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No. 920. Vol. XXVIII

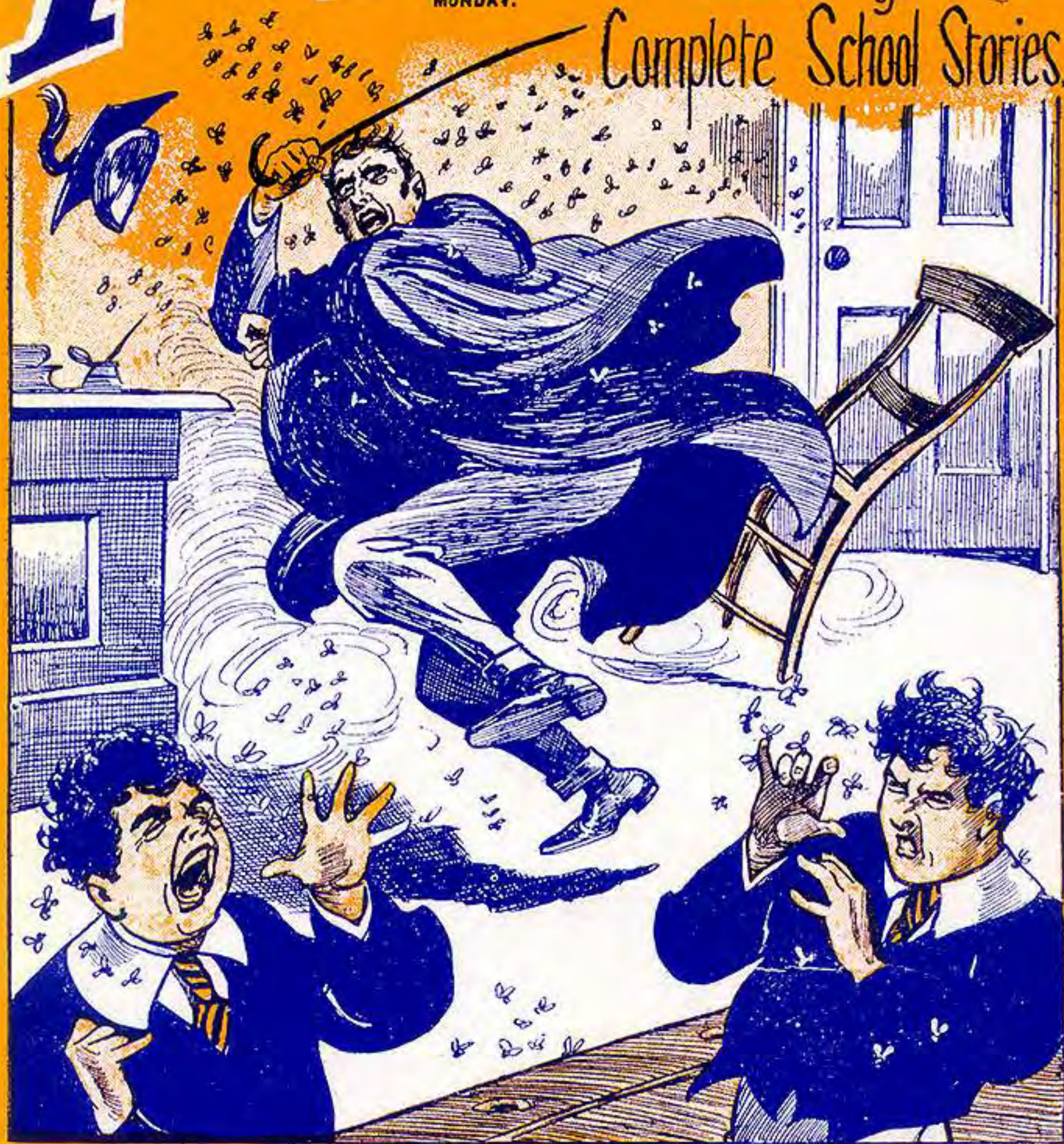
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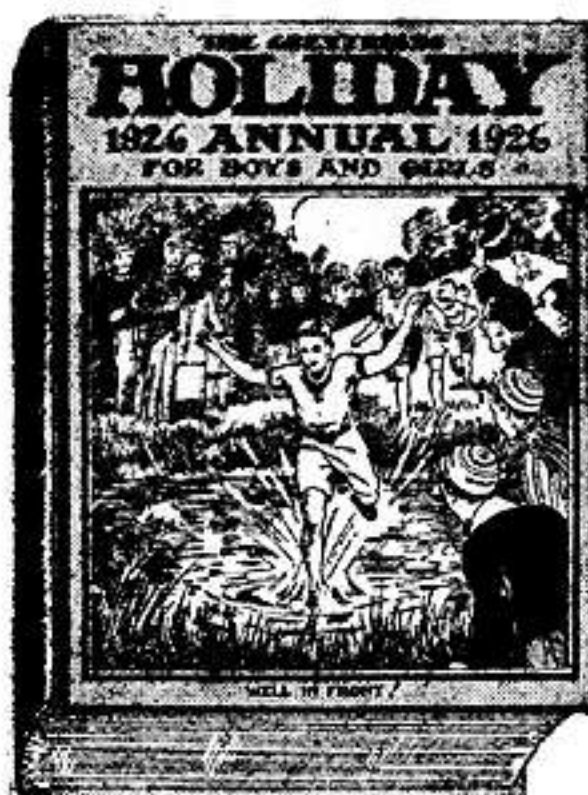
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TO AND FROM YOUR EDITOR!

SWIMMING THE CHANNEL!

HAVING read of the plucky attempts made by so many members of the fair sex to swim the Channel recently, several Magnetites, apparently good swimmers themselves, have made up their minds to try their luck when they are old enough. It's sure some task, as Fisher T. Fish would say, and I wish them luck. Whether they accomplish the job matters little really; it's the splendid spirit behind the thought that appeals to me.

BAD LANGUAGE!

A chum from Stockport writes and tells me that he is worried no end over the bad language his chums indulge in. He says that, despite the bad language, he still feels a great regard for his friends having put their friendship to a severe test on more than one occasion. Apparently the language that flies around is not uttered thoughtlessly. No; the speakers are under the impression that they are grown up, that they are men if they use strong language. It's a pity. Never did youth labour under a worse misapprehension. There's nothing manly in using bad language. It's the first step to a coarse existence, an existence where all the finer things of life are missed because of the inability to see things as they are. An habitual user of bad language becomes a hermit in good society—if he ever finds himself in it—for he is at a loss to express himself in King's English. My Stockport chum is regarded as "soft" by his pals because he won't join in this misguided aping of a man. He's not soft really. Rather does he show more promise of developing into a real man than any of his swearing friends.

THOSE FREE GIFTS!

Never has there been such an enthusiastic welcome or response as has been shown these cut-out photos of famous cricketers. It might seem ancient history now to refer to that gigantic presentation scheme, yet the letters of appreciation pour in every day. I feel that I must take this opportunity of thanking you all for your enthusiasm and loyalty.

Next Monday's Programmes!

"THE GREYFRIARS FILM FANS!"

By Frank Richards.

A magnificent, extra-long yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., describing the Film wave that sweeps over Greyfriars.

"THE PHANTOM BAT!"

Another grand instalment of this fascinating new mystery story, featuring Ferrers Locke and young Jack Drake.

"COMMON-ROOM SUPPLEMENT."

A special "Herald" supplement dealing with the lighter side of life in the Form-room, and another topping picture for your

PORTRAIT GALLERY.

Your Editor.

SOME STUNT! Fisher T. Fish, the cute business junior of the Remove, at last produces a "gilt-edged" scheme that interests his Form-fellows. It does more than that—it actually interests a swarm of hungry bees!



A Magnificent, New, Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., at Greyfriars. A scream from beginning to end!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Genial Gentlemen!

"I GUESS this is the real goods!" Fisher Tarleton Fish, the American member of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, sat perched on a three-legged stool at the counter of Uncle Clegg's little tuckshop in Friardale village, his lean jaws working overtime.

Before him was a dish of roast peanuts covered with a thick layer of maple-syrup, while near by stood a bottle of cream-soda, such as he had not tasted since deserting his native New York for England's clammy shores.

"I calculate this is a real treat!" murmured Fish. "Lemme have some more peanuts—and another bottle of soda."

"Certainly, Master Fish!"

Uncle Clegg gazed at the American junior in wonder.

The peanuts and maple-syrup had for a long time looked like involving him in a heavy loss. Half a dozen tins of the weird concoction had been palmed off on to him some three years before by an enterprising traveller for an American tinned food concern.

But no one in Friardale had evinced the slightest interest in peanuts and maple-syrup—tinned or otherwise!

The nuts and syrup had actually cost Uncle Clegg ninepence a tin. He had at first marked them up for sale at a shilling. They had then been reduced to cost price.

But still there were no customers.

At length, in sheer desperation, Uncle Clegg had been compelled to reduce them to fourpence-halfpenny to clear them out before they went bad—if he could!

That same afternoon Fisher T. Fish had called in at his establishment to purchase some chewing-gum, and he saw the tins of peanuts and maple syrup for the first time. The expressions of amazement, joy, and, finally, ecstasy chased across his lean features in rapid succession, and he ordered a tin to be opened for immediate consumption.

The same expressions had registered on the face of Uncle Clegg as he hastened to execute the American junior's order. Since then two more tins had been opened, and their price had risen three hundred per cent, but Fisher T. Fish was still going strong.

"I guess I'll have another tin before I go," he said, his jaws still working away; "an' you can wrap the other tins up for me to take away."

"Certainly, Master Fish!"

The worthy village tuckshop keeper bustled away before his customer should change his mind. As he did so, a small two-seater motor-car drew up outside, and two men, both attired in clothes of an unmistakable American cut, stepped out of it and entered the little shop.

Meanwhile, all oblivious of their presence, Fisher T. Fish commenced to wade into the contents of the last opened tin.

The taller of the two Americans—a gentleman rejoicing—or sorrowing—in the distinguished nomenclature of Watts D. Matter, stopped short and stared.

"Hoo!" he shouted. "Lamp it, Hunk! It's real! It's genuine! It's Hall-marked! Hoo, hoo, hoo!"

And in his exuberance, the gentleman from U.S.A. suddenly commenced to dance round the little tuckshop, yelling at the top of his very nasal voice.

Fisher T. Fish, his attention temporarily distracted from the extraordinary foodstuff before him, turned and stared.

"Hully gee!" exclaimed Mr. Matter, regarding his lean features with obvious delight. "Ain't he a peach? Ain't he a cutie? Ain't he a real, gol-darned son of a gun? Wow! I feel like a million dollars!"

And Mr. Hunk P. Dunk, probably infected by his compatriot's enthusiasm, commenced to execute a sort of wild war-dance, too.

"My only hat!" gasped Fish, in amazement. "Are you jays laffing at me?"

"Yarp—nope!" exclaimed Mr. Watts D. Matter, approaching the

puzzled Removite. "Don't say yewer a dream! Don't fade away! Let yewer Uncle Watts feel ef yew air reel."

And the gentleman from across the Herring Pond solemnly pinched one of the Removite's skinny arms.

"Ow! Yoooooop!" gasped Fish, springing from his stool in alarm. "Keep away, you silly jay! I guess you're balmy! I kinder reckon—"

The rest of the junior's remarks were drowned in a loud roar of laughter from his two amazing compatriots.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It ain't no dream, Hunk!"

"Nope; it's the real goods!"

"See hyer!" roared Fish angrily. "What's the blessed game?"

"He wants tew know what the game is, Hunk!" yelled Mr. Matter excitedly. "Ain't it great? Ain't it cute? This shore is the pelican's bib! Oh, boyes—"

But by now Fisher T. Fish was fed-up. He bunched his skinny fists, and, with a yell of wrath, hit out at the man nearest to him with all his might.

Biff! Thud! Crash!

Mr. Watts D. Matter staggered back on to the toes of his companion, and with loud yells they collapsed to the floor together.

Thud!

"Yaaaaaaaah!" shrieked Mr. Watts.

"Yerooooooh!" hooted Mr. Dunk.

Fisher T. Fish turned to bolt from the shop. But before he could do so Mr. Hunk P. Dunk scrambled to his feet and gripped him firmly by the shoulder.

"Yooooop! Lemme go, you jays!" roared Fish. "You're mad! Help!"

"Say, put a sock in it, ol'-timer," advised Mr. Dunk rudely. "We ain't gonna hurt yew. Pack it up!"

Fish subsided into silence, and regarded his captors apprehensively.

"Now see hyer!" gasped Mr. Watts D. Matter hurriedly. "I figger me an' my pard skeered yew up some! I reckon I calculate yew think we're just plumb loco. We shore air—with joy! I'll say yew just saved our lives—"

"Y-your lives?" demanded Fish, in amazement.

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"Shore! Me an' my pard hev bin totin' around this State for about three months. We ain't seen a Noo York noospaper in ages. We ain't so much as seen a horn-rimmed spectacle! No, sirree, we ain't even lamped a stick of gum! All we've seen is English apple-bashers, who don't know America has bin discovered yet—"

"Then, all fed-up, we hike into this joint for a sandwich," put in Mr. Dunk, taking up the story. "An' the first thing we sees is a real Yewnited States citizen, eating real American peanuts and maple syrup, with real cream-soda, just like we dreamed about for the past three months—"

Fisher T. Fish permitted himself a faint grin. He was beginning to think that the two Americans were not quite as mad as they had at first seemed.

"So we gives a howl of joy," went on Mr. Dunk. "First we figgers like it must be a dream. Then we touches yew tew see ef it's true, an' we heers the first words of the Amurrican language we've heered in months. Stranger, we're reel glad tew meet yew! Put it right there!"

As he spoke, Mr. Hunk P. Dunk shot out a horny fist for Fish to grip. Fish did so, and then, as the full meaning of his two countrymen's explanation dawned upon him he went off into a loud and prolonged roar of hearty nasal laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha! My only Sunday topper! I guess you galoots take the whole blessed biscuit factory! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shore!" agreed Mr. Dunk, with a pleased smile.

"Waal, I guess I'm a citizen from the Yewnited States alright!" grinned the Removite. "Fisher Tarleton Fish, late of Noo York, at present located at Greyfriars College—that's me. And now you galoots have explained why you were behaving like a couple of blessed lunatics, I reckon you're invited to the feed, which is on me."

"Say, yewer the stork's pants!" gasped Mr. Watts D. Matter, with marked enthusiasm. "I guess I'm starving!"

Fish grinned, and turned to Uncle Clegg again.

"Never mind about wrapping those other tins of peanuts up," he said. "Open the blessed lot, and let's have some more cream-soda."

"Certainly, Master Fish!" almost purred Uncle Clegg, feeling he had done a good afternoon's business.

Within a few minutes, with one of his compatriots seated on either side of him, Fisher T. Fish commenced to attack his fourth helping of peanuts and maple syrup.

Fish was not exactly noted for his generosity at Greyfriars. But he was as pleased to see the two Americans as they were to see him. Consequently, he spent his money on them with almost—but not quite—as much pleasure as he would have spent it on himself.

When the strange meal was over Mr. Dunk leaned back on his stool with a sigh of satisfaction.

"I calculate that was reel good!" he exclaimed.

"I'll tell the cock-eyed world it was," agreed Mr. Watts D. Matter.

Fish grinned.

"Waal, now, it's like this," went on Mr. Dunk. "Me an' my pardner is going tew do you a good turn for the reel handsome way yew have treated us. Yes, sirree! As you will see ef yew lamp the inscription on the side of our auto, which is out near the side-walk, we air in the hair-oil business. 'Growo,'

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 920.

sirree! That's the stuff, every time. Made in tins, jars, bottles, and caskets, at a tanner, a bob, and two-and-a-kick a nob. I've said it!"

"My hat, you have!" grinned Fish, wondering what was coming next.

"Now, see hyer," resumed Mr. Dunk, warming to his work. "It's the reel dope, and just tew show there ain't no punk about it, Hunk P. Dunk—that's me—is going tew hand yew a free sample, gratis and fer nix, of the world-famous 'Growo,' otherwise known as Nature's Own Scalp Syrup!"

Fisher T. Fish gasped.

"An' with the scalp syrup, which is guaranteed to cure coughs, colds, and pimples on the nose—nunno, I mean—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removite roared, but his roar quickly died away.

The two strangers were men after his own heart.

Fisher T. Fish was a youth who spent a great deal of his time in thinking out schemes whereby he could transfer the "dollars" of his Form-fellows from their pockets to his own.

He was the self-styled business man of the Remove, and he had always entertained an idea that what he did not know about business in any shape or form was not worth knowing.

But Messrs. Hunk P. Dunk and Watts D. Matter, to say the least of it, were men who knew their business backwards, and were well able to give him points. Fish commenced to listen to them with renewed respect.

"Tain't no laffing matter," resumed Mr. Dunk blandly. "As I was saying, all yew hev tew do is tew rub a little of the world-famous Growo on yewer scalp, an' even if yew is as bald as a bladder, within twenty-four hours yew have a head of reel hardy hair. Yarp!"

"The formula for this hair syrup, which is a dead secret, was obtained by me from Chief Why-be-Bald of the Thatcho Indians, when I was a trader out West. An' as a mark of appreciation for the reel handsome way yew hev treated us, I hereby hands yew a sample of Nature's Own Scalp Syrup as already aforesaid."

As he spoke, Mr. Dunk fumbled in his pocket and produced a small jar, which he handed to the astonished Removite.

"Thanks!" gasped Fisher T. Fish, taking the gift and examining it curiously.

"Not at all, bo'," beamed Mr. Dunk. "And now I guess we'll have tew beat it."

With that, the two Americans rose, and, gripping Fish's hand in turn, left the little tuckshop and entered their waiting car.

Two minutes later they were lost to sight up the road leading to Courtfield.

Fisher T. Fish returned to Uncle Clegg's and slumped into a chair.

"Waal, I swow!" he gasped. "If this doesn't beat the whole giddy orchestra, I'll eat my only hat!"

Fish examined his gift again. As he did so a slip of white paper, beneath the stool where Mr. Hunk P. Dunk had been sitting, caught his eye. He picked it up and examined it. It was an envelope on which was inscribed

"If lost, will finder please return to Growo Hair Oil Federation (Inc.), c/o American Traders Association (European Office), 500, Piccadilly, London, W."

"No value except to owners."

Fisher T. Fish opened the envelope and examined its contents.

The next moment a gasp of amazement escaped him.

"My hat! The blessed recipe for the Growo!" he exclaimed. "I guess Hunk P. Dunk must have dropped it when he gave me the sample."

The American junior was about to leave the tuckshop, in order to post the lost formula on to its rightful owners, as requested on the envelope. Suddenly, however, he paused, and a calculating gleam came into his eyes.

"My giddy aunt!" he gasped. "I reckon there's a blessed fortune in this."

The American junior's brain commenced to work overtime. Judging by the car the two Americans sported they must be in a good way of business. The celebrated Growo was evidently a money-making proposition. And the formula for the manufacture of Growo was now in his hands. Fish suddenly changed his decision to post the lost formula on to Mr. Dunk's office, and grinned.

"Jumping Jerusalem! What a bit of luck. I guess Hunk P. is going to be unlucky. This is where little Fisher shines."

The Removite thought again for a few moments.

Already the outline of a great scheme was forming in his mind. Why not keep Chief Why-be-Bald's precious gift to Mr. Dunk, and manufacture some of the wonderful Growo himself? If Mr. Hunk P. Dunk and his partner could make money out of it, why not Fisher T. Fish?

"Hully gee!" gasped the Removite excitedly. "The very idea! Me for the Growo—every time!"

And the next moment, with a whoop of delight, the business man of the Remove dashed from the little tuckshop, and made his way back to Greyfriars as fast as he could, to put the finishing touches to his great scheme, and to launch Growo on to the market so soon as he could get it prepared.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Making a Market!

WHEN Fisher T. Fish reached Greyfriars he made straight for his study, and secreted both the precious formula and the sample of Growo he had received from Mr. Hunk P. Dunk behind the cracked mirror over the study mantelpiece.

There was only one fly in the ointment as far as he could see, and that was, that none of the Removites appeared to be suffering from baldness, either in its primary or advanced stage.

But the astute American junior did not permit a little point like that to worry him for long.

Certainly, he could not make the juniors go bald in order that he could sell them a cure. But he could do the next best thing, and that was to try and convince them that baldness was creeping on.

