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By FRANK RICHARDS.

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.**

**Bunter to the Rescue!**

"HELP!" William George Bunter of the Remove Form at Greyfriars School halted in his stride as the cry fell upon his ears.

It was Wednesday afternoon, a half-holiday at Greyfriars, and Bunter was returning to the school from the village of Friarvale, passing through the woods.

He was in a desperate hurry, and, in spite of the fact that he detested a walk through Friarvale Woods, it was a short cut up to the school, and time was precious. In half an hour it would be tea-time. Billy Bunter thought of tea and felt extremely hungry. And so, with this important item fixed firmly in his more or less bright brain, he had taken, as it were, the bull by the horns, and was risking the perils which might lurk about the woods, to get to the school in time for the meal.

"Help!" It was the cry again, and Billy Bunter trembled like a jelly.

"Oh dear!" he muttered. "It—it must be a murder!"

The Owl of the Remove blinked nervously around him through his big spectacles. His eyes at last came to rest upon a very thick piece of wood which lay close by the path, along which he had been proceeding. Hardly daring to breathe, he moved ever so cautiously towards it, then, with a little gasp of relief, he bent down and picked it up.

"Now I'll just show 'em what for!" he murmured. "It's a girl's voice. A pretty little damsel in distress, but I'll teach 'em!"

Billy Bunter took a step forward.

"Help! Help!"

"The cry again! But now it was most pitiable, and at no great distance away.

Billy Bunter jumped.

"My hat!" he gasped, quite terror-stricken now. "Ow! I'm off!"

Dropping the stick from his trembling hand, he ran blindly forward. Escape was his only thought. Even tea was forgotten. On—on he went, his fat little legs going as if by clockwork. But ere the Owl of the Remove had gone a dozen yards his speed slackened. He was no athlete. The sudden exertion soon told

upon his unexercised organs, and he was puffing and blowing like a grampus.

Still, on he went, staggering hopelessly, until he was brought to an abrupt halt.

"Bump! Crash!" Billy Bunter collided with something, and fell to the ground with a resounding crash.

"Ow! Groooh! Help! I'm being killed!" he yelled.

He lay where he had fallen, too frightened to move, and half-expecting at any moment to be dealt a blow.

"Get up, you idiot!" growled a gruff voice close by. "Where the dickens do you think you're coming—oh! Get up, I say, and look at the damage you've done, you great bladder of lard!"

Billy Bunter blinked up nervously, and saw a very tall man towering above him.

The man looked quite a respectable kind of a person, and not one who would stoop to crime or violence. He certainly did look cross at the moment, but to anyone with the average intellect he looked the man to give and take a joke with the best of them. But to Billy Bunter it was different. He was scared.

"Who are yo-yo-you?" stammered the Owl of the Remove. "Have yo-you mur-murdered her?"

The man looked at Bunter hard, and then gave vent to a good-natured laugh.

"Look here, young shaver, talk sense! What do you mean?" he asked.

"You know well enough, you scoundrel!" growled Bunter. "You've killed her, and I'm a witness to it! I heard her cries for help, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The man held his hands to his sides and shook with laughter.

"I say—" began the Owl of the Remove.

"Oh, you ass!" almost sobbed the man. "Get up, and I'll explain. It'll take some explaining, too, with such a noodle as you possess!"

Billy Bunter rose to his feet very gingerly. Then, setting his spectacles straight upon his fat little nose, he blinked around him doubtfully.

"Well, sonny, I'll explain the trouble," said the stranger. "First of all, my name's Reeves—Reginald T. Reeves—and I belong—"

"Hi! What's all the trouble there?"

Billy Bunter and Reginald T. Reeves swung round.

Coming towards them was a tall, thick-set man, with a megaphone in one hand and a top-hat in the other. Behind him, at no great distance, came about a dozen men and women.

"It's the boss!" muttered Reginald T. Reeves.

"The boss?" murmured Billy Bunter inquiringly.

"Yes. Mr. Phillip Pecker and his stars!"

The Owl of the Remove looked astounded. Who Mr. Phillip Pecker and his stars were he did not, nor could not, understand. It was a mystery to Billy Bunter, and he went all of a tremor with excitement.

Mr. Pecker came up and stood regarding Reginald T. Reeves with indignation for several minutes. Then he suddenly let himself go.

"Well, sir," he stormed, "your explanation? What does this all mean?"

"Mr—er—er—" began Reginald T. Reeves.

"Come, man!" roared Mr. Pecker. "Don't bandy words with me! Out with it! Look what has happened to my favourite camera!"

Mr. Pecker gazed upon a mass of wreckage which had once been the apple of his eye. Then, with a little shrug of the shoulders, he burst out again.

"Reeves, will you explain, or am I to give you the sack right away?"

Reginald T. Reeves gave vent to a series of preliminary coughs, and then hung his head dejectedly towards the ground.

"It's like this, sir," he muttered.

"That young fellow there—"

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Pecker, his eyes falling upon the Owl of the Remove for the first time. "It—it—it's Fatty Fisher! By Jove!"

Mr. Pecker, as if suddenly taking leave of his senses, dashed towards Billy Bunter. Then, dropping his megaphone and top-hat to the ground, he flung his arms around the fat Removeite's neck, and hugged him as if for a life.

"Fatty! Fatty! Fatty Fisher come back!" cried the excited man delightedly.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!"

"Ow! You—out! Help!" roared Billy Bunter. "Take him away! Groooh!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 756.

"Ha, ha, ha! Haw, haw, haw!"

Reginald T. Reeves and the stars rocked with laughter at the sight.

"Help! Help! Help!" roared the unfortunate Owl of the Remove, as he struggled with the delighted Mr. Pecker. "Quick! Help! I'm choking!"

Billy Bunter was certainly in a sad plight, and it looked as if Mr. Pecker might really do him some bodily harm. Reginald T. Reeves evidently thought so, too, for he stepped up to Mr. Pecker, grasped him by the shoulders, and dragged him away.

"Don't hurt the kid, boss," said Reginald T. Reeves. "If he's an old friend shake him by the hand, but don't half kill him!"

"But, Reeves," cried Mr. Pecker, "he's my old star—Fatty Fisher, and he's come back to act for me."

Billy Bunter was standing by, endeavouring to regain his breath. But when he heard Mr. Pecker's explanation he began at last to understand the events of the past half-hour, and a grin spread across his face. He was all ears now, ready to pick up any information he could.

"You do not know him, Reeves, neither do the others," went on Mr. Pecker. "But he belonged to my last company, the one which I had to abandon at the beginning of that awful war."

"I see, sir," said Reeves. "And I suppose you're glad to have him back?"

"Have him back!" ejaculated Mr. Pecker. "I should just think I am. Now he shall be able to turn out some of those splendid films that made me—Phillip Pecker—famous!"

Mr. Pecker crossed over to where Billy Bunter stood, and placed his hands upon his shoulders.

"Fatty," he said, "this is a great reunion. You will carry on as you did of yore, a star above all others. Twenty pounds a film, my boy. Do you agree?"

Billy Bunter's brain worked quickly, and visions of himself as a cinema star with rolls and rolls of banknotes floated before his eyes.

"Rather, Mr. Pecker!" he exclaimed.

"Good!" said the producer. "Start on Saturday. By the way, Fatty, what are you doing in those clothes?"

Mr. Pecker had been wondering why his late star, Fatty Fisher, should be at the present moment clothed in Etons. It was very strange indeed to him!

Billy Bunter hesitated. But he recovered himself the next moment, and gave a chuckle.

"Matter of fact," he said, "with an air of very great importance, 'I knew you were in this neighbourhood, and moreover, in these very woods. Well, I think I would give you a bit of a surprise by making up as a schoolboy. And I have done so!"

"Ho, ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Pecker. "By Jove, you have!"

"Excuse me, sir," said Reginald T. Reeves, "it is time to get back to Court-field."

Mr. Pecker glanced at his watch. "It's six o'clock," he exclaimed. "I have a lot to do there, too. A new camera wanted, I'll forgive you this time, Reeves, but an operator should be able to look after his camera a little better. As for you, Fatty, here's a pound note to be going along with, and my address. Good-bye!"

Billy Bunter took the pound note and the visiting card which Mr. Pecker handed him, and thrust them into his pocket. Then he extended his hand to

the producer, who took it and squeezed it most affectionately.

"Good-bye, Mr. Pecker!" said the Owl of the Remove airily. "See you on Saturday!"

Then William George Bunter turned in the direction of Greyfriars with happy thoughts running through his brain. You had been actually forgotten! It was very much in the background!

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Very Mysterious!

**C**LANG, clang, clang!  
The rising-bell rang out at Greyfriars, and one by one the juniors of the Remove Form began to tumble out of bed.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as he turned towards his wash-basin. "Where the merry dickens is Bunter?"

"Bunter?" said Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove Form. "In bed, isn't he?"

"No, he isn't!" replied Bob Cherry, greatly astonished at Billy Bunter's absence. "Wonders will never cease! Bunter up and doing! Oh, my hat!"

All eyes had turned upon William George Bunter's bed. It was empty! The dormitory was soon in a state of great excitement.

It was Friday. Friday morning following Billy Bunter's eventful walk in Friarale Woods, and the bed he loved so dearly was, at this early hour, vacant. No wonder the juniors were astonished.

"What's your purpose, Toddy?" asked Frank Nugent, with a grin. "Gone for a dip?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites chuckled. They knew only too well how much the Owl of the Remove detested water.

"Blessed if I know," answered Peter Todd, who shared Study No. 7 in the Remove Form passage with Billy Bunter, "Lorenzo Todd," his cousin, and Tom Dutton, the deaf junior. "Anyhow, I'm not his keeper!"

"Hear, hear!" agreed Johnny Bull.

"The hear, hearfulness is—"  
"Terrific, my dusky chum!" grinned Bob Cherry, finishing Herree Jamsel Rem Singh's sentence for him.

The Removites turned to their toilet, and Billy Bunter was forgotten for the time being.

And in Study No. 7 in the Remove Form passage at that moment sat Billy Bunter, trying to think out the best possible means of making his exit from Greyfriars to join Mr. Pecker's Film Company.

At present he was at a loss. Ever since he had met Mr. Pecker this matter had been in his mind continually. During the night he had lain awake, tossing restlessly in his bed. He could not sleep, and, at last, about six o'clock, he had risen and made his way to his study to think the matter over. Something had to be done, and time was short.

He had thought of writing to his father, but it was useless. Mr. Bunter was a very strict man, and would be down on such a thing as a son of his going on the films. Bunter passed his father over without another thought.

He would have to run away from the school. This again had its drawbacks. He would soon be discovered and brought back to school. A thrashing would follow. Bunter groaned at the very thought of a thrashing.

"Harg it all!" muttered the fat Removite. "How am I to work it?"

He pondered again. Then, all of a sudden he jumped to his feet, sending the table crashing to the floor.

"Got it!" he gasped. "The very thing!"

Full of excitement, Billy Bunter set the table to rights, went to the study cupboard, and produced pencil, paper, and a Collins' dictionary. For the next twenty minutes or so he scratched away at the notepaper, referring every now and then to the dictionary.

Billy Bunter's ideas about dictionaries were that they were so much tommy-rot; but, nevertheless, the one he had before him at the present moment stood him in good stead. Bunter's spelling was simply atrocious.

At last, and with a sigh of immense satisfaction, Bunter hung down his pencil upon the table. Then he lounged back in the chair he occupied, and surveyed his efforts with a critical eye.

"Good!" he ejaculated. "A splendid idea! And now to trot along and bag old Quelch's typewriter for the next item of the programme. An actor must be up to all kinds of dodges."

With that, the Owl of the Remove rose from the table, quitted the study, and made his way cautiously towards Mr. Quelch's study.

Arriving there, William George Bunter applied his ear to the keyhole of the door. Then, assured that the Remove Form master had not as yet put in an appearance in his study, Billy Bunter pushed open the door, and blinked in.

The study was empty!

"Splendid!" muttered Billy Bunter. "And there's the giddy machine stuck on old Quelch's desk as if asking to be used!"

He closed the door with as little noise as possible, crossed to the master's desk, and sat down. Hastily he removed the typewriter cover, and placed a sheet of paper into the machine. Then, ever so carefully and slowly, he tapped away at the keys.

Billy Bunter's knowledge of typewriters was very limited, but in the end he completed his task.

An envelope took the place of the letter in the machine, and this he addressed to Dr. Locke, the headmaster of Greyfriars.

With a huge grin surmounting his face, the Owl of the Remove replaced the typewriter cover, gathered up his papers, and returned to the seclusion of Study No. 7.

"I'm!" he grunted, as he sank into a chair. "Now to imitate father's signature. Easier said than done!"

With as much speed as possible, the Owl of the Remove covered a sheet of paper with his father's signature, which he copied from a letter he had received from home the week before—a letter which informed the fat Removite in sharp, terse sentences that Mr. Bunter flatly refused to allow his son a further remittance for six weeks.

Satisfied that he had got as near Mr. Samuel Bunter's signature as he possibly could manage to get, Billy Bunter applied that signature to his typewritten letter. No thought of forgery entered his fat mind. He was much too obtuse to realise the seriousness of what he was doing. He simply used his father's signature as being the easiest way of getting what he wanted—which was just like Bunter.

"Well, that's that!" he murmured, holding the letter at arm's length, with a grin creasing his fat features.

Then he read aloud:

"London, E.C.,  
Friday.

Dear Mr. Locke.—Will you kindly grant my son, William, absence from Greyfriars for a short time. A week or so would suit me admirably. I desire assistance at my office, and I think that his help would be invaluable to me.

Thanking you in anticipation that this favour will be granted,

Yours sincerely,  
(Signed) SAMUEL BUNTER."

