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**SHOCKS
FOR
BILLY BUNTER!**

ALONZO THE GREAT!



BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

BILLY BUNTER, standing before the window of the school shop at Greyfriars, gazed into that window with a longing, yearning gaze.

Bunter was hungry; it was nearly an hour since he had had his dinner. And at dinner he hadn't had enough. Mr. Quelch's gimlet eye had been on him, and Bunter had been stopped at the third helping of steak-and-kidney pie. Only two helpings of "afters" had fallen to his share; and, in fact, he would have left the dinner-table in a famished state had he not, fortunately, bagged Bob Cherry's "afters" while Bob was not looking.

And in the tuckshop window there was a tempting display. Mrs. Mimble's little shop, in the corner behind the elms, was open till class—and fellows were coming and going. But it might as well have been shut, so far as Billy Bunter was concerned. Owing to delay in the post—or some other reason—Bunter had not received a postal order that he had been long expecting!

He feasted his eyes on good things; but it was not his eyes that he wanted to feast!

The Owl of the Remove proceeded to run his hands through his pockets, in the desperate hope of discovering some coin previously overlooked.

Through one pocket after another the fat junior rummaged and foraged. Pocket after pocket was turned out—revealing all sorts and conditions of things, but no cash!

There was a bit of string, with a bit

of ancient toffee sticking to it. There was a penknife with both blades broken. There was a notecase—empty inside and jammy outside. There was a handkerchief which, had Bunter started in business as a pirate, would have served him as a black flag! But there was no cash!

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter.

He pulled out the lining of the pockets to make sure! He blinked at the lining through his big spectacles! There was nothing doing! William George Bunter, like the seed in the parable, had fallen in a stony place! He was absolutely stumped!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The fat junior spun round at that sound of merry laughter behind him. Five juniors who were taking a trot round the quad had paused to observe Bunter's desperate, but unavailing search. They seemed to be entertained.

Billy Bunter blinked at the Famous Five.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Come on, you men!" said Bob Cherry hastily.

"Hold on a minute!" exclaimed Bunter. "I was going to say——"

"Speech may be taken as read!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"I say, I was expecting a postal order this morning——"

"We've heard that one!" said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"Tell us something new!" suggested Johnny Bull. "You're repeating yourself, Bunter."

"The repeatfulness is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"I say, you fellows, my postal order hasn't come. I say, Mrs. Mimble has got some lovely cakes! I say, don't

walk away while a fellow's talking to you!" roared Bunter.

Harry Wharton & Co. were on the trot again. They disappeared through the elms, laughing, and Billy Bunter blinked after them wrathfully.

"Beasts!" he roared.

They were gone! Slowly and sadly Bunter tucked the lining back into his pockets. Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, came along, to go into the tuckshop, and Bunter laid a fat hand on his arm.

"I say, Smithy——"

The Bounder jerked his arm away. Without speaking, he took out his handkerchief, and carefully rubbed his sleeve where the fat Owl's grubby fingers had clutched. Then he went into the tuckshop, leaving Bunter glaring after him, with a glare that nearly cracked his spectacles.

"Cheeky beast!" gasped Bunter.

Two Remove fellows came strolling along—Peter Todd and Tom Dutton. As they belonged to Bunter's study—No. 7 in the Remove—the fat Owl felt a faint flicker of hope.

"I say, Toddy——" he began.

"Say on!" said Peter cheerfully.

"You remember I told you I was expecting a postal order——"

"Sort of!" agreed Peter.

"Well," said Bunter sadly, "it hasn't come."

"Must be catching!" said Peter gravely.

"Eh?"

"The postal order you were expecting last week never came, you know," said Peter sympathetically, "and the one you were expecting the week before that never came, and the one you were expecting the week before that——"

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"Oh, really, Toddy—"
 "And the week before that, and the week before that," went on Peter, "and the week before that, and the week before that—"

"Look here—"
 "And the week before that—"
 "You silly ass!"
 "So it must be catching," said Peter gravely; "all your postal orders suffer from the same complaint—"

"Beast! I say, Dutton!" Bunter turned to Tom Dutton, raising his voice, as Dutton was deaf. "I say, my postal order hasn't come!"

"There's some in the study," answered Dutton. "But what do you want gum for? You can't eat gum."

"I didn't say gum, you ass, I said come—my postal order hasn't come!" hooted Bunter. "Have you got a bob?"

"How could I have a job while I'm still at school? Talk sense!"

"Oh crikey! Bob!" roared Bunter. "Have you got a bob—a shilling?"

"Willing enough, when the time comes, I suppose," answered Dutton.

"Which is more than you will be, you fat-slacker! Your people will have a lot to do to make you take any job!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter Todd.

"What's the joke, Toddy?" asked Dutton. "Nothing funny in Bunter asking me if I'm willing to take a job, is there?"

"Will you lend me a tanner?" shrieked Bunter.

"Certainly not! If you want a hammer, you can borrow one, I suppose. I'm not going to lend you a hammer. Besides, what do you want a hammer for?" demanded the deaf junior.

"Tanner!" raved Bunter.

"Oh, spanner! You said hammer? Haven't you got a spanner on your bike?" said Dutton. "You're always losing your things! Well, I'm not going to lend you my spanner—you'd lose that, too!"

And Tom Dutton walked on with Toddy, wondering what Toddy was chuckling at. Billy Bunter gasped. Talking to Tom Dutton was rather an exertion, and Bunter was rather short of wind.

"I say, Mauly!" A slim and elegant figure appeared in the offing. "I say, Mauly, old chap—My hat! The brute's as deaf as Dutton!"

Lord Mauleverer seemed deaf, at least; for he walked on, quite quickly, and disappeared.

"Beast!" gasped Bunter.

He blinked round for another victim. Then his fat face lighted up. A rather angular youth, strikingly like Peter Todd in appearance, came along. It was Peter's cousin Alonzo, lately returned to Greyfriars School after long absence.

Bunter beamed on him. Alonzo was distinguished from his cousin Peter by the gentle and simple expression of his face and the gentle simplicity of his nature. Alonzo had brought quite a lot of pocket-money back with him. As Alonzo never refused a request for a loan it had not lasted him long. Billy Bunter could have told what had become of most of it. If Alonzo had any cash, Alonzo was exactly the fellow that William George Bunter wanted to see!

"I say, hold on, Alonzo, old chap!" gasped Bunter. "I say, stop a minute!"

"Certainly, my dear Bunter," said Alonzo, stopping.

"I'm jolly glad to have you back at Greyfriars, old fellow!" said Bunter.

"I am very, very glad to hear you say so, Bunter! It is indeed very gratifying!" said Alonzo.

"I say, I was expecting a postal order this morning, from one of my titled relations, old chap," said Bunter, blinking at him.

"How very kind of him to send you a remittance, Bunter!" said the innocent Alonzo.

"Ye-es; but it hasn't come!" explained Bunter. "There's been some delay in the post. I want some fellow to lend me ten bob till it comes."

"I sincerely hope, my dear Bunter, that you will find some fellow who will do so."

"Some fellows," said Bunter sorrowfully, "won't take a fellow's word. But you do, don't you, Alonzo, old chap?"

"Certainly, my dear Bunter. I should be excessively sorry to doubt your statement—indeed, I think that my Uncle Benjamin would be shocked at such distrust."

"You wouldn't mind lending me ten bob, and taking the postal order when it comes," said Bunter hopefully.

"Not at all," answered Alonzo.

Bunter held out a fat paw.

"That's all right," he said. "Lend me ten bob, old fellow!"

"With the greatest pleasure—"

"Well, come on."

"If I possessed such a sum—"

"Eh?"

He used to be Alonzo, the freak—the weediest fellow in all Greyfriars. But now a remarkable change has come over Alonzo: he's the strongest chap in the school!

"But I do not, my dear Bunter. In the circumstances, therefore, I am unable to lend you ten shillings."

Bunter breathed hard.

"Well, look here, Alonzo, make it five," he said. "You can trust me for five bob—what?"

"Undoubtedly," said Alonzo.

"Well, then, hand over the five bob," said Bunter, showing signs of impatience.

"It would be a pleasure to do so, Bunter, only—"

"Only what?"

"Only I haven't five shillings left," explained Alonzo.

"You silly ass—"

"Eh?"

"I—I—I mean, lend me a bob," said Bunter desperately. "Look here, I can make a bob do! Will you lend me a bob?"

"Certainly, when—"

"Well, hand it over!"

"When—"

"For goodness' sake shell out before the bell goes!" exclaimed Bunter.

"What are you keeping me waiting for? The bell goes in a minute or two."

"I was about to explain, my dear Bunter, that I will lend you a shilling with the greatest pleasure when I get a remittance—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"At the present moment," said Alonzo, "I have no money. But in a few days perhaps—"

"You—you—you—" gasped Bunter.

"You're stony, you silly ass! You've kept me jawing all this time for nothing, you frabjous fathead! Beast!"

"My dear Bunter—"
 "Sit down, you silly chump!" hooted Bunter; and he gave Alonzo Todd a sudden shove on his waistcoat.

"Oh!" gasped Alonzo.
 He was standing on the edge of a puddle. He sat down suddenly. There was a splash and a yell.

"Ow! Oh, I am all wet!" yelled Alonzo. "Oh dear! My goodness! Ow!"

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter; and he rolled away, leaving Alonzo sitting in the puddle.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

"Goal!"

LOOK out, Alonzo!"
 "Pass that ball!"
 "Kick, fathead!"

Harry Wharton & Co. and half a dozen other Removites were punting a footer about while they waited for the bell to ring for class. A hefty kick from Bob Cherry landed the footer at Alonzo Todd's feet as he came towards the House. Alonzo was called the Duffer of Greyfriars, and never had a fellow deserved a nickname more. Alonzo was very kind and obliging, but he was clumsy. He could seldom pick up anything without dropping it, or go near anything without knocking it over. When he joined in footer practice Alonzo was liable to kick anything but the ball. But Alonzo was always ready to play up, and when the juniors shouted to him to pass that ball he did his best. Nobody could do more.

He kicked.

He put a great deal of force into the kick, but as his foot unfortunately missed the footer by ten or twelve inches the leather did not stir. Meeting with no resistance, Alonzo's foot swept up into the air, and for a split second he stood, stork-like, on one leg. Then he sat down.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well kicked, sir!"

Alonzo sat and blinked. He was quite surprised to find himself sitting down.

"Dear me!" he ejaculated.

"Try again, old bean!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Stand back, you men, and give Alonzo a chance!"

"Go it, Alonzo!" chirruped Bob Cherry. "Try the other foot!"

Alonzo picked himself up. He tried the other foot. This time his left leg cleft the atmosphere, leaving the ball where it was as before. But this time Alonzo did not sit down! He saved himself by a swift and active hop.

"Bravo!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Go it, Alonzo!" yelled Squiff.

"We shall have to play that man against Rookwood!" chortled Bob Cherry. "He would surprise them."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Kick that ball, you fathead!" exclaimed Peter Todd wrathfully. "Can't you kick a footer just under your nose?"

Peter, as great chief and leader of Study No. 7, was not so amused by Alonzo's performance as the other fellows. Peter considered that it let Study No. 7 down.

"My dear Peter!" gasped Alonzo. "I could not possibly kick a football under my nose! I should have to place my foot underneath it—"

"What?" gasped Peter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Kick that ball!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Certainly, my dear Bull!"

Alonzo tried for the third time. This

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time he was very careful, and he calculated well before he let out at the ball. At a little distance Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, had paused to look on with a faint smile on his face. He was at right angles to Alonzo, who was going to kick the ball towards the group of juniors near the House. The most skilful footballer, with his best shooting-boots on, could hardly have got Quelch, at right angles to the direction of the kick. It did not occur to the Remove master that he was in any danger.

But he was. When Alonzo got near the footer he moved in mysterious ways his wonders to perform.

He kicked. This time he landed his foot on the ball. He did not get the right direction—but that could not be helped. Neither could it be helped that the muddy football shot away straight at Mr. Quelch. And as Mr. Quelch did not know that it was coming till it came, it landed full on his scholastic countenance, blotting out the smile instantly. That could not be helped, either—it was one of those unfortunate accidents.

Whop! went the footer on Mr. Quelch's nose.

"Ooooooh!" gurgled the Remove master.

"Oh, my hat!" yelled Bob. "Look!"

"Great pip!" gasped Harry Wharton.

Mr. Quelch staggered back under the sudden impact of the ball, under the horrified eyes of the Removites. He staggered, and sat. There was quite a bump as he landed.

"Ooooooh!" repeated Quelch.

"Oh crumbs! Alonzo's done it now!" gasped Frank Nugent.

"The donefulness is terrific."

"And he doesn't know what he's done!" gurgled Bob.

Alonzo was looking for the ball, his back to the sitting Form-master, wondering where it had gone.

"Dear me!" ejaculated Alonzo. "Where is the ball, my dear fellows? I did not see where it fell!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch staggered to his feet. There were puddles in the quad, and the footer had collected some mud. Now a good deal of the mud had been transferred to Henry Samuel Quelch's majestic features.

"Urrggh! Upon my word! Wurrgh!" gasped the Remove master. He strode at Alonzo Todd and grasped him by the collar from behind.

"Oh, my goodness!" ejaculated Alonzo in surprise, as the Form-master shook him. "Ow! Oooh! Who—who is that? Please let go my—ooogh—collar—and do not shoo-shoo-shake me in that brutal manner!"

"Boy!" roared Mr. Quelch.

"Oh goodness gracious! Is it you, sir?" gasped Alonzo, squirming round and blinking at his Form-master.

"It is I!" roared Mr. Quelch. "How dare you kick a football at your Form-master! I repeat, how dare you!"

"But—but I did not, sir!" gasped Alonzo, in bewilderment. "I am sure I kicked it in quite another—ow!—direction! I assure you—groogh!—that if the ball collided with your—wow!—proboscis, sir, it was quite—yoop!—unintentional on my—yaroooooh!—part! Oh! Ow! Wow!"

Shake, shake, shake, shake!

Mr. Quelch was wrathful. With a pain in his nose, and mud daubing his features, perhaps that was not surprising. He shook Alonzo, and he shook him again, and he shook and shook and shook, as if he found some solace in it. The hapless Alonzo fairly crumpled up. He was not a sturdy fellow; he was far

from sturdy. His bony knees knocked together, and he sagged in Mr. Quelch's iron grasp like a sack of potatoes.

"Ooogh! Oooh! Wooh!" gurgled Alonzo. "My did-did-dear sir, I—ooogh!—I—woogh!—wow-wow!"

"He'll fall to pieces if Quelch goes on shaking him!" murmured Bob Cherry. "We shall have to collect the bits."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fortunately Quelch left off shaking before Alonzo fell to pieces. He released Alonzo's collar and strode away to the House for a wash before class, which he really needed. Alonzo was left tottering. He blinked dizzily at the yelling Removites.

"My did-did-dear fellows!" he stammered, "this is not a l-l-laughing m-m-matter! I am bib-bib-breathless! I—I—I feel quite—oh dear!—exhausted! Oh, goodness gracious!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors rushed for the ball again, and Alonzo tottered away, gurgling for breath. In class that afternoon Mr. Quelch had a very red nose and a very sharp temper. The Remove did not enjoy that afternoon with Quelch!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Alonzo Obliges!

"A ND a plum cake!" said Coker of the Fifth.

Billy Bunter blinked in at the doorway of the school shop.

After class Bunter's footsteps naturally led him in that direction. The tuckshop drew him like a magnet.

"One of those big ones!" said Coker.

Coker of the Fifth was a wealthy fellow, and he spent his money lavishly. Tea in Coker's study was generally a feast of the gods. Coker's bosom pals, Potter and Greene, often missed him after class, and missed him at other times; but they never failed him at tea-time. At tea-time they rallied round Coker with loyal attachment.

Bunter rolled into the tuckshop. He was still stony, and Mrs. Mimble's good things were not for him. But he was deeply interested in the stack that was growing up on the counter in front of Coker. Horace Coker of the Fifth Form was much too lofty a personage to carry parcels. Bunter, not as a rule an obliging fellow, was thinking of obliging Coker with an offer to convey his tuck to the study in the Fifth Form passage. His little, round eyes glistened behind his big, round spectacles at the big plum cake that Mrs. Mimble added to the stack. It was one of the ten-shilling cakes—simply enormous, and very luscious and fragrant. Ten shillings was nothing to the lavish Coker.

"I think that will do," remarked Coker. "Make a parcel of that lot, Mrs. Mimble. I'll send a fag for it."

"Yes, Master Coker."

Coker, being in the Fifth, had no fag, of course. Only Sixth Form men had fags. That was a standing grievance with Coker. In that, as in many other respects, Coker was not wholly satisfied with the way Dr. Locke ran the school. If Coker wanted the services of a fag he had to bribe some inky young scamp of the Third or Second with a tart or a cake. On this occasion, however, there was a junior at hand, ready and willing to proffer his services.

"I say, Coker," gasped Bunter, in a hurry, "I'll take the parcel to your study, old chap!"

Coker looked round at him.

"Did you call me old chap?" he inquired.

"Yes, old fellow—"

"Well, don't!" said Coker. "I don't

take that sort of thing from fags. Shut up!"

"But I say, I'll carry your parcel—"

"You won't!" said Coker. "You've carried a parcel for me before, you fat young scoundrel. And where did you carry it? Shut up!"

"Oh, really, Coker—"

"Come to think of it, I never kicked you for scoffing my tuck that time," said Coker thoughtfully. "Here you are, Bunter!"

"Yaroooooh!"

Billy Bunter left the tuckshop hastily.

Horace Coker came out and walked away, disdaining to take any further note of Bunter's unimportant existence. Billy Bunter blinked after him morosely. He was not anxious, as a rule, to make himself useful, but he did want to carry Coker's parcel. Certainly that parcel would not have been likely to arrive at Coker's study, had Bunter carried it. But it was useless to roll in again and tell Mrs. Mimble that Coker had sent him for the parcel. Coker disappeared, and Billy Bunter stood in deep thought. Sighting Harry Wharton & Co. in the quad, he hurried over to them.

"I say, you fellows," exclaimed Bunter breathlessly, "are you game for a lark on that ass Coker?"

"Game as pie!" said Bob Cherry at once. "What's the lark?"

"One of you go into the tuckshop and say that Coker's sent you for his parcel of tuck—"

"What?"

"And bag it," said Bunter, blinking at five astonished faces through his big spectacles. "And we'll whack it out—see?"

"Is that the lark?" demanded Harry Wharton.

"Yes, old chap!"

"We're to go and tell Mrs. Mimble lies and pinch Coker's tuck?" said the captain of the Remove. "My hat! Bump him!"

"I say, you fellows— Yaroooooh!" Bump!

The Famous Five walked away, leaving Billy Bunter sitting in the quad, roaring. Apparently they did not agree with the Owl of the Remove in his definition of a "lark."

"Beasts!" gasped Bunter. "Ow! Wow! Beasts!"

"My dear Bunter—" Alonzo Todd came up. "Pray let me assist you, my dear fellow! Did you fall down?"

The kind Alonzo helped Bunter to his feet. The fat junior blinked at him through his big spectacles.

"I say, Alonzo, old chap!" Bunter's eyes gleamed. "I say, you wouldn't mind doing something to oblige a Fifth Form man, would you?"

"Not at all," said Alonzo. "Uncle Benjamin has always impressed upon me very, very carefully, to be obliging at all times, and—"

"Coker wants a parcel taken from the tuckshop to the House," explained Bunter. "I'd take it myself, only I've got to go to Quelch at once—"

"That need not prevent you from obliging Coker, my dear Bunter. Mr. Quelch has gone out."

"I mean, I've got to see the Head in his study—not a minute to lose! Go and tell Mrs. Mimble that you've been sent for Coker's parcel, old chap, and take it to Coker's study, will you?"

"Certainly, Bunter!"

Alonzo, always ready to oblige, and never suspicious, went into the tuckshop. Billy Bunter grinned. Mrs. Mimble was rather a suspicious lady, so far as Billy Bunter was concerned. But the most suspicious of mortals could never have doubted the bona fides of Alonzo Todd. It was certain that when he stated that he was sent for the parcel, the parcel would be entrusted to him.

Bunter rolled away towards the House. Just inside the door he waited, keeping a watch for Alonzo through his big spectacles.

Five minutes later Alonzo came along with a large parcel under his arm. Bunter pounced on him as he came in.

"Got it?" he gasped.

"It is here, my dear Bunter!"

"Hand it over! I'll take it to Coker's study. I don't want you to take all the trouble, old chap."

"That is very kind and thoughtful of you, Bunter, and quite contrary to your usual customs," said Alonzo, beaming. "I am glad to see you improving like this, my dear Bunter. Here is the parcel!"

Billy Bunter clutched the parcel and rolled away with it. Alonzo followed him up the stairs. On the Remove

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Treat I

HARRY WHARTON & Co. stood in the Remove passage in deep consultation. It was tea-time, and the subject under discussion was a serious one.

As not infrequently occurred, funds had run short. The Famous Five generally tea'd in Study No. 1—but Study No. 1 had struck a stony patch. Bob Cherry and Hurree Singh would naturally have walked their friends along to Study No. 13 for tea there—but Study No. 13 was in the same financial state as Study No. 1. Study No. 14—Johnny's Bull's study—was another resource—but Johnny Bull was unhappily in the same scrape, his worldly wealth, at the present moment, amounting to one

what about Newland? Newland's a good sort, and might stand a couple of us."

"There's Kipps," said Nugent thoughtfully. "If he's in funds, he's all right. And we could let him do some of his conjuring tricks as a reward."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And Wibley," said Johnny Bull. "One of us can drop in on Wibley and ask him how the amateur theatricals are getting on!"

