

GREAT SCHOOL & DETECTIVE STORIES

INSIDE.

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The Magnet 2^d

Library

of
School & Detective Stories.

EVERY
MONDAY.



THE VAULT GIVES UP ITS SECRET!

A GRIM DISCOVERY BY THE FAMOUS FIVE!

(A startling incident from this week's grand story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars—inside.)

YO-HO FOR THE SPANISH MAIN!



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Marooned!

"Do you hear me, Señor Englishman? If you do not tell me the secret of the Caribs' Isle, you are a dead man ere the sun goes down! You are a buccaneer, remember, who has dared to come to the Spanish Main without permission, and I, as a captain of the King of Spain, have a right to hang you at my yard-arm! But I offer to let you live—"

"If I am a false coward and traitor to my comrades? No! A Spaniard can kill an Englishman, but he cannot make him show the white feather!"

Gerald Leigh did not speak boastfully, but his tones rang with cool resolution, although he well knew that his life was hanging in the balance.

He was as bold a young sailor as ever sailed the salt water, and his strength was proved by the fact that he was standing upright, despite that he was loaded with fetters so heavy that they would have crushed most ordinary men to the ground.

In addition, he was chained fast to the bulkhead in a close, gloomy prison-cabin aboard the San Jacopo, one of the largest galleons which ever sailed on the Spanish Main under the flag of the dons.

Confronting Gerald was a tall, thin man, whose dark face was as cruel as it was covetous, and whose magnificent dress proclaimed him the captain of the Spanish ship. He held a lantern above his head, for the cabin was so dark that he would otherwise have been unable to see the youth.

He was Don Balthasar de Cordova, a Spaniard who had made himself hated by his greed for gold and his cruelty to all English buccaneers who fell into his power.

The don ground his teeth at the young Briton's defiance, and then a pitiless smile wreathed his thin lips.

"Do not be so sure, señor!" he said. "You are one of a buccaneer crew, whose ship, the Rose, I attacked a week ago—"

"And were beaten off!" finished Gerald defiantly.

With a strangled curse, Don Balthasar dashed his clenched fist into the face of the young Briton, who was helpless to defend himself.

"Another such speech as that, you dog, and I will kill you at once!" he hissed. "The buccaneers got away from me, but in the fight your captain was in danger, and you saved his life, with the result that you were separated from your companions and captured by some of my crew. It was from one of my men that I learned the object of the buccaneers' voyage. He pretended to be one of you, and learned all he could of your secrets—"

"He was a foul traitor!" broke in Gerald, between his teeth. "We found him drifting in an open boat, apparently perishing of thirst and starvation, and he told us how you had set him adrift as a punishment. We took compassion on him and did all we could for him, and he repaid us by acting as a treacherous spy and doing all he could to betray us!"

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The captain of the galleon laughed sardonically.

"Antonio is a clever man," he said. "Now, mark me, señor. He has told me that while on the Rose he learned that an old buccaneer in Plymouth had told you that off the shore of Yucatan there is an island—the Caribs' Isle, the inhabitants of which are bloodthirsty savages, who kill all strangers who fall into their power, and who are the guardians of a vast treasure in jewels, which is hidden away so well that no white man could find it unaided. But there is a secret, and if any white man knew this secret he could go safely to the Caribs' Isle and force the Caribs not only to spare his life, but to obey him as their chief, and give up the hidden jewels to him. The old sailor told you the secret. You are the only white man in the world who possesses it, and who knows where the Caribs' Isle lies. You were guiding the buccaneers to the isle to seek the treasure when I took you prisoner. And now—"

The don paused, his eyes glittering greedily and more cruelly than ever.

"And now you will act as pilot to my galleon to the Caribs' Isle, and tell me the secret, so that I can force the savages to give me the jewels!"

"Never!"

"If you refuse, you sign your own death-warrant!"

"But Captain Royce and my buccaneer comrades will be alive. Perhaps they will find their way to the Caribs' Isle and win the treasure. I will not rob them of their chance by giving up the secret to you, Don Balthasar!"

Nothing in the shape of cruelty or threats that the don could devise could shake Gerald's resolution.

He was kept a close prisoner below, and the galleon sailed on.

One day at dawn the young buccaneer was dragged on the deck of the Spanish ship. Don Balthasar was there, and pointed toward an island, off which the San Jacopo was lying—a gloomy, desolate isle, which looked as if no living man had ever trodden it, and over which hung a brooding, ominous silence.

"That isle is uninhabited, Señor Leigh," said the Spaniard. "I have never seen it

before, but its appearance proves that it is a place of death and desolation. Do you know what I am going to do? If you do not pledge your word to guide me to the Caribs' Isle, and give me the secret of the savages, I will maroon you on yonder strand of death, and leave you to die! What is your answer?"

"No!"

Gerald spoke steadily. With features livid with rage and baffled greed, the Spanish don gave an order to some of his crew, and soon Gerald Leigh found himself marooned.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Alternative!

MAROONED! It was the most terrible word known to sailors in those days, for it meant being put ashore on a desolate, uninhabited isle, without food or weapons, and left to die of hunger and thirst, or be killed by wild beasts.

But the dons intended to treat Gerald even worse than this.

Landing on the isle, they carried the young buccaneer into the interior of the island until they came to a deep valley, which was like a swamp, with high, rank vegetation and brushwood growing on its sides. And in the valley were dreadful proofs that it was here that wild beasts dragged their prey. None of the terrible brutes were visible in the daylight, but it was certain that when night fell some fierce jaguar or puma would come creeping through the undergrowth.

In the heart of the valley Gerald was thrown down, bound hand and foot.

Don Balthasar bent over him. "I ask you for the last time, ere it is too late, señor, will you tell me the secret of the Caribs' Isle? Refuse again, and I will leave you to your doom!"

The young buccaneer answered by shaking his head. With a snarl of rage the don quitted the valley, his men following him; and then Gerald was alone, with nothing but death in its most fearful shape to look forward to.

The day dragged by on leaden wings of torture.

As the day wore on the sun rose high in the sky, and the intense tropical rays blazed down pitilessly on the youth; while millions of gnats and flies rose from the pestilential ground and buzzed round him in the heavy air.

Yet as he lay there, helplessly awaiting the fate from which he thought there was no hope of escape, he never regretted his refusal to buy his life from the don at the price of turning traitor to his comrades.

The day wore on, and the night came at last. The sun went down with tropical suddenness. For a brief while inky darkness reigned, and then the moon sailed into sight, casting a drifting, silvery illumination on the swamp.

"Savages, and my comrades of the Rose are in their power!"

The words leaped to Gerald's lips, and almost escaped him in a cry of amazed horror which, had it sounded, would have

(Continued on page 20.)

RIPPING

"ROYAL ENFIELD"

ROADSTERS

FOR READERS!

See next Monday's
Bumper Issue of the

"MAGNET."

*Treasure Trove, where dost thou dwell? I humbly crave,
Let me once know.
I sought thee in a secret cave,
And asked if you were there.
A hollow wind did seem to answer, No—
Go seek elsewhere.*



A Magnificent New Long Complete
Story of the Chums of Greyfriars
By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Only Way!

FISHER T. FISH stopped at the door of Study No. 1, in the Remove passage at Greyfriars, and grinned.

The study door was half-open, and the voices of the juniors within could be heard in the passage.

There were five juniors in the study—the Famous Five of the Remove. They were discussing a topic which, just then, was a great topic at Greyfriars—almost putting cricket itself into the shade. Fisher T. Fish grinned as he heard them.

"It's up to us!" Bob Cherry was saying, as he cracked his second egg—tea being on in Study No. 1.

"That's so!" agreed Nugent.

"The upfulness is the foregone conclusion!" That remark, of course, came from Hurree Janset Ram Singh, whose English, learned under the most learned moonshee in his native country of Bhanipur, had not changed very much since he had come to Greyfriars. "But the howfulness, my esteemed chums, is a boot on the other leg!"

Whereat there was a chuckle in Study No. 1.

"We've got to find a way!" declared Johnny Bull.

"Yes, rather!"

"The beaks are down on it," said Harry Wharton, captain of the Remove. "But—"

"Oh, blow the beaks!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Who cares for the giddy beaks? Besides, we're not going to tell them. If there's a jolly old treasure hidden around Greyfriars—and it really does look like it—we're the little men that are going to find it!"

"Hear, hear!"

Fisher T. Fish kicked the door wide open, and entered the study. He grinned and nodded to Harry Wharton & Co.

"You galoots chewing the rag about the pesky old treasure—what?" he asked.

"Yes; and we don't want any help!" answered Johnny Bull. "Run away and play, Fishy!"

Fishy smiled serenely, closed the door, and leaned on it.

"I guess that's the very subject I've moseyed along to speak to you galoots about," he said. "You see, I'm on in this! Just a few! I figure it out that if there are any dollars lying around loose, this infant is the particular galoot that is going to rope them in."

"Well, get on with it!" said Bob Cherry.

"I guess I've got a proposition to make," explained the Transatlantic junior. "The whole school is agog with this bizney now. Bunter has been lined for nosing round the vaults door—though he couldn't get in without a key, the fat mugwump. Coker of the Fifth says he is going after the loot. Now, look here, I'm willing to take you fellows in—"

"You've taken us in too often," said Bob, with a shake of the head. "We're not to be taken in again."

"Oh, don't be a funny ass!" urged Fisher T. Fish. "This is a serious matter. I've heard yarns about a buried treasure at Greyfriars ever since I came to the school, and I've never believed a word of it. Now it looks as if there might be something in it."

"It does!" agreed Wharton.

"I'm out to unairth it, if it's there," resumed Fisher T. Fish. "But nothing can be done without getting down into the school vaults—and the vaults are out of bounds, and the door's kept locked. That's put a lot of fellows off it."

"Well, it's a bit of a difficulty," grinned Bob Cherry. "Can't butt in through an oaken door some inches thick. And there's no other way in that's known—though there's supposed to be ways in that are unknown. But as we don't know where to look for them, that doesn't help us."

"We want the key!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"The wantfulness is great, my excellent and fatheaded Fishy!" said Hurree Singh.

"The Head's got one key," went on Fisher T. Fish. "Goodness knows where he keeps it, and, anyhow, it would be a risk trying to raid the Head's key. Gosling, the pesky o'd porter, has the other key, and keeps it on a rack in his lodge. That's the key we want."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I fancy nearly every fellow in the school has been after that key, the last week or two," he said. "Temple of the Fourth offered Gosling a quid to lend it to him. But the Head's jolly strict on it, and Gosling didn't dare to close on the offer. He reported Temple, and he got fifty lines."

"I guess we're going to rope in that key, all the same," said Fisher T. Fish. "That's our game."

"But it would be missed at once—"

"And then there would be a terrific hullabaloo," said Bob Cherry. "The Head would be wild."

"I guess it wouldn't be missed," said Fisher T. Fish, with a grin of superior knowledge. "I want that key in my hands for two minutes—that's all!"

"What the thump—"

"I've got the wax—"

"The what?"

"The wax, to take an impression of the key," said the Transatlantic junior coolly. "Then I can get another one made like it, and we can let ourselves into the vaults any old time we like."

"My hat!"

Harry Wharton & Co. stared at Fisher T. Fish. Since the topic of the supposed Greyfriars treasure had been revived, the Famous Five were as keen as any to get on the track of it. But the difficulties in the way seemed almost insuperable—and certainly they had never thought of taking a wax impression of the key.

"I say, that sounds a bit burglarious!" said Frank Nugent.

Fisher T. Fish sniffed.

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"Where's the harm?" he demanded.

"Well, there's no harm, but—"

"We want to let ourselves into the vaults," said Fisher T. Fish. "We've got to have a key. If Gosling's key is taken, there'll be a row at once, and the vaults will be watched. But we're going to get after that treasure. It means breaking bounds, but we've done that before, and can do it again. With a new key we can handle the stunt."

"That's so," agreed Wharton. "But—but—"

"Well, that's where you galoots come in," said Fisher T. Fish. "I've been spotting Gosling. He always locks up his lodge when he goes out of it—no chance of getting at the key then. Less chance still when the old clam is at home. Well, you galoots are going to draw him."

