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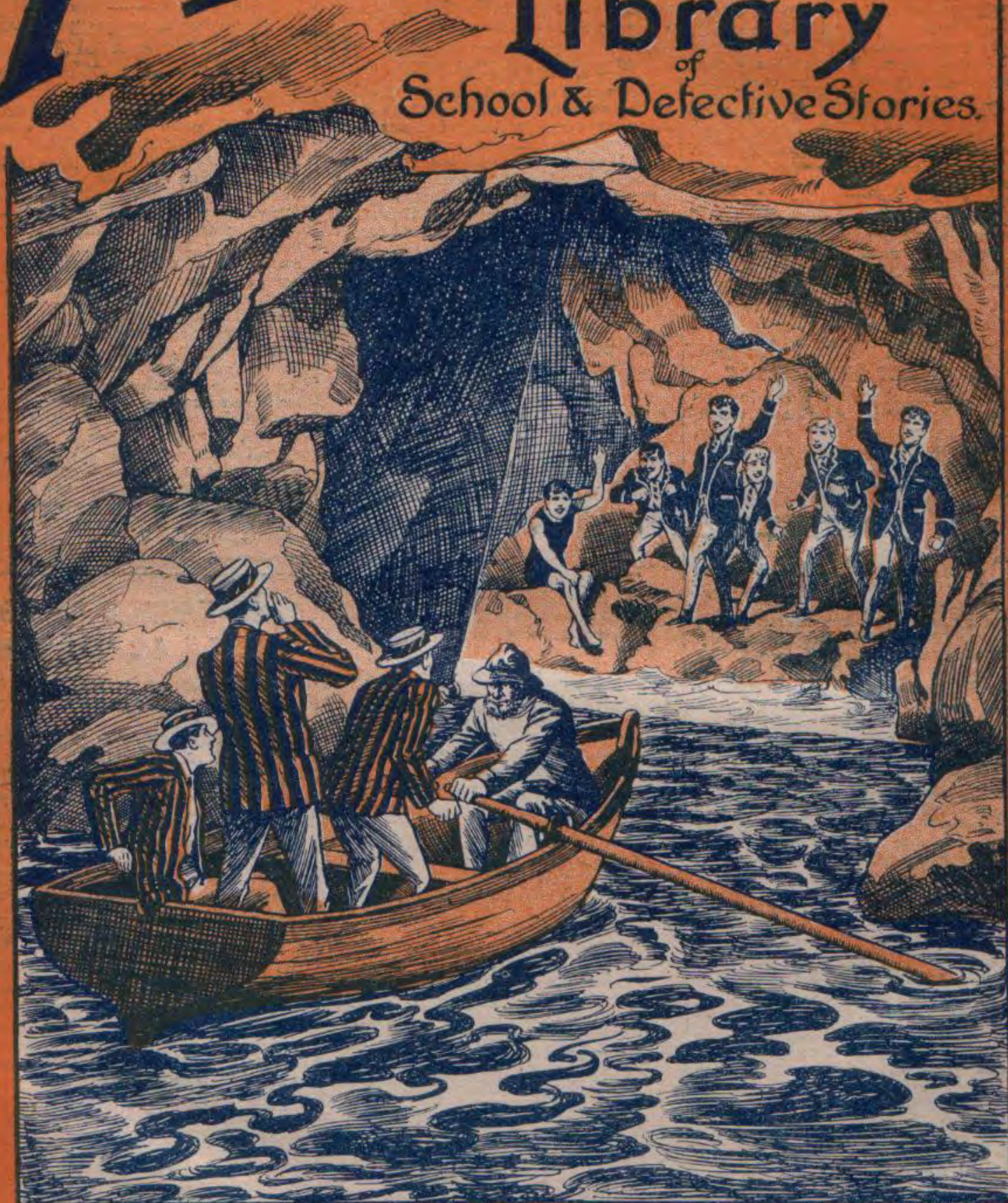
No. 812. Vol. XXIV. Week ending September 1st, 1923.

The Magnet 2^d

EVERY MONDAY.

Library

of
School & Detective Stories.



ST. JIM'S TO THE RESCUE OF THE IMPRISONED SCHOOLBOYS!

(A thrilling incident from the long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., inside.)



"THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL."

THIS week the new volume of the "Holiday Annual" is on sale everywhere. It is the event of the season. I am perfectly sure every Magnetite will make certain of getting a copy, but the good work need not stop there. Tell your chums about this magnificent book. It will fascinate everybody, young or old, and once it falls into the hands of anyone who is not as yet a supporter of the Companion Papers, there is one infallible result: the MAGNET and its companion weeklies have another thick-and-thin supporter. For you cannot revel in the grand yarns given in the "Annual" without, like Oliver Twist, asking for more. Just make sure of the record volume, price 6s.

"THE HEART OF A HERO!"

Frankly I am at a bit of a loss in dealing with the truly great and epoch-making story arranged for next Monday. It is not a yarn to be read and thrown away, or forgotten. The whole thing will find a perch in the memory. It will be talked about for months to come. I would not for worlds trespass on the fascination and the thoroughgoing interest of a well-thought-out tale, but I may be permitted to say that it is just the sort of thing which will please my MAGNET chums all over the world. The history of young Bobbie Severn simply gets you. He comes to Greyfriars under the lordly protection of Horace Coker, who rescues him from the hands of Skinner & Co. In return, Bobbie Severn begs to be allowed to tag for Coker.

WHEN THE CURTAIN FELL!

The yarn swings along in tremendous style. It just shows a few chapters in a youngster's life. You see his intense loyalty to Coker all the time. Now Horace is really very ordinary material with flashes of good feeling and the wish to do generous things. If he is clumsy you are ready to forgive him, because you somehow sense that he means well. But he is uncertain, easily swayed. He gets fed up with young Severn and "lams" him. When, later on, he finds out certain truths, he is sorry. I am not going into the parhous of it—to do so would be a pity—but I want all my chums to read this yarn, every word of it, and then let me know what they think. It will stir the heart as in the case of that well-remembered tale, "A Very Gallant Gentleman." What's more, it leaves you a little bit sorry for Coker, for he is left to think about the devotion of a loyal friend. But he has one consolation: the remembrance will make him a better fellow to the end. If Coker thinks—and I fancy he does so on occasion—his brain will be busy over a certain incident for a very long time to

come. There are some things you cannot forget. They serve as an inspiration while the years roll on.

"ROGUES OF THE TURF!"

There is a deep-set mystery involved in the new tangle which Ferrers Locke is called upon to handle. Next Monday's yarn is a racing one of the best, with the bright side of the great sport revealed as well as the seamy reverse of the medal. The great detective gets a firm grip on the problem, but it is a long time before even he has the mastery of

GREYFRIARS JINGLES!

Ode to a Blazing Bonfire!

By DICK PENFOLD.

Bonfire, bonfire, burning bright,
In the silence of the night,
Who ignited you, I pray,
In the quad at close of day?

Who's the senseless, stupid japer
That collected sheets of paper,
Cardboard, rubbish, and what not,
And set fire to all the lot?

Tongues of flame ascend on high
To the dark and starless sky.
From the windows of the dorm
We are watching in a swarm.

Gosling shuffles on the scene.
"Wot's this conflagration mean?"
Quelch and Prouty come as well,
We can hear the former yell:

"Gracious! How the fire is blazing!
This is really most amazing!
Who ignited it, I wonder?
Help me, Prout, to get it under!"

Bonfire, bonfire, burning bright,
What a scene you caused that night!
Prouty rushing for the hose,
And squirting streams on Quelch's clothes!

Dumb is every "tongue" of flame,
Or we'd learn the culprit's name.
Was it Snoop, or Stott, or Skinner?
See, the flames are getting thinner!

Panting Quelch, perspiring Prout,
Strive to put the bonfire out.
With a last defiant splutter
It subsides; loud cheers we utter.

In the morning will be found
Charred remains upon the ground.
And inquiries will be made,
But no confessions, I'm afraid.

If the lively, gay young spark
Who lit that bonfire after dark,
Cares to reveal himself to me,
Mum as an oyster I shall be!

the plotters who intend bringing ruin on a prominent racing stable. The many admirers of Locke will be proud of his doings in this record of bristling adventure.

"ESCAPING THE GALLOWS!"

Galloping Dick is in the nick of time. The iron hand of the law has fallen on a comrade of the famous highwayman, and the career of the prisoner seemed certain of final eclipse, only Dick happened along just when most wanted. It is a yarn with a thrill, to say nothing of the big surprise, dramatic in the extreme.

"THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE WHITE HEATHER!"

Look out for our brilliant new serial. It is due the week after next. The MAGNET has never had a finer story than this. You have heard of the romance of the "Scarlet Pimpernel," the dauntless Percy Blakeney, who was as cool a customer as old Henri of Navarre. The luckless captives of the French Revolutionaries were spirited away into safety thanks to the audacity and the immense pluck of the Scarlet Pimpernel, who was elusive as a will-o'-the-wisp. We live in other times, but there are revolutions in these days, and victims of the devastating Russian upheaval are in jeopardy in this amazing new serial, which will send the MAGNET circulation up even higher than it is, or I am much in error. The White Heather Brotherhood sets itself the task to rescue the innocent from the clutches of tyranny. The task is colossal, for the watchful eyes of a myriad spies are on everybody, but it would seem as if the old emblem of the White Heather possessed a magic of its own. The new serial, featuring the world-famous detective, Ferrers Locke, will hold you spellbound.

THIS MONTH'S "BOYS' FRIEND" 4d. LIBRARIES.

- 681.—A TRIP TO MARS.
- 682.—THE SCHOOLBOY INTERNATIONAL.
- 683.—THE POLRUANS' QUEST.
- 684.—THE KIDNAPPERS.

QUITE SIMPLE!

T. Browne writes from romantic Galway to ask where he is to get the new volume of the "Holiday Annual." That's an easy one. He can order the splendid book of any bookseller or newsagent, or he can dispatch a postal-order for 6s. 6d. to the publisher at these offices, when a copy will be sent to him direct by return.

MORE ABOUT WINGATE!

That's what one of my numerous correspondents wants, and I think I shall soon be able to oblige him in this respect. George Wingate is a perfect Trojan, and we all of us never, never shall forget the part he played in that sterling story, "Schoolboys Never Shall be Slaves." Wingate is an ideal skipper. He has been under clouds ere this, but his triumphs are far more numerous than his setbacks.

Your Editor.

Don't miss the "Holiday Annual"—on sale September 1st!

The finding of a secret door in one of the upper bed-rooms of the House of Pengarth puts Harry Wharton & Co. on the track of solving the "ghostly nonsense" of the mysterious mansion belonging to Sir Jimmy Vivian. Their discovery, however, ultimately places them in a highly perilous position, and but for the coming of Cardew, Levison, and Clive, of St. Jim's—who are spending their vacation in Cornwall—the secret of the caves would in all probability have remained a secret until this day.

THE SECRET OF THE CAVES



A splendid long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, recounted by
FRANK RICHARDS

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The House of Mystery!

HARRY WHARTON came out of the House of Pengarth, on the sunny summer morning. At the foot of the great cliff upon which the old Cornish mansion stood the wide Atlantic rolled, glistening in the sunlight. Far across the bay he could see the red roofs of Polpen and the fishing-boats drawn up on the beach. From the wild, unkept gardens of the House of Pengarth, rocky steps led down into the little cove, where a boat lay moored. Back from the house, the cliffs rose higher and higher against the blue sky. The captain of the Greyfriars Remove stood looking out to sea, drawing in deep breaths of the salt air from the ocean.

There was an expression of deep thought on Harry Wharton's face—troubled thought. Strange enough had been the experiences of the Greyfriars holiday party at the House of Pengarth, and the mystery of the strange old mansion was still unsolved.

Harry Wharton turned from the sea, and looked back at the house—with its old stone walls, and clambering ivy that almost hid the windows, and slanting slate roof. The house backed against the upper cliff, which rose high over the old red chimneys. In the bright sunlight of the morning, he could hardly believe in the strange, eerie happenings of the dark hours of the night.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry came out of the old house. Even Bob's cheery, ruddy face was less cheery than usual.

"Thinking it out, old chap?" asked Bob.

Wharton nodded.

"We're having no end of a holiday!" said Bob Cherry, rather ruefully. "We didn't exactly bargain for ghosts, and groans, and things. But we're sticking it out."

"Yes, rather?"

"Of course, it's somebody pulling our

leg," said Bob, though he spoke rather hesitatingly. "Some johnnie wants us to clear off from Pengarth—though why, goodness knows. There's nobody here but ourselves, and the caretaker Keeley—"

"Keeley is in the game to scare us away."

"But why?"

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"I can't answer that," he said. "But there's something going on—something underhand. And we're jolly well going to get to the bottom of it before we leave Pengarth."

"Hear, hear!" said Bob.

The rest of the Greyfriars party came out of the house—Johnny Bull, Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, Frank Nugent, and Sir Jimmy Vivian, the new owner of the ancient house. Sir Jimmy Vivian's chubby face had a dolorous expression.

"You blokes fed up yet?" he asked.

"No fear!"

"This 'ere 'oliday ain't much of a catch for you," said Sir Jimmy dismally. "I never reckoned on all this 'ere when I asked you to come along to Cornwall with me for the vac. I can tell you I'd rather be putting in the 'oliday at Greyfriars, myself, with nobody but old Gosling to talk to. We're 'aving a rotten time!"

"Oh, rot!" said Bob. "It's a ripping place."

"The ripfulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "It is all right in the esteemed day-time!"

"But a bit exciting after dark," grinned Nugent. "Blessed if I'm not beginning to believe what old Pengelly told us at Polpen—that the place is haunted by the Spaniards who were drowned here at the time of the Armada."

"Bosh!" said Johnny Bull.

"Well, it is bosh, of course," assented Nugent. "All the same—"

"It's a bit thick," said Sir Jimmy. "Blessed if I know 'ow that old cove, Keeley, can stand it, year after year! He's been in this 'ouse ever since the

last owner was 'ere—years and years and years. All the time the blooming place was in Chancery. And there was ghosts all the time."

"I fancy not," said Harry.

"Keeley says—"

"Keeley has a hand in it," said Harry Wharton quietly. "I feel certain of that. For some reason he wants us to clear—there's some game on behind the scenes. Something was going on here, I imagine, all the while the place was in Chancery—and when your guardian got it settled that Pengarth was yours, Jimmy, it gave them a jolt—whatever they were up to. And we're going to find out."

"'Ear, 'ear!" said the schoolboy baronet, but he did not speak very heartily.

Sir Jimmy still shuddered to recall the touch of an icy hand in the darkness, and the terrible vision that had appeared on the first night in the House of Pengarth.

"We're going to search—" went on Harry.

"The searchfulness has already been terrific," remarked Hurree Singh.

"But we haven't been half over the place yet. We're not going to leave an inch of it unexplored," said Harry determinedly. "You don't really want to chuck it, Vivian?"

Sir Jimmy shook his head.

"Not if you fellers want to stick it out," he said. "I ain't going to be drove out of my own 'ouse, if I can 'elp it."

"Good! Now, you're master here," went on Wharton, "and I think we should get on better with Keeley out of the way. Send him over to Polpen this morning in the boat. We want a good many things from the village, and you can give him enough to do to keep him busy there for some time."

"And while he's gone, we'll have another search?" said Bob.

"That's it."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 312.

"He hasn't interfered with us so far," remarked Nugent.

"I'm not sure of that. Anyhow, he would be pretty certain to chip in if he's got a secret to keep and we find it out. If it isn't Keeley playing ghost, it's some confederate of his."

"It can't be Keeley—we've seen him and the jolly old ghost at the same time," said Bob. "But if there's another chap in the game, where is he?"

"We've seen nobody else here," said Nugent.

"He wouldn't let us see him. There's a hundred nooks and crannies in this old place where a man might hide," said Harry. "We're going to begin in the room where Jimmy was handled by the giddy ghost. There's a secret door to that room, that's certain."

"But we've hunted—and hunted—"

"I know. But if Jimmy doesn't object to our damaging his property a little, we can break through the wall. Keeley would be better off the scene when we begin that."

"What-ho!" said Sir Jimmy. "I'll tell him."

And the schoolboy baronet walked back into the House of Pengarth.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Discovery!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. strolled in the old gardens, full of tangled shrubberies and creepers. For long years the gardens had been neglected and had run wild, and now they were like a wilderness. Here and there, among tangled ivy and clambering rose-trees, lay masses of stone from old walls that had crumbled and fallen in the blasts of the Atlantic gales. A large part of the House of Pengarth was in ruins, though the old stone hall and some other apartments were still intact.

The black-bearded man who had been so long the solitary occupant of the House of Pengarth, came out of the house and touched his hat to the juniors. "Black Keeley," as the Polpen folk called him, was a rather grim-looking and silent man. He had shown no sign openly of being dissatisfied with the invasion of his solitude by the Greyfriars juniors—he was always civil, and seemed to have done everything that he could to make them comfortable in the old house.

It was no open action of his that had led Harry Wharton to distrust him. It was the feeling that, if something underhand was going on at Pengarth, it could not go on without the knowledge of the man who had always dwelt there. And that some mysterious influence was at work to drive them away from the lonely house, all the Greyfriars party realised.

"Sir James is sending the boat over to Polpen, gentlemen," said Keeley respectfully. "If there is anything I can do for you there—"

"Only call at the post-office for letters," said Harry.

"Nothing else, sir?"

"Thanks, no."

"Very good, sir!"

Keeley touched his hat again, and strode away towards the rock staircase. The juniors watched him as he descended from rocky stair to stair, and reached the pebbly beach of the cove. He stepped into the boat and shoved off.

Wharton knitted his brows.

"He doesn't seem to mind going," he

remarked. "But he must know jolly well that we want to get rid of him while we search. I—I wonder—" He paused.

"If he's in the game against us, he doesn't give himself away," said Bob. "But he must be a bit anxious to know what we're up to while he's gone, in that case."

"He doesn't look it," said Johnny Bull.

"No; that's true."

Keeley was at the oars now, pulling out into the bay. From the cliff, the Greyfriars juniors watched him pulling until the man and the boat were small in the distance towards Polpen.

Sir Jimmy joined the Famous Five.

"All clear!" he said, with a grin.

"Keeley won't be back till the afternoon. Let's get goin'."

"Right-ho!"

The juniors re-entered the silent old house.

By the old black oaken staircase they reached the few bed-rooms that remained standing. They stopped in the room where Sir Jimmy Vivian had had his startling experience with the ghost of the Spanish captain, on a night a week before.

That room had been thoroughly searched, the walls and floors sounded, but nothing had come of the search.

Sir Jimmy shuddered as he entered the room. The window was thick with dust and cobwebs, and even in the morning it was shadowy. It seemed to the schoolboy baronet that he could see again the strange, eerie figure outlined in fiery light, and feel the touch of a phantom hand. He stared round him uneasily.

"Nothin' 'ere, you fellers," he said. "I say, I don't mind owning that this 'ere room gives me the creeps."

"Leave us to it, then, old son," said Wharton. "We only want your permission to do some damage."

"Do as much damage as you like," said Sir Jimmy. "If you don't want me, I'll go and 'ave a dip in the sea. I tell you straight I don't like this 'ere room, arter what I've been through here."

"That's all right."

"Sure you don't mind?" asked Sir Jimmy.

"Not a bit, old chap!"

"Orlright, then."

And Sir Jimmy, with evident relief, quitted the haunted room, and his shrill whistle was heard a few moments later as he walked through the gardens, and descended the rock staircase to the sea.

Harry Wharton brought up a couple of strong axes from the kitchen below. Searching the room, tapping and sounding the walls, had revealed nothing; and the captain of the Remove had determined upon more drastic measures.

That there was a secret entrance to the room he was assured. The door had been fastened when the "ghost" of the dead Spaniard had appeared to Sir Jimmy in that room. And as Wharton had too much practical common-sense to believe in ghosts, he was assured that the ghost was a substantial human being, who certainly could not have passed like a phantom through solid stone walls.

The walls, so far as could be seen, were of solid stone like the rest of the ancient building. In part they were covered with old black oak panelling. Wharton went round the room once more, tapping the old oak and listening carefully. But from nowhere could he detect any sound of hollowness.

"Well, where are you going to begin, old chap?" asked Bob Cherry, with a faint grin.

"We'll have every blessed wall down, if we can't find the spot otherwise," said Harry.

"And the jolly old roof down on our heads," grinned Bob.

"We'll chance that."

Crash!

The old house echoed and murmured to the first crash of the axe. Wharton had selected the wall that backed against the perpendicular cliff behind the house. The juniors had heard in Polpen that the great Garth cliffs were honeycombed with caves, though they had not discovered the caves. If there was a secret entrance to the house, Wharton felt that it was very probable that it was by means of a cave or fissure in the cliff behind.

Crash!

The splinters began to fly.

Bob Cherry seized the other axe and started also.

