

Another Bumper FREE GIFT Issue This Week, Boys!

No. 1,094. Vol. XXXV. Week Ending February 2nd, 1929.

The

Magnet

LIBRARY

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EVERY SATURDAY.



3 more
metal
MOTOR CAR BADGES
Given Free
inside

"HARRY WHARTON & CO. IN NEW YORK!"

This week's special story of the
Chums of Greyfriars—within.



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.

AND STILL THEY COME!

YES, this series of Free Gifts given away in your favourite paper constitutes something of a record, for we haven't come to the end of it yet. This week you have another three superb metal motor-car badges—making up to now a total of nine. Well, in next Saturday's bumper number "Magnetites" will find three more badges to add to their sets. Isn't that grand? And will you make sure of your Free Gift Number? The answer is:

"OF COURSE WE WILL!"

I think one of the most interesting hobbies a fellow can have is running an amateur magazine, although I warn Don Wallace, of Coatbridge, that he will need a great deal of patience if he is to produce one by means of a hectograph. Don asks me if I can give him a good recipe that will enable him

TO MAKE A HECTOGRAPH!

Here is a method of making one which might prove useful to Don, and also to others of my readers who want a cheap method of taking many copies of any particular writing: Procure a shallow tin about one inch deep and roughly about thirteen inches by nine inches. Get an ounce of gelatine and allow it to soak in cold water for fifteen hours or more. Pour away all the surplus water. Take six and a half fluid ounces of glycerine, and heat to the boiling-point of water. Pour the glycerine into the gelatine.

Place your tin on a level surface and pour in the mixture, leaving it to set, which it will do in about six hours. Cover the tin with cardboard or something similar to prevent dust settling on the composition. When the hectograph is properly set it is ready to take copies. Write your original with aniline ink and a steel pen on ordinary paper. Moisten the hectograph with a sponge and place the original face downward on the composition. Smooth it down carefully and allow it to remain for a few minutes. Then carefully strip it off by one corner, and you will find that the writing has been transferred to the surface of the hectograph.

You may now take off copies by placing plain sheets of paper on the hectograph, smoothing them down, and then stripping them off until the required number have been printed. When that is done, wash off the writing with a sponge, and the hectograph will soon be ready for the next time you require it.

BURIED TREASURE!

is a subject that sets everyone's pulses throbbing, so the following reply to J. D., of South Shields, is one that should also interest "Magnetites" in general. J. D. asks if there is still hidden treasure to be found. Yes, there is—and an expedition is already at work attempting to unearth a treasure which is estimated as being worth twelve and a half million pounds! It is said to

be buried under a tremendous ruin at Sacambaya, in Brazil, and is supposed to have been put there a hundred and fifty years ago by Jesuit priests. A great deal of work has been done by the expedition, which has now been forced to suspend operations until the rainy season is ended—for all their works have been flooded.

It is, of course, very doubtful whether the treasure will be found or not, but the expedition was financed by men who believe that it lies there. There is also another treasure said to be buried on Cocos Island, but no-one knows its exact whereabouts.

"TAPPING THE CLARET!"

We all know what "tapping the claret" means, but Arthur Hocking, of Whitstable, has been having an argument with a chum, Arthur holding that "claret" is not a colour. He is quite



right. We use the word to describe anything which is the colour of the wine of that name, but the word really means "clarified," or made clear and pure.

J. Jones, of Swansea, wants to know the length of the Severn Tunnel. It is 7,665 yards. And, talking about tunnels, I wonder if he knows which will be the longest tunnel in Great Britain when it is finished? It is not a railway tunnel, which is now nearing completion, but its purpose is to bring water from Loch Treig, in Scotland, to Loch Linnhe—a distance of fifteen miles. It is fifteen feet in diameter, and in parts is more than 300 feet below the surface.

PUTTING HIM RIGHT!

"I can't help thinking that all these yarns about ruined temples, buried cities, and cities under the sea are greatly exaggerated," says Walter Kennedy, of Penzance. Don't you believe it, Walter! I've knocked around the world a bit myself, and I've seen some of them! Running along the coast of Yucatan, for instance, you can see any amount of ruined temples which belong to an ancient civilisation, and goodness only knows how many there are

hidden away in the interior. The whole of Central and South America is swarming with them!

In North Africa, too, you'll find ruins of a bygone civilisation, and you can still see part of the ruins of Carthage under the sea. It's a very weird experience to sail over the surface of the sea and look down upon the ruins in the clear depths beneath. Don't be sceptical, old man; fiction hasn't dealt with half the wonders of the world which still exist!

WHAT ARE "PILOT FISH"?

asks F. C., of Whitley Bay. "Pilot fish," is the term given to the small fish which accompany a shark. One of them swims on each side of the monster, and they guide him to his prey, in very much the same way as a pilot guides a ship. They are quite small fish, and they live upon the scraps which the sharks leave over.

YOUR LUCKY DAY!

"I was born on a Saturday," writes one of my readers, "and Saturday has been my lucky day ever since—especially since I started to read the MAGNET. Very well, there's another lucky day in store for him next Saturday—and for all of you! And when you cast your eyes down this programme of next week's special features, you will realise why. First of all, there's the long, complete yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled: "GREYFRIARS CHUMS IN CHICAGO!"

Mr. Frank Richards has fairly hit the bullseye with this unique series, and next Saturday's story proves what I say more than ever. The Bounder is the chap in the limelight next week, also Lord Mauleverer. Don't miss this stage of the Greyfriars chums' trip to the States, whatever you do.

Then there's another fine instalment of our serial,

"THE BLACK HAWK!"

which moves with more dramatic power and reality than ever.

And, just to give you extra value for your money, there's another weird "shocker" from young Dicky Nugent, to say nothing of a sparkling cricket article dealing with the Test matches now being played "down under."

PENKNIVES AND WALLETS FOR YOU!

Up to the time of writing this chat I haven't, naturally, received any of the yarns or the limericks which I asked you fellows to send along, because the MAGNET goes to press a few weeks in advance; but I expect there'll be a sheaf of them for me to wade through in a week or two. I wonder who the lucky chap will be who will get either the penknife or the pocket-wallet for the first yarn or Limerick I use? Have you sent yours in yet? No? Well, if it's a good joke, sent it along to the above address—you may win a handy penknife. Mark your envelopes "Joke," to simplify matters this end. If poetry is your strong point, have a cut at a limerick dealing with one of the Greyfriars' characters. Then send your effort along to this office, with the word "Limerick" marked on the envelope. To the senders of "Limericks" which are considered good enough for publication I shall be pleased to award a useful pocket-wallet. Get busy now, boys. And before I "dry up," let me remind you about next week's fine Free Gifts. Don't spoil your set by missing them, will you? Till next week, then,

YOUR EDITOR.

YOU CAN'T BEAT THESE SCHOOL STORIES!



Here's another tip-top story of fun and adventure, featuring Harry Wharton & Co., the chums of Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The New World!

SNORT! Snort!
It was the fog-signal, booming eerily and wearily through mists that were like grey cotton-wool.

It snorted and grunted and wailed unmusically. Syrens and horns answered it from the unseen.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"I say, where's New York?" demanded Billy Bunter.

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Echo answers, where!" he replied.

And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, shivering in a thick overcoat and a muffler, remarked through his chattering teeth that the wherefulness was terrific.

"Must be lying around somewhere!" remarked Johnny Bull, peering through the dimness.

"O where and O where can it be?" sang Nugent.

Harry Wharton & Co. had arrived on the western side of the Atlantic. The Ruritania was creeping into New York Harbour.

Fisher T. Fish, all the way across the "pond," had been telling the Greyfriars juniors that when they saw "Noo Yark" they would sit up and take notice.

The chums of Greyfriars were prepared to sit up and take notice as soon they saw New York.

But at present they couldn't see it.

They could barely see the grey water swirling past the steamer; hardly the length of the Ruritania itself.

"Noo Yark," according to Fishy, was a sight for sore eyes.

That was an appropriate expression, for the dense mist with which New York greeted the travellers was at least painful to the eyes; they had, as Bob Cherry remarked, the sore eyes without the sight.

The skyscrapers, Fishy had told them, would strike them dumb with admiration as they steamed in. But there was no sky to be seen, much less a scraper thereof.

The Statue of Liberty, according to Fishy, was to dawn on them in colossal grandeur, a wonder of the world. But even the gigantic Statue of Liberty was coyly hiding from view.

New York was greeting the Greyfriars party with a whole concerto of foghorns and syrens.

Snort! Wail! Boom! Snort!

"I suppose," remarked Harry Wharton, "that it wasn't in weather like this that Columbus discovered America. He wouldn't have known it was there."

Boom! Snort!

"I say, you fellows, we shan't be home till morning, at this rate," grumbled Billy Bunter. "We're doing about a yard a minute. Is this what they call American hustle?"

Fisher T. Fish joined the little crowd of Greyfriars fellows on the boat-deck. Fisher T. Fish was muffled up in coat

and scarf, and his long thin nose was blue.

"I guess we'll soon be in, you guys," he remarked eagerly. "It's a piece misty to-day."

"Just a little piece!" chuckled Bob.

"The piecefulness is terrific!"

"What a change after our foggy old island at home!" remarked Vernon-Smith, and there was a chortle.

The Ruritania had tugged out of the Mersey on a clear day. She had left the Old Country bright under wintry sunshine. She had struck good weather in the Atlantic, until she approached the shores of the land of liberty. But Fisher T. Fish had never ceased to congratulate himself on getting away from English fog and British mist. He had assured the Greyfriars fellows that they would be able to breathe—really breathe—when they struck the New World. Certainly they were able to breathe, though not with any comfort; and it did not

seem improbable that they would strike the New World with a crash.

"Is this the jolly old climate you've been telling us about, Fishy?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Some climate!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"Begad, you know, a fellow could cut it with a knife!" remarked Lord Mauleverer.

"Oh, guff!" said Fisher T. Fish. "There's the Statue of Liberty!"

"Where?"

Fisher T. Fish pointed with a bony finger.

Something loomed up in the mist. Whether it was the Statue of Liberty or not, only the keen eye of a patriotic American could have told with certainty.

"So that's it?" asked Bob.

"Yep!"

"Splendid!" said Bob.

"Magnificent!" said Johnny Bull.

"Terrific!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Impressive," said Nugent; "and still more impressive, I've no doubt, if a fellow could see it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, is that where they have the slave market?" asked Billy Bunter.

"The what?" yelled Bob Cherry.

"The slave market."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter evidently required to bring his knowledge of the United States up to date.

"You're about sixty years too late, old fat bean," said Bob. "You should have come here in your grandfather's time if you wanted to see a slave market."

"Waal, carry me home to die!" ejaculated Fisher T. Fish. "Is that all you know about the Yew-nited States, Bunter, you silly clam?"

"Oh, really, Fishy! I say, you fellows, I want to see the slave market when we're doing the sights of New York."

"You silly ass!" hooted Bob. "There

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Greyfriars School is now left far behind, and Harry Wharton & Co., for the first time, gaze upon the towering sky-scrappers of New York, feel strangely out of place amidst the bustle and hustle of American life, and little dream of the amazing adventures that lie before them.

aren't any slaves in the United States these days."

"Rats!" replied Bunter. "I've read all about it in a book called 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's two sights I specially want to see," continued Bunter. "The Statue of Liberty and the slave market—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And that's the sort of history you learn in the Old Country!" said Fisher T. Fish, with withering contempt.

"Why, you fat mugwump, slavery was abolished in the Yewnited States when my father was a leeble nipper."

"Oh, really, Fishy—"

"Haven't you ever heard of the Civil War?" demanded Fishy.

"Of course I have, ass; we've had that in history class at Greyfriars. But that happened in England."

"In England?" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"Of course—Cromwell and Charles the First—"

"Oh, carry me home to die!"

"Oh!" said Bunter. "Was there ever a civil war in America?"

"Was there?" gasped Fishy. "Was there? Oh, Jerusalem crickets!"

"There was," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "And after it slavery was abolished, so you won't see any slaves in America, Bunter."

"But there's still the Statue of Liberty!" chuckled Bob. "Sixty years ago you could have seen the Statue of Liberty and the slaves as well."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter winked.

"I say, you fellows, you can't spoof me, you know. I can jolly well tell you that when we're doing New York, I'm going to see the slave market."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors. The idea of William George Bunter rooting about New York in search of a slave market was too much for them.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at," said Bunter. "I jolly well know that there are nigger slaves in the United States. Why, I've read about them in Dickens."

"Dickens is a bit out of date, so far as the United States are concerned," chuckled Nugent.

"Rats!" said Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove was not to be convinced. Bunter's knowledge of English history was vague—so vague that it had frequently caused him trouble with Mr. Quelch at Greyfriars. His knowledge of American history was a beautiful blank. He was fully prepared to see slave-gangs marching in chains when he landed in U.S.A. He had seen it already in his mind's eye; but he had, fortunately, arrived too late to see it with any other eye.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Harry Wharton & Co. in New York!

NEW YORK was not so misty as the East River and the harbour, as the juniors discovered when they found themselves in that great city at last—after some delay in the Custom House. Hiram K. Fish had landed with the juniors, but he did not go on into the city with them—some difficulty transpiring with regard to his baggage. He was left in a state of excited argument with several Custom House officials who, apparently, wanted Mr. Fish to pay something that Mr. Fish guessed he wasn't going to

pay. So it fell to Fisher T. Fish to conduct the party to the hotel where their quarters were already engaged.

A car should have been in waiting to take them—that having been arranged—and Fishy assured the juniors that the car would be right there, right on the nail, in the efficient American manner.

As the juniors knew their Fishy, they were not surprised at having to wait twenty minutes for the car, after Fishy had phoned twice to inquire why it wasn't on hand. But it rolled away with them at last; a large car, but packed like a sardine-tin with the numerous party of Remove fellows from Greyfriars.

Coker & Co., of the Fifth, did not crowd into that car, for two reasons. There wasn't room for them; and they disdained the company of Lower Fourth fags. And when Fishy warned Coker of the Fifth not to lose himself, Coker simply told him not to be cheeky, and carried on regardless.

"What about the luggage?" asked Bob Cherry, as the large and well-loaded car rolled away.

"I guess that's O.K.," answered Fisher T. Fish. "Popper's fixed that with the Express man."

"I say, you fellows, I hope my luggage won't get lost!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"That baggage will be at the hotel as soon as we are, I guess," answered Fisher T. Fish. "Baggage don't go astray in Noo Yark. This ain't London."

The juniors looked out of the windows with great interest, anxious to see as much of New York as the mist would allow.

"You've never seen Broadway!" said Fisher T. Fish, with pride.

"I have!" said Bunter.

"You have!" ejaculated Fishy. "You've never been in Noo Yark before, you mugwump!"

"Eh! Broadway's in Cricklewood," said Bunter.

"Wha-a-at?"

"Is there a Broadway in New York, too?" asked Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish did not feel equal to replying to that question. He had never heard of Broadway, in Cricklewood; Bunter, on the other hand, had apparently never heard of Broadway in New York.

"So this is Broadway?" said Harry Wharton, with interested eyes on that great thoroughfare.

"Yep."

"What's that up in the air?" asked Nugent.

"Never heard of the Elevated Railroad?" sighed Fisher T. Fish. "Shucks! You guys have got a lot to learn."

"And those are the sky-scrapers," said Nugent, with his eyes on the cliffs of buildings.

"Jest that! I guess it lays over anything you've got on the other side," said Fisher T. Fish.

"And what's that?"

"That's Madison Square," said Fisher T. Fish. "This is where we get into Fifth Avenue. Some avenue, I'm telling you."

"Where the millionaires live," remarked Bob.

"Some of 'em," said Fisher T. Fish. "More on Riverside Drive—that's on the Hudson. But Park Avenue is the goods these days. I guess when I make my pile I shall get me a home on Park Avenue. Our hotel is on Fifth, between Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh."

"Eh?"

"What?"

"I guess I'll put it in words of one syllable for you," said Fisher T. Fish pityingly. "The Magnificent Hotel is

on Fifth Avenue, between Twenty-sixth Street and Twenty-seventh Street."

"I see," assented Bob. "New York ought to be good for a fellow's arithmetic."

"And where's the slave market?" asked Bunter.

"You fat clam, shut up!" roared Fisher T. Fish, greatly incensed.

"Haven't you learned any history since 1865? There never was a slave market in Noo Yark, nor slaves for more'n ninety years. Noo Yark was one of the free states. It was in the southern states they had black slaves, you pesky chump. You make me tired."

"Mean to say there aren't any now?" demanded Bunter.

"Of course not, you fat clam. Gee-whiz! You tire me out, you sure do. Never heard of the Civil War!" fumed Fisher T. Fish. "You'll tell me next that you've never heard of Lincoln?"

"Of course I've heard of Lincoln," said Bunter. "It's a cathedral city."

"It's a—a what?" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "Oh, great snakes! I don't mean your little tinpot town in your little old island—I mean Abe Lincoln!"

"Who was he?" asked Bunter.

"Who was he?" repeated Fisher T. Fish faintly. "Gee-whiz! Now tell me you've never heard of George Washington?"

"Oh, rot!" said Bunter. "We don't do American history at Greyfriars, but I know all about George Washington. He was a slave-owner, and the champion of liberty, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Chuck it, Bunter," said Harry Wharton laughing. "We're in Fishy's country now, you know, and you mustn't be too funny."

"Eh! I wasn't being funny. I—"

"Here we are!" said Fisher T. Fish. "This hyer is the Magnificent. We locate here."

The car stopped before the Magnificent Hotel on Fifth Avenue. The juniors had already learned that in America a building is not in a street, but "on" it. The party alighted upon a pavement which, in the language of the country, was a side-walk. They marched into an immense entrance, after a vain attempt to see the top of the building in the mist. So far as they could see, the Magnificent Hotel had no top, but went on upwards and upwards for ever and ever.

"Some skyscraper!" Bob Cherry remarked.

"Forget it!" answered Fisher T. Fish. "There's only twenty floors to this hotel."

"Only!" murmured Bob.

"I say, you fellows!" ejaculated Bunter, in alarm. "I hope we're not booked for the top floor. I don't like staircases."

"There's an elevator, you fat duffer," said Fishy.

"Is there?" said Bunter, who did not know what an elevator was, "I think there ought to be a lift."

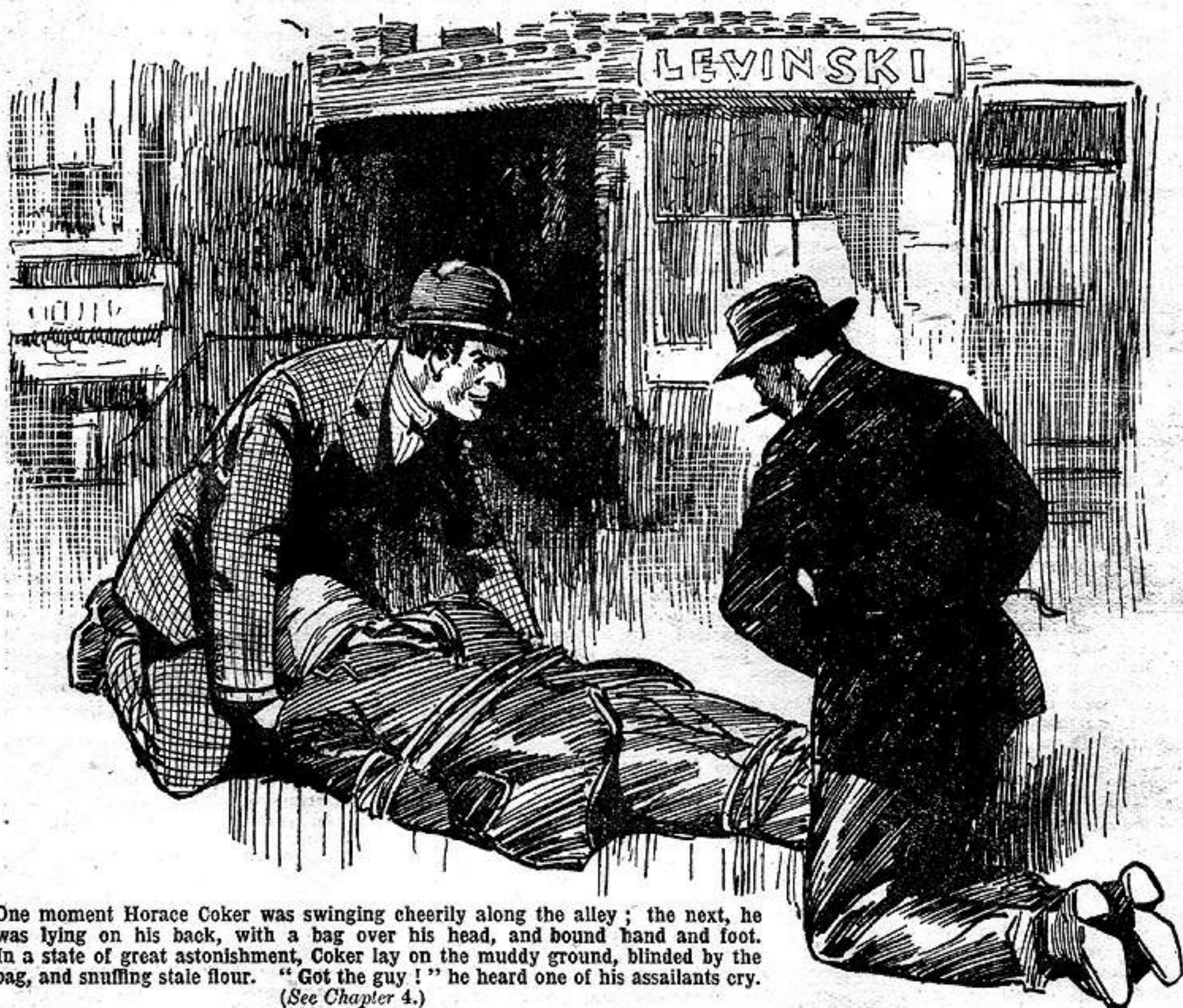
"An elevator is a lift," said Wharton, with a laugh. "We've got to learn a new language here, Bunter."

