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TAMING A TYRANT!



By
FRANK RICHARDS

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

No Takers!

"PUT it on, Bunter!"

"Go it, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Five Remove fellows were seated in a cheery row on the broad balustrade of the Remove landing. Harry Wharton & Co. were talking cricket when they were interrupted by strange sounds from the staircase below.

Grunt! Gurgle! Gasp!

Had it been imaginable that a grampus had got ashore and paid a visit to Greyfriars School, the Famous Five might really have supposed that it was a grampus puffing and blowing its way up the Remove staircase.

But it wasn't! It was Billy Bunter of the Remove, in a hurry—a tremendous hurry.

Billy Bunter generally did stairs in slow time. He had a lot to lift. Seldom, indeed, was Bunter seen to run up stairs. Now he was not merely running—he was bolting. He came up like a charging rhinoceros. His fat face was crimson—it streamed with perspiration. He gasped for breath, he gurgled, he puffed, and he blew. But he came on without a pause. It was evident that Bunter had reasons for hot haste.

From the landing above the Famous Five watched him with interest, and gave him encouragement.

"Put it on, old fat bean!"

"Heave ahead, my hearty!" chortled Bob Cherry.

"Don't burst over the stairs!" called out Johnny Bull.

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"Ooooh! Ooooo-er!" came in gasping tones from Bunter. He struggled on.

"But what's up?" asked Frank Nugent. "Nobody's after him, that I can see!"

Looking over the balustrade the chins of the Remove could see no pursuer to account for Bunter's frantic flight.

But from below a sharp voice suddenly called:

"Bunter!"

"Oh, my hat! That's Wingate!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Bunter!"

It was the voice of Wingate of the Sixth, head prefect and captain of the school. It was not a voice to be passed unheeded by any junior. But Billy Bunter passed it unheeded. He puffed and panted on, reached the Remove landing, and staggered across it, gurgling.

"I—I say, you fellows!" gasped Bunter, blinking at the juniors through his big spectacles. "I say—groooogh! Ooooooh!"

"Wingate's calling you, fathead!" said Harry.

"Ooooh!"

"He's coming up," said Bob, as there was a sound of heavy footsteps below. As the mountain did not come to Mahomet so to speak, Mahomet was coming after the mountain.

"Oh lor! I—I say, take this—quick!" gasped Bunter.

Bunter's fat hand was clenched over some small object. He held it out to the nearest of the juniors, who happened to be Bob Cherry. Bob stared at the small object as Bunter's fat paw unclenched. It was a cardboard packet of cigarette.

"Quick!" gasped Bunter. "That beast saw it—he's after me! I shall get six! Take it, quick!"

"You're piffing, pie-faced porker!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Do you think I'm going to hide your filthy smokes for you?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Bunter!" came Wingate's voice again, from the middle landing.

"Wharton, old chap, take it, quick!" gasped Bunter. "He will be here in a tick! If he finds them on me he will make out that I smoke, you know—"

"What else could he make out, you fat owl!" asked Wharton, putting his hands behind him.

He was no more disposed than Bob to take charge of the contraband goods.

Smoking was one of the things that were not done at Greyfriars. Any fellow found with cigarettes on him was liable to get a whopping. Bunter was eager to escape the whopping that was due, and did not seem to mind if another fellow bagged it instead. But on the part of the other fellows there was, naturally, a lack of enthusiasm.

"Nugent, old chap, take it—"

"Rats!" said Frank Nugent.

"I say, Bull—"

"No takers!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"Hide it, quick, one of you!" gasped Bunter. "That awful beast will be here in a minute! Oh lor!"

"Bunter!" came Wingate's voice again from the middle landing. "Come down at once."

"I say, Inky! Inky, old chap! You're not such a beast as those beasts! Take that packet, dear old chap!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh grinned a dusky grin.

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"My esteemed beastfulness is equally great," he remarked.

"Oh crickey!" gasped Bunter. "He's coming!"

Wingate's tread was heard on the Remove staircase now. Obviously, he was coming!

Billy Bunter gave the grinning five a devastating blink, and rolled on into the Remove passage. Vernon-Smith was coming down the passage, and he just dodged the rolling Owl of the Remove.

"Look where you're going, fathead!" snapped the Bouncer.

"I say, Smithy—hold on!" gasped Bunter. "I say, I've got some smokes for you—the kind you like, old chap! I got them specially for you! Here you are—take them—quick!"

The Bouncer stared.

"What the thunder!" he ejaculated.

"Bunter!" came Wingate's roar.

"Quick!" gasped Bunter. "He'll be here in a minute! Take them, old chap—they're for you! I'm not trying to land them on you because Wingate's after me, you know—nothing of the kind! I got them specially for you because you're a smoky sweep—I-I mean, because I-I like you, old chap!"

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

He put his hands in his pockets. Billy proffered his packet of cigarettes in vain.

"Boast!" gasped Bunter.

He rolled desperately on. A study door was open—that of Study No. 10 in the Remove. It was a case of any port in a storm. Billy Bunter tossed the packet of cigarettes into the study. He did not stop to see where it landed. He rolled to Study No. 7, his own study, and rolled, in, gasping.

He had got rid of the cigarettes, anyhow, and he was feeling rather like a murderer who had got rid of the body. He plumped down in the armchair and gasped for breath, and mopped the perspiration from his fat face.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. Found Guilty!

WINGATE of the Sixth came tramping on the Remove landing. His face was flushed with haste and wrath, and his brows were knitted. His official asphalt was under his arm. He stared round the landing, apparently in search of Bunter, but all he saw was the Famous F-ve and Smithy, who had just joined them.

"Where's Bunter?" he rapped.

"Bunter!" repeated Harry Wharton thoughtfully.

Fellows were bound to answer a prefect. Still, it was possible for a fellow to take his time about it. The chums of the Remove had very little sympathy with a Lower School fellow who was duffer enough to smoke. At the same time, they had a natural desire to extend a helping hand to any fellow who was up for a whooping. Delaying Wingate a little might give Bunter a chance to get rid of the body, as it were.

"Yes, Bunter! He must have passed you here!" snapped Wingate.

Wingate was usually a very good-tempered fellow, but he seemed annoyed now. His authoritative voice had been unheeded, and he had been given the trouble of mounting several flights of stairs. Sixth Form prefects were not supposed to be given all that bother.

"Yes, I think he passed us," agreed Wharton. "Did you fellows see Bunter pass?" he added, looking round at his comrades.

"Where did he go?" roared Wingate. "Has he dodged into one of the studies, or what?"

"We saw him coming up the stairs," volunteered Bob Cherry. "He seemed rather out of breath, Wingate—whoo—" added Bob, in a wild roar, as Wingate whacked out with the asphalt.

Possibly the Greyfriars captain guessed that the juniors were trying to waste his valuable time. It was not, perhaps, hard to guess. Anyhow, he bestowed that lick on Bob, and then tramped up the Remove passage, without stopping to ask more questions.

"Wow!" said Bob. "Ow! Wow!"

"That fat idiot will get six," grinned the Bouncer. "He tried to plant his silly smokes on me—"

"And on us," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Hallo! Wingate's found him! Let's be in at the death."

The juniors followed Wingate along the passage. The prefect was standing in the doorway of Study No. 7, glaring at the breathless fat Owl in the armchair.

"Oh, here you are!" he hooted.

"No—I mean yes! C-c-come in, Wingate," stammered Bunter. "I—I—I'm awfully gig-gig-gig—to see you in my study."

If Bunter was glad, his looks belied him. He was blinking at the Greyfriars captain with deep apprehension through his big spectacles.

"Hand over those cigarettes, you young rascal!" roared Wingate.

Walker, a prefect of the Sixth, has always been heavy-handed in his dealings with the Remove. But there comes a time when Walker, the tyrant, is made to see the error of his ways!

"Wh-a-at cigarettes?" stammered Bunter.

"You fat sweep!" exclaimed Wingate.

"I saw you in the quad with a packet of cigarettes in your paw! You didn't come when I called you. You seudded into the House."

"I—I never heard you!" gasped Bunter. "I—I didn't pop into the House because you called me, Wingate."

"I came in to—to do some lines for Quelch. Quelch hates to be kept waiting for his lines."

"Give me those cigarettes at once!"

"I—I haven't any!" gasped Bunter.

"I—I don't smoke, Wingate. I've never smoked in my life! I—I wouldn't! Last time it made me sick."

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the passage.

"Get out of that chair, and turn out your pockets!" snapped Wingate.

"Oh, all right!"

Billy Bunter was quite ready to turn out his pockets. He turned them out on the table. The cigarettes were far enough away in Study No. 10.

Quite a weird variety of goods came to light. There was a penknife with both blades broken, and a chunk of ancient toffee adhering to it. There was a piece of twine mixed up with fragments of butter-scotch. There were some smashed balls in a dusty and rusty state. There was a handkerchief seriously in need of a wash. There was an imitation leather notecase, with a folded newspaper page stuffed in it to make it look as if it contained notes. There was a threepenny-piece—the only

coin Bunter had. He still had it because it was a bad one. There were several other curious things, but there were no cigarettes. Nothing in the nature of a smoke turned up.

Wingate gazed at the weird collection, and then fixed his eyes on Bunter again.

"What have you done with the cigarettes?" he asked.

"Oh, really, Wingate! The fact is, I never had any," explained Bunter.

"What you saw in my hand was a packet of toffee."

"Then where is it?"

"Oh, I—I've eaten it!"

"Packet and all?" asked Wingate grimly.

"Yes—no. I—I mean—"

Bunter. "I—I mean, there wasn't anything in my hand when you saw it. That's what I really meant to say. It—it was just imagination. You—you fancied."

"Oh, my hat!" said Wingate blankly.

"You can ask those fellows," said Bunter. "They know I hadn't a packet of cigarettes when I came up. They saw it—"

"They saw it?"

"I mean, they never saw it. They couldn't have, you see, as I never had it. I never asked them to mind it for me, and they wouldn't, too. I never offered it to Smithy. Did I, Smithy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Smithy.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! This is jolly serious—a fellow being suspected of smoking!" said Bunter warmly.

"I—I say, Wingate, if you're done here, I—I've got some lines to do for Loder."

"I'm not quite done," said Wingate, slipping his asphalt down into his hand. "I suppose you've thrown the cigarettes away. Bend over that chair!"

"Oh crickey!" gasped Bunter. "Wh-a-at for, Wingate?"

"Six! And I'll make it a dozen if you waste any more of my time!"

"Oh lor!"

Billy Bunter bent his fat form over the chair in a dismal frame of mind.

Whack, whack, whack!

"You! Ow, ow!" roared Bunter.

Whack, whack, whack!

"You! Whoop! Yarroop!"

Wingate tucked the asphalt under his arm.

"Take that as a tip, Bunter!" he said.

"You! Ow, ow!"

"If I catch you with smokes again, I'll take you to your Form master! Got that?"

"You! Ow! Wow! Whooh!"

Wingate walked out of the study.

Billy Bunter leaned on the table and roared. The "six" had not been a very severe one, as a matter of fact. But William George Bunter made as much noise as if it had been sixty.

"You! Ow, ow! Wurrng! Ooooh!"

"Oh, listen to the band!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"You! Ow! I say, you fellows, fancy a prefect jumping on a fellow like that!" groaned Bunter. "Prefects are supposed to see justice done, and all that. Wow! Making out that I had a packet of smokes, you know, just because he saw it in my hand! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've a jolly good mind to complain to the Head!" gasped Bunter. "I told the beast I never had any cigarettes. A decent chap would take a fellow's word. I've a jolly good mind to go to the Head, and say—"

"Ow! Wow! Oh lor! I shan't be able to sit down again to-day!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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"Oh, shut up!" roared Bunter. "If you want to cackle, go somewhere else and cackle! Yah!"

And the Removites departed, still cackling. And Bunter was left to gasp and groan, too much occupied with his sufferings to think, or care, anything about the packet of cigarettes he had tossed into Study No. 10.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Lost, Stolen, or Strayed!

JAMES WALKER of the Sixth Form jumped. He jumped almost clear of the floor in his study in the Sixth Form passage at Greyfriars.

"Great gad!" he gasped. Loder and Carne, his friends in the Sixth, stared at him. Loder was sitting on the corner of the table. Carne was in the armchair. The three had been discussing an awfully important subject—nothing less than the chances of Nobbled Nick in the Swindleton Handicap. And Loder had asked Walker whether he had any smokes. And Walker had put his hand into his pocket, and then, like an electrified kangaroo, he jumped.

"Come!" gasped Walker. "Lost your cigarettes?" asked Carne. "Oh gad—yes!"

"Well, that's nothing to make a song and a dance about, is it?" asked Loder, staring. "You're not hard up for a bob, are you?"

Walker, instead of replying, began to go through his pockets. He went through one after another with feverish haste. His friends watched him in growing wonder. The sportsmen of the Sixth were accustomed to smoking cigarettes, in the strict seclusion of a study, so no doubt such a loss was rather annoying. But Loder and Carne saw no reason for the wild alarm in Walker's face.

But he was alarmed; there was no doubt about that. His rather weak face was quite pale, his eyes starting. Frantically he went through his pockets. Then he came back to the first pocket he had tried; pulled out the lining, and examined it. There was a hole in the lining. By that avenue of escape, apparently, Walker's packet of cigarettes had disappeared.

"Great gad! in the lining! I knew I put them in that pocket—I knew it! Look round the study, for goodness' sake! It's just possible I dropped them here."

"But what the thump—"

Walker, unheeding the amazement of his sporting pals, bent down and searched the study floor. But there was nothing to be found. He opened the door and hurried down the Sixth Form passage. He scanned the floor as he went with almost haggard eyes. Wingate, coming from the direction of the staircase, with his asphalant under his arm—the asphalant that had been recently exercised on Billy Bunter—glanced at him.

"Hallo! Dropped something?" he asked. Walker of the Sixth straightened up with a crimson face.

"Yes! No!" he stammered. "Nothing! That is, yes—"

"Lucid, at all events," said the Greyfriars captain. "Like me to help you look for nothing, if that's what you're hunting for?"

"Eh? Not! It—it's all right!" Walker turned and went back up the passage; and Wingate, after staring at

him for a moment in astonishment, went into his study. Walker hurried back to his own room panting, and there Loder and Carne gave him looks of amazed inquiry.

"You howling ass!" said Gerald Loder. "If you've dropped a packet of fags about the school, you'd better not be seen pickin' it up! Do you want to be called up before the Head, you ass?"

"I've got to find it!" "Why?" howled Carne. "What does it matter? Nobody will know you dropped it if it turns up. Leave it alone, wherever it is."

Walker shut the study door. His face was almost ghastly.

"It's not the cigarettes!" he gasped. "But—but I made a note on it! I—I had to make a note after seeing Banks, and—and I hadn't any paper about me, and—and I made it on the flap of the cigarette-box. It's one of those dashed cardboard packets with a flap that tucks in at the end. And—and there's my fist on it!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Loder and Carne understood now.

"If—if it's found, I'm done for!" gasped Walker. "Anybody would know my fist. It—it's not only that it will prove that I had smokes on me, but—but it's a note about a horse—"

"Oh, you prize ass!" exclaimed Loder.

"It's your fault!" exclaimed Walker sagely. "Banks gave me that rotten message about a rotten horse for you! Of course I jotted it down, as I might have forgotten it."

"And what exactly did you jot down, you born idiot?" asked Loder.

"Saucy Sam, in the Wapshot two o'clock race," as near as I remember!" groaned Walker. "How was I to know the dashed thing would get lost? I never knew there was a hole in my pocket."

Carne whistled. "Well, you've done it now!" he said. "You'd better root about and get that packet back before a beak finds it."

Loder shrugged his shoulders contemptuously. Loder, the black sheep of the Sixth, was hard as nails, cool as ice; not in the least likely to blunder carelessly like this. He had only scorn for a fellow who could not take care of himself. Indeed, if Walker had been a little better able to take care of himself, he would have had nothing to do with Gerald Loder. Walker was a fellow who was decent enough in decent company, and bad in bad company. Under Loder's influence he was a good deal of a black sheep—but he had not the courage of his sins, like Loder. The mere possibility of coming up before the Head knocked him over.

"Pull yourself together, you ass!" said Loder. "You're not sacked yet."

"It's the sack if old Locke sees that—my fist on a cigarette packet," muttered Walker. "I'm done for!"

"Old Locke hasn't seen it yet. You may have lost it out of gates; and in that case it will never be seen at Greyfriars at all."

Walker brightened a little.

"That's possible," he admitted. "I put it in my pocket after seeing Banks—a half-mile from the school. It may have fallen out on my way back. But—but no—"

His face clouded again. "I remember putting my hand in my pocket a few minutes before I came in; it was still there then."

"Then you dropped it in the quad most likely. Better hunt for it," said Loder, "and the sooner the better. I suppose your fist would be recognised, if it was found—"

"Of course it would!"

"Well, you haven't been in the House a quarter of an hour; ten to one it hasn't even picked up yet. Cut off and find it."

"You fellows come and help," said Walker anxiously.

"Oh, don't be an ass! A Sixth Form prefect can't go rooting about after a packet of smokes!" snapped Loder.

"Ain't I a prefect, you rotter?"

"You won't be one much longer if that packet falls into old Locke's hands! You're wasting time!"

Walker gave him a fierce look and stamped out of the study. Loder shrugged his shoulders again, and Carne whistled softly. Neither of them had any desire or intention to be mixed up in the peril Walker had brought on himself. They were his friends—but friendship among the black sheep of the Sixth was not of a very devoted kind. All the more because they were Sixth Form men and prefects, it would have been the "sack," short and sharp, had their headmaster discovered their secret manners and customs. Loder and Carne were no doubt concerned for Walker, but they were much more deeply concerned for themselves.

"The careless ass!" said Carne.

"The silly dummy!" said Loder.

And with that they dismissed the subject and resumed the much more interesting topic of Nobbled Nick.

Walker hurried down the passage and looked out of the doorway of the House. He tried to make his manner casual, but he did not have much success. Somewhere between the House and the gates that packet of cigarettes lay, with Walker's precious note about Saucy Sam written on the flap. A master might see it and pick it up, a prefect might—Wingate, or Gwynne, or Sykes, or Tom Noron, and Walker trembled at the thought. A prefect, perhaps, might keep the matter quiet for the sake of the reputation of the august body of prefects; but a beak would be certain to take it to the headmaster. Or some fag might get hold of it—some fag who knew Walker's "list." The matter might already be the talk of the Shell, the Fourth, the Remove, the Third, or the Second. It was an awful thought to the hapless Walker.

He stared at the steps as he went out, and then along the path to the gates. Five Remove fellows who had strolled out into the quad glanced at him.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Lost something?" called out Bob Cherry.

Walker gave him a glare.

"Mind your own business!" he snapped.

Bob stared at him.

"Well, my hat! I was going to offer to help you look for it, Walker, whatever it is," he answered. "No need to bite a fellow's head off."

"We'll help, if you like, Walker," said Harry Wharton, with a rather curious look at the prefect's scowling, perturbed face. "T'll see what it is."

"Clear off and mind your own business!" growled Walker, as he went on along the path, trying to look as if he was not looking for anything.

"Well," said Bob, "I can't say I ever thought much of Sixth Form manners, but that hooligan takes the jolly old cake!"

"The cakefulness is terrific," remarked Hurrey Jamset Ram Singh.

"Blessed if I can make him out!" said Harry. "He's lost something, and seems worried about it. I should think he would like fellows to help."

Johnny Bull grunted.

"No fear!" he said emphatically. "I fancy Walker's lost something that he

doesn't want any fellow to help him find."

"How's that?" asked Nugent.

Another grunt from Johnny.

"Where did Bunter get that packet of cigarettes?" he asked.

"Blessed if I know!"

"He's a silly ass, but not ass enough to spend money on smokes," said Johnny. "All his cash goes on luck—when he has any! He never bought those smokes. Ten to one he picked it up somewhere—"

"Oh, my hat!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"If that's what Walker's lost—"

"Get your hat on it!" said Johnny Bly.

"Oh, go it, old bean!" said Potter. "That's the third time you've tried it! Try again!"

