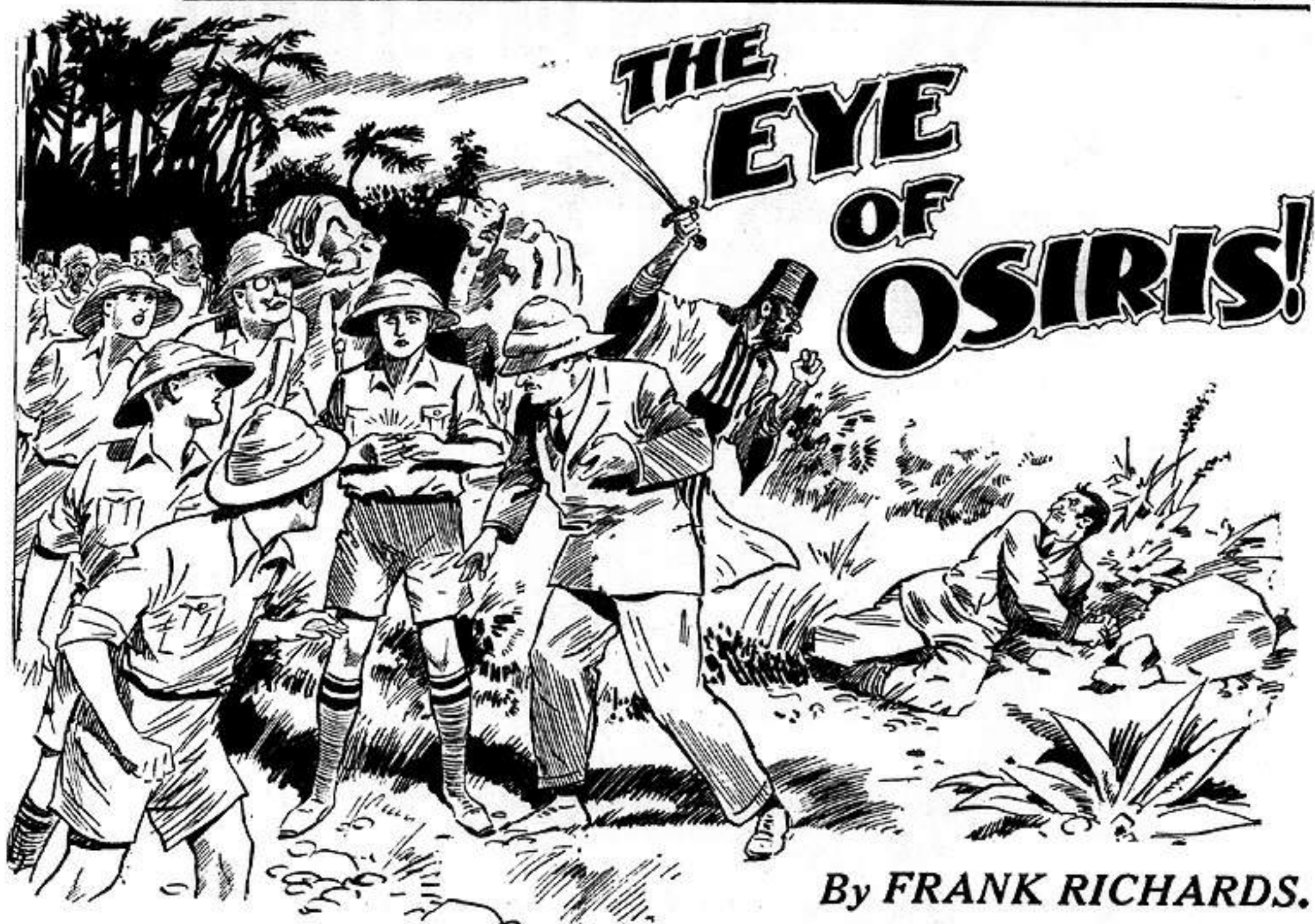


FREE - FIRST 6 SUPER PICTURE-STAMPS NEXT WEEK

The **MAGNET** 2^d



144 COLOURED PICTURE STAMPS
AND
GRAND 20-PAGE ALBUM
OFFERED TO YOU!



By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Halt!

BILLY BUNTER sat down. It was hot in the land of Egypt.

Bunter was tired.

Having walked nearly half a mile, Billy Bunter felt that his fat little legs had done enough.

A shady sycamore grew beside the sandy track that led towards the Nile. Billy Bunter turned from the track, plumped down under the shade of the wide-spreading branches, and leaned back against the trunk. He took off Lord Mauleverer's best Panama hat and fanned his heated fat face.

Harry Wharton & Co. halted. They stared at Bunter. Only another half-mile ahead of the juniors the Nile rolled and gleamed in the sun, and they could see their dahabiyeh tied up to the bank and the figures of the Nubian sailors on deck.

The Greyfriars tourists, on their way up the Nile in the houseboat, had taken a walk ashore that morning. Under the guidance of Hassan, the dragoman, they had "done" some ancient rock tombs. Bunter hadn't "done" the tombs. Bunter had sat under a date-palm and disposed of a large bag of sticky Turkish sweetmeats he had thoughtfully brought with him. The Famous Five and Lord Mauleverer had walked miles. Bunter hadn't! So anyone who did not know Billy Bunter might have supposed that he was good for the walk back to the Nile. It was only a mile. But half a mile was enough for Bunter—in fact, too much.

So he sat down. Harry Wharton & Co. were rather anxious to get back to the dahabiyeh for lunch. Bunter, for once, wasn't! With several pounds

of sticky sweets in his capacious inside, Bunter for once didn't mind being late for lunch—in fact, he wasn't ready for lunch. What he wanted was a rest. What the other fellows wanted was a trifling consideration to which Billy Bunter naturally gave no thought.

"Well," said Bob Cherry at last, "how long are you going to squat there, Bunter?"

"I'm tired!" said Bunter, with calm dignity.

"The tiredness must be terrific after the walkfulness of an esteemed half-mile!" remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"It's hot!" said Bunter.

"Hotter for you than for us?" asked Johnny Bull.

Snort from Bunter! He disdained to reply to that frivolous question.

"We've got to get on, fatty," said Frank Nugent—"we want our lunch, you know!"

Bunter's fat lip curled.

"I can't make out why some fellows are always thinking of grub," he said.

"It's a bit sickening."

"Oh, my hat!"

"You fat cormorant!" roared Bob Cherry. "You've been guzzling all the morning and we've had nothing since brekker!"

"I may have had a snack," said Bunter. "It's not much I eat, as you know. You fellows seem to think of nothing else. For goodness' sake stop worrying about your blessed insides and sit down and rest for an hour or so."

Lord Mauleverer grinned. The Famous Five looked at William George Bunter as if they could have eaten him. They were not blessed with appetites like Bunter's, but they had healthy appetites of their own. They were already rather late for lunch on the dahabiyeh, which the Coptic cook

was certain to have all ready for them. They had been thinking of putting on speed for the last half-mile. Bunter, evidently, was thinking otherwise.

The fat junior blinked at them severely through his big spectacles.

"I say, you fellows, don't be pigs!" he admonished. "For goodness' sake think of something else beside meals—think of me! I don't mind being late for lunch. And I'm tired. If one of you fellows would fan the flies off I could get a nap! Don't be so jolly selfish, you know. If there's one thing I never could stand it's selfishness."

"Oh, great pip!"

"You fat chump!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Get up and come on!"

"Shan't!"

"Oh, come on, you men!" grunted Johnny Bull. "I'm hungry! That fat ass can stay here as long as he likes, and be blowed to him!"

"We can't leave the howling idiot here," said Harry. "Bunter, you duffer—"

Snore!

Bunter's eyes closed behind his spectacles. No doubt the Owl of the Greyfriars Remove considered it best to put an end to the argument by going to sleep.

"Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry.

Snore!

"You fat piffler—" bawled Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I wish you wouldn't roar like a mad bull when a fellow's fast asleep!" said Bunter peevishly.

"Lug him along by the ears!" said Bob. "We can't leave him here! Take hold of his ears—plenty of room for the lot of us!"

"You cheeky beast!" roared Bunter. "Look here, you fellows, I'll come if I don't have to walk! What about Hassan carrying me?"

"Oh, my lordly gentlemen!" exclaimed Hassan, in dismay at the idea. "Oh, sar, I am as strong as King Rameses, but not strong enough for that, sar."

"Don't you be cheeky," said Bunter. "I say, you fellows, Hassan can take me on his back—you fellows can help. After all, it's not far—the river's in sight. Don't be slackers!"

Hassan, the dragoman, looked quite uneasily at the juniors. He was eager to oblige his "lordly gentlemen"—unwilling to reply in the negative to any request. But the prospect of having Billy Bunter's avoirdupois landed on his back evidently dismayed him. Neither did the idea of rallying round Hassan and helping to support Billy Bunter's uncommon weight seem to appeal to the chums of the Greyfriars Remove.

"Perhaps I find a donkey, sars!" suggested Hassan. "I go and run with a prompt dispatch and find one donkey to carry noble fat lord, sars."

"Well, that's all right," said Bunter. "I'm considerate, I hope—I'll wait here till Hassan fetches a donkey from somewhere, you fellows. If it's a quiet donkey—not like those beasts at Luxor—I'll ride it! Mind there's a comfortable saddle, Hassan!"

"There's no donkeys near at hand, anyhow," said Harry. "For goodness' sake, Bunter, don't be such a fat slacker! Get up and get on!"

"Yah!"

"What about kickin' him?" asked Lord Mauleverer, as if struck by a sudden bright idea. "I can't very well kick Bunter, as he's my jolly old guest, but I'll walk on while you fellows kick him—what!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

"Look here, Bunter—" said Nugent. "I wish you'd stop talking when a fellow wants to go to sleep. If you're not going to fan the flies off I don't want you here! I'll wait till Hassan brings the donkey, and you fellows can get off to your guzzling!" added Bunter scornfully.

Lord Mauleverer made a sign to the dragoman, and Hassan departed in quest of a donkey. All along the Nile donkeys and donkey-boys were to be found in their myriads—the difficulty, as a rule, was not to hire a donkey if a fellow set foot on shore. But, as so often happens in this troublesome universe, a thing that could be had in abundance when it wasn't wanted was not to be found when it was wanted. No donkeys or donkey-boys were to be seen, and the dragoman had to walk back to the native village near the rock tombs to fetch one.

The Famous Five glared at Bunter. Bunter shut his eyes once more—he snored.

"I'm going!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Hold on!" said Harry. "We can't leave him here, old chap. That villain Kalizelos has been watching us ever since we left Luxor, and those two Arab rascals, Hamza and Yussef might be about. Mauly's uncle has told us that when we go ashore we've got to keep

together. Look here, Bunter, if we leave you here something may happen to you!"

Snore!

"Suppose that Greek villain, Kalizelos, dropped on you?"

Snore!

"Suppose those Arabs got after you—"

Snore!

"Will you come on, you fat frump?" bawled Johnny Bull.

Billy Bunter's eyes opened with an exasperated blink.

"No, I won't!" he hooted. "There isn't any danger—besides, if there was I shouldn't be funky, like you fellows! Get out, and let a fellow sleep!"

"You fat idiot—"

Snore!

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged a glance. Bunter could not be left on his own. He had to get a move on. Kicking him seemed the only resource, and the Famous Five were prepared to take that measure. But Lord Mauleverer interposed.

"Go easy, old beans!" murmured his lordship. "Kickin' Bunter as far as the Nile will take as long as waitin' for Hassan to come back with the donkey. And I've got rather a wheeze."

Stepping back out of hearing of the fat Owl, Lord Mauleverer whispered. There was a chuckle from the Famous Five. Mauly's wheeze, whatever it was, seemed to catch on, and to console the chums of the Remove for the postponement of their belated lunch.

"Good-bye, Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry.

The juniors tramped away. Bunter opened his eyes, and blinked after them, and saw the six fellows disappear beyond the tamarisk bushes along the sandy path. With a grunt of satisfaction he closed his eyes again, and sank into balmy slumber, and his deep snore echoed along the bank of the Nile.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Kidnapping of Billy Bunter!

BILLY BUNTER woke suddenly. He woke with a startled gasp. He had been dreaming—a happy dream of a spread in a Remove study at Greyfriars.

Bunter, on the whole, had enjoyed his holiday in Egypt. The grub had been good. And if the grub was all right, everything was all right, from the point of view of William George Bunter. Still, he was not sorry at the prospect of returning to Greyfriars for the new term. He was not anxious to see the Head or his Form master, Mr. Quelch, or to grind at lessons in the Remove Form-room. But he looked forward to dropping into the school tuckshop.

He had not forgotten Mrs. Mibble's doughnuts. And whilst he admitted that the grub on the dahabiyeh was good—distinctly good—he pined for the jam tarts of his native land. And as he slept and snored under the shady

sycamore, he was dreaming of a spread in Smithy's study in the Remove passage at Greyfriars, and of an unlimited supply of juicy, flaky jam tarts that went down like oysters. It was a happy dream, and he smiled in his sleep.

He ceased to smile and ceased to sleep as a dusty dhurra-sack was suddenly whipped over his head, and drawn down over his fat shoulders.

"Ooooooh!" gasped Bunter.

He blinked dizzily.

He could see nothing!

Hands were on him on all sides, and they drew the rough sack down round about him, and a rope was run round it and tied.

Then he was jerked to his feet.

He stood gasping, blindfolded by the sack, and sneezing as some of the dust got into his fat little nose. He could not possibly see his assailants, but he knew that there were at least four or five pairs of hands on him. He could hear the movements of a donkey close at hand.

"Ow! Help!" roared Bunter. "I say, leggo! Yooop!"

"Bismillah!" came a deep voice through the sack. "Mashallah! Woshy-bosh bash-bash wushy-tush!"

"Oh crikey! Those beastly Arabs have got me!" gasped Bunter. "I say, leggo! I'm not Mauleverer! Mauly's got that beastly scarab! He's on the dahabiyeh! I'll show you the way, if you like! Oh crikey!"

"Inshallah! Wooosh-kooosh!" said the deep voice. "Coshy-boshy-wosh-bump!"

Bunter did not know much Arabic. He had learned the word "backsheesh," like all travellers in the East, his first day there. Such ejaculations as "Bismillah," and "Inshallah" he had heard among the natives along the Nile. But the rest of the talk was unintelligible to him, though he had no doubt that it was Arabic. If it was, it was a kind of Arabic that would have puzzled and perplexed any Arab.

"Kooosh!" said another deep voice.

"Wooosh! Hacky-cracky-backy-bang!"

"Bunky-bunky-bump!" said another voice.

Evidently there was a gang of them, all speaking in that strange tongue, which was Arabic to Bunter's terrified ears.

He felt himself lifted from the ground. From the panting among the unseen gang, it was clear that the kidnapers had to exert themselves to get him up. But they got him up, and he was planted in the saddle of a donkey.

"Yoo-hoooh—woosh!" said a savage voice. "Kosh! Bosh! Pong!"

The donkey started.

Bunter heard the tramping feet of the kidnapers round him. He swayed and lurched in the saddle, spluttering with terror.

He had no doubt in whose hands he was.

Kalizelos, the Greek, had tracked the Greyfriars party up the Nile, and they had had more than one narrow escape

FREE GIFTS!

FREE GIFTS!

FREE GIFTS!

In Next Week's Record-Breaking Issue.

See what Your Editor has to say on Pages 7 and 11.

from him and from Yusef and Hamza, his Arab confederates. Kalizelos was in quest of the Golden Scarab, which he believed to hold the secret of the lost treasure of the reign of Rameses the Second. Why the ruffians should have seized Bunter was not clear, for the scarab belonged to Lord Mauleverer, and they could not suppose that he had entrusted it into Billy Bunter's keeping. But they had seized him—for here he was, blindfolded in a dusty sack, stuck on a donkey, riding away in the midst of the ruffians to parts unknown.

At Luxor the juniors had had a narrow escape of being taken away into the desert by the Greek. Now Bunter realised that he was for it. He could not see in what direction he was being taken, but he had no doubt that the villains were heading for the sandy wastes of the Libyan desert.

"Help!" yelled Bunter suddenly.

A hand jabbed at the sack that enveloped him, and a deep voice growled in threatening accents:

"Boosh! Whup-whup-kooosh! Bashy-pashy-wang-bang—skoop!"

Bunter shuddered.

He did not, of course, understand the words; but the tone in which they were uttered was blood-curdling!

He did not yell again.

The donkey tramped on. On and on and on, till suddenly there was a halt. Muttering voices came through the sack.

"Booosh! Wishy-washy-whoop!"

"Cous-cous mashallah pong!"

"Hicky-chicky-wicky-wumps!"

"Osh-kosh! Yo-ho ping-pong pump!"

Bunter was lifted from the donkey after that muttered consultation. His feet landed on the earth, with strong hands grasping him on both sides. He shuddered at the touch, in his mind's eye picturing the fierce, dark faces of the savage desert Arabs by whom he was surrounded. Kalizelos could not have been among them. The Greek would have spoken to him in English. Some fierce gang of bedouins, most likely.

Forced forward by the grasp on his fat arms through the sack, Bunter tottered on his way. To his astonishment his feet no longer trod sandy earth, but hard wood. He might have fancied that he was crossing the gang-plank from the bank of the Nile to the deck of the dahabiyeh. But that, of course, was impossible if he had been taken away into the heart of the desert by a gang of kidnapping Arabs.

"Oooshywooshy-wops!" said a deep, growling voice.

Bunter was still walking on wood, which felt exactly the same as the deck of the dahabiyeh under his feet. He was taken down three shallow steps. A door opened.

"Kooosh!" came the savage growl.

He was led into a room.

Bump!

He roared as he landed on the floor in a sitting position.

Slam! A door closed!

Billy Bunter was left alone.

He sat in the sack, gasping. Evidently this unseen room was to be his prison, and the beasts had left him tied in the sack. For several minutes he dared not move, lest the villains should return.

But there was no sound of returning footsteps. The silence reassured him at last. He began to struggle with the sack.

To his intense relief he found that the rope tied round him was very loosely tied. The kidnappers seemed to have

been careless with their prisoner. The rope fell away as Bunter struggled. He worked the sack upward, and got it clear of his fat shoulders, his fat face, and his head. He gasped with relief when it was off at last.

"Oh lor'!" gurgled Bunter.

He picked himself up, set his spectacles straight on his fat little nose, and blinked round him.

He was in a room with a latticed window, and through the lattice he could see the glimmer of sunshine on water. Apparently his prison was near the Nile. There was one door, and Bunter rolled to it, and stood listening with a palpitating heart. From a little distance a sound came to his ears. It was a sound of laughter. Apparently the kidnappers were laughing over their success in seizing the most important member of the Greyfriars party.

"Beasts!" groaned Bunter.

Within sound of the villains Bunter dared not open the door. He perceived, with an astonished blink, that it was fastened only by the latch, and it would have opened to his fat hand. Undoubtedly those kidnappers were very careless with their valuable prisoner. But the fat Owl dared not venture out in sight of the desperate villains. He rolled across the room and blinked through the slats of the latticed window.

It was the Nile that rolled before him. He could see across the wide river the roofs of Assuan glistening among date-palms; and two or three dahabiyehs were in sight, as well as a dozen or more native feluccas. And now it dawned on Bunter, to his further astonishment, that the room in which he was imprisoned was a cabin on some vessel on the Nile. He could hear the wash of the water past the hull below.

The kidnappers had not, after all, taken him away into the desert on donkey-back—they had brought him to the river, and on board some vessel—perhaps a houseboat belonging to Kalizelos! That seemed probable to Bunter.

With a trembling fat hand he felt over the slatted shutter at the window. It opened to his touch. Even the window was not fastened by those careless kidnappers. Bunter blinked down at the rolling Nile, and shook his head. Swimming did not appeal to him—he did not like the idea of crocodiles.

A native felucca, gliding by at a little distance, slowed down, two brown faces turning towards the fat face that blinked out of the cabin window. One of the boatmen held up bunches of dates, evidently having those succulent articles for sale. Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his spectacles. He signed to the natives to approach with the boat.

They pulled in.

Billy Bunter put his head out of the cabin window, and blinked to and fro, and up and down. From the deck above he could hear a sound of moving feet and of native voices, but no one was looking over the side. The felucca's mast was down, fortunately; the boatmen were rowing, not sailing. Bunter hoped that the boat might approach without being observed by the men on the upper deck.

The felucca glided under Bunter's window. One man held on, the other held the bunches of dates, in the belief that that was what the foreign tourist wanted. But Bunter, for once, did not want something to eat. To the utter amazement of the boatmen, he clambered through the window, hung on by his fat hands, and dropped into the felucca.

They fairly goggled at him. Why a white man should leave a dahabiyeh in this extraordinary way was a mystery to the Nile boatmen.

Bunter bumped.

"Ooooooh!" he gasped.

But there was not a second to lose! Any instant, eyes might stare down from the deck and his escape be cut off! Bunter gasped, gurgled, and pointed to the eastern shore, where the roofs of Assuan glistened in the sun. With the other hand he showed a handful of piastres, which he had fortunately borrowed from Lord Mauleverer that morning.

"Assuan—quick!" he breathed.

"Yes, sar!" stuttered one of the astounded boatmen.

And they shoved off, and pulled for the shore.

—

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Flight and the Pursuit!

"HA, ha, ha!"

That merry sound of laughter was ringing in the dining-saloon of the Cleopatra, the magnificent dahabiyeh which Mr. Maroudi, of Cairo, had lent to the Greyfriars party, and in which Harry Wharton & Co. were "doing" the Nile up to the First Cataract.

The chums of the Remove had arrived late for lunch. They were enjoying it all the more for that reason. Still more were they enjoying their little jest on the fat and fatuous Owl of the Remove.

Billy Bunter had discovered that he was a prisoner on board a dahabiyeh. But he had not discovered that the dahabiyeh was the Cleopatra. He had heard the sound of laughter—but he had not realised that it proceeded, not from a gang of Arab kidnappers, but from the chums of Greyfriars. Not for a moment had it dawned on Bunter's fat brain that his kidnappers were the Famous Five of Greyfriars, and that he was a "prisoner" in a cabin only a few yards from the saloon where they sat at lunch.

The juniors were wondering how long it would be before those interesting facts dawned on William George Bunter.

They really expected that Bunter would discover how matters stood as soon as he got the sack off his head.

