

THE OUTCAST OF THE REMOVE!

THIS WEEK'S GRAND EXTRA-LONG SCHOOL STORY.

No. 850. Vol. XXV. Week Ending May 24th, 1924.

The Magnet 2^d

Library

of
School & Detective Stories.

EVERY
MONDAY.



BULSTRODE IS NOT WANTED!

"EXPELLED" BY HIS FORM-FELLOWS!

(A dramatic incident from this week's powerful story of the Chums of Greyfriars.)

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





Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his chums. Write to him when you are in trouble or need advice. A stamped and addressed envelope will ensure a speedy reply. Letters should be addressed "The Editor," THE MAGNET LIBRARY, The Amalgamated Press (1922), Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

"THE IRON HAND AT GREYFRIARS!"

By Frank Richards.

NEXT Monday's story will rank as one of the finest yarns ever put before MAGNET readers. We see a startling change at the old school when Dr. Locke collapses through overstrain and worry and is ordered away into the country to recuperate. His place is taken temporarily by a new Head—a regular tyrant and martinet. And Dr. Sterndale loses no time in moulding the discipline of the school to his own way of thinking.

There are stormy times at Greyfriars, and "birchings" and "waitings" become the order of the day. Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, attempts to put matters right. He gives Dr. Sterndale the "tip" that he is going the wrong way to work with the pupils of Greyfriars in general and the Removites in particular. Dr. Sterndale, however, is not grateful for the advice, and as good as threatens to sack the Remove master for his "gross impertinence."

The atmosphere at Greyfriars becomes tense with indignation and rebellion, and at last Dr. Sterndale oversteps the bounds. Law and order are cast to the winds. Chaos reigns supreme, and Dr. Sterndale is taught a much needed lesson.

There is an unexpected ending to this fine treat, boys, which I will leave you to discover for yourselves. Don't forget the title:

"THE IRON HAND AT GREYFRIARS!"

and order next Monday's MAGNET without delay.

"THE KNIFE OF CHINA JOE!"

That is the title of the next complete story in our thrilling series of detective tales. Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake, in their quest of the purple sandals, take the trail to North Vancouver. But these sandals are as elusive as the rascally Dr. Kruse himself. Whilst in Vancouver Ferrers Locke drops upon as pretty a mystery as it has ever been his lot to solve, and the mystery has a very significant bearing on the purple sandals. Don't miss this coming story, boys, or you will be missing something really great.

Readers will appreciate the extra length of the Greyfriars story in this issue even though it has necessitated holding over—until next week—the buccaneer story originally billed for this issue. The title of this story is:

"POMPEY THE GREAT!"

It is a thrilling complete story of the good old days when the black flag of ocean outlawry flew at many a mast-head. These magnificent stories are going like hot cakes; letters reach me

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every day in which the writers beg me to publish some more "old-time stuff." If the mail bag continues to bring such requests I shall have to punt round among my authors and see what can be done. Have you written me on the subject? If not, send me a postcard saying whether or not you are in favour of these romances of the days of our forefathers.

"LAUGH AND GROW FAT!"

A good maxim this, and one that can be applied to our "Herald" supplements. Next Monday's number contains plenty of laughs; Harry Wharton & Co. have a happy knack of treating difficult subjects in a light and breezy manner. "Laugh and the world laughs with you—weep, and you weep alone." But there's never any occasion for tears when you are holding a copy of the "Herald" in your hands.

GETTING BUSY.

There are few things so apt to get frayed at the edges as the spirit of energy. There is no special fault here. It is a phase of human nature. After a bout of work comes the disposition to look round and contemplate all the beauties of achievement. But where there is work to be done it is best to weigh in right away. You cannot beat the counsel of General Stonewall Jackson when he had to deal with a fussy officer who asked in what direction he was to employ his detachment. "Go just wherever you like," said the general. "There's plenty of good fighting all down the line." The same with work.

There is always tons of first-class work waiting. No matter about its not being precisely the kind of work you fancy. It is work!

MORE VENTRILOQUISM!

A keen MAGNET reader writes as follows: "I would like the stories even more if Billy Bunter's ventriloquism were introduced a little more frequently, as he is the only boy at Greyfriars who can use it." This is a rattling fine notion, but it means more trouble, for the purpose particularly. Bunter has landed himself in pecks of worry because of his exhibitions of the art of voice throwing. Mr. Quelch has ere this been mystified, and then intensely exasperated, and you cannot blame the popular Form master for feeling irritated. Bunter has often shown himself a bit too clever, but now, of course, the fat and funny fellow will have to start again, and risk the swishes on his good right hand.

FROM A LONELY FARM!

Many chums will be interested in a letter to hand from Pat Halford, "Killarney," Box 104, Ladysmith, Natal, South Africa. This correspondent is a keen Magnetite, and, living on an isolated farm, he wants to hear from others who are as keen as he is on the Companion Papers. Owing to his absence on active service he failed to get many of the copies. My South African chum says in addition that he would like a regular correspondence exchange in the MAGNET. It is a good notion. But to carry out this idea properly you want a good many pages each week, so that notices can be put through at once. What do others think?

CIGARETTE PICTURES.

Collectors of cigarette pictures must make sure to obtain the really splendid series NOW BEING GIVEN AWAY FREE by our merry, coloured Companion Paper, "Jungle Jinks." These beautifully-coloured pictures will enable you to make your own cigarette cards. The pictures are capitally produced, and show all kinds of wild animals. It would be a pity to miss this treat, for, without a doubt, the pictures will make the finest "Jungle Gallery" ever known.

GOING ON FOR EVER!

A real cheerio letter reaches me from St. Peter's, South Australia. My chum is an Aussie digger, and he cannot say more than he does. "I hope," he writes, "that the MAGNET will go on for ever, increasing in fame for its dinky stories and bonza serials." Bunter he considers a greedy little pig who absolutely spoils some of the tales. A remark like that just means that Bunter is winning all the way. For the Owl is there to cause trouble and upset the apple-cart. My correspondent wants to see the Famous Five out in his country, but I am afraid that is imposs.

AMATEUR JOURNALISTS, PLEASE NOTE!

Wm. Clements, 4, Alfred Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, tells me that he wishes to hear from those readers who are keen on amateur journalism. I gladly publish his request, as this correspondent has done much good work in this line, and the more amateur journalists get into touch with each other the better.



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JUNGLE JINKS

Every Thursday, 2D

Your Editor.

George Bulstrode, one-time Captain of the Remove, thinks that it is high time he held the reins of office again. He is given a chance of making an "ass" of himself, but Bulstrode's folly doesn't end there. What he cannot obtain by fair means he attempts to get by foul. One step on the downward path and Bulstrode finds himself fast in the toils, unable to clamber back to safety, and the object of the scorn of his fellow Removites.



The Outcast of the Remove!

A Magnificent New Long
Complete Story of the
Chums of Greyfriars.

Told by Popular
FRANK RICHARDS

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bulstrode Cuts Up Rusty!

"PENNY for 'em!"

Tom Brown of the Remove made that remark, looking across at George Bulstrode in Study No. 2.

Brown had just finished writing out an impot for Mr. Quelch, and so had only just become aware of his study-mate's demeanour. Bulstrode, who was not often given to brooding, was standing by the window with his hands thrust deep into his trousers-pockets, looking out unseeingly into the sunny quadrangle.

Bulstrode's face, in contrast to the bright weather, was dark and overcast. He seemed to be deeply immersed in his own thoughts.

He gave a start when Brown spoke, and swung round.

"Eh?" he exclaimed. "Did you speak?"

"Penny for 'em!" repeated Brown, with a grin.

"For what?"

"For your thoughts, old chap!" said his study-mate. "Wherefore the worried look and furrowed brow? Anything wrong?"

A hard glint came into Bulstrode's eyes.

"Yes," he muttered, between his teeth. "Something is wrong, I've been thinking—about the cricket. The season has only just started, of course, but things look like getting into a rotten state!"

Tom Brown looked curiously at him.

It was quite unlike George Bulstrode to talk in this strain.

The Remove Cricket Eleven were certainly not quite up to their full form, and one or two matches had been lost, but Tom Brown was surprised that Bulstrode should seem to take matters so deeply to heart.

Bulstrode was not a very prominent member of the Remove, although once—long ago—he had been Form captain. That was before Wharton's arrival and rapid rise to popularity. In the old days, Bulstrode's captaincy of the Remove had been marred by his tendency to bullying, and it had been that

trait in his character that had gone so much against him when the Remove had been asked to choose between him and Wharton.

Wharton had undoubtedly made a more capable captain than Bulstrode; he had that personality and inborn power of leadership that the other lacked. As time went on Bulstrode had managed to live down his old resentment of Wharton, and certain of the bad streaks in his character had become forgotten. He had come to take a back seat, somewhat, in the affairs of the Form, so that Bulstrode's sudden concern about the cricket took Brown by surprise.

Bulstrode, although a member of the cricket club, was not one of the regular players in the eleven.

"I don't think there's anything very seriously wrong with the team, Bulstrode," Tom Brown said. "It's true the team's a bit off colour, but—"

"But it's time we had a change in the captaincy!" broke in Bulstrode passionately. "Wharton ought to give up this season, and let somebody else have a go. He's stale! The team's stale! Every season we have the same old players—all of them pals of Wharton. That's what riles me!"

"Oh!" said Tom Brown rather blankly.

Bulstrode brought his fist down heavily on the table, and so hard was the concussion that the inkpot gave a jump, and a flood of blue-black liquid surged all over the neatly-written imposition.

Tom Brown gave a howl of wrath.

"You frabjous idiot! You've mucked up my impot! You—"

"Never mind that!" said Bulstrode impatiently. "Quelch won't take any notice—he's used to smudges. I've been thinking things over—"

"Br-r-rrr!"

"Wharton's had a jolly long innings as captain of the Remove, and the Form needs a change!" said Bulstrode, in a harsh voice. "The Form wants bucking up in everything—not only in cricket. Wharton's rotten favouritism is keeping

all but his own particular pals out of the limelight—"

"Oh, rats!" retorted Tom Brown warmly. "Who's put this giddy bee in your bonnet, you ass? Wharton's all right, and the Remove isn't exactly romping down to the bow-wows, so far as I can see. The fact that Wharton's friends happen to be the best chaps in the Form makes it look like favouritism when he puts them in all the big events, but Wharton acts for the best—I know that. What's making you cut up so rusty, Bulstrode, anyhow?"

Bulstrode's eyes glittered.

"I'm fed-up—fed-up with the way things are going on!" he rapped. "Wharton's too high and mighty! It's Wharton this, and Wharton that, and chaps who have been in the Form longer than him, and are more entitled to a say in matters, get shoved back. It isn't fair! I'm the oldest fellow in the Form, with the exception of Bolsover, and I've been at Greyfriars the longest. Yet I'm looked upon as a mere nobody now—when I used to be Form captain. Wharton has promised me a place in the eleven for the Highcliffe match on Wednesday; I am expected to bow and scrape to him, and think myself lucky if I get a game now and again in the team!"

"I consider myself as good a cricketer as any of the others, and there are plenty of other chaps who are turned down regularly by Wharton who are able to give a show equal to any of Wharton's chosen pals. Something ought to be done!"

"You get as much of a show as anybody, Bulstrode. You usually played goal in the footer matches—"

"Only when Hazeldene was too jolly unfit to play!" exclaimed Bulstrode angrily. "That smoky, unsteady worm is another of Wharton's pets. During the footer season I often had to stand down to make room for Hazeldene. Wharton's orders, you see! And now I see he's trying to pitchfork Hazeldene into the cricket team, because Marjorie Hazeldene has asked him to do so. I suppose! Hazeldene wouldn't get such

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favours shown him, only that he happens to have a pretty sister at Cliff House who's pally with Wharton and his clique. The other fellows know what is going on, and I can't imagine why on earth a row hasn't been made about it before. Somebody's got to start a movement against Wharton, and I'm going to be that somebody!"

Tom Brown shrugged his shoulders and took up his impot, which he had carefully blotted.

"Go ahead, Bulstrode, if you must raise a shindy," he said. "But you'd better be careful that you don't get it in the neck!"

"Bosh! The whole Form—Wharton's pals excepted, of course—will back me up when I do start!"

When Tom Brown had gone Bulstrode took a letter from his pocket and read it through, his brows contracted and his lips set in a hard, thin line.

The letter had arrived that afternoon, and was from an uncle from whom Bulstrode had not heard for some time. He had read it over and over again.

"Dear George," it ran—"Now that I am back again in the Old Country, I am taking this early opportunity of writing to you. I have not heard much of you while I have been away. I suppose you are still going strong at Greyfriars. As an old Greyfriars boy myself, it is particularly gratifying to me to know that a nephew of mine is captain of the Remove. Good old Remove—what little rascals we were in the old days! The Remove is still, as then, the most unruly Form in the school, I suppose—and the best! Keep the young beggars up to it, George, and make them look up to you as the leader! I might be running down to see you one of these days. Write and tell me how you are getting on. I shall be very interested to hear all the news.—Your affectionate

"UNCLE JACK."

Bulstrode crumpled the letter in his hand, and then thrust it back into his pocket. He gritted his teeth.

What could he write and tell his uncle? Tell him that he was no longer captain of the Remove—that he had lost that job long, long ago. That he was now a comparative nobody in the Form, and that the leadership and all the limelight had gone into other hands!

Bulstrode felt humiliated. With his uncle's letter, all his old animosity towards Wharton came back like a surging flood, shaming and mortifying him. Bulstrode had never felt his position more keenly than now.

A tap at the door roused him again from his brooding thoughts.

"It's only me!" said Peter Todd, looking in. "Browney not here?"

"No; he's just gone to take an impot to Quelchy," growled Bulstrode.

"All serene," said Peter. "By the way, Bulstrode, I see you won't be playing in the team against Highcliffe on Wednesday."

"What!"

"Your name isn't on the list on the board. Hazeldene's down instead. Hard cheese, Bulstrode!"

Peter gave Bulstrode a nod and departed.

Bulstrode's eyes took on a hard, steely glitter.

"So I'm left out of the Highcliffe match—eh?" he muttered. "Wharton has given Hazeldene pride of place—that waster! Uncle would have a fit if he knew. Chucked out of the captaincy, and used as a stand-by—a rotten make-shift—for the team. I'm not going to stand that!"

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Bulstrode strode out of the study and threw open the door of Study No. 1 next door.

The Famous Five were all at home, and the study had on its most festive appearance. Harry Wharton & Co. were busy preparing tea, and the table was laid with all manner of good things. They stared in surprise at Bulstrode when that angry youth entered.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry. "Did they ever teach you to knock at a door in the slum you were brought up in, Bulstrode?"

"The slumfulness of the esteemed Bulstrode's ridiculous entry is terrific!" murmured Hurrea Singh in his best English.

Bulstrode turned fiercely to Harry Wharton.

"What about the Highcliffe match?" he demanded. "Is it true that I've been left out of the team?"

"Yes; it's quite true," replied the Remove captain quietly. "I'm sorry, Bulstrode, but I've decided to put Hazel in on Wednesday, as he's been showing great form these last few days."

"Really?" sneered Bulstrode, his old truculent manner coming to the fore. "How very thoughtful of you, Wharton, for Hazeldene! It's a pity I didn't pal up to you, as I might be one of the elect now, instead of one of the make-shifts."

Harry Wharton flushed, and his chums looked angry.

"I say, Bulstrode, if you're looking for a thick ear, you've come to the right place to get it!" said Frank Nugent. "We don't want to hear any sarcasm or cheek."

Bulstrode gave a bitter laugh.

"You don't want to hear any plain home-truths, you mean!" he said. "You chaps have managed to do pretty well as you like in the Remove so far, haven't you? You boss everything and everybody. Trust Wharton to look after his pals! He expects the under-dogs to obide by his orders and take things lying down. But I'm not going to be such a fool. I won't be left out of the team!"

"Who's captain of this Form, Bulstrode—you or me?" demanded Harry Wharton hotly.

The question stung Bulstrode to the quick.

"Who has the real right to be captain?" he flashed back, his hands clenched hard. "Who was originally captain of the Remove before you came in, with your high and mighty ways, Wharton, and got a clique round you to turn me out? I suppose you think you've still got me under your thumb? You're jolly well mistaken, I can tell you. I'm knuckling down no longer to you, Wharton, or anybody like you!"

There was a pause in Study No. 1. The Famous Five looked at Bulstrode and at each other in amazement.

"My word!" said Bob Cherry at length. "Who's bitten him?"

"Must be off his rocker!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Look here, Bulstrode, for two pins I'd punch your head for your impertinence!" said Harry Wharton angrily. "This isn't the first time you've been left out of the team, yet you haven't kicked up such a shindy before. You're getting jealous of Hazeldene, I suppose?"

"Jealous! Rats!" scoffed Bulstrode. "I'm simply beginning to realise what a crass ass I've been to let you lord it over me all this time, Wharton, after filching the captaincy from me. I'm not a bit jealous of Hazeldene, but it makes me wild to see you bestowing favours on that waster, just because he happens to

have a pretty sister, and—Ow! Hands off! What are you doing? Oooooop!"

The chums of Study No. 1 laid violent hands on Bulstrode.

"We're going to chuck you out on your neck!" exclaimed Harry Wharton fiercely. "Out you go, you insulting rotter!"

"Yaroooooop!"

Bulstrode fought savagely as the Famous Five whirled him to the door. There was a crash, the table gave a lurch, and half the things upon it fell to the floor, to be trodden underfoot next minute by the combatants.

Bulstrode gave Harry Wharton & Co. a great tussle, and, boiling with rage, he hit out to right and left with great effect.

The chums of Study No. 1 looked rather the worse for wear by the time they had Bulstrode under subjection.

Inky opened the study door, and next minute Bulstrode went sailing through. Bump!

"Yaroooooop!"

The windows of Study No. 1 fairly shook with the concussion when Bulstrode landed on the linoleum.

At the same instant, feminine voices, raised in tones of astonishment, were heard in the passage. Harry Wharton & Co., looking out of their study door, were dismayed to see Marjorie Hazeldene, Clara Trevlyn, and Phyllis Howell, their girl chums from Cliff House, standing outside with Hazeldene.

Bulstrode, in whizzing out of Study No. 1, had landed right at their feet.

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Miss Marjorie, starting back. "What ever is the matter?"

"Ahem!"

"Hum!"

"You've been fighting again, you young bounders!" said Miss Clara, wagging a reproving forefinger at the Removites. "Really, I am ashamed of you! Look at your boko, Bob! It looks as though a steam-roller has been over it."

"Oh, jeminy!" gasped Bob, rubbing his nasal organ, which was certainly swelling.

Harry Wharton's lip was cut, and his hair dishevelled, Johnny Bull's collar was wrenched from its stud, and his necktie dangled ungracefully over his left shoulder. Inky and Nugent were in a similar parlous state.

"What has been the matter?" asked Miss Marjorie, looking concerned. "Nothing serious, I hope, Harry?"

"No, Miss Marjorie, of course not!" replied Wharton, with a rather twisted laugh. "Just—ahem—a little argument, you know. Help Bulstrode up, you chaps."

Bulstrode struggled to his feet, savagely refusing assistance.

He whirled round on Hazeldene.

"No wonder you've got a place in the team on Wednesday!" he snarled. "You bring your sister and her friends here to tea, and one good turn deserves another."

"You cad! How dare you talk like that!" exclaimed Wharton. "If you want another ragging—"

Bulstrode turned and walked into his own study, banging the door behind him.

"The silly ass is jealous, Marjorie, because Wharton has given me a place in the eleven," said Hazeldene to his sister. "Don't take any notice."

"Tea's nearly ready!" said Bob Cherry. "Come in! Ahem! There's a bit of a mess in here—"

The Cliff House girls laughed, and they tidied up between them, while the Famous Five prepared tea.



Bump! The windows of Study No. 1 rattled with the concussion when Bulstrode landed on the linoleum. At the same instant feminine voices raised in tones of astonishment were heard in the passage. Harry Wharton & Co., looking out of their study door, were dismayed to see their girl chums from Cliff House standing outside with Hazeldene. Bulstrode had landed right at their feet. "Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Miss Marjorie. "What ever is the matter?" "Ahem!" "Hum!" "Oh crumbs!" gasped the Famous Five. (See Chapter 1.)

And in the merry meal that followed Bulstrode and his grievances were entirely forgotten.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Hard Luck for the Remove!

"HERE we are again, dear lads!" said the Caterpillar genially. "Ready for the licking of your life?" asked Frank Courtenay.

To which the Famous Five, as with one voice, responded:

"Rats!"

It was Wednesday afternoon. The weather was glorious and just right for cricket. The junior eleven from Highcliffe had arrived at Greyfriars, and Harry Wharton & Co., looking very sprightly and businesslike in flannels, were there at the gates to meet them.

The rival juniors greeted each other with cheery friendliness.

Not only were Frank Courtenay & Co. there, but a large number of other Highcliffians had turned up as well to watch the match. All were most welcome, but Harry Wharton & Co. looked rather askance at a group of elegantly-attired and superior-looking youths who strolled in behind the team.

These youths were Cecil Ponsonby, the reckless young leader of the smart set at Highcliffe, and his satellites—Monson, Gadsby, and Vavasour.

Usually, when Pon & Co. and the Removites came into contact, a rag ensued, but as the Highcliffians were on the status of visitors at Greyfriars that afternoon Harry Wharton & Co. waived their dislike of the merry knuts.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's old Pon!" said Bob Cherry breezily. "What are the odds for to-day, old top?"

"Who's going to win the Swindlem Stakes?" inquired Squiff pleasantly.

Ponsonby sniffed—it was a very supercilious sniff—and he did not deign to reply. He and his followers walked on in high dudgeon.

Harry Wharton & Co. and Frank Courtenay & Co. chuckled.

On Big Side Wingate and his stalwart men of the Sixth were practising at the nets with leather and willow; but it was Little Side that attracted most of the onlookers' attention that afternoon.

The Highcliffe Junior Cricket Eleven, trained under the expert tutelage of Frank Courtenay, had been acquitting themselves well so far in the season, and in all matches they had shown that they were foemen worthy of their opponents' steel.

There had been a time when the Highcliffe team had been regarded by Harry Wharton & Co. as very easy prey; but since Courtenay had taken the slackers at his school in hand matters had become different.