Once he could convince them they were going bald, he felt they would receive Growo with open arms. Until then, however, he realised that it would be just as well to keep the wonderful Scalp Syrup in the background.

"You leave it to little Fisher," murmured the American junior to himself. "I'll show 'em. I guess by the time I've finished talking to 'em they'll start inquiring the price of wigs."

With that the lean Removite left his study, and made his way up the passage. He had not proceeded far when he met Bulstrode, who was engaged in an earnest conversation with Mark Linley and Peter Todd.

"Hallo, Fish, old chip—chap, I mean," grinned Bulstrode. "You look as though

you're out to spoil the Egyptians again. What's the wheeze now?"

"Cut the speech stuff!" commenced Fish briskly. "You won't be laffing so bright and perk this time next week, I guess."

Bulstrode stared.

"My hat! What the thump are you talking about?" he demanded.

"I reckon you calculate I've got spiders in the spire," retorted Fish. "But I ain't. No, sir. I'm warning you. I reckon I've noticed it in several other jays, too, but you're about the worst."

"Go hon!"

"Yep! I guess at the rate you're going, you'll be as bald as a bladder before long. Not that it matters to me, none. I'm warning you as one pal to another."

"Thanks for nothing!" gasped Bulstrode, looking extremely puzzled, nevertheless. "If you think I'm going bald you've made a mistake. Look at that!"

As he spoke Bulstrode ran his fingers through his bushy hair for Fish's inspection.

"I reckon you're blinding yourself to facts," retorted Fisher T. Fish, unabashed. "Your hair's only being held to your scalp by that cheap brilliantine you use. Wash it off and out comes the hair—sure!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Mark Linley and Peter Todd, in unison.

"He's off his rocker!"

"Nix on the laughter!" scowled Fisher T. Fish. "It's the real goods I'm handing you. See here."

Before anyone could prevent him, Fish shot out his right hand and grabbed a tuft of Bulstrode's hair. The next moment he gave a wrench and a small tuft came away in his fingers.

"Ow! Ooooooop" howled Bulstrode, in pain and alarm. "I'll—I'll smash him!"

"Oh, my giddy aunt!" roared Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What did I tell you?" demanded Fish, brandishing the tuft of hair before the face of the outraged Bulstrode. "Coming out by the peck, I reckon—"

What the astute American junior reckoned was never known. For at that moment Bulstrode's hard fist shot out and caught him dead on the top of his somewhat prominent nasal organ.

Biff!

"Yeroooooogh!" howled Fish, staggering back and tripping over the outstretched foot of Peter Todd. "Ow! Yoooooop! I'm hurt!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter Todd delightedly. "That was the real goods he was handing you! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on!" snorted Bulstrode, dancing round the fallen Fish, his fists bunched ready to renew the attack. "Come on, you skinny rotter! I'll smash you!"

But Fisher T. Fish did not wait to be smashed.

He scrambled to his feet, and with a wild howl of alarm bolted down the passage as though pursued by a horde of Thatcho Indians themselves.

"Yow!" groaned Bulstrode, when the Transatlantic junior had finally vanished from sight. "He's pulled about an ounce of hair out of my blessed head! Groooooh! He must have gone dotty!"

"I wonder what the wheeze was?" demanded Mark Linley thoughtfully. "He's got something up his sleeve, I'll bet!"

"If you ask me I reckon it's chewing-gum on the brain," grinned Peter Todd. "Come on!"



"Hully gee!" exclaimed Mr. Matter, regarding Fish's lean features with obvious delight. "Ain't he a peach? Ain't he a cutie? Ain't he a real, gol-darned son-of-a-gun? Wow! I feel like a million dollars!" In his exuberance, the gentleman from U.S.A. suddenly commenced to dance round the little tuckshop yelling at the top of his voice. (See Chapter 1.)

The American junior's first attempt to convince the Removites they were going bald had not proved exactly successful. Fish tenderly rubbed his nasal organ where Bulstrode's fist had caught him.

"Ow!" he wheezed. "The rotten galoot! I guess he can stay bald. Yoooooop!"

Fisher T. Fish was not a youth to be easily defeated however. He recalled the story of Bruce and the merry old spider and decided to try again.

He proceeded in the direction of the junior Common-room.

Alonzo Todd, the Duffer of Greyfriars, loomed up ahead.

"Hallo, Toddy!" greeted Fish genially. "You're just the chap I've been looking for, I guess. I've come to warn you. You're in great danger, Toddy."

"Dear me!" murmured the Duffer in some alarm. "I trust there's nothing untoward about to befall me, my dear Fish—"

"Waal now, can you stand a great shock, Alonzo?"

"My Uncle Benjamin, of whom you have possibly heard me speak, has always impressed upon me to meet shocks with fortitude and courage," began Alonzo, in his long-winded way. "It is very considerate of you to prepare me in such a manner, my dear Fish. My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Never mind old Uncle Ben now," exclaimed Fish disrespectfully. "The fact is, Alonzo, old man, you're going bald!"

"Bald!" echoed Alonzo.

"Sure! I guess your hair's falling out!"

"Falling out!"

"Yep! By handfuls."

"Handfuls, my dear fellow?" gasped Alonzo, in the parrot-like manner he had when excited.

"That's what I said!" retorted Fish.

"Don't be a blessed parrot!"

"P-parrot!"

"Yes, ass!"

"Ass, Fish!"

"Oh, rats!"

"Rats!"

"You're going bald, I keep telling you!" snorted Fish, in sheer desperation. "Your hair's coming out in handfuls. See here!"

Fisher T. Fish made a violent grab at Alonzo's forelock in much the same manner as he had treated Bulstrode's. A bunch of hair came away in his hand, which he flourished before the Duffer's face.

"Yarooooh!" Alonzo let out a wild howl of pain and leaped clear of the floor. "You caused me pain, my dear Fish—"

"Look!" hooted Fish. "What did I tell you? You're going bald. Look at your blessed hair, you—you big goop!" Alonzo looked.

"Dear me! Wow!" he gasped. "How extraordinary! That is certainly my hair, but it felt as though you had pulled it out by the roots, my dear Fish."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 920.

"You—you silly chump!" roared Fish. "It fell out, I tell you. I only just touched it, I guess. You're going bald like I told you. Don't say I didn't warn you."

"In that case I sincerely trust you will pardon me for having suspected you pulled it out by the roots, my dear American cousin," gasped Alonzo. "I am extremely obliged to you for calling my attention to it. That was very considerate of you, Fish—"

But Fisher T. Fish had gone.

"I guess that worked like a charm," he grinned, as he made his way into the Common-room. "I reckon Alonzo'll be wanting a cure before long. I guess the silly jay really thinks he's going bald."

And the business man of the Remove chuckled softly.

"A few more like that," he told himself, "and they'll come to me on their bended knees for a jar of Growo—yep, I reckon I'm slick!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared the stentorian voice of Bob Cherry, as Fisher T. Fish hove in sight. "What's bit old Uncle Sam?"

Harry Wharton and the rest of the Famous Five who were standing with Bob near the mantelpiece turned and grinned.

"I guess it was just thoughts," said Fisher T. Fish, as he made his way to where the chums of the Remove were standing. "I'll say this is where I'll get the laugh of you jays—jever get left?"

Harry Wharton & Co. stared.

"What's the wheeze, Fishy?"

"Forewarned is forearmed," went on the American junior mysteriously. "A kick in the head's as good as a wink to a blind hoss, I guess."

"What's he babbling about?" demanded Frank Nugent, puzzled.

"The babble of the absurd Fish is terrific," purred Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The worthy Fish has departfully gone off his esteemed rockerfulness."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's all O.K.," exclaimed Fish, wagging a bony forefinger at the astonished Removites. "If I tell you what's in my mind I reckon you'll think I'm pulling your legs, some. I'll say nothing about it."

The Famous Five surrounded the junior from the Land of Pep with puzzled brows.

"Look here," said Harry Wharton abruptly. "Don't play the fool, Fishy! What's the little game?"

"Haven't you heard?" demanded Fish, with well-assumed surprise.

"Heard what, ass?"

"About this wireless. I guess—"

"Well, what about it?"

"Waal, I guess I've been reading in the papers that the electrical current they discharge into the air is affecting folk's nervous systems and causing baldness—"

"Causing whatta?" demanded Johnny Bull, in amazement.

"Baldness," repeated Fish impressively. "Several jays in this Form are beginning to go bald. There's Alonzo Todd. All his blessed hair's coming out. You ask him—"

"Well, I'm thumped!" gasped Bob Cherry. "You silly ass—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. roared.

"My giddy aunt!"

"This is great!"

"See hyer!" snorted Fish. "You jays quit laffing, and I'll prove it. Look at Cherry's hair. It's all as loose as sand."

Bob Cherry ruffled his hair with both hands.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 920.

"Nothing much wrong with that," he said, scanning his fingers for loose hairs, and failing to find any. "Try again, Fishy."

"I calculate it's in patches," replied Fish. "You jays don't realise how serious it is. Lemme show you."

"I'll give you a bob for every loose patch you find," exclaimed Cherry, bending down his head. "Carry on!"

Fish's forefinger and thumb closed over a tuft of hair standing up from Bob Cherry's crown, and he tugged.

"Yooooooooop!" howled Bob in agony. "There it is!" exclaimed Fish triumphantly.

"Out by the root!" gasped Nugent.

"Come here!" roared the injured junior, his eyes glaring. "You blessed gum-chewing maniac. I'll smash you!"

Bob made a sudden dive after the American junior. But Fisher T. Fish had been expecting some such move.

He bolted for the Common-room door. Even as he did so the burly form of Bulstrode loomed up before him, followed by Mark Linley and Peter Todd.

Bulstrode gave a roar, and, opening his arms, received the flying American junior into them.

"Got him!" he gasped.

"Oooooo-er!"

"Hold him!" yelled Bob Cherry.

Bulstrode grinned.

One glance at Bob Cherry, rubbing his injured scalp, was sufficient to tell him what had been happening.

"Has the silly ass been trying to make you fellows believe you're going bald, too?" he demanded.

"He's been pulling my blessed hair out!" hooted Bob Cherry. "And now I'm going to make him suffer for it. Yow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Bulstrode.

"It's nothing to cackle about," snorted Bob. "You wouldn't laugh if you'd had half your blessed hair pulled out!"

"But I have," grinned Bulstrode, "and by the same burbling ass, too. You leave the smashing until afterwards. I want to find out what his blessed game is before you kill him."

"Lemme go!" howled Fish. "I guess I only warned you."

Bulstrode pulled out his watch and turned to his captive.

"You've got exactly three minutes," he exclaimed.

"Whaffor?" demanded Fish nervously.

"To explain why you've been behaving like a blessed scalping Redskin," explained Bulstrode. "If your account isn't amusing, I'm going to lam you like billy-ho when the three minutes are up, and then turn you over to Cherry. Savvy?"

"Oh, yep!" gasped Fish with relief. "I reckon that's dead easy. I guess I was about to explain when that galoot Cherry got his mad up an' headed for me—"

"Half a minute," droned Bulstrode grimly.

Fisher T. Fish treated the watching Removites to a lean grin. It suddenly occurred to him that he was being presented with a chance in a hundred. Fisher T. Fish had not reckoned on letting the juniors know of the wonderful Growo formula in his possession until he had prepared the market.

But since something had gone wrong with that preparation, as witness Bulstrode and Cherry, he realised that he might as well make the most of his unlooked-for opportunity and go ahead!

The juniors had asked—nay, demanded under threat of penalties—an explanation of his strange conduct. Fish determined, therefore, that they should have

it—with certain variations and reservations.

With the words of Mr. Hunk P. Dunk extolling the merits of Growo still ringing in his ears, the business man of the Remove jumped on to a chair and faced the waiting Removites.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

No Takers!

"ON the ball!"

"Go it, Fishy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The American junior was greeted with yells of encouragement from the entire audience—all except Cherry and Bulstrode.

"I guess you jays think I'm mad," commenced Fish. "I guess you jays think I've got spiders in the spire, but I ain't!"

"Go hon!"

"You don't say so!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fish's explanation was going to be interesting, it seemed, and the Removites waited for him to proceed, with amused grins—all except Cherry and Bulstrode.

"Nope!" went on Fisher T. Fish, in a manner that would have turned Mr. Hunk P. Dunk pale green with envy, "I guess not!"

"Buck up, Fishy!"

"Waal, now, I guess it's like this. Me and my pardner—nunno, I mean Fisher T. Fish—that's me—is going to do you all a good turn for the real handsome way you have always treated me."

"My giddy aunt!" murmured Frank Nugent faintly.

The Removites stared at the American junior in amazement. Fisher T. Fish had been treated to many things since his advent at Greyfriars. But mostly those things had been thick ears and sundry other corporal discomforts. Not by any stretch of the imagination could Harry Wharton & Co. see how such treatment could possibly be called handsome, hence their amazement.

"As you will see," went on Fish, "if you will lamp the inscription on the side of my auto—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You burbling jabberwock!"

"One minute!" sang out Bulstrode, glancing at his watch.

"Yooop! I—I mean, as you will see if you will wait and listen," resumed Fish hurriedly. "I have gone into the hair-oil business—"

"Oh, so that's the blessed wheeze!"

"My only hat!"

"And seeing that several jays in this Form are going bald, I guess I'm going to introduce them to a real dandy cure—every time. Now, I calculate that's where I hit the bullseye, and explain why I examined the hair of a certain two jays of this Form. That's a straight and sensible explanation, I guess. And now we come right down to the real business."

As the reason for Fish's strange behaviour became apparent, the crowd of juniors which by now had joined the Famous Five in the Common-room roared—all except Cherry and Bulstrode.

"Tain't no laffing matter," exclaimed Fish warmly. "I guess this Form is in for a severe attack of baldness. And that's where we come to Growo. I guess that's what you all want—Growo! Every time! Growo! Otherwise known as Nature's Own Scalp Syrup!"

Another howl of laughter burst from the audience.

"That's good!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Growo," went on Fish, grinning good-humouredly, "is made from a secret formula now in my possession, which was sent me by my Uncle Hiram, of New York City—"

"Good old Ananias!"
"This hyer formula, which was a secret possessed for many centuries by the Thatcho Indians, was presented to my uncle, when he was a trader out West, for saving the life of Chief Why-be-Bald—"

"Oh, my only hat!" gurgled Johnny Bull.

"This is the honourable limit, my worthy chums!"

The juniors simply howled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I calculate that's the truth, the hull truth and then some!" shouted Fish, making his voice heard above the din with difficulty. "But I'm not a greedy jay to keep a good thing all to myself. No, sirs! Live and let live—that's my motto. And just to prove there's no punk about it, little Fisher—that's me—is going to give his pals—that's you—the chance to book an order for a jar of Growo right now, and so avoid the horrors of premature baldness—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tain't no joke, gents," proceeded Fish, now thoroughly warmed up. "Baldness is a horrible thing! Ask Bulstrode, or Cherry, or Alonzo Todd. They're going bald already. Their hair's falling out by the bunch. I've seen it, so I know—"

"You burbling ass!" hooted Bulstrode. "You pulled it out."

"Same here!" roared Cherry angrily.

"First come, first served," went on Fish, affecting not to hear. "Growo is what you want, gentlemen—in bottles, jars, and caskets at a tanner, a bob, and two-and-a-kick a nob—"

"Go it, Fishy!"

"I calculate Growo will produce bamboo shoots on cast iron! I calculate Growo is the real goods! I calculate you jays can hand the frozen mitt to the Demon Baldness from now on—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But we're not bald yet!"

"That's all O.K.!" agreed Fish. "A stitch in time saves nine," and if you book your orders now you save ten per cent. A bob a jar, and I'll take your orders now! Slick, that's my motto! Come along, my lucky lads! Any more for the old Growo?"

And, in his enthusiasm, forgetful of Bulstrode and his three-minute time-limit, the Transatlantic junior pulled a notebook from his pocket, ready to book any orders the juniors might give.

"Come along, my lucky lads!" said Fish invitingly. "Any more for the jolly old Growo? Who says yep?"

But, apparently, nobody said "yep."

Many, however, said "nope"—or words to that effect, in no very uncertain voices.

The Removites knew Fisher T. Fish of old.

Since his arrival at Greyfriars he had instituted many schemes for making money. But more often than not, by some strange mischance, those schemes seemed to have gone wrong—often with dire results to the enterprising American junior.

Fish appeared to have taken the story of Bruce and the spider very much to heart. If at first he did not succeed, he was always ready to try and try again. And his decision to do his Form-fellows a good turn by supplying all advance orders for the wonderful Growo—when

he had made it—at a ten per cent reduction, was his latest attempt to emulate the exploits of the celebrated and aforesaid spider in that direction.

But if Fisher T. Fish remembered the story of Bruce and the spider, the rest of the Removites, in their turn, recalled the little girl in the fable, who, having been once bitten, was twice shy in consequence.

They did not, therefore, rush at the American junior's offer in quite the frantic manner that he had hoped.

"Come along, gents!" shouted Fish again. "A bob a jar! Book your orders now and save money! My loss is your gain!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" howled Frank Nugent.

"It's usually the other way round!"

"The gainfulness of the dishonourable Fish is terrific!" purred Inky.

The juniors almost choked with laughter—all except Cherry and Bulstrode!

Like Sister Ann, Bulstrode had waited long and patiently.

But now he decided to wait no longer.

He had given Fish three minutes to explain why he had perked the tuft of hair out of his and Cherry's head. In

fact, he had actually given him nearer five minutes than three, and the explanation he had just received from Fish did not seem to have warranted such generosity.

So, with a sudden roar, besides which that of the mad bull of Bashan was but an infant's whisper, he hurled himself at the excited American junior without warning. Like a streak of greased lightning Bob Cherry followed, and the three collapsed to the ground together.

Bump!

The next few seconds the rest of the Removites were treated to the extraordinary spectacle of three human figures, with arms and legs seemingly inextricably mixed, bumping up and down on the floor like three Manx cats fighting on a hot stove.

"Yoooooop!"

Biff! Thud!

"Wow! Yow!"

"On the ball!" yelled the spectators delightedly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Rolling from beneath his opponents, Fish staggered to his feet and stood for a moment endeavouring to collect his scattered wits. The next moment



"You're growing bald, I tell you!" snorted Fisher T. Fish in sheer desperation. "Your hair's coming out in handfuls. See here!" The American junior made a violent grab at Alonzo's forelock, and a bunch of hair came away in his hand. He flourished it before the Duffer's face. "Look!" he hooted. "What did I tell you? You're going bald!" "Yaroooo!" Alonzo Todd let out a wild howl of pain and leapt clear of the floor. (See Chapter 2.)

Cherry and Bulstrode rose on either side of him. The right side of Fish's lean face was turned to Cherry while the left was turned to Bulstrode. The idea to smite Fish's face occurred to both the juniors at precisely the same moment—and they reached back their fists to hit out.

By some curious instinct Fish seemed to realise what was happening. There are moments when the human brain works with lightning-like rapidity. Fish's brain worked at that speed now—and he ducked!

The next second there sounded two heavy thuds and two loud howls.

Biff!

"Yaroooooh!" howled Cherry and Bulstrode in unison.

"Ha, ha, ha!" howled the spectators in delight.

"They've hit each other on the boko!"

And even before the two Removites could realise what had happened, Fisher T. Fish turned and bolted, followed by another yell of laughter.

Up the corridor outside the Common-room he sped, running as fast as his skinny legs would carry him, until he reached the Remove quarters again. Without even pausing to glance behind him, the American junior burst into his study, locked the door behind him, and slumped, panting, into an armchair.

"Jerusalem crickets!" he groaned, tenderly rubbing various injured parts of his anatomy. "I guess I'm hurt—some! Wow! All because I tried to save the rotters from going bald! Groooh! I guess those guys don't know a good thing when they're on it! Ow!"

Alone in his study, the American junior sat and thought furiously.

His attempt to convince the Removites that they were going bald had failed lamentably, and the market he had hoped to make before commencing his manufacture of Growo from Mr. Hunk P. Dunk's wonderful formula seemed to be further away than ever.

He realised that if he was going to interest the juniors in Growo at all, he would first of all have to prove to them it was the real goods.

"I guess what I want is some jay to demonstrate on," he thought. "I guess seeing is believing. If this Growo is half what that guy Hunk P. Dunk said my fortune is made—every time!"