Billy Bunter folded up the precious letter, placed it in the envelope, and sealed it down. Then he produced a twopenny stamp, which appeared very much the worse for wear, from his waistcoat pocket, stuck it on the envelope, and then placed the letter in his jacket pocket.

"I'll trot down to the station directly after afternoon lessons and spare the guard of the five-fifteen to post it in London for me," murmured Billy Bunter to himself. "Old Locke will get it in the morning, and then all will be plain sailing. Lucky Pecker gave me that quid note."

He was about to rise from the table when the study door was thrown open, and in strode Peter Todd, accompanied by Tom Dutton and Alonzo Todd.

"Hallo, Toddy!" said Billy Bunter affably.

"Not so much of your Toddy, porpoise!" growled Peter Todd. "Where the merry dickens have you been to? Brekker's over, and I might mention Quelch is on his hind legs over your absence from the Hall."

"Blow brekker!" granted Billy Bunter.

"Eh?" exclaimed Peter Todd incredulously. "Did you say 'blow brekker,' Bunter?"

"I did," retorted the Owl of the Remove peevishly.

"My hat!" gasped Peter.

"Bunter must be queer, my dear Peter," murmured Alonzo Todd, greatly distressed.

"He must be," said Peter. "Or dotty!"

"I'm not dotty, Peter Todd!" howled Bunter. "Shut up!"

"Who's Bunter calling potty, Toddy?" asked Tom Dutton. "Me?"

"No!" answered Peter Todd. "I said he was dotty!"

"Pretty!" queried Dutton. "He's anything but pretty."

Billy Bunter rose from the table and strode over to the door.

"You're a lot of asses," he said. "And it makes a clever fellow like me sick to be in a study with you."

"Why, I'll slaughter you!" roared Peter Todd. "I'll—"

But Billy Bunter did not wait to be slaughtered. He strode out of the study hurriedly, and closed the door behind him with an emphatic bang.

"One of these days," remarked Peter Todd to Alonzo and Tom Dutton, when Bunter's footsteps had died away down the passage outside, "there'll be a dead Bunter lying somewhere about Greyfriars! Something's up. Something is mysterious about our porpoise again, or he's going as mad as a giddy March hare!"



Mr. Pecker, dropping his megaphone and top-hat to the ground, dashed towards Billy Bunter, and flung his arms round the fat junior's neck. "Fatty! Fatty! Fatty Fisher come back to act for me!" cried the excited film producer. (See Chapter I.)

"My dear Peter," murmured the gentle Alonzo, "you must not treat the poor fellow so harshly. Fatty is what he should have."

"Brekker!" growled Peter. "Fatty! I don't think. However, I hope Quelch rags him for missing brekker when he goes in to lessons, and I somehow think he will."

And Peter Todd was right.

When the bell went for morning lessons Billy Bunter was behind the rest of the Form, and in consequence he suffered a double dose—for missing breakfast and for being late for lessons.

But, to the surprise of the Form, and even Mr. Quelch himself, Billy Bunter did not seem to worry.

And that evening the fat Removee went down to Friarale Station. He saw the guard of the five-fifteen train to London, and that individual, at the sight of the half a crown which Billy Bunter extended to him, willingly agreed to post the letter at his journey's end.

Then, well satisfied with things in general, and himself in particular, the Owl of the Remove hurried from the station and turned into the lane leading up to Greyfriars, where he arrived just in time for tea in Study No. 7.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Working the Oracle!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. received another surprise when they awoke at the sound of the rising bell on Saturday.

William George Bunter was up and about again.

Throughout the previous day he had acted very mysteriously, and had avoided his school-fellows as much as possible. Peter Todd had cornered him in the quadrangle, and had demanded to know "what was on?" But Billy Bunter was not having any. All that Peter got by way of an answer was: "You'll see!" After that Peter had given it up as a bad job, and was firmly convinced that Bunter was showing the first signs of insanity. He had walked away from the Owl of the Remove nodding his head very gravely.

Billy Bunter was playing, and meant to play, his cards the right way.

It was the day of days—Saturday! Some time within the next twelve hours he must proceed to Courtfield to join Mr. Pecker's Film Company. At all costs he would be there.

Billy Bunter lolled against the gates of Greyfriars at this early hour with his eyes fixed firmly down the lane which led to the village of Friarale.

"Here!" he exclaimed suddenly.

"Here!" he comes!"

It was the old village postman whom Billy Bunter was waiting for, and that worthy official had just come into view from behind a bend in the lane.

The postman came up to the gates at length, and Billy Bunter beamed on him affably.

"Good-morning, Boggy!" he said. "Shall I take the letters up to the house for you, old top? It'll save you a walk, you know!"

"H'm! So it will, Master Bunter," said old Boggy, a little suspiciously. "But see that you hand them to the page-boy, won't you?"

"Rely on me. I'll hand them to Trotter!"

Boggs handed the Owl of the Remove a bundle of letters, and then proceeded on his way.

Billy Bunter hastily ran through the bundle, and a sigh of relief escaped his lips as he saw the letter he had written to the Head had safely arrived. He made for the School House. As he entered the door, Trotter, the page, was just emerging.

"Good morning, Master Bunter," said Trotter with a grin. "Toothache?"

"Er, What do you mean, you little beast?" demanded the Owl of the Remove indignantly.

"Only that it's quite a change to see you up so early," replied the cheery page.

"Is it?" growled Bunter. "Pity you weren't up in time to meet the postman, anyhow."

There, before Trotter could voice a suitable reply, the Owl of the Remove hurried the bundle of letters at his head, and hastened towards the Remove Form passage.

Ten minutes later Dr. Locke summoned Billy Bunter to his study.

"Bunter," said the Headmaster of Greyfriars, when the Owl of the Remove stood before him, "I have received a letter from your father asking me to allow you to proceed to London, and—"

"Is he ill, sir?" broke in Billy Bunter, appearing ill at ease.

"No, my boy," said the Head with a smile. "He just wishes you to be granted leave of absence for a short while to assist him with his business."

"Oh, sir!" gasped the fat Removite. "And am I to go?"

"Yes. You may go directly after morning lessons, and I sincerely trust that your help will really prove valuable to your father."

"There's no doubt about that, sir," said Bunter, throwing a chest. "I'm a business man to the finger tips."

Dr. Locke smiled again. He had his own opinion on the matter.

"Very well, Bunter. You may go." And he waved his hand towards the door in dismissal.

Once outside of the Head's sacred apartment, the Owl of the Remove executed a hornpipe from sheer delight.

"Worked the giddy oracle a treat!" he exclaimed breathlessly. "And the Head hadn't the ghost of a suspicion. Hurrah!"

Billy Bunter was in the Hall to breakfast, and many a pair of eyes were cast upon him as he sat and munched away with his huge grin spread across his face.

"I say, Wharton," said the fat Removite, catching up the Famous Five as the Form trooped out of the Hall after the meal, "I'm expecting a—"

"Well, expect away!" grunted Harry Wharton. "There's no harm in expecting. But as far as advancing you cash—nothing doing, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Wharton?"

"Nothing doing!"

"I say, Cherry—"

"Rats!"

"Oh, really, you beast—"

"Why, you fat chump," howled Bob Cherry. "I'll—"

"Nugent, I'm expecting— Ow!"

Frank Nugent did not stop to waste words upon the Owl of the Remove. Instead, he gave him a playful dig in the ribs and walked on, followed by the rest of the Famous Five.

"Lot of measly beasts, I call 'em!" growled Billy Bunter when he had

recovered his breath. "But I don't want their rotten money! Yah!"

When the bell rang for morning classes he went into the Form-room with the rest of the Remove. The morning breeze had blown and it took him all his time to avoid getting into Mr. Quelch's bad books.

At last lessons were over.

Once out of the Form-room, the Owl of the Remove lost no time in leaving the school. Most of the fellows had made their way to the playing-fields prior to the bell announcing dinner. The quadrangle was deserted, and even Gosing, the school porter, did not notice Billy Bunter as he slipped, bag in hand, out of the gates of Greyfriars.

Down the lane he went with all possible haste. Arriving at Friarale Station, he purchased a third-class ticket to Courtfield, and went up upon the platform.

"Lucky I've got a couple of hob left from the quid note old Pecker gave me!" mumbled the Owl of the Remove. "I feel absolutely famishing!"

He went along to the buffet and bought a dozen sandwiches. The train for Courtfield came in, and Billy Bunter soon made himself comfortable in a carriage, and prepared to munch his sandwiches with his heart's content.

"That's better!" he murmured, as he threw the empty paper bag out of the carriage window. "Now for a snooze!"

But Billy Bunter's snooze was but a short one. Suddenly the train came to an abrupt halt, and he sat up upon the seat of the carriage with a start.

"Courtfield! All change!" roared the voice of a porter.

The Owl of the Remove alighted from the train. And then, with his heart beating lightly at the prospect before him, he made for the exit of the station, and thence along the High Street of Courtfield to join Mr. Pecker's Film Company as Fatty Fisher, Cinema Star.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### Practice Makes Perfect!

"A T last," William George Bunter halted outside of a house in Priory Street, Courtfield, and made that remark with emphasis.

He was tired—and no wonder. Priory Street was situated at the other end of the town of Courtfield, and it had taken the Owl of the Remove just over an hour to find his destination. But his goal was reached at last, and Billy Bunter stood on the pavement of the Street surveying the notice-board which stood in the front garden of the house announcing that the premises belonged to "The Pecker Film Company."

"Old Pecker ought to have sent a car to meet me at the station," he grumbled. "The beast is dead tired and famished! The best of it is, when he was about to make his way up to the door when it opened, and Mr. Pecker himself appeared. Catching sight of Billy Bunter, he rushed forward, very nearly falling down the stone steps in doing so."

"Fatty, Fatty, Fatty!" he cried, his voice full of excitement and enthusiasm.

"Hallo, Mr. Pecker," chirped Billy Bunter, with a smirk on his fat face. "Here we are auzin'!"

Mr. Pecker grasped Bunter's hand, and squeezed it tightly.

Billy Bunter winced under the pressure.

"Ow! You-wow!" he gasped.

"This way!" exclaimed Mr. Pecker. "This way!"

And he marched the Owl of the Remove into the house, and then straight into the office.

Billy Bunter sank into the only arm-chair the office possessed, and gasped for breath.

"I say, Mr. Pecker," he said, "why didn't you send a car to meet me? I'm dead tired, and nearly dying of hunger!"

"Sorry, Fatty, but the cars are over at Wandnot, fetching profits. As for your hunger, my boy, we'll soon appease that!"

Mr. Pecker rang an electric bell which hung above his table, and within a couple of seconds a maid-servant appeared.

"Mabel," said the producer, "see that there is a meal prepared for Mr. Fisher. He has travelled far, and I think his appetite is very keen. The edge must be taken off of it at once!"

"Very well, sir!" said the maid.

Billy Bunter smacked his lips in anticipation.

"I say, Mr. Pecker," he said, "order me a dozen pork-pies, a roast chicken, a dozen rolls, a dozen apple-toroes, two dozen jam-puffs, and half a dozen bottles of ginger-pong to be going on with, and then—"

"My dear Fatty," exclaimed Mr. Pecker, in astonishment, "have you suddenly turned into a gourmandiser? If you managed to dispose of that little lot you'd starve. Besides, our stores are limited at the moment. The tradesmen do not come along until the evening."

"Oh, really, Mr. Pecker!" protested Billy Bunter.

But the film producer cut him short.

"There is tea to think of," he explained. "The other members of the company will require tea, you know. There's the mutiny in the camp, other-wise. But this much I will promise you. For supper you can have as much food as you can possibly put away."

Billy Bunter brightened up considerably, and he waved a fat hand in a dignified manner.

"Now, that's talking!" he said. "But I must have a snack at once, or I'll die."

"By all means! By all means!" exclaimed the producer hastily. "Go with Mabel, pray!"

Billy Bunter rose from the armchair he occupied, with a grunt, and followed the maid-servant from the room.

The girl led the way to a very spacious room which was used as the film company's dining-hall. Four long trestle-tables stood lengthways in this room, with forms already drawn up in position. And at the moment of Billy Bunter's entry two menservants were laying the tables for tea.

They paused in their labours to give the Owl of the Remove a glance. Billy Bunter, for his part, frowned, and then gave vent to a very emphatic sniff.

"I say, Mabel," he said at length, "trot on the mugs, old luck, and for goodness' sake look slippy. I'm famishing!"

"Yes, sir, Will you sit here, sir?" said the girl, indicating a table.

Billy Bunter sat down with a grunt, and the girl hurried out of the room.

She returned within a few minutes, carrying a tray of food which regaled a large plate of ham-and-beef, several rolls, pickles, half an apple-pie, and a bottle of ginger-beer. She placed these before Billy Bunter.

"I'm!" grunted the fat Removite, as he surveyed the comestibles. "Not enough to feed a sparrow, let alone a

follow with an appetite like mine! I shall refuse to act unless I'm properly fed."

Mabel gave the Owl of the Remove a withering glance, and departed. The two men servants sniggered, and carried on with their work.

"Well," murmured Billy Bunter, "I suppose this is better than nothing at all!"

And he at once commenced operations with a knife and fork.

The ham and beef and the rolls vanished like lightning. The apple-pie and ginger-bread followed suit.

"H'm! I must say—" murmured Billy Bunter.

But he was interrupted in his thoughts. The door of the room swung open, and Mr. Pecker appeared.

"Hallo, Fatty!" he said, with a smile. "Finished? Good! And now to work, my cherub!"

Billy Bunter stared.

"Wu-wu-wu-work!" he stammered.

"Yes," replied Mr. Pecker. "I want you to get your hand in again as soon as possible. The scenario editor has instructions to alter the hero of my new production, 'The Wood Nymph,' to fit your character."

Billy Bunter looked mystified. The cinema terms were all strange to him. He did not know what "scenario" meant, neither did he care, for that matter.