Both the juniors proceeded without a pause, the other fellows looking on in silence.

An antiquary might have shuddered at the destruction of the ancient black oak panelling, but the juniors were not thinking of that. It was the only way to penetrate the mystery of the House of Pengarth, and Sir Jimmy, the proprietor, had given full leave. So they went ahead with untiring energy.

But everywhere under the oak panelling the solid blocks of stone were revealed.

But for his absolute conviction that there must be an opening of some kind, Harry Wharton would have resigned the task. But his common-sense told him that there must be a secret entrance, since the room had been entered, and not by the door or window.

He uttered a sudden exclamation.

"Look!"

"What?"

"I think we've found it!"

Wharton laid down the axe.

He dragged the splintered panelling away from the stone revealing a large block, that was three times the size of any other block in the wall. And round that block, closely as it fitted to the others, there was no sign of cement to be seen. It seemed to be jammed into its place securely enough, but not cemented like the rest.

Wharton's eyes gleamed.

"I think we've got it! That stone moves, and the panel of course moved with it when it opened!"

"By gum!" said Bob Cherry, with a deep breath.

"There must be a spring or something," said Harry. "The fellow who came in here the other night opened and shut the stone easily enough and quickly enough."

"Puzzle—find the spring!" murmured Bob.

Crash, crash, crash!

Wharton drove the axehead again and again on the block. The surface was slightly chipped, but that was all the result.

"It opens from the other side, perhaps," said Nugent.

"It must open from this side, too," said Harry. "Whoever built the secret passage hundreds of years ago must have wanted to use it both ways."

Crash, crash!

"Look!" roared Bob Cherry in great excitement.

"The Heart of a Hero!"—next Monday's thrilling story—

With a slow motion and without a sound, the great block of stone glided back. The hidden spring, wherever it was, had been started by that last heavy blow.

With fascinated eyes the Greyfriars juniors watched the moving stone, scarcely breathing. It was a startling confirmation of Wharton's belief.

The stone, turning on some unseen pivot, glided back and moved aside.

A deep, dark opening was revealed in the wall. From the blackness beyond came a faint murmuring sound, something like the sound of a seashell held to the ear.

"Wha-a-t's that?" muttered Nugent. "The wind in the caves, I think," said Harry. "Never mind what it is, we're going on."

"Yes, rather!"

Harry Wharton lighted a lantern and Johnny Bull turned on his electric torch. And with the captain of the Remove in the lead, the Famous Five passed through the secret doorway in the wall, on the track at last of the strange mystery of the House of Pengarth.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Buried Alive!

DARKNESS as of the tomb lay before the juniors. The lantern and the electric-torch glimmered and flashed in the gloom, upon walls that seemed cut out of the living rock. They found themselves in a passage barely two feet wide, leading into the heart of the great granite cliff, as it seemed. Blackness lay ahead, and from the shadowed space came the low murmuring.

Wharton held up the light and examined the walls of the passage. Here and there he could see where they had been shaped by the axe; but the passage was evidently an old fissure in the rock originally, which had been enlarged in places by the hand of man. Whither it would lead them the juniors could not guess, but they were assured that this was the way the phantom Spaniard had come—the secret door explained the ghost. And in consequence it was certain that there was another outlet ahead of them.

"Look out!" said Wharton suddenly. The rocky floor under his feet came to a sudden end, and he stopped. Another step would have hurled him into black space.

The passage had gradually widened, and here it was four or five feet across from rocky wall to wall. The height of it was very unequal—in places only six or seven feet, in others soaring to a height beyond the reach of the light.

"What is it?" asked Bob, who came next to the captain of the Remove.

"Steps, I think." Wharton flashed the light of the lantern downward.

The fissure extended ahead of him, seemingly endless, and lost in profound shadow, but at his feet the rocky floor ended in a series of rough hewn steps.

The captain of the Remove stepped upon the first carefully and cautiously. But it was of solid rock, immovable. He descended step after step, his comrades following him close behind, breathing hard with excitement.

"Hark!" exclaimed Nugent suddenly. From the blackness in advance there came a sudden stir. It was the sound of a movement—something living had



"We're going on," said Harry grimly. "Yes, rather!" agreed the Co. Harry lighted a lantern and Johnny Bull switched on his electric torch. With the captain of the Remove in the lead the Famous Five passed through the secret doorway in the wall. (See Chapter 2.)

stirred there. The juniors halted involuntarily.

"Somebody—" muttered Bob Cherry. Thud!

It was the unmistakable sound of a door that closed.

"Come on!" said Wharton between his teeth. "We've been heard; and there's somebody here. Come on!"

He pressed on again. A few minutes more and he was at the bottom of the steps. Another minute and he was brought to a sudden halt by a wall of rock in front of him. The fissure had suddenly ended.

"Bunkered!" murmured Bob Cherry.

Wharton stared at the rock that blocked his advance. He rapped on it with his hand, but obviously there was no opening. The juniors had come to the end of a blind alley.

"But there must be a way!" muttered Wharton, almost savagely. "Where's that fellow we just heard—"

"This way!" called out Johnny Bull.

Johnny was examining the wall of the tunnel with his electric-torch. The light revealed a narrow opening in the wall to the left.

"We missed the giddy turning," said Bob.

Wharton hurried back.

The narrow recess extended about three feet into the rock and then was stopped by a strong, iron-studded door. Wharton flashed the light on the door.

Old—centuries old—as the solid rock was, it was still strong, though the iron

nails and clamps were thick with rust.

Wharton pushed at the door and it did not move. He pulled at it and it opened to his hand.

From the black opening on the other side came a breath of air and the deep murmuring sound the juniors had heard below. It seemed to them now that it was the murmuring of waters, echoing in the hollows of the ancient rock.

"This is the door we heard shutting," said Harry Wharton in a low voice. "Keep your eyes open—there's somebody farther on who knows we're coming."

He set the door wide open and passed through, leading the way, with his chums at his heels.

A few yards beyond the doorway the passage broadened, the sides slanting away into the darkness, and the juniors knew that they were in a large cavern.

The murmur of water was now quite clear to them.

The rocky floor sloped downward under their feet as they pressed on, keeping their eyes well about them. Harry Wharton wondered whether they were yet down to sea-level. There was no glimmer of daylight to be seen, but he felt assured that there was an outlet somewhere on the landward side of the Garth Cliff.

"Water!" exclaimed Nugent suddenly, as a glimmer struck his eyes, reflecting the light of the lantern.

Wharton stopped almost on the edge of a rough declivity.

There were rude steps shaped in the

—of Harry Wharton & Co.—the real "goods"!

rock leading downwards to the edge of the water, which lapped and murmured below. It glistened as the rays of the lantern fell upon it.

"That must come from the sea," said Harry. "There's a communication between the sea and this cave somewhere. I shouldn't wonder if we find a boat—it's plain that this place is used, though by whom, goodness knows!"

"Look!" breathed Nugent, grasping his arm.

From the darkness below, on the face of the waters, there came a gleam of phosphorescent light.

The strange and terrible figure that the juniors had seen before loomed out of the darkness.

It was the figure of a sea-captain of olden time, in trunk hose and doublet and Spanish cloak and plumed hat, outlined in strange evanescent light on the background of velvety blackness.

Wharton caught his breath.

Convinced as he was, as he could not help being, that trickery was at work, the sudden eerie apparition gave him a strange thrill, and he felt his heart throb faster.

For some moments the juniors stood quite still, as if turned to stone by the ghostly sight. Wharton pulled himself together with an effort and set his teeth hard.

"It's a trick!" he muttered. "We know it's a trick; we've seen it before, and it's trickery! Come on!"

"I—I say—" muttered Nugent.

"Follow on!" said Wharton.

And holding the lantern before him, he almost ran down the steps to the water that glimmered below.

His comrades followed him; and still that strange and dreadful apparition glimmered from the darkness. They reached the edge of the underground stream and there they had to stop. The phosphorescent figure was still at a distance.

Wharton compressed his lips.

"There's a boat, of course," he muttered. "He's on the water, in a boat. We can't get at him."

"I—I suppose—" muttered Nugent. He did not finish, but his voice was shaking.

"I tell you it's a trick!"

Bob Cherry stooped and found a loose fragment of rock. He rose again, and took a careful aim at the phantom figure on the face of the waters.

Whiz!

A loud cry rang through the hollow cavern—a cry of pain. The phantom figure collapsed suddenly.

The phosphorescent light could still be seen, but it showed the phantom Spanish captain sprawling, here and there the light being hidden—evidently by the gunwale of a boat.

Bob Cherry had bowled the "phantom" over—a pretty good proof that it was no phantom.

Nugent burst into a nervous laugh.

"That's done it!"

The juniors felt round them for stones, and three or four missiles whizzed across the water, at the spot where they now knew that a boat must be floating. The sound of a dashing oar answered, and the glimmer of phosphorescent light vanished.

"He's gone!" muttered Johnny Bull.

Wharton cast the light up and down the edge of the underground stream. There was no boat of any kind to be seen there, and pursuit of the phantom was out of the question.

Suddenly, through the darkness and

silence behind them, there came the sound of an echoing thud. The juniors started.

"What—" began Bob Cherry.

"The door!" breathed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The esteemed door has shut!"

Wharton caught his breath.

If the door through which the juniors had entered the cavern was shut and secured—

It was a startling thought. Wharton turned back at once, and began to clamber up the steps into the upper cavern.

"Quick!" he called out breathlessly.

The juniors hurried back the way they had come. It had not occurred to them hitherto that they might have more than one person to deal with in the cavern under Garth Cliff. But the heavy door could not have closed of its own accord; and Keeley could not yet have returned from Polpen.

Their hearts were beating fast as they hurried back.

They were soon in the fissure in which the iron-studded door was set. It was closed and fast. Harry Wharton put his shoulder against it, and drove at it with all his strength.

It did not yield.

"Try it this way!" muttered Bob.

"It opens towards the house," said Harry. "You remember—"

"Yes. Shove—all together."

The lantern was set down, and five sturdy juniors braced themselves against the oaken door, and shoved with all their strength. But the door was as solid and firm as the rock round it.

The juniors desisted at last, breathless and dismayed.

"How the thump is it fastened?" muttered Bob Cherry savagely. "I never noticed bolt or bar or lock on it—"

"A wedge under it very likely," said Harry.

"Well, we can't move it."

"No."

There was a long silence. In the glimmer of the lantern, Harry Wharton & Co. looked at one another. Their faces were pale.

The same terrible thought was in all minds now. The secret enemy of the House of Pengarth had sought to scare them away—and failed. Whatsoever secret and underhand was going on at Pengarth, it was something that their eyes were not to see, nor their tongues to tell. The enemy had failed to frighten them away, and they had found out, at least, a part of the secret, and proved the trickery of the phantom Spaniard. And now—

Now they were shut in the dim cavern, with an impassable door before them, and the underground stream behind them. Shut out from the light of the sun—shut out from escape! And each of the juniors realised, in his heart, that other means having failed, the secret enemy had been driven to desperate measures, and that the shadowed cavern in the heart of the granite cliff was destined to be their tomb!

They were buried alive!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Fellow from St. Jim's!

SIR JIMMY VIVIAN ceased to swim, and came up the pebble beach in the blaze of the sunshine, with the water glistening on his limbs. Sir Jimmy was a good swimmer, and while Harry Wharton & Co. were busy in their eventful search in the

House of Pengarth, the schoolboy baronet had been enjoying himself in his own way. He was a good half-mile from the House of Pengarth when he left the water and stretched himself on the sand in the hot sunshine to enjoy a "laze."

As he lay on the sands the broad bay was before him, widening into the blue Atlantic. Behind him the granite cliffs rose almost like a wall, with ledges here and there that gave a foothold to bold climbers, and here and there a hollow cave or fissure into which the waters flowed at high tide. Sir Jimmy lay and basked in the sun, not at all in a hurry to return to Pengarth. But the silence of the deserted beach was broken suddenly by a voice calling down from the cliff:

"Hallo!"

Sir Jimmy sat up and blinked round him.

Twenty feet up, on a rocky ledge on the face of the cliff, a youth in a Panama hat was looking down at him. He was rather a handsome fellow, and his clothes were of an elegant cut, and a diamond pin glittered in his tie.

"'Allo!" replied Sir Jimmy.

He stood up and looked at the stranger.

"Excuse my interruptin' your nap, but—"

"I wasn't napping," said Sir Jimmy. "Jest taking a rest afore I swim 'ome."

"Home!" repeated the youth in the Panama. "Is there any place in this giddy wilderness nearer than Polpen?"

"You bet," answered Sir Jimmy.

"There's my 'ouse."

"Your house?"

"The House of Pengarth—my Cornish property!" said the schoolboy baronet loftily.

"Oh, gad!"

The youth on the ledge looked very curiously at Sir Jimmy Vivian. Certainly the schoolboy baronet did not speak in the manner of a fellow who owned a "Cornish property."

"Fact is, you're on my property now, young 'un," said Sir Jimmy. "All this 'ere is mine, 'arf-way to Polpen."

"You don't say so!"

"I jolly well do!" said Sir Jimmy.

"May a fellow inquire who you may happen to be?" asked the fellow on the ledge politely.

"Cert'nly! Jimmy Vivian—Sir James Vivian, Baronet."

"Great gad!"

"P'r'aps you don't believe me!" exclaimed Sir Jimmy. "If you don't, you jest come down 'ere, and I'll punch your cheeky nose!"

Sir Jimmy was rather touchy in some ways. His unfortunate early training had hardly fitted him to fill a baronetcy with dignity and grace, and several terms at Greyfriars had not greatly improved his peculiar variety of the English language. But all the more because he was conscious of the defects in his education, Sir Jimmy prided himself upon the undoubted fact that he was a baronet of the United Kingdom.

"My dear chap, of course I believe every word," said the stranger gravely. "If you're the owner of these jolly old cliffs, perhaps you can tell me the way down—unless I'm trespassin'," he added, with smiling sarcasm.

"Oh, you're free to amble about 'ere, if you come to that!" said Sir Jimmy. "But I don't know the way about more'n you do. I've only been 'ere a week or two since Greyfriars broke up for the 'olidays."

Who volunteers to fag for Coker?—

"You belong to Greyfriars?"

"Course I do!"

"Pleased to meet another public school chap!" said the elegant youth on the cliff gravely. "I belong to St. Jim's myself."

"Oh, do you?" said Sir Jimmy, surveying him with new interest. "I know some St. Jim's blokes—Tom Merry and D'Arcy and Levison, and other coves what comes over to Greyfriars to play cricket."

"You know Levison of the Fourth?"

"You bet! He was at Greyfriars not so long ago," said Sir Jimmy. "Who may you happen to be?"

"My name's Cardew."

"Oh, you're Cardew, are you?" said Sir Jimmy. "I 'member 'earing Levison speak of you. Well, Mister Cardew, if you want to get down to the beach you'll 'ave to slide for it."

Ralph Reckness Cardew, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, glanced at the slanting rock below him, and then looked back the way he had come. He seemed to make up his mind to it, for he slid down the rough rock, and landed on the sands near Sir Jimmy Vivian.

There he sat on a boulder, while Sir Jimmy stretched himself on the sand again. Cardew of St. Jim's was evidently interested in the rather queer baronet.

"I believe I've heard of you, Vivian, now I come to think of it," he said, with an agreeable smile. "I'm jolly pleased to meet you. Never expected to dig up any Greyfriars fellows in this giddy wilderness. Any chaps I know along with you here?"

"Five chaps of the Remove," said Sir Jimmy. "Wharton and Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull and Nugent and Inky. Skinner was with us, but he was scared away, and bolted."

"Scared away?" repeated the St. Jim's junior.

Sir Jimmy grinned.

"The 'ouse is 'aunted," he explained. "The ghosts was too thick for poor old Skinner. He bunked."

"By gad! I seem to have dropped on somethin' interestin'!" said Cardew. "I must tell Levison and Clive this. I know all the chaps you've mentioned—they're great friends of Levison's."

"Levison with you?" asked Sir Jimmy.

Cardew nodded.

"Yes; he's at the Rose Inn at Polpen with old Clive now. I dodged them, because they're goin' to do strenuous stunts with a sailin'-boat, and I'm not lookin' for work. Tell me all about the giddy haunted house—it's no end interestin'."

Sir Jimmy was nothing loth.

Cardew really seemed interested, though probably he was more interested in the queer baronet, and in his odd grammar, than in the story he had to tell.

Sir Jimmy explained how the House of Pengarth had come to him by inheritance, after long being in Chancery, and deserted, with only old Keeley in charge of it. He told how the Greyfriars party had come there for their holiday, and how the phantom Spaniards had haunted them during their stay.

"Blokes that was drowned when the Spanish Armada was 'ere," Sir Jimmy explained. "If you ask them in Polpen they'll tell you all about it. The ghost of the Spanish captain is seen o' nights, and voices are 'eard calling in Spanish. 'Course, it's some trick—Wharton says so. But—but I don't never want to go through agin what I've been through in

that old 'ouse." Sir Jimmy shuddered.

"'Course, a feller don't believe in ghosts. But it was too thick, and no wonder Skinner chucked it and cleared."

"But the other fellows aren't chucking it?"

"No fear—they're 'unting the bloomin' ghosts at this very minute!" said Sir Jimmy. "If you'd like to see 'em, you can come along to the House of Pengarth and bring your friends, if you like."

"What a jolly idea!" said Cardew.

"We've got lots of grub, in 'ampers from Penzance," said Sir Jimmy.

"We'll do you well, if you like to come. Old Keeley rows over to Polpen nearly every day for fresh eggs and vegetables and things, and he's a good cook. Looks arter us all right. He's at Polpen now, and you can come over in his boat if you can find 'im before he leaves. Anyhow, any of the fishermen would row you over, though they won't land at Pengarth. They're feared of the dead Spaniards."

"Well, I don't think I should be afraid of Spaniards, dead or alive!" said Cardew, laughing. "It's a very temptin' offer."

"The blokes will be glad to see Levison," said Sir Jimmy. "They got on with him fine when he was staying at Greyfriars in the term. Bring him over in a boat, and Clive, too."

"It's a go!" said Cardew. "Levison and Clive can help in huntin' the ghost, and I'll watch them. I'm awfully good at watchin' chaps do things. How do you get back to Pengarth from here?"

"Swim," answered Sir Jimmy.

"How far is it?"

"'Arf a mile."

"Then I won't offer to swim along," grinned Cardew. "Fifty yards would be nearer my mark. Goin'?"

Sir Jimmy rose from the sand and stretched his chubby limbs.

"Got to get back for lunch," he said. "Come over any time you like, and we'll be glad to see you."

"This afternoon?" asked Cardew.

"Yes, rather, if you like!"

"Then we'll butt in."

"Good!"

Sir Jimmy nodded to the Fourth-former of St. Jim's and walked down to the water. He plunged into the sea and swam away towards Pengarth.

Ralph Reckness Cardew watched him with an amused smile.

Sir Jimmy, of Greyfriars, interested him.

It was not wholly willingly that Cardew of St. Jim's had joined his chums, Levison and Clive, in a walking tour in the West of England. He hated exertion in any shape or form. But the exertion of saying "no" was as disagreeable as any other form of exertion, and he had joined up. Now he was rather glad that he had done so. The peculiar baronet of Greyfriars interested and amused him, and also he was quite curious to see the haunted house of Pengarth, where the phantoms of drowned Spaniards were said to revisit the glimpses of the moon.

"It's quite a catch," murmured



Bob Cherry took careful aim at the phantom figure on the face of the waters. Whiz! The fragment of rock sang through the air. A loud cry rang through the cavern, and the phantom figure collapsed suddenly. "So much for the jolly ghost," chuckled Bob. (See Chapter 3.)

—See next week's ripping yarn!

Cardew. "I'm glad, after all, that we came this way. By gad, that chap can swim!"

Sir Jimmy Vivian was already at a good distance. Cardew, sitting on the boulder, leaning back against the rock, watched him idly as he cleft the shining waters towards the cove in the Garth Cliff far along the bay.

A boat pulled out from the cliffs, from exactly what spot Cardew did not observe. It was pulling towards the swimmer. There were two men in it—one a burly fellow, the other a slight man dressed in black.

Sir Jimmy's head was raised, and Cardew knew that he called out as the boat rushed down on him, though he could not hear the voice at that distance.

The boat rushed on and seemed to Cardew, as he watched, to overwhelm the swimmer.

The next minute, however, he saw Sir Jimmy pulled over the gunwale by the burly man, the other being at the oars.

"By gad!" ejaculated Cardew.

He started to his feet, his face ablaze with excitement. He could see in the far-off boat that Sir Jimmy was struggling in the grasp of the man who had pulled him from the water.

The struggle, however, was only momentary.

Sir Jimmy disappeared from sight below the gunwale of the boat, evidently held down there by the man who had seized him.

The man in black pulled back towards the cliffs.