But the more he thought of the possibility of getting anyone who would permit their scalp to be used for purposes of demonstration the more he realised how difficult it would be.

Quite apart from that, it occurred to Fish that so far he did not possess any Growo, and even when it was made it might not turn out to be as it should be.

Then he remembered the sample Mr. Dunk had presented him with.

The sample, at least, would be Growo at its best.

Fisher T. Fish drew the small jar of Growo from its hiding-place at the back of the cracked mirror over the study mantelpiece, and placed it carefully in his waistcoat pocket.

The American junior determined to find someone—preferably very bald—who might by some means or another be induced to use it so that the Removites might afterwards see its effect.

True, they were not going bald; but Fish realised that if he could only prove the much-vaunted merits of Growo to them, they would just as soon use it as any of the cheap—and sometimes nasty—brilliantines and hair-creams sold in Dame Mimbles little tuckshop.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 920.

"Lemme see," murmured Fisher T. Fish thoughtfully. "Who's a most likely jay?"

Several individuals suffering from that "Demon Baldness" occurred to the American junior.

There was Uncle Clegg, of the village tuckshop, P.-c. Tozer, the sole representative and upholder of the Law in Friardale, and a few other people of less note. But the great drawback to using any of them as subjects to demonstrate the powers of Growo on was that the Removites would not trouble to look them up in Friardale, while they, on the other hand, would certainly not trouble to visit Greyfriars.

"Jumping Jerusalem crickets!" ejaculated the American junior suddenly. "I've got it—Gosling! The very jay! I guess I'll toddle along and see him."

And carefully opening his study door to assure himself that neither of his late enemies were lurking in the vicinity, Fisher T. Fish made his way out of the building and across the Close in the direction of the school porter's lodge.

Fish wondered why he had not thought of Gosling before.

The school porter was as bald as any bladder, and if the wonderful Growo could induce hair to grow where not

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even the roots existed, it would certainly justify all the things that had been said about it, and more.

"I calculate I'll have to go carefully," thought the slick American junior. "I reckon Gosling's a wily bird. If I tell him what the wheeze really is he'll want paying, and if I don't, he'll think it's a leg-pull. I guess I'll sure go careful."

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Present for Gosling!

"HALLO, Gossy!"

William Gosling looked round with a grunt. Gosling was washing down the little concrete yard at the back of his lodge, and he did not like it. Gosling did not like work of any description. His idea was that his life should be spent in a comfortable armchair, with a glass of lemonade—or something stronger—at his elbow. Even then he would have complained that life was not all lemonade and skittles. But Gosling had to work, even without a sufficient supply of lemonade, much less skittles. Consequently, he consoled himself by feeling very ill-used, and bestowing scowling glances on the universe. But now he was bestowing a scowling glance upon Fisher T. Fish in particular.

"Get hout!" he exclaimed, as he observed the American junior standing in the yard. "Get hout! Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"See hyer, Gossy—"

"Get hout!"

"I guess not!"

"Which I'll report yer!"

It was evident that he would have to use subterfuge—and lots of it—to persuade the school porter to accept his little gift.

Gosling placed the rubber squeegee he had been using to clean the yard against the wall, and turned his attention to placing in order a number of small empty jars that had at one time contained face cream.

Gosling suffered from a tender skin, which was made more tender by the necessity of a daily shave, which his position as school-porter demanded. The generous application of face cream after shaving was the only means Gosling had of relieving his facial tenderness. Indeed, so generous was the porter's use of the face-cream, that he got through at least one jar a week, and the empty jars he was now arranging represented at least six months' supply.

"W'ich it ain't nothing to laugh at, Master Fish," snorted Gosling again. "Wot I ses—"

"See hyer, Gossy," interrupted Fisher T. Fish, the row of empty face-cream jars giving him a sudden idea. "I guess I've called to see you on a little matter of business."

"Ho!" murmured Gosling, turning his scowl into a smile. "W'ich you should have said so before, Master Fish."

"Yep! It's about those old jars you've got there," went on the American junior. "I guess they're no good to you, but I've sorta taken a fancy to them. Not that they're much good to me, but I calculate they might do to—keep studs and things in. I guess I'm open to do a trade for them."

"W'ich them jars is very valuable," grunted Gosling, whose business instincts were nearly—but not quite—as keen as Fish's. "W'ich they're real hart jars, and I don't know as I wants to part with 'em."

"Of course, if it's like that then, you hang on to them," said Fish, with an apparent loss of interest. "Only I reckoned you might be open to accept a tanner to let me clear them away. So long, Gossy!"

And the American junior turned as though to walk away.

"Old 'ard, Master Fish!" shouted Gosling hurriedly.

"Nix on that."

"Wot I ses is this 'ere. To a young gent wot I likes I might let 'em go cheap."

"I guess I won't rob you."

"Ho!" gasped Gosling, feeling that his affection for the empty jars had been too well simulated. "W'ich there's a mishunderstanding, Master Fish. Wot I sez is this 'ere. If someone gives them jars a good 'ome, I'll let 'em go cheap."

Fish chuckled softly to himself.

"Looking at them again, I guess they're not worth a tanner, Gossy," he drawled. "I'll give you threepence for the lot."

Gosling's face fell.

"I'll meet yer 'arf-way," he grunted. "Make it fourpence-a'penny, and the real hart jars is yours."

"Threepence is my limit."

"I'll knock the 'a'penny orf, Master Fish."

"Nix on that."

"Make it threepence-a'penny, then," groaned Gosling, ambling rapidly across

the yard in the direction of the retreating junior. "Wich it's a real sacrifice, just to oblige you. Wot I sez is them jars is a gift for threepence-'a'penny."

Fisher T. Fish paused.

He felt, as he would have put it in his own expressive language, that he had "got the school-porter where he wanted him." There was no doubt that, if he pressed the point far enough, he could secure the jars for twopence. But the astute American junior was out to do more than possess the jars.

The first—and most important—thing was to secure the services of the school-porter, as a subject on which to demonstrate the merits of the wonderful Growo.

He thought he now saw his way to do so.

"Threepence-'a'penny, and them two dozen real hart jars is yours, Master Fish," repeated Gosling almost pleadingly. "Wich is a gift."

"Look here, Gosling," exclaimed Fish briskly, "I guess threepence is my limit. I guess I've got no time to argue the point. Nope! But Fisher T. Fish—that's me—is not out to rob you. I'll give you threepence, and throw in a jar of Growo cream just for luck. I calculate that's all I'm open to do, so you can take it or leave it."

Gosling scowled.

But it seemed that the American junior meant what he said.

The school porter decided to take it, before Fish changed his mind again and left it.

"And over the threepence!" he exclaimed ungraciously. "Wich is a bare-faced robbery all the same. All boys ought to be drowned at birth, a swindling of a 'ard-working porter."

Fisher T. Fish extracted three pennies from his vest-pocket and handed them to Gosling.

"And now where's this cream?" demanded the porter.

With seeming reluctance Fisher T. Fish produced the sample jar of Growo presented to him by Mr. Hunk P. Dunk.

"I guess this Growo is worth half a dollar a jar," he exclaimed. "I reckon I was rash to promise you that, too. However, I calculate I always keep my word. Yes, sir! I guess you've caught me, Gossy. But I don't bear any malice, not on you. Here it is."

Gosling took the hair cream with a grunt and examined it curiously. The jar was almost identical in appearance with those which had contained the face cream. Gosling dropped it into a pocket, snorted again, and left the yard, leaving Fisher T. Fish to collect his empty jars, and convey them to his study as best he could.

"It worked like a blessed charm," grinned Fisher T. Fish to himself when the porter had gone. "I calculate I killed two eagles with one arrow that time. I guess I'm slick. Oh, gee!"

The Removite collected his jars, and, carefully placing them in a small sack, made his way back towards the School House.

He felt that he had done a very good day's work indeed.

He had secured two dozen empty jars, and Gosling's services as a demonstrator of Growo, all for the absurd price of threepence. When the rest of the Removites saw the effect of the Growo on Gosling's scalp, Fish had little doubt that an instant demand for Growo would follow, and the two dozen jars would then come in very useful.

"Oh, I'm slick!" murmured Fish again. "You trust your little Fisher!" Fish walked on with a cheerful face.



The idea to smite Fish's face occurred to both Cherry and Bulstrode at precisely the same moment—and they reached back their fists to hit out. But Fish's brain had been working like lightning—and he ducked. The next second there sounded two heavy thuds and two loud howls. Biff! "Yaroooh!" howled Cherry and Bulstrode in unison. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the spectators in delight. "They've hit each other on the boko!" (See Chapter 3.)

The Close was pretty full of juniors.

"There he is!"

"Got any more scalps, Fishy?"

"Heap big chief pull paleface's hair!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fish scowled.

"Beat it!" he snorted.

"What about the Growo?" demanded Micky Desmond.

"I guess it's the real goods!" exclaimed Fish. "You jays don't know a good thing when you're on it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Nearly all the Remove had heard of Fish's little publicity campaign earlier in the afternoon, and great was their mirth. They had heard of the American junior and his wonderful schemes before. Growo, they thought, was just another of his schemes to separate them from their cash. That the hair cream the American junior proposed to make would really make their hair grow was a point they were far from being convinced upon.

"Quit the laffing!" exclaimed Fish. "I calculate you jays think I'm trying to pull the wool on you about this Growo, but I'm not. I guess it's the real, hall-marked, side-kicking, he-man dope every time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you guys don't believe me, just keep an eye on Gosling. I reckon Gosling is some wise guy. Did he laugh when I offered to trade him some Growo? No, sirree!"

"I guess he just cried!" mimicked Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He jumped at it!" went on Fish, glaring. "That shows real hoss sense. I guess at this moment Gosling's head is a flies' skating-rink. But by this time to-morrow I calculate his dome will be covered with a growth of real hardy hair."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors roared.

"Poor old Gossy!"

"I guess seeing is believing," exclaimed Fish. "I don't ask you to take my word about Growo. Nope! I guess that mixture can speak for itself every time."

"Look here, Fishy," said Peter Todd, pushing his way through the crowd. "Do you really mean to say you've given some of this stuff you've been telling us about to Gosling?"

"Sure," agreed Fish. "You guys don't believe in it, so I'm not asking you to buy it any more until you've seen what it'll do. I guess that's fair."

Peter Todd nodded.

"It sounds straight," he agreed. "I'd just as soon use your stuff as Mrs. Mimble's brilliantine, if it's just as good."

"I'll say nothing could be worse," said Fish.

"My hat, you're right!" grinned Hazeldene. "The last bottle of stuff I bought made me smell like a fried-fish shop."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I'm not going bald," laughed Peter Todd. "But I'll tell you what I'll

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 920.

do. If this blessed Growo of yours makes any hair grow on Gosling's napper, then you can put me down for a couple of jars."

"Same here!" exclaimed Hazeldene.

"I'll take a jar on the same terms," grinned Dick Penfold.

"Begorra, an' 'tis meself as will have a jar intoirely," said Micky Desmond, "but only when I've seen it work on the darlint Gossy."

"Waal, now you're talking," grinned Fisher T. Fish, with a pleased expression. "I guess you jays have got more sense than I thought."

"Go hon!"

"Yep. When you see Gosling tomorrow you'll all double your orders before the first issue is snapped up."

And with his lean features creased with smiles, the business man of the Remove continued on his way to the School House.

"Well, I'm thumped!" gasped Peter Todd, when he had gone. "I wonder if Fishy really has struck a winner this time?"

"It seems fair enough, as he said," put in Hazeldene. "I don't suppose he'd tell us he'd given any to Gosling unless he felt pretty certain it's good stuff."

"Nunno!"

"We shall see what happens to Gossy, anyhow," grinned Dick Penfold. "Come on, chaps, let's get in to tea."

Still discussing Fisher T. Fish and his much boosted Growo, the juniors went.

The rest of the evening passed very pleasantly for Fisher T. Fish.

The news that he had given some of the Growo to the school porter quickly spread round the rest of the Form. It certainly looked that the American junior's offer to the juniors had been a genuine one.

And by the time the bell sounded for bed, subject to the Growo proving successful on the school porter, every junior had promised to purchase a jar, even including Cherry and Bulstrode.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Gosling is Angry!

"W'ICH I'm werry hartful, I am!" William Gosling uttered that remark as he undressed, ready for bed.

Gosling was feeling very pleased with himself.

As a rule he disposed of his empty face-cream jars to a rag-and-bone merchant from the village for a half-penny a dozen. But in his little deal with Fisher T. Fish he had succeeded in making an extra penny—not to mention the jar of Growo the American junior had so generously thrown in.

"Master Fish thought he was a-catchin' of me," went on Gosling to himself. "But I wasn't born yesterday!"

And the school porter chuckled again.

He withdrew the jar of Growo Fish had given him from his pocket, and placed it on the windowledge over the sink in the scullery of his lodge, where he kept his shaving tackle.

He then glanced at the alarm clock over his little kitchen mantelpiece.

It was well past midnight.

Gosling gave a gasp.

He had to be up, dressed and shaved, ready to start his duties for the day by six in the morning. As a rule Gosling retired to bed soon after ten. But even then he could only rise by a great effort.

He realised that, owing to the lateness of the hour, it was somewhat problematical whether he would be able to wake

at six, much less be up, dressed and shaved.

"I'd better shave before I go to bed, in case of accidents," he murmured. "It won't be so bad if I do overdo it then."

The school porter busied himself obtaining some hot water. Then, having lathered his face, he carefully commenced to shave. Among his other troubles Gosling suffered from a very stiff beard, and the process of shaving was always a long and trying business. But at length the ordeal was over, and, with a sigh of relief, he reached out for the jar of Growo Fish had given him. Without troubling to read the directions printed on the label, Gosling scooped out a generous quantity on his forefinger and commenced to massage it into his smarting face.

"W'ich I'd run right hout of cream," he murmured, "this 'as come in werry useful."

Gosling jumped into bed.

Five minutes later a series of loud snores denoted that he was safe in the arms of Morpheus.

It could not at any time be said of Gosling that he slept with one eye open. But, with the comforting knowledge that he had saved a quarter of an hour in the morning by shaving before retiring, the school-porter slept like a log.

At length the first cold grey flush of dawn illuminated his bed-room through the long lodge windows.

Trrrrrrring!

The alarm-clock, set for half-past five, broke the stillness of the early morn.

But if Gosling heard, he heeded not.

Instead, he turned over, and, pulling the bedclothes above his head, continued to sleep. Another half an hour passed, but Gosling, like Rip Van Winkle, slept on.

He did not sleep on for long, however. Several minutes later there sounded a frenzied jangling of the lodge bell.

Clang, clang, clang!

It was Trotter, the school page.

He had been sent by Mrs. Kebble, the worthy Greyfriars housekeeper, to see why the porter had not reported for his early morning tasks in the school kitchen.

"The lazy 'ound!" murmured the page disgustedly. "'E ain't hup yet. I'll wake 'im!"

And once again Trotter tugged at the bell.

Clang, clang, clang!

Trotter tugged at the bell for three minutes without stopping.

The din he created was enough to wake the Seven Sleepers themselves.

It certainly woke William Gosling.

The school porter jumped suddenly from his bed and flung open the door of his lodge.

"Wot I sez is this 'ere—" he began.

But the rest of his sentence was interrupted by a sudden yell of fear from Trotter.

"Ooooooooooer!" he gasped, his eyes almost starting from his head, and a trembling forefinger pointing at Gosling's face. "Yooooop! Ooooooooooer! Whatissit!"

Gosling stared.

"Wot I ses—"

"Ow! Don't! Keep away!" almost shrieked the page, staring at the porter much after the manner a fat rabbit is supposed to gaze at a starved boa-constrictor. "Yarooooogh!"

And Trotter let off another yell of fear, which echoed across the Close until it could almost be heard in the school building itself.

"My honly 'at!" gasped Gosling, in amazement. "Wot's hun now?"

The school porter advanced on to the step of the lodge with the intention of gripping the page by the shoulder and demanding the reason of his consternation. But even as he did so, with another terrified yell, Trotter turned and fled.

"Whoooooooooer! Ooooooooooer! Keep-inoff!"

"Hi! Come back!" shouted Gosling angrily.

But Trotter did not come back.

Instead, he put on every ounce of speed he could, and vanished out of sight, yelling like a youth possessed.

"My 'at!" gasped Gosling again. "'E's gorn balmy! That's wot it is! My 'at!"

With a puzzled frown the porter re-entered his lodge, and commenced to dress. He fastened his collar round his neck and approached the mirror of his dressing-table to adjust his tie.

As he did so a bearded face loomed up before him, surrounded by a bald head!

Gosling blinked, and spun round in alarm, as though expecting to see someone peering over his shoulder.

But the bed-room was empty save for himself.

"Ho!" gasped Gosling fearfully.

He faced the mirror again—and once more the bearded face leered at him!

His heart, thudding rapidly, Gosling pressed his face to within a few inches of the mirror and blinked.

The bearded face blinked back at him!

Gosling placed his hand to his chin—the figure in the glass did the same.

For a moment the school porter wondered whether he was suffering from a particularly bad form of nightmare.

Then the horrible truth flashed suddenly upon him.

The face was his own, and it was covered with a thick growth of beard!

"Whooooo! Haaaaaaa!" he yelled, in amazement and fear.

Gosling certainly presented an extraordinary spectacle. The beard was at least three inches long, and was standing out from his face like fur on the back of a frightened cat. At that moment Gosling resembled nothing so much as a bloodthirsty Bolshevik on the warpath.

He took another hurried glance at himself in the glass, and with a sudden roar of rage, dashed from his lodge and across the Close in the direction of the main school buildings.

"It's that dratted Fish!" he yelled. "I'll slaughter him!"

Gosling sped up the School House steps and along the passage to the Remove dormitory, and violently pushed open the door.

Crash!

The rising-bell had not yet sounded, but several juniors, including the Famous Five and Peter Todd, were already sitting up in bed rubbing the sleep from their eyes.

They gave a yell of alarm.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo—"

"What's the game!"

"What I sez is this 'ere," roared Gosling at the top of his voice. "Where's that dratted Fish? W'ich I'll slaughter 'im, I will!"

"Gossy!" ejaculated Peter Todd, recognising the porter's voice.

The next moment the juniors made out the porter's bearded face.

A gasp of amazement escaped them.

"My giddy aunt!"

"What the thump—"

"The thumpfulness is terrific!"

The juniors stared.

"Where's that dratted Fish?" yelled Gosling again shaking both fists in the

air at the same moment. "Wot I sez is—"

But the rest of the porter's sentence was cut short by a loud yell of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Trotter!"

"Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites jumped up and down on their beds and simply howled with mirth. They could not help it. The infuriated porter, with his shaggy beard and bald head, was more than they could stand—so they howled again.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Their yells of laughter, coupled with Gosling's shouts, aroused the rest of the Form, and within three minutes of Gosling's entry into the dormitory, the entire Remove was wide awake, and rocking with uncontrollable laughter, which echoed and re-echoed down the passages.

"Guy Fawkes!"

"Get your hair cut!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wich it's that face-cream that dratted Fish gave me!" yelled Gosling, dancing around like a cat on a hot stove. "Wich I shaved and used it last night. Wot I ses is this 'ere—"

"Where's Fish?" yelled several voices.

Fisher T. Fish, who had taken refuge behind a dressing-table, in case of accidents, peered over the top, almost choking with mirth.

"I guess I'm right here!" he exclaimed. "I guess that guy Gosling is crazy! I reckon I didn't hand him any face-cream—not on yours!"

Gosling blinked.

"It was that little jar wot you gave me!" gasped the porter.

"Hully gee!" gasped Fish, enlightenment suddenly breaking in on him. "You don't mean to say you used that on your face?"

"Of course I did—"

Fisher T. Fish stared for a moment and tried to speak. But his words spluttered and trailed off into another roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha! You silly jay! I guess that was Growo for the head, not the face. Jumping Jerusalem! He thought it was face-cream!"

And the Transatlantic junior went off into another roar of nasal laughter.

"W-w-ich it w-wasn't f-face-cream, Master Fish!" gasped Gosling in a shaky voice. "W-w-ich it—"

"No, ass! I calculate that's where you got left. That was Growo for the hair. I didn't tell you it was face-cream. If you'd read the directions on the jar you'd have seen it was for the head. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ho!" gasped Gosling. "Har!"

