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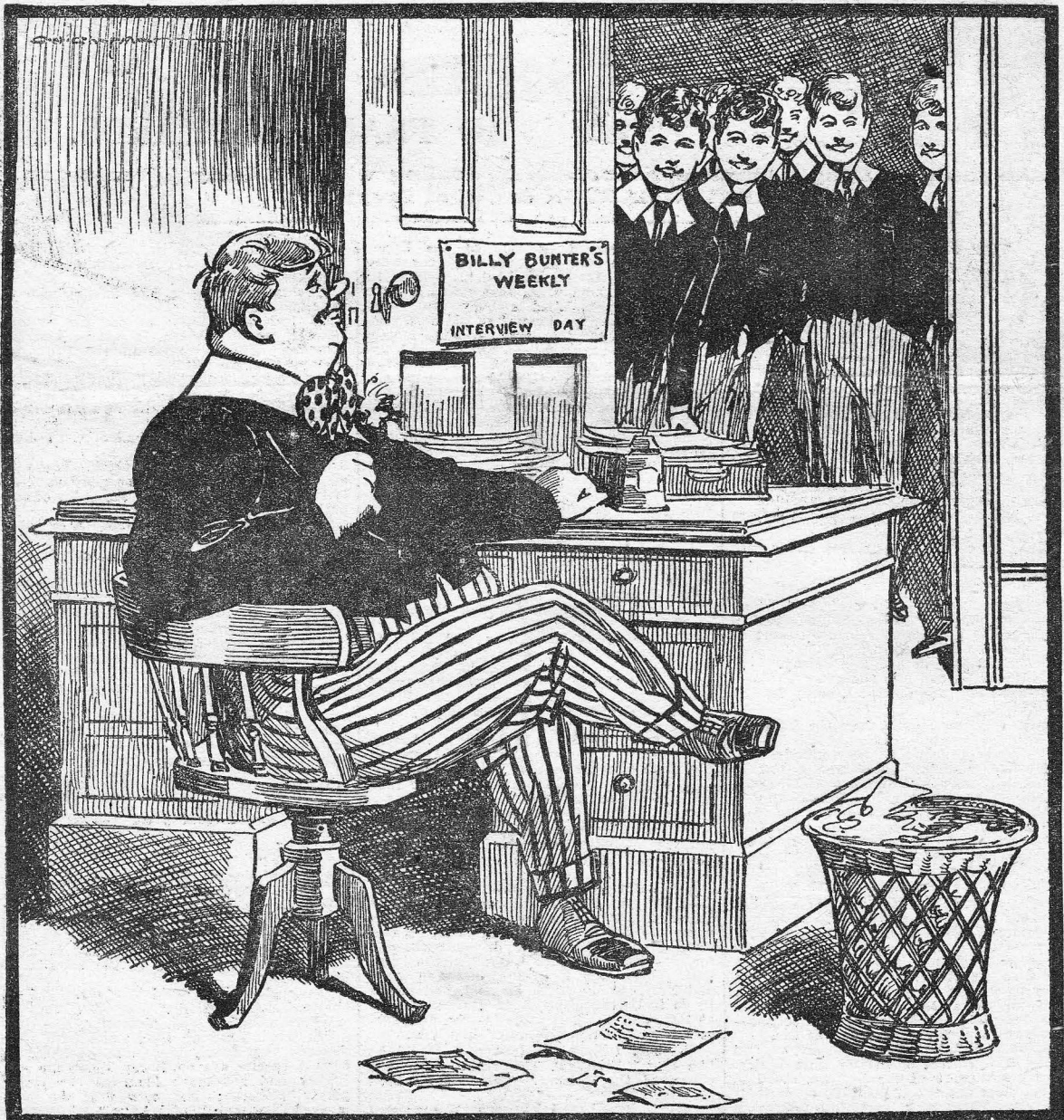
Greyfriars

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Stories, Jokes & Pictures
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BILLY BUNTER, EDITOR, INTERVIEWS HIS READERS!

(See the Special Four-page Supplement in this Issue.)

**TWO LONG
COMPLETE SCHOOL
TALES
EVERY WEEK.**



**"BILLY BUNTER'S
WEEKLY!"**

Grand Four-page Supplement,
Edited by WILLIAM GEORGE
BUNTER of Greyfriars.



By FRANK RICHARDS.

A Magnificent Long, Complete, School Story, dealing with the Early Adventures of
HARRY WHARTON & CO. at Greyfriars.

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.
The Redclyffe Match!**

WHAT'S on?" Bob Cherry, the fighting champion of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, asked that question of Harry Wharton, captain of the Form, as he was punting a football about. Harry had suddenly left Bob and the other Removites at the bidding of Wingate, the captain of the school, and instead of coming back to punt the footer Wharton was making for the School House.

"Important match!" called back Harry Wharton, with a grin.

"Wharton!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, coming towards him. "What do you mean, you ass? There's no match to-day!"

"Yes, there is—first eleven fixture!" said Wharton, with another grin.

"Well, you're not in the first eleven, are you, you fathead?"

"Yes."
"Eh!"

"I'm in to-day, at all events!" said Wharton, with a chuckle. "Loder's out, and there's a split in the Sixth, and Wingate's short of hands, and he asked me to play."

"Honest Injun!" gasped Bob Cherry.

Bob tossed his cap into the air.
"Hooray! Hooray for us! Hooray for the Remove! Hip, pip!"

Harry Wharton hurried into the house to get into his football clothes. Bob Cherry shouted out the news to his comrades. It spread like wildfire. There was a row in the Sixth Form; and Wingate had asked a junior to play in the first eleven—in one of the biggest matches of the football season. The Remove heard the news with incredulity and delight—the incredulity vanishing, and the delight augmenting, when Harry Wharton was seen on the footer ground with the rest of the eleven.

It was a proud day for the Remove; but the other Forms did not take it so kindly. But Loder & Co. consoled themselves with the reflection that a junior recruit would not be of much use in a match against a team like Redclyffe; and they hoped fervently to see the Greyfriars colours lowered. Harry Wharton himself, perhaps, was a little doubtful; but one thing was certain—he meant to play the game of his life.

Nugent and Bob Cherry, Tom Brown and Johnny Bull, Hurree Singh and Mark Linley, and a crowd more of the Remove, stood in a group near the ropes, ready to cheer their champion. There were very few fellows in the Remove who were not glad to see the Form captain taking a place in the Greyfriars First. It was an honour for the Remove which they were not likely to forget.

Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Upper Fourth, were near at hand, and they wore lofty smiles. Temple confided his opinion to Dabney, in a loud voice, that Wingate must be off his dot. And Dabney said, "Oh, rather!" But the Removites did not take any notice; they eyes were upon the footer-field. Redclyffe First had arrived, and the match was about to begin. Coker of the Fifth came down to the ground with his hands thrust deep into his pockets, and a puzzled frown upon his face. Coker could not understand in the least why Harry Wharton had been put into the team, and he—Horace Coker—had been left out. The probability was that he never would understand.

"We've won the toss," said Bob Cherry suddenly. "Redclyffe have got to play against the wind."

"Hooray!" said Johnny Bull.

"There they go!"

"Play up, Greyfriars!"

"Go it, Wharton!"

"On the ball!"

Redclyffe had kicked off, and the match had begun.

Very nearly all Greyfriars had gathered to watch the game. A first eleven match always had a great interest for the whole school; but this match was something out of the common. It was not often that a junior of the Lower Fourth was seen playing with the big guns of the Sixth.

Everybody wondered how Harry Wharton would turn out; and the general opinion was that Wingate was off his "rocker," and that Wharton would be more hindrance than help in the senior team.

That opinion, in fact, was held by all but Wharton's own chums; and the spectators generally expected to see the Removite simply pushed out of the game by the Redclyffe fellows.

But it did not happen.

At first the Redclyffians carried all before them. There was no doubt that the home team was not up to its usual form, or anything like it. They were driven back, and for some time the play was all in the home half. There was a sharp attack on goal, and North of the Sixth, in goal, had plenty to do to defend his citadel. He was caught at last, and the ball came in—the first goal in the game being taken for Redclyffe.

"I guess I told you fellows it would be like that," Fisher T. Fish remarked to the chums of the Remove. "Now, if I'd been playing, that goal—"

"Would have been taken sooner?" suggested Rake.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Nope! I guess I—"

"It's all over bar shouting!" growled Coker

of the Fifth. "Blest if Loder isn't right! The school wants a new captain, and no mistake!"

"It's going to be a bad licking," Loder remarked to Carne. The two cads of the Sixth had come down to see the match. "And if we are beaten, it will be bad for Wingate. He will have all the Form up against him over it!"

"Jolly good thing, too!" growled Carne. "Look at that ass Potter, who's been put in my place! The Redclyffe forwards simply walk round him!"

"And their confounded junior hasn't done much so far!" said Loder.

"Not likely to, I should think. Looks to me as if Wingate is dotty or else he's tired of being skipper, and wants the order of the push!" said Walker.

"He'll get it, whether he wants it or not!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! They're off!" shouted Bob Cherry. "Hooray! On the ball! Go it, Remove!"

Greyfriars had kicked off, and the forwards were away with the ball. Gwynne had sent it out to the wing, and Wharton was "on" it. The Redclyffians tried to tackle him, but Wharton eluded them, and ran down the field, the ball at his feet. The halves seemed to be nowhere, but the backs closed in on him. For a moment Wharton was tempted to take the kick before the backs could reach him, and he would have had a fair prospect of success, but he restrained the impulse. He sent the ball in to Wingate, who captured the pass, rushed past the backs, and shot for goal. The ball whizzed fairly into the net before the goalie knew that it was coming.

There was a roar from the Greyfriars crowd.

"Goal!"

"Hooray!"

And the Remove shouted:

"Bravo, Wharton!"

Wingate clapped Wharton on the shoulder as they walked back to the centre of the field. The goal was Wingate's, but he had taken it from Wharton's pass, and at least half the credit was due to the captain of the Remove.

"Jolly good, kid!" said Wingate. "Keep that up, and you'll do."

Wharton flushed with pleasure.

The teams lined up again; and from that moment the Redclyffians were observed to keep a special eye on Harry Wharton.

They had not much regarded the junior player hitherto; but now that he was marked he was "bottled up." But that was, as Bob Cherry remarked, a compliment to the junior. It showed that the senior players from Redclyffe regarded him as a dangerous opponent. They wouldn't have

taken the trouble to mark Loder, as Bob observed in a stage whisper at the prefect's elbow.

Wharton had no further chance in the first half, but he kept his end up as well as could be expected; and it could not be said, even by Loder and Carne, that his play "let down" the side in any way.

"The first half ended with the score equal. 'It's going to be a giddy victory!' said Bob Cherry confidently. 'I wish I could see Wharton kick a goal; that would shut up those wasters yonder!'"

"The shut-upfulness would be terrific," agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"If we lose, they'll make a song out of it," said Johnny Bull. "But they can't say that Wharton isn't doing well—better than Potter, anyway."

"We've got the wind against us now," said Nugent, as the teams came on the field again, "and it's blowing up from the sea."

"Yes, that's rotten luck!"

"Play up Greyfriars!"

Greyfriars kicked off against the wind for the second half. The change of ends had given Redclyffe the advantage of the wind, and it was a considerable advantage now. The Redclyffians had evidently made up their minds to force matters. The tussle was hard and fast from the kick-off, and soon the visitors were swarming round the home goal.

Bob Cherry & Co. watched the tussle anxiously. They were in momentary expectation of seeing the leather go in, and their expectations were soon realised. The ball whizzed in past North, and lodged in the net.

"Goal!" grunted Bob Cherry. "What they want is a few more of the Remove in the team. That would make it a bit harder for Redclyffe."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wharton doesn't seem to be going great guns just now," remarked Vernon-Smith of the Remove, with a sneer.

"Oh, rats!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Two up for Redclyffe!" said Coker. "Well, it serves 'em right! If Wingate doesn't know a good player when he sees one—"

"Play up, Greyfriars! Don't go to sleep!" shouted Fisher T. Fish.

Greyfriars kicked off again. The visitors pressed them hard as before, but this time not so successfully. Hammersley succeeded in sending the ball out to Wharton, and Harry ran it down the touch-line till he succeeded in sending it across to the other wing. There was a fine exhibition of short, quick passing as the Greyfriars forwards brought the ball across the enemy's half, and rushed for goal. The defence seemed to have no chance; but as Wingate received the ball from the right wing, and was about to kick, the backs charged him. The Greyfriars captain had just time to send the ball out to Wharton before he was charged over.

Wharton trapped the ball, and gave a quick glance round. There was no other forward in a position to take a pass, and he had only a couple of seconds to spare. There was nothing for it but to take the risk of shooting, and he did it after one second's pause.

Right for the goal-mouth the ball whizzed, and the next moment Wharton was shouldered over, and fell.

He heard a shout as he rolled over. Was it a goal?

He staggered up.

The shot had been good and true; but the wind had deflected the ball, and it had struck the goalpost, and fallen back into the field of play.

The next instant a Redclyffe back sent the leather whizzing to midfield, and the chance was gone. Play surged away to the half-way line.

"Oh, what rotten luck!" groaned Bob Cherry. "It was as near as anything—blow the wind! It was the narrowest shave!"

"Beastly luck!" grunted Johnny Bull.

Loder laughed.

"Exactly what might have been expected from a kid shoved into the first eleven!" he said to Carne. "It was an easy shot, and the young ass muffed it!"

Bob Cherry heard the remark, and he glared at Loder.

"You know you're talking rot!" he exclaimed. "It was a difficult shot, and Wharton very nearly brought it off. It was the wind spoiled it!"

"Hold your tongue, you cheeky cub!" said Loder, scowling.

All eyes were turned keenly on the game now. The Redclyffians were pressing the

attack once more, and the Greyfriars side were struggling hard in defence.

For a time there was no further score; but it could not be denied that the Greyfriars men were playing a losing game.

They did not seem to have a chance of equalising, and it began to be clear that if they kept the score as it was, it was as much as they could expect.

Bob Cherry glanced up at the clock-tower. "Ten minutes to go," he remarked gloomily.

"Lots of things happen in ten minutes," said Frank Nugent. "It's a delightfully uncertain game, you know."

"This one is certain enough," said Bolsover major. "The Greyfriars First is licked, and they might as well chuck up the sponge now."

"I guess so. Now, if I were in the team, —"

"There they go!" roared Bob Cherry. "Play up, Greyfriars!"

The Greyfriars forwards had succeeded in getting through at last. The field changed kaleidoscopically. The players were swarming round the visitors' goal now, and the attack was sharp and determined. The leather went in from Gwynne's foot; but the Redclyffe goalie was "all there." It came out again, and Harry Wharton made a leap forward. His head met the leather, and the ball went whizzing in.

"Goal!" gasped Bob Cherry.

But it was not to be.

It was very near; but the Redclyffe skipper was up to his work. His fist crashed on the sphere, and it whizzed out, and then a Redclyffe back sent it flying to the touch-line. The Redclyffe goal was saved, and the home team did not have a chance again. There remained but three minutes to play, and in those three minutes the visitors brought the attack up to the home goal, and piled in shots. And it was evident to all the crowd that only the whistle of the referee, announcing the close of play, saved Greyfriars from a bigger score against them.

Phip!

Bob Cherry grunted.

"That's the finish; two to one against!"

Oh, rats!"

"Licked!" said Vernon-Smith, with his unpleasant smile. "Our respected Form-captain hasn't done the giddy miracles expected of him!"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" said Bob Cherry angrily. "He's done jolly well, anyway. And if the rest of the team had been up to his form, we should have won."

"Yes, rather!" said Nugent.

And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh remarked that the rutherfordness was terrific.

But the faces of the Greyfriars eleven were gloomy as they came off the field. They had been beaten; and beaten not so much by the quality of the enemy, as by their own shortcomings. But for the split in the Sixth, there was no reason why the home team should not have kept its end up against the visitors. Wingate's brow was dark, and his lips were compressed. He owed that defeat to Loder, and Loder's trickery—he knew that; but the other fellows did not share his opinion. They attributed the defeat to the composition of the team, naturally, and the composition of the team was the work of the skipper, and so it was generally agreed to lay the blame upon Wingate's shoulders.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Wingate Sticks!

