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The Magnet ^{2/10} 1

Library

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD."



POOR OLD BILLY!

(A humorous incident from the long complete story in this issue.)



Address your letters to: The Editor, THE MAGNET LIBRARY, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. I am always pleased to hear from my chums.

NOTICES.

Missing!

Will C. W. T. communicate with Miss E. Bennett, 5, Basinghall Street, Tunbridge Wells, Kent?

Correspondence.

D. Robinson, Edzill Lodge, 6, Gordon Terrace, Yeoville, Johannesburg, Transvaal, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers interested in stamps, and willing to exchange.

Miss M. Pattinson, Kloof Cottage, 1, Rosebery Avenue, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers in England, Scotland, France, and Spain, with a view to exchange postcards and photos, etc.; also wishes to correspond with readers anywhere; ages 22 and upwards.

F. Bottomley, 48, Downhills Park Road, Tottenham, N. 15, wants advertisements for his new magazine, the "Advertising Herald." Write for terms.

William Claxton, jun., 476, Gloucester Street, Christchurch, New Zealand, wishes to hear from readers, ages 14-15, in France and India. All letters will be answered.

James Williams, 14, Gayfield Street, Glasgow, wishes to correspond with readers in Glasgow with a view to starting an amateur magazine.

A. Van den Bergh, 7, Zurenberg Street, Antwerp, Belgium, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere, ages 14-16, interested in boxing, swimming, football, and other sports.

Will William Roberts, of Christchurch, New Zealand, who wrote to V. Andrews of Luton, Bedfordshire, kindly send his address to that correspondent, as it has been mislaid.

John W. Roseworn, 29, Hawarden Grove, Herne Hill, S.E.24, wishes to contribute to an amateur magazine—articles or stories.

Miss Patience Gardiner, Taragh, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, would like to find a girl correspondent about 17, in Australia or New Zealand.

Your Editor.

FOR NEXT MONDAY.

"BILLY BUNTER—FILM STAR!"

By Frank Richards.

The above is the title of our next grand, long, complete school story of Harry Wharton & Co. and Billy Bunter of Greyfriars. In this story we learn how Billy Bunter is mistaken for a film star who achieved fame before the Great War, and of his efforts to live up to the reputation the real film star made for himself.

Billy is quite a success, though he has many anxious moments when he first appears before the camera. He has to resort to a subterfuge to get away from Greyfriars, and it is unfortunate for him that his minor, Sammy of the Third, gets to know about it. It gets to Harry Wharton & Co., and Billy Bunter, film star, gets the shock of his life when acting before the camera!

This is a grand story, my chums, and you are assured of a hearty laugh if you take the precaution of ordering your copy of the MAGNET LIBRARY in advance.

THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD" SUPPLEMENT!

There will be another grand four-page supplement in our next issue, for which Harry Wharton & Co. have compiled a perfect feast of good stories, articles, and verses. This supplement is growing in popularity every week, and deservedly so, for the chums of the Remove undoubtedly sacrifice a lot of their spare time in order to please readers of the MAGNET LIBRARY.

FOR TO-DAY!

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A Magnificent, Long, Complete Story, dealing with the Adventures of Harry Wharton & Co., and Mr. Wally Bunter at Greyfriars. By Frank Richards.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Deadly Enemy!

TAKE a hundred lines, Cherry!" The stern voice of Mr. Quelch boomed through the Remove Form-room at Greyfriars.

Bob Cherry groaned. "That makes the third impot I've been given this morning!" he muttered. "And I wasn't doing anything!" "That's just it!" whispered Harry Wharton. "If you'd been doing something, you wouldn't have got it. I should advise you to get on with your work, Bob, or it'll be a licking next time."

Bob Cherry, finding the gimlet eyes of Mr. Quelch fixed on him, hurriedly bent his head over the desk, and proceeded to digest large and unappetising chunks of English history.

It was a very bad morning for the Remove.

Accustomed as they were to bad mornings, under the iron rule of Mr. Horace Quelch, M.A., they had never experienced quite such a morning as this.

Mr. Quelch's temper—always a very uncertain quality—was at its worst this morning.

The master of the Remove was on the war-path. Peter Todd, who was something of a mathematician, had figured it out that Mr. Quelch had already awarded seven thousand five hundred and fifty lines, and one hundred and thirteen strokes with the cane, since the lesson started.

There was scarcely a fellow in the Form who had escaped the vials of Mr. Quelch's wrath.

The class was no more unruly than usual, yet Mr. Quelch had the tantrums—and he had them very badly.

What was wrong with him?

The juniors came to the conclusion that he was worried about something. His face was pale and drawn. He looked haggard. From time to time he passed his hand over his brow.

"There's something seriously wrong with Quelch!" murmured Frank Nugent. "But I don't see why he

should take it out of us! We're not responsible for his giddy troubles!"

"Nugent!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Stand out before the class! This is the third time I have had to reprimand you for muttering! Come out, sir, and I will endeavour to correct you of the habit!"

Frank Nugent left his place, and advanced towards the angry Form-master.

Mr. Quelch picked up a cane. "Hold out your hand, Nugent!" he commanded.

The junior obeyed. Swish!

The cane bit into Nugent's palm, and he clenched his teeth tightly together to keep back a cry of pain, for the swish had been unusually severe.

Mr. Quelch prepared to administer a second stroke, when suddenly a startling thing happened.

The cane fell from the Form-master's grasp, and clattered to the floor. And Mr. Quelch, his face deathly pale, reeled, and fell heavily against his desk. He would have slipped down on to the floor and collapsed completely, had not Frank Nugent jumped forward to support him.

Nugent glanced swiftly over his shoulder.

"Give me a hand, somebody!" he said. "He's—he's ill!"

Instantly Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry were at their chum's side. They surveyed Mr. Quelch with grave concern.

"Better lower him gently to the floor, and unfasten his collar," said Harry Wharton. "Go and fetch a glass of water, somebody!"

Mr. Quelch was laid at full-length upon the floor, and a cushion taken from his chair was thrust beneath his head.

Harry Wharton deftly unfastened the Form-master's collar, while Johnny Bull hurriedly obtained a glass of water.

The Remove could understand now why Mr. Quelch had been such a Tartar that morning. He was ill; and, that being the case, it was not surprising that he had been harsh and irritable.

Mr. Quelch lay with half-closed eyes, in a state of semi-consciousness. He appeared to be oblivious to what was going on around him.

The juniors worked hard to bring him round; but his condition seemed to be becoming worse instead of better.

"Let's get him up to his bed-room. Somebody can bike down to the village for the doctor," said Bob Cherry.

"I'll go!" said Tom Brown. And he was at the door in a couple of strides.

Before Tom Brown could leave the Form-room, however, Wingate of the Sixth came in.

The captain of Greyfriars took in the situation at a glance. His face was grave.

"Hallo! Another victim!" he exclaimed.

"Another victim!" echoed Harry Wharton. "What do you mean, Wingate?"

"Flu," was the curt reply. "It's spreading rapidly. Half the masters are down with it already, and some of the seniors."

"My hat!" The news came as a bombshell to the Remove.

All the masters, with one exception, had appeared at breakfast, and in chapel, that morning.

The exception was Mr. Prout.

The master of the Fifth, on the previous day, had played golf for two hours under weeping skies, and he had contracted what was supposed to be a common or garden chill.

It was now apparent, however, that Mr. Prout had flu, and that he had communicated the malady to his colleagues.

Wingate declared that the complaint had reached an epidemic stage. He himself looked none too well. But perhaps that was due to worry.

"Help me get Mr. Quelch up to his room, you kids," he said.

The inanimate form of the Remove master was lifted clear of the floor.

"Shall I go for the doctor, Wingate?" inquired Tom Brown, pausing uncertainly in the doorway.

"He's already been sent for," was the reply. "Not that he'll be able to do much," added Wingate. "These attacks

are too severe for a dose of quinine to put right. Prout's temperature is 103."

"Great Scott!"

Mr. Quelch as conveyed with difficulty to his bed-room, and he was partially undressed and placed between the warm sheets, pending the arrival of Dr. Short, the medical man from Friardale.

"We can do nothing more at the moment," said Wingate. "Go back to your Form-room, you kids. I'll send a prefect along to take charge of you."

Wingate's choice of a prefect did not prove a popular one. He sent Loder of the Sixth.

Loder was a fellow who believed in a liberal application of the ashplant, and a liberal flow of abuse. He knew of only one method of preserving law and order—and that was the Prussian method.

The Remove, who had already been in the wars with Mr. Quelch, were now made to writhe under Loder's tyranny.

Lines and lickings were the order of the day, and everybody was hugely relieved when the word of dismissal came.

The dinner-bell rang later than usual. Greyfriars seemed to be somewhat disorganised.

In the dining-hall, it was noticed that many familiar faces were absent.

The masters' table had a woefully neglected appearance.

Mr. Prout, Mr. Quelch, Mr. Twigg, Mr. Capper, and others, were conspicuous by their absence.

Only three persons were seated at the table. They were Mr. Hacker, the master of the Shell; Mr. Larry Lascelles, the young mathematics master; and Mr. Wally Bunter, the recently appointed master of the First Form.

"My only aunt!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Only three masters left to run the giddy school!"

"And the Head," said Johnny Bull. "Yes; there's the Head. But, by Jove, what a thinning of the ranks!"

"And look at the prefects' table!" said Vernon-Smith. "Faulkner's away, and Gwynne, and Hammersley, and North. Surely they're not all down with 'flu?"

"Looks like it," said Wharton.

Not for a very long time had such a swift and sudden calamity fallen upon Greyfriars.

So sudden, indeed, was this epidemic of influenza that there had been no time to make preparations against it. It had thrown everything out of gear. Already it had seriously dislocated the work of the school.

And the epidemic was still raging.

Up till now, it was confined to the masters and the seniors. But supposing it spread? Supposing it swept through the school—this deadly, insidious enemy which caused people to collapse in the street, and which had wrought serious havoc on every side?

These thoughts were not pleasant to the Greyfriars fellows.

"Who will be the next victim?" That was the uneasy question which passed through the mind of each.

Whilst dinner was in progress, the Head swept in with rustling gown.

Dr. Locke was looking very worried—distracted, almost. And it was scarcely to be wondered at.

"My boys," he said, "I had hoped, now that the worst of the winter is over, that we should be immune from an epidemic of influenza. But I regret to say that it has descended upon us, suddenly and without warning. Many of the masters are on the sick list; also a large number of seniors. Now, I want

you all to take every precaution. Eat well, keep yourselves warm, and do nothing that is liable to lower your vitality. If this epidemic becomes general, the school will have to close down for a time. And that is the last thing I want to happen. Bunter major! Why are you beckoning to me in that manner?"

Billy Bunter of the Remove had risen in his place. He was gesticulating wildly with his arms.

"You told us to eat well, sir!" he exclaimed.

"That is so, Bunter."

"Well, we're not allowed to, sir. I've just been refused a fourth helping of jam pudding!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Head silenced the laughter which followed Billy Bunter's remark.

"You are a greedy, gluttonous boy, Bunter!" he said sternly. "If you have already had three helpings of jam pudding, you ought to be more than satisfied!"

"But if I'm not properly nourished, sir, the 'flu germ will get me in its grip."

Billy Bunter spoke of the 'flu germ as if it were a grizzly bear.

"Nonsense, Bunter!" said the Head sharply. "You have already partaken of more than is good for you. Sit down!"

"But, sir—"

"Sit down!"

The Head's voice resembled the detonation of a bomb.

Billy Bunter sat down suddenly—so suddenly that he failed to notice the inverted tinctack which Skinner had thoughtfully placed upon the form.

"Yaroooooh!"

A yell of acute anguish rang through the Hall.

"Bless my soul!" gasped the Head. "Why did you give vent to that ridiculous noise, Bunter?"

"Wow! I—I sat on something, sir! A six-inch spike. I think it was!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Head knew that some practical joke had been perpetrated on the Owl of the Remove. But he did not institute an inquiry. He had other and more serious matters to attend to.

Having order silence, he referred once more to the subject which had brought him into the Hall.

"Now that the majority of the masters are indisposed," he said, "you must realise that the work which devolves upon the survivors will be very heavy. There are only three masters left to assist me in taking charge of the school. I trust to your honour, my boys, not to take advantage of the situation by indulging in horseplay, and getting out of hand. You must do your utmost to help, rather than to hinder, during this troubled time."

There was a low murmur of assent. And the Head, after a few more remarks, swept out of the dining-hall.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Sole Survivor!

LODER of the Sixth was very much on the warpath during afternoon lessons.

He made things as unpleasant as possible for Harry Wharton & Co., whom he disliked intensely.

As a matter of fact, the dislike was mutual.

The Famous Five of the Remove had never liked Loder. And they had never liked him less than now.

By the time afternoon lessons were over, each member of the Five was burdened with a heavy impot. And there were smarting palms, as well, for Loder had made free use of his ashplant.

"Why does it always happen," growled Johnny Bull, as he left the Form-room with his chums, "that when there's an epidemic of this sort, rotters like Loder always manage to escape it?"

"It's one of the ironies of Fate," said Harry Wharton. "All the decent seniors, barring old Wingate, are in the sanny. And people like Loder and Carne and Walker have dodged the 'flu, and will continue to dodge it."

"Loder is a bruteful beast!" said Hurree Singh, with unusual vehemence. "I hatefully despise him for his tyranny. He has loaded me up with the linefulness, and made me sore with the lickfulness."

"Same here!" groaned Nugent.

"Never mind!" said Bob Cherry. "Let's push Loder out of our thoughts. Have you fellows forgotten that we've an honoured guest coming to tea in Study No. 1?"

"My hat!" ejaculated Harry Wharton. "I'd clean forgotten that Mr. Bunter was coming to tea! This 'flu epidemic put it right out of my head."

"Better see about laying in supplies," said Johnny Bull.

The Famous Five hurried away to the tuckshop.

Fortunately, that favourite retreat was still open, and Mrs. Mimble was doing a roaring trade in hot cordials. The good dame had not been thoughtless enough to contract the 'flu.

Having laid in ample supplies, Harry Wharton & Co. went along to Study No. 1, where they prepared an excellent repast.

Mr. Wally Bunter had promised to join them at five o'clock.

The master of the First was late. It was twenty minutes past when he put in an appearance. He was looking considerably agitated.

"I can't stay more than ten minutes, you fellows," he said, dropping into a chair. "There's work for me to do—stacks of it, shoals of it! To use an un-scholarly expression, I'm up to my neck!"

"No more victims, sir, I hope?" said Harry Wharton, pouring out the tea.

"Sorry to dash your hopes, Wharton. The epidemic has spread. There were three masters left at dinner-time to preserve order and discipline. Now there is only one. Behold him!"

