

BILLY BUNTER IS FUNNIER THAN EVER!

THE GREYFRIARS STOWAWAY!

By **FRANK RICHARDS**



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The GREYFRIARS HERALD



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CAPTURED BY CANNIBALS!

A "Sensational" Story of Schoolboy Adventure, Introducing JACK JOLLY & Co., of St. Sam's, and Their Scramble of a Headmaster—DOCTOR BIRCHEMALL.

By DICKY NUGENT

"Fow!" wissled Jack Jolly. "What a nite!"

"You're right, old chap," said Frank Fearless. "I only wish we had Kaptin Goodfellow back on the bridge instead of our headmaster, Dr. Birchermall!"

And Merry and Bright joined in, from their seats in the cabin, with a rowful "Hear, hear!"

It really was a fowl nite, and although the chums of St. Sam's were by no means chicken-hearted, they could not help feeling that the storm was nocking the stuffing out of the good ship Mary Ann.

Mr. Fearless' yacht was the plaything of the elements, and the elements seemed to be playing some fine old games with her! Her progress was in sudden darts, and all the loose objects on board were flying about like skittles, while never for a moment did the vessel cease to pitch and toss.

With Kaptin Goodfellow present it would have been all serene. Kaptin Goodfellow was a real brick, and if he had been in charge Jack Jolly & Co. would have felt as safe as houses. But Kaptin Goodfellow, like Mr. Ferdinand Fearless and every other reliable man on board, had mysteriously disappeared, leaving the yacht to the tender mercies of Pete Leary and his mutineers.

What was even more disturbing was the fact that the mutineers, on the orders of Hymer Kerr, Mr. Fearless' raskally rival, had made Dr. Birchermall kaptin. Dr. Birchermall was probably a good enuff man in his regular post as headmaster of St. Sam's. But the Fourth-Formers could hardly imagine a worse choice for the job of running a yacht.

Bang! Crash! Wallop! Thud!

The storm was raging more furiously than ever.

Jack Jolly rose, frowning grimly.

"I'm going on deck to see how the Head's getting on," he said. "You fellows coming?"

"Yes, rather!"

Merry and Bright and Fearless gladly followed their leader out of the cabin. But they halted before they reached the steps leading up to the deck. Much to their surprize, they found a light shining from the kaptin's state-room.

"My hat! Surely the Head hasn't left the bridge?" eggsclaimed Jolly.

"We can soon find out," said Fearless, and he opened the door—to reveal a site that made the Co. fairly blink.

Instead of battling with the storm on the bridge, Dr. Birchermall was seated in his armchair, with his foot on the table, reading a book!

It was an eggsciting book by the look of it, for the Head's eyes were simply glued to the print, while his scanty hairs were standing up on end.

Jack Jolly's blud simply boiled at the site. He took a step into the state-room.

"Sir!" he cried. "What do you think yo're doing?"

Dr. Birchermall unglued his eyes with an effort and looked round with a frown.

"Don't interrupt, Jolly, when you see I'm busy. I'm reading a spiffing story—all about a storm at sea!"

"Wha-a-ant!"

"It's awfully eggsciting. It really is amazing what these sailors have to put up with at times. But run away now, like a good chap, and leave me in peace," said the Head calmly, and he turned once more to his eggsciting story of ocean advencher.

Jack Jolly made a sign to his followers.

An instant later the literary kaptin of the Mary Ann had a shock. Four hefty St. Sam's juniors made a rush and collared him. The book went flying and the Head



felt himself lifted up and whirled round the state-room.

"Put his oilskin on him and we'll take him up by force," said Jolly grimly. "The kaptin's place in a storm, sir, is on the bridge—not in his state-room, reading sea stories!"

"Yaroooo! Leggo! I'll slawter you! I'll spifficate you! I'll—wooop! Ow-ow-ow!"

Dr. Birchermall's dire threats turned into wild yells as Jack Jolly & Co. forced him into his oilskins and frogmarched him out of the state-room. The chums of the Fourth did not trubble to use kid glove methods in their present eggscipated mood, and the Head suffered in consequence. They rushed him out of the state-room, along the passage and up the steps, then across the storm-swept deck and up the ladder that led to the bridge. Here at last they set him on his feet, gasping.

"There!" said Jolly. "Now get on with the washing, sir!"

"You—you—you—"

"Fancy leaving the bridge with nobody in charge on a nite like this!" cried Fearless skornfully. "And you the kaptin, too! You ought to be ashamed of yourself, sir!"

"Hear, hear!"

Dr. Birchermall glared at them for some moments; but he calmed down a little when he looked out into the nite and saw what a fearful storm was raging.

"Ahem! I didn't realise the weather was so bad, boys. Perhaps I was a trifle neglectful," he admitted. "Still, that book will prove very useful to me in this

emergency. I picked up a lot of useful hints from it and I've learned crowds of orders in nawtical langwidge from it. Just you watch me!"

He picked up a meggafone and started bellowing orders into it for all he was worth.

"Hard a port!" he bawled. "Brace your yards and drop your mizzen! Man the forestaysail down-hawl! Stand by to wear ship! Splice the mainbrace! How's her head?"

Dr. Birchermall craned his ostrich-like neck over the bridge to catch the reply. But the only answer he received was the shrieking of the elements.

"Shiver my timbers! It looks as if the crew have deserted me, boys!" he remarked. "Where can they be?"

"I eggscpect they're all below, sampling the ship's grog, sir," grinned Fearless. "Not that your orders would make much difference, sir. You seem to have been reading about a sailing ship; and this happens to be a steam yacht!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh ratts!" said the Head crossly. "Sailing ship or steam yacht, I haven't the slitest doubt that I shall be able to steer the Mary Ann into—"

BANG!

What Dr. Birchermall had steered the Mary Ann into was not quite clear in the darkness; but that he had steered her into something was undeniable. There was a jolt that nocked the occupants of the bridge all in a heap in the corner!

Yells and shrieks that sounded loudly above the storm were heard a moment later.

"Hi! Mind where you're steering!"

"You're bumping into us, bust you! Got out of the way!"

It was that last voice that brought Jack Jolly bounding to his feet. There was a gleem of eggscitement in the Fourth Form kaptin's eyes.

"That voice, you fellows! Don't you reckernise it?" he yelled. "It's Hymer Kerr!"

"The very man we're looking for—my pater's grato rival!" gasped Fearless. "We must have bashed into the Saucy Sal!"

Fearless was right! By the strangest coincidence, they had hit the ship they were seeking broadside on!

"Ahoy!" they heard Kerr bawling through a meggafone. "Is that my old friend Dr. Birchermall? What has happened to your kaptin?"

"I—I—it's me!" yelled back the Head through his own meggafone. "Our kaptin and a lot of others have vannished."

"Ho, ho, ho! Then the mutiny has succeeded!" roared Hymer Kerr. "Kaptin Cadman! Order the crew to fix grappling-irons! We'll take back our lads before we scuttle the Mary Ann!"

The crashing of thunder prevented the St. Sam's fellows from hearing that order; and it was not till morning that they found they were hooked up by grappling-irons to the Saucy Sal.

By that time the storm was over. The sun shone brightly on a calm sea and on a tropical island near which they had drifted. But Hymer Kerr's plans were not carried out, after all. It was a cry from a look-out man that stopped them.

"Cannibals ahoy! They're attacking us in their war-canoes!"

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HARRY WHARTON & Co. ARE BREAKING UP FOR THE SUMMER VAC AND SOMEBODY'S GOT TO HAVE BILLY BUNTER. WHO'S IT TO BE?

The GREYFRIARS STOWAWAY!

By FRANK RICHARDS



SCREENED FROM SIGHT, BUNTER HEARD VOICES CLOSE AT HAND!

Bunter All Over!

"WHAT about Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Um!"

"Bunter can cook!"

"He's too jolly lazy, though!"

"We can boot him!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"When you ask a fellow to join up for the hols, you don't generally arrange to boot him!" he remarked.

"Not done in the best circles!" said Frank Nugent.

"Bother Bunter!" said Johnny Bull.

"Well, you see——" said Bob.

"We have enough of the esteemed Bunter in the term!" suggested Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "In the holidays, the too-muchfulness would be terrific."

"You see——" said Bob.

"Well, what?" asked Harry Wharton. "Bunter can cook, but he won't if he can jolly well help it. He will grouse all the time. If it rains, he'll grouse about the wet. If it doesn't, he'll grouse about the heat. And we don't want to overload the boat! An extra ton makes a lot of difference on a boat."

"What the dickens do you want Bunter for, Bob?" asked Nugent.

"Oh, don't be an ass, Franky! How could anybody want Bunter?" grunted Bob Cherry.

"Wash him out, then!"

"Yes—but——"

"But—what——"

Bob Cherry did not immediately reply.

Four juniors in Study No. 1 in the Greyfriars Remove looked at him. Really, they could not quite understand Bob.

Break-up for the summer holidays was at hand. The Famous Five of the Remove had settled how and where they were going to spend August. A boating trip up the Thames, starting at Richmond or Kingston, camping out on the banks of the river, was a scheme that appealed to them all.

Five fellows could pack comfortably into a boat. They could pack comfortably into a tent. They could take it in turns to tow. They did not mind roughing it a little. It was an inexpensive sort of holiday for five fellows together. The prospect was attractive. They were discussing

details, when Bob suggested adding William George Bunter, the fat ornament of the Greyfriars Remove, to the party.

Upon which there was a general lack of enthusiasm.

"You see——" said Bob at last, rather lamely.

"Blessed if I do!" said Johnny Bull.

"The seefulness is not preposterous!" remarked Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"Cough it up!" said Harry Wharton. "If you want Bunter, we'll stand Bunter somehow! We've stood him before, and we can stand him again. But——"

"The fact is——" said Bob.

Grunt from Johnny Bull.

"I think I can guess!" he said. "That fat Owl has been trying for a week past to hook on to somebody for the hols. Mauly's dodged him—Smithy's kicked him—so he picked out the softest ass he could find in the Remove and got away with it. Is that it?"

Bob Cherry coloured.

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Evidently Johnny had guessed right.

"Well, you see," said Bob, "I haven't asked him—I couldn't, without consulting you chaps—but I—I said I'd put it to you. After all, Bunter can cook! There'll be lots of washing-up—there always is on such a trip—it's washing and washing and washing up all the time. Bunter can take his turn—"

"I can see him doing it!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Well, as I said, we can boot him if he shirks—"

"Have you explained that to Bunter, as a condition?" asked Frank Nugent, with a chuckle.

"And he can mind the boat when we go hiking round," went on Bob. "He's too jolly lazy to stir his stumps, so that will suit him, and suit us. And—"

"And," said Harry Wharton, "the long and the short of it is that we're going to have Bunter. We shall need a larger boat—say, double the size—and ten times the provisions we were going to take—"

"Don't underestimate, on a trip like this!" said Frank Nugent. "Say twenty times."

"Oh, don't be a goat!" said Bob. "I said I'd put it to you! That's all I said, but—but I'm afraid Bunter is rather banking on it. I shouldn't like to disappoint him."

"Fathead!" said Johnny Bull.

"Look here—"

"Ass!"

"All right!" said Harry Wharton. "Shut up, Johnny! Bob can't help being a fathead, and he can't help being an ass—but we like him all the better for it. It's a go!"

"Well, you see—" said Bob.

"Of course we see!" agreed the captain of the Remove. "Bunter's pulled your leg! This Co. always sticks together, and when one leg is pulled, all the legs are pulled! We'll take Bunter."

"I say, you fellows—" squeaked a fat voice at the door.

"Talk about pigs, and you hear them grunt!" remarked Johnny Bull, as a fat face and a big pair of spectacles looked in at the doorway of Study No. 1.

Billy Bunter blinked at the Famous Five.

"Seen Mauly?" he asked.

"Mauly? No!" answered Harry Wharton. "Roll in, old barrel, and we'll fix it up about the hols. We're going to make it six instead of five! You're coming in the boat."

"Oh!" said Billy Bunter. He blinked thoughtfully at the captain of the Remove. "You want me to come?"

Harry Wharton paused.

In point of fact, he did not want Bunter. Neither did any other member of the Co. But it was rather awkward to ask a fellow and at the same time state that he did not want him! On the other hand, something was due to veracity.

"Well, I'm asking you to join up, old fat man!" said the captain of the Remove. "Suit yourself, of course!"

"I don't think much about suiting

myself, as you fellows know," answered Bunter, with dignity. "I never was selfish, I hope—not like some fellows! Look here, I'll do my best for you—"

"Eh?"

"You can't expect a fellow to answer first shot! I've got other things to consider!" explained Bunter. "Thanks for your invitation, and all that—but you'll have to give me a little time to consider. You must expect that!"

"Oh!" gasped Wharton.

"Mind, I'm not turning it down! I don't mean that! As I said, I'll do the best I can for you! If I can't make it the whole vac, I may be able to give you a week or two—perhaps two or three weeks. It all depends."

"Look here—" roared Johnny Bull.

"You needn't yell at a fellow, Bull! You can't expect to pin a chap down at a minute's notice!" said Billy Bunter warmly. "A fellow who's run after like I am has to be given a bit of time to consider things. You can't expect to bag me for the whole vacation at a minute's notice! Don't be selfish!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob.

"You blithering owl!" howled Harry Wharton. "We—"

"I'm afraid I can't stop now—I've got to find Mauly! I'll see you later, when I've got time."

"Look here—"

But Billy Bunter was gone.

The Famous Five stared at the doorway, from which the fattest figure at Greyfriars School had vanished. Then four of them stared at Bob Cherry.

"You ass!" said Harry.

"You fathead!" said Nugent.

"You idiot!" said Johnny Bull.

"You terrific chump!" said Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

Bob Cherry gave a snort.

"Wash it out!" he grunted.

And washed out it duly was—and the Famous Five settled down to discuss the details of that boating trip—minus Bunter!

Nothing Doing!

"I SAY, Mauly—"

"Oh dear!"

"Anything the matter, Mauly?" asked Billy Bunter, blinking at Lord Mauleverer in surprise.

A moment ago, Lord Mauleverer had been looking merry and bright. Sitting on the sofa in Study No. 12, with his head leaning back on a cushion, and his legs stretched out, Mauly was gazing from the window at blue summer skies, with a cheery and contented expression on his face.

Probably he was thinking of the coming holidays, and the cessation of lessons. Anyhow, he was looking very cheerful.

But as Billy Bunter rolled into the study, that cheerfulness departed from the countenance of the school-boy earl. It vanished as if wiped off with a duster. Its place was taken by a look of sad resignation. It was quite a startling change.

Billy Bunter really could not understand it.

He had been glad to catch Mauly so bright and good-tempered. It made it easier to broach the urgent subject of the holidays. But that dismal change in Mauly's looks was discouraging.

"What's the matter, Mauly?" asked the puzzled fat Owl. "A minute ago you were grinning—now you're looking as if you were going to a funeral! What's the trouble all of a sudden?"

"Guess!" said Mauly.

"Blessed if I can guess! If there's anything the matter, you can tell a pal," said Bunter encouragingly. "Anything I can do for you, old chap?"

"Yaas!"

"Give it a name, then!"

"Hand me that cricket stump out of the corner!"

"Eh? Oh, all right!"

More puzzled than ever, Billy Bunter sorted the cricket stump out of the corner and handed it to Mauly!

"Thanks, old fat bean!" said Mauleverer.

He took a grip on the stump, and sat up, Bunter blinking at him in astonishment. What a fellow sprawling on a sofa could possibly want a cricket stump for was a mystery to the Owl of the Remove.

"Now, what's the trouble, old fellow?" asked Bunter.

"You!"

"Eh?"

"I should hate to puncture you, Bunter," said Lord Mauleverer. "I don't want to burst you all over the study! But if you say the word 'holidays' I'm going to jab you with this stump!"

Billy Bunter blinked at him—a devastating blink. He understood now the cause of that remarkable change in Lord Mauleverer's expression—and he understood why Mauly wanted the cricket stump!

"You silly ass!" hooted Bunter. "You blithering idiot!"

"That's all right!" assented Lord Mauleverer. "I don't mind that! You can keep that up! But don't say 'hols.'"

"You cheeky idiot!"

"Go it!"

"You footling fathead!"

"Carry on!"

"You—you—you—" gasped the indignant Owl. "Why, only a few minutes ago, five fellows were badgering me, all at once, to go on the river with them for the holidays. I've a jolly good mind to go with Wharton's crowd and give you a miss, you footling ass!"

"Stick to that, old chap!" said Lord Mauleverer, brightening up. "That's a jolly good idea, Bunter!"

"I've a jolly good mind to! Still, I don't want to let you down entirely," said Bunter. "I could manage, say, a week at Mauleverer Towers! Yarooooh!"

Lord Mauleverer leaned over and poked with the stump.

The business end of the stump jabbed on the best-filled waistcoat at Greyfriars School.

Billy Bunter uttered a terrific roar, and bounded back. He bumped into the study table, and gave another

roar. The table rocked, the inkpot rolled over, and a stream of ink shot across books and papers.

"Oh!" roared Bunter. He clasped two fat hands to a fat waistcoat. "Wow! Why, you beast! Wharrer you up to, poking a fellow with a stump?"

"I warned you——"

"Beast!"

"Sorry, old man!" said Lord Mauleverer gently. "But you had it comin'. Now, roll away like a good barrel!"

Billy Bunter blinked at him with a blink that almost cracked his spectacles.

For a week or more the fat Owl had haunted Mauly, and Mauly was accustomed to dodge round corners when he saw him coming. Now he was run down in his study, and the fat Owl had him cornered. Desperate diseases, as Shakespeare has remarked, require desperate remedies. So Mauly resorted to the stump.

Even Billy Bunter could understand a stump applied to his fat waistcoat! It left no room for doubt on the subject.

"You—you—you silly chump!" gasped Bunter. "I wouldn't be found dead in the hols with a silly, slacking, yawning, gaping image like you, Mauly!"

"Wouldn't you really, old fat man?"

"No," roared Bunter, "I wouldn't!"

"That's fine! Stick to that!"

Billy Bunter gave his lordship a glare, his very spectacles gleaming with scorn. Then he rolled out of the study; and Lord Mauleverer—looking cheerful once more—replaced his head on the cushion.

But his lordship enjoyed his repose only for about a minute. Then a fat head was put in at the doorway again and a fat voice squeaked:

"I say, Mauly!"

"Oh dear! Blow away, Bunter!" said Lord Mauleverer plaintively. "I can't keep on jabbing you with this stump in this hot weather!"

"Beast! I mean, look here, old chap! I was going to say——"

"Come a bit nearer!" said Lord Mauleverer, sitting up on the sofa. "Don't talk to a fellow a mile off!"

Billy Bunter did not come a bit nearer. He preferred to remain out of reach of a lunge.

"I say, Mauly, don't be a silly ass! I was going to say——"

"Where will you have it?" inquired Mauly, taking aim with the stump.

As the fat Owl declined to come within reach, there was nothing for it but to use it as a missile.

"You silly idiot!" howled Bunter. "I ain't going to speak about the hols."

"Oh, all right, then! Anything else, old fat tulip?"

"I was going to say," said Bunter, with dignity, "that I've been disappointed about a postal order. That's what I was going to say, Mauly!"

"I've heard that one!"

"Oh, really, Mauly! As you had a tenner this morning, I think you might lend a chap five bob till his

postal order comes!" said Bunter reproachfully.

"How do you know I had a tenner this mornin', you fat Peepin' Tom? And how can I lend you five bob out of a tenner till I change it?"

"That's all right! I'll change it for you, old chap! I'd do more than that for a fellow I really like!" said Bunter. "Hand it over and I'll cut down to the shop at once. I'll bring in anything you'd like for tea at the same time. What are you grinning at, you fathead?" hooted Bunter. "Look here, do you want me to change that tenner for you or not?"

"Not!"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter closed the door of Study No. 12 with a bang that resounded the length of the Remove passage.

Lord Mauleverer settled down once more to repose.

But again his repose was brief. About a minute later the study door opened again.

"Oh dear!" sighed Lord Mauleverer. "Who is it this time?"

"Yah! Slacking rotter!" hooted Billy Bunter.

Up went Mauly's hand, with the stump in it. But the door banged again before he could hurl the stump.

Lord Mauleverer breathed hard. Imperturbable as his lordship's temper was, he was getting a little annoyed. However, he settled down again, with his head on the cushion.

The door reopened.

"Yah! Mean beast!" hooted Bunter; and again he banged the door shut before the exasperated Mauly had time to go into action.

Mauly sat up and grasped the stump, too late! But this time he did not settle down again. He remained sitting up, with the stump ready to hurl at Bunter's fat legs next time he opened the door. Next time that door opened, the exasperating Owl of the Remove was going to get that for which he was so earnestly asking.