"There's Dupont, the Froggy!" said Harry Wharton thoughtfully. "Only he's in Bolsover's study, and—"

"Toddy's no good, I suppose?"

"Um!" If Bunter's had his postal order—

"Ha, ha, ha!"



"You've scoffed all my tuck!" roared Coker. "Fellows are waiting in my study for tea—and you young rascals have scoffed all the tuck! Why, I—I—I'll—" Words failed Coker, and he made a grab at Alonzo Todd, lashing out with the fives bat. Whack, whack, whack! "Yaroooooop!" yelled Alonzo.

landing he tapped Bunter on a fat shoulder.

"My dear Bunter, you are not going towards the Fifth Form studies," he said gently. "Have you forgotten—"

"You silly idiot!"

"Eh?"

"I—I mean, that's Wharton calling you, downstairs."

"I did not hear him, Bunter."

"Well, I did! I say, you'd better go and see what Wharton wants."

"It is very odd that I did not hear him call; but I will certainly go and see what he wants!" agreed Alonzo. And he went down the Remove staircase again.

Billy Bunter rolled along the Remove passage. He rolled into Study No. 7. He shut the door, and chuckled.

That parcel was unwrapped in record time. Billy Bunter was going strong when Tom Dutton and the two Todds came up to tea.

penny, and that a French one! In this dismal state of affairs five fellows, who were hungry after football practice, were rather like lions seeking what they might devour.

Tea in Hall was the last resource of the stony! But the five juniors were considering whether they might "stick" Mauly for a tea—Lord Mauleverer's hospitality being unlimited. But landing five hungry fellows on Mauly was, they confessed, rather a big order.

"What about splitting up?" suggested Bob brightly. "Two of us can go and stick Mauly—that's reasonable! One can land on the Bounder—"

"We've been rather rowing with Smithy lately!" said Harry Wharton, with a shake of the head. "He's never quite got over that rag on the Fifth of November."

"Well, this isn't a time to remember rows!" said Bob. "And we're quite friendly with his pal Redwing. Well,

Peter Todd looked out of Study No. 7.

"You fellows had your tea?" he called out.

"Nunno! Not quite!"

"Tea with us, then! Lots and lots and lots!" said Peter. "This jolly old study is a giddy land flowing with milk and honey!"

"Oh, my hat!"

The Famous Five exchanged glances. Toddy, certainly, was a fellow they could tea with! He had a weird idea that Study No. 7 was top study in the Remove—but that mattered nothing, especially at tea-time! This kind invitation from Toddy came like corn in Egypt in one of the lean years!

"All of us?" asked Harry, laughing.

"All of you, and any pals you'd like to bring, too!" said Toddy cheerfully. "We're rolling in it!"

"What luck!"

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"The luckfulness is terrific!"

"Toddy, old man, you're a Briton," said Bob Cherry. "We were just wondering whom we could stick, or whether it would have to be tea in Hall! We'll come."

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is preposterous."

And the Famous Five walked along to Study No. 7 in a very cheery mood. They were quite surprised when they looked into that study. The table was spread in a way that could only be described as magnificent. A gigantic plum cake was flanked by plates of tarts, buns, and scones. There was a dish of ham—ripping ham, and plenty of it! Billy Bunter was eating ham, and he was going strong, but there was still plenty left. There were other good things, many and various! It was such a spread that was often seen in the Bounder's study, and sometimes in Lord Mauleverer's, but extremely unusual in Study No. 7.

"Bunter's spread!" said Peter Todd.

"Bunter's!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

The fat junior, with his mouth full of ham, grinned and nodded.

"Yes, old chap! Roll in! Take a pew! Lots and lots! Some fellows," added Bunter with dignity—as much dignity as was consistent with a large mouthful of ham—"some fellows make out that I never stand a spread! Well, look at that!"

"Well, my hat!" said Bob. "Mean to say that that jolly old postal order has turned up tramps, Bunter?"

"Exactly!"

"Gratters, old bean!"

"Dash it all, this is jolly decent of Bunter," said Johnny Bull. "I take back a lot of things I've been thinking about you, old fat man."

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"The decentfulness of the esteemed Bunter is terrific!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Alonzo Todd was beaming. Alonzo's simple and unsuspecting mind saw no connection between this gorgeous spread and the parcel that he had fetched from the tuckshop, of which Bunter had relieved him. Alonzo was anything but suspicious.

"Is it not very, very kind and thoughtful of Bunter to share his prosperity with his friends?" beamed Alonzo. "I am sure that my uncle Benjamin would regard this with his heartiest approval."

"If Uncle Ben would think it all right, it is all right!" said Bob solemnly. "And that ham looks all right—ripping, in fact! Bunter, you're a jolly old prince!"

"Pile in!" said Bunter hospitably. "Nothing mean about me, I hope! I thought of you fellows immediately the hamper came."

"The hamper?" repeated Harry Wharton.

"Yes, old chap—a hamper from Bunter Court!"

"Then it wasn't a remittance?"

"Oh! Yes! A remittance, too!" said Bunter hastily. "As it happened, my postal order came by the same post. Lucky, wasn't it?"

"The luckfulness was enormous!"

"But—" Some sort of doubt seemed to strike the captain of the Remove.

"Pile in!" said Bunter.

"Yes, but—"

"Wire in, old chap! I've been carving the ham for you—tuck into it."

Wharton dropped into a seat! It was a ripping spread, and the chums of the Remove were hungry; and Bunter's hospitality, certainly, was boundless. It

would have been rather ungrateful to look a gift-horse in the mouth! If the captain of the Remove had a lingering doubt, he banished it; and sat down to the feed with his comrades.

There were nine fellows in Study No. 7, which was rather a crowd for a junior study. But they were very cheery, very merry and bright. It was seldom that in a study spread there were ample supplies for nine fellows. On this occasion there was plenty—even when one of them was named W. G. Bunter! The Owl of the Remove urged them to pile in, and set a noble example himself.

Kipps of the Remove came along the passage and glanced in. Kipps was surprised at what he saw. Billy Bunter blinked at him, and waved a rather greasy and sticky fat hand.

"Trot in, Kippers! Make room for Kipps, you fellows! Lots and lots!"

"You men been holding up a bank?" asked Kipps.

"Bunter's the jolly old founder of the feast!" said Bob. "Have half my chair, old bean."

Kipps accepted half of Bob's chair, and a large helping. Hazeldene and Ogilvy looked in and was promptly invited by Bunter to join up. There was hardly room for the new arrivals, but they wedged in somehow, and large slices of plum cake were handed round.

"Standing room only!" said Bob Cherry, when Skinner looked in.

"Here, you keep out, Skinner," said Bunter. "You jolly well wouldn't whack out your toffee to-day—you clear off, see?"

"Is it Bunter's spread?" asked Skinner, with a stare.

"Yes, rather!" said Bunter, "and you can buzz off!"

"Whose study did you find it in?" asked Skinner pleasantly.

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"My dear Skinner," said Alonzo, "that is a very disagreeable suggestion. I am shocked at you, Skinner."

"I say, Smithy," yelled Skinner along the passage. "Have you missed a ship-load of tuck from your study?"

"No!" answered the Bounder.

"Why?"

"Well, somebody has!" said Skinner.

"Bunter's standing a spread!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Look here, Bunter—"

"Pile in, old chap! Try the tarts."

"Yes, but—"

"Try the scones; they're really good! Specially made by our cook at Bunter Court, you know."

"Did you—"

"Have some more cake! It's scrumptious cake! Our cook at Bunter Court knows how to make cakes, I can tell you!"

"Did your cook at Bunter Court make that big plum cake?" asked Bob.

"Yes, old chap. It came in the postal order—I mean the hamper—"

"Oh crumbs!" said Bob.

"Oh crikey!" murmured Johnny Bull.

Nobody wanted to be suspicious, but that big plum cake was a twin to the big plum cakes supplied by Mrs. Mumble at the school shop. Peter Todd gave his fat study-mate a sharp look.

"Look here, Bunter, that's one of Mrs. Mumble's cakes!" he said. "What the thump do you mean?"

"I—I—I mean, exactly! Tuck in, old chap! Don't leave anything. I don't want anything left—not a crumb."

"Afraid the owner might come along?" asked Skinner from the doorway.

"Beast! I say, you fellows, you might kick that beast Skinner out when a

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fellow's standing you a topping spread!" exclaimed Bunter warmly.

"Certainly!" said Johnny Bull, who was near the door, and he obliged at once, and Skinner departed with a howl.

"Cheeky cad!" said Bunter. "Making out that a fellow would scoff a fellow's tuck! You fellows know me too well, don't you?"

"Um!" said the fellows. They knew Bunter well—well enough to make them feel a little uneasy. The Famous Five remembered—rather late—the fat Owl's suggestion of raiding Coker's parcel from the school shop.

"Look here, Bunter—" said Wharton.

"Have some more cake, old chap."

"If you snaffled Coker's parcel—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Did you?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"Certainly not! Mrs. Mimble wouldn't have handed it over to me," said Bunter. "She's suspicious."

"Well, that's true enough," agreed Wharton.

"Ungrateful, I call it, to suggest anything of the sort when I'm whacking out my hamper with you!" said Bunter. "As if I'd touch Coker's parcel! Besides, he never had one!"

"You have forgotten, my dear Bunter," said Alonzo mildly. "Do you not recall asking me to fetch Coker's parcel from the shop—"

"What?" roared Peter Todd.

"Oh, shut up, Alonzo!" exclaimed Bunter. "You talk too much, old chap! Look here, have some cake!"

"Certainly, my dear Bunter. It is excellent cake," said Alonzo. "I will partake of it with pleasure."

"Look here, is this Coker's tuck?" roared Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"You giddy ass, Alonzo! Have you been helping Bunter in a grub raid?" roared Peter.

"I should certainly refuse to do anything of the kind Peter. My Uncle Benjamin would be shocked at such a thing!" said Alonzo warmly. "Bunter requested me to fetch Coker's parcel, but he took it from me and carried it to Coker's study—"

"Oh, my only summer bonnet! Did you see him take it there?"

"No; but he did so, my dear Peter."

"How do you know?"

"He said so," answered Alonzo simply.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Hazeldene. "So that's it, is it? I say, pass me some more of Coker's cake."

"Coker's scones this way!" chorled Kipps.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fat villain!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Is this Coker's tuck?" yelled Johnny Bull.

"Certainly not!" howled Bunter. "It came from—Bunter Court in a postal—hamper I mean!"

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Alonzo in alarm. "Is it possible that this is Coker's tuck? I fear that Coker will be very, very much annoyed."

"Look out for squalls, Bunter!" grinned Hazeldene.

"Oh, really, Hazel! I suppose you fellows are going to stand by a fellow if Coker kicks up a fuss?" exclaimed Bunter warmly.

"Then it is Coker's tuck!" exclaimed Nugent.

"Nothing of the sort! Besides, I never got the parcel; Alonzo did! If Coker kicks up a fuss, I think you fellows ought to stand by Alonzo! He's not strong, you know."

"My dear Bunter," gasped Alonzo. "I can only regard your conduct as

reprehensible—indeed, very, very unscrupulous!"

"You fat brigand!" roared Johnny Bull.

"I—I say, you fellows—"

Billy Bunter blinked round Study No. 7 in alarm. Almost all the fellows were on their feet. There was no doubt now as to the identity of the real founder of the feast. It was Coker's tuck—and it was absolutely certain that there was going to be a row. And a sudden tramping of heavy feet, and a voice that was not unlike that of the ancient Bull of Bashan, in the Remove passage announced that the "row" was at hand.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Horrid for Horace!

HORACE COKER wore a genial, hospitable smile.

He wore other things, of course. But his genial, hospitable smile was the most prominent.

Coker stood in his study with Potter and Greene. He was receiving guests. Coker was having fellows to tea. Tea was not yet on the table, but the guests were arriving.

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It was quite a distinguished party of the Fifth. Blundell, the captain of the Form, came with his pal Bland; Hilton, the dandy of the Fifth, had condescended to come, and with him came Price; Fitzgerald and Tomlinson and Smith major also came. It was quite a large party—a very distinguished party. Coker was pleased. Coker liked to be popular. Coker's Soccer on the football field and Coker's conversation in the games study never helped him on to popularity. But when Coker was standing a spread the Fifth Form men agreed that Coker, after all, wasn't a bad chap—at least, he had his good points. And they came.

"Trot in!" said Coker. "Here we are again—all of us present now, I think. Where's that young scoundrel Nugent mi?"

Nugent minor of the Second Form had been bribed to fag for Coker. He was overdue with the big parcel from the tuckshop. This was annoying, as the delay had caused the guests to arrive before the spread.

"Take a pew," said Coker. "Sit down, old beans. I've sent a fag to the tuckshop for some things—"

"Here he comes," said Price, looking out at the door.

Dicky Nugent came strolling up the passage in a leisurely way with his

hands in his pockets, whistling. Whistling in the senior quarters was "side" in a fag and merited a whopping. But Richard Nugent of the Second had cheek enough for anything.

"Stop that row!" said Blundell, with a frown, as the fag arrived in the doorway. As the kid was fagging for Coker, the captain of the Fifth refrained from administering a kick.

Dicky looked in; he was empty-handed.

"Well, where's the parcel, you young ass?" demanded Coker.

"Haven't you got it?" demanded Dicky.

"Eh? If I'd got it, do you think I should have sent you for it? Where is it?" snapped Coker.

"Blessed if I know!" answered Nugent mi. "I asked Mrs. Mimble for it, and she said it had been sent."

"What?" hooted Coker. "It hasn't been sent! What do you mean?"

"That's what she said—a Remove man called for it," said Dicky. "She handed it over to him to bring to you. It was that freak they've got in the Remove—Alonzo Todd."

Coker stared blankly.

"She—she gave my parcel to a 'Remove kid, and—and he's bagged it!" he gasped. "Why, my hat! I—I—I'll—"

"Hasn't he brought it here?" grinned Dicky. "Mrs. Mimble said he had it half an hour ago. You've been done, Coker!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Fitzgerald. "Lot of good waiting for that spread if the Remove have got hold of it!"

"Hold on, though!" said Blundell. "That kid Todd is a young idiot, but he's not the man to bag a fellow's tuck."

"Where is it, then?" gasped Coker.

"Half an hour ago! My hat!"

"You've been done all right!" said Dicky Nugent cheerfully, and he strolled away again, whistling. Dicky seemed amused.

Coker was not amused. Coker grabbed up a fives bat.

"You men wait here," he said. "I'll go and find Todd! I shan't keep you waiting long!"

The Fifth Form men waited. Coker, with the fives bat in his hand, and red wrath on his face, tramped out of the study. He tramped across the landing, into the Remove passage.

"Where's Todd?" he roared, addressing two or three fellows in the passage.

"Where's that young scoundrel Todd?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Bounder.

"Missed any tuck, old bean?"

"What did I tell you?" chuckled Skinner.

"Where's Todd?" roared Coker.

Without waiting for an answer, he tramped up the passage to Study No. 7. He glared into that study. More than a dozen fellows were crowded there. On the table were the remnants of the feast. Ample as the supplies had been, so large a party had dealt with them rather effectively. There was little left to greet the infuriated eyes of Horace Coker.

"Todd!" roared Coker.

"Adsum!" said Peter.

"Not you—the other idiot!" said Coker, glaring round. "Oh, here you are! What have you done with my parcel, you young villain? Is that my tuck you've been wolfing, what?"

"My dear Coker—" gasped Alonzo, in dismay.

"Where's my tuck?" roared Coker.

"I greatly fear, my dear Coker, that the major part of it is no longer in existence," said Alonzo. "I regret very, very much—"

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"You've had it!" roared Coker. "You've scoffed my tuck! Fellows waiting in my study for tea—and you young rascals have scoffed all the tuck! Why, I—I—I'll—"

Words failed Coker! After all, it was a time for action, not for words! Coker jumped into action!

Knocking over three or four fellows as he plunged, he sprang at Alonzo Todd, and grabbed him by the collar.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Oh, goodness gracious!" yelled Alonzo, as the lives bat fairly cracked on his bony person. "Oh dear! Please desist, my dear Coker! Yaroooh! Whoop!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yarooooooop!"

"Rescue!" shouted Bob Cherry.

He led a rush. The position was rather a difficult one. Coker's wrath was justified, there was no doubt about that! On the other hand, the fellows simply could not look on while the weedy Alonzo was whopped with a lives bat by the enraged Fifth Form man.

They grabbed Coker on all sides, and dragged him off Alonzo. They jerked away the lives bat; but, with great self-restraint, did not lay it round Coker. Coker struggled frantically in many hands.

"You young villains!" he roared. "My tuck—By gum, I'll smash the lot of you! I'll—Yarooogh!"

"Ow!" roared Alonzo. "Wow! I am considerably—ow!—wow!—hurt. My dear Coker, pray calm yourself—Wow, wow!"

"I'll pulverise you!"

"Look here, Coker—" gasped Harry Wharton.

"I'll spifficate you—"

"Let a fellow explain—"

"I'll smash you—the lot of you! Scoffing a fellow's tuck—"

"I say, you fellows, chuck him out!" gasped Billy Bunter. "Chuck him out on his neck! Coming here and making out that it's his tuck—"

"It is his tuck, you fat brigand!" yelled Peter.

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"My dear Coker," gasped Alonzo, "I assure you—wow!—that it was—wow!—absolutely unintentional on my part—ooooogh!"

"Lemme gerrat him!" gasped Coker.

With a terrific wrench, he tore himself away from the many holding hands, and hurled himself at Alonzo.

"Collar him!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Bag him!"

"Kick him out!"

The juniors piled in again. Coker was in no state to listen to reason, and Alonzo had to be saved from his wild wrath. Coker struggled once more in innumerable hands. Struggling, yelling, squirming, he was dragged to the

door, and hurled out into the passage. There a crowd of Removites had gathered and they all joined in heartily. The rights and wrongs of the matter did not appeal to them very much—they knew that a Fifth Form man was throwing his weight about in the Remove passage, and that was enough for them. They collared Coker on all sides, and bundled him away. They bumped him, they rolled him, they hustled and hustled him, and Coker never quite knew how he got back to the Fifth Form studies.

In Study No. 7 Billy Bunter blinked uneasily at his guests through his big spectacles. He did not like the way they were looking at him.

"I—I say, you fellows," stammered Bunter. "Now that beast's gone, let's finish the spread! That cake from Bunter Court is—Whoooooop!"

Bump!

Billy Bunter smote the study carpet! What was left of the big plum cake was crammed down his back! Taken internally, it was a very nice cake! Taken externally, it was horrid! Bunter wriggled and squeaked wildly.

"I say, you fellows—Yaroooh! Leggo! I say—whoop!—I say, it wasn't Coker's tuck—wow!—it came from—Whoop! I say—Oh crikey!"

Bump, bump, bump!

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Now give him the jam!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Oh lor'! Grooogh! Oooooogh!"

When the fellows crowded out of Study No. 7, Bunter was left sitting on the floor, frightfully sticky, and making frantic efforts to extract crumbled cake from the back of his neck.

Meanwhile, Coker had got home! The waiting tea-party gazed at him as he limped into the study. They stared at him. He had not brought the tuck with him, that was clear. He staggered in, and collapsed into the armchair.

"Well, what about tea?" asked Potter.

"Grooogh!" answered Coker.

"Any good waiting?" asked Blundell.

"Oooooogh!"

"Looks like a frost!" remarked Hilton.

"Urrrrrgh!"

The Fifth Form men exchanged glances. They had come there for a spread, not to listen to Horace Coker gurgling. It was, perhaps, entertaining in its way; but it was not the entertainment they were looking for.

"Well, what about it?" yawned Price.

"Gurrgh!" Coker found his voice.

"I say—gurrgh!—they've scoffed all the tuck in the Remove—wurrgh! All of you come with me, and we'll mop them up—smash 'em—pulverise 'em—urrgh! Where are you fellows going?"

The tea-party melted away. They were going—but wherever they were going, it was not on a raid in the Remove passage. It was past tea-time, and they wanted their tea, not a battle royal with the Lower Fourth. So they went—and Horace Coker was left to gasp and gurgle on his own!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Hunted!

PATTER, patter, patter!

It was a rapid beat of footsteps in Masters' Passage.

Mr. Quelch started a little, pricked up his ears, and frowned.

Some fellow was running along by Masters' Studies—running hard! It was not merely forbidden, but it was unknown, unheard-of, unthinkable, for a fellow to run by Masters' Studies! Henry Samuel Quelch could hardly believe his ears as he heard the patter of racing footsteps.

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Quelch.

He rose from his table, and stepped towards the door of his study. He picked up his cane as he went. He intended to catch that reckless, unthinking fellow in full career, and if he was a Removite, cane him on the spot; if he belonged to some other Form, to march him directly to his Form-master to be caned. The running feet were rapidly approaching his door. Indeed, they reached it, from the outside, as Mr. Quelch reached it from the inside.

The door flew open!

Naturally, Mr. Quelch had not expected that! How could any Form-master imagine that a Remove fellow was coming to his study as if he were coming up the cinder-path, intending to hurl the door open, without even knocking when he arrived there?

Not expecting that sudden hurling open of his study door, Quelch received the door, as it flew open, with a crash. It smote Quelch, suddenly and hard, and he staggered back, and sat down on his carpet, in a state of great surprise.

Alonzo Todd bolted into the study.

He bolted in like a rabbit into a burrow, swiftly—far too swiftly to see Henry Samuel Quelch sitting on the carpet. He was on to Quelch in a twinkling—stumbling over him, falling on him, and flattening him on the floor of his own study.

