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No. 1,093. Vol. XXXV.

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The Magnet ^{2^d}

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"BOUND FOR AMERICA!"

**THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL STORY
OF HARRY WHARTON & CO.**



Come into the Office, Boys!

Always glad to hear from you, chums, so drop me a line to the following address: The Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

**THE
MAGNET
EDITORIAL
OFFICE**

thinking cap and seeing if you can write one referring to the characters mentioned in the Greyfriars yarns? It'll be worth your while because I'm offering prizes for good limericks. Just to start the ball rolling, I'll give you one of my own:

There's a Greyfriars fellow named Coker,
Who fancies himself as a joker.
But, according to Prout,
His head is about
As dense as the Common-room poker!

To the sender of every limerick published I will award a splendid Pocket Wallet. All efforts should be sent to the office, marked "Limericks."

Horace Coker, incidentally, is well in the limelight next week. The Greyfriars chums arrive in New York, and then the one and only Horace gets busy. You can't tell Coker anything—he knows. And this little habit of obstinacy and conceit fairly lands him into trouble. Who gets him out of a really serious hole I'll leave you to discover when you read "Harry Wharton & Co. in New York!"

Here's a rather unusual question which J. Trent, of Cardiff, asks:

WHO WAS CASEY JONES!

I suppose he must have heard someone singing that American song about the engineer who "took his farewell trip into the Promised Land." Well, Casey actually existed, and he was an engine-driver in the early days of American railways. His real name was Jack, but he was "Casey" because he came from Cayce, in Tennessee, and Cayce is pronounced Casey. Casey volunteered to take out a train in place of a fellow-driver, who was ill. It was his last trip, for something went wrong, two trains collided, and Casey was killed. I don't know who wrote the song about him, but I do know that it is a very popular song on the other side of the Atlantic, and was probably brought over here by sailors who had heard it sung in Casey's native land.

I suppose there are few of my readers who haven't read Jules Verne's stories at some time or other, so this answer to G. Croft, of Dover, may also interest them. This chum wants to know

THIS ISSUE CONTAINS THREE MORE COLOURED METAL MOTOR-CAR BADGES!

Trim the badges with a pair of scissors and pin them in the space provided in the Album given FREE with last week's "MAGNET."

SOMETHING ABOUT THE MAELSTROM!

In "Ten Thousand Leagues Under the Sea," the maelstrom is described as a mighty whirlpool, and, as such, it has often been referred to in fiction. It would, however, be more correct to call it a "tide-rip." It is situated in one of the smaller channels which lead out of the Western Fiord, on the North-West coast of Norway. At high tide the water is trapped in many little inlets, and when the tide falls this water rushes back to the fiord, causing a considerable turmoil. It is assumed that a cup-shaped depression in the bottom of the fiord rotates the water in a circular direction, forming a whirlpool. In any case, it is a remarkably dangerous spot, and all vessels give it a wide berth, although the tales of mighty ships being engulfed in it are undoubtedly exaggerated. Still, it is powerful enough to divert vessels on to the rocks and smash them up!

One of the MAGNET authors came unpleasantly near being swallowed up in the maelstrom when the British cruiser India was sunk near that spot during the War. A swimmer, of course, would have not the slightest chance if he was caught in such a mass of conflicting tide-rips. However, this particular author was picked up by another vessel before the current could take him in the direction of the maelstrom.

He's not the only one of our contributors who have undergone hair-raising adventures. That's why they can write so convincingly. Take Geo. E. Rochester, for instance, who is writing our present serial. He has knocked about the world a bit, and some of his experiences have provided him with fine "copy" for his yarns. You'll find that next week's instalment of

"THE BLACK HAWK!"

rings true, because he knows what he's writing about. Mr. Rochester was a clever pilot during the Great War. All types of machines he has flown, and many are the adventures through which he's passed "up aloft."

The trouble about authors and artists, however, is that while they're able to get ahead when they've got pen and paper, or else a typewriter, in front of them, they're generally too modest to talk about their own adventures. It wouldn't be a bad idea to get some of their personal experiences out of them and pass them on to you fellows. I'll see what I can do about it!

Here I am at the end of my space again. Before I ring off let me remind you once again that there are three more motor-car badges to be found in next week's bumper Free Gift Number. You'll not forget now, I know.

Cheerio! We'll have another chat next week.

YOUR EDITOR.

HERE we are again, chums, with another three superb metal motor-car badges. Don't they look fine, and aren't you keen to collect the whole set? Of course! This unique Free Gift scheme has taken the world by storm. Collecting MAGNET motor-car badges is the latest craze, and it's a case of "everybody's doing it," to quote a line from an old song. See that you get the complete set. In other words, give your news-agent a standing order for the MAGNET to-day! And don't forget there are

THREE MORE TOPPING BADGES NEXT WEEK!

Whenever I hear a good yarn I always like to pass it on to someone else; and I also like my chums to pass on a good yarn to me. Here's one which Harry Mansfield, of Burnley, sends along, asking:

"HAVE YOU HEARD THIS ONE?"

A rather pompous individual went into a railway station, consulted the clock in the booking-office, and then another on the platform. "My man," he said to a porter, "the time-table says that the train to Liverpool goes at five-past two. The town hall clock says it is now two o'clock; the booking-office clock says four minutes past two; and the clock on the platform says ten-past two. Which clock shall I go by?"

"You can go by any clock you like," answered the porter. "But you can't go by the train, for it's gone!"

I chuckled when I read that one, and I felt so pleased that I sent along a MAGNET penknife to Harry. I wonder if any of you fellows know some good yarns that are worth passing on? If so, let me have them, and I'll award a penknife to the sender of the jokes which I consider good enough to make other "Magnetites" chuckle. Send them along to the address given at the top of this page, and write the word "Joke" in the top left-hand corner of the envelope. I'd prefer original jokes, of course, but they aren't always easy to come across. However, here's an idea I thought of for

GIVING BUDDING POETS A CHANCE!

You all know what a limerick is. Well, what about putting on your THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,093.



BOUND FOR AMERICA!

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

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Packing!

"ANYBODY seen my hat?"
 "Where's my jacket?"
 "And my tie?"
 "And my socks?"
 "And my esteemed collar-box?"

Five juniors, in the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars, asked those questions all at once.

Harry Wharton & Co. had come up to pack.

It was the last day at Greyfriars, before the Famous Five started on a long journey; and packing was the order of the day.

Most of their things had been placed in readiness, laid on the various beds till the time came to stack them in the various trunks.

After tea in Study No. 1, the chums of the Remove came up to get the job done.

They did not expect it to take them long. But there proved to be unexpected difficulties in the way.

Everything that was needed for the voyage had been sorted out with great care, and placed in readiness for packing. But now a number of the articles were missing from their places.

Harry Wharton frowned.

"I suppose this is some dashed practical joke," he said. "I don't see anything funny in hiding a fellow's things when he's going to pack."

"The funniffulness is not terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, came in. The Bounder had to pack, too.

"Hallo! Anything up?" he asked.

"Some silly ass has been bagging our things!" growled Johnny Bull.

"If any silly ass has been bagging my things," said the Bounder, "that silly ass is going to get damaged!"

He crossed to his bed, where his own pile lay.

"My only hat!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Any of yours gone?"

"Where's my dinner-jacket?" hooted the Bounder. "Where's my waistcoat? Where's my bags?"

Fisher T. Fish, the American junior, came in.

"You guys packing?" he asked.

"Just going to," said Frank Nugent. "But some practical joking ass has been shoving our things away somewhere?"

"Gee-whiz!"

Fisher T. Fish hastily proceeded to examine his own property. But Fishy's own property was intact.

"I guess mine are all here," he remarked. "I guess if any galoot messed about with my goods I'd sure make potato-scrappings of him!"

It's harder to persuade an elephant to do conjuring tricks than it is to get rid of William George Bunter once he's set his mind on being one of the party of Greyfriars Chums booked to visit America.

"The things will be in the dorm somewhere," said Bob Cherry. "Let's hunt for them."

The chums of the Remove proceeded to search up and down the dormitory. But the missing articles did not come to light.

Apparently they had been removed from the room.

The Bounder's brow was black with annoyance; and the Famous Five all looked exceedingly irritated.

They had plenty of occupations, on the last day before an absence from school of several weeks; and this waste of time was exasperating.

"What silly chump has been playing this fatheaded trick?" growled Johnny Bull.

"What silly, burbling ass——"

"What frabjous duffer——"

"We've got to find him and the things!" growled the Bounder. "Skinner, very likely; he's always playing some rotten jest! Let's go and ask him!"

The juniors went down the staircase and proceeded to the Remove passage. On the Remove landing they encountered Lord Mauleverer and Billy Bunter. Lord Mauleverer was leaning gracefully on the balustrade, with an expression of deep boredom on his noble face. That expression, no doubt, was called up by the fact that William George Bunter had bestowed his fascinating society upon the noble youth.

"I say, you fellows, finished your packing?" asked Bunter, blinking round through his big spectacles.

"No!" growled Johnny Bull. "Some dummy has been shifting our things!"

"We're looking for him," said Harry Wharton. "Have you seen anybody hanging about the Remove dorm, Bunter?"

"Oh, no!"

"Didn't you do your packing there?"

"No; I took my things to the box-room," said Bunter. "My trunk's there, you know. I say, you fellows, I shouldn't waste time looking for the things. Just pack."

"Fathead! How can we pack when a lot of the things are missing?"

"Well, suppose they're hidden away where you can't find them?" argued Bunter. "Suppose it was a burglar took them?"

"Ass!"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Do you really think a burglar would burgle a silk hat and a pair of trousers, you fat duffer?" hooted Bob Cherry. "Come on, you men! Let's go and see Skinner!"

"Done your packing, Mauly?" asked Harry.

Lord Mauleverer shook his head.

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"Not yet, dear man."
 "Haven't you better get on with it?"
 "Yaas!" assented his lordship, but without making any movement from the balustrade.
 "No good leaving it till to-morrow, Mauly. We get off pretty early, you know."

"Yaas."
 "You've done yours, Bunter?"
 "Yes, rather!" said Bunter. "I'm no slacker! You fellows shouldn't have left it so late, you know!"
 "Br-r-r-r!"

The Famous Five and the Bounder went along the Remove passage. They looked in at Study No. 11, where Skinner and Snoop and Stott were at tea.

"Hallo! Here are the giddy excursionists!" yawned Skinner. "You've come along to say a pathetic farewell? You needn't have troubled. There'll be a lot of dry eyes in this study when you're gone."

"Don't be an ass!" said Harry Wharton. "Some silly ass has been shifting the things we were going to pack—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Was it you, Skinner?" demanded Johnny Bull. "I don't see what you're cackling at if you haven't done it. Look here, Skinner, what have you done with our things?"

"I tell you—"
 "Got them here?" demanded Johnny Bull, glaring round the study.

"You silly ass! I tell you—"
 "What I want you to tell me is where the things are."

"You fatheaded chump! I—Yaroooh!" roared Skinner, as Johnny Bull suddenly grasped him and hooked him out of his chair. "Leggo!"

"Now, are you going to tell me what you've done with those things, you practical joking ass?" roared Johnny.

"Leggo! I—"
 "Yes or no?"
 "No!" yelled Skinner. "I—"

Bang!
 Harold Skinner's head smote the study wall, with a loud concussion. The yell that followed awoke every echo of the Remove passage.

"Yaroooh!"
 "Now, you silly ass—" said Johnny.

"I tell you—" shrieked Skinner.
 "You haven't told me," interrupted Johnny Bull. "I'm waiting for you to tell me before I bang your napper again."

"Cough it up, Skinner!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"I tell you," raved Skinner, struggling in vain in Johnny Bull's sturdy grasp, "I never—"

Bang!
 "Yooooooop!"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, laughing. "Skinner says he didn't do it, Johnny—"

"That makes no difference. He never tells the truth!"

"He may be telling it now. Hold on!"

"You silly chump!" shrieked Skinner. "I tell you I never touched your rotten things!"

"Then what are you cackling at?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"Go and eat coke!"
 "I'll jolly well—"

"Hold on!" Johnny Bull's chums grasped him, and jerked him away from the enraged Skinner. "Chuck it, old man! Let's look farther on."

"Get out of my study!" howled Skinner. "I jolly well hope you won't find your rotten things! Go and eat coke! Ow!"

Harry Wharton & Co. left the study, leaving Skinner rubbing his head and scowling furiously.

"Must have been Skinner!" growled Johnny Bull.

"My dear chap—"
 "Well, I've stopped his cackling, anyhow."

And the chums of the Remove proceeded farther in search of the missing articles, and the supposed practical joker who had abstracted them. But the search was in vain. Nobody in the Remove admitted knowing anything about the matter.

"Better get on with the packing," said Harry Wharton at last. "We'll stick the things in when they turn up."

And that was all that the chums of the Remove could do. The missing articles were still missing, and seemed likely to remain missing.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

And Unpacking!

"MAULY!"
 "Yaas."
 "Packed?"
 "No!"

"It's only an hour to bed-time."
 "Yaas."

"You can't leave it till to-morrow."
 "No."

"Well, you slacking ass," said Harry Wharton, "go at once and get on with it. I'll come and lend you a hand."

Lord Mauleverer, resting gracefully on the sofa in Study No. 12, shook his head.

"Can't," he answered.
 "Eh? Why not?"
 "No trunk."

"You ass, you've got a big trunk in the box-room!" said the captain of the Remove. "What do you mean?"

"Bunter's borrowed it."
 "Did you lend it to him, ass?"
 "No."

"But he borrowed it."
 "Yaas."

"Well, you born duffer, if you're letting him keep it, pack some other trunk," said Harry.

"Things won't go in."

And Lord Mauleverer settled back comfortably on the sofa, as if that settled the matter. His lordship made it a rule to leave difficulties, when they occurred, to solve themselves. It was not always a good system, but certainly it saved his lazy lordship a lot of trouble. In the circumstances, his lordship did not see what was to be done. So he let it go at that.

But as Mauly was to travel with the rest of the party in the morning, and as they were not prepared to lose their train, they did not let it go at that. Bob Cherry pushed past Wharton into the study.

"Feeling tired, old bean?" he asked.
 "Yaas."

"Feeling as if you can't get off that sofa?" asked Bob sympathetically.

"Yaas."
 "How lucky you've got me here to help you, then," remarked Bob; and he grasped Lord Mauleverer by the shoulders, and rolled him off the sofa.

Bump!
 His lordship landed on the floor.

"Oh!" he gasped. "Oh, begad! Ow!"

"Feel equal to walking out of the study?" asked Bob. "If not, I'm ready to help! I'll lend you a hand, and a foot along with it."

Lord Mauleverer scrambled up hastily.

"Keep off, you ass! I'm ready!"
 "Come on, then!" grinned Bob.
 "I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter

blinked into the study. "Is Mauly here? I say, Mauly, I want the key."

"You don't want the key of Mauly's trunk," grinned Bob Cherry.

"I jolly well do," answered Bunter. "Mauly's lent me that big trunk, and I've packed my things in it. It's got to be locked."

"Not at all. Your things have got to be pitched out of it," explained Bob.

"We're going to help Mauly pack it."
 "Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Come on, you men."

Bob Cherry took Lord Mauleverer's arm, and walked him away to the box-room. The rest of the Co. followed. Billy Bunter rolled after them in great alarm.

"I say, you fellows—" he squeaked.

But nobody heeded Bunter. Wharton turned on the light in the box-room, revealing a goodly number of trunks and boxes, conspicuous among them the huge trunk that belonged to Lord Mauleverer.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Fathead! Unpack your things out of that trunk, or do you want us to turn it over and roll them out?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Beasts!" roared Bunter. "I've borrowed this trunk! I tell you— Beasts! Let that trunk alone!"

Bunter rushed forward to defend the trunk, and Johnny Bull caught him by the back of the collar. Bunter's momentum carried him on, and he circled all round Johnny Bull before he came to a stop, spluttering.

Meanwhile, Bob Cherry and Nugent grasped the trunk, threw back the lid, and tilted the big receptacle over on its side.

There was a rush of all sorts of goods scattering on the box-room floor, and a howl of wrath from Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Whose jacket is that?"

"Whose hat is that?" shouted Harry Wharton.

"Whose silk socks are those?" yelled Nugent.

"Bunter—"
 "You fat bounder—"

"You podgy burglar—"
 "I—I—I say, you fellows—" gasped Bunter.

"My dinner-jacket!" hooted Herbert Vernon-Smith. "My best bags! My waistcoat! Why, I—I—I'll—"

"I—I—I say, you fellows. I—I—I borrowed a few things!" gasped Bunter.

"You—you see, a chap will have to be decently dressed on a trip to the United States. We don't want the Americans to think we're a shabby lot at Greyfriars. And—and—and my extensive wardrobe is at home at Bunter Court, you know, and—and, I say— Yarooooop!"

Bunter sat down on the floor of the box-room with a mighty concussion. He sat there and gasped for breath, while the chums of the Remove proceeded to examine the goods that had tumbled out of the big trunk.

They had rather wondered why Bunter should want to borrow the biggest trunk at Greyfriars, his own possessions not being very extensive.

But the mystery was explained now. Many fellows' possessions were packed in that big trunk.

Bunter evidently intended to show up as a well-dressed fellow on that trip to the United States. He had made a considerable selection from the goods the other fellows had put out for packing.

It was clear now why William George Bunter had done his packing early, while the other fellows were at tea,



Bob Cherry and Nugent grasped the trunk Bunter had borrowed, threw back the lid, and tilted the big receptacle over on its side. There was a rush of all sorts of goods. "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Whose jacket is that?" "Whose hat is that?" shouted Wharton. "Whose socks are those?" "My dinner jacket!" hooted Vernon-Smith. "My best bags! Why, you fat bounder—" "You podgy burglar, Bunter!" (See Chapter 2.)

"My boots!" howled Nugent, picking them up.

"My shoes!" snorted Johnny Bull.

"My scarf!"

"My best silk hat!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "And Mauly's hatbox to pack it in!"

"My silk socks—"

"My shirts—"

"My esteemed collars—"

"You fat fraud!"

"Bump him!"

"I—I—I say, you fellows," yelled Bunter. "I—I don't know how those things got in that trunk."

"What?" roared the juniors.

"I—I—I suppose some—some practical joker put them there!" gasped Bunter. "I—I've never seen them before. I—I hope you can take my word."

"Why, you've already said you borrowed them!" roared Johnny Bull.

"I—I—I meant that—that I hadn't borrowed them!" gasped Bunter.

"That's what I really meant to say. I—I've never seen them before, you know. I can't imagine how they got there! In—in fact, I—I saw Skinner putting them there!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"I—I hope you fellows believe me," gasped Bunter.

"Believe you! My hat!"

The fellows did not seem to believe Bunter. They picked up the fat junior, and bumped him on the box-room floor, and bumped him again, and bumped him a third time.

Then, leaving Bunter for dead, as it were, they proceeded to sort out their own property and carry it off. After which they helped Lord Mauleverer to pack the big trunk.

Bunter, when he recovered, did not need any help in packing. Now that he

had only his own property to pack, quite a small trunk was found to answer the purpose.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Coker Puts it Plain!

HORACE COKER, of the Fifth Form at Greyfriars, looked worried.

Potter and Greene of that Form were also a little worried.

The three Fifth-Formers were going with the party that was to leave Greyfriars the following morning, and Potter and Greene wanted to spend what was left of the last evening in the games study with their Fifth Form friends. Of Coker's society they were going to have enough on the train to London, the express to Liverpool, the steamer to New York, and on the tour in the United States. They were going to have, not only enough, but very likely too much. So they were willing—more than willing—to leave Horace Coker to his own devices that last evening; if Coker had been willing to be left.

But Coker was talking. Only too frequently was Coker talking.

Coker prided himself on being one of those strong, silent characters. Such characters, as is well known, usually get in more than their fair share of chin-wag. Thus Coker.

He stopped Potter and Greene in the passage outside the games study, and talked. They listened. The thoughts that were working in Coker's powerful mind gave him a worried look. Coker himself gave Potter and Greene a worried look. But he did not observe it. If Potter shifted from one leg to the other and Greene shifted from the other leg to the one, such trifles were not likely to catch Coker's attention.

"I'm a bit bothered, to tell the truth, you men," said Coker.

"Same here," said Greene.

"Quite!" said Potter.

"We've agreed to go on this tour in America," said Coker. "I thought it a good thing. Old Mr. Fish is standing the exes—but, of course, I don't care about that. But it's a weird country, and I'd like to see it. But—"

"But—" said Potter. He had heard all this before, and really did not want to hear it again. Almost he regretted having allowed Coker to persuade him to join up. True, he cared a great deal more than Coker did about the circumstance that all expenses were going to be paid on that tour in the United States of America. On the other hand, Coker would be there—and by the same token he would not be at Greyfriars. Greyfriars without Coker would be rather bracing.

"Nine fags are coming," said Coker. "Wharton and his lot, and that cheeky fellow Vernon-Smith, that ass Mauleverer, and that fat idiot Bunter, and that skinny American Fish. Of course, a mob of fags ought to have a senior with them to look after them and keep them out of mischief—lick them if necessary, and all that. I can do that all right. But—"

"But—" yawned Greene.

"But it's a bit infra dig, Fifth Form men travelling with a lot of fags," said Coker ruefully. "The nearer it comes the more I realise that. Once out of the school they may put on airs of familiarity."

"They might," agreed Potter.

"We can't be kicking fags all the way to America," said Coker. "At least, it will be a lot of trouble."

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"And they might not stand it!" suggested Greene.

"Don't be an ass, Greeny."

"Hem!"

"If you can't talk sense, old chap, don't talk at all," advised Coker. "That's a good tip. I'm a bit worried about this, as I said. In public places and before strangers, we can't have Lower Fourth kids coming up and talking to us and all that, claiming acquaintance and so on. People might fancy we were all on the same footing at school."