The porter gazed pitifully at the Removites, but they only roared again.

"Ho!" gasped Gosling again. "Har! Not for the face, but for the 'ead! My honly 'at!"

Gosling rose from the bed on to which he had collapsed, and staggered slowly out of the dormitory.

The juniors watched him go with broad grins.

"Har!" came his voice in mournful tone from the end of the passage some moments later. "Not for the face, but for the 'ead!"

"My only sainted aunt!" gasped Harry Wharton, when the last sounds from the porter had died away. "If that doesn't take the whole blessed biscuit factory."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors turned to Fisher T. Fish. "Your blessed Growo hasn't worked out quite as it should," grinned Peter Todd. "But it wasn't your fault Gossy put it on his face instead of his head.

I consider Growo has passed its test with flying colours. My order still stands."

"Same here!" shouted several voices.

"Sure!" agreed Fish genially. "I guess I've proved it's the real goods—every time."

"You have," grinned Bulstrode.

"And you can lemme have a jar as soon as you've made some more."

The juniors dressed and went down to breakfast.

But the appetite of Fisher T. Fish was very small that morning. He was too excited to eat. His great scheme to demonstrate the merits of the wonderful Growo had worked better than he had ever hoped for, even if not in quite the way he had anticipated. It seemed to Fish that everything in the garden was lovely.

All he had to do now was to manufacture some Growo from Mr. Hunk P. Dunk's formula Chief Why-be-Bald had so kindly presented to him, and his fortune was as good as made.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Fish Gets Busy!

"PHEW!"

"Great Scott!"

"What a whiff!"

"The whiffulness is terrific!"

Those exclamations, and many similar ones echoed along the Remove passage.

It was tea-time, and most of the Removites were having tea in their studies, or, at least, they had been until a few moments before.

But now many of them were standing at the doors of their studies, wrath and indignation in their faces.

Harry Wharton & Co. stood holding their nostrils between their forefingers and thumbs.

On each of their faces was an expression of repugnance and mystification. They had been in the middle of tea, when a smell such as they had never smelt before smote their unoffending and non-inquisitive nasal organs.

There was something about the smell in question that marked it as an out-cast. Certainly it was not included in anything they had ever succeeded in producing in the school laboratory, and certainly no tan-yard odour would have admitted it even as a distant relative.

It was, indeed, a nasty and overpowering smell, which was strangely reminiscent of both sour paraffin and hot glue.

"Phew!" ejaculated Johnny Bull. "It hums!"

"Like a blessed top!" added Frank Nugent.

"Or a polecat!"

The Famous Five dragged their handkerchiefs from their jacket-pockets and buried their noses in them.



"My honly 'at!" gasped Gosling in amazement. "Wot's hup now?" The school porter advanced to the step of his Lodge with the intention of gripping the page by the shoulder and demanding the reason of his consternation. But even as he did so Trotter let out a terrific yell and fled. "Who-oooooooo!" he shrieked. "Oooooooooo! Keepimoff!" "My 'at!" gasped Gosling, in surprise. "'E's gorn balmy! That's wot's the matter with 'im!" (See Chapter 5.)

"The dishonourable odourfulness seems to be approachfully coming from somewhere up the esteemed passage, my worthy chums," gasped Hurree Jamset Ram Singh through his handkerchief. "I proposefully suggest we amble along and locatefully find it."

"Good egg!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Bad egg, you mean!" snorted Harry Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five proceeded slowly up the passage in the direction whence they judged the strange odour emanated. But when they reached Study No. 13, the apartment occupied by Fisher Tarleton Fish, the hustling junior from U.S.A., they came to a halt. And behind them, also attracted by the strange smell, halted a number of other Removites.

"My hat, it's ripe!" choked Ogilvy.

"Not as bad as it was, though."

"It must be that ass Fish."

"Let's see what he's up to."

Without standing upon ceremony the Removites pushed open the door of the American junior's study and walked in—at least, they commenced to walk in. But when they had advanced a couple of paces they started back with exclamations of astonishment.

And well they might. For standing before the study fireplace, his Eton jacket off, and the sleeves of his shirt rolled up above his scraggy elbows, stood the one and only Fisher T. Fish himself.

In one hand he held a large wooden spoon, while in the other was a bottle of some pungent essence, some of which he dropped into the mysterious concoction he was stirring in a great enamel pan on the fire.

And behind him, working at the study table, their waists adorned with aprons made from an old sugar sack, stood Dicky Nugent and his two pals, Gatty and Myers of the Second, busily engaged in ladling some mysterious mixture from a large biscuit tin into a number of little jars.

Fisher T. Fish and the three fags seemed deeply immersed in their labours. The Famous Five had been in the study some moments before any of the quartette so much as noticed them.

Harry Wharton & Co. stared.

"What's the game, Fish?" demanded Bob Cherry suddenly. "Trying to make poison gas?"

The American junior looked up and observed the Famous Five for the first time.

"Great snakes!" he gasped. "I guess I didn't lamp you jays standing there. I kinder calculate I'm real busy, yes, sirree! And when little Fisher is busy, he's busy."

"Go hon!" murmured Frank Nugent faintly.

"You don't say so!"

"Look here, Fishy!" snorted Harry Wharton, "what's the blessed idea, anyhow? You stunk the whole passage out, and now we want to know the reason for it."

Fisher T. Fish grinned.

"I guess I've no time to chew a piece of speech with you guys!" he exclaimed, stirring briskly the concoction in the pan on the fire. "I calculate I'm real busy, as I said. You grease right outa this factory, and leave me and my staff—that's young Nugent and his pals—to get on with the Growo."

"Growo!" gasped Johnny Bull in amazement.

"You don't mean to say that horrible muck you've got in the pan is Growo?"

"Sure!" agreed Fish. "All being made according to the formula presented to my Uncle Hiram by Chief Why-be-Bald of the Thatcho Indians, whose life he saved when he was a trader out West. I guess that's it!"

Harry Wharton & Co. looked first at the three perspiring fags, and then at Fisher T. Fish. The next moment they went off into a wild yell of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Phew!"

"So that's the stink!"

"The honourable stink is terrific!"

"Tain't no laffing matter!" grunted Fish. "I guess this hyer Growo is the real gold-mounted goods."

"And I guess it's caused a real gold-mounted stink!" coughed Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yep—nope!" gasped Fisher T. Fish hurriedly. "I guess that Growo is the goods. What you jays niffed was a little that kinder boiled over, I guess. Jeyver get left?"

"Oh, I see," murmured Frank Nugent faintly. "It kinder boiled over, did it?"

"I say, Franky, cut the cackle and buzz off!"

The voice was that of Dicky, Frank Nugent's minor.

So far, the three fags had taken no notice of the Removites present, but had stuck assiduously to their task. But now Dicky turned and glared at his major angrily.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" grinned Bob Cherry. "The nursery's woke up!"

The Famous Five turned and gazed at the three fags with amused grins.

"Run away and look in a mirror if you want to be funny, Cherry!" snorted Dicky. "You're interrupting the business. Gatty, Myers, and I are on piece-work—"

"On what work?" demanded Johnny Bull in amazement.

"Piece-work!" snorted Dicky Nugent.

"No work, no pay—that's the idea. The more we do the more we earn and the sooner we get away."

"Oh, my giddy aunt!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's the joke?" demanded Dicky wrathfully. "We get a halfpenny a dozen for filling the jars, and a halfpenny a dozen for fixing the labels and shoving on the covers. The more we do the more we earn—see? Then you silly asses come in and interrupt!"

"Sorry!" chuckled Johnny Bull.

"That explains why they're so blessed industrious, then."

"Look here!" roared Fisher T. Fish suddenly. "You jaspers are interfering with the work of this hyer factory. Leave my staff alone and beat it."

"Right-ho!" grinned Bob Cherry. "We will. It smells a bit too whiffy in here to induce anyone to stay very long."

"Hear, hear!"

"Yep. I guess you can go and beat up the other guys and let 'em know Growo's on its way," said the American junior, pitching the contents of the pan into an empty bowl. "At the rate we are working I aim to execute all orders before bed-time. Now grease right outa the factory till you are notified that this hyer Growo is all ready for issue."

"Come on, chaps!" grinned Harry Wharton. "If I stay in this blessed study much longer I shall suffocate. Phew!"

"Hear, hear!"

And with that the Famous Five left the newly-established factory where the priceless Growo was being prepared according to the formula of the chief of the Thatcho Indians, and made their way out into the passage again.

They had not gone far, however, when they encountered Alonzo Todd, the duffer of Greyfriars.

Alonzo was walking up and down the passage, carrying aloft a torch of smouldering brown paper. "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry, in a stentorian voice. "What's this game, Toddy?"

Alonzo turned to the Famous Five with a beaming smile.

"I am obliging Skinner, my dear Form-fellows!" he exclaimed. "Skinner pointed out that the odour of brown paper is an excellent fumigator, my dear fellows, and he asked me if I would be good enough to walk up and down with this torch in order to dispel the disgusting odour which I now perceive to have emanated from the study of our American cousin, Fish."

"Oh, he did, did he?" gasped Bob.

"Yes, Cherry. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me to oblige my fellow-men whenever possible."

"Not really, Toddy?"

"Yes, really. So as Skinner was unable through pressure of preparation for to-morrow's lessons to carry out the fumigation himself, I am doing it for him. I am sure my Uncle Benjamin would approve of my action. Do you not think so, my dear Cherry?"

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Bob Cherry was about to make some reply when the brown-paper torch in Alonzo's hand commenced to fizz and splutter.

"Dear me!" murmured Todd, in astonishment. "How extraordinary!"

"Run!" yelled Bob Cherry suddenly. And the Famous Five ran.

They were only just in time.

Even as they did so there came a loud report from behind them.

Crack!

"I thought as much," gasped Bob Cherry, almost choking with laughter. "Skinner's been pulling the silly ass' leg again. There's a cracker in that torch he gave him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It seemed that Bob was right. There came a yell of alarm from Alonzo, followed by several reports in rapid succession.

Crack, crack, crack!

The Famous Five halted and turned their gaze back up the passage. The next moment they broke into a yell of laughter.

The cracker, which was of the jumping variety, had worked loose from the torch, and was fizzing and cracking on the floor between Alonzo's feet.

"Dear me!" gasped the Duffer. "Wow!"

Crack, crack, crack!

"Yaroooh!"

The cracker was leaping about in all directions—and so was Alonzo. Whatever direction he moved in, the cracker, as though imbued with understanding, followed.

Crack, crack, crack!

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Harry Wharton & Co.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came an echoing shout from the study occupied by Harold Skinner and his two precious pals, Stott and Snoop.

"Go it, Alonzo!"

But Alonzo had had enough. He turned and fled up the passage, and a series of loud bumps announced that he was descending the stairs in a speedy if unorthodox manner.

The Famous Five trooped into Study No. 1, grinning.

"Well, Fishy has indirectly cheered things up a bit one way and another, if he's done nothing else," grinned Frank Nugent.

"Hear, hear!"

The juniors continued their interrupted tea discussing the American junior's latest exploit in excited tones.

Meanwhile, in Study No. 13, Fisher T. Fish worked away industriously. Several hours passed until at length the wonderful Growo was finished and potted all ready for sale.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Big Business!

POM-TI-LL-OM-POM!
"What the thump—"

Crash, bang, ta-ra, ta-ra!

It was several hours after tea, and Harry Wharton & Co. were busily engaged on their preparation in Study No. 1, when a terrific noise echoed up the Remove passage.

Tootle, tootle, toot!

The Famous Five listened, their brows knit in puzzlement.

"Roll up, roll up, roll up!"

"This way for the Growo!"

"Fishy!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He said he'd notify us when he was ready!"

"He's doing it, too!" chuckled Frank Nugent.

"Let's get along and see him!"



Crack, crack, crack! The Famous Five halted in astonishment and gazed up the passage. The next moment they broke into a yell of laughter, for the cracker, which was of the jumping variety, had worked loose from the torch, and was fizzing and cracking on the floor between Alonzo's feet. "Dear me!" gasped the Duffer. "Wow!" Crack, crack, crack! "Yaroooh!" The cracker was leaping about in all directions—and so was Alonzo! (See Chapter 6.)

Headed by the captain of the Remove, the Famous Five left their study and dashed out into the passage. When they reached the study occupied by the American junior they found nearly half the Form crowded round the doorway.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Gangway, there!"

"Don't shove, Cherry!" shouted Ogilvy. "Take your turn!"

"Rats!"

"We ordered our Growo first!" hooted Dick Penfold.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

By the vigorous use of arms and elbows the Famous Five pushed their way through the crowd until they observed the lean form of Fisher T. Fish standing behind the study table which had been drawn across the doorway to act as a counter.

In one hand the hustling American junior held a large wooden rattle, while in the other was a brass bugle upon which he was blowing loud blasts from time to time to attract attention.

"Roll up, roll up!" he shouted, as he observed Harry Wharton & Co. "Any more for the Growo? Walk right into the stall, gents, the sale is about to commence."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Fishy!"

On the table before him Fish had a number of little jars on which was

stamped a picture of a Red Indian chief in full war paint, presumably a likeness of the great Chief Why-be-bald of the redoubtable Thatcho Indians.

When Fisher T. Fish did a thing he believed in doing it properly. And he felt that the pictures of the Redskins on the jars, which had been obtained by the use of a penny sheet of transfers purchased at the tuckshop, was a real cute touch.

"Come along, gents!" howled Fish, in a high nasal voice. "This way for the Growo! I guess the sale has now commenced!"

The Removites grinned.

"He's certainly doing the thing in style!" laughed Peter Todd.

"Hear, hear!"

"Buck up, Fish, me darlint!" yelled Micky Desmond. "It'll be bed-time in a minute, bejabbers!"

As he spoke, the Irish junior planked down a shilling, and Fisher T. Fish pushed a jar of Growo towards him.

Desmond picked it up and pushed his way out of the crowd, grinning.

Within a few minutes the Removites were raining shillings upon the business man of the Remove as fast as he could handle them, receiving in exchange a jar of the wonderful Growo.

(Continued on page 16.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 620.



No. 241.

THE GREYFRIARS HERALD

HARRY WHARTON, EDITOR

Week Ending Sept. 26th.



EDITORIAL!

By

HARRY WHARTON

The Menagerie in No. 1 Study!

PETS I PREFER!

Some like dogs,
and some like cats,
Some like mice,
and other—Rats!

PETS, unlike the poor, are not always with us. Frequently they have to be got rid of. Only the most tame and docile of pets are tolerated at Greyfriars. You don't see wild monkeys performing acrobatics in the Remove Form-room, or fierce bulldogs stalking round the corridors. Neither do you see tiger-cubs prowling in the Close, or sea-serpents rearing their ugly heads from the basin of the school fountain. Which is, perhaps, just as well.

Few things provide a more striking contrast than different fellows' tastes in pets. One fellow will have a warm corner in his heart for bunnies, whilst another will prefer a regiment of white mice. Some fellows love cats, others "can't abide 'em," as Gosling would say.

"Judge a fellow by the pets he keeps." This is a variation of an old proverb, and it contains a deal of truth. You can often size up a fellow's character by the sort of pet he prefers. Here are a few striking illustrations:

Bob Cherry, any lively type of terrier; Johnny Bull, bulldog; Percy Bolsover, pugdog; Billy Bunter, cormorant; Harold Skinner, snake; Alonzo Todd, turtle dove; Wun Lung, monkey.

I could extend this list almost indefinitely, and in every case you would find that the animal or bird had the same characteristics as the fellow who fancied it.

There was a time when Study No. 1 in the Remove passage was a sort of menagerie—a Zoological Gardens in miniature. Bob Cherry started the pet-collecting craze by adopting a stray fox-terrier. Then Nugent brought a black cat on the scene—for luck, as he explained. Certainly the furry beast brought us luck, but it was the wrong sort.

Hurree Singh added to our collection of pets by procuring a parrot from a bird-fancier's at Courtfield. The parrot was supposed to be a voluble talker—in fact, a perfect politician of a parrot. But he was as dumb as a dead fowl when Inky brought him to Study No. 1. He just blinked at us solemnly through the bars of his cage, and shook his poll in a grave, reproachful sort of way. But he said nothing. As time went on he picked up a few expressions, such as "The something-or-other is terrific!"

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and "Here comes the Quelchy bird!" Unfortunately, the last-named remark was overheard one day by Mr. Quelch, who strongly resented being referred to as a feathered biped, and to having a "y" tacked on to his surname.

A pugdog of Johnny Bull's, and a hedgehog which I had rescued from being run over by a motor in Friardale Lane, completed our menagerie.

Of course, there was trouble—lots of it, shoals of it. The pugdog was constantly at war with the black cat, and the black cat was constantly at loggerheads with the parrot, and the terrier was at war with the whole lot. Now, there were only two of the pets who had a right to be in Study No. 1—my hedgehog and Nugent's black cat. I ordered Bob Cherry and Hurree Singh to transfer the terrier and the parrot to Study No. 13, and I commanded Johnny Bull to take his pugnacious pug to his own study. A quarrel ensued, in which all the pets joined, and my study was transformed into quite a babel of yapping and snapping and shrieking and squeaking.

The climax came when Mr. Prout had occasion to pay a friendly visit to Study No. 1. He seated his plump person in the armchair, without troubling to see if the chair was already occupied. It was—by my hedgehog! Mr. Prout was punctured in about fifteen places, and he leapt to his feet, breathing threatenings and slaughter.

"Monstrous! Outrageous!" he stormed, caressing his injuries. "Who is the owner of this hedgehog?"

"I am, sir," I said meekly.

"Then you will restore it to its natural environment, Wharton, and take a hundred lines!"

So I had to send my prickly pet packing, and in due course Bob Cherry was ordered to get rid of his terrier, and Johnny Bull his pug, and Inky his parrot, and Nugent his black cat. I believe that black cat was the cause of all the trouble. I don't like cats. There's something supernatural and sinister about them. Anyway, as soon as Nugent disposed of his black cat, harmony took the place of discord, and peace prevailed once more in Study No. 1.

HARRY WHARTON.

FRANK NUGENT:

A handsome Persian cat, with fur as smooth as silk, and with eyes that shine in the dark—that's my idea of the Perfect Pet. I used to possess a Persian, and it would snuggle at my feet on a winter evening while I did my prep. Felicia—that was her name—was indeed a beauty. On one occasion she went along to Study No. 7 and gobbled up Peter Todd's goldfish—which showed that she had excellent taste. Felicia also had designs on Tom Brown's canary, and that bright-coloured warbler nearly lost its life on several occasions. It lost a good many feathers as it was! Finally, I was ordered to get rid of Felicia, who broke the Eighth Commandment too frequently for the liking of study-owners. We have no pets in Study No. 1 now, except carpets!

DICKY NUGENT:

What my major Frank says about Cats is all Tommy Rott. Cats are sly, slinking, stealthy creatures, and awful Theeves into the bargain. They will steal anything. I once saw a Cat steal upstairs, and then it promptly stole downstairs again! myself, I prefer White Mice for pets. I used to keep quite an army of them, but they mysteriously vanished after my major brought his Persian Catt to the school. If I thought for one moment that Frank's Catt had anything to do with their disappearance, I'd sue him for dammdiges!

WUN LUNG:

Me velly fond of monkeys. Me tinko they are topping pets. They jumpee-jumpee, and climbee-climbee, and they simply love to crackee nuttee. Me ask handsome Mr. Quelchee if little Chinese might be allowed to keep a monkey at Greyfriars. Handsome Mr. Quelchee shakee his headee and say: "Certainly nottee! We have too many young monkeys hear already!" He no lettee little Chinese keep monkey, which is an awful shamee!

