

FREE PLATE ——— of H.M.S. ——— **INSIDE!**
QUEEN ELIZABETH

No. 874. Vol. XXVI

Week Ending November 8th, 1924.

The Magnet 2^d

Library

of School Stories.

EVERY
MONDAY,

Free
PLATE
inside!



BUNTER, THE GRUB RAIDER, IS CAUGHT IN THE ACT!

(A gripping incident from this week's grand, rollicking school story of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars, inside.)

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EVERY boy, of course, knows H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth by name, though he may not have had the luck to have seen that splendid fighting ship. So worldwide is her fame, however, that large numbers of people have come from all parts of the British Empire, from America and from the Continent, to have a look over the "Q.E."—as the Navy call her—upon the occasions when she has been "open to visitors." It may be a long time ere such an opportunity recurs, for the Queen Elizabeth has now gone on foreign service.

At the end of September she joined the British Mediterranean Fleet as flagship of the admiral commanding-in-chief. This transfer gives the Queen Elizabeth the unique distinction of having been, in unbroken succession, senior ship of the three most important sea-going commands in our Navy, namely, the Grand Fleet, the Atlantic Fleet, and the Mediterranean Fleet, which latter has now been restored to its old prestige as our most powerful naval unit.

Quite apart from this unprecedented record, the Queen Elizabeth is assured of a permanent place in sea annals as one of the most historic vessels that has flown the white ensign. She is named after the Queen Elizabeth who sat on the throne of England when the Great Armada was defeated, and in whose spacious days lived such famous seamen as Drake, Hawkins, and Raleigh. There have been other "Elizabeths" in the British Navy. One bore the curious name of "Elizabeth Jonas," this being bestowed upon her by Queen Bess herself to commemorate her having been "saved like Jonas from the fury of the sea." Not that any whale ever had the temerity to try to swallow the strong-minded

Elizabeth Tudor, but that royal lady was full of quaint conceits, and this strange ship name was one of them.

H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth was laid down in Portsmouth Dockyard in 1912 as the first of an improved type of fast battleship for our Navy. Being the first battleship to carry 15-inch guns and to use oil fuel only, her construction initiated a new era in warship design. Actually she is a mixture of battleship and cruiser. Because of her great hitting power, the late Lord Fisher secretly sent the Queen Elizabeth, as soon as she was completed, to help in the attack on the Dardanelles. Greatly to the surprise and consternation of the enemy, she turned up suddenly at the Dardanelles in February, 1915, and for three months remained there, pulverising the forts with her big guns. As each of these threw a ton-weight shell that cost £1,000 to fire, the destruction they wrought may be easily imagined.

Fearing that the Queen Elizabeth would be mined or torpedoed, Lord Fisher withdrew her from Gallipoli and sent her to the Grand Fleet. There she remained until the end of the war,

but did no further fighting as she had the bad luck to be unable to take part in the Battle of Jutland. She first came into public prominence when Admiral Sir David Beatty (now Lord Beatty) chose her to be his flagship, and it was in her forecabin that he dictated to the German admiral, one night in October, 1918, terms for the surrender of the German Navy. This historic event is commemorated by a tablet in the cabin where it took place, and would give the Queen Elizabeth a permanent name in history if she had no other claim to such remembrance. But she has the additional one of having led the Fleet which received the surrendered German Navy into custody in the Firth of Forth. After the Grand Fleet dispersed, the Queen Elizabeth, as senior flagship of the Atlantic Fleet, became a great public attraction at various naval assemblies in home waters, and at some of these the King hoisted his standard in her as Head of the Navy—an unusual occurrence. Now, as already stated, she has gone to "show the flag" in the Mediterranean.

Although her appearance suggests the grim, hard-hitting warrior, the Queen Elizabeth is a vessel of beautiful lines, eye-pleasing to look at. She displaces (that is, weighs) 27,500 tons, is 600 feet in length, and has 75,000 horse-power engines which give her a speed of about 28 miles an hour. In her are mounted eight 15-inch and twelve 6-inch guns, and she also has four tubes from which 21-inch torpedoes can be fired under the waterline. Like all battleships, the Queen Elizabeth is strongly protected by steel armour, and it would cost at least £5,000,000 to build a ship like her at the present day.



NEXT MONDAY'S PROGRAMME!

WONDERFUL FREE PLATE.

I WOULD remind all my loyal chums that there is another gorgeous photogravure plate given away FREE with next Monday's bumper issue of the "Magnet." This time a light cruiser is shown—H.M.S. Hawkins. This famous warship is named after Sir John Hawkins, the intrepid "sea dog" who sailed the seas in the days of good Queen Bess. This coming presentation plate is a perfect specimen of modern photography. It measures nine and half inches across by six and a half inches deep. From that you can see the possibilities of framing this wonderful art plate and showing it to advantage on the wall of your den. Remember this wonderful series of Free plates depicts twelve of the absolute latest types of warships at present in commission in the R.N. The complete set will make as fine a collection of pictures as it is possible to have. And they cost you nothing! It would be a rare pity to lose such a splendid opportunity as this, and it is therefore advisable to place a regular order for the "Magnet" at once. That these beautiful art pictures are THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 874.

immensely popular and much sought after goes without saying, for every British boy and girl is interested in the Royal Navy and its fleet of "steel walls." Look out for

H.M.S. HAWKINS

next Monday, and mind you are at the right end of the queue when you call at the newsagents. 'Nuff said!

"THE VANISHED VENTRILOQUIST!" By Frank Richards.

That is the title of next week's magnificent new long, complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greystones. Billy Bunter's ventriloquism has landed him in trouble once again. Expulsion or, worse still in the fat Owl's opinion, a flogging, awaits him. Bunter shows a decided preference for the former. He would much sooner be "sacked" than flogged any day of the week. Dr. Locke, however, thinks a flogging will meet the case. Billy Bunter is informed to this effect and it leaves him terrified. Everything is staged for the flogging: Gosling is in Big Hall waiting to "hoist" the culprit, Mr. Quelch the Removemaister is there, the whole school is assembled. Finally the Head arrives. He gives the word to Gosling to take up the victim. But, amazing as it seems, there is no victim! Bunter has wisely decided to absent himself from this ordeal. I say wisely, for the outcome shows Bunter getting his own way after all. Make no

mistake about it, boys, this story is a real treat, showing Mr. Richards bang up to form. Don't miss it!

"THE TRIALS OF STORRYDENE VILLA!" By Walter Edwards.

This popular author has already kicked two splendid goals in the first two stories of his powerful footer series. No. 3 shows him still as fit as a fiddle. Nugent Beasley Allen is a crafty sort of worm even though he is the son of a baronet, and will stop at nothing to achieve his ends. The first part of his plot against young Peter Voyce sees him winning all hands down, but "Hefty" Hebble & Co. have to be reckoned with. They come into the picture in fine style, and the curtain shows Nugent Beasley Allen howled out and

"KICKED OUT!"

"GEOGRAPHY!"

That seems a pretty dry subject for the Herald staff to write about, doesn't it? But you will be pleasantly surprised when you come to read the finished effort. The Herald's merry band of contributors can extract fun and laughter from the driest of subjects—even geography. How they do it beats me, I must confess. I picked up their MSS. prepared to reject it with a heavy Editorial frown—what did "Magnet" readers want with Geography: they have (Continued on page 28.)

BUNTER ASKS FOR IT! If there's any grub knocking around William George Bunter is usually on the spot. If there's any trouble it's a hundred to one on Bunter being mixed up in it. And when the Owl is in trouble he is generous enough to think that the trouble should be equally divided amongst his schoolfellows—but not the grub!



A Magnificent New
Long Complete Story
of Harry Wharton & Co.
of Greyfriars.
By FRANK RICHARDS

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bunter is Wanted!

BUNTER!"

"I'm not here!"

"What?"

"I—I mean——"

"You're wanted," said Harry Wharton.

The captain of the Remove was looking in at the doorway of Study No. 7. Billy Bunter was in that study, and as the door opened Bunter dodged round the corner of the bookcase, apparently with the idea of taking cover and keeping out of sight.

But a very large bookcase would have been required to conceal a youth with a circumference like Bunter's. Peter Todd's bookcase in Study No. 7 was not nearly extensive enough. Quite a lot of Bunter remained on view.

"What's this game, you fat duffer?" asked Wharton. "You're wanted. Walker of the Sixth——"

"I know," grunted Bunter. "Toddy's told me, and Squiff's told me, and young Tubb's told me, and Bob Cherry's told me. No need for you to come and tell me as well."

Wharton stared at him.

"Well, you'd better go," he said. "Walker's a prefect, and he won't want to be kept waiting."

"Blow Walker!"

"Well, I've told you," said Harry; and he turned away.

"I say, hold on, old chap!" exclaimed Bunter. "I say, I don't want to go to Walker's study. I don't want a licking."

"Perhaps it isn't a licking."

Bunter snorted.

"What else would it be? I suppose Walker of the Sixth isn't asking me to tea, is he?"

"Not likely," said Harry, laughing. "But he didn't look very bad-tempered. I think he's got a visitor in his study, too, and even Walker doesn't lick fags before visitors."

"Blow him, and blow his visitor! I'm not chancing it. Look here, old chap, you go and tell Walker that I'm out of gates."

"What?"

"I'll do as much for you some day," said Bunter.

"I dare say you would," assented the captain of the Remove. "Telling whoppers is more in your line than mine."

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"What have you been up to?" demanded Harry. "Why are you afraid to go to Walker's study?"

"I'm not exactly afraid," said Bunter. "In fact, I'm not afraid of anything, as you know jolly well. You've known me long enough to know that I'm as brave as a lion."

"Oh, my hat!"

"But I don't want a licking. Very likely Walker noticed that some of the tarts were gone. Mind, I didn't take any. I never went into his study this afternoon at all. But fellows are suspicious, and he might think I'd had them, though I was careful to close up the bag again——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! Look here, old chap, go and tell him I'm having tea with the Head."

"Better go——"

"I'm not going!" howled Bunter. "Walker's a beast! He wouldn't take a fellow's word if I told him I knew nothing about the tarts. If he got them in for his visitor he would be waxy about it; he's just the sort of mean cad to count them, and see that some were missing. Not that I had anything to do with it, of course. I say, Harry, old fellow, suppose you go to Walker——"

"What's the good of my going, fat-head, when he's asking after you?" demanded Harry.

"Well, you could own up."

"Own up to what?"

"About the tarts, you know."

"The—the tarts!" stammered Wharton.

"Yes. Own up that you had them. If—if you owned up, in a frank and manly way, he might let you off."

"But I never had them!" roared Wharton.

"What difference does that make?" said Bunter peevishly. "Walker doesn't know whether you had them or not, does he?"

"So I'm to go and tell Walker lies, in

order to bag your licking for you!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove.

"Well, after all I've done for you——"

There was a heavy step in the Remove passage from the direction of the stairs. Wharton glanced round, and sighted James Walker, of the Greyfriars Sixth, in the distance. Walker of the Sixth was evidently coming along to Bunter's study in search of Bunter. As the mountain would not come to Mahomet, Mahomet was coming to the mountain.

"Here he comes!" said Harry.

"Walker?" gasped Bunter.

"Yes."

"Oh dear! Tell him I'm not here. Tell him I'm ill. Say I've been called home suddenly by a fatal telegram—I mean a telegram about a fatal illness," gasped Bunter. "Say—say it's my father's funeral to-day, and I had to go. See?"

"Oh, my hat!"

Bunter dived under the study table. He vanished from sight just as Walker of the Sixth reached the doorway.

The prefect frowned at Wharton.

"Didn't you tell Bunter?" he asked.

"Hem! Yes."

"Well, he hasn't come to my study. Do you know where the fat young idiot is?" demanded the Sixth-Former.

"I—I saw him a—short time ago," stammered Wharton.

It was really rather difficult to answer Walker without revealing that William George Bunter was close at hand.

"The young ass!" growled Walker. "I've told half a dozen different fags to find him and send him to my study. My uncle's waiting. Where the thump has he got to? Look here, Wharton, find the young idiot, and find him quick. I want him."

"I—I——"

"Don't you know where he's got to?" "I—I think I could find him," stammered Harry.

"Back up, then. My uncle can't wait all day for the young chump. I've told him about Bunter's ventriloquism, and he's curious to hear it done. Wish I hadn't mentioned it now," growled Walker. "I want the young ass to come and give us some of his ventriloquial

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stunts. Tell him I'll stand him half a dozen tarts if he gives a good show. That ought to fetch him."

There was a movement under the study-table. A fat face and a large pair of spectacles rose into view.

"I say, Walker—"

The Sixth-former jumped. The sudden apparition of William George Bunter startled him.

"Oh, there you are!" he exclaimed. "What the thump were you hiding under the table for? You knew he was there, Wharton."

"You—you see—"

"I see that you'd better not waste a prefect's time. Take fifty lines," said Walker. "Now then, Bunter, come along."

"Glad to oblige you, old chap," said Bunter affably.

Walker stared at him.

"You're going to oblige me, I suppose," he said. "But if you call me old chap again, I'll boot you the length of the passage."

"Oh, really, Walker—"

"Shut up, and get a move on!"

And Walker marched away with the Owl of the Remove—the latter quite confident and contented now. To "show off" his weird gift of ventriloquism was always pleasing to Billy Bunter, and the half-dozen tarts to follow formed a grateful and comforting prospect. A guilty conscience had very nearly caused him to miss that reward. Bunter walked away after the prefect looking quite merry and bright—not in the least troubled by the circumstance that he had landed the captain of the Remove with fifty lines. That was a trifling matter for Wharton himself to trouble about.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Too Much of a Good Thing!

JAMES WALKER of the Greyfriars Sixth marched Bunter into his study in the Sixth Form passage.

A middle-aged gentleman was seated there, rather like James Walker in features—evidently a relative. The remains of a tea were on the table. Walker of the Sixth had been entertaining his elderly relative—possibly in the hope of extracting a tip from the avuncular pocket. Mr. Walker adjusted a pair of gold-rimmed glasses and blinked at Bunter, who blinked back at him through his big spectacles.

"Is this the boy, James?" asked Mr. Walker.

"That's the kid, uncle!"

"He does not look very intelligent."

"He isn't," said Walker. "The dunce of his Form, I believe, and about the silliest young ass at Greyfriars. But he's a jolly clever ventriloquist, uncle, as I told you. It must be a gift, of course; he hasn't brains enough to learn anything!"

"Yes, he looks like that!" assented Mr. Walker.

William George Bunter glared at Walker, and at Walker's uncle, with a glare that might have cracked his spectacles. Neither uncle nor nephew seemed to feel it incumbent upon him to waste anything like politeness on the Owl of the Remove.

Perhaps Mr. Walker was surprised at what he had heard of Bunter's ventriloquial skill, on seeing the fat and fatuous Owl. But certainly his observations were not gratifying. And from Bunter's point of view, they were unfounded. Bunter was quite convinced that intellectual vigour beamed from his fat face.

"Well, well; let us hear what the boy can do!" said Mr. Walker. "I have

been kept waiting rather a long time, James!"

"Sorry, uncle," said Walker meekly. "The young ass couldn't be found. But as you seemed interested—"

"Certainly. It is very remarkable if a boy possesses the ventriloquial powers you have ascribed to this boy, Bunter, and—"

"Bunter!" murmured Walker.

"Yes, Bunter! Let me hear him! I shall be very surprised indeed if he justifies your description. Certainly he does not look capable of it."

Walker murmured something under his breath. Mr. Walker seemed rather cross; perhaps because he had been kept waiting, or perhaps because it was raining that afternoon, and he had some twinges of rheumatism in his elderly joints. Walker wished that he hadn't mentioned Bunter and his ventriloquism to the old gentleman at all; but really, it had seemed quite an easy way of getting through his uncle's visit. The visit had to be got through somehow.

"Go ahead, Bunter," he said hastily.

Bunter blinked at him. He was wanted to perform; and he was always ready to perform. Indeed, Bunter often inflicted his ventriloquism on fellows in the Remove who were quite fed-up with it, and who buzzed books at him as a reward. But on the present occasion

A Five-Pound Note and Six Footballs

MUST BE WON FOR
SOLVING THE HISTORY OF
H.M.S. QUEEN ELIZABETH.

See

"THE BOYS' FRIEND."

Out To-day!

Bunter realised that he had power in his hands. Walker had a rather cross old uncle to deal with and propitiate, and if the ventriloquism did not "come off" after all, it was very probable that the old uncle would be crosser than ever, and that Walker's expected tip would not come off, either.

So Bunter was in no hurry. In the circumstances, he was a fellow considered, and he meant to be considered.

"The fact is, Walker—" he began.

"Give us some of your ventriloquism," growled Walker. "I've told my uncle what you can do. Do it. Make a dog growl under the table, and a voice come down the chimney, and all that. Same as we've all heard you do lots of times."

"The fact is—"

"You're wasting time, Bunter."

"The fact is—"

"Look here—"

"Let the boy speak," said Mr. Walker.

"I doubt very much whether he can do what you have described, James. If he wishes to explain that he cannot do anything of the sort—"

"The fact is," said Bunter calmly, "that I haven't had my tea, and I'm hungry. When I'm hungry, the ventriloquism—hem—won't come. I shall have to take a snack first."

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Walker.

"Oh, really, sir—"

"Tuck into that cake, if you like, Bunter," said Walker of the Sixth, with a glare at the Owl of the Remove.

"Thanks! I will!"

Mr. Walker gave a sniff and walked to the study window, and stood looking out into the green old quadrangle of Greyfriars. There was a light fall of rain, and most of the Greyfriars fellows were indoors. A few determined footballers were punting a ball about, gathering mud in considerable quantities.

Walker of the Sixth glared at Bunter as he demolished the cake. He was quite well aware that the Remove ventriloquist was "on the make."

"You fat rascal!" he said in a whisper, as his uncle turned his back. "Get on with it."

"I'm getting on nicely with the cake, thanks!"

"My uncle's waiting!" hissed Walker. "I've got to fill up an hour somehow before he goes for his train, and you've got to entertain him, see? Buck up, or I'll smash you afterwards."

"What did you say, Walker?" asked Bunter, quite loudly.

Walker choked. He did not venture to repeat what he had said, in a voice loud enough for his uncle to hear.

Bunter finished the cake.

He was disposed, like *Oliver Twist*, to ask for more; but Walker of the Sixth was looking so dangerous by this time that the fat junior felt that it would not do.

"I'm ready!" he announced.

"Uncle—"

Mr. Walker granted and turned from the window.

"Gr-r-r-r-r!"

The old gentleman gave a jump as a dog's savage growl was heard, and he backed to the study wall.

"James! There is a dog in the study!" he exclaimed. "You know perfectly well that I dislike dogs—that I detest dogs—that I cannot bear dogs! It is thoughtless and inconsiderate of you, James, to have a dog in the study when I visit you. The headmaster should not allow it—"

"There isn't a dog, uncle!" gasped Walker.

"I distinctly heard it growl!"

"That's Bunter!"

"What?"

"It's Bunter's ventriloquism."

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

"Nonsense!"

"It is, really, uncle!" said Walker.

"He's really very clever at imitating sounds and voices, fool as he looks."

"Oh, really, Walker—"

The old gentleman blinked suspiciously round the study through his gold-rimmed glasses. He satisfied himself, at length, that no dog was there, and he seemed a little impressed.

"Really, that was quite good, if it was Bunter," he said. "The growl was not wholly natural, perhaps, but still—"

"Oh, wasn't it!" exclaimed Bunter warmly. "It jolly well took you in, anyhow."

"Don't be cheeky to my uncle, Bunter," said Walker. "Now make a voice come down the chimney."

"I scarcely think the boy can do that," said Mr. Walker, with a look of great disfavour at Bunter.

"Go it, Bunter!"

"Elp!" came a cry down the chimney. "Ere, 'elp! I'm shut up in this 'ere chimney!"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Walker.

Walker of the Sixth grinned. But for his knowledge of Bunter's ventriloquism, he would have fancied that someone was in the chimney himself.

"That's nothing to what I can do," said Bunter. "I say, Walker, I can give you a really good show if—"

"Get on with it!"

"I'm afraid I can't do any more unless I have another snack."

"You young sweep—"

"I have heard enough, James," said Mr. Walker. "Let the boy go. Certainly he seems to have a very unusual gift, but he is otherwise, I should say, a very stupid boy, and he is very greedy and ill-mannered. You may leave the room, Bunter."

"Oh!" ejaculated Bunter.

Walker gave the Owl of the Remove a glare. He had really depended on Bunter to see through the visit of Mr. Walker, and, with a little more tact, Bunter could have saved him from a long and boring conversation with his affectionate relative. But Bunter, of course, had spoiled it all.

Walker's look indicated what Bunter was to expect after the old gentleman was gone.

Uncle and nephew had quite different views about that visit. Mr. Walker's view was that his nephew would benefit very considerably from a long, serious, heart-to-heart talk, with special reference to industry in class and economy in money matters. Walker's view was that he had to let his uncle bore him as long as he jolly well chose, with a rather uncertain prospect of being tipped a pound note when the old gentleman said good-bye. If Walker bagged the pound note he felt that he would have earned it; and if he did not bag it— In that case Walker's feelings were likely to defy description.

Now the heart-to-heart talk was to come, and Walker felt that it was hard. Bunter might have kept the old gentleman entertained until it was time to catch his train.

So Walker gave Bunter a look, and, but for his uncle's presence, would have given him something much more emphatic than a look.

"Get out, Bunter!" he snapped.

"I say, Walker—"

"Get out!"

"Well, what about the tarts?" demanded Bunter warmly. "I was going to have half a dozen tarts—"

"You've had a cake. Get out!"

The gold-rimmed glasses were turned on Bunter again. Mr. Walker evidently disapproved very strongly of Bunter.

