempting flavour combined with such purity and wholesomeness? Try it!

8d per 1/4-lb.

Sold loose by weight, or in 4-lb decorated tins—also sold in 1/-, 1/6, & 2/9 tins. If unobtainable in your district, kindly send postcard giving name of your confectioner.

E. SHARP & SONS, LTD., MAIDSTONE.

SHARP'S SUPER-KREEM TOFFEE

Quality the Same To-day as Always,





The Magnet 2d

LIBRARY



The Mystery of the Christmas Candles!

A Magnificent, Extra-Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co.'s Christmas Holidays. By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Jam from India!

WHAT time does the Jam arrive, Inky?"

"About three o'clock, my esteemed chums."

"By train?"

"No; the excellent Jam travels carefully."

Billy Bunter pricked up his ears.

Bunter was passing Study No. 1, in the Remove, and at the sound of voices from within, he lingered, and listened. That was a little way Bunter had.

Bunter's eyes glistened behind his big spectacles, and he moved cautiously nearer to the door of Study No. 1. Bunter was keenly interested in the jam that was to arrive by car at about three o'clock. If a consignment of jam was arriving at Greyfriars for Harry Wharton & Co., Billy Bunter intended to be on the scene when it arrived.

"Then we'll chuck footer," said Harry Wharton. "You'll have to be on hand to see the Jam, Inky."

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur, nodded.

"This is so, my esteemed Wharton."

"We'll back you up!" said Bob Cherry. "We'll all be around, and give the Jam a distinguished reception."

"Good!" said Frank Nugent. "I've never seen that variety of jam before."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows——" Billy Bunter rolled into the study.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter's heard about the Jam!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. And there was a loud chortle in Study No. 1.

Billy Bunter blinked at the Famous Five of the Remove rather puzzled. He did not see where the joke came in.

"I say, you fellows, are you expecting the jam in time for tea?" asked the Owl of the Remove.

"Ha, ha! Yes."

"You've been listening, you fat boulder!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull! I just happened to catch a word as I was passing the door—sheer chance! I was coming to see you fellows——"

"Well, you've seen us now," said Johnny. "Roll along!"

"About Christmas," said Bunter. "I suppose you fellows haven't forgotten that we shall be breaking up for Christmas soon. I'm making up a Christmas-party for Bunter Court. You fellows care to come?"

"Bow-wow!"

"That isn't the way to reply to a generous invitation for Christmas, Bob Cherry. I've refused several pressing invitations for the holidays, simply because I'm going to ask you fellows home!" said Bunter reproachfully.

"Cut along and accept some of them, then, before it's too late!" suggested Bob Cherry. "You see, we couldn't very well come along to Bunter Court in December. As the place hasn't been built yet, we should find it rather parky!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"So you'd better make a selection from the immense list of pressing invitations you've received, Bunter," said Bob. "Leave us out!"

"Well, about the jam——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you fellows are getting in a thumping lot of jam this afternoon——"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 723.

"Not a thumping lot," chuckled Harry Wharton. "How much does the Jam weigh, Inky?"

"About eight stone, my esteemed chum," grinned the Nabob of Bhanipur. Billy Bunter jumped.

"Eight stone!" he yelled.

"Aboutfully, my esteemed Bunter."

"But that's a hundredweight!" gasped Bunter. "Mean to say you're getting a hundredweight of jam?"

"Just that!" said Nugent.

Bunter's mouth watered.

The mere thought of revelling in a hundredweight of jam dazzled the fat junior. Even William George Bunter would have had to rest occasionally in getting through a consignment like that.

"Oh, I say, you fellows!" he breathed. "That—that's splendid! It—it's ripping! Where does the jam come from?"

"India," said Wharton.

"Do they make jam in India? I say, Inky, is the jam nice?"

"Extremely so, my dear Bunter," grinned the Nabob of Bhanipur. "I have always found the esteemed Jam delightful."

"Good!" said Bunter. "I'm glad I dropped in to see you fellows about Christmas. Of course, you won't want a hundredweight of jam all to yourselves. I'm willing to take half of it off your hands for cash."

"Puzzle—find the cash!" remarked Johnny Bull.

"Cash—as soon as my postal-order comes," said Bunter firmly. "I've mentioned to you fellows that I'm expecting a postal-order, I believe!"

"Ha, ha! I believe you have!" chortled Bob Cherry. "I seem to remember something of the sort."

"Is it a go, then?" asked Bunter eagerly.

Hurree Singh shook his dusky head. "I am not disposing of the Jam salefully," he answered.

"But you won't want it all, Inky! Suppose you let me have about a stone of it—cash, you know!"

The dusky nabob chuckled, but shook his head again. His face was wreathed in smiles. Apparently he saw something very humorous in Bunter's request for a portion of the jam. Bunter could see nothing humorous in it.

"Well, if it's not for sale, you can make me a present of it!" suggested Bunter. "A chap can accept a present from a pal—specially at Christmas-time. I'm not a fellow to accept presents, as a rule—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'm more particular than some fellows!" snorted Bunter, with a glare at the chuckling juniors. "But in this case, being Christmas-time, I should not refuse, Inky. How much am I going to have?"

"Nix, my esteemed Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"The nixfulness is terrific," said the nabob.

"Don't be a pig, Inky," urged Bunter. "I'm asking you down to Bunter Court for Christmas, you know. One good turn deserves another. If you don't whack out the jam, when you're getting such a thumping lot of it, you can't expect me to take you in for the vac. Can you?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Famous Five.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at," said Bunter peevishly. "I say, you fellows, I'm going to make you a generous offer. There's going to be quite a distinguished party at Bunter Court for Christmas. That chap Drake, who used to be here—the chap who's become a

detective—I'm asking him, and his governor, Ferrers Locke—you'd like to meet Drake again, and of course, Ferrers Locke is a great catch. Now, you fellows do the decent thing over this jam, and I'll stand you a couple of weeks at Bunter Court. What do you say to that?"

Bob Cherry winked at his comrades—a wink unseen by the short-sighted Owl of the Remove.

"That's a good offer," he said gravely. "Suppose we agree to let Bunter eat as much as he likes of the Jam—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The whole study shrieked.

"I don't see where the cackle comes in," said Bunter. "If you fellows agree to that—"

"What about it, Inky?" asked Harry Wharton, laughing. "The Jam's coming for you, not for us."

Hurree Singh chuckled.

"The agreefulness is terrific," he answered. "If Bunter cares to eat the Jam, he may go aheadfully, and I shall not stop him."

"As much as I like?" asked Bunter eagerly.

"Certainly!"

"Oh, good!" Bunter rubbed his fat hands together. "You're not a bad sort, Inky. In fact, you're quite decent."

"The esteemed opinion of the ridiculous Bunter is grateful and comforting to my unworthy self," said the Nabob of Bhanipur gracefully.

"And the jam gets here at three?"

"Aboutfully."

Bunter glanced at the study clock.

"Why, it's five to three now!" he exclaimed. "I say, you fellows, if you'd like to go down to the footer you can leave the jam to me. I'll look after it."

"Oh, we'll be there!" said Bob Cherry. "We want to see how you like that Jam, Bunter. You've never eaten anything like it before."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better get along to the gates now," said Wharton. "Come on, you fellows!"

"I'm coming!" gasped Bunter.

The Famous Five quitted Study No. 1, and Billy Bunter rolled after them, quite a beatific expression on his fat face. There was a keen wind in the quadrangle, and it was very cold. Bunter preferred, as a rule, to spend a half-holiday loafing over the fire in cold weather. But now he braved the wind in the quadrangle without flinching. He wanted to see that enormous consignment of jam from India. He was very keen on it. His fat mind revelled in the prospect of unlimited jam till the end of the term.

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh glanced down the road towards Courtfield. In the distance a big motor-car could be seen coming on towards the school.

"Is that the car, Inky?" asked Bob.

"I thinkfully opine so," assented the nabob.

Bunter blinked at the distant car. He seemed puzzled.

"I should have thought it would come by lorry," he remarked. "Is the jam really coming here in a touring car, Inky?"

Hurree Singh nodded.

"Well, my hat!" said Bunter. "I suppose the packing-case is inside the car?"

"I hardly think the Jam's in a packing-case," grinned Bob Cherry, and the chums of the Remove roared again.

"Well, it would be in jars, I suppose. But the jars are bound to be in a packing-case of some sort," said Bunter.

"Jolly queer idea to stick it inside a car like that! Expensive, too! You do chuck your money about, Inky. I say, there's a nigger driving that car!" exclaimed Bunter, as the automobile came nearer.

"Not a nigger, my esteemed fatheaded Bunter," said the nabob mildly. "A Hindu."

"Same thing," said Bunter.

"The samefulness is not terrific."

"There's another nigger sitting beside him," said Bunter, blinking curiously at the oncoming car. "Are they in charge of the jam, Inky?"

"Looks like it," said Bob Cherry, chuckling. "Can you see the Jam yet, Inky?"

"Yes, my esteemed chum."

The big car was quite close now. It was closed, but the nabob's keen eye had caught sight of a dark face within. Billy Bunter blinked at the car with intense interest and curiosity.

"Blest if I can see the jam!" he said. "I can see an old nigger sitting there in a turban, that's all!"

"If that old merchant hears you call him a nigger, Bunter, he may tell one of his servants to chop your head off!" grinned Bob Cherry. "That old nigger, as you call him, is an Indian prince."

"Oh!" said Bunter. "Relation of yours, Inky?"

"My esteemed uncle."

"But where's the jam? Is he sitting on it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The big car rolled up, and slowed down at the gateway. The turbaned Oriental within glanced at the group of juniors, who lifted their caps very politely. The dark gentleman smiled, with a flash of white teeth, and returned the salute politely, and made an affectionate sign to Hurree Singh. The car turned in at the gates, and the juniors followed it in. Billy Bunter caught at the nabob's sleeve.

"I say, Inky, hadn't the jam better be unloaded at the lodge. Gosling can take it in—"

Hurree Singh shook his head, and the juniors hurried on. The car moved at a leisurely rate up the drive, and they overtook it at the great doorway, Bunter trotting breathlessly to keep up. The car halted at the steps, and the dusky servant, who was seated beside the dusky chauffeur, jumped down and opened the door.

The old gentleman stepped out.

He was enveloped in a fur-lined overcoat, probably finding the English winter rather cold after India. But glimpses of rich Oriental attire could be seen, and his turban glittered with jewels.

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh salaamed to his esteemed uncle, and his esteemed uncle salaamed to Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, much to the entertainment of a score of Greyfriars fellows who were looking on.

Then they shook hands in the English manner. And then Hurree Singh presented his chums in turn, with polite ceremoniousness, but somehow forgetting Bunter.

But Bunter was not thinking of a presentation to the visitor, even if he was a prince in his own country. Bunter was blinking into the motor-car in search of the jam.

There was no sign of anything in the shape of a packing-case, or even a box, inside that magnificently-upholstered motor-car. Unless the jam was hidden under the seats, it was difficult to guess where it could possibly be. Bunter

blinked into the car and then blinked at the nabob. He was puzzled and he was annoyed.

"I say, you fellows, where's the jam?" he demanded.

The little dark gentleman looked round, with a glitter of jewels as he moved.

"This is one other friend of yours?" he asked.

"It is the esteemed Bunter," said Hurree Singh. "Come with me, my uncle! I will show you the way to the Head."

"Where's the jam?" yelled Bunter, heedless of the visitor.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, appeared in the doorway. He saluted the Indian gentleman very politely. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh proceeded to present him.

"My esteemed and venerable Form-master the Sahib Quelch—my excellent uncle the Jam Sahib Bahadur Munny Singh—"

The Indian gentleman salaamed, and the Form-master bowed deeply. Bunter blinked at them. Mr. Quelch ushered the dark gentleman into the house very impressively. Evidently the Jam Sahib Bahadur Munny Singh was a great gun. Billy Bunter clutched at Wharton's sleeve.

"Where's the jam?" he hissed.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "There he is, just gone in with Inky."

"Eh?"

"That's the Jam!"

"Wha-a-at? Wharrer you mean? That's Inky's uncle—"

"Inky's uncle is a Jam."

"A—a—a Jam!" stuttered Bunter. The expression on Bunter's fat face was worth at least a guinea a box. He blinked blandly at the chums of the Remove.

"A giddy Jam!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "That's the Jam Inky was expecting this afternoon, Bunt—about a hundred-weight of him—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors.

"You see, it's a title in India," explained Harry Wharton, laughing. "I don't know whether they have any nobby nob called a marmalade, but they certainly have a Jam, and Inky's uncle is a Jam."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"But the agreement holds good," said Bob Cherry. "You can eat as much of the Jam as you like—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Unless he raises objections, of course—"

"He might!" chortled Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter bestowed a glare on the chums of the Remove that bade fair to crack his spectacles. He rolled away, in utter disgust. But he did not follow the Jam Sahib Bahadur Munny Singh. Healthy as Bunter's appetite was, and attached as he was to almost any kind of jam, he evidently did not want to sample that jam.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Something Like Football!

THE Jam Sahib Bahadur Munny Singh was an object of great interest to the Greyfriars juniors that afternoon.

His title was interesting in itself. All sorts and conditions of people had visited Greyfriars at one time or another, but it was uncommon for the old school to be distinguished by the visit of a Jam.

NEXT MONDAY!

"FAITHFUL TO HIS FRIEND!"



The juniors unrolled the parchment, and four Christmas candles were revealed. "He, he, he!" chuckled Billy Bunter. "Inky is pulling your leg! Candles! He, he, he!" (See Chapter 4.)

The Jam was a very benign and affable old gentleman.

Bob Cherry declared that in his own country the Jam was a terrific potentate, and that heads were lopped off at a mere nod from him.

But the Jam did not look like a gentleman who ordered heads to be lopped off. He seemed full of the milk of human kindness, and he was evidently very affectionately attached to his nephew, the Nabob of Bhanipur.

For some time the Jam was shut up with Dr. Locke, and later on he was seen walking about Greyfriars, taking a survey of the old school, escorted by the Head in person.

Only very distinguished visitors were shown around personally by Dr. Locke, so it was plain that the Jam was a great gun.

The two august gentlemen arrived on the football-ground together, and paused to look on for a few minutes.

Harry Wharton & Co. were punting a ball about on Little Side, to keep themselves warm, with a crowd of other Removites. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was with his chums at the footer while his august uncle was occupied with the headmaster.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes the giddy Jam!" murmured Bob Cherry, as the glitter of the jewelled turban caught his eye. "Bunter hasn't scoffed that Jam, after all?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was an honour to the juniors for the great and glorious Jam to stand in the keen wind looking at their play, and they felt it. Skinner of the Remove strolled on to the field and joined in the punt-about. Skinner, the slacker, never exerted himself in that way if he could

help it; but on this occasion Skinner had a special motive.

"Give a fellow a chance at the ball!" he called out.

"Bow wow!" said Bob Cherry. "What on earth do you want with a footer, Skinner?"

"I want the Jam to see me do a goal-kick!" said Skinner.

"The Jam would have to stand there till he struck roots if he waited for you to get the ball anywhere near the goal!"

"Well, let's try!" said Skinner.

Skinner was given his chance. He calculated his kick very carefully, and he was just going to let fly, when Hurree Jamset Ram Singh made a rush forward and collared Skinner round the neck.

Crash!

Skinner and the nabob went to the ground together.

"Yaroooooh!" roared Skinner.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" shouted Bob Cherry. "This isn't Rugger practice, Inky!"

"Yoop!" howled Skinner. "Leggo! Lemme gorrup! Wharrer you at?—Oh crumbs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Jam Munny Singh smiled as he looked on, and glanced at the Head, who seemed rather puzzled by the scene.

"One good game—yes!" said the Jam. "My nephew play same as honourable schoolfellows—yes! Fine!"

And the Jam clapped his hands.

Skinner was rolling on the ground in the grasp of Hurree Singh, and yelling at the top of his voice.

Hurree Singh was rubbing Skinner's features into the earth, and Skinner did not seem to be enjoying the process.

"Fine!" said the Jam Bahadur. "Oh, yes! Very fine!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 723.

"Ah—er—yes!" murmured the Head. "We will—er—ahem—pass on. Yonder there is a senior game—"

And the Head walked his august visitor off to Big Side, where the Sixth were at football.

"Will you fellows draggimoff!" came in muffled accents from Harold Skinner. "I'll smash him! I'll— Help! Yoop! Help!"

Harry Wharton and Johnny Bull seized the nabob and jerked him away from his victim. Hurree Singh rose breathlessly.

Skinner sat up and spluttered.

"What on earth's the game?" demanded Wharton. "What sort of footer will your uncle think we play at Greyfriars after that?"

"My esteemed chum, the humorous and rascally Skinner, was about to kick the ball at my honourable and ludicrous uncle—"

"Oh!" exclaimed Wharton.

"That was Skinner's little game, was it?" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Skinner, you cad—"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"I thought that was what he was up to!" said Peter Todd. "Inky stopped him just in time!"

"Yow-ow-ow-wow!"

"Bump him!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Leggo!" raved Skinner. "Only a joke, you rotters! I was only going to biff his silly turban off— Yaroooooh!"

"Bump him!"

"Yoop! Help!"

The Jam Bahadur, evidently under the impression that this was the famous British game of football, looked back and clapped his hands with enthusiasm.

"Oh! Fine! Fine!" he ejaculated.

He tore himself quite reluctantly away from the scene to accompany the Head to Big Side, and his looks showed that he did not find the Sixth Form game nearly so interesting.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Nabob's Guests!

"MY esteemed chums—"
"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Is the Jam coming to tea in the study, Inky?"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh shook his head.

"My excellent uncle is partaking of teaful refreshment with the worthy Head and the elegant mem-sahib," he answered. "He is going departfully in short time, and I am going with him—"

"Oh!" said Bob. "He's taking you back to London?"

"Exactly! I am sorry to leave my esteemed and ridiculous chums," said the nabob; "but we shall meet again Christmasfully!"

"Lucky bargée, to get away nearly a week before break-up!" said Frank Nugent.

"You'll be coming home with me for Christmas, Inky?" asked Wharton.

"I want my esteemed chum Wharton, and my other excellent pals, to come to me for Christmas!" explained Hurree Singh.

"It's rather a long step to Bhanipur, isn't it?" grinned Bob Cherry.

"My excellent uncle wishes me to bring my friends to his mansion in esteemed London for Christmas, where there will be high old time!" said the nabob. "I am going with him, by kind permission of honourable Head, to make all arrangements preparefully, if my chums will honour me with their desirable company at Christmas!"

NEXT
MONDAY!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 723.

"Good old Jam!" said Bob.

"It will be terrific honour and pleasure for my unworthy self—"

"Cut it out, Inky!" said Harry, laughing. "We'll come!"

