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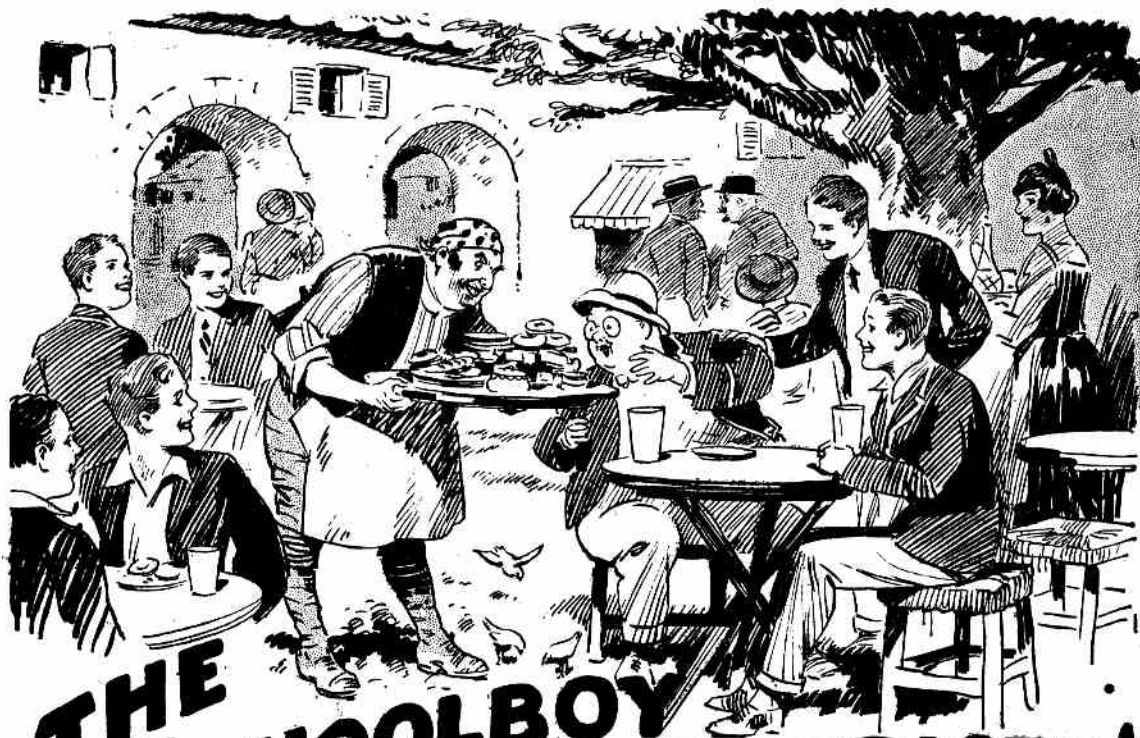
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THE SCHOOLBOY TOURISTS!

BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

In the Bay of Biscay-O!

ROT!" said Coker. Coker of the Fifth spoke resolutely.

Coker was a resolute fellow! "But, sir—" said Pawlings, the steward of the Sea Nymph yacht.

"Rot!" repeated Coker. "It's going to be very rough, sir. And Captain Cook says that you young gentlemen had better stay below."

Judging by the motion of the Sea Nymph, it was rather rough already. The holiday yacht was a good sea-boat; but the Bay of Biscay was rolling and swelling, and the Sea Nymph rolled and pitched. Black clouds banked the sky, and hid the mountains of Spain from view. Rain pattered down on the deck and on the frothing waters. Harry Wharton & Co., of the Greyfriars Remove, would have been quite pleased to go out on deck and see the gale through. But they agreed that it was only cricket to give the skipper his head! Not so Coker—not at all! For the third time, Coker of the Fifth pronounced his opinion:

"Rot!" Pawlings left it at that! Having delivered Captain Cook's message, he left Horace Coker and the rest to their own devices. Coker's devices led him deckward. He stepped towards the companion; and his comrades, Potter and Greene, exchanged a glance and called to him simultaneously:

"Look here, Coker—"

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Coker glanced round. "Coming on deck?" he asked. "No!" hooted Potter. "And you'd better stay where you are!" "Think you know better than the skipper?" demanded Greene.

Coker stared, as if surprised by a frivolous question.

"I hope so!" he answered. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Famous Five.

Coker gave them a look. It was irksome to Coker, a great man of the Fifth Form at Greyfriars, to be doing an Easter cruise in company with a mob of fags of the Lower Fourth. Not once, since the Sea Nymph had started on the Easter cruise, had those disrespectful young sweeps treated Coker with the respect that was due to so great a man. Indeed, Coker had found it necessary, quite early in the cruise, to thrash them all round for that very reason. Unfortunately, the thrashing had turned out to be what Hurree Janset Ram Singh called a boot on the other leg! Coker had got it! Since then, he had, so to speak, used no other! Still, he was not the fellow to be cackled at by fags.

"You'd better shut up!" said Coker. "Don't cackle! I don't like it! I was an ass to come on a cruise with a gang of fags on the same boat. I see that now."

"You were an ass," agreed Bob Cherry, "and you haven't changed since, old bean!"

"Shut up!" roared Coker. He turned his back on the cheery Removites. "Now, Potter—now, Greene! Come on deck! I'm not paying twenty-one guineas for a cruise to stick below, I can tell you."

"But Captain Cook—" urged Potter. "Captain be blowed! A fat hotel-keeper, running a floating boarding-house!" grunted Coker. "I'm not taking any nonsense from him, I can tell you."

"Well, he's skipper, anyhow; and he says—"

"Rot!"

"Look here, Coker—"

"I said rot!" said Horace Coker. "And when I say rot, I mean rot! See? I'm going on deck. You fellows can stick below with these frightened fags if you like! I'm going!"

"Who's frightened, you silly ass?" bawled Johnny Bull.

"The frightfulness is not terrific, my esteemed idiotic Coker," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh gently. "But the obeyfulness of the absurd skipper's directions is the proper caper."

"Shut up!" said Coker. "Come on, Potter! Come on, Greene! Have a little pluck! Look it in the face, you know! What's a gale of wind? What about the mariners of England, who guard our native seas, whose flag has braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze! What?"

"But we're not mariners!" pointed out Potter.

"You're jolly well not, anyhow, Coker!" said Greene. "You know you jolly well can't keep your feet if the wind more than whispers. And it's going to blow hard now."

That was the last straw. It was true that Coker was not a good sailor; though nothing would have induced him to admit it, even to himself. Coker fancied himself as a hardy mariner, just

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—ANOTHER TIP-TOP STORY OF THE GREYFRIARS CHUMS!

as he fancied himself as a cricketer, and a footballer, and an oarsman, and several other things. The number of things Coker fancied he could do was remarkable, compared with the number of things that he really could do! Of all the Greyfriars fellows on the holiday yacht, seniors and juniors, Coker was the one who would be most in danger on deck on a rough day. But that fact was quite hidden from Coker.

"Can't keep my feet?" repeated Coker. "Did you say that I can't keep my feet, Greene?"

"Well, you jolly well know——" said Greene warmly.

"I know this!" interrupted Coker. "I know I'm jolly well going to bang your head on the wall, Greene, for your cheek!"

And Coker made a stride at Greene of the Fifth, with wrath in his rugged brow, and a glint in his eye. Perhaps it was fortunate for Greene that the Sea Nymph gave a fearful roll at that moment. Loose articles clattered about the saloon, and there was a horrified squeak from Billy Bunter, who was sprawling on the divan, bitterly repenting of his tenth helping at lunch. The juniors held on to the table, which was clamped to the floor—Potter and Greene held on to a doorway. Coker of the Fifth, who was not quick on the uptake, had no time to hold on to anything. As the yacht rolled, Coker rolled, too—and his performance certainly seemed to bear out Greene's statement that he could not keep his feet! At all events, he did not keep them. He went headlong!

"Whooop!" roared Coker.

He had intended to bang Greene's head on the wall. But it was his own head that banged on the wall, after he had rolled across the cabin. And it banged hard.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the chums of the Remove.

Coker sat up, rather dizzily, jammed against the wall. He blinked at the other fellows in a dazed sort of way, and rubbed his head. Coker's head was hard. But so was the wall, and the wall seemed to have had the best of the collision.

"Ow!" said Coker. "Wow!"

"Do that again, Coker!" said Frank Nugent encouragingly.

"Gentlemen, chaps, and sportsmen," said Bob Cherry. "Watch Coker in his celebrated acrobatic stunt——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wow!" gasped Coker. "You cheeky young scoundrels—wait till I gerrup! I'll jolly well whop you—— Wow!"

With the aid of the wall, Coker lifted himself to his feet. Potter and Greene sagely retired to their state-room. Coker made a plunge towards the Famous Five. It did not seem to occur to him that the Sea Nymph might roll again, and that it was advisable to hold on to something. But the Sea Nymph did roll again, horribly; and Coker rolled, too, as helplessly as a sack of coke. This time he brought up against the divan and sprawled headlong over it—and Billy Bunter! Billy Bunter gave an expiring gasp as the Fifth-Former landed on him!

"Oooogh! Groogh! Beast! I say, you fellows, draggimoff! Woooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Draggimoff!" shrieked Bunter. "Oh lor! Oh crickey! He's squish-squish-squashing me—— Whooop!"

The Sea Nymph glided on an even keel again—for the moment. Harry Wharton & Co. rushed at Coker, grasped

him, and dragged him off Bunter. They landed him on the floor, in a heap.

"Sit on him!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"Hold on!" gasped Wharton, as the yacht pitched again. "My hat! She's going it!"

The juniors clutched at the nearest hold. The Sea Nymph seemed to be jazzing her way across the wild waters of the Bay of Biscay. That pitch of the yacht sent Coker rolling, and he did not stop till he jammed on the steps of the companion. There he clutched, and held on.

"Oh scissors!" gasped Coker.

After that exhibition of his "sealings," it might have been supposed that even Coker would be willing to take the skipper's advice and remain below. Obviously—to anybody but Coker—it would be rather dangerous to do these acrobatic performances on the open deck, with the Bay of Biscay surging under the rail. But warnings were lost on Coker of the Fifth! Finding himself sprawling on the cabin stairs, he clambered up them and scrambled out on the wind-swept deck. Coker was having his own way—as Coker generally did! And considering the sort of sailor Coker was, the Famous Five of the Remove could not help wondering whether they would ever see him alive again!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Looking After Coker!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter moaned dismally.

The Bay of Biscay, famous for its treachery, had been the undoing of the Owl of the Remove.

At lunch-time that treacherous stretch of water had been calm, smiling, sunny; looking, so to speak, as if butter wouldn't melt in its mouth. It had seemed quite safe, to Bunter, to stack away a large lunch—in fact, several large lunches, one after another.

Bunter's cousin, George Cook, who ran the Sea Nymph as a holiday yacht, twenty-one guineas inclusive for the Easter cruise, prided himself on the fact that he kept a good table. Feed 'em, and they come again, was, as George frequently remarked, his motto. There was no doubt that, in the matter of food, George was generous.

Billy Bunter, it was true, was not a paying passenger—he got his Easter trip free, as a reward for securing George so many "clients" from his school. But Billy Bunter, though he was the only passenger on board with no bill to pay, was undoubtedly the passenger who made the deepest inroad on the provisions. And the smiling calm of the Bay of Biscay had tempted Bunter to exceed even his usual limit at lunch. Now he repented it bitterly—now that the treacherous bay had cut up rusty.

He sprawled on the divan, with his fat face the colour of chalk, his eyes behind his big spectacles looking like those of an expiring codfish, and horrid gurgles alternating with his moans and groans.

"I say, you fellows, I—I think I'm dud-dud-dying!" moaned Bunter. "I—I say, g-g-go up and ask George if—if he can't keep the beastly ship still somehow! Ow! I wish I hadn't come! Oooogh!"

"Poor old bean!" said Bob Cherry, commiseratingly. The opinion of the juniors was that it served Bunter right. But his sufferings were so horrid that their hearts were touched. Still, sympathy was not of much use to the sick Owl! What he really wanted was firm

land under his feet, and that was unattainable in the middle of the Bay of Biscay. The nearest firm land was a mile away—downwards! Bunter certainly did not want that.

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I'm expiring! I—I can feel I'm gug-gug-going! Oooogh!" added Bunter, as the yacht pitched again.

Bob Cherry grasped him in time to save him from rolling off the divan. Bob sat by his side, holding on with one hand, grasping the fat Owl with the other.

"Buck up, old bean!" said Bob encouragingly.

"Ow! Beast!" was Bunter's grateful answer. "Don't pinch my arm like that, you clumsy ass! Ow!"

"Shall I let you go, fathead?"

"Ow! No! Hold me!" howled Bunter. "One of you fellows hold my other arm! Ow!"

Frank Nugent resignedly sat on Bunter's other side, and held his other arm. Bunter was safe from rolling off now, at least.

"That better?" asked Nugent.

"Ow! Yes—but don't grab me like—like a wildcat! Can't you hold a fellow without grabbing lumps out of him, you silly idiot?"

"What I like about Bunter," remarked Bob Cherry thoughtfully, "is the nice, pleasant, polished way he has of thanking a chap for lending him a hand."

"Let him roll," suggested Johnny Bull, with a grunt.

"Beast! D-d-don't you leggo!" gasped Bunter. "Pip-pip-put a cushion under my head, Bull, you beast! Can't you make yourself useful? You don't fancy you're ornamental, do you?"

Johnny Bull, breathing hard, picked up a cushion, refrained from banging Bunter with it, and slipped it under the fat junior's head. There was no doubt that Bunter was feeling ill—though his trouble was chiefly due to his many lunches, which seemed to be on frightfully bad terms with one another in his podgy interior.

"I think a fellow might get a fellow a glass of water!" said Bunter bitterly. "There's Inky and Wibley standing there doing nothing—lot they care if I perish under their eyes!"

"My esteemed and idiotic Bunter, I——"

"Oooogh! Grooogh!"

William Wibley kindly fetched a glass of water. Hurrey Singh helped him to get to Bunter with it without spilling it. Five fellows, now, were looking after Bunter, and he was keeping them busy. Harry Wharton had gone to the companion stairs. He was rather anxious about Coker. Champion ass as Coker was, nobody wanted him to be washed overboard into the Bay of Biscay—and the captain of the Greyfriars Remove rather regretted that they had not collared him by main force and kept him below. Sitting on Coker in the saloon would have kept him out of danger, though certainly it would not have had an agreeable effect on his temper.

Wharton put his head out into the wind, and his cap was torn from it at the same instant and whisked away. His hair flew out into a mop, standing on end, and felt as if it was being blown away, too. It was not yet sunset, but the black, murky clouds blotted out the light of day. All round the throbbing yacht, steaming steadily with her head to the gale, the sea roared in huge, white-ridged surges, towering as if they would crash down on the Sea Nymph

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and sink her bodily into the depths of the ocean.

Wharton had a glimpse of George's tubby figure on the bridge, with Mr. Pycroft, the mate—both in oilskins and sou'westers, splashed with rain and beaten by the fierce wind. Rain and spindrift washed the slanting deck, and again and again a sea lapped over the rail, and a wash of water came over Wharton's legs and splashed down the companion.

He dragged himself out and closed the door behind him, and, holding on with both hands, started round. In the dusky twilight that reigned under the black clouds, he glimpsed Horace Coker, hanging on to a seat that was clamped to the deck.

With the yacht pitching wildly in the surges of the Bay of Biscay, it was hardly safe to release hold. But Wharton picked his chance, and slid along to the deck-seat where Coker clung, and grabbed hold close to him. He was already drenched to the skin, and could not get much wetter. Coker blinked at him—a wet and rather dizzy blink.

It had been Horace Coker's intention to stride the deck, like an experienced mariner, heedless of washing seas and pitching and plunging. He had had an idea that this might encourage the crew—seeing him so unaffected by the gale, and indifferent to danger. George, fat and tubby as he was, seemed to keep his feet with the activity of an acrobat, and what George could do—a dashed fat hotel-keeper!—surely Horace Coker, the great man of Greyfriars, could do! But somehow he couldn't!

Instead of walking the deck indifferent to the gale, Coker had had to clutch hold of that seat, and hang on for his very life—soaked to the skin, and beaten and buffeted by the wind. That was not in the least what Horace Coker had intended—it was just what happened. Things often did happen in a way that Coker never intended. George had not even seen him. George had plenty to do to carry his ship safe through the raging bay, without looking after passengers who had not sense enough to go in when it rained. They had been told to stay below, and George had no doubt that they were there—safe and sound.

Coker opened his capacious mouth and shouted to Wharton, but the wind carried his voice away. The junior scrambled close, and caught his words as Coker roared again:

"You young idiot! What are you doing here? Go below at once!"

"Hadn't you better come down, Coker?" Wharton yelled in his ear.

"Shut up, and don't be cheeky!" Coker was too burly and beefy for Wharton to handle, or he would assuredly have grabbed him and rolled him headlong into the companion.

"Fatehead!" he yelled. "It's getting rougher every minute—"

"Shut up!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Wharton, as a heavy sea struck the yacht, and set her pitching so violently that her port rail seemed to be dipping into the sea. He held on desperately, and then, as the Sea Nymph laboured to right herself, he became aware that Coker was no longer clinging to the deck-seat. That sudden shock had torn Coker from his hold, and he was gone. Wharton's eyes picked him up the next moment—sprawling against the rail, struggling blindly, in imminent danger of tossing into the raging sea.

Wharton shut his teeth hard. He did not stop to think. He let go his hold, slid across to the rail, and grasped it with one hand, and Coker's collar with the other. He held him in time to keep

him from shooting away helplessly, as the Sea Nymph pitched again to the starboard. But he knew only too well that he could not hold him long. Another heavy lurch to port would hurl them both into the sea; and Wharton, holding on desperately, yelled at the top of his voice, so frantically that his shout rose above the howling wind:

"Help!"

"Hoity haddocks!" ejaculated George, as he stared round, and spotted the junior clinging to Coker and the rail, and he grabbed his megaphone and roared. Two or three seamen scrambled through wind and rain towards Wharton, grabbed him and Coker together, and almost hurled them into the companion, and slammed and fastened the door after them.

Bump, bump, bump!

Coker and Wharton went down the cabin stairs together, rolling. Coker landed first, on his back, sprawling and bawling.

Wharton landed on Coker, and Coker's bawl was changed to an agonised gasp as every ounce of breath was knocked out of his burly body.

"Urrrgh!" said Coker. "Wurrrrgh!"

And that was all Coker could say.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Sat Upon I

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry rushed up and dragged Wharton to his feet.

The captain of the Greyfriars Remove leaned on him and gasped for breath.

"Oh crickey!"

"Damaged?" asked Bob.

"I believe I've got a few million bumps and about fifty million bruises!" gasped Wharton. "Nothing to speak of!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Ow! I'm jolly wet!" gasped Wharton. "I think I'll go and change."

"Coker looks wet!" remarked Bob, with a grin at the sprawling form of Horace Coker.

"Blow Coker!" grunted Wharton breathlessly. "He's jolly lucky not to be at the bottom of the Bay of Biscay! Bother him!"

Wharton staggered away to his stateroom to change. He was soaked to the skin, and dripping water as he moved. Horace Coker, still gurgling, sat up dizzily. Coker's brain was not quite clear as to what had happened on deck; his powerful intellect, as a matter of fact, never was very clear. But he knew that rough, rude men had collared him, without the least ceremony, and bundled him below, like a heap of rubbish. And, naturally, Coker was wrathful. Coker was not the man to be handled like that with impunity.

"Cheek!" gasped Coker, as he scrambled to his feet at last. "Dashed cheek! If that dashed hotel-keeper thinks that I'm going to stand this sort of thing, that dashed hotel-keeper is making a mistake! I'll jolly well show him whether I'm going to stand it!"

Coker clung to the handrail for some minutes while he got back his breath. Then he started clambering up the stairs again.

Coker had said that he was going to see the storm through on deck—and Coker was a man of his word! Coker wasn't afraid of the Bay of Biscay in its wildest mood; also, Coker was anxious to tell George what he thought of him. It did not occur to him that

Captain Cook, with a steamer to handle in a gale on the Bay of Biscay, had no leisure to listen to what Coker thought of him.

"You're going up again?" roared Bob Cherry.

"Mind your own business!" snapped Coker, over his shoulder.

"Come down, you ass!" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Shut up!"

Coker clambered on. With the yacht rocking and pitching wildly, he spun from one side of the stairway to the other, grasping at both rails. But no doubt he would have reached the top had not Bob Cherry reached up after him and grasped his ankle from behind. A powerful tug on that ankle took Coker by surprise, and brought him rolling down again.

"Yaroooooh!" roared Coker, as he landed once more.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker sat up and spluttered.

"Somebody pulled me down!" he roared.

"My hat! Did somebody pull you down, Coker?" exclaimed Bob. "Now, I wonder who pulled Coker down, you men? Any of you know?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Keep that ass below!" shouted Wharton, from his room. "He's been nearly overboard once!"

"We're keeping him, old bean," answered Bob. "We're not letting Coker get himself drowned! We're not losing our funny man if we can help it!"

"Which of you young scoundrels hooked me down?" roared Coker.

He gained his feet and glared at the hilarious Removites.

"The whichfulness is terrific, my esteemed idiotic Coker!" remarked Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "But the stayfulness below is the proper caper!"

"Be a good little boy, Coker, and do as you're told!" advised Bob Cherry.

That excellent advice was too much for Coker! He made a jump at Bob Cherry, lost his footing as the Sea Nymph pitched, and landed on his hands and knees just in front of Bob, with a gasp. Bob Cherry cheerfully fastened his grasp on Coker's thick mop of hair and jerked him away from the stairs—to an accompaniment of wild roars from Coker.

"Ow! Leggo! I'll smash you—I'll pulverise you—I'll spifficate you!" shrieked Coker, as he rolled on the floor of the saloon. "You wait till I gerrup—"

"Sit on him!" said Bob.

