

FREE WAR PLATE

Magnificent Photographs
of the Charge of the
Ninth Lancers with this
week's

ANSWERS



No. 348. Vol. 9. October 10th, 1914.



VIVE LA FRANCE!

The juniors waved their flags and shouted themselves hoarse as the blushing French master appeared at the window.

The EDITOR'S WEEKLY CHAT WITH HIS READERS.

FOR NEXT MONDAY:

"WON BY PLUCK!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.

In our next splendid, long, complete story, Harry Wharton & Co. strike a really splendid idea in connection with the Prince of Wales's Fund, and take it up with their usual enthusiasm. The news that Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's, are at work on a similar notion only stimulates their efforts. For a time all goes well; and then occurs the unfortunate incident which casts a gloom over the whole scheme, and renders the life of Mark Linley, the ex-factory lad, a misery and a burden to him. But Linley is made of stern stuff, and holds his head high through all his troubles. And when at last the clouds have passed over, it is admitted ungrudgingly on all sides that through all his way has been

"WON BY PLUCK!"

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

Miss Rose Sketchley (Lower Edmonton).—The average age of the characters you mention is fifteen. Best wishes.

"A Regular Reader" (East Ham).—The first number of the "Magnet" Library is out of print. It would be a good plan to bind all your old "Magnets" into volumes.

J. T. (Walsall).—The persons and places you mention are quite fictitious. The fees at a public school vary, but seventy pounds or eighty pounds a year may be taken as an average. In answer to your third query, "The Taming of Harry" is now out of print.

A. Wenham (Liverpool).—Mr. Frank Richards' first task when he is free is to write a Harry Wharton story for "The Boys' Friend" 3d. Library, as I have mentioned many times before.

L. Z. and J. M. (Battersea).—Many thanks for your letter. Bob Cherry is usually considered the finest boxer in the

Remove, and Horace Coker probably holds that position in the Fifth.

L. Roberts (Sydney, N.S.W.).—Many thanks for your letter. I am sorry I cannot guarantee to do as you suggest. A French Dictionary can be obtained from Messrs. Glaisher & Co., Charing Cross Road, W.C.

S. Dowling (Blackpool).—I do not consider your idea impossible, and would certainly not think of holding it up to ridicule; but it seems impracticable at present.

SOMETHING EXTRA-SPECIAL.

Among the features contained in next Wednesday's issue of our grand companion paper, "The Gem" Library, will be found the first of a series of stirring letters on the great European War which is now raging. These graphic letters, written from the field of operations, should especially appeal to all my patriotic readers, inasmuch as they are the actual experiences of an old Gemite who is now serving with the Colours.

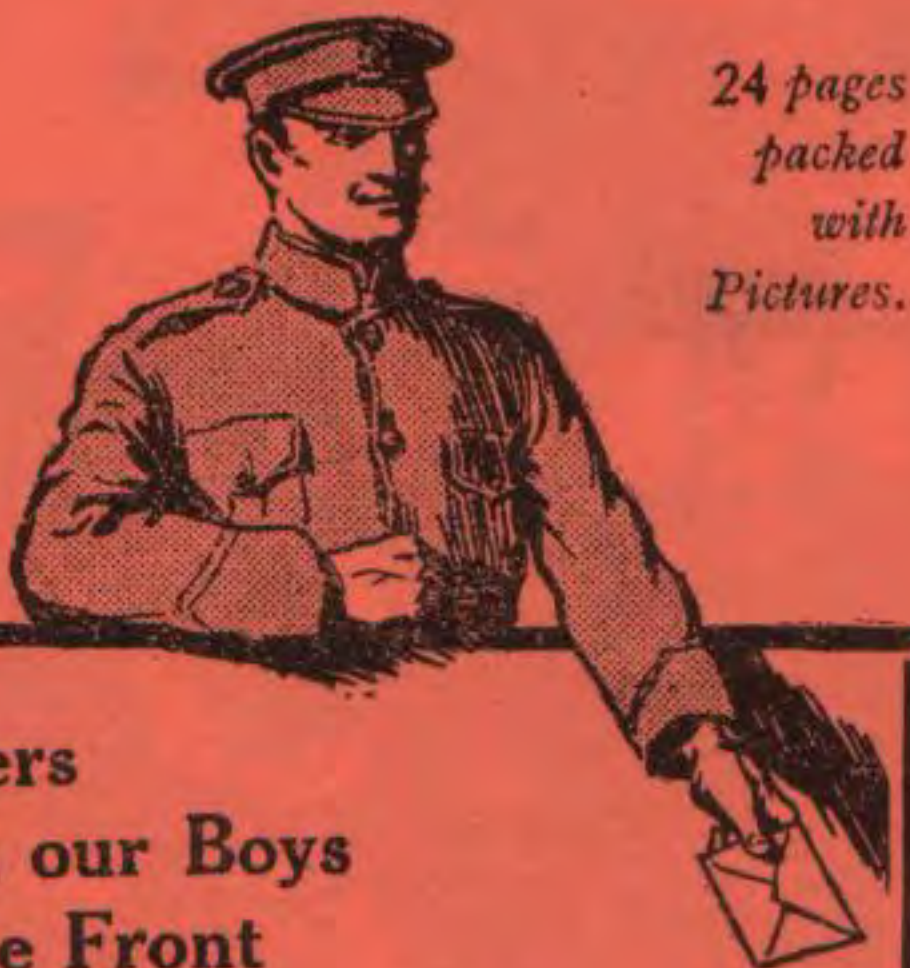
The newspapers, of course, set forth day by day the striking scenes of warfare—acclaiming British victories, and lauding those fine acts of heroism inseparable from the men of our nation; but how much better it is to be able to obtain detailed information from the pen of one of our own comrades, who even at this moment is undergoing the severe hardships and trials of warfare.

The first of these grand descriptive accounts deals with the storming of Liege, and the gallant defence made by the plucky little Belgians, whose unexpected resistance came as a severe blow to the German tyrant. The narrative is replete with thrilling incident, and will kindle the patriotism and enthusiasm of all who read it.

It behoves you, then, to make a special point of obtaining a copy of this week's "Gem" Library, and to tell your friends of this exclusive feature which our companion paper has been lucky enough to secure.

Place the order with your newsagent to-day!

The Editor



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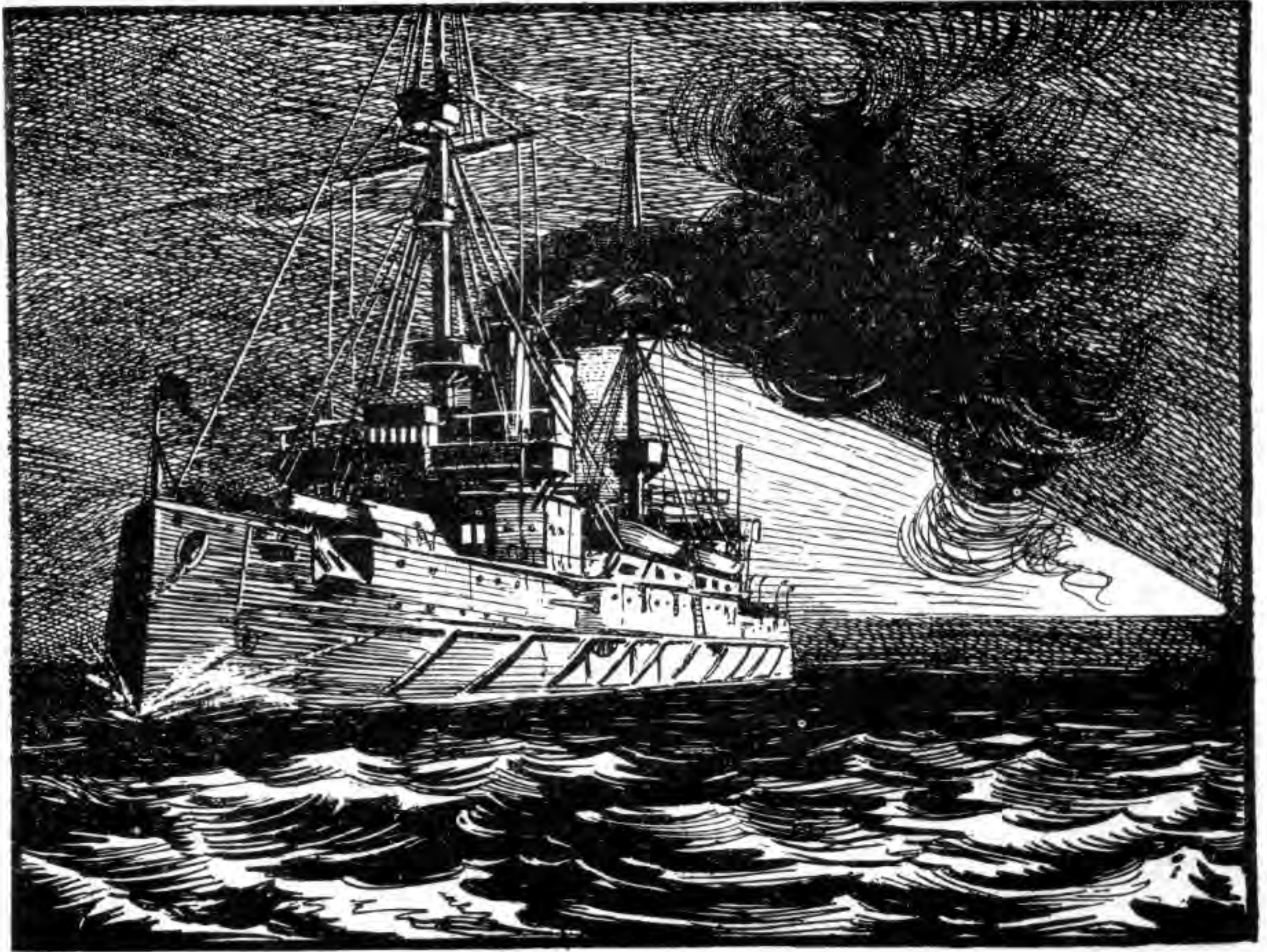
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READ THIS FIRST.

A wonderful airship, named the Falcon, is constructed by two brothers, Thorpe and Dick Thornhill, and it is offered to the British Government; but they remain indifferent to the Falcon's qualities. Major Seigner, a German officer, endeavours to purchase it for his Government, but the offer, magnificent though it is, is refused. The German, however, manages to steal the Falcon, taking with him Dick Thornhill and a young man named Tom Evans. The Englishmen are taken before the Kaiser, who orders them to be imprisoned, after Dick has hotly refused to explain any of the secrets which the Falcon holds. Meanwhile, Thorpe Thornhill, in the Night Hawk, the sister ship of the Falcon, gives chase to the German officer, his intention being to fly to the outskirts of Berlin, from whence he could make his attempt to liberate his brother, and regain possession of his airship. Tom Evans and Dick manage to escape. Tom Evans is caught a little later, and taken before a general of the German Army. This officer gives the mechanic the choice of facing a firing party or luring Thorpe Thornhill to a certain place, so that the Germans can make him prisoner.

"Quick!" says the officer. "Which is it to be?"

(Now go on with the Story.)

Too Late!

"But, sir, I don't want to refuse!" cried Tom, pretending to weep bitterly. "I'd be a gen'l'man with that twenty pound a month. But what would be the good of that? If Master Dick heard of it he'd kill me, as sure as higgs is higgs!"

A contemptuous smile curled the general's thin lips.

"You need not be uneasy on that score, my lad. Richard Thornhill will never leave this fort alive!"

Despite his anxiety to impress the German general with his utter unscrupulousness, Tom Evans with difficulty concealed the shudder which shook his frame as the other's words fell on his ears. But the other was too engrossed with his thoughts to notice the effect of his significant speech, and listened with gratification to Tom's protestations of fidelity.

That night Tom enjoyed the rare luxury of sleeping in a comfortable bed and eating the best of food. In fact, from the moment he had agreed to betray Thorpe Thornhill he was treated with the greatest kindness and consideration, for the Germans now looked upon him as one of themselves.

For three days Tom was kept in the governor's house, given the best of everything, and encouraged to talk about his late masters, whom he was careful to vilify as much as he

dare; until on the fourth morning, when he arose from his bed, he was astonished to find that the good clothes with which he had been presented, after accepting the German general's terms had been removed, and a heap of filthy rags put in their place.

These, for lack of better, Tom donned. Then, feeling somewhat ashamed of his disreputable appearance, descended to the breakfast-room, where he found Seigner already seated at the table.

"Here, boy, eat a good meal, for it will be the last you will have for several days."

"Am I going?" began Tom; when Seigner interrupted him by saying angrily:

"You will do as you are bid, and ask no questions!"

Tom had already discovered that there was no appeal from Seigner's decisions, and, following his advice, made a hearty meal.

Shortly after breakfast an overcoat, beneath which to hide his rags, and a respectable cap was given him, and, thus attired, he followed Seigner to the railway-station, where he was put into a third-class carriage; and, Seigner entering a first, they were speedily being carried towards Hamburg.

They reached that great seaport just as the shades of night were falling, and Tom, alighting on the platform, was looking vaguely around him when a man touched him on the shoulder.

It was Seigner, but so altered that he scarcely knew him. During the journey that gentleman had cast aside his uniform, appearing in the character of a sailor, or a man in some way connected with the sea.

"Come on, my lad; we have little time to spare," he said, leading the way from the station to where a large steamer was taking in cargo in the harbour.

"Now, Evans, listen to me. You are a cabin-boy, who, having been ill-treated on your last ship, ran away at Bremen. You have made your way to Hamburg, and, being anxious to return to England, have crept on board this ship. That is what you will say when you are discovered, which you will be when the steamer is too far on her way to London to put back and land you."

"I tumble," replied Tom. "You think if I went home in too great comfort, Master Thorpe would smell a rat. Oh, you are a sly 'un, you are!"

Seigner smiled, well pleased with the implied compliment.

"That's about it, Evans. But, quiet, now—here comes the sailor who is going to help me hide you away," he said.

The next moment they were joined by a sinister-looking German sailor.

"Is the captain on board, Hans?" asked Seigner.

"No," replied the other in a whisper; "he has not yet returned." Then, aloud, he added: "I do not know. You had better go on board and ask."

"Come along, Keppel!" cried Seigner to Tom, leading the way over the gangway. "Keep your eyes on that man, and go where he beckons," he added, in a hurried whisper.

The next moment the mate of the ship came forward, and, hearing that Seigner wished to see the captain on business, asked him to wait until his return, which would be in a few minutes.

Whilst this conversation was taking place, Tom, seeing the German peep out of the forehold and beckon him, strolled, as though impelled by boyish curiosity, to examine everything in that direction.

Suddenly he felt himself clasped round the waist and hauled below. With difficulty repressing an exclamation of alarm, he allowed himself to be drawn into the dark hold.

"Quick, creep in there, and lay as still as death! I have been stationed here to see that no stowaways get in, so there will be little danger of the place being searched," whispered the sailor.

Tom obeyed. Then, seeing a thin ray of daylight some distance away, moved towards it, scrambling over a number of bales and crates filled with German goods for the London market.

Presently he came to where some planks had been removed from a bulkhead, a carpenter's basket and tools lying near showing that they would be shortly replaced.

As he lay watching this opening, and listening to the sounds on deck, an idea entered his head, and, fired by a sudden determination, he crept through the opening, and found himself in the ship's fo'c's'le.

The place was empty. All were on deck, preparing the ship for sea.

Cautiously he clambered up the gangway, and hid in the bows, until he saw Seigner leave the ship, telling the mate that he was going to get a drink, and would return.

No sooner was the latter out of sight ere Tom clambered on to the wharf, then ran off as fast as he could in the direction of the railway-station.

Fortunately the German general had provided Tom with money for his expenses when he reached England, and, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 348.

therefore, he had no difficulty in obtaining a ticket—not to Kiel, but to Meimersdorf—a station just outside the great German naval base, for he deemed it probable that Kiel station would be full of police-agents and spies.

It was midnight ere he left the train and walked swiftly towards Kiel.

It was hot, close, and very dark, and Tom, iron-framed youngster though he was, was very tired; consequently, about half an hour later, finding himself in the country, he turned off the road, and, dropping on the soft grass, was soon fast asleep.

Presently he awoke with a start. It was still dark, but far in the east a grey light proclaimed the rising sun.

Then he looked up, and a cry of horror rose to his lips, for exactly over him, seeming as though it must fall and crush him to the earth, was a large, black, indistinct mass.

For a moment he gazed at the apparition in terror; then, as the familiar sound of whirring screws fell upon his ears, he started to his feet with a cry of joy.

It was the Night Hawk. Now Dick Thornhill's troubles and his own were surely at an end, for, in Tom's opinion, if any man in the world could work miracles it was Thorpe Thornhill.

Jumping to his feet, he sped after the rapidly moving airship, fearful of shouting lest he should attract the attention of some wandering soldier, yet terribly frightened lest it should pass from him without knowing how close he was to it.

But, to his dismay, it forged further and further ahead; then, as though luring him onward, stopped, and Tom saw a rope-ladder dropped earthwards.

Pressing his fists close to his breast, he ran as he had never run before. But he was yet a hundred yards from the vessel when a man, whom, even in the darkness, he recognised as Thorpe Thornhill, emerged from a clump of trees, ran to the rope-ladder, and clambered swiftly towards the Night Hawk's gleaming hull.

Careless, in his desperation, of who might hear him, Tom redoubled his speed, shouting at the top of his voice:

"Master Thorpe! Mr. Thornhill! Stop! For Heaven's sake, stop! It is I, Tom Evans!"

Then he ceased running, and gazed with clenched fist and streaming eyes at the airship as she shot like a rocket towards the clouds.

He was too late. His voice, drowned by the whirring machinery, had not reached the occupant's ears.

For a moment he saw her bathed in the light of the rising sun; then she seemed to melt into the clear morning atmosphere; and, with a cry of despair, Tom Evans flung himself on the ground, weeping as though his brave little heart would break. To be so near rescue and to be disappointed was more than he could bear.

Then the necessity of concealing himself during the day forced him to rise and enter a neighbouring wood, amongst the undergrowth of which he lay concealed until night once more fell upon the scene.

Face to Face!

All unconscious of how near he had been to his brother's faithful little companion, Thorpe Thornhill flung himself down in the saloon of the airship as she beat her way towards a bare, rocky, uninhabited island, which for nearly a week had been her resting-place during the hours of daylight.

His heart was heavy within him; for, although he had been unremitting in his search, no news of his brother Dick or the missing Falcon reached his ears. There were times when he feared that a report circulated throughout the German Press to the effect that a balloon or airship had been seen to fall into the Baltic on a date which corresponded with Seigner's flight from the woods near Munich, was true.

Although the unusual activity in the fortified ship-building yard of Kiel had attracted Thorpe's attention, the Germans had erected funnels of canvas on the hulls of the airships; and Thorpe, believing them to be torpedo-boats, took no further notice of them.

That night, instead of hovering round and over Kiel, the Night Hawk was steered straight for Berlin, on the outskirts of which busy city Thorpe Thornhill lowered himself to the ground by means of a parachute, whilst the airship sped away to the then deserted Grinewald.

Thorpe was no stranger in Berlin; and, making his way to the nearest station of the Circular Railway, was soon in a magnificent street to the east of the Unter den Linden, where is situated a Biergarten known as The Iron Cross, greatly favoured by military men.

Enveloped in an Inverness cape, an Alpine hat pulled down over his eyes, Thornhill entered the crowded public room, and chose a seat screened by palms near the door; then, ordering some refreshment, lighted a cigar, and listened for any chance

words which might help him to discover the whereabouts of the Falcon, or the fate of his brother.

At any other time he would have enjoyed watching the miscellaneous crowd of military men, naval officers, and civilians passing and repassing the door of that famed cafe; but now his heart was racked with anxiety, not only for his brother, but also for his country. Could he but be sure that the Falcon had perished, even though Dick had gone down with her, he would have been content; but this continued state of doubt and anxiety was unbearable. It was like sleeping over a loaded mine which at any moment might explode and level the supremacy of Britain with the dust.

Presently he started so violently that he spilled the contents of the glass he was raising to his lips, for it seemed as though Fortune, tired of persecuting him, was smiling upon him once more.

Entering the cafe, arm-in-arm with a man in a colonel's uniform, was Major Seigner.

Yes, it was indeed the unscrupulous scoundrel who had robbed him of his airship, and Thornhill felt the hot blood course through his veins as an almost insatiable desire to fling himself at his foe's throat and wring from him the secret of his brother's whereabouts filled his heart.

However, he restrained the mad promptings of revenge, and tried to catch what the other said, but the table Seigner and his companion had chosen was too far away for him to hear a word.

Having drunk their beer, the two arose, and Thorpe followed close upon their heels, his right hand clasped round the butt of a small revolver in his pocket.

Little guessing who was so close behind him, Seigner chatted gaily as they strolled down the Unter den Linden. Then, turning to his right, he bade his companion good-night, and entered a large house, evidently let out in flats.

Crossing to the opposite side of the road, Thorpe scanned the outside of the building carefully. It was a large block, with many windows, the majority of which were bright with lights from within.

Ere long, from his post of vantage, Thorpe saw Seigner looking out of a window; then he turned towards the interior of the room.

Now came the question of how to act. A balcony ran beneath the window at which Seigner had appeared, but to scale it would be impossible. To boldly enter the house and ask to see the German would be but to thrust his head into the lion's mouth, for most likely a noted spy like Seigner would be in telephonic communication with the police. Still, he was determined not to rest that night until he had met his foe face to face.

Thoughtfully he retraced his steps. Then an idea entered his head, and, hastening to the City Railway, stood, some twenty minutes later, on the spot where he had ordered the Night Hawk to meet him.

It was an open space in the suburbs; and, drawing an electric lamp from his pocket, Thorpe Thornhill flashed it quickly twice.

Ten minutes later, he seized a trailing rope as it swept by in the darkness, and was drawn swiftly on board the airship.

A hurried consultation with the steersman, and he was carried through the air to the neighbourhood of the biergarten. From thence he quickly regained the street in which Seigner lived; and, going boldly to the door, knocked at the porter's lodge.

An old man, surly at being aroused, opened the door. "Major Seigner, on the Emperor's business!" cried Thorpe brusquely, as he passed through.

The man's surliness vanished at once, and he became all obsequiousness.

"Does the herr know the room, or shall I show him?" he asked.