"Yes, rather!"

"The worthy Jam has taken large mansion in fashionable square," said the nabob. "Everything will be very top-hole, and the grubfulness will be terrific!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What about Drake?" asked Harry Wharton. "I was going to have Drake home for Christmas if he'd come—"

"The askfulness will also be extended to the esteemed Drake."

"Good!"

"Count me in, Inky!" said a fat voice at the door, and Billy Bunter blinked into Study No. 1.

"My esteemed Bunter—" murmured the nabob.

"I wouldn't desert you for anything!" said Bunter. "For your sake, Inky, I'll give up my own party at Bunter Court."

"Don't!" said Johnny Bull.

"You fellows can come on to Bunter Court afterwards, if you like," said the Owl of the Remove. "Bring your uncle, too, Inky, and his set of niggers. There's plenty of room at Bunter Court. You can send down the car for us when school breaks up, if you like. I'm accustomed to travelling by car, you know."

"My worthy and ludicrous Bunter, I—"

"Consider it settled!" said Bunter breezily. "I dare say I shall get on all right with your uncle, Inky. Funny old codger, isn't he?"

"Eh?"

"That turban and his features would make his fortune in a circus, wouldn't they?" said Bunter agreeably.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh looked rather fixedly at the fat junior, but he did not answer.

"Will there be a lot of other niggers there, Inky?" continued Bunter.

"There will be esteemed Indian friends of my respected uncle," said the nabob mildly.

"Well, I don't mind," said Bunter generously. "Bit queer to be mixing up with a lot of stove-polish gentry; but, dash it all, I'm no snob! I'll be quite civil to them, Inky."

"The excellent Bunter will lack the opportunity of bestowing civility upon esteemed uncle and other niggers," said the nabob grimly. "The niggerful door-keeper will have order to give esteemed Bunter the boot, if esteemed Bunter shows up."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"Scat, you fat bounder!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Of course, I know you're only joking, Inky, old chap," said Bunter. "I'm coming! And I tell you what. I'll telephone to the pater to send the Rolls-Royce for us. Now, what about tea?"

That question was not answered.

Bob Cherry took the Owl of the Remove by one fat ear, with a finger and thumb that gripped like a vice, and led him into the passage.

Bob did not speak, though Bunter did—loudly.

Having led the Owl into the passage, Bob slewed him round by his fat ear and planted a heavy boot behind him.

"Travel!" he said briefly.

And Bunter travelled.

The propulsion of Bob Cherry's boot was an irresistible argument. Bunter had no choice about travelling.

Then the Famous Five sat down to tea in Study No. 1 in a merry mood. Christmas with a Jam was an experience rather out of the common, and the chums of the Remove were rather looking forward to it. There was no doubt that the festivities would be on a scale of Oriental magnificence.

After tea Hurree Jamset Ram Singh made a round of the Remove passage, adding names to the list of his guests.

Vernon-Smith, and Tom Redwing, and Peter Todd, and Tom Brown, and Squiff, and several other fellows willingly accepted the invitation to the large mansion in the fashionable square for Christmas.

It was going to be quite a large party from Greyfriars, but did not include William George Bunter, in spite of that fat youth's willingness to be civil to the niggers for the occasion.

When the car came round for the Jam, the Head came out to say good-bye to his distinguished visitor, and a crowd gathered round to see the Jam Bahadur off.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh stepped into the car with his esteemed uncle. He said good-bye to his chums, and the dusky chauffeur started the engine. Billy Bunter shoved through the juniors and reached the car:

"Au revoir, Inky!" he gasped.

"Good-bye, my esteemed, ridiculous Bunter!"

"See you again at Christmas, Inky!"

"I think notfully."

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"Stand clear there, Bunter, you ass!" called out Johnny Bull.

The big car started.

The Greyfriars fellows raised a cheer as it rolled away with the Jam and the nabob.

Bunter stood blinking after it, with a rather dubious expression on his fat face. Bunter was quite determined that he was not going to be left out of the Christmas festivities, especially as he had heard Hurree Singh remark that the grubfulness would be terrific. That was an attraction that William George Bunter could not possibly have resisted.

When Harry Wharton & Co. turned back into the house, the fat junior followed them in.

"Will you fellows be going up by train?" he asked.

"Most likely."

"I suppose one of you could lend me my fare, if my postal-order doesn't come before we break up?"

"You won't be going," said Johnny Bull. "And the Head will hand you your travelling money to get home."

Bunter blinked at him.

"My dear chap, I can hardly decline Inky's invitation, when he's depending on me to come!" he answered.

"Inky's what?"

"His pressing invitation!" said Bunter firmly.

"Why, you fat owl—"

"I shall have to tell Lord Mauleverer I can't come to his place, after all," said Bunter thoughtfully; "and one of you fellows might lend me a stamp, to write to D'Arcy at St. Jim's. He wants me badly, but, of course, I can't go to him now I've promised Inky. I hope you fellows will behave yourselves at the Jam's place."

"What?"

"None of your blessed horseplay, and all that," said Bunter. "I don't want to be disgraced by a mob of dashed hooligans, you know."

A SPLENDID TALE OF GREYFRIARS. : :
: : : : By FRANK RICHARDS.

"FAITHFUL TO HIS FRIEND!"

"Why, you—you—" stuttered Wharton.

"Remember that you'll be with me, and that I shall expect you to behave yourselves," said Bunter. "I shall be responsible for you, in a way. Inky looks on me as the head of the party, being so pally with me. Mind you take some clean collars, Bob."

"Why, I—I—I—" spluttered Bob Cherry.

"And for goodness' sake, Johnny Bull, don't have baggy trousers on an occasion like this!" said Bunter. "Baggy knees are all very well for the Remove passage; but at the Jam's mansion I shall expect you to do me credit—as far as you can, of course."

And the Owl of the Remove rolled away, leaving the Co. staring after him as if mesmerised. William George Bunter had quite taken their breath away.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Christmas Candles!

"MASTER WHARTON!"

Gosling, the porter, appeared in the doorway of Study No. 1. It was a couple of days since Hurree Singh's departure for London with his esteemed relative the Jam. Four members of the Famous Five were at tea in Study No. 1 when Gosling appeared in the offing.

The porter had a parcel in his hand, which had apparently arrived by post. Harry Wharton glanced round.

"Trot in, old bean!" he said cheerily. "What is it?"

"It's a parcel for you, Wharton!" came Billy Bunter's voice from behind the school porter. "I say, shall I open it for you?"

Gosling came into the study and laid the parcel on the table.

"Just arrived, Master Wharton," he said. "I thought I'd bring it up for you, sir."

The chums of the Remove smiled. As a rule, Gosling would not have

dreamed of carrying up a parcel to a junior study, if he could possibly have helped it. But the approach of Christmas always made a considerable difference to the crusty old gentleman. It was not so much that the festive season softened his heart, but there was an expectation of a crop of tips when the school broke up. Gosling's crusty old voice gradually softened as Christmas drew near, from the growl of a mastiff to the coo of a dove.

"Thanks no end, old bean!" said the captain of the Remove.

Gosling lingered.

"Them stairs is steep!" he remarked.

"They is!" said Bob Cherry sympathetically. "I say, you chaps, we ought to help Gosling downstairs, as he's come up to oblige us."

"Good egg!" said Nugent.

"As Inky would say, the goodfulness of the egg is terrific!" chuckled Johnny Bull. "Hold on, Gosling; we'll all bear a hand!"

The Greyfriars porter did not wait for assistance from the merry Removites. He departed hastily from the study, and was heard to grunt emphatically as he disappeared down the Remove staircase. Possibly he feared that his descent might have been too rapid with the assistance of the chums of the Remove.

Billy Bunter rolled into the study, and started unfastening the parcel. He seemed more curious about its contents than the junior to whom it was addressed.

"Tuck, most likely," said Bunter. "It isn't a hamper—and it's not a large parcel—but it's most likely tuck. Were you expecting tuck from somebody, Wharton?"

"Not that I know of," said Harry. "Let's look at it. Why, it's Inky's fist!"

"The parcel's from Inky," said Nugent.

"Christmas presents, perhaps," said Billy Bunter, his eyes glistening behind his big spectacles. "Something for me in it, I should think; Inky would hardly forget his best pal. Sure this is

addressed to you, Wharton? Just like that ass Gosling to bring it to the wrong study—"

"Look at it, fathead!"

Bunter blinked at the label. There was no doubt that the package was addressed to Harry Wharton; but the Owl of the Remove did not seem to be quite satisfied. He shook his head.

"It's Inky's fist," he admitted. "But he might have written the wrong name by mistake; he's a bit careless. If he's sending around Christmas presents, it's odd that he should overlook me—very odd! I think that this parcel is most likely for me, Wharton; and on the whole, I'll take it to my own study to undo it."

Bunter picked up the parcel.

"My only hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Kick him, somebody!"

Johnny Bull was nearest Bunter. He brought a heavy boot into the discussion, and there was a howl from Bunter as he dropped the package on the table again.

"Yow! Beast!"

"Unpack it, Wharton," said Nugent. "Let's see what old Inky's up to."

"That's my parcel, I believe!" yelled Bunter.

"Shut up, ass!"

Harry Wharton unrolled several thick sheets of brown paper, and disclosed a box.

The juniors gathered round curiously to see the box opened. Wharton unhooked the lid and threw it up.

Inside the box were four separate packages.

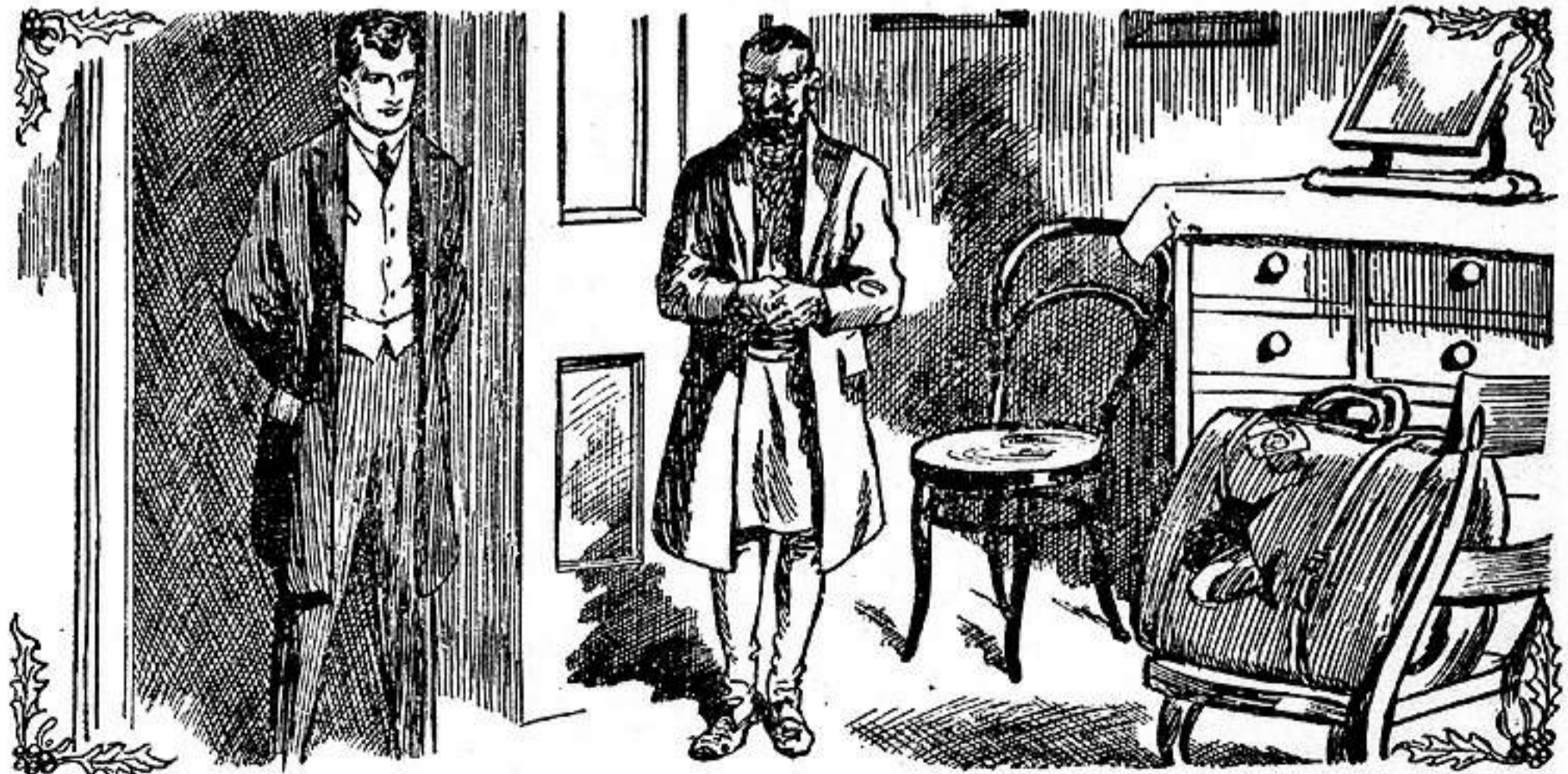
Each had a name written on the outside of it, and the names were Wharton, Nugent, Cherry, and Bull.

"One each!" remarked Frank.

"Isn't there one for me?" demanded Bunter.

"Looks as if there isn't," chuckled Bob Cherry. "Inky must really have forgotten how pally he was with you, Bunter."

"May be one under the packing," grunted Bunter. And he searched through the box. But there was nothing for Bunter. Astonishing as it seemed to



Drake stepped to the doorway and glanced into the room. On a chair lay a bag—still locked; but the side had been gashed open with a knife. "It is the candles I want!" said Drake. "You'd better hand them over, Din Das!" (See Chapter 12.)

the Owl of the Remove, Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had apparently forgotten that his best pal at Greyfriars was William George Bunter.

The four juniors unrolled their packets.

Bunter eyed them almost wolfishly.

"You've got mine, Bull!" he exclaimed suddenly.

"Fathead!"

"There's my name on it—"

"Is your name spelt B-U-L-L?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"That isn't a double L, I think—looks to me more like NTER," said Bunter. "The B and the U are plain enough."

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

"Look here, if there's something valuable in that parcel, it's for me!" roared Bunter.

Unheeding Bunter, the juniors unrolled the four packages. Somewhat to their surprise, what looked like four large Christmas candles were revealed.

"Candles!" exclaimed Bob.

Bunter's clouded brow cleared.

"He, he, he!" he chuckled. "You can have them; blessed if I want a candle! Inky is pulling your leg! He, he, he!"

The juniors gazed at the candles, rather taken aback. They were large, handsome candles, certainly, of a very hard aromatic wax. But it was rather a peculiar gift to receive from their dusky chum the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Hold on! There's a letter with mine," said Wharton. "Here it is. It was folded round the candle."

The four juniors gathered round the letter. Billy Bunter continued to cachinate, evidently very much tickled by the nature of the Christmas presents.

Wharton read the letter aloud. It ran:

"My esteemed Wharton,—I trustfully hope that my excellent and ridiculous chums will accept the humble and ludicrous present of honourable candles. I begfully request that they shall not be lighted until placed on esteemed Christmas-tree on Christmas Day in mansion of excellent Jam. Then there will be small delightful surprise for esteemed chums.

"With kindful regardings,

"HURREE JAMSET RAM SINGH."

"Well, my hat!" said Bob Cherry. "I suppose this is some little joke of Inky's. Something happens when the candles are lighted, I suppose."

"I suppose so," said Harry. "They look ordinary enough—just wax and a wick! But I suppose there's something else about them, or Inky wouldn't be so particular about their not being lighted till they're on the Christmas-tree."

"He, he, he!"

"What are you going off like an alarm-clock for, Bunter?"

"He, he, he! Inky's just pulling your leg!" chuckled Bunter. "Those candles are worth about half-a-crown each! He, he, he! If that's Inky's idea of a Christmas present, he needn't trouble to remember me. He, he, he!"

"Fathead!"

"Sorry for your disappointment," grinned Bunter.

"But we're not disappointed," said Harry Wharton mildly. "We're not Bunters, you know."

"Inky's rolling in money, and you jolly well expected something decent," grinned Bunter. "Serve you jolly well right! He, he, he! I never could stand

chaps who suck up to a fellow because he's wealthy. Not in my line at all."

"Oh, my hat!"

"This ought to be a lesson to you!" chortled Bunter. "I'm jolly glad! He, he, he!"

Bunter's cachinnation was suddenly interrupted by Johnny Bull's boot being re-introduced into the conversation.

There was a loud howl from William George Bunter.

"Ow! Yah! Beast!"

Bunter rolled out of the study. But he put his head into the doorway again to ejaculate:

"I'm jolly glad! He, he, he!"

Then he vanished at top speed.

Harry Wharton smiled.

"We'll put Inky's candles away somewhere safe, and take them to London with us," he said. "Some ass might get lighting them by mistake. I suppose Inky's got some reason for not wanting them lighted till they're on the Christmas-tree. Anyhow, we'll do as he asks."

"As he begfully requests," chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the four candles were replaced in the box, and the box was bestowed in Wharton's desk, and locked up. And then the four juniors gave their attention to prep, and for the time the Christmas candles were dismissed from their minds.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

In Dangerous Hands!

"INKY!"

Billy Bunter ejaculated the name, in great surprise.

It was the day following the arrival of the Christmas candles for Harry Wharton & Co., and the December dusk was thick in the Greyfriars quadrangle. Billy Bunter was ambulating between the old elms and the school wall, braving the keen winter wind—for a good reason. While he ambled, he was devouring jam-tarts from a bag under his arm. The tarts did not belong to Bunter; hence his retirement to a secluded spot while he devoured them.

A rustle in the ivy on the wall caught Bunter's ear, and he glanced round. A it happened, he was in the deep shadow of a tree, and quite invisible to anyone climbing the wall. But as he blinked in the direction of the rustling sound, Bunter caught a glimpse of a dusky face and deep black eyes.

"Inky! My hat!" murmured Bunter.

He stood where he was, transfixed with a jam-tart half-way to his mouth, with astonishment.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was supposed to be in his uncle's mansion in London, making magnificent preparations for the Christmas festivities. And here he was—climbing over the school wall in the most secret and surreptitious manner.

It did not occur to Bunter for the moment that possibly the dusky clamberer was not Inky. The bronze Oriental face and black eyes, of which he caught only a glimpse, were enough for Bunter. He did not expect to see any other Indian at Greyfriars; and he did not think of doubting for a moment that this was the nabob; though why he should be returning to his school in such a surreptitious manner was an amazing puzzle.

Bunter stood quite still, watching and

listening. He heard the climber drop from the wall, with another rustle of ivy; but he could not see him now. The dusky intruder was hidden in the shadows.