"Frightfully interesting!" said Greene.

"It's easy enough," said Coker. "That's what Kippis in the Remove does it as easily as anything. I got him to show me. I fancy I can do what a Lower Fourth kid can do."

Potter winked at Greene. That, in their opinion, was only one of Coker's many unfounded fancies.

The fact was, the trick was not so easy as Coker supposed!

Oliver Kippis of the Remove was a conjurer of uncanny skill. His father

saw! So far, at least, the amateur conjurer was able to get away with it. It was the further proceedings that baffled Coker.

Leaning on the elms, Potter and Greene watched with interest. They did not expect to see Coker get away with the trick of the vanishing half-crown. They only wondered how long he would keep it up before he admitted that he couldn't handle it.

"When you open your hand, like that, it's vanished—see?" said Coker, opening his extensive paw.

"But it's still there!" objected Potter.

"Don't be a silly ass, Potter!"

"But it is, really," said Greene.



"Oh, here you are!" hooted Wingate, glaring at the breathless Bunter in Study No. 7. "No! I mean, yes! C-c-come in, Wingate," stammered the fat Owl. "I—I—I'm awfully gig-gig-glad to—to see you."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a roar from the Famous Five. If that packet of cigarettes was what Walker was hunting for, he was not likely to find it in the quad; for it was certain that Bunter, pursued by Wingate, had thrown it away somewhere in the Remove quarters in the House. James Walker was on a long, long trail—which was not likely to lead him to the lost pocket of cigarettes.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Merely a Misunderstanding!

"**B**LOW!" said Coker of the Fifth. Potter and Greene of that Form grinned.

Coker did not grin; he frowned and said "Blow!" as a half-crown, dropped from his hand and thudded at his feet.

He stooped and picked it up, and gave Potter and Greene a glare.

"If you don't want me to show you this trick—" he snapped.

was a famous conjurer, who had performed, according to Kippis, to many crowned heads, and still more uncrowned ones!

Kippis of the Remove could perform all sorts of tricks, which other fellows essayed in vain. But Horace Coker of the Fifth Form had a fixed belief that whatever any other fellow could do he could do quite as well, and probably a little better.

So now he was showing Potter and Greene Kippis' trick with the half-crown—only, somehow, it didn't seem to come off. Why it didn't come off Coker of the Fifth did not know.

Potter and Greene knew—it was because Coker was a clumsy ass! But this knowledge was hidden from Horace Coker himself!

"Easy as falling off a form!" said Coker. "You take the half-crown in your palm—like that! You close your hand—like that! See?"

Potter and Greene admitted that they

"Don't be a fathead, Greene! I haven't done the trick yet—I'm only telling you!" said Coker. "The idea of the thing is this—you slip the half-crown up your sleeve unseen, and then, when you open your hand, it seems to have vanished! Of course, you mustn't let people see it go up your sleeve! Now watch me!"

Coker closed his large hand over the half-crown again. Potter and Greene watched.

No doubt Kippis of the Remove would have made the half-crown vanish as if by magic. But it was clear that Coker of the Fifth was no magician! He endeavoured to glide that half-crown, unseen, into his sleeve, as he had seen the Remove conjurer do. But he had no luck!

Plip! The half-crown dropped once more into the grass under the old Grey-friars elms. Coker gave a snort.

"Blow it!"

Potter and Greene chuckled.

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Hitherto, they had only grinned. But Coker's conjuring seemed to have, so to speak, a cumulative effect. It seemed funnier and funnier every time. They chuckled.

Coker chuckled hard.

"Would you fellows mind telling me what you're cackling about?" he asked, in a sulphurous sort of voice.

"He!"

"If you think I can't perform a simple trick that a kid in the Remove can do on his head it only shows what silly fools you are!" said Coker.

"He!"

"I can do it as easily as anything, but now I won't!" said Coker. "If you prefer to cackle, cackle!"

Coker stooped, picked up the half-crown, and shoved it into his jacket pocket. It was at that moment that James Walker of the Sixth Form came along from the direction of the House, hunting for his lost packet of smokes.

Seeing Coker stoop and pick up something and put it in his pocket, Walker broke into a run, and came quickly towards him.

He was quite unaware that Coker of the Fifth had been doing—or not doing—conjuring tricks. All he knew was that Coker had suddenly stooped down and picked up some small object from the grass beside the path and put it in his pocket. That was an unusual thing for any fellow to do, of course. Walker had no doubt what it was that Coker had picked up.

"Give that to me, Coker!" he exclaimed.

Coker looked round at him blankly. Such a demand was astonishing. It astonished Potter and Greene as well as Coker. They stared at the Sixth Form man.

"Give it to you!" repeated Coker.

"Yes! I shall take charge of it, as a prefect!" explained Walker. He could not, of course, admit that a packet of cigarettes was his own. "Hand it over at once!"

"You'll take charge of it!" gasped Coker.

"Certainly! Give it to me!"

"It's mine, isn't it?" booted the amazed Coker.

"Yours!" repeated Walker. "If—if it's yours, Coker, hand it over to me at once!"

"I jolly well won't!" roared Coker. "What the thump do you mean? I don't care two straws if you're a prefect—catch me handing over to you what belongs to me! My hat!"

"Look here, Walker—" began Potter.

"Don't you butt in!" snapped Walker.

"Look here, Coker, I saw you pick it up. It's not yours, and you know it! I don't want to report you to your Form master! Give it to me at once, and I'll let the matter drop!"

"Not mine!" exclaimed Coker.

"You know it isn't!" snapped Walker. "But if it was, it would make no difference. You know that Fifth Form men can't have such things, any more than Juniors. Do you want me to report you to Proot?"

"Report me to Proot!" said Coker, almost dazedly. "Yes, you can report me to Proot if you like! Get on with it!"

Walker clenched his hands. He was in a state of jumping nerves, terrified by the awful possibility of that packet falling into the hands of authority. He had no doubt that that was what Coker had picked up. What else could he have picked up?

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"I'm speaking as a prefect, Coker," he said, between his teeth. "I order you to give it to me at once!"

"And I tell you I'll do nothing of the sort!" bawled Coker. "Blessed if I ever heard of such a thing! Why should I give it to you?"

"You're asking for a prefect's beating, Coker!"

"Blow the prefects!" roared Coker, greatly incensed. "I've never thought much of the Sixth, and I don't care who knows it! As for giving you what belongs to me, I'll see you blowed first!"

And with that, Horace Coker swung away and strode off towards the House. Walker made a stride after him, but paused. Coker was a rather hefty fellow for even a Sixth Form man to handle. And a shindy in the quad would draw attention—which was exactly what Walker did not want.

He had no desire for publicity in this matter—indeed, till that fatal packet was in his hands again he was disposed to understudy the shy, retiring violet!

Coker stalked away, angry and defiant, and Walker sent a glare after him.

"Look here, Walker," began Potter. "If you're not off your rocker, what are you up to? It's really Coker's—"

"He dropped it, you know," said Greene. "It's really his—"

Turn to page 17 of this issue and see the miniature reproduction in black-and-white of NEXT WEEK'S HANDSOME SOUVENIR PHOTO-PLATE. Then place an order for your MAGNET right away!

"Don't tell me rotten lies!" snarled Walker.

"Well, my hat!" said Potter and Greene together. And they followed Coker to the House, greatly amazed and puzzled.

Walker remained with his hands clenched. He did not look any farther for that lost packet. He had already hunted up and down the path when he spotted Coker picking up a small object from the grass! That lost packet, he had not the slightest doubt, was in Coker's pocket. How to get it away from Coker was now Walker's problem.

And at last he went back to the House to consult Loder and Carne on the subject. And Coker & Co., at tea in their study in the Fifth, discussed, with utter wonder, the amazing nerve and effrontery of Walker of the Sixth in laying claim to Coker's half-crown!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Smack—and a Shindy!

"MILF pardons—"

"Smack!"

"Whooooop!" roared Napoleon Dupont, the French junior in the Remove.

He staggered under that terrific smack, and sat down, blinking in wrathful amazement at Walker of the Sixth.

There was, perhaps, some excuse for Walker. He was excited and worried, and his nerves were frayed. And

Dupont was running out of the House too fast to see Walker as he came in. Juniors were not supposed to loiter about the place without seeing where they were going.

Nap ran full tilt into James Walker, and was beginning to gasp out an apology when Walker smote. And it was "some" smite!

All Walker's worry and fear and uneasiness, all that he would have liked to give Coker of the Fifth, were concentrated in that angry smack, and it sent the French junior fairly spinning. He sat down with a crash, his head singing, and glared dizzily at Walker.

When Walker was in a bad temper he was a good deal of a bully; and he was in a frightfully bad temper now. But this was rather over the limit, even for a bad-tempered bully. Smacking fellows' heads was "taboo" at Greyfriars. It was fortunate for Walker that no master witnessed the action.

"Mon Dieu!" gasped Nap. "Vous êtes fou, n'est-ce pas! Why for you smack me ze tête—ze head—comme ça? Mon Dieu! Wow!"

Walker glared down at him.

"Can't you see where you're running, you young idiot?" he bawled.

"Take a hundred lines! Get out!"

He gave Nap a shove with his foot and passed him, and strode away to the Sixth Form passage.

"Shame!" came a howl from the staircase.

Walker glared round fiercely. Bob Cherry was on the stairs, and he glared back at Walker, with a red face.

"Cherry, you—"

"You rotter!" bawled Bob. "What do you mean by smacking a kid's head like that? If I were Nap I'd go to Quelch about it."

Walker was a prefect of the Sixth Form, and Bob a junior in the Lower Fourth. But Walker walked on, without taking any further notice of the indignant Bob. He did not want Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, to hear of that incident. With compressed lips he walked on quickly to his study.

Bob came down the stairs and helped the French junior to his feet. Nap gasped for breath and pressed a hand to his crimson ear.

"Ze rottier!" gasped Nap. "Ciel! I am hurt! I am damaged! I have a large pain in my nappair! Wow!"

"The brute!" growled Bob. "He ought to be jolly well kicked! I know what's upset his silly temper, too. He's been looking for a packet of cigarettes he's dropped somewhere about—that's what's the matter with him. I jolly well wouldn't do the lines, Nap!"

"Zen zat rottier give me six, perhaps!" said Nap. "I zink I do zose lines. Ciel! In my head I have enormous ache! He rubbed his head, and his black eyes gleamed. "Somehow I make zat bully stand up for us!"

"Sit up?" asked Bob, with a broad grin.

"Mais oui, I make him sit up. He smack me ze head for nozzings, and I make him stand up—zat is to say, sit up! Vous verrez!"

And Nap went out, leaving Bob grinning. It did not seem probable that a Remove fellow would be able to make a Sixth Form prefect either stand up or sit up.

Meanwhile, Walker of the Sixth arrived at his study. Loder and Carne were still there, still deep in their sporting discussion. But they dropped that subject as Walker came scowling in.

"Found it?" asked Carne.

"No. A Fifth Form man's picked it up," snarled Walker. "He's got it now—that fool Coker."

"What on earth does Coker want with it?" asked Loder, in surprise. "Coker's a blithering idiot, but he doesn't smoke. Why the thump should he bag a packet of smokes?"

"Just his pig-headedness, I suppose," said Walker savagely. "He's always cheeking the Sixth! I asked him for it and he refused to give it to me. What's to be done?"

"He can't refuse a prefect!" exclaimed Carno. "Why, if he's got a packet of smokes on him you can report him to his Form master."

"Think I don't know that?" howled Walker. "But do you think I want old Prout to get hold of it and read my fist on it?"

"Oh, my hat! That wouldn't do. But I don't see it. Coker doesn't smoke. If he did he could afford to buy his own fags. He's got tons of money. Sure he picked it up?"

"I saw him," said Loder. "Well, it's jolly odd," said Loder. "Has he seen it?"

"He can't have. He put it into his pocket when he picked it up, without even looking at it. He certainly never opened it. He can't know what I want it for—can't even know it's mine. It's just his cheeky swank, refusing to give it up. But I know where it is now, and we've got to get it off him. What do you fellows advise?"

"Where is he now?" asked Loder. "In the House somewhere—in his study, I suppose. It's tea-time," growled Walker. "Look here, there's no time to waste. If he happens to open that packet he will see my fist on the flap. He's the kind of burbling idiot to shout it out all over the school."

"Easy enough," said Loder. "Lucky it isn't a book, picked it up. That would have been the finish for you. We can get it off Coker. We're prefects, and entitled to deal with the matter. If you're quite sure he's got it—"

"I tell you I saw him pick it up. I can believe my own eyes, I suppose!" howled Walker.

"Well, then, this is how it stands, Coker has smokes in his pocket—against all the rules. We're bound to deal with it, as prefects. We can make him hand the packet over, and once we've got it safe, we can report him for a prefect's beating, for defying a prefect's orders. We must get the packet safe, of course. If he won't give it up we'll take it. He's a hefty brute, but the three of us will be able to teach him that Fifth Form men can't back up against the Sixth. Come on!"

"Good!" said Walker. "Easy as falling off a form," said Carno.

And the three Sixth-Formers left the study and proceeded to the quarters of the Fifth, which were on the next floor above. Tea was over in Coker's study by that time, and Potter and Greene were coming out as the prefects arrived.

"Coker there?" asked Loder. "Yes, in the study," answered Potter. "What's the row?"

It was rather unusual for three prefects to arrive at a Fifth Form study in a body.

"Nothing. You can cut!" Loder threw open Coker's door and marched in, followed by Walker and Carno. The last of them closed the door and put his back to it. Coker of the Fifth stared at them. Coker had a half-crown in his hand. He was practising once more that simple

Here are some interesting facts you may not know concerning

THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

which forms the subject of this week's free Photogravure Plate.



A BUILDING vast enough to give ample space to 80,000 people, rearing its eighty-odd floors hundreds of feet into the air and piercing the clouds with its tip—that's the tallest skyscraper the world has ever known. They call it the Empire State Building, and it's in New York. You'd think there would be a difficulty about getting people to live, or work, up above, say, the twentieth story.

But the engineers responsible for the building thought all that out. So they put seven miles of lift-shafts into it, with sixty-seven different lifts, to save people the fag of walking upstairs. They shoot you up to the eightieth floor in sixty seconds! You wouldn't want to stop on the eightieth floor, though, with that fascinating steeple, or mast, to inspect.

A Problem Solved!

Lifts take you to the very top of that steeple, and then you discover the tip is actually a gigantic mooring-place for Zeppelins and other airships. The balcony that runs around, below the tip and the tremendously powerful beacon light, is for passengers entering and leaving the anchored airship—through a door, of course, in the latter, across a gangplank.

That's solved a tremendous problem for huge airships which cannot expect to go to rest in ordinary hangars as do aeroplanes. They simply have to make for New York and hitch up to the tip of the Empire State Building, and there they are. Isn't a big air-

ship likely to pull this towering skyscraper down? Well, can you imagine a building that contains 10,000,000 bricks, 200,000 cubic feet of stone, and over 900 tons of steel and other metals, being at all rocky?

Safe, No Matter What Happens!

As an illustration of a skyscraper's strength, here is a startling instance. A few weeks ago, during a severe earthquake in Los Angeles (you've heard of that place in connection with "the pictures") a skyscraper 428 feet high stood up to the shocks whilst neighbouring smaller buildings flopped down. And that skyscraper actually swayed ten feet at its top without damage! That's almost a midget compared with the Empire State Building, but the engineers have put all the skill and science at their command into the latter. So we needn't be afraid an airship could pull it over, even in a raging gale well up above the clouds!

You've got an idea now how high the building soars. What about the ground floor? Well, the ground space it occupies is two acres. Which is a good deal more than it probably sounds to you. But that doesn't mean that the Empire State Building goes straight up all the way. American building laws won't allow a skyscraper to be reared in that fashion, because a street of them would be like a dark and airless chasm down on the pavement. So the building is set back considerably after it gets a certain height, so that it tapers off to a point; in this case the wonderful and ingenious mooring-mast being the tip.

Watch Out for Another Superb Photo-Plate Next Week, Boys!

trick he had picked up from Kippis of the Remove—which was not so simple as it looked!

"What the thump do you men want?" demanded Coker.

His manner was not very civil. Coker of the Fifth made no secret of the fact that he did not think much of the Sixth.

"Keep that door shut, Carno," said Loder. "Now, Coker, I hear that you've got cigarettes—"

"What?" gasped Coker, utterly astounded by that unexpected accusation. Coker had plenty of faults, though he was unaware of them; but there was nothing of that sort about old Coker!

"Hand them over at once!" said Loder sharply. "I suppose you know it's our duty, as prefects, to deal with you. You've got a packet of cigarettes in your pocket. Hand it over at once."

"You silly ass!" roared Coker. "Wharrrer you mean? Think I'm a silly, smoky ass like yourself—what?

I've heard fellows say you smoke in your study. Think I'm the same sort of blithering chump?"

Horace Coker jumped up. "Get out!" he roared. "Prefects or no prefects, you're not butting into my study and talking to me like that! Get out—see?"

"Will you hand over that packet of smokes?" demanded Loder.

"You pie-faced dummy!" roared Coker. "If you think I've got smokes on me I'll walk along to my Form master's study with you, if you like."

But that was exactly what Loder & Co. did not like!

"We're dealing with this matter, as prefects!" said Loder. "And, as a prefect, I order you to hand over that packet instantly!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"If you prefer us to take it—"

"Take it! I'd like to see all the

Sixth, in a gang, take anything from me!" bellowed Coker. "Get out of my study, before you're put!"

Loder set his lips. He was not the fellow to take that kind of talk, even if there had been nothing at stake. He made a sign to his comrades.

"Collar him!" he snapped.

The three advanced on Coker! But if they fancied that the odds against him would daunt Coker, they did not know Horace! Coker's big fists flew up at once. In his wrath, he forgot the awful penalty for "punching a prefect." He punched—quick and hard. And Loder gave a roar as he caught the punch with his nose. There was a great deal of beef in Coker, and Loder felt, for the moment, as if his nose had been pushed through the back of his head.

"Come on!" bawled Coker defiantly. "Come on, the lot of you! I'll give you smokes! I'll give you beans! I'll give you toco! Come on!"

Loder & Co. did not need telling to come on. They came on with a rush and mixed themselves up with Coker. Three to one as they were, Coker was not easy to handle. Coker put up a fight that was really and truly terrific, and the four of them tramped and staggered about the study in a wild mix-up.

Potter opened the door and stared in, with Greene, both of them alarmed and astonished.

"I—I say!" gasped Potter. "What the thump—" gasped Greene. "Back up, you men!" roared Coker. "Lend me a hand! Back up!"

Potter and Greene had a natural shyness about backing up in a shindy with Sixth Form prefects. They did not want to be called before the Head and sacked! Horace Coker was the only fellow at Greyfriars who was ready to run risks of that sort!

Crush Coker went down. He dragged down Carne and Walker with him, and they sprawled. Loder jammed a knee on Coker's waistcoat.

"Now search him!" he panted. Coker was not easy to search. He struggled, he kicked, he clawed, he raved, and he bellowed. It was difficult work, and Loder & Co. got on with it rather slowly. And outside the study a mob of excited fellows gathered, staring in at the wild and whirling scene.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

No Smokes!

"I SAY, you fellows!" yelled Billy Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"It's a fight—"

"Who, and where?"

"In the Fifth!" gasped Bunter.

"Coker and a lot of prefects!"

"Grent pip!"

News like that woke up the Remove passage like a hive of bees with a brick dropped into it.

"Coker—scrapping with prefects!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Oh, my hat!" yelled the Bounder. "Come on!"

Most of the Remove fellows were at tea when Bunter brought the news. They forgot tea now! Even Billy Bunter forgot tea. If a Fifth Form man was fighting prefects, it was not a thing to be missed. It was the sort of thing that happened only once in a blue moon—if as often as that! Every man in the Remove wanted a front seat!

