

GRAND SERIES OF MOUNTED POLICE STORIES!
STARTING THIS WEEK!

No. 834. Vol. XXV.

Week ending February 2nd, 1924.

The Magnet 2^d

Library

of
School & Detective Stories.

EVERY
MONDAY



BILLY BUNTER EATS HIS HAT!

SIGNOR SPEZZI PUTS THE 'FLUENCE ON!

(An amusing incident from the humorous long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars, inside.)



THE MOUNTED POLICE!

IN this week's issue of the **MAGNET** appears the first of a grand series of true-to-life stories about the tremendous activities of the Mounted Police. I have rushed this brilliant feature because of the outstanding merit of these vivid narratives of the patrol men whose vigilance and pluck means the safety of everybody, the security of banks, and warehouses, and the transport lines of the world.

"THE GOLD ESCORT!"

There you have the title of next week's yarn in this striking series. You will be able to get a very sound impression of what these tales really represent by reading the dramatic episode in this week's issue of the **MAGNET**. The story for our next number is even finer, with its wonderful account of what the Mounted Police achieve in Australia, where they are called upon to defend with their lives the gold freights from the backlands to the cities on the coast line.

HEROES ALL!

Some people imagine that the day of the Mounted Police has passed. It is not so. What happened in the past is occurring now. The mounted man on the frontiers of the Empire stands like a sentinel. He represents the force of civilisation and ordered life, and the good of it all. When you see a gripping film of the work of the "M.P.'s" your imagination gets fired by the sight of the lonely watcher, like a statue, horse and man, thrown up into vivid relief with a glimpse of the wild, trackless country with its untold perils. That's just it. The mounted man is on the watch. Often enough he is single-handed against long odds. Just keep your eye on the new series. It is a treat.

"THE YELLOW CLAW!"

By Hedley Scott.

Next Monday, too, sees the first instalment of our new serial of the stage. When I read the opening chapters of this intensely fascinating story, I did not know which to admire most—i.e., the dexterous manner in which the author has dove-tailed in some of the myriad interests of the theatrical world with other sensational features of the life of our time, or the insight revealed into the realm behind the footlights. The theatre always holds one. It has an appeal to everybody, and that is one of the reasons why I selected the new serial. It gets there, and it gets you all the time. Next week sees the opening of "The Yellow Claw," with its weird mystery and strange romance. Look out for it.

DRAMA AND FICTION.

That reminds me of a point which may interest you. I feel sure it will. In saying that much I am not drawing a bow at a venture, because I know from THE **MAGNET** LIBRARY.—No. 834.

letters to hand how closely the stories in the **MAGNET** are watched, and how keenly they are analysed. No greater compliment could be paid. Communications reach me from all over the world, splendid little reviews of past yarns, comments which exhibit genuine knowledge of the world. The writers of these welcome letters will understand, the same as others, what I mean when I say that the greatest story is a drama. If it is a real tale, holding the mirror up to nature you find yourself in memory placing it in action in the Theatre Royal of the mind. It always is so. You see the characters making their entrances and exits. They become real people. You may be irritated by their actions at times, but you are fair-minded enough to see the reason for certain happenings, and some apparent blindness of perception. Undoubtedly the right sort of story is a drama with atmosphere. Of course, a writer can put in more than is possible with a theatrical craftsman. When you have read the start of the "Yellow Claw" you will say the **MAGNET** has got another winner, also that the author is lucky in being a "twicer," otherwise he has a play and a story in one.

"MAULY'S AMAZING ADVENTURE!"

By Frank Richards.

What everybody says after reading a yarn which features the inimitable Mauleverer is just "Good old Mauly!" A remark like that shows the popularity of his lazy lordship. It covers the whole vast subject of Mauly's thoroughly attractive temperament. For, say what anyone may, a languid, indolent fellow is usually liked. The contrary can be told to the marines, or the submariners. Nobody else would believe it. The explanation is too obvious to need much stressing. It is this way. The "born tired" party is generally assuming a quality in order to conceal real grit. One knows the amusing listless fellow who, whenever the need comes, throws off his guise and wades into action as freely as a smart young whale disporting its giddy self in the Northern seas.

**DON'T
BE DISAPPOINTED!
GET YOUR COPY
of the
"HOLIDAY
ANNUAL"
NOW!**

MAULY FOR EVER!

In next week's Greyfriars story Mauleverer is seen in a plaguety difficult situation. He becomes the chief participator in a truly amazing adventure which calls for something more than sleep. It is distressing in the extreme, naturally, for Mauly is not accustomed to spade work. The manner in which he is brought right up against the need for strenuous toil will be read with deep interest. The plot is brainy and gilt-edged. It hums with incident, and fairly sweeps you along on a strong tide of expectancy and astonishment that some things can be. Possibly, too, you will shed a tear, or two, maybe, if you are in right down sympathetic mood, for Bunter. The fat clam is dragged into the limelight and the consequences are none too pleasant. But the Owl has himself to blame for the tragic results. A boaster always comes to grief.

MAULY'S "MAGNET."

Having said that much about the grim disaster which blots out the sunshine from Mauleverer's bright young life, though not, thank goodness, permanently, it is only right to refer to another tip-top attraction in our next number. This is a "Mauly" Supplement. The "Greyfriars Herald" is devoted next Monday to the schoolboy earl. I do not mean that Harry Wharton & Co. are more than ordinarily friendly to their chum. They like him well enough, of course. It is merely that they wisely felt they could not do better than "write up" Mauly. This noble work has been done with a vengeance. The famous bath chair, all Mauly's little foibles, his geniality, his generosity, his occasional moroseness—everything comes in for treatment. The annals of Greyfriars are particularly rich in records of what Mauleverer has done—likewise the things he has not done. The latter would fill a haystack of quarto volumes.

MORE TO FOLLOW.

The New Year is still a callow, very young affair, but already you have an idea of the 1924 programme of the **MAGNET**. There are even finer things to come.

MEMORY.

To some people memory is regarded as a sort of poetic adjunct, but it must be more than that. I was reminded of what a fair, average memory can do only the other day by reading a lengthy letter from a chum. The writer had not saved his copies of the **MAGNET**, but he had most of the stories by heart. Reference to the file proved he was right. Then we get the knowledgeable fellow at the music-hall who remembers dates without number. A useful chap to have as a city remembrancer, that! But the memory is a tricky jade often enough. It is not that the store in the mind of things believed to be forgotten ever really fails. The facts are there safe enough, pretty well everything that has happened, or which has affected, even in a slight degree, the memoriser. But certain circumstances have to be conjured up to permit of access to the mental pigeon-holes where the old data is warehoused. Actually, I take it, you do not forget anything, but frequently enough—and this may be just as well, all things considered—your card index system shows itself at fault.

Your Editor.

Horace Coker fondly imagines that, could he but induce Blundell to give him a chance in the Fifth Form footer eleven his powers as a footballer would come to be recognised and appreciated. Coker's methods of persuasion are forceful, to say the least, but he fails to bring Blundell to the proper state of mind. Then, like a gift from the gods, comes a certain gentleman who, Coker is certain, will work the trick for him. Coker is not given to much thinking, but his latest "spasm" is aptly described as—



Coker's Brain-Wave!

A Magnificent Story of
Harry Wharton & Co. of
Greyfriars, with Horace
Coker—the great man of the
Fifth—well in the limelight
Related by
FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Coker Means Business!

"THERE'S trouble in the Fifth," remarked Bob Cherry.
"Oh, blow the Fifth!" yawned Johnny Bull.
"But there's trouble—"
"Oh, let 'em rip!"

Harry Wharton & Co., the heroes of the Remove, were not specially interested in the Fifth. The Fifth were a senior Form, and the Remove were the Lower Fourth—mere juniors; in fact, the Fifth called them fags.

Nevertheless, the heroes of the Remove had a good opinion of themselves, and they agreed in regarding the Remove Form as "IT!" It was common knowledge in the Remove that the Fourth, the Shell, the Fifth, and the Sixth, were simply "also rans."

Therefore, when Bob Cherry announced that there was trouble in the Fifth, the other members of the Famous Five declined to be impressed. Trouble in the Fifth might come and go without disturbing their serenity in the least.

"But—" went on Bob.
"Dear old man," said Frank Nugent, "don't worry about the Fifth. The question is, are we going to the pictures at Courtfield this afternoon, or to the new show—"

"But it's Coker!"
"Oh, Coker!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
The chums of the Remove chuckled. It was a curious thing that the mere mention of Coker's name generally made fellows smile.

Coker of the Fifth was not a humorist. He was quite a serious person—very serious indeed. But the greatest humorist that ever set the table in a roar would not have been considered, at Greyfriars, quite so entertaining as Coker of the Fifth.

The mere fact that Coker of the Fifth believed that he could play football was funny, though not, perhaps, quite so funny as the way he played it.

laughing. "What's old Horace up to now?"

"I hear that he's tackling Blundell about his claim to play in the Fifth Form eleven. They've got a match on with the Sixth next Wednesday, and Coker wants a show."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Potter and Greene are trying to stop him. I fancy there's going to be bloodshed in the Fifth Form passage."

"Come on!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Yes, rather!"
Five eager juniors scudded off for the Fifth Form quarters. When Coker of the Fifth was on the war-path, Coker of the Fifth was well worth watching.

The powerful voice of Horace James Coker greeted their ears as they turned the corner into the Fifth Form passage.

"Let go my arm, Potter!"
"I say, Coker, old man—"
"Shut up, Greene!"
"But you see—"
"Cheese it!"

Potter and Greene of the Fifth were Coker's pals, and they were now playing the part of very devoted friends, trying to save Coker from himself, as it were. Coker's rugged face was red and wrathful.

His voice, of which the dulcet tones resembled those of the celebrated Bull of Bashan, rang the length of the Fifth Form passage, and beyond.

"I'm going to put it to him plain!" said Coker. "I'm not standing this any longer. Has my name been down for a single match, except for the blessed challenge cup I put up a couple of months ago, since the football started last term?"

"Well, you see—"
"You fellows know how I play footer!"

"Oh dear! Yes."

"Yet Blundell leaves me out every time. He can't say that he's overlooked my claims by accident. I've kept myself pretty well to the fore."

"You have!" gasped Potter.
"I've reminded him of my existence

every time the Fifth have played a match."

"Yes. But—"
"He refused to play me even in a match with the Shell last week."

"Well, dash it all, Coker!" said Greene, "the Fifth couldn't risk being beaten by a junior Form."

"Beaten!" roared Coker.

"I—I mean—"
"Properly speaking, I ought to be captain of the Fifth," said Coker. "It's well known that the best man ought to have the job. But the Form don't seem to see it."

"They don't!" agreed Potter.
"But that's no excuse for Blundell leaving out his best man every time consistently. I quite understand that he doesn't want to be put in the shade. That's rather mean, but it's natural in a way. Still, there's the Form record to be considered—and my rights."

"But—"
"Jealousy of this sort ought to be discouraged," said Coker. "I'm down on it. I'm going to put it plain to Blundell, and if he doesn't play up like a man, I shall take drastic measures."

"Oh, my hat!"
"You fellows can come and see fair play if you like."

"I—I say, we're going down to Courtfield this afternoon, you know," urged Potter. "We may be late for the show at the Ionic at this rate."

"Blow the show at the Ionic!"

"But you've booked the seats!"

"Blow the seats!"

"I say, Coker, old man—"

"I'm going to have this out with Blundell. If you don't let go my arm, George Potter, I shall punch you in the eye!" roared Coker.

George Potter let go Coker's arm. Coker was all sorts of an ass, but he had a very hefty punch, and Potter had no desire to sample it, especially with his eye.

Released by his restraining chum, Horace Coker stalked along the Fifth Form passage towards Blundell's study.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 834.

He was going to have it out with the captain of the Fifth. Coker was determined on that.

Potter and Greene looked at one another.

"We've done all we can!" murmured Greene.

"We have!" agreed Potter. "Let's get out!"

And they got out. Devoted friendship might have induced them to follow Coker to Blundell's study, and carry away what was left of him when he had finished with the captain of the Fifth. But they were a little fed-up with Coker. They had been arguing with him for ten minutes, and they were tired.

But Harry Wharton & Co. did not get out. They were interested in Coker's campaign, and curious to know in what manner he would leave Blundell's study. "On his neck" was most probable.

"Come on!" said Bob cheerily.

And the Famous Five followed the burly, stalking figure of Horace Coker, and arrived at Blundell's door in time to see the entertainment.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Drastic Measures!

B LUNDELL, the captain of the Fifth, was seated at his study table, with a pen in his hand and a worried frown on his brow. It was a half-holiday, and as the weather was too bad for footer, Blundell would have liked to take a spin on his motor-bike, happily splashing himself and others with rich, thick mud. But that afternoon Blundell's "stink-bike" had to repose in its shed, unspotted by the chalky mud of the Kentish lanes, what time George Blundell wrestled with mathematics in his study.

Blundell was a great footballer, an ornament of the First Eleven, and captain of the Fifth Form team. But in class he did not shine. Mr. Prout, his Form master, utterly indifferent to Blundell's record as a goal-getter, considered him sadly backward. It was useless for Blundell to explain to him that he was well up in the serious business of life—footer, from Blundell's point of view—and that class work—from the same point of view—was chiefly rot. Mr. Prout would never have understood.

In his mathematical "set" Blundell was below a good many Shell fellows; indeed, there were fellows in the Fourth who could have walked over him at maths. Blundell did not mind that in the least. But his Form master minded, and Mr. Lascelles, the mathematics master, minded. So here was Blundell, on a half-holiday, working away at elusive problems with a frowning and weary brow, and a keen desire to kick somebody.

It was at this propitious moment that Coker butted in.

Coker could not have dropped in more opportunely. The desire to kick somebody, to punch somebody very hard, was growing on Blundell. It is greatly to be feared that he would even have liked to thump the mathematics master, and would have had no rooted objection even to landing his knuckles on the august nose of Mr. Prout himself. And then Coker happened.

The deadly glare with which Blundell greeted his appearance in the study doorway might have warned Coker. But it was said of old that "fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

"Well?" grunted Blundell.

"About the football!" began Coker.

"I'm busy!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 834.

"Sorry! But this won't wait."

"Won't it?" said Blundell, his glare growing more deadly, till he gazed at Coker like a basilisk.

"No! The Form match with the Sixth comes off on Wednesday. Is my name going down in the list?"

"List!" said Blundell. "What list?"

"The football list, of course!"

"The football list!" Blundell was sardonic. "What on earth would your name be doing in a football list, Coker?"

Outside the study, Harry Wharton & Co. smiled at one another. The entertainment was beginning. Blundell was calm—deadly calm—but it was like the tropical calm before the hurricane.

"I offer my services," said Coker.

"To the Sixth?"

"No. To the Fifth, of course!" said Coker, puzzled.

"Then you must speak to Wingate."

"Wingate?"

"Yes. He's captaining the Sixth Form eleven."

"I don't quite follow," said Coker. Coker's powerful brain never did grasp things quickly, and sarcasm was wasted on him. "I'm offering my services to the Fifth—my own Form."

"That's right! Then you must play for the Sixth."

"Play for the Sixth?"

"That's it! Your services are always given to the opposing team, I believe. Play for the Sixth, and the Fifth will win hands down. You couldn't help us better!"

It dawned upon Coker that this was sarcasm.

"You silly, cheeky ass!" he roared.

"I think I mentioned that I'm busy," said Blundell.

"I want a plain answer!" hooted Coker. "I claim to play for my Form. I'm willing to take any position. If you're looking for a really good centre-forward, I'm your man!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blundell.

"But I'm as good a half as you'll find at Greyfriars, and at back I don't think I have an equal," said Coker. "But I'm willing to keep goal. Being a thoroughly good all-round man, you can put me in where you like. See?"

"I see. Good-bye!"

"Are you putting me in?" bawled Coker.

"No; I'm putting you out if you don't clear."

"Mind, I mean business," said Coker. "My claims have been passed over long enough. If I don't play for the Fifth in the next match there will be trouble. Now, yes or no?"

"No!"

"You will have it, then," said Coker, pushing back his cuffs. "I'm not standing injustice lying down."

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the passage. Coker's meaning was clear, but his way of expressing himself was a little mixed.

Blundell rose to his feet. His look was almost genial. He had wrestled with mathematics till he was feeling almost homicidal. He felt that it was quite kind of Coker to come to his study and ask for trouble at such a time. Some seniors would have found solace in cuffing a fag. But Blundell was a good-natured fellow, and hated bullying. Coker was just what he wanted.

"Two seconds!" he said cheerily.

"Eh? What do you mean—two seconds?"

"Two seconds to get out of my study," explained Blundell.

"Put up your hands!" roared Coker, and he rushed to the attack.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, they're going it!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Coker!"

"Back up, Blundell!"

Harry Wharton and Co. crammed in the doorway. The scene in Blundell's study was much too good to miss.

Coker's ferocious rush drove the captain of the Fifth across the study, and he brought up against the bookcase. There he rallied, and came at Coker.

Coker was muscular, powerful, hefty, there was no doubt about that. What he did not know about boxing would have filled huge volumes; but he was strong; he was obstinate, and he had unbounded pluck. His punch was terrific—if it landed. But when he had to deal with a boxer, Coker's terrific punches generally landed on the empty air.

He got in two or three drives that made the captain of the Fifth blink. There was a spurt of crimson from Blundell's nose.

After that, Coker's thrashing fists sawed the air, while Blundell walked all over him.

Crash!

The collision between Coker and the study floor almost made the room shake.

He lay and blinked up at Blundell. The captain of the Fifth breathed hard and stared down at him.

"Up with you," he said. "You're not licked yet."

"Licked!" gasped Coker. "Think you could lick me? Why, I'll make shavings of you."

He scrambled up, and came on. A minute later there was a crash and a roar. The roar came from the Famous Five in the doorway. Coker, spinning back from a right-hand drive, crashed into the interested juniors and fairly strewn them in the passage.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Whooop!"

Harry Wharton & Co. went sprawling, and over them sprawled Coker of the Fifth.

"Ow!" gasped Coker. "Wow! Yow! Oooooop!" He sat up dazedly. "Oh, crumbs! Wow, ow!"

"Mmmmmmm!" came from underneath Coker. He was sitting on the dusky features of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, though he was too dazed to note that circumstance for the moment.

"Come in and have a little more," gasped Blundell. "I'm beginning to enjoy this! This is better than maths! Come on, Coker!"

"Oh, my hat! Oh, dear!"

"Mmmmmmm!" came an agonised moan from under Coker.

The next moment Horace Coker leaped to his feet with a fiendish yell.

"Ow, I'm bitten! Yow!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh sat up dizzily.

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

"Yow-ow-ow-woop!"

"Aren't you coming in again, Coker?" asked Blundell. "I'm rather busy this afternoon, as I told you; but I can spare you a little more time."

Horace Coker came in. He was not beaten yet. He came in with a breathless rush, and the combat was resumed in Blundell's study, with terrific vim.

It lasted a full minute. Then Coker of the Fifth came flying through the doorway again. This time the Removites stood clear.

Crash!

Coker landed in the passage.

"Oooooooooooooop!"

Coker was finished.

Blundell looked out of the study with a smile.

"You fags might help Coker home," he suggested. And he shut his door and sat down to mathematics again, a little breathless but feeling much better.

Harry Wharton and Co. kindly helped

Coker home. They took him by his neck and his feet and whisked him along the passage to his own study. Coker was too far gone to resist. They landed him on his own carpet, and Bob Cherry thoughtfully poured the inkpot upon his flushed and crimson features before leaving him.

Then the Famous Five walked cheerily away.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Generous Bunter!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter met the Famous Five as they strolled back smiling to the Remove passage.

Having enjoyed the Coker entertainment Harry Wharton and Co. proposed to resume the discussion on what was to be done with the afternoon. The rain was drizzling down on Greyfriars and the football ground was weeping. Out of doors did not seem very attractive; but nobody wanted to pass a half-holiday indoors.

"Buzz off, Bunter," said five voices in unison. It was uncertain what the Famous Five were going to do that afternoon; but one thing at least was certain; they weren't going to pass it in the fascinating society of William George Bunter.

Instead of buzzing off, Bunter rolled after them into No. 1 Study. He blinked seriously at the five through his big spectacles.

"I say, you fellows, you're at a loose end this afternoon, you know. I want you to come with me to the Ionic."

"Standing treat?" asked Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"Practically," said Bunter. "I've got seats, and I'm letting you fellows have them cheap."

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Which?"

"I mean it," said Bunter. "Nothing mean about me, I hope. When I've got something, I whack it out with my pals."

"Do you?" said Bob, staring at him. "This is the first I've heard of it. New custom of yours?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"I suppose you haven't got five seats for the Ionic this afternoon?" asked Wharton.

"Yes, I have! Look!"

The chums of the Remove stared. The Ionic was a new building in the town of Courtfield where a variety show was given. There were pictures, there was a band, there was a juggling turn, and a trick cyclist turn, and a hypnotist, and several other attractions. Harry Wharton and Co. had never visited the new show yet, and they had been thinking of doing so that afternoon; but the question of cash was an important consideration.