Looking After Mauly!

"YAROOH!" roared Bob Cherry. He was taken quite by surprise.

The cheery Bob was welcome in almost every study at Greyfriars—and invariably so in Lord Mauleverer's. So, when he tapped at the door of No. 12, opened it, and walked in, he was quite surprised by the welcome he received.

Something whizzed across the study from the sofa under the window. It crashed on Bob's knees and he tottered and roared.

"Oh gad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer in dismay.

"Ow! Oh! Oh crumbs! Mad!" yelled Bob, staring at the cricket stump that had dropped at his feet, and then at the dismayed junior sitting on the sofa.

"Oh dear! Aw'fully sorry!" gasped Mauleverer. "I thought it was Bunter coming back again! Frightfully sorry!"

"You blithering idiot!" howled

Bob, stooping and rubbing his knees. The stump had landed flat on both of them, with quite a bang. Mauly had been on the watch, and he had got his man! It was rather unfortunate that it was the wrong man!

"He, he, he!" floated in from the passage.

Billy Bunter had been about to pay another call when Bob came up the passage. He was rather glad now that it was Bob who had opened the door.

"You potty chump, Mauly!" roared Bob. "I've a jolly good mind to boot you off that sofa, you howling blitherer!"

"Boot Bunter instead!" suggested Lord Mauleverer. "It's all his fault, really. Boot him down the passage."

"Yah! Beast!" floated into Study No. 12, followed by a sound of pattering footsteps.

Billy Bunter did not wait to ascertain whether Bob was going to act on that suggestion. Bunter departed.

"You fathead!" grunted Bob. "Ready?"

"Eh?" asked Mauly. "Ready for what?"

"Forgotten you were going to walk down to the river with us before tea?" hooted Bob.

"Oh! Yaas!"

Bob gave his knees another rub, and straightened up.

"Well, come on, ass!" he said. "We're going down to Baker's boat-house to look at a craft he's got. What the dickens has been happening here?" added Bob, with a stare at the study table. "You've got ink over everything."

"That ass Bunter bumped on the table." Lord Mauleverer rose from the sofa and stretched his elegant limbs. He had forgotten that walk, and he rather wished that Bob had not remembered it. He yawned deeply.

"You fathead!" Bob stepped to the table. "Look at this! There's a banknote here."

He fished out a Bank of England note that lay partly submerged in streaming ink. One corner of it was black as a hat.

"Oh gad!" said Lord Mauleverer, staring at it. "It's all right—that's my tenner. I put it under the inkpot for safety."

"Is that what you call safety?"

"Yaas," assented Lord Mauleverer. "Can't blow away with an inkpot on it! Of course, I never knew that Bunter was going to barge in and upset the ink. Fellow can't foresee things like that."

Bob Cherry carefully blotted the inky banknote on a sheaf of blotting-paper. The ink was still wet, and he got a good deal of it off. But the tenner was left in an extremely smudgy state.

"Thanks!" said Lord Mauleverer, taking the note. "Perhaps I'd better shove it in my pocket, with fat chumps barging about upsetting inkpots."

"Put it in your wallet, fathead!" hooted Bob, as Mauly began to shove the banknote into his trousers pocket.

"I should have done that already,

old chap, if I'd known where the wallet was!" said Lord Mauleverer mildly.

"Well, don't you know?" roared Bob.

"I know I laid it down somewhere! It will turn up all right—things always do turn up!" said Mauleverer placidly. "I lost a fiver once, for weeks, but it turned up in a book, and I remembered I'd used it to mark a place."

"Have you taken the number of that note?"

"Eh? No!"

"Take it then, fathead!" hooted Bob. "Suppose you lose it?"

"I'm not likely to lose it, old fellow; I'm always careful with money! Come on, I can hear the fellows in the passage."

Bob Cherry picked up the stump.

"Are you going to take the number of that note?" he asked.

"What's the good of faggin' takin' numbers? Oh gad—ow! Keep that cricket stump away!" yelled Lord Mauleverer. "You silly ass, what are you pokin' me with that stump for?"

"Take the number of that bank-note!"

"Oh dear! Anythin' for a quiet life!" sighed Lord Mauleverer. "What can I take the number on? I've left my pocket-book somewhere. Keep that stump away, you dangerous maniac! I'll write it in my Latin grammar—that won't get lost, or there would be a row with Quelch."

Lord Mauleverer fished the bank-note out of his trousers pocket, and dipped a pen in the pool of ink on the study table. Laboriously he copied out 00011122 on the fly-leaf of a Latin grammar. Then he crumpled the banknote back into his trousers pocket.

"You're makin' me tired before we start that walk!" he said plaintively. "You strenuous blokes overdo it, you know! Let's get off, for goodness' sake."

"Are you going to leave your study table like that?"

"Yaas; I can tip Trotter to clean that up—Trotter likes tips, and I don't like cleanin' up ink! Both parties pleased. Come on!"

And Lord Mauleverer followed Bob from the study.

On the Remove landing the other members of the Co. were waiting. They left the House in a cheery bunch, and walked out of gates, and down to the towpath by the shining Sark.

It was July, and hot weather. But the Famous Five walked briskly along the towpath, between shady woods on one side and the gleaming river on the other. Lord Mauleverer manfully put his best foot foremost to keep pace with them; but he glanced longingly at the shady trees. Exertion did not appeal to his lazy lordship, especially when the weather was almost tropical.

"I'll tell you what," said Lord Mauleverer suddenly, "that's a lovely shady spot—look! The scenery's magnificent here! What about sittin' down and lookin' at the scenery?"

"Do you generally take a walk sitting down?" inquired Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"Yaas! I—I mean, no good over-din' it. We've done jolly nearly half a mile, you know! It's another half-mile to Friardale Bridge," sighed Lord Mauleverer.

"We're going to see a boat at Baker's, fathead!" said Harry Wharton. "He's heard that we're going to have a boat on the Thames this vac, and he's asked us to look at it!"

"Supporting local industries!" explained Bob. "No reason why old Baker shouldn't make the money, if the boat's all right."

"He says it's a specially good one," said Nugent.

"How the dooce are you goin' to get it round to the Thames, then?" asked Lord Mauleverer. "It will be a bit of a pull, won't it?"

"The pullfulness would be a little too terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Fathead!" said Bob. "Baker's going to have the boat delivered at Kingston, all ready for us when we want it, if we hire it. I expect we shall—he says it's just the boat we want, and he's a reliable man. What about joining up with us for a trip up the river, Mauly? Do you good to rough it and exert yourself a bit."

Lord Mauleverer shuddered. "Yaas! Oh! Yaas! Delightful!" he gasped. "Nothin' I'd enjoy more, if—if my uncle hadn't fixed up a trip for me already. I shall envy you fellows!"

The Famous Five chuckled. They knew exactly how much his lazy lordship would envy them roughing it in a river trip.

"Buck up, Mauly!" said Bob, as his lordship lagged behind. "We've got to get back for lock-up, you know."

"Yaas! I'll tell you what!" said Mauly, as if struck by a sudden bright idea. "I'll sit down under one of these trees, and you fellows can gather me up again on your way back, what?"

"Got that tired feeling coming on?" asked Bob.

"Yaas."

"Feel as if you really can't keep on?"

"Yaas, exactly."

"Well, what's the good of having a pal with you if he can't help you when you get tired?" said Bob cheerily. "I'll walk behind you and help you. Say when!"

Thud!

"Oh! Yarooooh!" roared Lord Mauleverer. He suddenly put on quite a good speed. "Keep your hoofs away from my trousers, you howling ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Had enough help already?" asked Bob. "No trouble, old chap—I'll help you all the way, if you like!"

"You mad ass, keep off!"

Lord Mauleverer walked on quite briskly for about a hundred yards. Then he dropped behind again.

Bob Cherry, glancing round for him, had a glimpse of his lordship disappearing into the wood.

"Mauly, you slacker!" roared Bob. But answer there came none! Lord Mauleverer had had enough walking, and he was seeking a shady spot in the wood to repose his weary limbs. And the Famous Five, laughing, walked on to Baker's boathouse without his lordship.

The Shifty Man!

"AIN'T I said no?"

"But—"

"'Ook it!"

"Look here, Mr. Baker—"

"I said 'ook it! And if you come round 'ere again, Mr. Spooner, I'll set the dorg on you! Your sort ain't wanted round an honest man's place."

Harry Wharton & Co. heard those remarks as they walked into Baker's yard below Friardale Bridge.

Mr. Baker, the boat builder, seemed a little excited.

He was standing by a boat which lay on a landing-stage by the water. His plump face was red, and his grey whiskers bristled with wrath as he stared, or, rather, glared, across the boat at a man standing facing him on the other side of it.

The Greyfriars juniors knew old Mr. Baker well. Greyfriars fellows often hired boats from him. Generally, he was a placable old fellow, as good-tempered as he was plump. But the man to whom he was speaking seemed to have got Mr. Baker's goat.

The juniors did not want to butt into that excited argument, and they stood back to wait till Mr. Baker had finished.

The man to whom he was speaking was a slightly built man, dressed rather shabbily, with close-cropped hair on a bullet head. He had narrow, sharp, shifty eyes that at the moment were gleaming with anger. He looked, indeed, as if he could hardly keep his hands off old Mr. Baker—but was, perhaps, restrained by the circumstance that the old boat builder was twice as large and twice as heavy, and could easily have pitched him off the landing-stage into the river.

He was a stranger to the juniors; they had never seen him, or heard his name, before. But clearly he was well known to the boat builder—and not known favourably.

"It was my boat once," he said, in a sharp, angry voice. "Doesn't that make any difference?"

"No, it don't!" retorted Mr. Baker. "That there boat was sold by auction when you was sold up, and old Coger, up to Courtfield, bought it, and he sold it to me. And where was you, Mr. Spooner? Doing time!"

Harry Wharton & Co. backed a little farther, and carefully looked another way. But Mr. Spooner did not regard them at all. He stared angrily and savagely at the boat builder.

"That's neither here nor there," he answered. "If I was doing time, I've done my time, and the law's done with me."

"Till they ketch you next time," said Mr. Baker contemptuously. "I know your sort—knowed you well, I did! Wasn't you always called Shifty



"Here's luck!" said the thief, annexing a ten-pound note and some loose change.

Spooner? Who was surprised when you was copped? Nobody who knows you!"

"I've come here to talk about the boat!"

"And what's the good of talking about the boat?" hooted Mr. Baker. "I ain't the man to throw it in a bloke's face if he's done time, though I wouldn't trust you farther'n I could see you, Mr. Shifty Spooner. But you fancy I'm in the business here for my health? Ain't I got to be paid?"

"I can pay for the hire of a boat."

"Yes, and walk off with it!" hooted Mr. Baker. "But I'm a reasonable man. Lay down ten pounds deposit, I said to you when you come yesterday, and I'll hire you that boat, I said. And that's taking a big risk, considering the value of the boat and what I give for it."

"If I had ten pounds——"

"Well, you come back and talk again when you 'ave! You ask a man to trust you with boats when only two days ago you come out of chokey, where you was jugged for helping yourself to other people's goods. Now I've wasted enough time on you, Mr. Spooner, so you 'ook it!"

"But——"

"I said 'ook it! It's too late now, anyhow—I've let out the boat. Them young gentlemen yonder are going to 'ire it for the summer, and I got to pack it off by rail to be ready for them at my nephew's at Kingston. Any other boat you can 'ave, if you lay down a deposit——"

"I want no other boat—I want the Water-Lily on this river, like old times before I had my bad luck."

"Jim!" roared Mr. Baker, address-

ing a boatman on the towpath. "Let that dorg loose!"

"Yes, Mr. Baker!"

The man with the shifty eyes gave the old boat builder a savage glare, turned, and stalked away, without waiting for the dog to be let loose.

Mr. Baker gave an angry snort as he disappeared up the river.

"Good-arternoon, young gents!" he said, addressing Harry Wharton & Co. "Sorry you 'eard me blowing off steam, but that man Spooner is the limit! Two years he's had for pinching, and he ain't been out of the stone jug two days and come along and asks a man to trust him with a boat I give forty pounds for! Wouldn't he run it out and sell it for a tenner! Wouldn't he just!"

"Is that the boat?" asked Harry.

"That's the boat, sir, and a fine boat she is," said Mr. Baker. "Here, Jim, come and shove this boat out for the young gentlemen to try her. You look at that boat, Master Wharton, and you'll find she's a good craft."

The Famous Five were already looking at the boat with keen interest. It was really a handsome boat—roomy, well-built, with a mast, and a good-sized locker aft. They knew something about boats, and they could easily see that in Mr. Baker's extensive stock it was the pick of the bunch. It was in first-class condition, and, in fact, delightful to the eye.

"Like her, sir?" asked Mr. Baker, as Jim ran that handsome craft into the water.

"Yes, rather," answered Harry at once. "We'll see how she goes on the water, of course, but she looks topping. But look here, Mr. Baker,

we heard what that man you called Spooner was saying——"

"The rogue!" interjected Mr. Baker.

"Well, if the boat belonged to him once, and he wanted to hire her for that reason, we shouldn't like to butt in," said Harry; and his friends, much as they liked the look of the Water-Lily, nodded assent to that.

"That don't make no difference," answered Mr. Baker. "He could 'ave had the boat if I could 'ave trusted him to bring her back." The old boat builder snorted. "Rogue he is, that man Spooner! Asking a man to believe that he's fond of his old boat! Looks it, don't he?"

The juniors smiled. Mr. Spooner certainly had not looked, to them, a man of a sentimental nature. He had looked a particularly hard nut to crack.

"If I let him 'ave that boat, think I'd see it ag'in?" grunted Mr. Baker. "She sails well on a wind, and I'll say this for Spooner—he can handle a boat! He had a place on the river afore he went to chokey, and was always up and down the river and the coast in that boat. He'd run her down to some place he knows and sell her for ten quid! Don't I know him! Think they packed him behind the bars because he was honest?"

"Oh, no, I suppose not!" admitted Harry.

"Let him leave ten quid on a boat, like you young gents are going to do, and I'll do business with him," said Mr. Baker. "I'd risk it, anyhow! Mind, I trust you young gents all right, but boats is liable to get

damaged with schoolboys handling them, and damage is damage, and you don't object to a man having a spot of cash in hand."

"Not at all! That's all right—we've got the cash if we settle about the boat, Mr. Baker," said Harry, smiling.

"But that man Spooner—he wouldn't damage the boat, larking and such, as schoolboys might. But he'd pinch her as soon as look at her," said Mr. Baker. "Don't you worry, sir—Shifty Spooner ain't touching no boat of mine, whether you hire it or not! He ain't pinching my property like he pinched silver spoons from Popper Court, and got the stone jug for it—no!"

He waved a horny hand to the boat. "You jest try her, sir—you'll like her!"

The Famous Five jumped into the boat. Roomy as she was—an advantage for a river party with a good deal of camping outfit—she was easy to handle, and under four oars put on a good speed.

The juniors pulled her across the river, and as there was a wind from the sea put up the sail to sail her back again and ran her home swiftly. When they landed again their minds were made up—they were going to have the Water-Lily for the summer holidays.

"Topping boat, Mr. Baker," said Bob Cherry, as they jumped ashore. "If that man Spooner had her built, he knew how to have a boat made."

"I'll say that for him," admitted Mr. Baker. "If Shifty Spooner was as honest as he is clever, he'd be a rich man to-day! Nice little place he had once, spending money right and left—though nobody knowed where it came from, though they guessed, mebbe, when he was copped in a robbery at Popper Court. But he knowed all about boats, Shifty did. That's a good boat, and if you young gents decide on her I'll have her carted over to Kingston, to my nephew's, all ready for you on the Thames when you want her."

"It's a go!" said Harry Wharton.

And the terms having been arranged, and a deposit of ten pounds paid down as a guarantee against possible damage—which Mr. Baker seemed to think probable, and a receipt duly given and taken, the Famous Five left the boat yard to walk back to Greyfriars.

The Invisible Footpad!

LORD MAULEVERER jumped.

"Oh!" he gasped. Seldom had his lordship been so surprised.

Maully had selected a nice, shady spot in the wood that bordered the towpath on the Sark. He had seated himself in thick, rich grass. He leaned back against an ancient beech and he tilted his straw hat over his face. In that comfortable attitude his lordship enjoyed the rest he felt he needed after having walked half a mile.

His eyes closed under the shady rim

of his hat. The drowsy heat and the buzz of insects lulled him to slumber. But he jumped out of that doze with a startled bound.

He had not heard a sound in the wood save the drowsy hum of insect life. He had not the remotest suspicion that anyone was at hand till a grasp was suddenly laid on him, and he jumped.

But he jumped too late!

Some person unknown had spotted him there, and skulked behind the tree against which he leaned. Something was suddenly clapped over Maully's face from behind—some sort of a thick muffler. It completely blindfolded him. Before Maully quite knew what was happening, that muffler was over his eyes, and nose, and knotted at the back of his astonished head! And, as he clutched at it dizzily, his wrists were grasped, and twisted down again.

"Don't make a fuss!" said a quiet, unpleasant voice that had a tone rather like a file. "I'd rather not crack your head with this stick, because it's a longer sentence! But you give me any trouble, and crack goes your nut!"

"Oh!" gasped Mauleverer.

He sat still.

He greatly preferred his noble nut not to be cracked! And he was utterly at the mercy of the footpad he could not see.

His wrists were held in a grip of iron—one large and sinewy hand holding the two together. A stick, evidently held in the unseen man's other hand, tapped lightly on his straw hat, as a hint.

That hint was enough! Maully had heaps of pluck; but it was useless to ask for a blow he could not stop. One crack of the stick would have stunned him; indeed, he could guess that the footpad might have chosen that method, as less trouble, but for the circumstance that robbery with violence earned a longer sentence, in case of detection, than robbery without violence.

"Don't move!" said the voice.

"Anythin' for a quiet life, dear man!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. "Won't you let me have the pleasure of seein' you? I should like to tell Inspector Grimes, at Courtfield, just what you look like."

"Hold your tongue, you young fool!"

"Any old thing, if my conversation bores you!" murmured Maully.

The grip on his wrists was too strong for him to deal with. He felt a cord looped over his hands, and drawn tight, securing his wrists together. There was no help for it, and Maully had to submit to his fate with what resignation he could muster.

The muffler completely blindfolded him—he could not catch even a gleam of daylight, let alone of his assailant.

The man, whoever he was, was taking no chances of the schoolboy being able to identify him—with trouble to follow with the police.

Having fastened the schoolboy earl's wrists together, rendering him helpless even to attempt resistance,

the unseen man proceeded to grope through his pockets.

Lord Mauleverer grinned under the muffler. Fellows often called him a careless ass. But the fact that he had mislaid his wallet was rather fortunate at the present moment. That wallet was somewhere in his study at Greyfriars, with a wad of currency notes in it. It would have been rather a rich prize for this rascal.

He heard a grunt of angry disappointment, as his jacket pockets were drawn blank of anything in the nature of plunder.

But quite a different exclamation followed when his trousers pockets were turned out.

"Here's luck!" ejaculated the unseen man.

"Oh gad!" murmured Mauleverer, remembering the ten-pound note. That tenner was in the hands of the footpad now.

There was a clinking as his loose change was annexed. A supply of half-crowns, shillings, and sixpences changed ownership.

The thief realised that that was all.

Mauleverer suddenly found himself released.

"Hold on!" called out Maully. "Let me loose before you go, dear man, there's a good chap! This is rather a fix to leave a fellow in!"

There was no answer, but a rustle in the wood, that quickly died away. His lordship was left on his own.

He struggled to his feet.

It was a most uncomfortable position in which to be left—though no doubt good business for the footpad, who desired to get to a safe distance before his victim could spread the news.

"Oh gad!" breathed Lord Mauleverer dismally.

He knew that he was not more than a dozen yards or so from the towpath. But he had to get rid of the blindfolding muffler before he could cover even that short distance.

With his hands tied together, it was not easy. But he got his tied hands up to it, and grabbed at it with his fingers. Getting at the knot behind was impossible. All he was able to do, after many efforts, was to pull the muffler down, and uncover his eyes, leaving it circling the middle of his face.

However, he could see at last, and he looked round him, and started in the direction of the river.

The footpad was long gone, and Mauleverer had no expectation of ever seeing his tenner again. But he was thinking less of the tenner than of some Good Samaritan to loosen his bonds. He emerged from the wood at last, and stumbled out on the towpath.

Ponsonby Is Playful!

"**O**H gad!" "What the dooce—" "Greyfriars cad!"

Three elegant youths were sauntering up the towpath by the silvery Sark. They stopped, and stared at

Lord Mauleverer as he emerged from the shades of Friardale Wood.