"Awful!" said Potter.

"Horrible!" said Greene.

This was intended for mild sarcasm. But sarcasm was a sheer waste on Horace Coker. He was impervious to sarcasm.

"Oh, don't exaggerate!" he said. "It's annoying and irritating, and a bit worrying; but it's not what a fellow could call awful or horrible. No need to exaggerate. Now, I've been thinking—"

Coker paused. Potter and Greene fervently wished that he would go on thinking and leave off talking. They cast longing glances towards the games study, where cheery voices could be heard from a crowd of the Fifth. Potter made a tentative move towards the games study.

"I'm speaking, Potter," said Coker.

Potter halted.

"I've been thinking that if I see those kids and put it to them plain, they may realise the—the fitness of things, and we may start clear," said Coker. "What do you men think?"

"Splendid idea," said Potter heartily.

"I suggest speaking to them at once."

"Just the thing," agreed Greene.

Whether it was a splendid idea or not, Potter and Greene were undoubtedly willing to transfer the pleasures of Coker's conversation to Harry Wharton & Co.

"Put it to 'em plain," said Potter.

"Don't cut it short—give them a real lecture, Coker. Rub it in!"

"That's the wheeze," assented Greene.

Coker looked pleased. It was pleasant to find his friends endorsing his views in this hearty way.

"Well, come on, then," he said.

"We'll go and see those fags in the Remove."

"Oh! Better go alone, I think!" said Potter. "If—if we all go they may think we've come for trouble or something—"

"That's it," said Greene. "You'd manage the thing better without us, Coker. We should only be a hindrance."

Coker nodded.

"Well, that's very likely," he agreed.

"You fellows haven't much of what I may call horse-sense. You very seldom open your mouth without putting your foot in it. Still, you'd better come."

"Oh dear! I—I mean—"

"There may be a row if the fags take it uncivilly," explained Coker. "In that case I want your help."

Potter breathed hard and deep. The worm will turn.

"Look here, Coker," said Potter, "if you think we're going to spend the last evening here ragging with a mob of fags, you're jolly well mistaken, see? If you want a rag with the Lower Fourth, go and rag, and be blown to you. Come on, Greeny; the fellows are waiting for us."

And Potter and Greene walked hurriedly into the games study, leaving Horace Coker staring in the passage.

"My hat!" ejaculated Coker.

He made a movement to follow Potter and Greene, with the intention of strewing them in the games study. But he paused, and turned in the direction of the Remove passage instead. Potter

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and Greene would keep, while the Remove would keep, as it was now very near the bed-time of the Lower Fourth.

With a frowning brow Horace Coker strode into the Remove passage and hurled open the door of Study-No. 1.

That celebrated study was crowded.

On the last night at Greyfriars Harry Wharton & Co. had arranged a farewell supper, and all their friends had been invited. No. 1 was rather extensive for a junior study, but it was filled now to overflowing. Every seat and box was occupied, as well as the coal-box and the window seat, and for the rest of the company there was standing room only. And there really was not room for Coker to kick the study door open in that reckless way. The opening door crashed on Redwing and Ogilvy and Russell, who were nearest to it, and they gave a roar.

Headless, Coker strode in.

"Hallo! Hallo! Hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Here's jolly old Coker! Make room for Coker!"

"Welcome, old bean!" said Harry Wharton.

"Welcome as the merry flowers in May!" said Nugent.

"The welcome is preposterous and terrific, my esteemed Coker," declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"We take this kindly, old man," said Johnny Bull. "Cut a slice of cake for Coker, somebody."

"Give Coker your seat, Bunter."

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

It was quite a chorus of welcome. If Coker had forgotten his usual lofty manners and customs, and wanted to be friendly on the eve of that long journey, the heroes of the Remove were prepared to meet him half-way.

"Here you are, Coker," said Fisher T. Fish. "I guess you can have one end of this box. Squat down."

"You cheeky fags!" roared Coker.

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Do you think I've come here to feed with you?" snorted Coker, in great wrath and indignation at the bare idea.

"Eh? What have you come for then, fathead?" asked the captain of the Remove.

"To talk to you—"

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Vernon-Smith. "Can't expect us to stand that, Coker. There's a limit."

YOUR SET WON'T BE COMPLETE WITHOUT THIS TOPPING BADGE!

You'll find it in next week's MAGNET, so order your copy early, boys.



An Italian-built car which is famous all over the world, the Fiat has a well-deserved reputation for reliability and fine workmanship. The present air-speed world's record was made by Major Bernhardt with a Fiat-engined seaplane. Of all car badges, the Fiat is one of the most distinguished.

"To talk to you about—"

"Cheese it!"

"Ring off!"

"Hold on, you men!" said Harry Wharton. "If Coker wants to talk, let him rip! I dare say he won't mind stepping out into the passage to do it. We shall shut the door. Then it will be all right."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker breathed hard.

"I haven't come here for any cheek," he said. "I've agreed to travel on this trip with you fags. That's all right. But before we start I want it quite clear that you've got to behave yourselves. No cheek! No making out before people that you know me at Greyfriars. Nothing of that kind of swank! See?"

"My dear chap," said Harry Wharton, "we'll be awfully careful not to let anybody even suspect that we know you at Greyfriars. People might think we came from a home for idiots, if we let on."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I didn't come here for any fag impudence!" roared Coker. "I want this thing clear. No cheek! No familiarity! No making out that you know me at school. No butting into a railway carriage I'm in. Keep your distance all the time, and all the way. See? Otherwise, I shall jolly well lick you! And I can't be licking you all the way to New York!"

"You can't," agreed the captain of the Remove. "That's absolutely certain. On the other hand, we shall very likely lick you if you don't behave yourself, Coker. If you travel with us, we want no cheek, no swank—none of your familiarity, no making out that you know us at school—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, you—you—you—" gasped Coker.

Words failed Coker of the Fifth. He realised, too, that this was a time for actions, not for words. He hurled himself at the captain of the Remove, with the intention of bestowing upon him, on the spot, such a thrashing as would last him for a considerable way on the journey that was to commence on the morrow.

That intention, however, was never carried out.

Like one man the numerous supper-party seized on Horace Coker, on all sides, and he was swept off the floor in the grasp of more pairs of hands than he could possibly count.

"Carry him home!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bump! Bump! Bump!

Coker, roaring and wriggling, was carried out with many grips on his arms, his legs, his neck, his hair, his ears, and the rest of him. He bumped on the Remove passage floor, he bumped on the Remove landing, he bumped along another passage, he bumped all the way to the Fifth Form games study—and when the door of that apartment had been kicked open, he was bumped right into the games study, and, finally, bumped down in a sprawling, roaring heap at the feet of the astonished Fifth.

"Great pip!" yelled Blundell of the Fifth. "What—what—what's that?"

"Coker!" explained Bob Cherry.

"At least, what's left of him."

And the Removites retreated, leaving what was left of Coker to sort itself out.

The cheery juniors returned to Study No. 1 in the Remove to finish supper, and the celebration in that celebrated study passed off without any further

intervention from the great man of the Fifth. Coker, for the present, at least, had had enough.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Off to London!

CLANG! Clang! Clang!
The rising-bell rang out over Greyfriars in the wintry morning.

In the Remove dormitory Harry Wharton & Co. turned out cheerily enough. It was the last time for long weeks that they were to hear that clang in the morning—that day was to see them started on their long journey.

According to Fisher T. Fish a visit to the United States was next door to dropping in at the seventh heaven. Everything in that wonderful country was, as Fishy expressed it, a sight for sore eyes. To get out of a measly island in Yurrupe, into a great country where all was push and go was, as Fishy said, gee-lorious! Without agreeing with Fishy in the very least the chums of the Remove were undoubtedly looking forward very keenly to the trip. Harry

Wharton & Co. in their various vacations had seen a good deal of the world; but the land of the dollar was still strange to them. And a trip to the United States was more than welcome to the heroes of the Remove.

They were very nice to Fishy these days. They could not help thinking that it was very generous of Hiram K. Fish to stand that tour—all expenses paid to a crowd of schoolboys he hardly knew. Why Fisher T. Fish's popper was doing it was rather a mystery. From what they had seen of the lean American gentleman the juniors would never have guessed that he had a generous nature and a kind heart. In fact, the Bounder still had a lingering suspicion that there was something behind this generosity and kindness—that there was a nigger in the woodpile, so to speak.

But even the Bounder, keen as he was, had to admit that if Hiram K. Fish was on the make, he could not lay his finger on the spot.

Dr. Locke, the Head of Greyfriars, had been surprised like the juniors by the American gentleman's proposal—to take a party from Greyfriars on an educational tour in the United States. He had consented, never even dreaming that Mr. Fish might have an axe to grind.

Another surprise to the juniors was that Bunter was coming.

That Fisher T. Fish did not want Bunter in the party was clear. It was natural enough, too, for who could possibly want Bunter?

Yet Bunter was coming.

It was no business of the other fellows, of course, but they could not help wondering why Fishy was taking a fellow whom, obviously, he did not want—whom only too obviously he did not want in the very least.

They were not yet aware that Bunter had learned what was "behind" the generous invitation of Mr. Fish, and that the worthy Fishes, popper and son, were afraid that Bunter would give the game away.

Dr. Locke had already refused a request of the Perfection Picture Syndicate, of Hollywood, for a number of Greyfriars fellows to go out to Los Angeles to join in the taking of a film representing public school life in England. The Head had regarded that request as "cheek," and had turned it down with considerable curttness.

Had he known, therefore, that Mr. Fish was director of the Perfection Syndicate, he might very probably have suspected that that "educational tour" in the States had an ulterior object.

But he did not know; and Bunter, who knew, was keeping the secret, so long as he was included in the party. Fisher T. Fish had to content himself with the hope of dropping Bunter somewhere on the way to the steamer at Liverpool. Bunter was sticking to the party. And it was Fishy's intention

He was prepared to snore on, regardless of the other fellows. But that kind remark from Fisher Tarleton Fish roused him at once.

He rolled out of bed.

"Don't get up yet if you're sleepy, old chap," said Fisher T. Fish.

"Yah!" was Bunter's grateful reply.

"I guess—"

"Rats!"

The fact that Fisher T. Fish wanted him to stay in bed was more than sufficient reason for Bunter to get up. Bunter was a stickler, and he was not going to "come unstuck" if he could help it. He was quite well aware of the Fishes' scheme for dropping him on the journey. Bunter had his own ways of acquiring information.

Fishy's narrow eyes glinted at him, but he said no more. He did not want to rouse Bunter's suspicions, being happily unaware that they were fully aroused already.

It was quite a merry party at breakfast that morning. Other Remove fellows gave the selected party envious looks. Had all the fellows who wanted to go been allowed to go Mr. Quelch

would have been left without a Form at all at Greyfriars during that trip to the States.

Mr. Quelch beamed kindly on the trippers. In his opinion, a trip to the States was likely to be of great educational value to his boys. Like the headmaster, the Form master was quite unaware that that "tour" was a simply "eye-wash," planned by the astute Mr. Fish; and he would have been very much surprised to learn that the Greyfriars party, when they reached New York, were scheduled to head direct for Los Angeles on the other side of the American continent.

At the Fifth Form table Horace Coker gave the cheery juniors somewhat grim glances. Coker had feared that on this long journey the fags would forget the respect due to a Fifth Form man. What had happened in Study No. 1 on the last evening had confirmed him in this misgiving. Still, Coker was prepared to use drastic measures if these cheeky fags did not toe the line. So were the Removites, for that matter. So it was probable that the journey to Los Angeles would be marked by a "certain liveliness."

When the rest of Greyfriars went into the Form-rooms that morning the happy trippers prepared to start for the station. Mr. Quelch gave his boys some last words of counsel before he went to the Form-room. Mr. Prout of the Fifth gave Coker & Co. some good advice, to which they listened with respect, without allowing their faces to betray the fact that they regarded Mr. Prout as extremely long-winded. The Head himself came out to say good-bye to the party when they and their baggage were loaded on three taxicabs.

"Off at last!" said Bob Cherry, when the taxis rolled away from the old school and headed for Courtfield.

"I say, you fellows—"

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THE WORLD'S FINEST CAR!

An interesting chat about the "Rolls-Royce"—the famous badge of which forms one of this week's unique Free Gifts.

The product of the great Derby firm of Rolls-Royce, Ltd., has for many years set a standard of quality to the motor manufacturers of the world, and its name is a household word wherever the English language is spoken. The big 40-50 h.-p. six-cylinder New Phantom Rolls-Royce car is by common consent regarded as the "last word" in ultra-luxurious cars of supreme quality, and it is one of the most expensive cars in the world. The silence of a Rolls-Royce is uncanny; it steals along like a veritable phantom, only the noise of the tyres on the road giving any indication of its speedy progress. The other model made by Rolls-Royce is a 20 h.-p. six-cylinder car, a smaller edition of the famous 40-50, but just as carefully built and tested. To own a Rolls-Royce is the ambition of every motorist, but not every motorist attains it! Every Britisher, however, views with pride the famous car which has for so many years maintained the supremacy of British engineering against all-comers.

The neat Rolls-Royce badge on the famous radiator is the most prized badge there is.

that he should come unstuck before they sailed for New York.

Fisher T. Fish turned out at the first clang of the rising-bell. His sharp, bony face was very bright and cheery.

Billy Bunter was the only member of the party who did not turn out. Bunter never turned out at rising-bell if he could help it.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" bawled Bob Cherry. "Hop out, Bunter!"

Snore!

"Hop out, fatty!" roared Bob.

"We've got a train to catch!"

Snore!

The snore changed into a yell as Bob playfully seized Bunter's fat little nose between a finger and thumb and pulled.

"Ow! Beast! Leggo!"

"Turn out, old fat man!"

"Shan't!" hooted Bunter. "There's no class for us this morning! No need to turn out early! Go and eat coke!"

"Train to catch, fathead!" said Harry Wharton.

"We can catch a later train."

"Ass! Mr. Fish is going to meet the train in London!"

"Well, he can wait!"

"I guess you galoots can let Bunter have his snooze out," said Fisher T. Fish hastily. "Don't disturb him."

Bunter sat up in bed.

"It's simply ripping of your pater, Fishy!" said Harry Wharton.

"Yep!" agreed Fishy, winking at the back of the taxi-driver.

"Topping!" said Johnny Bull.

"The topfulness is terrific!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"The esteemed Mr. Fish is a kind-hearted and preposterously ludicrous sahib!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—" roared Billy Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Were you speaking, Bunter?"

"Yes, you beast! It's important, too! Mind you don't forget to have a lunch-basket put on the train at Courtfield!"

"Rats! It isn't a long run to London; we shan't want it."

"I shall want it."

"Well, you can stand yourself a lunch-basket if you like," grinned Bob Cherry. "You can stand 'em all round if you feel like it!"

"All expenses paid on this journey," answered Bunter. "That's the understanding. I shouldn't have consented to come otherwise."

"Bow-wow!"

The party arrived at Courtfield in good time for the train. Baggage was carried into the station; and Fisher T. Fish was following his trunk in, when Johnny Bull tapped him on the arm.

"The taxis!" he said.

"Eh?"

"They've got to be paid, you know."

"No objection to your paying 'em," answered Fisher T. Fish; and he walked after the porter who was carrying his trunk.

Johnny Bull stared.

"I say, you fellows—" squeaked Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish had disappeared. The juniors looked at one another. As Mr. Fish had expressly stated that all expenses were to be paid, they had taken it for granted that the payment of expenses began with the journey. That did not seem to be Fishy's view, however.

"Look here—" began Johnny Bull.

"All serene!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "I dare say Mr. Fish begins to foot the bill after we join him. After all, he will have plenty of bills to foot, with twelve fellows on his hands."

"Yaas, that's so," agreed Lord Mauleverer. "Leave it to me, you men."

"Rats! We'll whack it out."

Coker of the Fifth had already paid for his cab and gone into the station, with Potter and Greene. The Co. "whacked out" the fare of the two Remove taxis, and followed on. Then they took their tickets to London. This item also seemed to have been overlooked by the Fish family. Fisher T. Fish took his own ticket and left the other fellows to do the same. This they did—with the exception of William George Bunter.

Owing to the non-arrival of a postal-order which he had been long expecting, Bunter was starting on this long journey in a somewhat low financial state. In fact, his cash resources amounted to a threepenny-piece—and even that threepenny piece was a bad one, and had been refused at every place of refreshment within a wide radius of Greysfriars.

"I say, you fellows, who's taking my ticket?" asked Bunter.

"Echo answers who," replied the Bounder.

"The who-fulness is terrific!" smiled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

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"I say, Fishy—" bawled Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish had retired to a waiting-room, where he kept close. He turned a deaf ear to the dulcet tones of the Owl of the Remove.

"Fishy!" bawled Bunter. "Fish! Fish! Fishy!"

Coker strode across the platform, frowning. What Coker had feared was beginning already. The fags were kicking up a row—a regular Bank Holiday mob, as Coker bitterly remarked to Potter and Greene.

"Don't make that row, Bunter!" snapped Coker.

"Oh, really, Coker—"

"You're travelling with me!" grunted Coker. "Remember that! Keep quiet! Behave yourself! See?"

"Look here—"

"If you want Fish, he's in that waiting-room," said Coker, pointing. "Now shut up! Not a word! Silence!"

Billy Bunter rolled to the waiting-room. Fisher T. Fish, in the duskiest corner thereof, was lying low, doubtless hoping that that little difficulty about a ticket to London would solve the other difficulty of dropping Billy Bunter en route. So it might have done but for Coker. As it was, Bunter had run down the Transatlantic junior.

"Fishy, you beast," gasped Bunter, "the train will be in in a few minutes, and I haven't got a ticket!"

"Go and get it, then!" grunted Fisher T. Fish.

"All expenses paid—"

"Not till we join my popper," said Fisher T. Fish decisively. "I guess popper hasn't handed me the durocks."

"Do you want me to be left behind, you ass?"

Fisher T. Fish shrugged his shoulders. William George Bunter gave him a glare that almost cracked his spectacles.

"All right! I say, you fellows!" howled Bunter. "I say, you come here, will you? I've got something to tell you!"

Fisher T. Fish gasped.

"Shut up, you fat clam! I guess I'll hump along and rustle you a ticket!"

"You needn't trouble," said Bunter loftily. "If my expenses ain't going to be paid, I'm going back to Greysfriars! Besides, I feel bound to let the Head know how he's been taken in. It's rather on my conscience."

"You peaky mugwump!" hissed Fisher T. Fish.

"I dare say the Head will be glad to hear that your pater has bagged this party for the films at Hollywood, before it's too late to order them back to school," said Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish breathed hard and deep.

"Come with me and get the ticket!" he gasped. "I—I—I'll stand you a bag of choccs, too, I guess."

"Well, if you really want me, Fishy—"

"I—I—I guess I do."

"Done, then," said Bunter; and, with a fat grin on his face, he rolled along to the booking office with Fisher T. Fish, where his ticket to London was duly purchased—Fishy's eyes following the cash mournfully as the ticket clerk raked it in. When the express started Bunter sat in a corner of the carriage with a bag of chocolates on his fat knees, munching.

The express roared out of the station, bearing the Greysfriars party Londonwards. William George Bunter had not been dropped yet. But it was a long way to Liverpool; and Fisher T. Fish still hoped.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Coker Does His Duty!

COKER & CO., travelling first-class, were a little distance up the train. Harry Wharton & Co., travelling third from motives of economy, had a carriage to themselves, which they packed full.

Coker of the Fifth had plenty of money, which made him rather useful as a travelling-companion, as Potter and Greene had often found.

In the junior party, the Bounder and Lord Mauleverer and the Nabob of Bhanipur were wealthy fellows; but the others hadn't money to burn. Hence the third-class carriage, at which nobody grumbled except Billy Bunter. With five on one side, and three fellows and Bunter—which really amounted to five—on the other, the compartment was well filled. All were merry and bright, with perhaps the exception of Fisher T. Fish, who had a problem on his mind which he did not confide to the other fellows. Bunter, so long as the chocolates lasted, was content. When the chocolates were finished Bunter blinked round him disparagingly.

"Beastly crowd!" he remarked.

"Not wholly," said Bob Cherry. "Only a ninth part of this crowd can really be called beastly."

The other fellows grinned.

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Bunter. "I suppose this train stops somewhere before Charing Cross."

"Sure to," said Bob. "We change at Ashford, and we could hardly do that without the train stopping."

"Oh, good! Then we'll get the lunch basket on at Ashford."

And Bunter settled back comfortably in his corner, relieved in his fat mind. He was not exactly hungry now; but he was afraid that he would be hungry before the train ran into London. On a journey where all expenses were to be paid, Bunter did not see why he should be hungry. The other fellows smiled. They doubted very much whether Bunter would succeed in extracting the price of a lunch basket from Fisher T. Fish; and they were quite certain that he would not extract it from them; and certainly he could not purchase one on a bad threepenny-piece. So it looked as if Bunter would be disappointed at Ashford.

When the express stopped at that station the Greysfriars party turned out. Further up the platform Coker & Co. could be seen, loftily regardless of the existence of the juniors. As the juniors walked to the up-platform, Bunter poked a fat thumb into the bony ribs of Fisher T. Fish.

"What about that lunch, Fishy?"

"I guess we're getting into London for lunch," grunted Fisher T. Fish.

"I'm hungry," stated Bunter simply.

Fishy's eyes glimmered.

"Well, I guess you can get a lunch-basket here for five bob," he said. "Go and get it, and be blowed to you! Here you are."

Fisher T. Fish extracted two half-crowns from his pocket.

"Better make it ten bob," suggested Bunter.

Amazing to relate, Fisher T. Fish raised no objections. He handed Bunter four half-crowns.

The fat junior rolled cheerily away.

