

CASH PRIZES FOR READERS! RESULTS OF LIMERICK AND CRICKET COMPETITIONS, INSIDE.

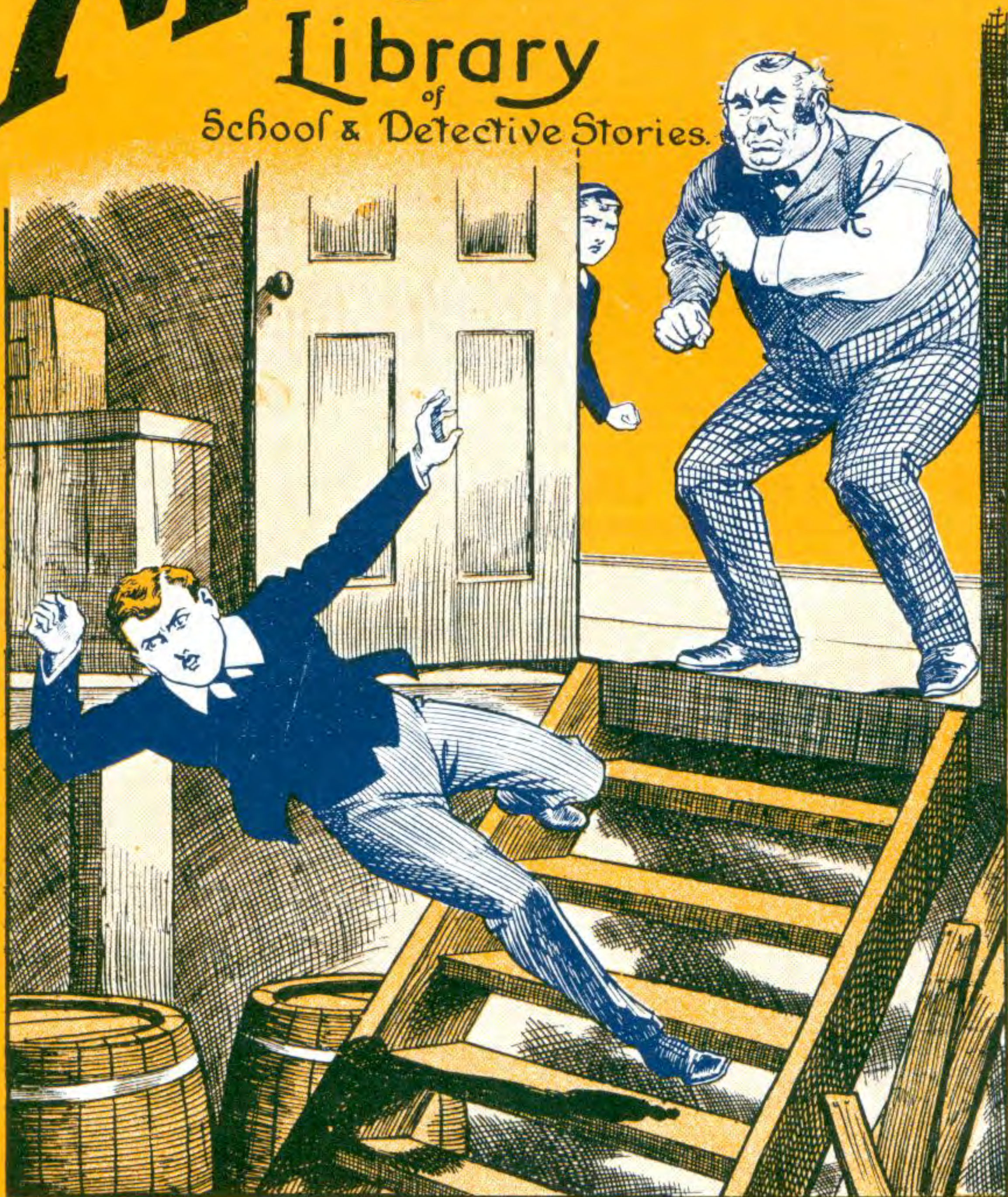
No. 804. Vol. XXIV.

Week ending July 7th, 1923.

The Magnet 2^d

Library

of
School & Detective Stories.



TRAPPED BY HIS BROTHER!

(A sensational incident from this week's magnificent Greyfriars story, within.)

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





"THE HAND OF FATE!"

NEXT week's brilliant yarn of Greyfriars will fascinate you. Long ago I published a tale in the MAGNET called "A Very Gallant Gentleman!" and over and over again readers have written to me respecting it. Well, I spoke of next week's brilliant story, and in many respects I feel that Mr. Frank Richards has touched a finer note and reached an even higher standard than in the long-ago triumph I have referred to.

It is a great yarn, this one that will be out on Monday next, and the interest and thoroughgoing sympathy of it simply sweeps you along. It is, of course, the culminating story of the series dealing with the mysterious Willesleys. The Renegade has had a problem in this instance second to none, and right up to the last you are mystified as to how the author is going to permit things to shape. Mr. Frank Richards goes right

to the heart of life for his plot. These Willesley twins have passed through adventures of the most astonishing kind; they have puzzled everybody; it is the art of impersonation carried to a point never before reached. No wonder the Removites and, so far as that goes, every fellow at Greyfriars—were perplexed! There was so little to hang on to.

The wind up of this magnificent and pathetic tale is simply terrific in its intensity. Mind you do not miss next Monday's treat.

"THE GREAT TURF SWINDLE!"

The great sport which has often enough been styled the sport of kings—and rightly so—is dealt with in dramatic fashion in this story of the racecourse. There is a bad side to most things as well as the good one. Racing has done much for this country; it has

ensured a breed of horses unequalled in the world. But the reverse of the medal shows plenty of defects, and we hear something of these shortcomings in this yarn, with its vivid pictures of the shady side. I consider the new story hits the mark. It gives you the reality of the subject, and its plot is a real boom one for out-and-out sensation. Of course, this yarn is one in which the celebrated detective, Ferrers Locke, is busy unravelling the tangled skein of crime. But you get as well the glamour and the colour of the sport of racing—which, be it said, has often enough inspired good deeds.

A COUNTRY FAIR NUMBER!

Nothing more suitable for these mid-summer weeks, you will say, than next week's special supplement of the "Greyfriars Herald." And you will be right. The subject is a large one for a small paper, but next Monday's "Greyfriars Herald" is a *multum in parvo*, so to speak. It gets right bang into the thick of things—the fun of the fair, and refreshingly hilarious, that is! The editor stops at nothing. He deals with erudite details in grand style. Come to think of it, there is heaps more to be said concerning these festivals than has even yet ever been set down. The new issue of the "Greyfriars Herald" will be found to have agreeably covered some part of the ground hitherto missed.

Your Editor.

GRAND NEW CRICKET COMPETITION! BIG CASH PRIZES.

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

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



WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

Here is a splendid Cricket competition which I am sure will interest you. On this page you will find a simple history of Gloucester Cricket Club in picture-puzzle form. What you are invited to do is to solve this picture, and when you have done so, write your solution on a sheet of paper. Then sign the coupon which appears below, pin it to your solution, and post it to "Gloucester" Competition, MAGNET Office, Gough House, Gough Square, E.C. 4, so as to reach that address not later than THURSDAY, July 12th, 1923.

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

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

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

Name

Address

M.



:: BY ::
Frank Richards.

New boys galore have arrived at Greyfriars from time to time, but never one to equal the amazing character of Cuthbert Willesley. The deep mystery surrounding the new Removite has taken the juniors by storm. Only one fellow is really in the "know," but circumstances do not permit of his using that knowledge to his chums' enlightenment.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Inside and Outside!

CUTHBERT WILLESLEY, who was at Greyfriars under false pretences, loafed about the quad, rather inclined to wish, on the whole, that he had stayed outside.

Quentin, his twin brother, was outside somewhere. It was he who should have been inside.

The twins were as precisely alike in appearance, and as utterly unlike in character as any two fellows could be.

That was why Greyfriars was so completely puzzled, having no clue to the mystery.

The school was quite unaware that there were two of them. If—or when—that fact became known the mystery would be at an end, except as to minor details.

It was Wednesday. That morning, between classes and dinner, Cuthbert had fought Bunter, if that could be called a fight in which two abject funks had stood up to one another, each fully intending to collapse at the first blow. As it chanced, Bunter had got home first, and Willesley had allowed himself to be counted out.

And then, or a little later, he had learned the truth. He was credited with having beaten Bolsover; and he was astute enough to be sure that Bunter would never have risked getting really hurt by the conqueror of the burly Removite. He and the greedy fat fellow had been playing the same game; and Bunter had won by a fluke, because his opponent had been the first to go down.

It was really Quentin who had licked Bolsover, of course. Quentin was a fighter born. He never seemed to mind getting hurt. He would not give in while he could stand.

Cuthbert, faint of heart and mean of soul, despised him for his folly. Yet Cuthbert could not help seeing now what a chance he had missed. It was plain that Quentin, during the few hours he had been at Greyfriars, had made a most

favourable impression upon several fellows. By thrashing Bolsover he had earned the right to treat a challenge from Bunter with scorn.

And if Cuthbert had only known the truth, with what high scorn he would have treated that challenge!

If he had only known!

That was the thought which haunted him.

He felt quite sore with Quentin for not telling him. Had not he warned Quentin against Bolsover and Temple and the Famous Five? His brother might surely have done as much for him in return.

He had given Cuthbert to understand that he had fallen on his feet in Study No. 12. But that must have been a lie—though Quentin was not in the habit of lying.

For Cuthbert had done his level best to ingratiate himself with Lord Mauleverer and Sir Jimmy Vivian, whose titles made an appeal to his snob-bishness. He had not bothered so much about Delarey, whom he looked upon as a mere colonial, with not much more than the average allowance of pocket-money. But he was sure he had been nice to Mauly and Sir Jimmy.

They had not responded in the least. When he said "Mauly, old top," Mauleverer had not seemed to like it. When he addressed Vivian by his Christian name Sir Jimmy had glared at him. Only Delarey, with whom he had not attempted familiarity, had seemed at all well disposed.

Delarey and Sir Jimmy were talking of him as they made their way to Little Side at that moment. Cuthbert had refused to play cricket, saying that he didn't feel well enough for the game.

"Yesterday," said the Afrikaner, "he seemed no end of a decent fellow. To-day he's a cringing rotter, though perhaps I needn't complain, as he didn't try to suck up to me. What do you make of it, Jimmy boy?"

"That's not all. Yesterday he licked Bolsover in a fair stand-up fight. To-day he lay down to Bunter. I don't

know what to make of it, Piet. When I first spoke to him I liked him at once. I'd a feeling that I'd found a pal—a real pal. Oh, you and Mauly are pals, and good ones; but that's different. You're generally with Squiff and Browney; and Mauly—well, you know having Mauly as a pal is a bit like having a dormouse as a pet. The little beast is amiable enough, but not lively. You can't get much change out of a fellow who would rather snooze than do any other blessed thing on earth."

"That's true enough," admitted Delarey. "Here's another thing. Wharton said that Willesley owned up to being keen on cricket, and that catch and throw of his in the quad certainly looked like it. Well, he cuts the game now on a rotten excuse. He doesn't look ill, and I'm jolly sure Bunter didn't hit him hard enough to make him feel queer."

"I suppose it's all due to the trouble we've heard of," replied Sir Jimmy, with a little sigh. "It upset him when he got that note last night, I know. But even that doesn't seem to explain everything. It doesn't explain why he should try to suck up to Mauly and me as he did. He wasn't a bit like that sort of fellow last night."

Then conversation ceased, for they had reached the pitch on which the Remove were that afternoon playing an A to L v. M to Z practice match.

A fairly level game was anticipated. Squiff—otherwise Sampson Quincey Ifley Field—captained the A to L side, and had with him Johnny Bull, Bob Cherry, Tom Brown, Delarey, Bulstrode, Tom Dutton, Hazeldene, Desmond, Hillary, and last, but far from least, Mark Linley.

Wharton, skipper of the M to Z team, had Frank Nugent, Inky—though he had secured Inky by tossing with Field for him, for it was argued that the Indian had, strictly speaking, no surname, and the "H" of Hurree balanced the "S" of Singh—Vernon-Smith, Tom Redwing, Ogilvy, Russell,

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Peter Todd, Penfold, Dick Rake, and Vivian.

The game had first been suggested when it was known that the away match arranged for the day had fallen through; and at the outset it had been regarded as no more than a good practice. But everyone had become as keen as mustard on it; and the whole twenty-two were in dead earnest—none more earnest than Sir Jimmy, who did not often get a chance of anything but a mere pick-up game, but felt that he had in him the makings of a batsman.

It was not out of any real interest in the game that Cuthbert Willesley found himself on Little Side. He would have continued to moon about the otherwise deserted quad, or would have gone in to play patience in Study No. 12, but for something that had happened a minute or two after Delarey and Vivian had passed him in their flannels.

Sammy Bunter had rolled up to him from the direction of the gates.

"There's a chap outside wants to speak to you, Willesley," Sammy said, with his mouth full of toffee.

Cuthbert gave a start of alarm. In an instant he had made up his mind that he would prefer staying where he was to going back to his old nurse and the dull life at Hampstead.

It must be Quentin, his twin brother, who wanted him. Who else could it possibly be?

"What sort of chap?" he asked nervously.

"Jolly decent sort! He gave me a tanner for bringing the message. I bought this toffee with it."

"Went to the tuckshop before you came to me, did you? You're as big a pig as your brother, Bunter minor!"

"I ain't, then. He's twice my size. And don't you say things about Billy, Willesley, or he'll give you another hiding! Yah!"

And Sammy retreated, his mouth full of toffee, his soul of exultation. It was not often Bunter major did anything of which Sammy could brag; but he had licked the fellow who had licked Bolsover—as Greyfriars believed—and as no member of the Second Form had seen the fight Sammy had got some secondhand kudos out of it.

Cuthbert Willesley was near to panic. He had felt so very sure that Quentin would not bring the matter between them to such an issue that Mr. Quelch and the Head must be drawn into it.

If he did that Cuthbert's number was up. No specious lying would avail against their knowledge of his existence and his black record at Arundel House

—his last school from which he had been "sacked." They would know that Quentin was the rightful claimant to a place in the Remove. They would send the impostor back to Hampstead in disgrace.

The study was not safe. Quentin knew his way to it, and might seek him there. It would be awkward if Mauly woke up while he and Quentin were threshing matters out.

The one thing he was resolved not to do was to obey that summons.

Rotter though he was, he did vaguely recognise the fact that his trick of the night before—when he had slipped in at the little gate left open for a moment by Wingate, the school skipper—was hitting below the belt.

He felt no remorse. If he had to face Quentin's indignation he would meet it with sneers. But he much preferred not to face it at all.

So he hurried off to the playing-fields, thinking that there he would be safest.

He was rather disappointed to find nothing at all like a crowd.

Practically every pitch was occupied by a game, except the sacred area of Big Side. The school's First Eleven had a match away, which had drawn many of the enthusiasts to Courtfield, and there was no game in progress of a calibre to attract many spectators.

Very few were looking on at the Remove match. Morgan, Kipps, Wibley, and three or four more were there, and Willesley added himself to the little group behind one of the wickets.

No one spoke to him. They all seemed interested in the changing fortunes of the game.

"We shall win!" said Kipps, as Squiff hit a 4.

"Not jolly likely! Oh, well fielded Vivian! That's the style!" shouted Wibley.

Sir Jimmy was at cover, and he had just stopped, very neatly indeed, a hard stroke that looked like being another 4.

The next ball offered him another chance of distinction, and he snatched at it. Vivian meant to take cricket seriously this term, and counted on showing to-day that he was more useful than he had been reckoned.

Squiff hit one from Wharton very hard and rather high—high enough, as it seemed, to pass well over Sir Jimmy's head and reach the boundary.

But the schoolboy baronet jumped and clutched and held, though the impact of the ball stung no end.

The Australian had to go, having made 35 of the 52 for three wickets thus far

registered. Tom Brown came in to join Bob Cherry, who was in steadier mood than usual.

At that moment a seeming stranger walked on to the field, looked round, and then came along to take his place by Cuthbert Willesley's side. Wibley and Kipps and Morgan were lying down to watch now, but Cuthbert and one or two of the others still kept on their feet.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Bold Stroke!

"**R**UN, Browney!" yelled Kipps.

But it was bad advice. If Tom Brown had taken it he might well have been out. Once again Sir Jimmy distinguished himself by a fine stop, and threw in neatly and accurately to the wicket-keeper.

"Oh, jolly good, Vivian!"

The words came from the seeming stranger; but among those who heard all but Cuthbert believed that he had yelled them.

They reached Vivian's ears, and there was in them such a hearty ring of pleasure that he threw a grateful glance towards where the supposed speaker stood, and was surprised to see a black scowl on his face.

When a fellow, keen to do his best, is showing form such as he has never shown before, there is real help to him in generous applause.

But it is disconcerting for him to see on the face of the supposed giver of applause the blackest of black looks.

Cuthbert was not scowling at Vivian, however. He might himself have applauded, had he thought of it, for he regarded Sir Jimmy as worth cultivating for the sake of his title. He had not thought of it because essentially cricket failed to interest him, and only his eyes had been upon the game, while his mind was busy with other things.

It was the sound of his brother's voice, coming from close to his elbow, that made the scheming Cuthbert scowl.

He turned, to see a fellow with dark hair and eyebrows, who wore a bowler-hat and a dust-coat.

But the disguise did not deceive him. He knew that fellow must be Quentin.

The crafty beggar! Who would have imagined he had it in him to think out such a dodge?

Its advantages were obvious. There was no rule against strangers walking in to watch a game at Greyfriars. They seldom came unless there was a school match on; then, if there happened to be nothing much else in the cricket line round Courtfield and Friardale that afternoon, they might turn up to the number of a few score. That one should think it worth while to watch a Remove scratch game might surprise those who chanced to notice him; but, even while surprised, they would not think it a matter that concerned them.

So much Quentin had guessed, no doubt. He was determined to get a talk with his treacherous brother; and, since Cuthbert would not come to him, he had come to Cuthbert.

Now the darkened eyebrows lifted ever so little, and Cuthbert understood, and sulkily followed the seeming stranger away, out of earshot of anyone.

"Well, this is a nice sort of thing!" he burst forth, in virtuous indignation.

"What's a nice sort of thing?" snapped Quentin.

"Magnet" Limerick Competition (No. 7)

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

PERCY BROOKS, 16, Nichols Square, London, E. 2, whose line was:

His head "swam"—he "lost it," they say.

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

MRS. F. HOPPER, 9, Allendale Street, Folkestone.

R. A. CAMP, Baddow Park, near Chelmsford.

HERBERT GEOFFREY WATSON, 117, Gathorne Terrace, Roundhay Road, Leeds.

STANLEY WILDE, 145, Sneinton Boulevard, Nottingham.

Money for the holidays! See pages 2 and 18!

"Coming here in disguise like this. You'll have us both in the cart, if you don't look out!"

"Not both of us, Cuthbert—only you," replied Quentin. "A full explanation can't hurt me. I've thought it all out—did a whole lot of thinking while I lay awake in a barn last night—and I see that clearly."

"In a barn? Well, you needn't blame me for that, anyway. You've plenty of tin. Why didn't you go to a hotel, or somewhere?"

"Because I was fool enough to do what you wouldn't have done in my place. I considered you. I didn't want anyone round here to know that there are two of us. That will make it easier when you come to do a bunk for good—as you'll jolly well have to!"

There was a new note in Quentin's voice. He had seen at last what Cuthbert had known all along—that when their mother had asked him to look after his wayward brother, she had never meant that he should go on sacrificing himself; had never foreseen such a contingency as this, of course.

She was like everyone else—it was Quentin she cared about most. He—Cuthbert—had never had fair play. If only people would take to him as they did so easily and readily to Quentin, his way through life would be much smoother. They would not make so much fuss then about his little transgressions. There would not have been half the fuss about them if Quentin had been the guilty one, he was sure.