Ponsonby, Gadsby, and Monson, of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe School, had been chatting, as they sauntered, on the subject of the coming holidays, and their plans for the same. But they forgot all about the holidays at the extraordinary sight of Mauleverer.

Mauly breathed hard through his nose.

He was warm, perspiring, uncomfortable, and fearfully anxious to be let loose. But he rather wished that he had not emerged from the cover of the wood as those three cheery youths came along.

There was a malicious gleam in Cecil Ponsonby's eyes; and Monson grinned in a far from reassuring manner.

Pon & Co., of Highcliffe, were generally ripe for mischief. And a fellow with his hands tied was not in a position to put up much of a defence.

But it was too late for retreat now that the Highcliffians had seen him, and Mauly hoped that Pon & Co. would be decent—rather a fragile reed to lean upon.

"Mind untyin' my hands, you chaps?" he asked politely, as they came up.

"How on earth did you get fixed up like that?" asked Ponsonby. "Some of the hooligans at your school been larkin' with you?"

"Rough old lot at Greyfriars!" said Monson sympathetically.

"Regular ruffians!" agreed Gadsby.

"A footpad got me in the wood!" answered Lord Mauleverer quietly. "I'd be obliged if you'd untie that cord, Ponsonby."

"You let a footpad tie you up like that?"

"He didn't ask my permission!" explained Lord Mauleverer urbanely. "I should have declined if he had."

Gadsby laughed and stretched out a hand to untie the knots.

Ponsonby knocked it aside at once.

"What's the hurry, Gaddy?" he asked.

"Oh, let the chap loose!" said Gadsby. "This isn't one of the Greyfriars cads we're always rowing with."

"Greyfriars cad all the same!" said Ponsonby. "Leave him as he is!"

"Look here, Pon—"

"And shut up!" said Pon. "You talk too much, Gaddy! We'll help him home as he is! Of course, we're goin' to help him."

"Don't bother, thanks!" said Lord Mauleverer, backing towards the trees. "I'll wait till somebody else comes along."

"No bother at all, my dear chap!" said Ponsonby. "We insist on helpin' you! We're the men to lend you a helpin' hand—or, at the very least, a helpin' foot! What do you fellows say?"

"Hear, hear!" grinned Monson.

"Oh, let him rip!" said Gadsby un- easily.

"I said shut up, Gaddy! Now, shove him into the middle of the tow- path, and we'll help him home."

"Hands off, please!" said

Mauleverer. "Let me loose, and I'll chuck the pair of you into the water. If you rag me with my hands tied, I shall kick! That's a tip!"

"Do!" said Pon. "We'll soon give you somethin' to cure all that! Get goin', you fellows, and help him along."

Three pairs of hands jerked Lord Mauleverer into the middle of the towpath.

It was impossible to resist. He gave a desperate wrench at his hands, but the invisible footpad had done his work too well. The hapless Mauly could not lift a finger in his own defence, and he was, in fact, just where the excellent Pon wanted him.

"Take it in turns!" grinned Pon. "My turn first!"

And he stepped behind Lord Maule- verer to start with a kick.

Mauly could not use his arms; but he could use his legs. He had warned Pon what to expect—and now he suited the action to the word. As Pon kicked, Mauly kicked out back- wards, and his heel met Pon's shin as the Highcliffian's kick came.

There was a yell of anguish on the banks of the Sark.

"Yooo-hoop!" yelled Ponsonby.

His kick did not reach Mauly's elegant trousers. That backward hack on the shin cut it short.

Pon danced on his left leg, with his right in the air, both hands clasped to his suffering shin.

"Ow! Oh!" he roared. "Ow! Oh, my shin! Oh gad! Oh crikey! Ow!"

Lord Mauleverer spun round.

"I mentioned that I should kick out," he remarked placidly. "Hadn't you fellows better call it a day?"

"Ow! Yow! Wow!" roared Pon, still dancing.

"Chuck it, old bean!" urged Maule- verer. "Some Greyfriars fag might come along, you know, and then you'd get frightened, and have to run away. I believe Sammy Bunter of the Second Form is somewhere about."

That remark did not soothe the wrath of the Highcliffe trio.

"Yow-ow-ow!" howled Pon, still clasping his shin. "You silly owls, can't you boot that Greyfriars cad? What are you waiting for?"

"I'm not goin' to boot a chap with his hands tied!" growled Gadsby sulkily. "Monson can please him- self."

"I'm going to!" said Monson.

And he advanced on Lord Maule- verer—warily, for his lordship was watchful, and ready to use his only weapon—his boot! Mauly was not going to be kicked along the towpath if he could help it!

"Look here—" muttered Gadsby.

"Shut up, Gaddy!" yelled Pon- sonby furiously. "By gad, I'll punch your head if you say another word!"

"Well, I'm getting out of this!" snorted Gaddy, and he marched off up the towpath, leaving his two com- rades with Mauleverer.

Pon put his damaged leg to the earth. It was fearfully painful, and the look on Pon's face expressed sheer evil and malice. He joined with

Monson, limping as he moved, and they assailed Lord Mauleverer from two sides at once.

Mauly had had a spot of hope when the number of his assailants was reduced from three to two. But he had no chance. Twice he lunged out with his boot, but the enemy dodged it—and then Pon, getting behind him, grabbed him by the back of his neck, and dragged him over.

"Oh gad!" gasped Mauleverer, as he went down on his back in the grass with a heavy bump.

"Boot him!" roared Pon.

"Oh gad! Oh crikey!" gasped Mauleverer, as Pon, with his sound leg, began applying boot-leather. "Oh crumbs! Yaroooh! Rescue, Greyfriars!"

Mauly shouted at the top of his voice, in the hope that some Grey- friars fellows might be within hearing.

That did not suit Pon. He grasped his lordship and rolled him over, jamming his features into grass- roots.

Mauly's shouts died away in a suffocated gurgle.

"Now sit on his head, Monson!" said Ponsonby. He swished a light walking-cane in the air. "Keep clear, and I'll let him have it. I'll teach the Greyfriars cad to hack my shin! I'll give him a dozen, and then we'll boot him home!"

"Go it!" grinned Monson.

And he sat on Mauly's head, grind- ing his hapless features deep into the grass of the towpath, while Pon wielded the stick. And it came down on Mauly's elegant bags, with a re- port like a rifle-shot!

Sauce For The Gander!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Oh, my hat! Look!"

The Famous Five stared.

They had remembered Mauly, as they started up the towpath for the school, and wondered whether they would see anything of his lazy lord- ship on the way back to Greyfriars.

Now they saw him.

They had not, certainly, expected to see him like this. They came on the scene suddenly, as they came round a bend of the winding bank.

A fellow lay extended on his face in the grass, with a Highcliffe junior sitting on his head and another whop- ping him with a walking-cane.

"Is that Mauly?" gasped Frank Nugent.

"Mauly!" exclaimed Harry Whar- ton. "Come on!"

The captain of the Remove broke into a rapid run. He fairly flew along the towpath, his comrades racing at his heels.

Neither of the Highcliffians was looking towards them. Gadsby had disappeared from sight up the river, and Ponsonby and Monson were too busy attending to Mauleverer to look round. The running feet made little sound on the grass.

Not till Harry Wharton was with- in a few yards did the Highcliffians

see him—and then Monson bounded of Mauly's head, as if that noble nut had suddenly become red-hot—and Pon jumped away with a splutter of alarm.

The next second they were running. But they did not run many paces. Harry Wharton's grasp was on Ponsonby in a few seconds, and he was dragged backwards, and dumped into the grass. Bob Cherry had Monson the next moment.

With a swing of his powerful arm Bob sent him sprawling over Ponsonby, and he crashed on the dandy of Highcliffe, flattening him down as he was struggling to rise.

Frank Nugent bent over Mauleverer.

"Mauly, old man!" he exclaimed. "Oooogh!" gasped Mauleverer, breathlessly. He sat up, with Nugent's assistance, and gurgled for breath. "Oh gad! Thanks, you chaps! Never so jolly glad to see you! Oooogh!"

"Why, your hands are tied!" exclaimed Frank.

"Yaas!" gasped Mauly. "Mind untyin' them, old bean? I've got a use for them, when I get them loose! Don't let those cads get away, you men!"

"I'll watch it!" grunted Johnny Bull.

He sat on Monson. As Monson was sprawling over Ponsonby's chest, the state of Pon was rather like that of a worm under a wheel. Monson was a good weight—and Johnny Bull was solidly built. Ponsonby moaned horribly.

"Gerroff!" gasped Monson. Pon could not speak.

"Wait a bit!" said Johnny cheerfully. "You're not cutting off just yet, you beauties!"

"Gurriggh!" came moaning from Ponsonby.

"Did these cads tie your hands like that, Mauly?" asked Harry Wharton. "By gum, if they did—"

"Oh, no! Footpad in the wood!" explained Lord Mauleverer. "Got me by surprise, you know, and bagged all my loose cash. He left me like this—and I asked those cads to untie me—might have expected what they did—"

"You've been robbed!" exclaimed Nugent.

"Yaas." "Oh crumbs! You had a tenner in your trousers' pockets, you ass!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "That smudgy tenner—"

"It's in somebody else' trousers pocket now!" sighed Lord Mauleverer. "This is what comes of puttin' tenners into a pocket, instead of leavin' them safe under an ink-pot!"

"You howling ass!" said Bob.

"Thanks!" Lord Mauleverer rubbed his wrists, as Nugent finished untying the cord, and then disengaged the muffler from his face. "I've had a rotten time—most unpleasant brute, grabbin' a chap when he was half-asleep—"

"Look here, if there's a chance of getting after him, never mind these Highcliffe cads!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

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Lord Mauleverer shook his head. "Nohin' doin'," he said. "It was more than half an hour ago—"

"But what was he like?" asked Bob.

"Not knowin', can't say! Modest sort of chap, understudyin' the shy violet," explained Mauleverer. "He took me by surprise, and clapped that rather unpleasant rag over my features—never saw a spot of him! Shouldn't know him from Adam—unless he pinned that tenner on his waistcoat—and he wouldn't do that!"

"Fathead!" said Bob. "It wouldn't have happened if you hadn't slacked, instead of coming on to Friardale with us."

"Well, it wouldn't have happened if I hadn't started on the walk at all!" argued Lord Mauleverer. "This is what comes of takin' walks instead of sittin' on a sofa like a sensible chap! Jolly lucky I'd lost my wallet, isn't it—he would have had that, too, if I hadn't!"

Lord Mauleverer rose to his feet. He grinned at the heap on the towpath—Ponsonby sprawling on his back in the grass, Monson sprawling across Pon, and Johnny Bull sitting on Monson's waistcoat.

"I think you can let those cads get up now!" he remarked. "It's fearfully hot weather for scrappin', but I rather think I'm goin' to thrash them."

Johnny Bull rose from the heap and picked up the cane Ponsonby had dropped. He took a business-like grip on it.

"Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander!" said Johnny grimly. "They were giving you this when we came along, Mauly! They're going to have some of the same!"

"Hear, hear!" Lord Mauleverer nodded.

"Yaas, that's not a bad idea!" he agreed. "Awful fag thrashin' Highcliffe cads in this hot weather! I'll sit down and watch."

And his lordship sat on a log and watched.

Pon and Monson were struggling to their feet. But several pairs of hands grasped them as they struggled up, and Pon was flattened out on his face.

"Sit on his head, Monson!" said Johnny.

"Wha-a-t?" gasped Monson. "You were sitting on Mauleverer's! Now you can sit on Pon's."

"I—I—I won't! I—I—I— Keep that stick away!" yelled Monson. "I—I—I—I'll sit on his head, if you like."

One lick from the stick was enough for Monson.

"I thought perhaps you would!" agreed Johnny. "Get going!"

"Gerroff, Monson!" came a suffocated howl from Ponsonby. "I'll boot you for this! I—I'll— Groooooogh! Oogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was no help for it! Monson had to sit on Pon's head, as he had sat on Mauly's, lest worse befell him! And he sat on it, grinding Pon's features into dust and grass-roots.

Johnny handled the stick.

"How many did he give you, Mauly?" he asked.

"Only two!" grinned Mauly. "There would have been a few more, I think, if he hadn't been interrupted! But I had only two."

"Then I'll let him off with six!" Whop, whop, whop!

Johnny Bull put quite a lot of beef into the whops! There was plenty of muscle in his good right arm, and he used it all!

Suffocated howls came from Ponsonby! He struggled and wriggled frantically. But with Monson sitting on his head, and Bob Cherry standing on his legs, Pon had to take it, and he took it.

Whop, whop, whop! "Like your own medicine, Pon?" asked Johnny.

A gurgling yell answered.

"The likefulness does not seem to be terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "But the esteemed and disgusting Pon should remember that whoever is saucy to the goose must be saucy to the gander, as the English proverb remarks."

"Ha, ha, ha!" Monson got off Pon's head.

Pon sat up with a crimson face. He glared at his pal as if he could have bitten him.

"Monson had better have a few!" remarked Johnny.

Swipe!

"Here, hold on—that's only the first!" exclaimed Johnny Bull, as Monson flew up the towpath. But there was no answer from Monson! He put on speed, and disappeared up the Sark at a great rate.

"Come on!" said Harry Wharton, laughing.

Lord Mauleverer rose from the log and yawned.

"Yaas, come on!" he said. "Past tea-time! If I find my wallet, I'll stand tea in my study—if I don't, you stand it in yours! What?"

"Yes, ass! Come on!"

And the Famous Five and Lord Mauleverer went on their way up the towpath, Johnny Bull delaying a moment to push the stick down Ponsonby's back before he followed.

Ponsonby was left making frantic efforts to extract that stick, as the Greyfriars fellows went cheerfully on their way.

Turned Down!

BILLY BUNTER was adorning the gateway of Greyfriars with his ample person when Harry Wharton & Co. and Lord Mauleverer arrived there.

Bunter was looking rather peeved.

He gave Lord Mauleverer a disdainful blink through his big spectacles—whereat his lordship smiled serenely. The cricket stump in Study No. 12 seemed to have discouraged the fat Owl on the subject of gracing Mauleverer Towers with his fascinating presence in the hols.

Bunter was not a fellow to take "no" for an answer; but it seemed that the business end of a cricket stump was able to convey an unmistakable negative, even to William George Bunter. Disregarding Mauly,

the fat Owl blinked at the Famous Five.

"I say, you fellows, I've been looking for you!" yapped Bunter.

"Now go and look for somebody else!" suggested Bob Cherry.

"I wish you wouldn't go stalking off somewhere when a fellow wants to speak to you!" said Bunter peevishly. "Look here, I've been thinking it over about that boat trip, and I've decided to come."

"What?" howled Bob.

"It's not much catch mucking about on the Thames in the hols, that I can see!" went on Bunter. "Still, I'll come. But there's one thing—"

"There isn't! Buzz off!"

"There's one thing—"

"Blow away, bluebottle!"

The Famous Five and Mauly walked on to the House.

Billy Bunter gave them an indignant blink and rolled after them.

"You fellows don't seem to understand!" he hooted. "I've decided to come with you for the hols—I say, you fellows, I wish you wouldn't keep on walking away when a fellow's talking to you! What I want to have quite clear is this, there's one thing that I'm particular about."

Six juniors walked on. Bunter's fat little legs twinkled as he kept pace.

"It's about the grub!" he said. "I think I'd better make up a list of the things we shall want. You fellows can get them—I'll leave that to you—but I'd better make up the list. See? I may as well say plainly that if I'm not satisfied about the grub, I shan't come."

"Not really!" gasped Bob.

"No! You can't expect it!" said Bunter.

"Right-ho! We won't!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I mean what I say!" declared Bunter. "Tain't much of a holiday, anyhow—but if you fancy you're going to starve me, you can forget it—you're not! Either you get the things I'll make a list of, or you don't get me in your boat at all!"

The Famous Five chuckled.

That was one of the happy ways of W. G. Bunter! If Bunter was given an inch, he would take not merely an inch but a mile or two!

"You can cackle!" said the fat Owl. "But you'll find that I mean it."

"That's all right, old fat porker!" said Bob. "You see, we're fed right up to the chin with you, and you're not coming in the boat. Now go and eat coke!"

And the juniors went into the House, leaving Bunter blinking.

Bunter, while he waited for the Famous Five to come in, had been giving quite a lot of deep thought to the important matter of provisioning the boat for the Thames trip! Now it looked as if all those mental efforts had been a sheer waste!

"Quelch's study, Mauly!" said Bob, when the juniors went in.

"Eh? I don't want to see Quelch!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"You benighted ass, you've got to

tell him what's happened, so that he can report it at the police station! Mind you tell him that the banknote was smudged, and give him the number."

"But I've forgotten it, old chap!"

"You wrote it in your Latin grammar."

"That's up in my study."

"I don't mind booting you all the way to your study. In fact, we'll all boot you, all the way! Get going, you fellows!"

"Oh, don't trouble!" said Lord Mauleverer hastily; and he went up the staircase unassisted.

The episode in Friardale Wood was duly reported to the Remove master, who repeated it on the telephone to Inspector Grimes at Courtfield. Then Lord Mauleverer joined the famous Five at tea in Study No. 1.

Tea in that study was in progress when a fat voice and a big pair of spectacles looked in, and a fat voice squeaked:

"I say, you fellows—"

"Get out, Bunter!" roared five voices in unison.

Billy Bunter blinked in at the tea-party. The fat Owl did not, for the moment, see Lord Mauleverer, who was screened from his view by the half-open door.

"Look here," said Bunter, "I want this settled! I've turned down Mauly to join up with your party! I can't very well go to Mauly now and say I accept his pressing invitation after turning it down. You see that?"

Lord Mauleverer grinned. The Famous Five chuckled.

"You've turned down Mauly, have you?" asked Bob.

"Yes—and entirely on your account!" said Bunter warmly. "I hardly had the heart to do it, he was so earnest about it—but I felt that I ought to stick to you fellows! Poor old Mauly was quite cut up!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Of course, he's a slacking ass, and a silly idiot, and a footling chump!" said Bunter. "But it was rather rough on him! I hated to do it! But, having decided to stick to you fellows, I had no choice. And now—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Poor old Mauly looked awfully down in the mouth when I told him it couldn't be done—"

"Oh gad!" ejaculated Lord Mauleverer.

Bunter jumped.

"Oh! Is Mauly there?" he gasped.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I didn't see you, you beast! I say, you fellows—"

Bob Cherry picked up a loaf from the table and took aim.

"Where will you have it, Bunter?" he asked.

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

He did not seem to want it anywhere. The study door slammed. Then a fat voice squeaked through the keyhole:

"Yah! Who wants to join up with your Bank Holiday crowd? Yah!"

And having discharged that Parthian shot, Billy Bunter departed.

Bright Prospect For Bunter!

HERBERT VERNON - SMITH grinned. Tom Redwing laughed.

It was morning break at Greyfriars, and the Bounder and his chum, in the quad, were discussing the coming holidays when they sighted Lord Mauleverer and William George Bunter.

Mauly had been sauntering in his usual leisurely way, with his hands in his trousers pockets, looking, as usual, too lazy to live, when a fat figure shot across from the House and squeaked:

"I say, Mauly, old chap!"

Upon which Mauly's laziness dropped from him like a cloak! He started into rapid motion, and passed Smithy and Redwing almost at a run. The fat figure rolled in pursuit.

"Mauly!" squeaked Bunter. "I say, stop a minute, old chap!"

Lord Mauleverer disappeared past the elms.

"Beast!" gasped Bunter.

The Bounder gave Tom Redwing a wink. Then he gave Billy Bunter a cheery nod. Bunter blinked at him in surprise. The Bounder smiled in quite a pleasant way. Bunter blinked in greater surprise.

Friendly nods and pleasant smiles did not often come Bunter's way just before break-up! Least of all did he expect them from the millionaire's son. Smithy was being unusually agreeable. Hope, which springs eternal in the human breast, germinated in Bunter's fat heart.

"Fixed up for the hols, Bunter?" asked Smithy pleasantly.

Bunter blinked at him.

"Well, I haven't settled things yet," he answered cautiously. "Mauly wants me to go home with him, but he's such a shilly-shallying ass, you know. I'd half-decided to go with Wharton's crowd on the river, but it's not much catch. What are you doing, Smithy?"

"Cruise!" said Smithy.

Bunter's eyes sparkled behind his big spectacles. He knew all about Smithy's father's magnificent yacht. A yachting cruise in the holidays was a catch—if a fellow could catch it!

"Well, if you're fixed up, Smithy, it's too late, but I was thinking of asking you to Bunter Court!" he remarked. "There'll be rather a decent crowd there. You'd like it."

"Sounds good!" said the Bounder gravely. "Throngs of the nobility, I suppose, and a prince or two spotted about?"