"The boy is unpleasantly fat and very greedy," he said. "I do not like the looks of this boy at all. Send him away, James."

Walker dropped his hand on Bunter's collar and jerked him doorward. He contrived to give Bunter's fat neck a twist in doing so, by way of reward for spoiling his programme. There was a howl from the fat junior.

"Yoooooop!"

"For goodness' sake, James, get rid of that unpleasant and noisy boy!" exclaimed Mr. Walker.

Bunter's eyes glittered behind his spectacles. Certainly, he had had the cake, but the tarts were not to be forthcoming, and Bunter was wrathful. He was not at the end of his ventriloquism yet.

"Oh, shut up a minute, uncle!"

"What?" roared Mr. Walker.

It was James Walker's voice that uttered the words, though James Walker had not opened his lips. Bunter was giving a ventriloquial demonstration that Walker of the Sixth certainly had never contemplated.

"I—I say—" gasped Walker.

"James, how dare you!"

"I didn't speak. I—I— It was—"

"How dare you!" roared Mr. Walker, justly indignant.

"Don't yell!"

"What! You—you said—"

"I didn't! I—I—I never—"

"You did!" roared Mr. Walker.

"It was this young villain!" gasped Walker, shaking Bunter furiously. "I told you he was a ventriloquist—"

"Nonsense! Do you think I do not know your voice, James? Do you suppose that you can insult me, and then fool me with so feeble a pretence?" shouted Mr. Walker.

"Oh, you're an old donkey!"

"Upon my word!"

Walker, in a state of desperation, planted a heavy boot on William George Bunter, and sent him spinning into the passage. There was a sudden end of Bunter's ventriloquism. His next remark was in his own voice, not Walker's, and the remark was:

"Yoooooop! Oh! Groough! Ow!"

Walker turned back to his uncle. The old gentleman had grabbed up his hat, with a face crimson with rage and indignation. Only too clearly did Walker realise that a pound note would not materialise.

"I—I say, uncle—" he stuttered.

"You have said enough, sir!" roared Mr. Walker. "So you hold the opinion, sir, that I am an old donkey. What—what?"

"I never said—"

"I heard you, sir! You impertinent young rascal!"

"I never. I wasn't—I—I—" stuttered Walker.

"Enough!"

"It was that young sweep—"

"Nonsense!"

"I—I swear—" gasped Walker.

"Enough!"

Mr. Walker brushed past his nephew, and strode from the study. Walker of

the Sixth stared after him in helpless dismay.

The expected pound note was gone—gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream. And that was not all. With his uncle leaving him in this mood, future tips from that particular relative were extremely problematic. Walker, with his mind's eye, saw a whole series of pound notes going from his gaze like unbeautiful dreams.

He rushed after his uncle.

"Uncle, I—I tell you—"

Mr. Walker strode on unheeding.

"Uncle!"

The old gentleman strode down the staircase. A dozen Greyfriars fellows, in the passage below, looked curiously at his crimson face, and at the excited Walker rushing after him. Walker of the Sixth caught him up, and, in his excitement and distress, grabbed him by the arm.

"Uncle, I repeat—"

Smack!

Walker staggered back. His exasperated uncle had boxed his ears. He staggered against the banisters, gasping for breath.

Mr. Walker strode out of the house. He vanished from sight, while Walker of the Sixth leaned on the banisters in a dazed state, under the gaze of a crowd of grinning faces.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Walker at last.

With a burning face the hapless Sixth Former hurried back to his study. His uncle was gone, and a dozen fellows downstairs were chuckling over his leave-taking. Walker had only one consolation left—to take it out of Bunter. In his study he selected his stoutest ash-plant, and sallied forth to look for the



Walker of the Sixth caught his uncle up and, in his excitement, grabbed him by the arm. "Uncle, I repeat—" Smack! The Sixth Former staggered back. His exasperated uncle had boxed his ears. Mr. Walker strode out of the House and vanished from sight, while his nephew leaned on the banisters in a dazed state. "Oh—oh crumbs!" he gasped. (See Chapter 2.)

Owl of the Remove. And, to judge by the expression on James Walker's face, Bunter, when found, was booked for the time of his life.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Any Port in a Storm!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry was astonished. In spite of the dropping rain, some seven or eight of the Remove fellows had turned up on Little Side for football practice. Most of the Remove thought it was not good enough. But Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, Harry Wharton, Squiff, Peter Todd, Vernon-Smith, and one or two others were there, rather wet and rather muddy, but in cheery mood. And all of them were surprised when a fat figure rolled down to the football-ground, in shirt and shorts, ready for practice.

Billy Bunter, as a rule, dodged the football-ground as though it were a plague spot. In the finest of weather he never played if he could help it. Strenuous exercise had never appealed to Bunter. Given freedom of choice, Bunter would have limited his exercise to a gentle walk to and from the tuckshop.

Yet here he was, on a most unpleasant, wet afternoon, turning up for practice on a day when games practice was not compulsory.

No wonder the juniors were astonished. "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Is that you or your ghost, Bunter?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Bunter as large as life!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "What do you want here, Bunter?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"You've missed the way, Bunter," grinned Johnny Bull. "It's the other direction to the tuckshop."

"Oh, really, Bull—"

Billy Bunter rolled on the field. For reasons best known to himself he was going to practise.

"You really want to join up, Bunter?" asked the captain of the Remove.

"Of course, I do! Do you think I've changed to look on?" sniffed Bunter. "I'm awfully keen on footer."

"Oh, my hat!"

"And that beast Walker is after me."

"What?"

"I say, you fellows, you'll stand by me if that beast comes here, won't you?"

"Oh!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "You fat bounder, is that it? Look here, you'd better roll off!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"But what's the matter with Walker?" asked Harry. "Weren't you doing ventriloquial stunts for him, to entertain his visitor?"

"Yes; and he wasn't satisfied," said Bunter. "Now he's going to lick me, though I tried hard to please him. It ain't fair, is it?"

"It jolly well isn't, if it's like that," said Harry. "Well, roll in, Bunter; and if Walker comes along we'll do the best we can for you."

And Bunter joined up.

The juniors were playing a very informal pick-up with four a side, and Bunter was put in goal. He was not likely to be of any use there, but he was less in the way in goal than in the field. So the Owl of the Remove stood between the posts, and blinked on at the game, and kept one eye open for Walker.

Quite a lot of excitement can be extracted from a rough-and-ready game with four a side, especially when the ground is slippery. Harry Wharton &

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Co. were going strong, rather breathless and exceedingly muddy, when Walker of the Sixth appeared in the offing. They did not heed him or even see him.

But Bunter saw him, and he quaked in goal. The goalie on the other side was taking part in the game as full-back and occasionally as half. But Bunter, on his side, remained between the posts. He was not looking for exertion. The football-ground was only a refuge from Walker, so far as Bunter was concerned. He had supposed that the prefect would not think of looking for him there. But here was Walker, with a black brow and an ashplant under his arm.

As a matter of fact, Walker had looked nearly everywhere else first. It was as a last chance that he had walked down to the junior football-ground, to see whether the Owl of the Remove was in sight there. And there he found Bunter.

"Bunter!" he shouted.

The fat junior seemed deaf.

"Bunter, come here!" shouted Walker.

Bunter did not heed. He was not very bright, but he was too bright to "come there" when Walker was already taking his ashplant in hand for business.

The prefect strode on the field. His wrath had not decreased, rather it had been intensified by the trouble he had had in finding Bunter.

He was prepared to give William George Bunter so terrific a hiding that the fat ventriloquist would be quite tired of playing ventriloquial tricks on a Sixth Form prefect.

Bunter blinked at him and rolled out of goal. It was time for him to follow the example of the other goalie, and take part in the kicking and rushing and slipping and tumbling which constituted that game.

"Stop!" roared Walker.

Instead of stopping, Bunter rushed right into the midst of the fray. There was a howl from Bob Cherry as Bunter charged him blindly, and sent him spinning from behind.

"Ow!"

"Look out, you ass!"

"Bunter—"

"Hallo, here's a giddy prefect!"

"Stop him!" shouted Walker, speeding across the wet ground after Bunter.

"Hold him, you fags!"

"Likely, I don't think!" murmured Johnny Bull.

Bob Cherry jumped up. His first thought was to slay Bunter for charging him over. Bob had a feeling in his back as though a motor-lorry had hit him. But the sight of Walker changed Bob's intentions at once. The rights and wrongs of the matter he did not know; but he knew that James Walker was a little given to bullying, though he was not so bad as his friends Loder and Carne in that respect; also, Bob was of the firm opinion that it was a "cheek" for a fellow of another Form to butt in on the Remove field while practice was going on.

So Bob gave all his attention to Walker. He captured the ball, and kicked as Walker came rushing up.

Bob did not kick for goal. He kicked for Walker.

Crash!

"Grrrrrrrr!"

The muddy football landed fairly in the midst of Walker's features.

Walker of the Sixth gave a muffled roar and sat down.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Goal!"

"Well kicked!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Walker sat dazedly mopping mud from his face. He glared at the hilarious Removites with a Hunnish glare.

"You young scoundrels! You—you—I—I'll—" Walker started to scramble up, gripping his ashplant with deadly intent.

"On the ball!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Play up!"

There was a rush of footballers. Before Walker of the Sixth could gain his feet the rush reached him, and passed over him like a tidal wave. And Walker, roaring, disappeared under muddy footballers, struggling and squirming. And Billy Bunter, with a grin on his fat face, sprinted off the football-ground and disappeared. Bunter's footer practice was over for that day.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Walker Wants Washing!

"OH! Ah! Yah! Yow! Wow!" The remarks of James Walker of the Sixth Form were scarcely intelligible. But they were full of expression.

"Whoop! Yooop! Ow! Gerroff! Yaroooh!"

Three or four juniors were sprawling over Walker. Squiff was sitting on his head, and the Australian junior was a sturdy fellow, not a light-weight. Walker found him heavy.

"Gerroff! Grrroooooh! Gug-gug-gug! Ooooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Walker struggled frantically.

"On the ball!" chuckled Bob.

The muddy footballers scrambled away from Walker and pursued the leather. The hapless prefect of the Sixth sat up, smothered with mud and quite out of breath. He sat and gasped, and gasped, and gasped, as if he never would finish gasping.

He staggered up at last.

The rough-and-tumble game was going on, and Walker was strongly tempted to rush into the midst of the footballers, laying out right and left with his ashplant.

But he realised that it was not good enough. He did not want to be the centre of another scum.

So he picked himself up, shook his fist at the juniors, and walked wearily and muddily off the field.

Bunter had vanished—he had not lost his opportunity. But Walker was not disposed to resume his hunt for the Owl of the Remove. He was feeling the need of a bath and a change of clothes more than anything else.

He stamped away towards the House, and met Carne and Loder of the Sixth on the way. They stopped and stared at him, and grinned.

"Hallo! Been rolling in a mud cart, old chap?" asked Loder.

Walker spluttered with wrath.

"Those Remove fags—"

"You don't mean to say that you've let fags get you into that state?" roared Carne. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, shut up!" howled Walker furiously.

And he strode savagely on, leaving Loder and Carne chuckling. In the doorway of the School House he came on Coker and Potter and Greene of the Fifth. Coker & Co. were looking out to see whether the rain had stopped. It hadn't; but their attention was at once transferred from the weather to Walker.

"My hat!" ejaculated Coker of the Fifth. "That's Walker of the Sixth—a prefect, too! Pretty state for a Greyfriars prefect to go about in! Why don't you wash your face, Walker?"

"What?" roared Walker.

"Soap's cheap, and you can get water

for nothing," said Coker. "Why, fags are licked if they don't wash clean! And look at you!"

Walker gave the Fifth-Former a muddy and furious glare. The Fifth, being a senior Form, were exempt from the ashplant; but Walker was greatly tempted to break that rule, and lay his cane round Coker of the Fifth.

"Dirty!" said Coker. "He's actually dirty—a Sixth-Form prefect! What would the Head say?"

Potter and Greene chortled.

"Look at his collar!" said Coker. "Just a dirty rag! I'm ashamed of you, Walker!"

Walker shoved Coker of the Fifth aside, quite roughly, and strode into the House. He strode in so quickly that he almost ran into Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth Form, who was crossing the hall with his usual slow, stately, and ponderous tread.

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Prout. He stared at Walker. "Goodness gracious! Is that Walker, of the Sixth Form?"

"Yes!" hissed Walker.

"Are you not ashamed, Walker, to be seen in public with a dirty face, and a dirty collar, like some careless and uncleanly boy in the Second Form?" exclaimed Mr. Prout.

"I—I—I—"

"Go and wash yourself at once, Walker!"

Mr. Prout walked on, ponderous and stately and contemptuous. Walker was fairly boiling with rage by this time. To be told to go and wash himself, like some slovenly fag, was a little too much.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Walker glared round. Temple, Dabney, and Fry, of the Fourth Form, were coming downstairs, and they were staring at Walker, and evidently they had heard Mr. Prout's remarks.

"You cheeky young sweeps!" roared Walker.

"Oh, gad! You look more like a sweep than anybody else, I think," chuckled Temple. "Why don't you wash, Walker?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Undoubtedly Walker of the Sixth looked seriously in need of a wash. From two or three directions came a howl:

"Wash yourself, Walker!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

James Walker hurried away, boiling with rage. He fairly bolted into a bathroom, and for some time he was busily engaged in removing the mud he had gathered up on the junior football ground. Then he hurried to his study for a clean collar and tie and a clothes-brush. It was some time before Walker of the Sixth was fit to be seen in public in a state suitable for a Sixth-Form prefect.

When he came out of his study he was keener than ever to find the Owl of the Remove. He attributed all his troubles to Bunter, and he intended to make Bunter pay for them with compound interest. And as it happened, almost the first person he sighted was Billy Bunter, as he came striding out of the Sixth-Form passage.

"Bunter! Here——"

"Oh dear!"

Bunter ran for it.

"Stop!" roared Walker.

"Ow!"

Bunter was not likely to stop. But the heavy tread of the prefect sounded behind him, drawing nearer and nearer; and Bunter realised that there was no escape. He was fleeing past the door of Mr. Quelch's study, and he suddenly



"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Prout, staring at Walker. "Is—is that Walker of the Sixth Form?" "Yes!" hissed the prefect. "Are you not ashamed, Walker, to be seen in public with a dirty face and a dirty collar, like some uncleanly boy in the Second Form?" exclaimed Mr. Prout. "I—I—I——" began Walker. "Go and wash yourself at once!" rapped the Fifth Form master. "Disgraceful!" (See Chapter 4.)

turned, tore open the Remove master's door, and bolted in.

Walker came after him with a rush.

From the fact that Bunter rushed recklessly into the study, Walker supposed that Mr. Quelch was out, and that Bunter knew it. As a matter of fact Bunter was too scared to care whether Mr. Quelch was there or not. He was simply bolting into the room like a rabbit into a burrow.

Mr. Quelch was there!

He started up as his door was hurled open, and Bunter panted breathlessly in.

"What——"

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "Oh dear!"

"Bunter! Why—what——"

Walker came in, with a rush.

"Now, you young scoundrel——"

"Walker!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, in a formidable voice.

"Oh, gad!"

And Walker, who had grasped the Owl of the Remove by the collar, released him quite suddenly, and stared at Mr. Quelch.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Lucky Day!

MR. QUELCH fixed his eyes on Walker of the Sixth, grimly. Mr. Quelch's eyes had often been compared, by his pupils, to gimlets, on account of their piercing qualities. Never had they seemed so like gimlets as they seemed now to Walker of the Sixth. They really seemed to be boring into the startled prefect.

"Walker!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Walker.

"What does this mean?"

"Oh! I—I——"

"Help!" roared Bunter.

"Bunter——"

"Help! Keep him off!" yelled Bunter.

"Silence, Bunter!"

"Ow! Oh dear! Keep him off! I never did it!" roared Bunter. "I haven't done anything, and he asked me to, too! I——"

"Silence! Walker, kindly explain what you mean by rushing into my study in this unruly manner, in pursuit of a boy belonging to my Form!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

Walker gasped for breath, red with confusion. He was quite aware that his conduct had been lacking in the sedate dignity required of a prefect of the Sixth Form at Greyfriars.

"I—I——" gasped Walker. "That young rascal——"

"Kindly do not use such expressions in my presence, Walker."

"Oh! No, sir! Certainly not!" gasped Walker. "I—I mean——"

"If Bunter has been guilty of a fault, and it is your duty, as a prefect, to punish him, this is not the way," said Mr. Quelch frigidly. "As Bunter belongs to my Form, and he is here, I will deal with the matter personally. What has Bunter done?"

"Nothing, sir!" said Bunter promptly.

"Silence! I am waiting to hear your explanation, Walker."

Walker breathed hard.

"He was playing tricks in my study, sir, while my uncle was on a visit—tricks with his rotten ventriloquism. My

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uncle's offended, and he's gone off in a temper—"

"Indeed! That is a serious matter!" said Mr. Quelch. He fixed his eyes on Bunter. "Bunter, I have had occasion to speak to you several times on this very subject."

"I didn't, sir!"

"What?"

"I—I mean, I wasn't—"

"What do you mean, Bunter?"

"He asked me to, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Fairly made me come to his study to show off my ventriloquism, sir, and I—I—I did my best, sir, and he wasn't satisfied."

"That alters the case," said Mr. Quelch. "Did you ask Bunter to come to your study for that purpose, Walker?"

"Yes, sir; but—"

"You requested him to perform ventriloquial tricks in your study?"

"Yes; but—"

"Then what have you to complain of?"

"I didn't mean him to—to—to—"

stammered Walker. "I was only doing what he asked me, sir!" said Bunter, feeling that he was getting on. "I'm an awfully clever ventriloquist, sir, and I—I thought Walker wanted me to do my best, and I did it, and then he got into a temper and kicked me, sir, and he's been after me ever since!"

"The young rotter—" began Walker.

Mr. Quelch raised his hand.

"It appears, Walker, that you asked Bunter to do as he did, but were not satisfied with the way he did it."

"Yes, sir. He—"

"Then you have only yourself to blame, Walker, and it is extremely unjust to punish Bunter. You appear to me to be taking an unfair advantage of your position as a prefect of the Sixth Form!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch sternly.

"I—I—" stuttered the hapless Walker.

"That will do, Walker! I insist upon this matter being dropped at once," said the Remove master. "I shall not allow you to punish Bunter. Bunter, you will inform me at once if Walker should inflict any punishment upon you in regard to this matter?"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Certainly, sir!"

"You may go, Bunter."

The Owl of the Remove quitted the study, Walker casting an almost wolfish look after him.

Mr. Quelch eyed the Sixth-Former sternly.

"Let this be a lesson to you, Walker," he said. "One in your position, a prefect of the Sixth Form, should learn to control his temper better. You have given way to angry feelings which are disgraceful, considering your position in the school! You need say no more, Walker. You may go."

Walker went. He did not desire to say more; indeed, his feelings were too deep for words.

He strode down the passage in a boiling state. At the corner of the passage stood William George Bunter.

He grinned at Walker.

Bunter was not afraid of the prefect now. Mr. Quelch's study was within sound of a yell, and Bunter was ready to yell if Walker laid even a little finger on him.

Walker paused, and glared at the Owl of the Remove. Deeply he yearned to take Bunter by the scruff of the neck and give him the licking of his life. Bunter was quite aware of his deep yearning, and he gave a fat chuckle.

"He, he, he! I say, Walker, what about those tarts?" he asked. "You

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promised me some tarts for entertaining your uncle. He, he, he! I say, you won't get a tip from the old Johnny now. He, he, he!"

Walker made a movement towards the fat junior. Billy Bunter blinked at him cheerfully through his big spectacles.

"Go it!" he chuckled. "I'll yell! He, he, he!"

"You—you—" gasped Walker.

"He, he, he!"

Walker contrived somehow to restrain his feelings. He turned his back on Bunter and strode away, followed by the fat chuckle of the Owl of the Remove.

Billy Bunter was left victorious.

It was characteristic of Bunter that he never could let well alone. When he had the upper hand he could not resist the temptation to use it. He was not much given to reflection, and it did not occur to his fat mind at the moment that it was a dangerous game for a Lower Fourth fag to pursue an advantage over a prefect of the Sixth. He rolled after Walker, and followed him into the Sixth Form passage.

"I say, Walker!" he shouted.

Three or four of the Sixth were in the passage at the study doors, and they all looked round as Bunter shouted. Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, called out to him sharply.

"Cheese that, young 'un! Don't you know better than to come yelling here?"

"Oh, really, Wingate—"

"Cut off!"

"I say, Walker owes me some tarts!"

"What rot! Cut off!"

Bunter blinked at the captain of the school and rolled on towards Walker's study. Walker had gone in and closed the door, only anxious to be rid of the fat junior now. For the present Bunter was immune from punishment, so far as Walker was concerned; the Sixth-Former did not want trouble with Mr. Quelch.

Bunter threw open the study door without knocking and blinked in with a fat grin.

"I say, Walker—"

Walker glared at him.

"Pretty sort of a silly ass, aren't you?" said Bunter.

"Wha-a-at?"

"You looked no end of a silly idiot when Quelch was slanging you!" said Bunter, with a chuckle. "He, he, he!"

Walker clutched up a cane.

"Lay it on!" grinned Bunter. "I don't mind. I'll go straight to Mr. Quelch about it."

"Get out of my study!" hissed Walker.

"I'm not in your study! I'm in the passage! A chap can stand in a passage if he likes! He, he, he! I say, how much did you expect to get out of your uncle? He, he, he!"

A hand dropped on Bunter's shoulder and he was spun round, and he gave Wingate of the Sixth a startled blink.

"Is that the way to talk to a prefect, Bunter?" asked Wingate grimly.

