

# OXFORD OR CAMBRIDGE ?

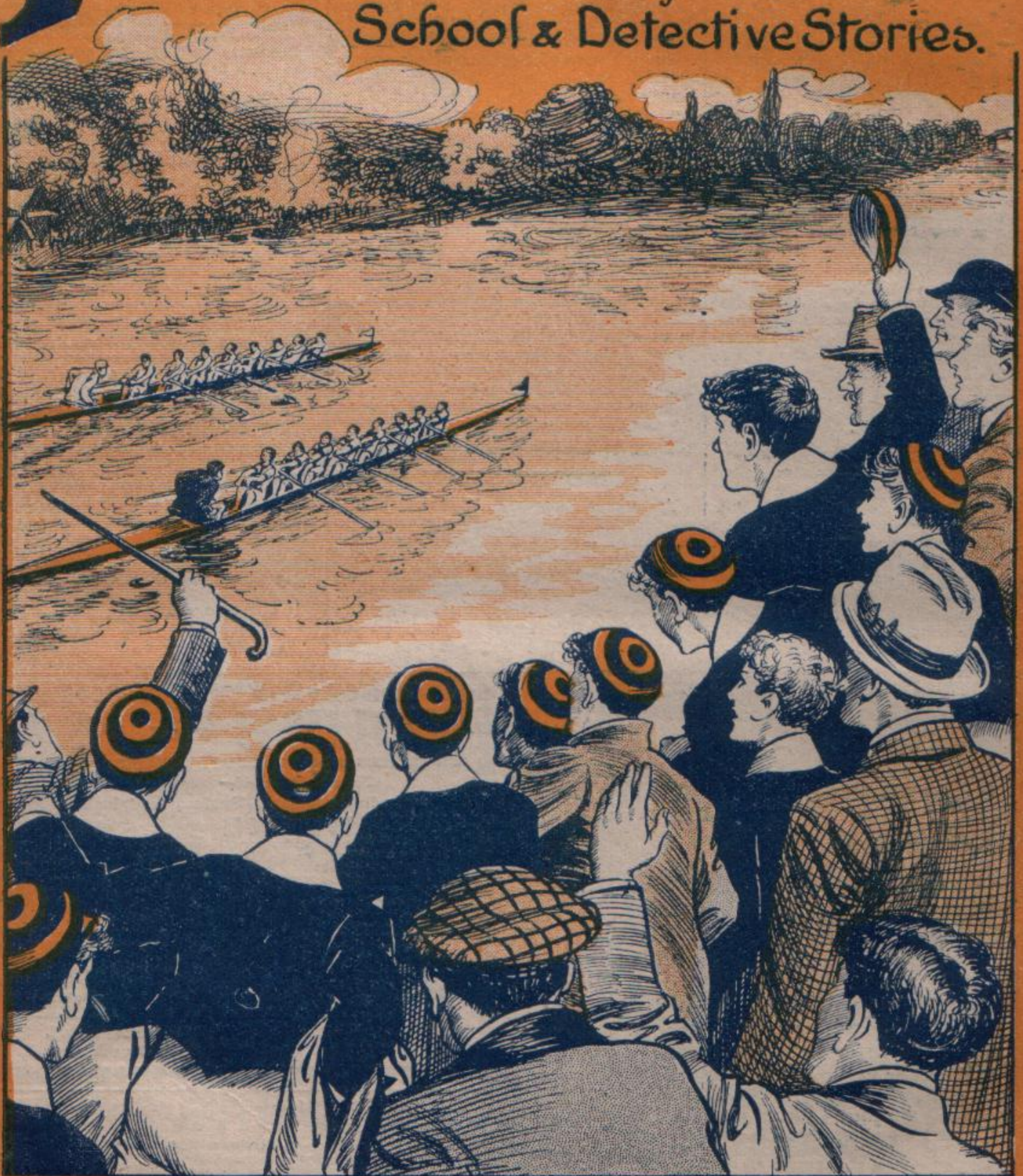
Read "BILLY BUNTER'S BOAT-RACE PARTY!"—inside.

No. 789. Vol. XXIII.

Week ending March 24th, 1923.

# The Magnet 2<sup>d</sup>

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## BOATS LEVEL!

(Harry Wharton & Co. cheering their respective favourites in the greatest river event of the year.  
Read the magnificent story within.)





**"A MESSAGE FROM THE SEA!"**

**T**HERE is an amazing mystery in the great story of Greyfriars given in next week's MAGNET. The shadow of an appealing drama of the sea hangs over it, and from the first chapter, with its thrilling description of a shipwreck, you are carried on in breathless style. I doubt if Mr. Frank Richards, expert weaver of plots as he is, has ever reached such a standard of poignant interest as that which distinguishes the coming treat. Pegg figures, of course. Hard by there the ship comes to utter grief. As in the case of any wreck, there are questions left unanswered. The pivot of the plot is found in the rescue of one of the passengers. This young survivor is a native of Pegg. Tom Redwing has some knowledge of the castaway, and the youngster, who is on his beam-ends, is charitably given a minor post on the staff at Greyfriars, just to keep him going.

**A FIND!**

Then Bunter makes a very curious discovery. The Owl has a rare talent for spying out things, and he comes upon a bottle down by the shore. This bottle was slung overboard when the ill-fated ship was sinking, and the receptacle contains a confession evidently written by the supposed father of the fellow who has been taken in at Greyfriars. I am not going much further into this extremely singular story: It has got to be read to be thoroughly

understood, for there is a perfect web of misunderstanding and doubt. Ages ago a tale called "What Will He Do With It?" was written by Lord Lytton. The query comes in nice and handily in the present case, for when Bunter chances upon the tail end of a mystery there is absolutely no telling what the chump will do with his find, and how badly he will botch matters and make confusion worse confounded.

**THE LURE OF £ S. D.!**

Of course, the unworthy Bunter scents a money-making proposition in his discovery. To know something which, possibly—who knows?—others would rather have kept a secret is a situation which has a magnetic and irresistible appeal to the heart of the ineffable porpoise. Be it remembered that Bunter is far more of a fool than a kuave. He may tiptoe delicately down the pathways of crime, but he has not—really, it is so—the very faintest notion that he is going so near to infamous actions. So we can let the fat personage have the benefit of the doubt, for what it is worth.

**THE WISE THING!**

As events turn out, this large-sized mystery of the great deep proves too big an order for the brain apparatus of Bunter. He is overwhelmed by the magnitude of the issues involved, and he runs for aid to the Famous Five. If you make a lightning calculation concerning the mental abilities of Harry Wharton & Co., you will agree

W. G. B. did the wise thing. They are thinkers in the Remove—some of them—and the Famous Quintet come out with first honours.

**"TRACKING DOWN TRACEY!"**

There is a school element in next week's topping yarn of Ferrers Locke and Drake. Drake figures more prominently than ever, which is a fact calling for satisfaction. To fathom a profound mystification Drake becomes a scholar at a well-known school. As usual, there is a perfect understanding between Jack Drake and his governor—the keen-witted detective who is in the offing, taking notes concerning an extraordinarily complex case.

**THE WIRELESS DICTIONARY.**

Immense success is attending this feature. It is just what every fellow wants. There will be a sound and informative section in next Monday's MAGNET.

**AN EXPLORERS' NUMBER!**

The "Greyfriars Herald" staff knows something about exploring, and it was a wise and statesmanlike thing to issue a special supplement devoted to exploring. Has not Harry Wharton roughed it in the Congo? This is put as a question, but I know the answer. He has! We get some interesting side-lights in the new "Herald"—glimpses of the life of an inveterate explorer. Of course, you can explore anywhere and at any time. You can go on an exploring trip to the nearest tuck-shop, or make a tour into the recesses of De Bello Gallico; but the subject is too vast to be dealt with here.

**THE COMPETITION!**

No words from me are really required about the alluring picture-puzzle. The weekly problem is IT. Those of you who have not already entered for this competition should start At Once!

**Your Editor.**

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# Billy Bunter's Boat-Race Party



A Ripping Story of Harry Wharton & Co., presenting Billy Bunter in the role of a person of note. A laugh from beginning to end.

By **FRANK RICHARDS.**

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. Ingratitude!

**O**XFORD—"Cambridge—"  
"You see—"  
"Yes, I see; but you don't, old chap!"  
"Fathead! Oxford—"  
"Ditlo! Cambridge—"  
An argument was proceeding in Study No. 1 in the Remove, when Billy Bunter arrived in the doorway.

The Boat-race, apparently, was under discussion, and there seemed to be a difference of opinion on the subject.

The Famous Five of the Remove were all there, and all stating their opinions at once. Consequently, no one heeded the still, small voice which said in the doorway:

"I say, you fellows!"  
"Oxford," resumed Harry Wharton.  
"I think—"  
"Cambridge," said Bob Cherry, "because, you see—"  
"I say, you fellows!" repeated Bunter, crescendo.  
"Oxford—" commenced Johnny Bull.  
"Cambridge—" said Nugent.  
"I say, you fellows!" roared Bunter.  
"My esteemed opinion—" began Hurree Janset Ram Singh.  
"For goodness' sake shut up for a minute, you chaps!" exclaimed Billy Bunter. "Let a fellow get a word in!"  
"Oxford—" "Cambridge—" Bunter rolled into the study.  
"Look here, you chaps, chuck it!" he said. "Never mind about the winner; the race isn't run yet. Would you fellows like to see the race?"  
"Of course we would, fathead!" said Bob Cherry. "But it can't be did. We couldn't get leave."  
"I think I can manage that."  
"What?"  
The Famous Five stared at Bunter. That fat youth blinked at them seriously through his big spectacles.  
"Leave that to me!" he said.  
"You're going to ask the Head to break up a bit earlier?" asked Johnny Bull sarcastically. "I'm sure he would do it—if you asked him."  
"Not exactly that," said Bunter.  
"Oh, not exactly!" said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"No; but I can manage it for myself and my friends," said Bunter. "Leave that to me. The question is—would you fellows like to join my party for the Boat race?"  
"Your party?" yelled Bob Cherry.  
"That's it," said Bunter, with a nod. "I'm making up a party to visit London for the Boat-race. One of our family mansions overlooks the course, you know—"  
"Only one of them?" asked Bob.  
"Yes. From the balcony we shall have a splendid view of the race," said Bunter—"that is, if my guests prefer to watch it from the balcony. Those who like it better can follow it in the launch."  
"One of your family launches?" asked Nugent.  
"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Oh, really, Nugent! My pater's splendid electric launch, you know. If it's a fine day I dare say you'd prefer the launch."  
"Lots!" said Bob Cherry. "Shall we toss up, you fellows, whether it's the mansion or the launch?"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"But perhaps Bunter could get us a lift in the Oxford boat," went on Bob humorously.  
"Oh, really, Cherry—"  
"Couldn't you use your influence, old chap, to that extent?" asked Bob.  
"That's what we should really like best."  
"Ha, ha, ha!"  
Billy Bunter blinked indignantly at the chums of the Remove. Apparently he had been expecting, not laughter, but enthusiastic gratitude for his kind offer. A chance of seeing the Boat race, and a choice of seeing it from a splendid mansion or a splendid launch, really ought to have excited something like gratitude.  
"Look here, you fellows," said Bunter, "this is a serious matter—"  
"Is it?" ejaculated Bob Cherry.  
"Yes!" roared Bunter.  
"My mistake! Sorry!"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"I'm asking you fellows to join my party for the Boat-race!" roared Bunter. "You don't get a chance like this every day, I can tell you! There will be refreshments—"  
"Oh, good!"  
"I'm going to ask my father to send down the big Rolls-Royce to take us all to London—"

"Bravo!"  
"Well, will you come?" demanded Bunter. "I'm giving you fellows the first chance. Lots of other chaps would jump at it, I can tell you!"  
"Let 'em jump!" said Bob. "We'll be generous and leave it to the other chaps."  
"Our jumpfulness will not be terrific, my esteemed, prevaricating Bunter," remarked Hurree Singh.  
"I say, you fellows—"  
"Haven't you finished yet?" asked Johnny Bull.  
"No!" howled Bunter.  
"Bunter's understudying the little brook which goes on for ever," said Bob Cherry. "You're not afraid of tiring your lower jaw, Bunter?"  
"Beast!"  
"Good-bye, old fat pippin! Now, as I was saying when that porpoise buffed in, Oxford—"  
"Are you fellows coming?" roared Bunter. "I tell you it's serious. Do you think I'm spoofing you?"  
"Of course!"  
"Honest, Injun!" howled Bunter. "There really is a Boat race party—"  
"Bow-wow!"  
"If you fellows don't believe me—"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"I jolly well won't take you, now!" yelled Bunter, in great wrath. "You'll feel pretty small, I can tell you, when the Rolls-Royce comes and picks up the party, and you fellows are left behind."  
"We'll chance it!" chuckled Bob Cherry.  
"Beast!"  
Billy Bunter rolled out of Study No. 1, leaving the Famous Five chuckling.

The discussion of the probable chances of the rival crews in the Boat-race was resumed, and not a member of the famous Co. seemed to feel any regrets for having lost the great opportunity offered by William George Bunter. That fat and fatuous youth was left to carry his pigs to another market, as it were.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER. No Takers!

**H**ARRY WHARTON & CO. smiled when they came on Billy Bunter again, at the door of the Remove Form room that same afternoon.



Some other fellows in the Remove were smiling, too.

Bunter's generous invitation had been extended far and wide, and not in a single case had it met with acceptance or gratitude.

Keen as all the Remove fellows would have been on a trip to the Boat-race, nobody was keen to accept Bunter's invitation, in spite of the handsome choice offered between a splendid mansion and a splendid launch.

The Removites knew their Bunter too well.

They had heard all about Bunter Court, and the Bunter butler, and the Bunter shooting-box in Scotland, and the Bunter villa at Cannes, and many other magnificences of the Bunter family. They had never seen any of these things, but they had heard all about them—from Bunter. And they ranked the Bunter Boat-race party in the same category. A fellow who had accepted Bunter's generous invitation would not have expected to see the Boat-race, either from a mansion or from a launch. But he would have expected to be asked for a small loan, and in that, at least, he would not have been disappointed.

Bunter frowned at a crowd of grinning faces in the Form-room passage.

How much Bunter believed of his own swank it would have been difficult to say, but certainly he always was annoyed when other fellows did not believe it.

Bunter had a rich imagination. He was given to believing in things that he wanted to believe in. And, having told one terrific whopper, he was always prepared to tell another, and another, in its support—Pelion piled on Ossa, as it were. And, having repeated whopper after whopper, Bunter really did get a little confused, and hardly knew how much was true and how much was the reverse, and cared still less.

"Boat-race party still on, old bean?" inquired Skinner.

"Certainly!"

"What time is the Rolls Royce arriving?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"First thing in the morning on Boat-race Day. You see, it's rather a long run."

"You don't think it's likely to break down on the way here?" inquired Smithy, with great gravity.

"In that case I should charter a special train," said Bunter calmly.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Is that how you're going to spend the seven-and-six you owe me, Buntty?" inquired Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My pater's footing all the bills, of course," said Bunter. "If I happened to be short of change, I should expect my friends to lend me a pound or two."

"Now we're getting down to business!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"We are—we is!" grinned Squiff.

"But it's not likely," said Bunter hastily. "I expect to have a good bit in hand on Boat-race Day. You see, I'm expecting a postal-order—"

"Great Scott!"

"From one of my titled relations—"

"Hear, hear!"

"If it doesn't come in time, though, I—"

"It mightn't," said Bob Cherry gravely. "There have been occasions when your postal-order hasn't come in time, Bunter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Anyhow, the party's on," said Bunter. "I'm going to ask Mr. Quelch

this afternoon for leave to use his telephone. I've got to make some final arrangements with my pater."

"Tell him not to forget to have the electric mansion ready," urged Skinner—"I mean the electric launch."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah!"

With that elegant rejoinder, William George Bunter rolled into the Form-room.

When Mr. Quelch arrived to take his class, he found the Remove in a merry mood. Bunter's Boat-race party seemed to have had a cheering effect upon the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars.

Mr. Quelch's gimlet eye, roving over his class, however, soon reduced the merry Removites to seriousness. Skinner nudged Bunter in first lesson.

"You haven't tackled Quelch yet!" he whispered.

Bunter coughed.

"You'll see!" he murmured.

"I don't think!" grinned Skinner.

Bunter drew a deep breath. Taking his courage in both hands, as it were, he rose to his feet. Mr. Quelch's gimlet eye fixed on him.

"Bunter!"

"If you please, sir, may I use your telephone?" asked Bunter.

The Remove master stared.

"For any sufficient reason, Bunter, I allow any member of my Form to use my telephone," he said, "but you should not make such a request in class. You may come to my study after lessons."

"But, sir—"

"That is enough, Bunter!"

"My father, sir—"

"What!"

"I have to ring him up at his office in the City, sir," explained Bunter. "He will have left before we leave the Form-room, sir."

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch.

"It's rather important, sir," continued Bunter. "It's about the arrangements my father is making for Boat-race Day."

The Removites stared.

"Really, Bunter—"

"My pater's expecting the call, sir."

"Very well, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, after a pause. "You may go. But kindly do not arrange to telephone to your father during classes on another occasion!"

"Yes, sir."

Billy Bunter rolled out of the Form-room.

"My hat!" murmured Skinner to Snoop. "There can't be anything in it! It's all rot!"

"Only a dodge to get off the lesson," whispered back Snoop.

"That's all!" murmured Stott.

Skinner nodded; but he was a little impressed, in spite of himself. Skinner was a doubting Thomas by nature; he never believed anything if he could help it. Like most extremely sceptical people, he was very liable to be taken in, with all his keenness. Being just as prepared to doubt truth as untruth, he was as likely to believe untruth as truth.

"I'm jolly well going to find out!" murmured Skinner.

Mr. Quelch's eye fell on Skinner.

"Skinner, you are talking in class, I think?" said the Remove master grimly.

"Yes, sir," said Skinner calmly. "I was just telling Snoop that I'd left the gas on in my study, sir, and wondering whether I ought to go and turn it out. I—I lighted it to seal a letter, sir."

"You utterly careless boy!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Go and turn it out at once!"

"Very well, sir."

"And take fifty lines, Skinner!"

"Oh!"

"Go immediately!"

Skinner left the Form-room. He had not bargained for the fifty lines, but it was too late to think of that now. From the Form-room Skinner hurried—not to the Remove passage, but to Mr. Quelch's own study. He wanted to know whether Bunter was there telephoning, also what Bunter was saying over the wires. If—by some miraculous chance—there was anything "in" Bunter's Boat-race party, Skinner was prepared to change his manner towards the Owl of the Remove at once, and coo him as gently as a turtle-dove.

The door of the Remove master's study was half open.

Skinner looked in.

He could not see the telephone, but he could see the glass, and in the glass he saw the reflection of Billy Bunter, standing with the receiver to his fat ear. Skinner drew a deep breath, and listened.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Proof Positive!

**B**ILLY BUNTER had quitted the Form-room without the remotest idea of going to the Form master's study. His request to Mr. Quelch had been intended simply to impress the Remove—to make the fellows believe the unbelievable. It was the second of a series of whoppers in support of the first; Bunter was already on his usual route into a tangled maze of prevarication.

But as he loafed in the passages, content to have got out of lessons for a brief interval, it occurred to Bunter's fat mind that Mr. Quelch would learn ultimately that he had not telephoned. The trunk-call would be booked for that date if it was called for; if it was not booked for that date, the Remove master would indubitably learn that Bunter had been pulling his majestic leg. That reflection sent the Owl of the Remove hurrying to the telephone.

After all, it would do no harm to ring up Mr. Bunter in the City. He could ask his respected pater for a remittance. Mr. Bunter was not likely to send a remittance, certainly; but the hopeful William George would be no worse off than before. The cost of the trunk-call would be put on his bill, and might—in fact, it would—lead to an argument at home. But Bunter was not accustomed to looking ahead. So he rolled into Mr. Quelch's study and rang up the exchange.

He was giving his father's number in the City to the exchange, when Skinner arrived and peered in.

Skinner heard the number given, and was still more impressed. Bunter was telephoning to Bunter senior, at least!

Billy Bunter, as he stood at the telephone, was not in view from the half-open door, but was fully reflected in the looking-glass. It did not occur to Skinner, for the moment, that if he could see Bunter in the glass, Bunter could see his reflection also there.

The glass reflected the half-open door and Skinner's sharp, keen face peering in.

Billy Bunter's eyes glimmered behind his big spectacles as he spotted Skinner's reflection.

He made no sign.

He was quite well aware of why Skinner was there. Skinner could have had only one possible motive for making

Next Monday's Greyfriars Yarn—"A Message from the Sea!"



an excuse to leave the Form-room, and following him to the Remove master's study.

"Right-ho, I'll wait!" said Bunter into the transmitter. "Put me through as quickly as you can, please!"

He hung up the receiver. Skinner moved back, to keep out of sight in case Bunter turned his head.

The Owl of the Remove sat down in Mr. Quelch's armchair to wait for his call.