GEOGE WINGATE was in his study, his brow clouded and moody.

He was dissatisfied with the result of that afternoon's match, dissatisfied with himself, and with things generally.

The split in the Sixth had brought about the defeat of the first eleven, there was no doubt about that.

The split in the Form was not due to Wingate; but he wondered whether he could have done anything to avoid it, if he had been more careful.

It was not his fault that Loder and the other black sheep of the Sixth wanted a change of captain, and were willing to play the game low down to get rid of him.

Wingate had always stood for a high standard of conduct and the best traditions of the school, and he had always been a thorn in the side of the fast set in the Sixth. It was not surprising that they wanted to be rid of him. But Wingate wondered that

Loder had succeeded in getting so many of the seniors on his side. It was due to his cunning; and in a contest of that sort George Wingate was woefully lacking. He had no tricks to pit against Loder's; he would not flatter, and he would not cajole, and he was at a disadvantage. If the fellows wanted another captain, let them have another captain, that was how he looked at it. It was not the way to combat Gerald Loder's plotting.

The football record for the season was a matter of very great importance to Wingate, and Loder did not care twopence for it. Greyfriars First might be defeated a dozen times for all Loder cared, so long as he gained his ends.

Wingate knew that. He knew that if Loder succeeded in driving him out of the captaincy, and replacing him, it would be a bad thing for the Sixth, a bad thing for the football club, and a bad thing for Greyfriars generally.

And so Wingate restrained his impulse to throw up the post, and decided to hold out, at all events, unless there was a chance of a decent fellow like North getting in as skipper in his place.

Wingate had made mistakes, doubtless; but upon the whole his rule had been for the good, and Loder's rule would be for the bad, there was not the slightest doubt about that.

And now Wingate was wondering what was to come of it.

The team were dissatisfied with him; the Sixth were, as a whole. All of them resented the fact that he had played a junior. If the match had been won, it would have passed off as a lucky inspiration of the skipper's; but the match had been lost—badly lost—and the team attributed it to his measures. Why could he have played Loder and Carne? They had refused to practise when ordered; but, after all, that was not enough to risk a football licking for, so most of the seniors considered. And Loder had confided to the fellows that he had declined to practise on that special occasion because he had had an important engagement, which Wingate refused to hear about. Loder was willing to say anything—Wingate was not willing to say even what was to his advantage—and so it was natural that Loder's view should be taken by a good many fellows.

Wingate started and looked up as a knock came at his door. There was a sound of a good many footsteps in the passage, and the captain of Greyfriars smiled grimly. He had been expecting some move on the part of Loder & Co. He did not know exactly what, but he knew that something was coming. And now it had come.

"Come in!" said Wingate quietly.

Loder opened the door of the study and came in. Carne and Walker and Phipps followed him. After them came three or four more of the Sixth, and then some members of the Fifth Form—Blundell and Bland, and Coker and Greene and Fitzgerald, and several more.

Wingate's study was a good-sized room, but the crowd of seniors nearly filled it as they came in.

Wingate rose to his feet and regarded his visitors with a sarcastic smile.

"Quite a little party!" he remarked. "If you've come to tea, I'm afraid you'll find the grub rather short."

"We haven't come to tea," said Loder.

"Then it's a conversazione?" asked Wingate.

Loder scowled.

"Not—not that, either. We've talked the matter over, and we've come to speak to you plainly and frankly."

"Well, that will be a change for you, anyway, Loder."

Coker chuckled; but he became grave as Loder scowled round at him. Some of the delegation looked uneasy and uncomfortable.

"The Sixth are not satisfied," said Loder.

"Really?"

"We've been licked to-day—licked by a team we could have beaten!" said Blundell, the captain of the Fifth.

Wingate knitted his brows.

"Well, whose fault is that?" he demanded.

"Well, I think it's yours!" said the Fifth-Former.

"I'm open to correction; but I must say I think it's your fault, Wingate!"

"Hear, hear!" said the delegates, all together.

"You played a kid out of the Remove in

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the first eleven," went on Blundell. "Such a thing is simply unheard of."

"Quite unheard of," said Coker. "I was willing to play—"

"And you left good men out from the Sixth," said Carne. "Loder and I were quite willing to take our places in the team, though you made things rather unpleasant for us."

"We offered," said Loder.

"And I offered—" began Coker of the Fifth again.

Wingate made an impatient gesture.

"If you fellows have come here to call me over the coals, you can save your breath to cool your porridge," he said. "I'm not taking any."

"You've got to!" said Loder roughly. "The Sixth are not satisfied, and you're not yet a giddy king, that I know of."

"And the Fifth are jolly well not satisfied," said Coker. "We're only a deputation, and there's a crowd of fellows who think the same as we do. It's time Greyfriars had a new skipper."

Wingate smiled sarcastically.

"I thought it was coming to that," he said, his lip curling in a way that made most of the delegates feel angry and uncomfortable. "You've decided among yourselves that I had better resign?"

"Yes!" said the seniors, with one voice.

"And I dare say you've selected my successor already?"

"Ahem—"

"You may as well get it out!" said Wingate scornfully. "I suppose Loder is the fellow you have fixed upon?"

"Well, I don't see that there's any use beating about the bush," said Carne. "It is quite right—we think Loder will make a better skipper. He can't do much worse than you've done lately, anyway."

"Hear, hear!"

"That's how the matter stands," said Carne bluntly. "The fellows think you ought to resign, Wingate."

"I don't think a majority of the fellows think so," said the Greyfriars captain.

"That can be settled by a show of hands in the seniors' room, if you like," said Blundell. "Anyway, you're free to stand for re-election, and if the fellows want you, you will be re-elected."

"That's fair play," said Bland.

Wingate laughed scornfully.

"I don't think I should get much fair play from Loder," he said. "I can guess the kind of tricks he would use to win an election—much the same as his trickery now in trying to make a vacancy."

Loder turned crimson.

"I am acting in the interests of the Form, and of the school," he said loftily. "I leave it to the fellows to judge of what I've done."

"Hear, hear!" said Walker. "It's all right, Loder; we're backing you up. I dare say it's a bit unpleasant for you, Wingate, to be told that it's time to go, but there you are. The Sixth are fed-up with you. Your putting a junior in the First Eleven, and leaving out Sixth-Formers who are willing to play, was the last straw!"

"Absolutely the last!" said Phipps.

"I put in the best man I could find," said Wingate; "and Wharton, of the Remove, played up as well as any fellow in the team. He gave me the pass I scored from."

"Oh, we expected you to defend your act, though everybody else can see it was a bungle!" said Loder.

"The question is—are you going to resign?" asked Carne.

Wingate shook his head.

"No," he said, "I'm not going to resign!"

There was a loud murmur from the deputation.

"You refuse?" demanded Loder.

"Yes, I refuse!"

"Will you take a show of hands on the subject, from all the members of the Fifth and Sixth?" demanded Phipps.

"No! You appear to forget that the captain of Greyfriars is captain of the whole school—not only of the Fifth and Sixth," said Wingate. "I have the juniors to consider, as well as the seniors. I'll take a show of hands of the whole school, if you like."

There was a pause. Well enough Loder & Co. knew that Wingate was the idol of the Lower Forms, and that in such a test the majority would be overwhelmingly in his favour.

"You don't like that idea?" asked Wingate, his lip curling.

"No!" said Loder. "After you've played a

junior in the First Eleven, it stands to reason the juniors will back you up!"

"In that case, they'd back me up in a new election, if I stood for re-election," said Wingate. "It would be a walk-over for me, and trouble for nothing."

Loder bit his lip. In a new election he had an arsenal of trickery at his finger-tips; there were ways and means of influencing the voting, of preventing some of the youngsters from voting at all, of bribing or threatening others. In a new election Loder felt that he had a good chance. But in a show of hands from the whole school, taken on the spot, without time for scheming, he knew that he had no chance.

"Very well; if you're sure of re-election, why not resign?" said Loder at last.

"Because I don't choose to. I won't give you a chance of getting in as captain, and disgracing the Form and the school," said Wingate coolly. "I won't give you a chance of getting in by trickery and rotten scheming—which is what you want."

"You've no right—" began Loder.

Wingate interrupted him:

"Oh, ring off! I know you, Loder!"

The prefect gritted his teeth. The delegation seemed to be at an impasse. They had fully expected Wingate to resign when he found that the two top Forms were against him. They were angry and disappointed. If Wingate had assumed a conciliatory manner, several of the fellows present would have come round to his side. But that was the last thing the captain of Greyfriars thought of. He had done his best, and it was not for him to be conciliatory. He had a right to demand that from the other side.

"Very well," said Loder at last. "You refuse to resign?"

"Yes."

"Then pressure will be brought to bear on you!"

Wingate shrugged his shoulders.

"Go ahead with the pressure!" he said.

"Then there's nothing more to be said," Loder muttered, between his teeth. "Come on, you fellows!"

And the delegation crowded out of the study with knitted brows.

"Shut the door after you!" said Wingate ironically.

Coker slammed the door.

But as soon as the door closed, and he was alone and unobserved, Wingate's cool and contemptuous manner deserted him. His face clouded over, and he threw himself into a chair, with a dejected look. It was bitter enough to him to feel that his Form-fellows were dissatisfied with him—that they wanted to get rid of him. The door reopened, and North came in.

"You've had a lot of visitors!" he remarked.

Wingate nodded.

"What did they want?" North said rather anxiously.

The Greyfriars captain laughed harshly.

"Nothing much—only my resignation."

"The cads!" said North hotly. "You haven't resigned?"

"No."

"That's right—stick it out!" said North encouragingly.

"I—I feel pretty rotten about it!" said Wingate despondently. "I'd pass on the captaincy to you willingly enough, North, or to Thompson. But I know what it would mean if Loder got in, and I'm standing out against that."

"They'll come round," said North.

Wingate did not reply. He did not think the fellows would come round, and he wondered what would be the next move in Gerald Loder's game. Loder had suffered a check, but not a defeat; and Wingate knew very well that the plotting prefect would not allow the matter to rest where it was.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Loder Gains His Point!

L ODER was not without some expectation that Wingate, in spite of his reply to the deputation from the Sixth and the Fifth, would resign; but his hope was disappointed. The next day passed, and the next, and Wingate made no reference to the matter. Neither had he spoken to Loder or Carne on the subject of the two seniors resuming their places in the First Eleven. As there was another important match fixed for Wednesday afternoon, when the First Eleven were to meet Courtfield Wanderers, there was a great deal of speculation on the subject. That Win-

gate would play a junior in the first team was again incredible; but otherwise it was not easy to see how the places would be filled.

Several members of the eleven had announced their intention of resigning if a junior was played a second time, and if Wingate persisted he was likely to have a team composed half of juniors to face the Wanderers with.

Loder felt that he had the captain of Greyfriars in the hollow of his hand; but his power was limited. He could balk Wingate at every point, and make it impossible for him to captain the team with success. But if Wingate did not choose to resign, it was not easy to "shift" him. Loder and his friends gave the matter a great deal of thought, and discussed it very frequently in Loder's study.

The split in the top Form was the talk of the school, and most of the juniors, especially in the Remove, were unreservedly on Wingate's side. As Harry Wharton said, the captain was being treated rottenly, and the fellows who were backing Loder would be sorry enough after they had succeeded in making the change they were aiming at, when they had had some experience of Gerald Loder as a captain. The black sheep of Greyfriars would rejoice, but, after all, they were in a minority, and the rest would be wanting their old captain back again soon enough.

"Only Wingate doesn't mean to go," said Bob Cherry, with a chuckle, as the Removites discussed it after morning school on Monday, "and if he doesn't choose to go, I don't see how Loder is going to work the oracle."

"Might appeal to the Head to shift him out of the captaincy," said Vernon-Smith, the Bouncer of Greyfriars, who was one of Loder's party.

The juniors turned wrathfully upon the Bouncer.

"Oh, shut your head!" said Johnny Bull. "The doctor isn't likely to do anything of the kind."

"No fear!" said Bob Cherry. "It's a rotten scheme against Wingate, and it's up to him to stick it out till the fellows come to their senses. If Loder gets in, the school will go to the dogs, I know that."

"Well, I don't know it," yawned the Bouncer, "and I should be jolly glad to see Loder captain, for one!"

"So that you could smoke cigarettes in your study without fear of being licked," said Bob scornfully.

"And break bounds without being reported," growled Johnny Bull. "Shut up, Smitty, you make me ill!"

"Well, I consider—"

"Oh, never mind what you consider! Shut up!" said Bob Cherry. "Dash it all, I think the cad would be better for a bumping! We're not going to have fellows in the Remove getting their ears up against old Wingate!"

"Hear, hear!" said Nugent.

"Hands off!" roared the Bouncer; but it was too late. The indignant juniors had collared him, and he was promptly bumped on the ground.

"Now you shut up on that subject," said Bob Cherry, wagging a finger at the infuriated Bouncer, as he sat breathless and gasping. "Your views on the subject ain't popular, and you'd better keep them to yourself."

The Bouncer staggered to his feet. His temper, which was always bad, was evil itself now. He made a furious rush at Bob Cherry.

"Well, if you will have it!" said Bob Cherry resignedly, and he let out his left, and Vernon-Smith measured his length upon the ground again.

"Yarrah!"

The juniors walked away, leaving the Bouncer there. Vernon-Smith scrambled up, his hand closing upon a heavy stone. He was too infuriated to think of what he was going to do—he raised the stone to hurl it.

A hand grasped his wrist from behind, and the stone was forced from his grasp. It fell with a thud to the earth, and the Bouncer swung round snarling, to find himself in the grasp of Wingate of the Sixth. Wingate's face was pale with anger.

"You cowardly cad!" he exclaimed. "You were going to throw that stone! Do you know what injury you might have done?"

"I don't care! I—"

"You don't care!" said Wingate grimly. "I'll teach you to care, then, you young ruffian. Hold out your hand!"

Wingate had a light walking-cane in his

hand. He swished it in the air, and waited for Vernon-Smith to hold out his hand; but the cad of the Remove did not obey. Loder had just come in sight, and the Bounder was looking towards him.

"Did you hear me?" said Wingate grimly.
 "Yes, I did."
 "Then hold out your hand!"
 "I'm not going to be caned."
 "What!"
 "Bob Cherry started the row."
 "I don't care what he did. You might have injured him seriously with that stone, and only a coward and a cad would have thought of such a thing. Are you going to hold out your hand, or shall I lick you?"
 "I appeal to you, Loder!" exclaimed the Bounder suddenly.

Loder paused.
 "What's the trouble?" he asked.
 "You needn't inquire what the trouble is," said Wingate sharply. "I'm attending to this matter, Loder."
 "Loder's a prefect, too," said Vernon-Smith.
 "I appeal to you, Loder. You saw—"
 "Hold out your hand, Smith!"
 "I won't!" said Vernon-Smith. "Loder saw what happened, and—"

He got no further. Wingate seized him by the collar, and laid the cane across his shoulders. Vernon-Smith roared.

"Hold on!" said Loder. "Let's hear the rights of the matter first."
 "Mind your own business!"
 "Look here, Wingate—"

"Oh, hold your tongue!"
 "Are you going to let that junior alone?" demanded Loder.

"I'm going to thrash him!"
 "You're jolly well not!" said Loder. Loder's eyes were gleaming. He did not care twopence whether Vernon-Smith was licked or not, but he saw his opportunity at last. "Let him alone, or I'll stop you!"
 Swish! Swish!

Loder ran in and grasped Wingate's arm, and arrested the fall of the cane. The Bounder wriggled out of Wingate's grasp. The captain of Greyfriars stared blankly at Loder, too surprised by the prefect's action to act for a moment.

"Do you know what you're doing, Loder?" he almost shouted, when he found his voice. "Do you dare to interfere with me?"

"Yes, I do, when you're bullying a junior," said Loder.

"Wh-a-a-at!"
 "You heard what I said," said Loder coolly. "You may be head prefect, but even head prefect hasn't a right to bully a fag. Let him alone!"

"Stand aside!" said Wingate hoarsely.
 "I shall do nothing of the sort," said Loder, planting himself between the captain of Greyfriars and Vernon-Smith.

"Will you get out?"
 "No!"
 "Then I shall shift you."
 "You had better not try."