"Oh! Are we?" said Bob doubtfully.

"That's the game. You rag him out of his lodge, and I'm just round the corner, ready to nip in. I take the impression of the key, and absquatulate, instant. After that, it's all plain sailing—what?"

"Not quite," said Wharton. "Looks to me as if we're going to be the cats-paws, and you're going to get the chest-nuts. Where do we come in?"

"We go Co. in hunting for the giddy treasure—see?"

"Well, that's all right. But the treasure—if any—won't be long to us, if found! I believe half of any treasure trove goes to the Government, by law."

"Oh, we won't tell the pesky old Government anything about it, you say!" said Fisher T. Fish impatiently.

"And the other half, I believe, will belong to the school Foundation," said Harry, unheeding. "The discoverers will be entitled to a proportion of it, I believe."

"It's the fun of the thing," said Bob Cherry. "Besides, we should get a whack in it if we found it. Enough to buy me a new bat."

Fisher T. Fish gave an angry snort.

"Can't we keep our mouths shut if we find it?" he demanded. "Do you want to sing out the news to the whole county of Kent?"

Harry Wharton looked at him rather grimly.

"If we found the treasure we should do exactly what is right and legal, and we'd jolly well see that you did the same," he answered. "This country is England, you know, not the Yew-nited States. You can keep your own manners and customs for Noo Yark."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Right you are," said Fisher T. Fish, unexpectedly amicable. "We needn't row about the thing before we've found it, like the jolly old hunters who divided the bear's skin before they had killed the bear. Are you fellows on?"

He eyed the Famous Five eagerly.

Harry Wharton & Co. discussed the matter while they finished tea, the Transatlantic junior waiting impatiently.

Their final decision was that they were "on."

Fisher T. Fish's proposition seemed, indeed, the only way of getting beyond the obstacle of the oaken door that barred access to the vaults. Once free of that, there was a chance of tracking down the treasure, if it existed. The chums of the Remove were by no means assured that it existed. But undoubtedly they enjoyed the prospect of a treasure-hunt in the dim and mysterious recesses of the ancient vaults under the school.

"It's a go!" said Harry Wharton at last, as they rose from the table.

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"Good man!" said Fisher T. Fish approvingly.

"It's understood that the new key will be common property among us, and that we all go con," said Harry categorically. He knew the slippery ways of Fisher T. Fish, and he did not want any misunderstanding.

"That's so, if you whack out equally to pay for the key. It will cost seven-and-six at least."

"That's understood."

"Then come on!" said Fisher T. Fish. And the six juniors left Study No. 1 and walked out into the green quadrangle to open the campaign against Gosling's lodge.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Gosling on Guard!

WILLIAM GOSLING, the ancient porter of Greyfriars, grunted, and grunted again.

Gosling was not famous for his good temper. He was, indeed, well known for the reverse.

Of late, Gosling's crusty temper had grown more and more crusty. Boys of all or any sorts were always a trial to Gosling. His fixed opinion, often stated to Mr. Mumble, the gardener, was that the universe would be a much more agreeable place if all boys were "drowned" at birth. Occasionally Gosling found solace in reporting some junior for some delinquency. Nevertheless, he felt that his path was a thorny one at Greyfriars School. And since the school had been buzzing with talk of the supposed treasure, Gosling had found his path more thorny than ever.

For Gosling was in charge of the key to the vaults, and every fellow at Greyfriars wanted that key. Bribes had been offered to Gosling for the loan of it. Gosling did not feel insulted by the offer of bribes. He felt an inward pang at having to refuse them. But he knew that it would not do, the Head's injunctions with regard to that key being so very strict. So Gosling sighed, and reported the would-be bribers.

Other fellows had sought to raid the key—a step which led to more reports and several canings. Gosling was fed up with the whole thing. The idea of a treasure hidden about the place he characterised as "dratted nonsense." And he grew crosser and crosser with every attempt made to obtain possession of the key to the vaults.

Gosling was sitting by his open lodge door now, basking in the summer sunshine and smoking his pipe. He grunted and grunted again as a fat figure came rolling up the path to the lodge. The figure was that of Billy Bunter, and Gosling knew what he wanted long before he arrived. The Owl of the Remove had made a dozen attempts already to get hold of the key. Now he was going to make the thirteenth.

Billy Bunter's manner was very polite as he stopped at the lodge door. He smirked at Gosling his most agreeable smirk.

"Nice afternoon, Gosling!" he said.

Grunt from Gosling.

"Lovely weather for a walk!" said Bunter.

Grunt!

"I'll tell you what, Gosling," said the fat junior confidentially, "if you'd like to take a little stroll I'll sit here for a bit and look after your lodge for you."

Grunt!

"I'll see that nobody gets after that key, you know," said Bunter fatuously.

Grunt!

"I say, Gosling, old chap—"

"Go away!" grunted Gosling.

"I'm offering to do you a favour, Gosling," said Bunter, with dignity.

"I'll report yer!"

"I—I say, Gosling, is that somebody at the gate?" asked Bunter.

"No, it aint."

"Hadrn't you better go and see?"

Grunt!

"By the way, Gosling, I forgot to mention it, but the Head wants to see you in his study," said Bunter, blinking at the old gentleman through his big spectacles. "You'd better go at once. Dr. Locke doesn't like to be kept waiting, you know."

Grunt!

"Are you going, Gosling?"

"No, I ain't going," grunted Gosling.

"You can't pull my leg, Master Bunter! I'll report yer!"

Billy Bunter snorted. Evidently Gosling was too "wide" to listen to the voice of the charmer. Gosling took a stump of pencil from his pocket and opened a grubby little book. In that grubby book he wrote down Bunter's name.

"You'll get a 'undred lines for this, Master Bunter," said Gosling, with stolid satisfaction. "I 'ope Mr. Quelch will cane you, I'm sure."

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter rolled away, disappointed and annoyed. Gosling grinned, and resumed his pipe.

Coker of the Fifth came strolling down to the porter's lodge. Gosling eyed him warily. Coker gave him a lofty nod.

"That young Remove cad after the key, Gosling?" he asked.

"Yes, Mr. Coker."

"I hope you didn't let him have it?"

"Certainly not!"

"That's right, Gosling," said Coker, with a nod of approval. "The cheek of these fags is really getting too thick. I'm glad to see that you know your duty, Gosling."

"Ho!" said Gosling.

Praise from Coker was praise indeed—in the opinion of Coker. In the opinion of common mortals it did not amount to any great value. Gosling did not seem delighted at having won the great Coker's approval.

"By the way," went on Coker of the Fifth condescendingly, "I've been thinking I'd like to have a look at the vaults, Gosling."

"Ho!"

"You might let me have the key for a few hours. You can, of course, trust it to a senior."

Gosling opened his grubby little book again, and wetted his stump of pencil and scribbled. Coker eyed that proceeding in surprise.

"What are you up to, Gosling?" he asked.

"Putting your name down, Mr. Coker," said Gosling grimly. "You're the seventh to-day, so far. I'll report yer!"

Horace Coker breathed hard. Potter and Greene, his chums in the Fifth, who were waiting for him on the path, exchanged a wink and grinned. Coker, the great man of the Fifth—the greatest man at Greyfriars in his own estimation—was to be reported, like a common or garden fag of the Third or Second Form!

Coker of the Fifth eyed Gosling for a moment or two, greatly inclined to take the crusty old gentleman by the scruff of the neck and bang his ancient head against the lodge door. But Coker restrained that natural inclination, and walked away in a state of high dudgeon.

Gosling grinned—a crusty grin. There was solace in reporting fellows for coming after the forbidden key; the matter was a worry to Gosling, but it had its pleasant side!

His crusty grin changed into a crustier frown ten minutes later, when a dusky complexioned junior appeared on the path. It was Hurree Jamset Ram Singh of the Remove, and he came up to the porter's lodge smiling a dusky, agreeable smile. Gosling prepared to enter down another name in his list of delinquents.

But the Nabob of Bhanipur did not mention the key. Apparently he was not thinking of that article.

"Good-afternoon, my esteemed Gosling!" he said. "It is a terrific pleasurefulness to see you looking so good-tempered, so handsome, and so young and bloomful."

"My heye!" said Gosling, in surprise.

"Have you any objection, my excellent and ludicrous Gosling, to my esteemed self standing here for a few minutes and regarding the transcendent beauty of your countenance?" asked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh gravely.

Gosling turned purple.

He could not report this. Had Hurree Jamset Ram Singh made the remotest allusion to the key of the vaults, his name would have gone down at once. But a junior could scarcely be reported to the Head simply for asking permission to gaze at Gosling's beautiful countenance. Yet, somehow, Gosling found this much more annoying.

"You clear hoff, you young rip!" he said gruffly. "You ear me? You ook it!"

"But the pleasurefulness of gazing upon the ludicrous countenance of the excellent Gosling is terrific——"

"Ook it!" roared Gosling.

"The beauty of that physiognomy is unusual and terrific. The expression of good-humour and cheerful benevolence is grateful and comforting. The——"

Hurree Singh broke off suddenly. Gosling made a clutch at a stick that leaned on his chair, and the Nabob of Bhanipur made a sudden jump out of range. Gosling waved the stick.

"You clear hoff!" he bawled.

And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh smiled a dusky smile and cleared off. While he had held Gosling's attention a thin, wiry, skinny figure had sneaked cautiously round the lodge, and was now in cover round the corner. Fisher T. Fish was ready—all ready to dodge into Gosling's lodge as soon as the Famous Five had succeeded in drawing Gosling from his lair.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Drawing Gosling!

BOB CHERRY strolled cheerily along to Gosling's lodge a few minutes after Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had retired. Gosling glared at him. He began to think that this was a concerted "jape" on the part of the Famous Five, and that he had the whole cheery Co. to deal with one after another. In which surmise Gosling showed unusual perspicacity. Bob nodded brightly to the old gentleman.

"Arter that there key—what?" snorted Gosling.

"Key!" repeated Bob blankly. "What key?"

"Which you know very well what key, Master Cherry," growled Gosling. "And you're arter it—I know that. Go away with you!"

"I was going to speak to you about that gargoyle, Gosling," answered Bob.



"Good-afternoon, my esteemed Gosling," said Inky. "It is a terrific pleasurefulness to see you looking so good-tempered, so handsome, and so young and bloomful." "My heye!" said Gosling in surprise. "Have you any objection to my esteemed self standing here a few minutes and regarding the transcendent beauty of your countenance?" continued Hurree Singh gravely. Gosling turned purple. "You clear hoff, you young rip!" he said gruffly. (See Chapter 2.)

"That what?"

"That gargoyle," said Bob. "What are you doing with a gargoyle in your lodge? I've a jolly good mind to report you!"

Gosling looked perplexed.

"There ain't any gargoyle in my lodge," he said. "What the dickens are you talking about?"

Bob stared at him.

"Mean to say you don't know it's here?" he exclaimed.

"Course I don't—and it ain't!" growled Gosling. "If there's a blooming gargoyle in this 'ere 'ouse, you point it out, that's all!"

"Oh! My mistake!" ejaculated Bob. "It looked like a gargoyle. It quite took me in. But it's only your face, old bean!"

"Wot!" roared Gosling.

"Look in the glass, old man, and you'll see how any fellow might be taken in the same way!"

Gosling gurgled.

"On second thoughts, though, don't," added Bob. "It might crack the glass!"

Gosling jumped up. For Gosling to administer corporal chastisement to Remove fellows was unheard of—impossible, in fact. Nevertheless, Gosling gripped his walking-stick, with the obvious intention of administering it to Bob Cherry. Human patience had its limits. He jumped towards Bob—and Bob vanished at a great speed. He stopped at a little distance to kiss his hand to Gosling, and then disappeared among the elms.

Gosling sat down again, breathing hard. "Cheek" was a thing that Gosling did not like, but it seemed scarcely

possible to report Bob for mistaking his face for a gargoyle!

"Hallo, old scout!" Johnny Bull strolled up, and Gosling eyed him truculently. "Enjoying this jolly weather, Gosling?"

"Huhhhhhhh!"

"Nice afternoon—what?"