"Ye gods and little fishes!" gasped Bob Cherry. "You don't mean to say, sir, that Hacker—"

"Mr. Hacker collapsed in the Close half an hour ago."

"And Mr. Lascelles—"

"He has been taken to bed with a high temperature."

"My hat!"

"Then the Head and yourself are the only two left, sir?" said Johnny Bull.

Wally Bunter, in his agitation, stirred his tea with the sugar-tongs.

"The Head has just developed a splitting headache," he said. "It's an unmistakable symptom. He'll be on the sick list by nightfall."

"Great Scott!"

"The chapter of accidents doesn't end there," said Wally Bunter. "Wingate is down."

"Oh crumbs!"

"Poor old Wingate!"

"It amounts to this," said Wally. "I'm the only master who hasn't succumbed to the epidemic. There's a handful of prefects left, but they are not the

sort who will back me up. I refer to Loder, Carne, and Walker."

"You can't expect any help in that direction, sir," said Harry Wharton.

"No, I'm afraid not. Loder, for reasons with which you are well acquainted, does not love me. So far from being a help, I am afraid he will prove a nuisance."

"We'll back you up, sir!" said Bob Cherry.

"Yes, rather!"

"The back-upfulness will be terrific!"

Wally Bunter smiled.

"Thank you," he said quietly. "I knew I could count on your support. I am up against it—more so than you realise. The examination takes place to-morrow morning, and in the circumstances, I shall have to conduct the whole thing. On the face of it, it seems a sheer impossibility."

The juniors looked mystified.

"Examination, sir?" said Wharton dazedly. "What examination?"

"I will explain," said Wally, "though I can only explain up to a point. There is to be a secret exam, open to all public school boys under the age of fifteen."

The eyes of the Famous Five opened wide.

"A—a secret exam!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Why do you call it that, sir?"

"Because the subject of it is a secret, even to the authorities. It may be a general knowledge examination; it may deal with history, or geography, or mathematics—nobody will know until this evening."

"What a weird idea!" said Johnny Bull.

"I prefer to call it a very novel idea," said Wally Bunter. "If only the masters were fit, everything would work like a charm. As it is, I shall have to conduct the whole thing single-handed. I shall have to take the Remove, the Third, the Second, and the First."

"My hat!"

"Can't the exam be postponed, sir?" suggested Nugent.

"No, unfortunately. It is a national competition, promoted by a scholastic journal called the 'Housemaster.' This evening a list of the conditions will arrive at every public school in the country. Until those conditions arrive I sha'n't know what preparations to make. The exam has to take place to-morrow morning, between the hours of ten and twelve. Then all the papers must be collected and sent away at once. That is all I know, except that handsome prizes are being awarded to the successful competitors."

"Handsome prizes?" said Bob Cherry. "This is where my mouth begins to water!"

"Why, Bob, you ass," said Wharton laughing. "you won't stand a dog's chance!"

"True. But my pal Mark Linley will. And if he wins a giddy fortune I shall help him to spend it, see?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There are to be five prizes of a hundred pounds each," said Wally Bunter. "But you must remember that every public school in the country is competing. Greyfriars will have all the best brains of the rival schools pitted against it. It is almost too much to hope that one of the prizes finds its way here. But whatever happens, Greyfriars must take part in the competition. The Head's determined about that. No matter how much hard work is involved, this thing has got to be carried through."

Wally Bunter spoke with a resolution that was characteristic of him.

Although heavily handicapped in being left to battle single-handed, he meant to see it through.

"You're not eating anything, sir!" said Harry Wharton suddenly.

"No. I preferred to spend the ten minutes in talking. One can't eat and talk at the same time—not satisfactorily, anyway. And now I must be going. I've got to go and fetch the doctor. The Head refuses to go to bed until he's compelled to by Dr. Short."

Wally Bunter rose to his feet. He nodded to the juniors, and hurriedly left the study.

"I'll get Loder to keep order in my absence," he muttered.

On making inquiries in Loder's study, however, Wally found that the prefect was out.

Carne and Walker were in the study, which reeked suspiciously of cigarette smoke.

The two seniors glared at Wally Bunter as he stepped into the apartment.

"Where is Loder?" he demanded.

"Out!" said Carne briefly.

"Yes, that's obvious, since he's not here," said Wally. "I want to know where he has gone."

"Am I my brother's keeper?" murmured Carne.

Wally frowned.

"Did Loder tell you where he was going?" he asked.

"Yes," said Walker, with a grin.

"But we're not going to tell you."

"Not likely!" chuckled Carne.

"From your remarks," said Wally

Bunter quietly. "I gather that Loder has gone to some shady haunt in the village. I won't press for information—"

"Because you know jolly well that we won't split!" said Walker.

"But I must ask you two fellows to preserve order in the school whilst I summon the doctor," said Wally.

"You can jolly well preserve order yourself!" said Carne insolently.

"We're not budging from this study."

A dangerous glint came into Wally Bunter's eyes.

"You appear to forget to whom it is you are speaking," he said.

"Oh, no, we don't forget," said Walker.

"We're speaking to a conceited upstart who, through currying favour with the Head, has been given charge of a kindergarten."

"Be careful, Walker!" said Wally sharply.

Walker laughed.

"I'll talk to you how I like," he said rudely.

"You can't go complaining to the Head, because he's ill. And there are no other masters to back you up. You're playing a lone hand—"

"Which is all the more reason why you should buckle to and help me," said Wally.

"You and Carne and Loder are the only prefects not on the sick list. I look to you to assist me in running the school during this crisis."

"Then you can go on looking!" said Carne.

"We don't intend to lift so much as a little finger to help. So that's that!"

Wally Bunter turned to the door. "I've no time to stay and thrash this



The cane fell from Mr. Quelch's grasp and clattered to the floor, and he reeled and fell heavily against the desk. Frank Nugent jumped forward and caught the Form-master as he collapsed to the floor. "Give hand, somebody!" said Nugent. "He's—he's ill!" (See Chapter I.)

NEXT MONDAY!

"BILLY BUNTER—FILM STAR!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 735.

out," he said. "I can only say that you are behaving like a pair of cads. I will instruct Blundell of the Fifth to take charge of the school during my absence."

Without waiting for a reply from the mutinous prefects, Wally Bunter withdrew.

He found Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, ready and willing to back him up.

Blundell was a decent fellow, and he realised the tremendous difficulties under which the young Form-master was labouring.

"I'll cheerfully keep an eye on things while you're gone, sir," he said.

"Thank you, Blundell. I knew you would not fail me."

Wally Bunter went along to his study to fetch his hat and overcoat. Then he set out for the village in the gathering darkness.

It was a wild evening.

Black clouds scurried across the sky, and a tempestuous wind blew up from the sea.

So terrific was the wind that there was no rain, as yet. But there were all the makings of an extra special storm.

Wally Bunter strode along the wind-swept road at a great rate.

"Whatever happens, I mustn't go and contract this beastly flu!" he muttered. "That would squash all chances of the exam taking place. I've got to keep fit, somehow. But it's going to be a strenuous time!"

Presently he came to the doctor's house, on the outskirts of Friardale.

He found Dr. Short in the act of stepping into his car.

"Hallo!" said the doctor. "How's the situation up at the school? Any better?"

"No," said Wally bluntly. "A jolly sight worse! There are several more victims, including the Head."

"Bless my soul!"

"The matron's working like a heroine," said Wally. "And a couple of trained nurses have been wired for. Were you just going to the school, doctor?"

"Yes."

"Well, pop in and see the Head first. He's awfully queer, but he refuses to give in and go to bed. It's a case where you'll have to exercise your powers of persuasion."

The doctor smiled grimly.

"I'll soon make him knuckle under to my discipline," he said. "Coming with me in the car, Bunter?"

"No," said Wally. "I'll walk."

He was conscious, as he spoke, of a throbbing at his temples and a general feeling of weakness. He staggered a little, but owing to the darkness and the fact that he was trying to keep his hat from being carried away by the wind, the doctor did not notice that anything was amiss.

When the medical man had driven away, Wally Bunter paid a visit to the local chemist.

"Give me a stiff draught," he said. "Something that will ward off influenza. None of your tame influenza mixtures—something strong and potent."

The chemist busied himself behind the counter.

"Try that," he said at length, handing his customer a medicine glass containing a thick concoction. "You're looking a trifle groggy, but this will pull you together. Glad to see you're taking it in time."

Wally Bunter drained the glass at a draught.

A warm glow came over him. He revived almost instantaneously.

"That's tons better!" he said, tossing a shilling on to the counter. "Good-night!"

"Good-night, sir!"

Wally Bunter passed out of the shop, and was soon swallowed up in the darkness without.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

To Save His Foe!

DEEP in thought, Wally Bunter swung along the road in the direction of Greyfriars.

It was of the examination he was thinking—the secret exam.

What time would the details of the exam arrive? And how much preparation would be entailed?

Wally was prepared to sit up all night, if necessary. At all costs, the Greyfriars fellows must compete.

Quite apart from the money that was being offered, it would be a great honour if one of the prizes came to Greyfriars. It was a golden opportunity that must not be missed on any account.

Wally Bunter was halfway between the village and the school, when he came out of his reverie with a start.

On his left lay Friardale Wood. And over the dark tree-tops a glow of light was distinctly visible—a glow which seemed to get bigger and bigger.

Wally stopped short in the roadway.

Faintly to his ears came a cracking, spluttering sound.

Wally's heart beat fast.

He could not mistake that sound. Neither could he mistake the meaning of that ever-widening glow which hovered over the tree-tops.

"A fire!" he muttered.

For a few seconds only he remained inactive, noting the direction of the glow. Then he plunged into the wood, tearing through the straggling roots and bracken which impeded him along the narrow path.

It took him but a short time to reach the scene of the fire.

An old and familiar barn—a place that could have told of many secret meetings—a place with a sinister history of its own—was blazing.

The first thought that leapt to Wally Bunter's mind was this: Was the barn occupied?

That question was answered immediately. From within the blazing wooden structure came cries for help.

The cries were awful in their intensity.

"Help! Help!"

Wally Bunter gave a startled gasp. For one of the voices was the voice of Loder of the Sixth!

Loder, and a number of others, were imprisoned within that blazing barn. They were unable to force an exit, owing to the fact that the door was in flames.

The other end of the barn had not yet caught alight. And in this end Loder and his companions were huddled together, almost paralysed with fear, and well-nigh overcome by the scorching fumes.

"Help!"

The cry was feebler and fainter now. In that suffocating atmosphere the prisoners were being deprived of their lung-power.

Wally Bunter made a hurried survey of the wooden shanty.

He noticed that there were no windows, and that it would be impossible

to force an entrance by means of the door, just as it was impossible for those inside the barn to force an exit.

It seemed an hopeless situation.

Wally Bunter saw only one way of trying to help those who were in peril of their lives.

The flames, aided by the wind, were spreading rapidly. There was no time to go for assistance. Something must be done at once. And Wally Bunter did it.

He carefully noted a part of the barn where the woodwork seemed more fragile, and more likely to yield under pressure. Then, after waiting his opportunity, he made a sudden rush, and hurled the whole weight of his body upon the wooden structure.

It was a herculean effort.

Wally's weight and strength were considerable; and he had need of them at that moment.

No lighter fellow could have accomplished such a feat. Few would have attempted it. The object was, of course, to break down some of the wooden planks and create an aperture. And Wally Bunter's gigantic effort accomplished this object.

The whole weight of Wally's body crashed against the woodwork.

Two of the planks gave way, and fell inwards.

The cavity was not sufficiently large to allow Wally Bunter to squeeze through into the barn, so he had, perforce, to hurl himself yet again upon the structure.

At the second attempt the gap widened considerably.

"Now for it!" muttered Wally.

And he commenced to clamber through the aperture.

The interior of the barn resembled a furnace.

There was no further cry from the inmates. Evidently they were unconscious. The fumes were overpowering.

If Wally Bunter had stopped to think—if he had wavered or hesitated—the rescue of Loder and his companions would have been impossible.

It was a crisis which required prompt action. Of his own peril in entering the burning barn, Wally thought nothing.

The next instant he was inside.

The fumes half-blinded, half-suffocated him. He reproached himself for not having taken the precaution of tying a damp handkerchief around his mouth and nose. But there was no time for that now. He groped his way blindly through the dense haze of smoke, and his foot stumbled against something on the floor. It was a human body.

Wally Bunter stooped down, dragged the unconscious form to the aperture, and, by a superhuman effort, he heaved it through, lowering it gently on to the grass, and leaving it to the reviving influence of the fresh night air.

This feat was in itself a prodigious one. Yet Wally Bunter had to repeat it twice.

Three persons, in all, he rescued from that scorching, suffocating furnace. And he hoped and prayed there were no more. He could not have gone back for another. His strength and his senses seemed to be failing him.

As in a nightmare, he fought his way through the opening.

He was just sufficiently conscious to notice that the lower part of his overcoat was in flames. He wrenched off the coat and hurled it from him. Then he collapsed in a heap on to the cool grass.

Fortunately, Wally quickly revived.

Fortunately, because the hungry flames had by this time enveloped the barn, and at any moment the structure might collapse, and imperil the lives of those who lay stretched upon the grass.

Wally Bunter tottered to his feet. He dragged the unconscious forms, one by one, to a safe distance.

Scarcely had he done so when that which he had anticipated came to pass.

The structure completely collapsed, and the burning planks came crashing to the ground. Some of them fell upon the spot where, but a moment before, the unconscious forms had lain.

Wally Bunter gazed at the heap of flaming debris, and shuddered.

"Jolly nearly a tragedy!" he muttered. "As close a thing as I've ever seen!"

He looked round at his companions. One of them was sitting up. It was Loder. He had regained consciousness, yet he still seemed dazed.

"Who—what—?" he gasped.

And then, in the glow from the burning timber, he recognised Wally Bunter.

"Tell me—how did I escape from that?" he asked, pointing to the conflagration.

"How you escaped doesn't matter in the slightest, Loder," said Wally. "It's the fact that you have escaped that matters. You had a very narrow shave of being roasted! Are you burnt?"

"Only slightly, on my left wrist. But half a moment. Let me get my wits together. Yes, I remember now. Just as I was losing consciousness I heard somebody hurling himself against the planks to force an entrance. That was you!"

Wally said nothing.

"It was you!" repeated Loder. "You forced your way into the barn, and hauled us out of it! You saved our lives!"

"Now you're getting melodramatic!" said Wally. "Who are the other two?"

"Melcroft and Mowbray, of Highcliffe."

"And how came you to be here?"

"It's a little meeting-place of ours—or, rather, it was!" said Loder. "There's no need for me to tell you why we came here. You can probably guess."

"Cards?" ventured Wally.

Loder nodded.

"And how did the place come to catch on fire?"

"Mowbray chucked his cigarette-end into the straw near the door; an asinine thing to do!"

