

ANOTHER GRAND BUMPER ISSUE—AND A FREE PHOTO INSIDE!

No. 771. Vol. XXII. Week ending November 18th, 1922.

The Magnet ^{2^d} Library of School & Detective Stories.



Real Glossy Photo of famous
Chelsea F.C. FREE inside.



WHAT MAKES THE NATIVES AFRAID OF THEIR OWN IDOL?

(The question is answered in the thrilling extra-long complete story in this issue.)

WONDERFUL STORIES FOR NEXT WEEK AND THE COMPANION PAPERS' FINE FREE PHOTO GIFTS!

The Editor's Chat



Address your letters to: The Editor, THE MAGNET LIBRARY, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. I am always pleased to hear from my chums.

WHAT I AM DOING.

I HAVE again the pleasure to put before my chums a really splendid number of the "Magnet" Library. I am very proud of this paper, readers, and when I look round I think I have every reason to be proud of it.

The stories sent me by the authors are undoubtedly the very best stories obtainable. Mr. Frank Richards, in my opinion, can be likened to Peter Pan, and will never grow up. He is still a boy at heart, and it is because of that he consistently sends us stories which we know appeal to boys—and girls—all over the world.

One never finds a story in the "Magnet" Library full of impossible situations, full of ridiculous incidents, or full of dialogue such as no boy or girl in England or any other part of our great Empire ever used. That is why readers of the "Magnet" Library are not provided with reading matter which, though thrilling, leaves an after-impression of impossibility.

My aim is to give my readers healthy stories of school life or adventure or sport. If I liked I could get my authors to curdle your blood with most sensational "stuff"—but I do not like. Nearly twenty years' experience has taught me that the boys of our great Empire want to read stories which will appeal to them because they know that such-and-such an adventure might easily fall to their lot. That's what I am doing now.

There is not an author in the world more competent to write school stories than Mr. Frank Richards. I have more than ample proof other papers have tried to get this wonderful author to write school stories for them. But Mr. Richards always says: "No, I don't believe in writing the sort of story you ask for. I know what the boys want—and so does the Editor of the Companion Papers. That's why I am one of the busiest men in the country to-day!"

Mr. Richards is not only one of the busiest men, but he is undoubtedly one of the cleverest men. Is it not wonderful the way he deals, week after week, year after year, with the many adventures of Harry Wharton & Co.? Just give the matter a moment's thought, boys, and I am sure you will agree with me that there is not an author writing to-day who can even approach such as Frank Richards, Martin Clifford, or Owen Conquest.

When I come to the conclusion that the boy of to-day really wants the blood-curdling, sensational, impossible tosh of twenty years ago, then I'll give it to him, perhaps—in lumps, as Bob

Cherry would say. Until then, however, I am going to continue to supply my readers with really good stories, full of incident of the possible kind, a healthy thrill or two. I won't insult the intelligence of my chums by thinking that they now want the impossible stuff just because it makes their hearts beat faster.

Detective stories, as a matter of fact, provide every reader with something to think about. Study the plot, study the way the detective solves a mystery, and think out if you would have solved it—or tried to solve it—in the same way. You'll find that an interesting hobby. I know of a select group of young fellows who regularly meet to discuss a detective story. One takes the part of the detective, another that of the criminal, another represents the ordinary police. They go through the story, discuss it in all its points, and then the "criminal" says: "Supposing I had done so-and-so." The "detective" and the "police" then say how they would have met that case. It is most interesting, believe me, and it teaches you to think—hard!

But when a boy stops a runaway steam-roller by pushing it gently back just as it is about to crash on top of people on the beach—well, isn't that rot? If that is possible we shall soon be having a story about a boy who put an aero engine on his back, and flew from London to Glasgow to earn the Freedom of the City! However, to change the subject to a few details of our story for next Monday.

"KING BUNTER OF THE CONGO!" By Frank Richards.

This story is going to please you immensely. It has just that spice of excitement to make it more than interesting.

Frank Nugent is caught by the cannibals, and taken to a village, where, after due consideration, the rest of the chums appear. Billy Bunter, by means of the idol and his ventriloquism, succeeds in getting Nugent free, but he also makes things nice and comfortable for himself by making the idol declare him king!

The appearance of Casco, the Spaniard, makes things rather awkward, but they fight him with all the power they can muster. King Bunter of the Congo is very powerful, too. You can just imagine yourself in the Congo when you read Mr. Richards' truly wonderful story, and you can imagine how really easy it would be to make the superstitious, idol-worshipping natives do your bidding if you were a ventriloquist! Cannibals still exist—you remember the great traveller who has recently returned to this country after spending a long time in cannibal-

infested country? Like the Greyfriars chums, I, personally, prefer England!

"BROUGHT TO JUSTICE!"

That is the title of next week's extra-special story of Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake. In it you are told how the detective and his assistant bring to an end the career of one of the greatest criminals in the world. After the feast—the reasoning! The murderer of Hubert Brandon and Inspector Flemming learns that there is no escaping the tireless hand of the law.

You must not, on any account, miss this special story, my chums, and I ask you once more to order your copy in advance.

There will be a special supplement for next week, and another meeting of the Greyfriars Parliament will be recorded. This Parliament, I want you to understand, is *your* parliament. Send in a speech and secure a handsome money prize!

A word about our Companion Papers. The "BOYS' FRIEND" is on sale to-day, and contains TWO SPLENDID, REAL HAND-COLOURED PHOTOGRAPHS OF FAMOUS FOOTBALLERS. In addition to the FREE REAL PHOTOS, there are many fine stories of adventure, school, and sport, articles and jokes. Don't forget, then, to get the "Boys' Friend."

Our cheery companion paper, the "Popular," appears to-morrow, and there are again four splendid, complete school stories, "Billy Bunter's Weekly," a great sporting serial, and other fine features. And there is also a GRAND FREE REAL PHOTO OF A FAMOUS SPORTSMAN GIVEN FREE WITH EVERY COPY OF THE "POPULAR."

The "Gem" Library strikes a new line with the grand free gift it offers you. IN EVERY COPY OF THIS WEEK'S "GEM" WILL BE FOUND A FREE, REAL PHOTO OF A FAMOUS FOOTBALLER—WITH HIS AUTOGRAPH PLAINLY WRITTEN! Tom Merry & Co. are the famous schoolboys whose adventures are recorded in this popular periodical; there is also a fine sporting story and interesting articles and jokes. Get the "GEM" on Wednesday!

My final words this week are to remind you that THERE WILL BE ANOTHER GRAND FREE, REAL PHOTO OF A FAMOUS FOOTBALL TEAM NEXT WEEK WITH THE "MAGNET." Order now!

Your Editor.



I am Always Pleased to Hear from my Many Chums! Drop Me a Line To-day!

Known all over
the world as
**THE BEST
BOYS' PAPER
WITH THE
BIG SCHOOL
STORY.**

No. 771. Vol. XXII. Week ending Nov. 18th, 1922.

The Magnet

28
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**EVERY WEEK
A WONDERFUL
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OF SCHOOL,
SPORT,
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AND
ADVENTURE.**

LOST IN THE DARK AND MYSTERIOUS WILDS OF AFRICA! Here, in this Magnificent Story, you will read how Harry Wharton & Co. commence the greatest stage in their expedition. An unforeseen thing happens—and before they know it, they find themselves alone in the howling wilderness of the African jungle-land!



A New Extra Long Complete Story, dealing with the thrilling adventures of the Famous Chums of Greyfriars and Billy Bunter on their long expedition in the Congo!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

(Author of the Famous Greyfriars Stories appearing in the "POPULAR.")

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Night Alarm!

HARRY WHARTON sat up and rubbed his eyes.

The night was dark, and for a moment, as he blinked round him, the captain of the Greyfriars Remove saw nothing but blackness.

Wharton had been dreaming of Greyfriars, and he sat up, expecting to find himself in bed in the old dormitory. Recollection came the next moment, and he smiled as he rubbed his drowsy eyes.

Instead of a high white ceiling over his head, there was the deep dark vault of heaven, with only the stretched mosquito-net between. Round him, his comrades were sleeping, on grass mats, on the deck of the steam-launch.

Round the launch murmured the sluggish brown waters of the Congo—the mighty river flowing from the heart of Africa to the Atlantic.

He was far from Greyfriars now.

The launch was moored by a sandy bank. Beyond the bank was a belt of mangroves—beyond that, the deep, dense forest. Over the tree-tops there was a

silvery glimmer in the blackness—the moon was rising.

From the forest came a deep, distant roar, and the Greyfriars junior knew that it was the voice of a roaring lion.

Wharton wondered what had awakened him.

It was not the roar of the lion—he was accustomed to such sounds now. He rubbed his eyes again, and looked round him. Dimly he made out the figure of Captain Corkran at a little distance, sitting with his rifle on his knees, keeping watch.

On one side of Wharton, Bob Cherry was fast asleep; on the other, Frank Nugent. Johnny Bull and Harree Jamset Ram Singh were a little farther off, sleeping soundly. From somewhere in the gloom came the steady, resonant snore of Billy Bunter.

Wharton's quick ear caught a movement.

He knew that the black Congo crew of the launch were fast asleep, and would not move till they were called. Captain Corkran would not have dreamed of trusting them to keep watch. But it was a black man who was moving. Wharton had caught a glimpse of the black face,

with the whites of the eyes glistening under the grass hat, and the dirty calico trousers. It was Pickle Jar, the Kroonman.

Wharton sat and watched him wondering.

Pickle Jar was supposed to be asleep with the other blacks, and Harry wondered why he was stirring.

Captain Corkran, on his camp-stool, was gazing shoreward—the direction from which danger would come, if it came. The Kroonman was moving behind him.

Harry Wharton pushed aside the mosquito-net, and rose quietly.

He did not mistrust the Kroonboy, but he wondered. Pickle Jar caught his movement, and turned his head, his dark eyes scintillating.

He put his finger to his lips, as a sign for silence.

There was a faint sound of a splash in the water beside the moored launch.

Pickle Jar moved quickly but noiselessly to Wharton's side, caught his arm, and drew him into the deep shadow of a stack of fire-logs.

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"No speak!" he whispered, so faintly that Wharton barely caught the words.

Captain Corkran did not move. His eyes were fixed on the forest, where the tree-tops were silvering as the moon came up.

Wharton was about to whisper a question, in spite of the Krooman's warning, when Pickle Jar pointed with a black finger.

Wharton followed the direction of the finger, and caught his breath with a sudden start.

A head rose into sight over the side.

Wharton's eyes, accustomed now to the gloom, could make it out—the face of a white man.

He saw two glinting black eyes and a cruel, scarred mouth. It was a face he knew—the face of Pedro Casco, the Spaniard.

He was about to make a movement, when Pickle Jar's grip closed more tightly on his arm, and he desisted.

The Spaniard hung on for a full minute, his black eyes searching the deck.

He saw the sleepers, under the mosquito-netting, and the motionless figure of Corkran, sitting with his back to the newcomer.

All was silent and still.

He could not see the two alert figures in the shadow of the stack of fire-logs.

Slowly, silently, the scarred Spaniard climbed up, and his leg came over the wooden rail. Water dripped from him as he hung there for a moment. Then silently he slipped down to the deck of the launch.

He stopped there to take breath, and still Pickle Jar did not move, and Wharton remained still. But when Casco, with a cat-like movement, crept towards the unconscious captain's back, and there was a glimmer of steel in the shadows, Wharton shook his arm free.

But at the same moment Pickle Jar made a spring like a leopard.

In an instant he was upon the Spaniard, and his large black hands grasped him, and brought him to the deck with a crash.

Crash!

The little vessel rocked as Casco went crashing down, with the bulky Krooman sprawling over him.

Wharton sprang after the Krooman, and caught up the knife as it dropped from the startled Spaniard's hand.

"Carambo!" stuttered Casco. "Nombre de Dios!"

Pickle Jar chuckled.

"Lib for catchy!" he said, in his Coast English, chuckling with glee.

Captain Corkran was on his feet now. He spun round, rifle in hand, and his glance took in the scene in a second. The edge of the moon showed over the forest now, and there was a silver glimmer on the wide river, the stretching sandbanks, and the little launch.

"You!" said Corkran coolly.

He knew what his danger had been, but it had not startled his iron nerve. His single live eye glittered at the Spaniard, but his bronzed face was calm and merciless. He stepped towards the sprawling ruffian in the grasp of the Krooman.

"Good boy, Pickle Jar!" he said.

The Krooman grinned.

"Captain no let Pickle Jar lib for watch," he said. "Pickle Jar lib for watch all same. See um swim out."

"Let him stand clear!" said the captain.

Pickle Jar released the ruffian. Casco struggled breathlessly to his feet.

The captain's rifle was levelled, and the



CAPTAIN KIT CORKRAN,
Chief of the Amazing Congo Expedition.

muzzle bore full upon the scarred rascal's sallow face.

"Por todos los santos!" panted Casco.

"I give you one minute!" said Corkran. "Make the most of it, Pedro Casco."

His finger was on the trigger, a pitiless eye glanced along the levelled barrel, and the pallor of death came into the sallow, swarthy face of the scarred Spaniard.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

In the Midst of Foes!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"What's the row?"

"Casco, by Jove!"

The Greyfriars juniors were all wide awake now, and on their feet.

Bob Cherry and Nugent, Hurree Singh and Johnny Bull gathered round with startled faces. Only Billy Bunter remained safe in the arms of Morpheus, snoring unconcernedly.

Casco backed away a pace, panting and snarling. There was no mercy in the eye that looked along the rifle-barrel. The strengthening light from the rising moon fell upon the Spaniard's face, and showed it ghastly.

Wharton uttered an exclamation.

"Captain Corkran! You are not going—"

"Do not interfere here, Wharton," said the captain coldly.

"But—but—"

"You saw what the rascal was going to do?"

"Yes. But—"

"You can't shoot the man down, cousin Kit!" said Bob Cherry, in a scared voice.

Corkran shrugged his shoulders.

NEXT WEEK'S FREE GIFT!

Real Photo of the Middlesbrough Football Team.

"Him lib for die, Mass' Harry!" said Pickle Jar composedly. "All right! Him come kill captain—captain lib for kill. All right!"

That was the simple law of the Congo, and the juniors knew it. The Congo was far enough from Greyfriars—not only in geography.

"But—" panted Wharton.

"Time's up!" said Corkran.

He pulled the trigger. At the same

moment Harry Wharton struck the rifle-barrel, knocking it up, and the bullet flew away a yard above the head of the Spaniard.

An angry exclamation broke from the captain. His eye blazed at Wharton.

Casco did not lose his opportunity.

He made a wild spring to the side, and, before Pickle Jar could grasp him, he had leaped out into the river.

Splash!

Casco struck the water, and vanished beneath it. He came up a dozen feet away, swimming hard.

"You young rascal!" roared the captain.

"I—I'm—sorry!" gasped Wharton. "But—"

Corkran pushed him roughly aside, and rushed to the rail. The scarred Spaniard was swimming desperately out into the river. Captain Corkran took aim at the swimmer, and pulled trigger again.

Crack!

The juniors watched breathlessly. The moon glimmered on the Congo now, giving a dim light for shooting—quite enough for so good a marksman as Kit Corkran.

With breathless horror, the chums of Greyfriars expected to see Casco sink beneath the brown waters. They saw the water kicked up by the bullet a few inches from his dark head. It was a good shot, but not quite near enough.

Before the captain could fire again, the swimmer was among a mass of driftwood, and hidden from sight.

Corkran gritted his teeth.

"He's got away!" murmured Nugent.

"He's a dangerous villain!" muttered Harry. "But—but I'm glad he's got away."

"Same here."

"The samefulness is terrific," murmured Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Go to sleep, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter sat up, and groped for his spectacles, and set them on his fat little nose, and blinked round.

"Wharrer marrer?" he demanded drowsily. "Wharrer row? Waking a fellow up when he's tired."

Captain Corkran came towards the juniors, his tanned face very grim. Wharton felt an inward tremor. He had acted as he had done on impulse; and he knew that it had been a right impulse. But the explorer, hardened by twenty years of savage life on the Congo, was not likely to agree with him; and Corkran was the commander of the party.

To his relief, Corkran made no reference to the incident. Life on the Congo had hardened and toughened him, but he could make allowances for the school-boy fresh from England.

"No more sleep to-night," said the captain tersely. "We should not be likely to wake in the morning if we slept again. That rascal is not here alone."

"I say!" howled Bunter. "I'm not getting up yet! 'Tain't daylight even."

"Oh, you can sleep!" said the captain contemptuously. "You wouldn't be any use in a scrap!"

"Oh, really, you know—"

"That's enough!"

Billy Bunter grunted, and turned over to go to sleep again. He had a very vague idea of what had happened; but for once he was not curious—he was too sleepy even for curiosity. In less than a minute his snore was heard again.

But every other soul on board the launch was wide awake and on the alert now.

The launch was on the upper waters of the Congo, far from the most outlying white station—on either bank were vast forests and still vaster savannahs, swarming with savage animals and savage tribes. The launch, with what it contained, would have been a rich prize to any of the black tribesmen; danger dogged every step after Boma was passed, and Boma now was hundreds of miles behind. In the heart of Africa it was every man for himself—there were thousands of black tribesmen within a few miles who would have exterminated the explorers, if only to "chop" them afterwards.

"Casco has friends on the Congo," added the captain. "He has followed us from the Gulf of Guinea, and he means business. He has tried his luck alone, and he has failed; when he returns, it will be with a crowd of niggers, who will back him up for the plunder of the launch. It's no good crying over spilt milk; he's gone, and we've got a fight on our hands."

With that, the captain proceeded to rap out orders.

The launch had put into the shore the previous evening for a new supply of wood, which was the fuel used; coal being unobtainable for love or money. The black crew had been cutting logs for hours before the darkness stopped them; and some of the new supply had been stacked on board. Captain Corkran had intended to ship the remainder in the morning; but there was no time to stop for it now.

The fires were started, and the little launch hummed like a beehive with brisk movement.

The Greyfriars juniors kept anxious eyes upon the river, where the moonlight now streamed in a silver flood, making the Congo almost as light as by day.

Casco had long since vanished from sight; and the chums of Greyfriars wondered whether the captain was right, and whether he would return with savage allies.

They soon had proof that Corkran had made no mistake.

Across the wide river a canoe shot into sight, paddled by a dozen black men.

It was followed by another and another.

Meanwhile, steam was rising on the launch, but there was not yet a sufficient pressure. The explorers had to wait, while their enemies gathered round them, canoe after canoe creeping out of shadowy creeks. Whether the scarred Spaniard was among the Congo blacks the juniors could not see; but they had no doubt that he was there. It was another attempt of the scarred ruffian to obtain possession of the little ivory idol, upon which was drawn the map of the buried treasure of ivory. Had his dastardly attempt upon Corkran succeeded, his task would have been easy enough; now the result was more doubtful. But as the juniors saw the crowd of canoes their hearts beat faster.

"My only hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "There must be hundreds of the black beggars."

"If they get to close quarters—" said Nugent.

"But they won't!" said Harry. "We're moving at last."

"Thank goodness!"

The little launch was moving out into the waters of the Congo, the captain at the helm. Pickle Jar was in charge of the stoking gang, and he did his work well—laying a heavy bamboo across bare black backs to keep the crew up to the mark.

