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The Magnet^{2D}

*Billy Bunter's
Own Paper*



BUNTER THE HYPNOTIST!

THE POWER TO COMMAND, obtainable at the low price of a few copper coins, is an opportunity not to be missed. It promises wonderful prospects to Bunter—free feeds here, and a loan or two there—if all goes well. But there's a bigger "if" in the matter than the Greyfriars hypnotist realises!

BUNTER the HYPNOTIST!

By FRANK RICHARDS



Vernon-Smith, under the "hypnotic spell," grasped the corner of the carpet and pulled. The table went crashing, and chairs went spinning. "Oh crumbs!" gasped Coker. "Stop him at once, Bunter!" "Well, I'm only proving that he's the slave of my will!" said the fat Removite.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Trapped!

FIVE fellows grinned. One fellow caught his breath. The five were Harry Wharton & Co. of the Greyfriars Remove. The one was Billy Bunter, the fat ornament of that Form.

The five were standing on the Remove landing, at a short distance from the door of Study No. 1, the first study in the passage. Billy Bunter was in the passage—near the doorway of Study No. 1.

Stopping there, the fat junior blinked round through his big spectacles at the fellows on the landing.

As their backs were turned to Bunter, that fat youth naturally did not discern the grins on their faces.

Having blinked at them, Bunter cast his next blink into the study.

Really it was enough to make a fellow catch his eager breath!

On the study table stood a large, ornate cardboard box, with the word "CHOCOLATES" on it in large and distinct letters.

Bunter had seen Bob Cherry carry that chocolate box into the study. He had seen Bob emerge without it. So he knew that it was still there. Hence his stroll down the passage towards the study.

He strolled quietly—almost on tiptoe. None of the five juniors looked round as he came. Bob Cherry was talking cricket—his usual topic at that time of the year. The Co. were giving him

their attention. Not one of them seemed to be aware of Billy Bunter's fat existence.

Softly Bunter made another step towards the study doorway.

Still the Famous Five never glanced round.

He made another step, and another, with great caution. This brought him into the doorway. Still no head was turned!

One more step and Bunter was inside the study—safe and of sight if all the five heads turned at once.

He suppressed a gasp.

This was really amazing luck! Harry Wharton & Co. were welcome to go on

But he did not touch it. For at the same moment came a tramp of heavy footsteps down the passage from the landing. Bunter knew that tread. It was either an escaped hippopotamus, or Bob Cherry.

"Beast!" breathed Bunter.

He backed quickly away from the table.

A swift step carried him to the window, where he stood looking out—in which harmless attitude he was to be discovered when Bob came in.

But, to his surprise, Bob did not come in!

He came as far as the door, reached in for it, and slammed it. That was all. Bunter blinked round in happy surprise and relief. The door was shut. Bob had shut it from outside. Apparently he had only come back to shut the door he had left open. Not being able to see through solid oak, Bunter was not to observe that Bob had put the key in the outside of the lock, and was turning it there.

"He, he, he!" eachinnated Bunter—a subdued eachinnation. He did not want Bob to learn that he had shut him in that study. Evidently—to Bunter—Bob had not observed him there when he slammed the door.

Bunter stepped back to the table.

His fat clutch was on the chocolate box.

Outside, from the direction of the landing, he heard a sound of laughter. Five fellows, who had hitherto been grinning, were now laughing.

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A Screamingly Funny School Yarn of HARRY WHARTON & CO., the Cheery Chums of Greyfriars.

talking cricket on the landing, as long as they jolly well liked, while Billy Bunter, in the study, disposed of the contents of the chocolate box. If he heard them coming all he had to do was to pop the lid back on the box and escape before it was looked into.

With a happy grin of anticipation on his fat face, Billy Bunter stepped to the table and stretched out a fat hand to the box.

What they were laughing at was a mystery to Bunter. He could see nothing whatever at which to laugh.

But they were laughing—loudly. There was a tramp of feet in the passage past the study door, and a sound of laughter along with it. Bunter, with his fat hand over the chocolate box, paused, and almost trembled. If the beasts were coming in, after all! But that really was not likely, as Bob Cherry had just come along to slam the door.

They did not come in. They tramped past in a merry crowd.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a roar, as they went on up the Remove passage. Footsteps and laughter died away up that passage.

Bunter was quite puzzled. That burst of hilarity was quite perplexing. No doubt the Famous Five were in good spirits. Bunter knew that they were going to a spread in Lord Mauleverer's study up the passage, and one of Mauly's spreads was enough to bring a beatific smile to any face. But it was not a cause for loud laughter, and they were simply roaring!

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" murmured the puzzled fat Owl of the Remove. "Well, let 'em cackle. I got the chocs!"

And the fat junior, quite at his ease now, whipped the lid off the big chocolate box. It was a large box. It looked as if it contained three or four pounds of chocolates. It could not contain too many for Bunter! Bunter liked chocs—in fact, he loved them! But the course of true love never did run smooth. Bunter never got as many chocs as he wanted!

Howsoever, many chocs were in that box. Bunter had ample stowage space, and he was going to park the lot. He would still have plenty of room left for Lord Mauleverer's spread. It was true that he had not been asked to that spread, but that was a trifle as light as air to Billy Bunter. Mauly was good-tempered and long-suffering. He might groan a little when he saw Bunter roll in; but so long as he only groaned, and did not kick Bunter out, it was all right. But the chocolates came first!

Billy Bunter's little round eyes gleamed through his big round spectacles as he extracted the lid from the chocolate box.

Then he stared. He almost goggled in surprise and dismay.

A fellow who lifted the lid of a chocolate box, which another fellow had just brought up to a study, naturally expected to find chocolates therein. Bunter had not dreamed of doubting it—till this moment.

He could hardly believe his eyes, or his spectacles, at the sight of the contents of that chocolate box.

A folded newspaper lay within. It was folded round something, and, as Bunter grabbed it out, what it was folded round fell on the top with a thud. It was a lump of coal!

Bunter gazed at that lump of coal.

Bunter could eat almost anything. The average ostrich had nothing on Bunter in that line. But even Bunter drew the line at a lump of coal. Neither could he eat the newspaper. It was the current number of the "Daily Quail"—recently enlarged to twenty-four pages, if that was any comfort. But it was not edible. It contained news, pictures and advertisements—especially advertisements; but it was no more eatable than the lump of coal.

Bunter gazed.

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He found his voice at last.

"Beasts!" he hissed.

He realised now that his surreptitious entrance into that study had not been so unsuspected as he had supposed.

The Famous Five must have known all the time. Indeed, it was clear that Bob Cherry had fired up that unattractive chocolate box, and left it in the study wholly and solely to pull Bunter's fat leg. That, it dawned on Bunter now, was why the beasts had been laughing! That was what they were laughing at!

"Beasts!" hissed Bunter.

Leaving the chocolate box, the newspaper, and the lump of coal on the table, the fat junior rolled to the door. His leg had been pulled; there were no chocs. But he was in good time for the spread in Mauly's study, and in that spread there was comfort. He grabbed the door-handle and tugged, and tugged again, and yet again. The door did not open!

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

The key was not visible, but the door was locked. It was locked on the outside!

Bunter gazed at that door with feelings that could not have been expressed in any known language.

The full iniquity of those beasts rushed on his fat mind at last. It was not merely to pull his fat leg that he had been tempted into the study by a chocolate box containing nothing but a newspaper and a lump of coal. It was to bar him off from Mauly's study. He was locked in Study No. 1, while the spread was going on in Study No. 12 up the passage. That iniquitous trap had been laid, and he had walked right into it.

"Beasts!" roared Bunter.

No doubt Lord Mauleverer would be happily relieved if Bunter did not roll into Study No. 12. But Bunter was not thinking of Lord Mauleverer. He was thinking of W. G. Bunter—the subject of most of his reflections!

"Beasts!" howled Bunter.

He thumped on the door.

"I say, you fellows! Lemme out! I say, you cads, come and unlock this door! I say, you rotters, will you come and lemme out!"

But answer there came none. Probably the Famous Five, in Mauly's study up the passage, did not hear. If they heard, they did not heed. Billy Bunter had rolled into Study No. 1 of his own accord—and, pot of his own accord, he had to remain there!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Showing Him!

"I'll show him!" said Coker of the Fifth.

His friends, Potter and Greene, smiled.

Horace Coker had a cricket ball in his hand. He grasped the round, red ball, with a determined grip. It was apparently with that ball that Coker was going to "show" him—whoever "him" was!

Which was enough to make Potter and Greene, or any other fellows, smile. The mere thought of Horace Coker, in connection with cricket, was hilarious. Any fellow who had seen Horace Coker handling a bat would have declared unhesitatingly that in the wide universe there was, and could be, nothing worse than Coker's batting. Such a judgment would have been hasty! There really was something worse! It was Coker's bowling! Nobody but the batsman was safe when Coker bowled.

Cricket was going strong at Greyfriars in the summer days. Great matches were coming along—though of more immediate interest was a Form match between Fifth and Sixth; in which every fellow in either Form hoped to catch the eye of old Wingate, captain of the school.

Juniors were as keen as seniors, or keeners. Harry Wharton & Co., back from a prolonged holiday, had thrown themselves into the summer game with tremendous keenness. But they were not keener than Coker. They were not, perhaps, so keen! For Coker of the Fifth was tremendously keen—enormously.

If keenness could have made a fellow into a cricketer, the name of Don Bradman would have paled its ineffectual fires in comparison with the name of Horace James Coker.

But keenness, though a valuable asset, was not all that was wanted. A fellow had to handle a bat, not as if it was a Fiji war-club. He had to handle a ball, not as if it was a half-brick he was going to chuck at the nearest head. And in the field, he had to drop a sitter by less than three yards.

For which cogent reasons, Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, would no more admit Horace Coker into the eleven than he would have put in Gosling, the porter, or Billy Bunter of the Remove. He would have laughed at the idea.

In fact, he did laugh at the idea—every time Coker urged his claims. The rest of the Fifth laughed in chorus.

On this particular afternoon there was a Fifth Form practice game, and Potter and Greene were going down to the same, when Coker joined them.

Coker walked down with them—he walked, and he talked.

"He says," said Coker, "that I can't bowl! I'll show him!"

Potter winked at Greene with the eye that was farthest from Coker.

"The ass!" said Coker. "The fat head! The clump! The footling populus fathead! I'll show him!"

"Another time, old chap!" murmured Potter. "We've got a game on this afternoon, you know."

"That can wait!" said Coker.

"Oh!"

"The silly idiot may put me in, too, when I've shown him," added Coker.

"It's only a practice game, but I'd play in it—I might catch Wingate's eye, and get shoved into the first eleven."

"Oh crickey!"

"If that fool—that idiot—that froggy-chump, Blundell, has sense enough to see what good bowling's like, he'll leave out one of the duds, and shove me in," explained Coker. "You, perhaps, Greeney—"

"Am I a dud?" inquired Greene warmly.

"Don't be an ass, Greeney! Is your cricket anything like mine?"

"No fear!" said Greene, promptly and fervently.

"Well, I'll show him!" said Coker.

Other ears, as well as Potter's and Greene's, heard Coker's announcement. Coker had a powerful voice, with great carrying powers. Quite a number of fellows, with cheery grins, walked after Coker, interested to see the great Horace "show him."

Fellows of all Forms seemed interested in Coker. Vernon-Smith and Radwing, Skinner and Peter Todd, of the Remove, came along; Temple, Dubney & Co. of the Fourth—Hobson and some pals of the Shell; even some of the Third and Second. Coker was going to have an audience. He was worth it.

"Want anything, Coker?" asked Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, as Coker arrived with Potter and Greene.

his followers following on behind with smiles of interested anticipation.

Coker snorted. That was just like Blundell—as if he didn't know that Coker was a keen cricketer; and the best cricketer at Greyfriars, if Blundell only could have seen it.

"Yes, you see!" yapped Coker. "You said I couldn't bowl!"

"Guilty, my lord!" murmured the captain of the Fifth.

"I'm going to show you."

"Later, old bean!" said Blundell. "We're just going to get busy. Mind trotting off the field?"

"Later won't do!" said Coker calmly.

The captain of Coker's Form looked at him. The other cricketers looked at Blundell. At one sign from the captain of the Fifth, Coker would have been up-ended off the field, so quickly that it would have made his head swim! But George Blundell was a kind-hearted fellow. He could feel for a chap who was fearfully keen on games, and fancied that he could play cricket and couldn't!

"My dear chap—" said Blundell.

Coker waved his hand to the wicket. "Get there!" he said. "If I don't take your wicket first shot, I'll admit I can't bowl!"

"You couldn't take my wicket in seventy million shots!" roared Blundell.

"If you can take my wicket, I'll put you in the Fifth Form eleven, and resign the captaincy to you."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't!" said Coker. "I'll hold you to that, Blundell! Now get hold of your bat, and I'll show you!"

Blundell laughed. "It won't waste more than a minute or two, you fellows!" he said, and he went grinning to the wicket.

Coker, at the other end, got ready. Potter and Greene faded out of his immediate neighbourhood. They knew what old Horace was like when he got hold of a cricket ball. Other fellows seemed to be taking "safety-first" as their motto. They gave Coker plenty of sea-room.

Right behind Coker there was a crowd of grinning juniors. The voice of Herbert Vernon-Smith of the Remove was heard:

"I'll give any man ten to one in doughnuts that that ball don't go within twenty yards of the wicket."

"Make it twenty miles, and I'll take you," said Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker glared round! He did not like this sort of thing from fags!

"Shut up, you scrubby little idiots!" snapped Coker. "Keep out of the way! What are you doing here at all? Clear off, before I boot you!"

The juniors backed a little farther off, to right and left. Coker gave them a stern frown, and devoted his attention to Blundell again.

He calculated that ball with a deadly gleam in his eye! Blundell was giving him a chance at the wicket! It was such a chance as seldom came a bowler's way! Instead of standing in defence of his sticks, Blundell did not grasp his bat—he balanced it, like a juggler, on the palm of his hand, upright! That performance elicited howls of laughter from all sides.

Coker smiled—a grim smile! If Blundell chose to pull his leg like that, so much the worse for Blundell! Coker was going to hold him to his word when he knocked down that wicket! If Blundell chose to chuck it away, that was his look-out. Certainly, it looked easy business!

Coker flashed an eye along the pitch. He gripped the round red ball. He took

a little run, and with great good fortune, avoided falling over his own feet! He turned himself into a catherine-wheel; and the ball flew—not at the precise moment that Coker intended, or in the precisely intended direction—Coker unfortunately toppling over and going down on his knees as it flew. He had catherine-wheeled not wisely but too well.

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

"Yaroooo!" came a fearful yell, high above the roar.

Coker scrambled up. He stared round. Blundell's wicket was still intact—and Blundell seemed almost in convulsions. That frog-like yell came from Coker's left, behind him. Staring round, he beheld Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, dancing in a perfectly frantic manner, with both hands clasped to his head, and yelling like a maniac.

"Owl! My napper!" yelled the Bounder. "Oh crakey! Oh crumbs! You dangerous idiot—Yarooooop!"

Coker of the Fifth blinked at him. Everybody else was yelling with merri-ment. This was a record, even for Coker. Even Coker had never done anything quite like this with a cricket ball before. How he had got the Bounder when Smithy was to the left in the rear, was a real mystery. Of course, it was an accident. Coker couldn't have done it if he had tried. But he had done it. The Bounder, clasp- ing his damaged napper, danced and yelled.

"Owl!" gasped Coker.

"Owl! Wow! Oh—oh crumbs! Oh crakey!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith rather wished that he had not come along to watch Coker's performance. Coker, really, was dangerous. Smithy was hurt. He was as much enraged as hurt. He left off rubbing his head, and made a rush at Coker of the Fifth.

But Coker, if he couldn't handle a cricket ball, could handle a Remove junior. He gave the angry Bounder a shove that sent him staggering; and Tom Redwing caught his chum by the arm, and led him away. Coker was too big to punch.

"Chuck in that ball, some of you!" called out Coker.

"Buzz off, Coker!" called out Blundell.

"I'm going to show you—" began Coker. Apparently he was not finished yet.

"You've shown us," chorried the cap- tain of the Fifth.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My foot slipped," explained Coker.

"Now I'm going to show you—"

"Push that fathead off the field!" said Blundell.

"Look here," roared Coker, "I'm going to show you—"

Five or six big Fifth Form men helped Coker to depart before he had time to say any more. His chance of "showing" Blundell was gone. Besides, he had shown him—quite as much as he wanted to be shown. Coker, pushed and shoved, departed, greatly exasperated. He objected, and he ex- postulated, but, like the guests in Macbeth, he stood not upon the order of his going, but went at once.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Prisoner of Study No. 1!

"I SAY, you fellows!" yelled Billy Bunter, at the sound of footsteps in the Remove passage.

Bunter had been quite a long time in that study. Every minute was

precious—with a spread going on up the passage. But it could not be helped. Billy Bunter could not get out through the keyhole, and there was no other way out. He had thumped on the door, and roared and howled—unregarded.

But at the sound of fellows coming up, he roared again:

"I say, you fellows! Let me out, will you?"

Thump, thump!

"That sounds like Bunter." It was Peter Todd's voice. "What the thump are you doing in Wharton's study, fatty?"

"I'm locked up!" howled Bunter. "I say, Toddy, old chap, go along to Mauly's study, and make that beast Cherry give you the key, will you? They've bunged me in here to keep me away from Mauly's spread."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!" roared Bunter. "I say, Peter, old chap, Mauly's expecting me to—I say, he will be fearfully dis- appointed if I don't turn up! Go and get that key, Toddy, old chap!"

"Sure Mauly wants you?" asked Peter, through the door.

"Yea, old chap! Quite!"

"Right-ho! I'll go and ask him! And if he wants you, I'll jolly well get the key!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

Peter Todd walked on up the pas- sage. He did not leave Bunter feeling very hopeful. Bunter doubted whether Mauly would say that he wanted him.

Apparently Mauly didn't; for Peter Todd did not return. But ten minutes later there were more footsteps. Fel- lows were coming up to tea.

"I say, stop, will you?" shouted Bunter, as footsteps sounded outside the study door. "I say—"

"Is that Bunter?" It was Skinner's voice.

"Yea, old chap; I'm locked in—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast! Blessed if I see anything to chuck at! I say, you fellows, will you go and get the key from the beast Cherry—"

The footsteps passed on.

"Beasts!" groaned Bunter.

But soon there were more footsteps. Bunter blinked through the keyhole, and spotted the Bounder.

"I say, Smithy, stop a minute!" he howled. "I say, will you stop a minute, Smithy, old chap?"

"No!" Smithy was rubbing a dam- aged head as he went up the passage, and he went on without a pause, re- gardless of Bunter.