He was in no hurry. He was bound to wait for the trunk-call, and all the time lessons in the Remove Form room were getting nearer and nearer to a happy ending.

It was rather different with Skinner. He was supposed to be turning out the gas—which was not alight—in his study, and would be expected to return to the Form-room immediately.

Staying out of class was a rather serious matter for Skinner.

But he stayed. He was keen and curious to hear what Bunter had to say to his pater over the wires; very keen, indeed, to know whether there was possibly anything in the Boat-race party. Upon that knowledge depended Skinner's treatment of Bunter during the next few days.

So Skinner decided to chance it with Mr. Quelch. But he felt uneasy as he waited, and was very anxious for the trunk-call to come through.

Fortunately, it was not long before the call came. The bell rang, and Billy Bunter heaved his heavy weight out of the armchair, and took up the receiver.

"Is that you, father?"

"Billy!"

"Yes, dad."

"What do you mean by ringing me up?" snapped Mr. Bunter, at the City end of the wire. "You ought to be at your lessons. Good-bye!"

Mr. Bunter rang off without ceremony. Apparently he was not anxious for a conversation with his hopeful son. Mr. Bunter was a stockbroker, and just then he was a "bull" of "oils," and the "bears" had made a raid on the oil market, and Mr. Bunter was worried. Consequently, he had no time or attention to waste on William George.

But Bunter did not mind. Keeping the receiver to his fat ear and his large mouth to the transmitter, Billy Bunter went on speaking, just as if there had still been somebody listening at the other end.

He knew that Skinner was lurking outside the half-open door, and his talk on the phone was entirely for Skinner's benefit.

"Yes, dad," said Bunter cheerfully to the deaf wires. "If the car comes at nine in the morning that will be plenty of time for us."

Skinner gave an almost convulsive start as he heard that.

Bunter paused, as if for a reply, and resumed.

"I'm bringing about half a dozen fellows with me. Will that be all right, dad?"

"My hat!" murmured Skinner.

"Well, I might bring nine or ten, or a dozen, father, if you don't mind. I say, that's awfully good! Will there be room for the lot on the launch?"

Skinner hardly breathed.

He would have given a great deal to hear Mr. Bunter's reply, and it did not occur to him that there was no reply at all.

"Lunch at Putney!" resumed Bunter. "That's all right. I hope it will be a

jolly good lunch. We shall be pretty sharp set after motoring up. You won't forget about the launch. I'm promising the chaps that we shall follow the race to Morlake."

"Phew!" murmured Skinner.

"I say, dad, you might send me a fiver, I shall have some little expenses to—"

"A—a fiver!" breathed Skinner.

"Morning of the race? All right," said Bunter, keeping up his one-sided conversation, to the blank amazement of a young lady who was listening at the exchange. "Don't let it arrive too late. The post will be only just in before we leave. All right."

"My word!" murmured Skinner.

"You'll fix it with the Head about leave for me and my friends, of course, father."

"Oh!" whispered Skinner.

"Better not bring Sammy? All right. No, I won't have another three minutes," said Bunter, in response to the inquiry of a dazed young lady at the exchange. "That's all right. Good-bye, father!"

And Bunter rang off. As he put up the receiver Skinner darted away down the passage. Bunter was not to know that he had been there. Throbbing with excitement Skinner hurried away.

He had found out the facts. He knew how to treat Bunter now. Well did Skinner remember an earlier occasion when Mr. Bunter had done great things on the Stock Exchange, and for a brief period Billy Bunter had received real remittances from home, and had actually

been seen in possession of fivers. Apparently something of the kind had happened again. Lightning had struck twice in the same place, so to speak. And Skinner knew the facts, of which all the rest of the Remove were ignorant. Skinner rejoiced in his own perspicacity.

Skinner knew how to act now. He was going to be first in the field. In a happy mood he arrived at the Remove Form room.

His satisfaction was a little dashed by his reception there. Mr. Quelch turned a steely eye upon him.

"Skinner!"

"Oh! Yes, sir?" gasped Skinner.

"You have been absent during a whole lesson, sir!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "You will be detained for one hour after classes, Skinner!"

"Ye-e-es, sir."

Skinner went to his place. With fifty lines and an hour's detention Skinner had paid rather dearly for his pursuit of knowledge. But he did not regret it. Bunter's Boat-race party was worth it.

Meanwhile, Billy Bunter was grinning the widest and fattest of grins in Mr. Quelch's study. In spite of Skinner's caution, Bunter had caught the sound of his retreat from the door, and he was aware that Skinner had overheard that amazing talk on the telephone. The Owl of the Remove chortled when Skinner was gone.

He rolled back to the Remove Form room at last, and went to his place. Skinner gave him a nod and a smile as he sat down. Bunter smiled back affably. He was feeling very affable,



"Can't you leave the Form-room?" asked Sammy Bunter. "No!" snapped Skinner. "Sure?" inquired Sammy. "Of course!" replied Skinner irritably. "Then here goes!" said the Second-Former. Whiz! A squashy apple caught Skinner full on the chin. He staggered back with a wild yell. (See Chapter 4.)

A shipwreck, a rescue, a new boy—next Monday!



Skinner's friendly smile being sufficient evidence that the keen and acute Skinner had not only overheard that talk on the telephone, but swallowed it—whole!

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

#### Scheming Skinner!

**M**R. QUELCH dismissed his class, and the Lower Fourth marched out of the Form-room, minus Skinner. That hapless youth had to remain, with a little problem in arithmetic to keep him busy for an hour of detention. Skinner was feeling dreadfully worried as the juniors disappeared, and the Form master followed them, leaving him alone in his glory.

Skinner was anxious to deal with Bunter. Having been the first and most emphatic in deriding Bunter's Boat-race party, Skinner had lost ground to make up for, as it were. He wanted to make it clear to Bunter that he had been merely jesting, that all the time he had, as a matter of absolute fact, regarded Bunter with feelings of admiration, friendship, kindness—in fact, veneration. And he could not do this while he was detained in the Form-room—and afterwards it might be too late.

Being now fully convinced of the genuineness of Bunter's Boat-race party, Skinner feared that other fellows might tumble to the same knowledge and get in before him. Suppose Bunter's party was fully made up before Skinner was released from detention?

It was almost an agonising thought. Skinner could not put his mind into arithmetic.

He crept to the Form-room door and looked out, in the faint hope of seeing Billy Bunter lingering in the vicinity. But Bunter was not there.

Temple of the Fourth came along, and Skinner called to him.

"I say, Temple!"

Cecil Reginald Temple glanced round loftily.

"I'm detained——" Skinner began.

"Sorry!" said Temple politely. "Is that all! I'm in rather a hurry, kid."

Skinner let the "kid" pass without comment.

"I want to speak to Bunter," he said.

"My hat! First time I've ever heard of anybody wantin' to speak to Bunter!"

"Will you tell him to come here?"

Temple raised his eyebrows.

"The cheek of these Remove fags," he said, addressing space, "is really stupendous! They think they can send Fourth Form chaps on messages!"

"Look here, Temple——"

"If you're detained," said Temple, "you'd better get back to your work, kid. Keep on with your pothooks and hangers, or whatever the work is in your Form, and don't worry!"

And, with that, Cecil Reginald Temple walked away, lofty as ever. Skinner had no time to get an inkpot to hurl after him, so the lofty Cecil Reginald departed undamaged.

"Swanking cad!" growled Skinner.

He watched the passage hopefully. His task remained undone; but, in the present stress of circumstances, Skinner could not bother about such rot as detention tasks.

Tubb of the Third came trotting by presently, and Skinner shouted to him.

"Tubb!"

"Hallo!" said Tubb.

"Tell Bunter I want to speak to him, will you? I'm detained and can't get out."

"Where is he?" asked Tubb.

"May be in the quad, or in the Remove passage, or——"

"And I'm to hunt for him?" asked

Tubb pleasantly. "Think again, old man!"

And Tubb walked off.

"You cheeky fag!" yelled Skinner furiously.

Tubb paused at the corner of the passage to put his thumb to his nose and extend his fingers in Skinner's direction. Then he disappeared.

Skinner returned to his arithmetic. He snarled as he sat down to it. Bunter had to wait till his detention was over. Skinner was tempted to bolt; but he knew that Mr. Quelch would look in for him presently, and he dared not make the venture. But he went to the Form-room door again at last at the sound of footsteps outside.

Sammy Bunter of the Second Form was in sight. The minor of the great William George blinked round as Skinner called to him.

"Fetch your major here, Sammy," said Skinner persuasively. "I want to speak to him. I'm detained."

"Can't you leave the Form-room?" asked Sammy Bunter.

"No."

"I suppose you could come down the passage?"

"No, no."

"Sure?" asked Sammy.

"Yes, yes!" snapped Skinner.

"Then, here goes!" said Bunter minor cheerfully. "I was keeping this for young Nugent, but you can have it!"

Whiz!

A squashy apple—so squashy that even a hungry Bunter could not eat it—caught Skinner on the chin. He staggered back into the Form-room, with a yell.

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter minor.

"Ooooh!" gasped Skinner.

"He, he, he!"

"You fat rotter!" shrieked Skinner.

"I—I—I'll——"

He rushed into the passage, and Sammy Bunter promptly retreated.

But Skinner paused. He dared not risk being caught out of the Form-room. He shook an infuriated fist at the grinning fag, and returned to the Remove-room and detention, mopping his chin with his handkerchief. Sammy Bunter chortled and rolled away.

Skinner gave it up. But, as it happened, Harry Wharton came into the Form-room for a book he wanted, and Skinner saw another chance.

"Getting through?" asked Wharton genially.

"Eh? No—yes. Will you tell Bunter I want to speak to him?"

"Bunter! Certainly, if you like."

"Thanks!" said Skinner. "Tell him I'll be glad if he'll come here for a minute, if he can spare the time."

Wharton stared. It was certainly the first time so polite a message as that had been sent to the Owl of the Remove.

"Are you pulling my leg?" asked Harry.

"No. Tell Bunter that."

"Then you're pulling Bunter's!" said the captain of the Remove.

"Tell him, anyway."

"Oh, all right!"

Wharton found his book and left the Remove-room, and proceeded to Study No. 7 in the Remove passage upstairs, where he expected to find Bunter. William George was there with Peter Todd, his study-mate.

"You're wanted, Bunter!" said Harry, laughing. "Skinner says he'll be glad if you'll go to the Form-room for a minute, if you can spare the time."

Bunter grinned.

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What happens to young Hemsley?



Evidently that overheard talk on the telephone was producing its effect. But Bunter did not move out of the arm-chair.

"Can't go!" he answered. "I've no time to waste on Skinner! I'm thinking out my Boat-race party!"

"Which is awfully important, of course!" remarked Peter Todd, with deep sarcasm.

"Well, rather!" said Bunter. "I'm thinking of taking you, Toddy."

"Thank you for nothing!"

"Beast! Tell Skinner he can come here if he wants to speak to me, Wharton."

"He's detained, fathead! Besides, I'm not going back to the Form-room."

"Well, I'm not going!"

And Bunter did not go. Skinner waited in the Form-room for him in vain. He was in a state of anxiety and wrath when Mr. Quelch looked into the Remove-room at last and told him he could go. Skinner fairly bolted from the room when he was released, and hurried in search of Bunter. He ran into Sidney Snoop and Fisher T. Fish in the Remove passage.

"Where's Bunter?" asked Skinner breathlessly.

"Blessed if I know—or care!" answered Snoop.

"I guess he's somewhere, trying to touch some galoot for a loan for tea!" grinned Fisher T. Fish. "I guess he's tried to touch me, but I wasn't taking any!"

"More fool you!" said Skinner. "It's worth lending him a bob to get included in the Boat-race party!"

"I guess Bunter's party cuts no ice with me!"

"All gammon!" said Snoop.

"I happen to know that it's genuine!" said Skinner. "You fellows know I was out of the Form-room this afternoon. Well, I heard Bunter's talk on the telephone with his pater." Skinner lowered his voice. "He didn't see me, of course. I took care of that. He doesn't know that I know anything. But it's all serene! We've only got to pull the fat idiot's leg—"

Snoop whistled.

"Sure?" he asked.

"I heard every word. His pater's getting leave from the Head for Bunter's party on Boat-race Day."

"Waal, I swow!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"We'll tell Stott," said Skinner. "Nobody else. Keep it to ourselves, you know. I suppose old Bunter has been working one of his swindles on the Stock Exchange, you know. He's in funds again. It's the real goods this time, and we've only got to pull that fat duffer's leg to get a ripping day out! And Wharton's crowd will be left out of it!"

"I'm on," said Snoop, "if you're sure—"

"Quite sure!"

"I guess it's a go!" said Fisher T. Fish. "I—I've been dunning the fat clam for that shilling he owes me. I guess I'll let that drop."

"Lend him another," said Skinner. "It will be worth it."

Fisher T. Fish looked doubtful at that. "I guess a shilling is a shilling," he said; "but if you're sure—"

"I tell you I heard every word!" said Skinner impatiently. "Let's get hold of Stott, and then we'll all tackle Bunter together. He won't suspect that we know anything. He's already asked us to his giddy party. I thought it was spooof, of course, being Bunter. Now we



Peter Todd made an energetic stride towards Bunter. The five-bat came in useful, after all. Crack! "Yaroooh!" roared Bunter. The cup of tea went in one direction, the ham in another, and the new-laid egg in a third. "Ha, ha, ha!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Go it, Toddy!" (See Chapter 5.)

know it's genuine, we've simply got to accept, and keep Bunter well buttered till Boat-race Day, and there you are!"

"Good!"  
And a few minutes later Skinner & Co. looked into Study No. 7 for the Owl of the Remove—now, suddenly and unexpectedly, a person whom Skinner & Co. delighted to honour!

### THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

#### Kind Invitations Accepted!

"SARDINES!"

"Yes, sardines!"

"Rotten!"

Bunter sniffed contemptuously at the rather frugal tea-table in Study No. 7.

Study No. 7 was not a land flowing with milk and honey. As Bunter never made any contribution to the study spreads, it really was not for him to complain. But he did complain—in fact, his complaints were frequent and painful and free.

"Don't care for 'em?" asked Peter Todd genially.

"Rubbish!" said Bunter.

"Then you sha'n't have any, old fat pippin!"

"Oh, really Toddy—"

"As you're not having tea here," continued Peter, "you may as well shift. It will improve the landscape."

"Beast! I say, Peter, old chap, as I'm taking you up to the Boat-race, you might stand a decent tea for once."

"I might stand a decent tea when we get back from the Boat-race," said Peter gravely.

"Beast!"

Tap!

The study door swung open, and revealed the smiling, genial face of Harold Skinner. Behind him appeared the equally smiling and equally genial faces of Snoop, Stott, and Fisher T. Fish.

"Old Bunter here?" asked Skinner. "Young Bunter is," said Peter Todd. "If you want him, there he is. Take him away and keep him, and I'll never forget it."

"Bunter, old chap—"

"Bunter, old fellow—"

"Bunter, old top—"

"Bunter, old pippin—"

The four juniors spoke at once. Billy Bunter grinned, and Peter Todd stared.

"Hallo! Has Bunter's postal-order come?" asked Toddy, in amazement.

"I don't want any rotten insinuations from you, Toddy," said Skinner loftily. "I don't know whether Bunter's postal-order has come or not, but I know one thing—it's coming."

"Eh? What? How? Which?" stammered Peter. "You know that, do you? And how do you know it, Skinner?"

"Because old Bunter says so."

"Bub-bub-because old Bunter says so!" stammered Peter.

"Just that," said Skinner, with a nod.

"Some fellows can take my word, Toddy!" put in Billy Bunter loftily.

"Not fellows that know you!" said Peter. "Skinner knows you."

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"What's the name of this game?" asked Peter, staring at Skinner & Co.

"What are you pulling that fat rabbit's silly leg for?"

"I disdain to answer a question like

Friends in time of need—Harry Wharton & Co.!



that," said Skinner. "Bunter's asked us to his Boat-race party—"

"He's asked jolly nearly all the Remove, I think, as well as lots of the Third and Fourth. Nobody's taken it on!" grinned Peter.

"We've taken it on."

"My hat!"

"Bunter, old fellow," said Skinner affectionately, "you asked me to join your party for the Boat-race. I accept with pleasure. I think it's kind and generous of you."

"Kindness itself!" said Snoop. "I accept!"

"Generosity itself!" supplemented Stott. "I accept with pleasure, Bunter, and I thank you!"

"I guess I'm in the same boat!" ejaculated Fisher T. Fish heartily.

"I'm dreaming this!" murmured Peter Todd faintly.

"All serene, you chaps!" said Bunter carelessly. "I'll take you."

"Thanks, old fellow!"

"Won't you tell me what's the name of this game?" implored Peter Todd.

"You silly ass, it's not a game!" howled Skinner. "Bunter's asked us to join his party. We accept. That's all there is about it."

"That's all!" chorused Snoop.

"Sure!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"But there isn't a party!" roared Peter Todd. "Bunter was spinning that yarn to spoof the fellows, and you know it as well as I do!"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"You can take that view if you like, Peter Todd," said Skinner calmly. "We know our pal better than that."

"Your pal!" gasped Peter.

"Our old pal Bunter."

"My only summer bonnet!" said Peter Todd dazedly. "You'll be telling me next that there's such a place as Bunter Court!"

"So there is!" roared Bunter.

"Bow-wow!"

"Don't take any notice of Todd, Bunter," advised Skinner. "This jealousy and envy shocks me!"

"This what?" shrieked Peter.

"Jealousy and envy. Still, Bunter's used to that kind of thing, I dare say. Superior fellows always have to stand it."

"Superior fellows!" stuttered Toddy.

"You let Bunter alone," said Skinner.

"Bunter, old fellow, as you've so kindly asked us to your Boat-race party, we'd like you to come to a little spread in our study. Will you come?"

"We'd be so pleased!" added Snoop.

"Do come!" urged Stott.

"My dear fellows, I'll come," said Bunter. "I was asked to tea by Wingate of the Sixth; but I'll put him off. I'll come."

"Come on, old chap!"

Skinner linked his arm in Bunter's, and led him affectionately from Study No. 7. Peter Todd gazed after them like a fellow in a dream. He simply could not understand.

That Bunter's Boat-race party was on a par with the rest of Bunter's yarns seemed to Peter beyond the shadow of a doubt. Only a few hours before Skinner had fully agreed with Peter's opinion. What had made Skinner change his views was a deep mystery. Evidently he had changed them.

Peter stepped into the passage and glanced after the happy party. Billy Bunter was walking into Study No. 11, in the midst of his new friends. Peter wondered whether it was some elaborate rag—whether Skinner & Co. were getting Bunter into their study in order to rag him. He decided that it must be so, and feeling that it was up to him

to look after his study-mate, exasperating as that study-mate was, Peter stepped back into Study No. 7, and picked up a fives bat to go to the rescue.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" hailed Bob Cherry, as Peter came out of Study No. 7, bat in hand. "On the giddy warpath?"

"They've got Bunter in Study No. 11 to rag him," explained Peter. "I'm going to fetch him out. I'm bound to look after the fat idiot."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"I'll come and help," he said.

The two juniors went along to Study No. 11. Bob Cherry hurled the door wide open.

"Go for 'em!" he roared.

Bob and Peter Todd rushed into the study. They fully expected to see Billy Bunter howling in the grasp of the ragers. Instead of which, they saw the Owl of the Remove seated at the study table, grinning all over his fat face with satisfaction.

Skinner was helping him to toast, Stott was handing him ham, Snoop was taking off the top of an egg for Bunter. Fisher T. Fish hovered round him, anxious to find something to do for this honoured and distinguished guest.

"My hat!" ejaculated Bob.

"Great Scott!" murmured Peter Todd.

Apparently the fives-bat was not required, after all.

Skinner stared at the invaders.

"What do you fellows want?" he snapped. "We haven't asked you to tea that I know of!"

"I guess not!"

"It—it—it isn't a rag!" stuttered Toddy. "They're feeding Bunter. I thought it was a rag, of course."

"If you think we should rag Bunter in this study, Todd—"

"Of course I thought so!" roared Peter. "What else should I think you wanted the fat idiot for?"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Get out!" snapped Fisher T. Fish.

Bunter blinked at the newcomers.

"You fellows, clear!" he said loftily.

"It's hard lines, I must say, that I can't have tea with my friends without hoodligans rushing into the study like this!"

"I came to help you out, you fat idiot!"

"Oh, don't talk rot!" said Bunter.

"You can go back to your measly old sardines, Peter Todd! I don't want any of them! I'm sorry for this disturbance, Skinner. You must excuse Todd; he's been badly brought up in a poor home, you know!"

"I—I—I—" gasped Peter.

"Clear off!" said Bunter. "I've told you before that I'd like you to keep your distance, Toddy! I want you to understand, once and for all, that I can't have you butting in when I'm asked to tea in a fellow's study!"

Peter Todd seemed bereft of the power of speech. He blinked at the Owl of the Remove and almost babbled.

Then he made a stride at Bunter. The fives-bat came in useful, after all.

Crack!

"Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter.