"I—I—I—"

"Come with me."

"Oh, dear!" gasped Bunter.

Wingate marched the Owl of the Remove into his study and picked up a cane.

"Bend over!" he said.

"I—I say, Wingate—"

"Bend over!"

"Oh, lor'!"

Swish! Swish!

William George Bunter howled and departed from the Sixth Form passage a sadder if not a wiser Bunter.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

His Master's Voice!

"I SAY, you fellows!"
"Don't bother!"
"But, I say!"
"Cheese it!"

Harry Wharton had no time to waste on Billy Bunter. He was seated at the table in Study No. 1 in the Remove with a sheaf of impot-paper before him and a Virgil propped open against the inkstand. He was writing lines from that great Latin poet at a great rate; but he did not look as if he were enjoying the beauties of Virgil.

Frank Nugent was at prep, but Wharton had no time for prep yet. He had lines to do in large quantities.

"What is it—an impot?" asked Bunter.

Wharton grunted.

"Do you think I'm writing out Virgil because I like it, ass?" he asked. "I've got five hundred lines. All your fault! So roll away and leave me to get them done."

"How is it my fault!" demanded Bunter.

"It's for handling Walker on the football-ground this afternoon," growled the captain of the Remove. "He's reported us to the Head, and every fellow who was there has got five hundred lines."

"He, he, he;"

Wharton glared at the fat junior.

"Is it a laughing matter?" he roared.

"He, he, he!"

"Kick him, Franky! I've got to keep on with these rotten lines."

"Pleasure!" said Nugent, jumping up.

"Oh, really, you fellows!" said Bunter.

"I say, keep off! I say, I got the best of Walker. I took him to Quelch, and Quelch jawed him till he was green and yellow. He's taking it out of you chaps because he can't take it out of me. He, he, he!"

Frank Nugent drew back his right boot.

"Where will you have it?" he asked.

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter rolled away from the study, still chuckling. It did not seem to occur to him to waste any sympathy on fellows who had landed themselves in trouble in protecting him from Walker of the Sixth. Evidently Walker, barred from avenging himself on Bunter, had found solace in making the footballers suffer for their sins. Bunter seemed to find something entertaining in it.

He rolled into his own study, No. 7. He found Peter Todd and Tom Dutton there. Dutton was at prep; but Toddy, like the captain of the Remove, was busy on lines. He was one of the footballers who had handled Walker of the Sixth.

Bunter grinned at the growing stack at Peter's elbow.

"You got it, too?" he asked.

"Yes, ass! Don't jaw. These lines have got to be taken in by eight," said Peter. "It's close on time now."

"He, he, he!"

Peter glared at his fat study-mate.

"You fellows don't know how to handle Walker," said Bunter. "I had him up before Quelch—fairly ordered him into Quelch's study. He looked pretty sick when I'd finished with him—fairly green and yellow!"

"Cheese it!"

"I wouldn't do the lines if I were you," pursued Bunter. "I wouldn't be bullied by a fellow like Walker. Who cares for a prefect? Not me!"

"Fathead!"

"Oh, really, Peter—"

"Dry up, for goodness' sake! How can a chap write against time with you yagging your chin nineteen to the

dozen?" exclaimed Toddy impatiently. "Give us a rest, Bunter."

"What about supper?"

"Blow supper!" roared Peter Todd. "The Head's told us to bring in these lines at eight, and if they're not in by eight Mr. Quelch will come round for them. That means more lines. So give us a rest."

"That's all very well," said Bunter. "I wouldn't do them. Catch me knuckling under to a prefect! Who's Walker?"

"You fat ass!"

"I don't think you ought to call me names, Peter, because you're funky of a prefect and I'm not!" said Bunter, with dignity. "What you want is a little pluck. You want to stand up to the Sixth, and tell 'em to go and eat coke—like me!"

Peter Todd did not answer that. He had no time for talk, with eight o'clock close at hand, and five hundred lines to finish off and take in to his Form master. But he found time to pick up a Latin grammar and hurl it at Bunter, as a hint to be silent.

"Yaroooooh!"

Bunter caught the grammar with his chin and roared.

"Now dry up!"

"Beast!"

"Do you want the inkpot?" roared Peter.

Billy Bunter rubbed his fat chin and glowered at Peter Todd. He did not want the inkpot. Peter's pen raced over the paper. It was on the stroke of eight now, and some dozens of lines remained to be written. A cunning gleam came into Bunter's little round eyes, and he gave the little fat cough which generally heralded the performance of his ventriloquial tricks. But Peter was too busy to heed it.

"Todd, your lines have not reached me!"

It was a sharp, staccato voice from the passage. Peter Todd gave a jump at the well-known tones of Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove.

"Todd, why are not your lines done?"

Peter rose to his feet. The voice came from the Remove passage, Bunter having left the door open. Apparently Mr. Quelch was waiting in the passage for Toddy's answer.

"Sorry, sir!" gasped Peter. "Nearly done—"

"Nonsense!"

"Only about twenty more, sir. I've been interrupted—"

"Take a hundred more lines, Todd!"

"Oh dear!"

Just at that moment Peter Todd caught a peculiar grin on Billy Bunter's fat face. Sudden suspicion flashed into his mind; it really was a little odd that Mr. Quelch should address him from the passage without looking into the study. Peter jumped to the door and looked out. The Remove passage was vacant save for Lord Mauleverer and Jimmy Vivian, chatting by the doorway of Study No. 12.

"You fat villain!" roared Peter, turning in great wrath on the Owl of the Remove. "You're playing your beastly ventriloquist tricks on me when I haven't a second to spare!"

"He, he, he! I say, keep off!" roared Bunter, as Toddy rushed at him. "Only a joke—yaroooooh!"

Bunter dodged round the table, but Peter's foot was quicker than Bunter. It smote Bunter's tight trousers with a crash, and the Owl of the Remove was strewn on the study carpet.

"Yow-ow-ow! Ow! Woop!" roared Bunter.

"Now give me some more ventriloquism, and I'll give you some more of my boot!" howled Peter.

"Ow! Wow!"

Bunter did not seem in a mood for further ventriloquism. Peter sat down again, jabbed his pen into the inkpot, and raced on with his lines.

"Todd!"

It was the sharp, staccato voice again.

Peter did not even look up. He was not to be taken in twice by Bunter's imitation of Mr. Quelch's voice.

"Todd, I have not yet received your lines!" went on the sharp voice at the doorway.

"Will you shut up?" roared Peter, without even looking up.

"What?"

"Shut up, you silly dummy!"

"Todd!"

Peter glared up, and his glare was frozen on his face as he saw Mr. Quelch looking in at the doorway.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Peter.

He realised that it really was Mr. Quelch this time, and not the Greyfriars ventriloquist.

"Todd"—Mr. Quelch's voice trembled with wrath—"what—what—what did you call me? What expression did you apply to me, Todd?"

"Oh dear! I—I—I—"

"You—you called me—"

"Oh, sir! No, sir! Oh dear!" gasped Peter. "I—I—I didn't know it was you, sir. Oh, my hat! I never meant—"

"Nonsense! I shall take you to the Head at once!" boomed Mr. Quelch. "I shall insist upon a severe flogging!"

"Ow! I—I didn't know. I—I thought it was Bunter. I thought it was a fellow playing a trick, sir!" spluttered the hapless Peter. "I did really, sir! I wouldn't call you a silly dummy for—for worlds, sir!"

The terror and distress in Peter's face were convincing. Mr. Quelch's frown relaxed.

"I—I thought it was that fat beast—I mean Bunter's ventriloquism again, sir!" groaned Peter.

"I accept your statement, Todd. But you should be more careful," said Mr. Quelch. "And I have not yet received your lines. You will take a hundred more lines, Todd, and bring them to me before bed-time."

"Oh dear! Yes, sir."

Mr. Quelch walked on along the passage, doubtless in quest of other delinquents who had not yet handed in their imposts.

"He, he, he!"

Peter Todd looked at Bunter. He did not speak to him. He picked up a cushion and rushed at him.

Bunter's fat chuckle died away suddenly. He made a leap for the doorway. The cushion caught him as he leaped, and there was a roar and bump in the Remove passage.

Peter Todd slammed the door, and returned to his lines. That swipe of the cushion seemed to have comforted him. But, to judge by the howls outside the study, it had not comforted Bunter.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Gets Beans!

"A PLUM cake—"

"Yes."

"And a dozen tarts."

"Yes, Walker."

Tubb of the Third, who had the pleasure—or otherwise—of fagging for



Billy Bunter bolted into Mr. Quelch's study like a hunted rabbit. Close at his heels came Walker of the Sixth. "Now, you little scoundrel!" hissed the prefect, grasping the Owl of the Remove by the collar. "Ow!" roared Bunter. "Walker!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch in a formidable voice. "Oh gad!" gasped Walker. He released Bunter as though he had been red-hot and stared blankly at Mr. Quelch. (See Chapter 4.)

Walker of the Sixth, was receiving his orders. Billy Bunter pricked up his fat ears, and blinked round.

Walker of the Sixth had stopped the fag in the quadrangle, to give him instructions. Apparently Walker was unconscious of the fact that Billy Bunter was near at hand; at all events, he took no notice whatever of the Owl of the Remove.

Since the incident of the previous day, Walker had taken no notice of Bunter. Probably he had let the sun go down on his wrath—and allowed it to rise again thereon. But in the matter of the ventriloquial episode in Walker's study there was nothing doing—Walker could not receive that matter without incurring the resentment of Mr. Quelch. Bunter would have been prompt to inform the Remove master had the prefect called him to account in the affair which Mr. Quelch declared was closed and done with.

So Walker, apparently, had let the matter drop, and ignored Bunter. He ignored him to such an extent that he seemed quite unaware of the fat Owl's existence at this moment, though Bunter was not six feet away from him. Regardless of Bunter the prefect called Tubb of the Third, and instructed him to make purchases at the school shop for tea.

He handed Tubb a currency note, and the fag started for Mrs. Mumble's little shop. Walker of the Sixth, still oblivious of Bunter, strolled away towards the gym.

Bunter blinked after him, and blinked after Tubb.

There was a greedy blink behind the fat junior's spectacles.

The mention of a plum cake and a dozen tarts was enough to make Billy Bunter's mouth water. And apparently Tubb of the Third was to convey that tuck to Walker's study, for tea—and Walker was in no hurry to be there to receive it. The tuck, in fact, would be left unwatched and unguarded.

Billy Bunter rolled into the House, and made his way to the Sixth Form passage. There he looked from a window—with one eye open for the arrival of Tubb of the Third.

Probably no one in the Lower School, excepting Billy Bunter, would have thought of raiding tuck from a Sixth Form study. Such an enterprise was altogether too perilous for most fellows. And Billy Bunter certainly was not of the stuff of which heroes are made. But the mere thought of cake and tarts was like a magnet to Bunter. The previous day he had bagged tarts in Walker's study, and Walker did not seem to have missed them. Now there was another chance—and half a chance was enough for Bunter when there was tuck ahead.

Tubb of the Third came along, and went into Walker's study, with a parcel under his arm.

The fag came out again in a couple of minutes, and walked away whistling.

Bunter watched him out of sight, and then rolled cautiously along to Walker's door. There was no danger of Walker returning; from the window Bunter had seen him lounging by the door of the gym, talking to Gwynne of the Sixth.

There was ample time to bag the supply in the study, and bolt with it; and if taxed with the raid, Bunter had his well-known powers as an Ananias to rely upon. Even if it led to a licking, at all events he would have had the tuck. But the coast was clear—there really seemed to be no reason why Bunter should be suspected. There was a football match going on, on Big Side, and almost all the Sixth were out of the

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House. The passage was empty, and Bunter, assured that he was unseen, slipped into Walker's study.

On Walker's table lay the parcel Tubb of the Third had just brought in. Bunter's fat hands were upon it at once.

He picked it up, and started for the door. Then he paused. It really was too risky, to take the chance of being seen carrying a parcel away from a Sixth Form study. Moreover, Bunter's fat mouth was watering for the tuck. It was tea-time, and Bunter had only had tea in Hall, and tea in Study No. 7. So he was hungry. Two teas did not go very far with the Owl of the Remove.

He jerked the parcel open on the table, and in a second a fat and juicy jam tart was crunching in his teeth.

It was a nice tart—very nice! Another followed it—and another! Then, by way of a change, Bunter hacked off a large chunk of the plum cake, and crammed it into his mouth.

Bunter was enjoying himself—his enjoyment only marred by the possibility of discovery. But, anyhow, Walker couldn't possibly get back to the study for a few minutes—and a few minutes meant much to Bunter; he was a rapid performer in the gastronomic line.

Crunch, crunch, crunch!

The tarts were going fast.

Bunter's mouth was full, and his fat face rather sticky, when the door was thrown suddenly open.

The Owl of the Remove gave a startled gurgle.

Loder of the Sixth looked in.

Bunter's jaws ceased to move. His mouth was full—but even the juicy jam tart lost its flavour as he saw a Sixth Form prefect's eyes fixed on him from the doorway.

He had calculated quite well. Walker, at the gym, would have had no time to return and catch him. And that any other prefect would be watching the study was a thought that never occurred to Bunter. It occurred to him now, rather late.

Loder grinned.

"So I've caught you!" he said.

"Mmmmmmm!" mumbled Bunter.

"Stealing—what?"

"Groogh! Oh, really, Loder—"

Billy Bunter bolted the mouthful of tart.

"I—I say—don't tell Walker—"

Gerald Loder laughed.

"You can wait here for him, Bunter," he said agreeably. He put the doorkey in the outside of the lock. "Finish the tuck, old fat pippin, if you've got any appetite left."

"I—I say, Loder—" stuttered the Owl of the Remove.

Slam!

The door closed, and Loder turned the key in the lock. Then he walked away, laughing.

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter.

He was fairly caught now. He was locked in the study—to wait there till Walker of the Sixth came in to deal with him. The cake and the tarts were tempting, but even Billy Bunter had no inclination to eat now. Apprehension had taken the place of appetite.

"The awful beast!" groaned Bunter. "The awful, treacherous rotter! It was a plant all the time! Oh dear!"

Even on Billy Bunter's obtuse brain it had dawned that he had fallen into a trap. Walker of the Sixth had been nursing his wrath, which he could not venture to wreak on Bunter. The ventriloquial incident was closed. So Walker had bided his time—with this outcome. Bunter knew now that Walker had deliberately spoken to Tubb in his hearing, and then walked off the scene, in order

to tempt him to his fall—leaving his pal Loder to keep an eye on the study!

More than once—many and many a time, in fact—Billy Bunter's unearthly appetite had landed him into trouble. Now it had landed him once more.

Billy Bunter waited in dismal apprehension.

He was booked now! Had Walker licked him for his ventriloquial sins he would have complained promptly to Mr. Quelch. But it was useless to complain for being licked for stealing tarts!

And it was certain that Bunter was going to get two lickings rolled into one, as it were, if not three—in fact, he was going to get the heftiest licking that James Walker could give him! Bunter the grub-raider was to receive what Walker had been prevented from handing out to Bunter the ventriloquist!

It seemed an age to the apprehensive Owl before he heard footsteps outside; but it was only a few minutes. The key was turned back, and the study door thrown open.

Walker of the Sixth grinned into the study.

Bunter eyed him uneasily, a good deal like a fat rabbit eyeing a dog. Walker stepped in cheerily.

"Loder tells me he caught you in my study, bagging my tuck, Bunter," he remarked.

"I—I haven't—"

Walker looked at the parcel.

"A good bit of the cake has gone and six of the tarts," he remarked. "Haven't you had them?"

"Nunno!"

"Then Tubb of the Third must have been nibbling," said Walker. "I'll have Tubb up, if you accuse him. Both of you can come with me to the Head."

Bunter's fat knees knocked together.

"I—I don't want to go to the Head, Walker!" he gasped.

"No? You'd rather I dealt with you personally?" asked Walker, with an agreeable smile.

"Ow! Yes!" groaned Bunter.

"Well, I don't mind. Bend over!"

Walker picked up a cane. Billy Bunter, with dismal forebodings, bent over a chair. Whack!

"Whoop!"

"Stop that row!" said Walker. "My hat! If you make that row over one out what will you do when you've had two dozen?"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Ow, ow, ow!" roared Bunter.

"Dear man!" smiled Walker. "Do you wish now that you hadn't played giddy ventriloquial tricks on my uncle—what?"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Oh! Ah! Yooooooop!"

"Not that I'm licking you for your ventriloquial tricks, of course," said Walker blandly. "Mr. Quelch ordered me to let that matter drop, and I've done so, of course."

Whack, whack!

"Yaroooh!"

"I'm licking you now for stealing tarts—shocking dishonesty!" said Walker. "As a prefect, it's my duty to deal severely with such things!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Yaroooh! Help!" roared Bunter.

Whack, whack!

Often and often Bunter had had to "bend over" in the course of his fat career. It was no new experience for him. But to keep bending while he received such terrific whacks as these was more than flesh and blood could stand. Billy Bunter leaped up and dodged round the study and fled for the door.

Walker's grasp was on his collar in a second.

"In a hurry?" he asked.

"Yaroooh!"
"I'm not finished yet, Bunter."
"Help!"
"Are you going to bend over, dear boy?"
"Yaroooh! Help! Fire! Murder!" roared Bunter.

Whack, whack, whack, whack, whack! Walker of the Sixth held Bunter by the collar with his left hand, and with his right he plied the cane. He put his beef into it.

Billy Bunter roared and squirmed and yelled and struggled. But the rain of whacks still descended on his tight trousers.

Two or three of the Sixth came along the passage, drawn to the study by Bunter's terrific roaring. Wingate looked in, with a frowning brow.

"What the thump is all this?" he demanded.

Whack, whack, whack!
"Bunter's been caught stealing," explained Walker. "I thought I'd better give him a lesson."

Whack, whack, whack!
"Stealing!" exclaimed Wingate. "If he's been stealing he must be taken to the Head."

"He asked me to deal with him." Whack, whack, whack! "I'm dealing with him. It's all right!" Whack, whack, whack!

"Yaroooh! Help! Whooooop!"
"What has he stolen, if he's stolen anything?" demanded the captain of Greyfriars.

"Cake and tarts—"
"Don't be a silly ass, Walker!" said Wingate brusquely. "If the fat young rascal has been bagging your tuck that's not stealing, and you've no right to call it by such a name. He deserves a thumping good licking, but you've given him enough. Let him go!"

Whack, whack!
"Do you hear me, Walker?"
"I suppose I'm the best judge in the matter, Wingate."

"You may be when the Head appoints you head prefect," answered the captain of Greyfriars. "So long as I'm head prefect I'm the best judge—in my own opinion, at least. Don't touch Bunter again."

Walker eyed the captain of the school surlily; but he lowered the cane. He did not care to enter into a contest with Wingate.

"I dare say he's had enough," he assented. "You can cut, Bunter! Keep out of my study after this, if you know what's good for you!"

"Ow! Wow, wow!"
Billy Bunter squirmed out of the study. Wingate's intervention had saved him from a good many whacks that Walker had intended for him. But he had had a licking that was about twice as severe as a Head's flogging—and it was painful. He groaned and moaned and howled as he squirmed his way out of the Sixth Form quarters.

Wingate walked away; and James Walker of the Sixth tossed the cane on the table and grinned. The account had been squared now, and rather more than squared; and Walker was satisfied. Billy Bunter, certainly, did not share his satisfaction; but in an imperfect universe it was impossible for all parties to be satisfied.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

No Backers!

"MMMMMMMMMMMM!"
Peter Todd was quite surprised, as he came along the Remove passage and stopped at his study door. A strange, weird mumbling sound was audible in the

PAINFUL FOR
BUNTER!



"Yaroooh! Fire! Murder! Help!" roared Bunter. Whack, whack, whack! Walker of the Sixth held Bunter by the collar with his left hand and with his right he plied the cane. He put his beef into it. Whack, whack! Wingate looked in at the study doorway with a frowning brow. "What the thump is all this?" he demanded. "I'm giving—whack!—Bunter—whack!—a lesson"—whack! explained Walker. (See Chapter 7.)

room; and Peter's first thought was that some animal had somehow got into Study No. 7.

"Mmmmmmm! Mmmmmmm!"

"What the thump—"

Peter stepped in. Billy Bunter was standing in the study, mumbling and moaning. Why he was not sitting down was a puzzle to Peter for the moment. It was quite unlike Bunter to stand when there was an armchair handy. But the Owl of the Remove had his reasons.

"What on earth's the matter?" asked Toddy.

"Mmmmmmmmmmm!"

"Is it a pain in your little circumference?" asked Peter. "Been over-doing the tarts?"

"Mmmmmmm! Ow! Wow! I'm hurt! Yow-ow!"

"You don't look as if you've been enjoying life," agreed Peter. "But what is it? What are you standing there for like a graven image? Why don't you sit down?"

"I—I sha'n't sit down again to-day!" groaned Bunter. "Ow! Wow!"

Peter Todd chuckled.

"Oh, it's a licking!"

"Ow! Wow! Yes! That beast Walker—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter Todd. "Didn't you tell me you weren't afraid of a giddy prefect? Who's Walker?"

"Ow! Wow! Wow! Yow!"

"I dare say you asked for it," said Peter comfortingly. "And if you didn't

deserve it this time, you deserve it for something else when you didn't get it."

"Ow! Ow! Ow!" groaned Bunter.

"Beast!"

"Have him up before Quelchy, and make him turn green and yellow again!" chuckled Peter.

"Ow! Wow! So I would, only Quelchy mightn't believe that I never touched the tarts!" groaned Bunter.

"Probably not!" grinned Peter. "If there were any tarts about you touched them, that's a cert!"

"Beast! Ow! Ow! Ow!"