Bunter laid quite a bundle of tickets on the table. They bore the inscription "Dress Circle" with numbers, and the legend "5s. 9d., including tax."

"Complimentary tickets?" asked Wharton, puzzled.

Bunter sniffed.

"Not at all. I've bought them, of course, to stand treat—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Practically—" added Bunter hastily.

"Oh, only practically?" asked Nugent, with a stare.

"That's it! I'm letting you fellows have these five-shilling tickets at half-a-crown each," said Bunter, impressively.

"My hat!"

The Famous Five of the Remove could only stare at Bunter. The tickets were not specially marked in any way; so they did not look like "complimentary"



The powerful voice of Horace Coker greeted the ears of Harry Wharton & Co. at the corner of the Fifth Form passage. "I say, Coker, old man—" "Shut up, Greene!" snapped Coker. "Let go my arm, Potter!" "But you see, old man," began Potter. "Let go!" roared Coker, his face red and wrathful. "I'm going to put it to Blundell plain. I'm not standing this any longer!"
(See Chapter 1.)

tickets. Besides, there was no reason to suppose that the powers at the Ionic would send a Lower Fourth boy at Greyfriars a batch of free tickets. But if Bunter had paid hard cash for those tickets, and was handing them out at half price to his Form-fellows, it was time for the skies to fall.

"We're dreaming this," said Bob Cherry at last.

"Oh, really, you know! I hope you know by this time how generous I am in money matters," said Bunter.

"Great pip!"

"The dreamfulness is terrific," declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"It's a jolly good show," said Bunter. "I've seen it once, you know. I'm going again. That hypnotic business is the real goods."

"What rot!"

"Well, I've seen it," said Bunter. "Here's a programme—here's the chap—Signor Orlando Spezzi—it's spelt Spezzi, but you pronounce it Spetzi—that's the Italian pronunciation, you know—"

"What the thump do you know about Italian pronunciation?"

"He told me—"

"Eh? Who told you?"

"Oh, nobody!" said Bunter hastily. "I haven't met the chap—"

"Haven't met him?"

"Not at all. I never came across him in the bun-shop at Courtfield, and he never said a word about getting Greyfriars fellows to come in a crowd to see his show on half-holidays."

"My hat!"

"If you think anything of the kind you're making a mistake," said Bunter, blinking at the Famous Five. "I don't

know the man from Adam, of course. How should I?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at."

"Did he give you these tickets?" gasped Wharton.

"Certainly not. I bought them full price, at the box-office, to give you fellows a treat, because we're pals. Don't you run away with the idea that dress-circle seats don't sell at the Ionic. People rush to pay five bob a time to see Signor Spezzi—he told me so."

"When you saw him at the bun-shop—or when you didn't see him?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've heard that the place isn't doing great business," said Harry Wharton with a laugh. "They sell the cheap seats, and the expensive ones are generally empty. But it's rather a new dodge to plant a bundle of tickets on a school-boy to sell."

"Nothing of the kind!" roared Bunter. "I bought—"

"Scat!"

"It's nothing to do with the management, you know, if the signor gave me a few tickets. Why shouldn't he?"

"Then he did?"

"Oh, no! I bought these to give you fellows a treat. Half-a-crown each is pretty cheap, especially with tax included," said Bunter warmly. "Coker took three off my hands at full price. Coker's free with his money."

"He's got more money than sense," agreed Bob.

"Well, it's a ripping show," said Bunter. "I've sold three in the Remove."
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 834.

at eighteenpence, and three to Coker at five-and-nine each, and I've got one for myself and five for you chaps—"

"A round dozen," said Wharton. "Well, as you got them cheap, you can sell them cheap. We were thinking of bob seats if we went."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Take them along the passage and bury them," said Johnny Bull. "Let's go to the picture-palace, you chaps. The Ionic can't be much of a show if they're giving away seats at this rate."

"They're not giving them away!" hooted Bunter. "Naturally, the man gave me a dozen tickets in return for my services."

"What services?"

Bunter started.

"D-d-did I say services? Now, I—I wonder what made me say services?" he stammered.

"Are you going off your rocker?" inquired Nugent.

"N-n-nunno."

"Then what are you burbling about?"

The Famous Five were more and more surprised. That Bunter had got into conversation at the bun-shop with Signor Spezzi, the hypnotist, was fairly clear; also that the signor had handed him a bundle of a dozen seats for nothing. But what "services" Bunter could have rendered in return was a deep mystery. Selling the tickets cheap in the school was scarcely a service to the signor; it was Bunter who benefited by that.

"I—I say, you fellows, don't be late for the show," said Bunter, changing the subject hastily. "Toddy's going, and Redwing, and Squiff. You'd like to come. I'm offering these tickets at eighteenpence—"

"It was half-a-crown a minute ago," grinned Bob.

"Eighteenpence to old pals like you," said Bunter affectionately. "There! I really want you to see this hypnotic show, because it's so jolly good, you know."

"Hypnotism is all spoo!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Well, there are other turns," said Harry Wharton. "We were thinking of bob tickets—but it will run to one-and-six."

"Oh, all right."

"The rightfulness is terrific."

"Taking the lot?" asked Bunter. "Good!"

Five eighteenpences were handed over to William George Bunter, and the chums of the Remove pocketed the tickets. Then they went for their coats and caps. It was rather a long walk to Courtfield, and Bunter proposed telephoning for a taxi-cab. He offered to dodge into Mr. Quelch's study and use the Form-master's telephone for the purpose. He did not, however, offer to pay for the taxi, so the proposition was unanimously turned down.

Harry Wharton and Co. came out into the drizzle, and found Peter Todd, Tom Redwing, and Squiff just starting. The juniors walked out of the school gates together, Billy Bunter rolling on behind.

"Know how Bunter bagged these tickets, Toddy?" asked Bob as they started for Courtfield. "You're his keeper, you know."

Peter shook his head.

"I can't make it out," he answered. "As far as I can see, Bunter met the hypnotist Johnny in the bun-shop the other day at Courtfield, and recognised him as a performer at the Ionic, and had the cheek to speak to him—"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"The man gave him a dozen tickets for the matinee this afternoon," went on THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 834.

Toddy. "Why, I don't know, unless it's to advertise the show at Greyfriars. I suppose it would be a good thing for him if the school took it up. If we come back and say it's a good show, lots of fellows will go, I suppose. But it's rather queer."

"The qucerfulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "I hope the esteemed dishonest Bunter did not bag the tickets bonefully from the pockets of the worthy signor."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cheeky rotter!" howled Bunter. "He gave them to me in return for—for—"

"For what?" demanded Redwing.

"Oh, nothing! The actual fact is that I bought these tickets at the box office specially—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Specially to do you chaps a good turn. And if this is all the thanks I get for my generosity—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah!"

With that classic monosyllable, Billy Bunter rolled on, and declined to pursue the subject. And the chums of the Remove walked on to Courtfield, still considerably puzzled as to what "service" the Owl of the Remove could possibly perform in return for a dozen five-shilling tickets.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

"WINGATE!"

"Not football?" said George Wingate, in an imploring tone.

Potter and Greene smiled, and Horace Coker frowned. Wingate of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, looked quite alarmed. He had heard so much from Coker of the Fifth on the subject of football. He did not want to hear any more.

Coker gave a snort. He was not feeling at his best that afternoon. His argument with Blundell had left him feeling sore, in a double sense. He was sore in mind; and he was sore in body wherever Blundell's knuckles had landed—and they had landed in a good many places.

Coker and Co. were dressed to go out now, and they were waiting at the door for a taxi. Coker, in his lordly way, had telephoned for a taxi. He had good-naturedly taken three five-shilling tickets off Bunter's hands for the Ionic that afternoon—Coker was a good-natured fellow, with all his faults. Likewise, he was an unsuspecting fellow. He had been quite touched by Bunter's story that he, W. G. Bunter, had spent his money on these tickets, and was now unable to pay a debt in the Remove which weighed on his fat conscience. It did not even occur to Coker's mind that Bunter had somehow got the tickets for nothing. Good-naturedly he had taken the tickets off Bunter's hands at full price—money was not an object with Coker; his doting Aunt Judy kept him well supplied with that useful article. And it was just like Coker to "stand" a taxi as well as the tickets, when he took his pals to a show. Coker had his good points, as Potter and Greene acknowledged freely. They rather liked old Coker, with all his funny ways.

Any other fellow would have suggested "whacking out" the taxi fare. Not so Coker! He was bound to pay the fare, and to give the driver half-a-crown over and above. Coker's way of doing these things made him quite popular at times. And as one good turn deserved another, Potter and Greene were prepared to

listen to him talking football, in the taxi. That, they considered, would make the account square.

It was Wingate's ill-luck that brought him along while the three Fifth-formers were waiting for their taxi. Horace Coker started on him at once. And in spite of the Greyfriars captain's imploring remonstrance, it was football that Coker's remarks ran upon.

"Yes," said Coker emphatically. "Football! It's a question of fair play in the games, Wingate! You're head of the games. I don't say you ought to be, that would be stretching it too far, but you are! Now, as head of the games, you ought to see fair play! It's really up to you."

"I try to see fair play," said Wingate, mildly. "Don't ask me for a place in the first eleven, Coker. I don't want to call you names."

Snort from Coker.

"If you choose to chuck away matches, by leaving out the best man you've got, go ahead!" he said. "The school record suffers. That's your lookout."

"I'll try to bear it," murmured Wingate.

"It's another matter," went on Coker. "The Fifth are playing the Sixth next Wednesday. I have a right to play for my Form. Blundell doesn't see it."

"You'd better argue that out with Blundell. I can't interfere in a Form matter, even if I wanted to."

"I should be the first to stop you if you had the cheek to butt into Fifth Form affairs," Coker assured him.

Wingate's eyes gleamed for a moment. Then he smiled.

"Well, as that's how the matter stands, there's nothing doing, is there?" he asked.

"Yes, there is! On Tuesday there's a Fifth Form pick-up, and after that Blundell picks out the men for Wednesday," said Coker. "Now, as head of the games, you have a right to tell Blundell to try any man in the pick-ups."

"That's so," assented Wingate.

"That's all I want," said Coker. "If Blundell has the sense to put me to the test in the pick-up on Tuesday, even he will have to admit that I'm the man for Wednesday's match. See? It's only a question of showing what I can do. After that, if Blundell's petty jealousy leads him to bar me, the Fifth will jolly well make him play up. All I need is a real chance to let the Form see what I can do."

"Oh!"

"You see the point," asked Coker.

"Oh, quite."

"Well, then, I want you to chip in as head of the games, and see that I'm given a chance in the trials on Tuesday. Is it a go?"

Wingate looked at Coker of the Fifth. It was always a matter of wonder to him that Coker couldn't realise what an absolutely rotten footballer he was. But there were quite a number of things that Horace Coker couldn't understand. That was only one of them.

There was a buzz and a hoot outside, and Potter said hastily:

"There's the taxi, Coker."

"Never mind the taxi now," said Coker. "Is it a go, Wingate?"

"We shall be late at the Ionic—"

"Blow the Ionic! Now, Wingate, are you going to speak to Blundell?"

"I'll speak to him, if you like."

Coker brightened.

"You'll order him to play me in the pick-up on Tuesday, as head of the games?"

"Oh, no! I couldn't do that, you

know! But I'll direct him, as head of the games, to give you a chance in a match at the proper time."

"When's that?"

"When the Fifth are playing marbles—"

"What?"

"Or kiss-in-the-ring," said Wingate, with great gravity.

"Kik-kik-kiss-in-the-ring!" stuttered Coker.

"Yes—or blind man's buff. But when it's a matter of football, the best thing you can do, Coker, is to sit down somewhere and watch, and try to pick up the rudiments of the game."

With that, the captain of Greyfriars walked away, smiling, leaving Coker staring after him blankly.

"Here's the taxi," murmured Greene.

Coker seemed still in a blank state, as his comrades led him out to the taxi. It was not till the taxi was gliding through the drizzle down the road to Courtfield that he recovered.

"That ass Wingate was trying to be funny!" he gasped, at last.

"Not really?" ejaculated Greene.

"Yes, I'm sure he was," said Coker. "He doesn't take me seriously as a footballer."

"D—d—doesn't he?"

"No," said Coker, "sheer ignorance of the game, of course. How they came to make a crass ignoramus like that captain of Greyfriars beats me. But it's not only that!" added Coker darkly. "I'm beginning to think that there's a conspiracy."

"A—a—a conspiracy?"

"Well, it looks like it! Captain of the school, and my own Form captain, in league to keep me out of the games," said Coker. "What they're afraid of is being shown up as rotten players, as they really are, by my brilliant form. It's a bit sickening, isn't it?"

Potter and Greene could only stutter.

Coker ran on in a strain of lofty and indignant wrath, while the taxi buzzed through the drizzle to Courtfield. He expressed freely the scorn he felt for the wretched trickery used to keep him in the background; but at the same time, as he nobly added, it was chiefly Greyfriars that he was thinking of. There was the school record to be considered. That record was not, perhaps, bad, but what might it not have been with a footballer like Coker in the forefront of the battle? Other public schools would have had to hide their diminished heads—indeed, there were League teams that would have had to sing rather small, in comparison with the Greyfriars first eleven, if only Coker had been allowed to lend his wonderful powers to that team.

"There's those Remove fags," remarked Potter as the taxi overtook Harry Wharton & Co. on the Courtfield road. He was getting anxious to change the subject. Coker was eloquent; but even the finest eloquence will pall in the long run.

Coker glanced from the window and frowned.

"Those cheeky young cads!" he grunted. "They were chortling in the passage when I was thrashing Blundell."

"When you were whatting?" stuttered Potter, quite taken aback.

"Thrashing Blundell! Call to the driver to stop, and I'll get out and give them a jolly good licking all round."

There were eight Removites tramping along the road, without counting Billy Bunter. Giving them a licking all round was a task upon which Potter and Greene had no desire to enter. They did not yearn to be rolled in the mud, or bumped into the ditch, along with Horace Coker.

Coker of the Fifth never counted odds; but Potter and Greene counted them—carefully. And it did not seem to them good enough.

"I—I say, we shall be late," murmured Potter. "Treat 'em with contempt, Coker! They—they—they're scarcely worth your notice."

"Well, perhaps there's something in that," admitted Coker.

"They'd be too jolly proud of themselves if you took notice of them," urged Greene.

Coker nodded.

"Perhaps you're right! Let's get on."

And they got on—much to the relief of Potter and Greene. Coker never realised how narrow an escape he had had of collecting up, with his burly person, all the available mud on the Courtfield road.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Hypnotist!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Here we are!"

The Remove party had arrived.

Coker's taxi had vanished ahead in the drizzle and mist; the walking-party were a good distance behind it. The chums of the Remove were glad to get into the warm, well-lighted vestibule of the Ionic, out of the drizzle of the

wintry streets. An obliging attendant showed them their way to their seats—and certainly it was much nicer than butting in at the "bob" entrance. Billy Bunter had been, after all, useful, with his reserved seats at five-and-nine each, tax included, howsoever and why-soever he had obtained them.

Although the five-shilling seats were handed out with, apparently, so generous a hand, the dress-circle at the Ionic was by no means full. The pit and the gallery had a goodly crowd; and the upper-circle, where the prices ranged to two shillings and half-a-crown, was fairly well patronised. But the more exclusive patrons of the dress-circle and the boxes had plenty of elbow-room.

With a good many seats empty, it was easy to see who was there; for which reason, the chums of the Remove spotted Coker and Co. at once. Coker, Potter, and Greene sat in the middle of the second row. The juniors filed into seats in the middle of the front row, right under the noses of Coker & Co.

Coker eyed them with disfavour.

It seemed rather a cheek, to him, for fags to come to the Ionic when he, Horace James Coker, was patronising that establishment with his lordly presence. And he was a little surprised to see William George Bunter.

According to the tale Bunter had told him, he had rather thoughtlessly purchased three reserved seats, and realised



Coker's ferocious rush drove Blundell across the study, and he brought up against the bookcase. There he rallied and came at Coker. "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" yelled Bob Cherry, from the doorway. "They're going it!" "Ha, ha, ha!" "Go it, Coker!" "Back up, Blundell!" roared the Removites. (See Chapter 2.)

too late that he needed the money to square a debt in the Lower Fourth. That tale had touched Coker, and he had taken the tickets off Bunter's fat hands. Yet here was Bunter—in a five-shilling seat!

Bunter tried not to catch Coker's eye—but the great man of the Fifth leaned over and tapped him on a fat shoulder.

"You've got along after all, then," he said, suspiciously. Even Coker was capable of seeing anything that was absolutely obvious; so now he began to suspect Bunter of having pulled his leg.

"Oh, ah! Yes," stammered Bunter. "I—I—I—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, old Horace!" greeted Bob Cherry cheerily, heedless of Coker's lofty frown. "What a jolly old pleasure to see you here! If there's nothing funny in the show we'll just look round and see you, and it will be quite as good, what?"

"You cheeky fag—"

"So it will be a success either way," said Bob, "we really owe Bunter a vote of thanks for standing us these tickets."

Coker started.

"Bunter stood you the tickets!" he ejaculated.

"Well, practically," chuckled Bob Cherry, quite oblivious of Billy Bunter's almost anguished signs to him to shut up. "He sold us the lot cheap—he had a dozen—"

"A dozen!" gasped Coker.

"Yes—they were given to him, or else he burgled the box-office, I don't know which. Which was it, Bunter?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, the—the young rotter told me he'd bought three, and—and needed the money to square a fellow he owed—"

gasped Coker. "He got five-and-nine each out of me. And—and he got the tickets for nothing, did he?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob.

"Why, I—I—I'll wallop him—I—I—I—"

"For goodness' sake, don't make a shindy here, Coker," stuttered Greene, "there's an attendant got his eye on you already! You'll be chucked out, old chap."

"I'd like to see anybody chuck me out!"

"Well, you'll see it soon," grinned Bob, "if you kick up a row, Coker. Can't you behave yourself when you're in good company? Don't disgrace the Remove while you're with us."

Coker choked. It required energetic remonstrances from Potter and Greene to keep him from assault and battery on the spot. Fortunately, the overture started, and the lights went down for the pictures, and Horace Coker subsided into silent wrath.

After the pictures came the variety turns. They were more or less entertaining; but the Famous Five felt pleased that they had not given more than eighteenpence each for their tickets. They did not seem to be receiving five shillings' worth. But then Signor Spezzi, the Italian hypnotist, came on.

The Signor was a little slim man—not so big as Coker of the Fifth, in fact, though he was old enough to be Coker's father or grandfather. He was extremely dark, with bright black eyes that gleamed in the footlights, and an enormous black moustache which was so large that it must have cost him a considerable amount in dye. He had a quick, alert foreign manner, and a decidedly shifty look in his keen black eyes.

There was a movement of interest in the audience. Signor Spezzi and his hypnotic turn had been much talked of in Courtfield. Not only did the signor hypnotise a black man who travelled with

him for the purpose, but he was wont to call members of the audience on to the stage to undergo the "influence"—which they sometimes did. After which, how was it possible to doubt the reality of the signor's wonderful hypnotic powers?

Certainly, there were cynical persons who hinted that the black man was paid to affect a thralldom under the "fluence" that he was far from feeling; and that the selected members of the audience who underwent the weird experience were specially placed in the audience, in advance, by the signor, before each entertainment. But that, after all, was only the voice of detraction.

A big black gentleman, in a striking Oriental costume, followed the signor on the stage.

Signor Spezzi proceeded to make weird passes at him, at the same time fixing his eyes on the black man's—and in a marvellously short space of time the dark gentleman was under the "fluence."

In that strange state, the dark gentleman proceeded to act in the strangest possible manner, amid chuckles from the audience. Being now the slave of the hypnotist's will, he believed that a poker was a stick of candy when the signor told him so, and tried to eat it. He danced with a chair under the impression that the chair was a "yellow gal." He walked on his hands when the hypnotist told him that his hands were his feet. It was really all very remarkable, if it was genuine. Probably it wasn't. Finally, the black gentleman sat down in a pail of water on being told that the said pail was an easy-chair. It was real water, and it splashed, and the black gentleman tottered off the stage dripping—amid howls of merriment.

"That's good!" said Coker.

"Spoof, most likely," remarked Potter.

"Oh, I don't know," said Coker, sagely. "You know what Shakespeare says—"

"Eh! Did Shakespeare say anything about hypnotism?" Potter stared. "I thought that sort of spoof was quite modern."

"I mean, he said that there are more things in the what-do-you-call-it and the thingummy, than are dreamt of in your thingumbob," said Coker lucidly. "There's a lot in that, Potter."

Potter did not argue the point. He did not even recognise Shakespeare in Coker's remarkable quotation.

Signor Spezzi was now making his usual appeal to the audience. If anyone doubted his powers, that one was free to come forward and submit to the magic 'fluence, and the signor would undertake to make him, willy-nilly, act as the black man had acted.