"Who told you where to find me?" he growled.

"Must have been the brother of your fat friend, Bunter," replied Quentin. "Yes, I'm sure it was. He said something about his major licking you in a fight. Owing to toffee, he wasn't too distinct, but I'm sure I got that."

"I'll skin that little brute!" snarled Cuthbert.

"You won't, for you won't get a chance. You're going outside—outside, Cuthbert. Do you get me? It's just about the last straw to hear that you have let me down by being licked by a fat sweep like Bunter! I've got that to live down. It didn't take you long to get rid of the reputation you might have had for having licked Bolsover. I don't suppose anyone will ever get to the rights of it now. But that's no odds. If they think I'm as easy money for anyone who chooses, as you are, they'll jolly soon find out their error!"

"If you'd told me that you'd given Bolsover a hiding—"

"You might have stood up to Bunter long enough to give him one, eh? Is that your notion? I don't believe it! Bunter's no hero, I should say, but he can't be such an utter fink as you are."

"I— See here, Quentin, you're put out because I played a bit of a trick on you last night. I don't see why you should be. You might have done the same in my place. I just saw my chance, and took it, that was all."

"Think I'd have done a thing like that? No, you don't think so; you know I never would! Cuthbert, I've known for a long time that you were just about as dirty a dog as a fellow well can be; but I shouldn't have thought even you would have been low enough for that!"

"I don't see it. A chap has to look out for himself. And, really, I didn't think at the time how awkward it was for you. I—"

"Don't lie, and don't whine! I'm fed up with you. I hope that somehow or



Cuthbert turned—to see a fellow with dark hair and eyebrows, who wore a bowler hat and a dust-coat. But the disguise did not deceive him. He knew that the newcomer on the cricket pitch was Quentin!
(See Chapter 2.)

other old Scrutton will manage to find a headmaster who will take you in—though I doubt it, unless it's a reformatory—and that you'll spend your holidays somewhere else than at Hampstead, for I never want to see your face again!"

"You're beastly rough on me, Quentin!"

"Not half as rough as you deserve! I've been a fool in the past. You'll sneer, I know, Cuthbert, but after I did get to sleep last night I had a dream that's made a whole lot of difference to me."

"I never did take any stock in dreams. But what was it?"

Quentin's voice took on a note that was almost reverential.

"I dreamed that the mater came to me and talked about you. She spoke about the time when we were babies together, and she couldn't tell one of us from the other except by making sure that I always had blue ribbons and you pink. Then later, and how the things you did even as a mere kid made her feel sad. When you were so beastly cruel to that poor kitten, and how you stole Sarah's savings from her box, and—"

"Oh, go on! Let's have it all! But I bet you fifty to one that wasn't any dream. You're just raking up all you can remember against me, that's what."

"I'd forgotten some of it," replied Quentin quietly. "But in the dream it all came back. I'm not going to tell you any more, though. I hate to think that she was your mother, too!"

"And the upshot of it was that you're to chuck doing things for me now—cast

me aside, and let me make what I can of my life for myself, I suppose?" returned Cuthbert bitterly.

"You've got it. If you're ever to make a decent man, it will be only by that way. And if I'm ever to have a chance it will be only by cutting you right out. So I'll walk with you to the gates, and we'll say good-bye there, and—it's a dashed hard thing to say, and I fairly hate to say it—but I hope I shall never see you again as long as I live!"

"Can't say I see any particular unwillingness on your part to say it. This is the second time," sneered Cuthbert. "But you seem to have forgotten a thing or two. You won't be able to make your story good, if we tell contrary tales, while you look like that. Willesley is a red-headed chap. Everybody at Greyfriars knows that, though they mayn't know much more about him. I don't know what you've done to your hair and eyebrows, but the stain won't wash out at once, anyway."

"Don't you worry. There's no stain. I'm wearing a wig, and I've only to rub my eyebrows with my handkerchief to put them right. The bowler's not a fixture; you can have that, if you like. And under the overcoat I'm dressed just as you are. I got these things in Courtfield this morning, and I did it all for your sake. You can clear out and go back to Hampstead, and there will be no questions asked. I wrote to old nurse this morning, telling her that you had followed me down here; but you were all right, and I hoped she wouldn't be too cross with you, or report you to

Mr. Scrutton. You can turn up to-morrow morning—I should sleep in town to-night, if I were you—and there will be nothing to face but a trifle of huffiness from her."

"You seem to have thought of everything!"

"I've thought it all out so completely that I shouldn't advise you to try on anything, Cuthbert! If you won't clear, I'm going straight to the Head. He and Mr. Quelch know about you, if no one else here does. Mr. Scrutton said he

"A FORTUNE AT STAKE!"—

thought it only right to explain. I guess you've sense enough to see that you haven't a leg to stand on, if it comes to that."

"Not so sure! I'll bet old Scrutton himself can't tell which of us is which when he sees us together. He never could."

"Are you going to kick?"

Quentin's tone was quiet and restrained, but there was the hint of danger in it, and Cuthbert began to back down. His cunning was not fortified by courage enough to support him at a critical moment like this.

"I—oh, well, hang it all, I don't think I care such a fat lot about Greyfriars, anyhow! You said those fellows in Study No. 12 were no end decent; but I couldn't get on with them. And you let me down so badly over that Bolsover business. I don't think you played fair there, really Quen! I think I might as well clear out. I wouldn't mind so much if it wasn't for having to go back to that dog-hole at Hampstead and old nurse's grumbles!"

"You'll have to put up with that. Is there anything you want to fetch from the study before you go?"

"No. I've nothing that matters except my cash, and that's on me, of course."

"Then we'll walk off the ground and out of gates together. When I see a chance, I'll get rid of my wig and this hat. Then you can go on to the station, and I'll turn back. There's a risk that someone meeting you may see me afterwards, and wonder how I'd got in without passing him; but we must chance that."

Quentin turned as he spoke, and his eyes went to the game at once.

"By Jove, isn't Vivian a ripping little cover!" he exclaimed, as Sir Jimmy again fielded a hard hit that had looked all over a boundary.

"Hang Vivian!" replied Cuthbert morosely.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Batsman Born!

IT was done!

Cuthbert was on his way to the station.

Quentin, his head held high, hurried back to Greyfriars with a song of joy at his heart.

It was to him as though he were starting a new life, free from the octopus tentacles of his brother's misdeeds and dependence upon him.

So quickly had it all been put through that he was back on Little Side before the A to L innings closed for 158.

He saw Vernon-Smith limp off the field with a strained leg. He saw Harry Wharton look round for a man to take his place.

"Willesley!" Harry shouted.

He was acting on a generous impulse. Willesley—Cuthbert, of course—had sulkily refused when asked to play for the side. But Harry thought that had only been because one of his black moods was on him. He put down those black moods to the trouble of which Mr. Quelch had told him.

He would give the fellow another chance. Anyway, he had shown sufficient interest in the game to come down and watch it.

"Do you want me, Wharton?" called Quentin.

His heart gave a great bound. He was so keen on the game that even the prospect of fielding as a substitute for a brief time appealed to him, as it certainly would not have appealed to Morgan or Kippa or Wibley, though any one of the three would have gone out had Wharton asked him.

Harry hurried towards the ropes.

"Would you come out and field for a bit?" he said. "Smithy's crocked."

"I'd be ever so glad to," replied Quentin.

And he went at once.

The Bounder had been at mid-on, and Quentin took his place. Inky was bowling, with Peter Todd on at the other end, and the batsmen—the last pair—were Piet Delarey and Micky Desmond.

—A Sensational Film and Adventure Story—

The Afrikaner was playing a capital game, and was nearing Squiff's score of 35, the highest yet made. Tom Brown had scored 26, Mark Linley 20. No one else had done much.

Desmond hardly looked like staying. He was swiping at everything, and more often than not failing to get bat and ball to connect. But the very first ball he had after Quentin took his place came to his bat just nicely for a big drive, and he gave it a whack that looked like sending it over the ropes.

It looked like being at least a yard over Quentin's head, and no one would have blamed him had he made no attempt to reach it.

But he jumped like a kangaroo, got the tips of his right hand fingers to it, partly arresting its way and making it rise higher; then, as it dropped behind him, he swung round and caught it, just as though the catch were simple and easy.

"My hat! Willesley's no duffer," said Bob Cherry, sitting by the scorer.

That catch finished the innings. Wharton called to Squiff.

The Australian junior came up. His side had made quite a decent score for a game so early in the season, and he and his two dearest pals had done better than anyone else. He was feeling very cheery.

"Your lordship was pleased to call?" he said questioningly.

"Ass! Smithy won't be able to bat;

he's crocked. Do you mind if Willesley takes his place? I don't see that there's anything against it, as Smithy didn't bowl. I wouldn't ask you if he had."

"If Ass Smithy—that was rude of you, Wharton—I merely quote you—personally, I don't regard Smithy as an ass—can't bat, by all means rope in Willesley. You'll need eleven men to lick us, and we don't care for a win over ten. You're keeping inside the right half of the alphabet, too. But—well, Willesley will be jolly useful if he's half as good as the Bounder."

Wharton knew that. The Bounder at his best was the most brilliant bat in the Remove. But he had hopes of the new fellow, too.

"Thanks, old man!" he said to Squiff.

Then he turned to Quentin.

"I'm rather taking you for granted, Willesley," he said; "but you would like to bat, wouldn't you?"

"Oh, rather! I'm no end obliged to you, Wharton. I'll cut off and get my flannels on at once, though, of course, I sha'n't be wanted for some time yet."

"I don't know about that. I'll give you an early chance if you care about it. The Bounder would have gone in second wicket down—that's the place he likes best. It's yours, if you care for it."

Quentin hurried off without another word. It was evident that he did care for the chance offered him.

Harry was puzzled. But he had made up his mind to allow for the new fellow's queer moods, and somehow he was sure Willesley could bat. That he could field they already had proof.

Without Vernon-Smith, the M to Z eleven looked rather a long-tailed one. It included at least half a dozen fellows from whom a score of twenty would come as a biggish surprise. Harry took Peter Todd in with him, put Dick Rake down for No. 3, and Frank Nugent for No. 5, and realised that if they four went cheaply the rest would hardly make runs enough to win.

Time would not allow of another innings each, but it allowed of careful play in the first, and Harry and Peter were very careful. Against the good bowling of Squiff and Mark Linley they took no risks at all, and when Quentin got back in his flannels and blazer they had only scored eight in the course of six overs.

Play quickened a bit after that, for they were getting set. The score had reached 25 at the end of half an hour. Then Harry, who had made most of the runs, had his middle peg sent flying by the rival skipper, and Rake came in.

—in this week's "GEM."

Out on Wednesday!

Rake took guard, faced Squiff, got his first ball round to leg for four, rushed out to the second, and was stumped by Bulstrode.

Quentin had begun to put on his pads as soon as he saw Wharton go. Now he walked out, buttoning his gloves, under his arm the bat with which he had made three centuries for Arundel House in the preceding summer.

He felt as confident as it is good for

"The Hand of Fate!"—next Monday's magnificent story—

a fellow to feel, and almost unspeakably happy.

For he loved it all—the grey walls of the old school, the shining Sark in the distance, the pavilion, the green turf, the rooks cawing from the old elms, the bright sunshine, the good comradeship, and Cuthbert, his incubus at Arundel House, was on his way home!

He took guard, then drew himself up, a born batsman, with a commanding stance seldom seen in one so young.

The last ball of Squiff's over was a nailer. It would have bowled almost any Removite, coming in sharply from the off as it did, after pitching a perfect length.

Quentin did not attempt to score off it, but his bat came down upon it with easy correctness, and through the fumbling of Hazeldene at point, the chance of a run offered itself and was taken.

So the new fellow faced Mark Linley, who had cultivated a nasty leg break, slow through the air, but getting off the pitch sharply and coming across in a way that often meant either off peg down or a catch in the slips. Peter Todd, who was a good bat, had been playing Mark with considerable difficulty, and had not yet scored a run off him.

Willesley made two fours and a two off that over. He seemed to know exactly what to do with each ball.

Then Peter faced Squiff again, and Squiff sent his leg stump out of the ground.

Forty up, three wickets down, and a long, thin tail! It did not look too hopeful.

"Play as carefully as you can, Franky," said Wharton to Nugent. "It looks as though Willesley could make the runs if anyone can stay with him. The chap's a born batsman!"

"An' a trained one, too," said the Bounder critically. "The foundations were there all right, Wharton, but he's been taught just how to move his feet, which is the biggest thing of all in batting, after a good eye."

"You bet I'll do my best, Harry!" replied Frank, passing on to the wicket.

And he did. He stayed for half an hour, making three singles and a two in the course of that time, and but for the fact that Willesley backed up for every possible run the two would have been his only scoring stroke, for the singles had all been stolen.

Meanwhile Willesley had taken his own score to 45, and the total had reached 81. The new fellow was evidently restraining himself. He took no risk, but waited for the loose ones.

"He knows a bad ball when he sees it," remarked the Bounder. "That is a whole heap more than most of the people who try to play do."

"Frank's out!" said Harry.

"If Nugent had known as much as Willesley knows he wouldn't have been out," Vernon-Smith answered. "That was a bad ball. Hazel's sending down some pretty trivial stuff. Squiff will have him off directly, in spite of that wicket. But Nugent took it for a good ball, tried to smother it, didn't play quite straight, an' got it on the edge of his bat."

The Bounder was right. Hazeldene, who had only had two overs, was taken off at the end of that one, and Hillary went on, with Delarey at the other end.

Inky joined the new fellow. Inky was not a bad bat; but his chief value to a side was in his bowling, and there was no consistency about his form at the wickets. This was not one of his good days. He was low to Hillary with only two runs added, and he did not attempt

to deny the justice of the decision when he returned to the pavilion.

"The legfulness was for protection against the breakfulness," he explained, "but the breakfulness was absentful, and the respected and degraded umpire was in the rightfulness when he said 'Out!'"

Five for 83 now. Tom Redwing went in.

Tom was not a polished bat, but he had a good eye and plenty of pluck. He hit a couple of fours before he succumbed to a bailer from Delarey, who swerved a bit through the air and was bowling very well and steadily.

Six for 97—Willesley 52.

Penfold came and went without any addition to the score, lunging forward at Delarey, dragging his right foot over the crease, and falling a victim to the vigilance of Bulstrode, who was shaping really well as a wicket-keeper.

Seven for 97. There did not seem much chance now, though no one would give up hope as long as Willesley stayed.

Donald Ogilvy was next. The fellows on both sides were as keen as though this were a real match against dear enemies.

Ogilvy set himself to stonewall. The new fellow went on making runs. A rousing cheer greeted three figures, and a louder one went up when the 120 was brought on the telegraph board by a six from Quentin's bat—the first six of the game. It was a clean hit that fell twenty yards beyond the boundary.

Squiff and Mark Linley were on again now. The score was creeping up—speeding up, rather, for, though Ogilvy could not score and made but small attempt to score, Willesley could and did.

He minded neither bowler a bit. Squiff might break wickedly from the off, Mark come in nastily from leg; Squiff might bowl his fastest, Mark might make the ball hang in the air in most puzzling fashion, then come off the pitch as though contact with it were electric—Quentin's bat was always in the right place for either!

Ogilvy was doing good service, too. Not a run from him yet, but he had stayed while Willesley had made 45, and he looked like staying till the new boy had reached his century and the match was won.

It was not to be, however. Ogilvy's duck was broken, thanks to his partner's keenness, but when he faced Linley again he was taken unawares by one that came through straight, and, like Inky, was most unmistakably leg before.

Russell went out. Sir Jimmy Vivian was fidgetting. He was No. 11 on the list, and he was torn between two desires—to be with Willesley when the winning hit was made, and not to disgrace himself and let down his side by getting the chance of that and then failing to make good.

The chance was his, anyway! Russell had failed. He had put one up tamely, and Mark, running down the pitch, had thrown himself at it and grabbed it—a fine caught and bowled.

Nine for 151—Willesley 97!

Sir Jimmy went out. He was in a cold perspiration, and the trees at the far edge of the ground seemed to be swimming before his eyes.

"First ball, me!" he murmured to himself.



Quentin jumped like a kangaroo, got the tips of his right-hand fingers to the ball, partly arresting its progress and making it rise higher; then, as it dropped behind him, he swung round and caught it. "Bravo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. (See Chapter 3.)

But luckily it was the end of Linley's over, and Willesley took strike.

Squiff was always a fine fighter. He was at concert pitch now, and the six balls of that over did not include a single loose one.

Willesley played them all—seemed to play them all easily, but knew that he had not done so, for he could not score off any one of them, not even the last, though he greatly wanted to do that.

So Sir Jimmy had to meet Mark Linley's leg breaks again.

But he had pulled himself together now. He played each ball of the over carefully, and at its end got a cheer that did him good.

Then, with a deft turn of the wrist, Willesley got a ball of Squiff's which pitched on the middle stump and broke away to the leg boundary.

He had made his century, and another four would win the game for his side!

But it was not he who hit that four. Every one of the remaining five balls of Squiff's over called for care, and got it.

Sir Jimmy saw a slow one on its way, dashed in, smote it before it reached the ground, and sent it flying over Mark's head to the ropes!

A to L had been beaten. If one of the two got out immediately M to Z had won by a single run.

But neither got out at once. Another thirty were put on before Sir Jimmy succumbed to Delarey, and he made ten of the thirty, so that his full score was thirteen—and Sir Jimmy had never made so many in a serious game in his life before.

The little fellow got plenty of praise; but, naturally, Willesley got more. He had played a really great innings against some of the best bowling seen on Little Side for a long time.

And he was very modest about it. His modesty and his pluck made them all think well of him. It seemed inconceivable that this fellow should have lain down to Billy Bunter. That he should have licked Bolsover was much more in the natural order of things.

The Remove had not the key to the puzzle.

Delarey and Vivian linked arms with him on the way back, and there was no end of a jolly tea in No. 12 after the match.

The Famous Five and Squiff and Tom Brown all came along, and everyone, with the possible exception of Mauly, who had not qualified for an appetite, did justice to a plentiful spread.

Willesley insisted on sharing with his study-mates the expenses of that spread. They let him, because it helped to put him on the footing upon which they wanted him to be.

But those who had seen Cuthbert gorging in the tuck-shop with the Bunters, major and minor, were disappointed if they had expected to see the new fellow doing a box constrictor stunt.

He had his share of the steak patties and sausage rolls, the raspberry tarts and meringues, the cakes of various kinds; and that meant quite a good whack. But it was a no bigger whack than Wharton's or Nugent's, and not so big as one as Bob Cherry's or Johnny Bull's or Squiff's.

There was not a trace of side about him. He admitted, on being questioned, that he had played cricket for his school, but added that the eleven there probably was not as good as the best team the Remove could put in the field.

"It was more a preparatory school than anything else," he explained. "Some of the fellows did stay on till they were sixteen or so, but not many. Most left before that for some bigger place."

The Famous Five, talking him over later, decided that he ought to turn out a credit to the Form, and were charitably ready to believe that his moods might be due to the mysterious trouble of which Mr. Quelch had given Wharton a hint before he had sent him to meet the new boy.

Sir Jimmy and Delarey, who had seen something more of his moods, were ready to forget everything they had not liked about him if he would let them.

So the glass looked "Set fair" for Quentin Willesley at Greyfriars.

But the state of the weather depended too much upon Cuthbert for that indication to be absolutely satisfactory.

Trying to make up his mind not to worry, Quentin yet could not help lying awake that night wondering whether Cuthbert had gone back to town.

Cuthbert had not!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

In Bad Company!

CUTHBERT WILLESLEY was a queer mixture of resolution and irresolution. But when one got him properly sized up, one saw that there was a certain coherence in his apparent variableness.

IS YOUR NAME HERE?

Another £10 for Readers!

RESULT OF SURREY PICTURE-PUZZLE COMPETITION!