"How long are you going to make that row for, Bunter?" asked Peter. "I've got some fellows coming to tea."

"Beast!"

"Well, I want them to be done well in this study—but I'm not giving them musical honours," explained Peter.

"When are you going to dry up?"

"Ow, ow! Yow!"

"I'll give you five minutes," said Toddy cheerily.

"Yah!"

Peter Todd proceeded to prepare the study table for a spread. He had the Famous Five coming to tea, and the Famous Five were fellows whom Peter delighted to honour. Therefore the preparations for tea were on a rather unusual scale.

Tom Dutton came in to help. He brought a large parcel from the school shop.

Bunter blinked at the good things as

they were unpacked, with lack-lustre eyes. As a member of the study, he was entitled to stay to the spread. But for once the sight of tuck did not buck him so much as usual. Walker's licking had been really a terrific one, and Bunter was feeling it sorely. Indeed, he would have given all Peter's good things for vengeance on Walker of the Sixth.

He moved restlessly about the study, mumbling and moaning and groaning. Tom Dutton eyed him curiously every now and then. Being an extremely deaf youth, Dutton heard nothing that was said in the study, and he did not know that Bunter had been through a licking. So the Owl's queer contortions and twistings and turnings puzzled him.

"What's the matter with you, Bunter?" Dutton asked at last. "Why can't you keep still?"

"Ow! Wow!"

"Eh?"

"I've been licked!" howled Bunter.

"Kicked?"

"Licked!" yelled Bunter.

"Oh, licked!" said Dutton. "Well, I daresay you asked for it. I suppose you've been bagging some fellow's prov-
is that it?"

"Beast!"

"Eh?"

"Oh, shut up!" howled Bunter. "If you want fellows to talk to you you'd better buy an ear-trumpet. You tire out a fellow!"

"No need to bellow," said Dutton. "I'm not deaf, only a little hard of hearing. You'd better not bellow at me!"

"I didn't say bellow, you silly duffer!"

"Eh?"

"Fathead! Ass! Duffer!"

"Well, if you suffer, I'm sorry, but you must expect to suffer if you bag a fellow's tuck," said Dutton. "It's too thick, you know, Bunter. You're always at it."

Peter Todd chuckled.

"Anyhow, don't wriggle about the study like a centipede, Bunter," went on Dutton. "Can't you stand a licking like any other chap? You make too much fuss of it."

"Oh, cheese it!"

"Seize what?" asked Dutton, looking round.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Peter.

"I don't quite understand you, Bunter. What do you want me to seize?" asked the deaf junior, quite puzzled.

"I didn't say seize!" shrieked Bunter.

"Sneeze? Why should I sneeze? I've not got a cold."

"Oh, my hat! Give us a rest!" howled Bunter.

"Nothing of the kind. My chest is all right. I've certainly not got a cold on the chest. Blessed if I don't think you're wandering in your mind, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter gave it up at that point. Conversation with Dutton was rather too strenuous a task for him.

There was a tramp of feet in the passage, and Harry Wharton & Co. came along, and five cheery faces looked into Study No. 7. Billy Bunter gave a deep groan—partly caused by his aches and pains, partly by his desire for sympathy. The Co. stared at him.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's that ghastly row?" asked Bob Cherry. "Is Bunter understudying the Great Huge Bear?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, I'm in awful pain!" groaned Bunter. "That beast Walker has given me a fearful licking. He made out that I'd bagged his cake and tarts. You fellows know whether I'd touch a fellow's tuck!"

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"Ha, ha! We do!"

"We does!" chuckled Johnny Bull.

"The knowfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"And the awful beast deliberately planted the tarts there for me to bag, and got Loder of the Sixth to watch for me," groaned Bunter. "What do you think of that for a prefect of the Sixth?"

"What did it matter, if you never touched them?" grinned Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

Peter Todd pointed to the clock.

"Time's up, Bunter!"

"Eh? What do you mean, Toddy?"

"I gave you five minutes, and you've had nearly ten. You've got to chuck groaning now."

Groan!

"Do you hear, Bunter?"

Groan!

"Then I'll jolly well give you something to groan for!" said Peter, and he picked up a slipper.

Billy Bunter blinked at him ferociously.

"You unfeeling beast! Haven't you got any sympathy?"

"Oh, lots!" said Peter. "I'm going to show my sympathy by slipperring you, if you don't shut up. See?"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter decided not to groan any more. As a matter of fact, the pain was wearing off, and Bunter was getting more interested in the good things on the table. But he did not sit down to tea. He took his provender standing.

Over tea he explained to the Famous Five the iniquitous duplicity of Walker of the Sixth. Harry Wharton & Co. chuckled.

"You see, he couldn't lick me for the ventriloquism, after what Quechy said, so he fairly trapped me with those tarts," groaned Bunter. "Dirty trick for a Sixth Form prefect, wasn't it?"

"Not nice," agreed Wharton. "Walker's rather a cad. But you shouldn't have played tricks on his uncle, and you shouldn't have bagged his tarts. You've only got yourself to blame."

Bunter glared.

"Does that mean that you're not going to take the matter up?" he demanded.

"Just that!"

"As captain of the Form, you're bound to stand by a fellow who's bullied by a Sixth Form beast!"

"Keep your hands from picking and stealing, old fat man," suggested Bob Cherry. "Then you'll be all right."

"I say, you fellows, you're bound to back me up. You've said lots of times that you won't let the Sixth bully the Remove."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"When you get a licking for nothing you can mention it," he said. "When you get licked for bagging another fellow's tuck, it serves you jolly well right!"

"Hear, hear!"

"The hear-hearfulness is terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter. Honesty is the best pitcher that goes longest to the well, as the English proverb says!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Even Bunter grinned at the English proverb, in spite of his aches and pains, his woes and his grievances. But the Owl of the Remove continued to be very morose over tea—though his moroseness did not affect his appetite in the very

least. Evidently he considered that it was up to the Famous Five to take up the quarrel, and make Walker "sit up" in his turn. But it was clear that there was nothing doing. No doubt Walker of the Sixth had erred on the side of emphasis in the matter of the licking; but there was equally no doubt that Bunter had asked for it. And the Famous Five charitably hoped that it would do him good.

After tea, when the Co. strolled out with Peter Todd, Billy Bunter gave them a truculent blink.

"So you're not backing me up?" he said. "You're going to let Walker lick a Remove chap for nothing—practically nothing—and let him rip? Well, I'm going to take the matter into my own hands, and if you don't like the result, you can lump it. I know what I'm going to do."

"What's that, fatty?"

"That's telling!" said Bunter mysteriously.

"Fathead!"

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter was left alone—to grunt and groan as long as he liked, and to turn over in his fat mind his scheme of vengeance on the iniquitous Walker, in which, apparently, Harry Wharton & Co. were to be involved. It was a matter of deep consideration for William George Bunter, but a trifle light as air to the chums of the Remove—though, as a matter of fact, they were to be reminded of it very seriously before long.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Something Like a Slanging!

JAMES WALKER of the Sixth Form looked up from his Livy and frowned. It was some days since the affair of Bunter, and Walker of the Sixth had almost forgotten the existence of the Owl of the Remove. Bunter had been licked—thoroughly licked; perhaps even too thoroughly—and so Walker dismissed the matter from his mind as finished and done with. It was easier, of course, for the matter to be forgotten by the lickier than by the licensee, so to speak. A licking is one of the many things which it is more blessed to give than to receive. It was natural that it should linger longer in Bunter's memory than in Walker's.

Walker was busy now. It was Saturday afternoon, a fine and sunny autumn afternoon, and nearly everybody was out of doors. Walker was kept in his study by the stern necessity of mugging up Livy. He had not the slightest desire for a closer acquaintance with Titus Livius, and he was absolutely indifferent both to the history of Rome and to the classic language in which Livy had written thereon. He had been utterly uninterested even in the reported discovery of the missing Books of Livy, though he would have been very interested to hear that the books already known had been lost beyond recovery.

But it was a case of needs must. The Head had been taking Walker very severely to task in the Sixth Form room that morning, and Walker had been "through" it. Livy was due again in the Sixth on Monday, and Walker realised that the Head would have a special eye on him. So, instead of joining the other seniors at games practice, or accompanying Loder and Carne on one of their little half-holiday excursions, Walker of the Sixth was putting in some weary and dreary hours at Latin.

It filled him with a ferocious hatred of Titus Livius, and imbued him with a longing to knock together the heads of

(Continued on page 17.)

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY—PRICE 2s



Supplement No. 198.

Week Ending November 8th, 1924.

THE FOLLY OF FIREWORKS!

By Billy Bunter.

WHEN you come to Anna-lies it, what's the use of fireworks? You pay quite a lot of munny for them, and they are gone in a flash.

True, the same thing can be said of grub. But then you get your full whack of enjoyment out of it, whereas with fireworks you simply scorch your togs and blister your fingers.

If one of my titled relations was to send me a "fiver" I should expire from shock—I mean, I should not dream of blowing it on fireworks, even if it arrived on the morning of the "Fifth." I should spend it on grub, and be satisfied.

There was a time when I used to go in for fireworks. But I have had so many painful eggperiences that I'll never touch the beastly things again.

Two years ago somebody sent me a box of fireworks. They were very damp, and I was afraid they wouldn't go off; so I thought it would be a sensible plan to put the box of fireworks in the fender to dry. They not only dried, but after about two minnits there was a deffening explosion, and the whole box of tricks went west! If ever I have occasion to dry fireworks again, I shall hang them out on a line, or something!

On another occasion I received a present of a bundle of skyrockets. I kept them until Bonfire Night, and then started to let them off. Skyrockets, indeed! Why, not one of them rose more than six inches from the ground. They were the most awful "duds" I'd ever seen—hadn't a kick in them!

On yet another occasion I was walking about with a pocketful of assorted fireworks—squibs and starlights and golden rains and Roman candles—when something caused them to explode, and I found myself in peril of being roasted alive! My Eton jacket was Eton away by the flames. Fortunately, Bob Cherry saw me on fire, and promptly put me out with a fire-distinguisher. But for his pressence of mind my life would have paid the four-foot.

You will see, therefore, that I've no reason to bless fireworks. And the next time somebody sends me a box of the beastly things I'll either put them up for auction, or else offer them in exchange for a hamper of sollid, substantial, satisfying tuck.

G. B. S. (Chester).—"You were once expelled from Greyfriars—undeservedly, I know. What did it feel like?"—It felt so jolly unpleasant that I don't want an encore!

"Sportsman" (Harrow).—"Who is the best boxer in the Greyfriars Sixth?"—Rather a knotty problem to decide. Wingate, Gwynne, and Faulkner are all first-class fighting-men. Perhaps Wingate is a shade superior to the other two.

Supplement i.]

THE FIFTH!

A Ballad of Bonfire Night.

By Dick Penfold.

I SING of Fawkes, the cunning Guy,
A scoundrel sleek and sinister,
Who once aspired to blow sky-high
The King and every Minister.
The famous "Fifth" we celebrate,
And make it quite a jolly day;
At Greyfriars School, at any rate,
We keep it as a holiday.

Bonfires are lighted in the fields,
They burn and blaze right merrily;
What rapture and delight it yields
To happy youths—yea, verily!
With hideous guys we feed the flames,
And dance around with merriment;
With rockets we have glorious games
And many a weird experiment!

Masters and prefects join the fun,
And share our youthful jollity;
Then, when the revelry is done,
A feast of finest quality
Is set before us in the hall.
We eat it with avidity;
Of course, friend Bunter's "on the ball,"
Gorging with great rapidity!

The glories of "The Fifth" are great,
And Guido's name we venerate;
The celebrations on this date
We trust may ne'er degenerate.
We love to see the gay sparks fly,
We love the romps and revelry;
Then, here's a health to good old Guy,
Who planned his deed of devilry!

RESULT OF MAGNET "CHARACTERS" COMPETITION (Harold Skinner).

In this competition a prize of
a Gent's "Royal Enfield"
Bicycle has been awarded to:

HAROLD BAILEY,
138, Belasis Avenue,
Haverton Hill,
MIDDLESBROUGH,

for the following line:

"DEALS"—HIS IDEALS.

Another ripping Bicycle
offered again this week!
See page 16.

EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

BONFIRE NIGHT!

There is magic and sparkle in the words. They conjure up visions of a blazing bonfire, of grotesque guys being fed to the flames, of rockets soaring sky-high, and of spluttering squibs and lively jumping-crackers.

Guido Fawkes was a pretty thorough-going scoundrel, by all accounts, but schoolboys never judge him too harshly. He has bequeathed to us one special night in the year when we can stay up late and enjoy our fill of fun and freedom. Therefore, we take off our hats to the arch-plotter who smuggled barrels of gunpowder underneath the Houses of Parliament.

The custom of celebrating Guy Fawkes' Day is dying out in some parts of the country, but we still observe it at Greyfriars. For several days beforehand fellows are busy buying fireworks. Sometimes, in their impatience, they let them off before the great day arrives. One misguided youth ignited a jumping-cracker in the Remove Form-room. It capered all over the place, and finally scorched a hole in the tail of Mr. Quelch's gown. The culprit was called out before the class, and there was a fresh display of fireworks.

At Greyfriars, on Bonfire Night, we always have a torchlight procession to light us down to the field where the bonfire has been built. Most of us are armed with effigies, and we hurl them on to the bonfire with great gusto. I made a guy last year of Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, but it was so unlike him that he failed to recognise himself. Which was fortunate for the guy-maker! This year I have made a guy which is a faithful representation of Horace Coker. That burly youth has made repeated efforts to capture the guy and prevent it being burnt on Bonfire Night; but Coker will be unlucky!

Of course, I have been bombarded with contributions for our special "Guy Fawkes" Number. Stories and articles and poems, all dealing with the fun of "The Fifth," have poured into my sanctum. I have selected the best, and the remainder have been consigned to the yawning depths of the waste-paper basket. Alonzo Todd's "Ode to a Smoking Effigy" is one of the rejected contributions. I daren't publish any odes to smoking effigies. The authorities don't approve of smoking! I am sorry that Alonzo should so far forget himself as to deal with a banned topic!

HARRY WHARTON.

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Should "The Fifth" Be Celebrated?

You would imagine our contributors would give a unanimous "YES!" But there are cranks & killjoys even at Greyfriars, — as will be seen below. —

BOB CHERRY:

Of course, "The Fifth" should be celebrated! Let us have one evening in the year, at least, when we can stay up until after midnight, and prance around the merry bonfire, and explode our squibs and jumping-crackers, and loose off our skyrockets. Some poetical johnnie has written:

"Remember, remember
The Fifth of November,
Gunpowder treason and plot.
I see no reason
Why gunpowder treason,
Should ever be forgot."

And neither do I! Let us keep the exploits of good old Guy Fawkes ever green in the memory!

GERALD LODER:

Guy Fawkes' Day is merely a festival for fags. They delight in rowdyism and revelling, and in making night hideous with their yells. But dignified members of the Sixth Form—and especially pre-

fects—have no use for these sort of capers. Guy Fawkes' Day should be abolished, and the making of guys should be strictly prohibited. I hear that my fag has made a hideous guy which is supposed to represent myself. Wait till I lay hands on the little brat! I'll cuff and clout him until he squeals for the mercy he will never get!

BILLY BUNTER:

"The Fifth" should be sellybrated, of course; but I don't agree with the prezant method of sellybrating it. Let's have a banquet instead of a bonfire. Let's have feasting instead of fireworks. The latter are all very well in their way, but they're no good for human consumption. You can't have squib-pie or starlight stew! It is true that after the firework display we always have a supper in the dining-hall; but why not let the proceedings start with supper, and continue with supper, and end with supper?

ALONZO TODD:

At the risk of being considered a

crank, I must say that I emphatically disapprove of Guy Fawkes' celebrations. Fireworks and bonfires are extremely dangerous, and many shocking mishaps have occurred at Greyfriars on "The Fifth." I know a fag in the Second Form who severely scorched his stockings, and another who burned himself so badly that the tip of his finger-nail had to be amputated. Then, again, we never get to bed until after midnight, and the loss of one's beauty sleep is a calamity. On the morning of the Sixth of November we all look haggard instead of handsome. I will now tell you the tragic tale of a boy who was once thrown on to a blazing bonfire in mistake for a guy—

(Spare us, Lonzy!—Ed.)

WILLIAM GOSLING:

Wot I says is this 'ere: "I don't haprove of all this 'anky-panky wot goes on at Greyfriars in connection with this 'ere Guy Forks. Why should we keep 'is memory green. 'E was a hout-an-hout scoundrel as ever was! Tried to blow up the 'Ouses of Parlyment, 'e did. Wish I'd been the gate-porter there, an' caught him in the hact! 'E wouldn't 'ave got no mercy from William Gosling, the destructive pest! It fair makes my blood boil to think about it. An' it will be a good think for Greyfriars when Guy Forks' Day is demolished. Why, last year one of the young rips of the Remove exploded a cracker underneath me feet. I thought the end of the world 'ad come.

A GUY FAWKES ALPHABET!

By FRANK NUGENT.

A's the APPLAUSE when the bonfire's ignited,
And all dance around it, entranced and delighted.

B's for the BONFIRE, so merrily blazing;
The glow, seen for miles, is truly amazing.

C is for COKER, the greatest of guys;
For this I shall soon feel his fist in my eyes.

D is for DUTTON, who's so hard of hearing,
It seems like a whisper when everyone's cheering.

E's the EXCITEMENT which everyone shows,
When soaring through space a big sky-rocket goes.

F's for the FIREWORKS, of all sorts and sizes,
And when they explode what commotion arises.

G is for GUIDO, the base Spanish plotter,
Whom, history tells us, was rather a rotter.

H is the HEIGHT to which sky-rockets soar;
They'll travel to Mars in a few years or more.

I is for INKY—high jinks has this nabob
With Wharton and Johnny, myself, and the gay Bob.

J's JUMPING CRACKERS, so merrily leaping
Towards Bunter's form as the porpoise lies sleeping.

K's for the KIDS in the Third and the Second.
On the night of the "Fifth" they go mad, it is reckoned.

L's for the LAUGHTER, light-hearted and gay;
Far over the fields it echoes away.

M's for the MASTERS, who share in the fun,
And let us stay up till a quarter to one.

N is for NUGENT, who scribbles this verse
For gay "HERALD" readers to chant and rehearse.

O's for the ODOUR of guys that are burning.
In their fiery furnace they're twisting and turning.

P's the PROCESSION, with torches ablaze,
On which every fellow is eager to gaze.

Q is for QUELCHY, who makes matters warm
For those who give firework displays in the dorm.

R's for the ROCKETS which scream overhead,
Disturbing the slumbers of people in bed.

S is the SQUIB—quite a fiery young fellow.
I threw one at Gosling, who gave a loud bellow.

T's for the TORCHLIGHTS, which flicker and flare,
And need to be handled with caution and care.

U's for the UPROAR from hundreds of voices
When everyone revels and romps and rejoices.

V's for the VILLAGERS; all flock around
To see the big bonfire upon the school ground.

W's for WHARTON, the chief in our capers.
Right ably he edits the prince of boys' papers.

(Flattery, thy name is Nugent. You shall have an extra penny for this couplet.—Ed.)

X, Y, and Z leave me stumped for a rhyme,
So good-bye to GUY FAWKES. And here's to next time.

[Supplement ii.



The Perfect Guy!

— By TOM BROWN —

DUSK was beginning to fall, and the Guy Fawkes' festivities at Greyfriars were about to commence. Ingenious guy-makers were putting the finishing touches to their guys; and the members of the torchlight procession were assembling in the Close.

A big bonfire had been built in a distant field, and Gosling, the porter, had received instructions to light it as soon as it got really dark. Gosling grumbled a good deal at having to perform this duty. He declared loudly that he "didn't 'old with these 'ere Guy Forks celebrations." But the Greyfriars fellows were too jubilant to take any notice of Gosling.

Skinner of the Remove was strolling to and fro in the Close, watching the fellows emerge from the school building with their guys.

Bob Cherry came staggering down the School House steps with an effigy which represented Loder of the Sixth. Loder saw the effigy, but failed to recognise it as a counterpart of himself. Which was perhaps fortunate for Bob Cherry.

Then Dicky Nugent came running out, with an effigy of his Form-master, Mr. Twigg. Nobody would have known whom the guy was supposed to represent, but for the fact that a big placard was pinned to it, bearing the inscription:

**"THIS IS THAT TIRANT TWIGG!
He is about to be burnt at the stake!"**

Skinner gave a chuckle.

"If Twigg sees that placard, there will be a dead fag found lying about!" he said.

"I want Twigg to see it!" said Dicky Nugent, with a grin. "Then he'll know exactly what we think of him!"

Skinner's attention was diverted at that moment by the appearance of Alonzo Todd and Billy Bunter. They carried a guy between them. There was nothing to show whom the guy was supposed to represent. Indeed, it was a poor specimen of an effigy. It was simply a sack, stuffed with sawdust, with eyes and nose and mouth painted on it with luminous paint. The guy might have been anybody; and Skinner stared at it in great perplexity.

"I say! Who's that guy supposed to represent?" he asked.

Billy Bunter grinned.

"I'll give you three guesses," he said.

"Right!" said Skinner. "The ex-Kaiser?"

"No."

"Mr. Pussyfoot Johnson?"

"Try again!"

"Guy Fawkes himself?"

"Wrong every time," said Billy Bunter. "I'm surprised that you can't recognise this guy, Skinny. It's a perfect imitation. No need to put a placard on it, pointing out who it is. It's Coker of the Fifth, of course!"

"Great pip! Coker would be pleased!"

"We manufactured this effigy ourselves, my dear Skinner," said Alonzo Todd, beaming. "To my mind, it's the cleverest guy of the whole lot."

Supplement iii.]