He felt that he was doing well. The other fellows could stand their own exes if they liked, and if they were asses enough; but William George Bunter, at least, was holding Fishy to the compact. Bunter's expenses were going to be paid, if nobody else's. What Bunter



"My hat!" gasped Coker. He plunged after his hat, which rolled in front of a trolley a porter was pushing. As the porter could not see the hat, he did not know it was there until the trolley wheels crunched over it! (See Chapter 6.)

know of the ulterior motives of Hiram T. Fish assured that much.

It did not occur to Bunter that Fishy had any secret and diplomatic reason for parting so easily with the sum of ten shillings. Fisher T. Fish smiled sourly as he went to the waiting train with the others.

With ten shillings in his pocket, and a supply of tuck under his fat nose, Bunter was not likely to hurry. The train was booked to start in three minutes. It was worth ten shillings to drop Bunter at Ashford. He could follow on, if he liked; once he was chucked, the Fishes would see to it that he remained chucked. But the chucking, of course, had to be made to appear accidental, to encourage Bunter to a vain pursuit of the party; it would not have done for him to head back to Greyfriars and "spill the beans." Until the party was safe on the steamer at Liverpool, there was still time for Dr. Locke to recall them; and there was no doubt that the Head of Greyfriars would have recalled them, had he been informed of the true object of the trip. Fisher T. Fish had a difficult game to play; and he had to play it carefully.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Where's Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry, as the party packed themselves into a carriage of the London express.

"The esteemed ass has disappeared," remarked Fisher T. Fish casually. "I calculate he'll be all right."

"If he loses the train—" said Nugent.

"I guess he can catch another."

"Does he know where to join us in London, then?" asked Johnny Bull.

Fisher T. Fish did not answer that question.

"After all, we shall be a couple of days in London with Mr. Fish," said Wharton. "Lots of time for Bunter to join up if he misses us."

"If he knows where to look!" remarked the Bounder, with a rather keen glance at Fisher T. Fish.

"Begad! We're losin' him now, anyhow," said Lord Mauleverer, looking at

his watch. "You might cut off and hunt for him, Fishy."

"I guess not!" grinned Fisher T. Fish.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Coker!" Horace Coker stared in at the carriage window. His face was severe in its expression. Coker was a fellow with a sense of duty. He was rather annoyed at having to travel with a mob of fags. Still, as a senior, he felt bound to keep a protecting eye on that mob. Coker had a sense of responsibility, for which nobody thanked him. In vain had Potter and Greene advised him to mind his own business. Minding his own business was not in Coker's line.

"You kids all in?" asked Coker gruffly. "I'm responsible for you till you meet Mr. Fish."

"You are?" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Oh, my hat!"

"Yes!" grunted Coker.

"Fancy being responsible for our actions, when you're not even responsible for your own!" remarked Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't want any cheek!" hooted Coker. "Are you all in? Where's that fat sweep Bunter?"

"Gone grubbing!" answered Nugent.

"The young ass! He will lose the train!" growled Coker. "I suppose I've got to see that he doesn't! I knew I should have a lot of trouble on my hands with a crew like this!"

"You let up, Coker!" exclaimed Fisher T. Fish, in alarm. "I guess you've nothing to butt in for, you jay!"

But Coker of the Fifth was not listening. He was hurrying away from the train for Bunter.

"Good old Coker!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "If he's going to make himself responsible for us he will have a lot on his hands before we get to New York."

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

"The pesky gink!" growled Fisher T. Fish, greatly incensed by the intervention of the dutiful and responsible Coker. "Why on earth don't this

train start? Don't trains ever start in this one-horse country?"

"Half a minute yet, dear man," said Lord Mauleverer, looking at his watch. Thirty seconds had never seemed so long to Fisher T. Fish. They ticked away with extraordinary slowness.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry suddenly.

"Bunter—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a scuffling and scrambling and yelling on the platform. The carriage windows were blocked with grinning faces.

Across the platform came Billy Bunter, with a bag of tarts in one hand, and a cake in the other, and Coker's powerful grip on the back of his collar.

Coker was propelling him towards the juniors' carriage at top speed.

Fisher T. Fish's calculations had been well founded. Once in sight of tuck, Billy Bunter forgot time and space, and undoubtedly would have continued where he sat till the ten shillings were gone—and the express! Horace Coker's sense of duty had saved the situation—for Bunter, if not for Fishy!

"Yarooogh! Leggo! Oooooooch!" Bunter was roaring, as Coker propelled him along.

"Urry up there!" shouted a porter.

"Groooogh! Oooooch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Coker!" roared Bob, holding the carriage door wide open. "Here you are, old bean! Chuck him in!"

"Yarooogh! Whoop! Leggo!" spluttered Bunter.

"Urry up!"

"Now then, stand back!"

Slam, slam! went doors along the train. But Coker reached the carriage, and hurled Bunter bodily in.

Bump!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker, his duty done, raced along the train and bolted into his own carriage. Doors slammed, a whistle shrieked, the train moved. Billy Bunter sprawled on the floor, gasping for breath, his face buried in tarts. The paper bag had

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burst as he fell, and Bunter had the tarts all at once. There were a dozen of them, and they clung lovingly to his fat features.

"Won by a neck!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The goldarned gink!" snorted Fisher T. Fish.

"Grooogh!" Bunter sat up, breathless and jammy and sticky. "I say, you fellows—Oooooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm sticky—"

"The stickfulness is terrific!"

"That beast Coker dragged me along by my neck!" roared Bunter. "I never got my change for ten shillings!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cackling beasts—"

"You silly ass!" said Harry. "You'd have lost the train but for Coker. You ought to feel obliged to him—though we've no cause to."

"Beast!"

Bunter scrambled up, and sat mopping his jammy features. It was quite a long time before he felt sufficiently recovered to begin on the cake. However, he began on it at last, and it was finished to the last crumb by the time the Greyfriars party arrived at Charing Cross.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Lost in London!

"CHENG-CRAW!"

That announcement from a porter, might have led a traveller to suppose that he had arrived at a station in China.

Fortunately, the juniors could depend upon their eyes, if not their ears, in this instance, and so they knew they had arrived at Charing Cross.

"Cheng-craw—Cheng-craw!"

Harry Wharton & Co turned out of the train in the midst of a swarm of passengers.

At a little distance, a tall, angular figure stood, with a sharp, thin face, easily recognisable as that of Hiram K. Fish, the popper of Fisher T. Fish of the Remove.

Mr. Fish was waiting for the party.

A genial smile overspread his bony features as he came forward to greet them.

It wavered a little at the sight of Billy Bunter, and the American gentleman gave his son a rather sharp look.

Fishy gave a slight shrug of the shoulders, to imply that he had had no luck yet in the dropping of Bunter.

That little bit of byplay passed unnoticed by the juniors—with the exception of Bunter. Bunter had his eyes, and his spectacles, on the two Fishes, and he grinned. He was quite well aware of the sentiments of popper and son.

The addition of Bunter to the party was a serious matter, from the Fishy point of view. He was no use for the picture that the Perfection Syndicate were going to take when the party arrived at Hollywood. He was simply a "passenger," and a passenger cost money. As the Fishes, popper and son, lived and moved and had their being in money, it was serious.

Still, it was a long way from London to Liverpool, and there was every prospect of strewing Bunter somewhere by the way. And, after all the farther he was from Greyfriars when he was dropped, the safer for the Fishes and their little scheme.

So Hiram K. Fish's annoyance was

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only momentary, and he greeted the Greyfriars party in a very genial way.

"Mighty glad to see you, I guess!" he declared. "Had a good journey? I guess we lunch at my hotel. Ready, what? Yep!"

Hiram K. Fish seldom waited for answers to his remarks. That was a waste of time, and time was dollars!

"I guess I'll see to your baggage," he said. "Fisher, take your friends along."

"Yes, popper."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Come on, Bunter; don't get lost again," said Bob Cherry. "You don't want Coker to chuck you into the hotel, same as he did into the train?"

"But, I say—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, there's Coker!" chuckled Bob, feeling in his coat-pocket for an apple.

Coker & Co. were walking past in lofty state. Coker certainly saw the juniors; but, with all the dignity of a Fifth Form man, he made it a point not to see them. Going into the hotel with a crowd of schoolboys was not at all in accordance with Coker's ideas. The hotel people might take him for a schoolboy himself! With his nose in the air, his eyes directly before him, Coker marched on regardless.

Bob, fortunately, had an apple in his pocket. Equally fortunate, he was a good shot.

Whiz!

The apple flew.

Coker gave a sudden convulsive jump as his hat flew from his head, knocked off by some invisible agency—invisible to Coker.

"My hat!" gasped Coker.

He plunged after his hat, Potter and Greene staring at him. The hat rolled away, and came to a stop just in front of a trolley laden high with luggage. The porter who was wheeling that trolley, naturally, could not see through a stack of luggage as high as himself, and he did not know that a hat was in the way till it crunched.

Crr-r-runch!

Coker was a couple of seconds too late.

The trolley trundled on, and Coker picked up what was left of his hat, held it up, and gazed at it. It bore a distant

resemblance to a concertina, but it was scarcely recognisable as a hat.

"Oh crumbs!" said Coker blankly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker glared round at a group of merry juniors.

"Where did you get that hat?" sang Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker began punching the hat into something like shape again. He had not much luck with it. The trolley had done serious damage.

"Who knocked my hat off?" breathed Coker. "Did you see who it was, Potter?"

"Haven't an idea," answered Potter.

"You silly ass! Did you see, Greene?"

"No, old chap!"

"You burbling chump!"

Coker & Co. walked on, Coker still endeavouring to punch the hat into a respectable shape.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"We want a taxi—"

"Only five minutes' walk," said Fisher T. Fish. "Get a move on!"

"If you think I'm going to walk, Fishy—"

"Hustle!"

Fisher T. Fish was already going, and the rest of the juniors went with him. Billy Bunter brought up the rear, grunting angrily. It might be only five minutes' walk to Hiram K. Fish's hotel, but William George Bunter had no desire to walk for even five minutes.

Outside the station he hooked hold of Fishy's bony arm.

"Look here, Fishy—"

"Leggo, you fat clam!"

"I'm taking a taxi—"

"Take it, and be blowed!"

"Oh, cheese it, Bunter!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "What's the matter with walking a few minutes, you fat slacker?"

Snort from Bunter.

"I'm jolly well not going to walk. I'm jolly well going to have a taxi. I'm jolly well—"

A sudden gleam came into Fisher T. Fish's eyes. Once more the transatlantic junior saw a chance.

"This way then, Bunter," he said. "I guess you can have a taxi, and the other guys can walk with me."

"They can do what they jolly well like; but I'm jolly well not going to walk!" snorted Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish signed to a taxi, which drew up in the yard, and he pushed Bunter into it. The other fellows stood back out of the crowd, waiting for Fishy.

"Hotel Regina, Bayswater," said Fisher T. Fish to the driver.

"Yes, sir."

Bunter blinked out of the window.

"You may as well hop in, Fishy—"

"I guess I'm hoofing it."

"Then the hotel people will have to settle for this taxi and put it down to you."

"Oh, sure!"

Fisher T. Fish stepped back, and the taxi rolled away with William George Bunter reclining gracefully inside it.

Fishy looked after it with a grin as it vanished into the traffic.

Then he rejoined Harry Wharton & Co.

"Beat it," he said cheerfully. "It ain't five minutes' walk along the Strand to the Burleigh."

Harry Wharton glanced at him.

"Bunter's taxi doesn't seem to be going that way," he remarked.

"Doesn't it?" asked Fishy blandly.

"No; it's headed to Trafalgar Square."

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"I guess the driver's going round, then," said Fisher T. Fish carelessly. "If he don't know his way I guess that ain't any funeral. Beat it!"

The juniors beat it.

As Bunter was in a taxi and the rest of the party were walking, the Owl of the Remove should certainly have arrived first at the Hotel Burleigh.

But he was not there when Harry Wharton & Co. arrived.

He was not there when Hiram K. Fish came in. He was not there when the party sat down to lunch.

He was not there when lunch was over.

"What on earth's become of Bunter?" asked Harry Wharton, with a very curious look at Fisher T. Fish.

Fisher T. Fish smiled.

"I sure wonder!" he remarked.

"Begad! If that fat duffer is lost in London somebody will have to root him out," said Lord Mauleverer.

"Oh, he'll turn up!" said Fisher T. Fish. "We're in London for two days, and that's lots of time for him to find us."

"Does he know the name of the hotel?" asked Bob.

Fisher T. Fish did not reply.

"Dash it all, we can't have him lost," said Johnny Bull.

"I guess he will be all right! If he don't find us, he will have to go home! Sorry to lose him, of course; but a galoot must look after himself in this world," said Fisher T. Fish.

Meanwhile, Bunter, after a long drive in the taxi, had arrived at the Hotel Regina in Bayswater.

There he had the pleasure of learning that no gentleman of the name of Fish was staying at the hotel.

He did not dismiss the taxi.

He would have dismissed it; but the driver seemed to have grown fond of

Bunter, and refused to part with him. Or else he was anxious about his fare.

Bunter, after a vain inquiry in the Hotel Regina, rolled out again, his fat face the picture of dismay. The taxi-driver gave him an expressive look.

"Beast!" ejaculated Bunter.

The driver's look became still more expressive.

"What?" he ejaculated.

"I mean that American beast," said Bunter hastily. "He must have given you the name of the wrong hotel."

The driver looked at Bunter.

Bunter looked at the driver.

Neither found much pleasure in the contemplation. Bunter was wondering dismally what was going to be done. The taxi-driver was wondering fiercely whether he was going to be done. It was quite an awkward situation, and it really looked as if the astute Fishy had succeeded in dropping the Owl of the Remove at last.

Bunter's face grew more and more dismayed. The taxi-driver's face grew more and more fierce. The situation was growing tense.

"Fishy's a beast!" muttered Bunter. "But he's not getting rid of me so easily."

There was a surprise in store for the American junior!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Where is Bunter?

"JOLLY old London!" remarked Bob Cherry.

London did not really look very jolly. A fine sleet was falling, and the streets were wet and slushy. But Bob was in exuberant spirits, as usual, and prepared to derive satisfaction from everything.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with his coat-collar turned up, a scarf wound about his dusky neck, shivered.

"The coldfulness is a little terrific," he murmured.

"I guess it will be warmer in New York," said Fisher T. Fish. "Wonderful city! Wonderful climate!"

Harry Wharton & Co. had intended to make up a party for the theatre that evening. But Bunter was still missing, and the juniors had agreed to walk round and look for him.

Fishy, who assuredly did not desire Bunter to be found, raised no objection. The walk of the juniors was not likely to take them so far as Bayswater, where Bunter had been landed by the taxi.

"Are we going as far as Los Angeles?" ejaculated the Bounder.

"Oh, perhaps! I—I guess we'll take it in our stride," stammered Fishy. "We're going all over the States, you know."

"May see something of the film factories if we get as far as Los Angeles," remarked Nugent. "Hollywood is there, ain't it, Fishy?"

Fisher T. Fish gave him a pitying look.

"Of course it's there, you jay!" he answered. "Ain't you wise to it that Hollywood is a part of the city of Los Angeles?"

"I thought it was there or thereabouts," said Frank, laughing. "We don't get a lot of American geography in the Remove, you know. Is Los Angeles a big place?"

"Biggest city in California," answered Fisher T. Fish. "Nearly a million inhabitants. Bigger than 'Frisco."

"'Frisco? Is that the name of a town?" asked Bob innocently.

"San Francisco, you guy! I guess you're going to learn a few things when you get across the pond," said

Fisher T. Fish. "Los was a little town once; but the city boundaries take in a lot of other places now—and Hollywood and San Pedro among them. I guess it will make you open your peepers when you see little old Los."

"And it lives on films?"

"Hollywood does chiefly; but Los lives as much on oil as anything else. Lots of oil produced in that part of California. I guess I'll tell you all about it, if you'll sit round this fire instead of going out mooching in your rainy old village."

But the juniors decided to go out mooching in the rainy old village, and they went.

What had become of Bunter was really a mystery. The juniors were getting a little anxious about him.

Obviously, he did not know which hotel Mr. Hiram K. Fish was abiding in, or he would have arrived there. The taxi-driver must have misunderstood Fishy—if Fishy had given him the right address. It seemed possible that Bunter might return to Charing Cross, expecting to be looked for there. And Wharton and Bob Cherry went to that rendezvous. The other fellows, in twos, took different directions.

"I can't make this out," Wharton remarked to Bob, when they arrived at the railway station. "I suppose Fishy isn't playing any trick, is he?"

Bob Cherry grinned.

"He generally is, in one way or another," he answered. "But I don't see why he should now. He asked Bunter to come."

"He doesn't seem to want him."

"Well no; but if he doesn't want him, why did he ask him? And why doesn't he chuck him?"

"Blessed if I know! But, anyhow, it's rather too thick losing him in London, if that's what Fishy's done," said Harry. "I don't see how we can go

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The attractive badge of the wonderful Morris-Cowley is known and respected all over the globe.

Looking for a fellow in a city of millions was a good deal like looking for a needle in a haystack, and though Fishy did not wish them luck, he was willing to let them have all the luck that might come their way. It was not likely to be much.

Fishy was not joining in that walk in quest of Bunter. He preferred to remain in the hotel toasting his toes. But all the others decided to go, even Lord Mauleverer making the necessary effort.

"Begad! What a night!" ejaculated Lord Mauleverer, staring at the weather. "If poor old Bunter's wandering about in this drizzle—"

"I can't understand his getting lost," said Wharton. "You told the taximan the name of the hotel, Fishy?"

"Yep!"

"He must have made some mistake, then."

"Sure!"

"We'll get along to the station," said Johnny Bull. "Bunter may go back there."

"Better keep in out of the rain, I calculate," said Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I ain't putting my nose outside. I'll take all the walks you want when we hit Los Angeles. Lovely climate there. It will make you open your eyes, after your foggy old island."

on to Liverpool without knowing what's become of him."

"Well, I suppose he knows his way home," said Bob. "And we're bound to go on to Liverpool when Mr. Fish goes. He's booked our passage on the Ruritania."

The two juniors proceeded to walk through the station and its environs—rather an extensive task—in search of some sign of Bunter. But it did not seem that the Owl of the Remove had returned there. Certainly, Wharton and Bob picked up no trace of him. But after about an hour they ran rather unexpectedly into Coker.

Coker was alone. Potter and Greene had gone to the pictures. Horace Coker bore down on the two juniors with a frowning brow.

"Seen anything of Bunter?" he asked.

"No; looking for him now," answered Harry.

"Better get back to the hotel at once."

"Eh?"

"Getting deaf?" asked Coker unpleasantly. "Go back to the hotel. I'm looking for Bunter. Not that it matters what becomes of the fat little idiot, so far as that goes; but while we're away from school, I consider myself responsible for you kids."

"That's awfully kind of you," said Bob gravely.

"Too awfully kind," concurred Wharton.

Coker looked at them suspiciously.

"Well, I've got enough trouble on my hands, with one young ass getting lost," he said. "I don't want to have to hunt for you kids, too. Go back at once!"

"Dear old Coker!" said Bob affectionately.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I've told you to go back," said Coker. "I hope I'm not going to get any of your fag cheek here in London."

"You're going to get quite a lot of it, if you don't mind your own business, old bean," chuckled Bob Cherry.

Coker breathed hard. It was very meritorious of Coker, no doubt, to feel such a strong sense of responsibility towards the Greyfriars juniors. But Coker received no gratitude for this. The heroes of the Remove declined to regard the great Horace as being "in loco parentis." They simply regarded him as a meddling ass. A difference of opinion like this was bound to lead to trouble.

"Are you going back?" demanded Coker.

"Not quite," smiled Wharton.

"Do you want me to walk you by your collar?"

"Hardly."

"Well, that's what will happen if you don't start."

"Bow-wow!"

Coker said no more. He reached out to grasp the two juniors by their collars, with the intention first of knock their heads together as a just punishment for their cheek; second, of walking them back to the hotel before they got lost.

That was Coker's intention; but it was not what happened. What happened was that Coker was grasped before he could grasp, and that he suddenly found his legs flying from under him, neatly hooked away.

Coker sat down.

"Oh!" he gasped.

He sat on the wet pavement, hardly knowing how he had got there. Staying only to smite down Coker's hat—a

new hat—over his ears, the chums of the Remove departed from the spot.

By the time Horace Coker was on his feet again they had vanished in the crowds. And Coker's enraged eye sought them in vain. Coker of the Fifth was left raging—in want of a victim for his wrath. And still more seriously in want of another new hat.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Billy—and a Little Bill!

HIRAM K. FISH smiled.

Fisher T. Fish grinned.

The hour was growing late.

In the sitting-room of his suite at the Hotel Burleigh the lean American gentleman sat at his ease, and smoked a big, black cigar. He seemed in a good humour with himself and things generally. So did Fisher T. Fish. Popper and son both seemed pleased with things. Perhaps the continued absence of William George Bunter had something to do with that.

Harry Wharton & Co. had come in, rather damp, and considerably disappointed. They had seen nothing of the missing Owl. Coker & Co. had come in; and they were equally ignorant of what had become of Bunter. Potter and Greene, as a matter of fact, had not given him a thought; but Coker, with his strong sense of duty and responsibility, had worried about it.

Lord Mauleverer suggested putting the matter to the police. Whereat the two Fishes smiled and grinned.

"I guess not," said Mr. Fish. "Nothing's happened to the guy. How could it? I calculate he's gone home."

"I guess he's changed his mind and gone home, or gone back to school," said Fisher T. Fish. "Sure!"

"I'm quite sure he hasn't," said Harry. "It stands to reason that he is still looking for us."

"That's a cert!" said Bob. "Bunter doesn't mean to be left behind. He's looking for us all over London."