The canoes, more than fifteen in number, faced the launch in a half-circle, as Corkran "tooled" her out into the river.

Rifles had been served out to the juniors now. During their trip up the Congo, Harry Wharton & Co. had done daily practice at rifle shooting, and the skill they had acquired came in useful now. The captain was too busy for handling a rifle, and the black crew, under Pickle Jar's control, had their hands full. Such shooting as was to be done fell to Harry Wharton & Co.

But they were ready, and their nerves were good. The five Greyfriars fellows kept in cover behind stacks of fire-logs,

and watched the canoes. Billy Bunter was still sleeping; but he was not wanted. His snore sounded as steadily and placidly as ever it had sounded in the old Remove dormitory at Greyfriars School.

The captain's sharp, cool voice rang out.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!"

"I'm running the launch through the canoes! Shoot down any who get hold and try to climb! If they get aboard, we are finished."

"We're ready, sir."

"Don't waste a shot. It will be touch and go, as it is."

"Right!"

The captain signalled full steam ahead to Pickle Jar. The launch shot forward almost like an arrow, straight at the semi-circle of canoes, crowded with savage blacks. From a dozen of the canoes trade guns blazed out, sending whizzing bullets, fragments of lead or iron pipe, every kind of missile that could be crammed into them and fired out again. The missiles splattered on the launch, most of them burying themselves in the stacks of logs. The juniors kept well under cover, watching. Right at the canoes went the little steamer, and there was a terrific concussion as she crashed into them.

Under the stem of the steamer a long war-canoe crumpled up like cardboard, amid fearful yells from the savage crew. And the next instant, savage hands clutched at the vessel from the sinking canoe, and savage men were clambering up like cats.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Fight on the Congo!

CRACK, crack, crack!
"Go it!" gasped Bob Cherry. Harry Wharton & Co. were firing now.

It was for life or death; their lives were in their own hands, and it was no time to hesitate.



Right at the canoes went the little steamer, and there was a terrific concussion as she crashed into them! Under the stem of the steamer a long war-canoe crumpled up like cardboard. The next moment Harry Wharton & Co. were firing as hard as they could load. (See Chapter 2.)

Boys, Next Week's Long Complete is an Absolute Thriller!

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Spears whizzed over the launch, dropping and sticking in the logs, and "ponging" on the iron plates of the deck. On both sides came black, clambering hands, savage animal-like faces, blazing, rolling eyes, hideous cannibal yells. The Famous Five of Greysfriars pumped out bullets as fast as the magazine rifles could work.

Crack, crack, crack!

Wild yells answered the shots. It was like a vision from some terrible nightmare to the schoolboys of Greysfriars—like some wild, weird scene from a film.

Even while they panted and pulled trigger, and fearful yells and cries rang in their ears, there was a sense of unreality about it.

Crack, crack, crack, crack!

Black, writhing bodies slid down into the brown, turbid waters round the

and Pickle Jar collided with the Congo savage, a heavy fire-bar in his hand.

Crash!

The Congo man went down, his skull smashed under the crashing fire-bar. Pickle Jar grinned at Harry Wharton.

"Him lib for die, Mass' Harry."

"Thank you, Pickle Jar!" panted Wharton.

"Oh, heavens!" breathed Nugent.

His face was white as he looked at the hideous savage sprawling on the deck, the spear still clutched in the nerveless hand.

Wharton glanced hurriedly round, rifle in hand, ready to fire his last shot. But the last of the assailants had dropped off, some to sink, and some to swim.

"They're done!" said Bob

"Keep in cover!" shouted Captain Corkran.

scraped by. The last yell died away at last, and the canoes dropped far out of sight.

Bob Cherry dropped the butt of his rifle to the deck.

"Jolly hot while it lasted!" he said, with a grimace. "I—I hope I did not—hem—finish anybody, cannibals as they are. But I suppose I did."

"The finishfulness of some of the esteemed niggers was terrific," said Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh gravely. "The hopefulness is great that the excellent villain Casco was one of the finished ones."

"I didn't see the Spaniard among them," remarked Johnny Bull.

"I caught a glimpse of him in one of the canoes," answered Harry Wharton. "He wasn't in the canoe we sunk."

"Let's hope he's fed up by this time,"



FOOTBALLERS IN THE LIMELIGHT!

CHELSEA F.C.

ALL ABOUT THE FAMOUS TEAM
WHICH FORMS THE SUBJECT
OF OUR GRAND FREE
REAL PHOTO.



The Romance of the Chelsea Club.

THE story of most of the big football clubs of the present day is one of gradual rise from humble beginnings. But the record of the Chelsea club is the one outstanding exception, for theirs was no obscure start made by a band of faithful enthusiasts. The Chelsea club simply sprang right into the limelight in 1904, after the optimists about the future of football in West London had spent one hundred thousand pounds on making a ground second to none in the country, and a lot more money on building up a side which should hold its own with the best.

In the season 1905-6, Chelsea started on their illustrious career in the Second Division of the Football League, and the fact that the optimism of the management had been backed by sound judgment was proved in the second season of the club's existence, when promotion to the top class was won.

Of course, it hasn't been roses all the way for the Chelsea club ever since then, for at the end of the 1909-10 season they found themselves once more relegated to the second class. Two seasons later they again won a place

among the highest in the land, but in 1914-15 they finished up second from the bottom once more. Then they had a bit of luck, for after the war was over the First Division of the League was extended by the admission of two more clubs, and Chelsea gained one of the vacant places. And in the season before last they accomplished the best League feat of their career by finishing up third in the First Division League table.

Still, although Chelsea have had, in the course of their comparatively short life, many notable players, and at times a very fine team, they have precious little to show in the way of trophies won. The best thing they have done in the Cup line was to get as far as the final tie in 1915, only to be soundly beaten by Sheffield United at the last hurdle which stood between them and an honour which is much coveted.

Though there remain many things which the Chelsea club have to accomplish, they stand out as one of the most interesting sides in the country. They have the biggest ground of any club in England, and as many as seventy-five thousand people have seen an ordinary match on their enclosure.

One of the most surprising things about the Chelsea club is the cosmopolitan nature of the crowd which assembles on the ground from week to week. In fact, it is often said that at Chelsea, alone of all the football grounds in the country, do the visiting teams get a measure of praise equal to that accorded to the home eleven.

The best eleven which the Stamford Bridge club ever possessed was in the days of James Windridge, Vivian Woodward, and George Hilsdon, three wonderful forwards, who all played for England in their time, but there are worthy successors in the ranks of the Chelsea team of to-day. In Jack Cock they have a notable centre-forward, while outside-left McNeil is recognised as good enough to play for any team. Always have the Chelsea management been ready to give a place to amateurs, and at the present moment they have one such in Howard Baker, the high-jump champion goalkeeper. During recent years, however, the management at Stamford Bridge has rather revised its team-building ideas. They used to go in for big men at big prices; now the tendency seems to be to find the young material, and to train it in the right way.

launch. The stricken canoe had sunk; another, colliding with the stem of the launch, capsized, and its crew clung to it as it floated on the current. The launch was going full speed now, and the crowd of canoes gathered behind, urged on in frantic pursuit by flashing paddles that worked like clockwork.

But the steam-launch was through the enemy line, and the savages who clambered up, clinging like cats, dropped off one by one under the rifle-fire from above. Only one brawny Congo cannibal leaped clear on deck, and came down fairly among the juniors, with a broad-bladed spear upraised. An instant more, and Harry Wharton would have rolled on the iron plates, transfixed, and probably two or three more of the juniors. But there was a quick spring,

Spears were whizzing from the other canoes, as well as assortments of missiles from the trade guns. The juniors crouched in the shelter of the logs stacked round the deck. On the lower deck the black crew crouched and jabbered, only driven to their work by the heavy club in the grip of Pickle Jar. Farther and farther behind the canoes dropped, and the savage yells grew fainter in the distance.

Up the Congo, under the moonlight, the launch sped on, between shoals and sandbanks where a skilled pilot's hand was needed. But Corkran had piloted on the Congo before, and every channel was known to him. Even with his knowledge and skill, the launch grazed more than one sandy bar, and the juniors' hearts leaped into their mouths as it

said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! You awake, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter's big spectacles glimmered round a stack of logs. His fat face was white as chalk.

"Are they gone?" he gasped.

"The gonefulness is terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter."

"Sure?" asked Bunter.

Bob Cherry grinned.

"The surefulness is also terrific," he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, good!" gasped Bunter. "I—I wasn't scared, you know. If you fellows thing I was scared, you're mistaken. I—I was looking for a gun. That's all, and I don't see anything to cackle at."

Pickle Jar had heaved overboard the body of the dead cannibal, and the

"Old" Billy Bunter—King of the Cannibals—he's a rare treat!

juniors were glad to see it go. They turned their faces away, to avoid seeing the snouts of the crocodiles that rose round the black body as it floated away in the wake of the launch.

"I say, you fellows, warm work, what?" asked Billy Bunter. "You look a bit sick, Nugent."

"I feel a bit sick, after that!" snapped Frank.

"My dear chap, buck up!" said Bunter. "Look at me! Nothing the matter with my nerve, what?"

"You fat idiot!"

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Dry up, Bunter, old bean!" said Bob Cherry.

"You're rather off colour, Cherry," said the Owl of the Remove, blinking at him through his big spectacles. "Pull yourself together, old man! Nothing to be funky about."

"Funky!" breathed Bob.

"Be a man!" urged Bunter. "Like me, you know."

Bob's eyes glinted. Now that the danger was over, Bunter, as usual, was as brave as a lion—and inclined to hint that other fellows weren't!

"What's that behind you, Bunter?" exclaimed Johnny Bull suddenly. "Look out!"

Bunter gave a wild yell. All his new-found courage oozed away from the ends of his fat fingers.

"Yow-ow-ow! Help! Yooooooooop! Help! Oh, help!"

"What's the matter with you, you young donkey?" shouted Captain Corkran, from the helm.

Bunter spun round, blinking in search of the imaginary enemy. There was nothing behind him but a heap of logs.

"Where—where is he?" gasped Bunter.

"He? Who?" asked Johnny Bull.

"You beast!" howled Bunter, realising that his fat leg had been pulled. "You said—"

"I asked you what it was behind you," chuckled Johnny Bull. "It's a stack of logs, if you want to know."

"Beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah! Rotter!"

And Billy Bunter rolled back under his mosquito-net and went to sleep.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Has His Way!

"I'M going ashore!"

"You're not!"

"Rats!"

Billy Bunter was in one of his most obstinate moods.

It was two or three days since the fight on the Congo with Casco and the cannibals. The steam-launch had made good way up the great river. Day by day she glided on, between banks thick with forest or lined with swampy mangroves, or sometimes stretching away in great plains. By shoal and sandbank and swampy island, Corkran steered ever onward, and never a sign of the white man's presence met the eyes of the explorers now. Few if any of the most eager seekers of ivory came so deep into the heart of the Black Continent.

The launch was moored now by a green bank that sloped to the water. Captain Corkran had gone ashore. The juniors understood that he was visiting some native village that lay at a little distance from the bank behind the forest. He had been absent for some hours now, though he had told the schoolboys that he was certain to return before nightfall.



A brawny black hand dropped on Bunter's shoulder from behind, and he was dragged back. The savage slung the fat junior upon his back as if he had been an infant, cast one careless glance towards the Famous Five and the launch, and made off towards the forest with his prisoner. (See Chapter 5.)

Frequently on the trip up the river the captain had gone ashore to negotiate for provisions and other supplies at native villages, handing out trade goods in return for supplies. The juniors guessed that that was his object now, and they expected to see him return at sundown, followed by a string of native bearers laden with goods. Meanwhile, he had commanded them not to leave the launch under any circumstances whatever, and to keep a sharp look-out, and to shoot down anyone who tried to get on board—orders that Harry Wharton & Co. were prepared to carry out to the very last letter.

But it was different with William George Bunter.

Bunter was bored with the launch and with waiting. For some hours he slept contentedly; after that he fed contentedly, but at last he announced his intention of going ashore to stretch his legs a little.

The sight of danger would have been enough to make the fat junior burrow into the deepest recess of the launch. But out of sight was out of mind with Bunter. He blinked ashore at the green plain sloping away to the forest, and saw no peril there—and he was tired of being cooped up in the confined space of the launch. And the opposition of the other fellows only made Bunter the more obstinate.

"Look here, Wharton!" he snapped, with a contemptuous blink at the captain of the Remove.

"Dry up!" said Harry. "You know Corkran said nobody was to go ashore under any circumstances whatever."

"Blow Corkran!"

"Well, blow him or not, you're not going!" said Wharton decidedly.

"I'm going!" roared Bunter.

"Rats!"

"The ratfulness is terrific, my esteemed Bunter," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh; "and the shuttupfulness is the proper caper."

"Go and eat coke! You fellows seem to forget that I'm chief of this party," snorted Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter gave the Famous Five a withering blink through his big spectacles.

"I'm the only fellow in this party that matters," he said. "I'm here because I can help Corkran through with my splendid ventriloquism. You fellows are no good at all; simply no use. Corkran was a fool to bring such a set of duds with him."

"Ain't he nice to listen to?" said Bob Cherry admiringly. "Keep it up, Bunter. You're breaking the monotony anyhow."

"Didn't I save all your lives with my ventriloquism, making the giddy idiot speak?" howled Bunter. "Casco and his gang would have finished you all off in the Gulf of Guinea, if I hadn't saved your lives."

"Even a fat toad may have its uses!" agreed Johnny Bull. "Your silly ventriloquism came in useful for once. Keep it for when it's wanted, though, if you give us any now, we'll bump you."

"Hard!" said Bob Cherry.

"I'm going ashore!" roared Bunter. "What you fellows have got to do is to obey my orders."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I can see myself doing it!" gasped Bob Cherry. "What orders would you give if there were an attack, Bunter? All hands hide at the bottom of the launch?"

What Happens to the Lost Schoolboys? See Next Week's Thrilling Story!

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"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "You're afraid to go ashore, anyhow, and I'm not!" jeered Bunter. "There isn't any danger. Besides, I should be with you; I'd protect you!"

"Fathead!"
 "Well, I'm going!"
 "You're not!"
 "You'll jolly well see!" howled Bunter.

The launch was moored to a tree-stump that rose out of shallow water. Between the vessel and the shore was a space of shallow mud and water, evil-smelling reeking. The customary method of getting ashore in such spots was "pick-a-back" on the back of a big Congo negro. Bunter had no intention of wading to his waist in filthy slime, and he looked round for a bearer.

"Pickle Jar!" he shouted.
 The Krooman raised his head from the hammock where he was swinging idly under the canvas awning.

"Come and carry me ashore!"
 The Krooman shook his woolly head.
 "Mass' Captain said no lib for shore," he answered.

"You cheeky nigger!" roared Bunter. "You're to do as you're told."

Pickle Jar grinned and settled back into the hammock. Billy Bunter turned his spectacles on the captain of the Remove.

"Wharton, that dashed nigger does as you tell him. Tell him he's to carry me ashore."

"Bow-wow!"
 "I'm going!" shrieked Bunter.
 "Let's see you wade it!" suggested Bob Cherry.

"Beast!"
 Billy Bunter sat down on a canvas chair and scowled. He was determined to go ashore, if only to prove that he could do as he liked—a very important point with William George Bunter. But the juniors did not heed. They knew that Bunter would never wade through the shallow slime to the bank with smelly mud up to his arm-pits, and there was no other way of getting ashore unless a black man carried him.

Wharton produced a set of pocket chess and began to play chess with Hurree Singh to while away the time. Nugent sorted an old "Gem" out of his bag to read for the third or fourth time. Johnny Bull dozed in a hammock, and Bob Cherry cleaned his rifle. Pickle Jar swung idly in his grass hammock dozing, but with one ear and one eye on the alert. On the lower deck the black crew loafed and snored. Under the blazing African sun all was quiet and still.



BILLY BUNTER.

Another important member of the Greyfriars party.

But in disregarding Billy Bunter, the Famous Five had reckoned without the Greyfriars ventriloquist.

More than once already Bunter's weird gift had come in useful in dealing with superstitious savages, and Captain Corkran had felt that he was justified in having brought Bunter to the Congo, though William George Bunter could not be called a pleasant travelling companion. More than once his ventriloquism had saved bloodshed. And Bunter was thinking out in his fat mind how to use his peculiar powers on his own account. He had been surprised at first at the effect of his ventriloquism on the blacks, but he was quite used to the idea now, and well aware of the power he wielded. He gave his fat little cough, and Bob Cherry looked round from his rifle.

"None of your stunts now, Bunter," he said. "It's too hot."

"Yah!"

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Pickle Jar in his hammock gave a sudden start. From the direction of the shore came a sharp, well-known voice—the voice of Captain Corkran.

"Pickle Jar! Pickle Jar!"
 The Krooman turned out of the grass hammock with a jump.

"Me here, Mass' Captain!"
 "Carry Mass' Bunter ashore at once!"
 "Me lib for 'bey, mass' captain."

Then Pickle Jar's knees knocked together, and he blinked round in fright. For there was no living figure to be seen on the green sloping banks or on the muddy stretch of water between the bank and the launch. He had heard Captain Corkran's voice, but Corkran was not there. Pickle Jar's black face grew as pallid as his complexion permitted.

"You fat rascal!" roared Bob Cherry.
 The Greyfriars juniors had started at the sound of the captain's voice. But as they saw that the captain was not in sight, they knew, of course, that the Remove ventriloquist was at his tricks again.

Pickle Jar blinked round him with an almost ludicrous expression of terror on his face.

"Him captain's ghost!" he gasped.
 "Mass' Captain lib for die, and him ghost speak to Pickle Jar."

"It's all right, Pickle Jar!" called out Harry Wharton.

"Him ghost speak, Mass' Harry."
 "No, no!"
 "Me lib for hear speak."

Wharton compressed his lips. It was doubtful whether the Krooman would have understood had Wharton explained. But it was impossible to explain. The secret of Bunter's ventriloquism had to be kept carefully. Captain Corkran had been very strict on that point. Above all, it was necessary that the blacks should not know how it was that the captain's ivory idol could "talk."

Bunter rose to his feet with a grin. Pickle Jar came slowly towards him.

"You know what you're to do, Pickle Jar!" grinned Bunter.

"Me lib for shore, Mass' Bunter."

"Stop!" shouted Harry, springing to his feet. The Krooman was already stooping to take Bunter on his broad shoulders.

Wharton ran towards him.
 "You're not to take Bunter ashore, Pickle Jar!" he exclaimed.
 "Mass' Captain order."

"Nonsense!"
 "He speak to Pickle Jar, him ghost!" said the Krooman, shivering. "Pickle Jar no dare disobey captain, him ghost! Lib for die if no 'bey."

"Bunter, you fat rotter——"
 "Stand back, Wharton!" said Bunter coolly. "I'm going ashore!"

"I'll hold you back by the ears if necessary," roared Bob Cherry.

"You'd better keep off if you don't want me to set the crew on you," said Bunter. "Mind, I'm not standing any rot. I'm master here!"

"You fat dummy!"

"I'll jolly well show you!" snorted Bunter. "If you want a fight with half a dozen niggers, you'd better say so. It's that, or minding your own bizney."