In this competition no competitor sent in a correct solution of the pictures. The first prize of £5 has therefore been awarded to the following competitor, whose solution contained one error:

GEO. CHAMBERS,
172, Dover Road,
Folkestone.

The second prize of £2 10s. has been divided between the following two competitors, whose solutions contained two errors each:

Walter Simmons, St. Catherine's, Freshwater Bay, Isle of Wight.

John Hogben, 35, Bournemouth Road, Folkestone.

Ten competitors, with three errors each, are awarded the ten prizes of 5s. each:

Margaret Kirkham, 48, Kenilworth Road, Wallasey; William Dianis, 19, West Terrace, Bomarsun, Stakeford, Northumberland; W. Sidwell, 15, Broadmead Road, Folkestone; Frances Morton, 7, Eyre Street, Pallion, Sunderland; F. Bissell, 11, Gt. Sloop Street, Barrow-in-Furness; Rose Cooper, Ivy Cottage, Wordsley Green, Wordsley, Stourbridge; Albert Woodcock, 9, Warton Terrace, Bootle, Liverpool; Vincent Hilling, 4, St. Albans Road, Treherbert, Glam; D. A. Fowler, 17, Syr David's Avenue, Cardiff; J. Board, Dowell Street, Honiton, Devon.

SOLUTION.

The Surrey County Cricket Club commenced in 1846, but the county had played matches nearly a hundred years earlier. Surrey shares with Yorkshire and Notts the distinction of having gained the championship eleven times. At present the Oval team is a very strong one, with such men as Fender, great hitter and versatile bowler, Hobbs, the globe's most renowned batsman, etc.

The way of it was this.

When Cuthbert made up his mind to do the decent thing—which was not often—he was at once assailed by doubts. As a rule, those doubts soon led him to change his mind.

But when the course of conduct he had determined upon was selfish and inconsiderate, he could be as fixed in it as the next man.

He had hardly got away from his brother before he began to regret having given in to him.

Quentin had overawed him. It seemed that the last straw had been piled upon the camel's back—no, that was not right, for the back had not broken under it, but had merely refused to accept more. And one could not well say that the worm had turned, for there had never been anything worm-like in the manner in which Quentin had sacrificed his own interests to those of his worthless twin.

Anyway, Quentin had kicked—hard!

But, judging by himself, Cuthbert could not believe that his brother's resolution to go through with the necessary exposure of the deceit practised was final.

How would he dare to stand up before the Head and Mr. Quelch and tell the whole disgraceful story? Why, it was enough to spoil all his chances at Greyfriars to have the fellows know that he had a brother like Cuthbert, and if it came to a show-down they surely would get to know.

Quentin had bluffed him—confound Quentin!

For now that he was outside Cuthbert felt that Greyfriars, though not all that he could have wished it, was far better than old nurse's dull house at Hampstead.

Study No. 12 would have been a place of refuge, at worst. Apparently Delarey and Vivian were outdoor fellows, and Mauly would not have been much in one's way. Mauly had pots of money, too, and anyone who could get round him ought to be in clover.

If it could be done by bluff or knavery, Cuthbert meant to get back.

He had thought of going to Courtfield for the night. It would be easy enough to get a bed at one of the hotels there. But he wandered into Friardale village, and saw Mr. Cobb and Mr. Jerry Hawke standing together at the door of the Cross Keys.

Quentin would have chosen the humblest cottage in Friardale in preference to the Cross Keys, once he had seen Messrs. Cobb and Hawke.

But Cuthbert did not feel at all that way about those two.

He had all the instincts of a sharper, and birds of a feather will flock together. There was to him nothing at all objectionable about the appearance of those two gross over-fed rogues, with the marks of much strong drink upon their faces.

The cap he wore was not a Greyfriars one, and there was nothing about him to suggest that he was from the school.

He went up to the precious pair.

"Are you the landlord?" he asked, addressing Mr. Hawke.

"Him," replied that worthy briefly, jerking his thumb towards his comrade Cobb.

"I want to put up for the night," said Cuthbert.

The Willesley boys were both better used to this sort of thing than most fellows of their age—a natural result of

The mystery surrounding Willesley of the Remove—

their having no parents and no more strict guardian than their old nurse.

"If so be you can pay, you can do so," answered Mr. Cobb facetiously.

Cuthbert turned his back to extract his wallet, from which he took the same pound-note received from Quentin on account of the debt never likely to be settled by William George Bunter.

Messrs. Cobb and Hawke winked at one another. They were well aware that these seemingly careful youths were often easy prey to men of their calibre in craft.

"That will cover it, I suppose, and leave a bit over?" said Cuthbert, displaying the note.

"For that you may stay—lemme see now?—to-day's We'n'sday. You hand me that over, young sir, an' I sha'n't be askin' you to go afore this time Friday—an' not then if you don't want."

There were other notes in that wallet, Mr. Cobb was sure.

"You ain't a Greyfriars boy, by no chance, are you?" said Mr. Hawke.

"No, I'm not," answered Cuthbert, telling the truth for once.

"That's a good thing, because my pal here couldn't take you in if you was. He's took a Greyfriars boy or two in afore now, an' got into trouble 'count of it."

This statement had a double meaning, which Mr. Cobb understood perfectly, though Cuthbert did not.

"Come inside, sir!" said the fat landlord.

He led the way. Cuthbert followed. Mr. Hawke, for the time being, remained outside, favouring the spring landscape with a large and comprehensive wink.

This seemed rather a shy bird, and Mr. Hawke did not want to alarm him by showing too much interest.

"You'd like some tea pretty soon, sir?" suggested Mr. Cobb.

It was very early for tea yet, but Cuthbert Willesley was almost as greedy as Billy Bunter. Mr. Cobb seemed to have quoted inclusive terms, and Cuthbert always liked value for his money. So he nodded.

"Now what would you favour, sir? A nice dish of 'am an' eggs, say?"

"That will do all right," Cuthbert replied.

About the time at which the two Remove teams were leaving the field Cuthbert sat down, with glistening eyes, to a dish upon which reposed three thick rashers of ham and three fried eggs. He cleared that dish to the last drop of fat or smear of egg, and after it put away about half a loaf, a bounteous whack of butter, and a few ounces of strawberry-jam.

Mr. Cobb was in and out two or three times while he sat at the meal, which he did not hurry.

To Mr. Hawke the fat landlord thus reported:

"If I was keepin' that one free, I'd a 'eap sooner keep him a week nor a fortnight, Jerry! He's got a rare twist on him. I sha'n't make a penny profit out of forty-eight hours of him at a quid. But there's other ways."

"Think he's any good for us?" inquired Hawke.

"He's got the dibs, that I'm sure; an' he reckons he's no end a leary cove! Didja ever know a kid his age what thought that an' couldn't be parted from some of his cash?"

"I never did," agreed Mr. Hawke.

And before the evening was well advanced they started in on the congenial task of separating Cuthbert from



Lunging forward at a loose ball, Penfold missed it completely. Bulstrode, who was at wicket, seeing the batman's foot away from the crease, smartly dislodged the balls. "How's that?" he exclaimed. "Out!" (See Chapter 3.)

a pound-note or two. They adopted the old method of a game of cards.

To their consternation and surprise, however, Willesley proved to be a born card-player. Instead of his being the victim, Messrs. Cobb & Hawke did all the "paying out." The unscrupulous pair of rascals did all they could to cheat him, but Cuthbert was full of suspicion, and, at length, seeing that their clumsy methods were unavailing, they settled down to playing a straight game.

And still Cuthbert won.

But the two rogues did not despair. There would be another chance, and next time they would get him into a game which offered greater facilities for manipulating the cards.

By this time Cuthbert had a pocketful of silver and coppers, and had not extracted a single note from his wallet.

As the game went on he began to talk. In two hours he had told Messrs. Cobb & Hawke far more than he had ever told anybody else. The excitement of winning was too much for him.

He finally went up to bed.

It was Mr. Cobb who showed him to his room. The landlord returned, rubbing his fat and dingy hands.

"He'll be sound asleep in twenty minutes, Jerry," he said. "Then I'll 'ave a dekko at that wallet of his. I've a notion it's well lined. If so—" He paused significantly.

"If so we might give him a 'and with his brother—eh, Cobb?" returned Jerry Hawke.

"That's the ticket, comrade!" Mr. Cobb answered solemnly. "It's got to

be done discreet, of course. We don't want no trouble. But, as I make it out, the other kid is one of these straight-goin', young innercents, an' once we git him 'ere we can stuff him up with a yarn that the only thing for him at Greyfriars, after stayin' at the Cross Keys, would be the order of the boot—see?"

"An' it won't be a bad thing for you an' me, Cobb, to 'ave the fly kid close 'andy, knowin' all that we know about him now, eh, Cobb?"

Mr. Cobb winked expressively.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Running Up Against Trouble!

THURSDAY, which Cuthbert spent in lying low at the Cross Keys, was one of the happiest days Quentin had had for months past.

It might have taken some fellows a long time to live down the odium of succumbing in craven fashion to Bunter, after thrashing Bolsover.

But the impression most of the Remove now had was that it must have been an elaborate joke on Willesley's part. It was easy to see that he had a sense of humour. He was essentially a happy fellow, too.

Bolsover major was one of the strongest supporters of the joke theory.

"Though it was a bit risky, you know, Willesley," he said, shaking his head. "The fellows might not have understood. Of course, there was a touch of

—finds a solution in next week's ripping yarn!

fluke in your knocking me out like that, but a chap who could stand up to me oughtn't to have been licked by the Owl, not even if he had both arms tied behind his back."

"I'm not sure that you're not right, Bolsover," answered Quentin.

He had not started the joke notion, and he said nothing directly to support it; but he felt no prickings of conscience. After all, though it was no joke, his supposed defeat by Bunter was not a blot on the scutcheon that he was morally bound to accept if there were a decent way out of accepting it. And this seemed a decent way, for no unfairness to Bunter was involved.

"If you get fed up with that crowd in No. 12," said Bolsover, "you just ask to be changed to No. 10. Froggy and I will be glad to have you!"

"Thanks no end! I'm not likely to get fed up—I like all those chaps—but I shouldn't mind a bit coming in with you and Dupont, and it's jolly decent of you to offer, Bolsover!"

No. 12 had taken to Willesley wholeheartedly. Mauly had quite forgotten any doubts he had had, and Delarey and Vivian had put their doubts aside. The Famous Five had taken to him also. So had Squiff and Tom Brown.

The Upper Fourth felt—or professed to feel—a lordly indifference to what went on in the Remove. Cecil Reginald Temple had not heard—or had not given ear to—any tidings concerning Willesley. But, though Temple was not a revengeful or spiteful fellow, he had not forgotten that through the new boy—it had been Cuthbert, of course—he had got into bad odour with both Mr. Quelch and his own Form master. For Mr. Quelch had told Mr. Capper that he was surprised to find Temple bullying, and Mr. Capper, who prided himself on his Form, had been sarcastic with Cecil Reginald for letting it down thus.

So that when Temple met Willesley after classes that day the lordly leader of the Upper Fourth thought the time opportune for a few words.

Quentin was alone. Dabney and Fry were with Temple.

"Hallo, you young rotter!" snapped Temple.

It was not to be wondered at that Quentin should stare. To be called a young rotter by an absolute stranger is rather disconcerting. And Temple did not look like the sort of person who went about calling people names without cause, which made it all the more surprising.

"What's the matter with you?" the new boy asked.

He did not look in the least scared. Temple was vaguely conscious of a difference in manner. The fellow who had offended him had not looked one straight in the eyes and spoken up boldly.

But Temple, naturally, did not get as far as sorting things out like that. Having no suspicion that there were two Willesleys, he could hardly do so. He was merely conscious of a different attitude on the part of the new boy.

"I'll soon show you what's the matter with me, you young cad!" he retorted hotly.

"Don't trouble! It really isn't my bizney!" replied Quentin, with a cheery smile.

"By Jove! You think not! I'm goin' to make it your bizney, my good fellow!"

"Well, when you've made it I suppose it will be. But I don't see why you should bother to do that."

"Do you know who I am?" roared Cecil Reginald.

"I'm sorry, but I don't, really. Are you anybody of any special importance?"

There was all the difference in the world between Cuthbert's morose impudence and Quentin's cheery impertinence.

Dabney and Fry sniggered, but the face of Cecil Reginald grew red with wrath.

"Do you mean to say that you've never seen me before?" Temple demanded.

Quentin was on dangerous ground, and he knew it. He cast back in his memory to the information his brother had given him.

Now he had it! This fellow must be Temple of the Upper Fourth. Cuthbert, always spiteful against anyone with whom he had fallen out, wanted a bad turn done to Temple if Quentin could contrive it. Quentin, without wishing to do Temple a bad turn, had no inclination at that moment towards doing him a good one.

"Is your name Temple?" he asked.

"You dashed well know my name's Temple!"

"I suppose I do now. I—"

"Do you deny that you did before? Do you deny that you got me into a row with Quelch, that you called Mr. Capper names, that—"

"Well, suppose I don't deny anything. What about it?"

It would not do to deny. He could not explain, and if he had tried to he would not have been believed. But he did not quite like this affair. He had a feeling that in trouble between Cuthbert and Temple it was more than probable that the balance of blame would be heavily on his brother's side. Temple looked as though he might be a very decent fellow when not in a rage.

"Then I'm goin' to give you a dashed good hidin'!"

They were in the Cloisters, not the quad, and no one was near except Dabney and Fry.

Both protested.

"Oh, chuck it, Cecil!" said Fry. "After all, as far as I can make out, you were hurting the kid, and Quelch naturally called it bullying—though I don't suppose you looked at it that way."

"Let it drop!" Dabney advised. "We don't want to get squabbling with the juniors!"

"No squabblin' about this!" snapped Temple. "I'm simply goin' to give the young rotter a hidin'!"

"If you can," said Quentin coolly.

Temple was bigger and heavier than he, but no bigger and no heavier than Percy Bolsover. He looked as though he would be quicker on his feet, and he might easily be cleverer with his fists.

But a fellow who has always fought when necessary does not take a hiding from anyone near his own size. What does a defeat in fair fight matter? Little enough to one who has real courage. But to lie down to it—Quentin had never done that and did not propose to begin now.

His coolness infuriated Temple.

Cecil Reginald made a wild dash, meaning to clutch him by the collar.

But Quentin dodged the outstretched hand.

He swung round in doing so, and

Temple kicked him. It was not a hard kick—meant to express contempt rather than to hurt.

But contempt galled Quentin Willesley worse than pain. That kick brought him to the end of his forbearance. He did not want a row with Temple, but no one was going to kick him!

Smack!

His open hand smote the handsome face of the lordly Temple with a sound like the crack of a revolver.

"You—you— Do you mean that you're goin' to show fight?" asked Temple, so much enraged that he was hardly coherent.

"It looks rather like it, Cecil!" said Dabney.

He and Fry were not grinning now. They did not half like this. There was no glory for Temple in defeating a Remove. It would have been far better if he had let the matter drop.

"Of course I am, unless you apologise for kicking me!" replied the new boy.

"I apologise to you? After havin' my face smacked?" Temple roared.

"Oh, well, you asked for that! If it's any good to you, I'll say I'm sorry, but only on the understanding that you're sorry you kicked me. I should think a fellow might regret doing that without losing his dignity half as much as he lost it by doing it."

Even to the angry mind of Cecil Reginald Temple there was some basis of reason in this contention. He was really sorry and ashamed that he had kicked Willesley. The fellow was something more than the cheeky kid he had thought him, it was evident. But it was puzzling to reconcile his manner now with his manner when he had been turned out of the Upper Fourth Form room. In fact, it was more than difficult; it was impossible.

But Temple's stubborn pride would not let him apologise.

"I shouldn't have kicked you, I'll admit," he said. "But that's not an apology for doin' it. I feel that it's up to me to give you a hidin', one way or another, an' if you won't take it any other way you'll have to take it fightin'!"

"It's the only way that suits me," Quentin answered. "When?"

Temple looked at his watch.

"It's too near tea-time now. Better leave it till to-morrow, I should say. Will the gym at five past twelve to-morrow suit you?"

"Suits me all right. You can count on me to be there."

With that Willesley turned away. He had been attracted to the Cloisters by curiosity to see more of Greyfriars. He wished now that he had not gone thither. But there was nothing like funk in his feeling that he did not particularly care to fight Temple.

He was not anxious to earn a reputation for quarrelsomeness in his Form, and somehow he was sure that Temple was normally quite a decent sort. It was not really wonderful that a decent fellow could not stand Cuthbert. Cuthbert was beyond the limit.

Temple, though he would not admit it, had much the same feeling about Willesley that Willesley had about him. The new fellow had seemed a rank outsider on Tuesday. But perhaps he had been at a disadvantage then, fresh to Greyfriars, nervous and flurried—though somehow nervousness and flurry did not seem in keeping with his bearing to-day. He had found his feet pretty quickly, it appeared.

What happens to the new boy?

Fry said what Temple would not say. "That's not a bad sort, that fellow! He has pluck, anyway!" "And cheek!" growled Cecil Reginald. "I shouldn't exactly call it cheek, either!" replied Fry.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Call for Help!

QUENTIN said nothing to the other fellows in Study No. 12 about his coming fight with Temple. He hardly knew why he kept silence. They would have to know to-morrow, of course. He must ask one of them to second him—Delarey, he thought.

Deep down in his heart there may have been a feeling that Temple would think better of it all when he grew calmer. But he did not know Cecil Reginald's vanity, and he was quite unaware of the precise nature of the offence by Cuthbert which had so aroused Cecil Reginald's wrath.

As to all that had happened in the Cloisters, Temple might have been willing to wipe the slate clean. A fellow who is not an absolute worm may be excused for lifting his hand to you after you have kicked him. Even though Temple's face still smarted hours afterwards, he did not feel half so bitter with Willesley on account of the smack as he did because of his belief that the fellow who had smacked him was the fellow who had let him in for a reproof from Mr. Quelch and a wiggling from Mr. Capper.

The prospect of the fight on the morrow did not spoil Quentin's spirits to anything like the extent that it did those of Temple, who really had all to lose and nothing to gain in the fight.

Quentin stood tea to Study No. 12, and the other three raised no protest, which was a sure sign that they accepted him as one of themselves. Bunter was laughing about the tuckshop when he came out laden with packages. He smiled and nodded to Bunter. But the Owl only cocked his fat little nose and looked supercilious. Somehow he knew that the cheery smile did not portend any readiness on Willesley's part to be sponged upon again.

No dread of Cuthbert kept Quentin from sleep that night. He felt sure now that his brother was back at Hampstead, and it was not in human nature that he should worry himself about Cuthbert's dislike of the dull life there.

But the morning brought trouble.

Among the letters in the rack was one addressed to him in a handwriting that anyone else might have taken as his own. He tore open the envelope at once, knowing that it was from Cuthbert, and never glancing at the postmark, which was a local one.

He gasped.

The heading of the letter was "The Cross Keys, Friarsdale," and the body of the letter told a tale of woe.

Cuthbert had got into another nasty mess, it seemed.

He was staying at the Cross Keys. He had not cared about going up to town at once. He had been playing cards with the landlord and another fellow, and had lost a good deal more money than he had upon him. He could not settle the landlord's bill, and the brute would not let him go.

If Quentin was anything like a decent fellow he would come to the rescue, saying nothing to anyone. It was a matter

of a fiver or so; but Cuthbert knew that Quentin had more than that.

"I've been a fool," wrote the prodigal brother. "But I know one thing—the mater wouldn't have said that you ought to let me stay here in pawn to a low beast of a publican. It's only money this time, and you really don't care much about money. Do come, old chap!"

Quentin's heart softened. It was true that he did not care about money in the way that his brother did. He had a healthy pleasure in spending his cash on things that he wanted, or for the benefit of his pals. But he could never have gloated over it as Cuthbert did over his.