"But, I say, I haven't had half enough to eat yet!" he moaned. "I—I—I can't work on an empty stomach, you know!"

"Course!" said Mr. Pecker, linking arms with Billy Bunter. "Ten's at four."

And, in spite of protests, Billy Bunter was led away to the back of the house. Here stood an exceptionally capacious outbuilding—built especially for the great film producer, and fitted up as the studio proper.

Without ceremony, Mr. Pecker pushed open the door, and landed William George Bunter in the room.

For a minute or two Billy Bunter stood, as a fish which has just been landed from its native element, gasping, and blinking through his big spectacles beneath rows of high-power arc lamps. His eyes grew accustomed to the glare, and then came to rest upon a pretty girl who, with a whimsical smile playing about her lips, regarded him with much interest. From the girl Billy Bunter gazed to a man who stood in his shirt-sleeves, beside a camera. And Bunter recognised Reginald T. Reeves, the man with whom he had collided the previous Wednesday in Friarstable Woods.

"Hallo, 'pospise!" exclaimed Mr. Reeves, with a grin. "Come to do a bit of acting? I hope that that face of yours doesn't smother my glibby camera, kid."

"Oh, really—"

"Besides," went on the camera man pleasantly, "you seem responsible in smashing up that one in Friarstable Woods, and—"

"That will do, Reeves," broke in Mr. Pecker tartly. "No time must be lost. I desire to see if Fatty still possesses all his old cunning for the game. Let me see, I must introduce you to our heroine, Queenie Walsh, first of all, Fatty."

Billy Bunter swaggered forward and bowed an exaggerated bow before the pretty film star. Then he grasped the snow-white hand that Queenie Walsh extended to him.

NEXT MONDAY!

"BUNTER'S BOLT!"

"Pleased to meet you, Mr. Fisher!" murmured the girl, in a rich, clear-toned voice. "And I sincerely trust we shall get along well together."

Billy Bunter smirked with delight, and he felt a wild pulsation of his heart. He decided there and then to be on his best behaviour whilst with the Pecker Film Company, and also to do his very best with his acting.

"The pleasure is mine, my dear Miss Walsh!" murmured the Owl of the Remove. "And I am sure that we shall get along well together!"

Reginald T. Reeves gave vent to a very euphuistic snuff, but this was lost upon the Owl of the Remove.

"Now, Fatty," said Mr. Pecker, "listen very carefully whilst I read you your instructions."

Billy Bunter came out of a deep reverie with a start.

"Fire ahead!" he gasped, a little nervously.

And then the film producer unfolded the plot of his new photoplay, "The Wood Nymph." It consisted of four scenes, three of which were interiors, the other "on location," as an exterior scene is called in the film world. This exterior scene, which was to be filmed in Friarstable Woods, appeared as Scene 3; but, as far as the actual filming of it went, it was to be left until the last. There is no need for the scenes of a film to be taken in strict rotation. As a rule, the scenes that can be taken inside of the studio are filmed first, and the exteriors last.

"And now, Fatty," concluded Mr. Pecker, "we will run through the first scene. Just a little rehearsal to see how

you shape. Take your place in the set with Queenie."

Billy Bunter looked astounded.

"In the s-s-set!" he stammered. "Come, come, Fatty!" snapped the film producer. "What's wrong with you? Have you suddenly taken leave of your senses, or what?"

"Nunno! Not exactly! But, you see, I lost my memory during the war, and I've quite forgotten the cinema terms these days."

"Hum!" granted Mr. Pecker. "I'll jog your memory, then!"

The film producer took a piece of chalk from his pocket and drew two converging lines upon the floor.

"The scene is really the set," he explained. "But you must keep within those two chalked lines, otherwise you'll be out of the picture altogether. Got it? Right! Carry on!"

Billy Bunter joined Queenie Walsh in the set.

In this instance "the set" depicted the inside of a barn—that is, three sides of one. The set was made of three-ply wood, and built in sections to simplify the erecting and "striking"—otherwise, taking down. And they had been very carefully painted in the weird colour scheme which is adapted for the films, for, unlike a scene for the stage of a theatre, it cannot be made of painted canvases.

"Action!" came Mr. Pecker's voice.

"I say, Miss Walsh," whispered Billy Bunter eagerly, turning to the girl.

"What's he mean?"

The heroine smiled.

"That's the cue to prepare to start, you silly!" she explained.

"Oh, really, Miss Walsh—"



"Bunter!" said the Head. "I have received a letter from your father, asking me to allow you to proceed to London for a short time to assist him with his business. You may go directly after morning lessons!" "Oh, thank you, sir!" said Billy Bunter. (See Chapter 3.)

"Shoot!" roared Mr. Pecker.

Billy Bunter jumped clear of the floor. He was alarmed.

"Help! Stop!" he cried. "Don't you dare to shoot me, Mr. Pecker! I won't have it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" the cameraman, shook with merriment. Quentin Wahl smiled with the absurdity of it all. But not so Mr. Pecker. He appeared to be on the very verge of an apoplectic fit.

"Fatty," said the film producer, more in sorrow than in anger, "something's radically wrong with you, my boy. I'm afraid it's a reflexion because you require. Very well, then; we will postpone the rehearsal for to-day. To-morrow you will have to go through your part in strict privacy with me. Yes, I know it is Sunday; but you have got to be up to scratch by Monday morning, so please don't protest. You see?"

With that, Mr. Pecker marched out of the studio, leaving Billy Bunter to the care of Reginald T. Reeves. And it was a very wretched Bunter he left, too! The Owl of the Remove came to the brainy conclusion there and then that acting for the films was not all milk and honey and fat cheese. Not a bit of it! It represented hard work, skill, and brains. Billy Bunter groaned. And he groaned again—a groan of despair—as he turned in for the night in the bed provided for him by the great Mr. Pecker.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### The Artfulness of Sammy!

WHEN it looked out that Billy Bunter had been granted leave of absence from Greyfriars to assist at his brother's business, at the school as a whole gasped. That the Owl of the Remove was capable of work would not wash with the majority of the juniors and seniors of the school. They could and would not believe it.

And Sammy Bunter of the Second Form was of the same opinion.

The Second-Former went out of his way to unravel the mystery. He was convinced that there was something on, and he meant to get to the very bottom of the business some way or other; more especially when he saw there was a chance of making it well worth his while.

And he had been successful in his quest, and within a very short space of time. He had made inquiries at Fair-Isle Station, and here had heard that his brother had taken a ticket to Courtfield by the two o'clock train on Saturday. Sammy had followed up the clue. He had proceeded to Courtfield Junction and his bag had held good. As he made his exit from the station, he had run bang into William George Bunter!

The Owl of the Remove, dressed in a brand new lounge-suit, supplied by the property-man of the Pecker Film Company, had been making for a restaurant to appease his hunger. At the meeting with his brother, Billy Bunter had stopped dead in his stride, too flabbergasted to move. Then the wily Sammy had come to terms—terms which amounted to blackmail, bribery, and corruption to keep his mouth shut.

Billy Bunter had been forced to provide his young brother with a feed on the spot, and also to promise to send him a pound note by the next half-holiday—Wednesday!

And it was now Wednesday five o'clock to be precise—and the pound note—

note had not as yet reached Sammy Bunter.

Sammy was indignant—very indignant, in fact—and as he pondered over the affair in the fags' Common-room, he decided upon drastic measures. He had almost decided to see Dr. Locke, and to speak to him about his brother's escapade. But now the young rascal had thought out another plan of campaign. He would ring his major up on the telephone.

His round made up, Sammy at last rose from his seat and left the Common-room. With the utmost stealth, he proceeded to the Sixth Form passage. The place was deserted, for most of the seniors were taking advantage of what little daylight remained to get in some footer practice. Locker, with Cerise and Walker, was behind his locked study, indulging in a cigarette or two. The blades of the sixth were content to lounge in a smoky room. It was preferable to clean, healthy sport on Big Side, according to their lights.

"Quite O.K.," murmured Sammy Bunter, as he straightened himself from crouching down at the keyhole of the Prefect's room. "Nobody about! My luck's in!"

Sammy Bunter's ways were like unto his major's. He was a snook, an eyes-dropper, and a gormandiseer rolled into one. A second edition of the great William George!

Pushing open the door of the Prefect's room, the Second-Former glided in. Without hesitation he crossed to the telephone, scanned through the pages of the phone directory, and found the number of the Pecker Film Co. Then, taking the receiver from its stand, he placed it to his ear.

"Courtfield, seven one!" he squeaked into the transmitter when the operator asked for his number.

For a moment or two Bunter minor waited in suspense lest a Sixth-Former should enter the room and catch him red-handed.

"Hallo! The Pecker Film Co. speaking, come in a musical tone over the wires."

"I wish to speak to Billy Bunter—er—er—I—I—I mean, your fat man, please!" stammered Sammy Bunter.

Sammy was told to hang on a second. He did, but to Sammy it seemed like so many weary years before anyone spoke again.

"Hallo!" bawled a voice in Sammy's ear.

Bunter minor nearly dropped the receiver, so startled was he. But he recovered himself the next moment.

"That you, Billy?" he murmured tremulously.

"Yes. Who's that?"

"Sammy."

"Blow! I thought it was one of my many admirers, asking me for an autographed photo!" came Billy Bunter's voice through the receiver.

"You've got a lot of admirers—I don't think!" granted Sammy. "But, Billy, what about that quid you promised me?"

"Be-r-r-y! You'll get no quid from me until Saturday, you little waster! You meet me at the barn in Friarlands Woods on Saturday at three o'clock, and I'll see what I can do for you. We're acting in the woods, you know."

"But I want it at once," said Sammy threateningly. "You'll send it me right away, or I'll go to the Head and tell him that you are getting for the films, Billy, and then—"

"Oh, my hat!"

That exclamation came from the door

way of the Prefect's room. There, on the threshold of the room, stood Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove, too thunderstruck to move. He had overheard the fat fags' conversation with Billy Bunter's conversation with his brother, and the unintentional discovery of the whereabouts of William George Bunter simply staggered him.

The captain of the Remove had come to the Prefect's room in search of a quarter-master's address. The telephone directory was his aim, and he had had permission from George Wingate, the captain of the school, to look the address up. But with this startling discovery his mission was completely forgotten.

Sammy Bunter heard Harry Wharton's gasp, and the telephone receiver slipped from his fingers. He swung round with a guilty start, expecting to come face to face with one of the prefects.

"Wharton!" he gasped, his face the colour of chalk. "Yo-yo-ya!"

Harry Wharton suppressed the smile that came to his lips.

"You're a rotten spy, Wharton!" he cried passionately. "Now you'll speak to the Head, and—"

"Why, you little worm, I'll pulverise you!" cried the captain of the Remove, his face turning crimson. "I'll jolly well thrash you within an inch of your life for that!"

Sammy Bunter quaked in his shoes as Harry Wharton strode up to him and placed a hand firmly upon his shoulder.

But as suddenly as he had flared up Wharton calmed down. He replaced the telephone-receiver, which Sammy had dropped, on its stand, and dragged the Second-Former towards the door.

"Just you come along with me, young Bunter!" he said. "It's risky to hang about in here. A prefect may come in at any moment, and then there would be the very dickens of a row!"

Sammy Bunter protested and wriggled in the powerful grip of the captain of the Remove. But it was of no consequence. He was literally dragged from the Prefect's room and along to Study No. 1 in the Remove Form passage.

Opening the door of his study, Harry Wharton pushed Bunter minor into the room. Sammy went staggering across the room and collided with the study table.

"Crash!"

"What the thump!"

"My only Aunt Jane!"

"The cause and!"

"The clumsy assfulness is certainly terrific!"

Four juniors jumped to their feet as Sammy Bunter slid to the floor. Bob Cherry, Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh, the Nabob of Bharanpur, had been mysteriously engaged with prep when the catastrophe had occurred. The inkpot had overturned on Frank Nugent's book, and from the pens of Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh had descended big blots upon their work.

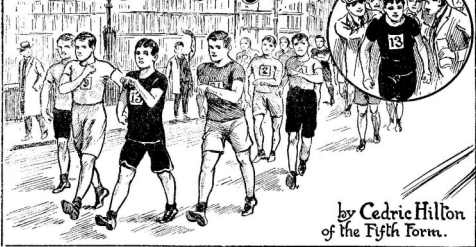
"What was that?" roared Johnny Bull in scotcher-tones. "An earthquake? The volcano? You no-ow! Tremor-what?"

"Why? Sammy Bunter!" exclaimed Frank Nugent. "Look at my prep, you little sweep! It's ruined!"

(Continued on page 13.)



**Coker goes to Brighton!**



by Cedric Hilton  
 of the Fifth Form.

**THE START OF THE GREAT RACE!** At last the order to go was given, and the white-clad figures moved off briskly over Westminster Bridge. Coker attached himself to the first line of men.

**G**ET off the field!" Blundell's tone was savage as he addressed Coker of the Fifth. "That's the second time you've put the ball through your own goal! I'll never ask you to turn out for the Fifth again—never!"

"Look here——" began Coker feebly. "But," stopped Blundell. "You're a rank duffer at games, Coker, and you always will be! You're a decent enough fellow off the playing fields, but when you start playing football for the Form, you're a thumping nuisance! The fact is, you'd never make a footballer, if you lived to be as old as Methuselah!"

"Look here——" stammered Coker, again. "There isn't a single branch of sport that you're any good at," went on Blundell. "Boxing, cricket, running, rowing—you're a chumpson duffer at all of them!"

"I can fight!" interrupted Coker. "Oh, yes, I grant you that! You can fight, but you can't box! There's a difference. You're a bit of a prizefighter, but you haven't a scrap of science! So far as athletics are concerned, you're a rank, rotten failure! Get out!"

And Blundell waved his hand towards the distant horizon.