Bunter grinned.

For some reason the Oriental was creeping secretly into the precincts of Greyfriars; and Bunter determined to give him a fright. He heard a faint footfall, indicating that the Indian was coming towards the trees, under which the fat junior stood.

Bunter drew back quietly behind a big trunk, and watched, still grinning. A dim figure in a heavy overcoat loomed in the dusk near him. Then Bunter gave a sudden yell.

"Hallo, Inky!"

His intention was to startle the intruder by that sudden yell.

He succeeded; there was no doubt about that.

The intruder jumped almost clear of the ground, and gave a gasping cry.

But what followed startled Bunter more than he had startled the Indian.

The dim form made a spring at him, and Bunter felt a hand grasp his fat throat in a grip like that of a vice.

Over his startled fat face loomed a dusky countenance, with glittering black eyes.

Bunter's heart almost ceased to beat with fright.

It was not Inky!

That iron grip was not Hurree Singh's; and the face, now that Bunter saw it more closely, was older than Inky's. It was the face of an Indian at least twenty years older than the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Two fierce black eyes, set very close together over a prominent nose like a beak, glittered at the frightened Owl.

Bunter would have yelled; but he could make no sound with the iron grip of the Indian compressing his throat.

He was forced back against the tree and pinned there, helpless in the grasp of his assailant.

His round eyes dilated behind his spectacles as he blinked at the dark face before him in utter terror.

It was not Inky—it was some man he had never seen before—and the expression on his dusky face was hard, cruel, ruthless. What the man could possibly want within the walls of Greyfriars was a mystery to Bunter. But he realised that he was in dangerous hands.

"Silence!"

Bunter did not need the injunction; the grip on his throat kept him silent. His fat limbs were shaking with terror.

A shiver ran through him, as something glittered in the dusk. It was a knife that the Indian had taken out from under his heavy overcoat.

"Silence! If you call out, you will never utter a sound again on this earth!" muttered the man in perfect English.

He loosened his grasp on Bunter.

"Oh dear!" gasped the fat junior.

"Are you alone here?"

"Yes!" gasped Bunter.

The man with the beaky nose stared round him suspiciously in the December dusk.

But there was no sound in the quadrangle, and the lights of the school-house were hidden in the winter mist that hung low over the quad.

He seemed reassured at last. Bunter did not make a sound or a movement; the cold steel glimmering within a foot of him had an hypnotic effect on the Owl of the Remove. The Hindu fixed his black eye again on the Owl's scared face.

"What is your name?"
 "B-b-bub-bub-bub—" stuttered Bunter.
 "What?"
 "Bub-bub-Bunter."
 "You are not Wharton?"
 "Eh? No! Oh, I'm Bunter! If—if you want Wharton, he's indoors!" gasped Bunter.
 He felt a sense of relief at finding that it was the captain of the Remove that the mysterious Hindu seemed to be after.
 "You know Wharton?"
 "Yes; he's in my Form."
 "Has he received a parcel by post?"
 Bunter started.
 "Yes; yesterday he had one—some silly Christmas candles—"
 The black eyes flashed.
 "From Hurree Jamset Ram Singh?"
 "Yes."
 "Where are the candles now?"
 "In Wharton's study."
 "Where is that?"
 "No. 1 in the Remove passage."

The hawk-faced Oriental made an impatient gesture. It was evident that he knew nothing about the interior arrangements of Greyfriars, and probably had never heard of the celebrated Remove passage.
 Bunter was feeling a little reassured now. Evidently this mysterious maurader did not want him—and Bunter guessed, though he was not quite sure, that the knife was only displayed to scare him. If he wanted Inky's Christmas candles he was welcome to them, so far as William George Bunter was concerned.

"Listen to me," said the Hindu, after a pause. "I am a servant of the Huzoor Hurree Singh, and he has sent me to take away the candles."
 "Has he really?" gasped Bunter.
 "They are of no value, and were sent by mistake."

Bunter blinked at the man.
 "I am here to take them away," continued the Hindu, watching Bunter like a hawk. "You will guide me to where they are placed, boy. I will give you money for your trouble."
 "I'd do it like a shot," said Bunter; "but the chaps will be in their study now, most likely. They jolly well won't let you take the candles, unless you've got something written from Hurree Singh."

Bunter grinned a little as he spoke. He was not a very bright youth, but he did not think for a moment of believing the Hindu's statement. A servant of Hurree Singh, sent to take away the mysterious candles, would not have entered the school like a thief in the night, that was clear. The man wanted to obtain the candles for his own purposes, though what those purposes could be was a deep mystery to Bunter. Four candles worth about half-a-crown each hardly justified all these surreptitious proceedings, so far as Bunter could see.

There was a pause after Bunter's reply. The Hindu seemed to be thinking deeply.
 "I—I say, lemme go now!" mumbled Bunter. "It's close on bed-time, you know, and—and the prefects will be after me if I don't show up in time for dorm."

"You will point out the room to me?"
 "Like a shot," said Bunter, glad of the chance of getting nearer to the schoolhouse.
 "Lead the way! If you give the alarm, I shall drive my knife between your shoulders!"

"Ow!"
 Bunter led the way in the gloom. There was a light from the window of Study No. 1, glimmering down through the mist, showing that Wharton and Nugent were in their quarters. Bunter pointed out the window.
 "That's Study No. 1," he said.

The Hindu stared up at the lighted window.
 "The candles are there?"
 "Yes; locked up in Wharton's desk."
 "They have not been used—lighted?"
 "No; Inky told Wharton they weren't to be lighted till they were put on the Christmas-tree."

The Hindu nodded; he seemed to be quite as well aware of these details as Bunter himself.
 "There's someone in the room now!" he muttered.

"Yes—Wharton and Nugent will be there. Perhaps Johnny Bull and Bob Cherry as well. I—I say, can I go now?"
 "You say it is nearly bed-time?"
 "Yes—ten minutes or so."
 "These boys will leave their study at bed-time?"
 "Yes, or sooner."

The Hindu scanned the lighted window again, and his eye followed down the thick ivy from the window-sill to the ground. Bunter could see that he was calculating his chance of climbing the ivy to the window of Study No. 1.

The light in the study window suddenly went out.
 "They're gone now!" said Bunter.
 "To bed?"
 "Not till half-past nine. Most likely down to the Common-room, or to another study along the passage."
 The Hindu muttered something in his

own tongue in tones of satisfaction. His black eyes scanned the ivy again.

"I—I say, lemme go!" mumbled Bunter. "It—it's jolly c-c-cold out here, you know!"

"Silence!" The word came in a ferocious hiss that sent a chill of fear to Bunter's heart.

The Hindu turned on him. He drew a coil of thin strong cord from his pocket and proceeded to bind Bunter's wrists and ankles. The Owl of the Remove did not dare attempt resistance. He was bound till he could not stir a limb, and then a gag was inserted in his capacious mouth and fastened there with a cord passing round his head.

The Hindu lifted him—with some exertion—and laid him on the ground in the deep shadow of an elm. Bunter made no sound or movement while he was bound and gagged; he was too terrified for that. He blinked with dilated eyes after the Hindu as the man glided away in the gloom. A rustle of ivy came to his ears, and he knew that the lithe Oriental was climbing up towards the window of Study No. 1 in the Remove.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Thief in the Night!

WINGATE of the Sixth glanced round the Remove dormitory. The half-hour had chimed, and the Removites were about to turn in. But there was one member of the Lower Fourth Form missing from the dormitory.

"Where's Bunter?" rapped out Wingate.



The train had started, but the boy detective was not to be beaten. He grasped the door, the window of which was down, and fairly shot into the carriage, head first! (See Chapter 13.)

NEXT MONDAY!

"FAITHFUL TO HIS FRIEND!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF GREYFRIARS. BY FRANK RICHARDS. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 72A.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! The Owl's missing!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Better look for him in the pantry, Wingate!"

There was a laugh. "Doesn't anybody know where the fat duffer is?" exclaimed the Greyfriars captain impatiently.

"I know he bagged a bag of tarts from my study," said Vernon-Smith. "I was keeping a fives-bat ready for him, but I didn't see him again."

Bob Cherry chuckled. "He's keeping out of the way of Smithy's bat," he remarked. "He's forgotten all about dorm."

"I'll jolly well warm him for forgetting dorm!" said Wingate angrily. "Some of you go and rout him out!"

"Right-ho, Wingate!"

The Remove fellows were not specially keen on going to bed—in fact, they were rather pleased to get another ten minutes or so. Nine or ten fellows who had not started taking their boots off yet left the Remove dormitory to look for Bunter.

"Where the thump can he be?" asked Bob Cherry. "Can't be out of doors at this time of night."

"I believe he scuttled out when he bagged my tarts," said the Bounder. "But he must have come in again before this—the door's been shut some time."

"We'll rout him out of a box-room, or one of the Remove studies," said Peter Todd.

"Blessed if I see why he hasn't turned up!" Harry Wharton remarked. "He must have finished the tarts long ago. They wouldn't last Bunter long."

"He's in hiding!" chuckled Bob. "We'll rout him out! Some of you fellows draw the box-room, and I'll go along the passage."

"Right!" Harry Wharton and two or three juniors went along to the box-room, and Peter Todd looked into Study No. 7. Bob Cherry and Nugent went along to Study No. 1.

If Bunter was in hiding, for fear of the wrath to come, it was most likely that he had taken refuge in a study, where there would be the remains of a fire. So the juniors looked into all the studies along the Remove passage.

Bob Cherry gave a soft chuckle as he came to the door of Study No. 1. A slight movement from within caught his ear.

"He's there!" murmured Bob. There was a faint glimmer of light under the door.

Bob Cherry turned the handle, to throw open the door, but it did not move. It was locked inside.

He thumped on the panels.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob.

He heard a sudden movement inside the study, and a catching of breath. Someone had evidently been startled by the thunderous summons at the door. Bob rattled the handle.

"Bunter!" he roared.

"Is he there?" called Wharton along the passage.

"Yes; he's got the door locked!"

"The silly ass!"

The searchers scudded along the passage and gathered round the door of Study No. 1. There was a heavy thumping on the panels.

"Bunter!" roared Bob. "Bed-time, you fat idiot! Unlock the door!"

"Come out, Bunter!"

"Wingate will be after you in a minute, you fat duffer!" shouted Harry Wharton. "Come out at once!"

There was no answer from within the study, and the door was not opened.

Vernon-Smith stooped and put his eye to the keyhole.

Then he gave a yell.

"Great Scott!"

"Wh-what's the row, Smithy? Nothing happened to Bunter, I suppose—"

"Burglars!" yelled Smith.

"What?"

"Bunter's not there—I couldn't see him, anyhow! There's a Hindu at your desk, Wharton!"

"A Hindu—at my desk!" stuttered Wharton.

"Look!"

The captain of the Remove, in utter amazement, put his eye to the keyhole.

Inside, the study was glimmering with the light of an electric lantern. The light shone on Wharton's desk, and a man in an overcoat was stooping over the desk. The lock had already been forced, and two or three drawers pulled out, and the contents scattered. Wharton had a glimpse of the man's profile—it was that of a Hindu.

The captain of the Remove gasped.

"A burglar in a junior study!" he exclaimed. "Must be potty! Here, we're jolly well going to break in the door!"

"What's the row there?" called Wingate over the banisters. "Have you found Bunter?"

"Burglars!" roared Bob.

"What?"

"A Hindu breaking into Wharton's desk—"

"Rot!"

"Come and look—"

Wingate was on the scene in a twinkling. He stooped and peered through the keyhole.

Heedless of the clamour at the door, the hawk-faced Hindu was tearing out the drawers of the desk in frantic haste, scattering the contents far and wide as he searched eagerly for what he wanted.

"Great Scott!" gasped Wingate.

He jumped up.

"A blessed burglar!" said Johnny Bull, in wonder. "What the thump can he want in your desk, Wharton?"

"Give it up!" said Harry. "There's nothing there of much value—only a few pounds, anyhow!"

Wingate strode along the passage and grasped the heavy form that stood in the window recess.

"Lend a hand here!" he called.

"What-ho!"

The form was rushed to the door of Study No. 1. It crashed on the lock with a terrific concussion.

Crash!

There was a gasp within, and the Hindu sprang away from the desk. The door shook and shivered, and it was obvious that it would fly open under a couple more such assaults.

Crash!

There was no time for the rascal to complete his search if he was not to be taken. He made a spring for the window.

Crash!

The lock gave way, and the door flew open with a bang. Wingate rushed into the study, with the mob of juniors in wild excitement at his heels.

They were just in time to see the dark-faced man vanish from the open window.

Wingate rushed to the window.

Below him the ivy was shaking and rustling as the man descended, hand-below-hand, with reckless hurry, and the activity of a monkey.

"Stop!" roared Wingate.

The man did not even look up. In the December dimness Wingate caught only a glimpse of him descending rapidly.

"We can cut him off in the quad if we hurry!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Come on!" shouted Bob.

The juniors went scampering down the stairs. Mr. Quelch met them in the lower hall, amazed and greatly scandalised by the terrific uproar from the Remove passage.

"Boys, what—what—" he began.

"Burglars, sir!"

"Wha-a-at?"

Wingate came speeding down the stairs. He rushed to the door, and tore it open.

"Come on!" roared Johnny Bull.

The juniors rushed on past their astonished Form-master, after Wingate, into the misty quad. They tore round the house to the wall under the windows of the Remove passage.

A shadow loomed for a moment in the mist, and there was a pattering of running feet.

"He's off!" yelled Nugent. "After him!"

The escaping thief had reached the ground less than a minute before the crowd arrived on the spot. He fled into the mist and darkness, and there was a roar behind him, and a frantic rush in pursuit. All Greyfriars was alarmed now, and a hundred fellows, of all Forms, had turned out into the quad.

There was little chance of running the fugitive down now that he was free in the darkness and shadowy mist. But the Greyfriars fellows did their best. They scattered among the elms, and shouted to one another, groping their way in the gloom. Bob Cherry stumbled over something that moved and wriggled, and immediately he grasped it and held on, and yelled:

"I've got him!"

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Mystery!

BOB CHERRY'S voice rang through the winter night.

"I've got him! Bear a hand here! I've got the brute!"

"Good! Hold on to him!"

"Bring a light, somebody!"

"Hang on, Bob!"

Bob Cherry's prisoner did not resist. He wriggled on the ground under Bob's grasp, and that was all. He seemed incapable of resistance. Neither did he utter a word, save for a faint inarticulate gurgle.

A dozen fellows were quickly on the spot, grasping the prisoner on all sides, groping in the gloom for a grip on him.

Mr. Quelch came hurrying up with a lamp.

"What—what—what is it?" he gasped.

"Got him, sir!"

"The burglar, sir," said Bob breathlessly. "He was crouching here, and I fairly stumbled over him—"

"Got him safe, sir!" said Nugent.

Mr. Quelch brought the light nearer, and it glimmered on the prisoner, who wriggled feebly in the grasp of the excited juniors. Then there was a startled yell.

"Bunter!"

"It's Bunter!"

"My only hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

The prisoner was released as suddenly as if he had become red-hot. The juniors blinked at Bunter in utter astonishment.

"He is tied up!" said Mr. Quelch.

"He—he seems to have something in his mouth. A—a—a gag, apparently! Release him at once, my boys!"

(Continued on page 15.)

The Greyfriars HERALD

No. 51.
Week Ending
December 17th, 1921.



Harry Wharton
Editor

THE POET'S DREAM!

By Dick Penfold.

I threw a snowball in the air,
It fell to earth—I know not where!
I simply heard a sickening squelch,
Then, turning, gazed at Mr. Quelch!

His mortar-board was in the snow,
I murmured, "Here's a pretty go!
Quelchy will lam me with his cane;
For days I sha'n't sit down again!"

But lo! great wonders came about.
He did not rave, he did not shout.
He patted me with great affection,
And said "Good shot!" and "Fine
direction!"

Then to his study Quelchy led me,
He fawned on me, and then he fed
me.

Then from his shelf he promptly
took
A cane? Oh, no—a handsome book!

"This is my 'Greyfriars History,'
I've finished it at last, you see.
Will you accept it, bound in calf?"
"Yes, rather!" I replied. "Not
half!"

"Here, also, my esteemed young
friend,
Is a remittance you may spend!"
Fond words of fervent thanks I
spoke,
For Quelchy's kindness — then
awoke!

EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

A right merry Christmas to you,
readers all!

I am a little early, perhaps, in voicing
this time-honoured greeting; but better
be early than late, as Bob Cherry says
when he turns out at five in the
morning!

Nearly twelve months have elapsed
since the "Greyfriars Herald" made its
appearance in supplement form. Dur-
ing this period, I am happy to say
that we have made crowds of new
chums, and our great army of readers
has been multiplied.

This is our first Christmas Number,
and we have done all that is humanly
possible to make it a success.

Our journalistic labours have some-
times been carried on far into the
night. Whole gallons of midnight oil
must have been consumed. It has been
hard work, but pleasant work, and if
this little paper of ours should add to
the enjoyment of the Christmas revels
—if it should create laughter and dispel
gloom—then we shall be more than
content.

Our toils over, we are now giving our-
selves up to the enjoyment of a jolly
good holiday. But don't imagine from
this that there will be no "Greyfriars
Herald" next week. We shall appear
on the scene as usual, with a Special
Pantomime Number. And you will be
given a feast of fun, I can assure you.

Although in the midst of a whirl of
pleasure, we are not forgetful of our
reader chums at this juncture. We
want them all to have a jolly good
time, and enjoy themselves to the full.
May this coming Christmas be the
grandest they have ever spent! May
it be full of fun and mirth and un-
selfish pleasure. I use the word "un-
selfish" advisedly, for it is in the little
gifts and kind thoughts for others that
true happiness and the true spirit of
Christmas lies.

A right merry Christmas to you,
readers all! And the whole of my staff
—yes, and all Greyfriars, too—join me
in the greeting!

HARRY WHARTON!

CHRISTMAS CHIMES!

By Mark Linley.

Christmas again, with all its
delights! Yuletide, with its revel
and dance and song! Would that I
were a Byron or a Penfold, that I
might do justice to the festive
season in honeyed lines of rhyme!
The long and weary term is over,
and we are off for the holidays!

Harry Wharton & Co. are bound
for London town. There, Hurreo
Singh will be enthroned in state as
his Highness the Nabob of Bhani-
pur. But there is no need for me
to describe this wonderful function.
I will leave that to the gifted pen
of Mr. Frank Richards.