"Oh, my goodness!" spluttered Alonzo. "What—what—what is that?" He felt something squirming and gurgling under him, but did not, for the moment, realise what it was. "What—what—"

"Boy! Gerroff! Ugh! Boy!" articulated Mr. Quelch. "Gerroff my face immediately! Oooooogh!"

"Oh, goodness gracious! Is that Mr. Quelch?" gasped Alonzo, in horror; and he scrambled up, planting a knee on Mr. Quelch's waistcoat to raise himself, and treading on his neck before he got clear.

"Urrrrrgh!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Oh dear! I am very, very sorry!" gasped Alonzo. "I—I did not see—I did not intend—Oh dear!"

He gazed in horror at his sprawling Form-master. Then he glanced round uneasily at the door. There was a sound of receding footsteps in the distance. Someone apparently had been in pursuit of Alonzo, but had given it up when the Duffer of Greyfriars bolted into a beak's study.

Mr. Quelch, with an effort, sat up. He was winded. He was rumped and crumpled. He was spluttering. And he was wrathful—distinctly wrathful. Any Form-master, floored on his study carpet by a member of his Form, would have been wrathful. It was only to be expected.

"Boy," gurgled Mr. Quelch—"boy! Fool! How dare you rush into my study, and—and knock me over!"

"I was somewhat pressed, sir," said Alonzo. "A fellow was after me—chasing me in a very fierce manner, sir."

"You utterly absurd boy!"

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"I had barely time to escape, sir. And Coker is so very, very cross, sir."

Mr. Quelch picked himself up at last. He leaned on the corner of the table and panted for breath. His gimlet eyes glittered.

"I regret exceedingly, sir, that I entered your study in such a very hasty manner, especially in view of the catastrophe that unfortunately ensued," said Alonzo earnestly. "But in the distressing circumstances—"

"Hand me that cane, Todd!"

"Oh, certainly, sir, with pleasure!" said Alonzo brightly. He was very, very pleased to do a little thing like that to oblige Mr. Quelch. It did not occur to him, for the moment, what Quelch wanted the cane for.

Mr. Quelch took it, gasping, and swished it in the air, still gasping. Then he pointed to a chair with it.

"Now," he said, "bend over that chair, Todd!"

"Oh!" ejaculated Alonzo, understanding. "I trust, sir, that you are not going to cane me—"

"Bend over that chair!"

"I am very, very sorry for the accident, sir, but if you will allow me to explain the circumstances, I am sure that you will see that it was unavoidable—"

"Bend over that chair!" roared the Remove master.

Evidently Quelch was not going to listen to explanations. The fact that Alonzo had knocked him over, and

sprawled on him, was enough for Quelch. He was not interested in explanations.

Alonzo bent over the chair. Generally Quelch made generous allowances for the fact that Alonzo was a born duffer, and couldn't help it. But he was damaged now; he was winded, and he was wild. He laid on six with a heavy hand, as tough a "six" as he had ever handed out to any man in his Form. Alonzo simply wriggled under it. He squirmed; he yelled. There were tough fellows like Smithy, who could have taken that six without a sound. But poor Alonzo was not tough. He was anything but tough. That six fairly doubled him up.

(Continued on next page.)



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STRONG KICKING!

WHAT surprises me when I go to watch a big football match, writes one of my many football friends, is the power which some of the fellows get behind their shots. What is the secret of it? In some ways that is not an easy question to answer, because different players seem to adopt different methods.

Take, for example, those free kicks from, say, twenty to twenty-five yards out. The ball is dead. Yet some players manage to "hit it" with such force that the goalkeeper scarcely has a chance of stopping it unless he is in the direct line of flight.

Earlier in this season I saw O'Callaghan, of Tottenham Hotspur, score a goal with a free kick from fully thirty yards out.

I was watching carefully, and my eyesight is pretty good, but I never saw the ball after it left the foot of O'Callaghan until it came down after striking the net. I don't think the goalkeeper could have seen that ball very clearly either. Anyway, he made no attempt to stop it.

Preparing to take the free kick, O'Callaghan went some dozen yards or so back, and was running hard when he hit the ball. There are other players who can kick a dead ball very hard while scarcely taking any run up to it.

The strength of the leg has something to do with this strong kicking, of course; and, by the way, do you know what the managers of football clubs always look at very carefully when they are weighing up the possibilities of a footballer? I'll tell you!

The thigh muscles. So far as strength is concerned, it is the thighs which make the footballer.

This strong kicking, however, apart from physical strength, is a matter of timing and follow-through. Just as the whole of the body is thrown into the bowling of Larwood, the cricketer, for example, so must the whole of the body be in a kick at the football when speedy travel is desired.

The follow-through with the leg which does the kicking is also an important item.

Neither full power nor direction can be obtained if the foot is checked after the impact with the ball.

It is extremely advisable for every team to have in the side at least one man who can kick a dead ball very hard, because those free kicks just outside the penalty area should produce a fair proportion of goals.

NEW TEAM FORMATIONS!

FOOTBALL tactics are always more or less in the melting pot, and more consideration than ever is being given to this aspect of the game. Not long ago I saw, twice in the course of a few days, the Glasgow Rangers team, and they showed to those with eyes to see new tactics in regard to defence. In a sense, they adopted the third full-back idea, but they carried it a step further than most of the English clubs have yet done. Strictly speaking, they had only one full-back, and he was the centre-half. That may sound a bit Irish, instead of Scotch, but let me explain.

The centre-half of the Glasgow Rangers team played farther back, for the most part, than either of his full-backs. Those full-backs, in their turn, went farther up the field than usual, and the effect really was that the Rangers were playing four half-backs.

You would have been surprised if you had seen the number of times those fellows who were full-backs on the programme were far enough up the field to drop the ball into the opposing penalty area, thus causing trouble for the other team.

I understand that, in their mid-week private practice games, Aston Villa have been trying this scheme, and one of these days they will produce it for the benefit—or otherwise, rather—of their First Division opponents. Connected with the Aston Villa scheming, however, there is another idea which is also well worth trying: that of having the centre-forward

behind the other four forwards. It is hoped by this means to defeat the third full-back defensive scheme.

One thing is obvious from the foregoing: that the old ideas concerning the formation of a football team are being thrown to the winds. No longer is it a case of a goalkeeper, two full-backs, three half-backs, and five forwards. When the Villa have worked out their new plan the side will, for practical purposes, be made up something like this:

Goalkeeper, centre full-back, right full-back, left full-back, right half-back, centre half-back, left half-back, outside-right, inside-right, inside-left, outside-left.

If you saw a football programme printed in that way you would think it funny. But such a formation is coming.

Why not try it in your team and then write and tell me how it works?

THE FOOTBALLER'S DIET!

I WAS very much interested the other day to learn, when talking to members of the Australian Rugby team, who are playing against Northern Union sides, that they are in favour of quite a substantial meal a couple of hours or so before a match. The basis of this meal, so I was told, was a very substantial steak.

I refer to this because a reader has asked me what I think the footballer should eat on the day of the match. This steak affair is contrary to the general idea of what is the proper thing to do. But the officials of Preston North End, to quote one case, have been so impressed with the way the Australian Rugby players have gone through their matches that they have been giving their players steak at lunch-time on match-days.

This is a departure from the usual course taken by the football clubs. The general rule is for footballers to have a fairly late breakfast—quite substantial—on match days, but only a very light lunch, a bit of fish, or chicken, and a little toast.

Perhaps in respect of these meals before a match the only principle applies: "One man's meat is another man's poison."

There is one point, however, on which everybody is agreed, and that is that vegetables just prior to a match, and potatoes especially, are not good. I am afraid that when you get to the end of my notes this week you will say that I have been in an experimental mood. Well, I shall get back to orthodox talks very soon, but, meantime, experiments are surely worth while. There is no reason to assume that the things which have been done in the past are the things we must continue to do. We live and learn!

"LINESMAN."

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"There!" said Mr. Quelch, panting, and laying down the cane at last. "That, I hope, will be a warning to you, Todd."

"Ow! Wow—wow! Yow!"

"Cease those ridiculous noises at once, Todd!" yapped Mr. Quelch.

"Ow! Oh! I will do my best, sir!" gasped Alonzo. "But—Yow! Ow! I am suffering very considerably, sir! Yow! Ow—ow—ow—"

"Silence!" hooted Mr. Quelch.

"Ow! Yes, sir! Wow! Certainly! Yow—ow!"

"If you continue to utter those absurd ejaculations, Todd, I will cane you again!"

"Oh my goodness!" gasped Alonzo.

And with a great effort, he contrived to cease the absurd ejaculations.

"Now," said Mr. Quelch, breathing hard, "why did you come to my study? I presume that you had some object in coming here."

"Ow! I mean, yes, sir!" gasped Alonzo. "To-morrow afternoon, sir, being Wednesday, is a half-holiday, and I desire permission to go to tea, sir, with a gentleman resident in the neighbourhood."

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch, eyeing the Duffer of Greyfriars.

It was a rule of the school that any fellow visiting any house, even on a half-holiday, should obtain leave so to do from his Form-master. But that was a rule that fellows not infrequently forgot all about. The good Alonzo, however, was not the fellow to neglect to ask permission. Keen as he was to pay his visit to the Willows, he would not have dreamed of doing so without permission. As he would have explained, if asked, his Uncle Benjamin would have disapproved of any such reckless disregard of constituted authority.

"I trust, sir, that I have your permission?" asked Alonzo, wriggling painfully.

"Who is the person?" asked Mr. Quelch.

"Professor Sparkinson, sir," answered Alonzo. "A scientific gentleman, sir, of, I believe, very vast attainments. He lives at the Willows, on Courtfield Common, the old house that has been empty until recently. He very kindly asked me to come to tea with him, sir."

"I have heard of Professor Sparkinson," said Mr. Quelch. "He is a very well-known scientific man. I was not aware that you were acquainted with him, Todd."

"I had the happiness, sir—ow!—of rendering him a small service the day I came back to Greyfriars," explained Alonzo. "A very unfeeling and unpleasant Highcliffe fellow, was pelting him with a catapult, and I intervened, and Professor Sparkinson kindly took me into his house, as I was considerably exhausted by the struggle."

"Very well, you have leave to visit Professor Sparkinson to-morrow afternoon, Todd," said Mr. Quelch, quite kindly, perhaps feeling a twinge of remorse for the excessive vigour of that "six."

Certainly Alonzo had floored him; but plenty of fellows would not have taken the trouble to come to him to ask leave at all.

"Thank you very, very much, sir!" said Alonzo gratefully. "I trust, sir, that you have now recovered from the unfortunate collision—"

"You may leave my study."

"I realise, sir, that it was very, very thoughtless of me to rush into your study as I did," said Alonzo earnestly. "I can only plead the peculiar circumstances of the case in extenuation—"

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"You may go!"

"Thank you, sir; but as I was saying, I—"

"Go!" hooted Mr. Quelch; and Alonzo jumped and went.

He closed the door behind him, and went very slowly down the passage, a good deal like a hunted animal. He had a strong suspicion that Coker of the Fifth was waiting for him at the corner.

He was right. Coker was.

Ever since Coker's visit to Study No. 7, Coker had been looking for Alonzo. It was Coker's fixed intention to give Alonzo the time of his life. He was going to make Alonzo squirm, to make him cringe, to make him sorry for himself with a deep sorrow. Coker's spread had been bagged. Coker, going in quest of it, had been ragged. If that was not enough to make a fellow wild, Coker would have liked to know what was. Covered with aches and pains, as with a garment, Coker had a natural desire to pass on some of the same to the fellow who had caused them.

"Oh, here you are!" said Coker grimly.

"My dear Coker—" gasped Alonzo.

"Got you!"

"If you will allow me to—Yaroooh! I mean, to explain—Yoop! Oh, my goodness gracious!" yelled Alonzo, as Coker smacked right and left.

In sheer desperation Alonzo lowered his head, and butted at Coker's waistcoat. Luckily for Alonzo, not for Coker, the butt took effect precisely on the spot where Coker had been going to park his share of the lost spread. It knocked all the wind out of Coker. He shut up like a pocket-knife, and sat down gurgling.

Alonzo fled. Long before Coker got his second wind, Alonzo vanished into space.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Looking After Alonzo!

"YOU ass!"

"My dear Peter—"

"You frabjous fathead!"

Peter Todd spoke emphatically. Peter was annoyed. He was in a bad temper. Alonzo, feeling very, very sorry to see his dear Cousin Peter in a bad temper, gazed at him sorrowfully.

It was morning break at Greyfriars, and the Remove were out. In the distance Peter spotted Coker of the Fifth coming out of the House, and glancing round him with a searching eye. He knew what Coker was looking for. Three or four times the previous evening Alonzo had been rescued from the avenging hands of Coker. Now Coker was looking for him again. Coker had let the sun go down on his wrath. He had let the sun rise on it. Coker's wrath seemed to be unappeasable. Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring of woes unnumbered, faded into insignificance, beside the wrath of Horace James Coker of the Greyfriars Fifth.

"If you had the sense of a bunny rabbit," growled Peter. "If you had as much brains as would go on a three-penny bit—But you haven't! You go and bag a Fifth Form man's grub and—"

"I was acting under a misapprehension—"

"Think Coker's going to understand that—or that it would make any difference if he did?" snorted Peter. "You bagged his spread! It cost him pounds, I should think; and lots of fellows

would go to your beak and ask him to make you pay for it."

"I should be perfectly prepared to pay for it, Peter, if I had any money—" murmured Alonzo. "But, in the circumstances, is it not up to Bunter to reimburse Coker for the expenditure—?"

"Fathead!"

"Indeed, Bunter has agreed to pay Coker—"

"When?" snorted Toddy.

"When his postal order comes, my dear Peter. I understand, from Bunter, that he is expecting a postal order shortly, from a titled relative."

"Ass!"

"Dear me!" ejaculated Alonzo, catching sight of a burly figure across the quad. "That is Coker! He appears to be looking for something."

"You can't guess what?" asked Peter sarcastically.

"Not in the least, Peter. But perhaps, if I offered to help him look for it, whatever it is, it might have a placating and ameliorating effect on his temper," suggested Alonzo. "Shall I go to Coker and make the offer?"

"Oh, my hat! He's looking for you!" roared Peter.

"Goodness gracious!"

"You blithering owl!" said Peter. "You frabjous, frumpious fathead! How's a man to make his study top study with a howling ass like you in it? What?"

Alonzo did not reply. His eyes were fixed uneasily on the distant figure of Coker! Coker, it was plain, was looking for something or somebody. And the expression on his rugged features was quite grim.

"Blessed if I make you out," went on Peter. "The day you came back to school you seemed a lot changed. You seemed to have developed tremendous muscles while you were away. You handled fellows right and left. You—what are you grinning at?"

Alonzo smiled.

"My dear Peter, that transient outburst of muscular energy—"

"For the love of Mike, cut it short!" groaned Peter. "Look here, how was it you developed all that strength on your first day back, and then the next day turned out the same feeble, fat-headed, frabjous freak you've always been?"

"I should be very, very pleased to explain that somewhat surprising circumstance to you, Peter—"

"Well, get on with it, fathead!"

"But it is a secret—"

"You howling ass!"

"However, I am going to see Professor Sparkinson this afternoon—"

"What difference will that make?"

"I trust, my dear Peter, that it will make a great deal of difference," said Alonzo, with a smile. "I hope to return to Greyfriars, after my visit to the dear Professor, in—but I must not tell you anything about it, as I have undertaken to keep the whole matter a secret."

Peter stared at his cousin blankly.

Like all the rest of the Remove, he had been astounded by the muscular powers Alonzo had displayed on his first day back at school. Naturally, he could not guess that Alonzo had been bucked by a "nip" of the Wonderful Elixir which was Professor Sparkinson's greatest scientific discovery! He might not have believed it if Alonzo had told him.

Really, it wanted some believing! But Alonzo did not think of telling him, or anybody! He had been told by the professor to keep it a secret, and he was doing so. But he was very keen to see the professor again and get

another "nip," especially since Coker of the Fifth had started tracking him down, like a Red Indian on the war-path.

Meanwhile, the matter was a mystery to the Removites. Naturally, they could not guess that the little scientific gentleman at the Willows had put his finger on the "secret of strength," and made a discovery that was hidden from all others.

"I say, you fellows!" yelled Billy Bunter. "Here comes Coker!"

Coker of the Fifth had spotted the two Todds at last. He came up with a rush.

"Oh, here you are!" roared Coker.

He grabbed Alonzo by the collar.

"Oh, my goodness!" squealed Alonzo. "Please release my collar, Coker— Oh crumbs! Oh, my goodness gracious!"

"Hands off!" snapped Peter, and he grabbed at Coker.

"You want some, too?" roared Coker. "Plenty, if you want it!" And he grabbed Peter's collar with his other hand.

Coker was a hefty fellow. With a grip on Alonzo's collar and a grip on Peter's, he dragged their heads together with a resounding concussion.

Crack!

"Oh!" roared Alonzo.

"Whoop!" bawled Peter.

"Have another?" grinned Coker, and he gave the two hapless heads another bang. Two fearful yells echoed over the quad.

"Rescue, Remove!" shrieked Peter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Coker's going it again! Pile in, my infants!"

Bob came up with a rush, and after him his comrades. Five pairs of hands grasped Coker of the Fifth at the same moment.

Bump!

Horace Coker hit the quadrangle—hard. He roared as he hit it.

"Roll him over!" yelled Bob.

"Give him beans!"

"The beautifulness is terrific!"

"Oh, my hat! I'll smash you!" bawled Coker. "Oh crumbs! Help! Oh Jiminy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here's a puddle—roll him in!"

"Put his face in! He wants a wash!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gurrregh!" gurgled Coker, as his rugged features dipped into a muddy puddle. "Urrrrrgh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Removites.

They left Coker to struggle out of the puddle. Coker sat up, his face streaming with mud. He sat for some moments, gasping for breath, and dabbing wildly at mud. Then he scrambled to his feet and glared round with a muddy glare for the Removites. They were gone.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Coker. "I'll smash 'em! I'll explicate 'em! Oh, grooogh! My m-m-mouth's full of m-m-m-mud! Urrrrgh!"

Coker trailed away, looking for the vanished Removites. He did not find them; but he found Prout, his Form-master, walking in the quadrangle in break. Mr. Prout glared at Coker's muddy face in surprise, horror, and disgust.

"Coker! Is that Coker?" exclaimed Prout. "Coker! How dare you go about with a dirty face! Are you not ashamed of yourself, Coker? You, a senior—a Fifth Form boy! A member of my Form—"

"I—I—I—" stammered Coker.

"I have never even seen a Second Form boy in such a dirty state, in public!" boomed Prout. "I am ashamed of you, Coker! Go into the House instantly, and wash yourself!"

"I—I—I—" gurgled Coker.

"Instantly!" boomed Prout. "Take a hundred lines! Take two hundred lines! And go and wash yourself instantly!"

Coker, with feelings too deep for words, went to the House—to wash! After all, Prout was right—he needed a wash! And while he had that necessary wash Coker breathed vengeance. Alonzo—poor Alonzo!—was the cause of all this! And a fiery Corsican, who had sworn a vendetta, could not have been more fiercely bent on vengeance than was Horace Coker, of the Greyfriars Fifth! Fortunately, that afternoon was a half-holiday, and he would have ample time to deal with Alonzo. And that afternoon Alonzo was going to have the time of his life!

Undoubtedly it was high time that Alonzo obtained another "nip" of Professor Sparkinson's wonderful strength-giving Elixir!

(Continued on next page.)

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THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Painful for Bunter!

HARRY WHARTON smiled. Billy Bunter was the cause of his smile.

It was games practice that afternoon; a "compulsory" day. Compulsory football was a standing grievance with Bunter. What was the good of calling a half-holiday a half-holiday, Bunter would indignantly inquire, if a fellow couldn't do as he liked? A fellow might as well be in class with Quelch as slogging about after a beastly, muddy ball. It was not, perhaps, quite so beastly as class, but it was beastly, and Bunter disapproved of it from the bottom of his fat heart.

But it went on, in spite of Bunter's disapproval! And it was the duty of a Form captain to see that members of a Form turned up on such occasions. Fellows who "cut" had to be reported to the head of the games—Wingate of the Sixth—which meant "six" from Wingate's ashplant. Only in case of illness could a fellow be let off.

It followed that Billy Bunter, generally in enjoyment of quite sound health, was often ill on compulsory football days. Now he was ill again—as Wharton could see, as he came limping up with a fat hand pressed to his fat ribs! Hence the smile of the captain of the Remove.

"What is it this time?" he asked.

"A fearful pain in my side, old chap!" said Bunter hopefully. "I think you fellows did it, yesterday, pitching into me in the study! I haven't felt well since. It's like a burning dagger."

"Too bad for games practice?" asked the captain of the Remove.

"That's it, old chap!" said Bunter eagerly. "It's rather rotten, because I was looking forward to football this afternoon—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"You know how keen I am—"

"I do!" assented Wharton.

"But it's no good," said Bunter. "With this fearful pain in my back—"

"Not in your side?"

"Eh! I mean, in my side!" said Bunter hastily. "I fancy a rib's broken! With this fearful pain in my side, I shan't be able to play."

"Well, if you've got a fearful pain in your side, I shall have to let you off, and explain to Wingate!" said Harry, with a nod. "But I shall have to know how bad the pain is! Is it as bad as that?"

"Yaroorh!" roared Bunter as the captain of the Remove took hold of his collar and tapped his bullet head against the wall. "Whoop! Beast! Leggo!"

"Not so bad as that?" asked Wharton.