"Rats! It's not a patch on mine," said Skinner.

"Yours? Why, I had no idea you had made one!"

"Well, I have. And it's a real beauty. The Perfect Guy, if I may say so. It's so skilfully made that you'd have a job to tell it from the original."

"Where is it?" asked Billy Bunter.

"You can see it from here," said Skinner. "It's an effigy of old Prout. I left it in the library. And if it isn't a lifelike representation of old Prout, I'll eat my hat!"

Bunter and Alonzo took their stand beside Skinner, who was pointing upwards to the library window.

In the half-light a motionless figure could be seen. And from a distance, at any rate, it certainly bore a remarkable resemblance to Mr. Prout.

"I left it sprawling in a chair, close to the library window," explained Skinner. "Perhaps you fellows would like to run and fetch it? I'll look after your guy for you."

Both Bunter and Alonzo were very interested in Skinner's guy. They were curious to see what it looked like at close quarters. Was it a better guy than their own? If so, Skinner was to be congratulated.

"Come along, Lonzy!" said Billy Bunter. "We'll go and fetch this wonderful guy of Skinner's. But I'm willing to wager a dish of doughnuts that it's not such a beauty as ours."

The two juniors hurried into the building. They failed to hear Skinner's soft chuckle as they went.

They found the library deserted, save for the sprawling figure in a chair by the window.

The greater part of the room was practically in darkness. But a fire was burning in the grate, and its rays illuminated the figure at the window.

Billy Bunter gave a gasp.

"It—it's Prout to the life!" he exclaimed. "I'd no idea Skinner was such a clever guy-maker."

Alonzo blinked at the motionless figure.

"It is indeed a wonderful imitation!" he declared. "The hair, the features, and even the clothes, are identical with those of Mr. Prout."

"Well, we'd better carry it down," said Bunter. "I'll take the feet, and you take the other end."

The juniors were astonished to find that the weight of the guy was considerable. Bunter lifted it by the feet, and Alonzo by the head; and it was with the utmost difficulty that they heaved it out of the chair.

"My hat! What a weight!" panted Bunter. "We shall never get the beastly thing downstairs!"

Suddenly there was a shriek from Alonzo.

"Help! It's alive! It's beginning to wriggle!"

There was a convulsive movement on the part of the guy. Billy Bunter lost his nerve completely, and let go of the feet as if they had been red-hot. Alonzo was similarly unnerved, and he

let go of his end. Their burden fell to the floor with a crash.

"Yarooooh!"

A wild yell of anguish rang out. And Bunter and Alonzo yelled, too—with terror! They both wanted to turn and flee, but panic rooted them to the spot.

Slowly and painfully the guy sat up, and then staggered to its feet. And in that moment Bunter and Alonzo realised the awful truth—that it was not a guy at all, but Mr. Paul Prout in person.

Skinner had planned a jape on his schoolfellows, and it had succeeded up to the hilt.

The cad of the Remove had seen Mr. Prout asleep in the library, and that had given him the idea. He had spoofed Bunter and Alonzo that the motionless figure in the chair was an effigy.

For a full moment Mr. Prout was incapable of speech. When he did find his voice, it resembled the booming of breakers on the beach.

"Bunter! Todd! You—you have dared to lay violent hands upon a master! You shall pay dearly for this appalling outrage! You took advantage of my slumber to perpetrate a savage attack upon me!"

"Nunno, sir!" gasped Billy Bunter, in startled tones. "We wouldn't attack you for worlds, sir! The—the fact is, we—we thought you were a guy!"

This was not very flattering to Mr. Prout. It was like adding insult to injury. Mr. Prout's secret opinion of himself was that he was rather a fine, distinguished-looking gentleman. To be mistaken for a guy was altogether the limit!

"You—you—" spluttered the incensed Form-master. "What grounds had you for supposing I was a guy?"

"Skinner pointed you out, sir, from the Close," explained Bunter. "We could see you in the chair by the window, and Skinner said it was a wonderful guy he had made himself. Of course, if it hadn't been so dark, we should have known differently. But when you were sprawling in that chair asleep, you—you looked for all the world like a guy, sir!"

"Be silent, Bunter!" roared Mr. Prout, becoming purple in the face. "I shall report this outrage to your Form-master. As for Skinner, I will take it upon myself to deal with him. Send him to me at once!"

The japer of the Remove was duly summoned into the presence of Mr. Prout, with whom he spent a very painful five minutes. Six on each hand was his reward for having pulled the legs of Bunter and Alonzo. As for those two bright youths, they got off scot free, their Form-master realising that the attack on Mr. Prout had been made quite innocently.

The Bonfire Night celebrations were a great success, and were thoroughly enjoyed by all—with the exception of Harold Skinner, who spent the evening in his study, sulking like Achilles in his tent.

THE END.

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HISTORIC BONFIRE NIGHTS!

A record of some amazing Events at Greyfriars School. Chronicled by **GEORGE WINGATE.**

NOVEMBER the Fifth has always been a red-letter day at Greyfriars. Ever since the time when Guido Fawkes plotted his deep, dark plot to "undermine" the British Constitution, and to send the Houses of Parliament sky-high, the anniversary of the event has been kept up at Greyfriars—sometimes with the consent of the headmaster, and on certain occasions without it!

THERE have been many casualties and calamities, and thrills and spills, in connection with Bonfire Night. In the seventeenth century the school had a narrow escape from being burnt down, the bonfire having been carelessly constructed in close proximity to the building, towards which a strong wind was blowing. Some of the outbuildings actually caught fire, but a hard-working amateur fire-brigade of schoolboys prevented the flames from spreading to the main building.

THERE were fireworks in those days, but they were very crudely made, extremely dangerous, and gave forth an odour that was anything but pleasant. We read in the school records that a pupil named Palgrave was expelled for exploding a firework in the Form-room. Nowadays, such an offence would hardly warrant expulsion; but, as I say, the fireworks of that period were so dangerous that the Form-room might easily have been set on fire. As it was, the Form master's gown was severely scorched.

IN 1836 the fiat went forth from the headmaster of that time—Dr. Grimstone—that Guy Fawkes Day was no longer to be observed at Greyfriars. All fireworks sent to the boys were confiscated by the authorities. But the scholars of that period did not mean to be deprived of their excitement and enjoyment, and several crates of fireworks were smuggled into the school. No

bonfire was lighted on the night of "The Fifth," but the Head and the masters were startled out of their slumbers by a series of loud explosions. On turning out to investigate, they found that a pyrotechnic display was in progress in the Close. Fireworks were being "loosed off" in all directions, and the scene was illuminated as if by flashes of lightning. On the appearance of the authorities the fellows bolted back to bed, but the ringleaders were discovered in the morning, when there was a "birching parade" which lasted nearly an hour!

DR. GRIMSTONE was unlucky in his efforts to abolish Guy Fawkes celebrations at Greyfriars. For in the following year a sporting governor named Sir John Loring arrived at the school, bringing with him an ample supply of fireworks for distribution amongst the boys. Sir John distributed the fireworks in Big Hall, greatly to the annoyance and chagrin of the Head. He also ordered the erection of a huge bonfire, and he himself took part in the festivities which followed, while Dr. Grimstone sat in his study and sulked.

IT has always been the custom to light a bonfire on one of the high chalk downs overlooking the sea. St. Michael's Mount, on which the bonfire is erected, is five miles from Greyfriars; and in 1855 a party of Remove boys broke bounds in order to visit the spot, and take part in the revels. They had already enjoyed the Guy Fawkes festivities at Greyfriars, but apparently enough was not as good as a feast in their case! At one o'clock in the morning a prying master went the rounds of the dormitories, and discovered that seven boys were absent. He roused and informed the headmaster, into whose arms the delinquents walked on their return. All seven were sentenced to expulsion; but the sentence was afterwards rescinded, and the offenders received a public flogging instead.

GUY-MAKING has always been a favourite pastime at Greyfriars, on the approach of "The Fifth." An effigy was once made of the notorious Dr. Grimstone, and, amid scenes of the wildest enthusiasm, it was cast to the flames, whilst the Head looked on, dancing with rage. He made strenuous efforts to discover the inventor of the guy,

but that youth's identity remained "wrapt in mystery."

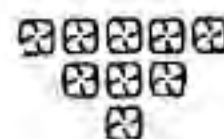
NOBODY ever reads the School Rules these days. There are so many of them, and they are worded in such a solemn and pompous style, that very few fellows would care to wade through them. In 1870 a new rule was added, to the effect that it was forbidden to make effigies resembling any master or prefect of Greyfriars. This rule—to quote Shakespeare—has been "more honoured in the breach than in the observance," for scarcely a year passes without guys being made resembling certain unpopular masters and prefects. Last year there were no less than a dozen effigies of Loder of the Sixth, who does not seem to be exactly a public idol!

IT is a very difficult matter to suppress guy-making. The effigies are made in secret, and are not produced until Bonfire Night. Even then it is no easy matter to discover the identity of the guy-makers, for their faces are generally disguised by grotesque masks. Last year there was an effigy made of Mr. Prout, and he ordered me to discover the maker and bring him to justice. I knew that the culprit was a member of the Remove Form, but, try as I would, I could not discover his name.

(Bob Cherry pleads "Guilty!" But, as it's an ancient offence, Wingate, he hopes you will take no action!—Ed.)

THE question as to whether Guy Fawkes celebrations should be abolished cropped up again this year, and the Head called a special conference of masters to discuss the matter. Mr. Larry Lascelles pleaded eloquently in favour of the Guy Fawkes anniversary being kept up; and Mr. Hacker, in an embittered speech, urged that it was high time that "this ridiculous tomfoolery," as he called it, was brought to an end. Finally, the matter was put to the vote, and by a narrow majority it was decided that Guy Fawkes Day should be observed as heretofore. When the verdict was made public the juniors and fags cheered wildly, and danced around in high glee. But, so far as the seniors are concerned, it is a matter of indifference to us whether "The Fifth" is kept up or not. We have left our fagging days behind us, and are no longer seized with a frenzied desire to ignite squibs or to send sky-rockets soaring into space!

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When you have thought out a good answer fill in the coupon herewith, taking care to write your effort and your name and address clearly, and post it to "Sidney James Snoop," "Characters" Competition, THE MAGNET LIBRARY, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4, so as to reach that address not later than **November 18th, 1924.**

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Write your effort here.....

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(Continued from page 12.)

Hannibal and Fabius. If a fag had been at hand, probably Walker would have cuffed him, or perhaps kicked him—as he could not kick Livy. Fortunately for Tubb of the Third, his duties as Walker's fag did not bring him to the study just then.

In this pleasant mood Walker was startled by a sudden sound at his study door.

It was the click of a key turning in the lock.

He frowned.

It was rather a surprising incident. The key should naturally have been on the inside of the door. Apparently, however, it was now on the outside. Someone had surreptitiously transferred it there before Walker had come into the study, and he had not noticed it in slamming the door shut.

Now, it seemed, he was locked in his study.

Walker breathed hard.

He was in a mood to cuff any cheeky fag who came within reach, and some cheeky fag was playing tricks on him!

Leaving Titus Livius on the table, Walker rose and crossed to the door. He grasped the handle and shook it. The door did not move; undoubtedly it had been locked on the outside. Walker rapped on the panels with his knuckles.

"Who's there? Who's locked my door?" he shouted.

"My esteemed Walker——" came a voice from the passage outside.

Walker jumped.

He recognised the voice, and he easily recognised the peculiar mode of speech. There was only one fellow at Greyfriars who talked like that. And it was not likely to occur to Walker that a fat ventriloquist was imitating the well-known "lingo" of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Indian junior of the Remove.

"Hurree Singh, you young rascal——"

"My esteemed fatheaded Walker——"

"What!" roared Walker.

"I have lockfully fastened you in your esteemed study, my excellent and execrable fathead——"

"You cheeky young villain!"

"You cheeky old villain!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Now I am going to tell you what I think of you, my esteemed disgusting Walker! You are a beastly bully!"

"Unlock this door!" shouted Walker.

"Rats!"

"You young scoundrel——"

"The ratfulness is terrific!"

"Unlock this door at once, and I'll give you the licking of your life!" roared Walker.

"Bosh! You couldn't lick a rabbit, my esteemed funky Walker!"

"I—I—I——" stuttered Walker.

"Shut up!"

Walker stared at the locked door, almost dazed. The Remove were, in the opinion of many of the Sixth, a cheeky Form. But certainly no Remove had ever ventured to cheek a Sixth Form prefect like this before.

"D-d-d-did you say shut up?" gasped Walker.

"Yes! You talk too much, my esteemed Walker! You are a gasbag! You are like a disgusting sheep's head—all jaw!"

"Great gad!" gasped Walker.

"You are an esteemed bully," went on the voice cheerily on the safe side of the locked door, "but you only bully fags! You are afraid of the Fifth!"

Walker spluttered.

"You are a funk, and a bully, and a beastly cad, Walker!"

"I—I'm dreaming this!" murmured the dazed prefect.

Really it was rather difficult to believe his ears.

"You funk at football, my esteemed cowardly Walker! You run away from the boys in the village!"

Walker gasped.

"You are the silliest ass in the Sixth, my esteemed fatheaded Walker!"

"Unlock this door!" shrieked Walker, almost in a frenzy.

"Go and eat coke, Walker!"

"I'll thrash you! I'll smash you! I—I—I——"

Walker became incoherent.

"You couldn't thrash a tom-cat, Walker! You can't box! Tubb of the Third could lick you if he liked!"

"I—I—I——"

"Shut up, Walker! Your jawfulness is terrific, and your esteemed voice is like the grinding of a saw!"

Walker grasped the door-handle with both hands, and dragged at it frantically. Livy was quite forgotten now; Walker had only an intense desire to get to close quarters with the Remove who was cheeking him in this unheard-of fashion.

But the locked door refused to budge. Walker gave it up, and rushed across the study to the window.

It was rather a jump from the study window to the ground, and rather an undignified mode of exit for a Sixth Form prefect. But Walker did not care about that. He wanted to get at Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, and he wanted it badly.

There was a crash as the window was thrown up. Walker of the Sixth leaped out.

The crash of the window was followed by the hurried retreat of the junior in the passage.

But it was not Hurree Jamset Ram Singh who retreated. It was Billy Bunter, who had so skilfully and unscrupulously imitated the voice of the Nabob of Bhanipur.

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CHUM!

Bunter scudded out of the Sixth Form passage at once, and scuttled up the Remove staircase.

He was safe in Study No. 7 in the Remove by the time Walker, rushing into the House, reached the door of his own study.

Walker came along the Sixth Form passage with a rush, hoping to find the cheeky youngster still there. But the passage was empty. The key was still in the outside of the lock, and Walker unlocked the door and threw it open.

He stayed in the study only long enough to snatch up a cane. Then he rushed out again, to seek Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Up Against It!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. sauntered cheerily in at the gates of Greyfriars. The Famous Five had walked down to Cliff House School that afternoon, and Marjorie and Clara had joined them on a ramble along the cliffs. Now they were returning from their walk, and thinking chiefly of tea in Study No. 1.

Skinner of the Remove called to them as they came in. Harold Skinner was grinning.

"Look out for Walker!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the matter with Walker?" inquired Bob Cherry.

"Of course, you don't know!" grinned Skinner.

"Of course we don't, as we've been out of gates all the afternoon," answered Bob. "Anything up?"

"Lots," chuckled Skinner. "Inky had better put some exercise books into his bags before he sees Walker."

The Nabob of Bhanipur looked surprised.

"My esteemed Skinner, I am not aware of having done anything to excite the wrathfulness of the excellent and execrable Walker," he said. "I have not even seen him to-dayfully."

"You've talked to him, though," chuckled Skinner.

"How the thump could Inky talk to him without seeing him?" asked Harry Wharton, staring at Skinner in astonishment.

"Oh, keep it up!" said Skinner, laughing. "Walker may believe you don't know anything about it—perhaps. My opinion is that he won't." And Harold Skinner walked away, grinning.

"What the thump does the fellow mean?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Goodness knows. One of his little jokes, I suppose," said Bob. "Let's get in to tea, and bother Skinner."

The Famous Five walked across to the School House. Lord Mauleverer was sunning himself on the steps, and he gave the Famous Five a rather curious look.

"Better keep out of Walker's way, you fellows," he said.

"What on earth for?" demanded Nugent.

"Well, after the way Inky slanged him——"

"My esteemed Mauly, the slangfulness has not been terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "I have not spoken wordfully to the esteemed and idiotic Walker to-day."

Lord Mauleverer stared.

"Oh, begad!" he ejaculated. "Well, I was only warnin' you. Walker's raggin' about it. He's been lookin' for you all over the school."

"Looking for Inky?" exclaimed Bob.

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"Yaas."

"What rot! There's some mistake. Inky's been over to Cliff House with us, and he's had nothing to do with Walker."

"Of course, if you say so, it is so," assented his lordship. "But I don't catch on. Walker's been raisin' Cain, askin' fellows right and left for Inky. He says Inky was slangin' him in the study."

"What rot!"

Harry Wharton & Co. passed into the house in a puzzled mood. Why Walker of the Sixth should be on the war-path, with the nabob as the special object of his wrath, was a mystery to them.

"Oh, here you fellows are!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith, as the chums of the Remove came upstairs. "Look out for Walker."

"Oh, blow Walker!" exclaimed Bob.

"The blowfulness is terrific."

"Well, he's in a tearin' rage," chuckled the Bounder. "I suppose all you fellows were in it?"

"In what?" yelled Bob.

"Slangin' Walker in his study. Anyhow, Inky was. Walker's on his track like a giddy Hun. I say, Inky, it was rather thick, you know. You must have known Walker would be wild."

The dusky face of the Nabob of Bhanipur was greatly perplexed.

"The wildness of the esteemed Walker does not concern me, my esteemed Smithy," he answered. "I have not slangfully addressed a word to the excellent and disgusting Walker."

"Draw it mild, old man," said the Bounder, laughing.

"My esteemed and ludicrous Smithy is——"

"Well, it's your own bizney," yawned the Bounder. "Anyhow, you'd better look out for Walker. Whether you did it, or whether he only dreamed it, he's after your scalp."

"Oh, bosh!" said Bob Cherry.

"The boshfulness is terrific."

Harry Wharton & Co. went into Study No. 1. Their reception had surprised them considerably, and they suspected a "rag" on the part of the Remove. So far as they were aware they had given no cause of offence to James Walker of the Greyfriars Sixth, and they saw no reason why he should be on the war-path on their account.

They sat down contentedly to tea in Study No. 1, dismissing the matter from their minds. But a few minutes later Hazeldene of the Remove looked in at the open door.

"Inky here?" he asked.

"The herefulness is terrific."

"Look out! Walker's coming!"

"The comefulness of the esteemed Walker is a matter of complete indifference to me, my esteemed Hazel."

Hazeldene laughed.

"Well, he's got a big cane with him," he said. "Look out for squalls. But I suppose you expected a row after what you did?"

Hazel strolled away, and a few moments later Walker of the Sixth reached the study. It was more than an hour since James Walker had been slanged through his locked door, but his wrath seemed to have improved, like wine, with keeping. His face was red now, and his brow like a thundercloud. He had a cane gripped in his hand as he strode into Harry Wharton's study.

"You black scoundrel!"

"My esteemed and cheeky Walker!"

"I saw you come in from my window," said Walker, glaring at the dusky nabob. "You dodged out of gates before I could get at you. But I've got you now!"

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"What on earth's the matter?" asked Harry.

"I dare say you know all about it," sneered Walker. "Very likely you were in the passage with that black rascal all the time. Still, I can't prove that, so I'm dealing only with him. Bend over, Hurree Singh."

Walker flourished the cane.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh regarded him with surprise, but calmly. Juniors were supposed to bend over when ordered to do so by Sixth Form prefects invested with the power of the ashplant. But in this instance there was not likely to be obedience. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had no intention at all of being licked for nothing.

"My esteemed Walker——" he said.

"Nuff said! Bend over!" roared Walker.

"The bendfulness will not be terrific, my ludicrous Walker."

"Look here, Walker," exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What's Inky done? Give it a name before you start in with the lickin'."

"You know jolly well what he's done. Anyhow, he knows. Hurree Singh, get to that chair and bend over!"

The nabob shook his dusky head.

"The lickfulness is not the proper caper in the esteemed circumstances," he said. "I declinefully refuse."

"For the last time!" roared Walker.

"You're jolly well not going to lick Inky for nothing," exclaimed Harry Wharton indignantly. "We're standing by you, Inky, old man."

"Yes, rather."

"Back up, all the giddy family!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

The Famous Five were all on their feet now, and all angry and indignant. But they were not so angry as Walker. He had had to bottle up his wrath for more than an hour, and it was now at bursting-point. He made a rush at Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, and grasped the dusky junior by the collar.

"Now you black brute!"

Swish!

The cane came down with a terrific swipe, and the yell of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh could have been heard far beyond the limits of the Remove passage.

"Rescue!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Collar the bully!"

"Down him!" shouted Wharton.

Walker of the Sixth had no time for a second swipe with the cane. He was collared on all sides by the excited juniors, and he came down on the floor of Study No. 1 with a crash and a roar.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Handling Walker!

"RAG him!"

"Sit on him!"

"Bump him!"

Walker of the Sixth struggled in the grasp of the Famous Five. His cane was jerked away, and Frank Nugent tossed it out of the study window. The prefect yelled and shouted as he struggled; and there was a rush of feet in the Remove passage.

Like wildfire the news spread through the Remove that the Famous Five, in Study No. 1, were "handling a prefect."

Handling a prefect was a rare entertainment; doubtless all the more entertaining on account of its rarity. The Remove rolled up almost to a man to see the show. Outside Study No. 1 the passage swarmed with the Lower Fourth, buzzing with excitement.