Coker went. It was only a practice match in which the Fifth were engaged. And Coker had been playing on Blundell's side. He had been more of a hindrance than a help. In the circumstances, Blundell was justified in Supplement 1.

reverting his authority as skipper, and sending Coker off the field.

As the unfortunate Horace blended his sorrowful words ring in his ears:

"So far as athletics are concerned, you're a rank, rotten failure!"

It had never struck Coker, until now, that there was any justification for such a remark. But when he cooled his study, and sat down to think it over, he came to the conclusion that Blundell was right.

Coker had always had a big opinion of himself. He had always considered he was brilliant at games.

Blundell's scathing words raised doubts in his mind. For the first time he began to see himself as others saw him. A duffer at this, a duffer at that, a duffer at every sort of sport that flourished in that essentially sporting school, Greyfriars.

Coker gave a groan.

"Is there nothing I can do?" he muttered. "Am I going to sit down and let everybody dub me a failure? Not Dash it all, I'll make a bit at something or other, if it takes me a month of Sundays to do it!"

Coker had many faults, but a lack of determination was not among them. He was grimly determined to make a bit in some form of sport. He would make Blundell take back that remark about failure. He would do something to show he was not utterly useless, after all.

At that moment his eye lighted on a

sporting paper, which had been left on the study table by Potter or Greene.

He picked up the paper, listlessly perused the reports of the recent Cupias, and then came across a paragraph which gave him a sudden inspiration:

**"LONDON TO BRIGHTON WALK!**  
 This time-honoured event will be repeated on Saturday next, when a number of enthusiasts will set out on the long, long trail from London to Brighton. Special prizes for the first six home are being awarded by that eminent sporting baronet, Sir Timothy Topham.

The walking match is open to all comers, and competitors will start from Westminster Bridge (near the clock-tower) at 6 p.m."

Coker read that paragraph several times, and, in his impulsive way, he decided to take part in the contest.

It did not occur to Coker that a tramp of fifty-two miles was a most strenuous ordeal, requiring special preliminary training.

Coker was a good walker. He had often accomplished a fifteen to twenty mile tramp without feeling unduly fatigued. He had plenty of stamina and endurance. The London to Brighton walk attracted him. His mind was fully made up. He would compete.

Coker said no word of his intentions to a soul—not even to the Head. He asked Dr. Locke if he could take the week-end off, as he wished to compete in a certain sporting

event. But he did not say what the result was at the end of the race.

Coker, being a Fifth-Former, and having been of good behavior since the term started, the Head saw no reason why he should not be forgiven. He gave it.

On Saturday afternoon, Coker made a sudden and mysterious disappearance from Greysfriars. Nobody knew where he had gone. Several people tried to find him.

Coker had gone to London.

On arriving at Charing Cross he went to the dressing-room, and changed into shorts and a T-shirt for the occasion. He put on his attire to a Brighton hotel, by train.

He wore a light raincoat over his running gear, so that as he proceeded to Westminster his appearance did not excite undue attention.

At half-past five he stood beneath the famous Big Ben.

Quite a crowd of people had assembled, including twenty competitors. The twenty had swelled to nearly fifty by six o'clock.

A trainer, who was to accompany the walkers and a friend had joined him. The trainer of Coker's vest. It bore the ominous number 15.

"Does that mean that I'm going to finish third, or, if I'm going to be unlucky, not to finish at all?" asked Coker.

"I'll relieve you of your raincoat, sir, if you like," said the trainer. "I can take it down to my room and hang it up for you."

"Thanks awfully."

The start was delayed, owing to the belated arrival of one or two competitors belonging to the Wharfedale.

Coker stood shivering in his light garments, impatiently awaiting the order to go.

It was given at length. And the lightly-armed figures moved off briskly over Westminster Bridge, to the accompaniment of a hearty cheer from the crowd.

Justly they stepped out, glad to be on the move. The trainer, eyeing Coker's stride, reflected anxiously that he would not be much jinxed at the other end. It was a long way to Tipperary; it was also a long way to Brighton.

Six tall, long-legged men were making the pace. Coker looked behind him to them, and solved not in let them out of his sight for one moment, if he could help it.

For the first twelve miles Coker was bewildered by the rain and mist on the trail. It was all so strange, after the quietude of the Greyfriars district.

But when Croydon was left behind, there was a long stretch of lovely road, with nothing to impede the progress of the competitors.

Dark had fallen long since. It was a novel and exciting experience, tramping through the night-out of the unknown into the unknown.

The six men who had set the pace were still in front. It seemed to Coker that they had increased their strides. It was as much as he could do to keep them in sight. He could not help admiring the way they bore themselves, erect, and keeping pace in perfect harmony.

"How far are we?" inquired Coker at length, as the trainer free-wheeled beside him.

"Twenty miles," was the reply. "Six of us."

"Oh, no?"

"Of course you jolly soon will be! A good many will be feeling the pace by the time they get to Halfway House!"

"What do you call Halfway House?"

"A village. It's a few miles farther on. A good number will be dropping out there."

"I shan't be one of them!" said Coker.

And he set his teeth and plodded on.

At Croyley a number of competitors threw up the sponge, as the trainer had predicted. But the six tall men in front kept on, and so did Coker.

He was not feeling comfortable. The strain was beginning to tell. Having set out on the enterprise, however, he meant to see it through. He could not go back to Greyfriars with an unsuccessful story of failure.

On and on, through the dark night and the drizzling rain. On and on, though legs were weary and feet were blistered. No pause, no respite until the dawn came—and Brighton!

Coker was walking mechanically now. There was no spring in his step. But the men in front were swinging along, without a moment's effort. It was as if they were taking a stroll for pleasure, and thoroughly enjoying themselves.

Up hill, down dale, and along level

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stretches of road which seemed unending, the perspiration made its way.

There was no change in the positions. Nobody overtook Coker, and nobody dropped behind him. He was seventh. And he wanted to take a prize bonus for Greyfriars, as proof of his merit, something would have to be laid.

And something did happen.

Five miles from Brighton one of the six men in front developed an attack of cramp—so acute that he was reluctantly compelled to retire.

Coker's form straightened somewhat, and his pace became less mechanical, and more brisk.

He was sixth!

And still he remained until Brighton itself was reached.

Then another of the men in front dropped out. Coker wondered why. The trainer enlightened him.

"Sheer exhaustion," he said briefly. "He's fagged out!"

Coker was fifth, and he finished in that position.

Those who finished in the first four were all walkers of high repute. It would not have been humanly possible for Coker to have got in front of any of them.

At the Aquarium, where the race finished, Coker collapsed. He just managed to mutter the name of his hotel to a taxi-driver.

It was not until Monday afternoon that Coker was sufficiently recovered to make the journey to Greyfriars.

In the railway carriage he read an account of the racing match. And he blushed when he saw a glowing reference to his achievement in finishing fifth.

Thank some account was being perused with amusement and admiration at Greyfriars. And when Coker arrived at the school, the very first fellow to congratulate him was George Blundell.

"Well played, Coker—jolly well played!" said the captain of the Fifth. "The other day, if you remember, I called you a rank, rotten failure. I take back those words!"

"That's all right, old chap!" said Coker.

"Got your prize?" asked Blundell.

"Yes. It's a silver medal."

"Sensitively inscribed?"

Coker nodded.

"Jolly good!" said Blundell. "I'm ever so pleased."

And he meant it.

Contributions by Fifth-Formers are few and far between. But this week I have prevailed upon Hilton of the Fifth to give us a story, with Horace Coker as the central figure.

Coker's motor-cycling exploits take a back seat to the Hilton incident in this sketch of the more serious side of Coker's temperament. We hope you will like the yarn, which shows the great Horace in a new and altogether admirable light.

Stories with an element of sport in them seem to be very popular with my reader club.

A Brighton reader, who signs himself by the not very dignified title of "Water-rat," wants me to publish a stimulating story. I would point out that such a yarn would be something out of season in the month of March. The mere sight of the icy waters of the River Sark makes one shudder! In a couple of months' time I may be able to gratify my club's wish.

Another enthusiastic sportsman whom I suspect is an American citizen—demonstrating for a baseball story. I am bound to decline his request, as a yarn on these lines would only appeal to the minority and not to the majority of my readers. Fisher T. Fish would revel in such a story—he'd probably want to write it himself—but baseball, though a very attractive game, has not yet fully established itself in this country.

Although I cannot always see my way to indulge their fancies, I am at all times pleased to hear from my clubs, and to consider any suggestions they care to send me.

Whenever it is possible to put their suggestions to practical use, they may rest assured that I shall do so.

MARBY WHARTON.

## THE PIRATE'S SONG!

By TOM REDWING.

When Peter Todd grows up, you know,

He'll be a Cabinet Minister;

While Skimmer will be a booglar bold,

Or something just as shoddy.

But something very different—go!

Will be the fate of little me!

Yo-ho! Yo-ho!

A pirate I will be.

I'll sail my larkie upon the Sark,

Or on the stormy sea.

Yo-ho! Yo-ho!

Yes, that's the life for me!

I'll cut a dash, I'll make a splash—

A pirate I will be!

When Hosking of the Shell grows up

He'll be a great musician;

While Wharston, as a soldier brave,

Will hold a high position.

I wish them luck! But as for me,

Give me the freedom of the sea!

Yo-ho! Yo-ho!

A pirate I will be.

And in pursuit of lots of loot

I'll have a topping speed!

Yo-ho! Yo-ho!

I'm fated to be free.

Whatever comes to all my dreams

A pirate I will be!

(We sincerely trust our contributor is jesting. We should not like to see him swinging at the yardarm, or being made to walk the plank! Steer clear of piracy, Reddy. It doesn't pay!—Ed.)

## HOW I SEE OTHER FELLOWS!

By Frank Nugent.



HORACE COKER.

(Fifth Form.)

[Supplement 4.]



By DONALD OGILVY.

**L**AY my study table!"

"Rats!"

"If you say 'Rats' to me, young

Newman—"

"More rats!"

Bolover major gave an angry snort.

"Do you hear me, you cheeky young cub?"

he demanded.

"I'm not deaf!" answered Willie Newman

of the First. "And I'm not a fool! I've

been here long enough to know that we're

not supposed to fog for the Remove!"

"You're off for Wharston?"

"Oh, yes! Wharston's a gadman!"

"Are you implying that I'm not?" teased

Bolover. "Because, if no, I'll jolly well tan

your hide for you!"

Willie Newman faced the burly Bolover

calmly and defiantly. There was a dangerous

expression on his face which good

people do bury.

"I'm going to make you fog for me,

whether you like it or not!" he exclaimed.

Striding forward, he seized the fog by the

tail of the neck, and proceeded to frog-

wrench him in the direction of his study.

"Hallo! What's all this?"

A youthful figure in green and mortar-board

had just rounded a bend in the passage. It

was Wally Butler, the master of the First.

"Bullying again, Bolover?" he said

sternly. "Release Newman immediately!"

Bolover reluctantly obeyed.

"I shall speak to your Form-master about

this, Bolover," said Wally Butler. "It is

right time a little correction was ad-

ministered."

The young Form-master passed on.

Little Willie Newman, delighted at having

gained his liberty, scuttled away down the

passage.

As for Bolover major, he tramped along

to his study, a savage snarl upon his heavy

features.

Having failed to enlist the services of

Willie Newman, he was obliged to prepare

his own tea. He did so; and by devoured

the meal in silence. Then, with an ugly

stint in his eyes, he went in search of the

fog who had evaded his clutches.

"He'll have gone out of gates, I expect!"

teased Bolover. "In which case, I shall

be able to get my own back, without the

risk of Wally Butler interfering."

A couple of First-Formers were playing

marbles in the Close. Bolover halted them.

His booming voice caused them to tremble

with alarm.

"Hi, you infants! Seen anything of young

Newman?"

"Please, Bolover, he's gone out!" piped

one of the boys.

"If you know where he's gone?"

"He's horrowing Major Thresher's pony,

and going over to Courtfield on it!"

"My hat!" said Bolover. "Is he as

frenzy as all that with the major?"

The fog nodded.

Major Thresher's awfully keen on New-

man's horse. "Took a fancy to him at

the start. He's given him permission to go

for a canter on Spitfire whenever he likes."

"Is that the pony's name—Spitfire?"

"Yes. Fits it like a glove, too. I wouldn't

risk the brute for anything! But Newman

doesn't seem to mind. I believe he likes the

risk."

The fog was on talking, but Bolover

didn't wait to hear all that he had to say.

At a ringing stride, he set out in the

direction of Courtfield. His school cap was

perched on the back of his head, in his

hand he swung a maulsaca cane. And he

swung it with a certain grimness of purpose.

Presently he heard the sound of hoofs.

Gazing ahead of him, he saw Spitfire, with

*Supplement it.*]

W. Newman up, as a sporting paper might

say.

The pony was being kept well in check. It

was, indeed, going at a snail's pace. The gentle

logging of a cart-horse could not have been

more soothing to the rider.

Bolover major quickened his stride, and

drew level with the pony on the brow of

the hill which descends into Courtfield.

Willie Newman halted the animal, and

looked round at Bolover.

Then he uttered a cry of alarm, as the

bully of the Remove swung the maulsaca cane

through the air.

Swish!

The blow—it was not a very powerful one,

but it would have hurt—was intended for

Willie Newman's back. The pony went for-

ward a pace, and the fog coughed.

The cane fell across the animal's back, and

it immediately took fright, and bolted. It

dashed headlong down the hill. Willie New-

man hung as desperately, but he was unable

to check the pony's mad career.

Bolover, dismayed at the sequel to his

blow, stood, following the flight of Spitfire.

He caught his breath as he looked,

At the foot of the hill was the High Street,

congested with traffic.



*The cane fell across the animal's back, and it immediately took fright and bolted, with Willie Newman clinging to its neck.*

And there was traffic on the hill itself.