The Co. looked at one another. Disconcerting as it was, there was no doubt that the power was in Bunter's hands. All the black crew of the launch had heard the supposed voice of the captain, and they were trembling and staring round and jabbering together. Their superstitious fears had already been aroused, and there was no doubt whatever that they would obey any command given in the voice of "him ghost." And Bunter—who, as usual, never realised the seriousness of what he was doing—was fully prepared to put his powers to the test. Indeed, Pickle Jar himself, devoted as he was to Wharton, was evidently determined to carry Bunter ashore, in spite of opposition from the juniors. Wharton's influence was as nothing compared with "him ghost."

Bunter grinned triumphantly.
 He was master of the situation, and he knew it. The power was in his hands.

"You fellows shut up!" he said loftily. "I want you to understand that I'm master here! I've told you so before."
 "You fat rotter!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Better shut up, Bull! Like me to make the niggers tie you up and give you three dozen with a bamboo?" asked Bunter.

"Why, you—you—you——" spluttered Johnny Bull. He clenched his fists; but Wharton caught him by the arm and dragged him back. Amazing as it was, exasperating as it was, Bunter could have carried out his threat with the greatest of ease.

"Now I'm going ashore!" said Bunter victoriously. "Ready, Pickle Jar?"

And while the juniors still stood undecided, Bunter clambered on the broad shoulders of the black man. Pickle Jar stepped into the cozy mud with him, and carried him high and dry to the bank.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

In the Clutch of the Cannibal!

"WELL, my hat!" said Bob Cherry, with a deep breath.
 Harry Wharton set his teeth.

Captain Corkran had given strict orders that no one should go ashore; but he had not, of course, foreseen anything like this. No doubt he would deal severely enough with Bunter when he returned. But for the present the harm was done. The juniors could only hope that no harm would come of it.

What was beyond the fat comprehension of Billy Bunter was clear enough to their keener minds. The banks of the

Next Week's Story will interest you from end to end!

river seemed deserted in the blazing sunshine; but every tree and bush might hide a lurking enemy, for all they knew. Pickle Jar lauded his passenger, and came squealing back through the mud, stirring up strange smells as he squealed.

He gave Wharton an apologetic look as he stepped on board the launch again.

"Mass' Harry no angry?" he asked. "Me, Pickle Jar, no lib for disobey captain him ghost!"

"Never mind now," said Harry.

It was useless to be angry with the black man. Pickle Jar returned to his hammock, but not to doze. The mysterious voice of "him ghost" had fully impressed his mind, usually impressionable enough. He lay wide awake with his black eyes staring.

The juniors watched Bunter.

Billy Bunter stretched his fat legs on the shore, and trotted away contentedly. He blinked back at the launch, and, seeing five faces in a row, watching him,

The juniors watched, spellbound.

Bunter was running his hardest; but he was no sprinter. And the finest running-man at Greyfriars could never have equalled the speed of the brawny Congo savage, whose bare feet seemed scarcely to touch the ground as he raced on the track of the fat junior.

Wharton threw up his rifle; but he hesitated. In a few seconds the black man was so close behind Bunter that he could not be fired at without equal risk to the fat junior. Had he raised his spear to hurt or strike, Wharton would have risked it. But the black man evidently intended to make a prisoner of the Owl of the Remove.

Quickly it was over—a brawny black hand dropped on Bunter's shoulder from behind, and he was dragged back. He was still at a distance from the launch, but his wild yell of horror reached the ears of the Greyfriars juniors.

"Good heavens!" breathed Nugent.

a marksman a difficult task to hit him from the launch.

Wharton's aim bore on his legs—the only part he could aim at without equal danger to Bunter. The bounding of the running savage made it difficult to get an aim; but every second was precious—the Congo man was getting nearer and nearer to cover with every bound. Wharton, with a white face, but a steady finger, pressed the trigger at last.

Crack!

The report rang almost like thunder in the stillness of the tropic afternoon.

"He's hit!" yelled Bob Cherry.

The black man was seen to stagger forward and almost fall. The billet had struck one of the brawny legs.

But the savage seemed to recover himself as the juniors were expecting him to pitch headlong. Instead of falling, he bounded on again, and a moment more was enough for him—he disappeared behind the screen of straggling bush



Suddenly, through an opening of the trees, the juniors caught sight of a huge, hairy body. "A gorilla!" muttered Bob Cherry faintly. The huge brute, more than six feet high as it stood upon its hind legs, clutched in one hand a heavy club. (See Chapter 8.)

he waved a fat hand in lofty derision. Then he trotted on towards the dense woods in quest of tropical fruits.

"The fat fool's very likely running into danger!" growled Johnny Bull.

"The likefulness is terrific!"

Wharton bit his lip.

"If he does, it's his own fault," he said. "We can't help him now. Why—what—what—look!"

Bunter was still in easy sight, when he came to a sudden halt. For a moment or two he stood stock still, as if his little fat legs had been rooted to the ground. Then, with a squeal of terror, he turned and came tearing back towards the launch.

"Something's up," breathed Bob.

The next moment the juniors saw what was "up." From the cover of a straggling thorny bush a black man leaped into sight. He was a tall, powerful savage, clad only in a loin-cloth, his black skin glistening in the sun-blaze. He had a long spear in his grasp, but he did not use it. He started in pursuit of the running junior, with the fleetness of a deer.

Bunter was no light-weight, but the brawny savage slung him upon his shoulder as if he had been an infant. The fat junior hung there like a sack, without movement, and it looked as if he had fainted from sheer terror.

The black man cast one careless glance towards the launch, and then started back towards the forest with his unconscious prisoner.

Even with the weight of Bunter on his shoulder he ran fast. Harry Wharton took careful aim. Pursuit of the black man was hopeless on foot, and, at the risk of hitting Bunter, there was nothing for it but to shoot.

"For Heaven's sake be careful, Harry!" breathed Bob.

The captain of the Remove did not reply. All his attention was concentrated on his aim. He felt that there would be no time for more than one shot. Johnny Bull had already blazed off a bullet, which flew wide.

The black savage was bounding like a roebuck, evidently knowing all about the white man's firearms, and desiring to give

from which he had emerged to attack Bunter.

"He's wounded!" muttered Wharton, with white lips. "But—"

"May have fallen behind that bush!" said Bob. "But—"

"Bunter's gone!" said Johnny Bull huskily. All the offences of the fat junior were forgotten in that terrible moment, in the presence of the fearful danger he had brought on himself.

Pickle Jar's voice chimed in.

"Him lib for chop, Mass' Harry!"

"What?" muttered Wharton.

"No kill with spear—like um better alive to chop," explained Pickle Jar calmly. "Mass' Bunter fat—make berry good chop!" To the horrified juniors it seemed as if Pickle Jar licked his lips in appreciation of the "chop" he was describing.

"You mean they—they—they'll eat him!" mumbled Nugent.

Pickle Jar nodded.

"Fat feller berry good chop!" he said. Wharton drew a deep breath.

"Captain Corkran ordered us to stay

Harry Wharton & Co.'s Strange Adventures on the Congo Next Week!

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on the launch," he said. "But this—this alters it! We can't leave Bunter to that! Better be wiped out, the lot of us, than leave a schoolfellow to black cannibals. I'm going after Bunter!"

"And we're coming with you!" said Bob.

"Some of us had better stay on the launch," said Harry doubtfully.

"All together," said Johnny Bull quickly. "Whoever goes after that fiend isn't likely to come back alive; no good blinking that. But it's up to us, and we're all in together."

"Pickle Jar can keep guard while we're gone," said Frank Nugent. "Tell the niggers to get us ashore quick, Harry!"

There was no time for argument. Wharton rapped out a few orders to the Kwoomen. Water-bottles were strapped on, and a few provisions hurriedly crammed into rucksacks, bandoliers were slung on, and then the juniors took their rifles in hand. How far the pursuit of the cannibal might lead them they could not even surmise, but upon one point they were resolved—only death should force them to leave Bunter in the hands of the merciless Congo savages.

Five of the black crew bore them ashore—Pickle Jar remaining in charge of the launch, promising to take every care, and to report to "Mass' Captain" when he returned—if he returned at all. Pickle Jar was doubtful on that point,

rag from his loin-cloth round the wound in his leg. The track of the bare, hard feet ran on, marked here and there with drops of crimson, into the dark shades of the forest.

The Congo forest, dense and dark with tropical vegetation, had swallowed up the cannibal and his captive from sight. Harry Wharton & Co. looked at the dusky, tangled wood, and looked at one another. Then the captain of the Remove spoke tersely:

"Come on!"

And, rifle in hand, the five juniors of Greyfriars ran on into the forest, following the track that was marked with blood.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Saving Bunter!

FROM the blaze of brilliant sunshine on the bank of the Congo the juniors plunged into dense shade. For a few minutes they kept on the run, then they had to drop into a walk. Before them the trees thickened, tangled with luxuriant creepers. Round them the forest was trackless—the vegetation so thick that they could not see a few yards in advance. From branches above black-faced monkeys grinned and chattered, and parrots of many colours screamed. Once a hideous thing, gleaming with prismatic

But unless he found danger close on him, the savage was sure to cling to Bunter, from the keen desire to take the fat prisoner home alive for a cannibal "chop" in his village. How near that village might be the juniors could not guess. If it was close at hand they were running upon destruction, and they knew it. But it was likely enough that the black man was far from home on a hunting excursion. They had to take the chance.

The forest fell away at last in a swampy glade. Sickly smells of stagnant water made the air heavy and foul; rushes and reeds of a bright, unhealthy green glimmered before the juniors; lizards and foul insects swarmed in the ooze. Knee-deep in filthy ooze and rotten greenery, the juniors plunged on; and Bob Cherry uttered a sudden low exclamation.

"There he is!"

Across the glade, less than a hundred yards distant, they sighted the Congo man. The insensible Bunter was sprawling on his black, brawny shoulder, lifeless to all appearance. Beyond the swamp the thick forest recommenced, but the black man had not reached its shelter yet.

"Halt!" muttered Wharton.

The juniors stopped, and the captain of the Remove dropped on one knee, and sighted his rifle across a log.

NEXT MONDAY.

FREE REAL PHOTO OF Middlesbrough's Famous Team!

since he had heard the mysterious voice of "him ghost." But to the launch, and even to Corkran, Harry Wharton & Co. gave little thought just then. Corkran could always care for himself, and the launch was as nothing compared with the life of their schoolfellow. Bunter had brought his fearful peril upon himself by his own folly and obstinacy; but it was no time to think of that.

The black bearers landed the juniors on the green bank, and they ran, rifle in hand, towards the straggling bushes behind which the black man had disappeared with Billy Bunter.

At any moment, as they knew, a spear might whizz out of the bushes with the deadly aim of the Congo tribesman; but they hardly thought of the danger. It was a danger that could not be avoided, if they were to rescue Bunter.

But no spear hurtled through the air. Either the black man was helpless from his wound, or he had fled farther. The juniors came trampling breathlessly through the bushes.

"He's gone!" panted Bob.

Harry Wharton halted where a pool of blood showed in the herbage. He bent and examined the traces; and his knowledge from old practice as a Boy Scout came in very useful now. He could read the "sign" where the Congo man had fallen or lain down, dropping Bunter. But the black man's halt had been brief, probably for the purpose of binding a

hues, glided almost under their feet, and it was not till the horror had vanished in the brake that they realised that they had almost trodden upon a huge snake.

It was with grave faces—almost grim—that the juniors pushed on now. But they did not pause or hesitate.

Before them, somewhere in the tangled forest, the Congo savage was tramping on with his prisoner. Death in a hundred forms threatened them on all sides, but their hearts did not fail. Better death than abandoning a schoolfellow in the clutch of the cannibal. That was the thought in all minds now.

Here and there the track of the Congo man was lost; but for the fact that he was wounded the juniors would probably have lost it altogether. But on herbage or twig or branch they found the tell-tale spatter of blood from the black man's wound. And it was clear that the man was lagging—his injury was telling upon him. The track grew fresher; and once, in an opening of the woods, Wharton caught an instant's glimpse of the savage with his prisoner slung over his brawny shoulder.

The black man did not look behind; the juniors hoped that he did not know that he was followed. For if he found pursuit close at his heels, it was only too likely that he would finish his prisoner with a thrust of his spear. Unburdened, he could have escaped easily enough in the brake, wounded as he was.

Still the black man did not look back, evidently not aware that he was pursued. The Co. stood silent, watching, waiting for Wharton to fire.

"Crack!"

A loud and fearful cry answered the shot, and the black savage pitched forward and fell upon his face. Bunter, hurled from him as he fell, rolled on the ground two or three yards from him.

"Oh, good man!" panted Bob Cherry. "Come on!"

The juniors raced on.

The swampy ooze splashed round them as they rushed on at top speed. Bunter lay where he had fallen, without movement; but after a second or two the Congo man struggled up, and groped for the spear he had dropped. He spun round towards the juniors, and stood facing them, staggering. The spear was clutched in his hand, and his black face blazed with ferocity.

His second wound was evidently more severe than the first, for he could hardly keep his feet. But it was plain that he was bent upon fighting to the last, like a rat in a corner, now that escape was impossible.

The juniors came on as fast as they could, fearful that the savage might turn his spear upon the helpless Bunter before they came up.

A yell of mingled pain and fury broke from the black savage as they came up,

Monarch of the black savages—Billy Bunter's Just Great!

and he brandished the spear and staggered towards them. Five rifles rang out at that moment, and the gigantic black tottered and fell, riddled with bullets.

With a crashing splash, he dropped into the ooze of the swamp, which almost covered him as he lay.

Wharton shivered a little as he turned away from the terrible sight. It was but a few short weeks since he had been at Greyfriars—and the ferocious life of the heart of Africa was still new to him. A thousand years of civilisation had been left behind the Greyfriars juniors when they came up the Congo.

But it was no time to think of that. Harry Wharton dropped on his knees beside Bunter.

"Bil'ly, old chap!" he panted. Bunter's eyes were closed, his spectacles still clung to his fat little nose.

"He's fainted!" said Bob. "He's not hurt."

The juniors lifted Bunter, and carried him beyond the edge of the swamp, to firm ground under the trees. There they set him down. Wharton glanced back at the fallen cannibal. The dead man was sinking out of sight in the slimy ooze; a few minutes later he had disappeared from sight altogether.

For the next ten minutes the Famous Five were busy with Bunter. Water was splashed on his face from Wharton's bottle; and at last his eyes opened and blinked up at them dizzily.

"Buck up, old son!" said Bob Cherry. "All serene now!"

"Oh, dear!"

"You're all right, Bunter."

"Help!" moaned Bunter.

"It's all right, old fellow," said Harry Wharton soothingly.

Bunter blinked at him dazedly, as if not understanding. It was only slowly that realisation came back to the fat junior. He shuddered and sat up, trembling.

"I—I say, you fellows—" he muttered.

"All serene, old top."

"He got hold of me," shuddered Bunter. "I—I—where is he?"

"Gone," said Nugent. "It's all right."

"Gone! He'll come back!" quavered the Owl of the Remove.

"He won't come back!" said Wharton grimly.

Bunter gave a terrified howl.

"I tell you he'll come back! Let's get away! I—I can't walk—you fellows carry me—"

"He won't come back," said Johnny Bull. "He's dead, and sunk under the swamp. It's all right, I tell you, Bunter."

"Oh!" said Bunter.

He sat silent for a while, breathing hard. The shock he had received had been a terrible one, and it was not easy for the fat junior to pull himself together.

But there was no time to be lost. The afternoon had been growing old when the juniors left the launch, and a considerable time had elapsed since then. The thought of being overtaken by the night in the trackless forest was unnerving. At the best it would not be easy to find the way back to the steam-launch.

"Can you start now, Bunter?" asked Wharton gently enough.

"I—I'll try!" said Bunter.

With the help of the juniors, he staggered to his feet. And then the party set off, back across the swampy

glade. When they passed the spot where the black man had fallen, there was no sign to be seen of him; the ooze had buried him deep. And the juniors, in spite of their courage, could not help wondering whether a similar fate was not to be theirs in the gloomy depths of the Congo forest.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Night of Terror!

"I CAN'T go on!"

Bunter hung heavily upon Wharton and Bob Cherry, who walked on either side of him.

For once the fat junior was not "malingering." He was tired and exhausted. The tramp through the tangled forest was telling on the other fellows, sturdy and fit as they were; and Bunter was neither fit nor sturdy.

He groaned at every step, and several times his companions had had to lift him over obstacles in the path—fallen logs, rotting tree-trunks, bushes bristling with long, sharp thorns. The pace of the party was necessarily that of the slowest member; and to the anxious juniors it was like crawling. The shadows of the forest were deepening; the tropical twilight was at hand; and that region the twilight was brief. Once darkness fell, the juniors knew that they could not proceed with any hope of finding the way. Even now they found it difficult to pick up the track by which they had come.

"Keep on, old chap!" murmured Wharton encouragingly.

"I can't!" groaned Bunter.

"Put it on, old fellow," said Bob Cherry. "We're not far from the launch now."

Bob spoke more cheerfully than he felt. He knew that it must be still a good distance to the spot where the launch was moored. And between lay the tangled and almost impenetrable forest.

Bunter sank down so heavily that his helpers had to let him go. He sat on a log and groaned.

"I'm done!" he mumbled. "I say, you fellows, don't leave me!"

"We're not going to leave you, Bunter."

The juniors consulted in low tones. At the pace at which they had been travelling, it was doubtful whether they could get out of the forest before night-fall. To carry Bunter meant making the pace still slower, and losing the last slim chance.

"We've got to stop!" said Wharton, at last. "Lucky we brought some food and water with us. We shall have to camp, and get on to the launch in the morning."

"Nothing else for it," said Nugent.

"Captain Corkran must be back at the launch by now," said Bob. "Pickle Jar will have told him. Suppose we fire our rifles; we can't be too far away for them to hear it at the launch."

Various Stages in the Lives of Greyfriars Celebrities.

No. 2.—HURREE JAMSET RAM SINGH.



In his fat hands lies the fate of his old School-chums.

"That's so," said Wharton slowly, "but—"

"But what?" asked Nugent.

"Others may hear, too. That wretch who collared Bunter is not likely to be the only black savage lurking in the forest."

"I—I suppose so."

It was difficult to decide. And the last few minutes of daylight were going now.

The gloom under the trees blackened into darkness; from day to night was only a question of a few minutes.

The juniors peered at one another now, hardly able to see each other's faces in the deep gloom.

"We can't go on, at any rate," said Bob. "It's camping here for the night, or signalling to the launch with the rifles. It's possible that Corkran is already searching for us—and if so, that would guide him."

"That settles it!" said Harry, with a nod.

Bunter took no part in the discussion; he was already fast asleep, leaning on the tree-trunk. Having decided on their course of action, the juniors lost no time. It was quite dark now, and the blackness round them seemed almost like a wall. From the gloom on all sides came the strange, unnerving sounds of the awakening forest—the howls and roaring of wild beasts seeking their prey.

The sharp, staccato report of a rifle rang out, followed at regular intervals by shot after shot. How far they still were from the launch the juniors did not know; but they felt assured that the launch was within hearing of the rifle-shots. If Captain Corkran was there, he could not fail to hear the regular reports, and to understand that the lost juniors were signalling.