MICKY DESMOND:

Faith, and what's the matter with a big fat rat? Lots of spalpeens despise rats, but, shure, I think they are noble creatures. You ought to see 'em fight when they're cornered! I always enjoy reading about the rats in "The Pied Piper of Hamelin"—how they fought the dogs and killed the cats, and licked the cheeses out of the vats, made nests inside men's Sunday hats, and even spoiled the women's chats, etc. I only wish somebody would make me a present of a nice pink rat—

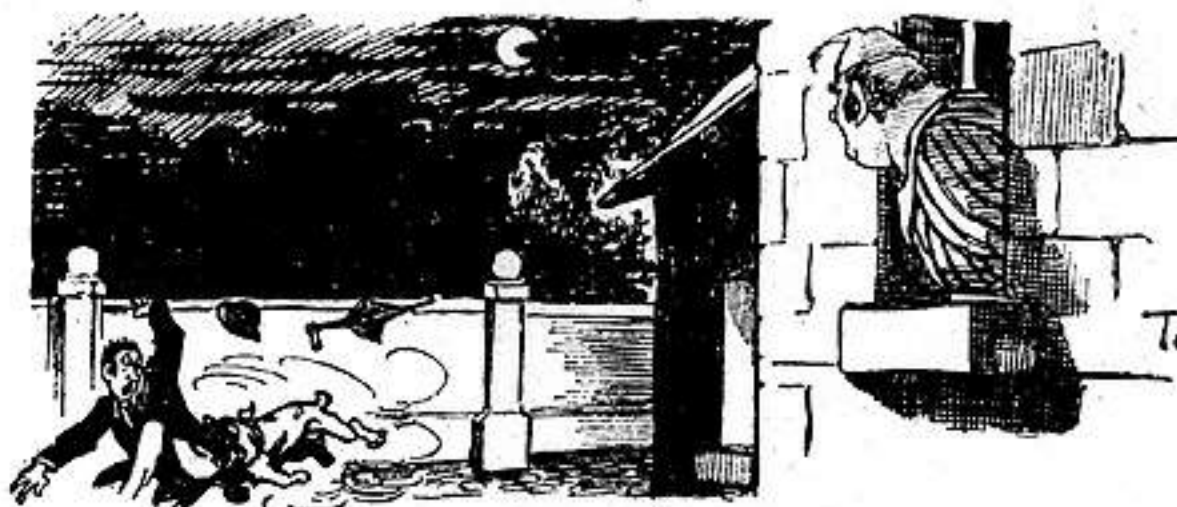
(Stop going into raptures over rats, Micky, or I shall get quite "ratty."—Ed.)

PERCY BOLSOVER:

A pug-dog wants a lot of beating. (Oh, does it? If ever I catch you beating a pug-dog, Bolsover, I'll report you to the S.P.C.A.—Ed.)

BILLY BUNTER:

There's hardly any need for me to point out that my favorite pet it a crum-pet!



Pets and Pests!

By
TOM BROWN

*An Interview with
Gosling the Porter.*

IT was a summer evening, old Gosling's work was done, and he before his parlour door was scowling at the sun.

Rather a poetic setting, what? But I had no time for poetry just then. I had come to interview William Gosling on business.

"Good-evening, Gossy!" I said, producing my inevitable notebook and pencil.

"Huh!" said Gosling.

"It must be rather ripping," I remarked, "when the toil of a long day is o'er, to stand in one's doorway, squinting at the setting sun, and listening to the melodious pipings of the birds."

"Huh!" said Gosling, with a glare. "Don't you talk to me about birds, Master Brown. They reminds me hun-pleasantly of a bird wot I 'ad once—a pesterin' parrot, to be precise."

"Oh, good!" I exclaimed. "We've got on to the very subject I came to see you about—the subject of pets. I want to collect your views on same, and pass them on to the readers of the 'Herald.' So you once possessed a parrot, Gossy?"

"Yus!" grunted Gosling, scowling savagely at the recollection. "I seed a parrot goin' cheap, over at Courtfield one day, so I bought it, an' fetched it 'ome. I 'ung it in the porch 'ere, jest above where you're standin', Master Brown. I thought it would cheer me up a bit with its chatter of an evenin'."

"And didn't it?" I asked.

"No, it never!" said Gosling fiercely. "That there parrot would 'ave been quite all right under my tootition. I'd 'ave taught it to say bootiful things in a bootiful way. But the young rips in your Form, Master Brown, hinterfered with my parrot, an' taught it all manner of himpertinent epitaphs."

"You mean epithets, surely?"

"That's wot I said. They taught it to say 'Rats!' and 'Go an' eat coke!' an' other slangy hexpressions of that sort. It was hawful! One night the 'Ead come in rather late—after the gates was locked. 'E rang the bell, but I was sleepin' too sound to 'ear it. 'Gosling!' 'e shouts, 'pray come an' unlock these 'ere gates!' 'Rats!' says the parrot. 'Go an' eat coke!' The 'Ead nearly falls down in a fit. 'Gosling!' 'e gasps, 'is that himpertinence proceedin' from your lips?' 'Bow-wow!' says the parrot. 'Goslin!' roars the 'Ead, 'you shall be given a month's notice for this outrage!' 'That's the stuff to give 'em!' says the parrot. The 'Ead dances an' prances about houtside the gates in a fury. Presently I wakes up an' goes down to unlock the gates, an' the 'Ead tells me 'ow 'e 'as been

hinsulted. 'E repeats the parrot's hexpressions, an' I hapologises on be'alf of the bloomin' bird. 'Gosling,' says the 'Ead, 'I am surprised at you, trainin' your parrot to make use of disrespectful epitaphs.' 'It wasn't me, sir,' I protests. 'It was them young rips in the Remove.'"

"And what did the Head say to that?" I inquired.

"'E never said nothin'." 'E jest glared, an' stamped off into the 'ouse in an 'uff. Next mornin' 'e sends for me, an' 'e says, 'I am very angry, Gosling, at wot occurred last night. I must request you to dispose of your parrot at once.' I done so, an' the fact is, I've 'ated birds ever since."

I was scribbling away furiously in my notebook.

"What about other pets, Gossy?" I asked, after a pause. "Are you fond of dogs?"

"Dawgs!" growled Gosling. "I can't abide the yappin', snappin', snarlin' things! Wot I says is this 'ere—all dawgs oughter be drowneded before they grows from puppy'ood to dawg-'ood!"

Gosling spoke so fiercely that I could see he had another bee in his bonnet. I asked him what was his objection to dogs, and he replied:

"I once kep' a bulldawg, Master Brown. I thought 'e would come in useful to guard the place, an' give the alarm in the case of burglars. I thought I should be able to sleep sound o' nights, with the bulldawg keepin' guard down below. But the fact was, I never got a wink of sleep. That pesterin' beast, 'e barked at everythin' an' everybody. If the school clock struck—an' it strikes about thirty-two times durin' the night—the brute barked. If a motor went past, 'e barked. If the wind rustled in the branches of the elms, 'e barked. If 'e 'eard so much as a pin drop, 'e barked!"

"Then he never stopped barking?" I queried. "Sort of non-stop barker, what?"

Gosling nodded.

"I wouldn't 'ave minded so much if the dratted dawg 'ad contented 'isself with barkin'," he said. "I dessay I'd 'ave got used to it in time. But 'is bite was wuss than 'is bark, an' that's sayin' a good deal. I 'ad to keep 'im chained up durin' the day, an' woe betide anybody wot was hangin' about the school presinks at night. My dawg would see 'im off, quick an' proper."

"Then he was a treasure!" I exclaimed. "You ought never to have got rid of him, Gossy."

Gosling snorted.

"A treasure, eh? I dunno so much about that, Master Brown. One night,

when Mr. Quelch come in a bit belated-like, my dawg raises a burgular alarm with that terrifyin' bark of 'is, an' then he fairly flies at Mr. Quelch. 'E chases 'im across the Close, an' finally 'e catches Mr. Quelch by the seat of 'is trowsis. From my bed-room winder I 'ears agonisin' yells—the most 'eartrendin' yells as ever was. An' presently my dawg comes trottin' back to the lodge with a square yard of cloth in 'is fangs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" I roared.

"It ain't no larfin' matter, Master Brown. It wasn't so at the time, an' it ain't now. That dawg nearly cost me my job. Mr. Quelch sends for me in the mornin', an' 'e says, 'Gosling, I've a good mind to soo you for personal injuries, inflicted by your bulldawg, an' also for the ruination of a pair of trowsis. Unless you dispose of that dangerous brute immediately, I shall take proceedings against you.'"

"So it was good-bye to your bulldog, Gossy?"

"Yus—an' good riddance!" growled Gosling. "I was right glad to see the back—or rather, the tail—of the pesterin' warmint. I ain't never kep' a dawg from that day to this."

I grinned as I jotted down Gosling's remarks.

"Now, speaking of cats—" I began. Gosling glared.

"I ain't goin' to speak of cats!" he snarled. "I 'ates cats! If I 'ad me own way, none of the furry pests would ever develop from kitten'ood to cat'ood. They'd be drowneded in a bucket at birth, as ever was."

I didn't ask Gosling to state his objection to cats. It seemed a sore point with him.

"Do you like monkeys?" I asked.

"Monkeys!" hooted Gosling. "I've seen too much of the young monkeys in the Remove to want an interdution to the other sort."

"White mice?" I interrogated.

"Huh!"

"Tame hedgehogs?"

Snort!

"Goldfish or tadpoles?"

"Rats!"

"Oh!" I ejaculated. "I've discovered a pet that you do like, at last! Fancy you liking rats, Gossy!"

"I don't!" roared Gosling. "I was saying 'Rats!' to you, Master Brown. An' if you don't 'op it at once, an' bring this hnterview to a sudden determination—"

Gosling picked up a broomstick, and there was a menacing gleam in his eye which I could not fail to interpret.

The interview was brought to a "determination" forthwith.

FOR NEXT
WEEK:

SPECIAL "COMMON-ROOM" SUPPLEMENT.



(Continued from page 13.)

"Great snakes!" gasped Fish, making the coins up into little piles according to their denomination. "I guess this is something like—every time!"

Whatever the juniors might have thought of Fisher T. Fish and his Growo when they first heard of it, they seemed eager enough to try it now. As a rule they fought shy of any concoction offered them by the astute Fish. But they had seen it work on Gosling. After all, there was not much difference between hair which grew on the face and hair which grew on the head. And it was not Fish's fault Gosling had applied it to his face instead of his head.

They felt they were on a safe thing.

True, they were not aware that the Growo used by Gosling had been manufactured by Mr. Hunk P. Dunk instead of Fisher T. Fish. But it was a case of ignorance being bliss. Indeed, by now, many of the juniors began to feel that for once Fisher T. Fish had actually told them the truth when he had recited his story of how he came to possess the wonderful formula.

"Well, I'll risk a bob, anyhow!" grinned Harry Wharton, when nearly half the form had been supplied. "It's as cheap as the stuff Mrs. Mumble sells, and it can't be much worse."

"The cheapfulness is terrific!"

"We can easily wallop Fish afterwards if there's any catch about it!" grunted Johnny Bull, as he laid down a shilling and was presented with a jar of Growo in exchange.

"I guess there's no catch in this!" snorted Fish. "I reckon you jays saw how it worked on Gosling."

"Yes, that's true!"

The jars of Growo on Fish's table grew fewer and fewer, while the piles of cash by his side grew higher and higher. At length the last jar was disposed of, and with a lean smile of satisfaction, the junior from U.S.A. rose from his seat and carried his "counter" back into the study.

Alone in his study he commenced to check his takings. He had sold his entire stock of fifty jars, and possessed in exchange silver coins totalling in value two pounds ten shillings.

"I guess this is something like!" he murmured. "I'll say I'm the real guy for big business—every time!"

Fish had barely finished putting his study straight when the bell sounded for bed. The American junior looked up his takings in a cashbox and made his way to the Remove dormitory where he was greeted with a yell of laughter.

"Good old Fishy!"

"Got any more Growo?"

Loder of the Sixth, the prefect on duty for the night, put his head round the dormitory door.

"Stop this row, you young hooligans!" he snapped as he switched out the lights. "If there's any more disturbance, you'll hear from me!"

But despite Loder's threats, a low murmur continued to come from the Remove dormitory. At length, however, the juniors dropped off to sleep one by one until the entire dormitory was slumbering.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 920.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Trouble!

CLANG, clang, clang!
Harry Wharton sat up in bed and yawned as the clang of the rising bell sounded through the morning air.

The early sunlight was struggling in at the windows of the Remove dormitory.

Clang, clang, clang!

The bell was ringing with vicious emphasis, only too indicative of the mood William Gosling was in as he rang.

"Show a leg!" shouted Johnny Bull, stepping out of bed.

One by one the juniors turned out and commenced to wash and dress.

"Now for the Growo!" grinned Ogilvy, opening the jar of hair-cream he had purchased from Fisher T. Fish the night before.

"Good egg!"

Led by the Famous Five, several juniors dipped their forefingers into their respective pots of Growo and commenced to rub the concoction into their scalps. And within five minutes every elbow in the dormitory was working overtime.

There came a sudden yell from Billy Bunter.

"Yaroooooh!"

"What's up, porpoise?" demanded the captain of the Remove. "Been trying to eat it?"

"I say, you fellows!" gasped the Owl of the Remove, staggering blindly about the dorm. "It's all run down my forehead, and I've got some of the rotten stuff in my eyes—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Really, you chaps, I don't see anything to laugh at!"

"Look in the glass, then," advised Bob Cherry facetiously.

"Ow! Yah! Beasts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites howled.

"Never mind about that fat ass!" grunted Johnny Bull at last. "Buck up, chaps, or we shall be late for brekker."

Within a few minutes the dormitory had emptied, and the juniors were seated at the breakfast-table in the hall discussing fried bacon and coffee.

Several times during the meal Mr. Quelch, the Remove Form master, who always presided at the head of the table, elevated his sharp nose and sniffed.

Wharton grinned.

"I reckon we smell like a blessed scent factory," he whispered to Bob Cherry. "It's a pretty strong perfume Fishy has shoved into his Growo, and no mistake."

"It needed something to tone it down a bit, judging by the niff it gave when he was making it," ejaculated Peter Todd from across the table.

"My hat! Rather!"

When the meal was over the juniors rose to their feet and trooped out, followed by the grins of the rest of the school.

The Removites certainly presented an unusual spectacle.

One and all, their hair was smeared down. Some, with the aid of the Growo, had succeeded in obtaining a visible parting for the first time. Even Bob Cherry's unruly locks had yielded to the Growo until his head almost resembled a well-polished ball.

By the time the bell sounded for morning lessons and the juniors trooped into the Form-room, the heat of their heads had warmed the Growo to such an extent that many of them, who had erred on the generous side in their application of the wonderful mixture, were compelled to wipe the surplus, which had

commenced to run in rivulets down their necks with their handkerchiefs.

But if Mr. Quelch noticed anything out of the ordinary in his pupils' appearance, he made no comment.

Lessons commenced and proceeded for some time uneventfully.

After about half an hour Harry Wharton turned to Bob Cherry.

"I say, Bob," he whispered in an undertone, "my blessed napper feels a bit funny. How's yours?"

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob. "So you've got it, too! I thought it was only my imagination at first. My napper's tingling all over. It's nothing much, though. I expect it's the close atmosphere of the room."

"H'm! Very likely!"

Harry Wharton turned to the book before him again.

He concluded that the slight irritation of the scalp he was experiencing was, as Bob had said, due to the warmer atmosphere of the Form-room—possibly increased by the quantity of Growo he had used preventing the air from penetrating to his scalp.

"I expect it will pass off before long," he thought.

The tingling sensation, however, did not pass off.

Indeed, for that matter it became more acute, until eventually Wharton was scratching his head every few minutes in order to obtain relief.

The captain of the Remove glanced round curiously at the rest of the Form. He observed that several other juniors were obviously suffering from the same unpleasant sensation as himself.

"My only aunt!" he gasped. "I hope that blessed stuff of Fish's is all right."

Then he remembered Gosling's little adventure.

Apart from the growth of hair on the school porter's face he had suffered no ill effects, despite his tender skin. And if the Growo had not injured Gosling's face it was hardly likely it would hurt the juniors' scalps.

Wharton felt momentarily reassured.

The lesson that morning happened to be English history, one of Mr. Quelch's favourite subjects.

Suddenly Mr. Quelch addressed William George Bunter, who, on a pretext of fastening his shoelace, had ducked his head beneath his desk in order to have a good rub at his tingling scalp.

"Bunter," he snapped, "we were discussing the sacking of the monasteries during the Reformation. Kindly inform me what year that was in."

The Owl of the Remove rose slowly to his feet.

As a matter of fact, he had been paying very little attention to Mr. Quelch and his valuable precepts.

"I—I—I beg your pardon, sir?" he said, playing for time to think.

Mr. Quelch repeated his question.

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped the fat junior, blinking rapidly through his big spectacles. "You want to know the year, sir?"

"You heard my question, boy?"

"Y-yes, sir. C-certainly, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Answer me, then!"

The rest of the Removites turned their gaze on the fat junior.

Bunter pushed his hand through his hair as an aid to thought.

But when he lowered it again, his hair, instead of falling back into place, remained standing upright.

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Quelch in amazement.

Even as the Form-master spoke, the remainder of Bunter's mouse-coloured hair continued to rise until every strand was standing on end.

At that moment the fat junior's head resembled nothing so much as the back of a hedgehog on the warpath.

"Ah!" murmured Mr. Quelch, wondering whether his eyes were deceiving him. "Good gracious! Oh dear!"

The Removites stared, then they gasped.

"Great Scott!"

"What the thump——"

The next moment the silence of the Form-room was split by a terrific roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"This is rich!"

"My only Aunt Jemima!"

"I—I say, you fellows——" gasped Bunter, all oblivious of the sensation he was causing. "I don't see anything to cackle about!"

"Oh, great pip!" shrieked Skinner, who was sitting near the Owl, almost choking with laughter. "He can't see anything to cackle about! My only Sunday topper!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence, boys!" thundered Mr. Quelch, getting a grip on his scattered senses only with the greatest effort. "How dare you! I will severely cane the next boy who laughs!"

But the Form-master might just as well have addressed his remarks to a brick wall as to the Removites at that moment. They rocked to and fro until their sides ached, and their eyes were filled with tears.

"This is the limit!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter gazed at the Removites in amazement. Suddenly his face paled, and he pointed a trembling forefinger at Skinner.

"Ooooooer! Look!" he gasped.

Mr. Quelch transferred his gaze from Billy Bunter to the cad of the Remove and collapsed, gasping, into his chair.

Slowly but surely, Skinner's hair was beginning to rise in exactly the same manner that Bunter's had a few moments before!

"B-bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch faintly.

As for the rest of the Form, their mirth quickly changed to alarm. There was something about the whole affair they could not quite understand.

Meanwhile, the irritation of their scalps seemed to be increasing. Forty right hands went to forty scalps, and the juniors rubbed!

"Good heavens!" gasped Mr. Quelch in amazement. "What is the matter, boys?"

"Yaroooooh!" gasped Bolsover. "It's my head, sir! It's burning!"

"So's mine!" shouted Penfold, bringing both hands into play.

"Yoooooop!"

Mr. Quelch banged his cane on the table.

"Is this some new kind of joke?" he grated, his face slowly changing to a deep purple hue. "Is this——"

"Whoooooh! Yow! Yaroooooop!"

Even as he spoke, there came a loud grunt of pain from the far end of the Form-room, and the next moment, his two hands clutching at his head and his eyes rolling with pain, Mr. Quelch observed Wun Lung, the Chinese junior, dart out from his place and

rush frenziedly up and down the gangway.

"Ow! Wow! Velly hot pain killee pool head!" shrieked Wun Lung.

"Head all burnce velly likee fire!"

"Good gracious!"

"Gooooooooh! I'm dying!"

This time the noise came from another part of the Form.

It seemed to the amazed Form-master that the entire Remove had suddenly gone mad.

Within a few seconds all the juniors were holding their hands to their heads and yelling with pain.

"Yarooooooooh!"

"My head's on fire!"

"Wow! Yow!"

Mr. Quelch regarded the juniors in amazement. It was more than obvious by now that something very serious was

"Wow!" shrieked Bulstrode, dancing about like a dervish. "It's all through that rotter Fish! It's all through his blessed hair-cream!"

"Yaroooooh! Where is he? I'll slaughter him!"

A mingled yell of wrath and pain went up from the Removites.

"I'll give him Growo!"

"Where's that rotter Fish?"

"Collar him!"

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Big Buzz!

FISHER T. FISH glanced round the Form-room in alarm.

He was in a state no better than the rest of the Removites. He had been as generous with the use of his wonderful Growo as any of the juniors, and now his scalp felt as though ten thousand fiends were stroking it with red-hot poker.

"I guess it's all O.K.!" he gasped hurriedly. "I guess I can put things right. Ow! Hold on, you jays!"