"It's Walker——"

"They're ragging him——"

"Bull's banging his napper——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat! There will be a row about this!" gasped Skinner. "You can't bang a prefect's napper, you know."

"Bull seems to think he can!" grinned Vernon-Smith.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bang, bang, bang!

Certainly Johnny Bull appeared to be under the impression that he could bang James Walker's head on the study carpet. For he was doing it with emphasis and energy.

Walker roared with anguish.

He had not had the slightest expectation of waking up this hornet's nest in visiting Study No. 1. It had taken him quite by surprise. Even now he could hardly believe that it was not some horrid dream.

But it was no nightmare—it was a grim, ghastly reality. He, James Walker of the Sixth, a prefect of Greyfriars, was struggling in the grasp of five angry juniors—and struggling in vain. His head—the head of a Sixth Form prefect—was being banged on the study floor. It was a terrible reality.

"Give him jip!" panted Bob Cherry.

"Leggo!" spluttered Walker. "Stop-pit! I'll smash you! I'll report you to the Head! I'll have you sacked for this! I—I—— Yaroooh!"

"Go it!" yelled Snoop. "Take your money's worth, you fellows! The Head will bunk you for this, so take it out of Walker while you can!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Help!" roared Walker.

The Sixth-Former was a burly fellow, but he had no chance against five juniors, all in a warlike and determined mood. He had hit out right and left, and all the five had received hard knocks but it was indubitable that Walker was getting harder knocks. The contact of his head on the floor was frequent and painful.

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter grinned into the study through a buzzing crowd. "Wingate's coming!"

The Famous Five did not heed. They were all hurt more or less by Walker's reckless blows, and they were excited and angry. They were taking a great risk in handling a prefect. So they seemed bent on getting their money's worth out of Walker, as Snoop expressed it.

Bang, bang!

Fiendish yells rang out from the hapless Walker, as his head smote the study carpet again and again. That was the sound and the sight that greeted Gerald Wingate, captain of Greyfriars, as he arrived at the doorway of Harry Wharton's study.

The juniors in the passage made way for him. Wingate stared into the study with a black brow.

He seemed scarcely able to believe his eyes for the moment, as he saw a Sixth Form prefect being mercilessly ragged by a mob of juniors.

"What—what—what——" stuttered Wingate.

He rushed into the study.

Harry Wharton & Co. were hurled right and left, and Walker sprawled, unassailed, on the floor, breathing hard.

"What does this mean?" roared Wingate.

The panting juniors backed across the study. Walker still sprawled and gasped and panted. Wingate stooped and grasped him, and helped him to his feet.

Walker stood unsteadily, with one hand on the study table, gasping and gasping, as if gasping for a wager.

Wingate eyed the Famous Five grimly.

"This is about the limit!" he said.



Bang, bang! Fiendish yells rang out from the hapless Walker as his head smote the study carpet again and again. That was the sound and the sight that greeted George Wingate, captain of Greyfriars, as he arrived at the doorway of Study No. 1. "Yaroooh! Stoppit—grooogh! Help!" roared Walker. "What—wha-a-t?" gasped Wingate. (See Chapter 11.)

"I won't ask you to explain this to me. You can explain to the Head!"

"We—" began Wharton.

"That's enough! Come, Walker!"

"Ow! Ow! Oh! Moooh! Grooogh!" mumbled Walker. "Ow! Grooogh! Gimme your arm, old chap—I'm about done! Oh, my napper! Ow!"

Walker left the study, leaning heavily on the captain of Greyfriars. The Removites crowded behind the two prefects as they went, howling with laughter.

In Study No. 1 Harry Wharton & Co. were panting for breath, after their uncommon exertions; and they certainly were not laughing. They realised only too clearly that the matter was serious.

Handling a prefect was not a matter to be passed over lightly: and Walker had been handled most drastically. It was probable that he had collected two or three dozen bumps and bruises in Study No. 1 in the ten minutes or so he had spent there. Only ten minutes—but every minute of the ten had been crammed with incident.

"Well," said Bob Cherry, with a deep breath. "We've done it now."

Hurree Janset Ram Singh rubbed his dusky nose, where Walker's knuckles had landed with effect.

"The donefulness is terrific!" he remarked.

"We'd do the same again," said Harry Wharton. "Walker's not going to bully this Co."

"No jolly fear!"

"But it's up to the Head now," said Nugent dismally. The Head always backs up the prefects! He's bound to, in a way. We're for it!"

Skinner grinned into the study.

"You're for it, all right," he remarked agreeably. "First train home in the morning for five! What a giddy surprise

for your people when you get there! It's sad, isn't it?"

Skinner said that it was sad, but he did not look saddened. He seemed to find the prospect amusing.

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Johnny Bull.

"Five model youths bunked in one day!" said Skinner. "It's really sad—heart-breaking, in fact. We shall miss you no end—Yaroooh!"

Skinner faded out of the study doorway, as a heavy cushion whizzed across and caught him on his sharp nose. There was a savage yell from Skinner, but no more of his airy badinage.

"I say, you fellows," squeaked Bunter from the passage, "Quech's coming for you."

"Let him come!" grunted Bob.

Bunter gave a fat chuckle.

"Don't you wish now that you'd backed me up the other day?" he said. "It would have turned out better for you, perhaps. Your own fault—you asked for it."

"What do you mean, you fat ass?"

"I know what I mean," grinned Bunter. "I know—" Bunter was interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Quelch.

The Remove master's face was cold and stern as he glanced into the study.

"You will follow me to the Head!" he said. "All of you who were concerned in this riot. Dr. Locke intends to deal with you immediately."

"Very well, sir!" said Harry.

The Famous Five, in rather dismal spirits, followed the Remove master to the staircase. The Remove fellows were left in a buzz of excitement. What would happen to Harry Wharton & Co. was a burning question in the Form to which they belonged. The matter was serious—deadly serious; and the punishment could not possibly be light.

Skinner declared that it would be the "sack," and evidently hoped that he would turn out to be a true prophet. All the fellows agreed that it would be a Head's flogging at the very least. Sympathetic glances from most of the Remove followed the culprits as they marched off in the wake of Mr. Quelch. Handling a prefect was a serious offence in the eyes of authority; but in the eyes of the juniors it seemed something rather in the nature of a tremendous lark.

"Well, they've asked for it," said Billy Bunter in Study No. 7. "They've fairly asked for it, haven't they, Toddy?"

Peter Todd granted. He was feeling concerned and anxious, while the Owl of the Remove, on the other hand, was grinning.

"If they'd backed me up when I asked them, and made Walker sit up for licking me, it wouldn't have happened," argued Bunter. "I warned them."

Toddy stared at him.

"What do you mean, Bunter? You hadn't anything to do with this, had you?"

"Oh, no, of—of course not!" said Bunter hastily. "Nothing of the kind. I've been out of gates all the afternoon."

"You haven't! What have you been up to?" asked Peter suspiciously.

"Nothing."

Peter Todd eyed his fat study-mate with deep suspicion. Bunter gave him an uneasy blink, and rolled from the study. He realised that he had talked a little too much—not an uncommon occurrence with William George Bunter. Meanwhile, the Famous Five, in the wake of Mr. Quelch, had arrived at the Head's study, where they found Walker of the Sixth, still dusty and dishevelled, with Dr. Locke.

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THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Up Before the Beak!

DR. LOCKE fixed a stern look on the chums of the Remove. Seldom had the five seen the kindly old Head looking so angry and severe.

"Wharton and you others, I can scarcely credit the report I have received from Wingate and Walker. Is it possible that you Lower Fourth boys have ventured to attack a Sixth Form prefect in your study, to assault him with violence?"

"We didn't begin it, sir," said Bob Cherry.

"What?"

"I—I mean——"

"Walker informs me that he visited your study, Wharton, to inflict a well-deserved punishment upon Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. Hurree Singh refused to take his punishment, and you all supported him in his refusal and attacked Walker. You do not deny this?"

"No, sir," said Harry.

"You understand, of course, that I shall deal with this breach of discipline with the utmost severity?"

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"If you have any explanation to give the Head, Wharton, give it at once," said Mr. Quelch.

"Certainly, sir! We think we did right," said Harry.

"What?" exclaimed Dr. Locke.

"Walker came to my study to bully Inky—I mean, Hurree Singh—who was having tea there," said the captain of the Remove. "He was whacking Inky for nothing. We were bound to stop him."

"My esteemed friends stood by me, honoured sahib," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The boundfulness to do so was terrific."

"Were you not aware of the offence Hurree Singh had given, Wharton?"

"Inky had done nothing, sir."

"The nothingfulness was great."

Dr. Locke raised his hand.

"If you believed that Walker was about to punish Hurree Singh without cause, that is some slight extenuation of your conduct," he said. "But you should not have supposed so. Walker informs me that this afternoon, while he was working in his study, Hurree Singh locked him in, and shouted a series of insulting words to him through the locked door. He continued this unheard-of insolence till Walker left the study by the window and came round to the door. For such conduct I should have administered a severe flogging had Walker reported the circumstances to me. By punishing Hurree Singh himself, Walker was really dealing lightly with the matter."

The Famous Five blinked at the Head. They could not suspect that grave and reverend gentleman of wandering in his mind. But really it seemed like it. Hurree Singh's eyes opened so wide that the whites of them gleamed in startling contrast to his dusky face.

"You understand now, Wharton——"

"No, sir!" gasped Harry. "It never happened, sir."

"What?"

"If Walker's told you so, sir, he hasn't told you the truth," said the captain of the Remove.

Walker's face became crimson.

"Dr. Locke!" he stuttered. "Am—I am—I to listen to this? Am I to be accused of making a false accusation?"

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against a junior?" The Sixth-Former fairly spluttered.

"Calm yourself, Walker! I am not likely to take the slightest heed of such a statement," said the Head. "Wharton, I almost think you are out of your senses. How dare you!"

Wharton looked at the prefect. Walker's indignation was obviously genuine enough. And, besides that, Harry was well aware that the prefect was quite incapable of such an act of rascality as bearing false witness. Yet what he had stated to the Head was certainly untrue. It seemed that there was a ghastly mistake somewhere.

"Walker must have made a mistake somehow, sir," said Harry. "I can't imagine how he made it. But he did if he thinks that Inky locked him in his study this afternoon. I can't believe he's lying, but he's made a silly mistake."

"The mistakefulness is terrific."

"Hurree Singh, do you deny locking Walker in his study?"

"Certainly, honoured sahib!"

Walker opened his lips, but the Head signed him to be silent. The brow of Dr. Locke was growing more and more stern.

"You deny shouting opprobrious epithets to Walker through the locked door of his study, Hurree Singh?"

"The denyfulness is great."

"Walker, you are absolutely certain that you recognised Hurree Singh's voice?"

"Absolutely, sir!" gasped the prefect.

"Besides, there's only that one chap in the school who speaks in such queer English."

"The esteemed Walker is mistaken," said the nabob warmly. "I speak the fine and best English learned under the most knowing moonshee at Bhanipur, and if it differs from the English of this esteemed and ridiculous school, the queerfulness is a boot on the leg."

The Head's face twitched for a moment.

"That will do, Hurree Singh," he said. "It seems impossible, Walker, that a mistake can have arisen in these circumstances."

"Quite impossible, sir!"

"I accept your statement unreservedly, of course, Walker. I shall now deal with Hurree Singh, and then——"

"May I speak, sir?" exclaimed Harry.

"You can have nothing to say, Wharton."

"Only the proof, sir, that Hurree Singh never did anything of the kind, and a dozen witnesses to bear out what I say."

"Nonsense!"

"Hurree Singh was with us all the afternoon, sir. We went out of gates soon after dinner, and came in at tea-time, only a few minutes before Walker came to my study."

"That is impossible, Wharton, in view of what Walker tells me!" said the Head sternly. "Is it possible that you, a boy I have always respected, are descending to prevarication?"

Wharton flushed crimson.

"There are plenty of witnesses, sir. Let Walker say at what time he heard Hurree Singh at his door, and we'll prove where Hurree Singh was at the time."

"It was four o'clock!" snapped Walker.

"That settles it!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "We were still at Cliff House at four o'clock. We'd just walked back there with Marjorie and Clara. Inky was with us, sir."

"Impossible!"

"A lot of the girls there saw us, sir," said Harry. "And we spoke to Miss Primrose, the Head of Cliff House. If you care to ring her up on the telephone, sir, she will tell you that Hurree Singh was in the garden at Cliff House at four o'clock this afternoon."

Walker stared at the captain of the Remove.

"You young rascal!" he exclaimed. "You know very well that Miss Primrose will tell the Head nothing of the kind."

"If she does not, sir," said Harry Wharton, looking at the Head, and taking no notice of Walker, "we're ready to be flogged, or expelled from the school, or anything you choose. But it's our right to have Miss Primrose called as a witness."

"If you demand it, Wharton, I am bound to accede to your request," said Dr. Locke sternly. "Do all you boys say the same?"

"Yes, sir!" chorused the Famous Five; and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh added that the yesfulness was terrific.

Walker looked perplexed and startled; the Head a little nonplussed. The telephone was at his elbow, and the matter was easily put to the test. By the answer from Cliff House the Famous Five were prepared to stand or fall. Mr. Quelch was scanning the faces of the five members of his Form very keenly, and a thoughtful expression had been growing on his own frowning countenance.

"One moment, sir," he said, as Dr. Locke stretched out his hand to the receiver.

The Head looked at him.

"It occurs to me that it is possible that a trick has been played," said the Remove master. "Walker is certainly speaking what he believes to be the truth in stating that Hurree Singh insulted him through the locked door of his study. My experience of these boys, however, is that they are extremely unlikely to resort to falsehood. There is a boy in my Form, sir, who has a trick of imitating voices with remarkable accuracy."

Walker gave a jump.

"Bunter!" he ejaculated. "That fat beast of a ventriloquist!"

The suggestion was enough for Walker. He understood.

"Walker!" exclaimed the Head.

"I beg your pardon, sir! I mean——"

"May I send for Bunter, sir, and will you question him?" said the Remove master. "There is evidently a mistake in this matter, and I suspect very strongly that Bunter of the Remove could throw light upon it."

"My hat!" murmured Wharton.

The Famous Five, as well as Walker, understood now. Dr. Locke knitted his brows and touched a bell. A minute later, Trotter, the page, was sent to fetch Master Bunter to the Head's study.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Alas for Bunter!

BILLY BUNTER entered the Head's presence with a woeful expression of doubt and dismay on his fat countenance.

A summons to Dr. Locke's study was a summons that could not possibly be disregarded, though Bunter had felt tempted to bolt into cover as soon as he received it.

In fear and trembling the fat ventriloquist of Greyfriars rolled into the dreaded apartment.

What the Head knew, and whether he knew anything, Bunter could not determine. But it augured ill to be called before the "Beak" at the time when the Famous Five were up for judgment.

"Bunter," said the Head quietly. "Yes, sir! No, sir! I didn't!" gasped Bunter.

"You did not what?" "Anything, sir—I mean, nothing! I wasn't there."

"You were not where, Bunter?" exclaimed the Head in perplexity.

"Anywhere, sir—I mean, nowhere!" gasped Bunter.

"Collect yourself, Bunter," said Dr. Locke severely. "I desire to put a few questions to you. You will answer them truthfully, and if you do so you have nothing to fear if you are innocent."

Bunter suppressed a groan. If innocence was the only thing that would see him through, it was indeed a rotten reed for the fat junior to lean upon.

"You will have justice, Bunter," said the Head kindly.

"Oh dear!" mumbled Bunter.

As a matter of fact, that was just what he feared.

"Did you lock Walker's study door this afternoon, and address him with insulting epithets, imitating the voice and the somewhat peculiar mode of expression of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh?"

"Certainly not, sir! I wasn't there, sir!" gasped Bunter. "If Walker says it was me, sir, he's mistaken. We all know what a fool Walker is, sir!"

"Bunter!"

"All the Sixth think him a silly ass, sir," said Bunter. "I'm sure you won't take any notice of Walker, sir."

Walker's face was a study.

"Bunter, answer my question—yes or no."

"Yes, sir! No, sir!"

"Do you mean yes or no, Bunter?"

"Whichever you like, sir!" gasped the Owl of the Remove. "I—I don't mind, sir! I—I don't mind at all."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

The Famous Five stood silent. They were quite assured that the Greyfriars ventriloquist had been playing tricks during their absence at Cliff House that afternoon, and they had no doubt that the headmaster would elucidate the facts. Walker was quite assured of it, too, and he was looking at Bunter as if he would eat him.

"Did you play this trick on Walker, Bunter?" asked Mr. Quelch.

"No, sir. I never even thought of it," said Bunter. "I wasn't in the Sixth Form passage at all. I was out of gates all the afternoon."

"That is not correct, Bunter," said the Remove master sternly. "I myself saw you in one of the passages this afternoon."

"That—that's what I mean to say, sir," stammered Bunter. "I—I was in one of the passages all the afternoon."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"As for imitating Hurree Singh's voice, I couldn't do it, sir," said Bunter. "I'm not really a ventriloquist at all; it's a mistake, sir. Besides, I told these chaps they ought to back me up, and that they wouldn't like the result if they didn't. They can't deny it."

"Bless my soul!" repeated the Head, looking at Billy Bunter very curiously.

"I warned them," said Bunter. "They'll admit it if you ask them, sir. They never backed me up. They said I asked for the licking for bagging Walker's tarts. I never bagged them; and, besides, Walker put them there specially to catch me bagging them. I

call it a dirty trick, sir. Taking a fellow in!"

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Quelch. "Bunter, will you make an effort and try to tell Dr. Locke the truth, if you are capable of telling the truth?"

"Certainly, sir! As my Form-master, you can bear witness that I'm the most truthful and honourable chap in the Remove, sir!"

"Oh dear!"

"I deny the whole thing, sir!" went on Bunter. "I deny it all from start to finish, sir, lock, stock, and barrel. I'm as innocent as a babe, sir, I am really. I never got hold of Walker's study key while he was talking to Loder in the quad. It never occurred to me to put it on the outside of his door. As for watching him when he went to his study to swot, I didn't do it, and if Walker says I did, he's prevaricating, sir. I was in my own study at the time."

"At what time, Bunter?" gasped the Head.

"At the time Walker went to his study, sir."

"If you were in your own study at the time, how do you know the time Walker went to his study?"

Bunter gasped.

"I—I mean, I—I didn't, sir! I never knew! I wasn't aware that Walker went to his study at all. That's what I really meant to say, sir. I—I hope you can take my word."

"Take your word!" repeated the Head dazedly.

"The takefulness will not be terrific, I think," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh to his comrades. And the Co. agreed with Inky.

"Bunter!" exclaimed the Head. "Your extraordinary prevarication leaves no doubt on the matter. You played this impertinent trick upon a Sixth-Form prefect; and basely allowed the blame to fall upon Hurree Singh, who knew nothing of it."

"It's clear now, sir," said Walker.

"Quite clear, I think," said Mr. Quelch.

Billy Bunter blinked from one face to another. He was more and more dismayed.

"I—I assure you, sir, it's all a mistake," he gasped. "I should not dream of talking to a prefect like that, sir! I—I respect the prefects too much. I don't think them a lot of swanking chumps, sir, like most of the fellows."

"Bless my soul!"

"I don't really, sir! I wouldn't dream of slanging Walker, and saying such things to him, sir. I wouldn't throw it in his face that he funks at football for worlds, sir."

Walker crimsoned, and the Famous Five grinned.

"Was a remark to that effect made at your door on this occasion, Walker?" asked the Head.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Walker.

"Then Bunter must have been there, or he could not be aware of what was said."

"Certainly, sir."

"Bunter! You have condemned yourself—"

"I—I didn't, sir! I—I never did. I—I— Besides, it was only a lark, sir!" howled Bunter. "I was only pulling Walker's leg, sir, and I never did it, either. If it wasn't Inky, most likely it was one of these chaps—Bob Cherry, perhaps—"

"What!" roared Bob.

"Silence, Cherry! Bunter, you have said enough!"

"Thank you, sir!" gasped Bunter. "C-a-a-can I go now, sir?"

"You can not go, now, Bunter," said the Head, in a deep voice. "You are guilty, Bunter, of a dastardly trick. You caused a Sixth-Form prefect to inflict an undeserved punishment upon an innocent boy, and caused his friends to commit a breach of discipline in his defence. You are to blame for all that has occurred, Bunter. What have you to say?"

"Oh, lor'!"

"Walker, you realise now that Hurree Singh was guiltless. In the circumstances, doubtless you will be willing to pass over the conduct of these boys, who acted rashly, but perhaps naturally, under a misapprehension."

Walker seemed to swallow something with difficulty.

"Oh! Yes, sir! As you think best, sir!" he gasped.

"Very good! Wharton, and you others, you will take two hundred lines of Virgil each. In consideration of the deception practised by Bunter, I shall not make your punishment more severe than that."

"Thank you, sir!" murmured the juniors.

"As for you, Bunter—"

"I—I say, sir—"

"You need say no more, Bunter. You appear unable to open your lips without uttering absurd prevarications. I shall consider your case," said the Head sternly. "It may be my duty to send you away from Greyfriars."

"Oh dear!"

"At the very least, I shall administer a severe flogging."

"Ow!"

"I shall consider the matter, and you shall know my decision to-morrow morning," said the Head. "You may go!"

"I—I say, sir, being innocent—"

"Go!" thundered the Head.

And Billy Bunter quaked and went.

The Famous Five followed him from the study. The affair, which had looked so awfully serious for them, had turned out well after all. But the fat face of William George Bunter was the picture of woe as he limped along the passage. He blinked dismally at the chums of the Remove.

"I—I say, you fellows!" he moaned.