Frank Courtenay won the toss and elected to bat first.

Harry Wharton & Co. took the field, Wharton and Hurree Singh doing the bowling.

Bulstrode stood by himself round the ropes, but he was joined afterwards by Dick Rake, Trevor, and Kipps.

Bulstrode's face was dark and frowning as he watched the progress of the match. Frank Courtenay and Hubbard opened the Highcliffe innings, and played carefully to the Greyfriars bowling. The runs mounted slowly, Courtenay taking no risks. Hubbard was cleaned bowled by Inky when the score stood at 28, and his place was taken by a tall junior in eyeglasses, who proved himself to be a perfect wizard with the willow.

Harry Wharton signalled to Hazeldene to take up the bowling, and there was a stir among the Removites round the ropes. Hazeldene had certainly been showing well at practice as a bowler, but was Wharton justified in putting him in this match?

Hazel's first ball was blocked by Courtenay, and his second hit for one. The third and fourth were knocked away for two each, the fifth went wide, and the last ball of the over was walloped into

the boundary, amidst cheers from the Highcliffe fellows. In the overs that followed Courtenay and his partner played havoc with Hazeldene's bowling.

Bulstrode turned to Dick Rake with a bitter laugh.

"Wonderful bowling, isn't it?" he said. "Wharton must feel jolly proud of his new recruit."

Bolsover major, who was standing by, gave a nod.

"If I couldn't give a better show than that I'd pack up and go back to marbles," he said. "I'm blest if I can see Wharton's reason for playing Hazeldene!"

"The reason's pretty obvious," said Bulstrode bitterly. "Wharton always favours his own pals, doesn't he?"

Highcliffe amassed 140 runs for their first innings before the Remove went in to bat. The Removites round the field did not look very cheery, but Harry Wharton's brilliant batting served to dispel their gloom. With Nugent as his partner, the Remove captain slogged manfully at the leather, and the Highcliffe fieldsmen were kept very busy—usually in the long field.

Nugent was caught out in the slips, and Johnny Bull took his place. Johnny only knocked up five, and then his balls were sent sky-rocketing by a hot "yorker" from Frank Courtenay.

Peter Todd and Tom Brown succeeded in adding 15 and 23 respectively to the score before their wickets were shattered. Bob Cherry and Harry Wharton were making hay between them when the latter was run out by a brilliant piece of field work and the alertness of the wicket-keeper.

Hazeldene then went out to face the bowling, but retired a few minutes later with one feeble run to his credit.

Squiff, as last man in, kept things going for a time, but the grand total of the Remove innings came to 105—35 runs behind—when he was at last caught.

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During the interval Harry Wharton came in for a good deal of criticism for putting Hazeldene, a comparatively inexperienced player, into the eleven. Bulstrode, leading the hecklers, had a good following, and Wharton's handsome face was troubled when he led his men out to field again.

He realised now that he had been mistaken in Hazeldene. The junior was doing his best, but his best was not good enough for the Remove Eleven. Wharton had really believed that Hazeldene would acquit himself well in the match, and there had been no thought of favouritism when he had decided to put him on the list. But the other fellows, prompted to discontentment by Bulstrode's agitation, would not believe that.

Wharton put Hazel at long field, and the Higheliffe second innings opened. Frank Courtenay again went in first, and he started right away to add considerably to his first score.

Partners came and went, some making a good show, others falling ready prey to Inky's fast bowling. But Frank Courtenay remained set, a great thorn in the side of the Remove team.

He walloped away a beauty from one of Bob Cherry's famous "twisters." The ball soared high in the air, its flight watched eagerly by spectators as well as fieldsmen.

"Catch, Hazeldene!"

It was the chance of a lifetime! The ball came down towards Hazeldene, and the junior ran out at it. But he muffed the catch, and an angry, disappointed roar arose from his schoolfellows.

"Yah! Butterfingers!"

Crimson with humiliation at his failure, Hazeldene threw in the ball.

Ten minutes later Frank Courtenay was clean bowled by Hurree Singh. The Higheliffe second innings realised 89, making their total score 229. Harry Wharton & Co., with the prospect of making 125 in order to win, did not feel particularly cheery. They were determined to win if they possibly could.

Misfortune seemed to be with the Remove that afternoon, however. Wicket after wicket fell. Hazeldene again gave a very poor show, adding only three runs to the lamentably low score before he was found guilty of l.b.w.

At last the final wicket collapsed, with the score for that innings at 77. The Remove had lost by 47 runs.

"Licked!" gasped Bob Cherry dismally. "Licked to the giddy wide! We ought to have done better than that, Harry!"

Wharton did not reply. He was looking towards the ropes where Bulstrode, Treluce, and a number of other Removites were animatedly talking together. Wharton could not hear them, but could imagine what it was all about.

The Remove was not satisfied with the result of the match, and inclusion of Hazeldene in the team had not helped matters.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Bulstrode's Challenge!

WHILE Wharton & Co. were taking leave of the Higheliffians, Bulstrode went indoors with Trevor and Micky Desmond. He walked into his study, and ten minutes later came out again, holding a sheet of paper in his hand. Bulstrode's expression, as he walked down into Hall, was of grim, dogged determination.

He pinned the paper to the notice-board and strolled away.

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William George Bunter, who was hovering near the letter-rack, blinked round in surprise when he saw Bulstrode affix the paper. He rolled over to the board and looked up curiously at the notice through his spectacles.

"My word!" gasped Billy Bunter.

Skinner, Snoop, Stott, Morgan, Wibley, and a few others came into Hall just then, and the Owl of the Remove turned to them excitedly.

"I say, you fellows!" he piped. "Look at this! He, he, he!"

The Removites gathered round the notice-board, and a chorus of astonished gasps arose when they read the following:

"NOTICE TO THE REMOVE!"

"A Meeting will be held in the Rag at 7 o'clock this evening, to discuss the Rotten State into which the Form has fallen, owing to the Fatheadedness and Gross Incompetence of the present Captain, Wharton.

"A Resolution will be passed by all patriotic Removites that, in the interests and future prospects of the Form, a new Captain be immediately elected, such new Captain being expected to give a better show than Wharton, or get the order of the boot.

"The Meeting will be addressed by the undersigned, who stands as candidate for the captaincy of the Remove.

"(Signed) G. BULSTRODE
(ex-Form captain)."

This notice created a great sensation among those who read it.

"Bedad!" exclaimed Micky Desmond. "It's loike Bulstrode's cheek, entoiely, to call a meeting!"

"And to poke himself forward as candidate for the captaincy in place of Wharton!" said Piet Delarey.

"I'm blessed if I don't admire his pluck, though!" said Bolsover major. "What the Remove badly needs is a change of captain. Wharton's all right, but we've had our fill of Wharton!"

"Rather!" said Billy Bunter. "I say, you fellows, I'm standing by Bulstrode! Wharton's no good as a captain—he's got no judgment. He sticks all his pals in the team, and leaves out the really first-class players. Look at me, for instance and——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites looked at Billy Bunter, and seemed to derive considerable amusement in doing so.

Bunter glowered.

"Oh, really, you know, there's no need for laughter!" he said. "You rotters know jolly well that I ought to get more of a look in than I get now. I agree with what Bulstrode suggests, although I don't hold with his being candidate. What the Remove wants is a chap with plenty of push and go—that's me! You fellows had better elect me as captain!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A louder burst of merriment arose at Billy Bunter's words.

"Bunt, old chap, you're far too modest to become a Form captain!" said Wibley. "Captain of Greyfriars is more your mark!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The hall door opened and Harry Wharton & Co. came in. The laughter immediately died down, and the Removites round the notice-board exchanged glances.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry. "What's on?"

"This!" said Bolsover major, pointing to Bulstrode's notice. "Come over and read it. It will do your eyes good!"

The Famous Five, Squiff, Tom Brown, and the Bounder went over and read the notice in amazement.

Harry Wharton's handsome face went a deep crimson. His eyes flashed round upon the Removites.

"Is this a rotten joke?" he demanded. "Bulstrode surely wouldn't have the nerve to put this up!"

"Bulstrode's had the pluck to do a thing that's been needed a long time, Wharton!" sneered Harold Skinner. "You won't think it is a joke when you find yourself kicked out of the captaincy. We're all going to the meeting, anyway!"

"Hear, hear!"

A large number of Removites voiced that response. They were feeling sore about the junior eleven's defeat that afternoon, knowing that it might have been avoided if Bulstrode had been included in the team.

Wharton clenched his fists hard and strode forward to the board.

He reached up with the intention of tearing off the notice, but Bolsover major planted himself in the way.

"Hands off that notice, Wharton! It isn't your property!" he rapped.

"Bulstrode has no right to put up notices!" exclaimed Wharton, between his teeth. "Out of my way, Bolsover!"

"Rats!"

Skinner, Stott, and Treluce, and a few others gathered round with threatening looks.

Bob Cherry and Nugent took their chum's arm and gently but firmly led him away.

"No need to make a rumpus here, Harry old chap!" said Bob. "The silly asses are discontented, but it can't be helped. You'd only make matters worse by going for Bolsover. Better wait till the meeting comes off, and see what happens."

A laugh followed Harry Wharton from the hall.

He was not unpopular in the Form, but there were numerous fellows who had grievances—particularly those who imagined that Wharton neglected them for his own chums.

They did not know of the trials and difficulties of being a captain, and how impossible it was to please everyone at once.

Seven o'clock came round, and the Remove turned up in the Rag in full force.

Bulstrode stood on a chair and looked round grimly.

"Gentlemen——"

"Hear, hear!"

"I have called this meeting in order to put before you——"

"A silly chump!" roared Bob Cherry from the back. "Get down, Bulstrode, and don't make such a beastly show of yourself!"

There was a roar of dissent from the fellows round Bulstrode.

"Shut up, Cherry!"

"Give a chap a hearing!"

"Fair play for all!"

"Gentlemen," cried Bulstrode, "take no notice of Cherry! He's only a spokesman for Wharton! He and the rest of the high-and-mighty clique have got their rag out over this meeting. They're afraid they're about to lose their precious influence!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Bulstrode, you cad, you're trying to stir up strife to gain your own ends!" shouted Harry Wharton fiercely. "You're trying to get back the captaincy, and think you can lead the whole Form by the nose to elect you captain!"

Bulstrode flushed.

"The Remove needs a new captain!" he exclaimed. "You're played out, Wharton! You've had your day—"

"And so have you!"

"Rats! I want a chance to show the chaps what I can do! I've been in the Remove longer than anyone else! I used to be captain; but I'm not begrudging the time that I've lost. You've had a pretty long innings, Wharton! It's time you stood down and gave another fellow a turn!"

"Meaning yourself, of course!" cut in Frank Nugent.

"Yes, and why not?" flashed Bulstrode. "I've had experience as captain. The Remove wasn't lorded over by the Famous Five in the old days. Things went on all right until you and your set took all the limelight, Wharton! Nobody else has had a look in since then. If only the chaps will give me another chance, I'll prove to them that there are fellows in the Remove as good—and perhaps better than the precious Famous Five!"

Bulstrode's words created an impression.

Hostile looks were cast at Harry Wharton & Co.

"What Bulstrode suggests seems fair enough, Wharton!" said Dick Rake. "Mind, we're not all against you, Wharton. Don't run away with that idea. But you must admit that you made a mucker of the match this afternoon."

"Hear, hear!" roared Bolsover major, who was among the disappointed ones who had been left out of the team.

Wharton bit his lip as his Form-fellows' gaze became focused upon him. Unfriendly looks were everywhere.

"I did my best!" he exclaimed. "There was no favouritism shown Hazeldene."

"Yah!"

"Tell that to your grandmother, Wharton!"

"Gentlemen, I maintain that I could raise a team capable of beating Highcliffe—and the team would not include the wonderful Famous Five!" exclaimed Bulstrode. "If you fellows will give me the chance I'll prove it."

There was silence for a little while. Removites looked at each other and at Bulstrode.

"I mean what I say!" said Bulstrode between his teeth. "If you fellows will stand by me, I'll form a team and challenge Highcliffe to a return match. That will give me a chance of showing what I can do!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Go ahead, Bulstrode!" he said. "I'd like to see the result. You'll find out that you've been talking out of your hat!"

"Will I?" retorted Bulstrode fiercely. "Then I have your permission, Wharton, to get together a team for a return match with Highcliffe?"

"Certainly!" said Wharton. "You ask for a chance to show what you can do, Bulstrode, and I'll be fair with you. If you think you can get a team together to do better than the Eleven did this afternoon, you have my full permission to try."

"That's reasonable enough," said Dick Rake. "Now's your chance, Bulstrode!"

"I'll take it!" exclaimed Bulstrode, his eyes gleaming eagerly. "I shall want some of the members of the regular team in my Eleven, of course. It will be only fair of them to back me up."

"You will be at liberty to make up your team with anybody in the Remove, barring myself, Cherry, Nugent,

Bull, and Hurree Singh!" said Harry Wharton. "That is, of course, if the others agree."

He looked towards Vernon-Smith, Tom Brown, Penfold, and other members of the Junior Eleven.

They all nodded.

"We're willing to play for Bulstrode," said Vernon-Smith. "He can rely on us to play properly, too. We'll give him every chance of proving his claim."

"Right! Then it's settled!" said Bulstrode. "I'll go over and see Courtenay to-morrow and try and arrange a match early next week. If I win—"

"I'll surrender the captaincy of the Remove to you with pleasure!" said Harry Wharton. "Go ahead, Bulstrode, and make an ass of yourself!"

"Rats!" retorted Bulstrode. "We shall see what we shall see!"

And in quite an orderly fashion the meeting broke up.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Voice of the Tempter!

BULSTRODE did not allow the grass to grow under his feet.

War had been declared between him and Harry Wharton, and he was determined to strain every effort in his bid to recover the captaincy of the Remove.

At first the Famous Five were inclined to treat the matter lightly,

thinking that Bulstrode would soon discover that he had bitten off more than he could chew.

But when they saw Bulstrode gathering quite a numerous number of Removites to his side, they began to realise how deadly in earnest he was.

"Bulstrode's a silly ass, of course!" said Frank Nugent in Study No. 1 the next afternoon. "But a lot of the fellows are listening to him."

"Let him have his head," said Harry Wharton impatiently. "Given enough rope, Bulstrode's bound to hang himself!"

"The hangfulness will be terrific!"

Billy Bunter insinuated his fat form into Study No. 1 at that minute. A wide grin suffused the Owl's visage.

"He, he, he! I say, you fellows!"

"Get out, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, you know—he, he, he! Bulstrode isn't half going it! He's got his team together! They're at practice on Little Side now!"

"Well, what is there funny in that, porpoise?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"He, he, he! He's left me out! And he reckons on the team beating Highcliffe!"

The Famous Five laughed at that.

"Funny, isn't it?" sniggered Billy Bunter. "Not that I'd play for Bulstrode now—not if he went on his banded knees to me! The rotter punched my nose when I demanded a place in the team—ahem!—I mean, when I did offer my services—out of



The ball soared high in the air, its flight watched eagerly by spectators and fieldsmen alike. "Catch, Hazeldene!" It was the chance of a lifetime. But Hazeldene muffed the catch, and an angry, disappointed roar rose from his schoolfellows. "Yah! Butterfingers!" (See Chapter 3.)

sheer kindness of heart, you know! I'll stick to you, Harry, old chap, never worry! It's not like me to go back on an old pal!"

"Thanks, all the same, Bunter! But you're too sticky for my liking!" said Wharton. "I think we'll go down, you chaps, and see Bulstrode's team." The Co. left Study No. 1, driving Billy Bunter out before them, and went downstairs.

On Little Side Bulstrode's newly-formulated cricket Eleven were at practice at the nets.

Wharton frowned when he saw them. Peter Todd, Tom Brown, Russell, Penfold, Vernon-Smith, and Tom Redwing were included in the team. The other five consisted of Bulstrode himself, Bolsover major, Ogilvy, Trevor, and Kipps.

Bulstrode gave him a triumphant grin.

"Come to watch points, Wharton?" he asked. "It gives you rather a shock, I suppose, to see a team representing the Remove that doesn't include yourself and your bosom pals?"

Wharton clenched his fists hard, but restrained himself.

Tom Brown, Russell, Penfold, and Peter Todd looked rather uncomfortable.

"We're prepared to give Bulstrode a chance, Wharton," said Peter. "You agreed, you know, and all's fair in love and war!"

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"You're giving him a chance to show what a thundering fathead he is!" he said. "Go ahead! I don't mind, of course!"

Bulstrode kept his team at practice until teatime.

He did not feel quite so confident when he walked into the School House with Tom Brown. Tea in Study No. 2 was not such a cheery affair as might have been expected.

Tom Brown, watching his studymate closely, knew the reason why.

Bulstrode was beginning to realise that although his team contained some of the best men out of the regular Remove cricket eleven, the cream of the players were absent. Wharton, Cherry, Nugent, and Hurree Singh were really the backbone of the Junior eleven, and Bulstrode had to admit it to himself.

"Look here, Bulstrode. I suppose you'll chuck this anti-Wharton campaign when you've reasoned things out?" said Tom Brown, breaking into the silence. "You don't stand an earthly of putting him in the shade, you know. If you make an ass of yourself, Wharton's position will be stronger than ever before, and the whole school will have the laugh of you."

Bulstrode set his teeth doggedly.

"Rats!" he growled. "I'm not backing out, Brown, if that's what you mean to suggest. I'm off to Highcliffe now, to arrange the return match with Courtenay."

He rose, took up his cap, and left the study.

Tom Brown looked troubled.

Having been a studymate of Bulstrode's for so long, he knew him better, perhaps, than any other person at Greyfriars. Brown knew of the bad traits in Bulstrode's character, but he also knew that deep down in his heart Bulstrode was not as bad as he appeared to be. He had never been looked upon as a chum of Bulstrode's, but he had a secret regard for his study-mate, and he could not help worrying over his present high-handed behaviour, knowing that it must

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inevitably land him, as Bob Cherry had expressed it that morning, "in the cart."

Bulstrode, meanwhile, left Greyfriars and hurried to Highcliffe School, which he reached after twenty minutes' sharp walk.

Ponsonby & Co. were adorning the gateway with their presence when he arrived, and their faces lit up with sardonic grins when they saw the Greyfriars fellow.

Bulstrode clenched his fists, and made ready for attack, but to his surprise Ponsonby & Co. did not commence the usual hostilities.

"Evenin', Bulstrode!" said Ponsonby in quite affable tones. "How are things?"

"I've come to see Courtenay, and——"

"Yes, I know, dear boy!" said Pon, with an agreeable smile. "How's the new eleven? Goin' strong, I hope?"

Bulstrode looked surprised.

"Then you know?" he exclaimed.

"Rather!" said the Highcliffe knut. "We get to find out these little things, you know!"

"Oh, absolutely!" said Vavasour.

"As a matter of fact, Skinner told us to-day," said Pon. "We wish you luck, Bulstrode. Wharton needs taking down a peg or two, and I'd be the first to give a cheer to see him kicked out of his high estate!"

At that juncture the Caterpillar strolled up.

"Hallo! A stranger within the gates!" he said. "Havin' a merry little confab with Pon, what? Nice, agreeable chaps, Pon and the good old firm. Goin' to indulge in a pleasant little game of banker round the corner?"

"Rats! I'm up to nothing of the sort!" said Bulstrode warmly. "I've come to see Courtenay. Is he in?"

"Oh! A thousand pardons!" said De Courcy, with a smile. "Yes, Franky's in. Come right inside, dear lad!"

Bulstrode and the Caterpillar walked away, leaving Pon & Co. by the gates, exchanging glances.

Frank Courtenay was surprised to see his visitor, and still more surprised when he heard the nature of his errand.

"My hat! So you want me to give a return match with another Remove team?" he exclaimed.

"Another team, yes; but it's a team that more properly represents the Remove than the team you played on Wednesday!" said Bulstrode vehemently. "I want you to give us a chance, Courtenay, to show what the Remove really can do!"

The Caterpillar winked slyly at the ceiling, but Bulstrode did not see him. Frank Courtenay did, and he grinned.

"Wharton has nothing to do with this new team, I suppose?" he said.

"No jolly fear! I'm captaining the eleven!"

"Ahem!" coughed the young Highcliffe skipper. "Well, as it happens, Bulstrode, we've no fixture for next Saturday, so if you care to bring your team here——"

"We'll kindly proceed to wipe up the field with 'em, as it were!" said De Courcy.

"Right-ho!" said Bulstrode eagerly. "I don't think you'll mop up the field with us quite so easily, though. Anyway, I'm much obliged, Courtenay. Expect us over on Saturday."

"Right-ho!"

Bulstrode's eyes gleamed as he left the junior quarters at Highcliffe and made his way out into the now dusky quadrangle.

The return match with Highcliffe was fixed up.

His team had got to win—they must win!

Bulstrode dared not think of the consequences if they lost.

"Hallo! Here we are again, dear boy!"

Ponsonby's smooth, insidious voice broke upon his thoughts as he neared the school gates. Bulstrode halted, and Pon & Co. came up.

"Everythin' fixed up, I hope?" said Ponsonby.

"Yes," replied Bulstrode. "I'm bringing my team over next Saturday afternoon."

"Good egg! And if you lose?"

"Rats! We are going to win!"

Bulstrode's voice was emphatic, but it lacked confidence.

Ponsonby gave a sneering laugh.

"Don't be so sure, Bulstrode!" he said. "If you want my candid opinion, your team will get licked—licked right out of shape!"

"I don't want your opinion, Ponsonby!" growled Bulstrode. "Good-night!"

"Hold on!" Ponsonby laid a hand on the Removite's arm. "I've got a little proposition to put to you, old man. Now, looking at things sensibly, you know jolly well that your team doesn't stand an earthly!"

"Rats! We're as good a team as any Wharton could put in the field, and——"

"Oh, come down to earth, Bulstrode! You're in for a licking as sure as your name is what it is! Courtenay is a pal of Wharton's, and he'll naturally go all out to beat your team, just for the sake of making you look small. You won't be able to hold your head up for weeks after, Bulstrode, if you lose the match!"

Bulstrode did not reply.

"Look here, Bulstrode, between you and me and the lamp-post, things can be wangled!" said Ponsonby glibly. "I've been going the pace, rather, lately, and am hard up—frightfully hard up, in fact. I'm so hard up that, for the sake of a quid or two, I'd be willing to work matters so as to make sure of your team beating Courtenay's next Wednesday. What do you say?"