The danger that the signalling might draw to the spot other savage denizens of the forest was one that could not be avoided.

But it was a very real danger.

Faintly, through the tree-tops tangled together, came a silvery glimmer, and the juniors knew that the moon was up. The pale, faint light filtered through narrow openings in the thick foliage overhead.

It was a pale, ghostly light, which barely enabled the juniors to see one another, and the hemming vegetation that shut them in.

Crack, crack, crack!

The signal shots rang out.

Crack! came faintly from the distance. The juniors started as they heard the shot.

"That's an answer!" breathed Bob Cherry.

"Corkran's heard, and he's signalling to us that he's heard!" said Harry Wharton with a nod. "He must be a good distance, though, from the sound."

"That's so."

Wharton fired his signal shot again. Again it was answered faintly from the distance.

"Look out!" breathed Bob suddenly.

He pointed with a shaking finger. From the surrounding gloom, two points of glimmering fire glinted and gleamed. The juniors could see nothing but those two fiery points—but they knew that they were the eyes of a wild beast—whether a lion, leopard, or hyena they could not guess.

For some minutes they watched the blazing eyes, spellbound, with their rifles ready for use, hoping that the unseen animal would pass on its way. But the blazing eyes remained motionless,

staring almost unwinkingly through the gloom. Then there came at last a faint brushing sound—the sound of an animal creeping stealthily through the brake. The two balls of fire gleamed nearer.

"Shoot!" muttered Frank Nugent. "He's coming for us—"

"All together!" breathed Wharton.

Closer and closer the animal was creeping; and still only those two terrible eyes could be seen. It was at the eyes that the juniors aimed, and fired a volley.

A cat-like howl followed the fire, and the bright light of one of the eyes was suddenly blotted out. A heavy body whizzed through the air, dropping again almost at the feet of the Greyfriars juniors.

In the pale, dim light, the juniors could see the creature now—a huge, spotted leopard. The animal was hard hit, and covered with blood—only its injuries had caused it to fall short in its spring, and saved the life of at least one of the juniors. The huge cat sprawled on the ground, with thrashing claws, and the juniors backed hurriedly, firing again and again, riddling the tearing, thrashing animal with bullets. Billy Bunter started out of his sleep with a cry of alarm, as the great body of the leopard stretched in death only a few feet from him.

"It—it's dead!" stammered Nugent. "Help!" yelled Bunter.

He staggered up, and plunged away into the forest. The tearing and yelling of the leopard so close at hand had scared the fat junior almost out of his wits.

"Stop!" roared Bob Cherry.

He rushed after Bunter, and caught him by the shoulder and stopped him in time.

"Come back, you fat duffer!"

"Ow! Oh, dear!"

"For goodness' sake, don't let's get separated!" exclaimed Frank Nugent. "Stick here, Bunter."

"Oh, dear! Ow! I say, you fellows, I'm fed up with this!" wailed Bunter. "It's awfully dark! Ow!"

"Dry up, old chap," said Bob.

"Beast! I wish I was at Greyfriars!"

"I think we all wish that, at the present moment," said Harry. "But it's no use grousing, Bunter."

"The grousefulness is not the proper caper, my esteemed fat Bunter," murmured Hurree Singh.

"Beast!" groaned Bunter. "It's all your fault, you fellows. You ought to have stopped that black villain getting hold of me. You ought to have found the way back. Oh, dear!"

"You fat boulder!" snapped Johnny Bull. "All this comes of your going ashore against orders."

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter groaned dismally. He was satisfied to lay all the blame on the shoulders of his comrades; but there was not much solace even in that. The darkness and the sounds of the forest kept his nerves in a twitter of apprehension. And there were grounds for his fears, as the juniors well knew.

Wharton had recommenced the signal firing, when suddenly there came a sound from the gloomy forest that almost froze the blood in the veins of the

juniors. It was an animal yell—loud, prolonged, piercing, yet deep—ringing strangely, eerily, terribly, in the echoing forest. Bunter gave a gasp of terror, and the juniors drew together in a shuddering group.

"What—what was that?" breathed Nugent, gripping his rifle almost convulsively.

"Heaven knows!" muttered Wharton.

"Listen! There it is again!"

Again through the forest rang that strange, terrible cry, nearer to the spot where the shuddering schoolboys stood.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Lost in the Forest!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. did not move.

That terrible cry from the depths of the gloomy African forest sent thrills to their very hearts, and their faces were pale in the dim twilight of the moon.

That it came from some wild and savage animal they knew; but what animal it was they could not guess. It was strange to their ears; they had not heard it before during their voyage up the Congo. It was not the cry of a lion, leopard, or hyena—it was not the trumpeting roar of the elephant, or the howl of the jackal. But it evidently came from some powerful throat, and it was full of hideous ferocity.

Again it rang out, echoing among the trees and tangled thickets nearer and nearer to the juniors. They heard a sound as of some great body brushing among the underwoods, but they could see nothing but foliage round them, faintly tinted with silver moonlight filtering from overhead.

"I—I say, you fellows, let's cut!" gasped Bunter, through his chattering teeth. "Get away—let's get away—quick!"

The fat junior, in his terror, forgot his fatigue. Louder and louder the cry rang again, and louder sounded the parting of twigs and boughs under the thrust of a heavy, moving body. Suddenly, through an opening in the trees where the moonlight fell in a pool of light, the juniors caught sight of a huge, hairy body—it looked, at first glance, like that of a gigantic man clad in hairy skins; but at the second glance they knew what it was.

"A gorilla!" muttered Bob faintly.

The huge brute, more than six feet high as it stood upon its hind legs, clutched in one hand a heavy club. Its little red eyes gleamed round, as if in search.

For the moment the hearts of the Greyfriars juniors almost failed them. The terrible beast was in sight only for a moment or two; then as it moved, the swaying foliage hid the threatening form.

But that the gorilla was searching for them, they felt was certain. Possibly the sound of the rifles had roused its attention. Quite close at hand now, the foliage rustled and swayed under the impact of the huge body, and the terrible yell of the gorilla rang and echoed. It was answered now by another yell in the distance, and then another.

"Run for it!" panted Bunter.

"Better cut!" whispered Wharton.

It was obviously the only thing to be done. At close quarters the rifles would have been of little use against the huge gorilla. Once the terrible beast had reached them, the schoolboys would have

(Continued on page 17.)

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2

A Strange Dilemma for the Daring Greyfriars Chums Next Week!



THE MATCH BY MOONLIGHT!



A DRAMATIC INTERRUPTION! Armed with his cane, Mr. Quelch stalked on to the field of play. "Boys!" he thundered. "This is disgraceful! What do you mean by playing football at this hour?" The footballers stopped playing and blinked sheepishly at Mr. Quelch in the moonlight.

THE Remove had already retired to bed when a challenge to a moonlight football match was issued by Temple of the Upper Fourth.

It was just like Temple to send such a cheeky challenge when he knew very well that the Remove's best men—Harry Wharton & Co.—were absent.

"What shall we do about it, you fellows?" inquired Vernon-Smith.

"Play!" urged a dozen voices.

"Yes, rather!"

"We'll wipe up the ground with the Upper Fourth!"

So Smithy sent a reply to Temple's dormitory to the effect that the Remove would be pleased to tackle the Upper Fourth at midnight, on Little Side.

Naturally, there was tremendous excitement. The Remove footballers rose at quarter to twelve, and donned their shorts and jerseys. It was bright moonlight outside—almost as light as day.

"Will you referee the match, Newland?" asked Vernon-Smith. And I cheerfully assented.

We let ourselves down from the dormitory window by means of a rope of knotted sheets. It was a risky business. On the one hand, there was a chance that the rope might break; on the other hand, there was always the risk of a master coming along.

When we reached the football ground—having accomplished the descent in safety—there was no sign of Temple & Co.

"They've funk'd it!" said Tom Redwing, in disgust.

We hung about till past midnight, shivering in our scanty attire. And we were just thinking of giving it up as a bad job, and going back to our dormitory, when the Fourth-Formers arrived. They explained that they had been delayed owing to the fact that Mr. Capper was on the prowl, and they had had to wait until the coast was clear.

Temple and Smithy tossed for choice of ends, and the ball was set in motion.

It was a weird spectacle—twenty-two players dashing about the field at dead of night.

The Upper Fourth attacked hotly, and Temple sent in a fast, rising shot which Bulstrode, in the Remove goal, could not quite get to.

About a dozen Remove spectators had turned out to see the fun, and they groaned in chorus.

"Goal!"

"Dry up, you asses!" exclaimed Peter Todd. "This match has got to be watched in silence. We want no groans and no cheers, or we shall have the beaks coming to see what's going on."

Play was resumed, and the Remove forwards set up a desperate attack. Twice Vernon-Smith hit the crossbar, and then Squiff fastened on to the ball and fired in a shot which knocked the goalie backwards into the net. The Remove had drawn level.

The players had quickly adapted themselves to the novel conditions. They played as if they were thoroughly used to moonlight football.

For the next ten minutes the ball bobbed about in midfield. Then Temple & Co. broke away. Bulstrode, falling flat, pushed out a hot drive by Temple, but Dabney dashed up and shot hard into the net. This goal put the Upper Fourth in front, and they began to take matters easily, no doubt thinking they had the game well in hand.

It was a fatal mistake. The Remove at once set up a fierce attack, and Dick Penfold scored twice in as many minutes. On each occasion he received a perfectly placed pass from Vernon-Smith.

The Remove spectators, carried off their feet with excitement, forgot Peter Todd's warning, and cheered lustily.

"Hurrah!"

"We're in front!"

"Good old Penfold!"

Before the cheering could be checked, it reached the ears of Mr. Quelch, who was working late in his study.

Next Week—a Grand Adventure Number of the "Herald"!

At first the Remove master could scarcely believe his ears.

"Can it be possible," he murmured, "that those young rascals are playing football at this hour?"

He soon found that it was not only possible—it was a fact.

Armed with his cane, Mr. Quelch shortly afterwards came stalking on to the field of play.

"Boys," he thundered, "this is disgraceful! What do you mean by playing football at this hour?"

The game had ceased as if by magic. The footballers blinked sheepishly at Mr. Quelch in the moonlight.

"Temple," rapped out the Remove master, "I shall report you and your Form fellows to Mr. Capper, who will doubtless administer condign punishment. You will return to your dormitory at once!"

Temple & Co. walked away, looking very glum.

"As for the rest of you," said Mr. Quelch, glaring at the Removites, "I shall deal with you here and now! You will line up in a row, and hold out your hands in turn."

"Do you mean the players only, sir, or the spectators as well?" asked Bolsover major.

"Both!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

The whole crowd of us lined up for the execution. And Quelch did not spare the rod. He gave us three stinging cuts each, and he was quite breathless by the time he had reached the end of the row.

"You will now return to your beds," he panted, "and, in addition to the punishment I have already administered, you will forfeit the next half-holiday!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Squeezing our hands tightly together, we followed in the wake of Temple & Co.

The moonlight football match was unfinished. Had it been played out, I feel confident the Remove would have won.

Vernon-Smith actually suggested that a reply should take place the following night. But the other fellows demurred. They had had enough moonlight football to last them for the rest of the term!

EDITORIAL!

By PETER TODD.

THIS, dear reader, is the second number which I have produced. Last week the editorship was thrust upon me at a moment's notice, and I was not able to do very much in the way of a special number. But this week I have more time to devote to the old HERALD, and have been able to collect a fine batch of stories and articles.

I have received several letters from Harry Wharton & Co. and Billy Bunter, who by this time must be right into the wilds of Africa, and I am publishing several of the messages.

At a Special Emergency Meeting of the Remove, I was duly elected to fill Harry Wharton's shoes in his absence. Full details of the voting appear on another page.

I confess to have felt somewhat like a fish out of water at the moment. To be thrust into the editorial chair at five minutes' notice fairly takes a fellow's breath away, but I am getting my bearings now.

Call me conceited and cocksure if you like, but I have every confidence in my ability to control the welfare of this paper during Wharton's absence. If I lacked that confidence, I should not have taken on the job. Clustered around me, as I write, are a number of willing helpers; and with the loyal assistance of Vernon-Smith, Tom Brown & Co., I have no doubt I shall get along famously.

Ad revoir until next week.

PETER TODD.

THE SEAT OF THE MIGHTY!

Written by DICK PENFOLD.

Recited by PETER TODD.

I wear the editorial crown

In Harry Wharton's stead;

I sit and write from morn till night,

And now I feel half-dead!

Oh for a hefty lump of ice

To cool my fevered brow!

I have to work just like a Turk,

For I'm the editor now!

My gallant "subs" around me stand,

And wait at my decree;

They scribble verse, and what is more,

They make sly digs at me!

Dick Penfold brings his ballad in,

And makes a mocking bow;

I murmur then "No cheek, young Pen,

For I'm the editor now!"

There's pools of ink upon the floor,

And smears upon the ceiling;

While on the wall, quite plain to all,

The beastly stuff's congealing!

I cannot think who put it there,

Or when, or why, or how;

There's ink here, there, and everywhere,

For I'm the editor now!

If Harry Wharton stays away

Much longer than a week,

'Twill turn my brain quite insane,

A mental home I'll seek.

I'm working in an atmosphere

Of din, and strife, and row;

Can't get away to rest or play

For I'm the editor now!

My hands are numbed with writer's

cramp;

My head is spinning round;

I simply long to join the throng

Upon the football-ground.

But work is work, and play is play,

And work comes first, I vow;

I dare not stop, or shut up shop,

For I'm the editor now!

HOW I SEE OTHER FELLOWS!

By Frank Nugent.



CLARENCE CUFFY.

(The Duffer of Rookwood.)

WARNING TO GREYFRIARS SCRIBES!

By PETER TODD.

Stories submitted to me for consideration should not exceed two-and-a-half billion words in length.

Stories of a sensational nature, dealing with such notorious characters as Jack the Ripper, or Sweeney Todd, the demon barber of Fleet Street, will be fed to the flames. (By the way, Sweeney Todd was no ancestor of mine.)

All poems submitted must be in rhyme. We have no use for blank verse in this paper. Bolsover major has just sent me a poem commencing:

"Bill Bashem was a boxer bold,
He had no rival in the Ring.
Straight from the shoulder shot his left,
Down went his victim for the count."

If Bolsover calls that poetry, I must strongly disagree with him. The verse would have looked much better like this:

"Bill Bashem was the boxing king,
He had no rival in the Ring.
He dealt in lifts, and thuds, and whacks,
And his opponents spluttered 'Pax!'"

Contributions that are published will be paid for at the rate of sixpence per column; and any fellow who does the Oliver Twist stunt of asking for more will be ejected on his neck.

Our advertisement offices will be found in Study No. 2. Tom Brown has been authorised to accept small advertisements on behalf of this paper. A fee of fourpence per line will be charged, and cash must be handed to Browney in advance.

Any would-be contributor who interrupts the editor during a busy moment will be banished from the editorial spectrum with peashooters, ink-squirts, cushions, and prehistoric eggs!

The editor reserves the right to publish exactly what he thinks he will. The opinions of others will be ignored, and they can jolly well keep off the grass.

I find that our Greyfriars artists were getting far too much money while Wharton was in charge of the paper. During my editorship, they will be paid at the rate of a penny per picture. No complaints, threats, or blustering will be listened to.

Contributions from Harry Wharton & Co., the schoolboy adventurers,—



Special Emergency Meeting!

Election of a New Temporary Editor!

Contributed by our Special Correspondent,
S. Q. I. FIELD.

A WEEK or two ago there was a special meeting of the Remove Emergency Committee. Harry Wharton took the chair. (I don't know where he took it, but I hope he put it back again.)

The Chairman: "Ladies and gentlemen—Bob Cherry: 'Puzzle—find the ladies!'"

The Chairman: "There is only one lady here, and that's Skinner."

Johnny Bull: "Skinner a lady! How do you make that out, Mr. Chairman?"

The Chairman: "Well, you see, he's always very much a-miss!" (Laughter.)

Bob-over major: "Cut the cackle, and come to the horses!"

The Chairman: "Gentlemen—and Bolsover major: this meeting has been convened for the purpose of electing a new temporary editor, in my enforced absence. As you are aware, to-day I shall be proceeding to the Congo. My trusty assistants, Bob Cherry, Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull, and the esteemed and ludicrous Nabob of Bhanpur, will accompany me. So will Billy Bunter."

Tom Brown: "Then we shall want two temporary editors—one for the 'Greyfriars Herald,' and one for 'Billy Bunter's Weekly.'"

The Chairman: "This meeting is concerned solely with the 'Herald.' Bunter must make his own arrangements, so far as the carrying on of his 'Weekly' is concerned."

Billy Bunter: "It's all right, Wharton. I'm quite capable of managing my own affairs. One of my sub-editors will run the 'Weekly' in my absence. Now, you are wanting a temporary editor for the 'Herald.' I propose my minor Sammy for the post."

At this point, howls of execration arose.

Billy Bunter: "Will no one second that?"

Back Penfold: "No jolly fear! We want a real live editor—not a half-witted, feeble-minded young porpoise!" (Laughter.)

The Chairman: "Order, please! Let this thing be done with due dignity and solemnity. I beg to move—"

Skinner: "It's about time you did move! We're fed up with your jaw."

The Chairman: "Another word from you, my friend, and I shall have you ejected with violence! As I was saying, I beg to move that Peter Todd be elected temporary editor of the 'Herald,' in my place."

Bob Cherry: "I beg to second that proposition!"

Frank Nugent: "Carried unanimously!"

Tom Redwing: "Half a tick! Don't be in such a frantic hurry! Toddy isn't the only candidate for election, I beg to propose Vernon-Smith for the post."

Dick Russell: "I second that!"

William Stott: "I beg to propose my hurly and brainy pal, Bolsover major!"

Sidney Snoop: "Hear, hear!"

The Chairman: "Any more candidates?"

Fisher T. Fish: "I kinder guess and calculate that the 'Herald' should shut up shop while Wharton's away. We can easily do without the potty rag for a few weeks."

The Chairman: "Will somebody be good enough to tweak the American gent's nose?"

Johnny Bull: "Ay, ay, cap'n!"

The long nose of Fisher T. Fish was duly tweaked. There was a wild yell of anguish, after which order was restored.

The Chairman: "I take it there are no more candidates for election, apart from Toddy, Smithy, and Bolsover major?"

Wun Lung: "Me tinkee me makeee velly good editor."



Peter Todd was chaired by the cheering juniors.

Bob Cherry: "Think again, old scout! Personally, I consider the readers would jolly soon get sick and tired of Special Chinese Numbers!"

typewriter, a bicycle, or a gramophone. The first offer will be accepted, so write at once, or you will be too late. The mittens are wonderful things. They were knitted for me by my Aunt Selma.—Apply HAROLD SKINNER, Remove Form, Greyfriars School.

PAIR OF SNOWSHOES FOR SALE. We are bound to get some snow some time during the winter, even if it's only a slight sprinkle. With my snowshoes adorning your feet, you will be able to laugh at all the unfortunates who are going about in patent leather shoes! Those who take any size less than nines need not apply.—OLIVER KIPPS, Remove, Greyfriars School.