Fish remembered all too late that he had not mixed the Growo as he should have done. He was, like most of his countrymen, a great believer in pep. Pep was the life and soul of the American junior, and he had tried to introduce a little pep into the Growo.

The formula which had been dropped by Mr. Hunk P. Dunk distinctly stated that to two pounds of lard ten drops of essence of carbolic lotion were to be added. But Fisher T. Fish had gone one better than that.

He had used fifty!

To make matters worse, as well as the perfume he had added, he had introduced a small quantity of "stickitite" to stiffen it up a bit. And for a reason known only to chemists, the lard, the "stickitite," and the perfume—not to mention the fifty drops of essence of carbolic lotion—had failed to agree.

Indeed, they were quarrelling violently—very violently at that. It had only needed the heat of the juniors' heads, coupled with the closer atmosphere of the Form-room, to set things going, and now the forty odd Removites were getting the benefit of it.

"I guess it's all O.K.!" gasped Fish again. "I calculate it's that 'stickitite.' I reckon it don't mix none with that carbolic dope—no, sir!"

"Look at my hair!" yelled Bulstrode, tugging at his thick-matted locks. "Look at it, you—you burbling chump!"

Fish looked, but the spectacle did not seem to inspire him.

"All you jays want is something to thin it out. I guess I've got the very stuff."

And the next moment, regardless of Mr. Quelch, the American junior dashed from the Form-room and disappeared down the passage without.

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Quelch, for the sake of something better to say. "I—I— Oh dear!"

Fisher T. Fish reappeared in the Form-room a few moments later, carrying in his left hand a bucket filled with some yellow solution. He dumped the bucket on the floor in front of the Form. Then, plunging his hand into it, he commenced to dash the solution over his burning head.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 920.

For Next Week!

... THE ... GREYFRIARS FILM FANS!

By Frank Richards.

DON'T MISS IT,
BOYS!

An early order for the
"MAGNET" saves
disappointment.—Editor.

the matter. For a few seconds he had suspected the juniors of working some kind of jape. But he quickly dismissed the idea from his mind and determined to find out what the trouble really was.

"Yoooooooop!"

"Grooooooh!"

"Wow!"

The shrieks and groans were becoming more heartrending every moment, and so were the antics of the unfortunate Removites.

Some were standing on their desks rubbing furiously at their heads, some were doing their best—or so it seemed—to tie themselves into knots, while others were running up and down the gangways between the desks, swinging their heads to and fro in an endeavour to obtain some relief from the searing pain which was now attacking their scalps.

To make matters worse, the Growo they had put on their heads earlier in the morning was beginning to set hard like stale treacle.

Within a few seconds the rest of the juniors—or as many as could crowd round the bucket, were doing likewise. The solution, whatever it was, seemed to have a soothing effect on their tortured scalps.

"Ow! That's better!" groaned Ogilvy, working the yellow solution well into the roots of his hair. "It's loosening it a bit."

"Buck up there!"

"Lemme have a go, Cherry!"

"Wow! I can't wait much longer!"

Splash, splash, splash!

As the solution in the bucket mixed with the concoction on the juniors' heads a curious odour, not unlike that of pineapple, began to fill the air.

Every few seconds the peculiar smell seemed to grow stronger and stronger, until the Form-room literally reeked with it.

"Phew!" gasped Harry Wharton. "The place smells like a blessed sweet-shop!"

"Never mind about that!" grunted Bob Cherry. "It's stopping the blessed pain, anyhow."

The juniors worked overtime at the bucket, their desire for Fish's blood temporarily forgotten in their endeavour to obtain relief for their burning scalps.

Meanwhile, the strange pineapple odour increased in intensity.

"Bejabers, an' wait till I've finished wid that spalpeen Fish afterwards!" groaned Micky Desmond, endeavouring to dip his head into the bucket. "'Tis meself as will teach him—"

What the Irish youth intended to teach the unhappy Fish was never known. For at that moment there came a strange buzzing noise outside the Form-room window.

Zzzzzzz! Zzzzzzz!

The strange buzzing noise grew louder and louder every moment.

Zzzzz! Zzzzz! Zzzzz!

"What the thump's up now?" groaned Bolsover.

The Removites gazed at each other in amazement.

They had an uncanny feeling that their troubles for the day were not yet over.

Zzzzz! Buzzzz! Buzzzz! Buzzzz!

The light seemed to be suddenly cut from the room as a black cloud of insects hovered uncertainly outside the windows.

"Bees!" exclaimed Harry Wharton suddenly.

"My hat!"

"Hundreds of 'em!"

"Thousands of 'em!"

"My giddy aunt!"

"Shut the windows!" ordered Mr. Quelch sharply.

Frank Nugent sprang to obey.

But too late!

Attracted doubtlessly by the overpowering smell of pineapple within the Form-room, one of the bees detached itself from the main body, and buzzed almost full into Nugent's face.

"Yaaaaaaah!" gasped Nugent.

The next second, in a sort of extensive squadron formation, the remainder of the mighty host followed, droning and buzzing, their wings glinting in the autumn sunlight.

Zzzzz! Buzzzz! Zzzzz!

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch, in alarm.

"Look out!" shouted Johnny Bull.

"Duck, you chaps!"

"My hat!"

"This is awful!"

Zzzzz! Buzzzzzz!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 920.

The vast host of bees circled gracefully round the Form-room near the ceiling. Then, like a shower of stones, they dropped in a black mass to the now empty bucket which had contained the yellow solution Fish had brought into the Form-room.

But the bucket was empty.

The buzzing seemed to the watching and waiting juniors to take on an angrier note.

Zzzzzzz! Zzzzzzz!

Billy Bunter collapsed beneath his desk, and placed his hands to his fat face.

"Yow! Yow!" he shrieked. "Keep-em-off! Ow! It wasn't me!"

Fascinated, the Removites watched the swarm of bees, wondering what their next move would be. They were not kept wondering long. The bees rose in a cloud from the empty bucket, and, spreading out fanwise, dropped with little plops on the juniors' heads.

Buzzzzzz!

"Ahaaaaaaar!" gasped Wharton, as a couple of the insects dropped down the back of his neck. "Wow! I'm stung!"

The next moment the Form-room was in a state of panic.

Mr. Quelch swished his cane frantically in the air to protect his head. His action seemed to annoy the insects more than ever. They swarmed around him, getting up his sleeves, down his neck, and attacking every part of his person they could reach.

"Yaroooooop!" yelled the Form master, all forgetful of his dignity, his only ambition being to protest himself by any means he could. "Wow! Ahaaaaaaar!"

Several of the juniors tore off their jackets with the idea of using them as shields to protect their heads. Books were waved frantically in the air, and desk-lids were flapped vigorously.

"Wow!"

"Grough! I—I've got one in my mouth!" gurgled Billy Bunter, to whom the insects seemed to have taken a special fancy.

"Ha, ha! Yooooop!"

"Great snakes! I guess—Yaaaaah!"

Buzzzz! Zzzzzzz!

The noise in the Form-room was terrific.

Juniors were dashing about yelling at the tops of their voices, wildly waving their arms.

"Wow!" gasped Fisher T. Fish, whose lean face was a mass of red and angry-looking bumps. "Oh, gee! I guess I've got left!"

It certainly seemed that Fish was right. He was left—and with a vengeance, too. But whether there would be anything of him left by the time the insects had finished with him was somewhat doubtful.

It dawned upon Fisher T. Fish that for the second time since he had started out as a hair-cream manufacturer he had made a mistake. Fish did not possess a very extensive knowledge of chemistry. Had he done so, he would have realised that the thinning solution and the "Stickitite" he had introduced into the Growo was the cause of all the trouble.

The two combined had turned the concoction on the Removites' heads into a sticky substance strangely resembling Pollardine. And if there was one thing more than another the average bee would barter its life for—Pollardine was that thing!

It might be said of Pollardine that no bee could resist it. They could usually smell it a mile off. And once

they smelt it there was trouble for someone—and oceans of it—until the bees got some.

Meanwhile, their desire not satisfied, the bees felt they had been handed a dirty deal—and the only people who had handed them that dirty deal, as far as they could see, were the unhappy Removites, about whom the seductive pineapple-like odour of Pollardine still clung. The bees, therefore, with all that intelligence which characterises their species, proceeded to hand the Removites a dirty deal in exchange.

Zzzzzzz Buzzzzzz!

By now the juniors' faces were stung and swollen all over. But the bees, instead of clearing off, as some had hoped, seemed, instead, to be getting their second wind.

"Yaroooooop!" howled the Removites, hitting out at their winged tormentors in vain.

"Grooooooh!"

Bob Cherry glared out of his one unstung eye at the squirming American junior.

"It's all your blessed fault!" he roared. "I'll—"

But Fisher T. Fish had had enough—more than enough, in fact. It seemed that it was his unlucky day. Whatever he did turned out to be wrong. He glared wildly about him, and the next moment dashed down the gangway and out of the Form-room up the passage.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Poor Old Fish!

"AFTER him!"

"Squash him!"

A yell of wrath went up from forty throats.

If Fisher T. Fish had had enough, so had the rest of the Removites. There was only one thing they wanted now, and that was blood. And the blood they wanted in particular was that of Fisher T. Fish.

Even as the Form-room door slammed behind him, the rest of the Removites, led by Bob Cherry, dashed out after him, the bees still humming and buzzing round their heads.

Behind the juniors, hardly knowing whether he was standing on his head or his feet, followed Mr. Quelch. The Form-master had long since given up all hope of restoring order among his pupils. His great concern at the moment—apart from dodging the bees—was to see that nothing too serious befell the unfortunate Fisher T. Fish.

But Fisher T. Fish was no dawdler.

By the time the Removites were all out of the Form-room Fisher T. Fish had reached the top of the passage. He took a hurried glance behind him, and turned off to the left. In less time than it takes Billy Bunter to think of a lie the Removites were after him.

"Come back, you blessed fraud!"

"I'll give you Growo!"

"Scrag him!"

Fisher T. Fish, however, appeared to have no desire to accept any Growo. At any rate, he did not come back, neither did he stop. He yelled instead.

"Yooooop! I guess it wasn't my fault!"

Fish continued his flight at headlong pace. He reached the passage leading to the Remove studies about a split second before Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, who was now leading the chase.

Down the passage he sped, and it certainly seemed for a few seconds that he would give the rest of the juniors the slip. Suddenly, however, Inky gave a



Fisher T. Fish was swung into the air. "One—two—" sang out Bulstrode. "Three!" The American junior felt himself flying through the air towards his pans of Growo. Crash! He landed dead in the middle of the awful concoction, sending the bucket of yellow solution flying as he did so. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removites, dancing with glee. (See Chapter 10.)

curious little jump, his lithe body shot forward, and his arms closed round the American junior's neck.

Crash!

The two Removites collapsed to the floor together.

"Hold him!" shouted Johnny Bull.

"Yaroooooogh!" gasped Fish. "Let up!"

The business man of the Remove made a desperate attempt to break away before the rest of the juniors arrived on the scene, but all his efforts proved futile. He was no match for the wiry Nabob of Bhanipur, who, in a few seconds, had him pinned out on the floor unable to move.

"Scalp him!" hooted Wharton.

"He's burnt my head!"

"Wow! I'm stung!"

The Removites crowded round their captive with sore and angry faces.

Meanwhile, their appetites still undiminished, the bees were having the time of their sweet young lives. They seemed to have entered into the spirit of the thing in real earnest. Wherever the Removites went, like Mary's little lamb, the bees were sure to follow.

Buzz! Zzzzzzz! Buzzzzzzzz!

As for Mr. Quelch, he came gasping up behind his pupils, the lower part of his gown flung over his face for protection, while with his mortar-board he hit out at the swarm of buzzing bees like one demented.

"Boys!" he ejaculated, as the Removites surrounded Inky and his captive. "Boys—"

But the juniors were not listening. Their one and all-absorbing ambition at that moment was to make Fish suffer for the double doses of pain he had been indirectly the means of causing them.

"Sling him in the Growo!" shouted a voice.

"Good wheeze!"

Fisher T. Fish felt himself grabbed by several pairs of hands at once. He was jerked from the floor, and lifted struggling and shouting to his own study, the quondam manufactory of the

wonderful Growo according to the formula of the redoubtable chief of the Thatcho Indians.

Crash!

Micky Desmond hurled open the door.

On the far side of the study floor were several pans of half-finished Growo, while near by was another bucket of the yellow, thinning solution.

"Lemme go!" shouted Fish in alarm.

"Yow! Hooooo!"

"Certainly!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"We'll let you go! Up with him, chaps!"

Fisher T. Fish was swung into the air.

"One, two!" sang out Bulstrode.

"Three!"

Fish felt himself flying through the air towards his pans of Growo.

Crash!

He landed dead in the middle of the awful concoction, sending the bucket of yellow solution flying as he did so.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removites, dancing with glee.

"Hear us smile!"

"Yarooooop!" roared Fish, struggling in the sticky mess. "Ow! Grooh! Yooooop! Wow!"

As the yellow solution began to mix with the Growo there came a sharp, fizzing sound, and within a fraction of a minute an odour of pineapple, about ten times as strong as that which had developed in the Form-room, filled the air.

"Phew!" gasped Vernon-Smith, clapping his handkerchief to his nose. "That's caused it!"

The buzzing of the bees became even louder as they left the Removites in the passage and swarmed into Fish's study.

Zzzzzzz! Buzzzzzzzz!

Round and round the study they swarmed, while Fish splashed and struggled among the wreckage of his brew of Growo.

"Shut the door!" shouted Hazeldene.

"Shut 'em in!"

Crash!

"Got 'em!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Now bolt before they get out again!"

The juniors turned and sped up the passage to where Mr. Quelch was awaiting them. In the excitement they had entirely forgotten such a person as Mr. Quelch existed. But the Remove master had not forgotten them.

He had long recognised that to attempt to interfere with the juniors in the mood they had been in a few minutes before, when the swarm of bees was buzzing around them, was worse than useless. But now with Fish—and the bees—out of the way, he felt he was, to say the least of it, entitled to some sort of explanation of the morning's events.

"Boys," he snapped, "what is the meaning of this extraordinary business? Bless my soul! I have never witnessed a more extraordinary affair in the whole of my career as a master at Greyfriars."

The juniors regarded the Form-master sheepishly.

Their hair was plastered all over their faces, their collars were limp and stained with the yellow solution. Fish had brought into the Form-room, and several of them were minus their jackets, which they had been using to ward off the swarm of bees. One and all, their faces were a mass of red and angry bumps, their lips were swollen, and it was as much as some of them could do to see out of their eyes.

Taking them all in all, they resembled English public school boys to about the same extent that a scarecrow might have been said to resemble Beau Brummel himself.

For that matter, Mr. Quelch was in a state little better.

The cloth had been ripped off his mortar-board, revealing the cardboard beneath; his cravat was missing altogether, while his gown was ripped and torn in a dozen places.

"We—you see, sir—" began Wharton, realising, now the excitement was over, that perhaps they had gone a little too far. "That is to say—"

"Do I understand that you boys were foolish enough to purchase some—ahem

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 920.

—alleged hair cream from your Form-fellow, Fish?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"Ah—yes, sir!" gasped several juniors.

"Bless my soul!"

"He told us it was made from a formula sent him by an uncle in New York, sir," put in Bulstrode. "Ow! It's burnt all my head!"

"Indeed!" exclaimed the Form-master.

Mr. Quelch regarded the juniors curiously. He was not without some knowledge of the American junior's propensities, and from what he had heard and seen in the Form-room he was beginning to have a fair idea of what had happened. His mouth twitched for a moment, and then, despite his swollen face, as the funny side of the situation dawned upon him, he doubled himself up and roared.

"Ha—ahem—ah—ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch laughed again and again.

"Bless my soul! Ha, ha, ha!"

In a few seconds, however, his face took on its customary grim expression again, and he addressed the crowd of unhappy Removites.

"I can assure you it is—ah—no laughing matter, boys," he said. "It is a most painful and disgraceful business. I am in great pain. I am stung all over!"

"Same here, sir!" groaned Skinner. "Ow!"

"I think you had better consider yourselves dismissed for the day, and get yourselves attended to," the Form-master went on. "Report yourselves to the matron at once, every one of you. I will—ahem—endeavour to see what I can do for Fish."

And, groaning loudly, the juniors went.

As for the luckless Fisher T. Fish, he was discovered by Mr. Quelch, some minutes later, rolling about his study floor with the carpet over his head. He was emitting awful groans and beating wildly about him, under the impression that his apartment was still full of bees.

As a matter of fact, however, finding for the second time that morning that the pineapple scent did not lead to the Pollardine they hoped it would, the swarm of bees departed in deep disgust out of the study window.

"Wow!" groaned Fish, as Mr. Quelch helped him to his feet. "I wish I'd never seen that blessed Growo formula. Yooooop!"

"You may well say that, wretched boy!" rasped Mr. Quelch, leading the way to the punishment-room. "And you will wish that even more so when I have informed Dr. Locke of what has occurred."

Fish's only reply was another groan.

Mr. Quelch closed and locked the punishment-room door on the wretched business man of the Remove, and stalked away with what dignity remained to him to get his own wounds attended to.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bowled Out!

HONK, honk!

A smart two-seater car purred up the road leading from Friar-dale and came to a halt outside the gates of Greyfriars College.

A second later two men attired in clothes of unmistakable American cut emerged from the vehicle, and, stepping briskly to Gosling's lodge, tugged vigorously at the bell.

Clang, clang, clang!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 920.

"I guess this is the show-door, Hunk," remarked one of the men, peeling himself a piece of chewing-gum.

"Yeah!" agreed his companion, Mr. Watts D. Matter. "I'll say we've struck the ranch first throw!"

Gosling opened the door of his lodge and glared at the two visitors.

"Wot I sez is this 'ere—" he began wrathfully.

"Slick!" interrupted Mr. Hunk P. Dunk briskly.

Gosling stared.

"I guess that's our motter," explained Mr. Dunk. "Slick—in other words, pronto! I guess that's how we want that Fisher T. Fish guy."

"Ho!" gasped Gosling, his brain whirling.

"I calculate this skate's the tortoise egg!" snorted Mr. Watts D. Matter, turning to his companion. "He ain't hatched yet! Let's hit the trail."

"Shore!"

The next moment, before the astonished school porter could reply, the two energetic Americans were striding rapidly across the Close in the direction of the School House.

"Wich I sez—" began Gosling.

But here speech failed him. Like a man in a dream, he watched the lean forms of the hustling gentlemen from the U.S.A., until they were within a few yards of the School House steps.

They stood for a few moments gazing about them uncertainly. As they did so Harry Wharton & Co. descended the steps, their faces almost hidden under masses of sticking-plaster.

"Say, bo'," exclaimed Mr. Dunk, waving the juniors towards him. "Come right here."

The Famous Five stifled their gasps of amazement, and, approaching the two strangers, politely raised their caps.

"I guess I'm Hunk P. Dunk, of the Yewnited States, and this is my old side-kicker, Watts D. Matter," drawled Mr. Dunk, getting right down to business. "We're looking for some slick jasper called Fish—"

"Fish!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Fish!" echoed Bob Cherry.

"Yeah! I reckon yew boys know him?"

"We know him all right," grunted Johnny Bull.

"Waal, we'd sorta like tew meet up with him—slick," exclaimed Mr. Watts D. Matter.

The Famous Five looked at each other—and then at the two Americans.

"They're looking for Fish, too," grinned Frank Nugent.

"My giddy aunt!"

The next moment they went off into a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My only hat!"

Hunk P. Dunk stared.

"Why the laughter?" he demanded, with a puzzled frown.

"Sorry, sir!" gasped Harry Wharton. "Only—you see—well, lots of fellows are looking for Fish just now. Nearly all the blessed Form, in fact—"

"But he's with the Head at the moment," added Frank Nugent.

Mr. Dunk gazed for a moment at the plaster covering the juniors' faces—and he grinned.

"Did that jasper Fish make yew guys look like thet?" he asked.

"Yes—and no!" admitted Bob Cherry, reddening where his face was not covered with ointment or plaster. "Fish happens to be in our Form, and we—we bought some hair cream off him. That's what caused the trouble in the first place."

"Some blessed stuff he called Growo!" added Johnny Bull.

"Growo!" shouted Mr. Watts D. Matter suddenly. "This skate Fish sold you Growo—and it did that?"

Bull nodded.

"Waal, I'm hornswoggled!" ejaculated Mr. Dunk faintly.