Wingate dropped the cane, and grasped Loder with both hands. Loder returned grip for grip, and they struggled. Loder was not a match for the captain of the school; but he was a powerful fellow, and not easily disposed of. The sight of the Greyfriars captain struggling with a prefect in the open quad drew a crowd from all sides. In a moment almost there was a swarm of fellows round them.

Crash!
 Loder went heavily to the ground. He lay there gasping, and blinking up at Wingate.

The captain of Greyfriars stood panting. He had lost his temper at last—the temper he had long held in.

"Now, you cad, if you want any more get up and have it!" he shouted. "You've been trying to force me into a fight for a long time, and now you've got your way. Get up!"

"Go it, Loder!" sang out Carne. "Tackle him while he's not finking it for once!"

Smack!
 The back of Wingate's hand caught Carne across the mouth, and the Sixth-Former went reeling back. He fell against several Removites who had hurried up, and they promptly shoved him off, and he rolled on the ground.

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Old George is on the warpath this time, and no giddy error!"

Wingate's blood was up; there was no doubt about that!

Loder, as he staggered up, and caught

sight of the captain's pale, concentrated look, felt an inward misgiving.

It was true that he had striven to force Wingate into an encounter with him, fully intending that the Head should know about it; but now that it had come, he felt a sinking of the heart. Wingate was a rough customer to tackle, and Loder was likely to pay dearly for his success.

"Well, are you ready?" exclaimed Wingate.
 "I'm ready!" said Loder thickly.

"Hold on!" said North hurriedly. "You can't fight out here, in full view of the Head's window. Have a little sense! Come round behind the chapel!"

"I'm not coming round anywhere!" snarled Loder. "If I'm going to fight, I'm going to fight here and now."

"The Head, if he's in his study—"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Fight to a Finish!

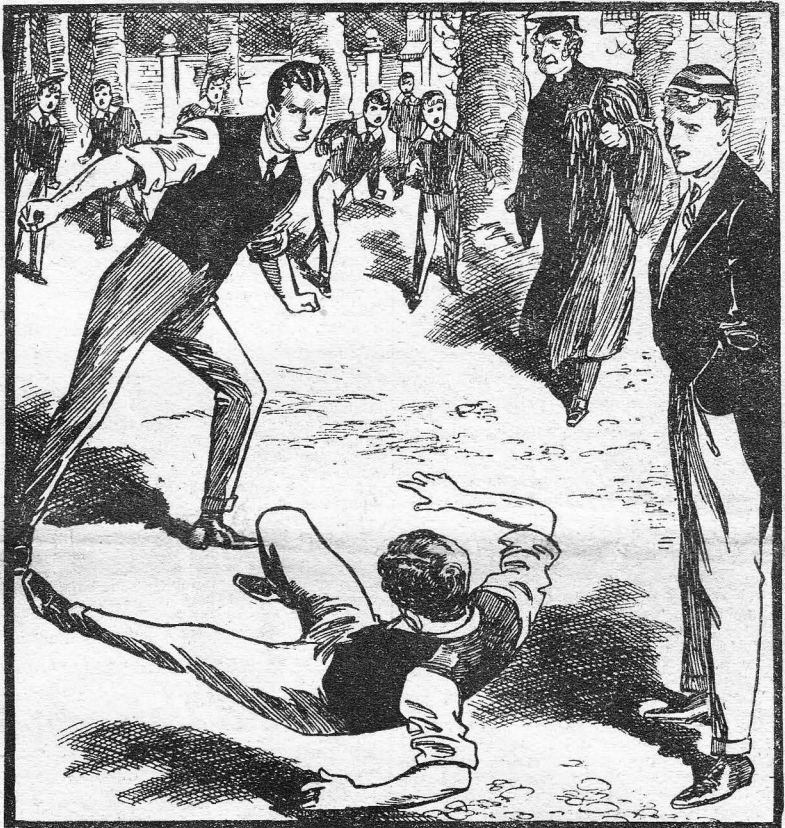
THE crowd thickened round the scene of the combat.

The news that Wingate—old Wingate, the head of the Sixth and the captain of the school—was fighting out a quarrel like any inky-figured fag in the Third Form spread like wildfire.

Fellows came from far and near to see the fun.

Loder's friends hardly troubled to conceal their satisfaction. Wingate was caught at last! They had scarcely hoped that he would break out like this, in public, in a way that could hardly escape attention from all Greyfriars.

Loder certainly would be roughly handled; but it was worth that, from the point of view of Carne, Walker & Company.



Wingate struck out, and Loder, hurled away by the force of the blow, rolled on the ground. There was a sharp exclamation, and a figure in a rustling gown came quickly through the trees. "Wingate!" It was the Head!
 (See Chapter 4.)

"Mind your own business!"
 But Wingate paused.
 "Come behind the elms!" he said.
 "Look here, I—"

"Get behind the elms, Loder, you cad!" shouted Bob Cherry. "You want the Head to see you—that's your little game."

"The cadfulness is terrific!"
 "Play the game, Loder!"

The crowd followed Wingate, and Loder was hurried along with it, whether he liked it or not. They swarmed past the elms. The trees were leafless, but the old trunks screened the crowd and the combatants from the House windows. Wingate paused, and faced the prefect.

"Now!" he said.
 Loder clenched his hands.
 "I'm ready for you!"
 "Then come on!"

And as Loder showed no haste to commence, Wingate himself attacked, and in a moment the two seniors were going it hot and strong.

Indeed, it was worth it from Loder's own point of view, though he did not enjoy the process while it lasted.

Loder was not a fighting-man when he could help it; but he was capable of putting up a good fight when he chose, and he chose now.

He wanted to make the combat last, if he could, until the Head was brought upon the scene, and that was certain to happen if he prolonged the fight.

And so he stood up to the slogging blows of Wingate with a pluck and determination which was quite unexpected from Gerald Loder.

"Go it, Loder!"
 "Mop him up Wingate!"
 "Pile in!"
 "Go it, ye cripples!"

"Your man's down, Carne!" yelled Nugent, as Loder sprawled on the ground under a terrific right-hander from the captain of Greyfriars. "Pick him up, man!"

THE POPULAR.—No. 151.

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. :: By FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT FRIDAY! "RIVALS FOR THE CAPTAINCY!"

"Bravo, Wingate!"
 "Hurray!"
 Wingate glanced round frowningly. It was not exactly gratifying to him to be cheered on by fags, while the seniors stood round with dark, grim, disapproving faces.
 "Shut up, you kids!" he said roughly.
 "Yes, dry up!" muttered Harry Wharton.
 "We don't want to get the masters here to see what's going on, you duffers!"
 Carne had picked Loder up. The prefect was gasping for breath, and there was a red stream flowing from his nose. He turned a look of hate and fury upon the captain of Greyfriars. Wingate met it grimly.
 "Have you had enough?" he asked.
 Loder ground his teeth.
 "Enough? No, I haven't! Come on, hang you!"
 And this time it was Loder who rushed to the attack.
 Wingate met him more than half way. Wingate's blood was up. Loder had driven him into this, and Loder should pay for it, and he was paying for it.
 Loder was fighting hard, and Wingate's face showed signs of wear and tear; but his punishment was as nothing to the prefect's.
 Loder's left eye was closed. His nose seemed to be double its usual size, and he was gasping for breath.
 But he fought on doggedly.
 "By Jove, he's got some pluck, after all!" Bob Cherry said grudgingly. "I never expected Loder to turn out game like this."
 "He's trying to hang it out till the masters come on the scene!" muttered Harry Wharton, with curling lip.
 "The rotten! That's his game, of course!"
 "The rottenness is terrific!"
 "Sure, and he won't hang it out much longer!" said Micky Desmond. "Faith, he can hardly stand up to old Wingate now!"
 "There he goes!"
 "Pick him up, Carne!"
 "Stand him on his pins!"
 Loder was on his back again. He gasped painfully as Carne and Phipps helped him to his feet.
 "You can't go on!" said Wingate abruptly.
 "I'm satisfied if you are!"
 Loder's eyes blazed.
 "You've got to go on!" he said savagely.
 "Hang you—hang you! I'm not done yet!"
 "Well, come on and finish!"
 And they closed in strife again. There was a sudden shout from Bolsover minor of the Third:
 "Cave!"
 The cry was taken up by the crowd.
 "Look out!"
 Wingate would have separated from his adversary; but Loder, too, had heard the cry of warning, and he grasped the captain of Greyfriars with all his strength.
 "Let go!" muttered Wingate. "Oh, you coward!"
 For Loder's fist had crashed into his face, after his hands were down. Wingate's eyes blazed with rage, and he struck out, and Loder, hurled away by the force of the blow, rolled on the ground at his feet.
 There was a sharp exclamation. A figure in rustling gown came quickly through the trees, just in time to see Loder roll at the feet of the captain of Greyfriars.
 "Wingate!"
 It was the Head!
 Wingate dropped his hands.
 He stood unsteadily, gasping for breath, exhausted by the conflict, and crimson with shame and humiliation. The Head looked at him in amazement and horror. Wingate was not a pretty sight at that moment. His face was daubed with blood, and bruised and cut. One of his eyes was closed, and he blinked painfully and uncertainly with the other.
 "Wingate," repeated the Head, almost dazedly—"Wingate, is it possible? You, Wingate, fighting like a hooligan?"
 There was a dead silence.
 "And who is the other?" said the Head, turning his glance upon the senior groaning on the ground.
 "Loder, sir!" said Carne.
 "Loder—a prefect! This is—utterly disgraceful!" said Dr. Locke. "I am ashamed of you! I am utterly disgusted!"
 Wingate stood overwhelmed with shame. He had no excuse to offer.
 "What is the cause of this?" said Dr. Locke.
 Silence!
 "Have you nothing to say, Wingate?"
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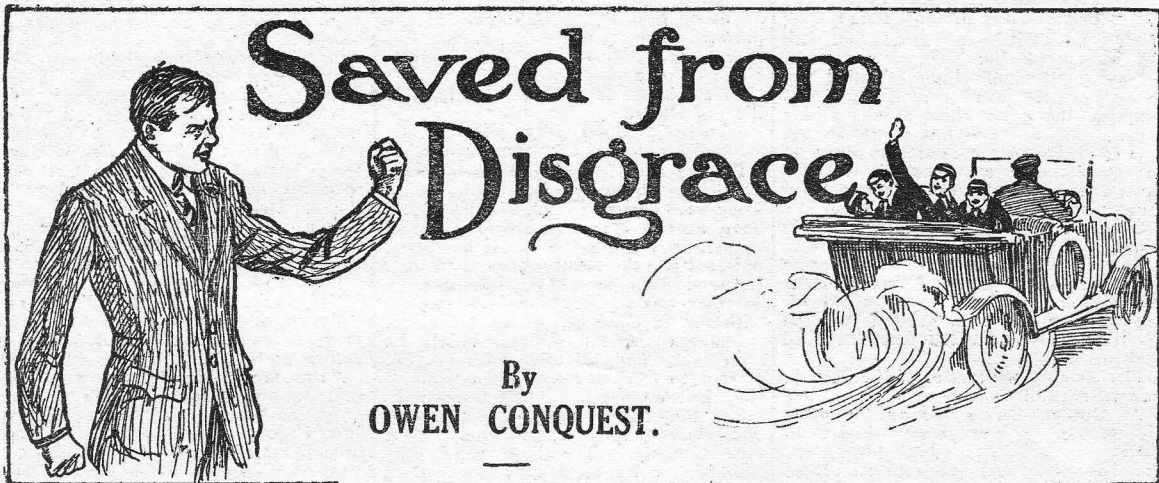
"No, sir," said Wingate, "except that I'm sorry!"
 "What have you to say, Loder?"
 Loder staggered up, and stood leaning upon Carne.
 "I—I did not strike the first blow, sir," he said, "that's all. I interfered with Wingate because he was bullying a junior, and he went for me. I think I'm entitled to explain that much."
 "It's a lie!" said Wingate.
 "Kindly moderate your language, Wingate, please," said the Head. "In what is Loder's statement incorrect?"
 "I was punishing a junior, and he interfered," said Wingate. "But I don't want to make any excuses for myself, sir. I lost my temper, and I own up."
 "You lost your temper," said the Head dryly. "Perhaps that accounts for the whole matter, Wingate."
 Wingate bit his lip.
 "At all events, wherever the blame may lie, you must both realise that this conduct is impossible in prefects," said the Head.
 "Loder, you are no longer a prefect."
 "Very well, sir," said Loder submissively.
 "The same applies to you, Wingate. I expect you to resign your position as captain. A boy who cannot command his own temper is not fit to command others."
 Wingate bowed his head.
 "Very well, sir, I resign."
 "I am shocked and pained by this scene more than I can say," said the Head, with real distress in his kind old face. "If you were juniors, I should cane you severely. You are no longer prefects; and I shall carefully consider your future conduct before I think of reinstating you. That is all."
 And the Head rustled away.
 There was a dead silence behind him.
 The fellows looked at one another without a word. The Head's sentence had fallen heavily upon their ears. Even the fellows who had backed up Loder through thick and thin were taken somewhat aback at this complete success of their plans. Wingate was no longer captain of Greyfriars; he was no longer even a prefect. The fellow who had loomed largest in the public eye of the school had become a simple member of the Sixth again—like Lueifer, Son of the Morning, he had fallen from his high estate, and great was the fall thereof.
 Wingate looked round upon the startled faces, and his lip curled bitterly.
 "Well, you've got your way now, you fellows," he said, with his glance upon Loder & Co. "You've got me out of the captaincy."
 "Shame!" yelled Bob Cherry.
 "Rotten!"
 "I'm no longer captain," went on Wingate,

without heeding the juniors. "I've resigned. And there will be an election for captain, I suppose. I shall not stand for re-election. That will be impossible under the circumstances."
 "I should say so," said Carne.
 "I've only got this to say," said Wingate, ignoring Carne. "I've stuck to the captaincy, not because I specially wanted the job, but because I thought I was doing pretty well for the school. I think it means a rotten state of things for Greyfriars if a fellow like Loder gets in."
 "Thank you!" said Loder, with a sneer that made his battered face look positively hideous for the moment.
 "Hear, hear!" roared the Famous Five.
 "I'm not going to stand for re-election," resumed Wingate. "Any fellows who would have backed me up can oblige me by picking out a decent candidate, and getting him in as captain. That's all."
 And Wingate walked away.
 Loder, walking very unsteadily, went into the House with his friends. The plotting prefect groaned as he bathed his injuries; but in the midst of his personal discomfort he felt a keen sense of satisfaction. He had succeeded. He had turned out the captain of the school, and there was no danger of Wingate being re-elected. It would be Loder's own fault now, he felt, if he did not work the election his own way, and succeed in his ambition. And that reflection consoled him as he dabbed at his burning face, aching all over from the punishment he had received.
 The Famous Five gathered in Study No. 1 with gloomy brows. Bob Cherry summed up the feeling of all present when he declared that it was rotten. And Hurree Janset Ram Singh agreed dismally that the rottenfulness was terrific.
 "But it's not a time to be downhearted," said Bob Cherry. "Old Wingate's shifted out; but we'll have him back again as skipper some time. But just now we've got to keep our eye on the giddy election, my sons, and keep Loder out."
 "Hear, hear!"
 "That's the business of this Co. now," said Bob Cherry impressively. "Loder's going to put up for election as captain, and Loder's got to get the kybosh!"
 "Hear, hear!"
 And the Famous Five of the Remove meant business, though whether they would succeed in baffling the scheming Sixth-Former was another question.
 THE END.
 (Next Friday: "Rivals for the Captaincy," by Frank Richards. Order your copy in advance.)

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Saved from Disgrace

By
OWEN CONQUEST.

A Splendid Long Complete School Tale of JIMMY SILVER & CO. the Chums of Rookwood.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Declined Without Thanks!

AN eyeglass gleamed in at the doorway of the end study. Behind the eyeglass was the languid and somewhat vacant countenance of Adolphus Smythe, the ornament of the Shell Form at Rookwood.

Scidom did the great Adolphus, the dandy of the Shell, condescend to visit a Fourth Form study. It might have been expected, therefore, that the four Fourth-Formers in the study would have been duly impressed, and that they would have greeted the great Adolphus with marked respect.

But they weren't—and they didn't!

Jimmy Silver and Lovell and Raby and Newcome, the Fistical Four of the Fourth, were deep in discussion.