WOOLLEN SLEEPING BAG WANTED, so that I can curl up like a dormouse and go to sleep in it for the

The Chairman: "Wun Lung's frivolous claim for consideration is overruled. We will now put the matter to the vote. Those in favour of Percy Bolsover as temporary editor of the 'Greyfriars Herald,' show their hands!"

Three hands went up. Bolsover major scowled. The chairman grinned.

The Chairman: "I'm afraid it's a wash-out, Bolsy, so far as you are concerned. Those in favour of Peter Todd as editor, show their hands!"

Nineteen hands went up.

The Chairman: "Quite a good response! We will now count the votes of those in favour of Vernon-Smith."

Eighteen hands were shown.

The Chairman: "A jolly close thing! I sympathise with Smithy on his narrow defeat, but no doubt Toddy will appoint him his right-hand man."

Peter Todd: "I certainly shall. As a writer on sports topics, Smithy has no equal in the Remove, and I shall welcome and value his assistance."

The Chairman: "I have much pleasure in announcing that Peter Todd has been duly elected temporary editor of the 'Greyfriars Herald.' He will be responsible for the welfare of the paper until my return."

Peter Todd: "Although you fellows are off to the Congo, in search of adventure and what not, I take it you will be able to send me contributions from time to time?"

The Chairman: "Rather!"

Peter Todd: "Now, what about sub-editors?"

The Chairman: "It is up to you to select your own."

Peter Todd: "Very well. I hereby appoint Vernon-Smith, Tom Brown, Mark Luley, and Sampson Quincey Isley Field to serve as sub-editors."

Bolsover major: "Where do I come in?"

Peter Todd: "You don't—you stay out!"

Billy Bunter: "I say, you fellows, isn't my minor Sammy to be in the picture?"

Chorus of howls and hoots and hisses.

The Chairman: "Having duly elected a temporary editor, the meeting will now close. I am very pleased to hand over the editorial control to such a capable fellow as Peter Todd, and I have every confidence in him to keep the flag gallantly flying until our return."

Peter Todd briefly replied, and the meeting broke up and chaired Peter Todd out of the Rag.

winter. Will pay any price for the sleeping bag, so long as it's within reason, begad!—Write LORD MAULEVERER, "Home of Rest," Remove Passage, Greyfriars School.

"The cold winds do blow, and we shall have snow. And what will the fellows do then, poor things? Why, they'll want heating stoves in their studies, to keep them nice and warm. I have a wonderful heating stove in my possession. Found it on the scrap heap the other morning, and took it along to my study. I've thoroughly overhauled it, and filled it with oil, and it's in good working order. What do I ask for this magnificent stove? A hundred pounds? Not likely! A tenner? No jolly fear! Just a humble tanner! Write at once, for the bargain of a lifetime, to TOM BROWN, Remove, Greyfriars School.

FOR SALE and EXCHANGE!

SECOND-HAND FOOTBALL for sale. Owner will be perfectly candid, and admit that the ball has been in the wars. The bladder has burst, the lace is missing, and the outer cover is badly punctured. But some ingenious youth may be able to patch the poor old footer up, and give it a new lease of life. I am willing to sell it for foppence (a penny discount for cash). Apply, DICK RUSSELL, Remove, Greyfriars School.

ADVERTISER will exchange a pair of woollen mittens (in good condition, and highly suitable for winter wear) for a

woollen sleeping bag WANTED, so that I can curl up like a dormouse and go to sleep in it for the

—will appear in next week's Bumper Issue of the Supplement!

Supplement (iii.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 771.

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION?

Write to the "Parliament" about it, and win one of our Special Money Prizes.



MR. PETER TODD (Deputy Speaker) took the chair at the ordinary weekly meeting of the Greyfriars Parliament on Monday, when there was a good muster of members.

Mr. Peter Todd: "It is my pleasant duty to chronicle the fact that the Member for Slough—a staunch and valued supporter of the Companion Papers—has asked me to state what he thinks of the 'Holiday Annual.' Reader GEORGE W. DAY, 9, Buckingham Gardens, Slough, Bucks, puts his opinion in the following manner: 'I beg to move a vote of thanks to the Editor of the "Magnet" for his great efforts to produce a book which is full of good stories and fun. The contributions from the various authors are to be admired, and their efforts deserve the thanks of all who read the "Annual."'

The vote was carried without a dissent.

Mr. Horace Coker: "I should like to say about this that I did not get the show I ought to have had in the 'Holiday Annual.'"

Mr. S. Bunter: "No more didn't I. I am always eclipsed by Billy, and it isn't fair."

Mr. S. Q. I. Field: "Better luck next year, old top!"

Lord Mauleverer: "Mr. Speaker, is that term permissible in this House?"

Mr. Peter Todd: "I failed to catch it—oh, yes, something about tops! If Mr. S. Bunter is urging the consideration of top-spinning, I am afraid he will have to wait."

Mr. S. Bunter: "I didn't—I wasn't—"

Mr. Peter Todd: "After Mr. S. Bunter's lucid explanation, we will now proceed to consider the speech of Reader H. YOUNG, 255, Narboro' Road, Leicester. He says: 'How often has it been said that to travel is the true form of education! If you possess the following, you can taste the joys of seeing Britain with comparative comfort and ease: (1) A good bike; (2) a supply of money; (3) a decent pal. These are the principal necessities you must possess. I will relate how my chum and I had an enjoyable holiday round North Wales for the nominal sum of 30/- each. We made our plans and set off. Many "Magnet" readers are Scouts, and have therefore enjoyed the experience of camping out. I will not, therefore, bore them with details about the kit necessary. You want a light eyeing tent and a good road map of the district you intend to explore. Our destination being Llandudno, we arranged a circular tour, so as to include most of the beauty spots of North Wales. We completed a distance of 400 miles with great satisfaction to ourselves. If the weather did not permit camping out, we found the Welsh people very obliging and reasonable in their charges for a night's lodging. What can be better than to sit outside your tent when the day's work is done, reading about the adventures of H. Wharton & Co.?'"

Mr. Ernest Wibley: "Sounds like Old Kaspar outside his cottage door."

Mr. Peter Todd: "Old Kaspar was not fortunate enough to read of Harry Wharton."

Mr. S. Bunter: "It's all very well for him, but what I want to know is where the supply of money comes in. My pater stumped up all right for Billy to go to the Congo, but I am struggling along on my old allowance of sixpence a week. How am I to go travelling about England on a giddy bike? Whose bike?"

Mr. Percy Bolsover: "You won't get mine."

Mr. Horace Coker: "To my thinking, Reader Young has about hit it, but, of course, what you want is not a mere push-bike, but a motor-bike."

Mr. Peter Todd: "A fellow sees far more of the country on a push-bike than the other kind."

Mr. Horace Coker: "Push-bike, indeed! It's called that because you push it up the hills."

Mr. George Blundell: "Is it a fact that Mr. Coker's machine blew up last time he was out?"

Mr. Ernest Dabney: "No; his aunt blew him up."

Mr. Horace Coker: "I indigently repudiate the remark."

Mr. James Carne: "All these dodges of seeing the country and camping out are a bit babyish. Better stop at a cosy hotel, and get a game of billiards at night."

Mr. S. Bunter: "If any fellow with a supply of money wants a good pal, I am his man."

Mr. Tom Brown (co-opted Member for New Zealand): "Pumpkin head!"

Mr. S. Bunter: "If you mean that for me—"

Mr. Peter Todd: "Order, order! I consider Reader Young has shown good taste and discretion. He rightly speaks of the joys of seeing Britain, and I am very glad he sent in a short account of his experience. I will now read a few remarks from Reader H. G. B. WILSON, The Cottage, Sandylands, Morecambe, about an amateur concert party. Reader Wilson says: 'In reply to Mr. Wibley's speech at a previous meeting, I beg to differ on several points concerning amateur theatricals. It is time that a change was made in the form of entertainment served up by our school theatrical societies. For years now the concert party has been gaining popularity. The idea originated from the vulgar minstrels, and it has grown tremendously.'"

Mr. Peter Todd: "Frankly, though I like this speech well enough, I fail utterly to see where the difference with Mr. Ernest Wibley comes in. I will ask Mr. Wibley to speak in a minute, but I want to say first of all that concert parties are all I hope Reader Wilson will be highly successful in his efforts."

Mr. Horace Coker: "Did you ever hear me sing?"

Mr. Tom Dutton: "I heard, and I hope I never may again."

Mr. Reggie Coker: "My elder brother can sing. It's about the only thing he can do."

Mr. S. Bunter: "It is worse than cats."

Mr. Horace Coker: "If you say another word I'll—"

Mr. Peter Todd: "Order, order! I call upon Mr. Wibley."

Mr. Wibley: "I should like it to be quite clear that I am not against concert parties. My line has been theatricals, but I have been a member of concert troupes. These are easier to run than a theatrical company. You can gag as much as you like, and so long as one or two of the company can strum, and give such pieces as the camels crossing the desert and having a drink, etc., all is well. You want to follow Corney Grain and Grossmith."

Mr. Horace Coker: "You'd be a long way after."

Mr. Wibley: "Cheap sneers butter no muffins."

Mr. S. Bunter: "Billy did the camels on the piano once, and at the end he sat on the keys and the piano was smashed. He, he, he."

Lord Mauleverer: "I hope Mr. Bunter paid for a new piano, begad!"

Mr. Gerald Loder: "Of course he did! His cousin the duke had just sent him a postal-order."

Mr. Peter Todd: "I think this House agrees that concert parties should be encouraged. I will now read a contribution from Reader A. E. ALLPASS, 73, Chelsea Road, Easton, Bristol, on a cheap burning oil: 'Take a large, screw-stoppered bottle to the oilshop, and have half a pint of colza (6d.) placed in the bottom. Add one pint of ordinary kerosene or petroleum lamp-oil (2½d.) and just a pinch of salt. Shake well together, and you will have a good, cheap oil, which probably will be enough to keep one pair of lamps going for a year with normal use.'"

Mr. Hazeldene: "A candle lamp is good enough."

Mr. Mark Linley: "I always use acetylene."

Mr. Fish: "Electricity for me. The electric light is what we Noo Yarkers prefer."

Mr. Peter Todd: "I think Reader Allpass should be thanked for his hint. An oil lamp is most useful, and his recipe is easy and economical."

Mr. Dick Russell: "What I want to know is how a fellow is to take care of his bike."

Mr. Harold Skinner: "Keep it out of Bunter's way."

Mr. Peter Todd: "We can leave Bunter out of it. He is on the Congo, and he Congo borrowing bikes." (Laughter.)

Mr. Dick Russell: "I didn't mean that. Bicycle stealing is rife. Lots of chaps have lost their machines. I think the police ought to look pretty sharp after the sneak thieves who watch and nab a bike which happens to be left unguarded for the moment." (Hear, hear.)

The House adjourned at nine.

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LOST ON THE CONGO!

(Continued from page 12.)

been crushed or torn in pieces helplessly. And the giant brute was evidently feeling his way through the tangled thickets towards the spot where they stood.

Wharton gripped Bunter's arm, and the juniors hurried away through the trees, in the direction opposite from that of the gorilla. The terrible yell sounded behind them again.

From two or three directions came answering cries. With thumping hearts the juniors ran and stumbled on. Bunter was soon staggering helplessly, and Wharton and Bob Cherry helped him, with a grasp on his fat arms.

Again and again behind them the yelling sounded, but at last they realised that it was farther away.

Still they stumbled on, till the sound died away in the distance in the gloomy forest.

Exhausted by their exertions, the juniors threw themselves on the ground at last. Billy Bunter groaned, but in a couple of minutes he was sleeping.

Harry Wharton listened intently. The yell of the gorilla was not heard again, though other cries came from different directions in the forest.

"Thank goodness we're out of that!" said Bob Cherry with a deep breath. "That hairy beggar would have finished us if he'd got to close quarters."

"No doubt about that!" said Harry, with a shudder.

"Where are we now?" muttered Nugent.

"Goodness knows."

The juniors laid down in the thick herbage to rest and sleep. The hour was late now, and they were exhausted. It was perilous to sleep in the wild forest, but perils encompassed them on all sides, and they were too exhausted to remain awake. Keeping together, and with their loaded rifles at hand, they slept.

Whether the gorilla yell sounded again they did not even know; deep sleep claimed them, and they did not open their eyes again till the light of morning was glimmering through the interlaced branches overhead.

Bob Cherry was the first to awaken. He sat up with a start, startling and dislodging a green lizard that had taken refuge in his curly hair.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob. "Rising-bell, you fellows." Bob had awakened in cheerful spirits, as usual.

Wharton opened his eyes.

Bright hot sunlight was streaming down through a gap in the branches above, and it dazzled him as he awakened. Close at hand in the boughs monkeys were peering at the juniors, and chattering to one another among the foliage.

Nugent and Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh awakened and sat up, rubbing their eyes. Bunter's deep snore went on undisturbed.

Bob Cherry rose to his feet.

"We've had a pretty long snooze, I fancy," he said. "Looks to me well on in the morning."

Wharton looked at his watch. Fortunately, he had remembered to wind it up before going to sleep.

"Ten o'clock!" he said.

"Late enough even for Bunter," said Bob Cherry. "I say, what about getting back to the launch?"

"We've got to find the way somehow," said Harry.

"The findfulness will be a terrific task," murmured Hurree Singh. "But we must manage it somehow." "But we must manage it somehow," said Bob.

"Yes, rather!"

It was a frugal breakfast, of provisions from their wallets, and water from the flasks. Billy Bunter awakened to join in it, with loud grumbles at the provisions. Bob Cherry offered to telephone for a fresh supply of eggs and bacon and kidneys and hot buttered toast—an offer which elicited a snort from Billy Bunter.

Wharton rose as soon as the meal was over. There was no time to waste. Bunter grunted.

"I'm not moving yet," he said. "I'm tired."

"Slut up, Bunter!" growled Johnny Bull. "Better signal with the rifle first, Harry. Corkran may be within hearing of a rifle-shot now."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"I'll try it," he said. "But I haven't the faintest idea of the direction we took when we bolted from the gorilla last night. Have any of you fellows?"

"Not the slightest," said Bob, and the others shook their heads.

"We may be only a score of yards from the Congo, or ten miles, for anything we know," said Harry. "We'll try signalling, and chance it's bringing the savages this way. But—"

He did not finish, but commenced signalling with the rifle. Shots were fired into the tree-tops at regular intervals of a minute each. The juniors listened intently, after each report, in the hope of hearing a signal shot in reply.

But no answering shot sounded.

Wherever Captain Corkran was, it was clear that he was out of the range of hearing of a rifle-shot, or certainly he would have replied. They were certain that he had answered the signal shots the previous night. Now there was no answer, and the inference was that in their flight from the gorilla they had placed a greater distance between themselves and the launch moored on the Congo.

A dozen shots were fired, and then Wharton desisted. The signals were useless, and it was necessary to be careful with the cartridges. The quantity of ammunition was limited, and at any moment the lives of the Greyfriars party might depend on their rifles.

FREE EACH WEEK

2



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The Boys' FRIEND

"No go!" said Bob. "We've got to find the way back ourselves. We—we may hit on the track we followed yesterday afternoon."

"We may!" said Wharton doubtfully. "The mayfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Singh.

There was little hope of it, and the juniors were well aware of the fact, but it was the only hope they had. Bunter grumbled and joined them, and the party started. They threaded their way through the tangled tropical forest, keeping their eyes well about them.

Hour after hour passed, and the heat grew more and more oppressive. In which direction the Congo lay they had no knowledge, and even if they had struck a river, they could not have told whether it was the Congo itself, or one of its many tributaries. And keenly as they watched, they found no trace of the track they had followed the previous day. They could not help realising that they were many miles from the spot where they had followed Bunter's captor, and it was possible that all the time they were tramping farther and farther away from the launch, instead of approaching it.

That possibility was disheartening, but it was useless to remain idle. They tramped on wearily, hoping against hope, till at last Billy Bunter threw himself down and refused to take another step. The party came to a halt.

So far as they could judge, through the thick branches overhead, the sun was now near the zenith. The heat was terrible, and the perspiration poured down their faces. But even as they halted, there came a sudden joyous shout from Bob Cherry.

"Look!"

Within a few yards of where they stood, the gladdened eyes of the juniors discerned footprints—not the track of bare native feet, but the clear imprint of white men's boots. And the sight of a white man's trail brought new life and hope to them.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Bitter Luck!

BOB CHERRY ran forward, his eyes glistening, and his comrades followed him fast. Even Billy Bunter scrambled up and ran with the others, invigorated by the hope of rescue from the tangled depths of the Congo forest.

"White men's tootsies!" exclaimed Bob Cherry joyously. "Thank heaven, there's white men somewhere at hand!"

"Thank goodness!" said Nugent.

"More than one of them!" said Wharton, examining the trail. "You can see the marks quite distinctly in this soft patch. One, two, three, four—at least four different fellows."

"Hurrah!"

"We've only got to follow this track, to come up with them sooner or later," said Harry. "Most likely they will camp at noon; they wouldn't be pushing on in this fearful heat. They may be quite near at hand."

"I say, you fellows, suppose they're cannibals—"

"Fathead! Cannibals don't wear boots!"

"Sure they're boot marks?" asked Bunter.

"Yes, ass."

"I don't know what white men would be doing in these parts," said Harry Wharton doubtfully. "It's possible that they may be some gang of slave-traders."

Just the Very Story You Want . . . Next Week's Rousing Adventure Tale!

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Anyhow, we must risk it; we can make it worth their while to guide us—"

"We can take care of ourselves," said Bob. "Any sort of white man is better than a cannibal or a gorilla."

"Yes, rather!"

With renewed hope, the juniors followed the trail.

For some distance, where the ground was soft and oozy, it was quite clearly marked, and it looked as if half a dozen persons had passed that way quite recently. But one fact struck Harry Wharton, and made him very thoughtful. The boot-tracks all seemed of a small size

fellows, we're following our own tracks."

"What?"

"Harry!"

"Look at them," said Wharton dismally. "They're not men's tracks—they're boys! We've been walking in a circle, you chaps, and we've hit on our own trail again!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Bob Cherry's face became grim. He stopped, and knelt down, searching for the clearest of the tracks. When he rose to his feet, he nodded quietly.

were now standing. They sat down to rest.

It was a crushing blow.

"Our luck's out," said Harry Wharton, forcing a smile. "It begins to look as if it will be a long time before we see the launch or Captain Corkran or old Pickle Jar again."

"If we ever see them again!" murmured Nugent.

"Nil desperandum!" said Bob Cherry, as cheerfully as he could. "Never say die, you know."

"I say, you fellows, I'm thirsty!"

Histories of Famous Football Clubs.

No. 8. Nottingham Forest F.C.

FROM HOCKEY CLUB TO FOOTBALL CLUB. A FINE HISTORY!

THERE are many curious beginnings of the big football clubs, but I doubt if there is one which is more curious than that of Nottingham Forest, which originated from a hockey club.

Fired with enthusiasm with the success of the Notts County Club several members of the then Nottingham Forest Hockey Club proposed to form a football club, which was duly formed in 1865. In these early days football was a queer mixture of the Soccer and Rugger codes; in fact, the rules then existent were evidently made to suit the spectators in the various districts.