Bunter blinked at him suspiciously. But the Bounder's face was quite grave. Bunter nodded.

"That sort of thing," he said carelessly. "But a fellow gets tired of it, you know. I dare say you'd like it. Still, perhaps you'd be a bit out of your element, among really nobby people."

"Oh!" gasped Smithy.

Tom Redwing looked at his chum in surprise. He would not have been surprised if Smithy had kicked Bunter for that remark. But he was quite surprised to see the Bounder

take it with pleasant equanimity. From which, however, it did not take him long to deduce that Smithy was bent on pulling the fat Owl's leg.

"The fact is, I'd just as soon go on a cruise," said the Owl of the Remove, blinking at Vernon-Smith hopefully. "I'm a pretty good sailor, and if the company's a bit mixed, I'm the fellow to make myself at home anywhere. I know how to treat City people with tact!"

"Tact's your long suit," remarked the Bounder. "Never saw such a tactful chap. Any good asking you to join up in the cruise, Bunter?"

"Oh! Yes! Rather!" gasped Bunter. "I—I—I mean, I think perhaps I could manage it. Yes, I think I could. I'll come, Smithy!"

"Look here, Smithy——" said Tom Redwing restively.

"Don't you butt in, Redwing!" said Billy Bunter. "Smithy can ask any fellow he likes for a cruise on his pater's yacht, I suppose, without getting leave from you. You mind your own business."

"You fat duffer!" said Redwing. "Look here, Smithy——"

"Dry up, old chap!" said Smithy.

"Yes, you jolly well dry up!" said Bunter warmly. "I'm surprised at you butting in like this! I say, Smithy, is Redwing coming?"

"Oh, yes, Reddy's coming!"

"Well, of course, if you want him, you can ask any fellow you like on your father's yacht," said Bunter. "I don't mind! Anyhow, I can stand him."

"Think you can?" asked the Bounder.

"Dash it all, I've stood all sorts in my time," said Bunter. "I must say I'd rather you left him out, but if you want him, don't mind me. Of course, I don't want him making out, before all the people on the yacht, that he knows me at school."

"You hear that, Reddy?" said the Bounder. "You're not going to make out on the yacht that you know Bunter at school."

"Fathead!" said Tom.

"Do you mind if I make out that I know you at school, Bunter?" asked Vernon-Smith.

Again the fat Owl gave him a suspicious blink. But the expression on the Bounder's face was one of serious and earnest inquiry.

"Oh, that's all right!" said the fat Owl. "Say anything you like, Smithy, and I'll stand for it! Why shouldn't I give a fellow a leg-up socially? I'm no snob, I hope!"

"Oh crumbs! I—I mean, O.K.!" gasped Herbert Vernon-Smith. "Well, is it a go? Perhaps I ought to mention that Redwing's pater will be on the cruise? Think you could stand him as well as Reddy?"

"Um!" said Bunter. "I say, isn't that rather thick, Smithy? Don't you think you ought to draw the line somewhere?"

"Then you won't come?" asked Smithy sadly.

"Oh, yes, I'll come!" said Bunter hastily. "That's all right! But, I say, isn't Redwing's father at sea? He's a sailor, or something——"

"Redwing had a letter from him last week, to say that he would be back in time for the school holidays," explained Smithy. "So he is coming on the cruise with us. My father rather likes him."

"No accounting for tastes," said Bunter, with a sniff. "Still, I've heard that your pater started life as an office-boy, or something! It's all right, Smithy, I'll come. Count on me! And, look here," added Bunter generously, "tell anybody you like that I'm your best friend at school! I'll play up. It will do you a bit of good among your City friends."

"Thanks!" gasped Smithy.

"Not at all, old chap! One good turn deserves another!" declared Bunter. "You're standing me a cruise, and why shouldn't I do what I can for you? That's how I look at it! I'm no snob—fellows of really good family never are. I'll see you right through, and if you and your City crowd get on my nerves a bit, every now and then, you won't see me turn a hair. I've got tact!"

"You have!" gurgled Smithy. "You're a whale on it! It's settled, then—you come on the cruise, and that's that! If a crowd of fellows get after you, after this, tell them you're booked."

And Vernon-Smith walked away with Redwing, leaving a happy and satisfied Owl behind him.

The Bounder was grinning cheerfully; Tom Redwing was frowning.

"Look here, Smithy, it's too thick!" said Tom.

"What is?" asked Smithy.

"Pulling that Owl's silly leg!" growled Tom.

Vernon-Smith raised his eyebrows.

"Who's pulling his leg?" he queried.

"Oh, don't be an ass! Bunter thinks that the cruise is going to be on your father's yacht!" exclaimed Tom.

"Does he? I certainly never said so."

"Well, he wouldn't be likely to guess that you were joining up with me on a coasting cruise on my father's lugger!" said Tom, his face breaking into a smile. "I'm afraid you'll get fed-up, Smithy."

"I'm not Bunter!" said the Bounder disdainfully. "Think I can't live without cars, and theatres, and evening clothes, and big hotel bills, and splashing money about?"

"It will be rough going——"

"Think I can't rough it?"

"Well, I don't think Bunter can," said Tom. "What on earth are we to do with him if he really turns up on the lugger?"

"A ship's boy will come in useful! Hard work and hard tack will do Bunter a lot of good—if he comes!" chuckled the Bounder. "I've got rather a sort of idea that he will turn it down when he finds that it's a coasting lugger instead of a steam yacht!"

"It's too bad!" said Tom, laughing.

"Rats!" said Smithy.

The bell rang for third school.

Billy Bunter rolled in with the Remove, with a cheery grin on his fat face. The difficult question of the

hols was settled at last; and really Bunter could hardly believe in his good luck in getting booked for that cruise! Happily, he did not in the least guess what sort of a cruise it was going to be!

The Purloined Tenner!

"WHARTON!"

"Yes, sir!"

"A man has called concerning a boat!" said Mr. Quelch. "I understand that he comes from Baker's boathouse at Friardale. He has asked to see the boys who engaged a boat there for the holidays! I think you had some such intention."

"Oh, yes, sir!" answered Harry. "We've booked a boat with Mr. Baker—I expect it's on its way by this time to Kingston."

"Then you had better see the man, Wharton! He is waiting now in the waiting-room."

"Yes, sir!"

It was after class when Harry Wharton was called in to hear that communication from his Form-master. He went at once to call his friends to see the man who had come about the boat.

"What does he want?" asked Bob Cherry. "It's all settled about the boat—Baker said it would be packed off this morning."

"Blessed if I know," said Harry. "I suppose the man will tell us! It's all fixed, anyhow—we're going to have the Water-Lily."

Considerably puzzled, the Famous Five made their way to the room where the man from Baker's was waiting for them. They could see no reason why the Friardale boat-builder should send them a message on a matter that was settled and done with.

"Oh!" ejaculated Bob, as they entered, and saw the man who was waiting. They knew that sharp face with its shifty eyes.

It was Mr. Spooner, the man who had been arguing with old Baker at the boat-yard the day before, and who, according to what he had said, had once been the owner of the Water-Lily.

Harry Wharton frowned a little.

The man certainly did not come from Mr. Baker. Why he had come at all was rather a puzzle, but it was fairly certain that the old boat-builder had not sent him.

"Well, what do you want, Mr. Spooner?" asked Harry, rather abruptly. "I was told that a man from Baker's boat-yard was here."

Mr. Spooner eyed the five juniors with his keen, shifty eyes. He recognised them as the party he had seen at the boat-yard the day before.

"Good-afternoon, young gentlemen!" he said, very politely. "I hope you will excuse my calling, but——"

"Mr. Baker never sent you here!" said Bob.

"Not exactly, sir!" admitted Mr. Spooner. "But it's about the boat!"

"Well, what about the boat?" asked Harry.

He did not like the man's looks, or his cunning, shifty eyes; neither did

he care for the company of any man who had been behind prison bars for pinching. However, he did not want to be uncivil.

"It's like this, sir!" said Mr. Spooner. "Maybe you heard what I was saying to Mr. Baker yesterday—anyhow, that boat used to be my boat! I wasn't always hard-up, sir—I had a place of my own once, and had some good times in that boat. I'm sure you young gentlemen will think it's natural for a man to be a bit attached to his old boat that was built to his specifications, and that he looked forward to sailing again while he was having a bad time."

"Well, what about it?" asked Harry. "We've hired the boat for the summer holidays, and it's ours now. I told Mr. Baker we'd stand down if he wanted to let you have it, but he told you he would not."

"That was because I was a bit short of the ready at the time," explained Mr. Spooner. "If I'd had a ten-pound note to dub up, Baker would have let me have the boat! As it happens, sir, I've been able to collect a debt in Courtfield, that was owed to me at the time of my trouble, and I'm in a position now to let Mr. Baker have his deposit."

"Oh!" said Harry.

"If I'd had the money before you settled with Baker, it would have been all right!" said Mr. Spooner. "But I had to hunt out a man in Courtfield, and get him to pay up, and when I got back to Baker's boat-yard, sir, he told me it was fixed and settled, and the boat was yours."

"Yes; we settled it before we left," said Harry. "I'm sorry, Mr. Spooner, if you wanted the boat so much; but it's settled now. In fact, I believe the boat is already put on the rail to go to Kingston."

"So I've heard, sir!" said Mr. Spooner. "But it ain't too late, if you'd do a kind thing, sir! You've paid Mr. Baker ten pounds deposit on that boat!"

"Yes," said Harry.

"Well, if you'd be willing to let me have it, seeing that I was the owner of it once, and sort of attached to it, I'd hand over the ten pounds, and you'd give me Baker's receipt. Baker will let me have the boat all right then, and I'll pick it up at Kingston."

"Oh!" said Harry slowly.

Johnny Bull grunted.

"A bargain's a bargain!" he said.

Frank Nugent and the Nabob of Bhanipur said nothing. They did not like Shifty Spooner's looks; but they rather sympathised with his request. Bob Cherry's face expressed his feelings on that point quite plainly. Shifty Spooner did not look a nice man, and he had been in prison; still, if he was attached to his old boat, it seemed rather hard lines that he should not have it because he had been temporarily short of ready cash.

None of the five was willing to part with the handsome boat they had secured for their summer holiday. But keeping it, in the circumstances, did not seem to them quite the right thing.

Harry Wharton glanced round at his friends.

Giving up the boat meant taking the trouble to select a craft for the river trip all over again, and it was pretty certain that they would not get so satisfactory a boat. It was not agreeable, but it seemed to be a case of noblesse oblige.

"What do you fellows say?" asked the captain of the Remove.

"Oh, let him have it!" said Bob, at once.

"I agree!" said Nugent.

Johnny Bull gave another grunt.

"Oh, all right!" he said. "Same here!"

"The samefulness is terrific!" agreed Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"That's that, then!" said Harry.

He turned to Mr. Spooner again.

That gentleman had watched the brief consultation with eager eyes. Little as the juniors would have guessed him to be a man of sentimental attachments, it was clear that he was very keen on having his old boat.

"It's all right, Mr. Spooner!" said Harry, as cordially as he could. "If you can settle the matter with Mr. Baker—"

"That's all right, sir, if you agree!"

"Then you can have the boat, if you return us the money we paid on deposit yesterday," said Harry Wharton. "I have the receipt here, and I will transfer it to you."

"Done, sir!" said Mr. Spooner, evidently very greatly relieved. "You'll put a line on the back of the receipt, sir, that it's transferred to me?"

"Certainly, when you've paid over the ten pounds!" answered Harry, rather dryly.

From what he had heard at the boat-yard, and from Mr. Spooner's looks, he was by no means sure that the man had the money, and that this was not an attempt at bluff. Certainly Mr. Shifty Spooner was not going to walk off with that receipt till he had paid over the cash.

But it seemed that Mr. Spooner had the cash! He dived his hand into an inside pocket, and took out a cheap imitation-leather wallet.

That wallet, when opened, revealed a single banknote inside. Mr. Spooner seemed to have come into possession of precisely the amount of cash that was required.

He laid a ten-pound note on the table.

"There you are, sir!" he said.

Bob Cherry almost jumped clear of the floor. His eyes popped at that banknote!

It was smudged with ink. It was not a small smudge—it was a large and prominent smudge, and it was, in fact, the same size and shape as the smudge that Bob had blotted on a ten-pound note in Study No. 12 in the Remove the day before.

Bob could hardly believe his eyes.

He made a jump at the table, staring at the banknote.

Mr. Spooner stared at him. A faintly uneasy expression came over his shifty face.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob.

"What——" began Harry.

Bob gave a roar. His eyes were on the number of the note.

It was barely possible that two banknotes, both for ten pounds, might be smudged with ink in the same way! It was possible, though not probable! But it was not possible for two banknotes to have the same number! And the number on that banknote was 00011122.

"Look 'ere——" began Mr. Spooner. His hand shot out towards the note.

Bob Cherry knocked it aside.

"Leave that banknote alone, you thief!" he roared.

"Bob!" exclaimed Wharton.

"What the thump!" exclaimed Nugent.

"That's Mauly's note!" roared Bob. "I know the smudge, and I know the number! That's the tenner that Mauly was robbed of yesterday in Friardale Wood, and that's the rascal who robbed him!"

Quick Work!

SHIFTY SPOONER jumped.

There was a general exclamation of astonishment from the juniors.

"Mauly's note!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Yes; and——"

Mr. Spooner leaped at Bob Cherry, to shove him back and grasp the banknote from the table. It was a swift and sudden leap. But Bob was quite ready for it.

He kept his left hand clamped on the ten-pound note on the table. He swung out his right and jolted Spooner on the chest.

The shifty man staggered back.

Bob's blue eyes gleamed at him as he staggered, panting.

"Try that again!" he roared.

Shifty Spooner panted. Bob was a hefty fellow for a junior schoolboy, but the shifty man might have been able to handle him. But he certainly had no chance of handling the whole bunch of them. Mr. Spooner realised that he was in a bad box.

"My only hat!" exclaimed Frank Nugent. "I say, Bob, if you're sure——"

"Of course I'm sure, fathhead!" growled Bob. "I blotted that smudge myself for Mauly, after that fat ass Bunter upset the ink over his tenner. I told you fellows that Mauly's tenner was smudged——"

"Yes, I remember that!" said Harry.

"And I made Mauly take the number because the silly ass had lost his wallet and was shoving it into his trousers pocket. That's the number."

"Suffering snakes!" breathed Mr. Spooner.

The foopad who had robbed Mauleverer in Friardale Wood had, of course, no knowledge of his lordship's identity. That he was a schoolfellow of the boys who had hired Mr. Baker's boat naturally did not occur to him. Naturally, Mr. Spooner, in bringing that ten-pound note to Greyfriars School, had never dreamed that he was bringing it home.

But he realised now what he had done.

Probably he had had some hesitation in attempting to pass that banknote in a shop. Shopkeepers had a keen eye open on ten-pound notes from strangers.

Very likely it had seemed to Shifty a specially safe way to get rid of it—landing it on unsuspecting schoolboys, especially as it was just on the summer holidays, and those schoolboys would be clearing off to places at a distance—and taking the banknote with them!

Really, it was rather unfortunate for Mr. Spooner that those boys happened to be schoolfellows of the fellow he had robbed, and that one of them was actually acquainted with the banknote and the smudge on it. It was one of those things that the most prudent and painstaking pincher could not possibly have foreseen.

Mr. Spooner was very keen about that boat, but he forgot the boat now and had a longing eye on the door. But Johnny Bull's stocky form was already planted in the doorway, and Johnny's face had an expression on it like a bulldog's. There was no exit for Shifty Spooner.

Bob Cherry picked up the banknote.

"That's going back to Mauly," he said. "By gum, that villain would have landed a stolen banknote on us! No wonder old Baker didn't want to have anything to do with him!"

"Have you anything to say, you rascal?" asked Harry Wharton, his eyes on the shifty face of Mr. Spooner.

"Course I have." Mr. Spooner had recovered his coolness. "If you've seen that note before, I cannot help that. It was paid me in the way of business, like I told you—and if you ain't satisfied you can hand it back."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"We shall certainly not hand back a banknote that was stolen from a friend of ours," he said, "and we shall certainly not let you leave this building, Spooner, until we have told our Form-master, and he has decided whether to send for the police."

Mr. Spooner breathed hard. He clenched a pair of rather knucky fists, but he quickly unclenched them again. Fists, it was clear, would not help Mr. Spooner out of his present scrape.

"I suppose it's possible that he may have got it honestly, from the rascal who robbed Mauly," said Frank Nugent dubiously.

"The possibility does not seem terrific," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"In that case, he can give the police the name and address of the man he got it from," said Harry Wharton dryly. "We'd better go straight to Quelch about this—he can decide."

"Yes, rather, and take that rascal with us," said Bob. "Come on, Mr. Spooner—you're going to see our Form-master."

"Jest what I want," said Mr. Spooner coolly. "And if your school-master don't make you 'and back that banknote I'll have the law on him!"

"Oh, my hat! Come on, then, and tell Quelch that!"

Mr. Spooner was quite cool again

now. His manner was indeed jaunty as he stuck his bowler hat on the side of his head and walked to the door with the juniors.

They gathered round him, to escort him to Mr. Quelch's study.

Spooner showed no unwillingness whatever to go, and his jaunty and assured manner put the juniors perhaps a little off their guard. Had he shown any desire to get away, they would have grasped him fast enough.

As it was, he walked round him, and he accompanied them with perfect self-possession to Masters' Passage.

They had reached the corner of that passage, in sight of the open doorway on the quad—when Mr. Spooner made a sudden bound.

It was so sudden and so swift that he was three or four yards away before they realised that he had jumped clear of them.

Then, as they whirled after him, Shifty Spooner ran for the doorway with the swiftness of a startled hare.

"Oh!" gasped Bob. "After him!"

"Collar him!" roared Johnny Bull.

The five tore in pursuit.

There was no doubt about the matter now. Obviously, Mr. Spooner was not able to explain his possession of that ten-pound note, except by explaining that he had stolen it from Lord Mauleverer in Friardale Wood—an explanation which he was naturally unwilling to make to a police-constable!

Shifty was on the run, and he had gained a start. He fairly flew out into the quad.

After him flew the Famous Five.

"Stop him!" roared Bob.

"Stop thief!" shouted Harry Wharton.

A dozen fellows stared round in surprise. Shifty Spooner flew for the gates. Temple of the Fourth was near him, and he made a grab—but Shifty's knucky fist knocked Cecil Reginald Temple out of the way, and he flew on.

"Stop him, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter was directly in the path of the running man. But Billy Bunter, after a startled blink at Shifty, bounded out of that path.

Shifty raced on to the gates.

In the gateway stood the burly form of Horace Coker of the Fifth.

Coker, hearing the roar of voices, looked round.

"Stop him, Coker!" roared Bob.

"Stop thief!"

"Collar him, Coker!"

Horace Coker was made of sterner stuff than Bunter. Coker blocked the way, ready to grasp the running man as he arrived.

Shifty Spooner cast a desperate look round him.

The Famous Five were close behind—twenty or thirty fellows were running up from various directions, and

the way of escape was blocked by the burly, beefy Fifth Form man.

"Got him!" gasped Bob.

But they had not quite got Shifty.

He careered on, and reached the gateway, and Horace Coker grasped at him.

Shifty lowered his bullet head and charged, butting Coker on the third button of his waistcoat.

"Ooooooh!" gasped Coker.

He went over backwards, gurgling.

Shifty Spooner leaped over him as he sprawled, and raced out of the gateway.

A moment later five fellows were sprawling headlong over Coker of the Fifth.

"Oooooooooogh!" came in gasping accents from Coker, as he struggled for wind. "Wooooooooogh!"



"I might have come with your Bank Holiday card!"

"It's too late!"

Harry Wharton & Co. scrambled up. They dashed out into the road. They had a brief glimpse of Shifty Spooner vanishing across a meadow.

"No go!" gasped Bob. "We've got Mauly's note, anyhow!"

And the Famous Five walked back to the House, breathless from the chase, to report what had happened to their Form-master and hand over the banknote for identification and return to the owner.

Not For Bunter!

"WHAT about it?" asked Bob Cherry.

It was the following day before break-up.

Bob Cherry propounded that query to his friends, on the Remove landing. They answered, all at once.

"Ass!" said Harry Wharton.

"Fathead!" said Frank Nugent.

"Chump!" said Johnny Bull.

"Preposterous duffer!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Bob grunted.

"Oh, all right!" he said. "If that's how, wash it out! All the same, the fat ass will be left over, and I don't see why he couldn't be put up with on the trip—we've put up with him often enough."

It was Bob's kind heart again!

It smote him.

After all, Bob considered, why not let Bunter hook on? Nobody else, it was certain, would let him hook on. Even the long-suffering Mauleverer had jibbed—to the extent of jabbing Bunter with a cricket stump to shoo him off.



