

LAUGH AND GROW FAT—READ THE "MAGNET"!

The

No. 803. Vol. XXIII.

Week ending June 30th, 1923.

Magnet 2^d

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of
School & Detective Stories.



BILLY BUNTER'S KNOCK-OUT PUNCH!

(An astonishing incident from this week's magnificent story of HARRY WHARTON & CO., inside.)

Published by Howard Baker Press Ltd, 27a Arterberry Road, Wimbledon, London, S. W. 20.





"THE TWIN TANGLE!"

NEXT week's topping Greyfriars yarn has a special fascination all its own. Everybody likes a puzzle. That being so, there is no question as to the popularity of the story next Monday, for it carries on with the amazing mystery which has fairly electrified Greyfriars. It is all about this strange fellow, Quentin Willesey, the chap who is one day a first-class athlete, ready for anything, and the next day a poor, wambly person minus grit, and a fumbler pure and simple at all forms of sport. The title is explanatory, but the title alone will not take you far. You want to read the yarn, and see how deftly Mr. Frank Richards contrives the mystification. The substitution is managed in brilliant fashion; you cannot call it impersonation, for we are dealing with a bearer of the honoured name of Willesey all the time. The only thing is that one twin has the invidious front name of Cuthbert, and the other is Quentin, a cognomen familiar enough to anybody who has read about the hefty wielders of battle-axes at the Crusades.

The plot of next week's story contains some dramatic surprises. Those delectable partners, Messrs. Cobb and

Hawke, appear in their old colours. Quentin is hard pressed by the precious pair, and the latter try to take a mean advantage of his position, and so make him pay for his brother's misdoings. Harry Wharton is the only junior at Greyfriars who has got hold of the truth. He would help Quentin if he could, but circumstances tie his hands.

When you read the next issue of the **MAGNET** you will be fairly swept off your feet by the right-down ingeniousness of the whole thing. Box and Cox are not in it. They were the celebrated characters who "changed over" with amusing consequences. But in "The Twin Tangle" there is real drama, and we have not seen the end yet by long chalks!

"THE CASE OF THE HAUNTED HOUSE!"

Do you know the good old town of Uxbridge, in Middlesex? If you do happen to have seen the old-world spot, with its many ancient houses, your interest in next week's Ferrers Locke story will be intensified, not that this personal experience is in the least necessary, for the coming treat is a gripper. It will appeal to you all, precisely as

the mystery surrounding the old Tudor mansion where things "happen" caught the attention of several people who figure most prominently in this roasting story of detection and intrigue. People who do not care have set down the amazing sounds which emanate from the ghostly stronghold as just so much imagination, but the estate agent of the property is deeply troubled. He knows it is not mere "moonshine." There is something particularly sinister behind the ugly reputation which the venerable domicile has earned for itself, and Ferrers Locke has a big task before him to unravel the threads. I want you to pay special attention to this yarn. It is unrivalled for its network of baffling detail. Make a note of it for Monday. You will not be disappointed, I give you my word.

OUR TRAVELLING SUPPLEMENT.

This is a positive prize, right up to all the demands of the season. As the fine weather comes along we all know what that "holiday feeling" is. It descends on young and old. People long to get away. Well, it is just here that the magnificent supplement to the **MAGNET**—the "Greyfriars Herald," to wit—comes in with some really up-to-date tips about travel. The esteemed editor has taken the bull by the horns. I am not referring to Johnny of that ilk, though all the big men of the Remove have had a chance in the coming supplement. It will be found replete with sparkling information about travelling—how to do it, when, and where, etc. It is peripatetic, piquant, and pleasantly pep-ful. To all who might, would, or should take a jaunt it will have a rare appeal.

Your Editor.

THE "MAGNET" LIMERICK COMPETITION!

NO ENTRANCE FEE REQUIRED.

First Prize - - - £1 1s. 0d.

and

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In order to win one of the above prizes all you have to do is to supply the last line of the verse given below, taking care to see that your effort bears some apt relation to the theme.

RULES GOVERNING THE "MAGNET" LIMERICK COMPETITION.

1.—The First Prize will be awarded to the sender of what, in the opinion of the Editor and a competent staff of adjudicators, is the best Last Line received.

2.—Consolation prizes of 2s. 6d. will be awarded from week to week to those competitors whose efforts show merit.

3.—The coupon below entitling you to enter for this competition must be either pasted on to a postcard, in which case your Last Line must be written IN INK directly beneath it, or enclosed separately in an envelope with your Last Line effort attached.

4.—Competitor's name and full postal address must accompany every effort sent in.

5.—Entries must reach us not later than July 5th, 1923, and **MUST NOT** be enclosed with entrance forms for any other competition. They must be addressed "MAGNET Limerick No. 12," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4.

6.—Your Editor undertakes that every effort sent in will receive careful consideration, but he will not hold himself responsible for coupons lost or mislaid, or delayed in the post. Proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of delivery.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 803.

7.—This competition is open to All Readers of the Companion Papers, but the result each week will appear only in the **MAGNET**.

8.—It is a distinct condition of entry that your Editor's decision must be accepted as binding in all matters. Acceptance of these rules is an express condition of entry.

Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

"MAGNET" LIMERICK COMPETITION

No. 12.

"I'll sing you a song of the sea!"
Tom Redwing exclaimed, in great glee.
But the chaps in the crowd
Said it wasn't allowed—

THIS EXAMPLE WILL HELP YOU:
And missiles then flew—so did he!

M.

OUT HERE



A Puzzle for the Remove!

Willesley, the new boy at Greyfriars, makes a bad beginning with Harry Wharton & Co., and is soon dubbed by the majority of the juniors a "worm." Suddenly this latest addition to the Remove comes out strong as a real sportsman—a change of character which leaves the Removites guessing. Willesley would appear to be the possessor of a dual character, but there is something far more deeper behind this remarkable change of front, and the explanation of it all is deftly given by popular

FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Bad Beginning!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Coming along to cricket, Harry, you old slacker?"

It was Bob Cherry who spoke thus, finding his chum, Harry Wharton, after a search which had extended to fully three minutes, and had seemed to the impatient Bob something like three hours in duration.

"Can't!"

"Oh, rats! Why not?"

"Got to go to the station to meet a new fellow. Quelchy's orders—at least, he didn't exactly order me to go. He asked me quite nicely and politely. But it comes to the same thing."

"It isn't all violets, being Form skipper," said Bob, with a momentary clouding of his cheery face—which was really no more than a reflection of the look on Harry's.

"It is not!" returned Wharton emphatically.

"You couldn't possibly see your way to get someone else to go—someone who doesn't matter so much, taking into consideration the fact that you are cricket captain, and—"

"Sorry, but I can't, Bob. There really are special reasons."

"Right-ho, if you say so, Harry! Anyone going with you?"

"Frank said he'd come."

Bob wavered.

"See here, I don't like missing net practice, but I'll come, too, old top. If you and Franky are to be away—and I know the Bounder isn't playing to-day—and— Oh, well, let's hunt up Johnny Bull and Inky, and we'll all go. It's a bigger honour than any blessed new fellow deserves, to be met at the station by the whole Famous Five, but there you are!"

"Glad to have you, Bob. Hi, Inky!"

Wharton had just caught sight of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur—"Inky," for short—crossing the quad.

"Did you call me, Wharton?"

A fat form rolled up—the form of William George Bunter.

"I didn't, Bunter."

"What did you expect Harry to call you, porpoise? Nothing complimentary, I should think."

"I'm not talking to you, Cherry. I disdain to talk to you!" said Bunter, elevating his fat little nose. "I thought you might perhaps like me to go with you to meet the new fellow, Wharton."

"Think again, and think something different! What do you know about the new fellow, anyway?"

"I know what I know," replied Bunter oracularly. "Perhaps more than you do, Wharton. I suppose you would be surprised if you heard that Quelchy had taken me into his confidence in the matter?"

"I shouldn't be surprised if it was from you I heard it, because I'm never surprised at any beastly crammer you tell; but—"

"Oh, really, Wharton! Perhaps you will believe me when I say that—g'way, Cherry; you've no right to hear this; it's confidential between me and Wharton—when I tell you that— Are you going away, Cherry?"

"The answer, Bunter, is in the negative, as they say in the House of Commons—where I wouldn't wonder if you found yourself some day, if you go on as you're doing."

Harry Wharton, and Inky, who had come up, grinned. They understood that Bob inferred a low opinion of the House of Commons. Bunter smirked. He inferred on Bob's part a high opinion of William George Bunter.

Bunter could be very obtuse at times.

"I shouldn't mind," he said. "Not that the salary would have any attraction for me. A measly four hundred quid! Why, my pater has made as much as that in a week on the Stock Exchange! But, as we're all pals here—"

"The palfulness is not of the fourfulness, but rather triangular, my esteemed and degraded Bunter," struck in Inky.

"What do you talk such rot for? How do you expect anyone to understand you, you silly black ass?" returned Bunter crossly.

"Inky means that Harry's his pal, and he's my pal, and Harry and I are pals, but that's where it stops short. Sec, bladder of lard?" said Bob politely.

Just then Frank Nugent and Johnny Bull came up together, and the Famous Five were complete—quite complete without Bunter, who would have liked to make of them, in his own weird fashion of spelling, the Selebrated Six.

"Scat, Bunter!" said Johnny, always blunt, but never disposed to waste any politeness he might have to spare upon the Owl of the Remove.

"Oh, really, Bull! I was explaining to Wharton that I ought really to go with him to meet the new fellow, seeing that Quelchy has told me— What are you looking at my feet for, Cherry?"

"I see they're both tied up all right, Harry," remarked Bob, contemplating thoughtfully the boots of Bunter.

"Yes, I see that, Bob," answered Harry, smiling.

"Bunter been listening outside doors again?" inquired Johnny Bull.

"I don't know that he has. I only guess it from something he's said," replied Bob. "I've noticed before this that when Bunter's taken into Quelchy's confidence, our respected Form master doesn't know anything about it. Also, after it's happened, Bunter's bootlaces are carefully tied up. It's ruin how they will come undone just as he's passing Quelchy's door if there happens to be anyone inside, isn't it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the other four.

"Very well, Cherry," said Bunter, with ineffable dignity; "I won't come to the station with you now. If you went down on your bended knees to me I wouldn't come! All I have to say is that a fellow with a feeling heart, like me, is far better suited to meeting a new chap who is in trouble than such fellows as you and Bull. I say nothing about Wharton and Nugent and Inky—"

"Just as well not!" put in Frank Nugent.

"Yah! I don't want to come with you, anyway. I only wanted to be kind to a new fellow. And I don't suppose I should have got anything out of it—not with all five of you there, I know that! If the new fellow's got a tuck-box or any cash worth speaking of, you'll farm it—positively farm it—that's what you'll do! The rest of us won't get a look-in until it's gone. Yah!"

And Billy Bunter rolled away, just in time to escape a kick that would certainly have registered a goal from Bob Cherry. What's this gas Bunter's giving us, though?"

"Yes, I'll come," said Johnny Bull.

"We may as well all go together."

"I'm afraid he must have been listening again," answered Wharton, knitting

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 803.

his brows. "He seems to have got hold of very much what Quelchy told me. The new fellow is in some sort of trouble. Quelchy didn't say just what it was—only that it wasn't his own fault, and he wanted me to be decent to him."

"Which you would be, anyhow, Harry," said Frank Nugent.

"Oh, well, I think he meant specially decent, you know! I shouldn't have done more than hint it to you fellows if that fat idiot hadn't let it out. He's getting too thick for anything. I only hope Quelchy will catch him at his Paul Pry games one of these days—he won't forget it in a hurry, I guess! Come along, or we sha'n't be at the station before the train's in."

They hurried off, and Bunter, from afar, watched them go, with a very lugubrious expression upon his fat face.

Bunter always looked upon a new fellow as a possible prey. That was not, of course, the way in which Bunter would have phrased it. He would have proclaimed himself actuated by the most laudable intentions. All he wanted was to be friendly with the newcomer, and show him the way to the tuckshop, and point out Mrs. Mible's choicest comestibles, and testify to his belief in their merits by practical demonstration—and perhaps borrow a trifling sum on account of a postal-order which was sure to turn up to-morrow.

As things were, Bunter feared that Willesey, the new boy, might be warned against him before he ever set eyes upon him. It would be just like the Famous Five to consider the feelings of a blessed new chap, instead of those of a fellow they had known for ages—a fellow who had practically been one of their fraternity in the past.

"I should think it must have been a death in the family, or something of that kind," said Johnny Bull, as the five passed out of the gates, unheeding the shouts of Dick Ogilvy and Bob Russell, who were crossing the quad in flannels at that moment, and were almost aghast at seeing the five going off thus in ordinary attire, plainly cutting cricket for that forenoon.

Harry shook his head.

"Quelchy wouldn't have said it wasn't his own fault if it had been that," he answered. "It would hardly have fitted."

"Nunno. You're right there, Harry. Well, just let's don't worry about it. If Quelchy says the kid's all serene, I reckon he is. I can't always see eye to eye with Quelchy, but I've some respect for the man's judgment."

They made their way at a good pace towards Friardale Station; but it was evident while they were still half a mile distant that they would not be in time. Already they could hear the rumbling of the train in the distance.

When they reached the platform the train had passed out, leaving the new fellow behind.

But he was not alone on the platform. Bolsover major, Skinner, and Stott were also there.

To those three the sight of a new boy was tempting. Bolsover had his decent points. He was a long way off being so complete a rotter as Harold Skinner or William Stott. But he had a tendency towards bullying, and his present companions were just the fellows to egg him on.

"Hang it all! They might give the fellow a chance," growled Johnny Bull.

Trouble had developed, it seemed, for Bolsover had the new boy by the scruff of the neck and appeared to be anxious

to get his face down low enough to rub it upon the gravel of the platform.

"Chuck that, Bolsover!" snapped Wharton.

"Hallo, here's nursie, with nursie's little friends!" sneered Skinner. "You're all right now, Whatsyourname! Our esteemed Form master has sent along the dear kind skipper of the Remove to see that no evil-minded persons molest you before you get to Greyfriars. Better drop it, Bolsy!"

"Dashed if I do!" snorted Bolsover, showing a heavy face red with fury. "This new cad cheeked me, and I'm going to make him taste dirt!"

"That's where you're wrong," remarked Bob Cherry coolly.

"Who's going to stop me?" howled the burly Removite.

"We are, if necessary," answered Harry Wharton. "But it oughtn't to be necessary. We're five to one, Bolsover, you know!"

"Five to three—or six to three, if you count this worm!" Bolsover returned defiantly. "It's longish odds; but I bet I can jolly well hurt him before you get him away from me!"

"Six to one!" said Johnny Bull significantly. "Are you such an ass that you count on Skinney and Stott to back you up?"

If Bolsover had counted upon that he saw now that he had been mistaken.

Skinner and Stott were fading away. They had no mind for taking a share in a tussle with the Famous Five.

They were within their rights, from their point of view. They had not touched Willesey. But Harry Wharton and the rest could guess that they had urged Bolsover to aggression, and they felt more contempt for the departing two than for the furious-faced bully who stood his ground defiantly.

Though Bolsover stood his ground, he released the new boy.

"All right!" he said sullenly. "I haven't a chance now! But you just wait till I get one. I'll show you!"

Then he lumbered off.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Was Mr. Quelch Mistaken?

"YOU'RE Willesey, I suppose?" said Harry Wharton, extending his hand.

"That's my name," replied the new boy ungraciously.

"We've come to meet you—I'm Wharton! This chap's Cherry; this Nugent; this Bull; and this Hurree Jamset Ram Singh—called Inky, for short."

"I didn't know you had niggers here. What sort of a school is Greyfriars, anyway, with black bounders and chaps like that hulking brute who piled in on me for nothing? As for coming to meet me, I think it would have been better if you'd come a bit earlier. And as for your blessed names, you can't expect me to remember them straight away."

The Famous Five looked at him—looked at him long and hard.

He had not taken Harry's hand, and none of the others offered theirs. In their minds was more than a little sympathy with Percy Bolsover. It was not likely that Bolsover major had been as polite as Wharton; but if the new fellow had only been half as rude to him as he had been to them they could quite understand the short-tempered Bolsover's wanting to deal with him drastically.

He was not at all an ill-looking fellow. About Wharton's height and build, he had auburn hair with a slight wave in it,

clear blue eyes, and a fresh complexion. Just now he wore a very disgruntled expression; but that was not altogether surprising, considering the manner in which he had been handled.

With an effort Wharton restrained his feelings sufficiently to speak civilly. The best the other four could do was to restrain theirs enough to keep silence. And for Inky, who particularly objected to being called a nigger, that was a good deal to do.

"I don't know that it matters much," Harry said. "You'll get to know everybody in time, of course! Are those your traps?"

"Yes; as I'm the only passenger who got out at this hole you might guess that, I should think."

"I'll get a porter to bring them up to the school," answered Harry, still keeping his temper.

"Have I got to walk up, then?"

"That's the idea! It's not so very far."

"Isn't there a taxi about?"

"No. If you wanted a taxi you should have got out at Courtfield. You might perhaps have got one there. But Courtfield isn't exactly crowded with taxis."

"Oh, well, if I must walk I must, though it's a beastly fag. I say, what time does the next down train get here?"

"Don't you mean the next up train?" inquired Bob.

The new fellow gave him a scornful glance.

"I mean what I say," he returned.

"Why should I want an up train?"

"It struck me that it might be quite a good notion for everybody concerned if you took the next train back," replied the candid Cherry.

"Oh, did it? Well, I'm not out to please you, and the sooner you get that into whatever little bit of brain you may happen to have the better it will be for you."

And, as no one showed any disposition to answer his question as to the next down train, he stalked over to the front of the booking-office and looked for himself.

"My only Aunt Sempronia Martha Jane!" gasped Bob. "This new chap fairly walks off with the giddy cake! We've had some queer specimens before, and some of them have turned out all serene after all, and some haven't; but I'll eat Johnny's fat head if this particular object is ever anything but a nasty job lot!"

"Quelchy said it—whatever it was—wasn't his fault," growled Johnny, overlooking Bob's polite reference to his cranium in his wrath against the new boy. "Now I reckon that's where Quelchy's wrong. Someone's been kidding him. Whatever it was—and I wouldn't put it too low—it might have been manslaughter or it might have been worse—I should say it jolly well was his fault!"

"That's what I think," agreed Frank.

"He's as unpleasant a bounder as I ever ran up against. Talk about gratitude! He never even said 'Thank you' to us for rescuing him from Bolsy's clutches."

"I don't believe he's ever learned the words!" Bob said.

"Shush! He's coming back. Give him a chance," pleaded Harry. "Bolsover and Skinner and Stott aren't exactly calculated to give any fellow a pleasant impression of Greyfriars, you know."

"But he's seen us," said Bob.

"The seefulness is of the obviousfulness. But the pleasefulness does not seem

A story that will grip you from first to last—

to be terrific," observed Inky, in his weird and wonderful English.

Willesley certainly showed no sign of being pleased. He was scowling as he turned from the time-table.

"Well, come on!" he said impatiently. "You don't want to stay here all day, I suppose?"

The six passed out of the station together. It was a fair question which of the other five most utterly disliked the new fellow. But there was no question as to which of them best disguised his feelings.

"Let's see—your name's Quentin Willesley, isn't it?" asked Wharton.

"No; I mean yes, of course. But what does the christian name matter? Are you fellows such kids that you use each other's christian names? I hate all that Tom, Dick, and Harry business."

"You needn't worry! It will be some time before anyone wants to use yours," said Johnny Bull dryly. "I should say that the better you get known the less you'll get called 'Quentin.' I could think of lots of other names—all nastier—that would fit you better."

"Fancy yourself clever, don't you? I say, Wharton, are there many brutes like that chap you called Bolsover, at Greyfriars?"

"Oh, Bolsover's not altogether a bad sort. You must have said something to annoy him, Willesley."

"I only made a remark about his face. He came swanking up to me as if he owned the giddy neighbourhood, with those two other apes chortling behind him, and said, 'Hallo, redhead! Are you the new kid?'"

"And what did you say to that?" asked Frank Nugent.

"I said, 'Hallo, Hippo-face! Are you one of the old kids?'"

"Your hair is red, anyway," Johnny Bull said.

"And Bolsover's face is like the biggest hippo at the Zoo. If he's to be allowed to say what he likes, why can't I say what I like?"