There was nothing in the call for help that seemed suspicious. Yet Quentin was not altogether easy in his mind.

He had not meant to tell anyone about his brother. But now he wondered whether it would not be just as well if one fellow in his Form should know. There was no danger really. But it was unpleasant. Anyway, he would like to know something about this Cross Keys place before going there.

Not any of the fellows in Study No. 12. It would be so much better that they should remain unaware of Cuthbert's existence.

Some fellow who would be sympathetic, and would keep it dark. Not a blunt fellow like Bob Cherry or Johnny Bull. Perhaps Wharton. Yes, Wharton was the man. Besides, he was skipper of the Form, and Quentin had a notion that Wharton knew of some cloud in his past.

So he sought out Harry as soon as breakfast was over. There was time before classes to tell his story, and the bell would probably go before he had done much more than tell it. He wanted advice less than he wanted to unburden himself to someone who could be trusted.

"I say, Wharton, can I have a yarn with you?" he asked diffidently.

"Of course you can, old chap. Come to Study No. 1. I'll give Franky a hint to clear out if he comes along."

But Nugent did not turn up, and there was nothing to interrupt the story.

"I know I've only to say that I want you to keep this to yourself, Wharton," began Quentin.

Harry nodded gravely.

"You're going to be surprised. But I guess you can stand that."

"I guess I can!" answered Wharton, smiling.

"The fellows have been above a bit surprised by me already, I know. But when you've heard you will understand it all."

"Go ahead!"

"I've a brother. He's exactly like me to look at. I don't think he is like me inside—in fact, I know he isn't. He got into trouble at our last school, and was sacked. I left, too, partly because our guardian thought it best, and partly because there had been such a horrible mix-up between us that it wasn't clear to everybody that Cuthbert was the chap who had been doing things, not me."

Quentin paused. He would not have resented it if Wharton had inquired what the trouble was all about. But he



Cuthbert turned his back to extract his wallet, from which he took a pound note. Messrs. Cobb and Hawke winked at one another. They were well aware that these seemingly careful youths were often easy prey to men of their calibre. (See Chapter 4.)

Frank Richards tells you in his own inimitable style!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 804.

thought the better of Wharton for not inquiring.

"The Head was uncommonly decent," he went on. "He sized up the whole thing to his own satisfaction, and he told me that he was sure I was innocent of anything, that it was all Cuthbert, which it was. He did more, for he wrote to Dr. Locke, explaining the affair, and got me in here."

"Jolly decent of him," said Harry. "And I'm glad he did, Willesley, for Greyfriars seems to suit you, and you're going to suit Greyfriars."

"You didn't think so when you met me at the station," said Quentin, with a smile that lacked its usual brightness.

"Well, no, I didn't—none of us did. Oh, my hat, you don't mean to tell me that—"

"It was Cuthbert you met? That's just what it was. He played a low trick on me, and came here in my place. But I followed him up."

"Wait a moment! I'm beginning to get it now. It was your brother who got cheeking Bolsver, and was so beastly rude to all of us—"

"I'm sorry for that. But it's Cuthbert's way. He seems to have been born sour. I don't believe he likes anybody, really."

"He told me he'd no use for cricket. He palled up with the Owl, and gorged himself in the tuckshop, thinking he was doing it at Bunty's expense, whereas it was the other way round. But, no, it couldn't have been—"

"What couldn't have been?" asked Quentin.

"I've got it now! You met him outside gates and came on here. It was you who chucked the ball more than half across the quad, and you who whacked Bolsy, of course. But it never could have been you who fairly lay down to Bunter!"

"It wasn't. That was Cuthbert. He never would fight."

"Then he must have got in again and edged you out?"

"Yes. He managed it by a trick. There isn't time to tell all about it now. He slept in the Remove dormitory that night—Tuesday night—and quarrelled with Bunter next day. But I got back by disguising myself, and coming on to the cricket-ground, as he wouldn't come out to me. And it was understood that he was going back to the place at Hampstead, where we hang out with our old nurse. She's an old dear, really, but Cuthbert hates her, and she's not keen on him. He hasn't gone, though."

"My aunt! It's like Box and Cox, or Shakespeare's 'Comedy of Errors.'"

"Or the old man and woman in the weather-house—one inside, the other outside. It's funny, in a way, but I can't somehow cotton to the funny part of it. Because it's serious for me."

"I shouldn't think you would, either. It's too thick for anything. But you say he hasn't gone, Willesley? Do you mean that he's hanging about on the chance of slipping into your place again? That's why you told me, I suppose. It was a good wheeze. He won't find it so easy with another fellow in the know."

"I don't think he wants to come back now. Greyfriars didn't really suit him. No school would, Wharton. He doesn't care a bit about the things that other fellows like. Only about money and grub and playing cards, and all that."

"For that matter there are fellows here who are keener on all those things than is good for them," said Wharton.

"What sort of place is the Cross Keys

[at Friardale?" asked Quentin, letting that remark pass.

"A low hole! Out of bounds, too. There's been no end of trouble one way and another in connection with it. But why do you ask?"

"Cuthbert's there. I had a letter from him this morning. He's lost money to the landlord at cards, and can't get away till it's paid."

"That sounds likely enough. Just the sort of game Cobb would play. I should let him stay there, Willesley."

"I can't. I must pay up for him, and get him off home. But it's awkward. I'm booked to fight Temple in the gym at five-past twelve, and Cuthbert asks me to go to him directly after classes, and I don't know what will happen if I don't. I want to see him into the train for town. I can, then. But there isn't one in the afternoon that fits."

"You are going to fight Temple—why?"

"Oh, some of Cuthbert's rotten cheek! It was he who fell foul of Temple. I couldn't explain, could I? But I do hate the notion of anyone's thinking that I lunked the fellow."

Wharton knitted his brows, after his fashion when thoughtful.

He tried to think of something he could do to help the new fellow.

But the only thing he could think of did not promise much. Cecil Reginald Temple was not exactly the kind of personage who would consent to wait unless some quite satisfactory reason were offered. And it was out of the question to give him the true reason here.

Then Wharton smiled. After all, what alternative had Temple but to wait? Obviously he could not fight a fellow who was not there. He might fume, and some members of the Remove might be ready to condemn Willesley as a funk. But that would be put straight when Willesley turned up once more, ready to face Temple, and able to say truthfully that he had been called away by something really pressing.

Just then the bell rang for classes.

"Look here, Willesley," said Harry, "we can't talk any more now. You just leave this to me. Cut off after classes, if you feel you ought to, and I'll represent you in the gym. You don't mind my being your second, I hope?"

"Mind? I should jolly well think not! It's awfully decent of you, Wharton, and I'm quite satisfied to leave things to you. Of course, you understand that everything I've said is in strict confidence?"

"Certainly! Now we must bunk, or we shall have Quelchy looking daggers at us!"

And they rushed downstairs to the Form-room.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

In the Gym!

WILLESLEY and Wharton had a word together as they left the Form-room, classes over for the morning.

Harry took good care not to let anyone else hear, though anyone who heard could only have been mystified when he said:

"Now then, Box, don't you go letting Cox usurp your place again!"

The smile that nearly everyone liked—the smile that differentiated Quentin from Cuthbert to those who knew them both, for Cuthbert's smile was little

better than a sour grin—spread over the new fellow's face as he answered:

"No jolly fear! I say, Wharton, you are a trump! I sha'n't forget this in a hurry!"

Then he bolted, and Harry made his way to the gym.

Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent joined him.

"What's up, Harry?" asked Bob. "You've got that serious look on your old chivvy that we all know!"

"Nothing much!" Harry answered. "Willesley's going to fight Temple in the gym, and I'm seconding him, that's all—no, it isn't quite all. Willesley's been called out of gates by an urgent message, and I've got to tell Temple so, and persuade him to wait without getting his wool off—if possible!"

"Which it's not," Frank said. "Temple's sure to get his wool off. The very idea of anyone keeping his lordship waiting!"

Bob had not waited to hear all that his chum said. He had rushed off to spread the news.

He saw Johnny Bull and Inky on the other side of the quad, and shouted to them to go to the gym. He saw Ogilvy, and told him, and the Scots junior started in to spread the news. He saw Vivian, and sent Sir Jimmy darting off to inform Delarey and Mauly. Bunter heard him tell Vivian, and himself rolled off to inform others.

The clans began to gather. Delarey, Tom Brown, Squiff, Mauly, and Sir Jimmy arrived together. Ogilvy came along with Russell, Bolsver, Hillary, Dupont, Bulstrode, Hazeldene, Vernon-Smith and Redwing came. Kipps and Morgan and Desmond, Wibley and Newland and Penfold. Mark Linley strolled in alone, just ahead of Bunter, Fish, Skinner, Stott, and Snoop.

Within ten minutes practically the whole Remove had gathered.

But Temple had not yet put in an appearance.

It was a quarter past twelve when he came, accompanied by Dabney, Fry, Scott, and half a dozen more of the Upper Fourth.

He seemed in no hurry. Perhaps he felt that in keeping everybody waiting he asserted his dignity. Cecil Reginald valued his dignity.

"I hope you haven't hurried, Temple," remarked Vernon-Smith.

"He couldn't help it, bless him! He was kept in," gibed Bob Cherry.

"I'm not a dashed Remove kid!" said Temple, regarding Bob with a haughty stare.

"Thank the stars!" retorted Bob, unabashed.

Temple looked round.

"Where's the new cad?" he asked.

"Ah, where is he?" said Delarey.

"Now that the old cad's turned up at last he certainly ought to be on view!"

"I'm not a cad, an' I'll—"

"I don't reckon Willesley's a cad, either," struck in the Afrikaner. "A fellow who prides himself on his manners, as you do, Temple, might be above that kind of thing."

Wharton stepped forward. He did not want Delarey and Temple to get scrapping.

"I'm seconding Willesley, Temple," he said. "He's very sorry, but he was called out of gates urgently, and asked me to say that he'd be back as soon as he could."

"What? Oh, by Jove! Does he think he can keep me waitin' like this?"

(Continued on page 17.)

Are you reading "The Golden Buddha!" in the "Boys' Friend"?



Supplement No. 132.

HARRY WHARTON
EDITOR

Week ending July 7th, 1923.

A TRAVELLER'S DIARY!



(This latest effort of our prize porpoise will send you into hysterics. The great W.G. is a born traveller; leastways he has travelled—rather hastily—from our study on innumerable occasions.—Ed. !)

MONDAY. — The Head has graciously konsented to give me two days off, so that I can go down to Cornwall and see my Aunt Prue, who has got an attack of scarlet meesles. I told the Head that a cupple of days wouldn't be enuff; but he said: "Look hear, Bunter, if you're not back at Greyfriars within forty-eight hours, you'll get it where the chicken got the chopper!" So I shall have to get back by Wensday morning, if I can mannidge it. I borrowed Tom Brown's bike, and started on my long jerney. I thought it would be better to bike, bekawse it would save the railway fair.

TUESDAY.—I spent the night at a little farmhouse a duzen miles from Greyfriars. Fancy doing only a duzen miles in a day! But it wasn't my fault. It was the fault of Brown's beestly bone-shaker of a bike. The blessed thing kollapsed three times, and on each occasion I had to push it to the nearest garridge and have it put right. I'm supposed to be back at Greyfriars by to-morrow morning—and I'm still on the way to Cornwall!

WENSDAY.—Brown's bike broke down kompletely. I threw it in a pond in deep disgussed, and continued my jerney on foot. I was lucky enuff to get a lift on the luggage-rack of a moter-car for twenty miles; but I'm still a long, long way from Cornwall. I sent a wire to the Head, as follows: "Sorry, old sport, but I've been hung upon the road. Please make allowances,

and give me an eggstension of leave till the end of the week." I eggspet the Head will have an apple-plectic fit when he gets that wire!

THURSDAY.—I felt so weery and footsore that I desided to hop on to a passing train, like you see them do on the pictures. Of corse, it takes a jolly good atherlete to do this, but I man-nidged it with ease. I took a flying leap, and landed in one of the trucks of a goods-train. I lay there, disguised as a sack of coal, without being discovered, and I reached my destination this evening. It's taken me four days to get to Cornwall, and I'm just about whacked, as the skoolboy said after he had been ordered to touch his toes! I found my Aunt Prue recovered from her illness, and she gave me a harty reseption. After a fifteen-corse dinner this evening I feel tons better!

FRIDAY.—Aunt Prue has given me my railway fair back to Greyfriars. I sha'n't arrive back until the morning, and the Head will be simply furious. But I'll eggplain to him that I was mixed up in a railway smash. He might swallow the yarn. If he duzzent, I shall have to throw myself on his mersy!

SATTERDAY.—To quote the words of the poet:

"Home is the Bunter, home from the hill,
And the fisherman home from the sea."

Gosling, the porter, marched me along to the Head's studdy when I arrived, and the Head fixed me with a freezing stair. "You are three days late, Bunter!" he barked. "Sorry, sir," I mermered. "Have you any eggscuse to offer?" he snapped. "Yes, sir," I replied. "Let me here it, then," he snarled. "Did you read about that terribul railway axcident in the paper, sir?" I asked. "No, I never," said the Head. "Well, there was one, and I was one of the victims, sir," I eggplained. "I've been in hospital for three days, nursing a frackchered thigh." The Head looked daggers at me—in fact, if looks could have killed, I should have eggspired on his studdy carpet. "You retched prevarricator!" he roared. "How dare you tell me such a cock-and-bull story? I shall give you a severe flogging!" And he picked up his pet cane, and laid it on good and hard. That wasn't the end of my trubbles. Tom Brown asked me what had become of his bike, and when I told him I had chucked it into a pond he turned pail with fury. Then he shook me until my teeth rattled, and afterwards used me as a punching-ball. A very paneful climb-axe to a week of travel!

BRIEF REPLIES.

"Eager" (Sheffield).—"We should very much like a special "Frank Richards" number of the "Herald," giving us some intimate details of our favourite author." Afraid Mr. Richards is too modest a gentleman to permit of this being done, but will keep your bright suggestion in mind.

R. H. B. (Bournemouth).—"Who is the cleverest black-and-white artist in the Greyfriars Remove?" Johnny Bull and Frank Nugent share the honours. The latter is a clever cartoonist, and in some quarters he has been christened "Tom Webster minor."

"Archie" (Kensington).—"I have two gold signet rings for disposal." Perhaps Billy Bunter would like to "take them off your hands," so to speak. But I doubt if he would be able to squeeze them on to his chubby fingers; and anyhow, he wouldn't be able to pay for them until his postal-order arrived! Seriously, though, Archie, this is a boys' paper—not a "Bazaar, Exchange, and Mart."

"Square Leg" (Southampton).—"Is it true that Hampshire beat All England at cricket?" Yes. Hampshire beat All England, at Hambledon, in June, 1777, by an innings and 168 runs. The fixture was revived in 1908, when Hampshire won by five wickets. In the latter match Newman took thirteen wickets for 120 runs.

A special "Fair" number of the supplement next!

TIPS FOR TRAVELLERS!



ALWAYS take as little luggage as possible. Compress it all into a match box, if you can. It will save you no end of trouble and worry. When Lord Mauleverer travels he takes two portmanteaux, two trunks,

half a dozen Gladstone bags, half a dozen suit-cases, and hat-boxes galore! He generally manages to lose half his property before he gets to his destination. And in "tips" to porters he spends about a fiver per journey. Travelling is simply hopeless when you're loaded up with luggage.

Never travel with cats, dogs, monkeys, parrots, or other pets. They are a jolly nuisance. I once took a puppy in a basket from Courtfield to Canterbury. It kicked up such a hullabaloo that I incurred the wrath of all my fellow-passengers. Cats, too, kick up an awful shindy. Monkeys are apt to make themselves a nuisance by perching themselves on the rack, cracking nuts, and pelting the passengers with the shells! As for parrots, the least said about them the better. I once travelled with one of these insolent birds, and its sole vocabulary consisted of the word "Beaver!" A bearded old professor in the corner-seat got fearfully annoyed. He threatened to pull the communication-cord if I didn't gag my parrot. But the bird went on

croaking "Beaver!" and I was obliged to change carriages at the next station.

Always allow yourself ample time in which to catch a train. It is not an edifying spectacle to see a fellow doing a Marathon race to the station, with a portmanteau on his back and perspiration pouring down his face. Some fellows say: "Oh, the train's bound to be late! I shall catch it all right." But the only thing they catch is the last dying shriek of the engine as it dies away in the distance!

If you want some light, lively literature to beguile the tedium of travelling ("tedium" is good!), what's wrong with the MAGNET Library? If it's a particularly long journey you're taking, arm yourself with the whole of the Companion Papers, and you won't have a dull moment. If you're not keen on devouring literature, try a bag of jam-tarts!

Finally, be sensible about "tipping" porters. Don't give extravagant tips nor stingy ones. There's a happy medium in all things, you know!

EDITORIAL!

By HARRY WHARTON.

NEARLY everybody travels nowadays. This is no age of stay-at-homes or stick-in-the-muds. It is possible to get from place to place with remarkable speed, and there are a dozen methods of transport to choose from. If you fancy a trip to the seaside you may travel by car, train, cycle, charabanc, or aeroplane, according to your means—and nerve!

A hundred years ago travelling was a tedious and a wearisome business. I expect you have seen pictures of the ancient coaches, half-buried in a snow-drift. It took some days to get from one side of England to the other.

Letters were conveyed by mail-coach in those days, and Billy Bunter, had he lived then, would have had cause to complain of the delay in the arrival of his postal-order!

The Famous Five—that select circle of which I have the honour to be the leader—have travelled north, south, east, and west in the course of their adventures. We have toured England from John o' Croats to Land's End—we have been abroad to the Congo, and to France, and goodness knows where! We simply love travelling, and I believe nearly everybody does.

But there are exceptions. The oldest inhabitant of the village of Friardale said to me the other day, leaning heavily on his crutches: "I've lived in this 'ere village, man an' boy, for nigh on ninety year, an' I ain't never travelled beyond Courtfield. I've 'eard wunnerful tales about Lunnon, but I ain't a bit keen on goin' there."

What a fearfully narrow outlook! Fancy being cribbed, cabined, and confined in one village for ninety years! No change of air, no change of scenery; seeing the same faces and the same buildings day after day!

It is a splendid thing to travel, for it broadens a fellow's outlook, and prevents him becoming stodgy and narrow-minded.

ROLLING STOCK!

By BILLY BUNTER.

(Spelling corrected by the Editor.)

The train was packed from end to end
The day I went to Harwich.

I bothered and beseeched my friend
To find a first-class carriage.

Alas! Alack! He had no luck.
They put me in the cattle-truck!

The bearded guard yelled "Right
away!"

The engine started puffing.
I lay among the straw and hay

And sundry sacks of stuffing.
I tell you, it requires some pluck

To travel in a cattle-truck!

A beastly bull was standing near,
And it began to bellow.

I looked at it, and quaked with fear,
And murmured: "Shush, old fellow!"

It started then to rear and buck
Inside that dreadful cattle-truck!

Of course, the brute was in a net,
And could not thus attack;

Or I'd have promptly jumped, you bet,
Upon the metal track!

I somehow seemed to lose my pluck
When riding in that cattle-truck!

At fifty miles an hour or more

The long train rushed and thundered.
Like a mad thing it flashed and tore:

Would we collide? I wondered.

That prospect in my mind got stuck.

I shuddered in the cattle-truck!

All bumped and bruised from top to toe
I reached my destination;

And when I staggered out, you know,

I asked for compensation,

But failed to get it—just my luck!

Confound that beastly cattle-truck!

SOME POETICAL
ADVICE!

By DICK PENFOLD.

When you travel, George or Gerald,
Always take the "Greyfriars Herald"!

If you want a gay week-end,
Don't forget the old "Boys' Friend"!

If your bike-wheel badly buckles,
On the bank sit reading "Chuckles"!

If your spirits need a prop,
What's the matter with the "Pop"?

Lots of chaps (good luck to them!)
On their travels take the "Gem"!

