

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





## 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.

**H**ERE we are again, chums, as the clowns say in circuses. And, talking about circuses reminds me that there is a query lying on my desk from a Southsea reader, who asks me to tell him something about

### BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST SHOW.

He's heard tales about it, and wants to know if it was really so marvellous as "old-timers" make out. It was certainly the biggest circus that was ever seen in this country, and first came here in 1885. It paid another visit later, when it toured all over the country. Buffalo Bill (his real name was Colonel Cody) had been a scout, an Indian fighter, and a Pony Express rider out West, and he hit on the idea of bringing Indians and Cowboys over to this country, and re-staging some of the thrilling incidents of the Wild West. He brought the real Deadwood Coach over with him, and the big feature of his show was when he sent the Deadwood Coach into the ring, and the Indians attacked it.

### HOLDING UP THE DEADWOOD COACH

was most realistically done. Naturally only blank ammunition was used by the cowboys and Indians, but the inside of the coach was provided with flare lights and so on, and when the attack was made, these were set off. But what used to interest youngsters the most of all was the fact that Buffalo Bill used to allow three or four of them to ride in the coach at each performance. You can imagine what keen competition there was for the coveted places. The end of the show came when the Indians were driven off by a rescuing band of cowboys, and the youngsters were hauled out of the blazing coach, and rode off with their rescuers. Buffalo Bill died in Colorado in 1917, and was buried in a tomb which was blasted from the solid rock on Lookout Mountain, near Denver.

Talking about Buffalo Bill reminds me of

### "BRONCHO CHARLIE,"

famous old-timer of the West who also rode with Buffalo Bill in the Pony Express. He's a very old man nowadays, but he's still got the spirit of the West in his blood. When he was over eighty he was living in a log cabin which he had built for himself near New York. But he thought he'd like to visit California again. He wasn't going to travel by train if he could help it. He borrowed a horse, and set out from New York to ride on horseback the whole journey. He did it all right, crossing barren deserts with the temperature at 127 degrees in the shade, and negotiating mountain passes with deep snow on the ground and a temperature of 20 degrees below zero. It took him seven months and twenty-three days to accomplish the journey. And even now he's not finished. He wants someone to take him and his brone up in an aeroplane, so that

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he can jump out and come down by parachute, still riding on the brone! Many readers have written to me asking for more

### THINGS YOU'D HARDLY BELIEVE,

so here goes for a further selection:

**Even Fish Get Seasick!** When carried in tanks aboard ship, fish are as susceptible to seasickness as human beings are. Goldfish have been seasick when artificial waves were caused in their bowl!

**The Greatest Linguist in the World!** It is claimed that Joseph Caspar, an Italian, could speak no less than 114 different languages, and, in addition, 72 different dialects!

**The Biggest Beans Ever!** Beans more than six feet in length have been grown in New Zealand. One makes a whole meal!

**A Spider Is Not an Insect!** Many people believe the spider to be an insect. Look it up in an encyclopedia, and you will find that it is an animal!

**Whales Produce the Most Costly Perfumes in the World!** Ambergris, used in perfume manufacture, comes from the spermaceti whale. A lump of ambergris may be worth as much as £25,000!

**A Million and a Half Pounds Worth of Greyhounds!** There are over fifty thousand racing greyhounds in this country. The total value of all these dogs is estimated at £1,500,000!

Most of you fellows seem to be interested in the Foreign Legion, so I'll devote a little more space to the query which comes from "Inquisitive," of Portsmouth. He wants to know something about the Foreign Legion. Incidentally that isn't its proper name. In France it is known as

### LES REGIMENTS' ETRANGERS.

Any foreigner may join it, with the result that it is composed of men of all sorts of nationalities. The pay is poor, and the food, judged by our standards, is not good. The Legion carries out the most arduous duties of all the French regiments, inasmuch as it is constantly involved in campaigns against rebellious tribesmen in Africa. The climate of the French North African colonies is pretty bad. The headquarters of the first regiment is at Sidi-bel-Abbes, in Algeria, forty-eight miles south of the coast. Sidi-bel-Abbes is surrounded by a bastioned wall and a moat, and admittance is gained by four gates. The military establishments occupy nearly half the town. The officers are mostly French, but so far as the men are concerned, the authorities are not particular as to their age or character, and many gaol-birds and "wanted" men are in its ranks.

Connected to *les regiments' etrangers* are certain battalions known as Zephyrs into which conscripts are drafted as a punishment. That punishment consists of serving in the unhealthiest of the French colonies.

Here is an expression that might puzzle several of you. It has puzzled "Mag-netite," of Deal, who writes to me to ask

Most of you know that the forecastle is the forward part of a ship, where the crew live. The term is derived from fore castle, for in mediæval days, ships were fitted with castles at the fore and aft ends. The monkey forecastle is a small deck which is below the level of the forecastle proper. Sailors frequently use the word "monkey" to mean something that is not quite the real thing. For instance, on some ships there is a sort of small bridge above the real bridge. Sailors call this the "monkey bridge" or "monkey island!"

I was told a yarn the other day which might interest some of you. It concerns

### A DIVER'S STRATEGY,

and a missing diamond. A dweller on a Thames houseboat lost a very valuable diamond overboard. The insurance company decided to send a diver to look for it, but, though he descended several times, he couldn't find it. It looked as though the insurance company would have to pay up and look pleasant—until the diver got a brain wave. There's quite a strong current running at that particular spot, so he suggested that someone should drop a silver coin from the same spot on the houseboat as the diamond had been dropped.

This was done, and the diver watched the way in which the current carried down the coin. Then he grabbed up a handful of mud where the coin finally settled on the bottom—and got the diamond with it. Clever bit of wangling, wasn't it, chums? Aren't you glad you don't live in New Guinea? Reason?

### THE HEAD HUNTERS

are out on the warpath again! Despite all the efforts that have been made to stamp out this practice, it still flourishes, and the authorities out that way are getting worried about it. They crush out the practice in one region, and it immediately breaks out in another.

Recently two airmen were forced down in the domain of the head-hunters. Knowing what would happen to them if they went to a village, they were forced to get back to civilisation through the jungles, keeping alive by eating berries and insects.

Perhaps you'll find it hard to believe that head-hunting was carried out in Europe until quite recent years. In the Balkans head-hunting was known as late as the years 1912 to 1913. In our own country there was head-hunting in parts of Ireland and Scotland up to the end of the middle ages. Scalping, as practised by the North American Indians, was a form of head-hunting. But, thank goodness, the practice is now confined to out-of-the-way places.

From a Glasgow reader comes a question regarding

### THE MOST DESOLATE DESERT

in the world. Most deserts are pretty desolate regions, but I suppose the most desolate of the lot is that portion of the Arabian desert which is known as the Rub al Khali. Only two white men in the world—both British—have managed to conquer these waterless wastes. Even the Arabs fear Rub al Khali, which they call the "Empty Quarter," and few Arabs have crossed it except those who accompanied the expeditions. A Cornishman is now planning to cross this amazing desert. He believes that a hoard of ancient gold is hidden in underground caves in one part of the desert, and he is going to have a shot at finding it.

Here is a selection of

### RAPID-FIRE REPLIES

to shorter queries which various readers have propounded to me:

(Continued on page 28.)

# Greyfriars Idiot No. 1!

By FRANK RICHARDS



—Featuring Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars—and Horace Coker!

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### Getting Ready for Coker!

“AND soot—”

“Yes, rather!”

“And cinders—”

“What-ho!”

“And ink—lots of ink!”

There was a chuckle in Study No. 1

in the Remove Form at Greyfriars.

Seven juniors were there—and they

were all busy.

Seven faces wore cheery grins.

Any fellow glancing into the study might have been puzzled to guess what they were up to. Had Mr. Quelch, their Form-master, looked in, he certainly would have wanted to know.

Harry Wharton had placed a large open rush basket on the table; a newspaper was spread over the interior of the basket to stop leaks.

Into the basket Wharton had emptied a bag of flour.

His chums were adding other ingredients to a remarkable mixture.

Bob Cherry with a shovel was raking soot out of the study chimney and transferring the same to the basket.

Frank Nugent emptied in a bottle of gum.

Johnny Bull collected cinders and ashes from the grates. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had brought a large bottle of ink to the study; he poured it in while Wharton mixed the ingredients with a ruler.

Squiff and Tom Redwing added leaves from the teapot, a little stale milk, some odds-and-ends of jam and jelly and tomatoes.

Wharton stirred as if he were stirring a Christmas pudding. The various strange ingredients in the rush basket were mixed to a rather thick consistency. The mixture was sticky and unpleasant—very unpleasant.

“See if he’s coming,” said Harry Wharton, as he stirred.

Frank Nugent opened the door and glanced out into the Remove passage towards the stairs.

A fat junior in the passage blinked at him through a large pair of spectacles.

**All Greyfriars knew Horace Coker was a chump! But nobody ever dreamed just what a chump he could be—until he turned 'tec and tried to solve the mystery of Jim Warren, the new Fifth Former!**

“I say, Nugent—” began Billy Bunter.

But Nugent did not heed the Owl of the Remove. It was not Billy Bunter for whom he was looking.

He turned back into the study.

“Coker’s not coming yet,” he said.

“Good! May as well get it fixed up, though; he may be along any minute,” said Harry.

Nugent carefully placed the door ajar. Harry Wharton lifted a chair to the spot and mounted on it.

“Hand up the basket,” he said.

There was a chortle in the study as Bob Cherry lifted the basket of mixture to hand up to the captain of the Remove.

Evidently it was a booby-trap that was being fixed up inside Study No. 1. That basket of horrible mixture was to be placed on top of the door ready for a visitor.

But as Bob was handing it up to Wharton, and Wharton was receiving it from him, the door was suddenly pushed open from without. A fat face and a large pair of spectacles blinked in.

“I say, you fellows— Oh crikey!” ejaculated Billy Bunter.

There was a roar in the study.

The opening door had banged on Wharton, causing him to totter on the chair as he received the basket of mixture from Bob.

The natural result was that the basket tipped, and a wave of its horrid contents swamped over the side on to the junior who was handing it up.

Bob Cherry’s roar, as a mass of mixed soot and gum and ink and flour and other things landed on his face, awoko most of the echoes of the Remove passage.

“Who-hoo-hooooop!” roared Bob, staggering back and clutching and dabbing at the sticky stuff on his features.

“Oh crumbs!” gasped Wharton.

He gripped the basket to steady it; but another wave shot over the side, and Nugent and Hurree Singh and Johnny Bull jumped away hurriedly.

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That mixture had been mixed for the benefit of Horace Coker of the Fifth Form. None of the juniors wanted any of it. Bob Cherry, unfortunately, had got some; the other fellows barely escaped.

"Careful—for goodness' sake!" gasped Nugent.

"Urrrrgh!" gurgled Bob. "You ass! Urrrrgh!"

"That idiot Bunter—" roared Wharton.

"Kick him!"

Billy Bunter, with his fat head round the edge of the door, blinked into the study in astonishment.

"I say, you fellows, what the thump are you up to?" he exclaimed. "What have you got there? I say—Yaroooooooh!"

Bunter broke off with a yell as Bob Cherry grasped him suddenly by a fat ear and jerked him into the study.

That sudden opening of the door had caused the disaster, and Bob was wrathful.

"You howling ass!" roared Bob. "What did you want to come barging in for? You fat Nosey Parker—"

"Ow! Leggo!" roared Bunter. "I came here to tell you—Ow! I came to say—Whoooooop!"

Bang!

Bunter's bullet head smote the study wall.

Bunter roared.

"There!" gasped Bob. "There, you fat, fooling, frabjous frump—"

"Ow! Wow!" howled Bunter. "Beast! Yah! Rotter! I'm glad you got that muck over your chivvy! Keep off, you beast!"

Billy Bunter dodged round the study table. Bob grabbed a duster and mopped his sticky face. He glared at Bunter as he did so. He seemed to think that the fat Owl deserved more than one bang. But Bunter, more than satisfied with one, carefully kept the table between them.

"Better keep that fat idiot in the study now," said Harry Wharton. "We don't want Coker to get the tip. Hold the door, Franky."

Frank Nugent approached—rather cautiously—with a wary eye on the basket. He held the door ajar while Harry lifted the basket of mixture to the top and lodged it there, resting on the lintel over the doorway.

"That's all right," he said.

He stepped down from the chair.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"But, I say, I came to tell you, Wharton—"

"Don't jaw!"

"Coker says—"

"Oh, what does Coker say?" asked Harry. News from Coker of the Fifth had interest for the chums of the Remove, considering that it was Coker of the Fifth for whom they were making these preparations.

"He says that if you don't go to his study at once, as he told you to, he will come up here to fetch you," said Bunter. "He told me to tell you so, and that he wouldn't wait long."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Good!" he said. "Let him come! We're ready when he does!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wonder what the dickens Coker wants you for?" said Nugent.

"Blessed if I know! He told me after class that he wanted me, and I was to go to his study and wait for him." Wharton chuckled. "Coker fancies he can give orders to the Remove."

There was a chortle in the study. It was one of Horace Coker's happy

delusions that he spoke as one having authority, saying "Do this!"—and it was immediately done!

The mere fact that he had ordered Wharton of the Remove to go to his study was a sufficient reason for Wharton of the Remove not to go there. And having no doubt that Coker, when he tired of waiting for him, would come to look for him, Wharton was getting ready for the visit with the help of his chums.

When Coker of the Fifth looked into Study No. 1 and caught that mixture with his head, it might dawn upon him that he was mistaken about being able to give orders to the Remove!

"Oh!" ejaculated Bunter. "You're fixing that up for Coker, are you?"

"Yes, ass!"

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter. "I say, he's coming all right; he told me to tell you he's waited ten minutes, and he jolly well won't wait any longer."

"The sooner the better!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"The betterfulness will be terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up!" said Nugent. "Listen!"

With bated breath the juniors listened. Striding footsteps sounded in the passage. They came up from the landing, and stopped at the door of Study No. 1. There was a sharp rap on the door, and it was pushed open.

Crash went the basket of mixture on a head!

Splash!

"Oh! Ah! What— Oh! Ooooh! Oooooooh!" came a startled yell.

And all Study No. 1 roared:

"Ha, ha, ha!"

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### A Startling Accusation!

"THAT fellow Warren—"

"Chuck it, Coker!"

"If his name really is Warren—"

"For goodness' sake dry up, Coker!" urged Potter of the Fifth. "The chap's just outside in the passage talking to Hilton."

"What do I care?" demanded Coker. "He's welcome to hear what I've got to say about him if he wants to."

Horace Coker was talking in his study in the Fifth Form passage; but Coker had a powerful voice, which was not confined to the limits of his study. Even when the door was shut, fellows in the passage were never left in any doubt when Coker's strenuous chin was in action. At the present moment the door was wide open, and Coker's voice could have been heard as far as the games study at the end of the passage.

Certainly Jim Warren, the new fellow in the Greyfriars Fifth, could not fail to hear it, as he was standing only a few feet from Coker's door, outside his own study, talking to Hilton of the Fifth.

Coker did not care.

But Potter and Greene felt uncomfortable, if Horace did not. Ever since Jim Warren had come to Greyfriars, Coker had been rowing with him. Coker was born to rows as the sparks fly upward.

Everybody else, or nearly everybody, liked the new man. Coker didn't! Coker considered him a cheeky tick!

This had led Coker to drive him into a combat which the new fellow had avoided as long as he could. Driven into it at last, Warren had astonished Coker by whopping him without even turning a hair in the process.

Coker was not the man to bear grudges for a licking in a fair fight. But Coker did not consider himself

licked. His view was that Warren had got away with the victory by some unexplained and inexplicable fluke.

The fact that everybody else regarded Coker as licked only added to his annoyance and exasperation.

Warren, perhaps, had hoped that the scrap in the gym might clear the air and leave them better friends. But it hadn't! It had left Coker sore and savage and resentful. One of Coker's chief objects in life now was to show that he did not funk the fellow who fancied that he had licked him, and that he was ready and willing to try over again at a moment's notice.

"Who is the fellow?" demanded Coker, glaring at his study-mates and propounding that question as if it were a riddle.

"Eh? What the thump do you mean?" grunted Potter, and Greene gave a snort. Coker's pals were fed-up to the back teeth with Coker's feud against the new fellow in the Fifth.

"I mean what I say!" retorted Coker. "Who is he, and where does he come from? That's what I want to know; and that's what I'm jolly well going to know—see?"

Potter and Greene stared at him. Everybody at Greyfriars knew who Jim Warren was and where he came from. They wondered whether old Horace was wandering a little in his mind—granting that he had one in which to wander.

"He's Warren, of course!" said Potter blankly.

"Is he?" said Coker sarcastically.

"He comes from Warren Croft, in Surrey. He's the son of Sir Arthur Warren, a diplomatic big bug!" said Greene.

"Is he?" repeated Coker, still more sarcastically.

"You know he is!" yapped Greene. "What the thump are you talking about, Coker? Gone potty?"

"I'm talking about that fellow Warren! I mean," said Coker deliberately, "the fellow who calls himself Warren."

"What else could he call himself?" gasped Potter.

"I don't know his name!" said Coker.

Potter and Greene exchanged an alarmed look. If this was not a sign that Horace Coker was going off his rocker, they did not know what it was. Only too well they knew that he had not far to go! What were they to think when Coker stated that he did not know the name of a fellow named Warren?

From the passage a murmur of voices had been audible. Warren was talking football to Hilton there. Under the new fellow's influence the dandy of the Fifth had taken up football that term; and his former pal, Price, made lonely trips out of bounds to play banker and billiards.

That murmur of voices died into silence as Coker's powerful voice boomed into the passage.

Hilton gave Warren a very curious look. Warren compressed his lips and stepped to Coker's open door.

He stood there looking in—a slim, handsome, fair-haired fellow—rather a contrast in looks to the burly, beefy, rugged Coker.

Warren had heard every word, and there was a glint in his eyes and a hard set to his lips, as he looked into Coker's study.

"You're talking about me, Coker!" he snapped.

Coker glared at him with grim defiance.

"Did you hear me? Well, listeners never hear any good of themselves!" he retorted.

"You meant me to hear!"

"I didn't care a rap whether you

heard or not!" said Coker coolly. "You can hear all I've got to say about you, if you like! I'm not the fellow to talk behind a fellow's back, I hope!"

"Well, what do you mean?"

"Only what I say!" answered Coker. "All the Fifth can hear, for all I care! All Greyfriars, if you come to that! I've said that I don't know your name—and I don't!"

"You know that my name's Jim Warren!"