A big, bulging rock, like a great shoulder jutting into the sea, hid the boat suddenly from Cardew's eyes.

He stood breathing hard, gazing at the cliff behind which the boat and its three occupants had vanished. Long as he gazed he did not see the boat reappear. It seemed as if it had vanished into the solid cliff.

"By gad!" repeated the St. Jim's junior.

What was it that he had seen? Had he stood there and watched a kidnapping? It seemed difficult to believe, and yet after what Sir Jimmy had told him of the secret enemy, at the House of Pengarth, and of the attempted kidnapping at Greyfriars last term, it seemed certain. Long Cardew stood and watched, but the boat did not reappear, and at last he turned away and clambered up the cliffs and started for Polpen to join his chums.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

In the Enemy's Hands!

SIR JIMMY VIVIAN lay in the bottom of the boat in a state of wrath and amazement. He lay and blinked at his two captors. The burly man had taken the oars and was pulling for the cliffs of the Pengarth cove, against which the flood tide was now running. The slighter man was steering with one hand, and in the other he held a boathook, in menacing proximity to Sir Jimmy's head.

"Keep where you are!"

"Look 'ere——" spluttered Sir Jimmy.

"Hold your tongue!"

The man in black made a threatening motion with the boathook. His hard, pale face was grim in its look—grim and ruthless. Sir Jimmy blinked at him, more amazed than angry, though he was angry enough. For what reason these two utter strangers had dragged

him from the sea into the boat he could not guess.

So far as he knew he had never seen either of them before. But as he stared at the slight man in black something like recollection stirred in his mind. He remembered the description of the man Scaife who had visited Greyfriars before the end of the term, and in attempting to kidnap the schoolboy baronet had kidnapped Billy Bunter by mistake. Sir Jimmy wondered whether this was the same man. He could scarcely doubt, at all events, that he was in the hands of kidnappers.

One thing was certain, and that was that he was powerless to help himself. The expression of the man in black showed that he would have not the slightest hesitation in using the boathook. So Sir Jimmy lay in the bottom of the boat quietly as the burly man pulled for the cliffs.

The boat was not heading for the landing-place at the foot of the rock staircase to the House of Pengarth. The oarsman was pulling for the cliffs at the farther end of the little cove. The incoming tide of the Atlantic had buried the pebble ridges deep in curling water, and the swelling waves broke against the great granite cliffs with a deep roar. Here and there, in the line of cliffs, great fissures showed, into which the water rolled at high tide, and the tide was high now. Vivian did not venture to raise his head, but from

where he lay he could see the frowning line of the cliffs drawing nearer and nearer and he felt the boat rocking in the surf. Suddenly the blue sky was shut out over him, and the boat was floating in gloom.

"My 'at!" ejaculated Sir Jimmy.

He realised that the boat had entered one of the great openings in the cliffs, into which the tide was pouring. Even on a calm day it was dangerous navigation; but the two men were evidently well acquainted with the coast, and the boat rocked through the surf into the calmer water of the cavern beyond.

Over Sir Jimmy, as he looked upward, there was a great arch of rock, the roof of the cavern. He blinked in the sudden change from the sunlight to semi-darkness.

The darkness deepened as the boat glided on into the depths of the cavern.

Soon there was almost impenetrable blackness round the boat, and Sir Jimmy wondered how his captors were finding their way. But the boat glided on without a pause.

A light suddenly shone out. It came from an electric lamp, suddenly turned on by the man in black.

The light danced on walls of rugged rock and the glistening waters of the subterranean stream of salt water.

The man in black bent over Sir Jimmy.

"Where is Keeley?" he asked. "Is he at the house?"

"What do you know about Keeley?" returned Sir Jimmy.

"Answer my question!"

"He went to Polpen this mornin' in the boat," answered Sir Jimmy, with a wary eye on the boathook.

"You sent him away?"

"Yes."

"To leave the place clear for your friends to search for the secret passage?"

"You seem to know all about it," answered the schoolboy baronet. "I s'pose that means that you blokes had a 'and in the ghost business, what? You are the fellers that was playing ghost."

The man in black compressed his lips.

"And I know who you are now," continued Sir Jimmy defiantly; "you're Scaife, you are—the bloke that came to Greyfriars, making out he was a solicitor's clerk come to see me. You got 'old of that fat duffer Bunter by mistake; and I fancy this 'ere cove is the man what drove the car. I know you, you rotters!"

Scaife smiled bitterly.

"The knowledge will not help you much," he said. "You would never have seen either of us, if seeing us would have brought us into danger."

"I shall remember your faces, anyhow," said Sir Jimmy.

"Much good may that do you."

Sir Jimmy started a little. That he was helpless in the hands of the kidnappers he knew, but it had not occurred to him before this moment that his life was in danger. Now he asked himself why he had been brought to that gloomy recess in the heart of the Garth Cliff, and he shuddered.

A grim, mocking smile crossed Scaife's lips as he noted the change in the baronet's expression.

"You are beginning to understand?" he sneered.

Sir Jimmy breathed hard.

"You'd never dare——" he faltered.

"That's enough!"

Scaife held up the light and scanned the dark cavern before him. The waters lapped on a kind of rocky shelf,

IS YOUR NAME HERE?

£10 in Cash Prizes!

Result of Gloucester Picture-Puzzle Competition!

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

WALTER LYNCH,
8, Greenhough Street,
Ancoats,
Manchester.

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

L. Bachelor, 19, Kettering Road, Levenshulme, Manchester; R. A. Camp, Baddow Park, nr. Chelmsford, Essex; George Cooper, Ivy Cott., Wordsley Green, Wordsley, nr. Stourbridge; E. George, 3, Surrey Road, Nunhead, S.E. 15; James Hodkin, 141, Moorhey Street, Oldham; D. Howard James, The Pines, Holcombe, nr. Bath, Somerset; James Lynch, 8, Greenhough Street, Ancoats, Manchester; Miss L. Marshall, Tanyard, Cranbrook, Kent; William Scott, 424, Parliamentary Road, Glasgow; Robert Scott, 424, Parliamentary Road, Glasgow; B. Stratton, 63, High Street, Whittlesey, Cambs; Leslie Wallis, 14, Egerton Road, Bishopston, Bristol; Bernard Wallis, 14, Egerton Road, Bishopston, Bristol.

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

SOLUTION.

W. G. Grace, the globe's most famous cricketer, made Gloucestershire a first-class county, and he and his brothers were its mainstays for a considerable time. Townsend and Jessop were Gloucester's best amateurs, the latter a brilliant hitter. The county has frequently done badly, but has had its great years too.

Skinner & Co. are well in the foreground next week!

from which rough steps rose to a higher level of the cavern. Sir Jimmy looked about him, his face pale now. The water in the cavern was evidently a kind of salt lake, left there by the sea when the tide came in, at which times the outer cave, on the Pengarth cove, was flooded. At low tide the outer cave was dry and a boat had no passage, and the lake in the cavern was no longer connected with the sea. It followed that the cave in the face of the Pengarth cliff was on a higher level than the bottom of the cave in the interior.

That he could ever be found and rescued in that dim, hidden recess was impossible, and Sir Jimmy knew it. His life was in the hands of his two mysterious enemies.

But why had the blow fallen now? Till now his enemies had been content with the ghostly trickery, evidently hoping to scare away the visitors to the House of Pengarth. The truth came into Sir Jimmy's mind—during his absence that morning Harry Wharton & Co. must have made some discovery which had driven the secret enemy to desperate measures. What, then, had happened to his comrades?

Scaife raised his hand and pointed to the rocks.

"Look 'ere—"

Scaife made a threatening movement with the boathook, and Sir Jimmy stepped out of the boat on the shelf of rock.

The boat backed off immediately.

"You ain't leaving me 'ere?" shouted Sir Jimmy in dismay, and his voice awoke endless echoes in the hollow cliff.

Scaife did not answer.

The light was extinguished and the boat vanished. For a minute or so Sir Jimmy heard the plash of oars, and then there was silence. He was alone—abandoned to his fate in the blackest darkness!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Prisoners of the Cave!

CRASH!

Sir Jimmy Vivian gave a sudden start as the thunderous sound rolled through the cavern under the Garth Cliff.

Crash, crash!

For a moment it seemed to Sir Jimmy that there was an earthquake in progress and that the great walls of rock were collapsing.

Crash, crash, crash!

Every recess of the great winding cavern rang and echoed with the noise like thunder.

"What the dickens—" muttered Sir Jimmy.

The din continued. It filled the cavern with sound and echo, and it was difficult for Sir Jimmy to guess whence it proceeded. But it dawned upon him that he was not alone in the cave.

For a long time after Scaife had stranded him—how long he did not know—Sir Jimmy had sat on the rocky shore, overwhelmed with dismay, and utterly at a loss what to do. The crashing din in the cavern roused him, however.

He was already fairly certain that the open attack from his enemies was due to some discovery made by his comrades in his absence. And it came into his mind now that Harry Wharton & Co. had shared his fate—that they also were prisoners in the Garth cavern. As soon as he realised that, Sir Jimmy became active at once.



"Quick!" panted Harry Wharton. "Shove—all together!" The lantern was set down and five sturdy juniors braced themselves against the solid oaken door, time and again. But to all their efforts it remained as firm as the rock around it. They were trapped! (See Chapter 3.)

As he was in his bathing-costume, he had, of course, no matches about him. The darkness was intense; he could hardly catch even a glimmer of the water that lapped on the rock. But he remembered the rough-hewn steps he had seen by the light of Scaife's lamp, and tried to grope his way to them. Whoever was in the cave was on the upper level, far above the water; he knew that.

But in the darkness he soon found himself helpless. Once he slipped from smooth rock into the water, and scrambled out again breathlessly. Twice he fell into crevices. He stopped at last, realising that he could never find his way to the other prisoners of the cave without a light.

Then, while the crashing above still went on, Sir Jimmy shouted at the top of his voice.

"Hallo! Help! Wharton! I'm 'ere! Help!"

His voice was multiplied a thousand-fold by the echoes of the cavern, and he was startled by the thunderous sounds that rolled back.

The crashing still went on, while Sir Jimmy continued to shout with all the force of his lungs.

Suddenly the crashing sound ceased, and silence descended on the cavern. Vivian guessed that his voice had been heard.

Then from somewhere in the black distance a voice came hallooing faintly.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"That's Bob!" exclaimed Sir Jimmy,

with a breath of relief. "Thank goodness they've 'eard a bloke!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"This way!" roared Sir Jimmy. "I'm 'ere! It's me, Vivian! If you've got a light, come along to a bloke!"

"Right-ho!" shouted back the voice of Bob Cherry.

A few minutes more, and a light gleamed down the rock. It came from an electric torch in the hand of Bob Cherry.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Where are you, Vivian?"

"'Ere I am. 'Old the light and I'll come up."

"How the thump did you get there?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in amazement, staring down at the diminutive figure in bathing-costume, upon which the rays of the electric torch now fell.

Sir Jimmy grinned ruefully.

"I didn't get 'ere—I was brought," he answered. "I'm coming up!"

Bob held the light at the top of the rocky ascent, and Sir Jimmy clambered up the steps from the water. He joined Bob Cherry in the upper cavern.

"The other blokes 'ere?" he asked.

"Yes; we've been trying to break down a door with a lump of rock," said Bob. "We're shut up here."

"Oh, that was the row I 'eard, then!" said Sir Jimmy. "I shouldn't 'ave known you was around if I hadn't 'eard you."

"Come on!" said Bob.

Bob Cherry led the way back to where he had left his comrades. Wharton and Nugent, Johnny Bull, and

"Escaping the Gallows!"—next Monday's Galloping Diok story!

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, were gathered by the iron-studded door, in the light of the lantern.

"It's Vivian," said Bob. "We're all together now—if that's any good. Let's hope that we can get out the way Vivian came in."

"How did you get in, Vivian?" asked Harry Wharton. The captain of the *Remove* was breathing hard, after his exertions in beating upon the iron-studded door with a heavy fragment of rock. But the door showed only scratches and gashes on the wood, and stood as firm and immovable as before.

Sir Jimmy Vivian explained what had happened to him. The Famous Five listened in grim silence.

It was not inspiring news.

So long as the schoolboy baronet had remained out of the hands of the enemy, there had been some hope that somehow he would bring help to his imprisoned comrades. But the enemy had evidently acted promptly to defeat any hope of that kind. Having come out into the open at last, they had not dealt in half measures.

"And 'ow did you get 'ere, you fellers?" asked Sir Jimmy, breaking the grim silence.

Wharton told him.

"Well, we've got to get through this blooming door," said the schoolboy baronet.

"Looks too hefty a job for us," said Harry Wharton. "We were trying that when we heard you shouting. But look here, if you came in by way of a cave on the sea-side, we may be able to get out that way."

"We ain't got a boat."

"We can all swim," said Harry. "After all, the distance can't be great. I know it's risky."

The juniors looked at one another gravely.

To trust themselves, in the darkness, to the unknown subterranean waters was not an enticing prospect. Sir Jimmy shook his head slowly.

He recalled the winding ways by which the boat had reached the salt lake under the Garth Cliff, with innumerable branching fissures into which the sea-tides flowed and flooded. Even in a boat, with a good light, only one well acquainted with the secret recesses of the hollowed cliff could have hoped to find his way without mistake. A swimmer, in the darkness, had scarcely a remote chance of reaching the outer cave that looked on Pengarth cove.

"There's nothing doin'," said Sir Jimmy, in a low voice. "We should only be drowned like rats. There's dozens of them fissures in the cliff, all full of water, and 'ow'd we know the right one to take? In the dark, too."

Wharton compressed his lips.

"I don't say it's a lively chance," he said. "But it may turn out to be our only one. Those scoundrels do not mean to let us out of this."

"They can't mean to let us die here, in this awful place," muttered Frank Nugent, with a shiver.

"What do they intend, then?"

Nugent did not answer that.

"We've hit on their secret—or part of it," said Harry, in a low voice. "We don't know yet what's going on here, but it's plain enough now that it's a crime of some kind."

"A—a crime?" said Nugent.

"What else can it be? For years they've frightened people away from the House of Pengarth with their ghost trickery, taking advantage of the legend of the dead Spaniards. Now we've

found out the secret, in part—we know that the secret passage from the house to the cave is used for something—something that won't bear the light. If we get away, we shall go straight to the police. Some crime is going on here, and they are desperate now. They do not intend us to leave this cavern alive."

Nugent shuddered.

"But we shall be missed!" said Bob.

"Keeley may say that we left, scared by the ghosts. When the police search for us, what will they find?"

"Well, we left pretty plain traces of the way we came here," said Bob, with a faint smile. "A smashed wall—"

"They will find a way of concealing those traces," said Harry, "and Keeley can choose his own time for stating when we left—a story day, perhaps, when it may be supposed that we were lost crossing the bay in a boat. They haven't taken a step like this, without having their plans laid. And nobody will be coming to the House of Pengarth—everything is in their hands."

"The rotters!" muttered Bob. "But what can their game be? It can't be smuggling, or we should see some signs of it about the cave."

"I can't guess. But they are desperate. Look here," said Harry quietly. "There's no need for us all to take the risk. One of us can try to get out by swimming the way Vivian came. I'll take it on."

"It's too jolly risky," said Johnny Bull. "We may have to come to it, but we'll jolly well try everything else first. If it was possible to swim out, those rotters wouldn't leave us the chance of trying it, I'm pretty certain of that."

"'Old on," said Sir Jimmy. "There's somethin' I ain't told you yet. There's some blokes coming to the 'ouse this artemoon to see us."

"What?"

"Who—how—"

Sir Jimmy told of his meeting with Ralph Reckness Cardew, of St. Jim's, on the sands that morning. Every face brightened as he told of it.

"What jolly luck!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "That chap Levison is as keen as a razor—he will want to know why, if he calls at Pengarth and finds we're not there."

Wharton's eyes sparkled.

"It's luck, and no mistake," he said. "You're sure they're coming, Vivian?"

"Cardew said so."

"But—but they'll come without knowing anything of what's happened," muttered Nugent. "They may fall into the same trap. We know now that there are three men in this villainy, and three schoolboys wouldn't have much chance against them."

Wharton shook his head.

"It will be known in Polpen where they are gone," he said. "If they're staying at the Rose Inn, Mr. Tregellis will know. Scaife and his gang will hardly dare to lay hands on them. Thank Heaven that Vivian fell in with Cardew. It may mean saving all our lives."

"Let's try the door again!" said Bob.

And Bob Cherry took up the jagged lump of rock, and crashed it on the iron-studded door.

Crash, crash, crash!

The hollows of the great cliff rang with thunderous sound. But under the crashing rock the iron-studded door stood immovable. The Greyfriars

juniors continued their efforts; but more and more it was borne in upon their minds that their escape from that black cavern of death depended upon the St. Jim's fellows at Polpen.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Shadow of Death!

BLACK KEELEY pushed off his boat from the old stone quay at Polpen, and put out his oars.

Three youths lounging on the quay watched him idly as he went. Keeley did not waste a glance upon the three schoolboys. Wandering pedestrians were not rare, even in a remote spot like Polpen, in the summer months, and there was nothing about Levison, Clive, and Cardew, of St. Jim's, to excite the black-bearded man's interest or attention. Without a glance at the three St. Jim's fellows, Black Keeley pulled away across the bay towards the cove below the House of Pengarth.

He rowed into the cove, and moored the boat at the foot of the rock staircase. Taking up the bundles he had brought from the Cornish village, Keeley ascended the rocks, and tramped through the wilderness of the unkept gardens to the house. The great oaken door stood wide open, and the House of Pengarth was very silent.

Keeley glanced about him suspiciously. He had been sent away in the morning so abruptly that he had had no opportunity of communicating with his hidden associates. He wondered what the Greyfriars party had done during his absence, though he was very far from guessing what discovery they had made, and what had followed from it.

"Keeley!"

A voice called down the oaken staircase, and the black-bearded man started violently.

"Scaife! You here?"

"Yes. Come up!"

"But the boys—" exclaimed Keeley.

"They are not here. Come!"

With alarm and agitation in his wrinkled face, Keeley ascended the stairs, and entered the room in which the juniors had discovered the moving stone in the wall. Scaife was in the room, and the burly man—both of them looking grim and gloomy. It was obvious that something of deep importance had happened.

The moving stone stood wide open, as the Greyfriars juniors had left it. Keeley's eyes fixed on it at once.

From beyond the secret doorway there came a dull echoing, as of heavy blows struck at a distance.

"What's happened?" breathed Black Keeley. "Have they found—"

"Yes!" snapped Scaife.

"Where are they, then?"

"In the cave!"

Keeley muttered an oath.

"The door's closed and wedged," said Scaife coldly; "they cannot escape. They are trying to break the door down now. They will not succeed."

Keeley wiped the perspiration from his wrinkled brow. It was evident that he was utterly dismayed by what had happened.

"And Vivian?" he muttered. "He will miss them. He—"

"Vivian is with them," said Scaife. "Hawes and I picked him out of the sea and took him to the cave by the seaway. They are all safe."

"Safe!" muttered Keeley. "Safe!"

"Ponsonby's Plot!"—this week's Greyfriars story in the "Popular"!

What's to be done? The game's up for all of us here."

A fierce and gloomy look came over Scaife's hard face.

"The game isn't up," he said, slowly and distinctly; "the game pays too well to be thrown up on account of a gang of inquisitive schoolboys. They've asked for this, now they've got it!"

"You—you don't mean—"

"I've avoided it, haven't I, as long as I could?" broke out Scaife fiercely. "If we'd got hold of Vivian before the school holiday, as we planned, and kept him a prisoner during the vacation, the party would never have come here. That failed, through no fault of mine. Then the ghost business—it has terrified away the natives of these parts for years; it had scared off nosing tourists. A Spanish costume and a little phosphorus was enough for them, and a few

may be investigated. If those school-boys leave the House of Pengarth, the game is up for us—after all these years of security and big profits."

"But—" breathed Keeley, while the burly Hawes sat grim and silent and pulled at his pipe.

"If this is tided over, we're all safe," went on Scaife, in the same low, distinct tone. Evidently he had thought the matter out in all its bearings. "We've money put by, and now that Pengarth has a legal owner the property can be bought. It will revert to old Brooke if young Vivian's death is proved or presumed; and he is not likely to want to retain a useless ruined mansion on an inaccessible coast. He will sell the place. Next year it will be ours, to do as we like with!"

Keeley wiped his forehead again.

"We did our best to avoid strong

shoulders again. "Penal servitude is not in my line, Keeley!"

"I—I wish I'd never had a hand in the game at all," groaned Keeley. "I might have guessed it would come to something worse in the long run."

"If the house had remained in Chancery nothing would have happened," said Scaife. "The dead Spaniards were enough to keep away the fishermen. A boat pulling into the cove after dark from a yacht riding out at sea, would never have been inquired into by them—and the phantom of the Spanish captain was always ready for them. I scented danger at once when the law decided at last about the property, and took my measures. It's not my fault if they failed. These boys have brought their fate on themselves; I wash my hands of it!"