"Very," agreed Wally. "It might have cost you your lives! But, when you looked round and saw that the place was alight, you could surely have got out?"

"That's just it!" said Loder. "Somebody—some practical joker, I suppose—had fastened the door on the outside. We were imprisoned like rats in a trap. We had a shot at bashing the door down, but the flames got to it, and we had to give it up. If you hadn't come along and—"

Loder broke off with a shudder.

During the conversation Wally Bunter and the prefect, Melcroft and Mowbray had come round.

Neither was hurt. Like Loder, they had been overpowered by the fumes.

Melcroft and Mowbray were two of the lesser-known gay dogs of the Highcliffe Sixth. They had met Loder by appointment at the barn in Friardale Wood, with the object of spending a jolly evening. The fire had effectively put paid to the jollity; and Melcroft and Mowbray were astonished to find themselves alive. They glanced at the now smouldering



The flames, aided by the wind, were spreading. There was no time to go for assistance. He must get into the barn at once and try to help those who were in peril of their lives. After waiting for his opportunity, Wally Bunter made a sudden rush and hurled himself at the wooden structure. (See Chapter 3.)

planks, and then at Loder and his companion.

Melcroft rose slowly to his feet.

"How did we get clear of that dashed furnace?" he asked.

"We've got Mr. Bunter to thank for the fact that we're still alive and kicking," said Loder. "He bashed down some of the planks at the side of the barn, and nipped in and rescued us! Don't ask me how he managed to carry three louts like us into safety. Goodness know how he managed it—but he did!"

Melcroft looked amazed.

"I—I thought Mr. Bunter was your enemy!" he gasped.

"Put it the other way round," said Loder. "I was Mr. Bunter's enemy. I've plotted against him in the past. I've done my best to get him kicked out of Greyfriars, and I practically succeeded once. And this is how he rewards me! He's returned good for evil!"

The usual sneer was absent from Loder's tone. He spoke quietly, remorsefully.

Melcroft stepped up to Wally Bunter. "I want to thank you, sir!" he said. "I want to show you that I'm grateful! But words are awfully feeble! I can only say 'Thank you!' But I mean it most sincerely!"

"Same here!" said Mowbray. "It's difficult to know how to thank you, but we can at least make a point of advertising your pluck—"

"You will oblige me by doing nothing of the sort!" said Wally quickly. "What has happened this evening is our own affair, and need go no further. I'm not looking for cheap popularity!"

That was Wally Bunter's way. He had

performed an act of heroism, and he did not wish the details to be published. Truly he could have said, with the poet:

"I have done one braver thing
Than all the worthies did;
And yet a braver thence did spring,
Which was, to keep that hid."

Wally shook hands with Melcroft and Mowbray, after exacting from each a promise of secrecy. He did not attempt to sermonise. He had no right to do so, since they did not belong to his school. But he knew that the events of that evening would be a lesson to them, and he hoped they would benefit by it.

The tall forms of the Highcliffe seniors were swallowed up in the darkness of the wood.

Then Wally Bunter turned to Loder. "Feeling fit enough to walk back to the school?" he asked.

"Yes, sir. Don't worry about me. I say, I feel an out-and-out rotter! More than that, I know I am one! I've hated you from the start. I've plotted against you. I've done everything possible to compass your downfall. And yet—"

"We won't talk of these things now, Loder," said Wally quietly. "We'll put them behind us. I have tried to put myself in your place, and I can sympathise, in a way, with the resentment you have shewn me. The appointment of a Form-master who was not much older than yourself naturally acted as an irritant."

"Don't make excuses for me, sir," said Loder. "I ought to have recognised your authority. I ought to have backed you up!"

"It is not too late," said Wally, with a smile.

Loder looked quickly at his companion.

"Can I help you in any way, sir?"

His tone was eager.

"You certainly can, Loder! This influenza has spread with amazing rapidity. Every master is now on the sick-list, saving myself. The Head is down; Wingate is down. The school is in a state of chaos. There are but three prefects left to preserve order. You are one of them. The other two seem disinclined to exert themselves."

Loder clenched his hands.

"I'll jolly soon make 'em!" he muttered. "By Jove, I can realise what sort of a fix you're in, sir!"

"I'm afraid you can't realise it fully!" said Wally, as he strode along beside his companion. "The task of running the school is a gigantic one, in all conscience. But there is another matter—the matter of the secret examination."

Loder looked bewildered.

"I will explain," said Wally.

And he gave the prefect the details—so far as he was able to give them—of the exam which was to take place on the morrow.

"With your co-operation, Loder," said Wally, "I may win through. It is a strange trick of chance that I should be calling upon you—my late enemy—to come to my assistance. I believe you to be a fellow possessing great influence. That influence has not always been directed for good. But I see no reason why, at this crisis, you should not render a valuable service to your school."

"I'll help!" said Loder, a trifle breathlessly. "I'll help you all I know!"

"Thank you, Loder!"

They had reached the school gateway by this time.

Master and prefect faced each other, and their hands met.

"Let us bury all these wretched misunderstandings which have existed between us in the past," said Wally Bunter. "Life is too short for feuds and bitterness. You have been a powerful foe, Loder. I do not doubt that you will prove a powerful friend!"

Loder took Wally's hand in a close grip. He did not speak. He could not trust himself to.

All that was best in Gerald Assheton Loder came to the surface at that moment. His past—stained and smirched with dishonour—seemed to recede into the background like an unclean thing.

Two thoughts were uppermost in Loder's mind.

Wally Bunter had saved his life at great personal risk. And Wally Bunter stood in need of help.

No thought of permanently reforming his character occurred to the prefect. Loder did not go in for reforms. But his enmity towards Wally Bunter had completely vanished. And he meant to stand at Wally's side in this crisis, and to do all he knew to help him through.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Wally's Champions!

"I SHAN'T lift a finger to help that beastly upstart!"

Thus Carne of the Sixth.

"I'm with you!" said Walker.

"Let the merry school go to pot, for all I care!"

Walker was in one of his most reckless moods. Ordinarily, he was a better fellow than Loder. He could, on occasion, be quite decent. But he bitterly resented

the appointment of Wally Bunter to the post of master of the First.

He disliked Wally intensely, and he had no intention of backing him up. Let the school go to pot. That was the devil-may-care mood that James Walker was in at the moment.

Carne glanced at his watch.

"Quarter to seven," he remarked. "What do you say to going out for the evening? If we stay here we shall be called upon to do duty of some sort. Apart from Loder, we're the only prefects who aren't down with 'flu."

"I believe Blundell's taking charge of the school," said Walker.

"And a pretty fine hash he's making of it, judging by the row that's going on! Listen!"

The junior section of Greyfriars was making merry.

The fact that practically all the masters were down with 'flu caused all the unruly spirits to get out of hand.

Wally Bunter had not yet returned—at this precise moment he and Loder were on their way to the school—and discipline was at a discount.

A torchlight procession was in progress in the Close. Judging by the number of flaming torches which were carried aloft, it might have been Guy Fawkes' night.

The fags were responsible for the procession, which was led by what Dicky Nugent was pleased to call a drum-and-fife band.

There were no drums and no fifes. The instruments consisted of pots and pans and rattles and mouth-organs. And the pandemonium was truly deafening.

The fags were too young to grasp the gravity of the crisis which prevailed at the school. If they thought about influenza at all, they thought of it as a rather severe cold. That it sometimes developed into pneumonia, and took toll of human life, did not occur to them. With all the thoughtlessness of very young boys, they romped and revelled and made merry.

Blundell of the Fifth did his best to check the uproar. He might as well have tried to stem the flow of a mighty river.

Blundell dealt out sharp rebukes, and a cuff here and there. But the din went on.

"Hark at 'em!" said Carne. "Making night hideous, by Jove! Well, let 'em be merry if they want to. It's Bunter's place to keep the young brats in order, not ours!"

"What about going out?" said Walker.

"Well, we'd better go one at a time. You go first, and I'll follow in ten minutes' time, and meet you by the stile in Friardale Lane."

"But why this subterfuge?"

"We don't want to be seen going out together, or people may tumble to the fact that we mean to make an evening of it. Off you go! And mind you don't run into Bunter. I know you could defy him, and all that sort of thing, but it's not worth while. We don't know what sort of tale he may tell the Head afterwards."

Walker put on his cap and coat, and prepared to leave the study.

"It's all right," he said confidently.

"I sha'n't be seen."

But Walker was seen. He was

observed from the window of Study No. 1 in the Remove passage, where the Famous Five were assembled.

Bob Cherry stood at the window, and in the glare of the torchlights he clearly discerned the tall figure of the senior.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob. "Walker's going out! This is a trick to leave Mr. Bunter in the lurch! I expect Carne's in it as well, and he's arranged to meet Walker outside the school!"

Harry Wharton looked grim.

"This is where we take a hand!" he said. "Treachery on the part of the prefects will only make things harder than ever for Mr. Bunter. We must prevent Walker from leaving the school."

"That's the idea!" said Nugent.

"Lead on, Macduff!"

The Famous Five hurried down into the Close. They had been down once before, to try to check the noisy fags, but Blundell had resented their interference, so they had left him to cope with the situation himself.

The juniors put in a sharp sprint, and they reached the school gateway just before Walker could get there. They planted themselves in his path, and the prefect was obliged to halt.

"What's the little game?" he demanded angrily.

"You're not going out, Walker!" said Harry Wharton.

"Indeed!" said the Sixth-Former, with a sneer. "And who's going to prevent me?"

"We are!" said Bob Cherry.

"The preventfulness will be terrific!" said Hurree Singh. "The esteemed Walker must not be allowed to leave Mr. Bunter in the cart lurchfully."

Walker gritted his teeth.

"Stand aside!" he said sharply.

"Rats!"

Walker strode forward as if he would elbow the juniors out of his path.

"No, you don't!" said Harry Wharton. "If you try to break through we'll collar you and take you back into the building by force!"

Walker was too furious to heed the threat. He made another attempt to get past the human barrier, and lo! that barrier sprang suddenly into life.

The prefect was seized and swept off his feet.

"You—you cheeky young cubs!" spluttered Walker. "You know what this means? Laying hands on a prefect! It'll mean the sack for the lot of you!"

"These boys are quite justified in resorting to violence, Walker," interposed a quiet voice. And Wally Bunter, accompanied by Loder of the Sixth, came on the scene.

The juniors released their hold of the prefect, who stood glaring at Wally.

"Of course, being a special pal of theirs, you're bound to take their part!" he sneered.

"That's enough!" said Wally sternly.

"You were about to go out of gates."

"What of it?"

"You know perfectly well that there are only three prefects left to maintain authority, yet you deliberately attempt to shirk your duty! Hark at this pandemonium in the Close! What steps have you taken to quell it? None!"

"Oh, dry up! I'm not going to be bossed about by you!" said Walker sullenly.

"Now, listen to me, Walker," said Wally Bunter in measured tones.

"Either you yield to my authority and

(Continued on page 13.)

NEXT MONDAY!

"BILLY BUNTER—FILM STAR!"

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The GREYFRIARS HERALD



Supplement No. 63.

Week Ending March 11th, 1922.

Neglect of Duty!



by
George Bulstrode.

TOM BROWN WATCHES THE THIRD ROUND OF THE ENGLISH CUP!

(An exciting incident from the special short Greyfriars story.)

IT was Saturday morning. Cold and crisp and clear—those were the atmospheric conditions, in spite of the fact that the weather experts in the newspapers had predicted thunder and lightning, and goodness knows what!

On this particular Saturday morning it was good to be alive. Never had there been such an ideal day for footer.

So thought Tom Brown of the Greyfriars Remove, as he stood at his study window, gazing out into the winter sunshine.

"Glorious afternoon for the Cup-tie!" he muttered. "I wouldn't miss that match between Courtfield United and Belmont Rovers for worlds!"

The two teams in question had been drawn together in the third round of the English Cup competition. Tom Brown, who had football in his bones and blood, was going over to Courtfield to see the match.

The Greyfriars Remove had no fixture that afternoon, and Tom Brown would be free. So he thought, anyway. He had overlooked the fact that there was a paper called the "Greyfriars Herald," and that he—Tom Brown—was on the staff of that paper.

He was still gazing out of the window when Harry Wharton came in.

"Hallo, Browney!" he said. "I've got a job for you this afternoon."

"Eh?" said Tom Brown, turning round.

"It's a reporting job for the 'Herald,'" explained Wharton. "Greyfriars First are playing St. Jim's away. I want you to go over to St. Jim's and report the heroic tussle."

Supplement i.]

"Impossible!" said Tom Brown. "Can't be done, my dear fellow!"

"But it's got to be done!" said Wharton, in that sharp, incisive way of his.

"I've made other arrangements for this afternoon."

"Then you must cancel 'em."

"Cancel 'em!" hooted Tom Brown. "Are you aware that I've paid five-and-sixpence for a reserved seat in the stand to see the Cup-tie at Courtfield?"

"I'll refund you the five-and-sixpence," said Wharton. "You must cut out the Cup-tie, and go over to St. Jim's. Business before pleasure, you know!"

"Look here—"

"I'm not going to stand here arguing, like an old washerwoman," said Wharton. "I've given you your orders. It's up to you to carry them out. If that report of the St. Jim's match isn't in my hands by eight o'clock this evening, I shall—"

"Well?"

"I shall sack you from the staff of the 'Greyfriars Herald.'"

Tom Brown gave a low whistle. He didn't want to lose his job as a sub-editor. He knew that there would be a dozen fellows only too eager to step into his shoes. At all costs, he must hang on to his job.

At all costs, too, he must see this wonderful Cup-tie.

Yet how could he do both? The laws of space would not permit him to be in two places at one and the same time.

For some moments Tom Brown stood deep in thought.

Presently his face brightened. He had an idea.

He turned to speak to Wharton. But the captain of the Remove had gone. He had given his orders to his subordinate, and departed.

"I think I can work the giddy oracle," murmured Tom Brown. "I can see the Cup-tie without losing my job on the 'Herald.'"

Immediately after dinner, Tom Brown went out of the gates on his bicycle.

Harry Wharton saw him go, and smiled. He fondly imagined that Tom Brown was bound for St. Jim's.

Had he seen his sub-editor pedalling furiously in the direction of Courtfield, he would have had several sorts of a fit.

When Tom Brown reached the football ground, he found a lengthy queue waiting outside.

Being possessed of a special ticket, the Greyfriars junior did not have to tack himself on to the queue. He was able to go straight through into the stand.

He had no qualms of conscience on the score of neglect of duty.

"Dash it all!" he reflected, as he signalled to a small boy who was selling programmes. "Everybody ought to get Saturday afternoon off, and nearly everybody does."

Shortly afterwards the teams took the field, and Tom Brown was oblivious to everything, save the Cup-tie.

He looked on with fascinated eyes while the teams lined up.