The fat junior jumped up, roaring. The cup of tea went in one direction, the ham in another, and the new-laid egg in a third.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Yow-ow-ow! Kick them out of the study, you fellows!" yelled Bunter.

"Ow! Wow, wow! Yoop!"

Peter Todd and Bob Cherry departed from the study. Skinner slammed the door after them viciously.

In the passage Peter stared at Bob Cherry, and Bob Cherry stared at Peter.

"What does it mean?" asked Toddy. "What are they feeding that fat idiot for and pulling his silly leg?"

"Ask me another!" said Bob, laughing. "Perhaps they believe there's really a Boat-race party."

"But they couldn't."

"I don't see how they could," agreed Bob. "but it looks as if they do."

"Skinner's the sharpest chap in the Remove," argued Peter. "He never believes anything even if it's true."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Perhaps he's too jolly sharp!" he suggested. "Anyhow, he believes in the giddy Boat-race party, that's plain. Is it possible that Bunter has been telling the truth?"

"Rot!" said Peter, dismissing that startling theory at once.

"Then I give it up," replied Bob.

And Peter, puzzled and in great perplexity, had to give it up, too. Boat-race party or not, Bunter was being honoured in Skinner's study—waited on hand and foot, and he was enjoying himself to the full. Four scheming youths had pooled resources for that feed, and it was a feed ample enough for even Bunter.

When it was over, and Bunter rose to depart, he was feeling rather incommoded by his waistcoat, ample as that waistcoat was. He had done justice to the spread—more than justice.

"We'll be ready on Boat-race Day, old fellow!" said Skinner at the door. "Your pater won't forget to arrange it with the Head?"

Bunter started.

"My pater! The Head! Oh—oh, yes! That's all right!" he ejaculated. "Certainly! Rely on me, old chap!"

Billy Bunter rolled away rather hastily.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER

### Keeping It Up!

**W**ILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER was an object of general interest in the Remove the following day.

Bunter's Boat-race party was a great topic now.

Not a fellow had believed a word of it to begin with. That, of course, was natural, though Bunter had been annoyed. Nobody had accepted Bunter's invitation to join the party—which was only natural, as nobody believed that the great excursion would come off. The general and unanimous opinion had been that Bunter was, as usual, talking out of his hat, and that his party was nothing more nor less than the baseless fabric of a vision. But now all was changed.

The keenest, sharpest fellow in the Remove evidently believed in it; for he had accepted the invitation, and was openly, palpably pulling Bunter's fat leg in order to keep in the Owl's good graces. And three other fellows who were supposed to know what they were about were following Skinner's lead.

Fisher T. Fish, who guessed that he was as cute a galoot as ever was raised in the Yew-nited States; Snoop, who was cunning, if not clever; and Stott, who was an extremely suspicious fellow—all three were backing up Skinner, and hanging around Billy Bunter with honeyed words and sweet smiles.

The force of example is great. What Skinner & Co. believed could hardly be totally unfounded, in the opinion of some

## Billy Bunter finds a bottle on the beach—



fellows. And that day Bolsover major had a kind word to say to Bunter, and Micky Desmond was observed standing him tarts in the tuckshop, and it was known that Hazeldene had lent him half-a-crown; evidently a sprat that was designed to catch a whale!

Harry Wharton & Co. wondered. Other fellows became more civil to Bunter. He was addressed that day oftener as "Old fellow" or "Old bean" than as "Fatty" or "Tubby," or "Podgy" or "Porpoise," which was quite a change.

Bunter found the change a pleasant one. But he was, not wholly easy in his mind.

In the first place, his stunt had been dictated by his usual absurd desire to swank, with a faint hope that it might materialise in loans from fellows who accepted his invitation to the party. Nothing more than that—at first. And at first it had been a frost. But from one whopper he had been led, as usual, to another, and the episode of the telephone had "done it."

Now Bunter found himself taken seriously, which was what he had wanted; but his success had its drawbacks, which was what he did not want, and, as usual, had not considered. For now he was landed with a Boat-race party, and it dawned upon his fat mind that, if the party did not come off, the fury of Skinner & Co. would be something terrific.

And it could not come off; that was an absolute certainty. Nobody would have been more astonished than Mr. Bunter to learn that he was giving a Boat-race party to a crowd of Greyfriars schoolboys. When Boat-race Day came round, and there was no party, Bunter hardly dared to think of what would happen.

Skinner & Co. could not lynch him, but they were certain to do everything they could short of that extremity.

This was quite a worry on Bunter's fat mind. Nevertheless, he was prepared to make hay while the sun shone. Bolsover major was included in the list of invited juniors—at tea that day in Bolsover major's study. Micky Desmond was put on the list, in consideration of a loan of five shillings. Apparently, Bunter's view was that he might as well be hung for a sheep as for a lamb!

That evening he considered thoughtfully whether he had better "chuck" it. He debated in his fat mind whether there should be an outbreak of influenza at Bunter Court, or whether Mr. Bunter should be knocked over by a motor-bus in the City, or whether—going the whole hog, as it were—the Bunter mansion should be blown sky-high by anarchists. But the unhappy Owl realised that Skinner & Co. would not believe such an explanation; they would know at once that they had been spoofed. It was painful to reflect upon, but there actually were fellows who could not take Bunter's word!

He ventured to put Skinner to the test that evening in the Common room.

"I'm sorry, old chap—" he began. Skinner's eyes glittered at once. "Sorry about what?" he asked. "Sorry he only dreamed about the Boat-race party!" chuckled Peter Todd. "Isn't that it, Bunter?"

"I—I mean—" stammered Bunter. "Well, what do you mean, Bunter?" asked Harold Skinner very quietly—with, in fact, a deadly quietness.

"I—I'm sorry, old chap—" "Well?"

"Mum-my pater, you know—" "What about your pater?" Bunter blinked at Skinner's glittering eyes. He blinked at Snoop and Stott and Bolsover major, who were gathering round. He realised that he was on the very edge of the ragging of his life.

He had only to state that Mr. Bunter was ill, and that the Boat-race party could not come off, after all!

That was all that was needed. And then the thunderstorm would burst. He could see that in Skinner & Co.'s looks, short-sighted as he was. And he stopped in time.

"My pater—" he gasped. "Well?" "He—he won't be able—" "Won't be able to give the party, after all?" asked Bolsover major, pushing back his cuffs to be in readiness.

Bunter quaked. "Won't be able to come down in the car!" he gasped.

"Oh!" "Is that all?" asked Snoop. "That's all!"

Skinner & Co. smiled again. If that was all, it was all right. They had expected more than that. Bunter realised that he had had an awfully narrow escape. But all was calm and bright again now, so to speak. He had put off the hour of reckoning.

"He was coming down in the car, you know!" gasped Bunter. "Now he won't be able to!"

"Never mind. We'll see him later in the day," said Skinner, as if one

of the dearest wishes of his life was to see Mr. William Samuel Bunter.

"Oh, of course!" "But the car's coming, I suppose?" said Stott.

"Oh, yes!" "Good!"

"Has he arranged it with the Head yet?" asked Bolsover major, eyeing the Owl of the Remove. "He ought to give Dr. Locke plenty of notice. Can't leave it till the day of the Boat-race. It's time the matter was fixed up definitely."

"When is he asking the Head, Bunter?" inquired Skinner.

"To-morrow!" gasped Bunter. "The Head will tell us, of course?"

"Oh, of course!" "That's all right!"

Bunter rolled away, with deep dismay in his fat breast. He was involved more deeply than ever now—"whoppers" piling up at their usual rate. If Skinner & Co. did not hear from the Head on the morrow, they would want to know the reason why. And it was only too clear that no excuse would be listened to. If that Boat-race party did not come off, Skinner & Co. would not believe that Mr. Bunter had been run over in the City, or that the Bunter household was laid up with influenza, or that Bunter Court had been blown up by anarchists. They would believe that Bunter had spoofed them. And they would know that several delectable and expensive feeds and a number of small loans had gone beyond recall, and gone for nothing. And then the earthquake would happen!

Feeling that he was in for it sooner



A farmer's dogcart came up the road, going towards Courtfield at a trot. Billy Bunter ran behind it and caught on to steal a lift. Skinner and Snoop, not prepared for that sudden flight, stood staring after him. Then they broke into a run in pursuit. But the trap was going at a good pace, and they were soon left behind. (See Chapter 7.)

—what does it contain?



or later, Bunter determined to make the best of it while it lasted. He invited himself to supper in Skinner's study, and cleared out all the eatables there—and then went along to see Fisher T. Fish in Study No. 14, and <sup>left Fishy without a crumb.</sup> Then he dropped into Study No. 1, where Harry Wharton & Co. were baking chestnuts. All was grist that came to W. G. Bunter's mill.

"I say, you fellows, have you made up your minds about Boat-race Day?" he asked. "Thanks! I'll have some of those chestnuts!"

"Is the jolly old party still coming off?" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Certainly!"

"Still sticking to it?" chuckled Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"The stickfulness of the esteemed Bunter is terrific!" remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"If you fellows don't believe me—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I suppose you know better than Skinner!" snorted Bunter.

"Blessed if I can understand Skinner being taken in!" said Bob Cherry. "It's all utter rot, anyhow!"

"I'd like you fellows to come, as my old friends," went on Bunter. "Say the word, and I'll put you on the list. I've got to give my pater the number of fellows, so that he can put it to the Head."

"Cheese it, old fat talip!"

"I'll tell you what," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "We'll join the merry party after your pater's asked the Head. When the Head tells us he's given leave to a dozen fellows, count us in the dozen."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Done!" said Bunter at once. The Ananias of Greyfriars was growing quite reckless now, on the principle of going the whole hog. "I'll put you on the list."

"My hat!"

"I say, is that a cake in the cupboard?"

"Yes—and it's staying there!"

"We'll hand you that cake—whole—when the Head tells us we've got leave to go to the Boat-race, Bunter!" chortled Nugent.

"Hear, hear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Then, I'll come in for it to-morrow!" said Bunter; and, taking a final handful of the chestnuts, the Owl of the Remove rolled out of Study No. 1.

The Famous Five looked at one another.

"Can't be anything in it, surely?" remarked Bob Cherry.

"Impossible!"

"Keeping it up till the last minute, that's all!" said Harry Wharton, shaking his head. "We all know Bunter!"

"Skinner & Co. will slaughter him! They've been lending him money and standing him feeds!" chuckled Bob.

"Poor old Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Study No. 1 were still unbelievers. But even Harry Wharton & Co., as it happened, were destined to join the ranks of the faithful on the morrow. Billy Bunter was not at the end of his resources yet!

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Suspicious Skinner!

"GOING out?"

Skinner asked that question in his most affable manner after dinner the following day. Bunter was rolling down to the gates, and Skinner, Snoop, and Fisher T. Fish joined him on his way.

Skinner was not suspicious. He was simply making himself agreeable. Bunter now being a great man whom Skinner & Co. were delighted to honour, they were honouring him. That was all.

A couple of days before, they would not have taken the slightest notice of Bunter's movements. Certainly they would not have bothered themselves to walk with him. Now they looked as if a walk with Bunter was all that was required to make them the happiest of mortals.

"Yes—no—"

stammered Bunter. The kind attentions of Skinner & Co. did not seem to please the Owl of the Remove somehow.

"Going to Friarsdale?" asked Snoop.

"Oh, no!"

"Not Courtfield, surely?" asked Skinner. "You won't be back in time for lessons."

"No; only a stroll," said Bunter.

"We'll come, old chap!"

"I guess we'll be no' end pleased!" declared Fisher T. Fish.

Bunter paused.

For reasons best known to himself, he did not want the company of his friends just then.

Skinner eyed him curiously. It was quite easy for him to read Bunter's thoughts in his fat face. Skinner, always ready to suspect anybody of anything, became suspicious at once.

True, it seemed impossible that there was any deception in the matter of the Boat-race party—after what Skinner had overheard at the telephone. Not for an instant did Skinner suppose that Bunter had known he was listening at the study door, and had talked into the transmitter for his whole and sole benefit.

Yet, certain as the matter appeared to Skinner after what he had heard, he was always ready to be suspicious. Undoubtedly it was unusual for Bunter to be in a position to stand such an excursion. It was still more unusual for Bunter to be telling the truth!

So, taking no heed of the Owl's obvious discomfort, Skinner strolled out of the gates with him, and Snoop and Fisher T. Fish followed Skinner's lead. If there was anything "on," Skinner meant to know what it was.

Billy Bunter rolled off towards Courtfield, and Skinner & Co. walked with him.

Courtfield, apparently, was Bunter's destination, after all, though how a walk to Courtfield could be connected with the Boat-race party was a mystery to Skinner. Yet it was obvious that something was "on."

Bunter's fat face became glummer and glummer as he proceeded on his way, and Skinner grew more and more suspicious, though he really did not know upon what specially to fix his suspicions.

Half-way to Courtfield Snoop slowed down.

"I say, we don't want to be late for class!" he remarked.

"I guess not!" said Fisher T. Fish. "Queelchy will be mad! Let's get back, you galoots!"

Bunter brightened up.

"Yes, better get back," he said. "Cut off!"

"Aren't you coming back?" asked Skinner.

"Nunno, not yet."

"We won't desert you, old chap," said Skinner affectionately. "We'll chance class if you do."

Bunter grunted.

This devoted friendship was all very well, but it was not what William George Bunter wanted just then.

The four juniors walked on a little farther, and then Fisher T. Fish detached himself from the party and walked back. He did not intend to reap lines for being late in class; and if Bunter required watching, Skinner could watch him—and take the consequences. That was the cute reflection of the cute Fishy.

Snoop looked uneasy, but he decided to stick to Skinner, as Skinner evidently intended to stick to Bunter. The Owl of the Remove blinked at them several times, uneasily and morosely. His anxiety to get rid of his companions was perfectly plain. That some trickery was in the fat junior's mind, Skinner was quite assured, and he wondered what it was.

Possibly some scheme for arranging

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The mystery of the rosewood box—



for a message to reach Greyfriars, announcing that the Boat-race party was "off" for some reason. Skinner wondered if it could possibly be that. He meant to know. If the whole thing turned out to be "spoofo," after all, Skinner was prepared to give Bunter the time of his life. With such black suspicions in his mind, it was a little difficult for Skinner to keep up his sweet and friendly smile to Bunter.

"Look here, where are we going, Bunter?" Snoop asked at last.

"I'm going to Courtfield!" grunted Bunter.

"You said you weren't."

"Did I? Well, now I say I am!" retorted Bunter gruffly. "I suppose I can go to Courtfield if I like? You fellows needn't come."

"Oh, we'll come!" said Skinner. "If you get a ragging from Queelhy we'll get a ragging, too, like good pals, you know."

Bunter compressed his lips.

Evidently there was no getting rid of Skinner, and it was very important indeed to get rid of him.

But fortune favoured the Owl of the Remove. A farmer's dogcart came up the road, going towards Courtfield at a trot. Billy Bunter ran behind it, and caught on to steal a lift.

Skinner and Snoop, not prepared for that sudden flight, stood staring after him. Then they broke into a run in pursuit.

But the light cart was going at a good rate, and Skinner and Snoop were not good runners. They were left behind, out of breath, in a very few minutes.

Skinner very nearly shouted "Whip behind!" But he restrained himself. He was more suspicious than ever, but it was not judicious to break off his devoted friendship with Bunter at this stage. The farmer's cart disappeared beyond a rise in the road, and Skinner, with a knitted brow, turned back towards the school.

"Jolly long walk for nothing!" growled Snoop. "What did you want to follow him for, Skinner?"

Skinner gritted his teeth.

"There's some spoofo on," he said. "The fat rotter's up to something. If the Boat-race party doesn't come off after all—"

Snoop whistled.

"But you said you were certain—"

"So I was," snapped Skinner irritably. "So I am, too! But you know what a spoofoing rotter Bunter is. He's been sticking us for feeds on the strength of that dashed party, and now what does he want to get out of our sight for?"

"Blessed if I know."

"Might be fixing it up for a telegram to come to the school, saying that the party's off," growled Skinner.

"Oh, my hat! I've lent him seven-and-six altogether," said Sidney James Snoop, in great dismay.

"Anyhow, if the party's put off, we shall know that it never was genuine, and that Bunter fixed up the telegram to-day," said Skinner. "That will be pretty plain after this."

"We'll scrag him."

"We'll jolly nearly lynch him," said Skinner, between his teeth.

And the two devoted pals of William George Bunter walked back to Greyfriars in a very doubtful and unenviable mood.

Meanwhile, Bunter was getting on to Courtfield at a good rate. Before he reached the town, however, the farmer in the cart discovered that there was



Bunter was the centre of attraction—with a vengeance! Bolsover major clapped him on the back in the most cordial way. Micky Desmond and Jones minor beamed on him, whilst Snoop, Stott, and Fisher T. Fish could almost have wept over him. As for Harry Wharton & Co., they were dumbfounded. ((See Chapter 9.))

a free rider hanging on behind, and he introduced his whip into the affair. Billy Bunter gave a yell, and dropped off into the road.

"Ow! Beast!" he roared.

The cart rattled on, and Bunter picked himself up. He glanced back, saw nothing of Skinner, and was comforted. Then he rolled on cheerily into Courtfield, and entered the post-office.

Had Skinner still been on the track, certainly he would have been deeply interested in Bunter's further proceedings. With the remnant of his last loan from Snoop, Bunter paid his fee for the telephone, and the number he asked for was the Head's number at Greyfriars. If Harold Skinner had known that Bunter had walked three miles in order to telephone to the Head of Greyfriars, Skinner's suspicions would have changed into certainties. Fortunately—for Bunter—Skinner did not know!

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### Desperate Measures!

"YES, Dr. Locke speaking!"

The Head of Greyfriars was at the telephone in his study.

"Ah, good afternoon, Dr.

Locke! You know my voice—"

"I think so. Is it not Mr. Bunter speaking?"

"Exactly!"

"Good-afternoon, Mr. Bunter," said the Head, wondering why the busy stock-broker should have rung him up from the City that afternoon.

Dr. Locke was not likely to guess that the gentleman at the other end of the wire was no farther off than Courtfield; and still less likely to guess that his name was William George Bunter, of the Greyfriars Remove.

Bunter's voice, naturally, was not unlike his father's, and Bunter, who was clever in few things, was at least clever in imitating voices. That was one of the rare gifts of the Greyfriars ventriloquist.

The Head had not the slightest doubt that it was Mr. William Samuel Bunter, of the City, who had rung him up. It was one of a headmaster's painful duties to allow his valuable time to be wasted by the parents of boys under his charge, and Dr. Locke answered politely, only hoping that Mr. Bunter would cut it short.

"I am going to make a rather unusual request, Dr. Locke!" came the far voice over the telephone.

"Indeed, sir! Anything in my power that—"

"You are aware that the University Boat-race is close at hand—"

"Undoubtedly."

"I desire very much that my elder son should see it. May I request you to give him the day's leave for the purpose?"

"Ah! Most certainly, Mr. Bunter! I have no objection."

"Thank you very much, Dr. Locke. I am making up a party to view the Boat-race, and I should be glad if my son could come, and bring a few friends with him."

"Hem!"

—is the pivot of next Monday's magnificent story!



"Greyfriars is a sporting school," went on the fat voice. "It will be a great pleasure to the boys, I am sure, to see the famous University race, and should have some—ahem—educational value—"

"Hem!"

"Boys who go in for rowing, sir, would surely benefit by seeing the Oxford and Cambridge race—"

"No doubt!" replied the Head. "I scarcely know how to refuse, Mr. Bunter. How many friends do you wish your son to bring with him?"

"Say a dozen."

"Hem!"

"It will be a treat for the boys—"

"No doubt."

"I shall, of course, be responsible for the party, and will take every care that they return to the school in good time."

"Quite so. But—well, perhaps, if an elder boy were sent with them—a Sixth Form prefect—"

"Oh, dear!"

"What? What did you say, Mr. Bunter?"

"I mean, I fear that the presence of a Sixth Form prefect would, perhaps, somewhat dash the pleasure of the—of the junior boys. They would not feel so free to enjoy themselves—"

"But really—"

"I will accompany the boys back to Greyfriars in person, sir, and see them safely home."

"Oh, in that case—"

"You may rely upon my care of the party—"

"Very well, Mr. Bunter, I consent."

"Thank you very much, Dr. Locke. Perhaps you would be kind enough to tell William that I am sending him a sufficient sum for the expenses of the journey to reach him in time."

"I will mention it."

"I am very much obliged to you, Dr. Locke."

"Not at all, sir."

"Good-bye!"

"Good-bye, Mr. Bunter!"

The Head put up the receiver. He remained rather thoughtful for a few minutes, and then left his study to speak to Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove.

At the same time, Billy Bunter rolled out of the telephone-box at Courtfield post-office, with perspiration on his fat brow.

How he had found the nerve to act as he had done, Billy Bunter hardly knew.

He was almost trembling as he quitted the post-office after that amazing "spoo" on his headmaster.

If the facts came to light—

Bunter hardly dared think of that. The wrath of Dr. Locke, in that case, would be tremendous. A severe flogging was the very least that the fat junior would have to expect.