The juniors did not wait for Coker to get up. He looked as if he would be quite dangerous when he got up. They rolled him over on his back, and sat on him.

Spread-eagled on his burly back, with Bob Cherry sitting on his manly chest, Frank Nugent on his right arm, Johnny Bull on his left, Coker of the Fifth was helpless. Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh sat on his right leg, William Wibley on his left leg. Coker was fairly pinned. He wriggled in vain.

"Will you lemme gerrup?" he gurgled.

"I think not!" said Bob. "We're saving your life, old bean! It's hardly worth the trouble, perhaps—still, we're going to do it!"

"I'll smash you!" roared Coker.

"Go it!" said Bob.

"I—I'll spifficate you!"

"The spiffication is a boot on the other leg!" chuckled Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"I say, you fellows, hold me!" yelled

Billy Bunter, as the Sea Nymph pitched. But all the fellows were holding Coker, and there was nobody left to hold Bunter. The Owl of the Remove yelled as he rolled off the divan and bumped on the floor. "Ow! I'm killed! Wow! I'm dying!"

"Look here, Bunter, you're a jolly long time dying!" said Bob. "You always were a slacker!"

"Oh! Wow! Beast!"

Having landed on the floor, Bunter remained on the floor. He clung to a table leg to keep from rolling about the saloon. The floor was slanting at a different angle almost every moment as the Sea Nymph ploughed and plunged in the wild waters of the Bay of Biscay.

and dry. He grinned down at the cheery group perched on Coker of the Fifth.

"That's right," said the captain of the Remove. "Take it calmly, Coker! You'll be glad presently that you're not drowned. You nearly went overboard, you know, when I got hold of you on deck."

"You young rotter!" spluttered Coker. "I'm jolly well going to whop you for grabbing me by the collar on deck!"

"Oh crumbs! Did you want to go over the side?" yelled Wharton.

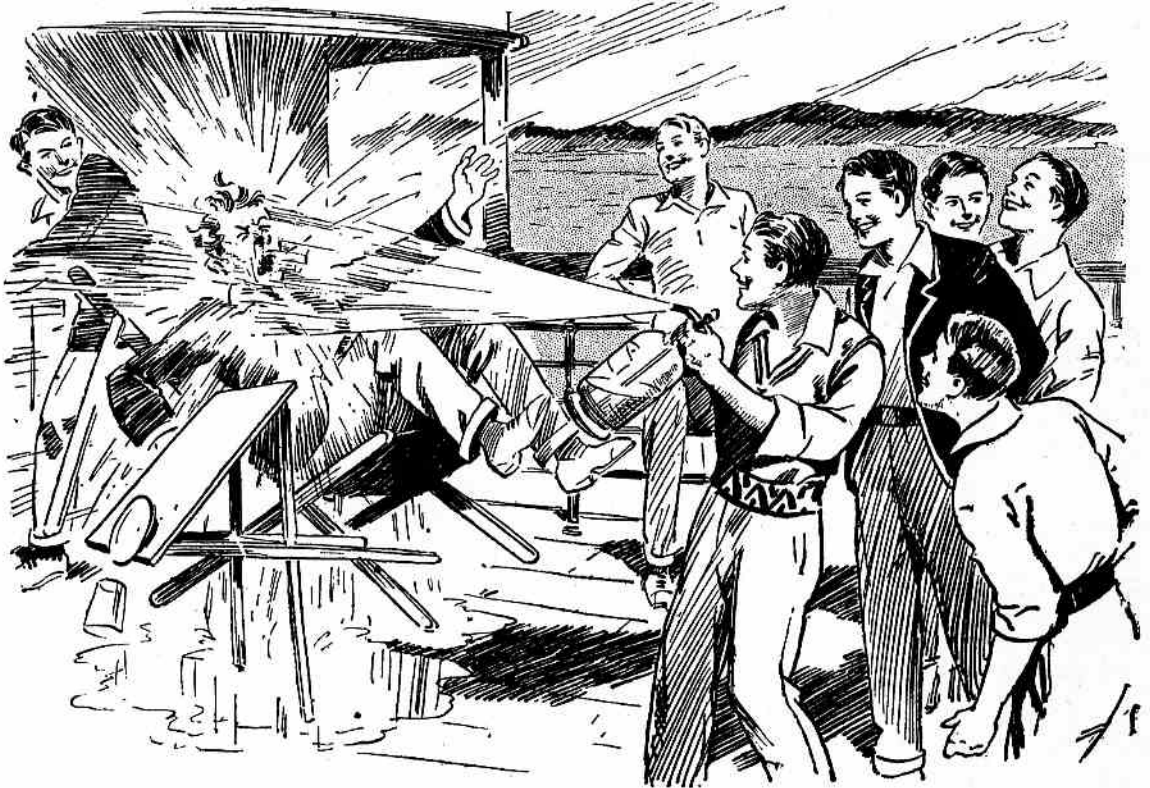
"Don't be a cheeky young ass!" snorted Coker.

Harry Wharton chuckled. Coker, apparently, was unconscious of the peril he had been through on deck. Probably

The juniors plunged and pitched and scrambled after Coker. They grabbed him on the stairs, and dragged him, wriggling, down. They rolled him as far as his state-room, and rolled him in, and landed him there in a breathless, gurgling heap.

Leaving him to gurgle, they retired, and Harry Wharton locked the door on the outside. It was too hefty a task to keep sitting on Coker, with the Sea Nymph plunging like a bucking broncho. But he was safe in his room with the key turned.

It was some minutes before Coker was on his feet again, and grabbing at his door. When he discovered that it was locked the voice of Horace Coker was raised in frantic wrath.



"Ooooooh!" roared Coker, as the lemonade went in a flood over his flannel bags. "You clumsy ass! You've soaked me——" "You've got the lemonade, Coker," said Bob Cherry. "Now for the soda!" Squisssssss! He pressed the lever of the siphon and the soda-water shot out in a stream. It caught Horace Coker just under the nose. Swlllllsssssh!

A stream of gurgling lamentations came from William George Bunter. But the juniors were too busy with Horace Coker to heed the lamentations of Bunter, though they were as lamentable as those of Job of ancient times.

Coker, pinned down with five fellows sitting on him, was still game. He was still putting up a tussle. He heaved under the Removites, like the Bay of Biscay under the Sea Nymph. Every now and then the whole bunch went sliding as the floor canted; but all the time Coker remained the under dog, pinned down and powerless.

"Potter!" roared Coker. "Greene!"

Perhaps Potter and Greene did not hear him in the howl of the wind and the thumping of the waves. Perhaps they did not want to hear him. At all events, they heeded not.

Coker roared and roared, and bawled and bawled, but Potter and Greene still lugged the cover of their state-room.

Harry Wharton came along, changed

his brain had been too dizzy and hazy for him to realise what was happening.

"The silly ass doesn't know that he nearly went overboard," said Harry. "Keep him safe! Look here, Coker, we'll let you get up if you'll promise to stay below."

"I'm going on deck," roared Coker, "and I'm jolly well going to thrash the lot of you first!"

"Sit tight!" grinned Bob.

The grinning juniors sat tight. But a sudden, terrific pitch of the Sea Nymph sent them rolling again, and this time the sitters were hurled off Coker. Freed from restraint, Horace scrambled up and plunged for the companion stairs. Apparently he was not thinking of thrashing the Removites as they deserved before he went on deck. But he was going on deck. That determination was as fixed and immutable as the laws of the Medes and Persians.

"After him!" yelled Wharton.

"You young scoundrels! Have you locked me in?"

"He's guessed it!" said Bob Cherry.

"What a brain!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Open this door!" roared Coker.

"I'm going on deck!"

Bang! Bang! Bang! came on the inner side of Coker's door. Coker seemed to be getting excited.

"Will you let me out?" raved Coker in frenzied tones. "I tell you I'm going on deck!"

"Get out of the porthole and climb up the side!" suggested Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

But even Horace Coker did not think of adopting that heroic method of getting on deck. He banged and thumped, and thumped and banged, till he was tired, and the juniors cheerfully left him to it. Coker was determined not to stay below. But he did stay below; and he was still below, safe

in his cabin, when the gale blew itself out and the sun shone once more from the clouds.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Fagging for Coker!

"THEATRE'S Spain!" said Horace Coker, staring at the summits of the mountains of Portugal, which loomed against the blue sky eastward.

It was the following day, and the Sea Nymph was churning southward under a sunny blue sky, over a smiling sea. It was a warm day—very warm—the Greyfriars party were already finding the weather warmer than at home. Potter and Greene, extended in deck-chairs, were feeling lazy and comfortable, after a good lunch, gazing at the blue sea and blue sky, and not thinking of anything in particular, except that they hoped Coker would not come breezing along. But Coker did come breezing along. Coker glanced at the two lazy-looking seniors of Greyfriars, and grunted.

"There's Spain!" he repeated, with a nod over the port rail.

"That's all right," said Potter. "Leave it where it is."

"You don't feel energetic enough to get out of that chair and take a squint at Spain?" asked Coker sarcastically.

"Couldn't see it if we did!" answered Potter.

"Anything wrong with your eyesight?"

"Not at all."

"Then why couldn't you see Spain if you looked?"

"Can't see across Portugal," answered Potter blandly. "It's too wide. And there's mountains in the way."

Greene chuckled sleepily.

Horace Coker gave them a look. No doubt the Sea Nymph had already steamed past the portion of the Iberian Peninsula fronting the Atlantic brine, which was part of Spain. No doubt she was now running down the Portuguese coast. Still, that was no reason why Coker should be checked. Coker gave Potter and Greene a very expressive look. As they had their eyes shut, however, it was wasted on them.

Coker grunted and sat down in a chair fronting the rail. He stretched out his long legs, leaned back his bullet head, and lazed like Potter and Greene. But he did not remain silent like those lazy youths. Coker was seldom silent.

"It gets warmer, the farther we go south," Coker remarked, with the air of a fellow who had made a discovery.

"Not really?" murmured Potter.

"It does," said Coker. "It's got something to do with the latitude, or the longitude, or something or other."

"You're full of information to-day, old bean," said Potter admiringly, and Greene contributed another sleepy chuckle.

"Well, a fellow ought to be observant," said Coker. "Fellow ought not to travel with his eyes shut, and never notice anything."

"Quite!" agreed Potter. "Open your eyes, Greene, old man, and see whether it's getting warmer."

For the third time Greene gave a sleepy chuckle.

"It's jolly warm," said Coker. "A fellow gets thirsty. That steward never seems to be anywhere when he's wanted. He's put my lemonade here and forgotten the soda-water. I told him I wanted soda. It's refreshing. He doesn't seem to care. One of you fellows cut down and get the siphon."

Potter and Greene sat tight. If Coker wanted a soda siphon they saw no reason why Coker should not fetch the same himself. Coker moved his head sufficiently to give them a scornful stare.

"Slackers!" he yapped. "Too lazy to move. What?"

This was rather good for Coker, who was sprawling on his back in the deck-chair, evidently too lazy to move. But it was Coker all over.

"Send one of the fags," murmured Potter.

And once more Greene chuckled sleepily. If Coker of the Fifth started "fagging" the juniors on the Sea Nymph, trouble was likely to accrue. If Coker got mixed up in a shindy with the Removites, Potter and Greene would get a much needed rest. Harry Wharton & Co. were sauntering about the deck, full of beans, as usual, in spite of the blazing sunshine and the heat.

"Not a bad idea!" said Coker. "Here, Bunter!"

A snore from a deckchair close at hand announced that Billy Bunter was there. Bunter had lost an enormous quantity of foodstuffs in the Bay of Biscay. He had made up for it since. Now he was sleeping off the effects of a gargantuan meal, with a straw hat

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SYDNEY BRIDGE!

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tilted over his fat face to keep off the sun.

"Bunter!" repeated Coker.

Snore!

Coker did not want to get up, but by stretching out one of his long legs he was able to reach Bunter. He stretched it out and hooked the toe of his shoe under the fat Owl's plump chin. Bunter awoke then, quite suddenly.

"Ooogh!" gasped Bunter. "Wharrer you up to, you beast? If that's you, Bob Cherry, you hooligan—"

"It's me, Bunter," said Coker. "Stop that yowling. Cut down and fetch me a soda siphon."

Bunter blinked at him.

"Fetch it yourself!" he hooted.

"That's the sort of thing we're supposed to stand from these fags," said Coker bitterly. "Yesterday that cheeky young scoundrel Wharton actually grabbed me by the collar on deck—"

"Cook says he saved you from going overboard!" yawned Potter.

"Cook's a fool!"

"But he says—"

"And you're a fool!"

"Oh, thanks!"

"I'm waiting for that siphon, Bunter."

"You can wait!" snorted Bunter. "Go and eat coke! Catch me fetching and carrying for you."

"If I have to get up out of this chair," said Coker, "you'll be sorry. That's a tip, Bunter."

"I say, you fellows!" yelled Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry came along. "What's the row?"

"You can mind your own business, Cherry. I've told Bunter to fetch up a soda siphon. You can fetch it, if you like, but be quick about it. I don't like being kept waiting."

Bob Cherry stared at Coker. He was considering whether to hook over the deckchair and send Horace sprawling along the deck. That was an adequate way of dealing with a Fifth Form man who fancied that he could fag Remove fellows—especially on holiday. After a moment's thought, however, Bob grinned and nodded.

"Right, my lord!" he answered.

"You silly ass!" hooted Johnny Bull.

"You're not going to fag for Coker."

"My dear chap, Coker's told me to fetch a soda siphon. To hear is to obey. Isn't that so, Coker?"

"Yes—and be sharp about it!" snapped Coker.

Bob Cherry dashed away, his comrades staring after him in astonishment. Potter and Greene sat up and took notice. Bob Cherry was really the member of the Famous Five who was least likely to obey Coker's lordly behests. He seemed to be learning new manners and customs. Coker, however, was not surprised. Coker always fancied himself as one having authority, saying "Do this!" and he doeth it!

In a couple of minutes Bob was back, with a soda siphon in his hand. His comrades eyed him.

"Look here!" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Don't talk now, old chap; I'm waiting on Coker!" answered Bob. "Ready for the soda, Coker?"

Coker heaved himself upright in the deckchair.

"Yes. Fill up that glass with it," he said, indicating a glass of lemonade that stood on a little table at his side.

Perhaps it was by accident that the soda siphon collided with the glass, and that the lemonade went in a flood over Coker's flannel bags. There was a roar from Coker as his long legs were drenched with lemonade, and a howl of laughter from the Removites. Potter and Greene exchanged a wink. They were beginning to understand why Bob Cherry was fagging for Coker.

"Oooh!" roared Coker. "You clumsy young ass! Look what you've done! You've soaked me—"

"You've got the lemonade, Coker! Here's the soda!"

Squissssss!

Bob Cherry's thumb was on the nozzle of the siphon. The soda-water shot out in a stream. It caught Horace Coker just under his nose.

Swiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!

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

"Urrrrrrgggh!" gurgled Coker.

"You mad young ass, turn that away! Why, you young villain, you're doing it on purpose! I—I—I'll—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Squisssh! Splash! Swoooosh!

Coker bounded from the chair, the soda stream still playing on his rugged features. He jumped at Bob Cherry, and Bob jumped back, still with the stream of soda playing on Coker. All over Coker's infuriated face, all over his spotless flannels, the stream dashed and splashed, amid howls of laughter from the Removites. Hurree Jamsct Ram Singh put out a foot as Coker leaped on his prey, and Coker sprawled. Bob bent over him and gave him the last of the soda in the back of his neck.

A gasp from the siphon told that the contents were exhausted. Coker had had the lot. Internally, no doubt, that fizzy fluid would have been refreshing on a hot day. Externally, it was unpleasant and uncomfortable. Coker

was drenched and dripping and raging as he picked himself up. He roared with wrath. From everybody else on deck came a roar of merriment.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came George's hearty boom. "Larking, what? Boys will be boys! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Removites. "He, he, he!" cachinnated Billy Bunter.

"I'll smash you!" bellowed Coker. "I—I—I'll— Stop, you young villain! Wait till I get hold of you, you young ruffian! I—I—I'll—"

For several hectic minutes Coker of the Fifth pursued Bob Cherry up and down the deck of the Sea Nymph. Bob was elusive. He jumped over deck-chairs, dodged round skylights, clambered into a lifeboat, and slithered out again, with Coker raging on his track, and yells of laughter echoing on all sides. And when Coker at last cornered the elusive junior in the companion, it booted not—for as he collared Bob, the rest of the Co. collared Coker—and instead of wreaking his wrath on Bob Cherry, Coker found himself rolling down the steps in a breathless, gurgling heap.

After which Coker of the Fifth went to his state-room for a change, which he badly needed. And it seemed probable, to the Famous Five, that they would not be asked to do any more fagging for Coker.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

At Gibraltar!

"'Twas in Trafalgar Bay,
We saw the Frenchmen lay!"

BOB CHERRY was singing—in his own opinion at least. At all events, everybody on board the Sea Nymph could hear him. If Bob's voice was not tuneful, it was powerful.

That burst of melody was called forth by the sight of Cape Trafalgar; glorious in British naval history. The Sea Nymph was steaming down to the Strait of Gibraltar, and her passengers had a sight of the famous Cape. A century and a quarter had passed since the great day when Nelson died in the hour of victory, a day never to be forgotten. Even Billy Bunter blinked with interest at the great promontory crowned by a lighthouse.

"I say, you fellows, is that Cape Trafalgar?" asked Bunter. "I suppose it was named after Trafalgar Square, what?"

"Not quite!" chuckled Wharton. "The other way round, old bean."

"We've had it in history class with Quelch," remarked Bunter thoughtfully. "It was called the Thingummy-bob by the Romans—"

"That sounds like a Latin name!" agreed Nugent.

"The Promontorium Junonis!" granted Johnny Bull.

"Yes, I knew it was something or other," assented Bunter. "That's what comes of having a good memory."

"Tell us all about it, old bean," said Bob. "Gather round, my infants, and absorb history from Bunter."

"Well, you fellows ought to remember as much as I do, as we've had the same lessons," said Bunter. "But I've got rather a brain for that sort of thing. It was here that Nelson—I think it was Nelson—"

"The thoughtfulness is terrific."

"Yes, Nelson—he was an admiral, you know—"

"Take note!" said Bob Cherry solemnly. "Nelson was an admiral, you men."

Interesting Facts Concerning the Giant GRAF ZEPPELIN

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



Around the world in eighty days was the "startler" presented by one of the world's most famous imaginative writers—Jules Verne. An impossibility, of course. Everyone said so. But since that story was written, scientists and inventors and engineers, and men who delight to risk their lives, have been tremendously busy. One of the staggering results of their labours is the amazing Graf Zeppelin airship, which astonished mankind by flying around the world, not in eighty days, but in twenty!

This gigantic airship started out from Friedrichshafen, in Germany, voyaging across Europe, Siberia, Tokio, on to Los Angeles—the famous "Celluloid City" of the films—and Lakehurst, and back from America to the starting point. Well, that doesn't look much on paper, but don't forget the commander and crew of the Graf Zeppelin had their lives hanging by a thread, as it were, every inch of the way.

772 Feet Long!

Think of the engineering marvels of this stupendous Zeppelin, too. The framework over which the envelope is stretched had to be made tremendously strong, and yet as light as possible, for this Zeppelin's length is 772 feet; at its widest part the diameter is 100 feet, and its full height is 113 feet.

In front of the airship is a big gondola, attached to the keel-gangway, which goes the whole length of the Zeppelin, containing the pilot's cabin and navigating-room, and behind these are the dining-saloon and cabins for the passengers. Windows in this gondola allow of a full

and free view for all who are not too airsick to want to look out!

A Regular Passenger Service!

There are five engines, actually outside the vast envelope, some of which you can see in the photogravure plate. The main frames divide the hull up into 17 different sections or compartments, each with its own gasbag. One of the smaller pictures in the plate shows gas being pumped from huge cylinders into these bags.

One of the big problems which confronted the engineers responsible for this sky monster was the matter of anchoring it. Naturally, they couldn't arrange for a shed, such as houses an ordinary aeroplane, in which to place the Zeppelin whenever she stopped, so they got over the difficulty by arranging that she should be moored by the nose to a tall and strong mast at certain stopping places.

On a long journey, 24 passengers can be carried, but for a short trip the Graf can take 35 people, in addition to the crew of 26 and cargo and mails. It can carry enough fuel to travel 11,800 miles, at 68 miles per hour. Its top speed is 80 miles per hour.

Since its record-breaking world flight, the Graf Zeppelin has done regular passenger-carrying trips across the South Atlantic, to Brazil, and has even invaded the Arctic! The enormous envelope, painted with an aluminium powder preparation, has stood up to tropic heat and intense cold, and after hundreds of thousands of miles of adventurous travel the wonderful super-airship is going as strong as ever.

Another Superb Photo-Plate FREE Next Week, Boys!

"He was, really," said Bunter. "He was in command of the fleet, and when the enemy was sighted—the—the Germans—"

"Oh scissors! Germans!"

"I—I mean the—the Italians—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Make it French and Spaniards, old fat bean!" suggested Nugent.

"I was just going to say the French and Spaniards, when you fellows interrupted me. Nelson flew his famous battle-signal—I dare say you fellows have forgotten what it was. The famous signal: 'Take away that bauble!'" said Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the juniors. "Blessed if I see anything to cackle at. Patriotic fellows ought to remember that—"

"You frabjous owl!" hooted Johnny

Bull. "Nelson's signal was 'England expects every man to do his duty!'"

"That's what I was just going to say," explained Bunter. "Then there was a battle, and the Germans—I mean the Americans—that is, the French, were whopped, and—and they never smiled again!"

"They never smiled again!" gasped Bob. "Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And as Nelson lay on his quarter-deck, he said, 'Kick me, Hardy—'"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Or—or something like that—"

said Bunter. "I forget the exact words, but it was something like that."