That afternoon Jimmy Silver had received a fiver.

Fivers were remarkably uncommon in the Fourth Form, and a junior with a fiver was a remarkable and much-to-be-respected youth, so long as the fiver lasted.

It was a great and unique occasion. The Fistical Four were holding a "pow-wow" concerning the disposal of the fiver. It was, as Lovell remarked, a day worthy to be marked with a white stone!

Naturally, they had no time to waste upon Smythe when that elegant youth locked in and his monocle glittered condescendingly upon them.

"A car out for the afternoon," Raby was saying; "that's a good wheeze! Lucky it's a half-holiday."

"What price a first-rate picnic?" said Newcome.

"Or a run over to Northwood, and the cinema," said Lovell.

"Or all the blessed lot!" said Jimmy Silver lavishly. "We could stand the lot out of a fiver."

Whereupon his devoted chums ejaculated together:

"Hurrah!"

Adolphus Smythe sniffed.

"I want to speak to Silver," said Smythe. "It's rather important."

"He's heard of the fiver," said Lovell, in a stage-whisper; and there was a chuckle in the end study.

Smythe frowned.

"Well, you can go ahead," said Jimmy Silver. "We're rather busy, but we can give you a minute or two. Fire away, Smythe!"

"It's you I want to speak to; not these kids!" said Adolphus, with a disdainful glance at Jimmy Silver's chums. That was Adolphus' very tactful way.

"Why, you cheeky ass—" began Lovell warmly.

"You can speak to all of us, or you needn't speak at all, Smythe," said Jimmy Silver. "No blessed secrets in this study!"

"Well, I suppose those kids can be trusted not to blab," said Adolphus. "The fact is, Silver, we've got a little excursion on this afternoon, and we'd like you to come."

"Oh crumbs!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Howard and Tracey and I are going," resumed Adolphus. "We'd like you to make a fourth, if you'd care to come."

"By gum!"

Jimmy Silver had never been asked before to join in the little excursions of the Giddy Goats of Rookwood. As a matter of fact, and as he would have expressed it, he would not have been found dead in their select society. Still, it was a fact that he had never been asked, and Smythe's manner conveyed that he fully understood what an honour he was conferring upon Jimmy.

There was only one possible explanation. Adolphus had heard of the fiver.

"It will be rather interestin'," drawled Adolphus. "We're havin' a trap out—quite a good gee-gee and a kinky little trap—holds five quite well. I'm going to drive."

"We're going to have a really rippin' time, you know. And we're meetin' a chap—the chap who used to be in this study before he left Rookwood—Gunter, you know."

"The Head's nephew!" exclaimed Lovell.

"He's stayin' in Coombe now," pursued Adolphus, "and we've arranged to meet him. I dare say you'd like to see him again."

"Blest if I want to see a chap that's been sacked from the school for being a beastly blackguard!" said Jimmy Silver. "And what the deuce is he doing in Coombe? Old Bootles took

him to London, and handed him over to the chap who was to take him back to America."

"Well, he hasn't gone," said Smythe. "He doesn't choose to go. He was a bit of a bouncer here, I know, but he's sportin'—very sportin'. And we've fixed up the afternoon with him. It's goin' to be toppin'! The fact is, we're goin' to see somethin' rather entertainin'—Coombe Races."

Jimmy Silver jumped.

"You're going to the races?" he shouted.

"Yaas!"

"Well, you rotter!"

"You needn't do any bettin', you know," said Smythe, with a sneer. "You can sit in the trap and watch. It's worth seein', you know, and it's an experience. We should want you to pay your whack in the trap, that's all. It'll come rather expensive—your whack in the exes will come to a couple of quid. If you can shell out you can come. In fact, we'll be glad to have you! What do you say?"

"I say that if you don't clear off this minute I'll bung this cushion at you!" said Jimmy Silver, picking up a cushion from the armchair. "You precious blackguard! You'd get the sack if you were found out!"

"Now, look here, Silver— Yah! Oh!"

Swipe!

Jimmy Silver kept his word. The cushion flew with unerring aim, and it caught Adolphus under the chin. Smythe of the Shell went spinning back into the passage as if he had been shot from a catapult.

There was a loud bump in the passage.

"Yah! Ah! Wah!" stuttered Adolphus. "You cheeky young sweep—yoop! I'll thrash you—grooh!—with-in an inch of your—ow!—life! I'll—Yow! Leave off, you young scoundrel!"

Jimmy Silver felded the cushion, but he did not take it back into the study; he used it as a duster on Adolphus.

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

"Oh! Ah! Ow! Yowp!"

Smythe of the Shell scrambled away wildly, all his languid elegance vanishing. He fled for his life.

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NEXT FRIDAY:

"RIVALS FOR THE CAPTAINCY!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. : : : : BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Mystery of the Letter!

"GUNTER back!" said Lovell, with a whistle.

And his chums whistled too. It was astonishing that Smythe, the great chief of the Giddy Goats, should have the nerve to ask Jimmy Silver of the Fourth to share in his questionable excursions. But the news that the nuts were going to meet Gunter was more astonishing still.

Gunter had been sacked from Rookwood.

The Head's nephew, who had come from the far-off plains of Texas to the old school, had created a record for rascally conduct, and, related to the Head as he was, he had been expelled with ignominy.

Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth, had taken him away.

As Gunter's home was on the other side of the sea, arrangements had to be made for sending him back there, and Mr. Bootles had undertaken those arrangements.

The Rookwood fellows had supposed that Gunter by that time was on board ship on his way to the western continent.

The news that he was in Coombe, the little village near Rookwood, astounded them.

What was he doing there?

Gunter had been an extraordinary youth. He had marvellous nerve, and as much cheek as all the rest of Rookwood put together. He had been a blackguard of the first water. He had smoked and gambled and mixed with sporting characters of the lowest variety, and had even introduced his shady friends into the school. The chopper had come down, as was to be expected, and Gunter had gone.

Naturally, it had been a blow to Dr. Chisholm to expel his sister's son and send him back to the far-off land he had come from. But the Head had done his duty sternly. He had made many allowances for the boy's peculiar upbringing in a wild country, but the cup of Gunter's iniquity had overflowed at last.

Gunter had said that he wouldn't go back to the States, but the juniors had taken that simply as "gas." But it appeared now that Gunter had kept his word.

And it appeared, too, that he had retained some influence over the more reckless fellows, like Smythe & Co., whose tastes for questionable enjoyments was somewhat like his own.

Gunter had made a terrible scene at Rookwood before he went. The fellows had not yet forgotten it. And now he was near the school again, evidently engaged in pursuits as rascally as ever.

"The silly ass!" said Jimmy Silver, referring to Smythe. "Gunter will get him into trouble. Smythe is only a silly, timid blackguard, but Gunter is a regular scoundrel. It would be his idea of a joke to land Smythe with the sack, too!"

"Serve him right!" growled Lovell. "My hat! Suppose Bulkeley spotted him going to the races!"

"They've done it before," said Raby. "Smythe thinks it's sporting—or sportin', as he calls it. Bulkeley never suspects anything. Well, 'tain't our business. What about our little run this afternoon?"

"We'll settle on the car," said Jimmy Silver.

"Hear, hear!"

"We'll run down and 'phone for the car from the prefects'-room—there'll be nobody in there now!" said Jimmy.

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NEXT FRIDAY!

"GOING FOR GUNTER!"

"Good!"

The Fistical Four went down to the prefects'-room, which was fortunately empty, and ordered the car, without asking anyone's permission.

Five minutes later they were back in the end study.

"There go those silly idiots!" said Jimmy, looking out of the window.

Smythe and Howard and Tracey were sauntering elegantly down to the gates. They were dressed to kill. Nothing could have exceeded the glossiness of their toppers and the set of their neck-ties, unless it was the beautiful crease in their trousers. Smythe & Co. disappeared—on their way to keep their appointment with the expelled nephew of the Head.

The car was not due for nearly an hour yet, and Jimmy Silver & Co. started to work through some "lines" they had on hand. Their impositions done, they could enjoy the afternoon with clear consciences, as Jimmy Silver put it nobly. The lines were duly finished. A fragment of paper slipped out of Lovell's "Virgil" as he was closing it.

"What's that?" asked Jimmy Silver, his eye falling upon the paper, and noting some of the words written on it.

"My bookmark," said Lovell.

"What about it?"

"It's part of a letter."

"Yes; I picked it out of the waste-paper-basket weeks ago," said Lovell, with a stare. "No good, I suppose?"

Jimmy Silver picked up the slip. It was nearly half of a page of notepaper, and it was covered with writing in a sprawling, youthful hand. His three chums regarded him with surprise. Jimmy Silver's interest in that fragment of an old letter which Lovell had used as a bookmark astonished them.

"Have you looked at this, Lovell?" Jimmy asked.

"No. Why should I?"

"It's part of a letter—a letter to Gunter, I think," said Jimmy quietly. "Do you remember a short time before he left, he had a letter from America that upset him a lot? It was after that that he became such a thoroughly reckless rotter. He said something about a fellow going back on him after making an arrangement. Listen to this—"

Jimmy read out the fragment.

"I can't keep it up any longer, Sam, and that's the truth. I reckoned I should like it, but I don't. Besides, there's mopper and popper to be considered. It was a wild idea, and I reckon it won't do. You can expect me pretty soon after you get this, so it's no good writing. I guess—"

That was all.

"That letter can't be part of Gunter's letter," said Lovell. "Gunter's name isn't Sam."

"That letter came from America," said Jimmy quietly. "There's only one chap here gets letters from America, and that's Gunter."

"But how do you know?"

"It's written in the American language, my son, Mopper and popper are American for mater and pater."

"You ought to be a giddy detective," said Raby admiringly.

"Then there's 'guess,' too," said Jimmy. "English people don't guess, except in guessing competitions. Now, how is it that a chap writing to Robert Gunter addresses him as Sam?"

"Ask me another," said Lovell.

"Gunter said something about the game here being up after he got that

letter. You know he's a jolly queer kind of chap to be a nephew of Dr. Chisholm. It's been in the back of my mind for a long time there was something shady about it," said Jimmy Silver.

"My hat! You—you don't think—"

"I jolly well do," said Jimmy Silver. "We know that the Head had never seen his nephew, who was born in Texas. He had never been in England before. I can't help thinking that there has been a swindle—and it looks to me as if this letter proves it."

Lovell whistled. "It sounds a bit thick," he said. "Not much good saying so outside this study, Jimmy. The fellows will think you're potty."

"I'm not going to say anything," said Jimmy, "because if it's as I suspect, the truth is bound to come out pretty soon. If it's as I think, it will be jolly good news for the Head, anyway. Let's go and look for that car."

The Fistical Four quitted the study, in a thoughtful mood. But the sight of a big car buzzing outside the school gates drove Gunter from their mind.

"Here it is," said Jimmy Silver. "Now we've got to get a bag of tuck, and we'll be off."

And a whole quid out of Jimmy Silver's fiver was expended in Sergeant Kettle's little shop for tuck to pack into the motor-car. And the Fistical Four packed it in in great spirits.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Knowles Asks for It!

"STOP!" The Fistical Four were on the point of starting. The chauffeur had, in fact, started the engine already.

Knowles of the Sixth came hurriedly out of the gateway.

He waved his hand towards the car, and ran towards it. His face was excited. The Fistical Four eyed him.

Knowles, as a Modern fellow, had no right to interfere with Classicals. Jimmy Silver & Co. had impressed that fact upon Knowles' mind more than once.

If there was one thing that put Classical backs up more than anything else, it was interference from the other side of the school. The Fistical Four were the very last fellows likely to stand it.

So they looked grimly at Knowles. If the bully of the Sixth had any idea of stopping their motor-run that afternoon, there was trouble to be expected. They would not have given it up for a dozen Knowles.

"Lucky you're here," added Knowles—"very lucky! I want that car."

"What!" ejaculated the Fistical Four, in chorus.

"You must lend me that car," said Knowles.

"My hat!"

"I'll pay you what you've paid," he said. "It isn't a question of money. But I'm in a hurry."

"Well, that beats the band!" said Jimmy Silver. "For sheer, pure, unadulterated cheek, you take the cake, Knowles! If you want a car, ring up a taxi."

"You know it would take too long," said Knowles.

"Then order a car in advance, and wait for it, as we've done," said Lovell hotly. "What the thunder! You're not going to have our car."

(Continued on page 13.)

A GRAND YARN OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.
By OWEN CONQUEST.



BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY!

A GRAND FOUR-PAGE SUPPLEMENT

Edited by

WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER of Greyfriars School.

Assisted by

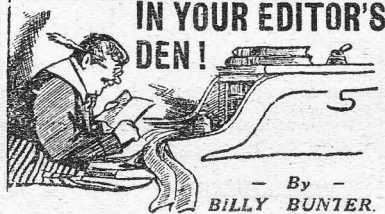
HIS FOUR FAT SUBS — **SAMMY BUNTER** of Greyfriars, **FATTY WYNN** and **BAGGY TRIMBLE** of St. Jim's, and **TUBBY MUFFIN** of Rookwood.

Contributions from the Three Famous Schools.

Rules for Visitors!

The following are framed and hung in the Editor's Sanctum of **BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY**.

1. Visitors who call on the Editor are requested to wipe their feet outside the door. A poodle-dog is provided for this purpose. (But don't wipe your feet too hard, or you may get bitten!)
2. If a contributor, knock three times. If a pal, walk right in. If an enemy, make a loud hissing noise through the keyhole!
3. On entering the Editor's presence salaam three times. Advance on all-fours, and kiss the Editor's hand (unless the latter should be too inky!).
4. If a visitor desires to smoke, he must bring his own herrings, and smoke them in the Editor's presence. Other forms of smoking are strictly taboo.
5. Children under eight years of age are not admitted. They are noisy, and they generally help themselves to delicacies from the cupboard when the Editor isn't looking!
6. No interview must occupy more than ten seconds. Say what you've got to say in a few sharp, jerky sentences. Editors are busy people. They've no time for jawing.
7. Before leaving, always make the Editor some suitable present. A basket of fruit, or a plum-cake, would form an appropriate gift.
8. Should the Editor wish to cash a postal-order in advance, visitors should promptly rise to the occasion!



IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN!

By **BILLY BUNTER**.

My Dear Readers,—

"Hallo!" you will say. "What's Billy Bunter got hold of now? Special Interview Number, indeed! What is it all about?" Let me, in my best jernalistic manner, explain.

It has been my pleasure—and also my misfortune—to interview certain of my readers. No, they didn't come to Greyfriars. I saw them in London, at the headquarters of the Companion Papers.

Some of the interviews had were pleasant; others were painful. If you want to read all about them, turn to Bob Cherry's story on the next page.

Bob's narrative is not exactly truthful. I am not such a poor fighting-man as he would have you believe. At the same time, the story will give you some idea of my eggperiences.

There have been other interviews with readers as well. Fatty Wynn has had one; so has Baggy Trimble; and so has Tubby Muffin. So, you see, this might almost be called a Special Readers' Number. It is a number which has been clammered for since my "Weekly" first came out, and I hope that now it is in your hands it will come up to eggpectations.

A few short weeks, and then—Christmas! "What is Billy Bunter doing about it?" That is a question which will be on everybody's lips.

Well, dear readers, I am going to prepare, produce, and put before you such a feast of fiction as you have never had in your lives before.

Our Christmas Number comes out the week after next. But there will be such a rush on the "Popular" that week, that it is advisable to order your copy six months in advance. (I don't quite see how you're going to do it, but that's a detail.)

Needless to say, me and my four fat subs have got our shoulders to the wheel, and our Christmas Number will make history. It will be a great number—a grand number—a magnificent number! And the price will remain the same—nicks!

The week after next, dear readers. Don't forget!

Ever your plump pal,

Your Editor.

The Sorrows of Sammy!

Written by **MARK LINLEY**.

Set to Music by **CLAUDE HOSKINS**.

Sung by **SAMMY BUNTER**.

Look out! Look out! For Billy's about!

There's duty to be done.
It's Sammy this, and it's Sammy that,
And I'm always on the run!
When people come to interview
My major in his den
He seems to think that I can do
The work of twenty men!

Oh, it's "Sammy, show the person in!"
And "Sammy, place a chair!"
And it's "Sammy, put a jerk in it,
And don't stand goggling there!"
It fairly drives me off my dot,
And makes me tear my hair!