"My hat!" muttered Bulstrode with a quick intake of his breath. "You mean, Ponsonby——"

"I mean that I'm prepared to guarantee a win for your team—for a consideration!" said Ponsonby. "Think it over, Bulstrode. If you lose you'll be the laughing stock of the school. On the other hand, a win will give you the whip-hand of the situation in the Remove. Wharton won't have a leg to stand on, and you'd get the captaincy back, sure as eggs! You'll never win without the match being wangled somehow, that's a foregone conclusion, whatever you may say or think. I'll give you my word that I can work things for you. A couple of quid will be very handy to me now. Are you game?"

Bulstrode's hands worked convulsively.

Ponsonby's words had gone deep into him, and he was struggling now between doing the right thing and knocking Pon down for his impertinence, or yielding to the young rascal's temptation.

He dearly wanted to win that match and win back the captaincy of the Remove. He realised miserably that he stood very little hope of making good his boast. He dared not lose that match, and yet——

"You'll do it, then, Ponsonby?" he exclaimed desperately. "It will be safe—you wouldn't tell a soul——"

"It would be a little secret contract between you and me," said the cad of Highcliffe. "These others will be in



"Now for these rotters!" said Courtenay, grimly. "Line up, you chaps, you can all take a hand!" "What-ho!" said the Removites. Ponsonby & Co. yelled and struggled, but they were made to run the gauntlet. "Yow-wow!" "Yah!" "Whoop!" "Yarooooogh!" The coal-black knuts of Highcliffe could hardly stand by the time their punishment was over. (See Chapter 5.)

the know, of course, but they'll keep as mum as oysters."

"Oh, absolutely!" said Vavasour.

"All right!" said Bulstrode between his teeth. "I'll agree to what you say, Ponsonby. I feel a cad in doing it, but—but my team's got to win!"

"Shall we say a quid now and a quid when the match is won?" asked Ponsonby.

"If you like."

"Right-ho! I'll get you to sign a little agreement, if you don't mind, Bulstrode. Must safeguard myself, you know."

Ponsonby tore a page from his pocket-book and wrote swiftly upon it with his fountain-pen. Then, having finished, he handed the paper to Bulstrode. The Removite read it in the light of the lamp over the school gate. This is how it ran:

"I hereby agree that, in consideration of the sum of Two Pounds to be paid by me, Cecil Ponsonby shall perform for me the necessary acts whereby the Highcliffe Junior Eleven shall be prevented from winning the match with my cricket team on Saturday next. I agree to pay one pound as deposit on signing this agreement, and the balance when the match is won."

Ponsonby & Co. watched Bulstrode's face as he read this.

The Removite gave a low cry.

"I—I can't sign this, Ponsonby! It's a rotten trick, and—"

"All serene!" Ponsonby shrugged his shoulders. "I didn't think you were a fellow with such scruples, Bulstrode, like Master Goody-goody Wharton. If you prefer to get it in the neck on Saturday, it's no bizney of mine, of course."

Bulstrode's face went grey.

"I—I'll agree, then, Ponsonby," he muttered. "Where's the pen?"

He signed the paper and handed Ponsonby a pound-note from his wallet. Pon. took both the note and the paper, and put them in his pocket, with a grin.

"Thanks awfully, Bulstrode. You can rely on me!"

Bulstrode turned, without another

word, and strode quickly out of Highcliffe.

Pon & Co indulged in soft chuckles when he had gone.

"I thought he'd fall in with the idea!" chuckled Ponsonby. "He'll win the match all right, but when Bulstrode comes to pay out the quid he'll find it won't be the last! He'll probably become captain of the Remove, and I shall be able to hold that little agreement over his head. He wouldn't dare turn on me—he'd be right under my thumb!"

"Oh, absolutely!"

And, chuckling deeply, the young rascals of Highcliffe went in to do their prep.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Betrayed!

BULSTRODE kept his team hard at practice, and, to do them justice, they showed splendid form. Nobody expected them to beat Frank Courtenay & Co., however, but Bulstrode himself seemed full of confidence.

He kept grimly to his assertion that his team would make a better show than the Remove Junior Eleven.

Tom Brown noticed that once or twice in the study Bulstrode appeared to be morose. He wondered at his study-mate's demeanour.

Bulstrode was thinking of the contract he had signed with Ponsonby. He wished now that he had never given way to Ponsonby's temptation. Thoughts of it had been haunting him ever since. And one evening after cricket practice he went over to Highcliffe and found Pon. & Co. at home in their study.

He refused the offer of a cigarette.

"I've come to talk to you about that contract," he said. "I've decided not to go through with it, Ponsonby. If I lose the match, then I'll abide by the result. Will you call that contract off and give me back the paper? I sha'n't want the quid back, of course."

Ponsonby grinned.

"Sorry, Bulstrode, but you'll have to stick to the contract, I'm afraid," he said. "I mean to carry it through."

"If it's the money you're after I'll pay you the other quid—"

"Nothin' doin', dear boy. I want you to keep to terms and—"

"You want to blackmail me afterwards, you mean!" Bulstrode broke out passionately. "If I win that match, you'll make me pay dearly for it afterwards!"

Ponsonby shrugged his shoulders.

"Think what you like!" he said. "You won't get that paper back, anyway. That's my property."

"You cad—"

"Better be careful how you talk, Bulstrode," said Ponsonby calmly. "There are other chaps in the passage, and if they hear a row they'll want to know what it's about. Run away, like a good chap, and look forward to a nice win on Saturday!"

Bulstrode clenched his fists hard. He restrained himself, however, and turned away.

He left Highcliffe in a savage frame of mind. He was in Ponsonby's hands, and he knew what to expect. The young rogue of Highcliffe would make the best of his position.

Bulstrode did not neglect his team, and when Saturday afternoon came round all Greyfriars was eager to see the match. Practically all the Remove and most of the Upper Fourth followed Bulstrode's Eleven to Highcliffe.

"We wouldn't miss it for worlds!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Bulstrode's in for a fine licking!"

"The lickfulness will be terrific!"

Frank Courtenay & Co. greeted Bulstrode's Eleven with smiles. All Highcliffe had turned out, and the fellows were grinning.

"So you've come, dear lads!" said the Caterpillar. "Like lambs to the jolly old slaughter!"

"Oh, rats!" growled Bulstrode. "We shall see!"

Ponsonby & Co. were nowhere to be

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seen, and they had not put in an appearance when the stumps were pitched and the toss taken.

Bulstrode won, and decided to bat first.

He wondered what Ponsonby was doing, and he felt gloomy and uncomfortable. Now that the match was about to begin the dread of the consequences if he lost came back to him, and he found himself hoping that Ponsonby would carry out his part of the agreement, after all.

If it came to blackmail afterwards, Bulstrode felt that he would be able to deal with Pon.

Bulstrode and Peter Todd opened the innings.

Bulstrode faced the Caterpillar grimly, and played the first balls with great caution, waiting to get accustomed to the bowling. This in time he managed to do, and he defended his wicket in good style, hitting out with shoulders squared when he felt it safe to do so.

Peter gave of his best too, and the score slowly mounted to 35 runs. Frank Courtenay bowled Peter, and Russell took his place. Russell was a noted stonewaller, but after scoring 11 the Caterpillar caught him napping with a shot that had a cunning break in it.

Bulstrode's individual score had mounted to 48 before his wicket fell, and a cheer followed him to the pavilion.

By sheer hard practice, grit, and determination, Bulstrode had proved himself at least as capable as any of the regular Remove Eleven, with the exception of Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry.

Bolsover major faced the bowling for exactly three minutes—in fact, he had hardly got set before his offside stump went "west." He returned with rather a blank look, and gave his pads to Ogilvy.

Vernon-Smith, Redwing, and Brown all met the Highcliffe leather with valiant willows, but each in their turn succumbed to the fast bowling, and the innings ended with the score standing at the quite respectable, but not brilliant, figure of 102.

Frank Courtenay & Co. went in to bat, followed by rousing cheers.

It was then that the real weakness in Bulstrode's team became apparent. He had no really good bowlers like Wharton, Hurree Singh, or Cherry. Bulstrode himself was good, and so were the Bounder and Tom Brown; but they were not equal to Frank Courtenay & Co.'s batting.

Courtenay himself knocked up 50 before he lost his first partner, whose own score totalled 38. Third man was caught out by a really brilliant piece of fielding by Russell, and then the Caterpillar joined Courtenay at the wickets. Between them they slogged the leather all over the field, scoring boundary after boundary. Bulstrode did his uttermost, but he knew he was beaten. He felt his doom approaching, and he savagely wondered what Ponsonby had done. He wished now that Ponsonby would show his hand.

Had anything happened, or had the wily Pon deliberately ignored his contract?

The Highcliffe score reached 236 with only two men down when Frank Courtenay declared.

"I don't think we'd better prolong the agony," he said. "Are you game for a second innings, Bulstrode?"

Bulstrode shook his head miserably.

"No," he muttered. "We—we're beaten."

The Famous Five strolled on to the pitch, smiling beatifically.

"Well, Bulstrode, how about those dozens of centuries you reckoned on

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getting?" inquired Frank Nugent sweetly.

"What price ducks' eggs?" grinned Bob Cherry.

Bulstrode clenched his fists and turned away.

He walked out of the gates of Highcliffe and disappeared—crushed and humiliated.

His bid for stealing a march on Wharton had failed miserably. And Ponsonby had not kept his word.

Harry Wharton & Co. prepared to take their departure from Highcliffe, but Courtenay held them back.

"I thought you chaps might like to see a gang of precious rotters ragged thoroughly," he said. "I refer to Pon and his pals."

"We'll stay with pleasure, and watch you rag Ponsonby," said Harry Wharton, smiling. "What's he been up to?"

"He tried to queer the match," replied Frank Courtenay grimly. "De Courcy first noticed that Pon's movements were fishy, and we watched him. He was plotting to make us lose this afternoon. The rotter stole some of Dr. Voysey's sleeping draught and diluted it. He tried to get it into the hot-water urn belonging to our table in the kitchen this morning before it was brought up for breakfast. It would have made us all feel tired and disinclined for exertion. The stuff in itself was quite harmless, of course. Pon's too much of a coward to take undue risks. But it would have messed us up for the match."

"The artful rotter!"

"We didn't say anything this morning, but we collared him and his pals just before the match and locked 'em in the coalshed. We're going to get 'em out now and give them a high old time."

"Good egg!"

A concerted march was made to the coalshed, which stood at the rear of the school building.

As the juniors approached they heard weird mumbling noises that sounded from within the shed.

The Caterpillar and De Courcy opened the door and brought forth, in turn, four weird and wonderful-looking youths.

They were smothered from head to foot in coal-dust, and looked more like Christy minstrels than schoolboys. Their gags were taken from them, and Pon & Co. gurgled loudly.

"Gerrugh! Yah!"

"Wowp!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Harry Wharton & Co.

"Get your cricket-stumps and pads ready, chaps!" said Courtenay. "We're going to make these cads run the gauntlet round the quad!"

"Hurrah!"

"Here—yerroooooch!—hold on!" gurgled Ponsonby, in a desperate voice. "I'm not—yow-wow!—alone in this. Groooooogh! Bulstrode—"

"Hallo! What's that about 'Bulstrode'?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Bulstrode got me to mess up the team!" wailed Ponsonby, wilting back in craven fear. "I was hard up, and—groooooogh!—he persuaded me to do something to make sure of his team winning. Look at this!"

Ponsonby tremblingly withdrew his pocket-book, and took out the contract which Bulstrode had signed.

Harry Wharton & Co. and Frank Courtenay & Co. bent forward and read it in amazement.

"I hereby agree that, in consideration of the sum of Two Pounds, to be paid by me, Cecil Ponsonby shall perform for me the necessary acts whereby the Highcliffe Junior Eleven shall be prevented

from winning the match with my cricket team on Saturday next. I agree to pay one pound as deposit on signing this agreement, and the balance when the match is won.

"(Signed) G. BULSTRODE."

The Greyfriars juniors could hardly believe their own eyes when they read this missive.

"Mum-my only hat!" gurgled Bob Cherry. "The awful outsider! Bulstrode signed that."

"And paid Ponsonby to wangle the match in his favour!" exclaimed Nugent faintly. "Bulstrode ought to be boiled in oil!"

Wharton's eyes glinted fiercely.

"I never imagined that Bulstrode would stoop so low as that!" he exclaimed. "No wonder he was so confident of winning. No wonder he cleared off as soon as the match was over. The howling cad! Can I have that paper, Courtenay? I'll confront him with that when I get back."

"Certainly! Here you are!" said Courtenay, handing over the paper. Then he turned to Pon & Co.

"Now for these rotters!" he said. "Line up, you chaps. You can all take a hand!"

"What-ho!" said the Removites with great heartiness.

Pon & Co. yelled and struggled, but they were made to run the gauntlet.

"Yow-wow-wow!"

"Yah! Wooooop!"

"Yarooooooogh!"

The coal-black knuts of Highcliffe could hardly stand by the time their punishment was over. They crawled away, feeling that life simply was not worth living.

"And now for greyfriars—and Bulstrode!" said Harry Wharton grimly.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Stormy Meeting!

BULSTRODE flung himself into the study armchair when he arrived at Greyfriars.

A multitude of disquieting thoughts had been racing through his mind on his solitary walk back from Highcliffe.

He had been crushingly defeated, and the whole school would ridicule him. Not only that, but the Remove would stick to Harry Wharton now, and all Bulstrode's hopes of retrieving the captaincy were vanished into thin air.

There was another thing to consider—that cowardly contract with Ponsonby.

Bulstrode hated himself more than ever now, and he bitterly condemned himself for having been such a fool as to have listened to the crafty inducements of the Highcliffe cad. The price—two pounds—had seemed so insignificantly cheap at first, but now he realised Ponsonby's wily ruse.

There would be other two pounds to pay, and more besides. Ponsonby had absolutely no scruples, and his intention undoubtedly was to hold that paper over his head and bleed him for money as the price of silence.

"He sha'n't do it! I'll see him hanged first!" exclaimed Bulstrode, jumping up in a frenzy. "I'll get this rotten business off my mind. It will make me feel easier. I'll call a meeting, apologise to Wharton, and make a clean breast of the affair to the chaps. They won't be too hard on me. I shall be doing the right thing, and it will be over, whatever happens. Ponsonby can go and eat coke afterwards."

Thus having made up his mind, Bulstrode hastily scribbled a notice on a sheet of impot paper and hurried from the study.

He went into the deserted Rag after he had pinned the paper to the notice-board. He stood moodily by the window, looking down into the quadrangle below.

At length Harry Wharton & Co. came in through the gates, accompanied by practically the whole of the Remove.

They hurried indoors, and, arriving in Hall, they found Tom Dutton, Wun Lung, and Alonzo Todd staring at the newly-affixed paper.

"Look, my dear fellows!" said the Duffer, blinking round. "Here is a notice which impels your immediate attention."

Harry Wharton looked grimly at the paper, which ran as follows:

"NOTICE!

"I, the undersigned, hereby call a special meeting of the Remove, to be held in the Rag at 6.30 sharp. An important announcement will be made, and all Removites are requested to attend."

"(Signed) G. BULSTRODE."

"My only hat!" exclaimed Squiff. "The rotter has had the cheek to call another meeting. He still expects the Remove to back him up, then, after the Highcliffe fiasco. Kids, we'll go to that giddy meeting, shall us?"

"Rather!"

"We'll give him meeting!" roared Bolsover major, who was now as much against Bulstrode as he had previously been for him. "It will be just our opportunity to show him what we think."

"Hear, hear!"

"Kim on! It's nearly half-past six."

The Removites rushed into the Rag in force when half-past six came round.

Bulstrode was at the table, and he jumped up on it when his Form-fellows came in.

"Gentlemen of the Remove—" he began, but was interrupted by a wild chorus of catcalls.

"Yah!"

"Get down, you rotter!"

"You miserable worm!"

"Look here, I want to tell you—Yaroooooooooogh!"

Bulstrode broke off with that loud yell as an egg, hurled by Bob Cherry's unerring aim, struck him full on his nose. The egg burst, and its contents spread all over Bulstrode's face.

"Grooooooh! Yah! Wh-what the—Wooooop!"

Whiz! Bang! Thud! Wallop!

A hurricane of miscellaneous missiles burst upon Bulstrode next minute. They were flung by the Removites, who had come well provided with ammunition.

Bulstrode danced on the table, dodging and leaping from side to side to avoid the whizzing eggs and pats of rank butter and over-ripe tomatoes, and other equally distracting objects.

"Yarooooop! Yah! Yow! Wow! Stoppit! Listen, you rotters—Oooooooooop!"

"Now then, grab him!" roared Johnny Bull, when all the ammunition had been expended. "We'll frogmarch the cad round the room!"

"Hear, hear!"

Bulstrode was whirled off the table and dumped heavily on the floor. He was dragged up, struggling and yelling wildly, and held in many hands.

"Geroooooooooh! You cads, what do you mean by—"

"What have you to say to this, you outsider?" demanded Wharton, holding the damning paper before Bulstrode's eyes.

Bulstrode, when he saw it, reeled back as though he had been struck.

His face went ashen pale.

"Well?" demanded Bob Cherry. "You know what it is, I suppose, Bulstrode?"

"I—I—I—"

That was all the junior was capable of saying. His tongue clave to the roof of his mouth.

"Chaps, I think that Bulstrode has proved by this that he isn't fit to become captain of the Remove, as he so ambitiously wanted to be!" cried Harry Wharton, looking round. "He's hardly fit to be a Removite at all! A fellow who acts like this isn't wanted at a decent school!"

"No fear!"

"Frogmarch the rotter!"

Bulstrode crouched back as his Form-fellows gathered round.

"Listen to me, you fellows!" he cried, licking his dry lips. "I called you here this evening to tell you all about it—"

"Rats!"

"Tell us another!"

"It's true, I tell you!" shouted Bulstrode desperately. "I realised what a fool I was! I signed that paper in a hasty moment, and went to Ponsonby afterwards to call it off! But the cad wouldn't let me! I had to go through with it! But this evening I wanted to make a clean breast of it and—"

"Yah! We're not green, Bulstrode!"

"That yarn won't wash with us!"

"Rag him!"

Bulstrode shouted in vain, and next minute he was overwhelmed by his infuriated Form-fellows, who refused to listen to him.

He was frogmarched round and round the Rag, whipped and buffeted hither and thither, and only the timely arrival of Wingate and a number of other prefects saved him from suffering further.

He staggered rather than walked from the Rag.

Smarting all over, bruised and aching, the junior went downstairs and out into the quadrangle.

His breath came in short, laboured gasps, and his eyes glittered with a fierce light.

All the brutality and venom in Bulstrode's nature had been aroused by that ragging, and through the whirl of stinging thoughts that surged through his brain came the desire to wreak vengeance on one fellow—Ponsonby!

With this thought in mind he went to the school gates and passed, hatless, out of Greyfriars.

He went straight to Highcliffe, and, as luck would have it, Ponsonby was standing alone at the side of the road by the school wall.

He gave a start on seeing Bulstrode.

"I say, I'm sorry about this afternoon, Bulstrode!" he said, looking nervously at the Removite. "But it couldn't be helped—"

"I'll give you something, you cad, for bringing this on me!" panted Bulstrode, who was suffused with rage.



"You rascal!" cried Miss Clara, as she hung on perilously to the rugged face of the cliff. "If—if I do get up there, I'll—oh!" In an endeavour to raise herself, the girl lost her footing. A shriek rang out, and Harry Wharton & Co. below were horrified to see Miss Clara reel outwards and fall. "Oh, good heavens!" muttered Ponsonby, darting away, and flinging the Greyfriars cap from his head. (See Chapter 7.)

"You got me to sign that paper so that you could blackmail me, and—"

"Here, hands off, Bulstrode!" gasped Ponsonby, as the Removite whirled round upon him. "I— Oh! Yarooooop!"

Next minute Bulstrode's large fists drove furiously upon him, and the knut of Highcliffe went reeling backwards.

Bulstrode gave him no quarter. He hammered him unmercifully, and drove him back and forth under a rain of smashing blows.

"Yah! Yarooooogh! Help! Stoppit! Wow-woooooop!" howled Ponsonby.

A quick step sounded on the road, and a schoolboy figure dashed up out of the gloom.

It was Tom Brown of the Remove.

Worrying about his studymate, Brown had followed him from Greyfriars.

Bulstrode had Ponsonby up against the wall, and was beating him from side to side. Ponsonby howled with pain and terror.

"Hold on, Bulstrode, you'll do him some injury!" cried Tom Brown, grasping Bulstrode's arm and dragging him back. "You mustn't pitch into him like that! 'Nuff's as good as a feast, you know!"

"Mind your own business, Brown! I'll flay him alive! I— Oh, you've let the cad go!"

Ponsonby, taking advantage of the interruption, darted away and disappeared through the gates of Highcliffe.

Bulstrode turned fiercely to his studymate, his breath hissing.

"Why didn't you let me finish with the rotter? He brought it all upon me! I was a fool to have fallen into his trap! And he wouldn't let me out of the bargain when I wanted to! His idea was to blackmail me afterwards. Brown, I really intended making a clean breast of the affair to the Remove, but they wouldn't give me a chance. They won't believe that I didn't mean to be such a rotter! And I suppose"—here the wretched junior's voice broke—"I suppose, Brown, you don't believe me, either."

"Yes, I believe you," replied Tom Brown in a quiet voice. "I think you were more of a fool than a cad, Bulstrode. But, come along now! If Ponsonby brings his pals out there'll be more trouble."

Bulstrode allowed himself to be taken away.

He was subdued now, and on the return walk to Greyfriars Brown, taking sidelong glances at his studymate, saw that he was suffering not only physically, but mentally, for his foolishness.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Cad's Trick!

BULSTRODE was shunned by the Form in the days that followed.

Hardly anybody spoke to him, and he was like an outcast in the Remove.

It made him feel utterly wretched, and had it not been for the friendliness of Tom Brown, Bulstrode would have found his lot very hard indeed to bear.

On Wednesday afternoon Bulstrode went out early after dinner for a long walk. He felt that he needed it—that he must get away from Greyfriars and the scorn of his Form-fellows.