"He said 'Kiss me, Hardy!' you ass!" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Rot!" said Bunter. "He wouldn't"

have called Hardy an ass, especially at such a time. That's rot, Bull!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors. "You fathead!" gasped Johnny Bull. "Nelson said, 'Kiss me, Hardy!'—you burbling bandersnatch!"

"Nothing of the sort! He wouldn't have called Hardy names. Besides, those words weren't known in Nelson's time. And a minute ago you said that he said, 'Kiss me, Hardy, you ass!' He couldn't have said both."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "If you're going to cackle at everything I say, I shan't tell you any more history," said Bunter. "You fellows are a set of ignoramuses, and you can only cackle when a fellow tells you things. Yah!"

"Oh, tell us some more!" implored Bob Cherry. "What did Julius Caesar say when Napoleon Bonaparte let the cakes burn in the neat-herd's hut?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" But Billy Bunter only snorted, and refused to draw further upon his vast stores of knowledge.

The Sea Nymph was to stop at Gibraltar, and the chums of the Remove were looking forward to a few hours ashore at the famous Rock. As the yacht glided through the Strait of Gibraltar, Spain was in view to port, and Africa to the starboard—and Coker of the Fifth pointed them both out to Potter and Greene; though by accident he pointed out Africa as Spain, and Spain as Africa.

"It's a Republic now," Coker added, still pointing to Africa, though no doubt referring to Spain. "They've turned out their king. Rather a cheek, I think, what?"

"I'll tell you why they sent the king away," said Potter.

"Eh? Why?" "It was to put him out of his Spain!" explained Potter.

This was a jest; and the Remove fellows, seeing the jest, smiled. But Coker did not smile. He looked puzzled.

"Naturally, he was put out of his Spain, when he was sent away," he said. "What do you mean, Potter?"

"I mean—to put him out of his pain!" Potter explained laboriously. "Out of his pain—out of his Spain! See?"

"No, I don't see!" Coker shook his head. "Was he in any pain?"

"No, ass! It's a joke!" howled Potter, wishing that he hadn't started.

"I can't see any joke in a man being in pain, especially if he wasn't in pain—and you say he wasn't! You're talking silly rot, Potter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors. Potter's little jest was, perhaps, rather a feeble one; but such as it was it was obvious enough. But nothing could be obvious enough for Horace Coker to see.

"I shouldn't talk nonsense like that, Potter, to set even these fags laughing at you," said Coker, happily unconscious that it was his own obtuseness that the juniors were laughing at. "It's rather ridiculous."

"You silly chump!" hissed Potter. "Shut up, old man!" said Coker.

A TIP!

"Magnetites" are strongly advised to read "THE RIVAL SCHOOLS!" this week's ripping school yarn in the GEM. In consequence of the activities of their Grammarian rivals a deep-laid plot is designed by Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's, "to put the Grammarian cads in their place." "The Rival Schools" will be special in many ways, but the GEM will be the same price as usual—2d. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,315.

"Talk sense, or don't talk at all. That's my advice, for what it's worth."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "And you fags shut up," said Coker. "Potter may be a bit of an ass, but you're not going to cackle at a pal of mine—see?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" In spite of Coker's prohibition, the fags did cackle, loud and long—though the cackle was not on Potter's account. Coker of the Fifth was, as Bob Cherry declared, enough to make a stone image cackle.

The Sea Nymph ran into the Bay of Algeiras, with the great rock looming against the sky. In the afternoon George took the whole party ashore for a look at Gibraltar. They walked round, looking at the sights of the famous rock fortress the juniors being contented to walk with George and follow his guidance and keep under his wing. Potter and Greene would have been contented to do the same, but it was not good enough for Coker. Coker preferred his own guidance. As George and his flock followed one of the narrow streets that rose in terraces, Coker drew Potter and Greene aside.

"I'm fed-up with this," he said. "We're not going round like a Cook's party, you men! Let's get out of this!"

"Look here, Captain Cook had arranged to have a motor run into Spain," said Greene. "We don't want to miss that."

"If you want to pack into a Bank Holiday bus with a mob of fags, you can please yourself," said Coker. "I'm going to ride!"

"Pretty steep here for biking—" "Don't be an ass, Greene! You can hire horses here, and I'm going for a trot into Spain. We can get some grub at some Spanish inn—that will be rather ripping—what?"

"Well, that sounds all right," agreed Potter. "If we don't lose ourselves—" "You will be with me!" Coker pointed out.

"Oh, my hat! I mean, all right! Let's!"

And Harry Wharton & Co. continued their peregrinations with George, minus Coker and Potter and Greene—deprived of the improving society of Horace Coker, but not missing it fearfully.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Run Into Spain!

"I SAY, you fellows! Give a fellow room!"

"Bow-wow!" "Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Shut up, Billy!" said George. "You talk too much!"

"Oh, really, George—"

Billy Bunter blinked indignantly. As a matter of fact, there was not too much room in the car. It was a large car, but there were eight passengers in it, and two of them were out-sizes!

Harry Wharton & Co. were packed in it rather like sardines, and the plump George was rather squeezed, and the plumper Bunter was rather squashed. Bunter needed room for two, and he hardly had more than room for one. Hence his fat voice was raised in complaint, which was unheeded. It was quite a merry party packed in the car as it ran out from La Linea, and raised the dust on the roads of Spain.

In addition to the passengers there were packages of souvenirs that the juniors had bought in Gibraltar town—quite a large package belonging to Wibley. Wherever William Wibley was

his thoughts ran on amateur theatricals, and he had been spending cash recklessly on Spanish costumes which, he told the other fellows, would come in jolly useful next term at Greyfriars for a play by the Remove Dramatic Society.

"I say, you fellows—" "Still feeling squashed, old fat bean?" asked Bob.

"Yes!" yapped Bunter. "That better?" asked Bob, shoving a little closer.

"Ow! No! Worse, you ass! Shift!" howled Bunter. "You shift, too, Bull!" Johnny Bull was on Bunter's other side.

"Right-ho!" said Bob and Johnny together; and they shifted.

But as they shifted nearer to one another, with Bunter in the middle, the fat Owl's last state was worse than his first.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "I'm squish-squish-squashed! Wow!"

"What about putting Bunter on the floor?" asked Frank Nugent. "We can rest our feet on him—"

"Hear, hear!" "Like the idea, Bunter? Lots of room on the floor!"

"Beast!" Bunter did not seem to like the idea.

"That," said George, waving a plump hand towards a forest of noble trees that bordered the road—"that is a cork forest. The country is famous for 'em! There were brigands in these forests at one time—"

"I—I say, isn't it time to turn back, George?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Hefty haddock!" said George.

"There are no brigands now, you young ass, Billy! Quite a thing of the past!"

"I—I say," Bunter blinked rather uneasily from the car, through the cloud of dust raised by the wheels, at a dark gentleman in an enormous sombrero who was loafing along the road. "I—I say, is—is that a brigand?"

"Let's stop and ask him!" suggested Bob.

"He's looking at us," said Bunter. "Wondering where we got you from, perhaps," said Bob. "May think we've been raiding some Spanish Zoo."

"Beast!"

"We stop for tea on the other side of this wood," said George. "There we shall find the Spanish fonda."

"They don't seem very fond of foreigners from what I've seen," said Bunter. "And why should we find them fonder further inland?"

George stared.

"Fonda you young ass—fonda is a name for a Spanish inn. The man who keeps it is called a fondista. Better not touch the water. But we can get good coffee and cakes and plenty of fruits."

"Oh, good!" said Bunter.

The car ran on, driven by a swarthy Spanish chauffeur from Gibraltar. It rocked considerably on the rough road, cracked by the burning sun. Every jolt took Billy Bunter (by surprise and pitched him either at Bob or Johnny Bull. The juniors were enjoying the trip, and would have been quite pleased to keep on to Cadiz, or to Madrid, for that matter. But Billy Bunter, at least, was glad when the fonda appeared in sight.

The car turned from the road, along a lane by the border of the cork forest, which was much rougher going—and Billy Bunter heaved and pitched more than ever, and felt as if he was on the Bay of Biscay again. But everything comes to an end, and the fat Owl gasped with relief when the car ran into the

(Continued on page 10.)

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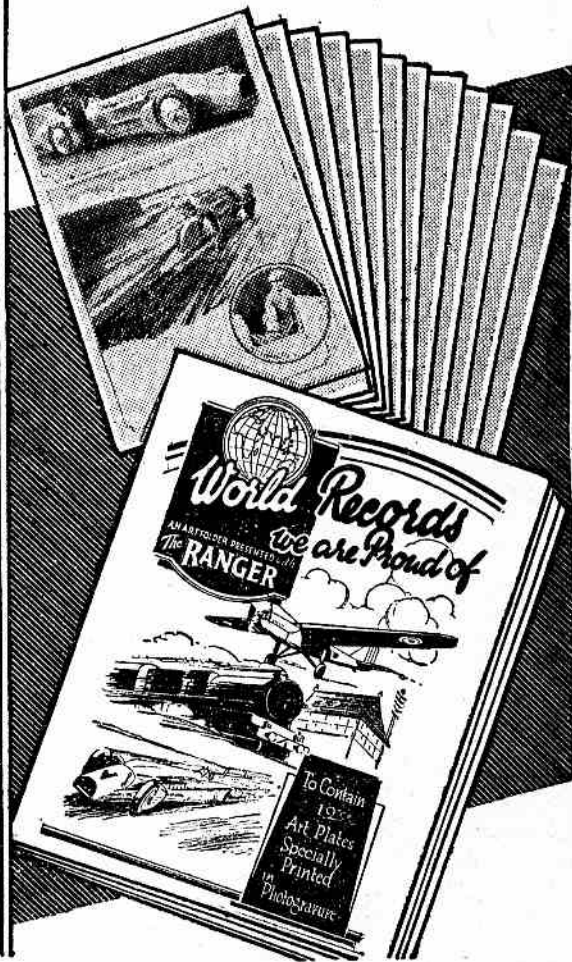
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THE SCHOOLBOY TOURISTS!

(Continued from page 8.)

courtyard of the Spanish inn, and halted, and he was able to unwedge himself and get out.

The fonda was a low dusky building, with dirty white walls surrounding three sides of a courtyard, in which a couple of carts were upturned. Stables occupied one side, and a rich aroma floated therefrom. But there was a magnificent tree in the centre, with seats and tables under it—and the Greyfriars fellows were glad to sit down in the shade of the wide-spreading branches.

Several Spaniards, shabby but picturesque, were lounging about the place, and they saluted the newcomers with Spanish politeness. The fondista came out, bowing and smiling, to attend to his guests, and refreshments were placed on the tables, at the sight of which Billy Bunter took comfort and forgot the sun and the dust and the flies and the smells. He kept the camerero, or waiter, quite busy, and would probably have overworked that dusky gentleman if it had been possible to overwork a Spanish waiter. But in Spain a waiter seldom forgets that he is a Spaniard and a gentleman, and even at a little rural fonda the camerero paid quite as much attention to his own dignity as to the demands of his customers.

"I say, you fellows, look at him!" said Bunter, as the camerero came slowly and leisurely across the sunny courtyard with a basket of ripe red oranges. "I'd jolly well tell him what I think of him if I could speak Spanish. Here, you!" bawled Bunter. "Buck up!"

"Si, senior!"

"Are you going to be all day bringing those oranges?"

"Si, senior!"

"What the thump does seeseenior mean, you fellows?"

"It means 'Yes, sir!' fathead," chuckled Bob. "The man doesn't understand a word you're saying. This is the country for taking it easy. They never hurry in Spain."

"You've kept me waiting!" hooted Bunter, when the camerero came up at

last, and landed the basket of oranges on the table.

"Si, senior!"

"You're a lazy, slacking, dawdling, snuff-coloured, silly ass!" said Bunter.

"Si, senior!"

"Think he understands me, you fellows?"

"Hardly!" chuckled Bob. "He would kick you if he did."

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter guzzled oranges. They were really ripping oranges, and the fat Owl disposed of them at a great rate. Bunter's elegant manner of eating an orange was to push his fat face into it; so after he had disposed of five or six, his podgy countenance was rather juicy in its aspect. Trifles like that, however, did not worry Billy Bunter. He guzzled on. George had gone into the fonda to smoke a cigar, and the juniors were left to themselves under the shady tree in the courtyard. Having finished with the refreshments, the chums of the Removo rose for a walk round.

"I say, you fellows, wait for me!" said Bunter. "I shan't be another quarter of an hour. I think one of you fellows might fan off those beastly flies! Blessed if I ever saw so many flies!"

"They're fond of orange-juice," said Bob. "They stick to you because you're sticky, old fat bean!"

"The stickiness is terrific!"

"Yah! Look here! Wait for me!" hooted Bunter. "I don't want to be left alone among these rotten foreigners!"

"Get a move on, then, fathead!"

"I haven't finished yet!"

"Bow-wow!"

Harry Wharton & Co. sauntered out of the courtyard into the blaze of the Spanish sun. Billy Bunter snorted, and resumed his operations on the oranges. Having transferred the last luscious fruit from the interior of the basket to his own spacious interior, the fat Owl rose in his turn, and rolled out after the juniors.

They were not in sight by that time. Bunter blinked up and down the sunny road in the blinding sunlight, and snorted. Opposite the fonda was a shady path leading up into the cork wood, and Bunter rolled across to it, chiefly anxious to get out of the blaze of the sun. He had no doubt that that was the way the juniors had gone.

"I say, you fellows!" he yelled.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came ringing back, through the cork trees.

The juniors were there, though out of Bunter's sight.

The fat Owl rolled on. There were many paths among the trees, and in places open spaces where wood-cutters had been at work. Bunter expected to rejoin the juniors in a few minutes, unaware that he had turned into a path that led him in a different direction. But he saw nothing of them, and he stopped and shouted again:

"I say, you fellows!"

His voice echoed among the cork trees. But only the echo answered him.

"Beasts!" yelled Bunter. "Can't you answer a chap?"

"Chap!" came echoing back, but that was all. Evidently Harry Wharton & Co. were out of hearing now.

"Rotters!" grunted Bunter. "I'll jolly well go back! Blow 'em!"

And Billy Bunter started to get out of the cork wood, and to get back to the fonda. But as he started with his back to that building, it seemed improbable that he would arrive there.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Coker in the Cork Forest!

"WELL?" said Potter and Greene together.

Coker snorted.

"Think you're lost?" he

jeered. "Well, you're not."

"Well, where are we?" snapped Potter.

"In Spain," answered Coker facetiously.

That was undoubtedly correct. They were in Spain—there was no doubt about that. Potter and Greene were rather worried about getting out of Spain. They would have been glad to see the ancient Rock of Gibraltar again, and the Sea Nymph riding in the Bay of Algeiras. But all they could see was an endless procession of cork trees—magnificent trees, and well worth looking at, but not what Potter and Greene wanted to see just then.

They had rather enjoyed their afternoon. Three horses had been hired in Gibraltar—quite good horses. Potter and Greene could ride; and Coker could stick on a horse like a sack of coke. It was hot. But, after all, a fellow expected it to be warm in Spain. It had been quite enjoyable, trotting, with a gallop now and then. And when Coker left open roads for a shady path through a cork wood, the shade from the burning sun was very welcome. But after awhile it struck Potter and Greene that they were a long time getting back to the road that led home to La Linea and Gib.

Coker was leader, and he led; but Potter and Greene knew Coker's leadership of old. And the bare possibility of getting lost in a Spanish forest was alarming, with the sun already sinking to the horizon. Trippers from Gib had to get back before evening gunfire, or they were likely to find the gates closed, and themselves shut out.

Now the three Fifth-Formers had come to a halt, at a spot deep in the cork wood, where three paths branched off in different directions. Which direction to take was a mystery to Potter and Greene. They hoped that Coker knew; but they doubted it.

The horses were tired, and the riders were tired. They all wanted to get home. But it was getting home that seemed rather dubious.

"Think you're lost?" jeered Coker. "I dare say you would be if I wasn't with you. In fact, I'm pretty sure of it."

"Looks to me as if we're lost," grunted Greene. "Look here! Which of these dashed paths do we take?"

"Left or right or middle?" grunted Potter.

"Middle," said Coker, without hesitation.

As a matter of fact, he knew no more than his companions; but Coker was not the man to admit that. He hoped, at least, that the middle path would lead the wanderers where they wanted to go.

"Sure it's right?" asked Greene. "Look here, Coker, it's getting late, and we've got to take the right path."

"We've got to do nothing of the kind," answered Coker calmly. "We've got to take the middle path."

"I mean, are you sure the middle path's the right path?" snorted Greene.

"Don't be an ass, Greene! How can the middle path be the right path, or the left, either, if you come to that? Don't talk rot! Just follow your leader."

Coker put his tired gee-gee to the trot again. Potter and Greene breathed hard, and followed him. They did not know which path to take, and they strongly suspected that Coker knew no

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more than they did. But it was useless to sit still, so they followed on.

"Duck up!" said Coker, glancing over his shoulder, and nearly falling off his horse as he did so. "We're all right. This will bring us right out into the road we want, with the jolly old Rock in sight. Ten minutes or so."

Ten minutes passed, during which the path narrowed, so that the three had to ride in single file. It dwindled to a mere track, and it was evident to Potter and Greene that it was going to fade away altogether. But Coker was not the man to admit a mistake, if he could help it, and he kept doggedly on.

He did not halt till he arrived at a gigantic cork-tree blocking up the path, which demonstrated even to Coker that he had come to the finish. Then he pulled rein.

"Um!" said Coker.

"Well, are we keeping on?" asked Potter, with ferocious sarcasm. "Going to push that tree over, Coker? It's in the way, if we're going on."

"Don't be a silly ass, Potter! This doesn't seem to be the path," said Coker calmly. "This is what comes of you fellows jawing and arguing when a fellow is trying to guide you. We shall have to go back and take the other path."

"Which of the others?" hissed Greene.

"Leave that to me!"

Coker's self-confidence was still unbounded. But if Potter and Greene had ever had any confidence in Coker, they had lost it now. It was clear that the riders were lost in the cork forest. And it was more than an hour since they had seen a human face. There was hardly the remotest chance of meeting a native and inquiring the way. They got the horses round in the narrow path, and started back.

"Hallo! There's somebody!" exclaimed Coker suddenly, as there was a rustle in the wood, and a swarthy face and a pair of gleaming, glinting, black eyes looked out at the weary three. "I told you fellows we should meet somebody, sooner or later, who would put us right."

"I don't remember you telling us," snorted Potter.

"I mean, I was going to tell you so, but you fellows talk so much a chap can't get in a word edgewise. Hold on while we ask this chap. Not that it's necessary. I can find the way all right. Still, it may save time to get a tip from a native."

The three riders stopped in a weary group, and Coker addressed the "native," who had now stepped from the trees, and was regarding them curiously. He was a swarthy, brawny Spaniard, in a dingy, red beret, and a tattered cloak. Coker thought he looked like one of the numerous beggars of Spain; and Potter and Greene thought, rather uneasily, that he looked more like a footpad. It was rather comforting to reflect that the days of brigandage in Spain were over, for this fellow certainly looked as if he might have done a little business as a brigand in his spare time.

"Hallo! Speak English, my man?" asked Coker.

The man stared at him. Closely viewed, Potter and Greene could not help thinking that he had rather a villainous look. Coker did not seem to notice it. He leaned over towards the "native" and repeated his question in a louder tone.

"Speak English?" bawled Coker. Coker was one of the many people who have a peculiar fancy that foreigners can be made to understand English by

shouting it at them, just as if they were merely deaf.

"No entiendo, señor!" said the swarthy man.

"Either of you fellows know what that means?" asked Coker.

"It must mean that he doesn't understand," grunted Potter. "How the dickens is a Spanish peasant to understand English?"

"They're a silly lot," said Coker. "It beats me why they stick to their own silly lingo at all, if you come to that. Plain English is good enough for me. But these foreigners haven't much sense."

"We're the foreigners here!" remarked Greene.

"Don't be an ass, Greene! Look here, my man," said Coker, addressing the Spaniard again. A faint grin was dawning on the native's dark face. "We've missed our path, see—I don't mean that we've lost the way—we haven't—but we want to find a short cut back to Gibraltar."

Coker made this speech in lofty disregard of the fact that the Spaniard evidently did not understand a word of the language he was speaking. But at the word "Gibraltar" the swarthy face showed intelligence. He understood that, at all events.

"Gibraltar, señor!" he repeated.

"He catches on all right," said Coker. "Yes, that's it—Gibraltar, my man. We

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want to get on the road back to the gates, see?"

"No entiendo, señor!"

"He seems to be rather a fool," said Coker. "But I can make him understand all right. You fellows got any Spanish money? If we show him some money and say 'Gibraltar' he will catch on."

"I haven't any," said Potter.

"Same here," said Greene.

Coker snorted with contempt.

"Just like you fellows, butting into Spain and never thinking of getting any Spanish money before you got out of Gib!" he yapped.

"If you've got some—"

"As it happens, I haven't! A fellow can't think of everything, I suppose. But he will understand English banknotes—they're known all over Spain, and I dare say they're jolly glad to get hold of them, too." Coker groped for his pocket-book.

Evidently the Spaniard understood English banknotes. As Coker opened his pocket-book and showed fivers in a wad, the black eyes snapped with a sudden blaze of greed that quite alarmed Potter and Greene.

"For goodness' sake, Coker, have a little sense!" exclaimed Potter. "It's not safe to show a lot of money in a lonely place like this."

"Don't be an ass, Potter. Do you think there are still brigands going around in Spain?" snapped Coker.

"I think there are footpads—there's enough in every country in Europe, I think! Would it be safe to show a bundle of banknotes to a tramp in a lonely wood in England?" snarled Potter.