The masters are bent on having a
real good time. Mr. Prout and Mr.
Quelch are going up to Scotland to
play golf—or to uproot lumps of
turf, whichever way you like to
put it. Mr. Twigg is going to
Switzerland, and as the Twigg is
bent, so the Capper is inclined.
Let us hope they won't lose their
equilibrium while crossing a perilous
precipice in the Alps. When the
Greyfriars census is taken at the
commencement of next term, we
don't want to find ourselves with
two Form-masters unaccounted for!

Mr. Larry Lascelles tells me that
he intends to take a footballing
holiday. He is keeping goal for
Courtfield Athletic. They have a
match on Christmas morning,
another on Boxing Day, and yet
another on the following Saturday.
So Mr. Lascelles' "holiday" will
be a jolly strenuous one!

UNDER THE MISTLETOE!

By Tom Brown.

A murrain upon the pernicious practice of kissing under the mistletoe!

I don't know what a murrain is exactly, but I do know that I feel more than usually savage when anybody mentions the word "mistletoe."

The mistletoe is the one black spot on the shining horizon of Christmas.

If a fellow wants to kiss his pretty cousin, why should he be compelled to drag her into the brilliantly illuminated hall, and "peck" her in the presence of a crowd of grinning people? Why must they stand directly under the mistletoe in order to make this demonstration of cousinly affection?

It seems all rot to me.

The mistletoe may have its champions, but personally I consider that the man who invented that idiotic Christmas stunt of kissing under the mistletoe was either mad or drunk—or both!

Last Christmas I went to stay with my Aunt Flora.

Aunt Flora is an awfully decent sort, on the whole. But she has one vice. She believes in the absurd, old-fashioned custom which is the subject of this article.

"Thomas," she said to me on Christmas Eve, "I want you to hang some mistletoe in the hall."

"Hang the mistletoe!" I growled.

"Precisely!"

So I fetched a pair of steps and a bunch of mistletoe, and set about the task.

When I reached the top of the steps they slipped, and I performed a graceful nose-dive on to the hall mat. It did not improve either the shape of the mat or the shape of my nose.

When I had sufficiently recovered my senses to make a second attempt, I managed to affix the bunch of mistletoe to a hook on the ceiling. Then I went and obtained first aid for my damaged nasal organ.



When I reached the top of the steps they slipped, and I performed a graceful nose-dive on the hall mat!

My Aunt Flora was holding a Christmas Dance that evening. All the old frumps of the village were coming.

Ye gods! What a time I had!

Every time I went into the hall, and accidentally drifted to the spot beneath the mistletoe, some old dame of about seventy summers and an equivalent number of winters would rush towards me, and give me an endearing peck on the cheek.

Now, if there is one thing that I strongly object to, it is being pecked by ancient spinsters.

It wasn't altogether the spinsters' fault; it was the fault of that confounded mistletoe.

I should think I was kissed about fifty times that evening.

"What a charming boy dear Thomas is!" I heard one old frump remark to Aunt Flora. "He has such a chubby little face, bless him!"

Early on Christmas morning "dear Thomas" arose, went down to the hall, and heaved a brick at the bunch of mistletoe. And when the next dance came off—our Boxing Night—he was free from the unwelcome attentions of the aged spinsters.

"Down with the mistletoe!" That will be my war-cry this Christmas. And if I happen to see any of it suspended from the ceiling, I shall flee for my life!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 723.



By JOHNNY BULL.

"IT'S a wicked waste!" declared Billy Bunter, in tones which rang through the Remove dormitory.

"Hallo! Another anti-waste candidate!" said Vernon-Smith. "What's a wicked waste, Bunt?"

"Why, they've made mince-pies and Christmas puddings, and all sorts of good things, down in the kitchen. And we sha'n't be here to eat them."

"They're for the staff—the domestic staff!" said Harry Wharton. "They want their Christmas dinner as much as you do, porpoise—and they've earned it, too!"

"Yes, rather!"

"I still think it's a wicked waste!" said the fat junior. "A dozen fat puddings—nearly as plump as myself—and half a gross of mince-pies! I peeped into the kitchen this evening, and counted 'em!"

"Well, what do you propose to do about it?" asked Bob Cherry.

Billy Bunter didn't answer that question. He had already decided what he was going to do. But it would not be good policy to make his intentions public.

Bunter was feeling hungry. There was scarcely a minute of the day or night when he felt otherwise. Even in his sleep he generally dreams that he is wasting away through lack of nourishment.

The fat junior's plans were cut and dried. When the midnight chimes rang out, he would pay a visit to the domestic regions, and considerably reduce the number of mince-pies and Christmas puddings which had been prepared by the cook's deft hands.

Bunter had no difficulty in keeping awake. The Christmas spirit was in the air, and there was a buzz of excited chatter in the Remove dormitory. It did not die away until after eleven o'clock.

Then, one by one, the fellows sank into the arms of Morpheus.

Billy Bunter lay propped up on the pillows, his mouth watering in anticipation of good things to come.

Boom!

The first stroke of midnight caused Billy Bunter to abandon his warm bed. He put on a pair of trousers over his pyjamas, encased his feet in a pair of slippers, and made a stealthy exit from the dormitory.

But for the prospect of a feed, Bunter would never have ventured out into the darkness. He was short-sighted in daylight. In darkness, he was as blind as a bat.

At the top of the stairs he caught his foot in a stair-rod, and pitched forward into space after the manner of a high diver.

There was a series of crashes as Billy Bunter humped from one stair to another. He finished up nearly at the bottom, and wondered if an earthquake had happened.

"Ow-ow-ow!" he groaned. "I believe I've fractured my spine and twisted my neck! Yow!"

The noise of Bunter's descent must have been heard. But the fat junior didn't stop to think of that. He picked himself up, tenderly caressed his thigh, and continued his excursion to the school kitchen.

It was very dark and uncanny in the corridors, and Bunter's heart quailed within him.

Bunter was an imaginative youth, and he began to imagine things now.

Supposing the Greyfriars ghost came along and waylaid him in one of the darkened corridors or in the kitchen?

Some fellows said that the Greyfriars ghost was a fiction. Bunter believed it to be a fact.

But he had gone too far to retract. He was now within a few yards of his goal.

With fast-beating heart, he stepped into the kitchen.

All was in darkness.

Bunter groped on the mantelshelf for matches, but found none.

"I must make the best of it!" he muttered. "Now, where's the blessed cupboard?"

He groped his way round the kitchen until his hands came into contact with the cupboard which contained the mince-pies and the Christmas puddings.

It was the work of a few seconds to open the cupboard, and to take a plump pudding therefrom.

Although the pudding was the size of a football, Bunter lifted it to his lips with both hands, and prepared to take an enormous bite.

Then he gave a violent start. The pudding slipped from his grasp, and went crashing to the floor.

Clank, clank, clank!

Those weird sounds, as of a ghost clanking its chains, were distinctly audible. And they were gradually getting nearer.



Billy Bunter picked up the pudding, and the next moment a figure appeared in the doorway.

With chattering teeth, the terrified Bunter edged back against the cupboard.

Self-preservation being the first law of nature, Billy Bunter picked up the pudding which he had dropped in his fright.

The next moment, a white-clad figure appeared in the doorway of the kitchen.

With a little yelp of terror, Billy Bunter hurled the pudding with all his force at the ghostly intruder.

"Yaroooh!"

Billy Bunter's action was followed by a very ughostlike yell. And the figure in the doorway toppled over backwards.

A dread silence ensued. Then the figure picked itself up, and an electric-torch flashed out.

Billy Bunter uttered an ejaculation of dismay.

"Oh crumbs! It—it's old Prout!"

"Yes!" said the master of the Fifth sternly. "It is 'old Prout,' as you choose to designate me!"

It didn't take Bunter long to grasp the situation.

Mr. Prout has been awakened by strange noises. He had seized the first garment which came to hand—a long white umpire's coat, which had been hanging behind the door of his bed-room—and he had hurried forth to investigate, taking with him his celebrated Winchester repeater. The clanking noise had been caused by the rifle knocking up against the wall of the corridor as Mr. Prout walked.

"I have caught you in the act of rifling the school kitchen, Bunter!" said Mr. Prout sternly. "There will be a further charge against you of hurling a plum-pudding at a Form-master. You will attend at the headmaster's study after breakfast in the morning."

The penalty which Billy Bunter paid for his misdoings consisted of three stinging cuts on each hand with the Head's cane.

Bunter took his licking with stoical fortitude—according to his own account. In reality, he made a noise which would have done credit to a specially-trained collection of Christmas waits!

[Supplement ii.]



Christmas Gifts for Bunter!

By BOB CHERRY.

BILLY BUNTER turned a flushed face from the Common-room fire. "To-night, you fellows," he announced, in his high-pitched voice, "I shall hang up my stocking."

"You—you'll do what?" gasped Johnny Bull, wondering if he had heard aright.

"Hang up my stocking."

"But that sort of thing is only done in one's nursery days!" said Harry Wharton. "And even then it's not done in the middle of December. Christmas Eve is the time for hanging stockings."

"But I sha'n't be here on Christmas Eve," said Billy Bunter. "I shall either be at Bunter Court—our ancestral mansion, you know—or in London, as a member of Inky's house-party. If I hang my stocking on the bed-rail to-night, Santa Claus is sure to come."

The juniors stared in amazement at the Owl of the Remove.

"You believe that there's such a person as Santa Claus?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Of course! He's a genial old jossler with a flowing beard, and a sack over his shoulder. He'll come down the chimney to-night—"

"If he's as fat as you, he'll find it a tight squeeze!" said Squiff.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really— It's all very well for you fellows to cackle. Santa Claus isn't a fiction; he's a fact. As I was saying, he'll come down the chimney to-night, call at the Remove dorm, and cram my stocking with good things."

"Your sock, you mean!" said Peter Todd.

"Oh, no; I sha'n't hang one of my socks. It wouldn't hold enough grub to feed a small-sized sparrow. I've got a special long stocking that I've raked out from my locker, and I shall hang it over the bed-rail—"

"The stocking, or the locker?" asked Dick Penfold.

"The stocking, of course, you ass! And when I wake up in the morning, the stocking won't be limp and empty. It'll be bulging—simply crammed with stuff!"

"Look here, Bunter," said Harry Wharton, "you don't seriously mean to say that you believe in the existence of Santa Claus?"

"If I didn't believe it, I shouldn't trouble to hang my stocking," was the reply.

"Well, you can hang your stocking every night till Doomsday," said the captain of the Remove, "but you won't have any luck!"

At that moment Wingate of the Sixth looked in.

"Bed-time, you kids!" he said cheerfully.

As the Removites trooped off to the dormitory, Bolsover major nudged Skinner in the ribs.

"I say, Skinney," he said, "lend me your tame hedgehog!"

Skinner stared.

"What on earth for?" he inquired.

"To put in Bunter's stocking."

Skinner chuckled.

"I've got a Santa Claus rig-out in my study," Bolsover went on. "I'll pop downstairs in the middle of the night and put it on. Bunter will think that the genuine Santa Claus has arrived, to cram his stocking with good things. He'll see me put something in his stocking, and he'll get out of bed to investigate. And, instead of finding a stocking full of tuck, he'll puncture his hand on the prickles of your hedgehog!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner seemed to regard it as a huge joke. "I'll stay awake and see the fun," he said.

It was a long time before the fellows dropped off to sleep that night. Being the last night of the term, there was much to talk about. For upwards of an hour there was a perfect buzz of conversation.

Supplement iii.]

But gradually the voices died away, and one by one the fellows dropped off to sleep.

It was close upon midnight when Billy Bunter's sonorous snore boomed through the dormitory.

The fat junior had carefully hung his stocking, and he fully expected to wake up and find it packed with good things.

On hearing Billy Bunter snore, Bolsover major promptly turned out.

"You fellows awake?" he murmured.

There was no response, save for a slight chuckle on the part of Skinner.

Bolsover slipped on a dressing-gown over his pyjamas, thrust his feet into slippers, and then went downstairs.

It was as dark as pitch, but Bolsover managed to grope his way to the Remove passage, and to his own study.

Arrived here, he switched on the light, and then proceeded to disguise himself as the celebrated Santa Claus.

The long, trailing garments, and the sweeping white beard, completely transformed Bolsover major. His own mother would not have known him, could she have seen him then.

"Now for the giddy hedgehog!" muttered Bolsover.

Skinner kept his prickly and peculiar pet in the wood-shed.

Bolsover didn't relish visiting one of the outbuildings at that time of night. But he



Greedily Billy Bunter grabbed at his stocking, and then gave a yell which fairly awakened the echoes. "Yow-ow-ow! It's a hedgehog!" he groaned.

screwed his courage to the sticking point, and carried out his plan.

In the wood-shed he found a sack. This he filled with shavings, in order to give it a bulging appearance. Then he gingerly picked up the hedgehog, and placed that in the sack also.

He lost no time in getting back to the Remove dormitory. It was chilly and uncanny in the Close, and Bolsover major was in mortal terror of meeting the Greyfriars ghost.

A few moments later Bolsover—the modern Santa Claus—shuffled into the Remove dormitory with his bulging sack.

He lighted a candle; then he stepped towards Billy Bunter's bed, and tickled the fat junior under the chin, in order to awaken him.

Billy Bunter sat up in bed, and blinked around him. Then his heart gave a jump.

In the subdued light of the candle he could see the figure of Santa Claus moving about at the foot of his bed.

"I—I say!" murmured Bunter. "Is that really you, Santa Claus?"

"Yes," answered Bolsover, in a deep, cheerful voice.

"Are you filling up my stocking?"

"Yes, my child."

"Oh, good!"

"You must not look and see what is in it until the morning."

"All serene, sir."

Billy Bunter wasn't quite sure whether it was correct to address Santa Claus as "sir." But it was best to be on the safe side, he reflected.

Santa Claus had now finished filling the stocking. He paused for a moment at the foot of the bed, and beamed at Billy Bunter.

"Good-night, my chubby infant!" he said.

There was a titter from Skinner's bed, and Santa Claus frowned. Fortunately, however, Billy Bunter failed to hear the titter.

No sooner had Santa Claus left the dormitory than Billy Bunter hastily slipped out of bed. He was consumed with curiosity to know what was in his stocking. He had promised Santa Claus that he would not investigate until the morning, but Billy Bunter's promises were of the piecrust variety.

Greedily the fat junior grabbed at his stocking. And then he gave a yell which fairly awakened the echoes.

It was as if a score of sharp spikes had been driven into his hand.

Billy Bunter sprang back, nursing the injured hand, and slowly tumbling to the fact that he had been japed.

"Why, it's a beastly hedgehog!" he groaned. "Yow-ow-ow!"

Half the dormitory had been awakened by Bunter's yell of anguish.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" I murmured drowsily. "What's the matter, Bunter?"

"Some beast has smuggled a hedgehog into my stocking!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's nothing to laugh at!" moaned Bunter. "I'm punctured all over! I shall get blood-poisoning, or hydrophobia, or something! Skinner, you rotter, it's your hedgehog! Take it away and bury it! If you don't, I'll go and wake Quelch, and tell him what's happened!"

This threat rather scared Skinner, for he knew that Bunter was not above sneaking.

The cad of the Remove reluctantly arose, and carried his precious pet back to its resting-place in the wood-shed.

Below stairs he met Bolsover major, and they laughed loud and long over the hoax which had been played on Billy Bunter.

As for the fat junior, he crept back into bed in disgust.

He was bitterly disappointed. Santa Claus had let him down horribly. He had expected his stocking to be crammed full of good things, and he had made the discovery—the very painful discovery—of a hedgehog!

Next morning, however, when the rising-bell clanged out, there was a joyful surprise for Billy Bunter.

He looked at his stocking, and, lo! it was full of the most tempting delicacies!

Harry Wharton & Co. were amazed. And Skinner and Bolsover were fairly flabbergasted.

It was as if a miracle had happened!

And the miracle was never explained, except to a select few.

We learnt afterwards that it was good-hearted Mark Linley who had played the part of Santa Claus.

"I felt sorry for poor old Bunter," said Marky. "I know he's a sneak and a glutton and all that, but, dash it all, it's the end of the term, and—well, I felt quite justified in loading up Bunter's stocking."

So the sequel was quite a happy one for Billy Bunter, after all. And the fat junior's faith in Santa Claus remains unshaken!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 723.



THAT GHOSTLY XMAS KNIGHT.

An Amazing Adventure of the Unique Detective, Mr. Herlock Sholmes.
Recorded by Dr. JOTSON.

IT was Christmas Eve. I had been summoned by telephone to the side of my one remaining patient. A glance informed me that he had developed oblique curvature of the off-side vertebrae, and that an immediate operation was necessary. Setting down my little black tool-bag, I extracted the various saws, files, and chisels needful for my humane task.

That operation I regard with pleasure as one of the most successful of my career. I removed the obtraneous cuticle and the vertebra valve in a manner which would have been a credit to the surgeon royal himself. After I had signed the death certificate, I set out in high fettle for home. Never before had I been so conscious of that Yuletide spirit of "Peace on Earth and Good Will to Men!"

As I turned into Shaker Street, in which my famous detective friend, Mr. Herlock Sholmes, and I had our apartments, I saw a long, attenuated figure a little way ahead. A bulky parcel swung from his right hand. Hastening along, I clapped the pedestrian on the shoulder.

"Ah, my dear Sholmes! Taking home the Christmas goose, I perceive!"

Herlock Sholmes regarded me with a smile.

"You have deduced rightly, Jotson!" he said. "How did you know?"

"I noticed that your hand was gripping a pair of yellow, webbed feet. There was an odour of well-hung poultry in your track, and—"

"Enough, my dear Jotson!" cried my famous friend. "I see you have proved an apt pupil of my methods! Directly you began speaking, I knew you were on the right scent."

I flushed with pride at this "high" praise.

"But let us not talk shop!" I said jocularly. "This is Christmastide. Knowing that my one remaining patient is out of his pain, I can enjoy the season in comfort. You yourself have no case on hand, I believe?"

Instead of replying to my remark, Herlock Sholmes gripped my arm.

"Look, Jotson!"

I followed the direction indicated by my friend's bony finger. In the middle of the muddy road almost opposite our apartments, a tall gentleman, clad in a moth-eaten overcoat was performing the most extraordinary contortions on his neck. He had just descended from a swiftly-moving bus.

As Sholmes and I hurried to his assistance, he sat up in the soft mud, and, gazing skyward, began making spasmodic movements with an upturned forefinger, as though counting to himself. What he was counting I utterly failed to perceive. Around him lay scattered a number of bills and other documents that had fallen from his pockets.

"The man is evidently a member of our British aristocracy!" muttered Sholmes, as we crossed the road.

"My dear Sholmes!" I panted. "What on earth makes you—"

"Simple deduction, Jotson. His poverty-

stricken though genteel appearance, the enormous number of tax and rate forms in his possession, and that ring that glitters on his finger. And, unless I am greatly mistaken—which I never am—he was on his way to visit our rooms."