Warning shouts were uttered; horses and

carts were pulled in to the side of the road;

and Spitfire, bolting madly, was presently

lost to Bolover's view.

The bully of the Remove stood trembling

from head to foot.

He was utterly dismayed by the unex-

pected result of his action. He had meant

to administer a mild licking to the fog who

had defied him earlier in the afternoon. And

this was the sorry sequel!

That there would be a terrible accident

Bolover felt certain.

Spitfire was completely out of hand, and

Willie Newman, smart little rider though

he was, could do nothing with him.

What would happen in the crowded, con-

gested High Street?

Bolover had visions of an ugly collision,

and of the ambulance-men being summoned,

to convey Willie Newman to hospital.

He dared not descend the hill to find out

the facts for himself. He was shaking as

with the ages. His one desire was to turn

and flee from the spot, and this he did.

He ran blindly back to Greyfriars.

Those who saw him arrive stared at him

in blank astonishment, and asked him

questions. But the white-faced Bolover

made no reply. He staggered away to his

study, where he sat down to await develop-

ments.

For nearly an hour he sat there, with his

head resting between his hands, wondering

what the spook of the affair would be.

Dusk fell at length, and the sound of

voices, from the Close, came distinctly to

Bolover's ears.

He heard Bob Cherry's voice:

"Nasty accident in Courtfield! You fellows

sent about it? Kid badly injured, and

taken to hospital!"

Bolover shuddered.

"Nasty accident. . . . Badly injured!"

The words struck him like a lash.

Although the name of Willie Newman was

not mentioned, Bolover had no doubt that

he was the victim of the accident. Badly

injured, a lost man! That meant that the fog's

life was in danger!

Another hour passed. And to Bolover

major, huddled in his chair, it seemed an

endless nightmare of anxiety and apprehen-

sion. His eyes flashed to come into his

study, and to point accusing fingers at him.

"It was you who did it! You've killed

young Newman!"

Those were the words he expected to hear.

But he never heard them.

True, somebody came into his study. And

the identity of his visitor caused Bolover

major to draw a deep, soothing breath of

relief.

The intruder was Willie Newman, safe and

sound!

"Thought I'd look in to tell you I was all

right, Bolover," said the fog. "I know you

don't mean to make Spitfire bolt. And I

guess you've been rather worried."

"Worried! I've been nearly off my

recker!" said Bolover. "Tell me, kid, how

did you escape injury?"

"Well, I got to the foot of the hill without

a collision, though it was a giddy miracle.

And then Wingoat of the Sixth, who was

coming along the High Street, saw what was

happening, he tried to come into the

and collared him, and brought him to a stand-

still. The pony soon got over his fright, and

I've taken him back to Major Thresher."

"But—but I heard some fellows saying

that there had been an accident—"

Newman's face clouded over.

"Yes; a cycling accident. Telegraph-buff

knocked down by a lorry. Rotten affair!

But the chap isn't so badly hurt as they

first thought."

"When I heard there had been an acci-

dent," said Bolover, "I naturally thought

that you were the victim. If it had been

I, I should never have forgiven myself!

I say, kid, I've been a brute! And I'm

going to try to be a bit less savage in

future—see? And I'll never ask you to fog

for me again!"

"That's all right!" said Willie Newman

cheerfully. "I'm coming to lay your tea

for you to-morrow, just to show there's no

ill-feeling!"

"A wfully decent kid!" was Bolover's sum-

ming-up of Willie Newman, as the fog left

the study.

And the summing-up was a correct one.

THE END

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 736.



By MARK LINLEY.

"**B**RING hither the next prisoner, Constable Bull!"

It was Harry Wharton, in the role of magistrate, who spoke. Thrilling dramas were being enacted in the Greyfriars police-court.

Some of the cases which came before "Mr. Justice Wharton" were of a purely humorous nature. Others were more serious. For the Greyfriars police-court was not entirely a farce. Where a prisoner really deserved punishment, he got it. Where he was proved innocent, he was acquitted. Wharton always endeavoured to keep the scales of justice evenly balanced.

Police-constable Johnny Bull ushered a good-looking youth into the improvised dock, which consisted of a chair, with a constable stationed on each side.

The good-looking youth was Monty Newland of the Remove. He was looking defiant and somewhat bewildered. Johnny Bull handled him none too gently, and he didn't seem to like it.

There was a buzz in the crowded "court." It was not often that a fellow of Monty Newland's type found himself in the dock.

"What is the charge against this person?" asked the magistrate, though he knew already.

The court usher, Tom Brown, rose in his place. Then he read the following statement very slowly, mouthing the words with evident enjoyment:

"Prisoner is charged with having wilfully, and with malice aforethought, fixed up a booby-trap on the door of Study No. 1, thereby causing personal injury to your worship. The offence was committed on the 20th instant, and prisoner was placed under arrest and remanded until to-day."

The magistrate bowed gravely. Tom Brown sat down.

"Prisoner at the bar," said his youthful worship, "do you plead guilty or not guilty?"

Monty Newland flushed.

"Not guilty, your ass."

The magistrate frowned.

"That is a very improper remark to make," he said sternly. "I must caution you not to repeat it. Who is the counsel for the prosecution?"

Mr. Harold Skinner, K.C.—to give him his official title—jumped to his feet.

Skinner was grinning maliciously. He didn't like Monty Newland, and he intended to make things warm for him.

"This is a very serious case, your worship," he began. "It is strictly against the law to construct a booby-trap, and when such an offence is committed against your worship it is very serious indeed!"

"I know that!" said the magistrate impatiently. "Back up and prove your case!"

Skinner promptly called the first witness. This was Fisher T. Fish.

"Now, Mr. Fish," said Skinner, "kindly tell the court what took place on the morning of the 20th."

"I guess prisoner came to see me—"

"Yes."

"And he asked if he could have a shoveful of soot from my study chimney."

"Indeed! That was a most singular request. Did he say why he wanted the soot?"

"Yep. He said he was going to rig up a booby-trap."

"Lies—all lies!" interrupted the prisoner, his face working convulsively.

"Silence!" thundered the magistrate. "It is not your place to comment upon the evidence."

"Look here—"

"Will you be silent!" roared his worship.

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Prisoner subsided. Skinner resumed his examination of the witness.

"Did the prisoner tell you the booby-trap was for?" he asked.

"Nope!"

"Very well. You may stand down."

The second witness was then called. This was Sammy Hunter of the Second.

"Now, my plump friend," said Skinner, with a bland smile, "tell us what you saw on the morning of the 20th."

Sammy Hunter gave his evidence as if it were a lesson he had learnt by heart.

"I saw prisoner going along the Remove passage with a tin of treacle in his hand," he said.

"How did you know it was treacle?"

"Because the tin was marked 'Golden Syrup.'"

"That's nothing to go by," interrupted counsel for the defence—Mr. Robert Cherry, K.C. "It doesn't follow that because a tin is marked 'Golden Syrup' it contains treacle. In my study there is a tin marked 'Mixed Biscuits.' In reality, it contains nuts and bolts."

Laughter in court!

Skinner smiled at Bob Cherry. Then he continued to address the witness.



Skinner, looking decidedly crestfallen, was seized by a couple of constables, and hustled into the dock.

"Where did prisoner take this tin?" he demanded.

"To Study No. 1."

"Thank you! I think your worship will agree that we are building up a very strong chain of evidence. There is one other witness, whose evidence will definitely show that prisoner is guilty."

A name was bawled through the court.

"William George Bunter!"

The Owl of the Remove was present, but he seemed in no hurry to go into the witness-box.

"Buck up, Bunter!" said Skinner impatiently.

Billy Bunter rose to his feet. But he did not proceed to the witness-box. He went up to Skinner, and lapped him on the sleeve. Then he muttered, in a tone which was perfectly audible to everybody in the court:

"Make it half-a-crown, Skinner, and I'll give evidence!"

Skinner turned pale.

"Shurrup, you fat fool!" he snarled.

"Oh, really, you know, I don't consider a bribe of two bob is good enough. Besides, I've already blued the money at the tuck-shop, and I want more."

Skinner spun round upon the speaker as if he would strike him to the floor.

There was a buzz of excitement in the court. Bob Cherry was on his feet. Catching the magistrate's eye, he said:

"I think it is perfectly clear to your worship that the prosecution is built up on a tissue of lies, and that the witnesses have been bribed. With your worship's permission, I will call one witness for the defence. I have others, but one will suffice."

The magistrate nodded.

Donald Ogilvy was then called.

"Did you see Skinner on the morning of the 20th?" asked Bob Cherry.

"I did."

"In what circumstances did you see him?"

"I was washing my hands, and he asked if he could borrow my soap."

"What was his condition at the time?"

"His hands were smeared with soot, and his fingers were sticky with treacle."

Sensation in court!

Bob Cherry was about to put further questions, when the magistrate intervened.

"No further evidence is necessary," he said. "I am satisfied that prisoner is entirely guiltless, and I shall ask the jury to discharge him."

Monty Newland quitted the dock. He was smiling now.

"I am also satisfied," went on the magistrate, in measured tones, "that this offence was committed by the accused for the prosecution. He fixed up a booby-trap for my benefit, and then attempted to fasten the guilt on to Newland."

"Shame!"

A loud murmur arose, swelling into a roar.

"Mud the rotter!"

"Lurch him!"

Skinner, looking decidedly crestfallen, was seized by a couple of constables, and hustled into the dock. The magistrate then sentenced him, without further ado, to receive a dozen strokes with a cricket stump.

The sentence was carried out on the spot. Skinner was placed across the chair, and he yelled and roared as the stump came down.

His plot against Monty Newland had failed utterly, and Skinner himself was paying the full penalty for his misdeeds.

Say what you will, but truth always triumphs in the end!

THE END.

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[Supplement to.]

**BILLY BUNTER—FILM STAR!**

(Continued from page 8.)

Harry Wharton, standing in the passage outside the study door, gave vent to a chuckle.

"What are you grinning at, you silly fatted!" demanded Bob Cherry, as he capped the captain of the Remove.

"Your face, Bob!" grinned Harry Wharton. "It wouldn't gain many marks at a beauty show, I can assure you!"

"Why, yo-yo-yo—" spluttered Cherry.

Harry Wharton stepped into the study, and as Bob Cherry advanced upon him he held up his hand.

"Pax, Bob!" he exclaimed. "And I will a tale unfold to thee!"

Bob Cherry pulled up short and looked at Wharton inquiringly. Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh also turned inquiring faces to the captain of the Remove.

Wharton grasped Sammy Bunter by the collar and dragged him to his feet.

"Leggo, you beast!" yelled Bunter junior. "Leggo, or I shall tell Wingate that you have been bullying me!"

"Bump the little boaster, Wharton!" growled Johnny Bull, advancing towards the Second Former.

Harry Wharton waved the exasperated Johnny Bull back.

"No!" he said. "Just you chaps lend me your ears for a few moments."

"Sorry, Harry, but mine are attached to my head, old chap!" grinned Frank Nugent.

"And mine, too!" said Bob Cherry.

"And mine are also attentively stuck on to my esteemed and ludicrous saddle," chimed in Hurree Janset Ram Singh in his quaint and wonderful English.

"Chumps!" laughed Harry Wharton. "Just you listen!"

And the "chumps" listened with all their ears while Harry Wharton related to them what he had overheard Sammy Bunter saying to his major on the telephone in the Prefect's-room.

"Bunter acting for the films?" exclaimed Bob Cherry incredulously. "My hat!"

"Gammion!" ejaculated Frank Nugent.

"Fact!" said Harry Wharton. "And I've thought of a gilt-edged wheeze!"

Sammy Bunter had been standing by whilst this conversation had been taking place as quiet as the proverbial lamb. His eye had been cast upon the study door the whole while, anticipating a hasty exit. But the chance had not come his way.

"I say, Wharton," he said, blinking through his spectacles at the captain of the Remove, "you've made a mistake!"

"What do you mean?" demanded the captain of the Remove, swinging round upon the fact.

"That Billy isn't acting for the films," replied Sammy. "You ask the Pecker Film Co. They'll tell you that they haven't a chap by the name of Bunter on their books. And, again, he's not acting in Friarhole Woods on Saturday afternoon. You just ask!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five simply rocked with laughter at the way in which Sammy Bunter had given the whole game away.

"As likely as not, Billy's there under an assumed name, Sammy," said Harry Wharton, his face suddenly becoming

serious. "Anyhow, you've admitted he is with the Pecker Film Co., and, moreover, that he is acting in Friarhole Woods on Saturday."

Sammy Bunter lowered his eyes before the penetrating gaze of the captain of the Remove.

"I—I—I—"

Harry Wharton pointed to the study door.

"S-s-s!" he exclaimed tersely. "And if you breathe so much as one word about Billy being with a film company outside of this study, Sammy, I promise you there'll be trouble! Skat!"

And Sammy Bunter "scatted" as fast as his fat little legs would carry him.

**THE SIXTH CHAPTER.****A Stunning Scheme!**

"WELL, what's the gilt-edged wheeze you have in that brainy noddle of yours, Harry?" asked Frank Nugent, as Sammy Bunter's footsteps died away in the passage outside.

"Just you run along and fetch Wibley to the study," said the captain of the Remove mysteriously. "And then I will unfold it to you all."

Frank Nugent looked hard at Harry Wharton. He was extremely curious, and simply itching to hear what it was all about. And Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh were just as impatient as Nugent.

"But why fetch Wibley?" asked Frank. "We don't want to let him into the wheeze, surely?"

Harry Wharton smiled. "My dear son!" he said. "He is the very man, I do want to hear it. His assistance in carrying it out will prove invaluable."

Frank Nugent's brows contracted, and he relapsed into a deep reverie.

"I've got it, Harry!" he exclaimed suddenly, his face full of excitement. "You're bringing Wib in for his acting—eh?"