But lunch was nearly over now, and the fat Owl had not emerged from the cabin where he had been placed.

From the dining-saloon the juniors could see along the passage that divided the cabins, and Bunter would have been in view had he emerged.

But he did not emerge.

Apparently he was still under the impression that he was a kidnapped prisoner in lawless hands, and that state of affairs made the juniors yell.

"Is that silly ass still sitting there with the sack on his silly head, I wonder?" remarked Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He needed a lesson," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Well, he's getting it! I dare say he will sit there, too funky to move, till we go and root him out."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We will give him a look in after lunch," chuckled Frank Nugent. "Or shall we leave him there till we get to Assuan?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Nubian servants glided to and fro, waiting on the juniors. Their black faces wore cheery grins. Everybody on board the dahabiyeh had seen Billy Bunter brought on board, enveloped in a sack, and taken to an unoccupied cabin. What such an extraordinary proceeding meant the natives did not know; but no doubt they realised that it was a jest at the expense of the fat Owl. Even Moussa, the grave reis, had grinned at the sight of him in the sack. How long he was going to stay in that cabin, under the impression that he was a kidnapped

prisoner, was quite an interesting question.

The juniors intended to leave him till after lunch, anyhow, if he did not come out of his own accord before. That afternoon the dahabiyeh was going on to Assuan, which was in sight, where the party were to meet Mauly's uncle, Sir Reginald Brooke, and his friend, Mr. Maroudi, the Egyptian millionaire, who had lent them the dahabiyeh. The holiday was drawing to a close, and only a few more days remained on the Nile, which were to be spent on a trip above the cataract, to see the great Assuan Dam, and the Nubian Nile above.

Harry Wharton & Co. would have

"Good gad!" ejaculated Lord Mauleverer, in amazement. "What the dooce—"

"He call a boat from a window of a cabin, sars!" gasped Hassan. He make boat peoples in a boat row him away, sars!"

"Great pip!"

"Oh, my hat!"

The juniors jumped to their feet. They stared at Hassan, and at one another, and then burst into a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Escaped!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Oh, my only summer hat! Bunter escaped from the jolly old kidnappers—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Forgetful of their unfinished lunch, the Greyfriars fellows rushed on deck. Moussa, the reis, and the Nubian sailors, were staring after a felucca that was pulling hard up to Assuan, on the other bank. Two brown men were pulling for all they were worth. In the stern sat a well-known fat figure. A fat face was turned, to stare back at the dahabiyeh, and the sunshine flashed on a pair of large spectacles.

Billy Bunter was blinking back with terrified eyes behind his spectacles. Partly owing to his short sight, and partly to his state of palpitating funk, he did not recognise the dahabiyeh, or



Bunter signed to the natives to approach, and the felucca glided up to the side of the dahabiyeh. Then, to the utter amazement of the boatmen, the fat junior clambered through the window, hung on by his fat hands, and dropped into the felucca!

been quite pleased to follow the great river up to Khartoum and the Sudan, and even to the Great Lakes where it had its source; but Greyfriars and the new term claimed them. Also, Sir Reginald Brooke had completed the business in the Fayyum which had brought him out to Egypt.

There was a hurried footstep in the cabin passage, and Hassan, the dragoman, came into the dining-saloon.

The dragoman was grinning.

"Lordly gentlemen!" he exclaimed.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Oh, sars!" exclaimed Hassan. "The little fat lord—"

"Bunter?" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "What about Bunter?"

"Magnificent, sar, he has escaped!" gasped Hassan.

"What?" roared the juniors.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He go very fast, sars!" said Hassan, his brown face wreathed in grins. "He hold up handful of piastres to boatmen—he point to eastern bank—he say 'Quick, quick, quick!'"

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

They had wondered how long Bunter would remain a prisoner in a cabin a few yards away. But they had never dreamed that he would escape by the window, in a boat on the Nile. They had not suspected the fat Owl of such resource. Evidently Bunter was desperate!

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob, wiping away his tears. "This is too jolly rich!"

"The richness is truly terrific!" chortled Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"We'd better get after him!" gurgled Nugent. "Goodness knows where he will get to!"

the black sailors who stared at him from the deck.

But he knew that his escape had been seen, for he could see that the sailors were staring after him, and he was in momentary fear of pursuit. He blinked back from moment to moment in dire terror, and from moment to moment urged his rowers to greater efforts. The two Nile boatmen were doing their best, but the felucca was slow and heavy, and progress was not swift.

Harry Wharton & Co. stared after the fugitive, hardly believing their eyes. Bunter was in desperate flight. Evidently he had not the faintest suspicion that it was the Cleopatra and the Greyfriars party from which he had escaped.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,284.

"Ain't he the jolly old limit!" gasped Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Small fat lord enormously frightened, sars," grinned Hassan. "He has the cold foot, as you say in English."

"Get after him," said Harry Wharton. "We're going on to Assuan, anyhow, so we may as well get under way. Tell the reis to get going for Assuan, Hassan."

"Yes, sar!"

Moussa called orders to the Nubian sailors. The gangway was taken in, and the dahabiyeh poled off from the bank. The current was against the houseboat; but the wind, as usual, blew from the north, and the lateen sail was hoisted. The huge boat rolled into motion and glided on the track of the felucca.

The juniors saw Bunter turn his head again and give a jump at the sight of the dahabiyeh under sail.

The fat owl knew that he was pursued now.

At the distance, no doubt, he did not make out the white faces on the dahabiyeh, or perhaps his terrors transformed them into fierce Arab faces. The juniors saw that he was waving and shouting to his boatmen, though he was too far away for his voice to be heard.

"They're hoisting the sail!" yelled Bob.

"It's going to be a jolly old race!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Nile boatmen pulled in their oars and hoisted the lateen sail of the felucca. As the wind caught it the little craft danced away much more swiftly on the Nile. Bunter blinked back anxiously. Time had been lost in hoisting the sail and the dahabiyeh had gained. Bunter yelled to the boatmen, and now the juniors could hear him.

"Buck up, you beasts! Row, you rotters! Oh crikey! Quick—quick—quick!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The boatmen put out the oars again, and, with sail and oars going strong, the felucca gained on the heavy dahabiyeh. Bunter increased his distance again, and he gasped with relief as he blinked back once more.

AMAZING ADVENTURES IN SOUTH AMERICA

THE LITTLE MEN WHO RIDE THE CONDORS

A series of amazing adventures have befallen Mr. Claude Galloway, the well-known traveller, and his young air-pilot, Mr. Lindy Ransome.

They recently flew to the Cordilleras, in a wild and quite unexplored part of South America, with the avowed intention of finding the fabulous treasure of the Incas. But they soon came up against an unscrupulous individual known as Bullman.

They report the existence, in this hitherto unknown territory, of dwarflike men who fly on the backs of condors, which they have succeeded in harnessing just as the South Africans have "broken-in" the ostrich. From latest messages received, it appears that these Birdmen have supplied Mr. Galloway with a clue to the treasure.

You can read the whole enthralling story of the amazing adventures of these two intrepid explorers in "VOLCANO GOLD," which is No. 5 of the BOYS' WONDER LIBRARY and is now on sale, price twopence.

"Bunter will beat us to Assuan at this rate!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Row, brothers, row!" chortled Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

In the felucca Billy Bunter mopped his streaming brow and gasped. He was gaining ground slowly but surely. Barring accidents the felucca would beat the dahabiyeh in the race to the landing-place at Assuan. Little dreaming that it was the Greyfriars party in pursuit, Bunter urged on his rowers to greater efforts. Even Bunter realised that it was rather extraordinary for a gang of kidnapers to venture to pursue him on the Nile in this way, in full sight of the city of Assuan and of a hundred pleasure-boats and trading feluccas. Still, they were doing it; there was no doubt that they were doing it, for there was the dahabiyeh from which he had escaped rolling on his track, its huge lateen sail bellying in the wind from the north.

"Quick, quick, quick!" gasped Bunter. He held up a large handful of Lord Mauleverer's piastres to encourage his boatmen. "Quicker, quicker, quicker!"

The felucca surged on.

At Assuan—if he reached it—Bunter knew that he would be safe. Even a desperate gang of kidnapers would hardly dare to pursue him right up to the landing-place. Yet, as he drew nearer to Assuan, and people on the bank and in other boats stared at him and his felucca, the dahabiyeh was still rolling on behind. Close to the landing-place the boatmen took in the big sail and tooled the felucca in with their oars. Bunter had won the race; the enemy were beaten. Yet, as he blinked back, he saw the big dahabiyeh still rolling on, coming right into Assuan after him!

"Quick!" he gasped.

And the felucca shot on to the landing-place; the Greyfriars fellows, in the dahabiyeh behind, shrieking with laughter as they watched.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Not Dangerous!

SIR REGINALD BROOKE removed his eyeglass from his eye, rubbed it, and jammed it back into his eye again and stared. The old baronet could hardly believe his eye or his eyeglass. Mr. Hilmi Maroudi, the Egyptian, who was walking with Mauly's uncle down the Shari-el-Manshiya at Assuan, stared also, almost startled for once out of his impassive, Oriental calm. The lean, tall English baronet, and the plump Egyptian gentleman were equally astonished at what they saw on the Nile.

"Good gad!" said Sir Reginald blankly. "What does this mean, I wonder?"

"It is perhaps some schoolboy jest," suggested Mr. Maroudi.

Walking down the Shari-el-Manshiya towards the river, the two gentlemen had sighted the Cleopatra in the distance on the Nile. They came down to the landing-place to meet the Greyfriars fellows when they arrived. Then they spotted the fleeing felucca.

Plenty of other people had spotted it and were staring at it. Billy Bunter's frantic gesticulations to his boatmen were rather calculated to draw attention. With his terrified eyes almost popping through his spectacles, his fat

hands waving, Bunter was urging on his boatmen to unheard-of efforts. Why he was in such a fearful hurry, the Nile boatmen did not know, but they were doing their best at the urgent behests of the fat Faringhee.

"It is the boy Bunter!" said Sir Reginald. "A foolish boy— But what—?"

"He appears to be frightened!" remarked Mr. Maroudi.

"But why?"

Mr. Maroudi shook his head.

Why Bunter should be fleeing in terror on the sunlit Nile, with the houseboat following him, the other fellows laughing on deck, was a mystery which the Egyptian gentleman could not solve.

They walked down to the landing-place to meet the felucca as it came in. It was well ahead of the slower dahabiyeh.

The boat bumped, and Bunter made a jump ashore. He slipped and stumbled and sprawled fairly at the feet of Mauly's uncle.

Sir Reginald stooped, grasped him by a fat shoulder, and lifted him. There was a howl of terror from Bunter.

"Ow! Leggo! Help! Police! Fire!"

"You absurd boy, cease these antics!" thundered Sir Reginald. "What do you mean by this, Bunter?"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. He realised that this, at least, was not a ferocious Arab. He blinked at Mauly's uncle and recognised him. "Oh, it's you! Save me!"

"What?"

"Keep them off!" panted Bunter.

"Keep who and what off?" almost shrieked Sir Reginald. He was beginning to wonder whether this was sun-stroke.

"Those beasts—those Arab villains!" gurgled Bunter, blinking round in terror at the Nile. "They're after me! That dahabiyeh—"

"That dahabiyeh!" articulated Sir Reginald.

"Yes; they're the kidnapers—"

"The—the—the kidnapers?"

"Ow! Yes! They got me! I escaped—"

"You escaped from that dahabiyeh!" exclaimed Mr. Maroudi, quite forgetting his Oriental calm in his amazement.

"Oh dear! Yes! They put a sack over my head and kidnapped me, and took me on that dahabiyeh!" groaned Bunter. "I got out of a window into that felucca and—and escaped—"

"Goodness gracious me!" ejaculated Sir Reginald, staring blankly at the fatuous Owl.

Mr. Maroudi smiled.

"It is a schoolboy jest," he remarked. "The high spirits of exuberant youth, my good friend."

"Tain't!" roared Bunter indignantly. "I tell you I was kidnapped, and they're still after me! They're coming here! Let's get out of this!"

Another moment and Billy Bunter would have been tearing up the Shari-el-Manshiya at top speed. Fortunately Sir Reginald grasped him again in time.

"Stop!" gasped the old baronet.

"Leggo! I'm not going to be kidnapped again!" shrieked Bunter. "Leggo, you old donkey—"

"What? What?"

"Beast! Leggo! They're after me!" roared Bunter. "Help!"

"My dear boy, you are in no danger," said Mr. Maroudi gently.

"Beast! They're after me! Leggo!"

Sir Reginald compressed his grip on the scared Owl's collar. Billy Bunter had drawn enough public attention

(Continued on page 8.)

OUR GREAT PICTURE STAMP COLLECTING SCHEME

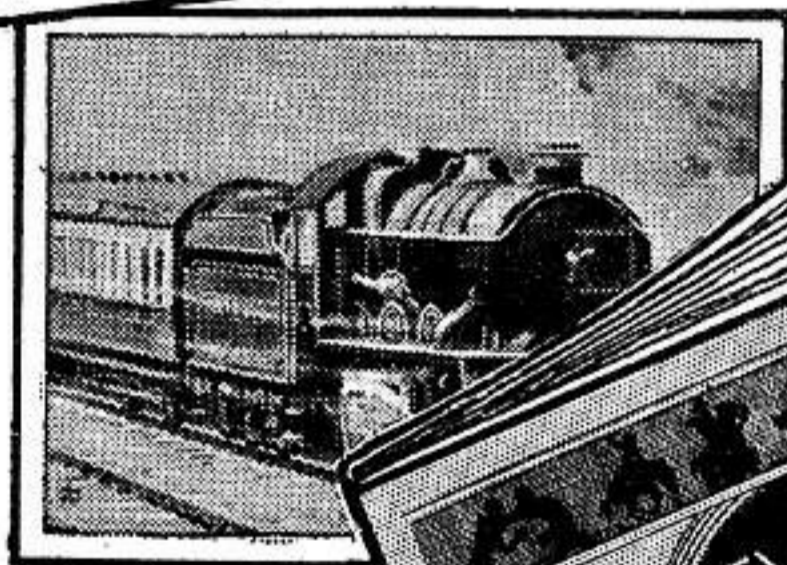
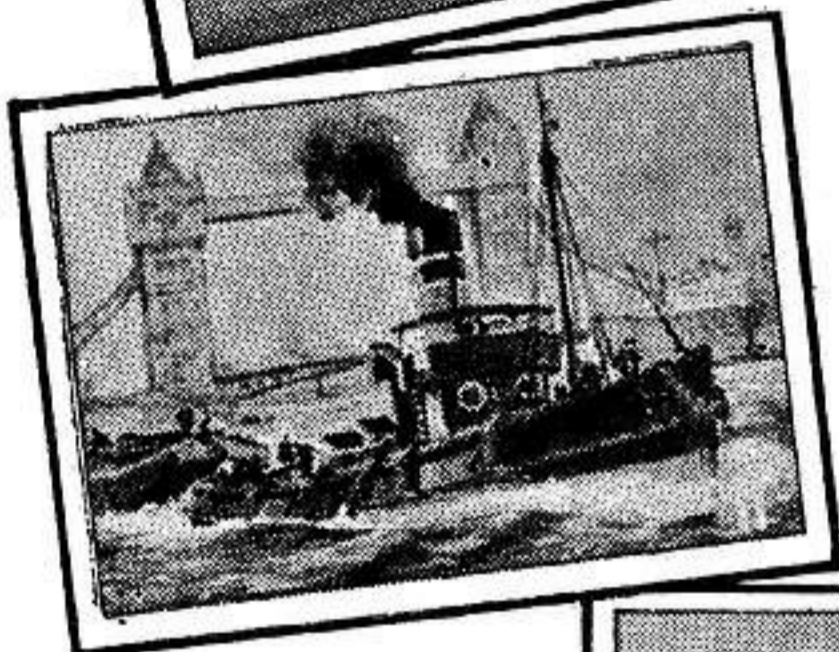
Starts Next Week

6 COLOURED PICTURE STAMPS

FREE

each week in The MAGNET

The most fascinating collecting scheme ever devised is about to commence. You will get your first six picture stamps in the MAGNET next Saturday. In the complete collection there will be 144 DIFFERENT PICTURE STAMPS, each measuring $2\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ inches, showing EVERY BOY'S WORLD IN PICTURES. They are divided into six sets illustrating such thrilling subjects as ROUGH RIDERS, AEROPLANES, SHIPS, RAILWAY ENGINES, DOGS, and the art of SELF-DEFENCE. Think of the fun you'll get swapping with your pals—two boys working together will each be able to get a complete collection. More details will be given next week when you get your first six stamps.



We are being joined in this great scheme by our two companion papers—

MODERN BOY

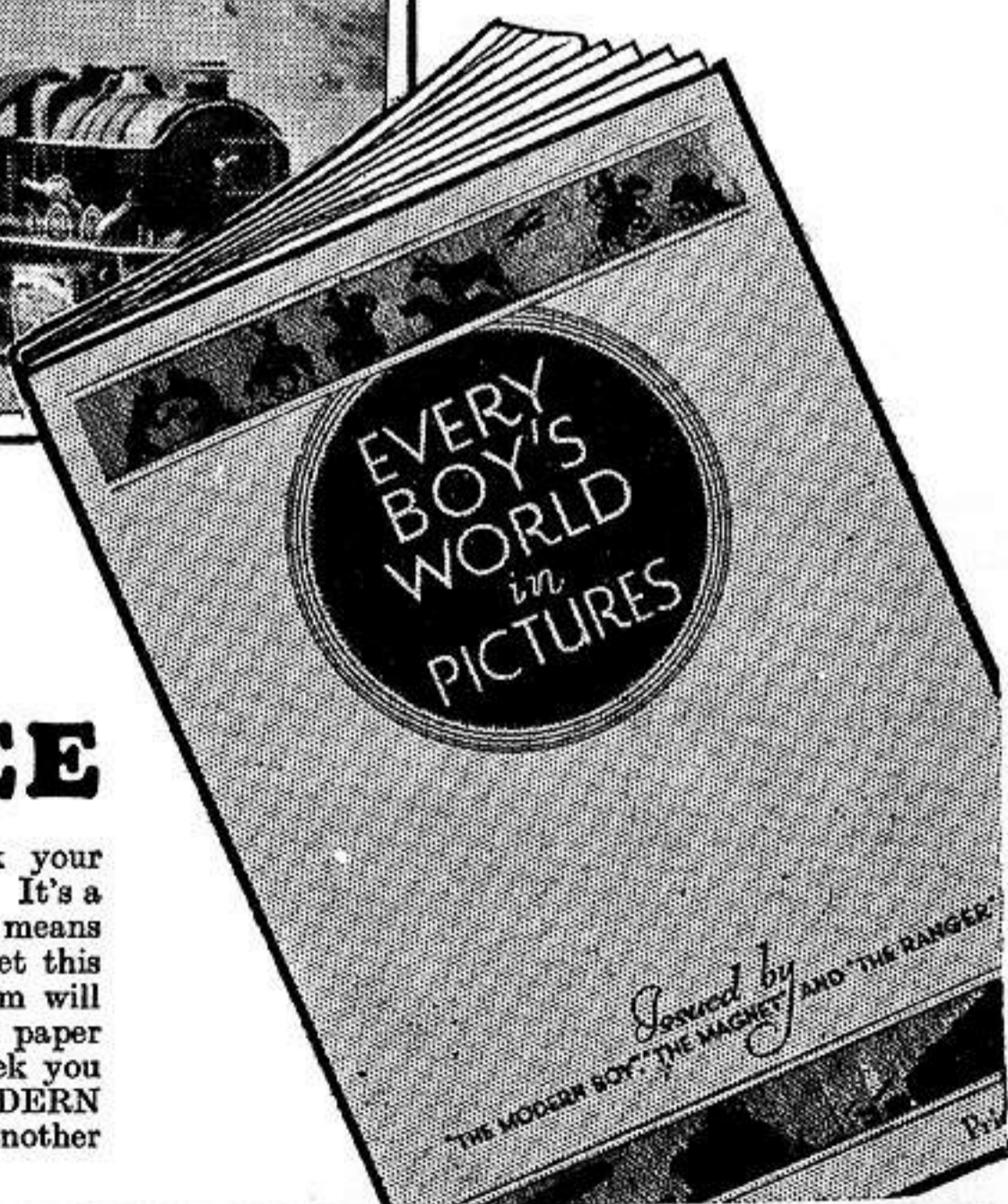
and

The RANGER

Both these papers will give picture stamps every week, and by taking them as well as The MAGNET you will make sure of the complete collection, and have some extra stamps for swapping.

How to Get the ALBUM FREE

Of course you will want an Album to stick your stamps in, and so we have designed the very thing. It's a real topping album worth 6d. anywhere. But a means has been devised by which you will be able to get this Album FREE as well as the stamps. This Album will be given away with every copy of our companion paper MODERN BOY next week. Remember, next week you will get six stamps in The MAGNET, and in MODERN BOY you will get the Album (valued at 6d.) and another six stamps.



THE EYE OF OSIRIS!

(Continued from page 6.)

already. Sir Reginald did not intend to let him go charging up the Shari-el-Manshiya to the astonishment of all Assuan.

"You utterly absurd boy!" snorted the old baronet. "Calm yourself—"

"Leggo!"

"You are in no danger—"

"Help!"

"That dahabiyeh is the Cleopatra."

"Police!"

"It is Mr. Maroudi's dahabiyeh—"

"Eh?"

"My nephew and his friends are on board—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"It is some absurd practical joke!" snorted Sir Reginald. "Have you not sense enough to see that you are in no danger, you stupid boy?"

Billy Bunter blinked round at the dahabiyeh. The Nubian sailors had lowered the sail, and were poling in to the landing-place. The Cleopatra was so near now that even the short-sighted Owl of the Remève could make out the grinning faces of the Greyfriars juniors on the deck.

His eyes bulged through his spectacles.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "You've beaten us, Bunter! Some race, old fat bean!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The racefulness was terrific!" chortled Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"I—I—I say, it—it's those beasts!" gurgled Bunter. "I—I—I thought it was a gang of Arabs. Oh lor'! B-b-but I was—was kidnapped. I—I was shoved in a sack. Oh, the rotters!" gasped the fat Owl as he realised, at last, how his podgy leg had been pulled.

"Absurd!" snapped Sir Reginald. Mauly's uncle had reached a sedate and serious age, and had no use for practical jokes.