Indeed, it was quite possible that he would be not only flogged, but turned out of the school for such an impudent trick on the Head.

Bunter quaked at that possibility.

"But what was a fellow to do?" he murmured, as he started on the homeward walk to Greyfriars.

Really, the Ananias of the Remove had left himself no other resource. One tremendous "whopper" was backed up by another, and that by another—every "whopper" growing bigger than the last. What was a fellow to do? The easy resource of sticking to the truth did not occur to the powerful intellect of the Owl of the Remove.

For a fellow who lived, moved, and

had his being, as it were, in "swank" and "gas," there was evidently nothing but to go deeper and deeper into the tangle of prevarication, and put off the hour of reckoning till the latest possible moment!

Anyhow, he was safe for the present; that reflection comforted Bunter. As for the future—the near future—possibly something would turn up! Anyhow, Bunter wasn't going to meet trouble half-way.

The Remove were in their Form-room when Bunter reached Greyfriars at last. He had obtained a lift back on the carrier's cart—tipping the carrier a shilling that belonged to Fisher T. Fish—but still he was late for class; and Mr. Quelch gave him a grim look when he came into the Form-room.

"You are late, Bunter!"

"Yes, sir! I—I—"

"One hundred lines!"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

Bunter went to his place. Skinner gave him as friendly a smile as he could considering that he was yearning to take the fat junior by his fat neck and bang his head on the desk. Skinner was in a doubtful, worried, and troubled frame of mind. He more than half expected that before Boat-race Day some sort of message would reach Greyfriars that the party was "off," and that thought made Skinner shiver with rage. But the possibility that the party was still "on" made it necessary to keep cordial to Bunter. Really, there was an undue amount of anxiety and stress of mind in being a devoted pal to a fellow like William George Bunter.

But there was a happy surprise for Skinner and the rest of the Remove when lessons ended that afternoon. Mr. Quelch had something to say to Bunter before dismissing the class.

## RESULT OF BURY PUZZLE-PICTURE COMPETITION.

In this competition two competitors sent in correct solutions of the pictures. The first prize of £5 has therefore been divided between:

SARAH COOPER,  
Ivy Cottage,  
Wordsley Green,  
Wordsley, near Stourbridge.

VIDA LOVE,  
20, Enmore Green,  
Shaftesbury,  
Dorset.

The second prize of £2 10s. has been divided among the following five competitors, whose solutions contained one error each:

Susanah Cooper, Ivy Cottage, Wordsley Green, Wordsley, near Stourbridge; William Downes, 45, Wordsley Green, Wordsley, near Stourbridge; Stanley Love, 20, Enmore Green, Shaftesbury, Dorset; A. Jones, Vine Cottage, Dudley Road, Ventnor; Frances Morton, 7, Eyre Street, Pallion, Sunderland.

The ten prizes of 5s. each have been added together and divided among forty-five competitors, whose solutions contained two errors each. The names and addresses of these prizewinners can be seen on application at this office.

### SOLUTION.

Bury has suffered much from lack of cash, and considering the lengthy struggle it has had, has performed numerous remarkable feats. In 1902-3 Bury carried all before it. The forward line was fine, the combination was magnificent, and the club won every match, including the Final.

"Bunter, Dr. Locke has asked me to tell you that you have leave for Boat-race Day."

"Oh, sir! Thank you, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Your father has requested the Head to allow you to take some of your Form-fellows to London for the Boat-race," continued Mr. Quelch. "Dr. Locke has given his consent. You may take a dozen boys with you."

"Good! I—I mean, thank you!"

"I trust you will enjoy the excursion," said Mr. Quelch graciously. "Mr. Bunter mentioned that the necessary sum for expenses would be sent to you, Bunter."

And the Remove master dismissed an astounded class.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### The Party!

"IT'S true!"

"True!" gasped Bob Cherry. "The truthfulness is terrific, and the amazefulness is great."

"My only hat!"

"Bunter, old chap—"

"I say, Bunter—"

"I guess I knew Bunter was the real goods!"

"Good old Bunter!"

Billy Bunter, for the first time in his fat career, was a great man in the Remove. He held quite a reception in the Form-room corridor.

Skinner—no longer in the least suspicious—was beaming with friendly good-nature. He could have hugged Bunter.

Snoop and Stott and Fisher T. Fish could almost have wept over him. Bol-sover major clapped him on the shoulder in the most cordial way. Micky Desmond and Jones minor beamed on him. Other fellows gave him cheery nods and smiles. As for Harry Wharton & Co., they were fairly dumbfounded.

The discovery that Bunter had been telling the truth all along, that the Boat-race party was a reality and not the idle vision of a dream, staggered the Famous Five.

They had no intention, however, of joining the crowd who were beaming on Bunter with effusive cordiality, in the hope of being included in the happy dozen.

"We seem to have been a bit too previous, and no mistake," Nugent remarked, as they walked away. "It's genuine! Who'd have thought it."

"Blessed if I understand it now," said Wharton.

"Beats me!" said Bob Cherry. "It will cost a tidy sum for a dozen fellows to go up to London for the Boat-race. It's amazing for Bunter's father to stand it."

"The amazefulness is tremendous," said Hurree Singh.

The Famous Five were at tea in Study No. 1 when the Owl of the Remove rolled in.

"Where's the cake?" he asked.

"The cake?" repeated Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton! You remember you—"

"Yes, I remember," said the captain of the Remove, laughing. "Here's the cake, Bunter! Blessed if you don't deserve it."

"You fellows doubted my word," mumbled Bunter, beginning on the cake at once. "I forgive you; I'm a very

(Continued on page 17.)

Is your name amongst the prize-winners above?





## BOAT-RACE RIVALS!

By H. Vernon-Smith.

I am not going to write of the junior boat-races between the rival schools, as these will probably be described elsewhere. It is of the senior crews that I shall write. They had their Boat-Race Day on Saturday last, when Greyfriars, Highcliffe, Rookwood, and St. Jim's met in open competition.

Greyfriars had a fine crew out. As on previous occasions, George Wingate was stroke; and Gwynne, North, Hammersley, and the others looked very fit and sturdy as they came down the boathouse steps, carrying their craft. The crowd on the towpath—which had assumed such startling proportions that some of the fags looked like being precipitated into the river!—gave our crew a rousing cheer. And they didn't forget to cheer the diminutive coxswain—Dicky Nugent of the Second.

As the river was not wide enough to admit of four boats starting at the same time, it was decided to pair them off. Greyfriars and Rookwood were to go first; then St. Jim's and Highcliffe. The two winners would meet in the final.

The Greyfriars and Rookwood crews rowed out to the starting-point. The Friars sported their usual colours—light blue—and Rookwood were all white. As soon as the pistol cracked, the two boats shot off the mark as one. Bulkeley, the Rookwood stroke, set a very warm pace, and swiftly forged ahead. But Wingate refused to be flustered. He was obviously biding his time. At the first bend in the river, Rookwood led by three-quarters of a length. At the second bend they had increased their lead to a length and a half. But they had worn themselves out, and were going groggily at the last lap. Wingate now spurred, and the Greyfriars boat leapt through the water like a live thing. To the delight of the onlookers, Rookwood were overhauled fairly easily, and Greyfriars flashed ahead, to win by two lengths. Wingate had rowed a well-judged race, and he was highly commended by the Head.

St. Jim's had no walk-over against Highcliffe, but they just managed to get the verdict, with a quarter of a length between the boats at the finish. Thus St. Jim's and Greyfriars were to meet in the final. The excitement, as you may imagine, was at fever heat.

The last race of all was a positively thrilling spectacle. St. Jim's rowed much better than they had done against Highcliffe. Possibly they had been saving themselves. Anyway, Greyfriars had a rare job to keep level, but they managed to do so until the boats reached the first bend. Then the Saints went ahead, but Wingate's merry men caught them again at the second bend. And thus it went on—a ding-dong tussle, with the Friars eventually victorious by a matter of inches. Bravo, the seniors!

## EDITORIAL!



By HARRY WHARTON.

THE "Battle of the Blues" is one of the greatest sporting events of the year. It is therefore fitting—as Mauly remarked when he tried on a new suit—that we should publish a Special Boat-race Number of the "Greyfriars Herald." Billy Bunter is furious with me for queering his pitch, as he calls it. He said he had already planned to produce a Boat-race Number of his "Weekly," and that I calmly cribbed his precious brain-wave! But it doesn't require much brain-power to think of a Special Boat-race Number, when all the country is ringing with the prowess and prospects of the two great Varsity crews.

On the morning of the titanic tussle between Oxford and Cambridge, Greyfriars will be in a state of seething excitement. Dark and light blue rosettes will be sported by everybody, excepting Fisher T. Fish, who will wear a pink one to show that he is neutral!

I am not going to start a discussion on the chances of the respective crews. Three years in succession I have attempted to forecast the winner, and I have been wrong every time! But I will say this much concerning this year's struggle—there won't be much in it at the finish, and the winning crew will have to go "all out."

I can't see them resting on their oars, and gliding past the winning-post a dozen lengths ahead of their rivals.

The Greyfriars fellows, as all the world knows, are keen oarsmen, and at this time of the year we usually meet Rookwood, Highcliffe, and St. Jim's in rivalry on the river. Some very thrilling scenes are described in this issue, and the usual sparkling current of humour runs through our pages.

Before I write "Fini" to my Editorial I want to call your attention to an extra-special attraction coming shortly. This is nothing less than a Special Pirate Number! Those who revelled and rejoiced in our Highwayman Number will realise that they have a priceless treat in store for them. Dicky Nugent has promised to write one of his inimitable complete stories, 'Nuff said!

HARRY WHARTON.

## THE TALE OF A TUB!

By Dick Pentfold.

I made a boat, the Neverfloat,  
To sail the silvery Sark;  
And those who saw me launch the craft  
Made many a rude remark.

"Oh, what a hefty tub!" cried Todd,  
"A Bunter of a boat!  
I somehow think that it will sink—  
It surely cannot float!"

"Come off it, Todd," I answered back,  
"You're jealous as can be.  
My boat, I say, is quite O.K.;  
Just keep your eye on me!"

I tugged the oars with might and main;  
The boat refused to shift.  
"Pentfold, you fool!" yelled Johnny Bull,  
"Get underneath and lift!"

But what's the good of such advice?  
That's what I'd like to know;  
The blessed Sark, caught up the lark,  
Oh, how I watched it flow!

I sat and shuddered in the stern,  
For the water rushed inside;  
I tried to row to the bank, you know—  
Oh, how I tugged and tried!

But the beastly boat refused to budge,  
It sank just like a stone;  
I tumbled in, not with a grin,  
But with a bubbling groan.

A roar went up from both the banks,  
A roar that made me wild;  
Bob Cherry swore, when I came ashore,  
That the "weeping" willows smiled!

Alas! my boat, the Neverfloat,  
Is sunk beneath the Sark;  
And Hazeldene and Bulstrode mean  
To salvage, after dark.

They can as far as I'm concerned,  
Do just whate'er they like;  
I can't forget that I am wet,  
To school—full speed—I hike!

This is the true and tragic tale  
Of Richard Pentfold's tub;  
Now, gentle reader, follow your leader,  
Bend low your heads and blub!

A special "Explorers" Supplement—next on the list!





It was Bob Cherry's idea. Bob is the leader of Study No. 13, the other occupants of which are Mark Linley, Inky, and Wun Lung.

"We'll challenge Study No. 7 to a boat-race on the river!" said Bob. "I'm simply bursting with energy, and I sha'n't be happy till I've worked some of it off! What do you say, you fellows?"

"Ripping!" said Mark Linley.

"We will competefully strive against the Todful Todd and the Bunterful Bunter—" began Hurree Singh.

"And the Duttonful Dutton!" said Bob Cherry, with a grin.

"Me velly muchee likee latest stantee!" was Wun Lung's comment.

So Bob Cherry went along to Study No. 7, and challenged Peter Todd to a one-mile race on the River Sark.

Peter accepted the challenge at once. He considered that his study stood a rosy chance. He and Bob Cherry were about equal as oarsmen. Tom Dutton and Mark Linley were also about equal the Lancashire lad being just a shade superior, but not enough to make any difference.

Hurree Singh of Study No. 13 was a better man than Billy Bunter. But this was counterbalanced by the fact that Alonzo, although a weakling, could row just as vigorously as the diminutive Wun Lung.

Everything pointed to a keen and thrilling race.

The rival crews met on the following half-holiday, and half the population of Greyfriars turned out to watch the race.

There was a cheer when Bob Cherry's crew rowed out to midstream.

"Hurrah!"

"Good old Study No. 13.

"Let's hope you won't be unlucky!"

Then a further cheer arose, mingled with a roar of laughter, as Peter Todd's crew appeared on the scene.

The occupants of Peter's boat had rather a cramped appearance, owing to the fact that Billy Bunter took up nearly all the room. The boat bore up bravely under Bunter's huge bulk, but it was already beginning to ship water.

The humorous Skinner had pinned a placard on to the boat:

"Cargo Not to Exceed One Ton."

Harry Wharton was the official starter and umpire. He hadn't a pistol, but Wingate of the Sixth had lent him a referee's whistle. Wharton blew this, and the race began.

"Go it, ye cripples!"

"Put your beef into it, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry's boat forged ahead from the start, Bob and Mark Linley pulling like Trojans.

In the other boat there was much commotion and confusion. Peter Todd,

who was seated behind Billy Bunter, received a terrific crack on the knuckles from the fat junior's oar, which was being whirled wildly backwards and forwards.

"Yaroooh!" yelled Peter.

Not satisfied with committing assault and battery on Peter, Billy Bunter nearly brained Alonzo, who was in front of him. Alonzo flung his head back, on completing a stroke, and at the same instant Bunter's oar landed with a clump on his cranium.

"Yow-ow-ow!" exclaimed Alonzo. "Pray be more careful, my dear Bunter! You battered my head as if you were taking the top off an egg!"

"Oh, stop your squealing!" growled Billy Bunter. "Let's get on with the race! Those fellows are leading by about six lengths!"

"Row up, then, you fat duffer!" hooted Peter Todd. "Don't swing your oar about as if it were an Indian club! Pull—pull like fury!"

But the boat was waterlogged by this time, and it showed a strong tendency to go downwards instead of forward.

"My hat!" gasped Tom Dutton. "We're sinking!"

Billy Bunter turned almost green with fright.

"Help! Rescue!" he roared.

The next moment the waterlogged boat sank beneath the surface of the water, and its four occupants were given a cold bath.

There was a peal of laughter from the crowd on the towpath.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"They've got slightly mixed!" chuckled Skinner. "It's supposed to be a boat-race, but they seem to imagine it's the swimming sports!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd and Tom Dutton swam without much difficulty to the bank.

Wingate of the Sixth rescued Alonzo with a boathook, and Billy Bunter was hauled ashore by the same method.

"Porpoise washed ashore in Kent!" said Bolsover major dramatically. "Where's the newspaper man?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow-ow-ow! I'm half drowned!" came in a plaintive wail from Billy Bunter.

And then Tom Brown sprung a conundrum on us. He said:

"When is a Bunter not a Bunter?"

And the reply was:

"When he's dripping!"

Meanwhile, Bob Cherry's crew finished the course, to the accompaniment of loud cheers.

Peter Todd declares that he's not going to let Bunter board a boat again until he has reduced his weight by fifty per cent!

THE END.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS!

By Harry Wharton.

"Brain-wave" (Lewisham).—"What do you say to a Special Gramophone Number?"—We have passed your suggestion on to Tom Brown, and he agrees that it would smash all records!

"Amurrican" (Chicago).—"Say, bo, when are we going to have more Fish?"—When the herring season starts!

"Critical" (Wimbledon).—"I don't altogether approve of the 'Greyfriars Herald.'"—Dear me! We are quite cut up, as the turkey said to the carving-knife!

"Jimmy" (Carlisle).—"My grandfather, who is over eighty, makes me read the MAGNET stories aloud to him."—The old gentleman evidently knows what is good for him.

"Heraldite" (Bournemouth).—"I am fourteen, yet I have never learnt how to ride a bicycle. I'm afraid to start now, in case my chums laugh at me."—What nonsense! Get one of your cycling chums to give you lessons right away. He won't laugh; he will be only too pleased to help you. By the way, it may comfort you to know that Billy Bunter is older than you, but he doesn't know how to ride a bike yet. He just plumps himself on to the saddle, clutches the handlebars like grim death, and trusts to luck there won't be a nasty spill.

J. R. H. (Mansfield).—"Your Special Flogging Number sent cold shivers down my spine."—Yes, it was rather grim in parts, wasn't it?

"Winsome Winnie" (Deal).—"I think you really ought to have a Girls' Column in the 'Herald.'"—Lots of our girl readers think likewise. I should like to oblige them; but it must be borne in mind that the "Herald" is first and foremost a boys' paper, and I am afraid the majority of our readers would not be interested in articles on needlework, and so forth. But if the demand for a Girls' Column becomes really overwhelming I shall yield to it.

"Admirer" (Aldershot).—"Billy Bunter is the life and soul of the Greyfriars Remove."—But Bob Cherry declares that Billy will be the death of us!

"Cave-man" (Chelmsford).—"More stories of the Stone Age wanted, please!"—We'll persuade Tom Brown to do the necessary.

"Sunny Jim" (Colchester).—"Your Supplement is simply great! What fun and mirth it does create!"—Our Sunny Jim is quite a poet, although methinks, he doesn't know it!

Can you picture W. G. Bunter at the Pole—





By DICKY NUGENT.

"We shall win," said Billy Blades quietly, "unless—"

"Unless what?" asked Ted Rowlock, who was Billy's studdy-mait.

"Unless we lose!" said Billy, with calm philosophy.

Ted Rowlock larked. "We might do neither," he said. "It may be a dead-heat."

The two chums were discussing the grate annual boat-race between their school—St. Sam's—and their deadly rivals, St. Steve's.

Billy Blades was the stroke of the St. Sam's crew, and the finest stroke the old school had ever had. He did not stroke his crew gently, as if it were the kitchen cat, but feercely and with grate vigger.

"Speaking quite seeriously, Billy," said Ted Rowlock, "do you really think we shall put it across St. Steve's?"

Billy's face clouded over. For a minnit silence rained in the studdy. Presently Billy Blades broke in. (For this purpuss he borrowed the chopper from the woodshed.)

"I'm afraid, Ted," he said, "that there will be fowl play."

"I trussed not," said Ted Rowlock, in alarm.

"You know what those St. Steve's bounders are," said Billy. "They resort to all kinds of low-down tatticks. Shouldn't be serprised if they were to kidnap me."

Even as Billy Blades spoke there were drammatick developments.

The studdy window was thrown open, and half a duzen masked figgers sprang into the room. One of them turned out the light, and then there was a short, sharp scuffle, in the corse of which Billy Blades was overpowered.

"Lemme go!" he spluttered wildly. "What does this mean? Who are you? Is this a dastardly plot on the part of the St. Steve's fellows?"

The only answer was a mocking lark.

Billy Blades was trust up with rope and lowered into the quad, where a big automobile was purring. It hadn't been "stroked" by anybody, though!

The stroke of St. Sam's was bundled into the car, and his masked assailants hopped in after him.

"We'll take him along to the Lonely Tower, on Lofty Hill," said the leader of the gang in a hoarse wisper. "Then he won't be able to turn up for the boat-race to-morro. St. Sam's will have to find a reserve stroke, and we shall win easily!"

"You curs!" cried Billy Blades. "This is fowl play!"

"All right, my chicken, don't get huffy!" said the leader of the gang.

Billy Blades gnashed his hair and tore his teeth in savvidge fury.

The big automobile went speeding along the dark lanes, and presently it started to climb.

"This is Lofty Hill," thought Billy. "Wish I wasn't tied up. I'd make a fight for freedom when we got to the top."

But there was no way of escape. The car stopped at the top of the hill, where Lonely Tower stood out in pail relief against the dark sky.

"Into the dark dunjon with him!" cried the leader of the gang.

Billy Blades was carried away from the car and into the tower. His captors took him down several flights of stone steps, and then tost him into a gloomy vault. Then, waving their hands in mock farewell, they left him to his fate.

"Oh, the cads—the cowardly cads!" groned Billy Blades. "To-morro morning the grate boat-race is to be rode, and I shall not be there to ride it—I mean, stroke it! That skinny young wesklng Midget minor will take my place. And St. Sam's will lose! Here am I, miles away from the school, trust up like a fowl. I knew there would be fowl play!"



Clutching the handle of the umbrella, Billy Blades took the plange.

All through the long night the stroke of St. Sam's lay in his prizzen, the victim of a barberous plot. But it was not of himself that he was thinking as he lay twisting and turning in his bonds. It was of the onner and glory of his school. He had set his hart on St. Sam's winning the boat-race. But it was not to be.

"If only sumboddy would come and reskew me!" muttered our hero.

He lifted up his voice (it was not a grate weight) and shouted for help.

"Help! Reskew!"

There was a swift patter of feet, and a large, fat rat came scuttling across the floor. It fastened its fangs into Billy Blades' bonds and started to gnaw them savvidgely.

"Go it!" cried Billy, with a woop of delight. "I shall secure my freedom yet!"