Courtfield United were a sturdy, bustling team.

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set of players, and their opponents, Belmont Rovers, were a famous Cup-fighting side.

It was a game of thrills and many goals. Courtfield attacked strongly at the start, and they gave the impression that they would have a walk-over.

Belmont Rovers, handicapped by playing away from home, seemed all at sea for a time; but they rallied towards the interval, and at half-time the scores were level, 3-3. The second half was contested at a fast and furious pace.

Belmont Rovers proved victorious by five goals to four, and the crowd, though naturally disappointed at the defeat of the home side, gave the winners a great ovation. "I wouldn't have missed that match," muttered Tom Brown, "for whole hemispheres! That was Football with a capital F!"

He waited until the bulk of the huge crowd had melted away; then he left the ground, recovered his bicycle, and went along to the post-office in the High Street.

He obtained permission to use the telephone, and put through a trunk call to St. Jim's.

There was an interminable delay, but at last Tom Brown's patience was awarded.

A deep voice sounded over the wires.

"Mr. Railton of St. James' College here!"

"Oh, good! Might I speak to Tom Merry, sir?" asked Tom Brown.

"Certainly! I will call him to the telephone."

There was another delay. Then the cheery voice of Tom Merry made itself audible.

"Merry speaking. Who is that, please?"

"Brown, of Greyfriars. I say, Merry, how did the match go?"

Tom Merry chuckled.

"I've had news for you," he said. "St. Jim's won, hands down!"

"Oh! What was the score?"

"Three to nil!"

Tom Brown made a rapid note on a sheet of paper at his right hand.

"Who got the goals?" he inquired.

"Kildare in the first half; Montelth and Darrel in the second."

"Was it a good game?"

"Rather one-sided. Your fellows were overplayed. The forwards were awfully weak!"

Tom Brown made further notes on the sheet of paper.

"Thanks very much, Merry," he said.

"Don't mention it!"

Tom Brown rang off, and gave a chuckle.

"I've got enough information from Merry to be able to write up a report," he muttered. "I'll pop into the Elysian Cafe for tea, and draw up a description of the match at the same time."

Tom Brown made a very good meal, and when he rose from the table, all the cakes were finished, and so was the report of the match he had never seen.

Highly satisfied, Browney went back to Greyfriars.

At eight o'clock that evening he proceeded to Harry Wharton's study.

"Here's the report of the match," he said.

"Oh, good!"

Without waiting for any further comments from the editor of the "Greyfriars Herald," Tom Brown hurriedly withdrew.

Harry Wharton glanced through the report. It was very brief, and ran as follows:

"SMASHING VICTORY FOR ST. JIM'S!

Greyfriars First Eleven Below Form.

At St. Jim's on Saturday the Greyfriars First Eleven sustained a crushing defeat.

St. Jim's had all the play in the first half, and Kildare, their skipper, scored a grand goal. In the second stage, the Saints continued to hold the upper hand. Monteith and Darrel getting through for them.

The Greyfriars forwards had only themselves to blame for their heavy defeat. They played considerably below form. Wingate was weak in the extreme, and Gwynne and Faulkner, who can usually be relied upon to get goals, played a very poor game.

There will have to be a decided improvement if the First Eleven are to win matches.

St. Jim's thoroughly deserved their 3-0 victory."

Harry Wharton sent the report off to the printers, and in due course it appeared in print.

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And then Wharton received a visit from Wingate.

The captain of Greyfriars was furious. He brandished in his hand a copy of the "Greyfriars Herald."

"What do you mean by publishing this report?" he demanded.

Wharton stared at the speaker in surprise.

"It—it's quite correct, Wingate, isn't it?" he murmured.

"No, it jolly well isn't!"

"But—but St. Jim's won by three goals to nothing—"

"Yes, that part of it is true. But it's the rest of it that makes me savage. Look here: 'Wingate was weak in the extreme.' 'Gwynne and Faulkner played a very poor game.' It might interest you to know that I wasn't playing—neither were Gwynne and Faulkner!"

"M-m-my hat!" gasped Wharton.

"We were down with flu at the time, and we had a very weak team out," said Wingate.

"In the circumstances, they did jolly well in not being licked by more than 3-0. How dare you publish this tissue of falsehoods in your rag!"

Harry Wharton looked grim. He knew where the fault lay.

"One of my reporters is to blame for this, Wingate," he said. "I'm awfully sorry! Will you leave it to me to deal with him?"

Wingate curtly agreed to this arrangement, and stamped out of the study.

Then Wharton sent for Tom Brown, and he gave Browney the option of forfeiting a month's salary, or being deprived of his job.

Naturally, Tom Brown chose the former.

It was rather rough, having to scribble stories and articles for a whole month without getting a bean. But neglect of duty always brings its consequences, and the general opinion in the Remove was that Tom Brown had been let down very lightly!

EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

Tom Brown, of the Remove, got himself into a tidy old tangle this week.

But there is no need for me to tell you the painful story. Bulstrode does that very effectively.

Strictly between ourselves, I'm glad I didn't give Tom Brown the sack. I know I should have regretted it if I had done so.

Browney's place on the staff would be very difficult to fill. If you were to reckon up the number of stories and articles which have appeared in the "Greyfriars Herald" since it started, you would find that Tom Brown has turned out a greater amount of stuff than any other contributor. What's more, his work is popular. When in a humorous mood, he is irresistible.

If I had sacked him, therefore, there would have been weeping and gnashing of teeth among a certain section of my readers. I believe a lot of fellows would rather I sacked myself than Brown! I can picture them saying, "We can do without an Editorial, if it comes to the pinch; but we can't do without the witty contributions of Tom Brown."

I think I have punished Browney very effectively, and if he is wise he won't be guilty of further neglect of duty.

There is one other member of my staff who will have to pull up his socks, as the saying goes, if he wishes to avoid the sack. I refer to Lord Maulverer.

The weeks go by, and yet his lazy lordship does not appear to bestir himself sufficiently to write an article on Fashions for the "Herald." And yet he is our Fashions Expert!

Maully, my son, I give you public warning that unless you put your shoulder to the wheel, and do the work demanded of you, there will be Ructions, with a capital R! This flourishing concern of ours, the "Greyfriars Herald," is not a school for slackers. It is a beehive of industry, and we have no use for drones! So put that in your pipe—your imaginary pipe, of course—and smoke it!

I sincerely hope I shall not have to take any of my colleagues to task again.

HARRY WHARTON.

WINGATE'S WORRIES!

Described by DICK PENFOLD
(of the Remove Form).

The woes of a skipper are many,
His pleasures remarkably few;
Some say that he shouldn't have any.
What is a poor skipper to do?
There is never an end to his troubles,
They follow him everywhere;
And they never burst, like bubbles,
But they drive him to despair!

Two of them, four of them,
Ten of them, a score of them,
Come to my study for passes,
They want to go here,
They want to go there,
They're a set of worrying asses.
It's Wingate this, and Wingate that,
Till I'm nearly off my dot, that's flat!

I seldom have time for pleasure,
My existence is barren of joy;
No fun, no frolics, no leisure,
And everything seems to annoy.
In a constant stream to my study
The worrying fags repair;
With boots that are terribly muddy—
They scatter mud everywhere!

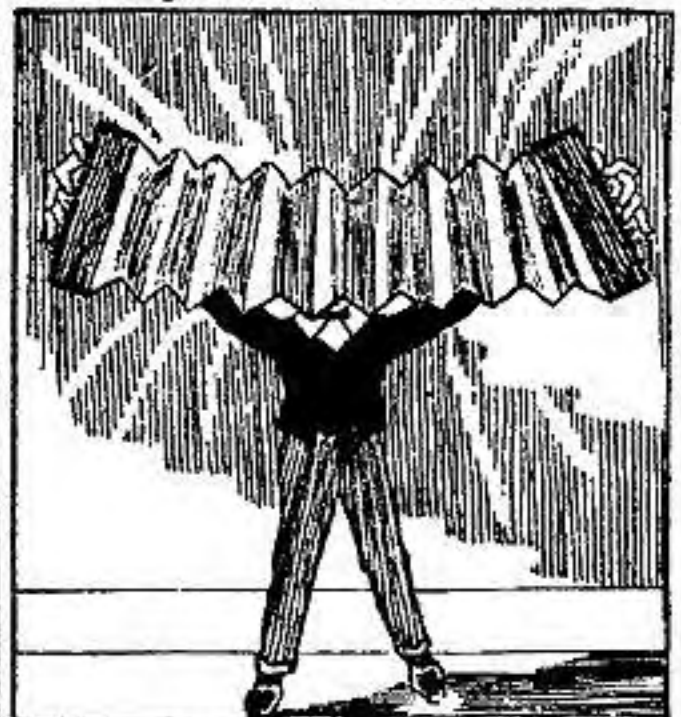
Two of them, four of them,
Possibly more of them,
Come to my study for passes,
To the picture-show
They crave to go:
Good riddance, you bubbling asses!
It's Wingate this, and Wingate that,
I'd like to shake each worrying rat!

Final Chorus:

Two of them, four of them,
If I have more of them
I shall go potty, I'm certain.
But ere I'm insane
I'll fetch my stout cane
That's hidden behind the curtain.
And I'll fiercely lash out left and right,
Till my tormentors have taken flight!

HOW I SEE OTHER FELLOWS!

By Frank Nugent.



JOHNNY BULL.

[Supplement to



Impertinent Interviews

By our Special Representative.

This Week: MR. WALLY BUNTER.

"FOR some weeks," said the editor sternly, "you have been eating the bread of idleness!"

"Oh, rot!" I growled. "I'm not a glutton."

"I'm not saying you are, fathead! What I mean is, you have been wallowing in sloth. You have received your salary week by week, yet you've done nothing to earn it. As I've told you over and over again, I've no room on my staff for slackers. I want you to go and interview Mr. Wally Bunter, the new master."

"But he'll kick me out of his study—"

"Not if you approach him properly. Of course, if you address him as a fat tyrant, or a pompous porpoise, you'll go sailing through his doorway. Speak to him respectfully, and introduce plenty of 'sirs' into your conversation, and you'll be all right."

"All serene! I'll interview Mr. Bunter this evening—"

"Pardon me, but you'll interview him now—at once!"

"Impossible!" I said. "He's going to referee the match this afternoon between Greyfriars and Rookwood. He won't be in his study."

"You haven't looked. Go and see, before you start making excuses."

Reluctantly, like a fly about to enter the web of an aggressive spider, I made my way to Wally Bunter's study.

I tapped on the door, and a gruff voice bade me enter.

The fact that the study was occupied astonished me greatly.

I was quite certain that Wally Bunter's name was down to referee the match. And, judging by the shouts which came from Big Side, the game was already in progress. Yet the referee was calmly seated in his study.

My suspicions were immediately aroused.

I gazed searchingly at the plump figure in the armchair.

"This isn't Wally Bunter at all!" I reflected. "It's his cousin Billy of the Remove!"

My suspicion ripened into certainty.

Between Wally and Billy there is a remarkable resemblance. And Billy had already been known to impersonate his plump cousin.

"I think I know what has happened," I murmured to myself as I stood on the threshold. "Mr. Bunter's on Big Side, refereeing the match. Billy has come to his study, removed his spectacles, and put on one of Wally's coats. He's trying to pose as a giddy Form-master. Just like the fat fraud!"

The occupant of the armchair surveyed me sternly.

"What are you mumbling about, boy?" he demanded.

"Boy yourself!" I retorted. "You're no older than I am!"

"How dare you? How dare you address a Form-master in that disrespectful manner?"

"Form-master be blowed!" I said rudely.

"It's all very well for you to put on a gruff voice and an air of authority, but you can't deceive me! I wasn't born yesterday, you know!"

"You will take five hundred lines for gross impertinence!"

"Five hundred rats!"

The plump figure rose up from the armchair, gesticulating wildly.

"A thousand lines!" he snapped.

"Oh, make it a billion!" I said jeeringly.

"If you utter another word I shall cane you!"

I laughed aloud.

"Cane my grandmother!" I said. "D'you think I can't see through this sham?"

"I quite fail to understand you."

"You're trying to pose as Mr. Bunter!"

"I am Mr. Bunter!"

"Oh, come off! You might be able to spoof a duffer like Alonzo Todd, but you can't spoof me! You're a fat, fibbing fraud of a prize porpoise—that's what you are! Hi! What are you doing?"

Supplement iii.]

For the fellow I addressed had suddenly seized a cane.

"I am going to thrash you soundly for your insolence!" was the reply.

That was altogether too much!

I made a rush at the fat impostor, with a view to snatching the cane from his grasp, and giving him a jolly good licking with it.

I anticipated no difficulty in overpowering a clumsy idiot like Billy Bunter.

And then an amazing thing happened.

My wrist was seized as in a vice, and I was swung back.

Then the cane descended upon my back and shoulders.

Swish, swish, swish!

I rendered a song and dance, and glared at my assailant. But I was helpless.

I've had a good many lammings in my time, and I pride myself that I can generally take them without a murmur. But this particular laming was so severe that I danced more wildly than ever; and my veils of anguish must have been heard all over the building.

Then a further amazing thing happened.

No sooner had my assailant flung me away from him in contempt than the door opened, and a plump youth in spectacles looked in.

It was Billy Bunter!



No sooner had my assailant flung me from him in contempt, than the door opened, and a plump youth in spectacles looked in.

It was Billy Bunter.

What with the licking and the shock, my head seemed to go round and round. I thought I was going to swoon.

"I—I—I've made a mistake!" I stammered. "A hideous mistake!"

"You certainly have!" said Mr. Bunter grimly.

"I—I didn't know it was you, sir. I thought it was Billy impersonating you. Your name was on the notice-board to referee the match."

"True. But at the last moment Mr. Lascelles consented to take my place."

"Oh!"

"Perhaps you will not be so ready to jump to conclusions in future!" said Mr. Bunter. "Now, Bunter major," he added, turning to Billy, "what do you want?"

Billy gave a cackle.

"I heard a sound as of somebody being slaughtered, sir," he said, "and I came along to pick up the pieces!"

"There are no pieces, Billy," I said with a groan. "I'm still intact—but only just. Perhaps you will do me the kindness to telephone for the ambulance."

Oh dear! What a life!

OUR BOOK CORNER!

By Our Special Reviewer.

"The Komplete Kook." By William George Bunter. (Messrs. Philling & Phatlenting. 3s. 6d. net.).

Mr. Bunter's knowledge of cookery, in all its branches, is unbounded. He has given us a very interesting and instructive book, marred, unfortunately, by frightful spelling. We have yet to learn that "onion" is spelt "u-n-y-o-n." And we don't like to see "cabbage" written like this—"k-a-b-b-i-d-g-e." Despite these defects, however, we feel sure Mr. Bunter's masterly treatise on cookery will command a ready sale, and the author may at last confidently expect a postal-order—for royalties!