Now, there was probably a majority present who doubted the signor's powers. But there remained always the bare possibility that the hypnotism was genuine: and nobody wanted to risk being made to sit in a pail of water. So, as usual, there were only a limited number of takers. But four or five persons rose in their places, among them William George Bunter, the Owl of the Greyfriars Remove.

"I'm your man!" squeaked Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Don't be an ass, Bunter," said Bob Cherry.

"Rot! I'm going on! You come?" said Bunter.

"No fear," said Bob.

"You said you didn't believe in it," jeered Bunter.

"Well, I don't," said Bob, "but I don't make out that I know everything, and I'm not jolly well going to chance sitting in a pail of water if it happens to be genuine."

"Well, I'm going."

"Don't be an ass, Bunter," said Wharton.

"Rot!" said Bunter. "This is worth looking into, from a—a—a scientific point of view, you know."

"Right as rain," said Coker, from the row behind. "Bravo, Bunter! I'd go myself; but of course, I couldn't consent to being made to look ridiculous. It doesn't matter about a Remove fag. Go it, Bunter."

And Bunter went it.

An attendant showed him down to the stage, and the fat junior rolled on, in full view of all the audience, with his fat little nose in the air, looking extremely important. Four or five other members of the audience came on too.

Signor Spezzi bowed to them with continental grace. But he explained that, the time allotted to his turn being limited, he could select only one of them. That was reasonable enough; and it was left to the signor to select the victim. He pointed a dusky forefinger to Bunter.

"You, ragazzo mio," he said, "you do not fear, a schoolboy as you are, to put yourself under ze influence?"

"I'm not afraid!" said Bunter, loftily.

"Perhaps you do not believe, non è vero?"

"Well, perhaps I don't," said Bunter, "but I'm willing to put it to the test."

"Zen I take you."

And the rest of the volunteers retired to their seats, and William George Bunter remained alone on the stage to undergo the weird experience of the hypnotic influence.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Marvellous!

HARRY WHARTON and Co. looked on with renewed interest now. Whether there was "anything" in hypnotism they did not know; they strongly suspected that it was chiefly, if not entirely, humbug. But if a Greyfriars fellow went under the 'fluence, it would look a good deal like proof of the signor's mystic powers. They watched with keen curiosity to see what would happen to Bunter.

In the row above them, Coker of the Fifth watched with even more keenness. Coker had already been impressed by the show, and his belief in the reality of the hypnotic power had been strengthened by Potter and Greene's doubts of the same. Only opposition was required to cause Horace Coker to become obstinate in any opinion. Had Potter or Greene declared that the hypnotist was wonderful, Coker probably would have poohed the whole thing, with an air of superior wisdom. As they considered it "rot," however, Coker was bound to take the opposite view.

Coker watched the further proceedings of the hypnotist and his new victim with a fixed gaze of interest. And Potter and Greene, though not so easily impressed as Coker, could not help being impressed now, as were the Removites in the front row.

For Bunter was going under the influence!

Signor Spezzi made his magic passes, with the magnetic glance of his black eyes fixed on Bunter.

Slowly, but surely, the Owl of the Remove yielded to the will of the hypnotist.

His eyes closed behind his big spectacles, and he sank into a chair placed ready for him.

There was a buzz in the audience. Signor Spezzi glanced over the sea of faces with rather a vaunting air. This was a triumph for him. He stood before



Signor Spezzi proceeded to make weird passes at his dusky subject. The black gentleman sat down in a pail of water on being told that the said pail was an easy chair. It was real water and it splashed, and the "subject" tottered off the stage dripping—amid howls of merriment from the juniors in the audience. (See Chapter 5.)

Billy Bunter, and continued the weird passes of his large dusky hands.

"Wake up!" he said.

Bunter's eyes opened.

"Stand on ze feet."

Bunter stood on his feet.

"I give you zis stick of candy and you eat him!" said the signor, handing a walking-stick to the fat junior.

Bunter took the walking-stick, and jammed the knob into his capacious mouth. He proceeded to mumble it with an air of great enjoyment.

"You like him?" asked the signor.

"Ripping."

"You zink him good candy?"

"Splendid! I've never tasted better. I say, where do you get this candy? Can you buy it in Courtfield?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the audience.

"By gad, you chaps!" said Coker.

"That settles it! It's like giddy magic."

"I—I suppose Bunter isn't spoofing, is he?" murmured Potter.

"Eh! Why should he?"

"Well, I don't see why he should," confessed Potter. "I—I suppose a fat fool like that could be hypnotized. He hasn't any brains to speak of. I fancy the man couldn't put it on me."

"That's only your conceit, George Potter. I'll bet that dark johnny could hypnotize you easily enough."

"B-r-r-r!" said Potter.

Bunter fairly gnawed at the walking-stick, while the audience chortled. There was something very funny in the fat junior gobbling at the stick under the belief that it was candy.

Now the signor gave him a silk hat, and told him that it was a cake. Bunter bit at the hat.

"I say, this is a stale cake," he said. "I can't get my teeth into it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Vill you ask zat young lady to dance?" said the signor, pointing to a chair.

"Pleasure," said Bunter.

He rolled up to the chair, and bowed with elephantine grace.

"May I beg the honour of a dance, miss?" he asked.

The audience roared.

"Ze lady she say yes," said the signor.

"You dance viz zat lady while I play."

"Right-ho," said Bunter.

The signor signed to the conductor of the orchestra, and the latter started the "Veuve Joyeuse" waltz. To those ancient and familiar strains, Bunter proceeded to dance with the chair. The audience of the Ionic roared with merriment.

"Well, this beats it," said Bob Cherry. "I'm jolly glad I didn't let the man experiment on me. I shouldn't like to look a thumping ass like that."

"Well, Bunter's used to looking an ass," grinned Nugent. "Besides, he doesn't know what he's doing."

"The esteemed Bunter looks a terrific duffer," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "but the worthy signor seems genuine, my good chums. The belieffulness of the audience is great."

Several more absurdities were perpetrated by William George Bunter, under the influence of the signor's hypnotism; and certainly there seemed to be few doubting Thomases left in the Ionic. A Greyfriars fellow had been picked out from a crowd of others, and he was under the 'fluence! Nothing could have looked much more genuine than that.

At last the signor, time being up, restored the hypnotic subject to himself! Bunter "came to" with a dramatic start.

"Where am I?" he exclaimed.

"It is all right, mi ragazzo," said the signor with a smile. "You are not hurt."

"I say, what have I been doing?" asked Bunter. "You can't hypnotize me, you know! You couldn't make me dance with a chair, I know that."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Signor Spezzi smiled, and shook hands with Bunter, and the Owl of the Remove was led off the stage. Then the hypnotist made his bow, and retired amid thunders of applause.

"Well, how do you feel, Bunt?"

asked Harry Wharton, as the fat junior rejoined the party in the dress circle.

"Oh, all right," said Bunter carelessly.

"Wonderful chap, ain't he?"

"Beats me hollow," said Bob. "I'd never have believed it if I hadn't seen it."

Bunter gave him a rather curious blink.

Then he sat down in his place without saying more. The entertainment terminated shortly afterwards, and the Greyfriars party came out of the Ionic. As they emerged with the crowd they heard remarks on all sides concerning the wonderful hypnotic powers of Signor Spezzi. Several people came up to Bunter and spoke to him on the subject. Evidently the good Courtfield folk had been impressed; and it was extremely probable that a good many more would visit the Ionic to watch the hypnotist's turn. Indeed, it was pretty certain that a good crowd of Greyfriars fellows would honour the show when the chums of the Remove related at the school what they had seen. In handing out those free tickets to Billy Bunter, after all, Signor Spezzi had been doing a good stroke of business for himself. He had cast his bread upon the waters, with a strong likelihood of that bread returning buttered.

Harry Wharton and Co. walked homeward in the dusk and drizzle, all of them discussing the hypnotic business with interest. On the way a taxi passed them and splashed them with mud, bearing Coker & Co. back to Greyfriars. In the taxi Coker was holding forth on the subject of hypnotism, stating his opinion. What opinions Potter and Greene had did not transpire, as Coker did all the talking.

In No. 7 Study in the Remove that day there was a handsome spread—and for once Billy Bunter not only stood his whack, but stood more than his whack. Owing to his rather mysterious deal in theatre tickets Bunter was in

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 834.

funds; and Bunter's funds always went the same way—to the tuck-shop. His experience under hypnotism did not seem to have affected him—certainly it had not affected his appetite. In a burst of generosity Bunter asked the Famous Five to tea in No. 7, and they honoured him with their presence.

"I say, you fellows, ain't you jolly glad you went?" asked Bunter, with his mouth full, blinking over the well-spread table.

"Well, yes," agreed Wharton. "It was worth seeing."

"All the same, I can't quite make out why the Italian chap gave you all those tickets, Bunter," said Peter Todd, eyeing the fat junior.

"Oh, really, Peter—"

"Well, anyhow, it was a good show, as it turned out, and this is a good spread," said Bob Cherry. "Here's to Bunter—the founder of the feast."

"Hear, hear!"

And William George Bunter's health was drunk in ginger-beer "stood" by himself—which was a record.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Brain-Wave!

"GOT it!"

It was on Monday that Horace James Coker, of the Fifth Form at Greyfriars, made that announcement. He made it to Potter and Greene, in an impressive, indeed in a dramatic manner.

It was just like Potter and Greene to fail to be impressed. It was said of old that a prophet is without honour in his own country. It was the same with a great man like Coker in his own study.

Coker announced that he had "got it" in a manner that implied that he had "got" something very important and valuable indeed. And Potter only yawned, while Greene made a movement towards the door.

Coker did not, however, notice that plentiful lack of enthusiasm on the part of his chums. He was too full of the brilliant ideas that crowded one another in his remarkable brain.

"Got it!" he said for the second time. And then for the third time he said "Got it!"

"Oh!" said Potter, feeling that he was called upon to say something.

"Yes. Don't go, Greene—you'll be interested in this."

"Oh!" said Greene.

"It's the catch of the season," said Coker, still impressive. "You fellows remember that matinee at the Ionic on Saturday."

"Eh! Oh, yes."

"That hypnotist chap—"

"Yes," murmured Greene.

"I daresay you've noticed that I've been thinking a bit since we went there," said Coker.

Potter and Greene hadn't noticed it. As a matter of fact, Coker had been very abstracted on a good many occasions since that visit to the Ionic. Something had been working in his powerful intellect on Sunday, and he had been unusually inattentive at morning lessons on Monday. But Potter and Greene had not noticed that he had been thinking. The fact was that they never suspected Coker of thinking. They even doubted whether Nature had provided him with the necessary apparatus for that process.

So they did not answer; but Coker did not require an answer. He went on regardless:

"Thinking it out, you know. Mind, I didn't think of it on the spot. I noticed what a wonderful thing that hypnotism

was, of course. It occurred to me, thinking it over yesterday, that a power like that might be put to a lot of use. Then in class this morning, while old Prout was gassing about classics, it flashed into my brain. Really what you'd call a brain-wave."

Potter and Greene were completely ignorant of what had flashed into Coker's brain. But it was a case where ignorance was bliss; and they only hoped that Coker would leave them still in the dark. Coker was quite a tolerable fellow on the rare occasions when he shut up.

But Coker did not shut up now. He proceeded to explain.

"Quite a brain-wave! That hypnotist Johnny is still in Courtfield, of course. I fancy he'll be getting good audiences now. Still, I don't suppose he's what you'd call a rich man."

"Eh! I should say not," said Potter. "If he was rich, I should think he would spend a little money on getting a better sort of dye for his moustache."

"A few guineas might make him think it worth his while, what?"

"To get a new dye?"

"No, you ass! To come here and help me get justice done."

Potter and Greene sat up and took notice at that. Coker had succeeded in surprising them.

"To come here—to Greyfriars!" repeated Potter.

"And—and help!" stuttered Greene.

Potter afterwards confided to Greene that at that moment he would have suspected Coker of having become suddenly insane; but for the fact that a fellow's brain couldn't go wrong unless he had one. According to Potter, however, Coker hadn't one, so he was safe from insanity.

The two Fifth-formers just blinked at Coker. Evidently Coker's brain-wave was something out of the ordinary run of brain-waves.

"That idiot Blundell——" said Coker.

"Blundell?"

"Yes. He refuses to let me show what I can do in the scratch match to-morrow, and Wingate refuses to order him, as head of the games, to play me in the pick-up. Now, if I show the fellows what I can do to-morrow, public opinion will force Blundell to put me in the team for the big match on Wednesday."

"Oh!" gasped Potter. "But what—what—what's that got to do with that dark chap and his jolly old hypnotism?"

"Lots!" said Coker with a smile. "I'm going to get him here to hypnotise Blundell."

"What?"

"Which?"

"Surprised you, what?" grinned Coker. "Well, I know you don't hear of a wheeze like this every day. I'm the fellow for ideas, you know."

"Oh, my hat!" stuttered Potter. "You are. No mistake about that. You are!"

"I daresay the chap will do it for a few guineas, and I've got lots of money," said Coker. "Of course, I shall explain to him that it's strictly above board, and in a good cause. As matters stand, the Fifth are going to be beaten by the Sixth, because Blundell insists upon leaving out his best man. Under the hypnotic 'fluence he will put me in the pick-up, and I shall demonstrate to the Fifth that I simply can't be left out. See?"

"Oh, ah, oh!"

"In a good cause like that, Spezzi will have no objection to using his wonderful powers, especially if I pay his expenses."

The giddy labourer is worthy of his hire, you know. A couple of guineas and a taxi fare, what?"

Potter and Greene gazed at Coker.

"I'll scud down to Courtfield before lessons this afternoon, and see the man," went on Coker. "There's no matinee on a Monday, so he will be free. I'll get him to come along to-day or to-morrow, and put the 'fluence on Blundell. Blundell will then be the slave of his will——"

"Will he?"

"Oh, yes! Then Spezzi will make him put me in the scratch match on Tuesday, and there you are!"

"Oh, there—there we are!" gasped Potter.

"What do you think of the scheme?" asked Coker, genially.

Potter and Greene did not tell Coker what they thought of his scheme. It was never safe to tell Coker what they thought of him.

"Bit of a catch, what?" asked Coker.

"Oh, ah! Yes."

"You fellows will be playing in the trial match to-morrow. You mustn't be put out, you know, at my going ahead and putting you in the shade."

"Oh, ah, no! We—we won't."

"You see, once I have a chance of showing my powers as a footballer, the thing's done," said Coker. "You two chaps are not bad players, but, of course, nothing like my form."

"Nothing like your form," agreed Potter fervently.

"Nothing!" concurred Greene.

"I'm glad you see it. Some fellows would be jealous," said Coker. "You're not bad average players, take it from me—and after all, I shall make Blundell and his lot look small, as well as you, when I show what I can do."

"Oh!"

"It will be a case of Eclipse first, and the rest nowhere, you know," explained Coker. "Facile princeps, and all that."

"Ah, oh!"

"All that's needed is to make that idiot Blundell give me my chance. The hypnotist will do that." Coker glanced at his watch. "I'll get off on my bike—catch him after his lunch. Keep this dark, of course—not a word outside this study."

And Coker walked out cheerily.

Potter and Greene sat and blinked at one another. Coker had said that there was not to be a word outside the study. As a matter of fact, for some minutes there was not a word inside the study. Coker had taken the study's breath away.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

All Serene!

HARRY WHARTON and Co. observed Coker of the Fifth wheel out his bike, and take the Courtfield road; they observed also the genial smile of satisfaction upon his rugged face. They were very far from guessing the cause, however; Coker's brain-wave was very far beyond their guessing powers.

"Old Coker looks bonny!" remarked Bob Cherry; and there was no mistake about it—Coker did.

When a fellow, up against a whole crowd of difficulties, finds a means of smoothing all those difficulties from his path, it is natural for him to look rather bonny.

Such a means had Coker found—at all events, he was firmly persuaded that he had found it.

For what could be more simple?

Signor Spezzi had put Billy Bunter, of the Remove, deep down under the magic 'fluence! That, apparently, had

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY—PRICE 2:

been as easy to the signor as mugging a pass was to Coker.

It followed that the signor could put the 'fluence on Blundell, and make him play fantastic tricks in the same manner.

Certainly, Blundell was not to be made to gnaw a walking-stick under the impression that it was a stick of candy, or to dance with a chair to the strains of the "Merry Widow" waltz. So far from making Blundell do anything ridiculous, the hypnotist was to make him act in an unusually sensible manner—from Coker's point of view. Under the 'fluence he was to play Coker in the trial game, after which all would be plain sailing. For the remarkable qualities Coker would display in that match would settle the question—public opinion would demand that so first-class a player should be played against the Sixth on Wednesday. When Wednesday's Form match came off, Coker's striking victory over the Sixth would establish his position and reputation as a footballer for the rest of the season!

It was all simple enough—granted that Coker really was the first-class footballer he supposed himself to be. On that subject Coker was untroubled by any doubts.

So it was only necessary to set the hypnotist to work—a move that surely was justifiable in the circumstances, Coker's only object being to get justice done!

Coker of the Fifth, looked, as Bob Cherry had remarked, bonny, when he rode away from Greyfriars on his bike. He looked still more pleased when he came back an hour later, and put up his machine and stalked to the School House. It was close on time for afternoon classes, and the fellows were going to the form-rooms.

Outside the Fifth-form room Coker found Potter and Greene, who gave him a sort of hopeless look. Coker's chums were beginning to feel that Coker was a little too much for them. Why he had been sent to Greyfriars instead of Colney Hatch was a mystery to Potter and Greene.

Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, was ambling along to his Form-room, stout and imposing. Coker nodded to Potter and Greene, and spoke to the Fifth-form master.

"I suppose there's no objection, sir, to my having a gentleman to tea this afternoon," he said.

Mr. Prout blinked at him.

"None at all, Coker, if the individual in question is a suitable person to visit a Greyfriars boy," he boomed.

"A scientific gentleman, sir."

"Dear me! I am very glad to see you taking an interest in science of any kind, Coker," said Mr. Prout, with heavy sarcasm, and he rolled into the Form-room and left it at that.

Potter and Greene exchanged a glance. They could guess who the "scientific gentleman" was. While Mr. Prout's back was turned during class, Coker explained to them in whispers.

"I've got him to come."

"Spezzi?" murmured Potter.

"Yes. I got his address at the Ionic—he lives over the fish-shop in the High Street. I called on him there."

"And—asked him—"

"I asked him to tea. Explained how impressed we all were with his wonderful hypnotism, you know—a little soft sawdery isn't wasted," said Coker, astutely. "Asked him to come to tea in my study. That's all so far. Over tea I'm going to tell him what I want—he'll be on the spot and can work the oracle, see? Having got him up to scratch, I shall ask Blundell into my study."

"And—and—"

"And the signor will do the rest. Easy as falling off a form," said Coker.

Potter and Greene gave one another hopeless looks. Potter glanced at George Blundell, a short distance away—wrestling with Mr. Prout's instruction, and in happy ignorance of the sword of Damocles that impended over his head.

What Blundell would have thought, had he known anything of Coker's marvellous scheme, simply could not be guessed.

Lessons seemed very long to Coker that afternoon. With such a scheme on hand it seemed a bit "thick" to have to waste time on rot like Latin prose. But classes were over at last, and Coker hurried away to make some preparations for the visit of his distinguished guest. Signor Spezzi was coming—certainly without guessing what he was coming for. Coker gave a lavish order at the tuck-shop, and bribed a couple of fags with half-crowns to tidy up his study, and give it a newly swept and garnished look.

Meanwhile, Potter and Greene were discussing the matter by themselves, in a worried mood. What they ought to do in the circumstances was a puzzling problem.

"We can't let the thumping ass go ahead," said Potter, for the tenth time. "If that dusky blighter really can hypnotize—"

"But can he?" said Greene.

"Well, you saw him at the Ionic—it wasn't merely a put-up job with a pal in the audience—he hypnotized a Greyfriars fag—"

"That's so—it looked genuine enough."

"Of course, I don't quite believe in such stuff—but there you are; he hypnotized Bunter," said Potter. "Of course, Blundell's a different sort of proposition

from that fat fool. But suppose it came off all right? It might."

"It might," agreed Greene.

"Then Blundell puts Coker into the trial match. That wouldn't matter so much—but you know Coker. He would wedge into the match with the Sixth, too."

"He would if he had a chance."

"Well, he'd have a chance, or rather a certainty, if he had a man in his pay who could make Blundell do anything he liked."

Greene nodded gloomily. He had to admit it.