"The lookfulness is an esteemed cert," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But the findfulness is a boot on the other leg."

Whereat the Fishes smiled and grinned again. They had no doubt that Bunter was seeking the party, as a matter of fact. But they doubted whether he would find it. Which was satisfactory, from their point of view.

There was a knock at the door just as Mr. Fish was looking at his watch, and remarking that it was bedtime for boys.

The door opened.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Bunter!"

"Bunter!"

"The Bunterfulness is terrific!"

"Jumping cats!" ejaculated Fisher T. Fish, in dismay; and Hiram K. Fish stared at the fat figure blinking in at the doorway blankly.

"Is this Mr. Fish's suit?" asked the Owl of the Remove. "Oh! You're here? I say, you fellows—"

"So you've turned up!" chuckled Johnny Bull. "Where have you been all this time, fatty?"

Bunter rolled in.

"I'm hungry!" he announced.

"You would be!" agreed Bob. "But where—"

"I've had nothing to eat since we got out of the train," said Bunter dimly. "I'm famished."

"But what—where—why—"

"You'd better go down and pay the taxi, Fishy!" said the Owl of the Remove.

"Eh?"

"I think it's about six pounds—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"You see, you fellows, Fishy made a mistake in telling the man the name of the hotel," explained Bunter. "The man took me out to Bayswater."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I suppose it was a mistake, Fishy," said Bunter, fixing his eyes, and his spectacles, on Fisher T. Fish. "If it wasn't, of course, I shall leave this party at once and go straight back to Greyfriars. I shall go back by the next train, as I have something rather particular to say to Dr. Locke."

Fisher T. Fish gasped.

"It—it—I guess it—it was a mistake!" he stuttered. "The—the galoot must have heard me wrong."

"In that case, I will overlook the matter," said Bunter, with dignity. "Better go down and pay the man. He's rather impatient. His temper's been getting worse and worse for quite a long time."

"But what—" exclaimed Wharton.

"You see, there was only one thing to be done, after I got landed at the wrong hotel," explained Bunter. "Luckily, I had kept the taxi. After thinking the matter out I got in again and started looking for you fellows. I've been in the taxi ever since."

"Great pip!"

"Going from one hotel to another, you know, inquiring whether a Mr. Fish was staying there," said Bunter calmly. "It's run up an enormous bill on the taxi. That couldn't be helped."

"The esteemed bill must be terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"It was six pounds last time I looked at it," said Bunter. "That was some time ago."

"Jumping Jerusalem!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"The man has been getting bad-tempered, and, in fact, excited, for some time," went on Bunter. "He seemed to be afraid that he wasn't going to get his fare. I shouldn't wonder if he kicks up a row if he isn't paid at once and let go. He looked rather tired, as well as cross."

"I—I—I guess—"

"Only, before you bother about him, see about some grub for me," said Bunter. "I'm famished!"

"You—you—you—" stuttered Fisher T. Fish.

Hiram K. Fish gave the Owl of the Remove a long, long look, and quietly quitted the room. Apparently he had gone to deal with the taxi-driver.

He looked quite pale when he came back. The taxi-man's little bill had vexed the economical soul of the gentleman from New York.

Popper and son no longer looked pleased with themselves and things. Hiram K. Fish had a gloomy look; Fisher T. Fish's expression indicated that he hardly considered life worth living.

Bunter, however, was enjoying life once more. He had missed some meals. Now he was making up for them, and a little over.

The waiter who waited on Bunter at supper regarded him with awed admiration.

Bunter was the last of the party to go to bed that night. He crawled to bed rather slowly and painfully. There was no doubt that he was loaded far beyond the Plimsoll line.

When Fisher T. Fish said good-night to his popper they looked at one another.

"That fat clam is some sticker," grunted Hiram K. Fish.

"He sure is!" agreed Fisher T. Fish.



As Horace Coker walked along the deck sounds of merriment came to his ears. He looked round in surprise at the smiling faces on all sides. Evidently, there was some jest on, and Coker wondered what it was. He naturally could not see the notice that was pinned to the back of his jacket—"Not Required On The Voyage"! (See Chapter 10.)

"I had to hand that taxi guy thirty-five dollars!" said Mr. Fish, with a suppressed groan.

"Gee-whiz!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"If only he wasn't able to 'spill the beans'!" murmured Mr. Fish.

"But he sure could, pop."

"I guess the old guy at Greyfriars would call it off if he got wise to it," said Mr. Fish. "We can't run any risks. But—we've got to shake that fat clam!"

"I guess we'll shake him before Liverpool."

But Fisher Tarleton Fish went to bed feeling dubious. "Shaking" Bunter was not the easy task he had calculated it would be. There was no doubt that the pesky guy was suspicious now, and on his guard. Really, it looked as if William George Bunter was booked for New York—unless Fisher T. Fish went to the length of dropping him over the side of the Ruritania into the Mersey. And even to save money Fishy was hardly prepared to do that.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Left!

"O FF!" said Bob Cherry.

Billy Bunter grinned.

Euston dropped behind the train.

Still a member of the Fish party, William George Bunter settled comfortably into a corner seat, with a fat grin on his face.

Being fully aware of the nefarious designs of the Fishes, popper and son, William George Bunter had been very much on his guard. Fisher T. had had no chance of losing him in London again. Indeed, Fishy had been rather anxious, while in London, to keep the fat junior under his eye. Bunter had dropped many hints of chucking up the trip, and going back to Greyfriars—with something very particular to tell the Head when he got there. Fisher T. Fish was kept on tenterhooks.

Until the party were fairly on the steamer there was still time for Dr. Locke to recall them; and undoubtedly he would have done so, had he learned that the astute Mr. Fish had "diddled" him. So Fishy was anxious to keep sight of Bunter now. Bunter lost, and looking in vain for the party, was one proposition. Bunter lost, and heading for Greyfriars, to "spill the beans," was quite another.

It was a relief to Fishy, therefore, as well as Bunter, when the whole party were safely packed in the train for the long run North.

On that long run Fishy hoped to strew Bunter about somewhere, too far from Greyfriars to "spill the beans."

If Bunter was dropped, say, at Crewe, there would be ample time for the party to get clear before he could reach Greyfriars and impart startling information to the headmaster. Especially as Bunter hadn't any money! Travelling without any money was certain to be a slow process; and most likely the Ruritania would be well away to sea long before the fat junior crawled at last into Greyfriars—with belated information for the Head.

Getting Bunter off the train at Crewe, therefore, was the problem to the solution of which Fishy now set his sharp, Transatlantic wits.

Bunter, of course, would stick if he could. But Fishy did not despair of getting him unstuck.

The other fellows, by this time, had some idea of the peculiar state of affairs between the unwelcome guest and his unwilling hosts. It rather entertained them; and it perplexed them a good deal. The Bunder, however, had no doubt on the subject. Smithy had believed all along that there was "something behind" this "educational tour" at Mr. Fish's expense; he was assured that Mr. Fish was not the man to part with one dollar unless two dollars would come back in its place. Somehow or other—the Bunder could not guess how—Mr. Fish was on the

make; and Bunter knew! The Fishes could not afford to kick Bunter out, as the whole party now suspected that they yearned to do.

It was a peculiar and rather entertaining situation—a battle of wits between the sticker and the stickces, as it were.

Bunter had scored, so far. He was in the express for Liverpool, with all arrangements made for his journey to New York—arrangements that Mr. Fish still hoped to cancel. And Fisher T. Fish, though he still hoped—for as the poet has said, hope springs eternal in the human breast—could not help guessing, reckoning, and calculating, that it would not be easy to get the fat junior hooked out of that train before the terminus was reached.

Mr. Fish smoked in the corridor; Coker & Co. were by themselves farther up the train. Fisher T. Fish was careful to keep near Bunter, still thinking out his problem. A glimmer came into the little round eyes behind Bunter's big spectacles, occasionally, when he glanced at Fisher T. Fish.

Being quite well aware of the problem that corrugated Fishy's brows, Bunter was rather entertained thereby.

When he was not grinning at Fishy's worried brow Bunter occupied his time in the perusal of a volume he had bought at a bookstall before leaving London. This volume was entitled: "How to Become a Film Actor."

The other fellows, seeing that volume in Bunter's fat hands, wondered what interest he found in it. So far, they were quite unaware that their journey to the United States had anything to do with films.

Bunter's hadn't, as a matter of fact; but Bunter had made up his fat mind that it had.

The Fishes, popper and son, might guess, calculate, reckon, and opine, that Bunter was no use on the films. Bunter knew better.

He had no doubt that when he arrived

(Continued on page 16.)

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(Continued from page 13.)

at Los Angeles and butted into the studio at Hollywood, his value would be understood and recognised by the people there, and that they would be thankful that he had come.

He found encouragement for this view in the volume he was perusing.

True, it was stated that the glaring lights of the studio were trying for even strong eyes, and particularly damaging to weak eyes, and that might have given Bunter pause. But Bunter had a way of passing over things that he did not want to believe. Besides, in "Los" lots of the pictures were taken in the open air, so that would be all right.

For the rest, the book was distinctly encouraging. It stated that good looks, a commanding presence, an air of distinction, an engaging manner, all counted for success on the screen. Bunter was happily in possession of these qualifications. Looking round the party, he could not help feeling that, so far as these qualifications went, he was the best equipped of the lot.

So, in spite of the derogatory opinions of the Fishes, Bunter had little doubt of a sweeping success, when once he got his chance.

In his mind's eye, Bunter could see himself the star of the cinema, the big noise of Hollywood; he could see directors falling over one another in their eagerness to secure his services, and dollars rolling in like the flood-tide. It was a happy, indeed beatific vision that Bunter saw in his mind's eye. The probability was that he never would see it with any other eye.

"I say, you fellows, do we stop at Crewe?" asked Bunter, laying down that encouraging volume at last.

"Yes," answered Harry Wharton.

"Long enough for a fellow to get out and stretch his legs?" asked the Owl of the Remove, with his eyes glimmering at Fisher T. Fish.

He observed Fishy draw a quick breath.

"Yep!" said Fishy at once, before Wharton could answer. "Lots of time for that, I guess."

"Only five minutes, I believe," said Wharton.

"I guess I'll ask popper and make sure," said Fisher T. Fish; and he went out into the corridor.

He came back as the train was approaching Crewe.

"Fifteen minutes, Bunter, if you want a trot," he said.

"Oh, good!" said Bunter.

"Don't get left behind, fatty," said Bob Cherry. "Why can't you stretch your silly legs in the corridor?"

"Well, a quarter of an hour is long enough for a walk up and down the platform, you know," said Bunter.

"You know what you are!" said Bob. "If you get left behind you'll be stranded. We go straight on the steamer at Liverpool."

"That's all right," said Bunter cheerily. "I shan't be left behind if there's fifteen minutes' stop. I'll trot round for ten minutes."

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Fisher T. Fish winked out into the corridor.

He could scarcely believe in his good luck.

For hours he had been cogitating on that very problem—how to hook Bunter out of the train and strand him at Crewe. Utterly unexpectedly, the fat junior was playing into his hands.

The train stopped for five minutes. If Bunter took a stroll for ten minutes the trick was done. Mr. Fish was in charge of the tickets of the whole party. Bunter would be left behind—without a ticket, and without any money in his pockets. Ticketless and moneyless, he could not follow on.

Fisher T. Fish found it hard to conceal his excitement when the train slowed down at Crewe.

Billy Bunter rose from his seat and yawned.

He rolled out into the corridor, and Fishy's eyes gleamed after him.

The fat junior opened a door and stepped down to the platform. In a moment he disappeared among the crowd there.

Hiram K. Fish glanced at his son, who stood looking out of the compartment into the corridor, grinning.

Hiram K. Fish grinned—Fisher T. Fish grinned back.

Both looked at their watches.

The minutes ticked by with exasperating slowness. One—two—three—four—and Bunter did not return.

The fifth minute seemed endless.

"That ass Bunter will lose the train, after all," said Bob Cherry.

"The lossfulness will be terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, looking at his watch.

"I'm sure it's only five minutes' stop," said the captain of the Remove. "I'm sure you got it wrong, Fishy."

"Think so?" smiled Fisher T. Fish.

"Bogad, you know, it's rough on Bunter," said Lord Mauleverer. "Hadn't you fellows better give him a shout?"

"Oh, don't worry!" said Fisher T. Fish hastily. "Bunter will be all right."

Bob Cherry went out into the corridor. He leaned from a window and scanned the platform.

There were plenty of people about, and it was not easy to pick out any particular person on the extensive platform. Nothing was to be seen of Bunter.

The train gave a jerk.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! We're starting!" exclaimed Bob.

"The esteemed Bunter will be left behindfully," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "He will be terrifically infuriated."

The fifth minute had elapsed. The train was in motion. Billy Bunter was still conspicuous by his absence.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at one another as the train glided out of Crewe and resumed its northward journey.

"It was only five minutes' stop, after all, Fishy," said the captain of the Remove, very quietly.

"I guess so," assented Fishy. "I sure reckoned it was fifteen, and so did Bunter! Looks as if we'll lose him."

And Fishy whistled cheerily.

"You were pulling his leg, Fishy," said Bob Cherry. "You jolly well knew it wasn't fifteen minutes' stop."

Fisher T. Fish winked into space.

"You don't say!" he ejaculated.

"Well, it's rather rotten," said Bob gruffly. "If you didn't want Bunter you—"

"How could any galoot want Bunter?" inquired Fisher T. Fish.

"Well, you could have left him behind if you'd liked, I suppose," said Bob warmly. "It's rather thick to land him

at Crewe all on his own, and I'm pretty certain he's got no money in his pocket. He may not be able to follow us on to Liverpool—"

"Dear me!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"And he will have a lot of trouble getting back to Greyfriars," said Bob.

"Go hon!"

Fisher T. Fish strolled away along the corridor, whistling. The troubles of William George Bunter did not seem to worry him very deeply.

The train ran on, and arrived at the terminus at last. Harry Wharton & Co. alighted in the city of innumerable docks. Mr. Fish, with a lurking smile on his lean visage, shepherded his party, and appeared to notice for the first time that Bunter was absent.

"Hallo! Is that fat guy still on the train?" asked Mr. Fish.

"He got off at Crewe," said Bob.

"Gee-whiz! Is he left behind, then?"

"I'm afraid so."

"Too bad," said Mr. Fish. "Nobody else left behind, I hope? That's all right. I dare say the guy will get home safe. I guess—"

"I say, you fellows!"

Mr. Fish jumped. Fisher T. Fish almost bounded. There was a gasp from Harry Wharton & Co.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Bunter!"

"The esteemed and idiotic Bunter!"

"Why, what—what—what—" stammered Mr. Fish, staring blankly at the grinning Owl of the Remove.

"Gee-whiz!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"I say, you fellows, you didn't think I was left behind, did you?" asked Bunter affably.

"We jolly well did!"

"He, he, he!"

"How did you get here, you mug-wump?" roared Fisher T. Fish.

"Eh? Oh, on the train, of course!"

"But you got off the train!" howled Fishy.

"He, he, he! I got on again, you see."

"You—you—you got on again?" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"Of course. You see, I knew you were mistaken about that fifteen minutes stop at Crewe," explained Bunter calmly. "I just walked down the train and got on again. I found a seat in another carriage, so I just stayed there, see?"

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

Fisher T. Fish was at a loss for words. Obviously the fat junior had been "wise" to his trickery all along, and had cheerfully pulled his Transatlantic leg, leaving him in the belief that he had dropped the Owl of the Remove at Crewe—till the arrival in Liverpool. At the end of the journey, Bunter had cheerily turned up again.

Harry Wharton & Co. chuckled. As it was quite clear by this time that popper and son both wanted to leave Bunter behind, they wondered what would happen now—it was their last chance.

Hiram K. Fish stood silent.

He was thinking hard.

"By the way, we might send a telegram to Greyfriars from here," said Bunter, perhaps by way of helping Mr. Fish with his reflections. "What about a farewell telegram to the Head? Lots of time for you fellows to get a wire back from the Head, you know, before we sail."

He grinned cheerily.

That settled it.

The full significance of Bunter's remark might be lost on the juniors, but it was not lost on Hiram K. Fish.

He swallowed the pill, as it were.

"This way!" he grunted.

Billy Bunter had won!

When the Ruritania glided out of the Mersey, William George Bunter was a passenger on board that majestic craft, booked for New York—and Hollywood!

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Not Required on the Voyage!

"**C**HERRY!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Don't shout at me!" snapped Coker. "Take this brush and brush down my coat! Sharp!"

The Ruritania was throbbing in the Irish Sea, the Calf of Man disappearing in the distance.

Coker was cross.

Some careless handler of baggage, unaware of the importance of Horace Coker, had biffed a box on the back of the great man of the Greyfriars Fifth. The box must have been standing somewhere where there was mud, to judge by the result to Coker's coat. There was mud on Coker's coat, and Coker was cross. Hence his command to Bob Cherry.

Coker had taken it upon himself to keep a fatherly eye on the juniors, and felt the responsibility heavy upon him, no doubt he felt that he was entitled to their services. At Greyfriars, Coker had always regarded it as utter rot that the Fifth Form were not allowed fags like the Sixth. Bob, certainly, would have had no objection to brushing down Coker's coat, had he been asked civilly. But Coker, of course, had no civility to waste on a Lower Fourth fag. It was for Coker to order, and for lesser mortals to obey—according to Coker.

Bob Cherry, at the moment, had a slip of paper in his hand. It was a label, bearing the legend: "NOT REQUIRED ON THE VOYAGE." It had been stuck—insecurely—on somebody's trunk, and evidently had fallen off. Bob had picked it up with the intention of handing it to a steward. Then Coker happened.

"Do you hear me?" rapped out Coker crossly. "My coat's smothered with mud by some clumsy ass. Brush it down!"

Bob Cherry was about to suggest that Coker of the Fifth should go and eat

coke. But another idea came into his mind, and he smiled and nodded.

"To hear is to obey!" he remarked pleasantly.

"Don't be a young ass, and don't keep me waiting," grunted Coker.

Bob took the brush.

"Turn round!" he said.

Horace Coker turned round.

Bob Cherry, with rather surprising obedience and docility, proceeded to brush down the broad back of Horace Coker.

Coker was aware of that, but he was not aware that the Removite was also hooking a slip of paper on his back with the aid of several pins.

By the time Coker's coat had been carefully brushed, and every speck of mud removed, the slip was safely fixed across Coker's broad shoulders behind him, nicely placed to catch the general eye.

"Don't be too long about it!" growled Coker.

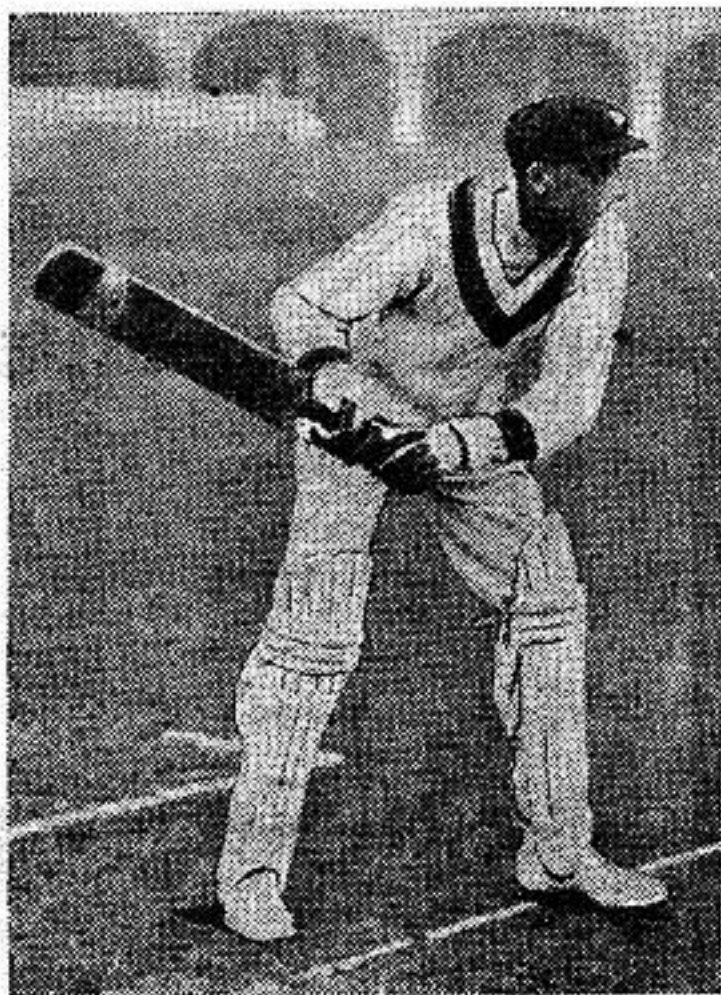
"Finished, old bean!" said Bob.

"Don't call me familiar names, Cherry! I want you to understand,

(Continued on next page.)

PREPARING THOSE "SHIRT-FRONT!"

The wickets in Australia on which England's Test Cricketers have been playing want some understanding—and preparing. Read what our cricket expert has to say on this subject.



H. L. HENDRY, a sound bat and a clever bowler.

Of course, you have heard that they call the cricket pitches on which Test matches are played in Australia "shirt-fronts." They are also called other names—by the bowlers who try to get batsmen out on them, but we need not go into details concerning these other names.

The "shirt-front" is a most appropriate name for them, because they shine like the front of your own—or your father's—shirt-front when it comes back from the laundry. Let me now tell you how these shirt-front wickets of Australia are prepared.

THERE is a bit of nature and a lot of art in the preparation of an Australian Test match pitch. Grass will grow—quickly—at Sydney or Melbourne if water is poured

on the ground plentifully. The first step in preparing a Test match pitch is to cut the grass very short. Then the pitch is literally flooded with water. When this has all but dried, and the ground is still moist, a roller weighing several hundred-weights is used for half an hour or so. Then another sprinkling of water, and then a two-ton roller.