"Cuthbert Cadd; or, The Boy Who Went Astray." By Alonzo Todd. (Pious Publications, Ltd. 5s. net.).

We do not wonder that Cuthbert Cadd, the hero—or, rather, the villain—of this story, went astray. Surrounded from birth by sinister influences, poor Cuthbert really hadn't the ghost of a chance to go straight. At the age of six we find him playing put-and-take for farthings, and losing the enormous sum of eightpence-halfpenny, which his irate parent was called upon to pay. Thereafter, Cuthbert developed into a thorough "goer." Expelled from six schools in succession, and subsequently serving terms of imprisonment, ranging from twenty-one days to twenty-one years, Cuthbert, indeed, went the pace. This is a moving story. It makes one move in the direction of Study No. 7, in order to give Alonzo Todd a sound bumping!

"Roger of the Ring." By Richard Russell. (Messrs. Power & Punch. 3s. 6d. net.).

Dick Russell tells a good story. He has a vigorous style, which will appeal to all lovers of boxing. Our sole objection to the yarn is that it is too short. The last chapter, describing the contest for the Heavy-Weight Championship of the World, is a thrilling piece of writing, which holds the reader spellbound. We congratulate Dick Russell on a really excellent piece of workmanship.

"Seventy Years a Gate-Porter." By William Gosling. (Messrs. Oldé & Do Creppit. 5s. net.).

Gosling's reminiscences make very interesting reading. We refuse to believe that he has been seventy years at his job. Forty would be nearer the mark. But he has certainly seen many generations of Greyfriars fellows come and go, and he describes all the changing scenes of life in a crude yet forceful manner. In the course of his career Gossy has reported over two thousand fellows for being late for locking-up. He has also swept up over three billions of leaves in the Close. Gosling is quite a landmark at Greyfriars. He is a decent old stick in his way, and we hope it will be a long time before he is pensioned off, and retires into oblivion.

"Famous Footballers." By H. Vernon-Smith. (Messrs. Shute & Scorer. 1s. net.).

Vernon-Smith's little gallery of famous players has been splendidly and painstakingly compiled. The author is completely master of his subject. He sticks to facts.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 735.

WHICH WAS YOUR GREATEST MOMENT?

(This question has been put to a number of Greyfriars fellows, and their replies are given below.—Ed.)

HARRY WHARTON:

If you mean my most thrilling moment, then it is a difficult question to answer. I've had so many thrills in my school career that it is not easy to make a selection. But I fancy I should give the palm to that terrible moment on board the derelict schooner in Pegg Bay, when we were attacked by, and succeeded in killing, the horrible snake which had been haunting the vessel. A thrilling moment, indeed—and a very terrible one!

H. VERNON-SMITH:

I think my greatest moment was when I scored the winning goal against St. Jim's, in a memorable match last season. It was in the very last minute of the game, and the chances of a Greyfriars victory seemed fearfully remote. However, Bob Cherry passed the ball to me, and although hampered by the St. Jim's defenders, I slammed the ball towards goal as I fell. When I saw that I had scored the winning goal, I experienced an overwhelming sensation of joy. It is no mean achievement to get the ball past such a smart and skilful goalie as Fatty Wynn!

DICKY NUGENT:

My greatest moment was when I beet yung Tubb in the 100 yards' race by a dessimal frackshun of an inch. I never had to run so hard in my life! I maid sure yung Tubb wood get their 1st, be-kawso he's got longer leggs than me and he wasn't so short of breth as I was. But I went fool steem ahead, and when I herd the crowd say, "Nugent miner has one!" I said at once, "Very nice, two!"

MR. PROUT:

Undoubtedly my greatest moment was when a tiger leapt out of the jungle and bore down upon me. Fortunately, I possessed a Winchester repeater, and great presence of mind, and I pumped several ounces of lead into the beast and despatched it. Unfortunately, this wonderful achievement was never mentioned in the papers. Had it been a lion I shot, I should there is no doubt have been lion-ised!

WILLIAM GOSLING:

Which my life has never had no great moments. I'm in a groove, that's what I am—in a hopeless rut! The monotonery of my existence is sumthing crool! No, I must say it agane, I've had no great moments!

HORACE COKER:

The greatest moment of my life was when I was borne! Think what a differense my pressence maid to the world! Just think how flat and empty the world would be without me. Why, it wouldn't be able to revolve on its axes!

ROAST CHICKEN!

By TOM BROWN

(Of the Remove Form).

NEXT time they serve this so-called delicacy in Hall I shall revolt. I shall commit a deed of violence. I do not say that I shall go so far as to slay my Form-master with a carving-knife. But I shall certainly commit a horrible crime.

Roast chicken sounds all right. And it smells all right. It even looks all right. But when you come to taste it—ye gods! I can understand why people hunger-strike!

The first time we had roast chicken at Greyfriars I didn't know what it was—or, rather, I mistook its identity.

I arrived in Hall rather late, and the meal was already served.

Mr. Quelch frowned at me from the head of the table.

"Late again, Brown!" he said sternly.

"Sorry, sir!" I muttered.

"Your sorrow does not impress me in the least," said the old tyrant. "You will take a hundred lines."

I sat down in my place, and started to dissect that which was on my plate. I found it exceedingly difficult.

At first I was inclined to think that my knife was blunt, but I learnt from Bob Cherry that the knives had been sharpened only that morning.



"I trust you are not quarrelling with the food, Brown!" said Mr. Quelch, in a menacing tone. "I consider it a 'fowl' atrocity, sir!" I answered.

I struggled and perspired and hacked and sawed, but all to no purpose. At last I gave it up, and rose in my place.

"Well, Brown?" said Mr. Quelch.

"This rabbit is jolly tough, sir!" I said.

"Rabbit! What are you talking about, boy? It is roast chicken!"

"My hat!"

"The bird is both tender and tasty," said Mr. Quelch.

"Have you had some yourself, sir?"

"I have eaten a leg."

"Then you must have popped it all into your mouth all at once, sir," I said. "You couldn't possibly have cut it with a knife."

There was a titter from the rest of the fellows.

Mr. Quelch bellowed for silence.

"I trust you are not quarrelling with the food, Brown?" he said, in a menacing tone.

"I can't help saying, sir, that I consider it a 'fowl' atrocity!"

A dramatic hush followed my words. I thought Quelch was going into an apopleptic fit.

"You will wait upon me in my study after

dinner, Brown," he said. "I will cane you severely for this impertinence."

"Meanwhile, sir," I said meekly, "can I take this bird into the kitchen, and swop it for a good, honest joint of roast beef or a dish of stew?"

"You will do nothing of the sort, Brown!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "You will either eat what you have, or leave it."

"I'll feed it to the kitchen cat," I murmured, sotto voce. "Its fangs are stronger than mine."

I went practically dinnerless that day. A lump of wobbling jelly was all I had to eat.

Three days later roast chicken popped up on the menu once more.

There was a special bird set aside for the Remove table.

I had my suspicions of that bird from the outset.

On the previous day, Mr. Prout, whilst motor-cycling at a furious speed in Friardale Lane, had sent a chicken permanently home to roost. It had passed under his front wheel, and perished painfully.

Mr. Prout, with the air of a triumphant game-shooter, had brought the bird back to Greyfriars. And although it had since been shorn of all its feathers, I thought I could recognise it on account of a broken back and a fractured thigh.

Mr. Quelch started to carve the chicken. "What part would you like, Cherry?" he inquired.

"A leg, sir, please."

"Very good. And you, Redwing?"

"He'd like a wing—a red wing!" murmured Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Be silent!" roared Mr. Quelch, who, fortunately for Skinner, had not heard that youth's remark. "Now, Redwing!"

"I'll have a piece of the breast, sir, please," said Tom Redwing.

Mr. Quelch hacked viciously at the bird.

"Brown?" he jerked out at length.

"None for me, sir, thank you!" I said hastily.

"Come, come, Brown! Surely your appetite is equal to the occasion? A nice leg—"

"I'd prefer a fatted calf, sir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch bestowed a fierce glare upon me.

"Have you any complaint to make regarding this bird, Brown?" he demanded.

"Yes, sir. In the first place, it didn't die a natural death. It's got portions of pneumatic tyre in its anatomy. I have reason to suspect that this is the bird that Mr. Prout ran over yesterday. It was an aged, decrepit creature, and it would have qualified for an old-age pension had it been spared another day or two. Don't ask me to sample that prehistoric fowl, sir—for pity's sake, don't! I'll eat anything in reason, but that chicken—Groo!"

"You are utterly absurd, Brown!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Now, a nice wing—"

"If you force a wing upon me, sir, I shall fly away!" I said.

"Very well, you insolent jackanapes," fumed Quelch, "you shall go without!"

And I did. Not for whole hemisphere would I have tackled that leathery fowl.

Roast chicken, my friends, is an abomination. It is worse than all the plagues of Egypt lumped together.

An expert on fowls tells me that the percentage of really eatable birds is four in every twenty.

Personally, I should be inclined to put the percentage at one in ten thousand.

One thing, at any rate, is certain: Next time roast chicken is on, I'm off!

[Supplement iv.]

WALLY WINS THROUGH!

(Continued from page 8.)

do your duty as a prefect, or I shall depose you from your post, and explain to the Head that I have done so and why. You will not go out this evening. You will not go out at all until the present crisis is over."

Walker was nonplussed by this speech. He was casting about in his mind for a suitable reply, when Loder chimed in.

"I endorse everything that Mr. Bunter has said," he remarked. "You'd better toe the line, Walker. There's work to be done, and you've got to put your shoulder to the wheel. So has Carne."

Walker nearly fell down. He had to peer closely at Loder through the gloom to make sure that it really was Loder.

What was happening? Had the world suddenly turned upside-down?

Here was Gerald Loder, the arch-enemy of Wally Bunter—as Walker thought—taking up the cudgels on behalf of the young Form-master!

Walker could scarcely believe his ears. "W-w-what did you say, Loder?" he stammered.

"Not getting deaf, are you?" said

Bob Cherry. "You've actually got a champion in Loder!"

"I appear to have five other champions, no less valuable," answered Wally, with a smile.

"Well, you know we're backing you up, sir," said Harry Wharton. "We'd do that as a matter of course. But Loder—"

"It fairly beats the band!" said Johnny Bull.

"Something must have happened to cause Loder to rally round like this!" said Nugent.

Wally Bunter did not enlighten the Famous Five. To do so he would have had to describe his rescue of Loder from the burning barn. And he had no desire to pose as a gallant hero.

"I'm glad Loder has decided to do his duty," he said.

Bob Cherry glanced at the overcoat which Wally Bunter carried over his arm.

The lamp over the school gateway had just been lighted by Gosling. And, in the rays of the light, Bob Cherry noticed that the overcoat had been burnt.

"Why, you've burnt your coat, sir!" he exclaimed.

"Yes," said Wally, glancing down at the garment. "That's rather unfortunate."

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Task for Two!

"**C**OME in!" It was a weak, agitated voice—not at all like the usually calm, confident tones of the Headmaster of Greyfriars.

Wally Bunter stepped into the Head's bed-room. He found Dr. Locke in bed.

"Ah, it is you, Bunter! I am very glad you have come! I wanted specially to speak to you. Dr. Short tells me that I have influenza and a high temperature, and that I must take to my bed. I hate to lay up like this, when there is so much to see to—so much that requires attention."

The Head beckoned Wally Bunter to a chair. Wally sat down.

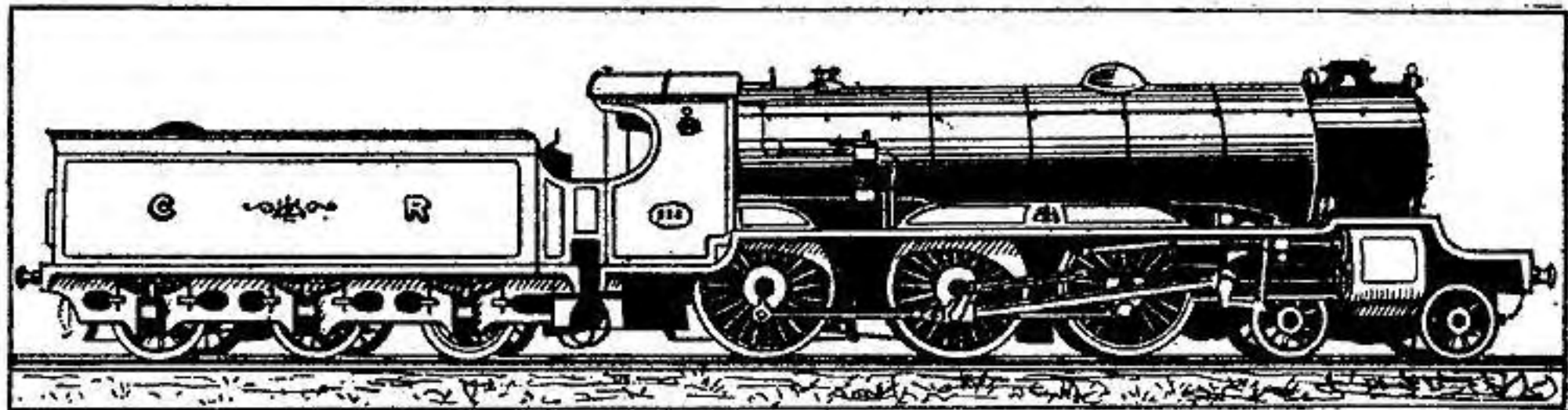
"You're not to worry, sir," he said. "Worry will only retard your recovery. With proper care, you'll soon get over this!"

"But the examination, Bunter—the examination!" said the Head, with a groan. "I fear it will have to be abandoned, so far as Greyfriars is concerned."

Wally bent eagerly towards the bed. Dr. Locke waved him back.

"Do not come too close!" he said. "I

GIVEN FREE! GRAND COLOURED PLATE OF THIS ENGINE!



In the "POPULAR." Now on Sale! Another Plate on Friday!

Loder. "I remarked that there was work to be done, and that you've got to put your shoulder to the wheel."

Walker stood for a moment as if petrified. Then he flew into a passion.

"You—you turncoat!" he said savagely. "You were up against Bunter as much as anybody, and now, without any reason at all, you start backing him up!"

Without any reason at all! Loder smiled. Walker knew nothing of the dramatic, almost tragic event which had occurred during the last hour.

"I'm not going to argue with you," said Loder. "Time's precious. First of all, you and Carne and I must break up this noisy mob." Loder waved his hand in the direction of the demonstrative fags. "We'll wade into them with ash-plants. They must be made to understand that when people are ill, the least noise made the better."

Loder made a move in the direction of the school building. Walker, accustomed by instinct to following Loder's lead, accompanied him.

The Famous Five, who had been standing by in case their services should be required, turned to Wally Bunter.