As I helped Sholmes to raise the man, I glanced at the gold ring which the eagle eye of my astounding friend had noticed from twenty yards' range. The ring bore the crest of a famous family—a dying duck dormant with crossed battle-axes on a background of split peas.

By this time an amused and curious crowd of wayfarers was collecting. Sholmes and I lifted the dazed unfortunate to his feet, and escorted him to the house wherein we had our apartments. Mrs. Spudson, our landlady, opened the door. The good woman was

wise the All-British Clothing Corporation, for services Sholmes had rendered in solving the mystery of the Second Hand. Then he sank into his armchair, and placed the tips of his fingers together. I found a perch on the cocaine cask.

The visitor showed surprise at Sholmes' manner of address.

"Yes," he remarked. "I am indeed Baron Battledore, of Bodkin Castle, Swapshire. I seek your aid, Mr. Sholmes. A terrible mystery is gradually driving me insane. Castle Bodkin has become haunted, though by what, I shudder to think! Hollow groans, the rattling of chains, and the shuffling of feet have reached my ears in the dead of night. It is horrible—uncanny—I cannot stand it longer! Come back with me to Bodkin Castle, Mr. Sholmes! Although I

am a member of an ancient titled family, I can still afford to offer you Christmas hospitality!"

I glanced at Sholmes anxiously. It seemed most unfortunate that this distressed client should arrive on Christmas Eve, of all times.

"I will accompany you to your ancestral home to-night, your lordship," returned Sholmes, "on one condition—that my colleague Dr. Jotson may come, too! I may need his valuable assistance in the case."

A happy smile lighted my face as the baron readily agreed.

Ten minutes later, after I had packed a valise, Herlock Sholmes picked up his violin-case, without which he seldom journeyed far afield. Then, hooking his walking-stick in my ear, the great detective followed our aristocratic client from the house.

During the short railway journey to Swapshire, Herlock Sholmes plied Baron Battledore with questions.

"Have you any enemies of whom you are aware, your lordship?"

The baron looked surprised. "Scores," he replied; "the income-tax officials, the whole Labour Party in the House of Commons, a butler named Spivet, whom I dismissed recently for possessing a whistle—"

"A whistle!" I cried.

"A whistle!" repeated the baron. "He was always wetting it—with my rare old wines!"

Herlock Sholmes cast a pitying glance at me, and then resumed the cross-examination of our client.

"How many servants has your lordship at Bodkin Castle?" he inquired.

"Only two footmen and a cook. The others have been driven away by the recent mysterious occurrences. And these three have threatened to leave."

"Do no relatives reside with you at the castle?"

"None! I have only one relative, and he lives at Poshe Hall, over a mile away. He is my nephew, Sir Eggbert Makesplash, the heir to the Battledore title."

"You are on good terms with your nephew, your lordship?"

"Excellent terms, my dear Mr. Sholmes. (Continued on page 22.)



The pointed boot of steel shot out, and caught the ghostly knight on a tender spot. "Yoop! Yow-ow!" "Quick, Jotson!" shouted Herlock Sholmes. "Fetch a tin-opener!" (See page 22.)

not surprised that we had brought something home with us. She was well used to Sholmes turning up with an assortment of things that he had run to earth.

Repairing to our consulting-room, Sholmes offered our guest a pinch of cocaine and my favourite armchair.

"Thank you, Mr. Sholmes!" said our visitor, who had recognised the great detective. "I was on my way to consult you when I met with my unfortunate side-slip!"

"Your lordship may speak freely before my friend and colleague, Dr. Jotson," said Herlock Sholmes.

Sholmes discarded his coat, and slipped into his dressing-gown—that famous checked article which had been presented to him by Messrs. Isenstein and Bloombaum, other-

A SPLENDID TALE OF GREYFRIARS. ::
By FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT
MONDAY!
"FAITHFUL TO HIS FRIEND!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 723.

"THE MYSTERY OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLES!"

(Continued from page 10.)

Many hands were already at work releasing Bunter. The fat junior was soon free, and he sat up and spluttered.

"Groooooogh!"
 "What has happened, Bunter?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.
 "Groooooogh!"
 "Bunter—"
 "I'm c-c-cold—"
 "Take the boy indoors," said Mr. Quelch. "Take him into my study, to the fire. All juniors will go indoors at once! Wingate, will you request the Sixth to help you in searching for the burglar?"

"Can't we help, sir?" asked Bob.
 "You may go indoors, Cherry."
 The Removites reluctantly gave up the hunt. As a matter of fact, it was pretty certain that the mysterious Hindu was, by that time, well outside the walls of Greyfriars, and far on the way to safety. Wingate and the Sixth-Formers made a thorough search, however.

Harry Wharton & Co. marched Bunter into Mr. Quelch's study. The fat junior was shivering and stuttering with cold. He squatted before the fire, and rubbed his fat hands, and gasped and groaned. To the questions the eager juniors showered upon him he made no answer whatever. He was too busy looking after his own comfort.

Mr. Quelch came in at last. He was looking very disturbed and a little cross.
 "Have they caught him, sir?" asked Wharton.

"No; he appears to have escaped," said Mr. Quelch. "I shall telephone to the police at once. Bunter!"

"Ow! Yes, sir?"
 "Kindly tell me how you came to be in the state in which we found you!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Were you attacked by the man who seems to have attempted to commit a robbery here?"

"Ow! Yes, sir."
 "Tell me what happened, as briefly as possible."

"I—I was taking a walk for—for exercise before going to bed, sir," said Bunter. "Suddenly a fearful ruffian leaped on me, and pointed a pistol at my head, and said 'Hands up!'"

"Keep to the facts, Bunter!"
 "Oh! Ah! Yes, sir. I mean, he took hold of my throat, sir, and showed me a knife!"

"Not much difference!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Well, what then, Bunter?"
 "He—he asked me about the candles, sir."

"Candles?" ejaculated Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir, candles."
 "Are you wandering in your mind, Bunter?"

"Nunno, sir."
 "Do you mean to say that that unknown man came here to steal candles?" exclaimed the Remove-master.

"Yes, sir. Wharton's Christmas candles."

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Quelch. "It must be some practical joke."

"It wasn't, sir! He made me point out Wharton's study, and tell him where the candles were, sir. I fought fiercely, but—"

"What?"
 "And felled him, sir, with one terrific blow straight from the shoulder—"

"If you do not keep to the facts, Bunter, I shall cane you!"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"Tell me what happened without absurd exaggerations and foolish boasting!" said the Remove master crossly.

"Oh! He—he tied me up, sir, and shoved something into my mouth, and stuck me under the tree, sir. It was frightfully cold. And—and I've lost the tarts, sir—"

"The tarts?"

"I—I mean I hadn't any tarts!" gasped Bunter, catching Vernon-Smith's eye at that moment. "Nothing of the kind, sir! I—I was shivering and freezing and shuddering and dying of cold, sir, and—and then some silly idiot came walloping over me—that silly fool Cherry, sir—"

"Oh!" murmured Bob.

Xmas Greeting Card
 WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON
 From The Editor
 1921

"And that's all, sir," said Bunter. "I think I'm going to be seriously ill from—from exposure, sir, and—and if you don't mind, I'd rather stay in bed all day to-morrow, sir. My meals could be sent up to the dormitory."

"Can you explain this, Wharton? What are these candles to which Bunter alludes?"

"Inky—I mean, Hurree Singh—sent us four Christmas candles, sir," said Harry.

"They're not to be lighted till Christmas Day. I can't understand why anybody should want to steal them. They can't be worth more than a few shillings."

"Extraordinary!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Are these—these candles still safe, Wharton?"

"I haven't looked, sir. I never thought about them."

"I will go with you to your study, Wharton. All the others will go to their dormitory immediately."

The Removites cleared off, Bunter going with them with many deep groans.

Harry Wharton and the Remove master proceeded to Study No. 1.

That celebrated apartment was in wild disorder.

The lock of the door was smashed, the window was wide open, and the drawers of Wharton's desk lay about the floor, and papers, books, pens, all sorts and conditions of articles, were scattered on the carpet. The electric lantern used by the burglar was still there.

Mr. Quelch lighted the gas.

"Now look for the candles, Wharton," he said.

"Certainly, sir!"

Wharton opened the secret drawer of his desk, in which the box of candles had been placed. The drawer was not much of a secret; the burglar certainly would have discovered it if he had been given time. Fortunately, he had been interrupted before his search could extend so far.

"Here they are, sir—quite safe!"

"Let me see them."

Wharton opened the box, and the Form-master looked at the four big coloured candles, knitting his brows.

"It is an extraordinary thing that a burglar should desire to possess himself of such things," he said. "Why did Hurree Singh send these to you, Wharton?"

"A sort of Christmas present, I suppose, sir."

"It is very odd."

"He said they're not to be lighted till they're on the Christmas-tree, when we shall get a surprise."

"It is possible that some article of value may be concealed in them," said Mr. Quelch. "Something in the nature of a surprise-packet. Evidently the Hindu attached some value to them, as he ran such risks in coming here to steal them."

"Looks like it, sir," agreed the captain of the Remove, regarding the mysterious candles very curiously.

"I shall inform the police immediately of this occurrence, Wharton. In the meantime, these candles had better be locked up in the Head's safe. If they are really of value, they are not safe here."

And Mr. Quelch carried off the box of Christmas candles with him; and Harry Wharton, very much puzzled, proceeded to the Remove dormitory.

It was long before the Removites slept that night!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Off for the Holidays!

THERE was a great deal of excitement at Greyfriars the following day, on the subject of the attempted burglary.

Inspector Grimes came over from Courtfield, and interviewed Wharton and Billy Bunter and the Head, and inspected the set of Christmas candles. He smiled sceptically as he looked at the candles, evidently under the impression that they were not really the thief's objective.

The affair was puzzling enough, and the inspector promised to investigate it; and he took his departure.

The Christmas candles remained locked up in the Head's safe till break-up day, and in a day or two the excitement was forgotten. The candles, valuable or not, were safe enough now, and it was not likely that the thief would venture to return.

Harry Wharton & Co. debated whether they would write to the nabob an account of what had happened, but they decided that there was no use in bothering

Hurree Singh with the affair. The nabob's peculiar present was safe now and that was all that mattered.

The Co. kept their eyes well open for any dark gentleman who might show up in the neighbourhood during the following days; but no dark gentleman dawned upon them. And, in the excitement of the approaching holidays, they soon ceased to give the affair much thought. It was arranged that Wharton was to take the candles home with him when the school broke up, as his chums were going with him. The party were to travel up to London on the morning of Christmas Eve, to arrive that day at the mansion of Inky's esteemed relative the Jam.

So when the Greyfriars fellows scattered to the four corners of the kingdom for the Christmas vacation, the box of candles reposed at the bottom of Wharton's trunk. The rest of Inky's guests went their various ways, to meet again on Christmas Eve at the Jam's mansion. Billy Bunter waved a genial good-bye to the Co. when they changed trains for Wharton Lodge.

"See you again Christmas!" called out Bunter.

"Bow-wow!" answered the Co. in chorus.

"If you like, Wharton, I'll come along with you now, and we'll travel up to Inky's place together—"

"Rats!"

"Yah!" yelled Bunter.

And they parted.

Harry Wharton & Co. had to change trains a second time for Wharton Magnus, and they were careful to see to the transfer of the baggage. A man, wrapped in a heavy overcoat, and deeply muffled against the cold, with a cap drawn down over his brows, came along to the guard's-van, and at sight of the juniors, walked up the train quickly. Bob Cherry glanced at him, and then looked after him rather fixedly.

"That chap's a Hindu," he said.

"After the giddy candles?" grinned Nugent.

"Well, he's a Hindu! I saw his chivvy!" said Bob. "We'll jolly well keep our eyes open. Of course, there's plenty of Hindus about; but a chap can't be too careful, considering what's happened."

"Right enough!" agreed Wharton.

At Wharton Magnus, a little country station, the four Removites left the train. Colonel Wharton was there to meet his nephew, and they chatted on the platform for a little time, while the other passengers cleared off. Bob Cherry, remembering the importance of looking after the baggage, hurried along the platform to where the trunks had been deposited. There were three boxes in a row.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" shouted Bob.

"Where's your box, Wharton?"

"What?"

The juniors came racing up.

"Wharton's box isn't here!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Has it gone on in the train? Where's the porter?"

"I saw it put out," said Harry.

He called to the old porter, who had known Harry from his earliest years.

Old Peter came up, touching his cap.

"Where's the other box gone, Peter?" asked Wharton.

"The dark gentleman's box?" asked Peter.

"The dark gentleman!" roared Bob.

"The dark gentleman pointed out the box and asked me to take it out to a cab," said Peter, scratching his head. "Of course, there ain't a cab 'ere, but I told 'im he could get a fly from the Wharton Arms—"

"Come on!" shouted Bob.

The juniors rushed out of the station. Colonel Wharton followed them at a more leisurely pace, while old Peter stood scratching his head in perplexity. It was evident that the dark gentleman who had travelled by the train had designs on Wharton's box, and pretty clear that he was the same Hindu who had attempted to burgle Study No. 1 at Greyfriars. It was a daring attempt, and had the juniors been a little less watchful it would certainly have succeeded. The porter had carried out the box at the dark gentleman's behest, without the slightest suspicion that it belonged to another passenger.

But the juniors were in time.

Outside the station the box reposed on the pavement, and a "fly" was just driving up. The coated and muffled Hindu was calling to the driver as the vehicle arrived.

"Quick! Take up my box! I am in a great hurry!"

"That's the man!" roared Bob Cherry. The Hindu spun round.

Harry Wharton & Co. rushed straight at him. For a moment the man hesitated, his black eyes blazing at the juniors. But he evidently realised that the game was up. He turned, and fled along the village street, leaving the box where it stood, and the driver of the "fly" blinking after him in astonishment.

"Chase him!" yelled Johnny Bull.

The juniors scudded in pursuit. But the dark man was out of the village in a minute, and he darted away down a misty lane and vanished. Harry Wharton & Co. slackened down.

"No good chasing him across the fields in the mist!" said Harry. "We shall never get him! Come back!"

The juniors returned to the station. They found Colonel Wharton awaiting them there.

"Well, what does this mean?" asked the colonel, eyeing the breathless juniors curiously.

Harry Wharton explained, and the party started for Wharton Lodge. The colonel tugged thoughtfully at his white moustache.

"It's pretty clear that there's something valuable about Hurree Singh's Christmas candles," he said, with a smile. "It's rather odd how that dark fellow has got on the track of them, however. You will have to be careful in taking them up to London, Harry."

"I jolly well won't let them go out of my hands on Christmas Eve!" said Harry. "He won't get another chance at them, the rascal! He must have been waiting for the break-up at Greyfriars, and must have watched us leave the school—"

"Chance for Drake if he had bagged them!" grinned Bob Cherry. "We could have set Drake to elucidating the 'Mystery of the Missing Candles'—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors arrived at Wharton Lodge in great spirits. During their brief stay there, before starting for London, nothing was seen or heard of the mysterious Hindu. And when on Christmas Eve the chums of Greyfriars caught their train, Harry Wharton carried the precious candles in his own bag, which he did not even trust to the hands of a porter. And, so far as the juniors could see, there was no dark gentleman on the train. And they arrived at the London terminus without adventure, and feeling that Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh's mysterious Christmas present was safe at last.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Robbed!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"My only hat! Bunter!"

"Bunter—you bounder!"

Harry Wharton & Co. stopped from their carriage, and were greeted on the platform by no less a person than William George Bunter. The Owl of the Remove grinned at them genially.

"Thought I'd meet your train!" he remarked. "I happened to hear you mention the train you were coming by at Greyfriars, you know—"

"You fat bounder!"

"The other fellows have come up," said Bunter. "I've seen Vernon-Smith and Toddy and Browney, and two or three more. They crammed into a taxi to drive to Inky's place. The beasts wouldn't give me a lift—I—I mean I refused their pressing offer of a lift, because I thought I'd better wait for you fellows. Inky would like us all to arrive together, wouldn't he?"

"I don't think he'd like you to arrive at all!" said Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Buzz off!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"You fellows can lend me some things, of course," said Bunter. "I see you've brought your bags. I thought I wouldn't bring any luggage. I'll carry your bag for you if you like, Wharton."

"Let it alone!"

Bunter chuckled.

"Got those precious candles in it?" he grinned. "I suppose you're going to agree to my having one of them, Wharton?"

"Cheese it!"

"I hate selfishness!" said Bunter reprovingly. "Well, shall I call a taxi for you fellows? There's rather a rush on them. It won't take us long to drive to Trumpington Square. Take care of that bag, Wharton. There's a dark gentleman on the platform somewhere. I saw him in the crowd. May be the same chap—"

"Keep your eyes open, you fellows!" said Bob.

"Yes, rather!"

The Greyfriars juniors passed the barrier and gave up their tickets, and Bunter parted with his platform-ticket. The Owl of the Remove stuck very close to the Co. With all his nerve, Billy Bunter seemed to prefer to arrive at the Jam's mansion in company with Harry Wharton & Co. Evidently he hoped to insinuate himself into the Christmas party under the wing, as it were, of Inky's special chums. Outside the barrier there was a jostling, hurrying crowd of people going to catch trains or coming away from trains, and the chums of the Remove found themselves separated. Billy Bunter caught hold of the sleeve of Wharton's coat and hung on grimly, quite determined not to be shaken off in the throng.

"Let go, you ass!" exclaimed Harry.

"Oh, really, old chap—"

"You fat duffer—"

"Here, hold on!" exclaimed Bunter.

"I've dropped my umbrella! Silly ass jostled me—"

"Let go my coat!" roared Wharton.

"Sha'n't! You're not going to dodge me! Lemme get my umbrella!" howled Bunter.

Still grasping Wharton's sleeve with one tenacious hand, Billy Bunter stooped and groped for the fallen umbrella with the other. Two or three people jostled him, and the Owl of the Remove sat

down and roared. Wharton was half dragged over by Bunter's grasp on his arm. He shook himself angrily, but the Owl of the Remove was not to be lightly shaken off. At the same moment someone hurried by and crashed against Wharton, almost sending him staggering over Bunter. A grip fastened on his right wrist, twisting it suddenly and savagely, and almost before he knew what was happening his bag was wrenched from his hand.

Wharton turned with a cry.

"Stop thief!" he shouted.

He had one glimpse of a man in an overcoat, muffled up, who plunged into the jostling throng and disappeared. Wharton would have rushed furiously after him, but Bunter caught at his coat again and held on.

"I say, Harry, old chap—"

"Let go!" shrieked Wharton, dragging at his coat.

"But, I say—"

Wharton wrenched himself loose. He darted into the crowd in the direction the thief had taken; but the man and the bag had vanished.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry came through the crowd with Nugent, and Johnny Bull arrived from another direction. "Anything up, Harry?"