"Owl! Not! Yes! Worse!" howled Bunter. "I mean, no—yes—wow!"

"I'll give you a harder tap! I've got to know exactly how severe it is! Is it as bad as that?"

Bang!

"Yaroorh! Leggo, you beast! Oh crikey!" roared Bunter. "Oh, you rotter! Leggo! I'll hack your shins! Wow! Leggo!"

"The fact is, Bunter, I think this treatment is good for your pain! I'm going on tapping your head till the pain's gone."

"Yaroorh!"

"Tell me when it's gone—"

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"Ow! Wow! It's gone now!" yelled Bunter. "Oh, crikey! Leggo, you beast! It's quite gone! Yoop!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Right-ho, then!" he said. "Turn up at three, Bunter. If you have another pain before then, just mention it to me, will you? I'll give you first aid."

"Beast!" Bunter rubbed his bullet head. "I say, Wharton, I—I want to get off this afternoon! Lonzy's going to tea with a man, and he wants me to go with him. He's very keen on it. That place where we got out of the rain last week, you know—the Willows! I'm going with Alonzo—"

"Games practice at three!" said the captain of the Remove.

"But I want to go over to the Willows, old chap! You can give me leave if you like, you beast! If Wingate asks, you can tell him I've gone home to a funeral! See? I say, can I go over?"

"Certainly," said Harry, and he grasped Bunter's collar again, and Bunter went over—in a yelling heap.

"Yaroorh! Wharrer you up to, you beast?" howled the Owl of the Remove.

"Didn't you say you wanted to go over?"

"You silly ass!" yelled Bunter. "I want to go over to the Willows—I don't want to go over in the quad, you blithering idiot!"

"Well, you can't go over to the

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Willows; but you can go over in the quad, and you'll go over hard, next time, if you keep on bothering!"

"Beast!"

"If you want to go over again—"

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter rolled away hastily. Harry Wharton, smiling, walked over to the elms, where the two Todds seemed to be engaged in a warm argument. Peter was rather excited—and Alonzo was making soothing gestures.

"What's the row, old beans?" asked Harry. "I hear you're going out to tea this afternoon, Lonzy! Forgotten games practice?"

"Mr. Quelch has very kindly given me leave, my dear Wharton," answered Alonzo. "I shall be very, very sorry to miss games practice, but it is very, very important for me to see the dear professor—"

"Well, if you've got leave, that's that!" said Harry. "I hope you'll have a jolly tea with the old bean! Mind your step while you're there—it's a weird place. The old scout gave us shelter from the rain last week, and we got a lot of surprises. Bunter tumbled through a trapdoor and Bob was electrified by the telephone, and Toddy was caught in a mechanical armchair—"

"That's all right—Lonzy's not going," said Peter. "I've told him he's to turn up for games practice. I'm going to make a footballer of him, or slay him. Study No. 7 is a Soccer Study."

"My dear Peter—" murmured Alonzo.

"Nuff said! Your jolly old professor can go and eat coke!" said Peter Todd.

"He's a weird old bird, anyhow—we've seen him climbing trees like a monkey, and he's so jolly strong that it's uncanny—looks like a little feeble codger, and he's really as strong as a horse. You can give him a miss and play footer, see?"

"But it is very, very important—"

"Rot! Who's chief of Study No. 7?" demanded Peter warmly. "I don't want to have to whop you, Alonzo—"

"The mere suggestion, my dear Peter, would shock Uncle Benjamin—"

"But at the risk of shocking Uncle Ben, I shall give you the whopping of your life, if you don't turn up at games practice."

"Draw it mild, old man," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Lonzy's let off—and he's no good, anyhow."

"I'm going to make him some good!"

"You've got all your work cut out!" said the captain of the Remove, with a chuckle. "Alonzo can biff a footer at a Form-master's boko—"

"I'm going to teach him not to. I'm going to make a man of him!" said Peter. "He's going to play up, and help make Study No. 7 top study! I'm going to see him in the Remove eleven before I'm done with him."

"Oh, great Scott!"

"But I must really keep my appointment with Professor Sparkinson this afternoon, my dear Peter—"

"You know what to expect if you do!" said Peter grimly. "Six from a fives bat in the study. I mean it. Hallo! Where are you going?"

Alonzo suddenly scuttled away among the elms. Peter and Wharton glanced round—and sighted Coker of the Fifth in the offing. Evidently it was the sight of Coker that had caused Alonzo to beat that sudden retreat.

Horace Coker passed the two juniors with a brow of thunder, stalking Alonzo among the elms. A loud squealing sound a few moments later announced that Alonzo was caught. Only a few more moments, and a roar like a bull announced that Coker was caught in his turn—six or seven cheery Removites having rushed to the rescue of Alonzo.

"Come and lend a hand, Toddy!" said Wharton.

"What-ho!"

They ran up to lend a hand. Once more Horace Coker suffered severely in the hands of the Amalekites.

Leaving Coker for dead, as it were, the Remove men went down to Little Side for games practice.

Harry Wharton looked over the Form on the football ground. There were two absentees—Alonzo Todd and Billy Bunter. Alonzo had leave—and Bunter hadn't; but both were absent. Peter Todd gave an angry snort.

"That means six in the study!" he said, thinking of Alonzo.

"That means six from Wingate!" said Harry, thinking of Bunter.

And the Remove men settled down to games practice, while Alonzo, with a wary eye open for Coker of the Fifth, went down to the gates—and Billy Bunter, with a wary eye open for Wingate of the Sixth, rolled after him.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Hot Chase!

"COMING?" asked Coker.

"Where?" asked Potter and Greene.

"I want you this afternoon."

"Um!" said Potter and Greene.



"Boy! Gerroff! Ugh! Boy!" articulated Mr. Quelch. "Gerroff my face immediately! Oooogh!" "Oh goodness gracious! Is that Mr. Quelch?" gasped Alonzo Todd in horror, as he scrambled up. "Oh dear! I am very, very sorry! I—I did not see—I did not intend— Oh dear!" "Urrrrgh!" gurgled Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, come on!" said Coker impatiently. "There's no time to lose. I saw the young scoundrel go out of gates, and I don't want to miss him."

"But, I say—"

"Don't jaw, Potter!"

"But what—"

"Don't gabble, Greene!"

Horace Coker marched off, and his chums followed him, not very enthusiastically. They willingly admitted that old Horace had a very serious grievance, and that it was quite in accordance with the fitness of things that he should bestow a record hiding on Alonzo Todd of the Remove. But they did not want to spend a half-holiday stalking a fag of the Lower Fourth. Really, Potter and Greene had more entertaining ways than that of occupying their leisure hours.

But Coker was not a man to take no for an answer. Coker was on the war-path; and he was as deadly a tracker as Chingachgook, on the trail of vengeance. Wrath was boiling in the breast of Horace Coker. His spread had been annexed, and his tea-party had been a frost and a fizzle! He had been handled most severely half a dozen times by the Removites in his quest for vengeance; and still Alonzo had not been whopped! Nothing else mattered, in Coker's opinion, till Alonzo had had his whopping. Anything that Potter and Greene wanted to do that afternoon was, in comparison, a trifle light as air.

"This," Coker condescended to explain, "is a chance! Those young rascals in the Remove stick together as thick as thieves. Five or six times I've been man-handled—got into a row with Prout, too! Think I'm going to let Todd off because of that? No fear! I'm going to give him twice as much! Now there's a chance of catching him out of gates without that swarm of young villains chipping in! See?"

"Um!" said Potter and Greene.

"There they are!" Coker pointed

along the road towards Courtfield Common. "Bunter's with him. Never mind Bunter! He will clear off fast enough if he's kicked."

"But look here, you don't want us to help you handle a Remove kid, old bean!" argued Potter.

"Of course I don't," answered Coker. "I could handle any man at Greyfriars without help, I hope. But he will cut and run. You fellows have got to see that he doesn't get away."

"Oh crikey!" said Greene.

Alonzo was no fighting man, but with Coker on his track, it was probable that he would turn out to be fairly good at sprinting! Chasing an elusive fag up and down Courtfield Common did not appeal to Potter and Greene as a really agreeable way of getting through a half-holiday. They dropped a pace behind Coker and exchanged a glance and a wink. It was a tacit agreement to disappear when the chase started. If Coker wanted to race about the common after a fag, he could do it on his lonely own.

"Hallo, they're stopping!" remarked Coker.

Alonzo Todd and Billy Bunter had stopped on the road some distance ahead. They were not looking back. Alonzo was looking at Bunter; and Bunter was blinking at Alonzo through his big spectacles.

"My dear Bunter," said Alonzo mildly. "You will miss games practice if you come any farther."

"That's all right," said Bunter cheerily. "I'm not going to let you down, old chap! I'm going to protect you if Coker gets after you again!"

"That is very, very kind of you, Bunter," said Alonzo, "but I must point out that you are quite incapable of protecting me, and indeed yourself. Also, you are funky of Coker, and I can't help thinking, my dear Bunter, that you would cut off immediately if Coker came along—"

"Oh, really, Alonzo—"

"You are aware, my dear Bunter, that you are the funkiest fellow in the Remove, if you do not mind my mentioning it!"

"You cheeky beast—"

"My dear Bunter, it was not my object to offend you, in pointing out a circumstance well known to the whole Form—"

"Oh, shut up!" said Bunter. "Look here, fathead, you're going to tea with that old goat at the Willow! Well, I'm coming, see?"

"But Professor Sparkinson has not authorised me to bring anyone to tea with me, Bunter! What you suggest is quite impossible. I could not take anyone to tea uninvited, and if I did, Bunter, I should have to select some agreeable person—not a fellow like you at all!"

Billy Bunter blinked at Alonzo through his big spectacles. Then he doubled a fat fist.

"Where will you have it?" he inquired.

"Wha-a-t?"

"You're taking me with you as a pal," said the Owl of the Remove. "That old goat won't mind; and if he does, I don't care! See? But if you don't treat me as a pal, Alonzo, I'm going to knock you into a cocked hat!"

"Oh my goodness!" exclaimed Alonzo.

"Any kid in the Second could handle you, you weedy, seedy, blithering nin-compoop," jeered Bunter. "Nugent minor sat on your head in the quad and you stood it! Yah! I could knock you into the middle of next week with one hand! Like me to try?"

"Certainly not!" gasped Alonzo. "Please do not be violent, Bunter! My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Blow Uncle Benjamin!" roared Bunter. "Look here, am I coming to

(Continued on page 15.)

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We must admit

that Brown demonstrated the fact that Kipps possesses uncanny powers—unless there is some material explanation of the extraordinary phenomena shown.

What happened was that Kipps was blind-folded and sat in a chair, with his back turned to the audience. Brown then went among the audience, asking fellows to hand him articles, which he held up for the rest of the audience to see. Kipps then told us what was being held up.

He was right every time!

Pencils, pens, diaries, notebooks, and pocket-knives passed through Brown's hands in bewildering profusion. Kipps named them all without a trace of hesitation.

What is there to explain it? Is it that

he has the gift of second sight? Can it be that some strange, inexplicable supernatural gift has descended on him?

We can hardly think otherwise.

Suggestions have been made that Brown gave him some kind of an indication through a prearranged code. Certainly, we couldn't help noticing that Brown did a stopdance every time he handled a pocket-knife, kicked a chair over whenever he took up a fountain-pen, whistled when he accepted a diary and made a noise like a rooster when he held up a pencil.

But apart from that, there wasn't the slightest sign of messages being passed to the mysterious Kipps.

It's all very strange and psychic.

My Worst



AND BEST

EXPERIENCE

By GEORGE WINGATE

The worst experience I can recall just now is an episode in the Senior Cross-Country Run last year. I was three-quarters of the way round the course and had taken the lead from North. I decided to go all out and attempt to break the record for the race, which I felt confident of doing if I finished strongly enough.

But the best-laid schemes of mice and men gang aft a gley! No sooner had I made the decision than my foot caught in a cart-track in the muddy field across which I was running and I fell with a frightful jolt. I knew at once that I had sprained my ankle and shouldn't be able to get up again without assistance. But my dismay at that circumstance was as nothing to the dismay I felt immediately afterwards, when one of the ugliest specimens of a beast I have ever seen outside a nightmare came charging across the field towards me at a gallop that fairly shook the earth.

It was a mad bull—not mildly insane, either, but stark, staring mad and just longing to get the smell of human blood into his nostrils!

I don't reckon to be easily scared, but I can assure readers of the "Greyfriars Herald" that

something cold—

down my spine—

Nearer and

came till the sound

was like thunder

time I found it

move a yard

where I had

almost given up

the first furious

lowered horns,

Well, to tell

don't remember

except that a cry

strike me from

direction entire

actually happen

North had arrive

time and was sn

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After that, at

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nearest hedge—

still raging after

Yes, I think

had an experience

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My best expe

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SCANDAL SHEET'S SENSATIONAL START

The "Greyfriars Herald" has had to endure opposition from rival papers in the past. But never in our chequered history have we had to endure such frenzied and ferocious opposition as we're getting from the latest entrant into the journalistic field at Greyfriars.

The new paper started last Tuesday. The promoter, publisher, printer, and general factotum is Fisher T. Fish. It's unique among school papers. You can tell that by the title alone—"The Greyfriars Blazing Beacon." Judging by the first issue, it has two principal points of policy—Scandal and War on the "Herald."

The headlines will give you a faint idea of the lurid kind of tush served up in this meteoric journalistic effort. Here are some of them:

"Fifth Form Footer Funds!

Who's Snooped Them?"

"Cousin or Cutie?

Shellite's Trip to "Talkies."

"Driven from Derm!

Removite's Pitiful Story."

"We Call Wharton's Bluff!

Remove Leader's Racketeering Ramp!"

The literary style employed throughout the paper strikes a novel note, which English readers may or may not like—that is, if there are any readers to read it! As an example, let us quote the beginning of the Editorial:

"Say, you Bozes! You wanna noospaper, don't you? Not a collection of tripe, guff, or hokum, but a noospaper, huh? Well, this is it!"

It's just as well Fishy mentioned it. Most people would take it for the kind of circular that's pushed under the door by the rag-and-bone man to be called for in half an hour, if they weren't told otherwise!

Don't think we dislike opposition, dear readers. We welcome it, in the ordinary

way. It keeps us up to scratch and puts the staff on their mettle. But there is opposition and opposition. Fishy's is the second variety. It consists for the most part of libellous and quite untruthful stories of the Editor, reporters and artists engaged on the "Greyfriars Herald." Anyone who reads Fish's rag and doesn't know the fellows in question will certainly be left wondering why on earth they haven't all been sent to Dartmoor long ago!

Of course, we might go round to Study No. 14 and strew the Editor of the new paper in little pieces all round the study. On the other hand, to do that would be to lower the dignity and prestige of the only school newspaper which is read all over the world.

Thinking it over we'll just let Fishy get on with the washing and challenge him to do his worst. We shall be very much surprised if he wins over many of our regular readers—but we'll give him the chance of attempting that feat!

So go ahead, Fishy—and if there's going to be a newspaper war at Greyfriars, may the best paper win it!

By which, of course, we mean the good old "Greyfriars Herald!"

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?



When a local photographer asked W. G. Bunter to pose for him, Bunter preened himself. It came out later that the man was entering a competition for freak photographs!

The school library contains many fine old volumes, among which studious fellows like Linley enjoy browsing. Bunter says he has no use for books, unless they deal with food!

Bob Cherry is very fond of the punchball. The other day, under one of his mighty swipes, it broke clear of its moorings—and biffed Bunter, who was just entering the gym!

is Herald

HARRY WHARTON.

November 25th, 1933.

EXTRA
GOOD
EDITION

BANISTER-SLIDING CHAMPIONSHIP.

Final Heats will be slid off next Tuesday evening at 8, beaks and pre-fects permitting. Reserved seats: Landing, 1d.; top stairs, 2d.; bottom stairs, 3d. All profits to the Banister-Sliding Brotherhood. Communications to BOB CHERRY, Hon. Sec., Study No. 13, Remove.



NCE TE

ld seemed to run
at that moment.
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baldly, that doesn't
pleasant, but I
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ence!
ys longed to do a
ve from a plane,
pilot pal of mine

offered to take me up, I
"jumped" at the chance—in
two senses!

My experience on that occa-
sion leads me to recommend
parachute-jumping as the greatest
sport of all. I felt a pang of
funk as I stood ready to take
the big drop, and my heart was
beating pretty rapidly when I
stepped off and felt myself
hurtling earthwards till I'd
descended a thousand feet or
so! But once my faithful old
"brolly" had opened out, the
going was really good. What a
feeling it is, to be sailing down-
wards in solitary and majestic
state—lord, it seems, for the
time being of earth and air
alike! I felt even more ex-
hilarated than when I scored
five goals against the Rookwood
First Eleven last year!

If you want to better your
best experience, you kids, you
can't do better than take a
joyride in a parachute!

(Next week Coker of the
Fifth will contribute to
this series. Book early and
avoid disappointment! Ed.)

DICKY NUGENT'S WEEKLY WISDOM

You'd hardly believe how
careful a publick carrickter like
me has to be when speaking.

The other nite, in the corse of
a lekture to the Second on
"The Sins of the Seeniors,"
I said I couldn't stand BLACK-
MALE at any price.

Now I'm being akkused of
saying that I simply detest
culledered men!

Oh Scissors!

Snippings, the Courtfield
tailor, has never struck us as
particularly incompetent.

Yet we're told that his work
is enough to give anyone a
"fit"!!

GREEK CLOBBER INTRIGUED HIM

Why Removite Wore Robes

Quite a sensation was
caused in the Rag the other
evening by the unexpected
appearance of a Removite
clad in a couple of bed-sheets
and a pair of sandals. Careful
examination of his face re-
vealed that he was Richard
Rake.

"Rake, old bean," greeted
Morgan, his study-mate, blink-
ing at Rake's unaccustomed
habiliments.

"Hail, faithful Aethalides,"
retorted Rake, much to every-
body's surprise. "Art away
to the Pythian Games at
Delphi?"

"What the thump—"

"See! I will perform for
thee an Apollonian Dance ere
the Dionysian Revels begin,"
said Rake.

We simply blinked as Rake
proceeded to prance round the
Rag with the sinuous grace
of a cat on hot bricks.

"Better call a doctor,"
suggested Bulstrode.

"Touch me at your peril,
Diomedes!" yelled Rake.
"Wouldst have lightnings
and thunderbolts called down
on thy bald pate from yon
starry vault? If wouldst—"

"Collar him!" roared
Bolsover. "The chap's as
mad as a hatter; he ought to
be put under restraint!"

There was a rush.
And then Rake ceased his
"classical" dance and took
refuge behind a group of
Upper Fourth men.



"Chuck it, you idiots!"
he grinned. "I'm only re-
hearsing!"

"Rehearsing what?" de-
manded many suspicious
voices.

"Rehearsing for Wibley's
Greek revue!"

"But I'm not running a
Greek revue!" howled Wibley,
who happened to be present.

"You don't know you are
at present!" grinned Rake,
not a whit dismayed. "But
you won't be able to resist it
now you've seen some of its
possibilities! Greek clobber's
intrigued me for a long time,
but it was only this evening
that the idea of running a
Greek revue struck me. As
soon as I thought of it, I
rigged myself up as you see
me and trotted down to see
you. Now, what do you think
of it?"

We all retorted "Rotten!"
—with the strange exception of
Wibley, whose eyes gleamed
as they always do when his
mind dwells on the subject of
the theatre.

"My hat! It's an idea!"
was Wibley's verdict.

And the fathead has actu-
ally started planning it now!

GREYFRIARS BUFF SHIRTS

Secret of Strange Sect

Who are the Buff Shirts? Are they a
sinister society, seething subterranean schemes,
subversive systems, shady secrets? Reader,
we will unfold the truth.

When Loder, of the Sixth, and Hilton, of
the Fifth, and Stewart, of the Shell, and
Dabney and Scott, of the Upper Fourth,
came down to breakfast on the same morning,
attired in buff shirts, we feared the worst.
Whenever a lot of fellows start wearing the
same coloured shirts, a coup d'Etat is certain.
What exactly that is, we don't know, but it

involves defying authority, and running
around like large lads with rubber truncheons,
hashing chaps you don't like.

Of course, we don't object to that in the
slightest, so long as we're the lads with the
rubber truncheons and not the chaps who're
disliked. But with Loder and Hilton and
Dabney in the swim, we couldn't help ex-
periencing a slight pang of uneasiness. The
prospect of a coup d'Etat, followed by a
bashing from a Buff Shirt was not a bit
attractive!

So we've been keeping an eye on the men
in the buff shirts, whose numbers, incidentally,
have since been added to by North and Potter
and Fitzgerald and Hoskins and Tomlinson
and Bolsover and Skinner.

We've seen nothing in the slightest degree
suspicious. So far as we can tell, the Buff
Shirts have no intention whatever of making
a coup d'Etat or beating up the rest of the
school. On the contrary, they don't seem
to be involved in any conspiracy; most of
them don't even speak to each other!

What, then, is their secret? Surely there
must be some reason for their all wearing
buff shirts!

Reader, there is—and it puzzled us quite
a lot to know why Buff Shirts turned away
to hide their blushes when we asked them
what it was. But now we've found out for
ourselves—and we understand.

The fact is, that Chunkley's of Courtfield,
have been stimulating trade by presenting
every purchaser of a pair of footer boots with
one buff shirt.

And that's the shady secret of the Buff
Shirts!



of the Horace Coker is always "tin-
under kering" with his motor-bike,
broke being under the impression that
he is a good mechanic. No
wonder the machine "conks
it" so often.

The Remove football XI's train-
ing consists of running, skipping,
and "medicine ball"—not for-
getting plenty of ball practice on
the field! Training tells in a
gruelling game!