"A little jest!" smiled Mr. Maroudi. "Boys will be boys, my dear friend."

The dahabiyeh ranged up to the landing-place, and the gangway was run out. Lord Mauleverer and his friends came ashore, and greeted the baronet and the Egyptian gentleman.

Billy Bunter looked on, his fat face crimson with wrath.

He had been made a fool of. There was no doubt about that. Those rascally, desperate kidnappers who had shoved the sack over him and talked such extraordinary Arabic, were the Greyfriars juniors; and it was from a cabin on board the Cleopatra that he had made his desperate escape. Even William George Bunter's self-satisfaction and conceit failed him now, and he looked, and felt, a complete ass—as indeed he was!

"Oh, the beasts!" he mumbled.

"Herbert, this is really—really—" rumbled Sir Reginald.

"Only a joke on the jolly old Owl, nunky," said Lord Mauleverer. "My idea entirely. Bunter bein' my guest, I couldn't very well kick him. I'm sure you would not approve of my kickin' a guest, uncle—"

"Upon my word!" gasped Sir Reginald.

"So we pulled his jolly old leg instead," said Mauleverer. "But we never guessed he would escape from the dahabiyeh. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors roared. They could not help it. Bunter's dramatic escape from the dahabiyeh and his wild race for

freedom were really too rich. Mr. Hilmi Maroudi was grinning, and even Sir Reginald's severe old face broke into a smile.

"Well, well, it was only a jest," said Sir Reginald. "The foolish boy has attracted a great deal of attention. Bunter, you should be more sensible, and you should not be so easily frightened. Now, my boys, we will go for a walk round Assuan, and then to tea at the Ghezireh Palace Hotel, with our good friend, Mr. Maroudi."

"Come on, Bunter!" chuckled Bob. "That is, if you feel sure that we're not jolly old kidnappers, after all."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah!" snorted Bunter. "Go and eat coke! Yah!"

And the fat Owl rolled down the gangway to go on board the dahabiyeh. Apparently, he was fed-up, for the present, with the Greyfriars fellows, though he was no longer in a state of terror. As he rolled across the gangway his two boatmen yelled and gesticulated excitedly. Bunter had forgotten them; but they had not forgotten Bunter. With a grunt the fat Owl handed over the promised piastres and rolled on board. For once the fat and fatuous Owl of Greyfriars was anxious to get out of sight.

Harry Wharton & Co. enjoyed a walk round the interesting city of Assuan and tea at the Ghezireh Palace Hotel with Mr. Maroudi, minus the company of William George Bunter. Bunter was sulking on the dahabiyeh, like Acrilles in his tent. But the loss of his fascinating society did not seem to have any depressing effect on the merry juniors. Indeed, they seemed to enjoy it.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Hits Back!

BILLY BUNTER was wrathful.

He was indignant.

He was vengeful.

He longed to make those beasts who had pulled his podgy leg to such an absurd extent sit up!

From the dahabiyeh he watched them strolling away in a cheery crowd, with the tall Sir Reginald and the plump Mr. Maroudi, and Hassan, the dragoon, fluttering round them like a gorgeous tropical butterfly.

They disappeared from his sight along the busy Shari-el-Manshiya, and Bunter snorted with wrath and scorn.

"Beasts!"

People on the shore, people in dahabiyehs and feluccas, were still glancing at Bunter. His wild flight had attracted a lot of attention, and people naturally wondered what was up. Many staring eyes followed him to the dahabiyeh. On board that craft the Nubian sailors were grinning; and Bunter did not need to ask what they were grinning at. He did not need to inquire what caused the smile on the grave bronze countenance of Moussa the reis.

He rolled below, red and wrathful. He was ready for lunch now—more than ready. In fact, much more than ready. He lunched amply, but he detected lurking grins on the faces of the Nubian servants. He was really glad to get out of the sight of derisive eyes and roll into his cabin for a nap. He napped, and rose again for an early tea and sat on the boat's balcony eating Turkish Delight until he could dispose of no more and Turkish Delight ceased to be delightful.

Sticky and sulky, Bunter brooded over his wrongs. Bunter, as a rule, was not a fellow to bear malice. Seldom did the sun go down on his wrath. Now he was deeply incensed, and yearning to make those beasts sit up. They had shoved a sack over him, making him think he was kidnapped; talked a lot of rot which he had fancied was Arabic, uttered by ferocious Arabs; and, worst of all, he had set the dahabiyeh chortling from end to end by his dramatic escape and his frantic flight. Bunter realised that he looked a fool—and he did not realise that he seldom looked anything else. So his wrath was deep!

And Mauly was at the bottom of it! Mauly, whose devoted pal Bunter had been, had actually propounded that wheeze! The ingratitude of it stung Bunter—after all he had done for Mauly!

In Shakespeare, that rather unreasonable old gentleman, King Lear, remarks: "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child!" In the same way, and with really more reason, Bunter reflected how bitter it was to have a thankless pal! He had done a lot for Mauly—accompanied him on his holiday to Egypt, borrowed his best Panama hat, worn his clothes, spent his piastres—in fact, he had been a devoted pal, sticking closer than a brother, or even a leech!

And this was his reward!

It would serve Mauly jolly well right to chuck him, and turn down the whole party. Bunter was tempted to do it. Crushing the ungrateful Mauly with gleaming eyes of scorn, he would turn his back on him and shake the dust of the dahabiyeh from his feet! Leaving the party to get on the best they could without him, Bunter would depart, on his dignified own! The difficulty was that he would have to borrow the fare home from Mauly—and borrowing the fare from him, while crushing him with scorn, might spoil the effect.

On reflection, Bunter decided on less drastic measures. Mauly deserved punishment, but not, after all, such a knock-out blow as the loss of Bunter's society.

Billy Bunter rolled into Mauleverer's cabin. An idea was working in his fat brain. In Mauly's cabin was the Golden Scarab.

The ancient scarabeus of A-Menah, once worn as an amulet by that old warrior of Rameses the Second, had been the cause of many adventures since the Greyfriars fellows had landed in Egypt. Kalizelos, the Greek, was in desperate quest of it, and, according to his own statement, he knew the mysterious secret of the scarab, and in his hands it would have guided him to the treasure of Osiris. From a prosperous merchant in Cairo the Greek had become a hunted fugitive, through his fierce and lawless attempts to possess himself of the scarab. And the Greyfriars fellows had come to believe, at last, that that ancient Egyptian relic really was a clue to treasure, though in what way they could not imagine.

Often and often they examined it, wondering what could be the secret that the Greek had read in an old papyrus, written by a scribe three thousand years ago at the order of A-Menah. They even had a lingering idea that they might guess the secret and lift the treasure during their holiday on the Nile. And, if the tale was true, the treasure was worth lifting, for it was the famous diamond called the Eye of Osiris, which had never been seen since



Little dreaming that it was the Greyfriars party in pursuit, Bunter urged on the rowers to greater efforts. "Quick, quick, quick!" he gasped, holding up handfuls of piastres to encourage his boatmen. "Quicker, quicker, quicker!"

the reign of Rameses the Second. Described in ancient papyri as worth many a king's ransom, it was supposed to be worth a quarter of a million pounds in modern money.

Billy Bunter shut the cabin door and blinked round the room, with a fat grin on his face.

Lord Mauleverer, certainly, was keen to keep possession of the mysterious scarab, but his lordship was careless, and the old relic had had many narrow escapes. For which reason, Mauly's friends had made him secrete it in a hiding-place in his cabin, where it was safe from thievish hands.

Bunter was not supposed to know anything about that. But Billy Bunter often knew things that he was not supposed to know. The Peeping Tom of Greyfriars had a way of finding things out, and he was, as a matter of fact, perfectly well aware of the scarab's hiding-place. It was from sheer inquisitiveness that Bunter had pried into that matter, for he was not in the least interested in the scarab, and did not dream of believing for a moment that it was a clue to a treasure. But he was going to put his knowledge to account now.

The fat Owl, of course, had no intention of "pinching" the scarab! He was going to abstract it from its hiding-place and hide it somewhere else—to punish Mauly for his ingratitude.

That would make Mauly sit up! Bunter rolled across to Lord Mauleverer's dressing-table. On that table stood an ivory box containing an ointment that was used for sunburn.

Billy Bunter poked his fat fingers into

the ointment and scooped up the Golden Beetle, which was hidden under it, wrapped in paper.

He gave a fat chuckle.

He unwrapped the greasy paper from the scarab, and tossed it out of the window into the Nile.

The Golden Scarab lay in his fat palm. Bunter blinked at it.

It was nothing but a beetle, made of gold, with the name and title of A-Menah inscribed on it in the picture-writing of ancient Egypt.

It looked as if it was made of solid gold, and, if that was so, it was worth perhaps twenty or thirty pounds for the metal.

"Silly ass!" murmured Bunter, thinking of Kalizelos. Whatever it was that the Greek had read in the old papyrus, written by the scribe of A-Menah, it seemed scarcely possible that this golden beetle could be a clue to a vast treasure.

According to ancient tradition, it would guide its possessor to the "Eye of Osiris," a tradition founded, no doubt, upon some inaccurate knowledge of what was written in the old papyrus that had fallen into the Greek's hands.

Unless it had some magical properties of some sort, the thing seemed impossible. And it was scarcely possible to believe in magic.

Moreover, the scarab had been for years in possession of Lord Mauleverer's father, and of Mauleverer himself, and certainly it had guided neither of them to the Eye of Osiris.

Bunter's opinion was that it was all "rot," an opinion that Harry Wharton & Co. would have shared, but for the

desperate attempts of Kalizelos to lay hands on the scarab.

Anyhow, whether it was valuable or valueless, Bunter had it now! He slipped it into his pocket and rolled out of Mauly's cabin and went to his own.

His next proceeding was to find another hiding-place for the scarab, where the beasts would never find it. Later on, Bunter would let Mauly have it back—after duly punishing him for his ingratitude to a faithful and devoted pal! For the present it was going to remain safely hidden, in Billy Bunter's keeping.

Billy Bunter considered that matter deeply. He was still considering it deeply, when there was a tramp of feet on the gangway and a sound of cheery voices on the deck. Harry Wharton & Co. were returning to the dahabiyeh.

"Oh lor!" ejaculated Bunter. Swiftly he stuffed the Golden Scarab into a matchbox, and slipped the matchbox into his trousers pocket. It was out of sight there, and later he could find a safer hiding-place for it. He rolled out of his cabin with a fat grin on his face.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Here we are again! Look out for kidnapping, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter snorted.

"Perhaps you fellows had better look out!" he said, with a fat sneer.

"Mind your eye, you men!" gasped Bob. "Bunter's going to whop us all round."

"Spare us, old fat man!" yawned Lord Mauleverer.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,284.

"You've treated me rottenly!" said Bunter, with a disdainful blink at the cheery juniors through his big spectacles. "After all I've done for you, you've treated me rottenly! Perhaps you'll be sorry for it! Perhaps you'll be sorry you left me on my own this afternoon! Wait and see!"

"My esteemed, idiotic Bunter—" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I'm not going to tell you anything!" said Bunter mysteriously. "I may or may not have paid you out for playing rotten tricks on a fellow! That's telling!"

"What have you been up to, you fat frog?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Find out!"

"I know what he's done!" said Bob. Bunter jumped.

"You beast, what—"

"He's scooped all the grub on the boat and left nothing for supper!" said Bob. "Is that it, Bunter?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!" roared Bunter.

"Well, what have you been up to, if you've been up to anything?" asked Nugent.

"That's telling!"

"Fathead!" said the juniors together.

Bunter intended to keep it a dead secret that he had played tricks with the Golden Scarab. But Bunter had his own inimitable way of keeping a secret. Certainly his mysterious hints might have roused suspicion if the juniors had given them attention. But they didn't! Dark and mysterious hints from Billy Bunter did not even rouse their curiosity. They only concluded that Bunter was talking rot, as usual, and let it go at that.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Ducking for Bunter!

"**E**NORMOUS dam, triumphant exhibition of wonderful skill of British engineers, at which it is proper to gaze with considerable wonder—"

Hassan, the dragoman, was at it as the dahabiyeh rolled up the Nile above Assuan. But the Greyfriars fellows did not need the dragoman's descriptions to interest them in the mighty Assuan Dam.

It was one of the wonders of Egypt, as wonderful as the Pyramids, and a great deal more useful.

The juniors, as they looked at it, could not help feeling proud of the work of British engineers.

Above Assuan is the First Cataract of the Nile, and there the great dam, designed by Sir William Willcocks, was built by the British firm of Aird.

More than 500,000 million gallons of water are stored in the vast reservoir barred by the dam, which turns the Nile above the Cataract into an immense lake, storing the water that comes down from Central Africa.

Water is precious in Egypt, which has scarcely any rain. But for the Nile, the country could never have existed.

In the huge dam are no fewer than 180 sluice-gates for regulating the flow of the precious water, which, when the Nile is low, is let out with great care to fill the irrigation canals of Lower Egypt.

Millions and millions of gallons of precious water, which once ran to waste into the Mediterranean, are stored up till needed. Indeed, when the engineers have finished their work on the Nile, probably not a drop of water from that great river will reach the sea at all—every drop being needed by the industrious fellahin for their crops.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,284.

By the Navigation Canal on the west side of the mighty dam, through a series of locks, the dahabiyeh floated slowly onward, to the upper waters of the Nile.

"Some job!" said Bob Cherry, as he gazed at the great dam. "Beats the jolly old Pyramids hollow, what? If you ask me, old Cheops would have shown a lot more sense if he had built this dam instead of the Great Pyramid!"

"The morefulness of the sense would have been terrific!" agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But the ancient Egyptians had not the wonderful common sense of the esteemed and ridiculous English."

Even Billy Bunter condescended to bestow a blink or two on the Assuan Dam. In that triumph of British engineering skill lay the cause of much of the wonderful fertility the juniors had seen in Lower Egypt.

"This great work shall go to commence in the year 1898!" chanted Hassan. "Historic foundation-stone is laid by noble highness Duke of Connaught. Enormous and gigantic triumph of estimable British engineering persons! Yes! Island of Philae, once extremely bootiful spot, now generally submergeful in waters of dam, to ruin of vegetation, also great damage to wonderful temples which are usually washed

to go; though, as a matter of fact, he would rather have loafed on the dahabiyeh.

"Here we see great Temple of Isis!" Hassan was full of information, as usual. "This temple built by Ptolemy Philadelphus, lordly gentlemen! Completion of great work by Energetes the First—"

"Oh, chuck that!" said Bunter peevishly.

"My noble sar!" ejaculated Hassan. "Dry up!" said Bunter. "You talk too much!"

Billy Bunter was peevish! It was, as usual, a hot day; and, also as usual, the innumerable flies of the Nile haunted Bunter. The traces of his last meal on his fat face attracted them. When Bunter was peevish he was not polite.

As a matter of fact, the other fellows would have enjoyed the wonderful sights of Egypt more, if the dragoman had not talked so much. But Hassan felt it his duty to impart information—and he did his duty manfully.

"Shut up, Bunter!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Yah!" replied Bunter elegantly.

"My esteemed and idiotic Bunter—"

"Yah! I say, you fellows, let's chuck this and have lunch," said Bunter. "I'm fed-up with temples and tombs and Hassan jawing."

As it was only an hour since breakfast, the suggestion of lunch did not catch on. Really, the party had not landed on Philae to sit under a tree and watch Bunter eat.

They rambled on; listening more or less to Hassan. They had to listen also to a series of discontented grunts from Bunter. Bunter rolled after the other fellows, wishing he hadn't come! Instead of tooting about mucky old temples and things, he might have been stretching his fat limbs in a deckchaic on the Cleopatra, under a shady awning, and eating! So might the other fellows, if they had had as much sense as Bunter!

"Here we take care, lordly gentlemen," said Hassan, as the party came to a wide ditch that was full of water and mud, left from the last high water of the Nile, and which was crossed by a plank.

"I say, you fellows, what about lunch—"

"Oh, come on, fatty!"

"Look here, what about going back to the dahabiyeh—"

"Buck up!"

"I'm tired!"

"Well, sit down and rest, and we'll pick you up coming back," said Harry Wharton. "We'll leave the lunch-basket with you, if you'll agree not to scoff more than nine-tenths of the grub."

"Just like you, to want to leave a fellow on his own after bringing him all this way!" snorted Bunter. "Just like you, I must say!"

"Oh, kick him!" said Johnny Bull.

"Beast! Lot of rot, I call it, mooching about a beastly island and listening to that silly nigger jabbering," said Bunter.

"Hassan!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Oh, yes, my noble sar!"

"You can kick Bunter if you like."

"Oh, noble sar!" said Hassan.

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

"Let's get on," said Bob, and he marched across the plank, followed by the rest in single-file.

Bunter remained on the edge, blinking across uneasily. The Famous Five looked back at him.

"Are you coming, Bunter?" bawled Bob Cherry.

"That plank's not safe!" hooted Bunter.

A SPLENDID PRIZE GOES TO

E. Raymond, of 128, Albany Street, Regent's Park, N.W., who sent in this winning Greyfriars limerick:

Vernon - Smith, of Greyfriars School,
Is often an arrogant fool.
But as Redwing's his chum,
Some sense he can drum
Into Smithy, who's just like a mule!

Readers are invited to send in original Greyfriars limericks. Handsome POCKET WALLETs are awarded for all efforts published.

over by Nile waters. When waters go low, temples emerge, and may be seen by interested eye of tourist, but receding waters leave slime on temple walls, covering the same with what you call muck in the bootiful English language."

The great barrage was left behind, and the dahabiyeh rolled on to Philae, the island in the Nile that was once a beauty spot, but which has been sadly marred by the building of the dam.

When the reservoir is full the island is flooded; but in the autumn the sluice-gates are opened to allow the stored water to flow down into the canals of Egypt; and then the level of the Upper Nile sinks, leaving slimy walls and rotting vegetation to greet the eyes of the tourist; and so the Greyfriars fellows were able to go ashore and explore the temples of Philae.

"Think you'd better come, Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry doubtfully.

"Eh! Why not?" asked Bunter. "You're taking a lunch-basket, I suppose?"

"Ha, ha! Yes. But—"

"But what?" grunted Bunter.

"That gang of kidnappers will be there!" said Bob. "The same gang that got you last time, you know."

"Beast!"

It was only a little joke of Bob's; but Billy Bunter drew from it the inference that his company was not wanted. For which reason, Billy Bunter determined

"We've crossed it, you fat duffer!" answered Nugent.

"I'm not going to be ducked in mud to please you!" roared Bunter. "I know it's exactly what you would like; but I'm jolly well not going to do it, see?"

"Stay where you are, and be blowed!" snorted Johnny Bull.

"Beast! You fellows hold the plank," said Bunter. "You'll only have to stand in up to your knees to hold it."

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob. "Is that all?"

"That's all! Get to it," said Bunter. "Don't stand around slacking!"

Somehow, the prospect of standing up to their knees in slimy mud, holding a muddy plank for Bunter, to cross, did not seem to appeal to the Famous Five. Bunter blinked across at them impatiently.

"I'm waiting!" he hooted.

"The waitfulness will probably be terrific!" chuckled Hurreo Janset Ram Singh. "There is too much mudfulness for my absurd self, my worthy Bunter."

"Well, let that nigger step in and hold it," said Bunter, with a glare at the dragoman. "What's he here for, except to make himself useful? Are we going to pay him for nothing?"

Hassan's eyes gleamed for a moment. Effusively polite and amiable as the dragoman was, his politeness sometimes wore a little thin under the stress of Billy Bunter. Perhaps Bunter did not care. There was no doubt that when Bunter was tired and peevish his manners were not those of the very best circles.

"Oh gad!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Can you help him across, Hassan? Take hold of his ears and lift him."

"On my head be it, noble lordly sar!" answered Hassan.

He went back across the plank to assist Bunter.

"All safe as a house, sar, as you say in English," said Hassan encouragingly. "Hassan is your dragoman, sar—you trust Hassan! I take one hold on your noble arm, sar, and help your majestic feet on a plank."

"Well, take care," grunted Bunter. "All you niggars are such clumsy fools."

"Oh, sar!" murmured Hassan. "I take an enormous care of so noble a lordly gentleman, sar! On my head be it!"

"Don't jaw!" said Bunter.

"Ain't he a dear?" murmured Bob Cherry. "Doesn't he encourage a man to give him a helping hand? Asks for it, doesn't he?"

The juniors watched Bunter's progress across the plank. As a matter of fact, it was quite safe without Hassan holding him. As another matter of fact, it was quite unsafe with Hassan holding him.

In the middle of the plank, Hassan suddenly slipped.

"Look out!" gasped Bob.

Hassan did not fall from the plank into the ditch. He stumbled, and regained his footing quite actively. But in doing so, he released Bunter's arm, and at the same time, jerked him violently to one side.

Bunter staggered on the plank.

"Oooooogh!" he gurgled.

Splash!

Bunter sat in the ditch.

Luckily, it was not deep. As he sat in it, the soft, liquid mud came up only to his chin.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Groooooogh!" came from Bunter.

"Oooooogh! Woooooogh!"

"Oh, sar, what a terrible accident!" gasped Hassan. "This lordly gentleman has fallen from a plank! Wahyat-en-nabi!"

ALL ABOUT NEXT WEEK'S FREE GIFTS!

CHEERIO, CHUMS!—I expect you are beginning to get excited over our Magnificent Free Gift Collecting Scheme. Well, when you open next Saturday's bumper number of the MAGNET, you will find inside the first Six Grand Super Stamps, starting you on the greatest Collecting Scheme ever devised for boys. These Super Stamps are beautifully finished in three colours, and you will feel instantly that you must collect them. The whole series, showing "Every Boy's World in pictures," consists of 144 Stamps in six sets of 24 Stamps, each set illustrating a different subject, such as dogs, railway engines, aeroplanes, roughriders, ships, etc.

Six Super Stamps will be presented free to MAGNET readers each week for many weeks to come, while our companion papers, RANGER and MODERN BOY, will also contain six Free Stamps. In addition, a magnificent 20-Page Album, priced at sixpence, has been produced to hold the whole series of 144 Stamps—and this you can get FOR NOTHING! You simply buy next week's issue of the MODERN BOY and—hey presto!—you have the Album FREE. Don't miss this wonderful chance of getting the special Album, which will hold the six sets of Stamps! Then week by week you can stick in the Stamps by means of the gummed backs, and by judicious "swapping" of your spare Stamps, you will be able to make up the six complete sets. The collecting of the Stamps is a fascinating pastime that will give additional interest to the scheme.