"Lead the way—quick! There is no time to lose!" returned Thorpe.

The man obeyed; and, mounting a flight of stairs, rapped loudly on a door—one of many in a long passage on the second floor.

"Who is there?"

"A messenger from the Kaiser, Herr Major," replied the porter.

There was a sound of quick movement about the room, a key turned in the lock, and the door was flung open, revealing Seigner, his regimental coat unbuttoned, but otherwise fully dressed.

"Enter, Herr Messenger," he said, motioning Thornhill into a room. "You may go!" he added, turning to the porter.

Without a word, Thornhill entered the compartment; then, closing the door behind him, turned the key in the lock.

A flash of alarm crossed Seigner's face. He moved towards a telephone hanging against the wall; but, ere he could raise the receiver to his lips, Thornhill had him covered with his revolver, crying:

"Move hand or foot, Karl Seigner, attempt to raise an alarm, or to communicate in any way with those without, and you are a dead man!"

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NEXT
MONDAY—

"WON BY PLUCK!"

EVERY
MONDAY,

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ONE
PENNY.

White as a ghost, Seigner staggered back.

"What do you want? Who are you? Are you a midnight assassin or a robber?" he stammered.

"Neither, Major Seigner. Simply Thorpe Thornhill, at your service!" returned the Englishman, removing his hat.

"Thornhill? You? What do you want here?" cried Seigner, his white face turning ashen as he looked into the relentless eyes of the man he had wronged.

"I want to know what you have done with my brother, and with the airship you stole from me," demanded Thornhill, regarding the trembling man with undisguised contempt.

"Your brother?" repeated Seigner, with well-simulated amazement. "What should I know of your brother? I gave him his liberty in the woods by the Watcher-in-See; and as for the airship, the fools I left on board whilst I visited Munich lost control of her, and—well, the newspapers say she perished in the Baltic. Whether they are right or not I cannot tell."

Thorpe was staggered. There was scarcely a town or fort of any consequence in Germany he had not searched more or less thoroughly, and Seigner's declaration received credibility from his own failure to trace the airship.

"You will swear to this?" he asked.

"Upon my word as an officer, it is true!" was the unscrupulous reply.

"Then why has he not returned to England?" demanded Thorpe.

Seigner shrugged his shoulders.

"How can I say? I am not in the secrets of the German police."

"Pardon me! I thought you were. You work on the same lines, at any rate!" returned Thornhill contemptuously.

"But enough of this. I am perforce compelled to believe you. If you have deceived me, it will avail you nothing, for I have made up my mind to kill you."

Seigner started back.

"Would you murder me?" he cried.

"If I shot you in cold blood where you stand, it would be no more than just retribution for the murders you committed when you stole the Night Hawk. But I am no assassin. You shall have an equal chance with myself. Name your own time, place, and weapons, and Heaven strengthen the arm of he who is in the right betwixt you and I!"

Thorpe noticed a sudden gleam of malicious triumph which sprang into Seigner's eyes; but, far from attributing it to the true cause, believed that the German soldier thought himself the English civilian's master with any weapon.

He was content. He knew his cause to be a righteous one.

"Willingly, Herr Thornhill, and I thank you for this opportunity of getting level with one who has repeatedly insulted me!" agreed Seigner, baring his gums in a sneering grin.

"Then we are mutually satisfied!" declared Thorpe grimly.

"Time, to-morrow morning—or, to be more correct, this morning—at sunrise. Place, on the island opposite the water-works in the Tegler See. Weapons, pistols. And I swear on my honour as a German I will kill you!" hissed Seigner.

"Thank you for the warning! It seems to add additional interest to the meeting!" retorted Thorpe.

The next moment the door closed behind the young Englishman.

Barely had Thornhill departed ere, his eyes glistening with triumph, Seigner sprang to the telephone.

"Lock the outer door, and let no one pass, as you value your life!" he commanded the porter. "The Englishman, Thorpe Thornhill, is in the building! Send a force to arrest him!" he telephoned to the police.

Then, rubbing his hands, and well satisfied with his treacherous preparations, drew aside the blind of his window and awaited the approach of assistance, confident that Thorpe Thornhill could not escape him, for past the porter's lodge lay the only path from the huge block of buildings.

Presently a squad of police hastened at the double down the street.

Taking a large Service revolver from a drawer, Seigner left his room.

The landing was in darkness, save for a subdued light burning in a niche at the further end. There was no one there, but Seigner troubled little about that. Doubtless Thornhill was at that moment praying the porter to let him pass.

Chuckling at every step, Seigner strode cautiously down the passage, peering carefully round every corner as he descended the stairs.

Then for the first time a fear that something had gone wrong in his arrangements troubled him.

Rushing to the front door, he reached it just as the porter drew aside the bolts and admitted the police.

"Where is the man you escorted to my room just now? Fool, you have let him escape!" almost shrieked Seigner.

"He is not here, Herr Major. The police will tell you the door was locked and bolted when they arrived."

"Ah, then we have him! He cannot escape! Leave two men on guard at the door! The rest, follow me! If he resists, shoot him down without mercy!" cried Seigner to the officer in charge of the gendarmes, then led the way upstairs.

But, though every suite of flats in that large building was searched with the unscrupulous thoroughness which distinguishes German police, no sign of Thorpe Thornhill could they find.

Beside himself with rage and disappointment, Seigner dismissed the police and retired to his own room, determined upon giving the porter an uncomfortable quarter of an hour the following morning, for he was certain that the man had been bribed to let the Englishman escape.

He did not know that, invisible in the darkness, the Night Hawk had been hovering over the roof of the flats whilst its commander was below, ready to take him on board as soon as the interview with Seigner was at an end.

A Strangely Fought Duel!

Although a villain to the backbone, Seigner was no coward. He would gladly have met Thorpe Thornhill on equal terms; but he knew that it would please the Emperor to capture the young inventor alive, and determined to lay his plans accordingly.

There was no sleep for him that night. From interviewing the police, he passed to the Imperial palace, with the result that, when day at last broke, every tree and shrub on the banks of the Tegler See concealed a German soldier, whilst hidden in the nooks and crannies about the shore were boats laden with sailors, ready to intercept the Englishman the moment he appeared.

The island on which the duel was to be fought—one of the many with which the sluggish waters of the Havel are dotted—was covered thick with trees except at one end, where there was a stretch of greensward, which had made it a favourite duelling-ground for the officers of the German garrison for many generations.

Knowing well that Thornhill would be on the look-out for treachery, Seigner had directed that the soldiers should remain concealed, while he, a brother officer as second, and a surgeon, to give an air of reality to the preparations, were rowed over.

Then, eagerly watching the mainland, they showed themselves on the open sward to lure their dupe to his destruction.

Slowly the sun rose above the horizon, but no boat put forth from the opposite shore.

"Curse the fellow, he has eluded me again!" cried Seigner angrily.

"Good-morning, Herr Major! You are punctual, I see!" said a voice close behind him.

And Thorpe Thornhill, unaccompanied by a second—for he had no friend in Berlin whom he could ask to act for him—emerged from the wood.

Seigner started.

"You were here early, Herr Thornhill!" he cried, saluting his opponent. "I thought we were first on the field!"

Thornhill did not reply, but an enigmatical smile flitted across his lips.

"I must ask one of these gentlemen to act as my second," he said, bowing to Seigner's companions. "I have not been able to secure the services of a friend."

"There is no need, Herr Thornhill," returned Seigner, with an evil smile, "for there will be no duel this morning. I arrest you in the name of my master, the Kaiser!"

Again that enigmatical smile hovered over Thornhill's lips.

"I was right, then, to distrust the honour of a German soldier!" he said contemptuously. "I am afraid you do not appreciate the position, Herr Seigner! You are my prisoner!"

"Your prisoner!" gasped Seigner. Then he laughed aloud. "You boasting fool!" he cried angrily. "Do you not know that this island is surrounded by armed men, and that escape is impossible?"

"Probably the island is surrounded, but I think you would find it difficult to cut off my escape. Put up that pistol, or you are a dead man!" he added, as Seigner flung open a box of duelling-pistols which his second had deposited on the ground at his feet.

Then Thorpe raised his hand, and through an opening between two trees the Night Hawk glided gently to his side. The next moment it rested gently on the ground, and the three Germans found themselves covered by the gleaming muzzles of half a dozen rifles in the hands of as many Englishmen, whom Thorpe had enlisted in case he found it necessary to rescue his brother by force.

"You see, Herr Seigner, others can lay traps as well as

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yourself. But I have no wish to be burdened with your company to England. We came to fight a duel, and, despite your assertion to the contrary, a duel will be fought. Gentlemen, I am at your service," he added, bowing politely to the second and the doctor. "Herr Seigner, take your weapon!"

With a savage growl, Seigner turned and seized one of the pistols.

"As you will, Herr Thornhill. I would have spared you, but you will not let me. Dr. Hans, kindly act as the Englishman's second. The sooner this farce is over the better!" he growled savagely.

In his new capacity as second, the doctor turned to his companion, and a low-voiced conversation took place between them.

"We have decided that one shot shall be fired at twelve paces," declared Dr. Hans after a few moments, turning to his principal.

Then, whilst his fellow-second loaded the weapons, he paced out the ground; and, pistol in hand, the opponents faced each other.

"You will fire when I drop this handkerchief, gentlemen!" said the doctor, standing midway between the combatants, well out of the line of fire. "Are you ready?"

"Ready!" returned Thorpe, in a firm voice.

Seigner bit his lips and nodded surlily.

"One—two—fire!" cried the doctor.

And the white handkerchief fluttered to the ground.

Two reports burst simultaneously on the ears of the spectators. Then Thorpe reeled back, clasping his hand to his breast; whilst Seigner, folding his arms, gazed with malicious satisfaction at his wounded foe.

Loud cries of rage burst from the deck of the Night Hawk as her crew saw their captain fall, and a couple of men, springing from the balcony of the airship, carried their stricken master on board.

"Seize them, gentlemen! Do not let them escape! In the name of the Emperor I command you!" cried Seigner furiously.

"Stop where ye are, ye spalpeens, or ye'll be riddled as full of holes as a sieve!" commanded Pat Denver.

The next moment the Night Hawk's machinery was put in motion, and she rose gracefully from the ground, bearing aloft her creator, sorely stricken, but not mortally wounded.

Seigner was furious. He had made so certain of capturing Thorpe Thornhill that he had already sent a message to the Emperor to the effect that the Englishman was a prisoner, and now he had to admit, to one who never forgave a failure, the ill-success of his carefully laid schemes.

But Dick Thornhill was still in his power, and, determined to avenge himself upon him, he hastened back to Kiel, where he was told a strange tale.

It seemed as though the ships were suddenly bewitched. Detonators, small pieces of dynamite, and other explosives had found their way amongst the various hulls. Explosion after explosion had wrecked the work of days. Now a scaffolding, the ropes of which had been surreptitiously cut half through, had fallen. Here a delicate machine had been smashed by a piece of iron inserted in its cog-wheels. There an explosion of dynamite had spread death and wounds around.

The mechanics openly declared all this to be the work of gnomes and demons; but Seigner knew better, and made a searching inquiry into the matter, but in vain. No clue to the mystery was forthcoming.

The work-sheds, the building-yards, and even the fort itself was searched, until it seemed as though not even a rat could have escaped detection, but in vain, and all because no one thought of looking in an old bombard, dating from the wars of Frederick the Great, where little Tom Evans, who, creeping through drains and past sentries, had stolen unperceived into the closely guarded fort, was snugly concealed, and from whence he sallied forth to work destruction amongst the airships, until the redoubled precautions Seigner took immediately upon his return forced him to exercise greater caution, and it was with difficulty that he could even steal forth to stretch his cramped limbs.

However, his time was not entirely wasted. Often, little expecting that alien ears listened to their conversation, German officers, and once even the Emperor himself, stood near the old bombard, openly discussing their plans for the invasion and destruction of England, conversations which Tom Evans harboured in his mind, and which were later to prove of inestimable benefit to the Government of his country.

Little did Dick Thornhill—when he whiled away the hours of his captivity by teaching his young companion to speak the language of their captors—guess how all-important it would prove.

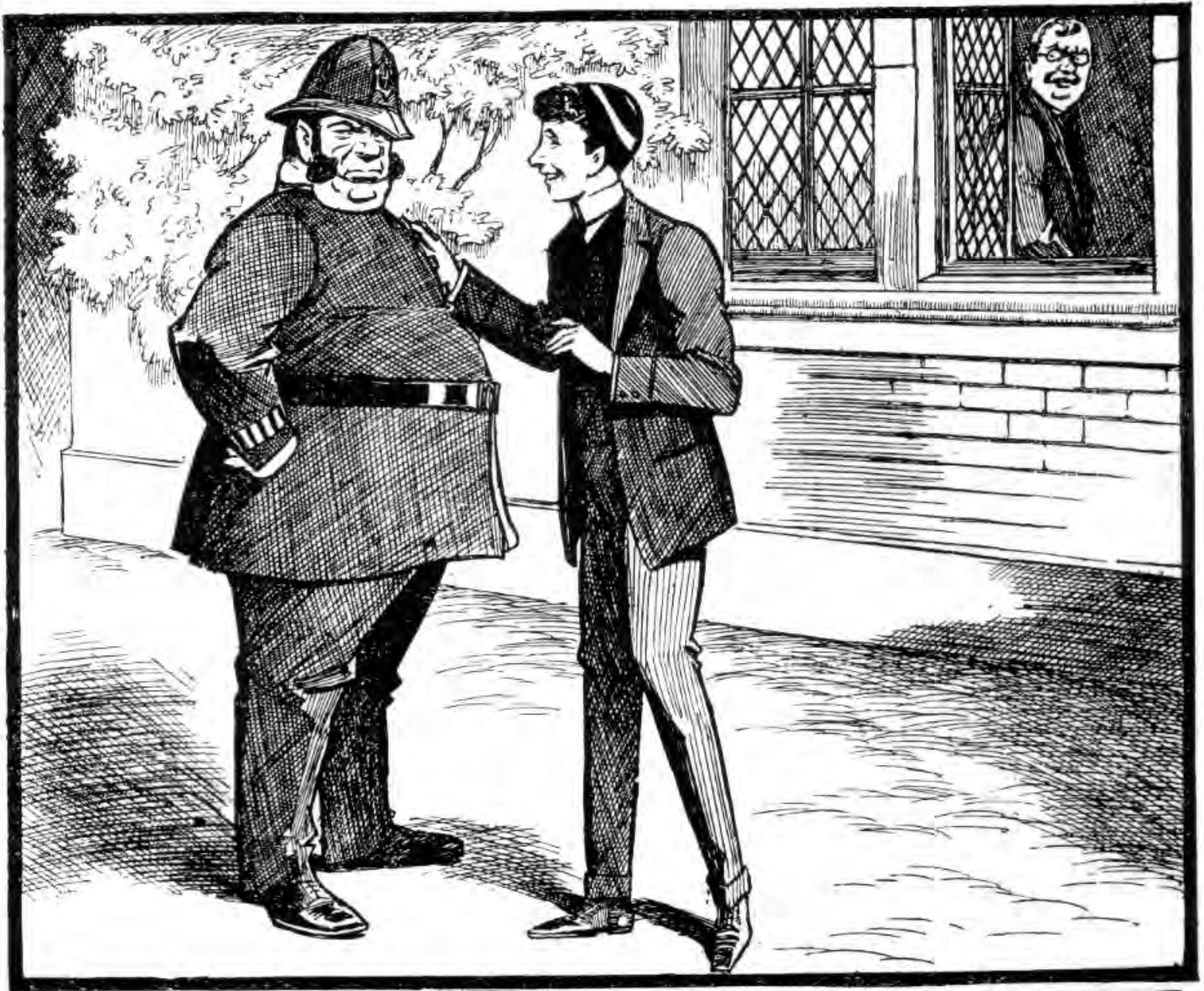
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THE GREYFRIARS SPY-HUNTERS!

A Magnificent, New, Long, Complete Tale dealing with the
Adventures of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars School.

By FRANK RICHARDS.



Coker rushed away towards the gates, and met P.-c. Tozer as he rolled majestically across the Close. "Come for our German master?" asked Coker. "Which I 'ave!" said Mr. Tozer in a deep voice, which was quite audible to the disturbed Herr standing at his open window. (See Chapter I.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Coker is Too Funny!

"ACH! Mein Gott! Mein Gott!" Harry Wharton of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, glanced round in surprise as he heard that startled and dismayed exclamation.

The captain of the Remove was sauntering along the Close, past the window of the German-master's study, when Herr Gans's voice fell upon his ears.

Herr Gans—generally called the "Gander" at Greyfriars, for the excellent reason that "gans" was German for "goose"—was standing at the open window, looking across the Close towards the school gates, his round blue eyes almost starting from his head.

Wharton raised his cap politely as he paused.

Herr Gans had always been popular at Greyfriars, and the

outbreak of war did not make any difference; indeed, most of the Greyfriars fellows made it a point to treat him with an extra amount of consideration, due to the unfortunate position in which he was placed.

But since the declaration of war, the Gander had been in a state of incessant perturbation and excitement.

As Bob Cherry remarked, his German irregular verbs were getting more and more irregular, and the fellows in the German class did pretty much as they liked.

"Anything the matter, sir?" asked Wharton.

Herr Gans blinked at him.

"Ach! Mein Gott!"

"What is it, sir?"

"It have come at last!" gasped Herr Gans. "Ach! Vy did I not fly to mein Faderland while tat dere was time? Mein Gott!"

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"WON BY PLUCK!"

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"Perhaps you hadn't any aeroplane handy, sir," suggested Bob Cherry.

But Herr Gans was in no humour for little jokes. He was in a state of excited dismay.

"Now I shall to prison go!" he groaned. "Ach! Mein Gott! Here kommt der policeman tat will me to prison take."

"My hat!" ejaculated Bob, looking towards the gates. "Here comes Tozer!"

Police-constable Tozer of Friardale had entered the gates, and his portly and ponderous form was advancing with slow and majestic strides towards the School House. There was a grim and severe expression upon the fat features of Mr. Tozer. As a member—an important member—of his Majesty's Police Force, Mr. Tozer evidently felt that the national crisis weighed heavily upon his shoulders.

"He can't be coming for you, sir," said Harry Wharton reassuringly.

"Ach! But I feel sure tat it is so! I am lost! Ach, mein Faderland! Never shall I him again see!"

Coker of the Fifth came along, in time to hear the German-master's remark. Coker of the Fifth grinned. Coker did not like Herr Gans very much—owing to certain difficulties he found with German conjugations and declensions. It was really quite unjust to visit that upon Herr Gans's head, as he was not responsible for the terrible declensions and conjugations of his native language. But Coker of the Fifth, after a struggle with German verbs, felt an intense dislike for all things German, from German-masters to German bands, and German sausages.

"My word!" said Coker. "You're in for it at last, sir. I hear that they are shooting German spies all over the country. If you're suspected, you're done for. Puff! Bang! and there you go!"

"Mein Gott!"

"But I've heard that it's a merciful death," said Coker comfortingly, "and you're allowed to make your own funeral arrangements in advance. I hear that the undertakers are doing a roaring trade in German spies."

"Ach! Ach!"

"But perhaps it mayn't come to that," said Coker cheerfully. "I'll tell you what—I'll speak to Tozer, and come and warn you in time to make your will, if it should come to the worst."

And Coker of the Fifth rushed away towards the gates, and met Police-constable Tozer as he rolled majestically across the Close.

"Come for our German-master?" asked Coker.

"Which I 'ave!" said Mr. Tozer, in a deep voice, which was quite audible to the disturbed Herr standing at his open window.

"Ach! Mein Gott in Himmel!" gasped Herr Gans.

And he disappeared from the window like a flash of lightning.

"What utter rot!" said Harry Wharton. "What can they want with Herr Gans? That ass Coker is going to jape him, I suppose."

The two juniors bore down upon Mr. Tozer. Coker had dashed away into the house, but quite a crowd of other fellows were gathering round the stout constable. Mr. Tozer stopped, and pushed back his helmet, and mopped his noble brow.

"Come for the Gander?" demanded Bolsover major.

"Looking for our poor old German-master—what?" asked Frank Nugent. "What has he done?"

"Which he's got to report himself at the police-station, same as all Germans in this 'ere country," said Mr. Tozer.

"Is that all?" asked Wharton.

"Course it is!" said Mr. Tozer. "I s'pose you don't think as I've come 'ere to eat 'im, do you, Master Wharton?"

"I wish you had!" growled Bolsover major. "There would be an end of German lessons for a bit, then!"

"Well, I ain't!" said Mr. Tozer. "Which I've got to speak to the 'Ead on the matter, and he have got to report 'imself reg'lar."

"Blessed if I see why they can't arrest him!" growled Billy Bunter, as Mr. Tozer marched on. "All Germans ought to be arrested—especially German-masters."

Mr. Tozer was shown into the Head's study. Meanwhile, Coker of the Fifth had rushed to Herr Gans's room.

Coker flung open the door, and dashed in, in a state of great excitement.

"It's all up, sir!" he gasped.

"Ach! I know it—I heard vat tat man say!" groaned Herr Gans. "Ach! Mein Rheinland—I shall never see him any more!"

"Buck up, sir!" said Coker. "We'll stand by you. There's time yet. Tozer has orders to take you to the police-station immediately——"

"Ach!"

"And I'm sorry to say that there's a detachment of Territorials there waiting to carry out the sentence," said Coker.

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sadly. "The regular troops are gone to the front, you know, and the Territorials have been specially ordered out to shoot Germans here. But we're going to help you out of this awful fix, sir. We're going to save you!"

"Mein goot poy! But how——"

"There's still time to escape in disguise," Coker explained.

"Ach!"

"We place at your disposal, sir, all the props—I mean the properties—of the Fifth Form Stage Club. We've got lots of disguises, and we'll lend them all to you, to save your life, sir. It would be simply awful if you were executed, and we never had any more German lessons. Come, sir—not an instant to be lost! Tozer is only stopping a minute to load his revolver."

"Mein Gott!"

Herr Gans scuttled out of the study after the voracious Coker. Coker of the Fifth grasped him by the arm, and rushed him along to the Fifth Form passage. Potter and Greene of the Fifth were in Coker's study, and they looked astonished when their study mate rushed the excited German-master in.

"Hallo, what's the row?" exclaimed Potter.