UNDER this sort of treatment the sub-soil under the typical Australian wicket not only gets the glaze which makes the title of "shirt-front" appropriate, but it also takes on the hardness and the consistency of concrete, and in ordinary circumstances is the sort of wicket to break the heart of the bowler. Occasionally, however, even under Australian weather conditions, these pitches are converted into perfect brutes from the batsman's point of view. If rain comes, then the sunshine which follows makes the pitch more like a pudding than either a shirt-front of concrete, and woe betide the batsmen who have to face bowlers who can use the "pudding."

THIS is how Jack Hobbs, who knows as much about batting as any man living, described to the writer an Australian pitch after rain and when the sun is shining: "You haven't the faintest idea how a ball will go. One whizzes past your left ear, and one whizzes past your right ear, and eventually you are very thankful if you get away from the wicket with all your limbs still intact." Rain and sunshine on an Australian wicket makes the sort of pitch on which an Australian team was once turned out for 42—in 1887—and on which an England side made only 45 in 1886. But these are "freak" pitches which only happen in Australia once in a season at most. And, generally speaking, an Australian pitch is good for a couple

of thousand runs without it showing the least signs of wear and tear.

MANY of the Australian cricketers have association with the homeland, and one of them is Hunter Laurie Hendry. He is the son of William Hendry, who at one time was associated with the Queen's Park Football Club at Glasgow, and his uncle played for Scotland at the Rugby game years ago. "H.L." has a nickname which was given to him on account of the way he walks to the wicket—the "Stork." He has claims to be considered as one of the best all-rounders Australia has produced. He can not only bat—having made as many as 325 in an innings—and bowl a good medium pace ball, but after Jack Gregory is considered one of the best slip-fielders Australia has produced in modern times.

THERE have often been calls for A. A. Mailey, the Australian, to come back to play for Australia in the present series of games. But Mailey could not come back for this reason: That before the start of the Tests he had entered into a contract to write about the games and draw pictures concerning the games for some newspapers in Australia, and it is a condition of playing for either England or Australia that the players taking part in the games shall not write for newspapers about the contests while they are in progress. By the way, Mailey holds a record for Test matches, for he is the only player who has taken nine wickets in an innings in a match between England and Australia. Mailey did this at Melbourne in 1921.

EVERYBODY thinks of Jack Hobbs as a batsman for opening the innings, and as a brilliant fielder at cover-point. But maybe you do not know that Jack Hobbs once started the bowling for England in a Test match. This was against the South Africans at Johannesburg in 1910. It may be added that Jack says he was very soon taken off.

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once and for all, that I don't want any familiarity from fags on this steamer."

"Dear old Coker!" said Bob. "Here's your brush!"

Bob returned the brush, apparently under the delusion, for the moment, that it was a cricket ball, and that Coker's features were the wicket.

Crash!

There was a roar from Coker of the Fifth as the brush landed.

"Oh! Ow! You——"

Bob Cherry left the spot hurriedly. Coker had been cross to begin with, and now he was undoubtedly crosser. The junior promptly vanished into parts unknown.

Coker of the Fifth, rushing after him blind with rage, collided with a stout passenger on the steps, and they rolled down again together. The stout passenger sat up gasping, and he looked so annoyed that Coker decided not to stay and ask him whether he was hurt. Besides, the question really would have been superfluous.

Coker ascended to the promenade deck, expecting to find Potter and Greene there. But Potter and Greene had gone to their state-room. There were plenty of people about, however; the *Ruritania* carried some hundreds of passengers. Almost all of them looked after Coker as he passed.

Smiling faces regarded Coker on all sides.

Now, Horace Coker was, in his own opinion, at least, a commanding sort of fellow, and well worth a second glance. But passengers were giving him not only a second glance, but a third and a fourth and a fifth. Sounds of merriment came to Coker's ears.

He glanced round.

Smiling faces were to be seen on all sides, laughing faces—twinkling eyes. Evidently there was some jest toward. Coker wondered what it was.

To his surprise, he could discern nothing that could explain this general outburst of hilarity.

The *Ruritania* steamed on her majestic way through the billowing waters of the Irish Sea. Stewards hurried to and fro. Passengers clustered here and there. The engines throbbed. Coker looked this way and that way, like Moses of old; but he saw nothing out of the common. Yet it was evident that something or other, unknown to Coker, was causing general merriment. He was puzzled.

"He, he, he!"

Coker stared round at Billy Bunter. That fat youth had evidently caught the general infection, his fat cachinnation told as much.

"Bunter——"

"He, he, he!"

"What are you cackling at, you fat young ass?" asked the mystified Coker.

"He, he, he!"

Coker made a stride towards him, with thunder in his brow, and Bunter retreated, still cackling.

"Begad!" It was Lord Mauleverer's voice. Mauly was reclining gracefully in a deck chair, and he grinned as his eyes followed Coker of the Fifth. "Oh, begad! Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker spun round towards him.

"Haden't you better get down into the hold?" asked Lord Mauleverer.

"Wha-a-at?"

"That's where the things go that are not required on the voyage," explained Mauleverer.

Coker glared at him and turned away in disdain. There was a ripple of laughter along the deck, and Coker's rugged face reddened.

It began to dawn upon him that he

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was the centre of this inexplicable merriment.

He withdrew to a secluded spot and took a little pocket-mirror from his pocket and regarded his face therein, with the idea that there might be a smut on his nose, or something of that kind.

But his face in the looking-glass presented its customary aspect. There was no smut on his nose, and nothing else amiss so far as Coker could see. Naturally, he had no view of his back, and did not know that a label was affixed there announcing that he was not required on the voyage.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

They were laughing now—actually laughing out loud! And it was unmistakable—though incredible—that they were laughing at Coker! The rugged face of Coker of the Fifth grew redder and redder.

There was no doubt about it. Eyes followed Coker wherever he moved, and a ripple of merriment followed him like the white wake following the steamer.

Coker breathed hard and deep. Something was up, though he could not begin to imagine what it was.

With a red face and a frowning brow, Coker paced the deck, wondering what on earth was making all these silly asses cackle.

He was glad to see Potter and Greene when they came up at last. Potter and Greene came towards him, and Coker glared at them suspiciously, expecting to see their faces breaking into smiles, like all the other faces in the offing. But they did not smile. As they were facing Coker they could not see his back.

"You fellows might have come up before!" grunted Coker.

"Looking after the baggage, old bean," said Potter. "What's the row?"

"No row that I know of!" snapped Coker.

"You look a bit savage."

"Like a bear with a sore head!" remarked Greene.

"Don't be an ass, Potter! Don't be a chump, Greene!"

"Hem!"

Potter and Greene glanced about them in some surprise. The hilarious state of about fifty people dawned on them, also the fact that Coker was the centre of attraction.

"Look here," said Coker in a low voice. "There's something up! Every silly owl on the deck is grinning at me!"

"Looks like it," said Potter.

"Is there anything wrong with my face?" asked Coker.

"Not more than usual."

"What?"

"I—I mean——"

"There's some sort of a fool joke on," said Coker. "Every silly chump grins or cackles when I pass him. What does it mean?"

"Must be your features," said Greene thoughtfully. "We're used to them at Greyfriars, you know; but strangers are——"

William Greene stepped back hastily. Coker was clenching his fists.

"I didn't ask you for idiotic jokes!" said Coker in a suppressed voice. "I want to know what's up. There must be something!"

"Perhaps it's the way you're glaring," suggested Potter. "You look as if you'd like to bite somebody!"

"Don't be a silly owl!"

"Hem!"

Potter and Greene were puzzled. They hardly thought that it really could be Coker's features that were setting the promenade deck in a ripple. Those features were, perhaps, remarkable in

their way. But they were not so remarkable as all that.

Coker glared at them and swung away.

Then all of a sudden Potter and Greene discerned the cause of the hilarity—and, unfortunately, joined in it.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Potter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Greene.

Horace Coker swung back, his face in a blaze of wrath.

"Why, you—you—you——" he gasped. "You're at it now! You cackling dummies, what do you mean? Do you want me to mop up the deck with you? My hat! I'll jolly well——"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Potter. "It's on your back——"

"On your back!" gurgled Greene.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"On my back!" repeated Coker blankly. "What's on my back, you burbling jabberwocks?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Something on my back?"

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

Coker groped wildly round his back. A label came off in his hand, and he held it up and stared at it.

"NOT REQUIRED ON THE VOYAGE!"

That was the legend that met Coker's infuriated eye.

"My—my—my hat!" gasped Coker.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cackling, burbling chumps——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That—that—that young villain Cherry——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He must have stuck this on when I told him to brush my coat——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you stop cackling?" roared Coker.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker made a sudden clutch at Potter and Greene. Before they knew what was happening he had grasped them.

Crack!

The heads of George Potter and William Greene came together with a resounding concussion. There was a simultaneous roar. They stopped cackling.

"Yaroooooh!"

Then Horace Coker rushed below in search of Bob Cherry and vengeance, leaving the deck in a roar behind him.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Jammy!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"Gerrout!"

"Busy?" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Yes! Gerrout!"

Billy Bunter looked busy. He was seated in the state-room, with a large spoon in his hand, a jar of jam between his knees, a smear of jam on his face, and a sticky and happy expression—which changed to suspicion as Bob Cherry looked in.

"You look it!" grinned Bob. "Don't get that jam all over my things, Bunt. We're sharing this room. I hope you've left your snore at Greyfriars!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I expected a cabin to myself, of course," said Bunter. "I shall jolly well speak to Fishy about this! Look here, you bunk; you're not bagging any of this jam. If you want any you can go and get it off the steward, same as I did! See? I've only got three pounds."

Bob Cherry chuckled. He had not



"You stuck that label on my back, you cheeky fag!" yelled Coker, as he made a rush at Bob Cherry. Bob jumped actively out of the way, and Coker plunged past him full-tilt into Bunter. Crash! The two sprawled on the floor of the cabin, and Bunter gurgled as jam went down the wrong way. "Goooooch! Ooooooch!" spluttered the Owl. "I'm c-c-choking! Yoooooooooch!" (See Chapter 11.)

come to the state-room for Bunter's jam, but to unpack a bag Bunter, however, with his fat thoughts concentrated on that luscious comestible, was suspicious. He dug the spoon into the jar, loaded it with jam, and conveyed it to his capacious mouth, his little round eyes blinking at Bob over it. Evidently he was uneasy lest an attempt should be made on the jam.

"All serene, fatty!" said Bob. "But go easy on it—"

"Shan't! I tell you if you want any you can go and get it off the steward. You can get anything you like on an Atlantic liner if you like to pay for it."

"Fathead! Go easy on it, or you'll be in trouble presently. Three pounds of jam isn't a good thing to start an Atlantic voyage on. And I saw you loading up chocolates and toffee and a cake—"

"Oh, that's all right!" said Bunter. "I'm a good sailor. You remember what I was like that day on the Channel, when all you fellows were sick."

"I remember you were on your beam-ends, groaning like a steamer's siren out of order!"

"Beast!"

Bunter continued his frontal attack on the jam. So far the Irish Sea had not worried Bunter—and Bunter never met troubles half-way. If he was going to be seasick, he might as well have a good innings while he had a chance; besides, he wasn't going to be seasick. Anyhow, he was going to demolish the jam to the last scrape at the bottom of the jar. Whatever else was uncertain, that at least was certain.

A deep voice was heard in the alleyway without.

"Where is he? Where's that young villain Cherry?"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob.

The voice of Horace Coker was heard up and down and round about. It was not a soft or gentle voice at the best of times. When Coker was wrathful, it was like unto the celebrated Bull of Bashan of olden time. He was wrathful now.

"My esteemed Coker—" came Hurree Jamset Ram Singh's voice.

"Where's Cherry? Which is his cabin?"

"My esteemed and preposterous Coker—"

"I've got it from the steward that you're all along here!" roared Coker.

"Cherry's in one of the rooms! Which?"

"The whichfulness is terrific."

"Run away and play, Coker!" called out Harry Wharton, from another state-room. "You're not required on the voyage, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, here you are!" roared Coker, glaring into Bob's room. "You cheeky little sweep, you stuck a label on my back! Now I'm going to smash you, see? I'm going to give you a thrashing that will last you till we get to New York; and teach you manners. And that's to begin with!"

Coker rushed on Bob Cherry and smote. The state-room was not large, and two bunks took up a considerable part of what space there was, not to mention the baggage. Bob Cherry lowered his head as Coker rushed on him, and butted. Coker did not see it coming. Coker seldom saw anything coming. While his smiting hands sawed the air, the top of Bob's head impinged on Coker's waistcoat with a powerful impact. Coker plunged helplessly forward, sprawling over Bob, who wriggled actively out of the way, and

falling headlong on Bunter, who had no time to get out of the way.

There was a gasping howl from Billy Bunter.

Bunter had just filled his capacious mouth with jam. A mouthful of jam, allowed to slide pleasantly down the gullet, was grateful and comforting. But a mouthful of jam going down the wrong way, owing to a Fifth-Form man falling on Bunter, was neither grateful nor comforting—it was frightfully unpleasant.

"Ooooooooooooooooooooooch!"

Bunter choked and gurgled.

"Moooooooooooooooooooooch!"

"Oh!" gasped Coker. "Ow! My hat! I'll smash him—"

"Goooooch!" spluttered Bunter, in anguish. "Gerroff! Oooooch! I'm cheek-chock-choking—yoooooooooooooch!"

Coker got off, leaving Bunter sprawling and gurgling. He spun round on Bob Cherry. By that time, however, all the Famous Five were on the spot. If Coker was hunting trouble, the cheery chums of the Remove were prepared to give him all he wanted, and a little over.

Five pairs of hands collared Horace Coker, and he resumed a horizontal attitude on the floor. This time he did not get up. Getting up was out of the question, with Johnny Bull sitting on his chest, Frank Nugent standing on his legs, Hurree Jamset Ram Singh holding his ears, and Wharton and Bob Cherry grasping an arm each. Once more it was borne in upon the powerful brain of Horace Coker that he had bitten off a larger allowance than he could masticate.

"Leggo!" raved Coker. "Lemme gerrup! I'll smash you! You cheeky

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fags! I warned you before we left Greyfriars—"

"Hand over that jam, Bunter!"

Gurgled!

Bunter was engaged in a struggle with the jam he had taken on board in bulk. Horrid sounds proceeded from Bunter. He gasped, groaned, gurgled, and guggled.

Bob Cherry picked up the jar. It was still half full. He picked up the spoon. He bent over Coker's upturned and alarmed face.

"Have a little jam, old chap?"

"You dare to put that jam on me—" gasped Coker. "I'll smash you—I'll spifficate you—I—I'll pulverise you—I'll—oooooooooh!"

Coker's open mouth received a large spoonful. He shut his mouth at once, and his nose received the next spoonful. His neck received the next. Then his ears had a spoonful each. By that time, Bob seemed tired of ladling it out, and he up-ended the jar and let what remained of the jam stream out over Coker's speaking countenance.

Horace Coker heaved under the juniors who were holding him, like an earthquake. But he was unable to get loose—the cheery juniors were too many for him. Jam streamed and trickled down on Coker's face, till his features were lost in a sea of jam.

"That's the lot!" said Bob Cherry regretfully. "Sorry there's no more, Coker. You should have dropped in earlier, before Bunter scooped it."

"Ooooooooooooooh! Grooooooooooh!"

"Now roll him out," said Bob. "He's too sticky to stay in here. Heave-ho, my hearties, and out he goes!"

The Famous Five heaved, and out went Coker. He rolled in the corridor, spluttering. He gained his feet, and gave the grinning juniors a jammy and ferocious glare.

Three or four passengers came along, looking for their berths. They stared at Horace-Coker blankly.

"Did you see that boy?" a lady's voice floated back. "Disgusting! So greedy! He must have put his face in a jam pot—"

"Better go and get a wash, Coker," chuckled Bob.

"The washfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed and ludicrous Coker."

For once, Horace Coker agreed with the Famous Five. He felt that a wash was the one thing needful. Bottling up his yearning for vengeance, therefore, Coker rushed away in search of a wash, a cheery chortle from the Famous Five following him.

"Dear old Coker!" sighed Bob Cherry. "Always looking for trouble, and always finding it."

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter had recovered his voice. "I say, old chaps! Oh, dear!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the trouble with Bunter?"

The juniors looked into the state-room.

Bunter was sitting on the floor, with his back to the bulkhead, and an extraordinary expression on his face.

"What's up?" asked Harry.

"Grooooh! I—I say, it—it wasn't the jam—I hardly had any jam! It wasn't the toffee! It—it wasn't the cake! I say, you fellows, I feel queer! I—I don't know why I do, but I—I do!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at. I've got a feeling as—as if my inside is walking about!" gasped Bunter. "I've had practically nothing to eat—but— Moooooooooooooh!"

"Toffee, and cake, and jam—and the Irish Sea!" said Nugent. "Too much!"

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of a good thing, old chap, when taken all together."

"Ooooooooooooooh!"

"Poor old Bunter!"

The chums of the Remove sympathised. Undoubtedly, Bunter had asked for it. But now that he had got it, he was certainly an object for sympathy. A steward brought a basin—Bob brought a glass of water. Bunter waved them feebly away. For a long, long time William George Bunter sat and moaned and longed to die.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Coker is Not Sea-sick!

"DINNER!"

"Any more casualties?" asked Bob Cherry.

There were no casualties among the Famous Five. They had been on the sea before, many times, and they had not started this voyage with jam, cake, and toffee. They were, in fact,

HERE'S THE THIRD BADGE IN NEXT WEEK'S SUPERB SET OF FREE GIFTS—DON'T MISS IT, CHUMS!



In the early days of motoring, Mercedes was the most famous name in the motor world. Still one of the world's finest cars, the Mercedes, which hails from Germany, has recently amalgamated with another famous German firm—Benz. The latest Mercedes-Benz cars will be among the most popular of Continental makes for 1929—so be sure to secure their distinctive radiator-badges.

looking very merry and bright, and the Bunder and Lord Mauleverer were equally bright and merry, and Fisher T. Fish had quite a pleased expression on his face—since he had heard that Bunter was on the sick list, seeming to derive some satisfaction from that circumstance.

Bunter was staying in his bunk, and anyone who passed his state-room was startled to hear heart-rending moans proceeding therefrom. Until dinner was announced, one or another of the juniors kept the sufferer company, and when they had to leave him, they promised to give him a look in again as soon as they could. Bunter only blinked at them with lack-lustre eyes. Nothing could have made Bunter happy at that moment, except the sudden sinking of the Ruritania with all hands.

Life had lost all charms for the Owl of the Remove, at present; it had become a weary, dreary burden. No doubt Bunter would change his views by-and-by, but, for the present, he regarded the earth and all things therein

as a delusion and a snare. He was only conscious of a feeble desire to slaughter Fisher T. Fish for having been the cause of this awful voyage, and the news that Fishy had fallen overboard might have afforded him a momentary gleam of comfort. For the rest, Bunter lay in the bunk, indifferent to fate, moaning occasionally, a hapless victim of toffee, jam, cake, and the Irish Sea.

Coker of the Fifth met the Famous Five as they went cheerfully along to dinner. Coker was no longer jammy; he was newly-swept and garnished, as it were. The Famous Five smiled at him, but Coker did not smile. Coker was still feeling his responsibilities heavy upon him. In vain Potter and Greene had begged him, almost with tears in their eyes, to mind his own business. There were many things that Coker could do. But he could not do that.

"Where's Bunter?" he asked.

"On the sick list," said Bob.

"Fat little pig!"

"Well, he didn't have so much of the jam as you had!" argued Bob. And the Famous Five smiled again.

Coker breathed hard.

"I want to give you kids a tip," he said. "That's why I'm speaking to you."

"My hat! That's jolly generous of you, Coker," said Bob, holding out his hand. "Shell out!"

"Eh?" ejaculated Coker.

"Gold or notes—just as you like," said Bob.

"You silly young ass! I don't mean that," said Coker. "You don't seem to have much sense, Cherry. I mean, I'm going to give you a tip about behaving yourselves. Don't be so dense."

"The denseness is a boot on the other leg, my esteemed and ridiculous Coker!" remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Shut up!" said Coker. "You're interrupting me. Now—"

"Come on, Coker!" called out Potter. "Shut up, Potter! Now, you kids," said Coker impressively. "One of you is sick already. The rest of you will be down with it soon, if you're not careful. Don't make greedy little pigs of yourselves. See? Go easy on the grub. None of your fag gorging!"

Having given the Famous Five that valuable tip, Coker of the Fifth followed Potter and Greene. Harry Wharton & Co. looked after him. Time and place were not suitable for bumping Coker; so the Fifth Form man got away with it, so to speak.

Coker & Co. had secured places at some distance from the juniors. This was a relief to Coker's mind. He hated the idea of being taken for a schoolboy on a holiday. Coker's own impression was that, to the general view, he looked rather a man of the world. Lower Fourth fags—unmistakably schoolboys on a holiday—hanging about him, would have given Coker away. Horace would have been greatly surprised had he been aware that his own impression was ill-founded, and that he was not only taken for a schoolboy, but an overgrown and rather clumsy schoolboy. The poet has remarked that where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise, and undoubtedly much of Horace James Coker's satisfaction was founded upon the circumstance that he could not see himself as he was seen by others.

"One of those young sweeps is sick already," Coker remarked to Potter and Greene. "I expect the others will guzzle themselves sick. However, I've

warned them; and that's all a fellow can do. Better go easy on that soup, Potter."

"Eh?" said Potter.

"You're not much of a sailor, you know. I don't want you laid up on my hands," explained Coker.

Potter breathed deep, and made no rejoinder.