Harry Wharton & Co. dashed away

across the Remove landing. After them ran the Bounder and Redwing and Peter Todd and Squiff. Tom Brown and Hazeldene rushed out of Study No. 2; Russell and Ogilvy out of Study No. 3; Morgan and Wibley and Desmond out of Study No. 6; Kippa and Hillary out of Study No. 5. All the Remove studies, in fact, disgorged their occupants in a swarm. Billy Bunter, still squeaking out the exciting news, was rolled over in the rush. Quite an army of Removites tore into the Fifth Form passage.

Fellows of other Forms were already gathering there; the exciting news was spreading. Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth had arrived; Hobson and half a dozen Shell fellows. The Fifth Form passage was beginning to swarm. Fifth Form men, coming to see what was up, had to shove and push their way through a mob of juniors.

Getting a front seat was not easy. But the Famous Five shored shoulder to shoulder, and got through to Coker's study. Really, it was rather like a Rugger scrum.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! They're going it!" gasped Bob.

"Go it, Coker!" yelled Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here, what's all this row?" Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, shoved his way up the swarming passage.

"What's going on—what?"

"Leggo!" came Coker's powerful

TO READERS IN THE IRISH FREE STATE.

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roar. "You cheeky rotters, going through a man's pockets! Gerroff!"

"They're searching Coker!" gasped Wharton. "What on earth are they searching Coker for? You know, Potter?"

"Haven't the foggiest!" said Potter blankly. "Can't make it out, unless they've gone potty!"

"Lemme gerrup!" roared Coker. "I'll smash you! I'll give you prefects! I'll spifficate you! I'll give you smokes! Gerroff!"

"Shut that door!" panted Loder.

"Potter, shut that door at once!"

"What are you up to?" yelled Potter.

"Shut that door, I tell you!"

Potter did not shut the door. Indeed, the door would not have shut, with the doorway crammed with eager sightseers. Blundell, elbowing with ruthless vigour, arrived at the doorway. He stared into the study with starting eyes.

"My only hat!" he gasped. "Have you all gone mad? What's all this about? Look here, leave Coker alone—see?"

"Draggemoff!" gurgled Coker.

"Rescue! Oh, my hat! Ow!"

Coker was still resisting. Some of his pockets had been turned out. But there was a bottle over every pocket. All sorts of Coker's possessions were scattered on the floor. But no packet of smokes had come to light so far.

Blundell strode into the study, with a knitted brow. He was captain of the Fifth, a great "Blood," a First Eleven man—greater in the eyes of most fellows than even a prefect. Still, he was not a prefect—no Fifth Form man was; and

—in theory, at least—Blundell had to respect prefects as much as any fag in the Third Form. Nevertheless, George Blundell was not going to stand this! He grabbed Walker and Carne by their collars and heaved them away from Coker. Then he gave Loder a shove, and Loder sat suddenly on the carpet.

Coker sat up, struggling for breath.

"Now, what the thump—" demanded the captain of the Fifth.

"Oooooooh!" gurgled Coker.

Loder, Carne, and Walker glared at Blundell. Blundell, clenching his fists, glared back. Coker sat between them, gurgling.

"Hands off, you cheeky fool!" exclaimed Loder. "If you interfere here, I'll—"

"What are you up to?" roared Blundell. "Are you raging in a study like a gang of Lower Fourth fags?"

Loder controlled his fury. Prefect as he was, he was daunted by so tremendous a Blood and games man as Blundell.

"Coker's got smokes here!" he gasped. "Are you backing up a man in smoking in his study?"

"Rot!" said Blundell. "Coker's every other sort of a fool, but not that sort of fool! He's got no smokes."

"Walker saw him with them! Now, stand back! Coker's refused to give them up, and we're going to take them from him!"

"Walker saw him!" Blundell was rather staggered by that positive statement. "I don't believe it! Look here, Coker, what have you got to say?"

"Groooooooh!"

That, for the moment, was all that Coker had to say. There was a chortle from the passage.

"Quiet, you fags!" roared Blundell. "Coker, you ass, if you've got smokes here, we'll jolly well give you a Foma ragging! Now, then!"

"I haven't!" gurgled Coker. "Never had! Grooooooh! They're all mad as hatters—Ooooh!"

"I know he hadn't," said Blundell. "And if you think he had, you'd do as right to search him like a pickpocket, as you know jolly well! You should have taken him to Prout or the Head! You know that!"

Loder & Co. were quite aware of that. But they had their own reasons for not going with Coker to Prout or the Head! "You think you can come here and treat a Fifth Form man like some snivelling fag in the Remove!" hooted Blundell.

"Draw it mild, old bean!" came a voice from the passage. "Not so much of your snivelling fag!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shu—up!" roared Blundell. "Look here, Loder, this won't do—see? See? The Fifth won't stand this!"

"Hear, hear!" said Potter and Greene and several more of the Fifth.

"You say Coker's got smokes; Coker says he hasn't! Pretty state of things when a Fifth Form man's word isn't taken!"

"I saw him!" shouted Walker. "And we're not going away without that packet of smokes he's got in his pocket! I saw him put it there not an hour ago!"

"It's a lie!" roared Coker. Coker struggled to his feet. Red with wrath, he shook a brawny fist in Walker's face, so close to his nose that James Walker jumped back quite suddenly. "It's a rotten lie—see? Look in your own study if you're after smokes! I dare say you'd find some there!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go home, Walker!" called out a

voice unknown. "You'll find your smokes at home!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you fags be quiet?" roared Blundell. "My hat! Half Greyfriars gabbling in our passage, and—"

"And Blundell gabbling in the study!" said the unknown voice from the rear.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let Coker turn out his pockets!" panted Walker. "I tell you I saw him pick up that packet of cigarettes and push it in his pocket! Potter and Greene saw him, too—they were there! They jolly well know!"

"We did?" gasped Potter. "We jolly well saw nothing of the kind!"

"Never!" exclaimed Greene.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Here comes Wingate!"

"The more the merrier!" chortled the Bouncer.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wingate of the Sixth, with a frowning brow, shoved a way to the study. The uproar had drawn the captain of Greyfriars there. Wingate, as head prefect, was in authority, and he took control at once.

"Quiet, you fags! Now, what's the trouble?" asked Wingate.

"That rotter—" roared Coker, pointing at Walker.

"Chuck that, Coker! If you speak of a prefect like that, I'll give you six here in your own study!" rapped Wingate.

"Why, you—you—" gasped Coker.

"Shut up, Coker!" said Blundell.

"Look here, Wingate, these Sixth Form men say that Coker's got smokes about him, and I jolly well know he hasn't!"

"I should think not!" bawled Coker.

"What rot!" said Wingate. "Who says so?"

"I do!" shouted Walker. "And I tell you I saw him pick up a packet of cigarettes in the quad, and he put them in his pocket and refused to hand them over to me. We've come here for them."

"He's mad!" said Coker, staring blankly at Walker. "I never picked up any cigarettes! If I did, I should shy the rubbish over the wall, not put it in my pocket! I'll—I'll eat all the cigarettes I've picked up in the quad."

"I saw him!" roared Walker.

"No need to yell, if you did," said Wingate. "If you've really got smokes about you, Coker, and you refused to give them up to a prefect, I'll take you straight to Dr. Looko for a flogging."

"I haven't!" roared Coker. "The idiot says Potter and Greene were there when I picked them up! Ask them!"

"Nothing of the kind!" said Potter and Greene together.

"Not an hour ago," panted Walker, "I came on the three of them by the path to the gates, and saw Coker—"

"Oh!" gasped Coker. "Do you mean when you asked me for my half-crown?"

"Your—your what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Potter and Greene suddenly. They understood James Walker's mistake now. How could they have failed? A half-crown was a packet of cigarettes, they did not know, but evidently he did.

"This isn't a laughing matter!" roared Wingate.

"Isn't it?" gasped Coker. Even Coker understood now. "Why, the silly ass must be off his chump! He saw me pick up something and put it in my pocket, and came up and asked me for it, and, of course, I wouldn't give him my half-crown—"

"What on earth do you mean?" snapped Wingate.

"I'd been showing Potter and Greene

a conjuring trick with a half-crown," explained Coker. "It dropped! I picked it up! Then Walker rushed up to me and told me to give it to him. Of course, I wouldn't! I never knew he fancied I'd picked up a packet of smokes! How should I?"

Loder and Carne exchanged a glance and looked at Walker. Walker's face was a study.

"Well, my hat!" said Wingate blankly. "Walker, did you see what it was that Coker picked up? Or you swear that it was a packet of smokes?"

"N-n-no," articulated Walker. "I—I thought it was! It—it was some small object in the grass—I—I thought—"

"You thought it was a packet of smokes, without even seeing it?" exclaimed Wingate in astonishment.

"Yes! You see, I—I—I—"

"Why on earth should you fancy it was smokes if you didn't see it?"

"I—I—I—"

"Walker was looking for a packet of smokes!" rapped howler upon the crowd in the passage. "He'd lost one."

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a roar.

"Silence!" yelled Wingate. "Clear off, you young sweeps! Walker, you seem to have made an idiotic mistake! Coker says it was a half-crown he picked up—"

"So it was," gasped Potter. "We saw that! Never saw any smokes! Ha, ha, ha! Walker will have to look further than this study for his smokes!"

"How was I to know he was after smokes?" gasped Coker. "He asked me for what I'd picked up, and I thought he was trying to pinch half-a-crown off me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder and Carne were siding out of the study with crimson faces. They realised that Walker had made a mistake, and made a fool of himself—and, worse still, fools of them! Obviously James Walker, in his state of nerves and terror, had jumped to a wrong conclusion—Coker knew no more about the missing packet of smokes than he knew about the man in the moon!

Loder and Carne showed an angry way through a yelling mob and disappeared. Walker stood overwhelmed with confusion and dismay.

"Well," rapped out Wingate. "are you satisfied now that Coker hasn't any smokes, Walker?"

"I—I—yes—I suppose so," stammered Walker. "I—I thought—"

"You owe Coker an apology!"

"I should think so," hooted Blundell. "Busting into a Fifth Form man's study and searching his pockets—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sorry, Coker!" gasped the wretched Walker. "I—I—I thought— Oh, sorry—"

He almost stumbled to the door.

Wingate, frowning, followed him out.

"Well," said Coker, "I never thought much of the Sixth! But this is the limit—the giddy limit! Looks to me as if Walker's been dropping smokes about, that's why he fancied I'd picked 'em up! What?"

"Looks jolly like it!" chuckled Potter.

"A packet, too!" said Coker. "My hat! Well, I never thought much of the Sixth—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Howls of laughter followed Walker as he went. Few fellows doubted how the matter stood. Walker's ridiculous mistake could only have arisen from the fact that he was looking for lost cigarettes when Coker picked up the half-crown! That was obvious, even to Coker! It was plain to everybody—including Wingate, the head prefect of Greyfriars. Walker's quest of the lost smokes had only resulted, so far, in

advertising to nearly all Greyfriars that he had had cigarettes in his possession, and had dropped them somewhere! Which certainly was not what Walker wanted!

Harry Wharton & Co. went back to the Remove passage chuckling. It had been quite an entertainment. There were sounds of merriment on all sides as the crowd dispersed. But Walker was not feeling merry as he went. Wingate went with him, and it was clear that Wingate had something to say before he left him—something that Walker certainly did not want to hear, but which he had to hear. The way of the transgressor was hard!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Dupont's Discovery!

"**M**ON DIEU! Zat cochon!" murmured Napoleon Dupont. Nap rubbed his head ruefully.

That head was still singing a little from the angry smack Walker of the Sixth had bestowed on it.

Walker had forgotten the incident long ago. Nap had not forgotten. A smack on the head was one of those things which it is more blessed to give than to receive. It was likely to be sooner forgotten by the smacker than by the smacked, so to speak.

"Zat peeg!" groaned Dupont. His ear was still burning, and felt very painful.

He was deeply incensed. Ordinary punishment, such as caning on the hands, or "bending over" and taking six, was all in the day's work, and Nap could stand it as patiently as any other fellow. But a smack on the head was an indignity—an insult—deeply wounding to Nap's sensitive spirit. Even fags in the Second Form did not have their ears boxed!

Nap was full of resentment; and he would have given a year's pocket-money to be able to stand up to Walker of the Sixth and give him the thrashing he really deserved. But that was only one of the happy things that could be dreamed about, but never done. Sixth Form men could not be thrashed by juniors—even had it been physically practicable, it was the "sack" for hitting a prefect. Nap's proud spirit had to chafe under the indignity; while he turned over in his mind many wild schemes—all of them futile—for getting his own back on the bully of the Sixth!

Tea had been given in the Remove studies. Bolsover major, Nap's study-mate in Study No. 10, was in the Remove passage laughing over the scene in Coker's study, with a crowd of other fellows. They were discussing whether anything would happen to Coker for his tussle with the prefects. The general opinion was that in the circumstances Walker & Co. would be glad to say nothing more about it. Nap did not join the fellows in the passage. He had a hundred lines to do for Walker—insult added to injury, as it were. He would rather have given Walker "one in the eye"; but it was not a matter of choice, and Nap, rubbing his head and mumbling uncomplimentary remarks about "peegs" and "rottairs," looked for his Virgil.

Virgil was among many other books on a very untidy bookshelf. The neat and tidy French junior often put that bookshelf in order; but Bolsover major would soon make it untidy again; like everything else in the study. Nap sorted over books in search of the one he wanted—and thus it was that he came on

a small cardboard packet that lay among the books on the shelf.

He gave a sniff as he picked it up. It was a packet of cigarettes—the sort of thing that ought not to have been in any study in the Remove. Bolsover major sometimes smoked a cigarette; not because he wanted to, but to show that he jolly well could if he jolly well liked! But it was unusually careless of Bolsover to leave his smokes about the study like this. Either or both of the owners of the study might have bagged a “whopping” if the contraband goods had been spotted there by the eye of authority.

“Ce diable!” murmured Nap. “Zat silly ass!”

He took it for granted that the packet belonged to Bolsover. Naturally, it did not cross his mind that a fat junior, sliding up the passage, had tossed that packet through the open doorway, and that it had happened to land on the bookshelf opposite the door. Nap knew nothing about Billy Bunter's adventures that afternoon with a packet of smokes.

But as he picked it up and looked at it a change came over the French junior's face.

The crash of the packet, when Bunter had hurled it in, had knocked it open, almost bursting it. Three or four cigarettes had dropped out on the shelf, and the cardboard flap at the end of the packet was open.

On that blank flap there was pencilled writing. Nap stared at it with wide-open eyes. This is what he read:

“Saucy Sam, two o'clock, Wapshot, Saturday.”

“Mon Dieu!” murmured Nap.

It was not Bolsover major's scrawling hand that had pencilled that note. It was nothing like Bolsover's “fist,” which

Nap, of course, knew well. He could see that it was an older fellow's hand; and he had seen it before, though he did not recall whose it was at the moment. But one thing he was certain about: it was not a Remove fellow's writing.

Quite puzzled and mystified, Nap stood with the packet in his hand, staring at that tell-tale note pencilled on the cardboard flap.

He knew little enough of racing matters; but he could see of course, that it was a sporting “tip.” Some fellow—apparently a senior—had made that precious note—about a horse that was to run in the two o'clock race at Wapshot on Saturday.

It did not belong to Bolsover, or to any Remove junior. That was certain. How it had got into Studz No. 10 was a mystery to Nap.

But, noting the burst state of the packet, and the smokes scattered from it, he could guess that it had been flung where he had found it—and it flung hard, too!

Evidently some fellow had passed the study and pitched it in—why and wherefore he could not imagine.

But though he could not guess how the packet had come there, there was something else that Nap could guess. Slowly a grin dawned on his face.

The scene in Coker's study was fresh in his mind. All the fellows were saying that Walker must have lost a packet of cigarettes, to account for his extraordinary mistake!

This was the packet!

Nap could hardly doubt that. And the pencilled note showed why Walker was so desperately anxious, and disturbed about it. If it was in Walker's hand—as he could hardly doubt—it was

enough to get James Walker the “sack,” if it came before Dr. Looka.

“Mon Dieu!” murmured Nap.

He grinned.

Walker had given him that savage smack on the head because he was disturbed about having lost this precious packet! His head was still aching from the smack—and the packet was in his hands.

He chuckled.

No wonder Walker had not found it! Some fellow had picked it up and thrown it into Nap's study—why, was a mystery—but the fact was clear! And now Nap had it!

“Zat peeg!” grinned Nap. “Zat coohon, he smack me zo head! I zink zat I make zat peeg stand up! Mais oui! Mon Dieu! if zo Head sees zis, it is zo ordair of zo shoe for zat peeg! I zink he will have grand fear! Ha, ha!”

Napoleon Dupont stood in deep thought for some minutes! He held Walker's fate in the hollow of his hand!

He had no idea of betraying the wretched sportsman of the Sixth! It was no business of his to get a Greyfriars man sacked. In other circumstances, Nap, who was a good-natured fellow, would have conveyed that dangerous packet to Walker's study and left it there for him to find. But that was not his intention now. He had been pondering over ways and means for making the bully of the Sixth “sit up.” The ways and means were in his hands now—in the shape of that packet!

Clutching, Napoleon emptied out the cigarettes. He twisted them up in a sheet of foolscap—to be returned to the owner! He did not want such things in his study! But the cardboard packet he very carefully tucked up in his desk. He was not parting with that!

Putting the cigarettes into his pocket, he strolled out of the study. He was not thinking of doing those hundred lines for Walker now.

“Hullo! Done your impot?” asked Bolsover major, as the French junior came out of Studz No. 10.

“Non, mon ami! I zink zat I will not do zem!” said Dupont.

“Hold on, old French bean!” said Bolsover. “You'd better! Walker's in a fearful temper to-day—he would be glad to take it out of somebody!”

“Zat for Walker!” answered Nap, snapping his fingers. “I care nozzings for zat peeg Walker!”

And Nap walked away, leaving his study-mate staring. He went down the Remove staircase, grinning.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Sword of Damocles!

THE next mornin' there was one fellow at Greyfriars School who looked as if he had accumulated most of the troubles of the universe on his shoulders.

That fellow was James Walker of the Sixth Form.

The bright May morning, which had a cheering effect on nearly everybody else, did not cheer Walker.

At breakfast-time when the May sunshine streamed in at the old windows of Hall, it showed up Walker's scowling and worried face to great advantage.

He sat at the high table with the other prefects; and a good many glances were cast in that direction.

Long before this all the school knew about Walker!

Everybody knew or, at least, felt certain, that he had had smokes, and

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dropped them about the school somewhere; and nobody doubted that Wingate, the head prefect, had given him a "royal" jaw on the subject.

Fellows said that Walker was lucky not to be reported to the Head. Prefects were supposed to set an example of conduct to the school—and certainly not an example of rowdiness.

But if Walker felt lucky he did not look lucky! He looked worried, nervous, bad-tempered.

After brekker, when he went out into the quad, Loder joined him—Carne giving him the cold shoulder. And Loder had nothing pleasant to say.

"You silly ass!" was what Loder said, in a low voice. "Do you want all Greyfriars to know that you're afraid of gettin' bunked? If not, you'd better pull yourself together a little!"

And Loder walked away without waiting for an answer.

Loder and Carne were fed-up. The ridiculous scene in Coker's study the previous day had been rather too much for them.

They had exceeded their powers, as prefects, in handling Coker, to search him for that wretched cigarette packet—and all the time it had been only an idiotic mistake, due to Walker's rattled nerves! They had to let the matter drop—to let Horace Coker get away with his resistance to authority.

Coker had actually punched prefects—and they could do nothing! So far from reporting Coker's mischievous conduct to the headmaster, they were only too glad that it was not to come before the Head at all! They had been, as it turned out, utterly in the wrong—and, naturally, they were extremely annoyed with Walker for having placed them in such a position.

In the Sixth Form Room that morning Walker tried to pull himself together under Dr. Locke's eyes. But he made continual mistakes; and he noted that the Head glanced at him several times.

He could not help thinking continually of the awful possibility of being called before the chief beak, to answer for his folly. Indeed, it was more than a possibility—it was probable—to the wretched Walker it seemed nearly certain.

He had searched nearly every inch of the ground, within gates and without gates, without finding that lost packet. The only explanation was that it had already been picked up. Coker hadn't picked it up—he knew that now. But somebody had! The power was in somebody's hands to get Walker "carpeted" by the Head, and in all likelihood turned out of Greyfriars! It was really awful to think of.