The walk took him past Pegg, and he made his way to the Shoulder, that wild, bleak part of the cliffs where the boys of Greyfriars often went for a ramble.

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He was walking moodily along a narrow cliff path when he heard merry voices ahead. Next minute Marjorie Hazeldene, Clara Trevlyn, and Phyllis Howell of Cliff House came into view, accompanied by the Famous Five, Hazeldene, and Squiff.

Bulstrode's face coloured, and the happy laughter of the girls died down when they saw Bulstrode.

Harry Wharton & Co.'s faces became grim.

Bulstrode raised his cap awkwardly to the girls, but they passed him by as though he did not exist.

Wharton & Co. looked straight at him, but gave no sign of recognition.

They passed on, and Bulstrode halted, his face crimson and his eyes glittering. He had been cut—cut dead—by the Cliff House girls and his own Form-fellows.

What added to his humiliation was the fact that he had come here to escape from it all. Feeling morose and savage, he walked on.

A stiff wind was blowing from the North Sea, and while Bulstrode was traversing a high, narrow track on the top of the cliffs a short while later a sudden gust of wind lifted his school cap off his head and whirled it swiftly away out of sight.

He started off down the path in search of it.

He had not noticed the appearance of four elegantly-attired youths on the cliffs just below.

Ponsonby & Co. had also come to the Shoulder for a ramble that afternoon. They exchanged meaning glances when they saw Bulstrode.

"So that cad's here!" muttered Ponsonby, his callow face taking on a look of spite and hatred. "Now I can pay him out for the licking he gave me the other night! There's his cap—on that ledge! He's gone by without seeing it! I'll get it, and use it as a decoy to get him into our hands!"

"Toppin' wheeze, Pon, old chap!"

Ponsonby climbed up to the ledge and secured Bulstrode's cap.

Bulstrode himself had gone on in search of his missing cap, and was now out of sight.

Ponsonby, crouching on the ledge, looked round him, and was just in time to see Harry Wharton & Co. and the Cliff House girls come round the bend in the twisting path far below.

The Removites and their girl chums were chatting brightly, but all of a sudden Miss Marjorie gave a cry.

The wind had blown away her scarf. It was taken high up the steep face of the cliff, until it fell and became lodged on a piece of rock.

"Oh, dear!" Pon heard Miss Marjorie exclaim. "How can I get my scarf back? I—"

"Don't worry, Marjorie, I'll get it!" cried Clara Trevlyn, who was the Tom-boy of the party. "It's impossible to climb up from here, of course, but if I get to the top I can climb down and fetch it. You watch me!"

"Come back, Clara!" exclaimed Marjorie as her chum ran off with a laugh. "You will fall—"

"Rats!" retorted Clara inelegantly.

"I'll go!" roared Bob Cherry. "Don't you attempt to climb down there, Miss Clara!"

"Really, Bob, don't you think I'm capable?" demanded Miss Clara warmly.

looking back. "I'll show you bounders that girls can do things as well as boys! We aren't as weak and timid as you think!"

And Miss Clara, with a defiant toss of her curly head, ran off up the steep path that led to the top of the cliff.

Ponsonby watched her come up. Miss Clara was rather at a loss at first as to how to commence climbing down the cliff; but she discovered a long piece of rock that jutted out, from which she could swing herself over.

She did so, finding foot and hand hold below. Then, with amazing daring, Miss Clara commenced her perilous climb down the cliffs towards the rock where Miss Marjorie's scarf was lying.

A crafty gleam entered Cecil Ponsonby's eyes.

"My word!" he muttered. "What a chance to give her a scare! I'd love to get even with that stuck-up little cat! She always treats me like a bit of dirt when she sees me! If I pull away that rock that sticks out at the top she won't be able to get back! She'll have to hang on down below till Wharton and the others get a rope to rescue her. Ha, ha, ha! That will put the wind up her, the minx!"

The cad of Highcliffe clambered up and made his way along to the top of the cliff.

So far Harry Wharton & Co. had not seen him. The Greyfriars fellows did not know of Pon & Co.'s presence on the cliffs that afternoon.

Ponsonby suddenly realised that, to carry out his cowardly scheme, he would have to expose himself to the gaze of the Removites and the two girls below. He paused, and then a swift, low exclamation escaped his lips.

"By Jove! I'll put on Bulstrode's cap and keep my face turned. They'll think it's a Greyfriars fellow, and if they catch Bulstrode— Why, it's a fine idea! I'll get my own back on Bulstrode, too—sort of killin' two birds with one stone, as it were."

Ponsonby chuckled, and stuffing his own cap in his pocket, he put on the Greyfriars School cap.

Then Ponsonby walked calmly to the place from which Miss Clara had commenced her plucky climb.

He knelt down, keeping his face averted, and grasped the jutting-out piece of rock. It was firmly embedded, but after a good deal of wrenching it loosened in its socket.

An excited shout came from below.

"Look!" shrieked Nugent, pointing upward to the schoolboy figure at the top of the cliff. "He—he's pulling out the rock!"

"And it's one of our fellows!" muttered Wharton. "Oh, the horrible cad!"

The Removites and the two girls looked up in horror at the figure on the cliff above.

Ponsonby, with a last gigantic tug, wrenched out the rock. He cast it away and looked down.

Miss Clara had retrieved the scarf, and was climbing up as fast as she could.

A sharp, dismayed cry escaped her lips when she saw that the rock was gone!

"You rascal!" she cried loudly, as she hung on perilously to the rugged face of the cliff. "If I do get up there, I'll— Oh!"

In an endeavour to raise herself the girl lost her footing. A shriek rang out, and Harry Wharton & Co. were horrified to see Miss Clara reel outwards and fall.

"Oh, good heavens!" muttered Ponsonby, his face blanching.

He was afraid to look down at first, and when he did he saw the figure of the

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girl lying motionless on the rocks below. Panting, he flung a scared glance round him.

Harry Wharton & Co. were dashing up the cliff path with Miss Marjorie and Phyllis Howell behind.

With a deft jerk Ponsonby sent the cap flying from his head, making it appear that the wind had blown it off. Harry Wharton & Co. saw the cap fall, and gave a shout.

Ponsonby, next minute, darted away. He found his chums crouching behind some rocks, looking terrified. They had seen their leader's rascally exploit, and its tragic sequel, from their hiding-place.

"Hop it—quick!" muttered Ponsonby. "This is where we make ourselves scarce!"

The Highcliffians scrambled down the rocks and disappeared.

Harry Wharton turned to Bob Cherry, Inky, and Nugent.

"You three go up and see if you can catch that rotter, whoever he is!" he exclaimed. "Johnny and I will get down to Miss Clara."

"Right-ho, Harry!"

Hazeldene had his arm round his sister, who was trembling and distracted.

Cherry, Hurree Singh, and Nugent ran up the path, whilst Wharton and Johnny Bull clambered down the cliffs to the spot where Miss Clara had fallen.

The girl was still insensible when they reached her, and at first the juniors feared that she was dead.

A large, cruel gash on her forehead was bleeding profusely, and Wharton, with a cry, went down on hands and knees and pressed his handkerchief to the wound.

Johnny Bull lifted Miss Clara and carried her to the beach, Wharton walking alongside, holding the handkerchief to the girl's forehead.

They laid her down on the soft sand, and a few minutes later Hazeldene, Miss Marjorie, and Phyllis Howell arrived.

The girls were almost frantic with anxiety.

"What—what has happened?" cried Miss Marjorie, darting to her chum. "She is not dead?"

"No, Miss Marjorie, but she is very badly hurt," replied Wharton quietly. "Oh, thank goodness!"

Miss Clara's eyes opened, and a little whimper of pain escaped her lips.

The other two girls tenderly bathed the cruel wound and bandaged it. Miss Clara made a brave attempt to rise, but sank back in a swoon.

"We'll carry her to the fisherman's cottage just round the Shoulder," said Wharton. "She can remain there till we get a conveyance to take her to Cliff House."

A shout sounded on the beach, and next minute Bob Cherry, Nugent, and Hurree Singh came into view, dragging a struggling junior between them.

It was George Bulstrode of the Remove!

"Let me go! It wasn't me, I tell you!" shouted Bulstrode fiercely. "I know nothing about it—honour bright!"

"You lie!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "This is your cap, isn't it?"

"Yes. The wind blew it off!"

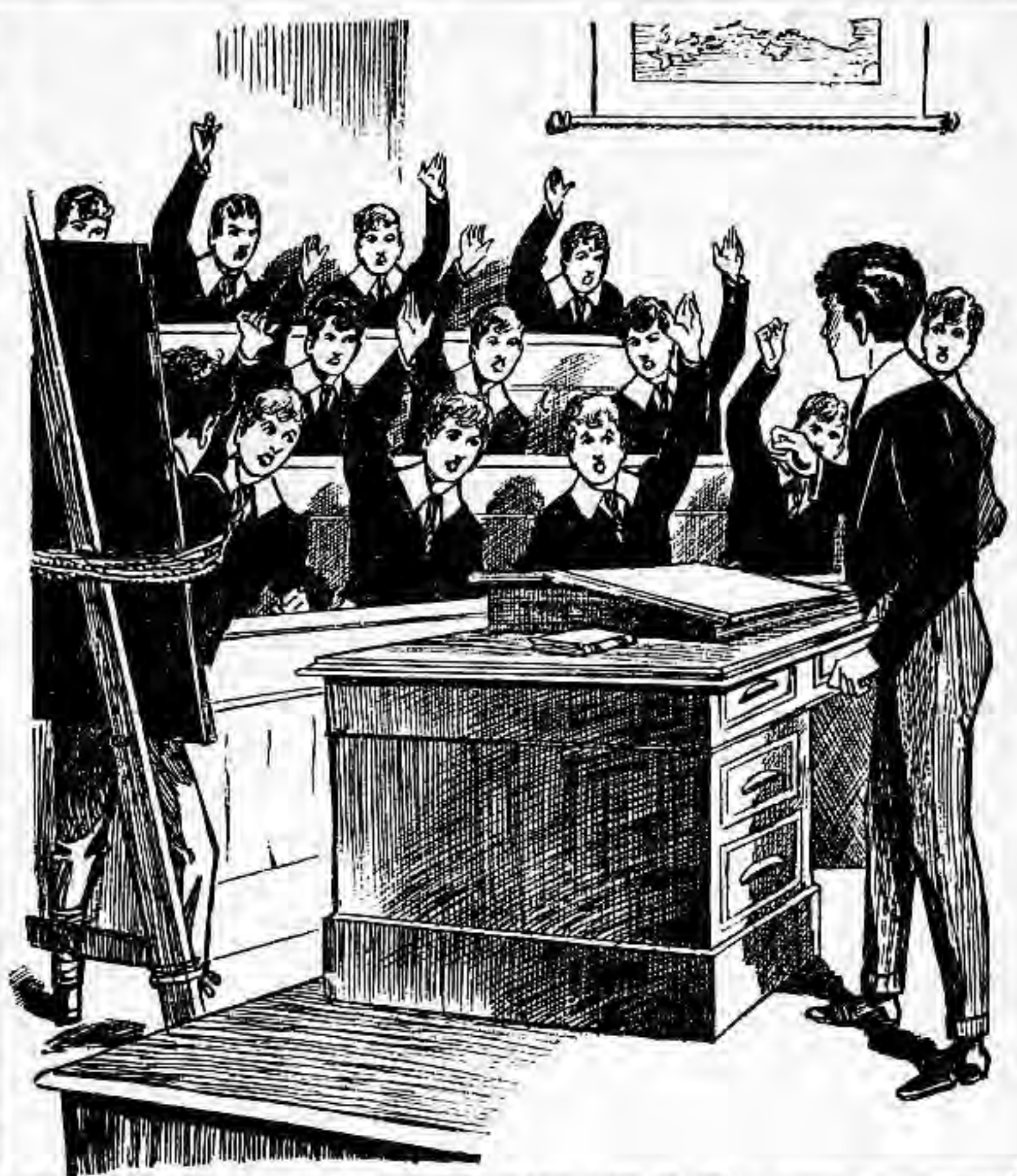
"You were caught almost red-handed, you cad!"

Bulstrode was held in front of Harry Wharton & Co.

He looked down in horror at the motionless figure of Miss Clara.

Bulstrode reeled back, his face blanched. He turned appealingly to Harry Wharton.

"I swear I know nothing about this, Wharton!" he cried. "I was looking for



"Hands up all those in favour of expelling Bulstrode from Greyfriars!" said Harry Wharton. Every hand went up—except Tom Brown's. "Passed unanimously!" exclaimed Wharton, and he turned to the tragic-looking junior who was tied to the blackboard. "From this minute, Bulstrode, you can consider yourself sacked!" "You can't expel me—you dare not kick me out!" panted Bulstrode. "I have done nothing—I swear I am innocent!" "Yah, clear out!" roared the Removites. (See Chapter 8.)

my cap when those three rushed at me. Cherry had my cap in his hand—"

"Yes, I picked it up from where it had fallen," rapped Bob sharply. "What's the use of your trying to get out of it, you cad? We saw you pull the rock away!"

Wharton's eyes blazed at him.

"Bulstrode, you despicable hound, you shall pay for this—dearly!" he cried. "I've never seen such a rotten trick—and against a girl! You deserve to be horsewhipped!"

"There has been some mistake! It wasn't me!" Bulstrode's voice came harshly through his bloodless lips. "Oh, if only I could prove it!"

"Hold him, you fellows!" said Wharton grimly. "We'll settle with him at Greyfriars."

Miss Clara was carried to the fisherman's hut, whilst Hazeldene ran into Pegg for a conveyance. He returned with a carriage, and found Miss Clara conscious, but in great pain.

Miss Marjorie and Phyllis Howell were crying softly over their injured chum, while Harry Wharton & Co. stood back, their white, haggard faces plainly showing the agony they themselves felt at the girls' distress.

Miss Clara was gently lifted into the carriage, and Marjorie and Phyllis got in beside her. Hazeldene accompanied them to Cliff House, to explain matters to Miss Primrose.

Harry Wharton & Co. then turned to Bulstrode.

"Now, you cad, you'll come back to Greyfriars and answer for this before the whole Form!" said the Remove captain between his teeth. "We can stand a fellow's caddishness to a certain extent, but there's a limit to all things."

Bulstrode, despite his wild entreaties and protests, was taken away in the grip of his angry Form-fellows.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Barred by the Form!

"HALLO! What's the giddy game?"

Peter Todd asked that question as the Famous Five entered the gates of Greyfriars with Bulstrode held firmly in their midst.

Bolsover major, Kipps, and Wibley also ran up in surprise.

"Come up to the Form-room at eight o'clock, and you'll see!" replied Harry Wharton. "Bulstrode has been up to some more caddishness, and this time he's going to stand trial before the whole Form."

"Great pip!"

Bulstrode's hands and arms were bound, and he was deposited in the school cellars. There, in his prison, he remained until the Remove were ready for him.

(Continued on page 16.)

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Supplement No. 176.

Week Ending May 24th, 1924.

HINTS TO SNAP- SHOOTERS!

By Billy Bunter.

WHEN I LIKE BEING "SNAPPED."

(1) When standing in the doorway of the tuckshopp with a doe-nutt clasped in one hand and a glass of ginger-pop in the other.

(2) When walking out in my Sunday best, or cycling in ditto, or dancing in ditto.

(3) When making a wonderful hit to the boundary during a cricket match.

(4) When in the act of reskewing somebody from a watery grave, or from a burning bilding, or when stopping a runaway hoarse, or performing any simmlar deed of valler.

(5) When adminnistering a nock-out blow to my opponent during a fight in the Jim.

(6) When in the act of opening a letter containing a postal-order from one of my titled relations.

(7) When taking part in a picknick on the bank of the river.

WHEN I STRONGLY OBJECT TO BEING "SNAPPED."

(1) When in the act of being bumped, thumped, clumped, or ducked in the school fountain.

(2) When turning a summersalt over the handlebars of my bike.

(3) When being clean bowled during a kricket match. (Even the best of batsmen get clean bowled sometimes, but they don't like being "snapped" in the act!)

(4) When tumbling head-first into the river, or falling through a hole in the ice when skating, or being throwu from a hoarse, or any simmlar kallamity.

(5) When being nocked out in the Jim by some beestly bullying broot.

(6) When I've just opened a letter and discovered that my titled relation has forgotten to enclose a postal-order.

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EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

In the merry month of May the "camera fiends" get busy. You find them everywhere. They haunt the seaside resorts and the country lanes and the woods and fields in search of suitable subjects for snapshotting.

I dare say the camera manufacturers are in the habit of rubbing their hands and chuckling when May comes round, for it brings brisk business. There must be thousands and thousands of cameras sold, to say nothing of films, lenses, and all the necessary paraphernalia for the dark-room.

Nearly every fellow at Greyfriars possesses a camera. The majority of them are of the handy vest-pocket variety. Nobody wants to carry about a cumbersome camera weighing about half a ton.

Those who have not the good fortune to possess a camera themselves have no difficulty in borrowing one whenever the spirit moves them to go a-snapshotting. Billy Bunter hasn't a camera of his own, but he is not averse to borrowing one—and he invariably forgets to ask permission. He borrowed Peter Todd's the other day, and it looked more like a battered concertina than a camera when he brought it back. Peter had a few words to say on the subject, and his "few words" left Bunter with a black eye and a swollen nose!

I am not a camera fiend myself. Clumping cricket-balls to the boundary is more in my line. But I like an occasional ramble by the seashore armed with a camera. One sees some comical sights, and when there is a camera handy they can be permanently placed on record. My album is full of humorous snapshots, and I wouldn't part with it for a five-pound note. If I had more time at my disposal I should take up photography seriously; but, what with my numerous duties, including the captaincy of the cricket eleven and the editorship of the "Herald," I have scarcely a moment to call my own.

There is a flourishing concern in existence known as the Remove Amateur Photographic Society. Monty Newland, who takes to photography like a duck takes to water, is the president, and there is a score of members. Half-holidays are devoted almost exclusively to snapshotting excursions, and some delightful results are obtained.

Photography is a fascinating hobby—and a jolly expensive one if you go in for it "bald-headed," so to speak, like Newland does. But if you indulge in it in moderation you are bound to reap keen enjoyment. And when the winter evenings come along you can spend many happy hours going through your albums, and live the summer holidays over again.

HARRY WHARTON.

LETTER FROM BILLY BUNTER!

To His Maternal Relative.

Dear Mater,—Thank you for your letter. I'm glad your hooping-koff is better. I'm also pleased to hear that pater Will send me a remittanse later. But—seems a selfish thing to say—I wish he'd send it right away!

I'm glad to hear a good report Of all the folks at Bunter Court. Bingham the butler, George the groom, And Ann, who sweeps the drawing-room. Their various jobs they seem to like; I hope they'll never go on strike!

Excuse this scrawl—I know it's clumsy. You mention in your letter, mumsie, That you are shortly sending me A camera costing one pound three. You say I ought to take some snaps Of Greyfriars scenes, like other chaps.

It's jolly nice of you to go To such a big expense, you know; But don't you think it's rather silly To buy a camera for Billy? A gift from you would be a treat, But cameras aren't much good to eat!

I'm rather fond of "snacks," not snaps. At Dame Mimble's counter all the chaps Are scoffing "tommy," but your poor Bill Is hungry and thirsty—starving, ill! Methinks a feed would suit me better. Enclose a hamper with your letter.

So send the camera to Sammy, And buy some doe-nutts, nice and jammy, Also some tarts and cakes and pies, Pack in a hamper—special size, And I shall vote it just A1! I am—your ever-luvving son.

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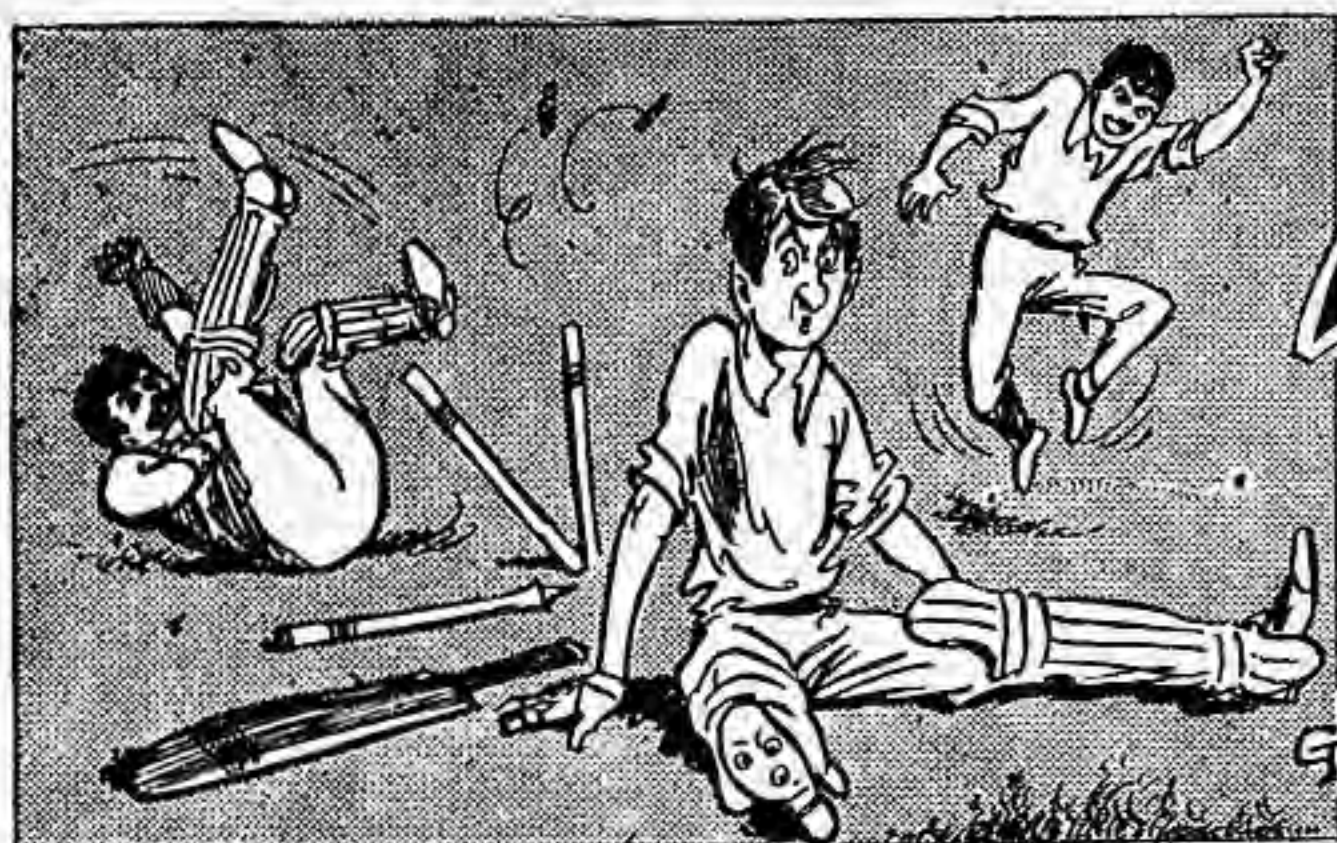
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[Supplement. i.]



