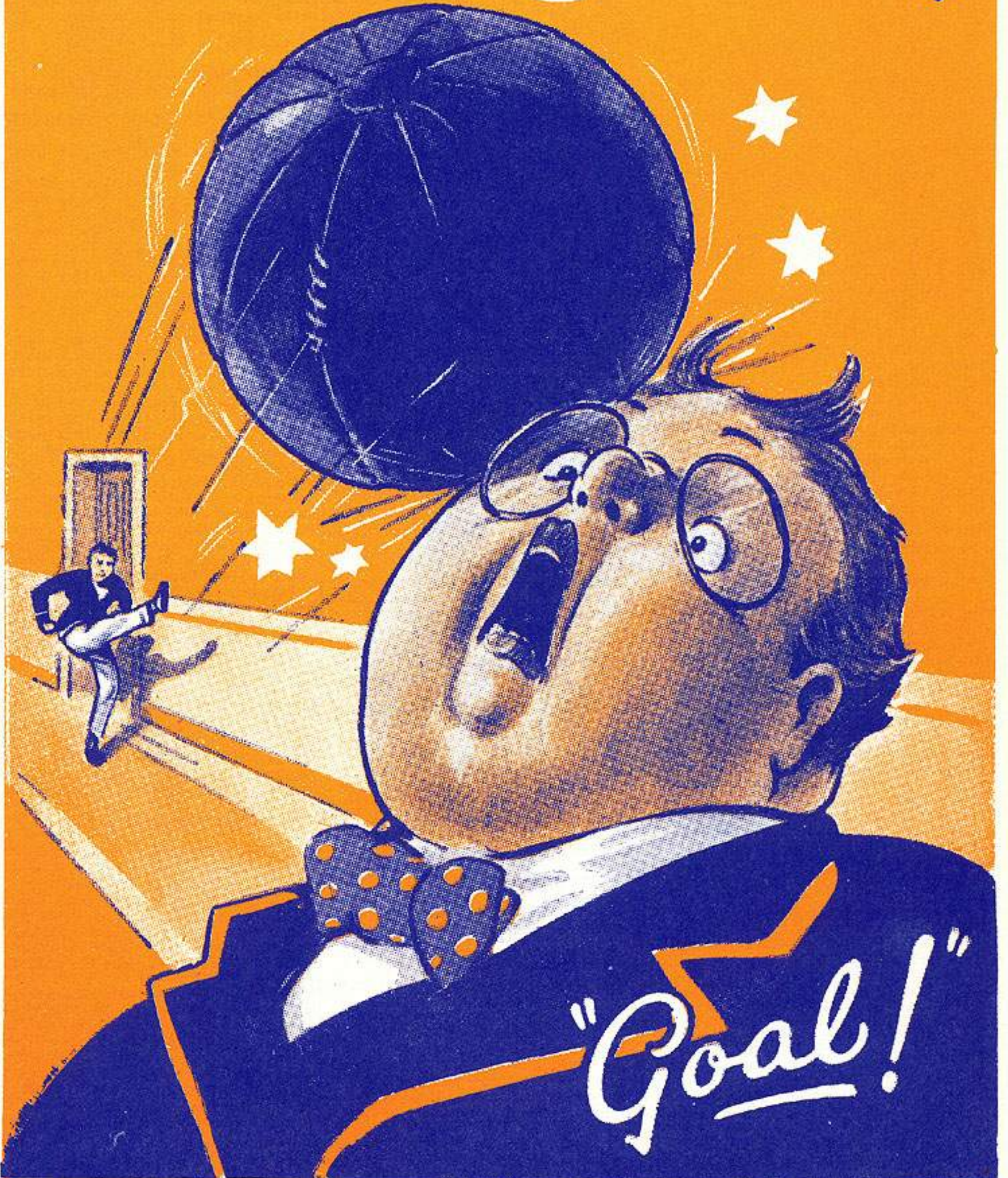


BILLY BUNTER and **HARRY WHARTON & Co.** in Another Exciting **School Adventure!**

The Magnet ^{1/2}_D



Come Into the Office, Boys—and Girls!

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. Write to him: Editor of the "Magnet," The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. A stamped addressed envelope will ensure a reply.



THE first letter in my postbag this week comes from "Inquirer," of Swansea. His query concerns

RAILWAY SPEED RECORDS.

As you all know, a little while ago a train of the London and North Eastern Railway broke all existing speed records by putting up the extremely fine performance of 108 miles per hour. "Inquirer" asks me if I can tell him something about how this compares with "crack" trains in other parts of the world.

The previous fastest speed to this was put up by a G.W.R. engine, which travelled at 102 m.p.h., between Plymouth and Paddington. The Cheltenham Flier averages over 71 m.p.h. on its regular runs. The streamlined American Diesel train, Zephyr, maintained an average of 77 m.p.h. on a trip from Denver to Chicago last year. The Flying Hamburger, running on oil, runs between Berlin and Hamburg at a speed of over 77 m.p.h. and touches 100 m.p.h. at times. The fastest electrified train speed is reached on the Paris-Orleans railway, in France, with 93 miles per hour.

But so rapidly are our railways increasing their speeds that it is quite possible that all the above may be eclipsed in a very short space of time.

Have you ever heard of

"ROOF-TOP RABBITS"?

One of my Swansea readers has heard the expression, and wonders what it means. Well, during the siege of Paris, when food was extremely scarce, people ate all manner of things—even domestic animals. Some bright spark hit upon the idea of serving cats as food; but, as the idea of eating a cat was not particularly relished, the poor animal was re-christened a "roof-top rabbit!" Incidentally, do you know that ox-tail was never used as a food until the siege of Paris? Previous to that, ox-tails had always been discarded by butchers, but the people of Paris were so hungry that they started eating the tails—and discovered them to be very palatable. So if it hadn't been for the siege, no one would have sampled ox-tail soup.

AT a recent exhibition in London, I saw some of the

WONDERS OF MODERN TELEGRAPHY,

which might interest my readers. Do you know that it is possible to send a message to New York and receive a reply within two minutes? This is made possible by the Beam wireless services. Furthermore, not only photographs can be sent by wireless, but also facsimiles of writing, so that it is possible for a person's ordinary handwriting to be sent by this method.

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One of the most remarkable achievements in the history of telegraphy was the sending of a film from Australia. The film was transmitted picture by picture, and the whole thing was completed in a few hours, and subsequently shown in cinemas all over this country. Before long it will be possible for a film that is "shot" in Hollywood to be sent to Britain almost immediately, and to be printed in this country within a few hours of its printing in America.

In response to many requests from readers, I am giving a few more

THINGS YOU'D HARDLY BELIEVE.

Gold has Been Recovered from Dust! The dust in a factory in America was found to contain minute particles of gold. By means of vacuum cleaners, all the dust was extracted from the oaken floors in which it was embedded, and gold to the value of over £500 was recovered. The factory had once been used for jewel-making, and all this wealth had remained in the dust for years.

Coffee is Bright Red in Colour! When they are gathered, coffee berries are red. It is only after being sorted, shelled, and dried for two weeks that they turn brown.

The Oyster that Swallowed a Fish! A fish attacked an oyster. The oyster promptly "swallowed" the fish by closing its shell. But the fish had its revenge, and ate the oyster. But it couldn't get out of the shell, and it remained there until a fisherman found the shell, opened it—and discovered the fish!

The Shortest Letters Ever Written! Victor Hugo, the famous French author, wrote to his publisher to inquire about his book "Les Misérables." This was what he wrote—"!". Their reply was—"!".

A Snake Can Fly! A very rare snake, found only in Java and Malaysia can flatten itself out like a ribbon, and fly from tree to tree. Attempts have been made to bring specimens of this snake to England, but they have always died in transit.

Two and Two Make Three-and-Four-Fifths! If you mix two quarts of alcohol and two quarts of water, a contraction of volume takes place, and the mixture becomes about four per cent less than the total amount you have mixed.

A READER from South Wales writes to ask me

WHAT IS A COFFERDAM?

It is a water-tight enclosure, used in laying foundations of bridges, piers, and so on. But you will also find cofferdams in oil-carrying steamers. In this case it is a compartment which runs the whole breadth of the ship, cutting off the cargo from the boiler rooms. Oil, being extremely inflammable, must not be

allowed to be heated over a certain point, and if the oil tanks were near the boiler rooms, an explosion might result. Therefore, the cofferdam is filled with water, which absorbs the heat from the boiler room, and thus prevents it from getting to the cargo.

A Dorsetshire reader puts the following query to me:

WAS STONEHENGE BUILT BY THE DRUIDS?

Many people believe that it was, but there is no valid reason for supposing that. Stonehenge belongs to an epoch far earlier than any Druidism of which record remains. It is estimated that Stonehenge was built as long ago as 1700 B.C., or in Neolithic times. The Druids used Stonehenge, but it was standing there long before they arrived. Probably the question as to who actually built Stonehenge will never be satisfactorily answered.

Just to finish off my little chat, I will give a few more interesting facts about

SURNAMES AND THEIR MEANINGS.

Bishop. This name does not always mean that the original bearer of it was actually a bishop. Many names like this were given to the men who played parts in the old miracle plays, and the surname "Bishop" could have been handed down by the man who played that character.

Salter indicates that its first bearer was a trader in salt. But it is also derived from the Latin *saltare*, meaning to dance. So the first Salter might have been a dancer.

Stoff is an old English name and is derived from "stot," meaning a stallion or a bullock. Its original owner must have been a pretty hefty fellow.

Chaplin is derived from "caplin" or "capeline," a skull-cap which was worn by knights in the middle ages. Thus the first Chaplin was most probably a knight.

Todd originally meant a fox. "Todhunter," therefore, is a fox-hunter.

Parker was a man who kept the woods and game in order. Park and Parkman are other variations of the same name.

Hawker meant a man who was in charge of hawks, or who dealt in them. Hawke and Hawkes are variations of the name.

Falconer is a similar name to the above, but means that its original bearer was connected with falcons. Sometimes, however, it is derived from Fule, which was the name of the Dukes of Anjou.

And now for next week's tip-top programme. Frank Richards can always be depended upon to produce the finest of all boys' stories, and next week's long complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, is no exception. It is entitled:

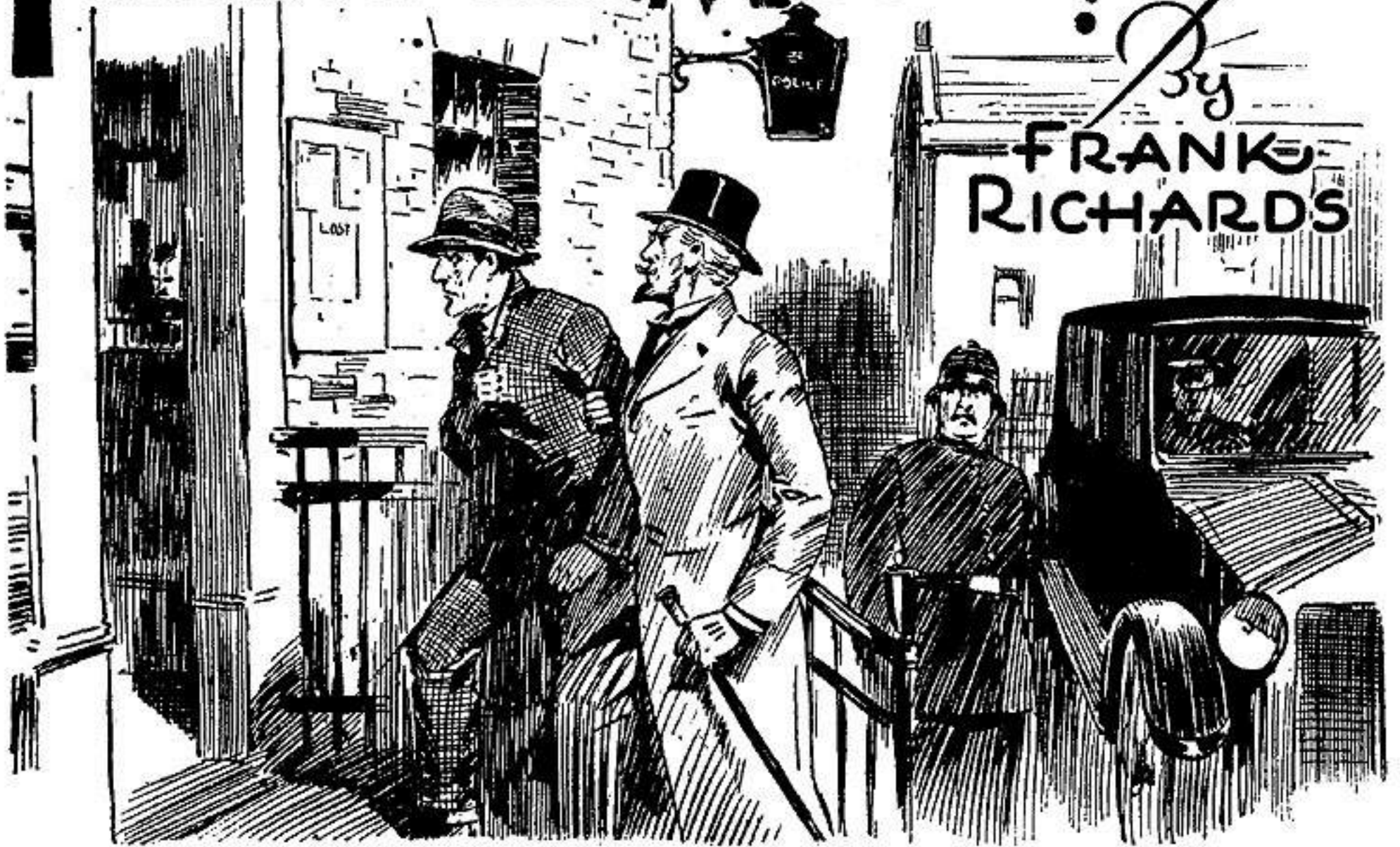
"QUELCH'S EASTER EGG!"

and if any other author can pack more fun and amusement—not to mention a proportion of thrills in any one story, I should like to meet him and shake him by the hand! It's a great yarn, chums, and it is well backed up by our other splendid features. Order your copy in advance, and don't run the risk of the MAGNET being sold out!

There are exciting situations galore in next week's chapters of "The Sea Spider!" The "Greyfriars Herald" supplement is a real corker, too. Next comes "Linesman's" interesting Soccer talk. In addition to all this there will be the first of a grand new feature under the heading of "Greyfriars Interviews," by the Greyfriars rhymester. Could you wish for a bigger and brighter two-pennyworth? I'll say no!

YOUR EDITOR.

FACING *the* MUSIC!



—HARRY WHARTON & CO., THE CHEERY CHUMS OF GREYFRIARS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Mysterious Motorist!

"A NY port in a storm!" said Bob Cherry.

"But—" murmured Harry Wharton.

"Where's the harm?"

"Nowhere, but—"

"Want to get wetter?"

"No, fathead; but—"

The Famous Five, of the Greyfriars Remove, came to a halt. They stood, damp and dismal and uncomfortable in pouring rain.

The April sky had been bright and fair when they started on a ramble after class. But April weather was a little unreliable.

April showers they did not mind. But this was not a shower. It was a down-pour.

And they were a good mile from the school. To save time, they had taken a short cut, by a narrow lane that wound through Friardale Wood. In that narrow lane it was surprising to see a car parked.

But there it was! Somebody had left his car there—a little green Austin. There was no shelter at hand—the weeping branches offered little or none. The Greyfriars juniors were wet, and getting wetter. There was only one dry spot in the whole vicinity—and that was the interior of the car! Hence Bob's suggestion that they should take refuge in it, and wait for the rain to stop!

"Why not?" demanded Bob warmly. "It won't do the car any harm to sit in it, I suppose! Cars were made to be sat in."

"But—" said Harry again.

He looked up and down the muddy lane. There was no sign of the owner of the car. Why it was parked there

was quite a mystery. Unless some lover of Nature had left it there while he went for a ramble in the spring-scented woods! But in that case, surely he would have hurried back to its shelter when the downpour came on. Anyhow, there it was, and Bob's hand was already on the door handle.

"After all, the motorist won't mind if he comes back and spots us in his car!" said Frank Nugent. "Why should he?"

"The whyfulness is terrific!" assented Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"Not if he's a decent chap!" said Johnny Bull.

FROM FATHER—

"If you are GUILTY, I have no desire to save you! But if you are NOT GUILTY face the police like a man!"

—TO SON

"If we could see him and ask permission—" said Harry Wharton.

"But we can't!"

Bob opened the door. There was not much room for five fellows in the little Austin. Still, it was possible to cram in.

Bob Cherry settled the matter by getting in. Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh followed him, and then Frank Nugent—then Johnny Bull.

"Staying out in the rain, old bean?" asked Bob, with a grin.

"Well, I'd rather have asked leave," said Wharton. "But, after all, there's no harm done if we sit in the car for a bit."

And he crammed in after his friends and shut the door.

There was no doubt that it was much pleasanter inside the car. The rain beat down on the roof with a noise like hailstones. The windows were misty with it. Little rivulets of rain ran down the lane. It was coming on thicker and thicker. Friardale Wood, so pleasant and sweet-scented an hour ago, was a weeping wilderness.

"After all, it won't last long!" remarked Harry Wharton. "We may be clear before the man comes back! Can't imagine why he's left his car here."

"Bit of luck for us that he did!" said Nugent.

"Yes; but it's odd."

It certainly was odd. No motorist who knew the neighbourhood would have thought of getting his car through that narrow, winding, rutty lane, little more than a cart-track. And a motorist who did not know the neighbourhood could hardly have known that the lane was there at all.

However, odd as it was, the chums of the Remove were glad of the shelter. Harder and harder the rain beat on the roof.

Wharton rubbed a space clear on the misty glass, to watch for the return of the motorist. No doubt the man would be surprised, when he came, to find his car packed full. Immediate explanation and apology would be due; and Wharton could only hope that the owner of the car would prove to be a good-tempered and good-natured man. If he turned out otherwise, the situation would be a little awkward.

But the April rainstorm, though fierce, was short-lived. The heavy beating on the roof diminished to a light patter. The torrents ceased to

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dash down on the muddy earth. A glimmer of sunshine came through the banks of clouds over Friardale Wood.

"Hallo, somebody's coming!" said Harry Wharton suddenly.

The figure of a man appeared in sight, coming up the lane with swift strides. He reached the car almost as soon as Wharton spotted him.

That he was the owner of the car was clear, for he stopped as soon as he reached it, and turned towards it.

From inside, the Greyfriars fellows had a clear view of him—a man who looked about forty, with a short, black beard, and a curly, black moustache, that gave him a foreign look. He wore gold-rimmed glasses, that glimmered under a Homburg hat pulled low.

That he had been out in the rain was evident, for his light coat dripped with water, his hat was drenched; also, there was an extremely bad-tempered expression on his face. He did not, as Wharton had hoped, look a good-tempered or good-natured man!

Obviously, he was unaware that anyone was in the car. He pulled the door open quickly, and gave a jump at the sight of five faces looking at him from the interior.

"Sorry, sir!" said Harry Wharton, colouring. "It was rather a cheek, I suppose, but finding the car here we took shelter from the rain."

"The sorrowfulness is terrific, esteemed sahib!" declared Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"We're ready to get out!" added Nugent.

The motorist did not speak.

He stared at the Greyfriars juniors, not through, but over the gold-rimmed glasses on his nose.

It seemed to the puzzled juniors that there was recognition in his look; though they were certain that they had never seen the black-bearded man before.

Whether he knew the schoolboys by sight or not, it was plain that the man was savagely angry at finding them in his car.

He opened his lips as if for an outburst of angry words. But before he had uttered a word he seemed to change his mind, for he did not speak. He stepped back to allow room for the juniors to get out, and gestured to them angrily to leave the car.

One after another the Famous Five got out.

All of them were feeling very uncomfortable; almost—though not quite—wishing that they had stayed out in the rain. They left a good many muddy footprints inside. Still, there was no real harm done, and no occasion, so far as they could see, for savage anger and annoyance. And why the angry man did not speak was a curious puzzle—unless he was dumb, which was hardly probable.

"We hope you'll excuse us, sir, for making free with your car," said Harry, when they were outside. "It was pouring hard; but you know that, as you seem to have been out in it. We— Oh, my hat! Ow!"

The back of an angry hand struck him across the face.

Wharton staggered back in rage and amazement.

"You cheeky rotter!" roared Bob Cherry.

"By Jove!" Wharton recovered himself and leaped towards the black-bearded man, his fists clenched and his eyes blazing. "You rotten ruffian—"

But he jumped back again as the man snatched a heavy spanner from the car and lifted it as if to strike.

Over the gold-rimmed glasses his eyes were glittering. Still, strange as it was,

he did not speak! A startling thought came into the minds of the juniors—that he was not quite in his right mind. There was something strange and almost uncanny in his silent rage.

Wharton checked his angry indignation.

"Come on, you men?" he muttered. "Let's get out of this!"

The Famous Five tramped down the lane, under the last showering drops of rain. A bend of the lane hid the car from them in a few moments. As they tramped on they heard the sound of the black-bearded man starting the engine. But the car did not pass them. It grunted and thudded away up the muddy lane in the opposite direction. Harry Wharton rubbed his cheek where a red mark had been left by that savage back-hander.

"That's a jolly queer merchant!" said Frank Nugent. "Potty, I should think!"

"It seemed to me as if he knew us by sight," said Harry slowly.

"We don't know him!"

"Never seen him before that I know of. Glad to be shut of him, at any rate!" growled Wharton. "After all, I suppose we had no right in his car. You're rather a fathead, Bob!"

"Same to you, old chap, and many of them!" answered Bob affably. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! The jolly old sun's coming out!"

And the chums of the Remove walked back to Greyfriars in bright April sunshine.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Spotted!

HORACE COKER, of the Greyfriars Fifth, gave a sudden start, and pricked up his ears. He looked round quickly.

His friends, Potter and Greene, glanced at him, wondering what was the matter with Coker. The sudden excitement in Horace's face showed that something was the matter, though the other two seniors of Greyfriars could not guess what it was.

Coker & Co. were in the tea lounge at Chunkley's Stores, in Courtfield. The sudden rain storm which had caught Harry Wharton & Co. in Friardale Wood had caught Coker & Co. in Courtfield High Street. But they had found a rather more commodious refuge than a little Austin car. It was near tea-time, and Coker suggested stepping into Chunkley's to tea. Never had Coker made a more welcome suggestion to his friends. Generally they regarded Coker's ideas as asinine, if not actually potty. But there were times when Horace was struck by a really bright idea, and this was one of the times.