"Wonders will never cease, sir!" said

But he did not explain how the coat had come to be burnt.

Before any more questions could be asked Wally turned away.

"I've got to go and interview the Head," he said. "So-long, you fellows!"

As Wally Bunter strode off in the direction of the Head's private house the din in the Close subsided as if by magic.

Loder of the Sixth, by the drastic method of bringing his ashplant into play, had quelled the tumult. And Walker and Carne had helped him—unwillingly enough, but they had no choice in the matter.

They were at a loss to understand this change which had suddenly come over Loder. He had always declared himself at war with Wally Bunter. He had professed to hate Wally. Yet he was now kow-towing to the young Form-master's authority.

Walker and Carne didn't like it a little bit. So they had to do the other thing.

Wally Bunter smiled as the din subsided.

"I'm glad Loder's on my side," he murmured. "It makes things ever so much easier for me. But it's going to be a big fight. And I shall have to exert every ounce of energy, if I'm to come through with flying colours!"

do not wish you to contract this distressing malady through being in close proximity to a victim. What were you about to say, Bunter?"

"There is no reason why the examination should be abandoned, sir," said Wally. "I will undertake to see it through!"

"You!"

Wally nodded.

"But—but you cannot conduct an examination of this nature single-handed. Bunter!" gasped the Head.

"I'll have a good shot at it, sir!"

Dr. Locke sighed wearily.

"I am afraid you do not realise the magnitude of such a task, Bunter," he said. "It is a colossal undertaking!"

"However colossal it may be, sir, I am prepared to carry it through," said Wally quietly. "Have the conditions governing the exam come to hand yet?"

"They arrived this evening," said the Head. He pointed to a sheet of paper on the mantelpiece. "Read them, Bunter," he added.

Wally unfolded the sheet, and perused the conditions.

"You might read them aloud, Bunter," said Dr. Locke. "I only glanced at them perfunctorily."

Wally Bunter recited from a sheet of paper, as follows:

"A NATIONAL COMPETITION
Open to Public School Boys Under the Age of Fifteen.

CONDITIONS.

(1) The subject of the Examination must not be made known to the competitors beforehand.

(2) Headmasters are hereby notified, for their own information, that the subject will be Geography. Each competitor will be handed a sheet of paper, on which will appear an outline (not a complete map) of England and Wales. He will be given half an hour to fill in the names of the principal towns, rivers, railroads, etc. At the foot of the chart he will fill in the chief industries of the towns he has mentioned. At the end of the half-hour the competitor will be handed a chart of Scotland, which he will fill up in a similar manner, half an hour being allowed. Finally, he will be given a chart of Ireland to fill up. The actual examination will, therefore, take one hour and a half; and it must take place between the hours of 10 a.m. and 12 mid-day, on the day following the receipt of these instructions.

(3) The charts, when completed, must be signed by the competitors, collected by the master in charge of the examination, and forwarded without delay to the Editor of the "Housemaster."

(4) Five Cash Prizes, of One Hundred Pounds each, will be awarded to the competitors who, in the opinion of the Editor, send in the best and most accurate charts.

(5) Great care must be taken not to let the competitors know beforehand what the subject is to be; and whilst the contest is in progress they must not have access to any geography books. The master in charge must sign a declaration to the effect that the examination has been conducted strictly on these lines.

(6) The decision of the Editor of the "Housemaster" must be accepted as final."

"Thank you, Bunter!" said the Head, when Wally had finished. "You will now realise what this means. Each competitor must be given three charts—one of England and Wales, one of Scotland, and one of Ireland. At Greyfriars there are one hundred and fifty boys eligible for this competition. That will mean that no less than four hundred and fifty charts will have to be prepared. It is impossible, Bunter—it is manifestly impossible!"

"I don't agree, sir," said Wally, with a slight smile.

"What! How can you possibly prepare four hundred and fifty charts by ten o'clock to-morrow morning?"

"By the simple expedient of working all night, sir!"

The Head gasped.

"I cannot allow you to endanger your health in that way, Bunter!" he said. "You have quite enough worry and responsibility, as it is. You are the only master who has escaped this influenza epidemic, and you bear a heavy burden upon your shoulders. Yet you are actually proposing to sit up all night—"

"I think this is a job I ought to tackle, sir, and I must insist upon tackling it. It would be a thousand pities if Greyfriars could not compete against the rival schools."

"Yes, it certainly would," agreed the Head. "But the task is too stupendous for one person to cope with. Even

supposing you managed to get the charts ready, how could you possibly conduct an examination in which a hundred and fifty boys, of different Forms, were taking part?"

"I should muster them all together in Big Hall, sir," said Wally. "It will be perfectly simple. I shall be bitterly disappointed, sir, if you refuse to allow me to go ahead!"

The Head was silent for some moments.

"It is extremely good of you, Bunter," he said at length, "to volunteer your services in this way. Strictly speaking, I ought not to allow you to attempt the task. But I am very jealous for the reputation of this school. Nothing would please me more than to see one of the prizes come to Greyfriars."

Wally Bunter rose to his feet.

"That settles it, then, sir," he said. "I'll go and make a start. May I take these conditions with me?"

"Yes. But you must take every precaution that they are not seen by any of the competitors. If you can persuade any of the seniors to help you in the matter of getting out the charts, do so. But pledge them to strict secrecy concerning the subject of the examination."

"Very good, sir," said Wally.

The Head sank back wearily on his pillow. He looked very ill. Conversation had been an effort. But he was immensely relieved to know that it would not be necessary to cancel the examination.

"I hope you will soon get fit again, sir," said Wally Bunter.

And he withdrew from the Head's presence.

Wally was feeling none too fit himself.

He had passed through some exciting experiences during the past twenty-four hours, and the reaction was beginning to set in.

A curious feeling of weakness assailed him. But he resolutely shook it off.

"I mustn't give in!" he muttered.

"I must get a grip on myself. If I go and contract this beastly 'flu, the situation will be hopeless!"

He made his way to his study.

Everything seemed quiet and orderly. There was no noise.

A stranger would hardly have believed that it was practically a school without masters. Every fellow appeared to be on his best behaviour.

This was a tribute to Loder's abilities as a disciplinarian.

It was also a tribute to the Famous Five of the Remove who had been working hard to preserve order.

After lights-out there would probably be fresh outbursts on the part of the lawless spirits. But for the present all was peaceful.

Wally Bunter had not been in his study many moments before Loder of the Sixth came in.

Wally nodded cordially to the prefect, and asked him to take a chair.

"I just looked in to report that everything was O.K., sir," said Loder. "There has been a bit of a shindy, as you know, but we effectively squashed it."

"Thank you, Loder!"

"You can sleep soundly in your bed to-night, sir," said the prefect. "I'll make a tour of the building from time to time to see that everything's all right."

Wally Bunter smiled.

"Sleep is out of the question, so far as I'm concerned," he said. "There's a job to be done—an all-night job, most likely."

"In that case," said Loder, "I'm going to give you a hand."

Wally's face brightened.

"That's very decent of you," he said.

"It's a fearfully monotonous job."

"Tell me what it is, sir."

Wally produced the conditions governing the examination.

"In the strictest confidence, I will show you this," he said.

"You may rely on me to keep my own counsel, sir," said Loder.

He read the conditions very carefully.

"So you will require four hundred and fifty charts, sir?" he said at length.

"Yes."

"Well, that's simple. It will only be necessary for you to draw up three charts—one for England and Wales, one for Scotland, and one for Ireland."

"Only three?" said Wally, in amazement.

Loder nodded.

"Then all the rest can be run off on a hectograph," he explained.

"Oh!"

"There's a hectograph in Mr. Quelch's study. We'll borrow it. I estimate that this job will take a couple of hours at the outside."

"Splendid!" said Wally, his face beaming.

"If you'll get out the original charts, sir," said Loder, "I'll help you to run off the duplicates. I'll go and get the hectograph and the necessary amount of paper."

Wally Bunter started to express his gratitude. But Loder cut him short.

"This is only a trifling return for what you've done for me, sir," he said, and he hurried away on his errand.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Night Patrol!

"IT'S up to us," said Harry Wharton, "to maintain discipline."

"Hear, hear!"

"Mr. Bunter's busy, and Loder's engaged with him in his study," Wharton went on. "That leaves only Carne and Walker to keep order. And you know what they are. Now that Loder's back's turned, they'll just let things slide."

Bob Cherry nodded.

"What I can't make out," he said, "is Loder's sudden devotion to Mr. Bunter. It's amazing! In a single evening they seem to have changed from deadly enemies to bosom pals!"

"Something has happened that we're not in the know about," said Nugent. "Anyway, I'm jolly glad Loder's doing the decent thing. Mr. Bunter could never get through single-handed."

"Have the conditions for the exam arrived yet?" inquired Johnny Bull.

"Yes," said Wharton. "That's what Mr. Bunter and Loder are working on. I wish we could help; but it's impossible. The subject of the exam is to be kept a deep, dark secret from those who are taking part. The best way we can help Mr. Bunter is to form ourselves into a sort of police patrol, and go on night-duty. We'll make a tour of the dormitories from time to time to see that everything is in order."

"That is a very worthy and appropriate suggestion, my esteemed friend," said Hurree Singh.

"We'll arm ourselves with cricket stumps, and use them as truncheons, if necessary," said Bob Cherry. "We won't allow any hanky-panky. We're backing up Mr. Bunter through thick and thin!"

"Yes, rather!"
The captain of the Remove glanced at his watch.
It was bed-time for the fags and the juniors. But from the Rag, and the fags' Common-room, came sounds of merriment. There was no prefect to shepherd everyone up to bed.

Walker and Carne, now that they were free from Loder's supervision, were slacking.

Harry Wharton led the way to the Rag.

On opening the door he saw that a game of leap-frog was in progress. A line of crouching figures extended from one end of the room to the other. Over their backs a number of hilarious juniors were leaping.

"Bed-time, everybody!"
Harry Wharton's voice rang out sharply.

"Since when," asked Bolsover major, "have you been appointed a prefect?"

"There are no prefects available to keep order," answered Wharton quietly. "As captain of the Remove, I'm going to exert my authority. The decent fellows won't need telling twice to go to bed."

The game of leap-frog had ceased. The majority of the fellows filed quietly out.

Only a few remained, including Bolsover and Skinner.

"Off you go!" said Harry Wharton sharply.

"Rats!"

"We'll give you one minute to make up your minds!" said Bob Cherry.

Bolsover and his companions guffawed loudly. But they looked somewhat uneasy.

Bob Cherry consulted his watch.

The minute elapsed, but the matineers did not budge.

"Time's up!" said Bob. "Drive 'em up to bed, you fellows!"

The Famous Five brought their cricket-stumps into action. And Bolsover & Co., yelling with anguish, rushed wildly from the room. They were pursued up the stairs and into the Remove dormitory, where they collapsed, groaning, on to their beds.

Having gained the mastery over the rebellious spirits of the Remove, Harry Wharton and his chums proceeded to the fags' Common-room.

Here they found an extraordinary scene in progress.

Little Willie Newman of the First was standing in front of the fire. He was bound from head to foot with stout rope, and a crowd of fags stood round him, cackling with glee.

"You're tied up in knots now," Tubbs was saying, "and I bet you a term's pocket-money you won't free yourself!"

Willie Newman struggled frantically to burst his bonds. But the more he struggled the more helplessly he became entangled. He wriggled and writhed and twisted, but all to no purpose.

The Famous Five pushed their way through the crowd of fags.

"What are you doing to this kid?" demanded Harry Wharton.

Dicky Nugent grinned.

"It's only a jape, you fellows," he said. "Newman's enjoying it."

"He doesn't look wildly happy," said Johnny Bull. "Are you kids aware that it's past bed-time?"

"We were waiting for the prefect on duty to come and tell us," said Paget.

"Well, we're the prefects on duty," said Bob Cherry.

He stepped forward, and severed Willie Newman's bonds with his pocket-knife.

"Move off in column of fours!" said

Bob. "The last fellow to leave the room will receive a swipe with my cricket stump!"

There was a wild stampede on the part of the fags. They rushed to the door, and Sammy Bunter, who was the last to reach it, received a gentle tap on his anatomy which made him howl.

The Famous Five followed up until the fags were in their dormitories. And they stood by until everybody was in bed. Then they extinguished the lights, and, warning the fags what would happen if there were any nocturnal revels, they withdrew.

"Our police patrol's going great guns," remarked Nugent. "We've got everybody to bed, and restored quiet."

"I'm not so sure about that," said Wharton. "Listen!"

Distant sounds of thudding and shouting came to the juniors' ears.

"I think I can locate that rumpus," said Bob Cherry. "It's coming from the Upper Fourth dorm."

"Then we'll go and give Temple & Co. fits!" said Johnny Bull.

The Famous Five went off at a canter.

On reaching the dormitory occupied by Temple & Co. of the Upper Fourth, they found a football match in progress.

It was not a real football that was being used. It was a sock stuffed full of paper and tied round with string.

One goal was the fireplace, the other goal was the door.

The fireplace was being guarded by Temple, Dabney, Fry, and Scott. These four were holding the fort against the attacks of four of their Form-fellows.

The remainder of the Fourth-formers were sitting up in bed, watching the fun, which raged fast and furious.

"Go it, ye cripples!"
"On the ball!"

"Take it forward, Temple! That's the way! Now, shoot!"

Temple shot hard at the door. At the same instant it opened, and Bob Cherry deftly shot out his hand and caught the improvised football.

The Fourth-Formers glared at the intruders.

"Remove fags!" growled Dabney. "What do you want here?"

"Chuck this horseplay," said Harry Wharton, "and get into bed!"

"W—w—what!"

"D'you think we're going to take our orders from a set of cheeky cubs like you?" demanded Temple. "Give us back our ball, Cherry!"

"Not this evening," said Bob cheerfully. "Some other evening!"

Snorting with rage, Temple took a quick stride towards the doorway.

"Better stand back," advised Nugent. "We're armed."

"And we sha'n't hesitate to use our cricket stumps, if you don't obey us, and get into bed," said Johnny Bull.

Temple hesitated.

The expressions on the faces of the Famous Five were grim and uncompromising. The juniors held their cricket stumps in readiness, and they were quite prepared to use them if the necessity arose.

But the necessity did not arise.

Temple & Co., though they hated the idea of knuckling under to their rivals of the Remove, went to their beds. They had no desire to be castigated with cricket stumps.

"We're not turning in because of anything you kids have said," explained



The juniors put on a sharp spurt and reached the school gateway just before Walker could get there. They planted themselves in his path. "You're not going out, Walker!" said Harry Wharton. "We're not going to allow you to leave Mr. Bunter in the lurch!" (See Chapter 4.)

Temple. "The game's over; that's why we're packing up."

Harry Wharton laughed grimly.