"How would you'd been civil!" said Bunter loftily. "I don't see how you'd be now!"

It was Bunter Court for Bunter, unless he joined up with the Famous Five—and the five were aware that Bunter Court, on close inspection, was Bunter Villa—and that the distinguished company there in the holidays consisted wholly and solely of his brother Sammy and his sister Bessie.

"He could cook!" said Bob.

"Only he wouldn't."

"He could wash up—"

"Catch him!"

"Oh, all right!" said Bob. "I know he's a bother and a worry. Still, I thought I'd mention it."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Go and mention it to Bunter!" he said. "He's in his study—go and tell him, fathead! As soon as you ask him, he'll fancy he's wanted and will begin to swell!"

"Well, he can't help being a fool—

and we're told to suffer fools gladly, you know!" said Bob. "After all, we did make up our minds to take him along—we can make them up again. Shall I tell him it's all right?"

"O.K.!"

And Bob Cherry, leaving his chums on the landing, went along to Study No. 7 to tell Bunter that it was all right!

Billy Bunter was reposing in the armchair in that study, with his fat little legs stretched out, and his fat thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat. There was a contented expression on his fat face. He was, in fact, contemplating that gorgeous yachting cruise that was to fill up the vacation so satisfactorily.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob in the doorway.

Bunter blinked round at him peevishly.

"Don't yell into this study!" he said.

"Fathead!" answered Bob, good-humouredly.

"I've looked in to tell you it's all right about the hols, old fat man!"

Bunter looked at him. His fat lip curled.

"Is it?" he sneered.

"Yes, ass! I've asked the other fellows, and they agree, so it's all right. Turn up at young Baker's beathouse at Kingston this day week," said Bob. "We meet there to get on the boat."

"He, he, he!"

Bob stared at him. He saw no reason for that fat cackling, in the information he had just imparted.

"Well, what's the joke, fathead?" he asked, rather gruffly.

Billy Bunter shrugged fat shoulders. His look and his manner were expressive of unlimited and overwhelming contempt.

"Too late!" he said scornfully.

"Eh? What's too late?"

"This is!" retorted Bunter. "I might have come with your Bank Holiday crowd, if you'd been civil about it. Were you?"

"You fat blitherer—"

"It's too late now," said Bunter loftily. "You had your chance and you lost it. Make the best of it."

Bob blinked at him.

"You burbling cuckoo!" he said, in measured tones. "This is the last time you'll get a chance. Are you coming or not?"

"Not!" answered Bunter. "Catch me mucking about in a rotten boat on your cheap trip. Hardly the sort of thing I'm accustomed to in the vac. I might have come, if you'd been civil. At least, I'd have considered it. It's too late now. Shut that door after you!"

Bob Cherry laughed.

"Thanks!" he said.

"Eh? What are you thanking me for, you ass?"

"For making our trip a success," said Bob.

"Eh? I'm not coming!"

"That's how."

"You silly ass!" hooted Bunter. "You'd jolly well like to bag me for the vac! Well, I ain't coming, see? I've got something better on."

"Poor old Mauly!" sighed Bob.

"It's not Mauly!" sneered Bunter. "I've turned down that silly, shilly-shallying nincompoop! If you want to know—"

"I don't!"

"If you want to know, I'm going on a cruise!" said Bunter. "While you're mucking about in a boat on the Thames, you can think of me on a magnificent steam yacht. If you'd been civil, I might have put in a word for you—now I won't. I dare say Smithy would have asked you, if I'd made a point of it. Now I shan't!"

Bob Cherry jumped.

"Smithy!" he gasped.

"Yes, Smithy!" said Bunter loftily. "He's asked me to join up for a cruise—something rather better than your cheap boating trip! You can go and eat coke, with your twopenny-ha'penny boat on the Thames, so yah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob.

Billy Bunter blinked at him in surprise.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" he yapped. "What are you cackling at, you dummy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Bob. "Has Smithy asked you to join in his cruise with Redwing—"

"Yes, he jolly well has!"

"And you're going?" gurgled Bob.

"Yes, I jolly well am! You can keep your cheap trips!" sneered Bunter. "No Bank Holiday crowds for me, thanks!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah!"

Bob Cherry turned away from the door of Study No. 7—or, rather, tottered away. He was doubled with merriment, as he staggered down the Remove passage to the landing.

Billy Bunter gave a snort of scorn as he went. This, he supposed, was jealousy and envy.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob, as he rejoined the Co. on the Remove landing. "I say— Ha, ha, ha!"

"What on earth's the joke?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Bunter!" yelled Bob. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Is he coming?" grunted Johnny Bull.

"No! He's got something better on!" gurgled Bob. "Ha, ha, ha! He's going on a cruise these hols—"

"Thank goodness for that!" said Johnny Bull. "But who the dickens has Bunter stuck for a cruise?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Smithy!" gasped Bob.

"Smithy!" yelled the Co.

"Yes—Smithy!"

"But Smithy told us he was going to rough it these hols on that coasting lugger, with Redwing!" said Harry Wharton, staring.

"He can't have told Bunter that!" gurgled Bob. "Bunter's going on a

magnificent steam yacht—so he says!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"So Bunter's turned us down!" gasped Bob. "Turned us right down! Wouldn't be found dead on our boat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five roared.

When Greyfriars School broke up the following day, Lord Mauleverer escaped without even a blink from Bunter.

The Famous Five, as they packed on the school omnibus, were favoured with a disdainful blink—merely that and nothing more.

"Good-bye, Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry. "Have a good time on that cruise!"

"I'm going to!" retorted Bunter. "Have a good time on that cheap trip of yours—he, he, he!"

And the bus rolled away with a merry crowd, leaving Billy Bunter still blinking disdainfully.

Not A Yacht!

"NOT a bad car!" said Billy Bunter.

"Glad you like it!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Hardly like our Rolls at home—still not a bad car!" said Bunter. "Are we going all the way by car, Smithy?"

"Oh yes!"

"Look here, Smithy——" said Tom Redwing uneasily.

"Shut up, Reddy!"

"Yes, don't you butt in, Redwing!" said Bunter, blinking at him. "You talk too much, if you don't mind my mentioning it. Where is your pater's yacht now, Smithy?"

The Bounder grinned. The millionaire's magnificent yacht was at Southampton; but he had no intention of informing Bunter of that fact. He turned to the chauffeur.

"Shove the bags on, Powser!"

"Yes, sir!"

"I say, though!" Bunter looked at the Bounder's sleeve. "I say, where are we heading for? If it's a long trip in the car, we shall want some grub—say, a lunch-basket——"

"Quite a short trip!" answered Vernon-Smith. "The jolly old craft has been brought round to Pegg Bay, to take us aboard."

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter. "Is your pater on board?"

"Oh, no! We shan't see the pater to-day."

"Well, I don't mind that, Smithy! Of course, you can depend on me to be perfectly civil to your pater!" said Bunter, blinking at him. "I've knocked about a bit, and I'm used to all classes. Any friends of his, too—leave it to me to treat 'em with tact."

"I will!" said Vernon-Smith, manfully restraining a strong desire to boot Billy Bunter across the quad and back again—which he would probably have done, but for the fact that it would have enlightened the fat Owl, before his leg had been sufficiently pulled. "Push in, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter packed his ample

figure into the car. Bags belonging to Vernon-Smith and Redwing were packed on. No baggage belonging to Billy Bunter was visible. Bunter was following his usual system of travelling: light! Like the Picts and Scots of old, Bunter was accustomed to live on the country he invaded! As a matter of taste, he would rather have borrowed Harry Wharton's clothes than Smithy's—but he could manage with Smithy's, at a pinch!

The car rolled away.

Billy Bunter settled back in his seat with a fat, contented grin.

Last hols he had hooked on to Smithy, and Smithy had played a rotten trick on him! This time it was all right, as he was departing in company with the Bounder, and was booked to arrive where the Bounder arrived!

He was rather glad that the jolly old craft had been brought round to Pegg Bay for the party to go on board. He hoped that some of the Cliff House girls might be about, to see him going on board that magnificent yacht! He was still happily unaware of the nature of that jolly old craft, and certainly did not dream that old John Redwing had sailed the little lugger down from Hawkscliff that morning, to pick up his son and his son's chum at Pegg.

It was only a few miles from Greyfriars School to Pegg, and the car covered the distance swiftly.

As it ran into the old cobbled street of the village, Billy Bunter turned his spectacles on the wide blue sea, seeking the yacht.

He did not succeed in spotting it.

There was a cargo tramp lying at anchor out in the bay. There were fishing-boats to be seen. There was a lugger lying beside the old stone quay. But there was no magnificent steam yacht.

"I say, Smithy, where is it?" asked Bunter. "I can't see your pater's yacht!"

The Bounder laughed. Bunter's sight was short; but he would have needed a remarkably long range of vision to see a yacht that was lying in Southampton from the coast of Kent!

"Have we got to wait for it?" asked Bunter.

"Well, we shan't see the yacht just yet, I fancy!" answered Vernon-Smith. "Here we are—get out!"

The car came to a halt.

Vernon-Smith and Redwing took their bags from the chauffeur.

"Let the car wait, Smithy!" muttered Redwing.

"Why?"

"Well, if Bunter wants to go back——"

"Do you want to go back, Bunter?"

"Eh? Of course I don't!" said Bunter. "I wish you wouldn't keep on butting in, Redwing! I think a fellow ought to know his place!"

"You fat ass——"

"Look here, you shut up!" said Bunter. "I'm going to stand you on this cruise, as Smithy makes a point of it; but I don't want any of your cheek!"

"Bunter's the man to tell you where you get off, Reddy!" said the

Bounder, laughing. "Don't you know him?"

"Look here, keep the car for a bit!" said Redwing. "That fat chump will want a lift back to the school——"

"I've asked you to shut up, Redwing!" said Billy Bunter. "Why the thump can't you mind your own business?"

"Hang on here for ten minutes, Powser, in case the car's wanted!" said Vernon-Smith, conceding the point.

"Yes, sir!"

"Come on, Bunter! Come on, Reddy!"

The Bounder crossed the stone quay to the steps, at the foot of which the lugger lay.

Old John Redwing, the only man on board, touched his hat to the millionaire's son, and gave Tom a cheery smile.

Smithy gave the old sailorman a nod and a grin, and pitched his bag on board.

Tom Redwing stepped on the lugger, and Smithy turned to Bunter.

"Hop on!" he said.

"On what?" asked Bunter.

"The jolly old craft!"

Billy Bunter blinked at the lugger. He blinked at the Bounder. He blinked at the lugger again. He was rather bewildered.

"What are we going on that old tub for?" he asked. "Is it going to take us out to the yacht?"

"The yacht?" repeated Vernon-Smith. "What yacht?"

"Eh? We're going on the yacht, ain't we?"

"Not that I know of."

Bunter jumped.

"What are we going on, then?" he gasped.

"That lugger!"

"That lugger!" shrieked Bunter. "Gone mad? Ain't we going on a cruise?"

"Yes—on that lugger!"

"On that lugger!" repeated Billy Bunter, like a fellow in a dream, or, rather, in a nightmare. "You—you—you—I thought we were going on the yacht?"

"What put that idea into your head?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"Why, you—you—you beast!" gasped Bunter. "Did you mean that putrid old lugger all the time?"

"My dear chap, it's been fixed up for a week! I asked you to join up because you're so nice—and so tactful! Aren't you coming on this cruise to give me a leg up socially?" asked the Bounder.

"Beast!" shrieked Bunter. "Think I'm coming on that filthy old barge?"

"It isn't filthy, and it isn't a barge! Quite a jolly old lugger," said the Bounder cheerfully. "You'll soon get used to sleeping on the planks——"

"Wha-a-t?"

"And living on hard tack——"

"Beast!"

"And making yourself useful! Lots of work to do on a coasting lugger, with a crew of only four! You'll sleep like a top at night—on the planks—after a hard day's work! I'm going to rope's-end you if you slae

"Rotter!"

"Come on!" said the Bounder cheerfully, and he jumped on board the lugger.

Billy Bunter did not come on!

Magnificent steam yachts were in Bunter's line—if he could contrive to wedge on board one! A coasting lugger, with a hard day's work, hard tack, and sleeping on planks, was not! Bunter Court was better than that!

Billy Bunter did not step on board that lugger! Wild horses would not have dragged him on board that lugger! Instead of stepping on board, he shook a fat fist at the Bounder! It dawned upon his fat brain at last that his leg had been pulled.

"Beast!" he roared.

"Aren't you coming?" grinned the Bounder.

"Beast!"

"May as well push off, sir!" said Smithy to old John Redwing, who was staring at Bunter in a very puzzled way. "My fat friend seems to have changed his mind about coming!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" said old John, and he cast off.

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

"Sure you won't come?" chuckled Smithy. "You'd come in useful as ballast!"

"Beast!"

The lugger slid away from the quay on the tide.

John Redwing stood at the tiller—Tom Redwing and the Bounder hoisted the sail! Billy Bunter brandished a fat fist.

"Beast!" he roared.

That valediction came down the wind to the lugger as it rolled out on the blue waters!

Billy Bunter, with feelings too deep for words, rolled away from the quay—glad, after all, that Redwing had prevailed on the Bounder to keep the car waiting! He had, at all events, a lift back to Greyfriars!

Unexpected!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Five fellows jumped almost clear of the platform at Kingston Station.

It was a bright August day.

Five faces were as bright as the August weather.

Bob Cherry had been the first to arrive at the rendezvous. Then came Harry Wharton and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, together; then Frank Nugent; last of all, Johnny Bull.

The Famous Five had parted hardly a week ago, on break-up day at Greyfriars; but they were very glad to see one another again, and every fellow in the famous Co. was looking forward to getting the Water-Lily out of young Baker's boat-house and starting on the trip up the Thames.

And, as they stood talking in a cheery group on the platform, a fat and familiar voice fell on their ears—a fat and familiar voice they had not expected to hear till they returned to Greyfriars for the new term.

They spun round.

"Bunter!" gasped five voices, in unison.

They gazed at Bunter!

The fat Owl of the Remove gave them a cheery nod. There was, perhaps, a rather uncertain blink behind his big spectacles. But his manner was cheery and airy.

"Here we are, old chaps!" he said breezily. "I spotted you from the waiting-room! I got here first."

"You got here first!" repeated Bob.

"Yes, I wouldn't risk missing you—I mean, I wouldn't risk keeping you waiting! It was such a pleasure to see your nice pleasant face when you got off the train, Bob."

"Was it?" gasped Bob.

"Yes, old chap! Yours, too, Wharton—I'd never really noticed before what a good-looking chap you were—"

"Eh?"

"Inky, too," said Bunter. "Chap can't help being black—but for a black chap, Inky's quite agreeable, and—nice!"

"The thankfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Even Bull!" said Bunter heartily.

"Pleasure to see you, Bull!"

Grunt!

"And you, Franky," said Bunter. "Same old pleasant smile you always have at Greyfriars, old fellow."

"You burbling Owl!"

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Time we were getting along!" said Johnny Bull. "Good-bye, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Fancy meeting Bunter here!" said Bob Cherry. "You doing anything on the river these hols, Bunter?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Well, whatever it is, we won't keep you away from it!" said Bob. "Come on, you men—we've got to walk to young Baker's."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Ta-ta, old fat man! See you again next term."

The Famous Five walked out of the station.

Billy Bunter blinked after them. Then he rolled after them. Those fellows were not, it seemed to Bunter, very quick on the uptake. They did not seem to realise that he was one of the river party.

However, if they did not realise that, Bunter was the man to put them wise, without loss of time.

Bunter accelerated, and overtook them outside the station.

"I say, you fellows!" he squeaked.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter again!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in surprise. "You here all on your own, Bunter?"

"I'm here with my friends!" said Bunter, with dignity.

"We won't keep you away from them! Don't waste your time on us!"

"Look here—"

"Good-bye, old man!"

"Beast! I mean, I say, old chaps, don't walk off while a fellow's talking to you!" roared Bunter. He got into rapid motion. "I say, you fellows, you didn't really think that I should let you down, did you? Of course, I meant to come all along! As if I'd let my best pals down over the hols!"

said Bunter reproachfully. "Did I ever? I say, you fellows, don't walk so fast!"

The fellows walked faster.

"I've turned Smithy down!" went on Bunter, accelerating again. "He was rather sick about it, but I said plainly that I'd as good as promised my own pals, and that was that! Of course, it was ripping on the yacht, and—"

"On the yacht!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Yes—everything in the most expensive style, of course—you know Smithy, and the way he splashes money about! But I didn't really care for it!" said Bunter, shaking his head. "Those Vernon-Smiths are rather a crummy lot! Palatial yachts are all very well—but, after all, I'm used to that sort of thing! Something plain and humble comes as a welcome change—such as a boat on the river—"

"You fibbing, frowey fozler!" hooted Johnny Bull. "Think we didn't know that Smithy was pulling your silly leg?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Did you?"

"Sort of!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "But tell us about the magnificent yacht you haven't been on!"

"Beast! I—I mean, I—I—I—I say, old fellow, I—I— Don't walk so fast!" gasped Bunter. "Look here, if you race along like that I shan't come with you!"

"Put in on!" said Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, I—I'm really coming, you know! I—I thought I should be jolly useful on the boat, you see! Look how I can cook!"

"Good-bye!"

"And think of the washing-up!" urged Bunter. "Tons and tons of washing-up on a trip like this! Well, I'm going to do all the washing-up! Mind, I shall insist on that! I—I want to do all the washing-up!"

"Oh crikey!"

"As for the grub, I'm not particular about that! I may have made a little joke about it—only my little joke, you know! What do I care about it? It's not much I eat, as you fellows know!"

"Ye gods!"

"The fact is, what I really want is the company of my old pals—pleasant company and—and sprightly conversation, and all that!" said Bunter. "And, mind, I shall insist on standing my share of the exes! It's no good arguing about that, because I insist on it. My idea is that every man in the party should pay his fair whack, and I can't agree to anything else."

"It's rather hot weather for a race!" remarked Bob Cherry thoughtfully. "But there are times when the weather has to be disregarded. You fellows feel up to a sprint?"

"Quite!" said Nugent, laughing.

"Go it!" said Harry Wharton.

"I say, you fellows, hold on!" roared Billy Bunter. "Think I can run in this heat?"

"Not at all! Good-bye!"

"Beast! I mean, old chap! I say, hold on!" shrieked Bunter, as the

Famous Five broke into a trot. "I say, I don't know the way to Baker's—I don't want to lose you! Hold on, you rotters! I mean, wait a minute, old fellows! I say, old beans! Beasts!"

Billy Bunter broke into a desperate trot.

Having waylaid the river party at Kingston Station, and caught them there, he did not want to lose them in the streets of Kingston.

He put on speed.

Bob Cherry glanced back over his shoulder.

What he saw nearly brought the flight of Bunter to a sudden end, for Bob almost choked with laughter.

Behind the five came the fat Owl, puffing and blowing, gasping and spluttering, as red as a turkey—going all out!

"Stamp on the gas!" gurgled Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five stamped on the gas. They almost flew. Behind them careered Bunter, spluttering wildly, and steaming with perspiration—regarded with considerable interest by many of the inhabitants of Kingston.

But it booted not!

Bunter sprinted his hardest. But he was too heavily handicapped for a foot-race! He had much—much too much—weight to carry!

In spite of his frantic efforts, the Famous Five—without unduly exerting themselves—faded out of the picture. They vanished from view—and Billy Bunter came to a halt—and fanned a streaming face with a straw-hat and gurgled for breath.

"Unnugg! Beasts! U'rggh!" gurgled Bunter.

They were gone—gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream! Billy Bunter was left on his own in Kingston—an interesting old place, where once upon a time the Saxon kings had been crowned—if that was any comfort to him!

Luck!

"THE Water-Lily!"

Billy Bunter blinked at it. Bunter's vision was not keen, but he could read the name Water-Lily neatly painted on the boat. He blinked at it, and blinked at it again, in surprise and satisfaction. This was luck—sheer luck!

It was a couple of hours since Billy Bunter had lost the river party in the quaint and interesting old streets of Kingston.

That unexpected disaster had rather floored the Owl of the Remove.

Having hooked on, he had not expected to be so suddenly unhooked. Bunter had great faith in his hooking powers.

But there he was—unhooked, and at a loose end. But he was not beaten yet. In fact, Bunter could not afford to retreat. He had, as it were, burned his ships behind him!

His financial resources had landed him at Kingston. He had two pennies and a halfpenny still in his possession. On that sum, it was clear that he could not travel to any considerable distance by railway.

He had not even the choice of Bunter Court now. It was the Water-Lily or nothing!