"I don't!" contradicted Coker. "I know that you say so! That's quite a different matter."

"Is the fellow mad?" asked Cedric Hilton, glancing into the study over Warren's shoulder. Hilton was blankly astonished at this outbreak on the part of Horace Coker. Nobody, of course, ever expected Horace to talk sense. But

Sir Arthur and his son, and he says that you're not the chap, and nothing at all like him!"

Potter and Greene gasped together. "What utter rot!"

Warren did not speak. His handsome face darkened, and his eyes gleamed.

Hilton broke in "Coker, you silly ass, some kid has been pulling your leg. Haven't you sense enough to see that?"

"I haven't heard from the kid himself," said Coker. "A Fifth Form man heard him talking about it, and mentioned it to me. I've thought it over and decided what I'm going to do. I'm going to question the kid who knows James Warren and get the facts out of him. I've told him to come to my study for that very purpose, and I'm waiting for him now."

Coker's lip curled. "Warren says he doesn't know young Wharton at home!" he said. "Wharton says he does. Wharton's a cheeky young rascal—he's keeping me waiting for him this very minute though I told him plainly to come to my study after class and I've sent him a message that I'll fetch him if he doesn't come. But cheeky little rotter though he is, he's a straight kid, and all the school knows it. If he says he knows Warren, he does know him."

"How do you know he's said so if you haven't asked him?"

"I've told you! A Fifth Form man heard him and told me yesterday."

"Pulling your leg," said Hilton. "It's a silly sort of joke, but can't be anything else! Who was the Fifth Form man?"



"I say you fellows——" said Billy Bunter, coming into Study No. 1. Next moment there was a roar. The opening door had banged on Wharton, causing him to upset the basket. A mass of mixed soot and gum and ink and flour and other things swamped over Bob Cherry's face. The wrong victim had been caught in the booby trap!

this really seemed rather over even Coker's limit of fatheadedness.

"Looks like it!" said Potter. "Don't mind him, Warren, old chap! Coker can't help being an ass!"

"He ought to be able to help being such an ass, though!" said Greene.

"You fellow's can shut up!" said Coker. "You don't happen to know what I've heard about that fellow who calls himself Warren. From what I hear, it's the talk of a gang of fags in the Remove."

Jim Warren compressed his lips hard. "And what have you heard?" he asked quietly.

"Oh, I'll tell you fast enough!" jeered Coker. "Nothing underhand about me, I hope! You've come here—calling yourself Jim Warren, son of Sir Arthur Warren, of Warren Croft. Well, there's a fellow in this school who lives near Warren Croft, in Surrey, and he knows

"And who's the kid?" demanded Hilton.

"Young Wharton of the Remove." Hilton glanced at Warren. The new senior did not speak. His face was setting harder and darker; but he said nothing.

"Does young Wharton live anywhere near your father's place in Surrey, Warren?" asked Hilton.

Warren nodded.

"Your people know his?"

Another nod.

"Then you know young Wharton?"

"I'd never seen him till I came to Greyfriars," said Jim Warren, breaking his silence, "and he had never seen me."

"That settles it, then," said Hilton. "Coker, you must be a bigger fool than even you're supposed to be to take any notice of such a silly yarn. Haven't you as much sense as a bunny rabbit?"

"Your pal, Price!" was Coker's unexpected answer.

Hilton started.

"Price said so?"

"Yes, he did!"

"Well, he must have been gammoning," said Hilton, after a pause. "Anyhow, it can be settled by asking young Wharton what he really did say—and I advise you, Warren, to give him a thundering good hiding if he has been working off a leg-pull at your expense."

Jim Warren nodded, and walked away down the passage. With compressed lips he crossed the landing at the end, and went up the Remove passage. In Coker's study he left silence behind him.

Hilton lounged away with a puzzled brow. Potter and Greene stood silent and perplexed. All of them knew that

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Price of the Fifth, dingy black sheep as he was, was not the kind of fellow to start an utterly unfounded yarn that could be immediately disproved.

It was well known that he disliked Warren. But a tale like this could do Warren no harm—unless it was true. And if it was not true, its untruth could be proved at once by a question put to Harry Wharton of the Remove. What could it mean?

Coker grinned triumphantly. "Wait till Wharton comes here," he said. "You'll hear then—"

"You silly ass," grunted Potter. "Do you think Wharton will come here because you've told him to? He won't come."

Coker's grin changed into a frown. "If he jolly well doesn't, I'll jolly well go and look for him, and take a cricket stump with me!" he said.

Coker glanced into the passage. There was no sign of Wharton coming. And Coker—a fellow who was always as good as his word—picked up a cricket stump, and went to look for him.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### The Wrong Man!

**H**ARRY WHARTON and Co. roared.

Study No. 1 rang and echoed with their merriment.

The door was wide open—and in the doorway stood a figure drenched and smothered, from head to foot, by the mixture from the rush-basket.

The booby-trap had been a complete success.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the mirthful juniors.

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

"Urrgh!" spluttered the fellow in the doorway. He groped dizzily at mixed ink and soot and flour and gum, thick on his face and hair. "Urrgh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you—urrgh! You—you—oocch!"

What—wooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

They fairly howled.

The Fifth Form fellow in the doorway was quite unrecognisable. He was clothed in that horrible mixture as in a garment. His voice came spluttering through mixture that had got into his mouth. His nearest and dearest relative would not have known him.

But the juniors, of course, supposed that he was Coker! They had been expecting Coker, and this fellow had come—banging the door angrily open in quite the way that might have been expected of Coker.

But as they roared with laughter staring at the ghastly object in the doorway, Harry Wharton gave a sudden jump and ceased to laugh.

The fellow was utterly disguised by the mixture, and he was as tall as Coker. But it struck Wharton that he was slimmer.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Squiff.

"I say, you fellows, Coker looks nice, doesn't he? He, he, he!"

"How do you like it, Coker?" asked Nugent.

"Drop in again any old time!" chortled Johnny Bull. "We'll always have something ready for you, Coker!"

"The readiness will be terrific, my esteemed and idiotic Coker."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wurrrrgggh!" the hapless victim was gurgling as he clutched and groped and dabbed at the sticky mixture.

"Urrgh!"

"I—I say!" gasped Wharton. "Is—is it Coker?"

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"Wha-a-at?"

"Is it Coker? Oh, my hat! Is it—?"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Urrgh! You young villains—urrgh! What do you mean by this?" shrieked Jim Warren. "What—urrghh!"

"That's not Coker!" gasped Bob.

"Who tae dickens—?"

"Warren!" stuttered Harry. Muffled as the voice was by mixture, it was familiar. "It—it—it's Warren!"

"Oh crikey!"

Laughter died away on the spot. Consternation took the place of amusement. All the chums of the Remove liked Warren. Any man would have made him welcome to his study.

But why he had come was a mystery! Fifth Form men did not drop in at Lower Fourth studies! And the way he had banged the door open did not look like a friendly call. Still, there it was—it was Warren of the Fifth and not Horace Coker at all. Coker, expected, had not come—Warren, unexpected, had. It was a real disaster.

"Oh, my hat! Awfully sorry, Warren!" gasped Wharton. "We—we hadn't the faintest idea you'd be coming here—we expected Coker—"

"Urrgh! You young rascals!" spluttered Warren, glaring into the study through a veil of mixture. "I—I—I'll—"

He made a stride into the study.

Harry Wharton and Co. promptly backed round the table. They did not want to have to handle a fellow they really liked. And Warren at the moment was not nice to touch. He was very unpleasant to touch. Coker, in a similar state, they would cheerfully have driven off with rulers and any other weapons that came to hand. But they did not want to drive Jim Warren off by such methods.

"I—I say, it was a mistake, you know, Warren!" gasped Bob Cherry, across the table. "Awfully sorry—"

"Your own fault, really!" said Johnny Bull. "Nobody expected you here—"

"You're welcome as the flowers in May, Warren!" said Harry. "Jolly glad to see you here any time. But we never knew—"

Warren, fortunately, halted, instead of pursuing the juniors round the table. He was deeply and intensely angry—which was not surprising in the circumstances. But no doubt he realised that what he chiefly needed, was a wash and a change.

He turned and tramped out of the study—leaving a trail of horrid mixture behind him as he went.

Harry Wharton & Co. gazed at one another.

For a moment there was the silence of dismay in Study No. 1.

It was broken by a cackle from Billy Bunter. Bunter was the only fellow in the study who was still amused.

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter. "I say, you fellows, you've done it now! He, he, he!"

They glared at him.

"He, he, he! I say— He, he, he!" chortled Bunter. "I say, serve him right, you know! That beast Warren pulled my ear the day he came, because I asked him to cash a postal-order for me. I'm glad he got it. He, he, he!"

The juniors did not speak. They only exchanged a glance before they turned on Bunter and collared him.

It was a case of seven souls with but a single thought; seven hearts that beat as one. They all grasped Bunter at once!

Bump!

"Whoop!" roared Bunter as he collided with the floor of Study No. 1.

"I say, you fellows— Yarooop!"

Bump!

"Yow-ow-woop!"

"Now," said Bob ferociously. "got any more to say, you fat frump?"

"Ooooh-ooop!"

"It's all Coker's fault!" said Bob. "We expected him, and he didn't come. He's let us down. He's made us muck up that chap Warren with the mixture we meant for him. Let's go and look for Coker."

"Let's!" said Harry.

Bumping Bunter had been a slight relief. But dealing faithfully with Horace Coker, the cause of all the trouble, was what the juniors really wanted. Leaving Bunter sitting and roaring, they moved out of Study No. 1 in a body—to look for Coker of the Fifth.

As it happened they had not far to look.

Coker, at the same time, came across the landing from the Fifth Form quarters, and turned into the Remove passage. He had a grim frown on his brow, and a cricket stump in his hand.

"Oh, here you are, Wharton, you cheeky young tick!" bawled Coker. "I told you to come to my study! I told Bunter to tell you. I—"

Coker got no farther.

With a rush the chums of the Remove up-ended Coker, and he hit the passage floor suddenly and hard.

"Why, I—I—I'll—!" yelled Coker.

"Roll him over!" said Harry Wharton, as he grabbed the cricket stump from Coker's hand. "Pin him down! Thank you for bringing this stump, Coker—it's just what we wanted."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I—I'll—!" yapped Coker.

He was rolled over, resisting fiercely. Then Harry Wharton wielded Coker's cricket stump.

Whack, whack, whack!

It seemed like some awful dream to Coker of the Fifth as he wriggled in the grasp of the juniors and his own cricket stump whacked on his bags.

But it was no dream—it was reality—painful reality!

Whack, whack, whack!

"There!" gasped Wharton. "That's for you, Coker."

"Yooop!" roared Coker. "I'll—I'll— Yarooop!"

He struggled and roared. Harry Wharton pushed the cricket stump down the back of his neck. Then the juniors left him, considerably consoled and comforted—feelings that Coker did not share in the very least.

Coker of the Fifth was left spluttering for breath, gurgling with fury, and struggling frantically to extract the cricket stump from the back of his neck.

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

#### High Words!

**Y**OU young rotter!" Harry Wharton gave a start and coloured.

He had come out of the House after tea, and in the quad he sighted Jim Warren of the Fifth Form. Warren, by that time, had got rid of the mixture and presented his usual handsome and agreeable aspect.

His face darkened at the sight of Harry Wharton, and he came towards him with an expression on his face that was far from agreeable. Still less agreeable was his greeting.

"You young cad!" repeated Warren, in a low, bitter tone.

"Oh, draw it mild, Warren!" said Harry. "We're all awfully sorry about the booby-trap—you know it never was meant for you! I'd as soon have had it on my own head as yours. You know—"

"I'm not speaking about that foolery, and you know it."

Wharton stared. "What's the row, then?" he asked. "What the dickens are you shirty about if it's not that?"

"You don't know, you young cur?" asked Wharton bitterly.

Wharton crimsoned. "You'd better chuck that, Warren," he said quietly. "I don't allow any fellow to call me names like that, senior or not! If that's all you've got to say, you'd better shut up!"

Warren clenched his hands. "I suppose it's no good talking to you," he muttered. "The harm's done now. I fancied you were straight!"

"Are you mad?" asked Harry, in sheer wonder. "What have I done—or what do you suppose I've done?"

"You've been gabbling my affairs all over the school!" snarled Warren. "You promised to hold your silly tongue, and you've broken your promise."

"I've done nothing of the kind," said Harry, his eyes glinting. "And you must be a bit of a rotter, Warren, to fancy that I have."

The Fifth Former made a movement towards him, with a clenched hand.

Wharton faced him. He was angry himself now.

But Warren paused. "Come with me!" he muttered.

He walked away towards the old Cloisters. Wharton followed him in silence. There were dozens of fellows in the quad, and the new senior did not want to be seen by countless eyes in talk with the junior.

Warren turned into the old Cloisters, a secluded spot. He stopped by one of the ancient stone pillars.

"You say you've said nothing!" he snapped.

"Nothing!"

"Then how is it that my affairs are the talk of the school?"

"Are they?" said Harry blankly.

"Yes, they are."

"Well, I know nothing about it. I've said nothing. I haven't mentioned the matter except to Frank Nugent in my own study since I had a talk with you on this very spot the other day," said Harry. "And all I said to Nugent was, that I was satisfied it was all right, and wasn't going to think about it any more."

Warren gave him a searching look.

"Bob and Johnny and Inky knew," went on Harry. "I consulted them about it when you first came and I saw you, and knew that you were not James Warren, the son of Sir Arthur, that you're supposed to be here. I couldn't help knowing that, could I, when I saw Sir Arthur Warren's son at Warren Croft in the holidays, and you're nothing like him? Naturally, I asked my friends what they thought about it—but they'd have known something, anyhow, because I'd already told them about James Warren, and what a bullying, hulking brute he was—and they could see for themselves that that description did not fit you."

"Then they've been talking if you've not."

"They've not!" said Harry steadily. "They're not talkative asses. I've asked them to say nothing about it, and they've said nothing, I'm sure of that. They all like you, too; and the truth is, that they more than half-believe that I've made some extraordinary mistake and that you really are James Warren of Warren Croft."

"Oh!" said Warren.

"If they'd seen the fellow as I have, of course they'd know that you are not

the chap!" said Harry. "But they haven't! Only Inky's seen him, and he never knew at the time that he was old Sir Arthur's son. I believe even Inky half-believes that that fellow was pulling my leg at Warren Croft when he told me his name."

Warren stood silent.

"But whatever they think or believe they're not the fellows to tattle," said Harry. "They've said nothing, and I've said nothing."

"How did it get out, then?"

"Well, I can't guess. After all, it's your own fault, and you've no right to row at me about it."

"My own fault?" repeated Warren.

"Yes, certainly," said Harry Wharton at once. "I told you when we talked here in the Cloisters that I should be satisfied, and would say nothing, if you gave me your word that no wrong was being done to the real James Warren—the fellow whose name you're using here. You gave me your word, and I believed you—though I can't understand what it all means. But though I take your word, and believe you're straight, that doesn't alter the fact that you're sailing under false colours here—"

"Take care!" muttered Warren.

"I'm going to speak plainly, and you can like it or lump it," said the captain of the Remove quietly and steadily. "You may have good reasons for what you're doing—I believe you must have, as I believe that you're straight—but you're here calling yourself by another fellow's name. You can't expect to get by with it."

"Then—you've talked?"

"I tell you I haven't!" snapped Wharton angrily. "I took your word, and that ended it. But a thing like that is sure to come out in the long run. Some other fellow in the school may know James Warren by sight—"

"Rot!"

"Or some fellow may know some chap at Oakshott, Warren's school, and may have heard something," said Harry. "James left Oakshott at the end of last term—I suspect that he was kicked out—but he would be remembered there."

"Oakshott's in Essex, a hundred miles from here, or nearly," Warren knitted his brows. "I believe you—I believe you haven't babbled it—I suppose you've been heard talking it over with your friends—"

"Nothing of the kind!" said Wharton.

"I tell you it's got out!" snapped Warren savagely.

"Not from any of us!" said Harry.

"Then how does Coker know?"

"Coker!" said Harry blankly. "Does he know?"

"He does. He was shouting it out in his study this afternoon, after class. That's why I came to your study to speak to you."

"Oh!" said Harry.

"He said he was told by another Fifth Form man who heard it talked among the juniors."

"No Fifth Form man ever heard it talked among the juniors," said Harry.

"Only my friends know about it, and we never talk of it. And if we did, it wouldn't be in the presence of a Fifth Form man."

"Price heard you, when you weren't talking, what?" asked Warren with savage sarcasm.

"Price!" repeated Harry. "That pal of Hilton's? If it was Price, he may have spied something out—he's that sort! He's in your study—he may have heard me speaking to you—he's

the kind of fellow who would listen behind a door."

"Oh!" said Jim Warren. His brow cleared a little. "I wonder! That dingy rotter dislikes me pretty badly—and it seems to have come from Price, who said he heard you say it—"

"If he heard me, he was listening when I spoke to you," said Harry. "He couldn't have heard it any other way."

Warren made an angry gesture.

"It comes to the same thing!" he muttered. "He's got hold of it, and told that fool Coker, and Coker's the kind of idiot to sing it out from the house-tops."

"That's why Price told him, I imagine," said Harry. "I can't see that I was to blame."

"If you'd minded your own business—"

"You can cut that out, Warren!" said Wharton coolly. "It was my business, and any fellow's business when a chap came to the school in a false name. You know that as well as I do. I think I've treated you pretty well in taking your word that there's nothing wrong in the affair, and holding my tongue about it since. If I wasn't convinced that you are a straight fellow, it would be my duty to tell my Form-master or the Head, and you know it. Even now I'm not sure that I'm doing right in taking your word and letting it go on."

Jim Warren breathed hard.

"I won't kick you back to the quad," he said, "but you'd better cut, before I change my mind."

"I'll cut, as soon as you like," retorted Wharton. "But you're not going to blame me because you've got found out. I've said nothing—and I shall say nothing. If it only got out through Price spying, there can't be any proof, and you're as safe as you were before."

"Coker's going to question you about it—"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Is that why he wanted to see me this afternoon? I wondered what the potty ass was after! Well, he won't get anything out of me."

"That's a promise?"

Wharton's eyes flashed.

"I've already said I shall say nothing, Warren! If that's not good enough for you, you can make the best of it."

"Oh, cut!" snapped the Fifth Former.

Harry Wharton left him in the Cloisters. He was feeling angry, but angry feelings soon faded away.