"Huhhh!"

"There's something I wanted to speak to you about, Gosling."

Gosling's eyes glinted. The request for the key was coming at last. Bull, at least, could be reported.

"What is it, Master Bull?" asked Gosling, almost genially. The wily old gentleman was actually leading Johnny on!

"I was bottled in the history class to-day," said Johnny Bull.

"Eh?"

"So I thought I'd ask you about it, Gosling," said Johnny innocently. "Was the Spanish Armada in 1588 or 1589? You remember?"

"Wot?"

"As you were living at the time, you ought to know— Oh, my hat!" yelled Johnny Bull, as Gosling made a lunge at him with the walking-stick.

Gosling was touchy about his age. He owned to fifty-nine years. But that was modesty on his part. He had more than that. Fags in the Second confidently averred that Gosling was a hundred years old—indeed, that he had been porter at Greyfriars for a hundred years or more. But to be asked whether he remembered the Spanish

Armada was a little too much. Undoubtedly that had been before Gosling's time!

Johnny Bull caught the end of the walking-stick with his ribs. He yelled and jumped away.

"Owl! You silly ass!" he roared. "Now you clear off!" hooted Gosling. "I'll give you Spanish Armadas! I'll report yer! You 'ook it!"

Johnny Bull hooked it. He gasped as he hooked it; and he warned Frank Nugent, who was next on the list, to look out for Gosling's walking-stick. Gossy was, he warned him, getting dangerous.

So Frank Nugent was very wary as he came up to the lodge. But his wariness did not save him.

Gosling was quite assured by this time that this was a "rag," and that he was to be bothered by all the members of the famous Co. one after another. So he did not wait for Nugent to speak. He only waited for him to come up, and then, without a word, he lunged out with the walking-stick.

Nugent leaped back just in time.

"Owl! I say—" he ejaculated.

"Worriting me like this 'ere!" roared Gosling. "I'll—" He jumped after Nugent.

Frank Nugent stood not upon the order of his going, but went at once. He rejoined his chums at a distance.

"Man in, Wharton!" grinned Bob.

"Look out for his stick!" said Nugent. "He's getting jolly dangerous. He's seeing red by this time!"

"I'll look out!" said Wharton, laughing.

Gosling was not surprised to see the captain of the Remove bearing down on him. He had expected it. He sat with the stick across his knees, his eyes gleaming, ready to lunge as soon as Wharton came within lunging distance. Gosling was simmering with fury by this time, and more than ready to take the law into his own hands in dealing with these cheeky Removites.

Harry Wharton sauntered up cheerily.

The object of the Famous Five was to entice Gosling out of his lodge, and give Fisher T. Fish a chance; and it looked as if they were on the point of accomplishing it.

"Gosling, old man—"

The captain of the Remove got no further than that. Out came the walking-stick lunging at him. But Wharton was wary; as the stick lunged out he dodged it, and caught the end in his hand and jerked it away. He put it under his arm and strolled off.

Gosling, for a moment, stared after him blankly.

Then he jumped out of the doorway. "Bring that there stick back 'ere, Master Wharton!" he roared.

The captain of the Remove seemed deaf. He walked on, with the stick under his arm.

"You 'ear me?" bawled Gosling.

Wharton did not seem to hear.

The exasperated Gosling rushed after him. And as he rushed Fisher T. Fish whipped round the lodge and stepped in at the open door. Fishy knew where the key-rack was; his keen eyes had been on it many times and oft. In a second or two the key of the vaults was in his bony hands, and he was pressing the wax on it to take the impression. Meanwhile, Gosling was rushing after Wharton, his ancient, crusty face crimson with wrath.

"Gimme that stick, you young rascal!" he exclaimed, catching the captain of the Remove by the shoulder.

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"But you gave it to me, old scout!" protested Wharton.

"Give it 'ere!"

Gosling clutched at the stick. Harry Wharton held on to it. Gosling pulled at one end, and Wharton pulled at the other. There was a laugh from a dozen fellows who came round to look on at the entertaining scene.

"Tug-of-war," said Vernon-Smith of the Remove. "Two to one on Wharton in doughnuts. What takers?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Leggo that there stick!" roared Gosling.

"Go it, Gossy!"

"Go it, Wharton!"

"Pull devil, pull baker!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"I'll report yer!" hooted Gosling. "I—I—I'll—"

"What the thump is all this?" exclaimed Wingate of the Sixth, coming up. "What are you doing, Wharton?"

"Giving Gosling some exercise," explained the captain of the Remove. "Good for his lumbago, you know."

"You young ass!" said the captain of Greyfriars, laughing. "Let go that stick at once."

Out of the corner of his eye Wharton spotted Fisher T. Fish sneaking stealthily out of the lodge. He grinned, and let go the stick.

"ROYAL ENFIELD" BICYCLES FOR READERS! See Next Week's MAGNET!

The Famous Five faded away, and Gosling returned, grunting, to his lodge. A sudden suspicion came into his crusty mind, and he looked at the key-rack. But the key of the vaults was still there, hanging in its place. If there was any trace of wax in the wards Gosling, naturally, did not notice it.

In the old gateway of Greyfriars the Famous Five foregathered, with Fisher T. Fish, in great glee.

"Got it all right?" asked Bob.

"Sure!"

"Good man!"

"Now I guess I'll mosey down to Courtfield and get the new key made," said Fisher T. Fish. "You galoots shell out. I want eighteenpence off each of you, and I'll stand the rest."

And Fisher T. Fish trotted away to Courtfield in great spirits, to call on the locksmith.

That evening, in the junior Common-room, Harry Wharton & Co. smiled when they heard fellows discussing the ways and means of getting into the locked vaults to hunt for the Greyfriars treasure.

In a few days the new key would be ready. The chums of the Remove would be in possession of the "Open sesame."

If the vaults were explored, and the hidden treasure discovered, the heroes of that great exploit were going to be the Famous Five—which, in the opinion of those cheery young gentlemen, was exactly as it should be!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Very Deep of Fishy!

"TIME Fishy was back," remarked Bob Cherry.

It was three days later, and the Famous Five had gathered in Study No. 1 to tea.

Fisher T. Fish, immediately after lessons, had wheeled out his bike to ride down to Courtfield, to call at the lock-

smith's for the new key. The chums of the Remove were rather impatiently expecting his return.

They were keen to begin the treasure-hunt.

That treasure was still the great topic at Greyfriars. Recent events had brought it to the fore.

All the school knew now that a fellow named Blagden, who had been at the school years before, had discovered some clue, though in what the clue consisted was not known.

Whatever it was, it had led him to believe that the legendary treasure actually existed, and his attempts to find it were still the talk of the school. He might indeed have found it during his school days at Greyfriars had he not been suddenly expelled from the school for bad conduct.

All Greyfriars knew, of course, that Blagden had recently succeeded in getting a post at the school as junior cricket coach—that, under cover of this, he had stolen Gosling's key to search the vaults, and that Mr. Quelch had discovered him in the act. All Greyfriars knew that the desperate man had attacked Mr. Quelch in the vaults, and was now in prison—an effective "finis" being thus written to his quest for the treasure. That shady "Old Boy" of Greyfriars had no further chance in the matter. But it was certain that there would be no lack of treasure-seekers.

But it was necessary to be very wary indeed, for the Head was very strict in forbidding access to the vaults; and rightly so, for those dim and ancient recesses were full of dangers for explorers. The fellows acknowledged that the Head was right; but they wanted to explore the vaults all the same, and were continually on the look-out for chances.

Some of the fellows wondered why Dr. Locke did not institute an official search for the treasure. But the explanation was simple—the Head did not believe in its existence. Blagden's belief in it he regarded as folly, the outcome of greed. So far as the Head was concerned the matter was at an end. But so far as some of the Greyfriars fellows were concerned the matter was very far indeed from being at an end. In fact, it was only at the beginning!

Bob Cherry stood at the study window and looked out. With the new key in their hands, the Famous Five intended to begin the exploration of the school vaults that very night, after lights out. They were looking forward very keenly to the expedition. Bike lamps and electric torches had been prepared in readiness. As for the dangers of the quest, the chums of the Remove gave them little thought. They were quite convinced that they could take care of themselves.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Fishy!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, at last, as he sighted a bony figure wheeling a bike below.

"Oh, good!" said Wharton.

A few minutes later Fisher T. Fish came up to the study. He nodded and grinned to the Famous Five as he came in, and if there was a peculiar gleam in Fishy's sly eye the chums of the Remove did not observe it.

"Got it, Fishy?" asked five voices together.

"Yep!"

"Hurrah!"

There was keen satisfaction in every face.

"I guess it cost seven-and-sixpence," said Fisher T. Fish. "You galoots stood the spondulics, and I've had the trouble of getting the job done; that's a fair division, I guess."

"That's all right," said Harry Wharton. "You needn't shell out any of



"Gimme that stick, you young rascal!" roared Gosling. "Give it 'ere!" "But you gave it to me, old scout," protested Wharton. Gosling clutched at the stick and pulled at one end, and Wharton pulled at the other. "Tug-of-war!" said Vernon-Smith, grinning. "Two to one on Wharton in doughnuts. What takers?" "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors. "Go it, Gossy—go it, Wharton!" (See Chapter 3.)

your dollars and cents, Fishy. I know it would give you a pain."

"I guess—"

"Well, let's see the key," said Bob. "Wharton had better take charge of it."

"Sure!"

Fisher T. Fish plunged his hand into his jacket pocket, apparently in search of the key.

Then a startling look came over his keen, bony face.

"Jerusalem!" he ejaculated.

His hand came out empty.

"Don't say you've lost it, you thumping ass!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"Waal, how could I lose it?" said Fisher T. Fish. "But it don't seem to be in the pocket, for sure."

"Sure you put it in that pocket?"

"Yep."

"Is there a hole in it, fathead?"

Fisher T. Fish turned out the lining of his pocket, with a very serious countenance. There was a large hole.

"Well, you benighted chump!" said Frank Nugent, in utter disgust. "You've lost the key!"

"The chumpfulness is terrific!"

"Bang goes seven-and-six!" said Bob Cherry ruefully.

Fisher T. Fish looked very contrite.

"I guess I'm sorry for this, you galoots," he said. "I reckon I opined that I had that key safe."

"You ass!"

"You footling chump!"

"You terrific dummy!"

All the members of the Co. had something to say to Fisher T. Fish, and all of them said it emphatically. There was to be no "open sesame" after all; their hopes were dashed to the ground at one fell swoop! The expedition planned for that night was off—very much off!

"I guess it can't be helped," argued Fisher T. Fish. "No good grousing at a galoot. You see—"

"You burbling jabberwock!" said Bob Cherry. "Now we've got to do the whole thing over again."

"I guess that won't be easy," said Fisher T. Fish thoughtfully. "Old Gosling is too jolly wary."

"Do you think we're going to give up the stunt?" roared Bob.

"Oh, Fishy's a silly ass!" said Harry Wharton. "We'll manage it without Fishy."

"Yes, rather."

"He ought to shell out the seven-and-six, after losing the key," said Johnny Bull.

"I guess not!" said Fisher T. Fish very emphatically.

"But can't we get another made?" asked Nugent. "I suppose if the locksmith could make one from the wax impression, he could make another?"

"Yep; only I guess I've chucked it away."

"Well, you footling ass—"

"This is what comes of letting that silly ass butt into the thing at all!" exclaimed Bob Cherry in disgust. "We've wasted three days, and lost seven-and-six, and now we've got the job to do again. Bump him!"

"Hyer, I say! Hands off!" roared Fisher T. Fish indignantly.

But the chums of the Remove were wrathful, and they were indignant. They collared Fisher T. Fish and bumped him on the study carpet. There was a loud concussion, and a louder yell.

"Yarooop!"

"Give him another!"

"I say, I guess—Ow! Yaroooh!"

Bump!

"I guess I'll make shavings of you, you galoots!" yelled Fisher T. Fish, sitting on the study floor and gasping. "I guess I'll make potato scrapings of you! Ow!"

"Give him another!" roared Bob Cherry.

