wads and wads by henri

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whiz----plop! the teacher, who was writing on the blackboard, turned slowly around rubbing the back of his head all the while. he glared at his pupils and cautiously resumed his work. again a whiz----plop! and the pedagogue went over the same routine of rubbing his head and glaring at the class. now, on the floor, two paper wads nestled side by side near the instructor's feet. another rolled by and settled in a crack on the floor.

now, dear readers, we shall trace it to the source of this confusion. no, it wasn't a freckled-faced, red-nosed tomboy, neither was it a fuzzy-headed, good-for-nothing rascal. a rowdy-dow was not the cause of it all. it was dear old percival -- "pet percy" as his classmates called him.

a big lump in his left cheek was moving up and down. at every bite he made a wry face—the kind of expression you make when you had gulped some medicine that the doctors had prepared for you. after chewing the paper for quite a while, each chew producing a shudder from him, percy set the wad on his desk besides more of the same thing. he then tore a big piece of paper and stuffed it in his mouth. a few minutes later another wad was placed besides the others.

while i was walking home with him from school that day, i asked him how he liked chewing papers.

"oh," he said, "at first it feels terrible. the paper is dry and needs lots of saliva to get it wet, then the ink on the paper—ugh! well, confidentially, the first ten wads are the hardest and dryest to chew, after that you get used to it."

the end

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