"We've got to save Herr Gans's life!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Tozer's looking for him with a loaded Maxim gun—I mean revolver—and the Territorials have orders to shoot him on sight," explained Coker. "Get out the stage props—quick—we've got to disguise him!"

Potter and Greene just managed to restrain a yell of laughter. The idea of the Territorials shooting the Gander almost overcame them. Potter tore open the box which contained the properties of the Fifth Form Stage Club. Greene rushed for the make-up box. Both of them entered into Coker's little joke on the instant, and were ready to lend their aid to save Herr Gans's life.

"Ach, ach, ach!" groaned Herr Gans. "Dis is dreadful! Never, never shall I see again my beautiful Rhine! Ach, ach!"

"Buck up!" said Coker. "Better put on this skirt, sir——"

"Vat!"

"It's safer to be disguised as a woman, you see," explained Coker. "Tozer won't think it is you, if he sees you. We've got some skirts and blouses here that we used for a Suffragette play. This blue skirt will do rippingly. Shove it on. My hat—it won't meet round your waist. Never mind, we've got a cricket-belt here to fasten it. Now the blouse!"

"Mein goot Coker——"

"Put your head through here, sir—that's right. Find a hat for him, Potty—the big green one with the feathers!"

"What-ho!" said Potter. "Rely on us, sir. We'll bring you through it!"

"Ach, ach! But——"

Coker looked out of the doorway, and then slammed the door hurriedly. The startled German fastened bulging eyes upon him.

"Ach! Vat have you seen, my good Coker?"

"Tozer's looking for you, sir—breathing murder!" said Coker. "I fancy he has orders to pot you at once, sir—puff—bang!"

"Ach! But tat is dreadful——"

"Buck up with the disguise. Better put on a wig—this long golden one will do beautifully."

"Tank you, mein poy."

The sight of Herr Gans, arrayed in a blue skirt, a pink blouse, a golden wig, and a large green hat with feathers, almost sent Coker & Co. into hysterics. But they restrained their feelings nobly. Coker got to work with the grease-paints. Herr Gans's cheeks were tinted a brilliant crimson, and Coker calmly drew black lines round his eyes, and put a bright red spot on the tip of his plump nose. The German master was too agitated to think of looking in the glass. He left it all to Coker, and Coker's artistic hand speedily turned him into a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.

"There, that's ripping!" said Coker, repressing a strong desire to shriek. "The Kaiser himself wouldn't know you now, sir."

"Mein Gott!"

There was a tap at the door, and Harry Wharton looked in.

"Is Herr Gans here, Coker? Inky says he saw him coming here with you. Why, my only hat, who—what—which——"

Wharton gazed in blank amazement at the German master.

Herr Gans's identity was not in the slightest degree concealed by his extraordinary disguise; but he was turned into a most amazing object that would certainly have attracted attention anywhere.

Wharton gasped.



A roar of laughter echoed through the Close as the disguised Herr Gans, gathering his unaccustomed skirts about him, rushed out of the School House. For a moment the Greyfriars fellows failed to recognise the German master, but the next moment they knew him, and yelled. "Ha, ha, ha!" (See Chapter 2.)

"Herr Gans! What— Oh, crumbs! Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Mein Gott, Wharton—"
 "Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Wharton.
 "Shush!" said Coker. "We're disguising Herr Gans to save his life. Not a word. Shush!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 Wharton staggered away almost in convulsions. Coker cast a wary glance along the passage.
 "Now's your chance, sir," he said hurriedly. "The coast's clear. Buck up, and run while Tozer's out of sight."
 "Thank you! But—"
 "Run for it, sir! Get out of the gates and bunk!"
 "But—aber—but—"
 "Run!" yelled Potter and Greene.
 And the alarmed German master ran for his life.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Not shot!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry.
 "What the dickens—"
 "What the deuce—"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "It's the Gander!" gasped Johnny Bull.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

A roar of laughter echoed through the Close as the disguised Herr Gans, gathering his unaccustomed skirts about him, rushed out of the School House.

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For a moment the Greyfriars fellows did not recognise the German master, but the next moment they knew him, and they yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Goodness gracious! What is this?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, meeting the fugitive in the Close. "Herr Gans! Is it possible? Stop! I beg you—stop! What does this mean?"

"Let me go, mein Herr!" stuttered Herr Gans, as the astounded Form-master caught him by the arm. "Let me go! I—I fly for my life!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "What ever is the matter?" gasped Mr. Quelch.
 "I am ordered to be shot wiz myself—"

"Impossible!"
 "Ach! It is true. I fly for my life! The policeman is dere mit his revolver."

"Nonsense!"
 "Herr Quelch—"
 "Pray come back into the house at once, Herr Gans. This is—is ridiculous!" exclaimed the Remove master. "You cannot be in the slightest danger. I will answer for it. Someone has been deceiving you."

"But der policeman—"
 "Pray come in!"
 Mr. Quelch drew the German master almost forcibly into the School House. Mr. Tozer was there, with the Head. Mr. Tozer was looking for Herr Gans, though without a

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revolver—the revolver only existing in Horace Coker's fertile imagination.

Dr. Locke, the reverend Head of Greyfriars, gazed at the weird figure of the disguised German master with wide-open eyes.

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed. "Who—what is that?"

"Ach! Mein Gott!"

"Herr Gans!"

"Ah! 'Ere he is!" said Mr. Tozer, glaring at the unfortunate expounder of German verbs. "In disguise! Ho!"

"Herr Gans, what is the meaning of this—this extraordinary masquerade?" exclaimed Dr. Locke.

"Ach!"

"In disguise!" repeated Mr. Tozer, taking out his truncheon. "This 'ere is a werry suspicious circumstance."

"Nonsense, Mr. Tozer!" exclaimed the Head sharply.

"I will answer for Herr Gans. But I demand an explanation at once, Herr Gans, of this ridiculous masquerade. What ever can have induced you to appear in public in this guise?"

"Is it not tat I am to be shot mit myself, den?" gasped Herr Gans.

"Shot? Bless my soul! What could have put such an idea into your head?" exclaimed Dr. Locke, in amazement.

"But is it not true, den? Tat poy Coker, he tell me; and he save my life mit der disguise of a frau——"

"I—I am afraid Coker has been—ahem!—exaggerating," said the Head, trying not to smile. "Your alarm is utterly groundless, Herr Gans. Mr. Tozer merely came to inform you that it is necessary for you to repair to the police-station and register your name, like all your countrymen resident in this country."

"Ach! Tat villain Coker——"

"I shall speak very severely to Coker about this," said the Head. "Pray go and remove that—that absurd dress, Herr Gans, and accompany Mr. Tozer."

"Ja, ja wohl!"

Herr Gans fluttered away in his skirts, leaving even the stolid Mr. Tozer grinning.

But Mr. Tozer was suspicious. All the eloquence of the Head was required to convince Mr. Tozer that Herr Gans's disguise was not a very serious matter indeed. Mr. Tozer would have been very pleased to arrest a German spy—it would have meant promotion for Mr. Tozer.

In half an hour Herr Gans came out in his accustomed attire, with his extraordinary make-up washed off his plump face. He walked out of the School House with Mr. Tozer, and the Greyfriars fellows greeted him with shouts of laughter.

"Clothed and in his right mind again," grinned Bob Cherry. "It was too rotten of Coker. Poor old Gander!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The whole school chuckled over the joke, but Coker did not chuckle after the Head had paid a visit to his study. As a senior, Coker was not liable to be caned, but the Head stretched a point for once, and caned him—which turned Horace Coker into a more ferocious Germanophobe than ever.

Coker rubbed his hands after the Head had left his study, and glared at Potter and Greene, who were sympathetic but smiling. The caning of the great Coker, somehow or other, struck them as funny.

"I don't see anything to grin at myself," snorted Coker.

"Naturally you don't," agreed Potter.

"If you want a thick ear, Potter——"

"Ahem!" Potter ceased to smile. "Coker, old man, it was a ripping joke on the Gander, and it was worth a licking."

"Hear, hear!" said Greene heartily.

Horace Coker brightened up a little.

"My opinion is that the boulder ought to clear off," he said. "We ought not to have any more German lessons while this is going on. I call it unpatriotic to learn German. We ought to be giving it to the beggars in the neck, not learning their awful language. I shouldn't wonder if he was a German spy, too."

"Ahem!"

"How do you know?" demanded Coker. "Ain't they arresting German spies right and left? Haven't you read in the papers about the German spies in France and Belgium and Luxemburg—crowds of 'em, pretending to be clerks, and workmen, and schoolmasters, and things? Look here, I'm jolly well going to keep an eye on the Gander. We're close to the sea-coast here—it's just the place for a German spy to locate himself. I'm going to keep an eye on him. I tell you."

"Ahem!" murmured Potter and Greene.

"Well, I mean it!" said Coker determinedly. "And if I bowl him out in anything, it's all up with him, and there won't be any more German verbs till the end of the war—what?"

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But Horace Coker's intention of keeping an eye on Herr Gans never "came off," for that evening it became known in Greyfriars that Herr Gans was leaving.

Billy Bunter brought the news into No. 1 Study, where the Famous Five of the Remove were having tea.

"I say, you fellows, the Gander's got the boot!" announced Bunter.

"Rats!" said Bob Cherry promptly.

"At least, he's clearing off," amended Bunter. "I happened to hear the Head speaking to Mr. Quelch about it——"

"Whose keyhole did you happen to be listening at, you fat boulder?" growled Harry Wharton, in disgust.

"Oh, really, Wharton! Quite by accident I had stopped to lace up my shoe——"

"Br-r-r!"

"And I heard 'em talking. The Gander is fed-up. He don't think he can look the fellows in the face again after what's happened to-day, and he's going. And there won't be any more German lessons, I hope," grinned Bunter. "German-masters can't be found very easily, I should think, while the giddy war's going on—what?"

"Well, I'm sorry he's going," said Johnny Bull. "He's a decent man. And there will be another one to take his place, anyway."

"As Shakespeare remarks, 'I fear there will be a worse come in his place,'" grinned Bob Cherry. "We sha'n't get out of the German lesson so easily as all that. I hear that Coker has suggested a Patriotic League for Refusing to Learn German! I wonder what the Head will say about it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The beast is packing already," said Bunter. "He's off to-night. Blessed if I know how he's going to get back to Deutschland. Catching the next train for London, anyway."

Harry Wharton rose.

"Let's go and say good-bye to him, chaps," he said. "He's treated us jolly well, and we don't want to visit the sins of the Kaiser on the Gander's head, do we?"

"No fear!"

"The no-fearfulness is terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

And the Famous Five left their tea unfinished, and repaired to the German master's quarters. Billy Bunter blinked after them, and snorted. But he did not follow them. He sat down at the study table, and finished the tea.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Buck Up!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. found the German-master packing, as Billy Bunter has stated. The Gander was evidently going.

Herr Gans was looking very dismal, and his face flushed as he met the glances of the juniors in the open doorway. He was keenly conscious that he cut an extremely ridiculous figure that day. But the chums of the Remove manfully refrained from smiling.

"Are you really going, sir?" asked Wharton.

"Ja, ja, mein poy," said Herr Gans sadly. "I have tink of it pefore mit myself, und now I tink I petter go."

"We're sorry, sir," said Bob.

"You are a good poy," said Herr Gans. "Dis is dreadful—dis war! Mein-beloved Chermanny is in great drouble in dese days, and it is goot tat I go home, if it is tot I can get dere. In dis country dere is great drouble for Chermans. Dere are many rascals who are spies, and pring disgrace upon dair own country—but I tink tat eferyonc here will believe tat I am an honest man."

"Yes, rather, sir!" exclaimed Harry. "We are very sorry you are going, and we hope you will come back when this is all over."

"I tink tat is possible," said Herr Gans. "Meanwhile, I try to get pack to mein Faderland. But you poyes need not be alarmed mit yourselves apout your Cherman lessons—dere will be anodder master."

"Oh!" said the Famous Five together. They were not especially pleased to hear that.

"I haf a cousin," explained Herr Gans. "Mein cousin Fritz Muhlbach. He is goimin' here to dake my place. He is a goot master—a ferry goot master—and I have him recommended to der Head. It is only vun lesson tat you will miss pefore tat he gums here, so tat is all right, mein poyes."

Gosling, the porter, put his head in at the door.

"Which the trap is ready, sir," he said.

"Tank you, Gosling! Mein paggage is almost retty."

The excited and troubled German-master was packing his things almost anyhow. Harry Wharton & Co. kindly lent him a hand in reducing the chaos to something like order. Then Gosling bore away the trunk and the bags.

Herr Gans took an affectionate leave of the Head and the other masters, and came out of the School House to mount into the trap. Monsieur Charpentier, the French-master at Greyfriars, met him in the hall, and bowed to him with great politeness.

Since the outbreak of the war, the French and German masters at Greyfriars had been almost painfully polite to one another. Both of them were intensely patriotic, and both of them followed the war news in the "Daily Mail" with the keenest interest, but both were afraid of allowing their personal feelings to cause them to transgress the correct attitude which politeness demanded.

"Est-ce que vous partez, monsieur. Is it zat you depart?" asked Monsieur Charpentier.

"Ja wohl."

"Adieu, monsieur," said M. Charpentier, with exquisite French courtesy. "I hope zat we meet again in happier times."

And, with an almost visible effort, the French-master shook hands with Herr Gans.

The Herr mounted into the trap, most of the Greyfriars fellows gathering to see him off. Only Horace Coker remained with a grim and unsympathetic face. Horace Coker was suspicious of all Germans. Horace Coker suspected strongly that the German-master's bags contained all sorts of valuable information destined for the War Office at Berlin—when the unfortunate Gander arrived there.

But the other fellows were kind and sympathetic, and waved their hands or their caps to Herr Gans as he drove away.

"Well, what about him being a spy now, Cokey, old man?" asked Potter, with a grin.

Coker snorted.

"He's going home stuffed with information, very likely," he replied.

"Oh, rats!"

"And this other chap who's coming in his place—what do we know about him?" said Coker darkly. "Very likely a German spy."

"Bow-wow!" said Greene. "You've got German spies on the brain, Coker."

"Well, I'm going to keep an eye on him, when he comes," said Coker obstinately.

"Always keeping an eye on somebody," yawned Potter.

"And if he turns out to be a spy—"

"Oh, rats!"

"Look here, Potter—"

"Bosh!" said Potter.

And he walked away—only just in time, for Coker was clenching his fists. Harry Wharton & Co. returned to their study to finish their tea—but they found it already finished. Billy Bunter was just disposing of the last fragment of toast.

"You fat burglar!" roared Bob Cherry. "Where's our grub?"

Bunter jumped up in alarm.

"Ahem! I—I thought you'd rather—ahem—not let it get cold, and—and be wasted," he stuttered. "You see—"

"Collar him!"

"Hold on, you fellows. I—I really came here to tell you of a ripping idea I've got," said Bunter, backing hastily round the study-table. "It's simply a topping idea, and I think you fellows ought to have a hand in it."

"Oh, rats! Collar him!"

"It—it's a demonstration, you know!" exclaimed Bunter, dodging Cherry's outstretched hand. "Under the circumstances, I think it's up to us—yow—leggo!"

Bump!

Billy Bunter, in the grasp of five pairs of vigorous hands, descended upon the floor of the study, and emitted a fearful yell.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"That's for the toast!" said Harry Wharton. "Now give him another for the eggs."

Bump!

"Ow! Help! Yaroo!"

"And another for the ham!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Leggo!" yelled Bunter. "I tell you I've got an idea, and—yaroo!"

Bump!

"Now chuck him out."

Billy Bunter went whirling through the study doorway, with his great idea still unexplained. He rolled along the linoleum in the passage, and fled.

The chums of the Remove repaired to Vernon-Smith's THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 348.

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study to finish their tea. The Bouncer of Greyfriars was always well supplied.

They were seated amicably round the Bouncer's table, when Peter Todd looked in.

"Oh, here you are!" exclaimed Todd. "I've been looking for you. Bunter's got an idea—a jolly good one for Bunter—"

"Blow Bunter!" said Vernon-Smith. "Squat down and help us with the cake."

Todd cheerfully accepted a chunk of cake.

"But it's a ripping idea," he said. "As a matter of fact, it's really my idea—Bunter made the first bare suggestion. It's a demonstration to back up the Ongtong."

"The—the what?"

"The Ongtong," said Todd.

"What on earth's an ongton?" demanded the juniors together.

Peter Todd sniffed.

"My hat! Haven't you heard of the Ongtong Cordiale?"

"Oh! The Ongtong Cordiale!" grinned Wharton. "Yes, we've heard of that—but we haven't heard it called an ongton before."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, rats!" said Todd. "Look here, the idea is that we give old Charpentier a demonstration. We march in force under his study window, you know, with a French flag, and sing the 'Marseillaise' in French—"

"My hat!"

"I say, you fellows," Billy Bunter blinked into the study through his big spectacles. "I say, that's my idea, you know—"

"Scat!"

"It's my idea," roared Bunter. "Old Froggy is bound to be pleased. He can't do less than stand us some ginger-pop, at the very least."

"On the make, as usual!" grinned Vernon-Smith.

"Well, I suppose he'll know that singing the 'Marseillaise' will make us thirsty," said Bunter. "There have been tremendous demonstrations before the French Embassy in London. We'll give Mossoo one of the same, and he's bound to stand—"

"Shut up!"

"Kick him out!"

Billy Bunter was promptly ejected. But the idea had caught on at once. A demonstration under the French master's window, in favour of the British-French alliance, was really an excellent idea. And the juniors were "on" it at once.

"Call the chaps together," exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Call a meeting in the Rag, and we'll rehearse the blessed song. We don't want to spring it on Mossoo out of tune."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Ten minutes later there was a notice on the school notice-board, in Harry Wharton's hand:

"ATTENTION!"

"GRAND PATRIOTIC DEMONSTRATION BACKING UP THE FRANCO-BRITISH ALLIANCE."

"All Fellows Who Wish to Take Part are Requested to Roll Up in the Rag."

And in ten minutes more the Rag was crowded with juniors, and Coker & Co. of the Fifth honoured the meeting with their presence. And Coker, in his usual high-handed manner, proceeded to take the lead.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Something Like a Demonstration!

"ORDER!" roared Coker.

"Rats!"

"Order! Gentlemen, this meeting is called to—"

"Shut up!"

"You clear off, Coker!" roared Bob Cherry. "This is a Remove meeting. You are superfluous. Travel!"

"The superfluity of the esteemed Coker is terrific."

"Buzz off!"

Harry Wharton unrolled a copy of the "Marseillaise," which he fortunately had in his possession.

"Now then, all together, and for goodness' sake keep some sort of time," he exclaimed. "Oblige us by shutting up, Coker!"

"Better hand that to me," said Temple of the Fourth.

"I'm willing to conduct the whole bizney—"

"Go and eat coke!"

NEXT
MONDAY—

"WON BY PLUCK!"

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry
Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"Better leave it to me," chimed in Hoskins of the Shell. "As I'm the only musical chap in the school——"

"Rats!"

Coker of the Fifth jerked the music out of Wharton's hand.

"You fags leave this to me," he said impressively. "I'll see you through. Mossos will be properly impressed if a senior takes the lead. Now, then——"

"Look here, Coker——"

"Gimme that music, you ass!"

"Order!"

It looked as if the meeting would resolve itself into a free fight, which was not at all a desirable manner of celebrating the Franco-British alliance. But Wharton, with great self-abnegation, allowed the lead to pass into Coker's hands.

"Order!"

"Silence!"

"Go ahead!"

Coker victoriously held up the music. Coker rather prided himself on having a voice and being generally musical. No one but Coker had ever been able to discover any grounds for that opinion.

"Gentlemen!" roared Coker. "Gentlemen of Greyfriars School——"

"Hear, hear!"

"This meeting is called to demonstrate the solidarity——"

"Good word!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Go it!"

"The solidarity of Greyfriars in backing up the Franco-British alliance. We're going to demonstrate to Mossos, as the representative of his glorious country at Greyfriars——"

"Bravo!"

"By singing the 'Marseillaise' to him under his study window. Now, all you fellows who don't know the words, just listen to me. You've got to sing it in French, of course. Just listen to me!"

And Coker started.

"Along, ongfong de la patrie——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Le jour de glaw ay arrivay!" continued Coker.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Contrer noo de la tyrannie, lay tongdar songlong ay levay——"

"Bravo, Coker!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ain't we going to sing it in French?" asked Nugent.

Coker gave Nugent of the Remove a withering glance.

"You silly ass, I'm giving it to you in French!" he howled.

"My only hat! Is that French?" exclaimed Nugent, in astonishment. "My mistake! I didn't recognise it."

"Sounded to me like Cokerese," said Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You kids shut up!" said Coker. "Just listen to me while I go through the thing, and then you'll have it right. We want Mossos to recognise what we're singing, or he won't know what the deuce we're at."

"Then we'd better not sing it like that," said Wharton, with a shake of the head. "He may take it for 'The Watch on the Rhine' in German, the way you do it."

"You thumping ass! Dry up! Here goes again! After me. 'Along ongfong de le patrie, le jour de glaw ay arrivay!'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

In spite of the merriment which greeted his weird pronunciation of the French language, Coker ground on determinedly from beginning to end, reducing his hearers almost to a state of hysterics. Then he gave the word to march.

With Coker of the Fifth in the lead, with the copy of the "Marseillaise" in his hand, the demonstrators marched.

There were a hundred fellows at least in the crowd that gathered under the study windows of Monsieur Charpentier, the popular French master at Greyfriars.

The study window was closed, and the curtain drawn. Monsieur Charpentier was there, reading the latest paper he had been able to obtain from his beloved patrie. He was startled by a roar like thunder outside his window.

"Hooray!"

Monsieur Charpentier jumped up in alarm.

"Mon Dieu! Vat is zat?" he ejaculated.

"Hip, hip, hooray!"

Tap, tap, tap on the window!

Monsieur Charpentier ran to the window, and threw it open. Outside, in the old Close of Greyfriars, the moonlight was streaming down. In the light of the moon more than a hundred fellows were crammed together under the window. Flags waved over the crowd—the Union Jack and the tricolour of France together. Tom Brown, the New Zealand junior, had the New Zealand flag in addition, and Squiff, the

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Australian, displayed the colours of the Commonwealth. The flags were waved with great energy. Monsieur Charpentier gazed upon the excited crowd in great astonishment.

"Vat is all zat?" he ejaculated.

"Here he is!"

"Bravo, Mossos!"

"Vive la France!"