"By gad!" ejaculated Cardew, starting to his feet, his face ablaze with excitement. He could see in the far-off boat that Sir Jimmy Vivian was struggling in the grasp of the man who had pulled him from the water. (See Chapter 4.)

words in Spanish howled out in the night. One of these young rascals was scared away; I thought and hoped that the rest would follow. It's their own look-out if they did not!"

"But—"

Scaife pointed to the secret door, from which there echoed every moment the dull sound of distant knocking.

"They know it all now. They've got proof enough that the phantoms of Pengarth are a fake; they know enough even to convince the fishermen of Polpen. There isn't a man up and down this part of the Cornish coast, however superstitious, who won't butt into the House of Pengarth to see what they have found when the story's told. Even the police will get suspicious and look into the matter. Nobody takes notice of a local ghost story, but a proved fake

measures," went on Scaife doggedly. "They've asked for this. They're in the cavern now; they remain there!"

"But"—Keeley's husky voice was a mere whisper—"but it's murder!"

Scaife shrugged his thin shoulders.

"What happens in the cave is no business of ours," he said. "Most likely they may try to swim out by the underground waters, and they will drown in dark corners. Anyhow, they've no food, and their light will soon give out!"

"It's too dangerous!" breathed Keeley. "I—I tell you I can't have a hand in it, Scaife!"

"You've no choice. It's not only that the game's up if they escape, but it's prison for us. The law is pretty severe in these days on smugglers of opium and cocaine!" Scaife shrugged his

"But the danger!" muttered Keeley. "They'll be missed and searched for!"

"They went out to sea in a boat," said Scaife coolly. "That was the last you saw of them. The first day there's rough weather will answer the purpose. When they fail to return you get along to Polpen in a state of alarm and report what's happened."

Keeley shuddered.

"But there will be a search here! They've got friends and relations who won't be easily satisfied. This secret door will be found. Why, the panelling is smashed to fragments, and we can never mend it. The way they went is plain enough for a blind man to see!"

Scaife laughed contemptuously.

"Do you think I shall leave a trail to be followed, you fool? Half the House of Pengarth is tumbled into

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ruins already. Another portion of the house is going to collapse—this portion; I've got the crowbars here ready. That secret door will be choked up and hidden by a stack of ruins when we've finished."

Scaife crossed to the secret doorway and drew the moving stone shut. It clicked into its place.

"Then we sha'n't be able to use the passage from this room again?" said Hawes, speaking for the first time.

"That matters little enough in the present circumstances. We can always use the cave at high tide, in the boat."

"But," muttered Keeley, "there's the way out from the cave—not the water way to the sea, but the other way. If they find the tunnel leading to the outlet on the landward side of the Garth Cliff—the way you go with the packages, Scaife, after the stuff is landed here—"

"They will not find it. If they do, it matters little, as I have blocked up the tunnel already with rocks," said Scaife coolly. "It will remain blocked until—until all is over in the cave. We cannot use the cave again till all is over."

"And the stuff that is there now—"

"It's safe enough. They will not be thinking of searching the recesses of the cavern for smuggled goods. Even if they should, what matters?"

"I don't like it," muttered Keeley. "I—I'd prefer to cut and run with what we've made already and chuck up the game."

Scaife gave a harsh laugh.

"Do you think we should be allowed to run? I tell you that if those schoolboys get away and tell their story in Penzance the police will be here an hour later. We should never get out of the country. It's their lives or our liberty—and they've asked for it!"

The man Hawes nodded without speaking. Keeley mopped his perspiring forehead, but he said no more. The dominating spirit of the three was not to be denied.

"Enough talking!" said Scaife abruptly. "We've got plenty to do. Get a crowbar and help."

The dull, faint sound of knocking from beyond the secret door was drowned a few minutes later in the heavy crash of falling stone and mortar. In an hour's time the upper rooms at the back of the House of Pengarth were a mass of collapsed ruins, like so much of the rest of the ancient mansion. Clouds of dust and mortar rose from the dismantled ruins. Broken casements, roof slates, oaken beams and floorboards lay in a wild and shapeless mass. Behind and under that stack of ruin the secret of the moving stone was hidden deep.

When the havoc had been wrought, Scaife, breathing hard, went to the hall doorway of the House of Pengarth to breath the refreshing keen air from the sea. His eyes rested on the broad blue bay stretching away towards the red roofs of Polpen. And they rested on a fisherman's boat that danced across the bay under a brown sail with a bronzed old Cornishman at the rudder and three schoolboys standing up and looking towards the House of Pengarth.

Scaife stared at the boat with a thrill of fear rising at his heart. He recognised old Dick Pengelly, of Polpen, at the rudder. The three schoolboys were strangers to him. Were they coming to

the House of Pengarth? Curious strangers on that day of all days?

The boat ran into the cove and disappeared from his sight. Scaife clenched his hands hard and his eyes glittered. Whoever they were they were landing in the cove—bound for the House of Pengarth.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Visitors at Pengarth!

ERNEST LEVISON, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, looked doubtfully at Cardew, as the latter sat on the stone wall by the old quay of Polpen idly swinging his elegant legs. Sidney Clive, the third member of the St. Jim's walking party, leaned on the wall fanning himself with his straw hat and occasionally glancing at Cardew. Both Cardew's comrades seemed perplexed.

"Are you pulling our leg?" demanded Levison at last.

"Looks like it to me," said Clive. "A fellow never knows how to take you, Cardew."

Ralph Reckness Cardew yawned.

"In this weather!" he said. "Dear me, pulling your leg is too much trouble in a heat like this! We really ought to have walked to Caithness instead of Cornwall; it would be cooler."

"That chap Vivian really told you the yarn you've spun us?" asked Levison.

"Every jolly old word."

"Well, I've been hearing a lot about the House of Pengarth," said Levison. "All the fisherfolk here seem to believe that the place is haunted by the ghosts of the drowned Spaniards. Our landlord, Tregellis, is full of it. He mentioned a party of schoolboys staying at Pengarth. I suppose that's the Greyfriars lot."

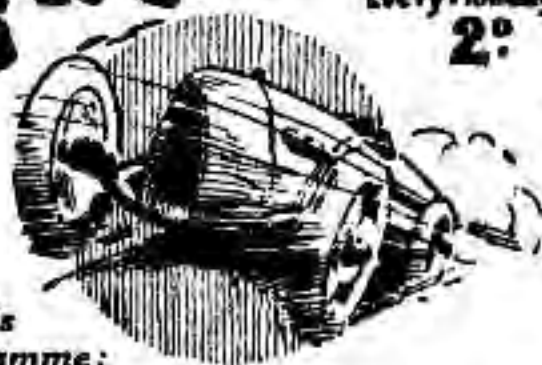
Levison looked thoughtful.

"I'd like to meet Wharton and his friends," he said. "They were jolly decent to me when I was staying at Greyfriars some time back. If Vivian's asked us to visit the place—"

"He has! Most polite of him," yawned Cardew. "He was quite taken by my fascinatin' manners. I'm wasted on you chaps."

THE CHAMPION

Every Monday
2d



This
Week's
Programme:

"Harvester Hal."
"The Menagerie Express."
"Phantom Isle."
"Bob o' the Big Tent."
"The Scarlet Scorpion."
etc., etc.

**BREAKS ALL RECORDS
FOR EXCITING STORIES**

"Fathead! But about what you saw after Vivian left you." Levison eyed his volatile chum very doubtfully. "Is it really straight, Cardew, or are you stuffing us?"

"Straight as a string," asserted Cardew. "Young Vivian was jerked out of the water by two men in a boat, and they disappeared with him into the giddy cliffs, so far as I could see."

"Some friends of his who picked him up," said Clive. "He'd a long swim, and they rowed him home."

"Possible," assented Cardew.

"But you don't think so?"

"Not at all. I think he was kidnapped. You see, it fits in with the yarn he spun me."

"It sounds rather thick."

"Anyhow, we'll get over to Pengarth," said Levison. "It's an interesting place to see. Tregellis says it's centuries old, and more than half tumbled into ruins. I dare say Vivian will stand us some tea."

"If we find him there," said Cardew.

"We'll find him there all right," said Clive with a grin. "I'll believe in the kidnapping when I see the kidnapers."

"Let's go, anyhow," said Levison. "We're staying a couple of days in Polpen, and we may as well have a run across the bay. And I want to see Wharton and his pals, anyhow."

"Get a move on, Cardew!" said Clive.

Cardew sighed and detached himself from the old wall. Levison called to Pengelly, who was smoking a pipe, sitting on a boat drawn up on the beach. The St. Jim's fellows had already arranged for a sail in Pengelly's boat. But the bronzed old seafaring man looked grave and serious when he heard their destination.

However, he launched the boat and stepped the mast, and the three St. Jim's juniors jumped in.

There was a light breeze from the Atlantic. Old Pengelly trimmed the sail, and the boat glided away from Polpen. Levison & Co. quite enjoyed the sail across the shining waters of Polpen Bay.

Cardew was looking unusually thoughtful. His interest had been aroused by the strange story Sir Jimmy Vivian had related to him, and still more by what he had seen afterwards. That Sir Jimmy had actually been kidnapped by force he did not feel certain; and yet, somehow, he felt that it was so. At all events, a visit to the House of Pengarth would decide the point. The schoolboy baronet had asked the St. Jim's party there, and if he was free, undoubtedly he would be there to receive his visitors.

"If we don't find Vivian there—" began Cardew, as the brown sail glanced under the cliffs by the Pengarth cove.

"We'll find him all right!" smiled Clive.

"But if we don't, not a word about what I've told you," said Cardew. "If he's not there, he's in bad hands, I fancy, and we shall have to be careful."

"That's all right," assented Levison.

The boat ran into the little cove, and the brown sail dropped. Dick Pengelly ranged up to the landing-place, and threw a rope over a post there.

"You're not comin' ashore?" asked Cardew, as the old Cornishman settled himself again in the boat.

Pengelly shook his head.

(Continued on page 17.)

Look out for next Monday's bumper number, chums!

With his heart full of bitterness against Sir Mostyn Frayne, gamester and rogue, who, in one stroke, has robbed him of a brother and the house and lands which had been the property of the Langleys for generations past, Dick Langley turns highwayman. With a price on his head he roams the countryside, seeking his livelihood behind a mask and a brace of pistols.

GALLOPING DICK.



This Week:
**RIVALS OF
THE ROAD!**

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Slippery Sam's Offer!

SIR MOSTYN FRAYNE sat in a deep armchair in the Red Room at Langleys, and stared gloomily at the wall.

"It's a cursed dull hole, this!" he said to himself. "I haven't sat down to a hand at faro for two days. The families round about here are beginning to fight shy of me, and if there's any young fool with a few thousands to lose, his people take care to keep him out of my way."

He stretched out his legs and yawned drearily.

"Odd's blood!" he said. "I shall have to turn respectable. Pink me, there's no reason now why I should take the trouble to strip a man of a few hundred at the card-tables! I did a good stroke when I won this place from the young fool Basil Langley, and if a few people fight shy of me because he was found lying across the card-table shot through the head, there are others who respect a man for what he's got, and at least I'm master of Langleys Manor."

"The cub's dead," he continued, "and he can't talk! If I could catch and hang his young scoundrel of a brother, I should be happy. The young jackanapes! To call me a thief to my face; to lay hands on me, and then turn highwayman because he'd lost his estate, and tell me he was a better man than I was! Took fifty guineas off me next day at the pistol's point, and flung my own servant's purse back to him with a handful of my own money in it! Curse him! I'd—"

He broke off abruptly as a knock sounded at the door.

"Come in!" he growled.

The door opened, and a grave, sombre-looking servant came in, and walked with a respectful, catlike tread towards the baronet.

"A man wishes to see you, Sir Mostyn," he said suavely.

"A man? What do you mean, Parker? Who is it?" said the baronet irritably.

"He wouldn't give his name, Sir Mostyn."

Sir Mostyn sat up.

"Parker, you are a fool!" he snarled.

"Why did you not get out of him what it is he wants?"

"I did my best, sir," said Parker, who had shown in some very queer characters to his master's presence in his time.

"Show him up," said Sir Mostyn, after a moment's thought.

The servant disappeared noiselessly, and presently, with a dignified curl of the upper lip, ushered in the stranger.

A curious contrast to the surroundings of that luxurious, old, panelled room was this shifty-eyed, red-nosed, seedy-looking loafer.

"Evenin', your worship!" he said, with an obsequious leer. "I 'opes your worship will excuse me taking this liberty."

Sir Mostyn surveyed the fellow with disfavour, and signed Parker to leave.

"Now, fellow," he said, drawing a second handkerchief from his cuff, and putting it to his mouth, "out with it, quick! What have you to say? If it is nothing important, you will regret your visit, let me tell you. As a magistrate, I shall commit you for a vagabond. 'Sdeath, you knave, you've been before me for poaching! I recognise your rascally face!"

"Quite true, Sir Mostyn," said the man with a wriggle, "but I'm come on a different errand this time. No offence, sir, but you offered two hundred guineas for the highwayman, Richard Langley?"

"Ah!" said Sir Mostyn. "Yes, I did, fellow. Have you got him, then? Be careful, for I have paid the reward once for the wrong man, and, pink me, the next that swindles me shall fare no better than the highwayman himself!"

"Gently, sir!" said the poacher. "I ain't got nothing more to say about that. But what I says is this—will you pay another fifty guineas to be in at the death? Would you give a bit extra to help in the capture, without soilin' your 'ands, an' see the young night-rider nabbed? I know it'd do you good to put it on him all you can. You're a magistrate, too."

Sir Mostyn's eyes gleamed for a moment, and then he hesitated. He longed to see the capture, and to have his young enemy in his power, but he had had more than one encounter with Galloping Dick, and had come off a very

poor second. Like most bullies, Sir Mostyn was not fond of meeting his match.

"It's all right, sir," put in the poacher. "There won't be no danger. I'll see it through; you trust Sam Quince!"

"What's your plan?" said Sir Mostyn. "What do you know?"

"This, sir. I knows where he hides himself in the day-time. He rides all night, as we all know, but no one's ever seen 'im off his guard. But I've found a dell in the woods where he sleeps for four or five hours each day, under a great oak-tree that keeps off sun and rain, an' his black mare grazes close by."

"Ah!" exclaimed Sir Mostyn.

"He thinks himself safe. I can get six brisk boys to help, who'll creep an' take him while he sleeps, as easy as they'd drain a jack-o' ale. I'll show him to you asleep, an' take half the guineas; the other 'alf when he's taken. Then he'll be in your charge, an' you can 'urry him through his trial to the gallows as soon as you like. Ain't that a fair offer?"

"Odd's death!" muttered Sir Mostyn to himself. "I should be safer at home, and letting this unsavoury rogue do the work himself. But, pink me, it would be sport to see the cub Langley caught, and the credit of it will do me good. It would get me the office of high sheriff of the county belike, and then I should be in favour again with all men. I shall have Dick Langley in my grip, too, and get him hanged out of hand."

He thought it over rapidly for a moment.

"I agree," he said to the poacher. "I will accompany you to the place, and superintend the capture on your terms. Be sure you do not fail!"

"Slippery Sam don't fail in a case like this, sir!" leered the man. "You meet me at the old hut in Quex Woods to-morrow at three o'clock, an' we'll have our bird within 'alf an 'our! There's one more thing, Sir Mostyn—I must 'ave ten guineas as advance fee, to get my mates together with. We can't take him alone, and I don't want a bullet in me. They're goin' shares wi' me, but they won't touch it without a smell o' the money first."

"Tut, you knave," sneered Sir Mostyn, who, being a rogue himself,

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DICK OVERHEARS THE PLOT TO CAPTURE HIM!

though on a larger scale, saw through this easily, "do you take me for a fool? The bait's big enough to draw all the help you want, and you'll get nothing till we have Dick Langley fast."

"I won't stir a hand or foot in it without seein' the colour o' your money first," said Slippy Sam, with an ugly glance.

"There!" said the baronet, throwing down a coin as though it hurt him to part with it. "There's a guinea for you. It's all you will get."

And Slippy Sam, after some more grumbling, pounced the guinea with a greedy look, pulled his forelock, and slouched out.

"Three o'clock by the old shed, sir," he said, as he opened the door. "An' before the clock strikes four, Galloping Dick'll be our prisoner!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Capture in the Forest!

"H E'S a rogue, I tell you, Basil: he's a rogue."

Only a wren, flitting among the lower branches of the great oak-tree, heard the words Dick Langley muttered. Kitty, the black mare, was cropping the grass quietly out of earshot.

The young highwayman, lying with his back propped against the trunk of the oak, saw nothing of the silent beauty of the greenwood around him. The sleep that his adventurous nights denied him had transported him into another world. He dreamed he was talking with his brother Basil, now dead, and warning him against Sir Mostyn.

Suddenly he awoke with a slight start, to find himself safe in his sylvan retreat, with the wonderful mare, Kitty, the only creature he loved now in the world, grazing close at hand. Dick, as he opened his eyes, stared fixedly into the tangled depths of the greenwood in front of him.

Was it fancy, or did he see an evil-looking face peering at him from behind a tree-trunk not far away?

Dick was on his feet in a moment, but the face had vanished. He made a short search, but there was no sign of anyone in the neighbourhood.

"I was half-asleep still," he laughed, "and that was a face of the dreamland."

It seemed almost real. Pooh! There's as little likelihood of anybody finding the place as of their flying! I've used it three months now, and only stumbled on it myself by accident. Ecod! I'm ready for a meal! Come, Kitty, the twilight's closing down, and we'll get back to the haunts of men—and fat purses!

When Dick and Kitty were awake and moving, they feared no man, and went wherever they chose. With the reckless daring of the eighteenth century knight of the road, Dick made from place to place, and dined with the many country squires, at whose boards he was an honoured guest, and whose purses he spared, as though no gallows hung over his outlawed head.

Especially at hostleries was he a welcome visitor, and often stalked in and dined as though he were a justice on circuit. To-night, however, he entered one of the smaller but equally comfortable inns which he had not patronised before, and, not being in the mood for company, he pulled his hat over his eyes, and drew his stock up, and ordered a plain but excellent repast in a private parlour. He was not recognised, and after the meal he went quietly into the outer room, and seated himself in a chair by a recess to smoke and muse, while Kitty was fed and watered in the stable. He often gleaned useful information in such places.

There were four or five rough fellows drinking at one of the tables, but they took no notice of him. Dick, a little moody and abstractive, was thinking of the vision of the face he had seen in the dell.

"It must have been fancy," he murmured; "but if it wasn't— Ecod, who's this?"

The door was flung open, and a shabby-looking ruffian entered with a swaggering stride. He advanced to the little bar, slapped a guinea down on it with all the noise he could, and looked round him fiercely.

"A jack of ale, an' quick about it!" he roared, as the landlord came forward.

From his dark corner Dick stared hard at the stranger.

"Ecod!" he muttered to himself. "That's the face I saw in the wood!"

The ruffian turned fiercely on the landlord, who, without taking any notice of him, bit the guinea hard, and rang it on the counter. Satisfied, he shot a

wondering glance at Sam Quince—for it was he—drew the ale, and doled out the change.

"Come on, lads!" shouted the poacher. "Give yer orders! Sam Quince owns the taps to-night!"

"Is it settled, Sam?" said one of the men, nudging him. "Do we do the job to-morrow? Say 'yes' or 'no,' mate; but don't say no more here."

"I'll say what I—hic—like!" roared Sam, turning on him. "We're all pals 'ere, ain't we? No; you ain't in it, nor you!" he added, pointing to one or two. "Ere's a shilling apiece, mates; go an' swill somewhere's else. Me an' my lot 'as business on hand."

"Stow it, Sam; don't blab too much here!" said one of his friends, as the outsiders left.

But the poacher had drunk too deeply for caution. Dick, unnoticed by anyone, sat in his dark corner, and watched with some disgust.

"I tell you it's—hic—all right, mates!" cried Sam. "We splits two hundred shiners between us for the job, an' I makes a bit extra for meself outside that for startin' the game. I saw Sir Mostyn to-day, an' he's comin' with us to see the capture."

"I 'opes it's all right," said one of the ruffians. "Galloping Dick's a big



THE TA

bandful to tackle. Are ye sure we can take 'im asleep?"

"Easy as winkin'!" hiccupped Sam. "I went ter the place, an' took another look at 'im an hour ago, to make sure. Sitting under the tree, an' sleepin' like a baby, 'e was. We just creeps up on all sides through the bushes, an' jumps on 'im, the 'ole six of us, while Sir Mostyn waits in the scrub. We gets 'alf the blunt first, an' the rest when we've got 'im."

A clatter of approval rose among the rascals, and in the midst of it Dick walked quietly out unobserved. When he reached the road, he stood in the cool night air and thought for a few minutes. Then he laughed softly and without noise, and shook all over.