It is on record that the first game that the Forest played, which was against their county rivals, was decided by a place kick after a touch-down, and in those days crossbars and goal-nets were unheard of.

When still in their infancy, the Forest played a game against the famous Royal Engineers, in which they were beaten by the odd goal in three, and it was as a result of this defeat that they learnt the value of combination.

Prior to this the game developed more on individual lines than anything else. The Forest have to thank S. W. Widdowson for much, for it was he who foresaw the great possibilities of combination, and, furthermore, it was he who first thought of shin-guards, which are now in universal use.

Other interesting stepping-stones in the game of football were reached when, during the game between the

Forest and Sheffield, Norfolk, the referee, first made use of a whistle, and that the club claims to be the first to indulge in five forwards and three half-backs. Previous to this the formation was one back, two three-quarter backs, two half-backs, and six forwards.



Jack Spaven, of Nottingham Forest.

The season 1878-9 marked their first entry into the English Cup Competition, which was attended with a fair measure of success, for, after defeating Notts County in the first round, they made their way into the semi-final, only to be beaten by the

Old Etonians by the odd goal of three.

The following season they took up their abode at Trent Bridge, and were again successful in the Cup Competition as far as the semi-final. Then followed a period of adversity, for in 1881 they had to find a new ground, which was at the Lenton, and as this was right away from all their supporters they made another shift to the Gregory ground. This, however, was also unsuitable, but eventually the ground difficulty was overcome, and they found their present headquarters, but not before the financial condition of the club was at a very low ebb.

On their new ground they were again successful, and once more reached the semi-final of the Cup, being drawn against the famous Queen's Park Club, a game which was decided against them at Merchiston, Glasgow, in the replay.

The 1892 season found them numbered amongst the last four left in the Cup Competition.

In 1893, under the captaincy of F. Forman, they realised a much-cherished hope, that of winning the Cup. Their first appearance in the Football League was in the season 1892-3, and from then until the end of the 1905-6 season, when they were relegated to the Second Division, they played consistently well.

From 1911 until the end of last season they stayed in the Second Division, and, judging by recent performances, they do not intend to go down again, once having joined this select body.

for full-grown men; only one was fairly large, and that was not larger than Bob Cherry's boot.

As he thought it over, a sickening feeling of disappointment came over the captain of the Remove.

The miserable truth dawned slowly upon his mind; but he realised it at last. He halted.

"We may as well chuck this, you fellows," he said quietly.

Bob stared at him.

"Why?"

"We sha'n't come up with that party," said Harry, with a faint smile. "Old

"You've hit it!" he said.

"What awful luck!" groaned Nugent.

The proof was plain enough, when it was looked for by the hapless juniors. They compared their own footmarks with those they were following, and found them identical.

"Well, of all the silly fools—" said Bunter, and he sat down. "I'm not going on any farther!"

The Greyfriars party halted, dismally enough. It was useless to follow the trail farther; it could only have led them in a circle back to the spot where they

"I gave you my water-bottle, Bunter," said Wharton mildly.

"It's empty."

"We shall have to be careful of the water," said Harry. "If we do not strike the river, we shall need every drop."

There was a yell from Bunter.

"Gimme some water, you beast! I'm not going to perish of thirst to please you! I believe you want me to!"

Bob Cherry, without a word, passed his water-bottle to Bunter. The Owl of the Remove emptied what remained in it, with a long gulp.

"That ain't enough!" he said.

A fat schoolboy—and a great monarch—that's Bunter!

"Oh, shut up!" roared Johnny Bull.
 "Oh, really, Bull—"
 "What's left must be rationed," said Wharton. "There isn't much."
 "And the grub, too," said Bob.
 "Yes, certainly."

"You want to starve me now," said Bunter bitterly. "This is what you call gratitude, I suppose."

The juniors did not answer that remark. They remained resting for some time, till their strength returned, and the severest heat of the tropical day was past.

Then they resumed their way, taking a new direction, tramping on hopelessly and resolutely. At every moment they hoped to see the glimmer of the waters of the Congo through the trees. But the wall of tropical vegetation encompassed them on all sides; and when darkness fell they were still in the midst of the dense forest. And under the darkness, in the midst of the strange cries and rustlings, they slept the sleep of exhaustion; and when another morning dawned, they woke to the knowledge—beyond doubt now—that they were lost—hopelessly lost in the heart of Africa.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

At Last!

"I'M thirsty!"
 "It can't be helped, Bunter, old chap."

"Beast! I'm dying!"

"Buck up!"

"Oh dear!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were in hard case now. Three more days had passed, and the change in the Greyfriars party was a startling one. For those days, long and hot and terrible, they had been wandering in the primeval forest, untroubled by the foot of human being, white or black. How many weary miles they had traversed they did not know—could not even guess. Their clothing was torn to tatters by bush and thorn, their hands and faces grimed and sunburnt. The water had given out, after the most careful husbanding, and the last fragment of food had gone. And still they were wandering desperately in the unending mazes of the Congo forests.

There was suffering in every face now, though the Famous Five bore their sufferings with resolute silence. Not so Billy Bunter! Even on rations, he had had the lion's share of food and drink; but now that was all gone, there was nothing even for Bunter. And to judge by Bunter's remarks, the fault was wholly on the shoulders of his companions; indeed, he almost seemed to think that they had intentionally lost themselves in the forest in order to do him injury.

But the juniors were patient with Bunter. They hardly answered his incessant grumblings and complaints.

Where the lurch was, where Captain Corkran was, they had not even the remotest idea. Possibly a hundred miles away—perhaps even more; there was no telling.

Now the juniors were almost at the end of their strength. A dozen times Bunter would have fallen by the way, but for the helping hands of his companions. But there were no helping hands for the Famous Five when exhaustion should overtake them.

The terrible conviction was forcing itself upon their minds that they would never emerge from the enfolding forest; that they were to find their graves in the wilds of the Congo. At last they must

sink down exhausted, and the hyenas would pick their bones. Greyfriars School would never see them again. They thought of Greyfriars sometimes, as of a dim recollection of a former life. They could scarcely believe that somewhere on the globe Greyfriars still stood; that the fellows were going into the Form-rooms as usual; that Mr. Quelch was taking his class in the dusky old Remove room; and Peter Todd, and Vernon-Smith, and Lord Manleyverer, and the rest, would be wondering how the absent fellows were getting on in their trip to the Congo. It was useless to think of it in the midst of that forest of death and suffering.

Even Bob Cherry, strong and sturdy, tottered a little in his walk now, and his ruddy face was grim and ghastly. From Billy Bunter came incessant groans and querulous mutterings.

"Give me something to drink, Wharton, you beast!"

"There isn't anything, old man," said Wharton patiently.

"Have you got the water, Bob Cherry?"

"There's none left, Bunter."

"Oh, you rotters! You've got some, and you won't give me any! It's all your fault that we're here at all! I never wanted to leave Greyfriars. I'm thirsty! You want me to die!"

It was useless to heed the mutterings of the fat junior. The Famous Five tramped dismally on, with dragging steps, hoping against hope.

It was a blazing afternoon; the tropical forest was steaming in the heat. The wild animals were sleeping in obscure, dusky corners; even the innumerable parrots were silent. But the lost juniors

tramped on. Hope was almost dead; but they kept on, almost like fellows in a dream.

They knew, only too well, that if they laid down to rest they would never rise again. With drooping heads, in silence save for the mutterings of Bunter, they dragged themselves onward.

It occurred to Bob Cherry at last that the trees were growing more thinly—that the forest before them was more open. In his dazed state he had noticed it for some time, without taking heed of it. But it was clear in his mind at last, and he felt a faint pulsing of hope.

"You fellows, we're getting out of this awful forest," he said huskily. "Whatever we get to can't be any worse than this!"

He paused and rubbed his eyes, and peered through the thinning woods ahead. A bright glimmer caught his eyes. He fancied it was the sunshine for some moments, and then he realised that it was the reflection of the sun upon a wide expanse of water.

"Water!" gasped Bob.

"What?"

"The river!"

"Oh, heavens!" breathed Nugent.

"The river," said Harry—"the Congo! Get on!"

The juniors plunged on desperately. Clearer and clearer to their view, through the thinning trees, they saw the broad, shining river, the sluggish current murmuring among the shoals and sandbanks. It was the Congo, or one of its many branches—at least, it was water. Even Billy Bunter was spurred on by the sight.

But there were miles to traverse yet, and the hurry soon changed to a walk



In the little pools by the shore three or four fat fish were grabbed and caught with the bare hands. Billy Bunter's eyes glistened at the sight of them. "I'll soon have these fish cooked!" he exclaimed. (See Chapter 10.)

What has happened to Captain Corkran? Will he find the missing Chums?

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again, and the juniors dragged weary limb after weary limb. But at last the forest was no longer about them; bush and thickets, and a few tall trees, stood on the bank of the river, where a peninsula jutted out into the broad waters.

They reached the water at last.

Whether the water was fit to drink or not they did not know, and hardly cared. They knew that they were perishing of thirst, and they thrust their faces into the river, and drank deeply.

Then they sank down on the bank, heedless of the blazing sun, dizzy with fatigue.

For a long time they lay there motionless. Complete exhaustion had seized upon them; their thirst was satisfied, and they forgot that they were hungry. But Billy Bunter was not likely to forget that for long. He sat up at last.

"I say, you fellows!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" murmured Bob Cherry faintly, the ghost of his old cheery hail.

"I'm hungry!"

Bob sat up.

"Not really?" he asked, with feeble sarcasm.

"Yes, you beast! Starving!"

"Order a dinner for six, then!" said Bob. "Tell them specially not to forget the whitebait. I like whitebait."

"Beast!"

"Well, we'd better hunt round for

something to eat," said Harry Wharton, rising rather painfully to his feet. "We may be able to catch fish in the river. Whether it's the Congo or not, there must be fish in the water!"

"Good!"

The juniors stirred at last. They found that they felt the pangs of hunger keenly enough, now that rest and the slaking of their thirst had revived them a little.

There were fish in the stream; they could see them playing among the sandy shoals by the peninsula. In a little pool by the shore three or four fat fish were grabbed and caught with the bare hands. Bunter's eyes glistened behind his spectacles at the sight of them.

"You fellows get something for a fire!" he exclaimed. "I'll cook them fast enough. Lend me a knife!"

There was fuel in plenty, and the juniors soon had a fire going. The sun was sinking now, though it was still breathlessly hot.

Cooking utensils there were none; but Bunter, for once, was equal to the occasion. If there was anything that Bunter liked, after eating and sleeping, it was cooking—and he was a great cook. The other fellows were only too willing to leave to him the task of preparing the fish and cooking it, and Bunter revelled in that task, his fat face beaming, and his eyes glistening. The fat fish were broiled over the fire by the edge of the pool

where they had been caught, and Bunter perspired happily over his job.

"All ready!" he sang out at last. "Line up, you fellows!"

And the hungry juniors lined up joyfully.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

In Deadly Danger!

"GOOD!" said Bob Cherry.

"The goodness is terrific!"

"What-ho!"

The finest trout could not have pleased the Greyfriars party so much as those unknown fish, grabbed from unknown waters, and cooked by the masterly hand of William George Bunter. It was a good meal, with plenty for everyone, even Bunter himself. Salt was wanting, but the juniors were too hungry to worry about that. The meal was of the fish fishy, so to speak; but it was welcome, it was appetising, and it gave the lost juniors a brighter view of existence generally. When they had finished they felt a little greasy, but they were happy and comfortable, and they stretched themselves under a tree to rest a little longer, while the sun sank lower in the cloudless blue sky.

"Lucky I was with you—what?" said Bunter.

"The luckfulness was terrific, my esteemed greasy Bunter!" said Hurree

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Ten Prizes of Five Shillings each.



Here is a splendid Footer competition which I am sure will interest you. On this page you will find a history of Nottingham Forest Football 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 under the puzzle, pin it to your solution, and post it to "Nottingham Forest" Competition, "Magnet" Office, Gough House, Gough Square, E.C. 4, so as to reach that address not later than THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23rd, 1922.

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

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

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

Name.....

Address.....

M.....

Singh. "The gifts of the esteemed Bunter are very great!"

"Blessed if I could have handled the giddy fishlets like that!" confessed Bob Cherry. "If ever I get wrecked on a desert island, I hope Bunter will be there to cook!"

Harry Wharton nodded thoughtfully. He was, to some extent, revising his opinion of Billy Bunter.

At Greyfriars, Bunter was little more than a fat and flabby slacker; but there was more in Bunter, evidently, than met the eye when he was on his native heath.

It was undoubted that more than once his curious gift of ventriloquism had been of great service to the explorers, and, by moving the superstitious fears of the blacks, had saved bloodshed. Now, in camping in the wilds of the Congo, without any of the implements of civilised life, Bunter had turned up trumps again. A new situation had called out a new phase in his character.

But Bunter was always Bunter!

He could not be glad of having made himself useful in a quiet way, like any other fellow; he was bound to swank as soon as he had the slightest peg to hang swank upon.

"You fellows rely on me to look after you!" said Bunter fatuously. "I'll see you through! So long as I'm with you you'll be all right!"

"Especially if we get attacked by leopards and things—what?" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I'd like to know what you would do without me, anyhow!" said Bunter warmly. "Set of silly asses, if you ask me!"

"Well, we won't ask you, Bunter," said Wharton, laughing. "I think we'd better look for a place to camp, you fellows, and to-morrow we'll try our luck along the river, looking for the launch. We don't know whether we've struck the stream above or below the launch—whether we'll have to go up or down. It will want thinking out. Better look for a camp now."

"You fellows can look for a camp while I'm having a rest," said Bunter. "I've been putting in all the work, you know—same as I had to when we were caravanning last year!"

"Bow-wow!"

The juniors were not sorry to leave Bunter to sleep in the shade, while they searched for a suitable spot to camp. He was of no use, and he was a worry, as Bob remarked; it was quite a relief to be without his company for a while.

Leaving Bunter sprawling luxuriously, the Famous Five, refreshed by rest and food, looked about them. The peninsula jutted out a quarter of a mile into the sluggish yellow flood of the Congo, for the most part thickly wooded. A narrow neck of land connected it with the swampy shore.

The juniors passed over the narrow neck, upon the peninsula. It occurred to them at once that this was a safer place to camp than on the open bank of the river, where they would be at the mercy of any enemy that came.

Since their encounter with the cannibal who had made a prisoner of Bunter, they had not seen any blacks; but they knew that savages might appear in sight at any hour or any moment. At every moment they had to be prepared to fight for their lives.

"Jolly good spot to make our headquarters," said Bob Cherry, looking round. "We could hold that narrow way against a giddy army, with our rifles."

"Just what I was thinking," said Wharton. "We'll camp on the peninsula. Let's have a look round first, though. We don't want to drop into a lion's den or a nest of snakes or a cannibal village."

"Great Scott! No!"

The juniors moved on, under the westerling sunlight. They had recovered their spirits now, though they still felt the effects of fatigue. But these were wearing off; and, keen as they were to get back to the launch and safety, they found some relish in the sense of adventure in a strange land, and in being thrown upon their own resources.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What on earth's that?" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly.

"Great pip!"

mouth were set roughly a row of teeth, shaped out of pure ivory.

Evidently it was an idol, and equally evidently, it proved that black men were in the vicinity. The earth in the glade showed the traces of countless footprints.

Before the idol was a kind of bench, and on the bench stood several gourds, thick with insects, and smelly with sour



Billy Bunter came racing up, his face streaming with perspiration. "The niggers!" panted Bunter. "They're coming! I—I saw them—a canoe full of the black beasts—just coming to the bank! I bolted!" "Did they see you?" asked Harry Wharton quickly. (See Chapter 11.)

The juniors had entered a deep glade in the woods that clothed the little peninsula. Overhead, the branches of the great trees almost met, making the glade dusky even under the tropical sunshine. In the midst of the glade, a strange object rose to view.

"It's an idol!" exclaimed Nugent.

"What they call a giddy ju-ju!" said Johnny Bull.

The juniors gathered round it, staring at the strange figure. It stood about six feet high, roughly carved in a hard kind of wood. The head was carved in resemblance of that of a negro, while the body was almost shapeless, but bore a distant resemblance to the form of a crouching lion. From the black face two eyes of green glass glimmered out with an eerie effect—common glass, probably obtained from a broken gin bottle. In the wide

milk. Among the gourds lay bunches of bananas and other fruit. The juniors could guess that these were the offerings of the superstitious natives to the powerful ju-ju.

"Poor blighters!" said Bob, in a low voice. "Fancy anybody putting any belief in that hideous black horror, and making offerings to it!"

"Waste of good grub!" granted Johnny Bull. "No reason why we shouldn't sample those bananas."

"Plantains, too," said Nugent. "They're good tommey."

"Hold on!" said Harry. "No harm in eating the grub—certainly that giddy idol will never eat it. But this looks as if we've dropped on the haunts of a Congo tribe. Keep your eyes open."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter!"

"I say, you fellows!" gasped Bunter.

The fat junior came racing up, his face streaming with perspiration. Wharton turned to him quickly.

"What's happened?"

He knew that something must have happened to cause Billy Bunter to exert himself in the tropical heat.

"The niggers!" gasped Bunter.

"What?"

"They're coming!" panted Bunter. "I—I saw them—a canoe full of the black beasts, just coming to the bank. I bolted."

"Did they see you?" asked Harry quickly.

"No fear."

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Looks as if we're in for it. Better take cover."

"They mayn't be coming out on this peninsula at all," said Nugent.

Wharton shook his head.

"It's struck me that they may be coming to the idol," he said. "The stuff there shows that the niggers come here pretty frequently—some of it is quite fresh. May be a fresh lot of offerings."

"Get into cover, then," said Bob.

The juniors took cover in a thick clump of tamarinds behind the huge idol. Bunter grabbed a bunch of bananas from the votive offerings, to take with him. As he crouched in cover, Billy Bunter demolished the bananas one after another. Even the imminence of danger seemed to have no diminishing effect on the Owl's uncanny appetite.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob spoke in a whisper. "They're coming!"

And the juniors almost held their breath.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Saved—By Bunter!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. watched in breathless silence.

By the narrow path from the bank a line of natives appeared in sight, each carrying a burden on his shoulder.

They came directly through the trees towards the glade where the idol stood.

The juniors watched them breathlessly. Discovery now meant a fight for life against cannibal foes.

There were six of the blacks, and each carried a long, broad-bladed spear in his hand—a terrible weapon at close quarters. Each had a reed basket on his shoulder, well-filled. Evidently it was a new supply of offerings of food to the god of the Congo wilderness.

The blacks arrived in the glade, and stopped before the idol, bursting into a low, tuneless chant. Each of them advanced in turn, bent to the ground before the idol, touching the earth with his forehead, and placed the contents of his basket on the low bench.

The offerings having been-made, the blacks gathered in a group, still chanting tunelessly.

Suddenly one of the party gave a start, and ceased to chant, and dropped on one knee, peering at the ground.

He looked up after a moment, and spoke to his companions in a tongue of which the listening juniors could not comprehend a word.

But they could guess the purport of what he said. Their grip closed on their rifles.

Bunter stopped eating, with his mouth full of banana.

The black man, clearly, had discerned the track of white men's boots in the glade, and the startling discovery filled the whole band with jabbering excitement.