At dinner Walker looked almost haggard.

It was all very well for Loder to advise him to pull himself together. How was a fellow to pull himself together, with a sword of Damocles suspended over his head in this way?

Who had picked up that wretched packet? Not a beak—or Walker would have heard about it long since. Not another prefect, or equally certainly he would have heard of it. Who, then?

Perhaps the fellow, whoever he was, hadn't noticed that note written on the flap. Perhaps if he had noticed it, he hadn't recognised Walker's "fist." Perhaps he had already smoked the smokes and thrown the packet away. Perhaps—and perhaps—and perhaps! Walker's mind was full of perplexities!

The wretched thing might be no longer in existence, and he might be tormenting himself for nothing. On the other hand, it might be just on the point of turning up!

After dinner Walker went to his study. Plenty of fellows had looked at him—and to Walker's mind, in his present worried and nervous state, it seemed as if all Greyfriars looked at him, and kept on looking at him, and looked at nothing else.

He slammed the door of his study, with a slam that rang along the passage. He flung himself into his armchair, yawning.

Then he noticed a little paper packet that lay on the table. It was something twisted in a sheet of foolscap.

He had not placed it there. Somebody must have slipped into his study and put it on his table. Wondering what it was, he picked it up, and untwisted the foolscap.

A dozen cigarettes dropped on the table.

Walker stared at them. Who, in the name of all that was mysterious had brought a dozen cigarettes to his study and left them there?

Slowly it dawned on him. That packet he had lost had been a packet of a dozen. These cigarettes were of the same brand—Golden Gorse.

Walker's jaw dropped as he understood.

These were his smokes—the contents of the missing packet! There could be no other explanation.

Somebody had found it, and had returned him the contents in this extraordinary way—keeping the packet itself!

That meant that the "somebody" knew to whom the packet belonged—had recognised Walker's "fist" on it!

"Good gad!" breathed Walker, in utter dismay.

He gathered up the cigarettes with trembling fingers. He put them out of sight in a drawer. His face was like chalk when he left his study. Gwynne and Sykes of the Sixth were in the passage, and they looked at him, and exchanged a glance.

"You fellows seen anybody go to my study?" asked Walker.

"No!"

"Somebody's been there—some—some fag, playing a trick! Sure you've seen nobody?"

"Quite!"

Walker went on his way. He questioned two or three more fellows; but nobody seemed to have seen anyone go to his study. Obviously the visitor had carefully selected a moment when nobody was about.

He looked in the quad for Loder and Carne. They walked away when they saw him coming, apparently not anxious for his company. Walker hurried after them.

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry, as he passed the Remove fellows. "Walker looks awfully sick!"

"The sickliness is terrific," said Harroo Jamset Ram Singh. "Perhaps he has found his ridiculous cigarettes and smoked them!"

The juniors chuckled at that suggestion.

"What on earth's the matter with the fellow?" asked Harry Wharton. "Even if his blessed smokes turned up, nobody could prove that they belonged to him. Everybody jolly well knows—but that's Walker's own fault! Nobody could know if he hadn't made such a fuss!"

"It's a jolly old mystery!" said Bob. "Certainly it seemed mysterious enough—to fellows who knew nothing about Walker's fist being on that miserable packet!"

Loder and Carne walked more and more quickly. In the present circumstances they preferred to keep clear of Walker. But he was not to be kept clear of. He broke into a run and overtook them.

"Look here!" he panted.

"Oh, ring off!" snapped Loder, driven to stop at last. "Look here, Walker! Don't make such a dashed fool of yourself! Have a little nerve!"

"I've got the cigarettes!"

"Oh! Then it's all right?"

"No, it isn't!" groaned Walker, and he explained how he had found the cigarettes on his study table.

"Well, my hat!" said Carne. "That's a jolly queer! They must be the same smokes, of course! Somebody's got the packet they were in. Some cheeky fag pulling your leg, old man."

"But who?" groaned Walker. "If I knew who it was, I'd jolly soon get that packet off him! But who?"

"Must be a fag—a senior wouldn't play a silly trick like that. You'd better find out who it is, somehow."

"How?" hissed Walker.

"What's the good of asking me?"

Loder and Carne walked off again. Walker had no help to expect from them. He stared after them bitterly. He realised that they preferred to keep clear of a fellow who was in danger of coming up before the Head. They did not want to be dragged into it. As a matter of fact, it was not from his sporting friends, but from a fellow who was not his friend, that he received the help he needed. Wingate tapped him on the arm, as he stood staring after his "friends."

Walker jumped.

"Oh! You!" he gasped, looking round and seeing the Greyfriars captain. He hardly knew what he had feared—perhaps the sight of the Head, with a grim and frowning brow.

"What the dickens is the matter with you, Walker?" asked Wingate. "You seem to be trying to get everybody's eye on you. I told you yesterday what I thought of you, so I won't tell you again. But I'll tell you this—the sooner this affair is forgotten, the better. You seem to be doing your best to keep it alive."

"I've got to find that packet!" muttered Walker desperately. "It—it's got something—something on it—that lets out that it belonged to me!"

"Oh!" Wingate gave a whistle, and his face became very grave. "That means that you may have to come up before the Head about your filthy smokes—a jolly serious matter for a prefect!"

Wingate did not guess how much more serious than that the matter was, and Walker did not tell him.

"Well, I think I can help you out, though I can't say I think you deserve it," said the Greyfriars captain. "I fancy it was young Bunter of the Remove that picked up your rubbish."

Walker started.

"Bunter? Why—how—"

"I mean, I spotted him in the quad yesterday with a packet of cigarettes in his paw," explained Wingate. "I thought, then, that the young ass had been smuggling smokes into the school, and went after him. But now I know you'd dropped a packet, it looks more likely that he picked it up. I gave him six; but he had chucked the packet out of sight somewhere—and I didn't get it. You can ask him."

Walker panted with relief. It seemed to him as if a heavy weight had been lifted from his heart.

"Oh! Thanks!" he gasped. "I—I'll see the kid, and—ask him. I say, you've done me a good turn, Wingate. So long as you don't let it happen again, that's all right!"

Walker hurried off to the House to look for Bunter. But the bell was beginning to ring for school, and when

he sighted the Owl, Bunter was going to the Form-room with it, and the Remove. Walker had to leave it till after class—and it was not a happy Walker that sat with the Sixth that afternoon, with the sword of Damocles still suspended over his head.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Beastly for Bunter!

"BUNTER! Bunter! Bunter!" Bob Cherry's voice rang along the Remove passage. "Here, old chap!" Billy Bunter rolled out of Study No. 7. "Ready, old fellow! Where is it?" "Eh? Where's what?" asked Bob. "The feed! In your study, or Wharton's?"

Bob Cherry chuckled. It was nearly tea-time, and Bunter's fat thoughts, of course, were running on that most important of all matters, the next meal-time. Bob's were not.

"Fatted! Walker wants you," said Bob. "He's told me to send you to his study."

Bunter's face fell. "Oh, blow Walker!" he grunted. "What does Walker want?"

"Forgot to ask him. But you'd better cut. He's not in a good temper."

"You don't think he wants me to tea?" asked Bunter.

"Well, he might—but he didn't look like it," chuckled Bob. "Have you got any lines for him?"

"No! Froggy has—and he hasn't done them, either! Are you sure it's no he wants? I fancy Dupont had better go."

"Well, he may have meant Dupont, but he said Bunter," grinned Bob. "I and I shouldn't keep him waiting, if I were you."

Billy Bunter grunted discontentedly. He did not want to go to a prefect's study—it was never on record that any junior ever did want to go to a prefect's study! Still, he realised that he had better go—and he went. He approached Walker's quarters with deep misgiving.

Walker of the Sixth had been in a rotten temper lately—and when he was in a rotten temper, he was rather a brute. All the Remove knew about his smacking Dupont's head the day before. Dupont's head, of course, did not matter—but Bunter's head was rather important, and he did not want it smacked.

He tapped gingerly at Walker's door, and opened it a few inches and blinked in through his big spectacles.

"I say, Walker! It wasn't me!" said Bunter hurriedly.

"Come in, Bunter," said Walker quite amiably.

Surprised, Bunter rolled in. Walker gave him quite a good-tempered nod. He was not feeling good-tempered. He was feeling disposed to pick up his ashplant and make it ring on Bunter's tight trousers. But what Walker chiefly wanted was to get back that tell-tale packet. Thrashing the fag who had picked it up in the quad might come later.

"Shut the door, kid," said Walker, with laboured good-humour. Bunter rather unwillingly shut the door.

"I'm not going to lick you, for playing tricks in my study," went on Walker, with an almost ghastly smile. "I can take a little joke—ha, ha! No harm done, kid! That's all right."

"But—but I haven't played any trick in your study, Walker!" gasped Bunter. "I haven't been in your study."

"I tell you I'm not going to whop you for it," said Walker. "That's all

right, Bunter. Now, look here. You picked up a packet of cigarettes in the quad yesterday afternoon."

"I didn't!" gasped Bunter. Bunter and truth had long been strangers.

"Wingate whopped you for it—"

"Oh! I say, Walker, you're not going to take that up, when I've had six from Wingate—"

"Not at all," said Walker. "That's all right, Bunter! I happen to want the packet, that's all. I don't mean that it was mine!" he added. "I had—hence—taken it from a Fourth Form kid, and—"

and happened to drop it, as—as I was taking it to Capper. As I—I've mentioned it to Capper, I've got to produce it. See?"

Bunter saw—more than Walker wanted him to see. Bunter was not likely to believe that Walker was so anxious about that packet because he had taken it from a junior who was to be reported to his Form master.

"I mean you mean no harm in picking it up," went on Walker smoothly. "You just happened to see it, and picked it up, that's all."

"Yes, that's all, Walker," said Bunter. "Wingate jumped on me, you know, and made out that I'd got smokes, just because he saw me with it in my hand. I hadn't had time to smoke any—I mean, I wasn't going to smoke them. I never heard Wingate calling to me—and I dodged into the House because I had some lines to do for Gwynne, and—"

and—"

"Well, give me the packet."

"I—I haven't got it."

Walker's brow darkened. His hand strayed towards his ashplant. But he withdrew it.

"Now, look here, Bunter," he said. "I found the cigarettes on my table, where you put them. But I want the packet they were in. I'm not going to punish you, if you hand it over at once."

Bunter's eyes grew round behind his spectacles.

"I—I never put any cigarettes on your table, Walker!" he stuttered. "I—I haven't been in your study at all."

"You young rotter!" Walker's good humour dropped from him like a cloak. He jumped up, and grasped his cane. "Give me that packet at once! Do you hear? I'll thrash you till you can't crawl if you don't hand it over."

"Oh crickey! I—I haven't got it—leggo!" yelled Bunter as Walker grasped him by the collar. "Yaroooh!"

Whack! whack!

"You-ow-ow! Whoop! I haven't got it!" shrieked Bunter. "I never picked it up in the quad yesterday. I haven't seen it! I don't know anything about it! I haven't touched it, and I throw it away when Wingate was after me—"

whoop!"

"You threw it away?" exclaimed Walker.

"Oh! Wow! Leggo! Yes! Wow!"

"Where?" hissed Walker.

"Oh lor! I chucked it into a Remove study," gasped Bunter. "I—I forgot about it afterwards. I didn't know it was yours! I—I don't know where you smacked it in your study, Walker, like most of the fellows—wow! Leggo!"

"If that's the truth, which study did you throw it into?"

"I forget—"

Whack!

"Yarop! I—I think it was Bolsover's study—wow! Yes, I remember now it was No. 10—vow-ow-ow! Leggo!"

Walker held the terrified Owl at arms-length, staring at his fat, scared face. He realised that Bunter was telling the truth. It had not been the Owl of the Remove who had placed those cigarettes so mysteriously on Walker's table.

Bunter knew nothing about that wretched packet, since he had got rid of it when Wingate was pursuing him.

He released the spluttering Owl.

"Then—it was left in Bolsover's study!" he asked.

"Oh! Yes! Owl!" groaned Bunter. "Has he found it there?"

"I don't know! I forgot all about the rotten thing! I suppose they must have found it lying about the study."

"You can cut!" said Walker, throwing open the door.

Billy Bunter was only too anxious to cut. But Walker stood beside the door, with the cane in his hand. Bunter had a well-founded apprehension that he was going to get a lick from that cane as he cut.

"I—I say, Walker—" he stammered.

"Cut!" roared Walker.

Bunter made a desperate bound through the doorway. As he had so fearfully anticipated, Walker whacked out with the cane as he bounded. It landed with a terrific swipe, and helped Bunter into the passage. He disappeared with a terrific yell.

Walker was done with Bunter! He had to deal with Bolsover now—at least, so he supposed! And his next proceeding was to consider how he was to deal with Bolsover major of the Remove.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Walker Has to Walk!

"O! Listen to the band!" chanted Bob Cherry.

"You-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Whisper, and I shall hear!" suggested Frank Nugent.

"Wow! Wow!"

"Licked?" asked Harry Wharton. "Owl! Wow! Yes—and for nothing!"

groaned Billy Bunter.

"It's a hard life, for really nice boys at school!" remarked Bob Cherry gravely. "Always getting licked—and always for nothing! What was the nothing you did this time, Bunter?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really? Cherry! Wow! That beast Walker! Owl! I couldn't help him losing his filthy cigarettes! Wow! I jolly well wish the hawk would catch him smoking! Whooh! Laying into a fellow for nothing! Oh crickey!"

Billy Bunter came along the Remove passage, looking as if he was putting in active practice as a contortionist! He writhed and he wriggled; he wriggled and he writhed. And he announced his arrival by sounds of woe that preceded him along the passage.

Bunter seemed to be in a lamentable state, and his lamentations beat those of ancient Job to a frazzle.

A good many Remove fellows were coming up to tea, so Bunter had quite a large audience. He blinked round dolorously for sympathy.

"You fellows know I never had Walker's cigarettes," he groaned. "You were eye-witnesses, as you saw me with them—"

"Oh, Christopher Columbus!"

"And you know that beast Wingate spotted me, and got after me," groaned Bunter. "Making out they were mine, you know, when I'd only picked them up in the quad. I wish now I'd gone and handed them to him when he called me. But I didn't hear him call me—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I had six, hadn't I?" demanded Bunter warily. "Then Walker goes and rakes it all up again. He makes out I put the cigarettes on his study table, and kept the packet they were in! As if I should, you know!"



Blundell grabbed Walker and Carne by their collars and heaved them away from Coker. Then he gave Loder a shove. "What the thump are you up to?" roared Blundell. "Are you ragging in a study like a gang of Lower Fourth chaps?" "Coker's got smokes here," gasped Loder, "and he's refused to give them up!"

I told him I'd never seen the rotten things, and that I chucked them into Bolsover's study—and like a rotten cad, he wouldn't take my word—"

"Now I wonder why he doubted Bunter's word?" said Bob. "Can you fellows account for it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the fellows. "Whacking me right and left," said Bunter. "I wish Coker had blacked his eye yesterday! I'd jolly well thrash the cad myself, only—it's rather bad form to wallop a prefect—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removites. The idea of Billy Bunter walloping Walker of the Sixth seemed to bring down the House.

"You can cackle," said Bunter. "I've been frightfully whopped, all because that rotter is afraid the Head will nail him! Blow him and his leastly smokes! My belief is that he's going off his chump! He owned up that he'd got the cigarettes back, and he makes out that he wants the packet they were in. What for, I'd like to know! I say, you fellows, do you think Walker's mad?"

"I zink he have a verree big fright!" chuckled Napoleon Dupont. "Zat Walker has grand fear, I zink."

"Can't make the fellow out," said Harry Wharton. "He's making the thing the talk of the school, at this rate! The Head will be asking him to his study for a heart-to-heart talk about smokes, if he goes on like this."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the voice of Bolsover major, from No. 10. "I've got to get this dashed exercise done for Quelch before tea, and how's a man to work with all that cackle going on?"

"Alors! Taisez-vous, mes amis!" said Nap. "Zat noise interrupt my shun!"

"I say, you fellows, I'm suffering fearful agony," said Billy Bunter pathetically.

"That beastly Walker whopped me right and left! Like beating a carpet, you know! Grabbed me! He was absolutely ferocious! All because he fancied I had a silly card-board packet with nothing in it! My belief is that he's mad—mad as a hatter! I think somebody ought to tip the Head that Walker's going potty—"

"Shurrup!" said Bob Cherry hastily, as the figure of James Walker of the Sixth rose into view on the Remove staircase.

But Bunter had his back to the stairs and did not see Walker coming. Neither was shutting up in Bunter's line.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I tell you Walker's potty—simply potty—springing at a fellow like a tiger, and grabbing him and laying into him with a cane; and all about a silly cigarette packet! What does he want the packet for if he's got the cigarettes? I wish the Head would drop into his study and catch him smoking—"

"Quiet!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"He's coming!"

"Eh?"

Billy Bunter spun round and blinked in horror at Walker of the Sixth, who was not only coming, but had come!

"Oh erikie!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, Walker, I—I wasn't speaking about you, you know! I—I don't wish that the Head would catch you smoking in your study, Walker, and—Whoop!"

Walker had his ashpit in his hand. One lick from that ashpit made Bunter jump clear of the floor, with a yell that woke every echo in the Remove studies.

"Wow! Yaroooh!" roared Bunter, and he bolted.

Walker gave the juniors a scowl, tramped into Study No. 10, and threw the door shut after him. The juniors stared at the closed door.

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "He's after those blessed smokes in your study, Nap! Bunter says he told him he chucked them in there."

"I zink he find zem not!" said Nap, grinning.

In Study No. 10 Bolsover major was at work on an impot, which he had left till almost the last minute, in his usual way. He glared up as Walker came in; then, seeing who it was, he stared. He could imagine no reason why Walker of the Sixth should come there.

"Want anything, Walker?" he asked gruffly.

"Yes," said Walker grimly. "I want the cigarette packet that Bunter threw into this study yesterday."

Bolsover stared at him blankly.

"Did he? I never knew it, if he did. I've seen nothing of it."

Walker breathed hard.

"You found it here, Bolsover. You put the cigarettes on my table and kept the packet! I'm here for it! Hand it over!"

"Blessed if I know what you're talking about!" said Bolsover major, quite mystified. "If Bunter chucked any smokes into this study, I dare say they're lying about somewhere. I haven't found them."

"Will you give me that packet?" asked Walker, between his teeth.

"How can I give you a packet when I haven't got it?" roared Bolsover.

"Look here! I've got to get this work

(Continued on page 16.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY, No. 1,318.

Mrs. Herald

W HARRY WHARTON.

EXTRA
GOOD
EDITION

May 20th, 1933.

MORE LEISURE FOR SCHOOLBOYS!

Mass Meeting in the Rag on Tuesday next at 8 p.m. Harold Skinner, Esq., President of the Greyfriars Early Closing Association, will speak on "OUR IDEAL: 6½ Days' Holiday per Week!" ROLL UP!

SEE THEM

ink of Dick Penfold

by Piet Delaney

weak that I am a lover of England. That enough, one of the things that has that in England I have met fellows like

d of the best type of Englishman. The obbler, he overcame tremendous handicaps to get to Greyfriars. Having won his re, he fought with equal grit to wipe out ed against him. That he succeeded in dy who comes into contact with Remove o-day, as a matter of fact, is one of the Farm, and even those who derided ays are glad now to claim him as a friend.

ing that he's a swot. But he's far from eled, round-shouldered fellow which that To look at, he's a typical bright-eyed and to talk to he's a cheery, good-natured stible supply of humour.

s already gained considerable success as a e he is, in addition, an artist of exceptional ture for Dick Penfold. And nobody will e him achieve it than myself.

Little Letters

ed into a sooty booby-trap-to-day, to my put it in more intelligible English, on my omichitary apartment-to-day, an aryle- ricipitated on to my cerebral appendage mentum, thereby occasioning me severe and inordinate excitation of the audior- eveloping me moreover in a fuliginous fluid d.

at "the ally ass who did it ought to know ore correctly, the purpose of his remark erate individual responsible for the con- e of this fuliginous practical pleasantry's ents should act with more discriminate rein I find myself in complete accordance u colleague.