"That's not it," replied Harry. "You're a new chap, you know, and, anyway— Oh, can't you see it for yourself? Haven't you ever been to school before? There may be some excuse for you if you haven't, but if you have you must surely know that a fellow has to stand a bit of chaff without getting on his ear."

"Besides, you called Inky a nigger when he hadn't said a blessed word to you!" growled Johnny.

"Well, he is a nigger, isn't he?" retorted Willesley, without the least regard for Inky's feelings.

"And you're a redhead, aren't you, hang you?" snapped Johnny. "If I were in the shoes of Inky—who is really an Indian prince, not a nigger at all—I'd jolly well say what I thought about you!"

"It is hardly of the worthwhilefulness, my esteemed Johnny," said the Nabob of Bhanipur quietly. "I will only remarkfully mention that, though for red hair I have the admirfulness, and though I find no great faultfulness with the countenance of the worthy and degraded Willesley, his manners give me the sickfulness."

"If I couldn't talk English any better than you I'd go home to the cannibal islands!" Willesley snorted.

Inky did not answer him. He and Johnny Bull went on ahead. Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent dropped behind. Harry Wharton was left alone with the new fellow, and Harry had no relish for his task.

But he honestly tried to make the best of things. He could not fit the bounding new fellow into the mental picture conjured up by what Mr. Quelch had told him. He had expected to see a boy rather weighed down by trouble, perhaps not responding fully to friendly advances, because of the weight on his mind, but at least civil.

The reality was as unlike this as anything could be. Vernon-Smith, when he first came to Greyfriars and earned for himself the name of the Bounder, had certainly not been more objectionable than Willesley was.

"If you can take a bit of advice—" Harry began.

"I don't see why I should," broke in Willesley. "I've been at school before, and I know jolly well that if a fellow will let himself be sat upon he's going to get sat upon, and that's all about it. So when anyone starts being cheeky to me I give him back as good as I get—see?"

Harry almost gave it up as a bad job.

If it had been only that. But it was very far, indeed, from being only that. Putting aside the matter of Bolsover major, Harry resented the wanton insult to his chum Inky, who had gone to the station with the best intentions towards the newcomer.

"Well, all I can say is that it's to be hoped you're pretty handy with your fists, for you're going to need them at Greyfriars!" Wharton said.

"I dare say I can fight as well as the next chap, but I'm not keen on it. Even

if you win you get hurt, and what's the use of that?"

"Play cricket?"

"When I have to—not else."

"What's your game—footer?"

"Oh, my word! Silliest mugs' game on earth!"

"But he's a nailer at marbles, and you can't beat him at hopscotch!" came Bob Cherry's voice from the rear.

Harry gave it up finally and completely. They did not speak another word during the rest of the walk, and, Greyfriars once reached, Wharton took his charge to Mr. Quelch's study, and left him there joyfully.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Willesley Finds a Pal I

WHAT passed between the Form master and the new boy Harry never knew, of course. The interview must have been quite a short one, for inside ten minutes Willesley was in the quad, his hands in his trousers-pockets, his shoulders slouched, his whole aspect that of a fellow who is at odds with himself and the world in general.

The quad was almost deserted, for most of the fellows were still on the playing-fields, whence their voices came to the ears of the Famous Five, who were unanimous in feeling that they had wasted time, that might have been put in at hard practice, on a most unprofitable object.



"Grooo! Atishoo! Groo!" spluttered Cecil Temple. "Who's been fakin' with my glass?" Squiff winked at those near him. "Disgustin', I call it. Those Upper Fourth fellows are really the outside edge in bad manners." (See Chapter 4.)

—"The Twin Tangle I"—next week's magnificent treat!

But there was one Removeite in the quad. Billy Bunter came across from the window of the tuckshop to Willesley.

Bunter was determined to be friendly, and Bunter in that frame of mind could not easily be insulted.

"Hallo!" he said, extending a podgy and unclean hand. "You're Willesley, I know. My name's Bunter."

"You look like it," said the morose new boy.

"He, he, he! I've noticed myself how names seem to fit the people they belong to sometimes," replied Bunter ingratiatingly. "Come far this morning, Willesley?"

"I don't know that it's any business of yours, but I've come from town, if you must know."

"I didn't ask out of mere curiosity. I hope I'm above that sort of thing," said Bunter loftily. "I merely thought that you might be a bit peckish, and intended to give you a friendly hint that the dinners here aren't all they might be. The quality's poor, and the quantity isn't what one would expect."

Willesley eyed him up and down with a hard stare that might have made a less obtuse fellow yearn to slay him.

But Billy Bunter, on the make, had a hide proof against anything of that kind.

"You don't look as if you did too badly," remarked Willesley.

"He, he! I flatter myself that I have a well-developed figure," answered Bunter. "But that's because I don't depend on the school rations. You see, Willesley, old chap, my pater's on the Stock Exchange, and he makes heaps of tin. I get an allowance that would open your eyes if you saw it."

Willesley's stare was no longer so hard. He even condescended to smile upon Bunter, though doing so seemed to hurt his face.

"Look at Skinner! There's a proof of what I've been saying," went on the Owl of the Remove. "Skinney's always hard up, and, in consequence, he's always hungry. He eats all he gets in Hall. He'll scoff another chap's tommy if he has half a chance. I often give him mine. That's the sort of chap I am, Willesley—open-hearted and free-handed. And, of course, I really don't need inferior grub after I'm full up with Mrs. Mimble's good stuff."

Willesley's respect seemed on the upward grade.

"It's jolly decent of you, Punter!" he murmured.

"Bunter, not Punter. Look at Wharton again! There's another skinny specimen. The times I've taken that

fellow into the tuckshop and stood treat to him out of sheer charity—well, you might not believe it if I told you. Come along and have something with me, Willesley! I like the look of you, old top, and I'm sure we're going to be pals."

"Well, I don't mind if I do," said Willesley. "You're the first fellow here who's been civil to me, anyway. I'll do as much for you another time."

Bunter hoped he would. But, anyway, he was going to do as much this time, though he might not realise it, for the only coin in Bunter's pockets was a bad halfpenny; and when two fellows went in together and ate Mrs. Mimble's delicacies she saw to it that if one could not pay the other should.

Willesley, smiling, though the smile still seemed an effort to him, thrust his right arm inside Bunter's left, and moved towards the tuckshop, with the Owl rolling by his side.

From the window of Study No. 1 in the Remove passage, Johnny Bull saw them go, and called to his comrades. All five were there.

"That's all right, Johnny," said Bob Cherry. "If ever a chap came to Greyfriars that I'd hand over to Bunter's tender mercies without turning a hair, this Willesley is the one. They're just two pigs together."

"But it isn't the decent thing," protested Harry Wharton, knitting his brows. "At best, Bunter's sponging on the new fellow; at worst, he's swindling him. I think I'll go down and stop his little game."

"You won't!" snorted Johnny Bull. "We'll jolly well all sit on you before we let you do that! Leave them to it. That's the thing to do."

Harry gave it up. After all, it was no use to think at this late day of keeping Bunter from wallowing deeper in the mire of greed and infantile sharp practice. And Willesley seemed so very sure that he could look after himself that it would be waste of energy to look after him.

In the tuckshop, whence Mrs. Mimble was absent for the moment, Bunter turned upon Willesley with a large and generous smile. It creased the fat face that was already red with anticipation of the gorge to come. It seemed to run round right to the back of the fat neck.

"Help yourself, old fellow!" said Bunter, waving his hand in a fine, generous gesture. "Tuck in! Don't spare it! I'm standing this treat, and I want you to enjoy yourself. I'm not particularly peckish; but I can toy with

the grub just to keep you in countenance, as they say."

"What do you recommend?" asked Willesley, just as Mrs. Mimble came bustling in.

The worthy dame, than whom none knew better the chronic impecuniosity of William George Bunter, saw that he had come in with a stranger, and naturally assumed that the stranger was paying.

New boys usually had money, and it was no new thing in the experience of Mrs. Mimble to find them wasting some of it upon Bunter. She did not regard the fat fellow's tactics with approval; but it was not her business, and, after all, a new fellow had to find Bunter out, and the sooner he did so the better.

"Rabbit-pie!" answered the Owl, smacking his lips. "Got any nice and hot, Mrs. Mimble?"

"Yes, Master Bunter. There's a batch just out of the oven."

"That's the ticket! Mrs. Mimble's rabbit-pies, Willesley, old top, are what the classics call non plus ulster. You can't beat them! Let's have two each, Mrs. Mimble! I hope you've been cooking tarts, too!"

"I have, Master Bunter. I've done a whole lot of cooking this morning, having been nearly cleaned out yesterday."

Bunter smacked his lips again. "I do like hot pastry, don't you, Willesley?" he said.

It appeared that Willesley did.

Though there was no one else at Greyfriars who could have stayed the pace with William George Bunter in a gorging competition—not even his minor, Sammy of the Second Form—there were others who had aptitude in the matter of putting away provender. Bob Cherry, for instance, had a big, healthy appetite, and Harold Skinner had a big, unhealthy one.

But neither the cheery Bob nor the sneering Skinner would have stood any chance in competition with this new fellow.

He astonished even Bunter.

He did not outdistance Bunter. That would have been too much to expect of anyone merely human. A boa-constrictor might have done it. But a boa-constrictor with any prudence and any knowledge of the capacities of these two would have hesitated to pit himself against them in conjunction.

They began with rabbit-pies, and Mrs. Mimble's rabbit-pies were not only savoury, but also substantial. Rabbits were cheap in the Greyfriars neighbourhood, and some people would have considered one of those sixpenny rabbit-pies the best part of a meal.

Bunter and Willesley had three each. The only difference thus far was that Bunter had drunk two lemonades, while the new fellow had barely touched his glass of ginger-pop.

They got on to raspberry-tarts, varying them with apricot. They must have had nearly a dozen each when Willesley asked Mrs. Mimble whether she had no gooseberry. This sweet jam, he said, rather cloyed.

Mrs. Mimble had no gooseberry. That jam was not much in demand at Greyfriars, where few fellows could afford to eat tarts till they reached the cloyed stage. But she had some strawberry, and, though Willesley mumbled uncomplimentary things, he and Bunter had two or three each of those.

They tackled cream-puffs next. Bunter was blowing and perspiring hard. But if Willesley imagined that

RESULT OF

"Magnet" Limerick Competition (No. 6).

In this competition the first prize of £1 1s. for the best line sent in has been awarded to:—

WILLIAM CLARK, 39, Head Street, Beith, Ayrshire, whose line

was:
Proved that "Tuck Shops" and Cricket don't mate.

Three consolation prizes of 2s. 6d. each for the next best have been awarded to the following:

GEORGE SPENCER, "Raby," 51, Knollys Road, Streatham, S.W.

WILFRED ACWORTH, 8, Crieff Road, Wandsworth, S.W. 18.

HENRY R. SAUNDERS, 5, Boulogne Cottages, East Peckham, Paddock Wood.

Have you "tried your luck" in our Limerick Competition?

those signs indicated his nearing the end of his tether, Willesley was mistaken. Bunter had a fourth lemonade, and suggested sausage-rolls.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Loses a Pal!

BY this time the tuckshop had filled up. Thirty or forty fellows of the Remove and Upper Fourth were there, with a sprinkling of fags and a few Fifth-Formers. The Sixth did not patronise Mrs. Mimble at times when the place was likely to be crowded.

Peter Todd was present, and Bunter sedulously avoided Peter's searching glances. Bunter knew that Toddy would know that this was a wangle of some sort.

Squiff, Delarey, and Tom Brown had come in together. Cecil Reginald Temple was present, with Dabney and Fry. Russell and Ogilvy, Hazeldene and Bulstrode, Micky Desmond and Morgan, Kipps and Wibley, were all there, and all watching with interest.

For the most part they were in flannels, thirsty rather than hungry, drinking lemon-squash or ginger-pop, and perhaps taking a tart or two, or a few biscuits with it, by no means fearful that so slight a snack would spoil their dinners.

"Faith, Bunter's found his match at last!" said Micky Desmond.

"It's early yet to say that!" chuckled Squiff. "They can't have started before about five past twelve. Give them until four o'clock, and you may be able to guess the winner. If Bunter isn't under the table by that time, he'll have swollen till he's all over it. But, my word, that new chap's a knock-out!"

"Disgustin', I call it!" said the lordly Temple, elevating his classic nose. "You Remove kids really are the atrocious limit for greediness."

Squiff's reply to that was to shake a well-filled pepper-pot over the lemon-squash of the lordly Temple, while that important personage was looking his contempt of Bunter and Willesley.

It was not with contempt that some of those present looked at the industrious pair, however. Sammy Bunter sidled up to his major.

"I say, Billy—" he began.

"G'way!" rumbled Bunter major, his mouth full of sausage-roll.

"Groo! Atishoo! Groo! Who's been fakin' with my glass?"

Cecil Reginald spluttered angrily. Squiff winked at those near him, and said:

"Disgustin', I call it! Those Upper Fourth fellows are really the outside edge in bad manners. Temple, old sport, don't be ill in here; go away!"

"Well, but, Billy—"

"Hook it!" snorted Bunter major.

"Your minor, eh?" said Willesley. "Thought it must be—same piggy face—same piggy eyes. But don't be mean with the kid. Tuck in, young Bunter!"

"That's right, Sammy. You tuck in!" said William George, reflecting that, after all, since the new fellow would have to pay the piper, it was but fair to allow him to call the tune.

Sammy did not need to be told twice. Sammy tucked in. Some of Sammy's Second Form pals watched him with yearning eyes.

"I believe you put pepper in my glass, Field!" said Temple hotly.

"I've often noticed that you're rather a credulous chap, Temple,"



Temple tweaked the new boy's arm—harder than he had really intended to do. Willesley let out a yell that was heard in every Form-room near. Suddenly Mr. Quelch appeared. "Temple! What are you doing to the new junior?" (See Chapter 5.)

replied Squiff coolly. "Did you see me put any pepper in his glass, Piet?"

"I did not," answered Delarey, with complete truth, for he had not chanced to be looking when the thing was done.

"There you are! Hallo, another competitor for the Great Grub Stakes! Weight for age, eh? Go it, Samivel! But I don't think I'll back you this race. A promising two-year-old is all very well, but he can't hope to stay the course with older competitors!"

Sammy grinned. Sammy did not mind whether he could stay the course or not; did not, indeed, know what Squiff was talking about, and did not care. Sammy was busy.

"Are you attendin' to me, Field?" snorted Temple.

"Not particularly, old bean. Attend to Temple, Browney, will you? I'm watching the contest. Take him out, away from the disgustin' Remove fellows, and give him a nice glass of cold water to clear his little throat. If it is pepper he's swallowed—I don't say it is, and I don't say it isn't—it's liable to make him cough and splutter, and that sort of thing really isn't quite nice in company."

Temple, in no mood to attempt hostilities, went out, coughing and spluttering, amidst a general roar of laughter, in which even his chums joined.

At that moment the first dinner-bell rang, and a general exodus began.

Sammy Bunter looked wistfully at the counter.

"I say, Billy," he whispered, "need we go in to dinner? It's compulsory, I suppose, but after all, we'd only get

lines for not being there, and it would be worth it."

"Of course we must go in to dinner, you young idiot!" retorted William George. "Do you think I want to injure my system by missing my proper grub?"

Willesley shot a queer glance at him. The new fellow had a big appetite, and was greedy. He had eaten as much as Bunter. But he did not feel at that moment that dinner had the slightest attraction for him.

Quite otherwise, indeed. What would it be? Roast beef, perhaps, or it might be boiled mutton, with lots of fat, and plenty of potatoes and turnips—ugh! The very thought of boiled mutton made Willesley shudder.

Gatty and Myers, with backward glances, faded out, last of the throng. Sammy helped himself to two raspberry-tarts and two apricot, on the principle of making hay while the sun shone. His fat young face was jammy and greasy, but in his small eyes was the light of a great happiness.

His major gave him a warning kick under the table, and then began to fumble in his pockets.

"Where's my wallet?" he muttered. "I must have left it in No. 7. You don't happen to have a quid or two on you, do you, Sammy?"

"Not to-day, Bfily," replied Bunter minor, stretching out a hand as podgy as his brother's and even less clean towards the tarts again.

"What's become of that fiver the pater sent you yesterday, you young duffer?"

The Editor: "Any complaints?" The readers: "NO!"

"I don't carry fivers about when I'm playing cricket!" answered Sammy, cramming his mouth full and winking at his major.

"Oh, really! It's a beastly nuisance, Willesley, but I'm afraid I shall have to ask you to lend me enough to pay the bill. Only until to-morrow, you know. I shall be getting a post—I mean, a biggish cheque then."

DON'T MISS NEXT MONDAY'S SENSATIONAL DETECTIVE STORY—

"Why till to-morrow? I thought you said you'd left it in No. 7? That's your study, I suppose?"

There was a distinct gleam of suspicion in the eyes of Willesley.

Bunter did not like it at all. It hurt him to find the new fellow so lacking in faith.

"I suddenly remembered that I spent it all—that is, I mean, I lent it to a fellow who was badly in need of it," he said. "I may never get it back, but I sha'n't care. That's me all over—too generous for my own good."

Willesley was not credulous enough to believe that. He suddenly saw Bunter as what he was—a fat fraud. And, looking at Sammy, who sat grinning at his major's cleverness, he realised that there were at least two fat frauds in the Bunter family.

But they would not find it so easy to do him down! He would show them!

"Well, you can have it booked up to you," he said sullenly.

"Oh, really! My dear chap, I thought you and I were going to be pals! If I even suggest that to Mrs. Mimble there will be a beastly row!"

"I reckon she knows you too well—eh?"

"Not at all! Nothing of the sort! If there is one fellow at Greyfriars whom Mrs. Mimble would trust, I am that fellow! But it's against the rules of the school, and she has orders to report anyone who tries to get tommy on tick."

Mrs. Mimble came to the counter again at that moment, and cast towards Bunter a glance that, to say the least of it, was not exactly overflowing with trustfulness. And Willesley saw it. He knew that he had been done brown. But he meant to turn the tables later. He would have his money back, or in some other way he would make Bunter give value for it.

He swaggered to the counter.

"I'm settling," he said. "How much?"

Mrs. Mimble hurried with the addition, for she knew that the second bell for dinner would be going in a minute or two.

Very little change was left out of a pound note when she had taken what was due.

"Come along, or we shall be late for dinner, Willesley!" said Bunter cheerily.

"I don't want any dinner," replied the new fellow morosely.

"That's no odds. You've got to go in, you know."

Sammy had already ambled off. Now

Bunter started to run, his fat little legs going like clockwork.

And Willesley ran, too. He did not like it. He did not care about running at any time, and just then it made him feel quite ill.

He left the food on his plate untouched, not feeling that he knew any of the lean kine well enough yet to offer it in supplement of their rations—not, indeed, feeling that he had the least desire to do anyone that or any other good turn. The two sentiments uppermost in him were physical discomfort in the region covered by the waistcoat and rage against the Owl of the Remove.

But Bunter was quite unconscious of the storm which raged within his dear pal—so soon adopted, so early lost. Bunter ploughed his way through the food supplied to him as though he had not crossed Mrs. Mimble's threshold that day.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Like and Unlike!

SOME fellow-Removite whom Willesley did not know by name—it was Hazeldene—asked him civilly enough if he knew where the Form-room was.

Willesley answered, not at all civilly, that he supposed he would not have any difficulty in finding it when the time came, as he had eyes in his head to see where others were going. Hazeldene

"THE CASE OF THE HAUNTED HOUSE!"

turned on his heel, with a snort of contempt, and told half a dozen fellows within the next five minutes that the new chap was a rank outsider. Wherein Hazeldene, though he really had not a great deal to go upon, was quite right.

When the bell for classes rang there did not happen to be a single Removite known to Willesley in sight. But he saw Temple, with Dabney and Fry, and he followed them, remembering that he had seen them in the tuckshop, and too uneasy internally to be capable of thinking clearly enough to realise that the fact proved nothing.

The three chanced to be the last of the Upper Fourth to file in. Mr. Capper, the Form master, was already at his rostrum, in rather a snappish temper, and he frowned at the trio for nearly being late. He could not well say anything to them, for it was no worse than very nearly.

Then his gaze fell upon Willesley, and he glared at the intruder.

"Who are you, boy?" he rapped out.