"Why the thump do they call a lift an elevator?" asked Bunter.

"You clam, an elevator is an elevator," said Fisher T. Fish, "only it's called a lift in your pesky old island."

In the great foyer of the hotel, the juniors looked round them. Fisher T. Fish exchanged a word with the young man in the bureau, who looked at the party just as if he guessed they were English; and then led his flock to the elevator.

"Sixteen," said Fisher T. Fish to the elevator attendant, whom the other



One moment Horace Coker was swinging cheerily along the alley; the next, he was lying on his back, with a bag over his head, and bound hand and foot. In a state of great astonishment, Coker lay on the muddy ground, blinded by the bag, and snuffing stale flour. "Got the guy!" he heard one of his assailants cry. (See Chapter 4.)

fellows could not help thinking of as a liftman.

The lift—or elevator—shot up.

It traversed floor after floor, Billy Bunter blinking at each, as they swept down, through his big spectacles.

Bob Cherry began to count the floors as they passed, but he soon lost count, and gave it up.

But the liftman was a good arithmetician, and he brought the elevator to a halt, with a brisk and efficient jerk, at the sixteenth floor.

The party trooped out.

"This way," said Fisher T. Fish.

He led his flock to Hiram K. Fish's suite.

"I guess you'll find your baggage has arrived," he said.

But Fisher T. Fish's guess was ill-founded. The baggage had not arrived. As nobody had expected it to arrive so soon, with the exception of Fishy, nobody was disappointed.

"I say, Fishy, where's the luggage?" asked Billy Bunter.

"Oh, shucks! Let's look at the rooms," said Fishy hastily.

The juniors looked at the rooms. They found themselves in quite comfortable quarters; and they found endless interest in looking out of the windows, to take a bird's-eye view of New York.

It was about a hour later that the baggage arrived.

"I wonder where Coker's got to?" Bob Cherry remarked, as he unpacked a trunk.

"Lost, very likely," said Nugent

cheerfully. "I saw him arguing with Potter and Greene when we got in the car. Let's hope he'll stay lost till it's time to push on from New York."

"I suppose we shall be staying here for some time," remarked Harry Wharton. "As we're on a tour of the United States we shall have to do some sight-seeing in New York."

"He, he, he!" came from Billy Bunter.

Wharton glanced at the fat junior.

"What are you cackling at, image?" he inquired.

Bunter grinned.

"I fancy we aren't staying long here," he said. "You fellows don't know yet—"

Bunter paused.

"Eh? What don't we know?"

"That's telling," chuckled Bunter.

"Fathead!"

"Still, now we're in the United States, I don't see why Fishy can't let on," said Bunter. "I say, Fishy!"

"Hallo!"

"How long are we staying in New York, Fishy?"

"I guess we take the cars for Buffalo to-morrow."

"To-morrow?" repeated Wharton.

"Yep!"

"We shan't see much of New York, then."

Fisher T. Fish grinned.

"I guess we ain't cutting time to waste," he answered. "But the popper'll tell you."

"You see—" began Bunter.

"Shut up, you fat clam!"

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter. "I'm not telling them anything. All the same, I think—"

"Give us a rest!" snapped Fisher T. Fish. "You shoot off that mouth of yours too much, Bunter."

"Oh, really, Fishy—"

"Can it!"

Bunter "canned" it, and Fisher T. Fish walked him away, apparently so that he should keep it "canned." The other fellows exchanged glances. The Bounder, who was lounging in the doorway, shrugged his shoulders.

"We're not here for sight-seeing," he said. "Old Fish told the Head that this was a giddy educational tour in the United States; but I told you fellows all along that there was something behind it—and Bunter knows what it is!"

"But what can be behind it?" asked Bob.

"I don't know, but we shall know soon," answered Vernon-Smith. "Old Fish has got something up his sleeve. He isn't spendin' money for nothin'."

"Begad, you know, that's rather ungrateful, Smithy," remarked Lord Mauleverer. "Mr. Fish seems to me to be treatin' us jolly well."

"With an axe to grind," said the Bounder.

"Oh, rot!" answered Bob Cherry.

"The rotfulness is terrific, my esteemed Smithy."

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The Bounder shrugged his shoulders again.

"You'll see what you'll see," he said. And as that was indubitable, the argument dropped. But, as a matter of fact, all the juniors were beginning to wonder, by this time, whether the Bounder was right, and whether there was something behind Mr. Hiram K. Fish's generosity in taking a party of Greyfriars fellows on an "educational tour" in the United States. But even the Bounder had no suspicion of the real facts of the case, and only Billy Bunter could have told them that they were booked for Hollywood, in far-off California, where the Perfection Picture Syndicate had planned a "scoop" in the form of a film of English Public School life, for which great film Mr. Fish had astutely bagged a dozen Public School fellows on the "cheap."

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Walking with Coker!

HORACE COKER snorted. Potter and Greene, of the Greyfriars Fifth, exchanged exasperated glances.

There was no doubt that Coker, with all his eminent qualities, had a rather exasperating effect on his friends.

That was noticeable at Greyfriars School. It had been noticeable on the steamer. It was still more noticeable in New York.

Coker was far from Greyfriars now, and far from the Greyfriars Fifth Form, but he had not, of course, forgotten that he was Horace James Coker, of the Fifth. He had disdained to pack himself into a car with a mob of fags, and, so far, Potter and Greene agreed with him. Their idea was to take another car. Coker had plenty of money, and, to do him justice, he was the fellow to spend it on his friends. Coker, indeed, had made a remark to the effect that they would take another car—or, at least, a taxi. But—

There was a "but"; in this case, an important "but."

On the steamer Potter and Greene had noticed Coker glancing at his pocket-book, to make sure that he had it about him, and they could not help noticing that it was stacked with American paper money. So there was, so far as Potter and Greene could see, no shortage of cash, and therefore no reason why they should not have proceeded to the Magnificent Hotel in the best car that New York could afford.

Yet Coker insisted upon walking.

How far it was Potter and Greene did not know; but they knew it must be a good distance. So they argued.

Coker snorted. He might have told his comrades—but he didn't—that, having slipped his hand into his pocket for his pocket-book, he had made the interesting discovery that it was no longer there.

Possibly some other eyes, as well as Potter's and Greene's, had noted that fat pocket-book. Be that as it may, it was an indubitable fact that Coker had not trod the soil of liberty for more than a few minutes when some cute native of the great republic had unostentatiously, but skilfully, relieved him of his pocket-book, and with it all his available supply of cash.

Coker of the Fifth did not confide that mishap to Potter and Greene. They might have taken advantage of it. Coker had been cautioning them about pickpockets, explaining that they knew

what duffers they were. In the circumstances, Potter and Greene would probably have grinned had they been told that Coker's pocket had been picked. Coker did not choose to be grinned at. He told them nothing, only that he had decided to walk.

"We want to stretch our legs a bit," said Coker, "besides, we shall see something of New York."

"We don't know the place at all," said Potter. "I jolly well don't want to get lost in a foreign city."

"You won't get lost if you stick to me," said Coker reassuringly. "You can rely on me seeing you through things here, just the same as at Greyfriars."

Potter and Greene did not seem very reassured by that assurance.

"But—" said Potter.

"But—" said Greene.

"We're walking," said Coker decidedly. "I've been looking over a map of New York on the steamer. It's as simple as A B C. There are avenues running north and south, and they're crossed by streets numbered from one to goodness knows how many. It's the American plan—everything at right angles. Horribly ugly, of course; but easy to find your way about. If you don't know where you are you simply look at the number of the street and calculate what number you want, and walk up town or down town. See?"

"But—" said Potter and Greene together.

"Any fool," went on Coker, "would know Broadway as soon as he saw it."

"You'll know Broadway all right, then," remarked Potter.

"Oh, quite!" said Coker, impervious to sarcasm. "You just follow my lead and you'll be all right."

"But—" grumbled Potter and Greene.

"This way!" said Coker.

He led off.

Potter and Greene could only hope that Coker would soon get tired, or lose his way and call a taxi. In that hope, they followed Coker.

Coker led the way with confidence. The study of a map of New York had told him, he thought, all he needed to know. In a city where the streets were numbered, instead of named, it was surely easy for a fellow to find his way about, especially a clever fellow like Coker. Truth to tell, Coker would not have trusted to his own guidance but

for the circumstance that he had been shorn of his wealth and either had to walk or confess to Potter and Greene that he had had his pocket picked—which, of course, was impossible. A clever fellow who knew his way about could not confess that he had had his pocket picked to a couple of silly duffers who hadn't had their pockets picked.

Exactly where Coker led them Potter and Greene did not know, as the city was wholly strange to them. Still less did Coker know. But all three of them knew that after they had been walking for some hours, seeing many interesting sights, but getting a little tired and hungry, they had not arrived at Mr. Fish's hotel.

Until they got tired and hungry Potter and Greene did not object to strolling about sight-seeing, especially as the mist was clearing off, and the sun shining down so far as the high buildings allowed. But when they got tired and hungry they did object. Their objections would have faded away had Coker acceded to their very broad hints to drop in at a restaurant. But Coker was deaf to such hints. Dropping in at a restaurant meant a bill to pay—a trifle light as air to Coker with an unpicked pocket, but a serious obstacle with a picked pocket. So far from having dollars to blow, Horace Coker hadn't even a dime—not even a "quarter," or a "bit." But Coker was not going to say so.

Potter and Greene were smitten with a horrid suspicion that Coker was growing mean. If Coker was growing mean it was time for Potter and Greene to tell him what they thought of him. As an open-handed fellow, with plenty of money and willingness to spend it, Coker was tolerable—just about tolerable. But if he was growing mean, that was the limit. A long and devoted friendship began to tremble in the balance.

"Look here—" said Potter at last.

"Look here—" breathed Greene.

"Come on!" said Coker briskly.

"Don't slack on your first day in New York! Remember you're in the land of hustle and buzz."

"I'm hungry!" said Potter.

"I'm tired!" said Greene.

"Where are we?" demanded Potter sulphurously.

"In New York!" answered Coker. "Did you think you were in Philadelphia, or San Francisco?"

"I mean whereabouts in New York, you howling ass?"

"Oh, down-town!" answered Coker.

"When are we getting to Mr. Fish's hotel, blow you?"

"Don't get abusive, Potter. Don't act like a fag!" chided Coker. "We shall get to the hotel sooner or later. Meanwhile, we're seeing the sights. Look at those railroads up in the air. Queer, what?"

"Blow the railroads!" snorted Potter. "I've got a crick in the neck already!"

"I'm hungry!" said Greene plaintively.

"Well, don't tell all New York!" said Coker. "New York doesn't want to know whether you're hungry or not."

Potter looked at Greene, and Greene looked at Potter. They came to a simultaneous halt.

"I'm fed-up!" said Potter.

"Up to the chin!" said Greene.

Coker, striding on, missed them, and turned round.

"Come on, you slackers!" he said encouragingly.

"Not a step!" said Potter. "I'm taking the first taxi I see, and I'm not getting out of it till we get to Mr. Fish's hotel."

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"Same here!" said Greene.

"Slackers!" said Coker. "Take a taxi if you like! Go and eat coke!"

"If that means that you're not going to pay the taximan," said Potter bitterly, "I'll pay him!"

For a moment Coker was smitten by a temptation to confess the facts to his comrades. He was tired and he was hungry; the thought of Mr. Fish's hotel was like the thought of a haven of rest. But he shook his head. Confession delayed was more difficult than ever to make. If he admitted the truth now Potter and Greene would know quite well why they had been walking about all these hours. Coker would look absurd—and it was bad enough to be absurd, without looking so. If they took a taxi Coker naturally would pay—Coker always paid. In the present case he couldn't pay. He wasn't going to admit it; so he wasn't going to take a taxi. He shook his head and looked obstinate.

"If you think we're lost—" he said.

"Of course we're lost!" jeered Potter. "If you'd have asked the way we might have found it. But you knew best."

"Coker always knows best!" sneered Greene.

"Exactly!" assented Coker. "I'll see you through. Come on!"

"Rats!"

"Bosh!"

"Look here—" roared Coker.

"Fathead! Come on, Greeney, let's find a taxi!" said Potter; and he turned his back on Coker and walked away.

"You silly owls!" roared Coker.

"You can come if you like!" called back Potter. "I'll pay for the taxi, if that's what's worrying you!"

"Take a taxi, and take your hook—and be blown to you!" retorted Coker indignantly.

Potter and Greene took their "hook," and soon afterwards they took a taxi—fortunately discovering one—and, with great relief, they found themselves on their way to the Magnificent Hotel at last, while the shades of night were falling fast—as the poet native to the country had expressed it. They lost sight of Coker and he lost sight of them, with mutual satisfaction. Little did they dream of what was to happen before they saw the great Horace again!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Coker Asks for It!

"**B**LOW!" said Coker. Coker was surprised and annoyed.

Any fool, as Coker had declared, would know Broadway, New York, when he saw it. Now that dusk had fallen, the "Great White Way" was ablaze with lights—if Coker could have seen them. Electric advertisements, Coker knew, spangled the sky there and obliterated the stars. Coker was qualified, by his own definition, to

know Broadway if he saw it. But he did not see it. Broadway, New York, undoubtedly was big enough to be seen. But it did not dawn on Coker's view.

There was another little trouble. Streets in New York being numbered, instead of named, it was, as Coker had told his friends, easy for anybody to pick his way. Numbered avenues running north and south, numbered streets running east and west—what could be simpler? But after Potter and Greene had left him Coker wandered on on his own; he scanned names of streets—not numbers. There was a catch somewhere, Coker discovered. He found himself in Ludlow Street, in Allen Street, in Delancey Street; and so Coker's scheme of finding his way arithmetically was quite knocked on the head. It dawned upon him that that

of the city he was seeking. Coker had a rooted objection to asking his way; people might have supposed him a muff or a duffer, Coker, of course, being quite unaware that this was evident without his speaking at all.

There were many things of which Coker was unaware. Among others, he was unaware that two men had been strolling along at a little distance behind him for a long time, keeping an eye on him. Even had he noticed them, he would not have guessed that his missing pocket-book reposed in the pocket of one of them.

Coker, standing at the corner of Delancey Street and the Bowery, looking about him, getting in the way of hurrying people, and drawing some amused glances from passers-by, debated in his mind whether he had not, after all, better inquire his way.

Even Coker realised that he was not getting any "forrarder."

He did not want to spend the evening and the night following exploring all New York between Harlem and the Bowery.

While Coker was debating that in his mind, and scanning the passengers for some respectable-looking person to ask, the two men who had been following him exchanged a few whispered words and separated.

One of them—a rather loudly-dressed man, with a Derby hat on the side of a well-oiled head, and with a prominent nose curved like a beak—sauntered up to Coker and lifted his hat politely.

"Excuse me, sir!" he said, very civilly. "Perhaps I can help you?"

The man was well dressed, if in a somewhat flashy manner, and his manner was very civil and obliging. Coker certainly was in want of help. But he was not disposed to admit that he was lost, and he was annoyed by a stranger getting such an idea into his head.

"Help me?" he repeated stiffly.

"I guess you've lost your way?"

"Nothing of the kind!" he answered.

"Oh! My mistake, I guess," said the stranger, still affable. "I guess I'd put you wise if you had."

"I haven't lost my way," explained Coker. "I never lose my way. I know my way about!" Stranger as the man was, one unit in the unknown millions of Manhattan, Coker felt that he had to make that clear to him. "But the fact is, I've walked rather farther than I intended."

"You know New York well, sir?" said the man with the beak.

"Hardly," smiled Coker. "I only landed yesterday."

But he was gratified at this stranger supposing—from his self-possessed manner, of course—that he knew New York well.

"You don't say!" ejaculated the stranger, in surprise.

"I do," said Coker. "And if you

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Many cars of all countries have copied this radiator, but by no means have all succeeded in achieving the fine balance and classic purity of line which distinguishes the original Fiat design.

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scheme of numbers was not carried on throughout New York; in some places it was, and in some places it wasn't—and Coker, in his wanderings, had evidently struck a place where it wasn't.

Coker felt that it wasn't fair. Numbered streets at right angles might be horribly ugly, but the scheme was efficient. It was American efficiency. And it really wasn't fair for American efficiency to let a fellow down like this. What was the good of efficiency if it let you down just when you were relying on it? From Delancey Street, Coker turned into a long street, with the elevated railroad grunting overhead, which, to his surprise, he discovered was called the Bowery.

Coker had heard of the Bowery in New York as a quarter with a lurid reputation. It did not look very lurid to the eye, however; but, obviously, Coker was a long way from the part

could tell me of a short cut to Fifth Avenue from here, I'd be much obliged."

"Fifth Avenue's a fairly long street," remarked the stranger. "Where did you want to strike it?"

"Near Madison Square."

Coker, had he only known it, was two miles as the crow flies from Madison Square, much more than that by walking routes. But Coker did not know it, and the obliging stranger did not tell him. The obliging stranger had other views in mind.

"I guess I can put you right, sir," said the man with the beak. "I'm going that way myself, and it's only a few blocks."

"You're awfully good!" said Coker.

"Not at all, sir," said the stranger. "Only too pleased to oblige a newcomer in our city, sir! This way!"

He swung off down Delancey Street.

Coker followed him, blissfully unaware that every step was taking him farther and farther away from Fifth Avenue and Madison Square.

From Delancey, the obliging stranger turned into another street, and another, and then another. Coker supposed these to be short cuts to his destination. But he became aware that every street he entered was a little more shabby and dark and disreputable-looking than the last, and he stopped at last as the obliging stranger was about to turn another corner.

The man glanced at him amiably.

"Only another block, sir," he said.

Coker hesitated.

Coker did not want to appear ungrateful, still less did he desire to betray anything like funk. But Coker had heard of strangers in big cities being enticed into shady places by obliging strangers. The man with the beak nose read Coker's thoughts as if Coker's countenance had been an open book.

"I guess I turn off here, sir," he said. "Follow this block, and take the first turning on the left by the brass shop, and you'll be all right. Good-evening, sir!"

He raised his hat politely and disappeared in the dusk before Coker could thank him for his valuable services.

"Oh!" said Coker.

He had lost his guide, but he was both relieved and reassured. Evidently this obliging stranger could have had no ill designs, and he had pointed out the way to Coker and vanished.

Horace Coker walked on.

He reached the end of the block and saw the brass shop—a little dirty shop with brass pots and pans in a murky window. The turning to the left was an alley, very ill-lighted. But that unmistakably was the turning he had been told to take, and Coker turned into it and proceeded briskly on his way.

What happened next was never quite clear to Horace Coker of the Fifth Form at Greyfriars.

One moment he was swinging along cheerily; the next he was lying on his back, with a bag over his head and a knee planted on his chest.

In a state of great astonishment, Coker lay on the muddy ground, blinded by the bag and snuffing stale flour.

Hands grasped him—how many, he did not know, but there seemed quite a lot. When he recovered his wits sufficiently to attempt to struggle, he made the interesting discovery that he could not stir a limb.

"Got the guy!"

Coker heard those words through the flour-sack, and recognised the voice of

the obliging stranger with the beaky nose.

There was a hoarse chuckle.

"Yep! Walked into us, Ulick! Of all the jaspers that ever came hunting for trouble in this little old town, I guess that guy caps the stack!" said the same voice. "He sure is some mosshead!"

"I'll say so!" agreed the other voice.

"I'll tell the world!" went on the obliging stranger's voice. "Don't hurt the baby! Jest grip him safe! Get him in!"

"Help!" roared Coker.

A heavy hand squeezed the floury sack over his mouth, and Coker choked. He was lifted from the ground, carried away, and he heard a door close. He was in some building now, and in the hands of—whom? Coker did not know; but he knew quite clearly that he wished that he had taken the taxi with Potter and Greene.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Missing!

DINNER was over at the Magnificent Hotel on Fifth Avenue.

Harry Wharton & Co. had dined in the great restaurant of the hotel with Hiram K. Fish, who had, apparently, got through his little difficulty at the Custom House in time to turn up for dinner. Potter and Greene came in a few minutes after Mr. Fish. The whole party dined with comfort and satisfaction, especially Billy Bunter. It was a dinner of many courses, but not too many for Bunter. Only Coker was absent; but the fellows were not yet anxious about Coker, and they did not worry. Besides, Coker's absence was enough to make any party a success.

After dinner, however, Mr. Fish seemed a little perturbed by the continued absence of Horace Coker.

He questioned Potter and Greene, and when they described their wanderings with Coker, Mr. Fish grunted.