"The bag—" gasped Wharton.

"What?"

"It's taken—"

"My hat!"

"That fool Bunter was holding me!" gasped Wharton. "Somebody twisted my wrist, and grabbed it and cleared! It was the Hindu, of course—the man we saw at Wharton Magnus! The bag's gone—and the candles—"

"Great Scott!"

Bunter came up gasping.

"Wharton, you beast, I've lost my umbrella! You'll have to buy me a new umbrella! It was all your fault—"

"Shut up!" howled Wharton.

"It was a jolly good umbrella—cost three guineas—Yaroooh!" roared Bunter, as Wharton, out of all patience, thumped his hat and flattened it over his eyes.

Billy Bunter was busy with his hat for some time, and the chums of Greyfriars held a hurried consultation.

"Drake!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"What about Drake—"

"He's the man!" said Bob, with conviction. "We're seeing him at Inky's, you know—"

"He mayn't be there yet—most likely not—"

"Cut off to Baker Street," said Bob. "We'll go to the station police here about the bag, and you cut off to Baker Street for Drake; and if he's left, keep on to Inky's, and see him there. Jump into a taxi, and don't lose a tick!"

"Good!" said Wharton. "It's the best thing."

"Get a move on."

Harry Wharton ran for a taxi.

"Baker Street, driver, as fast as you can—Ferrers Locke's house."

"Yes, sir!"

The taxi glided away.

It stopped at last outside the house of the famous Baker Street detective.

A handsome fellow of about Wharton's age had just come down the steps with a bag in his hand. There was a taxicab waiting, and he was about to step into it. Wharton leaned from his window and shouted:

"Drake!"

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Detective on the Case!

JACK DRAKE glanced round in surprise.

His face brightened at the sight of his old school-fellow. He turned from the waiting-taxi, and hurried towards Wharton.

"Hallo, old top!" he exclaimed. "Jolly glad to see you!" He shook hands with Wharton through the window. "I didn't know you were calling for me. I was just off to Inky's—"

"Something's happened! I want your help!" said Harry. "Send your taxi away, and jump in here, will you?"

"Certainly!"

Drake dismissed the waiting cabman, and Wharton opened the door for him, and he stepped into Wharton's vehicle. Harry directed the driver to return to the station they had left, and the taxi glided away. Drake sat down facing Wharton, his bag on the floor. Billy Bunter blinked at him with a genial grin.

"So you're coming to the party, Drake, old bean?" he asked. "Jolly glad you'll be there!"

"Thanks!" said Drake rather dryly.

"I managed to come," continued Bunter. "D'Arcy of St. Jim's begged me, almost with tears in his eyes, to stay on at his place, but I said I couldn't let Inky down. I couldn't, could I?"

"Will you dry up, you fat chump?" said Harry impatiently.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Give us a rest, Bunter," said Drake. "You said something had happened, Wharton. If I can help you—"

"I hope you can," said Harry. "I hardly like to turn up at Inky's place without the candles—"

"The what?" ejaculated Drake.

"I'd better spin you the whole yarn," said Harry.

And he told the story of the Christmas candles from the beginning, the boy detective listening attentively.

Drake did not interrupt him once.

Billy Bunter did several times; but Ferrers Locke's assistant paid no heed to the Owl of the Remove.

The boy detective was soon in possession of the whole curious story, and Wharton looked at him anxiously. He had a strong hope that Drake might be able to help him, but he had to confess that he did not see how the boy detective was to do it. The man who had snatched the bag at the terminus had vanished into the crowd, and was lost in the wilderness of London. How Ferrers Locke's pupil was to get on his track was a mystery to Harry—if, indeed, he could do so at all.

"You think there's a chance?" asked Harry at last.

"I hope so," said Drake quietly. "We'll do our best, anyhow. You didn't see much of the man who robbed you?"

"Only that he was a Hindu."

"The same who tried to bag your luggage at Wharton Magnus?"

"I am almost sure. Anyhow, it seems pretty certain, doesn't it?"

Drake nodded.

"If it was the same man, he had a prominent nose, and black eyes set rather close together," said Harry.

Drake turned to Bunter.

"Does that fit the man who collared you in the quad at Greyfriars, Bunter?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Good! Now, tell me your yarn—"

just what happened to you that time," said Drake.

"I was—was pacing the quad," said Bunter. "Suddenly there was a fearful yell, and about thirty Hindus rushed at me with drawn scimitars—"

"For goodness' sake, tell Drake the truth, you fat-fool!" shouted Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Let him run on," said Drake, with a smile. "I've had some training at disentangling the truth from the lies—"

"Oh, really, Drake, if you think I would tell you a whopper—or even exaggerate—"

"Get on with the washing, old top!"

Bunter grunted, and proceeded with his thrilling yarn. Evidently, his tale of adventure had grown since the break-up at Greyfriars. It was now a thrilling, fearsome narrative, calculated to make anyone's knotted and combined locks to part, and each particular hair to stand on end, like quills upon the fretful porcupine.

But Jack Drake listened to it patiently.

Doubtless he was easily able to pick out the facts from the fiction and to reduce Bunter's startling yarn to the proper proportions.

"The man seems to have gone to Greyfriars specially for the candles?" the boy detective remarked.

"So he said," answered Bunter.

"He wanted Wharton's study, not one of the others—"

"Yes."

"He seemed to know that the parcel had been sent by post to Wharton."

"Must have," said Bunter.

"It's jolly queer how the man knew anything about the candles at all," Harry Wharton remarked. "They contained some sort of a Christmas surprise for us; but how a stranger could get on to it is a giddy mystery! Must have been spying on Inky somehow."

Jack Drake nodded without speaking.

He sat in silence while the taxi buzzed on to the station, evidently thinking the matter out.

Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull and Nugent were waiting outside the station for Wharton. They came up quickly as the taxi stopped, and Wharton waved to them from the window.

"Got him!" said Bob Cherry, with satisfaction. "Good old Drake! Jolly glad to see you! Are you going to recapture those blessed candles for us?"

"I'm going to try," said Drake, with a smile.

"What's the first move? We've told the police here about it; but, of course, they can't do anything—the man's vanished long ago!"

"Better get on to Inky's," said Drake.

"But—" Wharton hesitated. "We—we don't like turning up without the candles, Drake. If there's the faintest chance of recovering them—"

"I think there is," said Drake quietly.

"But you told me, I think, that the candles are not to be produced till tomorrow, when they're to be put on the Christmas-tree—"

"That's so."

"Then you needn't mention to Inky that they're lost," said Drake. "I've got twenty-four hours to work in, and in that time I may be able to hand over the candles, and it will be all right. Don't say a word to Inky until the matter's settled one way or the other."

"Good!" said Nugent. "That will be all right. Are you coming on to Inky's with us?"

"Yes; I'm a guest, you know."

"I mean, about looking for the thief and—"



Bump! There was a rending sound of parting cloth! That second bump had done it—with fatal results to Drake's evening trousers. "My hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Merry Christmas! Good old English game! What, what!" chuckled the genial Jam. (See Chapter 14.)

"Never mind about that now." Nugent looked surprised.

"Oh, all right! I—I thought—"

"Leave it to Drake," said Bob Cherry. "Drake has his own giddy mysterious methods. I shouldn't wonder if he's got his eye on the thief already, and is going to produce him out of his hat like a conjurer."

Jack Drake laughed.

"It's not quite so easy as that," he said. "But you can leave it to me to do the best I can. Now let's get on to Inky's."

And the juniors crowded into the taxi and started for the mansion in Trumpington Square, the residence of the Nabob of Bhanipur and his esteemed uncle the Jam Sahib Bahadur Munny Singh.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Inky In All His Glory!

BRIGHT lights gleamed from a score of windows into the December dusk. The great doors stood wide open, giving a glimpse of a vast hall blazing with light and colour. Gorgeous Persian rugs covered the wide stone steps, and lay glimmering across the pavement. As the taxi stopped a dusky footman, in the magnificent Oriental livery of Bhanipur, opened the door and salaamed profoundly. Harry Wharton & Co. blinked a little. They had expected Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh to "spread" himself a little; but they had scarcely looked for this magnificence. From somewhere within the mansion came sweet strains of music.

"Salaam, sahibs!" said the six-foot-three of dusky magnificence, bowing to the carpet pavement.

"Top of the afternoon, old top!" answered Bob Cherry affably.

"Will it please the huzoors to alight?"

"Blest if I know what a huzoor is, but it will please us to alight," murmured Johnny Bull. And the juniors grinned. They alighted.

The bags were lifted out by dusky servants in gorgeous garb, who appeared to spring from nowhere.

A fat and imposing major-domo, glittering in a jewelled turban, appeared to conduct the guests into the mansion.

In the hall, in the blaze of light, stood Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, to receive his chums.

They almost jumped as they saw him.

Inky of the Remove had vanished out of all knowledge; in his place stood the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Instead of the accustomed Etons, Hurree Singh was clad in the native garb of a prince of India.

His costume, which rivalled Joseph's celebrated coat in its colouring, glittered with jewels of price. His spotless turban was fastened with a gigantic diamond, which fairly blazed in the electric lights.

Only his smiling, dusky face was familiar.

There was a new stateliness in the Nabob of Bhanipur, but he was still the same cheery Inky of old in his friendly greeting to the chums of the Remove.

He salaamed graciously, a form of salutation never used in the Remove passage at Greyfriars, but which seemed quite in

place in Inky's present magnificent surroundings.

Then he shook hands and grinned. "Welcome, my esteemed and honourable chums!" he said. "The gladfulness of again beholding your handsome and ridiculous chivvies is enormous and terrific."

"Good old Inky!" said Bob Cherry. "I say, old bean, you're rather going it, aren't you?"

Hurree Singh grinned. "It was the wishful desire of esteemed uncle that he should see me in proper style of Indian prince," he explained. "At first there was little difficulty in keeping excellent turban from falling off-fully. I have grown out of habit of wearing esteemed Indian head-gears. But it is bit of all right and first chop style—what? I am glad to see my esteemed old pal Drake. Trot in, old beans—I mean, honour me by deigning to soil your feet upon my humble floor."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Other esteemed chums have already arrivefully turned up," said Hurree Singh. "Smithy, and Brownce, and Toddy, and Squiffy, and Redwing, they are all here. But what is this?"

The nabob looked at Bunter. Bunter wriggled forward, with his most ingratiating smile upon his fat face.

"Jolly glad to see you, Inky!" he said. "I say, this show of yours reminds me of Bunter Court. It does, really!"

For a moment the nabob had an inward struggle. The sight of Billy Bunter did not seem to increase his pleasure on the joyful occasion. But hospitality came before everything. He salaamed to Bunter.

"The esteemed and fat Bunter is welcome," said Inky.

"Of course!" said Bunter. "I fairly had to jerk myself away from D'Arcy's place, but I told him plainly I couldn't leave you in the lurch, Inky. I say, I'm rather hungry."

"Don't blame us for Bunter," said Nugent. "The fat-bounder waylaid us at the station—"

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"And wedged into the taxi," said Johnny Bull. "I'll sling him out on his neck if you like!"

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"All are welcome at this season of esteemed festivity," said Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "Kalouth!"

The magnificent major-domo loomed up.

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh spoke to him in his own language, which Bob Cherry always declared sounded to him like cracking nuts.

"Kalouth will show you to your quarters, old beans," said Hurree Singh; and the juniors passed on with the dusky major-domo.

Kalouth performed the office with great gravity and stateliness. The Greyfriars party were ushered up a vast staircase, to a suite of rooms that almost dazzled their eyes.

There was a room for every fellow, and every room of magnificent size, and furnished with Oriental gorgeousness, regardless of expenso.

There they were left to their own devices for the present, to remove the stains of travel.

"I say, Wharton"—Bunter blinked into Harry's room—"I say, I haven't brought anything with me, you know. I suppose you can lend me some pyjamas?"

"My bag's gone," said Harry. "I

shall have to borrow some things off someone myself."

Billy Bunter rolled towards Frank Nugent's room.

He caught sight of Jack Drake in the corridor, strolling round and looking about him. Drake disappeared among the gigantic tubs of palms that decorated the corridor. Billy Bunter grinned, and scudded into Drake's room.

A dusky valet had been assigned to each of the visitors, and Bunter found a man laying out Drake's clothes in his room.

"Speak English?" asked Bunter.

"Yes, sahib."

"I've changed rooms with Drake. You can clear. Understand! Bunk off!"

"To hear is to obey."

The dusky valet glided noiselessly from the room. Bunter promptly locked the door after him.

Then he examined Drake's possessions with an appraising eye.

"Just about right!" he murmured.

"The bags will be a bit tight; but I can manage. I shall have to slit the waistcoat at the back; but the dinner-jacket will cover that up. It's all right. I hope dinner won't be late. This Eastern magnificence is all very well, but the grub is the principal thing!"

Billy Bunter proceeded to dress—in Drake's clothes. There were several slits and splits by the time he had finished; but they were all covered up successfully, and Bunter surveyed the final result, in a tall pier-glass, with great satisfaction.

When he strolled downstairs he felt a slight inward trepidation. He could not help wondering whether Jack Drake might not recognise his own clothes distended on Bunter's fat person.

To his relief, Drake did not appear.

Where he was, or what he was doing, Bunter neither knew nor cared; he was not interested in the pupil of Ferrers Locke. But he was glad that Drake was out of sight.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Face to Face!

"DIN DAS?"

Two glittering, black, hawk-like eyes fixed upon Jack Drake questioningly, suspiciously.

"That is my name, sahib! What does the sahib desire?"

"A few words with you."

"The hour is late, sahib."

"My business will not wait!" said Drake quietly.

The Hindu eyed him.

The scene was a Bloomsbury lodging-house, and the Hindu stood at the door of a room, which he had opened to Drake's tap.

It was evident that the dark man would have been glad to close the door again, and shut out his visitor; but there was something in Drake's manner that made him hesitate.

"What is the sahib's name?" he asked at last.

"Drake."

"I do not know the name."

"You may have heard the name of Ferrers Locke," said Drake.

Din Das started. Evidently the name of the celebrated Baker Street detective was known to him.

"I am Ferrers Locke's assistant," said Drake. "Will you let me in now, Mr. Din Das?"

The Hindu compressed his lips.

"You have no business with me," he said. "I refuse to admit you." He made a movement to close the door.

Drake put his foot into the doorway.

"Do you prefer me to call in the police?" he asked.

"The police?"

"There is a constable within call."

Again the Hindu hesitated. Then he opened the door wider.

"The sahib may enter!" he said sullenly.

Drake stepped into the room. Din Das closed the door, and stood with his back to it, his glittering black eyes fastened upon the boy detective. Drake gave a careless glance round him. The shabby sitting-room communicated with a bedroom, of which the door was ajar.

"And now, what is your business, Sahib Drake?" asked Din Das, in a low voice that had a ring of menace in its tones.

"I have come for the bag you stole from Harry Wharton at the railway terminus."

"Sahib!"

"With the nabob's candles in it," said Drake.

Din Das breathed hard. His black eyes, set close together over a beak of a nose, glittered like diamonds.

"The sahib talks in riddles," he said coldly. "I know nothing of a bag and candles."

Drake smiled.

"Listen to me, Din Das," he said quietly. "You are a member of the Jam Sahib Bahadur Munny Singh's suite. You are on leave of absence from his service. This evening I have been making inquiries at the Jam's house, and learned about you from Kalouth."

"For what reason, sahib?"

"I will explain. Four Christmas candles—of some unknown value—were

sent to Wharton at Greyfriars by Hurree Janset Ram Singh. Shortly after he received them a Hindu attempted to steal them from the school."

"I know nothing of it!"

"The same man repeated the attempt on Wharton's way home, after the school broke up," continued Drake. "He made a third attempt at the London railway-station, and succeeded."

Din Das shrugged his shoulders.

"I know nothing of it!" he repeated. "Why do you come to me with this tale, sahib?"

"I questioned Kalouth," continued Drake. "I figured it out that only a member of the Jam's suite could possibly have known of the existence of the candles—he must have seen Hurree Singh preparing them, and learned all about them—and that was only possible to a resident in the Jam's mansion."

The Hindu smiled sarcastically.

"The Huzoor Jam Bahadur has a hundred servants," he said. "Why do you come to me, who have been absent from the huzoor's mansion for more than a week?"

"Because you have been absent," smiled Drake. "I have a good description of the thief at Greyfriars, and I have seen every member of the Jam's suite, and he is not among them. I wanted to find one who was absent, and I learned all I wanted to know from Kalouth. I am looking for a Hindu with a prominent nose and close-set black eyes, Din Das. Do you recognise the description?"

Din Das did not answer, but he breathed hard.

"Kalouth told me of you, not knowing why I asked," said Drake. "You are the only member of the Jam's suite



Pop! It was a little explosion as the candles burned about half an inch, and the juniors watched breathlessly as a small ebony box flew out of each candle. "Great Scott!" "My hat!" exclaimed the juniors. (See Chapter 14.)

NEXT MONDAY!

"FAITHFUL TO HIS FRIEND!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 723.

absent from his house. It must have been a member of his household who learned about the Christmas candles, and knew that they were of great value. I learned from Kalouth where to find you, and now I have seen you I recognise the description. Do you follow me?"

The Hindu did not speak.

"If you prefer it I will call witnesses to prove that you are the man, and charge you with the theft," said Drake. "I should rather avoid a scandal, and take back the stolen goods without fuss. You know very well that Bunter could identify you, as well as several other fellows. Do you care to stand the test?"

The Hindu's black eyes were restless.

It was evident that he had deemed himself secure and unsuspected, and that he had only to avoid the Jam's house while the Greyfriars fellows were there, to escape any possible suspicion.

He had not counted upon the pupil of Ferrers Locke.

"I am here to take Wharton's property," said Drake. "Return it to me, and go your way. The Jam will be warned of your dishonesty, and that is all. Refuse, and you will be arrested! Take your choice! I give you one minute."

He waited quietly.

Din Das made a gesture of resignation. "The young sahib is very clever," he said. "The game is up. You will find the bag in my bed-room." He waved a dusky hand towards the half-open door.

"Good!" said Drake.

He stepped to the doorway and glanced into the bed-room. On a chair lay a kit-bag, still locked. But the side had been gashed open with a knife. Several articles were streaming out of the gashed side of the bag, and Drake did not need telling that the box containing the candles had been removed.

He looked back at Din Das.

"It is the candles I want!" he said. "You will hand them to me, Din Das. I do not intend to take my eyes off you."

"To hear is to obey!" said Din Das.

He passed the boy-detective, and went into the bed-room. As he passed through the doorway a sudden change came over him. Drake was on the alert, but he was not prepared for the Hindu's sudden action.