The religious awe which had been visible in their black faces vanished at once; the ju-ju disappeared from their thoughts as they grasped their spears and stared round them with ferocious eyes.

"All U P," murmured Bob Cherry. "We've got to fight for it!"

The black man who had discovered the footprints raised his spear and pointed directly towards the clump of tamarinds that hid the Greyfriars party.

Harry Wharton & Co. put finger to trigger. They knew that they were discovered now, and that a savage rush was coming. To the Congo savage, every stranger was an enemy—the only thought in the dull minds of the blacks was to hunt out the strangers and kill.

But a sudden thought flashed into Wharton's mind. He caught Bunter by the arm.

"Bunter!" he whispered.

"Ow! Keep them off!" panted Bunter. "Oh dear! I wish I hadn't come here! Why didn't I stay at Greyfriars? Oh dear!"

"Bunter, pull yourself together!" breathed Wharton. "You remember the trick you played with Corkran's little ivory idol. Try it on again—it may save us all! If the idol speaks—"

"Oh, good!" gasped Bob Cherry.

Bunter gave a start. In his terror he had forgotten—he had been thinking only of his own fat skin.

He pulled himself together, and cleared his throat with a fat little cough.

"Go it, Bunter!" whispered Nugent.

The six blacks were glaring towards the tamarinds, evidently on the point of making a savage rush. But in the nick of time the voice of the Greyfriars ventriloquist was heard.

From the black, hideous head of the wooden juju there came a sudden wailing sound, wild and eerie.

So sudden, so strange was it, that the juniors themselves started and shivered.

The effect on the Congo tribesmen was electrical. Instead of rushing at the thicket of tamarinds, they spun round towards the huge wooden god, jabbering in surprise and fear.

That wooden horror, evidently, was a god of great power in the vicinity, as the food offerings proved. But never before, certainly, had its worshippers heard it utter vocal sounds.

Now its wild wail rang over the little peninsula and the waters of the Congo.

The blacks drew together in a jabbering crowd, staring wildly at the idol, their knees knocking together in fear.

The juniors crouched motionless, silent, breathless. They were ready to fire, if the blacks came on; but there was no thought of attack now in the startled minds of the black men.

The wild wail ceased as suddenly as it had started. Then from the wooden juju came a stern voice:

"Black man lib for run one-time, quick!"

The blacks evidently knew the Coast English. They backed away from the idol, with ludicrous terror in their heavy faces.

Having backed away a dozen paces, they turned and ran for it. Helter-skelter they went, along the narrow neck of land that joined the peninsula to the bank of the Congo. In their haste and terror, two or three of them dropped their spears. In their excitement the juniors forgot caution, and crept out of the bushes and stood in the shadow cast by the idol.

In a minute or less the half a dozen savages had vanished from sight, and a

few minutes later the juniors heard the sound of paddles on the stream, splashing the water, as the terrified blacks fled in their canoe.

Harry Wharton breathed deeply. The relief was great and intense. Had a desperate struggle taken place, the victory would probably have remained with the juniors, owing to their firearms, but certainly some members of the party would have fallen under the thrusting spears. Once more the Greyfriars ventriloquist had saved the situation.

"They're gone!" said Bob Cherry.

"The gonefulness is terrific."

"Thank Heaven!" breathed Nugent.

Billy Bunter gave a fat chuckle. The danger was over; and it was William George Bunter who had averted it.

"I say, you fellows—"

"You've done it, Bunter," said Johnny Bull. "Blessed if I ever thought your fatheaded ventriloquism would come in useful like this, when I used to kick you for playing tricks at Greyfriars."

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Thank goodness they're gone!" said Harry Wharton. "It would have been touch and go, if it had come to a fight. Now, the sooner we clear out of this neighbourhood the better."

"Yes, rather!"

"Come on, Bunter!"

Bunter shook his head. There was a fat complacency in Bunter's face, and he blinked loftily at the Famous Five.

"We're going to camp here," he said.

"Don't be an ass!" said Wharton irritably. "That gang may come back with a hundred others. They're bound to spread the story of the idol speaking."

Billy Bunter stuck his fat little arms akimbo, and blinked at the exasperated juniors with lofty disdain.

"I know what I'm talking about," he said coolly. "Look here! If the niggers come back, I'll make that wooden juju speak again—and that will keep them in order. We're safe here—"

The juniors stared at Bunter, and looked at one another. Amazing as it was, they realised that Bunter was right. In that spot, which seemed the most dangerous they could have fallen upon, they were, in fact, safer than in any other—so long as the Greyfriars ventriloquist could make the juju speak and keep the natives in superstitious fear.

"My only hat!" said Bob Cherry, with a deep breath. "It beats me—but the fat idiot is spouting good horse-sense for once! He's right!"

"The rightfulness is surprising but terrific," assented Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

Harry Wharton burst into a laugh.

"Right ho, Bunter!" he said.

"You're talking sense for once! We camp here."

Bunter nodded loftily.

"That's right," he said. "You fellows do as you're told, and I'll see you through."

"Fathead!"

"And I don't want any cheek!" roared Bunter—more Bunterish than ever now, so to speak. "I want you fellows to understand that I'm boss of this show—and what I say, goes! Savvy?"

And for the time, as the juniors camped on the peninsula, in sight of the wooden savage god, Bunter's claims to leadership and loftiness were dropped.

But Bunter's time was coming. It was coming—and it was not far distant now!

THE END.

(The next grand long complete story of the Chums is entitled "King Bunter of The Congo." By Frank Richards. Read about Bunter—"Boss" At Last!)

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IS IT A CLUE? Ferrers Locke, the detective, and his assistant, Jack Drake, are baffled! The absence of clues in the "Brandon Mystery" puzzles the famous investigator. Then a tiny thread of light appears. Is it a clue?



THE SHADOWER!



A New Long Complete Story, introducing the world-famous detective FERRERS LOCKE and his assistant Jack Drake, ex-Greyfriars boy.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

(Author of the Famous Tales of Rookwood now appearing in the "Boys' Friend.")

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Dumaresq Weird at Home!

"**B**AKER STREET mystery!"
"Extra special!"
"Latest details of Baker Street crime!"

The newsboys' voices made a chorus. Dr. Dumaresq Weird, of Harley Street, glanced from the window of his car.

"Mysterious murder in Baker Street! Extra special!"

The car had slowed down in the traffic at Oxford Circus. Dr. Weird let down the window, and signed to a hawling youth on the pavement. The newsboy dodged across to the car and handed in the "Evening News," still damp from the press.

Weird tossed him a shilling, and the car glided on. The newsboy blinked after the car, and bit the shilling to assure himself that it was a good one. Then his voice was added to the chorus again.

"Extra special! Murder of Inspector Flemming! Latest details!"

Dr. Dumaresq Weird leaned back in the well-cushioned car and unfolded the paper.

There was a faint smile upon his pale, immobile face, a glimmer of interest in his deep, keen eyes.

As the car glided on, he looked at the large headlines, and glanced down the report of the latest details of the Baker Street mystery—a mystery that had sent a thrill through the metropolis and the whole country.

"At three o'clock this morning the body of Inspector Flemming, of Scotland Yard, was discovered in Baker Street. The discovery was made by Mr. Ferrers Locke, the celebrated private detective, who, we understand, is assisting the official police in this most mysterious case. The body of the unfortunate inspector was propped against the door of Mr. Locke's house. It had been left there during the hours of darkness by the unknown assassin."

"Amazing!" murmured Dr. Weird.

He continued to read:

"This is the second mysterious crime that has occurred in the same vicinity in the last few days. It will be remembered that Mr. Locke made the discovery of a dead man, whose body had been placed in the street near his house a few days ago. This body was identified as that of Mr. Hubert Brandon, a gentleman lately arrived from South Africa, and a relative of Dr. Dumaresq Weird, the celebrated Harley Street specialist. Inspector Flemming was in official charge of the case. It is a natural inference that the assassin, hiding the Scotland Yard man but upon his traces, dealt with him in this terrible manner. The conveyance of the body to the porch of Mr. Locke's house in the dead of night was an act of audacity unparalleled in the annals of crime."

"Amazing!" repeated the doctor.

He read the report to the end; there was much more of it.

The newspaper dropped on his knees, and Dr. Weird leaned back, a thoughtful expression on his face.

His thin, almost colourless lips were curved in a strange smile.

The car stopped at length at his house in Harley Street—an imposing mansion at the more fashionable end of that famous street, towards Cavendish Square.

The doctor alighted, and passed into the house, the car gliding away to the garage.

Ten minutes later the doctor was in his consulting-room, one of the busiest men in London.

From ten to twelve a constant succession of patients were shown in to the famous specialist; and when twelve o'clock struck the waiting-room was still crowded.

But at twelve o'clock Dr. Weird saw no one again till the afternoon. It was necessary to make an appointment days, or weeks, in advance to see the great man; chance callers had no prospect of an interview.

Dr. Dumaresq Weird passed into his study. He touched a bell.

Jex, the stout and imposing butler, entered.

"Mr. Locke has not called to-day, Jex?"

"No, sir."

"Or telephoned?"

"No, sir."

"The good man!" said the doctor with a smile. "He should have called when there was news—he is engaged upon the case of my unfortunate cousin, Jex, who was so mysteriously done to death shortly after his arrival in England."

Jex smiled.

Nothing could have been graver than Jex's aspect when he was seen by Dr. Weird's distinguished and wealthy patients. But in private it was evident that Jex allowed himself to depart from his professional gravity. There was now a familiarity between master and servant that would have astonished Dr. Weird's patients or friends if they could have witnessed it.

Weird returned his smile.

"I bought an 'Evening News' this morning, Jex—an extra early edition—which reports another startling crime in Baker Street."

"Indeed, sir."

"Yes, indeed, Jex. This time the victim is a Scotland Yard inspector. It is amazing, Jex."

Jex grinned.

"You're right, sir."

"The criminal had what the reporter describes as the unparalleled audacity to convey the body of his victim, Jex, to the very door of Ferrers Locke, who is assisting the police in this most mysterious case. A very daring criminal, Jex."

Jex chuckled.

"It would really seem, Jex, that the

unknown criminal regarded even Mr. Locke, the celebrated private detective, with contempt, and did not fear to defy him in this audacious manner."

"Very likely, sir," said Jex.

"He does not seem to regard even Ferrers Locke as dangerous," resumed Dumaresq Weird. "Perhaps that is fortunate for Mr. Locke. If he proved dangerous, he might follow his friend Inspector Flemming."

Jex grinned again.

"He might, sir," he assented.

Dr. Weird laughed—a soft, almost noiseless laugh. Then, like a cloak, the easy, familiar manner dropped from him; his face hardened, and he was once more the icy specialist.

"But to business!" he said. "I shall lunch at one, Jex. Meanwhile, the new specimen has arrived."

"It is in the laboratory, sir."

"Very good."

Jex retired, and the doctor passed through another door, which gave admittance to his spacious laboratory. In the middle of the room was a steel cage on the floor, and in the cage lay a spaniel. The little animal was whining softly. Its eyes turned on Dr. Weird as the man came in and bent over the cage.

The low whine died away.

With a dog's keen instinct the wretched animal read the ruthless cruelty in the hard, white face. It lay in the cage motionless, as if frozen with fear. Dr. Dumaresq Weird's laboratory had witnessed many a hideous scene; uncounted victims had been sacrificed there to the pursuit of so-called scientific investigation.

During the next hour strange, low sounds issued from the laboratory—sounds of an animal in pain. Dr. Weird was at work, in his merciless cruelty exceeding even the limits allowed by a faulty law. But there were no eyes to see but Dr. Weird's—nor ears to hear but those he could depend upon.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Drake Speaks!

JACK DRAKE watched his chief's face in silence.

Ferrers Locke stood leaning on the mantelpiece, his unlighted pipe in his hand, his face set and grim.

It was the first time in the career of the celebrated Baker Street detective that he had been utterly at a loss; but there was no doubt that Locke was at a loss now.

The very audacity of the crime made it the more baffling.

There was no clue—no shadow of a clue—only the obvious fact that Inspector Flemming had been shot down by the man whose track he was following. Where—when—by whom? All was dark!

The propping of the body against Ferrers Locke's door in Baker Street had been an act

ANOTHER THRILLING STORY, INTRODUCING FERRERS LOCKE AND JACK DRAKE. : By OWEN CONQUEST. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 771.

NEXT MONDAY:

"BROUGHT TO JUSTICE!"

of cool defiance on the part of the assassin. Undoubtedly he knew that Locke had been working with the inspector on the case. This was his defiance to the Baker Street detective to do his worst.

For once the cool, impassive calmness of Ferrers Locke was disturbed. He felt an almost passionate desire to get to grips with the unknown assassin.

It was Drake who broke the silence.

"May I speak, sir?"

Locke looked at his boy assistant.

He smiled faintly.

"Certainly, Drake! If you have any suggestion to make, make it. I shall be glad of it."

Drake coloured a little.

"I'm not likely to be able to help, sir," he said. "But—but I've turned the matter over in my mind, and you've told me to suggest anything that may occur to me—"

"Go on."

"Inspector Flemming telephoned last night that he had made a discovery, sir. He was trying to trace Mr. Brandon, who had walked from the Goring Hotel in Marylebone Road, to call on his cousin, Dr. Weir, in Harley Street, and met his death. He telephoned that he had made a discovery in Harley Street, and that he was coming here to consult you."

"Yes, yes!"

"He did not come, but his dead body was found at the door," said Drake. "It's fairly clear that whatever discovery he had made, the murderer was on his guard, and dealt with him promptly. He may even have watched the inspector, and overheard him at the telephone."

"It is probable. We have to do with a man of infinite cunning and resource," said Locke. "But what then, my boy?"

"I want to draw your attention to the fact that Mr. Flemming stated that he had made the discovery, whatever it was, in Harley Street, sir."

Locke looked curiously at the boy.

"Well, Drake?"

"To switch off to another point, Mr. Locke—you have told me to make it a rule in investigation to consider first the person benefitting from a crime."

"That is good as a general rule," said Locke.

"Mr. Brandon was killed, and robbed of everything he had upon him, sir," said Drake. "The rascals may have netted a hundred pounds or so, as he was a wealthy man. That might be the object of the crime—if he was waylaid and murdered by a gang of crooks. But—"

"But—"

"said Locke.

"Dr. Weir is his only living relation, sir."

"That is so."

"We know that Mr. Brandon had twenty thousand pounds in War Loan."

"Yes."

"Who will inherit that, sir?"

Ferrers Locke gave a violent start.

"Dr. Weir, of course," he answered.

Drake hesitated.

"You've instructed me, sir, that a detective should be no respecter of persons," he said. "The crooks who killed Hubert Brandon netted a handful of plunder. But Dr. Weir will benefit by his death to the extent of twenty thousand pounds."

"Good heavens!" muttered Ferrers Locke.

His look was agitated for a moment.

"Dr. Weir—the celebrated doctor and surgeon—the famous specialist—the greatest modern authority upon heart disease. Drake, do you realise what you are saying?"

Drake crimsoned.

"I know it sounds wild, sir," he answered steadily. "But I don't like Dr. Weir. You can see in his face that he is a hard man—as hard as flint. Hubert Brandon was taken to his house when he met his death. His house is in Harley Street, and the inspector declared that it was in Harley Street that he had made a discovery. Mr. Locke, isn't it possible that what inspector Flemming discovered was that Mr. Brandon had reached the doctor's house? He may have been seen entering it—"

"Drake!"

"And that the poor gentleman met his death there," said Drake unfinchingly. "His body was left in Baker Street, stripped of all marks of identity—robbed—to give the impression that he had been murdered by the crooks. But it is Dr. Weir who will benefit by his death to the extent of twenty thousand pounds."

"Well, sir, Dr. Weir came to you to find his missing cousin. If the case is as I've suggested, wasn't that the easiest way to get the dead man identified, without suspicion on himself? For as you were working on the case, you naturally thought at once of the dead man who had been found in Baker Street, and who answered more or less to the description Dr. Weir gave of his cousin."

"True!"

"Without identification he could not inherit what the dead man left," said Drake. "Without some strong motive, does Dr. Weir look like a man to take great trouble about a relation he had not seen for twenty years?"

"He does not."

BY WHOSE HAND?



OUR DARING DETECTIVE GETS ON THE TRAIL!

See Next Week's Splendid Story entitled:
"BROUGHT TO JUSTICE!"

"That's what's occurred to me, sir, for what it's worth," said Jack Drake. "I know it sounds steep—with regard to a man in the position of Dr. Dumaresq Weir—"

"Drake, it may be worth more than you think," said Ferrers Locke quietly. "But you have not considered all, my boy. The man who killed Hubert Brandon, and left his body in Baker Street was the man who killed the still unknown victim whose body was found in Grosvenor Square a couple of weeks ago. On that point I have no doubt."

Drake nodded.

"From that unknown man's death the doctor derives no benefit that can be discovered," said Locke.

"I know it, sir."

"If your suspicion of the doctor is well founded, Drake, there is only one theory that will cover the facts."

"And that, sir?"

"I have known for some time that there is a gang of crooks at work, headed by a criminal—a master-criminal—of unusual and indeed extraordinary abilities," said Ferrers Locke. "I had already determined that this leader was not to be found in the known criminal class, but that, if he was ever discovered, he would be found to be a man occupying a good position in life. He works in secret, without leaving a trace; even his own followers do not know his identity. If that man is Dr. Dumaresq Weir—"

He broke off.

"Drake, you have given me a new train of thought. It may lead to nothing, but where all is dark, the faintest gleam of light is welcome." Ferrers Locke smiled grimly. "I shall be upon my guard, Drake, in calling upon the doctor. We shall see!"

Ferrers Locke had food for thought as he sat in his car and drove to Harley Street to call upon Dr. Dumaresq Weir.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Clue at Last!

JEX showed in the Baker Street detective with his usual impressive, impassive manner—the old-fashioned family butler to the life.

"Dr. Weir is engaged at the present moment in his laboratory, sir," said Jex. "But I will tell him that you are here. He gave orders that you were to see him whenever you called. If you will wait a minute or two, sir—"

"Certainly."

The butler retired, leaving the detective seated by a window overlooking Harley Street.

From the window Locke gazed into the wide, spacious street.

He pictured to himself Inspector Flemming in his investigations of the night before that had led to his death.

What was it the inspector had discovered? Had the hapless Brandon, instead of meeting his fate in the dusky streets, indeed reached the doctor's mansion? Had the inspector found a witness to the fact?

At a short distance from the doctor's house was a cab-rank, with half a dozen taxis standing waiting.

Two or three chauffeurs could be seen.

Locke compressed his lips. Was it at the cab-rank that Inspector Flemming had made his discovery? Had some chauffeur, on duty there the night before, seen the man from South Africa arrive at the doctor's house? It was possible, at least.

Yet the theory was staggering—that the famous specialist was the unknown leader of a gang of lawless crooks, the unknown master-criminal whose existence Locke had suspected, but whom he had never yet been able to trace.

The door opened.

Ferrers Locke turned from the window, after making a sign to his chauffeur without. That sign conveyed to Wootton that he was not to wait with the car. As Locke turned to greet Dr. Weir, Wootton drove away.