"I—I think I must have come to the wrong room," mumbled Willesley.

"What's that? Speak up!"

"I think I've got into the wrong room."

This was not Mr. Quelch, and Willesley could not see Bunter or Wharton or Inky or Bob Cherry. He had a sense of injury. Willesley often had that sense of injury when he had made a mistake or been guilty of a misdemeanour. He was one of those who cannot believe that what happens is their own fault.

"Say 'sir' when you address me!" thundered Mr. Capper.

Seeing no occasion to address the master further, Willesley remained obstinately mute.

"Temple, will you have the goodness to conduct this stray lamb to the fold to which it belongs?" said Mr. Capper sarcastically.

"Certainly, sir!" replied Cecil Reginald, who rather prided himself on keeping on good terms with his Form master.

"Beast!" muttered Willesley, who hated sarcasm.

Temple heard him, but said nothing till they were in the passage.

"Who's a beast?" he snapped then.

"I didn't say you were. I meant that rotten master of yours!"

"Turn round!" ordered Temple.

Willesley obeyed before he had time to think what he was doing. The elegant boot of Cecil Reginald made forcible impact with the trousers of Willesley.

"Ow! You're a beast, too!" snarled the new boy.

"Say that again—if you dare!"

Willesley did not think it judicious to say it again.

But his silence failed to satisfy Temple.

"Say, 'Mr. Capper is a gentleman and Temple is a gentleman, and I am a low and greedy fag, with no manners!'" commanded the captain of the Upper Fourth.

Willesley shut his mouth stubbornly.

Temple was not a bully. But he loved "bossing" people, and he had taken an acute dislike to Willesley.

He seized the younger fellow's right arm and twisted it hard—harder than he had really meant to do, possibly.

Willesley let out a yell that was heard in every Form-room near.

A door opened suddenly and Mr. Quelch appeared. Cecil Reginald, flushing with shame and anger, dropped Willesley's arm as though it were a hot coal.

"What were you doing, Temple?" snapped Mr. Quelch, frowning portentously.

"Er—this new boy came into our Form-room, sir, and Mr. Capper asked me to take him where he belonged. I rather fancy he's Lower Fourth, sir."

"I asked you what you were doing to him, Temple!"

"Oh, doing to him, sir? I see! He was—er—cheeky, sir, and I—"

"I quite understand, Temple! I have not hitherto regarded you as a bully, but I fear that you are no better than that!"

—A WINNER FROM BEGINNING TO END!

I shall report your conduct to Mr. Capper!"

"Very well, sir."

Temple was too proud to attempt justification. He would not even tell his own Form master that he had kicked the sulky kid for calling him—Mr. Capper—a beast. He would take what might come to him. But he would not forget why it had come.

What happens to Quentin Willesley?—

The sympathies of those in the Remove Form-room who had heard and who knew Willesley were entirely with Temple. But their sympathy would not help him much.

He stalked back. Willesley, meekly though sulkily, followed Mr. Quelch in, and sat down at the desk brusquely indicated to him as his.

But he could not give his mind to his work. It happened that he was rather above the average standard of the Remove in the subjects dealt with, and he answered from memory the few questions put to him. But all the time his mind was busy with other things.

He was thinking of the afternoon train and of someone it might bring, and he had begun to wonder whether in what he had done he had acted for the best—that is to say, for his own benefit, which was all that ever concerned him.

It was a tremendous relief to him when the afternoon's work was over—and yet not wholly a relief, for now he had something else to face. He found himself dreading what was to come. But that was partly because he could not make up his mind yet as to whether he wanted to stay where he was.

He had been rather afraid that his movements after classes might be interfered with.

But no one took any notice at all of him—not even Bunter.

And he did not quite like that. It suited him, and yet he did not like it. He had a large sense of his own importance, and to be ignored thus was galling.

He sauntered up to the gates. Gosling stood outside his lodge, and Willesley scowled at the porter. Very likely he did not know that he was scowling, for when Gosling returned the compliment he felt aggrieved.

"Nice sort we git 'ere these days, I don't think!" muttered Gosling.

If he had known all about this particular junior he would have felt more than ever justified in that expression of opinion. But if he had known as much as that he would have been aware that Willesley had no right to be at Greyfriars!

Beyond the gates, the new fellow quickened his steps. He went towards Friardale, looking nervously around him from time to time.

On the loneliest stretch of the road he saw what he had expected to see. Coming towards him was a boy, who looked so exactly like him that they could hardly have been distinguished from one another, even when standing side by side.

With hair of precisely the same shade of auburn, they had features which matched in every detail. They were of the same height within so small a fraction of an inch as did not matter. Their figures were similar, and their actual weights tallied within a pound.

There was one difference, but it was a difference that no one who did not know them fairly well could have perceived.

It was in expression. On the face of the Willesley who came now from Greyfriars sat gloom and discontent. This fellow was at odds with the world because it would not accept him at his own valuation.

The other face, though clouded now, was naturally a bright and cheery face. The fellow to whom it belonged did not worry much about what others thought of him. He thought well of others, as long as they would let him. He took life cheerily and philosophically, and had never even started to look upon himself

as a very unselfish person, though he was that. But the end of unselfishness is usually in full sight when anyone begins to pride himself on the possession of it.

"I thought you'd come!" said the fellow who had been Bunter's pal for a brief space, meeting his double.

"You jolly well might! That was a nasty trick you played me, Cuth."

"Well, I didn't see what else to do. Why should I put up with staying at that dull hole with old Nurse Robbins, while you came along here?"

"My word! Why should I put up with it while you came, I'd like to know? Not that it's such a dull hole, really, and old nurse is one of the best. You've no right here, Cuthbert—you know that. They wouldn't have you, if they knew. But you saw a chance of squeezing in under my name, and—"

"Shut you up in your bed-room and went off in your place, eh?" struck in Cuthbert Willesley, with a sour grin. "Rather a brainy trick, wasn't it, Quen? Old nurse didn't think too well of you for not wanting to go and see me off. No, that's not right. She didn't think too well of me for not wanting to see you off—because I was you and you were me—see, Quen?"

"I'd have shouted the giddy house down, only I knew there would be a row, and she'd have reported you to Mr. Scrutton. I didn't dream at first what you were after—thought you only meant to make me miss my train—and it didn't seem to me to matter a fat lot

whether I caught that one or the next. So I lay low. But when I got properly fed up, I shinned down by the rain-pipe. Then I found out from old nurse that you'd gone off."

"And gave me away to her, I suppose, you rotter?" said Cuthbert Willesley bitterly.

"What do you take me for? I didn't do anything of the kind. If you get back by the next train, she may nag you a bit for staying out so long; but that will be the worst of it."

"She wouldn't nag you," said Cuthbert sulkily.

"Might not. I'm more civil to the old girl than you are. I like her, and you don't. That makes a bit of difference."

"You'd like anybody, almost. Chaps like you get all the best of things. There's hardly anybody I like. I don't think there's anybody at all. No, there isn't. I hate everybody!"

And Cuthbert Willesley looked as if he meant what he said.

"You don't give people a chance," replied Quentin.

In every word he spoke to his brother there was a certain queer tolerance, as though he had made up his mind long ago that nothing but the worst could be hoped for from Cuthbert, but that, Cuthbert being what he was, one had to make the best of him.

And that pretty accurately sums up his feeling. He could be a rare good pal; but he and Cuthbert had never been pals. The bond that united them was



Coming towards Cuthbert Willesley was a boy who looked so exactly like him that they could hardly have been distinguished from one another. "I thought you'd come," said Cuthbert, sulkily. (See Chapter 5.)

—You'll find the answer in next Monday's MAGNET!

far apart from that tie, seeming more than mere ordinary brotherhood, which commonly unites twins.

"Well, what are we going to do about it?" asked Cuthbert morosely.

He had usurped his brother's position at Greyfriars, well knowing that he would not have been received there if he had not gone under false pretences. But now he spoke as if he were the injured party.

"I should think you might make some suggestion about that," replied Quentin good-temperedly. "I can only see one way out. You go back to Hampstead, and I walk in at Greyfriars. You might give me a tip or two about the fellows you've met, so that I shouldn't seem such an utter fool. But if you feel too sulky to do that, you needn't. I shall just keep a close mouth till I find out the hang of things, that's all."

"You fancy I'm going to give way to you, then?" snarled Cuthbert.

"I don't see how you can expect that I shall cave in about this. Look here, Cuthbert, I don't want to rub it into you about why we had to leave Arundel House. But—well, everyone there knows, though it was only by a stroke of luck that it was made clear that I hadn't any hand in the games you played."

"Jolly rough luck for me!" Cuthbert grunted.

"I don't see that. A fellow ought to do a bit in the way of shouldering his own burden. I've never asked you to take punishment for what I've done, but I've taken it for you a good many times, and not made a noise about it. You can't deny that."

"It's easy for you. You're such a dashed saint, that you never kick over the traces. Besides, you promised the mater, when she lay dying, that you'd stand by me through thick and thin. You can't deny that, I reckon, if it comes to denying things."

Quentin Willesley's bright face suddenly saddened. But even now he kept his temper, extreme though the provocation was.

"Yes, I promised her," he said. "I've never forgotten that, Cuth, and I can tell you it's needed the thought of it to keep me going a good many times. But do you really think that she'd have expected me to give way to you in this? For I don't. And don't you call me a saint, for I don't like it! I'm no better than the next chap, but I don't do dirty things, though I've had the discredit for some that you've done."

Cuthbert laughed harshly.

"Oh, well," he said, "you go along to Greyfriars and see how you like it! Four or five hours of it has been enough for me."

Quentin might have guessed that without even a hint. For his twin never did anything from an unselfish motive. He was in a strong position now, for he knew that if he chose to hang on, Quentin would not give him away.

But he did not choose to hang on. He had sampled Greyfriars, and he did not like the place. So his brother might have a chance. Cuthbert had a grudging suspicion that Quentin might like it. But that could not be helped. One thing he knew—he had done nothing there to make smooth his brother's path.

He felt a sour satisfaction in the conviction that the Famous Five, Bolsover, and Temple were all disposed to dislike him, to say the least of it.

"I suppose you started in by making yourself disagreeable?" said Quentin, with a cheery smile. "Well, I've got that to wipe out. It may take some time. I'll say this for you, Cuth, you can pack as much disagreeableness into a little time as any fellow I know. But I guess I can manage to live it down. Will you condescend to give me a few pointers? I think you owe me that much, after going and queering the pitch for me in advance."

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Quentin's Turn!

"I'LL tell you one thing, to start with," replied Cuthbert. "You owe me nineteen and six."

"My word, that's fairly steep! How do you make it out?"

"The cash is owing to me by a fat fraud named Bunter. He's in my Form—our Form—your Form, I mean. He chummed up to me, and took me to the tuckshop. His beastly minor came along, and I had to pay the rotten bill!"

"More silly ass you, if he promised to stand treat! But that's your way, Cuth; you thought you were sponging on him, and only found out too late that he was sponging on you! All serene! Here's a quid note; you can give me sixpence change."

"I haven't got sixpence."

"Never mind, then. Take the note and get on with the washing!"

The wallet from which Quentin had extracted the note had several other "Fishers" within it. These two boys—without parents, brothers, or sisters,

left in charge of the family solicitor, as trustee of their mother's estate, and by him entrusted to their old nurse, who was very fond of Quentin and bore with Cuthbert for his sake and his mother's—had plenty of pocket-money.

"I say, you're going to dun that fat beast, aren't you?"

"I'll see about that."

"You jolly well won't! Unless you promise to, the deal's off!"

"Right-ho! I'll promise to dun him, then. But he doesn't sound to me like the sort of chap it would be much use dunning."

"He's a loathsome, podgy, tripe-hound, and I'd like to see him sizzling in hot oil! But he isn't the worst. There's a big brute named Bolsover—I reckon you'll have to fight him before you get a chance to settle down. You never did mind fighting. I don't like it."

"Right-ho again! Item one—to dun Bunter. Item two—to fight Bolsover. I shall have to take a bit of time to find out who Bunter and Bolsover are first, though. If I started in to dun Bolsover and fight Bunter it would be awkward. What else?"

"I don't know that there's much else. Oh, if you get half a chance to do a chap named Temple, in another Form—the Upper Fourth, I think—a bad turn, just you do it on my account."

"I'm not keen on doing any fellow a nasty turn," replied Quentin.

"No; you're too dashed soft!"

"Give me a tip or two about the geography of the place," Quentin said, ignoring that speech.

His brother proceeded to do so, though he did it all reluctantly.

"Thanks! What about your study? All the chaps have them, don't they? What's its number?"

"Don't know. It wasn't settled. The Form master—a stern beast named Squelch, or some such rotten name—said he'd let me know. Seems they are pretty full up. You needn't fancy you're going to have a study all to yourself!"

"I didn't fancy anything of the sort. Be rather funny if I have to pig in with Bolsover or Bunter, won't it?"

"Your notion of 'funny' isn't mine, by long odds!" growled Cuthbert.

"I've noticed that. What you think really funny is seeing someone hurt. I say, you're going back straight to Hampstead, aren't you? Old nurse will be worrying."

"A fat lot I care about that! But I suppose I shall have to go back. There doesn't seem anything else to do."

He spoke morosely. But, then, he generally spoke morosely, and it was only Quentin's soft heart that made him feel a trifle sorry for this fellow, who was never sorry for anyone but himself.

"Well, buck up, old top!" said the cheerful twin. "Give yourself a chance, and things ought to turn out all right. I suppose I'd better be going. So-long!"

He held out his hand.

"What's the good of that rot?" snarled Cuthbert. "You wouldn't care if I was dashed well dead."

"I should. But I'm hanged if I know why I should!" replied Quentin candidly.

And on that they parted.

"Looks as if 'e'd found a tenner!" muttered Gosling to himself, as the twin whom he had never seen before passed his lodge. "Went out with a face like a bloomin' thunderstorm, an' comes

MONEY FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

£10 in Cash Prizes!

Result of Cricket No. 1
Picture-Puzzle Competition!

In this competition one competitor sent in a correct solution of the pictures. The first prize of £5 has therefore been awarded to:

F. DIVER,

55, Rutland Road,
South Hackney, E. 9.

The second prize of £2 10s. has been divided among the following five competitors, whose solutions contained one error each:

M. A. Howard, 31, Blandford Road,
Beckenham, Kent.

F. Crickmere, 50, Loudon Street, Irvine,
Scotland.

Lizzie Dakin, 63, Albert Street, Burslem,
Staffs.

C. Nixon, 45, Rose Street, Hanley, Staffs.
Harry Morgan, 27, Victoria Road,
Folkestone.

Twenty-three competitors, with two errors each divide the ten prizes of 5s. each. The names and addresses of these prizewinners can be obtained on application at this office.

SOLUTION.

The Cricket season commences this week, and as the picture puzzle competitions on celebrated football teams have been so remarkably popular, your Editor is pleased to say that he has arranged to carry on with the County Cricket elevens. The same money prizes will be offered for correct solutions.

A fight—Willesley v. Temple! Who wins?

back shinin' like the roarey boarealis! Well, there ain't never no accoutin' for them himps of boys!"

As Quentin made his way across the quad a cricket ball, hurled by Bob Cherry, came straight at his face. He shot out his right hand, and caught it neatly.

"Sorry!" shouted Bob. "Didn't mean to do it, so don't look cross!"

"Didn't know I did," replied the new fellow. "I don't feel so."

And he threw the ball hard, sending it far over Bob's head, to drop into the hands of the Bouncer seventy yards or more away.

"I say, Willesley, I thought you never played cricket unless you had to?" remarked Harry Wharton, as the auburn-haired junior neared him.

"I guess I wasn't quite myself when I said that," answered Willesley, smiling.

"You mean, you weren't in a very good temper—eh? Well, you had had something to put you out, though you brought it on yourself, I consider."

"Very likely. By the way, I don't see why my chucking the ball proved that I liked cricket. I might have chucked it out of spite, you know."

Harry was puzzled. Never in his life had he seen so great a change in manner wrought in anyone within so short a time. He did not suspect the truth; but he wondered.

"A fellow doesn't throw like that unless he has been keen on cricket at some time or other," he said. "And that catch wasn't a fluke!"

"Well, I am keen, really," said Willesley, seeing a chance to wipe out from the mind of one fellow a wrong impression that Cuthbert had given of him—though it was a correct one of Cuthbert, who was a slacker at all games.

"Wharton!" shouted Ogilvy, from some distance away.

"Right-ho! I'm coming!" Harry shouted back.

That was one point scored. Willesley knew Wharton now, and it was plain that Wharton had talked with the wrong twin.

The right twin stood aside for a few minutes, watching the catching practice and making mental notes.

The name of the fellow who had shouted at him first was Cherry, though most of the others seemed to call him "Bob." He was popular, that was evident. He looked like the sort of fellow who would be, with his curly hair and his cheery face.

The broad-shouldered boy was Bull, and the dark-skinned one was called "Inky"—though that could hardly be his name. "Squiff," again—that must be a nickname. And "Rebel" was surely another. "Browney"—oh, Brown, of course—that was an easy one. And "Toddy" might be Todd—what a queer-looking individual Todd was, with his big nose and the lock of hair falling over his forehead! He had brains, Willesley fancied.

Bolsover and Bunter were not there, it appeared. But the new boy caught sight of a ponderously fat figure mooning about disconsolately at some distance from the rushing and shouting crowd, and he guessed that this must be "the fat fraud," whom his pleasant brother would have liked to see sizzling in hot oil.

When Quentin Willesley made a promise he always did his level best to keep it. He had undertaken to dun Bunter, and, though he would very much



Willesley's right shot out, with all the weight of a young, lithe body behind it, and Bolsover went down, sagging at the knees. "Well on the mark!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "He's down and out!" (See Chapter 7.)

have preferred to let the matter slide, he thought he might as well dun and be done with it. He had a shrewd suspicion that the fat fellow would not cash up, and he considered that he would have carried out his promise after a single request for the money and a single refusal or evasion.

Bunter saw him coming, and rolled in another direction. But Willesley felt his keenness augmented by the obvious desire to get out of the way which the stout sponger displayed.

"I say, Bunter!"

But Bunter seemed deaf. In another moment he would have made good his escape, for Willesley would have had no chance once they were indoors, knowing nothing of the interior of Greyfriars.

Bunter's luck was out, however. Sir Jimmy Vivian stopped him.

"That new chap's yelling to you, porpoise," he said.

"Let him yell," replied Bunter. "I'm not obliged to take any notice of a new ass unless I choose, I should hope!"

"From what I can make out," said the schoolboy baronet, "you took a bit of notice of him in the tuckshop before dinner. The yarn goes that you had the gorge of your life at his expense!"

"Nothing of the sort! You don't understand!" Bunter said, with as much dignity as was compatible with an evident desire to dodge past the agile Vivian, who had no notion of letting him pass. "As a matter of fact—"

"Now for a thumping whacker!" exclaimed Sir Jimmy.

And just then Willesley came up.

Sir Jimmy smiled at him, and he smiled back. Sir Jimmy's smile was a token of appreciation of the humour of the situation. Willesley's smile was a complete surprise to Sir Jimmy. For already the Remove had heard that the new fellow was a disagreeable rotter; and it seemed to Vivian very queer that a disagreeable rotter should have so very pleasant a smile.

"You wanted Bunter, I think?" said the youthful baronet.

"Quite right! I did—and I do. Thanks for stopping him! My name's Willesley."

"Mine's Vivian."

Sir Jimmy held out his right hand, and Bunter tried to dodge past him.

But Sir Jimmy also stuck out his left leg, and Bunter only just managed to avoid sprawling over it.

"Yaroooooh! What you doing, Vivian, you beast?" he howled.

Sir Jimmy, having grasped Willesley's hand firmly, let it go.

"Get on with the washing, old top!" he said amiably. "But don't expect too much. When Bunter's postal-order does turn up you're the last in the queue, you know."

Willesley grinned cheerily.

"You seem to know him," he said. "I say, Bunter, I hope it won't really inconvenience you if I ask for the cash I lent you. Nineteen-and-six was the amount."

"It won't inconvenience Bunter a scrap," said Sir Jimmy. "It's you that's going to suffer, Willesley, not Bunter."

Photographers! Look out for another camera article—coming shortly!