"You terrific rascal!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"We'd jolly well rag you, Bunter, if you weren't getting it in the neck," said Bob Cherry wrathfully. "If you're sacked, it's no more than you deserve—and if you're flogged I hope the Head will lay it on hard."

"Beast!"

That evening there was considerable speculation in the Remove as to Bunter's fate. Skinner offered two to one, in dough-nuts, that it would be the sack—the Bouncer offered even money on a flogging. The interesting question was discussed far and wide; but for once, the active jaws of William George Bunter were still; his rattling tongue was silent. Billy Bunter was quaking with dread apprehension; and, like Rachel of old, he mourned and could not be comforted.

THE END.

(There is another splendid story of Harry Wharton & Co. in next Monday's bumper issue of your favourite paper, entitled: "THE VANISHED VENTRILQUIST!" On no account must you miss this fine treat, boys.)

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THE TRIALS OF STORRYDENE VILLA!



By **WALTER EDWARDS.**

No. 2.—The One-Legged Goalie.

The Slight Breeze!

YOU'RE half a minute late, Voyce!"

Nugent Beasley Ailen glared across the Storrydene Villa dressing-room as he snarled the rebuke, but his hot words had no perceptible effect upon the brown-haired, brown-eyed youngster who had halted upon the threshold, a quiet, enigmatical smile upon his tanned features.

Calm and self-possessed—irritatingly so, thought the fuming Ailen—Peter Voyce glanced at his watch.

"I don't think I am——" he began; and the Villa captain interrupted fiercely, his close-set eyes blazing, his big fists clenched.

"Don't argue with me, confound you!" he shouted, working himself into a white-hot passion. "You haven't been with the Villa for more than five minutes, yet you think you can stroll in just when you like! But you can't, Voyce! You're a paid member of my father's club, dependent upon the Villa for your bread-and-butter and whelks—or whatever you pro's live on—and I'll have you know that you've got to conform to the rules that have been drawn up by Sir Aubrey and the other directors! You may think yourself a very fine fellow, blowing round with your Rundle's colours up, but the sooner you realise that you're a paid servant, and no better than the rest of them, the better will it be for everybody concerned! I'm boss here, Voyce, and my word is law! You will oblige me by making a mental note of that fact! Understand?"

Peter nodded, quietly amused by the outburst.

"Yes," he answered quietly; "but I am still of the opinion that I'm not half a minute late. And why should you go off the deep end, Ailen, seeing that I'm amongst the first to arrive?"

He nodded towards Battle, Noyle, and Coyne, three of the band of sycophants that fawned upon Sir Aubrey Ailen and his offspring.

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"That's beside the point!" shouted Nugent, shaking his fist. "It's all a matter of discipline! I told you to be here at ten o'clock, yet you rolled up just when it suited your convenience! It won't do, Voyce; I'm going to put my foot down! I'm boss here, and my word is law!"

"You've said that before," remarked Peter. "I shall begin to believe you in a moment!"

"No insolence!" fumed the Villa skipper, looking positively warlike. It suddenly occurred to him that he was making rather an ass of himself, and the knowledge did not add to his peace of mind. "Change into your footer things at once! You aren't paid to stand about, grinning like an ape! Do you hear what I say?" he roared, filling the dressing-room with a volume of grating sound.

"No," answered Peter quietly; "speak up, old man!"

The door opened at this moment, and Spudge Dixon, the elongated trainer, strode into the room, a big red hand curved round his right ear.

He paused, listening.

"Surely my ears do not deceive me!" he cried, a faraway look in his colourless eyes.

"What's the matter with you, idiot?" grunted Nugent Beasley Ailen.

"I thought I heard a charabanc calling to its young," said the trainer, "but——"

A shout of laughter broke from the players who had entered the dressing-room at his heels, but it was obvious that the Villa captain saw nothing even faintly humorous in the whimsical remark.

"That's enough of this rotting!" he cried, scowling at the smiling faces. "You've turned up for a couple of hours' practice, not to listen to the inane babbling of an idiot!"

A wintry smile flitted across Spudge's cadaverous features.

"That being so, lad," he said, "we shall expect you to maintain a tomblike silence!"

The remark raised another shout of

merriment, and again Nugent failed to see the point of the joke.

"Look here, Nixon——" blazed Ailen.

"Dixon, lad, Dixon," put in the lean-limbed trainer. "We Dixons come of very old stock, one of my ancestors, Dicko the Ravenous, having been head-coachman to Mrs. Boadicea! I suppose you never saw her in her four-in-hand——"

"Shut up, you garrulous, half-witted gargoyle!" shouted Nugent, trying to make himself heard above the din of laughter. "Haven't I ordered you fellows to get changed? Do you think I'm talking for the fun of the thing?"

Nugent Beasley was a very angry young man at that moment, and he looked quite capable of throwing himself upon Spudge Dixon.

"That's right, sir," put in Coyne, the ferret-faced inside-left, his bright, beady eyes upon his captain. "We're wasting valuable time!"

"Hear, hear!" said Sceptre and Battle, glancing across at the son of Sir Aubrey Ailen.

The three forwards had never been really popular with the other fellows, and now they were showing themselves in a new and less favourable light. Why they should have fawned upon Nugent Ailen was a mystery; but human nature itself is a mystery. Perhaps they thought it very fine to be able to claim friendship with the son of a real live baronet, a man who was reputed to be worth half a million pounds; but the fact remains that they fawned upon Nugent as they changed into their footer rig.

This servile attitude was not lost upon the other fellows, and Kerryway and Spudge Dixon exchanged puzzled glances.

Nobody commented upon the business, however, and ten minutes later the footballers trooped on to the field.

This was the first occasion on which Nugent Ailen had turned out for practice, for he had scorned the mere suggestion on his arrival at the club, exactly a week before.

Coming down from his 'Varsity—ho

had been sent down over a particularly unsavoury betting scandal—he had made it quite clear that he, the son of Sir Aubrey Ailen, the chairman of the club, was going to rule the roost.

The Villa had struck a bad patch, and it was Nugent, declared the baronet, who was going to stop the rot. Swaying the other directors with but one exception—that exception being Jonas Trimble, the auctioneer—Sir Aubrey had dropped Kerryway, and installed his offspring as centre-forward and skipper of the side. But Saturday's game against Newcastle Athletic had been a tragedy—farcical, painful.

Selfish, pig-headed, without a grain of football talent, Nugent Ailen had made an exhibition of himself, and it was largely due to his poor play that Storrydene had been beaten by three goals to nil.

The defeat meant nothing to Nugent, however, for he was smug and self-satisfied as he strolled languidly from the field of play; and the frantic yells of disgust and derision that came from all parts of the ground merely brought a smirk to his fleshy countenance.

Monday evening found a thirty-minute trial game in progress, the Villa reserves being opposed by a team of local talent; and the outstanding player of the match had been Peter Voyce, the brown-eyed youngster who had aroused Nugent's displeasure by being half a minute late.

It had been obvious to everybody that the stranger was a "find," a Soccer genius, and he had been rushed into the presence of Sir Aubrey. Everything was going smoothly when the door of the board-room was thrust open, and a wild-eyed Nugent declared that Voyce must not be signed on. Voyce was a wash-out, an outsider! Every goal he had scored was a fluke!

It was at once apparent that there was bad blood between the two youngsters, and Jonas Trimble, a shrewd man, had not minced his words in denouncing Nugent's attitude.

Peter, as a matter of fact, had fagged for Ailen at Rundle's, though the latter's reason for hating his late fag was something he did not disclose to the amazed directors.

Weight of opinion had gone against Nugent, and Peter Voyce had signed professional forms for the famous club; and the youngster could still hear his enemy's wild threat.

"Don't forget that I can make things dashed hot for you!" Nugent had shouted. "And if you take my tip, you will clear out whilst you're safe! That's a fair warning, and you can make your choice! Are you going to sign, or are you going to clear out?"

"I'm going to sign," said Peter quietly. And he knew quite well that his life with the Villa was not going to be a bed of roses.

The following morning—Tuesday—had started unpleasantly enough, Nugent Ailen going out of his way to be officious. Yet the new player was smiling quietly as he strolled on to the field between Kerryway and "Hefty" Hebble, the giant full-back.

"He's a nice little fellow to have about the house!" grinned Hefty, nodding towards his bottle-shouldered skipper. "Don't let him rattle you, kid!"

"I'm not likely to, old man!" smiled Peter. "I've had the pleasure of meeting him before!"

His companions turned upon him in surprise, their eyes wide open.

"You don't say so, kid," said Hebble. "When—"

"But I do say so!" smiled Peter.

And he trotted away, thereby giving them a broad hint that he had no desire to discuss his personal affairs.

"Hoppy!"

GORDON, the Storrydene Villa goalkeeper, was anything but a genius, and the nightmare spectacle of his life was to see the ball placed upon the whitewash blob within the penalty area; so Tuesday morning's practice started with a bombardment of his goal.

Each player took a kick, and the first six shots beat the unhappy Gordon all ends up. And Nugent Ailen did not improve matters by treating the flurried custodian to a lot of pungent abuse.

Gordon became red, angry, and nervous, and so poor was his display that Nugent's criticism turned to a running fire of abuse.

"What's the matter, man?" shouted Ailen. "You're about as much use as a tailor's dummy—but you're not so ornamental! What's the trouble? Are you paralysed, or have you got a pain somewhere? An idiot could do better than you!"

"Right!" growled Gordon, striding out of his goal. "Have a go, old man."

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The custodian made the obvious retort, of course, yet the ground echoed with the shout of laughter that greeted his invitation.

As for Nugent, he was at an utter loss. He had looked upon Gordon as a docile butt for his caustic remarks, and now the fellow had insulted him before the whole team. It was not good enough, thought Nugent, and his close-set eyes were gleaming unpleasantly as he took a threatening step towards the scowling goalkeeper.

"What do you mean?" he began blusteringly.

"Oh, go and chew coke!" growled Gordon, who was thoroughly fed-up. "I'm getting tired of you, Ailen! You should be in a nice comfortable home, old man!"

The son of Sir Aubrey Ailen looked flabbergasted as he glared into Gordon's smouldering eyes.

"Have you gone off your head, man?" he gasped. "Do you know what you're saying?"

Gordon nodded grimly.

"Sure I do!" he growled. "And if you don't take your face away I shall be tempted to dot you one on the nose! I'm in a nose-dotting sort of mood to-day!"

The goalie was burning his boats with a vengeance, but he wanted something to happen—something of a violent nature. He felt like punching something, and it occurred to him that

Nugent's sleek head would fill the bill to perfection.

Nugent was wondering what chance he would have if it came to blows, and he decided that the brawny goalie might prove a difficult proposition.

Discretion, in the present case, would be the better part of valour. So reasoned Nugent Beasley Ailen.

"I shall report you to the directors, Gordon," he declared, "for it is impossible to run a team if one or two players are going to defy those in authority! I shall see that you are dropped for the next week or so. What happens after that will depend upon yourself!"

The words came as a bombshell, and Gordon looked almost stunned. His stock was already low, and to be dropped from the First Eleven might do him irreparable damage.

His heavy jaw jutted like the toe of a boot as he stepped up to his skipper.

"You mean that?" he asked.

"I always mean what I say," returned Nugent airily. The effect of his threat had not been lost upon the Villa skipper, so he was wearing his usual smirk. He knew that he held the whip-hand, and he was feeling very pleased with himself in consequence.

"You're going to drop me—eh?" grunted Gordon, his mighty fists clenched.

"Such is my intention," answered Nugent Beasley Ailen, still smirking.

"Then," said Gordon, "it will level matters up if I drop you! Put 'em up!"

There was no mistaking the meaning of the words, and icy fingers seemed to close round the craven heart of Nugent Ailen. His heavy jaw dropped, and the light of fear dawned in his close-set eyes.

"I wish for no violence!"

"But you're going to get it—bucketfuls of it!" growled Gordon, looking a terrible figure in his wrath. "I'm going to knock you down and jump on your head, after which I shall feed you with handfuls of mud! I've already served a couple of terms for manslaughter—killing people is a kind of hobby with me!—and this time I shall get off lightly because I'm a good customer! I'm sorry for you, Ailen, for you're too young and beautiful to die; but something inside me—something that is stronger than I am—is goading me on!" He was leg-pulling, of course, yet he looked capable of anything at that moment. "The time has come when I must break out again! I am hot-headed; my brain is on fire!"

"Then why not wear an asbestos cap, my dear fellow?" put in a drawling, cultured voice; and the players found a stranger in their midst.

The newcomer was a youth of sixteen or so. Of medium height, he was dressed in a shabby rainproof and a green Homburg hat. And had his headgear not been three sizes too large for him it would have fitted him to perfection. As it was it rested upon his prominent ears, and the result might have been fatal had the hat slipped from its moorings. "Found smothered!" would have been the coroner's verdict.

The face beneath the Homburg was pale and birdlike, the nose being long and pointed and the eyes bright. The mouth, thin-lipped and expressive, had a whimsical twist at the corners, and, stranger still, the newcomer possessed but one leg.

He looked perfectly self-possessed as he moved across the turf and joined the crowd of footballers, all of whom were regarding him in amazement. Nobody had seen him approach; he had appeared as mysteriously as a genie.

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Coming to a standstill, he removed his green hat and swept the wide-eyed company an elaborate and not ungraceful bow.

"Pray pardon this intrusion, gentlemen," he begged, his mellow voice being strangely out of keeping with his somewhat bizarre appearance. "I could not help being a reluctant witness of the unpleasantness that followed Mr. Gordon's singularly inept display between the posts. It was tragical, gentlemen! I weep! Excuse me!" He dabbed at his moist eyes with a red-spotted handkerchief.

Having overcome his emotion, he ran on:

"As a man, Mr. Gordon is admirable in every way, but as a goalkeeper he is no more than a novice!" The birdlike young man smiled across at the burly custodian. "There are few goalkeepers in the country who are worthy of the name; the breed, I fear, is extinct. But wait! With one exception, gentlemen! The greatest custodian of the age is undoubtedly Erasmus Hawkins, for he combines uncanny agility with inspired anticipation and quickness of the eyes with perfect judgment! Forwards have died of a broken heart after having played against him; for Hawkins is unbeatable! His brilliance of intellect is equalled only by his personal beauty, but all his fine qualities and virtues are overshadowed by the magic of his goalkeeping!"

The stranger paused, smiling round at the company.

"Gentlemen," he cried, "I beg to introduce myself to this exalted assembly! Hoppy Hawkins—very much at your service!"

Signed On!

THE grinning players were fully convinced that they were in the company of a madman. Hawkins may have been harmless, but that he was mad was obvious to everybody.

"Don't laugh at him, you fellows," warned Kerryway. "He's got bats in the belfry, poor chap!" He turned and addressed the young man beneath the Homburg. "Where do you come from, son?"

"I come," answered Hoppy, "from the Valley of the Moon. My bed-room is upstairs in the cellar!"

A chuckle broke from the players, but the expression upon Nugent Ailen's face was a study in conflicting emotions. Storrydene, he told himself, was peopled by idiots. First Spudge Dixon, then Gordon, the man-killer, and now this fellow who lived in the Valley of the Moon!

Nugent breathed hard, and wondered if he would suddenly wake up.

"My time is valuable, gentlemen," said Hoppy; "but I can spare five minutes in which to give you a demonstration of perfect goalkeeping!"

"Humour him!" bade Kerryway, in a stage whisper. "Right, old man," he smiled, turning to Hawkins. "Get between the sticks, will you?"

Bowing gravely, Hawkins hopped across to the goal.

"I shall require three balls, gentlemen," he said, "for it is my wish that you should bombard me! That you will score a goal is beyond the realms of possibility!"

The balls having been produced, Hoppy Hawkins removed his shabby raincoat, folded it neatly, and placed it in the back of the goal.

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"I am ready, gentlemen," he announced, his bright, birdlike eyes twinkling.

Peter Voyce, Kerryway, and Hebble were going to do the shooting, and they arranged that they should slam the balls home in quick succession.

"Go!" cried Hawkins, crouching very low, his skinny fingers oustretched.

Boomp!

Boomp!!

Boomp!!!

Less than five seconds separated each shot, yet Hawkins, moving with the speed of light, managed to accomplish three brilliant saves. A right and left disposed of two of the balls, and the third he tipped over the bar, and he smiled quietly as he watched the expression of utter amazement that dawned upon the faces of the footballers.

"Could—could you do that again, son?" asked Kerryway, looking rather dazed.

"Indeed I could," answered Hoppy. "That's what I'm here for! Put a little ginger into the business next time. Saving those taps was child's play to a man of my genius!"

"Was it?" grunted Peter Voyce, who had a very strong suspicion that the stranger was enjoying a joke at their expense. Placing the ball on the penalty blob, he retraced his steps and fixed his brown eyes upon the goalkeeper; then, taking a short run, he swung his foot with all the power at his command. It was a magnificent shot, and not one custodian in a hundred could have saved it, yet Hoppy, flitting across the goalmouth with the speed of an arrow in flight, shot out a long arm and pushed the leather round the upright.

"Oh, good save!" shouted Gordon.

"Well done, son!" roared Kerryway.

There was an immediate rush to test the amazing stranger, of course, and every player on the field tried his luck; yet the end of ten minutes found Hoppy Hawkins unbeaten.

He looked quite cool when Nugent Ailen called a halt.

"But—but where on earth did you learn your football?" asked Hefty Hebble, his broad face beaming. "You're great! You're—you're wonderful!"

"I know," smiled Hoppy modestly. "And now, sir," he said, turning to Nugent, "do you wish me to sign forms for you?"

Taken by surprise, for he could not picture a man with one leg and a stump in professional football, Nugent was tongue-tied for the moment.

"Of course—" began Kerryway; and his skipper turned upon him with something very like a snarl.

"This is my business!" snapped Nugent.

"Then get on with it!" returned the burly full-back.

Ignoring the remark, Nugent addressed the stranger.

"You'd better come along and see Sir Aubrey Ailen, my father," he said. "He arranges these things!"

"Lead on," bade Hoppy, taking his rainproof from Peter Voyce and thanking the youngster, with a wink. "But one moment!" Smiling his whimsical smile he walked up to Gordon. "And what do you think about it?" he asked.

There was no hesitation upon Gordon. "I hope you're signed on, old man!" he declared heartily. "I'm not in the same street as you!"

"Well said!" smiled Hoppy Hawkins, extending slim, muscular fingers. "It gives me great pleasure to shake hands with a gentleman and a sportsman!"

And in this strange fashion did Hoppy Hawkins join the ranks of Storrydene Villa.

Nugent Does the Right Thing!

THREE o'clock on any Thursday afternoon found the directors of Storrydene Villa sitting in solemn conclave in the chilly board-room up at Bedwell Park.

Important business—the business of choosing Saturday's side—was at hand.

The Thursday following the Villa's three to nil defeat proved no exception to the rule, and each director was in his place when the clock spoke with three tinny chimes.

As usual, Sir Aubrey Ailen, obese and pompous, was occupying his roomy arm-chair at the head of the baize-covered table, and ranged on either side of him were his fellow-directors, most of whom looked acutely conscious of being in the presence of a real live baronet.

The distinguished gathering included Tippet, the lean-faced undertaker; Grizzle, the owner of a thriving wet and dry fish business; Cartwright, the dairyman; Craggs, the coal merchant; and Jonas Trimble, the little auctioneer. Seated upon Sir Aubrey's right was his offspring, Nugent Beasley Ailen. Arrayed in a black-and-white check morning-suit, Nugent looked a "sport" from the top of his sleek head to the natty pearl buttons on his white spats, and in the eyes of Tippet & Co. he was a vision of sartorial splendour.

Fumbling for his gold-rimmed monocle, the baronet gave an irritable cough, and endeavoured to fix his refractory eyeglass into position. It was obvious from his fussy manner that he was not altogether at his ease.

"H'm! Ha!" he began, his swarthy features distorted as he strove to keep his monocle in place. "We meet, gentlemen, to nominate those players who will represent Storrydene Villa on Saturday next!"

This was his usual opening, and he had come to regard the laboured statement as an oratorical gem.

"Hear, hear!" murmured the directors dutifully.

"Last Saturday's game against Newcastle Athletic left much, very much, to be desired," continued the baronet, "and I think I am entitled to a small amount of praise for having signed on a new goalkeeper to replace Gordon, who is the weak spot in our side!"

"What about the centre-forward?" demanded Jonas Trimble, half-rising from his chair and pointing straight at Nugent. "Do you think you're entitled to a row of medals for having signed him on?"

"The question," remarked the baronet pompously, "is scarcely relevant, Trimble! I rule it out!"

"He was like a dear old lady!" declared the auctioneer.

Nugent Beasley Ailen flushed hotly, and glared back at his accuser, whilst the directors looked somewhat uncomfortable.

"I must ask you to remain silent, Trimble!" said Sir Aubrey severely, his monocle slipping from his eye. "You are never helpful, so the least you can do is to leave the affairs of the club in more capable hands than your own! H'm! Ha!"

"Hear, hear, Sir Aubrey!" bleated Tippet.

"Hear, hear, Sir Aubrey!" echoed Grizzle.

"You see, Trimble," said the baronet, "the meeting is against you!"



"Go!" cried Hawkins, his skinny fingers outstretched. Boomph! Boomph! Boomph! Less than five seconds separated each shot, yet Hawkins, moving with the speed of light, managed to accomplish three brilliant saves. (See page 24.)

"Oh, get on with it!" growled the auctioneer, disgust stamped upon his angry face.

"That," remarked the baronet blandly, his eyes upon the grinning sycophants, "is my intention! However, it might be as well if you will remember that you are not at present gracing a cheap-jack's rostrum!"

A giggle broke from Tippet & Co. Sir Aubrey was a great wit! He was calling the auctioneer a cheap-jack!

The baronet was smiling as he ran on.