He went to the stable, brought Kitty out, and rode a couple of miles, laughing all the way, to another and a larger inn that knew him well. He went upstairs to a room that was kept for him, and soon came down with a grey riding-cloak, a hat, a second pair of boots, and some other clothing. These he tied into a neat bundle, swung them on his saddle-bow, and rode away, still laughing, into the darkness.

"Keep close behind me, sir, an' for goodness' sake don't make so much noise wi' yer feet!"

Something to look forward to—"The Heart of a Hero!"—next Monday's—

"Is it—are you sure it's all right, Quince?" Sir Mostyn asked, in a shaky voice.

"It will be if yer walks more quieter, sir."

The hot afternoon sun was shaded to a mellow light as it shone through the foliage overhead, and the baronet, with a rather pale face and a nervous tread, was trying to creep noiselessly behind Sam Quince to the centre of the dell.

"There!" whispered Sam, halting and peering among the leaves. "There 'e is! D'ye see 'im, Sir Mostyn?"

The baronet looked cautiously. Lying with his back against the great oak-trunk, his chin on his breast, his hat pulled down over his face, and one leg crossed over the other, was the figure of Dick Langley, evidently sound asleep. A gleam of hatred and triumph lit the green eyes of the baronet.

"The boys is ready in the scrub, sir," said Slippery Sam, "waitin' for the signal. When I give the word, we'll ave 'im tight. An' now I'll make so bold as to ax you for the 'alf of the money, as agreed."

"Yes, yes!" whispered the baronet, turning still paler. "Here's the money—take it! Now, then, do the job, quick!"

Sam Quince stole forward and gave a

"Step forward, Mr. Slippery Sam!" said Dick, directing one pistol at the poacher, who obeyed with alacrity. "Put the money you just received on the ground before me, and take care you do not overlook any!"

Sam Quince emptied out the blood-money he had received to the last guinea and the last banknote.

"Sir Mostyn, will you kindly add the balance of the reward?"

The baronet complied with trembling hands.

"Fifty guineas extra, I see! Thank you! The gentleman of straw, with my clothes on him, is now your property, fairly captured, and you may hang him as soon as you please!"

"Now be kind enough to turn your backs, all of you. The first who looks round within thirty seconds will receive a ball in his head, and there will be one rogue the less!"

The company obeyed. Dick gathered up the blood-money, the price of his neck, and stepped into the thicket. A light laugh echoing through the green-wood, and Galloping Dick was gone.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Two Empty Purses!

"KITTY, old lass, here's a pigeon to be plucked!"

The beautiful mare shook her ears as Galloping Dick twitched his mount aside into the forest, as he heard the sound of horse's hoofs round the bend overtaking him. He halted behind the trunk of a huge oak-tree a little way from the path, and watched.

"This looks like just what we are in search of," he whispered to Kitty—it was Dick's firm belief the mare understood all he said, and some others thought the same—"a master-weaver from Milton, as I live. No doubt he has a purse well filled from the toil of his poor apprentices under that Quakerish cloak!"

It was a thin, sour-looking man that rode round the corner, dressed in good cloth, but of a sombre black colour, and there was a strong smack of the well-to-do Puritan about him. He rode a big, heavy, black horse, and his features, sour enough at the best, were just then particularly grumpy.

One spring, and Kitty and her rider stood across the path. A black pistol stared the traveller in the face, and he drew rein with a jerk.

"What now?" he said, in a sharp, acid voice. "Twice in one day! Is the whole countryside overrun with these rogues of highwaymen?"

"Come, Sir Whiggamore!" cried Dick. "I do not ask you for a sermon, but for your purse. Hand it out swiftly, please, for it would grieve me if this pistol went off before its time, and deprived Wilton of so worthy a teacher!"

"I have no purse!" said the stranger savagely. "You are too late! Another rascal, with a stolen horse and a pilfered pistol, has just eased me of my property down the path, and I have nothing for you!"

"Odd's fish!" cried Dick. "Do you take me for a fool, fellow? There is no highwayman in the country dare trespass on my preserves! 'Tis a trick to save your purse, and you will suffer for it. Turn out your pockets, or I will send your horse home without a rider!"

Glowing sourly, the man turned his wallet and fobs inside out. There was nothing save a bunch of keys in any of them.

"Now are you satisfied?" he growled. "Ride on!" said Dick abruptly, lowering his pistol and drawing his mare aside.

And the black-clad man went on his way.

"There was nothing about him that I could see," muttered Dick; "and yet the knave must have told that tale to annoy me. Another knight of the road on Blackwold Hills. As if it were likely!"

He rode on a little way, but soon he heard another horseman approaching, this time at a canter, and once more he left the path.

"This looks better," he thought; "a man of substance, both in flesh and money. He doesn't look too well pleased, though!"

Up the woodland ride, glaring in front of him, and cursing vigorously, came a purple-faced squire, smartly clad, and bestriding a fine roan hunter.

"Hold!" cried Dick, spurring across the path. "Whither in such a hurry, sir? Allow me to relieve you of your purse, and then you will ride the lighter!"



ES TURNED!

low, hardly audible whistle. In an instant six burly forms burst out of the thicket, and flung themselves on the sleeping figure.

"Have you got him?" screamed Sir Mostyn, dancing out into the enclosure. "Hold him tight! Bind him!"

"We've got him!" roared Slippery Sam, as the sleeper, overwhelmed by numbers, was pinned to the ground. "Give us that rope, Joe! Why, what the—"

A chorus of frightened imprecations arose. Sir Mostyn shrieked aloud, and then there was silence. The company, as if struck dumb, were staring into the mouths of two horse-pistols, held by a tall, well-dressed figure that stepped lightly out of the thicket.

"A poor afternoon's work for you, I fear," said Galloping Dick blandly. "You may sit down, if your knees won't support you, Sir Mostyn. Now, you unclean knaves, get off those clothes of mine!"

With a sudden yell of fury and despair, the nearest ruffian whipped a long knife from his belt and lunged at Dick. One barrel of the horse-pistol spoke, and the knave rolled over groaning, a bullet in his shoulder. The rest, breathing heavily, remained as still as mice.



DICK RESCUES HIS RIVAL!

—Greyfriars yarn! As good as "A Very Gallant Gentleman!"

The squire reined the roan back on its haunches, and glared at the threatening pistol.

"What, another of you?" he cried. "Why, not twenty minutes back a rogue of your breed stripped me of my guineas, and now you would do the same!"

"What?" exclaimed Dick. "Is this tale true, after all?"

"The fiend take you!" roared the squire. "The road must be lined with highwaymen! The other rogue stopped me by the three cedars down along the path, and I suppose I shall find one at every milestone on the way home! There's my empty purse—take it, and be hanged to you, and shoot me if you like!"

And, flinging a silken money-purse at Dick, he spurred recklessly past, and cantered onwards with a volley of round oaths.

Dick let him go. Then he looked at the priming of both his pistols, and his eyes glittered ominously.

"This must be looked to!" he said grimly. "If it's true that I've a rival, I'll make him eat his bullets. I'll allow no one but myself to rob in my territory!"

He touched Kitty with his heel, and galloped along the ride. He soon neared the three cedar-trees of which the squire had spoken, and slowed down to a trot, every nerve on the alert. The sound of voices reached him, and he slowed Kitty to a walk.

No cat could move more silently than the black mare when she chose, and as Dick came quietly round the bend of a path he saw a strange sight.

A fat, comfortable-looking citizen, mounted on a staid old white horse, was trembling violently, as with pale and perspiring face he tried to haul his purse out of his breeches-pocket. Opposite him, with his back to Dick, was a well-dressed, debonnaire-looking horseman, presenting a bell-mouthed pistol at the citizen's head.

"Sdeath!" muttered Dick. "This rascal is taking fat hauls to-day! Three purses in an hour, and each one of them should have been mine! Well, 'twill be long ere he takes another!"

"Come, sir," said the strange highwayman to his victim, "hurry yourself, or I shall assist you!"

"I am, sir—I am!" bleated the citizen, tugging at the purse hastily, for he was so fat that he could hardly get it free. It came out with a jerk, and he was about to hand it to the highwayman when he gave a violent start, and it dropped from his trembling fingers. For as he raised his eyes he saw, to his amazement, a second highwayman, with a short, black mask and a mocking smile, sitting a splendid black mare, just behind his captor.

"What are you about, idiot?" cried the first highwayman angrily, as the purse fell. "What are you staring at?"

Then, following the citizen's frightened gaze, he looked behind him, and saw Dick's pistol within an inch of his head.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Difference of Opinion!

THE strange highwayman stared silently for a moment at the newcomer.

"If you move you are a dead man!"

"Indeed," said the other, with a sneer. "May I ask whether you call

yourself a King's rider or a constable?"

"Neither!" said Dick. "I am of the same trade as yourself, and I shall have a few words to say to you shortly. For the present, remember that this pistol will end your career at once if you move or speak!"

The highwayman, realising that his life was in the other's hands, bit off an oath and remained silent. Then Dick turned to the fat citizen, who was sitting on his big, white horse, and blowing like a whale with astonishment.

"Get down and pick up that purse!" he ordered.

The man obeyed.

"Put it safely back in your breeches and mount your horse. That's right! And now be off with you, and thank your lucky stars at getting off so cheaply!"

Dick dealt the white horse a smack with his open palm, and it cantered away, bearing the astonished citizen with it. In a few seconds the two highwaymen were alone.

"Now, sir," said Dick to his rival, "will you kindly explain why you are poaching on my preserves?"

"Your preserves!" retorted the other hotly. "Why, who the dickens are you? I am answerable to no one for what I do!"

"Pardon!" said Dick, whipping off his mask. "But you mistake! I am Richard Langley, known also as Galloping Dick, and anyone who trespasses in my district is answerable to me!"

"Odd's blood!" returned the stranger, doffing his mask, and showing himself a handsome young fellow a few years older than Dick. "I have heard of you, of course, but I did not know that I was in your district, and, if I did, that was no reason for you to stick your pistol into my ear when I was stripping a traveller. Dog does not eat dog. A plague on you, I say!"

"I will choose who shall be robbed and who shall not in my district!" said Dick coolly. "You have stripped two whom I would myself have plucked. I pass over that. But yonder citizen is a hard-working man with a large family—a worthy Milton surgeon, to wit—so I let him go. And I am about to teach you a lesson. Curb your tongue, sir, and remember that I hold your life in the bend of my trigger-finger."

"Sir," said the stranger, trembling with passion, and choking down a bitter speech. "I see you have a sword at your side. If you are not afraid put your barker up, and measure your steel with mine, and I will soon show you who is lord of this district!"

"A very sprightly proposal!" said Dick, slipping his pistol into his holster, and jumping down. "It does you credit. Out with your bodkin, sir, and we argue the matter out upon this level bit of turf."

Not many highwaymen encumbered themselves with swords, but Dick and his rival, each being by chance members of a good family who had taken to the road by stress of fortune, clung to the custom of their former lives, and each wore a Court rapier.

The clean, white weapons crossed in an instant, and at the first thrust Dick knew he had met his match, or near it.

There was little to choose between the two. The stranger made the fiercer onslaught, but Dick fought with cool, level courage. His father had been the first swordsman in the county, and Dick was a worthy pupil.

Loud rang the keen blades, and round and round the grass plot the fighters went. A stroke of Dick's brought blood

from his opponent's wrist, but a few moments later he received a sharp thrust in the shoulder.

Never flinching, he fought on steadily, but found himself at a disadvantage, and a gleam of triumph shone in his opponent's eyes.

Suddenly Dick's foot slipped, and he fell at full length, at his opponent's mercy.

Instead of ending him, or even calling on him to surrender, the stranger drew back, and with his sword at the salute waited for his adversary to rise.

"Thank you!" said Dick simply, rising to his feet. "I have dealt with ruffians of late, and it is a pleasure to cross swords with a gentleman. Fall on, sir, if you are ready!"

Fiercely the fight began again. Though the stranger would not take advantage of an accident, it was plain he meant to finish his rival, and Dick felt his strength failing.

Suddenly, at the height of the fight, there came the thunder of horses' hoofs, and a party of mounted men swept round the corner.

"King's men!" cried Dick, who knew them well. "We must ride for our necks!"

The stranger leaped to his horse, and Dick was on Kitty's back in an instant. They galloped away like arrows from a bow, amid a crackle of pistol-shots, the pursuers riding after them pell-mell.

"We will settle our differences later," cried the stranger. "Separate, sir, and throw them on different scents."

Dick needed no advice on such a matter as this. He laughed gaily, and the two fugitives struck out across the wooded heath beyond the forest in different directions.

Instantly three of the five pursuers followed Dick—for there was by far the bigger price on his head—while two went after the stranger. Darkness was settling down on the woods.

"Ho, ho!" chuckled Dick to Kitty, as the wind whistled past him. "They'd better have followed the lesser prize! They've little chance with us, old girl!"

Too often had Dick been hunted by King's riders to fall into their hands. Their steeds had not Kitty's speed, nor were they at home among the heath and woodlands.

In twenty minutes Dick had shaken them off, and left them galloping in the wrong direction.

This done, he cut across country to where he thought the stranger would be passing. His knowledge of the country led him right, and he soon saw his rival spurring across an open heath where there was no shelter, trusting to his horse's speed to carry him free.

But his beast was already foundering, and the two pursuers were close upon him. He snapped his pistol at them, but without effect.

"They've got him!" cried Dick, as he saw the highwayman's horse come down heavily.

And the pursuers instantly leapt down and threw themselves on the fallen man. They were powerful fellows, and the highwayman, being winded by the shock, was soon bound and slung across one of the captor's horses.

So occupied were they, and so delighted with their success, that they did not see Dick galloping like the wind across the heath till he was close upon them.

Whatever happened, Dick was determined to save his plucky rival from the gallows.

(Continued on page 20.)

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THE SECRET OF THE CAVES!

(Continued from page 12.)

"I'd rather not, zur," he said. "I'll wait here for you, if you don't mind. You may not believe in the dead Spaniards, zur, but I've seen mun, and I know."

"Perhaps we shall have the luck to see mun, too!" smiled Cardew. And he jumped ashore.

The three juniors ascended the rock staircase, and reached the ruined gateway of the House of Pengarth. They followed the wild, weedy path to the big oaken door—closed now.

Cardew knocked on it with the light cane he carried.

The knocking echoed through the old building, but for a long time there came no reply.

"Looks as if there's nobody at home," said Clive.

"Vivian ought to be at home, as he's asked us to come," remarked Levison. "Anyhow, they wouldn't all go out and leave nobody to meet us."

Knock, knock!

There was a sound of footsteps at last,

after lunch," said Keeley. "They've gone over the cliffs, inland."

"Oh, gad! When do you expect them back?"

"They did not tell me, sir."

"Well, we'd better go in and rest, anyhow," said Cardew, glancing at his companions. "I dare say they'll turn up before dark."

The big oaken door was only partly open. Keeley pushed it a little further shut, and his figure blocked the opening.

"Excuse me, sir, I can't let you in, as you are strangers to me," he said. "I was told nothing about this visit."

"You are in Sir James Vivian's service, I suppose, as you're here?" said Cardew.

"Yes, sir; but my master has not mentioned you to me, and I can't let you in in his absence."

And with that gruff answer, Keeley closed the door in the faces of the St. Jim's party. Ralph Reckness Cardew glanced at his comrades with a satirical smile.

"What do you think now?" he murmured.

"Blessed if I know what to think," muttered Clive. "It looks—"

"Better get back," said Cardew, in a tone loud enough to be heard by the

"Most likely they will not be staying long in Polpen," he said. "Anyhow, they're gone for to-day. To-morrow morning you must run the boat over to the village, Keeley, and see if they're still there. It's a rotten stroke of luck; we don't want witnesses that the party here had disappeared, before the time we arrange for their disappearance to be reported. But, after all, there's nothing unusual or suspicious in a party of schoolboys having gone out for the day—these confounded, meddling lads cannot suspect anything."

Keeley shook his head slowly.

"They can't suspect anything," he said. "I'm certain they've had no communication with Wharton so far—he would have mentioned it in my hearing if he had known that friends of his had arrived in Polpen. Most likely they only came along to-day, and they may not even be passing the night at Polpen. Most likely I shall hear to-morrow that they have gone back to Penzance."

"In a few days all will be over in the cave," muttered Scaife; and Keeley shuddered as he heard the muttered words. "There are signs already of the weather breaking—and at the first blow a boat must be run out to sea and turned keel up. The tide will bring it

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and the big door swung open on creaking hinges. A black-bearded man looked out at the St. Jim's juniors, with a forbidding face. They recognised the man they had seen leaving in the boat earlier in the afternoon from Polpen quay.

"What do you want?" asked Keeley harshly. There was no sign now to be seen of Hawes or Scaife.

"Is Sir James Vivian at home?" asked Cardew.

"No."

"Sure of that?"

"Quite sure."

Cardew did not add that Sir Jimmy had asked the party to come.

"Some friend of ours are stayin' here, I believe," he said. "Some Greyfriars fellows. Tell Harry Wharton we're here, please."

Keeley drew a hard breath.

"You're friends of Master Wharton?" he asked.

"That's it."

"You belong to his school, perhaps, sir?" asked Keeley, with a keen, searching look at the three.

"Oh, no! But we know him, and want to see him. I suppose some of the fellows are here?"

"No, sir. The whole party went out

man within. "No good hanging about here, and the boat's waiting. We can get back to Polpen in time for tea."

"Come on!" said Levison.

And the three St. Jim's juniors went back to the rock staircase, to descend to the boat in the cove.

Keeley, watching them from a cracked casement near the door, breathed hard and deep as they disappeared from sight. He turned back and crossed the old hall, and went down the flagged passage to the kitchen. Scaife and Hawes were in the kitchen, and they met him with looks of anxious inquiry.

"Three schoolboys, who know Wharton and his friends," said Keeley. "It's all right, I think. They came over in a boat from Polpen, knowing that Wharton was here."

"What rotten luck!" muttered Hawes.

"They're gone?" asked Scaife.

"Yes; gone back to Polpen. Nothing in it, I think," said Keeley. "They must have heard in Polpen that the Greyfriars boys were here, and came across to see them. That's all."

"They may come again," muttered Hawes.

Scaife breathed hard.

back into the bay, and that will give colour to the story you have to tell. Don't shiver, you fool—all is safe!"

But if Scaife could have read the thoughts of Ralph Reckness Cardew, he would not have felt that all was safe.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.**In the Toils!**

THE light's going!"

Bob Cherry spoke in a hushed voice.

The lantern was burning low and dim in the shadowed cave under the great cliff of Garth.

In the dying light the Greyfriars juniors looked at one another's pale faces.

For long, long hours they had been prisoners in the cave, and they had assailed the iron-studded door again and again, till at last they had given up the hopeless task. Echoes of the fall of masonry, the collapse of a part of the House of Pengarth, had reached their ears, and it came into their minds that their enemies were blocking up the secret passage on the other side of the door. If that was the case—and it seemed certain—it was useless to exhaust

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their strength on the thick, iron-clamped oak.

The juniors had left the spot, and gone along the cave. For some hours they had sought, in the light of the lantern, for some outlet—though with little hope of finding one.

And now the lantern was failing them. There was something like despair in the hearts of the Greyfriars juniors now.

No one doubted any longer that they were intended to perish in the black depths of the cavern, and the hope of escape was faint. Wharton had scanned the dark, subterranean stream, and he noted that the water was now at a lower level. The tide was running out in the bay of Polpen. At low tide, as he guessed, the connection with the sea was broken, and the salt-water stream became a lake in the cavern. It glimmered darkly in the failing light.

"All depends on the St. Jim's chaps," said Bob, in a low voice. "They're sure to come to Pengarth, from what Vivian says, and they'll surely be surprised not to find any of us there. If they give the alarm, and there's a search—"

"They're bound to, arter what I told Cardew," said Sir Jimmy.

"I think it's almost certain," said Harry. "Keeley and his confederates can know nothing of Jimmy having met Cardew, and told him the story—they cannot be on their guard there. I think there's a jolly good chance of a search being made."

"But—in this hidden den—" muttered Johnny Bull.

"We may be neverfully found here," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh quietly. "But while there is life there is hopefulness."

"As a last chance I shall try to swim out," said Wharton resolutely. "If I lose the way and—and don't get through, it's no worse than sticking here if we're not found. Those dastards mean us to die here to keep their rotten secret; whatever it is."

"We're not dead yet," said Bob, as cheerfully as he could. "The lantern's going, but we've still got the electric torches. They'll last some time. We may find a way out yet."

"I think there must be a way out, apart from the water-way to the sea, and the secret passage," said Wharton, knitting his brows. "This cave is used for something by those rascals, and, as far as I can see, it can only be some kind of smuggling. If there's a way out on the land side, that's the way they would take the stuff, after getting it landed at the House of Pengarth."