"Really, I'm surprised at you, Willesley!" said Bunter loftily. "You must surely remember that I told you I would cash up to-morrow, when I am expecting a large remittance. It's exceedingly bad manners on the part of a new fellow to—"

"It's no use, Willesley. You won't get it—not to-morrow or ever. Bunter never does, you know. At least, he does—he does down anyone who gives him half a chance. But he never, never never cashes up!"

"I'll see you to-morrow, then, Bunter," said Willesley, with as stern an aspect as he could assume.

"Come along with me now, and see your study," said Vivian. "I just met Quelch, and he told me that—for the present, anyway—you are to share Study No. 12 with Mauly and the Rebel and me. I don't think it will be too bad for you. Mauly's one of the best when awake, which isn't often; and when he's asleep he's all right. Delarey's a real good sort, and I'm not so bad when you know me."

"I'm jolly glad. I think it's luck for me," answered Willesley.

"I should think you would! Mauly's as rich as Croesus, and Vivian and Delarey have plenty of cash," said Bunter enviously.

"Well, what's biting you? You've had my cash. I don't want theirs, but I'm glad I've had better luck than to be put in the same study as you!" retorted the new boy.

Then he went off with Sir Jimmy, quite happy; and Bunter turned sorrowfully away, to stand in front of the tuckshop window and meditate on the hardness of the world and the emptiness of his interior.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Standing Up To Bolsover!

QUENTIN WILLESLEY felt that he had fallen on his feet at Greyfriars.

He had a capital tea with Lord Mauleverer, Sir Jimmy Vivian, and Piet Delarey, who all treated him as though they liked him. He certainly liked all of them, and congratulated himself on the luck which had prevented Cuthbert's being assigned to a study at once, with the natural and almost inevitable consequence of his setting the whole study by the ears before he had been there half an hour.

Quentin had no illusions about his brother. He knew Cuthbert to be greedy and spiteful, slack and cowardly, a liar and worse. Cuthbert had been a most unpleasant small boy, and he had not changed as he grew older.

But the older of the twins—it was only a matter of hours, but if both had come to Greyfriars in the ordinary way Quentin would have been Willesley major—had made a promise to his mother when she lay dying, and for the sake of that promise and her to whom it was given he had always done his best for Cuthbert, though it had been hard to go on doing it without gratitude or even acknowledgment from his twin.

Cheery at all times, he felt now unusually light-hearted—much as Sindbad the Sailor might have felt when suddenly relieved of the weight of the Old Man of the Sea. Just such an incubus to Quentin had Cuthbert been as was that objectionable old person to Sindbad.

After tea was over Mauly settled down upon the couch, remarking that

he felt tired, begad! With Delarey and Vivian, Willesley went down to the Common-room.

There was no crowd there. Half a dozen fellows were talking in the middle of the room. Two were playing chess in a corner. In front of the fire stood Bolsover major, legs astraddle; and with Bolsover were Stott, Skinner, Snoop, and Bunter.

"Here he is, Bolsover!" cried Bunter gleefully.

That was enough for Willesley. So this burly brute was Bolsover! He looked a tough handful.

But Quentin Willesley did not fear him. He could not recall ever having feared anyone, indeed.

"Hallo, you new bouncer!" said Bolsover.

"Hallo, you old—er—gentleman!" replied Willesley.

Bolsover stared. The biggest fellow in the Remove was a very long way off being the brightest fellow in it. But the same thing that had struck Gosling and Harry Wharton struck Bolsover now.

There was a marked difference in the new boy's manner. It was almost as though he had been doped with something that had given him cheerfulness and courage. Bolsover had thought Willesley a worm at the station—a cheeky worm, it is true. But this fellow had nothing about him that was wormlike.

"Really, that's pretty good cheek!" said Bunter. "I should lam him if I were you, Bolsover."

"Rats! It wasn't cheek—only a misstatement quite excusable in a stranger," Delarey said. "Willesley called Bolsover a gentleman—an old gentleman. We know that the substantive is as inaccurate as the adjective."

"Hear, hear!" cried Dick Rake, looking up from his game of chess with Morgan.

"Hear, hear, Piet!" chimed in Jimmy Vivian.

Bolsover scowled upon them darkly. His heavy face was flushed, and his hands clenched and unclenched themselves.

"That new cad," he growled, "cheeked me at the station. I didn't get a fair chance at him then, because Wharton and his crowd came along. But I've got one now, and I'm going to take it!"

"Good egg, Bolsy!" applauded Skinner.

Delarey and Vivian and Rake said nothing. It was all very well for Wharton to interpose between Bolsover and the new boy. As skipper of the Form, sent by Mr. Quelch to meet Willesley, Wharton had some right to do that.

They had none. They knew well, too, that Willesley—or any other newcomer—must find his level by showing his capacity—or want of capacity—to stand up for himself. And somehow Delarey and Vivian, at least, were confident of his ability to hold his own.

Not necessarily to lick Bolsover. That was no easy task. But victory was not the thing that mattered most. Let Willesley show that he did not funk punishment, and it would not be of any great importance if he were beaten. Win or lose, he would have no more trouble with Bolsover, who, with all his faults, had lots of respect for pluck.

"What do you mean to do to me?" Willesley asked, very quietly, but without the slightest sign of fear.

"Give you a dashed good hiding!" snorted Bolsover. "Rub your face on the floor; we'll see which of us looks most like a hippo after that! Then, if you beg my pardon for cheeking me at the station, we'll call it straight."

"That's the style, Bolsy!" chuckled Skinner.

"All that sounds as if it would hurt, rather," remarked the new boy.

"It's going to hurt—rather!" retorted Bolsover.

"It's not going to be done!" said Willesley.

"Do you mean that you'll fight?" roared Bolsover.

"Just that!"

"But you haven't a dashed chance against me, you know."

"Maybe not. I'd prefer fighting you and taking what came to me that way, to caving in and being manhandled by you!"

Bolsover looked at him with increased respect.

"You didn't seem to feel like that at the station," he said slowly.

"Didn't show a sign of fight then," Stott said.

"Never mind about the station. We're not there now. I'm ready when you are, Bolsover!"

"There's no time before prep," objected Vivian.

"Plenty of time! It won't take me twenty seconds to knock him out," growled Bolsover.

"There's twenty minutes," Delarey said, glancing at his watch. "That ought to do, if we hurry up."

"Let's go to the gym," Rake suggested. "Morgan, old top, cut off and tell some of the rest. They'll be sick if they miss this. I seem to remember Bolsy's biting off more than he could chew before, and if it's going to happen again Wharton and the rest of them would like to be there to see, you bet!"

Morgan and one or two more hurried off.

Bolsover, followed by his satellites, stalked out of the Common-room and along the passages that led out into the quad.

Willesley went along with Vivian, Delarey, Rake, and a few others.

"I'll second you, old chap!" said the schoolboy baronet eagerly.

"I was just going to offer to do that," Delarey said. "But it's no odds which of us take's it on. Ever done any boxing, Willesley?"

"A little," replied the new boy modestly. "More fighting than proper boxing, though."

"Sounds all right. Let me give you a tip or two. Bolsover's a strong brute: he can hit jolly hard, and he doesn't mind being hit back. But he's a long way off being clever, and he's clumsy on his feet. You don't look as if you would be. Keep him moving; dance in and hit him; get to distance again; and wait your chance for one to the point of the jaw or the mark, with all you know behind it."

"Thanks, Delarey!"

Within five minutes there was a crowd in the gym. The Famous Five came at once; Squiff and Tom Brown came, Russell and Ogilvy, Kipps and Wibley, Bulstrode and Hazeldene, Mark Linley and Hilary, the Bouncer and Redwing, Peter Todd and Dutton, Micky Desmond and Napoleon Dupont, and more behind them.

The sympathies of most were with the new fellow. He did not seem such a bad sort, after all; perhaps his early

(Continued on page 17.)

How do you like this story, chums? Your opinions, please!

THE GREYFRIARS HERALD

Supplement No. 131. HARRY WHARTON EDITOR Week ending June 30th, 1923.



HARRY WHARTON



FRANK NUGENT



BOB CHERRY



MARK LINLEY



HURREE SINGH



PETER TODD

GLORY FOR GREYFRIARS!

By H. VERNON-SMITH.

The sun was at its hottest when Frank Nugent lined up that afternoon with the rest of the competitors. These were few in number. There would have been a large entry but for the heat.

Dick Trumper, of the Courtfield County Council School, was one of the entrants. And he was, hot favourite for the event.

TOO MUCH FAG!

Verses Written during the Heat Wave.

By LORD MAULEVERER.

When summer suns are streaming down,
My spirits seem to droop and flag;
I can't play games with Bull and Brown—
It's too much fag!

Some chaps explore the rocky coast,
And nimbly leap from crag to crag;
Such energy I cannot boast—
It's too much fag!

Some fellows like to fight and scrap,
Their enemies they love to scrag;
But I am not a war-like chap—
It's too much fag!

Old Prout goes shooting every day,
Collecting bunnies in a bag;
The heat would make me faint away—
It's too much fag!

When seated in the Form-room hot,
The long hours seem to crawl and drag;
I cannot study, think, or swot—
It's too much fag!

Upon my word, I feel as limp
And helpless as a piece of rag;
Can't search for winkle, prawn, or shrimp—
It's too much fag!

I'd like to rest beneath the shade,
And read an interesting mag.
But even this stunt, I'm afraid,
Is too much fag!

The walkers toed the mark, and the starter fired a pistol. Then the grim struggle began.

The sun beat fiercely down upon the unprotected heads of the walkers. They were soon perspiring profusely, and it did not comfort them to know that the race would last nearly an hour. But they meant to stick it out.

Crowds of Greyfriars fellows ambled leisurely down to Friardale, in order to see the finish.

"Afraid poor old Franky will be right out of the picture," said Bob Cherry. "He hasn't the stamina of Dick Trumper. It was mad of him to compete—but, by Jove, it was plucky, too!"

"Yes, rather!"

Dick Trumper had taken the lead, and he looked like keeping it. Trumper was one of those fellows whose energy is never affected by heat. He covered the parched road at a giant stride, with Frank Nugent sticking doggedly to his heels.

In the rear, the rest of the walkers struggled along gamely, but they could make no impression on the two fellows in front. It looked like being Trumper's race, with Nugent a good second.

Frank's head was nearly splitting, and he regretted he had not brought his Panama hat, for protection from the sun. He wondered if Dick Trumper was ever going to slacken his speed. The fellow's energy seemed inexhaustible.

But even Trumper was affected at last by the sultry conditions. Half a mile from home, his stride became shorter, and his breathing more laboured.

Now was Nugent's chance, and he went all out. Physically, he was almost "whacked," but his dauntless spirit kept him going.

But although Nugent made a mighty spurt, he seemed to gain inches only, instead of yards. And he was still behind Trumper when they turned into the village street of Friardale.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked on with shining eyes. They could see what a great fight their chum was putting up.

"Good old Franky!"

"Stick it out, old man!"

It was now only a matter of twenty yards to the village pump.

Dick Trumper clung tenaciously to his lead; but Nugent, walking as he had never walked before, overhauled his rival foot by foot—drew level with him, passed him—and staggered blindly past the pump, the winner of one of the sternest struggles on record!

It was a great triumph for Greyfriars. Frank Nugent was hoisted on to the shoulders of his exuberant chums, and carried back to the school in triumph, a cheering throng of fellows bringing up the rear of the procession.

Nugent's great effort will always occupy a high place in the annals of Greyfriars sport.



"GREYFRIARS ought to put up a candidate," said Frank Nugent. "Too jolly hot for a five mile walking race!" grunted Bob Cherry, mopping his perspiring brow.

"The event is open to anybody under sixteen, and it would be a great honour if a Greyfriars fellow went in and won," said Harry Wharton. "But, as Bob says, it's too jolly hot. Fancy striding along for five miles in this awful heat. Phew! The mere thought makes me perspire!"

There was a big walking race due to take place that afternoon. It was to begin on the far side of Courtfield, and finish at the village pump in Friardale. The event was open to anybody under sixteen, and the Mayor of Courtfield was presenting a silver cup to the winner, who would hold the trophy for a year.

In the ordinary way, Greyfriars would have put up a candidate. But the country was sweltering in the throes of a heat wave, and to walk five miles at top speed would be a truly terrible ordeal.

"The fellows who go in for it will be roasted alive!" said Johnny Bull.

"The roastfulness will be terrific!" agreed Hurree Singh.

Frank Nugent looked very thoughtful. "I've a good mind to have a shot at it," he said. "Greyfriars ought to be represented. Yes, I'll enter, dashed if I don't!"

"This is madness, Franky!" gasped Wharton. "Why, you'll simply melt in this heat!"

But Nugent had made up his mind, and he was not to be turned from his purpose. He did not under-estimate the ordeal. He knew perfectly well what he was in for. He would have to endure "the heat and burden of the day," striding along for five miles under a scorching sun. But he did not falter.

"Tips for the Traveller!" Look out for the next supplement!

OUR ADVERTISEMENT COLUMN!



BELL-TENT FOR SALE!—Suitable for person wishing to sleep under canvas during a heat wave. I will be quite honest about the tent. It is not brand new. My grandfather camped out with it in Afghanistan over fifty years ago. The canvas is punctured in fifteen places, having been riddled with bullets on one occasion. The rain comes in by the bucketful on a wet night. But I am not asking a big price for my bell-tent. Will take half-a-crown.—Apply,

TOM BROWN, Study No. 2, Remove Passage.

MOSQUITO-NETTING FOR SALE!—A dozen square yards of this valuable material. Keeps away mosquitoes, dragon-flies, wasps, daddy-long-legs, and other pests. Going for a song—"Glorious Devon!" preferred, as I am rather keen on that.—Apply, CLAUDE HOSKINS, Shell Passage.

OVERCOME BY THE HEAT?—Then come and have one of my iced shampoos, and you will feel tons cooler! Shower-baths also provided, by means of soda-water siphons. If you feel like a parched pea in a frying-pan, come to FISHER T. FISH, and he will make you as cool as a cucumber.—The American Toilet Saloon, Study No. 14, Remove Passage.

TRY Mrs. Mimble's ice-cream, in five different flavours! Cooling, delicious, and refreshing. I am a past-mistress in the art of making ice-cream. Generations of Greyfriars boys have rolled my ices on their tongues with the keenest enjoyment. My tuckshop is patronised by Lord Mauleverer, the Nabob of Bhanipur, Sir James Vivian, and other Society swells. Also try my home-made lemonade, prepared from an old-fashioned and secret recipe!—MRS. JESSIE MIMBLE, the School Shop.

ELECTRIC COOLING-FAN FOR SALE!—Performs a hundred revolutions per second, and will keep your study beautifully cool. Owner, being hard up, will part with it at a great sacrifice. These fans are simply topping during a heat wave. I am only asking a paltry ten pounds for mine.—Apply, HAROLD SKINNER, Remove Form.

BATHING-HUT FOR HIRE, on Pegg Beach. Not a very spacious affair. You will have to crawl into it on all fours. No pegs for hanging clothes on, but you can dump them on the sandy floor. Small cracked mirror provided. Also hairbrush, and comb (minus twelve teeth). I am reluctantly parting with my hut, because one of the old fishermen informs me that it will blow down during the next big storm. Will let at two pence per week to a careful and respectable tenant.—Apply, PETER TODD, Study No. 7, Remove Passage.

N.B.—No use Billy Bunter applying. He would never be able to squeeze his ample form into the hut!

If you feel famished, come to the Fags' Soop Kitchen! Finest pea-soop, made from real peas pinched from the Head's garden! One penny per plate. If the Head finds out where we got our peas from we shall be in the soop, and there will be a frightful stew!—Proprietor of Soop Kitchen, DICKY NUGENT.

(Nothing doing—too hot, Dicky.—Ed.)

HOW TO KEEP COOL!

Some Useful Hints.
By TOM BROWN.

SEE that your attire is as scanty as possible. That duffer Alonzo Todd wears two flannel vests, a shirt, a cardigan, and a waistcoat, and then he wonders why he feels the heat so much! A cricket-shirt, a pair of flannel bags, and a pair of white shoes, should be all-sufficient during a heat wave. Personally, I should like to be allowed to go through the routine of the day in a bathing-costume!

The coolest place in all Greyfriars is the crypt. Take your books down there, and seat yourself on one of the cold stone slabs to do your prep. Much better than sweltering in a stuffy study!

Don't drink too much ginger-pop. It doesn't help you to keep cool. Besides, you might go off with a bang, if you imbibe too much of the stuff. When thirsty, come to Tom Brown's Soda Fountain, in Study No. 2, and sample my wonderful variety of iced drinks, at threepence a time!

Take no violent exercise during a heat wave. Get your minor (if any) to push you through the Close in a bath-chair. Then you'll become deliciously drowsy, and drop off to sleep and forget

the heat—till a bluebottle perches on your nose and wakes you up!

Cut down your supply of bedclothes to a minium. One thin counterpane is all the covering I have at night, during a heat wave. Billy Bunter sleeps with six blankets on his bed, and wonders why he feels roasted!

Fix up an electric fan in your Form-room. If funds won't run to this luxury, ask the fellow who sits next to you in class to fan you gently with an exercise-book!

Don't consume hefty joints of beef in the dining-hall, or you will feel the heat all the more. A diet of strawberries-and-cream, or stewed fruit and custard is ideal during a heat wave.

Bathe as much as you can, either in the sea, the River Sark, or the school fountain. But don't let the Head catch you swimming in the bowl of the latter!

Strange as it may seem, a cup of steaming hot tea is a fine thing to make you cool. At first, of course, you will perspire profusely, but a few moments after a delicious sense of ease and comfort will pervade your whole being.

A REQUEST!
WHEN you have finished with this copy of the MAGNET, kindly hand it to a NON-READER.

ODE TO A WASP!

By DICK PENFOLD.

I hate you with a fearful hate!
When I was having tea with Morgan,
You sniffed the jam upon my plate,
Then perched upon my nasal organ.
I smote at you with all my might;
Your buzzing made a fearful din.
You vanished from my nose all right,
Only to poise upon my chin!
"Be careful, Penfold! Swat the pest!"
Cried Morgan, with a sort of shriek.
And then you gave my chin a rest,
And calmly perched upon my cheek.
"Buck up and swat the beastly thing!"
Yelled Morgan, in great consternation.
"Or else the brute will start to sting,
And then you'll get an inflammation!"
I promptly warned you off my face;
One moment longer did you linger,
And then swooped downwards into space,
To land upon my little finger.
"That wasp will sting you, sure enough!"
Said Morgan, quivering with alarm.
"Look out! It's settled on your cuff,
And now is crawling up your arm!"
I shook you down into the grass;
I think you landed on your head.
"Now squash the brute, you silly ass,
Or it will sting you!" Morgan said.
Then up you rose into the air,
Buzzing with anger, I suppose.
Then came a shriek of wild despair—
You'd stung old Morgan on the nose!

"Ructions on the Railway!" by Peter Todd—next Monday!



BUNTER'S NIGHT ALOFT!

By DICK RUSSELL

"I SAY, you fellows—"
"Dry up, Bunter!"
"Go to sleep!"

"That's just what I've been trying to do for the last hour!" groaned the fat junior. "But it's such a beastly hot night. This dorm's like an oven. I'm sure I shall be roasted before the morning!"

"No such luck!" said Bob Cherry. "Only the good die young, Bunty. Now, stop chattering, for goodness' sake. You're not the only fellow who wants to get to sleep."

Billy Bunter mumbled and grumbled, and tossed restlessly on his bed.

It was indeed a sultry night. All day long the sun had blazed fiercely down; and when at last it sunk over the western hills no cool breeze sprung up to take its place. The night was hotter than the day had been, if possible.

Very few fellows in the Remove dormitory had managed to woo slumber successfully, although it was eleven o'clock. Lord Mauleverer's gentle snore could be heard; also the louder snore of Bolsover major. But the rest of the fellows were still awake.

Presently a bed creaked, and there was a heavy thud upon the floor. Billy Bunter was turning out.

"What are you up to, Bunter?" demanded Harry Wharton, peering through the gloom.

"I can't stick this any longer!" growled the fat junior. "I'm going to sleep out."

"Ass! Where can you sleep?"

Bunter's reply fairly staggered his schoolfellows.

"Up a tree," he said. "You know the old oak-tree, in the corner of the cricket field? Well, I shall rig up a hammock in the branches. There's an old hammock in the lumber-room that will answer the purpose nicely. It will be jolly cool, sleeping up in the oak-tree."