Seated in that well-appointed lounge, where everything was done in first-class and expensive style, the three Fifth Form men enjoyed an ample and expensive tea. At such moments Coker was quite popular with his pals, and they felt that friendship with Coker was not wholly a weary burden.

There were plenty of other people in the tea lounge. Chunkley's was generally well patronised in the afternoon. At a little table near the three sat an old gentleman with white hair and whiskers and beard—a very venerable-looking old gentleman.

He had glanced at the Greyfriars fellows several times with a disapproving eye. Coker's voice was loud, and he never thought of subduing it wherever he found himself. Potter and Greene rather wished that Coker wouldn't shout, but they could hardly tell him so, in the circumstances. It drew some attention to their table, and

gave people generally the impression that they were a party of noisy schoolboys. Coker, if he noticed, did not mind at all. Potter and Greene minded it, but it could not be helped. The grub, fortunately, was good, and as Coker was standing the spread it was up to them to stand Coker.

Coker had, in fact, noticed the white-bearded old gent, and had caught his disapproving eye. He did not mind in the least, so far as that went; but he was not pleased. Coker, for some reason known only to himself, regarded himself as above criticism, and certainly he was not going to take any notice of a "dashed old beaver."

So Coker talked on regardless, giving Potter and Greene, and most of the other patrons of the tea lounge, his opinion on many things, with that air of laying down the law which was peculiar to Coker.

At the moment, however, he was silent, not because he had finished talking, but because his mouth was full of cake. That impediment in his speech caused a brief silence on Coker's part. Silence never seemed so golden as when Coker of the Fifth left off talking!

In the silence there came a voice from the "old beaver," addressing the waiter.

"Can you change a five-pound note for me?"

That remark had no interest whatever for Potter and Greene. Lots of five-pound notes were changed in Chunkley's tea lounge—in fact, the wealthy Horace was going to change one himself to pay for the spread. There was nothing in the least uncommon in an elderly gent requesting the waiter to change a five-pound note for his bill.

Yet that remark had almost an electrifying effect on Coker of the Fifth. He turned in his seat and stared full at the white-bearded man with a steady, concentrated stare. Potter and Greene could only wonder what was up.

"Certainly, sir!" answered the waiter.

The old gentleman extracted a note-case from his pocket, and opened it with the leisurely movement natural to a gentleman of such venerable years.

Coker's eyes being fixed on him, Coker could not fail to note that there were many other banknotes in that note-case as well as the one that was taken out and handed to the waiter.

"By gum!" breathed Coker.

He turned back to his friends, his eyes gleaming with excitement.

"What——" began Potter.

"What——" commenced Greene.

"Hush!" whispered Coker.

He whispered mysteriously.

Potter and Greene could only gaze at him. Coker evidently had some bee in his bonnet, but what it was was a mystery to them.

"Not a word!" added Coker, in another mysterious whisper.

They just gazed.

"You fellows finished?"

"No fear!"

"Well, come on, all the same!"

"But I say——" exclaimed the dismayed Potter and Greene simultaneously.

"Don't say anything; just come on."

Coker stood up and signed to his waiter—a different waiter. There were innumerable waiters in Chunkley's tea lounge.

"My bill, quick!" said Coker. "Change this fiver and look sharp! I'm in a hurry—a dashed hurry!"

"Very good, sir!"

The waiter was obliging. Coker had a tipping look which waiters knew. The waiter hurried.

Potter and Greene, not in the least inclined to hurry, rose slowly. They had done very well, so far; but they had



Savagely angry at finding the Famous Five in his car, the motorist stepped back to allow room for the juniors to get out. "We hope you'll excuse us for sheltering in your car!" said Harry Wharton. "We—oh, my hat! Ow!" He staggered in wrath and amazement as the back of a hand struck him across the face.

intended to do better before they left off. Why Coker wanted to rush them off before the spread was finished they could not begin to guess. Naturally they were far from pleased. The rain was stopping, but it had not yet stopped. Potter and Greene had been prepared to put in another half-hour at least.

"Look here——" began Potter, very restively.

"Don't jaw, old chap!"

"But I say——" urged Greene.

"Don't gabble!"

The waiter came back quickly with the change. Coker justified his tipping look by adding half-a-crown to the amount of the bill. Then he hurried away, and as the feast was evidently over, Potter and Greene followed him with discontented looks.

Outside the doorway of the tea lounge, in one of Chunkley's expensive carpeted corridors. Coker came to a halt. Apparently it was not his intention to leave the building.

He stared back into the room. The "old beaver" was gathering up gloves while he waited for his change. He seemed in no hurry to depart.

"Plenty of time!" remarked Coker.

"Time for what?" asked the mystified Potter. Greene gave a hopeless shrug of the shoulders.

"You noticed that old beaver with the white whiskers?"

"What about him?"

"He gave us a cheeky look once or twice," said Coker.

"Well, the way you were shouting——"

"Don't be a fool, Potter! Keep your eyes on that old beaver," said Coker. "He will come out this way, and we shall get him."

"Get him!" gasped Potter.

"That's it. Of course, you don't know who he is—what he is, I should say. I fancy I've spotted him, though," said Coker complacently. "You heard what he said to the waiter—asked him to change a fiver. A fiver!" added Coker impressively. "Doesn't that mean anything to you?"

"Only that he wanted a five-pound note changed," said Potter blankly.

"Have you forgotten the bank robbery at Brighton?" asked Coker sarcastically.

"The—the what?"

"I should think you might remember it when the cashier of the bank, who bolted with the money, is a relation of a Greyfriars kid—young Hazeldene of the Remove. They've had his photograph in the papers, and it's well known that he has been hiding in this quarter——"

"What about it?" gasped Potter.

"That's the man!"

"Oh crikey!"

Potter and Greene, from the doorway, stared across the lounge at the white-bearded man seated at his table.

Whether the bank robber of Brighton was, or was not, John James Hazeldene, uncle of Hazel of the Remove, was not definitely known.

But as John James Hazeldene was known to be in the district, and as some of the stolen banknotes had lately been changed in the district, a good many people had made up their minds about it.

The problem did not interest Potter and Greene very much; but no doubt they would have been interested by the sight of a real live bank-robber.

But the white-haired, white-bearded

old gentleman at the adjacent table looked at least twenty years older than the Brighton cashier whose photograph had appeared in the newspapers.

"See?" asked Coker.

"But—but he's nothing like the man!" gasped Potter.

"Look at him again!" grinned Coker. "He's in disguise, of course—but look at his features!"

Potter and Greene looked. The old gentleman, seeing himself stared at, gave them a thunderous frown.

"It's perfectly well known," went on Coker, in a low voice. "You've heard how those Remove kids, Wharton and his gang, changed a banknote for a venerable-looking old johnny last week! It turned out to be one of the stolen notes! They gave Inspector Grimes a description of the man—an old sportsman with white hair and beard, and glasses and a topper——"

"Oh!" gasped Greene.

"A few days later they came on a man changing a fiver in Uncle Clegg's tuckshop at Friardale, looking quite different," went on Coker. "That turned out to be a Brighton fiver, too. But the man looked so different that they only spotted him by his voice. It was all over the school at the time—you fellows must have heard——"

"Yes; but——"

"Well, there he is—at it again!" said Coker. "White beard, white hair, and a topper—changing a fiver! Pretty clear, what?"

"I—I suppose it's possible!" gasped Potter. "But—but he doesn't look anything like——"

"He does!" said Coker calmly. "Look at him! Allowing for the

beaver, you can see that he's like that photograph of the missing cashier."

Potter and Greene gazed—having a clear view, as the old gentleman, aware of their scrutiny, was glaring directly at them, evidently annoyed.

That he was in disguise they did not believe for a moment. But they had to admit that there was in his elderly face, a resemblance to the features of the missing cashier. One of those chance resemblances, perhaps—but there it was!

"It—it's possible!" breathed Greene. "But—"

"You mean, it's certain!" said Coker calmly. "The loot from Brighton was all in fivers—a bundle of a thousand of them was pinched from the safe. The man's working this neighbourhood in disguise—getting rid of them one at a time! We've spotted him in the very act!"

With a final thunderous glare the old gentleman turned his back on the Greyfriars Fifth Formers, with an audible snort.

"I had my eye on him when we sat down!" went on Coker. "When I heard him ask the waiter to change a fiver, that settled it!"

"But people often change fivers here! Why, you changed one yourself—"

"Don't be an ass, Potter!"

"I—I say, let's get out!" said Greene uneasily. "He's just going—he will come this way—he's noticed us staring at him!"

"I'm going to stop him!" said Coker determinedly.

"You're going to whatter?"

"Stop him! He's not getting away! I dare say he's got dozens of the stolen notes about him! Look here! There's always a bobby outside Chunkley's.

You fellows cut off and fetch him here, while I keep that scoundrel from getting away—"

"But—but—but—" stuttered Potter.

"Don't jaw!" exclaimed Coker impatiently. "Just do as I tell you!"

"But you can't—"

"I said don't jaw! Cut off and get that bobby!" hissed Coker. "He will be passing us in a minute!"

Potter and Greene looked at Coker, and looked at one another. It was possible, no doubt, that the venerable gent was the same venerable stranger who had passed a stolen note on the Famous Five a week ago. His resemblance to the published photograph of John James Hazeldene was certainly a little odd. But that possibility was a little too nebulous for Potter and Greene.

"Will you hurry?" hissed Coker.

They hurried! They almost bolted—only anxious to be off the scene before Horace Coker kicked up a shindy! They did not stop to speak to the policeman outside Chunkley's. They passed him quickly.

"Hook it!" gasped Potter.

And they hooked it promptly. Coker was left to carry on, on his lonely own! If Coker was right, well and good—if he wasn't, there was going to be terrific trouble, which Potter and Greene had no desire to share. They went at a trot.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

No Luck for Bunter!

"PASS that ball, Bunter!"

Crash!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaroooh!"

The rain had driven the fellows indoors at Greyfriars. Most of the

Remove had gathered in the Rag, where Vernon-Smith had produced an old footer, and a game was going on.

It was not much like Soccer; but there was plenty of excitement and plenty of noise. The fun was waxing fast and furious, when Billy Bunter opened the door of the Rag and blinked in through his big spectacles.

Bunter could hear that footer was going on. But he naturally did not know that the door of the Rag was a goal! Neither did he know that Smithy had just shot for goal!

He knew it, however, as he opened the door!

Bunter wasn't interested in footer, indoor or outdoor. It was getting near tea-time, and Bunter wanted to learn whether the Famous Five had come in. They hadn't. As a matter of fact, at that precise moment they were sheltering in the Austin car in Wood Lane. But Bunter forgot all about Harry Wharton & Co., and even tea-time, as soon as he opened the door of the Rag.

There was a whizz and a crash, and Billy Bunter sat down in the doorway. He hardly knew what had happened, unless it was an earthquake.

He sat and roared.

"Pass that ball!" shouted Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Owl! Wow! I say, you fellows! Wow!" roared Bunter. He realised that it was a footer that had landed under his fat head. "Owl! Beasts! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover major rushed at the ball, and sent it whizzing across the Rag. After it rushed the Removites.

Billy Bunter roared unheeded.

He picked himself up, set his spectacles straight on his fat little nose, and blinked into the Rag. Harry Wharton & Co. were not there—he had bagged that bill for nothing!

"Beasts!" grunted Bunter.

And he rolled away, rubbing his podgy head as he went. His footsteps led him to the Remove passage.

Herbert Vernon-Smith was in the Rag, he was not therefore in his study! For that excellent reason Billy Bunter headed for the Bounder's study in the Remove passage. In the Bounder's well-supplied study he hoped to find something in the way of light refreshments to last him till tea-time!

He arrived at Study No. 4, opened the door, and rolled in. His roll took him across to the study cupboard, and he was about to open the same when a quiet voice said:

"Well?"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He spun round.

Tom Redwing, the bounder's study-mate, was sitting in the armchair, with a book open on his knees. The short-sighted Owl of the Remove had not noticed him when he rolled in.

"Want anything?" asked Redwing.

"Eh? Oh, nothing! I—I wasn't after Smithy's cake!" gasped Bunter. "I never knew he had a cake! I didn't see him bring it in from the tuckshop after class, Redwing! I never saw him at all!"

Tom Redwing grinned.

He laid down his book and rose from the armchair.

"Cut!" he said briefly.

Disappointed and cakeless, Billy Bunter was ready to cut! But he hesitated. Redwing was standing beside the doorway with his right foot swung back. The fat Owl of the Remove eyed that swinging foot uneasily. He had a strong suspicion that it was going to land on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars when he went out at the door.

*"A goodly tale," the spectre said,
As on his hand he held his head.
"I've never been so breathless since
The headsman's chopper made me wince!"*



.. and
this
is
the
yarn—

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"I—I say, Redwing," he stammered, "I—I say, old chap, Smithy wants you in the Rag! They're playing footer there, and—and Smithy specially asked me to come up and tell you—"

"Thanks!" said Redwing. "Now cut!"

"Beast!" Bunter made a rush for it! He did the doorway at about 60 m.p.h. But, swift as he was, Redwing was as swift.

Bunter's worst anticipations were realised. The swinging foot not only landed on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars School, but it landed hard. There was a roar from Bunter as he flew into the passage.

"Yooooop!" Tom Redwing grinned and shut the door. Billy Bunter's little round eyes gleamed with wrath behind his big spectacles. He stooped to the keyhole and yelled through it:

"Yah! Cad! Rotter! Outsider! Whose father is a tarry sailorman working in a stokehole? Yah! Come out here, and I'll mop up the passage with you!"

The door-handle turned.

But the Owl of the Remove did not wait for the sailorman's son to step out. On second thoughts—always the best—he decided not to mop up the Remove passage with Tom Redwing.

Instead of that, he scudded away down the passage. One of the study doors was open, and Bunter bolted into that study as Redwing stepped out from Study No. 4.

It was Study No. 2 into which the Owl of the Remove bolted. He closed the door after him as soon as he was inside, in terror of Redwing pursuing him down the passage.

"What the thump do you want here?" growled Hazeldene.

Study No. 2 belonged to Hazel and Tom Brown. The latter was in the Rag, footballing with the other Removites. Hazel, with a scowling face, was alone in his study.

Billy Bunter blinked at him.

He was far from keen on Hazel's society. Since it had been known in the school that Hazel's Uncle John James had fled from Brighton under suspicion of having robbed the Brighton and County Bank, Hazel had been like a bear with a sore head. He was overwhelmed by his disgrace, which he fancied was perpetually in the thoughts of every other fellow at Greyfriars.

Fellows who wanted to be kind and considerate, in the painful circumstances, found it very hard to bear his sulky and savage temper.

If a fellow spoke to him, Hazel fancied he was being taken pity on. If a fellow did not speak to him, he fancied that he was being cut because of his uncle's disgrace. He was ready to find offence in a word or a look—or in the absence of a word or a look!

It followed that most of the fellows left him alone—which he resented, as he resented everything else.

His sulky, scowling, harassed face was not pleasant to look at. But Billy Bunter was not in a position at the moment to choose his company. He was in dread of falling in with Redwing if he emerged from Study No. 2. So for the present he did not intend to emerge.

"Just dropped in to speak to you, old chap!" said Bunter affably.

"Drop out again!" grunted Hazel.

"Well, I should think you'd like a fellow to speak to you," said Bunter. "You're left rather alone lately—what? He, he, he!"

Hazel glared at him.

"I say, I saw my sister Bessie yesterday," went on Bunter. "My sister Bessie at Cliff House, you know."

"Bother your sister Bessie!" "Oh, really, Hazel! I say, she told me that Redwing had been over there to see your sister Marjorie."

Hazel stared. "What rot!" he grunted. "Why should Redwing go over to Cliff House to see Marjorie?"

"Well, I thought you might know," said Bunter inquisitively. "That's why I mentioned it."

"Can't you mind your own business?" snarled Hazel.

"Look here, old chap, don't you be so jolly shirty!" advised Bunter. "You stick in too much, old fellow. You're getting nervy! I'll tell you what—come down to the tuckshop with me. I'll chance the rain if you will. Mrs. Mimble has got a lot of new jam tarts in to-day—"

"Oh, shut up!" "Anybody coming to tea?" asked Bunter.

He blinked at the table, noting that it was set for tea, with an unusually clean cloth and a general aspect of unaccustomed tidiness. It looked as if Hazel was expecting a rather distinguished visitor. If there was anything good for tea, Bunter was quite prepared to be that distinguished visitor himself.

"My grandfather's coming!" snapped Hazel. "Anything more you want to know, Peeping Tom?"

"Never knew you had one," answered Bunter cheerily. "I say, who is he?"

"He's Colonel Hazeldene, if you must know! Like me to tell you how old he is, what sort of a necktie he wears, and where he lives?" asked Hazel sarcastically.

"Oh, really, you know! I say, old chap, I'll stay to tea, if you like! You'll want a pal to see you through, with a stuffy old grandfather about!"

"I don't want my grandfather to think that Greyfriars fellows never wash! He might, if he saw you!"

"Look here, you cheeky-beast, if you don't want me to stay to tea—" roared Bunter.

"I don't!" "Well, I'm not so jolly keen on tea-ing in this study, if you come to that!" said Bunter, with a fat sneer. "If the old man is your grandfather, I suppose he's your pater's father, and the father of that uncle of yours who bolted with the banknotes from Brighton—"

"Get out!" shouted Hazel furiously.

"Not the sort of man I want to know!" said Bunter disdainfully. "I draw the line at bank robbers myself, and I can jolly well say— Yarooooop!"

Bunter roared as Hazel jumped at him and grasped him.

Bang! The fat Owl's head hit the table, and hit it hard.

Billy Bunter's terrific roar rang the length of the Remove passage.

"Yaroooooop!" Bang! Bang!

"Ow! Wow! Yaroooh! Leggo, you beast!" shrieked Bunter. "Tain't my fault pour uncle robbed the bank, is it—"

Bang! "Yurrooop! Oh! Owl! Wow! Leggo! Yaroooooh!"

Grasping Bunter's fat neck with one hand, Hazel threw open the door with the other. Billy Bunter spun out into the Remove passage and crashed.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" splattered the Owl of the Remove, as he was strewn along the old oak planks. "Ow! Beast! Keep off!"

Hazel, apparently under the impression that Bunter hadn't had enough, followed him out and kicked.

His boot landed twice before the fat Owl squirmed to his feet and fled for the stairs.

Hazel stood panting and glaring after him.

On the Remove landing Billy Bunter turned his head to blink back. Seeing Hazel at a safe distance, he yelled:

"Yah! Did your uncle give you any of the fivers he pinched at Brighton? Yah!"

Bunter did not stop for an answer to that question. The look on Hazel's face was enough for him. He did the Remove staircase three steps at a time and vanished.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Genuine Beaver!

COKER'S eyes gleamed. He was watching his man like a cat!

Standing in the arched doorway of the tea lounge at Chunkley's, Coker drew a little attention from people passing in and out. The suppressed excitement in his face, the gleam in his eyes, naturally made people wonder what was the matter.

But Coker did not heed them. His attention was concentrated on the white-whiskered gentleman across the lounge. He waited eagerly for Potter and Greene to come back with the policeman. It did not occur to his mighty brain that Potter and Greene were on the trot, heading for Greyfriars, with no intention of returning to Chunkley's at all.

It was no wonder that Coker's eyes gleamed as he watched. The old "beaver," as Coker termed the white-whiskered gent, had donned his gloves and taken his silk hat in hand, and the obsequious waiter had brushed a crumb or two from his coat. Instead of leaving immediately, however, the old gent stepped to a window that gave a view on Courtfield High Street, and stood looking out, stroking his white beard thoughtfully as he did so.

Coker knew—or thought he knew—why. The man was looking out to see whether the coast was clear after changing one of the stolen fivers.

It did not occur to Coker's mighty brain that the old gentleman might be looking out to see whether the rain had stopped.

Coker had come into Chunkley's because it was raining. It was quite possible that the old gentleman had done the same.

Undramatic ideas like these, however, did not occur to Coker. Coker's imagination was rather coloured by the detective novels he had read; Coker had devoured hundreds of "best-sellers." In detective novels the most ordinary action has a deep significance.

In detective novels life runs on dramatic lines, full of incident. If a man, in a detective novel, looks out of a window, it is not to see what the weather is like, but to ascertain whether the coast is clear or whether confederates are arriving. If he blows his nose, it is a mysterious signal to an accomplice. If he scratches his ear, it means that the countess' diamonds are hidden in his left-hand breast pocket. Best-selling authors must give their readers something in return for seven-and-sixpence—and that is what they give.

So Coker not only did not suspect that his man was looking at the weather, but

would have laughed scornfully at the idea, had it been suggested to him.

The rain was nearly over, only a few drops falling. Having ascertained that fact—for it really was at the weather that the old "beaver" was gazing from the window—he turned and walked across the lounge to the exit.

He came directly towards Coker.

Coker gave a swift glance over his shoulder, hoping to see his friends with the policeman. He did not see them.

He breathed hard.

The man was going! Having, as Coker was convinced, landed a stolen fiver on the waiter at Chunkley's, he was going—no doubt with dozens of other stolen notes on him, if not hundreds!

Was Coker going to let him cut?

Coker was not?

As the old gentleman came under the arched portal Coker stepped resolutely into his way, barring further progress.

Five or six people, passing, stopped and stared at Coker. A couple of waiters directed their special attention to the spot. A commissionaire turned a rather baleful eye on Coker.

As for the old gentleman with the white beard, he came to a halt and glared at Coker as if he could have bitten him.

On a close inspection, he looked far from a good-tempered old gentleman. He had an aquiline nose, almost a beak, with the gold-rimmed glasses perched on it. He had very square shoulders, a tall, bony figure, and rather a military carriage, as if he had been in the army. He carried a cane with a knob under his arm. Old as he certainly was, he looked as hard as hickory—not at all the old gentleman to be cheeked with impunity.

But Coker cared nothing for all that!

"You young hooligan, get out of the way!" said the old gentleman, in a voice that age had not impaired in the least, and which sounded like the bark of a large and rather savage dog. "What do you mean, hey? You are the young lout who was shouting in the tea-room! What? I remember you! By gad, I'd like to have you in the barrack-square! I'd teach you manners!"

"You just hold on," said Coker. "I'm waiting for a policeman—"

"What?"

"Mind, I shall grab you if you cut!" warned Coker.

"Are you mad?"

"Think you can take me in, with your white whiskers?" demanded Coker derisively. "You were fixed up just the same when you spoofed the Remove kids with a stolen note. I've never seen you before, but I can jolly well tell you what your name is, all the same!"