Setaceously yours,
ALONZO TODD.

e this over a mere pail of sooty water seems e table!—ED.)

PETER'S PLEASANT PICNIC

Day Out for Study No. 7.

Peter Todd has always boasted that when Study No. 7 do things they do things properly. He ran a river picnic for No. 7 last week, and that picnic certainly was all that a picnic should be.

By that we mean that he chose the kind of day that looked fine at first and ended up in a jolly good downpour. He allowed Hunter to pack the hamper and thus made sure that nearly everything was eaten before the day began.

He tried unsuccessfully to make Dutton understand what was "on," Dutton remaining firmly convinced throughout that they were all going somewhere to read "Pickwick."

He grabbed his fellow-

picnickers by the arms and pushed them down the stairs, sending Mr. Quelch flying and thus ensuring likings all round.

He marched them down to the river at last and chose a boat with which a gang of fags had been tampering. Several leaks became noticeable very quickly and the trip was awfully exciting in consequence.

He landed in a wood up river



Strange, But True

We found Alonzo Todd using a feather duster on a set of chessmen in the Rag last night.

"Clenning 'em up, 'Lonzy?" we asked.

"No, as a matter of fact, I am endeavouring to study a hobby recommended by my Cousin Peter. He said it would keep my mind occupied."

"He told you to dust chessmen for a hobby?" we gasped.

"Well, he didn't put it in those words," 'Lonzy said, returning enthusiastically to his work. "What he said exactly was that I ought to learn how to tickle the ivories."

I presumed that this was what he meant. Have I misunderstood him, do you think?"

We didn't reply. We couldn't. 'Lonzy had left us speechless!

at the exact spot where Ponsonby & Co., of Highcliffe, were enjoying a quiet little game of banker.

Having ascertained that Pon & Co. outnumbered his party, Peter sternly ordered them off, backing up his request with the intimation that unless they buzzed off quickly, they'd all get thick ears.

This resulted in a very exhilarating scarp and thick ears all round—for Peter Todd & Co.

And then came the rain!

As we say, it was all that a picnic should be. Study No. 7 certainly can show the world how to do things when they really get going!

TEA FOR TWO POUNDS

How to be Economical

We've been picking up a few hints on Economical Meals, from the ladies' pages of the newspapers. It never struck us till we read them how absurdly extravagant most of us are. We often trot over to the tuckshop and buy a currant cake for 2s. when, according to those Economy Hints, we could easily make one for about 13s. Ridiculous, isn't it?

What's wrong with most of us is that we don't use up the scraps in making fresh dishes. Half the stuff we buy is thrown away as waste, when, by spending a trifle of 10s. or so on it, we could easily turn it into a nice palatable dish worth at least half-a-crown.

Take bread, for instance. You always are always throwing away half-loaves of bread because they're stale. Why not keep your half-loaf instead? If you cut it into slices, toast them, add a pint of whipped cream and boiled, crushed grapes with a half-pound of hothouse strawberries, you can make it into a nice little titbit to go with your tea. The whole thing won't cost you £2, and you'll have the satisfaction of knowing that you haven't wasted your bread.

To make it more attractive still, add some ice-cream. Ice-cream keeps well in a small refrigerator, which shouldn't run you into more than £20.

It nearly broke our hearts last week when we saw Squiff shying the remains of a tin of baked beans at an unwelcome caller. If Squiff had only paused and thought it out, he would have realised that by crushing the beans, adding 1 lb. of fresh salmon, shredded asparagus, and forced mushrooms, being in shape, mixing with 1 doz. new laid eggs, rolling and baking, he would have had some quite tasty fish-cakes for his supper.

And they wouldn't have cost him more than, say, £3.

It's high time you fellows woke up to the fact that half the tuck you buy is wasted at present. Chuck it, and start economising instead. On the lines we've indicated you can easily cut out all waste—and you won't be more than a fiver a week out of pocket!

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!



Hunter announced that he intended to become a second W. G. Grace, and practised assiduously at the nets for a whole week. He gave up then—having missed every ball bowled to him!



Report de Courcy, the "Caterpillar" of Highcliffe, is the sleepest fellow on record; but at football or cricket he plays up like a Trojan, to please his chum. Courtenay.



Coker recently attempted to swim the Channel, starting from Pez Bay. The Pez lifeboat fetched him back—exhausted, but protesting that he was only waiting for the turn of the tide!

Scotsman's Unusual Illness

We regret to announce that Ogilvy is at present laid up in the school sanatorium. Following the loss of a halfpenny on his study floor, Ogilvy spent eight hours crawling about the study before finding the missing coin. Soon after his ordeal he complained of a feeling of weakness in the legs, and within an hour he had been transferred to sanmy.

His complaint has been diagnosed as housemaid's knee.

Among his theatrical props, Wibley has a collection of artificial limbs.

We've heard before that he often lends Dick Rake a hand.



(Continued from page 15.)

done, and—and— Leggo! Oh, my hat! Hands off, you rotten bully!" Walker grabbed Bolsover major by the collar and jerked him off his chair. His cane fairly rang on him.

Bolsover major bellowed with pain and wrath.

"Leggo! Stop! You rotter! Oh, my hat! Leggo!"

"Whack, whack, whack, whack!" "Now give me that packet, you young scoundrel!" hissed Walker. "Sharp's the word! I'm not waiting! Hand it over instantly!"

"I've not got it—"

"Whack, whack, whack!" "I'll hack your shins!" yelled Bolsover desperately. "Let me go, you bully! You rotter! Oh crakes!"

The door of the study flew open. Napoleon Dupont, with blazing eyes, rushed in. Walker stared round at him awestruck.

"Get out, Dupont! I—"

"Jamais!" exclaimed Nap. "Laissez mon shun! Let Bolsover alone, you rotter! It is not Bolsover that finds your smokes—it is I! C'est moi, moi qui vous parle!"

"Oh!" gasped Walker.

He released Bolsover major, who backed away, grunting and gasping. He made a stride towards Napoleon Dupont, his eyes glinting. He had found the right party at last!

"You—you young rascal! Give me that packet at once!"

A crowd of juniors stared in at the doorway breathlessly. Walker was in a state of fury, and obviously could hardly keep his hands off the French junior. But Nap faced him with perfect coolness.

"I have not your cigarettes, Walker," he answered. "I put zaim on ze table in your study."

"You kept the packet they were in!" gasped Walker. "That's what I want! Give it to me at once!"

"Mais ce paquet était sans valeur—zai packet he have no value," said Nap coolly. "Vy for you vant zai packet, Walker?"

"I've told you to hand it over! I'll take the skin off your back—"

"Allons donc!" said Nap cheerfully. "Take off zat skin and I go to ze headmaster! I zink zat perhaps he like verree much to see zat packet."

Walker seemed about to spring at the French junior like a tiger. But he stopped dead.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked on in utter wonder. Why Walker wanted an utterly valueless cardboard packet was a mystery to them. And why he did not collar Nap and whop him with the ashplant was another mystery.

But Walker did not. Nap's words had sent a chill of terror to his very soul. If the Head saw that packet, with Walker's fat on it—

There was a long moment of silence. Then Walker spoke again in a husky voice.

"Give me that packet, Dupont! I— I want it very particularly!"

"Je le sais bien!" said Nap. "But I give him not! If you wish zat I give him to ze headmaster, I give him. To you I give him not."

"You young rascal!" roared Walker, his temper breaking out. "I'll thrash you till you can't crawl! I'll—"

He made a stride at Nap and grasped him by the collar. "Now—"

"Zrass away!" said Nap. "Zrass if you wish, you rotter! And zen you go and pack you ze box to go home."

The ashplant, lifted to whack, dropped. Walker's nerveless fingers fell away from Nap's collar. Those words were a proof that Dupont had seen the written words on the flap of the cardboard box, that he knew that they were in Walker's handwriting, and that he realised all that it meant to Walker if the Head saw what he had seen. Walker understood only too clearly that his fate was in the hands of the French junior, that Napoleon Dupont. If he liked, could get him turfed out of Greyfriars! He stood gasping and glaring. Nap lifted his hand and pointed to the door.

"Allez-vous-en!" he said. "Zai is to say, get out!"

"Wha-a-a?" gasped Walker. "Get out of my study!" said Nap. "You are a rotter, Walker, and I like not rottains in my study! Go away at vunce viz you!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. The Remove fellows gazed on, spell-bound.

With lifted hand a Remove junior ordered a Sixth Form prefect out of his study! It was time for the skies to fall! Walker, for a moment or two, stood rooted to the floor. Then, to the utter amazement of the juniors, he turned and walked out of the study! With a crimson face, he pushed through the amazed juniors and went down the passage to the stairs. And the Removites watched him go, wondering whether they were dreaming.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Loder Tries It On!

GERALD LODER gave an angry grunt.

"Look here, Walker—" he began.

Walker came into Loder's study, and closed the door after him. Loder's look was far from welcoming. Walker felt, rather than sat, on the corner of the table, and Loder eyed him surlily.

"What's the latest?" he asked sarcastically. "Have you dropped the 'Sporting Times' in the Head's study this time?"

"Don't be a fool!" Walker's voice was husky. "I'm in a fearful hole, Loder. You've got to help me out somehow. It was all through you that I wrote that stuff on the cigarette packet. It was a rotten bookie's message to you. I was a fool—"

"Why use the past tense?" sneered Loder.

"I tell you I'm in a fearful hole! A Remove kid has found that beastly packet, and he's keeping it. He's threatened to show it to the Head."

Loder sat up.

"Oh gad! Who's the kid?"

"That little French beast, Dupont!"

"Dupont!" Loder stared. "He's a decent kid enough—not the fellow to play a dirty trick. I suppose you've put his back up—is that it?—and he's getting his own back. If you had any sense—"

"I've done nothing. Well, I remember I smacked his head yesterday for running into me. I'd forgotten that."

"Looks as if he hadn't," said Loder. "He's got it, and refuses to give it up," said Walker. "He knows what's written on it in my list, of course, or he wouldn't dare."

"Why didn't you get it from him, then?"

"With a crowd of fags looking on? He might not have had it on him, either. More likely hidden it for safety," muttered Walker. "If I make a row about it and bring the books into it, it will be produced, and if the Head sees it—"

"Your number's up, in that case! Old Locke mustn't see it," grinned Loder. "But don't be a weak-kneed ass! It's something rather new, a Remove kid gets his ears up and defies prefects. Send for him to come to your study."

"Do you think he'd be fool enough? He can do as he likes, now he's got me under his thumb."

"Fm!" said Loder thoughtfully. "Well, I'll send for him. He won't dare to disobey me, I fancy. Once we get him here, he'll cough up the blessed thing fast enough, if he's got it on him. If he hasn't, he'll tell us where to get hold of it."

"He won't—"

"He will, if you twist his arm till he does," said Loder pleasantly. "Keep behind the door when he comes, and shut it as soon as he's in the room. We'll fix him all right."

Loder went to the door, opened it, and shouted "Fag!" He had to shout two or three times before Tubb of the Third appeared. But that youth turned up at last.

Tubb, go up to the Remove, and tell Dupont to come to my study."

"Yes, Loder."

Tubb of the Third cut off.

Walker leaned on the wall behind the door, waiting. Loder sat down in his chair again. In a few minutes there were footsteps at the door, and Loder made Walker a sign to be ready.

But it was George Tubb of the Third who put his head into the study, with a scared expression on his face.

"I—I say, Loder," stammered Tubb, "he—he—"

"Haven't you told Dupont, you young ass?"

"Yes, but he—he—" Tubb stammered, evidently hardly daring to deliver his message. But he had to get it out. "He—he says—he says he won't come, Loder."

"What!" roared Loder, jumping up.

"That's what he said, Loder!" gasped Tubb. "I—I couldn't help it, you know. I told him, and—and he said he wouldn't come."

"Get out!" snapped Loder.

Tubb of the Third got out promptly enough. The expression on Gerald Loder's face was alarming. A Tubb rather dreaded that the vials of wrath might be poured on his own head.

"That fears it!" muttered Walker.

"Of course, the kid knows jolly well that we're pals, and he guesses—"

Loder picked up his ashplant.

"I'll jolly well see whether a Remove kid will defy me!" he said, between his teeth. "By gad, I'll make him sorry he hasn't come!"

"Look here! For goodness' sake be careful!" panted Walker. "If you take it out of him, he may—"

"Leave it to me," said Loder. "I fancy he'll be glad enough to crawl here on his hands and knees when I've done with him."

He strode out of the study. Walker, by no means feeling so assured, remained in a state of trepidation. Loder went up the stairs two at a time.

Several fellows in the Remove passage looked at him curiously when he arrived there. He strode along to Study No. 10. Arrived at that study he lurched the door open, and strode in.

Bolsover major and Napoleon Dupont were there. Bolsover was still grunting and wriggling from Walker's cane. But he was thinking more about his study-mate than himself. He had heard Nap's reply to Tubb of the Third, and he expected to see Loder arrive with a cane in his hand. The burly Bolsover was accustomed rather to play the part of protector to the French junior; and Nap's reply to the fag had amazed him. Certainly Bolsover himself would never have ventured to send back such an answer to a prefect of the Sixth Form.

Nap, however, seemed perfectly cool. He was standing by the fender, and as Loder came in he stooped and picked up the poker.

"Nap, old man!" gasped Bolsover major.

"Dupont, did you tell Tubb that you would not come down to my study?" asked Loder grimly.

"Mais oui! I am not one silly ass," explained Nap. "I do not want to see zat Walker in your study."

"Bend over that chair!" said Loder, swishing his cane.

"Je crois non!"

"Speak English, you fool!" roared Loder. "What do you mean?"

"I believe not," said Nap calmly.

"I zink zat I bend not over, Loder! I will not be zrash."

"You—you—you dare to disobey a Sixth Form prefect?" stuttered Loder.

"Mais oui!" said Nap cheerfully.

Loder made a stride at him. Nap swung up the poker, and Loder backed just in time to save his nose.

"You—you—" Loder fairly gasped.

"Are you mad? Put down that poker at once! If you dare to resist a prefect, you young fool, I'll take you to the Head!"

"Zat is vat I vant," answered Nap.

"Nap, you fathead!" gasped Bolsover major. "It's a flogging; it may be the sack! I don't be an ass!"

"I zink I know vat I do, mon ami," answered Nap. "I will not be zrash. Jamais! I will see ze Head, and I will ask him if I am to be zrash, because Walker smoke cigarettes, and bet on les chevaux—ze horses."

Loder eyed him almost wolfishly. If the matter went before the Head, it was the "sack" for Walker. That was a matter in which Loder did not want to be mixed up. He was in danger of being dragged into it, anyhow, for Walker was quite likely to let out secrets, if the "chopper" came down on him. Loder certainly did not desire, or intend, to take Dupont before Dr. Locke—in the circumstances.

"Bend over that chair, Dupont!" he repeated, his voice husky with rage.

"Jamais!" answered Dupont coolly.

"Navoir!" He shrugged his shoulders.

"I vill go to ze Head if you wish, Loder. I am ready."

That evidently was not what Loder wished.

"Put down that poker!"

"I vill not!"

"You young rascal!" gasped Loder.

"Allons donc! It is you zat are zo rascal!" answered Nap. "Walker is one rascal, and you are another rascal! And I zink zat ven ze Head know everything, you go away ven Walker go, Loder."

That was too much for Loder. He made a jump at the French junior with uplifted cane.

Crash!

The poker met the cane with a concussion that knocked it out of Loder's hand. The next moment Loder gave a roar as Napoleon lunged, and the end of the poker jammed on his waistcoat.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bolsover major.

He could scarcely believe his eyes.

"Oh!" roared Loder. "Ow! Ooogh! Keep off, you young villain!" he added, in a yell, as Nap followed him up, lunging again.

It was a hefty lunge, and it took Loder on his third waistcoat button.

He gave a gurgling gasp, and sat down suddenly.

"Ooogh!" gurgled Loder.

"Take zat!" shouted Dupont, now in

a state of great excitement. "And zat, and zat, and zat!"

He danced round Loder, lunging with the poker. Loder took them. He could not help it. Bolsover major stared on like a fellow in a dream. He could hardly believe that it was the quiet, mild-tempered Nap who was poking a Sixth Form prefect in this extraordinary manner.

"Take zat, and zat, and zat!" shrieked Nap.

"Oh! Ow! Ooogh! Oh gad!"

Loder squirmed frantically away from the lunging poker, and bounded to his feet. He bounded at Nap. But he

(Continued on next page.)

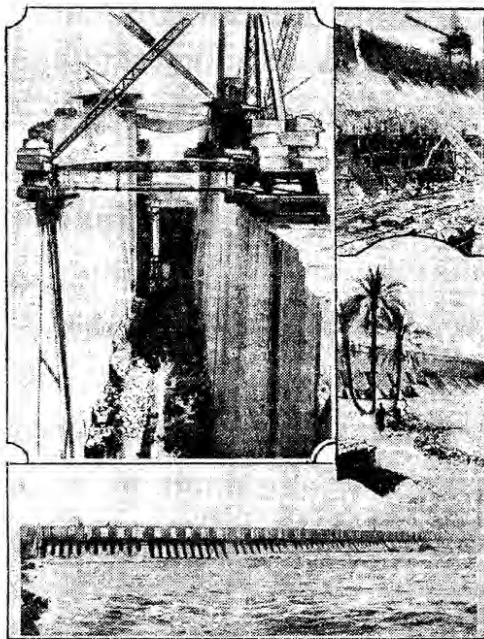
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stopped short, and bounded back again, just in time to escape a terrific swipe from the poker, which would have done a lot of damage had Loder caught it.

"You—you—you—" gasped Loder. "Allez-vous-en!" yelled the excited Nap. "Get out! Allez! I crack you ze teete—ze head—viz zis pokair!"

"Keep off!" shrieked Loder. "Oh, my hat! I—I—I—I—Keep off!"

He dodged another swipe—and another. Then he dodged out of the study. That poker, in the hands of the excited Gaul, was dangerous at close quarters.

Nap picked up his ashplant and flung it into the passage after him. It landed on the back of Loder's neck, and he gave another yell.

Dupont slammed the study door. "You—you—you mad ass!" gasped Dolsover major. "You'll be sacked for this!"

"I zink not!" said Nap. "Loder will come back with the Head!"

"I zink not!" said Nap again, with a chuckle.

And Nap was right. Loder did not come back with the Head! He did not come back at all. He seemed to have had enough of Nap.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Whip Hand!

BILLY BUNTER grinned. That grin cost Bunter dear. Bunter felt entitled to grin. Any fellow might have grinned. The expression on Walker's face was, as Bunter told the fellows afterwards, enough to make a cat laugh. And if a fellow felt disposed to grin, a fellow was entitled to grin—so Billy Bunter considered! Therefore, Bunter grinned—but he repented it.

It was the following day, after class. Most of the fellows were out of the House, in the bright May sunshine. Napoleon Dupont was sauntering with a cheerful face when Walker came along. He smiled at Walker, but that cheery smile brought no answering smile from the black sheep of the Sixth. It brought a black scowl.

Nap laughed, and walked on past Walker. The Sixth Form man gazed after him, with the expression that could only be likened to that of a demon in a pantomime. Hence Billy Bunter's grin. Bunter thought it funny.

Walker didn't! Catching that wide grin on Billy Bunter's fat face, Walker strode up to him. The grin irritated him in his present temper; but that was not all. Bunter, really, was the cause of the whole trouble. It was Bunter who had picked up the cigarette packet that had so unfortunately slipped through the hole in Walker's pocket. But for that, Walker would probably have found it where it fell. Bunter was the cause of Walker's woes and tribulations. Walker dared not take it out of Nap, as he longed to do. But he could take it out of Bunter—and he did!

Billy Bunter ceased to grin as Walker strode at him. Instantly he realised that it was no grinning matter! But it was too late!

A finger and thumb that felt like a steel vice closed on Billy Bunter's fat ear! He gave a yelp of agony.