"You hit China Town!" he said.

"China Town?" repeated Potter.

"Yep! Not the best place for strangers in Noo Yark. I sure wonder what's become of that guy Coker."

"He can't get very far away, sir," suggested Lord Mauleverer. "Isn't New York an island?"

"Sure."

"Well, he's bound to be on it somewhere," said his lordship.

"Noo Yark," said Mr. Fish, "is some island. I sure guess that that guy is somewhere between Harlem and the Battery, and he ain't gone across the East River or the Hudson, I reckon. But there's a few million guys on this little spot to pick him out of. Trouble is, we got to hit the Erie to-morrow at twelve."

"Begad!" said Lord Mauleverer, with interest. "Do you mean that there's a scrap on, sir?"

"Eh?"

"Who's the Erie?" asked Mauleverer. "And what are we going to hit him for?"

Mr. Fish gazed at his lordship.

"Oh, can it!" interjected Fisher T. Fish. "Popper means that we're taking the cars on the Erie Railroad."

"Oh!" said Mauleverer.

Fisher T. Fish was, as it were, the interpreter of the party. Often he had to translate his popper's remarks to the juniors, as yet somewhat ignorant of the language of the country.

"We hit the cars at twelve," said Mr. Fish. "If that guy Coker ain't along, he'll sure get left."

"We can't go on without him," said Potter.

"Something may have happened to him," said Greene.

Snort! from Mr. Fish.

"If he ain't turned up by twelve to-morrow, we'll put it to the police," he said. "We got to take the cars, I guess. This hyer run is on schedule."

"But aren't we doing New York?" asked Bob Cherry.

"I guess we'll do New York this evening," said Mr. Fish good-humouredly. "You've seen Fifth Avenue, and Broadway, and the sky signs, and the Elevated. We'll sure do the rest before you go to your bunks."

"Quick work!" grinned Bob.

"Shucks!" said Mr. Fish. "We move in this country. Knew a man who did Parrus in an hour and a half."

"Parrus?" asked Lord Mauleverer. "Is that near New York?"

Mr. Fish gazed at him again, and again Fisher T. was called on to interpret.

"Don't you know that Parrus is the capital of France, you guy?" he demanded.

"Oh!" gasped Mauleverer. "You—you mean Paris?"

"I said Parrus, I guess," said Mr. Fish.

"My mistake," murmured his lordship.

"A live Amurrican can do all Yurup in a week," added Mr. Fish.

Lord Mauleverer did not like to ask whether Yurup was in the United States, but he could not help wondering where and what it was. After a time, however, he realised that probably Mr. Fish meant Europe.

"I guess you'll see all you want of Noo Yark before you hit the Erie to-morrow," said Mr. Fish. "Son and self will take you round. I guess that guy Coker will turn up. I reckon he's rubbering around."

"Rubberin'?" repeated Lord Mauleverer.

"Staring around," said Fisher T. Fish. "Stretching his neck like rubber. Don't you know what rubbering is?"

"Oh! Yaas! I—I see!"

"But we can't go on and leave Coker behind, if he doesn't turn up, Mr. Fish!" exclaimed Potter.

"I guess he'll turn up," answered Mr. Fish. "Anyhow, this trip is on schedule, and we ain't got time to burn."

That settled the matter from Mr. Fish's point of view. It did not settle it from the Greyfriars fellows' point of view. Coker's absence might be more or less of a relief. But Potter and Greene, and Harry Wharton & Co., had no intention whatever of leaving New York if Coker was not found. Mr. Fish, apparently, was running this trip on some business principles unknown to the juniors, and it appeared he could spare a member of the party better than he could spare time.

But the Greyfriars fellows were quite resolved that no member of the party was going to be left to an unknown fate, and if Coker had not turned up by midday on the morrow, Mr. Fish, if he hit the cars, would have to hit them on his lonely own, or accompanied by only Fisher T. However, they hoped that Coker would turn up in time, so it was useless to argue the point at present.

Seeing New York, from the Fishy point of view, appeared to consist in walking along Broadway and looking round. The spending of money seemed to be discouraged by Mr. Fish—Popper & Son were agreed on that point. Still, as they were to have only one evening



Horace Coker rushed at the beak-nosed man, and before the kidnapper knew what was happening, the Greyfriars junior's left was in his eye, and his right caught the beak of a nose with a crash. There was a roar, and the bench went over backwards, and the man with it. "Oo-oo!" (See Chapter 6.)

in Manhattan, a walk on Broadway was as good as anything that could have been devised. Potter and Greene walked with Mr. Fish; the juniors with Fisher T. Certainly the Great White Way, with its endless roar of traffic, was interesting enough to the view, and the juniors hardly tired of looking up at the tremendous sky-scrapers that soared into the sky.

At every place where there were refreshments to be had, Billy Bunter proposed a closer inspection and interior exploration; but Fisher T. Fish hurried his flock on on every such occasion. No doubt his reason was that, on this tour, all expenses were to be paid by the Fishes. Certainly Bunter was not in a condition to foot any bills. He still had the threepenny-piece with which he had started the trip; but obviously, that sum would not have gone far in New York.

When they returned to the Magnificent, the Greyfriars fellows hoped to find that Coker had arrived. But inquiry at the bureau elicited the news that nothing was known of Horace.

A man with a nose like a beak was smoking a cigar and reading the "New York Times" in the lounge, and he eyed the juniors rather curiously, and presently came over to speak to Fisher T. Fish.

Fisher eyed him keenly, and nodded towards Hiram K. Fish, who was just then coming with Potter and Greene.

"There's the popper," he said.

The man with the beaky nose crossed over to Hiram K. Fish. After a few words, they stepped into the elevator together and disappeared upwards.

Fisher T. Fish gave a low whistle.

"Anything up, Fishy?" asked Harry Wharton.

"I guess so. That guy's got news of Coker."

"Oh, good!" said Harry. "I'm glad nothing's happened to him."

Fisher T. Fish grinned.

"I guess something's happened to bring that guy here to see popper," he answered. "Coker struck trouble, I reckon."

"But what—"

"I ain't wise to it yet. I guess he's spilling it to popper. But if he calculates he's going to touch popper for a continental red cent, he's got another guess coming!" declared Fisher T. Fish emphatically.

And Harry Wharton & Co. could only wonder what had happened, and what the man with the beaky nose had to say to Mr. Fish on the subject of the missing Fifth-Former.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

In Desperate Hands!

HORACE COKER sat up. An unseen hand had jerked the flour-sack from his head, and Coker stared round him with blinking eyes and a floury face.

He was in a small room, with one small window, which was covered by a wooden shutter. An unshaded kerosene lamp hung on a hook on a mildewy wall, shedding a glaring light. There was one door to the room, and in the doorway stood a man of muscular frame, with a blue-spotted scarf knotted round his bull neck. Another man sat on a bench, with a cigarette between his fingers, smiling at Coker. It was the obliging stranger who had guided him

from the Bowery to his present unknown place of sojourn.

Coker glared at him as he struggled to his feet. Coker was not frightened; he was enraged. He knew that he had been led into a trap, and that he was in bad hands. Clever as he was, he had walked into danger like the veriest greenhorn in the city. That was quite an unpleasant reflection to Coker, and it added to his anger. He clenched his fists and stared at the man with the beaky nose belligerently.

"Now what does this mean?" he demanded.

The beaky-nosed man smiled.

"Ain't you wise to it yet?" he asked.

"Speak English!" snapped Coker.

"I guess I'll put it plain." The man drew a pocket-book from under his coat, and Coker, to his amazement, recognised his own well-filled pocket-book.

"This is yours, I guess?"

"It's mine," said Coker. "Are you the rascal who picked my pocket?"

"I guess he ain't much farther away than me," agreed the stranger, with a genial nod.

Coker strode towards him, holding out his hand.

"Give it to me."

The man laughed, and put the pocket-book back into his pocket. Coker watched that proceeding with gathering fury.

"You don't want to kick up a fuss," advised the man. "Nobody wants to hurt you if you behave."

Coker breathed hard and deep.

"Give me that pocket-book. It's mine!"

"Forget it," smiled the stranger.

Coker's next proceeding rather surprised the kidnapper. Coker was in a haunt of crime, in a quarter where

the police came only in twos or threes; in an unknown building, with two enemies in sight, and the sound of others close at hand. In such circumstances, the man with the beaky nose obviously did not expect Coker to use violent methods. But he did not know Coker. Coker was incapable of fear, and he never counted odds. As the man refused to give up his property, Coker's idea was to take it from him by force, and then fight his way out of the house. It was quite an excellent idea, could Coker have carried it out.

He tried. He came at the beak-nosed man with a rush, and before the kidnapper knew what was happening Coker's left was in his eye, and his right caught the beak of a nose with a crash.

There was a roar, and the bench went over backwards, and the man with it, crashing to the floor.

"Now then!" panted Coker.

The sprawling man yelled frantically. "Get him, Purkiss, you guy! Why don't you get him?"

The man in the doorway had been taken by surprise, like the other, by Coker's sudden and unexpected outbreak. Now he rushed at Coker.

The beaky gentleman certainly would have been severely handled but for this prompt assistance. As it was, Coker went reeling over in the grasp of Purkiss, and they rolled on the floor together.

"Ow! You rotter!" panted Coker. "Help! Oh, my hat!"

He struggled furiously.

Coker was a hefty fellow, and even the muscular Bowery tough had hard work to hold him. But the beak-nosed man scrambled up and came to his help, and between them they got Coker on his back on the floor.

Coker still resisted fiercely, and he was in a breathless and wildly dishevelled state by the time they had succeeded in knotting a rope round his wrists, fastening them behind his back.

After that, even Coker had to give in.

He stood leaning against the wall, panting for breath, crimson with rage and exertion. Purkiss eyed him evilly, but at a sign from the beak-nosed man he retreated to the doorway again.

The kidnapper set up the bench, and sat on it, and for some minutes there was no sound in the room but gasping breath. But the beaky gentleman, having recovered his breath at last, lighted another cigarette. He smoked for a few minutes, eyeing Coker's crimson, enraged face through the curls of smoke.

"Now we'll get down to cases," he remarked. "I got that pocket-book off you, boy. I found three hundred dollars in it. I guess that's what you'd call sixty pounds in your money. A guy walking about with three hundred dollars in his clothes is well heeled, I guess. What?"

Coker glared at him.

"No business of yours!" he snapped.

"If you'd had twenty dollars, I reckon you'd never have seen me again," the beaky man explained. "But, seeing as you had three hundred, I reckoned you was worth something. Your folks must sure be well heeled to let a kid of your age carry three hundred dollars in his rags. What?"

He did not wait for a reply.

"What's your name?" he went on.

"Find out!"

"Give him a clip, Purkiss."

Purkiss, after his struggle with Coker, was only too pleased to give him the required clip. He strode across the room, and gave Coker a swinging smack on the side of the head that sent him

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crashing to the floor. Coker's hands being bound behind him, the fall was a most unpleasant one, and Coker roared as he struck the dirty planks.

He lay there, half-dazed, blinking dizzily at the beaky man. It was borne in upon Coker's mind that he was in the hands of desperadoes who would not stop at trifles. The brutal face of the tough, Purkiss, glared down at him, and the man was obviously ready to proceed to any brutality at a sign from his loader.

"You—you beasts!" gasped Coker faintly.

"What's your name?"

Coker considered it wise to answer the question now. It went sorely against the grain with him to give in, but Purkiss was already drawing back a heavy boot for a kick in his ribs.

"Coker," he gasped. "Horace James Coker."

"Who was you travelling with?"

"Mr. Hiram K. Fish."

"You got off the Ruritania?"

"Yes," gasped Coker.

"Where does Mr. Fish locate?"

"Locate?" repeated Coker. "If you mean where is he staying, he's at the Magnificent Hotel in Fifth Avenue."

"Relation of yours?"

"Certainly not!" snapped Coker.

"He's American; I'm English."

"I guessed that, sonny," chuckled the beaky man. "A brain like yours don't grow anywhere else, I reckon."

"Why, you cheeky rotter!" gasped Coker.

"If he ain't a relation, what are you doing with him in this here city?" asked the beaky man. "Put me wise to that."

Coker did not answer for a moment, but a movement of Purkiss' boot decided him to gratify this impertinent curiosity.

"We're on a tour," he grunted. "Mr. Fish is taking us for a tour of the United States—an educational tour."

"Oh!" said the beaky man. "Well, I guess you got plenty to learn, and you're sure learning suthin' already. You'll sure get some education on this side of the pond. Your folks are rich, I guess?"

"You seem to be jolly interested in my personal affairs!" snapped Coker. "I—I mean yes—oh, yes!"

It was just in time. Purkiss' boot was more than ready.

"How much do you figure you're worth to them?"

"Eh?"

.....
HERE'S ANOTHER FREE BADGE FOR YOUR ALBUM NEXT WEEK!



VAUXHALL.

Famous in the past for its racing and sports models, the Vauxhall firm now builds one of the finest 20 h.p. six-cylinder cars available. The famous Vauxhall griffin makes a particularly striking and handsome badge.

Coker blinked at him, not understanding. The man with the beaky nose leaned towards him.

"I mean, how much would your folks give rather than get the news that your body had been found floating in the East River?"

"Good heavens!" gasped Coker.

He was learning more and more. Coker's brain was not quick on the uptake, but he was beginning to understand now.

The colour faded a little from Coker's rugged face.

"You get me?" asked the beaky man. "I guess when I looked into your pocket-book, I reckoned you'd pan out well. If they can give you that much pocket-money, they can sure buy your dear. You reckon they'd stand for ten thousand dollars?"

"Ten thousand dollars!" gasped Coker.

"That's what I said."

"How much is that in real money?" asked Coker.

The beaky man laughed.

"Two thousand of your English pounds."

"Oh, my hat!"

"You reckon you're worth that much to your loving family?" asked the beaky man genially.

"I—I suppose so," stammered Coker. "But of course they won't pay you anything. This is all against the law."

That remark from Coker made the beaky man stare, and then burst into a loud laugh. Even Purkiss' savage face wrinkled into a grin. The precious pair seemed to find Horace Coker entertaining.

"We won't worry about the law just at present, sonny," said the beaky man, when he recovered his gravity. "The law ain't on in this deal. I guess ten thousand dollars is the figure. Now I want you to write a letter for me to take to Mr. Fish."

"What—what for?"

"To put him wise, sonny. Write as I dictate, and sign your name; and don't try any shennanigan—"

"Any what?"

"Any tricks. I guess Purkiss there is itching to knock your head off, after the trouble you've given. Don't give him a chance."

That advice seemed good to Coker. A writing block and a fountain pen were placed before him, and at the beaky man's dictation he wrote—his eyes opening wider and wider at the words that were dictated to him.

"Look here—" objected Coker.

He broke off, with Purkiss' grip on his throat. He gurgled as the tough half-throttled him.

"Groooogh! Ooooh! Oooooop!"

Purkiss, at a sign from the other, released him.

"Getting on with it?" asked the beaky man genially.

Coker got on with it.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Ransom Required!

HIRAM K. FISH dropped into a chair, and motioned his visitor into another. Mr. Fish's keen eyes scanned the man with the beak of a nose. Mr. Fish had no difficulty in "placing" that gentleman, and not the slightest doubt that his visitor was a "crook." And as the man had called in connection with the missing Fifth-Former of Greyfriars, Mr. Fish hardly needed telling that Coker, in his wanderings in the unknown city, had fallen into bad hands.

A hard, grim look was on Mr. Fish's

face. It was the look that he assumed unconsciously when an inroad on his cash was threatened. Mr. Fish was aware that the beaky gentleman was after the "goods," and Mr. Fish had no intention of parting with a single dollar or a solitary dime. Mr. Fish had undertaken to pay all the expenses of that tour in the U.S.A., but he did not figure that the expenses included ransoming a boob who butted into trouble.

He glanced at the card the stranger had given him, and read thereon the name of Ulick Burke, from which he learned nothing except that the man's name was probably not Burke, and that he had never been christened Ulick.

"Well?" rapped out Mr. Fish.

Ulick Burke, if that was his name, rubbed a bony forefinger along the bridge of his beaky nose.

"I guess I got a note for you," he explained. "It came into my hands by sheer chance, and I guessed I'd bring it along."

"Show it up!"

The beaky man drew a folded paper from his pocket. Mr. Fish read it carefully. It ran, in Coker's sprawling hand:

"Anyone who finds this note is begged to take it to Mr. H. K. Fish, who locates at the Magnificent Hotel, on Fifth Avenue. I am kept a prisoner on a barge in the Hudson River, and am throwing this note ashore, hoping that somebody will pick it up. If it reaches Mr. Fish, I beg of him to get into touch with the people who are keeping me here, and pay what is asked to get me free, and my relations will make it good."

"HORACE COKER."

Having read that epistle twice through carefully, Mr. Fish shifted his gaze to the face of the beaky man.

"Where'd you get this?" he asked.

"Jest saw it blowing about in the wind near the Hudson, and picked it up," explained Ulick. "Seeing your name on it, I reckoned I'd bring it to you."

"Where's Coker?"

"The guy who wrote that note you mean?"

"Yep. Where is he?"

"He allows that he's on a barge in the Hudson River," remarked the beaky man, with an air of surprise.

"I guess I wasn't born yesterday," said Mr. Fish. "Nor yet the day before."

"Meaning?" asked Mr. Burke.

Mr. Fish tapped the note.

"You dictated this note to Coker," he said.

"How do you get there?" inquired Ulick, with interest.

"Coker's English," said Mr. Fish briefly. "If he wrote this note of his own accord, he wouldn't use the word 'locate.' And he would say that the hotel is 'in' Fifth Avenue, not 'on' Fifth Avenue. All the English make that mistake; I guess I'm wise to their ways."

Mr. Burke nodded.

"Your eyes are sure peeled," he agreed.

"That was dictated to Coker by an American," said Mr. Fish. "I guess I needn't look a long way off for the American while you're in the room, Mr. Burke. Now, what's the game?"

The beaky gentleman smiled, not at all put out.

"Of course, personally, I know nothing about the matter," he explained.

"Of course not," agreed Mr. Fish ironically. "But come down to cases, all the same. 'Time's dollars.'"

"Knowing the Hudson River well, and so on, I guess I'd be willing to offer my services in helping to find this boy, if you liked."

"Oh, quite!" said Mr. Fish. "And how do you know the writer of this note is a boy, and not a man?"

"You sure are cute," said Mr. Burke admiringly. "But I guessed it by the fist."

A BRITISH PIONEER!

Interesting facts about the RILEY motor-car, the distinguished badge of which forms one of the wonderful FREE GIFTS in this issue!

Motor vehicles bearing the name of Riley have been built in Coventry since the very early days of the industry, and Riley "tri-cars" were leaders of their class a quarter of a century ago. It is safe to say, however, that the name of Riley never stood higher in the motor trade than it does now. The success of the 4-cylinder Riley 9 h.p. car, introduced a couple of years ago, has been phenomenal. Not only has this model an amazing turn of speed for its size, but it is equally remarkable for its smart appearance and the comfort of its standard bodywork.

The Riley Nine can hold its own with practically any sports type car of anything like similar engine-power, and it is one of the first cars to be considered by the motorist who wants a small-engined car, for economy's sake, without wishing to sacrifice power and speed.

The dinky little fabric saloon body commonly fitted to these cars is by universal consent one of the smartest bodies on the road.

In addition to the nippy 9 h.p. Riley, there is a larger six-cylinder model Riley, which is not, however, at present so commonly seen on the road.

Rileys have been seen in competition work again of recent years, and these cars performed well in the 1928 International Tourist Trophy Race held in Ireland. Those interested in speed events for sports cars will do well to watch the Rileys in 1929.

"You've never seen him, by any chance?"

"Not on your life!"

"And what do you reckon it would cost to find him, with your knowledge of the Hudson River?"

"I reckon you could put it at ten thousand dollars."

"You mean cents?"

"I mean dollars!"

Mr. Fish glanced at the telephone. "And what," he asked, "is to prevent me from ringing up the police office and handing you over as a kidnapper?"

"Nothing," answered the beaky man readily. "Nothing, except that you could never get away with it. What goods have you got on me? A paper I picked up in the street, and brought to you out of sheer good-nature? Forget it!"

Mr. Fish apparently forgot it, for he did not approach the telephone.

"There's the paper," said Mr. Burke. "If you want the police on to this, hand

it to them. They've got power to search every barge on the Hudson."

"Come off!" said Mr. Fish. "This note means that young Coker ain't inside of two miles of the Hudson."

"I should smile!" remarked the beaky man.

There was a long silence.

"I guess I brought that young jay over the pond," said Mr. Fish at last. "I guess I'm unwilling to go on to Chicago and leave him here. Put it plain. The young fool wandered into a tough part of the town, and you got him. You got what he had in his rags—a lot, I reckon. I'll make it ten dollars if the boy comes here to-night."

"I said ten thousand."

"And I said ten."

Ulick rose from his chair.

"I guess we can't do business, Mr. Fish," he said. "Time's dollars, as you said yourself; and I guess I don't care to waste time looking for that boy you've lost."

Besides, I reckon you'll have news of him soon—he may fall off the barge."

Mr. Fish's eyes narrowed as he scanned his visitor.

"You mean that if his folks don't ransom him you'll put him into the East River?" he asked.