"Hawkins," he said, consulting the list upon the blotting-pad, "will play in goal, for I have managed to rush his papers through. My name and—er—position did that. Grace and Hebble will remain at back, and Denning, Thirlboy, and Craye will operate at half-back. I need not go on, for we shall have the same forward-line as on Saturday last!"

"And the same forward-line will include the quietly-dressed genius on your right, I suppose?" asked Jonas Trimble, his eyes smouldering as they rested scornfully upon Nugent's loud checks.

The baronet nodded.

"That is so!" he smiled, with a proud side-glance at his scowling son. "I think we have agreed that Mr. Nugent was rather—er—out of his element in strange company! Professional football is so different. He is, as you know, an amateur of some standing—"

"He is, as you know, a wash-out of long standing!" interrupted the irrepressible auctioneer. "What's more, I protest against his inclusion in the side that is going to meet Mersey Albion! We're probably booked for a licking, anyway, but with Mr. Newgate in the team we shall be swamped for a certainty! I don't wish to be rude to anyone, but what Mr. Newgate—"

"Nugent, confound you!" snapped Sir

Aubrey's offspring, looking flushed and warlike.

"But what Mr. Nugent—confound you—doesn't know about Soccer would fill books!" continued Trimble. "Just think of last Saturday, when he made a laughing-stock of himself and lost the game for us! He's not in the same street as Kerryway, whilst the new youngster—what's his name? Voyce, isn't it?—could lick his head off! That kid's a marvel, a genius, and I say that he should be given a trial with the first eleven!"

He glared round at his fellow-directors, who were gaping at him in wide-eyed amazement.

"What's more, if you've got the backbone of an eel you'll back me up! This is becoming a one-man show, and there's got to be an alteration! I hope we're all sportsmen here; but there's nothing sporting in watching the 'gates' getting smaller and smaller. The takings are falling away every week, and a poor gate hits us where it hurts most—in the pocket!"

This was sound common-sense, and Cartwright and Craggs exchanged glances. Both were hard-headed business men, so Trimble's argument made an instant appeal to them.

Sir Aubrey was quick to notice their change of expression, and he coughed and fumbled for his monocle. Cartwright and Craggs had never had very much to say, for they were somewhat overawed by their titled chairman; yet it looked as though they might not see eye to eye with Sir Aubrey over the inclusion of Nugent in Saturday's team.

"Trimble," said the baronet hurriedly, "appears to have an absurd prejudice against Mr. Nugent, and I think I am voicing the opinion of all the directors—the responsible directors, that is—when I say that Mr. Nugent shall continue to

lead the attack! All he lacks is professional experience; therefore, he must turn out regularly for the first eleven!"

"What's the matter with the reserves?" demanded Jonas Trimble. "Let him play for them!"

The suggestion brought a smug grin into Nugent's face, whilst the baronet waved the words aside with a pudgy hand.

"Pray don't be more ridiculous than Nature made you, Trimble," he begged. "Is it likely that the son of a baronet, a gentleman by breeding and education, could forget his social standing and associate with the more mediocre type of professional—"

"Football is a leveller," declared the auctioneer, going very hot inside the collar. "Social standing and all that kind of rot doesn't count on the field! It's the player that counts! It doesn't matter whether he's a duke or a dust-man, a rajah or a rat-catcher!"

"You're impertinent, sir!" thundered the red-faced baronet, thumping the table with his fist. "I demand an apology, Trimble, and I mean to get it!"

"What for?" asked the auctioneer, his face a study in cherubic innocence. "What have I said now?"

Sir Aubrey spluttered and coughed, knowing that he had walked into a trap.

"Nothing! Nothing!" he mumbled, doing vicious work with his monocle. "What were you saying?"

This was a climb down, in all truth, for everybody present knew that the baronet had made his fortune out of Ratto, a vermin killer that was widely advertised as "The Rodents' Death-Knell!"

"I was saying," smiled Jonas Trimble, "that football is a great leveller. What's more, I suggest that Nugent

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who is too much of a snob to play with the reserves, should chuck the game altogether. Football can do, without his sort, and he can always take up a really aristocratic sport—like snakes-and-ladders or polo or shove-ha'penny!"

Nugent Beasley Ailen jumped to his feet, his fleshy body quivering with rage.

"Look here, you worm-eaten antique!" he shouted, shaking a big fist at the auctioneer. "You mustn't forget that you're speaking disrespectfully of the captain of the team! You're in the minority in this business, for the other directors insist upon my turning out against Mersey Albion! What is more, I—"

"One moment, lad!" put in Cartwright; and he was silenced with a black scowl.

"One or two of the players have made a song about Voyce," continued Nugent, "but what he did on Monday was merely a flash in the pan! He's done nothing remarkable since then, and—"

"He's not had the chance!" growled Trimble. "He's a better footballer than you'll ever be—even if you live to be a thousand, with blackbirds nesting in your beard! Voyce should be given a trial against the Albion, and I insist upon the question being put to the vote!"

A smug little smile flitted across Sir Aubrey's swarthy features.

"An excellent suggestion, my dear Trimble," said the baronet, glancing at the other directors. "Much valuable time would have been saved had this, one of your rare brain-waves, matured somewhat earlier! Gentlemen," continued Sir Aubrey, having allowed that shaft to sink in, "we will vote in the usual manner, those in favour of my son's inclusion in the team holding their hands up! It is a mere formality, of course!"

He was flagrantly optimistic about the whole business, for he was gloating as he looked across at Jonas Trimble; but his oily smile vanished when he saw that only two of his sycophants were voting in Nugent's favour.

Cartwright and Craggs had not moved, and they were flushed and defiant as they met the baronet's blazing eyes.

"Do—do you fellows realise what you're doing?" asked Sir Aubrey at length. "You're going against my wishes! My wishes, you understand!"

The two directors nodded.

"Ay, we understand," said Cartwright doggedly. "We've seen your boy, and we've seen young Voyce, and we think the new kid should be given a trial!"

Sir Aubrey snorted.

"Oh, you do, do you?" he cried. "Then let me tell you that my vote—the vote of the chairman—sways matters in favour of Mr. Nugent! You think it is three votes to three—a deadlock; but it isn't! Mr. Nugent plays against the Albion!"

"I think not, gov'nor!" put in Nugent. "I am perfectly willing to stand down and let Voyce take my place!"

Villa v. Albion!

PETER VOYCE could scarcely believe the evidence of his eyes when he saw his name upon the baize-covered notice-board in the dressing-room.

He was down to lead the attack against Mersey Albion! There could be no doubt about that—it was down in black-and-white!

"You're in luck, lad," said Spudge Dixon, greeting the youngster on Friday morning. "I've just left Strawberry, and he said Nugent stood down to make way for you! I don't cotton to the pup, but it seems dashed sporting of him!"

"It does," agreed Peter thoughtfully, a troubled light in his clear brown eyes. "It sounds pretty low down to say so, but it is most unlike him—"

"This self-sacrifice stunt?" queried the elongated trainer. "It has certainly got me guessing! How does that saying go? 'A leopard cannot change his spots, nor an Ethiopian his shirt'?"

Peter was chuckling as he moved away, making for the dressing-room; and he enjoyed every moment of the light practice that the players put in before midday.

Hoppy Hawkins had already settled down in his new home, and he continued to amaze the other fellows with his

pro prowess between the sticks. His agility was extraordinary—even for a man with two legs—whilst his sense of anticipation was positively uncanny. Moving with a speed that was almost bewildering, he was always in the right spot to get his safe hands to the ball; and he had been beaten on only two occasions since he joined the club on Wednesday morning. Both Peter Voyce and Hefty Hebble had managed to find the net, but many were the occasions upon which Hoppy had saved their efforts with almost contemptuous ease.

Of himself Hoppy would say nothing, so the players regarded him as the mystery man of the team. Where he hailed from, or what he had been doing in Storrydene on that eventful Tuesday, were matters known only to himself; and it was not long before even Nugent tired of putting questions to him. He had dropped the dramatic, bombastic attitude of Tuesday, and it was now quite obvious that he had his full share of humour and intelligence. Indeed, Peter Voyce declared that their new goalkeeper was "jolly nearly human."

Peter and Hoppy got along very well, the one-legged youngster having taken a bed-room in the Voyce's little house in the town. But Hoppy did not exchange confidence for confidence. He remained a mystery, even to Peter.

Peter had told his new pal about the misfortune that had overtaken his family as well as touching upon his life at Rundle's.

Mr. Voyce had speculated unwisely upon the advice of a well-known financier, and it was not until too late that he discovered that he was the dupe of a rogue. The Voyces were ruined.

Peter, having left Rundle's at the end of the term, had sought work in Storrydene, only to discover that office life didn't suit him. He declared that he could not breathe. He longed for the open air. And it was the search for healthy employment that had taken him to Bedwell Park. Football was in his blood. He loved the game, and the idea of playing for the famous Villa had been most alluring.

Then—wonder of wonders!—he had been signed on, and within a week he had been chosen to lead the team against Mersey Albion!

For once, a beautiful dream had come true.

Nugent, who had scorned the suggestion that he should turn out for the reserves, travelled with the First Eleven on Saturday morning, and Sir Aubrey also made one of the party in the special coach. Both the baronet and his son appeared to be in the best of moods, and the players wondered what had come over them. Nugent even went out of his way to be friendly with Peter Voyce, but it could not be said that the youngster was effusive in his treatment of the baronet's son. Taking his mind back to his schooldays, when he had "fagged" for Nugent Ailen, he was suspicious of this good-fellowship; yet once or twice he asked himself whether he were wronging Nugent.

It was little less than a two-hour journey to Mersey Town, so the special trains were packed with Villa supporters, and no sooner did the players step from their coach and make their way along the platform than the domed station echoed with a thunder of human voices.

The Mersey Town "fans" made a point of giving visiting teams a right royal welcome, so the charabanc journey

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to the football ground was a triumph of large-hearted sportsmanship.

The Albion had every right to boast of one of the finest grounds in the country, for over fifteen thousand pounds had been spent on it during the close season, yet it looked as though every inch of space would be occupied upon the occasion of the fixture with Storrydene Villa. A never-ending stream of humanity surged along Market Street towards the ground, and the Albion's colours—blue and white—were in evidence everywhere, flags and streamers being displayed from almost every window.

The Mersey folk would rather go without their dinner than their football.

Reaching its destination at last, the visitors' charabanc turned through the sliding doors, and came to a standstill in the paved yard, and the first person to greet Sir Aubrey and his men was Sandy Wilkinson, the famous old International who managed the Mersey Town team. He seemed to exude hospitality from every pore of his skin, and Peter Voyce thrilled as the famous player gripped his palm and smiled down at him.

"I've heard of you already, sonny," said Sandy, bringing a flush to the youngster's smooth cheeks. "But keep your head—keep your head!"

Peter wished to say something, but he found that he could not articulate. But his heart was thumping against his ribs in a most alarming fashion.

Sandy Wilkinson chatted genially as he led the way to the visitors' dressing-room, and he had won every heart by the time he nodded and strode towards the door.

"I think everything's O.K.," he said, "but don't be afraid to shout if there's anything else you want. Good luck, boys!" He paused, a smiling giant filling the doorway, and his grey eyes were fixed upon Peter Voyce. "You're a bit young for your job, sonny," he said; "but keep your head! That's a golden rule, and it is as well to remember it on and off the field!"

Still smiling, he swung out of the dressing-room and strode away down the echoing corridor; and the heart of Peter Voyce thumped anew as he thought of the old International's kindly advice.

"We've cut it pretty fine, you chaps," said "Hefty" Hebble, who was to skipper the side. "Jump round the cage!"

"The Albion are pretty hot stuff this year, aren't they?" asked Thirlboy, the centre-half.

"Mustard!" said Sceptre laconically.

"Still, I don't see that we've anything to worry about," smiled Peter. "We've got Hoppy!"

The goalkeeper's birdlike features twisted into a gentle grin.

"You can stand on me, boys," he said.

"Let us down, my son," growled Hebble, "and we shall jump on you!"

The players laughed and chattered like a crowd of light-hearted schoolboys as they changed into their football rig, and it was obvious that the thought of defeat at the hands of the redoubtable Albion had not entered their heads. Hoppy Hawkins, the goalkeeping wizard, was the rose-coloured spectacles through which they regarded the forthcoming game, whilst Peter Voyce had proved that he was in the first flight of centre-forwards.

Grace and Hebble—on their day—could put up an impregnable defence, and Thirlboy had a happy knack of "bottling up" even the most elusive centre-forward.

The Villa's chances looked rosy, and seldom had the Storrydene side felt so optimistic about the result of a game.

"By the way," said Hebble, five minutes before the kick-off, "I wonder what's happened to our mascot, the gentle Nugent?"

"He's probably having a whisky-and-soda with the directors," said Sceptre. "And he expects to keep fit!"

Nugent's voice echoed down the corridor at this moment, and Hoppy smiled across at his skipper.

"Talk of—angels!" he said. And then the door was thrust open and Nugent Beasley Ailen strolled into the room.

"Er—Voyce," he said, adopting that patronising air that made him singularly objectionable, "I've changed my mind! I think I shall turn out, after all!"

The Three Goal Victory!

It was Hefty Hebble who broke the silence.

"You—you think what?" he asked, his voice low, his jaw thrust out like the toe of a boot. "Say that again, will you?"

"Certainly!" smiled Nugent. "I've changed my mind. I shall turn out, after all!"

"Then I advise you to change your mind again," growled Hebble, "for you're certainly not going to play this afternoon!"

A wave of angry blood mounted to Nugent's narrow forehead, as he glared across at the scowling giant who was swinging a big boot by its laces.

"And who the blazes are you to tell me what I shall do?" he demanded, taking a step across the room.

"I'm skipper," returned Hefty, "and my word is law!"

"A word from Sir Aubrey—" began Ailen, conscious of the hostile glances that were burning into him.

"Bring him along!" said Hebble. "There's no time to waste if we're going to settle this business before the kick-off!"

Nugent was somewhat nonplussed as he glanced round at the footballers. Even Coyne, Noyle, and Battle, his sycophants, refused to meet his eyes, so he decided to take a new line.

"My father, as the principal shareholder in the club, will insist upon my playing!" he declared. "What have you to say to that, Hebble?"

"Very little!" growled the giant. "I shall simply sit down on that bench and refuse to budge!"

"You mean that you'll refuse to turn out?"

"That's about the size of it!" agreed Hefty.

"And I shall sit down beside you—if there's room," murmured Hoppy, with his gentle smile.

"So shall I," said Peter Voyce.

"And me!" put in three or four voices.

Nugent Ailen, standing very still, wondered if it were all a dream. He became unusually pale, and his jaw sagged as he looked round at the determined faces.

"But—but—but this is mutiny!" he gasped at length.

"Maybe," nodded Hefty Hebble.

"Call it what you like! We've got about a couple of minutes, so what about it, Mr. Ailen?"

Sir Aubrey's son hesitated for some seconds, biting his lower lip.

Things were not panning out according to schedule, for it was obvious that the whole side was ready to defy him, to tell him to do his worst.

In declaring that he would stand down, Nugent had had a sinister plan of revenge cut and dried, and his eleventh hour appearance in the Albion dressing-

room had been part of the business. Knowing that young Peter Voyce would be elated at his selection to lead the Villa, it had been Nugent's intention to wait until the last moment before dashing the cup of happiness from the youngster's lips. It was a cruel and callous plan, a plan worthy of the son of Sir Aubrey Ailen. But Nugent had made the mistake of thinking that he could either frighten or bully the other players into submission.

One glance at the set faces showed that the players were determined to stick to their guns. Theirs was the stronger will. They were backing young Voyce to a man.

Nugent, in bringing his father's name into the business, had hoped to play his trump card, yet the footballers—common pros—seemed to think as little of the baronet as they did of his illustrious son.

It was very humiliating, and Nugent had to confess that he was beaten—for the time being, at any rate.

Swallowing hard, he glared across at "Hefty" Hebble.

"Have your own way, and be hanged to you!" he growled, his features distorted with rage. "I hope you lose by a dozen goals!" Then, with a final scowl at the smiling Peter, he swung round and left the room, slamming the door behind him.

"As I remarked before," said Hefty Hebble, "he's a nice little thing to have about the house!"

"I don't think we've heard the last of this affair," said Peter Voyce quietly.

"And neither do I, my son," grinned Hebble. "Still, we beat him this time, and that's something."

A minute later he led his men on to the field, and the roar that greeted the famous black jerseys proved that many thousands of Villa supporters had made the journey to Mersey Town. The greatest shout of all was for Hoppy Hawkins, of course, and he removed his green Homburg hat in acknowledging the thunderous ovation.

The great game started on the stroke of three, and forty seconds later Hoppy Hawkins was called upon to save a rasping shot from Dines, the Albion centre-forward. The yell that greeted a masterly clearance broke from every throat in the crowd. A terrific punch sent the ball almost to the half-way line, and it was Peter Voyce who trapped the leather, swung round, and set off down the field, a crowd of players at his heels. They could not catch the youngster, however, for he seemed scarcely to touch the ground as he made for the home goal. Yet Kempton, the right back, was cool and unhurried as he ambled out to meet the visitor. His nonchalance amounted to a challenge, and the Albion "fans" hugged themselves as they waited for their "pet" to bring the flying youngster up with a painful jerk.

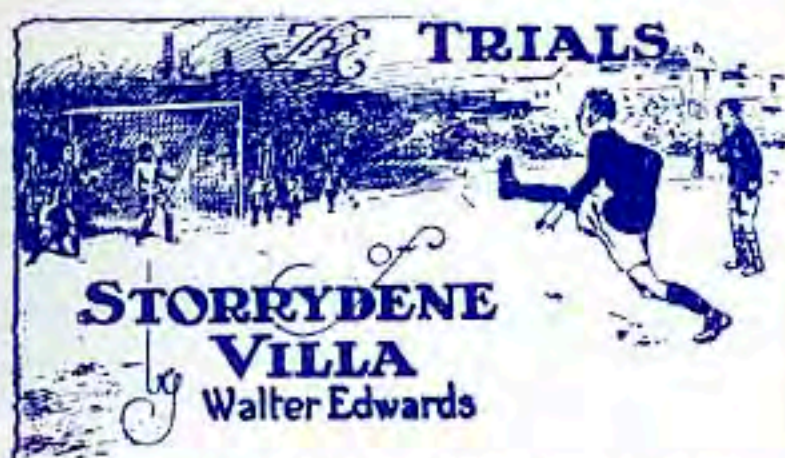
Having waited quietly, Kempton suddenly darted across the turf, bringing his massive shoulder into play, yet so quick was Peter that the burly back encountered nothing more than air, with the result that he staggered, lost his balance, and sprawled on all fours, an unlovely and inglorious spectacle.

The hysterical yell that split the tense silence lacked sympathy, but it was quickly drowned in the wild roar that greeted Peter Voyce's goal.

Evading Cannon, the right back, Peter netted with a shot that might have beaten the master, Hoppy Hawkins, and

(Continued on next page.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 874.



(Continued from previous page.)

the Storrydene fans were wild-eyed and almost delirious as hats and caps and papers were flung high into the air.

Tearing down the field, Hefty Hebble lifted the flushed youngster into his arms and bore him towards the centre line, the "baby in arms" struggling and kicking to free himself. The packed ground was still rocking with a cataclysm of noise as Dines, hard-eyed and tight-lipped, kicked off.

The Albion lost no time in making another attack upon the visitors' goal, and the manner in which they swept down the field was a revelation in short-passing tactics. But in Hoppy Hawkins they were up against something unique in the goalkeeping line.

Cool as an iceberg, the bombardment did not seem to flurry him in the least. And time and again a roar of "GOAL!" was followed by the reverberating groan of disappointment.

The Albion pressed for fully ten

minutes, and then came another thrill, for Peter Voyce again went away on his own. Pressed hotly on all sides, he emerged from the crush with the ball at his toe, and his scoring shot, taken from a yard outside the penalty area, was an effort that will live for ever in the memory of every fan who saw it.

The Albion fell back on the defensive after the second goal had been scored, and the visitors still had a two-goal lead at half-time.

Defensive tactics never won matches, yet the home team gave little thought to attack in the second half. They concentrated on keeping the other side out, and all went well until exactly one minute from long whistle. It was then that Peter Voyce scored his third goal and accomplished the hat trick, and the only person in all the thousands who did not shout congratulations was Nugent Ailen.

The son of Sir Aubrey was standing on the balcony of the clubhouse, and the expression upon his swarthy face was not pleasant to behold.

"I'll get even with him for this," he muttered, his smouldering eyes upon the brown-haired youngster who was being shouldered up the field, "and soon!"

(Will Nugent Beasley Ailen square his account with Peter Voyce? Next week's ripping story—"Kicked Out!"—will enlighten you. A great story, this, boys! Don't miss it!)

NEXT MONDAY'S PROGRAMME

(Continued from page 2.)

enough of it, I'll warrant in the class rooms. My blue pencil was in readiness, my "reject" frown had begun to dawn the moment I commenced Harry Wharton's editorial. And then, like the sunshine we've seen so little of this year, it suddenly faded out. I was amused—deeply interested. The blue pencil was not needed, neither was the waste-paper basket; for this supplement turned out to be a real winner all along the line. Mind you read it, boys!

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Your Editor.

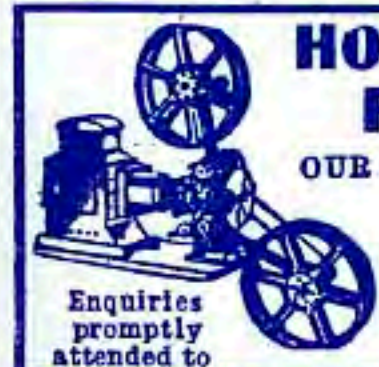
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