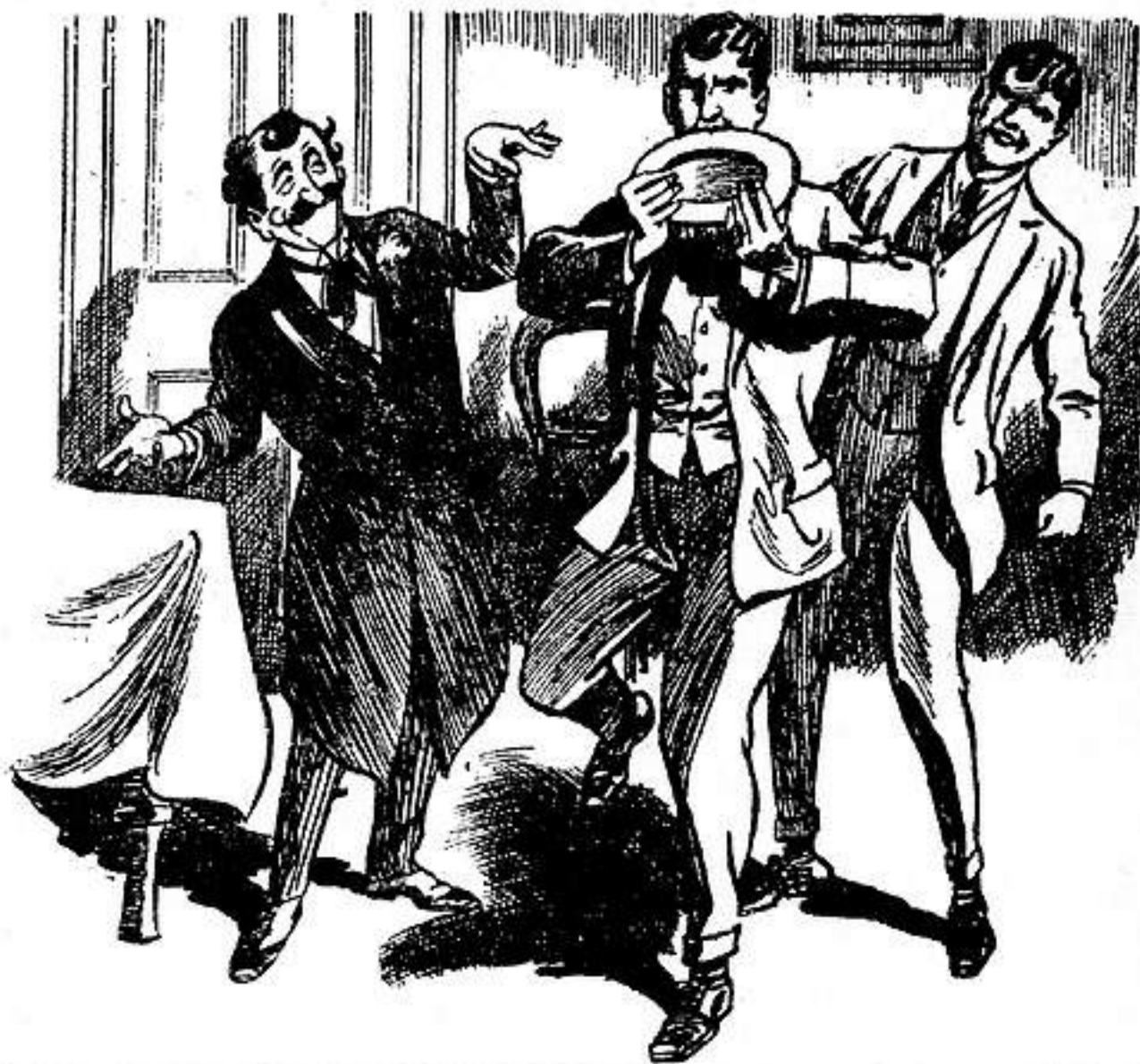
"Well, we can't let that howling ass muck up a big match, and get the Form licked," said Potter decisively. "If he could play footer, even in fag style, it would be different. But he can't play at all. Barging about like an insane elephant and putting the ball through our goal—that's his style."

"Just that!"

"We're Coker's friends, and we don't want to hurt him, but we can't have him playing tricks with the football matches. In case there's anything in it, we're bound to warn Blundell."

Greene nodded again. It had not occurred to Coker that his loyal chums would not be heart and soul with him in his remarkable enterprise. But they simply couldn't help taking a different view from Coker's. If there was anything in Signor Spezzi's hypnotism, the match with the Sixth was going to be utterly mucked up by the inclusion of Horace Coker in the Fifth-form team. That was what Potter and Greene could not possibly allow as members of the Form and of the Eleven.

Arguing with Coker was, of course, useless. It would only have led to a scrap in the study. Had the Fifth-formers believed that the signor was an impostor,



"Stand on ze leg!" commanded the hypnotist. Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, stood on one leg. "Take ze plate from ze table!" continued Signor Spezzi. "Zat is a verree nice cake—eat him!" To Coker's delight Blundell put the rim of the plate in his mouth. "Splendid!" exclaimed Coker, slapping the signor heartily on the back. "You've got him! Rippling!"

(See Chapter 10.)

they would have been willing to let Coker "rip." But the experiment on Bunter seemed to demonstrate the genuineness of Signor Spezzi's powers. That really left Coker's chums only one course to take—and they took it.

The result of their private discussion was that they dropped into George Blundell's study for a brief chat.

That brief chat was punctuated with roars of laughter from George Blundell, which seemed to indicate that he did not take hypnotism seriously.

Meanwhile, Coker had finished his preparations, and was waiting at the school gates for his visitor—in happy ignorance of the counter move his chums had made. In Coker's case ignorance was bliss.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The High Hand!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! It's the hypnotism merchant." Harry Wharton & Co. were sauntering in the quad, when the little Italian gentleman arrived. They glanced at him, rather surprised to see him at Greyfriars, and still more surprised to see him join Coker of the Fifth and walk off with him to the School House.

"That's Spezzi, the chap we saw at the Ionic," remarked Harry Wharton. "What the dickens is he calling on Coker for, I wonder."

Signor Spezzi walked along to the house beside Coker. He was dressed in a black frock-coat and a silk hat, and his big black moustache had been newly dyed for the occasion. He looked a very diminutive gentleman beside the burly Coker; the top of his silk hat was only on a level with Coker's nose.

"The long and the short of it!" grinned Vernon-Smith of the Remove, and some of the juniors chuckled.

"I say, you fellows." Billy Bunter rolled up to the Famous Five. "I say, what is Spezzi doing here?"

"Calling to see Coker, it seems," answered Wharton.

"But what's Coker got to do with him?"

"Better ask Coker."

Bunter frowned.

"I jolly well don't like this," he said. "What the thump has it to do with you?" asked Bob Cherry, in surprise.

"Well, it may have something to do with me, and it mayn't," said Bunter cautiously. "If Coker bags the tickets—"

"The tickets?"

"Yes—think I can't see the game?" sniffed Bunter.

"The game?" repeated Wharton, staring at the Owl of the Remove. "What on earth are you driving at, Bunter?"

"Oh, nothing! Still, I shall certainly expect Coker to give me some of the tickets, to sell among the fellows."

"What the merry thump—"

"It was through me he saw the man, and got to know him, wasn't it?" said Bunter warmly. "I'm entitled to a whack, I think."

"A whack in what?" roared Bob.

"Oh, nothing!"

And Bunter rolled away, still frowning, leaving Harry Wharton and Co. considerably mystified.

Meanwhile, Coker of the Fifth had conducted his distinguished visitor into his study in the schoolhouse. Coker's manner was very polite and genial: and Signor Spezzi was full of foreign grace. Possibly that invitation to Greyfriars had surprised the signor, but he attributed it to the impression his wonderful powers had made upon a youthful mind: and certainly he was pleased to come.

Great man as the signor was, a free meal was not without value to him; his salary was not in proportion to his wonderful powers. Coker's handsome study was quite a pleasant change from his somewhat dismal lodging over his fish-shop in the High Street at Courtfield.

Moreover, the visit to Greyfriars had advertising value. The signor had a bundle of tickets in his pocket for sale, if there were any takers.

Potter and Greene were in the study now. Coker's orders had been strict that they were to help to entertain the "scientific" gentleman. They grinned and ducked their heads to Signor Spezzi as Coker showed him in.

The little gentleman was soon seated at the festive board in great spirits. He wielded an active knife and fork. Diminutive as he was, he had a powerful appetite, almost rivalling William George Bunter in that respect. Perhaps his object was to lay in supplies and save the expense of supper that evening. At all events, he piled into ham and cold beef and eggs at a great rate, much to the delight of the hospitable Coker.

Coker exerted himself to look after his guest and supply his wants, and it was some time before the signor was at leisure to make any but desultory remarks.

The more solid portion of the refreshments having been disposed of, however, Signor Spezzi accepted the armchair, and a cup of coffee, and lighted a cigarette, leaning back at ease with a rather shiny face. Now he was prepared to talk—and he did, at a great rate. He told Coker & Co. of his distinguished career—of his amazing triumphs—of the immense crowds that had watched his performances in dazed wonder—of the Royal commands he had received to display his powers at innumerable palaces.

Potter and Greene nobly did their best not to yawn; but Coker listened with rapt attention. But even Coker, at last, had to switch the signor off the subject of himself—which seemed an inexhaustible topic with Signor Spezzi.

"I don't mind admitting," said Coker, "that I had some doubts when I went to the Ionic, signor. But when I saw you mesmerise Bunter, that, of course, settled the matter."

"Certo!" said the signor, with a rather peculiar glimmer in his black eyes for a moment.

"Of course, you could hypnotize me if you liked," said Coker.

Signor Spezzi gesticulated with large dusky hands.

"Mai, mai!" he exclaimed. "Never! I respect too highly my young friend—mai, mai."

"That's all right, I don't want you to try on me," said Coker—perhaps to the signor's relief. "But the fact is, I want you to do something for me, sir."

"Anyzing?"

Then Coker proceeded to explain. He put it quite plainly. For the sake of the school, and other good reasons, Signor Spezzi was to hypnotize a fellow who would be called into the study for the purpose. He was to make that fellow, under the 'fluence, select Coker to play in a trial football match on the morrow. No harm was intended; Coker's purpose was a good and noble one, in which Potter and Greene could bear him out. There would be a fee of two guineas, if the signor cared to accept it. Also, Coker would be much obliged to him.

Potter and Greene watched the dusky face rather curiously, as Coker made matters clear to the signor.

The changing expressions on Mr. Spezzi's face were, indeed, worth watching.

There were surprise, and wonder, and

uneasiness, and something like fear, to be traced there, in turns. Potter winked one eye at Greene. The signor's objections to the job were evidently strong. Hypnotism on the stage at the Ionic was one matter. Hypnotism in a study at Greyfriars was another. Signor Spezzi rose to his feet at last.

"I zink it is time zat I go," he remarked. "I am sorry I cannot do him, to oblige my young friend—but—"

"Sit down," said Coker.

"But I zink—" said the little gentleman, feebly.

"Sit down."

Horace Coker towered over the little man, and the signor sat down again.

Coker's brow was stern.

"I've told you exactly what I want," he said. "My friends here are witnesses that the object is a good one. I believe in you, Mr. Spezzi. I believe you're a great hypnotist. But if you refuse, of course, it will show that you have been spoofing."

"Vat?"

"Lots of fellows think hypnotism all humbug," said Coker. "I hope you won't make me think the same, Mr. Spezzi."

"Eh?"

"Because, if I come to the conclusion that you have taken me in, I sha'n't take it quietly," said Coker, grimly. "As you're my guest, I sha'n't lay hands on you here."

"Lay ze hand on me!"

"Not here," said Coker. "I shall take you out of gates. Outside the gates you are no longer my guest. Then I shall deal with you as an impostor ought to be dealt with."

Potter and Greene gazed at Coker. Then they gazed at the signor. Coker had taken their breath away again.

The hapless hypnotist gazed up at Coker, towering over him. Dark suspicion was in Coker's rugged face.

If it turned out, after all, that the signor's hypnotism was all trickery, and that he couldn't hypnotize, Coker's whole scheme had to fall to the ground!

In that case Coker's indignation was not to be harmlessly bottled up! The impostor was to pay the piper!

Signor Spezzi's hands were shaking.

In the grasp of the burly, muscular Coker, he would have been a mere infant; and the prospect of what awaited him outside the gates of Greyfriars quite unnerved the little gentleman.

"Potter!" said Coker. "Ask Blundell to step here, will you? Tell him it's rather particular."

"Oh, yes!" gasped Potter.

"You needn't come back. You can clear too, Greene."

"Oh, yes!" gasped Greene.

They cleared. Signor Spezzi's eyes followed them longingly through the doorway. But there was no escape for the signor. Horace Coker's burly form towered in the way.

"Is it a go, Mr. Spezzi?" asked Coker.

"I—I zink—I cannot do him—"

"Cannot!" thundered Coker.

"I—I mean I—I will not—"

"That comes to the same thing! By jove, I'll—"

"I—I mean, it would not be right—"

"I've told you it's all right."

"But I—I zink—"

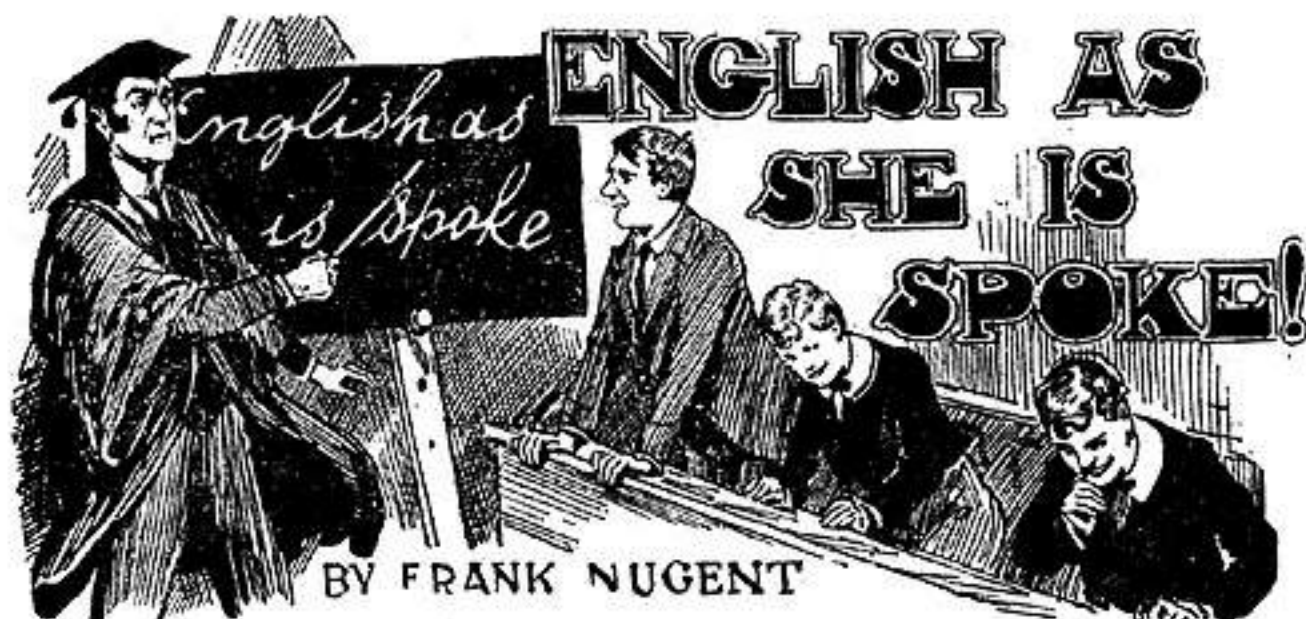
"No need for you to think," said Coker. "I've thought the matter out, as I've told you."

"But—"

"If you're a genuine hypnotist, hypnotize Blundell when he comes in. Make him do as I've told you. If you're an impostor, you know what to expect."

"Oh, Dio mio!" murmured Signor Spezzi.

(Continued on page 17.)



"BOLSOVER major!"

A rumble of thunder reverberated through the Remove Form-room. Mr. Quelch had spoken!

The bully of the Remove heaved himself to his feet. Mr. Quelch fixed him with a fearsome glare. Like the Ancient Mariner, he held him with his glittering eye.

"Your face is discoloured, Bolsover!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "You have been fighting!"

Bolsover did not deny the soft impeachment.

"Pray inform me of the circumstances, Bolsover," commanded Mr. Quelch.

"Ahem! I—I just had a bit of a dust-up—"

"A what?"

"A dust-up, sir—that is to say, a rumpus—in other words, a shindy."

Mr. Quelch frowned.

"I am still in the dark as to your meaning, Bolsover. Please be more explicit."

Bolsover flushed.

"I had a scrap, sir."

"A scrap?" echoed Mr. Quelch, looking more and more mystified. "Do you mean a scrap of food?"

"Nunno, sir! I mean a scrap with bare fists."

"Oh! You mean a fight?"

"Yessir!"

"Then why did you not say so in the first place? With whom have you been fighting?"

"With Temple of the Fourth, sir. He started calling me names, so I gave him a lift under the lug."

"A—a what?" gasped Mr. Quelch in horrified tones.

"A lift under the lug, sir," repeated Bolsover. "And I followed it up with a biff on the boko."

"Bless my soul!"

"And I finished up by giving Temple a hefty swipe in the bread-basket, sir!" said Bolsover, proud of his fistic achievements. "Of course, I didn't have matters all my own way. Temple gave me a sockdolager right on the dial."

"Enough!" said Mr. Quelch, looking dazed. "I have not the remotest idea

what you are talking about, Bolsover. You might be a foreigner for all the meaning your words convey. I plead ignorance on the subject of bokos and bread-baskets and sockdolagers. You will write out fifty times 'Brawling and hooliganism are strictly forbidden.' You will also write out fifty times 'I must not use slang when speaking to a Form-master.'"

LONG, LITTLE, AND SHORT!

A tall girl named Short long loved a certain big Mr. Little, while Little, little thinking of Short, loved a little lass named Long. To make a long story short, Little proposed to Long, and Short longed to be even with Little's shortcomings. So Short, meeting Long, threatened to marry Little before Long, which caused Little, in short, to marry Long. Query, did tall Short love big Little less because Little loved Long?

SETTLING THE BUSINESS!

The sun was shining outside, and Tommy was tired of the arithmetic lesson. He stood before the master, waiting to be told that he could go. "Your last problem is wrong," said the master. "You must stay." Tommy glanced anxiously at the clock. "How much am I out, sir?" he asked. "Five-pence." Tommy put his hand in his pocket and produced five-pence. "I'm in an awful hurry, sir," he said, "so do you mind if I pay the difference?"

TIT FOR TAT.

Jones wished to borrow a certain book from his friend Harris. "Why, yes," was the instant reply, "you are more than welcome; but I must ask you to read the book here. You know, I make it a rule never to let a book of mine go out of the house." A few days later Harris asked Jones if he might borrow his lawn-mower. "Why, certainly!" answered Jones. "You are quite welcome to it, but I must ask you to use it here. You know, I make it a rule never to let my lawn-mower go off my lawn."

EDITORIAL!

By
HARRY WHARTON.

NEARLY every big school has a private language of its own—a vocabulary which is not to be found in any dictionary. It comes under the heading of "Slang."

Now, lots of people object to slang. Form-masters will tell you that the use of slang is most undignified and improper. I'm not going to start an argument on the subject—it doesn't pay to argue with Form-masters!—but the fact remains that none of our wise pedants and pedagogues have yet been able to stamp out slang.

The use of slang, in moderation, and without vulgarity, seems fairly harmless. But, of course, you must show a little discretion in the matter. Speak slang among your own kith and kin, if you like; but don't go hurling slang phrases at the devoted head of your Form-master. Do not tell him he is a "burbling jabber-wock" or a "chopheaded chump," or he will promptly turn and rend you!

There are lots of slang terms in use at Greyfriars, and I have prevailed upon Tom Brown to compile a list of them. It appears in this issue. I do not claim that the list is anything like complete, for a complete list of Greyfriars slang would fill a whole issue of the "Herald." But Browney's curtailed list should prove interesting and amusing.

Some of the words used in our "unofficial language" have been in use for hundreds of years, and have been handed down through the generations. It is the same with nicknames. Even as far back as the days of Good Queen Bess there were fellows who answered to such names as "Fatty," "Tubby," "Punch," "Toby," and so forth. Greyfriars slang is, in fact, an education in itself. It has a long and honoured history.

I hope you will all enjoy this novel number up to the hilt.

HARRY WHARTON.
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 834.

THE HEAD WHO HATED SLANG!

BY DICKY NUGENT.



NOTISS!

Whereas I am fed-up with the amount of slang which is in use at St. Sam's I hereby issue a sollum warning that the next person who uses slang in my hearing will get it in the neck good and proper!

(Signed)

I. Birchmall.
Headmaster!

"MY giddy aunt!"

It was the headmaster of St. Sam's who made that dignified observation. He was seated in sollum state at his desk, and Mr. Lickham, the master of the Fourth, was present in the study.

"Grate jumping crackers!" eggclaimed the Head.

Mr. Lickham surveyed his chief with a startled stare.

"What's up, sir?" he asked. "Wherefore this thusness?"

The Head frowned.