"Mad!" repeated the old gentleman. "Gad, what is this lunatic doin' about here 'loose?"

"Your name's Hazeldene!" said Coker coolly.

The old gentleman jumped.

"Good gad! How the dooce do you know what my name is?" he demanded. "I've never seen you before."

Coker could have chuckled with triumph. If he had had a doubt before, he had none now! That white-whiskered gent was John James Hazeldene in disguise, he was assured. But now this man had admitted that his name was Hazeldene. Could anything be clearer?

Two waiters and a commissionaire were converging on Coker. A dozen people were gathering round. In the tea-room people were rising at the

tables to look round and discover what was going on.

The old gentleman who had admitted that his name was Hazeldene barked to the uniformed Chunkley commissionaire.

"Here, my man! Remove that fellow! Take him out of my path!"

"Certainly, sir!"

Coker dodged an outstretched hand.

"Hands off, you fathead!" he snapped. "That man's the bank-robber of Brighton, and he's been passing stolen notes here."

Sensation!

Commissionaire, waiters, and general public, all gasped. The old gentleman turned purple. The glare in his fiery old eyes was really alarming. But it did not alarm Coker of the Fifth!

Coker raised his hand and pointed at him. It was quite dramatic—in Coker's view, at least!

"That man's the bank-robber of Brighton!" he announced. "Seize him!"

"Good gad!" spluttered the old gentleman.

"You mad young idiot!" said the Chunkley commissionaire, recovering his voice. "You get out! See? Get out!"

"Don't be a fool!" said Coker coolly.

"He's got up in disguise, of course! He's been seen in the same disguise before, passing stolen notes! But I dare say you've seen the photograph of the bank-robber in the papers! Well, look at him!"

Coker's dramatic hand still pointed.

The commissionaire stared.

So did the waiters!

Everybody had seen the photograph in the papers of John James Hazeldene, late cashier of the Brighton and County Bank. Everybody in Courtfield was talking about him since the stolen notes had begun to circulate in the neighbourhood. Everybody in the shops was on the look-out for five-pound notes bearing the numbers of the missing list. And, amazing to relate, there was a resemblance between the white-whiskered old gentleman and the photograph of the bank cashier in the newspapers!

True, the missing cashier was depicted as a man in the forties, clean shaven. This man was well over sixty, and had a white beard and whiskers.

But there was a resemblance in the features—a distinct resemblance, not a resemblance that leaped to the eye, but easily detected if specially looked for!

Strange expressions came over many faces. The commissionaire's hand, almost on Coker's shoulder, dropped to his side.

"By gun!" said Chunkley's commissionaire.

Coker grinned.

"He's the man!" he said. "And I'll jolly well prove it!"

The old gentleman was standing as if transfixed, like a man in a trance. Speechless fury was gathering in his purple face.

Coker stepped swiftly up to him. Before his victim knew what he was at he grabbed at the white beard and tugged!

Naturally, Coker expected a false beard to come off in his hand!

John James Hazeldene had no beard. He would hardly have grown so extensive a beaver—especially a white one—in the weeks that he had been missing. So the beard had to be false!

Yet it did not come off!

Coker tugged. The old gentleman gave an ear-splitting yell. That terrific tug, which would have wrenched off any false beard, did not wrench off a beard

that grew naturally on its owner's chin! But it gave the owner thereof a fearful pain.

"Yurrrrooop!" roared the old gentleman.

Coker, still hopeful, still tugged! But the beard did not come off.

Evidently, it grew!

Equally evidently, this old gentleman, though his name was Hazeldene, and he resembled John James in feature, was not the missing bank cashier from Brighton! Equally evidently, he was not the white-bearded rogue in disguise who had landed that stolen note on Harry Wharton last week. It was only too terribly clear that he was not in disguise at all!

"Oh crikey!" gurgled Coker.

The old gentleman gripped his gold-headed cane. He swung it in the air.

Crack!

Coker gave a yell as he caught it. He jumped back, barely in time to escape another swipe!

Trembling with rage, the old gentleman pointed at the dismayed Coker with the cane.

"Take him into custody!" he roared.

"Call a constable! I will have him charged with assault! Seize him!"

"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Coker.

The commissionaire's hand was on his shoulder. Coker barged him back and the man sat down. Coker flew.

Behind him sounded a babel of excited voices, predominated by the angry roar of the gentleman, who had a fearful pain in his chin.

Coker did not stay to listen.

How he got out of Chunkley's he hardly knew. But he got out, and ran for it. He started for Greyfriars, and covered the ground at a rate that proved that Coker of the Fifth had an excellent chance for the School Mile.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Tracked Down!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"
"Jolly old Coker!"
Harry Wharton & Co. reached the gates of Greyfriars from one direction as a breathless, running figure reached them from the other.

They halted and gazed at Coker as he came down the Courtfield road, still going strong, though he had slackened speed a little, since he had started on his flight from Chunkley's.

The chums of the Remove gazed at the great Horace with smiling interest.

It was clear that Coker of the Fifth had been digging up trouble.

That, of course, was nothing new. Coker of the Fifth was born to trouble as the sparks fly upward! If there was any trouble lying about Coker was the man to barge into it, head-over-heels.

Coker halted, panting for breath. He pushed back his hat and mopped his perspiring brow. The juniors noticed that he gave a swift backward glance up the Courtfield road.

It looked as if Coker feared pursuit. Which was odd and unusual; for Coker, as a rule, feared no foe! Coker was not the man to run even from heavy odds!

"What the dickens is up, I wonder?" said Nugent.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob. "What's the jolly old trouble, Coker?"

Coker, still wiping his perspiring brow, stared at the juniors. Then he stepped into the school gateway, and kept a peering eye round the old stone pillars on the road.



"That man's the bank-robber of Brighton," said Horace Coker, raising a hand and pointing at the white-whiskered old gentleman, "and he's passing stolen notes here! Seize him!" "Good gad!" gasped the old gentleman, fury gathering in his purple face. "Wh-what's that?"

"Anybody after you, Coker?" asked Wharton, puzzled.

Coker gasped.

"I don't know. I dare say they don't know I'm a Greyfriars man. But—but if a white-whiskered old johnny blows along, don't mention me if he asks questions. Old Codger about sixty or seventy."

The Famous Five stared blankly at Coker. Coker was always ready for a row—too ready! But even Coker might have been expected to draw the line at rowing with a man who had reached the ripe age of sixty or seventy!

"I shouldn't wonder if he's after me!" panted Coker. "Keep it dark if you see him! Fierce-looking old sportsman, with a white beaver!"

"But what—" gasped Bob.

Coker gave another anxious blink up the road. He was relieved to see that there was no one in sight—yet, at all events.

"Don't fancy I'm afraid of the man!" snapped Coker. "I could mop him up with one hand! But I don't want him to report me to the Head, see? He might, after my pulling his beard nearly off."

The juniors jumped.

"You've been pulling some grand-dad's beaver!" gasped Johnny Bull.

"Great pip!"

"The great pip-fulness is terrific!" ejaculated Hurreo Janset Ram Singh. "It is preposterously bad manners to pull an esteemed old codger's beaver, my absurd and idiotic Coker!"

"It's all your fault, really!" gasped Coker. "He was just like that man you described as the blighter who palmed off that stolen banknote on you

last week—white hair and beard, and silk topper—and—and I thought he was the bank-robber from Brighton—young Hazeldene's uncle—"

"Hazeldene's uncle isn't the bank-robber from Brighton, you ass!" said Harry Wharton. "It's some other man—"

"My only hat!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Mean to say you went for a harmless old johnny, simply because he had a white beard, like the man who spoofed us?"

"No, you young ass! He looked like the photograph in the papers of that man Hazeldene—same kind of beaky nose—and—"

"Rot!" said Johnny Bull.

"And he owned up that his name was Hazeldene when I tackled him!" gasped Coker. "So what was a fellow to think?"

"Well, my only hat!" exclaimed Bob.

Really, it looked as if even the egregious Coker had had something to "go upon"—if the white-bearded gent looked like John James and admitted that his name was Hazeldene!

"So, of course, I thought the beard was false!" said Coker. "Wouldn't anybody? But when I jerked it, it wouldn't come off—"

"Wha-a-t!"

"You jerked it—"

"Oh crikey!"

"I tugged at it, but it stuck!" gasped Coker. "He yelled—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors yelled, too!

"There's nothing funny in it!" howled Coker. "It was an awful mistake. But how was a fellow to know? I tell you he had that bank-robber's

features—he owned up his name was Hazeldene—and he was got up in a white beard like that spoofer who took you in! I was sure of him—only—only the beard didn't come off—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I tugged jolly hard—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But it was a real beaver, so he can't have been the man!" gasped Coker.

"He gave me a lick with his stick—"

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

"Oh, stop that silly cackling!" roared Coker.

But Coker was asking too much. The juniors did not stop cackling—they couldn't! They shrieked and they roared—they nearly wept!

"Shut up!" roared Coker. "I tell you there's nothing to cackle at! I shall get into a fearful row if he finds out that I belong here, and reports me to the Head. He looked fearfully enraged—"

"No wonder!" chortled Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you see him, don't let on!" gasped Coker.

And he tramped in at the gates and hurried into the House. Coker was anxious to keep out of sight. He had not the slightest doubt that if the white-bearded old gentleman discovered that he was a Greyfriars fellow he would lay the matter before Dr. Locke. And what the Head would say—and do—Coker did not care to imagine!

Harry Wharton & Co. were left roaring. The rain and the disagreeable encounter with the man in the Austin car in Friardale Wood had not cheered

the chums of the Remove, and they had not been feeling their brightest. But Coker of the Fifth had cheered them immensely! They gurgled with merriment.

"Poor old Coker!" gasped Bob Cherry. "If he goes round pulling the beavers of every white-whiskered man in Kent he will book a lot of trouble!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The man will hardly follow him as far as this!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "He can't be trailing Coker like a Red Indian."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"What—"

"Look!"

"Oh crikey!"

On the road from Courtfield appeared a tall, military-looking, rapidly striding figure.

It was that of an old gentleman, with a white beard and hair, gold-rimmed glasses, and a silk topper! Old as he was, he swung along with a rapid and vigorous stride, as full of energy and pep as in ancient days on the parade ground.

"Oh, my hat!" breathed Wharton.

"That must be the man!"

"Not a word about Coker!" whispered Frank Nugent.

"No fear!"

The juniors went into the gateway. They expected to see the vigorous old gentleman stride by. But he did not stride by. He turned in at the gate.

"Hook it!" murmured Wharton.

And the Famous Five scudded.

They did not want to be asked questions about Coker. Glancing back as they reached the House, they saw the old gentleman stop at Gosling's lodge and speak to the porter. Gosling touched his hat very respectfully.

Then, with his vigorous military stride, the white-bearded gentleman came across the quad, heading directly for the House.

Harry Wharton & Co. cut in. It looked as if the offended man had, so to speak, tracked Coker of the Fifth to his lair, and it was only good-natured to give poor old Horace the tip.

They hurried to the Fifth Form passage. Voices could be heard in Coker's study. They looked in. Potter and Greene were there—grinning! Horace Coker was telling them what he thought of them for grinning like hyenas at such a disastrous time.

"You silly, cackling, gurgling, blithering idiots!" Coker was saying.

"Coker!" gasped Wharton.

Horace glared round.

"Get out, you fags!" he snapped.

"There's an old beaver just blown in—"

"Eh?"

"Looks like the Johnny you described!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Thought we'd give you the tip!" said Harry Wharton.

And having given Coker the tip the Famous Five went their way.

Coker sat down heavily. He ceased to tell Potter and Greene what he thought of them.

"Well, that tears it!" said Potter.

"It do—it does!" concurred Greene.

"I—I—I suppose he's gone to the Head!" said Coker faintly.

"Can't have barged in for something else!" said Potter, with a nod.

"If you will do these things, Coker—"

"I—I suppose the Head will send for me!" groaned Coker.

"Any minute!" said Greene cheerfully.

"Oh crikey!"

Coker sat overwhelmed with dismay!

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THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Old Warrior!

HAZEL rose to his feet at the sound of a voice in the Remove passage. It was the voice of Trotter the House page.

"This 'ere is the study, sir!"

There was a tap, and the door opened.

Trotter stood aside as a military-looking old gentleman, with a white beard, strode into Study No. 2—with a heavy stride that made the floor creak.

The page drew the door shut and went.

Hazel stepped forward to greet his grandfather! Old as he was, bony as he looked, Colonel Hazeldene was rather a massive figure. His eyes gleamed like a hawk's under his bushy white brows and he stood as stiff as a ramrod as he stared at Hazel. Hazel was possibly glad to see his grandfather at Greyfriars. But he did not look glad. He had always been rather afraid of the energetic, fiery old military gentleman. He did not see him often—and the fewer times he saw him the better he liked it. He shook hands with the Colonel—and received a grip that made him squeak. Age, evidently, had not withered the old colonel. He had more than sixty years, but he carried them with wonderful vigour.

"You're looking seedy, Hazel!" he rapped. The junior was always called Hazel in the family circle.

"I've had a lot of worry lately, grandfather!" answered Hazel.

"I dare say! But that's not the only reason! You were always a young slacker! You want exercise and fresh air!"

Hazel mumbled something.

"Open that window! The room's stuffy."

Hazel opened the window.

"I've got tea ready for you, grandfather!" he said timidly.

"I was caught in the rain walking from the station, and went into a place in Courtfield to tea!" grunted the colonel. "Never mind that!"

Hazel did rather mind. He had expended quite a little sum on getting a rather nice tea ready for this distinguished visitor. However, he said nothing.

Colonel Hazeldene sat down. The armchair creaked under him as he did so. He seemed rather to hit the chair than sit in it. There was no doubt that he was a very vigorous old gentleman!

"You're letting the affair of your uncle worry you!" he barked.

"I can't help it! All the fellows know!" muttered Hazel. "His photograph's been in the newspapers—everybody knows that the police are after him to arrest him—"

"Don't be a young ass!"

"Eh?"

"The police are not after him, as you express it, to arrest him! It was plainly stated in the newspapers that what they desire is an interview with him," barked the colonel.

"But you know what that means—"

"It means exactly what it says! My son is not a thief!" roared the old colonel. "He is a fool and a weakling. He is no thief! By gad! When I heard of it I could have laid my stick round him! I saw your father and mother at Cannes, Hazel—they had just heard, and they told me! I came home directly! And here I am."

"I—I'm glad to see you, grandfather—"

"Nonsense!"

Hazel was silent. Colonel Hazeldene, on the retired list, lived usually in the South of France. Hazel wished from

the bottom of his heart that the terrifying old gentleman had stayed there. Which was perfectly plain to the terrifying old gentleman!

Why he had come was a mystery to Hazel! A retired military gentleman could do nothing in the matter so far as the junior could see.

His son, John James, was on the run! The police, undoubtedly, were hunting for him, whether to arrest him or to "interview" him! What the fiery old colonel fancied he could do Hazel could not guess.

"Nincompoop!" snorted the colonel.

"Grandfather—"

"Fool and weakling! Bah!"

Hazel realised that these choice epithets applied not to himself, but to his missing uncle, the colonel's younger son.

"I've seen the bank manager at Brighton!" barked Colonel Hazeldene. "He does not believe that my son was guilty. I fancy the police do—but they are dashed fools, anyhow! The young fool!"

John James was at least forty; but in the eyes of the old colonel he was a "young" fool.

"If he had not cut and run all would have been well!" snorted the old gentleman. He tugged at his white beard and uttered a yelp. His chin had not quite recovered from Coker's hefty tug. "Ow! Urrgh! That mad young idiot! I wish I could see him again—I would thrash him, by Jove!"

"You—you would—" stuttered Hazel, supposing that the old gentleman was still speaking of John James.

"I mean that young hooligan in the tea-shop!" hooted the colonel. "A mad young villain insulted me, by Jove! I gave him one cut with my stick—I wish I'd given him a dozen! Gad!" He gave a snort of wrath. "Well never mind him. I'm here to clear up this tangle! Our name has been disgraced—by a weak-kneed fool—my younger son! You've seen him?"

"I've seen him once since he came to this quarter—" faltered Hazel. "I—I think he had an idea of getting off the coast here—getting away in a boat to France—"

"The idiot! Did he want you to help him?"

"I—I refused."

"Has he seen Marjorie?" The old colonel's grim face softened as he spoke the name of his granddaughter. It was clear from his look and tone that Marjorie Hazeldene had first place in his affection.

"Yes!" muttered Hazel, sulkily.

"Does she know where he is now?"

"I—I don't know! He was hiding in a woodcutter's hut in Lantham Woods, and—and I think Marjorie went there on half-holidays at Cliff House to take him things. But he was rooted out and disappeared again! I—I suppose he's still in the neighbourhood."

"Why?"

"The Brighton notes are being passed round about here."

Colonel Hazeldene half-rose from the chair. He gave the junior a glare that made him start back in alarm.

"You young fool!" he roared.

Hazel gasped.

"You young rascal!"

"Grandfather—"

"Don't grandfather me!" roared the colonel. "How dare you say your uncle, my son James, is in the neighbourhood because the notes are being passed in this locality! Do you dare to tell me that you believe that my son James robbed the bank that employed him?"

"I—I tried not to believe it," stammered Hazel. "But—but when the notes began to circulate—"

"Fool! Does Marjorie think so?"

"No! She sticks to believing in him! Girls haven't much sense—they don't know what evidence is—" sneered Hazel.

"Evidence be dashed!" snorted the colonel. "If any amount of evidence makes you believe your uncle a thief, you are a young rascal! Marjorie has more sense in her little finger than you will ever have in your head! She has more courage, more pluck, more character, than a dozen of you! Pah! She is helping James—you refused! He should never have come here—he should never have run—he should never have asked help— But she helped him, and you refused! Pah!"

Hazel wondered whether fellows up and down the Remove passage could hear the old boy barking!

"Sickening young nincompoop!" went on the colonel. "I'm ashamed of you! Your uncle is not guilty of anything but weak cowardice—understand that! You're James over again, by gad! Understand now?"

Hazel set his lips.

"Why should the bank robber come to this quiet spot to pass the notes if he's not—" he began.

"Don't ask me riddles! I was never good at riddles! The man who is passing the notes is not James! That's all."

Hazel stood silent.

Colonel Hazeldene heaved himself out of the armchair.

"I've wasted time coming to see you! You're a young nincompoop—as silly and as weak as James—or more so! I'd better see Marjorie! I may get some sense out of her! None to be got out of you! Don't let me hear you say again that you believe your uncle guilty! I'll lay my stick round you! Gad! I've a good mind to do it now!"

Hazel backed away from the fiery old gentleman's glare. For a moment the colonel looked like getting busy with the stick.

To Hazel's great relief he changed his mind, stamped to the door and left the study, shutting the door after him with a terrific slam.

"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Hazel.

He was glad his grandfather was going, at all events! That interview left him quite breathless.

But Colonel Hazeldene was not gone yet!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Coker Walks Into It!

"I'll smash 'em!"
"What—"
"I'll spifficate 'em—"
"But—"

"The cheeky young sweeps! Pulling my leg, of course!" hissed Coker.

There was no doubt of it to Coker's incensed mind.

For nearly half an hour he had waited in his study in momentary expectation of a summons to the Head.

But the summons had not come!

If that fierce old warrior had followed him from Courtfield, tracked him to his school, and gone in to lay complaints before Dr. Locke, it was certain that Coker of the Fifth would have been sent for.

He had not been sent for! That was a relief! But it looked as if the juniors had been pulling his leg! Harry Wharton & Co. had come up specially to his study to tell him that the white-bearded old sportsman had arrived! And he hadn't! At least, it seemed to Coker certain that he hadn't!

That that white-bearded old gent was the grandfather of a Remove fellow, and was coming to Greyfriars School to

see his grandson, was, of course, utterly unknown to Horace Coker! Neither had Harry Wharton & Co. thought of anything of the sort.

After what Coker had said to them at the gates, they took it for granted that the ancient sportsman was after Coker—as did Coker. They had tipped Coker in good faith.

As he did not hear from the Head, however, Coker concluded, at last, that the ancient sportsman had not arrived at all and that the playful juniors had been pulling his leg. And he proceeded to sort out a fives bat! Only with the aid of a fives bat could Horace make it clear to the playful juniors what he thought of such a jape.

"I'll pulverise 'em!" said Coker, breathing wrath and fury. "I'll whop 'em! I'll smash 'em! I'll spifficate 'em! I'll go to their study and mop 'em up all over the shop! By gum!"

"But, I say—" began Potter.

"Don't jaw!"

"I don't think those kids were pulling your leg!" said Greene.

"You don't think at all!"

"Look here, Coker—"

"Don't gabble!"

Horace Coker marched out of the study, fives bat in hand, wrath in his brow! Potter and Greene shrugged their shoulders. If Coker was not satisfied with the amount of trouble he had already dug up that day, he was welcome to go forth and hunt for more!

Breathing wrath, Coker tramped down the Fifth Form passage and across the landing to the Remove quarters.

He kicked open the door of Study No. 1.

He glared in at the Famous Five, who were gathered there to tea. There was an agreeable aroma of frying sausages in the study. Billy Bunter, with a red face, short of breath, but happy, was cooking sausages over the fire. Billy Bunter had waited for the Famous Five to come in, and he had not waited in vain!

He blinked round through his big spectacles as Coker hurled the door open.

"I say, you fellows, look out!" squeaked Bunter.

But the Famous Five were already looking out! It was clear that Coker had come on the warpath, and though they did not know why, they were ready to give old Horace all the trouble he wanted; indeed, a little more!

"You young sweeps!" roared Coker.

"You old sweep!" answered Bob Cherry politely.

"I'll spifficate you—"

"Get on with the spifficating!" said Harry Wharton cheerily, picking up a ruler. "But what's the row, old bean? Anything biting you?"

"You young rotter!" roared Coker. "You told me that that old beaver from Courtfield had blown in—"

"That's right!"

"Well, if he has, I've seen and heard nothing of him!" snorted Coker. "I jolly well know that you were pulling my leg! And I'm jolly well going to whop you, see?"

"But he did blow in!" said Harry, puzzled. "At least, a fierce-looking old sportsman just like your description."

"Rot!" roared Coker. "If he'd come, I'd have heard before this! And I can jolly well tell you you can't pull my leg! I'm going—"

Coker broke off.

The door of Study No. 2 opened, and a white-bearded old gentleman came out.

He was about to stride away to the stairs when his eyes fell on Horace

Coker, in the doorway of Study No. 1. Those eyes, for a moment, seemed to be on the point of popping out of the colonel's purple face.