He liked Warren—almost everybody at Greyfriars did. Anyone could see at a glance that the fellow was straight as a string, unless he was blinded by hatred, like Price, or by obtuseness, like Coker. Wharton had no doubt of it.

How and why the fellow was at Greyfriars, in the name of another fellow, was an impenetrable mystery to him—but he believed Warren's word that no wrong had been done—and that was that!

But it was certain that if the story got over the school, very different views would be taken of it. If it got to the Head, Dr. Locke would inquire into it at once—and a headmaster was not likely to believe that any fellow could have good reasons for coming to a school in a false name. It looked as if there was trouble—bad trouble—ahead for Jim Warren of the Fifth.

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## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

## Coker All Over!

**M**R. PROUT, the master of the Fifth Form, stared.

Coming along to take his Form in third school the next morning, Prout was a few minutes late.

That was nothing new, for if Prout spotted another beak on his way, he was sure to stop for a few words with him—a little chat which was likely to last till the other man somehow escaped.

So Prout was late!

His Form should have waited for him outside the Form-room, but as the door was unlocked, they hadn't. They had gone in.

Naturally the Fifth preferred to wait for Prout sitting down instead of standing up. They never knew how long they might have to wait for Prout.

But, really, the Fifth ought to have known that Prout was coming. Prout was a stout gentleman—a solid gentleman—a heavy gentleman. He had been likened to the "huge earth-shaking beast" mentioned in Macaulay. No floor, however well-constructed, ever took Prout's weight without giving tongue.

Floors creaked under Prout. Fellows had even said that the quadrangle trembled under him.

That, no doubt, was an exaggeration. Still it was certain that even a deaf man would have known, as a rule, when Prout was coming.

So it was all the more surprising that Prout took his Form by surprise on this occasion. But he did. Looking in at the Form-room, Prout found that nobody had heeded his elephantine tread as he came—nobody was looking in his direction—not a man knew that he was there!

The blackboard was erected on its easel before the Form. Coker of the Fifth was standing at the blackboard, chalk in hand.

It was no wonder that Prout stared.

All the Fifth were staring. They were also laughing. Perhaps it was because they were laughing so much that they had not heard Prout's approach.

Coker was not laughing. It was one of Horace Coker's ways to take himself seriously. Coker was the only man in the Fifth who never saw how funny Horace Coker was. He missed a lot of fun for this reason.

Potter and Greene were chuckling. Hilton was grinning. Blundell, captain of the Fifth, laughed loud. Fitzgerald sniggered. Even Price's sour face was twisted into a smile. Jim Warren's expression was a mixture of annoyance and amusement.

Coker was the cause—unintentionally. Horace Coker was chalking on the blackboard in capital letters—which even Coker could make decipherable. Coker's handwriting was something like a jigsaw puzzle, but Coker's print capitals bore some resemblance to the letters of the alphabet.

All the Fifth Form were able to read Coker's inscription chalked on the blackboard, and it seemed to entertain them considerably.

"WARREN IS A SPOOFER,  
SALING UNDER FALSW  
KULLERS!

(Signed)

"H. J. COKER."

H. J. Coker turned from the blackboard, apparently rather surprised to  
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see the whole Form on the edge of convulsions.

It was Coker's spelling that did it chiefly.

The strange story about Warren was up and down the Fifth by this time, and though nobody could make head or tail of it, it was generally agreed that it was only some more of Coker's asinine rot.

Now Coker was taking drastic steps. When Prout came in and saw that inscription on the blackboard, Prout was bound to sit up and take notice. At least, Coker had no doubt of it.

"That's that!" said Coker.

"Ha, ha, ha!" chortled the Fifth Form.

"You can cackle!" snorted Coker.

"We will!" grinned Blundell.

"Thanks for your kind permission!

Ha, ha, ha!"

"Coker, old man, rub that foolery out before Prout comes in!" implored Potter

He was unaware that Prout's face, petrified with astonishment, was at the door.

"I'll watch it!" said Coker.

"You'll get into a row, old chap!" urged Greene.

"I'll risk that!"

"Look here, you silly, cheeky ass—" began Jim Warren, rising from his form.

Coker pushed back his cuffs.

"You try to rub that out, that's all!" he said. "I'll jolly soon stop you! That's for Prout when he comes in!"

"You'll get an impot if Prout sees that spelling!" chuckled Bland.

"Eh! What's the matter with the spelling?" asked Coker.

"What isn't the matter with it, you mean!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" snapped Coker. "Don't you make out that I can't spell, like that old ass Prout!"

"COKER!"

Prout, hitherto petrified, found his voice. He rolled into the Form-room, booming.

"Oh!" gasped the Fifth.

"Oh!" gasped Coker.

Even Coker realised that it was unfortunate that Prout had arrived just as he, Coker, was calling him an ass!

Jim Warren coloured. He had been in doubt whether to strew Coker over the floor and rub the blackboard clear. It was too late now. Prout had arrived, and evidently had seen that remarkable inscription on the board.

It was not a happy moment for the fellow who was at Greyfriars in another fellow's name!

"Coker!" boomed Prout.

"Oh, sir! Sorry!" gasped Coker.

"I—I—I—"

His voice trailed off. How was he to explain his unfortunate reference to Prout?

He couldn't deny that he had called Prout an ass. He couldn't even say that he didn't really think Prout an ass, because Coker was a truthful chap, and would have scorned to tell a lie.

"What did you call me, Coker?"

"I—I—"

"And what?"—Prout raised a plump hand and pointed to the blackboard—"what does this ill-spelt absurdity mean, Coker?"

"That's for you to see, sir! I think you ought to know!" said Coker.

"That chap Warren—"

Prout glared. He was pleased with Warren, who was one of his best pupils. He was not pleased with Coker, who was his very worst!

"Coker! Is it possible—I repeat, is it possible—that you are so forgetful of the self-respect of a senior boy that you are thinking of giving me, your Form-master, information about another boy? Do you imagine for one moment, Coker, that I will allow sneaking in the Fifth Form? Are you in your senses, Coker?"

Coker crimsoned.

Sneaking was about the last thing Horace Coker would have been guilty of. Showing up a fellow sailing under false colours was not sneaking.

Prout's misapprehension was natural but it was very annoying to Coker.

"Nothing of the kind, sir!" he exclaimed hotly. "It isn't sneaking to show up a spoofer! Warren isn't Warren—"

"Wha-a-at?" gasped Prout.

He almost jumped at that statement.

"I—I mean, he isn't himself—he's somebody else!" gasped Coker, rather disconcerted by Prout's glare, and putting it even less clearly than before.

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

"Is this boy insane?" gasped Prout.

"Is he wandering in his mind? Ought I to send for a doctor?"

"What I mean to say is—" gasped Coker.

"Silence!" boomed Prout. "I will listen to no such nonsense from you, Coker. How dare you chalk on the blackboard, especially such absurdities as this!"

"That fellow Warren—"

"Silence!" roared Prout. "Take the duster and clean the blackboard at once, Coker!"

"But, sir—"

"At once!" thundered Prout.

Horace, rather hurriedly, took the duster and wiped the blackboard clean.

Prout glared at him as if he could have eaten him.

"Now, Coker you have made the extraordinary statement that a boy in this Form, named Warren, is not Warren! As I do not believe you to be actually insane, I can only conclude that you are indulging in misdirected humour at the expense of your Form-master. What you mean, or whether you mean anything at all, I cannot say—but I am only too previously accustomed to your obtuse stupidity! You will take five hundred lines!"

"But, sir—" gasped Coker.

"As I entered this Form-room," resumed Prout, booming, "I heard you apply an epithet—a derogatory epithet—to me! For that also you will take five hundred lines!"

"Oh crikey! But, sir—"

"You will be kept in detention on half-holidays, Coker, until the whole imposition of a thousand lines is completed and handed to me!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Now go to your place!"

"But sir—"

"And if you utter one more word," roared Mr. Prout, "I will order you to bend over a form, Coker, and cane you like a Lower Form boy! I warn you, Coker that I am in earnest, and you had better be silent!"

And Coker went to his place.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

## Information Wanted!

**I**SAY, you fellows!" Billy Bunter rolled up to the Famous Five after class that day, with his little round eyes gleaming with excitement behind his big round spectacles.





"There is a fellow here named Jones, though you don't know it," Coker told Blundell. And then he raised a dramatic finger and pointed at the astonished face of Jim Warren, the new boy in the Fifth. "That's the chap!" said Coker triumphantly. "He's an impostor!"

"I say, you might tell a chap!" he gasped.

"What and which?" asked Bob Cherry.

"About Warren of the Fifth!" gasped Bunter.

Harry Wharton frowned, and his chums became serious at once. Harry Wharton had been carefully avoiding Coker—since he knew what Horace wanted to see him about.

Twice Coker had looked in at the Remove passage, and had been rolled out on his neck no questions asked. He had given up looking in at the Remove passage.

Twice he had run down the captain of the Remove in the quad, and on each occasion the Famous Five had bagged him, and bumped him, and left him, so to speak, for dead!

This had a discouraging effect on Coker, stiffer as he was; and since then he had made no attempt, so far, to get in touch with the fellow who knew James Warren at home.

But even Coker, doubtless, was bright enough to see that the line Wharton took in the matter, showed that he could have told something if he had liked.

Already assured that Warren was a spooper—or, as he had written it on the blackboard, a "spoofer"—Coker was all the more convinced of it by the junior's evident determination to tell him nothing. The young rotter was trying to keep Warren's secret for him.

But though Coker had no opportunity of questioning the captain of the Remove, other fellows had—and did. A dozen Removites, and fellows in other Forms, had asked Harry whether there was anything in Coker's latest, and whether there was anything fishy about Warren.

To which Harry could only answer that Coker was a prize ass—a fact well known to all Greyfriars—and that Warren of the Fifth was, so far as he knew, as straight as a string.

That was his belief—he was sure of it. Nevertheless, he was conscious that such answers savoured more of the wisdom of the serpent than of the innocence of the dove.

He could not give a direct answer without admitting that he knew that Warren of the Fifth was not the son of Sir Arthur Warren, of Warren Croft, as he was supposed to be at Greyfriars.

On that point Wharton was determined to give no information if he could help it. Satisfied that Warren was straight—mysterious as the whole affair was—he was content to leave it at that. But it was growing more and more difficult to do so.

Now Bunter was getting hold of it. Bunter, of course, wanted to know. Anything that did not concern him, was of the deepest interest to William George Bunter.

He blinked inquiringly at the Famous Five through his big spectacles.

Harry Wharton turned and walked away. His chums followed him.

Bunter blinked at their backs with a very annoyed blink. This was not what he wanted at all.

"I say, you fellows," roared Bunter, "don't you start walking away when a fellow's talking to you! I say, you fellows!"

They walked on.

Bunter rolled in pursuit. But the Famous Five accelerated, and Bunter had to stop for breath.

"Well, this is a go!" remarked Bob Cherry, as the fat Owl of the Remove was left gasping astern.

"The gofulness is terrific!" agreed Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"The fat's in the fire now if there really is anything fishy about Warren," remarked Johnny Bull. "You're rather an ass, Wharton, old chap!"

"How do you make that out?" grunted Wharton.

"Well, if you're right about Warren, it's a matter for the Head to deal with. If you're not, you'd better have said nothing."

Wharton made no answer to that. Johnny Bull was right; so far as that went. A fellow under a false name was a fellow who ought to have stood before the headmaster to explain. But—

There was a "but."

"You see—" went on Johnny argumentatively.

"Oh, rot!" said Wharton gruffly. "I'm right about Warren! But I can't give the man away—he's given me his word that it's all above-board, and I believe him. He stood by me like a brick the other day, when the High-cliffe cads were ragging me. Any fellow can see he's decent."

Vernon-Smith came up. The look on the Bounder's face showed that he was going to ask a question—and the chums of the Remove did not need telling what it was going to be about.

"I hear that you know Warren at home, Wharton," said Smithy.

"I don't."

"Oh! Isn't Warren Croft near your uncle's place in Surrey?"

"About four or five miles."

"You know the Warrens?"

"No!"

"Hadm't you seen Warren of the Fifth before he came here?"

"No!"

"Coker's telling the wide world that you knew James Warren at home, and knew him at Warren Croft, and—"

"Coker's a prize idiot!"

"Tell me something I don't know! But look here, you've met Warren's father, haven't you?"

"I met Sir Arthur Warren once! It was the day he left for China, so I'm not likely to meet him again."

"Didn't you meet his son?"

"His son was out the day my uncle took me over to Warren Croft to see him."

The Bounder gave Harry a quick, searching glance. He was not the fellow to be satisfied with indirect answers.

"Is this chap, Warren of the Fifth, the jolly old baronet's son or not?" he demanded.

"Better ask him!"

"I'm asking you!"

"I think Warren's all right—a straight chap, and a decent chap," said Harry.

The Bounder laughed.

"I wasn't asking about his qualities. I was asking whether he was the son of Sir Arthur Warren, as he's supposed to be here."

"Didn't Quelch give you lines in class this morning, Smyth?"

"Eh? Yes!"

"Have you done them?"

"Not yet! Why?"

"Why not go and do them?" suggested Wharton. "Quelch cuts up rusty if he's kept waiting for his lines."

Vernon-Smith stared at him for a moment or two, and then burst into a chuckle.

"All serene!" he said. "You won't tell! I know what that means, of course, but it's no bizney of mine! Keep it dark if you like, old bean—all right!"

And the Bounder walked away, laughing.

"Smyth's cute!" said Bob.

"Too cute!" grunted Wharton.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes Skinner!"

Skinner came up with Snoop. Harry Wharton breathed hard. He was getting more and more fed-up.

"I hear that you know all about Warren of the Fifth, Wharton," began Skinner.

"Then you've heard more than I've heard!" answered Harry.

"Well, don't you?" asked Snoop.

"Oh, no! I don't know his taste in music, or whether he wears silk socks, or what his great-grandfather did for a living."

Skinner and Snoop stared and the Co. grinned.

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Skinner. "Look here, you know something about him, at any rate."

"Oh, yes, rather, I know something about him," admitted Wharton.

"Well, tell us what you know."

"Let's see! He's a human being—"

"Eh?"

"Genus homo species sapiens—"

"You silly ass!"

"He wears shoes on his feet, and a hat on his head—"

"Look here—"

"And a Greyfriars tie—"

"You fathead!"

"He's in the Fifth Form—"

"Don't be a goat!"

"His Form-master's Prout—"

"Will you—"

"And Prout's fat—"

"Look here, you idiot—"

"But Warren isn't—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Co., quite entertained by the expression on the faces of Skinner and Snoop. This information about Warren of the Fifth,

though undoubtedly correct in every detail, was not of much use to them.

Skinner and Snoop snorted and stalked away in disgust, leaving the chums of the Remove chuckling.

But the ordeal was not over. As the Famous Five strolled on, Hobson of the Shell spotted them, and cut across.

Wharton suppressed a groan as Hobby came up. He began to wonder whether he would ever hear the end of Warren of the Fifth.

"I say, Wharton—" began the Shell fellow.

"Don't!" interrupted Harry.

"Eh? Don't what?" asked the surprised Hobby.

"Don't say! At any rate, don't say anything about Warren of the Fifth. I'm fed-up with it, right to the back teeth!"

"Oh, don't be an ass, you know!" said Hobby. "Price of the Fifth has been talking to some Shell men, and he says he heard you say out plain that you knew Warren wasn't the chap he made himself out to be."

"Did Price mention what keyhole he was listening at?" asked Harry.

"Eh? No. Was he?" asked Hobby.

"I shouldn't wonder—he's that sort, if you ask me! But I say, is it true?"

"True that Price is that sort? Yes."

"No, you ass! About Warren. He looks a decent sort. I've rather liked him," said Hobson. "But is it true that you're pally with James Warren at home—"

"I don't know him at home."

"Oh, that washes it out then!" said Hobson. "I fancied there was nothing in it. I knew it was all rot, in fact!"

And Hobby went away satisfied, not being nearly so cute as the Bounder.

Harry Wharton compressed his lips.

"Price doesn't mean to let it die out," he said. "He's got his knife into Warren for some reason. He started Coker on this stunt, making a catspaw of the hot-headed ass. I suppose I can't go along and kick a Fifth Form man!"

That Price had got his knife into Jim Warren seemed only too obvious. The question was—why?

Harry Wharton felt worried. He was also feeling extremely uncomfortable.

But there was no help for it. Either he had to fence cautiously with questions, or he had to give Jim Warren away—which he was resolved not to do. He longed to hear the end of it all. But he knew only too well that he was not likely to hear the end of it yet.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Caught!

"O H!" gasped Billy Bunter. The heavy tread of Horace Coker in the Fifth Form passage was an alarming sound to the fat ears of the Owl of the Remove.

It ought not to have been, of course. Bunter had no business in the Fifth Form passage, or in Coker's study.

But Billy Bunter was often—very often—where he had no business to be.

At the present moment he was in Horace Coker's study in the Fifth.

It was Skinner's fault. Skinner, with that misdirected sense of humour for which he was well known in the Remove, had asked Bunter whether he had seen that big cake in Coker's study.

From such a question, what was Bunter to conclude, except that there was a big cake in Coker's study, and that Skinner had seen it there?

Jumping to that conclusion, the fat



## Time to Go to Bed. . .

but I can't leave off reading—

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Owl penetrated into the quarters of the Fifth, in search of cake.

There was no cake!  
The iniquitous Skinner had been pulling his podgy leg. Neither in the cupboard, nor anywhere else in the study, did Bunter spot a cake.

Bunter was concluding a vain search when the heavy tread of Horace Coker was heard in the passage, and the next moment the burly figure and rugged face of Horace appeared in the doorway.

Bunter backed round the table.  
Coker was looking cross. For two or three days Coker had been like a bear with a sore head.

His licking in the gym weighed on his mind. But that was not all. The affair of Warren was not going as Coker desired it to go.

Not because Warren had licked him, but from a sense of duty, and a sense of what was due to the school, Coker had taken up that matter, determined to show the spoofer up.

He had had no luck whatever.  
His half-holidays were booked for some time ahead, with the thousand lines he had received from Prout, and he had quite abandoned the idea of getting that old ass Prout to look into the matter. Prout, never fond of Coker, was now quite savage with him.

A Form-master who heard a fellow in his Form describe him as an old ass could not be expected to be pleased thereby. Prout was not pleased. Indeed, the incident rankled with Prout. Every time he had to deal with Coker he gave him the sharpest edge of his tongue.

Coker thought of laying the matter before the Head, but even Coker realised that something in the nature of proof was required before he took such a drastic step as that.