"Good-morning, my dear Locke!" exclaimed Dr. Weir, shaking hands with the detective warmly. "Pity excuse my keeping you waiting a few minutes—a little experiment in my laboratory—"

"Not at all," said Ferrers Locke. "I am sorry to have interrupted you. But there is news—doubtless you have heard it—"

Dr. Weir shook his head with a smile. "I live rather far removed from the gossip of the day," he said. "As I mentioned to you, I never look at the newspapers. What has happened? Has the assassin of my poor cousin been arrested?"

"I am sorry to say, no! But the Scotland Yard inspector who was working on the case with me has been murdered."

"Is it possible?"

"Not only possible, but true," said Ferrers Locke. "Inspector Flemming was found dead in Baker Street at three o'clock this morning."

"Upon my word!" exclaimed the doctor.

Locke's eyes were upon his face. But the doctor's countenance betrayed nothing but surprise and interest.

"Why should the inspector be harmed?" said Dr. Weir. "Is it possible that he had made some discovery?"

"That is my conclusion."

"And he was killed before he had time to make it known?" said the doctor regretfully. "That is very unfortunate."

"Not at all," said Locke. "He had made his discovery known by telephone before he met his fate."

Dr. Weir started.

"He had made it known?"

"Yes."

"That is good. May I ask what the discovery was?"

Locke hesitated.

He was playing a part now; he was seeking to learn what was behind that white mask of a face—if, indeed, there was anything behind it.

"You do not care to tell me, my dear Locke?"

"Really, I—"

Locke still hesitated.

The doctor's manner became sharper.

"You will remember, Locke, that the murdered man, Brandon, was my cousin, and that it was I who asked you to take up the case," he said. "I have your word that you will keep me posted. Really, I think I am entitled to know what has transpired."

Jack Drake finds a Clue and gets on the Trail!

"Very good," said Locke. "Inspector Flemming telephoned to my rooms in Baker Street—" He paused.

"Well?"

"That he had made a discovery in Harley Street," said Ferrers Locke.

"In this street?"

"Yes."

"Upon my word! This street is not generally associated with the idea of crime!" smiled the doctor. "But what was the discovery?"

"He gave no details," said Locke. "He was murdered while on his way to tell me all."

Was it imagination, or did a momentary glimmer of relief appear upon the doctor's face? If it was there, it was gone in a fleeting second.

"And that is all?" asked Weir.

"That is all, so far."

"Little enough, I fear," said Dumaresq Weir. "But little is much to Ferrers Locke. No doubt you will find out what Mr. Flemming—poor fellow—found—and will follow it further."

"I shall attempt to do so," said Ferrers Locke. "I hope to have something more definite to report soon, Dr. Weir."

"I shall trust so, Locke."

The detective took his leave. He had gained little by the interview, but he had given nothing away. Even yet he could not decide whether to allow his suspicions to fix upon the doctor.

From the pavement he crossed over to the line of waiting taxis. His car had been sent away, to give him a pretext for using a taxi; it was probable that he would be seen from the doctor's windows, if Dr. Weir had any interest in his movements.

"Taxi, sir!" said the chauffeur at the head of the rank.

Locke nodded and stepped in. The taxi drove away with him, and stopped at the house in Baker Street. It was then that Ferrers Locke, having alighted, questioned the chauffeur.

"You are always in the rank in Harley Street?" he asked.

"Generally, sir."

"Were you there last night?"

"No, sir."

"But there were cabs on the rank?"

"Oh, yes, sir; poor Billy Woods was there."

"Poor Billy Woods?" repeated the detective. "Has anything happened to Mr. Woods, who was on the rank last night?"

"Only he died this morning, sir."

Ferrers Locke, with all his self-control, could scarcely repress a start. It was with only the vaguest hopes that he had questioned the chauffeur. But he understood now that he was to make a discovery.

"How did it happen?" he asked. "I have reasons for asking—and you shall not lose by wasting your time."

The chauffeur grinned.

"I know whose 'ouse this is, sir," he said. "You're Mr. Ferrers Locke. You've got something to do with the bloke who was asking Billy questions last night, I take it?"

"Exactly," said Locke. "Tell me what you know about it."

"Certainly, sir, and that ain't much," said the taxi-driver. "Billy was on the rank when the gent came along—I heard about it from another man who was there at the time. The gent engaged Billy's cab, but instead of driving away, asked him a lot of questions—what about I don't know—nobody'll know now, as Billy's dead, poor chap! But Sam Smith, who told me about it, said the gent was a bit excited at what Billy told him, and Sam's opinion was that the bloke was a detective of some sort. Well, arter he had gone, a gentleman came out of a house and engaged Billy's cab at once, and drove away in it."

"From which house?"

"A pretty well-known one, sir—Dr. Weir's."

Locke's eyes glimmered.

"Was it Dr. Weir?"

"No, sir—another gent. But Dr. Weir came out with him, and walked away while this gent took the cab."

"What happened then?" asked Ferrers Locke.

"Blest if I know, sir—only Billy drove his cab back late at night to Newson's Mews, and went to bed, and this morning he was found dead in bed, sir. He was fat, Billy was, and given to drink, and the medical man called it 'heart failure. Billy's wife said he had been drinking before he came 'ome—in



TRAPPED!—A chill of black despair came over Jack Drake. He shouted, but only the dull echo of his voice answered him. He leaned against the slimy wall, panting, with the gurgle of incoming water in his ears. It was round his knees now—icy, swishing, rising fast! (See Chapter 4.)

fact, Billy told her that his fare had stood him a drink out of a flask."

There was nothing more the chauffeur could tell, and a few minutes later Locke handed him a pound note, and he drove away.

The detective's mind was almost in a whirl as he went into his consulting-room, where he found Drake.

"The plot thickens, Drake," he said. "My boy, I think you may flatter yourself that you have played me on the trail."

Drake's eyes sparkled with pleasure.

"It is fairly clear now," continued Ferrers Locke, "that Inspector Flemming gained some information from a taxi-driver who was on duty near Dr. Weir's house last night. The taxi-driver has died suddenly, after drinking from a flask offered him by a fare—a man who came out of Weir's house and took his cab."

"Oh!" exclaimed Drake.

"He is silenced—and the inspector is silenced," said Ferrers Locke. "What he told Flemming we shall never know—but was it, Drake, that, being on the cab-rank at the time Brandon called on his cousin, he saw him enter the house? Did he see Brandon on that occasion, and recognise the description Inspector Flemming gave? Was that Flemming's startling discovery—that Brandon had actually entered the doctor's house, while Dr. Weir declares that he never arrived there? We shall never know for certain, but the inference is fairly clear. I shall make it a point to visit Newson's Mews, and to see the medical man who attended Billy Woods when he was found dead in his bed. If possible, I shall get a post-mortem made."

"You suspect poison, sir?"

"Undoubtedly the poor fellow died from drinking from his passenger's flask," said Locke. "But I have little hope of a discovery—Dr. Weir, if he is the criminal, is not the man to leave a trace behind. He knows all there is to be known about toxicology, and he would not use a poison that could be traced. I shall look into this side of the matter merely for the sake of leaving

no stone unturned. But it is in other directions that I hope to make discoveries."

He paused.

"I shall want your assistance now, Drake."

"Good!" said Drake, his eyes sparkling.

"You will make some changes in your appearance, Drake, and keep a watch upon Dr. Weir's house," said Locke. "You will take up the task at dusk, and you will note all who come and go; and if the doctor should leave, you will follow him. Wootton will be waiting near at hand in a hired taxi, in case the doctor should go by car. During the day, of course, it is probable that he will visit only patients, but at night—possibly you will only follow him to some medical meeting, or to a social function. Your task may be a long one, Drake—a weary one—but—"

"I shall not fail, sir," said Drake.

"I am sure of that, my boy."

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Trapped!

DR. DUMARESQ WEIR, frock-coated and silk-hatted, came down the steps of his mansion in Harley Street as the dusk was falling. His large, handsome ear was waiting.

The tall, lean gentleman paused to light a cigar, and the match glimmered its light on his white mask of a face.

On the opposite side of the street two keen eyes were on the alert. Jack Drake did not look much like the Baker Street detective's assistant at that moment. He was dressed in a shabby suit, with a coat over his arm, his bowler hat a little on the side of his head, rakishly, and his upper lip adorned by a scraggy, sandy moustache. He looked well over twenty, and nothing like the handsome lad of fifteen whom the doctor had seen in Baker Street.

If Drake, from across the wide street, had had any doubt as to who had come out of the doctor's house, Weir's action in pausing to light the cigar would have dissolved it.

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For a moment or two he saw the keen, thin, colourless face clearly.

Weird stepped into his car and drove away. Drake raised a hand—it was enough. A rather shabby-looking taxi glided up, and Drake stepped into it.

There was no need to speak to Wootton. He knew that he had to drive after the doctor's car.

The big car glided on at a fair speed, the shabby taxi hanging on its traces.

Drake watched, keen and alert. It was the third evening that he had watched the doctor's house and shadowed Dumaresq Weird when he emerged. Once he had followed him to a lecture-hall, where he had paid for admission and listened to a learned lecture. The second time he had followed him to a noble lord's mansion in Mayfair for a social function. On the present occasion, he hoped for better results. But his experience as Ferrers Locke's pupil had taught him patience; he was prepared to follow a futile scent again and again without tiring.

But on the present occasion better results seemed likely, as Drake soon discovered.

The doctor's car drove into Oxford Street, then by Regent Street to Piccadilly. Drake was already beginning to think that it was another social function in the West End that had called the doctor from his house. But the car turned into Bond Street, and ran on back to Oxford Street. Drake was very alert now.

The doctor had covered a good distance, and was returning almost on his tracks—a waste of time that must have some explanation. It was a misty, drizzling evening—not the evening one would choose for an idle drive in the streets. If, however, that was the explanation, the car would be returning to Harley Street. But, instead of that, it turned down Oxford Street and glided on to Bayswater.

Drake's eyes gleamed.

Where was Dumaresq Weird going, that he was taking such a roundabout course? Was he suspicious that a shadower was on the trail? Was it the habitual caution of the criminal? On the theory that he was what he seemed—a Harley Street specialist, and nothing more—his actions were unaccountable.

The car stopped at a short distance from Holland Park Tube Station, on the Shepherd's Bush Tube.

The doctor alighted, and walked on to the station.

Drake stepped from the taxi a minute later. Keeping well behind the tall, lean figure, the shadower followed on.

Wootton hung on more slowly in the taxi, in case it should be wanted again. But the vehicle was not wanted; the doctor entered the station, and Drake followed him in. They did not emerge, and, after waiting an hour, Wootton drove home to Baker Street to report to Ferrers Locke.

Drake was a dozen paces from the doctor when the latter took his ticket for the Bank. A minute later Drake had taken his ticket, and was following Weird to the train.

In the train he sat at the end of the car in which the doctor sat, his face hidden by an "Evening News" he had taken from his pocket, but his eyes over the paper's top on the man from Harley Street.

Jack Drake was assured now that he was on the track. The man had a motive for taking a roundabout course in his car to a suburban Tube station, and then proceeding by Tube to the City. There could be no doubt on that point, and Drake felt a thrill of anticipated discovery.

Dr. Weird sat upright and silent, motionless, looking straight before him as the Tube train whirled and buzzed on its subterranean way.

He alighted at the Bank, and Drake followed him from the train.

In an obscure corner Drake dropped his bowler hat, replacing it by a check cap he took from his pocket, and put on his coat. The difference in his appearance was now great, and the doctor, if he sighted him, was not likely to know him for the young man who had sat in the Tube train. But Drake did not think that Weird had noticed him in the train at all; he was acting simply from an instinct of caution. He was glad of it, however, when in the crowd leaving the station Dr. Weird turned back suddenly and came face to face with him.

Drake almost ran into him; but he kept his face expressionless and walked on.

Outside he waited, and quietly slipped the sandy moustache from his lip. Dr. Weird came out in a few minutes, and passed him without a glance.

He walked away with long, vigorous strides, and Drake was compelled to hurry to keep in sight of him.

The doctor's course was a roundabout one, and he was a good walker; he seemed tireless.

But Drake did not tire. Never for a moment did he lose sight of the tall figure and the glimmering silk hat. The tall, lean, well-dressed gentleman was easily picked out in the thickest crowd.

That he was going to some secret rendezvous, and taking so much precaution to cover his tracks against a possible shadower, Drake felt certain. His actions could mean nothing else. Did he know, or only suspect, that he was being shadowed?

Certainly there was no sign of suspicion in his looks. Drake decided that his caution was that of the habitual criminal—the man at war with society, and conscious of incessant danger. He made no effort to throw the shadower off his track.

He turned at last into a narrow, dusky alley beside a public-house. Drake paused in the street.

He was still debating whether to enter the alley, when a tall, lean man emerged and passed him. It was the doctor; but the silk hat was gone now; the frock-coat was covered by a shabby overcoat, and the massive bald head was surmounted by a dirty bowler hat. There was no mistaking the tall, lean figure, however, and the white mask of a face, on which the lights of the public-house gleamed as he passed Drake.

He passed him without a glance.

Drake's heart beat faster.

He had all the sensations of the hunter on the chase as he followed the now disguised doctor, for the change of garments amounted to a disguise. Through Whitechapel High Street Drake followed the lean figure, through street after street growing more dingy and sordid.

At the corner of a narrow street, where a public-house gleamed with lights over the dirty pavement, the doctor paused. A slouching figure came up to him, and there were muttered words. Drake stopped, dodging into a shop doorway. He would have given a great deal to know what passed in words between Dr. Dumaresq Weird, of Harley Street, and that slouching loafer of the slums. But he could not venture near enough for that. He watched from the dusky doorway.

The man the doctor was conversing with was a short, thick-set fellow, with a bull neck, and a bulldog jaw, and a broken nose. He looked like what he was—a dangerous hoodigan. Dr. Weird's fashionable acquaintances in the West End and in the medical world would have been astonished to see him in familiar converse with the ruffian on the sloppy pavement outside an East End gin-shop. But Drake was not surprised. He had no doubt left on the subject of the doctor's real character now.

After a few minutes' talk the doctor passed on, and the broken-nosed man slouched into the public-house.

Drake emerged from the shop doorway.

He had only one part of his task left to fulfil—to ascertain the doctor's precise destination, and to make a note of it. Further investigation could be left to Ferrers Locke.

Dumaresq Weird turned into a side street, ill-lighted, dirty, with slatternly women gossiping at the doors, and slovenly men hanging about smoking. Silk-hatted and frock-coated, as he had left Harley Street, the doctor would have made a sensation in that quarter. But in his battered bowler and shabby overcoat he excited no remark.

At the end of the street was an alley, with an iron post at the end to keep out traffic from the narrow passage-way. It was unlighted, save for a faint glimmer. Dr. Weird evidently knew his way well, for he walked through the alley without a moment's hesitation.

Drake passed the iron post, and entered it after him. Not once did the shadowed man look back.

Suddenly from the murky shadows of the foul alley a shadow moved, and Drake stopped, and sprang back with a cry. But it was too late. The blow was already descending, and it crashed on his head, and he fell at full length on the miry ground.

It was a heavy blow, but it had not stunned the boy. He made an effort to stagger to his feet, his brain in a whirl.

In that terrible instant the truth flashed into his brain—that Dumaresq Weird had known that he was being followed—that he had led the shadower deliberately on. It was the broken-nosed man, to whom the doctor had spoken at the public-house, who was bending over Drake, with a bludgeon in his hand.

The ruffian gave a hoarse chuckle.

Drake struggled up.

Only too well he knew that his life was in danger now, far from help. The bludgeon whirled up.

Drake closed desperately with the ruffian as the blow was descending again, and bore him backwards. The blow came down, and missed, and the ruffian went reeling back in the boy's desperate grasp.

He panted out an oath.

Drake's head was swimming and spinning from the blow he had received, but he was fighting for his life now. He clung to the ruffian to keep the bludgeon off, and struck again and again. From the shadows a second figure leaped, and Drake found himself seized from behind and dragged back.

"Got him, Nosey!"

"Old him!" muttered the broken-nosed man.

Two pairs of hands were on Jack Drake now. He ceased to resist; in the grasp of the two muscular ruffians he was powerless, and resistance only invited brutality. Nosey twisted his arms savagely as he grasped him.

Drake was lifted from his feet. Dizzily he caught a glimpse of a tall, lean figure, of a white, mocking face. He was carried away in the dim, murky gloom—brushing against a brick wall—through a doorway into utter darkness.

He heard a door close, and a key turn and click. He was thrown roughly on a stone floor. He sat up dizzily, his senses swimming. In the black darkness he could see nothing, but he knew that he was not alone. The musical, cultivated voice was heard.

"Take him down!"

"To the water cellar, guv'nor?"

"Yes."

Drake was seized and dragged along. He clattered down dirty, foul stone steps, still in the darkness. There was a sudden gleam of light from above from an electric torch in the hand of Dr. Dumaresq Weird. It showed to the boy's dizzy eyes the dirty wet steps, the walls reeking with moisture. A door was opened, and he was flung into a damp, foul-smelling cellar.

The lean figure stood over the boy as he lay in the mud. The electric light gleamed down on him, leaving in darkness the man who held it. The cool, drawing voice came from the darkness behind the lamp.

"Who are you?"

Drake did not answer.

"I think I can guess." The voice was still musical. "I have seen you only once with Ferrers Locke, but I never forget faces. You have yet to learn your business, Master Drake. Unfortunately, you will not live to learn it. For three days you have watched my house—till I gave you an opportunity to follow me here!" Dr. Weird laughed softly. "Here ends your shadowing, Master Drake; Ferrers Locke will wait long for your report!"

The light disappeared; there was a sound of retreating footsteps. Drake staggered up; a door slammed, and he heard a bolt shot. In black darkness he stood panting, with swimming head, and through the deep silence that had fallen there came to his ears the sound of running water. There was water in the cellar. It was round his feet—it was already rising over his ankles.

A chill of black despair came over him. He shouted, but only the dull echo of his voice answered him. He leaned against the slimy wall panting, with the gurgle of the incoming water in his ears. It was round his knees now—icy, swishing, and rising—rising fast!

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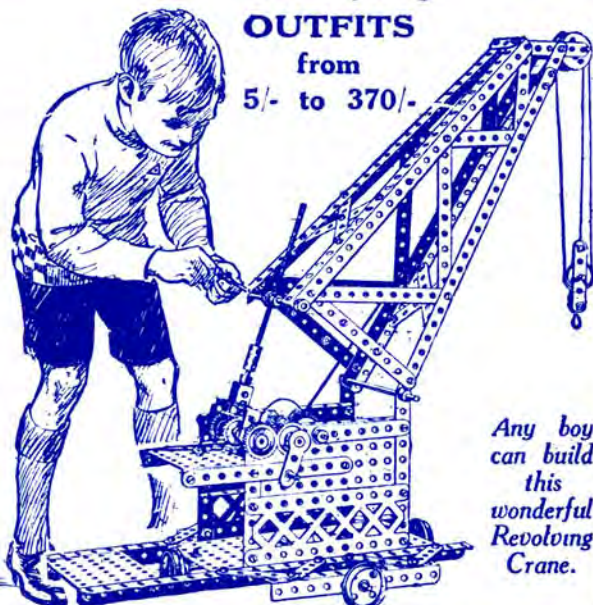
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