I have to work, and never shirk,
From morn to dewy eve.
It's Sammy this, and it's Sammy that,
And what do I receive?
A genial pat upon the back?
A gracious word of cheer?
No! As a rule, it is a smack
That dislocates my ear!

Oh, it's "Sammy, show the person out!"
And "Sammy, use your boot!"
And it's "Sammy, give the beggar beans!"
I want to see him scoot!"
If this goes on much longer, Bill,
I'll go on strike, old fruit!

(Oh, will you? I'm not going to have any traitors in the camp, so there! If you desert your post of duty, you needn't trouble to come back. There are as good sub-editors in the sea as ever came out of it—see? Ed.)



Specially written for "Billy Bunter's Weekly" by the famous writer of Rookwood stories.

THE Rookwood fellows had just finished dinner when I arrived at the school in my little two-seater cycle-car.

It isn't often that I have any time to spare. The writing of the Rookwood stories absorbs all my leisure. But, finding myself in the enviable position of being able to take a day off, I had decided to run down to the school.

No sooner had I bought my car to a standstill in the quadrangle than it was surrounded.

"What a funny-looking old bus!" was the rude remark of Tubby Muffin. "It's only got one wheel at the back!"

"If you criticise my car in that way, Muffin," I said, "you'll find yourself with several 'weals' at the back!"

Tubby Muffin looked at me for the first time.

"Why, it's—it's Mr. Conquest!" he declared.

"It is!" I replied. "I thought I'd come and look you up. Perhaps you'd like to come for a spin in my car?"

"I'd love to, sir!"

"Jump in, then!"

The rest of the fellows looked on rather enviously as Tubby Muffin clambered into the two-seater.

"Jimmy!" I exclaimed, catching sight of Jimmy Silver. "You might explain to your Form-master that I'm taking Muffin for a spin, and that he may not be back until after 'locking-up' time."

"All serene, Mr. Conquest!"

I found myself badly hampered for space with a passenger of Tubby Muffin's bulk beside me. The fat junior seemed to take up every available inch of room.

"Where are you taking me, sir?" he asked.

"Oh, just for a spin round!" I said.

"Are you a good driver?" inquired Tubby, with some trepidation.

"Fairly good, so long as the roads are clear," I replied. "Of course, if I get mixed up in a crush of traffic, I'm rather inclined to lose my head."

I could see that my passenger was trembling.

"If—if you don't mind, sir, I'd rather not come!" he faltered.

"Too late to draw back now," I said, with a smile.

And we bounded forward, and flashed past the school gates, which the porter held respectfully open.

As the little car rushed on towards Latham, passing cyclists and pedestrians without mishap, Tubby Muffin's fears departed. He settled himself comfortably in the seat.

"I say, Mr. Conquest," he said. "It's good of you to bring me out like this. But I wish you wouldn't write such horrid things about me in your stories."

"Horrid!"

"Yes, You make out that I'm a greedy glutton—that I haven't a soul that rises above eating and drinking."

"Is not my description of you correct?"

"No, it isn't! I'm not a glutton. I always eat sparingly at meals, and I never touch anything in between. I say, would you mind stopping here?"

"Why?"

"There's a tea-shop, and I'm feeling awfully peckish!"

I laughed outright.

"My dear Tubby," I said, "you are giving the lie to your own assertion! You declare that you never eat between meals, and now you want to stop and have what you would call a mild snack."

"Ahem! I—I hardly had any dinner," said Tubby. "They wouldn't allow me more than three helpings of the first course, and I only had four lots of pudding, instead of six. Do let's pop in and have some tea, Mr. Conquest! I'm absolutely famished!"

"I mustn't encourage you in your gluttony," I replied. "You have only just

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had dinner. You can't have a meal every five minutes, you know!"

The car rushed on through the narrow Hampshire lanes.

Every time we came to a signpost bearing the magic words "Teas and Refreshments," Tubby Muffin threw me an appealing glance. But I was impervious to it.

As we sped along I questioned my youthful companion concerning certain of the Rookwood fellows, and the recent happenings at the school, so that I should be able to introduce some of them into future stories.

We had proceeded nearly fifty miles, and were over the Sussex border, before I decided to turn back.

"You'll stop and have grub on the way, sir?" said Tubby Muffin.

"Possibly," I replied. "I won't promise."

"If you don't," said Tubby, "I shall be starving by the time we get back to Rookwood!"

We covered the first twenty miles of the homeward journey in splendid style.

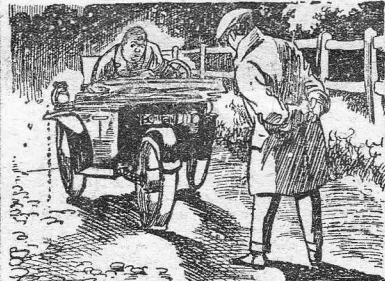
Considering the weight of the human cargo it had to carry, my little car behaved magnificently.

A dozen miles from the school, however, a calamity occurred.

The tyre of the back wheel became badly punctured.

It was now dark, and snow was beginning to fall.

I examined the puncture, and found that



A dozen miles from the school the back tyre became badly punctured. It was dark now, and snow was falling.

it would be impossible to repair it. A new tyre would be necessary.

We were miles away from a garage—stranded on a narrow road a dozen miles from Rookwood.

"What are you going to do about it, sir?" asked Tubby Muffin, in great distress.

"Nothing can be done to-night," I answered. "There is a shed over in that meadow. You must help me push the car into it, and then we must walk on to Rookwood."

Tubby Muffin groaned. And he groaned many times in the course of that long tramp to Rookwood. The unaccustomed exercise told upon him. He panted and gasped as he stumbled along, and he prayed that the end of the journey might soon come.

The hour was late when we reached Rookwood.

I popped into the Head's study and told him of our mishap.

"Muffin, I regret to say, is in a chilled and famished condition," I concluded. "I wonder, sir, if we might go together to the school kitchen and refresh ourselves?"

"Certainly, Mr. Conquest—certainly!" said the Head. "Bless my soul! You must be ravenous!"

I escorted Tubby Muffin to the domestic regions, and there we had the feed of our lives.

I slept in the Head's house that night. And when I left Rookwood early next morning, Tubby Muffin was none the worse for his adventure.

CONCERNING INTERVIEWS!

By BAGGY TRIMBLE.

I am feeling very sick and sorry this week.

If you have read Fatty Wynn's article, you will understand why.

Oh, what a sell!

When I had a charming letter from one of our lady readers I thought she was a bewitching young flapper. But she turned out to be an ancient lady, who first saw the light of day about a hundred years ago.

Such is life. Full of delusion and disappointment. Well might the lady in the comic opera, "H.M.S. Pinafore," sing, "Things are seldom what they seem!"

Now, I want to unburden myself this week on the subject of interviews.

Roughly speaking, they may be divided into two classes—pleasant interviews and painful interviews.

The pleasant ones may be summer-ised (that's a good word to use in winter!) as follows:

When a newspaper representative calls on you to say that you have been awarded the first prize of one thousand pounds in a competition.

When the Head sends for you to say that he is so pleased with your progress in class that he intends to invite you to tea. (This has never been my fortunate experience!)

When the captain of your Form football team drops in to tell you that you may regard yourself as a "cert" for Saturday's match.

When you are sent for by the Editor of the Companion Papers, and he and Mr. Martin Clifford take you out to lunch.

The painful interviews form a much longer list. In fact, I could fill the whole issue with them, so I will content myself with quoting a few:

When you are sent for by the Head, and you find him with a dark frown on his face and a light cane in his hand.

When you visit the dentist.

When the fellows who have lent you money drop in to know why it hasn't been paid.

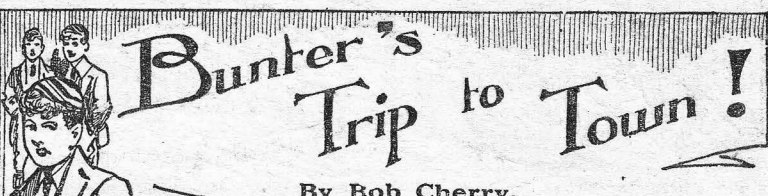
When a reader of the "Weekly" calls to see you, and he stands about six-foot-four in his socks, and has a fighting jaw!

Personally, I have some dozens of interviews every week, and most of them are of the painful variety.

I don't know why this should be so, because I'm a perfectly charming fellow, and have never given offence to anybody.

I hope, dear reader, that if ever you call upon me you will be nice and polite, instead of aggressive, and then I shall be able to add my interview with you to the list of pleasant ones!

OUR GRAND COVER STORY!



By Bob Cherry.

BILLY BUNTER goes to town periodically.

As the mountain will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain. In other words, if the Editor of the Companion Papers does not come to Greyfriars to see Bunter, then Bunter must go to London.

As a matter of fact, he rather likes it. But I don't think he found his last visit very enjoyable.

One morning in early December the Editor of the Companion Papers despatched two telegrams—one to Billy Bunter, requesting him to come to town forthwith; the other to the Head, formally asking permission for Bunter to be granted leave of absence.

Billy Bunter was in high spirits. He put on his best bib and tucker, as the saying goes, and caught the ten-forty from Friardale Station. He took the money for his fare from the funds of his "Weekly," knowing that the Editor of the Companion Papers would refund it when he got to London.

The prize porpoise of the Remove reclined lazily in his seat in a first-class carriage—Bunter always travelled "first" when opportunity permitted—and gave himself up to blissful reflection.

He would arrive in town, he reflected, about mid-day. He would get a cordial reception at the headquarters of the Companion Papers. Possibly a sub-editor, with a nice, kind face, would take him out to lunch.

Lunch in Fleet Street was a delight to Billy Bunter. He had already sampled its joys. How ripping to occupy the seat in which the renowned Dr. Johnson once sat! How grand to be waited on hand and foot, and to go right through the bill of fare, while the sub-editor—or whoever acted as Bunter's host—ruefully footed the bill.

These pleasant reflections occupied Bunter's mind throughout the journey.

As he jostled his way through the throngs of people at Charing Cross he felt on the best of terms with himself. His fat face was wreathed in smiles.

Outside the station he chartered a taxi. "The editor will pay," he muttered. "Generous fellows, these editors. I'm an editor myself, so I ought to know!"

Ten minutes later Billy Bunter was being shot upwards in a lift.

His surroundings, as he emerged on to one of the upper floors were familiar. The network of corridors, the busy clicking of countless typewriters, the rushing to and fro of messengers. The home of the Companion Papers was a veritable beehive of industry.

Billy Bunter found his way without difficulty to the editor's sanctum. He walked in without knocking.

The editor swung round in his revolving chair.

"Ah, I knew it must be you, Bunter!" he said. "Everyone else knocks."

Billy Bunter smirked. "Of course, old pals are privileged to walk right in!" he said.

The editor frowned. He found Billy Bunter's familiarity very trying.

"I have sent for you, Bunter," he said, "in connection with the Christmas Number of your 'Weekly.' You must get busy on it at once. And I must insist upon an extra-special number being produced. Wharton is forging ahead in excellent style with the Christmas Number of the 'Greyfriars Herald.' I want you to do likewise."

"Oh, certainly, sir!" said Billy Bunter. "I've already written a fine article myself, on 'How to Swim the Channel in Five Strokes.'"

The editor rapped on the desk impatiently. "Don't be so utterly absurd!" he said. "A Channel-swimming feature would be utterly out of place in a Christmas Number. I am

beginning to think, Bunter, that you are an even bigger fool than you look!"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"In your Christmas Number we want articles and stories of a topical nature. Please instruct your sub-editors—Wynn, Trimble, Muffin, and your minor—to this effect."

Billy Bunter nodded.

"Have you dragged me all the way up from Greyfriars just to tell me this?" he exclaimed.

"Don't be rude, or I shall turn on the ejector!"

"The—the ejector?" stammered Bunter.

"Yes. I have a modern installation here for ejecting unwelcome callers. I press a button, and the said callers are ejected like a cartridge-case from a shotgun."

"Oh crumbs!"

"I sent for you in order to tell you about the Christmas Number," the editor went on, "but that was not my sole reason. You might have noticed as you came in a queue of boys waiting in the passage."

"Yes, sir, I did. Who are they?"

"They are readers of your 'Weekly,' and they wish to interview you. You may see them in this room, one at a time."

The editor crossed to the door, and put on his hat.

"I am going to lunch," he said. "Possibly you will have gone by the time I return."



Hefty Harry did not desist until Billy Bunter sank down to the floor like a deflated gasbag.

In that event, don't forget my instructions concerning your Christmas Number."

The editor briskly withdrew, leaving Billy Bunter alone in the apartment.

The fat junior's eyes roved round the room, and he gave a snort of disappointment.

Why didn't these editors keep eatables in their sanctum? he reflected. Now, if only there was a nice rabbit-pie standing on the mantelpiece—

Billy Bunter's reflections were abruptly cut short by the entry of a youth of about fifteen. He was neatly dressed and well proportioned. The look he directed towards William George Bunter was one of infinite scorn.

"My name's Harper," he said, without any beating about the bush. "I'm a reader of your 'Weekly.'"

"That's fine!" said Billy Bunter. "It isn't often I get a chance of seeing my readers in the flesh. You simply adore my 'Weekly,' I suppose?"

Harper made a grimace. "Do I look as if I'm bursting with adoration?" he said. "I certainly find your rag amusing, but there's one thing in it that gets my goat."

"And that is?"

"Your Editorial!"

"Oh, really—" protested Billy Bunter.

"That's the best feature in the paper, you know! What don't you like about it?"

"I'll tell you. You bring out a Special

Gymnastic Number and a Special Staff Number, and you explain at great length what gymnastics mean and what staff means. It's an insult to our intelligence! We don't want these things explained to us as if we were unfledged infants who didn't know what was what. Now, you're going to promise me, here and now, that you won't insult the intelligence of your readers any more."

"And if I don't?"

"I shall be reluctantly compelled to punch you on the nose with such violence that your glasses will bounce off!"

Billy Bunter backed away in alarm. Harper's splendid proportions and his fighting jaw were disconcerting.

"I—I promise!" gasped the Owl of the Remove. "I didn't know that I'd been insulting my readers; but if I have, I'm awfully sorry, and I won't do it again!"

"All serene," said Harper. "That's all I wanted to know."

And, with a curt nod to Billy Bunter, he took his departure.

No sooner had Harper gone than a burly-looking youth heaved himself into the room.

"My name's Wilkins," he said. "They call me 'Hefty Harry.' I'm a reader of your 'Weekly.' And you're Bunter, are you—the actual W. G. B.—not an imitation?"

"Yes, I'm Bunter," quavered the fat junior, edging away from the intruder. He didn't like the look of the youth who was called Hefty Harry.

"You say in your 'Weekly,'" continued the burly youth, "that you are a fine fighting-man. In fact, you've made that remark not once, but dozens of times!"

"Well?" said Bunter uneasily.

"I've come to put you to the test," said Hefty Harry. "I want to see what sort of stuff you're made of. Put up your hands!"

"Oh crumbs! I—I—"

Bunter had no time to say more. Hefty Harry was already rushing to the attack.

The editor of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" found himself face to face, in fistic combat, with one of his readers. And he did not show up to advantage.

Hefty Harry proceeded to knock Billy Bunter round the room. He intended to be merely playful, but his playfulness proved decidedly painful for Bunter!

The fat junior howled and roared as he retreated under an avalanche of blows.

He fervently hoped that one of the sub-editors on the staff of the Companion Papers would come to his rescue. But the "subs" had gone to lunch.

"Yow-ow-ow! Chuckitt! Stoppit!" wailed Bunter.

But Hefty Harry did not desist until Billy Bunter sank down to the floor like a deflated gasbag.

"Bah!" said the burly youth, in tones of withering contempt. "You're no fighting-man! You let me bash you about as if you were a punching-ball! Have another go, and p'raps you'll go better."

But Billy Bunter definitely declined to have another "go." He scrambled to his feet, snatched up his Greyfriars cap, and fled into the corridor.

Other readers of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" were standing there waiting to interview the editor.

But the editor seemed to have a train to catch. At any rate, although there is very little dust at the Fleetway House, he shook what little there was from his feet without delay.