"Greene, old man," said Coker, a few minutes later, "I shouldn't take chicken, if I were you."

"You're taking it!" said Greene.

"That's different. I'm a good sailor. You know what you are."

"I know what you are, anyhow," said Greene. "That time we had a trip to Boulogne in the summer, you were ill all the way."

"And ill all the way back," remarked Potter.

"I was a little out of sorts that time," said Coker, "and I wasn't what you'd call ill, either. You fellows needn't get ratty, and say nasty things, when a fellow speaks to you for your own benefit. We go three to a cabin, too, and I can't have you two fellows sick all night, keeping me awake. Have a little consideration for me."

"Haden't you better go easy on the grub?" inquired Potter.

Horace Coker was not following his own good advice. Coker always had a healthy appetite, and the keen sea air seemed to have made it healthier.

"Don't be an ass, Potter."

There were many places vacant, and many of the passengers who were dining were only toying with their food. One or two left rather hastily before dinner was over. Coker could not help feeling anxious about his friends. Potter and Greene were making a good dinner, and so was Coker. The fare was good, and it kept Coker busy; but he was not too busy to give his friends advice. Coker was seldom too busy for that.

"Do you think you'd better eat that chocolate pudding, Potter?" he asked doubtfully.

"Yes," answered Potter briefly.

"It's a bit risky, old chap."

"Rats!"

Coker started.

"What—what did you say, Potter?"

"Rats!" answered George Potter very distinctly.

"If that's how you take a friendly word of advice, Potter, you can make a pig of yourself, and be as sick as you like," said Coker stiffly. "Greene, old man, don't take a second helping. You'll regret it."

"You've had three," said Greene.

"That's a dense remark, Greene. I'm a good sailor, and you're simply rotten. Don't do it!"

"Rats!" said Greene.

"What?"

"Rats!"

"Oh, very well!" said Coker, greatly offended. "Very well, indeed! Don't say I didn't warn you! But understand this. I'm not going to sit up all night

nursing you. You'd better get that clear. Now shut up!"

And Coker comforted himself with a fourth helping.

Somewhat to his surprise, Potter and Greene showed no ill effects when they went on deck afterwards. They walked up and down quite cheerily with Coker. It was a cold but calm and starry evening, and Potter and Greene seemed quite cheerful.

"You fellows feeling it yet?" asked Coker at last.

"Feeling what?" asked Greene.

"Sea-sick."

"Not at all."

"Oh!" said Coker.

Potter and Greene looked at Coker, and looked at one another. They smiled. Coker's complexion, as a rule, was ruddy. Now the ruddy hue had faded, and he looked a little pale, and, mixed with the pallor, was an artistic shade of green. Coker was already regretting the fourth helping of that very agreeable pudding. After a little thought, he regretted the third helping. A few minutes later he wondered

"Did you speak, Coker?"

"Oh! Numno! Oh! Not at all!"

"Let it slowly down your throat," went on Greene, "and pull it up again, you know. Nice, fat, juicy bacon—"

"Ooooooooooooo!"

"Anything the matter?"

"Oh! No! Oooooch! I—I—I think I—I—I'll go below for a—a—a few minutes," stuttered Coker. "D-d-don't you fellows c-c-come!"

"Not sick, old chap?" asked Potter blandly.

"Certainly not. I—I forgot to unpack something. I—I—" Words failed Coker, and he gurgled and departed hurriedly. Potter and Greene exchanged a cheery smile as Coker went below.

Half-way down, Coker clung to the handrail with both hands. The universe seemed to be whirling round Coker. He clung to the rail convulsively, feeling as Mount Etna might be supposed to feel when a particularly hefty eruption was going on.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry spotted Coker from the bottom of the stairs, and stared up at him. "Anything the matter, Coker?"

"Ooooooooooooo!"

"Oh, my hat! What—"

"Woooooooooooo!"

"Lend me a hand here, you men," called out Bob. "Coker's got it."

"Poor old Coker!"

The Famous Five rushed to the rescue. Coker, clinging to the handrail, turned on them a face like chalk.

"I—I'm not sick!" he articulated. "I'm not—groogh—sea-sick! I—I—ooch—I'm never sea-sick! I—I—Grrrrrrrrrr!"

Kindly the Famous Five bore Coker away to his state-room. Coker was too far gone to resist. Everything inside Horace Coker was in a state of wild rebellion. He was laid in his bunk, with a basin to keep

him company. He lay and moaned.

When Potter and Greene came down—looking exasperatingly cheery and fit—Horace Coker turned a haggard eye on them.

"Feeling bad, old bean?" asked Potter.

"No!" moaned Coker.

"A bit queer inside?" asked Greene.

"Ow! No."

"Anything we can do?"

"Only shut up."

Potter and Greene shut up and turned in. A little later a moaning voice spoke to them from the darkness.

"I'm not sea-sick, you fellows. Don't run away with that idea! I—I think it's ptomaine poisoning, or something. Must have been something from a tin at dinner—some American stuff, very likely. I say, Potter."

Snore!

"I say, Greene—"

Snore!

"You fellows—"

Snorrrrrrrrrrr!

After which Coker suffered in silence.

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THE GREAT TOURIST TROPHY RACE WINNER!

You've got the badge of the world-famous "Lea-Francis" car, now read what our contributor has to say about the enterprising firm that made this car!

Few cars have forced their way into the front rank so rapidly as the Lea-Francis. For the last few years this car has been increasingly popular amongst the knowing ones. But it was not until a Lea-Francis won the famous International Tourist Trophy Race, held in Ireland last August, after a sensational struggle, that this make really came into its own. The great race was won by Mr. Kaye Don, the famous driver, at the wheel of a four-cylinder sports model Lea-Francis, which promptly became the most popular mount for motorists of the sporting type. Everyone loves a speedy car, and the latest improvements in the Lea-Francis sports models make them speedier than ever!

Of course, other Lea-Francis models are manufactured, including a six-cylinder car, of which great things are reported. But the handsome Lea-Francis radiator badge has a special value in the eyes of all those of sporting tendencies by reason of the fact that the Lea-Francis was the first car to cross the line in the greatest race for standard sports models ever held—the 1928 Tourist Trophy Race!

whether the second and first helpings would not have been better left alone. Still later, he doubted the wisdom of having dined at all. The motion of the ship troubled Coker—the throbbing of the engines worried him. Of course, he was not going to be seasick; he refused to entertain that idea for a moment. But he felt uncommonly like it; he could not help realising that.

"Groooooogh!" said Coker suddenly, and quite involuntarily.

Potter and Greene looked at him.

"Anything the matter?" asked Potter.

"No." Coker spoke with forced calmness. "Certainly not! The fact is, I'm feeling uncommonly well."

"Good!" said Greene heartily. "If you feel at all seasick—"

"I don't."

"Well, if you did. I've heard of a jolly good cure. You tie a piece of fat bacon on a string—"

"Oooooch!"

"What's the matter?"

"Nothing!" gasped Coker.

"You tie a piece of fat bacon on a string," resumed Greene, "and let it slowly down your throat—"

"Grrrrrrrrrr!"

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The invalid!

"SHURRUP!"

It was morning on the Atlantic. The Ruritania was pitching a little in a rough sea-way. To Billy Bunter, extended in his berth, she seemed to be pitching a very great deal. Bob Cherry had turned out merry and bright, and he was singing vigorously, if not very tunefully:

"A life on the ocean wave,
A home on the rolling deep,
Where your lunch you cannot save,
And your dinner seldom keep!"

Bob had apparently introduced that variation to entertain Bunter. Bunter did not seem entertained. He lay and blinked at the cheery Bob with lack-lustre eyes.

"Shurrup!" he mumbled.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Feeling better, old fat bean?" asked Bob. "Enjoying life?"

"Ow! No."

"Wait till you get on your sea-legs," said Bob cheerily. "You'll be all right presently."

"I haven't slept a wink all night," said Bunter pathetically.

Bob Cherry grinned. Four or five times during the night he had been awakened by Billy Bunter's hefty snore.

But no doubt the Owl of the Remove had slept less soundly than usual. The inward Bunter was not at ease.

"Hungry, old fat man?" asked Bob.

"Famished!" said Bunter.

"Well, turn out and roll along to brekker. Shall I help you out?"

"Beast! Keep off!"

Billy Bunter sat up, propping himself on pillows. The sea-sickness had passed off, leaving Bunter feeling very flabby, and frightfully hungry. Bunter could quite well have turned out along with the other fellows. But Bunter considered that he had a right to be ill. He was never fond of turning out, anyhow.

"Better roll out," said Bob. "No good slacking in your berth, you know. A whiff of sea air will set you up."

"I'm ill!" said Bunter.

"Bow-wow!"

"Frightfully ill!" hooted Bunter. "I think you might have a little sympathy."

I can't possibly get up. Tell the steward to bring me some brekker here. Tell him I'm too ill to move, and I want something rather nice. And plenty of it. Don't forget—plenty."

"Better go easy with the grub, Fatty," advised Bob. "Have enough for three chaps this time, and stop at that till you get stronger. Leave your usual amount till to-morrow."

Harry Wharton looked into the state-room. The captain of the Remove looked very bright and cheerful.

"You fellows coming along?"

"Ready," answered Bob. "Bunter's ill, though. Too ill to get up, but not too ill to eat. He hasn't slept a wink all night; he must have snored while he was awake; it drowned the noise of the engines."

"Better turn out, Bunter," said Harry.

"I'm not going to turn out when I'm ill—practically dying. Send my brekker here. I think one of you chaps might stay in case I want anything. After all I've done for you—"

"Good-bye!"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter was left alone in the state-room. There was a feeling of immense emptiness in Bunter; but otherwise there was nothing the matter with him now. But it was a chance for slacking; and Bunter never neglected chances of that kind.

A tap came at the door, and a man in the white duck jacket of a steward presented himself. He carried a tray; and the tray was well-laden. Bunter groped for his spectacles, set them on his fat little nose, and blinked appreciatively at the laden tray.

"Breakfast, sir?" said the steward.

"Good!" said Bunter. "Put it here! Bring the rest while I'm eating this, will you? Same again, only rather more—see?"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

Bunter, with the tray on his knees, ate. He had finished the breakfast by the time the steward brought the second supply; and then he finished the second lot and felt considerably better.

After which he went to sleep again. Bunter could do with a great deal of sleep. It was some hours later that he woke up again—hungry.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Turning out for lunch, Bunter?" Bob Cherry looked in at the door.

"No. I'm too ill."

"Fathead! You will be really ill if you stick in bed all day long," said Bob. "Look here, I'll roll you out, if you like."

"Keep off, you beast! I'm ill! The steward can bring my lunch here," said Bunter. "But I'm too hungry to wait. Go and get me a cake."

Bob Cherry hesitated. But he was good-nature itself, and he left the state-room and returned with a cake for Bunter. The fat junior sat up and began to munch with a good deal of satisfaction.

"That's all right to go on with," he said. "I say, Cherry, don't go! I think you might look after a chap when he's ill. Look here, I shall want something more to eat. I'll give you a list. Another cake like this—no, say, two cakes like this—and a bag of biscuits."

"Not a sack?" asked Bob Cherry gravely.

"Beast! And a box of chocolates, and a box of chocolate creams—"

"I'd better get a pencil and paper," said Bob.

"Do. And a packet of toffee, if you can get it. And some apples. And a Swiss roll—a whole one. And if you

can get jam-tarts bring me a couple of dozen—no, three dozen!"

"Anything else?" asked Bob.

"That will do till lunch," said Bunter. "After all, it's only about an hour. Perhaps half a dozen sandwiches."

"Sure that's the lot?"

"Yes, yes; hurry up!"

Bob Cherry hurried up—to the deck—and remained there. He did not think that Bunter was ill now; but he had no doubt that Bunter would be ill if he got hold of the consignment he had ordered. In his berth Billy Bunter waited for the delivery of the goods; but he waited in vain.

Just before lunch Coker of the Fifth looked in. Coker was quite all right again now, and had forgotten that he had been sea-sick; indeed, he was not at all disposed to admit that he was capable of sea-sickness. Horace Coker glared in at Bunter.

"Slacking?" he snorted.

"Beast!"

"Turn out!"

"Mind your own business!" roared Bunter.

"This is my business," explained Coker. "I've got you kids to look after, and I'm looking after you. I shan't allow you to slack in bed, Bunter. Now, out you get, or I'll have you out of that bunk in a jiffy. Sharp's the word."

"I'm ill, you beast!"

"I'll jolly well cure you, then," said Coker, coming across to Bunter.

Billy Bunter grasped his pillow desperately. Coker reached out for him, and Bunter smote. The pillow landed on Horace Coker's features, and he staggered back. At the same moment the steward arrived in the doorway with Bunter's lunch on a tray. And the Ruritania at the same moment rolled.

"Hi! Look out!" gasped the steward. Crash!

A fellow who had lost his footing on a rolling deck couldn't help what happened, besides, Coker could not look out, so far as the steward was concerned, as he had, of course, no eyes in the back of his head. He landed on the laden tray, and there was a terrific smash. Coker was strewn on the floor at the steward's feet, and Bunter's lunch was strewn on Coker.

"He, he, he!" gasped Bunter.

"Oh! Ow! Grooogh!" spluttered Coker, with his mouth full of gravy and a hot potato in his neck. "Oh, my hat! You clumsy idiot—Wow!"

"Oh crikey!" said the steward.

"He, he, he!"

Coker sat up dizzily among the food-stuffs and broken crockery. He extracted a potato from his collar, and cabbage from the back of his neck. He staggered to his feet, slipped in the gravy, and sat down again quite suddenly. He sat on a broken plate, and leaped up again with a fiendish yell.

"My eye!" said the steward.

"Yooooop!" roared Coker.

"I say, you fellows!" yelled Bunter, as he heard the voices of the Famous Five in the passage outside. "I say, you fellows! Help!"

"What the thump—"

"Coker again!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll smash him!" gasped Coker. "I'll burst him! I'll—Keep off, you cheeky fags—hands off—leggo my neck—stop kicking me—if you punch me again I'll—Varoooooh! Yoop! Whooooop!"

Coker left the state-room. All the Famous Five helped him to leave, and he went in haste, and his voice was heard far and wide as he travelled. Under the staring eyes of a dozen astonished

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Billy Bunter rushed up the stairs and staggered out on to the deck. "Help!" he howled. "Save me! I won't be left behind to be drowned! Gimme a lifebelt!" "Gee-whiz!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "Is the galoot mad?" (See Chapter 14.)

passengers Coker was personally conducted to his own state-room and pitched headlong into it. After which Coker of the Fifth felt too tired to bother about the Removites again for some time.

Bunter lunched in bed, without any further trouble from Coker. Having lunched, he lunched again, and felt better. Then he laid his head on his pillow and slept, and his sonorous snore mingled musically with the throb of the engines. Bunter was beginning to enjoy the trip. This, in Bunter's view, was something like a holiday, and he saw no valid reason why he should get up till the Ruritania arrived at New York.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Recovers!

"BUNTER!"
Snore!
Shake, shake, shake!
"Ow! Beast! 'Tain't rising bell! Ow!"

Billy Bunter woke up. The wintry afternoon was deepening into dusk, and the Ruritania, lighted up almost like a theatre, plunged on through shadowy, billowing waters. Bunter blinked up at Harry Wharton, and, having blinked at him, scowled at him. Bunter had been dreaming—a happy dream. In that delightful vision he had seen himself a successful film actor, rolling in dollars, and living on the fat of the land. The shaking brought him back to reality, which was not half so delightful.

"Can't you let a chap have his sleep out, you silly chump?" he snorted. "Can't you let an invalid rest a little? I've told you I'm ill. Now you've woke me up, though, you can tell the steward to bring me some grub."

"You'll be really ill if you stick in bed, you fat ass," said Harry. "You've got to turn out for dinner."

"How can I turn out when I'm ill?" demanded Bunter. "I may get up to-

morrow or the next day. At present I'm ill. I should think even a selfish fellow like you, Wharton, might have a little sympathy for a fellow who's seriously ill."

"Like to see the doctor?"

"Doctors don't know anything," said Bunter hastily. "Very likely the doctor would think there was nothing the matter with me!"

"Very likely, I think," agreed Wharton.

"What I need," explained Bunter, "is plenty of rest and feeding up. Lots of rest and lots of grub. Especially grub. That's important. I think I could fancy a plum-cake and a box of iced fruits to go on with. Go and get them for me, old chap. Never mind the expense—old Fish is paying the exes, you know."

"Better get up," urged Wharton.

"I can't!"

"What's the matter with you, you fat slacker?"

"An awful weakness and general—general debility, and—and a strong disinclination to move," said Bunter. "Especially a strong disinclination to move. I've had that before more than once. I—I think it runs in our family. A prolonged rest is what I need, and plenty to eat. Don't be an unfeeling beast, old chap. I couldn't rise from this bed if the ship was sinking. I suppose you can take my word."

Wharton regarded him dubiously. Certainly the Owl of the Remove looked very flabby. But that might easily be accounted for by slacking in bed all day and eating too much. Bunter, by way of convincing him, lifted himself on a fat elbow, and sank back again with a groan. It was a deep, hair-raising, heart-rending groan, and seemed to indicate that the Owl of the Remove was almost at the last gasp.

"So bad as all that?" asked Harry.

"Worse!" said Bunter. "Much worse! I couldn't leave this berth if the boilers blew up!"

Harry Wharton left the state-room. Bunter's voice followed him.

"Buck up with that cake!" Bunter's voice was quite powerful for a fellow who was in a serious state of suffering. "Don't keep me waiting."

Wharton, however, was not thinking of cake. He went along to the saloon companion, where he found his chums. The Famous Five consulted on the subject of the interesting invalid, but they did not decide on cake as a cure. To judge by their grinning faces, they were looking on Bunter's serious illness in the light of an entertainment. The conference broke up chuckling.

Bunter lay in his berth and waited for Wharton's return. There were footsteps outside, and he heard the voices of Bob Cherry and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh speaking in low tones.

"Better not wake him!" whispered Bob. "There's no chance for him, ill as he is, and he may as well go down in his sleep. It will be more merciful."

"We could carry the esteemed Bunter up to the boat-deck—"

"Too heavy! The ship won't float another three minutes with that fearful leak. Buck up and get a lifebelt!"

Bunter sat up. As the door was ajar he heard those whispering voices from outside quite distinctly. He sat frozen. Harry Wharton's voice called along the corridor.

"Buck up, you fellows! You'll be too late for the boat."

"The esteemed Bunter—"

"No time for him—he's too ill to move, anyhow; we've barely time to save our own lives. Hurry!"

"Quick, you men!" shouted Frank Nugent. "All the boats have put off but one. Don't stop for anything. Come as you are—quick!"

There was a rapid pattering of running feet.

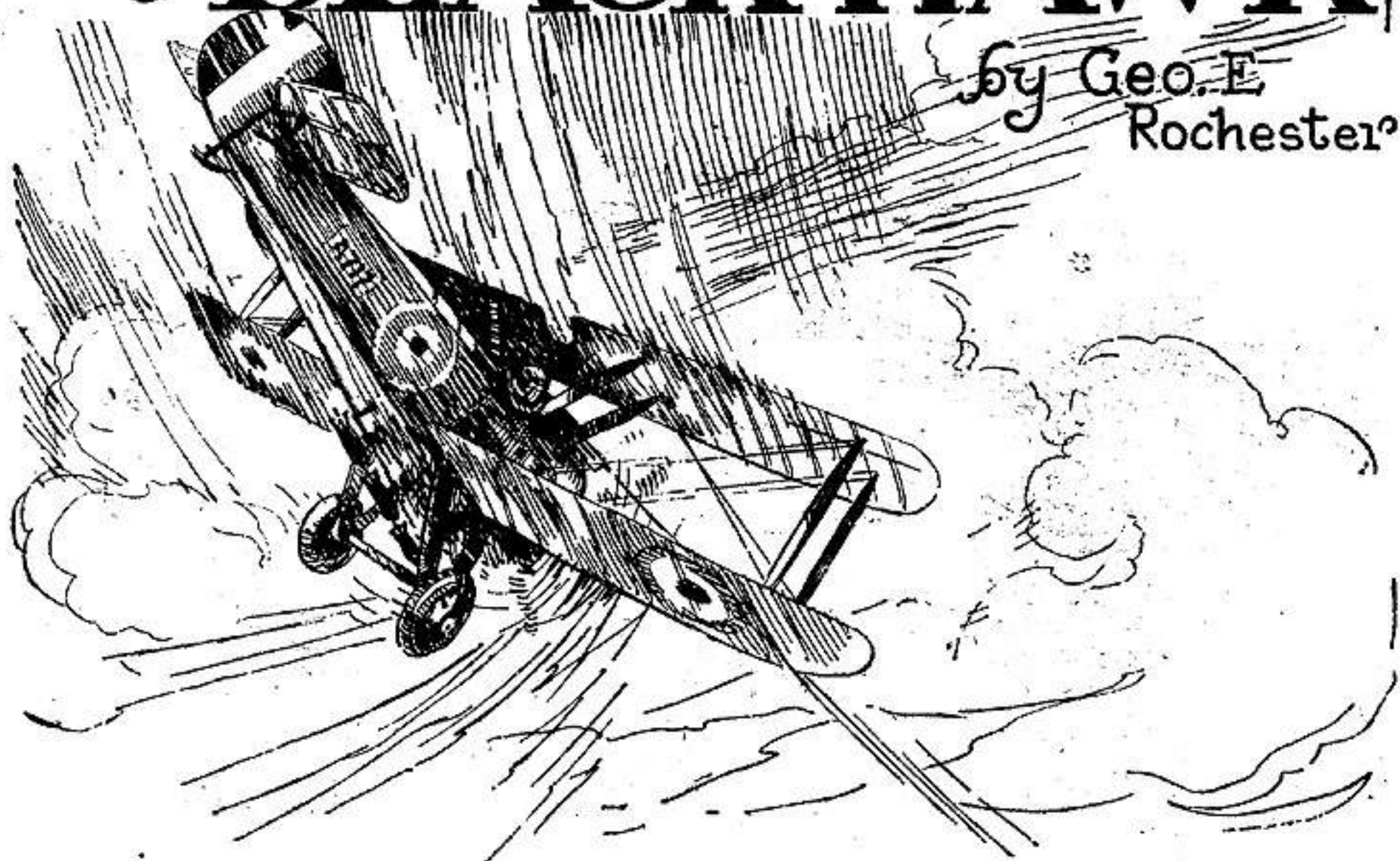
(Continued on page 28.)