The captain of the Remove smiled again.

"Quite a smart piece of deduction on your part, Franky," he said. "You're hit the estimated nail on its head, beautifully, as our friend Ink would say."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And now," continued the captain of the Remove, "buzz along and fetch old Wib, there's a good chap."

Without another word, Frank Nugent darted out of the room, and made for Study No. 6, which William Wibley, the brilliant amateur actor of the Remove, shared with Micky Desmond, David Morgan, and Richard Rake.

Frank Nugent tapped at the door of Study No. 6, and a voice bade him enter. He obeyed the summons and strode into the room. The four occupants of the study were at home. Desmond and Morgan were doing their prep at the table. Rake was at work on a toy model he had had in the making for the past week or so, and Wibley was reclining, with his legs at full stretch, in an armchair, deeply engrossed in a book on the "whys and wherefores" of amateur theatricals.

The four Renovites looked up as Frank Nugent entered and closed the door behind him.

"You're wanted, Wib," said Nugent.

"Come on!"

"Where?" interrogated Wibley.

"To Study No. 1. Buck up!"

"But I'm busy," protested the Renovite. "Can't you let a fellow have five minutes' peace for once in a way?"

"Busy be blowed for a tale!" granted Nugent. "It's urgent. Something in your line, you know. Come on!"

William Wibley rose to his feet, closed the book he had been perusing with a little snap, and placed it upon the mantelpiece.

"Very well, then," he said. "Lead on, Macdonald!"

And he fell into step as Frank Nugent marched out of the study.

When they entered Study No. 1, it was to find Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh, seated idly in chairs around the table. The prep books had been put away and forgotten for the time being, and the ink which had spilt upon the table when Sammy Bunter had crashed into it, had been dried up by means of blotting-paper.

"Hallo, Wib!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove genially, as Wibley and Frank Nugent came in. "Make yourself comfy, old chap."

Wibley seated himself upon the table,

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THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 736.

and dangled his legs. Frank Nugent made his seat upon the coal-scuttle.

"Are we all here?" asked the captain of the Remove, as a preliminary.

"Yes!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Well, what is now amiss that Caesar and his senate must redress?" quoted Wibley from Shakespeare's famous "Julius Caesar."

"Wib," said Wharton, "Billy Bunter's acting for the films."

Wibley stated that ejaculation and started so violently as to nearly lose his perch upon the table.

"It's taken the wind out of your sails, Wib—eh?"

"It has!" said Wibley emphatically. "But surely that fat idiot isn't capable of acting for the movies? It's impossible."

"It's true, nevertheless," said the captain of the Remove. "And this is where you come in, my son. On Saturday afternoon the Pecker Film Co., of which Billy Bunter is a member, is filming a scene in Friarale Woods. I don't know what part our fat porpoise is taking in the film, but anyhow, you—"

"Hush!" broke in Bob Cherry, placing a warning finger to his mouth.

Harry Wharton stopped abruptly at the sign. Bob Cherry rose from his chair and crept over to the door of the study with the stealth of a cat. Then, grasping the handle, he pulled it open with startling suddenness.

"You-ow-ow-wow!"

Sammy Bunter of the Second Form came flying in through the doorway, and sat with a resounding bump upon the hard, unsympathetic study floor.

"Little ratter!" roared Bob Cherry in exasperation, giving Sammy Bunter a gentle dig in the ribs with his foot. "Spying as usual!"

"Wow! Nunno! I wasn't! I never! I didn't!" wailed Bunter miser.

"Don't waste words on the little toad!" growled Johnny Bull. "Bump him!"

Johnny Bull was a firm believer in the old motto: "Deeds, not words!"

"Yes! Collar him!" exclaimed Harry Wharton wrathfully.

The Famous Five closed in upon the hapless Sammy Bunter, and he was grasped by five pairs of hands. Wibley did not move from his seat upon the table. He just sat there swinging his legs and grinning broadly.

"All together!" cried the captain of the Remove. "Go!"

Sammy Bunter rose in the air, and then came down on the floor with a thud.

"Ow! Stoppi, you beasts! Leggo!"

"Again!"

"Help! Help! Murder! Police!" yelled Sammy Bunter, writhing in the grasp of the Famous Five.

"Ow! You-ow-ow-ow-ow-ow-ow! Gronoooon!"

"Had enough, Sammy?" asked Harry Wharton, with a grim smile.

"Yes! Yes! Owwows!"

"And you won't do it again?"

"Nunno!"

Harry Wharton grinned, for he knew only too well what a promise from a Bunter was worth. Absolutely nothing at all!

"Right-ho! Let him go, you chaps," said the captain of the Remove loudly.

Sammy Bunter, in a very dishevelled state, picked himself up, placed his big spectacles straight upon his fat little nose, and made for the study door. As

he was about to pass through the doorway Bob Cherry gave him a playful push with the toe of his boot to help him on his way. Sammy staggered against the opposite wall of the passage, and collapsed, gasping for breath, upon the floor. Then the door of Study No. 1 was banged to in his face.

"Yah! Beasts!" howled Sammy.

Then, picking himself up, he took a hurried departure from the precincts of the Remove Form passage.

Inside Study No. 1 the Famous Five resumed their seats.

"Well, Wharton," said Wibley, when the juniors had recovered from their exertion. "Buck up, old man, with that brilliant wheeze of yours. I've got my prep to do, and I don't particularly wish to have old Quelchy coming down on me like a thousand of bricks."

The captain of the Remove grinned.

"Prep can wait a bit," he said. "It won't take us long to run through that once we got started. But, whatever else we do we must keep in Quelchy's good books until after Saturday. A gating on Saturday afternoon would upset the whole barrel of tricks. Now about my wheeze—"

"The same old wheeze, do you mean, Harry?" broke in Frank Nugent sarcastically.

"Yes, as!"

"Well, get a move on, for goodness' sake!"

"Right-ho, old acast!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Better all gathered round and put our heads together. It's a little bit risky gassing out aloud when a chap like Sammy Bunter is about, you know."

The juniors agreed unanimously upon this point, and gathered round the captain of the Remove. Then, for some considerable while, Harry Wharton talked in almost inaudible voice. He laid before them his scheme in minute detail. And when, at last, he had finished, they rose to him as one man, and voted the scheme an absolute stunner.

"Oh, my only Aunt Jane!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "What a giddy surprise packet old Bunter will receive on Saturday. Ha, ha, ha!"

"He will imagine that his last hour has come!" said Wibley. "But, by Jove, what a film it'll be if the camera Johnny keeps turning the handle while little us are in the limelight! Oh, my hat!"

"The film will certainly be worthfully while going miles to see, my esteemed and ludicrous chums," murmured Hurree Singh. "The rasculous Bunter as a second Charlie Chaplin will beautifully overcome the whole august jam factory."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And we shall spend a most enjoyable afternoon into the bargain," said the captain of the Remove. "Why, the producer of the Pecker Film Co. will probably want to bag our services bang on the spot. An offer of a thousand a year will take a wee bit of refusing—eh?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But what about footer, Harry?" asked Frank Nugent suddenly. "We have a match with the Third according to programme for Saturday."

Harry Wharton whistled.

"Great snakes!" he exclaimed. "I had almost forgotten footer in the

excitement of the scheme. Still, we can easily get over that. The Third Form are of no consequence, and it'll give some of the reserves a chance. Smifley can manage the captaincy for once in a way, and I am sure he'll lead the side to victory O.K."

"Good!" exclaimed Frank Nugent. "And now about prep. I really think it time to be getting on with it. What sayest thou, O chief?"

Harry Wharton nodded his agreement, and Wibley slid from his seat upon the table.

"I'll get along," he said. "You can rely on me to get the necessary prep together, and then, on Saturday, we'll make our fat porpoise absolutely sit up and take notice. If we get to the barn in Friarale Woods about two o'clock we shall have ample time to get made up, and to make ourselves scarce somewhere among the undergrowth. Cheerio!"

And with that William Wibley left the study.

The Famous Five, still chuckling immensely, produced their prep books, and got on with their work. But it was very hard going, for the scheme that boded ill for the Owl of the Remove remained uppermost in their thoughts, and, try as they would, they could not dispel it.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Bunter Before the Camera!

**F**ATTY!"

Mr. Pecker, the producer of the Pecker Film Co., stood in the hall of the house he rented in Priory Street, Courtfield, and bawled that one word at the top of his voice.

It was Saturday afternoon, and it wanted but half an hour to the time set for filming of Scene 3 of Mr. Pecker's new production "The Wood Nymph," and, as yet, Billy Bunter, alias Fatty Fisher, film star, had not put in an appearance. Bunter had been in the company's dining-hall to dinner, and after partaking of a very hearty meal had vanished, as it were, into nothingness!

The fat Removite had overcome the difficulties of film-acting in an astounding manner, and he was now "quite up to the game," as he had muttered to himself the previous evening.

Mr. Pecker had spent a considerable amount of time and patience with him, cloistered in strict privacy in the studio.

"The Wood Nymph" was now well under way. The three interior scenes had been enacted, and Billy Bunter had worked through the ordeal with flying colours. It was hardly creditable, but, nevertheless, true. And, although the great film producer had pondered for a solid hour over the invalidity of "Fatty Fisher" to appear before the camera with the skill he had once possessed, he did not for one moment imagine that it was a case of mistaken identity on his part. He was convinced that Fatty Fisher had lost his memory in some way or other during the late war. Billy Bunter had been licked into shape, and had passed muster. That was all that Mr. Pecker cared about.

Hook, however, was awaiting at evening the sound came from one of the two limousines that purred softly on the road outside the house, and it fell upon the ears of the film producer, Mr. Pecker sniffed. He was greatly annoyed at the absence of Billy Bunter.

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**"BUNTER'S**

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The Owl of the Remove was keeping the company waiting. In the cars, and growing impatient as every minute flitted away, sat the actors and actresses who were taking a part in the filming of the scene in Friardale Woods. Reginald T. Reeves, the operator, and Silas K. Symonds, the property man.

Five minutes elapsed, and still no Bunter.

"Blow that fat idiot!" growled Mr. Pecker, pacing the hall restlessly, and swinging the megaphone he carried the while. Then, in stentorian tones:

"Fatty, get a move on!"

The film producer allowed another couple of minutes to pass, and then, as Billy Bunter failed to answer the call, he bounded up the stairs which led to the floor above, and made for the room which the Owl of the Remove had had allotted to him as a bed-room.

Without ceremony Mr. Pecker lurled open the door.

"My word!" he gasped, almost flabbergasted. "The lazy lubber!"

Snore!

Billy Bunter lay peacefully sleeping upon his bed. All thought of his part in Scene 3 of "The Wood Nymph" had long since vanished from his brain, and he was dreaming he was back again at Greyfriars School.

Mr. Pecker strode over to the bed, and roughly shook Bunter by the shoulder.

"Gronooh!" granted the Owl of the Remove sleepily. "Getaway! 'Tain't rising-bell yet, Cherry, you beast!"

"What ever do you mean, Fatty?" demanded Mr. Pecker, in astonishment. "I'm afraid I fail to comprehend!"

"Oh!"

Billy Bunter sat up upon his bed with a start, and blinked at the producer with wide, staring eyes.

"Who's Cherry, Fatty?" inquired Mr. Pecker. "You mentioned Cherry when I awakened you. Who is he?"

"I-I-it's all right, Mr. Pecker!" stammered Billy Bunter, a trifle taken aback.

"I see— I was only d-d-dreaming about the ch-ch-cherry-tart I had last Wednesday for dinner!"

Mr. Pecker looked suspiciously at the Owl of the Remove. But he did not press the matter farther, much to Billy Bunter's relief.

"Get up off there, you lazy bouncer!" he growled. "D'yn know you're keeping the company waiting? Have you forgotten we are going out 'on location' to Friardale Woods?"

"Oh, really, Mr. Pecker—"

The film producer waved a hand in a gesture of impatience.

"Get a move on, and don't argue!" he snorted. "I'll give you five minutes to take your place in the car, and that's all!"

Then, turning sharply upon his heel, Mr. Pecker stamped out of the room.

As quickly as possible, Billy Bunter jumped out of bed, and got into his lounge suit. Then, sticking a cap upon his head, he ran out of the room. Down the stairs he went, through the doorway, and then—

Bump! Crash!

He collided with the company's carpenter, who was making his way towards the studio, carrying a large plank of wood, Bunter, the carpenter, and the plank of wood, rolled in a heap to the foot of the flight of stone steps that led down from the door to the level of the street pavement.

"Ynooop! Ow-aw!" yelled Billy

NEXT

MONDAY!

"BUNTER'S BOLT!"



"Shoot!" roared Mr. Pecker. Billy Bunter jumped clean off the floor. "Help! Stopptit!" he cried. "Don't you dare shoot me, Mr. Pecker!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the camera-man. (See Chapter 4.)

Bunter pathetically. "I'm dying! I'm dead!"

"Why, you thumping maniac!" roared the carpenter. "Can't you look where you're going to?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The members of the Film Co. seated in the cars shook with laughter at the sight they beheld. To witness Billy Bunter groveling on the ground and clutching frantically about him for some kind of hold, struck them as extremely funny.

The carpenter, with a grunt, extricated himself and rose gingerly to his feet.

"You ought to be chained up, young feller-me-lad!" he said, with a sniff, as he picked up his plank of wood. "You ain't safe to be running loose, blowed if you are!"

Another sniff, and the carpenter proceeded on his way.

Billy Bunter staggered to his feet, rearranged his big spectacles upon his fat little nose, and blinked dizzily around.

"Come on, Fatty!" cried Reeves, the camera man, who was sitting in the second car alongside of the chauffeur.

"We're still here, you know."