Fisher T. Fish leaped to his feet and fled. He dodged out of Study No. 1, and sprinted along the Remove passage as if he were on the cinder-path. The door of Study No. 14 slammed at the other end of the passage.

Harry Wharton & Co. sat down to finish their tea—disappointed and greatly annoyed. After tea, Bob strolled down to Gosling's lodge and looked in. It was very hard to give up the treasure-hunt, after all the arrangements had been

made; and Bob had designs on the key hanging on Gosling's rack. Gosling was there, and he gave the junior a crusty grin.

"Arter that there key?" he asked.

"Hem!"

Gosling pointed to the rack. There was an empty hook on it.

"You'd better tell the others, and then p'raps they'll leave off worritting a man," he said. "I've took that there key to the 'Ead—"

"Oh, dear!" gasped Bob, in dismay.

Gosling chuckled.

"I've 'ad a warning about that there key," he said. "And I ain't taking any chances with it. So I've took it to the 'Ead and asked him to lock it up, which he's done it, too. Go and ask the 'Ead for it, Master Cherry. Ho, ho, ho!"

Bob Cherry walked away, quite rueful and dismayed. There was not the remotest possibility of getting at the key when it was in the Head's possession. What "warning" Gosling could have had about the key was rather a mystery, but Bob did not worry about that. He realised that the planned treasure-hunt was "done for." He rejoined his comrades in Study No. 1, and imparted to them the dismal news.

"Dished!" said Johnny Bull.

"The dishfulness is terrific!"

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter's fat face and big spectacles glimmered in at the door. "I say, that rotter, Fishy—"

"Blow Fishy!" growled Bob.

"I say, you fellows, you ought to rag him, you know," said Bunter. "He's spoiled the game for all of us, you know. I'd jolly well lick him myself, only—"

"Well, what has he done now?" asked Harry.

"I heard him warning Gosling—"

"Eh?"

"If he doesn't want to look for the treasure himself, the beast, it's no bizney of his to queer the pitch for us, is it?" demanded Bunter indignantly. "Like his beastly cheek to butt in and warn Gosling about the key?"

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"Fishy warned Gosling?" said Bob Cherry blankly.

"I heard him," asserted Bunter. "I was hanging about the lodge, looking for a chance, and I heard him speaking to Gosling inside."

"But what—why—" ejaculated Wharton in amazement.

"He told him that if he didn't take care of that key, some fellow would get at it for a minute or two, and take a wax impression of it," said Bunter.

"What!" roared the Famous Five together.

"Gosling fairly jumped at the idea," said Bunter. "He hadn't thought of that—he'd only thought of fellows trying to pinch the key itself, of course. Now he's taken it to the Head to be locked up. Now we can't get at it. I say, you fellows, I was going to stand a ripping spread in the Rag, if I'd found that treasure. I think you ought to rag Fishy—interfering cad, you know!"

And Billy Bunter rolled away, fuming with indignation.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at one another.

"Now, what the thump does that mean?" said Bob Cherry at last. "Fishy's lost the new key, and at the same time he's tipped Gosling to get the old one locked up, so that it can't be got at. Doesn't he want to hunt for the treasure himself?"

Harry Wharton knitted his brows.

"Has he lost the new key?" he said quietly.

"Eh?"

"Fishy is a jolly slippery customer. It looks to me as if he has fooled us, and has got the key all the time," said the captain of the Remove, frowning.

Bob Cherry gasped.

"But—but even Fishy wouldn't be such a rotter—such an awful outsider! Why, we paid for the key!"

"Fishy would call it business, I suppose. Anyhow, he was keen enough on hunting for the treasure, and now he's made it impossible to get at the old key."

"It looks—" said Nugent.

"My hat, I'll get hold of the cad and wallop him till he owns up!" roared Bob, in great indignation.

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"That won't do! You cannot wallop truth out of Fishy—there isn't any in him. If he's got the key, he's playing a dirty trick on us, and he won't own up! Let him rip! But—"

"But what?"

"One of us will stay awake in the dorm to-night and keep an eye on Fishy. If he gets up after lights out that will settle it. Then we shall know what to do."

"I'd rather punch him!" growled Bob.

"The punchfulness is not the proper caper, my esteemed fatheaded Bob," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "Let us keep the watchful eye on Fishy to-night, fully and catch him on the esteemed hop."

And the chums of the Remove agreed to that. That evening they gave Fisher T. Fish more attention than usual, and they observed that many times a sly and satisfied grin adorned his bony countenance. Fisher T. Fish looked as he generally looked when he had brought off an astute stroke of business, and by bed-time the suspicion of Harry Wharton & Co. was very near a certainty.

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THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Tracking a Trickster I

"YOU galoots asleep?"

It was a cautious whisper in the Remove dormitory when the hour of midnight had tolled out from the clock-tower.

One "galoot," at least, was awake, and smiled grimly in the darkness as he heard Fishy's cautious whisper.

Harry Wharton made no movement and no sound. He waited.

Fisher T. Fish sat up in bed and blinked up and down the long, lofty room, with its row of white beds glimmering in deep dusk.

There was deep and steady breathing on all sides, and a dull, rumbling snore from William George Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish stepped stealthily out of bed. He had whispered, to make sure that the Remove were asleep; he was sure that they were by that time, but the cautious Fishy wanted to make assurance doubly sure. Now he was satisfied, and he stepped out and dressed quickly and quietly in the dark.

Harry Wharton did not raise his head from his pillow, but he could see dimly the figure of the Transatlantic junior against the glimmer of light from one of the high windows. Only Wharton was awake. It had been agreed that he should keep watch; it was useless for five fellows to stay awake, at the risk of falling asleep over lessons in the morning. Wharton smiled grimly and made no sign. He heard Fisher T. Fish tread softly and stealthily to the door; there was a faint sound as the door opened and shut. The Transatlantic junior was gone.

Then the captain of the Remove stirred.

He stepped out of bed and shook Bob Cherry by the shoulder.

"Groogh!" murmured Bob.

"Wake up, old man!"

Bob started and rubbed his eyes.

"What's up?"

"He's gone."

"Fishy!"

"Yes!"

"Oh! Time we were gone, too, then!" mumbled Bob sleepily. And he rolled out of bed and reached for his clothes.

Hurree Janset Ram Singh was already turning out; the murmur of voices, faint as it was, had awakened him. Johnny Bull and Frank Nugent had to be shaken, but they turned out cheerily enough at the news that Fisher T. Fish was up and doing.

The five juniors dressed in the dark as quietly as they could. But two or three Removites woke up.

"What's on?" called out Peter Todd drowsily. "Who's that?"

"Little us," said Bob.

"What's the game, then?" asked Bolsover major. "Raid on the Fourth? If so, I'm on!"

"No, nothing of that sort!"

"They're going down to the Cross Keys, old beans," came in a chuckling voice from Skinner's bed. "Naughty!"

"You cheeky ass!" growled Bob Cherry. "I'll jolly well bring my bolster over to you, Skinner—"

"Quiet, old man!" murmured Wharton.

"Is it a giddy treasure-hunt?" asked Squiff, sitting up in bed. "You must be asses to turn out at night for that! Why not leave it for a half-holiday?"

"You can't get into the vaults, anyhow," said Russell. "You're a lot of asses! Don't kick up a row; let a fellow go to sleep."

Without answering any questions the Famous Five finished dressing, put on

their rubber shoes, and left the dormitory. Some of the Remove fellows made sleepy surmises as to what was "on," but nobody was very keen on the subject at that time of night. The juniors went to sleep again, leaving Harry Wharton & Co. to their own devices.

Quietly and cautiously the five juniors descended the stairs.

They knew that Fisher T. Fish was well ahead of them, and was doubtless in the school vaults by that time. He was not likely to guess that he was pursued; but it was necessary to be cautious, all the same. At that hour all Greyfriars was asleep, and it would have been a serious matter for the juniors to be caught out of their dormitory by a wakeful master or prefect. Their object in leaving their beds would have been guessed; and an attempt to get into the forbidden vaults at midnight would certainly have led to a flogging.

Silent in their rubber shoes, the juniors entered the vaulted passage which led to the old stone arch where was set the ancient oaken door leading down to the vaults.

They groped their way along it in the dark and reached the old oak door, and Wharton passed his hand over it. It was closed.

He soon discovered, however, that it was no longer locked. It opened to his touch.

Beyond was darkness and the heavy, cold air of the vaults.

"That settles it!" whispered Bob Cherry. "Fishy's got the key all right, and he's gone down."

"The settlefulness is terrific."

"The awful cad!" breathed Johnny Bull indignantly. "That dashed key was actually bought with our money."

"It's ours," said Nugent quietly, "and we're going to get hold of it. Let's follow him down, Harry."

"Follow on!" said the captain of the Remove.

He turned on his electric torch to light the way down the winding stone stair into the vaults.

One after another the juniors trod down the old stair, the door being pushed shut behind them.

At the bottom of the stair Wharton turned off the light.

In the distant darkness, far down the series of grim old vaults, a twinkling light was seen.

"There's Fishy!"

"Quiet!" whispered Wharton.

"Let's collar the cad!" said Johnny Bull impatiently. "He's sold us out, the rotter! We're going to have that key!"

"Yes, rather!"

"We're going to make him sorry that he played that dirty trick on us," answered Harry Wharton. "He's going to be fed-up with exploring vaults at midnight. I've brought a sheet from my bed."

"What on earth for?"

"To pull Fishy's leg, and make him sorry that he came here alone and diddled us."

There was a soft chuckle.

"Good egg!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Fishy isn't a giddy hero—I rather wonder he's got the nerve to come here on his own anyhow. If he sees the giddy ghost of Greyfriars he will leave off thinking about dollars and dimes, and think about his precious skin. Go ahead!"

"Shush!"

The light ahead was moving along the vaults. Harry Wharton & Co., feeling their way in the darkness, moved on silently towards it, guided by the glimmer of the light. Hidden by the darkness, they drew nearer and nearer to the unsuspecting Fishy.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Phantom of the Vaults!

FISHER T. FISH held up his lamp, and stared round him with his keen, sharp eyes.

The light showed the ancient stone arches of the vaults, with more than one dim, damp passage among the old arches leading off into unknown darkness.

Fisher T. Fish looked very thoughtful. He realised that he had set himself a big task.

The vaults under Greyfriars were of immense extent; they extended not only under the school, but under the old ruined wing of the ancient monastery, and under part of the playing-fields, where in old days other buildings had existed. To explore the vaults was a long, laborious task—a task before which anyone might well have quailed. Only the thought of a hidden treasure could have spurred on Fisher T. Fish to the heavy task.

He was in great hope, however, that such an extensive exploration would not be needed. From what was known of what the man Blagden had said, there existed a clue in the vaults—a clue which had convinced Blagden of the existence of the treasure. That clue was what Fishy hoped to find; and he sagely opined that it could not be far out of sight, or Blagden would never have seen it in the first place. For Blagden of the Sixth, in his old days at Greyfriars, had used the vaults as a secret rendezvous for smoking and card-playing—for that object he had been there, and the discovery of the clue to the treasure must have been more or less accidental. Fisher T. Fish had thought it all out, and his idea was that the clue, whatever it was, would be found within some short distance of the stairs.

Possibly it was some sign cut in the stone flags of the floor—or in the stone arches. Possibly it was some painted indication on the old walls. It was probable that the old smugglers or pirates, who were supposed to have used the vaults by means of a secret tunnel from the caves at Pegg, had marked the route, in some way, through those dim and dismal recesses.

So Fisher T. Fish—for the present, at least—was hopeful. What had caught Blagden's eyes long years before was not likely to escape the keen hawk-eyes of a cute galoot who had been raised in Noo Yark. Fishy was quite sure that he was miles ahead in cuteness of any inhabitant of the played-out old island in which he now sojourned. If any person at Greyfriars was capable of unearthing the treasure, surely that person was Fisher Tarleton Fish, of the Remove.

So far Fishy had unearthed nothing but darkness and damp and cobwebs. Cobwebs were there in immense quantities—horrid-looking spiders scuttled from the light of his lamp. From the deep hollows of the vaults faint, indefinable sounds came. Fishy wondered whether it was the boom of the sea echoing along the tunnel from the caves—if such a tunnel really existed. He did not like those sounds, and he looked over his shoulder a good many times. The vaults were deep and dark and lonely; and Fisher T. Fish was not of the stuff of which heroes are made. He had a creepy feeling about him, which he strove to shake off, without much success.