The bed-room door slammed in his face in a twinkling.

Drake hurled himself on it the next moment.

Click!

The key turned on the other side.

"Open this door!" shouted Drake savagely.

He heard the sound of a drawer being dragged out, and dropped on his knee, and looked through the keyhole.

From a drawer Din Das was taking an oblong box, the box containing Hurree Singh's Christmas candles.

He slipped it under his coat, into an inside-pocket, and turned to the window. There was no other door to the bed-room.

Drake sprang up and seized a chair, and crashed it on the lock of the door.

Crash, crash, crash!

In a couple of minutes the lock cracked open, and Drake hurled back the door and rushed into the bed-room. He sprang to the open window. Outside was a rusty rainpipe clamped to the wall. And as Drake looked down into the misty gloom, he caught a glimpse of the nimble Hindu dropping to the ground.

The boy detective did not hesitate.

He swung himself from the window, and clambered down the pipe with the activity of a monkey.

As he sprang to the ground there was a sound of pattering footsteps, and he followed the sound through a misty entry into the street. In front of the house there was waiting the taxi in which Drake had come. He shouted to the driver.

"Have you seen a man—a Hindu—running—"

The chauffeur nodded.

"Yes, sir. There was a taxi just passing, and he jumped into it. There he goes!"

Drake gritted his teeth. It was sheer ill-luck that a belated taxi should have been passing at that moment. The escaping thief had taken instant advantage of it. Drake stared down the misty streets, and caught the winking lights of the speeding taxicab.

"Quick!" he panted. "After it! Don't lose sight of it! A five-pound note if you run it down!"

"Jump in, sir," said the driver, all alacrity at once.

Drake sat panting in the taxi as it throbbed in pursuit of the escaping thief.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Run Down!

"STAND back!"

Jack Drake raced across the platform.

The night express for Dover was just on the move. A porter and a guard jumped towards the boy detective on either side. But Drake eluded them, and tore at the door of a third-class carriage, the nearest at hand. The door was locked.

"Stand back!"

Drake did not heed.

From the window of a carriage farther up the train a dark face looked, and two black, jetty eyes scintillated.

Din Das had reached Charing Cross Station only a few minutes ahead of his pursuer. In the station yard Drake had left his taxi, a couple of Currency notes on the seat for the driver. There was no time to stop. He ran into the station. It was easy to pick up the track of a hatless Hindu. Drake had barely time to take his ticket at the booking-office, where Din Das had taken one a couple of minutes previously, and race for the train.

Din Das grinned breathlessly as he watched from his window. The carriage door was locked, and the porter's extended hand was only a yard behind Jack Drake.

But the boy detective was not to be beaten.

He grasped the door, of which the window was down, and fairly shot into the carriage, headfirst.

His heels disappeared from the eyes of the astonished porter behind him.

The train was moving.

There was an exclamation of amazement from two or three passengers in the carriage. They blinked at Drake.

"Nearly lost it, young 'un!" remarked one.

Drake picked himself up, breathless, and nodded with a smile.

"Nearly!" he said. "A miss is as good as a mile."

The porter was shouting, but his shout died away as the train glided out of the station.

Drake sat down next to the window.

He was in the same train with Din Das. He knew that. The Hindu's desperate flight had not thrown him off the track. He could guess the thief's object. But for his discovery by Drake.

Din Das would undoubtedly have remained in London, and resumed his place in the Jam's household after the Greyfriars fellows were gone. That was impossible now. The thief could only hope to save his plunder and his liberty.

Drake looked out of the window, and smiled as he saw a dark face projecting from a window three carriages away.

The Hindu's eyes blazed at him, and then the dusky head was withdrawn from view.

The express raced on, gathering speed. It was not a corridor train, or Drake would have proceeded to the Hindu's carriage at once. But he was not uneasy.

He had only to watch the train, and alight as soon as Din Das alighted.

The train slowed down.

Drake looked out watchfully. But there were no lights of a station; the train seemed to be stopping on the open track.

"What's up, I wonder?" said the passenger who had spoken to Drake before. "There's no stop here. Something's wrong."

"Somebody's pulled the communication-cord," said another.

Drake's eyes gleamed.

He knew that the express could not be more than eight or ten miles out of Dover now, in open, lonely country. He could guess who had pulled the communication-cord.

The train stopped with a rattling and shaking, and Drake's eyes, from his window, were on the watch.

A carriage door swung open, and a lithe figure leaped out. One flashing glance was cast towards Drake's carriage as the Hindu fled into the night.

Drake did not hesitate a second.

He squeezed through the window, dropped to the track, and darted off. The guard was coming along the train with a lantern, and he shouted to Drake. The boy detective did not heed—he scarcely heard.

He could hear the Hindu running and stumbling down the steep embankment in advance, and he had no eyes or ears for anything else.

There was a fence at the bottom of the embankment, and Drake caught a glimpse of a clambering figure. The next minute he was over the fence, in the lane on the other side.

Behind him the lighted windows of the train were gliding away; the express was in motion again. With a rattle and a roar, the train plunged on through the night.

Drake did not heed it.

On the wind the sound of pattering feet came to his ears, and he ran in steady pursuit.

Stars were glittering in the sky overhead. In the dim light Drake caught sight of the fugitive again, and realised, with a thrill of triumph, that he was gaining on him.

Closer and closer he drew to the fleeing figure.

The Hindu stopped at last.

He spun round, panting, and there was a glitter of cold steel in the starlight. Drake stopped as the knife flashed before his eyes.

His hand went into the pocket of his coat. The Hindu, his lips drawn back in a snarl from his white, set teeth, made a spring at him like a tiger. Jack Drake's hand flashed up with a levelled revolver in it.

"Stand back!" he rapped out.

The Hindu was almost upon him, but he leaped back from the levelled barrel. He stood panting, gripping the knife,

his dusky face ablaze with rage and hatred.

"Drop that knife!" said Drake curtly. Din Das muttered a savage curse in his own tongue. But he did not dare to come on in face of the revolver. He could read in the boy detective's face that he would not hesitate to pull trigger if it were necessary.

"Drop that knife, or I'll put a bullet through your arm, Din Das!" said Drake in low, steady tones.

Clang!
The knife clattered on the ground. "Step back!" Jack Drake advanced, and the Hindu, panting, receded, and Drake kicked the knife away into a ditch.

"Now put up your hands, Din Das!" he said grimly. "Mind, if you try any tricks I'll drop you where you stand!"

With a glare that spoke volumes of hate, the Oriental lifted his dusky hands above his head.

"Keep them like that!" said Drake. "I'm going through your pockets, my beauty! If you want this revolver to go off, you've only to try any tricks!"

With the revolver in his right hand ready for use, Drake tore open the Hindu's coat with his left.

The pocket where the box of candles had been thrust sagged heavily. Drake thrust his hand into it, and drew out the box. The black eyes blazed at him.

Drake dropped the box of candles into his overcoat pocket. The prize was recovered at last.

Din Das stood trembling with rage.

Drake never allowed his eyes to move from the Hindu's face. Din Das muttered something under his breath, turned on his heel, and in a moment had disappeared. Drake gave a sigh of relief, smiled, and set out for the nearest village to hire a car.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Light at Last!

"MY only hat! The cheek of the worm!"

Thus Bob Cherry. The chums had gathered in one of the magnificent rooms on the ground floor of the stately mansion. And Billy Bunter was with them. It was the clothes which Billy Bunter wore which brought forth Bob's ejaculation.

Billy Bunter was wearing a pair of evening trousers only too evident not his own—they were so tight he could hardly move.

"The rotter!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "They're Drake's bags he's got on. And Drake—Bump him, you fellows!"

"Look here—" began Billy Bunter.

The juniors did not stop to hear what Billy wanted to explain. They grasped him and whirled him off his feet.

Bump!

"Ow! Yow-ow! If you burst—" howled Bunter.

Bump!
There was a rending sound of parting cloth. That second bump had done it—with fatal results to Drake's trousers.

"My hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Merry Christmas! Good old English game! What, what!" chuckled the genial Jam.

Suddenly, even above Bunter's roars, there came to the juniors' ears the sound of a car in the road outside.

Harry Wharton caught his breath as he heard the car stop. The thought was in his mind at once that it was Drake. Bob Cherry's eyes met his.

"Drake!" whispered Bob.

"I—I hope so—"

"I say, you fellows, if that's Drake come back, you needn't mention to him that anybody's been wearing his clobber while—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

Harry Wharton hurried down the stairs. He was in time to see Drake enter, bowed in by the magnificent major-domo.

"Drake, old chap—"

"Here we are again!" Drake smiled.

"Am I in time?"

"Yes, if—if—"

"I've got them."

"Oh, good!" gasped Wharton.

The captain of the Remove could scarcely believe his eyes as Drake handed over the box of Christmas candles.

He opened the box. The four coloured candles reposed inside, safe and sound and undamaged.

"How on earth—" began Wharton.

Drake laughed.

"It's a long story," he said. "I'll tell you another time!"

Harry Wharton returned to the festive gathering, with the box of candles in his hand. Hurree Janset Ram Singh smiled as he entered. It looked as if the captain of the Remove had been to his room for the box of candles, and Inky little dreamed of what strange scenes that box had been through, or of the boy detective's desperate night's work to recover it.

"Got it?" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

Wharton held up the box.

"Oh, good!"

"My esteemed chums, place the honourable candles on honourable tree, in places arrangeably prepared."

"Right-ho!"

The four Christmas candles were arranged on the tree, each with the label attached bearing the name of the owner. The juniors gathered round curiously. Jack Drake came in, looking merry and bright, as the candles were arranged, and the Jam Bahadur himself prepared to light them with a long taper.

"Now for the giddy mystery!" murmured Johnny Bull. "Blessed if I see anything special about those giddy candles so far!"

Jack Drake smiled.

"I imagine there is something very special about them!" he remarked. "Somebody was very keen on bagging them, at least!"

"Well, we're going to see now!" said Frank Nugent.

"Attention!" said Bob Cherry, as the Jam Sahib Bahadur Munny Singh lighted the mysterious candles, one after another.

The four candles burned brightly.

The Jam looked on with a beaming smile, and Inky with a genial grin. The juniors watched breathlessly as the candles burned. They were aware that something was going to happen.

Pop!

It was a little explosion as the first candle burned down half an inch. Pop, pop, pop, came from each of the candles in turn.

"My hat!"

Out of each of the candles, as the explosion came, rolled a little ebony box.

Wharton and Johnny Bull, Nugent and Bob Cherry picked them up in wonder.

The lids snapped open.

"Great Scott!"

"Oh, Inky, you old ass!"

From each of the little boxes blazed a magnificent diamond! There were exclamations of admiration as the diamonds blazed and sparkled. Harry Wharton & Co. stared at them blankly. They had expected a surprise, but they had not expected this!

"Inky, you princely duffer—" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

The nabob smiled beamingly at his chums.

"This is the little delightful surprise and honourable Christmas present to esteemed pals!" he explained. "The acceptfulness will be one great honour and distinction to humble self!"

And the genial Jam chuckled.

"Fine! Oh, yes! Very fine!"

"So that was it!" murmured Drake.

"No wonder that dark beggar was after the candles, when he knew what was hidden in them!"

"Good old Inky!"

For the rest of that festive evening four Greyfriars juniors were adorned with sparkling diamond pins. The diamonds were too magnificent to be worn at Greyfriars, certainly, but they were quite in keeping with Harry Wharton & Co.'s present gorgeous surroundings. And before the merry party broke up for bed Jack Drake was called upon to tell the story of the recapture of the precious prize. And the whole party, from the Jam and the nabob to Billy Bunter, listened breathlessly to the story of the mystery of the Christmas candles.



"THAT GHOSTLY XMAS KNIGHT!"

(Continued from page 14)

You will have the pleasure of meeting him over the Christmas table to-morrow."

"Does anyone know that you intended making the journey to London to seek my assistance?" then asked Herlock Sholmes.

"Not a soul!" replied the baron. "I told one of my footmen I might bring guests back for Christmas, and that I should probably return before midnight."

After this Herlock Sholmes relapsed into a thoughtful silence.

It was past eleven o'clock when the train drew up at a little country station, and we alighted. The baron stated that it was but a short distance to the castle. As he had hired out his remaining Ford-Royce over the holidays to a gentleman who had supplied the infantry with corn-plasters during the Great War, we hoofed it along the darkened country lanes to the baron's ancestral home.

Bodkin Castle was a fine old pile of masonry that looked as though the rats had got at it.

Passing the lodge, we arrived before the massive portal, which was opened by a sleepy-eyed footman.

"Thank 'eavins you've come 'ome, me lord!" murmured the servant. "The queer noises and shapes floatin' about has fair given me the collywobblers!"

Baron Battledore turned the colour of a ripe Gorgonzola cheese.

"N-n-nonsense, P-P-Parrott!" he stuttered. "You've been asleep, and dreaming in the servants' hall. You may now go to roost."

It was the one witticism the baron ever permitted himself, fortunately, and the footman smiled respectfully. While the man was locking up, Sholmes and I followed Baron Battledore through the spacious, holly-bedecked hall. On either side stood suits of mediæval armour like a number of knightly sentinels. The Battledore ancestors glared down at us from between the frames of huge pictures on the walls.

Having shown us our rooms, the baron led us into the library, where he provided us with a night-cap each. Having drunk mine, I felt bolder than I had done since setting foot in this eerie old castle.

Baron Battledore, I could see, was strangely affected by the place. His eyes rolled, and his face had become pale and scared-looking. The frights he had received had brought him to the verge of a complete breakdown. He told us a gruesome story of his ancestor, the first Baron Battledore, who had had a penchant for playing "post-man's knock" on the heads of his unsuspecting guests with his mailed fist. The victims were buried beneath the castle keep. It was obvious that our agitated client suspected the ghostly visitor to be none other than this playful gentleman of the eleventh century.

"Once," said Baron Battledore, "when I heard the clanking of armour, I went down to the hall. Nothing was to be seen. But as I made my way back to my room something hit me a hefty clout behind the back of the skull. When I came to my impression was it must have been a mailed fist."

"Or a piece of plaster from the ceiling," I suggested brightly.

Baron Battledore glared. For some reason or other he had taken a violent dislike to me.

"Ah, well," murmured Herlock Sholmes, stretching himself, "let us retire! You may sleep peacefully to-night, your lordship. If your ghostly knight comes I will lay him for you."

After this we went to our separate rooms. Personally, I undressed and got into bed, but a sense of strange things pending kept me awake. Slipping on a dressing-gown, I crept into Sholmes' room for a chat. The room was in darkness. No response came to my knock. Opening the door, I entered. A shaft of moonlight rested upon a pile of white sheets. The bed was empty.

"Sholmes is on the track of the ghost!" I muttered to myself.

Going back to my room, I waited anxiously for the return of my amazing friend. But no Sholmes appeared.

Suddenly my blood froze, my hair rose

like a parrot's crest, and my knees became of the consistency of Jivvers' jelly. From down in the hall the faint clanking of armour came to my ears!

Then I pulled myself together. Sorry I was that Sholmes had not sought my assistance in his midnight quest. But my old friend might be in deadly peril; Never should it be said that he was deserted by his faithful Jotson!

Holding a candlestick in my hand, I made my way down the stairs. The lighted candle caused the suits of armour in the hall to cast weird black shadows on the walls. The silence was positively chilly.

"Sholmes! Sholmes!" I muttered anxiously. There was no response. It was uncanny. I began to wish I'd stayed between the blankets. But as I was about to retreat from this eerie part of the old castle I saw something small and yellow on the oaken floor. It was a real golden English sovereign—one of the pre-war variety!

In my excitement, I forgot Sholmes and the ghost. Instead, I saw a vision of unlimited fish-suppers. I stooped to pick it up, when—

"Ooch!" That agonised remark left my lips as I sprang bolt upright, clasping the back of my dressing-gown. What had felt like a pick-axe had caught me bending!

Trembling with fear and pain at this uncanny experience, I turned about to see who or what had done the cowardly deed. All I saw was a motionless suit of armour. It struck me as queer that it wore long, pointed boots of tempered steel. Then, to my horror, the suit of armour placed a mailed finger to its visor.

"Sh—sh!" it said. I stood rooted to the spot.

"Sh—sh! 'Sh—sh, my dear Jotson!" went on the suit of armour. "Put out that candle. If you must see this adventure through, hide in that alcove!"

"Sholmes!" I gasped, in heartfelt relief. "I thought you were the ghost!"

Sholmes chuckled. "Did my goodly boot of pointed steel feel so ethereal, then, my noble Jotty? I came down and got into this tin Mallaby-Deeley the better to watch for the spook."

"Of course it will prove to be that butler fellow, Spivet," I said lightly. "He's hanging round the castle and playing tricks for vengeance on the old baron. But what's that you've got in your hand?"

Sholmes held a large, round weight at the end of a short piece of rope.

"I found this in the kitchen," he said. "It is a Christmas-pudding. With this rope tied round it, it makes an excellent mediæval-looking weapon. But get into hiding, Jotty!"

A sound from the direction of the library reached us. Quickly I got into an alcove in the hall and blew out the candle. Sholmes remained motionless. What terrible sight were we to see?

We had not long to wait. There was a

clanking of chains and deep groans. Then out of the library stepped an old-time knight, a short length of chain trailing behind one foot. His hands were encased in chain gloves, with gauntlets attached. His face was pale and luminous.

The moonlight that streamed into the hall via the open door of the dining-room lighted up the golden coin I had failed to retrieve. The knight passed my alcove so close that I might have touched him. But apparently he was hard up himself, for he bent down to pick up the sovereign, even as I had done.

Sholmes pointed boot of steel shot out as though operated by a string. It caught the ghostly knight on the same tender spot as it had caught me.

"Yoop! Yow-wow!" The ghostly knight grasped the back of his leathern hand-me-downs and shot upright. As he did so Herlock Sholmes brought the Christmas-pudding down on his steel helmet with a dull thud. The knight fell prone. Sholmes' ruse of placing the golden sovereign on the floor had given him the grand opportunity he had sought.

"Quick, Jotson—fetch a tin-opener! The kitchen is just through the end of the hall." I lighted my candle and started on my errand. The scared faces of Baron Battledore and the servants peered over the broad banisters.

"It's all right, your lordship!" called out Sholmes cheerily. "I've laid your ghost. You have nothing more to fear!"

On my return with the tin-opener I found Sholmes, Baron Battledore, and the servants grouped round the prone figure of the knight. As I held my candle above the victim of the Christmas-pudding, our client gave a cry of amazement.

"Sir Eggbert Makesplash!" he gulped. "None other," said Sholmes, with a smile. "He has dressed up and put luminous paint on his face for the sole purpose of scaring you out of your skin—and the title. It was a fiendish scheme. Too cunning to give you a dose of Rough-on-Rats, he hoped, none the less to speed your departure from this sphere and assume the Battledore title himself!"