So there was Bunter on the tow-path, watching the river with his eyes and his spectacles, in the hope of picking up the Greyfriars boat as it passed.

The beasts had to go up the river. They had to pass Bunter. He was going to spot them again as they did it!

Bunter had a hopeful nature. He needed one to hope to be able to spot a boat among the countless craft that pushed up the river on a fine August afternoon!

How many dozens, and scores, and hundreds of craft of all sorts and sizes passed Bunter he did not know.

They seemed to him to pass by in their myriads.

And then—

Bunter, in taking these chances, had to trust a good deal to luck. And luck seemed to be befriending him in the most remarkable manner.

In watching the river and the innumerable craft that glided upon its broad and shining bosom, the fat junior did not notice for some time a boat that was tied up to the bank, within a dozen yards of his fat little nose.

When at last he did notice it, he discerned the name "Water-Lily" painted thereon.

He was watching in hope of spotting the Water-Lily, with five beasts on board who still had to be persuaded somehow to increase the number of the party to six! And there was the Water-Lily—tied up to the bank, with not a soul on board!

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated Bunter.

He grinned.

Why they had left the boat there he did not know, and did not care much. Probably they had tied it up while they did some shopping in Kingston.

Anyhow, there it was, untenanted, rocking gently on the water, under the bank. And Bunter rolled down to it in great relief.

He knew that it was possible that if he sighted the boat passing, and hailed it, they might turn a deaf ear to his dulcet tones! They were quite capable of it. But once he was safely aboard, it came easier! Fellows who might turn a deaf ear to his hailing might hesitate to boot him out of the boat. He hoped so, at least.

After all, they had asked him to join in that trip! True, he had turned it down in the most contemptuous manner. But he was willing to turn it up again. That invitation still stood, in Bunter's opinion.

The fat Owl had not seen the Water-Lily at old Baker's yard at Friardale. But he knew the name, and remembered it. He had supposed that it would be a rather larger boat than this: there did not seem a lot of room for half a dozen fellows in this craft. It looked as if there was going to be some close packing. Bunter made up his mind on the spot that he was jolly well going to have room to move, whatever happened to the rest. If they didn't like it, they should have got a bigger boat. Expense was no object—to Bunter!

He grabbed the painter, pulled the boat closer in, and rolled into it.

He sat down in the stern seat with considerable satisfaction. He was glad of a rest, after having been on his fat little legs for a couple of hours.

But, having taken a rest, he stirred again. He was, of course, hungry. Even if they were still shopping in Kingston, there was probably something on the Water-Lily already.

He opened the stern locker.

Then his eyes danced behind his spectacles.

There was a lunch-basket in the locker.

So far as Bunter could see, it was all that the Water-Lily contained in the way of provisions, so far. But it

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was enough for Bunter to go on with, at least.

He sat down again, with that lunch-basket on his fat knees.

He opened it. He gloated over it! Sandwiches, little cakes, nice little pots of various things, a whole jam-roll, met his delighted view.

Gobble, gobble, gobble!

That lunch-basket seemed to have been packed for three or four. Billy Bunter was quite equal to dealing with a lunch for three or four. He had had only one lunch that day, so far, and that was three or four hours ago. The fat Owl gobbled, and gobbled, and gobbled, and was happy and comforted.

In twenty minutes, that well-packed lunch-basket was reduced to a mere wreck. There were a few crumbs in it, and it was rather sticky; otherwise, there was nothing to indicate that it had ever contained foodstuffs.

Bunter felt better!

There was still no sign of the Famous Five. They seemed to be a fearfully long time about that shopping in Kingston.

Still, Bunter had only to wait!

They had not apparently packed their camping outfit on the boat yet. Bunter could see nothing of a tent, or cooking utensils, or bags, or anything but a heap of boat rugs piled up in the bows. It was rather puzzling why they had not loaded up the boat before bringing it away from young Bakers' boat-house. Evidently they hadn't.

But, as the fat Owl blinked at the rugs in the bows, his eyes gleamed behind his spectacles. There was nothing more to eat, and he had to wait, and he wanted a rest after his exertions on the lunch-basket. And he did not want to be hooked out of the Water-Lily and dumped on the towpath when they came aboard—which was quite a possible happening as soon as they spotted him. Obviously, it was judicious to keep out of sight, if he could, till after they had pushed off!

"He, he, he!" gurgled Bunter. It was quite a bright idea.

On a warm August afternoon, few fellows would have cared to snuggle down under two or three rugs. But it was a case of safety first.

Bunter crawled into the bows and arranged those rugs over him to screen him from sight. It was warm—but it was safe! And when, a quarter of an hour later, there was a sound of footsteps and voices close at hand, the fat Owl grinned in his cover and remained very silent.

An Exchange Of Shots!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Highcliffe cads!"

A rather roomy and well-laden boat was pulling up from Kingston Bridge. On that boat was painted the name "Water-Lily."

But the Famous Five had no doubt that their Water-Lily was the pick of the basket.

The Water-Lily was roomy; but there was plenty of cargo on board,

and the voyagers had not yet had time to sort it all out, and get it in apple-pie order. That could wait till they camped.

Johnny Bull and Bob Cherry were pulling. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was steering. Frank Nugent and Harry Wharton were industriously sorting the tow-rope out from among tent ropes and pegs and blankets that had come unrolled, and tomatoes that had tumbled out of a basket.

Farther up, they were going to tow. Towing was the great stand-by. But the oars were going to be used sometimes—and, on favourable occasions, the sail. At the present moment, the Water-Lily was going along under oars; and the sail was rather mixed with the tent.

There was a lot of sorting out to be done later. Rome was not built in a day; and, judging by the present aspect of the boat, the sorting out might take about as long as the building of Rome!

But every face was bright and cheery; and Bob Cherry only grinned good-naturedly as he made his remark concerning three fellows on the bank.

The Water-Lily was rather close in to the bank, and those three fellows were staring at it.

Harry Wharton glanced round as Bob spoke.

"Oh! Pon and his lot!" he said.

The three were Ponsonby, Gadsby, and Monson, of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe.

At school, the Famous Five were on terms of warfare with Pon & Co., of Highcliffe. But they had no idea of keeping up rows in the holidays; and Bob's remark was not made loud enough for Pon & Co. to hear.

In fact, Bob released one hand from his oar and waved it at the three Highcliffians on the towpath in greeting.

Bob never remembered grudges; and in his present cheery spirits quite forgot that he never saw Cecil Ponsonby's nose without wanting to punch it.

Pon's voice reached the five fellows in the boat:

"The Water-Lily, what? That old tub!"

"Coincidence!" said Gadsby.

"What a crew!" remarked Monson.

Evidently, the nuts of Highcliffe did not share Bob Cherry's cheery disposition to forget past rows and troubles. Probably they remembered the spot of trouble on the banks of the Sark.

"This dashed river swarms with Bank Holiday crowds in August!" grunted Ponsonby. "Fancy meetin' that crew here."

"Nice lad, what?" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Cheeky cad!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"The dear man seems shirty about something," remarked Frank Nugent. "I noticed they were rowing before they saw us."

It was a fact that Cecil Ponsonby was not looking his own bonny self. He was scowling, and his two friends were scowling also. It seemed that something must have occurred in the ancient town of Kingston to dis-

gruntle the Highcliffe trio. No doubt that helped to spur on Ponsonby into a quarrelsome mood.

"Packed any soap, you Greyfriars men?" called out Gadsby.

"Eh? Yes!" answered Bob, staring.

"Why not use some of it?"

"You cheeky ass—"

"Oh, they never wash at Greyfriars!" said Monson. "Catch 'em washing in the holidays!"

Harry Wharton's hand closed on a tomato he had sorted out from among the tent-pegs. It was in a rather squashed state, and even Billy Bunter would have disdained it as an article of diet. But he refrained from letting the Highcliffians have it, though strongly tempted so to do.

The Highcliffians, on their side, did not display the same self-restraint. Pon, only too clearly, was ripe for trouble. Pon had a long memory for grudges.

Whatever was the cause of the bad temper from which he suffered at the moment, he was prepared to wreak it on his old enemies of Greyfriars.

The Water-Lily pulled on, but it was quite easy for the fellows on the bank to keep pace. And as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh steered farther out, to give the Highcliffians a wider berth, Pon went into action.

He kicked loose a chunk of turf, grabbed it up, and took aim at the Greyfriars boat.

Bob glared at him.

"Chuck that, you fathead!" he roared.

"Comin'!" answered Ponsonby.

And it came—with a whiz—and landed fair and square under Bob Cherry's chin!

There was a yell from Bob as he went over backwards, very nearly losing his oar, and flinging his hat into the air.

The boat lost way and wildly.

Frank Nugent stumbled over among tent-ropes and pegs, blankets, and tow-rope.

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

"Give them another, Pon!" chuckled Monson.

"What-ho!" grinned Pon.

But Pon did not give them another. For, even before Bob Cherry collected his long legs from the air, Harry Wharton's hand went up, with the damaged tomato in it.

Whiz!

Squash!

"Oooogh!" spluttered Ponsonby.

The tomato squashed and splattered and splashed in the very middle of Pon's features.

He staggered back and sat down on the towpath, his face streaming tomato. He gurgled horribly.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a roar from the Greyfriars boat.

"Urrgh!"

"Oh gad!" exclaimed Monson, in alarm. He dodged, but he did not dodge quickly enough to escape the next tomato. It caught him in the neck. It burst inside the open neck of his shirt.

"Grooogh!" gasped Monson.

"Yaroooogh!" howled Gadsby, as

a third tomato came, landing in his left ear.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Greyfriars crew.

Pon & Co. were not laughing now. The hilarity of the proceedings seemed to have quite departed so far as they were concerned. Bowling a fellow over with a turf had seemed quite funny to Pon, but getting a squashy tomato in exchange did not appeal to his sense of humour at all.

Ponsonby sat and clawed tomato. Gadsby and Monson backed away, dabbing with handkerchiefs.

"Have a few more?" called out Harry Wharton. "We've got lots!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Pon & Co. did not seem to want a few more. One each, it appeared, was all they wanted. They were left behind, spluttering and dabbing, as the Greyfriars boat pulled on up the river and were lost to sight—still spluttering and dabbing!

Doggo!

BILLY BUNTER hardly breathed under the screen of rugs in the bows of the Water-Lily—which craft Billy Bunter never dreamed, so far, to be other than the Water-Lily hired by the Famous Five from Baker's boat-yard at Friardale.

The boat rocked as fellows stepped into it.

Billy Bunter could hear voices, but they were muffled by the rugs that hid his fat face and podgy figure from the general view. He had no doubt that they were the voices of Harry Wharton & Co., for whose else could they be?

He waited anxiously for the boat to push off.

Every little helped in such a case. Close in shore a fellow could be slung off a boat where he was not wanted. Out in the river, he couldn't! They would have to pull back to land him. And once afloat, surely even those beasts would realise that Bunter was one of the party, even if they lacked the good sense and good taste to realise that he was the most important one.

Bunter hoped they would push off before they shifted those rugs.

That hope was gratified—they did.

He felt the boat rock away from the bank. He heard the clatter of an oar in a rowlock. He heard several voices—all of them speaking in tones of annoyance. But though he could not distinguish the words, nor the voices, one thing was obvious to the hidden Owl. The beasts did not seem to be in good tempers.

Then suddenly a roar of rage reached his fat ears—so loud that it penetrated his cover.

"Look! That lunch-basket! Some tramp's been here!"

Bunter gave a jump under the rugs.

That voice was familiar to his fat ears. But it was not the voice of any member of the Famous Five! It

was the voice of Cecil Ponsonby of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe.

The fat Owl wondered whether he was dreaming.

This was the Greyfriars boat. At least, it was named the Water-Lily, and the Greyfriars boat was named the Water-Lily. What on earth was Pon of Highcliffe doing on the Greyfriars boat? And what did it matter to Pon if a lunch-basket belonging to his old enemies had been cleared out by a hungry Owl? It seemed to matter—Pon was fairly yelling with rage.

Bunter stirred a little, to shift an edge of a rug so that he could hear. He quaked from one end to the other of his fat person at the sound of Highcliffe voices. Only a day or two before breaking-up at Greyfriars those cads had ragged old Mauly. What were they likely to do to Bunter if they found him? The fat Owl could only hope that they wouldn't. Anyhow, so far, they seemed to be giving no attention to the heap of rugs in the bows.

There were only three fellows in the boat as well as Bunter. He knew the three voices. He wondered dizzily where the Greyfriars fellows were. This looked to Bunter as if Pon & Co. were pinching the Greyfriars boat.

"My hat!" It was Monson's voice. "Somebody's been in the boat and cleared out the grub! Not a spot of it left!"

"Who the dooce——" came Gadsby's voice.

"Those Greyfriars cads!" roared Ponsonby. "Bet you they found the boat tied up here."

"Couldn't have been that lot, Pon," said Gadsby. "They were pulling up from Kingston when we saw them, and they've gone on up the river. Half-way to Molesey by this time."

Billy Bunter suppressed a squeak of astonishment.

He gathered from this that the Famous Five were in a boat, and had passed on up the river. But if they were in a boat, what boat was this? If they were in a boat, they must be in their own boat. Billy Bunter felt as if his fat head was turning round.

"The boat oughtn't to have been left so long with nobody in charge," said Monson. "Might have had the boat pinched as well as the lunch, if you come to that."

"Yes, that's so," said Gadsby. "We landed to walk into Kingston for ten minutes or so, but Pon——"

"My fault, of course!" snarled Pon.

"Yes, your fault!" snapped Gadsby. "We were away two hours instead of ten minutes. If you wanted to play billiards you could have gone into a pub nearer home, not come here, making out you were going boating."

"Oh, shut up!"

"Yes, cheese it, Gaddy!" said Monson. "Pon's lost three quids on those games, and he's sore. But look here, that dishes our picnic! By gad, I wonder the tramp didn't walk off with the boat as well as the grub."

"Ten to one it was those Greyfriars cads!" growled Ponsonby. "Look here, we could get after them in this boat and run them down this side of Molesey. We can go faster than their old tub."

"Fat lot of good!" said Gadsby. "What's the good of making out that you'd tackle them if we did? The other day——"

"Will you shut up, Gaddy?" hissed Ponsonby.

"Well, they're five to three. No chance for us," said Monson. "No good thinkin' of that, Pon."

"Oh, they'd give us fair play!" said Gadsby sarcastically. "What's the good of pretendin' they wouldn't? They'd let you pick your man, Pon! Which one will you pick—Bob Cherry?"

Billy Bunter suppressed a giggle, under the rugs. Pon was little likely to pick Bob Cherry as an adversary.

In fact, Pon was only blowing off steam. He had not the slightest idea of hostilities with the strenuous crew of the Greyfriars boat—not open hostilities, at all events.

He answered Gadsby with a snarl, and sat down in the stern seat.

Monson and Gadsby went on pulling.

Billy Bunter, under the rugs, kept as quiet as a mouse when the cat was on hand. So far, the three obviously had no suspicion that a stowaway was on board that boat.

With the Famous Five on board, Bunter would rather have come to light when the boat was under way. But with Pon & Co. on board, he would vastly have preferred to be within a jump of the shore.

But it was too late to think of that now. The fat Owl could only hope that he would remain undiscovered till he had a chance to escape. Pon & Co., if they found him, could hardly pitch him overboard. But short of that, they were likely to give him a hectic time.

By this time, the hapless fat Owl had realised that he was on the wrong boat. It was, as Gadsby had remarked when he saw the Greyfriars boat, a coincidence. Both boats happened to be named the Water-Lily. It was not an uncommon name for a boat, and, really, it might have occurred to Bunter's fat intellect that the boat he had found tied up by the bank, with nothing belonging to the Greyfriars party on board, was not the Greyfriars boat.

But that had not occurred to Bunter—till now. Now it occurred to him rather too late to be useful. There was nothing for Bunter now but to keep doggo.

"Well, what about that picnic?" asked Monson, after a long, disgruntled silence in the Highcliffe boat.

"Hang the picnic!" grunted Pon.

"We can get tea ashore at Molesey," said Gadsby. "What's the odds? We're not campin' out like that Greyfriars gang. The lunch-basket didn't cost a quarter of what Pon chucked away at billiards. Pon can save the money at the next pub."

"You're askin' to have your head punched, Gaddy!" said Ponsonby.



"Think I'm coming on a filthy barge!" roared Bunter. "Not me!"

savagely. "Look here, this boat seems deeper by the head than it was before. Have you got anythin' stacked under those rugs?"

Billy Bunter trembled.

"Nothin' that I know of," answered Gadsby. "She's going all right. It's not a long pull up to Molesey—but you can take your turn if you like, Pon."

"I don't."

"Sit there and slack then, and be blowed to you!"

"Look here," said Ponsonby, "we can shift twice as fast as those cads if we like. We can keep them in sight, when we overhaul them. I'm not thinkin' of gettin' into a shindy with that gang; but when they camp—"

"Oh!" said Monson.

"You could see by that stack of lumber on their tub that they're campin' out," said Ponsonby. "Not much farther than Molesey to-day, very likely. We can spot their camp. They had a tent in the boat. That means that they'll be campin' ashore, with the boat tied up!"

"They'd wake up fast enough if we dropped in," said Gadsby. "Sort of hornets' nest—is that what you're looking for?"

"I shall be punchin' your head soon, Gaddy. I don't mean drop into their camp—I mean cut their boat loose. It would be back at Kingston, or perhaps at Hammersmith by the time they turn out in the mornin'. They had our grub—"

"Rot!"

"Well, whether they had or not,

they're a set of cheeky cads, and one of them got me with a tomato!" roared Ponsonby. "We're going to dish that Greyfriars crew! You two put your beef into it, and pull as if you were alive, and let's spot them this side of the lock."

"Oh, all right!"

The Highcliffe boat moved faster as Gadsby and Monson bent to the oars.

Billy Bunter, still happily undiscovered, lay low.

Ponsonby stood up as the boat drew nearer to Molesey, and scanned the many boats and punts and other craft on the sunny river.

"There they are!" he exclaimed suddenly. "I've spotted them! We're behind that Greyfriars gang now. I can see them towin' their tub!"

Billy Bunter was glad to hear it!

Bunter Astern!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"Those Highcliffe cads again!"

"All right—we've got some more tomatoes!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Greyfriars Water-Lily was towing now.

Johnny Bull, with the towrope under a sinewy arm, was tramping up the towpath, pulling. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, at the tiller-lines, steered, keeping the Water-Lily's nose out of the bank. Three other fellows were sorting over cargo.

Packing had been rather carefully done—but accidents will happen in the best-regulated boats. The lid of a hamper had somehow got loose and some of the contents of that hamper had got astray.

There had been a good supply ripe red tomatoes in that hamper. There were still a few in the hamper, but more loose in the boat.

Tomatoes seemed to be mixed up with sail and ropes, tent and tent pegs, bags and boxes and bundles. Some had been inadvertently trodden on, with a squashy and slippery result. There was a strong flavour of tomato from stem to stern. Tomatoes, or segments of tomato, seemed to be nearly everywhere.

But it was a cheery crew, and nobody grouched—not even when Frank Nugent slipped and sat on a tomato, and a squashy ruin had to be scraped off his flannel bags. Not even when Harry Wharton, groping in the hamper for stray tomatoes, discovered that the lid had come off a tin of golden syrup—making the discovery by getting an unexpected fistful of treacle. These little things did happen on a camping trip.

They all looked round when Bob sighted the Highcliffe Water-Lily astern.

The Greyfriars boat was towing at a leisurely rate of speed. Towing is leisurely work—it is not the sort of thing that is done in a hurry. Indeed, when a boat came along towed by a horse at a spanking rate, it caused general irritation—tangling tow-

ropes bothering everybody, and causing uncivil remarks to be made.

Fellows did not go on the river to be in a hurry. This was not, as Bob Cherry remarked, a boat race.

As they had started rather late in the day, the Famous Five were going to camp before they had covered any great distance up the Thames. Meanwhile, they were not pressed for time. They had the long holiday before them, and the Thames, after all, was not quite so long as the Mississippi or the Amazon! Slow and steady did it! The Water-Lily could put on speed when required—but it was not required at the moment.

It was quite easy, therefore, for the Highcliffe boat to overhaul the Greyfriars craft. It would have been quite easy for the Highcliffians to shoot past and disappear up to Molesey.

That they did not choose to do.

When the Famous Five sighted them they expected Pon & Co. to pass, and probably to make themselves offensive in passing. In which case the supply of tomatoes was available.

But the rival Water-Lily did not pass. It hung astern, slacking speed after sighting the quarry.

"Slackers," remarked Bob, when he looked back again and noticed that the rowing-boat was proceeding no faster than the towed boat.