Remember, chums, SIX SUPER STAMPS will be given away Free in next week's MAGNET, in next week's RANGER, and in next week's MODERN BOY, while the latter paper will also contain a splendid ALBUM FREE! Why not start off your collection with all three publications?

THE EDITOR.

"Grooogh! Woogh! Help!" shrieked Bunter. "I'm sinking! I'm drowning! I'm just going to be suffocated! Yaroooh!"

"Pull him out, Hassan!" shouted Harry Wharton.

"Yes, sar! I pull out this noble lord with a prompt despatch!" answered Hassan obediently.

He knelt on the plank, reached at Bunter and grasped him firmly by the back of the collar. With a squeezing, squelching sound, the fat junior was drawn up from the clinging mud. He glared furiously at the dragoman as he dragged.

"You clumsy fool!" he hooted.

Squelch! Perhaps by accident—or perhaps not by accident—Hassan let the fat Owl slip again, and Bunter sank into mud once more. Reaching after him, Hassan somehow pushed the top of his head, and Bunter's face went under the mud this time. It came up smothered, with the fat junior snorting like a grampus.

"Grooogh! You silly, clumsy fool of a nigger!" spluttered Bunter.

"Oh, sar!" gasped Hassan.

"Oooooogh! Grooogh! Gug-gug-ug! Oh crikey! I'm smothered! I'm suffocated! I'm chook-chook-chook-choked! Urrrrgggh!"

"This was one sad and lamentable accident, sar—"

"Beast! Gimme out!" howled Bunter. "You clumsy dummy, gimme out! You silly chump of a nigger— Oooooogh!"

Once more Hassan was clumsy, and Bunter ducked into mud again. He was a hill of mud when he was pulled up.

Perhaps it dawned upon Bunter that these lamentable accidents were likely to continue so long as he called Hassan fancy names. Or perhaps the mud made utterance difficult. Anyhow, this time Bunter held his peace till the dragoman had dragged him on the plank.

Once there, Bunter scrambled back to the side he had started from. In his present state Bunter was not inclined for further exploration of the island of Philae. Bunter was not a whale on washing, but even Bunter realised that he needed a wash now, and needed it badly. He squelched ashore, gurgling.

"Lordly gentleman, you desire that I help you across a plank one more time?" asked Hassan politely.

"Beast!" gasped Bunter.

"Oh, sar!"

"Blow you!" roared Bunter.

And he started back to the dahabiyeh, squelching mud at every step. Hassan crossed the plank once more, and rejoined his lordly gentlemen—who were grinning. They had a strong suspicion that Bunter's mud-bath had not been entirely accidental. Still, there was no doubt that Bunter had asked for it. So they went cheerfully on their way, and explored Philae—what time Billy Bunter, on the dahabiyeh, was cleaning off mud.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Desert Sheikh!

THE real, genuine, jolly old desert!" said Bob Cherry.

It was a few days later, and night lay on the Nile.

High over the great river of Egypt soared the moon, shedding silver light on the rolling river, on the high brown banks, and on the desert that lay on either side.

The dahabiyeh was tied up to the bank for the night, many a long mile from Assuan, and well on the way to the Second Cataract. Still a great distance ahead of them was Wady Halfa, which marked the limit of Upper Egypt, beyond which lay Nubia and the Sudan.

The spot where the houseboat was tied up was a lonely one.

Here the belt of cultivation on either side of the Nile narrowed, and Upper Egypt was hardly a mile in width, including the river. Beyond, east and west, lay the desert.

It was to the west that Bob Cherry was looking, over vast wastes, marked by lines of low, sandy, and rocky hills, where the Libyan Desert stretched away to the great Sahara.

No glimmer of light was to be seen on either bank.

The chums of the Remove seemed to have Africa to themselves.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,284.

After supper they had come up to the upper deck, to look at the desert in the moonlight, and chat before turning in.

The silence and solitude of the desert impressed the minds of the Greyfriars juniors, as they sat in the deckchairs and looked away to the west. Even Billy Bunter felt a little of the influence of the calm, still night and the illimitable desert. But Bunter did not give such trifling matters much thought. Neither was he, for once, sleepy.

Bunter had done uncommonly well at supper. Mr. Maroudi's Coptic cook had produced a wonderful ragout, which all the juniors had pronounced ripping—and of which Billy Bunter had had so many helpings that he was feeling a little uneasy. Billy Bunter's idea was that a fellow could not have too much of a good thing—but just now he was feeling as if a fellow, after all, could!

"Only a few days more!" said Frank Nugent. "We shall get a look at Wady Halfa, and then we turn back. Anybody willing to miss the new term at Greyfriars and go on to the Great Lakes?"

The juniors chuckled. There were plenty of attractions at the old school, especially with the football coming on; but they would have been more than willing to give the new term a miss and keep on to the very end of the river of wonders.

But that was not to be! After reaching Halfa, the dahabiyeh was to turn back for Assuan, where Sir Reginald Brooke and Mr. Maroudi were staying. Mr. Maroudi's houseboat was to be handed back to its owner, and the old baronet and his flock were to take the train back to Cairo, for the return to England. Only a few days more—but the cheery chums of Greyfriars were going to make the most of them—little dreaming, at that moment, how those days were destined to be spent.

"Well, we've had a ripping time," said Bob Cherry. "That bounder Kalizelos has made it rather exciting at times—"

"We seem to have seen the last of that sportsman," remarked Lord Mauleverer. "He seems to have chucked up his stunt of gettin' hold of my jolly old scarab."

"Still got it safe, Mauly?" grinned Bob.

"Oh, yaas!"

As it was hidden in what was supposed to be a perfectly safe place, it had not occurred to Lord Mauleverer to look at

it, and so he had not yet missed it! Mauly and the other fellows supposed that it was still safe in the ivory box of ointment in Mauly's cabin. Bunter could have told them differently, had he liked. But he did not like! The beasts were going to have the shock of their lives when they missed it.

"I suppose Kalizelos has chucked it?" remarked Harry Wharton thoughtfully. "He was wounded, you know, when those American johnnies chipped in to help us when he got hold of us near Luxor. Well, if he's chucked it, all the better—though I'd have liked to know what was the secret of the scarab."

"Same here!" assented Bob.

"The samefulness is terrific!" remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur. "It is a terrific and preposterous mystery!"

"Groooooogh!" came from Bunter.

The juniors looked round at him again. Bunter rose from his chair. He had doubted whether he had overdone it at supper. Now he no longer had any doubts; he knew that he had.

"Feeling the strain, old fat bean?" grinned Bob. "I told you to let that seventeenth helping alone."

"It was only the eleventh, you beast," answered Bunter, "or the twelfth, at the most! I haven't had too much supper, and I don't feel at all upset. I'm not a fellow for stuffing, I hope—like some fellows. I could name. I—I think a walk would do me good!"

"Roll round the deck," said Bob. "You can't go ashore."

"I can jolly well do exactly as I like, I suppose?" retorted Bunter.

"Look here, you ass—"

"You fellows afraid to step off the boat?" sneered Bunter. "Do you think that Greek blighter is hiding behind one of those rocks? It's a lovely night for a stroll."

"That's so," agreed Bob, with a glance at the Nile shore. "But—" He glanced at the captain of the Remove.

Harry Wharton shook his head. "Nothing doing," he said. "Mauly's uncle told us not to go ashore except at the show places, where there's crowds, and it's safe. We're bound to play up."

"The boundfulness is terrific!"

"I say, you fellows, don't be such rotten funks," said Bunter. "Be men, you know. Like me."

"Cheese it, fathead!"

"Yah!"

cars?" yawned Bob Cherry. "Bunter, you howling ass, come back, you frabjous fathead!"

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter strolled along the high bank. He was only a few yards from the juniors on the dahabiyeh, with a strip of mud and water between. They frowned at him, and Bunter grinned back derisively. He put a fat thumb to his fat little nose and extended his fingers.

"You silly owl!" roared Johnny Bull. Bunter added his other hand, with the fingers extended. That disrespectful gesture was intended to show his contempt for the Greyfriars fellows. The effect was rather spoiled, however, by an orange which Bob Cherry suddenly whizzed ashore at the fat and derisive Owl.

Bang!

The orange landed on Bunter's fat chin. He sat down quite suddenly on the bank of the Nile.

Bump!

"Good shot!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Owl! Beast!" roared Bunter. He scrambled up and, instead of putting his fat fingers to his podgy nose again, he shook a plump fist at the grinning juniors on the houseboat.

Then he walked on, and a fringe of tamarisk bushes hid him from their sight.

Behind the tamarisks, Billy Bunter sat down on a rock and grinned. His idea was to give the juniors the impression that he had walked on, and was, like Felix, still walking. From his cover, he could hear the voices on the dahabiyeh in the still quiet of the night.

"Where has that fat idiot got to?" he heard Bob Cherry ask.

Bunter chuckled silently.

"Oh, let him rip!" growled Johnny Bull. "If he loses himself it won't be much loss."

"Beast!" murmured Bunter.

"We shall have to go after the fat chump if he doesn't show up soon," said Harry Wharton. "We'll jolly well kick him all the way back!"

"Hear, hear!"

Thud, thud, thud! There was a sudden sound of horse's hoofs on the silent shore. From an opening in the rocks at a distance from the bank, an Arab horseman appeared suddenly in sight. In white burnous and turban, with his dark aquiline face and black eyes glinting in the moonlight, he was a rather startling figure. The juniors gazed at him.

"A jolly old Arab from the desert!" said Bob Cherry. "Nice of him to show up and let us have a squint at him."

"Bismillah!" breathed Hassan, the dragoman.

The dragoman's startled tone drew the glances of the juniors upon him. Hassan stood with his eyes fixed on the horseman, who was riding down to the Nile-bank, and there was something like fear in his brown face.

"You've seen that Johnny before, Hassan?" asked Bob.

"It is Abdurrahman, the sheikh!" said Hassan, in a low voice. "How dares he ride so near the Nile. The soldiers at Wady Halfa would be seeking him if they knew—yet he dares to show himself! Inshallah!"

The juniors exchanged rather startled glances.

"Who—what is he then?" asked Harry.

"He is a robber of the desert, sar," answered Hassan. "He is a sheikh of the Baggara, and as a boy of ten he fought in the Khalifa's army at Omdurman, against the great Lord Kitchener!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Billy Bunter rolled down the steps to the lower deck. The gangplank was in position, from the lower deck to the bank. There was nothing to prevent Bunter from walking ashore, if he liked. He blinked very cautiously at the bank. Bathed in bright moonlight, it was almost as light as by day. Bunter stepped on the gangway.

Harry Wharton called down from the upper deck.

"Come back, you ass!"

"Rats!" retorted Bunter independently. And he rolled across the gangway to the bank.

"Who's going to lug him back by his



SEND NO MONEY

Sent on Free Approval on receipt of a postcard.
"THE SOUTHERN ISLES"
UKULELE BANJO

You can play this delightful instrument with very little practice with the aid of our Free Lightning Tutor. Brass Fretted Finger Board; sweet mellow tone; solidly built; highly polished finish.
30/- VALUE FOR 11/9.


We will send you one of these "Southern Isles" real Ukulele Banjos upon receipt of your name and address. If entirely to your satisfaction, you send 1/6 on receipt and 1/- fortnightly until 11/9 is paid. Full cash with order or balance within 7 days, 10/6 only.

J. A. DAVIS & Co. (Dept. B.P. 49), 94-104, Denmark Hill, London, S.E.5.

RILEY HOME BILLIARDS

13/3 DOWN brings the famous 6ft. Riley "Home" Table (cash price £11-15-0) on 7 days' Free Trial, carriage paid and transit risks taken by Rileys. Write now for catalogue.

E. J. RILEY LTD.,
Belmont Works, Accrington,
And Dept. 38, 147, Aldersgate St.,
LONDON, E.C.1.





"Yes, sar!" said Hassan obediently. "I pull out this noble lord with a prompt despatch!" He bent down, and grasped Bunter firmly by the back of his collar. With a squeezing, squelching sound, the fat junior was drawn up from the clinging mud.

With deeper interest, the juniors looked, as was natural in one of the fierce Dervishes who had fought under the Khalifa, and who, since the reconquest of the Sudan, had preferred the life of a robber in the desert to submission to the Anglo-Egyptian rule. It was amazing to see such a man riding on the banks of the Nile. His life was forfeit a dozen times over, and it was only in the trackless, sandy wastes of the desert that he could find liberty and safety.

"What on earth is he doing here, then?" asked Nugent.

"That is only known to Allah!" said the dragoman, but his face was troubled and uneasy.

The horseman clattered down to the bank. He rode a magnificent black Barbary horse, which he handled to perfection. He came down to the water's edge with such a rush that the juniors wondered whether he would pitch headlong into the Nile. Within two or three feet of the shore gangway he pulled in his horse so suddenly that it reared and pawed the air. There he halted and sat his horse motionless as a statue, in startling contrast to his swift activity of a moment before.

"What on earth does he want here?" muttered Wharton.

Hassan breathed hard and deep. "Gentlemanly lords, I will draw in the gangway," he said. "It will be wise to push off and cross to the eastern bank of the Nile!"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "You don't think—"

"Where the Sheikh Abdurrahman rides, his followers ride," said the dragoman. "It has never been known for the robbers of the desert to ride to the

Nile—but Abdurrahman is here! What this may mean I do not know, my noble sars, but I have great fear that we are in what you call, in English, a queer street."

"Phew!"

The juniors were startled now. It seemed incredible that wild Arabs from the Libyan Desert could have any design of attacking a holiday houseboat on the Nile. Yet what else could the wild shoikh's presence portend—for, unless for some very special reason, the desert robber would never have ventured to ride within fifty miles of the Nile. Sir Reginald Brooke had impressed on the juniors never to leave the dahabiyeh except at well-known stopping-places. But he had never dreamed of danger to them on the houseboat itself—and such a thought had never crossed the minds of the juniors. But they had to think of it now—as they watched the dark-faced ruffian from the desert, sitting his horse on the bank.

"The sooner we get to the other bank the better, I think!" muttered Nugent. "If that fellow's got a gang with him like himself—"

"That fool Bunter!" breathed Wharton. "We can't leave him behind—oh, the silly fathead!"

"Look!" breathed Bob.

Hassan had gone down to the lower deck. But as he approached the gang-plank, the horseman drew a long-barrelled, silver-mounted pistol from his girdle, and lifted it. Over the levelled weapon, he shouted to the dragoman in Arabic.

"Wahyat-en-nabi!" gasped Hassan, and his brown face was almost grey with fear.

He returned to the upper deck without

touching the gangway and without calling the crew to pole off. The juniors looked at him.

"What did the man say?" asked Harry quietly.

"Oh, my noble sar!" said Hassan, "he say we stay here in this place, or he shoot! No one can dare to disobey the Sheikh Abdurrahman—he has taken many lives! Alas, noble sars, we are in one queer street!"

Wharton set his lips.

"That means that that scoundrel has ridden ahead to keep us here while his men come up, you fellows!" he said.

"Looks like it!"

"We'd chance his pistol and sheer off—only—that fool, Bunter—"

The juniors stared along the bank for Bunter. They had seen nothing of him since he had disappeared behind the tamarisks. Whether he was near at hand, or far away, they did not know. And they were not likely to see anything of him now.

The sight of the wild Arab horseman had caused Billy Bunter's eyes almost to pop through his spectacles, and his fat heart to quake with terror. He could not get back to the dahabiyeh without passing the savage horseman, who was halted close to the gang-plank. Wild horses would hardly have dragged Bunter into view while the savage Arab was there.

He squatted in the thickness of the clump of tamarisks, palpitating with terror, only anxious to keep out of sight. And from the shadowy rocks farther back from the river there came a sound of many hoofs, a glancing of turbans and burnouses in the moonlight, a squealing of camels. A bunch of dark-faced riders came in sight on the bank,

(Continued on page 16.)



(Continued from page 13.)

and among them was a man with an olive-skinned face—a face that the Greyfriars juniors knew only too well.

It was Konstantinos Kalizelos!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

In the Hands of the Enemy!

"KALIZELOS!"

Harry Wharton breathed the name.

The juniors understood now.

It was their enemy, the relentless seeker of the Golden Scarab, who was riding down to the Nile with the desert robbers.

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry.

The reis and the Nubian crew were up now. They stood in a startled crowd, staring at the men on the bank.

Motionless as a statue the Sheikh Abdurrahman sat his black Barbary horse, the long-barrelled pistol in his hand. But when Moussa made a movement towards the gang-plank the pistol was raised, and the reis stepped back again.

It was long since they had seen anything of Kalizelos, and they had begun to think that the Greek had given up the quest of the Golden Scarab. But it was clear now that he had been only biding his time.

Evidently the dahabiyeh had been watched on its way up the river, and the Greek had picked time and place for an attack. Fugitive as he was, he had plenty of money, and "backsheesh" had hired Abdurrahman and his gang of desert robbers.

Even the desperate dervish would hardly have ventured on a raid on the Nile shore, so far from his den in the recesses of the desert, at the risk of being cut off by the Egyptian soldiers at Wady Halfa. Many eyes must have seen the savage troop, and news of their coming would spread swiftly. The days of dervish raids were long over. In a few hours at the most the Camel Corps from Wady Halfa, mounted men from a dozen posts on the Nile, would be riding to intercept the desert troop. It was not a raid on Nile villages and plantations. The savage troop had one object, and one object only. The Greyfriars schoolboys understood that quite well. The Greek had planned a swift ride from the desert, the seizing of the dahabiyeh, and a swift ride back into the remote wilderness. Only swiftness could spell success, and even minutes might make the difference between success and failure.

Abdurrahman had dashed ahead on his swift horse to make sure that the dahabiyeh did not push off from the bank before the tourists could take the alarm at the sight of the desert troop. Sitting his black horse, pistol in hand, he kept guard while the rest of the gang came up.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,284.

There was a scared murmur from the Nubian sailors on the lower deck. They watched the Arabs with terrified eyes. Bared scimitars gleamed in the hands of the dusky ruffians riding down to join their chief. It was scarcely possible to think of resistance, and the crew of the Cleopatra were not thinking of it. With a clatter and a jingle and a squealing of camels the Arabs came on, and the juniors on the upper deck caught the triumphant grin on the olive-skinned face of Konstantinos Kalizelos. The Greek had won at last!

Harry Wharton set his lips.

"We've got to chance it," he said in a low voice. "We can pick Bunter up later. He will have sense enough to keep out of sight when he sees that gang. We've got to get the dahabiyeh away before that gang can get on board."

"And there's no time to lose," said Bob. "Come on."

"Oh, lordly gentlemen," gasped Hassan, "your noble lives will be taken! The sheikh will shoot with a pistol—"

"Tell the men to push off, Hassan, at once!"

"Oh, sar, under the eyes of Abdurrahman they will not dare—"

"Come on!" snapped Wharton.

He ran down to the lower deck, followed by his comrades. He caught Moussa, the reis, by the arm.

"Push off from the bank at once!" he exclaimed.

Moussa made a gesture towards the savage sheikh.

"Effendi, it is death!" he said.

"Get hold of the poles, you men," said Harry.

He ran to the side, one of the sailors' poles in his hands.

The man on the black horse raised his pistol, his eyes scintillating over it in the moonlight. He aimed it at Wharton.

"Unbelieving Faringhee," he said in a deep voice. "Stand back!"

Unheeding the Arab, Wharton drove the pole at the steep bank. There was a flash in the Arab's eyes, and he pulled the trigger. Bob Cherry grasped Wharton by the shoulder and dragged him back. It was only in time; the bullet crashed in the deck a foot from the captain of the Greyfriars Remove, and the report of the pistol roared and echoed along the Nile.

"Chuck it, old man!" muttered Bob. "Nothing doing!"

The sheikh had drawn a second pistol from his girdle. He raised it, aiming at the group of Greyfriars juniors.

Wharton dropped the pole.

His face was pale with anger, and his teeth set. But he realized that, as Bob said, there was nothing doing. The juniors were unarmed, and at the mercy of a ruthless ruffian with firearms in his hands. Almost incredible as it might have seemed, there was no doubt that the dervish would have shot them down like rabbits if they had attempted to push off.

"Lordly sars," groaned Hassan, who had followed the juniors down, "do not anger that terrible man—it is death!"

"If a fellow had a chance—" muttered Johnny Bull, between his teeth.

"The chancefulness is not great," said Hurrec Jamset Ram Singh, shaking his head. "We must bear it grinfully."

"Can't be helped," said Lord Mauleverer. "It's the scarab that rotter is after; that's all they want! Kalizelos has got us this time! But who the dooce would have thought it?"

With a trampling of hoofs the Arab gang reached the bank. There were

more than a score of the desert riders, and some of them were leading spare camels. Kalizelos dropped from his camel and came on the gang-plank. Behind him followed Hamza and Yussef, Abdurrahman and his men remained on the bank.

Kalizelos stepped on the deck of the dahabiyeh.

He gave the juniors a mocking salute.

"We meet again, my lord!" he said.

"Yaas," assented Lord Mauleverer placidly. "You've got a rotten way of turnin' up like a bad penny, Mr. Kalizelos. Can't say I'm pleased to see you."

"Do not think of resistance," said the Greek quietly. "I have hired Abdurrahman and his men at a great price to give their aid, and resistance is useless. They will remain on the bank unless I call them here; but I warn you that if those savage robbers are once let loose on the dahabiyeh, and blood is shed, they are not likely to leave a man alive."

Looking at the dark, savage faces on the bank the juniors could quite believe it.

"Give me the scarab!" continued Kalizelos. "Give me what I seek, and I will ride away with my men and you will see us no more. You may go peaceably to your beds as safe as any other tourists on the Nile. But lose no time; I have not even seconds to waste."

The Famous Five stood silent.

It was useless to attempt a futile resistance, which would only have been the signal for a massacre.

"You hear me, Lord Mauleverer?"

"Yaas."

"Give me the scarab!"

"Rats!"

"Is it on board the dahabiyeh?"

"Find out!"

The Greek's black eyes glittered.