Dormitory "spreads" after
"lights out" are rare but merry
occasions. The last one—given
by Lord Manleverer—was inter-
rupted by Mr. Quelch, who con-
fiscated the grub.

ALONZO THE GREAT!



(Continued from page 13.)

tea at the Willows or not? If not, look out for your silly nose!"

Alonzo backed away! Alonzo had lots of pluck! But it was a sad, sad fact that even Billy Bunter could have knocked him out in a scrap! And Billy Bunter meant business! It was tea at the Willows for Bunter, or a licking for Alonzo Todd!

"Oh, goodness gracious!" exclaimed Alonzo, catching sight of Coker & Co. on the road, as he backed away from Bunter.

"Better let me stick to you," said Bunter. "Suppose Coker came after you? Well, I'd protect you—"

"He—he's coming!" gasped Alonzo. "Wha-a-t?"

Bunter spun round.

"Oh crikey!" he ejaculated, at the sight of Horace Coker coming up the road with long strides. Potter and Greene were following more slowly.

"I—I—I say, run for it!" gasped Bunter. And he set the example. Apparently, at the sight of the warlike Coker, Bunter had forgotten his intention of protecting Alonzo.

Bunter ran—and Alonzo ran! Coker, in the rear, broke into a run also.

"After them!" he roared. He glared round at Potter and Greene. "Buck up, you slackers! Can't you move? After them, I tell you!"

"Oh, all right!" groaned Potter. And the three Fifth Form men ran in chase. Alonzo and Bunter left the road and cut across the green common in the direction of the distant residence of Professor Sparkinson.

In a foot race, Alonzo had the advantage of Bunter. He had little weight to carry; and Bunter had a lot. Alonzo forged ahead, covering the ground in great style. Until his wind gave out, Alonzo was likely to keep in the lead. Bunter very soon had bellows to mend.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "I say, stop for me, old chap! I say—ooogh!"

But Alonzo was already out of hearing. Billy Bunter plugged on desperately. But heavy footsteps were close behind Bunter, and a hand grasped his fat shoulder. A swing of Coker's powerful arm, and Billy Bunter was on his back, like an upturned turtle on a South Sea beach!

"Ooooooh!" spluttered Bunter. "I—I—I say, Coker—"

"Keep on after that young rotter, you fellows!" shouted Coker, and Potter and Greene ran on, while Coker attended to Bunter.

He bent over the fat Owl of the Remove and took a businesslike grip on a fat ear.

"Now, Bunter—"

"Yaroooh!"

"Where's that young villain Todd heading for? You were going somewhere with him. He may dodge me on the common. I want to know where to look for him if he does! Quick!"

"Yow-ow! Leggo!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,345.

"I'm going to twist your ear till you tell me—like that—"

"Whooooop!"

"And like that—"

"Yarooop! He's going to the Willows!" yelled Bunter. "Leggo! That old house by the—yooop—river! Leggo, you beast!"

"Good!"

Coker gave the fat ear another twist and left Bunter to yell. He raced on after Potter and Greene.

Alonzo had disappeared through a thicket of hawthorns. Potter and Greene disappeared after him. Coker scrambled through the bushes, and on the farther side, stared round him. Alonzo was to be seen—far in the distance, running hard. But strange to relate, Potter and Greene were not to be seen. They had vanished as if the earth had opened and swallowed them up. Coker glared round for them in vain.

"Potter!" he roared. "Greene!"

Echo answered "Greene." But there was no other answer. Coker gave a snort of wrath and took up the chase again on his lonely own. Going strong, Coker disappeared across the common on the track of Alonzo Todd.

When he was gone, Potter and Greene emerged from the hawthorns, where they had been lying low. They glanced after Coker and grinned and walked off—in the opposite direction. If Coker's idea of enjoying a half-holiday was to chase a fag over Courtfield Common, Potter and Greene were willing to let Coker have that enjoyment to himself! They walked back to Greyfriars, feeling quite bucked at having got shot of Horace James Coker for the afternoon. They really had no particular use for Coker—so long, of course, as he came in by tea-time! At tea-time Coker had his uses!

Thus, basely deserted by his bosom pals, Coker continued on the chase. Far ahead of him the elusive Alonzo ran and dodged. Wind was failing Alonzo, and Coker gained on him. But here and there, scattered about the wide common, there was plenty of cover; and Alonzo, though not very bright, was bright enough to hunt cover when he found that his legs would not save him. He vanished behind a row of straggling alders—and when Coker passed the alders, he found that Alonzo had vanished entirely.

Coker came to a halt, gasping.

There were trees and straggling bushes in a dozen directions, and Alonzo had dodged out of sight, and was keeping out of sight. This was what Coker had foreseen might happen, and this was why he needed the help of his pals. But the mysterious disappearance of Potter and Greene left him to his own resources. Luckily, Coker, with great sagacity, had obtained information from Bunter. He knew where Alonzo was heading for. So, after a little thought, Coker started for the Willows at a rapid trot, to arrive there before Alonzo and catch him when he arrived!

Alonzo, peering out of a clump of alders, was very, very glad to see Coker go! He waited ten minutes to give the Fifth Form man plenty of time to get clear, and then resumed his walk to the Willows. It did not occur to Alonzo that Coker was heading for the same spot, and would be waiting for him there. That did not occur to Alonzo, till he came off the common into the lane where the old house stood—and beheld a burly form leaning on the gate of the Willows!

Then Alonzo halted, in dismay, and ejaculated:

"Goodness gracious!"

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Professor Takes a Hand!

"JULIUS!" said Professor Sparkinson.

"Yes, massa!" said Julius Cæsar—not, of course, the celebrated Roman of that name, but the black servant at the Willows.

"The boy I am expecting seems to be a little late."

"Yes, massa."

"Is all ready?"

"Yes, massa."

"Very well, you may go, Julius!"

"Yes, massa!"

Julius Cæsar went.

Professor Sparkinson stepped to the window of his laboratory, and glanced out at the avenue of leafless trees that led down to the gates.

The little silver-haired old gentleman gave a grunt as he watched the drive with his little parrot-like eyes behind his horn-rimmed spectacles. Alonzo Todd was not in sight.

Professor Sparkinson's time was valuable—awfully valuable! Every minute in which he was not probing the deep mysteries of science seemed a wasted minute to the professor! Many wonderful discoveries had the professor made in the course of years and years of probing into those mysteries—but none, perhaps, so wonderful as his discovery of the secret of strength!

The phial of sticky crimson fluid locked up in his desk was calculated to revolutionise the world—had the professor imparted it to humanity. But that he was not thinking of doing. He hugged his discoveries to himself rather like a miser with his gold! Only in favour of Alonzo Todd had he made an exception. Alonzo had touched his heart. A weedy, saedy fellow, who had been plucky enough to tackle three young rascals at once in defence of an old man was evidently a proper object for his beneficence. Still, he had expected Alonzo at four—and now it was turned four! He grunted, and then he snorted!

Finally he walked out, and went down the avenue to the gates to see whether his expected guest was in sight.

Old and venerable-looking as the professor was, he walked with a springy, elastic step. Every now and then he gave a jump or a hop in sheer exuberance of spirits. This was the outcome of the Wonderful Elixir. The "monkey-gland" stunt, which is said to turn old men into young ones again, was a mere nothing, a trifle light as air in comparison with the professor's amazing discovery. Professor Sparkinson's elixir was the "goods"! It was really amazing to see a silvery-haired old gentleman leap to a branch twelve feet from the ground, swing himself lightly over it with one hand, and then walk on his way! The professor could certainly have earned big money in a circus!

"Dear me!" said Professor Sparkinson, as he sighted a burly back, belonging to a beefy fellow, leaning on his gate.

It was not Alonzo—the fellow was nearly twice as big as Alonzo. It was, as a matter of fact, Coker of the Fifth, waiting for Alonzo! And the next moment, through the bars of the gate, the professor sighted Alonzo. The Duffer of Greyfriars had come to a halt, and was regarding Coker of the Fifth with startled and dismayed eyes.

Coker, grinning, detached himself from the gate.

"Here we are again!" said Coker genially.

"Oh, my goodness!" said Alonzo,

"Waiting for you!" grinned Coker. He made a stride towards Alonzo! Alonzo backed away across the lane. Professor Sparkinson, with a frown, hurried down to the gate and opened it. Evidently his intervention was required. Coker—having no eyes in the back of his head—did not see the silver-haired gentleman. He advanced upon the retreating Alonzo.

"Got you!" he remarked.

"My dear Coker—" stammered Alonzo.

"Bagging a man's spread!" said Coker. "Ragging a man when he comes after it! There isn't a swarm of sneaking fags round here, what? I'm going to give you the hiding of your life! See?"

Coker made a jump at Alonzo with outstretched hand. Alonzo made a jump back, stumbled, and sat down. Coker's grip was on his collar the next moment.

"Stop!"

Coker stared round at that unexpected injunction. He stared hard at the little silver-haired gentleman who came bounding out of the gateway.

"Hallo, who may you happen to be?" inquired Coker.

"Probably you have heard of Professor Sparkinson!" said the little old gentleman with all the dignity of a great scientist.

"I've heard that some potty old chump has taken that house," answered Coker cheerfully. "Are you the old chump?"

"Release that boy at once!"

"Cheese it!" said Coker. "I'm going to whop this young scoundrel! I'm going to give him the whopping of his life! Keep clear!"

"Release him!" rapped the professor, coming across the lane to Coker, his eyes glinting through his spectacles. "Otherwise I shall be compelled to use force."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Coker, greatly tickled at the idea. "You look it, old bean! Now, look here, I don't want to hurt a man old enough to be my great-great-grandfather! You look as if you'd fall down dead if I poked you with my little finger! Just stand clear, see?"

"Will you release that boy?"

"Not so's you'd notice it!" answered Coker humorously.

"Pray release me, Coker!" urged Alonzo. "I assure you that it was a very, very lamentable misunderstanding about your parcel—"

"Shut up! I'm going— Oh, my hat!" roared Coker, as the silver-haired old gentleman hooked him by the collar. "Leggo! If you make me hit you, you'll be sorry for it! Why—what— Oh crikey! Yaroooooh!"

Coker fairly howled with amazement as he was swept off his feet in the grasp of the professor.

He released Alonzo Todd—he had to! He was jerked away from him by an irresistible force. Fingers that seemed made of iron gripped Coker's collar! To his speechless astonishment, he was swung in the air and described a circle round the professor.

"Oooogh!" babbled Coker. "Oooogh! What the thump—what the dickens— Oh, my hat! Woooooogh!"

Having swung him round in a complete circle, the professor tossed him into the grass beside the lane.

Bump!

Coker sprawled and roared.

"Come, my boy!" said Professor Sparkinson kindly to Alonzo.

And he led the Duffer of Greyfriars towards the gate.

Coker sat up! Dizzy with astonishment, he gazed after the little old professor! Where on earth the silver-haired gentleman packed all that muscle was a mystery to Coker.

"Mum-mum-my hat!" gasped Coker.

With dizzy eyes he watched the professor and Alonzo walk in at the gate and disappear up the avenue. He was still sitting there, breathless with amazement, long after they were gone.

He staggered to his feet at last.

"Well, my hat!" gasped Coker. "My only hat! Oh crikey! Who'd have thought it—that little old monkey handling me like that. I've a jolly good mind to go after him and give him a jolly good hiding, only—only I won't!"

Coker almost tottered away. He did not want to see any more of that astonishing old gentleman! He had had enough—more than enough—of Professor Sparkinson!

He departed—but he did not go far! Alonzo Todd was safe for the present—but he would leave the Willows sooner or later. Coker had only to wait and watch! His experience at the hands of the professor had not calmed Coker's wrath—rather it had added to it! He had been simmering—now he was nearly boiling over!

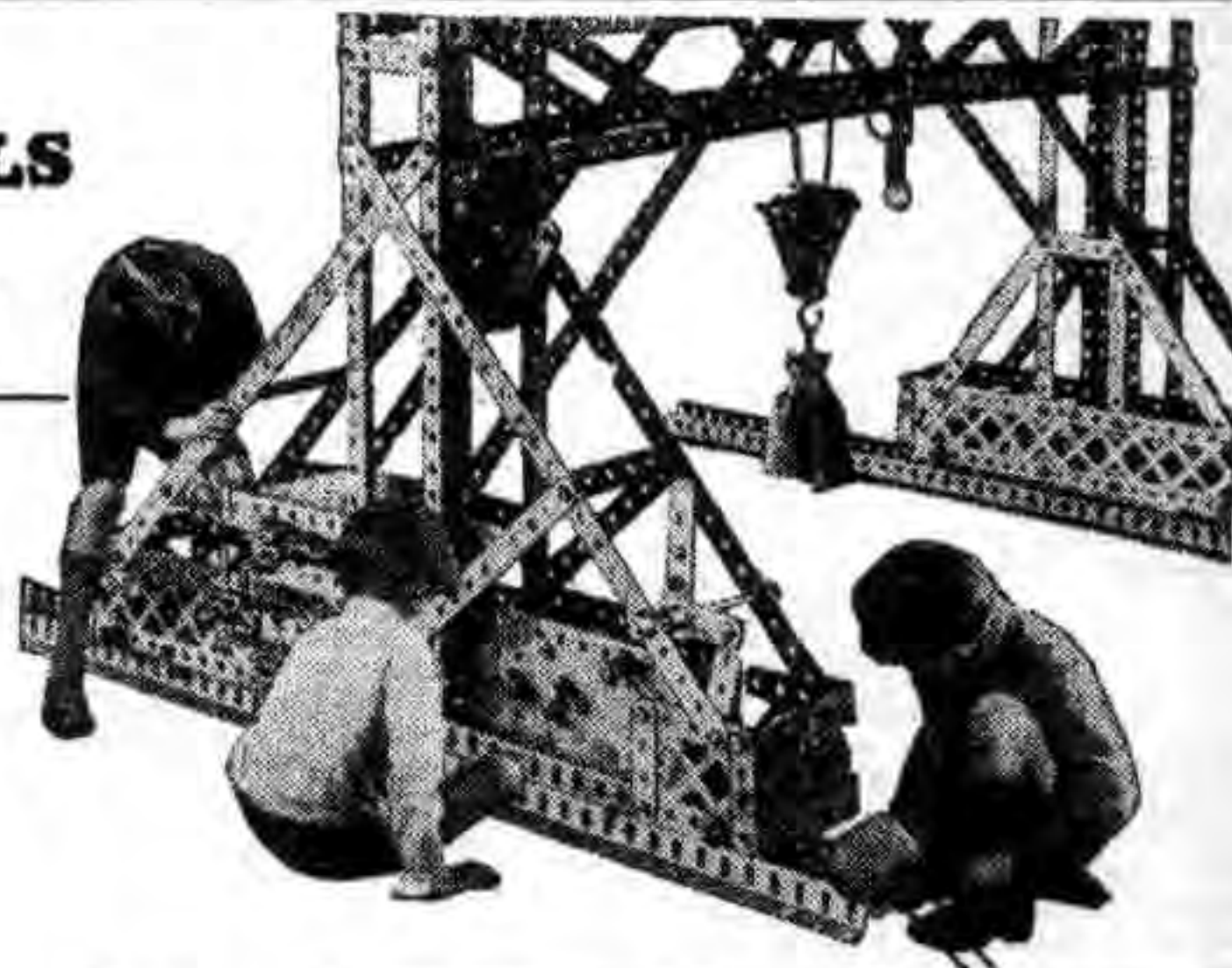
With grim and relentless determination, Coker of the Fifth waited for Alonzo Todd to take his homeward way—little dreaming of the remarkable change that was to take place in Alonzo before he left the Willows! If Coker had known what he was waiting for he would hardly have waited!

(Continued on next page.)

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MECCANO

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Tea for Two!

"**S**IT down!" said Professor Sparkinson.

Alonzo sat down.

He looked about the large, lofty room with interest. On his previous visit he had been rather too confused to take much note of the place.

The professor, apparently, was going to entertain his schoolboy guest in the lab. In point of fact, the professor lived and moved and had his being in that apartment. Nine-tenths of the rambling old house was still empty and unfurnished—except for the lab and the old gentleman's sleeping quarters, and Julius Caesar's domain, the Willows was as bare and uninhabited as it had been during the years that it had stood empty.

The professor had taken it as a quiet, secluded place, where he could carry on with his scientific experiments undisturbed, and had fitted up only the portions he needed. But it was clear that on the lab he had spent a lot of money.

Alonzo was interested in what he saw, but not exactly pleased. There were things he would have described as rather nasty, if he had not been taught such thorough politeness by his Uncle Benjamin.

For instance, a skull grinned at him from the top of a bookcase. A skeleton stood in a corner, looking as if it were about to step out. The bookcase was stacked—untidily—with immense volumes that looked as if they might give a fellow a headache if he opened them.

A microscope was adjusted on a bench, and an accidental glance through it showed something wriggling; and Alonzo, not being at all scientific, loathed things that wriggled. Biology had no charms whatever for Alonzo.

The walls were washed in a pale green, and all over them were charcoal drawings—drawings that showed great skill in handling the charcoal—but many of them incomprehensible.

Perhaps the professor worked out some of his scientific wheezes in charcoal on the walls! A design that might have been the skeleton of a mastodon, half finished, was mixed with algebraic signs, representing Alonzo could not guess what; and then there was a weird figure that was something like an ape, and yet not quite like an ape. Alonzo was quite, quite sure that there was no such creature in existence, and never had been! If Professor Sparkinson had evolved it out of his inner imagination, he had, Alonzo thought, a very weird and not wholly pleasant imagination.

And there was no sign of tea!

Professor Sparkinson stood before the fire, with his hands under his coat-tails, his silver hair shining in the firelight, his eyes shining through his horn-rimmed glasses. He looked very kind and benevolent, and Alonzo quite liked him! But he wished that he was being entertained in some other apartment. Skeletons and skulls and ape-like drawings on the walls did not conduce to ease of mind. But Alonzo would not have said so for worlds.

"So you have decided to accept my offer?" barked the professor suddenly. He had a sudden way of speaking that made a fellow jump. "You desire to be made strong—what, what?"

"Yes, please!" said Alonzo meekly.

"I shall give you," said the professor, "a small phial of the elixir. You will take one drop of it every night. A single drop, mind! So long as you take it you will be strong—amazingly strong

—astonishingly strong. You have experienced already what my elixir can do."

"Yes, indeed!" said Alonzo.

The professor stepped to the big desk in the window. He took out a phial and handed it to Alonzo. It contained a sticky, crimson fluid.

"Take it! Keep it secret! Not a word, mind! Not a syllable! What?"

"Oh, certainly!" said Alonzo.

"Put it in a safe place!" barked the professor.

Alonzo placed the phial in an inside pocket. The professor resumed his attitude before the fire, and regarded the Duffer of Greyfriars benevolently through his big glasses.

"You are interested in science?" he barked.

"Oh, no!" said Alonzo simply. "It makes my head ache."

"You young idiot!" said the professor.

Alonzo made no reply to that. He could not help thinking that the remark was impolite. He thought that his Uncle Benjamin would have thought so, too! But age has its privileges.

"Look!" said the professor. He waved a hand towards the ape-like charcoal drawing on the wall. "Do you know what that is?"

"No, indeed, unless it is some sort of a monkey," said Alonzo. "It looks rather like a human being, but then it has a tail!"

"That," said the professor, "is an ancestral portrait!"

"A—a—what?" said Alonzo faintly.

"One of my ancestors!" said the professor.

"Oh dear!"

"And yours!" added the professor.

"My dear sir," said Alonzo, rather warmly, "I am quite, quite sure that none of my ancestors ever looked like that! Possibly your ancestors, sir—indeed, now you mention it, I see a resemblance—"

"What?" roared the professor.

Alonzo stopped suddenly. To his surprise, the professor looked angry. Yet what was there to make him angry in mentioning the fact that he resembled what he declared to be a portrait of his ancestor?

"You are a young blockhead!" said Professor Sparkinson. "That, boy, is an ancestor in a biological sense; it is my idea of the missing link—the ape-like creature from which the human race is descended by evolution."

"Oh!" gasped Alonzo.

"Now do you understand?" grunted the professor.

Alonzo understood now, at least, why the professor was not pleased at being told that he resembled his ancestor! No scientific gentleman, though never so assured that mankind descended from a species of monkey, likes to have such a resemblance pointed out.

"What do you think of it?" barked the professor.

"I think it is all nonsense, sir!" said Alonzo meekly.

"Wha-a-at?" spluttered the professor.

"I have heard lectures on evolution, sir, and I think it is all nonsense," said Alonzo, gently but firmly. "Monkeys have tails—"

"You have never read Darwin, of course?" barked the professor. "Then I will tell you what you might have read in the 'Descent of Man.'"

"That is very, very kind of you, sir!" said Alonzo, manfully repressing a strong inclination to yawn.

"Man, in the early monkey stage, went on all fours," said the professor. "Later he walked on his hind legs! Naturally, having become a biped, he assumed the habit of sitting down! Evolution did the rest! The tail, con-

stantly sat upon, disappeared in the course of time. It was, as it were, sat out of existence! Now do you comprehend?"

Alonzo blinked.

"But we still sit down—" he ventured.

"Eh?"

"We have gone on sitting down for millions of years," argued Alonzo. "If sitting on the tail made it disappear—"

"It did!"

"Then surely the process would have continued—"

"What?"

"And the backbone would have disappeared in its turn—"

"Wha-a-t?"

"And man, in the long run, would have had to sit down on the back of his neck!" said Alonzo.

Professor Sparkinson glared at him.

"You are a fool!" he said.