My Best Snapshot!

The amateur photographers of Greyfriars describe their masterpieces.

BOB CHERRY:

I think the best snapshot I ever took was of Mr. Prout—though I don't suppose that gentleman will agree that it was my best! Poor old Prouty was playing golf, and he tumbled head-over-heels into a gully. He looked like a human codfish as he lay floundering in about three feet of water. Luckily, I happened to be handy with my camera, and I took a ripping snapshot of the extraordinary spectacle. Prout implored me to destroy the negative; but that would have been a wicked waste of a fine art photograph. I took off about a dozen prints, and distributed them through the school. Poor old Prouty hardly dared to show his face in public for about a week afterwards!

MONTY NEWLAND (President of the Remove Amateur Photographic Society):

I have taken hundreds of snapshots in my time, and it's a tall order to select the best. But I think I must award the palm to a snapshot of Coker of the Fifth, punting on the River Sark. That is to say, Coker had been punting, but by some means or other he and the punt had parted company. The great Horace was bobbing about in midstream, clinging frantically to the floating punt-pole! I ought to have plunged to the rescue at once; but I couldn't resist the temptation to "snap" Coker before going to his assistance. That evening, he tried to raid my dark-room at Greyfriars, with the object of finding the film and destroying it. But I had taken all precautions; and the next morning Coker had the mortification of seeing the offending snapshot circulated all over Greyfriars. It bore the inscription, "COKER GOES A-PUNTING!", and it was the joke of the school for days. Poor old Coker gnashed his teeth and tore his hair; and he would have liked to consign my camera to the bottom of the Sark!

BILLY BUNTER:

I once took a wonderful snapshot of the school tuckshopp. But I must have got it out of focuss somehow, for when I developed the film there was no sign of a tuckshopp. All that came out was a bit of the sky and a few fleecy clouds. It was a grate pity, because Mrs. Mimble had just stocked her window with pastries when I took the snap; and the good dame herself was standing in the doorway, with a proud and smiling face. The next time I experiment with a camera, I shall take a snapshot of the sky, and then perraps the tuckshopp will come out!

ALONZO TODD:

The choicest snapshot I have ever secured was of a little yellow primrose—one of the first of the season—opening its tender petals by the river's brim. What more exciting subject could I have

chosen for a snapshot? When I had developed the film, I sent a copy of the snapshot to my esteemed Uncle Benjamin, together with a little verse of my own composition:

"Hail! gentle harbinger of Spring,
Beloved by maids and men;
Thee have I snapped, sweet, yellow thing,
To send to Uncle Ben!"

FRANK NUGENT:

I once took a glorious snapshot of Billy Bunter bathing. It was not a voluntary bathe. Billy was walking across the plank which spans the river, when he suddenly lost his head—and his footing—and fell with a mighty splash into the sparkling water. I was standing in a convenient position on the bank, and—click! I secured one of the best snapshots of the term. The expression on Bunter's face was comical in the extreme. He has a wholesome dread of cold water with or without soap—and his expression of horror and alarm was enough to send an onlooker into convulsions. Having secured the snap, I fetched a boat-hook and secured Bunter! When he saw the snapshot next day, he had several sorts of a fit!

VERNON-SMITH:

I'm not certain which was my best snapshot, but I know which was the funniest. It was of Alonzo Todd being bowled out at cricket. The stumps were spreadeagled, and Alonzo was sitting in the middle of the wreckage, with an expression of blank bewilderment on his innocent dial. The balls were spinning in the air, and the wicket-keeper was lying on the ground, kicking up his heels in a paroxysm of merriment! I gave Alonzo a copy of the snap, to forward to his Uncle Ben; but I don't think he ever did. Perhaps Uncle Ben would not have seen the humour of it. Certainly Alonzo did not!

DICK PENFOLD:

I'm very fond of taking snaps of Bunter and the other chaps. But they are failures—dreadful shame! I'm not an expert at the game. My snapshots make me shake with sobs; they're nothing more than blurs and blobs! They never come out nice and clear; they're nearly always "duds," I fear. At writing verse I'm not so bad. Some say I'm quite a brainy lad. But when it comes to taking snaps, I do not shine, like other chaps! I'll give up photographic habits, and take to keeping mice—or rabbits!

SAMMY BUNTER:

The best snapshot I ever took was of a Swan on the River Sark; but it was never developed, and I'll tell you why. I stood up in a rowing-boat to snap the

Swan, and leaned forward so as to get the korrek range. The boat gave a fearful lurch, and I took a header into the water! I came up all right, I'm thankful to say, but the camera sank like a stoan. However, it happened to be young Paget's camera, so it didn't matter much. Paget, however, was in a terribul stew about it. He actually wrote to the perliece and asked them to dragg the river for his mouldy camera, but they never did, and it still reposes in the duckweed at the bed of the Sark!

PETER TODD:

My best snapshot depicted a thrilling bout of fisticuffs, in the Close, between Billy Bunter and Fisher T. Fish. The expressions on the faces of the fighters were worth a guinea a box! I wouldn't part with that snapshot—not for all the wealth of the Indies! I pressed the button just as Billy Bunter's fat fist was crashing upon Fishy's long nose. It made a gorgeous picture!

FISHER T. FISH:

I guess the best snap I every took was when I caught Loder of the Sixth playing cards with Mr. Banks in the garden of the Cross Keys. There was a pile of money on the table, too. I just caught Loder in the act of raking in the durocks after a winning hand. But when he saw the first print of the snap I guess he raved and stormed some. He demanded that I should give him the negative, but I reckon I wasn't born yesterday; and that negative cost Loder a tidy sum before he got a grip of it.

WILLIAM GOSLING:

Wot's the good of arskin' me which was my best snapshot, when you knows werry well that I don't go in for takin' fotygraphs? A wicked waste of time an' money, I calls it! Besides, it ain't right an' proper. Only the other day, when I 'ad the misfortune to lose me footin' in the Close, an' sit down with a bump, Master Cherry went an' took a snapshot of me. A crool shame, I calls it, snapshottin' a man when he's in a hundignified posture! 'Ow would Master Cherry like it, I wonder; if I was to get a camera an' take a picture of 'im when he was in the hact of bein' flogged by the 'Ead? Wot I says is this 'ere—all young rips wot takes fotygraphs oughter be drowned at birth!

(Tut, tut! Don't be a killjoy, Gossy! Why don't you join the Remove Amateur Photographic Society? They'd be pleased to have you as a member. The subscription is only five bob a term, and I'm sure you can manage that out of your princely salary!—Ed.)

THE END.

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The Outcast of the Remove!

(Continued from page 13.)

Hazeldene came back from Cliff House with the news that Miss Clara was under the doctor's charge, and that she was suffering terribly. The doctor took a serious view of her wound, which he thought might lead to concussion as the girl was delirious.

Harry Wharton heard this in great dismay.

The news had gone the rounds of Greyfriars, and the whole school was amazed at the cowardly trick that had been played on the defenceless Cliff House girl. All, too, were roused to anger against Bulstrode, whom they believed guilty of the deed.

At eight o'clock that evening the whole Remove gathered in the Form-room. Bulstrode was dragged in by Bob Cherry and Bolsover major.

The junior's face was pale and haggard. He was bewildered by the calamitous turn events had taken.

"Tie him to the blackboard!" commanded Harry Wharton, who was seated at Mr. Quelch's desk.

When this had been done, Wharton stood up and looked round grimly on the Form.

"Chaps of the Remove, it is for you to decide what shall be done with this cad!" he said. "I will briefly recount the facts so that you can judge for yourselves. Hazeldene, O'herry, Bull, Nugent, Hurree Singh, and myself went out this afternoon for a ramble over the cliffs with Marjorie, Clara, and Phyllis of Cliff House. Miss Marjorie's scarf blew off and became lodged on a rock high up the cliff. Miss Clara showed what a sport she was by going to the top of the cliff and climbing down to get it. She was only able to get down by swinging herself off a projecting piece of rock; and that, of course, was her only means of getting up again. While we were watching from below we saw a fellow wearing a Greyfriars cap pulling at the rock, and the rotter dragged it out and threw it away, thus preventing Miss Clara from getting back to the path above."

"The awful cad!"

A low rumble of angry voices arose.

"Miss Clara, in trying to reach the top, slipped and fell," went on Wharton incisively. "She fell on to the rocks a long way beneath and cut her forehead. She is badly wounded, and now lies in bed at Cliff House, in a very serious condition. The fellow who pulled out the rock, as soon as he saw what had happened, ran away, but his cap blew off. We watched it, and noted where it fell. Now, Bob, you can carry on."

Bob Cherry stood up.

"Johnny Bull, Inky, and I went to the top of the cliff and picked up the cap," said Bob, addressing the Form. "It was lying just where it had fallen. It was Bulstrode's cap—his name was written on the tab inside."

Again that angry murmur broke out.

"Soon after that, while looking for Bulstrode, we found him skulking among the rocks," proceeded Bob Cherry. "We immediately went for him. The rotter was looking for his cap; he admitted it. He wanted it back, of course, in case it should be found and serve as a clue. As it happened, we already had the cap, and we made a clean capture of Bulstrode."

The eyes of all the Remove were turned on the accused junior.

Looks of condemnation and horror were cast at him from all sides.

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Bulstrode's voice burst harshly from his parched throat.

"I didn't move the rock; I swear to you that I know nothing about it!" The words rang with tragic appeal through the Form-room. "My cap blew off, and I was looking for it when Cherry and the others set about me and accused me of a thing that I had never dreamed about. That is the truth—honour bright!"

Shouts of anger and disbelief greeted this statement.

"Rag the rotter!"

"Chuck him out of Greyfriars; he's not fit to be here!"

Harry Wharton raised a hand for silence.

"Gentlemen of the Remove, do you find Bulstrode guilty; or do you think there is an element of doubt?"

"Guilty!"

"Rather!"

"No doubt about that!"

Wharton nodded his approval.

"The thing's as plain as a pikestaff," he said quietly. "Bulstrode had his back up against us for ragging him over that Highcliffe cad's trick of his. We passed him on the cliffs this afternoon, and the girls ignored him. That must have made him feel spiteful, too, and I suppose when he saw Miss Clara climb down the cliff he thought that by stopping her from getting up he would be getting a bit of his own back."

"You're wrong!" cried Bulstrode fiercely. "I never—"

"A fellow who plays such a trick against a girl deserves all that we can give him!" said Harry Wharton, through his teeth. "The contract that Bulstrode signed with Ponsonby was bad enough—that made him a disgrace to the Remove and to Greyfriars—but this beats everything. Bulstrode has no right to be at Greyfriars at all. The cowardly hound is polluting the atmosphere of the school every minute he breathes in it!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We would take the matter before the Head," went on Wharton grimly. "It would not be sneaking. Bulstrode is condemned by the whole Form. But the Head is away from Greyfriars, so we can't ask him to expel Bulstrode. But, till the Head comes back, I vote that we expel Bulstrode ourselves!"

"Hear, hear!"

The Remove were unanimous in agreeing with their captain's suggestion.

"Hands up all those in favour of expelling Bulstrode from Greyfriars!"

Every hand went up, except Tom Brown's.

"Passed unanimously!" said Wharton, and he turned to the tragic-looking junior who was tied to the blackboard. "From this minute, Bulstrode, you can consider yourself sacked!" he said. "We won't give you the hiding you deserve; you are not worth soiling hands on! But you can clear out of Greyfriars, and never let us see you here again! We'll explain to the Head when he returns. Bob, undo the ropes!"

Bulstrode struggled free when Bob Cherry released him.

He faced Harry Wharton, his face flaming.

"You can't expel me—you dare not kick me out!" he cried. "I have done nothing; I swear I am innocent!"

"Yah! Clear out!"

"Kick out the rotter!"

"You had better go," said Harry Wharton quietly. "Otherwise you might get hurt."

Bulstrode swayed towards the door. He gave the Remove a stricken look, and then walked away.

The Remove did not see any more of him until bed-time.

Bulstrode was in the dormitory, and was undressing himself, when Wingate herded in the other Removites. A howl of wrath arose when he was seen.

"Get out, Bulstrode!"

"You're expelled!"

Bulstrode turned appealing to Wingate.

"They—they accuse me of causing an accident to one of the Cliff House girls!" he cried. "I didn't do it, Wingate; I am innocent!"

Wingate's lips curled as he looked at him.

"I have heard all the details, Bulstrode, and I don't see how, in the face of the evidence, you can deny your guilt," he said. "But the matter will have to come before the Head. I understand Miss Primrose has already sent a note for Dr. Locke, which he will read when he comes back in the morning. Get into bed, Bulstrode, and don't let there be any disturbance here."

The Remove went quietly to bed, and nothing was said until lights were out and Wingate had gone.

Then candles were lit, and Harry Wharton & Co. got up.

"Out of that, Bulstrode!" said Wharton curtly. "You're not sleeping in here with us to-night!"

Bulstrode was dragged out of bed, struggling and fighting.

"Take up his bedclothes, chaps! We'll put him to bed in the box-room!"

"That's the idea!"

A pillow-slip was tied round Bulstrode's mouth to serve as a gag.

Then he was tied up in a blanket and carried from the dormitory. Other juniors followed behind, bearing the "expelled" junior's bedclothes.

Walking quietly through the dark, deserted corridors, Harry Wharton & Co. took Bulstrode to the lonely box-room at the top of the School House.

"Make him up a rough bed," said Wharton. "The rougher the better!"

"Rather!"

The bed having been put down on the floor, Bulstrode was dumped uncereemoniously into it, and his gag was removed.

"Grooogh! Yow! You cads—"

"There! You can howl now, Bulstrode, as much as you like!" said Wharton. "I don't think you'll be heard. If you do get free, anyway, you'll never get back into the dorm. We're finished with you. You're not fit to share anything with us."

The Removites left the box-room, and Wharton locked the door.

Bulstrode, lying in his hastily-improvised bed on the box-room floor, ground his teeth savagely.

He realised that the Remove was in earnest.

His Form-fellows believed him guilty, and they had made him an outcast. He realised, too, the utter futility of attempting to get out of the box-room. So, seething with rage and mortification, he settled himself in the bed.

The hours passed, while Bulstrode lay writhing on the hard floor, torturing thoughts racing through his brain. And it was nearly daybreak before merciful slumber rescued Bulstrode from his thoughts.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Expelled by the Form!

CLANG! Clang!

Rising-bell rang out loud and clear at Greyfriars, and the Remove turned out.

"Wonder how Bulstrode slept?" grinned Bolsover major. "The box-room floor must be jolly nice and comfy."

What's going to happen to him to-day, Wharton?"

The Remove captain set his teeth grimly.

"Bulstrode's got to go!" he said. "It's a bit thick, I know, for us to take matters into our own hands and expel a chap, but in the present circumstances I think we are justified. A fellow who plays a cad's trick against a girl, as Bulstrode did, ought not to be allowed to mix with decent fellows. We'll take him some brekker, and then turn him out of Greyfriars."

The Remove all agreed with Wharton, though they wondered, with some misgiving, what Dr. Locke would say when he returned.

The juniors washed and dressed hastily and left the dormitory.

Wharton fetched some food from the kitchen. This he took up on a tray to the box-room where Bulstrode had been put to bed. The rest of the Remove and a horde of excited fags followed. Frank Nugent had Bulstrode's clothes.

Bulstrode was still asleep in his bed on the floor when Harry Wharton & Co. entered.

Bob Cherry stirred him with a none too gentle boot.

"Wake up, you rotter!" he exclaimed.

Bulstrode awoke with a grunt. He looked round wonderingly, incredulously. Then, remembering all, his face went crimson and he sprang up.

"Here is your breakfast, Bulstrode!" said Wharton, thrusting the food forward. "It's good enough for a hound like you; and it will be the last you have at this school, if we have anything to do with the matter!"

"You insulting cad!" burst out Bulstrode passionately; and with a sweep of his arm he dashed the tray to the floor.

The Removites gathered round him threateningly, but Wharton showed himself master of the situation.

"Put your clothes on, Bulstrode!" he commanded. "You're going out of Greyfriars now!"

"I won't!" panted Bulstrode. "You can't turn me out! I've done nothing to deserve it, I tell you! I'll appeal to Mr. Quelch—"

"Rats! You're obeying our orders! We refuse to have you in the school! Put those clothes on!"

Bulstrode set his teeth hard.

"I'll take no orders from you, Wharton!" he muttered. "I'll stay here till Mr. Quelch comes—or one of the prefects."

"You refuse to dress yourself—eh?" said Wharton. "Right-ho, Bulstrode! You'll go out just as you are! Grab him, chaps!"

"Yarooogh! Hands off, you cads—Oooooogh!"

Bulstrode was whirled out of the box-room in many willing hands, and was borne out into the quadrangle.

Squiff carried his clothes, and one or two others fetched Bulstrode's personal belongings from the dormitory.

"My hat!" exclaimed Temple of the Fourth, meeting the procession on the steps. "What in thunder—"

"We've expelled Bulstrode—and as he refuses to go, we're just turning him out!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A crowd followed Harry Wharton & Co. to the gates.

Bulstrode, yelling and struggling, was literally carried there.

Gosling, who had only just opened the gates, stared in surprise when he saw the juniors approaching.

"My heye!" he gasped. "Wot the—wot—"

"Out of the way, Gossy!"

The porter was thrust aside by the excited Removites.

Harry Wharton & Co. stood in the gateway, holding Bulstrode aloft.

"When I say go—out with him!" said Wharton. "Now, then—one, two, three—go!"

"Yarooogh!"

Bulstrode went sailing through the gateway, and he landed with a terrific bump in the Friardale Lane outside.

"Chuck his things out after him!"

Bump, bump!

Two portmanteaux and his clothing were hurled out into the roadway beside the expelled junior.

Harry Wharton, Bolsover major, and Squiff swung the gates shut, ignoring Gosling's protests.

"Don't you attempt to enter this school again!" said Harry Wharton, looking grimly at Bulstrode through the bars.

"You'll get a hot reception if you do!"

Gosling came charging to the fore.

"Hi! You young rips! Hopen them gates!" he roared. "Which this is agin the rules! Wot I says is this 'ere—Oh! My heye! Gimme them keys!"

Bob Cherry had deftly snatched the bundle of keys from Gossy's horny palm. These he handed to Harry Wharton, who locked the gates and slipped the keys into his pocket.

Bulstrode struggled to his feet.

A chorus of boos and hisses came from the juniors behind the gates.

Bulstrode's face was white, his eyes gleaming with a strange light.

"You cads will be sorry for this!" he cried. "I should expect to be treated like a dog if I was guilty of what you accuse me of, but I am innocent. Somebody must have picked up my cap and put it on—"

"Yah!"

"Tell it to the Marines!"

"We're not so simple as to believe that, Bulstrode!"

Bulstrode's eyes glittered.

He picked up his clothes and bags and staggered away with them.

The juniors inside the locked gates of Greyfriars exchanged glances.

"Well, he's gone!" said Johnny Bull.

"And jolly good riddance!" said Bob Cherry. "We'll have no truck with a rotter who plays dangerous tricks on girls!"

"Rather not!"

The juniors went indoors, and the breakfast bell rang soon afterwards.

Mr. Quelch was not at the breakfast-table, but he walked in when the meal was over.

He turned to Harry Wharton.

"I shall be busy this morning, Wharton," he said. "The absence of Dr. Locke has placed extra work in my hands, and as the Form is well up with the syllabus, I think I may leave you to take lessons on your own this morning."

The Remove looked quite pleased at this.

"You, Wharton, will supervise the lessons, and will take the Form with revision," said Mr. Quelch. "Can I trust you to do that?"

"Yes, rather, sir!" said Harry Wharton promptly.

At that juncture Gosling came rolling into the room, looking very bad-tempered. He glared at the Removites, and went straight up to Mr. Quelch.

"Which I 'ave to report these young rips, sir," he said. "They've locked the school gates, and robbed me of the keys. Which Wharton has the keys, and wot I says is this 'ere—these is nice goings hon!"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, turning in surprise to Harry Wharton. "For what reason, Wharton, have you taken upon yourself to lock the school gates?"

"We've expelled Bulstrode, sir!" replied Harry Wharton grimly. "We turned him out, bag and baggage, just before breakfast, and locked the gates on him. We don't want him at the school!"

"Hear, hear!" roared the Remove.

Mr. Quelch's amazement knew no bounds.

"Boys! Have you taken leave of your senses?" he rapped. "I heard from Wingate of the trouble with Bulstrode, but it is a matter for Dr. Locke to deal with on his return. Miss Primrose, of Cliff House School, has sent a letter, and she rang up on the telephone this morning. Miss Trevlyn, I am glad to say, is making good progress, and her condition gives no cause for grave anxiety."

"Oh, good!"

"But you lads must not take matters into your own hands," went on Mr. Quelch, his face setting sternly. "Bulstrode must be admitted at once. It is for Dr. Locke to expel him, if he decides that expulsion will be a fitting punishment."

"Bulstrode vented his spite on a defenceless girl, sir, and it was a trick that was worthy only of a hooligan, and not of a fellow of this school," said Harry Wharton. "He isn't fit to mix with decent fellows, and that is why we expelled him. We don't want him here, sir!"

"Wharton, you will kindly remember your position, and obey orders," said Mr. Quelch icily. "If you have the keys of the school gates, I command you to give them to me this instant!"