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

The fat prisoner in Study No. 1 breathed wrath. It was useless to yell to fellows passing the study. For some reason, unknown to Bunter, they seemed to regard it as rather a joke. There was no joke, so far as Bunter could see, in being kept away from the spread in Study No. 12.

But nobody seemed keen on tackling Bob Cherry, the hottest fighting man in the Remove, to get that key away from him, in order to enable Billy Bunter to barge into Lord Mauleverer's study. Bunter had to stay till Bob came to let him out. And only too well he knew that that would not be till the spread was over.

The fat Owl gave up thumping and yelling, and took a rest in the study armchair. He had already explored the study cupboard, but there was nothing of an edible nature therein. Having to wait, with nothing to do while he waited, Billy Bunter picked

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up the newspaper that had been in the box to kill time by reading the news.

It was not very interesting news to Bunter. Japanese and Spanish air raids had no great attraction for him; neither was he concerned about Czechoslovakia. A speech by Herr Hitler passed him by, like the idle wind which he regarded not. A murder or two might have consoled him; but there were no murders in the paper, not even a robbery. Even the cricket news, which really was of interest, only drew a careless blink from Bunter. The name of Bradman had no magic for the fat owl.

He turned to the advertisements.

Some of these were attractive. Bunter blinked very seriously at the generous offer of Messrs. Abrahams & Co. to lend any sum up to twenty thousand pounds without security.

Bunter would have liked to do business with Messrs. Abrahams on those lines.

Then another advertisement caught his eye, and he gave it a very interested blink.

It was headed by the single word:

"POWER"

Power was a thing that had never come Billy Bunter's way. But he would have liked it—he would have liked it a lot.

Bunter was—at least, he had no doubt that he was—one of those fellows who are born to command.

He could have fancied himself in the role of a dictator. In girth, at least, he was the equal of Mussolini.

So Bunter read that advertisement with great keenness.

It was brief, but it was to the point. All that Bunter, or anybody else, had to do, was to send a postal order for one shilling to the advertiser. In return he would receive a booklet entitled, "The Path to Power."

Power, at one shilling, was undoubtedly a bargain.

There was a certain open-handed generosity about that advertiser. Instead of bagging all this power himself he was prepared to pass it on to the general public, at a shilling a time—just like those sporting tipsters who, instead of looking winners themselves and making enormous fortunes, sell pass on the winner to anybody for half-a-crown.

Bunter was deeply interested.

He was very much inclined to sport a shilling on that valuable booklet. The only difficulty in the way was that he did not possess a shilling.

But difficulties were only made to be overcome. Bunter was the fellow to overcome a difficulty of that kind.

Somebody else's shilling would serve the purpose, and Bunter had great skill in annexing other fellows' shillings.

He tore out the advertisement, and put it in his pocket. There was plenty of room for it there.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

It was a sudden roar outside the study door.

"Beast!" roared back Bunter.

Outside the study five fellows were grinning again. The feast was over in Study No. 12. The Famous Five had returned. Bunter bounded out of the armchair.

"I say, you fellows, lemme out!" he howled. "I say, Bob Cherry, you beast!"

Bob, with a wink at his chums, inserted the key silently into the lock, and, as silently, turned it.

They grinned cheerfully. The door was unlocked now, and Bunter was

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free to emerge if he liked. As he was unaware of it, however, it was an interesting question—how much longer he would stay in the study.

"Will you answer, you beast!" roared Bunter. "I say, Franky, take that key away from that beast, will you?"

"Not at all," answered Frank Nagent.

"I say, Inky! Are you there, Inky?"

"The barefacedness is terrific, my esteemed Bunter!" answered Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Will you get that key, Inky?"

"The answer is in the absurd negative!" answered the Nabob of Bhangpur.

"Beast! I say, Bull—"

"Fathead!" said Johnny Bull.

"Yah! Rotter! Wharton, will you unlock that door?" yelled Bunter.

"Can't!" answered the captain of the Remove.

Which was certainly true, as the door was unlocked already.

"Beast! I say, you fellows, don't you walk off and leave me locked in here!" yelled Bunter, as footsteps receded towards the landing. "Oh, you rotters! Cads! Swabs!"

The footsteps died away down the Remove staircase.

Billy Bunter gasped with wrath.

Even now that the spread was over in Study No. 12, they were not letting him out! As he had not heard the key turn, and was quite unaware that the door was now unlocked, Bunter did not think of trying it. He glared at it in intense exasperation.

He had missed the spread in Study No. 12. He had missed any chance of tea in any other Remove study. If this went on, he would miss tea in Hall, the last resource. He gave the door a terrific thump.

"Beast!" he roared. "Lemme out!"

But the Famous Five were gone! Billy Bunter was still a prisoner—banging frantically on a door that would have opened had he turned the handle!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Coker Knows How!

"WHAT'S that row?" Coker snapped out the words.

Coker of the Fifth had just come upstairs. He had the pleasure—or otherwise—of meeting the Famous Five as they strolled down the Remove staircase to the next landing. From behind them—that is, from the quarters of the Remove—came a sound of loud and persistent banging.

Bang! Thump! Bang, bang! It was an awful row! Bunter was going strong! The Prisoner of Chillon, in older time, was not more fed-up with captivity than William George Bunter.

Horace Coker, of the Fifth Form, was not in a good temper. The way he had shown Blundell how he could bowl had made all the other fellows laugh, but it had annoyed Coker. He was in no mood to be patient while a fearful row was kicked up by fags.

Even had he been in a good temper, Coker would have barged in, all the same. He had a genius for barging in.

Of course he had no right to do so. Even a Sixth Form man hadn't, unless he was that great and glorious being, a prefect! Coker was only in the Fifth! He was, in fact, nobody! No-

body at all, if Coker had only known it!

But Coker did not know that! At least, he did not realize it! Coker, in his own estimation, was somebody—if not the biggest somebody going!

So he rapped out at the juniors as they came down the Remove staircase, in the authoritative tone of a Sixth Form prefect, which he was not—and in the snappish tone of a fellow in a bad temper, which he was.

The Famous Five smiled at him. They did not answer. If Coker of the Fifth fancied that he could "come the prefect," the cheery chums of the Remove did not share that fancy.

"Do you hear me?" snapped Coker angrily. "What's that thundering row going on in the Remove for? It's got to stop, now!"

Bang! Thump! Bang!

"I say, you fellows," came an infuriated yell, "will you come and lemme out! Beasts! Cads! Swabs! Come and unlock this door!"

"That sounds like somebody locked in a study!" exclaimed Coker. "Is this a silly fag lark?"

"Has the Head made you a prefect, Coker?" asked Bob Cherry politely.

"Eh?" Coker stared. "No!"

"Then run away and keep quiet till he does!" suggested Bob.

"That's a jolly good idea!" agreed Harry Wharton. "Run away and keep quiet, Coker! Don't talk so much!"

"The talkativeness is truly terrific!" remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

Bang! Thump! Bang!

Coker looked at the Famous Five. He came very near hurling himself at them, and snorting them tip and thigh. But he refrained. He had shoved over one Remove junior that afternoon with ease—but five together were not, as it were, shovenable. The shoving would have been, as Hurree Singh would have said, a boot on the other leg.

Leaving the Famous Five unslaughtered, therefore, Coker tramped up the short staircase to the Remove landing, to see about that awful row. He certainly was not going to allow it to go on.

The Famous Five exchanged a cheery grin and walked after Coker.

Bunter, inside the study, did not know that the study door was unlocked. They wondered whether Coker would "come the study." Bob had withdrawn the key from the lock, after unlocking the door.

Bang, bang, bang! rang loudly, as Coker tramped into the Remove passage.

"Will you unlock this door, you beasts?" came a yell from within Study No. 1. "Will you come and unlock this door, you swabs!"

"Stop that row!" roared Coker. "Do you think you can kick up a hullabaloo like that, you young cuss!"

"I say, is that Coker? I say, make them come and unlock this door, Coker, will you? I say, I've been locked in for hours and hours and hours!" wailed Bunter.

"The key's not here!" granted Coker.

"Bob Cherry's got it—he took it away when he locked me in!" howled Bunter. "I say, Coker, make him unlock the door, will you?"

Coker glanced round at the five grinning faces at the end of the passage.

"Have you got the key of this door, Cherry?" he demanded.

"Right on the wicket!" admitted Bob.



As Billy Bunter withdrew the parcel from the chocolate box, the newspaper unfolded and something dropped on the table with a thud. It was a lump of coal! The fat junior gazed at it spellbound. "Beasts!" he hissed.

"Come and unlock this door at once and let Bunter out!"

"Eh?"

"Come and unlock this door at once!" roared Coker.

"What?"

"Come and unlock this door!"

"Say it again!"

"Are you deaf, you young idiot?" demanded Coker, staring at him.

"Oh, no! But I like to hear you talk—your voice is so musical!" explained Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker breathed hard and deep. Again he was tempted to charge and scatter the Famous Five like leaves in the wind.

But scattering them was a bigger task than before, for a number of other Remove fellows were gathering, to see what was on—and there was no doubt that if Coker declared war, he would get more war than he could handle. Every man in the Remove would have lent a cheerful hand at rolling Coker down the stairs.

Vernon-Smith and Rodwing came out of Study No. 4—Peter Todd and Tom Dutton out of Study No. 7—Wibley, and Kipps, and Hazeldene, and Russell and Ogilvy, and other fellows, from other studies. Coker did not declare war. He turned to the door of Study No. 1 again. Inside that study Bunter was banging once more.

"Stop that row, Bunter!" snapped Coker.

"Lemme out!" yelled Bunter. "I say, I shall miss tea in Hall! I haven't had my tea! I say—"

"Will you hand over that key, Cherry?"

"Eh?"

"Will you hand over that key?"

"What?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker ceased to address Bob Cherry. Evidently there was nothing doing in that direction.

"Well, I shan't allow this," he said. "This is your study, I think, Wharton!"

"Do you?" exclaimed Wharton, in surprise.

"Isn't it?" demanded Coker.

"Oh, yes! But do you really think, Coker? I didn't know you could!"

Coker appeared on the point of choking!

Bang! Thump! Bang!

"Stop that, Bunter!" roared Coker. "I'll get the door open. Wharton, if the door's damaged, it's your own lookout. I'm going to get it open somehow!"

"Go ahead!" answered Harry. "I don't mind."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

As Bunter, in the study, was banging on the door in the firm belief that it was still locked, perhaps it was natural for Coker to take that for granted. Even a bright fellow would hardly have guessed that a fat junior was banging on a door, and howling to be let out, if he could have walked out at any moment he had chosen! And Coker was not a bright fellow!

Anyhow, it never occurred to Coker that the door was not locked! It was clear that Bunter had been locked in—and he knew that Bob Cherry still had the key! That was enough for Coker.

But it was quite entertaining, to the Famous Five, to hear Coker's resolute announcement that he was going to get that door open somehow—when all that was needed was the turning of the door-handle!

"Bunter!" hooted Coker. "I'm going to get this open! Take hold of the door-handle and pull as hard as you can, and I'll shove from this side! The lock will go, all right."

"Oh, all right, Coker!" gasped Bunter.

"Turn the handle and pull, while I shove!" rapped Coker. "Understand? We shall crack the lock between us! You'll hear it snap—then ease off, see?"

"All right!"

"Go it, then!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry, as Horace Coker planted his brawny shoulder on the door, and shoved with all his mighty strength.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five watched breathlessly.

Had the door been still locked, the lock might, or might not, have resisted the pull from within and the hefty push from without. If it went, the crack would have warned Bunter to ease off inside, and Coker to ease off outside.

But as the door was not locked it was fearfully interesting to watch what would happen when Bunter turned the handle and pulled, while Coker shoved.

Within the study, the fat Owl grasped the door-knob with both fat hands, turned it, and pulled—while from without came Coker's mighty shove.

The door flew open instantly.

There was no warning crack from a yielding lock. It was really not to be expected, as the door was not locked! Without any warning of any sort, that door flew open with the swiftness of a lightning flash, as soon as the door-handle was turned—it hit Billy Bunter on his fat little nose, and pitched him nearly across the study.

Coker followed the door in. He was shoving too hard to be able to stop when it yielded so suddenly. The door flew and Coker flew.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter, as he landed on his back.

"Yoo-hooop!" raved Coker, as he landed on Bunter.

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"Ha, ha, ha!" came a terrific roar from the passage.

"Ow! My nose!" shrieked Bunter. "Ow! Gerroff, ~~you~~ beast! Wharrer you falling on me for? Wew!"

"Oh! Wow! Ooogh!" spluttered Coker.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Coker's got it open!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Wonderful man, Coker! He can shove open a door that's not locked! Three cheers for Coker!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Gerroff! You're squish-squish-squashing me! Ow!"

"You young ass!" shrieked Coker. He scrambled to his feet. "The door wasn't locked at all! Pulling my leg, what? Take that!"

Smack!

"Yaroooh!"

Smack!

"I say, you fellows, rescue!" yelled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removes, yelling with laughter, swarmed into the study. They helped Coker out. With the help of a couple of dozen hands, Horace Coker departed, with flying arms and legs.

Bunter was left sitting on the floor. With one hand he held a fat little nose which had been damaged by the door. With the other he held a fat, large ear, which had been damaged by Coker's smacks. He sat and roared.

The Remove fellows roared with laughter. Billy Bunter roared, not with laughter. But they all roared.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Fierce For Fishy!

"SEEN the 'dick'?"

"Isn't it on the shelf?"

"No."

"Then where the dickens—"

It was quite mysterious. In Study

No. 1, at time for prep, Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent looked round for the Latin dictionary, and looked in vain.

With a chunk of Æneid to prepare, they had to have the dick. But the dick was not to be seen. It was not in the study.

"Some cheeky ass has borrowed it!" said Harry at last. "Might have shoved it back when he was done with it! We shall have to borrow one, or get one from Fishy! Blow!"

"Better ask along the passage," said Frank. "I don't see what a fellow wants to bug a dick for—'tain't as if it was the 'Holiday Annual.' There's a dick in every study. We must have it."

Harry Wharton nodded, and went out of Study No. 1 while Nugent sorted out the other books required. They shared a dick in Study No. 1. Now that the only dick was gone, it either had to be recovered or replaced. Preparing Virgil without the aid of a dictionary was altogether too much like work!

It was uncommon for a fellow to borrow a dictionary. Any chap who had a "Holiday Annual" could hardly call it his own; but any chap was welcome to keep his Latin dick to himself! It was quite puzzling—and still more puzzling, as the captain of the Remove progressed up the passage in quest of that dick.

Taking it for granted that some Remove fellow must have borrowed it, he stopped at every study to inquire. But the answers were all in the negative.

In Study No. 2 Tom Brown and Hazeldene disclaimed knowledge of it. In Study No. 3 Ogilvy and Russell knew nothing. In Study No. 4, the Bounder and Redwing shook their heads. In Study No. 5, Kipps and Elliott hadn't seen it—and in Study No. 6, Morgan and Wibley and Micky Desmond hadn't. In Study No. 7 there was a pause.

Peter Todd, in that study hadn't had it—Billy Bunter answered only by a scornful sniff, apparently still feeling sorry over the happenings in Study No. 1 that afternoon. Tom Dutton, the third member of the community in Study No. 7 was deaf, and Wharton put on steam to inquire.

"Seen my Latin dick?"

"Sorry," answered Dutton. "Perhaps you parked too much when you went to Maury's spread. But I hope you're not going to be sick here. Better get back to your own study."

"Not sick—dick!" yelled Wharton.

"As quick as you can," agreed Dutton. "Dash it all, old chap, I'm sorry if you feel sick, but your own study, you know—"

"Oh crumbs! Have you had my dictionary?"

"It's as airy in your study as here—but why not open the passage window if you feel you want air—"

"Oh, help!" gasped Wharton.

"Oh, chuck it!" exclaimed Tom warmly. "You needn't call a fellow names because he doesn't want you to be sick in his study. If you're calling me a whelp—"

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

"Somebody's had my Latin dick!" roared Wharton. "Was it you?"

Tom Dutton jumped up. Tom was deaf—and his deafness often led to little misunderstandings. Now it led to one more.

"That's enough!" he snapped. "I can't help it if you're sick, can I—and you come here and call me a whelp, and then a Jew! Get out!"

Wharton got out—leaving Tom frowning, Peter grinning, and Billy Bunter gurgling.

He looked into Study No. 9 next; but Penfold and Newland knew nothing of the missing dictionary. Neither did Trevor and Trelves know anything. In Study No. 10, Bolsover major announced that he didn't know, and didn't care where it was; while his French study-mate, Dupont, who was more polite than Bolsover, kept Wharton a whole minute while he politely expressed his regret that he could give him no information on the subject.

The captain of the Remove was breathing hard by the time he arrived at Study No. 11. There he found Skinner, Snoop, and Stott—smoking cigarettes, doubtless as an aid to learning.

They knew nothing about the missing dictionary; but Harold Skinner offered Wharton a cigarette—which was declined without thanks.

In Study No. 12, Lord Mauleverer and Jimmy Vivian were in the same state of ignorance. In Study No. 13 there were four fellows—Bob Cherry, Mark Linley, Hurree Janset Ram Singh, and little Wun Lang, the Chinese. Not one of the four could throw any light on the mystery of the missing dictionary.

Only Study No. 14 remained, and Wharton, a little excited by this time, looked into Study No. 14.

"Any of you fellows borrowed my Latin dick?"

"I never borrow books!" said Johnny Bull. "Rotten idea!"

"I often do!" said Squiff cheerfully. "But I haven't borrowed yours, old bean."

"You had it, Fishy?"

"Search me!" answered Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I got more dicks than I want." The American junior's eye gleamed with a business-like gleam. "I guess I can let you have one, cheap!"

Harry Wharton breathed hard. No news having been heard of the mysteriously disappeared dictionary, Fisher T. Fish was his last resource. Fishy always had second-hand books to



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sell. He bought them cheap from fellows when they were hard-up, and he sold them dear, when a fellow had to have a book that was lost, stolen, or strayed.

"Well, I must have one!" growled the captain of the Remove. "Quelch will be shirty if we do our prep on the lines of a guessing competition! Blessed if I know where my dick can be! I've asked every fellow in the Remove. If you've got one, trot it out, Fishy, and don't stick me for too much."

Fisher T. Fish was all brisk business at once.

He jumped up and sorted over a box. "I got one here that I bought to-day," he said. "I can let you have it cheap, because the title-page's missing."

"Chuck it over!"

"Cash down!" said Fisher T. Fish, laying the volume on the table. "I can let you have it for five bob. Good condition; only the title-page missing, and—"

"Keep it!" snapped the captain of the Remove. Five shillings was five shillings in the Lower Fourth Form, and he doubted whether Fishy had given more than one to the vendor.

"Well, if you're hard up for a dick, I guess I might take four," said Fisher T. Fish persuasively. "I don't want to keep the thing on my hands."

"Make it half-a-crown!"