When the rain comes pelting down,
The MAGNET drives away each frown!

If you meet a peppery colonel,
Show him Bunter's weekly journal!

Whether climbing, boating, riding,
Or along the highways striding,

Don't forget to buy and read
The papers that are friends in need!

Then your joys will increase tenfold,
Rare as my name's Richard Penfold!

(Well done, Dicky, my boy! One of these fine days we shall see you blossoming forth into a "big noise" in the advertisement world. When you do, old scout, don't forget your poetic contributions to the "G. H."—the paper which has placed you on the first rung of the ladder!—ED.)

PHOTOGRAPHERS!

Do yourself a good
turn. Read my:

SPECIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC
SUPPLEMENT IN THIS
WEEK'S "POPULAR."

—W. G. BUNTER.

"All the Fun of the Fair!" by Tom Brown! It's great!

"I've got to get back to Greyfriars somehow!"

Thus Billy Bunter. The fat junior was on the horns of a dilemma, so to speak. He had spent a week-end with one of his uncles in London—not a titled relation, by the way—and he had spent the money which he ought to have saved to pay his fare back to Friardale.

Billy Bunter found himself on Charing Cross Station with the sum of twopence-halfpenny in his pocket. And in these days of expensive travel you can't get very far for twopence-halfpenny. The day may come when we shall be able to travel from John o' Groats to Land's End for a modest copper or two. In the meantime, we've got to take things as we find them, as the tramp said when he picked up a gold watch.

Bunter had wild thoughts of seeking out the stationmaster, and requesting a loan on the strength of a postal-order he was expecting. But, he reflected, with a sigh, that no stationmaster would swallow such a story.

"I shall have to travel without a ticket, that's all," murmured the fat junior.

The train was already in; in fact, it was about to start. A porter was shouting:

"Any more for Bromley, Beckenham, Courtfield Junction, or Friardale?"

Billy Bunter dashed towards the barrier.

"Ticket, please!" said the official who stood there.

"Can't stop!" panted Bunter. "Train's just going!"

And he plunged through the barrier, ran along the platform, and scrambled into a first-class carriage.

The train moved off, and Billy Bunter heaved a sigh of relief. He fervently hoped that no interfering inspector would board the train on the way to Friardale and demand to see his ticket.

Alas for Bunter's hopes!

At the very first stop a ticket-collector jumped into the compartment in which the fat junior was seated.

"Ticket, please!" he said respectfully but firmly.

"Oh crumbs!" faltered Bunter. "I—I must have mislaid it somewhere."

And he started to go frantically through his pockets.

"I've got no time to waste!" growled the inspector. "Produce that there ticket at once, or pay the fare. Otherwise, out you goes!"

Billy Bunter was in a tight corner. And he fell back upon his ventriloquism, which had got him out of tight corners many a time and oft.

A voice—apparently the voice of an old lady—came from the platform.

"Inspector, what time is the next train to Canterbury?"

The inspector, scenting the possibility of a tip, jumped down on to the platform to answer the old lady's question. To his astonishment, no aged female was visible.

"Here I am, inspector!"

The voice seemed to proceed from the ladies' waiting-room. And the inspector darted off in that direction. At the same instant the train started, and Billy Bunter lay back in his seat with a fat chuckle.



"Good! I've got rid of that fellow all right," he murmured. "Hope I shall be left in peace now."

But once again Bunter's hopes were dashed. At the very next stop another "jumper" got into the carriage.

"Tickets, please!" he said, in commanding tones.

Bunter again resorted to his ventriloquism. A shrill, feminine voice hailed the "jumper," inquiring the next train to Margate.

"Oh, she can wait!" growled the railway official. "I'm fed-up with these old ladies an' their questions! They're a pesterin' nuisance!" He turned to Billy Bunter. "I want to see your ticket, sir!" he added.

The fat junior went slowly through his pockets, hoping and praying that the train would move on. And so the train did. But the "jumper" did not leave it. He stayed in the carriage with Bunter.

"Mislaid your ticket, sir?" he inquired, with crushing sarcasm.

"Yes!" groaned Bunter.

"Perhaps you never took one?"

"Oh, really—Of course I took a ticket! But I forgot which pocket I put it in."

"You'd better hurry up and find it!" said the man grimly.

Suddenly a low growl came from beneath one of the seats. The ticket-inspector gave a jump.

"Why, there's a dratted dorg in the carriage!" he ejaculated.

WELL SAID!

*In your travels, jaunts and capers,
Take the gay Companion
Papers!*

*They are fine for tube or train,
Tram, or 'bus, or aeroplane.*

Gr-r-r-r!

There was a low, fierce snarl, accompanied by a rending sound, as if the inspector's trousers were being ripped by canine teeth.

The startled official dropped down on to his hands and knees, and started to explore. But it was very dark under the seats, and he could see nothing.

The angry snarling continued, and the inspector trembled a little as he grovelled on the floor of the carriage. At any moment he expected a dog's fangs to be fastened into some portion of his anatomy.

"Come out, you brute!" he muttered.

Gr-r-r-r!

The snarling grew fiercer and more menacing. The inspector, now thoroughly scared, scrambled to his feet, and edged towards the carriage window. Billy Bunter pretended to be equally scared.

"There's a fierce monster in this carriage somewhere!" he exclaimed.

The train rolled into the next station, and the inspector, who valued his skin—and his garments—promptly hopped out of the carriage. He was confident that there was a mad dog lurking under one of the seats.

Billy Bunter, having shaken off two railway officials by means of his ventriloquism, hoped to finish his journey without further interruption. But at Courtfield Junction another "jumper" got into the carriage. This man happened to know Bunter, and he was not likely to be deceived by the fat junior's ventriloquism. He demanded to see Bunter's ticket. And when Bunter failed to produce it, he threatened to make things warm for the fat junior as soon as the train reached Friardale.

Bunter had visions of being handed over to the police, and goodness knows what. And he fairly quaked with alarm. To his infinite relief, Bob Cherry happened to be on the platform at Friardale. And when Bob heard of Bunter's plight he good-naturedly paid the fare.

Bunter promised faithfully to repay his benefactor when his postal-order arrived. But from what I know of Bunter, Bob Cherry will have to wait a century before that happens!

THE END.

And "The Fags at the Fair!" by Dioky Nugent—next week!

OUR ADVERTISEMENT COLUMN!



TRAVELLERS! When on a walking tour, always wear **BINGHAM'S BEAUTIFUL BOOTS!** All sorts, shapes, and sizes in stock. Bid good-bye to corns and bunions, and wear cosy, easy-fitting boots. No more tired, aching feet if you wear **BINGHAM'S BLISTERLESS, BUNIONLESS BOOTS!** Call and inspect our stock, and you will be amazed and delighted: No. 99, High Street, Courtfield.

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ALWAYS travel by **Chunkley's Charabancs!** Safe, smart, and speedy. Only fifteen accidents during the whole of last week! No need to insure your life before travelling in one of our charabancs. Fare, 3d. per mile. Each charabanc takes an ambulance in tow in case of emergency. In addition to this, the Cottage Hospital is situated on our main route, so have no fear. In the event of the charabanc turning turtle you will receive prompt attention!—**Chunkley's Garage, High Street, Courtfield.**

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THRILLING TALES OF TRAVEL!

(We have asked a number of people to describe some of their travelling experiences, which we print below.)

BOB CHERRY:

Of all forms of travelling, flying appeals to me most. I shall never forget the day when my cousin, who had just graduated as a pilot, flew me over to France. It was positively thrilling, rushing through the air, with the waters of the English Channel far beneath us. There were moments when I thought I should never see Greyfriars again—especially when something went wrong with the engine! My heart kept pounding against my ribs, and I expected at any moment to find myself whizzing downwards through space. But the engine trouble righted itself, and we reached the aerodrome at Calais without mishap. Flying is not the only form of travel which appeals to me; but, by Jove, doesn't riding a push-bike seem tame after an aeroplane trip!

DONALD OGILVY:

The most thrilling journey I ever made was when my big brother motored me up to Scotland. It was night-time, so the roads were clear, and my brother opened the throttle and fairly let the car rip. The speed at which we went almost took my breath away. I don't know how many miles an hour we were doing. My brother said we were "crawling," but I don't think a magistrate would have thought so! However, there were no police-traps on the road, and I felt jolly relieved to land in Scotland with all my limbs intact!

FRANK NUGENT:

I was once in a terrible railway accident with my minor, and I never want another experience of the same sort. The train jumped the metals, and was completely wrecked. Marvellous to relate, there was no loss of life, but many people were injured, and I was one of those who were pinned beneath the wreckage. I was in bed for weeks after the smash, but a strong constitution pulled me through, and now I look back upon the terrible experience as a bad dream.

ALONZO TODD:

I strongly disapprove of high-speed travelling, and my Uncle Benjamin shares my disapproval. "Safety First!" is my maxim, and when I have a fast train and a slow to choose from, I always select the slow one. It is so much safer. I never travel in a motor-car unless the driver assures me he will not exceed ten miles an hour. And I should not dream of risking my neck on a motor-cycle. My favourite method of travelling is on a donkey's back; but the donkey must be guaranteed tame and docile. A seaside donkey once threw me, and I alighted with a bump on the sands of Pegg. It was at first feared that I had fractured my little finger; but this terrible tragedy was happily averted. I shall refuse to ride on a young and frisky

donkey in future. I will make sure that the beast is at least twenty years of age!

HORACE COKER:

I find that the most perfect form of travelling is by motor-bike. I simply love dashing about the country lanes on my masheen, scattering souls in all direckshuns. Potter and Greene, my two pals, show a curious reluctance to ride in the side-car. They seem to be afraid of getting their nex broken, which is all Tommy Rott. I know I egseed the speed limit, but, in spite of this, I'm a very careful driver. I've only smashed up my masheen three times during the last month, and I call that very modderate going!

TOM BROWN:

The humble "push-bike" is good enough for this child. There are swifter means of locomotion, I know, but cycling has a charm of its own. I don't envy the millionaire in his Rolls-Royce, nor the belted earl in his limousine. A steady ten miles an hour on my trusty bike suits me down to the ground. It wouldn't suit most people, in this age of hurry and scurry. But, personally, I always was, and always will be, devoted to my humble "jigger." You can get plenty of thrills out of a cycling tour. Not so many as you would get in an aeroplane, perhaps. But I have managed to squeeze quite a lot of fun and romance out of it.

TOM REDWING:

My favourite mode of progression is to brave the stormy seas in a rowing-boat. One of these days I mean to make an effort to row across to France. My pal Smithy tells me that I've got bats in my belfry, and that only a mad-man would start on such an enterprise. But being a sailor's son, and a lover of the sea, I'm sure I shall thoroughly enjoy it.

WILLIAM GOSLING:

I generally travel on Shanks' ponies—otherwise, my pore, tired feet. I don't hold with all these noo-fangled methods of getting about. I once took a taxi, and it turned turtle in Courtfield High Street. Never again! I made sure that all my ribs was stove in, and it's a mercy they didn't have to send me to the Cottage Hospital. I fairly hates them taxis, and the sharrabangs is no better. What I says is this here—they oughter be sweep' off the roads, as ever was!

FISHER T. FISH:

To my mind nothing beats a journey across the prairie astride the back of a fiery mustang. The mustang wants a lot of breaking in, but to a fellow of my abilities such a task is a mere trifle. The travelling I've done—(Stow it, Fishy! We've great admiration and respect for the mustang, but not much of either for your Noo York imagination. Now travel!—Ed.)

To laugh is to live! Read our supplements!

THE TWIN TANGLE!

(Continued from page 12.)

"You didn't mind keeping him waiting, Temple," said Sir Jimmy.

"I didn't. He wasn't here."

"But he'd have been kept waiting if he had been, chump!" growled Johnny Bull.

"We know that call out of gates on urgent bizney!" sneered Skinner.

"I shouldn't wonder if you do, Skinney," said Bob. "It's the sort of thing that might happen to you any time if you'd booked a fight!"

"Oh, really, Cherry, are you going to stick up for the rotter?" asked Bunter. "It's all rot to think he can fight Temple. Why, I licked him!"

"That certainly does seem to prove that he can't lick Temple," Squiff said, with a grin.

"He licked me—I'm not ashamed to own it!" shouted Bolsover. "I don't care about Bunter and all that rot. Willesley was playing a joke on all of us—pulling our legs. He practically admitted it to me. And what I say is this—if Temple can't wait, he can jolly well take me on! I don't mind. I don't care what Willesley's doing, but I'm dead-sure he's not a giddy funk!"

"You silly ass!" hissed Skinner in the ear of Bolsover. "What do you want to meddle for? Willesley's nothing to you!"

"You're a liar, Skinney! I like Willesley. I offered to take him in my study, if he wanted to change out. He's the right sort—that's what I say!"

Bob Cherry patted Bolsover on the back.

"I'm hanged if I don't agree with you, old top!" he said genially. "I'll say more—if Temple can't wait, he can have his choice between you and me. I've always yearned to have a go with Temple. Not that I mind the chap. Apart from being a bit of a snob and a good deal of a silly idiot, he's quite all right. But—"

"I'll thrash you both—one down, 'other come on!" roared Temple furiously.

Wharton felt like groaning. Bob and Bolsover both meant well, but they were doing no good. It would not conduce to Willesley's popularity to have others fight his battles for him.

But one thing their open declaration had done—it had drawn together those who liked and believed in Quentin Willesley. To Bolsover and the Famous Five drew now Squiff and Tom Brown and Delarey, Mauly and Sir Jimmy Vivian, Mark Linley, Vernon-Smith, Redwing; then, after a brief pause, Ogilvy and Russell, Penfold and Newland, Morgan and Desmond. A few wavered; and Hazeldene, who had been offended by Cuthbert, and could be as sulky as anyone when he chose, moved nearer to Skinner and his sympathisers.

The cleavage, though it had taken place instinctively, was quite definite. Four groups had formed—the Upper Fourth fellows in one, the undecided few in another, the unbelievers in a third, and in a fourth, by far the biggest, Willesley's adherents, with Harry, Bob, and the burly Bolsover heading them.

At that moment Peter Todd entered.

"I came here to fight Willesley, who insulted me!" snapped Temple. "I'm not specially keen on fightin' every dashed fag in the Remove, but I'm not shirkin' it. Settle among yourselves who

it shall be—I don't care. If Willesley turns up—an' I'll say for him that I think he will, though I consider he has shown bad manners in keepin' me waitin'—I dare say I shall have enough in hand to give him all he has any need for!"

"Willessley may be coming, but he was heading the wrong way when I came back on my bike from the village just now," remarked Peter Todd. "What's the merry game, Wharton?"

"I've explained to Temple that Willessley will be back as soon as he can," said Harry, with some heat. "The appointment was for five past twelve. Temple turned up at a quarter past, in no hurry. I think it's up to him to wait a little before he gets on his ear about it, after that."

"I don't like your tone, Wharton!" snapped Temple.

"You don't seem to like anybody's," said Squiff. "Kindly add me to the list of candidates for the honour of entertaining you till Willessley comes."

"Me, too!" Delarey said.

"Oh, begad, what's the use of all this dashed janglin'?" said Mauly, yawning. "Willessley will come along all right, if Temple will only have decent patience. I'll guarantee that—I know Willessley. I've left a comfortable couch to come to this draughty hole to see him fight, begad! An' if I don't complain, I don't see why anyone needs to."

"Temple ought not to spoil for want of a fight, anyway," remarked Peter Todd dryly.

"Do you want to take me on?" Temple snorted.

"Nunno! You're too warlike. You scare me. G'way! I don't like being glared at so horribly!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Nearly everyone roared. Peter Todd feared no one, and they knew it.

But Harry Wharton was one of the few who did not join in the chorus of laughter.

As ever, Harry felt his responsibility. The knowledge that he could not share with any of his chums made him uneasy, yet at the same time caused him to be keener in defence of the absentee than any of them.

They believed Willessley a decent sort. He knew that the new boy was more than that—a fellow of exceptional generosity and boundless pluck. With his keen sensitiveness, Wharton had deduced more from Quentin's story than the teller of it had said. He could guess at the self-sacrifice that Quentin had practised—could even guess at some strong motive behind it all.

Now he stepped out and faced Temple.

"It's all very well for these fellows to talk, Temple," he said quietly.

"They mean what they say, I know. I suppose at least half of the Remove would fight you at a pinch. But this is my job—not Bolsover's or Cherry's, or Field's or Delarey's. I'm Willessley's second. I knew that he was going out, and I promised to get you to wait, or to do my best."

"Then it was like your dashed cheek!" returned Temple angrily.

Fry and Dabney tried to soothe him, but it was of no use. Cecil Reginald's haughty pride was wounded by the assertion that half the Remove would not fear to take him on. It might be true. He knew that the Remove did not number many funks in its ranks. But he did think it dashed cheek of Wharton to say it.

"It seems to me," said Scott, "that

it would be better all round if we waited till after half-past four. That will give Willessley a chance of coming up to the scratch, and it won't hurt anyone to wait. As for Temple fighting any of the rest of you, I consider that absurd. There's no quarrel, and—"

"But there is!" flashed Temple. "I've a quarrel with Wharton for what he said. I'm not going to stand cheek from any fag!"

That was enough. Harry Wharton pulled off his jacket and waistcoat.

There were a score of candidates for the honour of seconding him. Out of them all he chose Frank Nugent and Bob Cherry. Dabney and Fry would officiate in the other corner.

And now Willessley was almost forgotten. Circumstances had brought face to face the captains of two Forms between which there had always been keen rivalry.

The Upper Fourth were accustomed to talk as though a great gulf was fixed between them and the Remove. Actually there was nothing of the sort. Their average was a trifle higher; but the two Forms would have worked together as one—the Fourth—but that their joint numbers were too high for any master.

Between Temple and Wharton there was no bad blood. But at that moment each felt that he would give a good deal to lick the other.

Scott was selected as referee, and Squiff held the watch.

"Seconds out of the ring! Time!"

The gloved hands of Temple and Wharton met. Then, as they loosed clasp, Temple sent in a hard left at Harry's head.

It did not get home. Wharton dodged it, and crashed in one to the small ribs that made Temple wince.

The Upper Fourth skipper landed one on his rival's cheek, but Harry replied with two—left and right—on Temple's chest.

He did not want to mark his opponent's face if he could help it.

Temple was very vain of that handsome face of his. But that was not Harry's chief reason. Mr. Capper was sure to be sarcastic if he came to know that the captain of his Form had been fighting a Removite. Harry wanted badly to lick Temple, but had no wish to subject him to Mr. Capper's irony.

With all his faults, Cecil Reginald was a gentleman, and he was not dull of perception. Before the first round had ended he had twigged Wharton's avoidance of face blows, and in the second round he also went for the body.

No one else noticed. They were fighting hard, and that fact was enough to prevent criticism of their methods.

With four rounds gone honours were easy, but both combatants were blowing hard. In however good condition a fellow may be, a succession of hard punches in the chest and ribs is calculated to tell on his wind a bit.

All the Remove but Skinner & Co. were shouting for Wharton, even those who, like Hazeldene, would not have shouted for Willessley.

"My word, there's more in him than I thought!" said Fry at the end of the fourth round. "If I were you I should drop it, Cecil."

"Are you such an ass as to think he can lick me?" panted Temple.

"I don't think he will, but I'm not sure that he won't. I don't think it's a cert that you'll lick him, anyway. And

Harry Wharton & Co. are very prominent next Monday!

what good is it to you if you do? You've really got nothing against Wharton."

"Oh, haven't I? I sha'n't have after I've licked him, but I have till then, let me tell you."

And, with the call of "Time!" from Scott, in the absence of a gong, Cecil Reginald sailed in for the fifth round.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Box—or Cox!

MEANWHILE Quentin Willesley had hurried to Friardale, and, with an involuntary wrinkling of his nose at the atmosphere of the bar, thick with the stale fumes of drink and tobacco, had entered the Cross Keys.