Wharton bit his lips. The other Removites looked dismayed. Mr. Quelch's word was law, and, bitterly enraged against Bulstrode as they were, they could not very well disobey the master.

Wharton handed over the keys to Mr. Quelch.

The Remove master returned them to Gosling, and followed him from the room.

"Bulstrode will be admitted, and if this practice occurs again I shall severely punish the ringleaders," said Mr. Quelch, as he went through the door.

He left the Removites seething with indignation and disappointment.

"So Bulstrode will come back, after all!" said Bob Cherry.

"Never mind," replied Harry Wharton in a low voice. "He may come into the school, but we will never admit him into the Remove. Whatever Mr. Quelch says, we bar Bulstrode!"

And the Remove replied with hearty accord:

"Hear, hear!"

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Last Straw!

THE bell for morning lessons rang, and the Remove congregated in the Form-room, feeling more than usually cheerful at the prospect of lessons.

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Without Mr. Quelch keeping watch and ward over them, the morning was bound to be much more interesting.

Bulstrode was already seated at his accustomed place, and he coloured painfully when his Form-fellows entered.

"So Quelch admitted you again, you rotter!" said Bob Cherry. "If you had any decency at all, you'd clear off, and not thrust yourself on a respectable school."

"I have done nothing, so why should I?" returned Bulstrode savagely.

Several fellows made loud and derisive remarks, but a hush fell on the classroom as Mr. Quelch, looking austere and grim in cap and gown, swished into the room.

"Boys, I trust there will be no repetition of your high-handed and utterly unseemly behaviour," said the Remove master sternly. "Bulstrode is here under my protection until Dr. Locke returns to take the matter in hand. Wharton, as captain of this Form, I want you to give me your word that you will allow Bulstrode to remain in this room unmolested during lessons."

Harry Wharton was silent for a few minutes.

The eyes of all his Form-fellows were upon him.

"Well, Wharton?" demanded Mr. Quelch icily. "Do you refuse to make me that promise?"

"No, sir, I will not refuse," replied Wharton quietly. "I promise that Bulstrode shall remain in here during lessons, and that he shall not be interfered with."

"Thank you, Wharton! I know I can rely on your word," said Mr. Quelch a little more gently. "You will supervise lessons this morning, and any trouble you will kindly report to me."

When Mr. Quelch had gone the Remove turned fiercely to Harry Wharton.

"Where's your pluck, Wharton?" demanded Bolsover major brutally. "Fancy cowering down like that! We've all refused to have Bulstrode in the Form, and yet you promise Quelch that you'll allow the rotter to take lessons with us!"

"I promised Mr. Quelch nothing of the sort!" replied Harry Wharton calmly. "I gave him my word that Bulstrode should remain in here unmolested during lessons."

"Well?"

"Well, I didn't undertake that the Remove should have lessons with him, did I?" said Wharton steadily. "The Remove this morning will take lessons in the quad."

"Great pip!"

This announcement quite overcame the Remove.

"Lessons in the quad?"

"Yes," Wharton nodded. "We refuse to associate with Bulstrode. He's an outsider, and the Form bars him. The Remove's under my charge this morning, and lessons take place in the open air. Bulstrode can stay in here and do just as he jolly well likes."

"Hurrah!"

The Remove gleefully accepted this decision.

Bob Cherry took the blackboard, and Squiff and Peter Todd managed the easel between them. Several Removites took out their books in piles, whilst others struggled out with the desks.

During these proceedings Bulstrode sat in his place, watching his Form-fellows with lowered brows and glittering eyes.

Tom Brown, noticing him, felt a pang of pity for the condemned junior.

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At last all the Removites departed, leaving the Form-room bare and Bulstrode alone to his miserable thoughts.

Out in the sunny quad, right underneath the Form-room window, Harry Wharton & Co. set up their open-air class.

The blackboard and easel were erected, and the desks ranged round.

A table and chair had been brought out for Harry Wharton, and a music-stand, captured from the school music-room, served to hold up the atlas.

"Take your seats, kids!" said the youthful Form master. "The lesson will commence, and, mind, there's to be no slacking."

"Right-ho, sir!"

"Keep your hair on, sir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!"

The open-air lesson commenced, and the Remove were kept absorbed in the discussion of isotherms and isobars and other weird items in mathematics until the bell rang for the cessation of classes.

Fellows began to pour out of the Hall door, and they almost fell down the steps when they saw that open-air class.

"My giddy aunt!" ejaculated Temple of the Fourth. "What the merry dickens—"

"What the thump!" gasped Blundell of the Fifth.

Five minutes later the Remove open-air class was surrounded by a crowd of astounded and amused fellows.

"Well, if this doesn't beat the band!" gurgled Smith major. "What's the idea, Wharton? Why aren't you in the Form-room?"

"Because Bulstrode is in there, and we bar that cad!" said Wharton. "Skinner, attend to your book!"

"Boys!"

Mr. Quelch's voice broke in.

The Remove master had arrived, and, pushing his way to the forefront of the throng, now stood gazing in utter amazement at his Form.

"Boys! Wharton, what does this mean?"

Wharton snapped his book shut and stood up.

"Class, dismiss!" he said, and then he turned to Mr. Quelch. "The lesson's over now, sir," he said. "We've done quite a lot, and the class has behaved very well."

"Wharton, answer my question! What does this ridiculous affair mean? Why have you taken these things out of the Form-room?"

"We decided to take lessons out here, sir, as Bulstrode is polluting the Form-room with his presence!" replied Harry Wharton. "It's not healthy in there with him, sir, so we came out here."

Mr. Quelch was at a loss for words for several minutes.

"Wharton! B-bless my soul!" he gasped at length. "So you still persist in your campaign against Bulstrode?"

"Yes, rather, sir!"

"We bar him absolutely!"

Mr. Quelch looked angrily at his Form.

"Boys, I will tolerate this affair no longer!" he exclaimed. "As I told you before, it is for Dr. Locke to deal with Bulstrode, and you are exceeding your duties by acting like this. I can understand your feelings towards Bulstrode, but you must learn to curb your tempers. In future, any boy found molesting Bulstrode, or seeking to prevent him in any way from taking his usual part in the school routine, shall receive severe corporal punishment! Now, take these things back to the Form-room immediately!"

The Removites, feeling wrathful at

their master's edict, trekked back to the Form-room with the things they had removed.

The sympathies of the whole school were with them, but Mr. Quelch seemed determined to protect Bulstrode from the ban they had put upon him.

Bulstrode was not in the Form-room when they arrived.

A sheet of paper was pinned to the door, and Micky Desmond, who was the first to see it, took it down and read it.

"Tare an' bounds!" he gasped, his eyes opening wide. "Read this, you fellows!"

Wharton took the paper and read it out loud. It was in Bulstrode's handwriting, and ran thus:

"To the Remove. I have suffered enough these last few days, but there is a limit to any fellow's endurance. There will be no need for you to drive me from school now. I am leaving of my own accord. I am innocent, and I will move heaven and earth to prove it. In any case, you will all be sorry for the rotten way you have treated me."

"GEORGE BULSTRODE."

The Removites looked at each other when this message had been read.

Harry Wharton drew a deep breath.

"So Bulstrode's gone! Thank goodness for that!" he said. "The cad is better out of the way, and I don't suppose he'll have face enough to turn up here again."

"No fear!"

And the excited Removites rushed out to acquaint the rest of the school with the news of Bulstrode's flight.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Hand of Fate!

TOM BROWN was the only fellow at Greyfriars who did not share in the universal satisfaction that Bulstrode had left the school.

He had watched his study-mate closely, and, in his compassion for the wretched lad, Brown had begun to wonder whether, in spite of the damning evidence against him, Bulstrode might yet be innocent.

The flight of Bulstrode from Greyfriars gave strength to Brown's dawning belief in his study-mate.

If Bulstrode were guilty he would have left without a word. Yet to the end he had protested his innocence, had repeated it in his message to the Remove, and had stated his intention of proving his word.

"Poor devil!" muttered Brown to himself, as he paced the quadrangle. "I—I really believe the chaps have been torturing him for nothing. He didn't strike me as being guilty. I don't think Bulstrode would stoop to vent his spite on a girl. He's gone, and he'll need help. Perhaps, if he gets desperate, he may be driven to doing something serious. I—I'll see if I can find him."

Acting on this impulse, Brown left Greyfriars and made his way towards Pegg. He felt that Bulstrode would make for the cliffs on leaving the school. If the junior really intended proving his innocence, the scene of the accident would be his first objective.

Brown received a lift from a carrier's van as far as Pegg, and then he set out for the Shoulder.

There was a small teashop at the base of the cliffs on the Pegg side of the bay, and Brown went in, thinking that if Bulstrode were hungry he might have gone in there.

Bulstrode was not to be seen inside the shop, and Brown questioned the rather deaf old lady who owned the place.

"Eh? Have I had a schoolboy here?" she exclaimed. "No, young gentleman, not since last Wednesday afternoon I haven't seen any schoolboys."

Tom Brown gave a start.

Last Wednesday afternoon!

The Famous Five and Bulstrode were the only Greyfriars fellows who had gone anywhere near that vicinity on Wednesday afternoon. They had mentioned nothing about the teashop.

"You had some schoolfellows here last Wednesday?" exclaimed the Removite swiftly. "How many, ma'am?"

"Four," said the old lady. "They had tea here about half-past five."

"Wearing caps like mine?"

The woman quizzed through her eye-glasses at Brown's Greyfriars School cap, and she shook her head.

"No," she said decisively, "they didn't wear caps like that, young sir."

Tom Brown was silent for a while, and then the thought suddenly struck him. Highcliffe!

He described the Highcliffe School cap to the old lady, and she nodded readily when he had made it clear to her.

"Oh, yes; those were the caps!"

Brown's thoughts raced swiftly, eagerly now. Then Highcliffe fellows had been abroad on the cliffs that fateful afternoon. Perhaps they knew something about the tragedy. And then Brown instinctively thought of Cecil Ponsonby & Co.

He described the knuts of Highcliffe to the old teashop lady, and again she nodded her head.

"Why, yes; them's the lads!" she said. "I remember them quite well. They seemed a bit excited, and kept looking out of the window for something."

"As if expecting to see somebody pass?" asked Tom Brown eagerly.

"Yes, perhaps you're right, young sir. They did seem to act that way."

"You didn't happen to overhear anything they said?" asked the Removite. "This is very important, ma'am—really!"

The old lady looked curiously at him.

"Well, young sir, I'm rather deaf," she said. "But I did happen to overhear something about a girl falling down and hurting herself. I didn't take much notice, and—"

"Oh! Thanks very much!" exclaimed the Removite. "I'm awfully obliged, ma'am!"

And, much to the old lady's astonishment, he hurried from the parlour, leaving two shillings on the little wicker table.

Brown's eyes gleamed eagerly as he made his way to the Shoulder.

Ponsonby & Co. had been there last Wednesday afternoon! They had gone into the teashop, and had been overheard to mention the fact of a girl's having fallen down and hurt herself.

Then Ponsonby & Co. knew of Miss Clara's fall. They might have seen it happen. Why had they not shown themselves, then? Had they any reason not to be seen? Was it possible that Ponsonby—

"By Jove!" muttered the Removite, with a swift intake of his breath. "It's just the sort of caddish thing Ponsonby would do! It's more like Ponsonby than Bulstrode, anyway! He's not on friendly terms with Miss Clara, and she always cuts him when they meet. Pon's a spiteful rotter, and—why, of course, he would have been planning to get his revenge on Bulstrode for



Bulstrode sat in his place, watching his Form-fellows gather up their books and desks, with lowered brows and glittering eyes. At last all the Removites departed for "lessons in the quad," Tom Brown bestowing a glance of pity on the condemned junior as he halted at the door. Then the Form-room door closed and the Outcast of the Remove was left alone to his miserable thoughts. (See Chapter 10.)

the hiding he got outside Highcliffe that night! Bulstrode said he lost his cap, and couldn't make out where it had gone to. The only explanation of the affair that he could offer was that somebody else had found his cap and put it on while he pulled out the rock. Ponsonby is quite capable of a cunning ruse like that. My hat! If only I could prove it against Ponsonby—

Tom Brown broke off.

Looking across the cliffs, he saw a schoolboy figure seated on a rock, his head sunk between his hands, his attitude one of dejected misery and despair.

It was Bulstrode!

Tom Brown hurried over to him, and the runaway junior jumped up, his face flushing crimson, when he saw his study-mate.

"Bulstrode! I—I've found you!"

"Why can't you leave me alone?" muttered the outcast miserably. "Nobody wants me—nobody believes me, although I swear before Heaven that I am innocent!"

"I believe you, Bulstrode. I am sure you did not play that low-down trick on Miss Clara."

"You—you believe me!"

Bulstrode's voice rang out tremulously, incredulously.

"Yes, old chap, I do. What's more, I have a jolly good idea as to whom it was!" said Tom Brown firmly.

For one moment Bulstrode's eyes gleamed, a ray of hope expressed itself, but before he could put the question

that hovered on his lips a shrill, terrifying cry rang out from somewhere below the top of the cliffs.

"Help!"

Both juniors started violently, and turned in the direction of the cry.

"Help!"

"Great Scott!" said Bulstrode, breaking into a run. "Someone's in trouble, Browney! Come on!"

But Tom Brown needed no urging. He was panting alongside his study-mate, his ears on the alert for a repetition of the cry.

"Help! Oh, help!"

The cry came from somewhere close at hand now, although there was no one in sight. It seemed to rise in a shrill crescendo from somewhere below the top of the cliffs.

"This way!" panted Bulstrode, indicating a gap in the cliff top. "Look! The edge of the cliff has fallen away!"

What Bulstrode said was plainly obvious. Tom Brown gasped and shivered as he reached a position in close proximity to the spot and gazed down at the cracked earth.

"Help! Help!"

The cries grew fainter now, and to the anxious juniors' ears came a deep moan. But it was the voice that stirred the two Removites most, for the tones were unmistakably those of Ponsonby of Highcliffe!

"Oh, help!"

A peculiar, bitter expression crossed Bulstrode's face as he recognised them, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 850.

and Tom Brown glanced at him anxiously. But Bulstrode's inaction was only momentary. With a careless disregard of the risk he was running, the outcast of the Remove crawled to the cracked edge of the cliff top and peered over.

An involuntary cry of alarm left his lips—a cry that was echoed by Tom Brown, who had crawled as near to the edge of the cliff as he deemed safe.

"Oh, good heavens!"

About twenty feet below the cliff top was a narrow ledge, and sprawled across the ledge, his feet hanging over into space, was Cecil Ponsonby. His left arm hung limply at his side. His right hand clutched at a knot of roots above his head that had forced their way out through the side of the cliff. And by this slender hold the Highcliffe junior had saved himself from hurtling to a terrible doom below.

"Hold on!" shouted Bulstrode huskily.

Ponsonby started as the voice reached him. He turned an agonised face towards the Greyfriars junior. And Bulstrode forgot his animosity—forgot the caddish actions of the schoolboy who had caught him in his clutches and betrayed him to Harry Wharton & Co. on the day of the Highcliffe match—as he gazed for one fleeting moment into that terror-stricken face.

He gulped down a lump in his throat. "Hold on, Ponsonby!" he repeated. "I'll get help!"

"My—my arm is broken, I think!" muttered Ponsonby. "And my strength is giving out! I—I shall have to drop. I can't hold on any longer!"

"Don't be a fool!" panted Bulstrode, gazing about him wildly, and whipping off his jacket. "Hold on!"

Tom Brown gazed in wonder at his study-mate, at the same time slipping off his own jacket.

"What are you going to do?" he asked. "You're not—"

"I am," said Bulstrode resolutely. "I'm going down. We can't stand here and see a fellow drop to his death, can we? Quick! Give me your jacket!"

With growing admiration, not un-mixed with fear for his chum's safety, Tom Brown watched Bulstrode knot the sleeves of the two coats together.

"Catch hold!" he said briefly, when this task was accomplished.

"But the two jackets will only stretch about eight feet," said Tom Brown. "You can't reach Ponsonby that way."

"Cut the cackle!" said Bulstrode grimly. "You let me down over the cliff. If I can reach one of those roots in the rock, I can manage to worm my way down to the ledge. If I get on that ledge I can hold Ponsonby with one arm while I hang on to the root."

"But the risk," breathed Tom Brown. "You'll never reach that ledge! You'd be mad to try it, Bulstrode!"

Bulstrode laughed harshly.

"Mad or not, I'm going to try it!" he said. "You'll at least be able to say to the Remove that I declared my innocence of the vile charge they laid against me even at the last. See?"

"But—but," stammered Brown, "I—I believe—in fact, I'm almost certain—that it was Ponsonby who played that dirty trick on Miss Clara. Would—you risk your life for that—that—"

"What's that?" asked Bulstrode hoarsely. "Ponsonby! Oh, great Scott!"

"He was here on the cliffs with his cronies last Saturday afternoon," said Brown quietly. "I can prove that! He knew all about Miss Clara's fall. Why didn't he come forward and speak up if—"

For a moment a sullen, vengeful expression—that made Brown wish he had not acquainted his study-mate with what he knew at such a time—crossed Bulstrode's heavy features. The out-cast of the Remove began to see daylight now. He was fighting a battle with himself. All the primitive savagery in his nature rose up and bade him leave the Highcliffe cad to his fate. After all, it would be no more than many another person would do—would be forced to do—for it was almost tantamount to throwing one's life away to attempt to reach the ledge without a rope.

For the space of a few precious seconds the inward battle raged, with Tom Brown a silent and helpless spectator. But Bulstrode's better nature triumphed. He fought back the temptations of his bitter hatred, and as a despairing cry rang out from the ledge below he squared his chin and braced himself.

"I'm going over, Browney," he said resolutely. "Hang on to this end of the jackets. When I can get no further with their aid I'll let go and begin to worm my way down to the ledge. When I shout to you, Browney, you hop off like the wind for help. And don't forget to bring a rope!"

Tom Brown gulped something in his throat and laid hold of the improvised rope. With an anxiety that showed itself at alternate intervals with admiration for his plucky study-mate, he planted his feet firmly against a stump of rock and watched his chum begin his hazardous descent.

Perspiration poured from his face as Bulstrode was lost to sight over the edge of the cliff, but the terrific strain on the rope was sufficient indication that, so far, Bulstrode's descent had been successful. Suddenly the improvised rope slackened, and Tom Brown knew that his study-mate had been lowered as far as the rope permitted.

"All right, Browney," sang out Bulstrode, in a cool tone. "Off you go!"

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Light at Last!

TOM BROWN did not wait to peer over the edge of the cliff.

At that moment he hadn't the nerve to do so. He scrambled on to the cliff path and raced towards a little cluster of fishermen's cottages, that lay a quarter of a mile away, at a pace that would have beaten all cinder-track records.

Meantime, Bulstrode was gingerly working his way down the face of the cliff, grabbing at anything that would serve him as a handhold. Once the root to which he was clinging was plucked clean away from its bed, but, by Providence, the plucky junior clutched another root that held his weight.

Ponsonby watched the junior's gradual descent, his ghastly face changing in expression as he thought of the wrong he had done Bulstrode of the Remove, as he thought of the junior's pluck and the terrible risk he was running. His own strength was failing him now. A sudden numbness took root in his arm and spread slowly

through his frame, but help was close at hand.

With a slithering of earth and small stones, Bulstrode's feet touched the narrow rocky ledge. They rested there for a moment. Then the plucky junior lowered himself, until his outstretched fingers caught hold of the Highcliffe junior, whose grasp on the root was gradually slipping away.

Bulstrode's right arm went round Ponsonby's middle, whilst his left hand gripped the root.

"Thank Heaven!" breathed Ponsonby.

And then he fainted.

The plucky Remove junior hung on desperately to his human burden, a burden all the heavier now that Ponsonby had fainted. Bulstrode had always been proud of his strength, and on this occasion it served him well. A less muscular fellow would have been unable to hold on in such a precarious position for any length of time.

The minutes dragged by; they seemed like hours to Bulstrode. And then Ponsonby recovered consciousness. What actually passed between the two juniors until help arrived was never known, but there was a cheery smile on Bulstrode's face when the rescue party, with Tom Brown in the lead, reached the cliff top.

"Hold on, Bulstrode!" yelled Tom Brown. "A rope's coming!"

A rope whistled through the air, its dangling noose falling just within reach of Bulstrode.

"Hang on to the root with your uninjured arm, Ponsonby," he said quietly, "while I loop this rope over your shoulders."

The Highcliffe junior obeyed without demur. He still had sufficient strength left to support himself by the root in the cliff face, thus allowing Bulstrode the free use of one arm. With no little difficulty Bulstrode slipped the open noose over Ponsonby's head and shoulders and drew the slip knot tight.

"Haul away," he called out to the rescue party above.

Slowly, carefully, for the fisher folk above were able to see that the Highcliffe junior was little able to help himself on account of his broken limb, Ponsonby was hauled up to safety.

As his head and shoulders appeared over the top of the cliff edge willing hands went out to him.

"Thank—thank heaven!"

The words faltered from Ponsonby's lips, and an expression of deep gratitude crossed his features. And then he fainted again. Two of the rescue party attended to the Highcliffe junior whilst their comrades again sent down the rope to Bulstrode on the ledge twenty feet below. With little difficulty Bulstrode slipped the open noose about his own shoulders, and then signalled to the party above to haul him up. Tom Brown's hands were the first to reach the Greyfriars junior when he appeared over the edge of the cliff.

"Good old Bulstrode!"

That was all Tom Brown said, but the words were eloquent of his relief and admiration of the plucky junior. The hands of the two chums met in a firm grip, and then Bulstrode stretched himself on the grass to drink in great gulps of air and to rest his aching muscles.

"Ponsonby!" he breathed at last. "You will see that they take care of him, Browney?"

"Rely on me, old man," said Tom Brown. "They are taking him away to the cottage hospital on a hurdle. I reckoned one would be needed when I went for help. He's quite comfy,

though, and his broken arm has been put in improvised splints."

"Oh, good!" said Bulstrode. "He's done the right thing, Brownie," he added softly. "He's confessed to the rotten trick he played on Miss Clara. And—and everything in the garden will be lovely!"