"But there's nothing here that we can see, and we've explored the place a good bit," said Nugent. "If they're running cargoes of brandy or tobacco, the stuff would take up a good deal of room, too. There would be kegs, and cases, and so on."

"It may be something else, not so bulky. It may not be smuggling at all, though I can't think of anything else," said Harry. "But, as they use the cave, I feel pretty certain there's a way out on the land side of the cliff. Let's hunt for it, at any rate."

"May as well," agreed Nugent.

Each of the Famous Five had an electric torch, but only one was turned on when the lantern burned out, for economy of light. The weary juniors—tired and hungry by this time—proceeded to renew their search of the winding hollows of the cave.

That there was some hidden entrance on the land side Wharton felt certain.

Only that could account for the fact that the hidden enemy who had played ghost was able to come and go in the House of Pengarth as he chose. Scaife and his companion, he was assured, had been almost continually on the spot during the stay of the juniors at the ancient house, in communication with Keeley; and they could not have used always the boat passage from the sea without having been observed. Neither was it likely that Scaife had passed weeks hidden in that dreary cavern. He had come and gone, and he could only have done so by some secret exit.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly.

Bob was in the lead, with the electric torch, and he had led the way into a narrow, tunnel-like fissure of the rock. He stopped suddenly, as the light gleamed upon an iron-bound sea-chest.

"We've jolly well found something," said Bob.

The juniors gathered round the chest. It was locked, and they had no means of forcing the lock. Johnny Bull tilted it up on end, and there was a sound of packages displaced inside the chest.

"There's something in it," said Bob. "I wonder what."

"Smuggled goods of some kind, I should think," said Harry. "It looks to me as if this may lead to the way out. If they're smugglers, as I believe, they land their stuff at Pengarth, or at high tide get it into the cavern in the boat. Then it's left here in this chest to be removed later on the land side. Let's get farther on."

The juniors followed the rocky tunnel, Bob Cherry flashing the electric light ahead.

For a long distance they followed the tunnel, their hopes rising as they advanced. They were conscious that the air was fresher here, and at every moment they hoped to see the gleam of daylight.

Bob Cherry halted suddenly.

"Sold!" he grunted.

He had stopped at a wall of rock. Harry Wharton took the light and examined the rocks that barred the way.

It was the end of the tunnel, but from this spot a vertical tunnel or shaft had extended upward, evidently to the top of the cliff. A rope ladder had probably been used for ascent and descent. But the vertical tunnel had been blocked by the rocks rolled into it from above. Wharton shut off the light of the torch, but there was no gleam of daylight through the piled rocks.

"We're done!" he said. "I'm pretty certain that this was the way out that they used; but they've blocked it as soon as we were shut in the cave. Let's get back."

The juniors returned wearily to the great cave. The faint hope was gone now. There was an outlet but it was blocked, and they were still hopeless prisoners in the cavern. They gathered again by the glimmering water in the cave, and a look of resolution grew on Harry Wharton's face.

"It's the only chance now," he said. "I'm going to try it, you fellows. If I get through—"

"You're not going to try it yet, old chap," said Bob. "We'll give Cardew a chance first. By Jove, I'm hungry!"

"Same here," said Johnny Bull.

"The samefulness is terrific!"

"After all, what can we expect from Cardew?" muttered Nugent. "They will spin him some yarn and turn him

away. He may never guess or suspect—"

"Hark!" breathed Bob.

From the dark waters winding in the hollows of the rock there came a sound—a sound that echoed eerily, the sound of a human voice. The imprisoned juniors started and listened with beating hearts. Was it their enemies returning, or—they caught their breath at the thought—was it help and rescue? Bob Cherry shouted, and his voice rang in thunderous echoes.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Cardew Leads!

DICK PENGELLY shoved off the boat from the rock staircase of Pengarth, and Cardew & Co. glided out on the shining waters of the cove. Levison and Clive looked inquiringly at Cardew.

"Back to Polpen?" asked Clive.

"No jolly fear!"

"Where then?" asked Levison.

"I promised Vivian to call on him this afternoon," yawned Cardew. "I'm goin' to keep my word."

"But—" said Clive puzzled.

"He's not at the house," said Cardew. "After what I saw, I was pretty certain he wouldn't be there, or the other fellows either. It was only necessary to make sure, and now we've made sure. But I'm goin' to call on the jolly old baronet all the same."

"I don't see how," said Clive. "If he's kidnapped, as you think, we'd better get to the police and tell them so."

"It sounds a bit of a tall story to tell the police so far," said Cardew.

"It does, and no mistake," said Clive.

"A pretty set of asses we should look if it turned out that they've gone tramping on the cliffs, after all!"

"Exactly! Besides, if a gang of rascals have put them away they may be in need of help at once, and it would take time to convince the bobbies at Penzance—if a chap could convince them, at all, which I'm not sure of," said Cardew lazily. "It's a case of St. Jim's to the rescue, dear men. Pengelly, old bird!"

Dick Pengelly looked at him.

"Don't hoist the sail," said Cardew.

"I'm sure you're a hefty man with the oars. I suppose you know this coast well?"

"Man and boy for sixty years I've knowed mun," said Pengelly.

"Good! Are there any caves along this stretch where the sea flows in at high tide?"

"Plenty!" said Pengelly. "There's the Spaniards' Cave, where a boat can row in for a good distance. It's close at hand, but—"

"But what?"

"You don't want to go there, zur," said Pengelly earnestly. "It's where many of the Spanish sailors were drowned in the old time, and their spirits haunt the cave. Men at sea have seen them and heard their voices, and there's many a man at Polpen has seen a spirit boat glide into the cave at high tide and it never came out again."

Cardew's eyes gleamed.

"That's the cave we want, then," he said. "Lend me your ears, Levison, I tell you I saw Vivian taken into a boat, which from the distance looked as if it rowed into the solid cliff. As it couldn't do that it must have rowed into a cave. And a big cave where the

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sea flows in and where ghosts have been seen and giddy phantom boats is most likely the cave we want, what?"

"If you're right!" said Levison thoughtfully.

"Oh, you can bank on that, old bean! I'm bringin' all the powers of my unusual intellect to work on this giddy problem," said Cardew airily. "Pengelly, old duck, row us into the Spaniards' Cave; I've got a special appointment with the ghosts there."

Pengelly rested on the oars.

"You think you'll find Vivian a prisoner in that cave?" asked Levison in a low voice.

"I think it's jolly likely," answered Cardew coolly. "They must have put him somewhere, and the boat went into the cave with him. The ghost business that's been seen there, shows that the rotters, whoever they are, have used the cave before. What are you waiting for, Pengelly?"

"I'd rather take you back to Polpen, gentlemen," said the old boatman, with a troubled look. "No man alive in these parts would row you into the Spaniards' Cave."

"But you will, old scout," said Cardew. "Cornishmen are afraid of nothin', I've heard, and you won't let three innocent youths go among the ghosts on their own. And I give you my word that the Spanish ghosts are no more dangerous than Spanish onions."

Pengelly made no answer, but he began to pull. The boat ranged along the cliffs to the yawning opening of a deep, dark cave. With a grim brow Dick Pengelly pulled into the cave, and Cardew recognised the bulging shoulder-like rock at the entrance which had shut off Sir Jimmy and his kidnappers from view that morning.

"This is the place," he said quietly.

"Sure?" asked Clive.

"Quite sure."

The boat floated on. The sun was sinking into the Atlantic now, and over the western waves came a stream of golden light. It shone into the cave, partly dispelling the gloom.

Pengelly rested on his oars again.

"You've seen the cave now, gentlemen," he said.

"Keep on!"

"The boat can't get much farther at low tide, and the tide's run out now, zur," said Pengelly.

"It was at flood when they brought Vivian in here," said Cardew to his companions. "They got farther than we can get. But we'll go on as far as we can. Keep going, Pengelly."

The old fisherman reluctantly bent to his oars again. The boat glided on into deeper gloom.

It stopped at last, the boat's nose bumping on a shelf of rock. The wet surface showed that the rock had been recently covered by water.

"Land here!" said Cardew.

The juniors left the boat.

Dick Pengelly eyed them in alarm. Cardew smiled at him genially.

"Wait there for us, old scout," he said. "We're going to do some giddy exploring."

"The tide's on the turn, zur," said Pengelly. "You'll likely be caught in the water when it comes in."

"Oh, we'll look out!"

Cardew took an electric-torch from his pocket and advanced up the cave. There were little pools of water in the hollows of the rock left by the tide when it went out, and festoons of

seaweed hung on the rocks. Cardew flashed the light to and fro.

The great cliff was honeycombed with fissures and caves branching off in almost every direction. In all of them were pools of water, showing that they were all flooded at high tide, some of them as deep as their rocky roofs.

"We could jolly easily lose our way here," said Clive, with an uneasy glance about him.

"Of course we could," said Cardew, looking back at the spot of daylight which showed the opening of the cave far behind. "After we lose sight of the daylight, old bird, I wouldn't give a brass button for our chances of finding our way out again."

"Well, we shall lose sight of it in a few minutes more."

"That's the finish for us," said Clive. "Not at all, old scout! When the tide comes in the sea joins up with this water, of course," said Cardew. "It was high tide when those rascals brought Vivian here. As we haven't seen the jolly old baronet so far, it's plain that they went farther on with him. We're stopped till next high tide; it won't be long now."

"Let's get back to the boat before it comes in and drowns us like rats in a trap."

"Good! But let's give a shout first," said Cardew. "It's possible, old ducks, that we've come far enough to be within hearing of the giddy baronet, and it would be only civil to give him a greeting as we're his merry visitors, you know."



Keeley's burly figure blocked the doorway. "Excuse me, young gentlemen," he said gruffly. "But I can't let you in, as you are strangers to me." And Black Keeley shut the door in the faces of the St. Jim's juniors. (See Chapter 8.)

"Quite so! Isn't it lucky that I came prepared?"

Cardew took a ball of twine from his pocket and fastened the end of the string to a point of rock. Then, as he advanced, he unrolled the twine.

"Simple but useful!" he said.

"Good!" said Levison.

The three St. Jim's juniors pushed on. A score of times they found themselves in "blind alleys" in the fissures of the rocky cliffs and tried back again. But they kept on resolutely, though two of them at least were thinking uneasily of the returning tide.

"Water!" said Cardew suddenly.

He stopped on the edge of dark, lapping water, that gleamed and glistened as he turned the light on it.

"Ass!" said Clive.

Cardew shouted, and his voice rang loudly through the hollows of the Garth Cliff.

"Hallo! Ho, ho, ho! Anybody at home?"

Thunderous echoes answered.

And then, faintly from the black darkness and in the distance, there came an answering call.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"That's Bob Cherry!" exclaimed Levison in great amazement. "I'd know that toot anywhere!"

Cardew shouted again.

"Hallo!"

Faintly from afar came the reply.

"Hallo! Help!"

A creeping stream of water splashed

"The Bullies of the Bombay Castle!"—read about them in the "Boys' Friend"!

round the feet of the St. Jim's juniors. The tide was coming in, and already there was an inch of water in the rocky passage.

"Time we got back to the boat," yawned Cardew; "we'll leave the twine, it will be a guide. We know where to look for the fellows now. Come on, my merry men, before we spoil the effect of the whole thing by getting drowned. Drownin' is a dashed uncomfortable way of peggin' out, and it spoils a fellow's clothes!"

And Cardew & Co. hurried back to the boat, with the water almost to their knees before they reached it.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Rescue!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry shouted again and again, but the answering calls had ceased. He stopped at last.

"That was Cardew shoutin'," said Sir Jimmy Vivian. "I know 'im! He's huntin' for us in the cave."

"Good old St. Jim's!" said Bob Cherry. "But why the thump have they stopped?"

"Anyhow, they know we're here," said Harry Wharton. "It's only a question of waiting now. They must have a boat, and the water may not serve. The tide's coming in."

He flashed the light on the subterranean stream. The water was rising at their feet.

"That's it," said Bob, with a nod. "The boat can only come through when the tide's at flood, the same as when they brought Vivian here. We've only got to wait."

The Greyfriars juniors waited, with beating hearts.

At their feet the waters murmured and swished, rising higher every moment, as the tide came surging in through the rocky channel from the sea. They waited and watched, their eyes on the dark waters, and one of the electric torches burning steadily as a guide to their rescuers.

Suddenly, from the blackness in the distance, a light shone.

It moved on the face of the dark waters, approaching them, and they knew that it was on board a boat.

The splash of oars came faintly echoing through the gloom.

"They're coming!" panted Nugent.

The light gleamed nearer.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" shouted Bob Cherry. He stood with the rising tide splashing about him, heedless of it.

"We're comin', dear old beans!" called back a voice from the unseen boat. "This place is like a jolly old labyrinth. Is young Vivian there?"

"Wot to!" yelled back Sir Jimmy.

"I'm 'ere, Cardew!"

"Tea ready?"

"Eh?"

"Didn't you ask me to tea?"

"Well, my 'at!" said the baronet.

"We've been to the house, but you weren't there!" called out Cardew's voice. "So we've looked for you. I hope you're pleased to see visitors?"

"The pleasuredness is terrific!"

"Never so jolly pleased in all our lives!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "This way—here you are!"

The boat bumped. Dick Pengelly, like a man in a dream, stared at the little crowd of Greyfriars juniors. Cardew had already explained to the old Cornishman how matters stood; but Pengelly had been very dubious, until

at last he saw the prisoners of the cave with his own eyes.

Several electric torches were burning now, and faces were bright and merry in the light.

"Come aboard, old nuts!" said Cardew. "It's all right, Pengelly, they're not giddy ghosts—they're warranted quite harmless. As you fellows don't seem to have any tea going, you'd better come back to Polpen with us, and we'll stand the tea, what?"

"We'll come anywhere you like out of this," grinned Bob Cherry. "Can't say how glad I am to see you chaps."

"And we're jolly glad to see you," said Levison. "Jump in!"

Harry Wharton & Co. stepped into the boat. When the six juniors were on board, Dick Pengelly shoved off again. The boat glided away down the water-tunnel.

Pengelly had carefully marked the way he had come; but, even so, it was not an easy matter to follow the winding way back to the Spaniards' cave. And Harry Wharton, as the boat glided on, realised how very little chance he would have had of getting through alive had he tried his desperate plan of swimming. There was not much doubt that the Greyfriars party owed their lives to the St. Jim's juniors, and, above all, to Ralph Reckness Cardew.

But the boat glided into the open cave at last, and, pulling hard against the incoming tide, out to the sea. Then the mast was stepped again, the sail hoisted, and the boat danced away in the sunset for Polpen. Harry Wharton & Co. had determined not to return to the House of Pengarth, until they could do so with ample help to secure the rascals who had doomed them to death in the cavern under the cliff.

In the red sunset the boat ranged up to the old stone quay at Polpen, and within ten minutes all the Cornish village was thrilling with the startling tale of the happenings at the House of Pengarth.

The "game" was up for Scaife and his associates, little as they dreamed it till the blow fell. Soon after nightfall a boat crossed the bay from Polpen, crammed with the Greyfriars and the St. Jim's juniors, and half a dozen sturdy and resolute Cornishmen. There was no more dread of the ghosts of dead Spaniards after the juniors had told their tale, and mortal foes had no terrors for the men of Polpen. Headed by old Dick Pengelly, and Mr. Tregellis, of the Rose Inn, they entered the House of Pengarth—and Scaife, Hawes, and Keeley, taken utterly by surprise, were secured before they could dream of resistance.

The remainder of that night the three rascals spent locked in a cellar of the Rose Inn, while a messenger went in haste to Penzance. Soon after dawn the police were on the spot.

The mystery of the House of Pengarth was a mystery no longer.

The search that followed revealed what still remained hidden of the secret. The sea-chest in the cave, broken open by official hands, proved to contain packages of smuggled opium and cocaine—and it was clear that Scaife and his associates had been carrying on that profitable and dastardly trade for years.

The foul drugs, small in bulk and great in value, had been run into Pengarth in fishing-boats from a yacht at sea, and placed in the chest in the cavern by Keeley. And on the landward side of the cliff there was a cot-

tage, tenanted by a supposed artist—Mr. Scaife himself—who frequently had business in London; and, by means of the tunnel, the deadly packages of smuggled poison were taken from the cave to the cottage, and thence conveyed by Scaife to the distant city for sale to his confederates there.

It was a great haul for the police, and Scaife, Hawes, and Keeley were set to prison for long terms.

The ghosts of the dead Spaniards ceased to haunt the House of Pengarth from that day.

Harry Wharton & Co. returned to the house, after the police had finished there, and Cardew, Levison, and Clive stayed some days with them at Pengarth. The haunted house was haunted no longer—the secret of Pengarth was no longer a secret—and the juniors gave no further thought to their terrible experiences, but proceeded to enjoy their holiday, which they did to the full.

And when the new term began at Greyfriars there was quite a crowd of Remove fellows in Study No. 1 to listen with bated breath to the story of the Secret of the Caves.

THE END.

(Don't miss next Monday's fine story, *chums*.)

RIVALS OF THE ROAD!

(Continued from page 16.)

There was a yell and crash, as Dick charged right into them, riding down the nearest, and stunning the other with a blow from his pistol.

The horse the captive had been bound to was bowled over, spilling its burden in the heather.

"Are you hurt?" cried Dick, swiftly cutting the captive rival's bonds, for they had bound his wrists with cords. "Rough work, sir, but there was no time to lose."

"Nay, I am sound enough," cried the highwayman, springing up, "thanks to your gallant rescue, sir. What of these fellows? Are they killed? Nay, only stunned, I see. That is well. I like not to kill a man who is but doing his duty."

"Nay," cried Dick, "they will be fit to ride home and nurse their bruised pates in an hour's time. And now, sir—he turned with a smile to his rival—"what do you say? Shall we cross our swords again and finish our dispute? I am ready. But if I may say it, I would like even better to ride in comradeship with such a brave companion. What do you say? Will you join me, and range the roads in my company, dividing the spoil?"

"Nay!" cried the other, holding out his hand, which Dick grasped firmly. "You have proved yourself the better man, and, but for you, I should be on my way to the gallows. I will not prey on the winnings of so gallant a comrade, and will leave to you the district you rightly claim. But some day, perhaps, I will return to beg a favour of you. Till then, good-bye!"

And, mounting his horse, and sweeping off his three-cornered hat with a courteous bow, Dick Langley's one-time rival galloped away into the night.

THE END.

(There is another ripping story of Galloping Dick next week. Look out for it!)

Don't forget—Monday is MAGNET day!



DEAD or ALIVE?

By

OWEN CONQUEST.

A well-known crook is wanted by the police, and on the eve of his arrest the body of a man answering to the description of the scoundrel in question is found at the foot of a high building, from the top of which it is alleged he has thrown himself. The police are firmly convinced that the "wanted" man has committed suicide, but Ferrers Locke thinks otherwise. Now find out who is right.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Suicide?

"TRAGEDY at Earl's Court!

"Suicide of Morton Judd!"

The newsboy's voice floated in from the street, and Ferrers Locke gave a slight start and looked up.

"Drake!"

Jack Drake was on his feet at once.

"Get me a paper—sharp."

In about three seconds Jack Drake was outside, in Baker Street, and in another second he had captured the newsboy.

He came back into Ferrers Locke's study with the evening paper.

"It's impossible!" said Ferrers Locke, as he took the paper, "I should have said that it was impossible, at least! Morton Judd was the last man in the world to take his own life."

"It's there, sir!" said Drake, indicating the head-line on the front page, "and—and considering how matters stood, sir——"

Locke shook his head.

"He was fairly cornered, sir!" said Drake. "His flat was watched by the police—after you had finished with the case, it was only left for Inspector Pycroft to get the warrant and nail him. There was a long stretch of penal servitude before him."

"That is true."

"You told me that Mr. Pycroft would have the warrant this afternoon——"

"That is correct."

"And Judd could not have got away, with the block of flats watched on every side."

"Also correct!" assented the detective.

"If he had tried to bolt they would have nailed him, without waiting for the warrant," went on Drake.

"Certainly."

"Well, he knew all that, of course," said Drake. "He knew he was cornered, and there was no chance of escape. I—I don't feel surprised, sir, that he threw himself from the window, and made an end of it."

Locke shook his head slowly.

"I am surprised," he said. "This is the last thing that I should have expected to hear of Morton Judd. He is—or was—an utterly unscrupulous swindler—the police have noted him for years, without being able to catch him tripping. His last fraud landed him—but I am convinced that he has a good deal of plunder safely locked away somewhere, in readiness for the bolt that he knew would have to come some day. I was prepared to hear that he had attempted flight—even to the extent of shedding blood in a fight for escape. But this——"

He shook his head again, and turned to the paper.

"Let us see what has happened, at all events," he said.