Then Monsieur Charpentier understood. He placed his hand upon his breast, and bowed gracefully to the shouting crowd.

"Mes garçons—mes garçons, je vous remercie—I zank you, my good infants!"

"Hooray!"

"Now, then!" shouted Coker, waving his music. "'La Marseillaise'—all together!"

"Go it!"

And the great marching song of the French burst forth in a tremendous roar.

"Allons, enfants de la patrie!"

Le jour de gloire est arrivé!"

Perhaps the French left something to be desired, but there was no mistake about the enthusiasm. The Greyfriars fellows roared it out with all the force of their lungs, and the old Close rang with it. Dr. Locke looked out of his study window and smiled. Monsieur Charpentier stood at his window with tears in his eyes, deeply moved by that demonstration of enthusiastic schoolboys.

Loud cheers followed the conclusion of the "Marseillaise," and the flag-wagging became almost frantic.

"Speech!" roared Coker of the Fifth. "Speak up, Mossos!"

"Hooray!"

"Silence for Mossos!"

"My dear boys," exclaimed Monsieur Charpentier, with a break in his voice, "zis is a proud moment for me! Comme je suis heureux—it is zat I am very happy in zis moment. I zank you viz all my heart! May it always be zat zis country and my dear patrie sall always be ze good friends and allies, and may zey march togezzer to victory!"

"Hooray!"

"Again I zank you, mes enfants—from my heart I zank you!" Monsieur Charpentier could say no more; his kind heart was overflowing with emotion. And with a final tremendous yell of "Vive la France! Hip, hip, hooray!" the Greyfriars fellows marched off.

"Simply a ripping idea!" said Coker of the Fifth. "Simply ripping! Jolly glad I thought of it!"

Potter and Greeno stared at him as he made that remark.

"Jolly glad you thought of it?" murmured Potter.

Coker nodded.

"Yes, jolly glad!"

After which there was no more to be said. No amount of argument would have convinced Horace Coker that it hadn't been his idea from the very beginning.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Coker Keeps an Eye Open!

A COUPLE of days later the new German master arrived at Greyfriars.

The Greyfriars fellows were very curious to see him. Horace Coker and some other fellows were of opinion that the war with Germany was a sufficient reason for "chucking" instruction in German; but the Head of Greyfriars did not seem to see the matter in the same light.

At all events, German lessons were not to be "chucked."

Most of the fellows were prepared to be considerate enough to Herr Muhlbach. The position of a German in England at such a time was unfortunate and awkward enough, without anybody making it worse for him.

When they saw Fritz Muhlbach the fellows wondered, however, what he was doing in England at all. He was a much younger man than Herr Gans—a man well under thirty, and certainly liable to the military conscription. As it was known that all men capable of bearing arms in the German Empire had been called out to make head against the hornet's-nest the Kaiser had so cheerfully awakened about his ears, it was surprising that Fritz Muhlbach had not gone home to his Fatherland.

But an explanation was easily forthcoming.

Many Germans who found themselves abroad preferred to stay there, instead of going home to become "food for cannon," to suit the whims of the war-lords of Berlin.

Fritz Muhlbach was apparently one of those wise ones.

If he sympathised with the war his country was waging, he was content to sympathise from a distance.

But, as a matter of fact, he did not appear to sympathise in that direction at all. Instead of avoiding the subject of the

war—a delicate subject, under the circumstances—Herr Muhl-
bach talked on it quite freely.

He stated his opinion that Prussia had dragged the rest
of the German States into a wild and reckless war, and that
he, for one, was against it.

That point of view was reasonable enough; and yet it was
not wholly pleasant to hear Herr Muhlbach inveighing
against the military aggressiveness of his own country.

As Bob Cherry remarked, a fellow was bound to back up
his own dog in a dog-fight, even if his own dog had started
the trouble.

But Herr Muhlbach talked quite freely in that manner to
the other masters, and in the presence of the boys sometimes,
so his views were soon widely known.

Upon the whole, the fellows did not like him.

He was very different from Herr Gans in appearance—
being a little, dark man with a pointed black beard and a
pair of black, shifty eyes. But he was certainly a good
German master, and the German class soon discovered that
he knew his business. He had come to Greyfriars with the
best recommendations, and especially had been recommended
by Herr Gans, who was his cousin.

He reported himself cheerfully at the police-station in
Friardale, as Germans in the place were bound to do, and
made friends with the stolid Mr. Tozer, with whom he dis-
cussed the Kaiser, and the Kaiser's reckless plunge into war,
in a way that would have caused his instant arrest and im-
prisonment if he had been in Germany.

He was sedulously polite to Monsieur Charpentier; and
Mossoo was polite to him, but evidently did not like him.

He assumed the most agreeable manners possible towards
his pupils, at the same time keeping them up to their work.
Billy Bunter was soon of the opinion that he was as big a
beast as Herr Gans; and Coker of the Fifth found that
German verbs were as difficult as ever.

Coker had declared his intention to his chums of keeping
an eye upon Fritz Muhlbach, in case he should turn out to
be a German spy.

Coker kept his word.

But, in spite of Coker's suspicions—which really seemed
to be chiefly founded upon the difficulty of German verbs—
Herr Muhlbach did nothing that could by any possibility be
construed into a suspicious act.

His life was very quiet and calm. He did his work con-
scientiously in class, always lent a helping hand to fellows
in difficulties with their German, and in his spare time read
German newspapers—generally a fortnight old—and smoked
a big German pipe, or chatted with the other masters.

But Coker was not to be beaten.

When Horace Coker had an idea in his head it was very
difficult for anybody to get it out again. And reports in the
newspapers of the arrest of German spies at many places on
the coast confirmed Coker in his theory that Fritz Muhlbach
was probably a spy.

He discussed the matter with Potter and Greene in his
study till Potter and Greene were sick of the subject.

And all the time Fritz Muhlbach led a quiet life, natural
to a German master in a school, and gave the suspicious
Coker no grounds whatever for his suspicions.

The fact that he received German papers seemed to Coker
at first what he called a "clinger." Where did he get 'em
from, Coker demanded of Potter and Greene. But the dis-
covery that they were German-Swiss papers, and did not come
from Germany at all, but from German-Switzerland, some-
what "floored" Coker. He had to give up that point in
disgust.

But he didn't give up his suspicions. The fact that nothing
could be discovered against Herr Muhlbach only made Coker
feel sure that he was a very deep villain indeed, and covered
up his tracks remarkably well.

"Deep as a well, you fellows," said Coker, at tea one
evening, when the new German master had been at Greyfriars
about a week. "Blessed if ever I saw a chap quite so deep!
You'd expect a spy to go out for walks, and look round the
coast, and so on, wouldn't you?"

"Yes," growled Potter.

"Well, he doesn't!" said Coker.

"I know he doesn't."

"That shows how awfully deep he is."

"It shows that he's all right, you ass!" said Potter.

"What good would it do to a German spy to stay here in this
school, and hardly ever go outside the gates?"

"I jolly well know that Pegg Bay is a good spot for the
Germans to land if they ever came here," said Coker.

"Bow-wow!"

"And it's not an easy place for ships to get in, either,
without a pilot," said Coker sagely. "A German ship
toddling along this way might easily come to grief on the
Shark's Back unless they had a pilot, or information about
the place. Suppose they were going to make a raid—"

"Oh, cheeso it!"

"Then this boulder might turn himself into a pilot, and
guide their ships into the bay, and they'd shell the town—"

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EVERY
MONDAY,

The "Magnet"
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ONE
PENNY.

"Don't be funny!"

"It ain't funny!" roared Coker. "Why, they could shell
the school from Pegg Bay if they once got in. You wouldn't
think it funny if it happened."

Potter yawned portentously.

"What good would it do 'em to shell a school?" he asked.

"The Kaiser is an ass, but he's not such an ass as that!"

"How do you know?" said Coker. "That's just their way;
they go looking for trouble. Only thundering asses would get
themselves tied up in Belgium as the Germans did. Well,
then, they might have some scheme—"

Yawn—from Potter and Greene.

"Some idea of making us sit up over here by shelling a
coast town," said Coker. "The papers say it may happen
any day."

Yawn!

"Or they might plan a big landing of troops to march on
London—"

Yawn!

Coker glared at his unbelieving study-mates.

"Well, I know this much—if anybody bowls him out it
will be me," he growled—"and I mean to spot him, if he can
be spotted!"

"Oh, give us a rest!"

"Br-r-r-r!" said Coker.

He rose from the tea-table and stared moodily out of the
study window. It was really exasperating that Fritz Muhl-
bach showed no signs whatever of being a German spy.
Coker would have given a term's pocket-money to catch him
red-handed in the act of photographing the coastguard
station, or making plans, or drawing up diagrams. But Herr
Muhlbach never did anything of the kind.

"Hallo! He's going out!" exclaimed Coker, catching
sight of the German master crossing the Close towards the
gates.

"Go after him—and give us a rest!" said Greene.

Coker snorted and quitted the study. He ran into the
Close, and there he paused. His first idea was to follow
Herr Muhlbach. But it occurred to him that it was a re-
markably mean thing to do. Even if the Herr were a spy,
that would hardly justify Coker in being a spy, too. But
without keeping a watch on him, how was he to be spotted?
Coker felt that it was a difficult situation.

Coker slackened down as he strode towards the gates. He
did not like the task he had set himself. Yet he felt con-
vinced that the Herr was up to some mischief.

But Herr Muhlbach did not go out. He stopped at Gos-
ling's lodge to speak to the school porter.

"Has the post come in, Gosling?" Herr Muhlbach spoke
in perfect English, with hardly a trace of a foreign accent—
another circumstance which Coker somehow or other re-
garded as suspicious.

"Not yet, sir," said Gosling.

"When my papers come, please let me have them at once."

"Suttingly, sir!"

And Herr Muhlbach sauntered away towards the School
House again. He nodded pleasantly to Coker as he passed
him.

Coker's feelings were too deep for words as he made his way
back to his study to finish his tea. Potter and Greene grinned
as he came in.

"Ain't you on the track of the villain?" asked Potter.

"Go and run him down!" urged Greene.

"He hasn't gone out!" snorted Coker. "He only went
down to the lodge to ask Gosling if the post had come in."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at?" demanded Coker truculently.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Potter. "Ain't that a suspicious
circumstance, Coker? I advise you to report that to the War
Office at once."

"Shows that he's awfully deep, you know," chuckled
Greene. "Don't seem to be anything suspicious in it, there-
fore it must be awfully deep. That's the way you work it
out, ain't it, Coker?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker did not reply. He stamped out of the study in a
decidedly exasperated frame of mind, and closed the door
behind him with a slam.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Squiff's Scheme!

SQUIFF of the Remove came into Study No. 1 with a
frowning brow, and rubbing his ear.

Squiff—otherwise, Sampson Quincy Ifley Field—was
a new boy at Greyfriars, but he had already made him-
self quite prominent in his Form. At the present moment
Squiff was looking wrathful.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were in their study, and they gave the Australian junior inquiring looks.

"What's the trouble?" asked Harry.

"That ass Coker!" growled Squiff, rubbing his ear energetically. "I believe he's quite off his dot. He's got German spies on the brain."

The chums of the Remove chuckled. Most of the fellows had heard of Coker's suspicions, and grinned over them.

"I simply asked him if he'd found any German spies; quite politely," said Squiff, "and he landed out. It's spoiling his temper."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Like his cheek to wallop a member of the Remove!" said Wharton. "We shall have to keep Coker in order."

"Just what I was thinking," said Squiff. "The silly ass is seeing a German spy in every bush, now. It's spoiling his temper because he can't find any. Now, my idea is to help him to find one."

Wharton and Nugent stared.

"But there aren't any about here," said Frank.

Squiff nodded.

"I know there aren't. But we can make one easily enough. What's the good of being members of the best amateur dramatic society in the school if we can't manufacture a German spy, when Coker is simply dying to get hold of one?"

"My hat!"

"We've got the things we used to make up a comic German in our last comedy," said Squiff, grinning. "If you fellows will help me we'll pull the duffer's silly leg, and then perhaps he'll get fed up with the rot."

The chums of the Remove were on to the idea at once. Coker's high-handed methods with the juniors made them always willing to pull the leg of the great Coker and take him down a peg or two. And Squiff's scheme was simplicity itself.

"Good egg!" exclaimed Wharton heartily. "It's easy enough to make you up as a giddy Deutschlander, Squiffy; but—"

"Then I'll let Coker capture me," grinned Squiff.

"What!"

"Why not? He's out to capture German spies, and why shouldn't we make him happy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Wherefore the cackle?" asked Bob Cherry, looking into the study.

"The joke of the season," said Harry Wharton. "Coker's going to capture a German spy."

"Eh? Who?"

"Squiff."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob.

The juniors set to work at once. Squiff slipped on an exceedingly loud check suit over his own clothes, and stuffed out his new attire till he had a very plump figure indeed. Then Nugent made up his face. He gave him a flaxen wig, a flaxen moustache and beard, and a light-pink complexion. Squiff crushed a soft hat on his head, pulling it down to shade his features.

When the make-up was finished, nobody at Greyfriars would have recognised Squiff as Sampson Quincy Ifley Field of New South Wales. He looked like a short, fat German of middle-age.

Johnny Bull and Hurree Janset Ram Singh came into the study, and they started at the sight of the stranger.

"Hallo!" said Johnny Bull. "Who the dickens—"

"Goot efening," said Squiff, in a deep guttural voice, and a tremendous German accent. "How vas you dis efening, mein poy?"

Johnny Bull gave the chums of the Remove a glance of puzzled inquiry. He did not recognise Squiff, and he was astounded to find a German in Study No. 1.

"I—I say, who is it?" he ejaculated.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ich bin Deutschlander," said Squiff. "It is tat I am Hans Humper, and I am employed in te service of te Kaiser to spy in dis country, ain't it."

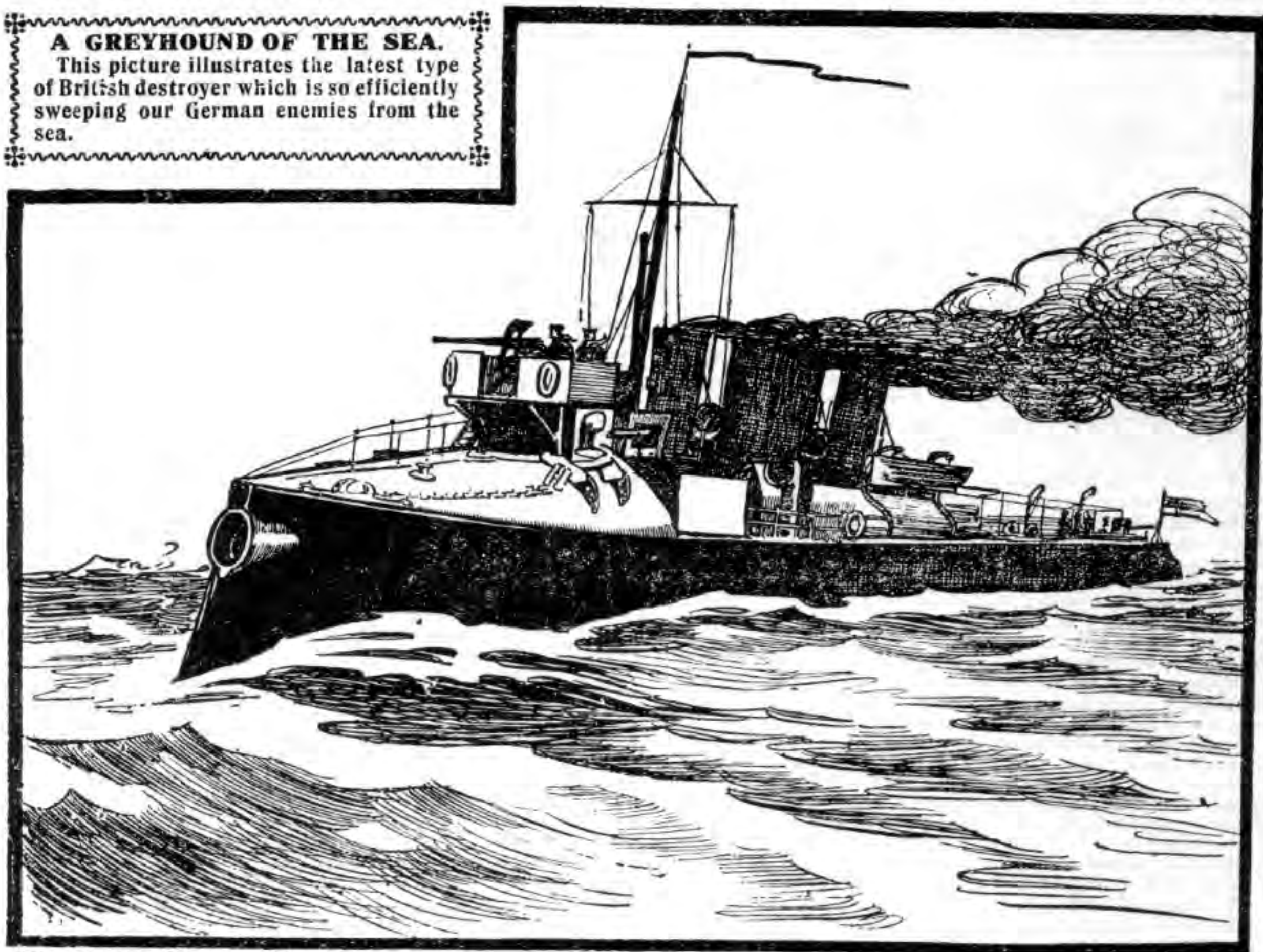
"Wha-a-at!"

"I am a Cherman spy, mein poy."

"Well, my hat! Then you're jolly well not going to get away, you cad!" roared Johnny Bull, and he made a bound upon the disguised Squiff, and seized him, and hurled him to

A GREYHOUND OF THE SEA.

This picture illustrates the latest type of British destroyer which is so efficiently sweeping our German enemies from the sea.





Squiff sprang from the cover of the trees, and flung himself upon the German from behind. The next instant Wharton was upon him, grasping him round the neck, and throwing his weight upon him. "Mein Gott!" The German, taken completely by surprise, went down with a heavy bump, the two Juniors clinging to him like cats. (See Chapter 14.)

the floor. Squiff was on his back on the study carpet in a twinkling, and the sturdy junior was kneeling on his chest. "Lend a hand, you fellows! Collar him! What are you cackling like a gang of giddy hyenas for?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gerroff!" roared Squiff, in his natural voice. "Gerroff, you thumping ass!"

"Why—what—who——"

"Get off, you chump!" gasped Harry Wharton, with tears of merriment streaming down his cheeks. "You duffer! It's Squiff!"

"Squiff?"

"Ha, ha! Yes."

"Then what is he got up like that for?" demanded Johnny Bull, relinquishing his victim somewhat reluctantly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Squiff struggled to his feet, with his beard awry, and his clothes very much rumped. He made a rush at Johnny Bull, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 348.

breathing vengeance; but Harry Wharton & Co. grabbed him in time and held him back.

"You ass!" roared Squiff. "You blithering clump! You—~~you~~— Oh, there ain't a word! B-r-r!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, you told me you were a German spy, and you looked the part," growled Johnny Bull. "What are you playing the giddy goat for?"

"It's for Coker's benefit," chuckled Bob Cherry. "Put your beard straight, Squiffy! It doesn't look a bit convincing like that. German spies don't grow their beards under their left ears."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Squiff growled, and turned to the glass, and put his disguise in order again. He had been considerably bumped, and he was not pleased; but at all events, it was a proof that his make-up was first-rate.

The shades of evening had descended upon Greyfriars, and the stars were gleaming upon the old Close. In the dim light

of the Close Squiff's disguise would certainly pass muster. But how to get into the Close, where Horace Coker was to capture him, was a question. There were fellows talking in the Remove passage, and if the disguised junior went out that way he would be the centre of attraction at once. And it was necessary to keep the jape very dark till Coker got on the track.

"The window!" said Harry Wharton, after a glance into the Remove passage.

Squiff whistled.

"Tain't so jolly easy to get down that way," he remarked.

"I don't want to break my neck even for a jape on Coker."

"We'll let you down with a rope."

"Right-ho."

Wharton hurried out of the study, and soon returned with a rope. The light in the study was put out, and the window opened wide. The rope was secured round Squiff under the shoulders, and he climbed carefully out of the study window. It was a good distance to the ground, and the descent required nerve; but the Australian junior was blessed with quite a superabundance of that useful article.

He swung below the window, in the deep shadow of the wall.

"Careful!" he growled. "I'll jerk the rope when I'm on the ground, and then you can pull it up."

"Good!"

The Famous Five lowered away at the rope. Squiff descended lower and lower. He bumped on a window-sill on the ground-floor, and rested there a second, clutching wildly on the rope. The jerk on the rope was understood by the juniors above to mean that Squiff was safely landed, and they ceased to hold on. Squiff rolled off the window-sill and bumped on the ground. And the remarks he made ascended to the study window, and they were emphatic:

"You blithering asses! You fatheads! You thumping chumps! You burbling jabberwocks!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"You dangerous maniacs! You silly noodles! You screaming jossers!"

"Ain't you landed yet?"

"Yes, you ass! Yes, you idiot! Yes, you lunatic!"

"Then what are you grumbling at?"

"Oh, you—you—you—" Words failed Squiff. "Pull up the rope and shut up, for goodness' sake!"

The juniors chuckled and pulled up the rope. Squiff vanished into the shadows of the Close, and Harry Wharton closed the study window, and relighted the gas.

"All serene so far!" he remarked.

"Now for Coker!" grinned Bob Cherry.

And the Famous Five proceeded to look for Horace Coker, to set that suspicious person on the track of the German spy!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Coker's Capture!

"IMPOSSIBLE!"

"But I saw him!"

"The seefulness was terrific."

"Sure it was a German?"

"Well, he looked like a German. The question is, what is he doing inside the school walls? Looks suspicious."

"Better tell somebody."

Coker of the Fifth paused, as he heard that excited consultation. Five juniors were talking together—five Remove fellows. Apparently they did not see Coker of the Fifth coming along the passage. At all events, they did not look towards him. They were gathered at the passage window, peering out into the starlit Close as they talked. And they all looked very excited.

"Hallo, what's that?" exclaimed Coker, interested at once.

"What's that about a German inside the school walls?"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, is that you, Coker?" exclaimed Bob Cherry excitedly. "Have you seen him too?"