For one instant he stared at Coker of the Fifth! Then he roared:

"You!"

Coker spun round at the sound of that remembered bark.

"Oh!" he gasped.

He stared at the old gentleman.

Harry Wharton & Co., from Study No. 1, stared also. Billy Bunter, frying-pan in hand, blinked.

"That's the man, Coker!" gasped Wharton. "That—"

"Oh crikey!" gurgled Coker.

It was the man! There was no doubt about that! What he was doing in the Remove studies was a mystery to Coker! But there he was!

"You!" roared Colonel Hazeldene.

"You! Here! So you are a Greyfriars boy! I have found you, have I! By gad!"

He strode at Coker and gripped him by the shoulder.

"I—I—I say—" stuttered Coker. He wished, from the bottom of his heart, that he had not come to the Remove passage on the warpath!

Still, how could he possibly have guessed that the fierce old gentleman was there? Of course, he couldn't! But the old gentleman was there—very much there! His grip on Horace's shoulder was like the grip of a steel vice.

The fives bat slipped from Coker's hand. He sagged in the grasp of the fierce old warrior.

"Come!" roared Colonel Hazeldene.

"I shall take you to your headmaster! I shall report your conduct at Courtfield! As I find you here, a Greyfriars boy, I shall not chastise you myself! I shall take you to your headmaster! I shall demand that you shall be flogged—expelled, by Jove! Come!"

"I—I say—" stuttered the hapless Horace.

"Come!"

Coker came! He could not help it! Hofty and beefy as Horace Coker was, he had no chance in that iron grip. The colonel was old, but he was uncommonly tough and muscular. Coker had simply no chance.

He was whirled away to the stairs.

"Well, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"He, he, he!" cachinnated Billy Bunter. "I say, you fellows, I fancy that's Hazel's grandfather! He told me he was expecting his grandfather this afternoon! I say, what's he going for Coker for? He, he, he!" Nugent.

"Hazel's grandfather!" ejaculated

"Oh, my hat!" yelled Johnny Bull,

"That accounts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The mystery was elucidated now! If the old "beaver" was Hazel's grandfather, he was the father of Hazel's uncle, John James! That, in quite a simple way accounted for his name being Hazeldene, and for his facial resemblance to the missing bank cashier. It was no longer an odd circumstance that he resembled the fugitive from Brighton! It would, indeed, have been rather odd if he didn't!

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Famous Five.

"He, he, he!" cachinnated Billy Bunter.

The juniors laughed—they could not help it. But it was no laughing matter for Horace Coker.

A policeman's grip could not have been firmer on his shoulder! In that vice-like grip Coker was marched away.

At the foot of the staircase, two masters stared at them—Mr. Quelch and Mr. Prout! The latter was Coker's Form-master, and he naturally rolled forward to intervene.

"What——" boomed Prout.

Unheeding the Fifth Form master, Colonel Hazeldene marched Coker on. Prout, amazed and wrathful, rolled after them to the Head's study. Quelch was left staring.

Plenty of fellows stared at the amazing sight of a wriggling, gasping, crimson Fifth Form man marched along the corridors by a white-bearded old gentleman with a purple face!

Unheeding the sensation he was causing, Colonel Hazeldene marched on to Dr. Locke's study, tapped with his disengaged hand, and threw open the door.

The headmaster of Greyfriars started up.

"What!" he ejaculated. "Colonel Hazeldene, what——"

He was interrupted. The excited old gentleman's roar told him, and most of Greyfriars, what had happened at Courtfield. A swarming crowd gathered in the corridor to hear—and were bitterly disappointed when Prout, stepping into the study, shut the door.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Man in Hawksell!

MARJORIE HAZELDENE wheeled her bicycle up the steep, rugged street of Hawksell.

The Cliff House girl was fit and strong, but it was a hard ride to the little hamlet high on the chalk cliffs, and Marjorie was breathless as she wheeled her machine on the last lap of the journey.

An ancient mariner in a blue jersey, who was leaning on a post gazing out to sea, detached himself from the post as he saw her, took the bike from her, grinned amiably, and wheeled it up the rugged cobbles.

Marjorie thanked him, with a smile, and, leaving both the bike and the ancient mariner leaning on the post, she walked to a small cottage that stood at some little distance from the rest.

It backed against the high chalk cliff, and was out of sight of the other cottages and cabins. It was the home of John Redwing, the sailorman, now away at sea, father of Tom Redwing of the Greyfriars Remove. Door and windows were shut, and there was no smoke from the chimney; anyone passing the cottage would have supposed it unoccupied. But Marjorie Hazeldene had reason to suppose otherwise.

She gave a light tap at the door and then stood back so that anyone peering from the curtained windows could see her.

That someone saw her was soon clear, for in a couple of minutes the door was opened a few inches.

The schoolgirl stepped quickly forward.

From within a pale, hunted face looked out at her.

"Marjorie!" breathed John James Hazeldene. "You! How did you know——"

He stepped back without finishing the question, as the girl pushed the door. She entered, and John James quickly closed it after her and shot the bolt. The curtains were over the window and the room was dim—dim and cold and dreary. The man who was hiding in Redwing's cottage had not ventured to light a fire.

Marjorie's kind face was full of pity and affection as she looked at the pale, harassed man; yet, fond as she was of her uncle, it was all she could do not to feel scornful. He was hunted, and he was hiding, yet she could not help thinking that it was chiefly from his own fears that he was hiding. If only he had had the courage to face the music——

"How did you find me here, Marjorie?" he breathed. "Does anyone know——"

"Only Tom Redwing."

"Who is he?"

"A Greyfriars boy—true as steel! He will keep the secret."

"The fat boy who came here——"

"No, no! That was Bunter. It was from him that I learned that someone was in this cottage. He fancied that it was a tramp; no one has taken any notice of what he said——"

"Thank Heaven for that! I—I was on the run after I had to get away from the woodcutter's cottage in Lantham Woods," muttered the wretched man. "I had one night in the open." He shivered. "I—I came up to this little place, hoping to get a shelter, and found that this cottage was unoccupied and——"

"When Bunter said that he had seen someone here I thought that it might be you, uncle," said Marjorie quietly. "I could not come till it was a half-holiday at Cliff House; it is so far from the school. I thought that I might find you here."

"You have found me," said John James. His pale face flushed a little. "Oh, if I could only get away—get a passage across the Channel——"

Marjorie set her lips.

"Uncle, I cannot help thinking that that would be the worst thing that could happen," she said earnestly. "If you would only make up your mind to return to Brighton and face it——"

"Impossible!"

"Uncle, I have news for you——"

"Inspector Grimes?"

"No, no! No one knows you are here, except Tom Redwing. I got a message to him, and he came to see me at Cliff House. I had to tell him; for I was afraid that, after the story Bunter told, the Greyfriars boys might come up here to see whether there was anything in his story. I—I told Redwing what I thought—I confided in him——"

"If he chatters——"

"He will not chatter, uncle. He promised me that no one should come to the cottage, in case it should be as I supposed. It is safer for him to know."

John James Hazeldene nodded.

"Perhaps you are right. But the news you spoke of—what is it? News from Brighton? Have they found the man?"

His manner was painfully eager.

"That is my only hope," he hurried on before Marjorie could speak. "Unless they find the man who robbed the bank, I am lost!"

"They have not found him."

John James gave a groan.

"I am a lost man," he muttered. "I cannot keep up this life of hiding. I have hidden here, like a rat in a trap, in dread every hour of being discovered by the villagers. When that fat boy came the other day I was in dire terror. If he had seen my face——"

"He did not."

"I know—I know. But I left the place; I hid in the cliffs till late at night before I dared return. I should have fled. But where could I go—where?" He groaned again. The wretched man's nerves were in rags and tatters. "I am almost at the end of my tether. But I dare not go back. I tell

you the police believe me guilty. They have made no formal charge yet, but I know—I know!"

"But——"

"What can they think? Only I and the manager had keys to the safe from which the bundle of banknotes was taken. A key was used! The building must have been entered with a key; there was no trace of burglary. What are they to think?"

He wiped his damp forehead.

"What is my defence? My keys have never been out of my possession—except once, when I lost them for a few hours. But—but, Marjorie, I have been thinking over that. Heaven knows I have had ample time for thinking! I do not believe now that my keys were lost; I believe my pocket was picked of them, and that the thief afterwards placed them where I found them. And while they were in his hands he took impressions of them, and had false keys made. Does it not seem likely?"

"I think it is very likely, uncle. But who——"

He made a gesture of despair.

"How can I tell—or even guess? Some crook, I suppose, who may have been watching the bank for weeks, looking for a chance. I have no hope, unless he is caught passing the notes. But your news!" He came back to that. "What is your news?"

"The stolen notes are now being circulated," said Marjorie in a low voice.

He started.

"Oh, that is good news! That may lead them to the thief. Where have they been found—in London?"

"No," said Marjorie; "here."

"Here!" John James repeated the word, stupefied.

"In Courtfield and Friardale and one or two other places near at hand," said Marjorie.

John James Hazeldene stared at her, speechless; then he sank into a chair with a groan.

"I am lost! It is known that I came to this district; known that I was lately near Friardale. It will be believed that I am passing the notes. In the name of all that is unfortunate, all that is horrible, why has the thief chosen this district to get rid of his plunder?"

Marjorie did not answer.

She knew what almost anyone else would have answered—that it was John James himself who was the thief, and who was circulating the stolen notes.

But that she could not and would not believe.

"It is the last straw!" he muttered brokenly. "It will clinch their suspicions upon me. The next step will be the issue of a warrant for my arrest. I am a lost man!"

"The thief is—must be—in this district, uncle!" said Marjorie. "I know what it looks like—what people must think. But if you were back in Brighton nothing that happened here could incriminate you."

"Too late—too late!"

"Even yet——"

"Too late, I tell you—too late! I was mad to come here! Yet who could have foreseen that the thief would choose this district to get rid of his plunder? He must have some motive. But what? I am a lost man! If I could get to France—I have friends there—my brother, my father, would help me. Though Heaven knows I hardly dare face my father with this fearful disgrace on my name!"

His head sank into his hands.

Marjorie stood miserably silent. The man had cause for fear; yet she knew that his best chance—his only chance—was to go back and face the music,



"Oh crikey!" gurgled Coker, as the old gentleman gripped his gold-headed cane and swung it in the air. Crack!
 "Yaroooh!" Coker gave a wild yell as he caught the cane, and jumped back barely in time to escape another swipe.
 "Call a constable!" roared the old gentleman. "I will have him charged with assault!"

But it was not for a schoolgirl to urge advice on a man almost as old as her father.

He raised his pale face at last.

"Leave me, Marjorie. I am glad to have seen you, my dear. But go—go! You may be missed. They may suspect—"

She looked round the desolate room. A suitcase—all the baggage the wretched fugitive had—lay open on the floor. It was half-packed with canned foods—evidently brought away with him in his flight from the woodcutter's cottage at Lantham. That was his subsistence while he lay in hiding in Redwing's cottage. Her heart was heavy with pity.

The fugitive unbolted the door.

"Go, my dear—go! Every moment that you are here adds to my uneasiness," he muttered. "But—but come again, if you can—safely. Heaven knows how glad I am to see one friendly face! But go!"

There were tears in Marjorie's eyes as she wheeled her bicycle down from Hawksliff, and mounted on the lower road, to ride back to Cliff House School. Every hour that the unhappy man remained in flight and hiding blackened the suspicion against him—drew closer the net. Yet nothing would induce him to face it out. How was it to end?

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Hard Lines on Horace!

"I SAY, you fellows! Look at Coker!"

Billy Bunter grinned as he drew the attention of the Famous Five to the great Horace.

They looked at Coker, and smiled.

Plenty of fellows looked at Coker that day, and smiled.

It was the day following Coker's adventure at Chunkley's in Courtfield.

That adventure, of course, was all over Greyfriars now.

All Greyfriars roared over it.

Seniors and juniors howled over it. Even the masters grinned in Common-room, excepting Prout. Prout, as Coker's Form-master, was greatly annoyed.

Prout did not like his Form to be famous for containing the biggest fat-head ever.

And the Head, of course, was wrathful.

He could hardly refuse to accede to Colonel Hazeldene's demand for condign punishment for the offender.

Coker's feeble defence did him no good. He had, of course, never dreamed that the white-bearded old gentleman was a Removite's grandfather—never dreamed that he was anybody, but John James Hazeldene disguised in a false beard.

How was Coker to guess that at a time when John James was being hunted for up and down the countryside, his father would blow in? How was Coker to know that he had a father at all, if it came to that? True, now that he knew that the old "beaver" was John James' father, he understood why the old beaver resembled John James in feature. Still, a fellow could not be expected to guess all these things.

But the Head took the view that a fellow could be expected, at least, to mind his own business, and not to meddle in what did not concern him.

Anyhow, Coker had pulled the old colonel's beard, and the old colonel demanded vengeance. He demanded that Coker should be flogged.

It was difficult to refuse. It was awkward to accede. Prout, angry as he was with Coker, did not want a flogging in his Form.

Fifth Form men were never caned, much less flogged. It was a degradation to the Fifth. Prout felt it keenly. He hated the thought of a Fifth Form

man bending over like a fag. Coker hated the thought even more than Prout.

Still, what was to be done? The infuriated old warrior was prepared to make the case one of assault and battery, invoking the law, if Coker was not adequately punished.

The Head had to consent. Prout objected in vain. The utmost that Prout could obtain was that the flogging should not take place immediately. Prout hoped that when he had cooled down the old colonel would be satisfied with some less terrific sentence—such as impositions or detentions. Horace Coker, therefore, was up for a flogging on Saturday. Unless, during the interval, Colonel Hazeldene relented, and allowed himself to be pacified which, judging by his expression when he stalked out of Greyfriars, was not probable.

In the morning Prout was very bitter with Coker in Form. He gave that unhappy member of the Fifth the sharpest edge of his tongue. Coker was even glad that it was maths in the afternoon. He loathed maths, but even mathematics was better than Prout.

Coker's face that day was glum and gloomy.

In that it contrasted with nearly every other face at Greyfriars. Smiles greeted Coker everywhere.

Coker grew absolutely sick of seeing smiling faces round him.

There was, so far as Horace could see, nothing at which to smile.

But that was not Coker's greatest trouble. There was the flogging. The actual whopping was little; Coker was tough. But the humiliation of it—that was intolerable to think of.

Coker was even thinking of asking his people to take him away from Greyfriars before Saturday.

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(Continued from page 13.)

How was he going to stand it?

After class that day Coker strode in the quad with a black and gloomy brow, in a state of the deepest pessimism.

"I say, you fellows, watch him!" grinned Billy Bunter. "I say, Coker looks as if he's enjoying life! He, he, he!"

"Poor old Coker!" sighed Bob Cherry.

"The poorfulness of the esteemed old Coker is terrific," remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"I say, you fellows, he kicked Hazel this morning!" grinned Bunter. "I fancy he would rather have kicked his granddad. He, he, he!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! He's going for Hazel now," said Bob. "Better weigh in, I think."

Hazel was lounging under the elms with his usual scowl on his face. Coker, spotting him, bore down on him.

Harry Wharton & Co. moved a little nearer. Coker, no doubt, derived some solace from kicking the old beaver's grandson; but there was a limit to that sort of thing.

Coker, however, did not kick Hazel this time. Other thoughts were in the mind of Coker.

"Look here, kid!" he said, as Hazel scowled at him. "Don't cut off; I want to speak to you."

"Well, don't!" grunted Hazel.

"About that old fool of a grandfather of yours!" went on Coker, unheeding. "He was fearfully waxy when he was here yesterday. Well, I don't see that I was to blame in the matter. But, as it stands, I'm up for a flogging, unless the old ass changes his mind, and speaks to the Head. It depends on him."

"Well, he won't change his mind—you can bank on that!" said Hazel. "And serve you jolly well right, too!"

Coker's eyes gleamed, but he controlled his wrath.

"Look here! Suppose you put it to him?" he suggested. "The old fossil's your grandfather, and if you pointed out to him how thick it is, he might think better of it. I understand that he's staying at the Courtfield Hotel. Well, you can run down and see him."

"I'll watch it!" said Hazel.

"And ask him, as a special favour, to think it over, and go easy," said Coker. "See? I dare say he's cooled down a bit by this time, and may listen to reason. I'll stand you a spread in my study if you get away with it."

Hazel looked at him, and the Famous Five grinned. Only that morning Coker had sought solace by kicking Hazel. Now he was asking Hazel to intercede with the incensed Colonel. It was evident that Coker had a hopeful nature.

"Well, will you do it?" demanded Coker, as the Removite did not speak.

"No," answered Hazel; "I won't!"

"Mind, I'm not the fellow to take no for an answer from a fag!" warned Coker. "You're asking for a thrashing, Hazeldene!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"If you're going to refuse—"

"I've refused already!"

"That does it!" said Coker; and he jumped at Hazel.

As if moved by the same spring, the Famous Five jumped at the same moment!

Coker did not reach Hazel. Harry Wharton & Co. reached Coker first. Grasped by five pairs of hands, Horace went over on his back, and his head tapped on the quadrangle.

Coker roared.

Hazel grinning, walked away. Coker was left in capable hands.

"You cheeky fags!" roared Coker. "By gum, I'll—Ugggh! Leave off banging my napper! Yaroooh!"

Tap, tap, tap, tap!

Four times Coker's head tapped on the hard, unsympathetic earth. Four times Coker's frantic roar rang across the Greyfriars quad.

"Sorry, old bean!" said Bob Cherry. "But Fifth Form men ain't allowed to whop Remove fellows! See?"

"I'll—Yarooop! Whoop! Ow!"

Tap!

"Whoo-hooop!"

The Famous Five walked off the scene, leaving Coker sitting up and rubbing his dizzy head.

"He, he, he!" Billy Bunter, blinking at the great man of the Fifth through his big spectacles, cachinnated with great amusement.

Coker staggered to his feet.

Hazel was gone—the Famous Five were gone! Bunter was there! It was a case of any port in a storm. Coker simply had to kick somebody! He kicked Bunter. Finding consolation in it, he kicked him again.

Billy Bunter's fat cachinnation changed into a frantic yell.

"Yow-ow! Beast! Wow!"

Bunter fled. Coker got in one more as he went. Then Coker tramped wrathfully away. He passed a grinning group of Shell fellows.

"Flogged!" Hobson of the Shell was saying. "Well, I hope it will do him good. Fact is, that's exactly what Coker wants."

"Exactly!" agreed Hoskins.

Coker refrained from charging the Shell fellows and tramped on. Tubb, of the Third, from a safe distance, yelled:

"I say, Coker! Who's going to be flogged on Saturday?"

Tubb did not wait for an answer to that question. He immediately proceeded to place a greater—and safer—distance between him and Coker. Horace glared after him, glared round at a score of smiling faces, and, with feelings too deep for words, tramped out of gates.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Caller for Mr. Grimes!

"MISS HAZELDENE!"

Inspector Grimes rose from his desk as the constable on duty announced Miss Hazeldene, and made a bow.

There was a puzzled, but very alert expression on Mr. Grimes' face.

Twice he had extracted information from Hazeldene, of the Greyfriars Remove, on the subject of his missing uncle.

He was well aware that Hazel would have been glad to hear that the missing cashier had been taken and removed from the neighbourhood of the school.

He had not supposed anything of the kind, however, with regard to Marjorie Hazeldene. More than once he had kept the girl under observation when she left Cliff House, in the hope of ascertaining whether she was in touch

with the fugitive, as he strongly suspected.

This visit to his official quarters in Courtfield, however, looked as if Miss Hazeldene had adopted her brother's views. If there was information to be obtained Mr. Grimes was not particular about its source. He wanted very much to drop his official hand on the shoulder of the Brighton cashier.

"Please come in, Miss Hazeldene," said the inspector, kindly and respectfully. "Pray take this chair!"

Marjorie sat down.

Her face had been a little pale when she entered. Now it flushed with colour. The portly inspector made soothing gestures.

"Thank you for coming to me, Miss Hazeldene," he said. "I think I can guess your reason; and you are doing right—quite right! If you have any information to give—"

Marjorie started, and her colour deepened.

"I have no information to give!" she said, almost sharply.

"Eh? I supposed—"

"Nothing of the kind, sir."

"Then why—"

"I must speak to you, Mr. Grimes," said Marjorie. "I—I don't know whether I ought to have come here. But—but—"

She faltered.

"My dear young lady, pray be quite at your ease," said the inspector soothingly. "I shall be glad to hear anything you have to say. I presume that it concerns your uncle, John James Hazeldene."

"Yes," said Marjorie, almost in a whisper.

The inspector's eyes glistened.

"Please proceed!" he said. "You must understand, Miss Hazeldene, that no definite accusation has yet been made in this matter. There has been, so far, no question of the issue of a warrant for arrest. The police simply desire to interview Mr. Hazeldene, to learn what light he can throw on the very mysterious circumstances of the bank robbery at Brighton."

"He fears that if he gave that interview he would not be allowed to go free afterwards," said Marjorie.

The inspector coughed. No doubt he was well aware that John James had ample grounds for that fear!

The girl's words were an admission that she had seen the fugitive since he had come to that part of Kent. Mr. Grimes, however, made no comment on that.

"In Mr. Hazeldene's own best interests," he said, "he should get in touch with the police."

"I am sure that that is true," said Marjorie, "and I have urged him to do so again and again. If he only would—"

She sighed.

The inspector suppressed a smile. There was no doubt now that the Cliff House girl knew where the fugitive was.

"You have given him excellent advice, my dear young lady," he said. "I have no doubt that he is in a state of—hem!—nerves, but surely a sensible man can see that it is wiser to grasp the nettle and face things out—if he is innocent!"

"He is innocent!" said Marjorie proudly.

"We must hope so—we must hope so!" said Mr. Grimes, though Marjorie did not need telling that his belief was exactly the contrary. "But, granting that he is innocent, Miss Hazeldene, surely his wisest, his only course, is to give the police the interview they desire. I should be very glad to ascertain—"

Marjorie's lips set in a way that showed the keen-eyed officer how very unlike her character was to her brother's.

"I can tell you nothing," said the Cliff House girl quietly. "I have not come here to tell you anything, only I—"

"Only what?"

"Since my uncle came to this quarter some of the stolen banknotes have been passed here," said Marjorie. "It has made people believe that there is no doubt of his guilt."

Mr. Grimes coughed again. His cough implied that it was hardly reasonable to expect people to believe anything else.

"Even my brother at Greyfriars—" faltered Marjorie. She checked herself. "Inspector Grimes, I have thought and thought over this matter. And I believe that the banknotes being

passed in this district is a proof of my uncle's innocence."