"Quite—if I was there," answered Coker. "I'd like to see any tramp rob me! I know I'd alter his features for him. Shut up while I talk to this man. Now, my man, you listen to me," said Coker. "Gibraltar—see? Gibraltar! Got that? Gibraltar?" Coker detached a pound-note from the pocket-book and held it up. This was to signify that he would pay the man a pound for guiding them to the road back to Gibraltar. The man hardly looked at it; possibly he was unacquainted with English currency notes. But his black eyes sparkled at the wad of banknotes in Coker's pocket-book as if they fascinated him.

"Gibraltar!" repeated Coker. "See?" "Si, señor," said the Spaniard. "Si, si!"

"There—he sees all right!" said Coker triumphantly, cheerfully mistaking the Spanish word for "yes," which was pronounced as if spelt "see," for the English word "see."

"He's speaking Spanish—"

"Don't be an idiot, Greene! I suppose I know my own language when I hear it! See?" demanded Coker again.

"Si, señor, si!"

"There you are—he says he sees! Well, that's all right!" Coker jammed his pocket-book back into his pocket. The swarthy man's eyes following it hungrily till it disappeared. "Get on with it! See?"

"Si, señor!"

There was no doubt that the Spaniard understood, from Coker's antics, that Horace wanted to be guided to Gibraltar. But there was certainly some doubt whether Coker was likely to reach that destination under this swarthy stranger's guidance. Potter and Greene were distinctly uneasy. They would not have been surprised if the man had a long knife about him somewhere. Still, they were three to one, if he cut up rusty; and except for the greedy blaze in his eyes at the sight of Coker's money, he had shown no sign of mischief so far.

"Venga usted!" he said.

"What the dooce does he mean by that, I wonder?" said Coker.

As the man was making signs that the Greyfriars fellows were to follow him, it was fairly clear that he meant "Come!"

"Permitame!" added the native politely, and he took Coker's bridle and led his horse onward. "Venga usted!"

"Oh, he means we're to follow him," said Coker.

"Guessed that already?" asked Potter.

"Don't jaw, Potter! Come on," said Coker. "I fancy we're not a quarter of a mile from the road—but don't dawdle!"

The tattered Spaniard led the way, walking ahead with the air of dignity that clings to even a beggar in Spain. As they moved into a wider path the three riders were able to ride abreast.

But ten minutes, and a good many more minutes passed, and they saw no sign of a road. After a considerable distance had been covered, Coker called to the guide—still in lofty indifference to the fact that the man did not understand English.

"Look here, my man! Sure you're going right?"

The swarthy face turned for a moment. There was a glimmer in the black eyes that Potter and Greene did not like at all.

"Venga usted!" said the man, "solo un rato."

"Goodness knows what that means," said Coker. "How these silly foreigners understand one another at all, beats me! I suppose he knows the way, being a native of the place."

"I hope he's leading us towards Gib, anyhow!" muttered Greene.

"Where else could he lead us, fat-head? Think he's heading for Cadiz or Seville?"

"I don't like his looks."

"Never mind his looks, so long as we get back to the road," said Coker. "I dare say he doesn't like yours, if you come to that—queer sort of taste if he did, what? Hallo, who are these chaps, I wonder?"

The party had arrived in a clearing where wood-cutters had been at work. Three men, as tattered as the guide, were seated on fallen logs, smoking "puros peninsulares," the native cigar of Spain, which is very potent. They started to their feet at the sight of the riders, and stared at them with snapping black eyes, and exchanged words in muttered tones. One of them called to the guide.

"Que, Pedro!"

The guide made Coker & Co. a sign to halt, stepped forward, and entered into muttered talk with the three Spaniards. Potter and Greene watched him with growing uneasiness; Coker with impatience. Pedro, evidently, had met acquaintances in the depths of the cork forest—and Potter and Greene suspected that he had been deliberately guiding them to that meeting, and not to the Gibraltar road at all. Certainly there was no sign of a road to be seen yet.

"Is the silly ass asking them the way, or what?" growled Coker. "We can't wait here while they jaw! Here, Pedro, if that's your name—here, I say! Buck up! Get a move on! See?"

Pedro came back towards the group of riders. His friends came with him. They surrounded Coker & Co. and laid hands on their bridles. Even Coker realised now that something was up. One of the men, who seemed to have a little English, spoke.

"You get down to a ground," he said. "You get from off a horse, yes! You get like I tell you, very quiet, you no hurt! There is a money in pocket we want!"

Coker stared blankly. Potter and Greene groaned. They had guessed already that Pedro had led them into a trap to be robbed. Now they knew it. And even Coker's powerful brain got it at last.

"My hat!" gasped Coker.

"Oh crikey!" groaned Greene. "We're for it now! Catch me riding with that idiot in a foreign country again."

"All right!" said the English-speaking footpad. "No shall hurt Ingles caballero. Money we want! Much money! All money in a pocket! Yes! You shall give all money. Yes! Want money! Want all everything! Me comprende usted?"

"You dashed rascal!" roared Coker, crimson with wrath. "Do you think we're going to be robbed? I'll jolly well push your coffee-coloured face in first!"

"Que quiere decir esto, Carlos?" asked the guide.

Carlos grinned.

"No so enfado usted, senior," he said to Coker. "Anger is not of a use. You get down to a ground pronto, at once. All you have to give."

"I'll give you one in the eye, if you don't let go of my horse, you black-faced thief!" roared Coker.

And Horace Coker clenched a fist like a leg of mutton, and drew it back to jolt it in the dusky face of Carlos. In an instant four long, sharp knives flashed out of their hiding-places in the tattered garments of the footpads. Coker unclenched his hefty fist.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Coker.

Potter and Greene scrambled down from their saddles in a great hurry. Coker followed more slowly. But he followed.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Bravos!

"Oh, you idiot!" groaned Potter. "Oh, you dummy!"

groaned Greene.

Coker did not speak.

This unexpected outcome of his ride into Spain seemed to have taken Coker's breath away. For once, Horace Coker had nothing to say.

Pedro, the guide, grinning, led the horses to a tree, and hitched them there. Then he rejoined his confederates, who surrounded the hapless group of Greyfriars seniors.

It was a strange, wild scene, in the dusky light under the great cork trees. Dark, fierce faces, dusky hands grasping long knives surrounded the three; black eyes glittered at them. The days of the brigands were over in Spain; but really this seemed quite a good imitation of the good old times.

Whether the four savage-looking ruffians would have used the long, flashing knives might have been doubtful—but they certainly looked like it. Obviously it was not prudent to take the risk. It was at least clear that nothing would prevent them from obtaining possession of the banknotes that Coker had so incautiously displayed.

Coker breathed hard and deep. He had a good old British conviction that one Englishman was as good as any three foreigners, in a scrap. But even Coker did not like the look of those long knives. They flashed in a most disconcerting way in the shafts of sunlight that came through the branches.

"You give over a money, senior!" said Carlos, in his English. "No give a money, there is a knife! Yes. We bury in a forest and who know?"

"Oh scissors!" gasped Greene.

"We want a money," said Carlos. "Si, senior! Much money that you have. All English are rich. Give a money, large money, all money!"

Potter and Greene dismally turned out their pockets. Luckily, they had very little with them. Coker was paying the expenses of that trip into Spain. Pedro held out a large, dusky, unwashed hand, and Potter and Greene dropped silver into it.

There was a grunt of dissatisfaction from the bravos, and two of them went through the pockets of Potter and Greene, to make sure that all was taken. Coker was still standing like a man in a dream, hardly realising the thing so far, though uncomfortably conscious of the gleaming knives.

But as Pedro stepped closer to him, he woke up, as it were. Pedro's unwashed hand was held out, and Coker stared at it, breathing harder than ever. He found his voice at last.

"I'm not standing this, you men!" said Coker.

"For goodness' sake, don't play the goat now, Coker!" gasped Greene.

"These villains look as if they'd murder us as soon as look at us!"

"It's your own fault!" growled Potter. "Pay up and look pleasant."

Coker looked far from pleasant, and he had no intention whatever of paying up if he could help it. The fighting blood of the Cokers was rising to boiling-point in his veins.

"Back up, you fellows!" he said.

"Look here, Coker—"

"You give a money, senior!" said

Carlos, flourishing his knife, and making the long blade flash in a way that had a sickening effect on Potter and Greene. "You shall be quick to give a money."

Pedro made a gesture with his waiting hand. He was eager to see those banknotes again. Coker, throwing prudence to the winds, let out his right, and it landed like a lump of lead on Pedro's swarthy, unshaven chin, and the treacherous guide spun backwards as if he had been shot.

"Madre de Dios!" howled Pedro, as he crashed over on his back.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Potter. "You mad idiot—"

"Coker—" shrieked Greene.

"Back up!" roared Coker.

And he jumped at the enemy with lashing fists.

Had the bravos used those long, glittering knives it would have gone hard with Horace Coker. Pedro was down and out, sprawling on the earth and nursing his jaw, which felt as if a mule had kicked it. But three knives flashed round Coker.

But probably the bravos were well aware that, while it would be easy to escape after a robbery, the murder of foreign tourists would have been a much more serious matter for them. Perhaps, too, they were not quite so ferocious as they looked. At all events, they did not, as the horrified Potter and Greene expected, stab Coker on the spot.

They grasped him, grabbed him, struggled with him, and hurled him to the ground. Coker was a hefty fellow, but he really had no chance against the burly bravos. He rolled on the ground, and Carlos rolled with him, clutching him, while the other two grasped Potter and Greene by the arms and held them.

Coker found himself lying on his back, with a fierce, swarthy face glaring down at him.

He struggled fiercely.

"Back up, you fellows!" he yelled.

But Potter and Greene, in the grasp of the bravos, made no movement. Coker struggled. Pedro left off nursing his damaged jaw, and came to the help of Carlos. His damaged jaw seemed to have affected the guide's temper, for he rained savage blows with both fists on Coker, knocking him almost senseless.

"Nough!" said Carlos, as he pushed his infuriated confederate away.

Coker was not struggling now. He lay, dazed and dizzy, and made hardly any resistance as his hands were pulled together and bound. Potter and Greene stood like lambs while their hands were also tied. They had no fancy for being hammered by the ruffians, even if they were not stabbed; and there was no chance in a struggle.

Then the four rascals gathered round Coker, and his pocket-book was jerked out of his pocket. There were exclamations of glee from the bravos as they dragged out the banknotes. The division of the spoil occupied their attention for some minutes, but was finally finished to their satisfaction.

Coker, by that time, had recovered a little, and he was wrenching savagely at his bonds. Coker was still game, if he could have got loose. It was perhaps fortunate for him that he could not.

The four bravos gathered in a group, muttering Spanish to one another, glancing at the prisoners every now and then. It was plain that they were discussing what was to be done with Coker & Co., and seemed a little dubious on the point.

Pedro, whose unshaven chin showed a bruise where Coker had punched it, half-drew his knife, as if to hint that that was the best way of disposing of the robbed travellers. But the other



"You get down to a ground," said Carlos, holding on to the bridle of Coker's horse. "You get like I tell you, very quiet, you no hurt! There is money in pocket we want!" "I'll push your coffee-coloured face in first!" roared Coker. The next instant long, sharp knives flashed out of their hiding-places in the tattered garments of the footpads.

three waved the knife away, and Pedro put it back among his tatters. Carlos at length rapped out an order, having made up his mind, and the bravos proceeded to bind the legs of the three Fifth-Formers, reducing them to complete helplessness. The three horses were unhitched, and one of the rascals disappeared with them, leading them away through the trees.

"Oh gum!" groaned Potter. "They're going to leave us here like this."

"I don't care—so long as they go!" muttered Greene. Greene was dreading every moment to see a knife come into sight again.

"You thieving rotters!" bawled Coker. "You wait till I get back to Gib! I'll set the police after you fast enough!"

"Shut up, you dummy!" shrieked Potter. "Don't you want to be left alive, you silly ass?"

"Rats! I can jolly well tell those rotters—"

"Oh, wouldn't I punch you, if I had a hand loose!" groaned Greene. "You dangerous maniac, shut up!"

Two more of the bravos followed the man leading away the horses. Carlos, the English-speaking ruffian, lingered for a last word.

"Muy bien, senores! You stay in a place!" he said. "You live—for that it is to say tanks! Some hombres kill you, but I, Carlos Alvaro, am caballero. I leave you in this place, with a hand and foot tie. Yes. Manana—one day after this day—wood-cutting hombre find you. You shout—you call—you make one large noise, and you are found! Si, senores! Adios!"

And with a polite bow, Don Carlos Alvaro turned away, and followed his

friends into the deep shades of the cork forest.

"Oh dear!" said Potter and Greene together.

It was a relief for the ruffians to be gone. But the hapless Fifth-Formers of Greyfriars were left tied up like turkeys, to take their chance of being found and released. The English-speaking bravo had said that on the morrow wood-cutters would find them, and no doubt that was correct. But that meant a night tied up in the wood, which was an awful prospect.

"We're for it!" groaned Potter.

"Fairly landed!" said Greene.

"That idiot, Coker—"

"That dummy, Coker—"

"You're not making out that it's my fault, I suppose?" asked Coker, rolling over on one side to glare at his comrades.

"What?" howled Potter.

"Not your fault!" shrieked Greene.

"Your own fault, entirely," said Coker. "I'm not rubbing it in. I don't expect much from duffers like you. Still, facts are facts. If you'd trusted me I shouldn't have asked that blighter the way, and then it wouldn't have happened. If you'd backed me up we should have whopped them. You fellows ought to be equal to a Spaniard each, and I suppose I can handle a couple of foreigners on my own. You've let me down all round, and the less you say about it the better!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"We're fairly for it, now," went on Coker. "They've taken the gees. We shall have to walk back to Gib when we get going—"

"With our feet tied?" hissed Potter.

"We shall have to get loose somehow," said Coker.

"How?" hissed Greene.

"No good asking me fool questions, Greene. Use your brains, instead of your jawbone. Shut up, anyhow!"

With their hands and feet tied, Potter and Greene could make no attempt to get away from that dismal spot. It was still more irritating that they could not hurl themselves on Coker, and smite him hip and thigh. Never had they so keenly desired to give their great leader the thrashing of his life. In spite of Coker's commands to shut up, they occupied a good ten minutes in telling him what they thought of him. Then they wriggled and wrestled and struggled to get loose, only to discover, after an hour of weary wriggling that tired them to the bone, that they could not possibly get as much as a finger or a toe loose. The red sun rays, slanting through the wood told that sunset was at hand, and the hapless prisoners, fatigued, furious, perspiring, aching, had to resign themselves to the appalling prospect of a night in the dark solitudes of the cork forest.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter to the Rescue!

"Oh lor'!" groaned Billy Bunter. Billy Bunter was tired.

He was feeling, in fact, as if his fat little legs would drop off.

He was hot, he was tired, he was tormented by flies. Even in the shades of the cork wood there were flies; the sticky orange juice on Bunter's fat face drew them like a magnet. Bunter wiped his fat, perspiring brow, he dabbed wearily at flies, he trudged and

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THE SCHOOLBOY TOURISTS!

(Continued from page 13.)

stumbled with aching, podgy legs. Bewildering trees surrounding him cut off the view on all sides.

By this time Billy Bunter realised that he was not heading for the road and the fonda where he had left Cousin George. He had seen and heard nothing of Harry Wharton & Co.. He had turned into one path after another in the hope of coming on the road, or coming on the chums of the Remove. But his many twists and turns had only led him deeper into the bewildering wood. Many times he had shouted and squeaked, in the hope of being heard. Now he was too tired to shout or to squeak.

He trudged on, grunting and groaning, with a faint, lingering hope of arriving somewhere, because he simply dared not stop and admit to himself that he was hopelessly lost.

"Oh crikey!" groaned Bunter. "I wish I was home! I wish I was back at Greyfriars! Oh dear! Old Quelch in the Form-room is better than this! Wow! I'd rather be taking six from Loder of the Sixth! Ow! Blow those flies! Wow! I'm getting hungry! Oh dear!"

"Shut up!" Bunter fairly jumped at the sound of that familiar voice, uttering those familiar words.

He came to a dead stop, blinking round him through his big spectacles in utter amazement.

He had forgotten the existence of Coker of the Fifth. He was aware that Coker & Co. had gone out of Gib on a ride, but he had certainly not expected to hear Coker's voice in the depth of the cork wood, miles and miles from Gibraltar.

But it was the powerful voice of Horace Coker that he heard, and, for once, he was glad to hear it.

"Shut up!" repeated the voice. "By gum, if I had my hands loose I'd shut you up fast enough!"

Bunter had supposed, for the moment, that he was the person addressed. He realised now that Coker was addressing somebody else.

Coker was not to be seen. Bunter blinked round in vain for a sight of him. Obviously, he was close at hand, or his voice would not have been heard.

"Gabbling, babbling, grumbling asses!" went on Coker. "You land me in a scrape like this, and then you can do nothing but jaw, jaw, jaw!"

"Oh, you idiot!" Bunter recognised Potter's voice, in groaning tones. "Oh, you dangerous lunatic! We're stuck here for the night, now!"

"If we could only get loose!" came Greene's voice. "I'd give a fiver to land Coker one in the eye!"

Billy Bunter, tired as he was, grinned. These remarks told that there was a rift in the lute among the Fifth-Formers.

"Lucky for you I'm not loose!" snorted Coker. "I'd jolly well boot

the pair of you all the way back to Gib. Suppose we have to stick here all night? Well, it's your own fault, isn't it? And a night out won't kill us! Don't be soft!"

The voices guided Bunter, and he wound among the trees, blinking round through his spectacles. He came in sight of the three Fifth-Formers and blinked at them in great astonishment. Near a heap of logs, where wood-cutters had been at work earlier in the day, Coker and Potter and Greene lay on the earth, bound hand and foot. They looked weary and red and wrathful, and it was clear that their tempers had suffered. They had given up struggling to get loose now. It was futile, and they were worn out with their useless efforts.

"Oh scissors!" murmured the Owl of the Remove, amazed at what he saw. How Coker & Co. had got themselves into a fix like that was a mystery to Billy Bunter. His little round eyes almost bulged through his big round spectacles as he blinked at them.

"Stick it!" went on Coker. "Stick it out. Shut up—see? When I say shut up, what I mean is shut up! Don't keep on babbling! Don't keep on gabbling! Just stick it—and shut up!"

"Oh, you idiot!"
"Oh, you chump!"
"I wish I had a foot loose," said Coker.

Potter and Greene groaned. They were in the lowest of spirits. Coker was in a state of wrath and indignation. It was too thick, Coker considered, for those fellows to be making out that it was his fault, when, so obviously—to Coker—it was nothing of the kind!

"I say, you fellows!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

Coker & Co. gave a sudden convulsive jump, all together. They struggled into a sitting position and stared round.

"Is—is—is that Bunter?" gasped Potter.

"Bunter!" gurgled Greene.
"That fat idiot!" said Coker, in wonder, as Bunter rolled up to the disconsolate group.

Bunter stood blinking down at them. The amazing discovery of Coker & Co. in this extraordinary fix had driven from his fat mind, for the moment, the recollection that he was lost in the cork forest.

"I say, you fellows, how did you get tied up like that? He, he, he! You look a queer lot!" giggled Bunter.

"Let us loose, kid!" gasped Potter.
"He, he, he!"

Bunter, of course, intended to release the hapless seniors. Still, he thought it funny, and he chortled. Coker glared at him.

"Don't cackle at me, Bunter! If you're cheeky, I'll jolly well whop you as soon as I get loose."

"Will you?" grinned Bunter. "You ain't loose yet, old bean!"

"Shut up, Coker!" hissed Potter.
"Can't you hold your silly tongue?"

"Look here, Potter—"

"Shut up!" yelled Greene. "Bunter, old chap, get us loose, there's a good kid. We've been robbed, and tied up like this, by a gang of footpads."

"Pity I wasn't with you!" said Bunter. "I'd have handled them. What did you let them do it for?"

"Why, you—you—you—I mean, do get us loose, Bunter! Got a pocket-knife, or something?"

Billy Bunter fumbled in his pocket and produced a pocket-knife. It was blunt, of course, or it would not have been Bunter's. He sawed across the cords with it, and Greene's hands were

released at last. Then he handed the knife to Greene.

"You can do the rest," he remarked. "I'm tired!"

Greene sawed his feet free, and then turned to Potter. Potter was released in his turn.

"How long are you going to keep me waiting?" Horace Coker inquired, in sulphurous tones.

"Wait, and be blown!" answered Greene.

"Bunter, you fat idiot—"

"Oh, really, Coker—"

"Begin on these cords, you slacking dummy! Get going! Make yourself useful, you bladder of lard!"

"Yah!"
"You podgy, piffing, pie-faced porker—"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter remained resting on the log. Coker's turn came at last, however, and Greene cut him loose. Coker rose to his feet, with knitted brows.

"You fat, cheeky toad!" he said.
"I've a jolly good mind—"

"For goodness' sake shut up, Coker!" interrupted Potter. "We might have stayed here all night but for Bunter. How did you get here, Bunter? Where are the others?"

"I left them at an inn on the road—that is, I left George there," answered Bunter. "The other fellows went for a walk, and I went to look for them. The silly idiots lost me somehow."

"Well, if we can get back to the road that's all right," said Potter. "We can get something at the inn to carry us back to Gib. Which is the way?"

"I don't know!"

"You—you don't know?" gasped Potter.

"You're lost in this dashed forest?" howled Greene. "Oh crumbs! Lot of good the fat chump finding us if he's lost himself!"

"I say, you fellows, have you any chocs, or anything?" asked Bunter. "I'm fearfully hungry!"

"Well, we can walk now, anyhow," said Potter. "We've got to get out of this filthy wood somehow. We can't be far from the road, or that fat chump couldn't have walked it. A mile would double him up!"

"Oh, really, Potter—"

"If a fellow only knew the way—"

groaned Greene.

Snort, from Coker.
"Who's leader of this party?" he demanded.