"Well, we're not speeding," remarked Harry Wharton.

"We're towing," answered Bob. "If a fellow pulls, he should pull."

Makes me tired to see fellows going asleep over their oars."

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh chuckled. "The esteemed Highcliffians do not want to pass us," he said. "They are keeping astern purposefully."

"Oh! Looking for a chance for more trouble," said Bob. "Well, if they want some more, they can have some more! Oh, great pip! Look!"

Bob, staring back at the Highcliffe boat, fairly jumped at a remarkable and unexpected sight on board that craft.

There was a heap of rugs in the bows which he had not specially noticed. But he noticed it now.

For from under the edge of a rug a most surprising and unexpected vision appeared in view.

It was a fat face, adorned by a big pair of spectacles!

That fat face and that pair of spectacles peered over the bows at the Greyfriars boat ahead.

Bob gazed at the unexpected vision blankly.

"Look!" he gurgled.

"Oh crikey!"

"Bunter!"

Since losing Bunter at Kingston the Famous Five had forgotten his fat existence. But if they had expected to see him again they certainly would not have expected to behold him on board Ponsonby's boat.

But there he was.

"The esteemed and idiotic Bunter!" ejaculated Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, in amazement. "Have those

ridiculous rotters given him a lift?"

"What the thump is he parked under those rugs for?" gasped Nugent. "Must be a bit warm!"

"The warmth must be terrific."

"Oh gum!" chuckled Bob. "They don't know he's there. We can see his chivvy from here—they can't see him."

"A jolly old stowaway!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Amazing as that view of Billy Bunter was, it seemed clear that the Highcliffians did not know that he was on their boat. Gadsby and Monson, of course, had their backs to him as they pulled, and they had no eyes in the backs of their heads.

Ponsonby, in the stern seat, faced the bows as he steered; but he was at the other end of the boat, with the two rowers between him and Bunter. All he saw, if he noticed anything, was the rugs over Bunter. Only by looking direct at the bows from the front was Bunter visible.

From under cover the fat Owl blinked at the Greyfriars boat ahead.

Never had his eyes or his spectacles fallen on a more welcome sight.

Stowed away in that remarkable manner on the wrong Water-Lily, Bunter sighted the right Water-Lily at last.

No doubt he was eager to get within jumping distance.

But the Highcliffe boat did not approach anywhere within jumping distance. Pon & Co. did not want any more tomatoes.

They hung astern, and were going to hang astern till the Greyfriars fellows camped; after which, having noted the camp, they were going to clear off—to call later.

There was no chance for Billy Bunter to tranship his fat person! He watched the Greyfriars boat with eager longing—in vain.

He had, at all events, spotted that boat. He was on the track of those beasts who did not realise that he was a member of the river party. If Pon & Co. spotted their camp, Bunter was going to spot their camp. That was all right if he was not, in the meantime, discovered. That awful danger hung over his fat head like the sword of Damocles.

He dared not call!

Even if the Famous Five were keen and eager to get him on their Water-Lily—which Bunter doubted—one sound from Bunter would betray him to Pon & Co.—whose lunch-basket he had cleared out! He would be at the mercy of the Highcliffe fellows long before rescue could reach him—even if it reached him at all.

Bunter could only watch the boat ahead with hopeless longing, like a podgy Peri at the gate of Paradise.

"That Owl!" said Bob. "What the thump has he parked himself there for?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Looking for this craft, perhaps," he said.

"Well, let him look if he wants to!" chuckled Bob. "A cat may look at a king. What about letting him have a tomato? Bunter's fond of tomatoes!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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The KIDNAPPED HIKER!

"The fat chump's making faces at us!" said Nugent.

"The facefulness is terrific."

Billy Bunter was not intentionally making faces. He was trying to make signs to the Greyfriars fellows, now they had observed him. By twisting his fat features into the most extraordinary expressions, Bunter was seeking to convey his desire that the boat ahead should stop for him. It was, or should have been, an expression of pathetic appeal.

To the fellows looking back, however, the extraordinary contortions of that fat visage only appeared to be making faces.

"Something biting him, perhaps!" said Bob Cherry. "A wasp under those rugs, perhaps—"

"Poor old Bunter!"

"Better not look, or those Highcliffe cads will spot something," said Nugent. "If they spot him on their boat, they will give him jip!"

And the Greyfriars fellows kindly turned their backs to Bunter, in order not to risk giving the fat Owl away to the Highcliffe crew. Which was really not what Bunter wanted at all—and he cast deadly glances at the backs that were turned on him.

Johnny Bull ceased to haul on the towrope. The golden sunset was flooding the Thames. Johnny waved his hand from the bank to the crew of the boat.

"Here's a ripping place!" he called out. "Just what we want!"

Harry Wharton stood up and scanned the shore. A nice little meadow, shaded by several magnificent old oaks, looked very inviting. Beyond it was a wood, and far in the distance a high roof could be seen over the tree-tops. Really, it was an ideal spot for camping.

"Right-ho!" called back Harry.

Johnny pulled the boat in to the bank. And the Famous Five, as they made fast and began to convey their impedimenta ashore, forgot all about the other Water-Lily that had hung on their track.

Battling Bunter!

"O H lor'!" breathed Billy Bunter.

The Highcliffe boat was pulling off.

Pon & Co. had effected their purpose now. The Greyfriars party were camping. They had tied up their boat to a bunch of willows under the bank. Obviously they were stopping there for the night. That was all that Pon wanted to know. The spot would be easy enough to find again—when Pon wanted to find it.

That would be when the Greyfriars camp was sleeping, and it was safe for a young rascal to cut the boat adrift, and send it drifting down the river.

So Pon & Co. pulled away satisfied.

Bunter did not share their satisfaction.

Bunter wanted to keep an eye on that camp. After what he had heard on board the wrong Water-Lily, Bunter had, he thought, an open sesame to admit him to the Greyfriars camp. He knew Pon's hostile inten-

tion—and he could convey a warning to the fellows who were in danger of losing their boat. There was such a thing as gratitude—at least, Bunter hoped that there was, though he did not recall having experienced that emotion himself.

Bunter, during his weary voyage under the rugs, had thought it out.

Those beasts made out that he did not belong to the river party. Even when he trailed them down and barged in, they were as likely as not to boot him out again. That was the kind of beasts they were.

Bob, in Bunter's estimation, was soft—but Johnny Bull's boot was like a lion in the path. Johnny was anything but soft. Even if Bob proved soft as usual, and the other fellows resigned themselves to their fate, Johnny was the man to settle the problem with a boot.

But that was where Bunter's trump card came in.

Pon & Co. were going to pinch their boat. Suppose a fat Owl butted into the camp just when Pon was getting busy, and gave the alarm.

Bunter, in that case, would appear in the role of guardian angel. Even that inexpressible beast, Bull, would hardly boot a guardian angel.

This seemed to Bunter like backing a winner.

But to back that winner he had to get ashore and keep an eye on the camp till the psychological moment came. And the Highcliffe crew were pulling on—and he dared not reveal his presence. Yet that presence would indubitably be revealed when they pulled in at Molesey. He was only postponing the fatal hour—and, in the meantime, losing track of the Greyfriars party.

Seldom had a fat Owl been placed in so awkward a position. He had to get out of that boat—but to get out he had to reveal himself—and he could not venture to reveal himself.

The problem was like the knot of Gordius, of ancient times, which no one could untie.

But, just as that ancient Gordian knot was cut by the sword of Alexander, so Bunter's Gordian knot was suddenly cut.

The fat junior moved a little to cast a blink round over the river, in the faint hope of seeing some less perilous craft at hand, upon which he could scramble out of reach of Highcliffian clutches.

Certainly no boating party was likely to welcome such a sudden and unexpected invasion; but Bunter was willing to take chances—with Pon & Co. it was not a chance but a certainty, if they discovered him and bagged him.

Hitherto, in keeping doggo under those rugs, Bunter had not noticed that a boathook lay under the rugs.

But now when he moved he noticed it from the circumstance that the hook poked into his fat ribs.

He noticed it quite suddenly—so suddenly that he let out a yell before he realised that he had opened his mouth.

"Ow!" yelled Bunter.

He did not know what was puncturing him; but he knew that something was—something fearfully sharp.

He yelled before he realised what he was doing. His yell rang from stem to stern of the Highcliffe Water-Lily, and far over the River Thames.

Three Highcliffians jumped, as if moved by the same spring.

Ponsonby started up in the stern seat; Gadsby and Monson ceased to row, and stared round over their shoulders.

That heap of rugs in the bows was in wild agitation! Clearly there was something alive under those rugs.

"What the dooce—" gasped Ponsonby.

"Somebody's there!" howled Monson.

"Who the thump—"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He was discovered now.

He scrambled wildly up, throwing the rugs aside. The three Highcliffians stared at him like three fellows in a dream! Not for a moment had they supposed that they had a passenger on the boat. Bunter came as a startling surprise to them.

"That fat Greyfriars chump!" gasped Gadsby. "Oh, my hat! Why, he's been on the boat all the time!"

"He had the grub!" roared Monson.

"By gad!" Ponsonby jumped to his feet. "So it was that fat freak, was it? We'll make an example of him! By gum! I'll take his skin off!"

"I—I—I say, you fellows, it—it wasn't me!" gasped Bunter. "I—I never touched the grub! I—I—I—"

"Steady on, Pon!" exclaimed Gadsby, as the dandy of Highcliffe came along the boat, his eyes glittering at Bunter. "Don't capsize us!"

"I—I say, you keep off!" gasped Bunter. "I—I never had the grub, and—and I'll pay for it, if you like! I—I'm expecting a postal order very shortly—"

The boat rocked as Pon came at him.

It flashed into Pon's mind at once that Bunter, on board the Water-Lily, must have heard all that was said on the boat; and that, then, his game of cutting the Greyfriars boat adrift was up. Bunter, he supposed, was a member of the river party who had got separated. Why, and why he had got on the Highcliffe boat, Pon did not know; but there he was, and he knew Pon's game—which was as good as putting paid to it.

So Pon, if he wanted vengeance at all, had to concentrate it entirely on Billy Bunter! That he was going to do!

The expression on his face as he came along the boat was really terrifying!

But just as there is no animal so dangerous as an exasperated sheep, so Billy Bunter, scared out of his fat wits, became a dangerous character from sheer funk.

He dared not let Pon reach him!

Hardly knowing what he did, Bunter grabbed up one of the rugs and pitched it at Pon as he came.

The rug folded itself round Pon's

head as it landed, and Pon went over backwards, sprawling over Gadsby and Monson.

The boat rocked wildly with the shock, and Billy Bunter sat down with a bump that very nearly drove the bows under water.

"Oooogh!" roared Bunter.

"Oh gad! Look out!" yelled Monson.

"Pon, you clumsy ass!" shrieked Gadsby.

Ponsonby struggled in the enveloping rug. The boat rocked, and rocked, and shipped water. Pon got the rug off, and sat up, spluttering, in three or four inches of water. He struggled up, dripping.

"I—I—I'll——" he gasped.

If Pon had been ferocious before, he was doubly ferocious now! Frantic with rage, he scrambled forward.

Bunter struggled to his fat knees. His fat hand was on the boathook. He did not stop to think. There was no time for thinking—and thinking was not Bunter's long suit, anyhow. He just grabbed the boathook and lunged.

Pon was coming on quite quickly. But he went backwards much more quickly as the boathook jabbed his waistcoat.

"Oh!" he yelled.

He bounded back, and sat down suddenly in the stern seat.

Bunter, still on his knees—he dared not assume the perpendicular in the wildly rocking boat—brandished the boathook.

"Keep off!" he roared.

"I—I—I—I'll——" gurgled Ponsonby.

"Keep off, you beast!" gasped Bunter.

"Collar him!" shrieked Ponsonby. "Take that boathook away from him, you fools, before he does some damage with it! Will you collar him!"

"We shall capsize in a minute!" howled Gadsby.

"Collar him, I tell you!"

Gadsby held on to the rocking gunwale. But Monson scrambled forward at Bunter.

Bunter was quite desperate now. He lunged recklessly with the boathook, and Monson bounded back just in time. Bunter jabbed again before he quite got out of reach, and punctured Monson's knee.

Monson yelled, and joined Pon on the stern seat. He sat there, clasping his knee, and panting.

Gadsby was still within reach. Bunter gave him a hefty poke in the back. Gaddy gave a fearful howl, let go the gunwale, and scrambled aft. Really, the frantic Owl might have done a lot of damage with that boathook. He had already done enough for Pon & Co.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He blinked along the boat.

They were keeping their distance now! Bunter did not need to tell them to keep off! They were keeping off quite carefully.

It was in the desperation of sheer funk that Billy Bunter had put up that scrap! But it dawned upon his

mind now that he was master of the situation!

The Highcliffians were more frightened of the boathook than Bunter was of the Highcliffians! A whirling, lunging, jabbing boathook was altogether too dangerous a weapon for Pon & Co. to tackle.

Surprisingly and unexpectedly, the fat Owl found himself cock of the walk!

He grinned breathlessly as he realised it.

"Yah!" roared Bunter. "Come on! Come on, you Highcliffe cads! Three to one! Yah! Come on!"

"You fat scoundrel, put down that boathook!" yelled Ponsonby.

"Come and make me!" invited Bunter.

Ponsonby half rose.

Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his spectacles, and he drew back his deadly weapon for a thrust. Really, a pluckier fellow than Ponsonby might have decided that it was not good enough. It was not merely good enough for Pon—and he sat down again.

"Yah! Come on!" hooted Bunter.

"Funks! Highcliffe rats! Yah! Who's afraid of you, I'd like to know? Yah! Funks!"

Bunter was not the man to be modest in the hour of victory. Bunter was the man to crow. He crowed!

"Measly funks!" said Bunter. "For two pins I'd come along there and thrash the lot of you! There's no fight in you Highcliffe rats! Yah!"

Pon almost foamed. But he remained where he was! Monson sat rubbing his knee. Gaddy was making frantic efforts to get at his back to rub it. Pon & Co. wanted no more.

Billy Bunter blinked round over the shining river. The Greyfriars camp was distant, and lost to sight. But Bunter was boss of the show now. Bunter had only to give his orders.

"Now, then, you Highcliffe cads!" he said. "I want to get out of this! Get the boat to the bank!"

Three Highcliffians eyed him evilly, and did not move or speak.

Billy Bunter's fat face took on a bullying expression that was worthy of Pon at his best!

"Do you hear me?" he rapped. "Do you want me to come along there to you? If I do, you'll know it! Two of you take those oars and pull for the bank! Don't keep me waiting!"

"You cheeky fat slug!"

Pon's voice choked with rage.

"That's enough from you!" said Billy Bunter. Still on his fat knees, he jerked himself along the boat, with the boathook ready to jab. "You've got it coming! I'll jolly well show you!"

"Stop that!" panted Ponsonby. "Stop, you fat fool! You'll do some damage with that boathook!"

"I'm going to!" retorted Bunter.

"We—we'll pull you ashore, if you like!" gasped Monson. "Keep that boathook away, you mad rhinoceros!"

"I'll give you a chance!" said

Bunter. "But I'm not waiting! Get down to it, you Highcliffe cads—and don't cheek your betters!"

Ponsonby and Gadsby moved along to take the oars.

Pon was watching like a cat for a chance of springing, avoiding the boathook. But the fat Owl was too wary for him. Bunter retreated into the bows, with the boathook held out before him—and it was so plainly his intention to hand out reckless jabs, if he was approached, that Pon gave up the idea.

The Highcliffe boat pulled to the bank.

Pon held on to a stump ashore, bringing the boat close in; and not till the bows were nosing into the rushes, did Billy Bunter clamber out. Then he clambered rapidly, taking the boathook with him!

Pon eyed him from the boat.

"Give us our boathook, you fat freak!" he muttered.

Billy Bunter chuckled.

"I'll watch it!" he answered cheerfully. "I'll give you the sharp end if you don't sheer off, and take your ugly mug away, you Highcliffe cad!"

Pon & Co., with deep feelings, sheered off.

Billy Bunter watched them go, till the Highcliffe boat was lost to sight among the craft on the river. Then he pitched the boathook into the Thames and started down the towpath in the direction of the Greyfriars camp.

Bunter On The Spot!

BILLY BUNTER grinned.

It was rather a sleepy grin. Bunter was sleepy! But, sleepy as he was, he was not asleep.

Bunter was sitting in a boat—the Water-Lily! It was the right Water-Lily this time!

It had been easy enough for the fat Owl, after landing from the Highcliffe craft. He had only to go down the towpath, back to the spot where the Greyfriars party had landed and camped. Even Bunter could not miss a camp on one hand and a boat tied up to willows on the other. Having spotted that camp, Bunter watched it from a distance till the sunset deepened to dark—and the Famous Five were packed in the tent and dreaming.

Then the fat Owl crept cautiously along the bank, and climbed into the boat under the willows. Luckily, all the foodstuffs had not been landed. The stern locker was packed with canned things, which were useless to Bunter; but there was a hamper, with a good many things in it—when Bunter blinked round for provender. Ten minutes later there was an empty hamper, and a good many things in Bunter.

After which, he sat down on the rolled sail to watch.

And now——

There was a stealthy footstep on the bank and a stirring of the willows. And Bunter grinned.

The enemy was at hand! Bunter could imagine that enemy's feelings when he suddenly let out a yell of alarm! But he waited, to make sure.

He had rather expected that Pon & Co. would come back by boat. It had not even occurred to his fat brain that Pon would realise that he had overheard the scheme, and would, in consequence, give up the idea altogether. Whoever was coming was coming by land, not by water. But Bunter had no doubt that it was the Highcliffe party.

The boat rocked at her moorings as that shadow boarded her. There was a light washing of water in the rushes.

Bunter was rather puzzled. There seemed to be only one of them. Gadsby and Monson, perhaps, had backed out, leaving Pon to carry on alone. But there was one, at all events—in the boat, and leaning over

Up went Bunter's fat paw!
Whiz!
Biff!

At such short range, even Bunter could not fail to get his man! There was a fearful yell as the jam-jar biffed into a waistcoat.

"Yoooo - hooo - hooop! Suffering snakes! Whooop!"
Bunter fairly bounded.

TOM NORTH (Sixth) says "YES."

I DARE say it will seem queer to most of you that a regular player in the first eleven, both at cricket and footer, should argue that sport features too prominently in school life. Well, I'm sorry to let down my "fans," but I seriously think it does!

I look on it like this:

Outdoor games are just a form of recreation. They should never be regarded as more than that. Our chief business at school—though many of us perhaps do not realise it—is learning to be men. Too much concentration on games is liable to defeat that end. In some cases it may even result in our going out into the world mere grown-up boys instead of the men we should properly become!

Naturally, I am not an opponent of sport. I shouldn't be in the First if I were! Physical exercise in the shape of organised games is of vital importance to the healthy development of boys. But I believe in moderation in all things. That includes sport. Too much sport is just as unhealthy for the brain as too much swotting is unhealthy for the body. It is my considered opinion that there is too much sport at most schools to-day. I will risk causing a howl of execration by saying that there is too much sport at Greyfriars!

Life is real, life is earnest, and mere games are not its goal—if you will excuse the slight liberty I have taken with dear old Longfellow! By living for games, we grasp the shadow instead of the substance. In my view, we should certainly place less emphasis on sport and direct some of our superfluous energies into more profitable channels!

GEORGE BLUNDELL (Fifth) says: "NO."

I DISAGREE with North's conclusions entirely.

North talks of missing the substance for the shadow. I would remind him of the words of the poet: "the shadow proves the substance true." Sport may be only the shadow of life, but it leads a man unerringly to the substance right enough!

I readily grant that we are at school to learn to become men. But I submit that there is no sphere of school activities where we learn that lesson more effectively than in the sphere of sport.

On the playing fields, a fellow

IS THERE TOO MUCH SPORT AT SCHOOL?

Greyfriars Celebrities Give Their "Fors" and "Against."

acquires the team spirit—learns to subordinate his own interests to those of his side—learns to take hard knocks without complaint and to control his feelings. Those lessons surely have a practical use in after-life!

It is hardly necessary, I suppose, for me to point out that we do our fair share of swotting at a school like Greyfriars. Most of the day is taken up with class-work. There is, in addition, prep nearly every evening. And we must not forget the impots and detentions that fall to the lot of every normal chap.

We work hard—nobody can deny it. I maintain that we are entitled to play hard, too. It's a natural compensation.

As for the alleged danger that sport will cause us to develop into grown-up boys instead of normal adult citizens, I think North must be dreaming it! "The Battle of Waterloo," said the Duke of Wellington, "was won on the playing fields of Greyfriars." (Another version mentions Eton, but this is a mistake!) The Iron Duke, you see, had no doubts about school sport turning boys into men; and the leaders of our country to-day, I feel sure, are equally convinced of the merits of school games in this direction.