A moment later pedestrians were mildly amused at seeing a fat and flying figure rushing pell-mell towards Ludgate Circus.

Billy Bunter did not linger in town, in the hope of being taken out to lunch by a sub-editor with a nice kind face. He caught the next train back to Greyfriars!



Baggy's Fair Admirer!

By Fatty Wynn.

LETTER for Master Trimble!" The postman's remark made everybody gasp.

Letters for Baggy Trimble were about as rare as golden sovereigns.

"Hand it over!" said Baggy, his voice trembling with excitement.

The next moment he was exploring the contents of the envelope.

There was no remittance within. This was rather a blow to Baggy.

Still, there was a very sweet and charming note, and Baggy's eyes sparkled with pleasure as he read it.

This was the note:

"Lavender Cottage,
Wayland.

Dear Master Trimble,—I have been a reader of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" from the start, and would not be without it for worlds.

Quite the best features in the paper, to my mind, are the contributions from your pen. They are both brainy and brilliant. Without them the "Weekly" would be but a shadow of its former self.

I have often longed to meet in person the boy who pens such wonderful stories and articles. I have seen your photograph; but photographs are not always flattering, are they?

Would you care to come over on Wednesday afternoon and have tea with me? I should be really delighted. Bring a good appetite with you if you come.—Your lady reader and admiring friend,

MIRIAM MARTYN (Miss)."

Baggy Trimble almost purred with pleasure.

So his fame as a journalist had penetrated to a cottage in Wayland! And a charming young lady—for he assumed that Miss Martyn must be such—was personally interested in him. She was his admiring friend!

Baggy had so few admiring friends at St. Jim's that it was quite refreshing to come across a real admirer.

"I say, you fellows," he said excitedly, "this letter's from a girl reader of 'Billy Bunter's Weekly'! She lives at Wayland, and she's invited me over to tea on Wednesday afternoon!"

"My hat!"

"I shall have a ripping time!" said Baggy. "I always was popular with the ladies, you know!"

"What's the name of this fair camel?" inquired Monty Lother.

"Miriam Martyn. And she lives at Lavender Cottage. You couldn't have a more romantic name. And Miriam simply adores the stuff that I write in the 'Weekly'!"

"Queer taste some people have!" grunted Manners.

"Oh, really, Manners— You're only jealous because I've been invited to Lavender Cottage! Picture me on Wednesday afternoon, having tea with a charming young lady, while you're fooling around with a camera or wallowing on a muddy football-ground!"

Directly Miss Martyn meets you face to face, she'll be sorry she ever invited you!" said Tom Merry. "You'll eat her out of house and home! She'll be expecting a nice-mannered schoolboy, and she'll get a fat, ugly porpoise! And it'll serve her jolly well right for being so forward!"

And Tom Merry & Co. strolled away, leaving Baggy Trimble to dream of Wednesday afternoon.

During the next few days Baggy wore a very preoccupied look.

He was thinking of Miss Miriam, trying to picture in his mind what sort of girl she was.

Was she dark or fair, gay or sentimental? What sort of a tea would she provide?

These and a score of other questions occupied Baggy's mind.

At last Wednesday afternoon arrived.

Baggy Trimble put on his best bib and tucker. In other words, he changed into his Sunday best.

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Having thoroughly groomed himself, Baggy proceeded to Wayland.

His heart was light, his reflections were very pleasant. He was on his way to interview a fair admirer—one who had expressed the highest admiration for his work.

Baggy—like many other fellows who have no pretensions to good looks—rather fancied himself as a ladies' man. His winning smile, his charming personality, would take Miss Miriam by storm. He was confident of that.

Entering Wayland High Street, he approached a constable who was on point duty.

"Can you tell me where Lavender Cottage is?" he inquired.

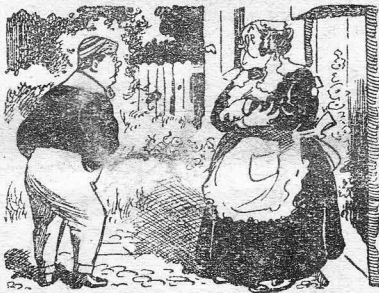
"Lavender Cottage? Why, that's on Wayland Moor! First house you come to, approaching it from this direction. It stands by itself, and it's got the name on the gate. You can't miss it."

Baggy solemnly "tipped" the policeman a penny, leaving the man speechless with indignation and amazement. Then he tramped on in the direction of Wayland Moor.

Poor old Baggy! His fond dreams were soon dispelled.

When he came in sight of Lavender Cottage he found there was nothing romantic about it.

It was a tumbledown place, which stood sadly in need of repair.



The door was opened by an old lady. "Good-afternoon," said Baggy Trimble, "I've called to see Miss Martyn."

This was rather a blow to Baggy Trimble. "Still, what does the place matter, so long as the person inside is sweet and charming?" he murmured.

He walked up to the ugly porch and rang the bell, which clanged harshly through the cottage.

The door was opened by a female of advanced years.

Baggy didn't trouble to lift his cap.

"Good-afternoon!" he said. "I've called to see Miss Martyn."

"That's me! And you are Master Trimble, I take it? How I have longed for this meeting! It does my old eyes good to gaze upon the young gentleman who has written so many funny stories and articles. Step inside, Master Trimble! I have prepared the tea!"

Like a fellow in a dream, Baggy stumbled into the cottage.

He could almost have howled with chagrin. He had taken it for granted that Miss Miriam Martyn would be a delectable young lady of the "flapper" variety. Instead of which she was a toothless old dame—very interested in him, it is true, but not at all interesting from his point of view.

The tea, too, was not what Baggy had expected. It consisted of a large cup of very weak tea and a couple of biscuits.

And whilst Baggy sipped the tea and munched the biscuits, the old lady fired questions at him—questions concerning his duties as a sub-editor.

In conclusion, the venerable Miss Martyn expressed the hope that Baggy would return the compliment by inviting her up to St. Jim's.

Needless to add, Baggy did nothing of the sort. And in future he will be wary of readers who send him flattering letters.

My Opinion of Owen Conquest!

By Tubby Muffin.

The gent who writes the Rookwood stories isn't a bad sort.

I will go further, and say that he's a real good sort.

But he has his faults. Perhaps if I tell him what they are he will make an effort to correct them.

Now, a person who writes school yarns ought to be true to life. Don't you think so? He ought to be able to depict his characters faithfully.

And that's what Mr. Owen Conquest fails to do.

Here am I, a good sportsman, a fine figure of a fellow, a chap possessing all the virtues and a few more besides, and yet the Rookwood author when writing about me uses such expressions as "prize porpoise," "bladder of lard," "greedy gormandiser," and so on.

You would almost think, to read some of Mr. Conquest's yarns, that I was a glutton!

Nothing could be farther from the truth. I have a healthy appetite, it is true. But that doesn't make me a glutton!

As to my being a prize porpoise, why, I am quite slim by comparison with some fellows:

Mr. Conquest is not the only one to blame for spreading the impression that I am—er—a little rotund. There is the artist. A dreadful man that artist. He exaggerates fearfully. To look at one of his sketches of me, you'd think I was a fellow of enormous proportions, whereas, as I implied before, I am slim and lithe and lissom.

Only the other day Mr. Conquest called on me at Rookwood. I expect he will tell you all about it in this issue.

Never again shall I go for a jaunt in a cycle-car. The beastly things are sure to go wrong when you're miles away from anywhere. In this case a tyre burst, and we had to put the car in a shed and hoof it all the way back to Rookwood.

A dozen miles' hard walking on a dark, wintry night. Groo! It makes me shudder to write of it.

I came in for a handsome feed at the finish, though; and a really good spread will atone for any amount of discomfort.

My grievance is that the feed ought to have been one of the first items on the programme.

Mr. Conquest should have motored me into Latham, stopped at the bunshop, and allowed me to eat my fill. I explained to him that I had had very little dinner that day, but he didn't seem to understand. We passed dozens of refreshment places on the road, and it was real torture to see such fine opportunities going begging.

I hope the famous Rookwood author won't be cross with me for writing this article. I don't mean any offence. I merely wish to open his eyes to a few of his faults, so that he may cure himself of them before he pays another visit to Rookwood.

(Probably the next time Mr. Conquest comes to Rookwood he will address a few forcible remarks to you, Tubby—with his walking-stick!—ED.)

SAVED FROM DISGRACE!

(Continued from page 8.)

"Tell the shover to drive on," said Raby.

Knowles put his foot in at the door. Jimmy Silver hesitated to give that order to the "shover." If the car had started, Knowles would have had a bad fall; and, after all, he was a prefect of the Sixth, although a Modern one. "Take your hoofs out, Knowles!" roared Lovell.

"Look here," said Knowles, in a voice of concentrated anger, "it's come to my knowledge that some young rascals have gone to the races this afternoon. I'm going after them to fetch them back. I've no time to waste, and I'm going to borrow this car. Now, get out of it!"

Jimmy Silver understood. Smythe & Co. had not been quite so secret as they had supposed. They could pull the wool over old Bulkeley's unsuspecting eyes. But Knowles was as keen as a razor, and he was "on" to the little game.

The expression on Jimmy's face as this thought flashed into his mind brought a sneering smile to Knowles' thin lips.

"Now you understand," he said, "so get out."

"It's no business of ours if some of your Modern cads have gone out playing the giddy goat," said Jimmy.

Knowles sneered again.

"They're not Moderns," he said. "We keep the fags on our side in order. They're Classical. Most of the blackguards are on your side of the school."

"Not the biggest one!" said Lovell, with a snort.

"Classicals, are they?" said Jimmy Silver. "Well, then, what business is it of yours, Knowles? You're not the Classical prefect. It's Bulkeley's business, not yours."

"I'm a Rookwood prefect, anyway, and I'm going to see into it, as Bulkeley seems to be too busy!" snapped out Knowles angrily.

Jimmy Silver wagged an irritating forefinger at Knowles.

"My advice to you is to mind your own business," he said. "No good comes of meddling in other people's affairs, you know."

"You cheeky little rascal!" roared Knowles.

"Shush! You can't expect us to help you do old Bulkeley's business for him. Go and tell Bulkeley about it."

"I'm not asking you for advice!" said Knowles, breathing hard through his nose. "I'm telling you to get out of that car and hand it over to me!"

"Bow-wow!" Knowles' greenish eyes glittered with rage.

"Silver! I—"

"You're not going to have our car!" said Jimmy coolly. "It's like your cheek to ask! Take your hoof away!"

"Get out of that car, or I'll pitch you out!" roared Knowles.

"Rats!"

"And many of 'em!" snorted Lovell. Knowles, gritting his teeth, made a leap into the car.

The Fistical Four rose as one man to deal with him.

The Modern prefect's high-handed proceedings would have exasperated more mild and patient fellows than

Jimmy Silver & Co., and they were not celebrated for mildness or patience.

To have their car taken forcibly away by a Modern prefect for the purpose of hunting down Classical fellows was a little too much.

They breathed wrath as they tackled Knowles.

Four pairs of hands fastened upon him at the same moment.

"Out you go!" panted Lovell.

Knowles struggled furiously.

He was a powerful fellow, but four juniors at once were a little too much for him. And the juniors were reckless and determined.

Knowles wasn't going to have their car, prefect or no prefect. He was going out of that car if they could put him out. And it looked as if they could.

Knowles clung to the door, and struggled, but his grasp was loosened, and he went whirling through the door. There was a loud bump in the road as Knowles landed there.

"Drive on!" shouted Jimmy Silver breathlessly.

The car started.

Knowles lay for some moments, completely winded. He sat up at last, blinking and panting with rage. The car was gliding away.

Knowles staggered breathlessly to his feet and limped in pursuit.

"Stop!" he yelled.

"Good-bye, little yellow bird!" shrieked Raby.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stop, you young rascals! Stop, I tell you!" raved Knowles. "I'll skin you! I'll—I'll—"

The prefect halted, in a cloud of dust and a reek of petrol, behind the car. He could not overtake it.

Jimmy Silver waved his hand in farewell, and Knowles ground his teeth with rage. The car buzzed on merrily down the dusty road, and vanished round the bend. Knowles, trembling with rage, limped back to the gates.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

At the Races!

JIMMY SILVER did not speak as the car buzzed on down the long white road.

His brow was wrinkled in thought.

Everything seemed to be going first-rate for the Classical chums, and that thoughtful wrinkle in their leader's brow puzzled the Co. Lovell demanded the reason at last.

"What are you looking like a boiled owl about?" he demanded.

"Eh?"

"Thinking of the row when we get home?" asked Raby. "Knowles won't make a fuss. He knows Bulkeley wouldn't back him up in trying to collar our car, especially considering what he wanted it for."

"We're all right," said Lovell.

"Oh, I wasn't thinking of that!" said Jimmy.

"Then what's the trouble? We've got the grub all right—lots!"

"Blow the grub!"

"You haven't lost your fiver?" ejaculated Lovell, in alarm.

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"No, ass! I changed it in the tuck-shop, and I've got four quids quite safe. 'Tain't that!"

"Then what is it?" demanded the Co. with one voice.

Jimmy paused.

"Are you fellows specially set on the run, and the cinema, and the picnic?" he asked hesitatingly.

"That's what we've come out for, isn't it?" said Raby.

"Yes, but—"

"You don't mean to say that you're getting stingy in your old age?" said Lovell.

Jimmy flushed.

"You silly ass! It isn't that. The fiver belongs to the whole study."

"Well, I knew it wasn't that. I was only pulling your fatheaded leg!" chuckled Lovell. "But what do you want to give up the excursion for?"

"I don't want to," said Jimmy; "but—but I've got a feeling that we ought to. That idiot Smythe has gone to the races—that cad Gunter's got him to go. Knowles has spied it out, and he's after him. He'll phone for a taxi, or something. Anyway, he'll get after Smythe."

"Let him!"

"I know Smythe's doing wrong," said Jimmy, colouring. "I don't make any excuses for him. He's more of a fool than a rascal, though, you know that. And we don't want a Classical chap caught out and sacked from the school because of a prying and meddling Modern worm!"

"Well, no. But—"

"I tried to give Smythe a tip before he started, but he wouldn't listen. But—but I think we ought to warn him," said Jimmy. "Knowles may be along any time looking for him, and he'll find him as sure as a gun. Well, suppose we run in the car to where he is and tell him Knowles is after him?"

"To the races?" yelled Newcome.

Jimmy nodded.

"Why, it means a flogging or the sack if we're found out," said Lovell, aghast. "You know how down the Head is on such things, and if he found that a Rookwood chap had gone—well—"

Lovell finished with a whistle.

"I know," said Jimmy grimly. "It's a risk—a big risk. But we don't want a Classical chap sacked—even a rotter like Smythe. 'Tain't only that, either. It will be up against old Bulkeley if a Modern prefect does his work for him. If it was Bulkeley after Smythe, we couldn't very well interfere. But a Modern prefect has no right to chip in. And we know that Knowles bets on horses himself. He's only doing this to get a score over old Bulkeley, and I think it's up to us to stop him if we can."

"Bulkeley is a bit sleepy," said Raby. "I wouldn't own it to Tommy Dodd, but the old chap is a trifle too unsuspecting."

"No reason why Knowles should score over him."

"Oh, no. I'm game if the others are."

Lovell shrugged his shoulders.

"Jimmy means to have his way, anyway," he said. "In for a penny, in for a pound. Let's chance it."

"I don't want to drag you chaps into the risk, though," said Jimmy Silver anxiously. "If you'd like to drop out—"

"Rats!"

"I'd do it alone, and join you afterwards."

"Shut up!" roared Lovell.

Jimmy Silver grinned.

"All serene! I'll speak to the shover, then."

Jimmy put his head over, and talked to the chauffeur. That gentleman looked rather serious when his destination was indicated to him.