Mr. Grimes almost jumped.

If anything could have made the Brighton cashier's guilt clear as noon-day, in Mr. Grimes' opinion, it was the circulation of the stolen notes in the district where he was known to be lurking in hiding.

"My dear young lady—" he ejaculated.

"Will you let me tell you my reason for thinking so?" asked Marjorie.

"I shall be deeply interested to hear it, Miss Hazeldene," said the inspector, with a note of sarcasm in his voice that brought another flush to the schoolgirl's face.

But she went on, quietly and steadily.

"When it was found out that my uncle was hiding in this neighbourhood, sir, it was reported in the newspapers."

"That is certainly the case," agreed Mr. Grimes.

"The bank-robber would naturally keep his eyes on the newspapers, especially on all references to the bank robbery, sir."

"I have no doubt of that," said Mr. Grimes, with a smile.

"Then—he would know, like everybody else, that my uncle was in this neighbourhood, in hiding."

"Naturally."

"It would be much safer for the real thief, sir, if the robbery were put down to my uncle."

"Eh? Oh! Yes. No doubt."

"What was to prevent him from coming specially to this district, sir, to pass some of the notes, so as to give that impression?"

Inspector Grimes stood quite still, gazing at the Cliff House girl. This,

(Continued on next page.)



"Linesman" is always ready to offer his knowledge and experience in first-class football to readers of the MAGNET. If you've a problem that wants solving, send it in NOW to "Linesman," c/o The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

SOME readers of mine do love to set me digging into the history books, to be sure. I don't mind a bit, though, because when the necessity for taking a dip into the past is provided, I usually find something which I myself did not know or, at any rate, had forgotten. For instance, the splendid struggle which Doncaster Rovers have made in the Northern Third Division this season—the club still has a chance of gaining promotion to the Second Division—caused Frank Arnold, a Yorkshire reader, to ask me whether the town of Doncaster has ever been represented by a Second Division side.

If I had answered that question without looking into the history books, I would have said "No," and I would have been wrong. There was a time, just over thirty years ago, when Doncaster Rovers were in the Second Division of the Football League. They had two successive seasons in that class. Then they dropped out for one season, but came back to experience a most disastrous time.

Indeed, they created a record of which no club will hope to rob them. From the whole of their 34 League games played in the season of 1901-5 they only gained eight points—the smallest total ever gained by a club from a series of Second Division matches.

No wonder they went out of that class again, for they were twelve points behind their nearest rivals at the finish.

"There has been some talk in the newspapers this season," writes Fred Stainton, from an address in North London, "about the football authorities putting a limit on the amount which clubs are allowed to pay for the transfer of a player. Do you think this is likely to come to anything, and are my friends right who tell me that a transfer limit was imposed at one time?"

The first part of that question raises a big issue, and although it is quite true that

there has been talk of putting on a limit to the amount which a club should be allowed to pay, I don't think the idea is likely, for the time being at any rate, to get beyond the talking stage. Whether it would be wise to limit the amount which a club can spend in the course of a season on new players is an intriguing question. Certainly there are a lot of people who consider that money talks too loudly in big football in these days.

AN EXPERIMENT THAT FAILED!

AT the moment, the sky seems to be the only limit when star players are the subject of negotiations between clubs, and during this season as much as six thousand pounds has been paid for a player who had only a few months' experience in Second Division football. This was the amount paid, I believe, by Arsenal for the services of the player whom I mentioned last week—Alfred Kirchen.

Perhaps the clearest indication as to the way in which the transfer fees have gone up and up can be given by quoting a line from the balance sheet of the Preston North End club forty years ago. That line read thus: "Player's transfer fee £1."

I wonder who the player was for whom Preston North End considered it wise to pay a transfer fee of eighty shillings in those long ago days? He was probably quite good.

Referring to the second part of Fred Stainton's question, it is a fact that for just one season, many years ago, a transfer fee limit of £350 was fixed. It was not legal for any club to pay more than that amount for a player. The experiment was deemed to be a complete failure, however, and was quickly dropped. For one thing the big clubs found a way of driving "a carriage and pair" through the limit regulations. They developed the habit of paying seven hundred pounds for two players from the same club at the same

time. One of the two players thus transferred was a good one. The other was, to put it mildly, not so good. But the same fee of £350 was paid for each. This means that virtually seven hundred pounds was paid for one good player, and the other was thrown in as make-weight to keep within the limit regulations.

A CORNER-KICK EXPERT!

AT least some of the success which has come the way of Sheffield Wednesday in Cup and League this season has been due to the very efficient way in which that fine little player, Mark Hooper, has taken the corner-kicks awarded to the side. There is an idea in the way in which Hooper has been used which I think might well be copied by many other clubs.

Hooper is the outside-right of the Wednesday team, and by the usual order of things he takes the corner-kicks which are won on his side of the field.

But Hooper does more than this. When the Wednesday have a corner-kick awarded to them over on the left Hooper goes across, and takes those kicks, too. He has practised so hard this season that he is now an expert in this corner-kick business whether he takes them from the right or the left.

It isn't at all a bad thing to have an expert in various phases of the game of football. A penalty kick expert on a side is most valuable, and so is a player who can hit the ball specially hard when free-kicks are granted anywhere near the penalty area. A player cannot be put into a side merely because he places corner-kicks well, or because he is good with free-kicks or penalty kicks. But a specialist in these—and other connections—is very valuable to a football team.

Now comes a goalkeeping query. "Playing in a match the other day," writes Kenneth Fraser, of Portsmouth, "I sent in a high shot which I felt sure was going into the net. I think it would have done so if the opposing goalkeeper had not jumped up, swung on the crossbar, and thus dislodged it. The ball struck the top of the bar and went over. Should this sort of thing be allowed?"

My reply is that the action of the goalkeeper was against the rules of the game. The referee could not award a goal even though he was convinced that the goalkeeper had prevented a score by swinging on to the bar. What the referee should have done was to speak to the goalkeeper, tell him that his action was against both the rules and the spirit of the game, and that if he did it again he would be sent off.

"LINESMAN."

evidently, was quite a new idea to him. But his keen mind fastened on it instantly.

Marjorie looked at him timidly. It was her fixed belief in her uncle's innocence, in spite of all appearances, that had brought that strange idea into her head. Mr. Grimes had had no such belief. He had looked at the matter from the point of view of John James' guilt. Looking at it from the point of view of his innocence, however, there was at least a possibility in the girl's suggestion.

"By Jove!" said the inspector at last. "Is it not possible, sir?" asked Marjorie. "It would make the man quite secure if another man were punished for his crime. He must be a very bad man, or he would not be a thief at all. If there is any stranger staying in this neighbourhood—"

The inspector smiled. He did not speak, but that smile told Marjorie that every stranger staying in the neighbourhood had already received some attention from the inspector. There was a possibility that any stranger might be John James in some disguise.

"He might," said Marjorie, "remain at a distance and visit this district in a car, or on a bicycle, at intervals, sir. The man whom the Greyfriars boys found passing one of the notes in Friardale had a bicycle, and escaped on it."

"Quite!" said Mr. Grimes.

"He might be as far off as Ashford, or Canterbury, and yet come into this district at times to suit himself!" said Marjorie.

"Quite!" said Mr. Grimes.

"Knowing that my uncle is innocent, I think that it is so, Mr. Grimes," said the Cliff House girl, rising. "I—I thought I—I would come and tell you, because—because—"

"Every suggestion made to the police," said Mr. Grimes solemnly, "is carefully considered, and, if useful, acted upon. If you have anything more to tell me—"

"Nothing, sir."

"An interview with Mr. Hazeldene—" murmured the inspector.

Marjorie did not reply.

"Well, well," said Mr. Grimes, "I am much obliged to you for calling on me, Miss Hazeldene—and if we have anything to learn from Cliff House School, accept my assurance that we shall be only too happy to learn."

Marjorie's face flooded with crimson. She was glad to leave the sarcastic Mr. Grimes and get back to her bicycle and ride away.

Sarcastic as he was, however, Mr. Grimes had a very thoughtful expression on his face when the Cliff House girl was gone. He sat at his desk quite a long time, jabbing a pen into the blotting-paper, with a wrinkle in his brow.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Colonel at Cliff House!

"I SAY, you girls! The old bean's getting quite wild!"

Bessie Bunter, the ornament of the Fourth Form at Cliff House, made that remark with a chuckle.

Barbara Redfern and Mabel Lynn smiled. Clara Trevlyn laughed.

The "old bean" to whom Bessie Bunter referred was pacing the path between the gates and the House.

He was a tall, angular, white-bearded old gentleman, in a silk hat, and as he paced the path, he gave an occasional grunt. He was, in fact,

Colonel Hazeldene, who had called on Hazel the day before at Greyfriars, and was now calling to see his granddaughter at Cliff House.

Having called and explained to Miss Primrose, the Head, that he wanted to see his granddaughter, he had been obviously and openly annoyed to hear that Marjorie was out of gates.

Cliff House girls were at liberty to ride their bikes after class; and the colonel had not announced that he was coming. So really he had no just grounds for complaint.

But twenty-five years in India had not improved the old gentleman's temper, and a twinge or two from an old war wound did not have any improving effect either! Striding on the path while he waited for his granddaughter to return, the old gentleman was frowning and occasionally snorting.

A car stood in the road outside the gates, with a chauffeur at the wheel, waiting. The colonel had arrived in that car. He had already waited more than half an hour. Declining Miss Primrose's invitation to wait within, he strode up and down, fuming. Which afforded a little harmless entertainment to the Cliff House girls.

"I say, you girls, he looks a fearfully bad-tempered old man!" remarked Bessie. "I fancy he's going to blow Marjorie up! If I knew where she'd gone, I'd tip her to keep out of gates till he clears off."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, he can't wait here for ever!" argued Bessie. "He looks as if he's going to burst like a boiler already! Poor old Marjorie won't want to see that old crosspatch! I'm going to warn her!"

"You little ass!" said Clara.

"Cat!" retorted Bessie.

And she rolled away down the path to the bike-shed, with the kind intention of "tipping" Marjorie when she came in.

Colonel Hazeldene was still parading and fuming, and occasionally snorting, on the drive when Marjorie wheeled in her bike at the side-gate, and found the plump Bessie waiting for her at the bicycle-house.

"I say, Marjorie, old dear!" said Bessie, as Marjorie put her machine on its stand. "I say, don't go up to the House!"

"Why not?" asked Marjorie in surprise.

"Come down to Pegg with me instead," suggested Bessie. "I've been going to ask you to come to tea with me at the Cliff Garden place for ages. Come now."

"But—" said Marjorie, puzzled.

"Do come!" said Bessie urgently. "I'm going to stand the tea, old thing—that's all right! Only, as my brother Billy hasn't paid back half-a-crown I lent him, you'll have to lend me the money! That will be all right, won't it?"

Marjorie laughed.

"Coming?" asked Bessie brightly. "I say, they've got some of those lovely chocolate cakes at the Cliff Tea Garden—you know, that kind with the cream inside—just scrumptious—"

"Marjorie!" It was Clara's voice calling. "Oh, here you are!" Miss Clara's flaxen head was put in at the doorway. "Buck up, old dear; your jolly old visitor's waiting for you!"

"Hazel?" exclaimed Marjorie.

She gave Bessie a reproachful glance, and hurried towards the door.

"I say, it's not Hazel!" exclaimed Bessie. "It's an ill-tempered old beaver, Marjorie—you don't want to

see him! Much better keep clear of him! I came here specially to wait for you to come in and tip you—"

"You little donkey!" said Marjorie.

"But he looks ever so ill-tempered—worse than Hazel when he's hard-up!" declared Bessie Bunter. "Worse than Miss Bullivant in class—in fact, the Bull's an angel beside him! Keep clear, old thing!"

"It's your grandfather, Marjorie," said Clara, laughing.

Marjorie uttered an exclamation. Bessie clutched her arm as she ran out of the bike-shed.

"I say, Marjorie—" she squeaked.

"Let go!"

"But, look here, lend me the half-crown all the same—Cat!" howled Bessie, as Marjorie jerked her arm loose and ran up the path.

"Ha, ha, ha!" trilled Clara.

"Cat!" snapped Bessie. "I mean, look here, dear old thing, if you'll lend me half-a-crown—Cat!"

Clara was gone.

Marjorie arrived breathless on the drive, and the old colonel came to a halt and glared at her under knitted white brows.

"Oh! You've come back!" he barked.

"Yes, grandfather!" gasped Marjorie. "I'm sorry I was out when you came; but I didn't know—"

Snort!

"If you'd written, grandfather—"

Snort!

Marjorie stood silent. She was aware, from experience, that it was wiser not to argue with the irascible old gentleman. Colonel Hazeldene motioned to her to follow, and stamped down the drive to the gates.

"Are we going out?" ventured Marjorie.

"I have asked your headmistress' permission to take you for a drive!" barked the colonel.

"That's very kind of you, grandfather."

"Is it?" said the colonel, rather grimly.

He helped Marjorie into the car, and followed her in. A snort to the chauffeur, and the car was set in motion. A little group of Cliff House girls watched the departure from the gate.

"I don't envy Marjorie a drive with that gargoyle!" remarked Mabel.

"Same here!" agreed Babs.

The car glided away up Pegg Lane. Marjorie looked rather timidly at her grandfather. She was a little afraid of the fierce old warrior, and he looked angry. Still, he generally looked angry.

"I saw your brother at Greyfriars yesterday!" he barked.

Marjorie did not need to ask whether he had been pleased by seeing her brother at Greyfriars. She could see that he hadn't!

"A young nincompoop!" barked the old gentleman.

Marjorie coloured.

"As weak-kneed as my son James, his uncle!" barked the colonel.

He glared at Hazel's sister, as if daring her to deny it.

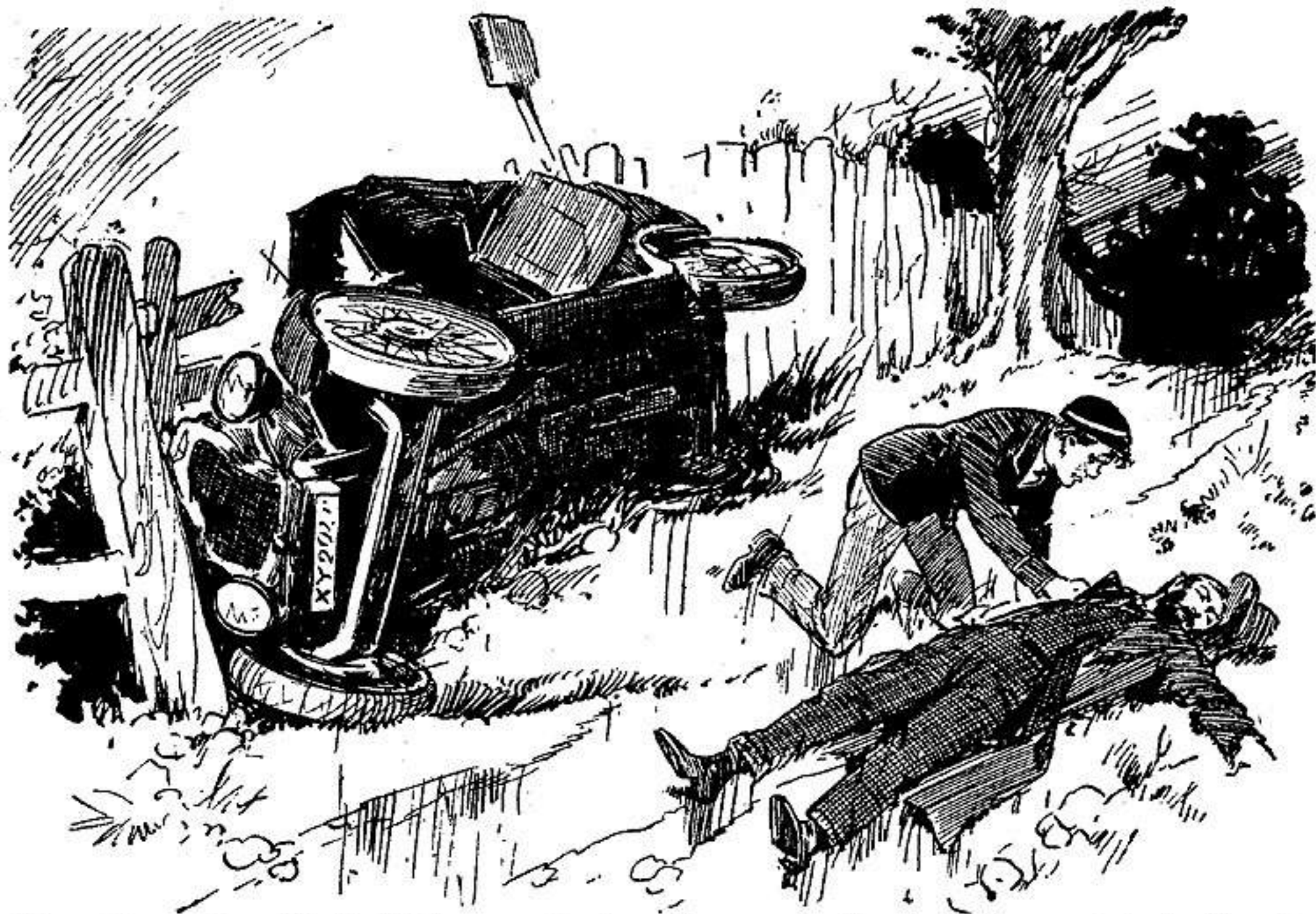
Wisely, Marjorie did not speak.

"But never mind him!" growled Colonel Hazeldene. "My business is with my son James—and you! You know where he is?"

It was rather an assertion than a question.

"You've helped him!" continued the colonel. "You've got the pluck to do it—your brother hasn't the pluck of a bunny rabbit! Not that James should have wanted help! Pah! Bah! Nincompoop! Where is he?"

Marjorie drew a deep breath.



Horace Coker raced round the bend of the narrow lane to see the car, on its side, embedded in a smashed gate. A couple of yards from the car lay the black-bearded man who had driven it. "Oh crumbs!" murmured the Fifth Former, dropping on his knees beside the man.

Certainly she knew where John James was—skulking in the Redwing cottage at Hawkscliff. But—

"Are you deaf?" barked the colonel.

"Oh! No!" faltered Marjorie.

"Or silly?" he continued.

"I—I hope not, grandfather."

"Then why cannot you answer a plain question?" barked the colonel. "I am here to see my son James. I have returned to England for that purpose! Are you taking it upon yourself to keep my son hidden away from his father?" The bark became a roar.

"Oh! No!" gasped Marjorie.

"But—"
"I am going to get him out of his scrape!" barked Colonel Hazeldene. "If he has no nerve or courage, he will find that his father has enough for two! Where is he?"

Marjorie made up her mind. That John James wanted to see his father, of whom, like the rest of the family, he stood in dread, was very doubtful. On the other hand, she could scarcely refuse to take the father to the son! And the colonel stated that he was there to get the fugitive out of his scrape. That was great news, if true.

"He is at Hawkscliff, grandfather!" she faltered.

"Hawkscliff! Where the deuce is Hawkscliff? Tell the chauffeur where to find it!" growled Colonel Hazeldene.

Marjorie told the chauffeur. The car glided away on the hilly road to Hawkscliff.

Colonel Hazeldene did not utter a single word during the drive. He sat with a grim face like iron. Marjorie stole a timid glance at that iron face every now and then, but drew no word or glance from her grandfather. She could not help feeling that the coming interview was not going to be a very pleasant one for John James.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Good Samaritan!

"STOP!" shouted Horace Coker.

The man in the little green Austin stared at him for a split second, and drove straight on.

"Silly ass!" commented Coker.

He halted and looked round after the car.

Coker, with a glum and gloomy brow, and in the very worst of tempers, was taking a long walk on his lonely own.

He was tired—absolutely sick—of smiling faces at Greyfriars. Fellows would keep on grinning like monkeys, and cackling like parrots, and laughing like hyenas, just as if there was something funny in Coker's misfortunes. It was enough to make any fellow sick and tired.

Horace Coker was chiefly occupied at the moment with his own troubles. Still, he was a good-natured fellow, and he called out a warning to the motorist—one was needed, though the driver of the green Austin did not seem to understand that.

Coker had just come round a corner of a narrow lane. Just round that corner was a gate across the road.

Such gates were common enough in Kent. The lane ran through pasture land, where cattle fed. Gates had to be closed to keep them from wandering on the roads.

There was a notice on that gate. "Please shut the gate!" There was also a heavy stone fastened on it, to drag it shut after it had been opened, in case anyone should neglect that notice.

Coker had closed the gate after him and turned the corner, and then beheld the little green Austin approaching at a fast rate.

Naturally, he called on the driver to stop.

Had the driver stopped, Coker would have explained that he was heading for a collision with a gate.

But the black-bearded, black-moustached man who drove the Austin did not catch on. No doubt he was unacquainted with that part of the country; perhaps he belonged to a city where there were no gates across roads. Perhaps he thought that Coker was merely a schoolboy pulling his leg. Anyhow, he paid no heed.

The green Austin shot on, and shot round the curve, and Coker, standing and staring after it, listened for the crash. At the rate at which the black-bearded man was driving, it would be miraculous if he was able to pull up in time to save his car.

Crash!

It came!

"The blithering idiot!" ejaculated Coker.

He started running after the car. He forgot his own troubles, manifold and serious as they were.

That terrific crash as the car struck the gate told of trouble much more serious than any of Coker's!

Breathlessly Horace raced round the curve.

"Oh, my hat!" he gasped.

The green Austin, on its side, lay embedded in a smashed gate. A couple of yards from it lay the black-bearded man who had driven it.

Apparently he had been tossed out of the car when it crashed.

Coker ran to him.

He lay in the grass, without motion, on his back. There was a trickle of crimson on his upturned face.

Coker dropped on his knees beside him. For a terrible moment he feared that the man had been killed by the crash.

But it was not so bad as that! He had been flung violently to the earth, and had struck it hard, and he was stunned.

He was still breathing. But he was quite unconscious. His eyes were closed, and the black-bearded man looked ghastly.

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Horace Coker.

He rose to his feet and stared round him rather helplessly.

The spot was an utterly lonely one. There was no habitation within a mile—the nearest, in fact, was Greyfriars School, by a path across the meadows.

To obtain help, Coker had to cover a mile, leaving the injured man where he lay. That, he felt, was impossible.

He looked at the car. Coker could have driven the car had it been in a condition to be driven. But it was helplessly wrecked.

He looked at the insensible man again. The black-bearded man had not stirred. He lay senseless, motionless.