"Aw, forget it! That dick cost seven-and-six when it was new!" said Fisher T. Fish indignantly. "Look at it! Only the title-page gone!"

Harry Wharton picked up the Latin dictionary and looked at it, then he gave a start—in fact, he jumped.

The title-page had been torn out—on which the original owner's name had been written. But a fellow knew his own books. There was a cut on the cover where Bob Cherry had tested the blade of a penknife; there was a purple patch on the first page where Frank Nugent had spilt indelible ink; there were other signs of wear and tear, all familiar to the eyes of the captain of the Remove. It was his own missing dictionary!

"Why, you—you—you—" he gasped. "You—you bandit! You—you gangster! You're trying to sell me my own dick!"

"You're!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"Mine!" roared Wharton. "I say, this is jolly thick!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Mean to say you've taken to pinching a fellow's school books, Fishy, to sell them?"

"Search me!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "You goob, I gave Bunter a bob for that dick. You fear me? A bob—and a penny over!"

"Bunter!" stuttered Wharton.

"Sure—Bunter! That fat goob said he wanted to get a shilling postal order for something, so I gave him a penny over the bob. Now you make out that it's yours!" exclaimed Fisher T. Fish. "It's mine!" roared Wharton. He put the dictionary under his arm.

Fisher T. Fish bounded across the study in great excitement.

"Aw! Forget it!" he hooted. "I bought that dick fair and square! You can settle it with Bunter!"

"You can settle it with Bunter!" retorted Wharton. "I jolly well know that I'm having my dick!"

"Not by a bibful!" yelled Fisher T. Fish. "Look here, if you say it was yours, I'll let you have it for the half-crown. There!"

"I'll have it for nothing, thanks, as it's mine!"

"Tain't!" shrieked Fisher T. Fish.

"Why, you piccan, I gave Bunter a bob and a penny for it! Look here, you

gimme the thirteence, and you can have it—and I make nothing on it!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I've bought this dick once for seven-and-six," he answered. "I'm not buying it again, Fishy! Thanks for handing it over!"

He turned to the door with the dictionary under his arm.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Johnny Bull and Squiff.

The expression on Fisher T. Fish's face was really excruciating. Never had the business-man of the Remove looked so utterly overwhelmed with dismay.

"Gimme that dick!" shrieked Fishy. "I'm telling you you can fix it with Bunter how you like!"

"And I'm telling you you can fix it with Bunter how you like!" said the captain of the Remove. "I'm keeping my own property."

Fisher T. Fish made a wild grab at the dictionary. The awful thought of losing a shilling with a penny thrown in, was too much for Fisher Tarleton Fish. The rights and wrongs of the matter did not worry Fishy so much as the shilling and the penny. He grabbed the dictionary and his bony fingers fastened on it.

Wharton grabbed it as he jerked it away; he grabbed it back; then, raising it in the air, he brought it down with a heavy smite on the head of the business-man of the Remove.

"Aw! Wake snakes!" yelled Fisher T. Fish. He sat down on the floor of Study No. 14—he sat suddenly and hard.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Johnny Bull and Squiff.

Harry Wharton, laughing, put the dictionary under his arm again and walked out of the study with it.

Fisher T. Fish staggered up, clasping his bony head. He made a step after the captain of the Remove—but only one. He wanted the dictionary, but he did not want another bang on his bony head therefrom, and he realized that that was all that would come to him.

"Aw, search me!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "I'll say this is fierce! I'll tell a guy this is sure fierce!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton returned cheerfully to his own study—with the Latin dictionary. He left Fisher T. Fish far from cheerful.

Fisher T. Fish rubbed his bony head and groaned. It was not the bang on the head that made him groan; it was the loss of the shilling and the penny. It was undoubtedly fierce!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A New Way to Pay Old Debts!

THE following day there were three fellows in the Greyfriars Remove in a very disgruntled state.

One was Herbert Vernon-Smith, who had a bump on his head, the outcome of Horace Coker's masterly bowling feats—a pain in the bump, and a still more severe pain in his temper.

Another was Fisher T. Fish, who was making incessant but hopeless endeavours to recover from Billy Bunter the sum of one shilling and one penny, paid over for Harry Wharton's Latin dictionary—now gone back to its owner.

The third was Billy Bunter, who was very much worried and irritated by Fisher's endeavours to collect cash.

It was useless for Fishy to demand cash from Bunter. Bunter had no cash.

Had Bunter had cash, he would not have been driven to the desperate resource of selling a fellow's Latin dictionary to raise the wind. Without cash he could not settle with Fishy.

All that Bunter could do was to promise to reimburse Fishy out of a postal order which he was hourly expecting from a titled relation.

This was no comfort to Fisher T. Fish.

In the dormitory over night, before and after prayers in the morning, after breakfast, and then in morning break, Fisher T. Fish haunted Billy Bunter with demands for the sum of thirteence.

By the time the Remove went in to third school Bunter was quite tired of the subject, and he hoped that he had heard the last of it.

But he hadn't.

No sooner had Mr. Quelch dismissed the Remove than a bony American bore down on the fat Owl with renewed demands for thirteence.

At dinner Bunter had a brief rest from Fishy, but after dinner the voice of Fisher T. Fish, like that of the turtle of old, was heard in the land.

Even in Form in the afternoon Fisher T. Fish gave Bunter dark and menacing looks, warning him that there was more to come after school.

After school Fisher T. Fish cornered Billy Bunter in the Rag; he pointed a bony finger at Bunter's fat, irritated face.

"Now, you fat clam," said Fishy, shaking that bony finger in warning. "are you going to square?"

"I'll square to-morrow!" snapped Bunter. "I've told you that I'm expecting a postal order!"

"Can it!" shrieked Fisher T. Fish. "Don't you spring that on me again, you piccan! Now, year this! I'm going to Quelch! Got that? You sold Wharton's dick—and it's not me back a quarter and two cents. If you want to see Quelch about it—"

"Oh erikay!" gasped Bunter.

"Mind, I mean it!" roared Fishy. "You ain't putting it across me, you fat clam! You square, or you go up to Quelch!"

"I say, you fellows, lend me a hand to settle with that American, will you?" asked Billy Bunter, blinking round through his big spectacles. "Got a bob you don't want, Skinner?"

"Yes," said Skinner unexpectedly.

"Oh, good! Where is it?" Bunter held out a fat hand.

"There!" said Skinner, pointing to Bob Cherry.

"Eh! Oh, you silly ass!" hooted Bunter. "I don't want any of your rotten jokes; I want a bob! I say, Wharton, lend me a bob, will you?"

"As a reward for selling my dick!" asked Harry.

"I guess I'm waiting for my spondulics!" hooted Fisher T. Fish. "Cough it up, you fat clam, or I'm going to Quelch!"

"I'll come with you," remarked Harry Wharton.

"Eh! Fishy stared at him. "What for?"

"Quelch may as well hear the lot," explained the captain of the Remove. "He will be interested to hear that you gave a bob for a Latin dick and tried to sell it again for five bob. I want to see his face when he hears that."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the fellows in the Rag, greatly entertained by the expression on Fisher T. Fish's face.

"Ho, ho, ho!" chorled Bunter.

"All right, let's go to Quelch! He, he, he!"

Fisher T. Fish breathed hard through his long, thin nose.

Mr. Quelch, there was no doubt, would have taken a very stern view of Billy Bunter's remarkable methods of raising the wind; but certainly he would have taken a sterner view of Fisher T. Fish's business methods. Fishy's dealings in second-hand goods were not dealings that could be confided to a Form-master.

"You pesky pieceni!" hissed Fisher T. Fish. "You misshapen mugwump! You—your pie-faced, slab-sided clami! I guess I'll make potato scrapings of you!"

"I say, you fellows—" gasped Bunter, jumping back at the enraged Fishy advanced on him with his bony fists in the air. "I say, keep that beast off!"

Bob Cherry obligingly interposed a foot, over which Fisher T. Fish stumbled.

"Aw, take make!" gasped Fisher T. Fish, as he landed on the floor, which he tapped with his long, sharp nose.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter called out of the Rag. Like Icarus in the poem, he rolled rapidly. Fisher T. Fish was left rubbing his bony nose, which felt as if it had been driven like a nail into his bony head.

But Billy Bunter was getting tired—more than tired—of this. It was clear even to Bunter's limited intellect, that he had to settle with Fishy, or else be taunted by him till the end of the term.

Cash was still lacking, Bunter's long-expected postal order being still in a non-arrived state. But Bunter had other resources.

After tea a bony, vengeful face looked into Study No. 7. Fisher T. Fish had cornered the fat Owl again.

"Now, you pesky clam—" said Fishy.

"Look here, you beast," said Bunter, "I'm going to settle! It's all right. I've been disappointed about a postal order, and I'm rather short of cash, but I'll let you have my 'Holiday Annual'."

"Oh!" said Fishy.

Billy Bunter pointed with a fat forefinger at an attractive-looking volume on the study table.

Fishy's face cleared.

The original cost of the "Holiday Annual" was less than that of the Latin dictionary; but there was no doubt that it would sell better in the Remove. The business man was more likely to get half-price for a second-hand "Holiday Annual" than quarter-price for a second-hand Latin dick.

"Is it a go?" asked Bunter.

"Yep!"

Fisher T. Fish put the "Holiday Annual" under his arm and retired from the study, without having made potato scrapings of the fat Owl.

Bunter grinned after him as he went, and hoped that Vernon-Smith would not miss a "Holiday Annual" from his study.

But that hope proved ill-founded. The Bounder, as it happened, was in the middle of a story in that entrancing publication, and after prep that evening he looked for it to take down to the Rag.

There was a vacant space on the book-shelf—Study No. 4 where a "Holiday Annual" once had been.

"You had that Annual, Reddy?" asked the Bounder.

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"No," answered Redwing.

"Where the deuce is it, then?"

"Must be on the shelf."

"Well, look!" grunted Smithy.

Redwing looked, but he looked in vain. The "Holiday Annual" undoubtedly was gone. Smithy's brow grew thunderous. After what had happened the previous evening, he fancied he could guess what had become of that volume.

"By gad!" said Smithy. "If Fishy has got it—"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Redwing.

Herbert Vernon-Smith stamped out of the study. He stamped up the Remove passage. He did not, like Harry Wharton in search of his dictionary, inquire at every study for a possible borrower. He headed direct for Study No. 14.

Johnny Bull and Squiff were leaving the study. Fisher T. Fish was still there. He had a "Holiday Annual" in his hand which he had just been endeavouring to sell to one of his study-mates. He gave Smithy a welcoming look as he stared in.

"Say, Smithy, you want a 'Holiday Annual'?" he asked.

"Exactly what I do want!" said Vernon-Smith grimly.

"Then I guess we can do a trade!" said Fisher T. Fish briskly. "I'm letting this one go for half-a-crown—quite good condition, too."

"Let's look at it!"

Fisher T. Fish handed over the volume, and Smithy looked at it. He had not, as it happened, written his name in it. But he knew his own "Holiday Annual"—with the page turned down at the point where he had left off reading it.

"Taking it off my hands!" asked Fishy.

"Exactly!" agreed Vernon-Smith. "As it happens to be mine, I'm taking it off your hands, Fishy, and I'm going to snop up the study with you for bagging it, too."

"What?" yelled Fisher T. Fish. "Say, I got that from Bunter! That fat clam handed it to me to settle, and I—I say—yarcocoo!"

The next few minutes were packed with excitement and incident.

Smithy, with an aching bump on his head, was not in a good temper; he was, in fact, just in the right temper to give Fisher T. Fish a severe lesson to be a little more circumspect in the management of his second-hand business.

He smote him right, and he smote him left; he rolled him over, he banged him with the "Holiday Annual," and finally he jammed his bony head into the coal-box, and left it there when he walked away with his property.

Fisher T. Fish extracted a dizzy head from the coal-box and spluttered.

He could only splutter. He was feeling too used up even to make potato scrapings of Billy Bunter. He rubbed coal dust from his bony features and spluttered.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Prospect of Power!

"SOMETHING for you, Bunter!"

"Oh, good!" said Bunter.

In morning break, the next day, fellows were looking for letters. Billy Bunter, of course, was there—eager, as usual, to see whether his postal order had arrived, but also interested in another matter. The fat Owl's celebrated postal order had not arrived, but a small folded pamphlet

had, and Bob Cherry handed it down to Bunter.

Bunter opened it eagerly.

It was the "Path to Power" at last! Billy Bunter had been greatly taken with that advertisement in the newspaper, and he could not help thinking that it was well worth a shilling to be shown the path to power. It was really cheap at the price, as it was Fisher T. Fish's shilling that had been expended.

Fishy was still annoying Bunter about that shilling. He seemed, indeed, to be worse than ever, since Bunter had settled the debt with Smithy's "Holiday Annual." It was in vain that Bunter had offered him a very handsome volume of "Milton's Poems" in a fresh settlement. Fishy had misgivings that the owner of that volume might turn up and cause more trouble in Study No. 14.

But the fat Owl forgot Fishy and his persecution now. With the "Path to Power" under a fat arm, he rolled out into the quad, very curious and interested to open that valuable little booklet, and see what it contained.

He sat on one of the old benches under the ancient elms, and blinked into it.

It was a work on the subject of hypnotism.

Hypnotism was one of the many subjects of which Billy Bunter knew nothing. Still, as he had paid a shilling—Fishy's shilling—for the book, he decided to have a look at it.

Having had a look at it, he became interested.

According to Professor Rook, the writer of that valuable volume, hypnotic power was within the grasp of anyone fitted by nature to exercise the same, and instructions, with diagrams, were given for practice.

The professor gave a list of required qualifications—strong will, dominant personality, unyielding determination, and strength of character.

This made Bunter feel rather hopeful, as he possessed all these qualifications—at least, he fancied he did.

Certain passes had to be made with the hands, while the eyes—full of strong will and dominant personality—were fixed on those of the intended victim.

This seemed rather easy to Bunter.

Any fool could learn those passes, he considered, and if any fool could, there was no doubt that Bunter could. He had, at least, that qualification.

Once the hypnotic influence was on the wretched victim was the slave of the hypnotist's will. This was the path to power. Great good could be done by this means. Pain could be relieved. You put the hypnotic influence on a fellow who had a headache or a toothache, and banished the pain. A lazy fellow could be bucked up by the same means. A sorrowing person could be made to forget a loss. Much good, in fact, could be done by a hypnotist exercising his magic power for good ends.

"By gum!" said Bunter.

He was getting deeply interested. It was quite a blow to him when the bell rang for third school, and interrupted his perusal of the professor's instructions.

It was very annoying to have to go into Form, and bother about Quelch and Latin prose and such stuff, when the path to power was just opening before Bunter.

However, Bunter slipped the pamphlet into his pocket and went. In third school he gave rather less attention than usual to Mr. Quelch.

He was thinking of great possibilities. If there were anything in hypnosis, he, according to the professor's

description, was just the fellow to make his mark at it. He could do ventriloquism. Why not hypnotism as well?

True, his weird ventriloquial gifts had earned him more kicks than he pence in the Remove. But hypnotism was quite a different thing.

With such power in his hands, he could make the other fellows too the line. As soon as ever he had mastered those passes he was going to put the thing to the test. There were subjects ready for him in the Remove. Smithy had a lingering headache from Coker's howling performances; suppose he began by banishing Smithy's headache under the hypnotic influence! Then, if it would make a narrowing person forget a loss, he might put it on Fishy and hear the end of that bob! He might put it on Quelch and get off lessons! At this happy thought Bunter's face brightened.

Still, he resolved to make quite sure before he tried it on Quelch! Quelch was rather a dangerous customer if anything happened to go amiss.

But how useful it would be in exams, too. You put the influence on the examiners and passed without doing any work! This was another very happy thought.

"Bunter!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter, as Bob Cherry kicked him under the desk.

He blinked round. Deep in day-dreams, seeing himself already a terrific hypnotist with unlimited power in his fat hands, Bunter had rather forgotten where he was, and quite forgotten that he was supposed to be giving a spot of attention to his Form-master.

Mr. Quelch's gimlet eye was gleaming at him.

"Bunter, I have spoken to you twice!" rapped the Remove master.

"Oh! Have you, sir?" gasped Bunter. "I never heard you, sir—I mean, I—I heard every word you said, sir; I—I was listening all the time."

"You will take a hundred lines, Bunter, for inattention!"

"Oh eriker!"

After that Bunter tried to banish more important matters from his fat mind and give some attention to the less important matter of lessons.

Bunter did not like lines from Quelch. Quelch was a beast; he always asked a fellow for his lines.

Still, if the path to power turned up trumps, Bunter might never have to do those lines! If he got going as a hypnotist he might be able to put the fluence on Quelch and make him fancy that the lines had been handed in! He hoped so.

Bunter had a hopeful nature.

Class was over at last, and the fat junior was able to get away and turn his attention to things that really mattered.

For the first time in history Billy Bunter did not count the minutes between the end of third lesson and the ringing of the dinner-bell.

Even dinner took a second place to this glorious prospect of treading the path to power.

Bunter scuttled off to that bench under the elms, opened the book, and glued his eyes and his spectacles on the diagrams within.

It looked easy enough, to Bunter. Propping the book open, he began to make the passes with his fat hands, as depicted in the diagrams.

It was just then that Fisher T. Fish spotted him and bore down on him—in eager and earnest quest of a shilling!

But at the sight of the fat junior sitting under the elms, waving his fat hands about in front of his fat little nose, Fisher T. Fish paused in astonishment.

His first impression was that Bunter was waving away a bee, or a wasp. But there was no insect of any kind to be seen near Bunter.

He was apparently waving his hands about for no reason whatever, unless he had gone cracked.

"Wake snakes!" murmured the startled Fishy.

He gazed at Bunter.

Unheeding, unseeing, the fat junior weaved patterns in the air with his fat paws! His fat face was intent and serious. He waved and waved, and waved and waved!

"Say, you fat clam, what's got you?" exclaimed Fisher T. Fish at last. He came no nearer—if Bunter had gone cracked Fishy did not want to be the fellow to get the first benefit of it.

Bunter started as he became aware of Fishy's proximity. He gave him an irritated blink through his big spectacles.

"Goroot, you beast!" he yapped.

"I guess I'm asking you for a bob!" booted Fisher T. Fish.

Bunter's eyes gleamed through his spectacles. He had not had a lot of practice so far. Still, it cost nothing to try it on. This was a chance, at least, to ascertain whether he was making any progress.

Up came his fat hands again, waving and weaving at Fisher T. Fish's astonished face. Fishy blinked at him. He goggled at him. Unless Bunter had gone "loco," there was no understanding these antics. Fishy backed a pace away. He was prepared to handle Bunter in his normal state, but he was not prepared to handle a lunatic.

"Go!" commanded Bunter.

"Search me!" gasped Fishy.

"Forget about that shilling!" said Bunter.

"Wha-a-t?"