No one was behind the bar. He rapped upon its zinc-covered top.

Mr. Cobb appeared, leering at him. Quentin hated Mr. Cobb on sight. He did not guess what cause he was to have for hating him more in the immediate future.

"What can I do for you, young sir?" asked the publican.

"I think you must know very well what I'm here for," answered Quentin.

Mr. Cobb peered at him as though short-sighted.

"Ah!" he said. "I do notice a sort of likeness now. You've come to see our young gen'l'man, eh?"

"I've come to fetch my silly fool of a brother out of this!" replied the boy impatiently. "It would only be wasting time to tell you what I think of you. Just let me know exactly what he owes you, and I'll pay it."

"An' very generous of you, too, Master Willesley. It's more than some brothers would, for it's a tidy heap. Come this way, and I'll make out the

account. I ain't sure to a quid or so jest what the figger is. He's a rare one for a bit of a flutter, that brother of yours."

The combined efforts of Messrs. Cobb and Hawke had failed to entice Cuthbert's money out of his wallet. Seeing that they were cheating, he had done likewise, and had done it both more cleverly and more successfully. Hawke and Cobb were no novices at the cheating game, but they had not been born with the uncanny gift for it which Cuthbert Willesley possessed.

The black sheep of Arundel House might before this have been in a position to put Kipps in the shade had he gone in for legitimate conjuring. But he had never cared for that kind of thing; he had devoted all his inborn ability to making the cards obey the behest of those slim fingers of his—fingers that were useless when they grasped bat or scull.

Not many people notice such details, but in their hands lay one marked point of difference between these two who were so much alike. Quentin's hands were browner and bigger than Cuthbert's, and the fingers were thicker.

Messrs. Cobb and Hawke had not worried overmuch about their failure to win at cards. They counted on bleeding Cuthbert dry in the near future.

But first they intended to bleed Quentin.

Hawke did not show up. Cobb led the way into the room in which Cuthbert had shown his skill with the pasteboards.

Quentin looked round.

"Where's my brother?" he asked sharply.

"Where should he be?" growled Mr. Cobb. "I've got him locked up till his little bill's settled."

"You've no right! I'm not sure that

you've any right to demand more than what he owes you for board and lodging," said Quentin. "But I'm not going to argue about that."

"All for the best you shouldn't!" said Mr. Cobb nastily. "You're out of bounds, my fine young Greyfriars chap, an' I might tell you that your 'Ead don't like me a scrap more than I like him—an' that's sayin' somethin'. The bill is—lemme see."

The publican produced a dirty half-sheet of letter-paper and a stump of pencil, and proceeded to do an imaginary exercise in addition.

He made the total £9 15s. 6d. He would have made it more, but he did not think it likely that this youngster would have more than ten pounds upon him.

Quentin glanced at it. Then he took out his wallet, and extracted ten pound-notes. That left two, and Mr. Cobb, his eyes bulging greedily, felt full of regret that he had not made the total £11 19s. 6d.

"There you are! No; never mind about a receipt. I'm going to see that my brother goes clear, and neither of us is likely to come inside this place again. You'd better fetch him."

"You'd better come to him!" snarled Cobb.

He led the way, and Quentin followed unsuspectingly.

The man was a rotter, of course. But, though he was sure of that, Quentin Willesley had not quite enough knowledge of the wickedness of the world to imagine the blackguardly compact made between this rascal and his own brother.

Cobb opened a door, revealing a flight of steps leading down into darkness.

"What? You don't mean to say that you've shut him in the cellar?" cried Quentin indignantly.

The publican's answer was not in

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

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

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

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

5.—Entries must reach us not later than July 12th, 1923, and MUST NOT be enclosed with entrance forms for any other competition. They must be addressed "MAGNET Limerick No. 13," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4.

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

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

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

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

"MAGNET" LIMERICK COMPETITION

No. 13.

A footpad, in menacing manner,
Ordered Banter to give him a tanner,
William George, though a funk,
Resolved not to bunk—

THIS EXAMPLE WILL HELP YOU:
So he screwed up his pluck with a spanner!

M.

CUT HERE

words. It consisted of the sudden lift of a knee, which took Quentin sharply in the rear, and caused him to shoot forward down the steps.

He reached the bottom with a thud that made Cobb tremble with fear—fear for himself, not for the boy.

"I didn't mean—he don't call out—my word, it's all a job if I've done him in!" faltered Cobb.

Cuthbert Willesley suddenly appeared beside him.

"That wouldn't kill Quen," he said unfeelingly. "I've known him to fall three times that far and be all right. Here, I'll go down and see."

He ran down the steps. Quentin was stirring and groaning.

He ran up again.

"He's all right—only dazed. Dropped his cap—bit of luck, that! I say, Mr. Cobb, you'll have to be careful that no one hears him yelling from the cellar."

"Whadja reckon? I ain't on for gettin' my licence took away an' a dose of stone jug, my pippin, don't you think it! In an hour or two I'll so put the wind up him that he won't ask for nothin' better than to be allowed to clear out an' make for 'ome—wherever 'ome is."

"What are you going to tell him?"

"I shall tell him that I'm goin' to send for Dr. Bloomin' Locke, an' let him hear about how I caught this young 'ound stealin' from my till, be havin' slipped in unbeknownst to me. That's what I'm goin' to tell him. That ought to do the trick—eh? He won't be so keen to git back to the school if he understands that it means nothin' better than bein' kicked out again. What?"

"It ought to work," replied Cuthbert. "But Quen's queer. I don't believe he's afraid of anything. You may have more trouble with him than you fancy."

"You leave that to me, young sharper!" growled Cobb. "Now you can shell out ten quid an' go."

The cellar door was shut now; and Mr. Jerry Hawke had come upon the scene to back up his partner's application.

"I say, didn't you get the cash out of him?" asked Cuthbert, in dismay.

"What I got out of him ain't neither 'ere nor there," answered Cobb.

"Of course it ain't," agreed Hawke. "Ten quid, young son-of-a-gun, an' dirt cheap at the price!"

Cuthbert, groaning, shelled out and departed.

He hurried towards Greyfriars, anxious to get away from the scene of his base treachery. But there was no real keenness in him for the school.

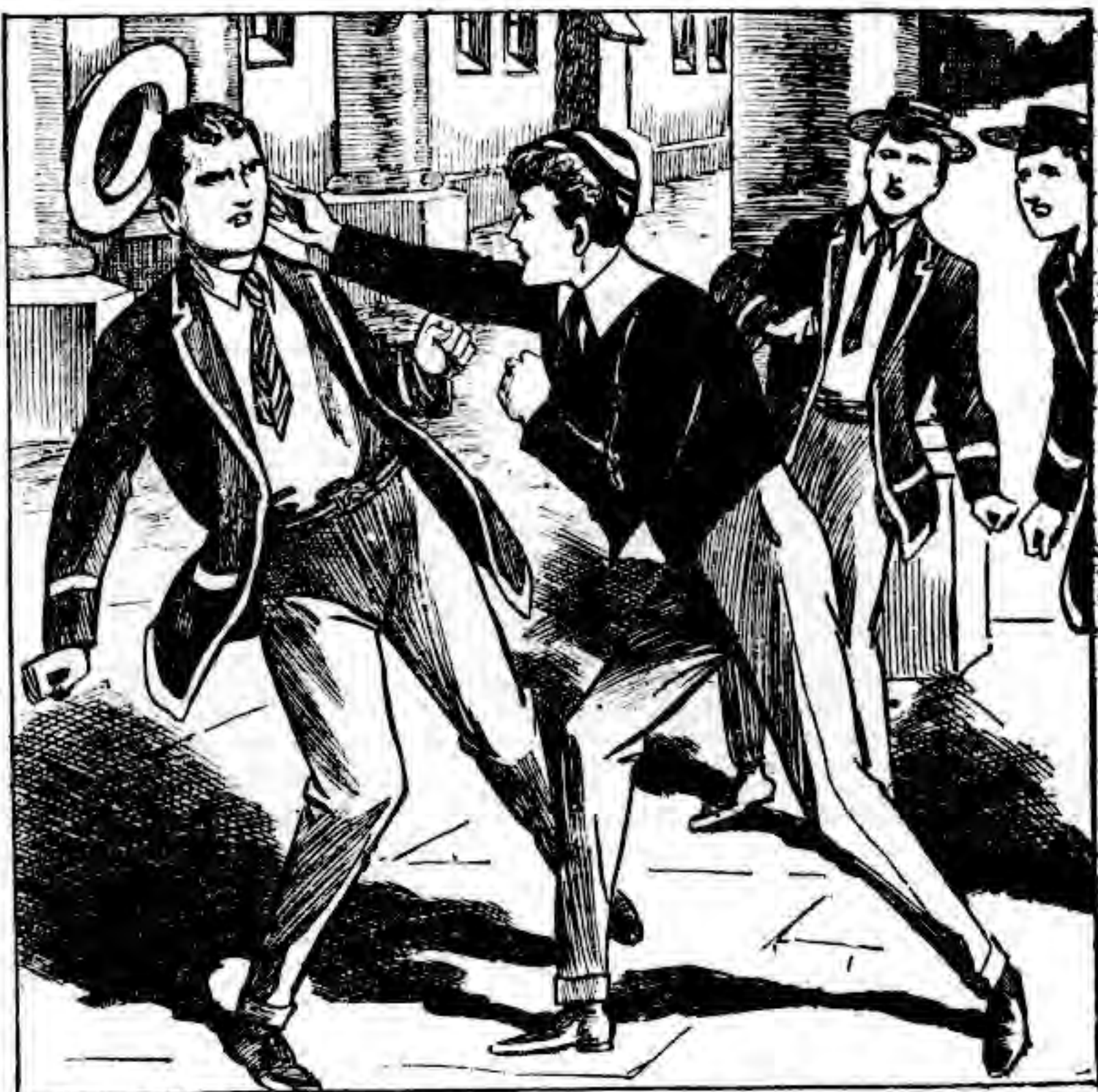
If only he could persuade everybody that he was Quentin—no, that was not the trouble, for no one would doubt it, unless the plot of Messrs. Cobb and Hawke slipped up somewhere.

If only he could behave like Quentin—that was it!

If only he could fight anyone who wanted to fight him, and win or lose without rancour or regret—smile upon the world—treat everyone as though he believed in them till he found them out, and then cut them dead if they proved wrong 'uns.

If only he could whack out with his pals, and honestly prefer doing it to a solitary gorge—take a caning without a whimper, even though he knew it undeserved—play the old games better than most, and learn new games with wonderful ease.

If only, in short, he could really be Quentin!



Smack! Quentin's open palm smote the handsome face of Temple with the sound like the crack of a revolver. "You—you mean that you're goin' to show fight?" asked Temple. "Of course I am, unless you apologise," replied Willesley. (See Chapter 5.)

But he knew that he could not, and deep down in his heart he knew that he did not really want to be. What he wanted was to go his own way and yet be as popular as Quentin.

He scowled at Gosling as he passed him. The quad was deserted; but from the gym came the sound of many voices lifted high, and, nervous about his imposture, thinking that his best chance of assuming Quentin's place again without arousing suspicion was to join a crowd, he passed inside.

Instantly the shouting redoubled.

"Here he is!"

"Here's Willesley, Wharton!"

Temple and Wharton had reached the tenth round, and now both displayed facial marks of the combat, though nothing like what they must have shown but for their care to hit at the body whenever they did not forget, or were not over-tempted.

Wharton's chest was black and blue under his vest, and Temple had half a notion that several of his ribs were broken. But neither had shown any desire to give in, though now Temple's anger had cooled off. He felt an increased respect for Wharton, and welcomed the chance to call the battle a draw.

"Time!"

They fell back to their corners. Cuthbert, with quick comprehension, would have bolted. But he found himself in the midst of an excited throng. There was no way of escape.

Quentin would have fought—he knew that. Quentin had been going to fight;

just like him to embroil himself with a fellow so much bigger!

But perhaps he had not really done anything to offend Temple. Cuthbert was aware that Temple had a score against him. It was his battle Quentin had been going to fight, with his usual foolish readiness for a fray.

Cuthbert did not feel grateful to his brother. His chief feeling was one of regret that he had not asked Quentin to the Cross Keys after afternoon classes. All this business would have been over then.

"Here, I say, I don't want to interfere with two fellows who are enjoying themselves!" he said, with a grotesque, grinning parody of Quentin's cheery smile.

"They've only been killing time till you came, old chap," said Delaney, hearing the words, not seeing the grin.

"Off with your jacket and waistcoat!" Squiff said.

Temple walked over to Wharton.

"I'll shake if you will, Wharton," he said. "I must admit that you held your own a good deal better than I expected."

It was not in Cecil Reginald to forbear from that little touch of condescension.

But Wharton did not mind. He knew Temple. Moreover, he had held his own rather better than he had himself expected to, and he felt rather chippy about it.

"I don't know that it's fair to you that you should take on another fellow."

(Continued on following page, col. 1.)

The day to remember—Monday! It's MAGNET day!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 354



STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER!

A Heart-to-Heart Boxing Chat.
By **STANLEY HOOPER.**

WHETHER you happen to be a boxing enthusiast or not, you will be interested, I am sure, in the following little story.

I was a spectator, not so very long ago, at a boxing tourney run by a working lads' club in the East End. Two of the contestants were in striking contrast to each other—one frail, pale, and genteel-looking, the other burly, surly, and scowling. The frail youth evidently had not had much experience in the ring, for he allowed his opponent to land time after time with vicious, round-arm blows, and, what is more to the point, could not prevent the shady manoeuvres that his scowling adversary resorted to whenever the referee was on the "blind" side. The laced palm of the glove would "rough" the frail one's face, the elbow would be brought across—quite "accidentally," of course—to connect painfully with the latter's chin. Not contented with this, the brutal-looking youth would contrive to swing with his left, miss purposely, then fall forward and smash his left shoulder, with all his weight behind it, to his opponent's stomach.

RETALIATION.

This sort of thing went on for two rounds, and I was feeling a little disgusted, although it was not my business to interfere. At the end of the third round the frail one came back to his corner looking very much used up and out of sorts with himself. Several dark and ugly bruises, the results of his opponent's "roughing," showed up vividly against his pale, clear skin. My seat was situated close to his corner, so I was in a position to see and hear everything that transpired between the boxer and his second. "It's no use," said the victim dispiritedly and dejectedly, "I cannot do anything with him. He simply won't fight fairly!"

His second snorted.

"Play the same game with him, sonny!" he advised. "He won't like his own medicine, I vow! Drop boxing, and get into him, rough him, and use your elbow whenever you get a chance. That'll stop his little games!"

THE WORST POSSIBLE ADVICE!

This was about the worst advice the youngster could possibly have, and I simply squirmed in my seat. If only I could have been in his corner for a few minutes!

When the bell went for the fourth round the frail one walked up to his man and attempted to put the advice to use. As I expected, however, the other simply revelled in the "rough" stuff, and showed his by now battered and sickly looking opponent no mercy. The contest went the distance, and, of course, the object of my compassion lost the verdict.

THE RETURN FIGHT.

I made my way afterwards to the dressing-rooms, and had a little chat with the loser.

"Do you really think you adopted the correct tactics?" I queried.

"Why, what else could I do?" muttered the frail youth between his puffed lips. "He wouldn't let me fight fair!"

"It would have been better for you had you forced him to fight fairly."

"How?"

"By boxing in the good old British fashion; by hitting straight from the shoulder! That is the Englishman's way. It beats all the shady tactics."

The loser pondered over my words for a while.

"Do you know, sir, I would like to fight him again," he said at last. "I think I could beat him the way you said."

"I will give you a few lessons," I said encouragingly. "And, more than that, I will see that you get the chance you ask for."

Accordingly, the two eventually met once more in the roped arena; and with a better boxing knowledge and a clearer mind, my protegee turned the tables on his former conqueror, much to my secret delight.

A MORAL VICTORY AS WELL.

Now, that lad may never make a name for himself in the world of boxing. Personally, I do not think he is quite built that way. One thing I am certain of, however, is that he will make a better man than his opponent, who had no conscience worries when seeking the victory by the aid of foul methods.

As sure as it is that the straight hitter in boxing commands success, so it is a fact that "straight" hitting in after life brings its own reward. The chap who will stoop to bring off a dirty trick in the boxing-ring will have little or no compunction in attacking a man from behind or kicking a fellow when he is down. The grand sport of boxing teaches us to be courageous and self-restraining. It imbues in us that good old British spirit of "Never say die!" Above all, it teaches us to be sympathetic and compassionate towards a fallen rival. The very first thing a victorious boxer does is to shake hands and console the defeated adversary. This is the spirit that carries a chap through the world, and ensures success in after life. It is British through and through!

THE STRAIGHT PATH.

A public school education is not necessary to make a success of a fellow. Most of our greatest boxers were, in their earlier lives, reduced to poverty and distress. Yet they were able to fight their way through the world to distinction, and to receive the respect of fellow-beings which is the just reward of all who in life's dealings do not attack from behind, but strike "Straight from the shoulder."

STANLEY HOOPER.

THE TWIN TANGLE!

(Continued from previous page.)

after ten rounds with me," he said, as he shook hands.

"Oh, that's all right!" replied Temple. "I'll soon settle him."

Cuthbert could see nothing for it but to fight. If he held back he would lose all the good opinions that Quentin had won, and might even raise suspicion. He could not lie down to Temple as he had done to Bunter, either. He must put up some sort of show.

And he did. But it was a poor show.

He landed Temple one on the chin, with behind it all the force of his resentment at being obliged to fight. Temple replied with one on the nose that drew blood; and Cuthbert, hating him for it, moved to fleeting valour by that hate, got home with both fists upon Temple's sore ribs, and made him give ground.

They were shouting—shouting—for him! He could hardly believe his ears.

Quentin had already made pals who were as keen on seeing him win as all that. He had only to beat this fellow, and—

Biff!

Temple's padded fist took him on the point of the jaw, and he sagged at the knees, and went down.

The fight was over. He was counted out before he could stir.

But no one thought the worse of him. It was an accident that might have happened to anyone. Though Quentin had beaten Bolsover, he had not revealed himself as a superlative boxer, only as a fighter of real pluck. In point of fact, Quentin had never had a real boxing lesson in his life. No instruction in the noble art was given at Arundel House.

Delarey and Sir Jimmy helped Cuthbert to his feet, and he restrained himself by a great effort from snarling at them.

They helped him out of the gym. His face was gloomy and sour. They did not notice this. But Harry Wharton did.

"Pity he didn't put up a better show," said Bob Cherry.

Harry did not answer. A sudden doubt had assailed him.

Was it Box—or Cox?

Could it be possible that the rascally brother had again managed to get into Greyfriars? If it were so, where was Quentin Willesley, the good fellow who had won Wharton's warm liking?

At the first chance Harry would tackle Willesley. If this was Quentin there would be no harm done. If it was the other—what then?

Harry hardly knew. But he would have to do something, that was certain. And he was badly handicapped—bound by his promise to Quentin to tell no one.

For the present he would have to emulate Brer Rabbit—"Lie low an' say nuffin'."

Box or Cox? That was the question!

THE END.

(Full particulars of next week's grand story on page 2.)

Another topping Greyfriars yarn next Monday! Don't miss it!



The Case of the Haunted House!

A thrilling story of mystery and adventure, staged in an old Tudor mansion, which is reckoned by superstitious folk to be the resort of ghostly visitants. Ferrers Locke's investigation reveals an astounding plot, the ingenuity of which will hold you spellbound.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Penwyn House, Uxbridge!

"AUDREY STAMFORD, estate agent. Hum! I seem to recollect the name. Show him in, my lad."

Ferrers Locke thoughtfully fingered the visiting-card which his young assistant had handed him, whilst Jack Drake vacated the well-appointed sitting-room to appear a moment later in company with a tall, well-groomed man of about thirty years, who made no effort to conceal the agitation which consumed him.