"I've heard of such things happening in New York," remarked the beaky man. "I mean, I've seen such things reported in the newspapers. Good-evening, Mr. Fish—sorry we can't do business!"

He crossed to the door.

Mr. Fish watched him, with knitted brows. Having the man detained would serve no purpose; he was at the hotel simply as a man who had picked up a note in the street, and having found Mr. Fish's name and address on it, had brought it to him. Even if the police detained him on suspicion, that would not help Coker. Coker, obviously, was safely hidden away; and the note that had been dictated to him revealed nothing but the fact that he certainly was nowhere near the Hudson River.

"I guess I'll make it twenty-five dollars," said Mr. Fish.

"Sorry we can't do business," said the man with the beaky nose, genially. "Fact is, I don't care to get mixed up in it. I guess that kid's got into a tough gang, and they might sandbag any guy that went rubbering after the boy. I'd rather let it alone. Good-night!"

Mr. Fish shut his thin lips hard, and made no rejoinder. He was quite well aware that this was not the last he would hear from the kidnapper. The demand would be repeated later, and, in the meantime, he would be able to decide how to act. Ulick Burke was lingering; and as Mr. Fish did not speak again, he spoke himself.

"Keep an eye on the 'Found Drowned' list, and I guess you'll hear more of the boy," he said. "That's what I gather from the note I handed you. But I shouldn't wonder if they get you on the telephone some time."

"Git!" was Mr. Fish's reply.

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Ulick shrugged his shoulders and opened the door to depart.

Bump!

"Yooooop!"

"Thunder!" ejaculated the beaky man, staring in surprise at the fat figure that had sprawled into the room as the door was opened.

"Yaroooo!" roared Billy Bunter.

"What the pesky dickens—" snorted Mr. Fish.

Bunter sat up.

"Ow! I wasn't listening!" he gasped. "I—I—I was—was just—just going to—to knock at the door—"

Ulick Burke passed him and walked down the corridor to the elevator. Mr. Fish gave Bunter a scowl, and the fat junior backed out and disappeared. Then Mr. Fish turned to the telephone, called up the police, and had a brief conversation with the police captain of the district. Ten minutes later a smart-looking young man, who gave the name of Van Horn, was shown into Mr. Fish's apartment. And before they went to bed that night Harry Wharton & Co. knew that Coker of the Fifth had been kidnapped, to be held to ransom by some gang on the East Side, and that the police and a special detective were searching for him.

They also learned that the search was to be left to the police and the special detective, while the "tour" went on, the party taking the cars for Buffalo the next morning—according to Hiram K. Fish. But on that point the Greyfriars party had their own ideas, which were not at all in accordance with those of Hiram K. Fish.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Cars are Not Hit!

"BAGGAGE ready at ten-thirty!" said Fisher T. Fish briskly.

"My dear man!" remarked Lord Mauleverer.

"Coker's not here," said Harry Wharton.

"I guess I can see that with my own eyes," said Fisher T. Fish amiably. "We've no time to lose hunting round for jays who get lost. We can do without Coker. One more or less don't make a whole heap of difference."

The juniors stared at Fishy. Fisher T. Fish was thinking of the Perfection Picture Syndicate's projected film, featuring Greyfriars fellows. They wanted the round dozen of schoolboys; but as Fishy said one more or less would not make a very great difference—and Coker was by no means the most important member of the party. But the juniors did not know of what Fishy was thinking, of course, as it had not yet been confided to them that they were bound for Los Angeles and the film studios.

"If we can do without Coker," said Wharton quietly, "he can't do without us, as he seems to have got himself into danger."

"Oh, blow Coker!" said Fishy airily.

"He's been kidnapped by some rough gang."

"Oh, guff!"

"I say, you fellows, he jolly well has!" said Bunter. "And that man with the beak who came here last evening was the kidnapper, too. I heard—I mean—"

"I guess you hear too much, you fat clam," growled Fisher T. Fish. "Now, look here, you guys! We hit the cars for Buffalo at twelve. Be ready. That jay, Coker, will be O.K. The police are hunting for him. Those toughs will let him go when they find there's

nothing doing. Anyhow we can't help him. I suppose you're not thinking of running a small comb over Noo Yark from Harlem to the Battery to comb him out. We've no time to hang on after lame ducks. A galoot shouldn't lose himself—see? Now you hump yourselves to get your baggage ready on time."

"And go on and leave Coker?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Look here, Fishy—"

"My esteemed and ridiculous Fishy we—"

Fisher T. Fish gave an exasperated snort.

"Can it!" he hooted. "Don't I keep on telling you that this party ain't hanging around waiting for lame ducks. Coker ought to be on hand. If he can't make the grade he drops out—see? Now can it?"

And Fisher T. Fish stalked away in high dudgeon. Harry Wharton & Co. consulted together, with rather troubled faces.

Coker of the Fifth was generally on scrapping terms with the Remove fellows, but that made no difference now that he was in danger. That he was in danger was certain. Mr. Fish had let fall a few hints; and Bunter had related the information he had gained at Mr. Fish's keyhole. Coker had been kidnapped; and to go on and leave him to it was impossible. On the other hand, as the party were guests of Hiram K. Fish, the situation was rather a delicate one. To disregard the wishes of their host was not easy.

Potter and Greene came over to the juniors. Both of them looked worried. They had fully expected Coker to get lost when they left him the previous day; but had not, of course, expected anything more serious than that. It was a shock to them to learn that he had fallen into unknown and desperate hands.

"You kids going on?" asked Potter.

"Not till Coker's found," said Harry Wharton decidedly. "We're not leaving that ass in the lurch."

Potter nodded.

"We're staying," he said. "Coker was bound to butt into trouble—it's his nature to. But we're not leaving him to it."

"No fear," said Greene. "It's pleasant and peaceful without Coker; but there's a limit."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, dry up, Bunter!"

"But I say—"

"The shutupfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed Bunter."

"I say," persisted Billy Bunter, "suppose we go round and look for Coker? Mauly can hire a car, and we can roll round the town, and look for Coker, and see the sights at the same time. I've been reading in a book here that the Chinese restaurants on the East Side are well worth a visit."

"Is there any giddy restaurant in the wide world that you don't think worth a visit?" asked the Bounder.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Shut up, Bunter!" said Bob.

"Hallo! Hallo! Hallo! Here comes Mr. Fish! We shall have to put it to him plain, you men."

"Yes, rather," said Nugent.

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

Hiram K. Fish came briskly up to the party.

"I guess I've just seen Van Horn," he remarked. "That's a detective. He expects to get hold of Coker shortly. To-morrow, he reckons. You young fellows get your baggage ready for transit to the Erie depot."

"The fact is, Mr. Fish, we can't go on without Coker," said Harry.

Mr. Fish stared at him.

"We leave by the Erie Railroad for Buffalo at twelve," he said curtly.

"We can't go on without Coker."

"Please yourself," said Mr. Fish.

"Stay here if you want. I reckon you know that you'll be staying on in Noo Yark at your own expense. I'm paying for the party, not for stragglers."

Harry Wharton coloured.

"Leave it at that, then," he said.

"You other guys be ready to start," said Mr. Fish, looking round.

"We're all staying with Wharton," explained Johnny Bull.

"Yaas, begad!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"You see, sir, it's not the Greyfriars way to clear off and leave a man in the lurch," said the Bounder, with cool impertinence.

"Well, carry me home to die!" ejaculated Mr. Fish, in angry annoyance. "Look here, how many of you are coming on?"

There was no answer to that. Even Billy Bunter was throwing in his lot with the fellows who were staying for Coker. That, however, was not caused by concern for the missing Fifth-Former. Bunter had been reading in a guide book about the Chinese restaurants in New York.

Bunter had fed on many things, in many places, and his knowledge of food-stuffs, like Sam Weller's knowledge of London, was extensive and peculiar. But he had never yet fed in a Chinese restaurant.

Bunter was keen to sample the fare—said to be very appetising—in a restaurant in the Chinese quarter. So Bunter was glad of an excuse for hanging on a few days in New York, instead of rushing off westward in the hustling manner that Mr. Fish desired.

The kidnapping of Coker was, of course, an unfortunate occurrence, but it had its fortunate side, from Bunter's point of view.

Mr. Fish surveyed the Greyfriars fellows with knitted brows.

He had a date at Los Angeles for his party; the Perfection Studio, at Hollywood, was all ready for them.

Delay was irritating; but, obviously, it would not be of much use for Hiram K. Fish to arrive at Hollywood without his party. Only Fisher T. was prepared to go on with him, regardless of Coker. Mr. Fish was deeply annoyed.

"I guess this kinder lets me out!" he said, in disgust.

"We're sorry!" said Wharton politely. "But we couldn't think of going on an leaving Coker to it."

"You can't help him, I guess!" snapped Mr. Fish.

"Perhaps not; but we can't desert him."

"What's the hurry, anyhow?" asked the Bounder, with a keen eye on Mr. Fish. "If we're touring the United States, sir, why can't we put up for a few days in the most important city?"

Mr. Fish did not answer that question. The time had not yet come for the Greyfriars fellows to be told the true object of the journey.

"I guess I've got the trip scheduled!" he grunted. "Look here, think again, and come on. You won't help Coker by staying here."

"We can't leave him in the lurch," said Potter.

"Oh, guff!" growled Mr. Fish. "I'll tell the world, I've got a first-class detective hunting for him, and what more can we do?"

The juniors did not answer that. It



One by one the Famous Five emerged from the train, crumpled and breathless. Lord Mauleverer was the last to land. He was hooked somehow through the press by the conductor, and ejected from the train like a pip from an orange. "Oh gad!" he gasped, as he flew through space. (See Chapter 9.)

was reasonable enough, in a way, for if the police could not find Coker, there seemed little chance of the schoolboys finding him. Nevertheless, it was impossible to proceed on the journey and leave Coker to his fate. That was one of the things that couldn't be done.

"You ain't coming on?" demanded Mr. Fish gruffly.

"No. You see—"

"I guess that's enough."

The bony gentleman stalked away, evidently extremely annoyed. The Greyfriars fellows looked at one another very uncomfortably.

"We have offended the esteemed and ridiculous Fishes," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But what cannot be cured must go longest to the well, as the English proverb says."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, dry up, Bunter!"

"Shan't! I've got an idea!" hooted Bunter indignantly.

"Bow-wow!"

"I tell you—" roared Bunter.

"Well, what is it?" asked Harry Wharton. "Cut it short!"

"Well, look here," said Bunter, "Coker was wandering about in what old Fish calls China-town when he was nabbed. The Chinese restaurants are in that part of the city. My idea is this—let's go to the Chinese restaurants—they say the food is jolly good—"

"You fat idiot!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! We can make a round of the restaurants, and—perhaps pick up some news of Coker—see?" said Bunter. "Being in the same neighbourhood, we may learn something about him. Anyhow, we shall get some good feeds; and that will be so much to the good."

"For goodness' sake shut up!"

"You silly ass!" hooted Bunter. "As we're staying on in New York we're not going to miss the Chinese restaurants;

at least, I'm not. In a way, it's rather lucky that Coker's keeping us back—we want to see the really important things before we go on. Now, let's make up a party and go and feed at a—"

"Ring off!"

"At a Chinese restaurant. The food—"

"Shut up!" shrieked Nugent.

"Is good!" went on Bunter, regardless. "We shall be safe if we stick together; besides, I will look after you fellows. Now, who's coming with me to see the Chinese restaurants?"

There was no reply.

Apparently nobody was going with Bunter to see the Chinese restaurants. Important as those establishments were, nobody was interested in them with the exception of William George Bunter.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"If you say another word," hissed Johnny Bull, "I'll jolly well bang your napper on the wall, hard!"

Bunter gave an angry snort, but did not utter another word. He rolled away while the juniors discussed their proceedings for the day.

"I suppose, as a matter of fact, that we can't help Coker," said Harry Wharton. "But we can't go on and leave him. No good doing nothing, though, so let's go round and hunt for him. It won't do any harm if it doesn't do any good. Let's make a day of it!"

"Let's!" agreed Nugent.

And they did.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Day in New York!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. had a busy day in New York.

Fisher T. Fish declined to accompany them on an excursion which he regarded as "loco." He

sniffed at the idea. However, they were not very keen on Fishy's company, and did not worry.

Neither did Bunter join up. Learning that restaurants, teashops, cafes, etc., were not in the programme, Bunter saw no use in wandering round New York. In the Magnificent Hotel he was able to get all he wanted to eat, from the restaurant on the ground floor, at the expense of Mr. Fish. From a window he saw as much of New York as he wanted, and he was able to eat at the same time. Certainly he would have preferred to sample the Chinese restaurants he had been reading about. But his threepenny-piece was insufficient for that purpose. So Bunter stayed in the Magnificent, ate all he could hold, and blinked at Fifth Avenue and Broadway from a window near the sky. And the chums of the Remove were quite pleased to leave him to it.

Potter and Greene went off by themselves, taking a taxi to the quarter where they had lost Coker, and seeking to retrace their steps of the previous day, in a vague hope of picking up some clue. They had a long day of it and no luck.

Seven Remove juniors fared forth in a body—the Famous Five, Lord Mauleverer, and the Bounder. They had a long and busy day, and saw a great deal of New York, if not of Coker.

They started down-town by the Elevated Railroad; rather a mistake on their part, but, being strangers in New York, they had to learn by experience. New York, being a long and narrow city, shut in on both sides by rivers, traffic ran up and down—down in the morning for business, up in the evening for home.

The Greyfriars party, starting out early, were in time to join in the

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(Continued from page 13.)

morning rush down-town. It took their breath away. They had been in crowded London Tubes—they had known what strap-hanging was like on the Metropolitan. But they had never had any experience like unto that of the New York Elevated in the rush hours.

The cars were crammed; the platforms between the cars were crowded. Once on the train, they were jammed like sardines in a tin. Coats were crumpled and hats squashed. How anybody got on the trains, how anybody got off again, seemed quite mysterious. But people did get on and off, somehow. Accidents ought to have happened every few seconds; yet accidents were few.

The New Yorkers were accustomed to travelling in a state of crowding and discomfort such as would have been tolerated in no other city of the world. It was American hustle with a vengeance. Indeed, short as had been their time in U.S.A., the Greyfriars fellows had already learned that in that great country hustle was the important thing.

Everybody was in a hurry, everybody was getting things done; but how they did them was quite another matter.

Harry Wharton & Co. hardly knew how they got into the train. When they wanted to get out, it seemed a hopeless problem. How fellows were to fight their way off in the brief time was a mystery.

But they managed it. One by one the Famous Five emerged from the cram, crumpled and breathless. The Bounder followed them, with his collar torn and his hat squashed. Lord Mauleverer, a much more leisurely youth, was last to land. Indeed, but for the conductor, Mauly would probably have spent the rest of his natural life travelling on the Elevated, for he gave it up as hopeless after one attempt to struggle out. But the conductor was used to the work; he gripped Mauleverer, hooked him somehow through the press, and ejected him from the train like a pip from an orange.

"Oh gad!" gasped Mauleverer.

"Oh crumbs!" said Bob Cherry.

"Begad! Where's my hat!"

Nugent fielded Lord Mauleverer's hat, which was spinning away. Mauly wiped his brow, and replaced the hat on his noble head.

"The crushfulness on this esteemed railway is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Perhapsfully we had better stick to the harmless and necessary taxi, my esteemed chums."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Good training for Rugby," he remarked. "Ow! Somebody jabbed a bony elbow into my ribs. I put my elbow in somebody's eye. I don't think I had the worst of it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think we'll leave the Elevated Railroad alone after this," remarked Harry Wharton. "Anyhow, we've got here—let's get out."

And they got out, down-town.

It was a clear, fine day, bitterly cold,

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but the mist was gone, and the juniors were able to see New York in all its glory. They travelled by the street cars; they walked immense distances; they found an agreeable place for lunch, and walked again. They explored the Battery, they had a view of the celebrated Statue of Liberty; they saw many things of great interest. They walked round China Town and the Italian quarter, and the whole length of the Bowery, without getting into trouble. They walked over the whole place around where Potter and Greene had left Coker; and once, in the bustling crowds, they sighted Potter and Greene.

Their hope of picking up any clue to Coker had been faint; and as they walked about street after street, it grew fainter and reached vanishing point. Searching for a fellow lost in New York was like searching for a needle in a haystack; and Coker was not only lost, but hidden away in some obscure den. That such a quest was hopeless from the start, the juniors were well aware; they had started on it because it was better than doing nothing.

They expected no luck, and they found none. When night was falling they made their way back at last to the Magnificent Hotel, thoroughly tired out and with their heads in a buzz with the roar and whirl of the great noisy city. Mr. Fish met them when they came in, with a dry, sarcastic smile.

"Where is the guy?" he asked.

"What?" said Wharton, staring.

"Haven't you brought him along?"

"Coker? No."

Mr. Fish raised his eyebrows.

"Mean to say you ain't located him?" he ejaculated.

"No."

"Well, you sure do surprise me!" commented Mr. Fish.

Evidently the American gentleman was indulging in sarcasm.

The juniors went up in the elevator, and on the sixteenth floor they found Billy Bunter sitting under a window, looking out at the lights of Broadway and eating candy. There was a shiny and sticky look about Bunter, and he had apparently consumed a considerable quantity of candy.

"Found Coker?" asked Bunter.

"No, ass!"

"Pity I didn't come with you."

"Do you think you'd have found him, fathead?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"Well, I might have," said Bunter. "Job like that needs intelligence, you know—gumption, and all that. Naturally, you fellows wouldn't be much good."

"My esteemed idiot—"

"I say, you fellows, if Coker doesn't turn up, are we staying here long enough for letters to come on from England?" asked Bunter.

"We're staying till he turns up, anyhow," said Harry.

"Good! You see, I was expecting a postal-order when we left," explained Bunter. "If it comes on here, all right."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Fishy has refused to lend me anything," said Bunter; "and old Fish only snorted when I asked him."

"Go hon!"

"You fellows will have to see me through till I get my postal-order," said Bunter, blinking at them through his big spectacles. "As we're staying on, I want to do those Chinese restaurants. Which of you fellows is going to lend me a hundred dollars?"

"The whichfulness is terrific!"

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"You fat duffer," said Bob. "You're not going wandering round China

Town. We've got one silly ass lost already."

"I think I know my way about," said Bunter calmly. "Which of you is going to lend me fifty dollars?"

"Ask me another!"

"I hope you're not going to be mean," said Bunter. "If I'm not treated decently I may change my mind about coming on with you and take the next steamer home."

"You'll do that if we don't lend you some dollars?" asked the Bounder.

"I will!" said Bunter firmly.

"Then we jolly well won't lend you any dollars."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!"

Harry Wharton & Co. went to bed early that night. Their day in New York had tired them. In the morning Mr. Fish wanted to know whether they were ready to come on to the Erie Railroad. The answer was in the negative, and Mr. Fish seemed on the verge of an explosion. Fortunately, he did not quite explode.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Rough on Coker!

"I'LL smash 'em!"

Horace Coker made that remark, addressing space.

"I'll pulverise 'em!" hissed Coker.

Coker was seated on the bench in the dilapidated room, his hands still tied behind his back.

A night, a whole day, and another night had passed since Horace Coker had vanished from knowledge of his friends.

His first day in New York had not been a happy one. His second day was worse. His third day dawned dimly.

"I'll pulverise 'em!" said Coker. "I'll spifficate 'em!"

He was alluding to his captors.

Coker was in uncomfortable quarters. His bed was a heap of sacks on the floor, in a corner of the room. His food had been crust and water. Thrice he had seen the man Purkiss, for a few minutes each time; all the rest of the time he had been left to himself. The solitude of his imprisonment was getting on Coker's nerves.

Solitude, praised by some poets, never had appealed to Coker. He was of a gregarious nature. He was fed up with his own company. Other fellows got fed up with it often enough; now Coker himself was fed up with it.

All he was seeing of New York was the shabby room, the shuttered window, and a glimmer of daylight that came through chinks in the shutter. That was not the way in which Coker had expected to "do" Manhattan.

He had fully intended to escape from this den, but he had not been able to carry out that intention. He had expected to be found by his friends, or by the police; but he had not been found. It had dawned upon Coker at last that he was done for unless his ransom was paid. And he did not expect it to be paid. Certainly his Aunt Judith would have given her whole fortune to save her dear Horace from harm. But Aunt Judy was on the other side of the Atlantic, in blissful ignorance of her dear Horace's peril.

The ransom, if it was paid, had to come out of the pockets of Mr. Fish—that gentleman to be indemnified later by Coker's people. Mr. Fish was not likely to "part." He was not likely to believe that Coker's people would indemnify him if he did. So Coker had very little hope that the ransom would be paid. His thoughts, as the weary

hours passed, were of the most dismal description.

It was possible, of course, that when the kidnappers found that there was nothing to be gained by detaining him they would let him go. Coker hoped so.

But that hope was faint. It was at least equally possible that the disappointed rogues might carry out their threats, and that when Coker was seen again, it would be as a body floating in the East River. That was a most uncomfortable prospect.

Many fellows, in Coker's situation, would have been scared. Coker was not scared—he was angry. He was also very hungry. Coker's temper was not one of the very best at the best of times, but now it was absolutely ferocious. He longed for liberty, but still more fiercely he longed for vengeance. But for the fact that his hands were kept tied, he would have assaulted and battered the ruffian Purkiss when he came to the room.