"Seen whom?" demanded Coker.

"The German."

"What German?"

"That fellow lurking about in the Close."

Coker's eyes sparkled.

Was he on the track at last? A German lurking about in the Close after nightfall—what could that possibly mean, excepting that a German spy was seeking to communicate with Herr Muhlbach? At least, that was how Coker of the Fifth looked at it.

"Look here, tell me exactly what you've seen, you youngsters," said Coker seriously. "You can leave this affair wholly in my hands."

"Oh, rats! Look here—"

"You leave it to me," said Coker. "This is far too serious for kids in the Lower Fourth to deal with. If there's a

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German lurking about in the Close, I'll jolly soon lay him by the heels, and make him give an account of himself. Now, what have you seen?"

"Well, I saw a chap, and so did Inky," said Bob.

"With my own esteemed eye-fulness I beheld him," purred Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"A stranger here?" asked Coker. "Sure of that?"

"Well, I know that chivvy has never been seen in Greyfriars before," said Bob.

"What was he like?"

"Fair hair and beard and moustache, and a slouched hat, and—"

"Looked like a German?"

"Just like a German."

"Where was he?" asked Coker, his heart thumping with excitement.

"In the Close. He went in the direction of Herr Muhlbach's study window."

Coker caught his breath.

"That settles it!" he exclaimed. "I knew it all along! But that settles it! I'll be after him in a jiffy, you bet."

"Hold on!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Suppose he's armed—"

Coker snorted contemptuously.

"I don't care if he is."

"Suppose he has a revolver—"

"Blow his revolver."

And Coker rushed away. The Famous Five grinned cheerfully at one another. Horace Coker was on the track, and there was little doubt that he would catch that suspicious German who was lurking in the Close of Greyfriars.

The fact that the supposed spy might be armed, and a desperate character, made no difference at all to Coker. He had plenty of courage.

"Looks like being a capture," remarked Bob Cherry. "Better tell the fellows now, so that Coker can have an audience when he brings his giddy prisoner in."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Horace Coker was dashing out of the School House when Potter and Greene stopped him.

"Hold on," said Potter. "What's the hurry? We've been waiting for you."

"Rats!" snapped Coker. "No time for guzzling in the study now. There's a German chap hanging about in the Close."

"Oh, draw it mild—"

"You can come and help me capture him if you like," said Coker; and he rushed out, leaving his chums staring after him in astonishment.

Coker rushed away in the direction of Herr Muhlbach's study window. The new German master had the same study that had been occupied by Herr Gans. The window was closed, and the starlight glimmered on the panes. Outside, in the dim light, a lurking figure was to be seen, and Coker's eyes gleamed as he caught sight of it.

He sprang towards the lurker at once.

"Who are you?" demanded Coker, dropping a heavy hand on the stranger's shoulder.

"Ach!" ejaculated the shadowy figure, and a bearded and moustached face, decidedly German in aspect, was turned towards Coker.

"Don't try to get away," said Coker grimly. "I've got you?"

"Mein Gott!"

"You're a German—what?"

"Nein, nein! Ich bin Engländer!" gasped the stranger.

"Ha, ha!" roared Coker. "You're English, are you, and you answer in German!"

"Ja, ja, ja, wohl! I am Englisher—"

"Oh, chuck it," said Coker. "I've got you! What are you doing here?"

"Let me go mit myself."

"Don't struggle, I tell you," warned Coker, as the bearded German wriggled in his sinewy grasp. "If I have to hit you, you'll know it."

"Ach! It is tat I do no harm here mit myself."

"Come along!" said Coker.

"Ach! I vill not gum."

"If you don't come," said Coker. "I'll yank you along by the scruff of your neck. I haven't any time to waste on a German spy."

"Ich bin nicht Deutsch—"

"Oh, shut up, and come along," said Coker; and he marched the captured spy towards the open, lighted door of the School House.

"Ach! Ach! I am lost!" groaned the German.

"No, you ain't—you're found," grinned Coker, "and I've found you, my pippin. This means the stone jug for you, if you ain't shot, you beastly spy."

"Ich bin nicht a spy, my goot poy! You let me go."

"No fear!"

"Vat if I giff you a hundred marks—"

"Rats!"

"A thousand marks—"

"Make it a thousand quid, and it's all the same," chuckled Coker. "You're coming in, and we'll telephone for the police. My hat! I knew it all along, and now I've spotted one of the scoundrels. Don't struggle, you villain—I'd like nothing better than to give you a thundering good licking."

"Ach! If you let me not to go, I shoot you wiz my revolver, ain't it."

"Will you?" said Coker. "We will see about that, you murderous rascal! Kim on!"

And Coker grasped the German with both hands, and fairly hauled him into the doorway of the School House, where the light fell full upon him.

"My hat!" yelled Potter. "Who's that?"

"I've caught him! He's a spy!" panted Coker.

"Great Scott!"

Coker whirled his prisoner into the hall, and stood between him and the door, and glared at him triumphantly. The German staggered, and looked round wildly, and made a sudden bolt for the passage.

"After him!" gasped Coker. "The silly ass can't get out that way—but collar him! He's got a revolver."

"Collar him!"

"Seize him!"

The Fifth-Former rushed in pursuit. The fugitive whipped into the junior common-room, which was crowded with fellows. There was a general roar as he appeared.

"Begad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. "Who's that?"

"Faith, and it's a Deutscher!" yelled Micky Desmond.

"Stop him!" roared Coker.

The fugitive came to a halt in the middle of the room, panting. The juniors were all round him in a moment. Certainly he had no chance whatever of escape from the crowded room. Coker & Co. followed him in, and after them came the Famous Five. There was wild excitement on all sides now. Fifty pairs of eyes were fixed upon the bearded, fair-skinned German.

"Got him!" said Coker. "You may as well take it quietly, you scoundrel, we've got you!"

"Who is he?" roared the juniors.

"A German spy—and I've captured him."

"My hat!"

"I guess this takes the cake," said Fisher T. Fish, the American junior. "Sure you ain't made a mistake, Coker? I guess—"

"Look at him!" snorted Coker. "Can't you see he's a German? He answered in German when I spoke to him. Said he was an Englishman—ha, ha, ha!"

"Ja, ja!" panted the prisoner. "Ich bin Englishman."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look out!" shouted Potter. "He's got a paper there—stop him!"

The German had suddenly jerked an envelope from his pocket and thrust it into his mouth. Coker knew at once what that meant. It was a letter the spy had to deliver to some confederate, and, finding himself captured, he was taking the only means of destroying it. Coker had read of such things before. But Coker was hardly likely to allow anything of the kind to happen under his very eyes. He leaped upon the German, and wrenched the letter away.

"Ach! Giff me mein ledder!"

The German made a motion to spring upon Coker, but a dozen hands held him back.

"This must be important," said Coker, with a chuckle of triumph. "Very likely some important information—perhaps a letter from the Kaiser to some of his spies in England. It may lead to bowling out a whole crowd of the villains."

"Blessed if it don't look like it!" said Potter, convinced at last. "I must say that you have done this very well, Coker, old man."

"Didn't I tell you all along?" demanded Coker triumphantly.

"Yes, you did, old chap."

"Better call the Head," said Greene. "This villain will have to be handed over to the police."

"What's in that letter, though?" asked Temple of the Fourth.

Coker hesitated to open the envelope.

"Perhaps I'd better not open it," he said. "It may be something awfully important. It might be better to call the Head at once."

"Here's Wingate!"

Wingate, the head prefect and captain of Greyfriars, strode into the room. The uproar had drawn him to the spot. Wingate was frowning.

"What the dickens is all this row about?" he exclaimed.

"Why—what—who is that? Who is that German?"

"A spy!"

"Wh-a-at!"

"And I've captured him!" said Coker. "Here's a letter he had on him. He tried to chew it up, but I stopped him in time."

"My only hat!" ejaculated Wingate, in amazement. "I

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EVERY
MONDAY.

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ONE
PENNY.

—I don't quite understand this." He stared blankly at the supposed German, who was standing with his back to the light. "Who are you, you fellow? What's your name?"

"Ich bin Englishman—I mean, I am Englishman."

"You speak jolly queer English for an Englishman," said Wingate. "You may as well own up that you're a German, anyway."

"Ich bin nicht Deutsch."

"Oh, rats! Better give me that letter, Coker, and I'll take it to the Head."

"And I dare say it will let in some light on a lot of things," said Coker. "I've had my suspicions about a certain party for a long time. Hallo! Here he is!"

There was a buzz as Herr Muhlbach, the new German-master, strode into the room, his face quite pale, and his eyes gleaming.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Herr Muhlbach is Alarmed!

HERR MUHLBACH had evidently heard the astounding news that a German spy had been captured in the Close of Greyfriars.

Fellows were buzzing the startling information on all sides, and crowding towards the common-room to look at the prisoner.

That the German-master was startled and worried was very evident from his face. He fixed a hard and penetrating stare upon the captured spy.

"Who are you?" he exclaimed sharply.

The prisoner did not reply.

"He's a German spy, sir," grinned Coker. "He had a letter for somebody—somebody here, I fancy—ha, ha!—and I've got it."

"You have a letter?"

"Here it is."

Herr Muhlbach stretched out an eager hand.

"Give it to me!"

Coker put his hand behind him.

"No fear!" he said coolly.

Herr Muhlbach frowned blackly.

"Give me that letter at once, Coker!"

"I'm going to hand it to the Head," said Coker coolly. "Excuse me, sir, you're not the proper person to take a letter captured on a German spy."

"It—it is all nonsense!" said Herr Muhlbach, speaking thickly. "He is not a spy; he is some lunatic who has come here. If that letter is in German I can read it, and I will translate it for you."

"I'd rather keep it in my own hands, thanks."

"I order you to give it to me!" shouted Herr Muhlbach.

There was a buzz in the room. The German-master's anxiety to get hold of that letter made a curious impression upon the fellows.

"Give Herr Muhlbach the letter, Coker," said Wingate. "He will be able to read it."

"I'm keeping it," said Coker coolly. "I don't trust Germans at a time like this. This letter is going to be handed over to the police."

"I insist!" exclaimed Herr Muhlbach.

"You can insist till you're black in the face, sir, but you're jolly well not going to have this letter!"

Coker made a movement towards the door.

What happened next passed so quickly that it took the whole crowd of fellows by surprise. Herr Muhlbach made a sudden spring upon Coker, and before the Fifth-Former knew what was happening, he had snatched away the letter.

Coker spun round with a roar towards him.

"Give me that letter!"

Herr Muhlbach had torn open the envelope at once.

As his eyes fell upon what was written on the sheet within he gave a gasp. It was a gasp of relief.

"Ach! Did I not tell you that it was all nonsense!" he exclaimed.

Coker was rushing upon him. If Herr Muhlbach had tried to retain that letter, Horace Coker would certainly have handled him on the spot, master as he was. But the German-master held out the letter to him coolly.

"Take it!" he said.

Coker took the letter. He wrinkled his brows as he looked at it. There was only one line written in the letter, and it was in German.

"It's in German," said Coker. "I think I can read it."

The fellows crowded round Coker to read the letter. There was a roar of laughter as they read it. For it ran:

"Sie sind dummkopf!"

It was certainly in German, but as it only meant "You are a blockhead!" the information it contained was not really valuable. As Bob Cherry remarked, that was no news concerning Coker. They had always known that.

Coker stared blankly at the letter. There was evidently something wrong. Certainly the spy department at Berlin was not over-gifted with intelligence; but it was impossible to suppose that any of the Kaiser's officials could possibly have written that letter. Something was wrong somewhere. Herr Muhlbach sidled through the crowd of fellows, and disappeared almost unnoticed from the room.

All eyes were turned now upon the prisoner.

He was grinning cheerfully.

"Sie sind dummkopf!" said Temple of the Fourth. "Well, it's true enough, if it means Coker."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But it's nothing new."

"We always knew that Coker was a dummkopf."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I—it's a cipher!" gasped Coker. "It must be a cipher—a secret cipher. It—it means something else, of course."

"Who are you, you villain?" roared Potter, seizing the captured German by the shoulder and shaking him.

"Ich bin Engländer!"

"Look here—"

"My only hat! Look at him!" gasped Greene.

"Begad!"

"Howly snake! Look!"

There was a roar as the prisoner calmly removed his beard. Then he took off his whiskers and moustache, and the wig followed. Coker stared at him as if mesmerised. Without his hirsute adornments, the captured German looked very much younger. Coker's eyes almost started from his head as the German proceeded to take off his coat, revealing an Eton jacket underneath.

"Squiff!" yelled Tom Brown.

In spite of the make-up on his face, Sampson Quincy Ifley Field was easily to be recognised now.

"Squiff!"

"You spoofer!"

"It's a jape!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Common-room rang with laughter. Squiff cheerfully removed his big check trousers, revealing his own garments beneath.

Coker looked at him like a fellow in a dream. Even Horace Coker could doubt no longer that he had been "spoofer."

"Field!" he stuttered. "You—you young villain! You—you've taken me in!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Squiff nodded coolly.

"You bet!" he remarked. "You wanted to capture a German spy, didn't you? I was only trying to please you."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But you can take that letter to the Head if you like, Coker. It isn't in cipher at all; it states the plain fact—Sie sind dummkopf!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Potter. "Oh, Coker, old man, you've done it this time! Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I—I'll smash him!" roared Coker.

The infuriated Coker made a rush at Squiff. But the Famous Five rushed between, and the Fifth-Former was hurled back. The chums of the Remove surrounded Squiff, and marched him safely out of the common-room, leaving the fellows there yelling with laughter.

Coker stamped away to his own study, in a state of mind that was not to be expressed in words. It was possible that even Horace Coker was getting at last "fed up" on the subject of German spies.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Squiff's Suspicions!

SQUIFF grinned cheerfully as he came into No. 1 Study, with the last traces of his disguise removed.

The whole school was howling with laughter at the way Coker of the Fifth had been "spoofer," and the chums of the Remove were in a mood of extreme satisfaction. They had succeeded in pulling the great Coker's leg as it had never been pulled before, and they rejoiced.

"Something like a jape—what?" grinned Squiff, as he came in and closed the study door.

And the Famous Five replied with one voice "What-oh!"

"I rather think Coker will chuck German spies now!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Next time he sees a German, I fancy he'll give him a wide berth!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Squiff nodded, and sat down on the corner of the study table. An unusually thoughtful expression had come over the face of the Australian junior.

"I dare say Coker will be fed up by this time," he

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remarked. "Coker is a champion ass. But even an ass may happen on something by sheer chance, and my opinion is that Coker has happened on the truth!"

"What?"

"We only intended to jape Coker with this little game," pursued Squiff. "But, as it happened, we took in Herr Muhlbach as well as Coker. As soon as he heard that a German had been found here, he was on it like a bird—what?"

"I suppose he was interested in the matter, being a German himself," remarked Nugent.

"Being a German spy himself," said Squiff quietly.

"Wha-a-at!"

"Oh, draw it mild, Squiffy!"

The Famous Five stared at the Australian junior in amazement. Coker's wild suspicions had been a subject only for merriment; but to find that the hard-headed, cool, and keen Australian junior shared them was amazing. Until now Squiff had laughed at Coker as heartily as anyone.

"My hat!" said Harry Wharton. "You don't mean to say that you agree with that thumping ass Coker, Squiff, old man?"

"Yes, I do!"

"Then you must be as big an ass as he is!" commented Bob Cherry.

"Thanks!"

"But, really, it's all rot!" said Johnny Bull. "Why, Muhlbach is old Gander's cousin, and the old Gander was as honest as the daylight!"

"Very likely; but that's no reason why his cousin should be. I've heard that you have a cousin, Bob, who is an awful rascal!"

"Quite true," said Bob. "I have. Of course, Herr Gans's cousin might be a rotter, though the Gander himself is as good as gold. But it's all piffle to suppose that he's a spy. You're getting spies on the brain, like Coker!"

"What the dickens would a spy want in a school?" asked Wharton. "Nothing for him to spy on here!"

"Nothing at all," agreed Squiff calmly. "But a spy must have some occupation—some innocent-looking occupation—to keep suspicion off him. And nothing could look more innocent than schoolmastering!"

"That's so; but—"

"There are crowds of German spies in England at the present moment, pretending to be clerks, doctors, workmen, tutors, all sorts of things. My belief is that Herr Muhlbach is one of them!"

"B-b-but why?"

"Coker is an ass, I know. He hadn't any reason at all to suspect Muhlbach; but we have," said Squiff. "In the first place, the man was on the scene in an instant when he heard that a German had been found here. Of course, that was nothing in itself. But I saw his face as he came into the common-room, and if ever a man was in a blue funk, it was Fritz Muhlbach just then!"

"I noticed that he was pale," said Nugent, with a nod.

"Might have a cold in the head," suggested Bob Cherry.

"He was in a blue funk," said Squiff. "I saw that!"

"But he might have been in a funk at the bare idea of a German spy being caught here," said Harry Wharton, with a shake of the head. "Being a German himself, and under observation by the police, he might feel uneasy—might think that it would reflect on him, and get him into trouble. That would account for his funk."

"Possibly," agreed Squiff. "It isn't only that. But you all saw him snatch that letter from Coker and open it. It was a most outrageous thing to do. He had no right to touch the letter!"

"Quite so; but—"

"Why did he do it, then? If he's an honest man, and quite above-board, why did he grab that letter and look into it before he could be stopped?"

The chums of the Remove were silent. They had certainly noticed the German master's extraordinary action, and wondered about it. But, since the whole affair had ended in laughter, they had not thought much about it. Evidently Squiff had been thinking it out, however.

"Muhlbach didn't know that it was spoof," went on Squiff. "He thought I was a German—with a letter for somebody! For whom? If a German came here with a letter, sneaking in after dark, for whom could it be?"

"Only for Muhlbach himself, I suppose," said Wharton slowly. "But—"

"Exactly. At that minute Herr Muhlbach believed that it was a letter for him—a personal communication brought by a German. Now, if it had been an ordinary letter, he could have said so. He had only to say 'I was expecting a messenger with a letter, and I think this is it.' Then he would have had to explain why his letter had come by a messenger instead of by post, of course; but if it was all above-board, he could have done that easily enough!"

"By Jove!" said Harry, impressed at last.

"But he grabbed the letter, and looked into it—without even claiming it as his own," said Squiff. "Everybody thought it was like his cheek—"

"The cheekfulness was terrific!"

"But it wasn't cheek," said Squiff. "It was sheer funk of the letter being read, and proving to contain something he was afraid of having known!"

"Phew!"

"As I figure it out, the fellow is in communication with other Germans in this country, and he fancied that this time it was a German with a letter for him, who'd been ass enough to get himself caught. In that case, it was worth any risk to him to get hold of the letter, and destroy it before it could be read. If it had really been a letter for him, and dangerous to have known, he would have chucked it into the fire, or swallowed it at once, and taken his chance afterwards!"

"But—but how can the man be a spy?" objected Bob Cherry. "What use is it to him to be here? He never goes out of the school!"

"He may simply be lying low, waiting for a chance to carry out his instructions, whatever they are," said Squiff; "or——"

He paused.

"Or what?" asked all the juniors together.

"How do we know he doesn't go out?" said Squiff.

"Well, Coker would have spotted him," said Wharton. "Besides, we all know he doesn't. He has said himself that he prefers to remain within gates, as a German attracts such a jolly lot of attention out of doors these days!"

"In the daytime," agreed Squiff.

"What! You think——"

"I think that if he is a spy—and I believe he is now—it is quite easy for him to go out at night if he wants to. All the masters have a key to the private gate, Herr Muhlbach among the others. He can go in and out as he pleases, at all hours. There is nothing to stop him!"

"My hat!"

"And if he is a spy, he is in communication with other spies," said Squiff. "He wouldn't be ass enough to trust anything to the post, now that such a careful watch is being kept on Germans. If he sees another rascal about his business, he sees him personally. If he is making any observations of the neighbourhood, he does it after dark. And although there is nothing inside the school for him to spy upon, there's a lot outside—the bay, the channel, the coast-guard stations, the telegraph wires. Suppose there were a German raid on this part of the coast, it would be very handy for them to have a man here who knew just where to cut the telegraph wires, just where to find the Coastguards, just where to blow up railway bridges, and so on. That's the business of a spy—to get informed of things like that!"

There was silence in the study. Squiff's cool, clear reasoning had a great effect upon the juniors. Perhaps the fact that they did not like Herr Muhlbach personally helped them to come into agreement with Squiff's suspicions.

Certainly the art of the German master, in violently possessing himself of the sham letter, afforded solid grounds for Squiff's startling theory.

Tap!

"Come in!" called out Squiff.

Trotter, the page, came into the study.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What do you want?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Master Field, 'e asked me to come 'ere," said Trotter.

The chums looked inquiringly at the Australian junior.

"That's right!" said Squiff, with a nod. "I told Trotter to come here. I've got a question to ask him. About Herr Muhlbach's boots."

"His boots?" repeated Wharton.

"Yes."

Trotter looked alarmed.

"I say, young gent, don't you ask me to 'elp in any tricks on Mr. Muhlbach," he protested. "It's as much as my place is worth."

"Only a question," said Squiff. "We're not going to ask you to put treacle in his boots, Trotty. Only we want to know whether he puts them out at night. I suppose he does."

"That he don't!" said Trotter, with a grin, "and if he did, Master Field, I couldn't let you play no tricks on them. Mr. Muhlbach ain't a werry good-tempered man, and he'd complain to the 'Ead, and I should get into a row."

"Why doesn't he put his boots out to be cleaned?" asked Squiff.

"Blessed if I know! Likes don't 'em himself, I suppose," said Trotter. "He did the first two nights he was 'ere, but arter that he complained of the way I cleaned 'em, and since then they ain't been put out. And if he likes to clean his boots hisself, why, I says, let 'em, and good luck to 'im. I 'ave enough boots to clean without 'is!"

"Then we can't get at them!" said Squiff.

"No, you can't, Master Field!" grinned Trotter, and he left the study.

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NEXT
MONDAY—

"WON BY PLUCK!"

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry
Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

Squiff did not speak again till the door had closed upon the page.

"Blessed if I can see what you're driving at, Squiff," said Bob Cherry, puzzled. "What do Herr Muhlbach's boots inatter to you?"

"It's been rainy at night, the last few nights," said Squiff coolly. "If Herr Muhlbach had been out at night, his boots would show it, if he puts them out to be cleaned or so. That was what I wanted to get out of Trotter. What I've got out of him is equally important—Muhlbach cleans his boots himself. He's got a reason for that."