The rat gnawed and nibbled away industriously, and at last our hero felt the rope snap in sunder. He got his arms free, and he made short work of the rope which pinned his legs. Then he rose to his feet and struck a match, and took stock of his surroundings.

The only outlet from the dunjon was the flight of stone steps. Billy Blades mounted them, until he reached the ground floor. Then he pitied his weight against the stout oaken door of the tower, but it refused to budge. There were no windows, so Billy's only chance of escape was to climb up to the parapet at the top of the tower, and leap from the parapet down to terror firmer.

On reeching the top room of the tower, Billy discovered an old umbrella. This he made into a parachute. Then he walked out on to the parapet.

Clutching the handle of the umbrella, Billy Blades took the plunge.

Down he went—down, down, down—through what seemed to be an affinity of space.

The parachute was a failure. But Billy landed in the moat which ran round the tower. Had he landed on the ground he might have sustained a broken neck, or some other minor ailment.

Our hero scrambled out of the moat, and then he made his way to St. Sam's.

He ran until his tongue was lolling out of his head and his tongues were lolling out of his boots.

The grate boat-race was about to commence when he arrived. The two crews sat stationery in their boats, and the starter had his finger on the trigger of the pistle.

Suddenly there was a roar from the crowd.

"Here's Billy Blades!"

"Good old Billy!"

Billy Blades took a flying leap into the St. Sam's boat. He picked up Midget minor by the collar and tost him overboard, and at the same instant the pistle rang out.

"Now they're off!" came the cry.

Billy Blades set a rapid pace, sumthing like two hundred strokes to the minnit, and the St. Sam's boat simply bounced over the water. As for their rivals, they were left hoaplessly behind, and St. Sam's flashed past the winning-post a good mile in front.

The crowd on the banks cheered until they were horse.

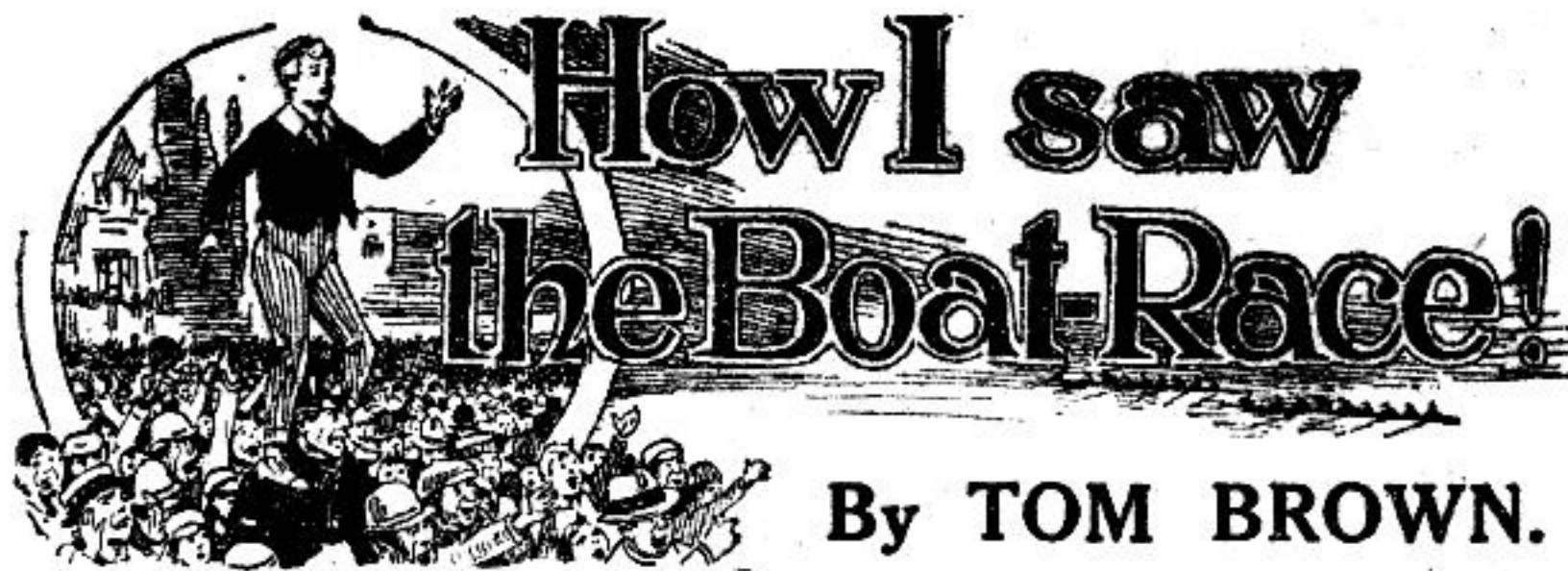
Billy Blades had turned up at the eleventh hour and stroked his crew to victory!

As for the preshus plotters of St. Steve's, they were ducked after the race. And although they got into hot water for their dasterdly konduct, they got into cold water as well; and they bitterly realised the trooth of the old saying that the way of the transgressor is damp!

THE END.

—or Dick Penfold as a diver?





# How I saw the Boat-Race!

By TOM BROWN.

I AM not referring to this year's Boat-race, of course, but to the thrilling event of a year ago.

Having obtained the gracious sanction of his Imperial Majesty the Head, I sprinted down to the station, and caught the London train by the skin of my teeth. Unfortunately for my comfort, about two thousand others caught it, too! I was compelled to travel in the luggage-van, with my feet in a basket of eggs, and my head bumping against a birdcage which had been suspended from the roof. The occupant of the cage was a parrot, and it kept saying: "Bother the crush!" With which sentiment I heartily agreed.

Glaring and growling at each other, and tossed from side to side by the swaying motion of the train, we—its human cargo—eventually struck Charing Cross. (It did not return the blow!)

"Now for the Boat-race!" I cried in exultation.

I had to make up my mind whether to see the start or the finish. I badly wanted to see both, but the laws of space do not permit of a fellow being in two places at once. Finally, I decided to see the finish.

It so happened that others had also decided to see the finish. Outside the Tube railway a tremendous queue was lined up, stretching along the Thames Embankment as far as the eye could see. The entire population of London had decided to go to Mortlake to see the finish of the Boat-race.

With all this multitude cramming the Tube station and flooding the Embankment, what hopes were there for poor Tom Brown?

Undaunted, I set off in quest of a taxi.

Taxicabs, on ordinary days, are as plentiful as leaves in Vallombrosa. On Boat-race days you can't get one for love or money.

I walked to Westminster Bridge and tried to board a bus. Although a New Zealander, I'm not used to Rugby scrums. I managed to get one foot on the step, only to be sent sprawling by a grim-faced conductor, who said, in the manner of Billy Bunter after a good tuck-in, "No more room inside!" adding, as he gave me the fateful shove: "Jest you get down orf out of it!"

I sorted myself out from under the hoofs of a hefty horse, and staggered towards the pavement, plastered with mud from top to toe.

Time was flying fast. I glanced at Big Ben, and saw that the Boat-race was to be rowed in half an hour.

I grew desperate, and as I stood hesitating on the pavement, wondering how on earth I was going to get to Mortlake, a big touring-car came along, flying the Cambridge colours, and I recognised Sir Timothy Topham, the sporting baronet, who was a governor of Greyfriars. Sir Timothy was seated at the back of the car, which the bobby on point-duty had just halted.

Taking the bull by the horns, I rushed towards the car.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Sir Timothy. "A Greyfriars boy, begad!"

"I wanna see the Boat-race, sir," I said, dropping into American in my excitement. "You're going to Mortlake, I guess?"

Sir Timothy nodded and smiled.

"Hop in!" he said cheerily.

So in I hopped, and we were soon speeding away towards Mortlake.

When we reached our destination my heart sank. The river bank was so thronged with people that it was quite impossible to get a glimpse of the water.

I thanked Sir Timothy Topham for giving me a lift; then I plunged into the crowd, and fought and pushed and hustled and jostled my way towards the river.

Presently a mighty roar rent the air. The rival crews were in sight!

I continued to press forward with desperate eagerness, and still I couldn't see what was going on; but I knew by the shouts that the Cambridge boat was in front.

Suddenly I sighted a tall policeman—an absolute giant of a man. I slipped a two-shilling piece into his hand, and asked if I might use him as an observation-post by standing on his shoulders. He consented, and I was soon perched precariously on high, with one foot on each shoulder.

That was how I saw the Boat-race. I saw the Cantabs score a fine victory, and I cheered as heartily as anybody.

I'm not going to tell you how I got back to Greyfriars, because I hardly know myself. Suffice it to say that when I did get back I was a mass of bruises from head to foot, owing to the frantic fight I had made to see the Boat-race.

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## ODE TO THE RIVER SARK!

(With apologies to the  
Shade of Tennyson.)



I come from haunts of coot and heron,  
I make a sudden sally;  
I travel, twist, and twine, and turn,  
With Greyfriars boys I'm pally.

I rise in this fair shire of Kent  
Beside a crop of clover;  
And it is always my intent  
To join the sea at Dover.

I envy not the River Dee,  
Nor yet the mighty Mersey;  
The River Sark they christened me,  
Why not the River Jersey?

I gurgle at each schoolboy joke,  
I know all Greyfriars faces;  
Like Billy Bunter, when he's "broke,"  
I fall on "stony" places!

I chatter, chatter as I go  
To join the sea near Dover;  
For boys may run, and boys may row,  
But I'm a constant rover.

When summer suns are streaming down,  
And Kent is like the tropics,  
With Harry Wharton, Bull, and Brown,  
I chat on "current" topics.

I bear their tiny craft along,  
And love to watch them heaving;  
And when my current's extra strong,  
I like to see them grieving.

A happy little stream am I,  
I'm in the seventh heaven;  
Much happier than the River Wye,  
Also the sulky Severn.

The fellows use me every day  
To exercise their muscles;  
And I have witnessed, I may say,  
Some thrilling boat-race tussles.

Merrily, merrily, boys, I go  
To join the sea near Dover;  
For boys may run, and boys may row,  
But I'm a constant rover.



**BILLY BUNTER'S BOAT-RACE PARTY!**

(Continued from page 12.)

forgiving chap. I hope you'll know better next time."

"Hem!"

"You fellows coming?" asked Bunter.

"Invitation still open?" said Bob Cherry, eyeing the Owl of the Remove curiously.

"Certainly! I'd like you fellows to come. I don't bear malice for your doubting my word. It was rather rotten, but after all, you haven't been brought up as I've been—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"It was rather low," went on Bunter, shaking his head; "but let bygones be bygones. I'll be glad if you fellows will come."

Harry Wharton & Co. were silent, eyeing Bunter. Certainly they wanted to go to the Boat-race; they wanted that very much. They felt rather conscience-stricken. Bunter's father, or Bunter, had got leave for the day for them if they went—they owed Bunter that. And after all their doubts, Bunter was still asking them to join his famous party! Really, they felt that they had been rather hard on Bunter.

"Do come!" said Bunter, with his mouth full of cake. "I've asked Lord Mauleverer, and he says he'll come if you fellows do."

Wharton looked at his chums.

"Let's!" said Bob Cherry.

"Why not?" said Johnny Bull. "I'd jolly well like to go. I—I—I'm sorry I didn't believe you, Bunter, as it turns out."

Bunter waved a fat hand.

"That's all right."

"We'll come, and we're much obliged," remarked Harry at last. "You're acting very decently in this, Bunter."

"Don't I always act decently?" demanded Bunter.

"Ahem! Of—of course! Hem!"

"Put us on the list," said Frank Nugent. "Thanks very much, Bunter!"

"Oh, don't mench!"

Bunter finished the cake—it was only a two-pound cake, so it did not last Bunter long—on the most amicable terms with the Famous Five. He put their names on a grubby list, and turned to the door. There he turned back.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Yes!" said Harry.

"I'm getting the money for the excursion on Boat-race morning. As it happens, I'm rather short of tin for the moment. Could one of you fellows lend me ten bob for a day or two?"

Harry Wharton laughed; he could not help it. Evidently the invitation to the Boat-race party had to be paid for. But undoubtedly it was worth ten shillings, and that moderate sum was handed over at once.

Bunter rolled away with it, quite pleased and satisfied. A little later he was devouring tarts in Bolsover major's study, and then he adjourned to the tuck-shop with Fisher T. Fish. Fisher T. Fish manfully hid the pangs it caused him as he watched Bunter scoffing doughnuts at his expense.

Then the Owl of the Remove went to tea with Skinner & Co. He had an early supper with Micky Desmond, and a late supper with Hazeldene. By the time he went to the dormitory, Billy Bunter was

feeling that life really was worth living. A dozen voices said "Good-night!" to Bunter in the Remove dormitory in every tone of cordiality. Bunter was quite popular.

The next day Bunter enjoyed his popularity, and he enjoyed also the hospitality of the fellows whose names were on his list. It was a very happy day for Bunter.

But towards the evening a shadow of thoughtfulness appeared on his fat brow—there was trouble in his well-fed breast.

For the next day was Boat-race Day. There was leave for the Boat-race party—that was all right! They were free to start for Putney, instead of going into class with the rest of the school. But—

But that was all!

Only too well did the fat junior know that there would be no remittance for him in the morning. With deep cunning he had included moneyed fellows in his party—Lord Mauleverer, and Wharton and his friends. Loans all round, doubtless, would tide over the difficulty of the missing remittance. But—

What was to happen after that? With his fat and fatuous swank, Bunter had almost arrived at believing in the riverside mansion, the excellent lunch, the electric launch, and the Rolls-Royce. Nevertheless, now that the hour was actually at hand, he had to realise, with dreadful clearness, that there was no riverside mansion, no excellent lunch, no electric launch, and no Rolls-Royce!

It was even too late to get somebody at home to send a last-moment telegram announcing that Mr. Bunter had been run over, or that Bunter Court had been blown up by anarchists.

What was to happen on the morrow?

That problem was too much for Bunter. So far as he could see, all that he could do was to keep up his amazing spoof till the last possible moment, and trust to luck for the rest.

But Billy Bunter did not sleep so soundly as usual that night. His slumber was haunted by dreams of ferocious raggings. Dreams sometimes come true—and it was very probable that Bunter's dreams that night were destined to be realised.

**THE TENTH CHAPTER.**

**Boat-race Day!**

**H**ARRY WHARTON & CO. turned out cheerfully on the following morning—the day of the great race. They were sporting light or dark blue favours when they came down, according to the side they honoured with their patronage and support. A dozen fellows in the Remove were in great spirits—even Lord Mauleverer exerted himself so far as to allow a smile of satisfaction to appear upon his noble visage.

After breakfast the members of the Boat-race party listened for the approaching sounds of the tremendous Rolls-Royce that was to convey the numerous party to Putney, to the riverside mansion, whence they were to witness—perhaps—the start of the great race, and the electric launch in which they were to follow—perhaps—the racing skiffs to Mortlake.

Skinner & Co. asked Bunter whether his expected letter had arrived, to which Bunter carelessly responded that he hadn't asked yet.

"Better ask!" said Skinner.

Bunter made the necessary inquiry, but there was no letter. Not that he had expected one.

"What about the expenses?" questioned Snoop rather blankly. "Your pater told the Head he was sending you the money for the exes."

"Next post, of course," said Bunter.

"But that's long after we've got to start."

"It will be all right," put in Skinner. "The car takes us direct to London, and then Bunter will see his pater."

"The—the car?" stuttered Bunter.

He had almost forgotten that the large-sized Rolls-Royce was to call for the party. He had too many irons in the fire, as it were. His fat memory was not equal to dealing with all the "whoppers" he had fabricated, and every now and then he forgot one or another of them.

"Yes, the car!" repeated Bolsover major.

"Didn't I tell you?" said Bunter feebly.

"Eh! Didn't you tell us what?"

"The car wouldn't hold such a crowd," explained Bunter. "The pater told me afterwards we'd better go up by train. The—the car will meet us at the station in London with—with a couple of taxis for the rest that the Rolls-Royce won't hold. See?"

"Oh!" said Skinner.

"Dash it all, you never mentioned that," said Bolsover major. "Still, it's all right, there's the early express at Courtfield. But if your money hasn't come, Bunter, how are you going to take the tickets?"

"That's all right," returned Bunter with a cheerfulness he did not quite feel. "The pater's registered letter will be here when we get back."

"You can't pay the fares when we get back, I guess," said Fisher T. Fish.

"I suppose my friends will not mind lending me a few pounds for a few hours on an occasion like this," replied Bunter with dignity.

"Oh!" ejaculated Skinner.

Bunter rolled away, leaving Skinner, Snoop, Fishy, and Bolsover major blinking at one another. These four youths, at all events, had no intention of advancing a few pounds—or a few pence—for a few hours—or a few minutes—to so slippery a customer as William George Bunter. Once more painful doubts and dark suspicions smote Harold Skinner. It really seemed impossible that Bunter's Boat-race party was all "spoof," after such an accumulation of proofs. But the non-arrival of the car and the non-arrival of the registered letter looked very odd—very odd indeed.

"I—I wonder—" muttered Skinner.

"I wonder—" murmured Snoop.

"I guess—" began Fisher T. Fish.

"If that fat villain is spoofing—" breathed Bolsover major.

They followed Bunter. The Owl of the Remove was seeking Harry Wharton & Co. He found them in the quadrangle with Lord Mauleverer.

"I say, you fellows, my registered letter hasn't come," said Bunter. "The car's meeting us at Charing Cross, you know. I shall want somebody to lend me a few pounds till we come back."

"By gad!" said Lord Mauleverer.

Wharton gave the Owl of the Remove a sharp look.

"Then we're going by train?" he asked.

"That's it!"

"We can pay our own fares," said Wharton rather curtly.

Another brilliant Wireless article next week!



"Not at all," retorted Bunter. "You're my guests. I'm standing the whole of the expenses. I simply want you to lend me the money."

There was a dead silence. This was the real Bunter coming out, as it were. Skinner's dark doubts were shared by the Famous Five now.

"Anyhow, we've got the day off, and we owe that to Bunter!" said Bob Cherry at last. "We'll pay our own exes and whip round for Bunter."

"That's all right," agreed Harry.

"Oh, really, you know—"

"That's settled!" said Nugent.

"Look here, I'd rather have the money in hand," went on Bunter warmly. "I'm taking this party up to town—"

"You can have your own money in hand—not ours!" said Johnny Bull quietly. "We'll stand your fare, Bunter."

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"And what about us?" broke in Skinner unpleasantly.

"Nothing about you," said Johnny Bull. "You can do the same as we do, I suppose."

"I can't afford to blow money on railway fares to London," declared Skinner sourly.

"Well, Bunter will square afterwards," said Harry. "As his father told the Head he was sending the money, I suppose he is doing so."

"If you doubt my word, Skinner, I shall leave you out of the party," said Bunter indignantly.

Skinner breathed hard. But, after all, even if he had to stand the fare himself, he reflected that there was the lunch and the launch and all the good things at that riverside mansion where Mr. Bunter was to do the honours. He determined to risk it.

"Well, I'll pay," he said ungraciously.

And the other members of the party came to the same decision, with a couple of exceptions. The party that finally started for the station consisted of the Famous Five, and Skinner, Snoop, Stott, and Fisher T. Fish, Bolsover major, and Billy Bunter.

At Courtfield Junction the return tickets were taken.

"First-class tickets, you fellows!" called out Bunter.

"I'm going third!" growled Skinner.

"Same here," said Snoop.

"The samefulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"We're all going third," said Harry Wharton. "No good throwing money away."

"That's all very well," declared Bunter. "I'm standing it, ain't I? And I can tell you I'm not used to travelling third, whatever you fellows may be."

"You can take your own ticket first-class, if you like," remarked Bob Cherry politely.

"Beast!"

Third-class tickets were taken, in spite of Bunter's aristocratic objections. The Boat-race party boarded third-class carriages in the express. Billy Bunter sat down with an injured expression on his fat face. He was taking these ungrateful fellows on an expensive excursion, and they would not even let him travel first-class, and they neglected to provide him with a lunch-basket. But Bunter reflected bitterly that he was used to ingratitude.

Bunter's view was that as he had anyhow to face a terrible "row" at the end of the day, he might as well have his

money's worth in advance. But the question of reimbursement being so very uncertain, the juniors did not feel disposed to expend cash recklessly.

Fortunately for the Famous Five, Bunter took the same carriage as Skinner & Co., and the chums of the Remove were not inflicted with his company on the way up.

"I suppose Mr. Bunter's car really will be at the station for us?" Bob Cherry remarked dubiously.

"Blessed if I know!" said Wharton.

"I can't make the thing out. It seems clear enough that Mr. Bunter arranged the whole thing with the Head, so it looks all right. But it's thumping odd all the same!"

"Most likely Mr. Bunter told the fat duffer to bring his party, and that was all," suggested Nugent. "The rest was swank. If the old gentleman sent Bunter a registered letter for the exes, he wouldn't miss the post with it."

"Well, we can afford to pay our own exes," said Bob. "In fact, I'd rather."

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"Same here."