Tom Brown emitted a whoop of joy. The storm had been weathered; the truth had come to light at last, and under strange conditions. Almost on the same spot that Ponsonby had committed his vile act against Miss Clara had the Highcliffe junior found retribution. It was poetic justice, but Tom Brown and Bulstrode scarcely gave that a thought. Both were thinking of Greyfriars; were thinking of the Remove and the stir it would make when Ponsonby's actions—self-confessed—were made known.

"Come on, Bulstrode," said Tom Brown at length, when the rescue party had disappeared with their burden in the direction of the cottage hospital; "let's get back to school."

The outcast of the Remove scrambled to his feet, now little the worse for his adventure, and at a brisk pace set off for Greyfriars.

Billy Bunter was the first to spot the two juniors coming in at the gates, and he rushed upstairs into the junior Common-room to spread the news.

"I say, you fellows, Bulstrode's come back—"

"Wha-a-at!"

Harry Wharton & Co. jumped to their feet immediately.

"It's a fact, I tell you! The rotter's just come in!" repeated Bunter.

"The fearful nerve!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "I thought we'd got rid of that hound for good! We'll go down and jolly soon kick him out again—and blow Quelch!"

"Rather!"

"Hear, hear!"

The Removites rushed downstairs. They arrived at the Hall door just as Bulstrode and Tom Brown reached the top of the steps. But they were little prepared for the story Tom Brown had to unfold.

The Removites listened incredulously at first, and then as Tom Brown's earnestness penetrated them they began to look uncomfortable. Bulstrode quietly slipped out of sight, and made tracks for Study No. 2.

"So Pon's the culprit," said Tom Brown, in conclusion. "You fellows have been wrong all the time. You've been persecuting Bulstrode for nothing. Ponsonby has confessed."

"Great pip!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"The rotter!"

The Removites looked askance at each other for several moments. Then Harry Wharton spoke.

"We've done Bulstrode a great injustice, you fellows," he said quietly. "And it's up to us to apologise. Come along!"

"Good old Bulstrode!"

"He's a plucked 'un, anyway!"

"Hear, hear!"

In a body the Removites surged along the passage and halted outside Study No. 2. Bulstrode looked up as the party crowded into the doorway, and his face crimsoned.

"We are sorry, Bulstrode," said Wharton, acting as spokesman for the party. "The Remove chaps ask your forgiveness. They are sorry they accused you of such a dirty trick. And they are—are sorry they—they—"

"Have treated you so badly," said Bob Cherry, coming to his chum's rescue.

"Oh, that's all right now!" said Bulstrode, smiling. "We'll call it square!"

Someone in the party commenced to cheer, and the Removites were not slow to respond. Harry Wharton & Co. sprang forward and hoisted Bulstrode aloft.

"Chair him, chaps!"

"Hurrah!"

"Chair the giddy hero!"

"Hurrah!"

Protesting in vain, Bulstrode was hoisted aloft and carried in triumph to the Remove Form-room. Mr. Quelch was waiting there a portentous frown on his features, a gimlet eye on the clock which indicated that the Remove were five minutes late for classes. But Mr. Quelch forgot his anger in his surprise at beholding Bulstrode.

"Bless my soul!" he gasped.

The Form master could not make out why the juniors were so jubilant, why Bulstrode looked so cheerful, why, in fact, he was being carried shoulder-high by his Form-fellows who had avowed their intention of "expelling" him such a short time back.

"What—what is the meaning of this, boys?" said Mr. Quelch faintly.

Tom Brown and Harry Wharton explained matters between them.

Mr. Quelch laid a kindly hand on Bulstrode's shoulders.

"My brave boy," he said kindly, "I cannot say how glad I am, Bulstrode, that your innocence has been established, and that the stigma of such a cowardly act has been removed from Greyfriars. You and Brown are excused lessons this afternoon. I will telephone Miss Primrose at Cliff House and acquaint her with the new facts."

But Mr. Quelch was forestalled in that direction, for Cecil Ponsonby, now made comfortable in the cottage hospital, had

written a letter of apology to Miss Clara at Cliff House, and had sent messages to both Dr. Voysey of Highcliffe and Miss Primrose of Cliff House.

These two principals arrived at about the same time, and once more Ponsonby confessed his share in the plot and bade Dr. Voysey visit Greyfriars on his behalf and set matters right with the Remove and Bulstrode. But Dr. Voysey, too, was forestalled; for when he arrived at Greyfriars on his unenviable errand he found Bulstrode the centre of an admiring throng.

Bulstrode's animosity against the Famous Five in general and Harry Wharton in particular was forgotten now. And the Remove, on their part, did their utmost to make Bulstrode forget the terrible ragging he had received at their hands.

And when Bulstrode's uncle visited Greyfriars some time later he had the satisfaction of seeing his nephew play for the Remove cricket eleven against Highcliffe.

Bulstrode was in form, and his terrific hitting turned the tide in favour of the Remove. He carried out his bat for fifty-five, and as the stumps were drawn a crowd of Removites surged forward and showered their congratulations upon him.

And that brief moment of popularity fully compensated Bulstrode for all the agony of mind he had endured as the Outcast of the Remove.

THE END.

(There will be another magnificent complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. in next Monday's MAGNET, entitled: "The Iron Hand at Greyfriars!"—Mr. Frank Richards at his best.)

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WHAT DO THE PURPLE SANDALS CONTAIN?



No. 5.

THE VULTURES OF THE LINE!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Registered Parcel!

At the police headquarters in Montreal, Canada, there was an air of suppressed excitement. Ferrers Locke, the great English private sleuth, who, with his cute, young assistant, Jack Drake, had drifted into the city on the previous day, had succeeded in laying by the heels a crook much wanted by the Canadian police. This was Slick Skinner, who was known to have been the leading spirit in the railway hold-up at Snake River, Ontario, three months before.

As a matter of fact, the English sleuth actually had apprehended the man in connection with a mysterious explosion that had taken place that morning at the docks. Already Locke had put some pointed questions to the prisoner, but he felt he was but on the threshold of the knowledge possessed by the fellow.

He glanced up at the clock upon the wall, and whispered a few curt instructions in the ear of Jack Drake. The boy immediately took his hat and slipped out of the room. Directly he had gone Locke drew the superintendent of the Canadian police to one side.

"You don't mind my occupying another few minutes with this man, Superintendent Grey?" he said. "Short of adopting the third degree methods, it is absolutely necessary that I should probe to the bottom what knowledge Skinner may possess."

"Do so by all means, Mr. Locke," replied the police-officer. "But, bless me, there seems to be much ado about this pair of purple sandals of which you want to get on the track! What's all the bobbery about?"

"You must forgive me, superintendent, but I cannot divulge the full purport of my quest for the sandals. I have been sworn to secrecy by the client who engaged my services in England."

The Montreal official accepted the situation with a shrug.

"I understand, Mr. Locke. You private inquiry agents have the interest of your clients to consider before everything. We members of the regular force are servants of the public at large. But I understand you are also after this doctor fellow—Harvey Kruse—about whom we were notified yesterday? How is he mixed up in this case of the sandals?"

"Simply that he, too, is anxious to secure the sandals," answered Ferrers Locke.

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Locke. "My chief duty is to obtain them myself, but if, in the course of my quest, I can lay Dr. Kruse by the heels, I shall seize the opportunity like a shot."

"As you know, superintendent," he continued, "Dr. Kruse, who formerly was a specialist in Harley Street, London, was responsible for the Dulwich murder when poor Professor Erskine, a noted scientist, was foully shot. He added to his crimes by slaying Adolph Keiller, a passenger of the Rockarra, in mid-ocean. Possessed of gorilla strength and an abnormally developed brain, Kruse effected his escape from the police, slipped through the net spread for him in Quebec, and is at present right here in Montreal."

"We have no definite proof of it, Mr. Locke."

"But I know it," said Locke emphatically. "Knowing the type of man with whom we have to deal, I can say positively that the wigwag of Kruse is pitched on the trail of the sandals. And as the sandals have arrived in this city you can bet Kruse is here, too. Wasn't this man Skinner bribed to cause an explosion at the docks, and secure the sandals from the luggage of their owner, Joseph Meech, in the confusion? Doesn't his description of the man tally with that of Kruse?"

"H'm, yes, I suppose you are right, Mr. Locke. But if Kruse is here my men will run him to earth never fear!"

"I've heard similar remarks to that from the lips of a personal friend of mine who occupies an exalted position at New Scotland Yard," murmured Locke, with a smile. "Poor old Inspector Pyecroft! I expect he will arrive from his fruitless search in Quebec during the day."

"Anyway," said the superintendent, "this man, Skinner, didn't give the sandals to the man who employed him to do the job. The parcel he presented to him contained only a pair of second-hand dancing shoes. If, as Skinner says, he afterwards sold the sandals to Ledge, the shoemaker of Mount-Street, for five dollars, you ought easily to be able to lay your hands upon them."

"I have already sent my assistant to get them if he has to pay a hundred dollars for them," answered Ferrers Locke quietly. "And now, on behalf of my English client, I will put those few extra questions to Skinner."

Perhaps had the police official known the identity of the client to whom Locke referred his eyes would have widened

considerably. For it was none other than the British Home Secretary himself.

But four people in the whole world suspected the secret shielded by that queer pair of purple sandals of Indian design which had already brought three of them across thousands of miles of ocean. They were the Home Secretary, Locke, Drake, and Dr. Harvey Kruse. And the secret they were so anxious to obtain was the formula of the late Professor Erskine for converting base metal into gold. The Home Secretary, fearing the disastrous financial chaos which would result if that secret became public, had commissioned the famous sleuth to find it and destroy it. Kruse, on the other hand, was anxious to secure it for his own unworthy ends. With that in his possession his power and wealth would become staggering in their extent.

Turning again to the prisoner, the detective eyed him keenly.

"Tell me, Skinner," he said, "did this burly pal of yours, who commissioned you to get the sandals, inform you what he wanted them for?"

"Aye," answered the crook. "He said they had been an heirloom in his family, and had been stolen in England and brought to this country."

"Did the man tell you his name, Skinner?"

"Yep. Guthrie," was the reply.

"I see. And where did you first meet Mr. Guthrie?"

Slick Skinner half turned away with an impatient gesture.

"Aw, find out!" he growled. "I've said too much."

"On the contrary," insisted Locke calmly, "you have not said enough. Or are you fully aware, my friend, that your acquaintance is none other than Dr. Kruse, the notorious murderer?"

"What!" gasped Skinner.

"So you see, Skinner," went on Ferrers Locke, "it might be as well if you gave what information you can to assist me and the police. It might prove a black circumstance against you in the calendar of your crimes if it were proved that you knowingly became an associate of Dr. Kruse and shielded the murderer from justice."

"But I didn't—I didn't, Mr. Locke. I swear it!" said Slick Skinner hastily. "I thought his name was Guthrie. He told me so. Gee, I've always drawn the line at killin' myself, and I ain't shieldin' no man what's got blood on his hands!"

"Then you will tell us what you know of the fellow and how you came to meet him?"

"Sure, I will! Not that there's much to tell, anyway."

"Very well, Skinner," said the sleuth. "Tell me where first you met the man."

"I saw this guy you call Kruse coming out o' a doss-house two doors above the Pats' Kitchen, in Portage Street," said Skinner slowly.

"Alone?"

"No, with three other guys."

"Friends of yours, Skinner?" interposed the superintendent keenly.

The crook flushed and was silent.

"You didn't recognise 'em as the Amberg brothers and Dago Louis by any chance, Skinner?" persisted the police official.

Again Slick Skinner held his peace.

The superintendent drew Ferrers Locke back slightly.

"I think an unexpected light is being shed on things, Mr. Locke," he remarked. "Skinner, Dago Louis, an American-Italian, and two brothers named Fred and George Amberg, formed among themselves a gang which gained the name of the Vultures in the

underworld. We have had rumours of their being in Montreal, but they have kept low cleverly, and none of my men have been able to get on their track. We have reason for thinking that Skinner fell out with his former confederates, and worked a lone hand on the Snake River hold-up. Now it looks likely that your Dr. Kruse has linked up with the Dago and the Amberg boys."

"Extremely likely, I should say," remarked Ferrers Locke.

By keen questioning he secured from Skinner an admission that the men with whom he had seen Kruse were indeed his former associates. He claimed, too, to have overheard an appointment being made for Kruse to go to the basement of the doss-house two doors from the Rats' Kitchen at eight o'clock that evening. 'The Rats' Kitchen was a notorious eating resort of the underworld, situated in Portage Street.

"Presuming you have spoken the truth, Skinner," said Ferrers Locke, "that information may come in very useful. No doubt the police will remember your service in this respect at your prosecution. Now, one final question, and please answer it to the best of your ability, as it is of supreme importance. Is Kruse aware that you saw him coming out of this doss-house in Portage Street with Dago Louis and the Amberg brothers?"

"I'm mighty sure he doesn't know it," said Skinner emphatically. "I'm positive he was living in the basement of the place—one hundred and eleven Portage Street is the address. And I'm equally certain that Kruse isn't wise to the fact

that I know about it. I slipped off directly I saw him with my old pals, and it wasn't until later he made up to me. At first I was surprised that he wanted me to do his dirty work at the docks for him. But then I figured it that he didn't trust Louis or the Ambergs with the job, knowing they were wanted men. O' course, I led him to think there was nothin' against me. A hundred dollars was by no means to be sneezed at for the job."

Locke thanked the man, and signified that his questioning was at an end. Thereupon Skinner was led below to the cells, and the superintendent and the great English sleuth put their heads together.

It was arranged that during the day disguised police officers should trickle into the Portage Street area and try to get on the track of Kruse and the Vultures. In the event of their failure, and should none of the wanted men be apprehended elsewhere, Locke himself, backed by a force of plain-clothes police, should visit No. 101, Portage Street at about eight o'clock that evening.

Hardly had these plans been formed than Jack Drake, the sleuth's assistant, returned breathlessly to headquarters. With a pang of anxiety Ferrers Locke saw that he was empty handed.

"The sandals, Drake?" he cried eagerly.

"Sold!" replied the boy laconically. "The purple sandals have been sold, and, my aunt, so have we!"

"You—you mean that the shoemaker, Josiah Ledge, has disposed of them to a customer already, my boy?"

"So it seems, chief. He said that a fat gent with a wart on the side of his nose entered the shop half an hour before I arrived, and while buying a pair of boots saw the sandals and took a fancy to 'em. Ledge, the old rogue, was still chuckling about the deal. He'd given five dollars for the sandals, and he sold 'em for twenty."

"Confound it!" burst out Locke. "Surely Kruse could not have got to windward of us after all?"

"The purchaser was a fat man with a wart on the side of his nose, sir," Drake reminded his chief.

"Tut, tut, my boy!" said Locke impatiently. "A burly person like Kruse could easily simulate stoutness with a bit of padding. Warts are cheap. He had only to buy a ten-cent stick of brown sealing-wax and exercise a little ingenuity in the adjustment of a piece upon his nasal organ. Yet I can scarce credit that Kruse could have got on the trail of the sandals again so speedily. Besides, we know he was short of money, and it is doubtful whether any of his new-found crooked friends would have advanced him twenty dollars. I suppose, as Ledge sold the sandals over the counter, he did not ask the name of this customer?"

"No, sir," answered Drake. "But I found out both the name and address of the purchaser from an errand lad employed at the shoe store."

"The dickens you did!" exclaimed Locke in surprise. "Then the boy delivered the sandals?"

"Yes, sir. The gent who bought them was going to make a call, and didn't



Even as the gunman fired, Ferrers Locke ducked like lightning and hurled the cayenne bomb full into the face of his assailant. The lightly sewn seam of the silk burst, and the pepper shot into the man's eyes. (See page 24.)

want to be bothered with a parcel. He put on the new pair of boots he bought, and had his old ones and the sandals wrapped up and sent to his address. I've got it here. 'Edmond Goodenough, 49a, McGill Avenue.'"

"By Jove!" cried Locke. "The fact that the customer had the goods sent instead of taking them himself raises my hope that Kruse, after all, was not the purchaser. We must go to this address at once. Fetch a taxi, Drake."

"I have one outside already, sir."

"Noble lad! Au revoir, superintendent. I hope to see you later. I will phone you of any fresh developments, and you can get in touch with me, if necessary, at St. Leger, Mount Royal, where I am staying temporarily as the guest of your citizen, Mr. Joseph Meech."

Leaving the police headquarters, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake taxied at full speed to McGill Avenue. Number 49a proved to be a sumptuously-furnished flat rented by a middle-aged bachelor, who was the Edmond Goodenough they sought.

Greatly to his chagrin, the sleuth learnt from the housekeeper that Mr. Goodenough had gone out. She had helped him to pack the sandals in a piece of stout brown paper, and her master had gone out to post them at the G.P.O.

Without waiting to hear more Locke thrust a dollar bill into the hand of the woman, and jumped into the taxi by the side of Drake.

"To the General Post Office!" he ordered the cabby. "And drive like fury!"

What lingering doubts that may have remained in Locke's mind that his quarry might be Dr. Kruse were set at rest as soon as the post-office was reached. Coming down the steps as the sleuth dived out of the cab was the very man he sought.

Edmond Goodenough was almost as fat as the late John Bunny, the film star. He had, moreover, the same geniality of expression, and there was no doubt as to the wart on the side of his nose being a perfectly genuine article. Wearing a well-cut suit of grey clothes and a light overcoat, and carrying a gold-knobbed walking-stick, he beamed upon the world outside the Montreal post-office with the air of a man extremely satisfied with himself and life in general.

"Mr. Goodenough," exclaimed Ferrers Locke, accosting him, "I wish to have a few words with you. My card, sir."

The Canadian gentleman took the sleuth's card between his gloved fingers and regarded it with starting eyes.

"Ferrers Locke!" he muttered. "Sure, I've often heard of you, sir. Your fame is world-wide. But you wish to speak to me? I hope I have in no way transgressed the law?"

"You purchased a pair of purple sandals from Ledge's shoe store this morning, Mr. Goodenough?" interrupted the sleuth. "You brought them here to the post-office with you. I believe?"

"Why, yes!" replied the Canadian gentleman in surprise. "I've just dispatched them per registered mail to my aged mother in British Columbia."

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Secret of the String!

A SICKENING sense of disappointment possessed Ferrers Locke. This was by no means the first time he had come within hand's reach of the precious sandals only to have a cruel fate whisk them from his grasp.

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Although unable to give the Canadian his full reasons for wanting the sandals, Locke nevertheless managed to enlist the man's aid in trying to get them back from the Post Office authorities. He obtained, too, the address of the old lady in Vancouver to whom they had been sent as a birthday gift.

But now official red tape hampered the detective's efforts. The postal people in Montreal refused to return the registered parcel to its sender. They pointed out the law on the subject. The parcel was no longer deemed to be the property of the sender at all.

Locke set the wires humming to Ottawa, the seat of the Government, to secure the personal intervention of the Postmaster-General himself. But this illustrious personage was in camp temporarily with his family on the shores of Lake Huron. The Deputy Postmaster-General would undertake no responsibility in the matter. It was pointed out to Locke that the parcel was as safe with the postal authorities as if it were in the strong-room of a bank, and that if he wanted it so badly he could recover it from the lady in Vancouver to whom it would be delivered.

After spending much time fruitlessly in attempting to break through the legal red tape of the postal service, Ferrers Locke had to bow his head to the inevitable. Fuming and fretting would make matters no better, and so he decided to leave for the Pacific Coast on the night trans-continental train that he might be in Vancouver when the registered parcel was delivered to the person to whom it was addressed. His one consolation was that Dr. Harvey Kruse had not got it, and, as far as he knew, was not even aware of what had become of the sandals.

During the afternoon a telephone message arrived for Locke. It was to the effect that Inspector Pyecroft, of Scotland Yard, who was on the track of Kruse, had arrived from Quebec and was in Montreal. But the inspector had not shown up at the Montreal police headquarters.

"Pyecroft intends to play a lone hand evidently," was Locke's comment to Jack Drake after the receipt of this news.

"Suffering snakes! Let's hope old Pyecroft doesn't bump up against the doctor, then," was Drake's reply. "Pyecroft has about as much chance of outwitting that cunning crook on his own as a domestic bullock has of capturing an escaped circus tiger."

Early that evening both the sleuth and his assistant obtained some shabby old clothes, and set about disguising themselves. By the time they had completed their task they looked as tough as any of the disreputable characters they had seen in the back streets of Montreal. Before leaving the residence of their host by the back way Locke took a couple of squares of very thin, oiled silk, which he had purchased, and sewed them into the form of two bags. Into both these bags he put a quantity of cayenne pepper.

"Take one of these, Drake, my boy," he said. "A cayenne bomb is sometimes more useful in a raid than a revolver. If Kruse is in Portage Street to-night, I want, if possible, to take him alive and not dead."

After leaving the house on Mount Royal the two separated. Drake's orders were to remain inconspicuously in the vicinity of 101, Portage Street, where a number of disguised police officers would also congregate. Ferrers Locke took upon himself the more dangerous task of entering the building.

Portage Street proved to be a wide

thoroughfare thronged with people of a low class. It was badly lighted, and most of the buildings appeared to be of the cheap lodging-house variety.

This, indeed, is what No. 101 proved to be. There was no mistaking it, for, as Slick Skinner had said, it was two doors from the notorious Rats' Kitchen eating-house.

The door was wide open, and Ferrers Locke slithered into the place. Even if he were seen, he knew his presence would create no comment. As many as thirty or forty "guests" might be occupying such a place. The human flotsam and jetsam of life drifted in and drifted out. Few knew or cared where any of their fellow-roomers came from or whither they went.

Three or four rickety wooden steps led down to a basement, the door of which was ajar. Taking his courage in both hands, Locke slouched boldly down the steps and pushed the door open. There was no window to the basement, but an oil-lamp on an old dirty wooden table gave the merest glimmer of light. Untidy piles of blankets littered the floor.

It was clear to the sleuth that this basement, like practically every other room of the building, was used as a bedroom for the lowest type of men, unable or unwilling to pay for better accommodation. At least half a dozen piles of dirty blankets on the floor denoted sleeping-places for that number of guests in this one small room.

So far the plan the sleuth had in mind had not succeeded. Although it was not yet eight o'clock, he had hoped that Kruse would be there. He was positive the doctor would not recognise him, and would consider him but a fresh lodger come to occupy one of the sleeping-places on the wooden floor.