He spoke in Arabic to Yussef and Hamza, and the two Arabs approached Lord Mauleverer. Swiftly they searched the schoolboy earl; Mauleverer submitting to the search with cheerful equanimity, as there was no help for it. Then each of the juniors was searched in his turn.

The Greek stood biting his lips with impatience. With equal impatience the Arabs on the bank waited and watched.

Every man in the gang was anxious to get finished and ride; every moment on the banks of the Nile was fraught with peril for them. Probably a hundred startled fellahin had seen the wild riders as they came, and were already carrying the news of their coming to the military posts along the river. The raiders could not get through too swiftly.

The Greyfriars fellows were well aware of that. Every moment there was a chance of help appearing in sight, and every moment that their enemy lost was a gain to them.

Kalizelos muttered in Arabic again and hurried below, followed by Yussef and Hamza. The juniors heard them searching in Mauleverer's cabin.

They waited.

The hiding-place of the Golden Scarab in the box of ointment was a safe one, and the juniors believed that it was still there. If the Greek found it he was not likely to find it in a hurry.

Kalizelos came back to the deck, leaving his confederates still searching in the cabin. His olive face was pale with rage.

"The scarab is hidden?" he said in a low, hissing voice.

"Yaas," assented Lord Mauleverer.

"Will you tell me where it is hidden?"

"No!"

"You would like to delay me till the soldiers arrive from Wady Halfa!" said the Greek bitterly. "But you will not succeed, my lord. I have no time to search the dahabiyeh for a secret hiding-place. Neither would Abdurrahman and his men consent to wait so long; they are already impatient to be gone. We shall ride—and you will ride with us! The old man Brooke will give the scarab for your lives and your liberty. Let him refuse, and the crows of the Libyan Desert will pick your bones."

He snarled out the words.

"Here, at any moment, rescue may come," he said. "But do you dream that rescue will follow when we have ridden at great speed into the heart of the desert? Do you fancy that the soldiers will track down Abdurrahman, who has defied the Egyptian Government for thirty years? Do you think that the sands of the desert will leave a track to be followed? Fool, while there is yet time, give me the scarab!"

Lord Mauleverer yawned.

"Answer me, fool!" snarled the Greek.

"I've answered you, old bean," drawled Lord Mauleverer. "If you want that jolly old scarab, look for it and find it."

"Bind them!" snarled the Greek, in Arabic.

Hamza and Yussef proceeded to bind the hands of the Greyfriars fellows behind their backs. Hassan's hands were bound, also.

Moussa and the Nubian sailors looked on in silence. They could not help.

It needed only a call from the Greek to bring the wild crew of desert robbers on the dahabiyeh, scimitar in hand. With their hands bound, the six schoolboys and the dragoman were hustled to the side. There was a thoughtful expression on Lord Mauleverer's face, but he uttered no word till the two Arabs began to drive the prisoners across the gangway to the bank. Then the schoolboy earl broke his silence at last.

"Hold on a tick, Mr. Kalizelos!" he drawled.

The Greek signed to the Arabs to stop and turned eager eyes on Mauleverer.

"Speak!" he snapped.

Lord Mauleverer looked up and down the bank of the Nile in the bright, clear moonlight. But if help was coming it was not in sight. Harry Wharton & Co. understood what was in Mauly's mind. He had delayed matters as long as he could in the hope of help coming. He had hoped that a long search on the dahabiyeh would delay the enemy still more, and give time for rescue to arrive. But the Greek was too cunning for that, and there was nothing more to be done.

"Look here, Mr. Kalizelos," said Lord Mauleverer quietly. "This is between you and me. May I ask you to leave my friends out of it?"

"Fool!"

"Shut up, Mauly!" growled Johnny Bull. "You're not going to let them have the scarab. We can stand it if you can."

"Not a word, Mauly!" said Harry.

Lord Mauleverer shook his head.

"The game's up, old beans," he said quietly. "If that brute had got us away that time near Luxor there was a chance of rescue. But there's no chance here! A day's ride from here will take us into the Sahara! I'd stand it on my own, but I can't see you men landed in it!"

"Fathead!" growled Bob Cherry.

"My esteemed idiotic Mauly——"

"Nuff said!" interrupted Lord Mauleverer. "The old bean's got us by the short hairs. I brought you fellows out to Egypt for a holiday, not to get you kidnapped in the desert. Kalizelos, old thing, tell your thieves to fetch up an ivory box from my dressing-table."

The Greek's black eyes snapped.

He ran below, and came back almost in a moment, with the ivory box of ointment in his dusky hand.

"This?" he explained.

Lord Mauleverer nodded.

"Yaas."

"It is here?"

"Yaas."

With a blaze in his eyes, his olive-skinned face irradiated with triumph, the Greek scooped the ointment out of the box. Harry Wharton & Co. watched him in grim silence, Hassan, the dragoman, in great relief. For his own sake, Lord Mauleverer would not have yielded; to save his comrades he was giving up the Golden Scarab, at last, into the greedy hands of the Greek. But there was a surprise in store for the Greek, and for the Greyfriars juniors.

The ointment that had hidden the
(Continued on next page.)

"Now, feint with your right!"

"On your toes, Sir; steady now . . . steady." Coolness and confidence . . . two most important things to carry you through. And Wrigley's helps. Put a pellet into your mouth—it is ideal to steady you and give you confidence.

The pure cool flavour of Wrigley's refreshes you like nothing else can . . . it refreshes your mouth . . . keeps you cool. Wrigley's 'after every meal' aids digestion . . . cleanses the teeth.

In two flavours—P.K., pure double-distilled peppermint flavour, and Spearmint, pure mint leaf flavour. Only 1d. a packet, worth many times more for the good it does you.

MADE IN GREAT BRITAIN.

WRIGLEY'S

MEANS BETTER CHEWING GUM



B.M. 31

scarab in the ivory box was scooped out. But there was no glitter of gold in the moonlight. The box was empty! The scarab was gone!

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Ride in the Desert!

"ONE!"

Lord Mauleverer uttered the word, in tones of blank astonishment.

The Famous Five stared.

Hassan gave a groan of disappointment.

The olive face of Kalizelos worked with rage. He huffed the ivory box on the deck with a crash that broke it into a score of pieces. He turned to Lord Mauleverer, convulsed with fury.

"Fool, you would trick me, to waste time!" he hissed. "Do you think that the soldiers from Wady Halfa are already on their way, liar and fool?"

Mauleverer compressed his lips.

"The scarab was there!" he said.

"It is false!"

"I suppose a rascal like you wouldn't understand that a fellow would not tell lies," remarked Lord Mauleverer reflectively.

"Where is the scarab?" hissed the Greek.

"Ask me another!"

"What the thump can have become of it?" exclaimed Bob Cherry in wonder. "It was in that box, packed under the ointment!"

"Looks as if somebody spotted it and pinched it," said Mauleverer. "I'm sorry for this, you chaps! I'd have let them have it, like a shot, to save you from his clutches. Now there's nothin' doin', unless that cheery old bean will take my word for it that I don't know what has become of the scarab."

"Am I a child, to be deceived by a trick?" said the Greek hoarsely. "For the last time, Lord Mauleverer, will you give up the scarab?"

"Can't!"

"Where is it?" hissed Kalizelos.

"Haven't the foggiest."

"Enough!"

The Greek snarled an order in Arabic, and Yussof and Hamza drove the juniors across the gangway to the bank. As they stumbled on the shore Hassan turned his eyes imploringly on Lord Mauleverer.

"Oh, noble sar!" he groaned. "I beg you in the name of the Prophet, to give up the scarab to this Greek. What is the value of such a trifle, lordly sar, to your noble lordship? These men are fierce as the lions, and all our lives are worth nothing in the desert of Libya."

Mauleverer glanced at him.

"Didn't you hear me tell the old bean that I haven't the foggiest idea where the jolly old scarab is, Hassan?"

"Oh, sar! Think yet once more, noble sar, before you anger these terrible men. I, Hassan, the son of Suleiman, have told many lies, sar, but I would not dare to lie to these men."

"Oh gad!" said Mauleverer.

"You silly dummy," growled Bob Cherry. "The scarab's been taken. Nobody here knows where it is."

"Lordly sar, I swear that the telling of lies to these men is useless," urged Hassan. "There is yet time to speak the truth my noble lord, and save us all from knock into a cock hat, as you say in the English language."

Evidently Hassan, no more than the Greek, believed that the scarab was

lost. Lying was the dragoman's usual resource in a difficulty, and it did not ever occur to his Oriental mind that the Faringhees might be more particular in such matters. Lord Mauleverer shrugged his shoulders and walked up the bank, and the unhappy son of Suleiman groaned in despair.

No time was lost now. The Greek and every lawless ruffian in his gang was in a state of trepidation, casting uneasy glances up and down and across the river in the bright moonlight. Already the delay had endangered the retreat of the gang of desert robbers.

The schoolboys and the dragoman were hoisted on the spare camels and the whole party turned from the Nile. Bound on the camels, the prisoners rode away from the river, in the midst of the Arabs, Abdurrahman leading the way on his black Barbary horse.

From the dahabiyeh the reis and the Nubian sailors stared after them. And from the clump of tamarisks on the bank, where he lay hidden, in mortal terror, Billy Bunter watched them through his big spectacles, and gasped with relief when the shadows of the desert swallowed them from sight. Billy Bunter, no doubt, was concerned for his schoolfellows, but there was still less doubt that he was more deeply concerned for himself!

With a rapid beat of hoofs, the party rode away from the river. The sheikh galloped in advance, and after him thundered the camels, driven to speed by blows and cries from their riders.

Every man was glancing to right and left as he rode. Abdurrahman and his men well knew that such a raid was a desperate one, and the delay on the dahabiyeh had added to their danger. They feared every moment to see armed riders start into view in the moonlight.

Eagerly the Greyfriars juniors looked back as they rocked and bumped along on the tall, swaying camels. What the desert robbers feared, was what the prisoners hoped.

There was a sudden shout from one of the robbers. It was echoed by others, as he pointed to the south. In the glimmering moonlight a camel-rider appeared in sight, and there was a gleam of a carbine-barrel in the light of the moon.

"That's a gipsy soldier!" breathed Bob Cherry.

The Sheikh Abdurrahman shouted to his followers. The ride, or rather the flight, had been swift before; now it was doubly swift. With fierce and savage blows and hoarse yells, the desert robbers drove the swaying camels onward, and it seemed to the juniors that they were rushing through the night at almost the speed of an express train. The way lay through a defile in a range of low sandy hills; and looking back now, they could see the Nile no longer, and the camel-rider they had glimpsed for a moment had vanished.

"They're after us, anyhow!" said Johnny Bull.

Thud, thud, thud, thundered the galloping hoofs.

Beyond the low, sandy hills lay a plain of sand, across which the riders tore at their fastest speed. Then they rode through a defile in rocky hills again, still keeping up the desperate pace. Again and again, they passed through ranges of low hills, clattering among dark limestone boulders—again and again, vast stretches of sand flashed under the thudding hoofs. Hour after hour passed, and still the wild ride went on without a pause.

And the hopes of the Greyfriars fellows died away. They had no doubt

that the news of the raid had spread; that mounted men would be seeking the Arab raiders up and down the Nile and across the western desert. But the sand and rocks left no trace of the fleeing robbers; and once in the illimitable spaces of the desert, pursuit was a practical impossibility.

For hundreds of miles the desert stretched, sandy, barren, uninhabited; with only the eyes of the birds of prey to watch the wild riders as they passed. Search for the prisoners, when they had vanished into the desert, was like a search for a needle in a haystack—a very small needle in a very large haystack. The Greek had won at last. There had been a chance that rescue might come, while the raiders were still in the valley of the Nile; but that chance had failed. There was no hope now.

No hope—and the juniors realised it. Long, long miles lay between them and the Nile now. The bright moonlight showed them only barren stretches of sand, and ranges of rocky hills. And still the camels thundered on, while the night grew older and the moonlight gave place to dawn.

Weary, aching from the jolting and bumping of the camels, with tired eyes, the Greyfriars juniors watched the sun rise on the desert. The rays of the rising sun glimmered over immense solitudes. The pace was slower now; even the hardy Baggara camels were growing fatigued; and the juniors could see, too, that the raiders had now little or no fear of pursuit. But the ride still went on, farther and farther into the trackless wastes.

It was like some terrible nightmare to the Greyfriars juniors. Only a few hours ago they had been chatting in the deckchairs in the dahabiyeh, in fancied security, discussing the new term at Greyfriars. From civilisation they had fallen, at one fell swoop, into primitive barbarism. Houseboats and the Nile, guides and donkey-boys, temples and tombs of past ages, had given place to the desert—the raw and savage desert, where life was held cheap, where savage men roamed as fierce and untamed as in the earliest ages of the world.

Through a long and weary morning the ride went on, more slowly, but without a halt until the heat of noonday approached. Then even the hardy robbers of the Libyan Desert were weary. They halted at last, in the midst of a stone-strewn, sandy plain, at a spot where a group of scrubby acacias grew, the only vegetation within reach of the eye. Evidently there was a spring at the spot, and water was to be found, known to the desert riders. The camels laid down to rest, and the prisoners were unbound from the humps on which they had swayed and jolted so long and so wearily. Their hands were released also; and they were given dry dhurra bread and brackish water. They ate and drank mechanically, almost too fatigued to stir. The Greek came over to them with his black eyes smouldering.

"Do you dream that we may be followed and that you may be found by your friends?" he asked.

"Doesn't look a healthy chance!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"The Golden Scarab will be your ransom! I will give you pen and paper and you shall write to the old man Brooke, at Assuan. The dragoman will carry your message!"

Lord Mauleverer made no answer. "I know you, my lord!" said the Greek bitterly. "You would perish here in the desert before you would yield! I know you! That is why I



Quaking with terror at the sight of the wild Arab horseman, Bunter squatted in the thickness of the clump of tamarisks, anxious to keep out of sight. From the shadowy desert farther back, a bunch of dark-faced riders came in sight, riding fast for the dahabiyeh!

have brought your friends to die with you if you do not yield! Do you dream that I will show them mercy?"

"You don't look it," said Mauleverer. "To save them, if not to save yourself, will you write to the old man Brooke? Only the scarab will ransom you."

"I've told you," said Mauleverer calmly, "that I know nothin' of the scarab. It was hidden in the ivory box; and someone must have taken it, as it was not found there. If you want the scarab, you must find who has taken it."

"Fool!" hissed the Greek. "Will you lie to me, when your life and the lives of your friends hang upon a thread?"

Mauleverer shrugged his shoulders.

"As you will, my lord!" snarled the Greek. "I can afford to wait! You will not escape from my hands! I leave you unbound—attempt to escape if you choose!" He waved his hand at the vast desert. "Leave this camp, and do you think you could find your path back to the Nile? Do you not know that you would perish of thirst in the sands? Yet I will warn you that if you take a step beyond the camp the Arabs will ride you down and spear you. Take thought, my lord—I can afford to wait! Either the Golden Scarab shall be placed in my hands, or you and your friends die in the desert! Dream of escape and rescue if you choose—you will soon come to your senses!"

The Greek swung away.

The Greyfriars fellows exchanged glances.

"Looks as if we're booked!" said Bob dismally.

"I'm sorry for this, you fellows!" said Mauleverer in a low voice.

"Not your fault, fathead!"

"I'd give the scarab like a shot to

see you fellows clear! You know that, don't you?"

"But what the dickens has become of it?" said Bob.

"Goodness knows! Somebody on the dahabiyeh must have spotted where it was hidden and pinched it. Can't expect Kalizelos to believe that, though—he's not a trustful sort of johnny."

"Well, we're for it," said Harry Wharton quietly. "We've got to keep a stiff upper lip and see it through! Never say die! I'm glad Bunter's out of it."

"Oh, sar!" mumbled Hassan. "If you will write a writing to the noble lord Brooke, I, Hassan, the son of Suleiman, will carry it to Assuan—and surely you will not lose so many lives for a scarab?"

The juniors made no reply to that. They stretched themselves on the hard ground under the acacias and slept the sleep of utter weariness.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

All Right for Bunter!

"**O**h lor'!" groaned Billy Bunter.

He mopped the perspiration from his streaming brow.

Bunter's little fat legs were almost dropping off with fatigue. But he plugged desperately on in the blazing sunshine.

Bunter had watched the desert raiders ride away with the prisoners; thankful to see them go, thankful that he had not been on board the dahabiyeh when they came. Not till the wild riders had vanished did the fat junior venture to crawl out of the clump of tamarisks.

Then he did not return to the dahabiyeh. There was no safety on the houseboat of Mr. Maroudi. Bunter did not know whether the raiders might return—he did not even know whether any of them might have remained on board. He turned his face to the north, following the course of the Nile, and tramped away as fast as his fat legs could move, only anxious to get out of the danger-zone.

Mile after mile the fat Owl tramped on, guided by the river till the night was gone and the new day came. He might have obtained help at more than one village along the Nile; but at the sight of a turban or a tarboosh, the fat junior dodged, palpitating, out of sight, dreading an enemy. He was a little comforted when daylight came; but his fat legs were aching, and he groaned and grunted as he plugged on. How many miles he had covered he did not know; but he knew that he was now at a great distance from the dahabiyeh, and there had been no pursuit. Apparently, the Greek, whom he had seen among the raiders, had not given him a thought, and had forgotten his fat existence; and for once, Billy Bunter was glad to be forgotten.

The sun rose higher, and Bunter's fat brow streamed, and his fat legs ached as he tramped down the rolling Nile. Flesh and blood could stand no more, and Billy Bunter came to a halt at last.

His first thought had been simply to escape and get out of danger of sharing the fate of the Greyfriars party.

But as his terrors diminished, the fat Owl ceased to think wholly of himself, and gave a thought or two to the fellows

who had been carried off into the Libyan Desert.

He had to get help somehow. Sir Reginald Brooke was at Assuan, waiting for the return of the dahabiyeh there, and Mauly's uncle was the man to take the matter in hand. Bunter did not know how far he was from Assuan, but he knew that it was many miles.

His fat little legs could carry him no further, and he stopped under the shade of a date-palm, and grunted and groaned.

Every dark face on the Nile-shore was, to Bunter's terrified mind, an enemy or a possible enemy. A dozen times, at least, he had dodged out of the sight of a harmless fellahin.

But the sight of a fruit-boat on the Nile was reassuring. A felucca, with a cargo of fruit aboard, rowed by six brawny brown men, was coming down the river, and appeared in Bunter's sight as he stood panting under the palm. Even Bunter could not fear that the natives on the boat had any connection with the Sheikh Abdurrahman's gang of desert robbers.

He waved a fat hand and shouted to the boatmen.

Brown faces turned towards him inquiringly.

"Hi!" roared Bunter. "Stop! Give me a lift to Assuan! Hi!"

The rowers slowed down, still staring, and talking to one another in rather excited tones. The boat pulled in to the bank at last.

Two or three of the natives spoke to Bunter, but it was in a language of which he did not understand a word. But with gestures they invited him on board the felucca, and he plumped down into a seat with a gasp of relief.

"Assuan!" he gasped, pointing down the river.

The answer was in Arabic, but the brown men bent to their oars again and rowed on.

The felucca was slow, but it was ten times as fast as Bunter's tired, fat legs could have carried him on. Six long, heavy oars pulled steadily, and the heavy craft rolled on its way. The rowers gave the fat junior many curious looks as he sat and mopped his perspiring face, gasping for breath, and dabbed at flies. Obviously, they were interested in him.

It occurred to Bunter at last that they knew what had happened on the dahabiyeh, and guessed that he was one of the party of Faringhees that had been attacked by the riders from the desert.

He realised that the reis, and the Nubian crew, would have spread the news of the outrage long before this, and that it must have run like wildfire up and down the Nile.

Such news was certain to cause a sensation, and to spread far and wide, and Bunter realised, too, that most likely it had already reached Assuan. It was more than probable that Sir Reginald Brooke had already heard it.

Slowly, but steadily, the felucca pulled on down the Nile, under the blaze of the Egyptian sun.

Chug-chug-chug-chug!

It was an hour later that Bunter heard, without heeding, the chugging of a motor-boat on the river.

The motor-boat was coming up from the direction of Assuan and the Nile Dam. Bunter gave it a blink through his big spectacles, without interest. He had a glimpse of a white man's face looking towards him, and caught the gleam of an eyeglass in the sunlight.

There was a shout, and the felucca's crew ceased to row, and the motor-boat ran down on them. Bunter gave a yelp.

"Get on! Get on, I tell you! Get on to Assuan, you dummies! I jolly well won't pay you anything if you don't hurry!"

"Bunter!"

The fat junior gave a jump. It was the voice of Sir Reginald Brooke, calling to him from the motor-boat.

Bunter blinked round in amazement. Beside the tall baronet stood the plump figure of Mr. Hilmi Maroudi of Cairo. Both were staring at Bunter, evidently astonished to see him in the felucca coming down the Nile.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

Mr. Maroudi spoke to the felucca's crew in Arabic, and the fruit-boat ranged alongside the motor-craft. Sir Reginald stretched out a hand to the fat junior and helped him on board. A handful of piastres were tossed to the brown men in the felucca, and they rowed on down the river.

The motor-boat immediately resumed its way up the Nile. Billy Bunter stood and gasped and mopped his brow, and blinked at Mauly's uncle through his big spectacles.

He could see the lines of deep anxiety in Sir Reginald's face, and guessed that the old baronet had already heard the news; indeed, he could guess, further, that it was the news of the raid that had brought Sir Reginald and his Egyptian friend up the Nile from Assuan that morning.

"Take courage, my dear friend," said Mr. Maroudi, in his low, pleasant voice. "This is one of the boys who has escaped—perhaps the others—"

"Bunter! Where is my nephew?" asked Sir Reginald, speaking quietly, but with a shake in his voice.

"They've got him!" gasped Bunter.

"Who?" snapped Sir Reginald.

"That beast Kalizelos—"

"You are sure it was the Greek?"

"I saw him!" groaned Bunter. "That Greek villain, and a swarm of awful Arabs—horrible-looking, savage beasts they—"

"News has reached Assuan of the attack on the dahabiyeh," said Sir Reginald, in the same quiet tone. "We have heard, so far, that a number of desert robbers attacked the houseboat and took away the schoolboys. We supposed that all had been taken—yet you are here—"

"I was ashore," explained Bunter. "I'd gone for a walk on the bank, and I jolly well kept out of sight when I saw them."