The two Americans exchanged significant glances. The smiles vanished from their faces, their places being taken by grim frowns.

"See hyer," grated Mr. Dunk, "I guess that's what we've come about. I reckon we can throw some considerable light on the stuff this jasper Fish sold yew. I'd take it as a reel favour if yew'd lead right on to the chief he-noise of this scholastic joint, pronto."

"I—I beg your pardon, sir," stammered Wharton.

"The headmaster," translated Mr. Matter briskly. "Lead right on and tell him we're hyer. I guess it's urgent, and it's about this Fisher T. Fish."

Wharton hesitated.

But there was something about the attitude of the two Americans that told him their business was indeed important.

"This way, gentlemen," he said.

Escorted by the rest of the Famous Five, the two Americans were led up the steps and along the passages to Dr. Locke's study.

Wharton tapped on the door and the kindly voice of the Head bade him enter. Dr. Locke, who was seated behind his desk, rose to his feet as the door opened and regarded Mr. Dunk and his friend with a look of surprised inquiry.

"These two gentlemen wish to see you on an urgent matter in connection with Fish, sir," explained Wharton hurriedly. "They know—ahem—a little of what has occurred, and I understood them to say they could throw some light on the affair."

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Dr. Locke. "You did quite right to bring them along. The miserable youth Fish is here with me now. Thank you, Wharton."

The Head invited his two strange visitors into his study and signalled Wharton to go.

As Messrs. Dunk and Matter entered the study they made out the lean form of Fisher T. Fish standing at the far side. Like Harry Wharton & Co.—and the rest of the Removites for that matter—his face was covered with sticking-plaster and his hair appeared to have been dragged through a mangle.

"Ow!" gasped Fish, staring at his quondam friends.

"The very guy!" ejaculated Watts D. Matter.

"Pray be seated, gentlemen," said Dr. Locke.

The two Americans did as they were bid and continued to stare at Fisher T. Fish with expressions that were far from friendly.

"Wharton informed me that you could possibly throw some light on the extraordinary affair that has taken place in the Remove Form-room," began Dr. Locke. "I understand you are aware of what has happened?"

"Shore!" agreed Hunk P. Dunk. "That's just what we've come about, I guess. But if it's all the same to you, sir, I calculate we'd shore appreciate it a piece if you'd spill us the beans first, and then we'll hand out our side of the yarn."

Dr. Locke hesitated.

He was not accustomed to admit strangers into any domestic trouble in the school. But it was evident from Fish's behaviour that the two Americans, if they did not know all about the affair, were well acquainted with at least some of it.

"Very well," said the Head. "I will repeat the story the miserable boy over there has just told me."

And Dr. Locke proceeded to tell the amazed Messrs. Dunk and Matter Fish's version of how a wonderful formula for the manufacture of Growo had been sent him by his Uncle Hiram, in New York, who had obtained it from Chief Why-be-Bald of the Thatcho Indians, together with the subsequent happenings in the Form-room.

Hunk P. Dunk listened in amazement. Several times he gave an angry snort, but otherwise heard the story through without comment.

As for Fisher T. Fish, he gazed helplessly about him, hoping every moment that the floor beneath would open up and swallow him.

At length Dr. Locke concluded.

"I shall be pleased to hear what you gentlemen have to tell me," he announced.

"Waal," gasped Mr. Hunk P. Dunk, "I'll say that's the biggest all-fired, cock-eyed hokus-pokus yarn I've heered in years!"

"It shore is—and then some!" added Mr. Watts D. Matter emphatically.

"Do I understand Fish's story is not accurate?" demanded the Head, with a frown.

"I guess not!" almost hooted Mr. Dunk. "I calculate he's pulling yew the long stirrup! Me an' my pardner hyer, we is the sole proprietors of Growo, the same formula of which was handed me personal by the Injun chief when I was trading out West."

"But Fish's uncle—" began Dr. Locke.

"Cut it out!" snapped Mr. Dunk. "That's all bunk!"

"Ow—ah—Ooooooer!" gasped Fisher T. Fish, caught like the Spanish hero of old between the dragon and the Lake of Fire.

"Silence, miserable boy!" thundered the Head.

"Wow!" groaned Fish again.

"But the formula," resumed Dr. Locke, turning to Mr. Dunk again. "The wretched formula from which this misguided boy manufactured the terrible concoction he sold to his hapless Form-fellows?"

"I reckon it's right hyer," exclaimed Mr. Dunk, drawing an envelope from his coat pocket and placing it on the study table.

"Then—then what is it Fish possesses?"

"That's what we're gonna explain, sirree," rasped Mr. Dunk.

And Mr. Dunk briefly described his meeting with Fisher T. Fish in Uncle Clegg's little shop a few days before.

"I guess when we left this jasper Fish we dropped another formula. We waited for it to be returned, as per instructions to any finder printed on the envelope. But did it arrive? No, sirree!"

"Grooooooh!" gasped Fish again.

"So me and my pardner," resumed Mr. Dunk, "we hikes along to this Clegg joint tew make inquiries, and we learns that this simp opposite hes picked it up an froze on to it. We beats it pronto right along tew this college tew get it back, and we learns there's been some trouble with Fish and stuff alleged tew hev been made from a Growo formula."

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the Head in amazement.

"Shore! Waal, I guess, boiled down, that jasper over there, finding the formula we dropped, and thinking it was the Growo one, which it wasn't, figgered on using it to make some kale, jack, or dollars instead of returning it to its

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No. 4.—John Bull (of the Remove).



A sturdy member of the Famous Five whose chief characteristic is his blunt and direct manner of speech. Apt to be prejudiced at times, but is most essentially a downright honest fellow. A good all-round sportsman, with heaps of dogged pluck and determination. Shares Study No. 14 with Samson Quincy Illey Field—Squiff for short—and Fisher T. Fish, the American junior. Johnny has a weakness for the concertina—a weakness that is not shared by anyone in the Remove, for the one thing Johnny lacks is an ear for music!

rightful owners—which is me and my pard."

"Did you say that that formula was not for the manufacture of Growo?" asked the Head, puzzled.

"Nope!" agreed Mr. Dunk. "I'll say not. This formula is the one we uses for Killenkwick."

"For—for what?" demanded the Head.

"Killenkwick," repeated Mr. Dunk.

"Killenkwick," emphasized Mr. Watts D. Matter. "The world's most famous corn cure, guaranteed to cure—"

"C-corn cure?" gasped the Head again.

"K-killenkwick!" wheezed Fisher T. Fish.

Dr. Locke's face twitched, and he permitted himself a faint smile. The next moment, unable to control himself any longer, he roared.

"Bless my soul! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, Jerusalem crickets!" moaned Fish, failing to see the joke.

The two Americans roared again and yet again.

At length Mr. Dunk rose to his feet.

"I guess it won't hurt yewer scholars none now!" he exclaimed. "And having recovered our formula, I calculate we'll beat it."

When they had gone the Head turned to the trembling Fish.

"Boy!" he grated, turning to Fisher T. Fish. "Come here!"

There is no need to dwell unnecessarily upon the really heartrending scene which followed. Dr. Locke did not say much, but his actions spoke louder—far louder—than words. And when he had finished, Fisher T. Fish, feeling as though he had drawn his hands across a red-hot stove, staggered out of the study.

Harry Wharton & Co., who had learned the true facts of the case from Mr. Hunk P. Dunk, were waiting for Fish in the corridor, but they were unanimously agreed that the Transatlantic junior's punishment had been enough as they caught sight of his woe-begone countenance.

"Ever get left, Fishy?" yelled Skinner.

But Fisher T. Fish did not reply. He groaned and crawled away.

But for several days afterwards it was only necessary to mention one word to send the entire Form—all except Fisher T. Fish—into hysterics. And that word was—Growo!

THE END.

(Look out for another topping tale of Harry Wharton & Co. next week, chums, entitled: "The Greyfriars Film Fans!" by Frank Richards. You are bound to enjoy it.)

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COMING EVENTS—Fading again into the murky blackness of the night as swiftly and as mysteriously as it emerges from it, sweeps the shadowy outline of an enormous bat. Simultaneous with each fresh appearance of this peculiar phenomenon comes news of an amazing robbery!



A Splendid New Mystery Story featuring Ferrers Locke, the wizard detective, and his clever boy assistant, Jack Drake.

The Night Prowler!

FERRERS LOCKE swung round in his seat with a shade of annoyance on his face, as the door of his laboratory was opened with a bang.

"If you must come in when I'm busy, Jack," he almost snapped, then added as he caught sight of his young assistant's face: "Why, what's the matter, my lad? You look as if you'd barged into a ghost!"

Thus addressed, Jack Drake laughed.

"Don't know about spooks, guv'nor, 'cause I've never met one. But hang me if I've ever seen anything like it before."

"Like what?" the detective asked, laying aside the test tube in which he had been boiling a greenish fluid.

"You know we thought there was something wrong with our aerial?" said Drake.

Ferrers Locke nodded.

"Well, as I hadn't anything particular to do for half an hour, I thought I'd just pop on the roof and have a squint round. As you know, it's fairly misty to-night, guv'nor, and I was just standing staring at the wires overhead, when all of a sudden the mist parted showing a bit of the sky, when, hang me, if something—I can only call it something—just floated across that patch of sky and got lost in the mist again!"

"Sure you weren't dreaming?" Locke inquired with a smile.

"Dreaming? Not much! I saw it plain enough, though only for a couple of seconds, and it wasn't half high up, I can tell you. No, guv'nor, I expect you'll laugh at me, but it's my firm belief that I glimpsed that Phantom Bat, as it's called."

"Umph!" the detective grunted thoughtfully, for not only had he perfect faith in his young assistant's veracity, but was actually well aware that he was too level-headed to jump at conclusions hastily.

"The Phantom Bat!" he repeated. "Well, if it is so, Jack, you apparently have had the honour of noting its first appearance in England."

"I know that, guv'nor, for although

we've heard all sorts of rummy yarns about it from the other side of the Channel, up till now nothing's been heard of it over here."

"Well, granted that your surmise is correct," the detective continued with evident interest, "what did you make of it? For of course, the phantom portion of this mysterious object is all tommy rot."

"Well, I didn't have much time to see, guv'nor, 'cause it wasn't half moving along. But as near as I could make out, it had a sort of rounded body with something protruding on each side, that might have been wings of some sort."

"Did you notice whether these wings, or whatever they are, were in motion?"

"Quite certain that they were not. They were simply sticking out one on each side."

For several seconds Ferrers Locke stroked his chin thoughtfully.

"Very odd," he said at length.

Then rising, the sleuth selected a large book from amongst others on a side table and began turning over the pages.

"Ah, here it is!" he remarked. "Now let's see! This so-called phantom bat was reported as seen at Le Puy in Haute Loire, when the Marquis de Beaulieu was relieved of his collection of Louis XIVth plate. Then it seems to have flitted to northern France, for my next note shows it was heard of at St. Servan, just off the coast."

"Ah, that was where that big haul of uncut stones was made from some old chateau, wasn't it, guv'nor?"

"Quite correct, Jack. The Comte St. Cerdaille was reputed to have had the finest collection in the world. And now the only other reference I have concerning this mysterious visitant, is when, as alleged, it appeared on the outskirts of Paris on the night Van den Schulyz, the Amsterdam diamond merchant, was eased of some 500,000 francs' worth of unmounted diamonds."

"And in each of these cases there wasn't a single clue left as to the perpetrators of the robbery," Jack added reflectively.

"No. The whole series of crimes was of a most baffling nature, and though the most experienced men of the French

police secrete had the matter in hand, they are apparently just as wise now as when they first started investigations."

"If they haven't given the matter up as a bad egg," Jack laughed.

"There you're wrong, Jack, for it was only a week or two back that I came across Jules Legarde. You remember him?"

"Oh law, yes, guv'nor, the man who always wears a grin."

"That's the man. He was over here on some extradition business, and during our brief chat, the matter of these mysterious robberies cropped up, Legarde, informing me that far from giving the matter up, the French police were— Oh, dash it! There's the phone bell. Hop along, my lad, and see who's bothering now?"

Obedient to these instructions, young Drake hurried to the instrument, to return almost instantly with the news:

"Inspector Pyecroft, guv'nor. What's in the wind now?"

"I'm not a thought reader, Jack," laughed Ferrers Locke. "How on earth do I know till I've spoken to him?"

"Hallo, Pyecroft! Locke speaking!" he called a moment later. Then after a pause: "The douce! You don't say so! Well, that's odd, because young Drake has just told me that he also distinctly saw the same object. Well, yes. Fortunately I can spare half an hour. Will you run over here, or shall I pop along to the Yard? You'd rather I came round. I've got you. All serene. So long!" And the receiver was placed on its hook.

"From what you were saying, I take it that Pyecroft spotted the bat as well as myself," said Jack.

"Not exactly. But a constable on point duty on Hampstead Heath appears to have done so, and on making his report, the sergeant in charge at once acquainted Pyecroft with the fact."

"And you're going over?"

"Yes. Sha'n't bother about the car. Hop out and get a taxi!"

"Right-ho, guv'nor. But I say, how about me?"

"You! Haven't you anything to do?"

"Nothing very particular."

"Nothing particular, you young

scamp. How about those files of letters not completed?"

"Oh, they're very nearly up to date."

"Are they? Oh, well, all right, you can come along. I expect Pyecroft is only anxious for a pow-wow. But as you've actually seen this so-called apparition, you'll be able to satisfy his curiosity better than I could."

Without waiting for the detective to change his mind, Jack bounded from the roof, to return in an incredibly short space of time with the news that the required vehicle was at the door. Nor was it long after, that Ferrers Locke and his young assistant found themselves in that home of police officialdom, New Scotland Yard.

"Awfully good of you to come straight away, Locke," Inspector Pyecroft said heartily as he shook hands. "I'd have run round to see you, only I've got to hang on here waiting for a report from two of our flying squad men, and I did want to have a confab with you over this bat thing as it's called. Thought the constable might have been mistaken, but now I hear young Jack's seen it, I know I can trust his sharp eyes. But there you are, make yourselves as comfortable as you can." And as the detective and his assistant settled themselves in arm-chairs, the C.I.D. man went on: "I sense a particularly interesting case coming along, Mr. Locke."

"In connection with what you've just heard?"

"You've hit it. Although, as far as we know, this is the first time the bat has paid us a visit, I'd bet my next quarter's salary to a pair of boots, that it won't be many hours before we hear of some amazing scoop."

"Well, and suppose such should be the case?" said Ferrers Locke, as he leisurely filled his pipe. "Got any theory as to who is at the back of these stunts?"

"No. Hang it all! There's the rub. That the crook is a man far and away above the average, goes without saying, and I've racked my brains to think of any likely individual. But I say, youngster," he added, turning to Jack,

"did you notice what the time was when you spotted this thing crossing the sky?"

"Twelve minutes past eight," the lad replied, without hesitation. "Naturally, I looked at my wrist watch, and as it has a luminous dial, I'm certain that I can't be more than a minute out either one way or the other."

"Good!" ejaculated Pyecroft, as he scrawled a rough note on a pad on his desk. "Notice the direction in which the—er—thing was flying?"

"Sure. Nor'-westerly."

"Good again, for that would bring it over Hampstead Heath after it had crossed Baker Street."

"Did the constable on duty there report what time it passed above him?" asked Locke, looking up.

"That's what I'm coming to, old bean. He did, and states that a church clock chimed the quarter past at the exact moment."

Ferrers Locke whistled softly.

"Then, at that rate, taking it for granted that it was travelling as the crow flies, it must have been mopping along at something about sixty miles an hour."

"Yes, guv'nor; and don't forget—against the wind, too!" Jack interpolated.

"Yes; and, by George, the lad's right!" Locke agreed, addressing Pyecroft. "For I noticed that the needle on the wind-gauge in my laboratory was oscillating between N.W. and N.N.W. And—but, there, had you done so, you would have mentioned the fact," he added, as he turned to Jack—"you did not detect any sounds of engines or propellers? Because it's generally reported that this thing moves absolutely silently."

"Engines? No, guv'nor! It just went along like—well, what it's been named after, a blessed phantom!"

Ferrers Locke was on the point of making a further remark, when a knock at the door of the inspector's room caused him to pause.

"Come in!" the C.I.D. man shouted, looking none too well pleased at the interruption.

In response to this curt permission a sergeant immediately entered, and saluted:

"The Chief Commissioner would like to see you at once, inspector."

"Oh, would he?" Pyecroft growled, as he raised his massive bulk from the swivel-chair that he had been occupying. "Awfully sorry, Locke; but needs must when the— But, there, you know the old saying. Anyhow, bet your boots I sha'n't be long; the old boy's not one to keep you hanging about."

And, with a nod and a grin, the inspector passed from the room.

"Think Pyecroft's right about something interesting following the appearance of this aerial thing?" queried Jack, when the C.I.D. man had quitted the room.

"It's been my opinion from the moment I received your report, and I'll even go a bit further," replied Locke, "and say this, that when it does, it will present one of the most complicated cases we've ever had a hand in unravelling."

"We?"

"Yes, I said 'we.' For, with all respect to our friends here, I'm rather of the opinion that the methods usually followed by the British police are not quite 'cute enough to cope with a master-mind like the one which is at the back of these amazing scoops."

"Gee! Guv'nor, that sounds splendid!" Jack responded, his eyes glowing



"Pyecroft!" The chief started from his seat as he repeated the name. "Pyecroft! Why in the name of thunder didn't you tell me of this man before, Husky?" "Why, what's all the excitement?" ejaculated Husky in astonishment. "Pyecroft don't count!" (See page 27.)

with anticipation; and then, each engrossed with his own thoughts, detective and assistant lapsed into silence.

Some ten minutes later Inspector Pyecroft literally burst into the room, his features aglow with excitement.

"Told you so, old thing!" he almost shouted.

"Told me what?" demanded Locke coolly.

"Why, the phantom bat's been up to its stunts again!"

"What?" Jack's excitement was more pronounced than Ferrers Locke's.

"Yes," continued Pyecroft. "Only got the bare bones of the matter so far. But you've both heard of the Epstein emeralds?"

"Those stones that were the cause of all that haggling in the Spanish law courts; it being contended that they formed part of the Spanish crown jewels?" Locke interrupted.

"That's the ticket! Well, it seems their present owner, the Grand Hidalgo something or other—haven't got hold of his crackjaw name properly yet—got hard up, so sent them over here to be realised, for they're worth close on a quarter of a million."

"Well, get on with it!" Locke snapped, as the inspector paused.

"The chap to whom they were sent seems to be a bit of an oddity. Rents a big place that is almost a ruin, though surrounded by high walls, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Dulwich. And here the jewels, which were locked up in a steel box, were placed in a safe securely let into the wall of a room at the very top of the building, which is some four stories high."

"And now?"

"Now they've vanished. The loss was only discovered about a couple of hours ago, but knowing now what you and I do, I think we can form a pretty good guess at the agency employed to remove them—eh?"

"You mean this mysterious bat?"

"Of course I do. Anyhow, I've got to get away to the scene at once and take charge of the show. Suppose you two couldn't spare time to come along with me? Should be jolly glad if you could!"

"Come along with you!" Jack shouted. "Will a duck swim?"

Locke smiled, and thought a moment.

"Very well," he said briefly. "We'll come!"

Ferrers Locke Investigates!

IT was before a gateway let into a high crumbling brick wall that, some two hours after Locke and his assistant had quitted the Yard, the great detective's car pulled up with a jerk.

Much as he would have liked to have accompanied Pyecroft to the scene of the Phantom Bat's supposed latest exploit without delay, Locke had been compelled first to return to Baker Street to send off some urgent letters by that night's post.

Leaping from the car, Jack seized a rusty chain that hung on one side, with the result that the hollow clanging of a bell boomed out—a summons that was answered more swiftly than the deserted appearance of the place seemed to warrant, one of the great doors being flung back almost immediately by a uniformed constable.

"Inspector Pyecroft told me to keep a look-out for you, sir," the man said, as he touched his helmet. "Go easy up the drive, though," he added, "there's holes in it a foot deep."

"Thanks!" the detective replied. "I'll look out! Don't want a broken axle."

A few minutes later the investigators found themselves at the front door of the house.

Had the walls surrounding the building looked forbidding, it was nothing compared to the gaunt appearance of the house itself.