"Ah! What a relief to find you at home, Mr. Locke," began the newcomer eagerly. "What a relief!"

"Take a seat, Mr. Stamford," smiled the great detective, "and try one of these cigars. You appear to be labouring under the stress of some deep emotion. This particular brand of Havana is distinctly soothing to the nerves."

The visitor sank into the proffered seat, and seemed to gain some strength from the calm, intellectual face before him. Then, his cigar well alight, he shot an interrogative glance in the direction of Jack Drake, who was busily engaged in pasting up newspaper cuttings of criminal interest.

Ferrers Locke sensed the meaning of his visitor's action, and hastened to put him at his ease.

"You may speak quite freely in the presence of my assistant, Mr. Stamford. Drake and I always work together," he said.

Thus assured, the estate agent leaned forward eagerly in the armchair.

"I want your advice, Mr. Locke—your help," he commenced hurriedly.

"You are welcome to the former, Mr. Stamford," replied the detective, "but the latter may not be so easy of accomplishment. However, pray state your case as briefly and concisely as possible."

"Well, then, Mr. Locke, you have seen from my card that I am an estate agent by profession, and therefore it will not surprise you to know that my object in coming here concerns my business."

The famous sleuth nodded.

"Proceed," he said.

Audrey Stamford drew a deep breath, and then resumed:

"No doubt you have read of the mysterious happenings at Penwyn House, Uxbridge, from the daily newspapers?"

"The fine old Tudor mansion which is supposed to be the happy hunting-ground of ghosts and whispering voices, et cetera, eh?"

"Exactly! That house, as you may remember, was the property of Colonel Jason Mendrick, who was murdered whilst on service in India, two years ago. His executors commissioned me to sell or let the house, Mr. Locke, and therein lies my tale," said the estate agent.

"A tragic one, too!" was the detective's dry comment, "if I remember rightly."

"True!" agreed Stamford, with a momentary shudder. "Two people—tenants—have already paid the price of their temerity in living in that accursed house, in spite of the fact that, in each case, the coroner's jury returned a verdict of 'death from natural causes.'"

"Your words imply a suggestion of foul play?"

"They do, Mr. Locke," returned the agent emphatically. "I am convinced beyond all measure of doubt that the two unfortunate tenants of Penwyn House met their ends from the hands of an assassin."

"That is rather a tall statement to make," murmured Ferrers Locke. "And yet there are many circumstances about the affair which excuse it. The case comes back to me very clearly now. What astonished me most at the time was the fact that both the tenants of Penwyn House were ex-Army officers of the same regiment as Colonel Mendrick. That's so, isn't it?"

The agent nodded.

"Yes. And although both of them were middle-aged, and, as is often the case, slightly tinged with grey at the temples, the morning they were discovered by the police-officer, who, seeing the electric lights on full at eleven o'clock in the morning, forced an entrance, the hair of the unfortunate gentlemen—in each case, mark you—was snow-white!"

"I must confess that that point puzzled me," admitted the detective frankly, "but I was so busy at the time with other important cases that I lost touch with the affair. But let me ask you a question. Did either of your clients engage any servants to look after them?"

"No. That's another peculiar thing about the whole case," replied Stamford. "Both my clients were bachelors, and the existence of each of them seemed shrouded in mystery. They came to me with the story that they wished to recuperate in health, and were desirous of renting Penwyn House for a short season, furnished. Naturally, we soon came to terms, and that was the end of it—as I thought."

"Instead of which, it was only the beginning," supplemented Locke. "A very interesting case, Mr. Stamford—very! The police—if again my memory is not at fault—paid a special visit to the house, and searched it from top to bottom, did they not?"

"Yes, sir. And their opinion was that nothing out of the ordinary had occurred. In these days, when so many people believe in the occult, it is not to be wondered at that Penwyn House soon became famous as a haunt of ghostly visitants. You see, the faces of the unfortunate tenants both wore expressions of extreme terror when the bodies were discovered. Then, again, the second unfortunate met his end in the same room as his predecessor, and was found in much the same position—spreadeagled over the bed."

"I suppose the rumour that the house was haunted found root in the imaginations of a few rustics, and grew apace?" asked Locke.

"Exactly! But it was given considerable strength, firstly, by the fact that a mysterious blue light had often been seen by the villagers shining from the first floor window of the house, and, secondly, by a daily newspaper, whose enterprising editor despatched one of his subs to the place, with orders to rent it from me for a week or so and to write up his experiences. Nothing loth, I let the place to him, although I did not know at the time that he was a journalist."

"The Great Turf Swindle!"—next week's Ferrers Locke story!

"And how long did he stay in Penwyn House?" queried Ferrers Locke.

"One night."

"What?"

"I repeat, one night," said the agent. "He was so terrified that he handed back the keys of the place to me the day after he had engaged to rent it for one month."

"You astonish me!" murmured the detective incredulously. "This must have happened whilst I was away in America."

"You're quite right; it did," returned Stamford. "And since then my business has gone to rack and ruin in consequence."

"Indeed! How so?"

"All this ghost business about Penwyn House has spread throughout the neighbourhood, with the result that ten of the big houses of which I am the agent have become vacant. People refuse to live in them at any price, especially now that that fiend of a reporter has circulated his story. I am at my wits' end, and—"

"You would like me to undertake the case?" interrupted Ferrers Locke.

"Exactly! Can we come to terms upon the matter?"

"Don't worry your head about terms, Mr. Stamford," said the scientific investigator easily. "I shall be pleased to look into the case. If my efforts are rewarded with success I shall have done a superstitious public a great service—reward enough."

The visitor breathed a huge sigh of relief.

"Your words cheer me, Mr. Locke," he said warmly. "And the fact that they come from a man who has never lost a case gives them an added stimulus."

The world-famous detective waved the compliment aside with a grim smile.

"I would advise you not to raise your hopes—at present, at any rate," he admonished. "You must remember that Scotland Yard drew a blank, so to speak. However, we will proceed to Penwyn House without delay. Drake, instruct Sing-Sing to pack my bag, and, incidentally, your own. We shall not be back for the night. And, Drake," he added, as the youth was about to cross the threshold, "see that our automatics are included in the luggage."

"Very good, sir," came the smiling response.

Jack Drake vacated the sitting-room, leaving Locke and Audrey Stamford in deep and earnest consultation. Five minutes later he returned, a small attache case in either hand.

"Ready, my lad," said Locke, rising to his feet. "You've called a taxi, of course?"

The young assistant nodded assent.

"Then we'll be getting along, Mr. Stamford," continued the detective.

Five minutes later the trio were being whirled towards Uxbridge. The driver of the taxi, having worked for Ferrers Locke many times in the past, put the pace on, with the result that Penwyn House was reached just inside the hour.

The fine old Tudor mansion presented a somewhat dreary aspect amongst its ill-kept grounds. A long, sweeping, weed-covered drive made the approach, and the solid oak portal surmounting a flight of dirty stone steps was blistered and cracked from long exposure to the elements.

"The exterior is certainly not very inviting," commented Locke grimly, as his keen scrutiny embraced the old mansion and its immediate surroundings. "Let's

have a look at the interior, Mr. Stamford."

The estate agent, whose nervous manner had returned to him, now that he was standing outside the mysterious old mansion, fumbled with a large iron key. Two seconds later the door creaked upon its hinges, as Ferrers Locke applied his elbow to it.

The trio strode into the spacious hall.

"Nice, creepy sort of place, I reckon," grinned Jack Drake, his eyes roving curiously over the ancient suits of armour that stood in frowning dignity on each side of the hall.

But Ferrers Locke allowed the remark to pass unheeded. He was intently examining a large footprint on the polished oak floor.

"Pycroft's, for a thousand!" he chuckled. "The official foot always leaves its trade mark."

The estate agent caught the name and immediately took up the conversation.

"Inspector Pycroft was in charge of the Scotland Yard posse sent down specially to investigate the case, Mr. Locke," he said.

"I guessed as— Hallo! What the dickens was that?"



JACK DRAKE,
Ferrers Locke's young assistant.

The three stood stockstill as a peculiar whining noise, emanating apparently from the floor above, rose to a wild crescendo, and then died away as suddenly as it had occurred.

"The ghost!" faltered Stamford, shivering with fright. "The—the ghost, Mr. Locke. Listen!"

Again the whining noise echoed out faintly, and then, as before, rose to a piercing shriek.

"Snakes!" ejaculated Drake. "What was that, guv'nor?"

"That's what I'm going to discover, my lad," replied Locke grimly. "Just pass me my automatic—and keep your own handy!"

The estate agent watched Locke's young assistant hand his chief a fully loaded automatic, mechanically. Then he spoke.

"You're not going up there?" he gasped hysterically. "Not up there?"

But Ferrers Locke did not waste any further time upon the nervous Stamford. He leaped for the old staircase, mounting the stairs three at a time, with Jack Drake close upon his heels. At the top of the first landing he shouted out an injunction to the estate agent that he had "better clear out

into the fresh air," which order the terrified man lost no time in obeying.

Again the piercing wail rang through the old building, and so terrifying was its note that even Jack Drake, plucky though he was, could scarce refrain from crying out. Ferrers Locke, however, was as cool as the proverbial cucumber. Rushing to the door of the second room on the landing, from which the ghostly sounds had emanated, he flung wide the portal, and, revolver clutched tightly in his hand, stepped inside.

Jack Drake was a second or so after him.

But if the detective and his assistant expected to confront anything in human form in that room they were sadly mistaken. The room—a bed-room—was devoid of any persons save themselves.

Both stood listening intently. Not a sound reached their ears other than the steady beating of their hearts, consequent upon the energetic rush up the stairs—Drake's a trifle faster than his chief's.

"We've drawn a blank!" muttered Locke somewhat testily. "Keep your eye on that door, my lad, whilst I have a look round."

Very carefully the famous sleuth inspected every inch of that apartment—examining the walls, chimney, flooring, and cupboards. When at last he rejoined Drake there was a puzzled expression on his sharply defined features.

"A mystery with a capital M, my lad!" he muttered. "Those sounds we heard have to be accounted for, and until I can solve their meaning and their place of origin, Penwyn House shall be my abode."

So saying, he swung open the door, and made as if to depart.

As if in very mockery to his words, the same piercing wail struck the ears of the detective and his assistant—with more volume this time, its moaning, pitiful tone the more increased. The strange part about this phenomenon, however, was the fact that it now proceeded from a different part of the house altogether.

"Quick, Drake!" rapped out Locke. "Up this next staircase—quick!"

Panting from their exertion, the detective and his assistant raced up the second landing, and dashed to the foremost room.

Then Locke, kicking open the door, dashed inside.

Save for his own presence, the room was empty.

"Blank again, my lad!" he growled to Drake, who was about to enter. "The ghost is walking!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Mailed Fist!

"I FEEL all the better for that!" Ferrers Locke made the remark as he leaned back comfortably in the armchair, placed before the open window of the sitting-room in Audrey Stamford's small villa on the outskirts of Uxbridge.

"Same here!" grinned Jack Drake, who was at that moment making rapid inroads into a second helping of sweets which his host had handed him.

The detective and his youthful assistant, having completed an exhaustive search of Penwyn House, had rejoined Audrey Stamford, who was in a state of terror at the extreme end of the drive, and the young house agent had invited them back to his own home to dinner.

The seamy side of the "sport of kings"—

Nothing loth, Locke and Jack Drake had willingly accepted the invitation, as it was their intention to keep an all-night vigil at the old Tudor mansion, which severe strain upon their endurance would necessitate all their physical strength and courage, to say nothing of the moral side of the question. Neither of them believed in ghosts; they were far too material for that. But something about Penwyn House had seized hold of their imaginations, and it wanted extreme self-control to keep that suggestion of the occult well in the background.

The dinner which Audrey Stamford had placed before his guests was appetising in the extreme, and both had done full justice to it.

"Try one of these cigars, Mr. Locke," said the agent politely. "I can see that you want to think things over; nothing like a good smoke for inspiration."

"Very true," replied the detective, accepting the proffered cigar.

And thereafter he relapsed into silence, staring fixedly out of the window to the faint outline of the hills in the far distance, over which the first inkling of a glorious sunset made itself manifest.

Jack Drake, well acquainted with the reticent habits of his chief, suffered him to smoke in silence, whilst Audrey Stamford, eager to put to the famous sleuth a hundred and one questions, had the good sense to refrain from breaking the silence.

For one hour Ferrers Locke sat thus—during the latter part of which time Audrey Stamford had shown Drake over the house—and then he rose to his feet.

"Hallo, guv'nor!" was Drake's greeting as he re-entered the room, in company with the estate agent. "What's the next move?"

"Penwyn House," replied the sleuth briefly. "Ready, my lad?"

"Ready for all the whispering voices in the world!" grinned Drake.

Audrey Stamford shook his head.

"I don't like the idea of you and Drake, Mr. Locke, staying all night in that wretched house," he said slowly. "But, to be frank with you, sir, I haven't the nerve to accompany you, and—"

Ferrers Locke smiled easily at the estate agent.

"Don't worry on that score, Mr. Stamford," he said. "Your highly strung temperament wouldn't stand five minutes of the ghostly noises in Penwyn House. By the morning I hope to solve the mystery. If, however, Drake or I should fail to put in an appearance here by ten o'clock, you will know that something is amiss. In that event, call in the police immediately, you understand?"

The agent nodded.

With many misgivings, he bowed his guests out of the house, and stood watching their fast-disappearing figures until they were hidden altogether from his view by a bend in the road. Then he returned to the library.

Meanwhile, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake were making good progress towards Penwyn House. The famous investigator traversed the whole distance without speaking a word. His whole appearance—despite the fact that he was walking briskly—was that of a person deep in thought. It had been on the tip of Jack Drake's tongue several times to ask the sleuth what theory he had arrived at, but each time he stole a sidelong glimpse at his chief the question was forced back.

Penwyn House hove into view as the detective and his young assistant

entered the massive gates at the end of the drive. As Drake peered at its grim and eerie exterior, he experienced a cold shiver down his spine.

"Pucker ghost-hole!" he muttered half aloud. "Glad I've got my gun, and—" He broke off suddenly, his eyes riveted to a first floor window in the old house. "Look, guv'nor!" he exclaimed. "Look at that blue light up there!"

Ferrers Locke immediately glanced upwards, but his keen eyes could discern nothing beyond a dreary brick wall, spaced at regular intervals by long, curtained windows.

"Your imagination is playing pranks with you, my lad!" he smiled. "I can't see any blue light."

"Wasn't imagination, sir!" said Drake stoutly. "It suddenly shone out and then disappeared."

"Hum! I think, Drake, that we'll commence our investigations," remarked Locke, taking from his pocket the big, rusty key of the house. "Switch on your torch!"

Drake did as he was bid. In a few seconds the sleuth and his assistant were standing in the long hall-way of the house, listening intently. All was still and silent as the grave.



FERRERS LOCKE—
The greatest detective of the age.

"Now we'll look for the whispering merchant!" said Locke grimly, switching on the electric light in the hall.

As if in very mockery to his remark there echoed out a plaintive wail that started in a whisper, and gradually rose crescendo. Jack Drake started violently, and glanced questioning at Locke. To his surprise, the famous sleuth was smiling.

"Don't see the joke, guv'nor!" muttered Drake, his hand unconsciously tightening over the butt of his automatic.

"You stay here a moment, my lad," commanded Locke. "I'm going upstairs. If anything should happen down here, just give a yell."

Drake nodded. "Bet your life I will!" he said, with a smile.

Ferrers Locke swiftly mounted the stairs. As he reached the first landing the terrifying wail rang out once more. With a grim chuckle, the sleuth rushed for the second door on the landing—as he had done on the last occasion—and flung it open. The apartment was empty. Leaving the electric light burning in the room, Ferrers Locke grasped the handle of the door and made as if to close it. Immediately the whining,

ghostly sound echoed out—apparently from the floor above.

"Rather amusing!" was the detective's dry comment as he glanced quizzically at the door-handle. "There may be something in Drake's blue light after all—would be in keeping with the rest of this strange house."

Entering the room again the famous detective halted near the old-fashioned bedstead, where the two previous tenants had been found dead by the local police, and regarded it critically. From there his eyes wandered carefully over the walls of the apartment, finally coming to rest on an ordinary ventilator grille about a foot from the ceiling.

"Hum!" he muttered, half-aloud. "And the hair of the two victims—when found—was snow-white. Very extraordinary, very."

The detective's eyes next sought the massive chandelier suspended from the centre of the ceiling, its dozen bulbs, with one exception, throwing off a brilliant light which illumined every part of the room. Crossing over to the electric light switchboard, the sleuth tried each bulb in turn. All responded to his manipulation of the switches with one exception—exactly the same as before. There was nothing remarkable in that circumstance—the globe might have burnt out, or the contact socket might have become loosened, but to Ferrers Locke supposition and guesswork was a means of elucidation he always avoided. As he had often remarked to the impulsive Drake—"guesswork was fatal to the detective faculty."

Examining the chandelier from a better point of vantage Locke allowed a grunt of satisfaction to escape him. His keen eyes had spotted something which would have been unnoticeable to the casual observer. Running in a direct line with the centre rod of the chandelier was a thin lead pipe; and the end of it terminated at the juncture where the unlighted globe fitted into the suspended socket. The other end of the thin piping apparently entered the ceiling at the same point as the centre rod of the chandelier.

"Drake's blue light might be accounted for, after all," the sleuth muttered grimly.

With which remark Ferrers Locke crossed the room and took hold of a large-sized trunk. This he dragged to the spot directly beneath the chandelier. Setting it on end, the better to give the altitude he required, the sleuth lightly vaulted on to it and stood upright. His head now came on a level with the lowest electric bulb. The one which did not respond to the contact of the switch was a little to his right.

Taking out his pocket magnifying glass the detective carefully scrutinised this latter globe and the thin piping which ran alongside it. A puzzled frown crossed his brow as he perceived that the piping was open at the end, and apparently appeared to be an old gas fitting which had not been taken down when the electric light was installed. A closer examination of the open end of the pipe and the perplexed expression on the keen face of the sleuth gave place to one of intense interest.

Bending forward a little, Locke could plainly see that the open end of the piping was greatly discoloured, and that a thick coating of mildew had collected on its surface. Next, his sensitive nostrils became aware of the presence of some subtle odour which pervaded the immediate vicinity of the

—is revealed in our next detective story! Truly a winner!

innocent-looking pipe and the disused electric globe. The balance of the globe—slightly out of perpendicular alignment—next arrested his attention. Grasping the globe between his fingers he fitted it carefully into its socket. To his intense satisfaction it now threw off an illumination in keeping with the others.

"Good!" muttered Ferrers Locke triumphantly. "Now for the mysterious voice!"

Jumping down from the up-ended trunk he dragged it back to its original position, and crossed the room. As he swung open the door of the apartment the same terrifying wail which had startled Jack Drake and the estate agent when they had first entered the house rang out on the stillness of the night. But it now held no terrors for Ferrers Locke. He chuckled grimly to himself, and his eyes immediately sought the ventilator grille just below the ceiling.

Still chuckling, the great detective closed the door of the room, and about the same time the ghostly wail faded away. His next movement was to examine the remaining rooms on that floor and those of the floor above. This task occupied about half an hour, what time the same terrifying wail rang out persistently.

Paying scant heed to the dismal sounds Ferrers Locke arrived at the first landing and commenced to walk down the stairs to the hall-way where he had left Jack Drake. To his consternation the hall-way was in darkness.

Gripping his automatic tightly, the sleuth called out the name of his young assistant. But only the faint echo of his own voice reached his ears. By the aid of his electric torch Locke moved carefully down the stairs until he reached the hall switch.

In response to his pressure on the switch the hall pendant immediately became illuminated, revealing to Locke's astonished gaze the inert figure of Jack Drake, lying in a huddled heap on the floor, apparently lifeless. On each side of him stood the frowning armour-clad figures, the light dancing and swaying upon their polished surfaces.