"That was fortunate, my young friend!" said Mr. Maroudi.

"Yes—just luck!" gasped Bunter. "But for that, I should be with them now—jolly lucky I was on shore! It couldn't have happened better, really! I might have been in the hands of those awful villains, along with the other chaps!"

Mr. Maroudi gave him a rather curious look, and Sir Reginald Brooke emitted a snort. Perhaps both the gentlemen considered that Billy Bunter might have evinced some desire to share the fate of the party, to sink or swim together. Such an idea as that was certainly not likely to occur to the fat mind of William George Bunter. He was sorry for the other fellows—but deeply thankful that he was not in their company. Matters were bad enough—but they might have been worse!

"Then my nephew and his friends are all prisoners?" asked the old baronet.

"All but me!" said Bunter.

Another snort from Sir Reginald, which might have implied that he did not count the fat Owl among his nephew's friends. Bunter wondered what the old donkey was snorting for.

JACK of all TRACKS



This motor-bike and its rider are ready for anything. They have ridden in road races, on a grass track and at Brooklands. They have thundered round the Wall of Death—greatest of all motor-cycling thrills. Their story is but one of a host of fascinating features of the MODERN BOY'S ANNUAL, which deals with ships, aeroplanes, railways and the most up-to-date developments of to-day. There are hundreds of striking illustrations from photographs which have been gathered from the four corners of the earth; there are three ripping adventure stories and two splendid coloured plates

The
MODERN BOY'S Annual

At All Newsagents and Booksellers—6/- net

"You saw them taken away?" asked Mr. Maroudi.

"Yes—tied on camels," said Bunter. "Kalizelos was there, and those two Arab beasts Yussef and Hamza, and a crowd of savage brutes—"

"I cannot understand it," said Sir Reginald. "The attack can only have been caused by that scoundrel Kalizelos' desire to possess the Golden Scarab. My nephew would never have submitted on his own account, but I should have expected him to give the scoundrel whatever he asked, to save his friends from savage enemies—"

Bunter gave a start.

"Oh crikey!" he ejaculated.

Sir Reginald stared at him, with a frown.

"They cannot have seized the scarab," went on the old baronet. "That is all that the Greek desired. I am convinced that he would have been willing to leave the party alone, had he gained what he wanted. No doubt it was safely concealed, and my nephew refused to reveal it. Yet, to save his friends, I should have expected—"

"Oh crikey! I—I say, I—I've got the scarab!" gasped Bunter.

"What?"

"I'd forgotten about it!" gasped the fat Owl. "I've got it in my pocket now! Mauly couldn't have handed it over, if he wanted to! Oh lor'!"

Sir Reginald stared at him.

"You have the scarab? How did it come into your hands, pray?"

"Oh! I—I—Mauly handed it to me to keep safely, you know!" stammered Bunter. "Being his best pal—"

"Nonsense!"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"If you have the scarab, let me see it!" snapped Sir Reginald. "I am quite assured that my nephew would never place it in your hands!"

"Well, here it is," grunted Bunter sulkily, and he fished out the match-box from his pocket and opened it. "I've got it safe all right! Mauly trusted it to me, you know—he's got more faith in me than in the other fellows, of course. I never found where he had hidden it, you know."

"What?"

"I'm not the fellow to spy anything out, I hope," said Bunter, with dignity. "As for taking the rotten thing to hide it, to make Mauly sit up for being such a beast, I never even thought of such a thing."

Snort from Sir Reginald.

"Give it to me!" he grunted.

He took the Golden Scarab from the fat Owl. He scanned it carefully, and Mr. Maroudi's dark eyes dwelt on it curiously.

"This is the Scarab of A-Menah," said Sir Reginald, with a grunt. "But for this foolish boy's crass trickery my nephew might have ransomed himself and his friends by giving it up to the Greek."

"Perhaps it is fortunate," said Mr. Maroudi softly, "for your nephew and his friends will be rescued, my good friend; and the scarab is safe."

"It is of little value. I fail entirely to understand the Greek's desire to possess it, at the cost of danger and crime." Sir Reginald slipped the golden beetle into his pocket. "The legend attached to it can be nothing but a fable. I would gladly give it, and a thousand such, to see my nephew safe once more."

"That is the Greek's design," said Mr. Maroudi quietly. "But I have some power in this land, my good friend, and I am here. According to the report received at Assuan, it was the Sheikh

Abdurrahman, once a follower of the Khalifa, who attacked the dahabiyeh with his men. If that is ascertained beyond doubt—"

"This boy may know!"

"You saw the leader of the desert riders, my young friend," said Mr. Maroudi. "You can tell us something of him."

"A fierce-looking beast with a hooked nose," said Bunter. "I heard Hassan tell the fellows on the dahabiyeh that he was the Sheikh Abdurrahman. Never heard of him before. Hassan said that the beast had fought as a boy against Kitchener at Omdurman."

Mr. Maroudi's face lightened.

"Then there is no doubt!" he said. "It is Abdurrahman, the robber of the Libyan Desert, who has aided the Greek in this raid!"

GOT YOUR POCKET-KNIFE YET?

All you've got to do is to send in an amusing joke like the following, which has earned for Raymond Meyer, of 26, Sotheby Road, Highbury, N.5, one of these useful prizes:



Alarmed Mother (to her little boy who is crying): "What is the matter, Tommy?"

Tommy: "Boo-hoo! I've eaten a cherry, and it tastes so nasty!"

Alarmed Mother: "Where did you get it from?"

Tommy: "Off your hat, ma!"

Our SHEFFIELD-STEEL PEN-KNIVES are well worth winning.

"Is that good news?" asked Sir Reginald, staring at the Egyptian. "I have heard of the man—a desperate and savage outcast, stained with the blood of many murders—"

"But a man who is known to me, and with whom I have eaten salt!" said the Egyptian tranquilly. "And now that I am assured, my good friend, that it is the Sheikh Abdurrahman into whose hands our little friends have fallen, I shall answer to you that I can save them. Upon my head be it!"

Billy Bunter blinked at the Egyptian, and then blinked round the motor-boat. He was wondering if there were any provisions on board. Fortunately there were, and Bunter sat down to a meal and forgot his troubles—and still more easily the troubles of the other fellows—as he packed away the foodstuffs, and the motor-boat chugged on swiftly up the Nile.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Messenger!

NIGHT in the desert! Tall, feathery palms waved their fronds in the light of the moon.

Far and wide, on all sides of the little oasis, stretched the Libyan Desert, glimmering in the moonlight, trackless, arid, illimitable.

Only a line of low, rocky hills, in the distance, broke the level of the desert.

Save in that one spot, where the oasis was fed by a spring, all was sandy, arid, barren. From the shadows of the barren plain came a distant sound, which the Greyfriars fellows thrilled to realise was the roar of a roaming lion.

After the noonday halt the desert raiders had pushed on again, ever and ever westward, deeper and deeper into the desert. Through the long, sunny afternoon they had ridden, and under the burning sunset, and till the moon rose in the velvety sky. Then they reached the oasis—evidently a place well known to them—and camped for the night.

The juniors wondered whether this was the final halt. They heard the talk among the Arabs without understanding it. But Hassan told them that the next morning the ride was to go on, farther and farther. Desperate ruffian as the Sheikh Abdurrahman was, he feared vengeance for so daring an outrage as a raid on a dahabiyeh on the Nile, and he intended to put a vast distance between himself and possible pursuit by the Egyptian troops. The halt at the oasis was only for a rest till dawn, as Hassan learned from the talk of the Arabs.

There was something like despair in the hearts of the schoolboys. The desert had swallowed them, far from help and hope. It was not even possible to pay the ransom demanded by the Greek, for the Golden Scarab had vanished, and Lord Mauleverer knew no more than the Greek where to lay hands on it. Unless there was pursuit and rescue they were doomed to leave their bones in the desert, and how could rescue reach them in the trackless wilderness of sand and rock?

Yussef and Hamza had put up a tent for the Greek, the hardy desert robbers wrapping themselves in their cloaks to sleep on the earth by the sides of their camels. Of the juniors, Abdurrahman and his men took little or no notice. They were not concerned with them. At a word from the Greek who had hired them they would have cut off the schoolboys' heads, without a moment's hesitation or remorse; but so long as Kalizelos desired to keep them prisoners, the Arabs left them to themselves.

Escape was impossible; the juniors hardly thought of it. They were left unbound; but the swift camels could have run them down at once if they had wandered from the camp. And escape into the arid desert meant nothing but death by hunger and thirst. Once, when Johnny Bull moved out beyond the sleeping camels to look across the plain, a blow from the butt of a spear drove him back again, and the look of the Arab who drove him in showed that he would willingly use the point if the junior resisted.

A supper of dhurra bread and dates and water was given to the prisoners. Hopeless as their position seemed, the juniors were keeping up their courage. It was Hassan who was plunged into the depths of woe. He was wanted only as a messenger to take word from Mauleverer to his uncle; and when he was no longer wanted, if it was certain

that no message would be sent, Hassan expected to be knocked on the head as a useless encumbrance.

Hassan, torn and soiled and dusty, looked little like the gorgeous, smiling dragoman who had guided the juniors at Cairo and Luxor, and sailed with them on Mr. Maroudi's dahabiyeh. If Hassan retained any hope, it was not in the Egyptian authorities, or in Sir Reginald Brooke, but in the power of the Egyptian millionaire, Hilmi Maroudi, the protector of his "lordly gentlemen." But the dismal, dolorous expression on Hassan's brown face showed that he doubted whether even Hilmi Maroudi's arm could stretch across the Libyan Desert to save them.

After they had eaten their supper the juniors sat under the tall palms of the oasis, and watched the moonlit plain. The camels and the Arabs were sleeping, and Kalizelos, in his tent, was perhaps sleeping, too; perhaps dreaming of the "Eye of Osiris," which he now believed to be almost in his grasp. Two or three of the savage outcasts were keeping watch, and a faint mutter of Arabic reached the juniors as the ruffians talked together.

The moon that sailed high above the desert was the moon that had shone down so peaceably the previous night on the juniors on the dahabiyeh; the same soft and silvery light fell in a flood on the desert, yet it seemed to them that they were in a different world. So, indeed, they were, for they had dropped back from the twentieth century into the ages of barbarism.

"We're for it, and no mistake!" said Bob Cherry, breaking a long silence. "I'm glad Bunter's out of it!"

"Yes, that's so much to the good," said Nugent. "Lucky the fat idiot took that stroll ashore last night, after all."

"Well, it would make matters worse if we had him grumbling and grouching here!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Thank goodness we haven't!"

"The thankfulness is terrific!" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

There was silence again. Through the silence there came a sound from the distant desert. The juniors saw the Arab sentinels start up, and stare away across the plain in the brightness of the moon.

"That's a horse or a camel!" said Bob. "I—I wonder— Hassan, old bean, do you think there's a chance they've got after us?"

Hassan shook a dismal head.

"No, sar. We are in one queer street," he answered lugubriously. "The soldiers will seek, but they will not find. That is a deadly cert, as you say in your language."

Thud! Thud! Thud!

The beat of swift hoofs was clearer now. A horseman was riding towards the camp at the oasis at a furious speed.

The juniors rose to their feet and looked across the sand. Far away in the moonlight they sighted the figure of an Arab rider on a powerful horse.

"One of the gang, I suppose," said Nugent, with a sigh. "Nobody can know where to look for these villains except their friends."

Hassan fixed his eyes on the approaching horseman. It was evident that the dragoman had no hope that the rider's coming meant rescue. But a strange expression came over his face as the galloping horseman drew nearer and clearer in the light of the moon.

"Bismillah!" muttered Hassan. "It is Selim, the son of Mustapha, who comes—Selim of Shellal, who has served the great Maroudi."

"You know the man?" asked Harry.

"Hassan knows all peoples in valley of the Nile, sar," said the dragoman, with a touch of his old manner. "Yes, sar, Hassan know everything! Selim, the son of Mustapha of Shellal, rides with the caravans that do business for the great Maroudi. Many times I have seen him. By the beard of the Prophet, it may yet be possible that the great Maroudi may help us, even here in the Libyan Desert. His power is great."

All the Arabs were on their feet now, watching the horseman as he came. The dark, fierce eyes of the Sheikh Abdurrahman were fixed on him. But there was no hostility in their looks. It was plain that Selim, the son of Mustapha, was known to them, and known on friendly terms. The juniors did not understand.

"You say that that man is in the service of Mr. Maroudi?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Yes, sar."

"Then how can he be friendly with

100 PAGES— PRICE 4d.

"The TOAD of the REMOVE!" By Frank Richards.

A magnificent book-length complete yarn of popular Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars.

"CHUMS AFLOAT!" By Martin Clifford.

A lively long complete story of the holiday adventures of Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's.

Ask for

**THE SCHOOLBOYS' OWN
Library, Nos. 179 and 180.**

**NOW ON SALE—
PRICE 4d. EACH.**

*The Best Entertainment
Value 4d. Can Buy.*

these robbers and thieves—they look as if he was a friend."

Hassan grinned.

"Oh, sar, in the desert it is different!" he said. "On the banks of the Nile Selim would not call the Sheikh Abdurrahman his friend. But in the desert I think he pay backsheesh to the sheikh, to permit the caravans to pass in safety. Abdurrahman is one terrible man, my lordly sar; he is feared in the desert. And if Selim pay him backsheesh, no robber of Libya dare to lay one finger on the great Maroudi's caravans."

"Oh!" said Harry. He understood now how an agent of Mr. Maroudi might have dealings with a robber chief of the desert. It was plain, at all events, that Selim was known to the horde; some of them made him welcoming gestures as he galloped up.

The Arab pulled in his horse, foaming and dust-covered, showing very plain signs of having been driven hard. He leaped lightly to the ground, approached Abdurrahman, and salaamed before the

sheikh. They proceeded to talk in Arabic; but they stood too far away for Hassan and the juniors to hear what they said. The Greyfriars fellows watched curiously.

It was clear that Selim had ridden desperately hard from the Nile, to reach the camp at the oasis. His brown face was caked with dried sweat and the dust of the desert, and his horse, powerful beast as it was, was almost exhausted. He was speaking breathlessly, but urgently, to the sheikh, and from time to time Abdurrahman nodded his head as he replied in curt tones.

Many times, as they stood speaking, both of them glanced towards the tent of the Greek, Kalizelos, as the juniors did not fail to notice. Once they caught a cruel, sardonic grin on the sheikh's hard, brown face, as he looked towards the tent of the sleeping Greek.

"I wonder—" muttered Bob.

"I, Hassan, do not understand!" muttered the dragoman. "They do not talk of the safe passage of a caravan, my lordly sars; they speak of the Greek, for they look towards the tent of that son of ten thousand dogs and pigs! Wahyat-en-nabi! May it be that the power of Maroudi may reach us here!"

The juniors looked at one another, with beating hearts. They would have given much to hear, and to understand, the talk between the desert sheikh and the man who had ridden in such desperate haste from the distant Nile. Twice or thrice they saw the black eyes of Selim rest on them, and they knew that he was speaking of them.

Hassan made an attempt to edge nearer to the speakers, but a threatening gesture from an Arab drove him back. There was little, perhaps, on which to build hope, and yet all the prisoners in the camp in the oasis felt that the coming of Selim from the Nile spelled hope for them.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Hope!

KALIZELOS, the Greek, stepped out of his tent under the palm-trees, in the sunrise of the Libyan Desert. He glanced towards the Greyfriars juniors with a grim smile on his olive face.

Harry Wharton & Co. were already up, and eating a breakfast of maize bread and dates—their eyes turning incessantly to the east—the direction of the distant and unseen Nile. From that direction, if rescue came at all, it would come, and though it seemed like hoping against hope, the chums of the Remove hoped.

Selim, the man from Shellal, on the Nile, was still in the camp; they had seen him among the robbers. He had not approached them, but his presence seemed to give hope. He was at least some sort of a connection between them and their Egyptian friend, Hilmi Maroudi.

The hope that was in the hearts of the schoolboys was reflected in their faces, and the Greek read it there, and it brought a grim smile to his olive visage. So far as Konstantinos Kalizelos could see, at all events, there was no hope for his prisoners. Surrounded by savage Arab robbers, and the boundless desert, they were in his hands like birds in a cage.

The Greek, after glancing at the juniors, stood looking about him before the tent. The juniors heard him call to one of the Arabs, who shook his head in reply. Hassan, the dragoman, started a little, and his keen eyes flashed towards the Greek.

"Inshallah!" murmured Hassan.



Harry Wharton & Co. were bound and hoisted on the spare camels and, with a rapid beat of hoofs, the party rode away. The sheikh galloped on in front, and after him thundered the camels, driven to speed by blows and cries from their riders!

"What's up, Hassan?" asked Harry Wharton. He could see that the dragoon had been struck by what was said in Arabic between the Greek and the robber.

"This is one strange thing," said Hassan. "Kalizelos, he ask where are his Arabs—Yussef and Hamza. The man he ask do not know."

"They're in the camp somewhere, I suppose," said Harry.

"I do not see them, noble sar," answered Hassan, "and I remember that I hear in the night a sound of camels that go fast. This is strange."

The juniors watched the Greek rather curiously.

It was easy to see, from where they sat under the palms, over the whole of the little oasis, which was merely a small bunch of palms in the midst of the desert. Now that they gave the matter attention, they could see that Yussef, the hawk-faced Arab, and Hamza, the man with the scar, were not present. The look of the Greek was perplexed and angry. It seemed that the Greek's two native confederates had left the camp during the night, evidently without the knowledge of their master, and had not returned.

They saw Kalizelos approach the Sheikh Abdurrahman, who was standing in the sand watching the east, like the juniors.

A murmur of voices reached their ears, but they understood nothing of the Arabic. But Hassan, who caught the words between the man from Cairo and the Arab sheikh, breathed hard.

"This is very strange!" he repeated.

"Construe!" grinned Bob. "Tell us what they're saying, Hassan."

"Somethin's going on, you men," murmured Lord Mauleverer. "I can't make it out, but I sort of fancy things ain't so rosy for Kalizelos as he fancied they were."

The juniors could see that Kalizelos was puzzled and irritated, while the sheikh, on the other hand, was cold and curt.

"Kalizelos, he want to know where are his servants, Yussef and Hamza," said

Hassan. "Abdurrahman say that in the night they take camels and ride. The Greek he very angry. He do not understand why is this. He is what you call in English, riddled."

"Puzzled!" grinned Bob.

"Yes, sar, he is puzzled and riddled to a great and considerable extent," said Hassan. "This is a very strange happening!"

The Greek at last went back to his tent.

Abdurrahman stared after him for a moment, and the juniors read in his hard face the cold, ironical, sardonic smile they had seen on it before. If the Greek was puzzled, the Greyfriars fellows were equally so. It looked as if there was some rift in the lute, as if matters were not going as smoothly as before, between the Greek and the desert thieves he had hired for his work. How and why, the prisoners could not guess.

"Oh, sars!" breathed Hassan. "You see that look of the sheikh? He is a terrible man! Kalizelos has paid him much backsheesh for this work. But what faith is there in a thief of the desert? Oh, sars, I think I see in this the hand of the great Maroudi!"

"Maroudi!" repeated Bob.

"Maroudi is a great and powerful man," said Hassan. "He is as rich and powerful as a caliph! Is he not the friend of my lordly gentlemen, who saved him the life when Kalizelos attacked him in his palace at Cairo? Oh, sars, I think it may be the will of Allah, and of Mahomet, his Prophet, that Maroudi may save us yet!"

"He will have to get a move on, if we're going on into the desert," said Nugent, with a faint smile. "You heard the scoundrels saying that we ride again at dawn, Hassan."

"It is true," said the dragoon. "But there is a change. The camels still lie in the sand; there is no sign that we ride. And now it is long past dawn, my noble sar."

"There's Selim!" muttered Johnny Bull.

The man from Shellal passed in sight of the group of juniors. He gave them

a glance as he passed, with a smile and a flash of white teeth. But he did not approach the group, passing on and joining Abdurrahman, and standing by his side watching the desert to the east.

The prisoners in the oasis felt their hearts beating more quickly.

Something—something strange and mysterious, behind the scenes—was going on in the Arab camp, that was clear. What ever it was, did it mean hope to the prisoners? They could not help thinking that it did.

At all events, there was no sign of the robbers breaking camp. The camels lay undisturbed, the Arabs loafed and lounged idly among the palms. Abdurrahman stood like a statue gazing across the desert to the east.

It could scarcely be for pursuers, for enemies, that he was watching. At a hint of danger the desert thieves would have been in the saddle, fleeing for their worthless lives. For whom, for what, was the sheikh watching?

Then from the sunlit level of the sandy plain to the east two moving dots came in sight. They were evidently horsemen approaching the camp at a gallop, though at present mere moving specks in the great distance. Harry Wharton & Co. watched them with their hearts in their eyes. It was for these riders, it was clear, that the sheikh was waiting and watching. Who were they? What did their coming portend?

The thudding of hoofs was heard at last. Closer and clearer came the two galloping riders. One of them wore the Egyptian tarboosh, the other a white man's pith helmet. There was something familiar about both of them, more and more so as they drew nearer. But the schoolboys hardly dared to believe what their eyes told them.

"One of them's Maroudi!" said Bob in a low voice, breaking the tense silence.

"And the other—"

"Nunky!" said Lord Mauleverer quickly.

"And that means—" said Bob, with a deep breath.

"It must mean that we're saved!"

"The savefulness is terrific," chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Great and powerful is Maroudi!" grinned Hassan. "Oh, my lordly gentlemen, the day you gain the friendship of that great man is a day worthy to be marked with a white stone. It is Maroudi! There is no God but one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet!"

With a thudding of hoofs, a jingle of spurs and bridles, the two horsemen dashed up to the oasis and dismounted.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Golden Scarab Gives Up Its Secret!

THE Sheikh Abdurrahman salaamed low before Hilmi Maroudi. The Egyptian gave the juniors a glance and a smile, and then plunged into talk with the desert sheikh in Arabic. Sir Reginald Brooke came over to the juniors.

"Jolly glad to see you again, nunky!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"The gladfulness is terrific, esteemed and venerable sir!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"What-ho!" chuckled Bob.

Hassan, the dragoman, was salaaming to the old baronet as if he had a spring in his back. The dragoman almost capered with joy.