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START THIS MAGNIFICENT AIR ADVENTURE YARN TO-DAY!

The BLACK HAWK

by Geo. E.
Rochester



For three long days the court-martial of Captain Moncrieff, brilliant war ace, now accused of treachery and espionage, dragged on. Then came the verdict and the sentence: "Guilty: . . . to be shot at dawn!"

The Accusation!

AS the young scout scrambled into his clothes there came to him a recollection of the instinctive dislike he had felt for Colonel Scaife at their first meeting earlier in the evening.

"Ready?" he demanded, turning to the adjutant.

"Yes."

"Come on, then, and we'll find out what it's all about!"

Switching off the light, Derek led the way grimly from the hut.

Colonel Milvain was seated at the table when Derek reached the flight office. His stern face was unwontedly grave. Colonel Scaife was standing rigid by the table, his hands clasped behind his back. His eyes were cold and hard as he turned them on the boy, and his firm-lipped mouth was compressed into a thin, cruel line.

"You sent for me, sir!"

Derek came stiffly to attention in front of the commanding officer, with a snap salute.

"Yes, Moncrieff," replied Colonel Milvain in a low voice. "I have something of the utmost gravity to say to you!"

His eyes were on the boy's face as he continued.

"During the last few months the Air Ministry have been seriously perturbed by the leakage of information into Germany of the movements, strength, and personnel of our squadrons, of the location of our squadrons, and of the whereabouts of both petrol and ammunition dumps on their respective aerodromes. Both the Royal Air Force squadrons and the Independent Air Force squadrons under Brigadier-General Sir Hugh Trenchard have been

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seriously affected by this information which has been given by someone to the enemy."

He paused; then turned to Colonel Scaife and said gruffly:

"Will you continue, sir?"

"Attend to me, Captain Moncrieff, please!" said Colonel Scaife harshly. "Although attached to 108 Squadron here at Ouchy, you have a roving commission, which means that, whilst making this your headquarters, you are at liberty to spend your non-flying hours at any aerodrome on the line—at the nearest aerodrome to which you happen to be, in fact?"

"That is so, sir," replied Derek grimly.

"For instance, eight nights ago you stayed at the aerodrome of the 92nd Squadron at La Bouille, north of Nancy. Four nights ago you were the guest of the 97th bombing squadron at Xaffavilliers?"

"Yes, sir!"

Colonel Scaife leant forward, his hands still clasped behind his back.

"And within forty-eight hours of your having left those aerodromes," he said, his voice harsh and metallic, "their petrol and ammunition dumps were blown up by concentrated bombing from enemy aircraft. Can you explain that?"

"What do you mean, sir?" cried Derek, his face pale, his eyes blazing.

"Steady, Moncrieff!" came the warning voice of Colonel Milvain.

"If he is insinuating—" began the boy hoarsely, his fists clenched, his voice quivering, as he fought to keep himself under control.

"Silence!" barked Colonel Scaife.

"Can you, further, explain why during the last few weeks large sums of money have been paid into your private banking account in London by a Dutch firm

whom we know, in reality, to be owned by Germany?"

"I don't know what you mean!" replied Derek blankly. "No sums have been paid into my banking account!"

"You lie! They have!"

Colonel Scaife's words came like the cracking of a whip. Derek took a quick step towards him, almost forgetting in that moment that the man was a staff officer and his person sacred. The adjutant laid a hand on the boy's arm, and the touch of it brought Derek rigid and erect.

"Sir," he said coldly, "you are making a mistake when you say that large sums of money—or any sums whatsoever—have been paid into my banking account by some foreign firm."

"I am not making a mistake!" retorted Colonel Scaife. "But we will not discuss that matter for the moment. Tell me—where did you go when you left this office earlier in the evening after talking with Colonel Milvain and myself?"

"I went to my hut."

"Ah!" There came a momentary gleam into the steely-blue eyes of Colonel Scaife. "You did not, then, go near your machine?"

Derek flushed. He had forgotten for the moment that he had retrieved his maps from the cockpit.

"Yes, I went to my machine," he said doggedly.

"You admit that?"

"Admit it?" echoed Derek. "I do not understand why you should use such a phrase, sir."

"Answer my question!" barked the colonel. "You admit you went to your machine on leaving this office?"

"Yes."

"Why did you go to your machine?"

"I went to get my maps, sir."

"Are you sure?"

"Of course I'm sure!" replied Derek angrily. "Why do you ask me these questions? What is the meaning of all this?"

"This is the meaning of it!" rapped Colonel Scaife; and his hand, holding a small silk parachute such as was used for dropping messages, whipped from behind his back. "After your visit to your machine this parachute was found in your cockpit locker. Attached to it is a plan of this aerodrome, with petrol and ammunition dumps plainly marked!"

Derek caught his breath sharply. The thing was astounding—unbelievable.

"You are the only person who approached your machine after the mechanics left it this evening!" continued Colonel Scaife harshly. "The guard is prepared to swear to that. Can you explain why this information, obviously intended for the enemy, came to be found in your cockpit?"

"No, I cannot!" said Derek dazedly.

"No!" Colonel Scaife leant forward, his eyes glinting. "But I can. When we found that money was being paid to you via Holland, we suspected you. I came here this evening to investigate. I had your machine searched, as I intended to have it searched again before you took off in the morning. But we have caught you red-handed. You are the man who has been giving information to the enemy—dropping it by parachute whilst on your lone patrols!"

Derek sprang forward, white to the lips.

"You are wrong—wrong!" he shouted passionately. "This is a plot—"

"Silence!" thundered Colonel Scaife. "You can keep anything you've got to say for the court-martial which will try you at Wing Headquarters. The evidence against you is damning enough to justify me in shooting you down here and now for the traitor you are, you treacherous young hound—"

Smack!

Maddened by the cruel, biting words, seared to his very soul by the foul thing of which he was accused, the boy had leapt forward. His clenched fist took Colonel Scaife full on the mouth, sending him reeling back against the table.

"You rotter!" he panted. "You—"

He choked back the words. In that instant had come realisation of what he had done. Even could he disprove the terrible charge against him, he would now be broken and kicked out of the Service for having struck a superior officer.

Derek was hardly conscious of the adjutant gripping him by the arms as, with shoulders slumped dejectedly, he turned to Colonel Milvain, and said huskily.

"Sir, I'm sorry!"

Colonel Milvain did not reply. Pale-faced, and with unutterable misery in his eyes, he turned to the telephone to summon an escort.

The Sentence!

THE sun was sinking slowly in the west, gilding the roofs of the hangars, office-huts, and living quarters of Wing Headquarters at Le Courban. It had indeed been a glorious day, and nothing now disturbed the stillness, save the long, reverberating thunder of heavy guns far to the eastwards.

Yet there was tension in the air. In the officers' ante-room, grim-visaged pilots and officers of the headquarters' staff sat either in silence or conversing

in low tones. Out by the canvas hangars, mechanics, off duty, stood about in little groups, waiting—waiting.

For three long days the court-martial of Captain Derek Moncrieff, brilliant War Ace, had dragged its weary length. And now, towards evening of the third day, the closing stages had been reached. The verdict was expected at any moment.

The rays of the setting sun shone through the window of a small room adjoining the spacious orderly-room in which the court-martial was being held. Captain Derek Moncrieff was seated by the window of that small room, staring with unseeing eyes out across the parched and withered grass of the aerodrome. Near him stood his guard—two officers of similar rank—Captain Baxter and Captain Ellis. They were waiting whilst the court considered its verdict.

The boy's face was drawn and haggard, his eyes grim and hard. And as he sat there, his chin cupped in his hands, he dwelt on how, inexorably and damningly, the evidence had been slowly mounted against him during the past three days.

The money which had been paid into his banking account in London; the bombing of British aerodromes by enemy aircraft within forty-eight hours of his visit to them—bombing which had for its objective the hidden petrol and ammunition dumps; the finding of the plan of Ouchy Aerodrome in his cockpit locker, with parachute attached ready to be dropped over enemy country for enemy information.

It was a plot—a vile, treacherous, and dastardly plot to ruin him! He had told himself that repeatedly. But who was at the back of it all—and why? Someone—some unknown behind the British lines—was sending priceless information into Germany. That much was evident, and it was that same someone who had cunningly, skilfully contrived that Derek should be blamed.

He knew the Germans meant to get him; knew now that they had put a price on his head—for that fact had been stressed by Major Beverley, defending him. Had this plot been engineered by German agents for the sole purpose of ridding the Western Front of him once and for all? It certainly looked like it. And Colonel Scaife had been the man who brought the charge against him. According to the evidence it was Colonel Scaife who had been responsible for the investigations which had led up to Derek's arrest.

Colonel Scaife!

The boy's hands clenched tight till the knuckles showed white.

A step sounded in the corridor. Someone opened the door and spoke a quiet word. Captain Ellis touched Derek on the shoulder.

"The court has considered its ver-

dict!" he said, in a low voice. "They are waiting!"

Derek rose to his feet. Pale of face, but with shoulders squared, he walked slowly from the room between his escort. It was but a step across the corridor to the door of the orderly-room, in front of which stood an armed sentry.

Major Henderson, acting as usher, opened the door. Derek heard the grave, dignified tones of Brigadier-General Sir Freville Howard, president of the court-martial.

"Bring in the prisoner!"

Almost mechanically the boy stepped into the room with his escort, and halted in front of the table at which the president was seated. On the right of the president was his aide-de-camp, Major Montessor, and on his left Colonel Milvain.

Two other tables adjoined that of the president, and were so arranged as to form with it the three sides of a square. At one was seated Colonel Scaife with four staff officers, at the other was Major Beverley, two field-officers, and a lieutenant.

For a long moment the grey-haired brigadier-general looked at Derek with grave, searching eyes. And in that moment a deathly hush settled on the room.

"Derek Moncrieff," he said slowly, in low, measured tone, "you have been found guilty by this court-martial of the charges which have been brought against you of espionage on behalf of the enemy. Have you anything to say before the sentence of the Court is passed upon you?"

"Only that I am innocent, sir," replied the boy, through dry lips.

The president bowed his head in acknowledgement of the words.

"The sentence of this Court is," he went on, in the same slow, measured tones, "that you be dismissed with ignominy from his Majesty's Service, and that you be shot at dawn!"

He pushed back his chair and rose to his feet. Dumbly, between his escort, the boy turned to the door. For an instant his eyes met those of Colonel Scaife. In the latter's was a glint of malignant triumph.

Foulkes!

"MAY I see him, sir?"

Brigadier-General Sir Freville Howard looked with kindly eyes at the unhappy Foulkes who stood before him in his office.

"You were a friend of his?" he asked quietly.

"Yes, sir."

"You gave evidence at the court-martial?"

"Yes, sir," replied Foulkes eagerly. "But in his defence, sir. I always believed in him, sir, and—still do."

He uttered the latter words bravely—nay, almost defiantly. The brigadier-general's eyes hardened.

"Very well," he replied. "You may see him for five minutes—no longer. I will give you a permit."

Five minutes later Foulkes presented himself at the door of the room in which Derek was lodged. He showed his permit to the sentry on guard, and was admitted.

Derek, standing by the window, wheeled round as Foulkes entered the room. His lips twitched into a brave smile, and he stepped forward with outstretched hand.

"Permit!" said Foulkes, banging down the slip of paper on the small,

HOW THE STORY BEGAN.

Fifty thousand marks! That's the reward offered by the German High Command for the capture of Derek Moncrieff—dead or alive! And it will be well earned, for this laughing British boy is also the fearless, daredevil pilot known on both sides of the trenches in France as the greatest War Ace of them all!

Returning to the base of the 108 Air Squadron at Ouchy, after a lone offensive patrol in enemy territory, Derek is interviewed by Colonel Scaife, from Wing Headquarters, to whom the young pilot takes an instinctive dislike. The colonel asks him to make a detailed report dealing with aeroplane matters. In the middle of the night Derek is awakened and grimly informed that he is wanted to appear before the Commanding Officer to answer a grave charge.

(Now read on.)

bare table at which Captain Ellis and Captain Baxter were seated.

"All right!" grunted Baxter. "We don't want to see it."

It is doubtful if Foulkes heard. He had taken Derek's hand in a firm clasp, and then, with his arm round the boy's shoulders, walked with him to the window.

"I've only got five minutes, Derek, old boss," he said, his voice booming through the room.

"Time enough in which to say good-bye," replied Derek bitterly; then, with a quick change of tone: "But it was decent of you to come."

"Rats! I wasn't going back to Ouchy without seeing you," replied Foulkes. "No jolly fear!"

Not once during those few short minutes that he spoke with Derek did Foulkes lower his voice. Every word he said was plainly audible to Baxter and Ellis seated at the table. But there was something strange in his manner—something forced, thought Derek. However, that was only natural in the circumstances.

It was when his five minutes were almost up that he blurted out:

"I came here from Ouchy in your machine, Derek."

"Did you?" asked the boy listlessly.

"Yes," boomed Foulkes. "I'm flying it back to Ouchy to-night. As soon as I leave you, as a matter of fact."

"I'll watch you take off from this window," replied Derek. "It'll be great to see the old bus again—for the last time. Mind you don't crash her."

He smiled faintly as he remembered how they used to chip clumsy old Foulkes back on the aerodrome at Ouchy.

"I won't crash her," replied Foulkes heartily. "I'll pass pretty close to this window, old bean, as I taxi out. You'll watch for me?"

"Yes, I'll watch for you."

"Good-bye, then!"

Foulkes held out his hand.

"Good-bye, Foulkes!"

"And a stiff upper-lip, lad!"

"Yes, a stiff upper-lip," replied the boy bravely.

Their hands met in a last firm grasp, and abruptly Foulkes turned away.

"Good-bye, you!"—Foulkes crossed to the table and shook hands with Captain Baxter and Captain Ellis—"You're hating your job, aren't you? I know I would if I were you. I'm sorry for you—dashed sorry! Good-bye!"

With that he was gone. Baxter and Ellis exchanged glances.

"Weird bird!" grunted Baxter.

"Oh, very!" mumbled Ellis.

"Decent sort, though!"

"Yes, quite!"

Derek was standing staring out of the window, with his hands plunged deep in his pockets. It had been topping of old Foulkes to come and see him. Foulkes still believed in him. Others did, as well. Derek knew that, and it helped such a lot.

Even now the youngster could not realise it all. The court-martial, with its dread sentence, seemed like some terrible nightmare. He was innocent, absolutely innocent of the charges that had been brought against him. Ah! If only he could live to prove it. If only he could live to hound down the men whose vile plotting had brought ruin, disgrace, and soon a shameful death to him. But it was too late now.

Shades of the coming night were already creeping across the aerodrome, and a thin ground mist was rising to swathe the canvas hangars. And when the short hours of the night had passed, he would be led out into the grey dawn. Then, stripped of rank and decorations, he would be shot down like a dog by the rifles of his fellow-countrymen.

His thoughts went back to his first meeting with Colonel Scaife in the flight office at Ouchy. How decently the man had spoken to him. How cunningly he had refrained from giving the slightest sign or hint as to the real purport of his visit. It was Colonel Scaife who had personally conducted the search of

Derek's machine. It was Colonel Scaife himself who had found the damning evidence in the cockpit locker. There came to Derek a recollection of the look of triumph in the man's eyes after sentence of death had been passed.

It seemed almost as though Colonel Scaife had been an active agent in the plot against the boy. But that was absurd. The man was a British Staff officer, and above suspicion. Yet—

Derek's eyes hardened. If only he could live he would concentrate every effort on solving the mystery. If Colonel Scaife emerged merely as a zealous British officer, then so much the better for Colonel Scaife. If not, then grim indeed would be the reckoning.

But it was hopeless to think of life now. With the dawn, Derek would die, and his name would live only to be spoken of with scorn and contempt throughout France.

The privileges of a condemned prisoner were his. He had been lodged in this sparsely-furnished room instead of a cell. He would watch Foulkes take off—see the old scarlet bus for the last time—and then turn in on the camp-bed against the wall. Maybe in sleep his tortured mind would find some relief.

The sudden shattering roar of a powerful rotary engine over by the hangars broke in on his thoughts. He pressed closer against the window. Well, indeed, did he know the old familiar note of the super-powered engine with which his Sopwith scout was fitted.

Then from out of the dusk came jolting and swaying the fast little scarlet bus, taxi-ing out into wind. One hundred yards or more away it came abreast of the window. Captain Baxter and Ellis had heard all that Foulkes had said. They were curious to see the machine which had been flown by Derek Moncrieff. But an innate delicacy of feeling kept them seated at the table. Pilots both, they knew Derek would wish to be alone at that moment.

Wedge in the snug cockpit of the scout sat Foulkes. Abreast of the window he throttled down whilst he adjusted his goggles.

Snap!

Oh, clumsy Foulkes! He had broken the elastic strap of his goggles.

"Couldn't possibly fly this bus without goggles!" he remarked to himself.

So, closing down the throttle till the propeller was barely ticking over, he clambered out of the cockpit and set off back to the hangars, the broken goggles dangling in his hand. He never walked quickly at any time, did Foulkes. He certainly was not walking quickly now.

Derek, amazed, saw Foulkes leave the machine. He saw it standing there, one hundred yards away, deserted, and with engine ticking over. A wild light leapt into his eyes. Almost idly, it seemed, he glanced over his shoulder. Captain Baxter and Captain Ellis were engaged in a low-toned conversation at the table.

Crash!

Derek's fist swung against the lattice windows and sent them swinging open. The two officers leapt to their feet. But Derek was through the window, running madly towards his machine. He heard a shout behind him from the broken window, and raced desperately for the scout. It meant life and liberty to him; life and liberty which would be devoted to proving that he was no traitor, and to the hounding down of those who had plotted against him.

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Bang, bang, bang!

Behind him sounded revolver shots, fired to give the alarm. Foulkes heard them, and for the first time he turned. He saw Derek racing madly towards the scout, saw Captain Ellis pounding in pursuit. He commenced to run towards the machine in a lumbering trot.

From the hangars came startled shouts, and running mechanics loomed up through the dusk. But Derek had reached the machine. He leapt for

chanced to be in the vicinity, Derek relaxed, and, leaning against the fuselage, pondered on his course of action.

In very truth he knew not where to turn, nor what to do for the best. Those first few exultant minutes which had followed on his escape had been succeeded by a dull and slowly dawning realisation that indeed his position was a hopeless one.

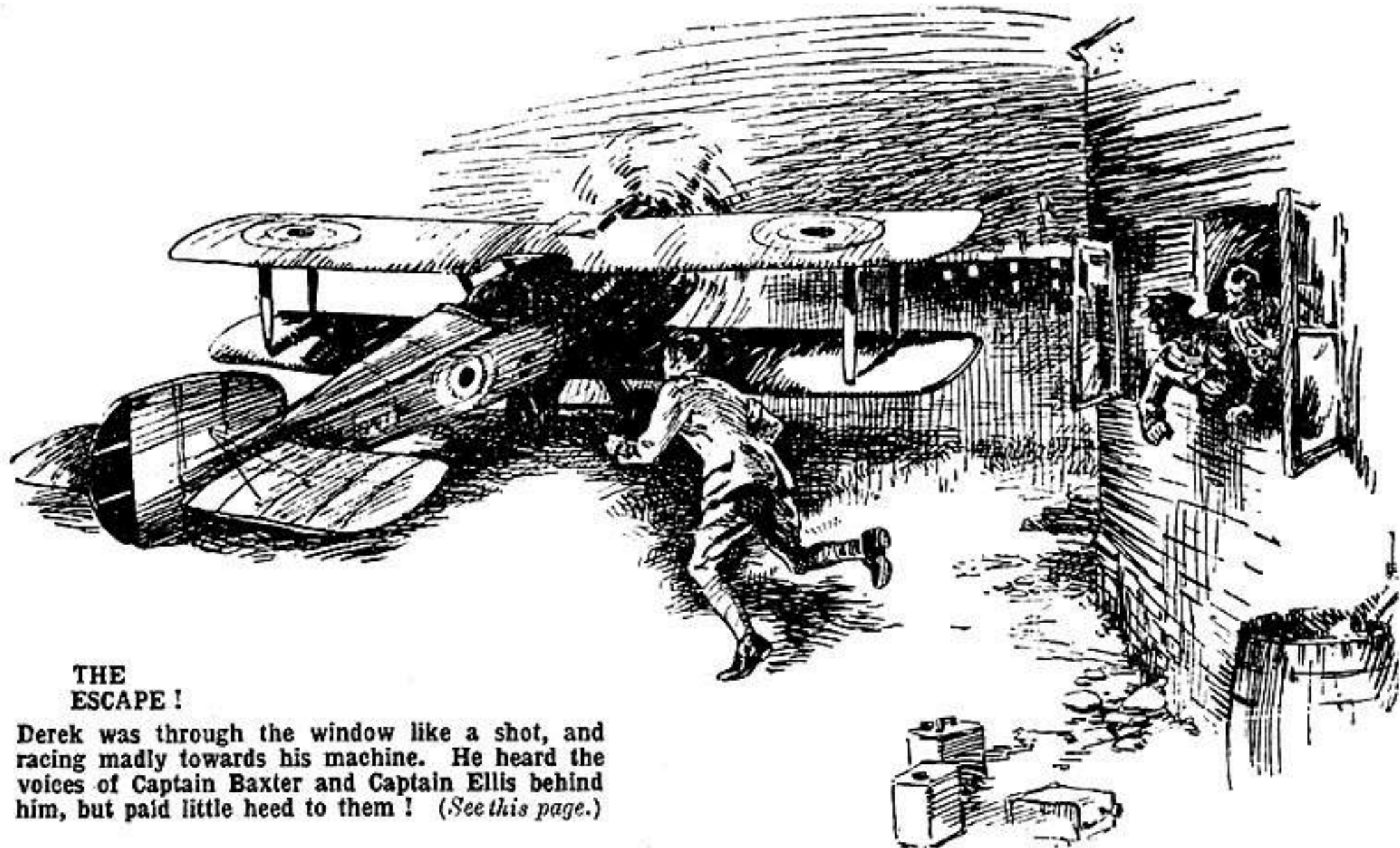
There lay no safety for him in France,

The Vosges!