"Indeed, sir—"

"And an idiot—"

"Oh, sir—"

"And a dolt—"

"Really, sir—"

"We had better have tea!" said Professor Sparkinson, changing the subject, much to Alonzo's relief.

Alonzo expected the professor to ring for tea. But he didn't! He touched a button in the wall. To Alonzo's surprise, a section of the floor sank immediately out of sight, disclosing a large cavity.

As Alonzo blinked at it, with wide-open eyes, a table rose from below, exactly filling the gap. There was a click, and the floor closed again under the table.

"Goodness gracious!" ejaculated Alonzo.

The table was set for tea, and all was ready.

The professor smiled, restored to good humour by Alonzo's admiring wonder.

"You have never seen anything like that before—what?" asked the professor.

"Never, sir!" said Alonzo. "I have read of it—"

"You have read of it?" barked the professor. "What do you mean?"

"It resembles what were called the 'tables volantes,' or flying-tables, in France, in the reign of Louis XV," said Alonzo mildly.

The professor stared at him.

"You are a young ass!" he said.

"Indeed, sir—"

"Come, come, sit down to tea!" barked the professor.

Alonzo rose from the armchair in which he had been seated. There were no chairs near the tea table, and he glanced round for one. He was about to step to one of the chairs near the wall, when the professor barked again.

"Stop!"

"Oh, certainly," said Alonzo, wondering whether he was to stand to his tea, or whether a chair was to appear suddenly from the floor or the ceiling!

The professor touched another button. A chair, standing by the wall, slid forward over the polished oak floor, as if moving of its own volition, and stopped at the side of the table.

"Goodness gracious!" gasped Alonzo.

The professor smiled again. Apparently he liked to surprise a visitor with the weird and wonderful arrangements of his scientific home.

"Sit down!" he barked.

Alonzo sat down in the newly-arrived chair—hoping that it would start on its travels again after he was in it!

The professor touched another button! Another chair detached itself from the wall and shot towards the table. Professor Sparkinson sat down in it with a cheery smile and beamed on



As Alonzo blinked, with wide-open eyes, a table, already set for tea, rose from below, filling up the large cavity. "Goodness gracious!" he ejaculated. "Come—come," said the professor. "Sit down to tea!"

Alonzo. He seemed quite to have recovered his good-humour.

The table was well-spread. If Julius Cæsar had prepared that spread, it showed that Julius Cæsar knew his business. There were cakes and buns and cream-puffs; there were ham sandwiches and tomato sandwiches and turkey sandwiches. There were other good things, many of them. It was a spread that would have delighted the heart of Billy Bunter! It had quite a pleasing effect on Alonzo, who was hungry after his walk.

Alonzo rather hoped that the professor would not talk science over tea. The professor didn't! He had heard enough of Alonzo's views on the abstruse subject of evolution! It was fairly plain that he regarded Alonzo as rather a fool! Indeed, he had said so! Alonzo, for his part, could not help regarding the professor as rather an old donkey! But he was much too polite to say so!

The professor, desirous of suiting his conversation to schoolboy company, talked about games! Alonzo was not a whale on games—but neither, it seemed, was the professor! Regardless of the fact that it was November, he talked cricket, apparently under the supposition that that game was going on at Greyfriars! His knowledge, or remembrance, of the game seemed a little limited, too, as he asked Alonzo how many goals he had scored in his last cricket match. Vast scientific attainments had doubtless driven more ordinary matters from the professor's powerful brain, as is not uncommon with scientific men.

"It is many years," said the professor rather superfluously, "since I played cricket! Are you a member of the fifteen?" Some hazy recollection of Rugby was perhaps in the professor's mind.

Alonzo was about to answer, when there came a sudden interruption.

"Yaroooooh!"

It was a sudden, terrific yell from the hall outside the laboratory. Alonzo jumped, and spilt his tea.

"Goodness gracious!" he ejaculated.

"What is that?"

The professor grinned.

"That," he said, "sounds like someone who has entered the house without permission."

Alonzo half-rose.

"Sit down!" barked the professor.

Alonzo sat down.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

No Admission!

BILLY BUNTER had arrived.

He was rather late; but when there was a spread going on it was a case of better late than never! That, at least, was Bunter's idea.

Billy Bunter had plenty of nerve. As a butter-in at other fellows' spreads he was famous for his nerve. But even Bunter felt that it would have been better had he arrived to tea with Alonzo and been presented to the professor as Alonzo's pal who had come with him. Old Sparkinson might not have liked it, but he would really have had to lump it. Even Bunter felt that it was a little awkward, arriving more than half an hour after Alonzo. Still, Alonzo would have to stand by him, and see him through. If he didn't Bunter would jolly well punch him afterwards. Alonzo, happily, was the one fellow in the Greyfriars Remove whom Billy Bunter could punch.

Bunter had been rather delayed in arriving. The old house lay on the loneliest side of the common towards the river; and Bunter had sighted a party of tramps as he came. There were three of them, and they looked a rough crowd, and the place was very lonely;

so the Owl of the Remove made a wide detour to keep clear of them. But he had arrived at last, and he plugged up the avenue, panting for breath, and reached the old stone porch of the Willows.

The big oak door stood open, giving a view of the hall within. Bunter blinked into it.

The hall had been furnished chiefly with packing-cases when Harry Wharson & Co. had dropped in for shelter from the rain a week or so ago. But the place was in better order now.

There were rugs on the floor, an electric fire in the grate, a large mat inside the doorway. Across the hall Bunter could see the door of the laboratory—and from that room he caught a click of crockery and a murmur of voices. That, evidently, was where the professor was entertaining Alonzo to tea—and Alonzo was stuffing, forgetful of Bunter! He was going to be reminded of him.

As the front door stood open the fat Owl decided to roll in and tap at the laboratory door and announce himself. Once safely inside the house he was going, somehow, to manage to stay inside. At the worst, the professor could only turn him out; and turning-out was no new experience for William George Bunter.

He stepped in on the mat. He had, for the moment, forgotten his previous experiences at the Willows, and that it was a house of uncanny surprises. Professor Sparkinson had his own weird methods of guarding his scientific treasures and secrets, more efficacious than locks and bolts and bars.

Bunter, as he stepped on the mat, met with a surprise! It was a large, square mat, as wide as the wide doorway. It looked just like any other mat, safe to tread on!

But it wasn't!

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As Bunter's weight was placed on it, there was a sound of a click below, and the inner edge of the mat suddenly rose in the air. The mat was fastened to the section of flooring beneath it; and that section of floor rose like the lid of a box.

Bunter was pitched backwards.

He gave a fearful yell, as he sat down backwards in the stone porch outside. His yell rang through the Willows from end to end.

Having thus expressed his surprised feelings, Bunter sat and blinked. The mat sank back immediately into its former position.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He hardly knew what had happened! But he knew that he had sat down in the porch hard!

"Oh lor!" gurgled Bunter.

He picked himself up and blinked into the hall through his big spectacles. He did not venture to tread on that deceptive mat again. He calculated whether he could jump across it! But suppose he landed on some other surprise! He decided at once not to jump across that mat!

There was nothing for it, but to knock! As the door stood wide open it was difficult to reach the big knocker without treading on the mat. Bunter tiptoed on the door-sill, leaning his left hand on the door and reaching for the big iron knocker with his right.

His fat fingers touched the knocker. But he did not lift it! At the contact a sudden electric thrill shot through Bunter.

"Yooooooooop!" he roared.

That sudden electric shock made Bunter stagger! He staggered on the mat!

Immediately the mat repeated its former performance! It rose on edge, and shot Bunter out into the porch again.

Bump!

"Whooooop!" roared Bunter.

He sat and gasped! His little round eyes gleamed with wrath through his big round spectacles! He could guess that his first yell had been heard, and that some beast—no doubt the professor—had turned on the current of electricity to the knocker! It really looked as if Billy Bunter was not wanted at the Willows!

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter, as he scrambled up at last. "Oh scissors! Beast! Oh jiminy!"

He blinked into the inviting-looking hall—inviting no longer! Nobody had come to the door, though Bunter's fearful yells must certainly have been heard all over the house.

"Beasts!" snorted Bunter.

He turned away from the door. Nobody, apparently, was going to let him in, and he did not want to try the knocker again, or the mat either. He rolled out of the porch, and along to the window of the laboratory. There he would be able to make his presence known to Alonzo. This was, no doubt, rather an informal manner of announcing his arrival to tea. But really the fat Owl had no choice in the matter. It was that or nothing!

He stood on the gravel path under the window, and blinked up. The window was too high from the ground for him to look in, or to reach to tap on the glass.

But there were bars to the window, and it was easy for even the fat Owl to catch hold of them and pull himself up, to get a view of the apartment within.

He reached up and grasped the metal bars.

"Yarooooooooop!"

Millions of pins and needles seemed

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to be running through Bunter as he grasped the metal. Evidently the window-bars were connected with an electric wire, and some beast, the professor, of course, had turned on the current. Bunter hung to the bars and wriggled and squirmed and roared and yelled.

Suddenly the current shut off. Bunter dropped with a heavy bump. He sat for long minutes rubbing his tingling fat hands and gasping for breath.

"Oh crikey!" groaned Bunter.

He rose at last. He glared at the window with a glare that might have cracked his spectacles. There was no admission for Bunter. He realised that now. There was only one comfort. That was to wait on the avenue and punch Alonzo when he came out. He found a seat under the trees on the avenue, where he sat down to wait for Alonzo, and as he waited, hungrier and hungrier every moment, his wrath grew and grew till it was at boiling point. Alonzo, when he came out after tea with the professor, was booked for the time of his life!

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THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Begs for It!

"O W!" said Alonzo.

The professor was saying good-bye. He gave Alonzo Todd a grasp of the hand as he said good-bye at the door, and Alonzo squirmed. Unconsciously the professor gave him a grip like that of a steel vice.

"Well, good-bye, my boy!" said the professor, grinning.

"Good-bye, sir, and thank you very, very much!" said Alonzo.

"Remember, a single drop of the elixir once a day, and keep it a secret—a dead secret!"

"I shall certainly pay great attention to your injunctions in every respect," said the solemn Alonzo.

And he took his leave.

Professor Sparkinson disappeared at once into his laboratory. He forgot the existence of Alonzo as he glued his eye to his microscope, where he surveyed innumerable wriggly things, no doubt of vast scientific importance.

Alonzo went rather slowly down the avenue. He was thinking of Bunter, whose loud yells had reached him while he sat at tea. Professor Sparkinson had passed those yells by, like the idle wind which he regarded not, evidently not interested in the intruder who yelled. But the kind-hearted Alonzo was wondering what had become of Bunter.

He soon discovered, as he went down the winding avenue, and passed out of

sight of the house. A fat figure rose from a seat beside the drive, and two vengeful eyes blinked at Alonzo through a big pair of spectacles.

"You rotter!" howled the Owl of the Remove, rolling into Alonzo's path.

"My dear Bunter—"

"You cheeky beast!" roared Bunter. "I've been waiting for you."

"Shall we walk back to Greyfriars together, my dear Bunter?" asked Alonzo amicably. "I cannot say that I shall be glad of your company, because I owe it to my Uncle Benjamin always to tell the truth. Nevertheless—Yaroooo!"

Thump! A fat fist, with all Bunter's weight behind it, landed on Alonzo's nose.

He shot backwards and sat down on the drive.

"Oh, my goodness!" gasped Alonzo.

"Oh dear! Oh, goodness gracious!"

"Get up!" roared Bunter, dancing round him, and brandishing his fat fists. "Get up, you rotter! Get up, you funk! I'm going to give you a jolly good hiding, see? Gerrup!"

"Mum-mum-my d-did-did-dear Bunter—" stuttered Alonzo.

"Gerrup!" yelled Bunter. "I'm going to knock you down again as soon as you gerrup! Now, then!"

Alonzo sat and blinked at him, with his hand to his nose. Alonzo had plenty of pluck—heaps of it—and Bunter hadn't. Yet it was an indubitable fact that Alonzo couldn't get up without being knocked down again by Bunter. Even the fat Owl of the Remove was more than a match for Alonzo!

"Up with you!" roared Bunter. "I'm going to whop you! I'm going to wallop you! I'm going to smash you!"

"Oh, my goodness!"

"I'm going to make you cringe!" yelled Bunter, still dancing his waltz round the hapless Alonzo. "I'm going to make you squirm! Gerrup!"

"My dear Bunter—" gasped Alonzo.

"I'll jolly well kick you if you don't gerrup!" roared Bunter. Never had the fat Owl of the Remove been so warlike.

Alonzo tottered to his feet. He put up a feeble guard as the fat junior rushed at him.

Bunter swept it aside and smote.

Crash!

"Oooooogh!" gurgled Alonzo, as he hit the earth again.

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter.

"That's what you're going to get! That's the stuff to give the troops! He, he, he!"

"Ow! Wow! Ow!" gurgled Alonzo.

"I shall—ow!—certainly do my best to—wow!—treat you as you deserve, Bunter! Ow!"

"Gerrup!" roared Bunter. "Gerrup and have some more! There's lots more where that came from! Leaving a fellow out of a feed! I'll give you beans! I'll give you jip! I'll give you toco! Gerrup!"

Alonzo sat up.

Bunter's fat fist was ready to knock him spinning again as soon as he got on his feet.

But Alonzo did not immediately get on his feet. He remembered the priceless phial in his inside pocket. He groped for it, removed the stopper, and placed it to his mouth.

Billy Bunter blinked at him in amazement! What Alonzo was up to was a mystery to the Owl of the Remove.

"You blithering idiot, what's that game?" demanded Bunter. "Gerrup, I tell you! Mind, I'm going to kick you if you stick there! I mean that! Gerrup!"

A single drop of the sticky crimson fluid moistened the tongue of Alonzo.

He jammed back the stopper and replaced the phial in his pocket.

He still sat looking at Bunter. But he was smiling now. He could feel the instant effect of the wonderful elixir. It was running through his veins like fire. Whether it was monkey-gland stuff, or whatever it was, there was no doubt that it was marvellous in its effects. In a matter of seconds it was a new Alonzo that sat there, blinking up at Bunter. Feeble Alonzo had vanished. Strong Alonzo had taken his place.

Bunter, of course, was not aware of that. He was simply puzzled by Alonzo's strange proceedings, and he was impatient. As Alonzo did not get up, the Owl of the Remove reached out with his foot to give him a dig in the ribs.

Alonzo caught his ankle.

Bunter hardly knew what happened next.

His foot shot up into the air as Alonzo jumped actively up. The rest of Bunter shot downwards and hit the earth.

Bump!

"Urrrrrrgh!" spluttered Billy Bunter. Alonzo released his fat ankle, and looked down at him, with a gentle smile. Bunter blinked up at him quite dizzily.

"You—you—you rotter!" gasped Bunter. "Catching a fellow! Pitching a fellow over! I'll jolly well smash you!"

The Owl of the Remove scrambled up. He doubled both fat fists, and jumped at Alonzo Todd. But it was Strong Alonzo that he had to deal with now.

The Duffer of Greyfriars gave him a tap on his podgy chest. It was only a tap, but it was Strong Alonzo's tap!

Billy Bunter spun off his feet and collapsed with a roar.

"Yaroooh! Oh crikey! Stop it! Keep off, you beast! Oh crumbs!"

Alonzo grinned.

"Will you have some more, Bunter?" he inquired.

Bunter sprawled, and blinked up at him in amazement and alarm. He remembered what had happened on Alonzo's first day back at Greyfriars; the weird and wonderful strength that the Duffer of Greyfriars had displayed that day, and that day only. Like Samson of old, Alonzo had lost his amazing vigour; but like Samson again, he seemed to have recovered it.

"I—I—I say, old chap—" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, keep off! We—we—we're pals, you know!"

"But you were going to smash me!" said Alonzo gently.

"Nunno!" gasped Bunter. "That was only a jig-jig-joke, old fellow! You can tut-tut-take a jig-jig-joke!"

"You were going to make me squirm?"

"Only—only a figure of speech, old chap!" groaned Bunter. "What I really meant was that—that we're pals, old chap, and—and I want to walk back to Greyfriars with you, to—to protect you if Coker's hanging about."

"I fear, Bunter, that you are dreadfully untruthful!" said Alonzo. "My Uncle Benjamin would be shocked at you."

"Oh, really, Alonzo—"

"However, if you have had enough, my dear Bunter—"

"Ow! Yes! Quite!" gasped Bunter. "Keep off, you beast! I—I mean, be pally, dear old fellow!"

"Very well," said Alonzo amicably. "You have caused me considerable pain in my nose, Bunter, but I am, I trust, of a forgiving nature!"

Alonzo dabbed his nose and walked on. Billy Bunter crawled to his feet, and limped after him.

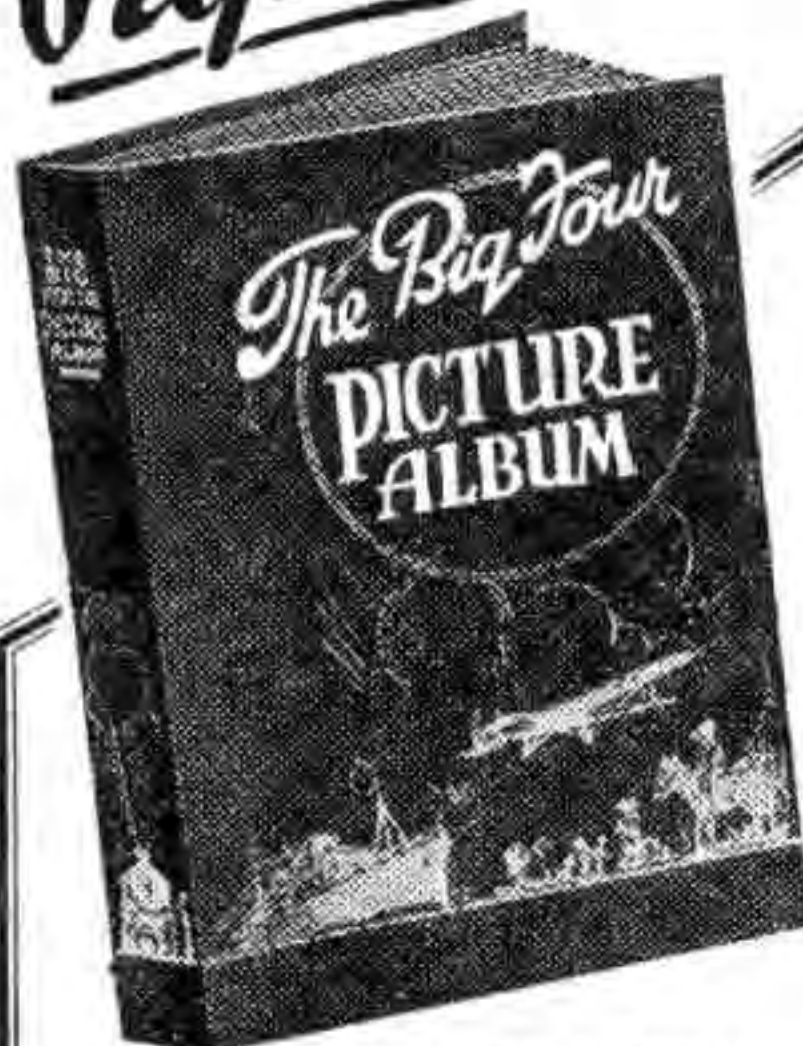
"Beast!" he groaned.

Alonzo glanced back.

"What did you say, Bunter?"

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"I—I—I said what—what a nice chap you are, Alonzo!" gasped Bunter. "I—I—I've never liked a fellow so much, old chap!"

Alonzo grinned, and walked on out of the gates of the Willows. Billy Bunter rolled after him dismally. He had had no tea, he had not, after all, whopped Alonzo, and he was feeling as if a sledgehammer had tapped him! It was not Billy Bunter's lucky day!

Alonzo started across the common, in the falling dusk, with a swift and springy stride that made Bunter stare. Was this the weedy Alonzo—this fellow who swung actively along as if his feet scarcely touched the earth? Was this the drooping Alonzo—this fellow whose head was erect, whose shoulders were squared back, whose chin was up? Really, it seemed like a new and wonderful Alonzo—as indeed it was!

The path lay through dusky thickets for some distance. Suddenly, from the dimness ahead, there came a sound of yelling, scuffling, and panting. Billy Bunter halted. He remembered the gang of tramps he had seen on the common that afternoon! There was trouble going on ahead—and as Bunter realised that, he promptly turned from

the path, and scuttled off by another route. Alonzo walked on alone—towards the trouble!

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER. Alonzo to the Rescue!

"SHEER off!" growled Horace Coker.

Coker of the Fifth was getting tired of waiting. But Coker was a stickler, and he was still sticking. He had planted himself at a spot where the path from the Willows ran through the thickets, and there, leaning on a tree, he waited for Alonzo Todd.

Coker could be astute. Alonzo, if he saw him, would dodge again, and give Coker another chase over the common. But, screened by the straggling hawthorns and alders, Coker would be unseen till Alonzo was fairly within his reach—and once his grasp was on the Duffer of Greyfriars, he would not escape.

Coker filled in some of the time of waiting by cutting a thick switch—for the benefit of Alonzo! The whopping, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,345.

when Alonzo got it at last, was going to be rather a record.

Impatient, but determined, Horace Coker waited. And he detached himself from the tree at a sound of footsteps on the path in the falling dusk.

But it was not Alonzo! Three rough figures loomed up in the dusk—three hefty-looking, stubbly faced tramps! They were loafing along, perhaps, with an eye open for a wayfarer on that lonely path. They stopped as they saw the Fifth-Former of Greyfriars, and eyed him, and muttered together. Coker, seeing that Alonzo had not arrived yet, leaned back on the tree again, indifferent to the tramps.