Potter and Greene gazed at him.

"Leave it to me," said Coker. "I've a pretty clear idea of the way. I should have found it all right if you fellows hadn't spoiled everything by insisting on asking that black-faced blighter, and getting led into a trap. Leave it to me!"

"L-leave it to you!" stuttered Potter.

"Yes! And don't jaw! Just follow your leader!"

Coker's sublime confidence in himself was still unabated. But Potter and Greene—which was, perhaps, not surprising—were fed-up with Horace Coker's leadership. Instead of following, they made a sudden, infuriated rush at their leader, grabbed him, and banged his head on the nearest log.

"There!" gasped Potter.

"Yarooooooh!" roared Coker.

"Now say another word, and we'll jolly well whop you till you can't talk rot any more—see?" shouted Potter.

"Come on, Greene! You'd better stick to us, Bunter!"

Potter and Greene started, and

Bunter rolled after them. Which way to take was a mystery to them, but it was evidently useless to remain where they were, and still more useless to trust to Coker's leadership. They had to chance it—and they chanced it.

Coker stood rubbing his dizzy head and blinking after them.

"Well," gasped Coker, "of all the cheek! I've a jolly good mind to leave them to it, by gum!"

But, on second thoughts, Coker started after the others—rubbing his head as he went, in a state of great wrath and indignation. And they trailed on wearily through the bewildering mazes of the cork forest, while the sun sank lower and lower towards the Atlantic.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Quite a Surprise!

"WHERE'S Billy?" asked George.

"Isn't he here?" asked Wharton, in his turn.

"I don't see him! And he's fat enough to be seen!" grunted Captain Cook—a remark that made the juniors smile. George Cook himself was not slim.

After a ramble in the cork wood—in which they had very carefully kept to a broad path and noted the way—Harry Wharton & Co. walked back to the fonda.

There they found George smoking a cigar under the shade of the big tree in the courtyard, and the Spanish chauffeur standing by the car.

It was getting towards time to return to Gibraltar, where they had to arrive by evening gunfire, or risk being shut out for the night.

"You haven't seen the young ass?" asked George.

"He came into the wood after us," said Bob Cherry. "I heard him squeak, and shouted back to him. But he never joined us."

"Hefty haddocks!" said George. "Ten to one he's lost himself in the wood, then! Give Billy a chance to do anything idiotic, and he won't miss it! Not Billy."

Evidently George Cook had no high opinion of the intelligence of his cousin, William George Bunter, of the Greyfriars Remove. On that point William George Bunter's schoolfellows were in complete agreement with him.

"Oh, I dare say he'll turn up!" said Johnny Bull, sitting down in the shade of the tree. "He'll turn up like a bad penny!"

"We've got to start in half an hour!" grunted George. "We didn't come here for a night out. We pull out of Gib early in the morning. One day at Gib is in the schedule for the cruise. I hope young Coker will be back on time. Between ourselves he's as big a fool as Billy—what?"

The juniors chuckled. Evidently George had come to know Horace Coker as well as he knew his Cousin Billy!

They sat under the tree and waited, and refreshed themselves with cooling drinks, and watched the gateway on the dusty white road. But the fat figure of Billy Bunter did not roll in.

George spoke to the fondista, and the innkeeper sent out several of the loungers about the fonda to look up and down the road. They came back without any news of Bunter.

"Hefty haddocks!" exclaimed George, in great exasperation. "If that fat young ass thinks we're going to stay the

night here waiting for him, he's making a mistake! What did I let him out of my sight for? What did I bring him at all for? I thought he was safe when I left him here. He was eating! How was I to know that he would leave off eating?"

"Nobody could have foreseen that!" grinned Bob.

"He must have lost himself in the wood," said Harry Wharton. "We shall have to find him, Captain Cook."

Snort, from George.

"Ever hunted for a needle in a haystack?" he inquired.

"No; but—"

"Well, looking for a silly idiot lost in a forest would be just like that! If

you wander into the cork wood you'll lose yourself, but you won't find Billy!"

Wharton was silent. There was, in point of fact, not the remotest chance of finding Billy Bunter if he had lost himself in the cork forest. The juniors could only have lost themselves in looking for him. At the same time, it was evidently impossible to return to the Sea Nymph and leave Bunter to wander on his own in Spain.

"I suppose we could put up here for the night," suggested Nugent.

Another snort from George.

"Have you ever put up for the night in a Spanish country inn?" he demanded.

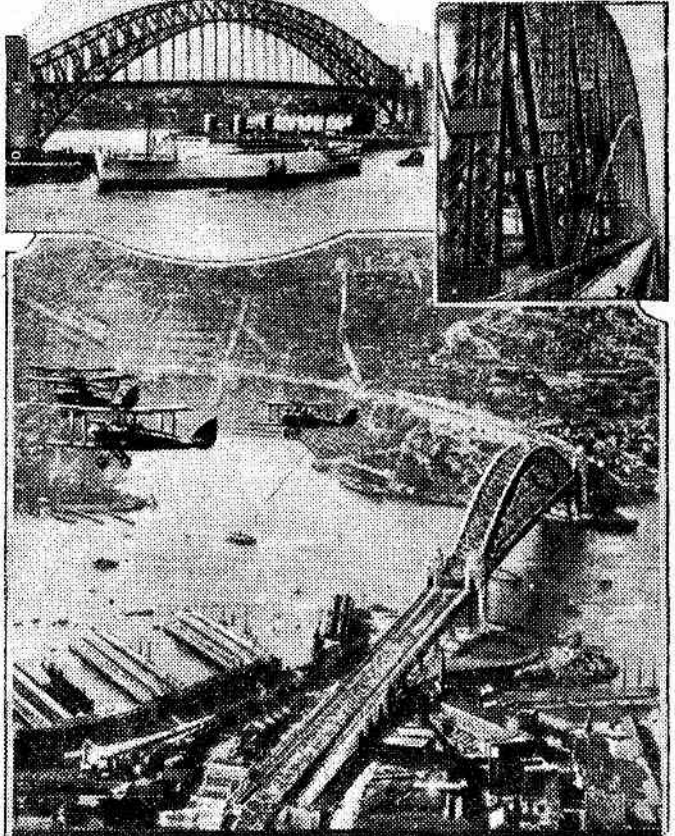
"Well, no; but—"

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"You wouldn't have a lot of skin left in the morning!" said George darkly. "It would all be bitten off!"

"Oh crikey!"

"In this country," said George, "they think they want a Republic. What they really want is a shipload or two of Keatings—see? We're not stopping here for the night! Get into the car."

"But we can't leave Bunter behind!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Leave that to me!" said George. "I've got a sort of idea that I'm in charge of this party! If you're in charge, Master Wharton—"

"Don't get ratty, old bean!" said Harry cheerfully. "But we really can't leave Bunter behind!"

"Who's talking about leaving him behind?" inquired George.

"Oh, all right!"

The juniors packed themselves into the car. The chauffeur took his place, and the big car rolled out of the gateway, fondista and camorero and mozo bowing after it as it went. But it did not go far.

In the road it came to a halt, by the edge of the shady cork wood, and the chauffeur began sounding the horn at a great rate.

"Honk, honk, honk, honk!"

It was a powerful horn, and its hefty note rang far and wide, echoing away deep into the cork forest.

"Oh, that's the idea, is it?" said Bob.

"That," said George, "is the idea! If that fat ass, Billy, is anywhere within a mile he will hear that, and know that it's the way to a road. He won't have sense enough to understand that I'm trying to signal him, because he hasn't sense enough for anything, as I dare say you lads have noticed, being his friends at school. But even Billy will understand that a motor-horn means a motor-car, and that a motor-car means a road—see?"

"Hear, hear!" said Bob.

"Honk, honk, honk, honk!"

It was a hideous din. With a stolid face, the Spanish chauffeur played his solo on the horn. It buzzed, it hooted, and it roared. The cork forest echoed with the sound. Certainly no one within a wide radius could have failed to hear that terrible hooting. And it was reasonable to suppose that Billy Bunter, though lost to sight, was not at a very great distance—for the simple reason that his fat little legs could not have carried him far. Even if he had kept on all the time, after finding himself lost, his pace would have been that of an old and tired snail. Really it was quite a bright idea of George's, and the juniors hoped that it would prove a winner.

It did!

For more than half an hour the car remained stationary on the dusty road, with that powerful horn making the sunset hideous. Then the party were rewarded by a sound of rustling in the wood, and a weary figure came tramping out from the trees. And from the fellows in the car came a yell of astonishment.

"Potter!"

Another weary figure stumbled out.

"Greene!"

Then came another.

"Coker!" chorused the juniors.

"Hefty haddock!" gasped George. "What does this mean, what? We're catching the wrong fish! Hefty haddock!"

Really, it was quite a surprise. Coker & Co. had ridden out of Gibraltar on horseback, and had not been seen since. Now they turned up on foot, weary and

wayworn, evidently at the last gasp, in answer to the signals that were made for Billy Bunter. George's round red face was the picture of astonishment as he stared at the weary three.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "There's Bunter!"

Last, but not least, Bunter staggered from the wood. Bedewed with perspiration, his fat little legs bending under him, the Owl of the Remove tottered gasping into view. He gave a squeak of joy at the sight of the familiar faces in the car.

"I say, you fellows—"

"This way, Bunter!" chuckled Bob. "Oh crikey! I'm tired!" groaned Bunter. "I've walked hundreds of miles—hundreds! Oh dear! Help a chap in!"

Bunter was helped into the car. He sank into a corner seat with a groan of relief. Potter and Greene leaned on the car and gasped. George looked at them.

"Hefty haddock!" said George.

"What's the game?"

"Oh lor!" groaned Potter. "We're walked off our legs! I—I could have cried when I heard that horn tooting—I thought I'd never get out of that horrible wood—"

"Never!" moaned Greene. "My legs are falling off! Oh dear! And when we heard the horn, that idiot—that howling ass—that blithering cuckoo—thought it came from the other direction, and wanted us to turn our backs on it. Oh dear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But what's happened?" hooted George. "Where are the horses you hired at Gib?"

"We've been robbed," said Coker calmly. "Those silly chumps insisted on asking a man the way, and he led us into a trap, and they cleared us out. They let me down when I started mopping the rotters up! We can't go back to Gibraltar now, Cook. We've got to set the police after those thieves, and get back the horses, and the banknotes, and—"

"Can you squeeze us into the car, Mr. Cook?" pleaded Potter.

"Must!" said George. "Pack in!"

Obligingly the juniors made room for the weary seniors. Potter and Greene crawled in, almost on their hands and knees. It was only too clear that they were tired—frightfully tired. Coker did not get in.

"I'm not going back," he said. "I'm going—"

"Get in!" said George.

"They've pinched the horses—"

"You'll have to pay for them at Gib. Get in!"

"They've pinched twenty pounds—"

"Serve you right for playing the fool! Get in!"

"Think I'm going to be robbed and take it lying down?" roared Coker.

"Quite!" said George. "Exactly! I don't know who's robbed you, but whoever they were, they're half-way across Spain by this time. The Spanish police might find them in two or three weeks—but the odds are that they wouldn't. Are you going back to school at the end of the Easter holidays, or have you come to live in Spain?"

"Look here—"

"Please yourself," said George. "squeeze in if you like—or stay there if you like! The Sea Nymph pulls out of Gib at nine in the morning. Now, then, make up your mind."

George signed to the chauffeur, and the engine began to roar. Harry Wharton & Co. regarded Coker with smiling faces. There was a struggle in Coker's mind.

"Shut that door!" said George.

"I—I think I'll come!" gasped Coker. And he came!

A sardine-tin had nothing on that car, when all its passengers were packed into it. Billy Bunter gasped and groaned all the way back to Gib. But the car fairly flew, racing and roaring in a cloud of dust, and the Greyfriars party beat evening gunfire by three minutes.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Not Pedro!

"THAT'S him!"

It was the following morning, and the Sea Nymph was pulling out of Gibraltar into the blue Mediterranean. Plenty of craft of all kinds, and innumerable boats, were in the harbour, and Harry Wharton & Co. found great interest in looking at the shipping, and dark-skinned sailormen of a dozen different races.

Coker of the Fifth was in a bad temper that morning. He was rather stiff with Potter and Greene, who, according to Coker, had let him down badly the day before. Neither had he forgotten how they had banged his head on the log in the cork forest. He was rather stiff with Cousin George, who, though only a dashed hotel-keeper on a floating boarding-house, had had the cheek to give Coker orders, fairly rap them out at him, in fact.

Coker had had to pay for the lost horses in Gib—a rather stiff sum, which George had had to advance to him. Coker had plenty of money, and his dear Aunt Judy had given him a letter of credit on Nice to renew the supply when the Sea Nymph arrived there—still, he did not like being done like that. No fellow would have liked it. Bunter, too, had been putting on cheeky airs of having rescued him from a serious scrape in the cork forest, and he had had to kick Bunter several times for that reason.

Altogether, Horace Coker was feeling very sore; and he gazed over the rail as the yacht glided out of the harbour, with a pessimistic eye and a grimly knitted brow. But he gave a start, and stared at the sight of a swarthy man in a dingy red beret in a boat, sitting on a heap of baskets of fruit, while two other swarthy men pulled at long oars. The boat rocked in the wash of the Sea Nymph, and the man in the red beret turned his head towards the yacht, and scowled, as if annoyed, as no doubt he was. Coker gazed at him fixedly.

"That's him!" he ejaculated again, regardless of grammar.

The man on the fruit baskets in the boat had an unshaven chin, on which there was a bluish bruise, doubtless received in some recent scrap in one of the Gibraltar wine-shops. He was as like a hundred other dusky men of that region, as a pea was like other peas; but Coker was convinced that he had seen him before—that he knew him. His face blazed with excitement.

"By gum! That's him!" he exclaimed. "Potter! Greene! Look!"

Potter and Greene looked at the fruit-boat. Coker quite forgot that he was annoyed with them, in his excitement.

"Seen that man before?" exclaimed Coker, pointing.

"Eh?" yawned Potter. "Which?"

"That black-jowled scoundrel sitting on the baskets scowling at us," exclaimed Coker excitedly. "Don't you recognise him?"



Coker leaned over the rail, took aim at the man sitting on the baskets in the fruit-boat, and hurled the orange full at the dusky face. The big, juicy orange flew, landing fairly on the Spaniard's nose and sending him sprawling backwards. "Got him!" gasped Coker.

"Never seen him before, that I know of."

"You silly ass! You know him, Greene?"

"Might have seen him in Gib," said Greene, puzzled. "I've seen three or four hundred unwashed dagoes just like him, anyhow. What about him?"

"It's him! That man in the cork wood, who guided us—Pedro, the other villains called him—look at him!" hooted Coker.

"Oh, my hat!"

Potter and Greene looked. Harry Wharton & Co., a little interested, gathered at the rail, and looked also. The Sea Nymph was going very slow, and as the fruit-boat was proceeding in the same direction at the moment, it was keeping level. It rocked in the wash, and the "dago" sitting on the pile of baskets seemed in some danger of toppling over. Possibly that was the reason why he scowled at the yacht. Possibly, too, he was feeling the effects of too many flasks of Valdepenas overnight. Anyhow, he scowled at the bunch of faces that regarded him over the rail of the Sea Nymph.

"It's him," said Coker again.

"He, old bean—he!" said Bob Cherry reprovingly.

"Eh! What do you mean, you young ass?"

"It is he!" explained Bob. "Nominative case, old bean! Don't they teach you grammar in the Fifth?"

"Shut up, Cherry!" Coker turned round and shouted to George. "Hi! Cook—here—Cook! Captain Cook!"

"What—" George stared at him.

"That's one of the men who robbed us yesterday, in that boat!" shouted Coker. "Stop the yacht, and we can collar him, see?"

"Hefty haddocks!" said George; and

he turned away, evidently without any intention whatever of stopping the Sea Nymph because Coker fancied that he recognised one of the bravos of the cork wood.

"Look here, how do you know it's the man?" said Potter. "These dagoes are as like one another as peas!"

"He knows us," said Coker. "Look how he's scowling at us! He's wearing a red beret, like that man Pedro!"

"So are fifty thousand other Spaniards."

"Don't be an idiot, Potter! He's got a bruise on his chin—you remember I slogged that man Pedro on the chin—he pitched into me for that when the other scoundrel was holding me!"

"I remember! But he may have picked up that bruise scrapping with some other silly ass. You're not the only silly ass in the wide world."

"Don't be a silly owl, Potter! He's got black eyes—"

"Most Spaniards have, I believe."

"It's him!" roared Coker. "Hi! See?"

"Might be!" admitted Potter. "But if he is, he'll say he isn't if he's lagged. And how are you going to prove it?"

"He bagged my banknotes, and he's got them now—"

"Well, he hasn't spent any of them on soap, anyhow."

"By gum! If we were near enough for a jump I'd jolly well jump on that boat and lather him!" roared Coker.

"Thank goodness we're not, then!"

Whether the Spaniard in the fruit-boat was Pedro or not Potter and Greene could not feel sure. But they thought it more probable not. But Coker had no doubt. He shouted again to George.

"Will you stop for that boat, Cook?"

"Not to-day, Mr. Coker," answered

George cheerfully. "Can't you be satisfied with one row at one place? Leave the next till you get to Nice!"

"I tell you that's the man in the cork wood—"

"Rubbish!"

"I know him perfectly well!"

"Bosh!"

"I'd swear to him anywhere!" roared Coker.

"Piffle!"

"I swear—"

"You don't, and won't!" said George.

"If you do anything of the kind on this yacht, Mr. Coker, I shall report your conduct to your headmaster at your school!"

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

"Why, you—you—silly ass!" roared Coker. "Look here, steer closer to that boat so that I can jump on and give him a dressing!"

"Hefty haddocks!" said George. "As likely as not they'd drop you into the sea if you did, you young ass!"

"I suppose I could handle three foreigners."

"You can suppose what you like," grinned George. "But keep to supposing! You're not handling any foreigners on this trip!"

Coker breathed hard with deep wrath. Slowly as the yacht was moving, the fruit-boat was dropping astern. Coker saw his victim escaping! He shook an enraged fist at the dusky man seated on the pile or baskets—probably very much to the man's astonishment. He stared blankly at Coker, and scowled more blackly.

"Chuck it, you ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Ten to one you've made a silly mistake, and it's not the man at all."

"Shut up, Wharton!"

"I don't believe it's the man," said Potter. "It's a hundred to one it isn't! Stop playing the goat!"

"Shut up, Potter!"

The dusky man on the fruit-boat snapped his fingers at Coker, no doubt in return for the shaken fist.

That was too much for Coker. He could not get at Pedro, if it was Pedro—which probably it was not—and he glared round for a missile to get him in that way before the boat dropped out of range. Billy Bunter was at hand, gnawing an orange that was held in his right hand, and holding another ready in his left. Coker grabbed at the latter.

"Here, I say!" gasped Bunter.

Coker did not heed the indignant Owl. He leaned over the rail, took aim at the man sitting on the baskets in the fruit-boat, and hurled the orange full at the dusky face.

"Stop it!" shrieked Wharton, jumping to clutch Coker's arm.

But he was too late. The big, juicy orange flew, and it landed fairly on the Spaniard's nose.

His position on the pile of baskets was already precarious as the boat rocked in the wash, and that sudden shock did it! The dusky man went sprawling backwards, the pile of baskets tumbled along with him, the two oarsmen jumped up, yelling, the boat oscillated wildly, and they lost their footing and stumbled over. Three Spaniards and two or three dozen fruit baskets were mixed up wildly in the bottom of the boat.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Coker's done it now!"

"Got him!" gasped Coker.

"You young idiot!" roared George, in consternation. "What are you up to? Are you mad? Hefty haddock!"

The boat floundered wildly in the wash. Three Spaniards rolled over amid rolling baskets, splashed from head to foot as the rocking boat shipped water. Yells came from them—frantic and furious yells. The man with the bruised chin scrambled up, his dusky face ablaze with fury, and shook a furious fist at the faces looking from the yacht. He yelled at the top of his voice—in Spanish at first, and then in English.

"Caramba! Madre de Dios! Por todos los santos! What do you, then? What is it for that you attack and throw? You are mad English! Cochinito! Cochinito! Pig! One pig!"

Coker jumped.

"Oh!" he ejaculated.

He remembered that the man Pedro could not speak English! This man, however, had a fine flow of English of an emphatic nature. It dawned on Coker that he had, after all, made a mistake. This was not, after all, the false guide of the cork forest! He had a bruised chin—not an uncommon adornment among the longshoremen of Gibraltar. But it was not the bruise that Coker had handed out to Pedro! The man was not Pedro! He was a total stranger to Coker—and Horace realised, too late, that he had buzzed an orange at a total stranger who had given no offence, and knocked him flying among his fruit baskets—for nothing!

"Oh crikey!" said Coker.

"I knew it wasn't the man!" yelled Potter. "You silly ass—"

"I—I thought it was—"

"Will that mend his nose, you idiot?"

"Well, I—I thought—"

"What for, yes?" roared the indignant Spaniard. "You throw and hit a nose with one orange that I fall in a boat! You are a mad English! I beat you with a large stick! Soon I beat you with a very large stick!"

He yelled to his companions, and they put out the oars again and pulled fiercely for the yacht. He rubbed his nose and sorted out a heavy cudgel from among the baskets. Coker gazed at him in something like horror. It was only too clear now that the man was not Pedro, and that he was astounded by Coker's outrageous attack—enraged and indignant, as well he might be!

"Hefty haddock!" gasped George.

He signalled speed to the engine-room. The Spaniard was justly indignant, but it was not judicious to let him clamber on board the Sea Nymph with that big stick in his hand. The Sea Nymph gathered speed and shot away. The boat had no chance in a race. It dropped fast astern, the angry Spaniards still pulling and the assaulted man standing up, clapping his nose with his left hand, and brandishing the big stick with his right. He was still brandishing it when the boat dropped out of sight.