"You mad chump!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"You'll be breaking your neck if you start trying to emulate Tarzan of the Apes. Your ancestors might have been jolly good climbers, but then, they weren't nearly so fat as you. Get back into bed, and don't be a prize idiot!"

"It's not a bit of use trying to sleep here," said Bunter, getting into his

clothes. "I'd sooner sleep in a burning fiery furnace."

"I forbid you to go—" began Wharton. But Bob Cherry chipped in.

"Oh, let the silly duffer go ahead! He'll never be able to stick it up in the oak-tree. He'll be back in the dorm. within an hour."

So Billy Bunter was allowed to carry out his crazy scheme.

The Owl of the Remove stole quietly down the stairs and made his way to the lumber-room. Here he found the old hammock, which had rather a weather-beaten appearance. Nobody knew who had originally owned it. It had lain in the lumber-room for years.

"I'll just cart this hammock along to the oak-tree, and then I shall be comfortably fixed up for the night," muttered Bunter.

But he was an optimist. It sounded very romantic to talk of rigging up a hammock in an old oak-tree on a hot summer night. But it proved a very difficult task for a clumsy fellow like Bunter. He made his way across the darkened cricket field, in one corner of which the giant oak rose out of the ground like a grim sentinel of the night.

Now came the task of climbing the tree. And Bunter, as Harry Wharton had pointed out, was not exactly a Tarzan when it came to climbing.

It was an easy tree to climb, as oak-trees usually are. An agile fellow like Wun Lung would have been up it in a twinkling. But Bunter, handicapped by the hammock, found it a colossal task.

At last, however, the fat junior managed to heave himself up on to the lowest branch. After which, progress was less difficult.

Bunter ascended the tree until he was at a good height from the ground. Then he started to fix up the hammock. It was corded at each end, and Bunter tied

the cords securely to two branches. He had brought no blankets with him. He didn't think he would need them. He got into the hammock, after a breathless scramble, and then curled up like a plump dormouse.

But he did not sleep. Sleep was as much out of the question here as in the Remove dormitory.

Strange noises of the night came to Bunter's ears. Already he was half-repenting him of his scheme.

Tap, tap, tap!

Bunter sat up in his hammock with a start. What was causing that weird tapping?

The noise continued, close at hand, and Bunter's heart pounded against his ribs. And then he realised that it was merely a woodpecker at work.

Bunter laid down again. But the sinister hooting of an owl caused him to shudder. Bob Cherry would have said that there were two owls in the same tree! And one of the owls—the human one—was decidedly scared.

Ghostly whisperings were audible, too. Bunter might only have imagined he heard them. But, whether real or imaginary, they were anything but pleasant.

At last, his ear having grown accustomed to the mysterious noises, Billy Bunter composed himself to slumber.

The branches were creaking ominously. They had to support Billy Bunter's weight, which was considerable. Bunter had not selected the strongest branches by any means, and his position was perilous in the extreme.

Just as the school clock was booming the hour of midnight, a tall figure made its way across the gloomy cricket field. It was the figure of Mr. Quelch, who, finding sleep impossible, was taking a stroll.

The Remove master was within a few yards of the old oak when a terrible rending sound was heard, followed by a mighty crash.

A deluge of leaves and twigs came hurtling down; and then a plump human form alighted at the Form master's feet.

"Bunter!" shouted Mr. Quelch, rooted to the ground with astonishment.

"Ow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Bless my soul! Whatever were you doing in that tree?"

"Yow! Sleeping out, sir. Would you mind sending for the doctor? I—I believe my back's broken!"

It didn't turn out quite so badly as that. Beyond a severe bruising, Billy Bunter was unhurt. Mr. Quelch marched the unhappy junior away to his dormitory, and gave him a stern lecture en route on the folly of sleeping in the tree tops. He warned Bunter not to do it again—a warning which, needless to state, was superfluous. Bunter will stick to his bed in future, heat wave or no heat wave!

THE END.

"I say, you chaps—"

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Heat Waves of the Past!

By
GEORGE WINGATE

THE heat wave we are now experiencing is nothing compared with some of the heat waves of years ago.

I have been burrowing into the chronicles of the past—a favourite amusement of mine—and I find that in the summer of 1886 there was an appalling heat wave, which seemed to affect this particular corner of England more than any other place.

So terrific was the heat on this occasion that lessons took place under the trees on the cricket-field. And the headmaster of that period decreed that the whole school should sleep under canvas. Two of the masters were affected by sunstroke, but both happily recovered. So strong was the sun that it caused the cricket-pavilion to catch fire, and the conflagration was only extinguished with great difficulty. In those days fire-appliances were very crude and primitive affairs.

A writer in the "School Magazine" of that time gives the following description of the heat wave:

"Greyfriars has sweltered for seven days beneath a scorching sun. Most of the pupils are as brown as berries, and in many instances their faces are 'peeling.' All cricket matches have had to be suspended, for it is impossible to think of games during this fierce heat. The nights are as bad as the days, for

we get no cool breezes. The atmosphere is heavy and oppressive, and few of the boys are able to get to sleep, even under canvas. Only the lightest garments are being worn, and there are no lessons in the afternoon, when the sun seems to be at its hottest. Naturally, sea-bathing is the order of the day; but even this gives little relief from the heat, for the sea-water is lukewarm. It seems that Greyfriars School has been suddenly transplanted to the tropics. We shall all be devoutly thankful when this fierce heat wave is over."

There was yet another terrible heat wave in the summer of 1895. The proprietress of the tuckshop must have made a fortune, for the records show that she sold no less than five hundred bottles of mineral waters per day while the heat wave lasted. We can imagine what a rush there was on the tuckshop, and we can picture the frenzied cries of "Iced lemonade, please!"

This heat wave lasted for more than three weeks. Then came the cool, refreshing breezes for which everyone had pined.

It must have been a truly appalling heat wave that visited the country a few years later, for we are told that the River Sark was completely dried up. Many ponds and lakes in the Greyfriars district suffered a similar fate.

So fierce was the heat on this occasion that lessons had to be abandoned, and the fellows were allowed to take it easy in their studies. This would have suited Lord Mauleverer down to the ground!

We are now passing through another heat wave, but it cannot compare with its predecessors.

Bunter of the Remove declares he is melting away to nothing; but it won't hurt him to lose a pound or two in weight.

Cricket and other sports are proceeding as usual. All of us are looking bronzed and sunburnt, but we can find plenty of ways and means of keeping cool—in fact, the heat wave doesn't distress us a little bit.

Personally, I prefer a heat wave to a cold snap.

The worst spell of cold weather that Greyfriars experienced was in the winter of 1866, when the school awoke one morning to find that the water had frozen in the taps!

So intense was the cold on this occasion that special sleeping-bags, such as Arctic explorers use, were issued to all the fellows. Roaring fires in studies and dormitories helped to fight the extreme cold, and pots of boiling cocoa were served to all the boys before bed-time.

During this cold snap a daring member of the Remove Form caused a great sensation by appearing in the Form-room in a suit of furs, as if about to embark upon a Polar expedition! If this practical joker felt cold we may safely assume that his Form-master soon warmed him up!

If I had to choose between a cold snap and a heat wave, I should plump for the latter every time. I much prefer King Sol to Jack Frost.

I will now despatch my fag for a cooling draught of iced lemonade, and hurl defiance at the heat wave!

THERE is one great risk about publishing a Heat-Wave Number. We go to press several weeks in advance; and although, as I write, the sun is blazing down from a cloudless sky, the weather conditions may be quite Arctic when this number actually appears. You can never trust an English summer; and the Clerk of the Weather is a treacherous fellow.

At the moment, Greyfriars swelters under a scorching sun. The heat wave is here, with a vengeance! Everybody is affected by it—even the energetic Bob Cherry. As for Lord Mauleverer, the slacker of the Remove, he declares it's too much fag to breathe! It is too hot for cricket; the Form-room is stuffy beyond description; and in the Remove dormitory feverish youths toss to and fro in their beds, in a stifling atmosphere.

Some fellows revel in a heat wave. Others groan and grunt in the throes of it. Billy Bunter declares that he is melting away under our very eyes; but, as a matter of fact, the fat junior is as corpulent and substantial as ever.

All roads lead to the sea, during a heat wave. We love to float idly on our backs through the cool water. It is pleasant, too, to glide in a punt down the River Sark, and to rest in some shady backwater.

There is a vast amount of humour to

EDITORIAL! By Harry Wharton



be squeezed out of a heat wave. All sorts of amusing things happen when the thermometer rises to blood heat. So I have whipped my parched and drowsy sub-editors into action, and insisted upon a Special Heat-Wave Number. We have

been working in our shirtsleeves, with windows and doors wide open, and wet flannels round our craniums. And ever and anon we have paused to sample a ginger-beer and ice, or to suck lemonade through a straw. It's the very dickens of a job to keep cool, but we've managed it somehow.

I wonder if Billy Bunter, my rival editor, will now produce a Special Eat-Wave Number?

"Born Tired" (Southampton).—"Cricket is a fearful fag on a broiling hot day. I prefer to recline in the grass, and take forty winks in the sunshine."—You must be a blood relation of Lord Mauleverer!

Gladys T. (Dorking).—"Will Billy Bunter ever become champion of anything?"—He is already the Remove's champion gorgor. Back Billy in any eating contest, and you will be on a "dead cert." Bunter is also the Remove's champion fibber.

J. F. (Tonbridge).—"I've got to go to the dentist's on Wednesday."—Hope it won't be a long "drawn out" affair!

"Determined" (Dorking).—"I mean to capture a prize in the MAGNET Limerick competition."—That's the spirit. Go in and win!

Don't miss "A Traveller's Diary!" by Billy Bunter!

A PUZZLE for the REMOVE!

(Continued from Page 12.)

moroseness was due to the trouble about which Mr. Quelch had spoken in guarded words to Wharton.

He showed no signs of trouble now. His face was quite cheerful. As he took off his jacket, waistcoat, and shirt, leaving only a thin vest on the upper part of his body, they perceived that his muscular development was good, though nothing like Bolsover's.

Hazeldene, who was in one of his queer moods, and had taken more offence at Cuthbert Willesley's boorishness than was at all worth while, proffered his services as second to Bolsover, and was accepted readily, to the disgust of Skinner and Stott. Mark Linley was chosen as judge, Harry Wharton as referee, and Johnny Bull held the watch.

The preliminaries left really very scanty time before they must all hurry back to prep.

"There won't be time for more than three rounds at most," said Linley. "Three-minute rounds, one-minute intervals, you know, Willesley."

Bolsover had not troubled to take off anything but his jacket. He was confident that he had a soft thing on.

The first round undeceived him. During its course he did not manage to land a single telling punch upon Willesley; but the new fellow hit him hard several times, and showed himself the possessor of a left with a real punch in it.

Bolsover, blowing hard, divested himself of waistcoat and shirt, and went for Willesley like a tiger, when "Time!" was called.

Twice the new boy dodged blows that must have come near putting him down for the count had they connected. He was very quick on his feet, and his quickness did not end with that. A bit in the rough at present, he had all the makings of a clever boxer, and he was already a fighter, which some clever boxers are not.

Bolsover's guard, always defective, got too high. Willesley beat one, two, three, four on his ribs and chest without taking anything in return, and disengaged smartly.

The big fellow pressed in. And then, in a flash, the fight ended.

It might have been luck. Some who saw held it so, but not all. Anyway, there was something besides luck in it. Bob Cherry said afterwards that if he ever found himself up against Willesley he should look out for that right of his. The left had a punch in it, but the right had a punch and a half, according to Bob.

The right shot out, with all the weight of a young, lithe body behind it; and Bolsover went down, sagging at the knees as if he were going to fall forward, then, partially recovering, standing straight for a moment with a wild look in his eyes, and thereafter subsiding upon his back with a thud.

"On the mark!" said Bob.

Bolsover did not stir till some seconds after he had been counted out; and even when he did make a convulsive movement he was little more than half-conscious.

Willesley was among the three or four who helped him to his feet. He said nothing till Bolsover spoke.

"You've licked me!" said Bolsover. "Who'd have thought it? Shake hands,

will you? I don't bear you any malice. I'm sorry I took you for a funk!"

Willesley shook hands readily. "It's all right," he said. "May have been a fluke, I dare say. I wasn't keen on fighting, but you wanted to. Anyway, it's all over, and there's nothing to hinder us being good enough friends in future."

"I say, we shall have to hurry up, or there'll be a jolly row!" said Johnny Bull. "It wants just nineteen seconds to time for prep!"

There was an immediate exodus from the gym, and across the quad flitted a couple of score or so of figures—just in time not to be too late!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Cuthbert's Trick!

QUENTIN WILLESLEY found no difficulty in getting on with his prep in Study No. 12. Delarey and Vivian went at their work with obvious determination to get it done and done with; and Mauly snoozed over his, and bothered nobody.

Of the twins, Cuthbert was distinctly the cleverer. Without ever exerting himself greatly, he had always kept ahead of his brother in class. Quentin, good at games, taking life cheerily, was rather solid than smart in the matter of scholarship. What he knew he knew pretty thoroughly; but he could pick up a new stroke or learn a new break at cricket, think out some way of stopping a fast forward, or grasp the meaning of a rowing coach when he gave advice, with a readiness that he somehow could not bring to bear upon classics and mathematics.

The work the Remove had on hand that evening would have been simple to Cuthbert. It bristled with difficulties for Quentin. But he plugged away at it doggedly after the Afrikander and Vivian had finished, and while Mauly roused himself sufficiently to give some sort of sleepy attention to it.

"Stuck, Willesley?" asked Delarey, in friendly fashion.

"I am a bit. This equation won't come out."

Piet Delarey on one side, Jimmy Vivian on the other, came to his help.

The new boy felt happy. He had kept cheerful under difficulties at Arundel House, where his brother's escapades—a mild name for the things Cuthbert had done—had caused him continual trouble. Here, with good pals like these, with Cuthbert away at Hampstead—or soon to be there—the situation seemed to him almost like paradise.

Delarey chuckled.

"It never will come out if you mix it up that way," he said.

"When you change over from one side to the other, old top, you must remember that the signs change," remarked Sir Jimmy. "Plus becomes minus, and minus is plus."

"Oh, of course! I am an ass, really! But, I say, it's fair for you to help me, I suppose?"

"Fair enough. That's right, isn't it, Mauly?" said Delarey.

"Oh, begad, yaas! I'd let them do mine for me, Willesley, only they're such obstinate bounders, they won't! It wouldn't be any harm if I copied it out. I don't see what use algebra's goin' to be to me, begad! But—"

"It's all right, then. I don't want to copy it. I think I can see my way clear now. Thanks ever so much, you two!"

"Don't mench!" replied Delarey lightly.

He sauntered off to find Squiff and Tom Brown, and a minute or two later Sir Jimmy also left the study. Mauly yawned, and drew faces on his scribbling-paper. Willesley kept doggedly on.

A quarter of an hour passed. Then Sir Jimmy came back, looking rather serious.

"Trotter, the page, has just come in, Willesley," he said. "He had this for you. It was given to him by a chap he met on the road near the gates, who said it was no end urgent. I say, I don't want to interfere in what ain't my bizney, but it's breaking bounds to go out after call-over."

Willesley had taken the note, but had not yet opened it.

His heart was like lead within him. There was no name on the envelope—no writing at all on it—but he knew that the note came from Cuthbert.

"I—what makes you think that I should want to go out?" he asked, his voice faltering ever so little.

"Only that the fellow who gave Trotter the note for you asked questions about whether we chaps could get out at this time of night."

"What sort of fellow was he?"

"Trotter didn't see properly. It's pretty dark to-night, you know. But it wasn't a man—he was sure of that."

Jimmy Vivian did not add that Trotter had collected half-a-crown from him, saying that the stranger had told him Willesley would pay him for carrying the message. The new boy looked so troubled that he thought he had better leave that till next day.

"Suppose a fellow had urgent reasons for getting out?" inquired Willesley. To Jimmy Vivian it seemed that the question came reluctantly, as if forced from him by circumstances. "How could he manage it? The gates are locked, of course."

"You bet! The only way is over the wall, and that means a jolly old row if you're caught out!"

"I shouldn't go if I were you, Willesley," said Mauly kindly. "Won't it keep, begad? If a chap wants to see you let the chap wait till to-morrow an' come along at a decent time. If he was a decent chap, begad, he'd do that of his own accord; an' if he isn't, the less you have to do with him the better."

"There's some good, fatherly advice for you, old top!" said Sir Jimmy.

Then he went, for somehow it seemed to him that Willesley was bound to think out this matter and decide for himself. In some ways the schoolboy baronet, who had once been a street arab, was shrewd beyond his years.

Mauly said no more. He went on languidly with his equations while the new boy read the note, and kept silence even when Willesley got up, took his cap, and thrust it into his pocket.

Interference was never much in the line of Herbert, Lord Mauleverer. He had said all that he felt it good manners to say.

Quentin Willesley's heart was bitter within him as he made his way downstairs.

He had thought himself clear of the weight of Cuthbert. But he had reckoned too soon. Cuthbert never did keep a promise if it did not suit him to keep it.

Cuthbert had not gone back to Hampstead. He was hanging about round Greyfriars. He wanted to see his brother at once—demanded to see him, in fact. And Quentin felt that he had to go. How could he sleep with the

A smile, a laugh, a roar—the MAGNET supplements!

knowledge that the brother for whom he had promised always to do his best was wandering round like a lost dog, possibly unable to find lodgings for the night?

It was galling to Quentin's pride to sneak out as he did now. He was no saint, no prig; he would have shared a night expedition after tuck or for the sake of some practical joke readily enough.

But this was different. To be stealing out of the school which he had already come to like as if he were on some nefarious errand, with his heart in his mouth lest master or prefect should bar his way, reluctant to risk being seen even by his own Forn-fellows—it made him feel sick.

Luck was with him—if, indeed, it were luck that he should get out unobserved. What would not have been easy for a fellow who knew well every door and passage was accomplished by this fellow, who had sometimes to guess his way, as though he wore a fairy cloak of invisibility.

Again, in the quad, when he looked up at the high wall and saw no chance of scaling it, Fate seemed to make easy his way to—what?

Workmen had left a ladder. He stumbled against it. He did not know what any of the fellows inside could have told him—that the men would certainly hear about it to-morrow if anyone in authority saw the ladder before they arrived to resume their work. But he guessed that it was an unusual chance that served him.

He put the ladder against the wall, and mounted to the top, feeling that anyway he was bound to go through with this business, let the result be what it might.

Wondering how he was ever to get back, he dropped.

He landed on his feet, though with a nasty jar.

"Is that you, Quen?" came out of the darkness.

"It's me. I say, Cuth, you are a young cad, really! You promised me you'd go back to Hampstead!"

"You're a liar!" snarled Cuthbert. "I only said that I didn't see what else there was for me to do. Now I do see, so that alters things."

"What do you intend doing, then?"

"That's telling! You shall hear after a bit. But I wanted to know how you got on inside there, anyway. Like it?"

"Ripping place, that's what I call it! The fellows seem to me a jolly decent lot."

"Ah, you haven't run up against that brute Bolsover yet, I can see!"

"Not hard enough to hurt much," answered Quentin, grinning in the dark.

"He said something at the station about being afraid Squelch would put me in his study. Are you there?"

"No. Study No. 12 is my study. There was something said about it being only for a time. But I hope I sha'n't have to change out."

"Who are the chaps in it?"

"Vivian—he's Sir Jimmy Vivian, a baronet, or something of that sort; and Mauly—no, Lord Mauleverer—I believe it's the Earl Mauleverer by rights; and a South African fellow, named Delarey."

There was no trace of snobbery in Quentin Willesley's make-up. He had taken Mauly and Sir Jimmy at face value, without thinking that their titles mattered.

But Cuthbert was full of snobbery. To him the titles seemed to matter no

end. He was more keen than ever on the scheme that he had thought out.

"Dunned Bunter yet?" he asked.

"Yes. Didn't get anything, though. Vivian says it's no go. He never does cash up. He's always got a postal-order coming, but it never comes."

"Ugh! Swindling, fat beast!"

"What did you want to see me for, Cuth? It wasn't the decent thing to fetch me out like this, you know. I should get in no end of a blessed row if I was caught!"

"You're not going to get into any blessed row," replied the other twin, with some mysterious meaning, unfathomable to Quentin, in his words. "I'll explain directly. Come this way."