"Banish it completely from your mind!" said Bunter.

"Gee-whis!"

Bunter took a surreptitious squint at the book. Then, rising to his feet, he advanced on Fisher T. Fish, waving fat hands at him and fixing him with a steady stare crammed with strength of character and dominating personality.

Fisher T. Fish backed away.

As Bunter advanced he backed farther.

"Go!" commanded Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish jumped back like a kangaroo.

He could have no further doubt that Bunter had gone out of his mind. A fellow who waved his hands about and glared through his spectacles and said "Go!" in a deep voice seemed to Fishy a fellow that it was safer to keep at a distance. Fisher T. Fish went—in fact, he scuttled!

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bunter, blinking after him.

He grinned with satisfaction as he sat down again. It did not occur to his fat brain that Fisher T. Fish, fancying that he had gone off his chump, was alarmed. He attributed Fishy's retreat to the hypnotic influence. Already, it seemed, he had power in his hands. This was a good beginning.

When the dinner-bell rang Bunter crammed the "Path to Power" into his pocket and rolled off to the House, a happy and hopeful Bunter. He was not, of course, going to let anybody see that valuable book. He did not want a lot of rival hypnotists in the Remove. Bunter alone was going to exercise this strange, this tremendous, this terrifying power—if all went well!

There was a bigger "if" in the matter than Bunter, at the moment, realised.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

What's Up With Bunter?

REMOVE fellows glanced at Billy Bunter at the dinner-table.

That was not uncommon! Fellows often wondered where he parked it all; moreover, Bunter was not above annexing another fellow's pudding if a fellow was unwary.

But more glances than usual were turned on Bunter now.

Two or three fellows, from a distance, had seen Bunter in the quad, waving his hands about in an inexplicable manner, and were perplexed—till they heard from Fisher T. Fish that Bunter had gone loco—which, being interpreted, meant that he had gone off his fat chump!

All the Remove knew that, in that direction, Bunter had not far to go. But had he gone?

According to the alarmed Fishy, he had brandished a pair of fat paws in the most extraordinary way and glared like a maniac. Such was Fishy's impression of the fixed, steady gaze in which Bunter had thrown all his strength of will and dominant personality!

Bunter seemed normal at dinner. He ate enough for four—that was the usual Bunter all right. He got possession of Lord Maulover's pudding and ate that also. That, too, was the usual Bunter. He whispered to Bob Cherry that a fellow never got enough to eat at school; that was one of his customary remarks. No unusual signs appeared till Mr. Quelch, who was at the head of the Remove table, rapped out:

"No more for Master Bunter, Spivens."

Spivens was the man who served at the Remove table. Quelch often kept an eye on Bunter and stopped him at the fifth or sixth helping of pudding or pie. This was one of Quelch's most beastly manners and customs.

Bunter breathed hard. He turned his spectacles on his Form-master, with a gleam in his eyes.

"You wait!" he breathed.

Bunter did not let Quelch hear that, of course. He was not yet prepared to deal with Quelch hypnotically.

But two or three fellows near Bunter heard that vengeful mutter, and stared at the fat Owl.

"What's Quelch to wait for, fashed?" inquired Bob Cherry.

"That's telling!" answered Bunter mysteriously.

"Ass!" remarked Bob.

"Yah!" retorted Bunter.

After dinner Billy Bunter cut after the Bounder when the Remove went out. Smithy was his next object for experiment.

Smithy had a hard nut, but Coker, with his cricket ball, had nearly cracked it. There was still a bruise, and, judging by the Bounder's uncertain temper, still a pain. Bunter was going to make him forget it—if he could! Hypnotism could do it, and Bunter's experience with Fishy had already shown—to Bunter, at least—that he could hypnotise. He was quite eager to try his new skill and power on a tough subject like Herbert Vernon-Smith.

"I say, old chap, still got a spot of pain in your napper?" asked the fat Owl sympathetically.

Vernon-Smith stared at him. It was rather unusual for Bunter to take an interest in another fellow's troubles.

"Just a spot!" he answered.

"Let me cure it for you?"

"Wha-a-t?"

"I can do it," said Bunter breezily.

THE MIGNET LAMARY.—No. 1,583.

"Just stand still, fix your eyes on mine, and think about nothing in particular."

These were directions from Professor Rook's book. But Smithy, who had never heard of Professor Rook, and never even dreamed that Billy Bunter had become a hypnotist, was only astonished.

"Off your chump?" he asked.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

Three or four fellows stopped to eye Bunter. It was beginning to look as if Fisher T. Fish had been right, and the fat Owl was losing his wits—such as they were.

"Potty!" murmured Skinner.

"Mad as a hatter!" breathed Bolsover major.

"The madfulness is terrific!"

More fellows gathered as Billy Bunter, with his eyes and spectacles glued on Smithy's astounded face, waved fat hands in the air.

Not a fellow guessed that these were hypnotic passes.

Why Bunter was sawing the atmosphere in this way was simply a mystery—unless he was off his rocker!

"Feel it coming on?" asked Bunter.

"What!" gasped the Bouncer.

"Oh, nothing!" said Bunter hastily.

He was not going to mention that he was putting on the hypnotic influence. That would have given his secret away.

"You mad as a! Stop slinging your silly paws at me, or I'll boot you!" said Vernon-Smith. "I'll boot you, anyway!"

And he did!

Bunter ceased to make hypnotic passes. He roared. Professor Rook himself, probably, would have failed to get the fluence on with his intended victim booting him on the trousers!

The fat hypnotist gave it up on the spot. He roared, and fled, the Bouncer glaring after him.

"Must be bumpy!" said Bob Cherry, in wonder.

"Poor old Bunter!" said Johnny Bull. "I never knew he had a mind to wander in, but he's wandering in it now."

Billy Bunter retired to the Rag and an armchair, and a further study of the professor's book. He realised that he had not succeeded with Smithy as he had with Fisher T. Fish. More practice, it seemed, was required. After all, Rome was not built in a day!

Seldom was Billy Bunter seen deep in study. But the attractive idea of wielding irresistible power had quite taken hold of his fat mind, and he was going into this. He delved deep into that book of hypnotic instruction with an attention he had never bestowed on his lessons.

It was a half-holiday that afternoon, and most of the fellows were at cricket. Bunter had the Rag to himself until Lord Mauleverer drifted in.

Mauly was looking for a spot to take a little rest on that warm summer's afternoon. It was cool and shady in the Rag, and there were easy-chairs. Mauly sat down in one, and stretched his elegant legs, and put his hands behind his noble head, heedless of Bunter.

Bunter blinked at him. Smithy was a tough nut to crack; Mauly was a much more promising subject. Bunter began to make stealthy passes at Mauly as he reclined in the armchair.

Mauleverer observed him through half-closed eyes with mild wonder. Why Bunter was doing this Mauly did not know—unless it was some queer new kind of physical jerks. Neither did he care. Mauly was going to sleep, and if Bunter liked to wave his fat hands about Mauly did not mind.

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The fat hands weaved mystic patterns in the air. Billy Bunter watched his victim eagerly through his big spectacles. He was going to throw Mauly into the hypnotic slumber, and already Mauly's eyelids were drooping!

Bunter was getting on!

His fat arms ached a little. He was not used to physical jerks, but he kept on regardless.

Mauly's eyes closed.

That they had been about to close, anyhow, because Mauly had come into the Rag for a little nap in the armchair. Bunter did not know. What Bunter knew was that Mauly had slowly but surely sunk into slumber under the influence of those mystic passes.

"Sleep!" commanded Bunter.

Mauly slept!

"Are you awake, Mauly?"

No answer.

Bunter's eyes fairly glittered. He had done it. He was successful with Mauly as with Fisher T. Fish. There was Mauly, deep in slumber, and Bunter had no doubt that it was the hypnotic slumber.

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Bunter.

If this was not proof, Bunter would have liked to know what was.

Just as he had the gift of ventriloquism, so he had the gift of hypnosis—that was clear to Bunter.

He rolled, grinning, out of the Rag, leaving Lord Mauleverer in that hypnotic trance. Mauly, happily unaware that it was a hypnotic trance, slumbered peacefully.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Trying It On Coker!

"GET out!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith uttered those words, not in an agreeable tone. He addressed them to Billy Bunter.

Smithy had come up to his study after a spot of cricket. He still had a lingering ache in that bruise, and he was going to give it another rub with ointment. He did not seem at all pleased to see a fat face and a pair of big spectacles glimmering in at the door of Study No. 4.

Bunter, instead of getting out, got in. "I say, don't be shirty, old chap!" he said. "I say, how would you like to make Coker sit up for giving you that bump?"

Smithy unknitted his brows.

He had been thinking quite a lot on that subject since Coker's exploit with the cricket ball. Coker had not only given him a painful bump, but he had shoved him over. Had Coker been of a suitable size for a Remove fellow to punch, Smithy would have punched him long ago, and punched him hard. But a hefty Fifth Form man was, of course, too big for a Remove junior to punch. Smithy would have been quite pleased to hear of any practicable method of making Horace Coker "sit up."

"What do you mean?" he asked.

Bunter winked—a fat wink.

"I can do it," he said. "I've got power in my hands."

"Eh?"

"Wonderful power!" said Bunter impressively. "I can do things that no other fellow in the Form can do, Smithy."

"If you mean your silly, rotten, fat-headed ventriloquism—" grunted the Bouncer.

"Oh, no! Something else," said Bunter. "I'm not going to tell you what it is—it's rather a secret. But, look here, I can do practically what I like.

Later on, I'm going to try it on Quelch."

"Try what?" asked the mystified Bouncer.

"Oh, nothing! But I can jolly well tell you that Quelch had better mind his p's and q's!" said Bunter darkly. "Giving a fellow lines for nothing! I'm not going to do the lines old Quelch gave me, Smithy! I'll show him!"

Vernon-Smith gazed at the fat Owl. Hitherto he had not supposed, like some of the fellows, that Bunter had gone off his fat chump; he had only supposed that he was a silly idiot, as usual. Now, however, he wondered whether Bunter had.

"I've got the power in my hands!" continued Bunter. "I could make Quelch believe that he was a kangaroo if I liked—"

"What?"

"And jump all over the Form-room!" said Bunter.

"Oh crakes!" gasped Smithy.

There was no doubt now; Bunter was off his chump!

"But about Coker," went on Bunter. "Coker's just the subject—weak-minded, you know! I'm absolutely sure it would work with Coker! It worked all right with Fishy and Mauly—"

"What did?"

"Oh, nothing! I'm not telling you anything!" said Bunter astutely. "I'm keeping it dark—see! I mean to say, if it got out that there was a hypnotist in the Remove, fellows would get on their guard; and it's not so easy to put the fluence on when fellows are on their guard."

Vernon-Smith jumped.

"A—a—a hypnotist!" he stammered. "You—you—you're a hypnotist?"

"Don't you ask me any questions, Smithy, and I'll tell you no whoppers," answered Bunter. "I'm not saying anything about it."

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

Bunter was not off his chump! Smithy's first opinion, after all, had been the right one—he was not off his chump—he was only a silly idiot, as usual!

Bunter blinked at him.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" he said. "I'm keeping it dark, you know! I may be a hypnotist—or I may not! That's telling! I may have learned it out of a book—or I may not! I'm not saying anything! I'm keeping the whole thing absolutely dark at present."

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Smithy.

"But, without giving you any particulars, I'm keeping it dark," went on Bunter. "I can say this much—I've got enormous power in my hands. I ordered Fishy to walk away and forget all about that bob. Well, he walked off, and he hasn't asked me for it since. I put Mauly to sleep in the Rag—and left him sleeping like a top! Not much doubt about it after that, I fancy! What?"

Vernon-Smith gurgled. He quite forgot that he was in a bad temper. Bunter seemed to have an enlivening effect on him.

"Well, what about it?" asked Bunter. "Suppose I make Coker go and cheek his Form-master! Prout will whop him! What about that?"

"Oh, do!" gasped Vernon-Smith.

"Well, one good turn deserves another!" explained Bunter. "My postal order never came to-day, Smithy! Mind, I'm not on the make! I'm going to make Coker sit up, on your account, because—because I like you, old chap! Still, one good turn deserves another, Smithy."



Coker gripped the round, red ball, took a little run, and almost turned himself into a catherine-wheel. The ball flew, but not in the intended direction. "Yaroooh!" A frightful yell came from Vernon-Smith, who was dancing frantically with both hands clasped to his head.

Bunter eyed the Bounder rather anxiously.

"The postal order will be for ten bob," he went on. "It's absolutely certain to come—it's from one of my titled relations, you know. Only, being rather short of tin, I'd like to have the ten bob to-day. I will hand you the postal order immediately it comes to-morrow, Smithy. See?"

"I see!" gasped the Bounder. "It's a go, Bunter—as soon as you've made Coker sit up by hypnotising him."

Bunter's fat face beamed.

After two successes, he felt that there was no room for reasonable doubt. He had not had much luck with Smithy himself—but then everybody knew that the Bounder was a hard nut to crack. Coker of the Fifth was a much easier subject. Bunter had no doubt now about what he could do.

"All serene, then?" said Bunter confidently. "Coker's in his study now—I saw him go. Got that ten bob about you, Smithy?"

"Yes, and I'm keeping it about me—till you've put the fluence on Coker!" gurgled the Bounder.

Sniff, from Bunter.

"You can come and see me do it, if you like!" he retorted.

"Oh crumbs! I'll come as far as the end of the passage!" gasped Smithy. "I'd rather not be too near Coker when you put the fluence on!"

"Oh, he'll be quiet enough!" said Bunter cheerfully. "First of all, you know, I put him into the hypnotic trance, same as I did Mauly. After that he's the slave of my will. I could make him go and punch the Head's nose, if I liked."

"Oh errikey!"

"But I won't do that," said Bunter generously. "He would be sacked.

you know. He's rather a beast—he's kicked me more than once—but I won't get the chap sacked. I'll make him go and slang Frost."

"Do!" gurgled Smithy.

"Come on, then!" said Bunter.

Vernon-Smith followed Bunter from the study. He followed him in wonder. That even Bunter could be fat-head enough to fancy that there was anything in hypnotism, or that, if there was, that he could hypnotise, Smithy could hardly believe. It was true that Bunter was the biggest ass going—but this really was the limit.

Smithy was quite interested to see the outcome of this experiment on Coker of the Fifth. He did not think that it would cost him ten shillings!

He followed Bunter to the corner of the Fifth Form passage. He remained there, while the happy and confident fat Owl rolled up the passage to Horace Coker's study. From the corner he watched Billy Bunter disappear into that study.

He waited for the result!

He had not long to wait! What transpired inside the study he did not know; but he knew what transpired outside! Bunter did—in a dying heap!

Bunter had been less than a minute in Coker's study. Perhaps that did not give him time to get the fluence on! Perhaps the fluence wouldn't have gone on, anyhow! At all events, Bunter flew out of the doorway—and Smithy, looking along the passage, saw a large foot appear from that doorway after Bunter. That was all he saw of Coker.

"Oh! Yow! Yaroooh!" came a roar from the fat Owl of the Remove.

Bunter came down the passage at top speed. Perhaps he fancied that

Coker was following him from the study.

He whirled round the corner, passing Smithy unheeded. He cut across the landing and vanished—leaving the Bounder yelling with laughter.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Skinner Under The Fluence!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. grinned.

Every fellow in the Rag grinned.

Grimacing faces on all sides surrounded Bunter when he appeared in the Rag that evening.

Even Fisher T. Fish grinned—his first grin since the disastrous and irreparable loss of thirtypence.

By that time all the Remove knew what was up with Bunter. Bunter was still keeping it dark, in his own inimitable way—but Smithy was not—Smithy had told the fellows that they had a hypnotist in their midst, evoking howls of merriment.

Now everybody knew, and the sight of Billy Bunter, rolling into the Rag, was the signal for a general outbreak of grinning and chuckling and chortling.

One touch of Nature, according to Shakespeare, makes the whole world kin. It was certain that one touch of Bunter made the whole Rag grin!

Billy Bunter blinked round him, through his big spectacles, in surprise. He could see that there was some joke on; but he could not see what it was.

"I say, you fellows, what's the joke?" asked Bunter.

"You, old fat beast!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

(Continued on page 16.)

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(Continued from page 13.)

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"He ain't loco, after all!" said Fisher T. Fish. "He's just the world's prize boob! Jest the boob from Goochville!"

"Oh, really, Fishy—"

"Let's see you do it, Bunter," suggested Skinner. "We're all fearfully interested. Smithy says you're a hypnotist—"

The fat Owl blinked at Smithy.

"Eh? How did you know, Smithy?" asked Bunter, in surprise. "I never told you. I remember saying to you that I am keeping it dark, and wasn't going to tell anybody."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it!" said Bob Cherry. "Let's have a performance, Bunter. Pick out your man, and put the jolly old fluence on!"

"Well, I didn't mean it to get out," said Bunter. "Still, if you fellows want to know, I can hypnotise. I'm nearly as good a hypnotist as I am a ventriloquist, and you know my wonderful ventriloquism—"

"Never mind that—stick to the hypnotism!" urged Bob. "Put it on Skinner, and make him swallow the cigarettes he's got in his pocket."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I jolly well could!" said Bunter. "I've hypnotised two fellows already. I can jolly well tell you. It's a gift, really, like my wonderful ventriloquism; but you have to have a strong will and a determined character and a dominant personality—that's where I come in strong, you know. Only I haven't had a lot of practice, so far, and I got some of the pames mixed—and, of course, that rather spoils the effect. But for that, I should have got the fluence on Coker to-day—"

"Poor old Coker!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The easiest subject," went on Bunter, retelling the knowledge he had gained from the "Path to Power," "is a rather weak-minded sort of chap. I'll try on you, Nugent, if you like."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled all the Rag, quite amused by the expression on Frank Nugent's face, as Bunter made that offer.

"You cheeky, fat-headed blithering owl!" roared Nugent.

"Well, I mean, you'd be a good subject, being a bit soft!" explained Bunter. "The softer, the better, you know, for hypnotism."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Try me!" urged Skinner.

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter. "You see, a fellow like Smithy is hard to hypnotise—obstinate and pigheaded, you know. But you'll be all right, Skinner. So long as a fellow's a bit of a nincompoop, it comes easy."

"You burbling bluster—"

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

Skinner's object was to pull the fat Owl's leg; but he nearly changed his mind and kicked him instead. However, he restrained that natural desire.

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"Go it!" he said.

"Fix your eyes on mine, and think of nothing in particular!" said Bunter. "As far as you can, think of absolutely nothing at all."

"Think of Bunter's brains, Skinner," suggested Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You shut up, Toddy! Don't jaw while I'm putting the fluence on Skinner. It spoils the effect!"

Bunter fixed his eyes, and his spectacles on Harold Skinner. He waved his fat hands, weaving patterns in the air.

The whole crowd in the Rag watched him.