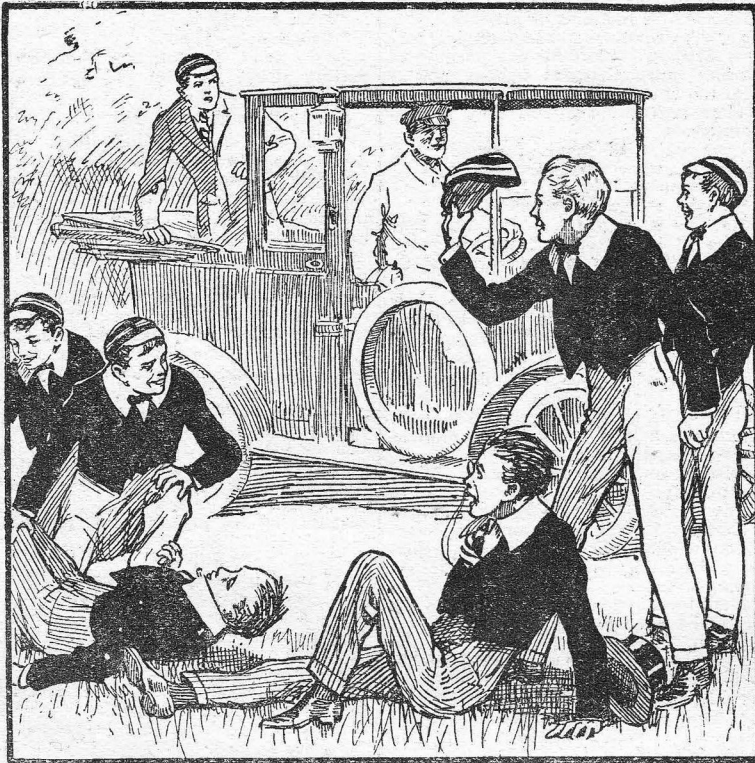
Jimmy Silver understood his thoughts, and hastened to reassure him.

THE POPULAR.—No. 151.

NEXT FRIDAY!

"RIVALS FOR THE CAPTAINCY!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. :: BY FRANK RICHARDS.



A taxicab came whirring up the road. Knowles, who was seated inside, jumped up at the sight of the crowd of panting juniors. Jimmy Silver raised his cap with great politeness. "Hullo, Knowles!" he said. "Going to the races? Naughty! Naughty!" (See Chapter 5.)

"It's all right," he said. "We're not going on the razzle, sonny. We're going to fetch back some of our chaps who are playing the giddy ox, and we're going to give them a hiding for giving us the trouble. We want to find a trap with four young rotters in it—one slovenly cad, and three idiots dressed up like tailors' dummies."

"Yes, sir," said the grinning chauffeur.

The car buzzed on again, taking a new direction for the racecourse, that lay about six miles from Coombe.

The Fistical Four were serious enough now.

They were running a big risk to save Smythe & Co. from the consequences of their own folly, and they knew it. Their intentions were excellent; but their excellent intentions would not have saved them from condign punishment if their escapade had come to Dr. Chisholm's knowledge.

The car was presently in the midst of a stream of vehicles all travelling in one direction, and crowds of pedestrians.

The crowded heath, with its shouting crowds and swarming stands, came in sight at last.

There the four juniors left the car. Jimmy Silver directed the chauffeur to wait for their return, and the Fistical Four plunged into the rowdy crowd in search of the trap that had taken Smythe & Co. there.

A loud roar announced the result of a race; the first "event" of the afternoon was over.

Lovell gave a shout.

"There they are!"

Jimmy Silver followed his pointing finger. In the ranked vehicles the trap

was to be seen with three fellows in it—Smythe and Tracy and Howard of the Shell.

The three young rascals had put on raincoats to conceal their Etons, but anyone could have seen that they were schoolboys.

They were standing up, straining their eyes to watch the next race, which was starting. Smythe was using a pair of silver-mounted field-glasses.

"Come on!" said Jimmy.

The Classical chums wormed their way through the crowd, and came up behind the trap, from which the horse had been taken. The three nuts of the Shell were too busy to notice them. They heard Smythe's voice as they came near. Gunter was not to be seen, and Jimmy wondered whether the nuts had joined him, after all.

"By gad, there he is!" Smythe was saying. "Three to one on Bonny Boy, Tracy!"

"Not takin' any deah boy!" said Tracy. "Bonny Boy's goin' to win!"

"Well, I've got three quid on him with Hook!" chuckled Smythe. "Hook didn't think he was a winner, with a stranger riding."

"What would the Head say if he could see his giddy nephew now?" said Howard.

The three nuts chuckled in chorus.

They were staring at the little bunch of starters, and the Classical Four, puzzled by their remarks, stared in the same direction. Then Jimmy Silver uttered almost a yell.

"Gunter!"

There he was—Gunter, once of the Fourth, sacked from Rookwood—Gunter, the nephew of the Head—in silver-and-

blue, sticking almost on the neck of a horse—among the other jockeys. Gunter was riding in the race!

"Gunter!" gasped Lovell. "Riding! Oh, my hat!"

There was a roar; the horses were "off." Smythe's field-glasses followed them anxiously. He had backed Gunter's horse to win. But the field-glasses left his eyes, and fell into the trap with a crash as he was suddenly jerked by the leg. He spun round, and sat down on Tracy.

"What the merry dickens!" stammered Smythe. "Oh! Jimmy Silver! Ha, ha, ha! So the good and spotless models of Rookwood have come to the races! Ha, ha, ha!"

"We've come to find you, you howling idiot!" said Jimmy Silver. "Knowles—"

Smythe suddenly left off grinning.

"Knowles!" he stammered.

"Yes, Knowles. He's spied it out somehow that you're here—"

"You young cad, you've sneaked about us!" shouted Smythe furiously.

Jimmy gave him a contemptuous look. "That's not the truth!" he said. "We know about it because Knowles wanted to take our car. If we'd let him have it, he'd have been here by now, and you'd have been spotted!"

"Oh, by gad!" mumbled Adolphus.

"As it is, he's coming just as fast as he can, and he may happen along any minute," said Jimmy Silver. "If you want to be caught here, and marched back to Rookwood by the scruff of your neck, and expelled in the morning, just stay where you are. We came to give you the tip—not that you deserve it, you blackguard! Come on, you chaps—let's get off. We don't want Knowles to see us here."

"I—I say, hold on!" panted Adolphus. Howard and Tracy were pale with terror now. The mere thought of being discovered there by a Rookwood prefect was more than enough to knock all the airy assurance out of the Giddy Goats.

Jimmy Silver took pity on the wretched nuts.

"Jump down, and come with us," he said. "We've got a car on the road, and we'll give you a run."

Smythe & Co fairly jumped at that generous offer. Hardly staying to snatch up his silver-mounted field-glasses, Smythe bundled out of the trap, and Tracy and Howard bundled after him. Keeping close to the Fistical Four, they squirmed a way through the crowd. As they left the heath, there was a roar—the race was over. A raucous yell announced that Bonny Boy had won. Gunter had ridden the winner. But Smythe did not dream of seeking Mr. Hook, and claiming his three quids and his winnings. He almost babbled with joy as the car was reached, and the juniors crowded into it.

"Let her rip!" he gasped. And the car buzzed away.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Licking for Throc!

"HALT!" sang out Jimmy Silver.

The racecourse had been left miles behind, and Smythe & Co. were recovering their nerve. They had not been spotted. Doubtless Knowles was on his way to the Coombe races, but Jimmy Silver had been in good time. He had saved the nuts of Rookwood. And as soon as the danger was over it was quite in accordance with Smythe's nature that he should assume a lofty and patronising air towards the juniors who had saved him.

"Dashed crowd in this car," the lofty Adolphus had remarked. "Do keep your boots away from my trousers, Newcome. You kids have such dusty boots." "Shouldn't wonder if it was a false alarm, after all," growled Tracy. "Those cheeky fags may only have been pullin' our leg."

It was then that Jimmy Silver called "Halt!"

The car stopped outside a roadside inn with a tea-garden. Jimmy Silver intended to have tea there. He also intended to rid himself of the egregious Smythe. He was quite fed up with Adolphus.

"Hallo! What are you stopping for?" asked Smythe. "This ain't Rookwood."

"Get out!" said Jimmy. "Yaas; we can get a lift home from here," remarked Smythe. "I don't like being crowded with fags, anyway."

The nuts stepped out. The Fistical Four followed them, looking grim.

"And now," said Jimmy Silver, tersely, "put up your hands."

Smythe jammed his eyeglass into his eye, and stared at him.

"What!" he ejaculated.

"You've acted the giddy goat and the rotten blackguard, and we've risked getting the sack to yank you out of the scrape," said Jimmy Silver. "Now we're going to give you a lesson. Put up your paws!"

"By gad!" If there was one thing the nuts of Rookwood didn't want to do, it was to put up their "paws" to the Fistical heroes of the Fourth. But they had no choice about the matter.

Jimmy Silver tackled Smythe, Lovell decided on Howard, and Raby started operations on Tracy. Newcome looked on; fair play was a jewel in the opinion of the Fistical Four, and they would not give the cads of the Shell anything else.

"Leave off!" roared Smythe. "Keep off, you young rotter! Oh gad! My nose! I'll smash you—yaroo! Oh dear! Yowp!"

Biff, biff, biff! Jimmy Silver & Co. were in deadly earnest. The risk they had run owing to Adolphus' rascality made them angry, and the nuts had to go through it.

Finding that there was no help for it, the Giddy Goats put up a fight. They did their best.

But the three elegant slackers of the Shell had no chance. They were knocked right and left.

In three minutes Smythe and Howard and Tracy were on the ground, and they refused for any consideration whatever to get off it.

"Wow-wow!" mumbled Adolphus.

"Hallo!" roared Raby. "Knowles, by thunder!"

A taxicab came whirring up the road. Knowles of the Sixth was seated in it, evidently on his way to the races. Knowles jumped as he caught sight of the juniors in the road before the inn.

Jimmy Silver raised his cap politely to the Modern prefect.

"Hallo, Knowlesey! Going to the races?" he asked pleasantly. "Naughty! Naughty!"

But Knowles was staring at the nuts, who sat up and stared back at him. Much as they had suffered at the Fourth-Former's hands, Smythe & Co. were devoutly thankful that they were there, and not on the racecourse. They could almost forgive the licking as they realised what they had been saved from.

"Smythe!" stammered Knowles. "Tracy! Howard! I—I thought—" "Oh, by gad!" stammered Smythe. "G-g-g-good-afternoon, Knowles!"

"Have you been to the races?" shouted Knowles.

"Races!" said Smythe. "What races?"

"The Coombe races."

"Do they have races at Coombe?" asked Smythe innocently.

Knowles almost choked. He felt that his prying into Classical affairs had led him astray for once. He was en route for the races, to catch the Giddy Goats in the act—and, lo and behold, here they were, "scrapping" with Jimmy Silver, five miles at least from the racecourse! Knowles felt that he was beaten. This time, at least, he would not score over the captain of Rookwood.

He scowled savagely at the juniors, and muttered something to his driver, and the taxi swung round, and whirred back the way it had come. The meeting outside the inn had saved Knowles a journey; but he was not grateful. He was grinding his teeth as the taxi drove away.

Jimmy Silver chuckled gleefully. "What a disappointment for Knowlesey!" he remarked. "Life is full of giddy disappointments, my sons! 'Do they have races at Coombe?' Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha! Do they?" roared Lovell. Adolphus Smythe grinned as he dabbed his streaming nose.

The others rubbed their eyes, they mopped their noses, and they caressed their ears, and they scowled.

The Fistical Four watched them cheerfully. They were ready to give Adolphus & Co. some more, if Adolphus & Co. wanted any more.

But Adolphus & Co. didn't. They had had enough.

"Let's get out of this, you fellows," said Adolphus. "Let's get away from

these young hooligans, for goodness' sake!"

And the nuts tramped away on the road to the village.

"Now for tea!" chuckled Jimmy Silver. "Tain't been such a rotten afternoon, after all. Knowles has been done in the eye, and Smythe's had a lesson. Let's hope it will do him good. Now for a feed!"

The Fistical Four, in a cheerful mood, sat down to tea on the grassy bank beside the road, with fresh tea from the inn, and an endless supply of tuck from the basket in the car. The afternoon's excursion was, after all, a success.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Gunter's Little Game!

CLATTER, clatter, clatter! "Hallo! Somebody in a hurry!" said Lovell.

Jimmy Silver & Co. had finished tea, and were discussing their next move, when that sudden clatter was heard on the hard ground.

The Classical chums glanced along the dusty highway.

A trap, with a handsome horse between the shafts, was dashing at a reckless speed along the road. The juniors recognised Adolphus Smythe's "turn-out," which the nuts had abandoned in their hasty departure from the racecourse, and they recognised the lad who was driving. It was Gunter!

He came up to the inn with a terrific clatter, and dragged in the almost foaming horse as he caught sight of the Classical chums.

"Whoa!" yelled Gunter. "Hallo, you galoots!"

"Hallo, you bounder!" said Jimmy Silver.

He looked curiously at Gunter. It was the first time he had seen the Head's nephew since the latter had been expelled from Rookwood.

"Fancy meetin' you!" grinned Gunter, holding in the snorting horse and looking down on the Rookwood juniors. "What a happy meetin'! How are you getting on at Rookwood? Same old slow and sleepy shebang—what!"

"Well, we're not mourning for you, anyway!" snapped Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha! I guess I was glad to get out; the place would have bored me to death if I'd stuck it out much longer," said Gunter. "It was a game while it lasted, but I guess I couldn't have stood it much longer. I reckon I'm on to something better now—just a few!"

"Riding in races," said Raby, with a curl of the lip.

"You've seen me!" grinned Gunter.

(Continued on the next page.)

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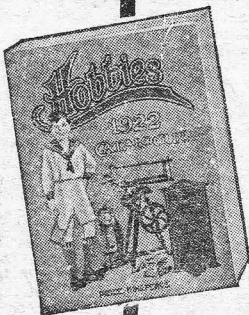
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"So you've been there—you, the spotless and immaculate models of Rookwood! Ha, ha, ha! Did you see anything of my pals, Smythe and his set? I've lost them."

"We saw you," said Jimmy Silver. "And we got Smythe & Co. to clear off. They've gone home to Rookwood. There was a prefect after them."

Gunter roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess I'm fixed in Coombe," he said. "I've got friends there—the merry galoos at the Bird-in-Hand. We have a roaring time, you bet. I guess I'm there to make my beloved uncle squirm—see? He kicked me out of Rookwood. But I calculate I'm not going back to the States—not much. I'm going to stick in Coombe, and paint the town red, and make his name and mine the talk of the neighbourhood."

The Fistical Four glared at Gunter. They had guessed that this was his motive in "planting" himself near the school—revenge upon the Head for sacking him, and upon Rookwood generally by bringing disgrace on the school.

The expressions upon the faces seemed to amuse Gunter. He roared with merriment.

"You can put that in your pipe and smoke it!" he chuckled. "You don't get rid of me so easily. I'm a stickler!"

Jimmy Silver looked at him steadily. The thought was in his mind of the fragment of the letter from America, which had turned up in the waste-paper basket in the end study.

"You may get shifted," he said quietly.

Gunter laughed.

"Who's goin' to shift me?" he demanded.

"The police, perhaps."

Gunter stared at him.

"Oh, come off!" he ejaculated. "I guess they can't touch me. I rather reckon I'm too cute to give them the chance."

"Suppose," said Jimmy Silver deliberately—"suppose they found out that your front name is Sam, and not Robert at—"

Gunter started violently.

"Then they might suspect that your surname isn't Gunter!" said Jimmy Silver. "You might be lagged as an impostor."

"By gum!" said Gunter, staring blankly at Jimmy. "By hokey! I guess—" He broke off with a reckless laugh. "But you're bluffing. You don't know anythin'; you're only bluffing! You can't scare me worth a cent."

The next instant the whip fell across the horse, and the animal started with a leap, and the trap clattered away down the road, Gunter brandishing the whip and yelling with laughter.

"So he's staying in Coombe!" said Lovell.

Jimmy Silver's eyes glittered.

"He's not going to be allowed to keep on!" he said. "The Head can't deal with him, but it's up to us, my infants. Gunter is going to have the whopping of his life, and he's going to be turned out of Coombe!"

It certainly sounded like a big order. But the Co. did not argue; Jimmy Silver had made up his mind. And when the Fistical Four came home to Rookwood there was a solemn and serious "pow-wow" in the end study to discuss the plan of campaign. It was Jimmy Silver against Gunter, and it remained to be seen which would have the upper hand.

THE END.

(For particulars of next week's story see "Chat" page.)

THE POPULAR.—No. 151.

NEXT FRIDAY!