That he needed medical attention at the earliest possible moment was clear. Coker made up his mind to it.

The man was of medium size, slightly built. Coker was big and brawny and beefy. Brains had been dealt out to Coker by niggardly Nature with a sparing hand. But Nature had made up for it with brawn and muscle. And it was brawn, not brains, that was needed now.

Coker lifted the insensible man from the ground.

Big and hefty as he was, Coker had to exert himself to lift the black-bearded man on his back. Having got him there, however, it was fairly easy to carry him, bending forward like a coalman under a sack of coal. Coker could have carried a sack of coal, and the black-bearded man did not weigh nearly so much as that.

Coker started.

He picked the shortest cut across the meadows, and tramped away with his burden. It was likely to cause rather a sensation at Greyfriars when Coker tramped in with a stunned motorist on his back. But it was evidently the only thing to be done.

Dr. Locke, it was certain, would be glad to allow the injured man to be placed in the school hospital while a doctor was sent for. The school was the nearest place where help could be obtained; and Coker, though willing to exert himself in a good cause, had no desire to carry such a burden farther than was absolutely necessary.

He tramped on and on.

His burden, fairly easy to deal with at first, grew heavier and heavier as he proceeded. The weight told more and more.

Coker was soon gasping. He bent more and more forward, till he was bent almost double.

But he stuck to it manfully.

He emerged at last into Friardale Lane, by the field gate, only a few minutes' walk from the school. He paused for a minute or two, to rest against the gate, breathing hard and deep, the perspiration trickling down his manly brow.

All that time not a sound had come from the insensible man. But now it seemed that his scattered senses were struggling back.

Coker heard a moan.

"It's all right!" gasped Coker. "I'm taking you in! You're hurt! You'll get a doctor! All right?"

A groan answered him.

Coker restarted after the interval. Feeling ready to drop, he staggered gamely on with his burden.

He was quite near the school gates when there came a struggling motion from the man on his back. There was a gasping cry:

"Let me go! Put me down!"

"Oh, you've come to, have you?" gasped Coker. "It's all right! I'm taking you where you'll get help!"

"Let me go!"

The man struggled feebly. He had recovered his consciousness, but not his strength. Coker gripped him fast.

"Keep still!" gasped Coker. "'Tain't so jolly easy to carry you, as it is! Don't wriggle like a dashed eel!"

"Let me go, you fool!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"You meddling dolt, let me go!"

Coker concluded that the man was

getting delirious. He marched on, and marched into the gateway of Greyfriars School, with his burden wriggling on his back. The man made one desperate effort to break loose, and the effort cost him his returning senses. Once more unconscious, he lay like a sack of coal on Coker's broad shoulders.

Old Gosling came out of his lodge, staring blankly at the Fifth Former and his burden.

"My eye!" ejaculated Gosling.

Coker, unheeding, marched on. And from fifty fellows in the quadrangle came a shout, and they crowded towards Coker.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Startling Suspicion!

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

"I say, you fellows——"
"Coker——"

"Lend a hand, you gabbling asses!" said Coker, with his customary politeness. "Can't you see I'm nearly dropping? Lend a hand, fathead!"

Harry Wharton & Co. willingly lent a hand. The heavy burden slid from Coker's aching shoulders to be supported by the Famous Five.

An excited crowd gathered round. A dozen voices asked Coker what was up, and what had happened.

"Can't you see?" snorted Coker. "Smash-up in a car. I've carried him in, all the way from Giles' gate."

"My hat! Some muscle!" said Bob Cherry.

"Who is he, Coker?"

"Blessed if I know! Never seen him before."

"We have," said Harry Wharton. "Was he driving a green Austin, Coker?"

"That's it!" assented Coker.

"Smashed up now."

"We saw him yesterday in Wood Lane."

The Famous Five had instantly recognised the black-bearded man in whose car they had taken refuge from the rain the day before.

Wharton had not forgotten the savage back-hander across his face, but he did not think of that now. The man was hurt and senseless, and that was enough for the captain of the Remove. He handled him gently and tenderly.

In the midst of a crowd the senseless man was carried towards the House.

Mr. Quelch came hurrying out.

"What——" he began in amazement.

"Injured motorist, sir!" said Harry.

"Coker carried him in."

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch. "Wingate, Gwynne, Loder, Sykes—please take the man from these juniors. Please carry him to the sanatorium at once. I will telephone for Dr. Pillbury."

The juniors yielded the burden to the stalwart Sixth Formers.

Loder of the Sixth uttered a sharp exclamation.

"Great pip! Look at this!"

"I say, you fellows, his beard's coming off!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"Great Scott!"

There was no mistake about it. The short, black beard, which gave the man a foreign look, had become disordered while he was wedged on Coker's shoulders. It had slipped sideways, and a wire was revealed by which it was fastened.

It was a false beard!

There was a buzz of excited voices. The whole crowd followed as the Sixth Formers bore the mysterious man away. He was seen to make a movement.

"Keep quiet, sir!" said Wingate, "You're all right now."



Jim Kendall never had a chance—because he suffered for a crime he hadn't committed. Little did Jim suspect, when he went to have a haircut, that he was to find himself involved in a chain of nightmare incidents that were to change the whole course of his life. Yet such was his fate. Falsely accused of a robbery . . . the police on his trail . . . caught . . . proved guilty. And then . . . Drama! Excitement! Thrills! Read the opening chapters of this magnificent new story—it appears in to-day's issue of

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The RANGER

"Let me go!" The man was conscious again. "How dare you bring me here? Let me go at once!"

"You can't walk, sir," said the Greyfriars captain, puzzled. "You're in good hands—"

"Let me go!"

It was almost a yell. The man struggled so fiercely that the amazed Greyfriars men set him on his feet and released him.

"Let him go if he wants to go," said Wingate blankly. "But—"

"He's delirious," said Coker. "He jawed me as I was bringing him in. He called me a meddling dolt."

"That doesn't sound like delirium," remarked Vernon-Smith. "Solid common sense and good judgment."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you want a thick ear, young Smith!" roared Coker.

"Order there!" rapped Wingate.

The motorist stood unsteadily in the midst of an excited circle. His ghastly face, streaked with blood from a cut on his head, was full of a strange excitement and fear. Why he was alarmed was a mystery, unless he was getting delirious. The false beard, hanging on a single wire, gave him a strange look. It was slipping farther out of place, but he was unaware of it. He stood staggering, evidently scarcely able to keep his feet.

"For goodness' sake, sir, let us take you in!" exclaimed Wingate, really concerned. "You are in good hands here, and a doctor is being sent for."

"Leave me alone!"

"Certainly, if you wish; but—"

"Leave me alone, I tell you!"

The man stared round with dizzy eyes, as if taking his bearings. Then he started to walk towards the gates. That he was in no state to walk was clear to all eyes, and the Sixth Formers stood ready to catch him if he fell.

He lurched, and Wingate's strong arm caught him.

"Bear a hand!" said Wingate.

The man fainted as he fell! He was insensible again as the seniors carried him into the sanatorium.

The crowd in the quad were left in an excited buzz.

Harry Wharton had a startled look on his face. His eyes met Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh's, and the Nabob of Bhanipur gave a nod.

"You think you've heard his voice before, Inky?" breathed Wharton.

"The thoughtfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "We have seen that esteemed Johnny before more than oncefully."

"We saw him yesterday in Friardale Wood," said Bob Cherry.

"And before that!" said Harry quietly.

"I don't remember—"

"He hadn't a black beard, or a moustache either when we saw him before that!" said the captain of the Remove. "It's a false beard, and I fancy the moustache is the same. You remember he did not speak when we came on him in Wood Lane yesterday."

"I remember; but—"

"We might have known his voice—that was why," said Harry. "When we came on that man in plus fours, in Uncle Clegg's shop at Friardale, last week, we knew him by his voice—the voice of the venerable sportsman in white whiskers who landed a stolen note on us."

Bob Cherry jumped.

"Great pip! Do you think—"

"I am sure—or almost sure," said Harry. "You think it's the same man, Inky?"

"The thoughtfulness is preposterous."

"Oh, my hat!" said Nugent blankly.

"He was in a fearful temper when he found us in his car yesterday in Wood Lane," said Harry. "He knew us, too. And the way he smacked my face showed what he felt like towards us. Yet he never said a word. He knew that that time in Uncle Clegg's shop we spotted him by his voice, and he was afraid to speak. But we've heard him speak now."

"Phew!"

The Famous Five looked at one another. It was a startling idea. That there was something strange and mysterious about the motorist in the green Austin, they had realised; but they had not concerned themselves about it. But if he was the same man who had been seen in two different disguises, passing the stolen notes from Brighton! The fact that he was obviously in disguise now gave the idea probability.

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter rolled up to the Famous Five. "I say, what's the secret?"

The fat Owl blinked inquisitively at the Famous Five through his big spectacles. He could see that something was "on," and, of course, he wanted to know.

Bunter always wanted to know.

The discussion ceased immediately. The matter required thinking out before anything was said, and certainly Billy Bunter was not a fellow to be told. Telling Bunter was telling the wide world.

"I say, you fellows, do you know who the man is?" asked Bunter eagerly. "Some fishy sort of blighter going about in a false beard—what? I say, who is he?"

Bob Cherry winked at his chums.

"You'll keep it dark, Bunter?" he whispered.

"Yes, rather, old chap!" gasped Bunter, breathless with curiosity. "You can trust me, old fellow! You know how I keep secrets!"

"Oh, my hat! I mean, yes, rather! Mind, not a word!"

"Not a syllable!" gasped Bunter. "I say, do tell me! Who is he?"

"Mussolini!" breathed Bob.

"What?" yelled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!" roared Bunter.

"Don't be a goat! Tell me who he is!"

"Hitler!" said Bob.

"You—you—you—" Bunter's very spectacles gleamed with wrath. "You—you silly idiot! You—you blithering ass! Tell me who he is!"

"I've told you!" answered Bob gravely. "Mussolini or Hitler! You pays your money, and you takes your choice!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

And the Famous Five walked away, laughing, leaving the Owl of the Remove glaring after them, with a glare that almost cracked his spectacles.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Brought to Book!

KNOCK!

John James Hazeldene peered from behind the drawn curtain in the Redwing cottage at Hawkscliff, with beating heart.

That sharp, imperative knock at the door, he knew, was not delivered by the hand of his niece from Cliff House.

Who was there?

The hapless man in hiding had been terrified, only a few days ago, by Billy Bunter butting into the cottage. He lived in fear of some villager discovering his presence and investigating.

Only since Marjorie's visit had he ceased to fear the coming of the owner of the cottage. Yet he could not leave. Where was he to flee?

That loud, commanding knock at the door brought the thought of the police into his mind at once. With a trembling hand he drew the curtain a little aside and peered out.

He gave a violent start at the sight of a tall, white-bearded, grim-featured old gentleman standing before the cottage door.

It was his father.

He had not even known that the colonel had returned to England at all. Marjorie had not known it at the time she had seen her uncle in Redwing's cottage. John James gazed at the old military gentleman, dumbfounded.

Knock!

The door shook under the bang of the colonel's cane.

"Oh!" gasped John James helplessly.

He moved to the door. There was a sound of dragging bolts, and it opened. Colonel Hazeldene stared in.

"Father!" breathed John James.

John James was well over forty, but he stood in the presence of his father like an uneasy schoolboy. He almost looked as if he expected the old gentleman to lay the gold-headed cane round him—as no doubt he had done in days gone by.

The colonel snorted, and stalked in.

"So you're here!" he grunted.

"Did Marjorie—" faltered John James.

He guessed that it was from his niece that the colonel had learned his whereabouts.

"Exactly!"

Colonel Hazeldene stared round the cottage. Then he stared at his son. The contempt in his face brought the colour to John James.

"You nincompoop!" said the colonel.

"Father—"

"You weak-kneed young fool!"

John James was silent.

"I have a car on the lower road," said the colonel. "How long will it take you to get ready?"

"Ready for what?" gasped John James.

"For what?" snorted the colonel.

"To come with me, of course! Do you fancy that I shall leave you here?"

"But—but I cannot go! I—I am in danger of arrest! You have heard of the bank robbery at Brighton. I am suspected!"

"Get your coat on!"

"But—"

"Where is your hat?"

"But—but—"

"My granddaughter," said the colonel, "is waiting in the car. She has to return to Cliff House. Lose no time!"

"But I—I—I cannot—"

Colonel Hazeldene looked at his watch.

"I will give you five minutes, James!" he said. "I will wait for you outside the cottage! Lose no time!"

"But—"

Snort!

The colonel stalked out.

He stood like a ramrod outside the cottage, leaving his son fluttering and twittering within.

But John James joined him there in five minutes. What the old gentleman's intentions were John James did not know. But he knew that he was as much under his domination as when he had been a boy of ten.

When he came out, in coat and hat,

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the colonel surveyed him with grim disapproval and contempt. He said only one word:

"Come!"

John James followed him.

They went down the rugged, steep street to the lower road, where the car waited.

Marjorie was sitting in the car. She gave her uncle and her grandfather a quick look. She, no more than John James, knew what the old man's intentions were. Whatever they were, it was not for her to oppose them; and evidently John James was not thinking of doing so.

"Get in!" barked the colonel.

John James hesitated one moment—only one. Then he got in. The old warrior followed him.

The car buzzed away.

Not a word was spoken. Colonel Hazeldene sat as stiff and silent as a bronze image. His look did not encourage conversation on the part of his son or his granddaughter.

The miles flew under the wheels. The car ran down Pegg Lane at last and stopped at the gate of Cliff House School.

Colonel Hazeldene stepped out. John James looked at him without catching his eye. Marjorie got out of the car.

Then, for a moment or two, the grim old gentleman's iron face relaxed.

"My dear," he said, "you are a good, brave girl! It was plucky of you to stand by this shivering nincompoop of a son of mine! But you can leave him in my hands now. I am seeing him through! Good-bye, my dear!"

He kissed the girl affectionately, and stepped into the car again.

"Good-bye, grandfather!" faltered Marjorie. "But—but, uncle—"

"He is in good hands!" said the colonel grimly.

The car shot away.

Marjorie stood watching it till it was out of sight. Then she went in at the gate, with a thoughtful brow, but a lighter heart. Whatever it was that the colonel intended to do, she could not doubt that he would handle the situation better than the scared fugitive possibly could.

John James did not look as if he shared that confidence. When the car passed a constable on the road, he shivered back and drew his hat over his face. That action drew a snort of contempt from his father.

"A son of mine—afraid to be seen!" snorted the colonel.

"I am in danger!"

"Danger should be faced, not dodged!" barked the colonel. "Nincompoop!"

"But—"

"Nincompoop!"

John James said no more.

On the Lantham road the colonel spoke to the chauffeur—words that sent a cold chill down the spine of his hapless son.

"Brighton—and make her move!"

The car whizzed.

John James gasped. Every vestige of colour deserted his face. He seemed scarcely to breathe as he leaned back weakly on the cushions. But he found his voice at last.

"We—we are going to Brighton!" he panted.

"Where else?" barked the colonel.

"But—but—but I dare not—"

"Nincompoop!"

"I—I—I will not go! I will not—"

Colonel Hazeldene eyed him grimly.

"Jump out of the car, if you like, James!" he answered.

As the car was doing forty, John

James was not likely to avail himself of that desperate resource!

He sat, overwhelmed, as the car ate up the miles. It was a long, long drive to Brighton. But it was a good car, and it made good speed. In the dusk of the April evening it glided into the lighted streets of Brighton.

John James knew only too well the building at which it stopped at last.

When he stepped out he gave a hunted look up and down the street. It was so clear that, even at the last moment, he was thinking of a frantic bolt, that the colonel gripped his arm.

"Come!" he grunted.

A constable on the steps of the police station looked at them curiously. John James Hazeldene groaned.

"I am a lost man!" he muttered.

"If you are a guilty man, you are a lost man!" said Colonel Hazeldene. "And if you are guilty, I have no desire whatever to save you."

"I am not guilty! I—"

"Then you are a saved man, and I have saved you! Come!"

There was no help for it!

With his arm linked in his father's, John James walked into the building, where an astonished chief inspector was immediately informed that the missing cashier of the Brighton and County Bank had arrived to give the police the "interview" they had so long desired!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

News on the Radio!

"STOP that row!" snarled Hazel. "Rats to you!" answered Tom Brown cheerfully.

The wireless was on in Study No. 2 of the Remove. Hazel, coming up to his study, found it fairly full of Remove fellows. Tom Brown's wireless set was rather popular in the Remove—though to Hazel, in his sulky, irritable, nervy state, it was only a worry.

Harry Wharton & Co. were in the study, and Billy Bunter and Smithy and Redwing and several other fellows. It was rather a "full house."

Hazel stared sulkily at the gathering. Strains of jazz emanated from the radio, till a pause came.

"News next!" said Tom Brown.

"Shut the rotten thing off!" growled Hazel.

"Oh, draw it mild, old bean!" said Bob Cherry. "Wander along the passage if you don't like it!"

"This is my study!" snapped Hazel.

"Mine, too!" remarked Tom Brown.

Billy Bunter contributed a fat cachinnation.

"He, he, he! I say, you fellows, Hazel doesn't want to hear the news! He doesn't want to hear about his uncle being nabbed."

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

Hazel gave the fat Owl of the Remove a fierce glare. Possibly his objection to the wireless was partly due to his fear of news of his missing uncle coming through.

He lived in fear of hearing that John James had been arrested in the vicinity of the school. At the same time he would have been glad to hear that the missing man had been taken, and that the dismal affair had some chance of coming to an end. Almost any end of it would have been welcome to Hazeldene. His nerves had been in rags ever since John James had turned up in the vicinity of Greyfriars.

"Keep it going, Browney!" said Vernon-Smith. "We want to hear the news, if Hazel doesn't! If they get that

jolly old bank robber, the news is sure to be broadcast."

"Good news for Hazel if they do!" said Redwing.

"He, he, he!" cackled Billy Bunter. "Not if it's his uncle!"

Hazel, with gleaming eyes, made a jump at the fat Owl! He sprawled over Bob Cherry's long legs, which were in the way. Study No. 2 was rather packed with the numerous radio audience.

"Here, look out!" roared Bob. "They're my legs!"

"Get out of the way, you fool!"

"Nice polite sort of sportsman, ain't you?" said Bob cheerily. "Same to you, old bean, with knobs on!"

Hazel scrambled through and reached for Bunter. That fat and fatuous youth squirmed away round the study table.

"I say, you fellows, keep him off!" howled Bunter. "'Tain't my fault his uncle bolted with those banknotes!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say—yaroooooh!" roared Bunter, as Hazel reached him at last.

Hazel gripped him by the collar.

Bang!

Bunter's fat head established contact with the study table. His wild roar rang the length of the Remove passage.

"Yoooooop!"

Hazel was about to deliver another bang when Harry Wharton caught his arm and jerked his grasp away from Bunter.

"'Nuff's as good as a feast!" remarked the captain of the Remove.

"That will do, Hazel!"

"Let go, you fool!"

"Yow-ow-ow!" roared Bunter. "You beast! Rotter! I hope they'll jolly well nab your uncle and send him to chokey! I wish they'd send you along with him! Yow-ow-ow!"

Hazel wrenched his arm away from Wharton's hold. Billy Bunter jumped into the passage just in time, and fled for his life.

"Quiet, you men!" said Tom Brown. "We're getting the news—"

"Hang the news!" snarled Hazel.

"Oh, shut up!"

"Don't be a silly ass, Hazel!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "You ought to be anxious to hear the news, if there's any from Brighton. The way you carry on, you make a fellow think that you believe your own uncle a guilty man."

Hazel snarled, but did not answer. That, as a matter of fact, was his fixed belief, since the stolen banknotes had turned up in the district. He was very far from sharing Marjorie's loyal faith.

Harry Wharton & Co. listened keenly to the announcer's voice, when the news started. They were very eager to hear whether there was any news of John James Hazeldene.

They had a suspicion—a strong suspicion—that the man now lying in the school hospital was the man who had passed stolen banknotes. They had seen the man in two different disguises, engaged in his nefarious work—once as a venerable, white-bearded old man, once as a younger man in plus fours. They suspected, if they were not sure, that the man in the false black beard was the same man in a third disguise.

But was he John James Hazeldene? That, they did not know.

They hoped not—they believed not! But they knew that it was possible.

So far, they had said nothing of what they suspected. The man was safe enough where he was, so far as that went. The school doctor had seen him, and attended to his injuries, and it was known that those injuries were too serious for him to move, unless in an ambulance. If he was the man they



As Horace Coker marched into the gateway of Greyfriars School with his burden wriggling on his back, old Gosling, the porter, came out of his lodge, staring blankly. "Lend a hand, you ass!" said the Fifth Former, in his customary polite way. "Can't you see I'm nearly dropping? Lend a hand, fathead!"

suspected him to be, he could not make his escape. But was he also John James—was he Hazel's uncle, and Marjorie's? That was a tormenting thought to Marjorie's friends.

Nothing could have been more welcome to their ears than an announcement that the missing cashier had been found—for that would have proved that he was not the man now lying in the Greyfriars sanatorium.

"Hark!" exclaimed the Bouncer. "Here it comes!"

Hazel gave a convulsive start as he heard his uncle's name from the radio. Every fellow in the study listened keenly—especially the Famous Five! News of the missing cashier was coming!

"John James Hazeldene, the missing cashier of the Brighton and County Bank, has returned to Brighton—"

Hazel gasped.

"By Jove!" murmured Harry Wharton.

"Quiet!"

"And has interviewed the police on the subject of the robbery at the Brighton and County Bank some weeks ago—" came the announcer's voice.

The juniors exchanged glances.

"Mr. Hazeldene's absence has not yet been explained, but it is stated that he returned to Brighton entirely of his own accord and free will, and called on the police—"

"Oh!" gasped Hazel.

"Hurrah!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"First sensible thing the silly ass has done!" remarked the Bouncer. "You ought to be glad to hear that, Hazel!"

Hazel did not speak. He did not know whether to be glad or not. If his uncle was innocent he had taken the right step. But if he was guilty—if this only meant the surrender of a fugitive tired of flight and hiding—

Harry Wharton & Co. did not wait to

hear more. The news on the radio lightened their hearts, and brightened their faces. If John James Hazeldene was now in Brighton, as evidently he was, the man in the school sanatorium was not, and could not be Marjorie's uncle! And that man, they were almost convinced, was the bank robber!

The Famous Five left the study. Wharton drew Hazel out into the passage. Hazel stared at him with sulky inquiry.

"What—" he began.