"Oh crikey!" said Coker.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Wibley's Wheeze!

WILLIAM WIBLEY grinned. Wibley of the Remove had not seen the exciting episode on deck. He had been below in his state-room, sorting over the purchases he had made at Gibraltar. Wibley seemed to live chiefly for amateur theatricals, and he had brought a large bag of his props on the trip with him, and now he had added considerably to their extent. Several times during the Easter cruise, Wibley had entertained his companions with his impersonations—which was Wib's favourite stunt, and a thing that he could do really well. Now Wibley had heard of Coker's remarkable exploit with the man in the fruit boat, and a bright idea was working in Wib's active brain. And he grinned.

"It's a case of assault and battery," said Wibley. "If we were still at Gib, that Spanish chap would bring an action against Coker and get damages."

"Lucky we're clear of Gib!" said Bob Cherry.

"Did he look waxy?" asked Wib.

"Frightfully!"

"Suppose he belongs to the Spanish town next to Gib—La Linea. I think they call it—and suppose he complains to the authorities there about being assaulted from a foreign yacht—and suppose they send a Spanish bobby after us?"

"What rot!" said Harry. "They might—but they won't."

"Well," said Wibley, "my belief is that they will! I mean, I believe that a Spanish official is coming after this yacht to grab Coker."

The Famous Five stared at William Wibley. What he suggested was, perhaps, within the bounds of possibility; but it was exceedingly improbable. Wib's eyes were dancing.

"Suppose they send a fast motor-boat—"

"They wouldn't, you ass!"

"They might!"

"The nightfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Anyhow, if a Spanish official turned up on board, it would look like it—good enough for Coker!"

"But a Spanish official won't turn up on board, you ass!"

"He jolly well will!" said Wibley positively. "The fact is, he's here already—Senor Don William Wibley—and he's only got to get his things on."

"Wha-a-at?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Famous Five—they caught on now.

"Catch on?" grinned Wibley. "It's easy enough to make up as a Spaniard—swarthy skin, black eyebrows, and black eyes, and a big black moustache and a black beard! What?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gorgeous!" chortled Bob. "It will be a lesson to Coker about buzzing oranges at inoffensive foreigners."

"The gorgeousness will be preposterous!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Until the gong went for lunch, the chums of the Remove were in deep consultation, elaborating that little plot for the benefit of Horace Coker. It was agreed on all hands that Horace needed a lesson, and that the Easter cruisers needed a little entertainment. And, as Bob put it, what was Coker for, except to furnish entertainment. Otherwise, he was not useful, and his best pal could not have said that he was ornamental.

At lunch that day Coker would have been glad to avoid the topic of the man in the fruit-boat. But the other fellows picked that topic.

They debated whether the injured Spaniard was likely to lay a complaint at La Linea, and whether the Spanish authorities were likely to send a swift craft in pursuit of the yacht, and whether, if they did Coker would be arrested and put in irons and taken away for trial.

Potter and Greene, though unaware of the jape that was on, entered into the game, amused by the varying expressions that passed over the rugged countenance of Horace Coker. Both Potter and Greene expressed the opinion that it was very probable that the Spanish police would send after the Sea Nymph.

Cousin George, who presided at lunch, grinned at the idea; but he was not the fellow to spoil a joke, and likewise he was extremely annoyed by Coker's outrageous assault on the man in the boat—so he entered heartily into the game of pulling Coker's leg.

Horace Coker's brow grew darker and darker as he listened.

"Suppose a Spanish police-officer ran us down, Captain Cook, and asked for Coker, what would you do?" inquired Bob.

"Well," said George solemnly, "properly speaking, they couldn't seize Mr. Coker under the British flag. On the other hand, we're in Spanish waters here, and that makes a difference. If a proper officer insisted on it, of course, I should have to let him take Mr. Coker."

"I'd like to see any dashed foreigner do it!" said Coker. "You're talking silly rot, and you jolly well know it! Let any dashed Spaniard come after me, that's all—I'll make him wish he had stopped at home!"

And Coker hurred back his chair, rose, and tramped on deck, fed-up with listening to the discussion of the possible results of his assault on the Spanish boatman. He heard Bob's voice as he went:

"Poor old Coker! I'm afraid he's for it! Do you fellows know what Spanish prisons are like? A bit insanitary, I've heard."

"They could hardly give him more than six months!" said Nugent.

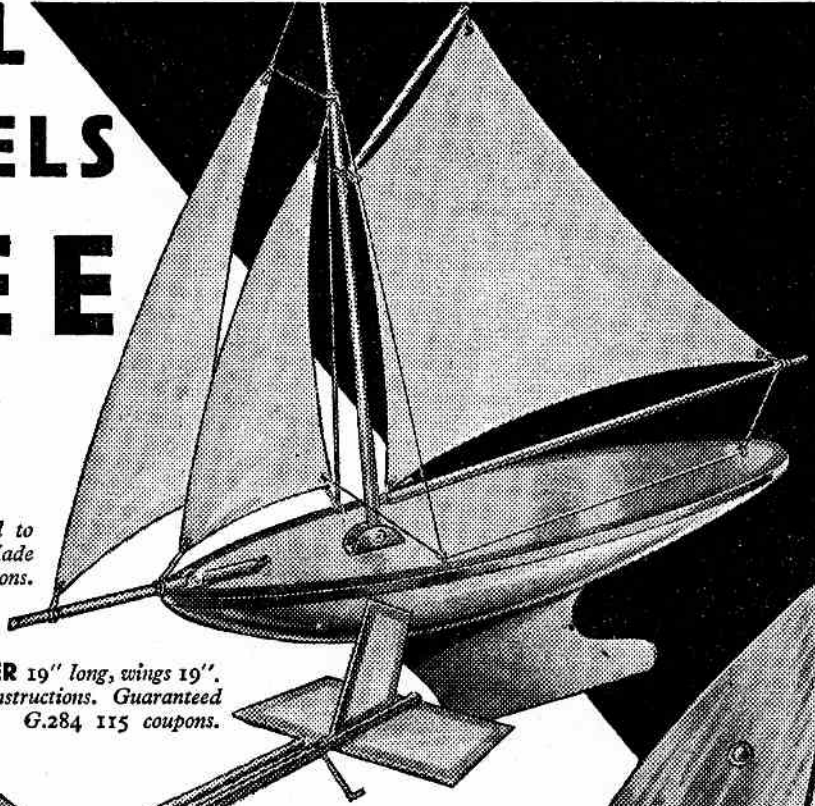
"Oh, I don't know—foreign law is a queer thing! Goodness knows what may happen to Coker: if they get him."

"You see, it was such an entirely

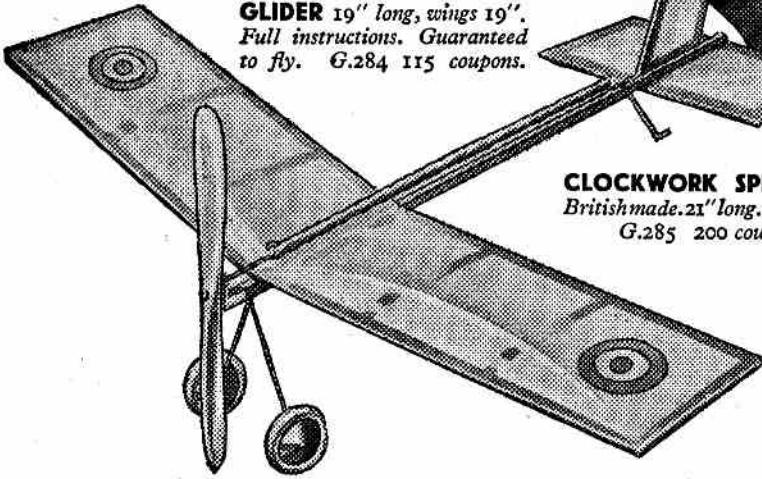
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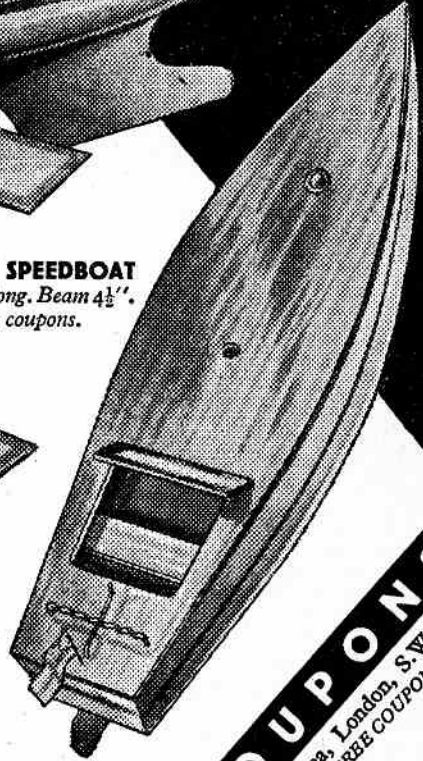
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THE SCHOOLBOY TOURISTS!

(Continued from page 20)

unprovoked attack on an inoffensive man—"said Johnny Bull.

"Brutal, really!" said Nugent. "They call 'em alguazils," said Bob. "Spanish bobbies, you know! I believe they carry swords and things! If an alguazil comes after Coker—"

"You silly young ass!" roared Coker down the companion.

And he stamped on deck, extremely irritated, and at the same time a little uneasy.

He stared towards the Spanish coast with a frowning brow. Several steamers were to be seen, coming up from the Strait, and Coker could not help wondering whether one of them might possibly contain a pursuing alguazil. All the fellows seemed to think it probable; and Coker could not deny himself that he had been guilty of an unprovoked assault upon a total stranger. When George came up Coker went over to him.

"Look here, Captain Cook, why not put a bit of speed on?" he asked. "I don't see why we're crawling like this."

"Coal costs money," explained George.

"We're paying for this trip!" snorted Coker.

"Quite!" agreed George.

"Well, look here, get going a bit. You can put the extra coal down in my bill, if you like!" added Coker scornfully. "Call it an extra, see?"

"On these cruises," said George, "there are no extras! Every passenger on my cruises, sir, knows exactly what he has to pay—twenty one guineas, neither more nor less. That is my invariable rule."

"Look here—"

"Passengers," said George, "are not allowed on the bridge. That is another invariable rule."

"Will you get some steam on?" roared Coker.

"No," said George. "I won't!"

Coker snorted and stamped away. And Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged gleeful grins. There was only one explanation of Coker's sudden desire to put on speed. Coker was getting the wind up! Evidently it was time for the pursuing Spanish policeman to overhaul the Sea Nymph. That Spanish policeman was already getting ready—in William Wibley's cabin!

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Don William Wibley!

"GREAT!"
"Tip-top!"
"The tip-topfulness is terrific!"

William Wibley smirked.

Wibley was proud of his powers in the make-up line. Words of praise were music to his ears. But, really, Wibley had reason to be pleased with himself. Anyone looking at William Wibley at that moment would never have dreamed that he was William Wibley. His sisters and his cousins and his aunts would never have known him. He looked much taller than Wibley, owing to high heels on his boots. He looked much fatter, owing to padding round his circumference. He looked twenty years older, owing to a black moustache and a pointed, black beard. He looked like a Spaniard, owing to his dark, swarthy skin, his thick, black eyebrows, his jet-black hair. And the latter was

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attached to him with such skill that it looked as if it grew on his head.

Exactly how a Spanish alguazil dressed Wibley was not aware; but neither was Coker of the Fifth, so that did not matter. Spanish trousers, with braid, a short, braided jacket, and a sash, and a Spanish cloak, at least gave him a very Spanish look. An official-looking cap, with gold braid on it, surmounted his black mop of hair. By his side hung a short sword in a scabbard—and the fact that the sword was made of wood could not be discerned.

Wibley looked like a Spaniard between thirty and forty, and he stood curling his fierce black moustaches in quite the manner of a truculent Spanish soldado. And the juniors crowded in the state-room admired Wibley, much to his satisfaction, and grinned and chuckled, though they subdued their chuckles, lest Coker should hear that something was "on."

"You'll have to speak some Spanish, though," Frank Nugent remarked.

"That's all right—I know a few words," said Wibley, "and I can make up some more. I'll bet Coker doesn't know any."

"All ready?" asked Wharton.

"Pronto!" answered Wibley.

"Good egg! We shall have to get Coker below somehow. He's on deck now, and even Coker would smell a rat if a Spaniard got on board without coming from any other craft. Stick there till we've got Coker in his cabin and the door shut. Then you can slip on deck, as if you'd just come on board from a motor-boat."

"Right-ho!" chuckled Wibley. "I mean, si, señor. Muy bien!"

The juniors chuckled, and left Wibley to himself. They went on deck, and found Coker leaning on the rail, staring gloomily back towards the Strait, Potter and Greene, in deckchairs near him, were talking cheerfully on the subject of Spanish prisons. They were not talking to Coker, but "at" Coker, as it were. They seemed to relish the subject of Spanish prisons.

"They call 'em carrels," Potter was saying, as the juniors came up. "They call a turnkey a carcelero. And—"

"I say, Coker!" sang out Bob Cherry.

Coker glared round.

"Don't jaw to me, you cheeky fag!" he snapped.

"Oh, all right, old bean, keep your wool on!" said Bob amicably. "If you told Bunter he could borrow your Panama hat—"

"What?" roared Coker.

He unhooked himself from the rail, and went tramping down the companion, with thunder in his brow. Coker was in a mood to whop somebody. And if Billy Bunter was borrowing his Panama hat without permission, Coker was rather pleased than otherwise—it was a whopping for Billy Bunter. At that moment, as a matter of fact, Billy Bunter was snoring in his bunk, having his afternoon nap. But Coker was not aware of that. Really, it was almost too easy to pull Horace's leg.

Coker's cabin opened off the saloon. He tramped into it with the expectation of seeing Billy Bunter there. Bob certainly had not said that Bunter was there; but that was the impression Coker had drawn from his remark. Bob Cherry followed him down, and slammed the door as soon as he was inside.

There was a roar from Coker. The key clicked as he roared, and Coker, jumping to the door, found that it was secured on the outside.

"My hat!" roared Coker. "Bunter's

not here! Cherry, you young scoundrel! Pulling my leg—what?"

"Just that, old bean!"

"I—I—I'll—" Coker gurgled, with wrath.

Wibley stepped out of his room. Pawlings, who was at hand, gave an almost convulsive start at the sight of him.

"Who—who— What—" stuttered the steward.

"Mum's the word!" whispered Bob. "It's a giddy jest, old bean! Mum's the word! Let Coker out in ten minutes, will you?"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Pawlings. "Certainly, sir!"

Don William Wibley walked up the companion to the deck. Bob Cherry followed him. The wrathful roar of Horace Coker followed both of them.

There was a buzz on deck as Wibley appeared. Potter and Greene jumped up and stared at him. George almost fell down at the sight of him.

"Who—what— Hefty haddocks! What—" gasped George, his eyes almost popping from his round, red face in his astonishment. "Here! Who are you? How did you get on this craft—what?"

No other craft had been within a cable's length of the Sea Nymph, so, to the amazed George, it really seemed as if this Spaniard had dropped from the skies. Certainly he had not come from any other vessel. And George did not even dream that it was Wibley of the Greyfriars Remove. Even the juniors who had seen him make up could hardly believe that it really was the William Wibley they knew.

"Buenas dias, señor!" said Wibley, in a deep and rather husky voice, quite unlike his usual tones.

George pushed back his yachting cap, and blinked at him.

"But who—how—" he stuttered.

"Soy Don Guzman Bobadilla y Tocopilla, señor! Soy alguazil de la Linea—oficial de policia!" said Wibley, who knew a few words of Spanish—about a dozen to be exact.

"Hefty haddocks!"

"Alguazil!" breathed Potter. "That's what they call a bobby in Spain, I believe. Oficial de policia means a police official."

"Couldn't mean anything else," said Greene. "Is—is—is he really after Coker? But how on earth—"

"Look here! How did you get on this ship—what?" demanded George, his eyes bulging at Don Guzman Bobadilla y Tocopilla.

"Walked on, old bean," answered Wibley, in his natural voice. "Keep mum, Captain Cook! It's a lark on Coker! Don't give us away."

"Hefty haddocks!" gurgled George. "Is—is—is that Wibley? It sounds like Wibley. But it looks like—like—like— Hefty haddocks!"

"Just a jape, old bean!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Keep mum—what? Just a little game to keep Coker amused."

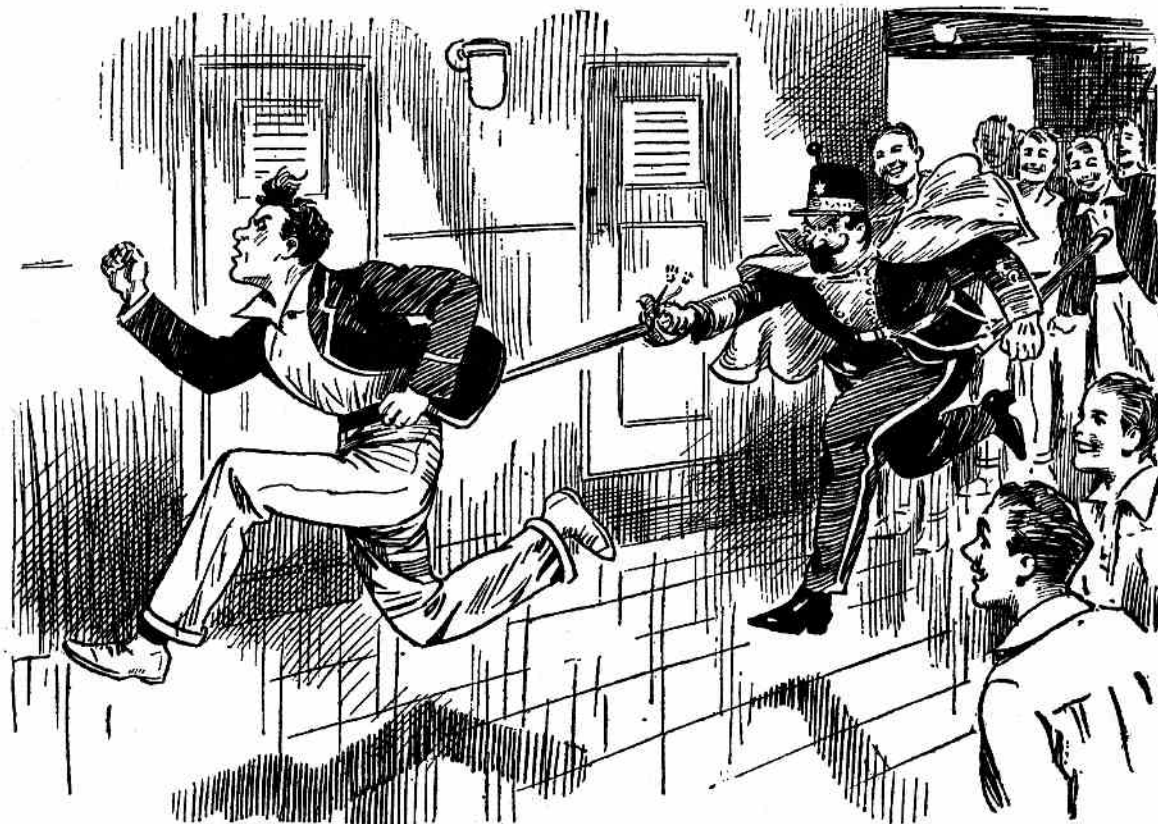
"Hefty haddocks!" said George, grinning. "Oh, all right! Larking—what? Well, boys will be boys! Go it! Ha, ha, ha!"

Potter and Greene grinned and sat down again.

"Don't you men chip in," said Harry Wharton. "We should hate to have to roll you down into your cabin and tie you up in your bunks!"

"The hatefulness would be terrific," said Hurree Jamsed Ram Singh. "The mumfulness is the esteemed word."

Potter and Greene had a strong objection to being rolled into their room, and tied up in their bunks. On the



As the blade flashed in the sun, Coker jumped back—dodged, and raced along the deck. "Zat you stop, senior!" shouted Don Guzman, pursuing him with brandished sword. "I arrest you! You are one prisoner! Caramba!" "Yaroooh!" roared Coker, as the point of the sword poked in his back. "Keep off! Whoooop!"

other hand, they had no objection whatever to seeing Horace Coker's leg pulled. Their choice was easily made. "Carry on!" grinned Potter. "We're mum!"

"Mum as a jolly old oyster!" chuckled Greene.

From below the powerful voice of Horace Coker was still heard. Coker, it seemed, wanted to be let out of his cabin. But he was not let out till the ten minutes were up. Then Pawlings turned back the key, the door flew open, and Horace Coker came raging out, rather like a lion seeking what he might devour. He glared at Pawlings, stamped into the companion, and tramped furiously on deck. There was a shout as he appeared.

"There he is!"

"Look out, Coker!"

"They're after you, Coker!"

Coker came to a sudden halt. He stared, hardly believing his eyes, at the Spaniard who stood before him, twirling his black moustache. Coker's jaw dropped. Was it possible that during the ten minutes that he had been below, a craft from a Spanish port had overhauled the Sea Nymph, and sent this swarthy brute on board to arrest him? Certainly it looked like it! The dark-skinned gentleman made him a polite bow.

"Senior Coker?" he asked.

"Eh—what? I—I—I'm Coker! What—"

"Soy Don Guzman Bobadilla y Tocopilla, oficial de policia de la Linea!"

"Oh crikey!"

"No speak Spanish?" asked Don Guzman. "I speak one small English. 'Hem! I arrest you—arrestar! You are prisoner, for to assault and to batter Spanish subject! Si, senior! I arrest you, senior!"

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Arresting Horace Coker!

HORACE COKER stood rooted to the deck.