Only twice had Coker's hands been untied, and on those occasions two other "toughs" had come with Purkiss, and remained in the doorway while Coker ate. Even the enraged Coker did not attack three Bowery toughs at once. And when Purkiss came along he was unable to attack him. As for the beaky man, whose beaky nose Coker yearned to knock through the back of his rascally head, he did not come at all. He seemed to have forgotten Coker's existence. It was useless for Coker to ques-

tion Purkiss; the man did not even answer him when he spoke.

"I'll smash 'em!" snorted Coker. "Just wait till I get a chance at them, and I'll pulverise them!"

There was a grinding of a key in a rusty lock and the door opened. Purkiss came in with a chunk of bread in one hand and a jug of water in the other. That constituted Horace Coker's breakfast on his third day in New York.

Coker glared at him.

"Can't you bring me some decent grub?" he demanded.

No answer.

"Where's that hound with the nose like a hawk?"

Silence.

"Can't you speak?" bawled Coker.

Either Purkiss couldn't, or he wouldn't. At all events, he didn't. Coker eyed him savagely.

"If I had my hands loose, I'd smash your features in!" he said.

Purkiss went to the door.

"Hold on!" roared Coker. "How am I to eat with my hands tied?"

The door closed, and the key turned in the lock. Coker's remark as to what he would do with his hands if they were loose had apparently decided Purkiss to leave them tied.

Coker gasped with rage. He tramped across to the door, and kicked it to relieve his feelings. Then he gave his attention to his frugal breakfast.

Coker always had a healthy appetite. His fare in the kidnappers' den was

making it healthier. Coker could have eaten almost anything, and a lot of it. So he managed to eat the half-loaf by the painful and awkward process of kneeling and gnawing at the moving loaf as best he could. Then he rose to his feet and tramped savagely about the room.

By this time Coker knew there was no hope of escape, and he had little hope remaining of rescue. All depended on his ransom being paid, and he did not expect Mr. Fish to pay it; he knew that parting with money was the least likely of that gentleman's possible proceedings.

The prospect before Coker was dismal in the extreme. Again and again he wondered where he was—what house this was in which he was held a prisoner. He knew that it could not be a great distance from the Bowery, but that was all he knew. From sounds he heard beyond the locked door he knew that it was frequented by a good many people at times; at other times it was silent and still, as if it had no occupant save Coker. That it was some thieves' den, used by a gang of law-breaking rogues, of whom the beaky man was the leader, was clear.

When the house was silent and seemed deserted was the time for attempting to escape—if Coker could only have got out of the room. But, with his hands tied and the door locked, that was impossible. Only that one door

(Continued on next page.)



WOODFULL—the unbowlable.

IN big cricket these are the days when the batsmen make nearly all the records. The bowlers don't break records, they merely break their own hearts. The truth of this can perhaps be best illustrated by mention of a remarkable fact: that no England or Australian bowler has ever done the hat-trick against the other country in a Test match during the last twenty-four years.

THERE are five instances of the hat-trick—three wickets with three balls in succession—having been performed in Test matches between Australia and England played in Australia. Strangely enough, four out of the five cases of hat-tricks in Test matches in Australia were witnessed on the Melbourne ground. To the credit of Hugh Trumble stand two of these

TEST MATCH HAT-TRICKS!

By "SCORER."

feats, and the other Australian who did the hat-trick in Test matches down under, was the "demon"—F. R. Spofforth.

W. BATES and Johnny Briggs are the two Englishmen who have done the hat-trick in Australia, and in view of the fact that English wickets are not supposed to be anything like so good as those down under, it is surprising to find that only once in England v. Australia games played in England, has the hat-trick been done. J. T. Hearne—the uncle of the present Jack Hearne of Middlesex—dismissed Clem Hill, Syd Gregory, and "Monty" Noble with successive deliveries at Leeds in 1899.

THE most remarkable hat-trick performance in any Test match stands to the credit of an Australian—T. J. Matthews. Playing for Australia against South Africa in the triangular tournament in England in 1912, Matthews accomplished the hat-trick in both the first and second innings of the South Africans. This is a feat beyond parallel in all Test match history. How long will it be before any bowler of either England or Australia takes three wickets with successive balls in a Test match? One would almost be inclined to answer that question with the statement that it will never be done again. The modern pitches are too good.

WHO is the Australian batsman of whom the English bowlers are most pleased to get a back view—when he is on his way back to the pavilion? There is only one possible answer to that question—William

Maldon Woodfull. Was there ever a batsman born so likely to break the heart of the bowlers? I doubt it.

DO you know that in the course of two full seasons of the highest class of cricket in Australia, Woodfull has never once been bowled out? That is a fact, however. But it can be said that, during the present series of matches, he once had his wicket hit—by Maurice Tate in the second Test match, Woodfull playing a ball to his own stumps. But just to enable him to keep up his record of never having been bowled, that particular ball, though hitting the wicket, didn't remove the bails.

THE reason why Woodfull doesn't get bowled out is that he has such a wonderful defence of his wicket. "When he sees me coming to bowl to him," said Harold Larwood, "he puts up the shutters; the bat hides the wicket." And Woodfull takes good care that the bat is not raised sufficiently to enable even the lowest ball to sneak underneath. He has been called the "worm-killer," because he scrapes his bat along the floor as he makes the stroke. To sum up, Woodfull is a great defensive player, not wonderful to watch, of course, because he never forsakes the safe for the spectacular. But a jolly valuable fellow to open an innings and tire the bowler out, believe me.

THERE are two players who have appeared in the present series of Test matches at the age of forty-six—Jack Hobbs for England, and Don Blackie for Australia. But between the two there is this vital difference. Hobbs has been considered a Test match player for years and years. Blackie was only brought into the Australian team for the third match of the present series when other and younger Australian bowlers had failed. Blackie returned the best analysis, so the idea that youth will be served doesn't always apply to cricket.

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between him and freedom—but it kept him as secure as bars of iron and gates of brass.

"I'll smash 'em!" said Coker for the hundredth time.

It was noon before the door was unlocked again, and it was almost a relief to Coker to see the beaky-nosed man.

"Oh!" he growled. "You!"

The beaky man sat on the bench. Purkiss lounged in the doorway as before. Ulick Burke lighted a cigarette.

"I guess you're fed-up with this, boy?" he remarked.

Coker gave an affirmative grunt.

"Your Mr. Fish has had your note. I've phoned him twice since," said Ulick. "He don't seem to rise to it."

"I suppose he's told the police," said Coker.

Ulick Burke laughed.

"Yep! He sure has," he answered. "There's a detective nosing after you, if that's any comfort to you. I ain't waiting much longer for the dollars! I guess I can't keep you here for ever!"

"I'm not asking to be kept here!" Coker pointed out.

Ulick did not heed.

"That guy Fish is a hard case," he said. "I figured that he would cable to your people. He ain't done it. I reckon he don't feel sure of getting the money back. He ain't the man to risk losing it. Say, do you reckon your people would see him clear if he stood the dollars?"

"Of course they would."

"I guess it would save a lot of trouble if he'd believe it. Might save your life, too!" said the beaky man.

"I suppose you can't cable to England that you've got me kidnapped and want a ransom for me?" said Coker. "I suppose you couldn't send a cable like that, even in New York, without being nabbed?"

"You're bright, ain't you?" said Ulick. "Nope! I ain't sending that cable. You want to write a letter. Put it to your people in a way that will make them put it plain to Mr. Fish and guarantee the money. If they cable him to pay, he will pay."

"You think I'm going to write to England and wait here all the time it takes for a letter to cross the Atlantic?" ejaculated Coker.

"Sure!"

"And frighten my father and mother and Aunt Judith into fits."

"The more you frighten them, the sooner they'll pay up and get you out." Coker set his teeth.

"Well, I won't!" he said. "I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll give you my word to pay the money if you let me go."

"This isn't a joke," said the beaky man. "It's cold business. No good my dictating a letter to your folks; it's got to come from you, or they won't pay up. Are you ready to write it now?"

"No!" roared Coker. "I'll see you dashed first! Catch me frightening them with a letter like that! No fear!"

"Well, if you ain't in a hurry, I ain't in a hurry," said the beaky man, rising from the bench. "Leave it till to-morrow. I'll come in and see you again then. Take your time."

"You rotter!"

"Getting hungry?" asked the beaky man.

"Yes!" snarled Coker.

"That's sure bad, because you won't have anything more to eat till you've written that letter!"

"What!" gasped Coker.

"So-long!" said the beaky man.

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And he lounged out of the room, and the grinning Purkiss locked the door.

Coker was left alone again. Coker had turned up his nose at the diet that was provided in this establishment, but the hardest crust of bread would have been welcome to him now. He was frightfully hungry; he had a feeling that he could understand now what people felt like in an open boat at sea. He kicked on the door; he shouted, and received no answer. He paced the dingy room, a good deal like a caged tiger. He was hungry, he was famished, and getting hungrier every minute. But Coker's mind was firmly made up—he was not going to write that letter to frighten his relations into "fits" with the news of his danger.

The house was very silent. The crooks who gathered there at night were apparently abroad, pursuing their peculiar avocations in the great city. At intervals, Coker kicked on the door, and shouted to Purkiss to bring him something to eat. But only the echo of his voice answered him.

Mr. Purkiss, as a matter of fact, was at a distance, refreshing himself with spirituous liquors—in spite of Prohibition. And Ulick Burke, quite easy in his rascally mind as to the ultimate outcome of the affair, had turned into a Chinese restaurant near Delancey

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER!

Those readers who missed the first two special Free Gift Numbers of the MAGNET, which contained a special coloured Album and 8 Badges, can still obtain them by applying to "Back Number Dept.," Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Bear Alley, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and enclosing 3d. in stamps to cover cost of postage for each issue required.

Street, and was lunching there contentedly—with a good appetite, if not with a good conscience.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter on His Own!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Bother!"

"If that's what you call civil—"

"Rats!"

"Beasts!" said Billy Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove blinked at the juniors, with a blink of the deepest indignation.

In the Fish party, more than one temper was a little edge-wise that morning.

Mr. Fish, anxious to get on the way to Los Angeles, and willing to strew Horace Coker carelessly by the wayside, to save time, was undoubtedly wrathful at the firm refusal of the Greyfriars fellows to "hit the cars" while Coker's fate remained unknown.

Fisher T., of course, supported his honoured parent, and had not hesitated to tell the fellows that he guessed they were guys, jays, mugwumps, boobs, and even scallywags.

But the fellows were adamant.

Knowing nothing of Mr. Fish's ulterior motives, they did not see where the hurry came in.

Potter indeed, went so far as to tell Mr. Fish that he would see him blowed first, and Greene added that he would see him hanged. Both Potter and Greene were feeling very uneasy about Coker, and not in a humour to be bothered by Mr. Fish's desire to hustle.

Tempers were growing shorter and shorter, and seemed likely, if Coker's absence was prolonged, to fail altogether. Indeed, the juniors half expected the irritated Hiram to announce that the tour was over, and to leave them to their own devices. They did not care very much if he did. That, however, Hiram K. Fish could not very well do, as he was booked to land the Greyfriars fellows on the Perfection "lot" at Hollywood. Mr. Fish bore it as patiently as he could, which, certainly, was not very patiently.

Bunter—though Bunter did not matter—was irritated, too, that morning. Bunter wasn't worried about Coker, and he was not worried about the delay. He was worried because he had not yet visited a chop-suey joint, and the other fellows, with the selfishness to which Bunter was sadly accustomed, did not seem to care a rap whether he visited a chop-suey joint or not. It was in vain that Bunter explained that at a New York chop-suey joint you got food that you did not get elsewhere, and that it was therefore, an occasion not to be missed. Nobody heeded Bunter—and the Owl of the Remove grew wrathful and wrathful.

Now, when the juniors were about to leave the Magnificent, and begin another peregrination of New York, Bunter felt that he could stand it no longer. He insisted upon being heard.

"I'm not going trotting all over New York with you chumps!" Bunter declared. "I'm going to visit Chinatown, and call in at a chop-suey joint and sample the grub."

"You can call in at Jericho, if you like," growled Bob Cherry, "and stay there for ever."

"Beast! Do listen to a chap!" said Bunter. "Coker may turn up any minute, and then we've got to leave New York. Well, if you miss this chance of dining at a Chinese restaurant, you may never get another."

"Awful!" said Bob sarcastically.

"The awfulness is terrific!"

"Coker disappearing like this, gives us the time to do it in," said Bunter. "It's really lucky, looking at it that way."

"Lucky?" repeated Bob.

"Almost providential," said Bunter. "If Coker hadn't disappeared, we should be rushing on to California now, and never have a chance of going to a New York chop-suey joint, see?"

"You howling ass!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! Now, are you coming—yes or no?"

"No! Now shut up!"

"Well, then, lend me some money!" hooted Bunter. "My postal-order hasn't come on yet. I'm stony!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"Beast!"

The juniors took their hats and coats. Bunter took Lord Mauleverer by the arm. His fat face was beseeching.

"Lend me a hundred dollars, Mauly, old chap?"

"Bow-wow!"

"Make it fifty."

"Bosh!"

"Twenty!" beseeched Bunter. "Twenty dollars, old chap, and I'll hand you my postal-order immediately it comes on from England."

Lord Mauleverer grinned.

"Come on, Mauly!" called out Bob Cherry.

"Yaas."

"Mauly, old chap—"

"Oh, begad!" said Lord Mauleverer, feeling in his pocket. Two ten-dollars bills were dropped into Bunter's fat hand, and then his lordship was released, and followed the other fellows out into Fifth Avenue.



Billy Bunter, frightened out of his fat wits as the three toughs closed in on him, made a sudden jump. Without even knowing what he did, he lowered his head and butted the first comer on the waistcoat and hurled him crashing against his confederates. "Yow-ow-wow!" gasped the injured tough. (See Chapter 12.)

"Beast!" was Bunter's parting benediction.

He was the happy possessor of twenty dollars—about four pounds. He had wanted a hundred, still, twenty was better than nothing. Twenty dollars would easily see him through a lunch at a chop-suey joint, and a taxi there and back. Prices were high in New York, but Bunter had enough to see him through for the day.

So he saw the other fellows depart—without regret—to see the sights, and to search for Horace Coker, neither of which objects appealed to Bunter. Bunter had been interested in seeing two things—the Statue of Liberty, and the slaves. He had seen the Statue of Liberty, and learned that the slaves were a thing of the past. So far as he wanted to see any more sights, those sights were confined to interior views of places where foodstuffs were sold. Such sight-seeing as that, Bunter could have carried on contentedly for the term of his natural life.

Mr. Fish had gone out—not to see the sights, certainly, and probably not to look for Coker. Perhaps he was gone to walk off his annoyance in Madison Square, or Central Park. But Fisher T. Fish was hanging about the lounge when Bunter came down.

"Say! Where are you off to?" asked Fisher T. Fish.

"Just a walk," answered Bunter.

"You'll get lost, you fat jay!"

"If I do, I won't ask you to find me!" answered Bunter disdainfully.

"Look here, you fat clam, you stay in the hotel," snapped Fisher T. Fish.

"That other silly jay has given trouble enough, without you horning in."

"Rats!" retorted Bunter.

"I guess—"

"Guess again!" said Bunter.

And he rolled out of the hotel, leaving Fisher T. Fish frowning. Billy Bunter was convinced that he knew his way about New York, or anywhere else, having complete reliance on his own perspicacity. Had Fisher T. Fish known that Bunter was in possession of cash, and was intending to expend it in the neighbourhood of the Bowery, he would have had no doubt at all that the fat Owl was heading for trouble. But he was not aware of that, and he dismissed Bunter from his mind as the Owl of the Remove rolled out on Fifth Avenue.

Billy Bunter rolled along cheerily amid jostling crowds. At the corner of Twenty-Second Street, he narrowly escaped being run down by a street car; at the corner of Twenty-First Street he nearly butted into a racing taxicab; at Twentieth Street the driver of a big limousine could have sworn that Bunter was under his wheels. But there undoubtedly was such a thing as fool's luck, for the Owl of the Remove escaped all these dangers.

But by that time he was tired of New York traffic, which resembled the famous little brook, inasmuch as it went on for ever, but in other respects was like unto a roaring river. And so, at the corner where Broadway and Nineteenth Street meet, Bunter secured a taxi, and—full of topographical knowledge, recently acquired from a guide-book—told the

chauffeur to drive to the corner of the Bowery and Bayard Street.

The chauffeur honked and hurried, in the manner of New York taxi-drivers, and Bunter was no longer in danger of walking under street cars and automobiles—only in danger of being hurled into them by his chauffeur.

During that drive Bunter did not waste time looking at his surroundings. He was thinking over what he should have for lunch at the chop-suey joint.

That matter was of far greater interest than anything that the sights of Manhattan Island could offer.

The taxi stopped at last—with a jerk that nearly pitched Bunter headlong.

He had arrived.

He alighted at the corner of the Bowery and Bayard Street, paid his taxi off, and walked.

Now he blinked about him with great interest, for he was seeking a Chinese restaurant for lunch, and that was a matter important enough to rouse all Bunter's interest.

More than one eating-place caught his eye, and at last he stopped at one which was called, on its sign, the Pagoda. That name seemed rather home-like to Bunter. There was a Pagoda teashop at Lantham, near Greyfriars. So he rolled into the Pagoda. Obviously, it was a "chop suey" establishment. Bunter could see that. That it was situated in a street which strangers in the city would have done wisely to keep away from was less obvious, and Bunter did not even think of it. He was there for food; and when

Bunter was anywhere for food lesser matters faded from his fat mind.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter in the Bowery!

BILLY BUNTER blinked round him.

He walked upstairs to the dining-room.

His surroundings pleased him. There were a number of teakwood tables, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, with cushioned seats. Chinese lanterns swung from the ceiling, and the walls were decorated in the Chinese manner. A waiter, in Chinese costume, glided up to Bunter, guided him to a table, and awaited his order with Oriental passiveness. Bunter wondered whether he spoke English or American. Certainly Bunter was not able to speak to him in Chinese. The Celestial placed a menu card before him, but the names on it rather perplexed Bunter. He had arrived at the chop-suey joint, but ordering his chop-suey was a matter of more difficulty.

"Now," murmured Bunter, "what on earth is moochar shu?"

Moochar shu might, or might not, be very nice. The Chinese waiter came to the rescue.

"I guess that's roast pork," he remarked.

Evidently the waiter spoke American.

"Good!" said Bunter, brightening.

With the assistance of the waiter, Bunter selected various items from the menu and started operations.

It was good food, he discovered, and Bunter found that he liked it. Having eaten one lunch, he started on a second. This was so nice that he began on a third. He kept his waiter quite busy. Having packed away three good lunches, one after another, Bunter discovered that there was a "chow," that consisted of shredded chicken, almonds, and chestnuts, and he ordered a goodly portion of it wherewith to wind up.

By this time Bunter had taken the edge off his appetite, and was at liberty to glance at his surroundings, while he proceeded slowly with that excellent "chow."

The place was nearly full, and Bunter blinked inquisitively at the people at the other tables.

Suddenly he gave a start that nearly made his spectacles drop off his fat little nose.

At one of the teak tables, a short distance from Bunter, sat a man with a nose like a beak.

His face was partly turned from Bunter, but the Owl of the Remove recognised him immediately.

It was the man who had called at the Magnificent to see Mr. Fish, and given the name of Ulick Burke.

Bunter gasped.

It was the kidnapper—at all events, it was the man whom Mr. Fish had called the kidnapper, as Bunter knew from his keyhole method of acquiring information.

Bunter felt his fat heart quake.

Certainly, in a restaurant full of people, the beaky gentleman could do Bunter no harm, but the sight of him was alarming. He had kidnapped Coker to hold for ransom—Bunter had no doubt about that, any more than Mr. Fish had. Suppose he spotted Bunter, and attempted to kidnap him also when he left the restaurant? Suppose he followed him and sandbagged him for his watch and chain? Suppose—William George Bunter found his fat mind running upon a whole crowd of unpleasant suppositions.

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Fortunately, the man had not seen him. At all events, he was not looking towards him.

But alarm brightened Bunter's fat wits, and he discerned that the beaky man was looking into a Chinese mirror on the wall, which undoubtedly gave a view of the table at which Bunter sat.

He quaked again.

The beast had an eye on him. If he was plotting mischief, what was Bunter going to do? He decided that the best thing he could do would be to get out of that chop-suey joint as fast as he could, pick up the first taxi he could discover, and head for home. Whatever Coker's unknown fate, Bunter had no desire to share it.

The Owl of the Remove called for his check and rolled to the desk to pay it. Before going downstairs he blinked round with great caution to ascertain whether Ulick Burke had moved. He felt a thrill of dread when he saw that the beaky man was on his feet and taking his check from the waiter.

Bunter rolled down the stairs in haste and rolled out into the street.

He looked this way and that way, like Moses of old. But there was no sign of a taxi. It was not a street into which taxicabs came, unless to bring passengers there.

Bunter tried to remember precisely where he was.

He knew that he had started from the corner of the Bowery and Bayard, and that he had turned several turnings. That was all he knew. What turnings he had taken he could not recall. He had intended to take a taxi back to Fifth Avenue. But there was no taxi available. At any moment the man with the beaky nose might emerge from the chop-suey restaurant. It was perilous to linger. Bunter started to walk.