"I think we know better than that," he said. "Now, look here, Temple. If there's another sound from this dormitory to-night, we'll bring the Remove in force, and pulverise you!"

"The pulverisation," said Hurree Singh, "will be terrific!"

Having issued that threat, the Famous Five withdrew.

They remained on patrol until one o'clock in the morning. But there was no further disturbance.

It had been a great achievement, for five juniors to keep a school in subjection. And it had been a tremendous help to Wally Bunter, who would otherwise have had to leave his work in order to maintain discipline.

Harry Wharton's police patrol had rendered yeoman service. And when at last they turned in, it was with the satisfying reflection that they had deserved well of their country.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Slaves of the Lamp!

"LIFE is just one dashed misfortune after another!"

It was Loder of the Sixth who uttered that epigram.

Wally Bunter and the prefect were hard at work in the former's study.

From the outset, everything had gone against them.

Wally had carefully drawn up three charts—one of England and Wales, one

of Scotland, and one of Ireland. And Loder had procured the hectograph from Mr. Quelch's study.

Fifty copies of one of the charts had been run off in record time. And then a calamity had happened.

The hectograph had broken down. It refused to operate properly, and it refused to be set right.

It was impossible to run off any further copies of the charts.

"Here's a pretty go!" said Wally Bunter.

"Enough to make a saint savage!" said Loder. "With ordinary luck, we should have completed this job within a couple of hours. As it is—"

The prefect made a despairing gesture. "There's only one thing for it, Loder," said Wally.

"And that is?"

"The remainder of the charts will have to be drawn separately, by hand."

"But there are four hundred wanted!" gasped Loder. "That will be two hundred apiece!"

Wally Bunter nodded.

"If you've no stomach for the job," he said, "get along to bed. I'll tackle it, somehow."

"I'm not deserting you, sir," said Loder. "I'm staying here until this job's through. But four hundred charts, to be drawn one at a time. It—it's overwhelming!"

"That hectograph," said Wally, "is no longer fit for active service. It ought to be decently interred in some field, with full military honours."

"It's an obsolete type," said Loder. "Invented in the year dot, I should say."

I'll take it back to Mr. Quelch's study; then we'll get busy."

Wally Bunter had already started work on the charts. A few moments later Loder joined him.

The prefect found the work slow and difficult at first. He had done no map-drawing for some time. He was working on a chart of Ireland. Gradually, the outline of that country impressed itself on his mind, and he became quicker and more facile.

For two hours master and prefect worked untiringly.

Then, without any warning, a second calamity occurred.

The electric light suddenly went out, and the study was plunged into darkness.

"What the merry dickens—" gasped Loder.

He groped his way to the switch near the door, and jerked it up and down. But it failed to act.

"Seems to me," came Wally Bunter's voice through the darkness, "that the light has been cut off at the main."

It was at this juncture that Loder made his remark:

"Life is just one dashed misfortune after another!"

After an uncanny pause—for it was pitch-dark in the study—Loder inquired:

"What are we going to do about it, sir?"

"We must get a lamp," said Wally. "I don't fancy working by lamplight, but it's the only way."

He groped his way from the study, and returned in a few moments with an acetylene lamp. This was set upon the table, and by its rays Wally Bunter and his assistant pursued their colossal task.

The hours dragged slowly by, and no word passed between the toilers. Their pens were active; their tongues were idle.

Boom!

The sound reverberated from the old clock-tower.

The silence in the study was broken at last.

"What time was that, sir?" asked Loder.

"Three o'clock."

"My hat!"

"How many charts have you done?" inquired Wally.

"A hundred and twenty."

"Splendid! And I've done a hundred and fifty. We've broken the back of the job, and can afford to take a rest, I think."

Loder glanced at his companion's face. It looked ghastly in the lamplight.

The prefect started to his feet in alarm.

"You're ill, sir!" he exclaimed.

"Nonsense, Loder!"

"But you are!" persisted the Sixth-Former. "You seem on the point of collapse! Why not go to bed? I can finish this job off my own bat."

Wally Bunter rose rather unsteadily to his feet.

"I'm quite all right," he said gruffly.

"A bit fagged, that's all. I think I'll brew some coffee. It'll do us both good."

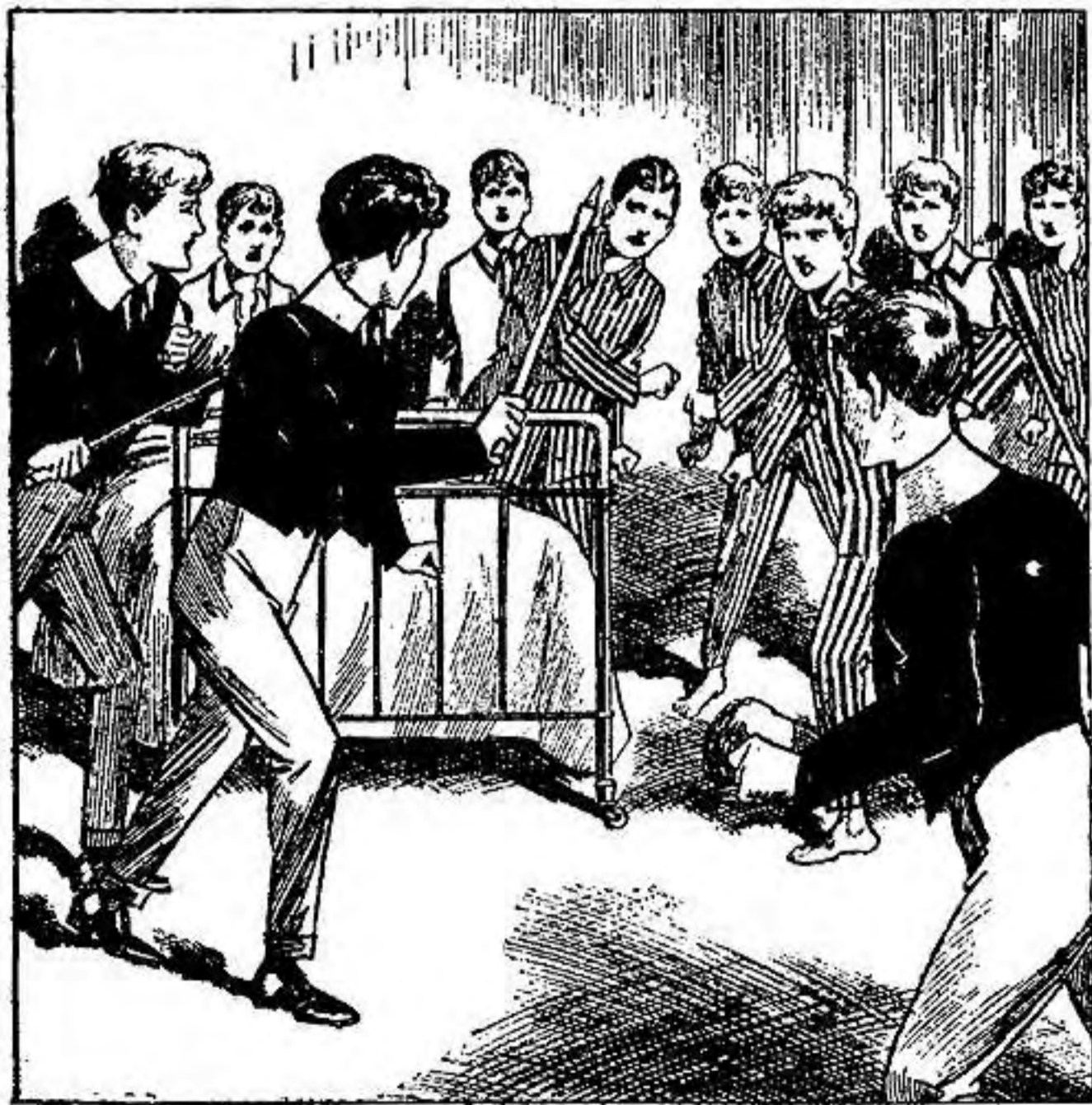
There was a spirit-stove in the study.

In a few moments Wally had prepared a steaming jug of coffee. He also produced a sultana-cake from the cupboard. Then he built up the fire, which had got very low.

"We'll take a respite now," he said, with a smile. "Do you take sugar?"

"Two lumps, please," said Loder.

If anyone had told the Sixth-Former twenty-four hours earlier that he would ever sit and drink coffee with Wally Bunter in the latter's study, on the most friendly terms, he would have



Bob Cherry opened the door of the dormitory, deftly shot out his hand, and caught the im rovised football. The Fourth-Formers glared at the intruders. "Chuck that horse-play," said Harry Wharton, "and get into bed!"
(See Chapter 6.)

NEXT
MONDAY!

"BILLY BUNTER—FILM STAR!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 735.

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY FRIARS.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

scuffed at the suggestion. Yet here he was, enjoying a snack which he had thoroughly earned, and chatting genially with the young Form-master whom he had formerly hated.

"Funny world!" thought Loder. "Fate plays some queer tricks!"

After he had partaken of refreshment, the colour returned to Wally Bunter's cheeks.

When Loder had seen him look so ghastly he had had another attack of dizziness, similar to that which he had experienced in Friardale when he had gone to fetch Dr. Short. But again he had taken himself in hand, and the attack had passed. The coffee revived him, and after the interval of rest he settled down to work again with a will.

And so, through the long night, master and prefect worked on the examination charts.

Their arduous task was not finished until the rising-bell rang out. Then they both laid down their pens, and exchanged triumphant glances.

"Finished!" said Wally Bunter.

Loder nodded.

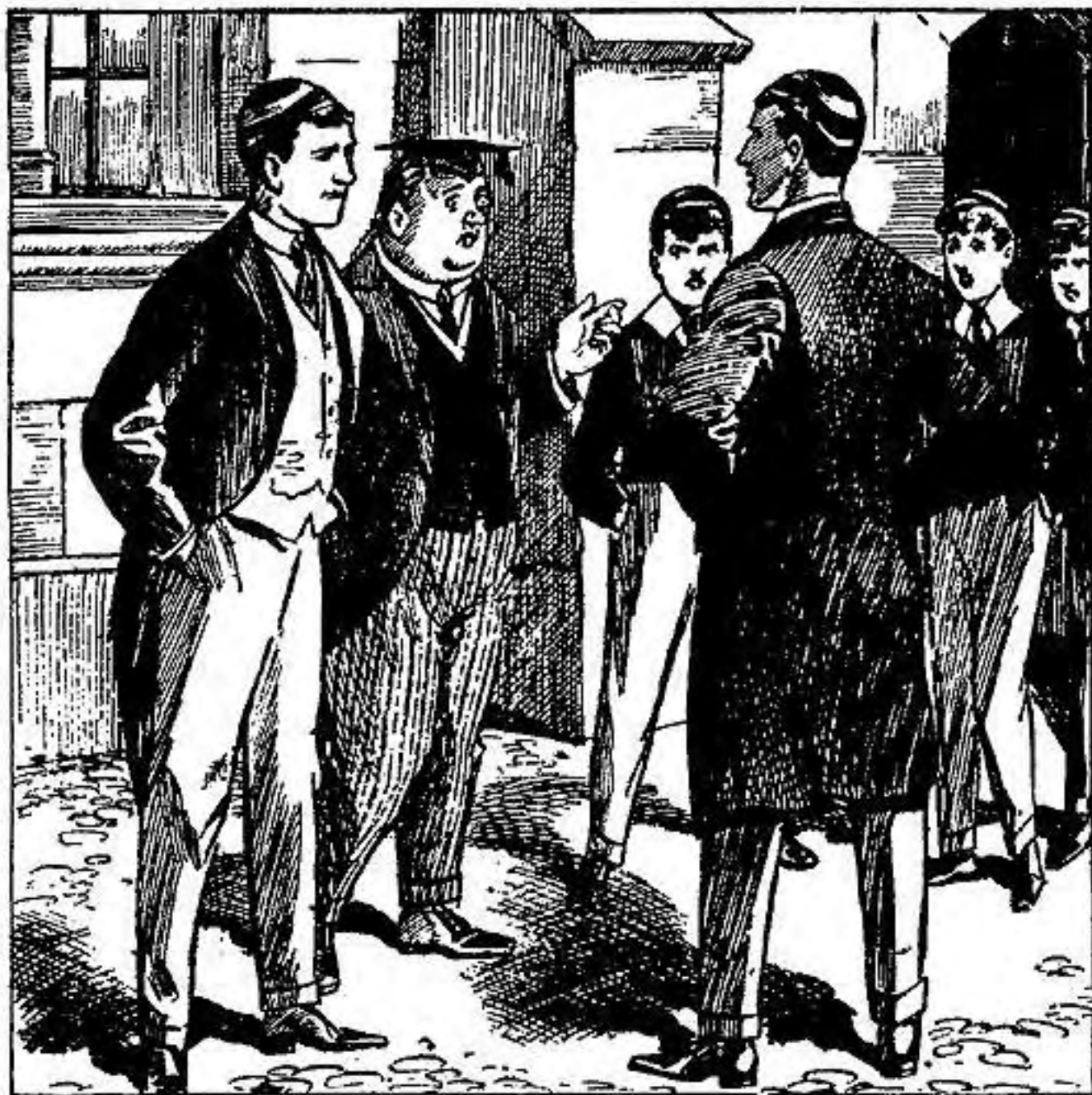
"I'm going to stagger out and get some fresh air," he said.

"One moment!" said Wally. "I want to thank you for all you've done—for this real proof of your friendship. You must hear me out. I'm not going to let you interrupt this time. It was perfectly ripping of you to put your shoulder to the wheel and to help me out of a very awkward situation!"

Loder flushed.

"It's a poor return, sir," he said, "for what you did for me. If I can be of any farther assistance, let me know."

And he left the study and went out into the keen morning air.



"You had better toe the line, Walker!" chimed in Loder. "There's work to be done, and you've got to put your shoulder to the wheel!" Walker stared with amazement at Loder. "You—you turncoat!" he said, sav gely. (See Chapter 4.)

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Exam!

"Oh crumbs!"

Billy Bunter of the Remove emitted a deep and despairing groan.

The fat junior, having performed his tardy toilet, had come downstairs.

On reaching the Hall, he beheld the following announcement, freshly pinned to the notice-board:

"NOTICE.

In spite of the epidemic of influenza which has attacked the school staff, an examination promoted by the 'House-master' will commence at ten o'clock in Big Hall.

It is compulsory that all members of the Remove, Third, Second, and First Forms should compete.

(Signed) WALTER BUNTER.
Form-master."

Billy Bunter gave a further groan.

The fat junior had fondly hoped that, owing to the ravaging effects of the 'flu, the examination would be cancelled so far as Greyfriars was concerned.

It came as quite a shock to him to read his cousin's announcement.