And as Ferrers Locke bent down to

make a closer examination of his young assistant, the metal arm of one of these armour-clad figures moved slowly upwards, the ancient battle-axe in its mailed fist throwing off a glint of light as the rays from the hall pendant fell upon it.

It was that glint of light which caused Ferrers Locke to straighten up rigidly, and turn on his heel, but even as he did so the battle-axe descended with a dull thud upon his head. Fighting for his senses the sleuth mechanically grappled with the armour-clad figure with all the strength at his command. Again the battle-axe came into play, and with a low groan, Ferrers Locke relinquished his hold and pitched in a heap to the floor. He had a faint recollection of being picked up and carried for some distance, and then his mind became a blank.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Ruby of Aga!

WHEN Ferrers Locke regained consciousness, he discovered that he was bound hand and foot, and by the damp atmosphere around him surmised that he was in a room or cellar below ground.

All around him was pitch darkness.

To his intense relief he was not gagged. His head throbbed painfully where the battle axe had struck him, and a thin trickle of blood oozed slowly down his face. Peering through the gloom he called Drake's name softly. To his intense relief there came a reply:

"Is that you, guv'nor?"

"Yes, my lad. How are you?"

"Mustn't grumble," was the reply.

"I'm trussed up like a turkey, and my head's nearly splitting, but otherwise I've a clean bill of health to report, sir!"

The famous sleuth smiled at his young assistant's cheerfulness.

"Didn't know you were here, guv'nor," went on Drake. "Thought I had this palace to myself. There's one consolation, though, all this ghost business about Penwyn House is eyewash. Hefty kind of ghost who knocked me out and brought me here."

The detective chuckled grimly.

"I'm afraid the information won't help much, my lad," he remarked, "if we don't get out of this hole."

"True," granted Drake. "But what happened to you, sir?"

"Wait a moment, Drake," replied the sleuth, "and I'll roll over to you."

In less than two minutes the detective had reached the side of his assistant.

"I guess," explained Locke, when he had recovered his breath, "that what happened to you happened to me. I was bending over you, my lad, in the hall-way, when one of those armour-suited figures laid me out with a battle-axe—"

"Well, you had the satisfaction of knowing something," granted Drake. "They didn't introduce themselves to me like that. I was walking up and down the hall when I suddenly received the 'k.o.'—that's all there is to my tale, and—"

"Listen!" interrupted Ferrers Locke.

To the ears of the captives came the sound of approaching footsteps.

Swiftly the sleuth rolled back to his original position and feigned unconsciousness. There was the sound of a key being turned in a lock, and then a white beam of light flooded the underground room.

Peering from beneath half-closed eyelids, Locke discerned three individuals stride into the room. A second glance revealed the fact that they were Hindus. The taller of the three seemed to be a person of importance judging by the way his companions saluted him. That much Locke took in before he completely closed his eyes.

"One of our clever prisoners is still unconscious," hissed the tall Hindu, in fairly good English. "See to it that he awakes."

The two Hindus salaamed before the speaker and crossed over to Ferrers Locke. They shook him roughly for some minutes, and then the detective made a pretence of regaining his senses.

"Where am I?" he muttered feebly.

"You are in the presence of Aga," hissed the tall Hindu, "and in one hour from now the vengeance of Aga will strike. Meddling detective that you are, prepare to pay the price of crossing the path of the Sacred Aga. My mission in this house is accomplished. Twenty-four hours, my clever friend, and I shall be miles from this country!"

"Cheerful kind of cuss, ain't he?" interrupted Drake.

"Silence, whelp!" exclaimed the tall Hindu. "You, too, shall share the fate of your interfering master. Thought you to discover the secret of Penwyn House? You shall, ha, ha! And your method of discovery will be of use to you in the next world—perhaps."

Aga concluded his grim remark with a burst of fiendish laughter, and Ferrers Locke could see that the man was half-insane.

"Blessed if I know what he's burbling about," muttered Drake. "Chap must be off his giddy cranium."

"Two other tenants of Penwyn House," went on Aga, "were found dead in the bed-room upstairs, their hair snow-white. You, Mister Locke, and your grinning imp of an assistant will be found in exactly the same way. I will leave you for an hour, whilst I make preparations for departure. At the expiration of that time you will be taken upstairs to your doom. I leave you to reflect. Au revoir, my friends."

With a mocking bow Aga and his two companions vacated the underground room, taking care to switch off the

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electric-light. Drake listened until the sound of their retreating footsteps died away, and then he spoke.

"Don't know what you make of it all, guv'nor," he remarked, "but the whole thing is double-Dutch to me!"

"Never mind that for the moment," replied Ferrers Locke. "The theory I had formed is evidently correct. But unless we can make our escape inside the hour it will avail us nothing. Are you tightly bound, my lad?"

"Absolutely!" grumbled Drake. "Not much chance of my getting rid of these ropes."

"Don't be too sure, my lad," admonished the detective. "You forget that we are not gagged."

"I get you, guv'nor," broke in Drake excitedly. "You mean one of us might be able to bit through these ropes?"

"Exactly."

Rolling himself over to where Drake lay, Ferrers Locke immediately set to work with his teeth on the lad's bonds. He had a faint idea that, given a chance, he could pick the lock of the door. It was a laborious and painful task that Locke had set himself—the ropes binding Drake seeming to be made of iron, but after twenty minutes had ticked by relentlessly, the famous detective had the satisfaction of feeling two strands part company from their fellows. Despite the aching pain in his teeth and jaws, Locke continued, and exactly three-quarters of an hour after the three Hindus had made their exit the last strand snapped asunder.

It was the work of a moment for Drake completely to shed the remaining rope, and then he devoted his energies to liberating his chief.

It wanted five minutes to the hour when Ferrers Locke stood upright, the rope which had previously held him prisoner lying in a heap at his feet.

"Quick, Drake," he commanded. "We must pick the lock of that door. The rogues had the forethought to take away our automatics, otherwise I should be tempted to remain here until they come. As it is, we must get outside."

While he was speaking the sleuth was rapidly inserting a piece of bent wire—which he always kept about his person—into the lock of the door. Luckily for him it was an old-fashioned lock, and under his skilful fingers the bolt soon slid back.

"Bravo, sir," whispered Drake excitedly, as the door began to swing inwards. "What do we do now?"

The sleuth silenced his assistant with a gesture of the hand and cautiously led the way outside. Having advanced a few steps he stood listening, but no sound reached his ears other than his own quickening heart beats. The passage outside their late place of confinement was damp and mildewy, and there appeared to be no means of illumination.

"Open the door of the room as far as it will go, Drake," Locke whispered. "The light from there will show us what this passage is like."

Swiftly Drake obeyed his chief. The extra illumination thus provided revealed a long, narrow passage, which led to some steps above. Directly opposite the door of their late prison was another door. Locke's glance immediately lighted on it, and he grunted with satisfaction.

"The very thing, my lad," he said. "Switch off the light—quick! I can hear someone coming."

Scarcely had Drake performed his task when the patter of footsteps echoed out from the region of the steps at the end of the passage. Quick as thought, Locke

softly closed the door of his late prison, and noiselessly entered the room opposite.

The footsteps approaching were much louder now, and to the watchers' ears came the hissing, sibilant voice of Aga.

Locke heard the jangling of keys as the trio halted outside the room in which they fondly imagined their captives to be; heard the key inserted, and then whispered to Drake:

"Help me push them into the room the moment I leap out, my lad. We'll take them by surprise before they have a chance to use their weapons."

Drake nodded in the darkness.

Directly the detective caught the sound of the electric switch being operated he leapt out of the room and charged headlong into the three

lot. I've gambled on them being armed only with knives. If they possess revolvers this lock will soon be blown to atoms."

Without wasting time in words, Drake dashed along the passage as fast as he could on account of the darkness, and climbed the stairs. With a whoop of triumph on his discovery that there was no locked door to negotiate, he scrambled to the ground floor of the house, and there he made a further discovery.

The passage from below led directly to the old-fashioned kitchen of Penwyn House, and found an outlet through a six-foot cupboard, which possessed a sliding panel at the back.

Marvelling to himself, the boy found his way into the main hall, and thence into the weed-covered drive. Running



CAUGHT NAPPING!

Suddenly Ferrers Locke straightened up and turned sharply on his heel. But even as he did so the battle-axe descended with a sickening crash upon his unguarded head. With a low moan he pitched across the unconscious figure of his assistant. (See Chapter 2.)

astonished Hindus, who were gaping, open-mouthed, on the threshold. Drake was not half a second behind him. Head well down, he cannoned into the foremost Hindu, and sent him staggering yards into the room.

Locke had fared equally as well with the remaining two. Before they were fully aware of the fact that their prisoners had escaped the scoundrelly trio of Hindus were captives in their own prison. And as Ferrers Locke swiftly drew to the door and turned the key in the lock, a babel of exclamations and yells of rage fell upon his ears.

"Now, Drake," exclaimed the detective eagerly, "you get along to the nearest police-station, and bring here with all speed a posse of men. Whilst you are away I'll take care of this little

like a hare, he made tracks for Uxbridge Police-Station.

Meanwhile, Ferrers Locke was calmly listening to the frenzied shouts of the imprisoned trio in the room below the kitchen of Penwyn House. As he had surmised, the scoundrels carried no revolvers, for no attempt was made to blow out the lock of the door, although it shook again and again under repeated shoulder charges.

"If Drake is more than another quarter of an hour in bringing up reinforcements this merry little trio will break down the door," muttered the sleuth. "I think I'll look round for a weapon."

So saying, Locke turned swiftly on his heel, and took the same direction as his assistant had done. He smiled grimly

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as he merged into the kitchen via the sliding panel of the cupboard, and then strode into the hall. Still smiling, his glance fell upon the armour-suited figure holding the battle-axe, which was now in a different position from where he had last seen it.

"Our friend who slipped into that suit of armour and kindly laid me out may yet feel the weight of his own weapon," was the detective's dry comment, as he took the axe from the mailed fist.

Returning to the underground passage with all speed, Locke was surprised to hear the sound of voices. A beam of light at the farther end of the passage told him that the three Hindus had broken down the door, and were advancing in his direction.

A terrific yell went up as the foremost amongst them sighted the detective. With knives brandished aloft they bore down upon him. The next moment Ferrers Locke was fighting for his life.

The battle-axe came into play, and its first sweep found a dusky head as a billet. Incidentally the head belonged to the fellow who had rendered both Drake and his chief hors de combat. With a gasping grunt of pain the fellow toppled over and rolled to the foot of the steps.

His two companions continued the attack with unabated fury. They knew they were fighting for their lives. The absence of Drake was a significant pointer to the fact that he had gone for help. Disregarding the heavy battle-axe, the Hindu known as Aga dashed in under its sweeping stroke, and dealt Locke a savage thrust with his knife on the forearm.

A cry of pain escaped the detective's lips as the steel went home, followed by a rush of air as the battle-axe continued on its downward passage, and met nothing more vulnerable than the stone steps. The contact between the steel and the stone flags sent a terrible shock along his arms, which made him bite his lips to stifle the pain he felt, and the axe slipped from his grasp. Next moment the two Hindus were grappling with him at close quarters.

Locke drove his fist full in the face of Aga, and had the satisfaction of seeing that important personage rolling down the steps to join his comrade. But there was still the remaining member of the scoundrelly trio to account for, and he was armed with a knife.

The terrific struggle was reaching a climax, when, to Locke's anxious ears, there came the patter of footsteps. Summoning all the strength he could muster, the detective drove his fist to the jaw of his assailant.

Clawing the air for one brief second, the Hindu swayed on the topmost step, lost his balance, and pitched headlong.

And ere his body struck the stone-flagged passageway below, Jack Drake, accompanied by a squad of police, made his appearance in the kitchen. Running to the aperture in the cupboard, Drake assisted his chief into the room.

"A narrow squeak, my lad," smiled Locke, as he grasped his assistant's hand. "Well done!"

Then the inspector in charge of the posse of police stepped forward.

"Hallo, inspector!" said Locke. "Very pleased to see you, indeed, under the circumstances. Downstairs you will find three Hindus. Arrest them for the time being on the charge of attempted murder. Another and more serious charge of the murder of the two previous tenants of Penwyn House will be preferred against them later."

The inspector saluted and gave instructions to his men.

"And now, inspector," said Ferrers Locke, "you and I will visit each room of this house. There are some very interesting things to see, I assure you."

"Marvellous, Mr. Locke!"

Mr. Audrey Stamford made that enthusiastic remark some two hours later, when, seated in the comfortable library at the agent's house, Ferrers Locke told his thrilling experiences of the night.

"On the contrary," smiled the great sleuth, "it was quite elementary. The first impression I got when I visited Penwyn House was that the place was very cleverly wired. You remember we were standing at the foot of the staircase when that piercing wail rang out. That was caused by my foot pressing into contact a concealed stud—which I have since discovered under the mat at the

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foot of the stairs—operating an instrument on the lines of a gramophone or musical-box. In this case, though, the sound recorded was merely a ghostly wail, terrifying enough, I'll admit.

"Then, again," went on the sleuth, turning to Jack Drake, "you will remember that the moment we reached the first landing the ghostly noise rang out again."

"That I do!" exclaimed Drake. "Fairly gave me the creeps."

"History repeated itself there," continued Locke.

"But the ghostly sounds emanated from the upper regions of the house," said Drake. "How do you account for that, guv'nor?"

"Quite simple, my lad. In each of the upper rooms you may or may not have noticed a ventilator grille. The action of the studs—to which I have just referred—set in motion a miniature gramophone, or musical-box, behind these grilles. The inspector and I, whilst you were talking with his men, my lad, unscrewed one of these, and discovered such an instrument as I have named. Then, again, the door of each room upstairs operated in much the same way as the studs. In this case, the hinges of the door—when they had passed a certain angle—set up a contact with the instrument behind the grilles on the floor above. Do you follow?"

"Quite!" said Drake and Stamford in unison.

The detective took a pull at his pipe, and watched a smoke-ring ascend in a perfect circle.

"Mr. Locke," suddenly exclaimed the estate agent, "you have accounted for a good many things, but can you account for the fact that the last two tenants of Penwyn House were found dead in their beds, and that the hair of them, in each case, was snow-white?"

"Quite simply," smiled the great detective. "They were asphyxiated by a deadly poisonous gas—at present unknown to civilised science—which, when inhaled, turns the hair of the victim snow-white, and, moreover, leaves no trace in the system. In each of the upper rooms of the fatal house I observed a thin lead pipe, which would give to the casual observer the impression that it was an ordinary gas-pipe, no longer in use. Through this pipe, from a secret room underground, the scoundrelly Hindus pumped this gas until their victim expired."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Drake.

"But the motive for all this?" persisted the estate agent.

"Fairly simple also," smiled Ferrers Locke; "but it at present calls for a little supposition on my part—supposition which will, I feel positive, be borne out as actual fact when the trial comes on. A search of the prisoner known as Aga brought to light a very valuable blood-red ruby, which plays a very important part in this ghostly business. We will go back to the original owner of the house—"

"What, Colonel Jason Mendrick?" exclaimed Stamford.

The sleuth nodded.

"Yes. He was—I remember quite well—a collector of curios and suchlike. People who collect curios—not the purchasing of them from dealers—often run great risks to secure them. I rather fancy that Colonel Mendrick, whilst on service in India, set out to secure the famous ruby of the Aga Sect—a religious society up in the hills of Northern India, little heard of in these advanced days.

"By some means or other—probably through a traitorous member of the Aga Sect itself—he obtained the precious ruby—worth, I should say, several thousand pounds—and paid the price for having it in his possession with his life. Just over two years ago, the newspapers told us, you remember, that Colonel Jason Mendrick was found dead up in the northern hills of India. It was a rank case of murder, and the murderers, I dare swear, were some chosen members of the Aga Sect who had been selected to restore the stone to their temple, and to slay the 'sahib.'"

"The sahib was slain all right, but the ruby had still to be recovered. In the meantime it was despatched to England—to Penwyn House, in fact. We will presume that the religious society gained intelligence of this fact. The Aga himself, accompanied by two trusty and clever comrades, forces his way into Penwyn House, and discovers the secret passages and rooms underground. At the same time a retired military officer—from the same regiment as the murdered colonel—desires to take the house for a period. How does that strike you?"

"Why, the chap had got wind of the fact that the house contained the Aga ruby!" exclaimed Drake. "Perhaps the colonel had spoken of it some time before his death."

"A quite probable theory, my lad,"

said the sleuth approvingly. "He, as we know, met his end in this house under mysterious circumstances, likewise another officer from the same regiment as Colonel Mendrick."

"I can see daylight now," broke in the estate agent. "Both of them were after the valuable ruby!"

"Exactly! And both paid their lives as forfeit. The Aga and his two comrades were determined to stay in Penwyn House until they had recovered their precious stone. With tenants in the place that was, naturally enough, out of the question. With the typical Eastern cunning they hit upon the idea of making the house a haunted dwelling, and they played upon the English credulity with a certain amount of success."

"Then I butted in, and they began to think—I say it with all due modesty—that their haunted house scheme would fall like a pack of cards. They therefore decided to remove me and young Drake in exactly the same manner as they had done the previous tenants of the place. I expect they would have bound us with ropes to the bedstead in the fatal room on the first floor, and pumped their vile

gas into the room. A few seconds of that stuff would, I should think, be enough to kill any man. That done, they would have cut the ropes from our dead bodies and left us, making yet a further mystery to the grim history of Penwyn House."

"But what about the blue light, guv'nor?" questioned Drake.

"That, my lad, was simply an ordinary electric bulb of coloured glass," said Locke. "I should think that it was a practice of these Hindus to switch it on at night with the idea of frightening a superstitious public."

"That's so," interrupted the estate agent. "I've seen it myself many times."

"The time you saw it, Drake," continued Locke, "the fellow operating the switch must have caught sight of you through the window. Your near presence and mine caused him to swiftly change the blue globe for an ordinary white one, and make his getaway to the underground regions of the house. His very haste proved his undoing, for in replacing the white globe he omitted to ensure contact with the socket. And it

was just the fact that one globe did not operate in answer to the electric switch which drew my attention to the chandelier overhead. That little slip on the part of our Hindu friend led me to discover the thin piping, which had a coating of mildew at the open end—a circumstance which would not be apparent were the pipe only used for ordinary household gas."

"Marvellous!" exclaimed Audrey Stamford. "You might call it elementary, Mr. Locke, but I repeat, it was marvellous! The police, when they were called in, discovered nothing like that, anyhow."

"Don't be too hard on them," smiled the sleuth. "You must remember that our cunning Hindus did not fill the house with their ghostly wailing on that occasion—they switched off the current which set their instruments in motion—and the police had nothing to work upon."

"That's true," admitted Stamford.

"Well, Mr. Stamford," said Locke, rising to his feet, "Drake and I must get back to my chambers. We shall meet

(Continued on page 28.)



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"THE CASE OF THE HAUNTED HOUSE."

(Continued from previous page.)

you again at the court this morning. I think the case comes before the magistrate at eleven-thirty."

"Right-ho, Mr. Locke," said the estate agent, "and many thanks for rendering me such a service! No doubt the house property in this district will return to its normal value now that you have laid the 'ghost' by the heels."

"I sincerely hope so," returned Locke cheerfully. "Come on, Drake, my lad!"

The detective and his young assistant strode briskly to the railway-station, and caught the train to Baker Street. Arriving at their chambers, the pair of them indulged in a refreshing bath and still more refreshing breakfast. Attending to one or two urgent matters, the sleuth and his assistant then took train to Exbridge, and arrived at the police-court.

The Hindu, known as Aga made a full confession, and he and his confederates were committed for trial at the Old Bailey on a capital charge.

The case made a great stir amongst the general public. Needless to say, both Drake and Ferrers Locke figured prominently in the news columns.

And the Aga Ruby? That is now in safe custody in the British Museum.

THE END.

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