Bunter had a large and deeply interested audience. It was true that the fellows were all grinning, and evidently regarded this as a comic entertainment. But they were going to take a different view. Bunter considered, when he got the fluence on! They would realise what terrible power he had in his hands. They would be duly impressed—in fact, scared!

On the whole, Bunter was not sorry that the secret had come out. Bunter liked an audience. He liked the limelight. He liked to show off. He liked to reveal what a tremendously clever fellow he was. And there was no doubt that he was going to impress the juniors, when he put Skinner into a hypnotic trance and made him believe himself a monkey, and set him climbing up the curtains. That was what Bunter was going to do—and when he did it, there was no doubt that the Grayfriars fellows would be tremendously impressed, indeed awed!

The fat hands wagged and waved and weaved.

To the surprise of some of the fellows—not at all to Bunter—a decaying expression came over Skinner's face, and his eyelids drooped.

Bunter grinned with satisfaction.

Skinner, evidently, was not a tough subject, like Smithy or Coker! He was going right under the fluence like Mauly.

Bunter wagged and waved and weaved industriously.

"Sleep!" he commanded suddenly.

Skinner's eyes closed.

Billy Bunter grinned round triumphantly.

"That's the hypnotic trance, you fellows!" he announced.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Some trance!"

"The trancefulness is terrific."

"Skinner, now, is the absolute slave of my will!" said Bunter. "I can keep him asleep like that, standing up, as long as I like."

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

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at!" yapped Bunter.

But if Bunter could not, the other fellows could!

One of Skinner's eyes had opened, for a moment, long enough to wink—and then closed again. This was lost on the short-sighted Owl of the Remove; but as every other fellow in the Rag saw that wink, they knew exactly how deep Harold Skinner was in the hypnotic trance!

"Oh, stop cackling!" said Bunter crossly. "I can tell you, this isn't a laughing matter. Hypnotism is a jolly serious thing. In bad hands it could do a fearful lot of harm. For instance, I could make Skinner go and pinch something out of Quelch's study!"

"Oh crumey!"

"I could make him go and dot Dr. Locke in the eye, and get cacked for it!" said Bunter.

"Oh crumbs!"

"He is simply the slave of my will, and my lightest wish is law to him,"

said the fat hypnotist. "I could make him chuck a chair at your head, Cherry."

"I don't think!" gurgled Bob.

"Well, I could! I could make him smack your face, Wharton!"

"Please don't!" said the captain of the Remove, laughing. "As you are strong, be merciful, old fat boss!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll just show you what I can do, now he is under the fluence!" said Bunter. "Skinner! Open your eyes!"

Skinner opened his eyes.

"Now, Skinner, listen to me! You're going to believe everything I say to you," announced Bunter.

"Chap needs hypnotising to do that!" murmured Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, shut up! Skinner, you're a dog! Now, what are you, Skinner?"

"I'm a dog!" answered Skinner solemnly.

"You see that, you fellows," said the fat Owl triumphantly. "Skinner's absolutely unconscious of his own identity now, under the hypnotic influence. I've made him believe he's a dog."

"Oh crumbs!"

"Now, Skinner, bark!" ordered Bunter.

"Bow-wow-wow!" came from Skinner.

Billy Bunter beamed. He had been sure of his wonderful powers—still, it was very gratifying to receive proof like this, with the whole Form looking on. He had made Skinner, under the mystic fluence, believe that he was a dog, and bark! At least, he was convinced that he had.

"That's pretty plain, isn't it?" said Bunter. "It's chiefly a masterly personality and a dominating will that does it, you know. I could make you put me in the Remove eleven to play Highlife, Wharton, just by putting the fluence on you. Easy!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Skinner!" rapped Bunter. "You're no longer a dog—you're a donkey! Now, what are you, Skinner?"

"A donkey!" answered Skinner submissively.

"Not such a donkey as Bunter!" murmured Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bray!" ordered Bunter.

"Hee-haw!" brayed Skinner. "Hee-hee-haw!"

"I fancy you fellows can see now that I'm a pretty good hypnotist!" said Bunter complacently. "What?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, Skinner—I say, keep where you are—what are you up to?" roared Bunter, as the hypnotised subject suddenly rushed at him and began to kick him. "Stop it—what are you up to, you fathead?"

"I'm a donkey!" explained Skinner.

"Donkey's kick!"

"Yaroooooh!"

Thud, thud!

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Rag, almost in convulsions.

"I say, you fellows, hold him—I say, stoppin'!" howled Bunter, dodging wildly round the table, with Skinner in pursuit, still kicking. "I say, something's gone wrong—yaroooooh! Keep off, you beast! You're not a donkey, Skinner—do you hear—you're not a donkey—"

"I jolly well am," declared Skinner, "and I'm a kicking donkey, too!"

Thud, thud, thud!

"Ow! Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

This was quite an unexpected outcome to Bunter. It was not quite as unexpected to the other fellows. They roared with laughter as Bunter fled

frantically round the table with Skinner in hot pursuit, landing one at nearly every step.

The fluence had gone on, quite easily! But it did not seem so easy to get it off again! Skinner obstinately persisted that he was still a donkey, and therefore entitled to kick—and he did kick, hard and often—till the hapless hypnotist fled, yelling, from the Rag, and slammed the door after him.

Whereupon Skinner immediately recovered from the fluence!

Bunter left the Rag rocking with laughter. Billy Bunter had often added, unintentionally, to the gaiety of existence at Greyfriars School; but the Remove fellows agreed, without a dissentient voice, that Bunter as a hypnotist took the whole cake.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Coker Gets The Idea!

"IT'S a queer thing!" said Coker of the Fifth, rubbing his nose thoughtfully.

Potter and Greene looked at him.

Coker was at tea in his study with his friends; and for some time Coker had been silent and thoughtful. Both were unusual. Coker was seldom silent, and he was not much given to thinking.

Coker came out of a brown study, as it were, with that unexpected remark, rubbing his nose thoughtfully as he made it.

"Whaaa-t!" ejaculated Potter. "What did you say, Coker?"

"I said it was a queer thing," answered Coker, still rubbing his nose in that thoughtful, reflective way.

"Well, I shouldn't worry, old chap," said Potter kindly. "It may be a bit queer, but we can't help our noses."

It was a natural misapprehension on Potter's part. As Coker was rubbing his nose when he remarked that it was a queer thing, Potter supposed that he was alluding to his nose. Coker's nose was, in fact, a bit unusual. All his features were of a rugged cast.

Indeed, after A.R.P. drill one day, Price of the Fifth had actually asked Coker why he hadn't taken his gas-mask off, affecting to notice no difference between Coker's features and the gas-mask.

"No; don't you worry, Coker," said Greene, as kindly as Potter. "I've seen worse noses than yours." Greene did not state where he had seen them.

Coker stared at his studymates. He was following his own train of thought, and did not catch on. Coker himself was unaware that his nose was a queer thing.

"What are you talking about, you silly asses?" snapped Coker. "I said it was a queer thing, and so it is! I heard the fags talking about it to-day; some of them were laughing."

"Cheeky!" said Potter. "Fags will laugh at anything. I shouldn't mind."

"Mind!" repeated Coker. "Why should I mind, you ass?"

"Well, some fellows would," said Greene. "But, after all, looks ain't everything. If a fellow's plain, he's plain."

"Are you fellows wandering in your minds?" asked Coker. "If not, what the thump are you talking about?"

Coker did not wait for an answer to his question. Coker had little use for answers. Conversation with Coker was mostly on the one-way system.

"It's jolly queer," went on Coker, "but there may be something in it."

"A gnat, perhaps!" suggested Potter,

still under the impression that Coker was talking about his nose.

"A gnat!" repeated Coker blankly.

"I got a gnat in my nose the other day," said Greene. "Lots of them about this hot weather."

"Blow your nose! Who's talking about noses?" hooted Coker.

"Eh? Aren't you?"

"You silly ass, I'm talking about what happened in the Rag last evening," snorted Coker. "As I said, it's a queer thing."

Potter and Greene realized that there was a misunderstanding. Coker was not, after all, talking about his nose. That was not the queer thing to which he had alluded.

"Did anything happen in the Rag?" asked Potter. "Those fags are always up to something or other."

"It's a queer thing, but there may be something in it," said Coker, with a return of his thoughtful manner. "As Spokeshave says—I mean Shakespeare—there were some what-do-you-call-'ems in what's-its-name and thumgumny, than are dreamt of in your thumgumboh."

"Oh!" gasped Potter. "Do you mean, there are some things in the heavens and the earth, than are dreamt of in your philosophy?"

"That's what I said," answered Coker. "You fellows ever heard of hypnotism?"

"Hypnotism?" repeated Potter and Greene.

"Yes. From what I've been hearing, there's a kid in the Remove who can hypnotize—that fat kid Bunter. As I said, it's a queer thing, but there may be something in it. I don't know a lot about hypnotism; but you wave your hands, or something, and it puts on a magic influence, or—or something, and then the chap does whatever you tell him, or—or something."

"Gammon!" said Potter.

"Spool!" said Greene.

Coker looked at them coldly. In point of fact, Coker rather fancied himself that hypnotism was all gammon and spool. But it was sufficient for any fellow to express an opinion for Coker to take the opposite view. Horace Coker was built that way.

"I don't see that it's all gammon and spool," he retorted. "Shakespeare knew what he was talking about when he said there were more things in thumgumny and thumgumboh, than are dreamt of in your what's-its-name. From what I hear, that fat kid Bunter actually put the fluence on one of the fags, and made him believe that he was a donkey."

"Must have been one already," said Potter sippantly.

"Don't be an ass, Potter! That is, if you can help it, I mean. A lot of the fags were talking about it and laughing. I dare say it was funny enough, if the kid actually believed himself a donkey, and started kicking. It seems that he started kicking Bunter all over the shop, believing that he was a donkey, you know, under the hypnotic influence."

"I'll believe that when I see it," remarked Greene.

"Well, a lot of the Remove fags saw it, from what I heard!" snapped Coker. "Mind, I don't say I believe it, but I've got an open mind. I don't jump to conclusions like silly fools—like you fellows, Frinstance. If there's anything in it, look what a fellow could do!"

Coker's face was very thoughtful indeed.

"Oh, rather!" grinned Potter,

"Might get Bunter to put the fluence on Frost, and get us off Latin."

"Or on the Head, and get the school an extra holiday," said Greene.

"Well, that would be rather unscrupulous," said Coker, shaking his head. "I couldn't approve of anything of that kind. But suppose a fellow was a silly fool, and he was made to act sensibly under the hypnotic influence, what about that?"

"Good!" said Potter heartily. "If Bunter can put the fluence on you to that extent, Coker—"

"I'm talking about Blandell."

"Eh?"

"You know what a fool he is; not a bad chap, but an utter fool!" said Coker. "He keeps me out of the Form eleven."

"Oh crumbs!"

"Even out of practice matches," said Coker. "He makes out I can't bowl, owing to my foot slipping the other day, you know, when I was showing him. If I were a hypnotist, I should certainly put the fluence on Blandell, and make him play the best cricketer in the Form. That would give old Wingate a chance to see how I shape, and he might have sense enough to shove me into the first eleven—see? That would mean rather a record season, wouldn't it?"

"Oh crickey!"

"I mean to say, we all want to win matches for Greyfriars," said Coker. "I'm not the chap to push my claims, as you know."

"Eh?"

"But a fellow has to think of the school. A series of whacking wins on the cricket field—what?" said Coker. "I mean, with my bowling, not to speak of my batting, we should go ahead pretty fast. If Wingate put me in the first eleven, I should not only put up the best game of cricket that ever has been put up in this school, I should be in a position to advise Wingate, and prevent him from making a fool of himself, you know, as he so often does. You see, I know the game."

"Oh!" gasped Potter and Greene.

"Personally," explained Coker, "I should be willing to stand aside, and let them fumble and fizzle as much as they liked. But a fellow must think of the school. If there was any way of getting round Blandell's fatheaded obstinacy, and making him play the best cricketer in the Form, I should feel justified."

"The which?" gasped Potter. "The best which?"

"The whatter!" gasped Greene.

"The best whatter?"

"Mind, there may be nothing in this," said Coker. "Probably there isn't. Still, it certainly seems odd about that kid being made to believe that he was a donkey, and starting kicking all over the shop. I shall look into it—with an open mind, of course. What are you fellows laughing at?"

added Coker, in surprise, staring at Potter and Greene.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Potter and Greene.

They did not tell Coker what they were laughing at. They just roared.

Whether there was, or wasn't, anything in hypnotism, the idea of putting the fluence on the captain of the Fifth, to make him play the worst cricketer that ever was, was too much for Potter and Greene. They yelled.

"Look here—" roared Coker wrathfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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Coker shoved, and the door flew open with the swiftness of a lightning flash. It caught Bunter on his fat little nose and pitched him across the study. Unable to stop himself, Coker followed the door in. "Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter, as he landed on his back. "Yoo-hoop!" raved Coker, as he flew.

"I don't want any!" grunted Coker. He was willing to feed Bunter, for reasons of his own, but he disdained to gobble cake with a fag.

"Oh, good!" said Bunter.

Gobble, gobble!

Coker opened his mouth several times, though not to gobble cake; but he shut it again. He was going to question Bunter about that very odd happening in the Rag, of which he had heard. If there was anything in it, great possibilities opened before Coker. Perhaps that was the chief reason why Coker fancied, or hoped that there might be something in it.

But, as he watched Bunter gobbling cake, he doubted very much. Potter and Greene thought it was all rot, which was a reason for Coker to think that it wasn't all rot! But—

Bunter got through the cake at last. Fat and shiny, and with a rather tight feeling under his well-filled waistcoat, he blinked at Coker through his big spectacles. He was quite puzzled. Why Coker had asked him there for cake was still a mystery to him. He supposed that Coker must want something, but he could not guess what Coker wanted.

"What's this I hear about you being a hypnotist?" asked Coker at last.

"Oh!" ejaculated Bunter.

So that was it!

"Gammoo, I suppose?" said Coker.

"Oh, really, Coker! If you'd seen me put the fluence on Skinner last evening in the Rag—" exclaimed Bunter warmly.

"Well, I've heard about it," said Coker. "I'm—rather interested in—in hypnotism, Bunter. Look here, did you really put the fluence on a Remove kid?"

"You should have seen him!" answered Bunter cheerfully. "I made him believe he was a donkey, and he brayed and kicked."

"That's what I heard," said Coker, eyeing him. "Well, if you could put the fluence on a fag you could put it on me."

"Easily!" answered Bunter.

"Well, do it, then!" said Coker.

"Oh!" said Bunter.

"If you're only bragging," said Coker, "I'll jolly well take a stump to you and give you a jolly good hiding! See? If you can do it, do it! I'd like to know. I've got a reason. Now, get on with it."

Billy Bunter blinked at him with a secret qualm. The fact was that since that hilarious scene in the Rag Bunter had learned that Skinner had only been pulling his leg, and had not been under the hypnotic influence at all.

So at present Bunter rather hoped than believed that he had the wonderful gift of hypnotism. He had definitely postponed hypnotising Mr. Quelch and getting off his lines.

He had, in fact, done the lines, feeling that he had better put in some more practice with those magic passes before he tackled the Remove master.

He was quite willing to experiment on Coker, but he was not willing to be stumped if he failed to get the fluence on. And he realised that he might—possibly—fail.

"If you can do it," went on Coker, "all right. In that case you can be jolly useful to me, and I'll give you a hamper I've had from my aunt."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. His eyes glistened behind his spectacles. He knew Coker's hampers.

"But if you can't, I'll jolly well stomp you for wasting my time!" said Coker grimly. "Now, go it!"

Billy Bunter breathed hard.

He understood now why he was there, and why Coker had stood him a cake. If he could hypnotise, Coker was going to make use of that weird and wonder-

ful power. But if he couldn't, Coker was going to stomp him. Obviously Coker meant what he said—indeed, he picked up a cricket stump and placed it on the table in readiness.

It was rather an awkward position for a fat hypnotist who was not certain of his powers. It was useless to bolt from the study; Coker's long legs would overtake him in a twinkling.

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter. "You have to sit down and fix your eyes on mine, and I make some passes, and—there you are. As soon as I've got you under the fluence I'll make you crawl down the passage on your tummy and mew like a cat."

"You dare to do anything of the kind and I'll kick you all over the school!" roared Coker.

"That's all right; you won't know," explained Bunter. "Once you're in the hypnotic trance you know nothing; you're simply the slave of my will. I can make you stand on your head in the quad. I can make you walk into Prouit's study and call him an old donkey."

Coker gasped at the idea.

"Now I'll put the fluence on," said Bunter. "Afterwards you'll be quite astonished at the funny things you'll hear you've done."

"I—I—I think perhaps you'd better let me see you put the fluence on somebody else," said Coker hastily.

Coker realised that there were drawbacks to putting the matter to the test personally. Coker had his dignity to consider—a very serious matter with Coker.

Crawling down the passage and mew-ing like a cat, or standing on his head in the quad, did not appeal to Coker in the least. Certainly such a happening would have proved Bunter's hypnotic

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powers beyond a doubt. Still, Coker did not like the idea.

On the whole, it was more prudent, Coker thought, to test Bunter's powers on some other fellow whose dignity did not matter.

"Well, I'm ready, if you are," said Bunter breezily. "Look here, suppose I make you go into the games study, before all the Fifth Form fellows, and Bray like a donkey. What about that?"

Coker shuddered at the bare possibility.

That settled it for Coker. Bunter fancied that it would—and it did! Horace shook his head decidedly.

"You can try it on some other chap in my presence," said Coker. "On the whole, I think it would be better to see it done than to go through it personally."

Bunter was glad to hear it. This meant getting out of Coker's study unscathed, at any rate.

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter. "If you'd rather—"

"I would," said Coker firmly.

"Then I'll tell you what," said Bunter. "I'll put the fluence on a Remove man, and make him come here and crawl round the study and mew like a cat and bark like a dog—what?"

"If you could do that—" gasped Coker.

"I've done it, and can do it again, as easy as falling off a form!" said Bunter cheerfully. "Where's that hamper?"

"Never mind the hamper now. Go and fetch some Remove chap and let me see it done," said Coker. "You can have the hamper afterwards."

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter. And he rolled out of the study. "I won't keep you waiting long, Coker."

Coker was left in a very thoughtful mood. Really it looked to Coker as if there was something in it. Bunter seemed confident enough, and it was going to be put to the test under Coker's eyes. Coker was quite impatient for Bunter's return. For probably the first time in history, there was a fellow anxious to see Billy Bunter come back after he had departed.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Wants A Backer!

"FORGET it, Smithy," murmured Bob Cherry.

The Bounder grunted angrily.

Herbert Vernon-Smith was in Study No. 1 with the Famous Five, and they were not talking cricket. Smithy was rubbing a lingering bruise, which had a lingering ache in it.