"Bust me, Lickham," he said, "but I'm fed-up with all this slang that is going about the school. The silly young chumps of pewpils don't seem to be able to speak King's English! Their langwidge, my dear Lickham, is the absolute giddy limit! Instead of speaking in tones of pollish and refinement, like this child, they're always using slangy expressions. And I'm jolly well going to put a stop to it. I shall put my foot down with a firm hand!"

"Don't blame you, sir," said Mr. Lickham. "Nothing is more annoying than to hear our noble and beautiful langwidge perverted and distorted. Only the other day I heard Jolly of the Fourth address one of his schoolfellows as a fatheaded mugwump. My hat! Jevver hear such an undignified way of talking?"

"No, never!" said the Head sollumly. "Shiver my timbers, Lickham, but if I don't bring about a drastick alteration, my name ain't what it is!"

Saying which, the Head took his pen from behind his ear, and scribbled something on a peace of paper.

"Now, Lickham," he said, "turn yourself into a blessed billposter, and go and stick this up on the notiss-board."

"Right-ho, old bean!" said Mr. Lickham respectfully.

But Mr. Lickham had no intention of carrying out the Head's destructions. He didn't fancy himself as a billposter. On the way to his study he encountered Binding, the page—he was too thin for

a book, poor chap—and he called upon him to halt.

"Yessir?" asked Binding, pulling off his buttons by way of filling in the time. "What do you want with a bloke?"

Mr. Lickham raised his hand in horror.

"My dear Binding," he remonstrated. "You should not use such common slang. Bloke? Surely you mean Cove?"

"Jest as yer loike, sir! Bloke, blighter, fathead, cove—is all the same to me."

"Ahem!" Mr. Lickham's jaw dropped suddenly, but Binding didn't offer to pick it up. "I see I shall have to take you in hand. Meanwhile, my dear boy, kindly stick this blessed notiss on the board. You might read it yourself Binding—this blooming habit of using slang must be abolished."

And with that the Form-master rustled away, leaving Binding trying to pull himself together.

A few minutes later there was quite a stir at St. Sam's. Crowds of fellows flocked round the notiss-board, in order to perooze the Head's announcement.

"NOTISS!"

"Whereas I am fed-up with the amount of slang which is in use at St. Sam's, I hereby issue a sollum warning that the next person who uses slang in my hearing will get it in the neck good and proper!"

(Signed) I. BIRCHEMALL,
Headmaster."

"Well, of all the cheek!" gasped Jack Jolly of the Fourth. "Fancy forbidding slang!"

"It's the limmit!" said Merry. "They'll be forbidding us to breathe next!"

"And it will be a capital offence to open our mouths!" snorted Bright.

"The Head's absolutely potty!" shouted Jack Jolly.

The next minnit he could have bitten his tung out, for there was a sudden rustling sound behind him. Turning swiftly, he found himself face to face with the Head!

"Jolly!" thundered the latter. "What were you saying?"

"Oh crumbs! I—I merely remarked that a certain person was potty!"

"Potty?" echoed the Head, raising his hands in horror. "How dare you make use of such a word? If that isn't slang of the most vile and vulgar descripthun, I'll eat my hat!"

Jack Jolly stood silent. His eyes dropped, and his face fell, but nobody offered to pick them up.

"You have set my express orders at defiance, you cheeky young cub!" roared the Head. "I will summon a general assembly in Big Hall, and make an egg-sample of you!"

Jack Jolly groaned.

The Head strode away, and presently the school bell started to peck, summoning all St. Sam's to Big Hall,

With scared faces, the fellows trooped into their seats.

On the raised platform at the end of the Hall stood the Head in sollum majesty, with all the masters ranged in a row behind him.

"Boys!" bellowed the Head. "In spite of my express orders, which appear in black and white on the notiss-board, Jolly of the Fourth has had the ordassity to use slang in my presence! Come here, you young rotter, and I'll tan your hide for you, bust me if I don't!"

"Stop!"

The voice of Mr. Justiss, the master of the Fifth, rang out like a pistle-shot.

The Head spun round in astonishment. "What the merry dickens—" he began.

"I refuse to stand by and see Jolly punished!" cried Mr. Justiss. "You use slang yourself, sir, and what's sorce for the goose is sorce for the gander!"

"Hear, hear!" came a shout from the assembled throng.

The Head nearly choked. He nashed his hare and tore his teeth in savvidge fury. But he was helpless. He simply had to fall in with the wishes of Mr. Justiss, bekawse the latter knew a thing or two about the Head's unsavory past, and he had the Head in his power.

"Will you let Jolly off," demanded Mr. Justiss, "or shall I rake up some of your past histery, for the entertainment of the boys?"

The Head turned pail.

"No, no!" he pleaded. "Anything but that! I'll promise not to lam the kid. Go to your place, Jolly. The school will now dismiss!"

The fellows streamed out of Big Hall, leaving the Head standing alone on the platform, with a scowling brow and a gleaming eye.

"Bust me!" snorted the Head who hated slang.

THE END.

(Look out for next week's ripping supplement, boys—it's a real treat!)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 834.



A DICTIONARY OF GREYFRIARS SLANG!

COMPILED BY
TOM BROWN
AND REVIEWED
BY BILLY BUNTER

BEAK.—A master.

BUZZ OFF! ABSQUATULATE! VAMOOSE! TRAVEL!—Phrases used in order to speed the unwelcome guest.

BUMPING.—A form of punishment peculiar to Greyfriars. The victim is lifted off his feet and then lowered to the ground with a terrific concussion.

BIFFING. SLOSHING.—The act of smiting a person with violence—usually on the proboscis.

BOUNDER. OUTSIDER.—A cad; an objectionable person.

BOSH! GAMMON! ROT!—Expressions of disbelief and incredulity.

BROKE. STONY. ON THE ROCKS.—The unenviable state of being without cash.

CHUMP. FATHEAD. JABBER-WOCK.—A fool; an imbecile; a born idiot; a person with "bats in his belfry."

DIAL. PHIZ.—Countenance.

FUNK.—One who flees from danger, and suffers from "cold feet."

IN THE SOUP. ON THE CARPET. OVER THE COALS.—The state of being in trouble—a perpetual state with some people.

JAPING. SPOOFING. KIDDING. LEG-PULLING.—The merry art of deceiving a person. Having him on toast, or on a portion of string; taking him in; fooling him.

JIGGER.—A bicycle.

LICKING. SWISHING.—"Corporal" punishment—sometimes in "private," sometimes before the "general" public.

LIFTING. BAGGING.—The art of purloining, pinching, plundering, and appropriating.

OW! YOW! GROO! YAROOO!—Signals of distress.

POTTY. BALMY.—The state of being "not all there"; lacking the necessary grey matter "up aloft."

RAGGING.—A term which covers all forms of practical jokes and horseplay, including study-raiding, pillow-fighting, etc.

RIPPING. TOPPING. TOP-HOLE.—

Expressions signifying approval and delight.

SCOFFING.—Eating in a gluttonous manner.

SCRAPPING.—Indulging in fistcuffs. **SWOTTING. MUGGING. CRAMMING.**—Keeping one's nose buried in books, to the exclusion of outdoor sports.

SPLOSH. TIN. SPONDULICS. DOUGH. BRASS.—Money; coin of the realm; funds; resources.

SPREAD. TUCK-IN. BLOW-OUT.—A feed; a banquet; a celebration.

SOUP.—Rain.

TICK.—Obtaining goods on credit.

TUCK.—"Grub, glorious grub!"

TOGS.—Wearing apparel.

TOPPER.—A resplendent article of headgear, usually worn on "high days and holidays."

WIGGING.—A reprimand from one in authority.

WHOPPER.—A perversion of the truth. (Billy Bunter is computed to have brought his total of whoppers up to a million, which is a world's record.)

IF MASTERS SPOKE SLANG!

An Amazing Dialogue by Bob Cherry.

Mr. Quelch: "Hallo, Prouty, old bean!"

Mr. Prout: "Hallo, Quelchy, old top!"

Mr. Q.: "How goes the merry game?"

Mr. P.: "Top-hole, thanks! I've just given old Hilton Popper a jolly good licking at golf. Simply put it across him—pulverised the old josser, in fact!"

Mr. Q.: "Great pip! I always thought you were an awful ass at golf—"

Mr. P.: "Rats!"

Mr. Q.: "I thought you were a chop-headed chump and a burbling duffer—"

Mr. P.: "Go and eat coke! I'm a jolly sight better golfer than you, anyway, you slabsided son of a gun!"

Mr. Q.: "Dry up, you rotter, or I'll give you a 'tuppenny' that'll knock you into the middle of next week!"

Mr. P.: "My only Aunt Jane! Dashed if I'm going to stand any of your cheek! Step along to the gym, and I'll paste your ugly chivvy so thoroughly that your own mater won't know you!"

Mr. Q.: "This way to the gym, you pie-faced old idiot, and if I don't knock you out in the first round, I'll eat my Sunday topper!"

(Exit the two masters, fuming.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 834.

IMAGINARY EPITAPHS.

GERALD LODER.

HERE LIES
THE LANKY FORM
OF
GERALD LODER,

Beast, Bully, and Braggart,

Who met his fate in attempting to climb down the ivy one dark night, for the purpose of visiting the—er—Temperance Hall in the Village. The ivy gave way, and the creeper refused to support the midnight creeper. And there, beneath the box-room window,

THE TYRANT FELL!

He was discovered next morning by Gosling, the porter, who, believing in the old adage that "a stitch in time saves nine," stitched him up with a length of bell-rope. Fortunately, however, Loder failed to survive, and Greyfriars is well rid of one of the beastliest bullies who ever handled an ashplant.

TAKE WARNING, YE MIDNIGHT REVELLERS,

and never attempt to descend the ivy at night, lest, like Loder, ye share the fate of Humpty Dumpty!

"Loder by proxy climbed down a wall, Loder, Loder had a bad fall. All the wise surgeons, and all the cute doctors Couldn't heal the bruises and knocks of Loder's!"

SNAPSHOTS!

By
VERNON-SMITH.

IT is rumoured that Loder of the Sixth has avowed his intention of stamping out the use of slang in the Remove. I rather think that Loder—like the stamp—will be licked; that the "slangers" in our midst will "Remove" Loder, by the simple process of slinging him out on his neck. Oh, what rapture!

* * *

A prominent public man in Courtfield has recently been granted the Freedom of the City. Billy Bunter wants to know if there is such a privilege as the Freedom of the Tuck-shop!

* * *

A correspondent writes to ask if the ancient monks of Greyfriars had a tuck-shop of their own. Undoubtedly! And it was presided over by Friar Tuck!

* * *

Just a little riddle to wind up with. Why is Billy Bunter like a fountain-pen? Because he is invariably a "self-filler."

[Supplement iv.]

COKER'S BRAIN-WAVE!

(Continued from page 12.)

"There's the fee!" Coker laid two pound notes and two shillings on the table. "Now, is it a go?"

The signor's eyes glistened at the sight of the money. Promptly he transferred it to his pocket. That, at all events, was so much to the good, whatever might happen afterwards.

"Good," said Coker, with satisfaction. To Coker's simple mind, the acceptance of the money finished the matter. "Now, here comes Blundell. Just put the 'fluence on, and it's all serene."

George Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, strolled into Coker's study, with a smile on his face.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Amazing!

SIGNOR SPEZZI was probably, at that moment, the unhappiest man to be found within the limits of the wide county of Kent.

To refuse to demonstrate his powers was to admit that he was an impostor! That was to ask for a terrific hiding, for there was not the slightest doubt of the form Coker's indignation would take. The mere thought of being handled by the burly Coker made the unhappy little gentleman shudder.

There was only one way out—and that was to go through the form of putting the "influence" on Blundell, and then to announce that Blundell was not a "receptive subject!" It was doubtful whether that dodge would save the signor. Coker wanted the "goods," so to speak, not explanations and excuses.

But in point of fact the wretched signor was not wholly without hope. He had "spoofed" the public so long, that he had come to take his own spoofing more or less seriously. He had a sort of half-faith in his own humbug, like that of a politician in political clap-trap, or that of a cubist painter in cubism.

So, though he would have given a great deal just then to be safe home in his lodging over the fish-shop, he nourished a hope that Blundell might go under the magic 'fluence. For there might be something in hypnotism, for all the signor knew!

"Sit down, Blundell, old chap," said Coker. "Friend of mine, a celebrated scientific gentleman—Blundell, the captain of our Form here, signor! I thought you'd like to have a talk with the signor, Blundell."

But for the "tip" he had received in advance from Potter and Greene, it is doubtful whether Blundell would have dropped into the study at all, and still more doubtful whether he would have sat down for a chat with Coker's scientific friend. As it happened, however, Blundell was all gonality.

"That's really kind of you, Coker," said Blundell, sitting down. "Happy to meet you, sir! I hear that you're very celebrated for—for hypnotism, isn't it?"

"But yes," said the signor.

"Oh! You've seen Signor Spezzi, Blundell?" asked Coker, a little taken aback.

"Certainly! Very pleased to meet him like this," said the captain of the Fifth, blandly. "I wonder whether the signor would try putting me under the influence? It would be rather a jest."

Coker's face beamed.

Blundell was fairly playing into his hands. The idea had been for the signor

to engage him in talk, and then surreptitiously, as it were, put the 'fluence on.

But Blundell was fairly asking for it now! Coker made an eager sign to the Italian gentleman not to lose this chance.

"I'm sure Signor Spezzi will be pleased," said Coker. "Go it, sir—just for a jest—ha, ha!"

"Certo!" mumbled the hapless signor. With many deep misgivings, Signor Spezzi proceeded to make the magic passes, as seen on the stage at the Ionic—hoping for the best!

Coker looked on eagerly.

Blundell smiled at first, but gradually his face became more serious, and he adopted a sleepy expression. His eyes closed.

Coker's heart thumped. The 'fluence was getting on.

Signor Spezzi stared.

For twenty years or so he had been playing the hypnotist, and as no man likes to think himself a rogue, he had always done his best to believe in hypnotism. Now, for the first time, he attained to something like belief in it, and in his own powers.

Blundell, a stranger to him, with no conceivable motive for taking him in, was apparently yielding to the influence!

The signor's black eyes sparkled, and he made the magic passes with redoubled energy.

"Sleep!" he said in a thrilling voice.

Blundell breathed regularly.

"Open ze eyes."

Blundell's eyes opened.

"Stand up!"

Blundell stood up.

"Stand on ze one leg."

Blundell stood on one leg.

"Take zat plate from ze table." Blundell obeyed. "Zat is a cake—a verree nice cake! Vat is it?"

"A cake," said Blundell.

"Eat him."

Blundell put the rim of the plate in his mouth.

"This is a jolly hard cake," he said.

"Put him down."

Blundell put the plate down. Coker, in his delight, gave the signor a slap on the shoulder.

"Splendid! You've got him. Ripping."

The signor's dusky face beamed like Coker's. It was a thrilling moment for him as well as Coker, for here was a helpless victim to his magic influence for the first time in his career as a hypnotist! Great prospects opened out before the vision of the signor! He had earned a living, at least, as a spoof hypnotist. What might he not do as a genuine one!

"Now tell him," said Coker.

"Si, signor, si!" The little gentleman fixed his black eyes on Blundell. "Now, amico, you are ze slave of my will!" he said.

"Yes."

"To-morrow you play ze game of ze football—"

"Football, trial match," said Coker.

"Football, trial match," repeated the signor. "Is it not so?"

"Yes," said Blundell.

"You will play my young friend Coker in zat trial match. It is a command."

"Yes."

"Tell him to go and put my name in the list for the trial match at once," said Coker.

"You goes at once and puts Coker's name in ze list for ze trial match."

"Yes."



Coker had disappeared under a stack of falling men. He came out from under that human pyramid breathless and dishevelled. "You dummies—" he gasped. "On the ball!" roared Blundell. There was a rush at Coker. When Blundell said "on the ball" it was clear that he meant Coker. The great Horace was rushed over again. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removites from the touchline. (See Chapter 11.)

"Zen you vake up and forget all zis," said the signor. "But it is a command zat you play Coker in ze football to-morrow."

"Yes."

"Go!"

Blundell went.

Coker walked down to the gates with and wrung it warmly.

"Good man!" he exclaimed. "Why, it's simply splendid! You've done a good thing for Greyfriars to-day, Mr. Spezzi. You're simply wonderful. I say, hypnotism's a marvellous thing!"

"It is ze greatest wonder of ze modern time," said the signor. "I am happy to oblige you, my young friend. It is nozing."

"It's great."

Coker walked down to the gates with Signor Spezzi, and saw him off, shaking hands with him cordially. All was plain sailing now! Coker walked back to the schoolhouse like a fellow walking on air. He stopped at the notice-board when he went in, to look for the list of players in the Fifth Form trial match.

"H. Coker."

There it was—his own name, down for the trial! Coker strolled away to his own study in a happy mood. Potter and Greene were there, and they regarded him rather curiously.

"Seen the list for the trial?" asked Coker carelessly.

"H'm! Yes."

"My name's there."

"Yes! I—I—I noticed it."

"Blundell's done the right thing at last."

"Oh! Ah! Yes."

"Something in my little scheme, what?" smiled Coker.

"Oh! Ah! Looks like it!" gasped Potter.

Coker of the Fifth was a happy man that evening. Curiously enough, many other fellows in the Fifth Form seemed to be in a hilarious mood. Blundell, and all Blundell's intimate friends, seemed to be in possession of some mysterious cause of hilarity. Perhaps they were rejoicing because justice was being done at last, and Coker was getting his chance of coming out into the limelight as a footballer! Perhaps there was some other cause for their merriment. At all events, that evening there was much hilarity in the Fifth, and Coker's smiling face was surrounded by other smiling faces.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Coker Wakes Up!

HARRY WHARTON stared.

He was astonished.

So were other fellows! A good many Greyfriars fellows, junior and senior, could scarcely believe their eyes, in fact.

Wharton had glanced at the notice-board after lessons on Tuesday morning, and the Fifth Form paper had caught his eye. He was not specially interested in Fifth Form affairs, but when he saw that paper in Blundell's hand he became interested at once. It was only a list for a trial match—not a matter of great importance, excepting to the fellows concerned—the twenty-two from whom Blundell was to select eleven for Wednesday's match with the Sixth. But that list, otherwise not at all interesting, became striking and provocative of amazement from the inclusion of Horace Coker's name in it.

In making up his twenty-two for the trial, Blundell had borrowed a couple of men from the Sixth and three or four

from the Shell—not being able to call up twenty-two footballers from the Fifth alone. In a trial match, of course, it did not matter how the teams were made up—it was only a test of form. But however short Blundell might have been of recruits for his twenty-two, it was astounding that he should have selected Coker.

For Coker was not merely a bad footballer—he was no footballer at all. His game was of a kind calculated to make the angels weep. His presence in the trial simply made the trial a farce, for with Coker barging about the field not much of a game could be played. Coker had a perfect genius not only for wild and whirling play on his own, but for getting in everybody's way and making all the play wild and whirling. It was even said that on one occasion, in the excitement of the game, Coker had charged his own goalkeeper into the net. Certainly he was capable of doing it.

"Well, this beats it!" said Wharton.

"The beatfulness is terrific," agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Thrice over the Famous Five read Coker's name, to make sure that their eyes had not deceived them. But there it was!

"We're seeing this!" said Bob Cherry decidedly.

"We are!" said Wharton.

And the Famous Five rolled up when the trial was booked to start that afternoon. So did a crowd of other fellows. The astonishment caused by Coker's name in the list was general. Temple, Dabney and Co. of the Fourth neglected their own practice to turn up. Hobson came with a crowd of the Shell. Even Tubb and Paget of the Third came with a mob of fags. For Horace Coker's fame was great in Greyfriars, and on the football field he was well worth watching. Fellows confidently predicted that there would be a serious casualty list; some hazarded the opinion that, after Coker had crippled half his own side, he would be lynched by the other half.

Why Blundell had done it was a deep mystery. How he was going to judge the form of his players, with Coker barging about and turning the game into a wild harlequinade, was a puzzle. If Blundell had not gone suddenly insane, there seemed no explanation. Certainly nobody outside the Fifth suspected that Blundell had been hypnotised into doing it, and certainly nobody but Horace Coker believed that there was anything in the hypnotism.

"Well, here we are," said Bob Cherry; "if it isn't a queer joke, we shall see Coker now."

"Here he is!" shouted Squiff.

"Good old Coker!"

Horace Coker came down to the field, in jersey and shorts, looking lofty and important and satisfied.

There he was! It was no joke, apparently! Coker was there, all there!

Blundell, looking quite serious, picked sides. He was captaining one side himself, Hilton commanding the other. Most of the Fifth-formers were smiling, and exchanging glances. But Walker, of the Sixth, who was lending his services to fill up Hilton's team, came over to Blundell with a frowning brow.

"What's this rot?" he demanded. "I thought this was a trial match."

"What about it?" asked Blundell.

Walker pointed to Horace Coker.

"What's he doing here, then?"

"Look here, you cheeky ass——" roared Coker.

"It's all serene, Walker," said Blundell hastily. "Leave it to me."