If Prout had looked into it and taken it up, it would have come before the Head as a matter of course. But Prout had to be counted out now. And Coker, though absolutely convinced himself, had no proof, and could not obtain any from the fellow who knew—Wharton of the Remove.

Trying to get information from Wharton was growing to be a more and more painful process, as well as a hopeless one. How many times that cheeky young tick, backed up by his friends, had mopped up Coker when in quest of information, the persistent Horace could hardly remember.

Nobody in the Fifth believed a word of the story. The mere fact that Coker believed it made it seem doubtful, even if it had not seemed too fearfully steep, anyhow.

So Coker was cross, and when he tramped into his study the expression on his rugged countenance was quite alarming to William George Bunter, and it grew more alarming still as he beheld the fat Owl.

With the table between, Bunter blinked at Coker through his big spectacles, and Coker glared at Bunter with a deadly glare.

"Oh!" said Coker. "You! After my tuck, I suppose! I'll teach you to come grub-hunting in the Fifth!"

Coker looked round for a cricket stump with a grim eye. Bunter eyed Coker with great uneasiness, calculating his chances of dodging to the door, round one end of the table, while Coker came for him round the other.

But the chances, unlike Bunter himself, were slim. Bunter's little fat legs had small chance against Coker's long ones. He knew that he would be grabbed—and when Coker hooked a cricket stump from the cupboard he knew what would happen to him when grabbed.

"I—I say, Coker," stammered Bunter, "I—I say, I never came here after your cake! Skinner never told me there was a cake here, and I never came to look for it! I say—"

Coker slammed the door. Little chance as Bunter had of escape, that cut it off entirely.

"I—I say, Coker, I—I came here—to speak to you—" gasped Bunter.

"Did you?" said Coker grimly.

"Well, you can save your breath—you'll want it when I start on you with this cricket stump!"

"Oh, really, Coker—"

"Come round that table!" said Coker.

"I—I'll stay here if—if you don't mind, Coker!" groaned Bunter.

"All right—I'll come round!"

"I—I say, I—I came to—to to tell you about Warren!" gasped Bunter.

It was a sudden brain-wave!

"I—I thought you'd like to know, Coker!" gasped Bunter.

Coker's expression changed at once.

"About Warren?" he repeated.

"Yes!" stammered Bunter.

"Then Wharton's told you?"

"Eh? No! Yes! I mean, he—he's told me everything! We—we've talked it over together many a time!"

"Oh!" said Coker. He laid down the cricket stump.

Bunter breathed more freely.

Luckily it was always easy to pull Coker's leg! Bunter, aware how fearfully keen Coker was to get information about Warren, and of his vain attempts to extract the same from Wharton, had tried it on—hoping for the best. The look on Coker's face showed that it was a winner.

Coker looked almost genial.

"Well, that's quite right of you, Bunter," he said. "If you came to tell me that I'm sorry I made a mistake. Go ahead—and tell me all you know about that spoofer Warren!"

Bunter paused.

It would not have taken him long to tell all that he knew about Warren—as he knew nothing at all about him. But that, it was clear, would not have done for Coker.

Coker had to be told something. Otherwise it was obvious that the cricket stump would be featured in this scene. The only question was, what was Bunter to tell Coker?

A fellow who knew nothing, but had to tell something, was in rather a difficulty. There was only one resource—and that, as it happened, was Bunter's accustomed resource in difficult moments. He had his fat imagination on which to draw. And he did not resemble the celebrated George Washington, who could not tell a lie. Bunter could—and often did!

Still, even Bunter had to have time to think something out. He blinked at Coker, cudgelling his fat brain. Coker was impatient.

"Get on with it!" he rapped.

Bunter got on with it.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### Coker Makes Discoveries!

"THE—the fact is, Coker—" began Bunter.

"Go on!"

"The—the fact—"

"For goodness' sake don't beat about the bush," said Coker impatiently.

"Why can't you come straight to the point, you young ass?"

The answer to that one was easy, had Coker only known it. Bunter could not come straight to the point, because he did not yet know what the point was. He was willing to tell Coker anything

Coker wanted to hear. But he had to have time to make it up.

"You—you—you see—" stammered Bunter.

"Oh, get it out! Wharton's told you about Warren, hasn't he?"

"No—"

"What?"

"I mean, yes!" gasped Bunter.

"Everything!"

"Well, then, tell me what he's said."

"He says Warren is all right, Coker. He says he's a straight chap, and as decent as any man at Greyfriars," said Bunter.

This was the truth. Bunter had heard Wharton say that more than once, in fact. So had every other fellow in the Remove.

To do Bunter justice, he would not have told the truth, if Coker had given him time to make up an untruth. But Coker was too impatient.

The truth, however, was no use to Coker. He gave the Owl of the Remove a glare across the table, and his hand strayed to the cricket stump.

"I see how it is," said Coker.

"Wharton's warned you not to tell me. He doesn't want me to know the facts about Warren—that's why he's been cheeky every time I've tried to ask him about it. Well, that won't do, Bunter. You came here to tell me—"

"Oh! Yes!"

"And it's a bit too late to change your mind," said Coker grimly. "Either you're going to tell me the whole story or I'm going to thrash you with this cricket stump, and you can take your choice."

Bunter's choice was not in doubt for a moment!

"Well, the—the—the fact is—" gasped the fat Owl. But again he had to hesitate, not yet having made up the fact.

"I'm going to get it out of you," said Coker, unconsciously coming to the fat fibber's aid. "Now, in the first place, Wharton knows Warren at home, doesn't he?"

As Coker obviously expected an answer in the affirmative, Bunter put it in the affirmative.

"Yes! Knows him well—in fact, they were practically brought up together," said Bunter. It was like Bunter to put on trimmings. "I—I understand that the nurse wheeled them out in the same pram when they were small—"

"Well, I don't quite see that, as Warren must be some years older than Wharton," said Coker. "Unless this fellow who calls himself Warren is passing himself off as a fellow younger than himself."

"That's it!" said Bunter. "You—you needn't tell Wharton I've told you, Coker. But that's how it is. Wharton's always been very pally with—James Warren at home! In childhood they walked hand-in-hand—"

"Don't be a young ass! He knows the real Warren," said Coker. "Is he anything like this man here to look at?"

"Oh! Exactly—"

"What?" roared Coker.

"Oh dear!" gasped Bunter. He saw that he had not got the right answer to this one! "I—I mean, exactly the opposite! Nothing at all like him."

"So I understood from what Price said," remarked Coker, with a nod. "And as soon as Wharton saw this spoofer at school he knew at once that he wasn't James Warren, what?"

"Oh! Yes! Seeing him here," said Bunter, "Wharton gave a violent start—"

"What?"

"And said 'Good heavens! That's

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not Warren! Those very words! I heard him."

Bunter was getting going now. If Coker wanted it piled on thick, Bunter was the man to pile it on as thick as he liked.

"You heard Wharton say that!" exclaimed Coker eagerly.

"Er—yes! Turning to me, he grasped me by the arm and said 'Look at that fellow, Bunter! He's an impostor!'" Coker's eyes gleamed.

He was getting information now. "He actually said to you that Warren was an impostor?" exclaimed Coker.

"That very word!" said Bunter cheerily. "To be absolutely exact, he said 'that villainous impostor!'"

"Well, I suppose he would be struck rather of a heap, having been brought up with Warren, to see this chap coming here in his name!" said Coker thoughtfully. "He ought to have gone to the Head at once about it."

"I advised him to," explained Bunter. "I said 'Look here, Wharton, you ought to go to the Head and denounce that impostor!'"

"And what did he say?"

"Well, you—you know what Wharton is," said Bunter. "Obstinate, you know! Pig-headed! He wouldn't!"

"I'll jolly well make him!" said Coker grimly. "Now that I know the facts, I'll make him fast enough! But tell me the rest."

"The—the rest?" stammered Bunter. "Yes. I want to know the whole thing."

Bunter had hoped that Coker would be satisfied with what he had got already. But Coker wanted to know more—and he was still between Bunter and the door, the cricket stump dangerously near at hand.

But now that Bunter had fairly started, his vein of invention flowed freely. If Coker wanted more, Bunter was the man to give him more.

All he needed was a lead from Coker. Coker gave him a lead.

"Does Wharton know where Warren really is?" asked Coker.

"I—I don't know. I think he's in his study," said Bunter.

"What?"

"I mean I saw him go into his study when I came up the passage—"

"You young ass! I mean the real Warren!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "You—you mean the—the real Warren! Oh, I—I see!"

"Can't you see that if this spoofer has come to Greyfriars in another fellow's name, the real fellow must have been kept away somehow?" demanded Coker.

Bunter blinked. It had not occurred to him. Still, now Coker mentioned it, it seemed probable.

"Oh, yes! Rather!" said Bunter. "That—that was what—what worried Wharton chiefly. He said to me, 'What can have become of the real Warren?' He—he was quite worried and bothered about it."

"Well, I suppose he would be," said Coker, with a nod. "Something must have been done to the real James Warren to keep him away. Kidnapped, very likely."

"Oh cricky!" said Bunter.

"Did Wharton think so?" asked Coker.

"Oh, yes! It—it flashed into his mind at once, and he—he asked me what I thought about it."

"What did he say exactly?"

"He—he said, 'Look here, Bunter, do you think the real James Warren has been kidnapped?' And I said, 'Well, old chap, what does it look like? Kidnapped or—murdered!'"

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Coker gave quite a start. Even Coker, so far, had not thought of that awful possibility. And now that he heard it, even Coker felt that it sounded sort of improbable.

"Oh, draw it mild, you young ass!" said Coker. "The fellow's a spoofer and a cheeky tick, but—"

Bunter realised that he was piling it on too thick even for Coker. He waited for another lead. Bunter was a most obliging fibber. He really only wanted to tell Coker the fibs he wanted to hear. "Kidnapped, I fancy!" said Coker. "He's kept away from the school somehow, that's certain, so he must have been kidnapped. Now, about this spoofer who calls himself Warren—does Wharton know anything about him? He seems to want to back him up, impostor as he is. Or is he afraid of him?"

"That's it—fearfully frightened," said Bunter promptly. "He—he sometimes turns pale when he sees him."

"If he's frightened of a crook, that would account for his refusing to speak out," said Coker thoughtfully. "Does he know who the chap actually is?"

Bunter for the moment hesitated between a negative and an affirmative; but he could see that Coker's appetite was whetted, and he fancied that an affirmative would be more welcome, so he made it affirmative.

"Yes," he answered.

"Oh, he knows!" exclaimed Coker eagerly. "Does he actually know the chap's real name?"

"Oh, yes!"

"And what's the name?" asked Coker.

"Jones," said Bunter. "It was the first name that came into his mind. 'George Albert Jones,' he added.

"How does he know the chap's name?" asked Coker. "Did he know him before he came here—or what?"

"I—I suppose he did—"

"I don't want any of your suppositions!" said Coker. "I want the facts—the plain facts!"

"Oh, yes! I mean, I know he did. He—he knew him at home," explained Bunter, fairly letting himself go. "This chap Smith—"

"Smith?" exclaimed Coker.

"I mean Jones!" said Bunter hastily. "This chap Jones is the son of a gamekeeper at Wharton Croft—I mean Warren Lodge—that is—"

"For goodness' sake, don't get mixed up in an important matter like this!" snapped Coker. "Do you mean Warren Croft, or Wharton Lodge?"

"Yes!" gasped Bunter.

"Which?" hooted Coker.

"Oh, whichever you like! I—I—I mean Wharton Lodge—"

"I begin to see!" Coker's eyes gleamed. "The son of a gamekeeper named Jones, at Wharton's home. Naturally, he would know the chap. The young villain got rid of James Warren somehow—got hold of his clothes and things somehow—and coolly walked in here as James Warren! That's it in a nutshell, Bunter!"

"Oh, yes! As—as you say, in—in a nutshell!" assented Bunter, with a longing blink at the door. "I—I say, Coker, d-d-don't tell Wharton I've told you all this! He—he might be annoyed."

"That entirely depends," answered Coker calmly. "I shall make Wharton repeat all this to the Head!"

"Oh cricky!"

"And if he prevaricates, you'll be wanted as a witness that he did say it."

"Oh lor'!"

"You've nothing to be afraid of," said Coker reassuringly.

"Oh, haven't I?" gasped Bunter. "I

—I say, Coker, I—I wouldn't g-g-go to the Head if I were you."

"When I want advice from a fag I'll ask for it," said Coker disdainfully. "Till then shut up, if you don't want to be kicked!"

"But—" gasped Bunter, utterly dismayed at the bare idea of his astounding yarn being repeated to Dr. Locke.

"I—I say—"

"That will do!" Coker waved his hand to the door. "You can cut! I've got to think this out. Cut!"

Bunter was glad, at least, to cut. He cut promptly. And he gasped as he went down the passage, leaving Coker to think it out. If Coker's mental processes actually got as far as thinking, there was no doubt that he had food for thought.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### Denounced!

**H**ERE, young Cherry!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" answered Rob cheerily.

"Know where Warren is?"

"I saw him going down to the footer."

"Oh!" said Coker. "All right! Then I'll go down, too!"

And he went.

Bob Cherry gazed after him.

Horace Coker strode away towards the football ground, where a good many seniors had gathered for practice. It was a half-holiday, and Coker ought to have been busy with his lines for Prout, but Coker had given those lines hardly a thought.

Having made such startling discoveries that afternoon, Coker was not likely to think about lines for Prout.

He was feeling rather like a detective who had got up his case against a suspected crook—and he flattered himself that he had his case pretty complete, too.

Had he not extracted the whole story from Bunter, who had had it from Wharton—the fellow who knew? All he had to do now was to shout it from the housetops, so to speak, and cover his enemy with confusion.

That was what Coker was going to do. "Oh, my hat!" said Bob to himself.

"Is that howling ass looking for another row with Warren? He may get a real whopping this time, if he does."

And Bob rushed off to call the Co., unwilling to miss the entertainment if Coker was seeking another scrap.

And so in a few minutes the Famous Five were following Horace Coker down to the football field, with about a dozen other fellows who had caught the news that something was on.

Coker arrived there and joined Potter and Greene. The games practice had not started yet. Warren was there, talking to Blundell, the captain of his Form.

Jim Warren had undoubtedly been startled and disconcerted when he found himself the most-talked-of fellow at Greyfriars, in consequence of Coker's amazing accusation. But no harm had come of it so far; he was relieved to find that the Fifth Form—and the fellows generally—appeared to regard it as only one more specimen of Coker's idiocy.

Anyhow, he was looking very happy and cheerful now. He was already a member of the Form eleven in the Fifth—with a good chance of getting his cap for the School First Eleven. He was keen on footer, and was going to enjoy himself that keen September afternoon.

He did not even notice Coker arrive—and Horace's glance of scorn was wasted on him.



"Play up!" shouted Fitzgerald. "On the ball!" "Ha, ha, ha!" With a battery of football boots converging on him, Coker retreated. After him surged the footballers, and Coker's retreat became a headlong flight!

"You've not changed, old man," said Potter. Seeing Coker there, his friends supposed he was coming down for football practice. They did not yet know that matters of much mightier import than footer were on Coker's mind.

"Changed?" repeated Coker. "I dare say Blundell will shove you in, as it's only practice," said Greene. "But you'd better get changed sharp."

"Don't be an ass, Greeney! I'm not here for footer."

"Oh! Just going to watch?" asked Potter, rather puzzled.

"Yes—I'm going to watch—Warren!" grinned Coker. "You fellows had better watch him, too. He will be worth watching when I tackle him."

Potter and Greene looked alarmed.

"I say, old fellow, you can't kick up a row here," said Potter anxiously.

"The men will boot you if you do."

"Who's going to kick up a row?"

"Oh! I thought—"

"Don't you start thinking, old chap; it's hardly in your line," advised Coker.

"Just watch while I tackle that spoofer. I've found out all about him now! I'm going to show him up before all the Form!"

"Oh dear!" said Potter.

"I'm going to catch him napping!" went on Coker. "I've thought it out—right out! Watch him jump when I call him suddenly by his right name."

"His name's Warren!" said Greene, staring.

"Don't be an ass, Greeney!"

"Mean to say he's got another name?" gasped Greene.

"I mean to say that I've found out his right name!" said Coker coolly.

"His name's no more Warren than mine is Jehosphat!"

Potter and Greene gazed at Coker.

He spoke so positively that they were quite staggered.

"I've found out all that Wharton knows," explained Coker. "He's been keeping it dark because he's afraid of the fellow. The chap's real name is Jones."

"J-J-Jones!" stuttered Potter.

"That's it! Just watch him jump when I call him Jones, and he knows that he's spotted!" chuckled Coker.

"I—I say, Coker—" stuttered Greene.

"You needn't say anything. Just watch!" said Coker. "I fancy it will take the wind out of his sails when he hears his right name, what?"

Coker moved towards Warren. At a distance of a few yards from him he suddenly shouted:

"Here, Jones!"

Potter and Greene watched, dumb-founded. Coker watched—eagerly.

Had Warren of the Fifth really been named Jones, no doubt he would have been startled to hear his true name suddenly shouted at his elbow. But as the name of Jones was merely a figment of Billy Bunter's fertile imagination, it had no startling effect on Warren.

He did not jump. He did not spin round in sudden alarm. He did not even turn his head.

Coker waited a moment or two, puzzled and annoyed. His bombshell, so to speak, had gone off without blowing anybody up. After a few moments he tried the experiment again.

"Jones! I say, Jones!"

Blundell looked round.

"What the dooce do you mean, Coker?" he asked. "There's nobody here named Jones."

"That's all you know, Blundell!" retorted Coker. "There is a fellow

here named Jones, though you don't know it—yet."

"Another new man that I've not seen?" asked the captain of the Fifth, perplexed.

"No—a new man that you have seen!" grinned Coker. "He goes by the name of Warren here!"

"Warren!" gasped Blundell.

Coker raised a dramatic finger and pointed at the astonished face of Jim Warren, who had turned as he heard his name mentioned.

"That's the chap!" said Coker triumphantly.

There was a buzz of amazement from the Fifth Form men. They gathered round, forgetting for the moment that they were there for games practice.

They stared at Coker—and they stared at Warren.

"Is the man mad?" asked Smith major.

"Mad as a hatter, I think!" said Blundell. "Look here, Coker! Sheer off! We don't want any more of your foolery!"

"Has Price been pulling your leg again?" asked Hilton, laughing.

"I've not got this from Price!" retorted Coker. "I've found out the whole thing! That fellow calls himself Warren! Well, his name is Jones! He isn't the son of Sir Arthur Warren, of Warren Croft, he's the son of a game-keeper at young Wharton's place. I've found him out, and he may as well own up now. Young Wharton knows the whole story, and he will have to own up to the Head now I've found it out!"