"The fool nearly brained me!" he growled.

"Accidents will happen, old chap," said Harry Wharton.

"Especially when Coker gets hold of a cricket ball," said Frank Nugent, laughing. "You should have given him plenty of sea-room, Smithy."

"He shoved me over!" granted Smithy. "I was going to punch his silly head, and he shoved me over!"

He scowled round the study. "Look here, Potter and Greene have gone down to the cricket; I saw them. Nearly all the Fifth are out; but Coker's sticking in his study, for some reason. It's a chance to get him on his own and rag him baldheaded."

The Famous Five smiled and shook their heads. They had no objection to a rag, in principle, and they had ragged Coker of the Fifth often enough; but

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really they could not consider that old Horace wanted ragging for that accident with the cricket ball. Moreover, several days had passed since it had happened—and it was not quite the thing to remember offences so long.

Perhaps the Bounder would have forgotten it, but for the lingering pain in the lingering bruise. So long as he had a pain in his napper he was likely to have a pain in his temper.

"Well, if you won't back me up, you won't," he grunted. "I'll jolly well make Coker sit up, all the same! If he thinks he can lay his cheeky paws on me he's going to find out his mistake!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, my hat! Bunter again!" said Bob Cherry. "Come back for another kick, Bunter! You kick him, Smithy; you're nearest!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I say, you fellows, this is rather important," said the fat Owl, rolling into the study. "I say, you know what Coker's hampers are like, don't you?"

"Not so well as you do, old fat bean!" grinned Bob. "Have you been raiding Coker's hamper, after he's stood you a cake?"

"Coker's offered me the hamper!" said Bunter.

"What?"

"And I'm going to whack it out among my pals," went on Bunter. "You know what his hampers are like; that old sketch Coker's Aunt Judy sends him tons of stuff. I believe Potter and Greene wolf most of it; I dare say that's why they stand Coker. I say, you fellows, how would you like the hamper in this study?"

"Oh, fine!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "We're not likely to see it here."

"I tell you Coker's offered it to me—"

"Gampion!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! The fact is, Coker's heard of my hypnotism, and he's fearfully interested—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! I think Coker wants to put the fluence on somebody, from what I can make out!" explained Bunter.

"Anyhow, he's offered me that hamper if I can give a demonstration of a fellow under the fluence. Just to prove that I can do it, you know."

There was a roar of laughter in Study No. 1.

"You're going to prove to Coker that you can do what you can't!" gasped Bob. "That ought to be worth watching."

"Well, I can do it, you know," said Bunter. "I can jolly well send a fellow to sleep—"

"You might with your conversation! Not with your hypnotism!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, stop cackling!" snorted Bunter. "This is important! Coker's waiting in his study for me now. I'm going to take a fellow there, under the fluence, and prove it. Then I get the hamper. I think my pals ought to back me up when I'm offering to whack out the hamper."

"How can we help?" asked Harry Wharton, staring. "You can't hypnotise! I don't believe anybody can; but I jolly well know you can't!"

"Well, I may need some more practice!" admitted Bunter. "But there's no time to waste, as I want that hamper. Suppose I put the fluence on you, Wharton—"

"Go ahead!" chuckled the captain of the Remove. "If you can do it, I don't mind."

"I mean to say, you can let me out

it on!" explained Bunter. "Suppose you play up, just as if you were hypnotised, you know. That will do for Coker."

"What!" gasped Wharton.

"You see, Coker's a silly idiot!" said Bunter. "He wants to see a fellow under the fluence! How's he to know whether it's real or not—a fool like Coker! You see what I mean."

"Why, you fat rotter!" exclaimed Wharton. "I'm to play the fool, and tell a pack of lies, so that you can diddle Coker out of a hamper! I can see myself doing it!"

"Well, that's a rotten way of putting it!" said Bunter. "I mean to say, if Coker wants to have his silly leg pulled, why not pull it? I mean it's about the hamper—I'll bring it to this study and whack it out! I can't say fairer than that."

"You fat villain!"

"Beast! I say, Bob, old chap, will you—"

"Not quite!" chorried Bob Cherry.

"Well, look here, Nugent—"

"Fathead!" said Frank Nugent.

"What about you, Bull?" asked Bunter hopefully. "You can make out that the fluence is on, and I'll make out that I've made you believe that you're Tommy Farr, and you can hit Coker in the eye! What about that?"

"Oh, crickey!" gasped Johnny Bull.

"You fat, fooling, frumpious fat-head!"

Even that tempting offer had no effect.

Billy Bunter blinked at Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I say, Inky, old chap, you'll back me up, won't you, after all I've done for you, you know!"

"The answer is in the absurd negative," grinned the Nabob of Bhanipur. Bunter snorted.

"Well, after all I've done for you fellows, I think you might back me up," he granted. "But I'll jolly well find somebody—I'm not losing that hamper, I know that."

The fat Owl turned to the door.

"Hold on, Bunter!" said Vernon-Smith.

Bunter blinked round at the Bounder. He had not thought of expecting help from that quarter. But he was hopeful at once.

"I say, Smithy, will you do it?" he asked eagerly. "It's a bit of spoof, perhaps; but, after all, you're not so particular as some fellows, are you, old chap?"

"You cheeky fat idiot—"

The Famous Five chuckled. Bunter was not really putting it very tactfully.

"Roll on, ass!" said Bob Cherry.

"Smithy won't do anything of the sort!"

"Wrong!" said the Bounder.

"You shut up, Cherry!" exclaimed the fat Owl. "I say, Smithy, you're going to do it, ain't you? Mind, I whack out the hamper."

"Bother the hamper, you fat fool!" snapped Vernon-Smith. "You bring any of Coker's tuck near me, and I'll jam it down the back of your neck!"

Bunter blinked at him. Bunter's fat thoughts were concentrated wholly and solely on the hamper. Certainly he would not have taken the trouble to spoof Horace Coker for the fun of the thing.

But the Bounder's ideas were rather different from Billy Bunter's. He did not want to bag Coker's tuck; but he did want to make the hefty and high-handed Horace "sit up," for banging his head with a cricket-ball, and slinging him over afterwards. Now he had an opportunity.

"I'll do it!" said Smithy. "You

can put the fluence on, fathhead, in Coker's study! What a rag!"

"Right-ho!" said Bunter. "Come on—Coker's waiting! I'll make you do anything you like, Smithy! So long as Coker takes it in, it's all right."

"Look here, Smithy—" said Harry Wharton.

"Rats to you!" said the Bounder, and he followed Billy Bunter from the study. And, after a brief consultation on the landing, they proceeded together to Horace Coker's study in the Fifth!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Demonstration of Hypnotism I

"WHAT the thump do you want!" snapped Coker.

He stared at Herbert Vernon-Smith as he came into the study, without knocking.

Smithy walked straight in, as if the study belonged to him, which naturally surprised and irritated Coker. Coker had no use for cheek from Remove fags.

Vernon-Smith gazed at him.

"I don't know," he answered, in a dreamy voice.

Coker blinked.

"You don't know?" he repeated.

"You walk into a Fifth Form man's study, and you say you don't know what you're come for? Mad?"

"Bunter told me to come here."

"Oh!" said Coker. "Bunter!" He was interested at once. "Well, you don't usually do what Bunter tells you, do you?"

"No!" said Vernon-Smith, with a puzzled look. "I don't! But I don't seem to have been able to help myself this time! I can't make it out, Coker! Bunter told me to come, and I just came—I don't know why."

Coker's eyes gleamed.

He knew why, if Smithy didn't. At least, he thought that he did! This looked like the fluence, and no mistake! He glanced at a fat face grinning in at the door.

Billy Bunter favoured him with a wink.

Coker breathed hard and deep. If a fellow had walked into his study at Bunter's order, without knowing why he did so, the hypnotic influence must have been pretty strong. Coker did not guess that Bunter was lingering outside the study, till he saw how it worked!

If Coker felt for this it was all right! If not, Bunter preferred to have a start in the foot-race that would follow.

But he need not have been uneasy. Coker felt for it, like a gudgeon for bait. Bunter had told him that he would bring a Remove fellow to the study under the fluence. He had done it!

It was quite simple! So was Coker! So it was all right!

"You've got him under it?" breathed Coker.

"What do you think?" grinned Bunter.

"By gum!" said Coker.

"Look here, what are you talking about?" asked Vernon-Smith, playing his part in a manner really worthy of the Remove Dramatic Society. "I can't make this out. What were you waving your hands at me in the passage for, Bunter?"

"The passes, you know!" whispered Bunter to Coker.

Coker nodded. He understood that the hypnotic passes had reduced Herbert Vernon-Smith to this strange state.

Bunter rolled into the study. He was quite reassured now! Coker had his faults; but there was one thing to be

said for Coker; a fellow could always pull his leg.

"Smithy!" rapped Bunter. "Fix your eyes on mine!"

Vernon-Smith fixed his eyes on Bunter's.

"Stand still, and think of nothing in particular!" went on Bunter; and his fat hands weaved mystic patterns in the air, before the Bounder's face.

Coker watched him, almost breathlessly. The dreamy, perplexed expression on Smithy's face was quite artistic. Evidently—to Coker—he was reluctantly but irresistibly passing deeper and deeper under the mystic influence.

"Close your eyes!" commanded Bunter.

Smithy closed his eyes.

"Sleep!" ordered Bunter.

Smithy gave a faint moan.

"Is he really asleep?" gasped Coker.

He could hardly believe it! Really, it wanted some believing.

"Fast asleep!" said Bunter calmly.

"If I ordered him to jump out of the study window now he would do it. He would have to."

"He's smiling in his sleep!" said Coker, gazing at the Bounder's face.

A momentary grin had appeared on that face. But it became solemn again at once.

"He's the slave of my will now," said Bunter airily. "I can make him believe anything I like and do anything I like. Now, Smithy, your name's not Vernon-Smith—you're Mr. Quelch! Who are you, Smithy?"

"Mr. Quelch," answered Vernon-Smith in a faraway voice. "Take a hundred lines, Bunter, and leave the Form-room at once and wash your face. I will not have dirty boys in my Form."

"By gum!" gasped Coker. This was the real thing!

"Open your eyes!" rapped Bunter.

Smithy opened his eyes.

"Look at that inkpot on the table!"

Smithy looked at the inkpot on the table.

"Now, that's not an inkpot," said the fat hypnotist. "That's a teapot, Smithy, and that Latin grammar is a teacup! Now, what's on that table?"

"A teapot and a teacup," answered Smithy, staring with a fixed hypnotised gaze at the inkpot and the Latin grammar.

"Pour out the tea!" commanded Bunter.

Vernon-Smith stepped to the table, grabbed the inkpot, and emptied the contents over Coker's Latin grammar.

"Here, I say, hold on!" exclaimed Coker. "Don't mop that ink all over my books, you young idiot!"

"He doesn't know what he's doing now," explained Bunter. "He thinks he's pouring out tea. Don't try to stop him."

"You stop him, then!" howled Coker.

"Think I want ink mopped all over my books! Stop him at once!"

"Stop pouring out the tea, Smithy!" commanded Bunter.

Smithy stopped pouring out the tea.

The inkpot was empty.

"Now," continued Bunter, "that isn't an inkpot, Smithy. It's a cricket ball. What is it?"

"A cricket ball," answered Smithy.

"That frigate is a wicket. Now, what is it?"

"A wicket."

"Bow!" said Bunter.

Crash!

Coker's inkpot, which was a large and heavy one made of cut-glass, a present from his affectionate Aunt Judy, crashed into the grate. It flew into about a thousand fragments as it crashed.

"My inkpot!" roared Coker, in consternation. "Why, you blithering young idiot, you've smashed my inkpot!"

"He thought he was bowling," explained Bunter. "Being the slave of my will, you know—"

"Well, you jolly well stop him smashing things," growled Coker. "You young ass, the study will be wrecked at this rate!"

"I'll tell him he's a monkey," said Bunter. "He will believe that, just as much as he believed that he was Quelch a minute ago!"

Which was quite a truthful statement.

"Go it!" said Coker.

"Smithy, you're a monkey. Now, what are you?" demanded Bunter.

"A monkey," answered Smithy, in the dreamy, faraway voice which showed—to Coker—that he was under the hypnotic spell and unconscious of his words and actions.

"Start climbing," said Bunter.

Vernon-Smith gazed round him and moved towards the window. Coker watched him breathlessly. If that junior—well known to be a hard-headed fellow—could be made to believe that he was a monkey, and to start climbing about the room, the proof of the hypnotist's powers was really conclusive.

Smithy grasped the window curtains—another handsome present from Coker's Aunt Judy. He started to climb.

Window curtains, naturally, did not support the weight of a sturdy Lower Fourth fellow. There was a tearing, rending sound, and Aunt Judy's window curtain came down in a mangled heap.

"Stop him!" gasped Coker. "Stop that!"

"Well, you asked me—" said Bunter.

"Stop him, I tell you!" yelled Coker.

"Oh, all right! Don't climb any more, Smithy. You're not a monkey. You're a carpet-beater," said Bunter.

"Now, what are you?"

"A carpet-beater," answered Smithy.

"Get on with it, then," said Bunter.

Vernon-Smith grasped the corner of the square of carpet—another of Aunt Judy's gifts to her dear Horace.

As it was a large square, and covered most of the floor, naturally most of the furniture stood on it.

But the furniture did not continue to stand on it as Vernon-Smith grasped it by the corner and wrenched. Most of the furniture toppled over.

The table went, with a terrific crash, scattering books and papers; two or three chairs went spinning; the book-case rocked!

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Coker. "Stop that! Stop him at once! Do you hear, Bunter? Stop him this instant!"

(Continued on next page.)

ROYAL NAVY

Boys may now enter between the ages of 15 and 17½ years. Full particulars are contained in the illustrated

booklet "The Royal Navy as a Career and How to Join It," which may be obtained on application to the Recruiting Staff Officer, R.N., and R.M. (N), 85, Whitehall, London, S.W.1, or at any Post Office.

"Well, I'm only showing you—" "Stop him!" shrieked Coker. "Think I want my study wrecked, you young idiot? Stop him!"

"Oh, all right! Stop it, Smithy. Now, look at that clock. That's not a clock, Smithy, that's a toy balloon. Now, what is it?"

"A toy balloon!" answered Smithy. He grasped Coker's clock from the mantelpiece.

"Here, hold on!" yelled Coker. "Let that clock alone!"

But it was too late. The hypnotised Bounder, apparently in the belief that the clock was a toy balloon, tossed it into the air.

It came down, with a fearful crash!

Coker made a wild grab at it as it went, but missed. He failed to stop the clock going. But the crash on the floor did it—effectually stopping the clock going. It was never likely to go again.

Coker gazed at it. Then he yelled frantically at the fat hypnotist of the Remove.

"Keep him quiet! Do you hear? Keep that mad young ass quiet, you blithering idiot!"

"Well, you wanted me to show you—" urged Bunter.

"Keep him quiet, I tell you! If he smashes anything else I'll jolly well smash you!" roared Coker.

Coker was getting his demonstration of the powers of hypnotism. That demonstration was convincing enough. But Coker's study was beginning to look as if a hurricane had struck it. Coker wanted convincing proof, and he was getting it; but there was a limit.

"Suppose I make him think he's doing air-raid drill," suggested Bunter.

"Yes, that's all right!" agreed Coker.

"Smithy, pick up that wastepaper-basket."

Smithy picked up the wastepaper-basket.

"Now, that's a gas-mask!" said Bunter. "What is it, Smithy?"

"It's a gas-mask," answered Smithy dreamily.

"Show Coker how it's put on."

Vernon-Smith grasped the wastepaper-basket, upside down. He made a sudden jump at Coker and jammed it over his head.

Coker's features disappeared into the wastepaper-basket. Vernon-Smith gave it a thump to drive it well down.

"Yoooooohoo!" came a frantic splutter from the interior of the wastepaper-basket. "Urghh! My nose—you've nearly scraped my nose off, you mad young ass! Woooooh!"

Coker clutched madly at the wastepaper-basket, striving to get it off. But it fitted rather tightly and was not easy to remove.

Billy Bunter winked at the Bounder, who—now that Coker was momentarily blindfolded—grinned!

But both faces were serious again when Coker wrenched off the wastepaper-basket and revealed a crimson and breathless countenance.

"You potty little idiot!" gasped Coker. "If you make him do anything of that kind again I'll scrag you! Oooh!"

"Well, I'm only showing you how he's under the fluence," said Bunter. "You asked me to. Being the slave of my will, he has to do everything I tell him. I'll make him believe that he's on the cricket field, playing cricket! Smithy, this study is a cricket field. What is it?"

"It's a cricket field," answered the hypnotised Bounder.

"Now get hold of a bat and show Coker some cricket."

Vernon-Smith crossed to a corner.

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where Coker's bat stood. He grasped it by the cane handle.

"There's your wicket," said Bunter, pointing to an overturned chair. "Now, man it, Smithy!"

Smithy took up his position. If he did not believe that the study floor was a cricket pitch and the chair the batsman's wicket, he certainly looked as if he did.

Coker watched him, rubbing his nose. That nose, which had already suffered under the cushion, had been rather badly scraped by the edge of the wastepaper-basket and was sore. Still, Coker was keenly interested.

Obviously, only the potent hypnotic influence could account for what he was seeing—a fellow standing, bat in hand, in front of an overturned chair, fancying that he was batting on a cricket field!

"By gum!" said Coker, with a deep breath. "It's wonderful! It really is! Just those few passes, and you get a fellow into that state—not knowing what he's doing—not the least idea! I'm jolly glad I didn't let you try it on me, Bunter. I jolly well shouldn't like to be made a fool of!"

Coker was unaware that that was already going on!

"Oh, that's nothing!" said Bunter airily. "I'll make him believe that that hassock is a cricket ball!"

Bunter tossed the hassock to Smithy. Smithy swiped at it with the bat. It flew across the study, and caught Horace Coker, with startling suddenness, under the chin.

"Woooooh!" spluttered Coker.

He sat down on the study floor with a bump!

Smithy started running. If, indeed, he was under hypnotic influence, and fancied that he had just hit away a ball, it was only natural for him to start running! Anyhow, he did!

He ran into Coker!

Coker, floored by the hassock, was scrambling up, spluttering, when Smithy charged him! He rolled over on his back and gurgled horribly as Smithy tread on his waistcoat.

"Urghh!" gurgled Coker. "Gurgh! Get off! Woooooh!"

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

Coker sprawled and gurgled. Smithy turned to run back. Coker scrambled wildly out of his way, and, perhaps by accident, the bat came into sharp contact with Coker's head.

Crack!

There was a fearful roar that woke every echo in the study, and a good many beyond.

"Yoooo-hooop!"

Coker dodged round the overturned table, his hand clasped to his head—which felt as Smithy's head had felt after Coker's bowling! Perhaps that was Smithy's intention.