"Ooooooooooooooh!" The grip compressed. Bunter yelled.

He felt as if his fat ear was being punctured. Walker, deriving solace

from the operation, compressed his grip harder and harder. The hapless Owl of the Remove fairly squirmed.

He gasped, he yelped, and he howled. It was not till five or six fellows, drawn by Bunter's unusual howling, came running towards the spot that Walker released his vice-like grip and stalked away.

Billy Bunter clasped a fat hand to a fat ear and roared. Generally, when Bunter was damaged he made a noise quite out of proportion to the damage. But he was really hurt now; his uproar was almost justified. Walker, perhaps, did not realise how very hard he had twisted that fat ear. Bunter felt as if it had been in a pair of pincers.

"Ow, ow, ow! My ear! Wow! Woodoooh!" roared Bunter. "What the jolly old thump!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, the first to arrive on the scene of anguish.

"Ooooooh! That beast Walker—Whooooo!"

"Damaged your snapper?" asked Skinner.

"Yaroooooh! It's nearly pulled off!" wailed Bunter. "Ow, wow!"

"Hard luck!" said Skinner. "Won't you be able to use it at a keyhole again?"

"Beast! Ow! Wow!"

Bunter rubbed his fat ear in anguish. It was crimson, and it had a pain in it—a very severe pain.

"Ze rotair!" said Nap indignantly. "Zat is vat he would like to do to me, mais il n'ose pas—he dare not! So he do him to le pauvre Buntair!"

"What the thump did Walker twist your ear for, Bunter?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Ow! Nothing!" wailed Bunter. "I—I just smiled at him, that's all—Wow! Just a pleasant—wow!—smile! Ow!"

"Walker's rather dangerous to smile at these days!" said Bob Cherry, shaking his head.

"Ow! The beast! He was glaring at Nap like a—like a—like a dangerous maniac!" groaned Bunter. "It was enough to make a cat laugh! Ow! My ear's nearly pulled off. Wow!"

"Rotten bad!" growled Johnny Bull. "The smilefulness was not the proper caper!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The esteemed Walker is terrifically infuriated!"

"Ow, wow! Ow, wow!"

"Zat is too much," said Nap. "Zat Walker sall not do such zings! For zis I vill make him sit down—zat is to say up! Mon pauvre Buntair, venez avec moi—come viz me—"

"Ow, ow, ow!"

"Is it zat you are in ze great pain?" asked Nap sympathetically.

"Ow! Yes! Frightful! Wow!"

"You are in so much pain zat you would not like one verree nice spread—"

"Eh! No fear!" said Bunter promptly. "If you're standing a feed, old chap, I'll come with pleasure!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Venez avec moi," said Nap. "It sall be one enormous spread—so much as more zan you can eat!"

Billy Bunter almost forgot the pain in his fat ear as he walked to the House with Nap. This was a glorious prospect!

"I—I say, Nap, I—I always liked you, old chap!" said Bunter. "I always thought you a splendid fellow. I never thought you were a horrid beast to eat frogs and things, you know."

"I zink you are one silly ass, Buntair! But come viz me, and zere sall be one verree enormous spread!"

"What-ho!" chuckled Bunter. He rolled into the House with Nap. It was tea-time, and Billy Bunter had been considering upon whom he should land himself for tea when that unfortunate affair with Walker occurred. Now the problem was solved for him. But, to his surprise, Nap did not head for the stairs. He started in the direction of the Sixth Form passage.

"I say, old chap, where are we going to have the feed?" asked Bunter, jerking at the French junior's arm.

"In ze Sixth, mon ami! Venez!"

"Mean to say a Sixth Form man has asked you to tea?" inquired the perplexed Owl.

"Zat is all right—you come!"

Greatly perplexed, Bunter rolled into the Sixth with Dupont. But he halted, with a squeak of alarm, as the French junior stopped at James Walker's door.

"Wharrrr you up to, you ass?" he gasped. "That's Walker's study!"

"Je le sais—I know it! Zat is all right!"

"You fathead, do you think I want to see Walker again?" howled Bunter. "Think I want my other ear twisted?"

"You come viz me—"

"I'll watch it!" gasped Bunter, and as Nap tapped at the door he turned to run.

Napoleon caught him by a fat arm. "It is all right, Buntair!"

"Leggo," gasped Bunter. "You silly ass, leggo before Walker comes out! Leggo my arm, you silly frog-eater!"

But Dupont did not let go. He threw open Walker's door with one hand, and with the other jerked Billy Bunter into the study. Walker of the Sixth was there, about to call his bag to get his tea. He glared at the two Removites.

"I—I say, I—I never came here!" gasped Bunter, in terror. "I mean, that French beast dragged me here—dragged me in—Ow lor!"

"N'avez pas peur, mon ami—have no fear, Buntair," said Nap. "It is viz Walker zat you come to tea! Walker pull you ze ear, and for zat he make you one big spread! N'est-ce pas, mon bon Walker?"

Walker glared.

"Get out of my study!"

"Ow! Leggo! I'm going, if that beast will leggo!" wailed Bunter. "I say, Walker, make him leggo! Ow lor!"

Nap held on to the fat arm. Walker was looking as if he would like to bite. But he made no hostile movement. He reared, from the bottom of his heart, to seize his ashplant and lay it around the two juniors, putting all his beef into it. But he dared not. Even Billy Bunter, in spite of his terror, realised that Walker was afraid, somehow.

"Get out!" breathed Walker.

"Is it zat you will not ask Buntair to tea?" asked Nap.

"No!" gasped Walker. "Get out!"

"Verree well—in zat case, Buntair, please walk viz me to ze Head's study—I have something to show ze Head—"

"Stop!" gasped Walker in awful dread. "Dupont—stop—I—I say, be a decent kid—I say—hold on—Ow gad! Hold on!"

"Is it zat you ask Buntair to tea?"

"Oh! Yes! Yes!" gasped Walker. "Obviously!" He wiped beads of perspiration from his forehead. "Bunter, will you—would you like tea here?"

The pride seemed to be drawn from James Walker like teeth. "I—I—I'll be glad if—if you will, Bunter."

Billy Bunter blinked at him. He blinked at Nap! Walker was scowling like a demon—Nap was smiling! Bunter did not understand. He did not begin to understand. Walker, it was clear,



Loder made a jump at Napoleon Dupont, with uplifted cane. Crash! The poker met the cane with a concussion that knocked it out of Loder's hand. The next moment Loder gave a roar as Napoleon lunged, and the end of the poker jammed on his waistcoat. "Ow!" he gasped. "Oooogh! Keep off, you young villain!"

was taking orders from Nap of the Remove—why, was a deep, deep mystery to Billy Bunter. But one thing stood out clear—Walker, for whatever mysterious reason, was asking him to tea! And that, after all, was the important matter.

"I—I—I say, if you mean it, Walker—I gasped the Owl of the Remove.

"Oh! Yes! Certainly!"
"Done!" said Bunter quite affably. "I'll have tea with you with pleasure, Walker! I say, don't you go, Nap!" added Bunter. Whatever the mysterious explanation might be, it was clear that it was Nap's presence that kept Walker under control.

"J'y reste!" grinned Nap. "I stay—zat is all right! Walker, I desire zat you make a verree good spread for mon ami Bunter, of whom you pull ze ear. If it's not a good, verree good spread, I shall be angry viz you, Walker."

"Well, my hat!" gasped Bunter.
"I—I—yes—all right!" stammered Walker.

And he called his fag, and gave that youth instructions to get tea—on an unusually magnificent scale. Walker's fag, that term, was Nugent minor of the Second Form. Dicky Nugent stared in surprise at the ten-shilling note that Walker had given him to take to the tuckshop. It was seldom that Walker stood a tea to that extent; still more seldom that he had Remove juniors to help him dispose of it. But there it was—and Nugent minor, in a state of great wonder, carried out his instructions; and Billy Bunter, in still deeper wonder, but considerable satisfaction, prepared to enjoy himself.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Tea in Walker's Study!

"MANGEZ!" said Nap.
Billy Bunter did not need telling to eat! As soon as the feast was on the table, Bunter was ready to begin; more than ready.

Walker's fag prepared tea—in a state of suppressed indignation. It was bad enough, in Dicky Nugent's opinion, to have to fag for the Sixth. Fagging for a Remove kid was the limit; the outside edge.

But Dicky suppressed his indignation very carefully. The gleam in Walker's eye made him wary. Walker did not look the part of the hospitable host, the polite entertainer. He looked like a dog that longed to bite. Dicky was rather afraid of getting the bite, as it were, if he drew his fag-master's attention on himself. Never had Dicky made toast and cooked eggs with such care. And he had to make unusual quantities. Walker was in no mood for tea with his guest. Nap disdained to break bread on his enemy's table. But Billy Bunter had appetite enough for three—if not for three-and-twenty!

Bunter was enjoying life!
He sat at Walker's table and tucked in. How it had come about Bunter did not know—but there it was! It was already rumored up and down the Remove that Walker of the Sixth was, for some reason, afraid of Nap. All the Form had talked over the amazing episode of Nap ordering the Sixth Form man out of Study No. 10 the previous day. Bunter realised that, amazing as it was, it was the fact—Walker dared

not resist. And Walker had twisted his fat ear! It was not only a pleasure to enjoy an extensive feed; it was a pleasure to make Walker sit up! Bunter fully enjoyed both pleasures! So long as Nap was able to see him through, Bunter was the fellow to spread himself! And he did spread himself—far and wide!

"Any more jam-tarts, Walker?" Bunter had disposed of many eggs, and mountains of toast, a cake, and cups of tea galore. There were half a dozen tarts, which went down like half a dozen oysters.

"No!" hissed Walker.
"I'd have liked some more tarts!" said Bunter.

"Walker will send his fag for some more of ze tarts," said Nap. "Vill you not do zis zing, Walker?"

"No—yes—yes! Nugent mi, cut down to the tuckshop for a dozen tarts," gasped the wretched Walker.

"Bring another cake," said Bunter, "and a dozen doughnuts! You don't mind, Walker?"

"Walker does not mind," said Nap. "N'est-ce-pas, Walker?"

Walker gurgled.
"Make it two dozen jam-tarts, will you?" said Bunter.

"Oh! Yes! Cut off, Nugent mi—ask Mrs. Mimble to put it to my account—two dozen tarts, another cake, a dozen doughnuts," said Walker in a choking voice.

Nugent minor, lost in astonishment, obeyed. When he returned with the fresh consignment of provender, Walker signed to him to go. It was bad enough, without his fag witnessing his humiliation. Dicky Nugent departed to tell

the strange tale among his friends in the Second.

"Look here, I don't see sending that fag away!" grumbled Bunter. "I like to be waited on."

Walker made an indistinct sound. "Walker vill wait on you, Buntair," said Nap. "Vill you not, Walker?"

Walker gasped for breath. "Well, that's all right," said Bunter. "Cut that cake, Walker! Have it ready for me when I've finished the tartar. Pour out another cup of tea! And look sharp!"

Undoubtedly Bunter was spreading himself.

Walker, almost convulsively, grasped at his ashpit. He caught Nap's eye, and let it go again. With feelings that could not have been expressed in words, James Walker poured out tea for Bunter, and cut the cake. Billy Bunter grinned, and travelled through the tarts, and then the doughnuts. By that time, Bunter was breathing rather hard, and his face was shiny and sticky. Seldom had even Billy Bunter packed away a spread to this extent. But he was enjoying it, though he certainly had to exert himself a little! He was rather glad, after all, that Walker had pulled his fat ear! It was turning out unexpectedly well! Bunter would have had both his fat ears pulled, twice as hard, for a feast like this any day!

Nap, sitting on a corner of the table, watched with a cheery grin on his face. The varying expressions on Walker's speaking countenance seemed to entertain him.

Even Bunter could not quite finish the cake. There was, actually, no more room inside Bunter! He merely toyed with it. The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak!

The study door opened suddenly. Loder of the Sixth looked in.

"I hear that you've got Dupont here—why—what—what the—Oh crumbs!" ejaculated Loder. He stared in blank amazement at the tea-party.

Bunter ceased to munch cake. He blinked in alarm at Gerald Loder, and rose hastily to his feet.

"I—I—I think I—I'll cut, Walker,"

he stammered. "Thanks ever so much for the feed!"

He sidled to the door, with a doleful eye on Loder. Loder's eye was on Nap, sitting on the corner of the table, cool as a cucumber. He held the door wide enough for Bunter to roll out; and shut it after him. He did not want any witnesses to what was to happen next.

"I—I say—" stammered Walker. "You've got something belonging to Walker, kid!" said Loder very quietly.

"Hand it over, now!" "Mais, but I have not got him wize me," smiled Dupont. "I am not one silly ass to bring him to Walker's study, Loder."

"Where is it, then?" "Zat you find out!"

"I think we'll find out quick enough," said Loder grimly. "You're not in the Remove passage now, my beauty. And if you don't tell me where to find that cigarette packet at once, I'll twist your arm till it cracks! Got that?"

"Oh, good!" said Walker, with a deep breath. "Cough it up, you young rotter! I'll go and get it, Loder, while you keep an eye on him here."

"That's the big idea!" assented Loder.

Nap did not seem alarmed, however. Loder's back was to the door, and there was no escape for him. And in a tussle he had not the slightest chance against one of the seniors, let alone the two together. But the French junior was quite cool.

"Zat you touch me not," he said. "You touch me, and I bring all ze school here viz ze noise terrific zat I make!"

"Will you?" hissed Loder, and he made a stride at the French junior. "Get hold of him, Walker!"

Nap slipped from the table and seized the teapot. For the moment Loder and Walker supposed that he was going to use it as a weapon, and they paused. But that was not Nap's intention. Taking the teapot in both hands, he crashed it down in the midst of the tea-things on the table. The crash and smash of crockery was terrific. It rang far beyond the limits of Walker's study.

"Why, you—you—" Loder, panting, jumped at Nap. Nap leaped towards the window. There was no escape that way. The window was closed. But Nap was not thinking of escape. He grabbed up the nearest handy object, which happened to be a cricket bat, and crashed it on the nearest pane of the window. There was a fearful smash, and fragments of glass were scattered in the quad outside. From the quad came a startled shout.

"Get him!" breathed Loder. He heard footsteps and startled voices outside the smashed window in the quad. "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" bawled Bob Cherry.

"What the thump—" "It's Nap—" "I say, you fellows, Loder and Walker have got him in the study, bullying him. I say, you fellows—"

Crash! Another pane went under the cricket bat. Fragments of glass flew far and wide, amid shouts of amazement from the fellows gathering outside. Walker panted with utter terror. Even Loder was daunted. A shindy like this was certain to bring masters on the scene—probably the Head himself. They were more anxious now for Nap to go than Nap was to get away. Walker grabbed Loder by the arm.

"Stop it! Let him alone. We shall have the beaks here. Get out, Dupont! Do you hear? Get out!"

"Comme vous voudrez, mon cher!" answered Nap cheerfully.

And he strolled to the door. Loder's fingers twitched in their eager desire to seize him, but he dared not. Walker was quaking with funk. Already Mr. Quelch and Mr. Prout, who were in the quad, were walking up to the window, startled by the crashing of breaking glass.

"What is this?" Mr. Quelch stared at the broken panes. "Have you had an accident, Walker? What—"

"Extraordinary!" boomed Prout. "What is the matter here? Walker, your window is broken—smashed! What—what—"

"It—it—it was an—an accident, sir," babbled Walker. "I—I—I was showing Loder a—a—with my bat, sir, and—and it hit the—the window."

Walker would have told anything but the truth. He only hoped that the masters knew nothing of Nap having been in the study.

"Very careless of you," boomed Prout. "Very careless indeed, Walker."

"Oh! Yes, sir. I—I—I—" babbled Walker.

"Really, Walker, this is most extraordinary," snapped the Remove master. "I can scarcely understand such clumsiness."

The two masters walked away. Walker turned from the window, his brow wet with perspiration. He gave Loder an almost homicidal look.

"You fool! You jolly near did for me! If they knew it was Dupont it couldn't be kept quiet; and then the Head would see that— Oh, you fool! You silly idiot!"

Loder stamped out of the study and slammed the door after him. Walker was left alone, staring at the broken window and the smashed crockery, and mopping his perspiring brow. Undoubtedly the way of the transgressor was hard!

(Continued on page 22.)

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TAMING A TYRANT!

(Continued from page 20.)

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Loder Knows How!

HARRY WHARTON looked into Study No. 10 in the Remove, on Wednesday afternoon.

"Coming?" he asked. Napoleon Dupont was standing by his desk. There was a shade of deep thought on Napoleon's brow. But evidently he was not thinking of the picnic that was arranged to take place in Friardale Wood that afternoon. The desk was open, and Nap's attention was fixed on a small object in one of the pigeon-holes within. He started a little and looked round at the captain of the Remove.

"Forgotten the jolly old picnic?" asked Wharton, with a smile. "We're ready, kid! I've been looking for you. What the thump are you sticking in your study for?"

"I zink!" answered Nap. "Well, give it a miss, and think another time," said Harry.

"Mais non!" said Nap. "Now zat you are here, mon ami, I tell you, and ask you ze advice. Voyez!"

To Wharton's astonishment he took an empty cigarette packet from the desk.

"What the thump—" said Harry. "Voyez! See!" said Dupont, and he opened the flap at the end of the packet.

Wharton stared at what was written thereon.

"Saucy Sam. Two o'clock race. Wapshot. Saturday."

Wharton's eyes opened wide. "What the dickens is that?" he exclaimed.

"Zat is one tip." "A—a tip?" repeated Wharton, blankly.

"Saucy Sam is one horse," explained Dupont. "He run in a race—"

"Why, you howling ass! Have you taken up that sort of rot?" exclaimed the captain of the Remove indignantly. "You can leave that muck to Smithy and Skinner. You young sweep—"

"Non, non, non!" gasped Nap, in a great hurry. "I take him not up. Jamais! Zat race is run last week. It is all over. Mais voyez—know you not zat writing?"

Wharton looked more closely at the pencilled note.

"I've seen it before. I don't remember."

"It is Walker's."

Wharton jumped. "Walker of the Sixth! Great pip! Yes, I know the fist now. For goodness' sake, don't let it get out! The man would be sacked!"

"Zat is vat he fear?" grinned Nap. Harry Wharton looked at the French junior, long and hard, and his face grew rather grim. He began to understand.

"Is that the packet that Walker lost a week ago?" he asked. "Is that why he was making such a fuss? Yes, I can see it now. Nap, you young rascal, have you been holding that over Walker's head?"

"Just!" said Nap. "He smack me on ze head, and he whop my shum Dolsover. I zink zat I make him sit up. I make him sit up vorree mooch! Zat Walker have grand fear."

"This won't do, Nap!" said Harry abruptly. "The man's a bit of a bully, and he deserves to be kicked for smacking your head, but—look here, a fellow has to draw a line. This isn't good enough. See!"

"Zat is vat I zink," answered Nap. "Now zat I have make him stand up—zat is to say, sit up—I zink zat is enoff! Now I zink zat I let Walker have him back, and he no longer have ze grand peur—ze great fear! I zink zat he is punished enoff."

"All right, then," said Harry. "And the sooner the better. Lots of fellows have been wondering how you handled Walker as you did, and—well, there's a limit. Let him have it back."

"Ca va!" said Dupont, and he slipped the cigarette packet into his pocket. "Ven I see him I give it to him, viz ze kind regards, isn't it? I zink zat he has had enoff."

"Good!" said Harry. "And now come on—the fellows are waiting."

Nap went down the Remove staircase with Wharton, and they went into the quad. The rest of the Co. were waiting for them there, Bob Cherry with a basket in his hand.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" bawled Bob. "Buck up, slow-coaches! Do you want to wait for Bunter?"

"Where's Bunter?" asked Harry. Bob chuckled.

"I told him Mauly had had a remittance. He's gone to look for Mauly."

"Rough luck on Mauleverer."