But they were not indifferent to Coker!

They were pleased to see him there—there was no doubt about that! A well-dressed, apparently well-off fellow, on the solitary common when dusk was falling, was a windfall to Beaky Bill, Soapy Jones, and the Cadger. After looking Coker over, and making sure that he was alone, they came towards him.

"Helping a poor man on his way, sir?" asked Beaky, with a grin.

"Sheer off!" said Coker. He did not like the look of the tramps at close quarters.

"You ain't got a quid or so to spare?" asked Soapy.

"No, I haven't!" grunted Coker.

"You look as if you might 'ave!" grinned the Cadger. "P'r'aps you'd be so obliging as to turn out your pockets!"

"Sheer off, I tell you!" growled Coker.

"'Course he will, Cadger," said Beaky. "He'll turn out his pockets, 'cause why, he knows he will get 'urt if he don't! Don't you, sir?"

Horace Coker began to wish that he hadn't waited for Alonzo in that lonely and dusky spot. It was important to thrash Alonzo, of course. But this was growing very unpleasant.

He stepped away from the tree, and stepped back from the tramps. One of them cut behind him at once.

There was no escape for Coker! He was a burly, beefy fellow, but every one of the three tramps was burlier than himself. Coker might have had a chance with one of them. With the three, he had not the ghost of a chance. But he was not going to be robbed!

"'And it over, sir!" said Beaky pleasantly. "Wot's the good of getting 'urt first? That won't buy you anything."

"Sheer off!" said Coker, for the third time. "You lay a finger on me, and I'll jolly well hit out, and have you run in afterwards, see?"

Whereupon the three tramps, all together, laid many fingers on Coker! They grabbed him all at once.

"Hands off!" roared Coker fiercely.

He struggled and hit! He was not the fellow to be robbed by footpads; and if there had been thirty, instead of three, Coker would have put up a fight. But three were at least two too many for Coker.

Struggling and panting, hitting his hardest, Coker was up-ended, and he came down with a crash on the footpath.

"Old him!" gasped the Cadger.

"Kneel on 'im!" growled Soapy.

"I got him!" said Beaky. "Give him a knock! What he wants is a knock or two! Give him a oner!"

"Oh!" roared Coker, as he got the "oner."

But Coker was not beaten yet! The fighting-blood of the Cokers was boiling in his veins.

He fought like a tiger. Three to one as they were, the tramps had all their work cut out to hold the Greyfriars Fifth Former for a couple of minutes. They got some hard knocks—though not so many, and not so hard, as Coker got.

Then Horace, sprawling dizzily on his back, with Beaky kneeling on his chest, still attempting a feeble struggle, was done! Hands grasped him on all sides and held him down. Beaky was getting ready to run thievish hands through his pockets.

"I—I—I'll smash you!" gurgled Coker faintly.

"Looks like it, don't it?" said Beaky. Coker heaved. But he was well held. And Soapy gave him a oner again, as a hint to keep quiet. Instead of keeping quiet, Coker roared.

Neither Coker nor his assailants heard, or heeded, a light footstep on the path through the bushes. Alonzo Todd came up while they were struggling and wriggling in a heap, and stared at them.

"My goodness!" exclaimed Alonzo.

Three rough, savage faces stared round at him. Coker gave another heave.

"Who's that?" he yelled. "I say, help! Rescue! I'm being robbed! Lend a hand! Help!"

"Shut up!" hissed Soapy, banging Coker's head on the hard, unsympathetic earth.

"Yooooop!"

"Is that Coker?" exclaimed Alonzo. "My dear Coker, most certainly I will help you! You rough persons, please release Coker at once!"

"Get 'old of that there shrimp!" growled Beaky, in a deep bass voice. "You get 'old of him, Soapy! We got this feller all right!"

Soapy jumped up from Coker, and ran towards Alonzo. Certainly, on his looks, Alonzo was not dangerous! Probably his pockets might be worth going through, and all was grist that came to Beaky & Co.'s mill! Soapy was only anxious to get hold of him before he could dodge away and run.

That, however, was not in Alonzo's mind. Even the former feeble Alonzo would have tried to help Coker in such a desperate scrape. Strong Alonzo not only tried—but succeeded!

Soapy reached out at him, and grasped him by a lean shoulder. The next moment an earthquake happened to Soapy.

Alonzo hit him—only once! But that hit had all the wonderful vigour of Professor Sparkinson's New Elixir behind it. It was not merely like the kick of a particularly powerful mule. It was worse than that! It was rather like the impact of a cannon-shot! Soapy hardly knew that he was hit! He was lifted off his tattered feet, and laid on his back with a bump—and he remained there! Dazed and dizzy, Soapy lay on his back, with a dim idea that the end of the world had come suddenly.

"My eye!" gasped Beaky.

With his knees on Coker, he was watching—and his jaw gaped wide open as he beheld what happened to Soapy.

"Strike me pink!" gasped the Cadger.

The two rascals jumped up as Soapy crashed. They jumped at Alonzo Todd.

Coker lay gasping. He would gladly have piled in to help, but for the moment he was too exhausted by his struggle even to sit up. He could only gasp and stare.

But Coker's help was not needed.

Alonzo Todd faced the two footpads as they rushed him down. He stood up to them without flinching. He gave Beaky his right, and the Cadger his left. Beaky went spinning over, and the Cadger spun across him. They rolled in the grass together.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Coker of the Fifth.

Loud yells came from the fallen tramps. It was clear that they were hurt.

Beaky was first on his feet. But he did not rush at Alonzo again. With his hand to his jaw, he backed away from that surprising youth.

"Keep orf!" he gasped. "It's a blooming prizefighter! 'Ere, mates, 'ook it—'ook it, I says! It's a blinking pug! 'Ook it!"

Beaky set the example of hooking it. He went through the thickets with a rush, still holding his jaw. The Cadger tottered after him. Soapy, pulling himself together a little, crawled after the Cadger.

The enemy were in full retreat. Alonzo rubbed his knuckles; they felt rather raw.

"My goodness!" exclaimed Alonzo. "My dear Coker, I trust you are not hurt. How very fortunate that I came along, my dear Coker! Was it not?"

"I'm dreaming this," said Coker.

"My dear, dear fellow—"

"Is that Alonzo Todd—that freak?" gasped Coker, still amazed and mystified.

"It is Alonzo Todd," said the Duffer of Greyfriars gently. "But the expression you have used is not complimentary, nor—in the circumstances, if I may mention it—grateful."

"It's Alonzo!" gasped Coker. "It's that long-winded idiot! But what—How—Oh, my only hat!"

Coker staggered to his feet. He stared at Alonzo Todd; he blinked at him. He seemed unable to believe in what had happened.

"You—you—you've knocked out those three tramps!" gabbled Coker.

"Yes, my dear Coker," smiled Alonzo.

"If you wish, my dear Coker, I will walk back to Greyfriars with you. It is scarcely safe for you to walk alone on the common in the dusk."

"What?" roared Coker. "You cheeky young—"

Then Coker broke off. Alonzo had rescued him. He was safe with Alonzo. If Beaky & Co. turned up again he would not be safe without Alonzo. It was a hard pill for Coker of the Fifth to swallow. But he had to get it down.

"I—I—I was waiting for you," said Coker at last. "I was going to give you the whopping of your life, young Todd!"

"Were you?" smiled Alonzo, feeling very, very glad that he had taken that single drop of the elixir.

"But now I won't," said Coker generously.

"Oh!" murmured Alonzo.

"After what you've done, I won't," said Coker. "I'm letting you off. And—and I'll see you safe to the school, in—in case they come back."

"That is very, very kind of you, Coker," said Alonzo—and, fortunately, it was too dusky for Coker of the Fifth to see Alonzo wink at space.

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Returning grasp for grasp, Alonzo Todd swept his cousin Peter off his feet and placed him face downward across the study table. "Now, my dear Peter," murmured Alonzo, holding his cousin down with a hand on the back of his neck, "pray do not be so very, very cross!"

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Jam for Bunter!

"I SAY, you fellows—" "How did Bunter know we had a pot of jam?" asked Frank Nugent. "Oh, really, Nugent—" "Wingate wants to see you in his study, Bunter," said Harry Wharton. "You're up for six, for cutting games practice." "Wingate had better take care how he hands out six!" said Bunter darkly. "I may ask my pal to whop him." "Wha-a-at!" "Alonzo could do it," said Bunter. "There isn't a man at Greyfriars that Lonzy couldn't handle! And he's my pal—my best pal!" "Has he had a remittance?" asked Bob Cherry. "No," roared Bunter, "he hasn't!" "Then what makes you pally?" "You can jeer if you like!" sneered Bunter. "Lots of fellows are down on poor old Alonzo because he's a bit of a freak. Well, I'm not!" "A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind," remarked Johnny Bull. "Ha, ha, ha!" "Jeer!" sneered Bunter. "There's such a thing as friendship, though you fellows don't seem to understand it. I'm 'Lonzy's pal. I've always stood by him, if you come to that—always backed him up—closer than a brother, and all that. We're pals. And I can tell you that you'd better be civil to a fellow that's got a pal like Alonzo. Like me to ask him to step into this study and mop up the lot of you?" "Oh, my hat!" "He could do it with one hand!" said Bunter, blinking at the Famous Five through his big spectacles aggressively. "I advise you to keep a civil tongue in your head. See?" Harry Wharton & Co. gazed at the

Owl of the Remove. This was rather a new Bunter. There was a distinct tone of huffing about the fat Owl.

"I'll have some of that jam," said Bunter, coming into the study. "I'll have some of the biscuits, too. I never got any tea at the Willows, as that beast Alonzo—I mean as my old pal Alonzo left me behind by accident. Hand over those biscuits, Wharton!"

It was not a request; it was an order. The captain of the Remove gazed at Billy Bunter as if that youth's fat and fatuous face fascinated him.

"Sharp!" said Bunter. "My only hat!" said Harry Wharton. "Is the fat ass potty—or what?"

"I don't want any check!" said Bunter. "I can tell you—"

Herbert Vernon-Smith looked into Study No. 1. The Famous Five were at tea there when Bunter barged in.

"Heard the latest?" grinned the Bounder.

"No. What's the jolly old latest?" inquired Bob Cherry.

"Alonzo! He's come in with Coker. Hasn't Bunter told you? He was there when they came in. Coker's telling the world. He was set on by three tramps on Courtfield Common, and Alonzo rescued him."

"What?" yelled the Famous Five with one voice.

"Beats Banagher, doesn't it?" grinned Smithy. "According to Coker, Alonzo knocked them out easily without turning a hair. Three huffy roughs, all bigger than Coker—"

"Great pip!" "The pipfulness is terrific."

"You remember Alonzo was doing terrific physical stunts his first day back? Well, he's started again. Sounds like jolly old magic, doesn't it? I say, I'm goin' to be jolly civil to Alonzo. Must make it a point not to tell him what I think of his looks and his brains—what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bounder went on up the passage, laughing. The Famous Five looked at one another; then they looked at Bunter. They were beginning to understand. It was "Strong Alonzo" again—and Bunter was basking in the reflected glory of the strong man of the Remove. The fat Owl blinked at them through his spectacles, his podgy lip curving in a scornful sneer.

"Now you know!" said Bunter. "I can tell you that you'd better mind your p's and q's! You know that 'Lonzy was handling fellows right and left his first day here. Well, I jolly well know how he does it! He takes something for it; I've seen him. I suppose he ran out of the stuff, or something. Must be jolly good stuff! I can tell you this—my pal Alonzo could walk into this study and mop up the lot of you! He could mop up Wingate, or any man in the Sixth! See? You'd better be civil to a chap!"

"You fat, cheeky rhinoceros—" began Johnny Bull.

"Shut up!" Bunter waved a fat hand at Johnny. "Don't give me any lip! If I ask my pal to handle you you'll be sorry!"

"Why, you—you—" gasped Johnny.

"Shut up! Hand over that jam, Nugent! Hand over those biscuits, Wharton! And look sharp!"

Harry Wharton rose to his feet and picked up the jar of jam. There was a snort from Johnny Bull.

"You silly ass, are you going to give him the jam?" he roared.

"Hasn't he asked for it?" answered the captain of the Remove, stepping round the table towards Bunter with the jamjar in his hand.

"Yes, rather—and I'm jolly well going to have it!" said Bunter victoriously. "You shut up, Bull! Wharton knows when he's got to toe the line."

"Here's the jam!" said Harry.

He grasped the Owl of the Remove by the collar with his left hand. Billy Bunter was immediately up-ended on the floor of Study No. 1.

Holding him there with his left, the captain of the Remove up-ended the jamjar over his fat face.

The contents poured out in a stream.

"Urrrrrgh!" spluttered Bunter.

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

"Like it?" asked Wharton.

"Urrgh! Wurrgh!"

Bunter's mouth was open and the jam streamed into it. Bunter liked jam, and he liked it in bulk. Still, he did not like taking it like this! He choked and spluttered, and gurgled! The jam overflowed round his capacious mouth, over his fat little nose, his fat ears, his fat cheeks, his spectacles, and his collar and tie! It was nice jam—quite good jam! But, taken like this, it was horrid!

"Yurrrrrgggh!" gurgled Bunter.

"Wurrgh! Stoppit! Urrgh!"

"Don't you like it?"

"Groooogh!"

"But you asked for it——"

"Gug-gug-gug!"

"And you're going to have the lot!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oooo-er! Wooh! Ooooh! I'm choke-choke-choke!" Wurrgh!" gurgled Bunter. "Ooooh! Beast! I'm all jammy! Urrgh!"

"There, you've had all the jam, old fat man. I'm not going to take the trouble to scrape out the pot for you."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter did not want Wharton to take that trouble. As he was released, he squirmed away to the door. It was a sticky and jammy Bunter that wriggled out of the Remove passage. A yell of laughter followed him.

"Beasts!" gasped Bunter. "Urrgh! You wait till I start Alonzo on you! Ugh! Ooooh! I'll jolly well ask him to—— Urrrrrgh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll jolly well—— Yarooooh!" roared Bunter, as a boot came out of the doorway, with Bob Cherry's foot in it. Bunter departed in haste.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Who Gets the Batting?

PETER TODD frowned.

Peter was wrathful, and he was growing wrathier.

He sat in Study No. 7, with a fives bat lying on the table in front of him. That fives bat was ready for Alonzo when he came in.

In spite of Peter's commands, as head of the study, Alonzo had cut games practice that afternoon. Peter had warned him what he had to expect if he did so. The Duffer of Greyfriars had carried on, regardless! So when he came back he had to take what was coming to him.

Peter was resolved on that! He had his position as head of the study to maintain.

He had made up his mind that somehow he was going to make a man of the Duffer of Greyfriars. He was going to begin by making a footballer of him—quite a good beginning! Making a footballer of Alonzo was no easy task. Peter felt that the least Alonzo could do was to play up and do as he was told. And he hadn't.

Peter was wrathful, but what made him wrathier was the peculiar conduct of a lot of Remove fellows. All the Remove knew what he was going to do to Alonzo, and perhaps approved.

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But there was some joke on, which Peter did not "get."

The Bounder was the first. He looked into Study No. 7, glanced at the fives bat on the table, and grinned.

"Waiting for 'Lonzy?" he asked.

"Yes," granted Peter. "Has he come in?"

"Oh, he's come in. He'll be coming up soon."

"Good! I'm going to give him a tip about cutting games practice, against orders!" said Peter grimly. "If you see him you can tell him it's no good hanging about. He's got to have it."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Bounder. Toddy stared at him.

"What are you cackling at?" he demanded.

Smithy did not explain what he was cackling at. But he was still cackling as he went up the passage.

A minute or two later Skinner and Snoop looked in, grinning.

"Going to whop Alonzo?" asked Skinner.

"Yes," granted Toddy.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skinner and Snoop.

"And I'll jolly well whop you, too, if you snigger here!" hooted Peter.

Skinner and Snoop faded away, still sniggering. Peter breathed hard. The fact that he was going to whop Alonzo seemed to be taken as a joke by the Removites. Peter did not see where the joke came in.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry looked in. "I hear you're going to whop Alonzo?"

"What about it?" snapped Peter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob.

"You sniggering, snorting fathead!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's the joke?" shrieked Peter.

"You are, old bean. Ha, ha, ha!"

And Bob Cherry walked on, chortling. Peter Todd frowned. He was getting fed up with this. He resolved that the next fellow who looked in and sniggered should get something to snigger for!

The next fellow was Fisher T. Fish. There was a wide grin on the bony face of the American junior as he put his head into Study No. 7.

"I guess you're going to lambaste that guy Alonzo when he moseys in, say?" grinned Fisher T. Fish. "Ha, ha, ha! I'll say it's the bee's knee! Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd jumped up from his chair and clutched up the fives bat from the table. He made another jump at the doorway!

Fisher T. Fish made a backward jump—but not in time. There was a loud crack, and a still louder yell, as the fives bat and Fisher T. Fish established contact.

"Who-hooh! Great snakes!" howled Fisher T. Fish, and he fled—no longer laughing.

Toddy slammed the door.

He sat down again, with the fives bat before him, wrathful and puzzled. After Fishy's drastic treatment, fellows did not look into the study again. But he heard the sound of laughter in the passage. He heard the voice of the Bounder.

"Toddy's waiting to whop Alonzo!"

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

It was quite perplexing! It was very exasperating! It sounded just as if the fellows fancied that Peter had taken on a job too big for him. Which, of course, was absurd!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came a roar.

"Here comes Alonzo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Peter's waiting for you, 'Lonzy!"

"Mind your step!"

The study door opened. The Duffer of Greyfriars appeared on the threshold. He cast his usual mild glance into the study, and gave his Cousin Peter a gentle smile. Behind him the Remove passage was crammed with juniors. Nearly all the Form seemed keen to witness that whopping of Alonzo.

"Oh, here you are!" granted Peter.

"Yes, my dear Peter," said Alonzo gently. "I have returned, and you will be pleased to hear that I had a very agreeable tea with Professor Sparkinson at the Willows."

"Oh, frightfully!" said Peter. "You cut games practice, you frowsty slacker!"

"As I informed you at the time, my dear Peter, I had leave from Quelch to——"

"Who's head of this study?" roared Peter.

Alonzo regarded him thoughtfully.

"Hitherto, my dear Peter, you have been head of the study," he remarked. "But in the circumstances that have arisen, no doubt you will realise the suitability of stepping down——"

"Eh?"

"And leaving it to me," said Alonzo, beaming on him. "Far be it from me—far indeed—to push myself forward in any way. I am convinced that my Uncle Benjamin would not approve of anything of the sort. Nevertheless, in the circumstances that have arisen——"

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

"He's wound up," remarked Nugent.

"The woundfulness is terrific!"

"I think, my dear Peter, that it would be more suitable for me to be regarded as head of the study," said Alonzo. "But that is a matter which we will discuss in an amicable spirit."

"Will we?" said Peter grimly.

"I trust so, my dear Peter. I—I—I say, what are you going to do with that fives bat, my dear fellow?"

Peter Todd had risen to his feet, and taken the fives bat in his hand. Alonzo blinked at it.

"Guess," said Peter, with grim humour.

"My dear, dear Peter——"

"I warned you that I'd give you six if you cut games practice. Now bend over the table, and get it over," said Peter. "It will be a tip to you to do as you're told, old bean. Also, it will impress on your mind, if you've got one, who's head of the study—see?"

Alonzo backed away across the room. Peter, bat in hand, followed him up. The doorway was crammed with eager faces. Peter, in his study, had not heard the latest. Probably he was the only fellow in the Remove who did not know that Alonzo Todd was "Strong Alonzo" once more. He was going to learn.