"That's how it is, I think," said Wharton with a nod. "The fat bouncer was swanking, as usual, and his pater never intended to pay the exes—probably never said so. It's decent of him to stand us a lunch and take us on the launch, anyhow."

"Yes, rather!"

"I—I suppose there is a launch?" said Johnny Bull.

"My hat! I suppose so."

"Anyhow, there's a house," chuckled Frank Nugent. "Mr. Bunter wouldn't ask us up to see the Boat-race if there wasn't a window to see it from."

"That's so."

How much was truth and how much was swank in this perplexing affair the Famous Five simply could not determine. As yet they were far from guessing that there was no truth in it at all, and that it was all swank.

That knowledge was to come later.

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

### The End of His Tether!

**CLARING CROSS!**  
The Greyfriars party turned out of the train upon a crowded platform.

"This way!" called out Bunter.

"That isn't the way out."

"It's the way to the buffet."

"Oh, blow the buffet!" said Bob Cherry. "We don't want to feed now, when we are going to have lunch with your father."

"It's a long way to Mortlake," said Bunter.

"Mortlake!" yelled Bob.

"I mean Putney. Better have a snack first."

"Oh, let's get out!" exclaimed Skinner. "Your pater's car will be waiting outside the station, Bunter."

"I'll tell you what," said Bunter, "you fellows go and see if the car's there while I get a snack. Lend me half-a-quid, Wharton."

"I had just three shillings left, after buying my ticket," said Harry cordly.

"I say, Cherry—"

"I had just a tanner," said Bob.

Bunter sniffed.

"I say, Mauly—"

Lord Mauleverer passed Bunter a ten-shilling note without a word.

The fat junior rolled away for refreshments. Harry Wharton & Co. went out of the station, looking for the Bunter motor-car. Several motor-cars were in waiting, as well as plenty of taxicabs.

"One of that lot," remarked Skinner. "But we can't tell which one till that fat fool Bunter comes."

"Perhaps!" murmured Johnny Bull.

"The perhapsfulness is terrific!"

"Eh—what?" exclaimed Bolsover major. "I suppose old Bunter's car is bound to be here, isn't it?"

"Blessed if I know!" said Bob. "Toddy told me, as we came away, to look for the Bunter crest on it. I believe he was pulling my leg. He wouldn't come himself, anyhow."

"What's the Bunter crest?" growled Bolsover major.

"I don't know—unless it's a pork pie or a pile of jam-tarts."

"If that fat villain—"

"Oh, really, Bolsover—"

Billy Bunter rolled up. It had not taken him long to negotiate ten-shillings' worth of refreshments.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he is!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Which of this lot is your pater's car, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter quaked inwardly as he caught the expression on Bolsover major's face. He assumed a thoughtful air as he blinked at the cars.

"Blessed if it seems to be here!" he said.

"What?" growled Bolsover major.

"I dare say it's got held up in the crowd of traffic," went on Bunter. "You know what it's like on Boat-race Day. But it's all right."

"Oh, it's all right, is it?" inquired Skinner.

"Yes. We'll take a couple of taxicabs. The pater will pay the drivers when we arrive," said Bunter recklessly.

"That's not a bad idea, as the car's not here," agreed Bolsover major, his brow clearing.

"Good!" ejaculated Skinner.

"I guess that's a cinch," remarked Fisher T. Fish.

Wharton signalled to a couple of cabs, and the Greyfriars party embarked in them.

"Putney!" said Bunter.

**A foul conspiracy is afoot at Greyfriars!**



The taxicabs glided away. It was a long run. Billy Bunter felt almost giddy as he made a vague mental calculation as to what the fares would probably amount to. As he had no money at all, with the exception of a few coppers, the remnants of a loan from one of his new pals, it did not matter much what the total sum was. In any case, Bunter could not have paid it. What was going to happen at the end of that taxi-drive Bunter did not know. He could only be guided by circumstances.

"I shall be ready for lunch by the time we get in," Bob Cherry remarked. "It's topping of your pater, Bunter!"

"Eh! Oh, yes!" gasped Bunter. "There'll be an—extra special lunch—depend on the pater for that. Oh dear!"

"Good old pater!" said Nugent. "There's the river!" exclaimed Wharton suddenly.

"Oh, good!" There was a swarm of vehicles going in the same direction. The Greyfriars cabs came to a halt.

"Here we are at Putney!" said Bunter's driver, looking in at the window.

"Give him the name of the house, Bunter."

Bunter gasped. He felt that it was time to own up now; but owning up was far beyond his nerve. Bolsover major was in that taxi.

"The—the name!" he stammered. "The man can't get to the house without knowing the address," said Harry. "Tell him where to drive."

"Didn't I tell him?" said Bunter. "Riverside Lodge, my man."

"What street?" asked the chauffeur.

"Not in a street—stands in its own grounds," said Bunter desperately. "Just inquire along the river for Riverside Hall!"

"Riverside Lodge or Riverside Hall?" asked the chauffeur.

"I mean Lodge—Riverside Lodge."

"Orlright!"

The chauffeur spoke to the other driver, and the two taxicabs resumed their way. Riverside Lodge seemed hard to find, which was not surprising, considering that the mansion existed only in the fat imagination of William George Bunter.

Up and down and round about went the taxicabs, the chauffeurs inquiring here, there, and everywhere for Riverside Lodge. They stopped again at last. The drivers seemed to be losing patience. Bunter's driver looked in again.

"Can't find it nowhere," he said. "If you can't give it to me a bit clearer, sir—"

Bunter breathed hard. He had not expected the chauffeur to find it; he was only trying to gain time.

"We can't be far off it, anyhow," said Bob Cherry. "I dare say we can find it on foot. Does it face the river, Bunter?"

"Yes—right on the river. Near Putney Bridge," added Bunter. "You can see the bridge from—the library window." Bunter felt that a few convincing details would do no harm. "Big house, with green shutters, and a—a clock-tower."

"Well, that ought to be easy to find," said Bob. "Let's get out and look for it."

"Good!" gasped Bunter. He was anxious to get out of the cab now. He felt that the only way to save his life was to dodge away somewhere in the swarm of sightseers.

"You'll see it at once from the towing-path," added Bunter. "Easy as—falling off a form!"

The Greyfriars party alighted. "What about the cabs?" asked Nugent.

Bunter felt giddy again. "They'd better drive on to the lodge, and see my pater," he said.

That suggestion did not seem to recommend itself to the taxi-drivers. One of them remarked with great plainness of speech that he had been bilked before!

Wharton crimsoned. "It's all serene, dear boy," said Lord Mauleverer hastily. Mauly's well filled pocket-book came into sight again, and he paid the chauffeurs.

"My pater will settle with you, Mauly," said Bunter feebly.

His lordship made no reply to that. "Well, come on, you fellows," said Harry Wharton. "We've crossed the bridge, and we've only got to go along the towing-path. Right or left, Bunter?"

"Which ever you like—"

"What?"

"I—I mean, right!" gasped Bunter.

The Greyfriars party started in search of Riverside Lodge. They looked out keenly for the imposing mansion with green shutters and a clock-tower. The towing-path was crowded, and Billy Bunter, dropping behind to tie his shoe-lace, was lost to sight.

"Where's Bunter?" asked Skinner suddenly. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter!" "Bunter! Billy Bunter!"

But answer came there none. Billy

Bunter was lost to sight, though to memory dear, and the Greyfriars party were destined not to see him again before the Boat-race.

**THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.**

**Retribution!**

"THERE they come!" "Oxford—!" "Cambridge—!" "Hurrah!"

In the midst of a swarming throng, Harry Wharton & Co. watched the two racing skiffs on the gleaming river.

They had not found Riverside Lodge. They had not had that excellent lunch. They had given up all idea of following the Boat-race in a magnificent motor-launch.

By that time—in fact, before that time—it had dawned upon the whole party that Bunter had pulled their leg, and that Riverside Lodge and the rest were only figments of Bunter's fertile fancy.

But they were seeing the Boat-race, at all events.

There it was, under their eyes; two splendid crews pulling away in great style, amid a roar from the banks.

In the keen interest of that fine sight the juniors forgot that they had missed their lunch. They had bought cakes and chocolates and such things from itinerant dealers, to ward off famine. Now they forgot the spoil of which they had been the victims, as they watched the rival oarsmen bending to their task.

"Oxford's leading," said Bob Cherry. "Just about level, I think," remarked Harry Wharton.



"We'll take a couple of cabs. The pater will pay the drivers when we arrive," said Bunter. Wharton signalled to a couple of taxicabs, and the Greyfriars party embarked in them. "Putney!" ordered Bunter loftily. (See Chapter 11.)

**Will it be discovered in time? See next week's MAGNET!**



"My dear chap—"  
 "My dear ass—"  
 "Hurrah!"

Up the gleaming river went the racing skills, followed by myriads of eyes from the banks, and all sort and conditions of craft on the water.

"Now, if we were on Bunter's electric launch—" grinned Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"It was all spoof, of course," he said.

"The spooffulness was terrific," said Hupree Janset Ram Singh. "But how did the esteemed spoofing Bunter fix it with the Head? His excellent and ludicrous pater would not join in a game of spoof."

Wharton shook his head.

"I can't understand that," he said.

"It beats me! But it's pretty clear now that Mr. Bunter never was giving a Boat-race party at all. We've let that fat bouncer spoof us from beginning to end."

"I'll make him sit up!" growled Bolsover major.

"Well, we got the day off from school," said Bob, laughing. "We've seen the giddy race."

"Something in that!" agreed Johnny Bull.

"I'll make him squirm!" said Skinner.

"I guess I'll make that fat clam shell out the dollars I've lent him," said Fisher T. Fish ferociously. "He's had six bob out of me in loans, and four bob in feeds, and now I shall have to pay for some grub out of my own pocket, as well

as my return ticket! Oh, Jerusalem!" Fisher T. Fish fairly groaned as he thought of that expenditure of cash.

"Well, they're out of sight!" said Nugent. "We may as well be moving. Bunter isn't likely to turn up with the giddy electric launch now."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Won't I make him squirm!" hissed Skinner.

The Famous Five were feeling fairly well satisfied. They had had leave from school, and they had seen the Boat-race—and they were quite willing to stand their own expenses. It was quite different with Skinner & Co. They were not at all willing to pay their own footing, and they had Bunter's expensive friendship to think of—a friendship that had lasted several days and made deep inroads upon their pocket-money. They were yearning to see Bunter again, though not from friendly motives.

Lord Mauleverer, the only member of the party who had any money left, stood a tea to the deserted party, and then the juniors returned townwards—not by taxi-cab. Only Bunter was able to afford such excessive taxi drives, and Bunter was no longer with the party.

Harry Wharton & Co. were looking and feeling quite cheerful when they sat in the express for Courtfield. Skinner & Co. improved the shining hour, on the homeward journey, by discussing the things they were going to do to Bunter.

At Courtfield Junction they looked for him, but evidently he had not come up

by the same train. They walked to Greyfriars, and in the School House a crowd of fellows met them with inquiries.

"Had a good time at the Bunter mansion?" inquired Peter Todd blandly. "How did you like the turtle soup? I hope you didn't overdo the pate-de-foie-gras? Did the electric launch go all right?"

"We've been spoofed!" roared Bols-over major.

"You don't say so!"

"There wasn't any Riverside Lodge!" howled Skinner. "We've been taken in. He must have known I was listening when I heard him on the telephone in Quelchy's study—"

"Go hon!" chuckled Peter. "So you heard him on the phone—"

"No lunch!" said Snoop almost tearfully. "No electric launch—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No Boat-race party at all!" howled Fisher T. Fish.

"Go it!" shrieked Peter Todd. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"We're going to scalp him!"

"I guess I'm going to lynch him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's all right!" said Harry Wharton.

"The Boat-race party was all bunkum, but we've had a run up to town and we've seen the race—and Bunter can go and eat coke!"

"Where is he?" asked Peter.

"Goodness knows!"

It was an hour later when William George Bunter put in an appearance.

## HERE'S AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU! WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO. A Simple One-Week Football Competition.

Solve the Simple Picture-puzzle, and send in your solution.

**FIRST PRIZE £5. SECOND PRIZE £2 10s. 0d.**  
 Ten Prizes of Five Shillings each.



Here is a splendid Footer competition which I am sure will interest you. On this page you will find a history of Luton Football Club in picture-puzzle form. What you are invited to do is to solve this picture, and when you have done so write your solution on a sheet of paper. Then sign the coupon which appears below, pin it to your solution, and post it to "Luton" Competition, MAGNET Office, Gough House, Gough Square, E.C. 4, so as to reach that address not later than THURSDAY, MARCH 29th, 1925.

The FIRST PRIZE of £5 will be awarded to the reader who submits a solution which is exactly the same as, or nearest to, the solution now in the possession of the Editor. In the event of ties the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. The Editor reserves the right to add together and divide the value of all, or any, of the prizes, but the full amount will be awarded. It is a distinct condition of entry that the decision of the Editor must be accepted as final. Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

This competition is run in conjunction with the "Gem," "Popular," and "Boys' Friend," and readers of those journals are invited to compete.

I enter "Luton" Competition, and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final.

Name .....

Address .....

M .....



He rolled into the School House, blinking round uneasily through his big spectacles, in a very apprehensive frame of mind. Bolsover major linked arms with him and led him into the junior Common-room. Bunter did not seem willing to go, but Bolsover major would take no denial.

In the Common-room, with the door shut, William George Bunter was surrounded by the Boat-race party and a crowd of other fellows, all grinning. Skinner fixed a deadly look on him.

"Now, you fat rotter—"

"Now, you fat spoofer—"

"I guess—"

"We're going—"

"Give him a chance to speak!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Let him tell us how he fixed it up to spoof the Head."

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Go it, Bunter!" said Peter Todd.

"How—how did you miss me, you fellows?" gasped Bunter, blinking at the Boat-race party. "I—I got to Riverside Hall—"

"What?"

"I mean Riverside Lodge. We waited lunch for you for an hour—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"The pater refused to wait longer," said Bunter. "You see, the electric launch was waiting for us—"

"The—the electric launch!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Yes. As you fellows didn't turn up, we had to have lunch without you, and—and we started in the—the electric launch without you," went on Bunter. "Awfully sorry you missed me like that! How—how did you come to lose yourselves in that way?"

The juniors stared at Bunter. The Owl of the Remove had succeeded in taking their breath away.

"My only hat!" said Bob Cherry at last. "He's still keeping it up! He wants us to believe there is really a Riverside Lodge, and a launch, and a lunch, and a Boat-race party!"

"You spoofing worm!" roared Bolsover major.

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"I guess you've got to square—"

"Of—of course, if my registered letter's come—"

"It hasn't come! There never was any registered letter, any more than there was a Boat-race party!" raved Skinner.

"Oh, really, Skinner— I—I say, you fellows, keep off!" howled Bunter, as Skinner & Co. closed round him.

"I—I tell you it was all square—all right from beginning to end. My pater fixed it with the Head, didn't he? You heard what Quelchy said. I suppose you don't suspect that I telephoned to the Head and made him think it was my pater? As if I should do anything of the sort—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter Todd. "So that was it!"

"It wasn't!" howled Bunter. "Ain't I just telling you that it wasn't?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Spoofed the Head as well as us!" gasped Bolsover major.

"I didn't—I wasn't—I never— Leggo!" roared Bunter. "I say, you fellows, look here, you're my pals, ain't you? Oh, my hat! Yaroooooh! Let go! Yooooop!"

Skinner & Co. did not let go.

They held on—hard.

The hour of reckoning had come at last!

Bunter had really had a wonderful run of luck in his career as a dealer in tremendous "whoppers." Possibly he

had hoped that his latest and greatest "whopper" would see him through. If so, he was woefully disappointed.

All was clear to Skinner & Co. now—and they proceeded to make it clear to Bunter what they thought of him.

The next ten minutes were exciting ones to Billy Bunter. He hardly knew what was happening to him; he felt as if he were going through a series of fearful earthquakes.

Harry Wharton & Co. chipped in at last and rescued what was left of Bunter, and the wreck of William George crawled painfully away, groaning.

Boat-race Day was being celebrated that night in many places and in many ways. In Study No. 7 in the Remove Billy Bunter was celebrating it with deep and dismal groans.

And his troubles did not end with that day. Skinner & Co. let the sun go down upon their wrath—and rise upon it also. For several days Billy Bunter led the life of a hunted rabbit; the number of kicks and cuffs and bumpings he gathered in during those days could hardly be counted.

It was what he deserved; but that reflection brought no solace to the afflicted Owl of the Remove. And while the hapless Owl suffered for his sins at the hands of Skinner & Co., the rest of the Remove chuckled loud and long over Billy Bunter's Boat-race party.

THE END.

(Next Monday's ripping, long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars is entitled "A Message From the Sea!"—a yarn packed full of exciting interest. Don't miss it! Order next week's MAGNET now!)

## THE GREYFRIARS PARLIAMENT!

AT the ordinary weekly meeting of the House, the Speaker referred to a communication from a reader of the Companion Papers in India.

The Speaker: "I think I cannot do better than let members hear the remarks of Reader KAMDIN A. BHARUCHA, 10, Sholapur Road, Poona, India. Reader Bharucha writes on drawing as a hobby. Now, we of Greyfriars have the cheeriest associations with Hindustan. Have we not as a comrade in the Remove a fine chap like the Nabob of Bhanipur? I will read the speech: 'The subject to which I refer is drawing. Drawing is one of the best arts, as you must admit, and it has got its own history and secrets. It is a very useful art, and with a little skill you can do wonders in the artistic line. For instance, you can make a comfortable bit of pocket-money out of your drawings, taking it for granted that you are a good hand. I know of a friend who sells his water-colours at a good price. Besides bringing you money, it helps you a lot in your own work.'

"Think how you can decorate your studies. To a chap who runs an amateur magazine, drawing is a boon and a blessing. He can design the cover in any attractive way he chooses, and, also, he can do a sketch or two inside the pages. Some of you must be good

hands at it. Utilise the art to a fine purpose. Think it over seriously.'

Mr. Peter Todd: "I think the appreciation of the House should find expression for this admirable speech. Reader Bharucha has handled a difficult matter in splendid style."

The Speaker: "Reader C. CROWE, 14, Shalimar Road, Acton, London, W., says: 'It appears to me that you have given wrestling a miss at Greyfriars. This seems a great pity, as wrestling is an excellent, strengthening sport which should be given more scope in this country. Of course, a fellow like W. G. B., with great weight, has an advantage; but more active fellows, with science, should cause more competition and great fun.'

This member was thanked. But it was pointed out that if he frequented the Remove corridor he would see plenty of wrestling any day of the week.

The Speaker: "I will now read about first aid. Reader A. ARMSTRONG, 70, Keptie Street, Arbroath, Scotland, says: 'The few remarks I wish to place before you concern first aid. To begin with, I should like to ask a question: Why do the Greyfriars boys never go in for this interesting and useful art? I am quite sure accidents of a common nature constantly occur in the studies, inflicting scalds, burns, cuts, etc. A little knowledge of first aid would come in extremely handy, and a lot of unnecessary bother be saved. On the footer-field, too, despite the absence of rough play, accidents are apt to happen. In fact, players have been known to break a limb on the field. Here, again, first aid would be valuable. In my opinion, the sooner the Greyfriars chaps learn this

very necessary study the better it will be for themselves and those around them.'

Mr. Coker: "It is just what I should have said—only, of course, I should have put it better."

Mr. Bob Cherry: "Question."

The Speaker: "Reader T. OLI-PHANT, 85, Brussels Street, Gateshead upon Tyne, says: 'Not all boys are aware of the help offered them in the pursuit of their hobbies by the public libraries, and perhaps a few words on the subject might not be out of place. Most hobbyists come to a time when they feel the need of a good book on their pet subject; but, on looking round, they find the book in question is a bit beyond their means. This is where the public library comes in. All good reference libraries have books specially devoted to hobbies, and the loan of such books can be obtained by filling up a form. No hobby is neglected—engineering, chemistry, photography, painting, drawing, electricity, stamp-collecting.'

Mr. Frank Nugent: "I agree with that. The libraries are not half enough used. If some members of this House—"

The Speaker: "No personal attacks, please."

Mr. Nugent: "I was not thinking of attacking anybody. What I meant was that the information is all there, waiting to be picked up."

Mr. Alonzo Todd: "Exactly. Often I have been reproached for not taking my place on the footer-field, but I am nearly always to be found at a library, or in the company of some weighty tome, some masterpiece of erudition—"

The hon. member was not allowed to finish, and the House broke up.

Harry Wharton & Co. are well in the foreground next Monday!





The object of this dictionary is to explain in simple language the meaning of the technical terms or expressions used in connection with electricity and wireless telephony.

**CIRCUIT.**—A circuit is a path, made up of conductors, through which the electricity flows from the source of energy back to the point of origin. If a battery or dynamo is the source of energy, then the current flows from the positive terminal of the battery or dynamo, through the circuit, back to the negative terminal of the battery or dynamo. The machine or apparatus which the electric current has to supply is placed in the path of the flow, or, in other words, in the circuit.

Before attempting to understand the units of electrical measurement, you must know something of the system on which it is based.