His jaw had dropped, and he stared at the Spaniard open-mouthed, a good deal like a fish out of water.

Every eye was fastened on Coker. With great efforts the Greyfriars followed suppressed their merriment. It was no time for laughter. George turned away to hide his emotions. Mr. Pycroft, the mate, changed a chuckle into a cough. Potter and Greene were hidden by the backs of their deckchairs, and Coker could not see them grinning.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Coker at last. "You—you—you— What? Look here!"

"You are the young Senior Coker?" asked Don Guzman. He referred to an official-looking document in his hand.

"Si, senior, I have you description here—big and clumsy, with face like doormat, very large feet—zat is you, senior. You assault Spanish subject in boat by throwing orange at him!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"You cause severe damage to nose of Spanish subject, senior. For that there is heavy penalty. I come to arrest you, senior."

"Oh jiminy!"

"You will not resist, senior. If so, I cut you down with sword! Such are my—'Hem!—orders!"

"Oh scissors!"

Coker gazed dumbfounded at the Spanish alguazil. Don Guzman Wibley turned to George, who was trying hard not to gurgle.

"Senior el capitano! I yill not interrupt your voyage," he said. "You will

keep on, and put in at ze next Spanish port."

"Hefty haddocks!" gurgled George. "Zat will be all right," said the alguazil. "I remain viz my prisoner. It is necessary to put ze irons on him." He turned to the dumbfounded Coker again. "Senior, I am desolated, but it is necessary zat you be ironed. You are one dangerous criminal, senior. You make much damage to nose of Spanish subject."

"It—it was a mistake!" gasped the unhappy Coker. "It was all a—a mistake. I—I took him for somebody else, see?"

"All zat you tell to ze judge when you are tried, senior!" said Don Guzman. There was a clink of metal under the Spanish cloak. "Put out ze hands, senior, and I will put on ze handcuffs."

Coker started. Coker glared. He gazed round at staring, solemn faces. He gasped for breath. From under the Spanish cloak came into view a pair of "property" handcuffs, which looked alarmingly like the real thing.

"Ze hands, senior!" rapped Don Guzman Wibley, in a deep voice. "You are so dangerous zat it is necessary I make you one prisoner viz ze irons. Pronto, senior!"

"Go and eat coco!" roared Coker. "Catch me being ironed by a dashed foreigner! Why, I could eat three of you!"

With the handcuffs in his left hand, Don Guzman Bobadilla y Tocopilla laid his right hand on his sword-hilt.

"If you resist, senior, I keel you," he explained. "Such are ze orders! You are one prisoner, senior, or you are one dead man!"

The sword flashed out in the sunshine. That it was made of wood, and painted THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,315.

to resemble steel, would have been visible on a close inspection. Coker did not give it a close inspection. He felt no desire whatever to get close to it! As the blade flashed in the sun, Coker jumped back—dodged, and raced along the deck!

"Zat you stop, senior!" shouted Don Guzman, pursuing him with brandished sword. "I arrest you! You are one prisoner! Caramba!"

"Yaroo!" roared Coker, as the point of the sword poked in his back. "Keep off! Whoop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors, unable to suppress their feelings any longer. The sight of Horace Coker dodging about the deck, with the sword poking at his back, was too much for them. They fairly howled.

"Go it, Coker!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Run for it, Coker!"

"Potter!" yelled Coker. "Greene!" He dodged round the deckchairs where the Fifth-Formers sat. "Back me up! Get a boathook or something! Why, what are you laughing at, you rotters?"

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

"Is this a laughing matter?" shrieked Coker. "Lend me a hand, you funks! Keep him off! Yaroooooh!"

The point of the sword poked in Coker's ribs. It did not penetrate—but it gave quite a nasty jab, which was quite enough for Coker. He fairly bounded.

Potter and Greene collapsed helplessly in the deckchairs, almost in hysterics. Coker fled across the deck. After him, with his Spanish cloak blowing out in the wind, rushed Don Guzman Bobadilla y Tocopilla, brandishing his sword. There was not a lot of room for dodging, and again and again Coker felt a poke in his back or ribs. Every poke he expected to run through him.

"Captain Cook!" he yelled.

But George could not even answer. George was almost doubled up, with tears of mirth rolling down his fat face.

"Keep off!" shrieked Coker.

"Caramba! You resist—I keel you!" shouted Don Guzman. "Zat is ze order! I keel you dead, pronto!"

"Oh crikey!"

Coker rushed for the companion, with a vague idea of locking himself in his cabin. A terrific jab in the back caught him as he rushed, and he did the cabin stairs in one.

Bump! Crash!

"Yaroooh! Oh, my hat!" Coker staggered to his feet as Don Guzman, with floating cloak and brandished sword, came pelting down after him. "Oh, my hat! Oh crumbs!"

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter rolled peevishly out of his room. "I say, you fellows, what's that row? Can't you let a fellow have forty winks? I say—Whoooooop!"

Bunter flew as Coker rushed into him. There was a bump that almost shook the Sea Nymph. Coker darted into his room. Bunter sat and roared.

"Caramba! Now I keel you!" roared Don Guzman.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter, his eyes almost popping through his spectacles at the sight of the Spaniard. "I say, you fellows—brigands—pirates—help—Yaroooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the deck in a wild yell. The whole ship's company of the Sea Nymph were almost weeping.

Slam! rang Coker's door. Then he remembered that the key was on the outside. The door flew open again, and a black-bearded, black-moustached, swarthy face glared in, and a brandished sword missed Coker's nose by an inch. He staggered back against the bunk, gasping.

"Caramba! Yield! You are one prisoner, or I keel!" roared Don Guzman Bobadilla y Tocopilla Wibley. "Resist alguazil, and you are one dead! Hold out ze hand for ze iron, or I keel! Pronto!"

Coker staggered against the bunk, gurgling, the sword at his breast. His hand was on his pillow—and he grabbed that pillow convulsively. He was cornered now—fairly cornered—but Coker, if he was not over-burdened with brains, and heaps of pluck. And his blood was up! He gripped that pillow, and with a sudden swing of his arm, sent it whizzing full at the black-bearded face of the alguazil.

Coker was the man to take risks! Had it been a genuine alguazil and a genuine sword, Coker might have been run through on the spot. But that especial alguazil had the best of reasons for not running Coker through—likewise a wooden "property" sword would not have gone into Coker. The pillow crashed into the black-bearded face, and Don Guzman Wibley spun backwards as if he had been shot.

"Oh crikey!" he gasped, as he crashed on the floor of Coker's cabin—quite a remarkable ejaculation for a Spanish alguazil! The sword clattered on the planks.

Coker panted! He had fled and dodged from a drawn sword, as any fellow might have done! But hand to hand, fist to fist, Coker feared no foe! He jumped at that alguazil! He kicked the fallen sword out of his reach. Then he piled in with both hands!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Up to that moment, Wibley of the Remove had been enjoying the game! From that moment his enjoyment ceased—suddenly! Struggling frantically, he rolled into the saloon in Coker's hefty grip—Coker's left arm round his neck, Coker's hefty right clenched, as hard as iron, banging away like a blacksmith's hammer! Fearful howls and yells came from Don Guzman Bobadilla y Tocopilla—but his head was in chancery, and Coker kept it there!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Quite a Surprise for Coker!

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

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, there's a Spanish brigand—"

"I say, he's killing Coker—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter, who had rolled on deck in a state of great alarm, blinked in amazement. Everybody on deck seemed to be in a state of convulsions. They laughed—they chortled—they howled—and they yelled. They almost wept and sobbed. Horace Coker's frantic flight from the Spanish alguazil had been too much for them—much too much! They were in danger of hysterics.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at," gasped Bunter. "I tell you that Spaniard's after Coker with a sword—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly, as a series of fearful yells rang from below. "That's not Coker—that—My hat!"

"Ow! Wow! Help! Rescue!" came a fearful howl, in the tones of William Wibley. "Help! Rescue! Yaroooooh!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Harry Wharton. "Coker's got him—come on!"

The Famous Five rushed down the companion. A startling scene met their gaze. Over and over on the saloon floor rolled two struggling figures. Don Guzman's cloak had been torn off, and his official gold-braided cap was gone—his mop of black hair was almost gone. His moustache was on one side of his face—his beard hung by a single wire on the other. Wibley's disguise was not planned to stand a hefty hammering from fists like Coker's. He was losing it fast. And he yelled frantically for help—which he sorely needed. Coker was hitting hard and often.

"Oh, my hat! Collar him!" gasped Wharton.

The juniors rushed at Coker and dragged him off by main force. They hurled him away, headlong.

Wibley sat up and spluttered. His nose streamed red.

"Oh crikey! Keep that maniac off!" he gasped. "Oh lor'! Ow! Wow!"

Coker staggered up. He stared at the Spanish alguazil like a fellow in a dream. Wibley was still unrecognisable as Wibley, with his swarthy face and darkened eyebrows. But the displaced beard and moustache told their own tale—and the black wig that was half-off, disclosing close-cropped, brown hair underneath.

"Why, what—what—" gurgled Coker, almost petrified. "He—he—he's disguised! Look at him! That's a false beard!"

"Not really!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"And a false moustache—"

"Go hon!"

"He's not a Spanish policeman at all!" roared Coker, as if a light had broken on his mind. "It's a spoof!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's some scoundrel pretending to be a policeman!" exclaimed Coker. "One of the gang that robbed me in the cork wood, most likely—"

"Oh crumbs!"

"In fact, I believe I recognise him—he's one of that gang! I'm sure of that! Collar him!"

Coker made a jump at the disguised junior.

"Keep him off!" shrieked Wibley, squirming round the table.

Harry Wharton & Co. grabbed Coker in time, and dragged him back. Coker struggled to hurl them aside.

"Let go!" he roared. "You silly

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young asses! I tell you he's not a Spanish policeman at all—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's one of that gang—I'm going to bag him—can't you see that he's in disguise?" shrieked Coker.

"Hold him!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Grab him! Keep him off!" Coker, you howling idiot, it's Wibley!"

"Don't be a young ass, Cherry! Let me go, I tell you!" roared Coker. "I'm going to collar that bandit before he gets away."

"Ha, ha, ha! Hold him!"

The Famous Five held on to Coker, though they were laughing almost too much to restrain the excited Horace. Wibley staggered to his feet, on the other side of the table. He held on to the table and spluttered for breath.

"Keep that maniac off!" he gurgled. "Keep him quiet! Oh crikey! He's jolly nearly dislocated my nose—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The silly ass has spoiled the whole thing—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Horace Coker ceased to struggle. He gazed at Don Guzman with starting eyes. He could not recognise Wibley's face; but he could recognise his voice. Slowly, but surely, it dawned upon Coker's powerful brain that Don Guzman Bobadilla y Tocopilla was not a bandit in disguise—but a schoolboy got up as a Spaniard. He realised, at long last, that it was indeed William Wibley, of the Remove, in one of his theatrical stunts.

"It—it—it's W-w-w-w-Wibley!" articulated Coker.

"Got it at last?" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Wibley!" repeated Coker dazedly.

"A—a—a spoof from beginning to end. You young scoundrels were all in it!" More and more the truth was dawning on Coker. "You knew all the time he wasn't a Spanish policeman. You jolly well knew—all of you—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What a brain!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"You—you—you—you young villains!" Coker, recollecting his frantic flight from a dummy sword in the hand of a hilarious fag, crimsoned with fury.

"Pulling my leg—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll smash him! I'll smash the lot of you! I'll—I'll—"

Words failed Horace Coker, and he proceeded to actions—strenuous actions.

Fortunately, there were plenty of fellows to deal with Coker. Wibley retired to his room to mop his streaming nose and discard his disguise—what time the Famous Five dealt faithfully with Coker. Not while there was an ounce of breath in his burly person would Coker give in. But that final ounce having been extracted, Coker was rolled breathless and gurgling into his cabin, and left there.

It was some time before Horace Coker was seen in public again.

Coker was not, usually, of a diffident or retiring nature. But after the affair of Don Guzman Bobadilla y Tocopilla, Coker of the Fifth felt a certain coyness about meeting the public eye. He felt that he had been made to look a fool. He was far from realising that he was precisely what he looked. While he remained in his state-room he was entertained—perhaps—by the sounds of merriment that awoke all the echoes of the Sea Nymph. Coker was not feeling gay himself; but there was no doubt that he was adding enormously to the gaiety of the Easter cruise.

(Continued on page 26.)

"LINESMAN CALLING!"

As a fitting and topical wind-up to this series of footer talks, our contributor gives you a number of interesting facts about the greatest of all Soccer events—the fight for the F.A. Cup at Wembley.

THE BATTLE OF LANCASHIRE!

NO difficulty in deciding what our football talk must be about this week, chums. The Cup Final is the thing which matters; the struggle for the greatest prize which the football field offers. Everywhere there is excitement, for this English Cup Final is an affair in which the whole country, not to say the whole world, takes an interest. Wherever English people are gathered together they will be talking of this annual game of games. I can visualise, next Saturday, listeners all over the world tuning in their sets to Wembley. Let us hope, for the sake of those of our countrymen who are far away, that the broadcast conditions will be perfect.

While the Cup Final is a great affair for all, there is a part of the country which will be even more than ordinarily interested in this year's affair—the county of Lancashire, which supplies both the teams.

In a way it is fitting that Lancashire should continue to play its part in this last big battle of the season, for Lancashire was in at the very beginning of professional football, and it was a Lancashire club which first took the trophy away from London in those long-ago days.

It has been my good fortune to spend many hours with Cup Final players, season after season, and knowing something of what has happened in the past, I can well imagine how quickly the hearts of the players of Everton and Manchester City will be beating. The managers of these teams will concentrate on keeping the minds of the players off the game as much as possible. They will tell the men not to think about the coming match; to forget it. That sort of advice, however, is easier to give than to take.

The trouble in this connection, of course, is that the managers themselves will be excited. So far as I can discover, the manager of Manchester City is in a unique position. I do not remember any other manager of a football team who has been with his club to the Cup Final in his first season as manager. That is the position in which Mr. William Wild, the manager of Manchester City, finds himself. He has been associated with the City club for several years, but was only appointed to the managerial chair last April. I wonder how much the excitement will get him?

THAT NERVOUS FEELING!

THE last few hours before the kick-off are, I should say, the most trying of all. How to get through them? That is the question. After a light lunch the players will start for Wembley in a charabanc. And if the managers are wise they will see to it that the players do not get to the ground too early.

I remember a Cardiff City player who was in two Finals telling me how he felt.

On the first occasion the Cardiff players were taken to the ground about an hour a half before the match was due to start. They were even ready to go on the field well before the kick-off time, and the waiting got on their nerves. They lost the match.

On the second occasion when they got to the final the Cardiff players were taken there almost at the last moment: so late

that they had to get dressed in a hurry. They won this second final.

If you could look into the dressing-rooms at Wembley you would immediately be struck with the difference in the temperament of the players. Here and there is a player who is deadly serious as he gets into his football "toga." There are other players who are obviously trying to overcome their nervousness, and again there are players who seem to be quite genuinely light-hearted. Lucky the side going to Wembley which has a player of the temperament of Joe Hulme, the Arsenal outside-right. When Arsenal were last in the final, Joe took along with him his portable gramophone, and as soon as the players were in the dressing-room at Wembley, he got it going with the lightest of light music. How cheerful he kept all his colleagues.

LUCKY LADS!

AT the time of writing I do not know the actual make-up of the Cup Final sides. Indeed, they are not usually chosen, definitely, until a day or two before the game. But it seems likely to work out that there will be some lucky lads in this season's final too. The youngest of all the candidates for a Cup-winners' medal this season is Albert Geldard, the outside-right of Everton. He is only eighteen years of age. Fancy playing in a Cup Final at eighteen! There are scores of excellent footballers who have been in the game for years and years without having had that wonderful experience. Geldard is in his first season with Everton.

There is at least one player of Manchester City who may be considered a specially lucky lad, too. This is Alec Herd, the inside-right. Manchester City had already started on the road to Wembley before Herd joined them from Hamilton Academicals as late as the month of February this year. Now he, too, is in an English Cup Final.

On the last occasion when two Lancashire clubs appeared in the final—1926—Manchester City were the opponents of Bolton Wanderers. Incidentally that was one of the best Cup Finals, from a football point of view, I have ever seen, giving the lie direct to the oft-made suggestion that you don't get good football in a final.

In the Manchester City team there will, barring accidents, be two men who played in the last Lancashire final—Sam Cowan, the centre-half, and James McMullan, the inside-left. McMullan then, as now, was the captain of Manchester City, but he played at left half-back.

The only other player of the two teams who has played in an English Cup Final is Tom Johnson, the inside-left of Everton. And he played for Manchester City in the 1926 final. Isn't it strange that he should now be appearing against his old team? What will be his thoughts?

Who will win—Everton or Manchester City? I can't tell you. What I can tell you is that this Cup Final, like all Cup Finals, is just a fifty-fifty affair. The result may go either way. But when it is all over, when the medals have been handed out and the captain of one side is being carried off the field with the Cup in his possession, I want you to remember the losers.

"LINESMAN."

When he emerged on deck at last, the Sea Nymph was steaming under the glowing sunset on the Mediterranean. Coker emerged with dignity, his head in the air, a frown on his brow. Like the gentleman in the poem, there was "pride in his port, defiance in his eye." But every other face wore a grin. Potter and Greene were grinning—Harry Wharton & Co. were grinning—Wibley, in spite of his damaged nose, was grinning—George was grinning—Billy Bunter was grinning—even the crew were grinning. It really seemed as if one touch of Coker made the whole world grin. While they grinned, the chums of the Remove eyed Coker warily, ready for warfare. But the great Horace seemed to have realised that that was a chicken that would not fight. And there were other thoughts in Coker's powerful brain. Coker could scheme schemes, as well as other fellows. And Coker had been scheming.

"I'm not going to whop you, Wibley!" he said grimly.

"Thanks, old bean!"

"You're jolly clever at making up, and playing the ox," said Coker, "but I fancy you won't do a lot more of it, this trip. I fancy that you'll find that somebody's going to put a spoke in your wheel!"

With those mysterious words Coker stalked away, leaving the juniors staring. Something, evidently, was working in Horace Coker's powerful brain. The question was—what?

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not as Per Programme!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were still smiling when the Easter cruisers gathered at supper.

They seemed to be wearing smiles that wouldn't come off. Rather to their surprise, they discerned a smile lurking on Horace Coker's rugged features—a grim smile; one of those sardonic smiles. It was as clear as noonday that Coker's mighty intellect was at work, and the chums of the Remove were both interested and puzzled.

After supper they went on deck, and Wibley went into his room to pack away his theatrical gadgets. Wibley kept those priceless possessions in a large suitcase, which was pushed under his bunk, where there was just room for it. That suitcase was open, in the middle of his room, and Wibley was packing his priceless gadgets in it with loving care, when Coker glanced in.

"Oh! So that's where you keep your theatrical rubbish, is it?" asked Coker, glancing at the big suitcase.

"That's it," said Wibley, "under my bunk. Why?"

"Oh, only asking," said Coker.

And he turned away and went on deck.

Wibley blinked after him.

"My only hat!" murmured Wibley. "If that howling idiot is thinking of messing about with my props—"

That dreadful thought almost turned William Wibley cold. Wibley had intended to push the suitcase back into its place after repacking it, and join the other fellows on deck. Now, however, Wibley remained in deep and anxious thought for some time, with a wrinkle in his brow. Finally, a grin dawned on his face and he proceeded to take measures—adequate measures—to secure that priceless suitcase, in case

Horace Coker had vengeful designs on it.

He came on deck at last and joined the Co. Horace Coker was strolling by the rail, and it really looked as if he was waiting for Wibley to show up, for as soon as that youth appeared Coker went below again. Wibley glanced after him and sat down in a deckchair with his friends.

"Coker's up to something," said Bob Cherry.

"The upfulness is terrific!" agreed Maurice Jamset Ram Singh.

"Looks like it," said Wibley. "I wonder what?"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's that?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as there was a sound of heavy bumping in the companion.

"I say, you fellows Coker's bringing up a suitcase!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"What is he bringing up a suitcase for?"

"Goodness knows!" said Wharton.

The juniors stared at Coker as he emerged into the starlight. Coker had a large and heavy suitcase in his grasp, and he jerked it out on deck with a bump.

"What's the game, Coker?" asked Potter. "We're not in port yet, old bean!"

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"Don't be an ass, Potter!"

"But what the thump are you bringing your luggage up for?" asked Greene.

"Don't be a fathead, Greene!"

Horace Coker walked to the rail with the suitcase. There was a howl of astonishment as he heaved it up with both hands and hurled it into the Mediterranean.

"Hefty haddocks!" roared George.

"What are you up to?"

"Coker!" gasped Potter and Greene.

"Is—is he potty?" stammered Bob Cherry.

"The pottiffulness must be terrific!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Wibley.

"So that was the game, was it? My only hat!"

There was a heavy splash as the big suitcase struck the water. It vanished into the depths of the Mediterranean, astern of the Sea Nymph. Horace Coker turned from the rail, the grim, sardonic smile more pronounced than ever on his rugged features.

"That's that!" he said. "Next time you want to play theatrical tricks on a Fifth Form man, young Wibley, you'll have to look a bit further for your rubbish. I fancy you'll have to dive for it! Ha, ha!"

And Coker laughed—a sardonic laugh.

"Oh, great pip!" gasped Potter. "Why, you—you cheeky chump!" roared Bob Cherry. "Is that Wibley's bag of gadgets you've heaved overboard?"

"Just that," answered Coker coolly. "There won't be any more theatrical tricks on this trip, I fancy."

The juniors stared at Coker. They stared at Wibley. They expected to see that youth jump clear of the deck; they expected to hear him rave. But Wibley showed no sign of going off at the deep end. He smiled.

"What larks!" he remarked.

"D-d-don't you mind?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Not at all!"