The trick he had played on the chums of the Remove did not worry the worthy Fishy in the least. If fellows let themselves be taken in, it was their "funeral," that was how Fishy looked

at it. Any galoot was welcome to take him—Fishy—in, if he could! Fishy was quite sure that any galoot couldn't.

Fishy was examining a dark arch when a faint, echoing sound in the vaults behind him made him start. He glanced over his shoulder again, his heart beating unpleasantly.

All was darkness there—save for one spot, where something white glimmered faintly from the gloom.

Fisher T. Fish fixed his sharp, startled eyes on that white spot, breathing quick and hard.

What was it?

His heart beat faster and more unpleasantly—a curious choking feeling came into his throat, and his bony knees knocked together.

What could it be?

To a keen, sharp, spry, cute galoot like Fisher T. Fish, the mere idea of ghosts was ludicrous. In the daylight Fishy would have laughed the idea to scorn. He did not feel like laughing now, alone in the deep, eerie vaults at midnight.

The white patch in the darkness was moving—it was advancing towards him. It was a moving figure—all white; a figure draped in white from head to foot.

Fisher T. Fish staggered back against the stone arch. The lamp almost dropped from his hand, but he held on to it convulsively.

The white figure came on.

It entered the next vault to Fisher T. Fish, and there it seemed to fade away into the solidity of a stone arch.

Fisher T. Fish stood leaning on the wall, his breath coming in gasps, the lamp shaking in his trembling hand.

From the hollow vaults came a deep, dismal groan. It echoed through the darkness with a sound that seemed to Fishy like thunder.

Groan!

"Oh, gosh!" mumbled Fisher T. Fish. Groan!

He detached himself from the wall with an effort. He was not thinking of buried treasure now. He was only thinking of getting out of that dreadful vault—back to the upper air, back to human companionship, before grisly fingers closed on him.

He ran for it, and lights and shades danced wildly round him from his lamp as he ran. The whole series of vaults were peopled with phantom figures to the terrified eyes of the Transatlantic junior.

"Oh gum!" he gasped.

Groan!

That deep and terrible groan was quite near him, and it caused the skin to move on Fishy's horrified head. His very flesh was creeping with horror.

He put on a desperate spurt, and reached the stairs that led to the upper regions. One glance he gave behind him there, and he caught a glimpse of the white figure again.

Then he went stumbling desperately up the steps. He lost his footing in his wild haste, and fell, barking his shin, and gave a howl of pain. A deep groan answered from the bottom of the stair. In utter horror the terrified junior



"How'd you like me to call a prefect after you, or Quelchy?" demanded Fisher T. Fish threateningly. "Do!" said Bob Cherry cheerily. "If we're caught here, Fishy, we'll give you such a ragging that your features won't be recognised when you go home to Noo Yark!" "I guess——" "Oh, kick him!" growled Johnny Bull. "Yaroooh!" roared Fishy, as Bob's boot came into play. "Ow! Yowp! You mugwump—yooop!" (See Chapter 8.)

looked round. The white figure was ascending the stairs after him!

"Ow!" spluttered Fisher T. Fish.

He tore on up the stone stairs in mad, desperate hurry. His lamp crashed on the wall and went out, and he was left in darkness. He dropped the useless lamp and tore on, scrambling wildly up the winding stair.

It was only a matter of seconds, but it seemed to Fisher T. Fish years before he reached the oaken door above. It was shut, as he had left it. He dragged at it desperately, his heart throbbing with terror, his bony limbs shaking from head to foot.

There were sounds behind him—sounds as if of pursuit. In frantic terror Fisher T. Fish groped at the oaken door, and got it open. He burst through into the passage beyond, and pulled at the door to shut it. It swung to, but did not quite close. Fisher T. Fish dragged and dragged at the heavy oaken door, but still it did not shut, and he could not lock it. Somebody—something—was holding it from the other side.

In the darkness Fishy could not, of course, see that it was a foot that had been placed in the way. Quaking with terror, he dragged at the door, and then he was conscious that it was being pulled open from the other side. The Thing—whatever it was—that had pursued him up the stair from the vaults—was trying to get the door open.

Fisher T. Fish let go the door and fled.

Terrified as he was, he had thought of locking the door of the vaults; but he was not thinking of it now. The key was still in his pocket, as he raced away, and the door was still ajar. If it was found open on the following morning, undoubtedly there would be trouble; but such considerations were trifles light as air to Fishy now.

He ran for the Remove dormitory, palpitating with terror, careless even if he was heard.

He burst into the dormitory, still palpitating. A startled voice came from one of the beds.

"Hallo! Who's that?"

Fisher T. Fish did not answer. His throat was dry—his tongue cleaving to the roof of his mouth. He could not have spoken.

He plunged headlong into bed, and pulled the blankets over his head. That seemed the safest place now to Fisher T. Fish. He did not even trouble to remove his clothes. Dressed as he was, with even his boots on, he covered himself with the blankets, and lay, squirming with terror.

It was a disastrous and inglorious end to Fisher T. Fish's treasure-hunt!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Not a Ghost!

"HA, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Quiet!" gasped Harry

Wharton. "Don't wake the house, you fellows. We don't want to be spotted here."

The Famous Five could not help chuckling.

They were gathered at the top of the winding stair, and it was Harry Wharton's boot that was inserted to prevent the oaken door closing. They had heard Fisher T. Fish's scared footsteps die away along the passage, and knew that he was gone. Bob Cherry turned on his electric torch, and the chums of the Remove grinned at one another in the light.

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"Poor old Fishy!" gasped Bob. "He really hasn't the nerve for butting into the giddy vaults at midnight. Ha, ha, ha!"

"I dare say he wishes by this time that he hadn't spoofed us," grinned Johnny Bull.

Wharton folded up the sheet, chuckling. A close inspection of the ghost would have revealed to Fishy that the grisly phantom was only a Remove fellow with a sheet over his head. But Fishy had been thinking of anything but a close inspection of the ghost.

"The silly ass!" said Harry. "I had to get after him quick, or he would have locked us up in the vaults! He must have thought that the giddy ghost was holding the door."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let's get out," said Nugent.

Wharton pulled the oaken door open, and the Famous Five emerged into the passage. Fisher T. Fish was already back in bed in the Remove dormitory.

The captain of the Remove closed the oaken door. It was impossible to lock it, as Fisher T. Fish had the key.

"I say, suppose Quelch or somebody fuds this door unlocked in the morning?" whispered Bob.

"It's got to be locked before anybody's up," said Harry. "Fishy's got the key. Come on."

In a merry mood, the Famous Five made their way to their dormitory. They entered quietly, and Wharton closed the door. But quietly as they moved there was some slight sound; and from a junior whose head was buried under bed-clothes there came a muffled howl of fear. To Fisher T. Fish it seemed that the grisly phantom of the vaults had followed him home to the dormitory.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, is that a rat squeaking?" asked Bob Cherry.

"What's the row, Fishy?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Eh?"

Fisher T. Fish sat up in bed, and his pallid face stared at the juniors in the dim light from the high windows.

"Who—who—who's that?" he gasped.

"Little us."

"Oh Jerusalem! I—I thought—I—I guessed—Oh, dear! I say, you galoots been out of dorm?"

"Looks like it," answered Harry.

"I—I say, have you—have you seen anything?"

"Seen anything! What was there to see?"

"Oh, nothing!" gasped Fishy.

"Have you been out of dorm, too, Fishy?" asked Bob Cherry gravely.

"Oh, nope! Not at all."

"Hallo! You fellows got back?" yawned Peter Todd. "Where have you been, you duffers?"

"Had a good time at the Cross Keys?" yawned Skinner.

"Go and eat coke!" retorted Bob politely.

Fisher T. Fish stared at the five as they turned into bed. His first spasms of terror were over now, and suspicion was dawning in his mind. He realised that it was a coincidence, at least, that the Famous Five had been out of the dormitory at the same time that he had seen the ghost in the vaults. That suspicion, as soon as it entered his mind, was enough to enlighten Fisher T. Fish.

"Why, you pesky mugwumps!" he said. "It was you!"

No answer.

"You hear me, Wharton?" Fisher T. Fish's narrow, sharp eyes gleamed with wrath. "You pesky jay, you've played me for a sucker! You've been pulling my leg!"

There was a chuckle from five beds,

and that was the only answer Fisher T. Fish received.

He laid his head on his pillow again, his feelings almost too deep for words.

He realised now that the Famous Five had suspected his trickery, and followed him to the vaults. He realised that the "ghost" was only a member of the Co. arrayed in a white sheet. And—now that he was cool, and his customary sharpness had revived—he realised that when the ghost had vanished into the solid arch, that amazing phenomenon was only due to the junior in the sheet stepping into one of the side passages in the vaults.

Fisher T. Fish's terrors were gone now. But it was long before he slept. He was in such a state of wrath that he yearned to turn out of bed, and drag the Famous Five out of bed one after another and hammer them. But he did not yield to that natural desire—the consequences would have been too painful to Fisher Tarleton Fish. Fishy had to consume his own smoke, as it were; and long after the Famous Five had dropped off to sleep, Fishy was still wide awake and boiling with rage.

But he slept at last.

He was awakened by a shake, and opened his tired eyes and blinked. The early rays of the summer sun were creeping in at the windows of the Remove dormitory, but it was not yet time for the rising-bell to clang out and call Greyfriars up to a new day.

He blinked, and stared at Harry Wharton.

"Leggo! What's this game? 'Tain't rising-bell!" he growled.

"Another ten minutes," agreed Wharton, with a nod.

"Waal, let a galoot alone."

"I want the key."

"What key?" snarled Fisher T. Fish.

"The key of the vaults."

"You can want."

"The door's got to be locked, before it's found unlocked," explained the captain of the Remove. "Hand it over."

"Sha'n't!"

Harry Wharton smiled.

"Will you hand the key over, Fishy, or shall I bump you out of bed on your neck, and take it?" he asked.

Fisher T. Fish glared at him. It was futile to deny that he had the key, now that he knew that the Famous Five had followed him to the vaults. But he was extremely unwilling to give it up. He glared, and hesitated.

Wharton took a grip on Fishy's bony neck.

"Out you come!"

"Ow! Leggo! I'll lend you the key!" gasped Fishy.

"Sharp, then!"

Very reluctantly Fisher T. Fish handed over the key. Harry Wharton slipped it into his pocket, and left the dormitory. Only an early housemaid was about, and it was easy for the captain of the Remove to slip into a remote passage unseen, and lock the oaken door. Then he put the key into his pocket and walked cheerily away.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Left!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were feeling a little drowsy that morning, but otherwise they were in very cheery spirits.

That afternoon was a half-holiday, and the Famous Five intended to spend the afternoon in the vaults if they could. Now that they had a key to the door it was only a matter of slipping along the

vaulted passage unseen by masters or prefects and whipping in at the arched doorway. And although they were prepared, if necessary, to explore the vaults at night, after lights out, they greatly preferred exploring in the daytime. Nodding over their lessons, the result of missing their sleep, was too likely to draw upon them the gimlet eye of Mr. Quelch, their Form master.

So their plans were laid for the afternoon, plans in which Fisher T. Fish had no part. During morning lessons Fishy eyed the chums of the Remove in turn with anxious and unresting eyes. He had had to give up the key. His trickery was known to the juniors he had sought to deceive, and Fishy knew what he deserved. What worried him was the apprehension that he was going to get it.

After lessons he sought Harry Wharton, working up as ingratiating a grin as he could.

"I guess we've got a chance this afternoon," he said.

"A chance of beating Redclyffe?" asked the captain of the Remove, appearing to misunderstand. "My hat! What do you know about cricket, Fishy?"

"Blow cricket!" said Fisher T. Fish, in great disgust at the bare idea that he should have brought down his powerful Transatlantic intellect to such a low level. "Cricket! Great gophers! I guess I'm not thinking about cricket. You galoots playing Redclyffe at cricket?"