"That's all very well——"

Potter whispered something to Walker, who seemed satisfied after that whispered communication. The crowd that had gathered round the field looked on with interest and surprise. They noticed that Walker of the Sixth grinned as he went to his place.

The sides lined up! To the further surprise of the spectators, Coker was put in as centre-forward in Blundell's side.

Bob Cherry rubbed his eyes.

"We're not dreaming this, I suppose," he said. "Blundell's really giving that born idiot a trial for matches. Is he potty?"

"Must be!" said Nugent.

"Anyhow, we shall see some fireworks now," said Wharton. "Wait till Coker charges his own backs, and butts into his own goalie."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The whistle went, and the trial game began. Coker led a rush. After Coker went the whole crowd of Blundell's side, including the goalkeeper. The spectators looked on spellbound.

If this was football it was something new in Soccer.

For Hilton's side, paying no attention to the ball, closed up on Coker!

That great man was played instead of the ball.

"Coker's down!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker had disappeared under a stack of falling men. He came out from under that pyramid breathless, gasping, crimson, and dishevelled. He staggered up.

"You dummies!" he gasped.

"On the ball!" roared Blundell.

There was a rush—at Coker! When Blundell said "on the ball," it was clear that he meant "on Coker!"

Coker was rushed over again. Hefty fellow as Coker was, he could not stand up to these tactics. He went heels over head.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The crowd were catching on now. It was Coker who was being played—twenty-one fellows were there to play Coker! And they played him—hard!

Coker rushed, and ran, and dodged, and twisted! It was all in vain! He was charged over, he was shouldered here, and shouldered there. Every fellow on the field was anxious to get at him—and they all got at him more or less. Even Potter and Greene charged him, perhaps seizing the opportunity of getting their own back for Coker's high-handed methods in the study. Blundell was worst of all—he fairly revelled in hurling Coker to right and left, in rolling him over and rolling on him.

There was no trace of the fluence on Blundell now. That was certain. He had put Coker into the trial match according to orders! And this was how he was treating him, now that he was there!

Coker failed to understand it at first! He roared and raved and expostulated, so long as he had any breath left! But his breath was soon gone, and he could only gasp and gurgle.

Finally, he made an attempt to escape from the field. Amid wild yells of laughter from the crowd, he ran for the ropes.

But he was headed off!

"Pass!" roared Blundell.

And Coker was passed back into the whirling mob.

After that Coker almost ceased to realise what was happening. He was dazed, he was dizzy, he was breathless, he was utterly done and worn out. He collapsed on the field at last, without a run left in his limbs.

There he lay panting.

"Go it, Coker!" roared Bob Cherry. "Up and at 'em!"



Blundell signed to Bland and Hilton, and they picked Coker up. They held him up—he had no power left to stand on his own legs. As he hung on them, helpless and dazed, Blundell addressed him. "Had enough Coker?" "Grooogh!" "I let you rip," continued the captain of the Fifth, "just to give you a lesson. The trial match is just about to begin—you're not in it, you crass ass!" "Gug—gug—gug!" spluttered Coker. (See Chapte. 11.)

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give him some more!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

But Coker had had enough! Blundell signed to Bland and Hilton, and they picked Coker up. They held him up, he had no power left to stand on his own legs. As he hung on them, helpless and dazed and wondering if this was some fearful dream, Blundell addressed him.

"Had enough, Coker?"

"Grooogh!"

"Now, you born idiot, I'll explain," said Blundell. "Next time you engage a jolly old hypnotist to hypnotize me into putting you into a game, make sure that he can do the trick."

"Gug-gug-gug."

"What's that?" gasped Wharton. Blundell's voice was heard all round, and this was news to the spectators.

"So that was it!" ejaculated Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I let you rip," went on Blundell, grimly, "just to give you a lesson. Got that, Coker? I'm sorry I couldn't give your jolly old hypnotist a hiding for his cheek, but I had to let him off to pull your leg. See?"

"Mmmmmmm!" mumbled Coker.

"The trial match," went on Blundell, "is just going to begin. You're not in it, you crass ass. This little game was to give you a lesson. Do you think you've had lesson enough, or shall we give you some more?"

"Groooooogh!"

"Looks as if he's had enough," grinned Hilton. "Chuck him off the field, and let's get to business."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker, still breathless and voiceless, was jerked past the touch-line, and deposited on the ground. He lay gasping.

Then the sides lined up for the game, and the trial match began—without Coker.

But Coker was not thinking of trial matches, or Form matches, or any matches at all. For a long time he was not capable of anything but gasping and

spluttering. At last he crawled to his feet, and limped away to the house, still spluttering and gasping. He sank into a chair in his study, feeling a perfect wreck; and when Potter and Greene came in to tea, after the trial game, he could only give them a feeble glare.

Coker's brain-wave had come—and gone—and this was what it had done for Coker! Somehow or other, the hypnotism had missed fire—Blundell, evidently, had not been "under the 'fluence" at all—he had simply "put it on" to take Coker in; and instead of playing him in the trial match, had taken him to the field to be mobbed, as a warning to him, certainly a warning that Coker needed.

All Greyfriars roared over the story, with the exception of the great Horace. Coker only groaned.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Light at Last!

BILLY BUNTER tapped at the door of Coker's study the following afternoon and rolled in.

Coker was there alone.

On Big Side, the Form match between Fifth and Sixth was going on, and Coker was not even going down to watch it. Potter and Greene were in Blundell's team, Coker wasn't. The trial match had not, as he had so confidently expected, given him any chance of displaying his wonderful powers as a footballer; Greyfriars was still in the dark as to what he might have done.

Coker, lofty and indignant, ignored the Form match—and as a matter of fact he had not yet quite recovered from his terrific experience of the day before, and still needed rest. So he was resting, in his study, when Billy Bunter rolled in.

Coker glared at him. He was in a humour to glare at anybody. But the Owl of the Remove was not to be deterred by glares. Billy Bunter had come there on business.

"I say, Coker—"

"Get out."

"That's all very well," said Bunter, firmly. "But I may as well tell you that I'm on to your game."

"What?"

Bunter winked.

"Signor Spezzi, you know, and the jolly old hypnotism," he said. "How many tickets did he give you?"

"Tickets!" said Coker blankly.

"He gave me a dozen for the job," said Bunter. "I suppose he gave you the same. Well, halves."

"Halves?" stuttered Coker.

"Yes, halves! That's fair," said Bunter. "You'd never have thought of it but for me. You must own that."

"You fat idiot," said Coker. "I don't know what you're driving at. Do you think that merchant gave me any tickets?"

"I jolly well know he did," said Bunter, warmly.

"Well, he didn't; and if he had I shouldn't give you any," snapped Coker. "Travel!"

"That's not good enough," said Bunter, firmly. "It was my idea, and you'd never have thought of it on your own. He gave me a dozen tickets to sell among the fellows, in return for my services—"

"Services?"

"Yes. Stands to reason that he's done the same with you," said Bunter. "That's what he came to see you for. Now, I'm entitled to a whack. Mind, I mean business. If you don't stand me some of the tickets I shall give you away."

"Give me away!" stuttered Coker.

"Certainly. You're in the game to go to the Ionic, and go on the stage when the hypnotist calls for someone from the audience—"

"What?"

"And pretend to be hypnotized—"

"Eh?"

"Same as I did—"

"You!"

(Continued on page 26.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 834.

A GREAT STORY OF THE NORTH-WEST MOUNTED POLICE!



THE OUTLAW OF THE HILLS!

Introducing Mel Ruthven, a hardy frontiersman whose character will make a great appeal.

Canada abounds with romance and thrilling adventure, but there is nothing to equal the daring and dangerous work of the men who have made history—the N.W.M.P.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Carver Chris' Capture.

MEL RUTHVEN, ordinarily the best-tempered fellow in the world, was surly as a bear with a sore head. Even Joe Clarke, his oldest and best friend among the squad of twenty at Fort Alexandra had not ventured to speak to him all the morning.

After dinner Joe found Mel smoking moodily in a corner of the mess-room. He was passing on when the other looked up sharply.

"Joe, I want you! Look at this," continued Ruthven, in low, angry tones, handing the other a scrap of crumpled paper. "Isn't it enough to make a coyote weep?"

Joe took the paper without a word. This is what he read:

"Mister Rooven.—They cudn't keep me down to Fort Grizzly. I'm at the old stand agin, an' reddey to doo bizness with yew or enny uther of yore fat-headed lot. I'm gaim to make a sporting offer. Fifty dollars yew don't ketch me in three months!—Yores,
"BLACK JACK."

"Those idiots down at Grizzly ought to be shot!" exclaimed Ruthven bitterly. "It took me three weeks' hard work to capture that ruffian, and they can't even keep him in gaol!"

Joe nodded sympathetically.

"Send him to Winnipeg next time," he remarked.

"Yes; but we've got to catch him first. 'The old stand'—that means the Black Hills, and the whole corps might spend a month in that beastly maze of rocks without so much as seeing the tail of the beggar's pony!"

"Come for a walk," was all that Joe said.

Ruthven got up, and, without another word, the two started off on a long tramp across the prairie.

Neither spoke a word, but slowly the exercise restored Ruthven to a better frame of mind, and by the time they had reached the upper rim of the Snake River valley he was quite himself again.

He flung himself down under a shady tree, and Joe dropped beside him.

They were hardly seated before Ruthven started up again.

"Who's that, Joe?" he whispered sharply, and pointed down the valley.

Along the path below came riding a strange figure—a man with a hunched back and a huge head of grizzled hair. Deformed as he was, the immense width of his shoulders and the length of his arms bespoke enormous muscular strength.

Joe stared a minute.

"Carver Chris!" he muttered, with as near an approach to excitement as he ever showed.

Ruthven spoke rapidly and earnestly for a minute or two, then the two rose and slipped away down the slope, as silent as a pair of weasels, making for the trail.

Arrived in the thick brush which bordered it, both hid and waited for the man who rode, all unsuspecting, up towards them.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 834.

Carver Chris was even more forbidding at close quarters than at a distance. He looked as if he had been rough-hewn out of an old oak log. His fierce, hawk-billed face was disfigured with a great, white scar across the forehead, and his beard and whiskers were long and unkempt.

Suddenly Joe stepped out of the bushes right into his path. But it was a different Joe from the smart policeman of a moment ago. Undress jacket and forage cap had been doffed, his shirtsleeves were turned up. He looked like a rough lumber-man.

Chris whipped out a pistol.

"What do yew want?" he growled threateningly.

"Only to give you a word o' warning," answered Joe hoarsely. "Them perlice is after yew!"

"Think I don't know that?" retorted the other roughly, fixing his piercing eyes on Clarke. "Air yew in league with 'em? Fer if so—"

He got no further. At that instant Ruthven, who had slipped out unseen from the trees, vaulted on to the horse behind him, and, clapping both hands round the big man's neck, wrenched him backwards.

The terrified horse reared, but Joe had him by the bridle.

Chris and Ruthven rolled to the ground together, and lay struggling. Powerful as Ruthven was, he was no match for the giant strength of Carver Chris; but next instant Joe had flung himself into the battle, and, with his aid the man was very shortly trussed up so securely that he could not move hand or foot.

"I feel a whole heap better, Joe," remarked Ruthven, as, with their prisoner tied fast on his pony, they started back for the fort.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Blue Blanket's Mission.

CHRIS, who was wanted for a variety of misdoings, including a bank robbery and a train hold-up, was safely bestowed for the time being in the military gaol at Fort Alexandra.

To Joe Clarke fell the duty of looking after him till the civil authorities could take him over.

Early next morning Joe came to Ruthven.

"This any good to you?" he asked, and handed his chum a folded piece of paper.

Ruthven opened it quickly. On the inner side was a roughly-drawn plan, apparently of a town. A certain house was marked with a red cross.

"It's meant for Fort Grizzly, or I'm a Dutchman!" exclaimed Ruthven. "Where did you get it, Joe?"

"Chris' pocket," responded Joe laconically. "Notice anything about the paper?"

"My hat, yes! Same as Black Jack's letter was written on."

"Thought so," answered Clarke. "Might be good biz—eh?"

Like a flash his meaning dawned on Ruthven.

"You mean that he and Jack are in this

together? This is the factor's house, the one marked red. The winter furs were brought in last week. They mean to have a try for them?"

"My idea," was the brief reply.

Ruthven considered a moment.

"Can we get a sample of Chris' writing? That's the question."

Without a word the other produced a small note-book. It was full of straggling hieroglyphics in Chris' hand.

"Nice stuff to copy!" observed Mel, surveying the scrawls in some disgust.

Joe merely nodded. Stolid as he was outwardly, his brain was sharp enough. Already he had an inkling of Ruthven's purpose.

"Better warn the city marshal, hadn't you?" he suggested, after a pause.

"And have him muff it, like he did the Merton affair!" exclaimed the other scornfully. "Not much! Joe, this is my picnic—my very own. Keep a still tongue, and I'll make sure of Black Jack this time."

"Ain't I in it?" queried Joe regretfully.

"Not this journey, old man. If I make a mess of it, then it's your turn. Now, the question is, how to get a letter to Jack."

"That's all right. Blue Blanket, the Indian kid, will take it. Trouble is, if Jack gets to hear we've got Carver Chris in quod."

"Not likely. At least not in two days. Got to risk that anyhow."

After a little more talk the two retired to a secluded corner with pen and ink, and with great care concocted a note to Black Jack. Purporting to come from Carver Chris, it briefly informed the outlaw that he was to meet the writer at one o'clock in the morning outside Factor Mulgrave's house in Fort Grizzly.

This done, Ruthven enclosed it in a creased and dirty envelope, and went off to find the Indian lad, who, for a consideration, eagerly volunteered to carry the missive to Black Jack's haunt in the Black Hills.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Novel Weapon.

HIS best friend would never by any chance have recognised smart Mel Ruthven in the misshapen monster who crouched in darkness and blinding rain on the lee-side of Michael Mulgrave's house in Fort Grizzly a little before one in the morning on the second night after sending the note to Black Jack. Hump, beard, grizzled hair, blue jumper, moleskin breeches, jack-boots, all were a faithful copy of Carver Chris.

It was horribly cold, and the drip from the eaves made its way in a chilly stream down the trooper's neck. He heard one strike on a clock inside the house, and after an enormous interval, half-past. Still no sign of the robber. At last, considering he might as well get in out of the rain, with the skill which only burglars and policemen possess, Mel prised open a window, and slipped through into Mulgrave's dining-room. The house was still as death, the only sound being the shrill whine of the wind around

the chimneys and the dreary patter of the rain on the shingled roof. Shivering, he crouched over the ashes of the dying fire and waited quietly.

He had often before been Mulgrave's guest, and knew the house fairly well. Hence his easy entry. Black Jack, he considered, would certainly break in from the back, for that side of the house opened on a quiet alley-way. The fur store was in the cellar beneath his feet.

The dining-room door opened into a passage which ran through the house from back to front. This Ruthven had set open, and now sat facing it, with ears sharp cocked for the entry of his expected captive.

The warmth gradually made the trooper drowsy, but he fought the feeling off. Suddenly a slight creak behind made him start and glance sharply round. A tall, gaunt figure, looking gigantic in the gloom, stood silent, close at his shoulder.

It needed all Mel Ruthven's self-control not to betray his surprise, but he fancied that he had succeeded when Black Jack said, in a matter-of-fact tone:

"Sorry, pardner. Know I'm late, but couldn't help it. Reckon we'd better get to bizness. Lead on!"

Ruthven rose mechanically, and after one quick glance at the other, moved silently towards the open door. It seemed the only thing to do under the circumstances. His plan had been to get the drop on Jack before the latter saw him. Now that he had lost this advantage, owing to the robber's unexpected entrance by the window, he was at a loss what to be at.

Of course, he might turn on Jack and attempt to hold him up; but as the outlaw had ready in his hand a particularly long-barrelled, unpleasant-looking six-shooter, the chances were something better than even that he himself would get drilled first.

There was a second danger, and one almost equally great. Any disturbance would undoubtedly bring down the factor himself—a great, big, red-headed, hot-tempered Irishman, who was apt to shoot first and ask questions afterwards. He would most certainly give the trooper no time to explain his disguise.

No, on the whole, Ruthven concluded that the disguise was his best friend. Evidently Black Jack had no suspicion whatever of his supposed partner's real identity. He must let matters drift for the present.

As he crossed the passage towards the cellar door he smiled grimly at the idea of a corporal of D troop assisting one of the biggest blackguards in Western Canada to burgle the richest of the North-West Company's fur stores.

The cellar entrance was near the kitchen. Black Jack, still with his pistol in his right hand, took a well-oiled key from his pocket with his left and silently unlocked the door. Motioning Ruthven to precede him, he then closed the door, and lit a bullseye lantern.

Ruthven, outwardly composed enough, was in reality watching his companion as a cat does a mouse. But the robber, while apparently taking things as coolly as though

his feet were on his native heath, the Black Hill fastnesses, never gave the other half a chance to get behind him.

Round the cellar, which was wood-floored and walled, bales of skins were piled to the very roof.

"Whar's the silver fox?" inquired Jack.

The trooper pointed silently to the precious packages. There were two of them weighing about forty pounds apiece, and each probably worth £500, for silver fox grows yearly in rarity and price. Now was coming the crucial moment. While Jack was lifting the bales, the trooper would get his chance of clapping a pistol to the other's head.

To his deep chagrin, Jack said coolly:

"Rake 'em out, pardner. I'll hold the light!"

There was nothing for it but to obey. Yet Ruthven was horribly uneasy. He would have to work with the light full upon him. Black Jack's keen eyes would have an excellent chance of penetrating his disguise. His height was not so great as that of Chris, and his hands again were very unlike the horny, knotted paws of the man he was supposed to represent.

Yet Jack neither moved nor spoke as the trooper rapidly disengaged the bales from among those piled round them, and lifted them out into the open.

"Yew take one," said the outlaw coolly; "I'll carry t'other!"

Again a spasm of uneasiness assailed Ruthven, as he noticed that Jack did not lift his bale until he himself had the first one safe on his shoulders.

"That's all right!" remarked Jack. "Now the word's 'git!'"

Not a soul was about, and shortly the two were outside the town, and striding rapidly along in the direction of the Black Hills. Ruthven's sense of humour was strong, but this was beyond a joke.

Burdened with the bale of fur, there simply was not a ghost of a chance for him to draw forth his pistol and turn on the other.

There was no alternative but to tramp on up into the hills. Dawn would come in a couple of hours, and in the broad light of day his disguise would no longer serve him, and—well, the rest didn't bear too close consideration. Yet even then it was the idea of the ridicule of his fellow-troopers that weighed far more heavily upon Ruthven than the thought of personal danger occurring to himself.

Two miles out of the town the path struck off into thick woods. Ruthven knew the way, and, to avoid suspicion, took it. Well, there were still two hours to daylight. He ought to be able to trick Jack in that time.

Click! The sound of a cocking trigger. Ruthven wheeled, to find himself looking down the glistening muzzle of that ugly six-shooter.

"Hands up, Mister Ruthven!"

Down went the pack, and up the hands of the other.

"Ho, ho! So you thought you'd fooled me, my beauty! Crickets! What a joke! This is the best I ever struck!"

But laugh as the ruffian might and did, that deadly muzzle never left the trooper's head.

At last Jack's fit of mirth was over. He threw down his pack.

"Take 'em up both, sonny!" he ordered Ruthven. "Chuck down your gun! Now, march! And look here," he added, in suddenly menacing tones, "yew try to turn or fool me, and it'll be the last thing yew ever do on this earth!"

Ruthven had no doubt whatever that the fellow spoke literal truth. He shouldered both packs, and under this heavy burden



Before Jack could recover from the stinging cut across his eyes, a forty-pound bale caught him full in the chest.

tramped silently onwards up the steep, rugged path.

Jack drove him forward with jeers and taunts.

"Warn't it a pretty plan, Mister Ruthven?" he inquired sneeringly. "Say, you've lost that bet, I reckon. Hev yew the dollars about yew? No, don't stop. I'll take 'em when we gits to camp."

As for the trooper, he set his teeth and made no reply. The road was awful, and getting worse. He needed all his strength to keep up the pace under the burden of his double load.

The path plunged through a tangle of brush. It now resembled rather a series of rude, rocky steps than a mere slope. Ruthven stumbled more than once, and Jack jeered afresh.

Thicker and thicker became the tangle of branches. The path was rarely used, and the long boughs of dog-wood and maple were in many places interlaced across the footway.

A thin switch struck Ruthven sharply across his unprotected face, making his eyes sting and water, and with the pain a desperate idea flashed upon him.

It was very dark here, for though the rain had ceased, clouds still covered the night sky.

Ruthven then began quietly shifting the packs so that he could hold them both by one hand. He succeeded in doing this without attracting the other's attention, and then raised his free hand to the level of his face.

Branch after branch he touched and dropped as useless. At last he felt the right one meet his palm—a long, slim, springy sapling.

Clutching the suitable branch tightly, he pressed onwards, until he felt that it had reached the limit of its spring. Then, with a quick movement he raised it over his head and let go.