"But he's chucked your theatrical outfit overboard!" yelled Nugent.

"Oh, no, he hasn't," yawned Wibley. "I fancied he was up to something, and I saw it safe before I came up. I handed my box of tricks over to the steward, and asked him to lock it up safely. That's all right."

Coker stared at him.

"You young ass!" he bawled. "Whar-rer you mean? I got that suitcase out from under your bunk!"

"Oh, I dare say," assented Wibley. "Why shouldn't you if you wanted to? I fancied you might go there rooting after a suitcase so I put one there, after handing mine over to the steward."

"Mean to say it was another suitcase?" stammered Coker.

"Quite."

"Then it's jolly well your own fault if you've lost your clothes instead of your theatrical rubbish—"

"That's all right! It wasn't my suitcase," explained Wibley. "I got it from another fellow's cabin."

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Not yours!" howled Coker. "Whose was it, then?"

"Yours!"

Coker jumped clear of the deck, as the juniors had expected Wibley to do.

"Mine!" he bawled.

"Yours, old man! I got it from your cabin, thinking you might be thinking of damaging anything that was under my bunk. No objection to a fellow damaging his own property! I never guessed you meant to chuck it overboard. Still, a fellow can do as he likes with his own things—"

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

The look on Horace Coker's speaking countenance made them howl. Coker gazed at Wibley, speechless, for some moments. Then he stared back at the sea astern. But if he was thinking of recovering that suitcase there was nothing in it. That suitcase was gone for ever. He turned to Wibley again.

"Mum-mum-mine!" he gurgled.

"Mum-mum-my suitcase! You—you put m-m-my suitcase under your bunk, and—and I've chick-chick-chucked it overboard—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, I'll—I'll—I'll—"

All hands were required to handle Coker of the Fifth for the next few minutes. He was in quite a dangerous state. After which Coker gasped and gurgled for his second wind—while peals of merry laughter rang over the shining waters of the Mediterranean.

THE END.

(Look out for "BUNTER'S BIG BLUFF" in next week's MAGNET, and don't forget that this grand issue of your favourite paper also contains another Free Photo Plate. Don't miss it, boys!)

NOBBY, *the* 'Shooting Star'!



By HEDLEY SCOTT.

WHAT'S GONE BEFORE.

Daniel Willoughby Thundersley, nephew of Lord Weatherstone, chairman of the Perriton Rovers, resents his uncle's adoption of "Nobby"—a nameless wail whose clever football gets him a permanent place in the Rover's eleven. The jealous Thundersley schemes with the Don—a rascally circus proprietor with whom Nobby had spent his earlier years—for the removal of his young enemy. The Don double-crosses Thundersley, and plans to kill Nobby. Ferrers Locke, the detective, however, intervenes and rescues Nobby in the nick of time. Clues the Don has left behind him clearly point to Thundersley as being the would-be assassin.

(Now read on.)

Cornered!

"**FERRERS LOCKE!**" There was obvious alarm in Daniel Willoughby Thundersley's voice as he gazed at the visiting-card his servant had brought him. "What the devil does he want?"

The servant coughed.

"Mr. Locke said his business was important," he added.

Thundersley glared at him.

"I'm not going to see him. Tell him I'm not at home, d'you hear?"

"Very good, sir!"

The servant wheeled and made as if to retire, but froze on the instant as his eyes came in line with the doorway. For there, grave and imperturbable, stood Ferrers Locke.

"What are you waiting for?" snarled Thundersley, whose back was to the door. "Tell the nosy, meddling fool of a detective that I'm not at home."

"Pardon me—"

That quiet, even voice caused Thundersley to leap out of his chair. His face blanched as he saw the object of his uncomplimentary remarks framed in the doorway.

The detective's face was inscrutable, his eyes cold and grey. Easily he strode forward, calling out over his shoulder:

"You may come in, Jack. Thundersley is delighted to see us!"

Speechless with rage, not unmix'd with terror, Thundersley watched the smiling perky face of Jack Drake come into view.

"What do you mean by forcing your

way into my rooms?" At last Thundersley found his voice. He turned snarlingly on his unhappy-looking servant. "Why did you let these people in, eh?"

"Your servant was polite enough to ask us inside the hall," explained Locke easily. "But I must add that he had no alternative, for, you see, my foot between the door and the post prevented his shutting the door. That, however, is of small moment. I suggest, Thundersley, that you bid your servant retire."

The wretched servant required no further hint. He glided out of the room like a shadow, and Locke beckoned his assistant to make himself comfortable in a chair.

Thundersley was about to explode into a fresh tirade of objections when Locke coolly waved him to silence.

"I will be as brief as possible, Thundersley," said the detective. "But my errand is an unpleasant one. It concerns one whom I have reason to know is hardly a friend of yours—"

Thundersley looked mystified. He looked even more mystified as the detective slowly drew from his pocket a silk neckerchief and a small card-case.

"These articles, I believe, belong to you, Thundersley?"

The detective dangled them before the man's eyes.

"Why—why, yes! They certainly look like mine!" babbled Thundersley, overcome. "But how—where—I mean, what are they doing in your possession?"

His amazement was genuine—Ferrers Locke's keen insight to character was satisfied on that point. Tantalizingly he replaced the articles in his pocket.

"They might mean for their legitimate owner—and you have admitted ownership—a very unpleasant trial at the Old Bailey—"

"What?" shrieked Thundersley.

"And a job for the public hangman," continued Ferrers Locke relentlessly. "These articles, my good fellow, were found in a certain packing-case—"

He stopped deliberately to note the effect his words had upon Thundersley. But the latter's face merely registered bewilderment.

"And in that packing-case also was

found," resumed the detective, "the body of a young man, bound and gagged—"

"Good heavens!"

Thundersley's face crimsoned and paled again in a flash.

"Who—who was the young man?" he added—and he dreaded the answer which he knew must come.

"The name of the victim of this terrible outrage is known to you," said Ferrers Locke grimly. "Nobby—"

Something like a scream left Thundersley's gaping mouth. His mind conjured up a picture of that packing-case, with its human burden, bound and gagged. His tortured conscience added to the picture, as the detective had imagined it would. Locke had not said that Nobby was dead in as many words, but the inference had been there.

For a moment Thundersley felt himself swaying—his mind was in a turmoil. The Don—of course, this terrible business was the work of the Don! Why had he gone so far as this? Why—Thundersley's terror increased—why had his card-case and silk handkerchief been found in that grim packing-case? It was murder—

He turned on Locke, wringing his hands.

"I knew nothing about it!" he shrieked. "I didn't kill—kill him! Oh, I didn't—I swear it—I swear it!"

The detective's face was grim.

"You will have to prove that statement," he said coldly. "My investigations show me that you hated Nobby—"

"I didn't like him," admitted Thundersley tearfully. "I will admit that! But I never killed him! I don't know how my things came to be in that packing-case!"

"Think again," said Ferrers Locke casually, and pulled out his pipe and lit it calmly.

Through the wreathing smoke, however, his keen eyes never left the panic-stricken face of Thundersley.

The wretched schemer gazed wildly from Locke to the now serious Drake. Then he sank back in his chair and buried his head in his hands.

Ferrers Locke winked at Drake slyly. "I said think again," remarked the detective when a moment or two had passed. "Surely you realise what this means to you, man? Come clean! Come clean, and I'll do my best to help you."

Thundersley looked up with swimming eyes.

"You mean that? You mean it? I'll tell you everything—everything—honest, I will! There's another man at the back of this ghastly business. I can see it all! He's tried to frame me, the rotten hound!"

"His name?" snapped Locke.

Thundersley seemed in no hurry to reply. His eyes narrowed cunningly. How much of what he knew would be safe to impart to this inquisitive private detective? Why if Nobby had been killed, murdered—he shivered at the thought—why hadn't the official police called upon him?

"For the moment I would prefer to call him X," he said at length, whereat Ferrers Locke leaped to his feet, seized Thundersley by the collar, and shook him savagely.

"You have no preference in the matter, you scheming dog," he said harshly. "I would prefer you to call him by the name of Don Carlos!"

Thundersley's jaws gaped wide at mention of the Don's name. How much did this detective know?

"It was the Don—it is the Don!" he spluttered confusedly. "He's the man you want! He's had his knife into Nobby ever since the kid ran away from his circus."

"I am aware of that," said Locke coolly, "just as much as I am aware that both he and you have made previous attempts on the youngster to get him out of the way." He held up a hand commandingly as Thundersley seemed about to give the lie to that statement. "Now don't try any more of your transparent lies on me, Thundersley. I know, you understand! From the moment the youngster joined up with the Rovers you've had your knife into him—"

Thundersley made no reply to that. He was cornered—cornered like a rat.

"What harm did the youngster ever do you?" continued Locke remorselessly. "A nicer kid than Nobby never breathed. Now, for the last time, if you want me to help you, come clean!"

An unhappy silence followed for a minute or two—unhappy for Thundersley, at least. Then he blurted out his story, carefully omitting any mention of his rifling of Lord Weatherstone's safe, and of the alternative

Nobby had given him of owning up to his lordship or being exposed. "Coming clean" had its limits with Daniel Willoughby Thundersley, even when a charge of murder seemed to hang over his wretched head.

In a torrent of words he confessed to scheming with the Don for the removal of the youngster he hated; confessed to paying hard cash to the Don that the boy might be smuggled out of the country, out of his life, away from Lord Douglas Weatherstone.

Locke's lip curled at the wholesale admission. He had known jealousy and hate to drive many a man to desperate crime during his long career among evil-doers, but never had he listened to a story to equal this.

Thundersley sat panting when he had told of his share in the conspiracy.

"Honestly, Mr. Locke," he cried again and again at its conclusion, "I never thought, I never knew, the Don would go to the extent of murder! Honestly I would have stopped him doing that!"

"I believe you that far," said the detective, "and that's the only redeeming feature. When I tell you the real identity of Nobby, you will be prepared to go down on your bended knees and thank your Maker that you jibbed at murder!"

"What do you mean?" asked Thundersley, wild-eyed and haggard, whilst Jack Drake's boyish face lit up with lively excitement. Here he knew was a denouement of tremendous importance.

"I mean," said Locke gravely and earnestly, "that the boy you have schemed against is your own brother!"

It was out now! A wild cry was wrung from Thundersley. Even Jack Drake found himself exclaiming aloud. Both gazed wide-eyed at Ferrers Locke.

"My brother—my brother!" panted Thundersley. "You can't mean it! It can't be! My brother died in infancy! What are you telling me?"

He blazed up into a passion, but Locke calmly soothed him down.

"I am telling you the gospel truth, Thundersley," he said quietly. "On my honour as a man, on my reputation as a detective, I say again the boy whom you know as Nobby is in reality Trevor Thundersley, your young brother!"

(The secret is out now! What will Thundersley do? What's going to happen to the Don? You'll find the answers to these questions in next week's grand Free Gift issue of the MAGNET. Order your copy now!)

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS!

WELL, chums, the MAGNET has scored another big triumph, what? I am referring, of course, to the splendid FREE Photogravure Plate, and the special Loose-Leaf Folder which is presented to every reader with this week's grand issue. Isn't this double-free-gift worth waiting for? And wouldn't you have felt like kicking yourself if you had missed it? Everybody will be talking about these handsome photo-plates, and that means also that there will be a rush to secure a copy of your favourite paper. Order YOUR copy in good time. Don't forget there are

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Star items in

NEXT WEEK'S MAGNET!

A top-notch yarn by Frank Richards, entitled: "BUNTER'S BIG BLUFF!" which deals with the further exciting holiday adventures of Harry Wharton & Co. aboard the Sea Nymph. Then follows a sparkling edition of the "Greyfriars Herald," further chapters of our thrilling footer and 'tec story, and another SUPERB PHOTOGRAVURE PLATE.

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DO YOU WEIGH FIFTEEN STONES?
 If so, report to Study No. 1 at once. Someone's urgently wanted to sit on Coker's chest while we pour ink over him!

AS OTHERS SEE THEM

What I Think of Peter Hazeldene
 By George Bulstrode

The best thing about Hazeldene is Hazeldene's sister. If Marjorie's left out of the reckoning, there's precious little left over which to enthuse about. But I'll grant you that Hazeldene's a lot better than he is used to be. In the long-forgotten days when I was skipper of the Removes—and a jolly good skipper at that, I fancy I—Hazeldene was generally regarded as a thorough bad egg. Nowadays, he's looked on more or less as a reformed character. But—
 There's always a "but" about Hazeldene. He's got old habits die hard, and Hazeldene finds it easy to slip back into them. If anyone in the Remove starts taking the well-known Downward Path, it's two to one in doubtless Hazeldene's not far behind!
 He's an ungrateful sort of bouncer, too. Wharton has always been a good friend to him; but whenever anybody has tried to lower Wharton's colours, Hazeldene has been in the camp of the newcomer!
 Still, there's no need to rub it in. But for the fact that contributors to this column are encouraged to be painfully frank, I should probably say that Hazeldene is quite a good chap. Brown and I rub along fairly well with him in Study No. 2, anyway; and I'm not perfect myself, as I shall probably hear in no uncertain manner when Hazeldene lets rip about me in the next number!
 (Hazeldene's opinion of George Bulstrode, written regardless of the law of libel and entirely unconsented, will positively appear next week!—Ed.)

Lonzy's Little Letters

Dear Editor.—The abstinence of pedestrianism from exploratory rural diversions consequent upon the antecedent employment of the ubiquitous automobile for equine transport is a phenomenon for which the donation of unqualified satisfaction must necessarily be withheld pending satisfactory interpellation: Is this metamorphosis in our means of mobility indicative of increased sanative felicity or otherwise?
 I expounded this viewpoint to Coker yesterday, thinking that his ownership of a two-wheeled vehicle propelled by an internal combustion engine would lend the matter particular interest.
 But much to my surprise, Coker fainted!
 Incomprehensibly yours,
 ALONZO TODD.

CURING BUNTER'S CURIOSITY

Fellows who happened to be spinning themselves down at the gates one day last week saw a somewhat unusual spectacle. An emergency breakdown lorry came driving along the lane; but the crane at the back was not, as is usual, supporting the front of a smashed motor-car. It was supporting Billy Bunter instead!
 Bunter was hanging over the road, suspended by a heavy iron hook which had been inserted into the belt of his trousers. He was too terrified to speak. He just hung there, with his eyes fixed to the racing road beneath him!
 The Greyfriars fellows at the gates yelled out to the driver, and he pulled up. He almost collapsed when he saw Bunter! When he had been involved, Trumper & Co. didn't appreciate Bunter's fat nose being poked into their affair, and, when the breakdown van arrived, they submitted Bunter for the damaged car at the last moment, just to cure his curiosity.
 They haven't done that, of course. But we shall be surprised if Bunter displays a lot of interest in the next motor accident he happens upon!



"Merrie" England at Greyfriars
 The Removes are making a bold attempt to revive some of the glories of the old-time English May Day, this year. It is intended to erect a may-pole, in the quad, if nobody's looking.
 Old-fashioned sports such as climbing the greasy pole for a leg of mutton will be indulged in during the day.
 The Remove Folk Dancing Society will put on white trousers and billycock hats and the bookies round their calves prior to giving a display of Morris dancing.
 Mad wriggles will be sung. Doubtless performed by those historians who are unaccustomed to hearing this kind of thing.
 Marjorie Hazeldene has been elected Queen of the May and may possibly trot over from Cliff House to be crowned.
 Of course, it's quite possible that the whole thing may fall through. But the Remove must be given credit for thinking about it, mustn't they?

NO SUMMER EXTENSION

Tuckshop Hours Unaltered

Eloquent, but unavailing pleas for an extension of tuckshop hours were made by the Council before the Remove Licensing Bench last Tuesday.
 The Bench met under the chairmanship of H. Wharton, Esq., to consider an application by prominent Remover for permission to be given to Mrs. Minnie's retail ice-cream and minnera waters till 8 p.m. instead of 8 p.m. during the months of May, June, and July.
 Introducing the application, Mr. H. Vernon-Smith, K.C., said that was a crying scandal that in a civilised age like this the tuckshop should close at eight o'clock. It meant that a chap who had been dem at the nets or for a stroll round the school grounds had to race well go thirsty! (Shame.)
 It was all very well for people to say he could go to his club or keep a supply in his study. Such things might be all right for bloated plutocrats like himself (Lawgiver).
 Opposing the application on behalf of the Nilivits' League, Mr. Justice Coker said it was about time somebody put the Remove in their place and, by gum, he was the man to do it. Extending the tuckshop hours for the sake of a gang of idle, indeed! Pah!
 When Mr. Coker had been stung out on his neck, the chairman said if Mrs. Minnie was present.
 Mr. Vernon-Smith: "I'm sorry, your honour, but we couldn't get the old dame to come across!"
 Chairman: "May I ask what is the attitude of the good lady to the proposal?"
 Mr. Vernon-Smith: "You may ask with pleasure, old bean, but I'm afraid I can't tell you!"
 Chairman: "Application dismissed, with costs." Mr. Vernon-Smith, for disrespect to the Bench, is accordingly to be detained during the chairman's pleasure!
 Before the Remove licence could interfere, however, the crowd had rushed forward with the apparent intention of bumping every magistrate on the Ben and the magistrates had to beat a hurried retreat through the windows.
 Mr. Vernon-Smith fell at liberty.

SCOTLAND FOR EVER

Fellows passing Study No. 3 one day last week were surprised to hear a sort of orthogonke going on inside. On looking in, they were relieved to find that it was only Ogilvy, roaring with laughter.
 He had just seen the point of a joke he read in the "Greyfriars Herald" six months ago!

CRAZY PAVING—MAD HEAD

Gardeners' Enterprise Unappreciated

"The flowers that bloom in the Spring, try to bring honour to all the Remove!"
 That was what some poetical Johnny wrote a long time ago, you remember. Or, at least, if it's not what he wrote, it's what he ought to have written.
 Anyway, to come to the point, the Remove Horti-

FRENZIED SUMMER SPORT

Croquet Season's Wild Start

If you want a really hectic afternoon, have a peep over the hedge at the next Saturday afternoon. But for goodness' sake keep away from it if you're inclined to suffer in any way from a weak heart. The strain might easily prove too great for you!
 The players, neatly attired in Norfolk suits and spring-sided boots, will charge out of the Head's house at 3 p.m. at the hair-raising speed of at least two miles per hour.
 The teams will then line up, doing their respective war-cries of "Tut-tut!" and "Bliss my soul!"
 Amid a breathless silence the first player will swing his mallet. A scream of agony will ring out. He has hit his pot corn instead of the ball!
 Another try. This time he hits the ball and sends it on a terrific drive of at least three yards.
 Wild enthusiasm from the spectators greets this wonderful feat, both of them walking up for a moment to call for their deck-chairs!
 "Well tapped, Herbert!"
 So the play goes breathlessly on from hoop to hoop. How they keep up the amazing pace is a mystery no one can expect to solve!
 Really, chaps, all things considered, we strongly advise you to trot along and peep over that hedge next Saturday afternoon—unless, of course, you can't stand too much excitement!



plots last Tuesday evening, when Russell and a crowd of fellow horticulturists started work on the crazy paving footpath they'd planned to lay this year.
 Russell thought it would be an economy to use the old stone slabs and bits of masonry lying about on the outskirts of the Cloisters. After a ton or so of material had been dragged on to the site, Russell and his co-conspirators got busy with pickaxes and sledges, reducing the

pieces of stone to reasonable proportions. They had worked on the job for about an hour when Dr. Locke suddenly strolled up, beaming.
 "Busy, my boys?" he remarked, affably. Then his eye fell on the embryonic crazy paving and his affability suddenly vanished as he asked in a faint voice: "What—that is that?"
 "Crazy paving, proudly," Russell answered, proudly.
 "Kik-kik-crazy paving!"
 "Where, may I ask, did you obtain the stones for your purpose?"
 "Collected it up from the Cloisters, sir," explained Russell cheerfully. "Anything wrong, sir?"
 "Well, you just ought to have seen the Head! You wouldn't have had any doubts about it! He roared and staggered and pressed his hands to his forehead and tore his hair in a kind of frenzy! Eventually he managed to blurt out: 'They have touched them!' They have interfered with the ruins! And a party of archaeologists are coming down to-morrow to study them! O-o-o-o-h!"
 His trembling finger pointed to the House. The amateur gardeners didn't know what the thump it was all about, but they interpreted it as a sign that they were to leave their garden work and go up to the Head's study.
 Their interpretation was perfectly correct!
 Some of them are still wondering why the Head spent the next hour dusting their pants. We must say we don't see much sense in it ourselves. But peaks are notoriously funny birds to understand, aren't they?

DICKY NUGENT'S WEEKLY WISDOM

Most sportsmen like a nice sunny day; but Wingoate must be an exception. At any rate, his speech at the Cricket Club Bazaar last week ended up: "HAIL! King Kricked! Long may it RAIN!"
 Did Wingoate really mean what he said? Thinking he over, it seems DOUBTFUL WEATHER he did!

"REEL" FUNNY!

"Drevo" is the son of a Lanchester mill-owner. Yet somehow we can never "collin" on to him!



WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?

Because he reported a fat for breaking bounds, Dicky Nugent & Co. "pelted" P.-e. Tozer with turfs. Tozer is still wandering which "young rip" knocked his helmet off!



STARTLING CHANGE

Peter Todd, our amateur lawyer, has been paying marked attention to the Young Lady at the banniship, just lately.
 The "solitor" has become the "silly editor," so to speak!



78 VOLTS!

Ogilvy, who understands electricity, says that when Coker's belt boot strikes a hapless farrier on the trousers, the farrier experiences a shock equivalent to seventy-six volts!



GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

Q. I. Field is the leap-frog champion of the Removes. No belt is too high for "Squid!"



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Gerald Leader has awarded 3,100 lines in the Remove since the term began. Bunter has collared the lion's share, but he is several hundred in arrears, and will probably remain so!



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