"Keep him off!" yelled Coker.

"That's enough, Bunter—stop him! That's quite enough—stop him! Tell him to go away! I've had enough of this! Turn him out!"

"Chuck down that bat, and clear, Smithy!" gasped Bunter.

Smithy was ready to clear by that time. He had to keep serious while he was under the magic fluence. But he found it very difficult to do so!

He checked down the bat—on Coker's foot. He checked it hard!

Coker, with a frantic yell, jumped clear of the floor.

"Ow! Get him out of the study!" he yelled. "He's smashed my toes!"

Wow! By gum! I'll smash him!"

Coker made a rush at Smithy.

Hypnotised or not, Smithy was going to be booted out of Coker's study.

But the Bounder—with great presence of mind, considering that he was under the fluence—jumped for the door and scudded.

He was done with Coker now, and he considered that he had done pretty well! Coker's study was a wreck—and Coker was nearly one!

"Ow!" groaned Coker. He stood on one leg and clasped the other foot.

"Wow! My toes! My tut-tut-toes!"

Ow! What are you grinning at, Bunter, you young idiot? Ow! Wow!"

"He, he, he!" gurgled Bunter.

It was injudicious; but, really, Bunter could not help it. The sight of Horace Coker, standing stork-like on one leg, was too much for him. He gurgled spasmodically.

Coker gave him an infuriated glare. He had had the proof he wanted—more, in fact, than he wanted. But that bang on the toe had given him a fearful pain, and Bunter's giggle was the last straw. He hopped at Bunter—and clutched!

Bunter ceased to giggle and jumped for the door. He escaped Coker's clutch. But he did not escape the foot that Coker shot out after him.

That foot landed, with what a novelist would call a sickening thud, on Billy Bunter's tight trousers.

Bunter fairly whizzed through the doorway, yelling. His yell floated back as he fled.

Coker, in the study, was yelling, too. Inadvertently, he had booted Bunter with his damaged foot. Standing on one leg, Coker howled with anguish.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Play Up, Bunter!

POTTER and Creone eyed Horace Coker rather curiously at prep that evening. They could not quite make Coker out.

They had been at cricket during the hypnotic séance in Coker's study. When they came up to prep, they found the study in a startlingly dismantled state. But Coker vouchsafed no explanation. They set the study to rights, more or less, and sat down to prep.

Coker gave little attention to prep. His powerful brain was occupied with matters of deeper import.

His friends noticed—they could not help noticing—that Coker's nose bore a surprising resemblance to an over-ripe tomato. They noticed that every now and then he gave a squeak, as if he had one or two pains spotted about. It looked as if Coker had been in the wars.

They noticed, too, that every now and then a grim, sardonic smile glided over his rugged countenance.

Coker was, in fact, thinking great thoughts. Now that he knew—the thing having been demonstrated and proved—that Bunter was a hypnotist, Coker's course was clear! Justice, at last, was going to be done to Coker the cricketer!

All that was needed was for the Remove hypnotist to put the fluence on Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, as he had put it on Smithy!

If he could make a Remove junior believe that he was Mr. Quelch, and that a clock was a toy balloon, he could make Blundell believe that Horace Coker was the man he wanted for the Form match on Saturday.



"That fat goob Bunter said he wanted to get a shilling postal order for something," said Fisher T. Fish, "so I gave him a bob and a penny over for that dictionary!" "I tell you this dick is mine!" roared Wharton.

Once having figured in the Form match, Fifth against Sixth, Coker had little doubt that the captain of the school would pick him out for the first eleven. All he needed was an opportunity to show what a cricketer he was—a fair field and no favour! This was his chance!

Blundell would be glad enough of it afterwards, Coker thought! He would be sorry that he had passed over that first-class man so long, and glad that Coker's amazing abilities had, at last, come to light! Wingate would be glad, once he saw what Coker really could do, to capture him for the first eleven. Coker would be glad to play for School and win matches for Greyfriars. In fact, there was going to be gladness all round! It was going to be a glad world!

With these great thoughts in his mind, Coker was not likely to bring his lofty intellect down to prep. If Prout grouched in the morning, let him grouse! Prout was always grumbling at something, anyhow!

"Anything up, Coker?" asked Greene at last, when prep was over.

"Eh? Oh, no! Yes!" answered Coker vaguely. "I wonder which of you fellows Blundell will drop on Saturday?" he added thoughtfully.

"Why should he drop either of us?" asked Potter, puzzled.

"Well, he can't play twelve men," said Coker. "He will have to drop somebody to make room for a new man."

"Blundell's picked the eleven for Saturday!" said Greene, staring. "I've heard nothing about a new man."

"You will!" said Coker. "The fact is, I fancy I shall be playing!"

"Has Blundell gone off his dot?" asked Potter.

"Eh? Not that I know of."

"Then what makes you think he might play you in a cricket match?"

Coker did not answer that question in words. He reached for a Latin dictionary—and Potter popped out of the study just in time.

Greene followed him, grinning.

Coker frowned. But he soon dismissed Potter and Greene from his mind. They did not matter. Coker had it all cut and dried now. His cricket ambitions were going to be realised at last. Potter and Greene were a pair of cackling asses; but they would be proud enough of him when he made centuries for Greyfriars, handed over uncounted hat-tricks, and made that season the most successful season the old school had ever known.

Coker left his study and went along to the landing. Prep was over in the Remove and the juniors coming away from the studies. At the sight of Coker there was a howl:

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. roared. All the Remove fellows in sight roared. Why, Coker did not know. He did not know that Vernon-Smith had given a graphic description, in the Remove, of that hypnotic seance in Coker's study, and that the Remove had been gurgling over it ever since. The mere sight of Coker was enough to make the Removes roar.

"Stop that row!" snapped Coker.

"Is Bunter about? I want him."

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

"I say, you fellows, shut up!" squeaked Billy Bunter, rolling out of the Remove passage. "I say, here I am, Coker—"

"Come along!" said Coker.

"All right!"

Bunter rolled cheerfully up the Fifth Form passage after Coker—leaving the Removes chortling.

Bunter's fat thoughts were concen-

trated on Coker's hamper. He had left old Horace's study rather hastily after the hypnotic demonstration, and in view of Coker's frame of mind at the time he had not ventured to return. He was very glad to see old Horace in a good temper again. It was, he felt, time for the hamper to be featured.

Bunter was, in fact, very eager to get the matter of the hamper settled. He could not help thinking that, with the whole Remove bowling over the joke, it would not be long before Coker learned that he had been spoofed. Obviously, Bunter had to bag the hamper before that happened.

He blinked eagerly round Coker's study as he followed Horace in.

"I say, where is it, Coker?" he asked.

"Eh? Where's what?" asked Coker. Coker was not thinking of hampers.

"The hamper!"

"Never mind that!" said Coker testily.

Bunter blinked at him. Bunter did mind. He minded very much. If Coker fancied that Bunter had taken the trouble to pull his silly leg for nothing, Coker had another guess coming.

"Oh, really, Coker—" protested Bunter.

"Don't jaw!" said Coker. "I haven't brought you here to jaw! The hamper's in the cupboard," he added. "You can have it as soon as you've done what I want. I told you I should want you to do something for me, when you proved that you could hypnotise."

"Oh!" said Bunter.

"You've proved it," went on Coker. "Nothing to grin at, you little idiot! Be serious. You've proved it, right under my eyes, and I'm satisfied. How a silly little ass like you can do it,

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beats me; but there it is, you can. Now I'll tell you what I want you to do."

"Oh!" repeated Bunter.

Evidently he had to earn that hamper. But if it was something in the hypnotic line that Coker wanted, Bunter had deep doubts of getting hold of that hamper.

The fact was that by this time Bunter was rather regretting that he had wasted Fishy's shilling on the "Path to Power."

Professor Rook's valuable volume pointed out the path, and Bunter had followed the path, but he had not arrived at the power.

He still hoped—Bunter had a hopeful nature—that with a little more practice at the mystic passes, he would acquire that power; but he had to admit that it was a doubtful proposition, so far.

"I—I—I say, Coker, if—if you want another demonstration, I—I'll get Smithy here again," mumbled Bunter. "I said don't jaw!" snapped Coker. "Listen to me! I dare say you know that Blundell, my Form captain, is leaving me out of the Form match on Saturday. I'm going to make him put me in."

"Eh?"

"He's in his study now," went on Coker. "You're to go to his study—"

"What?"

"And put the fluence on him—"

"Oh, crickey!"

"And make him decide to put me in the cricket list," explained Coker. "Easy enough for you, after what I saw in this study to-day."

Bunter did not feel so sure of that.

"Now I'll wait here," said Coker briskly. "You hike along and put the fluence on Blundell—"

"I—I—I say—"

"Don't jaw! Make him come along here, and tell me that I'm to play!" said Coker. "As soon as Blundell's done that, the hamper's yours."

Billy Bunter saw that hamper fading away like a beautiful dream. He gazed at Horace Coker in dismay.

"Now get going," said Coker.

"Strike the iron while it's hot, you know. What are you hanging about for? Play up, you young ass!"

"I—I—" stuttered Bunter.

"Don't waste time! Get going!"

As the dismayed fat Owl seemed still bent on hanging about, Coker took him by the collar, and swung him into the passage.

"Now buck up!" he said. "You're wasting time!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bunter.

Coker turned back into the study, leaving the door half-open. He sat down in the armchair, in happy anticipation.

It was all plain-sailing now. After that remarkable hypnotic session in that very study, Coker had no doubt that Bunter could do it, and was going to do it. He had only to wait till George Blundell looked in, to tell him he would be wanted on Saturday. Coker had no doubt at all.

Billy Bunter had,

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Spot of Ventriloquism!

"OH lor!" murmured Billy Bunter.

Bunter was dismayed.

Coker was waiting in his study, waiting for Blundell. Billy Bunter could not help thinking that Coker had a long wait before him.

Coker did not matter, of course. But Billy Bunter wanted that hamper. Moreover, if he let Coker down, Coker would guess that he had been spoofed, and he was fairly certain to get busy with a cricket stump.

Bunter wanted the hamper. He did not want the stump. But it looked as if he was going to get what he did not want.

He stood blinking dully at the door of George Blundell's study. He simply dared not try it on. He still hoped and believed, more or less, that he was a hypnotist, but not to the extent of trying it on a big gun like

George Blundell, captain of the Fifth Form.

Blundell's door opened, and Hilton of the Fifth came out. He had been there talking cricket. Hilton was in the Fifth Form team for Saturday.

He stared at Bunter as he passed him, no doubt wondering what the fat junior was hanging about the Fifth Form passage for.

Bunter did not heed him. He had a glimpse of Blundell in the study, sitting at the table. Blundell had some algebra on hand, and he was staying in the study to get through it. This was a chance for the fat hypnotist, if only he had felt as sure of his powers as Coker did.

Bunter hesitated long.

Between the hope of the hamper and the dread of the stump, he was in a most uncomfortable frame of mind.

But he resolved at last to try it on. After all, Blundell might go under the fluence. If he didn't, he couldn't eat Bunter.

But it was in fear and trembling that Billy Bunter pushed open the door, which Hilton had left ajar.

Blundell, deep in algebra, did not look up. He was unaware that a fat Removee was blinking uneasily into the study.

Bunter drew a deep breath, and started.

His fat hands came up, and he weaved mystic patterns in the air, as laid down in the diagrams in Professor Rook's valuable volume, the "Path to Power." If there was anything in the mystic fluence—if Blundell passed under its spell, without looking up and catching Bunter—

The captain of the Fifth looked up.

He jumped.

Not knowing that Bunter was in the study, he was naturally surprised to see him there and still more surprised to see him waving his fat hands in the air in an utterly unaccountable manner.

"Good gad!" ejaculated the astonished Blundell.

He gazed at Bunter.

Bunter gazed at him. He was in for it now. Desperately he concentrated on that steady, fixed, hypnotic gaze, and waved his fat hands wildly. The hypnotic passes got a little mixed—if that mattered.

Possibly that was why Blundell did not pass under the fluence. Anyhow, he didn't.

"You mad little idiot!" gasped Blundell. "Have you gone off your rocker? What are you up to? Is that a rag, or what?"

Without waiting for an answer, Blundell concluded that it was some sort of a rag. He rose from the table, and came quickly round it.

Bunter gave up hypnotism on the spot. Only too plainly the captain of the Fifth was not under the fluence. He backed swiftly for the doorway. But he did not back swiftly enough. A finger and a thumb caught hold of a fat ear.

"Ow!" squeaked Bunter.

Blundell twisted that fat ear. Then, using the ear as a handle, as it were, he jerked Bunter into the passage.

"Ooogh!" gasped Bunter.

Having landed him in the passage, Blundell kicked him, and went back into the study and shut the door.

Bunter was left wriggling in the passage, holding a fat ear with a fat hand, in the lowest of spirits.

The game was up. There was no hamper for Bunter, only a stump. If it had been ventriloquism, Bunter

Yarns that will Thrill!

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could have done it, but hypnotism seemed a bit out of his reach. That thought passed through Bunter's fat mind, and it gave him a sudden idea.

Hypnotism had failed, but—Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his spectacles. He blinked along the passage at Coker's door—half-open at a little distance.

Coker was expecting Blundell to come along and tell him that he had been picked to play on Saturday. Blundell, certainly, was going to do nothing of the sort. But the Remove ventriloquist could do it for him.

The fat ventriloquist could imitate any fellow's voice—and Blundell had a rather distinctive voice, easy to recognise. He had a rather sharp, staccato way of speaking, and Bunter, in fact, had often imitated what the juniors called Blundell's bark in playing his ventriloquist tricks.

Bunter grinned.

This was the big idea.

If this worked that hamper was as good as Bunter's. Even if there was a stumping to come later, he would be a hamper to the good.

Bunter gave a little fat cough—his usual preliminary to a ventriloquist outbreak. Then he walked along to Coker's study. He trod as heavily as he could, in imitation of Blundell's manly stride. Coker was to get the impression that it was Blundell coming.

But he kept on the safe side of the door. Coker, of course, was not to see him. Coker was not bright, but he would hardly have believed that it was Blundell speaking if he had seen Bunter.

"Hallo, Coker!" called out the fat ventriloquist, and any fellow who had heard him would have recognised, without doubt, Blundell's bark. Bunter could do these things!

Coker, in the study, recognised it at once. He sat up in the armchair.

"Hallo, Blundell!" he called out, nothing doubting. "Come in, old man!"

"Can't stop, Coker!" It was Blundell's voice to the very life. "Just come to tell you that you'll be wanted in the Form eleven on Saturday, old man. I'll put up your name to-morrow."

The heavy tread receded from Coker's doorway. But as he heard Coker getting out of the armchair, Bunter settled and shot round the nearest corner. He heard Horace Coker's cheery call as he went:

"Right-ho, Blundell! Do come in for a minute, old fellow!"

But answer there came none. Blundell's voice had said that he couldn't stop, and it looked as if he couldn't, as there was no further word.

Coker was a little puzzled. Really, he thought, the chap might have stepped into his study, instead of just barking at a fellow from the passage and then walking off.

But it was all right.

What Blundell had said he had said. Horace Coker's cricketing ambitions were going to be realised at last—at long, long last! At least, he fancied that they were! Blundell, he had no doubt, had come along, under the mystic fluence, to utter those memorable words, and that was that! It was, Coker thought, worth a hamper!

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

All Right for Bunter!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Who's after you?" asked

Bob Cherry.

"Eh? Nobody!" answered

Bunter, rather breathlessly.

Some of the Remove were chatting on the landing after prep, when Billy Bunter shot out of the Fifth Form passage rather like a bullet from a rifle.

Naturally they supposed that some Fifth Form man was after him. They were quite unaware of what had happened at Coker's door, and of Billy Bunter's masterly strategy in making ventriloquism serve his turn, hypnotism having let him down.

"What have you been up to?" asked Harry Wharton, staring at the breathless fat Owl.

"Oh, nothing!" answered Bunter. "I haven't been pulling Coker's leg, or anything, and I wasn't getting away before he could see me, you know. Nothing of the kind. I say, you fellows, come and help me with the hamper, will you? I don't think I could carry it."

"Coker's hamper?" asked Bob. "You fat villain, do you think we're going to help you raid Coker's hamper?"

"Root him!" said Johnny Bull.

"Tain't that!" snapped Bunter.

"Coker's given me the hamper—made me a present of it, you know."

"Gampion!" said Frank Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent! I say, you fellows, I'm going to whack it out. I'm standing a study spread in Study No. 7. Come and lend me a hand."

"Oh gum!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "You don't mean to say that Coker's really given you that hamper because you and Smithy spoofed him?"

"Oh crumbs!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Is that it?"

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

"This is too rich!"

"The richness is terrific!" chuckled Horace Jamset Ram Singh. "But the doddlefulness is also great."

"Oh, really, Inky! Look here, Coker can give me a hamper if he likes, I suppose!" exclaimed Bunter warily. "Come and help me carry it to my study."

Billy Bunter was rather anxious to have some hefty assistance at hand when he called for that hamper. He fancied that he had got away with that ventriloquist trick, and he was going to claim his reward; but he did not feel quite sure, and he preferred to call on Coker in good company.

If it was all right, it was all right; but if it wasn't, Bunter's idea was to execute a rapid retreat while the Famous Five bore the brunt of Coker's wrath.

But the Famous Five shook their heads. Pulling Coker's leg was one thing, but bagging his hamper was quite another.

It did not occur to Billy Bunter's fat brain that there was anything unscrupulous in the way he had obtained possession of that hamper. Bunter's fat brain moved in its own mysterious way, its wonders to perform.

Besides, a fellow couldn't think of everything! Bunter was thinking of the hamper, and that was quite sufficient to occupy the whole of his fat thoughts.

"Look here, you fellows, you come and lend me a hand," he urged. "I'm going to ask you to the study supper. I can't say fairer than that!"

"You fat brigand, leave Coker's hamper alone!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Beast! I say, you fellows, Coker's given me that hamper because I've done something for him," explained Bunter. "Honest Injun!"

"What have you done?"

"Well, I've done him a good turn," said Bunter. "You needn't tell everybody, but the fact is, I've put the fluence on Blundell, and made him pick

Coker to play for the Fifth on Saturday."

"What?" gasped the Famous Five.

"You gammoning fat oyster!" exclaimed the Bounder. "Do you think anybody's going to swallow that?"

"You can ask Coker whether he's going to play or not," retorted Bunter. "Coker knows. Blundell told him—"

"Blundell did?" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Yes. Went to his door a few minutes ago and told him," said Bunter. "That wasn't why I was coming away in a hurry, you know. I didn't care if Coker saw me in the passage. Why should I? I never imitated Blundell's voice at his study door."

"What-a-t!"

"Never even thought of such a thing! The fact is, I've quite forgotten my ventriloquism," said Bunter.

"Oh, my hat!"

"You spoofing slug!"