Swish! A yell of pain. Before Jack could recover from the stinging cut across his eyes, a forty-pound bale, flung with all the force of long-suppressed fury, caught him full in the chest, and whirled him backwards.

He fell like a pole-axed ox, and his head striking a stone, he lay stunned and still like one dead.

When he came to he was so carefully attached to a substantial pine trunk that by no possible exercise of his immense strength and ingenuity could he have got free. Ruthven stood in front of him.

"Jack, I'll trouble you for that fifty dollars!" remarked the trooper.

THE END.

(Another magnificent Mounted Police story next week, boys.)

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A Marked Man!

by
Hedley Scott.

(Conclusion.)



Ambitious Hopes!

THE advent of Fang, the Chinese manservant, bearing two steaming hot dishes of food put a stop to further conversation, and both Brooks and Swiveller fell to with an avidity that was only too common a sight in the rendezvous which boasted the sign of "High Class Tailors."

But after the meal had been consumed and glasses of liquor had been placed upon the table, Brooks and his new-found companion remained deep in conversation for over an hour. At the expiration of that time the two sought the open again, and Swiveller, under the guidance and patronage of Brooks, was fitted with a complete new rig out. A hair cut and shave put the finishing touches to his new appearance, and Swiveller felt like a new man.

Buoyed up with hope, for he had extracted from Brooks the whereabouts of the secret panel in the late Mornington Hardacre's house, Swiveller, accompanied by the well-dressed man rejoicing in the nickname of Smart-Fingered Rupert, entered Euston Station. He took a ticket to Middleham, and whiled away the time in the buffet with Brooks until the guard announced that his train was due in. Then, with a hearty handshake, the two parted.

"Good luck, pard!" said Brooks, as the guard waved his flag aloft. "See you this time to-morrow."

"Sure thing!" returned Swiveller with a confident smile. "And then for a bust-up, eh?"

"Bet your sweet life!"

The train drew out of the station, thus parting a friendship which Fate had destined was not to be renewed.

The Secret of the Panel!

"HERE he comes!" The cry was taken up by hundreds of throats as the Scottish express steamed into Middleham Station. The platforms, the booking-offices, the waiting-rooms were packed with an enthusiastic crowd of football lovers who had come to acclaim Jim Blakeney as the first International ever to be chosen from their beloved town.

The result of the England v. Scotland match had reached Middleham long before the express fussed into the station, and it had given a heightened colour to the crowd's enthusiasm and delight. For England had triumphed in a very stern tussle by three goals to two, and Jim

Blakeney—Jim Blakeney of Middleham—had scored two of England's goals.

"Hurrah!"

"Chair him!"

"For he's a jolly good fellow—"

As Jim Blakeney stepped from the train, closely attended by Ferrers Locke and young Jack Drake the crowd broke loose. In a wild, surging rush they surrounded Middleham's popular centre-forward and hoisted him aloft. From somewhere in the street beyond the strains of a band floated into the station. In less than two seconds the excited townfolk were howling at the top of their voices the old-time song: "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow," etc.

From his lofty perch on the shoulders of the cheering crowd Jim Blakeney smiled down at Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake. The great detective and his assistant were as enthusiastic as any

native of Middleham, and they cheered and sang at the top of their lungs. Both had been present at the England versus Scotland match, and both had watched with delight and admiration Jim Blakeney's skilful exhibition of football—such football that even the dour Scots themselves had rubbed their eyes in astonishment, and then cheered with generous sportsmanship.

"We'd better leave him to it, my lad," remarked Ferrers Locke to his young assistant. "I'm feeling in need of a tub and some food. Jim will be another hour or more before he escapes this crowd. Come on!"

Drake and his beloved chief entered the Hawk, which had been drawn up in readiness outside the station. The last the pair of them saw of Jim Blakeney was a figure carried high aloft on the shoulders of a cheering populace, smiling protests to those paying him their homage, and suffering himself to be led wherever the fancy of the crowd drifted.

It was a difficult task for Ferrers Locke to clear a passage through the dense throng, and the Hawk merely jogged along. But once clear of the station precincts the sleuth accelerated the powerful engine and reached the Myrtles in record time. Jenkins, the butler—who had heard the news of his young master's triumph—was waiting at the gates of the drive when the Hawk drew to a standstill.

"You won't see your master for some time yet, I reckon," remarked Ferrers Locke to the aged butler. "Can't you hear all that row coming from the direction of the station?"

"I should just think I could, Mr. Locke—disgraceful!" replied Jenkins stiffly.

"Not so bad as that," smiled the sleuth. "It's only the crowd showing their appreciation of your master!"

"Ah, then, that's very proper," interrupted Jenkins, quickly amending his previous remark. "I'm eager to shake Mr. Blakeney by the hand myself, sir."

Regaling Jenkins with a few tit-bits of information concerning the footer match of the afternoon Locke and Drake passed into the library. As the great detective crossed the threshold there came to his ears—and to those of Drake—a peculiar grating noise as of a chair being pushed back.

"What was that, guv'nor?" asked Drake quickly.

It was some minutes before Ferrers Locke made any reply. He appeared to

HOW THE STORY OPENED.

JIM BLAKENEY, the popular centre-forward of the Middleham Rangers, who has inherited the vast fortune of the late Mornington Hardacre, inventor of the wireless ray, for the possession of which

TIGER SLEEK, a notorious criminal, and **RONALD SWIVELLER**—the late Mornington Hardacre's nephew—have risked so much. The actual whereabouts of the ray have never been discovered.

FERRERS LOCKE, the world-famous detective, who has thrown in his lot with Jim Blakeney and has saved him from the Tiger's clutches on innumerable occasions. The sleuth is ably backed by

JACK DRAKE, his clever boy assistant.

BILL STUBBINS, a formidable member of the Tiger's villainous gang.

Ronald Swiveller, who, urged on by the subtle insinuations of Tiger Sleek, has murdered his uncle, flees from Middleham to escape the grim hand of the law. In London he makes the acquaintance of a rogue named Brooks, more commonly known as Smart-Fingered Rupert. By a strange coincidence, Swiveller learns that his companion worked for a firm of builders in Middleham in the years gone by, and that his last "honest" job took him to the Myrtles—the late Mornington Hardacre's and now Jim Blakeney's property. Smart-Fingered Rupert informs Swiveller that he had to fix a secret panel in the library of the Myrtles, and Swiveller instantly jumps to the conclusion that the secret panel will lead him to the wireless ray, for which a foreign government agent is willing to pay a million pounds. Smart-Fingered Rupert takes Swiveller to a crooks' rendezvous and offers to fit him out with a decent suit of clothes.

(Read on from here.)

he listening intently, and his steely eyes swiftly scanned the interior of the library. "Must have been our fancy, my lad," he said slowly at length. "But I could have sworn that I heard a door being shut, or a chair being moved back—and in this room, too."

"So could I, gov'nor," said Drake. "But we are standing at the door ourselves, and the chairs are all flush with the table. The noise must have come from outside."

"I suppose it must have," rejoined Ferrers Locke, with a strange lack of conviction in his tones, however.

As the Euston express neared the long tunnel which preceded a short run into Middleham Station the driver observed that the signal was against him, and, with a promptness for which the great traffic service is so noted and appreciated, he applied his brakes.

Before the train had come to a standstill Ronald Swiveller had jumped to his feet and was gazing out of the window of his carriage.

"This is luck and no mistake," he muttered. "If I hop off now it will save a lot of bother and gossip. No one will know that Mr. Swiveller has returned to Middleham."

Grabbing his hat, which he jammed on his head at a rakish angle, Swiveller opened the door of his compartment and stepped on to the footboard. From thence he reached the gravel track that ran either side of the rails in a grass-covered bank, down which he scrambled without loss of time.

The narrow lane which ran parallel with the embankment was deserted. With an ejaculation of triumph Swiveller noted the fact and strolled leisurely along it until he came to a stile. By a short cut which he had traversed innumerable times in the past Swiveller came at length to the high wall which surrounded the Myrtles. Selecting a suitable point of vantage from which he could keep a sharp look-out on the house Swiveller waited for over two hours. During that time he saw two of the servants wander down to the gates and out into the main road, evidently "off" for the afternoon. An hour later he saw the lean body of the Hawk streaking down the drive, also bound for the main road to Middleham.

"Everything is working out fine," reflected Swiveller, with a smirk of satisfaction. "Blakeney—curse him—will be arriving by the Scottish express in about five minutes' time. That's Ferrers Locke's car off to meet him."

He settled down to wait a few moments longer. In the distance he saw the ribbon of smoke which proclaimed the approach of the express. Again, he heard the terrific uproar as the train steamed into the station.

"Just arrived," muttered Swiveller, with a chuckle. "Blakeney's won his cap and I'm going to win the wireless ray. Here's for it!"

He made the last remark as his eyes saw the aged figure of Jenkins, the butler, walk down the drive to the gates. It was Swiveller's opportunity.

"Two servants away; the chauffeur at the station; Jenkins, the old fool, down at the gates; the house must be empty," thought Swiveller swiftly.

He swung his legs over the wall and dropped lightly on the soft moss the other side. Then, with a glance in the direction of the gates which took in the fact that Jenkins was staring down the main road to Middleham, Swiveller sprinted across to the french windows of the library. Once again, it seemed, luck was with him, for the windows were open.

For one moment he paused, his hand



"Hurrah!" "Chair him, boys!" As Jim Blakeney stepped from the train the crowd broke loose. In a wild, surging rush they surrounded Middleham's popular centre-forward and hoisted him aloft. (See Page 22.)

upon the catch of the window, whilst a spasm of fear shot through his frame. His active imagination was portraying in extravagant grimness and reality a vivid picture of the tragedy which he had left behind him when last he had stepped from the library through those very same windows. But in the excitement and greed for the possession of the high stakes for which he was casting the dice the picture was blotted out.

Ronald Swiveller entered the library on tip-toe.

With but a moment's hesitation he made straight for the furthestmost wall and stood counting the panels, richly carved, that graced the wall facing the windows.

"One, two, three! Ah!" exclaimed Swiveller. "This is the one!"

His hands commenced to explore the carving, the long, slender fingers pressing lightly on the carved flowers and decorative work until they had traversed every square inch of the panel.

"Funny!" muttered Swiveller, after he had been thus engaged for five minutes. "There's nothing doing here, I'm afraid. Brooks must have been mistaken in the number of the panel. I—"

He broke off abruptly and stood listening intently. From the direction of the drive he heard the movement of wheels and the sound of voices.

"They're coming back."

With a fearful glance to right and left of him, Swiveller stood shivering in every limb. Then suddenly his attention was drawn to a prominent piece of wood-

work in the centre of the panel which stood out two inches or so from the rest of the pattern. An exclamation of astonishment escaped his thin lips. In his fear of being surprised in his nefarious work by the man he hated most in all the world, Swiveller's brain had drawn an inspiration.

"Fool!" he muttered to himself. "I've been pressing the studs. I wonder—"

Feverishly he tugged at the projecting piece of woodwork, what time he could hear the sound of voices in the hall beyond becoming more distinct at every passing second. But although Swiveller knew he was cornered like a rat in a trap should his sudden inspiration prove to be wrong, the spirit of triumph and egotism which formed largely his make-up urged him to put his theory to the test.

And it bore fruit.

As Swiveller tugged at the projecting woodwork of the panel it slipped from his fingers, and the whole panel revolved in a semi-circular movement. It described ninety degrees of a circle and then stopped. And Swiveller saw that both sides of the panel were identical—carved and polished. Ahead of him loomed a dark aperture, the very darkness of which sent a spasm of apprehension down his spine. But the voices which he had heard in the hall beyond a few seconds before were now almost outside the door of the library—were now in fact outside the door of the library!

Plucking up his courage Swiveller passed through the half-opened panel. Even as his feet touched ground upon the other side the panel automatically swung to, and a flood of light, evidently switched on by some connecting stud concealed and operated by the board upon which he now stood, temporarily blinded him. With wildly staring eyes Swiveller crouched behind the closed panel; with his nerves strung to a high pitch, he heard Ferrers Locke's remark as the great detective stepped into the library. And something like a sigh of relief escaped him when the famous sleuth's words—"Must have been our fancy, my lad," came faintly to his listening ears.

"A narrow shave!" muttered Swiveller to himself. "But a miss is as good as a mile!"

The Underground Workshop!

THE single electric light bulb that was suspended above Swiveller's head enabled him to get his bearings without any discomfort. He appeared to be standing on a small wooden platform from which, into a realm of darkness, a flight of stone steps twisted and turned.

Gingerly at first Swiveller placed his feet upon the topmost step. His groping hand on the wall, which was strangely dry and in a good state of preservation, encountered something round and hard. A movement of his fingers, and another bright beam of light shone out ahead of him. He had unconsciously discovered another electric light switch.

"Old Hardacre didn't do things by halves," muttered the intruder. "This looks to me like an old priest hole which had been converted into a modern dug-out."

He laughed harshly at his own remark and proceeded. Turning the corner of the flight of steps his hand came into contact with another electric light switch. It was then, as a new bulb flashed its glow, that Swiveller realised the intricate wiring of the place. For as he progressed, lighting each bulb before him by means of a series of switches, the bulbs in his wake went out, providing an inky curtain of blackness at his back.

At the foot of the stone steps Swiveller found himself in a large, oblong-shaped room, part of which was fitted up like a workshop. This room was better

lighted than any room in the whole of the Myrtles. High candle-powered bulbs lit up a scene somewhat like a miniature power station. In the centre of the room was a strange and intricate apparatus, that for all Swiveller's lack of knowledge upon such a point he knew instinctively to be the famous Wireless Ray.

"Gee!" muttered the scoundrel, peering closely at the coils of wire and tiny glass bulbs that appeared to form a major part of the contraption. "This is the Ray, right enough. But unless I can discover the plans and specifications of this little lot I am afraid I shall have made my journey for nothing. Can't very well hank this blessed machine out of the place without being seen."

He began to examine the shelves of the room, turning over bundles of papers upon which were a weird collection of figures and hieroglyphics that left him in a sea of wonderment. Then he caught sight of a small safe standing by the wall of the room. With a muttered ejaculation falling from his lips, he knelt down before it and wrenched at the handle. But, as he had expected, the combination of the safe was set—the door remained firm.

"This is going to take time," muttered Swiveller, rising to his feet and walking over to a work bench. "I shall have to break open that blessed safe. I feel convinced that I shall find the plans of the Ray inside."

Selecting an oxy-acetylene blow pipe from the pile of tools before him, and connecting it to a long cylinder containing the same mixture, Swiveller once again knelt before the locked door of the safe. He lighted the lamp and directed the white sheet of flame full on the combination of the lock. Slowly, very slowly the intense heat began to make itself felt on the steel. To Swiveller it seemed that he had been kneeling before the safe for forty-eight hours. In reality, he had been engaged upon his task for but forty minutes.

"Scott!" he grunted, wiping a stream of perspiration from his forehead with his disengaged hand. "Will this cursed door never budge?"

And then, when he felt that his labours had been rewarded, for the metal of the door upon which the flame played was beginning to slither and bubble, the white tongue of light went out suddenly.

He had exhausted his supply of oxy-acetylene.

"Confound it!" growled Swiveller, rising to his feet and pitching the empty cylinder to the floor. "Just my luck!"

The metal of the door, freed from that intense heat, swiftly contracted, and the safe presented just as formidable a barrier as it had done an hour previous. Giving expression to his feelings in a volley of bitter imprecations, Swiveller stood regarding the safe like a wounded animal, say rather, like a spoilt child. Just when victory had been within his grasp it had been snatched away from him.

He had tried every means in his power to force the safe, but all his efforts were unavailing. Two hours had now passed by since he had discovered the secret of the library, two hours which had brought so much and yet so little. Biting his lip in vexation Swiveller began a further search of the workshop in the hope of discovering the plans. But in his heart of hearts he knew that the safe only could yield to him the secret of Mornington Hardacre's years and years of research.

And the safe was locked!

.....

"Hallo!"

Tiger Sleek picked up the receiver of the telephone and bellowed into the instrument. The master-criminal was suffering from a bout of "liver," and his temper, never of the best at any time, was reaching a state where it demanded an outlet.

"Hallo! Who the deuce is that? Speak up, man!"

Bill Stubbins grinned across at his companion, the driver of the limousine who had so cleverly effected the "smash" which had resulted in the Tiger's escape from the police, and jerked his thumb in the direction of his irascible chief.

The trio were lying low in a haunt of criminals situated on the outskirts of the pottery district of Hanley, where fugitives of the law went into a state of convalescence, as it were, until the hue and cry after them had died a natural death, and they were free again to resume their nefarious calling.

"Yes, yes—tell me more, Stevens," rapped the Tiger. And it was noticeable now that a trace of eagerness had displaced the note of irritability which had predominated his voice when he had first answered the telephone call.

For quite three minutes the Tiger held the receiver to his ear, what time his bloated features creased themselves into a significant smile. Replacing the receiver on the hooks he turned towards his two confederates, rubbing his great hands with satisfaction.

"Well, guv'nor?" demanded Bill Stubbins, elevating his bushy eyebrows interrogatively.

"Very well indeed, Bill," chuckled the Tiger, drawing up a chair. "The best of news. Listen here: Stevens, my man who runs the tailor's establishment at the back of Cambridge Circus, has just reported to me that Mr. Blessed Swiveller entered the den to-day in company with Brooks—Smart-Fingered Rupert."

"Never!" exclaimed Bill Stubbins.

The Tiger laughed harshly.

"True as I'm sitting here," he returned. "Stevens, remembering my dealings with Swiveller, sent one of his chaps into the den and instructed him to pick up any conversation that passed between Brooks and Swiveller. And what he's overheard is worth a million to us, if we get a move on," he added.

"You don't mean that we are on the

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trail of the Ray, do you, chief?" asked the chauffeur eagerly.

"Sure thing!" chuckled the Tiger. "It appears that this fellow Brooks knew of the secret panel in Hardacre's library and he told Swiveller about it. Between them they reckon to sneak off with the plans of the Ray and sell it to a foreign agent. Then they are going to divide the spoils. But they've both lost sight of the Tiger. The Ray is my property—our property, you chaps. And we are setting out right now to lift it, savvy?"

"Yes, yes," said Stubbins eagerly. "But do you know where to find it?"

"I know where the secret panel in the library is situated," grunted the Tiger. "I reckon we can accomplish the rest easy enough. Stevens got his man to shadow Swiveller, but the fool lost his trail about mid-day to-day. Stevens himself kept a watch on Brooks—and he's still in town. Turnley, you'll have to hire a car right now. While you are getting it fixed up Bill and I will get the kit together. My plan is this: If we can discover the specifications of the Ray we'll destroy the apparatus—would be a hefty job, I expect, to shift the contraption bodily. If the worst comes to the worst, though, Turnley, with your electrical knowledge we shall have to dismantle the Ray and cart it away between us. Get busy now!"

The chauffeur shuffled out of the room what time Bill Stubbins and his chief prepared their "kit." The cool mind of the Tiger did not overlook the fact that the plans would possibly be concealed in a strong place—a safe, for instance, and he included in the kit the very latest appliance for eating away the most hardened steel. By the time the scoundrels' paraphernalia had been gathered together, Turnley, the chauffeur, reappeared.

"Car's outside, guv'nor," he grinned.

"Ready?"

"Sure!"

Crossing over to a cunning and dirty-looking individual whose Semitic cast of countenance proclaimed his origin, the Tiger pressed a wad of notes into his hand and whispered a few words in his ear.

"Very good, Mister Sleek," replied the "proprietor" of the dingy haunt which was known amongst the criminal underworld as the "Rest House." "I will post your letters on to Stevens."

Bowing his departing visitors off the premises the old Hebrew went back to his desk at the end of the long room shaking his head sorrowfully at having lost so soon such a generous and wealthy "customer" as the notorious Tiger Sleek.

Meantime, the car which Turnley had procured was speeding in the direction of Middleham. The journey to the scene of the Tiger's recent activities was accomplished in two and a half hours of reckless driving. The clock in the main square of Middleham was striking midnight as the Tiger's car flashed through the deserted streets en route for the Myrtles.

"We'll pull up here," whispered Sleek a few moments later. "Shove the car into the hedge—it won't be spotted by a casual observer."

The car came to a standstill with a grinding of brakes and the trio alighted. To their left lay open country—to their right, the high brick wall surrounding the Myrtles. But high walls presented no difficulties to such expert cracksmen as the Tiger and his confederates. Dragging their kit with them the trio negotiated the wall and crept forward silently in the direction of the library.

Not a light showed in the whole house—



As Swiveller tugged at the projecting stud in the panel it slipped from his fingers, and the whole panel revolved in a semi-circular movement. Plucking up his courage he passed through the aperture. (See Page 23.)

evidence that its inmates had retired for the night, and the Tiger noted the circumstance and grunted with approval. The clasp of the french windows next received his attention, and another grunt of approval signified that an entrance had been gained.