"I—I suppose so," said Wharton slowly.

"He's been out, and he didn't want his muddy boots to give him away," said Squiff. "So he consigned 'em to Trotter, they were cleaned, and took to doing it himself."

"My hat! Looks as if you have hit on something," said Nugent, with a whistle. "Of course, there may be something in it—but there may be something. But how do you know you're going to prove anything?"

"I'm going to find out whether he goes out at night."

"How?"

"By keeping watch at the side gate," said Squiff.

"Blessed if I see how you'll keep watch at the gate when you're in the dorm."

"I sha'n't be in the dorm," Squiff flushed a little. "Don't think I'm going to do anything mean. But if the man is a spy, sneaking in here to give information to the enemy, it's up to us to nip it in the bud if we can."

"That's right enough," said Harry. "But if you're caught out of the dorm, you'll get into trouble; and it wouldn't be much use explaining to Quelch that you suspect the German master of being a spy."

"I shouldn't do that. It would put him on his guard. If I'm caught I shall take my licking and keep mum. But I sha'n't be caught. After lights out I shall slither down by the ivy from the dormitory window, after the fellows are asleep. You chaps will keep this dark, of course?"

"The darkness will be terrific."

"Mum's the word!" said Harry Wharton. "But you'd better not go alone, Squiff. I'll come with you."

"Just as you like!"

"And now for prep.!" said Bob. "We shall have frobbie with Quelch in the morning if we don't get that done."

And for the present the juniors dismissed the subject of Herr Muhlbach, and gave all their attention to their preparation.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

In the Dead of Night!

LODER, the prefect, saw lights out in the Remove dormitory that night.

Loder left the Remove apparently tranquil as usual; but there were six juniors who were far from thinking of sleep.

Squiff's suspicions of the German master had excited the Famous Five, and the more they thought about the matter, the more assured they felt of the correctness of the Australian junior's theory.

Herr Muhlbach's action in seizing that sham letter from Coker could hardly be explained otherwise. Why had he been so anxious to see that letter, and to obtain possession of it, if he had nothing to fear, no secret to keep?

The thought that there might be a spy in the school, an unscrupulous rascal seeking to send information to the enemy under the guise of a harmless German master, was exciting enough to the chums of the Remove.

After all, it was possible enough. That German spies abounded in the country was certain. It had always been German policy to flood a country with spies, when intending to make war upon her.

If an ass like Coker of the Fifth had hit upon the truth by sheer chance, it would be remarkable enough; but that was no reason for believing that it was impossible.

At all events, it was easy to put the matter—at least to some extent—to the proof.

If the German master, who seldom, or never walked further than the school gates, left the precincts of Greyfriars at night, it would be, if not actual proof, at least an indication that something was wrong.

The chums of the Remove waited anxiously for the buzz of talk to die away in the dormitory.

The Removites were asleep at last.

It was half-past ten when Squiff and Harry Wharton slipped quietly from their beds. They dressed quickly and silently in the darkness.

Bolsters and pillows were arranged in the beds, to give them the appearance of being still occupied, in case of an

unexpected visit to the dormitory on the part of a master or a prefect.

"You chaps asleep?" murmured Squiff.

"No fear!" said Bob Cherry. "We'll stay awake till you come in. I've got the rope in my bed!"

"Good!"

Wharton silently opened the window.

There was a dim glimmer of starlight in the old Close of Greyfriars. Here and there lights glimmered from windows in the School House.

The rope was cautiously lowered from the window in the rustling ivy, the end being fastened to the nearest bed, which happened to be Johnny Bull's. Then Wharton slid silently from the window, and slid down the rope.

Squiff followed him.

Bob Cherry closed the window after him and returned to his bed. The window was not fastened, but the rope was pulled up and concealed under Johnny Bull's bed. The clink of a pebble on the window was to be the signal for lowering it again.

Harry Wharton and his comrade remained for some minutes in the shadow of the ivy, scanning the Close.

It was dark and deserted.

The School House was locked up for the night, and most of the fellows were in bed, only a few of the Sixth still having lights in their windows.

"Safe as houses!" murmured Squiff. "Lots of time too. If the rotter goes out, he won't do it till everybody else has gone to bed."

"There's a light in his study window," said Harry.

"This way!"

The two juniors scudded across the Close, and stopped at the side gate, to which they knew the German master had the key.

There, under the shadow of a tree close by the wall, they waited. They were quite concealed in the dark shadows; but if anyone came to the gate, they could not fail to see him.

From where they stood, they could watch the lighted windows of the School House, across the shadowy Close.

One by one the lights disappeared.

At last only one remained; and that one, they knew, was in the study of Herr Muhlbach. He was, at all events, the last to go to bed.

"Still up, anyway!" said Squiff.

Midnight tolled from the clock-tower.

The two juniors, leaning against the wall, felt sleep heavy upon their eyelids, but they did not allow themselves to nod.

It was a weary vigil.

Even if their suspicions of the German master were well-founded, it was quite possible that he would not be going out on that especial night; and so the long and weary watch might be for nothing.

But they did not falter. They were losing their sleep, and they knew how they would feel in the morning as a consequence. There would be trouble for them in the Remove Form-room if they nodded over their lessons. But their determination was unshaken.

"We'll have a nap after dinner to-morrow—what?" murmured Squiff.

Wharton started a little. The Australian junior's remark brought to his mind the fact that Herr Muhlbach always slept after his midday meal. True, other masters at Greyfriars had a "nap" after lunch. But for so young a man as Fritz Muhlbach to sleep in the afternoon was odd. It was another point in favour of the theory that his nights were not entirely spent in slumber.

Another weary half-hour passed.

Then suddenly Squiff gripped Wharton's arm, and drew him back deeper into the shadows. There was a light foot-step in the path.

Wharton's heart thumped.

Someone was coming, in the shadows of the trees, from the direction of the house. Who was it, at that hour?

Some "boulder" breaking bounds—perhaps Loder of the Sixth, whose little habits the juniors knew of old. Not likely! Loder of the Sixth might have been coming in, possibly, at that hour—but not going out!

Who was leaving Greyfriars at half-past twelve at night?

A form wrapped in an overcoat, with a dark hat pulled down over his brows, passed the juniors like a shadow, and stopped at the gate.

They heard the scraping sound of a key inserted into the lock.

The gate opened—the shadowy figure disappeared—and the gate closed again—the lock clicked!

The two juniors were alone again, with thumping hearts, in the darkness.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Coker Has an Idea!

"WAS it—was it he?"

Wharton muttered the words, husky with excitement.

"I couldn't see his face. But he was the same height; and who else could it be?" said Squiff quietly.

"How are we to make sure?"

"Easy enough. Come on!"

Squiff led the way across the Close, and Harry Wharton followed him without a word. He had already learned to trust to the sagacity of the Australian junior.

They stopped under the dark window of the German master's study.

"If it's Muhlbach, he must have got out this way," whispered Squiff. "He couldn't have opened a door in the house; and he couldn't very well get out by his bed-room window."

"Yes, but—"

"If he got out this way, we shall find the window unfastened."

"Right!"

Squiff mounted upon the window-sill, and tried the window. The study was quite dark within. Whether the German master was gone out or not, certainly he was not in his study.

The sash slid up under Squiff's pressing hand.

The window was unfastened.

"By George," muttered Wharton between his teeth, "that settles it!"

"We've got to make sure. He might possibly have gone to bed and left his window unfastened. It's possible. Get in this way."

The two juniors climbed in at the window.

All was dark within.

Squiff felt his way to the door of the study. It was closed—and locked! And the key was on the inside of the door!

"My hat! The key's there!" muttered Squiff. "The door's locked on the inside! That settles it! He hasn't gone to bed."

"By Jove, it does!"

There could be no further doubt about it. The study door being locked on the inside, the German master could not possibly have quitted the room by the usual way. He had left it by the window, then—proof positive that the dark figure the juniors had watched leave by the gate was that of the German, Fritz Muhlbach.

"Get out of this!" muttered Squiff. "He may come back."

They dropped into the Close again, and Squiff carefully closed down the window.

"What's to be done now?" said Harry, after a pause. "We've proved that he goes out at night, Squiffy."

"That's something to begin with!"

"Not enough to denounce him upon," said Harry. "You can bet that he will have some lie ready to satisfy the Head."

"Possibly; but we're sure of our case now," said Squiff.

"That's enough for us. Let's get back to the dorm. We've done enough for to-night. We can't follow the villain, as we don't know the direction he's gone in. But to-morrow night—"

He paused.

"Well?"

"To-morrow night," said Squiff grimly, "we'll watch for him on the outside of the gate, not the inside; and wherever he goes, we'll follow."

"Good egg!"

There was evidently nothing more to be done that night. The juniors had proved that Squiff's theory was correct. That the German master could have an innocent motive for stealing out of the school after midnight was impossible. He had certainly not gone out for nothing. If he were an honest man, he would assuredly take care not to act in a manner so exceedingly suspicious. But to follow him, and discover what rascality he was engaged upon was impossible; and the juniors had to abandon the idea, reluctantly enough.

They returned to the School House wall, and a pebble clinked on the window of the Remove dormitory.

A couple of minutes later the rope came rustling down through the ivy, and Wharton and Squiff climbed it.

They clambered in at the window, where Johnny Bull and Bob Cherry, Nugent, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh awaited them in a state of suppressed excitement.

ANSWERS

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OUR COMPANION PAPERS: "THE GEM" LIBRARY, "THE PENNY POPULAR," "CHUCKLES," &c.
Every Wednesday. Every Friday. Every Saturday, 2

The rest of the Remove were sleeping peacefully enough. "Well?" murmured four voices at once.

Wharton hurriedly whispered what had been discovered. And the juniors, excited but sleepy, returned to bed.

In spite of the excitement of the discovery, they slept soundly enough.

Nor were they very willing to rise at the sound of the rising-bell in the morning. They sat up in bed and yawned, as the clang of the bell sounded through the clear morning air.

"Hallo, slackers!" exclaimed Peter Todd. "Why don't you turn out?"

"Yaw-aw-aw!" yawned Bob Cherry.

"I'll help you out, if you like," said Todd kindly.

"Yaw-aw—yarooogh!" roared Bob, as Peter Todd squeezed a sponge over his head. "Yow-ow! You silly ass!"

"Only helping you," said Todd. "You look sleepy."

The chums of the Remove certainly did look sleepy, and they felt sleepy, as they turned out of bed. They had missed a good many hours of sleep, and they felt the effects.

At breakfast they yawned portentously.

In the Form-room at morning lessons they felt far from energetic, but under the keen eye of Mr. Quelch it was necessary to "buck up," and they bucked up to the best of their ability.

There was a German lesson that morning, and when Herr Muhlbach came in, the Famous Five and Squiff regarded him very curiously.

There was nothing in the German master's manner to indicate that he was keeping a guilty secret.

He went through the lesson with his accustomed calm and methodical manner.

Harry Wharton & Co. were very careful to "buck up" during the German lesson. They did not want the German master to surmise that they had been missing their sleep the previous night.

As a matter of fact, Herr Muhlbach did not take any special notice of them. Billy Bunter had more of his attention than anyone else in the Remove. The German language had always offered almost insuperable difficulties to Bunter, and under the present national circumstances, Bunter felt that it was hard lines indeed that he should have to learn German at all. He fully agreed with Coker that it was unpatriotic. Bunter would have "cut" the German lesson with pleasure—from patriotic or other motives. He slacked even more than usual, and Herr Muhlbach came down on him very heavily. Bunter groaned when he was given fifty lines in German to write out that afternoon before tea.

"I say, you fellows, it's rotten!" Bunter muttered furiously. "Look here, if you chaps would back me up, we'd go on strike against learning German."

"Probably Quelch would go on strike—with a cane!" remarked Bob Cherry, with a grin. "Don't be an ass, Bunt."

"I shouldn't wonder if he's a spy, just as Coker says," growled Bunter. "Fifty rotten lines from 'Faust'! Brr-r-r!"

And Bunter was still grumbling over his hard fate when the Remove were dismissed for the morning.

Coker of the Fifth was chatting with Potter and Greene in the passage when the Lower Fourth came out. Billy Bunter, having failed to receive sympathy from his Form-fellows, rolled up to Coker of the Fifth.

"I say, Coker, old man," he began.

Coker glared at him.

"Not so much of your 'Coker, old man,' you cheeky fag!" he snapped.

"Ahem! I mean, I have an idea——"

"Go and bury it!"

"Ahem! You see, Coker, I know you're right about that German beast!"

"Well, that shows you've got more sense than the other silly fags," said Coker, relenting a little. "You're not such a fool as you look."

"H'm! I've got fifty lines from the utter beast this morning——"

"Which proves that he's a spy, if anything would," said Potter solemnly.

"Well, I'm jolly well not going to write out fifty beastly lines from 'Faust,'" snorted Bunter. "I thought of a good idea, Coker! Of course, as an influential chap—ahem—you are the proper person to take the lead."

"Go on!" said Coker encouragingly.

It was always easy to "butter up" the great Coker.

"Under the present circumstances—war with Germany—country in danger—everybody buking up to—to back up the British Empire, and so on," said Bunter. "Under those circumstances, I think it might be put to the Head that we don't want to do any more German lessons. 'Tain't patriotic. I—I'd go to the Head myself, only—only it ought to be a really important chap like you, Coker—ahem!"

"Ass!" said Coker. "The Head wouldn't see it!"

"Well, he might," urged Bunter.

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NEXT MONDAY—**"WON BY PLUCK!"**

"More likely give me a couple of hundred lines," said Coker. "You can go and put it to him yourself if you like."

"Ahem!"

"But look here, you say you've got fifty lines to write from 'Faust.'"

"Yes, the beast!"

"Good!" said Coker unexpectedly.

Billy Bunter glared at him. He did not see anything good in having to write out fifty lines even from so excellent a work as Goethe's masterpiece.

"You see, I've done lines from the beastly thing," explained Coker. "I remember a line that just suits the case. I suppose the beast hasn't specified which lines you're to write?"

"No; any old lines, so long as there's fifty!"

"You could write the same line fifty times," suggested Coker. "That would make fifty lines, wouldn't it?"

"I suppose it would," said Bunter discontentedly. "I don't see any sense in that, though. Fifty rotten lines are fifty rotten lines, whether they're the same rotten lines or different rotten lines!"

"I'll help you," said Coker.

"Wha-a-at!"

For Coker of the Fifth to offer to help a fag write out an imposition was so astounding that William George Bunter could only stare at him open-mouthed.

"You've got to do it in German writing, haven't you?" said Coker. "Well, in German writing you can't tell one fist from another—the kind of German writing we do here, anyway. Whoever does it, it looks like a set of spider's legs. Muhlbach won't know I've done it; and I'll do it—some of it, anyway!"

"I say, you're awfully good, Coker!"

"Mad, I should say!" ejaculated Potter. "Rather a new thing for a Fifth-Form chap to write out impositions for a fag, ain't it?"

"Dotty!" murmured Greene.

"It's a rag!" said Coker.

"Blessed if I see any rag in writing out lines!"

"That's because you haven't my brains, my son."

"Jolly glad I haven't!" said Potter. "I should be afraid of dying in a lunatic asylum if I had!"

"What's that?"

"Ahem! Nothing. Get on with your rag. You don't want me to help, I suppose?"

"Yes, I do," said Coker. "Come up to the study. We'll all take a hand. Many paws make light work, you know."

"Look here, I don't want——"

"Never mind what you want—you come along and lend a hand," said Coker loftily.

And Potter and Greene reluctantly followed Coker to his study; and Billy Bunter rolled after them, very much surprised at Coker's good-natured offer, and not caring whether it was a rag or not, so long as somebody else did his lines for him.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Quite a Success!

COKER of the Fifth hunted about his study, and found a tattered volume, which had evidently seen much service. It was a copy of Faust, with translations and comments scrawled on the margins of the leaves. The comments were in Coker's own sprawling "fist," and some of them were very interesting to read—such as "This rotten thing is dative!"—or "Accusative, blow it!"—or "Beastly irregular verb this!"

Coker turned the pages till he came to the dialogue between Faust and Mephistopheles, one of the finest passages in the great poem. Potter and Greene and Bunter watched him in surprise, as he mumbled over the pages, looking for the places.

"Ich bin's—herein—that ain't it—Nur mit Entsetzen wacht ich Morgens auf— Blow it! Where's the rotten place?"

"Look here——" began Potter.

"Shut up!" said Coker ferociously. "Don't bother while I'm trying to disentangle this frightful language! If the Germans are beaten in this war—I mean, when they are beaten—they ought to be compelled to learn English or French, or some civilised language. Nobody has a right to use a language like this. It isn't fair!"

"But look here——"

"Cheese it! Here's the place. Und doch hat jemand einen brunnen something or other, in jedem Nacht nicht ausgetrunken——"

"What the deuce does that mean?"

"It's old Meffy says that to Faust, telling him that he didn't drink the stuff he was going to scoff—poison, I

suppose—though he says he's sick of life," explained Coker.

"Making fun of him, you know!"

"Who's Meffy?"

"Mephistopheles, you ass! Then Faust answers——"

"Oh, blow Faust!" said Greene. "Blessed if this isn't as bad as the German lesson! Might as well be in class with Herr Muhlbach!"

"Fathead, I tell you it's a rag! Faust answers here, 'Das Spioneren, scheint's, ist deine Lust!'"

"What if he does?"

"And that means," pursued Coker, "'Spying, it appears, is your pleasure!'"

"Oh!" said Potter, understanding at last.

"Bunter's got to write fifty lines from Faust!" grinned Coker. "That's the line he's going to write—fifty times. 'Das Spioneren, scheint's, ist deine Lust!' That will be one in the eye for Muhlbach—what?"

"Phew!"

"I—I say," said Bunter, in dismay, "old Muhlbach may get ratty if I take that to him, you know?"

"That's the beauty of it!" said Coker, chuckling. "He will be ratty—ratty as anything—but he can't show it without owning up that he's a spy! See?"

"Ye-es; but——"

"Jolly good idea!" said Potter. "It will be up against him, anyway, whether he's a spy or not. And if he is one, it will make him feel quite green!"

"Exactly!"

"But—but I'd rather do some other lines, if it's all the same to you," demurred Bunter. "The beast will be down on me afterwards!"

"If you do other lines, you'll do them yourself!" growled Coker. "If you take him these, we'll do them for you!"

That was enough for Bunter. He was willing to take the risk for the sake of getting his imposition done by other hands.

"All serene," he said. "You give it to me after dinner, then!"

"Write the first half-dozen lines yourself," said Coker.

Billy Bunter started the imposition. As his task was fifty lines from "Faust," there was no reason why he shouldn't write the same line over and over again if he liked. It would be a little unusual, but there was, as Coker remarked, no law against it.

Bunter wrote, in his weird rendering of German script, "Das Spioneren, scheint's, ist deine Lust!" half a dozen times, and then rolled out of the study, leaving the rest of the task to Coker & Co.

Coker and Potter and Greene took it in turns to fill up the impot.

Fifty lines were finished at last, and Coker grinned over the imposition with much satisfaction.

After dinner, the impot was handed to Billy Bunter, who cheerfully took it to the German master's study.

But there was "no admission" there.

Herr Muhlbach had the habit of taking a long nap in the afternoon, when lessons did not require him. Billy Bunter was not able to deliver his impot till after lessons in the afternoon, when he found Herr Muhlbach in his study, smoking his German pipe.

The German master looked sharply at the fat junior as he came in.

"My lines, sir?" said Bunter meekly.

"Give them to me!"

Bunter handed over his imposition, and sidled towards the door.

He had left the door open, and Coker of the Fifth was in the passage. He meant to see Fritz Muhlbach's face when he read those lines.

If Coker expected the herr to betray himself at the sight of that peculiar impot, he was not disappointed.

The German master gave one glance at the scrawled sheets, and jumped up from his chair, his eyes gleaming, and a sudden pallor in his face.

"Bunter!" he gasped.

Billy Bunter blinked round nervously.

"Ye-es, sir!"

"What—what does this mean?"

"That—that's my impot, sir. Fifty lines, sir!"

"What does it mean?"

Herr Muhlbach sprang towards the fat junior, his eyes ablaze, and gripped him by the shoulder, and swung him back into the study. With the other hand he slammed the door, almost in Coker's face.

"My hat!" murmured Coker. "My only hat! If that isn't a complete give-away, I'm blessed if I know what it is!"

"Ow! Ow!" wailed Bunter. "Yow-ow! I—I—Leggo!"

The German master shook him savagely.

"Bunter, you have dared to write—you have dared to insinuate——"

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"Yow! Don't you shake me like that!" howled Bunter.

"Yah! If you make my glasses fall off——"

"Bunter——"

"And if they get broken—yow——"

"You young rascal——"

"You'll have to pay for 'em! Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

The German master shook the Owl of the Remove till his teeth seemed to rattle in his head.

"You young scoundrel! How dare you to write that? What has made you think anything of the sort, hein?"

"I—I—I—Leggo! Help!" yelled Bunter.

"Silence!"

"Leggo! Help! Yow!" roared Bunter.

Coker of the Fifth opened the door and looked in. Herr Muhlbach left off shaking Bunter, and glared at the Fifth-Former.

"What do you want here?" he snapped. "Go away at once!"

"Excuse me, sir," said Coker blandly. "I heard Bunter calling for help, and I thought there was something wrong!"

"There is nothing wrong. Go away at once. Bunter, I shall cane you severely for your impertinence!"

"Yow-ow!"

Herr Muhlbach suited the action to the word. He seized a cane from his table, and lashed Billy Bunter across the shoulders till he roared with pain.

"Ow, ow, ow! Yow! Help! Fire! Murder! Help!" Coker strode into the study.

"Stop that!" said Coker.

"What! Mein Gott! You—you dare to interfere——"

"Yes, I do!" said Coker sturdily. "I'm not going to see a kid licked like that! Let him alone, or I'll jolly well take that cane away from you!"

"Coker! You dare——"

"Yes, rather!" said Coker. "You hit him again, that's all, and you'll see!"

Herr Muhlbach panted with rage, but he did not hit Bunter again. As a matter of fact, the burly Fifth-Former could have wiped up the study with the German master if he had chosen.

"Coker, I shall report this insolence to the Head!"

"Report, and be blowed!" said Coker. "I'll report at the same time how you were laying into Bunter, and why you did it!"