There are certain fundamental units of measurement from which all others are derived; so, as briefly as possible, we will give you an idea of these fundamental units and those derived from them.

### C.G.S. UNITS, OR ABSOLUTE UNITS.

C.G.S. units, sometimes called absolute units, is a short method of expressing centimetre, gramme, second units, which are the fundamental units of length, mass, and time.

**CENTIMETRE.**—The unit of length.

**GRAMME.**—The unit of mass.

**SECOND.**—The unit of time.

Daily use of these units, or terms, has made you so familiar with them that you no longer pause to consider what they are.

When we speak of a thing being one centimetre in length, constant usage enables us to picture in our minds something about a quarter of an inch in length. Many of us do not know that one centimetre is one thousandth-millionth part of a quadrant of the earth, nor do we care; we are satisfied that it enables us to form some conception of length.

It is the same with the units of measurement that follow. Do not attempt, in the first instance, to understand the exact quantity which the unit represents, because you will fail to do so. All that you require to do is to realise that each unit has a definite value; the number of units required for a certain purpose will become apparent as you gain experience.

A pint of milk, a pound of apples, or a yard of cloth—all these are familiar terms, and convey an idea of quantity; experience in the use of them teaches you how far they will go when used for certain purposes, but in each case you

would find it difficult to explain exactly what these terms mean. This is so with volts, amperes, ohms, or other electrical measurements. You will find it difficult to understand the exact quantity they represent, but you will soon learn the number of units of each required for a certain purpose.

### DERIVED UNITS.

**SQUARE CENTIMETRE.**—The unit of area.

**CUBIC CENTIMETRE.**—The unit of volume.

**VELOCITY.**—The unit of velocity is the speed of a body which moves through unit distance (one centimetre) in unit time (one second). Thus if a body moves one centimetre (0.3937 inches) in one second, it has unit velocity.

**ACCELERATION.**—The unit of acceleration is that acceleration which imparts unit velocity to a body in unit time. When the speed of a body increases at the rate of one centimetre per second, in each second that it is moving, it has unit velocity.

If a pound weight were dropped from a height of 163.2 feet, it would reach the earth in three seconds, because gravity imparts 981 units of acceleration to a body—that is, every second that the body is falling its speed is increased at the rate of 981 centimetres, or 32.2 feet per second. The weight would fall 32.2 feet the first second, 64.4 the next second, and the remaining 96.6 feet in the third second.

**FORCE.**—The unit of force is that power which, acting for one second on one gramme, gives to it a velocity of one centimetre per second. It is called one dyne.

**WORK AND ENERGY.**—The unit of work is the work done in moving a body through unit distance (one centimetre) against unit force (one dyne). If 1-981st gramme is lifted one centimetre high against the force of gravity, one unit of work has been performed. The unit of energy is the same as the unit of work, because energy is measured by work done.

The ERG is the unit of work and energy.

### ELECTRIC-MAGNETIC UNITS.

It is not necessary to give the C.G.S. units because they would confuse you. The absolute units are not used in practice because some are too small and some too large. Practical units have been fixed, and these are as follows:

**VOLT.**—The unit of the difference of potential, sometimes called electromotive force (E.M.F.), potential or pressure. Difference of potential is the difference in electrical pressure at two ends of a conductor. One volt is the difference of potential required to cause

one ampere to flow through a conductor having a resistance of one ohm.

The greater the number of volts, the greater the number of amperes that will flow through a conductor of given dimensions.

The pressure of one volt is very small; if you touch a wire having a pressure of four volts you would probably not feel a shock, because the pressure is not great enough to overcome the resistance of your body. If you touched a wire with a pressure of one hundred volts, you would receive an unpleasant shock. A thousand volts would probably kill you.

The volt is 10<sup>-8</sup>, or 100,000,000 times greater than the C.G.S. unit of pressure.

**OHM.**—The ohm is the unit of resistance. One ohm is the resistance of a conductor through which a current of one ampere flows when an electromotive force of one volt is applied. The ohm is 10<sup>-9</sup>, or 1,000,000,000 times the C.G.S. unit of resistance.

**COULOMB.**—The coulomb is the unit of quantity. It is a definite quantity of electricity, just as one gallon is a definite quantity of water. The coulomb is the ampere divided by time; it is the quantity of electricity which flows per second through a conductor having a resistance of one ohm when one volt is applied to it.

One coulomb is 10<sup>-1</sup>, or 1-10th of the C.G.S. unit of quantity.

**AMPERE.**—The ampere is the unit of current, sometimes called amps. It is the quantity of electricity which flows per second through a conductor having a resistance of one ohm when an electromotive force of one volt is applied. The number of coulombs flowing per second are termed amperes.

One ampere is 10<sup>-1</sup>, or 1-10th of the C.G.S. unit of current.

**OHMS LAW.**—The strength of the current varies directly as the electromotive force, and inversely as the total resistance of the circuit. This means that the number of amperes of current flowing through a circuit is equal to the number of volts of electromotive force divided by the number of ohms of resistance in the whole circuit.

$$\text{Current} = \frac{\text{Electromotive-force}}{\text{Ohms}}$$

$$\text{or } C = \frac{E}{R} \text{ or Amperes} = \frac{\text{Volts}}{\text{Ohms}}$$

$$\text{Electromotive-force} = \text{Current} \times \text{Resistance}$$

$$\text{or } E = C \times R \text{ or Volts} = \text{Amperes} \times \text{Ohms}$$

$$\text{Resistance} = \frac{\text{Electromotive-force}}{\text{Current}}$$

$$\text{or } R = \frac{E}{C} \text{ or Ohms} = \frac{\text{Volts}}{\text{Amperes}}$$

(To be continued next Monday.)

Hallo ! Hallo ! Hallo ! How do you like these articles ?





# THE MAN IN THE LIGHT-BLUE VEST!

A thrilling story of the greatest River event of the year, which comes near to ending in disaster but for the timely intervention of Ferrers Locke. Written specially by your popular author

## OWEN CONQUEST.

### THE FIRST CHAPTER.

#### The Madman of Putney.

"O H, smartly away!" Ferrers Locke made that exclamation under his breath in a tone of frank admiration.

Standing by the boat-sheds at Putney with his assistant, Jack Drake, the world-famous detective was watching the practice of the rival rowing eights.

It was Friday afternoon. The following day at four-thirty would see the annual battle of the Blues over the famous course from Putney to Mortlake.

Oxford had taken their boat out sharp at three o'clock and had set off steadily to row to the mile post. Cambridge had appeared a few minutes later, and had paddled to their stake-boat. Upon getting away for their first practice start, eight blue-tipped oars had entered the water in perfect unison. The boat gathered momentum swiftly from a few short, sharp, powerful strokes, and then the crew settled down to row a steady thirty-to-the-minute until recalled to the stake-boat.

The smartness of the Light Blues in getting away brought admiring exclamations from many spectators besides Ferrers Locke. Even the out-and-out supporters of the Dark Blues, of whom there were many present, "could scarce forbear to cheer."

"A likely crew indeed, my boy," said the detective to Jack Drake. "Although they are not able now to command the services of Hartley, who stroked them to victory for the past three years, they should lower the Dark Blue pennant again. But Oxford has unlimited pluck and brains in their ship beside ample brawn, so it should not be a 'walk-over' for either crew."

Jack Drake, who had been as keen to come and see the eleventh-hour practices of the rival boats as his chief, turned his gaze from the Cambridge crew to the throng lining the bank of old Father Thames.

"Egad, sir!" he said, his eyes shining: "and it does one good to see so many folk frankly interested in the Boat-race!"

"It does, my boy," said Locke seriously. "It's an institution that England could ill-afford to do without. That sixteen clean young athletes should submit to Spartan training for many weeks for the mere privilege of representing their Varsity over the gruelling four and a half miles' course from Putney to Mortlake, is calculated to fire the imagination of all true lovers of sport. The Boat-race is the finest example we have of sport for sport's sake. And,

thank goodness, there still exists the true British spirit in our country that can appreciate and enthuse over this, the cleanest sporting event of the year!"

For half an hour Ferrers Locke, Jack Drake, and the rest of the people near the Putney boathouses, watched the practice of the Cambridge crew. Oxford was out of sight round the bend of the river.

Although last out, the Light Blues were the first to paddle back to the plank which acted as a landing-stage. The crowd of eager sightseers, resplendent in Boat-race favours, thronged down the stone slope leading from the boat-sheds. Genial policemen marshalled them into two sections to leave a path for the crew when they stepped ashore.

"Let's go and get a closer view of the crew, sir!" cried Jack Drake eagerly.

Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake, farther up suffered himself to be dragged among the crowd near the landing-place.

Very carefully two stalwart boatmen grasped the blades of a couple of the blue-tipped oars, and drew the fragile racing shell towards the shore. Suddenly, above the murmur of conversation of the throng of onlookers, arose a cracked, angry voice.

"Let me take my place! Make way, I say!"

Some youngsters bearing autograph books in readiness in their hands, were pushed roughly aside, and a hatless old man sprang on to the plank. Whipping off his coat, he stood for a moment staring with baleful eyes at the racing shell on the river.

Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake farther up the bank on the other side of the landing-stage, looked at the old fellow in astonishment. And well they might, for the stranger presented a curious spectacle. His bald head was fringed with white hair just above and behind the ears. His face, seared and wrinkled with age, wore an almost demoniacal expression of hatred. He wore dark trousers and rubber shoes, and, strangely enough, a light-blue vest which exactly matched in shade the cap worn by the Cambridge cox.

Only for a second did the old man stand motionless. Then he stepped boldly towards the two boatmen at the end of the plank.

"Pull the boat in," he ordered curtly, "and tell that fellow to get out of it!"

"That fellow" was the Cambridge stroke, whose good-natured countenance showed sympathetic concern. A number of the spectators ashore, however, who had

obviously seen the old man before, burst into ripples of laughter.

The boatmen, intent on their delicate work of bringing the racing crew to the landing-stage, nodded to the old fellow to begone. A burly policeman hurried down the plank towards him.

"Toddle off home, Grandpa, and take a shower-bath!" called out the constable in a kind, jovial tone. "The practice is over for to-day!"

The old man swung round with an angry snarl.

"They're keeping me out of my place in the boat!" he shouted vehemently. "It's a conspiracy! I was the best oar at the University!"

With astonishing agility he eluded the policeman's grip. A few thoughtless youngsters in the crowd cheered encouragingly. But even their cheers turned to exclamations of alarm as the old man, jumping hurriedly back along the plank, tripped over one of the long oars the boatmen were holding. One of the boatmen made a valiant effort to save the old fellow, but, with a loud cry, the ancient toppled head over heels into the river between the landing-stage and the racing boat.

Locke, Drake, and a number of others dashed forward with the idea of assisting him. But the water was shallow, and the boatmen, releasing the oars, had no difficulty in getting him out.

A stout woman elbowed her way through the knot of people bordering the lower end of the landing-stage, and threw a thick cloak over the shaking shoulders of the old man. As she led him up the steep stone slope towards the roadway above, a flash of recognition passed between her and Ferrers Locke.

The detective watched the couple on their way, followed by a number of curiosity-mongers. Then, turning to Drake, he said:

"The woman who took charge of that poor half-witted old chap was Mrs. Bentley. Many years ago I was the means of securing the release of her son, who was wrongly accused of a theft from the house in which he was employed. The son went abroad, and I suppose now the woman is acting as house-keeper for the old fellow in the sporty vest."

As, one by one, the Cambridge crew gingerly stepped ashore and were surrounded by the hero-worshippers with autograph albums, Ferrers Locke addressed himself to the policeman who had tried to induce the old man to "go home and have a shower-bath."

"That was a queer old bird, officer," he

A gripping mystery yarn of Ferrers Locke next week!



remarked. "A monomaniac, eh? Suffers from just one illusion, I suppose?"

The genial constable tapped his forehead significantly with his forefinger.

"Bats in the belfry," he said impressively; "otherwise a screw loose in the trumpet. The old boy thinks he's the world's crack oarsman. He's always a-hanging about the river. Each year—for the last two or three years, to my own knowledge—he gets a fit of the Blues, as I might say. That is, as the time for the Boat-race comes on he gets more and more depressed. He reckons it's sheer jealousy an' spite what keeps him out of the Cambridge crew."

"Was he ever up at Cambridge?"

"Not he! He went to some good school, though, in his young days, 'cause he's an educated man. But that's partly where the screw's loose; he thinks he went to Cambridge and got kicked out."

A feeling of sympathy and interest in the afflicted old man and the willingness of the policeman to engage in conversation, led Locke to ask further questions. Truly, it had been a strange sight to see the old fellow standing there close to the river, with his light-blue vest sagging over his thin chest. The contrast between him and the mighty athletes of the trained Varsity crew, whose great muscles rippled beneath their white rowing singlets, had been more pathetic than ludicrous.

"What is the name of the old chappie?" asked Locke of the friendly constable.

"Ezra Cooney—though all the people in this part call him 'Grandpa.' He resides with his housekeeper—that woman you saw—in a house on the River View Estate near here. I don't know the exact address."

"The Force doesn't regard him as a dangerous lunatic, then?" murmured the sleuth.

"Bless my soul, no!" answered the officer. "He's as harmless as a—frog. Usually at this time of year he can be seen hanging about the Punch and Judy shows on the river bank. Everybody knows Grandpa! It's the first time he's ever attempted to interfere in any way with a boat's crew. And I expect it'll be the last. If the old boy isn't laid up with rheumatics for the rest of his life, it's a cert he'll never come risking his old neck near the water-side again!"

"I shouldn't be too sure of that if I were you," said Ferrers Locke. "If the old man's mania has been getting worse with the passing of the years, to-day's unfortunate experience may increase his strange resentment."

"Well, if he comes down here again wanting a row in the Cambridge boat," said the policeman, "he'll find himself mixed up in a row with us fellows instead!"

He touched his helmet to the Cambridge president, who passed just then towards the boat-house; and Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake, strangely thoughtful, moved away towards the station near Putney Bridge.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### His Hand Against Cambridge!

"PLEASE, Missa Locke, a lady wanchee see you!"

Sing-Sing, the Chinese servant, quietly inserted himself into the sitting-room of the house in Baker Street, where Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake were enjoying tea, and made the above announcement.

"Show her in, Sing-Sing—not to the consulting-room, I will see her here."

"Velly good, Missa Locke!"

With catlike tread Sing-Sing withdrew, to return in a couple of minutes with a stout woman, whose face was stamped with the lines of constant care and anxiety.

"Mrs. Bentley!" cried Ferrers Locke, rising. "I recognised you at Putney this afternoon."

"Yes, Mr. Locke; and I knew you, too. It would have been strange if I hadn't recognised the man who did so much for me and mine when—"

"Tut, tut, Mrs. Bentley!" interposed the sleuth hastily. "Remove your wrap and be seated. Sing-Sing, bring in another cup and saucer and a plate!"

Then, as the servant went on his errand, Locke said to the visitor:

"It is no family affair that brings you to me this time, Mrs. Bentley, I presume? Grandpa Cooney is the trouble—eh?"

The woman removed her knitted gloves with a weary gesture.

"He is, indeed, Mr. Locke," she replied. "The old man fair worrits the life out of me! I have to look after him like a mother does a mischievous brat of four. To-night he as good as told me to get out of the house. And as he was as crusty as a twice-baked loaf, I was glad enough to make myself scarce!"

"So you came along here," murmured Ferrers Locke. "Well, I'm very pleased to see you, Mrs. Bentley, and if the narration of your troubles to me will relieve your mind, I shall be only too glad to listen, and advise you."

"Thanks, Mr. Locke! You're a gent, if ever there was one!"

As Locke poured tea for the lady, after Sing-Sing had arrived with the cup, he inquired:

"And how is your charge, Mrs. Bentley? A ducking in the Thames in March is not likely to prove salubrious for a gentleman of Mr. Cooney's age."

"Oh, he's all right as far as his old carcass is concerned, Mr. Locke," said the woman. "He's wondrous strong and wiry, and feeling none the worse physically for his wetting. But, mind, Mr. Locke, talk about water on the brain!"

"H'm! He wasn't in the best of tempers after he got home?" said the detective.

"It isn't often he is in the best of tempers, even when he has got cause to be!" sniffed the lady. "To-night he was that crotchety that he was nigh unbearable. The things he promised to do to the Cambridge boating gentlemen made me fair tremble, Mr. Locke!"

"Well, I don't suppose that the Light Blues would lose any sleep to-night if they knew about it," said Locke, with a smile. "So there is no need for you to worry, Mrs. Bentley."

The woman shook her head doubtfully.

"I've been housekeeper to Mr. Cooney for a long time now," she said. "Each year I've seen him getting a little madder. Long ago he got in his head that he was 'sent down' from Cambridge University because of spite against him there. Gradually the notion, too, has taken root in his deranged brainbox that he ought to be occupying the stroke position in the Cambridge boat. This year it has been more apparent than ever before. But what has scared me is that he has become so vindictive. He puts on a light-blue vest, which he bought at some shop in Putney, and wanders down to the riverside, breathing threatenings and slaughter."

"I see, Mrs. Bentley," said Ferrers Locke, as the woman paused to sip her tea. "For a long time you, like everybody else, regarded Mr. Cooney as a—h'm!—very eccentric but harmless old man. Now you fear that his monomania is actually becoming a menace to other people."

"Those are exactly my thoughts," said Mrs. Bentley eagerly, "and put in far better words than I could have thought of. It's no good my telling the police what I've been thinking. They know all about the old man—so they reckon—and they look upon him more as a joke than a nuisance."

"Perhaps, Mrs. Bentley," said Ferrers Locke, "it would be as well if you engaged a doctor to examine the old man."

"Doctor?" echoed the woman, with a harsh laugh. "I tried to get him to see a doctor after his ducking to-day. He nearly sacked me! I don't want to leave him. Until the last few days he's been a very good master, and he's always paid me well for my services as his housekeeper. Good, well-paid jobs aren't to be plucked up like blue favours on Putney Bridge after the Boat-race. Besides, it wouldn't be right for me to leave the old man when he most needs looking after."

"But what do you wish me to do for you, Mrs. Bentley?" inquired Locke, reaching for a silver cigarette-box. "I hardly see how I can be of any special assistance to you."

"You could if you only would, Mr. Locke."

With all seriousness, I say that Mr. Cooney is really becoming a positive danger, and I don't care what the doctors or police would say, either. He's threatened that unless he strokes the Cambridge boat, that the Light Blues sha'n't have a chance of winning this year's race."

"Well, they certainly wouldn't have a chance if he did stroke the boat," said the detective, with a chuckle. "However, I can understand your anxiety, Mrs. Bentley. Drake and I have nothing special to do this evening. If you like, we will come with you to Putney. You could introduce us into the house as relatives of yours who have just arrived from the country for the race. I think if I could have a chat with Mr. Cooney I might make a pretty shrewd decision as to whether his mania has crossed the border-line into dangerous dementia, and act accordingly."

"Oh, thank you!" cried Mrs. Bentley. "That would be such a relief to me, Mr. Locke. You don't know how worried I was before I came here."

In accordance with the promise he had given, Ferrers Locke accompanied Mrs. Bentley back to Putney a little later that evening. Jack Drake went with them.

But when the trio arrived at the house in Minver Road, on the River View Estate, Putney, they found that no one was at home. Mrs. Bentley, who opened the front door with the latchkey she habitually carried, expressed surprise at not finding the old man in the house.

"It's seldom Mr. Cooney goes out at this time of the evening, Mr. Locke," she said. "Usually he stays locked up in his study and says he's not to be disturbed. Always up to some crack-brained experiment or other, he is."

"Which is the old man's study?" asked Locke. "For his own good, as well as that of others, I think it might be as well if I had a look into the place."

The housekeeper unlocked the door of a room leading off the hall and switched on the electric light.

The room proved to be a large and very untidy apartment. Mrs. Bentley explained that the old man would hardly let her touch a thing in it. A large book, with a number of currency notes sticking out from the leaves, immediately focused the detective's attention.

"By Jove!" he muttered. "That's an unsafe way to keep money. Is he usually careless with his valuables?"

"Very," replied Mrs. Bentley. "I'm fair scared of burglars coming in one of these fine nights. I'm always telling Mr. Cooney not to leave his money lying about. He's a man of independent means, Mr. Locke, and very generous, too, in his way."

"Some of these one-pound notes are pencilled," commented Locke, opening the book. "He appears to do sums and make memos on his money. Hallo, but what have we here?"

The articles which had attracted Locke's notice were on a table near a disorderly bookcase. They consisted of a bottle of a cloudy, yellowish liquid and some pieces of oiled silk, each bearing a single letter in indelible pencil and in various stages of decay.

The sleuth turned from them back to the book containing the currency notes. He now examined some of the notes with more care. Three of them he selected and showed to Drake. Each bore a pencil mark—the first, "A, 5 hours"; the second, "B, 5½ hours"; the third, "C, 7 hours."

Having replaced the notes in the book, Locke returned to the table and looked once more at the silk fabrics. He sniffed at each in turn, and finally extracted the cork from the bottle and smelled the liquid.