"The fixture's to-day," said Harry.

"Right-ho, then! I'll have a squint round the vaults while you're busy," said Fisher T. Fish eagerly.

Harry Wharton smiled.

"We sha'n't be busy," he answered. "I've asked Smithy to captain the side this afternoon, and he's taken it on."

"Look hyer," urged Fisher T. Fish, "you don't want to run any risks with a cricket match. Think of the record! Smithy's all right, but you're really wanted in the match, Wharton. Go in and win! You hand me over that key, and I'll take a squint —"

"Oh, the Bounder will see the game through all right," said Harry, laughing. "And he's got a good team—quite good enough for Redclyffe. Five of us are standing out. We're going grubbing after giddy treasures."

"Waal, if you're set on it, you can come," said Fisher T. Fish, with a sigh. "I guess I'd better take charge of the key, though."

"Guess again!"

"Look hyer, Wharton, that's my key!"

"I don't quite see how you make that out. We paid for it to be made, and it seems to me that it's our key," said Harry Wharton coolly. "You pretended you'd lost it to cheat us. But I suppose an attempt at swindling doesn't make it your key, does it?"

Even Fisher T. Fish had the grace to blush.

"Waal, you—you see——" he stammered.

"I see," assented Wharton. "I see that you're the kind of spoofing rotter I've always believed you, Fishy. And you can see that you're out of this now. You're not going to touch the key, and you're not coming down into the vaults either."

Fisher T. Fish jumped.

"Not coming?" he roared, in alarm. "Me not coming?"

"No. If you found anything you'd keep it dark and swindle us, as you tried to do over the key. I suppose you don't expect anybody to trust you?"

"Look hyer, I'm coming!" howled Fishy.



"Feels solid enough," said Bob Cherry, and he raised his foot and stamped hard on the old flag-stone. The next moment a wild yell rang through the subterranean passages. The light that had gleamed on Bob Cherry gleamed on a square opening in the stone floor—and Bob had vanished from the sight of his comrades.

(See Chapter 9.)

"Do, if you like. We'll roll you down the steps if you do!"

With that Harry Wharton turned his back on the Transatlantic junior and walked away, leaving Fisher T. Fish in a most unenviable frame of mind. Once more it was borne in upon the astute mind of Fisher T. Fish that honesty was the best policy. With the key in his possession he had striven to exclude the Co. from the treasure-hunt, and he had prided himself upon his wonderful cuteness in so doing. On his own principles it was quite all right for the Co. to exclude him, now that the key had changed hands. So on his own astute principles he had nothing to grumble at. Nevertheless, he did grumble—loudly, incessantly, and emphatically. Somehow or other, cute sharpness did not seem so admirable when it was directed against his Transatlantic self.

After dinner Harry Wharton & Co. watched for an opportunity of getting to the vaults unseen. No special observation was kept on that quarter, as the masters were quite ignorant of the existence of the new key, and the old keys were safely locked up. Vernon-Smith of the Remove, with Peter Todd, Squiff, Tom Brown, Redwing, and the other members of the cricket eleven, went down to Little Side to meet Redclyffe.

The Bounder had willingly consented to captain the Remove side for the match, and as it was not a very difficult fixture the captain of the Remove had no hesitation in leaving it in his hands. A big fixture would have driven all thoughts of treasure-trove from the minds of the Famous Five, but the Redclyffe match was safe in second-rate hands.

So while the cricketers were busy, and most of the other fellows were out of

doors, the Famous Five strolled about the House with an air of careless unconcern, looked at the notice-boards, chatted in the passages, and finally, when they were safe from observation, made a dive into the vaulted passage that led to the oaken door in the arch. And there they found Fisher T. Fish waiting for them in the dim light of the gloomy old passage.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There he is!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What the thump are you here for, Fishy?"

"I guess I'm waiting for you galoots!" growled Fisher T. Fish.

"You're going to wait here till we come back?" asked Bob innocently.

Snort from Fisher Tarleton Fish.

"I guess I'm coming with you, you mugwumps!"

"I guess not!" chuckled Bob.

"Didn't we agree to go co. in this hyer bizney?" demanded Fisher T. Fish excitedly.

"Oh, chuck it!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "You diddled us, and we've done with you. Hook it!"

"I guess——"

"Look here, Fishy, we're done with you!" said Harry Wharton quietly. "We did agree to go co., but that drops, as you played false. But if we find anything you will take an equal share. We shall keep faith, though you wouldn't. But you're not going to take a hand. You're too dashed dishonest. Is that plain enough?"

"You'll get your whack if there's anything found," agreed Bob Cherry.

"What more do you want?"

Fisher T. Fish eyed the juniors morosely. As a matter of fact, he wanted much more than that. Having failed to exclude the Famous Five from

the quest, he hoped still to find some clue that he would be able to keep to himself. But it was a case of once bitten, twice shy. The chums of the Remove declined to have anything further to do with him at all.

Wharton glanced back along the dusky passage. The coast was clear. He inserted the key into the ponderous lock and turned it back. The heavy oaken door swung open.

The five juniors passed through, and Fisher T. Fish, not to be denied if he could help it, pressed after them. The key could not be inserted in the lock from the inside of the door, so it had to be left unlocked. The five turned on him.

"Stand clear, you fellows!" said Bob Cherry, swinging back his right boot.

Fisher T. Fish jumped back hurriedly.

"Look hyer, you galoots—"

"Buzz off, Fishy!"

"How'd you like me to call a prefect after you, or old Quelch?" demanded Fisher T. Fish threateningly.

"Do!" said Bob Cherry cheerily. "If we're caught here, Fishy, we'll give you such a ragging that your features won't be recognised when you go home to Noo Yark!"

"I guess—"

"Oh, kick him!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Yaroo!" roared Fisher T. Fish, as Bob Cherry spun him round, and planted upon him a large size in boots. "Ow! You mugwump! Yooop!"

The door closed.

"Oh, Jerusalem!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

He stood staring wrathfully at the old oak of the door. He was shut off from the exploration of the vaults. True, he could have opened it and followed the explorers, but he realised that that would simply amount to a request for further kickings—a request that would have been cheerfully, promptly, and energetically complied with.

"The pesky mugwumps!" groaned Fisher T. Fish.

He hesitated to follow the explorers, and he hesitated to leave the spot. He remained there, like an exceedingly bony Peri at the gates of Paradise.

"Fish!"

"Oh, gum!"

Fisher T. Fish spun round at the sound of Mr. Quelch's voice. The Remove master was looking along the passage.

"What are you doing there, Fish?"

"N-n-nothing, sir."

"Nonsense!" Mr. Quelch came along the vaulted passage. "Have you been making any attempt to open that door, Fish?"

"Nauno, sir!"

Mr. Quelch eyed him suspiciously, and eyed the door. He could not see that it was unlocked, and Fish wondered whether he would make the discovery. But as Mr. Quelch knew that the key to that door was safely locked up in the Head's study, he naturally did not think of trying the door.

"I am afraid, Fish, that you were thinking of making some foolish attempt to open that door," he said.

"Oh! Nope, sir! Not at all!"

"Then what are you doing here?"

"Hem! Just strolling round, sir."

"Nonsense! You will take a hundred lines, Fish."

Fisher T. Fish's eyes gleamed. Harry Wharton & Co. were in the vaults, seeking the mysterious treasure—and Fisher T. Fish was left out—to receive a hundred lines. It was too much for Fishy.

"The fact is, sir, I—I think I ought to tell you, sir—" said Fish cautiously.

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"Well, what?" snapped the Remove master.

"This hyer door, sir, ought to have been locked," said Fish.

"It is locked, Fish. It was locked after the police came here, in connection with the man Blagden."

"I guess not, sir!"

"Nonsense! Gosling was instructed to lock it, and I have no doubt that he did so."

"I've jest found out that it isn't locked, sir," said Fisher T. Fish. "Gosling couldn't have turned the key, sir—jest thought he had, that's all."

"Nonsense!"

Mr. Quelch, however, tried the door. It opened to his hand.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Remove master.

Fisher T. Fish grinned.

"I am glad you have told me this, Fish," said Mr. Quelch. "Evidently Gosling did not lock the door as he supposed. I will fetch the key from the Head's study and lock it immediately. You need not do the lines I mentioned, Fish."

"Thank you, sir."

Five minutes later the door was safely locked, without any suspicion on Mr. Quelch's part that he was locking five members of his Form in the vaults. Fisher T. Fish strolled out of the House, and walked down to the cricket field, with a grin on his bony face. He felt that he had scored off the Famous Five now. They had the key, and it was useless now to Fisher T. Fish. It was equally useless to them, as the door did not unlock from the inner side.

Fishy chuckled, as he thought of their feelings when they sought to emerge from the vaults.

"I guess they'll have to hammer some, to get out!" murmured Fisher T. Fish. "I guess they'll have to hammer hard, and then Quelch will have to get the key again and let them out—and I kinder reckon they won't be pleased at the meeting!"

Fishy chuckled again. It was quite a pleasant thought.

"I guess they'll be sorry they left this infant out," he reflected. "Quelch will take their key away—that will bar them off, I reckon. And I'll get that key away from Quelch somehow, later on—for sure. I guess them galoots will be sorry that they tried to take a rise out of a galoot that was raised in Noo Yark."

And Fisher T. Fish sat contentedly in the grass, in the shade of a tree by the cricket field—but not to watch the cricket. Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing were putting up a great innings against Redclyffe, but it did not interest Fisher T. Fish. With a notebook and a stump of pencil, Fisher T. Fish was making an account of all the money—it was not much—that he had spent since Christmas, and as there was a penny he could not account for, Fishy was soon deep in mental research, forgetting all about the juniors who were shut up in the old vaults, and indeed about everything but his abstruse calculations.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Shut In!

"**N**OTHING doing!"

"And it's tea-time!"

"I'm hungry!"

"Same here!"

"The samefulness is terrific!"

Harry Wharton smiled rather ruefully. Hours had passed in the exploration of the dim old vaults; and the sum total of the Famous Five's discoveries was—nil.

Really, they had not expected much more than that. Still, it was a disappointment.

Hours spent in the old vaults, with their heavy, damp air, had not been exhilarating. By that time the juniors were not wholly glad that they had left the cricket to the Bounder and his comrades. Cricket and sunshine seemed wonderfully attractive, in comparison with the dusky vaults under the school.

Whatsoever might be the clue the man Blagden was supposed to have discovered, the Famous Five had seen nothing of it. Up and down and round about they had gone, by the light of a bike lamp and electric torches, but only the endless old stone arches had rewarded their searching gaze.

"After all, Rome wasn't built in a day," said Bob.

Johnny Bull grinned.

"If this jolly old hunt is going to take as long as the building of Rome, we're in for a good thing," he remarked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Nil desperandum," said Nugent. "Let's chuck it and get out to tea, anyhow. We can come here whenever we like."

"The tealfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed chums. Let's."

And Harry Wharton & Co., a little tired, and still more fed-up, ascended the winding stair to the oaken door above. Wharton pulled at the door, but it did not open.

A startled look came over his face.

"Something's wrong with this," he said.

"Oh, it's a bit stiff!" said Bob. "Let me get hold of it!"

Bob Cherry grasped the massive old iron knob, and tugged. But the stout oaken door did not budge.

The fact dawned upon all the juniors that it was locked. And their key could not be put into the lock from the inner side; there was no opening on that side.

They blinked at one another in the light of the bike lamp.

"My hat!" Bob Cherry whistled. "This is no end of a catch! Some silly ass has spotted that the door was unlocked—"

"Or Fishy has given us away!" growled Johnny Bull.

"My hat! If he has, I'll—"

"It isn't that," said Harry Wharton. "Only the Head's key would lock the door—so it must have been a master that locked it. No master would lock it, knowing that we were in the vaults."

"That's so."

"Quelch generally has an eye on this quarter," groaned Bob. "I dare say he got watchful, as it's a half-holiday. Anyhow, the door's locked now—and what the thump are we going to do?"

"Goodness knows!"

The juniors stood in dismay.