When Sir Eggbert Makesplash came round and saw Sholmes calmly swinging the fatal Christmas-pudding in his hand, he broke down utterly and confessed all. He had discovered a secret underground passage between Poshe Hall and the library of Bodkin Castle, and it had given him the idea of playing upon the nerves of his august relative.

The scoundrel was assisted from the castle by the carpet-slippers of Baron Battledore and the footmen. But just as he thought he was getting off easily, Sholmes added his pointed steel boot to help speed the parting guest.

THE END

Give the Children Christmas Annuals

Beautiful pictures, coloured plates, jolly games, etc.—a source of enjoyment for months on end. Strongly bound with attractive, coloured covers they are cheaper and more durable than toys. Make a note of these names:—

PLAYBOX Annual

For the very little ones.

WONDERLAND & PUCK Annuals

For children from 7 to 14.

HOLIDAY Annual

For boys and girls at school.

Price 6/- each

wherever books are sold.

NOW ON SALE!

No. 585.—THE SMUGGLER'S SECRET

A splendid yarn of the old smuggling days
By HARRY HUNTINGDON.

No. 586.—SON O' THE WILD.

A superb story of the Boxing Ring.
By ERIC W. TOWNSEND.

No. 587.—RENTON OF THE ROVERS.

A magnificent tale of the footer field.
By PAUL MASTERS.

No. 588.—PREFECT AND FAG.

A grand school yarn of Jack Johnson and his chums at Wycliffe.
By JACK NORTH.

No. 589.—THE IRON SKULL.

A thrilling detective romance of adventure all round the world.
By MAXWELL SCOTT.

Ask for the
BOYS' FRIEND 4d. LIBRARY.



**MANLY SPORT—HEALTHY EXERCISE
JUST THE THING FOR AN
XMAS PRESENT.**

BOXING GLOVES, 9/6
as illustrated, set of four. Youth's size, 9/-
Punching Balls, 22/6

to fix from ceiling to floor, complete.
Cheaper qualities, 13/6, 15/6, 17/6
CHEST EXPANDERS, 5/-, 6/-, 7/6
SPRING DUMB-BELLS, 6/6
FOOTBALLS Cowhide, complete, full size,
8-p., 9/6, 11/6; 12-p., 15/6,
18/6; 18-p., 19/6, 22/6. **FOOTBALL BOOTS, 11/6,**
12/6, 17/6; **KNICKS, 2/-; HOSE, 1/9; PUMPS, 2/-.**
Nothing shoddy. Strong, serviceable goods at lowest
prices. Test it. Your money returned if not satisfied.
include 9d. for postage. Send p. c. for full catalogues.
TOM CARPENTER, High Grade Sports Outfitter,
638, Morecambe Street, Walworth Road, S.E.17.

GREAT MUSICAL DISCOVERY



Range 3 1/2 Octaves.

A BRITISH INVENTION.
A pocket instrument that plays
in all keys as perfectly as a
violin, without the laborious
study of scales. The only British
made pocket instrument on the
market. Post free—with
full instructions—1/9. Better
Quality 2/9, from:—

R. FIELD (Dept. 33), HALL AVENUE, HUDDERSFIELD.

**HOME CINEMATOGRAPH
AND FILMS.**

Send for free illustrated list of cheap
machines and films. Enquiries invited.
FORD'S, Dept. A.P.,
13, Red Lion Square, London, W.C. 1

The Famous "WONDER GLASS" Specially Reduced!

1. A First-Class Opera Glass.
 2. A Double Magnifying Glass.
 3. A Long-Distance Spy-Glass.
 4. An Optical Lens.
 5. A Compass.
 6. A Stereoscope.
- 3/- POST FREE.**

J. LANE (Dept. 3), 24, Thurstan Buildings, Newton Street, Kingsway, W.C.2.

Buy a Mead ON EASY TERMS

Direct from factory and SAVE POUNDS.
World's finest Table Gramms, Portable-Hornless
and exquisitely coloured horn Mead-ophones
to select from. Sent on 10 days' trial, carriage paid,
with 52 tunes and 400 needles. WRITE TO-DAY
for beautifully illustrated ART CATALOGUE.
MEAD CO. (Dept. G105) BIRMINGHAM

STRENGTHEN YOUR NERVES

Nervousness deprives you of employment, pleasures, and many
advantages in life. If you wish to prosper and enjoy life, strengthen
your nerves, and regain confidence in yourself by using the **Mento-
Nerve Strengthening Treatment.** Guaranteed Cure in 12 days. Used
by Vice-Admiral to Seaman, Colonel to Private, D.S.O.'s, M.C.'s,
M.M.'s, and D.C.M.'s. Merely send three penny stamps for particu-
lars.—**GODFREY ELLIOTT-SMITH, Ltd., 527, Imperial Buildings,**
Ludgate Circus, London, E.C. 4.

MAGIC TRICKS, etc.—Parcels, 2/6, 5/6. Ventriloquist's
Instrument. Invisible. Imitate Birds,
Price 6d. each, 4 for 1/-.—**T. W. Harrison, 239, Pentonville Rd., London, N.1.**

FREE BOOK OF BARGAINS, 7d to £6, Free & Post

Free—Watches 7/11 to 90/-. Clocks, Jewellery, Accordions,
Useful Goods Novelties, Toys, Etc.
A Big Novelty—
Pocket Cinema
and 100 Real
Cinema Film
Pictures 1/-.
Postage 2d.
Delight or
Money Back.
Pain's Presents
House, Dept. 14P, Hastings.

VENTRILOQUISM made easier. Our new enlarged book of easy instruc-
tions and ten amusing dialogues enables anyone to learn this wonderful
laughable art. Only 1/-, post free. "Thousands delighted" (Dolls Supplied).
Thought-Reading, 1/-; Mesmerism, 1/6.—**G. Wilkes & Co., Stockton, Rugby, Eng.**

CINEMA FILMS AND MACHINES.—Comic and Cowboy Films.
Stamp for Lists. 50-ft. Sample Film, 1/3.—**TYSON & MARSHALL,**
89, Castle Boulevard, NOTTINGHAM.

HORNBY CLOCKWORK TRAINS

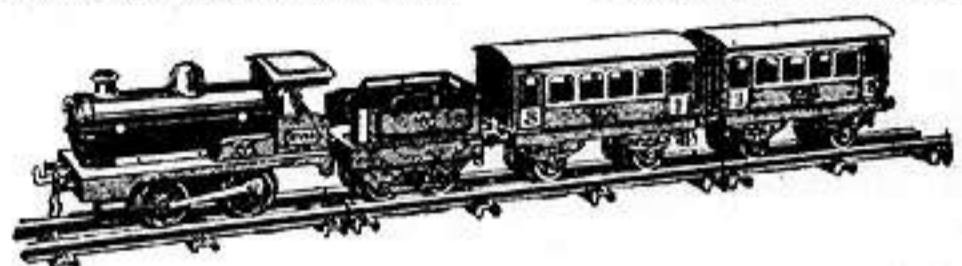
can be taken to pieces and rebuilt

The Hornby Trains are quite different to any other Clock-
work Trains, being strongly built in sections, and screwed
together with nuts and bolts. You can take them to pieces,
clean them and rebuild them, and if a part becomes lost or
damaged, you can buy another and fit it yourself quite easily.

The Clockwork mechanism is strongly built and does not
easily get out of order. Hornby Trains last for ever.

Hornby Trains are made in the four types described on this
page, each type being obtainable in the correct colours of
the London and North Western, Midland, Great Northern
and Caledonian systems.

*It's a Hornby Clockwork Train you want this
Christmas! Standardised Parts.
Perfect Mechanism. Beautiful Finish.*



This is No. 1 Passenger Set with Loco, Tender, and 2 beautifully enamelled coaches. Complete set 38/6. Locos, 18/6. Tenders, 4/6. Extra coaches, 6/6 each.

No. 1 Goods Set includes Loco, Tender, and Goods Wagon. Set of rails, including a 2ft. diameter circle and 2 straights. Complete set, 30/-. Locos, 18/6. Tenders, 4/6. Wagons, 4/6.

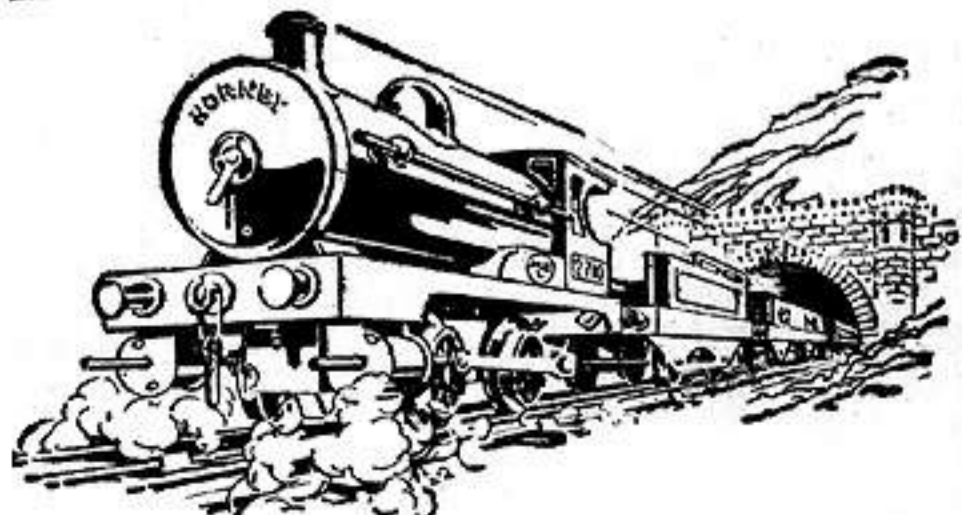


This is No. 2 Pullman. This Loco is larger, and together with the Tender measures 17 in. long. One Dining and one Pullman Coach, Set of Rails making a 4 ft. diameter circle. Complete set, 80/-. Locos, 40/-. Tenders, 5/-. Coaches, 16/-.
No. 2 Goods. Similar to No. 2 Pullman, but with two Wagons instead of Coaches. Complete set, 57/6. Wagons, 4/6 each.

FREE TO BOYS!

This is a new and splendidly illustrated book telling of all the good things which come from Meccanoland, where the best boys' toys are manufactured. No boy should be without this wonderful book.

TO GET A FREE COPY just show this advertisement to three chums, and send us their names and addresses with your own. Address your letter to Dept. U.



MECCANO LIMITED : BINNS RD : LIVERPOOL

MECCANO

is a Thousand Toys



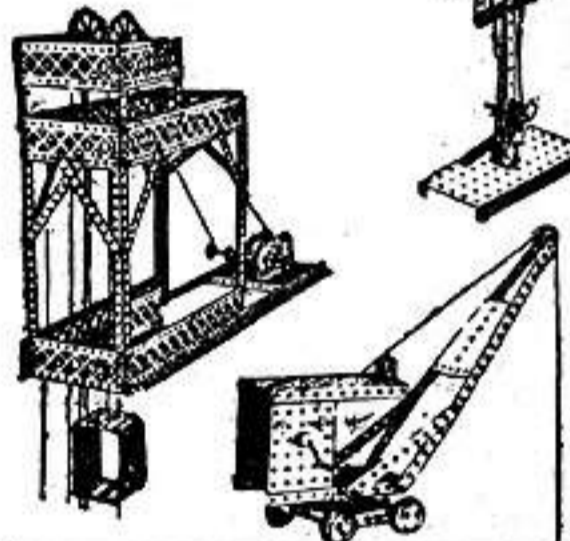
NOBODY knows how many models can be built with Meccano. Every day new ones are invented—every year Meccano boys send in thousands of splendid new ones for the £250 Prize Competition. There's heaps of fun building Meccano models, heaps of fun working them, heaps of fun taking them to pieces. It is the finest hobby in the world for boys. No skill or study needed—the Big Book of Instructions free with each Outfit explains everything.

Choose Meccano for Your Christmas Present

Great £250 Prize Competition

Closing Date, April 15th, 1922

Here is a splendid chance for keen inventive boys. We offer big prizes for the best original models. Full particulars can be had from your Toy Dealer, or by writing to Meccano, Ltd., Binns Rd., Liverpool.



FREE TO BOYS!

A Splendid New Meccano Book

This is a new and splendidly illustrated book telling of all the good things which come from Meccanoland, where the best boys' toys are manufactured. No boy should be without this wonderful book.

How to Get a Free Copy

Just show this advertisement to three chums, and send us their names and addresses with your own. Put No. 35, after your name for reference.



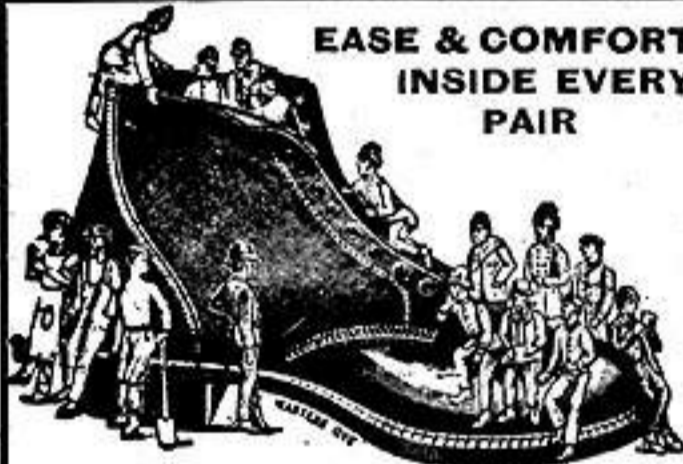
Write to-day

MECCANO LTD : BINNS ROAD : LIVERPOOL

Meccano Prices

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| No. 0 Outfit - 6/- | No. 5 Presentation Outfit in Oak Cabinet, 100/- |
| No. 1 Outfit - 10/- | No. 6 Presentation Outfit in Oak Cabinet, 180/- |
| No. 2 Outfit - 20/- | |
| No. 3 Outfit - 30/- | |
| No. 4 Outfit - 50/- | |
| No. 5 Outfit - 70/- | |

EASE & COMFORT INSIDE EVERY PAIR



Read This.
Rochester, Otterburn, To J. N. Masters Ltd. Gentlemen,—I have used these boots since last March and they have not been in any way repaired yet. Considering that my round is 16 miles per day I have every reason to be satisfied. Yours Truly, D. McINTOSH.

MASTERS' WONDERFUL 'AJON' BOOTS BUILT WITH DOUBLE-LIFE DRI-PED SOLES—NON-SLIP—WATERPROOF—DOUBLE-WEAR—FLEXIBLE

Here are the very finest long-life Boots we have yet constructed. Look at the back piece—like a backbone—this keeps the boot always in shape. Look at the Soles—they are the famous Dri-ped leather—gives double wear, are absolutely waterproof, is light, flexible, and non-slip. The uppers are fine seasoned Box Calf, screwed and stitched to the heel, and well finished throughout. If you want a pair of Boots which will satisfy you, stand miles of hard walking in all sorts of weather; then send for a pair of these famous Dri-ped "AJON" Boots. Our terms place them within your reach. Send 5/- now and promise 5/- monthly after delivery and you have the boots to wear while paying for them. Full satisfaction or deposit refunded. Send 5/- to-day and say size required. Price List free. **MASTERS, LTD., 19, HOPE STORES, RYE. (Est. 1869.)**

5/- MONTHLY

CARD TRICKS—Automatic Professional. Failure Impossible. No Practice. Set Complete, 3/9.—**WABERNS (M), OSBOENE ROAD, SOUTH FARNBOROUGH, HANTS.**

CUT THIS OUT

"The Magnet." **PEN COUPON.** Value 2d.

Send 13 of these coupons with only 2/9 direct to the Fleet Pen Co., 119, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4. You will receive by return a Splendid British Made 14-ct. Gold Nibbed Fleet Fountain Pen, value 10/6 (Fine, Medium, or Broad Nib). If only 1 coupon is sent, the price is 4/9, 2d. being allowed for each extra coupon up to 12. (Pocket Clip, 4d. extra.) This great offer is made to introduce the famous Fleet Pen to the MAGNET readers. Satisfaction guaranteed or cash returned. Foreign post extra. **Lever Self-Filling Model, with Safety Cap, 2/- extra.**

NN

**BANG!
BANG!!
BANG!!!**

Blaze away, boys, 100 shots without reloading.

The "QUICFIRA" Price 1/3 pos. free.
(Postage abroad, 3d. extra.)

Perfectly harmless, but just the thing for Amateur Detectives and Scouts. Write your name and address very plainly on a sheet of paper, attach this advt. and send with P.O. 13 to

F. GILMAN, 8, Grange Road, Smethwick, Birmingham.



FACTORY TO RIDER

Packed Free. Carriage Paid. *Fifteen Days' Free Trial.* **LOWEST CASH PRICES. EASY PAYMENT TERMS.**

Prompt delivery. Save Dealers' Profits. Big Bargains in Shop Soled and Second-hand Cycles. Satisfaction guaranteed or Money Refunded. Write for Monster Size **Free Lists** and *Special Offer* of Sample Bicycle.

MEAD CYCLE COMPANY, Incorpd. Dept. BIRMINGHAM.

"CURLY HAIR!"—"It's wonderful," writes E. 10,000 Testimonials. Proof sent. Ross' "WAVEIT" CURLS STRAIGHTEST HAIR. 1/3, 2/5. (Stamps accepted.)—ROSS (Dept. M.T.), 175, New North Rd., London, N. 1.

AEROPLANE AND CATAPULT ELASTIC.—Best quality only. 1-16th, 1-8th, 3-16th, and 1-4th inch thick. Price 4d., 11d., 3d., and 6d. per foot. Orders 1/- post free.—**GREENAWAY, 5, New Inn Hall St., Oxford.**

PHOTO POSTCARDS OF YOURSELF, 1/3 doz. 12 by 10 ENLARGEMENTS, 8d. ALSO CHEAP PHOTO MATERIAL. **CATALOGUE AND SAMPLES FREE.**—**HACKETTS, JULY ROAD, LIVERPOOL.**

CINEMATOGRAPHS AND FILMS!—Lowest Prices. **CINEMAS** from 5/-. Cowboy, Drama, and Comic Films. Send 2/- for Large Sample Film. Stamp for Bargain Lists.—**A. N. Maxwell (Dept. 5), 43A, George St., Hastings.**

FUN FOR ALL!—Ventriloquist's Voice Instrument. Invisible, Astonishes, Mystifies. Imitate Birds, Beasts, etc. 1/- P.O. (Ventriloquism Treatise included).—**Ideal Co., Clevedon, Som.**

17-12-21