"Oh, really, Reeves—"

Mr. Pecker gave the word to start to the man at the steering-wheel of the first car. The film producer was seated next to him. Off shot the car in the direction of Friardale Woods.

Billy Bunter hurried towards the other vehicle, but, when he was within three yards of it, it began to move off. Reginald T. Reeves had given the chauffeur the word to start, and at the same time, a knowing wink.

"Oh, grubs!" ejaculated Billy Bunter, breaking into a run and dashing after the motor-car. "Wait for me, you rotters!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

roared the camera-man at the top of his voice. "Show us what you're made of, you giddy breaker of sprinting records!"

The car moved along the road at exactly the same pace as the Owl of the Remove was travelling. And a distance of eight yards separated Billy Bunter and the car for about two hundred yards. Then the limousine suddenly stopped, and Billy Bunter came up to it puffing and blowing as if for a wager.

"Jump in, Fatty!" cried Reeves, with a grin. "Mr. Pecker will be simply leaving his hair if we keep him waiting long in the woods."

"Oh, really, you beast—"

Reginald T. Reeves realised it was useless wasting time and words upon the Owl of the Remove. He jumped to the ground with startling suddenness, threw open the door of the car, and, grasping the fat Remove by the scruff of the neck and a fat leg, bundled him in. The door banged to, and as the camera-man resented himself beside the chauffeur, the car shot away.

Through Courtfield it sped, and then on to Friardale. But it did not catch up to the car in which Mr. Pecker journeyed, and, when at length it arrived on the borders of the woods, it was to find the produce bustling around making what preparations he could for the filming of Scene 3 of his new production.

The actors and actresses swarmed inside the marquee which had been erected in advance by the property-man's assistant and a scene-shifter, to put the finishing touches to their make-up. The majority of the company had come "on location" already dressed in their

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.  
By FRANK RICHARDS.

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various highly-coloured costumes, and only required the attention of the dresser to dress her hands ere they were ready to face the camera.

At last everything was in order, and, at a word of command, the actors and actresses, together with Reeves, the camera-man, followed Mr. Pecker in a little procession to a perfectly delightful glade situated deep in the heart of Forest Woods.

The camera was set up in position, and Mr. Pecker ran two converging tape lines from the tripod of the camera to a bush which stood a few yards away. The film producer did this for the benefit of the members of the company, so that they would not stray out of the focus during the filming of the scene.

A rapid rehearsal followed, and then another, for Billy Bunter made one very big blunder in the first. He quite forgot to kiss Queenie Walsh, the heroine, when she had accepted his proposal of marriage! But the Owl of the Remove rectified this error at the second attempt, and it was pronounced as O.K.

"Take your places in the set, ladies and gentlemen!" came in a sing-song voice from the producer.

The actors and actresses in the opening of the scene moved forward into this set at the order. Billy Bunter strutted along beside Queenie Walsh with the gait of an overfed turkey, and with a lustre smile beaming upon his face.

Billy Bunter, with his face an almost uniform dull yellow colour, his mouth the colour of a plum, and his eyebrows picked out in blue, and wearing a yellow shirt and collar, was hardly recognisable as the Billy Bunter of Greyfriars. The Owl of the Remove had received a more or less scientific explanation of this weird colour scheme adopted by the many film companies from a dresser on the previous Wednesday. Bunter's curiosity upon this matter had been pacified in a very short space of time.

Mr. Pecker retired to a stool which had been placed for him a few yards behind the set, and mounted it. Then clearing his voice with a loud and prolonged cough, he placed the megaphone he held to his mouth.

"Action!" he shouted. And after a short pause: "Shoot!"

Scene 3 of "The Wood Nymph" was in the making.

Click, click, click!  
Reginald T. Reeves turned the handle of his camera with its rhythmical accent as the members of the Film Co. acted their parts in the set.

Mr. Pecker always insisted upon his company speaking actual words to fit in with the film when they were acting. He said it greatly assisted in the putting of more life into the action.

There came a "close-up" of Queenie Walsh in the grasp of a burly footpad, and then, at her cry for help, Billy Bunter rushed into the set with the roar of an infuriated bull. The footpad, at the sight of the hero, flew for his life out of the picture.

"Put more life into it, Fatty!" roared Mr. Pecker through his megaphone. "Good! That's the idea!"

Click, click, click!  
The camera was recording it all. Billy Bunter grasped Queenie Walsh around her supple waist with a fat arm as the girl staggered backwards as if in a faint, and supported her.

"You are in safe hands, my dear," said Billy Bunter, sticking out his fat chest and slapping it with his hand. "I, Charlie Careless, will see that no harm comes your way from now and henceforth."

Queenie Walsh, as Rose Bud, the Wood Nymph, bestowed a sweet smile upon her gallant rescuer, and then sat down upon the ground with her back to the bush which formed the rear of the set. Billy Bunter paced restlessly up and down for a moment, and at last, with a shrug of his shoulders, dropped down beside her.

"That's the style!" cried Mr. Pecker excitedly, as he stood upon a stool before the actor who stood upon: "You two are marvels!"

Mr. Pecker's words of praise were lost upon Billy Bunter. He bent his head downwards to Queenie's face and was about to continue, when a weird noise at the back of the bush they were sitting against attracted his attention. The Owl of the Remove looked nervously about him. The film was forgotten in an instant.

"Cut!" roared Mr. Pecker. Reeves, the camera-man, ceased to turn the handle of his camera. He was well aware of why the order had been given. He, as well as the producer, had noticed Billy Bunter's hesitation.

"What's wrong with you, Fatty?" demanded Mr. Pecker, striding up to the Owl of the Remove. "Come to sleep?"

"Nonsense!" murmured Billy Bunter, with a shiver.

Billy Bunter was frightened. He was sure he had not imagined the noise.

Mr. Pecker asked Queenie Walsh and the remainder of the company who stood just outside of the set, if they knew what was the matter, but they all answered in the negative.

"Well, carry on," he said, when Bunter had assured him that he had only become faint for the moment but had now recovered. "We are nearly through."

And the film producer gave the necessary commands for the restarting of the film.

Billy Bunter pulled himself together and bent to kiss the heroine. But, before he could do so a low moan sounded in his behind him, and he started back. The Owl of the Remove, thoroughly alarmed, swung round, and at the sight he beheld, he seemed to become suddenly stricken with paralysis, for he gazed with fascination at the head and shoulders of a man who peered round the bush at him. It was that of a Redskin warrior—an Apache chief in full brassard and warpaint!

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### The Falling Star!

"HELP! Help!"  
Billy Bunter shouted those two words in a panic-stricken voice as he recovered from the first effects of the shock he received at the sight of the Redskin.

Mr. Pecker and the rest of the film company, although far from being alarmed at what they saw upon the intruder, were too astounded to move an inch in his direction.

"O paleface of huge dimensions, prepare to meet thy doom!" chanted the Redskin chief, producing a tomahawk from beneath the folds of his blanket.

Billy Bunter's eyes nearly started out of his head when he saw the warpaint, and he uttered fervently that the earth would open and swallow him up.

"O-er-er!" he groaned pathetically. "Spare me! Spare me!"

The Redskin bared his teeth in a grin which seemed to split his face from ear to ear. And what a hideous sight his

face presented with the bars of vermilion running horizontally upon it—the warpaint of the Apache nation!

"That is a cunning paleface!" he murmured. "But thy end is near. The Happy Hunting Grounds shall soon claim thy spirit, whilst I—Wib-of-the-Wisp, first war-chief of the Apache nation—shall swing thy scalp in my lodge by the great Sarkin River! Wah! I have spoken!"

The Apache chief raised his tomahawk above his feathered head as if preparing to deliver the Owl of the Remove a death-dealing blow.

But the blow did not come. Billy Bunter did not wait for the weapon to descend. He jumped to his feet with the agility of a monkey, and dashed in the Wib-of-the-Wisp like a flash of the proverbial greased lightning.

Click, click, click!

Reginald T. Reeves, the camera man of the Pecker Film Co., was turning the handle of his camera.

Reeves, having recovered from the surprise that he had sprung upon the film company with the coming of the Redskin, realised that the country in which he was at present standing was England, and that it was ridiculous to suppose that there were Red Indians abroad. And with these thoughts fixed firmly in his mind, the camera man was taking the most of his opportunity to record the startling happenings with his camera. And startling happenings they were, too!

Billy Bunter dashed on, hotly pursued by the Redskin chief, who brandished his tomahawk in businesslike fashion, and gave vent to the most hideous war-whoops imaginable. The Owl of the Remove ran as he had never run before in his life, and he might have possibly made his escape but for one fact. He had only covered about twenty yards when, in running between two trees, he went hurtling to the ground with a crash that jarred every bone in his fat body. Billy Bunter had tripped over the stump of a dead tree.

The next moment, and with whoops of savage delight, four sturdy young Redskin braves dashed out of the bushes close by and hurled themselves upon the hapless Removite.

"Yoo-ooop! Yoo-oo-oo-oo!" moaned Billy Bunter as he lay upon the ground endeavouring to cover his eyes with his hands as the Redskins spraked over him. "Leggo! Let me get up! Help!"

"So the paleface porpoise is mine, after all!" said the deep-throated voice of Wib-of-the-Wisp, as the warrior came up to his braves and their prisoner. "Yes, O Wib-of-the-Wisp, great chief of the Apache nation, I arrested one young brave, bowing low before the chief. 'What words of wisdom doth thus speak for your humble braves to obey?'"

"Keep out of the way, you idiots!" This, in a shout, came from Mr. Pecker, the producer of the Pecker Film Co., who, as the members of his company started forward as if to interfere on the Owl of the Remove's behalf. However, at the curt command from their employer they dropped back without a word and watched the scene before them with much wonder and amusement.

Reginald T. Reeves moved his camera nearer as he was bringing the actor and the Redskin warriors into a "close-up." Mr. Pecker was positively delighted at the camera man's initiative, and he showed his appreciation by dancing a jig beside the man.

"Good for you, Reeves!" he cried almost hysterically. "It fits in with our



scheme a treat! You'll get a handsome rise in your salary for this, as sure as my name is Phillip Pecker!"

Meanwhile, the Redskin braves had become their prisoner hand and foot. It had been a simple job, for Billy Bunter was too scared to offer the slightest resistance. He sat up upon the ground and gazed at Wib-of-the-Wisp towering there above him with horror written plainly in his wild, staring eyes.

The Owl of the Remove's big spectacles had slid down to the tip of his nose during the fall, and he looked the most wretched person upon the face of the earth at that moment. But, at the same time, he looked the funniest. And it seemed that it was only by a supreme effort of will-power that the Redskin warriors kept their stolid native expression upon their faces as they gazed at him.

"Thy doom is at hand, O paleface of fatness!" grunted Wib-of-the-Wisp in slow, dragging tones. "I sentence you to be hung, drawn, and quartered, and then boiled in oil! Wah! I have spoken!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter gasped incredulously as the Redskin braves broke into a hearty chuckle, and it dawned upon his muddled brain that he had probably been the victim of a joke. Bunter stared at the laughing Redskins for one long minute.

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Silence!"

Wib-of-the-Wisp held up a hand to signify that to hear was to obey. But Billy Bunter was not having any.

"But, really, you know—"

"Again he was cut short.

"Gag the prating paleface, O Cherry-tree!" thundered the Redskin chief, stamping his foot upon the ground and striking an attitude of a typical villain of a drama.

One young brave sprang forward at the command. He bowed low before the chief, and then produced a handkerchief from a pocket of his dress.

Billy Bunter eyed him searchingly the while, and the ghost of a smile flickered across his face.

"Don't trouble, Bob! Bunter's too smart for us; we're found out!"

It was the voice of Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove Form of Greyfriars.

Wib-of-the-Wisp and the four Redskin braves jumped clear of the ground in astonishment.

"What the merry thump!" came in the voice of Wibley of the Remove from the supposed Redskin chief.

"He, he, he!" cackled Billy Bunter. "I knew you all directly I set eyes on you, you apologies of bad, bold Redskins."

"Why, you grinning hyena!" roared Bob Cherry, otherwise Cherry-tree, the brave. "You were absolutely scared out of your skin at the sight of us!"

"Don't talk rot, Cherry!" said Billy Bunter loftily. "I was acting up to you the whole while. And my ventriloquism put the finishing touches a treat—what?"

"You're talking out of the back of your neck, porpoise!" growled Harry Wharton. "You were scared as plain as a pikestaff!"

"Why, you ass, Wharton, I—"

"Ha, ha, ha! The esteemed and risulous Bunter has howfully knocked the wheels out of my worthy chums!"

Harvey Jansent, Ram Singh, the Naloh of Bhanpur, came from behind the bushes, chuckling wholeheartedly.

Inky was dressed in Etons. He had not been of the party of Redskins owing to his weird and wonderful knowledge of

the English language. He would have given the whole game away in a very short space of time if he had unconsciously spoken so much as one single sentence. He had had to be content, as it were, with a place in the audience, and this he had thoroughly enjoyed.

"Yes, Inky," said Frank Nugent. "But we gave him a jolly good fright, and if it—"

"What's the trouble there, Fatty?"

Mr. Pecker and the rest of his firm company were not, as yet, wise to the real identity of the Redskins. They had not heard the conversation that had taken place between the Owl of the Remove and Harry Wharton & Co. They were a little too far away for that, but they could see that something was the matter, and Reeves, the camera man, had ceased to turn the handle of his machine.

"It's quite all right, Mr. Pecker!" answered Billy Bunter, with a grin. "Only an extra turn, you know!"

Harry Wharton & Co. grinned. The extra turn as supplied by them had been a real corker while it lasted. The unfortunate laugh had been their undoing, and Billy Bunter's ventriloquism had made it doubly so.

Mr. Pecker came striding up to the little party.

"Well," he queried, "what's this all about, anyway? It's some joke, I suppose! A good joke, as far as I'm concerned, I might say, for I've got a tip-top film of it all!"