"Leave my study at once, both of you!"

Billy Bunter was only too glad to obey. He squirmed out of the study, and Horace Coker strode after him, and slammed the door, as a sign that he didn't care for any old German, as he would have expressed it.

"Ow, ow, ow!" groaned Bunter. "You silly ass, Coker! You thumping idiot! Look at what you have done for me! Yow—ow!"

"Well, I stopped him," said Coker.

"Groo—hooh! I'm hurt all over! Yow—ow—ow!"

"It's all right," said Coker. "The way he took it shows plainly enough that it hit him on the raw. If ever a chap had a guilty conscience, he has."

"Blow his conscience!" howled Bunter. "I know I've been licked, and I sha'n't get over it in a hurry! Yow—ow—ow!"

Coker walked away, quite satisfied. Billy Bunter rolled painfully away to the junior common-room, not at all satisfied. The way Herr Muhlbach had taken Coker's little joke might be a proof that he was playing a part at Greyfriars, and that his guilty conscience had been alarmed. But all Billy Bunter was thinking about was the licking he had received, which had certainly been very severe.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER,

Bunter Gives His Opinion!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Wherefore this thushness?"

"Ow—ow—ow!"

"What on earth's the matter, Bunter?"

"Groo—hooh—hooh! Wow!"

The Famous Five had come into the common-room, and they found Billy Bunter curled up in an armchair, groaning.

"Looks as if he's been through it," remarked Squiff.

"Who is it this time, Bunt? Loder been at it again?"

"Ow! No! It's that beastly spy!"

"What spy?"

"That German beast!"

"Better be careful how you call him names," said Nugent.

"You might be heard, you know."

"I don't care!" groaned Bunter. "I can't get it much worse than I've got it already. I've a jolly good mind to go to the Head about it! Yow—ow!"

"But what's happened?" asked Wharton.

In gasping sentences the unfortunate Owl of the Remove

explained Horace Coker's little joke on the German master, and its direful results.

The chums of the Remove exchanged glances.

"So he flew into a temper, did he, when he saw 'Das Spionieren ist deine Lust'?" said Squiff thoughtfully.

"Like a wild beast!" groaned Bunter.

"Looks as if he took it personally," remarked Bob Cherry.

"The most surprising thing is, that for once Coker turns out to be not such an ass, after all!"

"The beast ought to be denounced!" groaned Bunter.

"Ow wow—wow! I'd complain to the Head, only—only he'd be down on me for writing those lines. It was all Coker's fault. Ow! Yow!"

The chums of the Remove left Billy Bunter still groaning. The incident made them very thoughtful. From the happenings of the previous night there was little doubt left in their minds of Fritz Muhlbach's true character. But the effect that Bunter's lines had had upon him was an additional proof.

"Coker is a thumping ass!" Squiff remarked, as they strolled out into the Close. "He wanted to prove to his own satisfaction that Muhlbach was a beast with a guilty conscience, but he may have put the man on his guard as well."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"He may guess that some of the fellows think he is a German spy," he remarked. "It may make him more careful. It won't be so very easy to prove it against him, anyway. But let us once catch the rotter in the act, and then his game is up."

"The upfulness will be terrific."

Harry Wharton & Co. were looking forward with keen excitement to the night. Sure now of the guilt of Fritz Muhlbach, they were eager to expose him, and to put an end to whatever rascality he was engaged upon. If he was a spy, he had been long enough in the district now to have gained a great deal of information which would be useful to the Berlin Government in the event of an attack upon the English coast. In that case he must have some scheme for transmitting it to Germany—and that could only be done by means of a confederate—since the telegraph could no longer be used, and letters in the post could not be delivered. To unmask the rascal, and cause him to be placed where his rascality could do no further harm would be a great triumph for the chums of the Remove—if they could do it.

They noticed, when they saw Herr Muhlbach that evening, that the German master had a very preoccupied look.

Probably those lines of Bunter's were weighing on his mind. That he was actually suspected of being a spy he could hardly believe. He probably regarded the matter as a "rag" directed against him simply because he was a German. But conscience makes cowards of us all, and the knowledge of his guilt—if he was guilty—was enough to make Fritz Muhlbach uneasy and disturbed.

Harry Wharton & Co. went to bed with the Remove as usual, with the intention of carrying out their plan after lights out. Billy Bunter was late in the dormitory. As he passed the German master's study, Herr Muhlbach called him in to speak to him. The Owl of the Remove entered the study very much as he might have entered a lion's den. Fritz Muhlbach was all smiles and kindness now.

"My dear Bunter," he said smoothly, "I caned you somewhat severely this afternoon. I was very angry. I am sorry."

"Oh!" said Bunter.

"You see, the lines you wrote were—well, disrespectful," said Herr Muhlbach. "It was, I suppose, a joke."

"Ahem!"

"I do not mind a joke. I know that boys will have their little jokes," said Herr Muhlbach. "I shall not punish you, Bunter, if you admit that it was intended as a joke against me."

"Very well, sir," said Bunter. "It—it was a joke, sir."

"But why did you make such a joke?" asked Fritz Muhlbach. "Surely the idea did not occur to you that I, your German master, might be a suspicious person." And he laughed pleasantly.

Bunter blinked at him through his big spectacles. Bunter was not over-blessed with intelligence, but he had sense enough to see that Herr Muhlbach was trying to pump him. The Herr wanted to know whether anybody suspected him; and Bunter could see that quite plainly. And, with his usual disregard for the truth, Billy Bunter proceeded to pull Herr Muhlbach's leg.

"Oh, no, sir; certainly not! Of course, we know that you are all right," said Bunter. "We couldn't suspect you, sir. It would be absurd."

"Of course," said the Herr, greatly relieved. "If anyone made such an insinuation against me I should complain to the Head at once, and the person would be very severely punished. You are aware of that."

"Oh, yes, sir!" said Bunter cheerfully. "I shouldn't think for a moment, sir, that you were anything like that."

EVERY
MONDAY,

The "Magnet"
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ONE
PENNY.

Only an awful scoundrel would be a spy, don't you think so?"

"Ye-es, of course, Bunter."

"Only a thoroughly disgusting mean beast, sir," pursued Bunter, enjoying the peculiar expression that came over Fritz Muhlbach's face. "Only the lowest, beastliest, meanest sort of a skunk would be a spy, sir. I'm sure you agree with me."

"Yes!" gasped Herr Muhlbach.

"It's such a cowardly, dirty, rotten thing, isn't it?" said Bunter confidentially. "Fancy a man eating at a fellow's table, sleeping under his roof, and spying on him all the time! Only a born criminal could do it. Isn't that so, sir?"

"I—I—"

"Such a beast ought to be hung at once, sir! Don't you think so? In fact, hanging is too good for such a thorough rotter!"

"You may go to bed, Bunter."

"Yes, sir. But I'm glad to hear you say what you think of spies, sir. They are such mean, despicable worms!"

"Good-night, Bunter!"

"Good-night, sir!" said Bunter cheerfully.

And he left the study, feeling that he had to some extent "got his own back" on Herr Muhlbach for the licking of the afternoon.

"You're late!" growled Loder, who was seeing lights out for the Remove, as the fat junior rolled into the dormitory.

"Herr Muhlbach wanted me," explained Bunter. "I—"

"Well, get to bed—"

The Remove were all in bed, and Billy Bunter turned in, and the prefect extinguished the light and left the dormitory. Then there was a chorus of inquiry.

"What did Muhlbach want with you, Bunter?"

"Only a little friendly talk," said Bunter airily. "I gave him my opinion on the subject of spies. He turned quite green."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Rot!" said Bolsover major. "What should he care what you think of spies?"

"He's got his reasons," chuckled Bunter. "Old Coker hit on it first of all. Coker's not such a silly idiot as he looks —"

"You are!" said Bolsover major. "Shut your silly napper and go to sleep."

Bunter grunted and went to sleep. The Remove were soon all snuk in slumber—with the exception of Harry Wharton & Co.

At half-past ten Harry Wharton and Squiff were out of bed; and ten minutes later they were in the Close; and their chums, wakeful and anxious, were waiting in the dormitory for their return.

The two juniors lost no time.

They crossed the Close, climbed the school wall, and dropped into the high-road that ran past the walls of Greyfriars.

The long, white road glimmered in the starlight. But under the shadows of the trees that overhung the school wall was deep darkness. There the two heroes of the Remove ensconced themselves, close by the little gate by which the German master would come out if he came at all.

Would he come?

Whether he came or not, Harry Wharton and Sampson Quincy Miley Field were prepared to keep up their vigil through the long hours of the night. And while the long minutes dragged wearily by the two juniors waited with grim patience and determination.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Spies!

CLICK!

The little gate opened quietly, and closed again. A figure in a dark overcoat and a soft, slouched hat stepped out of the shadows of the wall and the trees, and after a quick glance up and down the road strode away in the direction of Friardale.

Harry Wharton and Squiff remained motionless for a few moments.

In the gloom they had not been able to see the figure closely, but they knew that it was Fritz Muhlbach, the German master of Greyfriars.

The German walked quickly, but with a soft and silent step. There was something very catlike in his movements.

"After him!" murmured Squiff.

"What-ho!"

The two juniors skirted along the school wall, keeping in the shadows.

It was nearly half-past twelve, and the road was silent and utterly deserted. The last light in Greyfriars had long been extinguished.

Keeping on the belt of grass beside the lane, under the shadows of the trees that bordered it, the two juniors followed on the track of the German.

To follow anyone and watch him was not a pleasant task; but the conviction that Fritz Muhlbach was a spy, working to injure the country that sheltered him, was a justification, and the chums of the Remove had no hesitation.

The German looked round several times, and at first they feared that he suspected the pursuit. But it was soon apparent that it was only his natural caution.

He strode on till he reached the stile in the lane, about half-way to the village, and the juniors saw him climb over it.

They ducked through a gap in the hedge, and reached the footpath on the other side of the stile, and peered out in search of the German.

A low sound of voices reached their ears.

Low, guttural voices, of which they could not distinguish the words—but they knew that the words were German.

Fritz Muhlbach had met another man of his own nationality under the dense shadows of the trees near the stile.

That alone was proof enough of his guilt. The secrecy of that meeting at midnight cleared up all doubt on the matter.

The muttering in German came to the ears of the juniors, as they kept back in the darkness of the trees; and after a few minutes they made out the figures of the two talkers on the other side of the footpath.

Fritz Muhlbach was talking to a man of much larger stature with a thick, dark beard, and an overcoat buttoned up to his chin.

What they were saying the juniors did not know; their tones were low, and they spoke very quickly.

But a few words came to their ears, and they distinguished "Berlin," "Kriegsministerium," "tausend marken," "briefe," and several other words that had a great significance.

The Germans were speaking of the Ministry of War at Berlin—of a thousand marks—of a letter!

Herr Muhlbach opened his coat and felt inside it, evidently for something in an inner pocket.

The juniors watched him breathlessly.

The German's hand came forth again, with a sealed envelope in it, which he passed to his companion.

Squiff grasped Wharton's arm almost convulsively.

What was the letter that the German master of Greyfriars was thus passing to his confederate in the dead of night? The result of the explorations he had made in the neighbourhood after dark on many a night when he had been supposed to be asleep in his bed at the school?

The taller man had taken out a portfolio, and was taking papers from it. Dim as was the light on the footpath, the juniors behind the trees could see that he was counting out banknotes.

Herr Muhlbach took the little wad of notes and bent his head to examine them more carefully in the dim light; and the juniors heard him utter an exclamation of discontent.

"Reichsbank!" he exclaimed.

"Ja wohl, Fritz."

"Warum nicht Englisch?"

Then the voices sank again.

But Squiff and Harry Wharton understood. Herr Muhlbach had been paid for his services in German banknotes, and he would have preferred to receive English money. But the other spy—evidently in a superior position, since he paid the German master for his services—was supplied with German notes. Doubtless he had been stationed in the country long before the war, with the ready money for the base services that were rendered by Herr Muhlbach and others of his kind; and probably he had not cared to attract attention to himself by trying to change German paper-money. Herr Muhlbach had to take his payment in the banknotes of the Deutsches Reichsbank, whether he liked it or not.

To a German living in England, like Herr Fritz Muhlbach, German banknotes were useless—till he could get back to his own country, at all events.

But he had to be satisfied.

He put the Reichsbank notes into his pocket, with a muttered growl, and buttoned up his coat again.

"Auf wiedersehen," he said.

The other German shook his head.

"Samstag kommt Karl Altdorf," the juniors heard him say. "Adieu!"

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"Adieu!"

They parted. Herr Muhlbach stepped over the stile again and strode away in the direction of Greyfriars.

The tall German remained for some moments on the footpath, securing the envelope he had received in an inner pocket, which he buttoned over it.

The juniors' hearts were beating hard.

For they knew what the words they had heard meant. Herr Muhlbach had said "Au revoir!" And the other rascal had replied that on Saturday—evidently the next meeting arranged—another man would come in his place.

That was as much as to say that the information passed on by Herr Muhlbach in that bulky envelope was to be taken out of the country immediately by the man who had received it and was now buttoning it so carefully in an inside pocket.

Harry Wharton squeezed Squiff's arm; and Squiff nodded. They understood one another.

The rascal was not to be allowed to escape with the spy's report.

That bulky envelope contained information for which the War Minister in Berlin had been willing to pay a thousand marks—or forty pounds—besides other sums that Herr Muhlbach had probably received.

If the rascal got away with it, it would be useless for the juniors to give the alarm afterwards; they could not even describe the man, excepting by saying that he was a German, and tall. In the gloom of the wood, and in the shadow of the slouched hat, they had caught hardly a glimpse of his face.

If that spying report was to be kept from being sent abroad it was up to the chums of the Remove to act—and act promptly.

That they were only two boys against a powerful man—probably armed, and very likely desperate—did not make them hesitate.

They had their duty to do, and they meant to do it, whatever the risk.

The tall German strode away along the footpath, softly humming to himself the tune of the "Wacht am Rhine" as he went. He was evidently well satisfied with the result of his interview with the German master of Greyfriars.

"He's not going to get away, Squiff," muttered Wharton, between his teeth.

The Australian junior's eyes gleamed.

"Not with that letter!" he said.

"We're going to tackle him."

"You bet!"

"Come on, then!"

They emerged from under the trees; but Squiff caught Wharton's arm again as he was starting in pursuit.

"Hold on! He'll hear us if we go after him. We can get ahead of him through the wood, and lay for him on the path."

"Good!"

They plunged back under the trees. Every part of Friar-dale Wood was well known to the Remove fellows, who had done their Boy Scout practice there many a time. Almost without a pause they hurried on in the darkness under the trees.

The footpath the German was following led away in the direction of Redclyffe. The juniors knew where another path crossed it, and for that point they made as fast as they could.

In five minutes they came out upon the path.

They were certain that the German had not yet passed. They separated, and stood in the shadows of the trees on either side of the path, waiting for the spy.

The low humming of the "Watch on the Rhine" came to their ears again, and the footfalls of the tall German coming along the path.

A shadowy figure loomed up.

It was the spy, passing on his way without a suspicion that he was waited for. Still humming the tune, the tall German strode on, past the two juniors crouching in the dense shadows.

From the cover of the trees, Squiff made a spring like a tiger, and flung himself upon the German from behind, grasping him by the collar and dragging him back.

The next instant Wharton was upon him, grasping him round the neck, and throwing his weight upon him.

"Mein Gott!"

The German, taken utterly by surprise, went down with a heavy bump in the grass, and the two juniors, clinging to him like cats, sprawled over him.

"Squash him!" panted Squiff.

"Ach! Let me go, or—"

"Hold on!"

Crack!

CRACK!

The sharp, sudden report rang through the silent woods, awaking a thousand echoes.

There was a revolver in the hand of the desperate rascal, and he had fired. But he fired at random, and the bullet flew into the tree-tops.

He had no chance to use his weapon a second time.

Squiff grasped his wrist, and twisted it savagely, and with a gasp of pain the spy relinquished the revolver, which dropped into the grass.

"Ach!"

"The scoundrel!"

"Squash him!" panted Squiff.

The German was struggling desperately under the weight of the two juniors. But powerful fellow as he was, he was overmatched. The juniors were strong and sturdy, and they were grimly determined.

Squiff's hands were wound in his collar, choking him, and Wharton was kneeling on him, pinning him down.

The struggles of the floored scoundrel gradually relaxed. His breath came in short, quick gasps.

"Ach! Mercy! Oh!"

"Don't throttle him, Squiff!" panted Harry.

"I'd almost as soon throttle the rotter as look at him," said the Australian junior grimly. "Keep quiet, you villain, or you'll get some more!"

"Mein Gott!" groaned the half-strangled German. "Who are you, den?"

"Never mind who we are. We've got you," said Squiff. "Keep your knee on his bread-basket, Wharton. Can't be too careful with a rascal of this sort."

"How dare you touch me?" the German gasped. "Are you thieves? If you want mein money, I giff him to you!"

"We don't want your money, we want you," said Squiff.

"But vat for—vy?" The German peered up at the dusky forms of the juniors who were pinning him down. "Vat you want, den?"

"The letter you've got in your pocket."

A sudden shiver ran through the prostrate man.

"Vat letter?"

"The letter the other spy handed to you," said Squiff coolly; "and we're going to have it, too."

"Ach! I have no letter. I am a peaceful Cherman clerk."

"Taking a walk at one in the morning, with a revolver in your pocket?" grinned Squiff. "Make it easier, my son."

"I tink tat you are tieves when you jump on me, and I shoot, but—"

"You thought we were police, more likely," said Wharton. "It's against the law for Germans in this country to carry weapons, or to have them in their possession."

"I did not know. I—I—"

"Don't tell lies," said Squiff. "You've got to answer for having a revolver, if you have to answer for nothing else. I've got his necktie off now. We'll tie his hands, and then get the letter."

The German recommenced struggling with savage violence. But the juniors were ready for him.

With a heavy knee planted on his chest, and two pairs of strong hands grasping him, the man had no chance.

His strength was spent at last, and he had not succeeded in shaking off the juniors or forcing them to relax their grasp.

He collapsed under them, panting feebly, and the two juniors could feel the spasmodic thumping of his heart.

"Ach! Mein Gott!" he panted brokenly.

"Now tie up the beast!" said Squiff coolly.

The German was only resisting feebly now. Squiff dragged his hands together, and looped the necktie round them, and knotted it. It was impossible for the rascal to resist after that, and he resigned himself to his fate.

"Now for the letter!"

"What-ho!"

Squiff rummaged in the rascal's pockets till he found the letter, and dragged it out. The prisoner gave a cry.

"Tat is mein! Touch my letter not! Dis is-against te law!"

"Lot you care about law!" said Squiff contemptuously. "There's a law here against spies, but you don't take much notice of it."

"Ach! I am not a spy."

"Liar!" said Squiff cheerfully.

"I swear it!"

"You can swear from now till cockerow, and it won't make any difference," said Squiff. "This is where you come to grief, my Deutscher friend."

"Give me tat letter. I give you hundret marks!"

"I'll give you some marks on the nose, if you say that again!" growled Squiff.

"I tell you I am a peaceful Cherman clerk. Tat is a private letter!" panted the prisoner. "If you take it, I go to te police!"

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"NEXT MONDAY—"

"WON BY PLUCK!"

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ONE PENNY.

"You're going there, anyway!" chuckled Squiff.

"Den I demand tat you are arrested for stealing my private property!" said the German fiercely.

Squiff and Wharton exchanged glances. They were sure of their ground. What had happened had left no room for doubt that this man was a German spy, in collusion with the German master at Greyfriars. And yet the bare possibility of a mistake gave them pause. If they should be wrong—there was a bare possibility of it—the consequences would be serious for them. Breaking bounds after midnight would mean a flogging, at least, from the Head, if the matter came out, and it proved that they had made a mistake. Their good intentions would not weigh with Dr. Locke, who would certainly pooh-pooh the whole matter unless they could offer the clearest proof of their case.

The German observed their hesitation at once. He was not slow to push his advantage.

"You give me my letter, and I say notings," he said. "Tat is a ferry private letter—a letter of love!"

"Oh, rats!" said Squiff. "We know what you are, but we're going to make sure before we yank you away to the police-station. Got a match, Wharton?"

"Yes."

"Strike it, and we'll look into the letter."

"Right-ho!"

Squiff coolly slit the envelope. If, by a bare possibility, the juniors had made a mistake, the contents of the letter would prove it. Wharton, still kneeling on the bound German, struck a match.

It glimmered on the face of the prisoner—deadly white, the eyes dilated with fear. If ever guilt and terror were written in a man's face they were written in the face of the German who lay panting in the grass.

"His chivvy is enough," said Harry Wharton contemptuously. "But we'll see the letter, all the same. What's in it?"

"My hat!" muttered Squiff, in an almost awe-stricken voice.

The bulky envelope was full of papers. Some of them were covered with writing in German—some of them had diagrams and plans sketched upon them. In the brief glimpse by the light of the match the juniors could make out little of the papers; but the nature of them was quite apparent.

"That settles it," said Squiff, thrusting the papers into an inner pocket. "These are going to the police-station at Courtfield—to-night."

"And this rascal, Squiff?"

"He's going too!"

"Mein Gott," murmured the German, "let me go! Listen. I confess I—I have been a spy by the orders of my officers."

"Chuck it!" said Squiff. "A decent man wouldn't be a spy by the orders of anybody."

"Give me my liberty! I—I—I will pay you—I will pay you anything! Listen, I have five thousand marks in my portfolio!"

"Keep 'em there!" yawned Squiff. "Drag the beast up, old chap!"

The spy was jerked to his feet. He made a desperate wrench to tear his hands loose, but Squiff had bound them too carefully for that. The juniors took an arm each of the captured spy.

"March!" said Squiff briefly.

"Vere do you take me?" the German muttered huskily.

"To Courtfield Police Station."

"I beg of you—"

"You can save your breath. No room for spies in this country," said Squiff. "Yank him along!"

And, with an iron grip fastened on either arm, the wretched spy was marched along by the juniors of Greyfriars.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Exit Herr Muhlbach!

INSPECTOR GRIMES, of Courtfield, jumped.

"What the deuce!" he ejaculated, in amazement.

The worthy inspector had reason to be surprised. In all his turns at night duty in Courtfield Police Station he had never had a similar experience. He rubbed his eyes as two juniors of Greyfriars marched in, with a burly man between them, his hands bound, his face white and haggard.