There was a general gasp.

Coker's finger remained aloft, pointing in denunciation at Jim Warren.

But the denounced senior did not

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(Continued from page 13.)

seem alarmed. He stared blankly at Coker for a moment or two, and then burst into a roar:

"Ha, ha, ha!"

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### Booted!

**H**ARRY WHARTON & CO. stared on. They had arrived on the senior football ground expecting to find a scrap in progress. There was no scrap, but a dramatic denunciation. It was, perhaps, more interesting than a scrap, but much more unexpected and surprising. They could hardly believe their ears as they listened to Coker.

Blundell seemed dumbfounded. But he found his voice at last.

"You priceless idiot!" he gasped.

"You don't believe me?" sneered Coker.

"B-believe you!" stuttered Blundell.

"You howling ass—"

"Well, it's true! Are you going to own up—Jones?"

"Are you speaking to me?" asked Warren.

"You jolly well know I am!"

"But, my dear chap, my name isn't Jones!" said Warren, laughing.

"Quite a nice name—but not mine!"

"You won't get away with lying now!" said Coker scornfully.

"I'm going to make young Wharton go to the Head and tell the whole story! And you'll have to explain what you've done with the real Warren."

"How did even that silly idiot Coker get this bee into his bonnet?" asked Potter, in despair.

"Don't ask me!" said Greene.

"If you've done your funny turn, Coker, suppose you sheer off?" suggested Fitzgerald.

"Don't be a fool, Fitz!" said Coker.

"I'm going to the Head about it. Jones had better come with me. He will have to come, anyhow."

"I suppose," said Blundell, "that that young ass Wharton has been pulling this silly idiot's leg! I'll jolly well kick him next time I see him—"

"He's here," said Hilton, glancing round.

Blundell looked round, and beckoned to Harry Wharton.

"Have you been spinning this fool yarn to Coker?" he demanded.

"No fear!" answered Harry.

"You'll have to spin it now to the Head!" said Coker grimly.

"I've got it from a Remove kid who heard it from you, Wharton."

"Fathhead!" answered Harry.

"Tell the truth, and let the fellows hear you!" said Coker encouragingly.

"You needn't be afraid of Warren—I mean Jones—any longer. His number's up here! Now, answer me! Isn't his name Jones?"

"Not that I know of!" answered Harry.

"Didn't you know him at your uncle's place in Surrey—Wharton Lodge?"

"No!"

"Isn't he the son of a gamekeeper there?"

"No!"

"You're denying it," roared Coker, "when I've told you that I've got the whole story from the Remove kid as told by you!"

"If any fellow told you that, Coker, he was pulling your leg!" said Harry, laughing.

"So you deny it, do you?"

"Yes, rather!"

"You never said anything of the kind, Wharton?" asked Blundell.

"Nothing of the kind! Never dreamed of it! Poor old Coker asks fellows to pull his silly leg, and I suppose some fellow has obliged him!" said Harry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Blundell's jaw set grimly.

"Now, look here, Coker!" he said.

"You've talked a lot of rot about Warren. You worried him into a scrap, and got the licking you asked for, and you can't get over it. That's the long and the short of it. Now you're making such an ass of yourself, that Remove kids spin you silly yarns, and you believe them, and come here and make a fool of yourself. You're going to stop it—see? Get off this field, or we'll kick you off!"

"Oh, let him rip, Blundell!" said Jim Warren good naturedly.

"When a fellow's a born idiot, you know—"

"That's all very well," said Blundell.

"But we're all fed-up with this. Get off this field, Coker!"

"I'll please myself about that!" retorted Coker.

"We'll give you three yards start, and—"

"You needn't trouble."

"Then every fellow here is going to kick you," said Blundell.

"He glanced round. "Line up, you men!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The footballers prepared for business. Coker gave them a defiant glare. This was rather an unexpected outcome of his denunciation of Jim Warren on the football ground.

"Look here—" bawled Coker.

"Start!" rapped Blundell.

"Shan't!"

"Start him, Fitz!"

"Played!" said Fitzgerald; and he started Coker with a hefty application of a football boot to his trousers.

Coker roared. He turned on Fitzgerald; but at the same moment Blundell's boot landed.

With another roar Coker spun round at the captain of the Fifth. Hilton's boot landed as he did so.

"Play up!" shouted Fitzgerald.

"On the ball!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. backed out of the way, chucking. Coker glared round in almost speechless wrath at grinning faces. Even Potter and Greene had lined up with the rest of the Fifth to boot Coker off the field.

It was clear that all Warren's Form was fed-up with Coker and his antics, and considered it a good idea to give him a lesson on the subject.

Coker was not a man to count odds, or to flee from foemen. But with a battery of football boots converging on him, even Coker realised that the time had come for retreat.

He retreated.

After him surged the footballers. Coker's retreat became a flight—his flight became a frantic chase.

Boot after boot landed on Coker, hard. Every fellow seemed anxious to get in a kick. Some fellows got in more than one. Horace Coker was soon running for his life. Behind him the Fifth Form footballers ran and kicked.

"Ow!" roared Coker. "Wow! Ooogh! Oh, my hat! Yaroooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Horace Coker hardly knew how he escaped from the footballers. By the time they gave up the chase—at quite a distance from the football ground—Coker was feeling as if he had been under a traction-engine. He tottered into the quad, gasping and spluttering. He staggered to the House, and limped in, and just managed to crawl to his study.

There he sank down in an armchair, exhausted. For quite a long time afterwards Coker's remarks were chiefly: "Ow!" and "Yow!" and "Wow!"

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Light at Last!

**M**R. QUELCH, master of the Remove, gave quite a start.

Mr. Quelch was enjoying that half-holiday—in his own way.

Seated in his study he was deep in literary works.

It was quite a nice September afternoon, and the Remove master's window was wide open.

Through that window floated the balmy breeze. And suddenly there floated through it a fearful yell:

"Yaroooh!"

It was the dulcet voice of Billy Bunter, the fat ornament of Mr. Quelch's Form.

Quelch's eye turned from literary works to the quad.

What he saw made him rise from the table with a jump, forgetful of literary works.

Full in view of his study window was the fat figure of William George Bunter, wriggling in the grasp of Horace Coker of the Fifth Form.

Coker of the Fifth had Bunter by the back of his fat neck, and was propelling him towards the House.

"Yoop! Leggo, you beast! I won't go!" roared Bunter.

"Won't you?" answered Coker. "I think you will!"

Mr. Quelch leaned from the window. His gimlet eye glittered with wrath at Coker of the Fifth.

"Coker!" he roared.

"Oh!" Horace stared round. He spotted the Form-master at his window.

"Oh! Yes, sir! Did you call?"

"I did, Coker!" hooted Mr. Quelch.

"Release Bunter at once! How dare you handle a boy of my Form in that manner?"

"I'm taking him to the Head, sir," explained Coker.

"You are taking Bunter to the Head!" repeated Mr. Quelch, as if he could hardly believe his ears, as indeed he hardly could.

"Yes, sir! Come on, Bunter!"

"Yaroooh!"

"I have ordered you, Coker, to release that boy!" said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice. "Do you dare to disobey me, Coker?"

"I say, sir, make him leggo!" wailed Bunter. "I—I don't want to go to the Head, sir! I—I don't want to waste Dr. Locke's time, sir! Oh, lor'!"

"You will come to my study, Bunter! You will come, also, Coker! I shall inquire into this extraordinary matter!" hooted Mr. Quelch.

"Very well, sir!" said Coker, "I'll bring him to your study."

"You will do nothing of the kind, Coker! You will release Bunter this instant!" roared the Remove master. "Otherwise, I shall report your conduct to the headmaster, and request him to flog you!"

Coker paused a moment. But even Coker's bull-headed obtuseness had some sort of a limit. He released Bunter.

"Now come to my study—both of you—at once!" snapped Mr. Quelch; and he turned from the window.

Billy Bunter would have preferred distinctly to take any other direction, except that of Mr. Quelch's study. But it had to be, and the fat Owl rolled into the House with Coker, and arrived with him at Mr. Quelch's door.

Coker entered the Remove master's study calmly. He was still rather feeling the effects of his experiences on the football ground; but he was quite cool. The denunciation of Jim Warren had been rather a failure; but that was by no means Coker's last card. Placing the matter before the Head was his next step.

Of course, he needed Bunter for that purpose. It did not even occur to him that Bunter would be unwilling to repeat his strange tale to the headmaster, until he tackled him on the subject.

Then he found Bunter very unwilling indeed. Pulling Coker's leg was one matter; attempting the same feat with the Head was quite another.

Coker, of course, was not the fellow to take no for an answer. Willing or unwilling, Bunter was going with him to the Head, to tell the tale he had told in Coker's study. Not that Bunter was likely to tell it if Coker got him to the Head!

He had got him to Mr. Quelch, so far. Coker did not mind. He was willing to let Quelch hear all about it if he wanted to. Indeed, when Quelch heard he was certain to insist on Bunter making his statement to the headmaster. What else could he do?

So the grim frown and glittering eye of Quelch did not daunt Coker. He marched into Quelch's study calmly. Bunter rolled in after him, far from calmly. Bunter was full of apprehensions.

"Now, Coker," said Mr. Quelch, "explain yourself at once!"

"Certainly, sir!" said Coker cheerfully. "Bunter knows something that the Head ought to know. It's about Warren of the Fifth, as he calls himself."

"Warren!" repeated Mr. Quelch. "The new boy in the Fifth Form?" Quelch had noticed Warren on the first day of term.

Jim Warren had collared a bull pup, which had a fancy for sampling Mr.

Quelch's legs. He had risked getting bitten to save Quelch from a bite. The Remove master had a kind and grateful remembrance of that episode.

It disposed him in favour of Warren, and certainly not of Coker, to whom that ferocious bull pup had belonged.

"He calls himself Warren, sir," said Coker.

"I presume, Coker, that you are in your right senses!" said Mr. Quelch, with a glare that might have withered any fellow less fortified by solid obtuseness than Horace Coker.

"Eh?"

"Then what do you mean? What else should Warren call himself, except by his own name?"

"It's not his name, sir" explained Coker. "His real name is Jones."

"Oh lor!" breathed Bunter.

"Jones!" repeated Mr. Quelch dazedly. "Warren's name is Jones!"

"That's it, sir! Bunter knows, so does Wharton, though he won't own up to it. He's kidnapped the real Warren!"

"Wha-at?"

"Stuck him away, somewhere, sir—"

"Bless my soul!"

"And walked into the school in his place," said Coker cheerfully. "Just like a villain on the films, sir."

Quelch gazed at Coker. It was altogether too much like the films for Mr. Quelch to think of believing a single word of it.

"He got rid of the real chap, sir, somehow, and bagged his box and his clothes and things somehow, and took in the Head somehow, and—"

Even Coker realised that there seemed to be a lot of "somehows" about the story.

"Coker," gasped Mr. Quelch, "how dare you stand in my presence and talk this utter nonsense!"

"I know it's a bit surprising, sir," conceded Coker. "Not a thing that happens every day. But it's true."

"Nonsense!"

"Bunter knows, sir. He got it from Wharton, who knows all about it, though he won't say so. The fellow's real name is Jones, and Wharton, who knows him, told Bunter so. I think he ought to be shown up, sir, don't you?"

Mr. Quelch gasped.

"Bunter!"

"Oh crikey! I—I mean yes, sir!"

"Did Wharton tell you any such ridiculous story about a Fifth Form boy?"

"Oh dear! No, sir!"

Coker jumped.

"You young ass!" he exclaimed. "Tell your Form-master the truth! Tell him what you told me in my study a couple of hours ago."

"Did you tell Coker that Wharton made such a statement, Bunter?"

"I—I was only pulling his leg, sir!"

groaned Bunter. "He was between me and the door, sir—"

"What?"

"And—and he had a cricket stump, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I'd have told him anything to get away! He—he wanted to hear something about Warren, so—so I told him, sir. He's up against Warren because the chap whopped him in the gym the other day. Oh dear!"

"You utterly absurd boy! You told Coker a fanciful story without a word of truth in it!"

"Oh dear! Yes, sir!"

Coker gasped.

"Mean to say you were pulling my leg?" he roared.

"Of course I was!" gasped Bunter, feeling safe from Coker, at least, in his Form-master's presence. "Only an idiot like you would have swallowed a word of it."

"Why, I—I—I'll—"

"Silence, Coker!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "If you were bullying this junior, that accounts for his deluding you, though certainly he should not have done so. You are an unscrupulous boy, Bunter!"

"He—he had a cricket stump—"

stammered Bunter.

Coker made a movement towards the Owl of the Remove.

Even upon Coker's solid brain it dawned, at long last, that Bunter knew nothing whatever about Warren of the Fifth, and had only drawn on his fat imagination for a yarn to get away from Coker.

In the circumstances Coker might have been glad that he had not succeeded in getting Bunter to the Head.

But Coker was not thinking of that. He was thinking of giving Bunter what he deserved, and a little over.

Mr. Quelch, with a thunderous brow, strode between them.

"Coker, how dare you—"

"That lying young tick!" gasped Coker.

"Bunter, you may go! Coker, come with me! I shall take you to your Form-master! Come!"

"I'm not going to Prout, sir! I—"

"You are going to Mr. Prout with me this instant!" said Mr. Quelch, and he grasped Horace Coker by the collar. "I shall take you to him by force, if necessary! Now, come!"

Coker breathed hard. It was fearfully humiliating for a great man like Coker to be marched along by his collar, like an unruly fag. But even Coker realised that he could not knock a Form-master down. He did not want to be sacked. There was no help for it. Breathing wrath and indignation, Coker went, with Mr. Quelch's grip on his collar.

Billy Bunter rolled away, grinning.

(Continued on next page.)

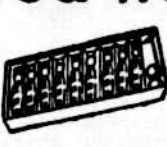
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## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

## Poor Old Coker!

"I SAY, you fellows!" yelled Billy Bunter.

There were a number of the Remove fellows in the Rag after tea. They all looked round as Bunter put a fat, excited face in at the door and yelled. Bunter's eyes were almost popping through his spectacles with excitement.

"I say, you fellows, come on!" howled Bunter. "I say, Quelch is taking Coker to his beak!"

"What on earth's up?" asked Harry Wharton.

"He's got him by the neck!"

"Quelch has?" exclaimed the Bounder.

"Gripping him like—like—like—like Billy-o!" gasped Bunter.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Roll up, my infants!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "This ought to be worth seeing!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Come on!" squeaked Bunter.

There was a rush from the Rag.

If their Form-master was escorting Coker of the Fifth by the back of his neck to see Prout, it was a performance worth watching, in the general opinion. There was quite a scamper to Masters' Passage.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There he is!" gasped Bob.

As they swarmed round the corner the juniors had a view of Coker in the distance up the passage, being propelled into Prout's study by Quelch's grasp on his collar.

They disappeared inside.

"Poor old Coker!" grinned Nugent. "He must have got Quelch's rag out fearfully! What has he done to Quelch, Bunter?"

"Checked him," said Bunter. "Spinning him a yarn about that chap Warren, making out that the chap's name was Jones."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He had the nerve to say I'd told him so!" went on Bunter. "Of course, Quelch wasn't likely to believe that."

"Oh! Then it was you spun Coker that yarn?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"What did you pull Coker's leg for you blithering bloater?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"I didn't! I never said a word to him about Warren! Besides he had me in his study with a cricket stump! What was a fellow to do?" argued Bunter. "Not that I said a word about Warren, you know! Never mentioned his name!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on!" said the Bounder, and he led the way along Masters' Passage to the doorway of Prout's study.

Juniors were not supposed to swarm in those sacred precincts. But all the fellows wanted to be in on this scene. They trod cautiously, and kept back out of sight of the doorway. Fortunately Quelch had left the door wide open when he marched Coker in. This was distinctly fortunate, from the point of view of the audience.

Quelch's sharp tones came clearly from Prout's study. The juniors grinned as they heard.

"This boy, sir—this boy Coker, Mr. Prout—this absurd, insensate, disrespectful and incredibly stupid boy—"

Prout's boom interrupted.

"What is it, Mr. Quelch? What has that troublesome boy done this time?"

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I shall be surprised at nothing I hear."

"It appears, sir, that he has taken some prejudice against a new boy in your Form—a boy named Warren—"

"I am aware of it, sir, but—"

"A boy, sir, who acted very bravely and chivalrously on an occasion when I was attacked by a savage dog."

"I remember it, Mr. Quelch—an excellent boy!" said Mr. Prout. "A member of my Form of whom I am proud, sir! But—"

"In his absurd prejudice against this boy Warren, Coker has gone to the length of frightening a junior—a stupid boy in my Form named Bunter—into inventing absurd stories about him—"

"Bless my soul!" said Prout.

"Goodness only knows how far this utterly nonsensical story may have spread," said Mr. Quelch. "In his fear of Coker's violence, Bunter actually went to the length of pretending that Warren had come to this school under an assumed name."

"Bless my soul!" repeated Prout.

"I request you, sir, to deal with this boy of your Form! I caught him in the very act of forcing Bunter to go to the headmaster, to repeat his absurd inventions to Dr. Locke! You will see, sir, that Coker must, somehow, be restrained from such follies."

"Mr. Quelch, this boy is almost beyond me!" boomed Prout. "Already he has an imposition of a thousand lines! He is detained for all half-holidays until they are written! What can be done with a boy whose stupidity is so abysmal! I can only request the headmaster to administer a flogging!"

"The fact is, sir—" Coker got in a word at last.

"Silence!" boomed Prout.

"I've been taken in," said Coker. "But all the same, that chap Warren—"

"If you utter another single word, Coker, I shall cane you!" roared Mr. Prout. "Silence! Go to your study and remain there! Remain there till I give you leave to go! I shall consider what is to be done with you! Go!"

"But sir—"

"Kindly hand me that cane, Mr. Quelch!"

The juniors in the passage fairly held their breath. Was Prout going to break with all traditions by "whopping" a member of his Form?

"I'm going, sir!" gasped Coker.

And he went.

With a flushed and wrathful face, Coker came down the passage. He stared in surprise at the mob of juniors there. It was his first intimation that he had had an audience.

"You cheeky fags!" snapped Coker. "What the dickens are you doing here? Get out before I boot you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removites. There were a dozen or more of them on the spot, so booting them was a rather large order.

"If you cackle at me—" yapped Coker.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker, goaded, charged!