"Thank Heaven I find you safe, my boys," said Sir Reginald, "and thank Heaven again for such a friend as Mr. Maroudi!"

"Then it's all right?" asked Harry.

Sir Reginald smiled.

"I believe so, or I should not be here without help. Where we are, I have no idea, but Mr. Maroudi knows the desert as well as he knows the streets of Cairo. I gather that he has some influence over these wretches. I trust to him entirely. He is a wonderful man."

"And Bunter?" asked Bob. "Seen anything of Bunter?"

"Bunter is safe," said Sir Reginald.

"We came on him on the Nile and took him back to the dahabiyeh with us. He is there now. The troops are out from Wady Halfa searching for these villains, but they have, of course, no knowledge where to look for them. But for Mr. Maroudi—"

The schoolboys glanced towards the Egyptian. He was in deep talk with the sheikh. Evidently it was an amicable interview. Even the fierce, proud sheikh of the desert was treating the Egyptian with marked respect. No doubt "backsheesh" figured in the talk.

Abdurrahman, who had hired himself and his gang to the Greek for a great price, was no doubt prepared to betray the Greek for a greater price. Treachery came as easily to him as breathing. Fear of Maroudi's power counted for much; backsheesh, it was probable, counted for more. Obviously Maroudi had counted on success when he rode out with only a single companion to meet the robbers at the solitary oasis in the Libyan Desert. The schoolboys did not know, or care to know, the details of that talk, but they knew that Hilmi Maroudi had saved them.

"I was surprised, astounded, when Mr. Maroudi proposed to me to ride into the desert, and without armed forces," went on Sir Reginald. "But he pointed out that even if guided, the troops would have had no chance of running down such elusive scoundrels in their native desert; moreover, the desert Arabs are much more likely to kill their prisoners

than to allow them to be rescued. It seems that Mr. Maroudi dispatched a swift rider to reach these Arabs and detain them till he could arrive. All has gone as he told me, though I hardly dared to believe that it would be so. He is a wonderful man and a faithful friend. My dear, dear boys, you are saved!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Look!"

There was the sound of a struggle, and a yelling voice, hoarse with rage. Kalizelos, the Greek, had seen the arrival of the baronet and Mr. Maroudi from his tent, staring at them with amazed and unbelieving eyes. For several minutes the Greek stood like a man in a trance.

Then he rushed towards the sheikh. Three or four of the robbers, closing round, grasped his arms.

The Greek, mad with rage, struggled furiously.

Abdurrahman gave him one cold, careless glance over his shoulder and turned his head away again and resumed his conversation with Maroudi. The Egyptian did not deign to look at him at all.

Struggling, shrieking, foaming at the mouth with rage, realising at last that his treacherous allies had turned on him, the Greek tore and wrenched in the grasp of the Arabs.

He was borne to the ground, and a camel-rope was knotted round him, securing his arms and legs.

He lay a helpless prisoner under the palms, spitting like a cat with fury. His screaming voice rang through the oasis and echoed far on the desert. Abdurrahman turned his head again and snapped a word in Arabic. One of the robbers approached the Greek and struck him with the flat of a scimitar. It was a hint to be silent, and Kalizelos, grinding his teeth, was silent.

"Looks as if the jolly old Greek has lost this game, after all," remarked Lord Mauleverer.

"Just a few!" grinned Bob Cherry.

The conference between Maroudi and the sheikh ended at last. Abdurrahman salaamed low, evidently satisfied with the outcome. He called an order to his men and they ran to their camels. The long-legged beasts lurched up from the sand.

"They're going!" breathed Bob.

Abdurrahman mounted his black Barbary horse and placed himself at the head of the troop. Once more he saluted Mr. Maroudi, and then, with a clatter and a jingle, rode away into the desert, to the west, followed by his crew. With a thudding of hoofs, a squealing of camels the whole gang of robbers disappeared into the waste of sand.

Glad enough were the Greyfriars fellows to see them go.

Mr. Maroudi came up to the schoolboys with a smile on his dark, plump face.

"We meet again, in happy circumstances, my little friends," he said. "Now we have but to ride back to the Nile, and I have prevailed on that very great scoundrel, Abdurrahman, to leave you camels to ride. This is a happy day."

"You've saved us, sir," said Harry Wharton. "It's not easy to tell you how grateful we are!"

"Did you not save me, in my house at Cairo?" smiled Mr. Maroudi.

"It is a tit for a tat, as you say in the noble English language," chuckled Hassan.

"The gratitude of our ridiculous

selves is both terrific and preposterous, absurd sir!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Mr. Maroudi grinned.

Then his face became grave as he glanced at the writhing Greek. A gleam shot into his dark eyes.

"We have to deal with Kalizelos!" he said. "The crimes of this man have filled the cup to overflowing, and it is fitting that he should not live to do more evil."

"Oh gad!" exclaimed Lord Mauleverer. "Hold on, sir! That Johnny won't do any more harm. The scarab's lost."

Kalizelos writhed over and fixed his black eyes on the schoolboy earl. Mauleverer gave him a cheery nod.

"You may believe me now, old bean, though you're not a trustin' sort of Johnny," he said. "I told you the scarab had been pinched on the dahabiyeh. Even a doubtin' Thomas like you will believe me now you hear me tell my uncle so—what?"

The Greek made no reply.

"My dear boy," said Sir Reginald Brooke with a smile. "The scarab was lost, but it has been found. It was that stupid boy, Bunter, who removed it from the hiding-place on the dahabiyeh."

"Bunter!" exclaimed the juniors.

"Oh gad! If I don't kick that fat villain from one end of the dahabiyeh to the other—"

"He handed it over to me, and I have it here," said Sir Reginald, and he drew the Golden Scarab from his pocket.

"Great gad!"

In the old baronet's hand the Golden Scarab glistened in the sun. The Greek's eyes snapped as he saw it.

"That's the jolly old article!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Perhaps it's just as well, as things turned out, that that fat idiot played silly tricks with it. Kalizelos would have had it." He gave the Greek a grin. "Fool inclined to cough up the giddy old secret now, old thing?"

"Fool!" snarled the Greek.

"Give me ear, my friends," said Mr. Maroudi quietly. "It is known to us that the scarab has a secret—the secret of the Eye of Osiris. That secret Kalizelos has read in an ancient papyrus, and it is known only to him. That secret he will now reveal."

"Never!" hissed the Greek.

Maroudi stood looking down at the bound man with a calm, grave face.

"These young English lords are my friends," he said. "In this land of Egypt my power is great enough to protect them; but soon they return to their own country, and my arm is not long enough to reach to an island in the North Sea. If you live, O Man of Evil Deeds, you will follow them to their own land. You must die, Konstantinos Kalizelos."

The Greek stared up at him. He uttered no word.

"Mr. Maroudi—" exclaimed Wharton.

The Egyptian raised his hand.

"Do not speak, my little friend," he said gravely. "It is written that men of evil deeds shall die for the wrong they have done. The life of this wicked man is in my hand, and only on one condition will I spare it."

He spoke in Arabic to Selim.

The man from Shellal took his scimitar in hand and approached the Greek, who stared at him with dilated eyes. The keen, bare blade flashed in the sunlight as it was raised.

"Listen to me, O Kalizelos!" said Hilmi Maroudi. "You who know the secret of the scarab utter that secret to the young English lord, who is the possessor of the Scarab of A-Menah. You who know what was written by the scribe of A-Menah, speak your knowledge." He struck a match and held it up, burning with a steady flame in the stillness of the desert. "If he has not spoken by the time this match has burned out, you, Selim, strike off his head."

"On my head be it!" said Selim.

There was a terrible pause. The juniors would have spoken, but they knew that it was useless. Maroudi was their friend and protector, but he was master there, and he was grimly, irrevocably resolved. Only by giving up the secret could the Greek be made harmless; and if he did not give it up, it was death! Sir Reginald Brooke opened his lips, and closed them again. It was for Maroudi to give orders, and opposition was futile. The Egyptian was grim, and in terrible earnest.

The still flame burned down.

The Greek panted, and great drops of sweat came on his brow. The secret was dear to him, but life was dearer.

The match burned out.

There was a flash of sweeping steel as Selim swept up the scimitar for the fatal blow. A scream broke from the Greek.

"Hold! I will speak!"

Maroudi signed to the man from Shellal. The scimitar remained poised in the air.

"Speak!" said Maroudi coldly.

"What I have read in the papyrus is this," said the Greek, in a hollow voice. "The great diamond, the Eye of Osiris, is hidden within the scarab. This was written by the scribe of A-Menah for the guidance of his son, Menarsis! The Golden Scarab is hollow, and the Eye of Osiris is within."

The Egyptian gave him a keen look.

"If this be true, you live!" he said.

"Oh gad!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Anybody got a pair of nut-crackers?" The juniors laughed, relieved by the breaking of the tension.

Eager eyes were turned on the golden beetle.

The Greek's statement was simply

amazing; such a thought had never crossed the minds of the juniors. To all appearance, the Scarab of A-Menah was made of solid gold. Yet they knew that Kalizelos must be speaking the truth; he had spoken it only to save his life.

The scarab passed from hand to hand; but the keenest eye could detect no sign of an opening. Maroudi's eyes turned doubtfully on the Greek; those of Kalizelos, in terror, on the gleaming scimitar poised above his head.

"Unwind the head of the beetle," said Kalizelos hoarsely. "Thus it is written in the papyrus—I know no more."

Watched breathlessly by all the juniors, Lord Mauleverer gripped the head of the beetle in finger and thumb and attempted to unwind it. For a full minute he failed—then there was a movement in the metal, and the golden head of the scarabeus unwound. It came off in Mauly's fingers, leaving the golden body of the beetle open.

From the opening came a dazzling flash, almost blinding in its brilliancy, from the hidden contents of the scarab. It was the flash of the great diamond that human eyes had not seen since the reign of Rameses the Second—the flash of the "Eye of Osiris."

Lord Mauleverer tipped it out into his palm.

It lay there, scintillating and blazing in the sun; a huge diamond, glowing with strange lights. The schoolboys stared at it breathlessly.

Kalizelos gave a groan. He was looking, at last, on the Eye of Osiris that he had so long and desperately sought; but he was looking his last on it. The great diamond, worth the ransom of many kings, was lost to him for ever.

"It is the Eye of Osiris!" said Hilmi Maroudi, in a hushed voice. "For three thousand years it has lain hidden—and now it is yours, my young friend."

Lord Mauleverer shook his head.

"Not mine!" he said quietly. "This diamond is the property of the Egyptian Government, and will be handed over to them."

"Oh, Mauly!" gasped Bob Cherry.

The Egyptian gave Mauleverer a very curious look.

"It is true," he said. "There is a law in Egypt concerning treasures that are found! Yet—"

"Fool!" muttered Kalizelos.

Lord Mauleverer glanced at the Greek with a smile.

"Take it, Mr. Maroudi," he said. "I can trust you to hand it over in the proper quarter! You approve, nunky?"

"My dear boy!" was all Sir Reginald could say.

"Take it, Mr. Maroudi! Hassan's got his eye on it already—"

"Oh, sar!" gasped the dragoman.

"I will take it and it shall be placed in the Museum at Cairo," said Mr. Maroudi gravely. "And there shall be an inscription that it was found and given to the people of Egypt by a noble English lord!"

"Like the scarab, Mr. Kalizelos?" asked Lord Mauleverer politely. "You can have it now, if you like—a parting present."

"Fool!"

Lord Mauleverer laughed, and slipped the hollow scarab into his pocket.

"I'll keep it as a jolly old souvenir," he said.

The Greek was released and allowed to take his camel. With a black and bitter brow, he rode away from the oasis and disappeared from the sight of the Greyfriars fellows—and they were glad to see the last of him.

"I say, you fellows!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"You've got back!" grunted Bunter, as the juniors came on board the dahabiyeh the following day with Mr. Maroudi and Sir Reginald, and the smiling dragoman. "Had a rough time, what? Did they give you anything to eat?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I saved the scarab for you, anyhow, Mauly," said Billy Bunter. "I suppose old Brooke's told you. Foresight, you know, and presence of mind—"

"You fat villain!" said Lord Mauleverer. "I was goin' to kick you—"

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

"But it's all right! We've found the jolly old treasure."

"Oh crikey! Where is it?" gasped Bunter.

"In Mr. Maroudi's pocket."

"You silly ass! I don't believe in trusting these niggers! I say, Mauly, old man, I'll look after it for you."

"Mauly's handed it over to jolly old Egypt!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "It's going into the museum at Cairo."

"The silly idiot!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly dummy—I mean, look here, old chap, get it away from that nigger and give it to a pal, and I say—yarrroooooop! Leave off kicking me, you beasts! I can call a nigger a nigger if I like, and I can jolly well say—yarrroooooop!"

Harry Wharton & Co. sailed back in the dahabiyeh to Assuan, where they took a kind and friendly farewell of Mr. Maroudi. From Assuan the train bore them to Alexandria, where they took the steamer for home. The holiday in Egypt was over—and they all agreed that it had been a great time! Still, they were glad that they were going to see Greyfriars again, and they looked forward cheerily to the new term at the old school.

THE END.

(That ends Harry Wharton & Co.'s holiday in Egypt. Next week they return to Greyfriars again, and are starred in the first grand story of a new and sensational series. The yarn is entitled: "THE WORST BOY IN THE FORM!" Tell all your pals about it.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,284.

MAGNIFICENT NEW "MAGNET" PROGRAMME!

Starting in Our Record-Breaking Free Gift Issue Next Saturday.

"THE WORST BOY IN THE FORM."

By FRANK RICHARDS.

The first splendid yarn of a fine new series, featuring popular Harry Wharton in a sensational role.

"THE RED FALCON!"

By ARTHUR STEFFENS.

The thrill-packed chapters of this old-time story of highwayman adventure will grip you from first line to last.

The "Greyfriars Herald."

A new edition of the "Herald" makes its appearance, telling in its amazing and amusing way all the latest news about Greyfriars.

"LINESMAN CALLING."

By "LINESMAN."

A new feature of interesting facts about play and players of the football world, written by an expert who will also answer every week any Soccer problems readers send him.

This great number of the MAGNET, containing as it does the first SIX SUPER STAMPS of our Wonderful Free Gift Collecting Scheme, will "sell like hot cakes!"

See Your Newsagent About Your Copy Without Delay.

The Red Falcon!



By
Arthur Steffens.

READ THIS FIRST.

Convicted of robbing the Earl of Huntford of a diamond star, Hal Lovett and Jerry McLean are conveyed to the convict hulk *Ethalion*, anchored at Woolwich—Hal to serve a sentence of seven years and McLean to await deportation. As the result of a prearranged plan, the convicts fire the ship, and Hal and Jerry escape in the blackness of the night, eventually reaching Blackheath, where they stay at an inn named the *Swan With Two Necks*. Hal and Jerry are returning from a trip to London when suddenly their coach is held up by a highwayman.

Held Up!

THE coachman's foot stepped on the brake and jammed it down on the iron-shod wheels. The postboy behind, searching for a weapon, was ordered fiercely to "Drop that and get down!"—an order he promptly obeyed. Then the horseman, whose eyes glittered like diamonds through the hole in the crude mask which hid his face, came up closer, with his second pistol levelled.

"Drop those reins!" he said to the driver, who was by this time shivering like a jelly.

The man obeyed.

"Now I'll trouble you gentlemen to drop your money in my hat!" said the highwayman sternly. "You may add your watches and your jewels, or anything of value you may carry! I'll advise you gentlemen inside who are searching for a pistol that I am fingering a hair trigger, and that my gun is liable to go off without warning! Ah! You are sitting up! That's better!"

The coach-robber urged his horse—a bony and sorry-looking steed, Hal was quick to notice—close up to the coach. Into the hat he held crown downwards the trembling passengers began to drop their money and their valuables.

Under the chin of one fat man inside the coach, who was more obstinate than the others, the highwayman jerked the cold steel barrel of his pistol.

"Come, come!" he roared. "You can't tell me a guinea is all you've got! Feel in your pockets, friend, and find some more, or my gun shall pop!"

With a savage oath, the passenger added a bag-purse to the rest of the loot, then subsided on the padded seat in a kind of faint.

Having ridden all round the coach, the highwayman came back to the front seat and covered McLean with his pistol extended at arm's length.

"Now, sirs, you look well-to-do!" he cried. "What about you?"

The coolness and daring of the robber thrilled Hal. But there was more about him and his horse which startled the boy. That bony steed, quite unsuited to the daring work of its master, was none other, Hal knew, than the wretched animal Jerry McLean had rescued from the shafts of the farmer's cart when he robbed the man of the clothes—the horse which had enabled him in safety to reach the *Swan With Two Necks*.

And not only was the horse familiar, but the rasping voice of the highwayman as well.

Hal gripped Jerry by the arm.

"You must know that voice, Jerry!" he whispered excitedly.

The highwayman was growing impatient. To rob a stage coach single-handed was perilous work. One had to be expeditious and stand no nonsense to get away with it.

"Come, gentlemen!" said the horseman, beginning to show anger. "Your money, IF YOU PLEASE!"

But Jerry did not hand out the little money he had left. Instead, he leant forward on his box seat and cried:

"Jack Pryse, don't you know me?"

If the driver of the coach heard, McLean did not care. Neither did Hal.

As for the highwayman—with a loud, bellowing laugh, he lowered his pistol-arm.

"Jerry, by all that's wonderful!" he cried. "And the kid, too! You may keep your money Jerry. Kid, I'll be

seeing you later. Now, my bonnie mare, come up; we must away!"

Even as he swung his bony horse round there came a clattering of hoofs back along the way the coach had come. It was the echoing beat of horses ridden hard.

At that moment the moon swung out of a bank of cloud and silvered the highway. Looking back, Hal saw a posse of men coming along the road, leaving a cloud of dust behind them. He caught the glint of metal, and saw scabbards swinging as the horsemen rode along.

Then the coachman began to yell.

"It's the Bow Street patrol! They'll catch the thief, by jiminy!"

Setting a leg up on the lower step, he reached out for a leather hold. As he did so, however, Hal leapt into the driver's seat, gathered up the reins, and began to pull the horses round. They obeyed in huddled, prancing confusion.

"Cut your stick, Jack!" shouted Jerry McLean.

Waiting for no further urging, Pryse rode his sorry horse into the night.

Hal had by this time got the leaders dancing up a grassy slope which bordered the road, and, yanking at the reins, he brought them round so violently that the coach reared up on its near-side wheels only.

The coachman, thrown into the dust as the coach moved, was scrambling to his feet, fuming wildly.

"Dang it!" he yelled. "You'll have the whole lot over!"

Which was exactly what Hal wanted to do—and did. One last mighty pull at the reins at the crucial moment, and over went the coach. It struck the ground with a rending crash, and the horses came down in a struggling heap with it.

Jerry and Hal were hurled from their box seat to the ground; passengers came tumbling from the top seats in a panic-stricken jumble: the men inside could

be heard shrieking and cursing as they struggled to get free.

Then up came the posse of Bow Street Runners, to find the whole road blocked and no way of getting through.

Jack Pryse, who had helped Hal and Jerry to escape from the convict hulk, had got a flying start.

As Hal picked himself up from the road and brushed the dust from his clothes he found himself staring into the cold, calculating eyes and grim, set face of Martin Cosgrave, the Bow Street Runner!

A Narrow Escape!

HAL LOVETT held his breath as he looked into the stern eyes of Cosgrave. The man's eyes seemed to bore right through him, to read his mind.

"I believe," said the Runner, bending in the saddle as he reached out for Hal's shoulder, "I've seen you before!"

Hal did not answer. He wanted to turn and run, but the way was barred by the overturned coach and the four struggling horses, who were plunging madly as they tried to regain their feet.

Hal believed that Martin Cosgrave had recognised him, and felt that he was lost.

"What madman overturned the coach?" Cosgrave demanded, drawing back the clutching hand and staring hard at Hal.

"Oh, it was the coachman!" answered Jerry McLean, who had sprung to safety when the coach crashed, and now loomed up beside Hal. "The fellow lost his head."

The coachman did not hear, for he was bent double trying to loosen straps and buckles and free the harnessed horses, the capes of his great coat floating over his ears.

"H'm!" grunted Martin Cosgrave, staring hard at McLean, and taking in appraisingly the faded finery which Jerry had that day bought at Isaac Sloman's, in London.

Hal Lovett bit nervously at his underlip. Had Cosgrave recognised Jerry, too, he wondered. He had been present at the trial at the Old Bailey. Often he had talked to Hal in the streets that abut on Covent Garden.

But the Bow Street Runner seemed suddenly to remember that the coach had been robbed. Swinging his fine horse round, he pointed in the direction Jack Pryse had gone.

"After him," he cried, "and take him dead or alive! Don't wait there, gaping like a lot of schoolboys! Get round that coach and ride him down!"

And he himself, since they were slow to move, pushed his horse among the others, gained the bank beside the road, and went slithering over it.

In a moment he was by, and the others made after him, finding a path in single file. Soon the last of the Redbreasts—as the Runners were popularly called—had scrambled past the barrier, the whole posse vanishing in a clatter of pounding hoof-beats and a cloud of flying dust.

And with their going the coachman gave tongue.

"Which of you overturned my coach?" he wanted to know. "Where's Jim? Hey, Jim! Come and help us get these horses up, and to right the coach!"

"Coach won't run no more to-night, Walter," answered the guard, as he came up holding his dented horn in gloved hands. "The rear axle's broke."

"Dang it! And darn it!" howled the driver, as he flung his hat down on the dusty road. "Did ye ever hear the like?"

And then the passengers joined in the chorus of lamentation, cursing the high-

wayman, blaming the driver, and wanting to know how they were going to reach Maidstone that night.

"Reckon some of you'll have to walk," said the coachman. "The Billings' coach won't have room for all of ye!" And then he caught sight of Hal, and strode up to him angrily. "Here's the one who toppled the coach over! Oh, he's a dark 'un, he is! He was workin' in wi' the highwayman!"

But Jerry McLean intervened.

"I'd advise you to keep your tongue quiet," he said. "The horses were scared. All my friend did was to try to quiet them."

Then Jerry drew Hal away.

"Let's get our luggage, lad," he said, "and we'll foot it to the inn."

And so they dragged their chests out of the bootikin, and shouldered them, and together they started upon their long walk to the Swan With Two Necks. The wooden chests were heavy, but they did not mind. And as soon as they were out of earshot and the overturned coach had been swallowed by a bend in the road, Jerry began to laugh.