"Not a sound!" whispered the Tiger, swinging open the windows and stepping into the library.

The windows were closed again and the trio moved forward, a beam of light from the Tiger's pocket torch showing the way.

The three scoundrels halted in the centre of the library whilst Sleek found his bearings.

"Centre panel of wall facing windows," he muttered. "Shsssh! Here we are!"

The trio crossed over to the panel upon which Ronald Swiveller had tried his skill a few hours since. And like Ronald Swiveller, Tiger Sleek wasted a deal of time searching for the key to the secret panel. But, at last, he hit upon the reason of the projecting stud and tugged at it viciously.

"Bravo!" muttered Bill Stubbins beneath his breath as the panel swung open. "Now for it, chief!"

With infinite caution the trio passed through the narrow aperture, experiencing the same surprise at the up-to-date lighting as had Ronald Swiveller.

The panel swung back into position leaving three scoundrels feeling highly satisfied with the progress they had made. Treading noiselessly down the stone steps, and finding the electric light switches as they went, the Tiger and his two confederates peered into the room which had been Mornington Hardacre's secret workshop—the room that contained the secret of the Wireless Ray.

"Hist!"

The sharp intake of breath seemed to be magnified a thousand times in that stone-walled space as the Tiger clutched Bill Stubbins by the arm, and pointed into the workshop. For, at the further

end of the room, kneeling before the door of a small safe and frantically turning a hand-drill into the hard metal door was a familiar figure—that of Ronald Swiveller.

Used as he was to surprises, Tiger Sleek had all his work cut out to refrain from shouting aloud. That Swiveller, of all people, should have stolen a march on him seemed incredible.

But Tiger Sleek's surprise soon changed into anger and rage. With a significant glance at Bill Stubbins, the master-criminal padded softly into the room, reaching a point not three feet distant from where Ronald Swiveller was energetically plying the drill, without being observed.

"Confound this drill!" Swiveller was talking as he worked. "I shall never—"

"Handle the Wireless Ray," finished the Tiger sibilantly.

Ronald Swiveller spun round from the safe door as though he had been shot. His eyes nearly started from his head as he caught sight of the menacing figure of the Tiger, revolver in hand, staring down at him with a mocking light in his eyes.

"You—you—" gasped Swiveller, hardly able to believe the evidence of his senses. "You—"

"Little me," smiled the master-criminal cruelly. "Never thought to see me here, did you, no more than I expected to find you here—the surprise and the pleasure is mutual, as it were, eh?"

Ronald Swiveller seemed incapable of speech. He rose slowly to his feet and backed away, the ominous figure of the Tiger following him step by step, whilst the burly Bill Stubbins and the chauffeur brought up the rear.

"You hound!" Swiveller's power of speech returned. "You cur, Sleek. I never thought to see you again, but now we're face to face I can speak my mind! You it was who killed my uncle—your

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dastardly plotting—me the dupe! You can laugh, you scoundrel, but if I had a weapon in my pocket I'd avenge my uncle's death now. You knew that I never intended to kill my uncle! You it was who weighted the sandbag! You go free every time. But your time will soon come Sleet, as sure as I'm standing here!"

He pointed an avenging finger at the master-criminal. He seemed to be endowed with the gift of prophecy, and there was something uncanny about his appearance that struck a chord somewhere in the Tiger's blackened heart. The criminal who had defied the police of three countries felt a spasm of fear pervade his being. A something whispered in his brain that what Swiveller said was true. The feeling of fear increased; the Tiger, the strong man, was torn of his brute strength—he was trembling. Then, with an oath prompted by rage and executed by fear, the Tiger's fingers closed round the trigger of his revolver. There was a spurt of flame, but no report—for the master-criminal's weapon was fitted with a silencer—and Ronald Swiveller, with a piercing shriek, staggered back over the apparatus for which he risked so much, sprawling in a lifeless heap.

The Tiger, shaking in every limb, turned a fear-haunted face upon his two confederates, who, seeing this weakness in their chief for the first time in a long and varied career, began to lose their nerve in equal measure. And while the rascally trio were gazing at each other's horror-stricken countenance, the hand of the dead man fell across a tiny switch at the side of the apparatus. The bulbs of the Wireless Ray leaped into life as the dynamo performed its function.

And across the secret which Mornington Hardacre had given the best years



"TIGER" SLEEK.

of his life to discover, like some grim sentinel, sprawled the young man who had been known to the world as Ronald Swiveller—yet another victim of the sinister and scoundrelly Tiger Sleet.

Retribution had followed swift on the trail of Swiveller's descent into crime, even as it was yet to strike at the man who had brought him so low.

Retribution!

FERRERS LOCKE started out of his slumbers as a piercing shriek rang through the silence of the night. He sat up in bed, listening. But to his alert ears there came

no sound now save the occasional rustle of the wind in the trees.

"I could have sworn I heard a cry!" muttered the sleuth, slipping out of bed and pulling a dressing gown over his shoulders.

He passed out of his bedroom and stood listening in the passage beyond. All was still. Then, with ears and eyes alert, the sleuth passed down the broad staircase to the main hall below. A peculiar rumbling sound—very soft at first, but growing louder as he approached the library—seemed to emanate from beneath his feet.

"That's queer!" muttered the famous detective. "Sounds like a motor of some sort. I wonder—"

He broke off as he entered the library and switched on the electric light. For on the polished oak flooring forming the surround to the thick pile carpet were distinct muddy footprints. An examination of the carpet, too, revealed a regular trail of muddy footprints.

And the footprints—three pairs of them—led right up to the wall of the library.

For some minutes the famous sleuth stood staring down at one particular footprint, the heel of which faced flush with the panel of the wall, and then he started violently. He had made a great discovery, for it was obvious to him that the panel against which the footprint ended so abruptly must open in some way.

His keen eyes roved the clever carving before him, finally to rest on the projecting stud which has already formed an important part in this narrative. Then, with a soft whistle of surprise, Ferrers Locke turned on his heel and swiftly vacated the library. Mounting the broad staircase, the sleuth lost no time in awakening Jim Blakeney and Jack Drake. These two young men at first
(Continued on page 27.)

COKER'S BRAIN-WAVE!

(Continued from page 19.)

"Of course, we're keeping it dark," said Bunter, with a very sly wink. "Wouldn't do to give it away. You see that?"

Coker gazed speechlessly at Bunter. It was the hypnotizing of Bunter that had convinced him of Signor Spezzi's wonderful powers, and had led to his remarkable brain-wave.

Now he began to understand the "true inwardness," so to speak, of that marvellous sample of hypnotism. He also understood how Bunter had become possessed of a sheaf of tickets for the Ionic on the previous Saturday.

"It's a pretty good dodge of his, getting Greyfriars fellows to back him up in spoofing the audience," said Bunter. "Looks genuine, what? And the tickets don't cost him much. Of course, he oughtn't to over-do it."

Coker still gazed at the Owl of the Remove, fixedly.

"You see, you'd better whack 'em out," said Bunter. "He's got you to help him now, same as he did me. I know jolly well he's given you a bunch of tickets for your services, same as me. Well, I'm entitled to a whack as you got the wheeze from me. See? Halves."

"My hat!" gasped Coker, at last.

"I don't want to be unpleasant, of

course; but if you don't whack out the tickets I'm bound to show you up," said Bunter. "That will knock the thing on the head. As I said, it's halves."

Coker rose to his feet.

He did not speak. It was, he felt, a time for action, not for words. The hypnotist had deceived him, undoubtedly. But it was to Bunter—to Bunter's greed and duplicity—that he owed his misfortunes. Horace Coker was feeling sore, in mind and body; and he proceeded to take it out of Bunter.

As the Owl of the Remove caught the expression on Coker's face he made a jump for the door. Coker's hefty grasp swung him back.

With his left hand gripping Bunter's collar, Coker grasped a walking-cane with his right. Then he started in.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yarrop! Help! Fire! Murder! Yoop!" roared Bunter.

Whack, whack, whack!

Bunter's yells rang along the Fifth-form passage. Almost as loud rang the hefty whacks.

A Head's flogging was a joke to it. Coker had suffered much—and it was Bunter's fault! He passed on his sufferings to Bunter, with a generous rate of interest.

His arm was aching when he had finished. It was a powerful arm, but Coker's exertions had tired it. Bunter was more than tired! With a swing of his left, Coker hurled the Owl of the Remove into the passage.

Bunter had just energy enough left to scuttle off before Coker could reach him with his boots. He arrived in the Remove passage roaring.

Billy Bunter seemed to expect that the Remove fellows would take up his cause and avenge him upon Coker. They didn't! As soon as they understood how matters lay, they gave the fat junior a record ragging, and Bunter's last state was worse than his first.

As for Coker of the Fifth, he still dreamed dreams of displaying wonderful prowess on the football field—when his chance should come. How to wedge into the First Eleven, or the Fifth-form eleven, or any old eleven, was still a problem over which Coker pondered, giving his powerful intellect much exercise. But it was quite certain that Coker never, never would seek again to wedge into any eleven by means of hypnotism. On hypnotism Coker of the Fifth was quite fed up. He had quite grown to dislike the topic—while most of the Greyfriars fellows, on the other hand, chuckled for quite a long time over Coker's Brain-Wave.

THE END.

(You've enjoyed this yarn? Good! There's another splendid story by the same author in next Monday's bumper number, boys, entitled "Mauly's Amazing Adventure!" Be sure and read it!)

censured Locke for dragging them from their sleep at such an early hour, but when they had listened to the sleuth's story of the footprints in the library and the shriek he had heard they were soon wide awake.

"Better get your automatic, Drake," ordered the detective quietly. "I rather fancy we've dangerous customers to deal with."

Drake soon fished out his weapon from his dressing-case, and, with Ferrers Locke in the lead, the trio descended the stairs and entered the library. The detective wasted no more time in explanations, but proceeded at once to the panel under and against which the footprints ended.

To both Blakeney and Drake's astonishment the sleuth began to run his fingers over the carved woodwork of the panel. Like Swiveller and Tiger Sleek before him, he caused himself some delay by pressing on the projecting stud rather than pulling it. When at length he discovered the secret of the panel a gasp of amazement escaped Blakeney and Drake's lips simultaneously.

"This, gentlemen, unless I am greatly mistaken, will take us to the Wireless Ray," said Ferrers Locke grimly as he passed through the aperture. "And I warn you to be prepared for trouble. There are three men here—desperate men, too, I'll wager!"

In wonderment, their excitement strung to a high pitch, Blakeney and Locke's assistant followed in the detective's wake. They traversed the stone steps in absolute silence, but Drake could scarcely stifle the cry that rose to his lips as he peered into the underground workshop. First in his line of vision was the grotesque and inanimate figure of Ronald Swiveller spreadeagled across an apparatus which even now was being driven by the dynamo unconsciously set in motion by the falling of the dead man's hand.

Next he saw three figures—all huddled before a safe door at the extreme end of the room—working feverishly with instruments that threw off a bright blue-white light.

"Trying to force the safe!" whispered Drake, plucking Ferrers Locke by the arm. "Look, they've cut out a square of the metal!"

It was true. The worst part of breaking open the safe had been accomplished. It was only a matter of minutes now before the Tiger hoped to handle the plans for which he had committed so much.

But retribution was at hand. And its agent this time was Ferrers Locke, the world-famous detective.

"Hands up!"

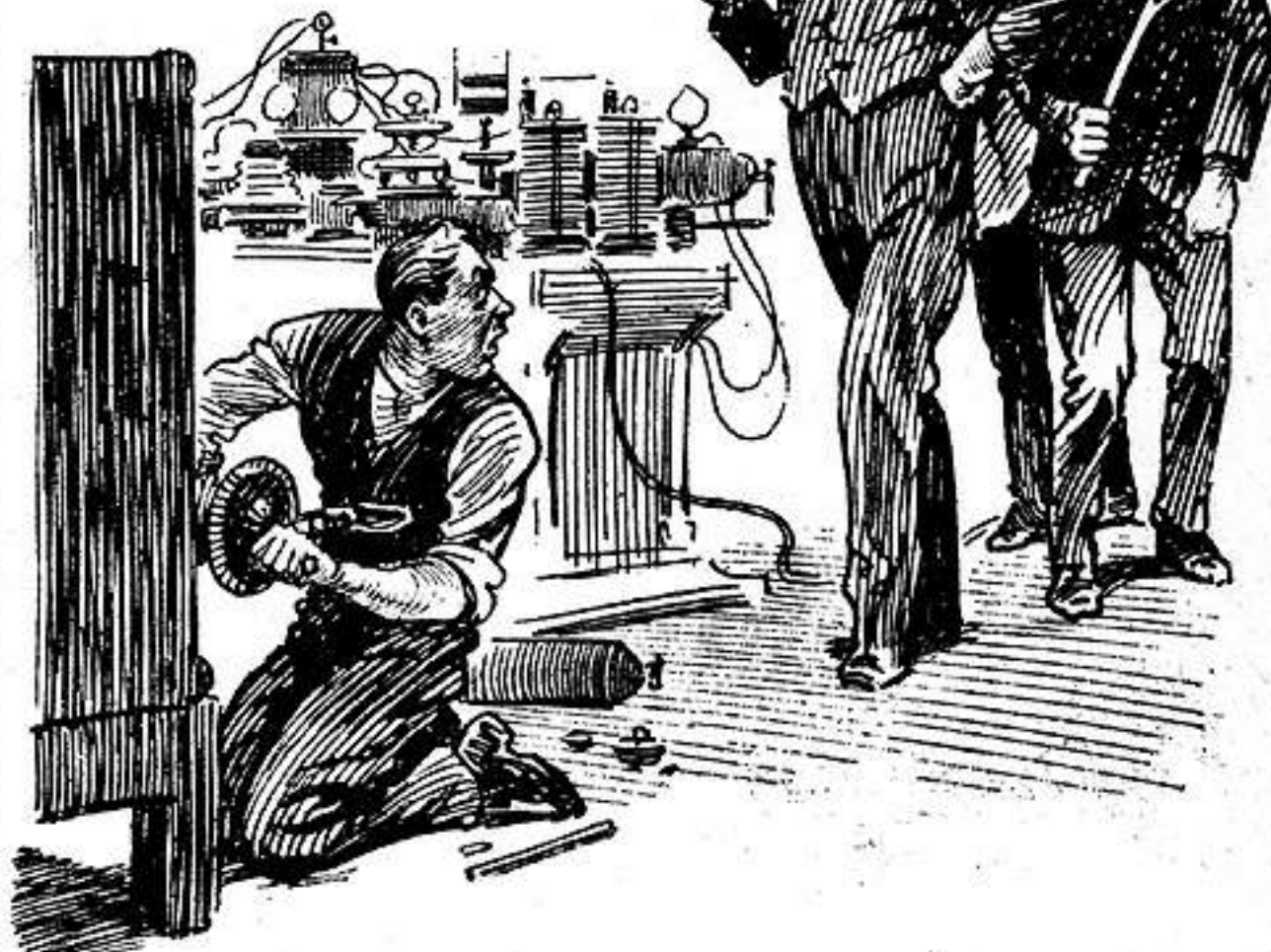
The words were spoken in a very matter-of-fact tone, but their effect was electrical. The Tiger and his two confederates turned their heads sharply, whilst their hands rose slowly. They knelt like carved statues—now incapable of speech or action.

"A very fine haul," grinned Ferrers Locke. "At last, Sleek, I hold the trump card. I'm sorry Ronald Swiveller has escaped me, for I can see your vile work here, Sleek, and I had a theory that he could throw light upon several matters. However, I fancy we have enough against you, Sleek, to put paid to your account, and Swiveller's death—his murder—will send you to a fate you richly deserve!"

"You—you—" babbled the Tiger, casting his narrow eyes around for a weapon.

"No—no, Sleek," admonished the sleuth, "keep your hands above your head. I'm taking no chances!"

SLEEK SURPRISES SWIVELLER!



"Confound this drill!" Swiveller, on his knees, was talking as he worked. "I shall never—" "Handle the Wireless Ray!" finished the Tiger sibilantly. Ronald Swiveller spun round from the safe as though he had been shot. His eyes nearly goggled from his head when he caught sight of the Tiger, revolver in hand, staring down at him with a mocking light in his eyes. "You—you—" he gasped wildly. (See page 25.)

"Curse you!" growled Sleek with all his old defiance. And then, as the words of the late Ronald Swiveller rang through his brain—"Your time will soon come, Sleek"—the master-criminal shivered as with the ague. Hands above his head, his eyes filled with the light of horror, he approached the still figure spreadeagled over the Wireless Ray, while Ferrers Locke and his companions regarded him in wonderment.

"Stand back, Sleek!" exclaimed the sleuth at length.

But a stronger power was urging the master-criminal to advance. He reached the figure of the man he had used as his tool and stood staring down at it with a fearsome expression on his cruel face. Then his eyes scanned the floor. A fierce glint shot into them as he caught sight of his own revolver—which he had dropped after he had fired the fatal shot at Swiveller—and, stooping swiftly, he attempted to snatch it up.

Crack!

Ferrers Locke's revolver spat fire, and a bullet scored through the bulky hand of the Tiger as he reached for his own weapon. With a howl of pain the master-criminal fell back, clasp ing his injured member.

And in so doing his body brushed against the grotesque shape of his latest victim sprawled across the Wireless Ray. There was a blinding flash of light and a piercing shriek that all present will have cause to remember until their dying day.

And before its grim echo had died away the black soul of Tiger Sleek had

passed into a dim eternity. Swiveller's words had come true!

"Good heavens!" gasped Jack Drake, darting forward.

"Stand back, Jack!" exclaimed Ferrers Locke anxiously. "Don't you see the dynamo is running—is sending a terrific voltage through the body of the poor fellow sprawled across the apparatus? The Tiger must have received a charge of a few thousand volts through his own body when he brushed against that corpse!"

Swiveller's words had come true. And in an indirect fashion Swiveller had dealt the fatal blow at the man who had tried every means in his power to steal the secret of the Wireless Ray.

It was exactly three months later that Ferrers Locke, Jim Blakeney and Jack Drake entered the underground workshop again. And this time they were accompanied by a party of learned-looking gentlemen who had journeyed from the War Office specially to examine the late Mornington Hardacre's invention. That they were impressed with the work to which Hardacre had devoted his life was fully evidenced, for tests were arranged to take place the following day with actual aircraft.

And the result of the tests exceeded anything the representatives of the War Office had expected or imagined. The Hardacre Wireless Ray, as it was to be called, would play a very important part in any future war.

(Continued on the next page.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 834.

A MARKED MAN!

(Continued from previous page.)

Despite the fact that the Government offered him a considerable sum of money as the purchase price of the Ray, Jim Blakeney generously offered it to the nation in the name of the late Mornington Hardacre as a gift, which, needless to say, was accepted.

At about the time the newspapers made it known that Blakeney had offered the Wireless Ray to the nation the trial of Bill Stubbins and his rascally companions neared conclusion. In order to lessen his own sentence Bill Stubbins cleared up several points which had left the police fumbling in the dark. When Ferrers Locke, who had discovered in the late Ronald Swiveller's pockets a very crumpled cheque for an amount of one hundred and fifty pounds signed by Mornington Hardacre, suggested that Swiveller it was who had committed the murder of his uncle, Bill Stubbins swore on oath that such was the case, not forgetting to mention, however, that Swiveller's original intention had been merely to stun his uncle. The weight in the sandbag had been a cunning idea of Tiger Sleek's.

This confession, drawn by Ferrers Locke's cross-questioning brought to light

in official quarters the important part the private detective had played in saving Jim Blakeney from being the victim of a miscarriage of justice when he had been accused and arrested as the murderer of Mornington Hardacre.

The confederates of the Tiger were each sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment, and, strangely enough, the first person Bill Stubbins ran into at one of H.M. prisons was Mr. Theodore Kettleton—no longer known as Mr. Theodore Kettleton, however, but just No. 79628.

And the Crusaders?

They are still endeavouring to oust the Rangers from popularity, but they are playing a losing hazard. For the wearers of the black-and-gold are going great guns, and it is fully expected by the many thousands of supporters who regularly throng the enclosures that the Rangers will walk off with the Cup. That, of course, is a matter of conjecture. But if they fail to achieve such an exalted ambition it will not be through want of grit and determination on the part of Jim Blakeney, the popular centre-forward, who, nobly and generously backed by Ferrers Locke, England's foremost detective, and his capable young assistant, Jack Drake, has lived through a sea of trouble during his exciting and dangerous life as "A Marked Man!"

THE END.

WHO IS THE
"YELLOW CLAW?"

Ferrers Locke has tackled a good number of cases in his time, and, thanks to his unlimited resource and grit, has proved the victor with very few exceptions. The next case to which he devotes his energy is out of the beaten track. Society is threatened by a mysterious society that styles itself the "Yellow Claw." The master-mind behind this organisation has, so far, held all the trump cards, and his reign of terror has caused prominent officials at Scotland Yard sleepless nights. The great question on the lips of wealthy Londoners—to whom the dreaded society pays special attention—is: "Who is the Yellow Claw?"

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