Tier upon tier of uncurtained windows, in not one of which could be seen a vestige of light, seemed to stare down at them, whilst, as if to add to this scene of desolation, the heavy door, studded with bosses of rusted iron, and the steps leading to it, were not only grimed with the dirt of ages, but partially overgrown with moss.

"Cheerful sort of show, I must say, guv'nor!" grunted Jack, as he mounted the steps, with the intention of announcing their arrival; but before his fingers could close on the heavy knocker the portal was flung wide by no less a personage than Pyecroft himself, his rubicund face plainly revealed in the rays of a stable-lantern he held aloft.

"Sorry I can't give you any better illumination than this!" he laughed.

"Hang it all, Locke, the place is little better than a rats' warren! However, come along in. I sent a man for some candles and things, and I've got a fire so that we can make ourselves fairly comfy."

"Good!" his visitor laughed. "Well, how goes it?"

"Let you know when you've settled down, so come in and we can shut out this beastly draught!" And, turning, the C.I.D. man led the way along a stone-flagged passage that echoed to the footsteps of the little party as they advanced.

A sudden turn, and they found themselves in a small room, which was illuminated by some half-dozen candles stuck in extemporised candlesticks. A fire blazed cheerfully in the huge grate.

"Hospitable sort of show, isn't it?" Pyecroft grinned, as he helped the arrivals off with their heavy coats.

"I've seen some that look more inviting," Locke agreed. "But now, out with it; I can see that you're bursting with news!"

Seating himself gingerly in a crazy armchair, and inviting his guests to follow his example, the inspector remarked:

"As you know, Locke, I've closely followed the details of these mysterious robberies in France, with the result that

I'm convinced that this case is but one more engineered by the same master mind. In many ways, the—er—'modus operandi' is similar, but on two points absolutely different."

"That so?" inquired Locke sharply.

"Yes. In the first instance, the lock of the safe in which the jewels were stored, instead of being opened by a duplicate key or cunningly picked, has been burnt clean out."

"Burnt out!" the Baker Street detective echoed, in surprise.

"Burnt out, old bean, and presumably by some sort of oxy-hydrogen arrangement, only of a far higher power than the ordinary burglar's outfit."

"But how could such a gadget be got into the room? Why, man alive, think of the weight of the necessary cylinders alone!"

"I have thought of it, my dear fellow, and there I must own myself beaten, anyhow, for the present," added Pyecroft hastily. "But that the lock is burnt out, you'll see for yourself presently."

Ferrers Locke remained silent, evidently thinking intently.

"And what's the other peculiarity in this case that you were going to mention?" he asked, after a while.

"One that is the more extraordinary of the two, Juan Fernandez, for that is the name of this Spanish fellow who had the emeralds under his care, actually entered the room when the marauder was present."

"The deuce he did! What happened?"

"What happened?" reiterated Pyecroft. "Well, the man himself can hardly tell you. He's fair got the jim-jams, and, 'pon my soul, firmly believes the intruder to have been some supernatural being."

"What Tommy-rot!" Locke snapped. "Weak intellect, I suppose?"

"Seems rational enough, but he's had his nerves badly shattered—so badly, that the doctor who was called in won't let him be disturbed again for a bit."

"But what caused him to get such an insane idea in his head? Hasn't he described—"

"As well as he could at the moment. All I can make out is, that feeling restless, he entered the room. There he noticed an intense glowing spot, which I imagine proceeded from the half-fused lock. He then declares that some strange shape, which he swears was neither human nor animal, leaped at him from the darkness. He was conscious that his face became wet, then icy cold, and beyond that remembers nothing more."

"An anæsthetic, eh?"

"Undoubtedly, for he was discovered in an unconscious state by his man, who instituted a search for him, finding that he was absent from his usual rooms."

"And he was discovered in the room in which the safe was fixed?"

"Sure thing, crumpled up on the floor. But I reckon you'd like to go up and have a look round. I can assure you that the room hasn't been disturbed since the man dragged his master out before rushing to the gate and yelling for the police."

"Most decidedly; we'll go up at once," Locke agreed willingly. "Of course—but there, I need hardly ask you—you've had a thorough examination made of the place, to see if there are any traces of an entrance or exit?"

"You bet. I've a couple of my best men here, and they've made a close inspection of every door and window in the building, and with the exception of the three rooms occupied, they were all securely fastened. No, there's not so much as a finger-print."

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"Finger-print?" Locke laughed. "My dear fellow, you don't suppose that a crook like we've got to deal with is such a bungler as to leave finger-prints behind?"

The inspector flushed slightly, as he felt that he had been caught napping.

"Anyhow, it's as well to take precautions," he growled.

"Quite so, old chap," smiled the unofficial detective. "And now, if you're fit, we'll get up aloft."

"Right! I tell a man to bring along some candles."

"Let him stop where he is, old chap. He'd only be in the way. We can take one each," said Locke. And, suiting his actions to his words, the private

contracted, and that he is addicted to using a plentiful supply of brilliantine on his rather long hair."

Jack Drake, who was well acquainted with his chief's powers of observation, grinned, whilst the police-inspector contented himself with grunting out:

"Not a bad guess."

"Guess! My dear chap," smiled Locke, "plain reading as a child's spelling-book. See here, where he rested his hand on the panel, then undoubtedly placed his ear to the door to listen, as is told by these highly-scented smears of grease. But, anyhow, that's not to the point."

Carefully opening the door, the detective stepped within.

"Stay where you are, Jack," he said, as he crossed the threshold. "I'll leave you in charge of the candles, for we don't want any grease spots about, anyhow, for the present."

Then, producing a powerful electric torch, he set to work to make a thorough examination of his surroundings.

Contrary to Pycroft's expectations, his colleague's first steps led him to the

Locke. Such a thing couldn't be done, unless anyone dropped from the sky. Hang it all, man, it's a good forty feet from the ground. Not that such a possibility was overlooked," he added hastily. "We've been all round the house, and there isn't even a stack-pipe, let alone a creeper, on the whole of that wall. And if a ladder had been used—well, but there, it couldn't have been done!"

With a faint smile wreathing the corners of his mouth, Ferrers Locke, without replying, raised the sash and leaned out. He continued his investigations, switching his light here, there, and everywhere. Pycroft, who was watching his every movement, did not, however, observe his colleague detach from the head of a rusted nail a minute fragment of some dark material that adhered to it, a fragment which he slipped into his pocket-book without a word.

Following this, the safe from which the jewels had been abstracted arrested Locke's attention, and, kneeling down before it, he examined it thoroughly.



The little puppy ripped the envelope clean across. Then for a fraction of a second it stood rigid, after which it rolled over on its side and lay ominously still. "My hat, guv'nor!" whispered Drake. "The pup's dead! What—what can it mean? That letter was intended for you!" (See page 28.)

detective seized one that had been thrust into an empty bottle, and made for the door, adding: "You first, Pycroft. You can pioneer the way."

Flight after flight of uncarpeted stairs were negotiated before the C.I.D. man halted in front of a door that was the only one leading off the small landing at which they had arrived.

"Here we are," he gasped, puffing somewhat badly after his long climb.

Holding his light aloft, Ferrers Locke closely examined every inch of the woodwork.

"Nothing much here," he at length remarked, "except that it tells me that this Juan Fernandez—I think you said that was the name—is a short man, with the little finger of his left hand slightly

one and only window lighting the room, over which he flashed his torch.

"Of course, you noticed that this window, unlike the others, is unfastened?" he at length remarked.

"Certainly!" Pycroft agreed. "I was referring more particularly to the lower windows of the house."

"Then you would be surprised to hear that it was fastened but a short time before the robbery?"

"What d'you mean?"

"Exactly what I say, my dear chap. If you look carefully, you'll see where the catch was forced back with a thin-bladed knife, and the marks are quite recent."

"Come, come!" Pycroft almost spluttered. "You're trying to pull my leg,

The Yard man had not been mistaken. The entire lock had been reduced to a fine white powder.

"Come, now, what d'you make of that?" asked Pycroft eagerly, noticing Ferrers Locke scraping a small portion of the powdered lock into a piece of paper.

"Decidedly out of the ordinary. The heat employed must have been terrific, and yet it evidently possessed the strange peculiarity of acting only on the spot against which it was directed. See, the paint around the burnt-out hole is scarcely blistered?"

"It's a fair knock-out!" the C.I.D. man grunted.

"Agreed. Yes, this case promises to

be even more interesting than I anticipated."

"Hang your anticipations!" Pycroft snapped. "You seem to regard the whole matter in the same way as you would the solving of a Cross Word puzzle."

"Except that you don't get much excitement out of Cross Word puzzles," Jack remarked from the doorway.

Ferrers Locke laughed.

"You're right, lad, and if I'm any judge, we're going to have a fair share of excitement before we've unravelled this problem."

"Then you've already arrived at some definite conclusion?" the inspector queried in astonishment.

"Far from it, my dear fellow," Locke replied blandly. "I was talking in generalities. But now, if you think our friend, Fernandez, will be in a fit state, I'd like to have a few words with him."

Turning on his heel, the C.I.D. man led the way downstairs, and in a very brief time the three investigators found themselves in the room occupied by the man who had had the custody of the gems. That he was still suffering from the effects of the shock was evident from the nervous manner in which he started as his visitors entered.

Framing his inquiries as briefly, and to the point as possible, Ferrers Locke was not long in learning all the Spaniard had to tell, which simply amounted to this: That feeling restless, he had determined to assure himself that the emeralds entrusted to his care were secure, and had proceeded to the room containing the safe.

Knowing his way well, he had ascended the stairs without the aid of a light, but had paused outside the door,

thinking he had detected a hissing sound coming from within.

Reasoning to himself that it must have been fancy, he had flung the door wide, only to stand petrified on discovering that the chamber was lit up by a faint, red glow, whilst from the corner in which the safe was placed gleamed a spot of intense white light.

Then, in disjointed sentences, Fernandez narrated how from somewhere, he could not say where, some hideous object had leaped into view and hurled itself at him.

"Por los Santos, senor!" he cried, addressing himself to Locke. "It were not one man, for it no' be so bigs, nor one beast! Ah!" And the speaker shuddered at the recollection. "Madre de Cielo, it be El Demonio!"

Without attempting to dispute a fancy that had taken such a firm hold on the man before him, the detective replied:

"My friend the inspector tells me that as this—ahem!—thing that attacked you sprang forward you felt as though something cold had been dashed in your face?"

"Si, senor; eet all goes wet and cold like—er—wot you calls ze ice. Zen I falls."

Approaching close to the speaker, Locke produced a pocket magnifying-glass, through which he closely examined his face and neck, remarking at length:

"I suppose you are still wearing the same collar as when you were attacked?"

"Ah, that ees so."

"Then I should be greatly obliged if you would take it off and let me have it."

"Eh, what?" Inspector Pycroft grunted, whilst even Jack flashed a look of surprise at his chief.

Without the least hesitation Fernandez complied with this seemingly strange

request. Then, as Ferrers Locke stowed the collar away in his pocket, he turned with the remark:

"I say, Pycroft, old fellow, there's one thing you might do, if you haven't done it already."

"What's that?"

"Get our friend here to make out a list of everyone with whom he has been in touch, with regard to the sale of these emeralds."

"Right! But what are you up to?"

"Returning to Baker Street straight away. See you again in the morning. Come on, Jack!"

And without another word the unofficial detective hurried to his car, which a few moments later could be heard bumping down the uneven path leading to the gate.

The Deadly Missive!

A TALL, immaculately groomed man, whose black hair was brushed well back from his high forehead, was seated beneath a large, shaded lamp.

On all sides, from the costly rugs that littered the floor to the rare china and priceless paintings that adorned the walls, were evidences of wealth. The eyes of the only occupant of the room were fixed on a small steel box that lay open on a table before him.

From time to time, with the aid of a pair of tweezers, he drew from the interior a sparkling green stone that scintillated as though composed of liquid fire as it caught the rays of the overhead light.

One by one they were critically examined, then placed on a sheet of blotting-paper at his side. Then, having counted them over, the sorter leaned back in his chair, and selecting a cigarette from a gold case, he lighted it, and gazed at the glittering gems with a slight frown contracting his brows.

"M'yes," he muttered to himself: "I'll have to put Husky on this job!" He pressed a bell-push let into the under part of the table.

"Tell Husky that I want him at once!" he snapped out to the manservant who responded to the summons.

The servant silently withdrew, only to open the door a few minutes later to usher in a flashily-dressed individual.

With hands thrust deep into the pockets of his jacket, the newcomer advanced towards the table.

"You wanted to see me, chief?"

"Sit down!" came the curt reply. "You've already seen these?" The words were jerked out harshly, and the speaker indicated the gems with a sweep of his hand.

"Yes."

"Well, what d'you make of them?"

"What I told you before we started on the deal. You'll find them a blamed awkward lot to pass on," said the newcomer, fidgeting in his chair.

"As they are—yes. But the smaller ones will be sent to Van Hupen, of Ghent. He's the right man for that lot, and the next sizes will go to Girade, of Paris. These"—and the speaker moved several magnificent stones on one side—"will be for you to deal with."

"How d'you mean, chief? You're not going to have them cut, are you?"

"That's just what I intend to do, and you can start on the job straight away, Husky, for the sooner it's finished the better."

"But you're mad, chief! You'll cut their value down to next to nixes."

The eyes of the "chief" flashed.

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"All you've got to do is to obey orders, and keep your opinions to yourself!" he retorted sharply. Then, suddenly changing his tone, went on: "As to their being cut, I knew they'd have to be all along, for I've had my eye on them for a long time—long before they were sent over to Fernandez and literally dropped into my hands."

"And the old bird fancied himself, too, chief!" Husky laughed. "Thought by renting that old ruin and stowing the sparklers away in a safe, he'd kept their whereabouts dark."

"More fool he! Anyhow, we're not the only ones who'll make a scoop over the deal."

"Not the only ones! How's that?" Flinging away the stump of his cigarette and lighting a fresh one, the chief shrugged his shoulders.

"Should have thought you'd have tumbled to it, Husky. How about the papers? Won't the public be falling over each other to get them when they come out with splash headlines such as the 'Phantom Bat in England,' or something like that?"

"Guess they will," Husky agreed, with a grin. "But what tickles me to death is to think how these so-much-jawed-about British police will be puzzling their brains."

"Police—brains! Oh, they've brains enough to run in a drunken man, or lag a burglar or pickpocket, but when it comes to— And yet, by the way, have you heard from the Snark as to who's on this case? Talk about brains, there's an instance! Here's the Snark, employed on clerical work at the Yard itself, and not one of the officials have a ghost of an idea that he's not only a man in my pay, but an old lag into the bargain!"

"Oh, yes, he phoned through to me directly news of our scoop got around. There was a big pow-wow amongst the Big Four, but they've only put a third-rate man on the job."

"Who's that?"

"Pycroft."

"Pycroft!" The chief started from his seat as he repeated the name. "Pycroft! Why in the name of thunder didn't you tell me that before?" he shouted.

"What's all the excitement? Pycroft don't count!" ejaculated Husky in astonishment.

"Don't count, you fool! Don't you know—or, if you don't, you ought to—that this fellow Pycroft is hand in glove with that confounded meddler, Ferrers Locke? He's the cutest 'tec unhung—so cute, in fact, that if he attempts to have a finger in this pie I'll see to it that he's put out of the way, and without waste of time, either!"

Husky whistled.

"Jumping snakes! Like that, eh, chief?"

Without replying, the chief took several rapid strides across the room, then, swinging round on his heel, jerked out:

"You know where the Snark hangs out?"

"You bet!" came the instantaneous reply.

"Then take a taxi there at once, and mind you see him. If he can give you the information I want, come straight back."

"You want to know whether this chap Locke's on the prowl?"

"That's it. And make the Snark clearly understand that if he's not sure, he's to find out at once; and then send me a wire. Let's see! Yes, tell him to

wire me: 'Mind the lock.' Now clear and get there as quickly as you can."

And as his subordinate slouched from the room, his chief, with a settled scowl on his heavy face, flung himself in a chair and began idly drumming on the table with his fingers.

Intent on reaching his rooms as speedily as possible, Ferrers Locke let his engine rip as they passed through the suburbs, only slowing down when emerging into the more busy thoroughfares in the neighbourhood of Westminster Bridge, which he had selected as his point for crossing the river.

During the journey the detective had remained silent as the Sphinx, his sensitive hands gripping the steering-wheel, whilst Jack, who knew too well to disturb his guv'nor when he was evidently working out some abstruse problem, snuggled back on his seat without attempting to break the silence.

Suddenly the lad pricked up his ears. He could not have been mistaken; a faint though distinct whine had come from somewhere close at hand. Then to his intense surprise, something jogged his elbow, and, raising himself with a jerk, he pulled aside some rugs that had been hastily piled in one corner of the seat, when a patch of white came into view.

"My hat!" he gasped as his hand flew to the unexpected object, then dragging it into full view, blurted out: "Hang me, guv'nor! If we haven't got a puppy on board!"

"A what?" Locke inquired in astonishment.

Glancing round, he found that his
(Continued on next page.)

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(Continued from previous page.)
assistant's statement was correct, for in the lad's arm nestled a small fox-terrier pup, that, after the manner of its kind, was making frantic efforts to lick Jack's face.

"How on earth did the little blighter get mixed up in our rugs?" said Jack blankly.

"More than I can say!" the investigator laughed. "Suppose it was shut out from somewhere, and being cold, scrambled into the car while we were going round the house."

"And evidently went to sleep. But I say, guv'nor, what are we going to do with it?"

"Well, as it's travelled so far without paying its fare, I reckon we'll have to take it the rest of the journey."

Jack Drake, with his inborn love of animals, was perfectly satisfied with this arrangement, so it was with the puppy tucked underneath his jacket to protect it from the cold, that he arrived at Baker Street.

Without loss of time, Ferrers Locke descended from the vehicle and mounted the steps, when before he could insert the key in the lock, the door was flung

wide by his Chinese servant, Sing-Sing.

"Anyone called, Sing-Sing?"

"Only one. I'll piece boy. Mistel Locke. Him blingee little."

"Boy with a letter. Know him?"

The celestial shook his head.

"No savvy. Li'll boy piece hat much so!"

And Sing-Sing indicated by gestures that the lad had been wearing a pill-box.

"Bet you anything he means a District Messenger-boy!" said Jack.

"Him leabe letter den go chop-chop," said Sing-Sing. "Ah! Yow-ow-ow!"

This unexpected diversion on the Chinaman's part, being brought about by the pup, which Jack having placed on the floor, had in playful mood grabbed at the Chinaman's thin nether garments, its sharp teeth penetrating to the flesh.

Laughing heartily, Jack snatched up the offending animal in his arms, and followed Ferrers Locke, who was already mounting the stairs. Then the consulting-room having been gained, and the door closed, Jack deposited his burden on a rug.

Approaching the table, Ferrers Locke hastily sorted over the pile of letters awaiting him, then turned his attention to a large square unstamped envelope on which his name and address had been scrawled in a bold hand.

"Evidently the one brought by the messenger-boy," he remarked, as he reached across the table for his paper-knife.

In doing so, however, his coat came into contact with the letter and sent it fluttering to the floor. The pup, in playful mood, pounced on it instantly, and carried it away behind an armchair.

"Hi, you perisher!" Jack shouted, as he started after the animal. "You'll get socks if you start interfering with the guv'nor's letters!"

Swinging the chair on one side, Drake made a grab at the missive.

Then it was that the unexpected happened, for the little animal with one paw on the envelope, was tugging at it with its teeth, and before Jack could stay it, had ripped the envelope clean across.

For a fraction of a second the puppy stood rigid, then slid on its side. A few convulsive movements of its muscles, and rolling over, it lay ominously still.

"My hat, guv'nor!" Jack whispered, in awed tones as he started back. "The pup's dead! What—what can it mean? That letter was intended for you!"

"It means this, Jack," answered Ferrers Locke gravely, "that by an act of Providence, I've narrowly escaped death, for that envelope undoubtedly contained a deadly powder, that as you can see, causes instant death by inhalation."

"But—but who—?" Jack gasped.

"Who?" Ferrers Locke smiled grimly. "We shall see, my lad. But this only goes to prove my firm conviction, that in taking up this case, we have pitted ourselves against an unknown who is as unscrupulous as he is daring."

(Don't miss the next instalment of this amazing story, chums. Ferrers Locke is up against one of the most difficult cases of his career.)



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