"Buck up, old bean!" said the captain of the Remove. "That's the best news we've heard for a jolly long time."

"What-ho!" said Bob.

"How do I know?" muttered Hazel feverishly. "If he's innocent, yes. But—but he was about here lately, while the stolen notes were passing—"

"And the man who passed them is still here," said Harry Wharton quietly.

"You can't know that—"

"I believe I do. We've got reason—jolly good reason—to believe that that man Coker carried in this afternoon is the man!"

"What rot! Why—"

"I'll tell you why," answered Harry. "He palmed off a liver on us last week, got up as a venerable old johnny; that's how Coker came to make his idiotic mistake at Chunkley's, mistaking your grandfather for him. When we spotted him at Uncle Clegg's we knew him by his voice, he looked quite different. Well, yesterday we came on that motorist and had a row with him, and he never spoke a word all the time; and I'm jolly certain now that it was because he knew we might spot his voice again—"

"But—"

"He's in disguise; you saw his black beard come off when he was carried in. And when he spoke—"

"You knew his voice again?" gasped Hazel.

"Yes—at least, I feel sure of it."

Hazel caught his breath.

"Oh, if only you're right!" he breathed. "If only you're right! But it's not much to go on. Only he was in disguise; that looks fishy—"

"The fishfulness is terrific," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh, with a grin.

"And he wanted to get away, though he was hurt and couldn't walk!" breathed Hazel. "That looks—"

"It does!" said Harry. "And we know now for a fact that, whoever he is, he isn't John James Hazeldene—who's at Brighton this very minute."

"What are you going to do about it?"

"I'm going to Quelch to tell him what we think," said Harry. "He can decide whether to let Inspector Grimes know. If that man's the bank robber, it's pretty certain that he's got some of the plunder about him, and that will fix it. I'm going to Quelch now!"

And Harry Wharton went at once to his Form-master's study.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

All's Well That Ends Well!

"I SAY, you fellows!" roared Billy Bunter in great excitement.

Billy Bunter was full of news in break the following morning.

He rolled up to the Famous Five, his little round eyes glistening behind his big round spectacles.

"He's gone!" gasped Bunter.

Harry Wharton & Co. grinned. They knew more than William George Bunter did about that little matter. In bringing them this startling news the fat Owl was carrying coals to Newcastle.

"Who's gone?" asked Bob Cherry.

"The man in sanny! Gone! I've just heard! I say, you fellows, there was something jolly fishy about that chap!" said Bunter impressively. "I'm jolly certain he was a suspicious character of some sort—"

"Not really?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Well, he was got up in a false beard!" said Bunter. "I believe the bobbies have got him!"

"You don't say so!" ejaculated Nugent.

"I do!" said Bunter firmly. "I noticed that old Grimey came barging in last night just before dorm. Well, that man in sanny was taken away in an ambulance this morning. There were two policemen—I heard Gosling say so—which looks to me as if it was a police ambulance—"

"What a brain!" said Bob admiringly.

Billy Bunter rolled away to tell his news farther. The Famous Five grinned at one another.

Hazel joined them in the quad. In contrast to his usual looks of late Hazel was bright and smiling.

"It's topping, isn't it?" he said.

"The topfulness is terrific," agreed Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "Everything in the esteemed and ridiculous garden is lovely."

"There's no doubt about it now," said Hazel. "You fellows spotted him, and that did it. They've got the man."

"The gotfulness," said Bob Cherry solemnly, "is preposterous."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hazel chuckled. He looked a new man, with the weight lifted from his mind that had lain there like lead for so long. He had had leave from Quelch to go over to Cliff House that morning to carry the good news to Marjorie, and he had returned very merry and bright.

"I say, Marjorie was fearfully bucked when I told her," he said. "She believed in uncles all along." Hazel coloured.

"I wish I had now. But it looked—well, you know how it looked when the notes began to pass in this quarter, and we knew that he was hiding about here. What was a fellow to think?"

Harry Wharton & Co. made no reply to that.

"I know what old Grimes thought," said Hazel. "But Marjorie didn't. She had an idea—she told Grimes, I hear—that the rotter came to this quarter to pass the notes simply because he learned from the newspapers that the missing cashier had been seen here; to fix it on him, you know, and see himself safe."

"By gum!" said Bob. "That was pretty deep, if it's correct. What an awful rotter!"

"Well, it looks like it now," said Hazel. "I never thought of it; but Marjorie did, and she told Grimes. Anyhow, Grimey's got his man now! They've found a bundle of the stolen notes on him. That settles it. Fancy that silly ass Coker walking the man in here—for you fellows to spot him!" Hazel laughed. "That silly ass, you know! I'm sorry he's up for a flogging on Saturday."

"Poor old Coker!" said Bob. "He never knew he was doing anything useful—but he's done it all the same. I say, couldn't you put in a word for him now? It was through him—"

"Go and see your granddad and beg him off," suggested Johnny Bull.

"Like a shot if I could!" answered Hazel. "But I can't. I've just heard from Marjorie that grandfather's gone. She took him to Redwing's cottage, where Uncle James was hiding, and he walked Uncle James off in his car."

That's how he got to Brighton, of course. I wondered at his going back of his own accord." Hazel grinned. "Lot of his own accord about it! Grandfather did it, of course! Marched him off, whether he liked it or not!"

"Best thing that could have happened to him!" said Harry.

"Oh, yes, rather!" agreed Hazel. "Only I can't get in touch with my grandfather now; I haven't any idea where he is, unless he's putting up in Brighton somewhere."

"Poor old Coker!"

Coker of the Fifth was in the quad—with a glum and gloomy brow. The sword of Damocles still impended over the unhappy head of Horace Coker.

Coker was not thinking about the injured motorist he had brought into the school; he had almost forgotten him. He had heard that the man had been taken away, but he was not in the least interested. Horace Coker's dismal reflections were concentrated on his own unhappy state. He was up for a flogging on Saturday. That terrible prospect obscured the whole horizon to Coker of the Fifth.

Harry Wharton & Co. smiled as Coker stalked past them, looking like Hamlet in his most tragic moments.

"Let's tell him," suggested Bob.

"Dash it all, Coker ought to be let off in the jolly old circus! If he hadn't trotted that sportsman into the school we should never have spotted him, and if we hadn't spotted him we couldn't have tipped Quelch, and if we hadn't tipped Quelch he couldn't have put old Grimey wise, and if he hadn't put old Grimey wise—"

"Sounds like the 'House That Jack Built,'" grinned Nugent.

"Well, it was really through Coker that he was nabbed; though, of course, Coker doesn't understand that—or anything else," said Bob. "Let's tell him; and if he puts it to the Head it may do him some good."

"Let's!" agreed Wharton.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Coker!" bawled Bob. "Stop a minute, old bean!"

Coker glared.

He stopped—but it was only to concentrate a glare of wrath on his well-wishers in the Remove. Coker was in no mood to be bothered by fags, or to be addressed as "old bean" by them.

"You cheeky little tick!" roared Coker.

"But, I say—"

"Shut up!" said Coker, and stalked on.

"You silly ass!" roared Bob.

Coker stopped again and turned back. He made a stride at Bob Cherry.

Smack!

"Yarooooop!" roared Bob, as Coker's heavy hand landed.

The next moment Coker was struggling in the grasp of the Co. Roaring, Coker smote the quadrangle hard!

The Famous Five walked off, and left him to roar! Bob Cherry rubbed a burning ear as he went! His sympathy for Horace Coker had evaporated!

"If Coker bags that flogging," said Bob, "I hope the Beak will lay it on hard! Jolly hard!"

At which his comrades chuckled.

After class that day Coker received a message calling him to the Head's study. The sword of Damocles was coming down at last! He was in no hurry to obey the summons.

"It's about the flogging, of course," he told Potter and Greene gloomily. "Pretty thick, what? Can either of you fellows see that I was in any way to blame for what happened at Chunkley's that day?"

"Um!" said Potter.

"Hem!" said Greene,

"Mind, I'm not going to be flogged!" said Coker darkly. "I've thought it over, and decided."

"Isn't that for the Head to decide?" murmured Potter.

"No!" said Coker. "It's not! It's for me to decide, and I've decided. I'll go and see the Head now, as he wants me to. But if he's fixed up the flogging, I shan't be here in the morning to take it!"

Potter and Greene gazed at him.

Coker was very firm.

"I shall walk out of the school!" he said. "I don't know what my people will think—but Aunt Judy will stand by me, anyhow! I shall be sorry to leave—I'm not the sort of fellow that a school can well spare, as you know—and goodness knows how you fellows will get on without me! But I've made up my mind—I'm not going to be flogged!"

And with that grim determination fixed, Horace Coker proceeded to the Head's study. As he entered that dreaded apartment, he looked rather like the Alpine gentleman in the poem—his brow was set, his eye beneath, flashed like a falchion from its sheath!

He stood before his headmaster, rather in the attitude of Ajax defying the lightning. Luckily, the Head did not discern that Coker of the Fifth was understudying Ajax! He blinked at Coker over his glasses, with a benign and benevolent blink.

"Ah, Coker!" he said. "I have sent for you, my boy, in reference to the—er—unfortunate episode about which Colonel Hazeldene laid a complaint before me! I have been in communication with Colonel Hazeldene—"

Coker stood silent. He was debating in his mind whether to tell the Head that he had decided not to be flogged, or whether to let the old bean run on! Fortunately he let the old bean run on!

"Colonel Hazeldene is now acquainted with the part you played, Coker, in connection with the arrest of the bank robber," went on the Head. "It is very largely due to you, Coker, that the man was taken, and the colonel's son cleared of all possible suspicion in connection with the robbery. Colonel Hazeldene desires me to convey his grateful acknowledgments to you."

Coker jumped.

"He desires me to say that he completely forgives the absurd action of which you were guilty at Courtfield a few days ago—"

"Oh!" gasped Coker.

"And there is, therefore, no further question of punishment," said Dr. Locke. "The matter ends here."

"Oh!" gasped Coker again.

"I am very glad of this, Coker!" said the Head.

Coker was glad, too!

He left the Head's study as if he were walking on air. He strolled back to his own study, with his hands in his pockets, and a grin on his face. Potter and Greene stared at him. They had not expected Coker to come back looking like that.

"All serene, you men," said Coker airily. "The Beak only wanted a chat."

"And the flogging?" gasped Potter.

"I think I mentioned," said Coker, "that I was not going to be flogged! Well, I'm not! That's all!"

And that was that!

(Watch out next week for another magnificent story of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled: "QUELCH'S EASTER EGG!" You'll vote it one of the finest school yarns Frank Richards has ever written!)



THE SEA SPIDER

By GEORGE E. ROCHESTER

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

Ulverst, the greatest U-boat commander Germany ever had, accompanied by a competent crew, sets out aboard the Sea Spider to wage war against the world. The first vessel to fall a prey to this deadly underwater craft is the bullion carrier Minneapolis, from which is transferred bullion to the value of £200,000. Driving on through the surging seas in mid-Atlantic, the Sea Spider eventually reaches the lost city of Atlantis, where treasure worth more than £1,000,000 is discovered. Boarding a plane, Ulverst then sets out for the mainland with a view to making arrangements for the disposal of the treasure. He is forced down in the Arctic Ocean, whence he is picked up by Serge Tarka, a white Russian and owner of the whaler Nordyck, and taken to Para, on the White Sea. Here he is instrumental in saving the villagers from a murderous attack by Red Russians. Promising to end this cruel persecution by the Reds, Ulverst, with a crew of five sturdy youngsters to handle the Nordyck, sets out for the open sea, bound for Ice Rock, the lair of the Sea Spider.

(Now read on.)

Disaster!

WHAT puzzled Ulverst most was what was to be done with his youthful crew when he reached Ice Rock. He could not keep them there, and, although they might have the best intentions in the world, they would be certain to talk about the lonely rock with its strange cavernous workshops when they returned home.

And if they talked, it would not be long before either the Russian Government or some other European Government got wind of it, and sent a warship to discover just what was going on at that lonely rock.

Still, there must be some solution to the problem, reflected Ulverst, and, in the meantime, what he had to concentrate on was getting the Nordyck safely to Ice Rock.

As Tarka's wife had said, the boys were strong and sturdy, and Ulverst found them a smart and useful lot. Thanks to the auxiliary engine with which the whaler was fitted, they were not dependent on the wind, and when, towards evening, they ran into fog, Ulverst kept the engine running at full revolutions, driving the Nordyck through the murk, with a total disregard for any other whalers which might be nosing their way through it.

Nor did he use the electric foghorn on the bridge, but took the one precaution of stationing a couple of the boys on the fore'sle head, with instructions to keep their eyes and ears strained.

By morning they had run out of the fog, and, although the sky was grey and lowering, there was a freshening wind, which took the whaler along at a steady clip, the water frothing and foaming away from her blunt bows.

They were well within the region of drifting snowfields now, and more than once the Nordyck had to bear away off her course to skirt some vast floating plain of snow which stretched white and dazzling against the dark background of the oily sea.

The day passed uneventfully, and if the wind held Ulverst reckoned that

he should reach Ice Rock within the next thirty-six hours. But the wind died with the dusk, and the clatter of the engine again broke the stillness of those dreary wastes of ice and sea.

On the bridge, Ulverst was casting an anxious eye at the grey and thickening murk ahead.

"It's getting dark too quickly for my liking," he said to Ivan, a straight-limbed lad of sixteen, whom he had selected as mate. "That's snow ahead, I'm certain!"

"Yes, it is snow!" answered Ivan.

"And wind with it, only dead against us!" commented Ulverst grimly, as an icy wind souged across the deck, then died away, to be followed a few moments later by another and stronger gust, which brought with it fine and powdery flakes of snow.

Ulverst stepped back into the wheel-house.

"Stay with Ivan on the bridge," he said, relieving the lad at the spokes. "I'll take the wheel. We're in for a real dirty squall!"

He was right, for the snow-laden wind was wailing now across the deck on a high-pitched and eerie note, which gave promise of worse to come. Within a few minutes the Nordyck was ploughing her way forward through a blinding storm of flying snow, which cut the face and caused Ivan and his companion to crouch for shelter behind the bridge tarpaulin.

The sea also was rising, and the heavy whaler was shipping great spouts of icy sea over her blunt bows, the flying spray rattling like lead against the wheel-house windows.

It was fortunate for Ulverst and his youthful crew that he had taken the wheel, for strong though the lad whom he had relieved had been, he could never have kept the bucketing, swinging Nordyck on her course, for she reeled and plunged like a mad thing as the buffeting seas hit her and the screaming hurricane shrieked through her spars, causing the ropes and hal-yards to bend rigid, like rods of black and curved steel.

Time and again Ulverst thought his engine had failed him and that the vessel had lost steering way as she swung perilously and broachingly to the piling seas, but always he pulled the blunt bows back into the teeth of the storm.

Then without warning came disaster. Ulverst heard Ivan yell, glimpsed a huge solid whiteness, which seemed to bear toweringly down on the Nordyck, then was almost flung from the wheel as there came a terrific crash, followed by the grinding and splintering of timbers.

Marooned!

LEAVING the wheel, Ulverst dashed out on to the bridge. The whaler had hit an iceberg on which she was slowly but surely grinding herself to death.

Ulverst could see the massive, towering whiteness of the berg through the driving, blinding snow, and, cupping his hands to his mouth, he bawled:

"The boats are useless. Get all the stores you can carry, and jump for it! Get on to the ice!"

He wheeled on Ivan and his companion as the other three boys dashed below.

"Come on, we've got to salvage what we can!" he rapped. "You, Ivan, get the oil cask over. We'll want it. You, Serge—to the other boy—collect all the blankets and bedding you can. Hurry, she'll go any minute!"

Ivan and Serge leapt down the bridge ladder, and whilst the latter dashed into the fore'sle, Ivan made for the galley, where the oil cask was stored.

As for Ulverst, he made below to the store lockers, where the remaining three boys were loading themselves with all the stores they could carry.

This was to be their most urgent need, Ulverst knew. They must have food, and who knew but what the time might come when an extra tin of biscuit or meat might mean all the difference between life and death?

The Nordyck had heeled to an acute angle, the heavy seas which were crashing against the ice, sweeping over her and sending gallons of icy cold water shooting down through the open scuttles.

Suddenly she shuddered like a live thing, and Ulverst realised she was going.

"Get on deck and on to the ice!" he shouted, and as the three heavily laden boys scrambled up the tilted ladder he followed them.

"Look out!" he yelled as a heavy sea crashed down over the weather rail and surged, swirling and creaming, across the deck.

Next instant he had leapt forward, diving desperately for one of the boys, who had been swept off his feet. He caught him, and together they rolled into the scuppers as another sea crashed down on the deck and swept over them.

Gasping and breathless, and soaked to the skin, Ulverst staggered to his feet, still holding the lad whom he had saved from being swept away. The stores which the boy had been carrying had gone, but that could not be helped now.

"All right, lad?" panted Ulverst. "Look out, here comes another!"

The two clung desperately to the rail as another sea came sweeping across the deck, plucking at them with icy fingers as it poured away through the running scuppers.

The moment it had passed Ulverst hoisted the boy up on to the rail.

"Now!" he shouted. The lad jumped, slipped on the ice, scrambled to his feet again, and literally clawed his way up to safety.

The other four boys had already jammed. Ulverst could see them huddled against the ice above the swinging, crashing seas. How many stores and blankets had been salvaged he did not know, but there was no time for anything more now.

Already the Nordyck was moving, sliding back into the seas which smashed so pitilessly against her. Ulverst had about two seconds in which to act.

Leaping on to the rail, he sprang for the ice, and by the time he had scrambled, panting and slipping, to safety, the Nordyck had gone, sliding back into the crashing seas, which closed over her as she sank.

For the next hour Ulverst and his five youthful companions crouched shivering, miserable, and drenched to the skin, in the lee of a great outcropping of ice.

There was nothing they could do for warmth, except keep huddled together, for the hurricane was still screaming about them, and in the murk and blinding snow one false step might easily mean a quick downward plunge to death in the raging waters at the base of the berg.

Their clothes were stiffening and freezing on them, and Ulverst knew that if the blizzard did not ease up there was little chance of any of them seeing another dawn, for they would die of cold and exposure.

Bitterly he cursed the luck which had dogged them since he had set out from Ice Rock for the mainland. But there was no use thinking of that now. It was all in the luck of the game which he played, and he knew that if death came to him in those dreary wastes it would be a better end than on the gallows.

There came at long length a thinning of the snow which was swirling about them, and the storm began to ease up.

It ceased at last, and there came a lightening of the murk, which was the

real Arctic dusk. Ripping open the wooden cases of stores and breaking the wood into short lengths, which they had drenched with oil from the cask, the marooned party quickly had a fire going.

"Perhaps some whaler will see the fire and come and take us off," said Ivan.

"Yes, that is almost certain to be what will happen," replied Ulverst cheerily.

Yet he was wondering to himself just how he would explain the presence of himself and the five boys on a drifting iceberg to any whaling skipper who might pick them up.

True, the fight on the mainland and his subsequent escape from prison might or might not strike a sympathetic cord in the heart of his hearer, but what would be difficult to explain would be why he had been sailing northwards.

No, if they were picked up he would be in a devil of a mess; and if they weren't picked up he'd be in a worse mess still, for death would come slowly but surely to all six of them when their stores were exhausted.

However, it was no good worrying now. The fate of himself and his companions lay in the lap of the gods, and, having opened a couple of tins of meat and a tin of biscuits, the party were soon eating heartily, with Ulverst the cheeriest of them all.

Out of the Dusk!

THE night passed, the long and bitter Arctic dusk yielding at length to dawn, which was but a faint lightening of the surrounding gloom.

Eagerly the marooned party scanned the waste of waters, Ulverst and Ivan clambering to the highest pinnacle of the iceberg. But not a hull or a sail or a wisp of smoke was to be seen. In his heart, Ulverst knew that they were too far north for even the stout little whalers, which each year pressed farther and farther beyond the grim Arctic circle.

He said nothing to Ivan, but the lad knew the whaling seas only too well.

"I think we will stay here until we die," he said, without any show of emotion. "Vessels do not come so far north as this."

Ulverst looked at him. "But you said last night that perhaps a whaler would see our fire and pick us up," he said.

Ivan nodded. "I said that in front of the others so that they would not be sad," he answered. "With you it is different. You also know, like me, that we will never be picked up."

"Mein blut!" exclaimed Ulverst. "But you take it well, lad."

"It is the only way to take it," responded Ivan stoically. "We of the sea live always with death. What matter if it comes sooner than one might wish? I am not afraid."

Ulverst turned and stared out again across the lonely and deserted sea, his face hard and set, a strange look in his eyes.

It was he who had brought this gallant lad and his companions to their deaths. And on what enterprise? Merely that he might get back to his Sea Spider, that murderous beast of steel which had sent so many innocent souls to their doom.

True, he had intended using the Spider to avenge the gross injustice

shown those who had befriended him, but somehow that did not seem to matter.

Had he never come into the lives of these boys they would not now be marooned on this drifting berg on which they would die of exposure and starvation before many days had passed.

Strange how it struck home to him when he had sunk a ship like the Minneapolis without trace, and without compunction.

He looked again at Ivan. "I am sorry," he said.

Ivan shook his head, his firm young lips curving in a gentle smile.

"It is not your fault," he said. "There is no need to be sorry."

They rejoined the others, and what had passed between them was not mentioned. The day passed, and the Arctic night came again. With its coming the marooned party rekindled their fire, and throughout the long and weary hours there was always one of them crouched over the flickering flames, his hands outstretched to the warmth, his eyes ever watching the darkened sea.

No masthead light, however, showed through the murk, and another dreary day dawned and passed, and then another.

Ulverst had rationed the stores from the first, but already they were running short, and the fuel provided by the wooden boxes was exhausted.

They had no fire the fourth night on the iceberg, and the lad on watch sat lunched and shivering, chilled to the very bone, until he was relieved, and snuggled down beside his sleeping comrades, to find some warmth there.

Not once had Ulverst heard a complaint from one of the boys. Desperately he had tried to keep hope of being picked up alive in their hearts, but he knew that they realised the truth.

Not one of his men on the Sea Spider, he reflected, could have faced inevitable death with a greater heroism than these boys.

That he would last longer than any of them, he knew, and more than once he wondered if an inscrutable Providence had decreed that part of the punishment for his crimes should lie in the watching of these boys dying, one by one.

Two more days, and two more weary nights passed, and, in spite of the most rigorous economy and rationing, the stores were finished.

"It is the end," said Ivan, as he and Ulverst sat on watch in the murk of the Arctic night.

"Yes," assented Ulverst, then asked quietly: "What do you think of Sazo?"