"Fancy the highwayman being Jack Pryse, Hal, boy!" he said. "Jack's alive. I reckoned he must have got away from the burning hulk, but it's good to know he is safe."

"The Runners are splendidly mounted. I'm afraid they'll run him down," said Hal, as he swung the heavy chest from shoulder to shoulder without even changing stride.

"H'm! They have the pace of him. But Jack's cute. He can look after himself. I don't think they'll take him. And, thanks to your blocking the way with the overturned coach, he got a long start. That's not what is troubling me, boy."

"What then?" asked Harry.

"Cosgrave knew us. I saw the gleam of recognition in his eyes. Hal, he's the cleverest of all the Bow Street Runners. And since he did not apprehend us, I'm wondering what he is scheming in his mind."

They swung along with raking strides, two gentlemen of the town, to judge from their appearance, and each one weighted down by a heavy trunk.

"Hal," said McLean presently, "did

you once tell me that Cosgrave liked you?"

"He seemed to. He used to talk to me whenever he passed my father's shop in Wych Street."

"And he saw that red falcon tattooed on your chest?"

"Yes."

"Did he ever refer to that?"

"Only once when he asked me how I came by it."

"Well, in my opinion, he gave us a chance to-night," said McLean, "because if he recognised us, he must know we both escaped from the convict hulk Ethalion. Then why did he give us the chance?"

But since Hal Lovett could not answer him, Jerry McLean lapsed into silence, and in this manner, trudging manfully on, they at last reached the Swan With Two Necks, and dumped the chests down within the hall, only too glad to ease the muscles of their aching arms.

In the hall they found mine host, Peter Davey, waiting for them, and holding in his palm a great silver turnip of a watch whose dial Peter eyed critically.

"Why, what's to do, gentlemen?" cried Peter. "Where's the coach? I've got a bowl of rum freshly brewed for the passengers. But not a sound of horn or rumble of wheel have we heard, though she's been overdue this hour past."

Jerry McLean told the story of the highway robbery, to which Peter Davey listened intently, whilst the sinister figure of Tom Kinch, the potman, hovered in the background.

A while later, over a bite of supper and a tankard of foaming ale, Jerry told Peter Davey more about the robbery, and told how he had recognised Jack Pryse, and how Jack had been responsible for his and Hal's escape from the convict hulk.

Peter nodded his grand old head approvingly.

"If your friend is one of the right kind, I'm glad he got away from that bloodhound Cosgrave," said he. "And if you think Cosgrave guessed who you were, I'd advise you to be on your guard, sir. Perhaps you would be wise to leave my inn."

"We'll stay another day, Peter," said Jerry, as with a yawn and a stretch, he prepared himself for bed.

The Runners Arrive!

IN the morning Hal and Jerry were up and about almost as soon as the bustle and clatter in the inn began.

They ate a hearty breakfast in the coffee-room, during which they heard the lively chatter of travellers who passed in and out of the inn yard in a constant stream.

And with it all they gathered some news.

None of the passengers on the overturned Maidstone coach had gone on to their destination. The highwayman had got away with a rich haul. And, what was more, he had got the better of Cosgrave and his Bow Street Runners.

Jerry dropped a hand on Hal's across the table and winked.

"Did you hear that now?" he asked.

A little while afterwards they gathered from the ostler how the highwayman had hoodwinked the Runners.

"It seems he was a desperate cove, sir," said the ostler, as he chewed at a pipe of straw, "and a new 'un at the game, they say. Any rate, 'e's got nerve. He's the one who robbed the farmer out on Blackheath t'other night, for he was ridin' the stolen 'oss, a bag o' bones only fit for the knacker's yard. And 'ere's

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,284.



The GEM 2^d

SKIMPOLE the
Deep Sea Diver

You will laugh until your sides ache over this ripping yarn of Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's. Skimpoole, the Freak of the Shell, tries his hand at salvage work, and the result is—one long laugh for you! Make sure of this week's issue of

The GEM

Now on Sale . . . 2d.

where 'is cleverness comes in. 'E 'ad a long start, but the Runners were finely mounted and on fresh 'osses. They rode him down. But one of them, an officer named Martin, eager to get his man, gained a long lead on t'others. And what does the 'ighwayman do?"

"What did he do?" asked Jerry lazily, his hands set deep in his pockets and his feet spread wide, whilst he grinned happily at Hal.

"Slips his 'oss in amongst the trees on Shooter's 'ill, waits till the Runner rides up; then dashes out on him; ducks the bullet, and tips him out the saddle on to his head as clean as a whussle. And then, the Runner being stunned, he pinches his fresh 'oss, and gets clean away on it!"

"Smart!" said Jerry.

"Ay," muttered the ostler, shaking his almost bald head, "I'll say it was smart: But a batch of reinforcements have galloped out of Lunnon town, and, what wi' highwayman abroad, and convicts at large, they're scouring every bush and copse and cottage and barn the county through. For Mr. Cosgrave, they say, is the last man to take it lying down."

Soon after lunch a coach arrived, and with it a messenger in charge of the saddles which Isaac Sloman had promised to send. Jerry tipped the messenger, unpacked the saddles, and had them carried out to the yard.

And there he told the ostler to saddle Galloper so that the horse should be ready for the road in case of emergency. Jerry had given measurements with accuracy, and the saddle was a perfect fit.

"Didn't know you wuz a military gent, sir," said the ostler, as he remarked upon the pistol holsters.

"I am not, Bob," answered Jerry, "but with highwaymen and escaped convicts around, I intend to go armed when I ride abroad."

Hal was not yet provided with a horse, but landlord Peter Davey lent him a smart grey, and this horse also was saddled. The holsters were filled. McLean and Hal packed black masks in their riding coats, and lists of inns and friendly landlords up and down the country which Peter Davey provided were pocketed as a further precaution.

The afternoon came and began to wane, and the only arrivals at the Swan With Two Necks were gossips from the villages, who came to talk over the coach robbery.

So evening came, and, feeling easier in their minds, Jerry and Hal sat down to dinner. Here Peter joined them.

"I tell you what it is, Tom Kinch," said Peter, angered by the long face of the man. "I shall have to give you marching orders. It's time I got another potman."

Kinch did not answer, but the look he shot at Peter and Jerry and Hal was full of venom.

Make Absolutely Certain

of getting the first

SIX SUPER STAMPS GIVEN FREE

in Next Week's Bumper Number!

Order your copy of the
MAGNET right away!

Jerry had just helped Hal to a second serving of the prime, juicy rump steak which formed the basis of the meal when of a sudden there was a great hubbub and clatter in the yard. Hal put down his knife and fork, and drew back the curtain which screened the window.

Through the thick, small panes of glass he saw that the yard was full of horsemen. His keen eyes roamed over three-cornered hats and red waistcoats. His ears rang to the echo of clanking swords, ringing spurs, and voices raised almost to a shout. For a moment he sat as if frozen to his seat.

"Jerry," gasped Hal, as soon as he had recovered from the shock, "the Bow Street Runners!"

Peter Davey's chin drooped, his jovial, ruddy face lengthened. But in a moment he was himself again.

"Better not be trapped in your pew, gentlemen," he whispered.

Jerry McLean and Hal scuttled out of it, abandoning their meal.

"Come with me upstairs," whispered Peter, taking Hal by the arm. "The Swan is full of bolt holes."

But before they could get clear of the room there was a surge of men, who entered from the yard and from the front of the inn simultaneously, men in blue coats and scarlet waistcoats, who walked with ringing steps.

And in front of those who entered from the yard came Tom Kinch, who, pointing at Jerry and Hal, said, in a shrill, squeaking treble:

"There they are, Mr. Cosgrave! They're convicts escaped from the hulk Ethalion. Arrest 'em, and give me the reward!"

Jerry and Hal were surrounded in a moment by strapping, broad-shouldered men who eyed them fixedly. Some were jeering, some were smiling, others looked grim.

Martin Cosgrave alone betrayed no sign of emotion. His keen, sharp eyes looked into Hal's, into McLean's.

"H'm!" remarked the celebrated Bow Street Runner. "This man declares you are escaped convicts. What are your names?"

"My name is Palmer," said Jerry carelessly, and without hesitation. "This is my younger brother Ted. We live at Canterbury, and are riding there to-morrow."

Mr. Cosgrave's eyes wrinkled into a grim smile, his lips at the same time curving downward.

"Indeed!" he said. "And what would you say if I told you your name was Jerry McLean, and that your brother's name was Lovett, eh?"

His right hand sought his pocket and dived beneath the big flap. It came out again gripping a staff with a crown on top of it, and this he held up to view.

"Jerry McLean and Hal Lovett," he said briskly, "I arrest you in the King's name!"

(Hal and Jerry are in a tight corner now, through the treacherous Tom Kinch. Don't miss the thrilling developments in next Saturday's extra special number of the MAGNET. And, remember, chums, the first SIX SUPER STAMPS will be presented FREE in this issue.)

GROSE'S, LUDGATE - CIRCUS, LONDON



FOOTBALL JERSEYS

All Colours and Designs.

12/9 per doz.

Send for Illustrated List. Post Free, 2d.



GEO. GROSE & CO., 8, New Bridge St., London, E.C.4

BE TALL

Your Height increased in 14 days or Money Back. Complete Course, 5/-. Booklet free privately. —STEBBING SYSTEM, 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.

The "BRITANNIA" AIR PISTOL

A British-produced weapon upholding all the traditions of BRITISH WORKMANSHIP. Positively the most accurate MACHINE-MADE pistol ever produced at the price. Beautifully finished. Shoots with great force and penetration, being made entirely of BEST STEEL. It will wear for ever. Unrivalled for In and Outdoor use, Target and Rat Shooting. Price, GUN BLUED ... 8/6 each. With supply of PLATED ... 9/-. Darts and Slugs.

POST FREE Send for List of Guns, etc., Post Free, from the Maker—FRANK CLARKE, 39/41, Lower Loveday St., Birmingham.

BLUSHING,

shyness, "Nerves," Self-consciousness, Worry Habit, Unreasonable Fears, etc., cured or money back! Complete Course, 5/-. Details—L. A. STEBBING, 28, Dean Road, London, N.W.2.

Ventriloquists' Instruments given FREE to all sending 7d. (P.O.) for latest Magic Trick and list of Jokes, Novelties, etc.—B. Fearing, 25, Lawson Road, Colwyn Bay.

HEIGHT INCREASED In Thirty Days. No apparatus, no medicine, ordinary habits retained. Complete Course, 5/-. Full particulars and testimonials, stamp.—MELVIN A. STRONG, REDNAL, BIRMINGHAM.

BLUSHING.—FREE to all sufferers, particulars of a proved home treatment that quickly removes all embarrassment, and permanently cures blushing and flushing of the face and neck. Enclose stamp to pay postage to—Mr. A. TEMPLE (Specialist), Palace House, 128, Shaftesbury Avenue (2nd Floor), London, W.1. (Established over 25 years.)



MY GREAT OFFER

Write for my free Bargain Lists of the best ALL-BRITISH Cycles. 14 DAYS' APPROVAL. CARRIAGE PAID. Cash price £3 : 10 : 0, or terms. All accessories FREE.

2
WEEKLY

Edw. O'Brien THE WORLD'S LARGEST CYCLE DEALER 3817-COVENTRY.

300 STAMPS FOR 6d. (Abroad 1/-), including Airpost, Barbados, Old India, Nigeria, New South Wales, Gold Coast, etc.—W. A. WHITE, Engine Lane, LYB, Stourbridge.

BLUSHING, Shyness, Weak Nerves, Lack of Self-confidence, completely cured in 28 days. Complete treatise, 6/- (Personal Magnetism included).—Clives Institute, Hargock Hse., Colwyn Bay.

BE STRONG

I promise you Robust Health, Doubled Strength, Stamina, and Dashing Energy in 30 days or money back! My amazing 4-in-1 Course adds 10-25 ins. to your muscular development (with 2 ins. on Chest and 1 in. on Arms), also brings an Iron Will, Perfect Self-control, Virile Manhood, Personal Magnetism. Surprise your friends! Complete Course, 5/-. Details free, privately.—STEBBING INSTITUTE (A), 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.

BE TALLER!

Increased my own height to 6ft. 3ins. Treatment £2 2s. Details 2jd. stamp.—A. B. M. ROSS, Height Specialist, SCARBOROUGH, ENGLAND.

MOUSTACHES are again fashionable. Grow a manly moustache in a few days with MARVEL moustache-grower. 1/6, posted.—Marvel Labs., 145, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

FINE FREE GIFT!—30 FRENCH COLONIALS, UNUSED, VARIOUS, TO BUYERS from Approvals. (Usual discount.) Send 1jd. stamp.—MILLER (U.J.), 9, Lynton Road, Kilburn, London. (Abroad Gift only, send 1/- P.O.)

MAN-SIZE

My Two Illustrated Books show a simple, quick way to be TALLER and STRONGER. Write TO-DAY for FREE copies and BB MAN-SIZE CARNE Institute, Rhiwbina, Cardiff, S.W.

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

"SAMSON" STRONG of ST. SAM'S!

By Dicky Nugent.

JACK JOLLY & CO., of the Fourth at St. Sam's, were standing at the school gates one fine half-holiday, wondering how to spend the afternoon without spending any money, when a weird newcomer rolled up on the scene.

The newcomer was dressed in school clothes and a cap. But the funny thing about him was that he stood at least 6 feet 3 inches in his socks. He had a grato, bull-like neck, a beefy face, colliflower ears, and leg-of-mutton fists.

"Grate pip!" eggshelmed Jack Jolly, rubbing his eyes in astonishment. "This chap's a grato—a veritable Garner! Yet he's dressed in school clothes! Who can he be, I wonder?" "He's going to speak to us," said Frank Fearless. "Perhaps we shall find out!"

As Frank finished speaking, the weird stranger stopped in front of them. "Hi, you brats!" he said, in a ruff, savage voice. "Show me where I can find the 'cadmaster!'" "Brat yourself!" flashed back Jack Jolly, undaunted by the newcomer's tremendous size. "Who are you, anyway?"

The big fellow seemed quite taken aback by Jack Jolly's fearless retort, and he clenched his fists, while grato noddies stood out on his forehead, as though he was tempted to give the kapitan of the Fourth a savage, brutal punch on the dial. But he evidently changed his mind again, for he unclenched his fists and allowed the noddies to sit down again.

"My name's Meakin Mild!" he growled. "I'm a new boy at this 'ere college, and I want to see the 'cadmaster!" "My hat!" "Where does 'e hang out?" asked Meakin Mild, with renewed fierceness. "Over there, old bean!" replied Frank Fearless, pointing to the Head's house. Jack Jolly & Co. watched the egg-strange stranger out of site with feelings that were too deep for words.

"I fancy we're not going to like this new chap," murmured Jack Jolly, when Meakin Mild had disappeared into the Head's house. "There's something peculiar about him—something sinister!"

While the juniors were discussing the new boy, Meakin Mild was being ushered into the presence of the Head. His behaviour in front of the majestic Dr. Birchmell, however, was in vivid contrast with his behaviour in front of Jack Jolly & Co. He fairly cringed and grovelled as the Head swept his eagle eye over him.

"Please, sir," he said, "I should very much like to join your school as a junior skoller."

"Bust me!" murmured Dr. Birchmell, eyeing the newcomer in grato astonishment. "How old are you, my man—I mean, my boy?" "Please, sir, I'm fifteen next birthday!"

The Magnet Library—No. 1,284.



"Well, I'm jiggered! I should have taken you for fifty," at least!" said the Head. "Anyway, I'm afraid it's impossible; you have to apply years in advance to get into a famous school like St. Sam's."

Meakin Mild frowned for a moment. Then his face brightened up a bit again, and he dived a large hand into his pocket and drew out a thick wad of crisp, russet notes.

"I forgot to mention, sir," he said, "I have plenty of cash on me," and I am prepared to pay in advance."

Dr. Birchmell's eyes fixed rather greedily on those notes, and his manner changed noticeably. "Ahem! Why didn't you say so before?" he asked. "If that is the case, of course, I can perhaps make an exception for once. Shall we say five pounds for the first week?"

"That'll suit me all right, sir!" grinned Meakin Mild, counting out the notes with a grimy fourfinger. "Ere you are—five pun!"

The Head snatched the five notes and transferred them to his pocket, regarding Meakin Mild rather queerly as he did so. "Thanks!" he said. "I must say, judging by what I have heard of you, so far, that the fier will be earned. Your grammar is really shocking. Fancy saying 'five pun'! Why, any idiot knows the correct expression is 'five quid—I know it myself!"

"Sorry, sir!" grinned Meakin Mild. "Well, well, we shall soon lick you into shape, I suppose!" sighed the Head. "You will be placed in the Fourth Form to begin with!"

Five minutes later Meakin Mild was walking out of the Head's study a registered skoller of St. Sam's. He didn't look a bit like a fellow who would soon be licked into shape. On the contrary, he looked the kind of fellow who would soon want to lick St. Sam's into shape himself!

Lickham could only stare at the new skoller. "Meakin Mild!" he gasped. "You've said that once already, old cocker!" "I growled Meakin. "Wol-gor want?" "Few!" wistled the Fourth. Mr. Lickham seemed to be on the verge of paralysis.

"Meakin Mild!" he roared. "I was warned by the 'cadmaster that you were a somewhat pekkhar boy, who has had no education or tuition in good manners. But for that circumstance, I should have you very severely!" "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Meakin. "You'd walk into trouble if you did!" "What?" Mr. Lickham flew into a towering rage, picked up his cane, and approached Meakin. "Bend over, boy!" he thundered. To the utter amazement of the master of the Fourth, Meakin Mild wrenched the cane from his hand. An instant later the surprising new boy went one step further.

such brutal methods on a meek lad! Kindly leave him alone for the future!" Then he turned to Meakin Mild and whispered: "By the way, Mild, what about setting up for your second week in advance?"

"Pleasure, I'm sure!" grinned Meakin Mild, passing over a crisp, russet five. "That right?" "Right as rain, thanks!" smiled the Head. "Now return to your desk, Mild, and if Mr. Lickham or anybody else tries to bully you, just come and see me!"

With that, the Head rustled out, leaving Mr. Lickham and the Fourth almost overcome. It was clear to everyone now how matters stood. Meakin Mild was an ally of the Head, and was evidently being given a free hand to do just as he liked. The outlook for the Fourth was black indeed!

Seeing Mr. Lickham by the scruff of the neck, he lifted him clean off his feet, and started belabouring him for all he was worth! A veritable rain of blows descended on the unfortunate Form master's anatomy, and Mr. Lickham emitted a series of wild howls.

"Yarooo! Yarooo! Ow-wow-wow!" Jack Jolly started to his feet. "I say, you chaps, we can't allow this!" he cried. "Reskew, St. Sam's!" "What?" "The Fourth didn't intend to sit idly by and watch manslaughter committed before their eyes. They leaped over the desks to the front of the class, and faroly flung themselves at Meakin Mild.

How the contest would have gone can only be conjectured, for before it had really started Dr. Birchmell rushed into the Form-room. "Bless my sole! What over's the meaning of this here?" he asked, in shocked, though cultured, accents. "Back to your desks at once, the lot of you! Mr. Lickham! Kindly eggshelme the meaning of this riot!"

"It's this—this hooligan!" gasped Mr. Lickham, pointing a trembling finger at the gigantic new boy. "He started walloping me with my own cane!" Dr. Birchmell frowned. "You are using strong language, Lickham! Let me tell you that I have a very high opinion of Mild; if he set about you, I'm pretty sure he had good cause!"

"Quite right, sir!" said Meakin Mild. "That old gent wanted to cano me—me, you know!" "Preposterous!" eggshelmed Dr. Birchmell. "I wonder you're not ashamed of yourself, Lickham, using

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

say here, that's not his name at all! Read this!"

The amazed Fourth-Formers read the paragraph underneath the foto. This is what they saw:

"Above is a fotograph of 'Samson' Strong, a notorious criminal, who varies the monotony of 'all-in' wrestling by indulging in freckwont highway robberies with violence. The police are anxious to get in touch with Strong, who was last seen near Muggle-ton, after raising a costumer's, where he pinched an outsize in skool suits."

"Grate pip! Then that's the mystery about him!" gasped Merry. "He's not a skoolboy at all, but a fugitive from justice!"

"I'm going to wring up the perlice!" declared Jack Jolly. The young kapitan was as good as his word. He got on to Inspector Smart, of the Muggleton Perlice, and in a very short space of time a perlice-ran was routing up the carriage-drive to the Skool House.

"Quick! There's your man!" said Jack Jolly, who was waiting for them at the top of the steps. Before Samson Strong could say "Nife!" the peckers were upon him!

Dr. Birchmell's face, when he was told that his favorite pupil was an old lag, was a site for gods, men, and little fishes.

"Villan! Skoundrel! Double-dread dooeeer!" he cried, shaking a bony fist at the Carnera of St. Sam's. "How dare you besmirch the fare name of this grato skool with your evil prozessor? Avauant! Take him away, inspector, and throw him into your deepest and darkest dunnion!"

The green eyes of Samson Strong gleamed as he heard that stern speech. He was thinking of the fere the Head had been very pleased to take from him only a few hours since.

"Mite I ave a word with you afore I go, sir?" he asked humbly. Dr. Birchmell eyed him rather craftily, wondering whether he was going to hand over the swag into his keeping.

"Very well; release him for a minute, inspector." Inspector Smart nodded, and released Samson Strong, who then went close up to the Head. Instead of whispering and handing over the munny, as the Head had hoped would happen, the criminal seized Dr. Birchmell by the beard, yanked him off his feet, and started swinging him round and round in a circle. When he did let go, eventually, the Head's speed was so tremendous that he flew through the air above the heads of the spectators, to land with a terrific crash in the branches of one of the trees!

"Yarooo!" shrieked Dr. Birchmell from that dizzy hie. "There! Perhaps that'll lern you not to turn agin a man arter you've bin taking 'is munny!" said "Meakin Mild." "Now, inspector, I am ready to take my grool!" And the Carnera of St. Sam's stepped into the perlice-ran to be taken away to his robly-deerved punishment. It is hardly necessary to add—but we will add it, all the same—that St. Sam's breathed a grate sigh of relief to see the back of him!

The Magnet Library—No. 1,284.