He took his brother by the arm and hurried him along the wall towards the gates.

"Look here, you know, I'm not going to put up with this!" protested Quentin.

"What do you mean by it?"

Then, as the lighted window of the porter's lodge gleamed through the iron scrollwork of the gates, he suddenly guessed.

"You rotter! You think you're going in, and that I'm soft enough to stay outside, do you? Not likely! You've been a handicap to me for these last three or four years; but you can't take everything."

"I can take this, and I'm jolly well going to! Remember what you promised the mater! I'm going to ring the bell and fetch that wooden-faced old porter chap out to let me in. If he'll take five bob to keep it dark he can have it; if he won't, he can report me. I shall say that I went out, not knowing the rule against it, and lost my way, and found the gates locked."

"You won't tell any such beastly lie; for I shall be there, and I—"

"Not you, Quen! If you do, the porter chap will see that there are two of us. He won't know which is which, and I don't see how anyone at Greyfriars is going to. I shall stick it out that I'm Quentin Willesley, and that you are my rotten brother, who was sacked from Arundel House. Then the porter will fetch the masters, or somebody. You can deny it, and tell your own tale; but mine will sound truest, for I shall say that you followed me here. Anyway, you won't get a fat lot of

change out of Greyfriars when the yarn's been told, even if they believe that you're the saint and I'm the sinner—see? And you promised the mater!"

Quentin's head fairly whirled. He had known his brother as one without conscience or scruple; but he had never suspected him of such baseness as this, or such craft. Perhaps the craft was the more surprising.

At that moment the sound of footsteps on the gravel of the quad came to the ears of them both. They drew aside together into the shadow of the wall, close to the small gate to which masters and prefects had keys.

One of those keys grated in the lock now. The gate opened, and a tall figure emerged.

Wingate, captain of Greyfriars, stood outside the gate for a moment before he relocked it, gazing up at the dark sky. Rain seemed likely, and Wingate, on his way down to the village, was wondering whether it might not be worth while to turn back for his rain-coat.

Cuthbert Willesley slipped behind him and through the gate!

Quentin all but yelled out. But he shut his mouth with such a snap that his teeth bit upon his tongue. He could not bear the explanations, the arguments, the disgrace for them both, which must follow if his brother and he were confronted and Cuthbert carried out his threat.

And Cuthbert would! It was not mere bluff. He was bad enough even for so rotten a trick as that.

Wingate made up his mind. He would chance it. He turned and locked the gate.

A dry sob shook the boy who heard the key grate again. With that sound hope seemed to him dead.

How beastly it was! Mauly and Sir Jimmy and Delarey—good fellows all, who had been ever so decent to him—what would they think of him in twenty-four hours' time?

Cuthbert would never behave decently for so long as that. If only Quentin could have believed that this meant a new start for his brother he would not have grudged him the chance so much, though his heart would have been sick for Greyfriars and his own chance there.

But there was no possibility of that. Cuthbert was a rotter through and through—a funk, a slacker, a swindler, a thief!

And Cuthbert was fumbling his way across the dark quad to the warmth and light of Greyfriars, while he, Quentin, was left outside—shut out—hopeless!

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Lying Down to Bunter!

CUTHBERT WILLESLEY did not know much about the interior of the School House at Greyfriars. But he managed to get in unnoticed, and to make his way to Study No. 12 on the Remove passage without mishap.

There he found Mauly snoozing, and he did not wake the somnolent school-boy peer. He took advantage of Mauly's slumbrous propensities to find out as much as he could about the study and the fellows who shared it.

He felt pleased. No. 12 suited him. It looked no end comfortable, and this slacker liked his little comforts.

He handled his brother's prep work, and sneered as he noticed the trouble

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which is an absolute "top-notch." It is absolutely packed with thrilling, gripping yarns, wonderful illustrations, and lots of fine helpful advice on "wireless." No boy should miss this week's "PLUCK" (on sale Tuesday, June 26th)—it's a real record number.

The Companion Papers make every day a sunny one!

Quentin had had with his quadratic equations. He added a line or two to some of the work, and he did it in a handwriting hardly distinguishable from Quentin's, even by an expert. Their likeness went even farther than the likeness between twins generally does. Except that Quentin spoke cheerily as a rule, while Cuthbert had a way of whining or growling, their voices were similar. They had never thought alike; but they wrote, spoke, and moved in much the same ways.

Sir Jimmy and Piet Delarey came in. Cuthbert nodded to them, but said nothing. The schoolboy baronet said nothing, either. He had told Delarey about the message for Willesley, and it was only the gloomy look on the new fellow's face which prevented one or the other of them from asking him how he had fared.

Cuthbert lay low. He went up to the dormitory when the others did, and got into the bed pointed out to him as his without speaking to anyone.

No remorse at the manner in which he had treated his long-suffering brother kept him awake. He might have worried if he had thought that Quentin would do anything to put matters straight. But Quentin had stood so much that Cuthbert imagined he could and would stand anything.

He pursued the same policy next morning, lying low, finding out all that he could, and doing nothing to arouse suspicion.

Morning classes came to an end, and, since it was Wednesday and a half-holiday, with cricket in the afternoon, the time between twelve and dinner was used by a good many of the Removites in expeditions out of gates.

Delarey and Vivian asked Willesley whether he would care to go down to the village with them. He refused rather churlishly, and as they joined Tom Brown, Squiff, and Bulstrode, the South African said:

"Can't make that fellow out a bit. He seemed no end decent yesterday—to-day he's as sour as can be!"

"He's got something on his mind," returned Squiff. "Bull told me that Quelchy told Wharton that the chap had been through it, rather, but that his troubles weren't his own fault. Leave him alone, Piet, and he'll come round all serene."

Sir Jimmy and Delarey glanced at one another significantly. They thought they knew that what had happened the night before—though they really did not know what had happened—was part of Willesley's mysterious trouble.

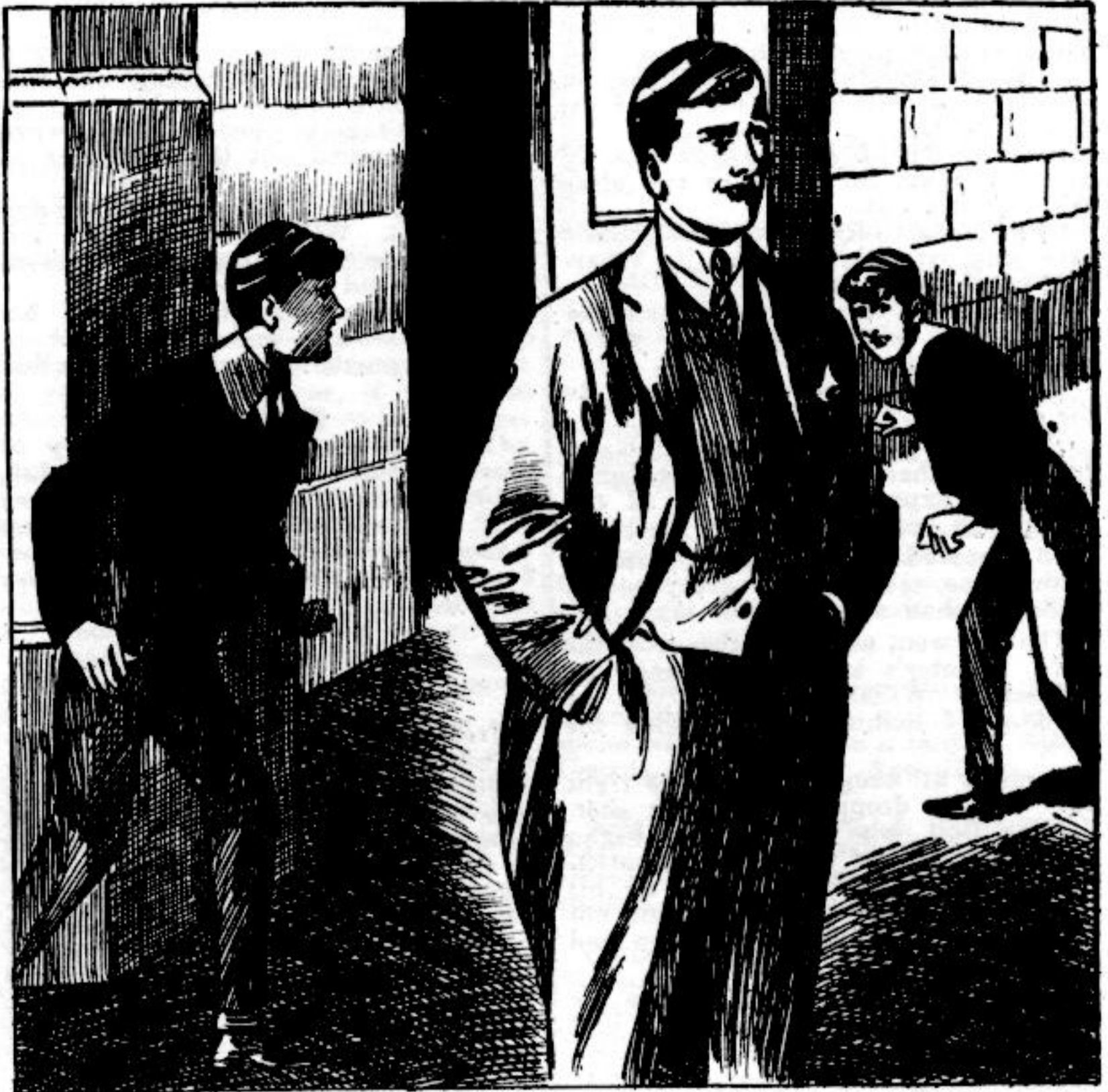
Then they forgot all about him. There was a fair of sorts at Friardale, and for the fair they made.

Bunter might have gone to the fair if he had had any money to spend there. But, as usual, Bunter was stony.

When a fellow is in that condition he does not like being dunned. The only worse time for being dunned, from Bunter's point of view, was when one had money, for then it might be difficult to dodge paying out some of it. But it was so seldom Bunter had any that this happened rarely.

Cuthbert Willesley was as keen on the main chance as Bunter—keener, maybe, for while Bunter had cash in his pocket he was not given to trouble himself about acquiring more. Cuthbert, with ten pounds in his wallet, would have gone to quite a deal of trouble to add ten shillings to it.

Thus it came about that Bunter, mooning aimlessly about the quad,



Wingate stood outside the gate for a moment, gazing up at the dark sky. Cuthbert Willesley slipped behind him and through the gate. Quentin all but yelled out. But he shut his mouth with such a snap that his teeth bit upon his tongue. (See Chapter 8.)

found a hand laid on his shoulder, and turned to see his creditor—his latest creditor, that is, for there were few fellows in the Remove to whom he did not owe something.

"What about that remittance?" asked Willesley unpleasantly.

"It hasn't come this morning. I'm expecting it by any post now," replied Bunter. "Really, Willesley, I don't consider that you ought to make all that fuss, considering."

"Considering what?" snapped the new fellow.

"Well, you know, as I'm your senior—I suppose I've been in the Form as long as anybody—it would have been much more decent if you had offered to stand treat to me, instead of—Well, I won't call it sponging, for I'm an open-handed chap, and—Wharrer doing? Stop that! Yaroooh! That hurts!"

Cuthbert Willesley, who had that streak of the bully in him that the coward often has, had somehow got the notion that Bunter was so essentially a non-combatant that nothing was to be apprehended from him, whatever might be done to him.

Goaded to fury by Bunter's burbling, he had twisted the fat junior's right arm, pulled it behind his back, and twisted it viciously. He was an expert at the trick, as the small boys at Arundel House had known to their cost.

If Willesley was goaded to fury, so was Bunter. He did not like fighting; but he was not wholly incapable of standing up for himself. He forgot.

that he had seen—as he believed—this fellow thrash the burly Bolsover. He forgot everything but the pain and the ignominy of being thus dealt with by a fellow who had not been twenty-four hours at Greyfriars.

He dragged his arm away, and smacked Willesley's face—hard.

The moment before they had been practically as much alone as if they were on a desert island. But the sound of that smack seemed to make the quad populous of a sudden.

The two were in a few seconds the centre of an interested throng. The Famous Five were all there, with a dozen others.

"What's the matter, porpoise?" inquired Peter Todd.

"Hit him again, Fatty!" grinned Skinner.

"I—I— Oh, see here, you know, I didn't mean anything! I'll apologise if you like, Bunter! I don't suppose it really hurt, but I'll apologise!" muttered Willesley, to everyone's astonishment.

But Bunter's blood was up. He forgot everything except his wrongs.

"I won't accept an apology!" he said valiantly. "I'm going to fight you!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Bunty on the warpath!"

"Don't be an idiot, Bunter! You haven't an earthly chance, and you must know it!" interposed Wharton.

Bunter wavered. Suddenly he remembered.

But he could not quite reconcile himself to backing down. He would put on

£10 in cash prizes! Enter for our simple cricket competition!

the gloves and stand up to this fellow. It would not be necessary to go on after Willesley had punched him once. No one would expect him to win, and he would get a little credit for his readiness to fight.

Besides, Willesley could not decently dun him again for a day or two after knocking him out.

"I'm going to fight him, and I don't care what you think about it, Wharton!" he said doggedly.

"I think you're an utter ass, and that you deserve what's coming to you!" snapped Wharton.

But he went along with the rest to the gym.

There had been long fights at Greyfriars, and there had been short fights. This was expected to be one of the shortest on record.

So it proved. But it did not turn out as everyone, even Bunter—everyone but Willesley—had expected.

The two went at one another from the call. Bunter's arms were going like mill-sails. Willesley seemed to be thinking of nothing but guarding his face.

Bunter's fist caught him on the right ear, and he dropped as though shot. Johnny Bull, who was referee, began to count. Most of those present anticipated that Willesley would be on his feet again by "three"; they could not understand how that random blow had felled him, indeed.

He did not get to his feet. He lay there as if helpless. As Johnny Bull told off the seconds the face of William George Bunter underwent a mighty change. At "one" it had been pallid

with anxiety; at "eight" it looked like the rising sun.

"Nine—out!"

Bunter had won! Bunter, who had only put on gloves to save his face, intending to take but one punch and cave in, had knocked out the conquerer of Bolsover.

So it seemed. But somehow no one believed it. Willesley could have got up and gone on fighting had he chosen. He simply did not choose.

It was a puzzle for Greyfriars. No one knew what to make of it at all.

But the puzzle was to be solved in due course.

THE END.

(There is another ripping story of Harry Wharton & Co. next Monday, entitled "The Twin Tangle!"—a yarn that delves further in the amazing mystery surrounding Willesley, the new boy in the Remove. Be sure you read it!)

A WARNING.

Frankly, I am proud of our Correspondence Column, for it performs a really fine service in bringing readers into touch. But, of course, the best things are apt to be misused. I say this in connection with a complaint I have just received from a reader at Leicester, who tells me that when he wrote to a correspondence club he was asked to pay fees. Now, it must be clearly understood that the correspondence feature in the MAGNET and "Popular" is not run on such lines. Let me strongly advise any reader who is asked for money to drop the correspondence at once.—ED.

A DOWNRIGHT CRITICISM!

A correspondent writes to me on the subject of Don Quixote of all things in the world. He says he saw some mention of the book in a paper, and his curiosity was excited. "I made it my business to get a copy of 'Don Quixote,'" he says, "and I tried to read it, but it bored me stiff." I am not altogether surprised. In the old days when Cervantes wrote his book, which is now a classic, it was the fashion for an author to stroll about amongst the questions of the day, and stop to chat about things in general. This was positively rotten for the thread of the narrative. Now as regards the old romance of Don Quixote of La Mancha, the grand old knight who wore a barber's basin for a helmet, having no other, and sallied forth to fight windmills and cross a lance with harmless country folk, it is a story you want to know, but it is not necessary to wade through the whole library of interpolated stories and fables with which the book is crammed. Stripped of its extras, the ancient story has a tremendous fascination. It has no end of humour in it, and you come to admire the shrewd common-sense of Don Quixote's body-servant, Sancho Panza.—ED.

GRAND NEW CRICKET COMPETITION!
BIG CASH PRIZES.

Solve the Simple Picture-puzzle, and send in your solution.

FIRST PRIZE £5. SECOND PRIZE £2 10s.
Ten Prizes of Five Shillings each.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

Here is a splendid Cricket competition which I am sure will interest you. On this page you will find a simple history of Nottingham Cricket Club in picture-puzzle form. What you are invited to do is to solve this picture, and when you have done so, write your solution on a sheet of paper. Then sign the coupon which appears below, pin it to your solution, and post it to "Nottingham" Competition, MAGNET Office, Gough House, Gough Square, E.C. 4, so as to reach that address not later than THURSDAY, July 5th, 1923.

The FIRST PRIZE of £5 will be awarded to the reader who submits a solution which is exactly the same as, or nearest to, the solution now in the possession of the Editor. In the event of ties the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. The Editor reserves the right to add together and divide the value of all, or any, of the prizes, but the full amount will be awarded. It is a distinct condition of entry that the decision of the Editor must be regarded as final. Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

This competition is run in conjunction with the "Boys' Friend," "Gem," and "Popular," and readers of those journals are invited to compete.

I enter "Nottingham" Competition, and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final.

Name

Address

M.

A WORD ABOUT CAMERAS!

(A chatty little article which will be of use to the amateur photographer.)

By **A DEALER.**

ALL sorts of people come to my shop to buy cameras—old men, young men, professionals, amateurs, ladies, people who know what they want and who don't, and others who baffle description.

And the customers I like the best are the boys.

As a rule a boy knows the sort of camera he wants, and if he doesn't he lets me tell him. And he usually knows how much he can spend, too.

Of course, there are exceptions. There's Billy Bunter, for example. I remember when he came to me and ordered a half-plate reflex with a telephoto lens. Of course, it would have been no use to him, and I knew him too well to trust him with a fifty-guinea instrument if it had; but if it had been Harry Wharton now—well, there would have been a temptation to sell the camera instead of recommending something much cheaper as being more appropriate. Very expensive cameras and lenses are really only fit for experts, and some of the best work I have seen has been done with fairly cheap cameras. It depends a lot on the man or boy behind the camera.

You know those little box cameras which I sell for twelve-and-six? You can take your friends and pets with those cameras very well. You only have to remember not to hold the camera nearer than six feet from the "victim." Lots of people get so close that the photograph is ruined by being out of focus, these cameras being built to get as much as possible between six feet and far distance in focus at once. But nearer than six feet they will not work properly unless a "magnifier" or supplementary lens is used with them. The same applies to dearer folding cameras, which are provided with a focusing scale. But don't try to work nearer than six feet even if you can afford supplementaries or a camera that will extend past the six-foot focusing mark. That is, unless you are working for a professional, doing copying or process work; then it's very different, of course.

Most people nowadays go in for film cameras. Years ago everybody used plates. If you buy a roll film camera you will be able to load your camera with sufficient ammunition to last for six, eight, ten, or twelve pictures. And you can load it up in daylight. You can also unload it when the spool is used up, and hand the spool to me for developing and printing. And you will never see the inside of a beastly dark-room. But if you prefer a plate camera, you will be able to tackle serious picture-making with the aid of the focusing screen on the back of the camera, and as we do not generally specialise in trade development of plates, you can enjoy yourself watching the results develop in the cellar or pantry at night. Don't bother with special shutters and other fakes to keep out the daylight.

Old King Sol will dodge you all right when you want to make an exposure and badly need him, but try to fasten him out of your best parlour—or, if you're at school, the prefect's study—while you get on with your developing, and you'll be glad to give it up. A little moonlight won't give much trouble or interfere with the red light from your lamp. And, though I like to sell "posh" lamps, I will tell you this—but don't pass it on—when I was a boy I used a tin box with a candle inside and a cover of "Answers" fastened over the open end. And, what's more, I have used the same gadget since, many a time.

But you will have a few spoils and accidents. Don't run away with the idea that photography is all jam and pickles. Just as you will fall off that new bike sooner or later, so you will come a cropper with your camera. But don't despair over a trifle. Come and ask me what's wrong. It pays me to tell you.