He halted, the words on his lips. Although they lay in enemy country, somewhere on the lonely wooded slopes of those mountains he might be able to lie up whilst he made his plans.

Yes, he would make for the Vosges. He turned toward his machine, then tensed. Stealthy steps were approaching through the darkness.

Derek carried no weapon, but he clenched his fists and waited in grim



THE ESCAPE!

Derek was through the window like a shot, and racing madly towards his machine. He heard the voices of Captain Baxter and Captain Ellis behind him, but paid little heed to them! (See this page.)

the cockpit and scrambled in. His fingers, cut and bleeding from the broken glass of the window, fastened on the throttle, pulling it open to full. The quiet rhythm of the ticking engine rose in an instant to a shattering roar. The machine jerked forward.

Slumping into the pilot's seat, Derek gripped the control-stick. The thundering engine of the scarlet scout was taking it tearing across the aerodrome. As Derek pulled on the control-stick, the mist-swathed ground dropped away from beneath his undercarriage, and he took the air in a steep, upward climb.

"Foulkes! Oh, Foulkes!" he cried joyously. "I'll never forget you, old pal!"

And on the aerodrome, far below, Foulkes was plaintively explaining.

"It was my goggles, you see! The strap broke, and—and—oh, well, you know what happened when I was on my way back to get 'em mended!"

The Outcast!

FIFTEEN kilometres to the west of the French headquarters at Rambervilliers, lay a flat tract of country as yet untouched by the red hand of war.

And here, when dusk had deepened into night, the red scout came gliding down out of the darkness to make a landing with engine switched off. (Lumbering stiffly from the cockpit, Derek Moncrieff dropped to the ground and stood listening for a moment with straining ears.

Nothing disturbed the stillness save an occasional deep reverberating rumble from eastwards. Satisfied that his landing had been unnoticed by any who

for if he fell into Allied hands the sentence of the court-martial would be carried out, and he would be shot. Before morning the news of his escape would be circulated throughout France and his apprehension could then only be but a matter of days.

Neither would he receive any mercy if he fell into German hands, for there was a price on his head. There was one solution of the problem. He could make his way to some neutral country such as Switzerland or Holland, burn his machine, and in disguise merge with the masses and lose his identity.

No!

Almost savagely he put the thought from him. He was not going to run away. He was going to fight—fight with every atom of his strength and courage—to right the vile wrong which had been done him and to bring those responsible to justice.

But how?

He had sworn to himself, after sentence had been passed, that if only he could win his freedom he would leave no stone unturned to prove the falsity of the charge brought against him, and that he would spare no effort to hound down the plotters. He hadn't troubled much about details—about how he would do it—for freedom, then, had seemed a remote and impossible thing.

But now he was free. And what had freedom brought him save the seeing of things in their right perspective? He was an outcast—a hunted fugitive.

In agony of mind he commenced to pace up and down. Surely there must be something he could do, somewhere he could find sanctuary whilst he formulated a plan of campaign.

silence as the steps drew slowly nearer. "Who are you?" rapped the boy.

"What do you seek here?"

"Ah, pardon, m'sieur!" replied a hoarse voice. "I am but crossing the fields on my way home."

Derek breathed a sigh of relief. Stepping forward he confronted, in the darkness, the unshapely bulk of a French peasant.

"Why did you approach so quietly, then?" he demanded.

"M'sieur, I heard you moving and I saw the black shadow of your machine against the skyline," replied the peasant timidly. "I came to see if it was someone who wanted aid, m'sieur!"

The boy laughed bitterly.

"Yes, I require aid, my friend," he said. "More aid than you can give. Tell me, where is your cottage?"

"It is just across the fields, m'sieur. Less than half a kilometre from here," replied the peasant, then inquired timidly: "You are English, m'sieur, are you not?"

"Yes, I am English," replied Derek, releasing the man's arm. "Who lives with you at your cottage?"

"My wife, m'sieur. Our two sons are serving with the Colours, but I am too old. If I can be of assistance, m'sieur—"

"Yes, I believe you can," said Derek, as the other paused. "Lead on—and no tricks, if you value your life!"

(In his present position Derek can ill afford to turn down such a generous offer. But he is determined to keep his weather eye open for all that! Whatever you do, chums, don't miss next week's instalment of this powerful serial, it will grip you.)

"BOUND FOR AMERICA!"

(Continued from page 23.)

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "Help! I say, you fellows! Help, help! Rescue! Gimme a lifebelt! Wait for me! Yarooogh! Help! Beasts!"

Bunter rolled out of his berth as actively and rapidly as if he was not ill at all. He did not stay to dress. In his pyjamas he rolled wildly out of the state-room, yelling for help. The Ruritania was rolling a little, and it seemed to Bunter's terrified mind that she was taking her last plunge.

"Help!" shrieked Bunter, as he tore along. "Help! Rescue! Wait for me—wait for me, you beasts! I'm going in that boat! Help!"

He reached the companion-ladder, spluttering. A steward yelled to him, staring at him in alarmed amazement.

"Hi! Stop! You can't go on deck like that!"

Bunter did not heed.

Pyjamas certainly were not considered a deck costume; but there was no time to bother about trifles of that sort. Bunter scrambled up the stairs to the deck, the steward grabbing after him too late.

"Help!" roared Bunter, as he emerged upon the deck.

In the bright lights he made a conspicuous and imposing figure in his ample pink pyjamas striped with blue.

Twenty pairs of eyes were turned on him.

"Gee-whiz!" yelled Fisher T. Fish.

"Is that galoot gone loco?"

"Begad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

"Bunter, my dear man—"

"Help!"

"Wha-a-t?"

"Save me!" shrieked Bunter. "I won't be left behind! Where's the boat? Which way to the boat?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I won't stay behind and be drowned!" yelled Bunter. "You silly chumps, the ship's sinking! Help me to the boat, will you? Gimme a lifebelt! Oh, crikey! I wish I'd stayed at Greyfriars! I— Yaroooh! Leggo! Help!"

The pursuing steward had reached Bunter. He grasped him, and hooked him into the companion again, out of sight of the passengers on deck. Bunter, amazed and alarmed at being dragged below on board a sinking ship, clung to the hand-rail and shrieked.

"Help! Help! Leggo! Pumme in the boat! Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mad as a 'atter!" gasped the steward. "Ere, you lend me a 'and with him, young gents! Get' old of him!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were laughing almost hysterically, but they lent a hand! Bunter was detached from the rail and hooked below. He struggled frantically as he was rushed back to his room.

"I say, you fellows! Help! I won't be left behind!" yelled Bunter. "I tell you I won't be drowned to please you! I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter was hurled into his room. The steward followed him in.

"Now, what's the meaning of this 'ere?" he demanded.

"You silly idiot!" spluttered Bunter. "Don't you know the ship's sinking? We've run on a rock or something! Help!"

"My eye!" said the steward. "Somebody been gammoning you, I s'pose. You look here! You stay where you are till you get your clobber on—see?"

Bunter blinked at him.

"Is—is—isn't the ship sinking?" he gasped.

"If it is they ain't mentioned it to me," said the steward sarcastically.

"Go to sleep and dream again, you young idiot!"

And he left the state-room.

Bunter blinked out after him.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

He saw the Famous Five in a group, yelling with laughter. It dawned upon Bunter that the ship was not, after all, sinking, and that his fat leg had been pulled.

"I say, you beasts!" he yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you rotters—"

"All serene, old fat man!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "The Ruritania isn't

going down just yet. It seems that you weren't too ill to get out of your berth, after all. Now you're up, stay up!"

Bunter glared at the hilarious juniors.

"Of—of course, I wasn't scared!" he stuttered. "I—I knew you fellows were larking, of course."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I just played up," said Bunter. "I'll bet I made you believe that I was jolly scared. He, he, he!"

"You did," chuckled Bob Cherry. "And so you were jolly well scared, you fat fraud!"

"The scarefulness was terrific!"

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter turned back to his berth.

"You're not going back to bed?" yelled Bob Cherry.

"I jolly well am! I'm too ill to get up!"

"My only hat!"

"Don't make a row, you fellows! You might have a little consideration for an invalid."

"Dinner's in a quarter of an hour," said Harry Wharton. "And Mr. Fish says—"

"Blow Mr. Fish!"

"But he's told the steward—"

"I don't care what he's told the steward!"

"That no more meals are to be brought to your cabin!"

"Eh?"

"So, if you want any dinner—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"You'd better buck up and dress!"

"Oh, I say, where's my trousers?"

Where's my shirt? I say, you fellows,

you might help a fellow! Where's my

socks? Don't stand cackling there,

you beasts! Help a fellow find his

socks! Where's my trousers? Where

the thump did I put my trousers?

What silly ass has moved my trousers?"

The invalid had recovered!

Day after day the great liner

ploughed her way westward across the

Atlantic, and Harry Wharton & Co. be-

gan to count the hours to New York,

little dreaming of the startling adven-

tures that awaited them there.

THE END.

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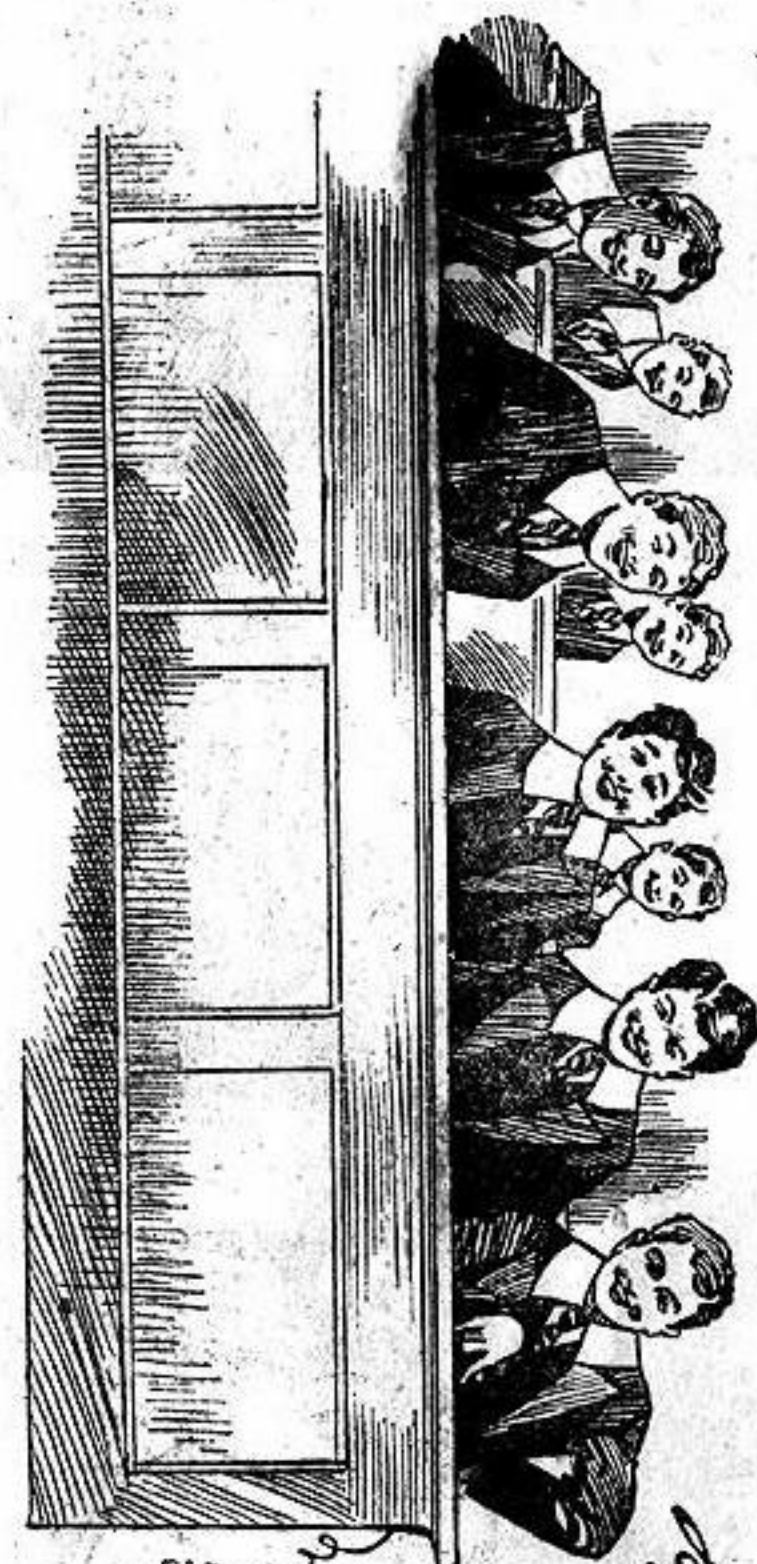
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The INVENTOR of the FOURTH!

by Dicky Nugent

Young Clarence Cleverove of the Fourth is a lively young spark. He certainly gives them shocks at St. Sam's this week!



JOGGRAFY

"JOGGRAFY this morning, you men," remarked Jack Jolly, the captain of the Fourth, as the fellows streamed out of the dining hall at St. Sam's after breakfast. Merry and bright and Frank Fearless groaned in chorus, for joggraffy was by no means their favorite subject. "We didn't do any prep, last night, either," Frank Fearless said, sadly. "Thanks to young Cleverove keeping us engrossed in his weird inventions!" Clarence Cleverove, whose sensational arrival at St. Sam's a few days before had not yet been forgotten, grinned. "Are we going to get into trouble then?" he asked. "Yes, rather!" answered Bright. "Lickham duzzent worry about Latin or mathemattix, not knowing much about them. But when it comes to joggraffy, he's a perfect tartar." "You see, he happens to be an F.R.J.S.—Fellow of the Royal Joggraffical Society—and he's as keen as mustard on it," eggshopped Jack Jolly. Cleverove nodded thoughtfully. "Perhaps we'd better do something to distract his attention then—something to take his mind off the subject," he suggested. Jack Jolly & Co. laughed. "I'm afraid you'll find that a pretty difficult job, old chap," said Fearless. "What were you thinking of eggshoppin'?" "Well, couldn't we fix up one or two of my batteries round his desk and give him a shock?" asked Cleverove. "That would take his mind off joggraffy for a bit, wouldn't it?" "Oh, grate pip!" "I should imagine it would!" grinned Jack Jolly. "But wouldn't he spot them, though?" "I'll see if I can conceal them first," said Cleverove. "Wait for me in the Form-room, you fellows. I shan't be a minute." Cleverove buzzed off, leaving the chums of the Fourth to proceed to the Form-room in a state of keen anticipation. The schoolboy inventor soon rejoined them again, bearing in his arms a plentiful supply of electrical equipment, and for several minutes he buzzed himself around Mr. Lickham's desk and the blackboard. Mr. Lickham had not yet arrived in the Form-room. "Done it!" grinned Cleverove at last. The MASTER LIBRARY.—No. 1,093.

Mr. Lickham

Mr. Lickham came to earth again looking very much the worse for wear. "Silence!" he wrapped out, glaring savagely at Jack Jolly & Co. "I have just been seized with an extraordinary roomattick pain in my arm, boys. It is no laughing matter, I can assure you." "You were going to come me, sir," Jack Jolly reminded him respectfully. "It will have to wait then," granted Mr. Lickham, as he roofoolly rubbed his tingling arm. "Return to your place, Jolly. My arm is for the moment out of action." Jack Jolly grinned, and trotted back again, while Mr. Lickham limped over to his high stool to rest his limbs. Unfortunately for Mr. Lickham, Cleverove had been at work on that high stool, too. The master of the Fourth, of course, was unaware of this little circumstance, and he sat down on the stool with the full force of his somewhat flabby carcass. "Yooooooooo!" shrieked the master of the Fourth, leaping off the stool with amazing agility. Jack Jolly & Co. simply yelled. Mr. Lickham staggered over to the blackboard. "Groooooo!" This is the giddy humint! he muttered to himself. Undoubtedly I am suffering from roomattick seizures. However, I will endeavour to carry on. Silence, you lubbers!" Mr. Lickham panted for a minute, while the class quietened down, then he steadied himself against the easel with the idea of resuming the lesson from that position. "And now to carry on with what I was saying," he cried. "The capital of France, as any idiot knows, is—Whooooo!" Naturally Mr. Lickham didn't mean to say "Whooooo!" But it seemed the only thing worth saying as his leg touched a "live" spot on the easel. "Yow-ow-ow!" Groooooo! I'm ill. I must see a doctor at once—if not sooner!" he gasped, reeling towards the door. "You may buzz off, my boys. The class is dismissed!" And Mr. Lickham vanished, leaving the

follows to cheer



any mean trick to gain their

any mean trick to gain their ends, and they fairly gloated over it. They waited till after dinner, and then, while Cleverove, little suspecting their foul designs, went down to footer with his pals, they ransacked his belongings for the batteries. Having found what they wanted, they tipped wearily down to the Head's study, and spent a busy five minutes there. When Dr. Birchmell, his face shining and a dab of custard still clinging to the corner of his mouth, entered the study a little later, there were no signs to indicate that skimming hands had been at work. And as Biffer and Ruff had refrained from "doctoring" the Head's chair, he remained in blissful ignorance until the arrival of the Governors. But he soon knew that something was wrong when they did arrive! Sir Frederick Fungus, the chairman, was the first to kick open the door and career in. The stern, unbending old aristocrat bent stily and sat down. What happened next was like a nite-hot needles seemed to pierce his anatomy at once, electrifying him from head to toe. "Yow-ow-ow!" roared the chairman at the Governors, feendishly, shooting up as though he had set down on a red-hot poker. "Ow! Yooooooooo! Groo!" "Grate pip! Are you suffering from an apoplectic fit, Sir Frederick?" eggsclaimed the Head in surprise. "Of course not, idiot!" roared the chairman, angrily. "I am suffering ag-gerry as a result of sitting on that confounded chair, sir! If this is one of your practical jokes, Birchmell, you're in for a large size in thick ones!" "P-P-practical jokes? I haven't been playing practical jokes, strike me pink if

cheer, Birchmell, hay? Answer me, you

cheer, Birchmell, hay? Answer me, you whiskery old dodderer!" "Have they all gone off their rockers?" he eggsclaimed aloud, addressing the air. "Hullo! Here's the Reverend James joyful now! Trot in, sir, and take a seat!" The reverend gentleman did so, and followed the eggsmoke of the other governors in a dabble-quick time. "Ooooooooo! Dear, dear me! I have received a greesoon shock, my dear Birchmell!" he cried, writhing about in agony. At the word "shock" Sir Frederick Fungus suddenly saw light. "My hat! I believe that's the solution. We've all had an electric shock!" he eggsclaimed, eggshoppin'. "Oh, my giddy aunt!" murmured the Head faintly. The governors fell on their hands and knees, and eggsmoked the chairs which had caused all the trouble. Needless to say, Clarence Cleverove's batteries were soon revealed. Dr. Birchmell's eyes nearly popped out of their sockets when he realised the truth, while the governors, fairly turned, "The culprit, Birchmell, the culprit! Find him at once or take a week's notice!" stormed Colonel Fory Sparks. "I'll do my best, colonel, never fear!" gasped the Head. "And when I find him I'll make him suffer, but me if I won't! I promise you he shall be flogged and eggspelled—pardon the vulgar phrase, I should, of course say whalloped and chuckered out!" "So I should jolly well think!" snorted Sir Frederick Fungus. "And I think we can soon find him, too. Here is the owner's initials on this battery—C.C. What do they mean?" "Dr. Birchmell thought deeply. "That must be Cleverove of the Fourth. I reckoned, too, that he is a keen smatcher electrishum. Undoubtedly he is the guilty party." Frowning fiercely, the Head rang the bell for Binding, the page. "Find Cleverove of the Fourth immediately!" he ordered, when Binding appeared. "Ha, Cleverove!" ground out the Head, as that junior entered the study a few minutes later. "Do these batteries belong to you?" "Yes, sir!" he answered. "Thought how they got here—?" "That is enuff, Cleverove! Out of your own mouth you are convicted of playing a disgraceful and disrespectful trick upon your viziters, the honorable governors of St. Sam's!" "But—" began Cleverove. "Silence! For your shocking offence, Cleverove, you will be flogged with severity and eggspelled with indignity." "But I am innocent, sir!" protested the junior. And many of 'em! boomed Dr. Birchmell wrathfully. "Demals are useless. Binding, fetch Talloby, and ask him to look up this wretched boy in the punishment room!" Wildly protesting, the innocent young victim of a dastardly plot was hauled away to durance vile, and the governors settled down to their business. Within half an hour all St. Sam's had learned with amazement that the popular new member of the Fourth was condemned to be flogged before the whole school, then chucked out on his neck!