He hoped to emerge into a broader street, where there was traffic, but that hope proved delusive. It came into Bunter's mind that he was doing over again what Horace Coker must have done—wandering by unknown paths in a questionable quarter of the city. The thought almost destroyed the glow of satisfaction he was deriving from that excellent and substantial chop-suey lunch.

"Oh dear!" murmured Bunter.

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There was one relief; when he blinked round before turning a corner there was no sign of the beaky man. Undoubtedly he had noticed Bunter in the Chinese restaurant, but apparently he had taken no further interest in him. As a matter of fact, Bunter, contrary to his own belief, did not look like a rich prize, and Mr. Ulick Burke, after scanning him, had decided that he was not a game worth the candle. Bunter would have felt annoyed, but relieved, had he been aware of that. Anyhow, the beaky man did not seem to be on his trail, and Bunter breathed more freely. He turned another corner, and almost ran into three youths who were loafing up the street. The houses in that street were dismal-looking, disreputable tenement houses, and what Bunter saw of their occupants did not reassure him. Still less was he reassured by the three young men he had met so suddenly in turning the corner.

Bunter had heard of Bowery toughs, but had not observed any closely. Now he observed three quite closely.

They looked at him, whispered together, and suddenly surrounded Bunter. That they were going to rob him—and damage him if he resisted—on the open street, where it was yet daylight, seemed incredible, only it happened to be obvious. Bunter, had he only known it, was now passing through a street where the New York policemen walked in pairs, and walked warily.

For an instant Bunter was frozen with terror.

Had he been quite sure that the three toughs only intended to rob him, he would not have stirred. But his fat mind was full of stories of sandbagging and garrotting. Excess of terror lends a fictitious courage. Bunter, frightened out of his fat wits as the three toughs closed round him, made a sudden jump. Without even knowing what he did, he butted the first-comer on a red waistcoat and hurled him spinning. He dodged and ran, and the other two toughs fell over the first as they darted after him. For some seconds the three of them were mixed on the ground, all three pouring out remarks of an extremely lurid nature. Bunter, running like a deer, vanished round the nearest corner, while the three young gentlemen of the Bowery were still sorting themselves out.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Makes a Discovery!

"**W!**" gasped Bunter. "Wow!"

He panted and gurgled.

Bunter was not much of a sprinter at the best of times. With that ample chop-suey lunch inside him, he was less disposed than ever for violent exertion.

But he felt that he was running for his life—and he ran.

Where he ran he had not the faintest idea. He heard, or thought he heard, echoing footsteps behind him. The sound spurred him on to extraordinary exertions.

But his wind petered out at last. That ample lunch was taking its revenge on Bunter now.

He came to a halt, gurgling and panting and gasping. He was in an alley, with a high board wall on one side, and a ramshackle building on the other. At either end of the alley an iron post planted in the ground barred it to wheeled traffic. Bunter, overcome with breathlessness and fatigue, stopped, and leaned against a door and panted. He

leaned heavily on the door for about a second. Then it opened under his weight, and Bunter sprawled within the building.

"Wow!" spluttered Bunter.

He lay where he had fallen, gasping, and palpitating with terror. He had no doubt that the inhabitants of that ramshackle house were of the same kidney as the three toughs who had attacked him. He lay expecting to hear footsteps heralding the arrival of a sandbagger or a garrotter.

But there was no sound of footsteps within.

Without, on the other hand, there was a distinct sound of them. Bunter could hear them in the alley, and he guessed that the pursuers were at hand. Again excess of terror supplied the place of courage. Danger within was doubtful, danger without was certain. Bunter scrambled up, grasped the door and closed it softly. He groped frantically over it for a fastening, and felt a lock and key, with the key inside. With deep thankfulness he turned the key.

Then, palpitating with fear, he leaned on the door, trying to get his breath back.

The footsteps came along the alley, and passed, much to Bunter's relief. Then his fat heart palpitated as they returned.

They stopped outside the door that Bunter had locked. The fat junior almost ceased to breathe.

With terror creeping like a cold chill through his fat limbs, Bunter heard a hand grope over the door and try the handle. Then a voice came to his ears:

"He ain't dere, Mike. Dat's Purkiss' joint."

"Where's he got, den?" asked another voice.

"Must have beat it."

"Dat's door's locked—he can't be dere," said the second voice. "Guess I'll beat up dat guy when I pipe him. Dis way."

The footsteps passed on again. The three toughs were going farther along the dim alley, hunting for Bunter.

The fat junior gasped with relief as the footsteps died away. But he did not think of opening the door and emerging. They might come back, searching the dismal alley for him. He was safer where he was, so far. No one had appeared within the building—it seemed to be deserted.

Bunter blinked round him. Outside, the daylight was fading into the early winter dusk; within, it was deep twilight. Bunter found himself in a narrow passage with mouldy, mildewed walls, and a floor of dirty, cracked bare boards. So long as no one came, Bunter decided that he had better stay there and wait till the three toughs had cleared off.

Crash, crash!

Bunter jumped almost clear of the floor.

That sudden crashing noise, breaking the silence of the dismal building, came to him like the roar of thunder, startling him almost out of his fat wits.

"Ow!" he gasped.

Crash, crash, crash!

It was the sound of someone hammering on a door. Evidently it was an

interior door, for the sound was within the building. The house was not, as it seemed, untenanted. Someone was there banging on the door of a room. Bunter listened and quaked.

Crash, crash!

The hammering ceased as suddenly as it had started.

Bunter had discovered by that time that it came from a room at some distance along the gloomy, dirty passage. In that room was the unknown person who had hammered at the door, and why he had hammered at it was a mystery to Bunter. Whoever it was, he had not emerged from the room, for which the Owl was deeply thankful.

If it was some drunken hooligan, as Bunter concluded, he seemed to have tired of banging the door. But in the silence that followed Bunter heard a sound of pacing feet, and knew that the unseen occupant of the room was walking about in it.

The fat junior trembled.

If the unseen man walked out into the passage, he could not fail to see Bunter,

that the key was in the outside of the lock. Whoever was crashing at the door was locked in the room.

Bunter breathed more freely.

Why a denizen of that dismal place should be locked in a room when all the other inhabitants were apparently out of doors he could not imagine, but it was a great relief to find that it was so.

Crash, crash! Bang!

It dawned on Bunter now that the hammering on the door was not done by a clenched hand, as he had supposed, but by a foot. The door was being savagely kicked by someone in the room.

Sure now that the door was locked, Bunter recovered his nerve a little. Whoever the unknown denizen of the room was, he could not get at Bunter through a locked door. No doubt it was the fact that the door was locked that was the cause of the excitement.

Crash, crash, crash! Then the crashing on the door ceased, and a voice, hoarse with fury, shouted:

"You rotters! You thieving rascals!

Bring me some grub! Do you hear? I'm hungry! Bring me some grub!"

Billy Bunter staggered against the opposite wall, his eyes growing big and round behind his spectacles.

For the moment he could scarcely believe his ears.

It seemed like a dream to Bunter.

He knew that voice!

It was a rather distinctive voice. At Greyfriars it had often been compared to the voice of the celebrated Bull of Bashan.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bunter faintly.

It was the lost Fifth-Former of Greyfriars who was hammering at the locked door. The voice that shouted was the voice of Horace Coker!

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter, the Rescuer!

"COKER!" Bunter gasped with amazement.

Coker!

He had found Coker!

He had been thinking of anything and anybody but Coker of the Fifth. But he had found him! That was indubitable. That voice could only belong to Horace Coker.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bunter.

Within the room now was the sound of hurried pacing. The prisoner was tramping about the room, undoubtedly hungry, and still more undoubtedly furious.

Billy Bunter blinked up and down the dismal passage. There was no one to be seen; no one to be heard but Coker. Mr. Purkiss, if Bunter had known it, had gone along the valley to a certain "dive," where, in spite of Prohibition laws, boot-leg liquor was supplied to thirsty souls.

Mr. Purkiss had intended to be gone only ten minutes or so. But the cup that cheered Mr. Purkiss had induced him to stay and be cheered by another cup, and another; and by that time Mr. Purkiss was in a maudlin state, and not

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A FAMOUS GERMAN CAR!

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Mercedes has always been a name to conjure with in motoring circles, while the firm of Benz, of Mannheim, is only slightly less famous. These two pioneer German firms have now amalgamated, and have jointly produced a new eight cylinder car which made something of a sensation at the last Olympia Motor Show in London. Rugged strength and superb workmanship is there, combined with terrific power and speed. Power and speed, rather than beauty of form, has always been a characteristic of big German cars. Of old, Mercedes built racing cars which proved time after time in the big International races that they could stand up to the gruelling stress of racing conditions better than any of their rivals. In the Grand Prix race of 1914, held in France just before the Great War, Mercedes cars came in first, second and third.

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dim as the place was. In which case, Bunter expected to be sandbagged, garrotted, or otherwise maltreated on the spot.

He turned back to the outer door, and to his dismay heard the sound of footsteps outside. Whether it was the three toughs returning, or some other rowdies, Bunter could not tell; but the footsteps decided him not to risk opening the door.

But evidently he could not stay where he was, at the imminent risk of discovery by the man in the room.

With palpitating heart, Bunter tiptoed along the passage, hoping to find another outlet.

His fat heart almost ceased to beat as he came abreast of the door on which he had heard the hammering. If the man came out now—

Crash, crash!

Bunter barely suppressed a squeak of terror as the hammering on the inner side of the room door started again.

But the door did not open; and the fat junior guessed the reason, as he saw

likely to return until his legs became a good deal steadier than they were at the moment.

Bunter crossed the passage to the door and took hold of the key. He turned it back in the lock.

The click of the key caught Coker's ear, and he stopped pacing, and turned to the door.

"Oh, you've come, you scoundrel!" bawled Coker, as the door opened. "You rascally rotter! You—you—Great pip!"

Horace Coker stared at Bunter.

The light was dim in the room; but it revealed the Owl of the Remove in the doorway. Coker stared at him stupefied.

"You!" he stuttered.

Bunter grinned.

"Little me!" he answered.

"Great Scott!"

Coker stared at Bunter, as if he could not believe his eyes; as indeed he hardly could. He had given up hope that his friends would ever find him; but had he retained a hope, certainly, he would not have pinned it to Bunter. Yet it was Bunter who had found him.

"You!" stuttered Coker. "You! Bunter! Oh, my hat! You—you—you've found me!"

"Looks like it," assented Bunter.

"A fool like you!" said Coker, in wonder.

It was not the most tactful way of putting it; but Coker always spoke as he thought. He was astonished at having been found by a fool like Bunter. So he said as much.

"Oh, really, Coker—"

"Well, if this doesn't beat it!" said Coker. "Are the other fellows with you, Bunter?"

"No," said Bunter cheerily. "I've found you, Coker. The other fellows didn't seem much use—I left them."

Coker, obviously, supposed that Bunter had come there to find him. Bunter was not the fellow to deceive him. That the blindest chance had led Billy Bunter to that spot was a detail that the Owl of the Remove considered it unnecessary to mention. He, alone of the Greyfriars party, had found Coker. Bunter was willing to leave it at that.

Indeed, in his satisfaction, Bunter almost forgot that he was not out of the wood himself. He had found Coker, but he had found him in a den in the toughest quarter of the Bowery,

and how he was going to get away Bunter did not know. But for the moment he found satisfaction in the role of a daring and resourceful rescuer.

"Well, my hat!" said the astounded Coker. "You can't be such a silly fool as you look, Bunter!"

"Is that what you call gratitude?" asked Bunter, with sarcasm.

"Don't be an ass!" said Coker. "Get this rope off my arms—my hands are tied. Buck up, before those rotters come back."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

At the reminder that the kidnappers might arrive on the scene, Bunter fell at once from the bold rescuer into the alarmed fugitive. He spun round and blinked out of the doorway into the passage.

"Buck up!" repeated Coker. "Don't stand mooning there, Bunter."

"Oh, really, Coker—"

"I'm waiting!" booted Coker.

Coker did not mean to be ungrateful. But he could not, of course, help remembering that he was a Fifth Form man, while Bunter was a Lower Fourth fag. The fact that they were in a "Bowery dive" in New York made no difference to that. Coker was always Coker, so naturally he was as "Fifth-Formy" as ever.

Bunter's anxious blink having ascertained that no enemy was nigh, he turned back into the room, and fumbled with Coker's bonds. But the knots were tightly tied. Coker grunted and growled while Bunter fumbled.

"Can't you buck up?" he snorted.

"Look here," booted Bunter, "I'm rescuing you, ain't I? Well, if you're not a bit more civil, I'll leave you where I found you—see?"

"Shut up, ass! Got a penknife?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Use it, then, idiot, and leave off fumbling with your fatheaded fingers!"

Bunter took out a penknife and opened it and began to saw at the cord which secured Coker's arms behind his back.

Coker was impatient, and did not stand still. A sudden, ferocious yell rang through the room, and Bunter jumped.

"What—"

"You're carving me!" yelled Coker.

"Oh, really, Coker—"

"You born idiot, I told you to cut the rope, not to cut my arms off!" roared Coker. "Do you think I want to be amputated, you crass ass?"

"Stand still then," suggested Bunter.

"If you keep on wriggling about, I'm bound to jab you a bit! There, I told you so!" he added, as Coker uttered another fiendish yell.

"I'll smash you!" gasped Coker.

"Eh?"

"You're doing that on purpose, you fat villain! Wait till I get my hands loose! I'll mop up the room with you!"

"Will you?" said Bunter. And he ceased to saw.

"Get on with it!" bawled Coker.

"Rats!"

"I—I won't mop up the room with you. I—I mean, get on with it, before those rascals get here. I can put up a fight as soon as I get my hands loose!"

"Shut up, then!" said Bunter.

"What?" roared Coker.

"Shut up!"

Horace Coker breathed sulphurously. But he contrived to shut up, though it was a thing he seldom did. Until his hands were free, he made no more remarks to Bunter.

The cord parted at last, and Coker was free. He gave Bunter a glare,

doubtless by way of thanks. Then he looked out of the doorway into the empty passage.

"Coast seems clear," he said. "Did you meet anybody coming here?"

"Three awful ruffians," answered Bunter. "I—I fought with them, and— and beat them off. One I knocked down, and the others ran."

"Did you see any rascally rotter in the house?"

"Only you," answered Bunter.

"What? You silly fat idiot! If you think you can cheek me because you've found me here—"

For a moment Coker looked as if he would, after all, mop up the room with Bunter. He was yearning to mop up all New York with somebody. But he changed his mind.

"Let's get out of this!" he snapped. "The sooner we're gone the better!"

Coker grasped the bench, and wrenched off one of the legs to use as a weapon, in case it should be needed. If anyone tried to stop Coker from quitting that "dive" there was likely to be serious damage done. Coker was in a frame of mind that was positively dangerous.

"Come on!" he snapped.

Bunter followed him from the room. As a bold rescuer, he was entitled to take the lead. But he was willing to leave that to Coker, in the circumstances. If they ran into the toughs, Coker was likely to prove useful with his bludgeon; and while he was keeping them busy, Bunter would be able to execute a strategic retreat.

"Which way did you get in?" demanded Coker.

Bunter pointed to the door in the alley.

"Good!"

"I—I say, those hooligans may be outside!" stammered Bunter.

"What does that matter, if you knocked down one, and the others ran?" jeered Coker. "You're not afraid of toughs you've handled like that, are you?"

"Beast!"

"Anyhow, I'm not," said Coker, and he unlocked the door, and dragged it wide open.

"Great snakes!" exclaimed a startled voice.

"You!" roared Coker.

Mr. Ulick Burke, having finished his lunch at the chop-suey joint, and smoked a few cigarettes, and taken a few drinks after it, had strolled back to Purkiss' "dive"; and arrived at a dramatic moment. As the door opened, he expected to see Purkiss. He saw Coker!

He saw him only for one moment, however.

The next, Coker's bludgeon crashed on his head, smashing in his Derby hat, and stretching him senseless on the ground. Coker put all his beef into that blow, and it was a hefty one.

"Now—" panted Coker, glaring down at the fallen kidnapper.

Ulick Burke did not stir. He lay on his back, quite motionless, his beaky nose pointing to the sky.

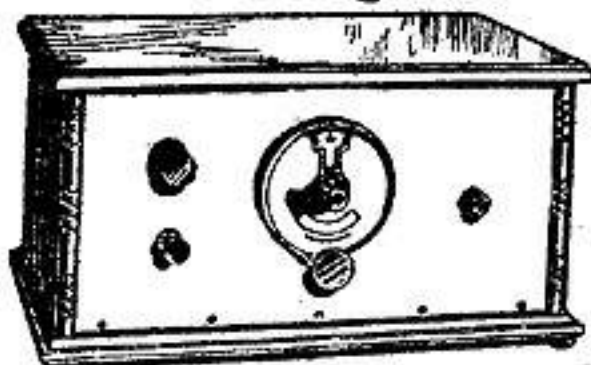
"That's for you!" panted Coker.

"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Bunter.

"Come on!"

Horace Coker strode forth, still grasping his hefty bludgeon. Bunter followed, quaking. Luckily the three toughs had given up their quest of Bunter by that time, and disappeared from the alley. Perhaps it was just as well for them, for Coker, with that bludgeon in his hand, and in his present Berserker mood, would not have been agreeable to meet. He strode down the alley, with the quaking Bunter at his

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Bunter opened the penknife, and began to saw at the cord which secured Coker's arms behind his back. Coker was impatient and did not stand still. A sudden ferocious yell rang through the room, and Bunter jumped. "What—" "You're carving me!" yelled Coker. "I told you to cut the rope; not to cut my arms off!" (See Chapter 14.)

heels; and, as he reached the corner, an unsteady man on shaky legs reeled round it. Mr. Purkiss, full of forbidden liquor, was coming home. His defiance of the Prohibition laws rendered him unable to recognise Coker; but Coker recognised him, and without stopping for argument, he gave Mr. Purkiss a terrific swipe with the bench-leg. Mr. Purkiss doubled up and collapsed on the ground, and the subsequent proceedings interested him no more.

"Come on, Bunter," said Coker.

"Oh, crumbs!" said Bunter.

Coker led the way. He was in a mood to fight his way from one end of Manhattan Island to the other. Fortunately, that was not necessary.

"Which way from here, Bunter?" he snapped.

"I—I—I—"

"You know which way you came, I suppose?" snorted Coker.

As a matter of fact, Bunter didn't! But anything was better than lingering in that unhealthy spot.

"Turn to the right!" gasped Bunter.

"Come on, then!"

Coker strode on. Ill-favoured-looking groups stared at him, but no one offered to stop him; perhaps the expression on Coker's rugged countenance was not encouraging. Bunter quaked in the rear, expecting every moment to be surrounded and assailed by hooligans, and ready to leave the fighting to Coker—who certainly was ready to have it left to him. They emerged into a

wider street, and then into another where there were shops; and then Coker caught a glimpse of an elevated railroad in the distance, and headed for it. When he came out, at last, into the crowded side-walk of the Bowery, he dropped the bludgeon into a doorway, and composed his speaking countenance to a less ferocious expression.

"Which way now, Bunter?"

"Oh! Keep straight on!" said Bunter, at a venture. They were safe now, in the midst of a swarming crowd, and Bunter was himself again.

And now fortune was tired of persecuting Horace Coker. Keeping on, as Bunter had directed, they came in sight of the Thalia Theatre; one of the Chinese theatres of New York. A taxi had landed a couple of tourists there; and Coker spotted it turning away empty, and hailed it.

"Got any money, Bunter?"

"Only ten dollars—I mean, no!"

"Give it to me."

"But I haven't—"

"If you want me to wring your fat neck—"

Bunter didn't! He handed Coker Lord Mauleverer's ten-dollar bill; the other Bunter had spent.

"Get in!" snapped Coker, as the taxi drew up to the kerb.

Bunter rolled in. Coker followed him. "Magnificent Hotel, Fifth Avenue!" he told the chauffeur.

The taxi scudded off.

"I say, I'm not standing this taxi!" hooted Bunter.

"Shut up!"

"I don't mind rescuing you!" howled Bunter indignantly. "But if you think I'm going to rescue you at my own expense, you're jolly well mistaken, see?"

"I'll give you a hundred dollars when we get to the hotel!" growled Coker.

"Oh!"

All was calm and bright.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Glory for Bunter!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. came in tired.

They had had quite an entertaining day, seeing more and more of the innumerable sights of New York.

But they had not seen anything of Coker.

More and more clearly they realised that they hadn't any chance whatever of finding Coker. The police, and Mr. Van Horn, hadn't found him. It looked as if Coker was going to remain permanently unfound.

The tired juniors got into the elevator, and the liftman shot them up to the sixteenth floor.