"Well, as he's gone out in a car this afternoon, Bunter isn't likely to find him. Let's get off before he finds us."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the chums of the Remove got off. Loder of the Sixth was lounging at the gates when they went out. Loder's eye was on them—especially on Nap—though he affected to take no notice of the party. But he stood watching them as they went up Friardale Lane. He stood with a thoughtful frown on his brow as they disappeared in the distance in the winding, leafy lane. He turned round at a sound of grunting and gasping behind him.

"I say, Loder—I say, have you seen my pals go out?" gasped Billy Bunter. "I—I've missed them. Did you see which way they went?"

Bunter blinked out into the road. But the picnickers were safe out of sight by that time. He blinked at Loder.

"It's a picnic, you know!" he said breathlessly. "They were waiting for me, really, only I went to look for Mauly. I say, you might tell a chap if you've seen them, Loder! Did they go towards Friardale, or Courtfield?"

"Oh, a picnic, is it?" said Loder. "Don't you know where Bunter?"

"Well, they mentioned the old priory in Friardale Wood," said Bunter. "But they might have gone the other way; it would be like them, the beasts—dodging a chap! I believe that beast Cherry sent me to look for Mauly just to cut while I was gone! I say, Loder, if you saw them—"

It was, of course, fearful cheek for a Remove junior to question a Sixth Form prefect, but the matter was so urgent that Bunter did not stop to think of that. But Loder did not kick him. Loder was already forming his plans—and to carry out those plans Bunter was useful.

"Yes, I think I saw them about ten minutes ago," said Loder. "They went towards Friardale."

"Oh, good!" gasped Bunter. "Then they're going to the priory."

"Hold on a minute, Bunter."

"I—I say, Loder, I—I'm in rather a hurry—"

"Hold on, I tell you! If you see Dupont this afternoon, tell him to come in at once; there's a telegram from France for him."

"I believe he's with them," said Bunter. "I heard Nugent say they were going to ask him—"

"Well, give him the message if you see him—from Quelch. It may be an important telegram—somebody ill, or something."

"Right-ho!" answered Bunter, and he rolled out of gates, and puffed and perspired in the bright sunshine along Friardale Lane.

Loder walked back to the House. He went to Walker's study, where he found James Walker in a rather limp state.

"Get a move on, Jimmy," said Loder. "I fancy we've got it all right this time. For goodness' sake, don't look like a dying duck!"

"All very well for you!" snarled Walker. "You're not in danger of the chopper coming down every minute! I tell you, Loder, this is getting on my nerves, and I can't stand much more. I was a fool ever to get mixed up in anything of the kind—"

"Cut that out—"

"A fat lot you care!" growled Walker savagely. "You and Carne got me into this shady rot between you, and now you'd turn your backs on me, only you're afraid I might let something out when I come up before the Head. You needn't worry about that; if I get the book I shan't squeal about you and Carne."

Loder did not feel quite so sure of that. He could imagine a fellow like Walker crumpling up under the Head's stern eye and blurring out all sorts of things that had better be kept dark—from Loder's point of view. Walker had not been enjoying life of late, but his precious pals had been far from easy in their minds.

"I was a fool—a silly ass!" went on Walker. "Playing the giddy ox, and getting under the thumb of a cheeky fag—"

"We'll make him sorry for it."

"Well, the little brute has given me a rotten time," said Walker. "But—but I smacked his head for nothing—harder than I meant. I can hardly blame him for taking it out of me now he's got a chance. If I hadn't been such an ass—"

"You'll never be anything but an ass, old bean," said Loder coolly. "Are you going to sit there gabbling when I tell you I've got it cut and dried to deal with that young scoundrel?"

"There's nothing doing—"

"He's gone out with some other fags for a picnic in a lonely place in the woods," said Loder quickly. "We've sent him a message that will bring him back alone. We shall meet him on the way back."

"What's the good? He doesn't carry the thing on him; he's too jolly wary for that. He's hidden it away somewhere."

"I know that. And he will tell us where he's hidden it."

"We tried that on in this study—"

"There won't be anybody to hear him in Friardale Wood," said Loder coldly and grimly. "It will be rather different. By the time I've handled him he will be ready to tell us where to find that dashed packet! He can yell as loud as he likes in Friardale Wood."

"Oh!" said Walker.

"Come on!" grunted Loder. "We'll pick up Carne and start. No time to waste."

The two Sixth-Formers left the study



"I say, Nap, old fellow, I'm really sorry if your father's been smashed up, and, I say—Whoooooop!" Bob Cherry picked up an egg and sent it whizzing straight for the fat junior. Billy Bunter's flow of sympathy was suddenly interrupted as the egg squashed on his fat little nose. Squelch! "Yaroooop!" roared Bunter. "Why, you beast—oh lor! Yaroooh!"

together. They picked up Carne in the quad, and the three left Greyfriars. Loder had a stick under his arm—and the expression on his face hinted that there was a hectic time in store for Nap of the Remove when Loder got going with that stick.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER. Egg for Bunter!

"I SAY, you fellows!"
"Oh, my hat! Bunter!"
"Toujours le Buntair!"
grinned Nap.

Pink with exertion, puffing for breath, Billy Bunter arrived in the priory in Friardale Wood. The May sunshine fell brightly into the old ruins, and shone on six cheery faces. Over a fire of sticks a tin kettle was swinging and singing. An old newspaper spread on a flat mass of ancient masonry under a quite good tablecloth. Bob Cherry, with a rather red face, was boiling eggs on the wood fire—getting a little troubled himself in the process. It was not really so comfortable and convenient as tea in the study, but everybody agreed that it was ever so much better—especially as Billy Bunter couldn't roll in. And then in rolled Bunter!

Bunter mopped the perspiration from his fat brow with a handkerchief that had long required a wash, and blinked at the picnicers. They stared at him. If Bunter expected an uproarious welcome, he did not get it. Even Bunter, indeed, could not quite imagine that the picnicers were delighted to see him. If they were, they were experts at hiding their feelings.

"I say, you fellows. I jolly nearly missed you!" said Bunter.

"Why didn't you?" quite?" sighed Bob Cherry.

"The quiet-fulness would have been an esteemed boon and a ridiculous blessing," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Oh, really, you know! I say, I hope you haven't forgotten the cake! Did you bring any doughnuts?"

"Not one!"

"Well, you know I like doughnuts!" said Bunter reproachfully.

"Bit thoughtless, old chap. But never mind; I see you've got a pot of jam. But what the thump did you bring plum jam for, Wharton? You can't say you didn't know I prefer strawberry."

"Bow-wow!"

"Selfishness all round," said Bunter. "Well, I'm used to it. Lucky I got here before you started, wasn't it?"

"Blessed if I see where the luck comes in!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! After a fellow's fagged miles and miles to tell a chap that there's a telegram waiting for him at the school—"

"Telegram for whom, fathead?"

"Froggy," answered Bunter. "He's got to go back at once—telegram from France. That's why I really came after you, you know; I wasn't thinking of the picnic. Now I'm here I'll join you, if you really want me."

"If we really want him!" gurgled Bob Cherry. "Only if we really, really, truly, truly want him, you men! Not otherwise!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Zero is telegram for me?" exclaimed Dupont, rising from the mossy chunk of old masonry on which he was seated.

"Yes—message from Quelch! He seems to have asked Loder to find you;

and Loder, of course, shoved it off on me. I'm always getting things shoved on me—it's my good nature. Not that Loder cares much whether you get it or not, I fancy," Bunter chuckled. "He told me to tell you if I saw you. Then I remembered you'd be with these fellows, and came on here. I came specially to tell you, Dupont; I'd forgotten all about the picnic—in fact, I never knew there was a picnic—I wasn't anywhere near the study door when you fellows were talking about it last night—"

"Look here, stop and have a bite, Nap!" said Nugent. "The telegram can wait a few more minutes."

Nap shook his head. "Mais non," he answered. "If zero is one telegram from France, it is verree important. Perhaps someone is malade—cel! Helas! Someone in ze famille may be verree cel!"

"Pegging out, perhaps?" suggested Bunter brightly. "They'd hardly wire for you from France unless it was serious, old chap. I dare say there's awfully bad news waiting for you at Greyfriars! Are those eggs done?"

"You fat, frabjous, fooling frump!" roared Bob Cherry. "Shut up!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I'd cut off, if I were you, Nap! Depend on it, it's jolly bad news!"

"Will you shut up?" howled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull, I think you might let me sympathise with poor old Nap when there's a serious illness in his family!" said Bunter warmly. "Some fellows have a sympathetic nature. We're not all selfish, Bull! Most likely, it's Nap's father—"

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"Kick him!" said Harry Wharton.
 "Run over by a motor-car, perhaps," said Bunter. "There's an awful lot of these accidents nowadays. I say, Nap, old fellow, I'm really sorry if your father's been smashed up! And, I say—Whoooooop!"

Bob Cherry had cracked an egg to see if it was done. It wasn't. It was barely half-done. But it was done enough for the purpose for which Bob now used it. Billy Bunter's flow of sympathy was suddenly interrupted as that half-done egg squashed on his fat little nose.

"Smash! Squash!"
 "Yarooooop!" roared Bunter. "Why, you beast—! Oh lor! Oh crickey! Why, you awful rotter! Yarooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha, ha!"
 "Tres bien!" chuckled Nap. "Zat serve you left, Buntair—zat is to say, he serve you right! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Grooooo! Ooooooh! Ooooooh!" Bunter's handkerchief came into action again, and he mopped egg from his fat face. That hanky was more in need of a wash than ever. "Look here, you rotters, if that's how you're going to behave, I jolly well shan't stay to this picnic!"

"Give him another egg, Bob!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Keep off, you beast!" roared Bunter, jumping back, and still dabbling egg.
 "I say, you fellows—"

"Au revoir, mes amis!" said Nap. And he started off, hurrying out of the old priory, to take the path back through the wood to the school. The news that a telegram had come from his native country naturally made him anxious, and Bunter's cheery suggestions had not lessened his anxiety.

Nap disappeared at a trot; and Bunter, with a wary eye on Bob Cherry, sat down, still rather egg.

"Poor old Nap!" said Harry. "I hope it's not bad news!"

"Never mind Nap!" said Bunter. "Pass the sandwiches! I suppose you don't want me to get up, now I've sat down? What are you fellows looking so jolly solemn about all of a sudden?"

It did not occur to Bunter's powerful brain that the juniors were feeling a little perturbed by the possibility that Nap had bad news. Certainly that possibility did not perturb William George Bunter.

"Ten to one it's all right," said Bob. "Only old Nap will miss the jolly old picnic."

"Well, you don't want Nap," said Bunter. "You've got me!"

"Oh, my hat!"
 "Bit of an improvement—what?" said Bunter. "I say, pass those sandwiches! You're keeping me waiting!"

And the picnic proceeded—greatly improved, in Bunter's opinion, by his fascinating company instead of Nap's.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Unexpected!

"HERE he is!"
 Napoleon Dupont gave a start as he heard Loder's voice. He was a half-mile from the old priory, and going along the leafy, shady footpath at a trot, when he heard it.

From the trees by the footpath three Sixth Form men stepped out. Nap came to a sudden halt as he recognised Loder, Carne, and Walker.

Loder caught him by the arm.

"This way!" he said quickly. And, with a swing of his arm, he jerked the French junior away from the path into the trees.

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Nap struggled.

"Laissez-moi!" he shouted. "I must go to school! Zero is a telegram for me here! Laissez-moi, or I hit you viz ze foot!"

"You needn't worry about the telegram," said Loder, with a grin. "There isn't any telegram!"

"Zat Buntair say—"
 "I told him to tell you! There's no telegram!" growled Loder. "Now shut up, and come along!"

Nap glared at him indignantly. He understood now that the message sent by the fat Owl was a trick to get him away from his friends, so that Loder & Co. could waylay him in the wood and deal with him. It had worked like a charm, and Nap was fairly in the hands of the Philistines.

"Mon Dieu! You rottair!" he panted.

"Come along, you young sweep!"

Nap had no choice about coming along. Loder gripped his arm and dragged him, and, as he held back, Carne let out a foot. Nap gave a howl as it landed, and he went.

Walker followed on behind, rather shamefaced. Walker was not such a bully as either Loder or Carne, and he was by no means satisfied with the present proceedings. Still, he had to get that miserable packet into his hands, and that was that.

Nap was led to a good distance from the path into the thick depths of the wood. Loder stopped at last and slung him roughly against a tree. Nap clenched his hands, and glared defiance.

"Now," said Loder in a low, concentrated voice, "you've got something that belongs to Walker! You're going to tell us exactly where it is, and two of us will stay here with you while the other goes back to the school and gets hold of it—see! And I warn you not to waste our time!"

Nap's eyes blinked.
 That tell-tale packet, with Walker's "fit" on it, was, in point of fact, in the inside pocket of his jacket at that moment. He had fully intended, as he had told Wharton, to hand it over to the wretched black sheep of the Sixth next time he saw him. But that intention was completely abandoned now.

"I tell you nozing!" he said, between his teeth. "You are one rottair, Loder, and Carne is anozzer rottair, and Walker is anozzer rottair! And I will tell you nozings!"

"We'll see about that!" said Loder grimly. "Hold him, Carne, while I give him a few! He will change his tune pretty soon, I think!"

"I fancy so!" grinned Carne, as he took a grip on Nap's collar. "Now then, bend over, you young scoundrel!"
 "You've got to give it up!" growled Walker. "What's the good of playing the goat, kid? You'll be licked till you tell us where it is."
 "Jamais! Nevair!"

"Give him a few and see!" grinned Carne.

"Zat you let go!" yelled Nap. "I will hit you viz ze foot—"

"Bottic me if you know what's good for you!" said Carne. "Why—yarooooooh—your young villain—Wow!"

Carne yelled and hopped, as Nap kicked out and caught him on the shin. He hopped on one leg and clasped the other; and Nap, released for the moment, made a spring to escape.

Loder's grip caught him as he leaped, and he was dragged back. With savage force, Loder flung him into the grass.

"Ow! Ow!" howled Carne. "Wow! Oh, my shin! Ow!"

"I'll give him a few extra for that!" growled Loder. "Hold him down!"

Carne gripped the French junior again by the shoulders, and pinned him to the earth, face down in the grass. Loder raised the stick and brought it down across Nap's trousers with a terrific swipe.

Nap's frantic yell woke most of the echoes of Friarlands Wood. He wriggled and struggled wildly.

Loder laid it on hard and fast.

"Now, you young rotter, where's that packet?" he snarled. "Is it locked up in your study, or what? If it is, give me the key. Sharp!"

"I tell you nozings!" yelled Nap. "Cochon! Peeg! Lachet! Coquin! Peeg! I will tell you nozings!"

The lashes came down harder and faster. It was such a "whopping" as even Loder of the Sixth had never administered before—and such as even Loder would never have dared to hand out in sight or sound of the school. But he had laid his plans well; there were no ears to hear Nap's frantic yells in the depths of the wood.

"Ah! Mon Dieu! Peeg!" yelled Nap. "Peeg!"

Whack, whack, whack! Loder's face was black and bitter and he laid it on with a savage hand. Walker made a sudden movement as the stick was rising again, and caught Loder's arm.

"Look here, chuck it!" he said. "That's enough!"

"Don't be a fool! He's got to tell us where to get that dashed packet!" snarled Loder. "Do you want the sack, you dummy?"

Loder gave James Walker a shove that sent him staggering backwards, and he sat in the grass. The stick came down again on Nap and there was a wild howl from the French junior.

Walker sprang to his feet. He made a jump at Loder, and snatched the stick from his hand. The next moment it was sent whirling away in the treetops. Loder turned on him like a tiger, and Walker's hand came up.

"Let him alone or I'll jolly well knock you spinning!" shouted Walker.

"Look here, you fool—" exclaimed Carne.

"You shut up!" snapped Walker. "Leave that kid alone!" He grabbed Carne's collar and dragged him away from Napoleon Dupont. "Now, then, kid, cut while you've got the chance!"

Loder made a clutch at Nap as he leaped up. Walker cut out and the bully of the Sixth rolled over with a yell.

The next second Nap of the Remove was vanishing in the wood.

"Why, you—!" Loder staggered to his feet, breathless with rage. "You—you idiot—you dummy—you—you—I'm done with you now! Come on, Carne—leave the silly fool alone!"

Loder and Carne swung away. "Look here," began Walker, "you needn't—"

But they were gone.

Walker of the Sixth shoved his hands deep in his pockets and tramped away, with a dismal face. He had quarrelled with his friends—which was not, perhaps, much loss. But that miserable packet was as far off as ever, and he had no more help to expect from Loder and Carne in getting hold of it.

"Walker!"

The Sixth-Former gave a jump. Nap of the Remove emerged from the thickets and stood grinning at him and wriggling at the same time. Walker gave him a scowl.

(Continued on page 28.)

ALLISON OF AVONSHIRE!



By JOHN BREARLEY.

When it comes to work, cheery Bill Allison drives ahead at full speed; but when he starts bowling on the cricket pitch he's slow... But, gosh, how rapidly the wickets fall!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Ruthless!

"Whee-zy Anna! Whee-zy Anna!
Down where the water melons grow,
Tah-di-lum-ta-ra-rah—"

"COME ON, bike, got a move on!
You're a wheezy auna, all right!"

Breaking off in the middle of his "song," young Bill Allison grinned and bent even lower over his racing handlebars. Under the drive of his long, hard legs the lightweight machine fairly whizzed along the winding lane that led from Avonport to Kelsey village.

As a matter of fact, Bill's sorely tried bike was anything but a "Wheezy Anna"—trust her cheerful, but efficient, owner for that!

Bill's tweed jacket and grey flannel bags might be shabby and stained, his shoes dusty, and his school cap, jammed on the back of a tousled head, old and faded. But his bicycle, though ancient, was as clean, well-oiled, and smooth-running as only the bicycle of a lad who knew and loved machinery of any kind could be.

Nor was there any real need for Bill or the bike to "get a move on." He was only going home to tea—which he would have to get for himself—and he was not particularly hungry, anyway. Nevertheless, Bill scorched as though his life depended on it, taking the frequent corners at top pace. He was that sort!

In Avonport and Kelsey, where he lived, opinions differed considerably concerning young Bill Allison.

Some people—his admiring school-fellows at Avonport Grammar, for instance—insisted that Bill was a born speed-ace. Others—chiefly the older folk, growled that he was "a barmy lunatic, like the rest of his barmy family." The fact remained that when Bill Allison did anything, he did it quick!

At work or play he was always the same—always cheery and cool, but always driving ahead at full speed. Indeed, the only "slow" thing about Bill was his left-hand bowling at cricket. But, even there, as Terry Mason, the Grammarian captain, observed, "the only reason the blighter bowls slow is 'cos he can get wickets quicker that way than by slinging 'em down!"

Terry had made that rueful remark only half an hour ago at the "nets," as it happened, and Bill, nipping round another sharp corner, chuckled as the words came back to him.

In spite of his slapdash ways, Bill Allison was a modest youth. Yet there was no getting away from it, he had been in deadly form at practice that evening—better even than last season. None of the school batsmen had been able to touch his curly spinners, and old Jance, the groundsman and pro, had declared roundly that the tall, smiling youngster was in a class by himself.

"My lad, you ought to have a great season this year if ye keep this form up. In fact, if ye don't go breaking your silly neck first, mucking about with bikes or cars, you'll play for Avonshire yer-ay, and mobbe England, too, one day!" the grizzled veteran had prophesied.

Whereat Bill had reddened with pleasure, for, next to machinery, he loved cricket better than anything else in the world.

"Hope I can keep my form—specially on Saturday against the County Club and Ground," he murmured, as he rode along. "I suppose they'll have half the County pro's out, as usual, to give 'em some practice before the season starts. Decent chaps, too! Golly, I hope they do better this year than they did last! Poor old Avonshire! That's the worst of being a hard-up county and not being able to afford a nursery! Jove, I'd certainly like to play for 'em after I leave school sometimes!"

At the thought a faint shadow

clouded Bill's freckled face. His firm lips tightened a little, and he shrugged.

"County cricket," he mused, a trifle wistfully. "Guess that's all right for chaps like Cousin Len, but some hopes for me, with poor old dad as broke as he is. Now, if only he could put that invention of his on the market and clean up a fortune, I might—"

Wharr-rrr-rr-huh!