"You pernicious porpoise!"

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

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" yapped Bunter. "Look here, who's coming to help me carry that hamper?"

"Even Coker can't be such a blithering idiot!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Oh, Coker's got no limit!" grinned the Bounder. "There couldn't have been any vacancy in a home for idiots when they sent him to Greyfriars. I'll come and help you with the hamper, old fat man."

"So will I!" chortled Skinner.

"Come on, then!" chirruped Bunter. Four or five fellows—almost in convulsions—followed Bunter up the Fifth Form passage.

The fat junior blinked rather anxiously into Coker's study. He was anxious to know whether it was all right.

But a glance was enough. Coker's countenance was beaming. It was, in fact, glowing with satisfaction. He was radiant. He resembled that ancient classic gentleman, who was like to strike the stars with his sublime head.

Already Coker, in his mind's eye, saw himself doing wonderful things in the Form match on Saturday. He saw himself knocking up centuries for the Fifth, and knocking down wickets for the Sixth, in his mind's eye. He saw himself carried shoulder high, after a glorious match. He saw Wingate picking him out for the first eleven. All this Coker saw in his mind's eye—though, alas, he was never likely to see it with any other eye!

"Hallo!" In this happy mood Coker could be genial even to fags. "If you want that hamper, Bunter, it's in the cupboard. I say, if your kids want to see some good cricket on Saturday, come down to Big Side."

"Anything special there?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"I shall be playing for the Fifth," said Coker, with studied calm. "Oh erikey!"

"I say, you fellows, here's the hamper! I say, lend me a hand!" exclaimed Billy Bunter.

Bunter was eager to get that hamper away. He really did not feel safe about that hamper till he had it in Study No. 7 in the Remove.

Smithy and Skinner lent a hand. They were not quite so particular in their views as the Famous Five, and if Coker chose to reward Bunter with a hamper for pulling his leg, they saw no reason why not.

Coker did not even glance at the

hamper as it went. What he was getting was worth many hampers.

Billy Bunter rolled after the hamper, grinning with glee; hardly daring, in fact, to believe in his good luck. But there it was!

The hamper was safely landed in Study No. 7 in the Remove. Coker was left to enjoy his day-dreams, while Bunter enjoyed the hamper.

There was quite a large party at that study supper in Study No. 7. There were lots of good things in that hamper. On the rare occasions when Billy Bunter had ample supplies he was hospitable—he liked to see happy and sticky faces round him. The supplies were quite ample now, and the fat Owl gave the Removites welcoming blinks as they crowded into the study.

It was a glorious feast! And Billy Bunter happily forgot that after the feast comes the reckoning!

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise For Coker!

"THAT'S queer!" said Coker. Standing before the notice-board the following day, Coker of the Fifth made that remark to his friends, Potter and Greene.

He was looking at the Fifth Form cricket list, posted by Blundell, for the match on Saturday.

He had expected, of course, to see the name of "H. J. Coker" in that list. He had already seen it there with his mind's eye. Now he expected to see it with his actual eyes. But he didn't!

Coker rubbed his nose thoughtfully as he made the remark. But this time Potter and Greene did not misunderstand, and they did not fancy that he was alluding to his nose! They knew that Coker was looking for his name in that list—why, they could not understand.

"Queer!" repeated Coker. "Blundell can't have forgotten, after coming along to tell me specially last evening."

"Did you go to sleep in the study after prep?" asked Potter.

"Eh? No. Why?"

"Well, you must have dreamed it, you know!"

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

"But Blundell couldn't have—"

"Don't be a silly fathead, Greene!"

There was a chuckle behind Coker. Some of the Remove fellows had gathered there—interested, not in the Fifth Form cricket list, but in Coker's personal of that list.

Coker glanced round at them and gave them a glare. Coker was puzzled, and he was annoyed. He was in no mood to be cackled at by fags. But his glare had no effect on the juniors. They chuckled and they chortled.

"I'd better see Blundell about this at once!" granted Coker, and he tramped away, very perplexed and very perturbed and annoyed.

"Come on, people!" murmured Bob Cherry. "This will be worth watching!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And a little army followed Coker of the Fifth to the games study—the apartment where the Fifth Form most did congregate.

Headless of them, Horace Coker marched into the games study, where he found Blundell and a crowd of the Fifth, talking cricket.

"Look here, Blundell!" rapped Coker.

The captain of the Fifth glanced round.

"Looking?" he answered genially.

"My name's not in the list," said Coker.

"Eh?"

"I've just seen the list for the match to-morrow! You've forgotten to put my name in it."

"You mean I've remembered not to," said the captain of the Fifth, staring at him. "Off your rocker, old man!"

"Run away and play, Coker," said Hilton. "We're talking cricket—not a subject you understand, old bean!"

Coker did not heed Hilton. He fixed his eyes on George Blundell's astonished face.

"What do you mean by this, Blundell?" he demanded. "You came to my study last evening and told me I should be wanted."

Blundell jumped.

"I did!" he gasped.

"Yes, you did!" roared Coker.

Blundell looked at him. Then he glanced round at the other fellows. They all stared at Coker. Then Blundell stared at Coker again. Unless Horace was wandering in his mind, this was difficult to understand.

"My dear chap," said Blundell at last. "If we ever play the Sixth at marbles, or hopscotch, or kiss-in-the-ring I'll remember you! But—"

"You came and told me—" roared Coker.

"You're dreaming."

"Mean to say you didn't?" shrieked Coker.

"Of course I didn't, fathead! The men would lynch me if I put you in the eleven. Think I want to be lynched?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell from the doorway. Coker's speaking countenance seemed to entertain the juniors looking in there. It was, as the Bounder remarked, worth a guinea a box!

"Shut up, you cheeky fags!" roared Coker. "Now, look here, Blundell. I want to know what this means! You came to my study after prep—"

"I was in my own study after prep, mopping up slivers, till Fox came and told me it was near dawn," said Blundell. "Dreaming, or what?"

Coker gasped.

"My dear chap," said Blundell. He was quite concerned. "You'd better see a doctor! If you really fancy that you saw me in your study after prep last evening you want looking after."

"I never saw you, as you never came in. You called in from the passage," gasped Coker.

"I never came near your study—"

"I tell you you did!" howled Coker. "I wondered why you didn't come in, but you said you couldn't stop—but you called in—"

"Oh!" ejaculated Blundell. He grinned. "Somebody spoke to you from the passage, and you didn't see who it was? Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you sniggering at?" howled Coker.

"You were born to have your leg pulled, old man. Somebody's been pulling your leg! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Fifth Formers.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell from the doorway.

"Nothing of the kind!" roared Coker. "Think I don't know your voice, Blundell? Has any other fellow

at Greyfriars got a voice like a dog with the croup barking?"

"What?" ejaculated Blundell. Possibly he was not aware that his voice resembled the bark of a dog afflicted with the croup.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was you!" roared Coker. "I didn't see you, but I knew your voice all right! And you told me—"

"You silly, cheeky ass!" roared back Blundell. "I never came near your study, and I never told you anything, and I wouldn't play you in a team against a kindergarten. Now shut up!"

"I tell you—"

"Shut up!"

"Shan't! I tell you—"

"Push that man out!" said the captain of the Fifth.

Five or six Fifth Formers, grinning, pushed Coker out.

A howl of merriment followed him as he went. It was obvious to every fellow—except Coker—that his ogreous leg had been pulled.

But it was not obvious to Coker! Coker was puzzled, exasperated, and enraged.

He passed through a crowd of grinning faces in the passage without heeding them. Coker knew, if nobody else did, what the captain of the Fifth had said—he remembered every word distinctly!

There was only one explanation—to Coker. The hypnotic influence must have worn off. It was, perhaps, only a temporary fluence—it needed renewing.

That was it!

It was quite a relief to Coker when he thought of that! That, of course, was it. All that was necessary was for the hypnotist to put the fluence on again.

Coker went to look for Billy Bunter.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Keep It Dark!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a crowd of Remove fellows in the Rag. They were all laughing—except one. Billy Bunter's fat face was serious.

Bunter was feeling uneasy. He had cause for uneasiness. He could not help thinking that Coker was very likely to cut up rusty when he discovered that his leg had been pulled.

"I say, you fellows, was—was Coker wry?" asked Bunter.

"Fearfully!" chorried Bob Cherry.

"The fearfulness was terrific, my esteemed, spoofing Bunter!" chuckled Hurrey Janset Ram Singh.

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

"I—I say, if—if Coker comes after me, you fellows—"

"That's all right!" said Harry Wharton. "You've only got to put the fluence on him, Bunter."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors. "Same as you did on me," chorried Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

That suggestion was not of much use to Bunter. Bunter had lost all faith in the fluence.

Not only had he given up the bright idea of hypnotising Mr. Quelch and making his Form-master toe the line, he had given up the idea of hypnotising.

(Continued on page 23.)

Roll Up, You Fellows, for Another Merry Ramble with—

The GREYFRIARS GUIDE

THE DAILY ROUND.

7.15 p.m. CALL OVER.

(1)

At seven-fifteen it's trouble
Unless we're in Big Hall.
We rush there at the double.
Yes, prefects, fags, and all.
The prefects holler "Silence!"
And make a fearful fuss,
You'd hear the yell a mile hence,
They make more noise than us!

(2)

The masters in rotation
Take turns to call the roll.
While great exasperation
Lays heavy on each soul.
We answer "Absent" primly,
For so the law decrees,
And then the master grins
Notes down the absences.

(3)

Some masters are so blindly
Content and unaware
That I can answer kindly
For chaps who are not there!
But this is most illegal,
With Quelch it's never tried,
His eye is like the eagle,
And I've a tender hide!



AFTER SCHOOL HOURS Bunter Writes Home

Dear Pater,—I trusted yore O.K.,
As I am myself at the present.
Yore letter arrived hear to-day,
I thort it seemed rather unplesant.
Apart from its impolite manner,
You made a sad error, I fear:
You sent a P.O. for a tanner,
I asked for a tenner—O dear!

A poppular fello like me,
Good-looking with plenty of tallernits,
Can do with sum more £s. d.,
So will you please send me the
halance?
If yore neckst remittance is bigger,
I'll perchise some grub with the tin.
Alas! I am loosing my finger,
It's so under-nourished and thin!

You say that my half-term report
"Reveals a most sorry position."
The fact is, I'm gratest at sport,
But brilliyunt in class in addishun,
I kno the report's verry rotten.
It's all Quelch's fault, I may say;
He's muddled me up and forgotten,
We all kno his mind's givving way.

At cricket I'm really soopreme,
Of runs I've skored neerly a milliyun;
My batting's a screem—I mean, dream—
It faredly brings down the pavillyun.
Pleeze send me a nice fat remittance,
I'm hooping, dear pater, you will;
A tanner's a miserable pittence,
I now close with luv from,

Yours, BILL.

P.S.—Please despatch it at wunce,
It's urjent, I'm practickly starving,
I've not had a square meal for munce,
And I'm down to my verry last
farving.

THE GREYFRIARS ALPHABET

HENRY SAMUEL QUELCH,
M.A.

Master of the Remove Form.

Q is for QUELCH—we're on to him,
And often have we gone to him
To make some weird excuse to him
Which wasn't of much use to him.
Each morning we are taught by him,
And sometimes we are caught by him,
And then we are advised by him
To bend and be chastised by him.



So often have I sung of him—
The scarifying tongue of him,
The gleaming gimlet eye of him,
Which makes us all fight shy of him,
The things we have admired of him—
That you must be quite tired of him.
But though we grumble loud of him,
We're really rather proud of him!

ANSWER to PUZZLE

One hundred miles.



A WEEKLY BUDGET OF FACT AND FUN

By
THE GREYFRIARS
RHYMESTER

GREYFRIARS GRINS

There's a rumour that Carne has been told to wear spectacles. To see the error of his ways?

This morning Coker was whopping Snoop and shouting: "I'll teach you to hit someone smaller than yourself!" Teaching by practical demonstration, I suppose.

P.-c. Tozer says it's a crime to call a policeman an ass. But I suppose we can call an ass a policeman! If so, P.-c. Tozer's a policeman!

Mr. Prout was heard to say that "his hair was getting a bit thin." Which hair does he mean—he has five or six?

PUZZLE PAR

An express train goes at sixty miles per hour from London to York, and another express, going at forty miles per hour, starts at the same time from York to London. How far apart are the two trains an hour before they meet?

Answer at foot of column 2.

In our first practice match Bulstrode distinguished himself by hitting a ball so high that we took the tea interval while we waited for it to come down.

The other day Quelch asked us in acid tones why we thought we were sent to school. Aunt Judy could have told him—so that Horace Coker shouldn't be lonely.

Bunter asked me to pay for a ginger-beer to-day because he hadn't any change. That's certainly no change.

Mrs. Kebble has missed her cat. No doubt she could have it by applying to Wun Lung's study with a soup tureen.

Bunter's many friends will be glad to know that he has magically recovered from a severe attack of galloning pneumonia. The half-term exams have been postponed till next week.

Someone, for a lark, put a Greyfriars cap on the stuffed bear in Prout's study. When Prout saw it he snapped: "Well, Coker, have you done your lines?"

anybody. From the bottom of his fat heart he repeated that he had wasted Fishy's shilling on Professor Rook's valuable volume. He had even tried to dispose of the "Path to Power" at the reduced price of one penny. But in vain—there were no takers.

"I say, you fellows, you stand by a fellow if Coker gets shirty," said the fat Owl. "It was all your fault, Bob Cherry—"

"Mine!" ejaculated Bob.

"Yes, yours!" said Bunter warmly. "If you hadn't locked me in the study the other day, I shouldn't have seen that beastly newspaper, and shouldn't have noticed that beastly advertisement, and shouldn't have got that rotten book, and shouldn't have taken up hypnotism, and—and so you see it was all your fault, old chap."

"Not quite," chuckled Bob.

"And Skinner's," said Bunter. "If Skinner hadn't pretended to be under the fluence, that fool Coker wouldn't have fancied that I could hypnotise, and—and so you see it was your fault, Skinner."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And yours, Smitty—"

"Mine, too!" ejaculated the Bounder.

"Yes, yours! If you hadn't come to Coker's study and pulled his leg just for a rag on him, he would never have asked me to put the fluence on Blundell—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's everybody's fault, except Bunter's," remarked Peter Todd. "But Bunter's going to get to go when Coker spots him."

"I say, you fellows, you stand by me, you know," said Bunter anxiously. "And—and mind you don't get telling Coker anything. If he's forgotten that I'm a ventriloquist, don't you get reminding him. After all, he never saw me, and he thinks it was Blundell's voice he heard at his door. And he's such a fool—"

"Shut up, Bunter!" called out Johnny Bull hastily, as Coker of the Fifth looked in at the doorway.

The Owl of the Remove did not observe him looking in. He squeaked on regardless.

"He's such a fool, you know. Everybody knows what a silly fool Coker is. He will never guess—see! Don't you fellows get telling him anything. I mean to say, if he's fool enough to believe that I really put the fluence on Blundell, and he jolly well is, you know, he's fool enough for anything. He will never guess that it was my ventriloquism, and that Blundell never came to his study at all—But if he finds out that it was me, you know, putting on Blundell's bark and pulling his silly leg, he will get fearfully wild."

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the juniors. Billy Bunter did not observe Coker

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS AND GIRLS!

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. Write to him: Editor of the MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

SHOULD a boy have pocket-money every week, and, if so, how much?—is one of the questions put to me this week.

Well, nothing can be got without paying for it! As to what amount a boy should have rests entirely with the parents. Some can only afford to give their children a few coppers each week, while others, more fortunately placed give a shilling, or maybe more. When I was a youngster, I was given fourpence every week—which, of course, went further in those days than it does now. But I had to do odd jobs in the house every Saturday morning, such as cleaning knives and forks, before I got my "wages." Later on, I started running errands, and my pocket-money was slightly increased. At this stage, I was given a money-box, in which I used to put an occasional penny or two to buy presents or pay for some little extras when I was on holiday from school. The possession of money entails a certain responsibility, especially when you are able to do a little shopping for yourself—such

as at the doorway. But about twenty other fellows did. And the expression that came over Coker's face, as he heard this happy Owl, was really execrable.

"Blessed if I see anything to chuckle at!" boomed Bunter. "Mind all you fellows keep it dark. I don't suppose Coker will ever trouble to it. I mean to say, you all know what a silly idiot he is. Practically an imbecile, you know. Don't let Coker hear a word, or—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look out, Bunter!" yelled Smitty. Coker, for some moments, had seemed spellbound. Now he suddenly woke to action. He made a rush into the Rag, heading for Bunter.

"Eh?" said Bunter, blinking round. "What—Oh! Ah! Oh crickey! I say, you fellows—Yaroooh! Keep him off! Yoo-hoooh! Oh crumbs! Oh crickey! Leggo! Help! Fire! Murder! Help! Yaroooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Owl! Wow!" roared Bunter, frug-

as buying hair oil, toothpaste, caps, and ties. To have too much money, and be allowed to squander it, however, is bad training for any boy.

Now for next Saturday's Greyfriars path.

—WALKER ON THE WARPATH!

Walker, as you all know, is a prefect, and by all the laws of Greyfriars School, a prefect has to jump when a prefect says jump! But, like or no laws, a prefect is not allowed to throw his weight about. Walker, however, is one of those fellows who, when something works out contrary to expectations, tries to make things uncomfortable for others. Such is the case next week. But there's a rude awakening for prefect Walker when he tries to make things awkward for Tom Brown, the cherry junior from New Zealand. Most of the popular characters at Greyfriars appear in this yarn, and I guarantee that you'll vote it a winner. The tit-bit in the "Greyfriars Herald" is Dicky Nugent's masterpiece, recounting the latest strike news at St. Sam's—a real tickler! To wind up this great programme, there'll be more news in a nutshell by the Greyfriars Guide—and MORE "ARMAMENTS" STAMPS to add to your growing collection. Don't give up hope if you failed to win a prize in the First Lap of the "Armaments" Race—you may be more fortunate next time.

YOUR EDITOR

glung frantically in Horace Coker's mighty grasp. "I say, you fellows, help! I say, Coker—yaroooh—it wasn't me! I never—Wow! I didn't—Yooow! I wouldn't—yaroooh!"

"Thump, thump, thump!"

"Owl! Owl! Wow! Help! Yaroooh! Oh crickey!"

"You—you—you," gasped Coker—"you—you—you take that, and that, and that, and that, and that—"

"Yoo-hoooh! Whooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And that, and that, and that—"

"Owl! Help! Wow!"

The Remove fellows were almost in hysterics. But some of them at last rushed to the rescue. Coker was dragged off Bunter, and rolled out of the Rag.

The Rag was left in a roar. Loudest of all was the roar of Billy Bunter. It was the end of Bunter's hypnotism, and, really, it was very nearly the end of Bunter!

THE END

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