He had borne much that day. He had been booted off the football ground by his Form. He had been marched along by the collar by Mr. Quelch. He had been slanged by Prout, and narrowly escaped a caning from that incensed gentleman. Cheek from juniors was the last straw!

Coker charged!

Probably, a few moments later, he wished he hadn't. For it was not the fags who were booted out of the passage, it was Coker! Coker did not

count odds—but they were there all the same, and too much for him!

A forest of boots helped Coker along the passage. He reached the end of it, rolling and roaring!

Leaving him to roll and roar, the mob of juniors cleared off, yelling with laughter. It was a tired and dusty and dishevelled Coker that limped away to the Fifth Form studies.

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## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

## Play Up, Price!

JIM WARREN came into his study, No. 4 in the Fifth, with a cheery smile on his face, healthy and ruddy after football practice.

Few fellows, looking at his handsome, pleasant face, would or could have supposed that there was anything like trickery in his nature. Yet it was certain, as Harry Wharton knew, that he was at Greyfriars under another fellow's name. Coker of the Fifth, though as usual making a fool of himself, was really on the right track—though he had succeeded in convincing everybody that he wasn't!

Warren coughed, and the smile left his face as he entered his study and caught a whiff of cigarette-smoke.

Price of the Fifth was there, sprawled in the armchair with a cigarette between his discoloured teeth and a racing paper in his hands.

He glanced up at Warren furtively and unpleasantly. The new senior stood looking at him with unconcealed disgust.

That was how Price had been occupied while the rest of the Fifth were at Soccer. It was his own study—and he considered that he could do as he liked in it. Before Warren came, Hilton was more likely than not to have joined him in smoking cigarettes and conning over racehorses. But Warren, at all events, had no such tastes—and the atmosphere of the study was very disagreeable to him after footer in the fresh open air.

He crossed to the window and threw it wide open. Price gave a snarl.

"Shut that window! There's a rotten draught."

"And a fog of smoke!" said Warren, "I prefer the draught."

"Well, I prefer the smoke."

"You wouldn't if Wingate happened to drop in, or Prout."

"You can't mind your own business?" sneered Price. "I've had enough pi-jaw from you, Warren—if your name's Warren! I'm going to smoke in my own study if I please!"

"Granted!" assented Jim. "But sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander! I'm going to have the window open in my own study, if I please, Price—if your name's Price!"

Stephen Price jumped.

"What do you mean, you idiot? You know my name's Price."

"And you know my name's Warren!" said Jim with a laugh. "If there's an 'if' in one case there's an 'if' in the other."

Price's thin lip curled.

"You may fancy you can get by by making a joke of it," he said, "but you'll get landed all the same. You've taken all the fellows in, but you haven't taken me in—or Coker! Coker's got his teeth into it—and I can tell you you won't hear the end of it in a hurry."

Warren smiled. Coker's antics, as a matter of fact, had made his position safer. The ridiculous scene on the





“Mean to say you were pulling my leg?” roared Coker wrathfully. “Of course I was!” gasped Bunter, feeling safe in his Form-master’s presence. Coker made an angry movement towards the Owl of the Remove, but Mr. Quelch strode between them. “Coker, how dare you?”

football ground had convinced everybody that there was absolutely nothing in the strange story about Warren.

So far from convincing anybody that he was right, Coker had convinced everybody that he was wrong including his Form-master, who was wraithier with Coker than he had ever been before. Indeed, it was rumoured in the Fifth that Coker was up for a flogging—and really Coker’s best friend couldn’t say that he hadn’t asked for it.

“You can grin!” said Price viciously. “But you’ll get landed! A fellow can’t carry on a spoof like that. Coker may be a silly idiot, but facts are facts!”

Warren looked at him steadily. “And who put Coker up to this?” he asked quietly. “He got the idea into his head from you, Price.”

“Do you expect me to keep your secrets?” asked Price with a shrug of his narrow shoulders.

“Hardly! But since you’ve mentioned the subject, I should be interested to know how you learned anything about my affairs.”

“Better ask the Remove fag who knows the real James Warren!” sneered Price. “Young Wharton knows, and naturally a fag talks what he knows all over the shop.”

“I’ve spoken to Wharton about it. I came near pitching into him—but I’m glad I didn’t. I take his word that he hasn’t been talking about me.”

“It seems to have got out all the same.”

“There’s only one way you can have heard Wharton speaking on the subject,” said Warren contemptuously. “You were eavesdropping—listening behind some corner when the kid was speaking to me.”

“Think so if you like!” Warren stood looking at the dingy, weedy, spiteful fellow sprawling in the armchair, blowing out streams of smoke. Price looked up at him with sneering defiance.

“I think Coker may let this matter drop now he’s got into a row with Prout over it,” said Warren.

“You don’t know Coker. The more everybody’s down on him the more stiff-necked he gets. Coker’s a stickler.”

“Well, I can stand it from Coker. He’s a fool—but he’s straight as a string, and honest as the day. I respect Coker, annoying ass as he is. But you’re a fellow of quite a different sort, Price.”

“What about it?”

“This about it,” said Warren very quietly, “Coker’s an honest fool—you’re a dishonourable rascal!”

“Thanks!”

“Coker’s a howling ass; but he is honestly down on anything like deception,” continued Warren. “You’re not! At this very moment you’re doing what you’d be sacked for if the Head knew.”

Price blew out another cloud of smoke.

“Are you going to sneak to the Head?” he sneered.

“Why not?” said Warren coolly. “If you’re so shocked at the idea of a fellow spoofing, and feel bound to give him away, why shouldn’t I feel the same?”

Stephen Price sat upright. The sneering grin faded off his face.

The black sheep of the Fifth had a good many secrets to keep, and he was a good hand at keeping them. But he could hardly conceal his manners and customs from a fellow in his own study. Warren knew more than enough about him and his ways to cause him plenty of trouble—if he liked.

“You’d sneak to the beaks?” exclaimed Price.

Warren laughed.

“No!” he said. “Whatever you may choose to think of me, I wouldn’t do that! But—you’ve taken up the line that you’re the kind of fellow that won’t stand for spoof and deception and what-not. Coker takes that line—and means it. You take that line—and don’t mean it. Well, I think I’ve a right to ask you to live up to it.”

“What the dickens do you mean?”

“I mean this,” said Jim Warren, “that as you’ve barged into my affairs, I’m going to barge into yours. You think I’m playing some rotten game—and you feel bound to stop it. Well, I think you’re playing a rotten game, and I feel bound to stop it, see? If you can prove that I am an impostor and a spoofer, and the rest of it, get on with it! And, in the meantime, as you set up on that matter, to be a decent fellow, you’re going to act like one.”

“What the dooce—”

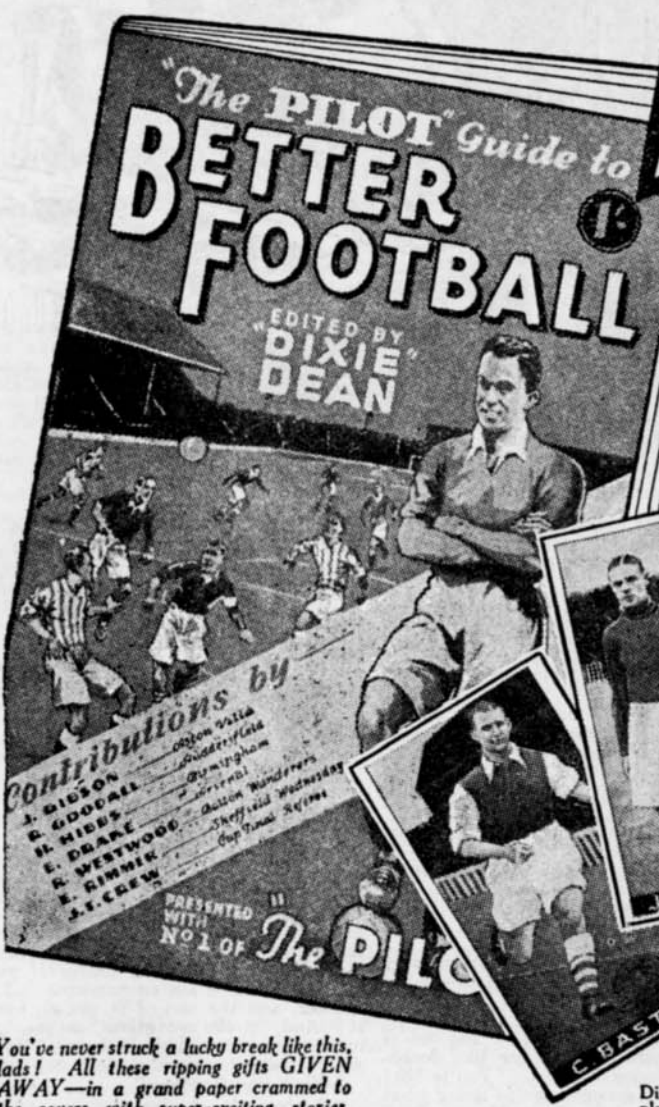
“You’re going to stop smoking in this study,” said Jim Warren deliberately. “You’re going to stop bringing your filthy racing papers here. You can’t have it both ways, Price! You can’t be fearfully scrupulous about what I do, and utterly unscrupulous about what you do yourself. You see that?”

“You can mind your own business!” snarled Price.

“You should have set the example, dear man. I never asked you to barge into my bizney, any more than you asked me to barge into yours. One good turn, deserves another! Throw that cigarette away!”

“Don’t be a fool!”

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"Are you going to throw it away?"  
 "No!" hissed Price.  
 "Then I am!" said Warren coolly.  
 He made a stride at the weedy fellow in the armchair.

"Hands off, you rotter!" yelled Price, Unheeding, Warren grasped him and hooked him out of the armchair.

Price, crimson with rage, struck at him fiercely.

With his left hand Warren knocked the blow aside. With his right, he grasped Price by the back of the neck.

In that iron grip Price was hooked over to the fender.

"Throw that cigarette into the fire!" said Warren.

"I won't!"

Snap!

Price's jaws clicked together with painful effect as Warren jolted his head sharply. He gave a yell, and struggled frantically. But he was held as in a vice.

"Better get on with it," said Warren coolly. "I mean every word. You've got to play up to the line you've taken, Price. You're fearfully concerned about whether I may be doing wrong. You can't square that with doing wrong yourself. See?"

"Let me go!" hissed Price.

"Throw that cigarette into the fire."

"You rotter—"

Snap! Again Price nearly bit off his tongue as his jaws clicked together.

"Owl!" yelled Price.

The cigarette dropped into the study fire.

"Now that racing paper—"

"I won't!"

Snap!

The racing paper followed the cigarette. It flared up in flame in the grate.

"Now let me go, you hound!" hissed Price, almost inarticulate with rage.

Jim Warren released him, spinning him towards the armchair. Price plumped into it.

"That's a tip!" said Warren. "Every time I catch you smoking in this study, Price, you're going to get the same. Next time I find a racing paper here, I'll make you eat it! Now shut up!"

Warren sat down at the table and proceeded to sort out his books for prep. Price, sitting and gasping in the armchair, stared at him with evil eyes of hatred.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Catastrophic for Coker!

HARRY WHARTON reached for a ruler. Frank Nugent reached for an inkpot.

The actions were simultaneous and were caused by the appearance of the burly form and rugged features of Coker of the Fifth in the doorway of Study No. 1.

But the next moment Wharton relinquished the ruler and Nugent the inkpot. One glance showed that Coker had not, for once, come up to the Remove studies on the warpath.

Coker, indeed, looked very unlike Coker.

He was subdued.

He was not merely subdued; but he looked almost dazed, like a fellow upon whom heavy and irreparable misfortune had fallen.

He entered the study quite quietly instead of barging in in his usual style.

Wharton and Nugent gazed at him in surprise, and some concern. This was such a changed Coker that they hardly knew him.

"Trot in, old top!" said Wharton, with very unaccustomed cordiality. "I say, is anything up, Coker?"

"Yes," said Coker heavily.

"You're not bothering about that rag in Masters' Passage?" asked Harry.

"Only a lark, old bean."

"Eh? What? No!"

Coker had evidently forgotten the booting along Masters' Passage. It was something of much more serious import that weighed on his mind.

"Take a pew, old man!" said Nugent kindly.

Coker slumped into a chair.

At normal moments Horace Coker would have resented "old man" from a Lower Fourth junior. Now he did not even notice it. Evidently the fat-head of the Fifth Form was deeply perturbed.

"Anything we can do, Coker?" asked Harry, in perplexity.

"Yes!" said Coker, in the same heavy tone.

"Well, give it a name! What the dickens—"

"Any old thing, Coker!" said Nugent. "But what's up?"

"You'd hardly believe it!" said Coker, in a hollow voice. "But I'm up for a flogging!"

"Oh!" exclaimed the juniors together.

It was rather a relief to hear that it was no worse than that. From Coker's look and manner, a fellow might have supposed that he was going to execution.

"It's through that chap Warren!" said Coker.

"Oh!" repeated Wharton. He began to catch on.

(Continued on next page.)

GREYFRIARS INTERVIEWS

Our tame poet is on the war-path again. And this week his victim is

"GOSSY"

Greyfriars' garrulous gate-keeper.

(1)

"Now listen," I said, when I heard that the Ed. Required me to visit the porter, "If I go on that trip I must give him a tip. Which old Gossy will spend on strong water!"  
 He gave me five bob, and I started the job By approaching the lodge in the gateway, And my path, it is clear, had to pass very near To the tuckshop, for that is the straight way!

(3)

So I sat on a seat to get over the heat, Still keen on refreshments refusing, Though I may, so I think, have had one little drink Just to pay for the seat I was using. Well, you know how it is when there's plenty of fizz In the sight of a poor thirsty scholar! My cash, strange to say, simply melted away— When I left I was minus the dollar!

(4)

With the money gone west I set out on my quest To Gosling, the finest of porters, And I found the old bear sitting down on a chair At the door of his lair, den or quarters. "Good evening, old top! Are you having a drop Of that substance you buy ready bottled?" He jumped from his chair and replied with a glare, While his face went all purple and mottled.



(5)

So I said, "Would a rip come to give you a tip?" And I put both my hands in my pockets And rattled some keys, which made Gosling unfreeze, And his eyes started forth from their sockets! "Well, I'm sure, sir," he said, as he touched his old head, "I shall take it most kindly and willing!" And I thought, "Oh, great Scott! Whether kindly or not, You won't take so much as a shilling!"

(6)

But I merely said, "Well, first of all you will tell Me some facts, if you're decently sporting! It's a porter, you are—not reporter—ha, ha!"  
 You're fond of both port and reporting!  
 He laughed not a bit at my brilliance and wit, But told me a tale long and fearful, The hardships of life, with its work, woe and strife— In fact, Gossy gave me an earful!



(7)

"The pay I receives for a-sweepin' these leaves Is shocking," he said, nearly weeping, "And when the leaves go, there is nothing but snow; My life's a continuoal sweeping! And then, in the spring, there is bells you must ring, And winders, which get very dirty!" I nodded, "It's sad! So much work must be had For a man at a hundred and thirty!"

(8)

His manner grew short as he answered, "I thort You would tip me! You said so, you know it!"  
 I said, "No, you make just a little mistake, And as for the tip—well, I'll owe it!"  
 Then he shouted: "Ere, stop!" and he picked up a mop!  
 Right on the cabeza it caught me!  
 I rolled on the ground with my head spinning round, While Gosling went off—to report me!

"It seems now that that young scoundrel Bunter was pulling my leg about that fellow!" said Coker. "He make me believe—What are you grinning at?"

Wharton and Nugent straightened their faces at once.

"Oh, nothing! Go on, Coker!"

"I fancy that, after all, that fat little blighter was in my study after my grub, and he only spun me that yarn to get away!" said Coker. "It seems that there was no truth in it."

"You don't know Bunter so well as we do," said Harry sympathetically. "He couldn't tell the truth if he tried."

"Not that he's ever been known to try!" remarked Nugent.

"Well, he took me in, and I—I went and denounced the fellow on the strength of it—Look here, if you're going, to snigger—"

"Sorry! Carry on, Coker!"

"Well, all the fat's in the fire now," said Coker drearily. "Quelch caught me hooking Bunter off to the Head, and he fancies that I cheeked him, somehow. You know what Form-masters are! Just because I said I wasn't going to Prout, he grabbed me by the collar and hooked me there. I can see that he was waxy, though I can't see why."

"Oh!"

"And Prout's as mad as a hatter," went on Coker. "I needn't tell you that Prout is always giving me trouble in one way or another; the whole school knows that! I'm very patient with him; I wonder at it myself, sometimes! You'd hardly believe how often I've been tempted, to hit him in the Form-room—"

"Eh?"

"But I've never done it!" said Coker, with the air of a fellow telling a tale of wonderful self-control. "Never once!"

"Oh!"

"Well, now he makes out that, as I'm loaded up with lines already, and detentions, it's no good giving me any more lines and detentions," said Coker. "Just as if I was to blame, somehow, you notice."

"Oh! Yes!"

"You'd expect a beak to be proud of having a fellow like me in his Form," explained Coker. "It's a sort of distinction, if Prout could only see it! But can he? No!"

"Perhaps—perhaps not!" gasped Wharton.

The chums of the Remove wanted to be nice and polite to Coker in his present state of stress and distress. But how to keep serious while Coker talked in this strain was a bit of a problem.

"But never mind that," went on Coker. "I've been at school long enough not to expect any sense from a schoolmaster! I haven't told Prout that—"

"Oh! You haven't!" gurgled Wharton.

"No! What's the good?" said Coker bitterly. "No good talking sense to Prout! I'm patient with him. I let him run on! I let him make out that I can't spell! Anything he likes! But it makes no difference! The fact is the man has a down on me! It seems to rankle with him that he heard me call him an old ass the other day."

The juniors gazed at Coker. "Well, there it is!" said Coker gloomily. "He's left it at this—that I'm to be reported to the Head for a flogging, and to get it to-morrow morning, after prayers. Me, you know! Bad enough if it was any man in the Fifth—but me! Prout can't see that I've got a certain position in the Form—a position I have to consider! He treats me exactly the same as any other fellow in the Form."

Wharton and Nugent really did not know what to say in answer to that.

"Well, that's why I've come here," said Coker. "Prout's an old ass—but he sets out to be just! See?"

"Blessed if I do!" said Harry.

"I mean if he finds that I'm right about Warren, he will have to draw in his horns!" explained Coker. "I may have made a mistake in letting that fat little scoundrel Bunter pull my leg! But that doesn't alter the fact that Warren is a spoofer, and ought to be shown up! See? Well, you know all about Warren, Wharton! I want you to back me up!"