There they found Billy Bunter loafing

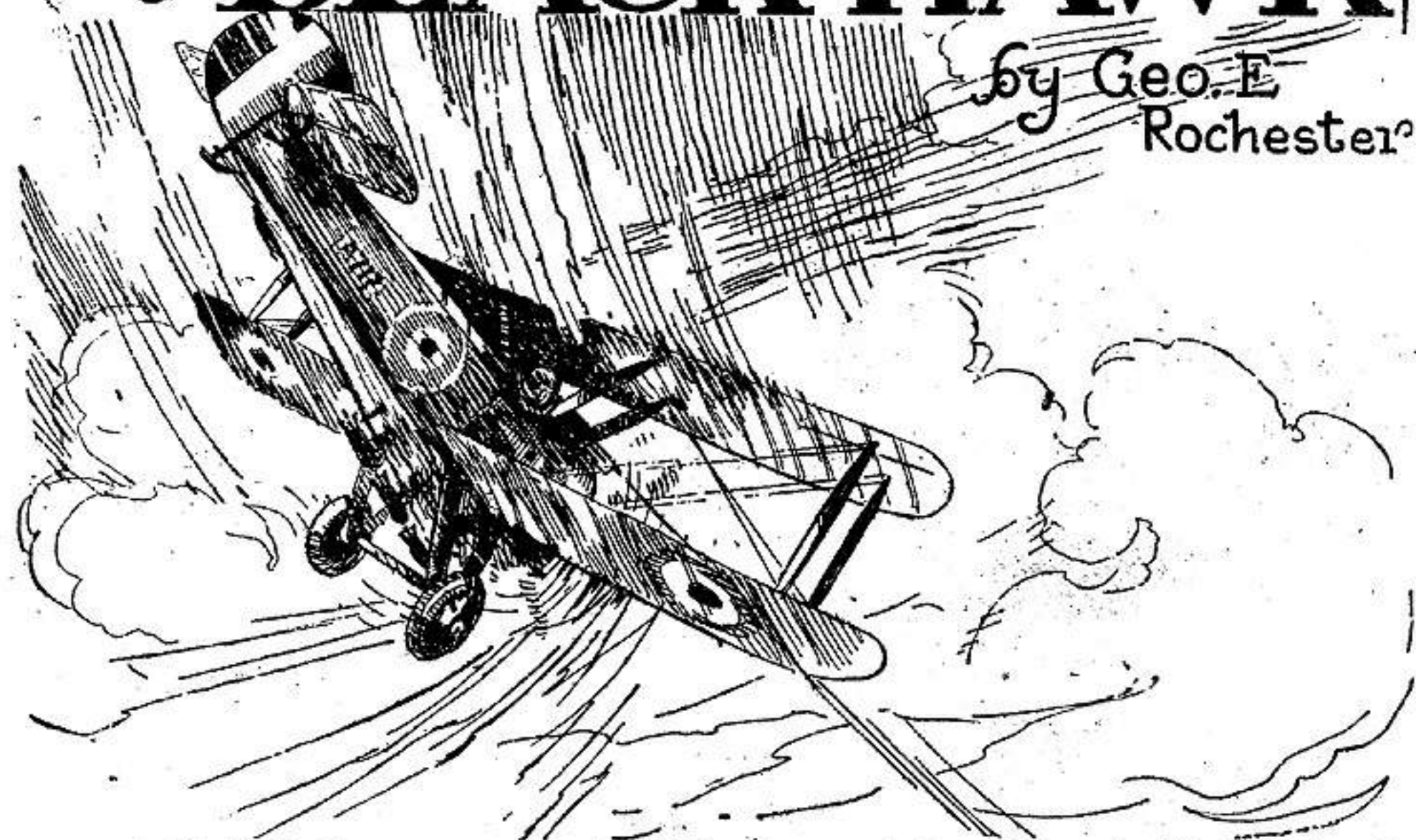
(Continued on page 28.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,094.

THE MOST POWERFUL WAR STORY EVER WRITTEN!

The BLACK HAWK!

by Geo. E.
Rochester



A Friend in Need!

"STAY!" Derek made as if to follow the peasant, and then he changed his mind. The fellow looked honest enough, but Derek could not afford to take any risks. He was thinking rapidly. It was impossible that his escape could have yet become known in a district such as this.

For a few hours he was reasonably safe, and those few hours he spent in sleep might prove invaluable to him. Another thing, it would be better if he could reach the Vosges when the first faint light of dawn might render visible some place where he could land and thus preserve his machine.

He did not fear a night landing there, but knew that at the best he would probably wreck his undercarriage. Yet to remain here would mean the taking of a grave risk.

Risk? It would be nothing to the risks which he would have to face in the near future.

"Listen to me, my friend," he said, facing the peasant. "It has been necessary for me to land here, and now that darkness has fallen I do not care to venture farther to-night. But I cannot leave my machine unguarded. Will you, therefore, go to your cottage and bring me back some food? I will sleep out here in the open and be off with the dawn!"

"Certainly, m'sieur. I will bring you food!" replied the peasant. "But you can sleep at my cottage and I will stay here by your machine!"

It was a generous offer, and it touched Derek.

"I thank you," he replied gently; "but I will not trouble you beyond the bringing of some food. Go now!"

The peasant departed, merging with the darkness. A little more than half

an hour elapsed before he returned with a pitcher of milk, a loaf of bread, and two cold cooked fowls.

"Simple fare, m'sieur," he said, "but the best I can provide."

"It will do excellently," replied Derek.

The young airman pressed all his loose silver and coppers into the peasant's unwilling hand, and, waiting until the man had gone, he drank the milk and ate sparingly of the viands. He placed what was left of the loaf and fowls in his cockpit locker, for food might be hard to come by in the unknown into which he would so very soon be heading.

Then wearily, for reaction was setting

A chance encounter with a German airman, knowledge of the enemy language, and the borrowing of a German uniform all play their part in the amazing adventures of Derek Moncrieff—once the darling of the British Air Force—now an outcast, with a price on his head!

in, Derek stretched himself out on the ground beside his machine.

For a long time sleep would not come, and he lay gazing up into the star-sprinkled sky. More than once he raised himself on his elbow, listening intently, but it was only one of those strange and indefinable night noises of the countryside, magnified by the stillness, which had disturbed him.

At length the boy fell into a fitful and troubled sleep. And thus the short hours of the night passed for Derek Moncrieff. He lay there by his machine, a hunted fugitive, a boy without a country. A few short days beforehand he had been hailed as the greatest ace of them all, had been dubbed "The Scourge of the Boche."

There was something pitifully tragic about Derek as he lay there, stirring restlessly in uneasy slumber. But the

soothing touch of Mother Earth against his flushed face, and the merciful shrouding darkness which gave him short respite from those who sought him, combined at length to lull him into a brief period of healthful sleep from which, refreshed, he awakened an hour before the dawn.

Swinging himself up to the cockpit of his super-powered scout, Derek saw by the dull illumination of the dashboard that the petrol gauge registered a tank more than half full.

The ammunition-belts for the synchronised gun carried a thousand rounds. For although the machine had last been used to take Foulkes from Ouchy to Le Courban, no machine flew in France without being armed to withstand attack by hostile aircraft.

Switching on, Derek dropped to the ground and swung the propeller. The engine picked up with a shattering roar, and, leaping for the cockpit, the boy dropped into the pilot's seat. Throttling down as the machine

began to move forward, he bumped and swayed gingerly along for about fifty yards or more. Then, kicking on full rudder to bring the tail-skid into play, Derek gave the machine a burst of the throttle which brought it surging round to face the way it had come.

Then the roar of the engine rose to a high, pulsating, thunderous rhythm, and the little scout shot forward with increasing impetus. The tail came up as Derek eased back the control-stick, and the machine took the air in a steep upward climb. It circled once, and above the thunder of the engine there sounded the staccato rattle of exploding cartridges as Derek fired a burst to test the working of the synchronised gun.

Satisfied that all was well with the machine, the boy pressed on the rudder-bar until the compass needle flickered, and was steady at, due east. Then,

relaxing in his seat, and with one sensitive hand on the control-stick, he thundered on towards the line, climbing as he went.

The Enemy Plane!

DAWN was not far distant when, at ten thousand feet, the scarlet scout passed over the lines into enemy territory.

Derek possessed neither flying-kit nor goggles, and was crouched low behind his cockpit windshield, seeking some protection from the tearing slip-stream of his whirling propeller.

But with watchful eyes he continually scanned the lightening sky. He was over enemy country now, and any moment he might fall in with some hostile aircraft out on offensive patrol in the early dawn. There was little to be seen below on the mist-swathed ground, and rapidly the trenches and immediate battle area fell behind.

On and on Derek thundered, and always the greying sky grew lighter with the coming of day. He pressed on the rudder-bar and swung a few points to southerly, where ahead the wooded slopes of the Vosges reared themselves into the morning with a strangely softened beauty.

Suddenly Derek tensed in his seat, his hand moving instinctively towards the trigger of his synchronised gun. Less than half a mile away to port, and a thousand feet below him, was a fast-flying German Stahlschuss scout.

The boy's eyes grew cold and hard with sudden anger. He had harried the Boche, had waged a merciless war against them, but he had always fought them fairly. And they had retaliated by having him dishonoured and disgraced. They had made him appear a contemptible thing—a traitor whose name must stink in the nostrils of all decent-minded men.

Yes, the Boche were at the bottom of it all, somehow. Derek was convinced of that. They were no fellow-countrymen of his whose minds had hatched that foul plot and carried it through to its almost successful conclusion.

The cold, hard look in the boy airman's eyes gave place to one of overwhelming, flaming passion. His lips drew back into something that was almost a snarl. He'd show them—show any Boche he met—whether they dare treat him so. "The Scourge of the Boche," they'd called him in France. He'd be all that now, and more. He'd show no mercy to any one of them—he who had been shown no mercy by them.

It took less than a second for these thoughts to whirl through Derek's mind, and, whipping forward the control stick, he kicked savagely on the rudder-bar. His fingers jerked open the throttle to full, and in a wild, screaming dive he tore towards the Stahlschuss scout.

Wind shrieked madly through flying wires and struts, and above the thunder of Derek's engine sounded the vicious spitting snarl of his synchronised gun.

The pilot of the Stahlschuss scout wheeled to meet him, but, seeing his danger, banked wildly and went earthwards in a thundering nose-dive.

Like a scarlet streak the little British scout hurtled down in pursuit, but the German pilot whipped back his control stick, and went up, up in a wild soaring zoom.

Derek, veteran of a hundred flights, had anticipated that move when he saw the German throw his machine into the nose-dive. His own stick came back, and, as his feet moved like lightning on the rudder-bar, the scarlet scout tore in at the German plane. His cartridge belt was whirling madly through the

chamber, and hot flame licked back from the belching, lurid muzzle of his gun.

The German pilot's gun was useless for the moment, for the nose of his machine was pointing into the sky as he went up in that soaring zoom.

He had not yet fired a single shot. Nor did he. For suddenly, with a moan, he crumpled up in his seat, his nerveless hand dropping from the control stick. The machine came out of the zoom in a tail slide, then, as the control stick jerked forward of its own volition, the Stahlschuss scout went spinning earthwards, its pilot a limp and huddled heap over the controls.

Grim-faced, Derek dove down in the wake of the German machine. At fifteen hundred feet from the ground he saw the German pilot stretch out groping hands and haul himself back off the controls. Derek's hand moved again to the trigger of his synchronised gun, but he allowed it to fall away, for it was obvious that the German pilot was badly wounded, and had no intention of carrying on the fight.

At eight hundred feet the Stahlschuss scout came out of its spin. The pilot was lolling drunkenly in his seat, fighting desperately to keep his machine from falling away into another spin which must, of necessity, finish in a crash.

Derek flattened out and swung his machine towards the Vosges. As far as he was concerned, the fight was over. In spite of the wrong the Boche had done him, he was not going to fire on one of their wounded.

He glanced down. The Stahlschuss scout was banking in wobbly manner, with nose down for a landing.

The fight had taken place above one of those desolate stretches of moorland which lie between the Vosges and the more fertile land to the north. Three kilometres or more towards the east smoke was rising on the still morning air from the chimney of some small farmstead. And that, as far as Derek could see, was the nearest habitation.

The boy's foot moved on the rudder-bar, and he circled.

The Stahlschuss scout had landed, but the pilot was making no effort to leave the cockpit.

"He can rot, for all I care!" said Derek savagely; but as though to belie his words, he circled lower and lower.

The German pilot was leaning back in his seat, sagging heavily against the cockpit side. For though he might be, he was in sore need of human aid.

"Oh, confound it!" muttered Derek. "I can't leave him like that!"

Pushing forward the control stick, Derek dropped the nose of his scout for a landing.

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! There is a grim reception awaiting Derek on his return to the base of the 108 Air Squadron at Ouchy after a lone offensive patrol in enemy territory. He is accused by Colonel Scaife, from Wing Headquarters, of sending priceless information to the enemy. The evidence in this dastardly plot against the young pilot is so black that Derek is court-martialled and sentenced to be shot at dawn. The night before, however, Derek makes a desperate bid for liberty, and succeeds in escaping in his machine, the Scarlet Scout. He makes a landing on a flat tract of country, with no plan of action but that of somehow smashing the plot against him, and encounters a French peasant, who offers him assistance. "Lead on," says Derek, "and no tricks, if you value your life!"

(Now read on.)

Herr Hauptmann Von Arn!

DEREK made a fairly good landing on the rough, uneven ground, and gave his machine a burst of the throttle which took it surging in towards the Stahlschuss scout.

Leaving his propeller ticking over, he dropped to the ground, and crossing to the enemy machine, swung himself up to the cockpit. Shipping his arm round the wounded pilot's leather-clad shoulders, he gently raised him in his seat and threw off flying helmet and goggles, disclosing a pallid, but finely-featured face.

The man's eyes flickered open, and he stared at the boy half comprehendingly.

"Who—who are you?" he whispered. "Never mind about that just now," replied Derek. "See; let me hold you up and I will dress your wound."

Derek spoke in German, for he was an excellent linguist. Weakly, the other shook his head.

"I thank you," he whispered haltingly; "but I am dying!"

His gaze moved from the boy's face to the khaki uniform with its oil-bespattered pilot's wings and row of medal ribbons. It seemed then that understanding came to him, for he struggled to sit erect.

"You?" he gasped hoarsely. "You who shot me down?"

"Keep quiet, man," said Derek, "and I'll see what I can do for you!"

Again the German pilot shook his head, his eyes fixed on Derek with an almost fierce intensity.

"You can do nothing for me!" he said in a voice which was momentarily stronger. "But I thank you for this. You are Moncrieff?"

Derek started.

"I am," he replied. "But how do you know?"

"I know—by the colour of your machine."

Derek had forgotten that for the moment. The Germans knew it was Moncrieff who flew the scarlet scout.

"I knew it was you—when I met you in the air!" the halting voice of the German pilot was very weak now. I salute you for your courage—and your chivalry."

He made a gallant attempt to raise a gloved hand, but suddenly quivered and fell limply back on the arm around his shoulders.

Gently Derek lowered the dead pilot back into his seat. He stood a moment with bent head, commending this gallant soul to its Maker. Then, drawing off the leather flying-gloves, he examined the diamond-shaped identity disc on the right wrist. Engraved on it was the name:

"Hauptmann Adolf Von Arn."

Impelled, not by curiosity, but by some half-formed thought in his mind, Derek unbuttoned the leather flying-coat, disclosing the high-necked, tight-fitting grey uniform beneath. Protruding from an inner pocket of the flying-coat was a long, flat envelope.

Drawing it out, Derek turned it over in his hand. It was an official envelope, heavily sealed with the impress of the German eagle, and addressed:

"Leutnant Zweig,
Abergau."

Dropping to the ground, Derek returned to his machine. Amongst the tools, in the tool-box below the cockpit seat, was an old penknife, and, armed

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with this, he split open four Verey-light cartridges which he took from their rack.

Making a heap of the compressed magnesium, he ignited it, and, drawing on one of Von Arn's flying-gloves, thrust the penknife blade into the flame.

When the blade was sufficiently heated, he carefully eased it under the seal on the envelope, then raised the ungummed flap to which the unbroken seal was still attached. With eager fingers, he withdrew from the envelope a thin, folded sheet of grey paper.

It bore the official heading of the German Army in the Field, and below the word "URGENT" was the following: "To Leutnant Zweig,

"Gotha Commander, Abergau.

"You will, without delay, vacate your hangar and will fly your machine to Mannheim Aerodrome, where you will await further instructions. Your flying height will not exceed one thousand feet during this flight in order that the risk of attack by enemy aircraft may be reduced to a minimum. Your crew will accompany you in the machine, and you will instruct your mechanics to proceed to Ulm by rail transport. (Signed)

"EBERHARD VON ERGSTROM."

For a moment Derek stood gazing at the dispatch; then in a flash came the great idea—the solving of his problem as to where to go and what to do.

Thrusting the paper back into its envelope, Derek quickly re-sealed the packet.

Then, turning towards the Stahlschuss scout, the young airman murmured:

"Von Arn, it's imperative that for a little while I borrow your identity and your uniform; but I will not disgrace the name you have borne."

Ten minutes later, clad in the flying

kit and the grey, high-necked uniform of Von Arn, Derek took the air in the Stahlschuss scout. Below him, on the ground the gallant little scarlet Sopwith scout which had carried him through many a hard-fought fight, was burning furiously. And some distance away from the blazing mass lay the body of Von Arn, clothed in the khaki uniform of Derek Moncrieff.

With one last look at his burning machine on the ground below, Derek pressed with his foot on the rudder-bar and swung the Stahlschuss scout towards the little village of Abergau which, by means of his map, he had discovered nestled at the foot of the Vosges.

Leutnant Zweig!

L EUTNANT GOTTLIEB ZWEIG, squat, coarse, unshaven, and unpleasant-looking, was in a foul temper. And for why? Because he had arisen from the dirty straw palliase and pile of filthy blankets which he was pleased to call his bed, only to find that whilst he had slept some thrice-cursed pig-dog had stolen his shirt.

"Can I not," he roared, stamping furiously with bare feet about the earthen floor of the dimly illumined hangar, "leave the shirt of me off without some pig-dog putting it on?"

Unteroffizier Umgenstalt, leaning against the lower tail-plane of the mighty black Gotha bombing machine, straightened up.

"Is it permitted," he inquired, "to ask how many shirts you possess?"

His superior officer wheeled, to favour him with a glare, and bellowed:

"How many—you ask how many? Then know that two shirts I have. One has been taken to be washed by that aged woman in the village, and the other has been stolen by some pig-dog who—"

"But are you not wearing the shirt you think you have lost?" protested the youthful Umgenstalt.

"No, you fool, I'm not!" roared Leutnant Zweig. "I'm— Huh!"

The concluding exclamation came rather weakly. For, happening to glance down at his attire, Leutnant Zweig had discovered that, extraordinary as it may seem, he was indeed wearing the missing shirt.

"Did—did I go to bed in this?" he demanded.

He seemed to suggest that someone had draped him in it whilst he slept.

"I'm afraid you must have done!" remarked the unteroffizier.

"Perhaps I did," said Zweig in more mollified tones, looking round for his trousers. "I had a little refreshment before I turned in after the raid, and it made me very tired."

As a matter of fact, it had got into his head.

"That raid last night was good!" he grunted, struggling into a pair of dirty, field-grey slacks. "Ten 120-lb. bombs on that concentration camp behind Soissons. I wonder what the cursed Englishers have got to say about that, hein?"

"I am a good pilot, and you will learn a lot if you watch me," he went on, as he donned his tunic and proceeded to fill a big-bowled pipe. "Sometimes I think I must not be so good."

"Indeed?"

Zweig winked.

"I know what I know!" he leered; and, taking a box of matches from his pocket, walked out of the hangar and seated himself on the lopped trunk of a felled tree.

With pipe well aglow, Zweig sat puffing and thinking. It was a glorious morning, giving promise of a perfect day to follow. Perfect for him, of

(Continued on the next page.)