Quite frankly, my idea about it is that there cannot possibly be too much sport at school! But even assuming that you can have too much sport, I shall never admit, while class-work and indoor activities take up so much of our time, that there is too much sport at Greyfriars!

BILLY BUNTER (Remove):

WHAT'S wrong with skool sport is not that there's too much of it, but that it's in the hands of jellus beasts who won't give a chance to men of real merrit to distinguish themselves. I could tell you of one such chap who is barred from the Remove team, despite the fact that he is an absolute jeenius both at cricket and footer. His name? Moddesty

The willows stirred. There was a faint squelch as a foot stepped in shallow mud by the water's edge.

A shadow loomed over the boat!

Billy Bunter, sitting on the folded sail, had a blanket over him, to keep off the wind from the river. In the deep gloom he was quite invisible.

All he could see of the enemy was that looming shadow! He grinned at that looming shadow.

to cut her loose. But for Bunter there could be no doubt that that boat would have been a goner. Harry Wharton & Co. were only a few yards away—but they were fast asleep in the tent. The boat was at the mercy of the pincher—but for Bunter! But Bunter was there—and his fat paw closed on an empty jam-jar—which had been a full jam-jar when he found it in the hamper.

prevents me giving it, but you can take my word for it that it's absolutely true!

HARRY WHARTON (Remove):

BLUNDELL, I fancy, has rather missed the point. It's not so much a question of whether or not we spend too much time at sport as whether or not we take sport too seriously.

There is nobody in the Lower School who is more keen on sport than I am. But I can still see something in North's viewpoint. Perhaps sometimes we do attach too much importance to sport; and if we do, I can quite see that we may be creating a false standard of values for ourselves. When all's said and done, cricket and footer are only games, aren't they?

I think, however, that the danger is not very real in the Remove. We put our heart and soul into the game while we're playing it; but, win or lose, we treat it afterwards as it should be treated—cheerfully and light-heartedly! The same applies to our rivals in other schools.

On the whole, I do not believe that there is too much sport at school.

WILLIAM GOSLING (Lodgekeeper):

WHAT I says is this here: there's a lot too much of this here sport and larking about and what not at schools. If I had my way, I'd put all boys under military discipline; and they'd get all the hexercise they wanted on the barrack square—and a bit more than they wanted if I was about! What I says is this here: less sport and more hard work and whackings is my idea for school. That's what I says!

CLAUDE HOSKINS (Shell):

I GIVE my hearty support to the proposition. This over-indulgence in sport is turning many of you fellows into barbarians, to whom even the uplifting influence of music is scarcely known! Why not confine sport to one "halfer" a week and devote the other to music-practice and singing? I would gladly give lectures and pianoforte recitals if it could be arranged.

The motion was put to a representative number of Greyfriars men and a card vote taken.

RESULT
FOR 25
AGAINST 61

It was not a Highcliffe voice!
"I say, you fellows!" Bunter yelled even more loudly than the man who had got the jam-jar. "I say! Help! Wake up! I say, the boat's going! Help!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"What—"

"Who—"

"Help!" raved Bunter. He realised
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that this was not, after all, one of the Highliffe crew. It was some boat-pincher—perhaps a dangerous ruffian! Terror smote the fat Owl!

The man who had got the jam-jar had rolled over under the impact! Now he picked himself up, his hand to his waistcoat, spluttering, and glaring about him.

"Help!" shrieked Bunter.

There were sounds of rapid activity ashore! Five fellows bounded out of a tent, and there was a glare of light as an electric torch was turned on.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Is that Bunter?"

"Boot him!" howled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, my hat! Look!" shouted Harry Wharton.

The man in the boat panted with rage. He had turned on Bunter. But he had no time to deal with Bunter. He turned back, glaring at the figures coming down the bank. The boat was tied safely fore and aft—he needed time to cut the moorings, and he had no time! He had hardly a moment!

And as he stood glaring the light streamed on his face, and all the Famous Five knew that face at once.

"Spooner!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Shifty Spooner!" yelled Johnny Bull.

"After our boat!"

"I say, you fellows—" yelled Bunter.

Shifty Spooner made one rapid bound! He had time for it—and no more! That bound carried him ashore—and Bob Cherry's swift grasp just missed him as he leaped away into

the darkness. Johnny Bull succeeded in landing one clout, which made Mr. Spooner yell, as he bounded away—then he was gone!

Night swallowed Mr. Spooner!

"By gum!" gasped Bob. "That rascal—that blighter who had Mauly's tenner! After our boat!"

"My only hat!" Harry Wharton stared after the vanished man. "He must have been watching for us here, and—"

"He seems to want this boat bad!" said Frank Nugent. "It was Spooner all right!"

"Fancy that sweep cropping up again here!" exclaimed Bob. "One of us had better sleep in the boat, after this! Who'd have thought that—"

"I say, you fellows!"

The Famous Five stared at the fat Owl in the boat! His presence was almost as surprising as Shifty Spooner's.

"You fat villain!" roared Johnny Bull. "What are you doing in that boat?"

"Oh really, Bull! I'm taking care of it for you!" answered Billy Bunter. "I'd like to know what would have happened to it if I hadn't been on the watch!"

The Famous Five gazed at him! It was true enough—Bunter had saved the Water-Lily! There was no doubt that its former owner would have had it—but for Bunter!

"I thought it was those Highliffe cads!" explained Bunter. "I heard Pon say he'd come and pinch the boat while you fellows were asleep, so I—I

came to watch over it for you! I'm not the chap to let my pals down—even when they don't treat a chap decently, like you chaps. Where would this boat be if I hadn't been in it?"

"Echo answers 'Where?'" said Bob.

"Esteemed echo answers that the wherfulness is terrific!" agreed Hurrec Jamset Ram Singh.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Well, the fat sweep's saved the boat! That rascal Spooner would have had it! I suppose we'd better let him stick in it. Stick, you fat oyster!"

"Well, if you fellows want me to join up, I don't mind overlooking your rather rotten conduct!" said Bunter.

"We don't!"

"Beast! I mean, all right, old chap, I can take a joke. He, he, he! I'll stick to you and see you through!" said Billy Bunter. "I've turned down Mauly, and I'm done with that cad Smithy, and I'll tell you what, you fellows—I'll wash out all my other invitations for the holidays and stick to you fellows right to the finish!"

And Billy Bunter—not always a man of his word—kept that promise to the very letter.

THE END.

(Now look out for "RUCTIONS ON THE RIVER!"—next Saturday's sparkling, extra-long yarn of Harry Wharton & Co.'s further holiday adventures. Order your MAGNET early.)



COME INTO the OFFICE, BOYS—AND GIRLS!

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. Write to him: Editor of the "Magnet," The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

ONE of my reader chums, who has been spending a holiday by the briny, has been learning to swim. He informs me that on several occasions he has had a mouthful or two of sea-water, which left him very thirsty. He asks me why fish never get thirsty, considering the amount of salt water they must drink.

The organs of a fish's body which are concerned with keeping the composition of the blood right are able to filter an excess of salts out of it. The same is true of our own bodies, fortunately for us, as we often take food and drink containing an excess of various things which certainly must not stay long in the blood. On the other hand, we are not adapted to keep the composition of the blood right if we drink nothing but sea-water, as fishes can without harm.

The next letter comes from "Fond of Horses," Cornwall, who asks me two questions. The first is:

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Why Do Horses Wear Blinkers?

The curious flaps of leather known as blinkers, placed at the side of a horse's eyes, restrict its field of vision, so that it can see only straight ahead, and cannot see what is happening to the right and left of it. In this way the horse is supposed to be protected from sights which might frighten it. But it is very doubtful whether the blinkers really have this effect. Some people think they do more harm than good, and it is certain that in some cases a horse becomes less frightened if it is allowed to see a noisy object which has alarmed it.

The second question is:

Why Does a Horse Need Shoes?

The loops of iron nailed to a horse's hoofs seem very unnatural, for in their wild state horses require no shoes. But the shoes are necessary because the hard roads along which horses are driven would otherwise

wear away the horn of the hoof. It is probable, too, that the hoofs of horses driven along hard roads become dry and unhealthy through lack of moisture. On their native pampas, the wild horses bathe their feet every morning in the dew of the grass, and the moisture soaks into the horn of the hoofs and keeps it healthy and tough. All experienced horsemen know that dew is a splendid ointment for horses' hoofs, and it has been found that horses which are kept at night in the dewy fields have such healthy hoofs that they can do a great deal of work without shoes. But the chief reason why horses must be shod lies in the hard roads and stony streets, and as long as horses continue to be driven or ridden along such roads they will require iron shoes.

"RUCTIONS ON THE RIVER!"

That's the title to look out for next Saturday, chums. Frank Richards is once again at his very best, and this latest story of his is one of the finest it has been my lot to read. I am certain you fellows and girls will all say the same when you've read it. Follow the further holiday adventures of Harry Wharton & Co., and enjoy their fun, excitement, and adventure on the River Thames.

As usual, there will be plenty to interest you again in the "Greyfriars Herald," rounding off another grand number. See that you book your order for the MAGNET early, chums.

The GREYFRIARS HERALD

(Continued from page 2.)

A lass! The warning came too late. Scores of hideous islanders were already boarding the two ships and rushing to the attack!

Resistance was useless. In a few minutes the savages had captured both vessels and were taking back the white invaders in triumph in their canoes!

Even Jack Jolly & Co., brave as they were, could not help shuddering at the thought of the fate that awaited them when they reached the island!

(Looks as if our heroes are "for it" now! But all is not lost yet, as you will learn when you read: "Sentenced to the Stewpot!"—next week's mirthquake!)

TEMPLE TRIUMPHED IN SAND-CASTLE CONTEST!

Or Was It His Double?

The strange sight of Cecil Reginald Temple, of the Greyfriars Upper Fourth, building a sand-castle in an East Coast beach contest last week made Bulstrode, of the Remove, stop and stare.

Bulstrode sank down on the sands and fanned himself! It was true there were other entrants of Temple's weight—the age limits were six to sixteen—but for Temple, of all

people, to descend to building a sand-castle even if the rules did allow him to do so, was simply staggering!

Bulstrode remembered, as he dizzily watched the elegant leader of the Fourth at work, that Temple had had occasional artistic spasms in the past and had even been known in a modest way to attempt sculpture in the hols. So, perhaps, despite that first shock, it wasn't very remarkable after all. All the same, Bulstrode continued to gaze at Temple with a fascinated gaze!

The contest ended. Amid cheers, Temple's castle was judged to be the best, and Temple was awarded the prize of a flip in an aeroplane.

He was led to a waiting car and whirled off to the local airport for his free flight before anyone had time to speak to him. Bulstrode met him again on the following day, however, and congratulated him then instead.

"Nice work, your winning that beach contest yesterday, Temple," he grinned. "You deserved it, old sport; yours was the best sand-castle I've ever seen."

Now, you would have expected Temple to be quite delighted at that pally speech—especially in front of the several other elegant lads who had joined Temple that day. But he showed no delight whatever. On the contrary, he seemed quite peeved. His brows went up, his mouth went down, and his cheeks turned pink.

"One of the dashed fags from my school!" he explained apologetically to his pals. "Tryin' to be funny, I fancy!"

Bulstrode jumped. "Why, you blithering idiot! You're not going to deny you won the prize for building the best sand-castle?!"

Temple's cheeks turned a shade pinker. He coughed.

"Unless this kid has been to sleep an'

dreamed it all, it sounds as if I've got a double, what?" he bleated to his pals. "They say that every man has a double. Dashed inconvenient, though, when a man's double starts winnin' sand-castle competitions! Cheerio, kid!"

And Temple hurriedly shepherded his posh pals to another part of the prom.

Bulstrode wants to know what we make of it. Was it really Temple who won that beach contest, or was it his double?

Having pondered deeply on the problem for at least one second—noting carefully that Temple did not actually deny it and that he obviously would not want his friends to know of his juvenile lapse—we have arrived at the conclusion that it was Cecil Reginald himself. That "double"

of Temple's was just Temple's brainwave—and for an "inconvenient" double he made a strikingly convenient use of him!



OBVIOUSLY!

How can you believe that Coker dotes on his Aunt Judy when he refuses to wear the silk scarf she gave him to protect his neck against draughts when playing cricket.

Obviously, Coker doesn't care a "wrap"!

ETIQUETTE FOR HOLIDAY MAKERS!

By HAROLD SKINNER

When accidentally meeting a Greyfriars acquaintance during the vac. while with your people, it is advisable to curb the youthful heartiness with which you would greet him in term time. The best plan is to walk by with your nose in the air and ignore him completely till you have passed him. You can then start slightly, look round, and call back: "Let's see—it's—ah!—Ogilvy, isn't it? Had an idah I'd seen your face somewhah. How do? My patah and matah, you know. Good-bay!"

You should then sneer and stalk on.

If you are by yourself, the greeting can be a little less formal. Grin broadly and trip him up from behind. Snatch his cap off his head and fling it into the sea. Laugh uproariously.

When meeting a master, it is not necessary to observe the strictly respectful attitude which is right and proper in the Form-room. There is no need, for instance, to raise your cap and make a sweeping bow. A sufficient acknowledgment is to put your cap on the back of your head and wink at him. Nor need you simper and beg him: "Good-morning, sir!" Just nod cheerily and say: "Hullo, matey!"

Regarding general behaviour, it should be remembered that the removal of the restrictions to which you are subject at school does not mean you should at once do all the things you are not allowed to do

during term. In this connection, here are a few "don'ts":—

Don't walk along the promenade smoking a pipe.

Don't talk too loudly when making rude remarks about passers-by.

Don't play cards for money while listening to the pierrots.

Don't sling empty lemonade bottles out of charabancs when you are driving through crowded streets.

Don't drop banana skins on the pavement in the rush hour.

Don't make too much noise when eating lemons near the bandstand.

I think that's about all.

(And quite enough, too!—Ed.)

A CHEERY CHIN-WAG WITH YOUR EDITOR, HARRY WHARTON

Talking of holidays, chums, do you ever spare a thought for the chaps who are condemned to stay on at school during the vac?

Most fellows are quite surprised to learn that anybody is left at all on the day after breaking-up. But such exiles certainly do exist! Fisher T. Fish and Wun Lung, for instance, have spent several holidays in the School House. Delarey is another Remove man who has had the experience on one or two occasions.

In many cases, where parents or guardians are abroad, the fellow concerned is invited to other chaps' houses for part of the vac. But it is not always convenient for them to have him for the entire holiday, and such fellows, therefore, usually find themselves back at Greyfriars for at least a part of the vac.

Special provision is always made for these out-of-term boarders. When the Head is in residence, he gives an eye to their welfare. While he is away, he leaves somebody else to look after them—usually one of the masters who is willing to put in a week or two at the school. The Head or his deputy provide outings for the fellows—trips to places of interest, an occasional theatre, and a cricket or footer match according to the time of year. They do their best to save their charges from boredom. But most of the time, naturally, the exiles are left to their own devices.

School rules are almost non-existent. Bedtime is later, there are no lessons of any kind, and meals are arranged to suit the chaps' convenience. Places out of bounds in term are, however, still out of bounds in the vac. The man who was caught visiting the Three Fishers would certainly find his movements studied with some interest for the rest of the vac!

Taking it all round, our out-of-term boarders usually manage to have quite a good time—that is, providing there are two or more of them for company. If a chap finds himself entirely on his own, then he naturally gets a little bored and starts to look forward to the beginning of the new terra.

Still, as I pointed out last week, this has also been known to happen to fellows who spend the vac. at home!

More chin-wag next week, chums.
HARRY WHARTON.

HAVE A HECTIC VAC., DEAR MEN!

Says LORD MAULEVERER

In the usual way, I am no believer in being frightfully energetic. On the contrary, dear men, I am firmly of the opinion that too much rushing about, whether it's

at work or play, results in strain and disorganises the system. More important still, it takes away a chappie's repose and leaves him incapable of viewing this cheery old world with a calm and dispassionate eye.

Ergo—that means "therefore," old beans, I fancy—my great aim at Greyfriars is to relax on all occasions and to snooze at frequent intervals.

But the summer vac is different. There are exceptions to every rule, and the summer vac is the exception to mine. In that glad period of the year, dear men, I believe in being frightfully energetic and rushing about like anything!

You don't find me lying in bed till lunch-time in the holidays. No fear! I get up with the jolly old lark at about eleven o'clock in the dewy morn. Rather!

If you imagine that after brekker I flop into an armchair and read the newspapers, you're wrong. I get up and go places. The chauffeur takes me to them in the Rolls.

Am I exhausted by my hectic day after I've had tea? Well, yes, dear men, I am; but that doesn't stop me! With indomitable vim and vigour, I drift out of doors yet again and expend more strength and energy in a terrific bout of sport. I mean, I have a round of croquet.

Even that doesn't finish off my crowded programme, for after dinner, instead of rolling off wearily to bye-byes, I usually retain sufficient energy to listen in to the radio from my favourite armchair.

(Continued top of next column.)

THRILLS GALORE!

If you want to experience one of the biggest thrills that sport can offer, get a Hornby Speed Boat and try racing it on the pond. These models are famous for their magnificent performance and reliability, for each one is built with the same precision and craftsmanship as the famous Hornby Trains. Hornby Speed Boats cost from 2/11 and the Hornby Racing Boats from 5/6. Ask to see them at your local dealers or write to Meccano Ltd., Dept. F, Binns Road, Liverpool, 13, for a free copy of the Hornby Speed Boat Folder which gives full particulars of the Hornby Fleet.

So you see, old pals, I really do let myself go on holiday. My tip to you is to do the same thing yourselves. You may not have the stamina to see it through like I do; but do your jolly old best.

Have a really hectic vac, dear men; and rush about like anything—that's my idea! After all, you'll have all next term to get over it!

CHAMP AT ROWING-MACHINE —CHUMP AT ROWING!

Coker's Boatrace Hopes Dashed

Coker has a rowing-machine with a scoring-dial in front of it.

The scoring-dial registers the strength of your pull and the speed of your strokes. It's an infallible test of a chap's oarsmanship—so Coker says.

Coker's rowing-machine has been very popular in senior circles this term. Most of the Fifth have dropped into Coker's study at one time or another to see how they shape at it; and even the Sixth have condescended to give it a trial.

Wingate himself was persuaded to try his hand at it last week. He liked it immensely.

"Useful article to have about the house, this, Coker," he remarked. "It should improve your rowing."

"Just what I thought myself, Wingate," nodded Coker. "In fact, on the strength of the practice I've been having on it, I'm going to ask you for a trial in the school eight. I've pointed out before that in leaving me out you're leaving out the best oarsman in Greyfriars."

"Ahem! Yes, I fancy you have said something of the kind," replied Wingate. "But stand aside, old chap, and let's see how I score."

Coker stood aside. Wingate plied the "oars." He scored a steady 78 out of the possible 100.

There was a gleam in Coker's eye when Wingate stood up again.

"Now watch me!" he said.

Wingate did so. He received quite a bit of a jolt when Coker proceeded to score a steady 93!

"Nice work, Coker!" he had to admit when Coker had finished. "You certainly seem to know your machine!"

"It's an infallible test," Coker smiled.

"Now what about that trial?" Wingate gave in and promised the great man of the Fifth a trial at the next practice. What else could he do, after what had happened?

We need hardly say that there was an unusually large crowd on the towpath to watch the trial.

Perhaps we need hardly say what followed; but we'll say it all the same!

At the word "go," Coker dipped his oar deep into the water, caught a lovely "crab," sprawled back on to the knees of the man behind him, and finished up by losing his balance completely and pitching into the water!

Wingate has promised him another trial after the vac—in a skiff all by himself. But we can't see it resulting in Coker going into the school eight.

We have an idea that a champ on Coker's rowing-machine can still be a chump when it comes to rowing!

WILL "INKY'S" ENGLISH IMPROVE?

Asks HARRY WHARTON

The weird and wonderful brand of English used by our dusky pal, Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh, is a source of never-ending wonderment to newcomers and amusement to old stagers at Greyfriars. "Will it ever improve?" is a question that is often asked.

Well, I, for one, shall get quite a lot less fun out of life if it does improve; but I think it can be taken for granted that he will improve—in time!

Even now, I think, Inky could, with an effort, speak more or less correct English. But the influence of the native tutors who taught him our language in Bhanipur retains a powerful hold on him.

He appreciates that the English he learned in Bhanipur offers some startling contrasts with the language actually spoken in England and that the home product is presumably the genuine article. But he still prefers the imported variety!

Language apart, anyway, Inky is one of the best. In fact, the one-of-the-bestfulness of the esteemed and ludicrous Inky is terrific!

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