By hammering on the old oak they could have attracted attention in the long run, though probably after a long wait. Release would have come, to be immediately followed by a visit to the Head's study. It had been officially announced that a flogging would be the reward of any bold explorer who succeeded in getting into the vaults. A flogging, and the confiscation of the new key, did not attract the Famous Five. Yet it was difficult to see what else could be done.

"My hat! Fancy Quelch's face when he comes to let us out!" groaned Nugent. "We're for it, and no mistake!"

"The flogfulness will be terrific!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh lugubriously.

(Continued on page 17.)



EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

THIS week we are rising to dizzy heights, so to speak, by publishing a Special Climbing Number.

There is something breathlessly thrilling in the thought of a big climb. Quite a lot of fellows would cheerfully give a term's pocket-money to be allowed to take part in the Mount Everest expedition. They would also like to have a shot at scaling the Matterhorn, in Switzerland. But, alas! Whenever a Greyfriars fellow feels in a mountain-climbing mood he must be content with climbing on to the gym roof by means of a rain-pipe, and thank his lucky stars if he escapes a broken neck!

Even Billy Bunter has the climbing fever, though I fancy the fat porpoise would not be able to climb far. He might manage a small hill about a hundred feet above sea-level, but that would be about the limit of his achievements. Can you imagine Billy Bunter squatting on the summit of Vesuvius? And can you picture his wild panic if an eruption happened and fire and flame started spurting out of the summit?

The fat junior describes his most famous climbing feat in this issue, but you are cautioned not to believe a word of it. Bunter is an old hand at telling the tale, and his hair-raising experiences have only taken place in his fertile imagination.

Among the daring and intrepid climbers in the Greyfriars Remove are David Morgan, who is quite at home among the Welsh mountains; Wun Lung, who is a clever acrobat as well as a climber; and Micky Desmond, who can climb trees with the agility of a monkey. The champion tree-climber at Greyfriars, however, is Dicky Nugent. That fearless youngster will tackle any tree that lifts its head to heaven. He hops from branch to branch like a squirrel, and performs deeds of daring—or shall we say foolhardiness?—which scare and startle his comrades down below. Alonzo Todd declares that Dicky will one of these days fracture his vertebrae, or, in common parlance, break his neck. Frank Nugent's minor is certainly a young scapegrace, and he often finds himself "up a tree" in more senses than one!

I do not claim to be a wonderful climber myself, though I am very fond of going on climbing expeditions during the holidays. It is great sport. I often wonder that our poets have not sung more often of the joys of climbing. A

Supplement i.]

mountain peak should be a jolly fine place to get inspiration. But perhaps poets don't go in for Alpine climbing. One of our greatest bards wrote a charming poem commencing:

"I stood tiptoe upon a little hill."

Why didn't he have a shot at scaling Mount Everest? He would have found it a jolly sight more exciting! Still, so long as my reader chums find this number exciting, nothing else matters.

HARRY WHARTON.

CLIMBING CHATTER!

By Bob Cherry.

WHEN asked by Mr. Quelch to define the Alps, Billy Bunter answered: "The Alps, sir, are the natives of Algeria!" We always thought the latter were called Algerians, but we bow to Bunter's superior knowledge!

Another amusing episode in the Form-room was when Skinner was asked where Mont Blanc was. He promptly replied: "At Rylcombe Grammar School, sir!" You see, there happens to be a French fellow at Gordon Gay's school, and his nickname is "Mont Blanc." Skinner's little joke failed to raise a smile on Quelch's dial—in fact, it was a case of "raising cane"!

At the annual meeting of the G.C.C.C.—Greyfriars Climbing, Creeping, and Crawling Club—Dicky Nugent was elected president and climber-in-chief. Dicky has long been known to fame as an intrepid tree-climber. Nothing seems to "sap" his enthusiasm for the sport, not even when he happens to "bark" his shins. Still, it's about time he turned over a new "leaf." Twig?

Only one fellow has ever had the nerve to climb to the top of the school flagstaff. This honour belongs to Wun Lung. The flagstaff rises to a height of thirty feet from the top of the school tower, and even a monkey would find it a precarious climb. But little Wun Lung went up, hand-over-hand, until he reached the flag at the top; and the crowd in the Close who watched his daring feat held their breath, and expected the nimble Chinese to come hurtling down at any moment. Unfortunately, Wun Lung's performance was witnessed by Mr. Quelch, and the sequel was a swishing.

Lord Mauleverer, the born-tired slacker of the Remove, says he would have no objection to climbing Mount Everest, but he wants to know if he would "ever rest" during the ascent. To climb for hours on end without taking forty winks every now and then would be "too fearfully exhaustin' an' fatiguin', begad!"

Coker of the Fifth has just had his motor-bike repaired for the umpteenth time this term. The machine has never given satisfaction, and we think it is high time Coker taught it how to climb properly! It can descend all right, especially if there's a duck-pond waiting for it at the foot of the hill!

My chum, Mark Luley, informs me that he is not keen on tree-climbing as a sport. But, being an ambitious youth, Marky is bound to "climb to the top of the tree" sooner or later!

REPLIES TO READERS!

"Froggy" (Folkestone).—"Why don't you publish a special number of the 'Greyfriars Herald' with all the articles and stories written in French?"—Because, like Billy Bunter's home-made toffee, it would be difficult to digest!

"Cover Point" (Bath).—"What is the highest score made by a Remove cricketer this season?"—105, by Bob Cherry. And it didn't take him a "century" to make it, either. He gave an exhibition of fireworks!

"Budding Bard" (Nottingham).—"I am sending you a poem of twelve verses dealing with summer. What do you think of it?"—It would be quite all right if it was a dozen verses shorter!

Eric K. (Taunton).—"I was reading one of Dicky Nugent's stories during lessons, and it was so funny that I fairly exploded!"—Then you got a "blowing-up" from your master, I suppose?

Jack R. (Gravesend).—"I consider that Billy Bunter is a really charming fellow."—You wouldn't think so if you had to live with him!

"Curious" (Cardiff).—"Did you go to Greyfriars on a scholarship?"—No; on an express train!

"Curly" (Blackpool).—"Why don't you publish a Deep Sea Diving Number of the 'Herald'?"—It would be a "mighty deep" subject to tackle!

Harry H. (Warwick).—"Could you get round Billy Bunter to write a serial for the 'Herald'?"—My dear fellow, it's impossible to "get round" a person with a circumference like Bunter's!

"Sunny Jim" (Pevensey).—"I read the 'Herald' every week; its articles are quite unique. The stories, too, are simply splendid. I'm always sorry when they're ended. Your little 'mag.' is smart and clever. I wish you luck, both now and ever!"—Many thanks, "Sunny Jim"! Dick Penfold will have to look to his laurels!

"Admirer of Alonzo" (Newbury).—"I consider that Alonzo Todd has the heart of a lion, though physically he is as frail as a dandelion."—Very aptly expressed.

T. H. R. (Kingston).—"Does Loder of the Sixth ever cut up rusty when you pillory him in your paper? Doesn't he ever stalk into Study No. 1 with an ashplant, breathing threatenings and slaughter?"—Indeed, he does; but we are more than a match for him. We fear no foe in shining armour!

Mabel S. (Wimbledon).—"If Billy Bunter were to be let loose in the school kitchen, what would happen?"—It would be a grub-less Greyfriars on the morrow!

"Sympathiser" (Hove).—"Is Tom Dutton really deaf? If so, I am very sorry for him."—Dutton is certainly deaf, but not to any great extent. The postman came this morning, and Tom heard from his people!

Ronald W. (Torquay).—"You seem to do nothing else at Greyfriars but play cricket, and organise japes and rags."—Quite a mistaken notion, dear boy. We spend over thirty hours per week in the Form-room under the gimlet eye of Mr. Quelch!

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**BILLY BUNTER:**

It is agreed on all hands that my most famous climbing feat took place in Switzerland, where I spent a holiday some time ago. It had always been my ambition to climb to the top of the Matterhorn, but I couldn't find any companions with enough curridge to accompany me. Harry Wharton and his pals were staying with me at the time; but when I said to them, "I say, you fellows, shall we climb the Matterhorn?" they trembled and turned pale. "It is madness!" said Wharton. "It is certain death!" said Bob Cherry. And Hurree Singh quoted a couple of lines from "Excelsior":

"Beware the pine tree's withered branchfulness!"

Beware the awful avalanchefulness!"

Nugent told me I should be dashed to death and destruction from a grate height, and Johnny Bull said it was sheer folly for a novice like me to attempt to scale the Matterhorn. What a set of white-livered finks, to be sure! "Cowards!" I cried scornfully. "I will leave you down here in the valley, and set off on my adventure." "You'll want a couple of guides, and about a mile of rope, and a St. Bernard dog," said Bob Cherry. "Bah!" I retorted. "I can dispense with all assistance. Alone and unaided I will toddle right up to the top of that lofty peak!" Then the Famous Five bade me an affectionate farewell, for they didn't think they would ever see me alive again. I put on my climbing shoes, and filled my haversack with tuck, and started the ascent. Higher and higher I went, and the air got frigid and frigid until my fingers and toes and nose became frostbitten. Sometimes a terrible avalanche of snow and ice would come rushing down from above, but I always managed to dodge it. And at last, after climbing without a pause for two nights and two days, I found myself on the summit of the Matterhorn. My grate ambition had been achieved. It was the proudest moment of my life! From my egg-salted position I was able to get a view of the whole of Europe. I could see France and Spain and Italy and Russia quite distinctly. I had brought my camera with me, and I took some wonderful snapshots, so as to prove that I had really reached the top of the Matterhorn. But, although the camera cannot lie, Harry Wharton and his pals flatly refused to believe me when I told them of my feat. "It's another of Bunter's woppers!" said Johnny Bull. "He dreamed it!" said Bob Cherry. But the grate British public believed it all right when my photograph appeared in all the papers. And I've got the reputation of being the finest mountaineer that ever

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mounted, and the greatest climber that ever clumb!

MR. PAUL PROUT:

In my younger days I did a vast amount of climbing among the Rocky Mountains. At that time I was nimble of foot and steady of nerve, and possessed of wonderful powers of endurance. I thought nothing of scaling ten thousand feet. Bah! A mountain of that height was a mere hillock to me! But as the years go by we lose our youthful zest and vitality, and now it is as much as I can do to climb the stairs to my bedroom! I generally feel like a cigarette when I get there—that is to say, I am puffed and blown!

DICKY NUGENT:

I consider that tree-climbing is the greatest sport ever invented. It beats cricket and football into a cocked hat; and I even prefer it to such egg-sitting pursuits as winkle-catching and tadpole-fishing. Sometimes I climb trees for bizzness; sometimes for plezzure—that is to say, I either climb them in search of birds'-nests or froot, or else just for the fun of the thing. I have already worn out twenty pairs of trowsers this term, and my pater will have several sorts of a fit when he resees my tailor's bill! But it can't be helped. A fellow can't get hung up on a spiked branch without puncturing his baggs. I will now tell you all about my most famous climb, when I assended a poplar-tree that was 100,000 feet high!

(Pardon me, Dicky, but I've no space for "tall" stories.—Ed.)

PETER HAZELDENE:

The curious thing about my most famous climbing feat is that I knew nothing at all about it. You see, I performed the feat in my sleep! I had been swotting very hard for an exam, and I suppose it excited my brain too much. Anyway, I developed the sleep-walking habit, and one night I climbed right up to the top of the school tower! It was a moonlight night, and by a lucky chance I was observed from one of the windows of the Remove dormitory. I was sitting in a most perilous position, on a narrow ledge. When I woke, with a start, and took in my surroundings, I was seized with panic. I could never have got down unaided. Bob Cherry and Mark Linley came to my rescue, and it was a thrilling experience. I haven't done any sleep-walking since, and I don't want to. Enough's as good as a feast!

ALONZO TODD:

I confess I have no head for heights, and the mere thought of climbing Mont Blanc or Mount Everest fills me with

horror. I have no objection to climbing a short distance—a rock about three feet high, for instance. I once accomplished this daring feat on the seashore at Pegg. I clambered up on to one of the rocks and stood proudly on the summit, at least a yard above sea-level! I was very proud of this feat, but I would not dream of essaying a higher climb. As my esteemed Uncle Benjamin says, in a little book of verse he has just published:

"He who climbs a little way
May live to climb another day;
But he who tries to reach the stars
Will quit this earth to live in Mars!"