The sudden, long-drawn, and raucous blast of a horn—right in his ear, it seemed, crashed in on Bill's thoughts just like a bombshell. Deep in day-dreams, he had not even heard the approach of the long, low roadster that came sweeping up behind him now, practically in silence save for the brisk hiss of tyres.

And truly the scowling young man at the wheel had left it mighty late before sounding his warning.

Startled, Bill jerked upright in his saddle, flung a hasty glance to the rear, and saw, among other things, a pair of hard, intolerant eyes staring at him maliciously through a windshield. Then, with a sharp gasp, he swerved desperately—just in time.

What followed was all over in a second!

There came another deafening blast of the horn, a contemptuous shout. At a reckless speed the powerful car shot alongside, and then, as Bill continued to swerve, the driver swerved after him, crowding the lad deliberately into the side. As an example of road-hogging it was as efficient as it was ugly and dangerous.

For one awful moment Bill thought his time was up. The roadster's near wheel flashed by, almost scraping his knee. He caught a brief glimpse of two sneering faces turned towards him; felt a stifling rush of wind. And then—

Crash!

His front wheel struck the raised grassy margin of the lane full-tilt, while

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his back wheel rose into the air. And so did Bill! Diving head-first over the handlebars, he hit the ground with the back of his neck and went sprawling into the sharp brambles of the hedge.

By the time he had opened his eyes and the world had ceased to spin round his mischievous aggressor had vanished.

Trouble Brewing!

"YOU rotten outsider!" Slowly, grrogly, Bill got to his feet, wincing at a myriad of thorns stabbed into him through his well-worn clothes. He spent a minute or two patting himself all over and shaking his muzzy head to clear it. Then he limped across and picked up his fallen bike.

"Hm!"

That was all he said for a while as he examined the buckled front wheel and twisted handlebars. But presently he began to whistle softly through clenched teeth—always an ominous sign with Bill, as certain of his fellows at Avonport Grammar had discovered to their cost.

Good-natured and boisterous, Bill Allison rarely lost his temper over anything. Even when he did, he never blew up. He just whistled tunelessly, while his stubborn jaw became rock-like and a cold light frosted his pleasant eyes. But once a fight started he was in it—hitting hard and relentlessly to the bitter end.

Now, as he straightened and stared up the lonely lane, Bill was in fighting mood with a vengeance.

Although he himself was a scorcher, he never abused the laws of the road, and despised those who did. He knew that the driver of the roadster had crashed him purposely, and that only the thick grass beside the lane had saved him from what might have been serious injury. Worst even than that was the fact that his beloved bike—the only means he had of satisfying his own craving for speed—had been wrecked.

Bill stopped whistling abruptly and doubled his big fists.

"Yes, that's what you are, Cousin Leonard—a rotten, road-hogging cut-throat!" he muttered at last, still staring in the direction the roadster had taken. "You always were and always will be. Thought I didn't recognise you—eh? And I suppose that little stunt was just your gentle way of showing that you can pelt along in Allison Straight Eights, while poor relations have to sweat on common jiggers!"

He grinned maliciously.

"Well, anyway, whatever car you've got, you'll never be a real driver, my tulip—not if the Allison Works turned out a million cars a year, and you drove 'em all! And one day—"

With a quick heave, he hooked the bike over one broad shoulder.

"One day, dear old Leonard," he continued, in the same level voice, "I'm going to give you such a wallop on the chin, and you'll wonder what's hit you. You may praps, give me a licking afterwards—or may not. But, by gum, I'll knock that sneering grin off your dial first, you swollen-headed galoof, and chance what happens!"

Taking a firmer grip on the machine, he started to walk the last mile to the little cottage where he and his widowed father lived. At every plodding step his anger increased.

"The swanking blighter!" he growled disgustedly. "No wonder

everyone in Avonport gives him the go-by, even if he is boss of the Allison Works now, and a first-class cricketer. Wonder who the other chap was he had with him—looked a tough. Just the sort who would be a pal of Len's."

Sore, and still a bit dizzy from his heavy fall, he tramped on, a prey to grim thoughts. Slightly envious thoughts, too, though he tried to stifle them. But, being only human, after all, he could not help contrasting his own lot in life with that of his elder cousin.

At twenty-four, Leonard Allison was not only the best amateur all-rounder in the Avonshire county team, but a wealthy man also; owner of a large and beautiful house in Avonport, a fleet of cars, and the great Allison Motor Works into the bargain, one of the biggest plants in the country.

Bill, on the other hand, was the son

"COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS!"

WELL, and what do you think of this week's handsome Free Photogravure Plate? Isn't it just splendid? You should have four photo-plates all told now, as well as a folder to put them in. But this series of Free Gifts is not finished yet. Oh dear, no! There are twelve photo-plates in all, and when you have collected all of them you will have a collection of souvenirs that will be the envy of your pals.

"HARNESSING THE WATERS OF THE NILE"

is the subject of next week's topping photogravure plate, and if you take my tip you'll order your copy of the MAGNET NOW! No collection will be complete without Photo Plate No. 5.

By the way, on page 21 of this issue you will find full particulars of an amazing offer of a RIGBY "SUPER" MODEL AEROPLANE for 4j.d. These super flying planes, assembled and ready for flying, would cost 2s. 6d. at the shops. Just think of it—through the medium of the MAGNET you can get the various parts, together with the mechanism and full instructions as to how to assemble the plane, for the modest sum of 4j.d. Irrespective of the fun of assembling your model, just imagine the hours of enjoyment you'll get flying your plane. See page 21 at once!

Spaced here rather limited, I've only just room to tell you what's in store for you all next week. Topping the bill comes Frank Richards' first-rate school yarn:

"THE DESERTER I"

in which you are guaranteed excitement galore and tons of fun. John Brearley's sparkling story of king cricket will give you a feast of thrills, while you'll chuckle loud and long over the rollicking fun "Greyfriars Herald" supplement. Last, but not least, you will receive

ANOTHER SUPERS FREE PHOTOGRAVURE PLATE.

Be sure, then, and order your copy of the MAGNET without delay!

YOUR EDITOR.

of a clever, but irascible old man, embittered and impoverished by years of disappointment and bad luck.

A pioneer of motoring, and still a shrewd inventor and designer, Simon Allison, Bill's father, had once been a power in the automobile world, as well as part-owner of the family firm. But now—

Bill sighed. He had never got to the real bottom of why his father had suddenly chucked up the works, or why he had sold his own topping house in Avonport and moved out to tiny, sleepy Kelsey.

All the lad knew was that there had been a fierce quarrel between his father and his late uncle, Jacob Allison, a big, masterful man, with a harsh voice that had always put the wind up Bill as a kid. And after that—the crash!

The Allison brothers had dissolved partnership forthwith.

Simon Allison, no longer rich, had set up a small workshop in Kelsey, employing, after a while, one mechanic, Mike Doyle—a queer, loyal old "crab," as Bill called him privately. There he had produced two moderately successful inventions, and then started on his latest and greatest—a super-charger for small engines, more powerful and reliable than any others in existence. So far, however, all attempts to put it on the market had proved its worth had failed through lack of finance.

Jacob Allison, apparently wealthier and more influential than ever, had continued to run the works until he died six months ago, and neither brother had ever seen or spoken to the other again after the quarrel.

For some reason, after Jacob's death, there had been some funny rumours flying around that Allison's were not doing quite so well as they formerly had. These rumours still persisted, in spite of all the dashing Leonard's efforts to squash them.

Bill, trailing along with his buckled bike, sniffed.

No one in Avonport tried harder to make himself popular than Len Allison—and no one failed more lamentably. He was good-looking, rich, and always perfectly dressed; a stylish batsman who had scored a century against Surrey last year, and a fast, though erratic bowler. Yet, in spite of all this, Avonport folk fought shy of him.

He was too much like his father, they said, just a bit too conceited and domineering. So long as he could get his own way and go his own road, nothing else mattered to Len Allison. The ruthless way he had just swept Bill from his path was characteristic of the young owner of Allison's.

"Ah, well!" grinned Bill, with a sudden return to his usual philosophical style as he thought of all this. "I wouldn't change places with the beggar, anyway, for all his cash. Dad and me and Mike haven't got much money, but we do have fun—sometimes. And, anyway—Gosh, my only sainted aunt!"

A sudden, sharp, incredulous exclamation burst from Bill Allison as he turned a last bend and came in sight of his home. He blinked, unable for the moment to believe his own eyes, for there, outside the cottage gate, stood Leonard Allison's car, the same sleek roadster that had dunned him only fifteen minutes previously.

Bill gaped, open-mouthed. Then gradually a dull red flush spread across his freckled face.

"Well, I'll go to sea!" he scolded. "Golly, that road-hogging blighter's got a nerve all right. Knocks me flying,

and then has the infernal cheek to stop at our house! Wonder what the game is? My stars, I'll—I'll—"

Dumping his bike behind the hedge, Bill sprinted along to the little cottage, a tall, hefty figure, ready and eager for war. After vaulting the gate, however, he checked abruptly as the sound of a loud and angry voice reached his ears. Bill's jaw hardened still more.

"Hallo! The beggar's got dad's goat, too, has he?" he muttered grimly. Prowling round to his father's small workshop behind the cottage, he cautiously peeped in through the dingy side-window. He grunted at what he saw.

Inside, lounging carelessly against the door, were Leonard Allison and the other man Bill had glimpsed in the roadster, a burly, swarthy-faced stranger in leather coat and gauntlets.

Old Simon Allison, his stiff, iron-grey hair bristling as it always did when he was in a rage, stood glaring at them half-wrathfully, half-anxiously, like some old bear badgered by mongrels. And in the farther corner, Mike Doyle, lean and stolid, was apparently absorbed in

stodid eyeing him sardonically through the smoke of a cigarette.

"Now, listen, uncle—" began Leonard, only to be cut off by a sweeping gesture.

"Don't call me uncle, either!" roared the irate inventor. "I know you're the son of my half-brother all right, but, believe me, I'm not proud of the relationship! I don't like you, I don't want you, and I won't do business with you! D'ye get that?"

Simon Allison's stocky figure quivered with wrath. With his stiff grey hair, square, ill-shaven chin, and soiled overalls, he made a strong contrast to the handsome Leonard, slim and spruce in immaculate plus-fours. Yet, in spite of his unkempt appearance, there was a solid dignity about the old man that his nephew would never attain if he lived to be a hundred.

"I had enough of dealing with your father, my lad," he continued, in a quieter tone. "It's not for me to say anything about him now—especially in front of a stranger"—and he shot a brief, measuring glance at the swarthy man. "But you force me to speak

The great Allison Works aren't doing so well these days, since you took charge, eh? A lot of people are guessing at the truth, but I know! You can't hide things like that from a veteran like me, even though I'm no longer in the family firm!"

His faded eyes were bitter. "Your father got me out of the firm—hounded me out!" He flung the words in Leonard's lowering face. "And now you and the firm, too, are perilously near the rocks! Allison cars are slipping badly, and that's the reason you want my invention!"

Still closer he came, staring deep into his nephew's wavering eyes.

"A ruined man, you called me! Perhaps so. But you know that ruined man has invented something that'll pull Allison Works out of the rut you're slipped into. You're trying to get hold of my new supercharger at a fool's price to save yourself. Well," he rasped, "you won't get it!"

Snapping his fingers he stepped back, panting slightly. For a long minute silence followed, broken only by the occasional clink of a tool from Mike



Crash!—Bill Allison's front wheel struck the raised grassy margin of the lane full-tilt, while his back wheel rose into the air. Diving head-first over the handlebars, Bill hit the ground with the back of his neck and went sprawling into the hedge!

some job at a work-bench, keeping his back turned squarely to the visitors.

One glance at the three faces he could see told Bill that tempers were rapidly rising. He could almost sense the electricity in the air. Then, as he heard his father's next words, uttered in a strong, vibrant voice, Bill started.

"Oh! So that's it, eh? The same old stunt!" he breathed. "All right, Mr. Leonard, you've come looking for trouble, and you'll get it! When dad's finished with you, I'll start!"

A smile crossed his lips as he gently rubbed his hands together and stole away.

A Swarthy Stranger Butts In!

"I'VE told you before, and I'm telling you again—I wouldn't sell you my new invention if you were the last motor-manufacturer on earth. Len Allison! Besides, your offer amounts to just what I'd expect to get from you—nothing!"

Arms akimbo, with lined, rugged face flushed with exasperation, old Simon Allison glowered at his nephew, ignoring completely the swarthy stranger who

plainly. Your father was a hard man, Leonard, to say the least. And I told him that once, to his face."

Leonard Allison scowled blackly. Two hectic spots of colour appeared suddenly on his prominent cheekbones, and his dark eyes glittered. When he spoke again it was in a cool, insolent voice that cut like a whip.

"Yes, you did. And you pulled his nose in his own office, too, I believe!" he drawled. "But that assault, my dear uncle, eventually cost you an awful lot, didn't it? In fact, it—er—practically ruined you! As you say, dad was a hard man, who knew how to deal with people who stood in his way. And," he added softly, "so do I!"

At that, Simon Allison struck back with a harsh laugh. If Leonard expected him to be impressed by the veiled threat, he was disappointed.

"You! Huh! You pretty-faced pup!" he grunted, and suddenly took a quick pace forward. "And don't yap so much about my being ruined!" he went on then, so significantly that Leonard Allison blanched. "Ha, that gets you, does it? Thought it would!

Doyle's bench in the background. That worthy seemed deaf to all that was going on."

Old Simon stood rigid, chin thrust out, fists clenched on his hips, waiting for Leonard's reply. But the young motor magnate was dumb; confused by his uncle's fiery statements, which were, alas, too true. Meantime, the swarthy stranger, cigarette drooping from thick lips, studied both antagonists closely with his queer, heavy-lidded eyes, sleepy, yet curiously menacing. Like those of a cat watching a mouse.

It was he who at last broke the tense hush.

"A-ah, gee! We're wastin' time. Len!"

With a scorching oath, brutal as an unexpected blow, he suddenly heaved himself away from the door and towered over Simon Allison, spreading his broad, leather-clad shoulders truculently. Next moment a thick stream of smoke took the old man fairly between the eyes, and a gauntleted hand landed heavily on his arm.

"Now listen, you!" The man's voice, marked by a faint foreign accent, was

as rough as a file. "Lemme introduce myself. I'm Phil Valetti. Maybe you've heard the name, huh? No? Well, anyway, I'm Len's new pardner. And a working pardner—get it?"

Furiously the inventor broke free; bracing himself as though to dash his fist into the dark, sneering face before him. Just in time, however, he relaxed.

It was one of Simon Allison's greatest failings that, unlike Bill, he invariably lost his head when aroused. But now something in Valetti's threatening personality, something lurking in those cat-like eyes, made the explosive old man pause.

In a flash he recognised quite clearly that here was an opponent to be reckoned with; a brute, but a fighting brute, bold, clever, deadly determined. The blustering, dandified Leonard suddenly faded into insignificance. Another stronger, far more dangerous figure had suddenly loomed into the Allison family feud.

The realisation of this fact acted like a cold douche on Simon Allison. Wisely he took a firm grip on himself; became very cool, very alert all at once. His stare was as bleak as Valetti's as he answered quietly:

"Yes, I get it. Working partner, or hired thug, eh? Well, what now?"

Valetti's white teeth glimmered.

"This! We're not bargaining with you for that invention any more! I've purred, emphasising the 'we.' We're just giving you a last chance to take our terms as they are, see? We want your supercharger—at our price! And you're going to sell it, or else—"

Simon Allison drew a deep, hissing breath.

"Or else—what?" he demanded huskily.

Valetti only smiled and glanced furtively across the shop at Mike Doyle's bent back before answering:

"Just or else," he nodded calmly, lowering his voice at the same time. "But maybe you remember how Jacob Allison treated you when you stuck out against him, huh? Maybe, you'll remember what he did to your reputation in the motor world, which is why you can't get anyone who wants to take an interest in you now? We'll—"

Valetti's evil smile broadened; a chill

cruelty glowed in his eyes—"old Jake started something. And maybe, if you don't behave yourself with us, maybe we'll finish—"

"Now!"

The single word, uttered in the quietest of voices, stopped Valetti like a bullet. Even Simon Allison received a shock.

He swung round. Leonard Allison frowned and grasped his "pardner's" elbow. Roughly Valetti shook him off.

A startling change had come over Len Allison's sinister new partner.

Valetti's swarthy complexion had turned a dull, pasty yellow, while his coarse lips, drawn back in a snarl of surprise and alarm, revealed tightly clenched teeth. The heavy-lidded eyes bulged as he stared stupidly at the mechanic who came slowly towards him from the work-bench; a lean, lanky man, with a clear, expressionless face, big, bony hands, and a slight limp.

He halted; stood motionless, long, muscular arms drooping limp at his sides. Only his lantern jaw moved steadily, rhythmically, for no one yet had ever seen Mike Doyle without his chewing-gum. Nor had anyone ever seen him excited.

Impassive as a sphinx, he surveyed the crouching Valetti with blue, deep-set eyes, devoid of all emotion. But if he had been a man-eating tiger, the effect of his appearance on the foreigner could not have been more astounding.

Twice Valetti strove to speak, though all he achieved was a strangled croak as he gazed at Mike's imperturbable face, seen clearly for the first time. Then suddenly, while Leonard and Simon Allison stood petrified, and young Bill trembled with eagerness outside the door, the swarthy bully exploded in a tearing gasp:

"Corpo di Bacihi! You! Cannonball Mike Doyle!"

The spell broken, he fell back against Len Allison, glaring at the mechanic like a trapped wolf.

(That Valetti and Mike Doyle have met before is obvious. But where and how? There's a surprise in store for the Allison and you as well in next week's Free Gift issue of the MAGNET. Order your copy in good time!)

TAMING A TYRANT!

(Continued from page 24.)

"You young rotter—! he growled. "Zere is something for you!" said Nap, and, to Walker's amazement, he drew a cigarette packet from his pocket. "Zat you catch!"

Walker caught it. He stared at it. Nap disappeared into the wood again, leaving him staring at it. With trembling fingers, Walker drew out the flap of the cardboard box and recognised his "fist" on it.

"Oh gad!" he murmured.

It was his at last. Loder had failed; but Walker, quite unexpectedly, had succeeded. He had reason to be glad that he had intervened to save Nap from that thrashing. This was his reward!

Walker breathed deep and hard—as he lighted a match and watched the cigarette packet burn away to a fragment. His step was light and his face was bright as he walked back to Greyfriars—and the Bouncer, who saw him come in, opined, from his looks, that he had backed a winner!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's old Nap! Lucky there's some cake left!"

The picnic was over when Nap of the Remove, still wriggling a little, arrived in the old priory again.

Five fellows were glad to see him there—one wasn't! Billy Bunter grunted. There was still some cake left.

"I say, you fellows, pass that cake—quick!" said Bunter. "Look here, I dare say Nap's had his tea—he won't want any more cake. Hand me—Yarrooh!"

What was handed to Bunter was not cake—and it made him tip backwards and land on his pudge back, with a wild roar. Nap sat down in the place he had involuntarily vacated.

"Zank you, Buntair!" he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was no more cake for Bunter!

THE END

(Now look out for next Saturday's MAGNET and another ripping page yarn of Greyfriars, entitled: "THE DESERTER!" And don't forget that this issue will also contain another Free Photo Plate. Be sure and add it to your collection.)



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FIG. 4.—A MAN-MADE MOUNTAIN OF BRICKS AND STEEL.

The Empire State Building, New York, the world's tallest skyscraper, reaches a height of 1,471 feet. 10,000,000 bricks were used in the construction of this mammoth edifice. Towering above its 85 stories is a giant "nest" built specially for the purpose of housing visiting airplanes. If it were possible to transplant the Empire State Building to the dock of the giant liner "Leviathan," the result would be as shown in our top left picture. If you would compare it with St. Paul's, take a look at the composite photo showing both buildings, reduced to scale. The inset picture on right shows a cut-away view of the giant nest and how passengers are able to make their exit from the second airplane.