"He is growing very weak," said Ivan. "He had your rations to-day."

"No," lied Ulverst.

"But, yes; I know he had," nodded Ivan. "And see, I have kept these for him, also. He will have them in the morning."

From his pocket he drew his pitiful ration of biscuit and meat.

"Mein goist!" breathed Ulverst.

But in the morning Sazo, the youngest member of the party, could not eat the food which Ivan had kept for him. The bitter chill of the night, and the long exposure had laid fatal grip on him, and, although Ulverst and Ivan chafed his limbs to restore the fast failing circulation, and got him to his feet and tried to walk him about, it was no use.

The boy was dying, and towards dusk he breathed his last.

Bared of head, and strangely drawn and haggard of face, Ulverst uttered a prayer over the emaciated little body whilst the others stood by, their eyes wet with tears.

Then, filling the empty oil cask with water, Ulverst lashed the body to it, and solemnly committed it to the deep.

That night on watch Ivan was more silent than usual.

"You are thinking of Sazo?" said Ulverst quietly.

"Yes," replied Ivan. Then, after a pause, he added: "His soul is out there over the waters. He will bring aid to us if the good God permits."

Ulverst was silent. What had such a one as he to do with God? The prayer he had uttered over Sazo's body had been the first that had ever passed his lips for more years than he cared that night to remember.

It was for the sake of these simple-hearted, simple-minded lads that he had uttered the prayer: He knew they had expected it, and knew they would have been deeply shocked and troubled had he refrained from commending the soul of the gallant little Sazo to its Maker.

And now Ivan thought that soul to be somewhere out there over the dreary waste of waters, guiding, if Providence so willed, some vessel to their aid.

It was a wonderful thought, engendered by the simple faith so deeply ingrained in them.

"Listen!"

The voice of Ivan cut in on Ulverst's thoughts, and his fingers gripped on Ulverst's arm.

Startled, Ulverst listened with straining ears. As he did so he heard, through the hushed and brooding stillness, the faint and distant thump of engines.

Back to Headquarters!

INSTANTLY Ulverst sprang to his feet, his eyes glinting as he peered out into the murk.

"Those are Diesel engines, Ivan," he cried. "They're Diesels!"

Ivan stared at him in wonderment. "They are the engines of a ship," he said. "That is all that matters."

"The engines of a ship?" repeated Ulverst exultantly. "Ay, but of the strangest ship you've ever seen, unless I'm greatly mistaken."

They had drained the oil cask into the empty meat and biscuit tins, and, seizing one of these, Ulverst dropped a match into the inflammable fluid.

Instantly a blood-red flame licked upwards, and within a moment the oil in the tin was blazing furiously.

"We'll light them all, Ivan!" cried Ulverst. "Our only chance of life lies there on the sea."

Swiftly he applied lighted matches to the other tins of oil, and although the flames were pitifully small compared with what a signal fire would have been, they would at least be apparent to anyone on watch aboard the unseen vessel.

The other three boys, roused by Ivan, were standing staring out into the dusk of the Arctic night, hoping desperately against hope that the little fires would be seen.

"Listen!" ordered Ulverst tersely.

They listened with straining ears and bated breath. The thud of the engines was much more perceptible now.

"She's heading this way," said Ivan, "but she carries no lights that I can see."

Ulverst laughed shakily.

"No, if she's the craft I think she is she will be carrying no lights," he said.

Ivan looked at him.

"Why should she not carry lights?" he asked, in surprise.

"Because she's a creature of the depths and of the night," answered Ulverst cryptically. "You'll understand soon now."



Ulverst and his youthful companion clung desperately to the rail as a huge wave came sweeping across the deck, plucking at them with icy fingers!

Was it the Spider out there on the darkened waters? What other craft would be cruising in these desolate seas, and what other craft would have all lights doused?

No, it must be the Spider. It could be nothing else. The thud of the Diesels was very close now, and suddenly a hail rang through the night:

"Ahoy, there! Who are you?"

Ulverst's hands clenched, and the blood leapt riotously through his veins, for the voice was the voice of Wesel.

"Ahoy, the Spider!" shouted Ulverst. "Send us a boat. This is Ulverst!"

In answer came Wesel's voice, incredulous and amazed:

"What the blazes are you doing there?"

"We're marooned," replied Ulverst. "Send a boat!"

To the watchers on the iceberg came the sound of sharp guttural orders, then the voice of Wesel:

"The boat's away! Stand by to be picked up!"

From out of the murk crept the collapsible canvas dinghy of the Spider, under the command of Falze, who leapt on to the ice the moment the bows touched, and seized Ulverst by the hand.

"Ma foi!" he cried. "But how came you here? We saw your signals and

bore off to investigate. And these"—his wondering eyes took in the four boys—"who are these?"

Ulverst laughed and clapped him on the shoulder.

"It's a long story, Falze," he said, "and this is no place for the telling of it. Come, let us get aboard!"

He embarked with Ivan, for there was no room for more than the two of them. But the dinghy quickly reappeared after putting them aboard the Spider, and took off the other three lads, who blinked in amaze at the huge, squat-bellied monster of steel lying there in the water.

In the squat conning-tower Ulverst was gripping Wesel by the hand.

"We could not have been better met," he said. "You have saved us from certain death."

Wesel stared at the drawn, haggard, and unshaven face of his leader.

"I was very worried when you did not return," he said, "but I kept the men working on the Spider, giving engines and gear a thorough overhaul. Last night we took her out on test, and that is how we came to be here. If we had not seen your signals we would have passed you in the darkness."

"Well, thank goodness you did see them!" laughed Ulverst. "Let's get below and get under way. You will

turn now and head back for Ice Rock." When the Spider had submerged with hatches closed, and Ivan and his three dumbfounded companions were tucking into food and steaming hot coffee provided by the steward, Ulverst told Wesel and the intently listening officers just what had happened to him since leaving Ice Rock.

He turned in shortly after, and slept the sleep of utter exhaustion, lulled to slumber by the drone of the quietly running motors driving his beloved Spider home to its base.

How long he slept he did not know, but it was the hand of Wesel on his shoulder which roused him into instant wakefulness.

"Yes, what is it?" he asked, starting up.

"We are approaching Ice Rock," said Wesel. "I thought you might like to take the Sea Spider in yourself."

"Thank you, Wesel, I would like to take her in," answered Ulverst.

He appreciated this thoughtfulness on the part of his second-in-command. But he and Wesel were two men who understood each other thoroughly, and Wesel had known how disappointed Ulverst would be if he were not roused until the Spider had been safely berthed in its secret lair.

Rising, Ulverst hurriedly dressed and made his way into the control-room. Day had come, and, reaching the periscope, he turned it slowly the full three hundred and sixty degrees, searching the seas for any sign of hull or smoke.

But nothing broke the even contour of the desolate sea save a few floating fields of snow and the grim, stark cliffs of Ice Rock, rising stark and inhospitable from out the dreary waste of waters which lapped their black and rugged base.

Satisfied that there was no ship about, Ulverst gave the order to dive, and as the Spider sank down into the gloomy depths of eternal night to the ocean floor, the powerful searchlights which formed its eyes were switched on, the crank gear rumbled into life, and, like the huge underseas monster which it was, the Spider crawled forward on its massive legs of steel, and turning about at the under-water entrance to its cave, backed slowly into the cavern and squatted down.

Once again the Spider had come home to rest, and Ulverst was heartily glad to get back, for there were times when he had thought he would never see Ice Rock again.

Waiting until the disembarking of his crew was well under way, he turned to

Ivan and the other three lads who were still awed and amazed by their wonderful voyage through the underseas in the bowels of this queer monster of steel.

"You will be quite safe and happy here," he said, "until we leave for home. That will be soon now, for I am going to avenge your brothers and your fathers!"

The Gunboat!

GIVING the boys over to the care of Stuxberg, the young second engineer, with instructions that comfortable quarters should be found for them, Ulverst walked with Wesel towards his own quarters.

"It is difficult to know just what to do with those lads," he said. "I'm afraid that they will betray the location of this base, although I do not think they would do it wilfully. They are bound to talk, you know, and that will probably result in a gunboat or warship being dispatched here to investigate."

"Yes, it is awkward," grunted Wesel. "It will be no good, I suppose, getting them to swear on oath that they won't betray the secret of Ice Rock?"

Grand New Feature by the GREYFRIARS RHYMESTER Starts Next Week!

"I'm afraid it's the only thing we can do," replied Ulverst, leading the way into the cave which served him as quarters. "We cannot keep them here as prisoners, although that would be the ideal way of settling the matter."

"Why cannot we keep them here as prisoners?" demanded Wesel. "No harm will come to them. They'll be well fed and happy enough, and when we abandon the base, which we've got to do some time, you can give them a couple of hundred pounds apiece, or something like that, to recompense them for having kept them here."

"I'd like to do that," said Ulverst slowly, "but somehow I can't. They're fine lads. They worked the old Nordyck well, and it would savour to me of treachery most foul to keep them here against their will."

"It might not be against their will," replied Wesel. "I'm not suggesting that you get them to join us, but for all you know they may be quite content to

stay on here, particularly when they know that one day they'll return home rich."

"Yes," nodded Ulverst, "there is something in that. I could also communicate with their parents, telling them that the boys are quite safe and happy, and that they will be home one day, bringing riches with them."

He broke off as Falze walked quickly into the cave, and stared in surprise at that individual's startled face.

"I think you had better come at once, sir," said Falze. "A vessel is approaching the island!"

"A vessel?" repeated Ulverst sharply.

"What sort of vessel?"

"It looks to me like a gunboat," replied Falze—"one of the craft detailed to look after British fishing interests in these waters."

"She's a cursed long way north!" growled Ulverst. "Come on! We'll have a look at her!"

The newcomer was still some four miles away, and Ulverst cried harshly:

"Don't stand there, you fools! Get under cover!"

Instantly the men dispersed, some coming back from the edge of the cliff to the lower ground behind, others lying flat on their faces behind the numerous rocks and boulders.

"I'm afraid the damage has been done already," said Wesel. "Those fellows are sure to have been seen."

"Yes, confound them!" snapped Ulverst.

He had his powerful Zeiss glasses pressed to his eyes, and, focusing them on the strange vessel, studied her long and earnestly through the lens.

"What do you make of her?" asked Wesel.

"A fishery protection vessel for certain," replied Ulverst. "What the blazes can she want here?"

"Oh, just having a look round, I suppose!" said Wesel. "Do you think they'll send a landing party ashore?"

"Sure to, if they've seen these fools here," replied Ulverst. "Cursed bad luck this, Wesel! It might turn out serious for us."

"It certainly will if they send a landing party ashore," assented Wesel grimly—"or, rather, it'll turn out serious for them! What will you do?"

"Destroy her!" replied Ulverst. "It's the only thing we can do if we want to save our necks!"

(Next week's chapters of this powerful adventure yarn are more thrilling than ever. Don't miss them, chums, whatever you do!)

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PROOF POSITIVE!

Coker's boast that he's the best angler at Greyfriars has been unexpectedly confirmed this week.

When Wingate gave him a trial in the Senior Eight he caught half a dozen crabs in a couple of minutes!

BOATHOOK AND LIFEBELT WANTED

State lowest price for second-hand articles in good working condition. We're bound to need them; Coker's going in for sculling!—Potter & Greene, Fifth Games Study.



THE NEW Greyfriars Herald



No. 132 (New Series.)

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

April 13th, 1935.

START TO FINISH

You can't beat Trevor's Towpath Transport if you want to watch the Fourth v. Remove boat race in comfort from start to finish! Fast motor-cycle combinations for Remove supporters—and donkey-carts for Fourth fans. Book now and state which crew you want to follow!—TREVOR'S TOWPATH TRANSPORT, Study No. 9, Remove.

FOR THE HONOUR OF THE CREW!

By **DICKY NUGENT**

"Avast, ye lubbers! Heave, me hearties!"

The words fairly boomed across the silvery waters of the River Ripple, causing the St. Sam's Rowing Eight to redouble the efforts they had been making at their oars.

"Splice me mainbrace! That's not half hard enough! Heave!" rang out a further order from the megaphone on the bank.

The voice belonged to Dr. Alfred Birchmell, the revered and majestic headmaster of St. Sam's. It was unusual for Dr. Birchmell to speak in nautical longwidge, but he was under the impression that it gave a professional touch to his work as official coach to the St. Sam's crew. For similar reasons, he had dressed himself in the bell-bottomed trows and ribboned cap of a blewjacket—thereby presenting rather a peculiar picture as he cycled along the towpath.

The Head was far from satisfied with the progress of the St. Sam's crew, and his megaphone was continually to his lips as he pedalled onwards.

"Shiver me timbers! Can't you go faster?" he bawled. "Watching you lubbers is enough to make a man go right up in the air—woooooop!"

The Head's remarks ended up in a sudden yell. His eyes being fixed on the river, he had failed to observe, till it was too late, that he was approaching three youngsters who were fishing from the towpath. The result was that his bike came to a sudden stop against Jolly and Merry and Bright of the St. Sam's Fourth—and the Head went right up in the air in reality!

"Yaroooooo!" he shrieked, as he hit the hard, unsimperthetic towpath.

Fortunately, he had landed on his head, so no serious dammidge was done; but he was in a dickens of a rage as he stood upright again.

"Shiver me mizzen-mast! I'll make you land-lubbers pay for this!" he roared. "Bend over and touch the deck!"

It was useless to argue with the Head while he was in this mood, so Jack Jolly & Co. bent over; and Dr. Birchmell, to their dismay, promptly produced a length of rope and started belabering their anatomies with it!

"Perhaps that'll teach you not to anchor under my bosprit again!" he panted, as he finished. Then he mounted his cycle and pedalled off again, leaving Jack Jolly & Co. staring after him like fellows in a dream.

The Head was still frowning severely when he dismounted at the boathouse and met the perspiring St. Sam's crew.

"Belay there, ye swabs!" he cried. "Avast, ye lubbers, and hear what—"

"Eggscuse me, sir," interrupted Burleigh, the stroak of the St. Sam's crew. "Can't you make it easier for us by speaking plain English?"

"Okay, then, Burleigh. Get a load of this," said the Head, lapsing into his usual flawless Oxbridge accent once more. "For a rowing crew you're positively the puniest and palestriest pack of pie-faced, panhandling piffers I've ever coached. A snail is a speed-feend in comparison with you!" He sighed wearily,



as he glarnced down the line of sheepish seniors, who were as quiet as lambs under his biting criticism. "I'm afraid a very heavy defeat lies ahead of you when you row against St. Bill's to-morrow. The fare name of St. Sam's will be dragged down into the dust—or, perhaps I should say the water. Defeat—"

The Head stopped suddenly. His greenish eyes had fallen on Midgett minor, the St. Sam's cox.

"Bless my sole!" he said, half to himself. "I wonder—"

"Thought of a wheeze, sir?" asked Burleigh curiously.

Dr. Birchmell cullered.

"I trust you don't think me capable of solving the dilemmer by means of any fraudulent device, Burleigh," he said, with a cough. "Nothing was further from my thoughts, I assure you. But an idea did occur to me for improving the crew. I think I shall stand Midgett minor down and take his place as cox myself!"

Burleigh started violently.

"Take Midgett's place, sir?" he gasped.

"But—"

Dr. Birchmell did not stop to listen, he went off, leaving the seniors wondering if he had also gone off his rocker.

Little did they dream what method lay behind Dr. Birchmell's madness!

That nite, a misterious figger mite have been seen sneaking into the boathouse, pushing before him a wheelbarrow on which stood an intreegling-looking mass of metal and some cans of petrol. For some hours he worked on a strange job connected with the St. Sam's racing skiff. Then he sneaked off—and a passer-by mite have recknaised with surprize in the light of the moon the grinning dial of the headmaster of St. Sam's!

A vast concorse of enthusiasts lined the banks of the Ripple on the following after-

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?



The only time Bunter has ever been in a racing "eight" was at practice—and on that occasion he stepped clean through the bottom of the boat! The thin shell was no match for Bunter's weight—and Bunter was out of the boat at one "stroke"! "Water" surprise!

noon, and the cheers were deffening as the St. Sam's crew bore their boat down to the water. The Head was with them, helping; and, for reasons best known to himself, he had slung his macintosh over the stern, completely hiding it from view.

The rival crews pushed out into mid-stream and there was a breathless silence as the starter raised his pistol.

Bang!

They were off! And, strange to relate, St. Sam's had made a splendid start. In fact, to the surprize of the spectators, their boat seemed to start off long before their oars touched the water.

Another queer circumstance was that a strange humming noise seemed to proceed from the stern of the fragile vessel. But that was soon drowned by the cheers of the spectators.

Nobody could possibly have eggpected them to do so well. They seemed to make hardly any effort, yet their boat skimmed through the water with almost incredible speed!

St. Bill's were soon left far behind and the race became a farce—and when, eventually, the winning-post was reached the rival crew were so much in arrears that even the most powerful telescope could not find them!

It was a triumph for St. Sam's—a grate and glorious triumph, without a doubt! Yet among the cheering crowds there was one at least who eyed the winners with something like suspishon. That person was Jack Jolly.

As the Head stopped on to the landing-stage Jack went forward and tapped him on the arm.

"Eggscuse me, sir," he said, sotto vocey, "didn't I see you detach a motor from the stern and sink it in the water just before the finish?"

The Head's jaw dropped for a moment. Then he winked.

"Yes, Jolly, that is quite right," he replied, in a wisper. "Not a werd to anyone, though!"

"But that means we've won the race under false pretences!" eggscloimed the kaptin of the Fourth.

The Head grinned.

"In a sense, yes," he said. "But I did it from the best of motives—to save St. Sam's from disgrace. It was, perhaps, a slietly dishonnest action. But it was done solely for the honour of the crew!"

And he went forth to receive the plawdits of the multitude—leaving Jack Jolly gasping!

As a change from sailing, Tom Redwing enjoys a long row in a small boat in Pegg Bay. When Skinner tried to "show off" with the sculls he was glad for Redwing to board his dinghy and row him safely back to shore. Without Redwing, Skinner would have been at the mercy of the Channel currents!

In a four a-side tennis tournament between Greyfriars and Highcliffe, Greyfriars won, thanks mainly to the brilliant play of Hilary, Remove champion. De Courcy, erstwhile slacker, proved Highcliffe's tennis star. With two more like him, said his chum Courtenay, Highcliffe would have won!

An unusual lesson in geography was afforded the Famous Five when, as a special reward, Mr. "Larry" Lascelles took them up in an aeroplane from Courtfield Aerodrome to survey the surrounding country. The Famous Five combined pleasure with geographical survey—and the thrills were thrown in free!

George Wingate is the champion oarsman of Greyfriars, and has stroked the Greyfriars eight to victory on several occasions. Against a Courtfield Rowing Club crew he set a fierce pace—and the Courtfield men, though dogged, were beaten by two lengths!

THEY WOULD SEE THE BOAT RACE

By **LARRY LASCELLES, B.A.**

I am taking two youngsters named Gatty and Myers to London to see the Boat Race on Saturday. Just to set all rumours at rest, here's the reason:

On Tuesday last, I happened to overhear a crowd of fags under my study window excitedly discussing the seaworthiness of small motor-boats. Imagine my surprise, on listening further, to find that their talk had a very practical application.

Two juniors—the aforementioned Gatty and Myers—had actually, it seemed, set out from the school with the fixed intention of borrowing a motor-boat from the school boathouse and driving it round the coast to London in time to see the Boat Race!

A wilder and woollier scheme I never heard of. The chances that a couple of inexperienced schoolboys could navigate a little cockleshell of a motor-boat into the North Sea and round to the Thames without disaster of some kind overtaking them were slender indeed. I shuddered to think of it; and, without waiting to hear any

more, donned my hat and rushed out of the School House.

When I arrived at the boathouse, it was to find a youth in overalls standing on the landing-stage, scratching his head in a very puzzled manner. In reply to my inquiry, he said he had been overhauling two motor-boats in the boathouse in readiness for the summer season; and that while he had been away

at lunch one of them had disappeared!

Knowing what I know, I could easily guess the identity of the boat-bandits. I asked him whether the other boat was in going order; and, on receiving an affirmative reply, promptly decided to commandeer it and set off in pursuit of the youthful Boat Race enthusiasts. Within a few minutes I was chugging along down the Salk towards the sea.

A nice dance those two

"Blows"!

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GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!



I CAN'T STEER FOR TOFFEE!

Sighs **HAROLD SKINNER**

I never was much good at steering. Wingate knows that, so why he should have chosen me as cox for the Senior Eight last Wednesday is a puzzle.

Many fellows would have kicked for another reason. It was only an hour since Wingate had whopped me for smoking, and I was still emitting an occasional groan! But I'm a forgiving kind of chap, and, having warned Wingate that I couldn't steer for toffee, I charitably consented to guide the destiny of the Senior racing skiff.

Off we started. While the seniors bent to their oars, I fumbled about with the lines, trying to determine which made the skiff turn right and which left.

My experimental work caused the skiff to describe a zig-zag course. It struck me that this would probably look rather graceful from the bank, and it certainly varied the monotony in the boat. But, alas! the crew didn't appreciate it a bit! They glared at me as though they could have brained me, and Wingate roared out in a furious voice: "Can't you keep her straight, you young idiot?"

"I'm doing my best, Wingate," I said meekly. "But I told you I couldn't steer for toffee!"

On we went, creating consternation all the way along amongst such other river craft as we met. Once, to the speechless indignation of the crew, we went completely round in a circle!

And then, at the bend of the river near Popper's Island, my well-meant, but unskilled, efforts at helping the Senior crew took them into disaster!

There happened to be a man in waders, fishing in the river at that spot, and (quite unintentionally, of course) I sent the skiff straight towards him.

He yelled and waded wildly out of the way. Fortunately he missed being hit by the boat itself; but one of the oars smote him on the napper and another on the chest, the two between them sending him down under the water for a count of five.

It turned out to be Sir Hilton Popper himself.

There was trouble for Wingate when old Popper got back to land, I can tell you! When I had explained that I had warned Wingate I was no good at steering, the old boy left me out of it and poured out all the vials of his wrath on Wingate and the rest of the crew. Wingate was never sorer for anything in his life than appointing me cox. by the time Sir Hilton has stopped talking!

Well, he can't say I didn't warn him. I told him plainly enough that I couldn't steer for toffee—and he wouldn't believe me.

Ah, well!

Answer to Correspondent

"Curious."—"Is it true that Coker & Co. have gone potty?"

No, "Curious." It's just that they're simplifying their diet during the Boat Race season—and as a first step, they've gone off their nuts!