"Master Wharton—and Field!" exclaimed the inspector. He knew the two juniors by sight. "What does this mean? I shall have to report you to your headmaster! Who is this man? What the deuce—"

"German spy, sir," said Wharton.

"Wha-a-t!"

"We've collared him," said Squiff. "He had a revolver on him, and he used it once. Here it is!"

Squiff laid upon the inspector's desk the German's revolver, which he had picked up from the grass of the footpath.

"My word!" murmured the inspector.

"And here's a letter we captured on him," added the Australian junior.

"M-m-y word!"

Inspector Grimes's eyes almost bulged from his head as he examined the contents of the bulky envelope. For ten minutes he seemed forgetful of the presence of the juniors and the haggard prisoner, as he scanned the papers.

A constable on duty stepped up beside the prisoner to take charge of him.

Inspector Grimes raised his eyes from the papers at last.

"I don't know how you youngsters have managed this," he said; "but you have rendered the country an important service. I can't read all this, but I can make out the plans and diagrams. Whoever drew up these plans had been making a general examination of the neighbourhood. The lighthouse, the coastguard station, the railways, and the telegraph-wires are all marked, and there is a plan of the bay, with the landing-place marked, and the safe channel. One of these papers contains the name, address, and description of old Dave Trumper, the best pilot on the coast. Looks as if there had been some plan for a German landing here, and a spy was posted here to get information."

"And he got it by moonlight, or most of it," remarked Squiff. "This rotter was the man he handed it to, and we saw him do it."

"These papers will be sent up to London by special messenger at once," said Inspector Grimes. "Now tell me all about it."

Harry Wharton concisely explained.

The inspector took a deep breath when he had finished. He signed to the constable to take the prisoner away, and the spy disappeared in the direction of the cells.

"You are sure of what you tell me?" said the inspector gravely. "This man has been caught in the act—but Herr Muhlbach—"

"We are quite sure, sir."

"You actually saw him hand this envelope to this man?"

"Both of us, sir."

"And we saw the rascal pay him, too," said Wharton.

"He's got a thousand marks on him in German banknotes." The inspector's eyes gleamed.

"That will settle it, and he will have other papers about him, or in his room—not much doubt about that."

"You're going to arrest him?" asked Wharton.

"You can depend on that," said the inspector, with a smile.

"You'll come back to Greyfriars with us?"

Inspector Grimes shook his head.

"No need to wake the school at this hour," he said.

"You say Herr Muhlbach knows nothing of your dealing with his confederate?"

"Nothing at all. He must have been back at Greyfriars, or nearly, by the time we tackled this rotter in the wood."

"Then the best thing you boys can do is to go quietly back to bed," said Inspector Grimes. "You can leave the matter in my hands. I shall have the school watched at once, and the first thing in the morning Fritz Muhlbach will be arrested and searched. As for you, I shall speak to your headmaster, and, under the circumstances, I am certain he will forgive you for this escapade."

"I suppose it will have to come out that we were out of bounds?" said Harry.

"It must. You will be wanted as witnesses at the trial of this pair of precious rascals. But you can depend on your headmaster overlooking this prank, considering the service you have rendered to the country."

"Thank you," said Harry.

And the two juniors took their leave, leaving Inspector Grimes in a state of most complete satisfaction. The capture of two German spies, with the information they had gathered, and a considerable sum of German paper-money, was a triumph for the Courtfield inspector, and he had reason to be satisfied.

Wharton and Squiff hurried back to Greyfriars.

It was close on dawn when they stood once more in the Remove dormitory.

Nugent and Inky had gone to sleep, but Bob and Johnny Bull were still faithfully on the watch, and they helped the adventurers into the dormitory.

"Well, what's the news?" murmured Bob sleepily. "Blessed if you haven't been out all the giddy night. I'm as sleepy as a dog."

"The best," said Harry cheerfully.

"Spotted the rotters?" asked Johnny Bull.

"What-ho!"

Bob and Johnny Bull listened eagerly, sleepy as they were, to the recital of the startling events of the night. Bob grinned with glee as he listened.

"Fairly got it in the neck!" he said. "Exit Herr Muhlbach—with giddy gyves upon his wrists, like Eugene Aram in the poem! Good egg!"

"Yaw-aw! I'm sleepy," said Johnny Bull. "Let's turn in, for goodness' sake."

And the juniors turned in, and slept the sleep of the just.

They were more than ever reluctant to turn out at the clang of the rising-bell in the morning. But they made the effort, and dressed themselves quickly. At any minute they might hear of the arrival of the police, in search of Herr Muhlbach. And they wanted to be "in at the death," as Squiff expressed it.

Squiff and the Famous Five were first down in the morning, before the school-gates were opened. So far, the juniors had said nothing of the matter outside their own select circle. They did not want the risk of putting Herr Muhlbach on his guard; although, as the school was already watched, there would have been little chance of the spy's escape.

They grinned as Coker of the Fifth came out of the School House. There was a surprise in store for Horace Coker that morning.

The task he had set himself of "keeping an eye" on Fritz Muhlbach, and showing him up, had been taken out of his hands, and brought to a successful conclusion, entirely without the knowledge of the great Coker. Whether the Fifth-Former would be pleased or otherwise was a question.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry affably. "Found any more German spies yet, Coker?"

Coker frowned majestically.

"If you want any more, you've only got to say," said Bob liberally. "We'll keep you supplied with German spies, so long as the props of the Junior Dramatic Society last."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Can't say fairer than that!" grinned Squiff.

"Cheeky fags!" growled Coker, and he stalked majestically away.

At breakfast the Famous Five were in a state of suppressed excitement, so keen that they forgot to be sleepy. Herr Muhlbach appeared at breakfast as usual, and immediately after breakfast he went to his study.

Inspector Grimes had not yet arrived. The juniors wondered when he was coming.

They looked out of the door of the School House, as eager as the celebrated Sister Anne, for "somebody coming."

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

The helmet of a policeman appeared in the old gateway of Greyfriars. A burly constable strode in, and beside him the dapper figure of the inspector could be seen.

They came directly towards the School House.

"Now, look out for the giddy circus!" murmured Squiff.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Coker. "What do those bobbies want? Looks as if they're after something. Potter, old man, and I haven't been able to send 'em any information yet. I hope to have some proofs shortly, but—"

"Perhaps somebody else has chipped in, and done the trick, while you've been thinking about it, Coker," suggested Bob Cherry demurely.

The inspector came in. He nodded cordially to the chums of the Remove.

"Will one of you young gentlemen take me to Herr Muhlbach?" he asked genially.

"What-ho!" said Wharton.

And he led the way to the German-master's study.

Inspector Grimes knocked at the door. The constable was close behind him, and behind him again was a crowd of excited Greyfriars fellows. They were all wondering what it meant, and a good many voices were heard to whisper that it looked as if that ass Coker had been right after all.

"Come in!"

Inspector Grimes entered the German-master's study. Herr Muhlbach rose from his chair, and laid down his morning pipe.

The sight of the inspector evidently startled him, but he kept himself well in hand, and tried to smile genially.

"Good-morning, inspector!" he said, as calmly as he could. As yet the spy did not know that there had been any discovery, but the sight of a police-inspector and a constable behind him naturally made him feel uneasy.

"Good-morning!" said the inspector cheerfully. "Nice morning, sir?"

"Very nice," agreed the Herr. "You have some business with me?"

"Exactly. I am sorry that it is my duty to take you into custody, Herr Muhlbach," said the inspector—without looking at all sorry, as a matter of fact. On the other hand, his looks expressed the most complete satisfaction.

(Concluded on page lii. of cover.)

Herr Muhlbach started back.

"You—you are joking, inspector."

"Not at all."

"But—but what is the charge?"

"You are charged with being a spy in the service of a foreign power, now at war with this country," said the inspector grimly, "and it is my duty to warn you that whatever you say may be taken down to be used in evidence against you at your trial."

The German turned pale. He cast a hunted look round the study.

Outside, in the passage, there was a buzz of voices that became a roar. The inspector's words had been heard by a score of fellows, and they flew through the school like wild-fire.

Herr Muhlbach licked his dry lips.

"But this—this is ridiculous!" he stammered. "I am a tutor. The headmaster here can answer for me. I am an honest man!"

"You will be able to prove that at your trial, I hope," said the inspector genially. "We have evidence that you met another German—now in custody—and handed him an envelope containing papers and diagrams—Ah, would you!"

The German master had made a leap for the window.

The inspector was on him in a flash. There was a moment's struggle, and the constable rushed forward; but he was not needed. The German master sank into a chair with the handcuffs clinking on his wrists.

He was a prisoner!

"I'll trouble you to come with me," said the inspector cheerfully.

"Mein Gott, I am lost!"

"Looks like it, don't it?" smiled the inspector. "John Bull isn't so sleepy as some of you German johnnies imagine. He can spot a spy now and then. Good-morning, Mr. Quelch!"

The Remove master, startled and amazed, pushed through the crowd in the passage and entered the study.

"Inspector Grimes, what is this? Herr Muhlbach—"

"A German spy, sir."

"Impossible!"

"We have proof!"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"And I dare say we shall find further proof here," added the inspector, as he proceeded to make a business-like search of the study.

He was right! Papers and plans, and a considerable sum of money in German Reichsbank notes came to light. Mr. Quelch looked on aghast. The inspector smiled genially. It was one of the happiest mornings of his life.

Leaving the constable in charge of the wretched spy, the inspector visited the Head to explain to him, and to make the excuses of the two juniors, whose midnight excursion had been the means of bringing the whole plot to light. Then the inspector and the policeman departed with their prisoner, followed to the gates by nearly all Greyfriars.

Herr Muhlbach vanished from sight, never to be seen at Greyfriars again. With his confederate, and others rascals who were discovered later by means of the papers that had been secured, he went to his just punishment.

Harry Wharton and Squiff were called into the Head's study immediately the inspector had gone.

They entered in a rather uneasy mood, not knowing exactly how Dr. Locke would have taken the matter. But they were soon reassured. The Head of Greyfriars shook hands with them cordially.

"Inspector Grimes has told me the part you have played in bringing to justice a most unscrupulous and conscienceless rascal," said the Head. "You have acted—ahem!—very irregularly, but, under the circumstances, I shall not mention that. You have acted very well, my boys, and I shall forgive your action in breaking bounds. But—ahem!—don't let it occur again."

And the Head dismissed them.

The part the Famous Five and Squiff had taken in the exposure of the spy was soon known all over Greyfriars, and they were the observed of all observers. Only Coker of the Fifth was furious. Coker bore down upon the chums of the Remove, and told them what he thought of them, at great length and with great emphasis. Indeed, to listen to Coker, one might have imagined that the German spy was his own private property, and that the juniors had been guilty of trespass, at least, if not actual burglary, in unmasking him and placing him in the hands of the authorities. However, nobody minded Coker.

As Bob Cherry cheerfully remarked, they could afford to let old Coker gas, since they had secured the "kudos" of capturing the spy in the school.

THE END.

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By SIDNEY DREW.

READ THIS FIRST.

Ferrers Lord and his old companions, Rupert Thurston, Ching-Lung, the Chinese prince, Gan-Waga, the Esquimo, with Hal Honour, Prout, Maddock & Co., are once more on board the submarine, the Lord of the Deep. This time they are in chase of Lord's wonderful machine, named the Unconquerable, which is a marvellous combination of submarine and airship. The Unconquerable has been stolen by the millionaire's enemies, but a temporary fouling of the propellers enable Prout and Barry O'Rooney to get aboard. They overpower the men aboard. Barry, donning his diving-dress, leaves the ship to try and attract the Lord of the Deep with the peculiar bell which Ferrers Lord invented—which can be heard for miles by any submarine fixed with a "receiver" constructed by the millionaire. Barry's attempts are not in vain, and Ferrers Lord, who, with his men, is delighted at the prospect of once more seeing their friends and the Unconquerable, watches the little machine that gives them the position of the signallers. But the needle whizzes madly for a moment, and then swings back to its former position. It has broken. Hal Honour, however, succeeds in making another instrument, by which they once more get into communication with Barry O'Rooney. Suddenly there is a terrific explosion from a long way away, and Hal Honour fears the Unconquerable has been blown up. Meanwhile, Mike Kennedy, Ching-Lung's secretary, who is aboard the prince's yacht, runs down a small sailing-vessel, which is found to contain the bound and gagged form of Jeff Sanday, who has just succeeded in obtaining the insurance money of his vessel, which ran ashore at the time the Unconquerable was stolen. He informs Kennedy that every penny of his money has been stolen from him, and that the vessel which they collided with was full of dynamite. Jeff Sanday describes his thrilling adventures, when a detective enters, with orders to take possession of the yacht, as she is stated to carry explosives. Meanwhile, the men on the Unconquerable manage to set the machinery in motion, and the vessel rises to the surface once more. Prout and Barry were looking forward to seeing their comrades of the Lord of the Deep again, when suddenly Martin Arkland enters the room with a bayoneted rifle at his shoulder.

"Hands up!" he shouts. "I am not beaten yet!"
(Now go on with the story.)

The Wrath of Herr Schwartz—Ben Maddock Promises to be Cheerful—Queer News by Cable—The Diver Makes a Discovery.

It was some time before Hal Honour turned his head. He looked disgusted. The sound that had terrified him was explained by further sounds, a succession of brisk reverberations. The Unconquerable had not blown up, as he had dreaded. In all probability they were running away from the lost submarine. The sounds were caused by the exploding shells of some battleship at target firing.

"Stop!"

Ching-Lung transmitted the order. He grumbled bitterly when he understood the reason for it.

"Hang it, that spoils everything! Can't we go up and tell 'em to shut their row? Anyhow, let's have a look at them."

"As you like, Ching," said Ferrers Lord. "It's a nuisance but they will soon have finished. If they are British vessels I may speak to them."

The picture that appeared on the disc revealed two French cruisers and a first-class battleship. They were firing their heavy guns at a floating target a couple of miles away. The Lord of the Deep sank again.

"After all, it is only postponing the happy hour," said Thurston cheerfully. "We shall find them presently."

"Not with that," grunted Hal Honour. "In an hour!"

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Once more his screwdriver was brought out, and the instrument came down. A third was fitted, and Ferrers Lord took his turn at the telephone. The firing was over, and the French warships had steamed away. Again gloom began to settle down upon the submarine.

"Souse me, Joe!" remarked Ben Maddock. "I can't keep my pipe alight, and the 'baccy tastes like smokin' ay. What's that a sign of?"

"Sluggish liver," replied Joe.

"No, it ain't; it's a sign of the hump, Joe. Drat them Frenchmen! The unthinkin' brutes have fair done us in!"

"You forget they didn't know, my boy," replied the carpenter. "Personally, I don't dislike Frenchies at all. We're very good pals wi' 'em just now, and I 'ope we'll keep on being good pals, so just smile away. You can't down Barry and old Tommy Prout."

"Ach, I dink not dot dey drown," sighed the cook, "bud I am fill mit grief. Shaf! I would smash all der Frenchmans alive mit ein growbar! I do not like Frenchmans. Nein—nein, dey vas no goot. Dey vas vicked like all der Esgimos."

"I know one Eskimo that loves you, cook," said Joe; "and he must love you a lot, for he's called his dog after you."

"A fact, souse me!" added Maddock, with a feeble grin. "Gan-Waga, out o' pure affection, has named his new tyke 'Blue-eyed Shorts.'"

The cook gazed from one to the other to see whether they were joking or not.

"He says the tyke is just like you in the face, and has the same colour of hair," went on the carpenter.

"And the same sort of voice, souse me, when you tread on its tail and make it yelp pen-and-ink," murmured the bo'sun. "You ought to be complimented. It's a nice tyke, and he thinks when he's trained its moustache a bit and taught it to squint, they won't know which is you and which ain't."

"Dot vas drue, yes?" hissed Herr Schwartz, rubbing his right fist against the palm of his left hand. "Ar-r-r! Dot vas drue? You not choke, is ud? Dunder! Ach, der insult! Der miserable hound, he vas gall after me! He vas like me, is ud? Ar-r-r-r! He vas like me, yes?"

"Said he'd got cook's soft and soothin' smile, didn't he, Ben, and a jolly sight better manners?" inquired Joe.

Mr. Benjamin Maddock nodded, and Herr Schwartz proceeded to put an edge on a carving-knife.

"Goot!" he said. "Ha, ha, ha! Dot Esgimo he haf ein merry wit. Dot vas ein goot choke. Ar-r-r! I like der tog, but I dink Gan-Vaga like bedder der tog. He could ead der tog. Yes, yes—ach, yes! He shall both ead der tog and he shall ead der vords of insuld he sbeak! Ar-r-r-r! Of der tog I shall make ein pie—ein beautiful pie, mit ein lofely grust, and all gravy inside. Und Gan-Vaga he shall ead ud. Ha, ha, ha!"

Uttering a wild and dreadful laugh, the cook savagely plunged the knife into the heart of a Cheshire cheese. Joe and Ben were too dispirited to laugh themselves. Schwartz stabbed the cheeze a second time, and gave the knife another scrape on the steel.

"Ja, ja! Ein pie—ein pie mit tog in it!" he snarled. "Ein lofely tog-pie, all for lofely Gan-Vaga! Ha, ha, ha! He gannod insuld me."

The bo'sun and the carpenter were fully aware that Herr Schwartz had no intention of converting his namesake into pie-mbat, for the cook was just as fond of dogs as any of the crew. Still, they knew he would have something to say to Gan about the liberty that had been taken with his name, and they wished Gan would stroll along. The Eskimo, however, remained in his safe and cool retreat, the swimming-bath.

"Souse me," said Benjamin at last, "I'm sick of this! I'll go and ax point blank for news, if I has to ax the chief."

"Ein pie—ein pie mit tog in it!" hissed the cook. "Ar-r-r! Ein pio dot vill bark at der insulding plackguard! Ar-r-r-r!"

Prout tiptoed to the door of the saloon and drew back. The chief himself was at the telephone, but Ching-Lung caught sight of the bo'sun's anxious face and smiled reassuringly.

"There's no fresh news, Ben," he said, "but it will all be well. Don't look so miserable. We shall hear that tinkler again before long."

"I 'ope so, souse me!" sighed the bo'sun. "It seems a bit lonesome wi'out them two boys, sir, not the same ship, sir, and we all says so."

"But they'll turn up chuckling, my dear lad. Put a merry face on it. Don't let them see you looking down in the mouth, for they think a lot of your opinion, very likely a lot more than it's worth. Set an example, like a good chap. Keep on being cheerful and talk cheerfully."

"I'll try, sir," answered the bo'sun, but you might have axed me something a lot easier."

Ching-Lung went on making artificial trout-fica with great skill. Thurston came in and threw himself into a chair.

"I'm beginning to feel the strain," he said. "It's giving me a headache. You chaps might be built of iron instead of flash and blood. I'm about dead beat."

Ferrers Lord moved in his chair, and the Lord of the Deep sank to the bottom and came to rest.

"Take this, Rupert, for ten minutes or so," said the millionaire. "We must see if anything is known in London."

The steel shutters rolled back. A lamp flashed through the water, and Ching-Lung saw the shadowy form of a diver move past the glass and disappear.

He came back, and another diver joined him. Ching-Lung put away his feathers, hooks, and silk, and waited, whistling to himself. There was a long delay. At last the two divers returned, and a bell rang.

"Hallo!" cried Ching-Lung. "Say it's good if there's any news at all."

He heard the millionaire's quiet laugh.

"It is queer news; but not wholly unexpected, after a fashion," said the voice of Ferrers Lord. "Your yacht, with Kennedy aboard, has been in collision in the Thames, and has been towed back for repairs. The police are suspicious, and have taken possession of her. She sank a Dutch eel-boat. The one survivor—at least, the only man they rescued—turns out to be Jeff Sanday, late captain of the Grudon. One of Guthrey's boats sailed just an hour before your yacht. She —"

But Ching-Lung had dropped the receiver of the telephone, for a diver was standing close to the glass with an object in his hands that drove all thoughts of Kennedy and the yacht out of his head—a wooden keg.

"Submarine Unconquerable below. Unable to rise. Four men aboard."

They bent over the splintered and dripping keg. One of the staves had been driven in. Evidently some ship had ridden over it. There was the message, the call for aid. The keg might have drifted far before it reached the bottom. Except for its iron hoops it would probably never have sunk at all. But who could tell which way the tide had been running when the keg had been struck adrift?

"Another riddle," said Ferrers Lord. "Can you read it for us, Honour?"

The engineer shook his head.

"They must be near," said Ching-Lung. "Why don't they sound the bell? I know why, but I don't like to think about it."

"Bosh! We must face these things, Ching," said the millionaire. "They have trapped a useful man in this fellow Arkland if they have managed to trap him. You imagine that they cannot go out and sound the bell because they have exhausted their supply of air? A man like Arkland surely understands how to manipulate a force pump. Come, we are idling."

He gave an order to one of the divers. A long iron bar was driven into the sand, and a lamp tied to it. The lamp was the centre of a circle, with a radius of two miles. With her searchlights blazing through the water the submarine followed the circle. At the second revolution she narrowed the circle by a furlong, at the third by two furlongs. It was weary work.

"There's the lamp, sir," said Maddock at last.

They saw it glimmering faintly, a luminous blotch in the darkness. They had returned almost to their starting-place.

"That keg must have drifted a long way," said Rupert Thurston dismally. "What's to be done now? Suggest something, for pity's sake!"

"We'll take in the lamp, and I must use the cable," answered Ferrers Lord. "We cannot perform miracles, Rupert. If all ends well, I shall be almost thankful that this has happened. It only proves how much there is yet to be done. We are only like children playing with a new toy. When we build our new Unconquerable we must give her eyes and ears and a voice. Yes, there is much to be done."

The divers went out and tapped the submarine cable. Ten minutes later Ching-Lung entered the saloon.

"Any news?" he asked.

"None so far, Ching. Ah, here comes something! I must answer this. What shall I say?"

"What you think best, as it's from the London police," said Ching-Lung. "They'll take more notice of you than of me."

"You are right in that. Your yacht may as well stay where she is now, and Kennedy come on by train. And Chan-Song-Pu?"

"Oh, let him stay! He'll be more useful in London. You don't sufficiently appreciate that rascal, Lord. Chan will surprise you one day."

(Next Week's Instalment of this Serial will contain Some Startling Developments. Be Sure of Your Copy and Order in Advance.)