Ferrers Locke read the brief report aloud:

"A terrible tragedy took place this afternoon at Sheraton Mansions, Earl's Court. Mr. Morton Judd, the well-known financier, threw himself from the window of his flat on the fourth story, and was instantly killed. The police were immediately on the scene, and the body was identified by certain documents found in the pockets. We understand that Mr. Judd left a letter addressed to the coroner, written immediately before committing the desperate act. Any further details that reach us will appear in the stop-press column."

Ferrers Locke turned to the stop-press column and found another brief paragraph:

"It transpires that Mr. Judd was being watched by the police, and that Inspector Pycroft, of Scotland Yard, was on his way to Sheraton Mansions with a warrant for Mr. Judd's arrest, on a charge of extensive fraud."

Don't miss Locke's latest case, chums!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 312

Ferrers Locke laid down the paper. His brow was wrinkled in perplexed thought.

Drake smiled slightly. Even Ferrers Locke was not infallible. His absolute certainty that Morton Judd was not the man to escape by the easy road of suicide received a shock from the news of the financier's terrible death.

"A surprise for Mr. Pycroft, when he arrived with his warrant, Drake," said Ferrers Locke. "It closes his case in an unexpected way."

"Yes, sir! I may as well mark the case as finished, in the record, Mr. Locke."

"Not yet."

Drake raised his eyebrows.

"But it is finished now, sir, surely?"

"That I cannot tell, so far. But I am not satisfied, Drake. If I was mistaken in the character of Morton Judd, it is the first mistake of the kind I have made for many years. Call a taxi."

"You are going to Earl's Court, sir?"

"Yes—and you, if you like."

"Yes, rather."

Drake was puzzled, as he sat beside the Baker Street detective in the taxi, and it glided away through busy streets. More than once, on the way, they heard the newsboys calling the startling news. Morton Judd had made a prominent figure in the City, and his sudden and terrible death caused a sensation.

Drake asked himself what Ferrers Locke was seeking on the scene of the suicide. That he was loth to give up an opinion he had formed from careful observation, Drake could understand; but the facts stared him in the face. Morton Judd had escaped prison by the gate of death; nothing could alter that.

Ferrers Locke did not speak a word on the way to Earl's Court. He remained buried in profound thought, until the taxi drew up opposite the entrance of Sheraton Mansions.

A crowd had gathered there, drawn by morbid interest in the tragedy; and a constable stood at the entrance-hall, allowing no one to pass in but the residents in the block of flats.

Ferrers Locke's name was enough, however; and Locke and Drake passed through the crowd, and entered the hall of the mansions. The lift carried them up to the fourth floor, and they stopped at Morton Judd's flat.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Missing Key!

"YOU here, Locke?"

Inspector Pycroft shook hands with the Baker Street detective, and gave Drake a nod.

The portly inspector had a troubled look.

"I thought I would look in, Pycroft," said Ferrers Locke. "As I helped you to work up the case against Judd, I am naturally interested."

"Naturally," assented the inspector. "You can't see—it. It's been taken to the mortuary. I'll take you there, if you like, of course."

"I should like a look round here."

"No objection to that; I'm in official charge, of course," said the inspector. "I've been going through the place. A precious rascal Judd was—though I suppose one shouldn't speak ill of him now. There's plenty of evidence in his rooms of rascalities extending over ten years—once he was arrested it would

have been a lifer for him. I suppose that's why he did it."

"It would seem so," said Ferrers Locke. "Which was the room he leaped from?"

"The bed-room! Here it is."

It was a large, well-furnished bed-room into which the inspector showed Ferrers Locke and his companion. The window looked out from the back of the block of flats, over countless roofs.

Locke looked from the window.

Drake noticed that he bent his head and examined the broad stone sill with penetrating eyes. There were marks on the sill, as if the stone had been scraped.

Inspector Pycroft noticed the detective's occupation.

He smiled faintly.

"It's not a question of looking for clues this time, old fellow," he said.

"We know what's happened."

"We may not know all that has happened," suggested Ferrers Locke.

"The sill, as you see, is painted, and the paint has been scraped a good deal. It is worth while noting details."

"Even when they are superfluous?" smiled Mr. Pycroft.

"Even then, perhaps. The unusual is always worth noting. It is worth while to consider why a man, leaping from a window, should leave such very visible marks on the sill."

"Oh, that's easily accounted for; probably he hesitated a good deal before he could make up his mind to it," said the inspector. "May have crouched there for some minutes."

"Without being seen?"

"You can see that the window only overlooks lower buildings—it is not overlooked."

"Quite so. It would be unlikely that anything happening at this window would be observed from without," Ferrers Locke assented, with a glance from the window. "The other windows are the same, no doubt."

"No; the other windows look on the street with another big block of flats opposite. Anybody crouching on the other sills would certainly have been seen from some opposite window."

"Mr. Judd evidently selected his window with care. He did not want to be seen in the act."

"That is all immaterial, isn't it, Locke? He did it! That's where the body was picked up!" The inspector pointed down from the window. A narrow paved way ran at the back of the building, and even from the distance a dark patch could be seen on the pavement.

"A fall from this height must have had fearful results," said Ferrers Locke.

"You are right," Mr. Pycroft shivered a little. "He wasn't a pleasant sight—the head—pah!"

"He was not recognisable?"

"Not in the least—a mere heap. But my men guessed who it was, of course; and, of course, his clothes were known, and his papers, when they examined him."

"His clothes?"

"He was wearing the suit in which he had last been seen. His valet knows all his things, of course, and he was on the spot at once. This man, Dodson, knew him first, when he saw the body, by his clothes. He knew his watch and

chain and cuff-links, too, of course. But the papers in the pockets settled the matter. Letters in Judd's hand, and letters addressed to Judd—all sorts of personal papers."

"He left a letter for the coroner?"

"Yes; I have it here. I am making my official inventory, you know—that is one of the 'pieces.' You'd like to see it?"

"If I may."

"Look!"

The inspector spread the letter on a table. It was brief:

"All hope is gone. I know that I am to be arrested to-day—I know that I am watched. There is one way out, and I shall take it. I ask the pardon of all whom I have injured, before I go to my death."
"MORTON JUDD."

"That is Judd's hand-writing," said Ferrers Locke, with a nod.

The inspector stared.

"Of course," he said, "I know his fist well enough—I've got dozens of his letters here. Did you doubt it?"

"No! I was only curious to see the letters. That, of course, will be handed to the coroner."

"Yes; it was addressed on the envelope to the coroner. Anything else you wish to see, Mr. Locke?"

"Well, yes! The man Dodson—"

"He is in his room above; he lived here, and seems to have been Judd's only attendant. Of course, Judd was in the City every day, and generally dined in the West End. Dodson seems a good deal knocked over. He was out when it happened."

"Oh! He was out of the building?"

"Yes; Judd had sent him away. Dodson, of course, had no idea of his master's intention—he wasn't even aware that Judd was being watched. Judd evidently wanted him off the scene."

"No doubt."

"But why do you want to see Dodson, Mr. Locke?" asked the inspector curiously. "Of course, I'll call him if you want him, but I don't see the use."

"Put it down to curiosity," said Ferrers Locke.

"Come, come," said Mr. Pycroft, good-humouredly, "there is no room for your methods in this case, Locke. It is a plain case of suicide; and there are some dozens of witnesses to prove that Dodson was absent when it happened. Also, the bed-room door was locked on the inside, and we had to force it, as you can see."

"There is another door," remarked Ferrers Locke.

"That opens into Judd's study." Inspector Pycroft threw open the communicating door. "The study door was also locked on the corridor."

Locke stepped into the study.

"This is where Judd did his business, I suppose?" he remarked.

"Such business as he may have done here. Of course, he worked at his office in the City. I daresay he sat here a good many times working out the financial schemes by which he robbed the widow and the orphan," said the inspector.

Ferrers Locke examined the room. Drake stood silent and puzzled, and the inspector watched Locke with growing surprise and some irritation.

"If it isn't a case of plain suicide, Locke, I never saw one," he said.

"You wouldn't suggest that Judd was pitched out of the window by someone



The best of the batch—the MAGNET!

who disappeared afterwards through locked doors."

"No," said Ferrers Locke. "I am perfectly assured that Judd was not thrown from the window."

"Well, then—"

"You found the bed-room door on the corridor locked, and had to force it."

"That's so."

"And the study door on the corridor was locked also?"

"Yes."

"Both keys were in the locks?"

"The bed-room key was," said the inspector.

"But the study?"

"No, the key isn't in the lock. The door was locked, however, as it still is, if you choose to look at it."

"Odd!" said Ferrers Locke. "Morton Judd determined to leap from a window. He locked both the doors on the corridor, and from one door he removed the key, not from the other. Has the key been found?"

"It has not been looked for," said the inspector gruffly.

"It was not on the body?"

"No, that's certain; a list was made of everything found on the body."

"You have not found it in the rooms?"

"I haven't finished my examination yet; but, certainly, I shall not be very disappointed if I fail to find a door-key," said the inspector sarcastically.

"Then you will be wrong, Pycroft," said Ferrers Locke tranquilly. "Without being too confident, I venture to say that you will not find the key."

"Judd may have thrown it out of the window for anything I know—or care," added the inspector.

"At all events, I think you will not find it. And the key is of more importance than anything else in the case."

"In what way?"

"In the way of furnishing a clue."

"A clue? A clue to what?"

Ferrers Locke smiled.

"Ah! I must leave the rest to you, Pycroft. Only, if you will take a word of advice from an old friend, you will not overlook the importance of the missing key."

Inspector Pycroft looked very nearly exasperated.

"You have already said that you are assured that Morton Judd was not thrown from the window, Mr. Locke?"

"I am certain of it."

"You do not suspect that he was murdered?"

"I am assured that he was not."

"Then in the name of all that's absurd, what does a lost doorkey matter, and what do you mean by a clue?" demanded the inspector. "Hang it all, Ferrers Locke, I don't mind admitting that you've often looked through things that were too dark for me; you've helped us at the Yard a good many times. But this—"

"Well, well, let it drop, Pycroft," said Ferrers Locke good-humouredly. "Let me have a talk with the man Dodson."

And the inspector, with an expressive grunt, went to call Dodson.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Pycroft is Perplexed!

FERRERS LOCKE smiled slightly as he glanced at Jack Drake. Drake was silent, but his face expressed his wonder. That Ferrers Locke was working out a theory

was clear to Drake. But what that theory was, and what it implied, utterly perplexed him. If the Baker Street detective had no suspicion that Morton Judd had been murdered, what was he seeking to discover? To that question Jack Drake could find no answer.

Yet evidently the detective was seeking to discover something, and believed himself on the track of the discovery he sought.

Locke did not address his boy assistant. He was still scanning the room with searching eyes when Dodson, the valet, came in. Inspector Pycroft did not return with him. The inspector was evidently "fed up."

Dodson, a pale-looking man of middle age, saluted the detective respectfully. He looked troubled and worn, which

"For what reason?"

"He told me he would not need me again till the evening, and advised me to take a walk for a couple of hours. That was his way of putting it. I knew he wanted me to clear off, so I went."

"When was that?"

"About five o'clock."

"Where were you when the tragedy took place?"

"I had had a stroll, sir, and a chat in the newsagent's, and then I strolled round to the garage at the back. Mr. Judd kept his car there, and the chauffeur is a friend of mine. I was talking to the chauffeur when we heard the crash. The garage opens on that path behind the buildings. Mr. Judd crashed down within a dozen feet of the door."



The hand of the bandaged man whipped out of his pocket, and a revolver glittered in it. But Ferrers Locke was ready. His spring was like that of a tiger. The hand that held the revolver was forced upwards, and the bullet flew with a crash into the plaster of the ceiling. "The bracelets, quick!" panted the private detective. (See Chapter 4.)

was not surprising after his terrible experience of that afternoon.

"I wish to ask you a few questions, Dodson," said Ferrers Locke, with his keen eyes on the man's face. "You will answer them to the best of your ability, I am sure."

"Certainly, sir; I've nothing to hide!"

"Quite so! At what exact time did Mr. Judd fling himself from the window of his bed-room?"

"Six o'clock, sir. Several people have told me that they heard the hour striking just before he crashed down."

"He was seen to fall, then?"

"Not exactly seen to fall; but there were several people about, and the instant he crashed down he was seen."

"You were absent at the time?"

"Yes, sir. Mr. Judd had sent me out."

"So you were very quickly on the spot?"

"Yes, sir. A man—I know now he was a plain-clothes constable—was first. He'd been watching the place, as it turns out. I think I was the second to arrive. But there was a crowd in a few minutes."

"You recognised Mr. Judd at once, though you had had no idea that he intended to throw himself from his window?"

"None at all, sir. And as for recognising him, nobody could have done that—he was smashed too much for that. But I knew the suit of clothes he was wearing—a somewhat conspicuous pattern, sir. I had put those clothes out for him this very morning."

"So you knew it was Mr. Judd?"

"I guessed it was, sir. And then I looked up and saw that the bed-room

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THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 812.

window was open. But it was soon proved that it was Mr. Judd, sir, by the watch and chain, and seals, and cuff-links, and other things."

Ferrers Locke nodded.

"What did you do then?"

"I came into the building, sir, with a police-sergeant, to show him up to my master's rooms. But the doors were locked and we could not enter. When Inspector Pycroft arrived, the bedroom door was forced. Then my poor master's letter to the coroner was found on his bed-room table."

"Did you see the visitor who called on Mr. Judd this afternoon?"

Dodson raised his eyebrows.

"No, sir. Was there a visitor?"

"Yes. Doubtless he came after you left at five o'clock."

"It's likely enough, sir. Mr. Judd sometimes saw rather unusual people at his flat, and he has sometimes sent me out before. It was no business of mine, of course."

Drake's eyes were on his chief's face. How did Ferrers Locke know that there had been a visitor?

"You did not see the visitor leave, Dodson?"

"No, sir."

"How long after the tragedy was it that you came round to the front of the house and entered with the sergeant?"

"I suppose about five minutes, sir."

"Where was the hall-porter?"

From the adjoining room came the sound of a sniff. That sniff expressed Inspector Pycroft's opinion of this strange interrogation. Ferrers Locke did not seem to hear it.

"The hall-porter, sir?" said Dodson, evidently astonished by the question.

"I did not see him just then, sir."

"He was not on duty in the hall?"

"Now I come to think of it, sir, he came in just afterwards. He had run round the building to see what had happened, I suppose."

"No doubt. Where was the liftman?"

"I—I don't know, sir."

"Did you and the sergeant ascend by the lift?"

"No, sir; we had to come up by the stairs, as the liftman wasn't there; now I remember."

"Doubtless the alarm of the tragedy had called him away, too?"

"I suppose so, sir."

"Thank you, Dodson; that will do. You will be in your room if I want to see you again, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir."

"One word more—do you know where the key of this room is?"

"Isn't it in the lock, sir?"

"No it seems to be missing."

"I suppose Mr. Judd must have taken it out after locking the door on the inside, sir."

"On the inside?" repeated Ferrers Locke reflectively.

Dodson stared.

"Yes, sir. It's clear that he locked the doors on the corridor, in case he should be interrupted. He must have locked them on the inside, as they were found locked, and he had gone by the window."

"Ah! Yes, thank you, Dodson."

The valet retired, obviously puzzled. Inspector Pycroft looked through the communicating doorway from the bedroom after Dodson had passed out.

"Is that the end, Locke?"

"Not quite; I have some questions to ask downstairs. Perhaps you will come with me, inspector; you may find

the questions interesting, although at the present moment you suspect me of wandering in my mind," said Ferrers Locke with a touch of irony.

Mr. Pycroft coloured a little.

"Not so bad as that, Locke. But really—really, you know, I don't see the object of all this. Aren't we wasting time?"

"Possibly!" Locke shrugged his shoulders. "But you are a good fellow, Pycroft, and I want to save you from committing the biggest blunder of your career, if I can."

The inspector jumped.

"What! What did you say, Mr. Locke? Where does the blunder come in? What is there in this case that does not lie on the surface, I'd like to know?"

"Much!" said Ferrers Locke tranquilly. "But please yourself, Pycroft!"

He walked out into the corridor followed by Jack Drake. Inspector Pycroft stood staring after him like a man in a dream. But uneasiness was showing now through his official complacency. He started with a sort of jerk and followed Ferrers Locke to the lift.

The Baker Street detective pressed the button and the lift came gliding up from the ground floor. The trio stepped into it.

"You saw Mr. Judd after his terrible fall, I think?" Ferrers Locke remarked to the lift-attendant as they descended.

"Not more than a minute after, I think, sir. I ran round the corner when I heard them shouting."

"It was you who took up Mr. Judd's visitor this afternoon, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir."

Both Drake and the inspector started. Evidently there had been a caller at the dead man's flat.

"At what time was that?" asked Ferrers Locke.

The man considered.

"I suppose it was soon after five, sir."

"Dodson went out at five. Was it after that?"

"Oh, yes, sir, because I chatted a minute or two with Mr. Dodson before he went out, and it was at least a quarter or an hour later that the gentleman asked to be taken up to Mr. Judd's floor."

"Did you take him down again after his visit?"

"No, sir. They often come down by the stairs," explained the liftman. "Most people go up in the lift, but if it isn't handy they often walk down. I hadn't thought about him since taking him up."

"But being on duty at the lift, no doubt you noticed him come down by the staircase?"

"Well, there's a lot of people in these flats, sir, and I shouldn't notice one specially. I dessay a dozen people or more came down."

"Would you know the man again?"

The lift had stopped at the ground floor and the attendant opened the gates as he replied.

"Oh, yes, sir; I suppose I'd know Mr. Altamont anywhere."

"You know his name, I see?"

"He came here fairly frequently to see Mr. Judd," explained the liftman. "I suppose I've taken him up a dozen times or more—perhaps twenty times in the last few months. He did some work for Mr. Judd. Some sort of mining man, I believe, sir."

Ferrers Locke nodded and crossed

over to the portly hall-porter. That gentleman, having heard Ferrers Locke's name from the constable on duty at the entrance, was all attention at once.

"I think you were on the scene very soon after Mr. Judd fell from his window?" Locke asked.

"Very soon, sir," answered the porter. "I heard somebody shout that a man was killed and ran out at once."

"Naturally. By the way, a Mr. Altamont called on Mr. Judd this afternoon. No doubt you saw him?"

"Well, I couldn't be sure, sir. The liftman would know."

"Yes; but Inspector Pycroft wishes to know at what time the man left. Did you notice him leave?"

"Can't say I did, sir. But a lot of people pass in and out."

"Of course, if he did not leave till after the tragedy he would have found no one here to see him as he left," the detective remarked. "Both you and the lift-attendant had gone round to the back of the buildings, and no doubt everybody else was running in the same direction."

"That's very likely, sir."

Inspector Pycroft gnawed his lips. His impatience was difficult to suppress, and he had a lurking feeling that he was being made a fool of. But Ferrers Locke's warning words were ringing in his official ears and he did not interrupt. But he had given a jump when Locke stated that he, Inspector Pycroft, wished to know at what time Mr. Judd's visitor had left. The inspector did not take the slightest interest in Mr. Altamont, the mining man, who had called on Morton Judd that fatal afternoon.

Ferrers Locke looked at his watch.

"Dear me! We have kept our taxi waiting a whole hour, Drake. I think I shall send in a bill to your department, inspector. But we shall want the taxi now."

"Well good-bye, Mr. Locke!" said the inspector rather gruffly.

"You won't come?"

"Come? Where?"

"To call on Mr. Altamont."

The inspector stared at the Baker Street detective. Like a man dazed, he followed Locke out of the block of flats. But before they reached the waiting taxi the inspector halted.

"Look here, Locke, are you making a fool of me?"

"Not at all."

"Why are we to call on Altamont?"

"I think he has the missing key."

"How could he—and what does it matter, anyhow? You don't suspect Altamont of having had a hand in Judd's death?"

"Very far from that," answered Ferrers Locke.

"He seems to have called on Judd shortly before his suicide. Is that against the man?" said the puzzled inspector. "Judd may have had a dozen visitors to-day. He was under surveillance, but his callers were not interfered with. You can't suspect a man like Judd of being influenced into committing suicide—he was a man of iron. Great Scott!" The inspector broke off suddenly. "You say that Altamont has the key of the study door? You have a theory that Altamont remained till the moment of the tragedy—that he pitched Judd from the window—that it was murder and not suicide—and that he then let himself out, locked the door after him, and took away the key—"

Jack Drake gave a low whistle.

"You are getting near the idea," said Ferrers Locke, with a smile.

A special "Friendship" number next week!

"Then how do you account for Judd's letter to the coroner?" demanded the inspector. "You don't doubt that it's absolutely genuine, written by Morton Judd in his own hand?"

"Not in the least."

"Doesn't that exclude the theory of the murder of Morton Judd?"

"I am absolutely certain that Morton Judd was not murdered," answered Ferrers Locke.