Mrs. Bentley, bursting with curiosity, watched him narrowly.

"What is that stuff, Mr. Locke?" she asked, as the sleuth put the bottle down. "My master has been collecting queer-smelling substances for the last few days and mixing 'em together. Fair gassed me out of the scullery yesterday afternoon with 'em, he did."

But the detective thought it better not to tell the voluble housekeeper too much.

"Only one of Mr. Cooney's crack-brained experiments, I expect," he remarked easily. "We should, I think, do you a greater service at present by going to seek your master than by staying waiting here for him."

**ANSWERS**  
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Jack Drake at school—in "Tracking Down Tracey I!"



Either we will bring him home or send him home. Anyway, I shall do my best to interview him, Mrs. Bentley."

Leaving the house in Minver Road, Ferrers Locke set off at such a brisk pace towards the nearest shopping thoroughfare which led towards Putney Bridge, that Jack Drake had to break into a trot at times to keep up with him.

"Wh-what did you make of that stuff you found in the study, sir?" asked the boy. "Did you find anything about the old man's experiment to lead you to think that he's pottier than most people imagine?"

"I did, indeed, my boy," replied Ferrers Locke. "I have now not the slightest doubt that Mrs. Bentley was perfectly justified in coming to me. The idiotic obsession that he ought to be included in the Light Blue crew has so preyed upon the old man's mind that his early mild resentment has changed to a virulent hatred of those whom he imagines are responsible for keeping him out of his place in the boat."

"You think he should be placed under restraint, sir?"

"I certainly think he should be examined by a competent doctor who has specialised in mental cases. The liquid contained in that bottle in the study was some special concoction of his own. But one ingredient of it was undoubtedly a lotion which has the property of speedily destroying silk fabric and other similar materials. He had experimented with some of the stuff on a number of pieces of oiled silk, and had carefully checked the time it took for the fabric to rot and allow water to penetrate through."

Drake glanced at his chief with eyes opened to their fullest extent.

"My giddy aunt, sir!" he muttered. "I think I see what is in your mind. You fear that the old chap hopes for the opportunity of treating the vellum covering of the Cambridge racing shell with his concoction?"

"Yes; I have no doubt that is what he has in mind. Of course, the idea could only have originated in the deranged brain of a lunatic. That he could not accomplish the task I have no fear, for the 'Varsity racing shells are as carefully tended before the Boat-race as a racehorse on the eve of the Derby. However, there is evidence of extreme cunning on the part of old Cooney, and his disordered mind might lead him to the commission of some deed which would actually be the means of ruining this year's tussle between the rival 'Varsities. Our job is to make certain that he hasn't it in his power to do some rash act which might endanger others and land himself in a criminal lunatic asylum."

Aware that the old man was well known in the Putney neighbourhood, Ferrers Locke estimated that he would have little difficulty in getting on his track. After making one or two fruitless inquiries, he learnt from a news-vendor that old Mr. Cooney had entered a coffee-house near the bridge.

From the proprietor of the place Ferrers Locke discovered that Mr. Cooney had only left there a couple of minutes previously, after partaking of a cup of coffee.

"As I thought, Drake," said the sleuth, when they had left the coffee-house. "Probably the old man is on his way to the boat-houses now. Let's step out and try to get ahead of him without his seeing us."

In this the two succeeded with far more ease than either of them had anticipated. They saw Mr. Cooney ambling along down the dimly-lighted road to the south side of the sluggish Thames. He appeared to be lost in thought, and neither saw nor heard Locke and Drake slip by along the sloping bank of the river below him.

Arriving at the boathouse above which had floated the light-blue pennant of the Cambridge University Boating Club that day, they withdrew into the shadows at the side of the building.

With stealthy tread the old man approached. He paused to look at the boathouse from the front, and to shake his gnarled fist at it. Then he ambled round to the side. At once Ferrers Locke stepped forward.

"Hallo, Grandpa!" he said in a low voice.

"What are you doing about here to-night?" The old fellow was thunderstruck for a moment. Then, drawing himself up with a gleam of fire in his ancient eyes, he demanded:

"Who—who are you?"

"Oh, I'm here to guard the Cantabs' boat," said Ferrers Locke, truthfully enough. But to "draw" the old man he added: "But I'm Oxford, really. It's time the Dark Blues won again, I say."

Mr. Cooney chuckled.

"And that's what I say, too!" he said. "Between me and you, young man, the Cambridge president has treated me pretty badly. I ought to be stroking the boat this year. I licked 'em all up at the 'Varsity—could do what I liked with 'em on the river. But," he added sadly, "they got jealous of me. Thought if I rowed in the boat it might show up the other men. Now, tell me, would you like to earn some money, young man?"

Ferrers Locke nodded assent.

Cautiously the old man undid his coat. Beneath it was the light-blue vest—which had been dried out for him—and a bottle containing a cloudy, yellowish liquid. The bottle he pushed into the sleuth's willing hand.

"You don't like the Light Blues any more'n I do, young man, I can see," said Mr. Cooney. "If you want to see 'em lose the race to-morrow, and earn some money for

young sportsmen who probably are scarcely aware of his existence. We must see him safely home to-night, and communicate with the authorities with a view of having him put in a nursing-home for a time."

But somewhat to the surprise of Locke and Drake, they soon found that the artful old man had no intention of going straight home. Instead, he took a circuitous route to Aylott's meadows, where a large and popular circus was encamped. The show had started, but Mr. Cooney purchased one of the most expensive reserved seats, and entered the large tent. The detective and his assistant also took tickets and followed him in, taking good care that the old man should have no idea he was being watched.

A couple of knockabout clowns were followed by the Javanese Troupe of Jolly Jugglers. They, in turn, gave place to Mlle. Spinney and her Wonderful Talking Horse. A string of galloping cream-coloured ponies came next, and then the Most Intelligent Hog in the World, who could tell your age or house-number by rooting up cards with his snout from beneath the sawdust of the circus ring.



The 'Varsity crews shot from under a span of Hammersmith Bridge. Tumburra dropped his hand into his pocket. It came forth again clutching a boomerang. Thrusting the sightseers ruthlessly aside, Locke tackled the aborigine in true Rugby fashion. (See Chapter 3.)

yourself, too, just cover the fabric of the Cantabs' boat with some of that stuff. Put it on first thing to-morrow morning. It will rot the vellum, and if there's a bit of rough water about during the race, it will get through and fill the boat."

"Right you are, sir!" said Ferrers Locke in a hushed tone. "Now, you can get back straight home. It wouldn't be wise for us to be seen talking here. And you can keep your mind absolutely free from further worry about the Light Blues. Cambridge will not win to-morrow"—adding to himself—"unless they pass the winning-post ahead of Oxford."

Keeping a straight face, he accepted the ten one-pound notes that Mr. Cooney thrust into his hand. But he threw a wink back over his shoulder to Jack Drake as the old man, apparently perfectly satisfied, ambled away.

"Well, Drake," he murmured, as he pushed the bottle of yellow liquid into his overcoat pocket, "the old chappie certainly meant business. Money has become no object with him in his attempt to satisfy the insane hatred he bears towards a crew of gallant

Jack Drake took his eyes off the bald head of old Cooney, who seemed to be enjoying the show with almost childish enthusiasm, to watch the skill of Tumburra, the Blackfellow from the Australian Bush. This Aborigine brought into the arena an array of boomerangs, each about a foot in length. With them he knocked the ash off the ring-master's cigar. Then he threw one and knocked down a row of clay pigeons from a pole, one at a time, the boomerang returning to his hand after each shot.

Directly the applause had died away after Tumburra's exit, Texas Red, the Deadliest Shot of the Universe, gave a display of his skill with a brace of pistols. Using both hands, he shot down one tiny coloured ball after another as they were sent hurtling through the air by an assistant. Further to demonstrate the right to his high-sounding title, he repeated the feat from the back of a galloping mustang.

Once Drake's keen eyes detected a knowing glance pass between the circus performer and the old man in the ringside seat. He mentioned his suspicion to Ferrers Locke.

Introduce Ferrers Locke to your friends! They'll thank you!



As, later, they left the show, his suspicion was confirmed, for Mr. Cooney tumbled unsteadily to the rear of the big circus tent, and muttered something in the ear of Texas Red, who was standing there with his mustang. When the old man passed on his way, Ferrers Locke dropped back slightly and addressed himself to the Deadliest Shot of the Universe.

"Pardon me, sir," he said politely; "could you tell me the name of the old gentleman who spoke to you just now?"

Texas Red was taken aback for a moment, and a heavy scowl crossed his swarthy features. But he recovered himself almost instantly.

"I thought everyone around these hyer parts knew that old guy!" he grunted. "His name's Cooney—it oughter be Looney!"

"Indeed? Is he a—a trifle mad, then?" said Locke in a tone of concern.

"Waal, I kinder guess so. He asked me jest now whether I'd mind shootin' up the copper on point duty on Putney Bridge for him, as he doesn't like the man's face. Yep; the old guy's sure got apartments to let in his upper story. He's what we call a 'nut' out Texas way."

"Dear, dear! Is that so?" murmured Locke mildly. "He's not the sort of man to approach for a trifling loan, then?"

"No, he ain't!" said the other tersely. "The old guy ain't got no flies on him that way. He kin't the sort to fall for you confidence sharks, believe me! You'd better try somethin' easler!"

"Thanks, mate!" said Ferrers Locke, as he moved off with Drake on the trail of Mr. Cooney. To the boy he said, as they got out of earshot of the circus performer: "Truth isn't the strongest virtue in that fellow's category of qualities, Drake. I think it extremely likely that I shall pay Mr. Texas Red another visit to-morrow morning. I've a feeling there's some shady secret between him and our unfortunate old friend in the light-blue vest."

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### The Peril at Hammersmith Bridge.

WITH consummate skill, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake shadowed old Mr. Cooney home to the house in Minver Road. Allowing a short interval to elapse, during which time they slightly altered their appearance, they themselves knocked at the door, and were admitted by Mrs. Bentley. They remained for some fifteen minutes in the role of relatives of the housekeeper. But although they secured the opportunity of chatting with the weak-brained old gentleman they had so persistently shadowed, they learnt nothing from him. All that Mr. Cooney would discuss was his imagined grievance in having been left out of the Cantabs' crew.

Leaving the house, the sleuth and his assistant proceeded direct to the local police-station. Here Locke produced the bottle of yellowish liquid and the notes as evidence of the vindictive state of Cooney's disordered mind.

"For the good of the old man himself chiefly," said the detective, "I think it would be well for you to arrange with a competent mental doctor to examine him to-morrow."

This suggestion was readily agreed to. So early on the following day—the day of the great Boat-race—a physician with wide experience of mental cases presented himself at Minver Road. Locke—who wanted to take another look at Mr. Cooney's study—and his assistant Drake, arrived from Baker Street, where they had spent the night, in time to meet the doctor as he was about to enter the house.

By the exercise of great tact, the doctor induced Mr. Cooney to consent to "taking a course of treatment at a nursing-home for the benefit of his health." Still wearing among his other attire the light-blue vest which had been the jest of the Putney waterfront, the old man entered the doctor's motor-car. He was in a light-hearted mood, and openly stated the opinion that Oxford would win the Boat-race that afternoon by "a couple of miles." This idea gave him the greatest possible pleasure, and he chuckled incessantly over it.

Seizing an opportunity for a talk to Ferrers Locke, the doctor returned to the house for a brief minute after his patient was safely ensconced in the car and chatting to Mrs. Bentley.

"Thank you, Mr. Locke," said the medico, "for the trouble you have taken in bringing the case of this poor old fellow before the authorities. If left to himself, he would undoubtedly have got himself into serious trouble before long. As it is, I think that, properly cared for, he will recover from his affliction."

"I am glad to hear it, doctor!" said Locke brightly. "I think it is now up to me to make sure that the old man has not laid any mines which might explode after he's gone."

The doctor looked rather puzzled. But, fearful lest the old man in the car should get impatient, he did not stop to ask for an explanation. Bidding the detective good-bye, he entered his car and drove rapidly away.

Mrs. Bentley waved to her unfortunate employer until the car had turned the corner, and then she returned to the house.

"Now, Mrs. Bentley," said Ferrers Locke briskly, "has everything been left untouched in the study?"

"Yes, sir."

"Good! I should like to make a more careful examination of the room."

For fully half an hour Locke and his young assistant made a close investigation of the personal belongings of the old man. One-pound notes and ten-shilling notes were tucked away in the most unexpected places. Many of these bore pencil-marks in the form of calculations and memoranda of various kinds.

At last a pound-note, which bore the following cryptic scrawl, came to the detective's notice: "Tex Red 26—Mar. 22. 20—Mar. 25."

"What the blump does it mean, sir?" muttered Drake, wrinkling his brow. "Tex Red is obviously Texas Red, and the dates are lucid enough. But what does the twenty and eighty stand for?"

Ferrers Locke sucked his pipe in thoughtful silence, his keen eyes closely regarding the pencilled scrawl.

"Well," he said at length, "knowing what a maniac the old boy was, I shrewdly suspect

that the numbers mean twenty pounds and eighty pounds. We know he had an all-consuming desire to prevent Cambridge from winning the race to-day. We know, too, that he was prepared to spend money to that end. Accordingly, it seems to me that he had approached Texas Red with a scheme for bringing about the result he desires."

Drake gave a low whistle. "Texas Red is a dead shot," he said. "Surely the old boy wasn't mad enough to suggest that he should shoot some member of the boat's crew?"

"The old chap has been mad enough for anything these past few days," said Locke. "But I don't think Texas Red is mad enough to carry out any hare-brained scheme that old Cooney might have suggested to him. However, he willingly accepted twenty pounds from the old boy on the twenty-second of this month. He had only to say he would shoot up the crew to satisfy Cooney."

"Well, if he did that, it was a pretty rotten kind of action!" said Drake.

"It was obtaining money by an illegal conspiracy," replied Locke. "From this pencilled note it appears to me that the old man promised him another eighty pounds after the job was done—that is, on the twenty-fifth. It is a matter that the police should certainly deal with. But come, let us be going!"

Having notified Mrs. Bentley that he wished to retain one of the pound-notes for the time being, Locke advised the good woman to bank the remainder for Mr. Cooney. Then he and Drake left the house, and went direct to the police-station.

Mord by the force of his own great reputation than by the meagre amount of evidence he was able to present, Ferrers Locke induced the police to take out a search-warrant against Texas Red. But this took some time to obtain, and it was well after midday when a couple of constables, together with Locke and Drake, wended their way to Aylott's meadows.

Texas Red was resting in his caravan when they called upon him. His fury when the police produced the search-warrant was unbounded. A string of abuse rolled from his lips, and he snatched at a revolver that lay on a table near by. Immediately a constable snapped a pair of handcuffs over his wrists for his temerity in resisting the police.

A search of his person and the caravan speedily proved that Locke's deductions had been correct. Twelve one-pound notes, some of which bore pencil-marks in Mr. Cooney's hand, were brought to light.

"What have you done with the rest of the money, Red?" asked Locke quietly. "It was twenty pounds you received from Mr. Cooney, wasn't it?"

"Find out!" snarled the circus performer. "Still, you can bet I wasn't going to shoot up the Cambridge crew like what that crazy old guy wanted me to! You needn't charge me with none o' that kinder intention."

Unable to get any further information from the man, Locke nodded to the constables to take him to the lock-up.

"I think, Drake," he said, "you and I might now go and have a bite of something to eat. By Jove, it's nearly three o'clock; we shall have to buck up if we wish to see the race!"

They stopped at the first restaurant they came across on the road leading to Putney from the circus encampment. It was an uninviting sort of place, but they were too peckish to be particular.

Having had a good square meal, the detective paid for it at the cash-desk with a pound-note from his wallet. He received in change a ten-shilling note, and four shillings in silver. As he was about to put the money into his pocket, he noticed something on the note which caused him to open his eyes wider. It was a pencilled memo in old Cooney's writing!

"Excuse me!" he said, to the girl at the pay-desk. "Can you remember who gave you this ten-shilling note?"

The girl looked astonished at the question, but she answered more readily than Locke had expected.

"Why, yes. I received it from that black-smoor who performs at the circus," she said.

"You mean Tumburra, the Australian aborigine?" demanded Locke, almost fiercely.

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"Yes; he was in here only a few minutes before you came. Jolly glad I was, too, when he went! He'd been drinking. He told me he was going off to hammer some fellow named Smith."

"Sure he didn't say he was going to Hammersmith?" asked Locke.

The girl gave a rippling laugh.

"Perhaps he did mean that. But he said, 'Me go to hammer Smith!'—like that, and tapped his overcoat pocket. So I thought he meant he was going to pay out someone."

"By jingo, and I'm not so sure that he isn't, either! Thanks for the information! Come on, Drake; our work isn't done yet!"

Drake stepped out quickly with the detective down the street from the restaurant.

"My aunt! What does it all mean, sir?" questioned the boy.

"It's impossible to be sure," replied Locke. "But there is a big chance that there is more roguery afoot. Tumburra, if he is a true aborigine, is as thick-headed and ignorant as all his tribe. Texas Red, on the other hand, is possessed of much low cunning. The Blackfellow tendered a note in that restaurant which he had received from Red. Why should Texas Red present him with money?"

"Jupiter, I've got it!" cried Drake. "Having received twenty quid from old Cooney, Texas Red wanted to earn the other eighty that was promised him if he stopped the Cambridge crew from winning the race. Instead of attempting the job himself, he has induced Tumburra to act as the catspaw for him. Tumburra does the job, and afterwards Texas Red draws the rest of the money from Cooney. If the black fellow is caught, Red would simply deny he ever had any dealings with him."

"That is exactly what I think is probable, my boy," answered Ferrers Locke. "Here is a fresh danger, indeed! The ignorant aborigine, under the influence of drink and the promise of a few more pounds, may attempt to spoil our cleanest sporting event of the year. By hook or crook we must get on the track of the fellow!"

As fortune would have it, they quickly sighted a taxicab plying for hire. Leaping in, Locke ordered the driver to drive like fury to the Putney quarters of the River Police. Here the detective had an old friend in the person of the head official.

It took the detective but a few eloquent sentences to convince the man that there might be a serious attempt to interfere with the race from the neighbourhood of Hammersmith Bridge.

The official himself put on his peaked cap, and accompanied Locke and Drake down to the Putney river front, where he hailed two of the police launches. Locke entered one, Drake the other.

As the launches speeded up the river a roar from the assembled crowds on the shore greeted the appearance of one of the racing crews, who emerged from a boathouse carrying their "ship."

But neither the famous sleuth nor his young assistant had any eyes for the stalwart athletes who would soon be battling their way over this self-same course they themselves were traversing. Their minds were filled with deepest apprehension of the lurking black danger somewhere among the mighty throng which lined the river on both banks.

Arriving in the vicinity of Hammersmith Bridge, the police launches separated. The one with Drake aboard turned in towards the Surry bank; Locke's groped its way along the Middlesex side. Both Locke and Drake had brought binoculars with them for viewing the race. Now they constantly used their glasses trying to pick out the jet-black features of Tumburra among the crowd. They knew that should he attempt to do the deed they suspected he had in mind, he would have to be close to the water's edge.

As the police launch with Locke aboard crept under Hammersmith Bridge the detective grew more and more anxious. Tumburra was nowhere to be seen. The crowd on the bank was showing increasing restlessness. Meantime, the hands of Locke's wristlet watch crept steadily towards half-past four.

Suddenly an electric current seemed to run through the waiting multitude.

"They're off!"

The words were tossed from lip to lip. No gun had been heard; it was as though the crowd had sensed that the great race had started.

Then a low murmur could be heard far down the river. It came sweeping up the river-banks, and swelled and swelled into a mighty roar. And then the two tiny, white, swaying specks on the broad surface of the river fashioned themselves into sixteen superb young athletes urging a couple of wisplike boats through the sluggish brown waters with powerful, steady strokes.

"Oxford!"

"Cambridge!"

Without turning his head, Locke knew that the crews were about to shoot Hammersmith Bridge. Then, with a roar above the din of the multitude, he commanded the coxswain of the police launch to take the boat in to a nearby barge crowded with sightseers. For among the throng on the barge he had discerned the black, crafty face of Tumburra!

Springing from the boat on to the barge, Locke pushed his way through the people. The Varsity crews shot from under a span of Hammersmith Bridge. Tumburra dropped his hand into his pocket. It came forth again, clutching a curious, curved piece of dark-coloured wood about a foot in length. Thrusting the crowd ruthlessly aside, Locke hurled himself in a fierce Rugby tackle about the aborigine's body.

Tumburra went rolling to the dirt-covered deck of the barge, while from his hand clattered the deadly boomerang—the terrible Bush weapon with which he could have rendered senseless any one member of the racing boat crews!

And as Tumburra was handcuffed and thrown into the police launch, while Oxford and Cambridge fought out their annual battle on the river, few there were who realised that Ferrers Locke, Britain's greatest detective, had saved Britain's best sporting event from a terrible disaster!

THE END.

(Look out for the next thrilling yarn of Ferrers Locke—"Tracking Down Tracey!"—dealing with a deep mystery of public school life.)

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