If there was one thing that Billy Bunter hated, next to soap and water, it was an examination. He would almost have preferred going to the dentist to facing the ordeal of an exam.

"Just like Wally to carry the thing through!" he growled. "I must wangle out of it somehow. But how?"

That, as the immortal Hamlet had said, was the question.

It would not have been a bit of use for Billy to ask Wally to excuse him. Wally, he knew, would not let him off except on very substantial grounds.

Billy Bunter paced to and fro in the Hall, debating the matter in his mind.

Presently he gave a chuckle.

"I've got it!" he chortled. "Quite a topping inspiration, by Jove!"

And he rolled away, with a definite purpose in his mind.

At the breakfast-table Billy Bunter was conspicuous by his absence.

Seldom, indeed, did the fat junior miss a meal. The fact that he was not in his usual place aroused general comment.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Where's our prize porpoise? He can't be wallowing in bed still. I coaxed him out of it with a wet sponge!"

"Anybody seen the fat duffer?" inquired Harry Wharton.

"Last time I saw him," said Skinner, "he was sliding down the banisters. I didn't stop to see if there was a fatal accident."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton rose to his feet and beckoned to Peter Todd.

"Let's go and see if we can find him, Toddy," he said.

"But my bacon will get cold—"

"Bless your bacon! Bunter's got to be found."

Peter Todd reluctantly accompanied the captain of the Remove.

They went first of all to the tuckshop, that being the most likely place for Billy Bunter to be in.

At the school shop, however, they drew blank. Mrs. Mumble, questioned,

said she had seen nothing of "the fat young warmint."

"Let's try the dorm," said Peter Todd. "He may have sneaked back to bed."

But Bunter was not in the Remove dormitory.

"He may not have heard the brekker-bell," said Wharton; "in which case, he'll be in Study No. 7."

The juniors made their way to that notorious apartment. They threw open the door without ceremony. And on entering the study they had quite a shock.

Billy Bunter was there.

The fat junior's appearance was extraordinary. He was seated in a chair, with his trousers rolled up to his knees, and his feet resting in a bath of hot water. He was wrapped in a blanket, and appeared to be suffering acute anguish.

"Atishoo!" he sneezed, as his school-fellows stepped towards him. "Atishum-um-yum!"

"My only aunt!" gasped Harry Wharton. "What's the matter, porpoise?"

"Ow! It—it's the 'flu!" groaned Billy Bunter. "A jolly severe attack! I've got an awfully high temperament! Gimme my medicine—quick!"

There were a couple of bottles of physic on the table. Harry Wharton and Peter Todd, believing for the moment that Bunter was genuinely ill, commenced to minister to him.

Presently, however, their suspicions were aroused.

Billy Bunter was overdoing the sneezing. He sneezed about twenty

times off the reel, and it was not difficult to see that the sneezes did not come naturally. They were forced.

"Atishoooo!" "Shoo! 'Shoo! 'Shoo! 'Shum!"

"Drop that, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton sternly. "Anyone can see that you're shamming!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"You're not ill at all," said Peter Todd. "And you haven't got a 'temperament,' as you call it. You're shamming—though I'm dashed if I know why!"

The truth dawned upon Harry Wharton in a flash.

"It's the exam!" he exclaimed. "The fat idiot's trying to dodge out of it by pretending he's got 'flu!"

Billy Bunter groaned.

"Don't be a heartless beast, Toddy! 'Shoo! You can see for yourself how terribly I'm suffering! 'Shoo! I don't think I shall last much longer. I can feel it turning into double pneumonia. Alishoooo!"

There was a quick footstep in the passage, and Wally Bunter came into the study. He stared at his cousin in amazement.

"Bunter major!" he ejaculated. "What—what is the meaning of this?"

Billy Bunter waved the Form-master back.

"Don't come near me, sir!" he urged. "Keep your distance! I've got 'flu, and it's disinfectious!"

Wally looked grim. He knew Cousin Billy of old.

"I strongly suspect that you are malingering, Bunter," he said. "This is a miserable deceit—a trick to avoid having to sit for the examination!"

"Nunno, sir! I'm really ill—horribly ill! My lungs are being eaten away in your presence, sir! There's an army of microbes—"

"Be silent, Bunter! I will soon test the accuracy of your statements."

There was the hoot of a motor-horn in the Close.

Wally Bunter went to the window and looked out.

"Good-morning, Dr. Short!" he exclaimed. "May I trouble you to step into this study for a moment?"

"Certainly!" said the doctor.

Billy Bunter looked thoroughly alarmed.

"Yow! I—I'm past medical aid!" he groaned.

"We'll soon see about that!" chuckled Peter Todd.

Dr. Short, on his arrival, thoroughly examined the fat junior with a stethoscope. He also took his temperature. Finally, he turned to Wally Bunter.

"This young rascal is malingering," he said. "His temperature is normal. He is sound in all respects, save for a slight tendency towards a fatty heart."

"Thank you, doctor," said Wally. "I shall know how to deal with him."

When Dr. Short had withdrawn, Wally turned to the Owl of the Remove.

"Take your feet out of that bath and remove that absurd blanket!" he commanded. "For this clumsy attempt to mislead me you will take five hundred lines!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"And you will appear in Big Hall at ten o'clock, without fail, to compete in the examination!"

Billy Bunter realised that his little deception had failed utterly, and he resigned himself to the worst. In order to fortify himself against the ordeal,

however, he consumed a breakfast that would have satisfied three ordinary persons.

At ten o'clock precisely, the competitors were in their places in Big Hall.

Loder of the Sixth, aided unwillingly by Carne and Walker, had rounded everybody up.

Wally Bunter handed out the charts of England and Wales.

"You are required to fill in the names of the principal towns, rivers, and railroads," he said. "You will also record, at the foot of the chart, the chief industries of the big towns. You are allowed half an hour. Then a bell will be rung and the papers will be collected."

Bob Cherry gave a groan.

"It's geography!" he muttered.

"Mouldy geography! About the last subject in the world that I'm capable of tackling. I know that the capital of England is London, and that somewhere or other there's a small stream called the Thames. That's where my knowledge begins and ends."

"I, too, am sadly unfamiliar with the geography of this esteemed and ludicrous country!" murmured Hurree Singh. "Now, if only it were my native land—"

"Silence!" thundered Wally Bunter.

The competitors started on their task. Most of them were very unhappy about it. But some were grinning cheerfully, and seemed full of confidence.

Morgan, the Welsh junior, was in his element. He had a sound knowledge of his Principality. He could place all the big towns, and the rivers, and the railroads, without any difficulty. He knew all about the industries of Cardiff and Newport and Swansea. True, his knowledge of England was less intimate; but he relied on his knowledge of Wales to pull him through.

Harry Wharton seemed quite at home. So did Mark Linley and Dick Penfold and Tom Brown.

Vernon-Smith created something of a record by completing his map in twenty minutes—though the majority of the juniors regarded half an hour as insufficient.

When the time-limit was reached, Wally Bunter rang a bell and the papers were gathered in.

Charts of Scotland were then distributed. And this was where Ogilvy smiled. He had an extensive knowledge of the Land of Cakes.

Finally, the charts of Ireland had to be filled in, and Micky Desmond grinned cheerfully. He knew Ireland like a book.

At half-past eleven the examination was over.

The whole of the charts were collected and fastened together and made up into a brown paper parcel.

Wally Bunter made the parcel secure with sealing-wax. It was his intention to send it off by registered post.

Worn out by his recent exertions, Wally was almost in a state of collapse. He seemed to have aged considerably since the previous day. Harry Wharton & Co., who knew something of what he had been through, regarded him anxiously.

Although physically and mentally weary, however, a glad light shone in Wally's eyes.

He had fulfilled the promise he had made to the Head on the latter's bed of sickness.

With Loder's aid, he had prepared

all the charts. Single-handed, he had conducted the examination.

He knew that, strictly speaking, he ought not to have been working. He was ill. He had been ill since the previous day. There were symptoms he could not possibly mistake. His limbs were shivering, as with the ague. His head seemed to be splitting.

But it was characteristic of Wally Bunter, when he did a thing, to do it thoroughly.

He took the parcel to the post-office himself, cycling hard in order to catch the midday collection.

Having despatched the competition entries, Wally rode back to Greyfriars at a more leisurely pace.

He proceeded to the Head's house, and was shown up to Dr. Locke's bedroom.

"Come in, Bunter," said the Head. "I am very pleased to see you."

"I trust you are feeling better, sir?" said Wally.

"Very much better, thank you! And Dr. Short has given me reassuring news concerning the other patients. Mr. Prout and Mr. Quelch, in particular, are making a rapid recovery. They will be able to resume their duties very shortly. Now, with regard to the examination, Bunter. I presume I was correct in saying that the task would be too much for you?"

"Not at all, sir," said Wally, with a faint smile. "The examination has taken place—"

"What!"

"And the papers have been forwarded to the proper quarter. Set your mind at rest, sir. Everything is all right."

Dr. Locke sat up in bed.

"Bunter," he said kindly, "I am immensely cheered by your news. This reflects the greatest credit upon you. Why, bless my soul!"

The Head broke off with a gasp of alarm and dismay.

For at that moment Wally Bunter reeled, clutched at the empty air, and collapsed heavily to the floor.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Well Played, Wally!

WALLY BUNTER knew very little of what went on during the next few days.

For the most part he was in a state of delirium, with very few lucid intervals.

Dr. Short described his condition as very grave.

Wally had been struck down by the 'flu, and it was feared that pneumonia would supervene.

"He must have been ill for some time before he ultimately broke down," said the doctor. "If only he had gone to bed at the onset of the illness, all would have been well. As it is—"

And the medical man sighed, and shook his head gravely.

"I will call again in a couple of hours," he informed the matron.

When he did so, he found that the patient had taken a decided turn for the better.

The delirium had passed, and Wally Bunter was sleeping composedly. On awaking from that long, refreshing sleep, he was more like his old self again.

There was now no danger of the illness developing. The crisis was over. But

it would be some time before Wally was able to resume his duties.

At the end of a week, he was permitted to have visitors. And his first visitors were Harry Wharton & Co. of the Remove.

"Glad to see you're on the mend, sir," said Bob Cherry, seating himself on the edge of the bed. "We were fearfully worried when we heard that you'd got the 'flu, and got it so badly."

"The anxiety on your behalf, honoured sahib, was terrific!" said Hurree Singh.

Wally smiled. "You shouldn't have worried on my account," he said. "I've a pretty strong constitution, and it was only reasonable to suppose that I should pull through."

"You've had a rotten time, sir," said Harry Wharton. "I declare you've got quite thin!"

"Impossible!" said Wally, laughing.

"But you have!" said Nugent.

"That's because I've been fed on thin gruel. I'm going back to a normal diet to-morrow, and I shall soon build up and fill out again. How are all the other victims?"

"Nearly all fit again, sir," said Johnny Bull. "Mr. Prout and Mr. Quelch resumed work just after your collapse."

"So there has been no serious dislocation of the school routine?"

"No, sir."

"I'm very glad to hear that."

"Would you like some books to read, sir?" asked Bob Cherry.

"And some flowers, to make the room look a bit brighter?" suggested Nugent.

"Thanks awfully!" said Wally. "It's immensely good of you!"

"Rats!"

The Famous Five stayed with Wally an hour, and their cheery society brightened him considerably.

After the first visit, they came regularly, every day, to see how the patient was progressing.

Wally Bunter had reached the convalescent stage, when, one morning, the matron brought him some periodicals. Among them was the current issue of the "Housemaster."

He was idly turning over the pages, without expecting to come across anything of outstanding importance, when

suddenly his gaze was arrested by the following announcement:

**"COMPETITION RESULT:
DUAL HONOUR FOR
GREYFRIARS!"**

"Dual honour for Greyfriars!" echoed Wally. "Does that mean that two prizes have come here?"

Eagerly he devoured the ensuing paragraph:

"The 'secret' competition promoted by this journal has proved an unqualified success. Many thousands of efforts were submitted, and the work of adjudication was rendered extremely difficult.

"It is worthy of notice that two of the prizewinners hail from the same school.

"The five prizes of £100 each have been awarded to the following:

K. ERROLL,
Rookwood School,
Hampshire.

R. H. REDFERN,
St. James's College,
Rylcombe, Sussex.

K. RENTON,
St. Clive's School,
Near Taunton, Somerset.

R. PENFOLD,
Greyfriars School,
Friardale, Kent.

H. VERNON-SMITH,
Greyfriars School,
Friardale, Kent."

Wally Bunter uttered a whoop of delight which would have shocked the sensibilities of his more austere colleagues.

"Penfold and Vernon-Smith!" he exclaimed. "Two prizes to Greyfriars! Oh, how topping! The labour of getting out those charts was not in vain!"

Needless to state, there was tremendous excitement when the result of the competition became generally known.

Dick Penfold's success was particularly popular.

It was well known that Pen's people were not in affluent circumstances, and Pen would now be able to give them a welcome lift-up.

So far as Vernon-Smith was concerned, he was not in need of the money. But the honour of having won pleased him enormously.

Vernon-Smith expended the money unselfishly. He subscribed handsomely to the various Remove funds, and he

treated his Form-fellows to a sumptuous banquet.

Not for many moons, as Bob Cherry remarked, had there been such a sensation at the old school.

When Wally Bunter was at last pronounced fit, he received an extraordinary ovation.

So thunderous was the applause, when Wally appeared in public, that he knew it could not be solely on account of the examination that the fellows were cheering him. It went deeper than that. Wally was cheered as a V.C. hero might be cheered. And fellows swarmed round him from all sides, and wrung his hands, and thumped his back, and made much of him generally.

And then Wally realised what had happened.

Greyfriars had heard of the rescue from the blazing barn.

How could they have heard it? Only from Loder's lips, Wally reflected.

When he was able to break away from the cheering, clamorous throng, he went in quest of Loder.

He found the prefect in his study.

"Glad to see you're about again, sir," said Loder cordially, when Wally entered. "You've had a ghastly time, by all accounts."

"Loder," said Wally, coming straight to the point, "did you tell the fellows about—that barn incident?"

Loder flushed.

"Yes; I did, sir!" he said defiantly.

"I thought it was only right that the school should know. You needn't look at me so reproachfully. You didn't bind me to secrecy, you know. You extracted a promise from Melcroft and Mowbray to keep their mouths shut; but you overlooked me. I've told the school all about the rescue—and I'm glad I've told. So that's that!"

Wally could find no reply to this outburst. In any case, it was no use rebuking Loder. The story had been published; and it would have to stand.

Wally Bunter's position and popularity at Greyfriars was now assured. By his energy and pluck he had won for himself a high place in the esteem of masters and fellows alike. He had increased the affection of his friends; he had won the admiration of those who until recently had been his enemies. And a sunny and prosperous future was in store for Mr. Bunter, Form-master!

THE END.

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