"Then what are we driving at?" demanded Mr. Pycroft. "I can tell you, too, that this man Altamont stood to lose, not to gain, by Judd's death. I've come across his name, and some of his work, among Judd's papers. He drew up technical papers for Judd in his mining deals—just about keeping on the right side of the law. Only just about—he was an unscrupulous man, and knew how to make a swindling prospectus look genuine with a stack of technical flapdoodle. That's what Judd employed him for, and I fancy he paid him well. Altamont loses by his death—loses a good many fat fees."

"You forget, my dear fellow, that in helping you to work up the case against Judd, I came across Mr. Altamont," said Ferrers Locke quietly. "He was a man of Judd's own build, though very unlike him in features."

"What has that to do with it?"

Locke opened the taxi door.

"Come, inspector, you have known me long enough to trust me. Rely on me for once, and come with me to see Mr. Altamont."

Inspector Pycroft gave a grunt of protest; but he stepped into the taxi-cab, and Locke followed him in. Jack Drake sat beside the driver, and the vehicle glided away.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

An Amazing Revelation!

"**Y**ESSIR, Mr. Altamont's at home, but he can't see you."

The stout landlady made that statement to Ferrers Locke and his companions, in the narrow hall of the lodging-house at Hammersmith.

"He has had an accident?" asked Ferrers Locke. "I suppose he came in with his face rather damaged—covered with sticking-plaster, perhaps."

"Oh, you know about it, sir?" said the landlady. "Yes, it was very bad, and you'd hardly have known him, with his face done up like that, sir."

Inspector Pycroft wondered whether he was dreaming. The expression on Mr. Pycroft's plump face made Jack Drake smile; though he, in truth, was as mystified as the inspector by Locke's uncanny knowledge.

"But we really must see him, as he is going away so soon!" said Ferrers Locke.

Again the inspector gasped. But the landlady's next words showed that Locke's statement was correct.

"That's why he can't see anybody, sir—he's busy packing," she said. "He says he'll see you next week when he comes back."

"I am afraid," said Locke gravely, "that circumstances might prevent Mr. Altamont from returning next week, madam. Please show us to his room, and a few words through the door will convince him that he ought to see us, I think."

"Well, sir—" said the landlady, hesitating. She glanced at the official-looking Mr. Pycroft. "If it's a matter of the law—"

"It is, and very serious."

"Come this way, sir."

The landlady led the way up the rugged staircase. Ferrers Locke and the inspector followed, and Jack Drake brought up the rear. They stopped at the door of the bed-sitting-room occupied by Mr. Altamont. Locke turned the knob; the door was locked.

"Who's there?" snapped a voice within.

"My name is Locke," said the detective. "I wish to see you on rather important business, Mr. Altamont."

"Sorry—I can see no one now. I've had an accident and cut my face, and I'm in pain, and bandaged. Call another time."

Ferrers Locke did not answer that. He retreated a few paces, and then drove his powerful shoulder at the door. The flimsy lock gave way at the first shock, and the door flew violently open.

A shout of rage rang out from the room, as Ferrers Locke rushed in. A man with a bandaged face confronted him, his eyes blazing with rage.

"How dare you burst into my room! How dare—"

Altamont broke off as the portly, uniformed figure of the inspector filled the doorway behind Ferrers Locke. There was a shriek from the landlady outside.

"You'll pay for that damage you—you—"

"Madam, the damage shall be paid for twice over," said Ferrers Locke, without looking round. His eyes were fixed on Altamont, and Jack Drake, at least, knew that he was watching the man, to seize him in time if he attempted to produce a weapon.

"Locke, you're taking a lot of responsibility," gasped Inspector Pycroft. "We've nothing against this man. You're compromising me—compromising the Yard—"

Altamont had driven one hand into his pocket. He did not withdraw it. He kept it there, and it dawned on Drake that he was gripping a hidden revolver. But he spoke calmly.

"What does this mean? Who are you? What do you want?"

Drake scanned the man. He was of rather portly build, but what his face was like it was difficult to say. The lower part of it was patched with sticking-plaster, and most of the forehead and one cheek had disappeared under a bandage.

"We wish to ask you a few questions, Mr. Altamont," said Ferrers Locke quietly. "Are you aware that Mr. Judd committed suicide this afternoon by jumping from his bed-room window?"

"I have seen it in the evening paper."

"You called on Mr. Judd this afternoon?"

Altamont hesitated a brief instant.

"That is correct. I had to see him with regard to some mining plans. How does it concern you?"

"Is it not a little odd that Mr. Judd should wish to see you regarding mining matters so shortly before his suicide?"

"It was an old appointment—a week old. I stayed only a few minutes—Mr. Judd put off the appointment to next week. I can see now that he must have forgotten his appointment with me, and wished to get rid of a visitor."

Altamont breathed hard. "I demand to know what right you have to burst into my room and question me?"

"Your room?" repeated Ferrers Locke.

"The landlady will tell you that this

is my room, if she has not told you already!" snapped the man.

"Then there is some mistake," said Ferrers Locke blandly. "The landlady informed us that this was Mr. Altamont's room."

"I am Mr. Altamont."

Locke shrugged his shoulders.

"I do not think that is your name," he said gently. "At all events, you have been recently known by another."

"What do you mean? By what other?"

"Morton Judd!"

The bandaged man staggered for a second. The next his hand whipped out of his pocket, and a revolver glittered in it. But Ferrers Locke was ready.

His spring was like that of a tiger. The hand that held the revolver was forced upward, and the bullet flew with a crash into the plaster of the ceiling.

The next moment the revolver was wrenched away, and the man was on his back on the carpet, with Locke's knee on his chest.

"The bracelets, Pycroft!" said Ferrers Locke.

Mechanically Inspector Pycroft produced the handcuffs, and snapped them on the struggling man's wrists. Then Ferrers Locke rose to his feet. The bandaged man, helpless now, sat up dazedly. His eyes were fixed on Ferrers Locke with a glare of rage and hatred.

"Locke!" panted the inspector. "Who—what—whose this man? What does it all mean?"

"That man is Morton Judd!"

"But—"

"And you have arrested him," went on Ferrers Locke calmly, "on the capital charge—for the murder of Altamont, the mining engineer!"

"Locke!"

The Baker Street detective stooped over the handcuffed man, and removed the bandage from his head, and the patches of sticking-plaster from his face. A hard, grim face was revealed—a face that made Inspector Pycroft start.

"Morton Judd!" he breathed.

"The—the dead man!" muttered Drake. "Oh, I see now! That was his trick to escape—"

For a good two minutes Inspector Pycroft stood silent, staring at Morton Judd. It took the portly inspector that space of time to assimilate this new and amazing idea. Then he grunted, dropped his official hand on Morton Judd's shoulder, and lifted him to his feet.

"I have a warrant for you, Mr. Judd, for fraud," he said. "It will answer the purpose, though it's a bigger charge you'll have to face. And I warn you that anything you may say—"

Judd interrupted him savagely.

"That's enough! The game's up, and I know it! I'm game to face it out! That's enough!"

"You'll lend me your taxi, Mr. Locke?"

"Take it," said Ferrers Locke.

And Inspector Pycroft drove away with his amazing prisoner in great satisfaction—and did not remember till considerably later that Ferrers Locke had kept his word, and saved him from the biggest blunder of his official career.

Ferrers Locke walked away with Jack Drake, after a constable had been placed in charge of Altamont's room. A five-pound note left in the landlady's hard hand consoled that good dame for the dramatic happenings in

her establishment. Drake looked up at the Baker Street detective as they walked towards Knightsbridge.

"I understand now," he said. "But—"

"Now you know why 'I looked for clues, in a case that was apparently clear as daylight, Drake,' said Locke with a smile. 'Morton Judd had determined to escape and to disappear. His suicide saved him from all danger of pursuit. But there could not be a suicide without a body. The man was an utterly callous villain. Evidently he had picked out Altamont as his destined victim because the man resembled him in build. That was sufficient for his purpose, as the crash from the high window battered the unhappy man beyond all recognition.'"

"The awful villain!" said Drake, with a shudder.

"He made the appointment with Altamont, and the man called on him," went on Locke. "Doubtless he was stunned by a blow from behind in Judd's study—perhaps from the butt of that revolver he was so keen on attempting to use on me. Dodson had been sent away—the doors were locked. The cool scoundrel stripped his victim, placed his own clothes upon the body, with identifying documents in the pockets, and hurled the dead or insensible man from the window."

"And the scraping on the sill—"

"That was done in pushing the body out. A man leaping out would scarcely have scraped the paint so effectively. But pushing a heavy body out was another matter—and I fancy that the watch-chain or seals scraped on the paint."

"But, you suspected before you saw—"

"I suspected a trick," said Ferrers Locke. "Morton Judd, from what I knew of him, was not the man to give in while the possibility of a struggle remained. He was unscrupulous and remorseless. The scraped paint on the window-sill was my first clue; and then the fact that the man had chosen the only window that could not be overlooked. The missing key settled the matter in my mind. A man locking the doors to prevent interruption while preparing to take his own life would have

no object in removing the key from the lock. And where was the key?"

Drake nodded.

"But a man who had thrown a murdered fellow-creature from the window had to make his escape as the next step," said Locke. "He let himself out into the corridor by the study door, locked it behind him, and, of course, took away the key. If he had left it, it would have betrayed the whole scheme. Dressed in Altamont's clothes, he left the flat. Doubtless he counted on the alarm of the suicide drawing everyone round the corner to where the body lay. At all events, he had to take his chance of that—and he could hold his handkerchief to his face as he went out, if anyone happened to be on the stairs or in the hall."

"And then—"

"While everyone gathered round the body, Morton Judd walked out of the block of flats, in Altamont's clothes. Two or three minutes later the place was swarming with people—but he was gone by then. He had laid his plans with a coolness and precision that was almost fiendish. Once clear of the place, he came to the lodging-house at Hammersmith—as Altamont. Now you know why I mentioned to the landlady that he had met with an accident, and suggested sticking-plaster. He could not, of course, let Altamont's landlady see his features plainly. He was about Altamont's build, and wore Altamont's clothes, but his features would have betrayed him. A pretended accident averted the danger."

"But he could not have stayed long as Altamont, where the man was known," said Drake.

"He did not intend to do so. His first thought was to get into cover, which he effected by installing himself in Altamont's lodging. But he would not have remained longer, I think, than to-night. He would have left to-night or to-morrow—as Altamont—and doubtless had already arranged some quiet refuge in the country, where he could discard the bandages and lie low while he grew a beard, or assumed some other disguise."

"But if he had fled without going to Altamont's lodging at all—"

Locke smiled.

"I had that possibility in mind; and

it would have made the chase longer: but I did not think so. Altamont left his lodging intending to return—and if he had failed to return, his absence would have been noted, and before long have been communicated to the police. The disappearance of Altamont would have coincided with the suicide of Morton Judd—a coincidence that Judd was naturally very anxious to avoid. He avoided that danger, of the police being set searching for Altamont, by turning up at the lodging as Altamont, and informing the landlady that he was going away for a time."

"I see!" assented Drake. "After that, naturally, Altamont would not be missed."

"I think it will prove," added Locke, "that Altamont was to some extent his confederate, and that what he intended to take with him in his flight was already placed in the Hammersmith lodging, with Altamont's connivance. Probably the wretched man called on him at the flat in Earl's Court as his confederate—little dreaming of the terrible part Judd secretly designed him to play. He made use of the man up to a certain point, and then—"

Drake shuddered.

"And if you had not taken a hand in the case, Mr. Locke—"

Ferrers Locke shrugged his shoulders.

"A dead man would have been buried under the name of Morton Judd," he said. "The letter to the coroner was a clever stroke—it satisfied the inspector, and would have satisfied all others, I imagine. The man did not leave a loophole—or scarcely one. But the best-laid schemes of mice and men go wrong at times. Morton Judd will pay for his crime, and Inspector Pycroft will score another triumph, and"—Locke smiled—"and forget that Ferrers Locke had a hand in the matter at all. But that matters little, so long as that monster of wickedness pays the penalty."

THE END.

(Next week's splendid story of the great detective is entitled "Rogues of the Turf!" Don't miss it! NOW GET BUSY ON THE EXTRACTS FROM THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD," BELOW!)

HOW I SHOULD FILL "THE ANNUAL."

What do you suppose would happen if Billy Bunter, for instance, or Bolsover Major, had the handling of the "Holiday Annual"? Read the startling schemes outlined below.

BOB CHERRY:

If I were the editor of the "Holiday Annual," I should run it on exactly the same lines as at present. I honestly don't consider there is any room for improvement. There is not too much of this, or too little of that. Everything fits in splendidly. I should not dream of departing from the present editorial policy.

BILLY BUNTER:

If I was summoned to Fleetway House, London, and the Editor said to me, "Arise, William! We hereby appoint thee editor of the 'Holiday Annual,'" do you know what I should do? I should

get about two years' issues of my wonderful paper, "Billy Bunter's Weekly," and fill the "Annual" with them! What a vast improvement that would be! I have no grudge against the present style of the "Annual," but I wish Mr. Frank Richards and the other writers would learn how to spell korrekctly!

BOLSOVER MAJOR:

If I had to plan out the next issue of the "Holiday Annual," I would kick off with a long complete story of my own, entitled "Percy Pugg—Prizefighter!" Then I should have an article on pugilism, illustrated with photographs of myself in various fighting attitudes. The rest of the volume

would be taken up with stories, poems, and chatty paragraphs dealing with ringcraft. I'll guarantee that the "Annual" would be sold out within twenty-four hours!

DICK PENFOLD:

I really think I might do worse than fill the "Annual" with my verse. I'd use a barrel full of ink, And pints of midnight oil, I think. And when at last the book came out, It would be grand, without a doubt. Fellows would vote my ripping rhymes The finest feats of modern times! Even a bulldog, or a spaniel, Would start "devouring" "Penfold's Annual!"

DICKY NUGENT:

I wish they would let me edit the "holliday annual"; it would be Jolly Fine. I should have a story about deadwood dick, and follow it up with a story about bufferlo bill. Then I should have with a tail of robbin hood. There would a tail about dick terpin, and follow on

(Continued on page 28.)



A Bright and Breezy Ballad. By DICK PENFOLD.

We heard our plump old porpoise say,
"The 'Holiday Annual's' out to-day!
If only I can get some cash,
Down to the village I shall dash,
And buy that volume, bright and breezy.
Alas! I'm worried and uneasy,
My postal-order's gone astray,
And the 'Holiday Annual's' out to-day!"

"Come, cheer up, Buntie!" said Tom Brown.
"I'm going to lend you half-a-crown."
And Bunter, with a beaming face,
Clasped generous Tom in close embrace.
The silver coin was handed over,
And Billy Bunter was in clover.
"I hope more loans will come my way,
For the 'Holiday Annual's' out to-day!"

Then Skinner gave a choking sob,
And parted with a brand-new bob.
And Inky then subscribed a tanner
In quite a kind and gracious manner.
Two others gave a bob a-piece,
"Why, miracles will never cease!"
Said Bunter. "I've enough to pay
For the 'Holiday Annual'—out to-day!"

He tore away at breathless speed,
Voices and shouts he failed to heed.
He cannoned into Mr. Prout,
And winded him, without a doubt.
"Come here at once!" the master cried,
He meant to tan the culprit's hide.
But Bunter yelled, "I cannot stay!
The 'Holiday Annual's' out to-day!"

Although not strong, like Mr. Sandow,
Nor yet an athlete, like Dorando,
Old Bunter sprinted like a hare,
And passers-by all stopped to stare.
He knocked a milk-churn in the road,
White rivers down the highway flowed.
"Sorry!" he gasped. "Can't stop to pay!
The 'Holiday Annual's' out to-day!"

He leapt a hedge, he cleared a stile,
He raced like mad for half a mile.
He seemed to have a constitution
Like the old gent who swallows
Kruschen.
On, on he sped, with nimble feet,
Until he reached the village street.
"Hi, stop!" he heard the bobby say.
"I can't—for the 'Annual's' out to-day!"

He saw a tuckshop on his right,
His mouth was watering at the sight.
A window, stacked with topping cakes,
The sort that Mrs. Mimble makes.
Assorted pastries, row on row,
And juicy, jammy "nuts of dough."
"Into that shop I dare not stray,
For the 'Holiday Annual's' out to-day!"

THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL!



By HARRY WHARTON.

SEPTEMBER comes but once a year,
and when it comes it brings good cheer—in the shape of the "Holiday Annual."

This delightful volume, packed from cover to cover with stunning stories by famous authors, and splendid sketches by sterling artists, is now on sale!

The "Holiday Annual" is no stranger to us. It has appeared for several years past. The great grievance is—judging by the letters I receive on the subject—that it doesn't appear every month, as the "Holiday Monthly." But that, of course, while highly desirable, is not humanly possible.

Our authors and artists devote the

At last he reached his destination,
And stood in pools of perspiration.
The little man who kept the shop,
Said, "Want the MAGNET, or the 'Pop'?"

"Nunno!" gasped Bunter. "Not at all!"

Nor any paper on your stall.
I'll tell you why I came this way—
The 'Holiday Annual's' out to-day!"

"Six shillings, please!" the man exclaimed,

And Bunter's cheeks with anger flamed.

"I helped to write the blessed book.

Turn over all the leaves, and look!

So sell it me for half-a-crown,

Or one-and-six—I'll pay cash down!

Six bob I cannot, will not pay,

Though the 'Holiday Annual's' out to-day!"

The man was firm, and would not budge,

So back to school did Bunter trudge.

He'd paid six shillings, on the nail,

Hopes of reductions all did fail.

But when he sat, all hot and muddied,

And read the volume in his study,

His joy and rapture were untold:

Said he, "It's worth its weight in gold!"

cream of their talent to their "Holiday Annual" work. They save themselves specially for it, so to speak. They would not dream of giving anything but their very best to the "Annual." Thus it is that this six-shilling volume is the finest treat any boy or girl can possibly have. And he or she who misses such a bumper feast of fun and fiction is indeed to be pitied.

In this special issue of the "Greyfriars Herald," we mean frankly and fearlessly to sing the praises of the "Holiday Annual." We can't praise it too highly. We can't extol it more than it deserves. It is a work to be proud of. The Greyfriars fellows love it, and so do their rivals and chums of St. Jim's and Rookwood. For we are all in it—the Famous Five of Greyfriars, Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's, and Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood. There are stories about us, and bright, breezy verses about us, and clever sketches which depict us in various scenes, both serious and comic.

Three cheers, and three times three, for the jolly old "Annual"! I'll guarantee it won't rest idly on anybody's bookshelf, collecting cobwebs! It will be read in season and out of season—on the golden sands in summer, and around the glowing fireside in winter. The stories are of the type that can be read over and over again, without any fear of staleness or boredom. It's a great work, is the "Annual"—a work that will endure and remain ever fresh in the memory.

Have I succeeded in whetting your appetites? If so, hustle along to your newsagent, and call upon him in joyous tones to produce the "Holiday Annual" for 1924!

HARRY WHARTON.

A feast of fun and mirth—MAGNET Supplements!

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HOW I SHOULD FILL "THE ANNUAL."

(Continued from page 26.)

also be a long pirate story, written by Me, all about the cut-throats dogs of the spanish main. The "holiday annual" would be packed with thrills if i ran it. of corse, i should raise the price of the volume to ten bob, so as to get a good prophet.

ALONZO TODD:

I should fill the "Holiday Annual" with the sane, sound, and sensible precepts of my Uncle Benjamin. Nothing of a frivolous or mirth-making nature should appear in its pages. I feel sure Uncle Benjamin would readily give me his assistance in the task—especially if I paid him at the rate of half-a-crown a word for his contributions!

LORD MAULEVERER:

I should fill the "Annual" with blank pages, begad! That would be a less exhausting task than filling it with stories and articles. Besides, it would be jolly sensible, because if the volume was filled with blank pages, fellows

would be able to use it as a scrap-book or a stamp album!

WUN LUNG:

Me fillee the "Holiday Annual" with lots of lovely stories about my native countree. There would be thrilling picture on cover of a Chinese chopping off another Chinese's headee. All the stories would be written in Chinese, too. The English readers would not savvy, but the boys in China would like it muchee-muchee!

THE HEAD:

If I were invited to fill the "Holiday Annual" I should do so with selections from the works of all the great classical writers. Then it would prove a most instructive volume, of vast educational value. (Unfortunately, though, nobody would buy it!—Ed.)

NOW TROT ALONG TO YOUR
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OF

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"HOLIDAY ANNUAL" SNAPSHOTS!

By BOB CHERRY.

I have been graciously permitted to steal a glance at the contents bill of "THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL" for 1924. The "ANNUAL" will be on sale by the time you read this. But, of course, I am writing several weeks in advance.

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Now for the stories. That cheery trio of famous authors, Frank Richards, Martin Clifford, and Owen Conquest, is well in the limelight. Each of these genial gents has written a long complete story, and each of them has striven to make it a masterpiece. The Greyfriars yarn is packed with thrills, and the long stories of St. Jim's and Rookwood are absolutely tip-top.

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