"Oh!" gasped Harry. "You've dodged me and cheeked me, and refused to give me information," said Coker. "Well, I'll overlook all that! But now things have come to this pass, you can see that you've got to speak out, cheeky young rotter as you are! If it came out that I was right about Warren, Prout would very likely thank me for showing up an impostor, instead of reporting me to the Head for a flogging! See?"

Wharton said nothing.

"You jolly well know that Warren is spoofing!" said Coker. "You know he isn't really Warren at all! What?"

Silence!

"Tell Prout so, or the Head, and I'm all right," said Coker. "I don't care much whether Prout thanks me or not; but I do want to get off the flogging. I do really want to!" said Coker earnestly.

Wharton did not speak. There was something in what Coker said; he was talking rather less idiotically than usual. Still, the captain of the Remove could hardly make up

his mind to give Jim Warren away because Coker had barged into the affair like a bull at a gate and landed himself in the soup. But it was an awkward position.

Coker rose from the chair.

Wharton sat where he was.

"Come on!" said Coker.

Wharton shook his head.

Coker's face grew grimmer. A gleam came into his eyes. The awful sentence of a flogging from the Head had subdued Coker. It had almost crushed him. But he was still Coker!

"Now I've put it to you fair and square, Wharton," he said. "You're bound to speak out! I've talked to you as man to man instead of treating you like the measly fag you are, and you know it. But I'm not taking 'No' for an answer! You've got to come to Prout!"

"Fathead!" said Harry.

"It's no good my telling him to send for you; he won't hear a word from me! You've got to come! Come on! Mind, if you don't, I'm going to make you!" Coker was more and more the old familiar Coker with every word. "I'd think nothing of taking you by the collar and hooking you along, like I did Bunter!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

He was in a troubled and dubious frame of mind, and hardly knew what he ought to do in the peculiar circumstances. It was like Coker to come to the rescue, as it were. The idea of being taken along by the collar, like Bunter, was enough.

Wharton rose to his feet.

"Get out, Coker!" he said.

"Are you coming?"

"No! You've landed yourself for a whopping by playing the fool! Prout wouldn't go so far if you hadn't cheeked him. Now—"

Wharton was interrupted.

Coker made a grab at his collar.

"That's enough!" he snapped.

"You're coming—"

"The next moment Coker, in his turn, was interrupted. He was mixed up on the floor of Study No. 1 with the two juniors.

"Rescue, Remove!" yelled Nugent.

"Fifth Form cad! Rescue!"

There was a scampering of feet in the passage. Five or six Removites appeared as if by magic. Those cheery youths were always prepared to turn out for a scrap with invaders.

"Coker!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith, the first in the study. "Collar him!"

"Scrag him!" yelled Peter Todd.

"I say, you fellows, rag him!" yelled Billy Bunter. "Give him a jolly good hiding! I say—"

"Bag him!"

"Bump him!"

Horace Coker roared and struggled in the grasp of countless hands.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Go easy! Coker's up for a flogging—go easy! Just walk him home."

"Better put his head in the coal-locker first—"

"And some ink down his neck—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No. Just walk him home!" said Harry, laughing. "Better go quietly, Coker, or you may get damaged!"

Coker did not go quietly. And he did get a little damaged. In the grasp of a dozen Removites, he was walked down the passage, across the landing, to the door of the Fifth Form games-study.

Nugent threw open the door of that apartment—and a dozen Fifth Form seniors stared round.

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Jim Warren grasped Price by the back of the neck. In that iron grip Price was hooked over to the fender. "Throw that cigarette into the fire!" said Warren. "I won't!" Snap! Price's jaws clicked together with painful effect as the new boy gave his head a sharp jolt.

"What the thump—" roared Blundell.

"Here's your prize idiot!" said Harry Wharton. "Better keep him chained—we don't want him wandering up our passage!"

And, with a general heave, Coker was sent spinning into the games-study. The Removites slammed the door and retired rather hastily from the spot.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Just Like Coker!

"DON'T!" said Potter. "Don't!" said Greene. Coker eyed them coldly. "I've decided!" he pointed out. "Am I a fellow to chop and change? I hope not."

Prep was over in Coker's study. That is to say, Potter and Greene had done prep, Coker having been too deeply occupied with gloomy meditations to have time for it. Prep, at the moment, was like Nero fiddling while Rome burned, in Horace Coker's estimation.

Coker's cogitations had borne fruit. He had decided what to do. And what he had decided to do had rather an alarming effect on his study-mates when he told them.

"I'm going to Prout," said Coker. "I'm not going to cheek him—I'm not the fellow to cheek a Form-master, I hope! It's rotten bad form to do anything of the kind. I'm going to speak to him quite calmly and respectfully, and point out that he is making a fool of himself—"

"Don't!" implored Greene. "Do you

want to be sacked instead of flogged?"

"You're rather an ass, Greeney! Prout's idiotic, but he's bound to be able to see a thing that's plainly pointed out to him," said Coker. "I'm going to explain to him, in words of one syllable, if necessary, that a Fifth Form man can't possibly be flogged. The whole idea is altogether too thick. I shall ask him to think it over calmly and not act hastily and thoughtlessly—"

"Don't!" groaned Potter.

"Even schoolmasters have some sense, though I must say I've found them a pretty thickheaded lot," said Coker. "I'm going to give Prout a chance of acting sensibly. I shan't let him browbeat me, either. If he keeps on interrupting me as he did before, I shall tell him plainly to shut up and let a fellow speak!"

"Oh crikey!" "I fancy it will be all right," said Coker. "Anyhow, I'm going to do my best to keep Prout from acting the goat. I consider that that's up to me."

And, leaving his dismayed pals dumb-founded, Horace Coker marched out of the study and tramped down the stairs.

Potter and Greene gazed at one another in eloquent silence. Coker had bereft them of words.

With a firm step, Horace Coker came up Masters' Passage.

Mr. Prout's door stood open. Coker frowned as he noted that circumstance. If it meant that someone had gone in to speak to Prout, he had to wait till that someone departed.

Even Coker realised that he had better not have that heart-to-heart talk with Prout in public.

He slowed down as he came along to the study.

The sound of voices floating out told that someone was, in fact, with the Fifth Form master.

Coker suppressed a grunt, stopped, and leaned on the passage wall, to wait and take his turn.

It did not occur to him, of course, to listen to what was said in the study. Coker was not inquisitive, and certainly he never would have listened to any Form-master's "jaw," if he could have helped it.

Nevertheless, where he stood, he simply could not help hearing the booming voice of Prout in the study.

"My dear Warren—"

Coker gave a little start. It was that new tick who was in Prout's study!

Coker's lip curled with scorn. Rotter! Greasing up to Prout! That was the sort of worm he was! Prout called him his "dear Warren." He never called Horace his "dear Coker." No doubt the swotting brute had been nugging some putrid Latin to grease into Prout's favour!

"Pray speak out, my boy!" went on Prout's boom, with a very kindly note in it. "I have, as you are aware, Warren, the very highest opinion of you. I do not conceal the fact that I regard you as a credit to my Form in every way. I have told your head-master so, and I am pleased to tell you, Warren, that Dr. Locke fully agrees with my opinion."

Coker very nearly snorted aloud as he heard that. It was enough, in Coker's opinion, to make a stone image snort.

"You are very kind, sir," came THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,442.

Warren's pleasant voice. "You encourage me, sir, to ask you a favour."

"My dear boy, is that why you have come to me? Speak out frankly!" said the benevolent Prout. "I assure you that I shall be very glad to grant anything you may ask. If you desire special leave—"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Then what is it, Warren?"

"It—it's about Coker, sir!"

Horace, in the passage, gave another start. The tick was going to speak about him. The awful rotter!

"Coker! I understand. That unruly, ridiculous, obstreperous boy! Leave that matter entirely in my hands, Warren! You may be fully assured of your Form-master's protection on such a matter—"

"I—I was going to say, sir—"

"Coker will be severely dealt with—very severely dealt with! You need have no doubt of that, Warren!"

"I hope you'll forgive me, sir, for asking you such a favour! But—but if you could possibly let Coker off, sir—"

Horace did not start as he heard that. He jumped!

"Warren!" boomed Prout, amazed.

"I know it's a cheek to ask you, sir. I know Coker's been very disrespectful. But—I can't help feeling that I'm the cause of it to some extent. He's got a silly idea in his head about me, and he really thinks, sir, that he's in the right. He's got a lot of faults, sir, but a fellow can't help seeing that he's a really decent chap at heart, and just as straight as a fellow could be."

"No doubt!" said Prout. "No doubt! Coker's faults certainly are of the head, not of the heart! But—Warren, I am amazed that you should speak a word in his favour! It is the last thing I should have expected to hear!"

"I hope you won't think it cheeky, sir—"

"Not at all! Not at all! But—"

"I've no right to ask you, sir. But if you would be so very kind, I should be awfully grateful. The truth is, sir, that I like Coker, and should be glad to be friends with him, if he'd let me. It's a weight on my mind, sir, that I'm the cause of his getting into trouble like this—"

"I am afraid you have too tender a conscience, Warren! However, that certainly is a fault on the right side. You are not to blame in any way. Coker's obstinate and absurd folly—"

"I know, sir! But—but you said I might ask you a favour, and—and I'd try, sir, to show that I'm not ungrateful."

There was a pause.

Prout spoke at last.

"Warren! I am surprised—very much surprised by this request. But I am not displeased. If you, as the injured party, can forgive Coker's insensate folly, and even ask for his pardon, it would ill-become me to refuse! I shall grant what you ask."

"You are very kind, sir—"

"Not at all, Warren! You may tell Coker, from me, that he is pardoned—the matter is at an end unless he should offend again. In that case, I shall certainly report him for a flogging. I trust that this will be a lesson to him, however. You may go, Warren."

"Thank you, sir!"

Jim Warren left the study.

He closed the door after him and started down the passage—and stopped, finding himself suddenly and unexpectedly face to face with Coker.

"Oh!" ejaculated Warren.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—NO. 1,442.

"Oh!" gasped Coker.

Warren recovered himself.

"Message for you from Prout," he said casually. "The flogging's off—it's all washed out! Gratters!"

He walked on past Coker.

Coker stared after him.

Then he rushed after him.

He grabbed him by the shoulder.

"Look here, Warren—"

"For goodness' sake don't kick up a row in Masters' Passage, Coker," gasped Warren. "Get out of this first—Prout—"

"Who's kicking up a row?"

"Eh!"

"I hope," said Coker, "that I know a decent fellow when I see one! I'm going to kick Price for telling me that rot about you."

"Oh!"

"Of course, young Wharton never said what Price said he said! I can see that now! If he did I don't care—he's a young ass and a cheeky fag, anyhow! Warren, old man—"

Jim blinked at him! He was "Warren, old man!" now!

"We're going to have a bit of supper in my study," said Coker. "Come!"

"But—but—" stammered Warren. Coker as a quick-change artiste was rather surprising.

"We've had rows," said Coker. "Never mind that! Look here, I heard what you said to Prout—"

"Oh!"

"Why shouldn't we be friends?" said Coker. "Let me hear any chap saying a word against you, that's all. I say, do come to supper in my study! I've had a hamper from my Aunt Judy and—"

"I'll come!"

"Good!" said Coker.

## THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Astonishing!

POTTER and Greene looked anxiously at Coker as he came back into the study. They were anxious to know what had happened.

"Sacked?" asked both together as Coker came in.

"Eh! Don't talk rot!" said Coker.

"Seen Prout?"

"Oh! No! Bother Prout! I say, get that table clear and help me unpack that hamper!" said Coker. "Make the room a bit tidy! I don't want a fellow to think we're an untidy lot in this study when he comes to supper."

"Anybody coming to supper?" asked Potter, mystified.

"Yes."

"Well who?" asked Greene.

"My friend Warren."

Potter and Greene almost fell down. "Your fuf-fuf-fuf-friend Warren!" stutted Potter.

"Your friend W-w-w-warren!" stutted Greene.

"Yes! Buck up—make the room a bit decent! Warren's a baronet's son, you know, and accustomed to things a bit decent."

"You said he wasn't—"

"Don't be an ass, Potter!"

"But you said—" gasped Greene.

"Don't be an idiot, Greene!"

"Have you made friends with Warren, or what?" yelled Potter.

"Why shouldn't I make friends with the most decent chap in the school?" demanded Coker.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Oh crickets!"

"If you've got anything to say against Warren, don't say it to me," said Coker, warningly. "I shall hit out!"

"We've never said anything—"

"It was you who—"

"Don't jaw so much, you men! Help me get supper ready! Warren may be here any minute!"

Potter and Greene gave it up. In a state of helpless bewilderment they proceeded to help to get supper ready—for Warren.

There was a step in the doorway, and Price of the Fifth looked in.

Coker glanced round with a friendly grin, expecting to see Warren. As he saw Price, the friendly grin changed to a glare.

"What do you want" he snapped. "I was going to speak to you," said Price. "I—"

"About Warren?" sneered Coker. "Well, if you want to run a decent chap down, don't come here to do it!" Price stared.

"What—" he began.

"Keep your back-biting to yourself!" said Coker scornfully. "You pulled my leg once! You can't pull it again! Get out!"

"Look here—"

"I said get out!"

"But—" gasped Price.

"Waiting to be put?" asked Coker. "Well, I'll put you fast enough, you back-biting worm!"

He jumped at Price.

Price jumped for the passage; but not quite quickly enough.

He whirled in Coker's hefty grasp and went spinning. There was a bump and a yell in the Fifth Form passage.

"Now come back and have some more!" bawled Coker.

Price of the Fifth did not accept that invitation. He picked himself up, gasping, and bolted into his own study, as Jim Warren came up the passage.

Warren glanced at him and at Coker, and smiled.

Coker smiled, too—his friendly grin returning at once at sight of Warren. "Trot in, old bean!" he said.

It was quite a jolly supper-party in Coker's study.

Harry Wharton had a surprise the following morning.

In break, Coker of the Fifth bore down on him in the quad.

"Just a word to you, young fellow-me-lad!" said Coker, sternly. "I don't know whether you've been running Warren down—Price said you had—but I'll give you the benefit of the doubt, and I won't whop you this time! But mind, if I ever hear that you've said a single word against Warren, I'll give you such a whopping you'll remember it over the Christmas holidays!"

"Wha-a-a-t?" gasped Wharton incredulously.

"Wha-a-a-a-t?" gasped Johnny Bull.

The other members of the Famous Five merely gaped. They could find no words.

"And that goes for you kids, too," went on Coker. "Somebody has started a ridiculous story about Warren not being Warren. They say the real Warren has been kidnapped! I should be the last person to believe it, I hope. But some fellows will swallow anything. If I hear any of you fags repeating stories like that, I shall consider it my duty to whop you in public!"

With that stern warning, Coker stalked away.

Harry Wharton was left gasping.

He could only gasp!

THE END.

*(Even Harry Wharton has satisfied his doubts about Jim Warren now. But in next week's yarn something happens which makes the mystery of the new Fifth Former more perplexing than ever. What that "something" is must remain a secret until next Saturday!)*



CARSON

CAPTAIN LAWLESS

CRIBB

**Spy!**

**P**OSKA, the spy, had got a job. Following the arrest, in London, of his chief, Serge Nikola, Poska had fled to the Provinces, and his comrades in Newcastle had got him a job in Barton's Ammunition Works at Wallsend.

They had a special reason for getting Poska that job. The great Baltic power for whom they were working was on the eve of declaring war on Britain, and, quite aware of that fact, Britain's dockyards, ammunition works, and aircraft factories were working furiously night and day.

Barton's works, in particular, were busy, the day and night shifts working overtime, and Poska's comrades were particularly anxious to know just what was going on there.

One evening, after the buzzer had blown, Poska streamed out through the big gates, with hundreds of his workmates, joined the rush for the workmen's trams, and arrived home at his humble lodgings in Byker. There he washed, shaved, and changed with more than usual care.

For that night he was to meet his comrades and report. He certainly had startling news for them, he reflected, as he took his tea. Captain Lawless had been at the works. With his own eyes Poska had seen him.

And if that was not sufficiently interesting, Poska had another item of news. A large ammunition van, the loading of which Lawless had supervised himself, was to leave in the morning for some secret destination.

At least, the destination was secret as far as Poska was concerned. He had done his best to find out where the van was going, but had failed, and it was dangerous to question too closely.

Anyway, Lawless was in the vicinity. That was the one thing that mattered. It was Lawless who, aided by two youngsters named Carson and Cribb, had been directly responsible for the sinking of the Baltic Fleet, for the disablement of Dr. Narym, and for the arrest and imprisonment of Nikola.

"You have got to get him," Poska told his comrades that night, as he sat

with them in the back room of a little cafe off Westgate Road. "He is interested in the ammunition-van. The van leaves for a secret destination at six o'clock in the morning. Follow the van and I think you will find Lawless."

"What is in the van?" demanded Volsk, who was head of the foreign espionage service in Newcastle.

"I do not know," confessed Poska. "beyond that the load is composed of heavy wooden cases."

"What department did they come from?" demanded Volsk.

"From the Secret Experimental Department."

"Ah," said Volsk thoughtfully, "that might mean anything. They may be bomb, or aerial torpedoes, or even shells. It is a great pity you could not find out just what they are."

---

**Britain's enemies were ready to declare war. Their army was waiting to march. Then, suddenly, down from the sky, came the Crimson Fog—and Captain Lawless!**

---

"I did my best," said Poska sullenly. "To have appeared too inquisitive would have been fatal. You don't know how suspicious everyone is nowadays."

"Don't I?" retorted Volsk, and laughed shortly. "Anyway, if Lawless is connected with that van, as you say, it is imperative that we find out. Now, listen to me, comrades!"

They had the room in which they were seated to themselves, but, in spite of that, Volsk lowered his voice. For an hour or more he talked rapidly, repeating his plans in the minutest detail.

The result of that secret conference was that when the ammunition-van pulled out of Barton's Works at six o'clock the following morning, and took the road which led across Byker Bridge into the city, a large furniture-van

emerged from a side street near the works and trundled in its wake.

Swinging out of Blackett Street into Northumberland Street, the ammunition-van passed through Gosforth and rumbled northwards along the Great North Road.

Steadily the furniture-van followed, its driver keeping as far in the rear as possible. There was plenty of traffic about even at that early hour, and there was nothing suspicious at all in a big furniture-van making northwards in the direction of Alnwick.

But after Alnwick was passed and the ammunition-van had swung eastwards along the narrow road which led towards the coast six miles distant, the furniture-van began to close in on it.