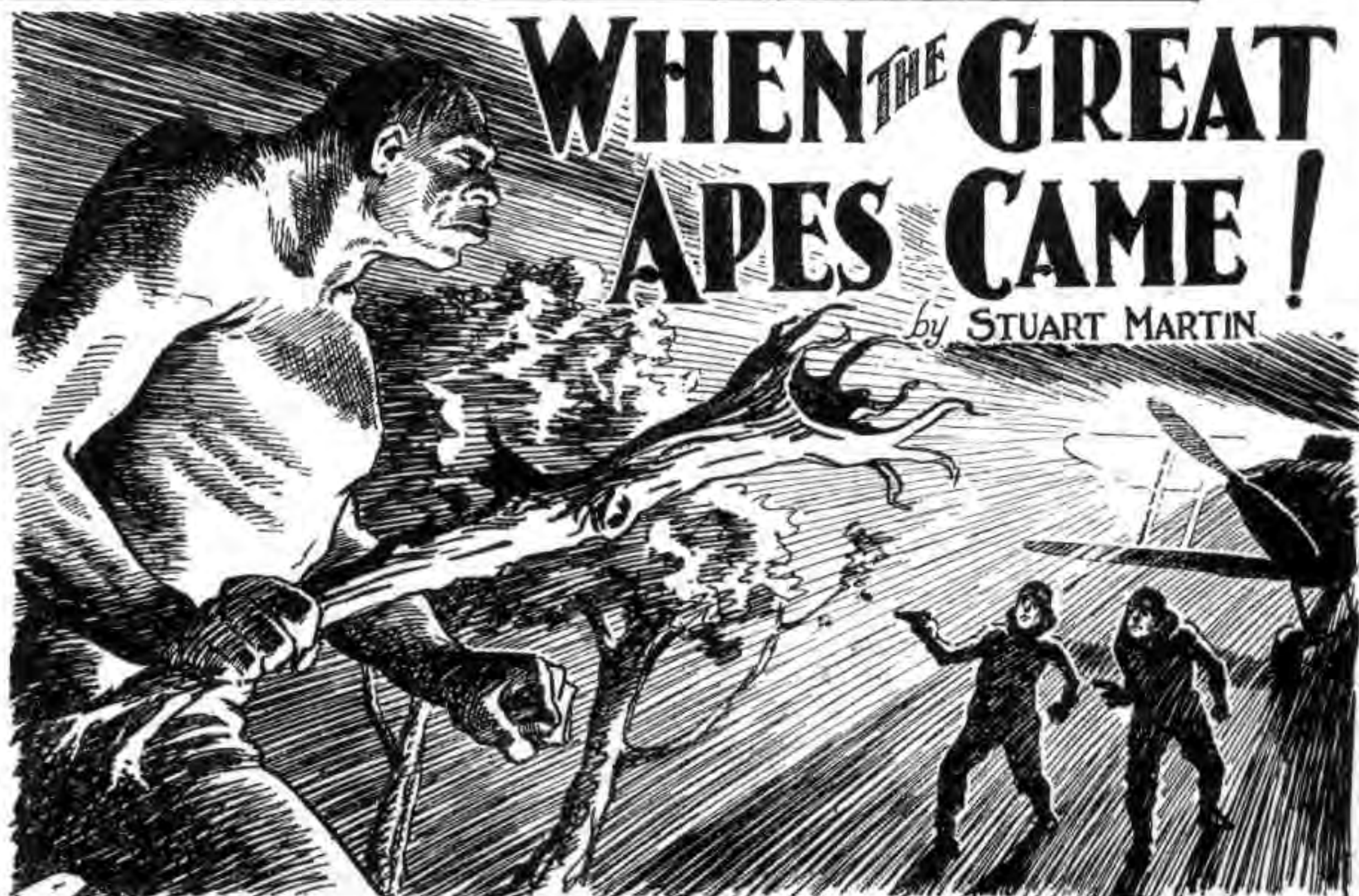
"My dear Peter," murmured Alonzo, "pray put down that bat! It would be excessively uncomfortable to be batted, but, at the same time, I am extremely reluctant to treat you roughly——"

"You pie-faced, piffing, footling frump!" said Peter Todd, in measured tones. "I'd like to see you treat a white rabbit roughly. Will you bend over that table, or shall I bend you over? What are you grinning at, you image?"

"I do not think, my dear Peter, that you could bend me over the table," smiled Alonzo. "But pray do not put it to the test! Please lay down that bat!"

"I'm going to—on your bags," said Peter. "Hard!"

(Continued on page 23.)



WHEN THE GREAT APES CAME!

by STUART MARTIN

HOW THE STORY STARTED.

GERRY LAMBERT and BILLY MURCHIE, two young airmen, set out on a flight from England to the Cape. Flying over the African jungle they crash into a number of nets supported by gesticulating gorillas suspended in the air by means of small balloons. At the command of the lord of the jungle—a giant ape-man, standing some twenty-five feet high—the pilots are taken prisoners and lowered into an underground cave in the centre of which is a steaming pool of water. After partaking of some food brought to them by a girl, the two prisoners look round for a means of escape.

(Now read on.)

Big Ling!

TO the surprise of Gerry and Billy, the apes made no attempt to stop them, but continued to gnaw at their food. They seemed to have no interest in their prisoners.

As the two boys stepped out towards the edge of the pool they saw that the great cavern was of immense proportion—big enough to enclose St. Paul's Cathedral. The domed roof was slotted and ribbed, as were the walls, and up the sides, in crevices, and on ledges were apes of every size. Some were climbing aimlessly, some quarrelling and fighting on ledges, some swinging to and fro on lianas that drooped from the roof and hung like gnarled roots above and around the pool.

It was like a huge monkey-house in a gigantic zoo. But they were not all apes of the African type. Most were of the dark brown variety, with hanging jaws and brutal faces, while others were of a lighter shade, with more human faces, their hides shining and glistening, like the skin of savages.

The air was filled with the jabbering and growling of these animals, but a strong sulphurous smell arose from the pool; and high above the very apex of the dome there was a glimmer of daylight. The din was so great, coupled with the rumbling underground and the strange hissing sound, that the boys had to shout to make each other hear.

"If there's no other way," shouted

Gerry, "we must take a chance of climbing one of these lianas—"

"No chance that way, Gerry. To climb to the dome we'd have to dislodge these gorillas clinging to every rope. I think we might try one of the passages along by the pool. Let's make a circle of the place and see what's what. What are those yellow objects on that platform?"

He pointed to a number of pale amber oblongs, about the height of a man, that stood on a natural shelf above one of the burning torches.

"Statues of some kind, Billy. No, they are lumps of gold! What a find!"

The two boys strode over quickly, but as they approached the objects they stopped suddenly.

The torch threw a glare upon the strange objects that was weird and unearthly, but now they were within a short distance of the platform the boys held their breaths.

These oblongs were not gold.

No wonder the boys were speechless.

The tall yellow pillars were dead men—air pilots, who had disappeared on African flights, and who had been given up as lost by the outside world.

Lost, indeed, to the world they were. For every one of these dead men was standing clad in his flying dress, stained and torn by some terrible struggle, their faces held in rigid horror at some unspeakable terror that had come upon them.

The names of these aces of the air who had vanished from human ken fell, one by one, from the lips of the two boys as they recognised each in turn.

Imprisoned in a transparent tomb of a hard, yellow, glass-like substance, the long-lost heroes stood silent and awful, braced stiff and erect by the substance that imprisoned them.

It was Gerry who first tiptoed forward and touched the substance that held these dead heroes of the air.

Hard as rock, the substance was, a foot thick, transparent as dull glass, and set in broad waves round the feet

of the dead men, giving each statue a base that kept it upright.

"Resin!" gasped Gerry. "Pure resin, from the forest, poured over them in liquid and left to cool and harden!"

"And that will be our fate, unless we get out of this quickly!" cried Billy, grabbing Gerry's arm. "Apes could never do that. There's a brain behind all this that we haven't faced yet, Gerry!"

"Who? The monster we saw—"

"No; he's half a gorilla. Not him! Just think. Those nets that hemmed us in. How were they shot up into the air? How could they stay in the air as they did? Helium! That's the secret of it all. We are in a cave of cleveite, I tell you. And the lifts that lowered us down here? Apes did the donkey work, but apes never thought out such things as helium, or—this! There's a master brain behind the apes. Come on, Gerry!"

The two pilots turned and ran into one of the side passages seeking for some way upward and outward, but they were met with a blank wall. They tried passage after passage.

At last they found one that wound deeper than the others into the earth, and it wound upward. Its walls were of solid rock, glistening with the strange, bluey colour of cleveite.

They had not gone far, however, before they were stopped. It seemed as if they were running into the heart of a subterranean volcano. The heat became intense, and the strange hissing sound they had previously noticed was now stronger than ever. It seemed to come from behind one of the walls of the passage.

On the other hand, they saw, far ahead, and higher than their level, what seemed to be a narrow slit, showing like a knife-cut. They pressed on cautiously. A sense of danger had seized them, and the heavy odour of apes filled the hot atmosphere. After traversing some distance they saw that

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an opening lay ahead of them—a narrow opening, with the sky beyond.

The passage now became nothing more than a burrow, the floor of which was strewn with loose stones, and rose at a sharp incline; the roof came down until they had to move in a crouching position; then they had to crawl. They reached the opening, and were crawling forward to the green of the forest beyond when a movement behind them made them turn swiftly. The girl they had already seen was crawling in their wake.

Her voice came in an agitated warning, in a breath of suppressed fear.

"Big Ling!"

She edged her body between them and laid her finger on her lips meaningly.

"What do you mean?" asked Gerry, turning to her swiftly.

For answer the girl stabbed a finger towards the narrow opening and made signs for the boys to lie still.

It was well for them that they obeyed, for as they raised their heads above the ridge of rubble that lay about the opening of the passage they realised the danger the girl had indicated.

Right in front of the entrance was an immense shelter, since it could not be called a hut, of intertwined branches of tall trees, the boles of which were the pillars. The sun poured its rays through the gaps in the foliage. Gorillas and monkeys were there, and beyond the huge kraal were several elephants, one of them a tremendous bull, that was a veritable mountain of flesh. Two lion cubs played on the ground, and a lioness, with a liana rope round her neck, lay asleep beside them. Other animals were to be seen moving about, too. But what completed the picture were the two principal figures in this wild company.

To the left the boys saw an old packing-case, about the size of a writing-desk, by the side of which sat the monster ape-man.

Across his knees lay a club that no

ordinary man could lift. It was black, and its great, rounded head was studded with knobs. It was a young tree, which had been torn up and trimmed rudely into a formidable weapon.

The ape-man sat without moving. On his wide chest, hanging by a cord round his neck, was a metal ornament—a big swastika.

On the opposite side of the packing-case stood a white man, naked, save for a pair of soiled shorts. His face was bearded, his hair long. He, too, had a swastika for ornament hung round his neck, a small, black metal swastika which he fingered at the moment. His right hand held a long whip made of the skin of a rhino, and in his left eye was a monocle.

Just at that moment he bent over the packing-case, and the watchers saw his hands moving to and fro; and then there burst on the silence a voice, loud and clear, speaking in English:

"News bulletin. Anxiety is felt for the safety of the two flyers, Gerry Lambert and Billy Murchie, who left England to attempt a record flight to the Cape. They are now overdue. They were last observed in the Congo region, and there would be little hope for them if they landed in this unknown tract. Several flyers have already started to scour the region, and orders have been given to all military stations—"

The voice suddenly ceased. The monocolled man had turned off the radio. He faced the monster ape-man, and in a harsh, staccato accent that gave the watchers the impression of a German military commander, began a harangue.

"Big Ling, these two young flyers we captured are but the beginning of those who will come!"

So Big Ling was the name of the ape-man.

"I have spent a long time teaching you, Big Ling," continued the monocolled man. "These cursed English planes will soon be sweeping your country. You will be driven from the forest as the white men advance. They will put you

in a cage and keep you prisoner. They will penetrate your forests and slay your armies."

Big Ling bared his teeth and his hands gripped the enormous club on his knees.

"Big Ling, you are lord of the jungle, ruler of the hordes of gorillas, king of the forests. The time has come which I forecasted."

Again the monster ape-man made a grimace, his eyes on the speaker.

"Will you stay here and die at their hands? Or will you make a bid for power? The charm you wear on your breast is the charm of victory. The swastika! I have taught you all you know. Think of the victory that may be yours. You have hordes of apes, troops of elephants, lions, buffalo. You have unnamed forces of the jungle at your command. Take the war into the enemy camp. Strike before you are stricken!"

The monocle dropped from the man's eye as he leaned forward and gazed at the ape-man as if he were hypnotising him.

"Call your forces together. March at their head through Africa—then Europe—then Asia. The white men will flee before you. The plans are made for you to be ruler of the world. Take the world from the white men before they take it from you—"

The fierce words had their effect. The monster ape-man leaped to his feet and shook his club high above his head as he gave a roar that was like thunder. A tower of flesh and blood he was, frightful in his strength and energy.

As that terrible battle-cry and challenge rang out across the spaces, there came answering roars, the trumpeting of elephants, the rage of lions, the howling of gorillas, the scream and yell of every voice in the jungle, all blending in a deafening riot of sound that shook the air and hurled its force to the clouds. It was the voice of Africa's beasts defying the world.

The white man waved his arms in ecstasy.

"The revolt of the earth!" he cried. "Big Ling will conquer the nations! Trample England underfoot! Tread France into the mire! Slay Europe's rulers! From the North Sea to the ends of Japan he shall march in triumph! Death to all who oppose the swastika!"

Big Ling let forth another thunderous roar and swung his club upward. Once more he was answered from every quarter, and presently there came crashing through the shrubbery scores of apes, uttering strange calls and dragging in their paws ropes of lianas to which were fashioned rough contraptions of bladders that floated like small balloons.

The monocolled man dashed hither and thither, lashing right and left with his whip at those who cowered before him. He seized a big ape and threw a tangle of ropes over the animal's shoulders, tying them securely under its arms and leaving a semi-inflated bladder bobbing at the ape's neck. He did the same to another, and another, and so on until he had twenty apes thus accoutred.

Then another sound came to the ears of the two pilots who lay hidden in the burrow. It was the tapping of drums, the steady roll of the beating of sticks against hollow wood. Simultaneously the topmost branches of the trees stirred and tossed. Something was moving at a rapid rate in the greenery. What it was the two boys saw the next moment.

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A big semi-white gorilla, with the skin of a savage that glistened owing to perspiration, came swinging along in great pendulous motions. He landed astride a limb of a tree and slid down to the ground, jabbering and striking his breast with ponderous fists.

As this creature stood there, barking and booming like a hound, the boys heard yet another sound—the unmistakable hum of an aeroplane.

They were on the point of creeping forward an inch or two when the girl suddenly seized both by a hand. Her face was aflame with excitement as she pulled at them both convulsively.

"What do you want?" cried Billy.

"Big Ling! Big Ling!" was the girl's only reply.

"We'd better see what she's up to!" cried Billy. "Come on!"

Rushing breathlessly down the subterranean passage, the girl led the two boys to the central cavern, and then into another passage next to the one from which they had come. The hissing sound in this place was almost deafening. It was the sound of steam passing through an escape valve. Following the girl through a narrow opening, they eventually found themselves in a Turkish bath of vapour.

They could not tell the size or shape of the apartment they were now in. All they could see was a column of water thicker than a man's waist that rose from the floor and shot through a circular hole in the ceiling. The place was filled with spray and steam, and yet the water was not more than warm in temperature.

Pulling some harness from off a ledge, the girl slipped it over Billy's arms, fixing it behind his back. She did the same with Gerry; afterwards tying a small bladder similar to those the apes had worn to each of the boys' equipment.

Then she gave a cry, and pushed Billy straight into the rising column of water and steam. Before Gerry could realise what the girl's motive was he, too, was pushed into the pillar of the geyser's central force.

The boys clutched at each other as they were enveloped in the white, blinding steam, and carried up through the funnel like wisps of wool up a chimney.

Up and up they went with terrific speed like the celluloid balls one sees forced up on a column of water at shooting galleries at a fair. Up through the blackness they whizzed, and when their breath was almost beaten out of their bodies they felt the pace slacken and the freshness of open air fan their faces.

They had been shot up the geyser's funnel with a force that carried them nearly a thousand feet above the forest.

They did not drop either when the water ceased to force them up, but floated in the air, the wind having carried them away from the geyser. And there they hung in the hot sky, their small balloons above their heads, suspended between heaven and earth.

As the two boys floated there together, their eyes scanned the scene below and about them. They saw apes rising from the trees in the same manner as they themselves had. They saw the apes float apart and the nets drop from their paws and swing in the air; then, lifting their eyes, they saw, coming towards them, two large planes, and glimpsed a steady stream of smoke issuing from the nose of both.

"They're firing on the apes!" cried Billy. "Listen to the machine-guns!"

"They've seen us!" came the shout from Gerry. "The one on the left has, anyway!"

One of the planes had ceased firing, and was coming towards the two boys in a gentle, graceful dive. Would the men who piloted the plane be able to pick them up?

Some Battle!

IT was clear that the pilots of the big plane were scrutinising the extraordinary scene. Their machine-gun had done havoc among the apes, although it had not succeeded in bringing down the liana nets that hung, waving gently, in the humid air. The bodies of the riddled gorillas drooped, and it was lucky for Billy and Gerry that they had been seen.

On came the plane, an enormous machine with its gun mounted on a platform, and in its long cabin the faces of its occupants could be seen, peering through the glass windows.

Down the plane swooped, flying barely a thousand feet above the forest. It flew past the two boys, who waved their hands and shouted. They could see the plane's occupants very clearly now, and they saw that the occupants were soldiers, every man wearing the uniform of the Belgian Air Force.

The pilots had flown near Billy and Gerry merely for a scrutiny. Now the plane turned, tipping on its starboard

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side, and swung back again. A partition was opened, and a rope thrown out, dropping like a long snake, while the plane eased its speed.

The rope dangled nearer and nearer. Gerry missed it, but Billy was more successful. The rope struck him, and in an instant his hands were upon it, and he was being hauled through the air, while another movement told him that he was also being hauled towards the plane.

The rope had taken the skin off Billy's hands in the first feverish grip, but the boy did not know this until he was eventually helped through the partition and found himself in the saloon of the plane, surrounded by curious faces, who regarded him in wonder.

"Give us what information you can rapidly," said an officer in English to him. "I see you are British. We want to bomb the headquarters of these animals."

"I don't know where the headquarters are," said Billy. "My pal and I were captured and taken underground—"

A dark missile rushed past the window, and a shout came from the pilot, causing every eye to turn towards the scene outside.

There was little time for talk or explanation. Billy saw the plane was being surrounded by nets just as the Golden Clipper had been; and he saw something more, too!

They were low enough to observe the movements of the gorillas below, and there they saw the white man with the monocle running here and there, using his whip on the apes' shoulders, giving orders and urging them on.

What had thrown that missile upward with the speed of a cannon-ball?

The explanation was simple, but surprising. Down in the forest the observers saw dozens of tall, supple palms and similar trees which had been hauled back by groups of apes, using liana ropes, until the tops of the trees reached the ground. Every tree was bent backward like a huge bow, and on the top of the stems a sort of nest had been constructed, into which a large piece of rock, or a coconut, could be placed.

At a word from the monocled man, the apes let go the ropes. Up sprang the long stem released like a bent wire, and the missile was thrown as the stem struck against a crossbar placed to stop the upward spring. The thudding of these natural catapults against the struts came to Billy's ears like the distant thud of a gun.

Before the plane could turn again one of the missiles crashed home, tearing a hole in the metal, and passing out at the opposite side, after flooring three soldiers. Two of them were killed outright, the third lay bleeding from an ugly wound in the head.

The artillery of the apes became fiercer than ever. Showers of missiles were flung upward, most of them going wide. But while the plane manoeuvred for position, and the pilot had his foot on the trigger ready to release a bomb, another shot struck the plane's starboard wing, passing through it and carrying struts and fabric with it.

Next moment the bomb was released.

Owing to the position of the plane, the bomb did not strike the earth near the ape gunners, but dropped in a long slant, to burst below the trees. The explosion that followed rocked the plane so dangerously that it seemed as if it would crash. Men were flung from side to side, and, in the pandemonium, Billy saw fragments of trees and a shower of earth and stones heave up past the windows like an enormous wave.

The wave subsided, the rocking steadied, and then from the ground came the yells of animals in pain.

Another flash split the heavens. The second plane had dropped a bomb also, but it was the last bomb it ever did drop. Simultaneously with the loosening of the bomb, a coconut, or piece of rock, catapulted from a palm, had struck the engine. A second flash seemed to blind the observers, and a different roar rent the sky, as a sheet of flame came from the petrol-tank. It swept over the entire plane in strange, jagged points, smoke burst out in clouds, and the plane dropped like a stone and lay crushing the trees beneath it as it burned to a cinder in an awful holocaust.

Meanwhile, the battle was continued against the plane in which Billy had been hauled. In vain the pilot dived and rose to clear the missiles that were being sent upward. At the same time he was seeking a spot to drop another bomb, and Billy, as he held on to a stanchion, peered this way and that for a sign of Gerry.

(Fortune has certainly favoured Billy so far. But how's poor old Gerry faring? Look out for more thrilling chapters in next week's bumper free gift number of the MAGNET.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,345.

ALONZO THE GREAT!

(Continued from page 24.)

He made a jump for Alonzo. He grasped him!

According to the fitness of things, Peter's grasp should have bent the weedy Alonzo over the study table, and then the fives bat should have come into play, and done the rest. But it did not happen.

Alonzo returned grasp for grasp.

Bump!

Peter, in dizzy astonishment, found himself sprawling, face down, across the study table. He hardly knew how he had got there. The table rocked as he landed. Alonzo handled him like a feather.

"Now, my dear Peter," murmured Alonzo, holding Peter there with a hand on the back of his neck, "pray do not be so very, very cross!"

Peter heaved wildly, but the hand on the back of his neck pinned him down like a giant's hand. He wriggled, and thrashed the air with his legs. There was a roar of laughter from the passage.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Aren't you going to whop him, Toddy?" inquired the Boulder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter struggled frantically. He could not get loose. But one of his boots jammed on Alonzo's chin, and there was a roar.

"Ow! Oh, my goodness! Wow!"

Alonzo seemed wrathful now. The crash of Peter's boot on his chin had stirred the wrath of even the kind Alonzo. He jerked the fives bat from Peter's hand.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Removites. Peter yelled, too—but not with laughter. The fives bat was getting to work in Study No. 7, after all. But Alonzo was not getting the baiting. It was Peter who was getting it!

Whack, whack, whack!

"Now, my dear Peter—" gasped Alonzo.

"Chuck it, Peter, old man!" chuckled Harry Wharton. "Lonzy's too hefty for you. He's too hefty for any of us. Bunter says he takes something for it. If he does, it must be worth a guinea a box. He's too jolly hefty for any man at Greyfriars."

"Oh, my hat!" said Peter.

He slid from the table. He looked at Alonzo. He did not speak; his feelings, perhaps, were too deep for words. Alonzo laid down the fives bat, but Peter did not make a movement towards it. It was clear that if anybody was going to be batted in Study No. 7, it was not going to be Alonzo. Whatever else might be in doubt, there was not a shadow of a doubt about that. Whether Peter liked it, or whether he lumped it, that was that!

This time "Strong Alonzo" had come to stay!

And the outcome was going to be very exciting.

THE END.

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