Most of the spoils I see are caused by photographers not giving sufficient exposure. It is not enough for the plate or film to just see the slickest glimpse of any old light. It must have at least a definite amount if you want any result. This amount, of course, varies with different cases, but I can tell you how to calculate it. Get a cheap calculator. If you buy the "Kodak Magazine," two-pence per month, you will find a chart telling you what exposure to give. The figures refer to Kodaks and Kodak film, but if you use any other camera, or plates, your dealer will tell you what alteration to make in the figures, if any is required.

Another source of trouble is shaking, through holding the camera in the hand when giving long exposures. Now I will tell you something. Although I have been in the business for more years than you can remember being on earth, I seldom or never use the camera in my hand. When ever possible I put it on a stand, or hold it down on a table, box, or wall. When I snap, I hold it against my nose—I use a direct finder for sighting, like a rifle. Don't hold a camera against your chest—the side of a lamp-post is better. But if you have a bulb and tube, or an antinous release fitted, you can take snaps of a fifth of a second, or less, without any rigid support.

And don't forget, whenever you are in doubt, ask me or whoever you buy your things from. It's our business to help you out and show you how to get the nice pictures. Not that I have any fear for your photographic luck. Boys are not easily upset in this or any other line, and I find that they get on very fast even when left to their own resources. So the best of luck, and when you buy a camera, or dig up your old one, may you never regret it.

Yours,

"THE DEALER."

CORRESPONDENCE EXCHANGE!

Stuart S. Gumbrell, 87, Richmond Road, Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere.

James Gorman, 19, Balmore Road, Possilpark, Glasgow, wishes to correspond with readers who are interested in the violin.

H. Carr, 20, St. George's Park Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, wishes to hear from readers willing to join a cycling club; ages 13-14. Southend district preferred.

D. Rowed, 6, Leighton Terrace, York Road, Exeter, Devon, wishes to correspond with a reader on a farm in either Canada, or Australia. Ages 15-16.

Miss Violet Rawson, 4, Hopkinson's Yard, off Lordsmill Street, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, wishes to correspond with readers.

Oscar Magnusson, Kotupna, via Nathalia, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with stamp collectors in England.

Kevin Quigley, Port Pirie, South Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere, interested in pigeons, and snaps.

P. Cowlard, 29, Brown's Road, Surbiton Hill, Surrey, wishes to correspond with readers interested in magic lanterns and foreign stamps.

Miss Lilius Baylis, 120, Beaufort Street, Perth, Western Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere; ages 15 upwards; interested in sports, photos, etc.; all letters answered.

Curly Clifton, Burns Street, Campsie, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia, wishes to correspond with readers interested in sport.

George P. Burgess, 13, Richmond Hill, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere; ages 15-17.

Clifford Hardy, 32, Corson Street, Great Lever, Bolton, Lancs., wants members for his new sports club; within fifteen miles of Bolton. Also, he requires partners in a sports' magazine; football, cricket, cycling, boxing, etc.

J. F. Richardson, 37, John Street, New Hindmarsh, Adelaide, South Australia, wishes to correspond with readers; ages 18 up; interested in stories, the Companion Papers, specially; photo-play-writing, and cornet playing.

Miss Marjorie Quigley, Port Pirie, South Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere; ages 12-13; interested in stamps.

Frank Lee, c.o. Singer Sewing Machine Company, Central Agency, Singapore, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere; ages 17 upwards; hobby—stamps and postcards.

Another top-notch story of Harry Wharton & Co. next week!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 803.



A Sensational Detective Story showing, yet again, Ferrers Locke's remarkable faculty for unravelling a mystery from a small clue, which officials in high authority have apparently regarded as worthless. Recounted in glowing style by —

OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Mysterious Bottle!

LONDON at nine o'clock in the morning on any weekday presents an animated spectacle. From north, south, east, and west thousands of City workers pour into the metropolis to their employment. And at nine o'clock one morning, at the end of June, as Ferrers Locke and his young assistant—Jack Drake—strode along past Westminster Abbey, the throng of pedestrians was unusually great.

It was a fine morning, giving promise of a hot day. The famous sleuth and the boy had been early astir. They had left Baker Street at eight o'clock, in response to an urgent summons from a well-known resident of Chelsea. It was supposed that a valuable brooch had been removed from the drawer of his dressing-table. It took Locke exactly five minutes to find the missing article attached to a lace collar hanging to a knob of the dressing-table mirror, where the owner had carelessly left it and forgotten it.

This simple case satisfactorily disposed of, the world-famous detective and Jack Drake set off to walk to Charing Cross Tube Station. The walk would give them an appetite for breakfast, and at Charing Cross they could get a train back to Baker Street.

Stopping opposite the Houses of Parliament, Locke purchased a morning paper. He glanced at the front page, and gave a chuckle. For in large type at the head of the first column was the heading:

"THIEF BREAKS INTO SCOTLAND YARD!"

Following was an account of a theft from the Lost Property Office, which is one of the many departments of the Yard.

"That's pretty rich!" laughed Locke, as he indicated the news item to Drake. "Poor old Scotland Yard—being roasted again by the Press! I expect our old friend, Inspector Pycroft, is mighty sick about it. Of course, it's no fault of the

police themselves, but the papers always manage to saddle 'em with some of the blame when the least thing goes wrong."

He put the newspaper in his pocket, and, with Drake at his side, walked towards Westminster Bridge, and turned to the left up the Embankment. As they approached Scotland Yard they saw a number of City folk pause and view the great building with amused smiles. Then they became aware of a familiar figure in uniform, chatting to a constable at the corner of a side street.

Ferrers Locke quickened his pace, and clapped the burly figure on the back.

"Hallo, Pycroft!" he cried cheerily. "Fine morning—eh?"

The inspector spun round on his heel, and looked at Locke and Drake glumly.

"A rotten morning, I call it!" he grunted. "You've seen the papers, I suppose?"

"Yes. According to the 'Morning Clarion' you've had the burglars in."

"It was nothing really," said Pycroft. "But, of course, the papers have made the most of it. They give me a pain. You should have heard some of the silly questions that passers-by have put to this constable, too. The public have a sort of notion that Scotland Yard is packed in every corner with policemen and 'tecs, like a hive is full of bees. They can't understand that the Lost Property Office isn't hedged round with a cordon of police."

"Well, they'll think it ought to be for a cert now," returned Locke, with a smile. "What exactly was stolen? The paper I read stated that it was only a brown handbag."

"That's true. The thief got through a skylight of the Lost Property Office and evidently searched especially for it. It was a queer kind of robbery. A handbag was found in a taxi last evening at Victoria Station, and brought here. It contained only one article, and that was of no value."

"What was that?"

"A bottle of medicine."

"My aunt!" chuckled Drake. "Perhaps, though, the thief had an attack of liver, and knew that the bag

contained a bottle of the only dope that was able to do him any good."

Inspector Pycroft frowned at Drake's levity.

"Why the dickens a fellow wanted to risk a term in the lock-up merely for a bottle of medicine I'm blessed if I can make out!" he said crossly. "It was a transparent sort of stuff, and the bottle was labelled, 'To be taken three times a day.' Nothing remarkable about the thing as far as anyone could see. I—"

He broke off suddenly, and his eyes grew wider. A man had just passed round the corner. He was carrying a small brown handbag.

"Excuse me!" said Pycroft hastily.

He hurried after the man and stopped him, and became engaged in earnest conversation. Then he beckoned to Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake. As the two approached they saw that the inspector's ruddy face was beaming with a triumphant smile.

"Eureka!" exclaimed Pycroft. "We've recovered the bag. That shows that Scotland Yard is pretty smart on the job. When the robbery was discovered this morning we immediately telephoned to the police all over London, and had the officials at all the railway-stations notified. This man is a porter from Liverpool Street Station, and he saw a fellow about to entrain with the stolen bag."

Locke took the bag in his hands, and indicated a small splash of blood on the side. Then he turned the bag over. As he did so, a small spot of the blood was transferred to the front of his own coat.

"H'm!" said Pycroft, as he took the bag back and examined the bloodstain. "It looks as though the thief injured himself."

"Well, is the bottle of medicine safe?" asked Locke in a concerned tone.

Pycroft opened the bag. The bottle containing the thick, transparent fluid was intact. There was nothing else in the bag. Having thus satisfied himself, the inspector led them all into the Lost Property Office to restore the article to one of the attendants. Evidently expecting some sort of reward, the porter explained his recovery of the bag in detail.

"I was a-wheelin' some luggage to

"The Case of the Haunted House!" is the title of—

No. 7 platform," he said. "Suddenly I saw a thin-faced bloke in a check suit carrying a brand-new travelling-rug over a brown bag. I accidentally like bumped into him. People is allus gettin' in the way o' us porters. Well, as I bumped him the travellin'-rug slipped, and I caught sight o' the initials on the bag. They was H. C."

"We asked the railway officials to keep an eye open for a brown bag marked with those initials," explained Pycroft to Ferrers Locke.

"Havin' been informed as a bag like that had been pinched from the Yard," went on the voluble porter, "I asked this 'ere thin bloke what he was a-doin' with it. O' course, I did it tactful like."

"Of course," agreed Pycroft.

"Yes, I give him a dig in the ribs and got a-hold o' the bag so's he couldn't push off. Then I beckoned to one o' our coppers. The thin bloke spotted the copper movin' towards us and got scared. He left the bag in my hand and beat it like as 'ow he'd only got 'alf a minute to catch his train."

"Then the man got away completely?" said the inspector, in a disappointed tone.

"Well, what about it?" said the porter. "I got the bag back for you, didn't I?"

He wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, and Pycroft gave him a ten-shilling note from his own pocket. Then the inspector tried to get the porter to give a detailed description of the thief. But the man could only say that the person from whom he had taken the handbag was thin-faced and wore a check suit. The only other piece of information that could be drawn from him was that the porter had had breakfast before bringing the article back to the Lost Property Office.

As there was nothing else to be gained by keeping the porter, Pycroft dismissed him and handed over the bag to be put in the racks among the other lost property. Meantime, Locke and Drake viewed with languid interest the cut window of the skylight through which the thief had gained entrance to the office during the night.

"Pity the railway constable wasn't able to nobble the thief," murmured the inspector, as he rejoined the private sleuth. "However, we'll notify the papers that Scotland Yard has recovered the missing goods. That'll be one feather in our cap. The bag will have to remain here until it's claimed in the ordinary way."

Hardly had he spoken when a bent figure dressed in sombre black entered the Lost Property Office, and approached the attendant behind the counter. The newcomer was apparently an elderly man for the hair which showed beneath his felt hat was almost white. He wore a pair of tinted glasses, and, when he spoke, his voice sounded gentle and refined.

"I left a brown bag in a taxi on my way to Victoria Station yesterday," he said. "In my newspaper this morning I saw that a bag—answering to the description of the one I lost, had been stolen from here. It has not been recovered by any chance, I presume?"

The attendant nodded to Pycroft, but the inspector was already on his way to the enquirer's side. In a few words he explained how the missing article had been returned.

The elderly gentleman rubbed his gloved hands together with intense satisfaction.

"Thank goodness!" he breathed.

"You don't know what a relief it is to me. May I have my bag now?"

"You may," answered the inspector, "providing you give your name and address and sign for the article in the usual way. But I should like to know if you are aware of any reason why anyone should deliberately risk imprisonment to secure a bag which contains nothing more than a bottle of medicine?"

"I will tell you. My name is Henry Culham. I was granted a medical degree in Vienna, where I studied many years ago. I specialised in tropical diseases, and lately I have given up my time to experiments in my home near Bournemouth. The bottle in that bag does not contain medicine. It contains glucose, in which I have bred millions of the most virulent rabies microbes."

The attendant who had fetched the bag from the rack dropped it on the counter with a bump, and edged away. Pycroft glared at the old gentleman with eyes of steel.

"Great Scott!" he muttered. "I ought to take you in charge! It's positively dangerous carrying a million of microbes about in a little bottle labelled, 'To be taken three times a day!' Why, I suppose there are enough germs there to give the whole population of London hydrophobia!"

"There are," admitted the old doctor. "Still, even if the bottle went astray—as indeed, it did, thanks to my absent-mindedness—no one would be foolish enough to take doses of a medicine he knew nothing about. It must have been a madman who stole the bag from here. You see, I've been on a visit to a professional colleague who has shown some interest in my culture of various types of virus. I took him some of the rabies microbes to demonstrate by means of the microscope how speedily the germs would breed under certain conditions. He wished me to give him some to try a few experiments of his own. I did so. As he hadn't the proper sort of receptacle for them, I gave him some in the bottle I had brought with me. The remainder I put in a medicine bottle he supplied me with, merely to take home."

"H'm, I see!" grunted Pycroft. He thought for a few moments, and then said: "Just wait here for a brief space, will you? Don't go yet, Mr. Locke."

The inspector left the Lost Property Office, and five minutes later returned to say that the old gentleman could have the bag. He had consulted a directory and had satisfied himself that a doctor of medicine, named Henry Culham, did actually live at the address near Bournemouth.

The brown bag was handed over to the caller, who duly signed for it. Then, with many thanks, the old gentleman tottered out of the Lost Property Office and moved off down the street with his queer luggage.

Inspector Pycroft took a large red handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his brow.

"Thank goodness, that bag's gone out of here again!" he said fervently. "Bless me, that bottle might have got broken and we all should have got hydrophobia as like as not."

"I'm surprised you let the old chap have the bag without having the con-

tents of that bottle analysed?" remarked Ferrers Locke, lighting a cigarette. "He's gone now, and it might be difficult to trace him if you want him again. Still, it's no business of mine."

"Phsaw," said Pycroft; "I have his address. Anyone can see what the old boy is—a harmless old fossil who spends most of his life in reeking chemical laboratories. I was jolly glad to see the last of that beastly bag! What troubles me, though, is for what sinister purpose the thief wanted those microbes."

"Have you found no clues about the skylight or in this office?"

"None! Perhaps you would care to cast your eyes over the place while you're here, Mr. Locke?"

By climbing up on a ladder Ferrers Locke examined the skylight. The glass had been cut with a diamond or something of that sort, and then pushed in. It had fallen on some kit-bags, and so had made but little noise. There were no finger-prints. It was safe to conclude, therefore, that the thief had worn gloves for his nocturnal task.

When he had had a look round, Locke admitted Pycroft's assertion that there were indeed no clues to go upon.

In company with the inspector, Locke and Drake were just about to leave the Lost Property Office when a well-dressed man of about thirty-five entered hastily. Locke recognised him immediately, although he had not seen him for some years. The caller was Horace Clements, of the experimental department of the Admiralty. Ferrers Locke had met him once in Portsmouth, while the sleuth had been engaged on a case.

Clements, without noticing the sleuth, walked straight up to the counter, and addressed the attendant in an agitated voice.

"Can you tell me, please, if a brown bag, bearing the initials H. C., has been brought here?"

Inspector Pycroft swung round as though stung. Then he tapped the caller on the shoulder.

"Here, what's the game?" he demanded suspiciously.

"The game? I—I don't understand you!"

The Scotland Yard man tugged his moustache and glared.

"Have you seen the newspapers?" he asked.

"No," replied the caller, looking at the burly inspector wonderingly. "I have travelled post-haste from Portsmouth this morning and did not buy a paper. I have been too worried to read. Yesterday I carelessly left my bag containing a small bottle in a taxi at Victoria. I did not discover that the bag was missing from among my other luggage until I reached my home at Havant, near Portsmouth, last night. But—but what was in the newspapers?"

There was a note of intense anxiety in the question.

"The newspapers—drat 'em!—gave a good deal of prominence to the fact that a brown bag marked 'H. C.' was stolen last night from Scotland Yard."

Horace Clements gazed at the inspector with horror-filled eyes.

"Stolen?" he gulped.

"Yes. But this morning the bag was brought back by a porter of the North-Eastern Railway."

"Ah!"

The exclamation came in a tone of immeasurable relief from the lips of the caller.

"But," resumed Pycroft, "a few

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minutes ago an old chap dropped in here and claimed the property and took it away."

"Great heavens! You—you mean to say you gave that brown bag with the little bottle in it to somebody else? Do you know what that bottle contains?"

Clements, deathly pale, and clutching the counter with nerveless fingers, almost hissed out the question.

"Yes," replied Pycroft blandly, "I know what it contains all right. Microbes!"

The Admiralty man looked at the inspector much as a casual visitor to a mental asylum might look at a dangerous lunatic.

"Microbes be hanged!" he burst out. "I'll tell you what that bottle contains! Enough explosive to blow Scotland Yard and half the Thames Embankment to the skies!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Clue of the Blood-spot.

TO say that the little group in the Lost Property Office were astonished would be expressing the situation mildly. But there was a ring of truth in the utterance of the caller which to Locke and Drake, at least, carried conviction.

Inspector Pycroft, however, was inclined to regard Clements much as Clements had regarded him—namely, as a dangerous lunatic.

"Look here, my good sir," began the Scotland Yard man soothingly, "just calm down a bit and—"

"I am calm!" thundered the visitor. "And don't you 'good sir' me! How dare you give my bag to another? You'd better get moving and get it back for me! I shall write to the newspapers about this!"

"Gr-r-r-rh!" groaned Pycroft, whose mind was reeling. "If—if a mistake has been made, you may be sure that we shall do our best to rectify it. What proof can you give that the bag belongs to you?"

"I can only describe the contents, and refer you to a gentleman who saw me with the bag yesterday. I am Horace Clements, of the Experimental Department of the Admiralty."

"I can vouch for that," put in a quiet voice at his side.

Clements turned in surprise and faced the speaker.

"By Jove! Mr. Locke! I'm glad to see you here! Perhaps you will help me out of the awful mess I've got myself into?"

"I will do anything I can for you, with pleasure," said the sleuth. And he mentioned to Pycroft how he had met Clements during a previous case at Portsmouth.

"Come to my private room, gentlemen," said the inspector wearily. "We must try to get to the bottom of this matter. It's as puzzling an affair as I've butted up against for some time."

Inspector Pycroft led the way out of the Lost Property Office and to his room. Entering that comfortable sanctuary, he showed Locke, Drake, and Clements to seats, and then seated himself at his desk.

"Now, Mr. Clements," he said, "let's have your story from the beginning, please."

"Perhaps you may know," said the visitor, "that the Admiralty have some new experimental laboratories at Havant. These laboratories are used for a variety of purposes connected with the Navy.

Among other things, we test explosives of all kinds, and endeavour to improve upon them. For some time I have been working on a new type of explosive discovered by myself. It looks almost like glycerine or glucose. But it is even more powerful than the turpentine used by the French during the Great War. A shell filled with it would be twenty times as powerful and devastating in effect as one filled with picric, for instance."

"Gosh!" said Pycroft. "And do you mean to tell me you carried some of that stuff in a little medicine-bottle in a handbag?"

"Yes. Unless the bottle was subjected to a direct flame or was hurled heavily against something hard, there was no danger. Once I dropped the bag from my hand, but it did not alarm me."

"It would have alarmed me!" said Pycroft. "It strikes me as being a very careless way to carry explosives!"

"I am used to them," replied Clements, "and I know exactly what this particular explosive can do. I simply ladled some into a bottle to show Sir Wilfred Sternden, of the Admiralty, while I was making a call at Whitehall yesterday. If you will be good enough to telephone him, he will confirm my statement."

The inspector, to make no error this time, phoned Sir Wilfred. From this high official of the Admiralty he learned that Clements had called on the previous day with a brown bag and a small bottle containing explosive.

With all his doubts removed, Pycroft quickly set to work to try to find out as much as possible from the real owner of the bag. Clements explained how he had carelessly left the bag under the seat of a taxi, and had reached Havant on the previous night before he had discovered his loss. In answer to a question put by Ferrers Locke, he stated that he had told several of the other workers at the laboratories of his loss. It was then too late to do anything, so he came to town this morning and made inquiries of the taximen at Victoria, afterwards coming along to the Yard.

"Do any of your fellow-workers know of the composition of this explosive you have discovered?" asked Locke.

"No," answered Clements. "No one in the world, to my knowledge, knows the secret save myself. I had intended revealing it to their lordships of the Admiralty after the tests that were to take place shortly."

"What object do you think anyone would have in wanting the stuff?" next asked Locke. "Have you anything in your mind on the subject?"

Clements wore a worried expression. "I—I'm afraid it would be just possible for a clever analyst to discover the composition of the explosive from a sample," he said. "Needless to say, other Governments pay highly for knowledge of the latest inventions of rival Powers in matters of armaments and explosives, and so forth."