"GOING FOR GUNTER!"

A Splendid Extra-Long Instalment of Sidney Drew's Greatest Story!

THE INVISIBLE RAIDER!

BY SIDNEY DREW

A Magnificent New Serial of Adventure, introducing FERRERS LORD and PRINCE CHING LUNG.



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FERRERS LORD, the famous millionaire adventurer, and owner of the Lord of the Deep. PRINCE CHING LUNG, a very old friend of Lord's, who has accompanied the millionaire on many adventures.

GAN WAGA, an Eskimo, who belongs to the crew of the yacht, and who is ever on the look-out to play japes on his shipmates. Greatly attached to Ching Lung.

RUPERT THURSTON, a young Englishman, and friend of Lord's.

HAL HONOUR, known as the man of silence, engineer of Ferrers Lord's wonderful submarine. Honour has invented a marvellous paint which causes things to become invisible when painted with it. He has also built a new kind of aeroplane which he calls a helicopter; and which is covered with this new paint, but which is destroyed by

KARL VON KREIGLER, a mysterious professor, who has great power in Germany, and who holds the secret of Germany's great treasure-chest. Ferrers Lord has ferreted out one or two of the professor's secrets, and Von Kreigler realises that Lord is a very dangerous man. After this attack, Ferrers Lord despatches Rupert Thurston, with Honour and Ching Lung, with a message to Kreigler.

They are detained, but escape, after many exciting adventures. In the underground passages of the Schloss Schwartzburg, where they have been imprisoned, they discover a great treasure which Von Kreigler has been hiding from the Allies.

Thurston & Co. return to the yacht, where Ferrers Lord has been waiting for them.

The yacht returns to England again, and Ferrers Lord & Co. set about building a new aeroplane.

Von Kreigler holds a council at the general's house, and arranges a ball to hide his movements. But Ferrers Lord discovers the plot, and with Ching Lung, Honour, and Thurston pays the Supreme Council a surprise visit, clothed in their invisible robes. At Lord's sudden entry into the chamber, the council are speechless with amazement.

(Now read on.)

Kidnapped!

FERRERS LORD'S eyebrows narrowed. One of the shadowy figures extended an open cigarette-case to the millionaire, but he shook his head and pushed the case aside.

"It was not my intention to deal very harshly with you three," he said, after a pause. "I am quite aware that you were not at Schloss Schwartzburg, but you are arrant liars if you say that you do not know the true facts, if you tell me that your only information of the crime comes from the document sent to the British commanding officer, which is a tissue of plausible and cunning lies. Perhaps his Excellency has something to tell me. Come, professor, find your tongue!"

"It was not our fault," said the professor slowly. "When your friends broke out of their prison we offered them an honourable surrender. They refused, and attacked the soldiers we sent in pursuit. We were very patient. It was your friends who set fire to the Schloss, and by doing so exploded the magazine."

"In that case, I seem to be greatly in the wrong," said Ferrers Lord. "I admit that when in a corner my poor friends were perfectly capable of doing desperate things. But I have something against you, my dear professor. Whether my emissaries lived or died made no difference there. By Mr. Rupert Thurston I sent you a certain letter. That you duly received, and read the instructions it contained. They were definite and unmistakable. Instead of carrying them out, you threatened to shoot three men who were perfectly innocent of everything in the world except that they were doing my bidding. Why were those instructions not carried out?"

"Ach, because you demanded the impossible!" said Von Kreigler wearily. "The terms of the Allies are impossible; but do

not deceive yourself, Herr Ferrers Lord, yours were beyond that; they were preposterous and ridiculous!"

"So preposterous and so ridiculous that they cost three valuable lives. Do men murder them for something that is only preposterous and ridiculous?"

Professor Karl von Kreigler licked his dry lips. He seemed to have grown years older in a few minutes.

"Ach, must I repeat till I am weary that it was an accident?" he said.

"Then the document you sent to British Headquarters is true to the letter."

"Ach, yes—true to the letter! It was not our fault and we regret it. Your friends came to the Schloss uninvited. They brought it upon themselves."

"And it is also true that you could not follow out the terms of my letter?" said Ferrers Lord, in an icy voice. "Think well before you answer, Excellency."

"A mad letter—a preposterous demand!" said Von Kreigler, clenching his hands. "You might just as well ask a beggar to fill your pockets with gold. I am not foolish enough to tell you that we are not doing the best for ourselves to obtain easier terms from the Allies. Who would not do so? I do not deny that we might pay more than we are offering. Every man tries to do the best for himself, and with nations it is the same. But you asked an absurdity."

The millionaire laughed.

"I am not at all convinced that the death of my friends was due to accident," he said, after a pause. "I am going to assume, cruel and brutal though you may think it, that they were murdered at Schloss Schwartzburg. Even the most callous assassin will not commit murder for an absurdity, my dear professor. If they were murdered, it was from some motive. The murderers were taking great risks. An elaborate scheme had to be devised to hide the crime, and at devising schemes, professor, you have few equals. I am quite sure you are not in favour of murder, but one takes desperate chances in desperate cases. What was the motive? What had you to hide? What is the secret of Schloss Schwartzburg? What had my friends seen there that was of such tragic

(Continued on page 18.)

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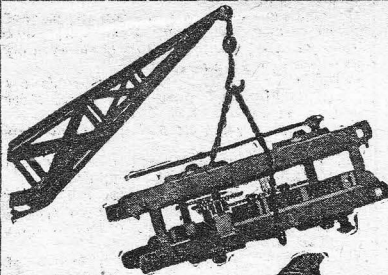
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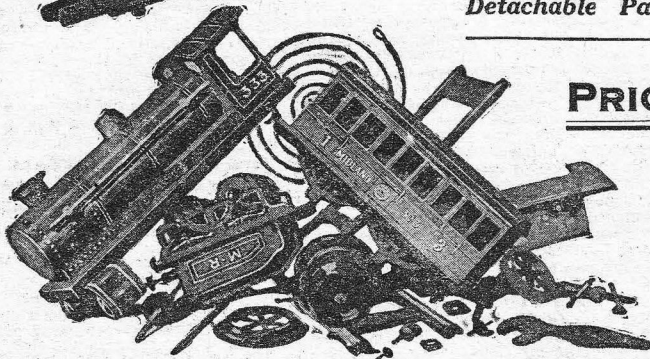
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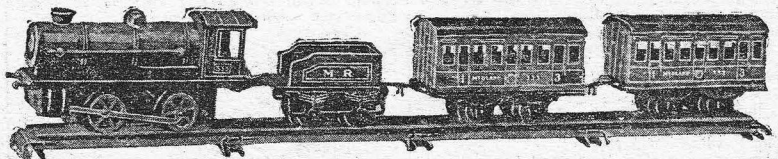
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THE INVISIBLE RAIDER!

(Continued from page 16.)

importance to you and General Goltzheim that death had to seal their lips? Give me your answer to that, Professor von Kreigler."

Ferrers Lord turned his steel grey eyes on the general. He saw Goltzheim's red, fleshy throat swell. Perspiration gleamed on the man's purple forehead.

"Do not deceive yourself, Herr Ferrers Lord," said Von Kreigler. "There is to that but one answer, and the answer is nothing—nothing at all."

Again one of the shadowy figures held out the cigarette-case, and this time the millionaire accepted a cigarette and lighted it.

"As a diplomatist, professor, you are as successful as any man in Europe," said Ferrers Lord, "but, face to face with me, you are a poor liar! Schloss Schwartzburg has a secret. Perhaps, of course, it may be unknown to you and to your friend the general—truly a strange state of affairs. Honour!"

The engineer lifted the black mask that covered the upper portion of his face. With a groan, Karl von Kreigler covered his spectacled eyes with both hands; and the general, as he glared haggardly at the burly engineer, gasped like an over-ridden horse.

"Tie up those three fellows," said Ferrers Lord. "The servants will find them and release them when they come to turn out the lights. We don't call those men gallant patriots who are robbing their country. Gag them, or they may raise enough courage to shout."

The two shadowy figures advanced. They had come prepared with straps and gags, and there was no resistance. And the band was playing a merry fox-trot in the ball-room below. Hal Honour took a step forward and placed himself before the general. From his pocket he took a roll of cloth and shook it out. When unfolded it was a cloak with a hood, amply big enough to cover the general. Honour pointed to the spurred jack-boots.

"Off!" he grunted.

Goltzheim was a terrified and beaten man. His red moustache was limp, and all his Prussian bluster and braggadocio had oozed out of him. When he had dragged off his boots, the engineer threw a pair of socks at him and said "On!" And General Goltzheim obeyed him. Even when Honour gagged him he did not struggle. He could not understand himself. The cloak was thrown over his shoulders and the hood drawn down over his perspiring face.

"Go!" said Hal Honour, and dug the muzzle of the automatic pistol into the small of the general's back.

By this time Professor Karl von Kreigler had also been converted into a shadow. Two other shadows—they were Ching Lung and Rupert Thurston—took charge of him. Ferrers Lord led the way. It was supper-time, and the dancers had trooped into the banqueting-room. Down the wide, brightly carpeted staircase moved the shadows. A few of the general's guests still lingered in the garden, but the shadows passed on unseen to the brink of the river above the lawn where stately trees grew at the edge of the water and flung dense, black shadows across the stream.

"All safe!" cried Ching Lung softly, and whistled.

"All safe, by honey!" answered Prout's voice. "We've got two boats. Did you bring any luggage with you sir?"

"Two bundles, Tom," said the Prince, with a chuckle. "One is a pretty heavy one, and Hal has charge of that. Gently, your Excellency, if you please! Let me take your arm, for the bank is steep just here, and it's abominably dark, though not so dark as the labyrinths of Schloss Schwartzburg."

"Nor as dangerous, Ching," said Rupert Thurston. "A beastly, uncomfortable place you made Schloss Schwartzburg for us, professor. What with flood and fire and machine-gun bullets and explosions, you kept us quite busy. And if you're behind us with the general, Hal," he added, "go steady. Don't drop him on us!"

The broad, gentle-flowing river had been left unguarded. The general cursed inwardly when he realised that these bold and successful

ful raiders had come by boat. Not that he had seen any reason for guarding his house at all. That had been Von Kreigler's idea, but the professor had the English millionaire on the brain, and Goltzheim had come to look upon him as a nervous fool. Goltzheim had brought out his troops and police more for show than because he thought there was any danger. Now, when he found himself thrust unceremoniously into a boat, and was ordered to sit down and sit still, he realised that he was wrong, and that Von Kreigler was right. Oars rose and fell and the boat slipped swiftly downstream, and the coloured lights of the garden faded out.

"Easy all, by honey!" growled Prout, standing up to peer ahead. "We may be right a-top of her, but she's as hard to find nearly as a ten-shilling note the day before pay day. She is at the back of the island. Right, I see where I am now, by honey! Pull hard enough to make the friction set her keel a-fire."

"Before you do that let me get my feet athwart, please," said Ching Lung. "I'm only wearing my invisible socks, and I don't want my feet blistered!"

Under the Sea!

IF Professor Karl von Kreigler and General Goltzheim had been true patriots they might well have wept for their country, that is if they had destined the vast wealth of Schloss Schwartzburg to be spent in Germany's welfare on some future day. Perhaps there was some such idea at the back of their heads, but not until they had helped themselves very liberally. They were strangely different in character. The professor loved power, but he loved to hide in the background and exercise that power without notoriety, while nothing pleased the general more than to strut in the full glare of the limelight and beat the big drum. As far as brains went, Von Kreigler was a giant and Goltzheim was a miserable dwarf.

Both men had only a hazy idea of what had really happened since those ghostlike shadows had entered the council chamber. One terrific thought had crushed the lesser details out of their minds. Ferrers Lord had learned the secret of the treasure vault of Schloss Schwartzburg; the dead had come back to life to tell the story of that Aladdin's cave, and all was lost. They were betrayed and ruined.

In the darkness they were dragged out of the boat. Unseen hands removed their cloaks and the general's gag, for they had not gagged the professor. They were still in utter darkness, and strange humming noises sounded in their ears. Then came the click of an electric-switch, and for a moment or two the light dazzled them.

"Kidnapped!" said the general, staring round him. "We are on an airship!"

They were in a small cabin. The walls were decorated with panels of blue and gold tapestry, and the two luxurious armchairs bore the initials "F.L." in a monogram. Under their feet was a thick, spongy carpet, and the electroliner overhead with four opal-shaded lights was of burnished silver. On the rose-wood table in the centre of the cabin stood a decanter of water and a glass. Without his jack-boots and the great sabre he was so fond of rattling, the general, in spite of his gorgeous uniform and his numerous medals, ribbons, and crosses, did not look a very warlike figure. His hair was ruffled, and the crispness had left his moustache.

He gulped down two-thirds of the contents of the decanter, and scowled at the professor, who was huddled in one of the chairs.

"We are on an airship, I tell you!" he said again. "Don't you hear the hum of her engines? That swine-pig of an Englishman has kidnapped us, do you hear?"

"Do not deceive yourself. I both hear and know," said the professor. "We are beaten and ruined, but I am not a murderer. They are alive, these three men, all of them, for I recognised the voices of the prince and Mr. Thurston. At least, we are not murderers. As all is lost but that, I am glad they are alive, very glad!"

"Glad they are alive! Ten thousand fends! If all is lost, then I wish the interfering hounds had been lost, too! Why should you be glad, you fool?"

(There will be another long, thrilling instalment of our grand adventure serial next week.)

A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR!

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. Address: The Editor, The "Popular," The Fleetway House, Farringdon St., London, E.C.4.

FOR NEXT FRIDAY!

Next week's grand, complete story of the Greyfriars chums is entitled:

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In our next issue there will also be a fine supplement, "Billy Bunter's Weekly," which the fat editor has called a Special Shopping Number. There's fun in that, let me warn you, and there's bound to be a rush for the next issue of the "Popular." Get your order for a copy placed right away!

"POPLETS" COMPETITION No. 46.

Examples for this week:

Rival Captains.	Christmas Day.
Money Makes Money.	Almost Unbelievable.
Past and Present.	Bunter Wants Doctor.
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Select two of the examples, and make up a sentence of TWO, THREE, or FOUR words having some bearing on the example. ONE of the words in your sentence must commence with one of the letters in the example.

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2. The postcards must be addressed "Poptets," No. 46, The "Popular," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4.

3. No correspondence may be entered into in connection with "Poptets."

4. The Editor's opinion on any matter which may arise is to be accepted as final and legally binding. This condition will be strictly enforced, and readers can only enter the competition on this understanding.

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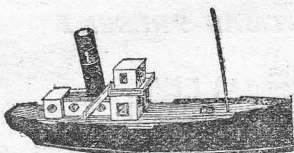
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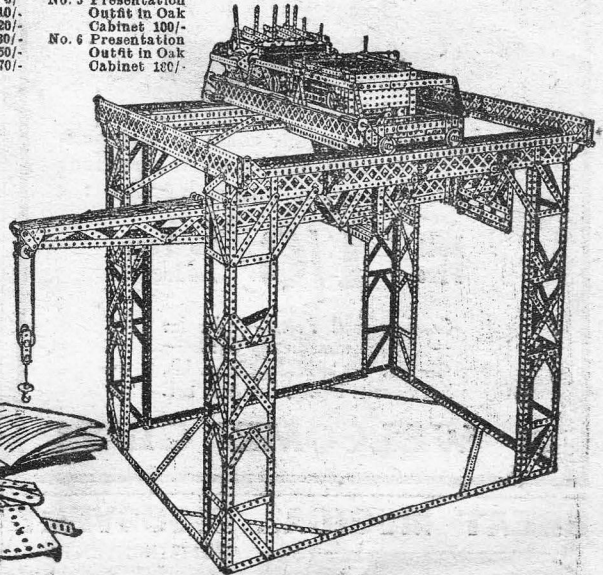
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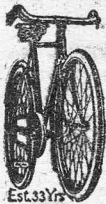
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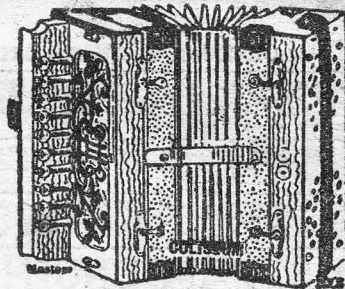
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