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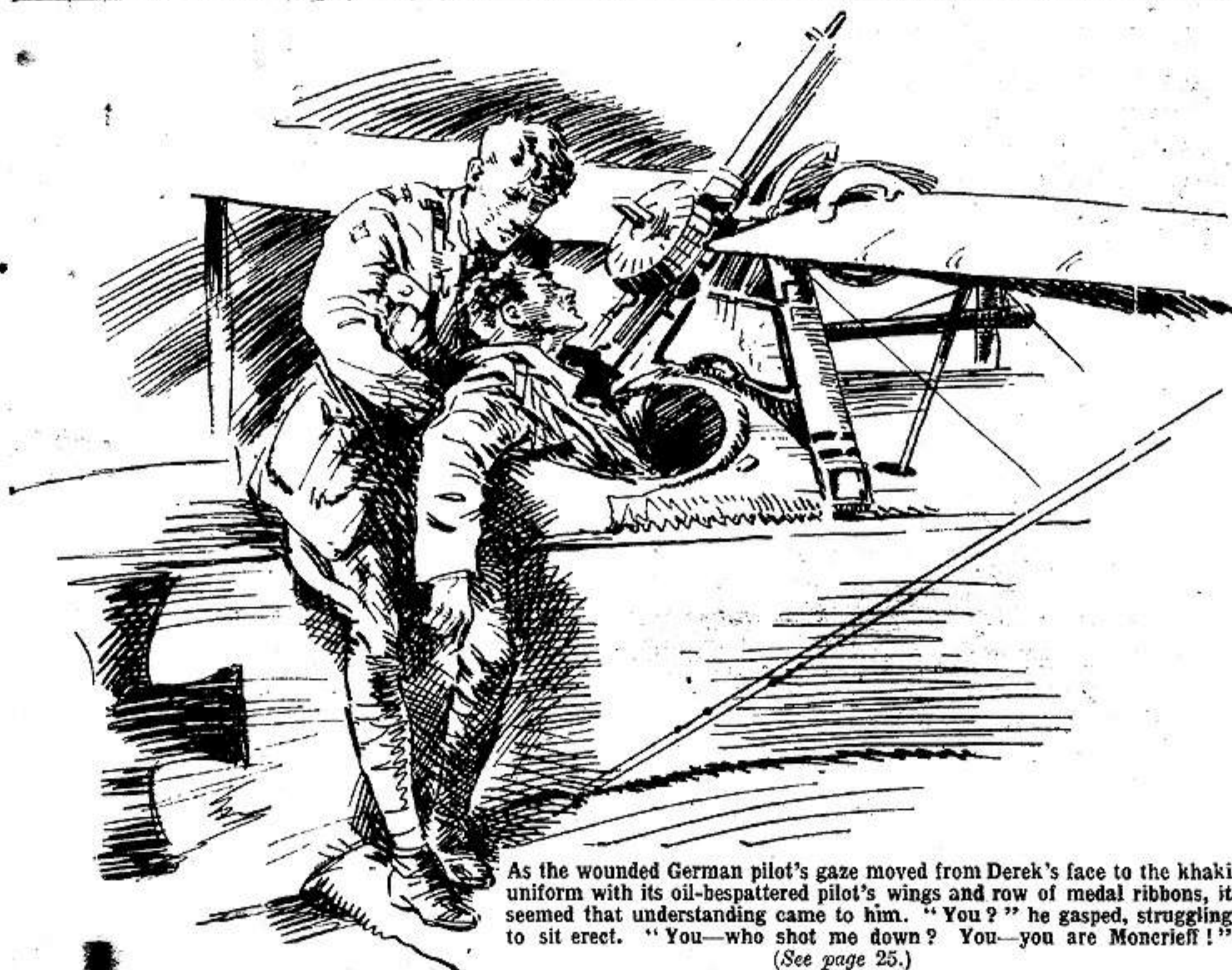
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As the wounded German pilot's gaze moved from Derek's face to the khaki uniform with its oil-bespattered pilot's wings and row of medal ribbons, it seemed that understanding came to him. "You?" he gasped, struggling to sit erect. "You—who shot me down? You—you are Moncrieff!"

(See page 25.)

course. It would not be so perfect for the miserable cannon-fodder in the trenches. No, nor for the fighting squadrons and bombing squadrons who did their work by day.

But as for him? Well, after he'd had a smoke and some breakfast and, maybe, a walk to the village to see the old woman about his other shirt which was at the wash, he'd go back to bed again. Yes, that would be pleasant—very pleasant. He liked his bed. He could, of course, live at the old house which stood behind the hangar if he wanted to.

But he didn't want to. He preferred to stay at the hangar. He could lie on his bed there and watch the pig-dogs of mechanics do their work. And if they didn't do it properly he could lie and swear at them. Zweig couldn't do that if he lived up at the old house. No, he was quite right. It was better to have his bed in the hangar.

The distant drone of a powerful aero engine, growing rapidly in volume, cut in on his thoughts. Removing his pipe from his mouth, Zweig shaded his eyes with his hand against the glare of the early morning sun. A Stahlschuss scout was already circling low over Abergau village, a kilometre away. And, as Zweig watched, the noise of its engine died away and its nose went down for a landing.

"I wonder," soliloquised Zweig, "if that is some officious pig from headquarters!"

"It is," growled Zweig, some twenty minutes later, scowlingly surveying two figures which were advancing towards him along the pathway which led from the village.

One figure was clad in high-necked, grey uniform, and black field-boots. It

was Derek Moncrieff. His companion, who was acting as his guide to the hangar, was the innkeeper of Abergau—a fat, wheezing individual garbed in a pair of dirty trousers, red knitted waistcoat, and shapeless, black felt hat, who kept a pace ahead of Derek.

"Along here it lies," he remarked at intervals. "Jawohl, I know it well!"

As he watched their advent, Lieutenant Zweig debated with himself as to whether he should retire to the hangar and smarten himself up. He decided he wouldn't. He wasn't on duty at the moment, anyhow. Huh! Couldn't an officer and a gentleman, like himself, sit at ease in deshabille if he wanted to?

So Zweig stayed where he was, sitting sucking noisily and stolidly at his pipe.

The path which Derek was following wound along the foot of a hill, the slopes of which were dense with thick shrubs and bushes. The other side of the path was flanked by a long stretch of flat pasture land.

There was no sign at all of the hangar. The only indication that the hill might house anything out of the ordinary was a pair of wide-gauged steel rails which, appearing to issue from out of the hill-side itself, crossed the path and terminated on the flat pasture land.

It was beside this light railway that Zweig was seated on the felled tree-trunk. He knocked out his pipe and rose to his feet as Derek strode up to him. He even managed a desultory sort of salute.

"Leutnant Zweig?" inquired Derek sharply.

"I am the Leutnant Zweig, Herr Hauptmann!" replied Zweig gruffly.

A mere boy, this—and a captain, at that. Huh! Things must indeed be

going badly with the Fatherland when such young ones could attain the rank of captain.

"You?"

There was cold contempt in the boy's tone as he took slow, calculating stock of Zweig's uncleaned boots, unbuttoned tunic, and dirty, unshaven face. Zweig flushed dully.

"I have but arisen from my bed," he grumbled, "and I tell you, Herr Hauptmann. I have not had time to complete the toilet. Not till after three of the clock this morning did I get back from a good raid on the concentration camp behind Soissons. Nein! Ten 120-lbs. bombs I dropped, and every one of them—"

"Fell on its objective!" cut in Derek sharply. "I know. You all say the same—always! It is only when our observers return with aerial photographs that we are able to inform you that you have—miscalculated!"

The sneer in the last word brought angry, protesting gesture from Zweig, and a snigger from the fat innkeeper who lingered within earshot.

Derek wheeled on the latter individual. "Get out of this, you great lout!" he rapped harshly, and, turning, the innkeeper waddled hastily away.

"As for you," went on Derek, turning again to Zweig, "I shall report your gross slovenliness in the proper quarter. Here are orders, for your immediate attention!"

(Will Derek carry through his imposture now that he is face to face with a real German officer, or will he be bowled out? Mind you read the continuation of this fine story in next Saturday's Bumper Free Gift Number, boys.)

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HARRY WHARTON & CO. IN NEW YORK!

(Continued from page 25.)

with a contented grin on his fat face. Bunter looked at them and grinned more widely.

"Had a nice day?" he chuckled. "The niceness has not been terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter," said Hurree Janiset Ram Singh. "We have not seen anything of the ridiculous Coker."

"Well, what did you expect?" argued Bunter. "You fellows haven't the gumption, you know. Lucky for Coker I was here."

"Have you found him?" asked Bob Cherry, with deep sarcasm.

"Yes."

"WHAT?"

The Famous Five stared at Bunter. The Bounder glared at him. Lord Mauleverer gazed at him.

"You've found him?" roared Bob Cherry.

Bunter nodded carelessly.

"Oh, yes! I had a stroll round the Bowery and nosed him out, you know. Had a bit of a scrap with some Bowery toughs, but I got the upper hand. I brought Coker home all right."

"You fat idiot!" said Harry Wharton. "What the thump do you mean by spinning that yarn?"

"The yarnfulness is terrific."

Bunter curled his fat lip.

"There's his room," he said. "Seeing as believing, I suppose. Go and look at him, and then you may believe me."

"You gumptioning ass—"

"Coker!" shouted Bunter.

"Shut up!" came a well-known voice from behind a closed door.

The juniors jumped.

"Coker!" gasped Nugent.

"Coker!" roared Lord Mauleverer dazedly.

Bob Cherry rushed to the door and hurled it open. Coker was there—relating his perilous adventures to Potter and Greene. He stared angrily at the Removites.

"What the thump do you mean by bursting into my room like this?" he demanded. "Haven't I told you that I don't want any of your Remove manners on this trip? Do you think you're still in the Remove passage at Greyfriars?"

"You've got back!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Yes, you young ass. Shut the door!"

"How did you get here?" shouted Johnny Bull.

"Taxi! Get out!"

"Where have you been?"

"Oh, run away and play!" said Coker. "I've said before, and I say again, that I will not have a mob of fags checking me—"

"Did Bunter find you?" demanded Harry Wharton.

"Yes, he did. Now get out!"

"Well, my hat!"

The juniors got out, in a state of almost dazed astonishment. Billy Bunter blinked at them with a superior smile.

"I say, you fellows—"

"How did you find Coker?" gasped Vernon-Smith.

"Looked for him," explained Bunter. "You see, I spotted that beaky beast in the Bowery, and—and that put me on the scent. One thing led to another, you know, and I got into the place where Coker was locked in a room, with his hands tied. I let him loose, guided him away, found a taxi, and—and here we are! Quite simple to a fellow with gumption!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"It beats me!" said the Bounder blankly. "Bunter's lying, of course, and—"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"But he really seems to have found Coker; for Coker's here, and he says so—Must have been pure chance."

"Must have been," agreed Bob.

"But—"

Bunter sneered.

"That's what I expect from you fellows," he remarked bitterly. "You search for Coker for two whole days without finding him; I just take the job on and get it done. Then you can't give a chap the credit! I must say I rather despise you."

"But how—"

exclaimed Wharton.

"Coker's here," said Bunter.

"I rescued him—after knocking out a gang of Bowery toughs. That's all."

Bunter did not intend to give details. The details might have detracted a little from the glory of the rescue. Anyhow, it was certain that Coker had

been found, and that Bunter had found him. Whether it was by some extraordinary chance or not, there was no doubt that Bunter had done the trick. Coker was there!

The elevator came up again, and Mr. Fish and Fisher stepped out of it. Both of them looked rather sourly at the juniors. The delay in New York was irritating more and more both popper and son.

"You guys found that jay Coker, yet?" jeered Fisher T. Fish.

"Now, look here," said Mr. Fish, "we hit the cars to-morrow! You hear me? Coker or no Coker, we hit the Erie Railroad to-morrow!"

"Good evening, Mr. Fish!" said Coker, looking out of his room.

Hiram K. Fish almost fell down.

"You! Great snakes! Coker! Search me! Then the police found you?"

"No."

"Van Horn found you—"

"Never heard of him."

"Then who the John James Brown did find you?"

"Bunter."

"Bunter?" said Mr. Fish faintly.

"Yes."

"Carry me home to die!" said Mr. Fish.

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

"Bunter! That sure is the elephant's hind leg! It sure is!"

Mr. Fish quickly recovered.

"Waal, you're found," he said.

These young jays insisted on stopping on in New York to look for you—

"Silly young asses!" said Coker.

"Now you're found we'll sure hit the railroad before you lose yourself again," said Mr. Fish. "You hear me talk? This here party hits the cars at nine-thirty in the morning."

And they did—and it was a cheery party that rolled westward on the Erie Railroad and bade farewell to the city of skyscrapers.

THE END.

(Whatever you do, chums, don't miss: "GREYFRIARS' CHUMS" IN CHICAGO!" the next yarn in this magnificent series which will appear in next week's MAGNET, together with another set of FREE Motor-car Badges.)

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CLEVERCOVE'S TRIUMPH!

by Dicky Nugent.



The odds are about ten to one on in dough-nuts that Clarence Clevercove gets the bullet from St. Sam's. But even "certainties" sometimes come unstuck, as clever Clarence proves!

"A garish mistake!" declared Clevercove. "Who japed the guv'nors? I can't imagine. But I'll swear I ain't gilty."

In his emotion, Clevercove was even forgetting his grammar. He should, of course, have said "I never done it."

From the other side of the door came a low whistle of surprise.

"Few! I didn't know you denied nollidge of the jape, Clevercove. But if you didn't fix up those batteries, who the dickens did?"

"Goodness knows. Some bass scoundrels, I'll wager a tenor. Whoever they are, the fact remains that I've got to face the music."

There was the sound of a hurried movement out in the passage.

"Can't stop now! Perfect coming!" whispered Jack Jolly through the key-hole.

Clevercove heard the soft footprints of the captain of the Fourth patterning away in the distance, while a heavier tread became audible from the opposite direction, finally stopping outside the door of the punishment-room.

A key grated in the lock, and the door swung open to reveal Burleigh of the Sixth, the captain of St. Sam's, bearing a tray containing Clevercove's meager breakfast.

"Hallo, young shaver!" cried Burleigh gruffly. "Ready to take your grool in an hour's time?"

The inventor of the Fourth drew his head up hastily, and his eyes flashed.

"No, I'm jolly well not! I am innocent of the charges laid against me—as two as I'm standing here," he said proudly, as he sat down to begin his frogal meal.

Burleigh started grimly. "I fancy the Head will take a lot of convincing on that point," he murmured. "If you take my tip, you'll grin and bear it without kicking up a fuss, or you'll cop it with a vengeance. The Head may be a bit light-headed at times, but he's by no means light-handed when it comes to wielding the merry old birch!"

Chuckling at his grim jest, Burleigh strode out of the punishment-room again, leaving Clevercove to think things over as he masticated his bread-and-scraps.

"Of course!" "Why didn't I think of them before?" cried Jack Jolly. "We know they've been looking for a chance of doing Clevercove an ill-service ever since he was put in their study. I vote we go and see em now."

Without further delay the Co. went along to the study which the boobies of the Fourth had shared with the unhappy Clevercove.

Biffer and Ruff were at home, and they skulked unpleasantly as Jack Jolly & Co. entered.

"If you're looking for your prehnus pal, Clevercove, you'll find him up in the punishment-room," snored Biffer.

Jack Jolly flung him a scornful glance. "If I have any cheek from you, Biffer, I'll give you a smack on the cheek, ear in double-quick time!" he said steadily.

Biffer immediately covered back like the coward he was at heart.

"What we've come for, as a matter of fact," resumed the captain of the Fourth, "is to find out what you know about yesterday's jape on the guv'nors. To put it plainly, we suspect that you two rotters are the real culprits."

Biffer and Ruff exchanged sly winks then sniggered.

"I don't suppose the Head will trubble much about what you suspect," grinned Ruff. "It's proof that counts, and if you find any proof of our gift, you'll be lucky. What do you say, Biffer?"

"Oh, rather!" chuckled Biffer. "Let 'em get on with it, Ruff. I'm going in to brekker now. Coming?"

Biffer and Ruff edged out of the study and buzzed off, leaving Jack Jolly & Co. staring after them.

"They're gilty, right enough," said Jack Jolly. "But they're quite right about the proof. It seems impossible to prove anything."

"Is it? That remains to be seen," snapped Jack Jolly. "Perhaps you chaps had better trot off to brekker now. I'm going to stay here—to see if I can find proof!"



and the eggsted clattering of hundreds of boys. The hour had come at last—the hour that sounded the death knell of Clevercove's brief career at St. Sam's. A few words from the Head to commemorate the unneak occasion, and then the inventor would be hoisted on to Fossil's shoulders, flogged black and blue, and finally slung out on his neck from the school which in a few days he had grown to love.

Clevercove looked a lonely figure standing in the center of the platform, surrounded by shouting masters. But his misfortunes had not broken his proud spirit, and though he drooped listlessly, he still held his head erect, and his eyes flashed with unconquerable courage.

"Boys!" boomed out the Head's voice. "Some of you may be wondering what is the reason for the summoning of general assembly to-day. In order to rid your minds of one of any false conclusions, I may as well tell you, to begin with, that you haven't been called here for a feed."

There was a chuckle from the juniors, which Dr. Birchmell immediately suppressed with a savage jesture.

"I may add," he continued, "that if you imagine that I am about to entertain you with an egglification of conjuring, juggling, ventriloquism, or sife-of-hand trix, you're equally far from the truth. I don't propose to do anything of the kind."

There was another chuckle and another fierce jesture.

"No," thundered Dr. Birchmell, thumping on his desk, "the reason I have called the skool together, boys, is that I want you to witness the degradation of a person whose behavior has been so bad that his presence at St. Sam's can no longer be tolerated. There is no need for me to mention his name, boys. You know it all ready."

"Yes, rather!" cooressed the skool, innocent-ly. "Dr. Birchmell!"

The Head jumped. "How dare you!" he roared, turning red with rage. "You're right off the wickedest of the wicked as a matter of fact, for the person in question is a junior belonging to the Fourth Form."

His name is Clevercove Clevercove."

"Oh!"

"This foolhardy youth has had the temerity to play a practical joke on the guv'nors; pardon the vulgar phrase—I should, of course, say he has had the awful nerve to jape the old covvys who run this here skool."

"For such a classically deed there can be only one punishment," said the Head

with a jeer. "He must be walloped without mercy, then, socked from St. Sam's."

The skool glammed sympathetically at Clevercove, who, beyond weeping bitterly and going deadly white, betrayed no signs of being affected by the Head's words.

"I won't detain you any longer, boys, with olivwags," finished up the Head. "Instead of that I will now get on with the giddy wessling."

Dr. Birchmell took a firm grip on his birch-rod and swished the air.

Before the egglification could commence, however, there came a dramatic interruption from the rear of the Hall. The door suddenly burst open, and Jack Jolly of the Fourth rushed in, his face flushed with eggstement.

"Stop!" he cried. "You've got the wrong man!"

"What?" yelled the Head, pawing with his hand aloft.

"Clevercove is innocent!" said the captain of the Fourth, advancing to the front of the Hall.

"Impossible!"

"But I've got proof!" said Jack Jolly triumphantly, and with that he held up a strange-looking box which had a kind of loud-speaker fixed to the top of it.

Clevercove stared at that box in amazement.

"Why, that's my loud-speaker dictaphone for recording speeches!" he ejaculated.

"Eggstately!" grinned Jack Jolly. "But how the merry dickens can a loud-speaker whatever you said affect Clevercove's gile?" demanded Dr. Birchmell.



"I preesoon, sir, that while Biffer and Ruff were looking round the study for Clevercove's batteries they unintentionally set this contraption recording. Consequently their conversation is reproduced in full. You just listen, sir!"

Jack Jolly switched on the machine. The whole skool listened with bated breath. "This is what they heard: 'Hallo! Here are the rotter's batteries, Ruff!'"

"Good for you, Biffer! Now the next move is to plant them in the Head's study."

"What-ho! Is it safe to go there now?"

"Yes, rather! The Head's feeding his face in Hall, and he'll take an hour to snitch. You know what a pig he is!"

Dr. Birchmell threw a savage glance over at the trembling Ruff, and picked up his birch significantly.

"Come on, then!" squeaked on the dictaphone. "Revenge is sweet! Clevercove will jolly soon be sorry for himself now!"

That finished the record. But it was quite enough. A storm of booling and hissing broke out, directed, of course, against the boobies of the Fourth, whose bass desines had come so near to succeeding.

Little remains to be told of what happened afterwards. Dr. Birchmell, naturally did not sack Clevercove after Jack Jolly's amazing revelation. Instead of that he rung him warmly by the hand and told him he had felt sure of his innocence all along.

Biffer and Ruff were then hauled on to the platform. They were not, however, eggstimated, for they came of wealthy families with whom the Head did not want to quarrel. Instead of that, they were birched with unegglampled severity, and their yells of aggerry woke the echoes in St. Sam's for the next hour.

Thus ended the gale plot against the inventor of the Fourth in the complete failure of the villain, and the amazing triumph of the clever Clarence Clevercove!

THE END.
(Look out for "JACK JOLLY'S DOWNFALL," the first of another series of amusing St. Sam's yarns which will appear in next week's bumper FREE GIFT NUMBER of the MAGNET.)
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"A LASS and a lack! Woe is me!"

Clarence Clevercove, of the Fourth at St. Sam's, rung his hands in an aggerry of despair as he paced up and down the punishment-room.

A silence brooded over St. Sam's—a silence broken only by the faint sound of snoring from a dormitory some distance away, for rising-fell had not yet gone.

But the nite that was just passing had brought no sleep to the inventor of the Fourth. He had spent the nocturnal hours bitterly bewailing his fate, and wondering who wore the rogues who had brought him to his prezont mizerable state.

For Clarence Clevercove was innocent! The electric batteries with which the guv'nors of St. Sam's had been japed had certainly belonged to him, but he had no idea who had used them. How was he to know that Biffer and Ruff, the boobies of the Fourth, had planned the whole affair so that he should be eggstimated from St. Sam's in disgrace?

Crash!

What was that?

It was the dawn breaking over the gray buildings of the old collidge. For Clevercove it was a hopeless dawn. Only too well did he know what was coming to him. A frogal breakfast of a couple of doorstops and a mug of tea; the ignominy of a flogging before the whole skool in Big Hall; and then, the sack!

What a morning it would be! The outlook was black, indeed.

A powerful kick at the solid oak door of the punishment-room brought Clevercove out of his gloomy reflections.

"Who's there?" he said.

"It's me—your pal, Jack Jolly!" answered a familiar voice from the other side of the door. "How are you blowing, old scout?"

"Kotten!" replied Clevercove. "This bizness has taken all the puff out of me, Jack, I can tell you."

"So I should imagine!" remarked the captain of the Fourth, stropherically. "But, of course, you asked for it, old sport. Ragging the guv'nors really is a bit thick, you know."

"But you don't understand. It's all The Magnet Library.—No. 1,064.