An alternative plan now suggested itself to his mind. He would get among the heap of the blankets on the floor and wait. If Kruse entered the sleuth would get the drop on the astute doctor with his revolver before the latter could discover the presence of anyone. In his pocket he had a whistle, three blasts upon which would summon Drake and the police.

The sleuth took a step forward; and then a voice sounded from the heap of blankets in the darkest corner of the basement.

"Get your hands up—I've got you covered!"

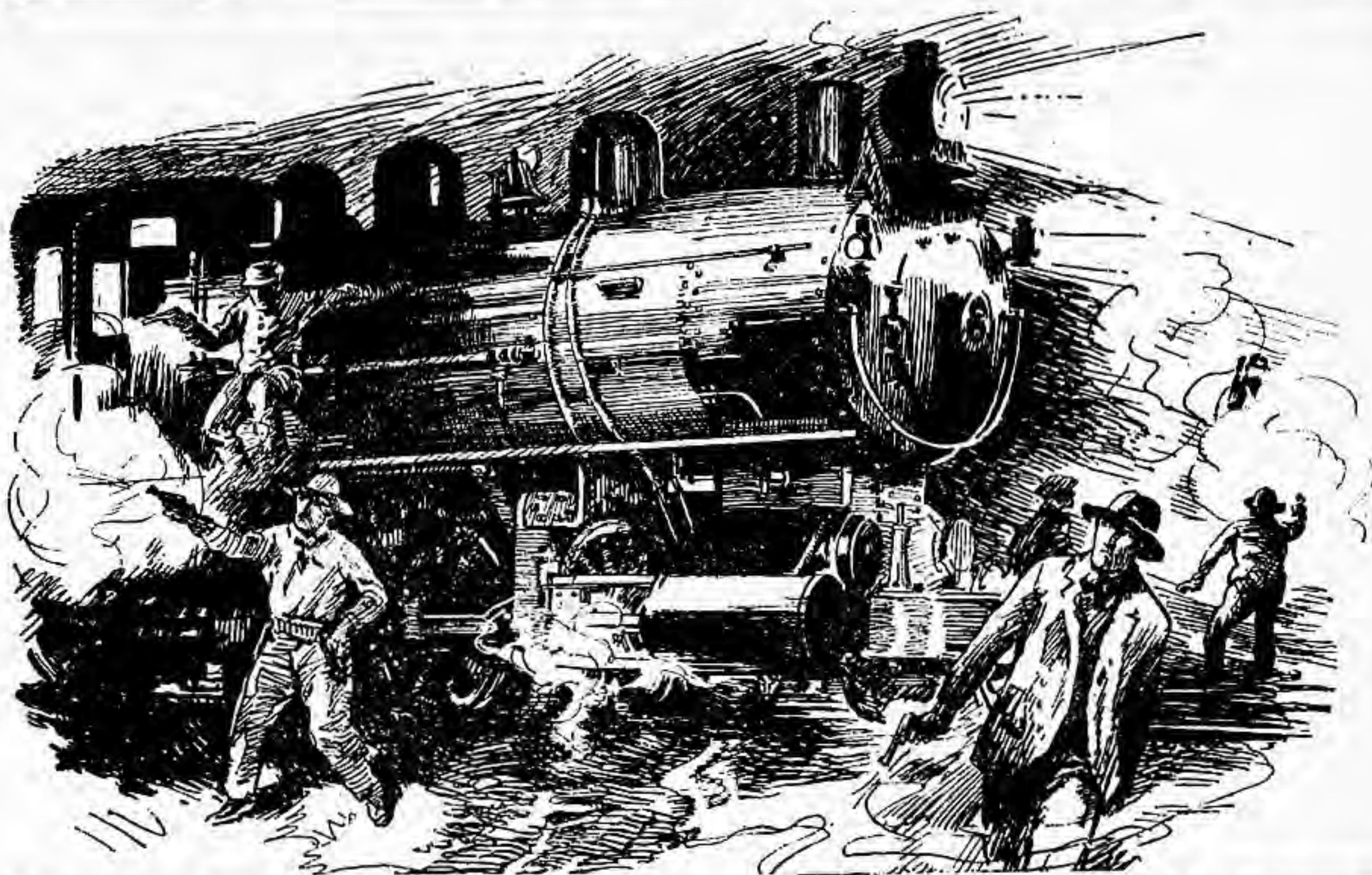
The voice was strangely familiar, but Locke lost no time in obeying. But as his hands shot up he detached the little cayenne bomb of oiled silk from the strands of thread that held it to his wrist and kept it hidden in his right hand.

The blankets were cast aside, and a burly form arose from the floor. Ferrers Locke leaned forward involuntarily to see the face of the man. Immediately a blinding flash of flame and an ear-shattering report burst out, and a revolver bullet, missing Locke's head by an inch, smacked into the wooden door behind the sleuth.

Locke ducked like lightning in time to avoid a second shot, and hurled the cayenne bomb full into the face of his assailant. The lightly sewn seam of the silk burst, and the pepper shot into the eyes and nostrils of the gunman.

A metallic clatter on the floor was sufficient evidence that the pistol had fallen from his hand, and it was followed by a series of sneezes from Locke's discomforted antagonist.

The detective picked up the gun and turned up the light just as Jack Drake and the police, who had been hovering in



As the train, with a grinding of brakes, came to a standstill, Locke, Drake, and the police threw themselves into the fray. Flashes of flame and whizzing bullets were coming from the rocks above the line. But of the Vultures themselves they could see nothing. (See page 27.)

the vicinity of No. 101, came charging down the wooden stairway.

"Have you got him? Have you got him, Mr. Locke?" cried Superintendent Grey, who, disguised as a waterfront tough, was the first into the place.

"I've got him all right," said Ferrers Locke grimly. "Gentlemen, allow me to introduce to you—Inspector Pycroft!"

For a few moments there was silence, broken only by the agonised "A-tish-oo" of the unlucky recipient of the cayenne pepper.

"Good heavens!" muttered the superintendent. "Then the complete kybosh has been put on our little stunt for to-night. Neither Kruse nor the Vultures will show up here now, even if they ever intended doing so. Why, there's a crowd of about a thousand strong collected in Portage Street by this time, you can bet."

"The lid has been put on it," said Locke a trifle bitterly. "Thanks to my old friend Pycroft trying to play a lone hand."

"A-tish-oo! A-tish-oo!" was the only comment from Pycroft.

Still, it was no good crying over spilt milk, and Locke and the police took a glance over the basement while the inspector was recovering from the effects of the cayenne. The place was in such a dirty state that it was almost unfit for human habitation. A few old newspapers littered the floor, together with other rubbish, such as tobacco-tins and odd bits of string. On the walls were tacked some old posters of the local Frivolity Theatre, bearing crude-coloured pictures, and announcements in large type.

The examination speedily convinced the superintendent there was nothing to learn, but he waited to hear Pycroft's story.

Still dabbing his eyes with a large red handkerchief, the unfortunate Scotland

Yard man apologised to Locke for his hastiness with the shooting-iron.

"Y'see, Mr. Locke," he explained, "when I reached Montreal I came down here in plain clothes to make a few inquiries in this quarter of the city. I scraped enough information to lead me to the belief that Kruse was hanging out at this place."

"Smart work, Pycroft! But why did you keep the information to yourself? Why didn't you seek the aid of the Canadian police in capturing the man? Had you done so you would have learned of the intended raid on this address."

Inspector Pycroft looked exceedingly sheepish.

"I was wrong, Mr. Locke," he admitted. "The temptation of bringing off the capture single-handed was too strong. I'm sorry that I mistook you for the crook, and mighty glad my aim was so rotten!"

"Yes," said Locke dryly, "so am I."

"Anyway, I caught one fellow," said Pycroft more brightly. "There was a dark-skinned chap in here when I came in about half an hour ago. I was sure I'd seen a description of a man similar to him among the files at the Quebec police-station."

"Dago Louis?" said Locke, with interest.

"That's the fellow. I wanted this place to myself, so I clapped a pair of darbies on the fellow and quietly sent the proprietor of this doss-house for a policeman. There happened to be one in uniform not ten yards from the building, and he took the dago in charge."

"It's seems wonderful, Pycroft," murmured Ferrers Locke—"a policeman on the spot at the very moment you wanted him! Remarkable, too, that we carefully arranged that no uniformed

member of the force should be in the neighbourhood until after eight o'clock!"

"No police officer has been in Portage Street the whole evening except a plain-clothes man, Mr. Locke," put in the Montreal superintendent. "I can absolutely swear to that."

Ferrers Locke turned again to the dis-comforted Pycroft.

"Can it be that you have been stung again, my dear Pycroft?" he said gently. "Can it be even that you may have handed over Dago Louis, the notorious railway bandit, to none other than Dr. Harvey Kruse himself? Oh, I hope not, Pycroft—I hope not!"

In truth, Ferrers Locke felt exceedingly bitter against his old friend. He had helped Pycroft out of many a mess in the course of his career, and now Pycroft had put his foot into it again—this time with the most serious results.

As Locke figured it, if the man to whom Pycroft had handed over the captive was no policeman at all, the fellow could only have obtained the uniform through a fancy-dress or theatrical costumer. Therefore, he sent Drake forth to telephone to each such firm in the city, or to get in touch with the proprietors by such means as seemed best and quickest. There were only three or four firms of this character, as the superintendent was able to say.

The superintendent himself left the basement to pacify the proprietor of the doss-house, who, naturally, was indignant about the raid on his premises. The other plain-clothes men also departed to help some of their uniformed brother-officers to dispel the crowd which had collected in Portage Street.

Ferrers Locke and Inspector Pycroft, very much chastened in spirit, remained in the room.

"Cheer up, Pycroft; we may be able

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to obtain some clue as to whether Kruse or any of the gang known as the Vultures have been here," said Locke at length. "From your description of the man you caught I should certainly think it was Dago Louis."

He nosed about the room, examining the bedding and the rubbish on the floor. Suddenly he stood bolt upright, a length of knotted string in his hand. For a few moments he looked at it in the light of the oil-lamp. Then he handed it to the inspector.

"Jove! We may have made an important find here, Pyecroft, or it may be nothing at all! What do you notice about this string?"

Inspector Pyecroft ran it through his hands and gazed at it as Ferrers Locke had done.

"It—it's a bit of string," he said at last. "Used for tying up a parcel, I should say, seein' it's got some knots in it."

"It has nineteen knots in it," said Ferrers Locke. "The string has been broken at the ends—not cut. It would take a powerful man to do that with his bare hands, Pyecroft. The man who tied those knots was the person who filled the oil-lamp on the table. By an examination of the lamp you may see that it was filled this evening, and there is fresh oil on this string. There are four pieces of string of different thicknesses to make this one length."

"H'm! But it doesn't get us much forrader," grunted the inspector.

"I'm not so sure of that," retorted Locke.

From his pocket he extracted a folding rule, and carefully measured the string and the distances between each of the nineteen knots.

"Unless I am greatly mistaken," he went on, "this is a string cipher. The string was hidden under that bedding in the far corner, and probably left for someone to find. Our problem now is to find the key of the cipher."

Then he suddenly gave a little exclamation of satisfaction.

"By Jove! The posters! Perhaps in one of those playbills on the wall lies the solution to the mystery!"

He took the string and measured it against the various lines of type on the posters. It took him but a couple of minutes to discover that the four lengths of various thickness of which the whole piece was composed would, if the string were folded in four, fit exactly the length of some lines of type on one of the playbills.

Allowing three-quarters of the string to hang loosely, Ferrers Locke fitted the thickest quarter across the top line of type.

"Take your notebook, Pyecroft," he said, "and write down the letters I call out. We may have to try the string the other way round if we get no result."

Holding the thickest quarter of the string on the type, five knots sat directly over five letters of the words of the poster. They were: "K C O R K."

The next thickest quarter of the string Locke put over the second line of type from the top of the playbill. He repeated the process with the remaining two-quarters. Then, having called out all the letters indicated by the knots, he looked at Pyecroft's notebook. The complete sets of letters there were these:

"KCORK CALB EHTHTA ENEB."

"Huh! A fat lot o' good that was!" said the Scotland Yard man. "We know as much now as we did when we started!"

Ignoring the remark, Ferrers Locke regarded the letters.

"Not so fast," muttered Locke. "Note that combination of the first three letters in the third section: 'EHT.' Twist 'em round. The result: 'THE.' That's a word. We'll try the process with the lot."

Taking the pencil from the inspector he rapidly jotted the letters down, beginning at the end of the fourth section and working backwards. The result now was:

"BENEATH THE BLACK ROCK."

"Eureka! We can read that!" cried the famous sleuth. "'Beneath the black rock'! That's English, though it doesn't read like sense! However, it's a clue, and I should bear it in mind and ruminate on it if I were you, my dear Pyecroft! That is what I intend to do!"

The return of Jack Drake put an end to further discussion upon the cipher. The boy brought tidings that a police uniform had been purchased from the shop of a theatrical costumier in the city that very afternoon. The description of the purchaser tallied somewhat with that which the police had of the notorious Dr. Kruse.

"Then I am convinced in my mind," said Locke, "that Kruse has thrown in his lot with that notorious gang of railway bandits, Dago Louis and the Anberg brothers—the Vultures of the Line. It tallies with my idea of what a versatile and cunning scoundrel such as Kruse would do. We know that the doctor has been sadly short of cash. Take my tip, there will be a daring attempt to rob the mails before we are many days—or many hours—older."

"Bless me, I shouldn't be surprised that you're right, Mr. Locke!" said the inspector. "But I think we shall lay Kruse by the heels before he can bring anything of that sort off. The police net is spread for him here, and I don't think he'll get through it!"

"He found a pretty big hole in the meshes of the police net at Quebec," Locke reminded him. "However, you might put Superintendent Grey wise to the discovery of the cipher, and, of course, I can rely on you to do all you can to assist in the capture of the astute doctor. Drake and I must catch the nine-forty train from Windsor Street Station for the West. We must be in Vancouver when the sandals arrive there. And, by the way, you might warn the railway company of the possibility of another hold-up so that they may put extra guards in the mail vans."

"I will, Mr. Locke. And thanks for your help."

Outside, in Portage Street, Locke and Drake took leave of their old friend, for they now had little time to spare to catch their train.

They had to walk a few hundred yards, and then they picked up a passing taxi. Returning to Mount Royal, they took leave of their host, Mr. Meech, and secured their bags. Then, without waiting to change from their shabby old clothes, they dashed to the railway depot and secured colonist berths for their trans-continental run through the forests, prairies, and mountains to the Pacific Coast.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Beneath the Black Rock

AS the Pacific Express rolled on its way across a continent, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake were not idle. They absolutely satisfied themselves that neither Kruse nor any of the doctor's new-found friends were on the train.

At Winnipeg, Calgary, and various other stopping places, the sleuth received special news from the superintendent of the Montreal police. One message was to the effect that it was believed that Dr. Kruse, Dago Louis, and the Anberg brothers had got into United States territory. Through the efforts of the Deputy Postmaster-General, Locke received, in cipher, the information that the registered parcel, about which he had inquired, was going West on the Pacific Express of the following day.

This was the most help that was rendered by the post office authorities. And Locke was duly grateful for the information. At least he knew where the parcel containing the sandals was. He knew, moreover, that he could reach Vancouver in time to see the mother of Edmond Goodenough before the arrival of the precious footwear.

During the long journey Ferrers Locke sought to elucidate the mystery of that curious cipher message he had discovered in Portage Street—"Beneath the black rock." Shrewdly he guessed that the knotted string cipher had been left by Dago Louis for Kruse himself to find.

It was in the Annotated Time-table of the railway company where he first obtained a glimmer of light on the mystery of the message.

Beyond the Rockies and in the heart of the Cascade Mountains, which run through British Columbia, parallel with the Pacific Coast, was a place called Spuzzum. The time-table stated it was two thousand, seven hundred and ninety-one miles from Montreal, and gave a spirited description of the grandeur of the canyon scenery. But what took the chief attention of Locke was the information that in the Fraser Canyon, just to the east of Spuzzum, there was a remarkable, dark-coloured mass of rock high above the railway known as the Black Rock.

The rest was theory, but to Locke's keen mind there was but one meaning to the cipher message. The Vultures, together with Kruse, were going to attempt a hold-up of a mail-train at this wild spot in the Fraser Canyon.

From Banff, in the Rockies, Ferrers Locke set the wires humming. Especially did he warn the representatives of law and order at North Bend, Spuzzum, and Yale, in the dread canyon, to be on the look-out for men answering to the description of Kruse & Co. Yet he knew that the only way by which the crooks might arrive in the Fraser Canyon before his own train, was by their taking one of the fast American fliers through the States. This they might conceivably do if any of the Vultures had money to finance the project. Even so, they would still have the risky task of crossing the border from the State of Washington, which is near to Spuzzum.

That his theory was right and that the amazing crooks had succeeded in reaching British Columbia, Locke was convinced upon arrival at the picturesque little town of Spuzzum.

A man from one of the small mining-camps between Spuzzum and the border reported having come across four men in an old bunkhouse who in some ways bore out the description of the wanted men. A posse was sent out, but could not get on the track of them.

Upon receiving this information, Locke made a quick decision.

"Drake, my boy," he said to his young assistant, "we will break our journey here and stay over until to-morrow. To-morrow's West-bound train contains the sandals amongst its registered mail. We must see that the train passes the Black Rock safely, and then we can travel the rest of the journey to Vancouver in it."

Closely questioning the man who had brought in the news from the mining-camp, Ferrers Locke extracted a piece of information that afterwards was to prove of tremendous importance. It was to the effect that the man who resembled Dago Louis had conceived a grudge against his associates. In the words of the miner, "he was sure fightin' mad, swearin' as he'd have revenge on his pards, 'cause he'd been double-crossed by 'em!"

A number of police from the small places along the line congregated quietly at Spuzzum, and put themselves under the command of the famous British sleuth. Each man wore leathern chaps over his trousers, a grey shirt, and Stetson hat. At his belt he carried two Colt revolvers.

A code wire received by Locke from Superintendent Grey of Montreal had informed him that armed guards were in the mail-vans of the passenger trains on their way West, and that the engineers and firemen had been armed.

The express which bore the sandals crept through the tortuous canyon in the dead of night. Her powerful headlight

illuminated the towering walls of rock on either hand, and the madly-racing torrent of the Fraser River far below the ledge on which the permanent way was laid.

Locke, concealed near Drake behind a great boulder, gave a sigh of relief that the hours of waiting had come to an end.

"There has been no sign of the Vultures, my boy," he whispered. "If nothing occurs within the next few minutes we will swing on to the train as she passes and return to Spuzzum."

Hardly had the words left his lips than there was a sharp report like a crack of the whip from the direction of the train slowly worming its way through the Canyon towards them. Then flashes of fire began to light the darkness behind the great snorting locomotive.

"The Vultures!" cried Drake, leaping out.

The boy dashed madly along the track towards the train. Locke, fleet of foot as he was, could barely keep at the heels of the excited youngster. The police, six-shooters in hand, bounded from their hiding-places.

And as the train, with a grinding sound, came to a stop, Locke, his assistant, and the police threw themselves into the fray. Flashes of flame and whizzing bullets were coming from the rocks above the line. Of the Vultures themselves they could see nothing.

For a time Locke and Drake replied shot for shot with their revolvers, firing at the flashes of their opponents.

But soon, to Drake's disappointment, Locke called a halt.

"My boy," he panted, "we must leave the scoundrels to the posse. The Vultures will try to beat back across

the border into the States, and they will have all their work cut out, too! Our job is to satisfy ourselves first as to the fate of the registered mails and the sandals."

Returning to the train, they found a group of men bending over two bodies. Both the engineer and the fireman, in their valiant efforts to repulse the attack on the train, had fallen victims to the guns of the foul miscreants. From the guards of the van Locke learnt to his intense relief that the registered parcels were absolutely safe, none of the bandits having succeeded even in securing a foothold on the train. One of the guards was positive that there were only three men concerned in the Canyon raid, a fact which Locke himself had estimated from the shots that were fired during the retreat of the outlaws.

He had just assisted to lift the unfortunate victims of the hold-up into the train when Jack Drake clutched his arm.

"Look, sir!"

Ferrers Locke followed the direction indicated by the boy, and gazed aloft up the mountain side ahead of the train, where the tumbled mass known as the Black Rock was silhouetted against the starry sky.

"By Jove!" he muttered. "There's a light up there!"

Who could be up there, by the Black Rock? Certainly none of the police. Then the remembrance of the miner's news of Dago Louis threatening his three companions came to the sleuth. Could the Dago be at that dizzy height? If so, what was his object? A flood of dreadful possibilities swept

(Continued overleaf.)

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THE QUEST OF THE PURPLE SANDALS!

No. 5.—The Vultures of the Line!
(Continued from page 27.)

the sleuth's keen brain, and his voice echoed loudly through the Canyon.

"All aboard! Get into the train—for your lives!"

He called to his young assistant, and, rushing forward to the giant locomotive, swung himself on to the foot-plate.

"Stoke the fire, my boy!"

Grasping the throttle, he gradually opened it. Slowly the wheels of the great engine, after racing, began to

grip the rails. And as the train swung through the Canyon towards Spuzzum, there was a blinding flash of flame high above by the Black Rock and an ear-shattering roar like heavy artillery. Immediately afterwards a great mass of rock came sweeping down the mountainside, tearing away the rails and sleepers behind the moving train as though they had been mere wires and matchsticks, the whole lot disappearing for ever in the foaming Fraser below.

So Ferrers Locke, the great British sleuth, and Jack Drake, black as tinkers, and running with sweat, brought the Pacific Express safely into Spuzzum.

While the newspapers of a Continent rang with their exploits, the two pro-

ceeded to Vancouver in that same train aboard which were the purple sandals. They learnt that the body of Dago Louis had been found killed by the shock of explosion in a cave from which he had fused the dynamite. Clearly the object of the madman had been to sweep his former associates who had double-crossed him into the raging river during their hold-up.

Those other Vultures of the Line, Fred and George Amberg, were shot by the posse during their attempted escape. But of the amazing Dr. Harvey Kruse, who was believed to have taken a leading part in the affair of the Canyon, nothing could be discovered. Kruse had vanished into thin air apparently.

(Another grand story next week, boys.)

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