Harry Wharton & Co. grinned.

"It's all Bunter's fault, really, sir!" said the captain of the Remove. "He—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Bunter! Wharton!" exclaimed Mr. Pecker, mystified. "Pray, what does it all mean?"

Billy Bunter glared at Harry Wharton furiously as the captain of the Remove bent down and released him of his bonds.

"Better explain to Mr. Pecker, Bunter!" said Harry dryly. "There'll be trouble at the school for you if you're found out! Better out with it while there's still a chance of getting back to Greyfriars undetected."

"But my minor knows all about it!" said Billy Bunter dismally. "He's certain to have let all Greyfriars hear of it by now!"

"He hasn't, and he won't!" replied Harry Wharton. "I happened to overhear his conversation with you on the 'phone, and he's keeping mum. Savvy?"

"But—but—but—" stammered the Owl of the Remove as he rose to his feet from the ground. "But I—"

Mr. Pecker interrupted, and placed a hand firmly upon Billy Bunter's shoulder and shook him ever so gently.

"Look here, Fatty!" he said sternly. "I heard you addressed as Bunter by one of these fellows. Just you put me wise immediately to this little episode of, shall I say, the Redskins?"

"I—I—I—"

"Come, come, Fatty!" said the producer, not unkindly. "You're keeping the company waiting! We've still the wood scene to wind up, my dear fellow!"

For a moment or two Billy Bunter was silent. Then, with an effort, he



Sammy Bunter heard Harry Wharton's ejaculation, and the telephone receiver dropped from his trembling fingers. He swung round with a guilty start. "Wharton!" he gasped, his face the colour of chalk. "You were spying on me!" (See Chapter 5.)

blurted out the whole truth to the amazed and wondering Mr. Pecker. He related how, when the film producer had mistaken him for his late star, Fatty Fisher, he had humoured Mr. Pecker and had obtained leave of absence from Greyfriars to join the company, omitting, of course, the way in which he had wangled his exit from the school. That Billy Bunter deemed unwise to divulge. Then Harry Wharton explained how he had humoured Bunter's boasts, and that the jape that the Removites had played upon him was all for his own good.

"Well, you certainly amaze me!" said Mr. Pecker, when he had heard it all. "And to think that after all this Fatty Fisher is but a pleasant memory of the past! Now I understand why Master Bunter was unable to perform before the camera straight lung off. Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Pecker could hold himself no longer. He was a genial kind of man, and could appreciate a good joke when he saw one. And to him this was one of the very best he had come across for many a long day. He stood there and shook with merriment for fully five minutes. Then, seeing that Reginald T. Reeves and the members of his company were gathering round in an endeavour to discover the facts of this startling interruption in the filming of "The Wood Nymph," he ceased abruptly.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, addressing the company, "I have news for you all."

And then he went on to tell them about the affair, and denounced Billy Bunter as an impostor. It was the turn of the members of the Pecker Film Society to enjoy the joke, and they did so with great gusto.

Meanwhile, Mr. Pecker had relapsed into a deep reverie. Suddenly he swung round upon the Removites with a smile of great satisfaction upon his face.

"My boys," he said, "will you be so good as to do me a very great favour?"

"It all depends on what it is, Mr. Pecker," answered Harry Wharton. "If it is anything of a reasonable nature, you can rely upon us, I am sure!"

"Good!" exclaimed the film producer. "It's like this Bunter will have to finish his part in the scene we are filming before he returns to his school, but—and this is where you come in—owing to the fact that my camera-man has taken your unforeseen jape with his camera, will you carry on and help to make the film a real thriller?"

"What ho!"

The Removites, as one man, fell in with the idea. They were highly delighted and excited. This was a chance indeed to show off their capabilities as amateur actors. And they almost hugged each other in their enthusiasm. "Didn't I tell you that the film producer would probably bag our services, chaps?" exclaimed Harry Wharton, with a grin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You did," ejaculated Bob Cherry, slapping the captain of the Remove upon the back. "And I'm only hoping that your guilty face doesn't snash the camera! Harry, old son!"

"Ass!"

"Well, boys," said Mr. Pecker, "thanks ever so much for consenting to join in the scene! And now will you come along, for we haven't too much time to spare? The light will be failing

within an hour or so, and we cannot afford to hang about any longer. This way, please!"

And the Removites, very highly elated, followed Mr. Pecker and his company back to the set in the glade where Scene 3 of "The Wood Nymph" was being filmed.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### Back to the Fold!

"S HOOT!"

Mr. Pecker, with megaphone to his mouth, and standing upon the stool behind the film camera, gave the word of command for the restarting of Scene 3 of "The Wood Nymph."

The film producer had briefly explained to Harry Wharton & Co. the part he wished them to act in the conclusion of the scene, and the Removites, always quick to learn, had grasped the whole idea in record time. A quick rehearsal for their benefit had followed, and had proved satisfactory.

The wood scene had been altered to a certain extent to introduce the Redskins—the length of film which Reeves had taken of them was to be lengthened still more.

Billy Bunter's hands and feet had been bound again—loosely this time—and when Mr. Pecker's order to his camera-man came, he was grasped by the Redskins and lashed insecurely to a fir-tree. Click, click, click!

Reginald T. Reeves was turning the handle of his camera as the juniors of the Remove began their parts with the whole-hearted enthusiasm. Mr. Pecker watched keenly, and with critical eyes. And to him there was but one word that explained their acting—splendid!

"That's great, my boys!" he cried excitedly. "Your acting's simply splendid!"

The picture changed. The Redskins had captured Rose Bud, the wood nymph, and they were executing a war-dance around the helpless maiden. And the warwhoops which they emitted were agonising and hideous in the extreme.

Then Reeves brought Billy Bunter into a "close-up." The Owl of the London, bound to the fir-tree, was struggling desperately with his bonds. And the expression upon his face made it appear as though he were very firmly secured indeed, but, in reality, he could have cast the ropes aside in about two seconds.

"Wriggle a bit more, Fatty!" roared Mr. Pecker, through his megaphone. "Put a little more life into it, please!"

Billy Bunter did. He wriggled and grimaced with wonderful cleverness, and Harry Wharton & Co., looking on from their place in the original set, had to admit that Bunter was really excelling himself in the role of film star.

At last Billy Bunter was free, and he struggled daintily to his feet. Reeves retired with his camera and placed it facing the Redskins and the apparently helpless Rose Bud. But the lens of the camera was still upon Billy Bunter. The fat Removite picked up a thick branch of a tree which had been placed on the ground close by for his benefit. Then, grasping it firmly, he dashed towards the Redskins.

"Now, you murderous ruffians," he roared, as he dashed among them and brought his weapon into play with much vigour, "I'll show you what one Englishman can do against the lot of you!"

Appearing demoralised before the sudden attack, the Redskins retreated out of the set, and Billy Bunter was left alone with the heroine. He caught the girl in his arms and then kissed her.

"Cut!" roared Mr. Pecker. "The camera at once ceased its click. The filming of "The Wood Nymph" was at an end.

"A topping film!" cried Mr. Pecker exultingly, as he came up to the juniors of the Remove. "Absolutely topping!"

Harry Wharton smiled. "And we've enjoyed it no end, sir," he said. "Shouldn't mind this kind of thing every day of the week."

"But it's real hard work, my boy," said the camera operator kindly. "You'd soon wish yourself back at your school—I do even now, and it's a long time ago since I was a boy. But we must be getting back to Courtfield. Would you and your

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chums care to come along and have tea with the company at the studio?"

"Rather!" exclaimed Harry Wharton boisterously. "What say you, chaps?"

"Want to?"

The Removites responded with a will. "Good enough!" said Mr. Pecker. "We'll be off in about ten minutes. But first of all I must see to the packing up of our props. See you later!"

"Jolly nice man, Mr. Pecker!" remarked Harry Wharton to his chums when the film producer had departed. "Fancy asking us to tea! How ripping! And we shall be able to have a look over his studio!"

"And to escort Buntly back to Greyfriars?" chuckled Bob Cherry. "By the way, where is the porpoise?"

"Probably looking after the heroine of the film," said Frank Nugent, with a smile. "Still, we shall see him anon."

Harry Wharton whistled.

"What about our clothes?" he exclaimed. "I'd almost forgotten we'd left them in the barn! We'll make a rapid change and ask Mr. Pecker to let us have a wash when we get to the studio. Come on!"

And the Removites sprinted for the barn which stood about two hundred yards away.

very cheerful meal indeed, and spirits ran high the whole while. And when it was over, Mr. Pecker took Harry Wharton & Co. around the house and explained all details of interest to them.

"And now," concluded the film producer when the tour of inspection had been completed and he and the Removites were in Mr. Pecker's private sanctum, "we must settle up with Master Bunter."

The film producer rang the electric bell that hung over his desk, and Mabel, the maid-servant, appeared in the doorway.

"Mabel, please find Mr. Fisher and send him to me at once," said Mr. Pecker to the girl.

Harry Wharton & Co. grinned as the maid departed. They could not help it. To hear Billy Bunter spoken of as Mr. Fisher—Fatty Fisher, film star—struck them as comical.

Ten minutes elapsed before Billy Bunter put in an appearance, but when at last he did so, he was attired in his Etons, cap and overcoat, and was carrying his bag.

"Hello, Fatty!" cried Mr. Pecker cordially. "So you're quite ready to return to your school, I see."

Billy Bunter granted.

my attention immediately, and, I am sure, you must all be getting back to school, I will see you as far as the gate."

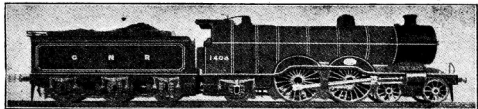
At the gate of the house the Removites halted. Again the film producer thanked them for their assistance in the filming of "The Wood Nymph," and Billy Bunter swelled with pride when he received praise of an extra special nature.

"Well, it's good-bye, and good luck!" said Mr. Pecker. "I will let you have some tickets for the trade show of 'The Wood Nymph' in due course. It will be shown in Courtfield, and I am sure you all would like to see the parts you have so admirably played to-day."

And the Removites, after shaking hands most heartily with the film producer, made their way towards Courtfield Station en route for Greyfriars.

During their short journey in the train from Courtfield to Greyfriars, Billy Bunter related his success as a film star to the Famous Five and Wibley. The juniors sat back in the carriage they occupied, and roared with laughter at Bunter's exaggerated account of his adventures with the Pecker Film Co. It tickled them immensely. They could hardly credit the fat Removite with the

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## GIVEN AWAY FREE WITH NEXT FRIDAY'S "POPULAR"!

When they returned all was in readiness for the company to move off. They looked round for Billy Bunter, and when they espied him chatting with Queenie Walsh.

"Come on, boys!" cried Mr. Pecker, striding up to them. Then, noticing that they had changed into their Etons, he smiled. "So you brought your school togs along with you, you young rascals."

"Hather, Mr. Pecker!" said Harry Wharton. "And if you would be so good as to allow us to wash when we get to your studio—"

"Most certainly!" broke in the film producer. "Now come along. We must be getting a move on. It'll be a bit of a tight fit in the cars with you as extras, but we'll manage somehow or other!"

And, followed by Harry Wharton & Co., Mr. Pecker led the way to the waiting limousines.

The Famous Five and Wibley crowded into the cars with the rest of the company. As Mr. Pecker had said, it was a bit of a squeeze, but it was managed. Then, at the word of command from the film producer, and amid much excitement and light-hearted chattering, the cars shot off in the direction of Courtfield and the Pecker Film Co.'s studio.

The studio was reached in record time, and after the Removites and the members of the company had made themselves presentable, tea was served in the company's dining-hall. It was a

"And you've said good-bye to your friends in the company—eh?"

"Yes!"

"Well, here's your pay—twenty pounds, mind the pound! I advanced you when we first met in Friarcliffe Woods."

Mr. Pecker handed the Owl of the Remove a wad of Treasury notes, and Billy Bunter took them greedily in a fat and grubby hand.

"Thank you, Mr. Pecker!" he gasped, placing the notes very carefully in his jacket pocket.

The film producer then offered the "Redskins" a small remuneration for their services, but they declined firmly and with thanks.

"No, Mr. Pecker," said Harry Wharton, speaking for all. "It was a pleasure to assist you, and we thoroughly enjoyed it. Our reward was your kindness in asking us to act in your film when, by rights, you should have given us a wigging for interfering as we did."

"Tut, tut!" exclaimed Mr. Pecker.

"It was nothing. Why, it relieved the monotony, and the way in which Fatty was taken in was extremely ludicrous, not to say absurd—"

"Oh, really, Mr. Pecker—"

But the film producer took not the slightest heed of Billy Bunter's indignant interruption. He just continued pleasantly.

"Well, boys, you must excuse me now. I have several little items that require

ability to prove himself successful before the camera. But there it was—he had done so."

When they arrived at the school, Billy Bunter reported his return to Dr. Locke.

Then on the following Monday the Owl of the Remove actually stood Harry Wharton & Co., Wibley, his own study-mates, and his brother Sammy, a feed to commemorate his appearance as a film star.

And during the feed, Peter Todd, Alonzo Todd, and Tom Dutton, the deaf junior, heard for the first time of Bunter's short sojourn with "The Pecker Film Co." Peter Todd was annoyed at first, but he allowed the matter to drop. Peter wondered how on earth the Owl of the Remove had managed to get away from the school, and so did Harry Wharton & Co. But they did not think of asking him how he had worked it. And, needless to say, Bunter did not volunteer any information on that point.

At the end of the feast a toast was given to William George Bunter, alias Fatty Fisher, film star!

THE END.

(There will be another grand long complete story of the chaos of Greyfriars next Monday, entitled "Bunter's Bolt!" By Frank Richards. Further reference to this story is made in the *Chat* page.)

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