"They're making for the fishing village of Boulmer," said the driver of the furniture-van to Volsk, who was seated beside him.

"All right, we will attack now," said Volsk. "Better pass them first!"

The driver accelerated, and, pulling out almost on to the grass verge, the furniture-van rattled past the van it had followed from Newcastle, and droved round a bend in the road.

"Right, pull her across the road!" rapped Volsk, leaping to the ground, a drawn automatic in his hand.

The driver obeyed, blocking the road with his big vehicle. The rear doors swung open, and a dozen armed men jumped down to the ground.

"Here she comes!" cried Volsk, as the ammunition-van appeared round the bend in the road. "Rush her, and if they resist, shoot!"

The men dashed forward, and, seeing them coming, Barton's driver clapped on his brakes. Simultaneously, Captain Lawless, seated beside him, pressed a switch on the dashboard in front of him.

In the interior of the van a warning buzz sounded. Instantly steel shutters slid back, and, as Volsk and his gang swarmed round the van, a couple of machine-guns stuttered into life.

But neither bullets nor flame came from those menacing muzzles—only vicious spurts of deadly gas, which sent

Volks and his gang reeling back, swaying on their feet, to crash limp and unconscious to the road.

"That's enough, Cribb, old chap!" grinned Carson, suddenly releasing his pressure on the trigger of one of the guns. "Ease up! Every one of the blighters is out to the wide!"

Scrambling out of the back of the van, he and Cribb joined Lawless and the driver in the roadway.

"Come on," said Lawless grimly, "let's get 'em tied up and shoved into their own van before they come round. Hallo, here's our old pal, Olek! D'you remember him at Sandwich Bay, lads?"

"Yes, when he was masquerading as an artist," laughed Carson. "What are you going to do with this bunch, sir?"

"I think you and Cribb had better drive them into Alnwick and hand them over to the police there," said Lawless. "As soon as I reach Boulmer I will ring through to Alnwick and tell them to expect you. These fellows can be held on a charge of attempted robbery until

we have investigated their espionage activities."

The effects of that deadly gas took some hours to wear off, and Lawless and his companions had no difficulty in trussing up the spies and bundling them into the furniture-van.

When the doors had been locked on them, Carson swung himself up into the driving-seat. With Cribb beside him, he turned the heavy vehicle, and, with a cheery wave to Lawless, went rumbling off in the direction of Alnwick.

It was getting on towards midday when, after dumping their prisoners at the Alnwick Police Station, the two boys got back to Boulmer.

Down on the beach Lawless was superintending the transference of the heavy wooden cases from the ammunition-van to his flying submarine, which was lying moored offshore.

The final case was just going aboard when the boys arrived. They rowed out to the submarine with Lawless, then the hatches were closed, and the long, black,

torpedo-shaped hull, with wings outspread, tore across the water, to soar gracefully up into the air and head eastwards towards the distant Baltic.

### The Coming of the Crimson Fog!

**N**EVER in its age-old history had the world known such a vast military camp as that which, during the past weeks, had sprung up on the eastern shores of the Baltic.

As far as the eye could see stretched tents, huts, workshops, storehouses, fuel dumps, and ammunition dumps.

A million men were under canvas, supported by 10,000 tanks and 300 fast fighting squadrons. And to name but a part of this vast fighting organisation there were scientists and doctors, field hospitals, and nurses. A complete army in the field. According to the world Press, the army had been mobilised merely for manoeuvres. But the British Secret Service knew better. This great army was in readiness to be transported at a moment's notice westwards towards the shores of Britain.

That fact was carefully concealed by the army leaders, however, who saw to it that

daily manoeuvres were carried out and daily bulletins issued to the European newspapers.

"We have no intention of going to war with anyone," said General Plessek, the Commander-in-Chief, to a group of newspaper representatives. "We have a big seaboard, and these manoeuvres are being held merely to satisfy ourselves that we are in a position to defend it, should we ever be attacked."

Some of the newspaper men swallowed this yarn. Some of them didn't. But all of them sent it in to their respective newspapers, and it duly appeared in print, to the relief of millions of people who had read with alarm of the mobilisation of that gigantic army on the shores of the Baltic.

"Poor fools!" said General Plessek, one night after dinner, when he was seated alone with his most trusted officers. "If only they knew the truth! Within a month from now we will have declared war on Britain, and every man, gun, and tank in this camp will be afloat, bound for her coasts!"

He broke off, scowling. "We would have declared war before now," he went on angrily, "had it not been for that cursed Lawless sinking our Baltic fleet with that abominable corroding liquid which he invented. I'd give £50,000 in gold to see that scoundrel facing a firing party!"

"We're bound to get him sooner or later, sir," said his aide-de-camp soothingly. "He's had the devil's own luck up to the moment, but it cannot last. There's one thing—he will not dare show his face here."

"Won't dare?" snorted the general. "It is evident that you have yet to appreciate what the villain is capable of. He will dare anything—he and those two brats who are working with him!"

Furiously he proceeded: "But I am taking no risks to-morrow, when the whole camp parades. It is a full-dress rehearsal for what is to come, and I would not put it past Lawless to turn up here with that flying submarine of his and try to bomb us, or something!"

"I only hope he does!" said Colonel Lodar, leader of the fighting squadrons. "He will not live five minutes if my pilots sight him in the air!"

"You have warned them to keep a sharp look-out for him, and be prepared for trouble?" demanded Plessek.

"Yes," assented Lodar; "they have orders to attack him at sight."

"Good!" grunted the general. "I was going to mention the matter to you. I have already issued orders to the anti-aircraft gunners to be on the alert. But perhaps, after all, he will not show up. He must surely realise the suicidal madness of attempting anything when we are here in such vast numbers."

He pushed back his chair and rose, a brimming glass of wine in his hand.

"Gentlemen," he said "I give you a toast. To our glorious Army and Air Force, and before this present month has run its course may they have achieved a swift and crushing victory over the cursed British!"

The toast was drunk with frenzied enthusiasm; and when, shortly afterwards, the general retired for the night, his officers sat down to celebrate the day when their flag should fly over every town in Britain and over the great Empire of that hated country.

As the night wore on the wilder and more vainglorious became their prophecies. Once war broke out, it would be over in a fortnight—no; a week.

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### The British Air Force!

Pooh! It could never live with them. They'd drive every British machine out of the air within forty-eight hours. There was no British warship, either, which would be left afloat after they'd dealt with the Englishman's vaunted Navy.

Thus they talked, anticipating the power which was to be theirs, and it was not until dawn was creeping in at the windows of the mess that the last remnant of them staggered off to bed.

Reveille followed soon after, and within a remarkably short space of time the vast camp was a scene of bustle and confusion.

For this was to be the day of days, when the whole million men in camp were to parade en masse, together with the tanks, armoured cars, mobile workshops, and the whole mechanism of modern fighting forces.

The march past of the infantry commenced as early as seven o'clock, and for hour after hour column after column swung past the raised platform on which General Plessek was standing with his staff to take the salute.

It was at three o'clock in the afternoon when the great spectacle of the day was to take place—the advance in mass formation of the 10,000 tanks.

They had taken up formation seven miles away across the plain, and as the maroons rang out to signal the hour they commenced to advance on the camp, a mighty and slow-moving mass of solid steel—heavy, indomitable, invincible.

There was something awe-inspiring about the slow, rumbling advance of those mechanical monsters, covering as they did an area of many square miles.

Nearer and nearer they came to the camp, where tents and hutments had been cleared to afford them passage. The

foremost of them, moving twenty abreast in perfect formation, were opposite the general's dais, when suddenly down from out of the blue came hurtling the black, torpedo-like hull of Lawless' flying submarine.

With a scream of motors it flashed over the serried ranks of the tanks, and as it did so four squat bombs tore earthwards.

They exploded with only a muffled roar, causing no immediate damage as far as could be observed. But as the compressed gases inside the bombs merged with the air a slowly thickening crimson mist began to hang over the tanks.

Wheeling with a speed which baffled the eye, the flying submarine screamed back the way she had come, the squat bombs hurtling down over the whole area of the tanks, which by now were becoming obscured in the mist, which was deepening into a thick crimson fog.

From out of the fog came muffled shouts. A wraith of the crimson mist drifted towards the pallid-faced General Plessek. He recoiled, in horror, then

turned on his heels and fled.

The whole camp was in an indescribable uproar. Men were fleeing in confusion across the plain, routed by this terror dropping from the skies. But even as they ran they fell, overcome by the stupefying effects of the crimson fog. Masks were useless against the deadly gas.

Meanwhile, above the belt of gas, fighting scouts were engaged in a desperate battle to the death with the long-hulled flying submarine.

Lawless could have escaped. Easily could he have escaped, for he had a swifter climbing speed by far, and a swifter cruising speed than these enemy planes.

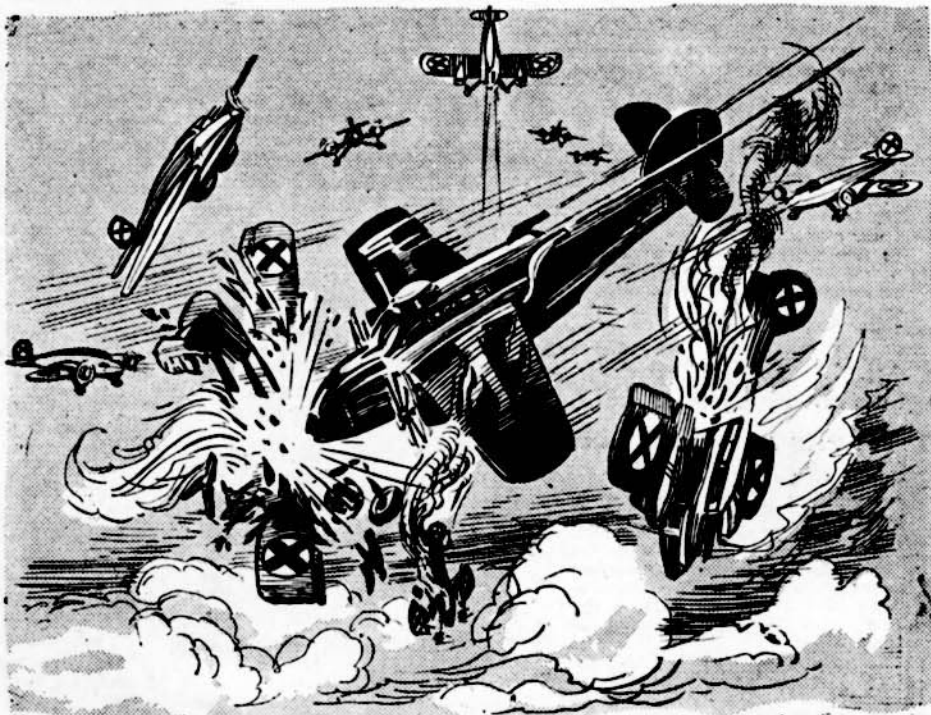
But he preferred to remain and fight. For he was grimly determined to take what toll he could of these machines. Aided by Carson and Cribb, he had crippled the enemy's Baltic fleet. Now he had demoralised their army. He

one the flying submarine out-maneuvred them and sent them crashing earthwards!

The bullets from their snarling guns were pitifully ineffective against his armour-plated hull, and, realising at length the futility of continuing the attack, those that were left drew off and thundered away to the north, south, east and west—anywhere, so long as they escaped from that hurtling torpedo of the air.

On the ground below the crimson fog was slowly thinning, exposing to view the havoc it had wrought. Over a vast area lay the bodies of unconscious troops. Tanks, armoured-cars, mobile workshops, tractors, guns and limbers had crashed into each other, and were now piles of wreckage. On that fateful afternoon Lawless had struck a deadly blow to the army which had been prepared to invade Britain.

That same night in a certain Baltic



**Captain Lawless drove his all-metal flying submarine at the enemy planes, sending them crashing earthwards in tangled wrecks of wood and fabric!**

determined that the Air Force should not escape unscathed.

The metal propellers of his all-metal flying submarine were protected by curved, oval flanges like the petals of a flower, and he fought a fight all his own.

Disdaining the gun, he smashed through every enemy machine which opposed him, sending them crashing earthwards in tangled wrecks of wood and fabric.

From a vantage point safe from the crimson fog, General Plessek and his staff stared open-mouthed at the scene which was being enacted above them.

They had imagined that their air force would prove more than a match for Captain Lawless; they were realising their mistake.

The black form of the flying submarine dived and twisted at unbelievable speed.

The modern fighting planes of the enemy, fast as they were, stood not a chance. Their pilots banked and rolled and looped, striving in vain to escape from Lawless' invincible craft. One by

town the leaders of the army, the navy and the government met at the house of the hunchbacked and sallow-faced Count Kolgub.

"This man Lawless," said Kolgub harshly, "has in a few weeks destroyed our work of years. From now onwards every man in our espionage service will suspend all other activities, and devote himself to the bounding down of Lawless. Is that understood?"

His guests signified that it was. "And as an added incentive towards his capture," continued Count Kolgub, "you can inform our espionage service that a reward of one hundred thousand pounds in gold will be paid to the man who produces Lawless here in this city, dead or alive!"

(With one hundred thousand pounds in gold on his head, Captain Lawless is in greater peril than ever—and his peril is shared by Carson and Cribb. In next week's thrilling story the two youngsters find themselves fighting for their lives on a lonely island off the coast of Scotland.)

## COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS— and GIRLS!

(Continued from page 2)

**Is Oxygen Apparatus Used in Passenger Aeroplanes?** A Russian air service provides oxygen for passengers when flying at a height of 16,000 feet over the Badakhshan mountains.

**How did the "Sedan Chair" get its Name?** Because it was first used in the town of Sedan in France. It was introduced into England in the early days of the seventeenth century.

**Why do Fish Jump out of the Water?** Mostly to avoid weirs and waterfalls. They also do it for the sheer sport of the thing, just as we ourselves sometimes run and jump when we are pleased.

**How many Different Insects are there in the World?** About a million different known specimens. There are nearly two hundred thousand names of insects, but each name includes several different specimens.

**When was the First "Heavier-than-Air" Flight Made?** In the year 1903, when Wilbur Wright made his first aeroplane flight. The machine did not rise from the ground, but was launched from a special platform.

**What is a "Puffin"?** A sea-bird. There was also a coin called a "puffin." It was struck by the owner of Lundy Island, but had to be recalled because it was not authorised by the Government of this country.

I think you are going to be extra pleased with next week's issue, chums. Frank Richards has written some rattling fine stories in the past, but I honestly think that next week's yarn

### THE BOY WITH A BORROWED NAME

is the best he has ever sent me. The mystery which surrounds Jim Warren, the popular new Fifth Former, is still unsolved, and Greyfriars is puzzled. Now come startling developments to take even Warren himself by surprise! Thrills and laughs simply tumble over each other, and if you don't vote it the best yet, well—I'll eat the editorial waste paper-basket!

In addition, Captain Lawless and his schoolboy assistants are well to the fore in another thrilling story of the Flying Submarine. And, of course, there is the usual big bag of laughs in the Greyfriars' Herald and the Rhymer's effort.

Cheerio till next week.

YOUR EDITOR.

## WILLY AND NILLY

### Our Coloured Coons Talk About Work

**G**OLLY! Dere's ol' Nilly atchewally runnin'! Hey, Nilly! Ease off, niggah! What's de hurry?"

"Lion got loose f'm a circus!"

"Which way, black man?"

"Which way nuttin'. Youse don't suppose I'm runnin' to meet it, do youse? Show a little sense, niggah!"

"Brake down, Nilly! Take yo' foot off de accelerator a minute! Anyone would t'ink youse was lookin' for work at de rate you're goin'!"

"Not me, big boy. I saves a shillin' a day by doin' no work!"

"You am certainly loopy, niggah! How do you save a shillin' a day by doin' no work?"

"Don't have to pay no tram fare to de city!"

"Boy, youse so dumb dat you make a waxwork sound like a gramophone! How come youse out of work? I t'ought you had a job!"

"So Ah have—but I'se leavin'."

"Gee! Does de boss know you're leavin'?"

"Sure t'ing! He knew it before I did!"

"What work is youse gwine to get?"

"I dunno, niggah. Maybe I'll be a cashier. Old Man Peters is lookin' for a cashier!"

"You is talkin' rot, niggah! Ol' Man Peters had a cashier when I see him yesserday!"

"Yeah—dat's de one he's lookin' for!"

"Niggah, you am so nutty dat if you saw a manhole cover, you'd try to play it on de gramophone. What've youse been doin' to de top o' your head? It's all sore!"

"Yeah—dat's where I bit meself!"

"Oh, niggah, how could youse bite yo'self on de top ob de head? Talk sense!"

"Me—I stood on a chair!"

"You astonish me by growin' worse every minute, niggah! Say, I saw yo' drivin' yo' little car yesserday. Why was you tearin' along at such a speed?"

"Oh, dat! De brake had gone

west, and I was drivin' home as quick as I could before I had an accident!"

"You ought to be operated on for gallopin' foolery, black man! Don't you know what to do when yo' brake gives out?"

"Yeah—hit somet'ing cheap!"

"Youse ought to give up yo' rotten motor-car! Buy a cow instead!"

"Say, don't make me laugh, black man! How'd I look drivin' about on a cow?"

"Why, you'd look even sillier tryin' to milk a motor-car!"

"Oh, yeah! Now, listen, niggah! I ain't getting rid ob dat motor-car for sixteen years yet!"

"Why sixteen years, Georgie Washington?"

"Becos dat's about de time I'll have paid for it. Why, boy, dat car goes a treat—'cept when it gets overwound at times!"

"You're suttinly cuckoo, niggah! And, talkin' of cuckoos, can you imitate birds?"

"Me? I can imitate any bird you ever heard!"

"Den let's hear yo' imitate a nightingale."

(Silence.)

"Go on, nigger! Imitate a nightingale!"

"Why, gee! I just done it!"

"I didn't hear yo' do nothin'!"

"Well, I did. Yo' ought to keep yo' ears open, niggah—never mind about gettin' a draught in yo' head."

"Well, do it again, then!"

(More silence.)

"You suttinly am missin' on all cylinder, black man! You didn't do a t'ing. A nightingale sings mighty loud!"

"Yeah—but mine was a dead one."

"Oh, niggah! One ob these days I kick yo' in self-defence!"

"Can you imitate birds, Willy?"

"I can imitate any bird dat ever walked on four legs!"

"Den imitate a homin' pigeon. Good-bye, niggah! See youse 'noder time!"

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