"Then you think some spy may have got hold of the stuff, in the hope of discovering its composition and selling the secret? If that is so, it looks to me as though there is a spy at Havant."

"I—I'm sure none of the fellows at the laboratories had a hand in the affair," said Clements.

"But they knew that you had lost the bag containing the explosive. None of them left Havant last night, to your knowledge?"

"No."

"Still, doubtless it was possible for one of them to get a message through to London. In my opinion, the man who has secured the bag was put up to it by one of those who knew of your loss. And the thin-faced man in the check suit who broke into Scotland Yard and the old doctor who waltzed off with the bag are probably one and the same person."

Inspector Pycroft drummed his fingers on his desk, and then, with sudden resolution, pressed an electric bell-button.

"This is most annoying—most annoying!" he mumbled in his moustache. "It is a pity the bag was given up to that plausible old man. But then, the attendants in the Lost Property Office cannot be expected to see through a clever rogue like that. I will set the best detectives of Scotland Yard on the track of him at once."

Locke also rose to his feet.

"And as you wish me to assist in this case, I will also get to work, Mr. Clements," he said. "Where can I get in touch with you if there is anything to report?"

"I shall stay at the Grand Metropolitan Hotel for a few days," replied the Admiralty man. "And here is my card with my Havant address on it."

As Pycroft requested Clements to remain for a few minutes longer, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake took leave of them and went out together.

Outside the great police headquarters, the sleuth thrust a fiver into the hand of his young assistant.

"Jump into a taxi, my boy," he ordered, "and catch a train to Havant. I want you to make some inquiries there. Get back to Baker Street as soon as you can."

In a few words he gave Drake implicit instructions, and, after a quick handshake with his chief, the youngster hurried away.

Locke himself walked to Charing Cross Station lost in thought. The case was a very curious and baffling one. The absence of all clues as to the identity of the thief did not promise any speedy solution of the mystery. But then he remembered the blood-spot on his coat, and his eyes shone with a fresh hope.

He caught an underground train from Charing Cross to Baker Street, and hastened to his own residence. Arriving there, he told Sing-Sing, his Chinese servant, that he was not to be disturbed. Then he retired into the small laboratory adjoining his consulting-room on the first floor.

In this small laboratory Ferrers Locke had some of the most modern inventions and appliances used in the detection of crime. He switched on a high-power electric light and divested himself of his coat. That done, he applied some special solution to the blood-spot, which had dried in the texture of the cloth. After a few moments he was able to transfer a speck of the blood on to a tiny glass slide.

His next move was to insert the slide into a powerful microscope fitted with a Rontgen lens. He suspected that the bloodstain which was on the brown handbag when the railway-porter returned it to Scotland Yard was that of a human being. But he wanted to make certain. This might, or might not be, important in subsequent investigations.

Through the powerful microscope he was able to see the blood-spot broken up into a hundred queer little red and white disks. These were the corpuscles, which

What is the secret of the mysterious house at Uxbridge?

vary in human beings and animals and other living creatures. In his possession he had a series of charts depicting the magnified appearance of the blood in creatures of all kinds. And, after putting the blood-speck to this test and a final chemical test, he was able to definitely establish its origin. It was not human blood which had stained the side of the bag—it was the blood of a fowl!

"Corks!" muttered Locke, as he made this discovery. "It's queer that the thief should have got chicken's blood on the bag between the time he broke into Scotland Yard and reached Liverpool Street."

But there was another line of investigation open for him to follow. He believed that the man in the check suit, from whom the porter had taken the bag, had returned to Scotland Yard disguised as an old doctor to claim the article again. That being so, he determined to start his trail of the crook at Liverpool Street Station.

At the great terminus of the North-Eastern Railway he was able to open up a conversation with the voluble porter. But the man could throw no further light on the affair.

Not until long after lunch was Locke able to get any more forward with the case. Then, after patient inquiries, he unearthed a taxi-driver, who admitted having a fare early that morning who answered to the description of the wanted man.

"Where did you pick up the fare?" asked Ferrers Locke.

"At the corner of Gracechurch Street and Leadenhall Street, sir," was the reply.

With an eager light in his eyes, the sleuth leaped into the cab and ordered the driver to proceed there post-haste.

By Leadenhall Street he paid off the man and tipped him handsomely. Then he entered Leadenhall Market.

Again, the famous sleuth embarked on a series of inquiries. It was tedious work, and the hour was late when at last he reaped the reward of his industry. He found a poulterer with whom the man in the check suit had been in conversation early that morning.

The poulterer, when he found that his caller was Ferrers Locke, the famous private detective, willingly gave all the information he could.

"I reckon the chap you're asking after is an old customer of mine," said the man. "His name is Adolph Crouch, and he's a veterinary surgeon, who lives at Epping. He had a standing order for me to send him a brace of fowls twice a week. First thing this morning he dropped in to tell me not to send 'em any more. I reckon he's going away."

"Did you notice whether he had a brown handbag in his possession?"

The poulterer thought for a moment.

"Yes, come to think of it, he did. He stood it down on that counter over there alongside of some freshly-killed fowls."

Concealing the intense satisfaction he felt, Ferrers Locke obtained Crouch's full address. Then he left the market and took a taxi back to Baker Street. The clue of the blood-spot had proved useful indeed. There was no doubt in Locke's mind that the stain had found its way on the handbag in Leadenhall Market, and that Adolph Crouch was the man who had committed the theft from Scotland Yard.

It was still light when he reached his residence in Baker Street to find that Jack Drake had returned from his journey to Havant.

"Well, my boy, any luck?" asked Locke.

"I found out one thing which may prove important, sir," replied the boy. "An assistant in the Admiralty laboratories named Jules Farman caught a late train to London last night. He arrived back at a very early hour this morning. Clements knew nothing of that, neither did any of the other workers of the laboratories, I believe. It was an old porter at Havant Station who put me wise to the fact."

"Ah, we must bear that in mind," remarked Locke. "Now, I'm going to have a hurried wash and change while you catch Miggles, the cat."

"Catch the cat, sir?" said Drake.

"Exactly," said Locke. "You'll probably find it sitting on the fence in the back-garden. When you've caught it, put it in a basket. Then we'll take the animal along to the surgery of a certain vet. named Adolph Crouch."

"That's awkward," he murmured. "I have a poor little cat here that I—"

"Call to-morrow!" snapped the woman.

"It might be too late," said Locke significantly. "What time will the veterinary surgeon be back?"

"Don't know!"

"Then if you don't mind, we'll wait." And before the woman could stop him Locke, followed by Drake, entered the house and took a seat in the waiting-room of the surgery.

The woman was plainly nonplussed by this action on the part of the visitors. At first she inclined to be indignant, but at last, to get rid of her callers, she admitted that Crouch was not returning that night.

Although Locke had half-suspected Crouch might not be at his address, yet he felt a cold chill of depression at



With a cry of rage the trapped man hurled the medicine bottle, which contained high explosive, full at the bulkhead behind the detective. With an exclamation of alarm Locke leaped high in the air. His outstretched fingers clutched the deadly missile just in time. (See Chapter 3.)

Drake stared at his chief in bewilderment. But he made no further comment. With some difficulty he caught the reluctant Miggles and packed it in a roomy basket with plenty of air-holes.

"Good!" said Locke, when the lad returned to the house. "We must now take a trip out to Epping. The cat will afford an excuse in case the vet. I wish to see is at home."

On the train journey to the little town on the North-Eastern Railway the sleuth informed Drake of the result of his own work that day. It was dark when they left Epping Station and sought out the house of Adolph Crouch.

In response to the ring which Locke gave to the bell, a fat, elderly woman, obviously the housekeeper, shuffled to the door.

"What do you want?" she asked in no very pleasant tone.

"I wish to see Dr. Crouch," said Ferrers Locke.

"He's not in!"

The woman prepared to shut the door, but the sleuth quietly inserted his boot.

the news. He realised that he must quickly get on the trail again. To do so he must learn all he could of this woman. But the housekeeper was coldly reserved, and, as a last resort, the sleuth decided to startle her if possible out of this attitude. Rising to his feet, he looked her sternly in the eyes.

"Do you know, madam," he said, "that there is no likelihood of your master returning here? I am a detective and I have urgent business with him. When did he leave this house, and where has he gone? Tell me!"

The housekeeper was plainly scared. "He—he's not coming back!" she muttered. "Not coming back—and him owing me three months' wages! The scoundrel! The scallywag! I might have known he was crooked."

Locke sternly repeated his questions. Crouch, so the housekeeper said, had left the house only ten minutes before the arrival of the sleuth and his assistant. He had said he would be away all night on an urgent case, but had not stated where he was going. She

Performing the seemingly impossible—Ferrers Locke!

readily gave the visitors permission to search the house.

A hasty but thorough search was made. At the bottom of a wardrobe in Crouch's bed-room was the brown handbag bearing the initials "H. C.," and still showing traces of the bloodstain. On a chair nearby was an A.B.C. Railway Guide, evidently tossed there hurriedly. The page giving the times of the trains to Harwich was slightly crumpled, and bore a faint thumbmark.

"The bird became scared and took a hasty flight," muttered Locke. "Crouch, I guess, means to get from Harwich to the Hook of Holland. At all costs we must stop him getting to the Continent with the bottle which he stole from Scotland Yard."

He rapidly turned over the leaves of the time-table. There was a train from Epping to Liverpool Street which would give their quarry time to catch the boat-train to Harwich. But it was now too late for Locke and Drake to get to Epping Station in time.

Locke thrust a pound note into the hand of the astonished housekeeper. Drake grabbed the basket containing Miggles. Then the two left the house. Post-haste, Locke led the way to a garage which he had noticed on his way up. A fast motor-car was quickly arranged for, and the two were soon speeding towards London.

Luck was with them. Not once were they held up. The Harwich boat-train was due to leave at ten-thirty, and the big clock at the Liverpool Street terminus pointed to twenty-five minutes past ten as Locke and Drake bounded out of the motor and into the station. Hardly had they entered when Drake gave an excited exclamation:

"Look, sir!"

A slim man carrying a suit-case bearing the initials, "A. C." was just passing through the barriers to the Harwich train.

"By Jove, that's Crouch himself," muttered Locke, "or that poulterer gave me a wrong description of the fellow."

"He dashed forward to the barrier, but a burly policeman and a ticket-collector barred his progress.

"My man," whispered Locke, to the railway policeman, "I wish to get through here at once to keep in sight a man I'm following. My name is Ferrers Locke."

The constable scowled.

"You tell that to the Marines," he said. "Mr. Ferrers Locke has gone through here already, and without a ticket."

"What?" gulped Locke. "Who did you let through?"

"That chap with the suit-case just getting into the train. Now move off, and don't try any more o' your little tricks or I'll take you in charge."

The detective gritted his teeth in chagrin. It looked as though by some means Crouch had got wind of the fact that he was being tracked, and had adopted the name of the famous sleuth to make sure of catching his train. But it was useless to argue with the stolid railway constable or the unimaginative ticket-collector. Grabbing Drake by the arm, Ferrers Locke hurried back to the booking-office. There was still time to get a ticket if he was quick.

But at the booking-office a shock awaited the sleuth. Half a dozen people were before him. There was only a minute left now before the train was due to leave. But Drake, with great presence of mind, took the matter in hand.

"Get into the queue, sir!" he whispered. "I'll see what I can do."

No sooner had Locke taken his place than the boy put the basket containing the unfortunate Miggles on the ground. Then he staggered back against a pillar, his eyes rolling, and making curious gurgling noises with his mouth.

"By Jeremy!" exclaimed the man at the head of the queue, who was not going by the Harwich train. "The lad's in a fit. Fetch some water, someone!"

The man himself and one or two others hastened to Drake's side. The remainder hastened off in different directions. The queue had disappeared like snow before a hot sun. Locke dashed to the wicket.

"First single Harwich!" he cried.

The ticket was thrust out to him. He grabbed it, and, without waiting for his change, rushed away. The barrier was being closed to the platform, but Locke, showing his ticket, rushed through in the nick of time, to leap into the train as it began to move out of the station.

Drake's ruse had succeeded! By it Locke had been enabled to catch the train—this boat express in which Adolph Crouch, the wanted man, was seated somewhere in another compartment.

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THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Dash to Harwich.

FERRERS LOCKE sat back breathing a trifle hard as the train drew out of Liverpool Street Station. An old gentleman in the corner looked up from his paper and shook his head.

"Cut it a bit fine, didn't you, young man?" he said. "No good that; bad for the heart—bad for the liver!"

Locke admitted he had "cut it a bit fine," and got into conversation with his fellow traveller. Nevertheless, he was not at all pleased at the presence of the old gentleman. However, he felt pretty safe as to Adolph Crouch. The train was fast gathering speed. It was unlikely that Crouch knew of his presence on the train. But he badly wanted to locate the fellow and shift into a carriage near him so that he could easily watch his quarry when the latter alighted.

The train sped on through the night. There was but one stop—at Colchester.

Here the old gentleman alighted. So did Locke.

The famous sleuth turned up the collar of his light summer overcoat and walked up the platform, peering into the compartments. There were, as it happened, but few people on the train, and Locke had little difficulty in locating the man he firmly believed to be Crouch.

Crouch was sitting alone in the far corner of a first-class carriage, his suitcase bearing the initials "A. C." on the rack above his head. He had his face turned away, and this fact led Locke to pause momentarily before the carriage window to make sure that it was indeed the man whom Drake had pointed out to him at the terminus.

He saw the man make a slight movement, and he at once moved a little higher up the train and entered the next compartment. Little did he know that Crouch, whose nerves were strung to their highest pitch, had been looking direct at the glass of the opposite window. In this glass he could see reflected the forms of anyone passing on the platform on the far side. And it was because he had seen someone halt and gaze steadily at him for a brief space which had caused the man to start slightly.

In an empty compartment himself, Locke watched the platform until the train started. Soon the express was again thundering through the night at a sixty-mile-an-hour clip. Locke settled back to read an evening newspaper, satisfied that Crouch was safely in the trail until Harwich was reached.

He had just finished reading a facetious paragraph guying Scotland Yard over the recent theft at headquarters, when the train slowed down perceptibly. The detective tossed his newspaper on the floor. The progress grew slower and slower. Locke glanced at his watch. They were drawing into Harwich.

Then, for no tangible reason, a great sense of uneasiness possessed the sleuth. He rose to his feet, lowered the window, and looked out. Above was a star-studded sky; below, a steep, grassy embankment; ahead, the lights of the famous port to the Continent.

Locke withdrew his head, and tried to settle himself to wait. But the sense of uneasiness persisted. By this time the speed of the train had been reduced to about ten miles an hour.

At the expiration of a restless couple of minutes, Locke rose and looked out again. Then, with sudden determination, he opened the carriage-door and got out on to the footboard. Cautiously he worked his way to the compartment in the rear, and glanced in. Immediately an exclamation of dismay left his lips. The compartment was empty!

"Good heavens! The chap must have suspected my presence, and given me the slip!"

The thought was galling in the extreme. Certainly, Crouch was not in his seat, neither was the suit-case in the rack.

Two solutions to the mystery suggested themselves to the sleuth. Either Crouch had got out of the train on the up-line side at Colchester, or else the man had changed to some other compartment. The second solution seemed possible, for he was certain the man was very anxious to reach Harwich.

Very carefully Ferrers Locke made his way down the train on the footboard. As he reached each compartment he cautiously peeped in at the

side of a window. Then, as he failed to find his man, he bent down and passed on his way.

He had just looked in one third-class carriage and had almost reached the door of the next, when he stopped and drew back. The doorhandle of this compartment moved. Then the door slowly opened away from him. Locke drew his revolver and waited, every nerve strung to its highest pitch.

Suddenly a suit-case was hurled out of the carriage, and went rolling down the embankment. Then Adolph Crouch stepped out. The detective took a pace forward along the footboard, his revolver pointing at the man's body.

"Get back into that carriage!" he ordered brusquely. "Get back at once!"

A rasping exclamation left Crouch's lips. His hand came down with a sweeping motion which sent the sleuth's revolver clattering down on the footboard. Next instant Crouch leaped from the train. The detective threw out his hand to clutch him, but lost his balance, and the two men went hurtling down the embankment, rolling over and over like shot rabbits.

Adolph Crouch, who had fallen first, was the first to pick himself up. Without thought of retrieving his suit-case, he rushed away into the night. Locke dashed after him, but the other had obtained a good start, and was running like a hare.

Entering the town, Crouch made a lucky strike. He found a disengaged taxi, and, entering it, was driven rapidly away. It took Locke some minutes to find another vehicle. By the time he had done so, Crouch had gained another useful start.

The detective glanced at his wrist-watch. He knew the Hook of Holland boat was due to sail at midnight. He guessed that Crouch had made a dash for it, and it looked as though he himself was going to be too late. But he did not hesitate to grasp at the faint chance left to him.

"To the docks!" he ordered the taxi-driver. "Get there in five minutes, and you'll earn a pound-note!"

With this incentive, the driver set his old vehicle rattling through the streets at such a pace as it had never gone

before. The docks were reached within the time allotted, and Locke jumped out and pressed the money into the gratified driver's hand. The boat was still at the jetty; the gangway was still down.

Locke rushed up to a couple of policemen and mentioned his name and his errand. The men in blue had never seen the famous private sleuth before, but his card and his reputation worked magic. The quartermaster at the gangway, to whom Locke also explained matters, was willing to assist him.

"Go to the top of the gangway," Locke said to the policeman, "and allow no one off this ship until I return."

He darted on board, and hastily looked among the passengers on deck. But Crouch was not there. Next he went below. As he entered the smoke-room, he saw the man he sought standing at the bar. Evidently Crouch was under the happy delusion that he had shaken off pursuit.

But as the detective entered and approached the man, Crouch swung round. There was a look in Locke's keen grey eyes which startled him. Leaving his drink untouched, he slunk hastily out of the opposite door and ran up the companion-ladder to the deck above. Locke bounded after him.

Crouch was just making for the gangway to leave the ship when Locke shouted to the two policemen. The men in blue started forward. Crouch was caught like a rat in a trap. He realised the fact, and the madness of rage possessed him. He swung round, and his hand dropped into his pocket.

Next moment Locke, who had the steel bulkhead behind him, saw the man with his arm high above his head, his fingers clutching a small medicine-bottle.

"Good heavens! Don't throw that, you idiot!"

The evil face of Crouch worked with rage. His hand shot forward, sending the bottle hurtling through the air. In one dreadful moment Locke realised the danger, not only to himself, but to the whole ship. That bottle contained a portion of the highest explosive ever concocted. If it struck the steel bulkhead he and all others on board would be blown to atoms.

Even as the awful thought flashed through his mind, he caught the glitter of the bottle as it flew through the air. With a terrific bound, the detective leaped forward and upward, his right hand outstretched above his head. Then he felt something strike his fingers and stick there. He had brought off a great one-handed catch such as he had done many a time on the cricket-field in the old days. But instead of it being a cricket-ball and the matter of saving a few runs, it was a bottle of deadly explosive and the saving of a hundred lives or more!

His fell purpose thwarted, Adolph Crouch dashed for the side of the ship, but the policemen's hands grasped his shoulders, and the handcuffs clicked on his wrists.

Now that the worst had happened to him, the prisoner's anger gave place to a tired listlessness.

"Well," he said, scowling at Ferrers Locke, "you've got me all right. But who the dickens you are and who put you on my track, I don't know."

"I am Ferrers Locke, at your service," answered the detective, stowing the bottle carefully in his breast-pocket. "But you wish to know who gave you away. Perhaps you have heard of a certain gentleman of Havant known as Jules Farman—"

"Jules Farman!" Crouch gulped out the name with a sudden return to anger. "So it was that white-livered sneak who split on me—the very man who came to town to put me on to the job!"

So, by this strategic chance shot, Locke obtained sufficient evidence to arrest Farman, the spying colleague of Clements in the laboratories. But the credit of the two arrests went to the police, and completely washed out the star on Scotland-Yard, much to the relief of Inspector Pycroft. The secret of the new deadly explosive had been prevented from reaching the knowledge of a foreign power. And Locke's concrete reward was a handsome cheque which he received from Horace Clements, of the Experimental Department of the Admiralty.

THE END.

(Don't miss next week's fine story, chums.)



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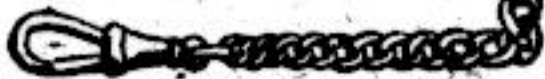


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