WILLIAM GOSLING:

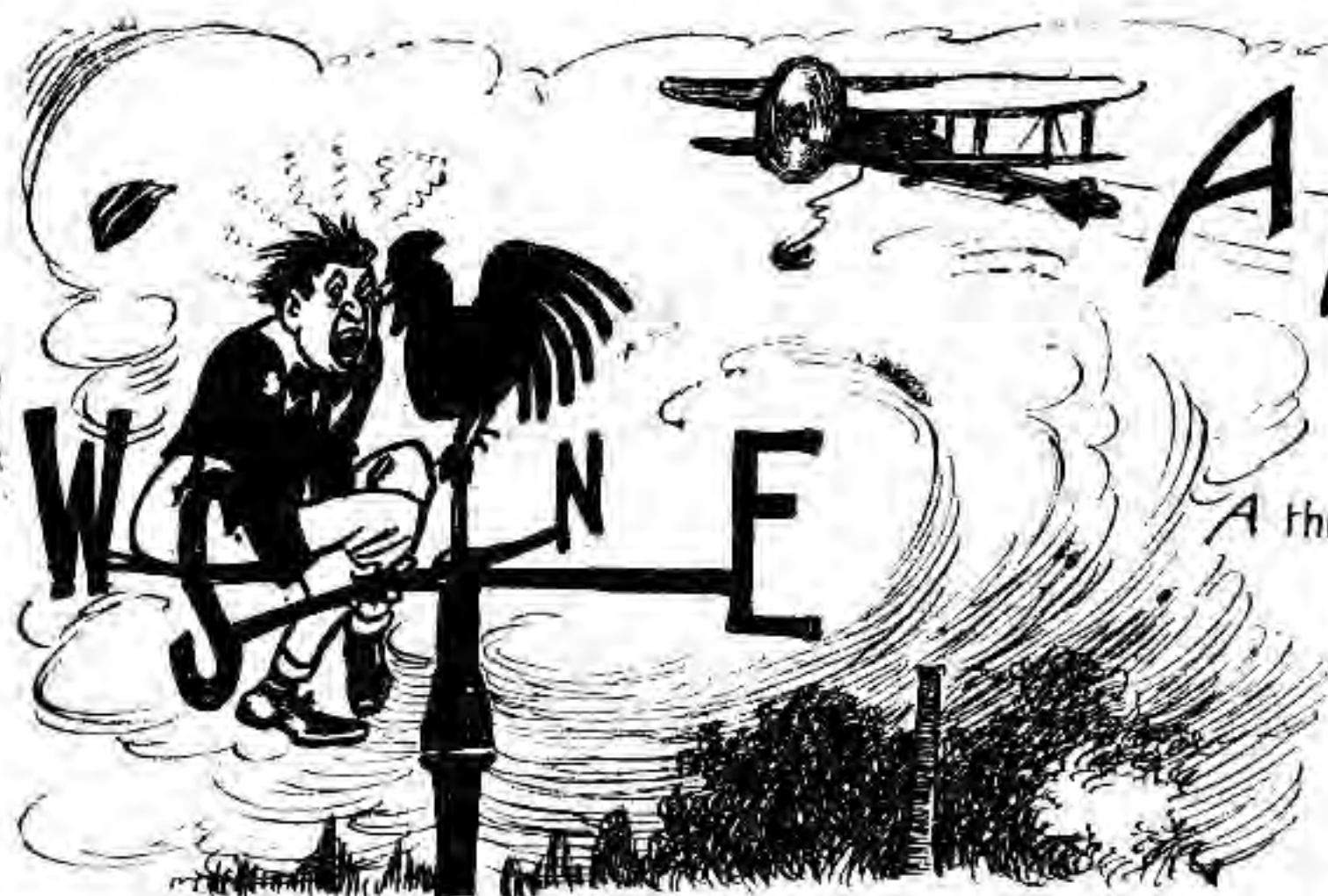
"Wot I says is this 'ere, I'm a porter, I am, not a blessed steeplejack! Yet whenever one of the young rips at Greyfriars 'appens to 'it a ball on to one of the roofs, I'm expected to go up and get it. Only the other day, Master Cherry smit a lorn-tennis ball high into the air, an' it lodged on the roof of the Jimmynasium. "Cossy," says he, "go up an' fetch my ball, there's a good sort." "Go up an' get it yerself, Master Cherry!" I retorts. "But I don't perfer to be a climber," says he. "I can't climb 'alf a dozen rungs of a ladder without gettin' dizzy. But you, Cossy, are a splendid climber—quite as good as Tarzan of the Apes!" I was rather pleased with this compliment; so I ties a couple of ladders together an' rears 'em up to the roof. Then I goes up 'and-over-'apd, while a big crowd watches me with bated breath. One false step an' I should 'ave come 'urtling down to destruction. But I never lost me 'ead or me nerve. All I lost was me 'at, which was blowed away by a sudding gust of wind. I recovered the tennis-ball, an' brought it down to its owner, who tipped me a tanner. You ought to 'ave 'eard the cheerin' when I landed safe an' sound on terror firmer! Anybody would think the school was on fire, an' I 'ad gallantly rescued the 'eadmaster's daughter from the flames! I was made a tremenjuss fuss of. All the same, I can't say as 'ow I'm verry fond of these 'ere acrobatics! As I said in the beginnin', I'm a porter, I am, not a blessed steeplejack!"

VERNON-SMITH:

Tree-climbing is a risky game, but, personally, I like it. Some fellows welcome the idea of risk. They will agree with the Canadian poet:

"No game was ever yet worth a rap
For a rational man to play,
Into which no accident, no mishap,
Could possibly find its way."

[Supplement ii.]



A Night Aloft!

A thrilling story of a perilous climb.
BY DICKY NUGENT.

"**F**AR be it from me to boast," said Jack Jolly, the kaptin of the Fourth Form at St. Sam's, "but I'm a ripping climber! I can climb anything, from a greasy pole to a mountain-pass. Climbing is my strong point—my 'forty,' as they say in France!"

Merry and Bright grinned.

"No, you're not a bit boastful, old chap," said the former. "You're not konseated, either. You're simply stuck up!"

"Here, here!" said Bright. "You make out you're a wonderful climber, Jack; but I'll tell you one thing you wouldn't do."

"What's that?"

"Climb up to the top of the church steeple."

Jack Jolly larfed scornfully.

"Why, I could easily perform a simple feat like that!" he said. "The church steeple is only ten thousand yards high, and it will be an easy feat to climb up it inch by inch!"

Merry and Bright shook their heads with vigour.

"You'd never do it!" said Merry.

"You'd lose your head," said Bright, "and then some passer-by would come along and find your feet!"

"You think I should come a cropper?" said Jack Jolly.

"I'm jolly sure of it! And you wouldn't feel very jolly, Jolly, if you had a jolly good drop of ten thousand yards!"

"Ratts! I'll perform the feat to-night," was the reply. "I can't do it in the daytime, bekawse people would see me, and I should be arrested on a charge of attempted sooside. I'll tackle the task after lights-out. And if I don't succeed in climbing that merry old steeple right up to the wethercock at the top, I'll eat my Sunday topper!"

That night, after the lights had been

distinguished by the prefect on duty, the three chums broke bounds and went down to the villidge. Their destination was the parrish church, a fine old building which had been erected in the rain of Julius Seizer, and which had wethered the storms of senturies. It was reckoned to have the highest spire of any church in England. The wethercock at the top was quite a big affair, but from the ground it appeared a mere speck.

It was Jack Jolly's intention to climb right up to the top, and sit astride the wethercock.

In the darkness the grate building looked grey and somber and forbidding.

"Hadn't you better chuck this tomfoolery, Jack?" muttered Merry, clutching at his chum's arm. "If you fall from an attitude of about five thowsand feet, we sha'n't be able to catch you, you know!"

"I don't want to be caught!" growled Jack Jolly. "But I'm not going to be stumped by a simple affair like this. Whether I'm bowled out or not, I mean to make the attempt. You fellows run out of the way, while I start my climb."

"It'll be a case of l.b.w., I'm thinking," said Bright. "'Limbs broken wantonly.' Go ahead, Jolly, if you've made up your mind to this madness!"

Jack Jolly started the assent. The first part of it was easy. He merely had to shin up a drain-pipe attached to the wall; and this was child's play to a climber of his ability and agility.

It was when he reached the base of the church steeple that Jack Jolly's trubbles began. There was practically nothing to cling to, eggsept little crevices in the brickwork. Jack Jolly dug his fingers and toes into these—he had left his shoes down below—and slowly, inch by inch, he made the assent.

Far below, Merry and Bright looked on breathlessly. They could just see

their chum. He looked like a small fly climbing up a window-pane.

"He'll brake his neck, as sure as eggs are eggs!" muttered Merry.

"Never mind!" said Bright. "They won't have to take him very far to berry him. He'll land in the church-yard!"

Up and up went Jack Jolly, higher and higher. And all the time his hart sank lower and lower, for he wondered, with a sickening sense of fear, whether he would ever reach terror-firmer again.

One false move, and the foolhardy climber would have been food for fishes! (The writer seems to be getting slightly mixed. There was no sea down below, surely—unless it was a sea of anxious faces!—Ed.)

Up and up he went, higher and higher, upper and upper. The pore sole wondered how long it would last. He knew that nothing could heal him if he fell. His tongue was parched and, personally, I wouldn't have been in his shoes for a pension!

Only ten more feet to climb! Would he do it? Would he? Could he? Did he? Didn't he?

It was a terrifying moment. Merry and Bright could not bear to look up. At any mimnit they eggsepted their reckless chum to come crashing down to destruckshun.

Would he reach the wethercock in safety? Or would a broken finger-nail cause him to lose his footing?

Up and up, higher and higher, upper and upper! And prezzantly Jack Jolly made a desprit clutch at the swing-ing wethercock, and hauled himself up until he was astride it. Then he drew a deep, sobbing breth of releef.

"Safe!" he gasped hortely.

But was he? How on earth was he going to get down again? There is a saying that it is easier to go down than up; but this was not so in Jack Jolly's case. For a terribul thing had hap-pened. He had lost his nerve!

He hunted for it everywhere. With feverish fingers he went through his pockets, but his lost nerve was not to be found. He strained his eyes into the

(Continued on next page.)

WHO WANTS A MAGNIFICENT "ROYAL ENFIELD" BICYCLE?

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ONCE on a time (to start my rhyme
Like this is only proper)
There lived a bold bad baronet,
By name Sir Hilton Popper.

Sir Hilton had a big estate
Comprising many acres;
There was an orchard filled with fruit,
Also a board, "NO TAKERS!"

Hither, one fine half-holiday,
Came Bunter of the Second;
A feed of peaches, plums, and pears
Would be first-rate, he reckoned.

He clambered up the tallest tree,
The effort made him dizzy;
And, perched upon a laden branch,
He very soon got busy.

UP A TREE!

A Ballad of
Sammy Bunter.

By DICK PENFOLD.

Refreshing fruit was swiftly stored
In his capacious pockets;
Then came a snarl from down below—
His eyes bulged from their sockets!

Then Sammy took a downward peep
And nearly toppled over;
He saw Sir Hilton's portly form,
Also his bulldog Rover.

"You are observed!" Sir Hilton cried.
"Come down, you base marauder!
How dare you poach on my preserves,
Defying law and order!"

"Pip-please, sir," Sammy Bunter wailed,
His plump cheeks pale with fear,
"I sha'n't be happy on the ground,
I'd sooner stay up here!"

Sir Hilton Popper pranced around,
His eyes with fury flaming.
"I'll thrash you with my hunting-crop!
Come down!" he kept exclaiming.

The bulldog Rover snapped and yapped,
And tried to climb the tree,
But fell back after every spring—
He was no chimpanzee!

Then Sammy Bunter gave a grin,
A gloating grin of glee.
Said he: "If I remain up here
No harm can come to me!"

Alas, alack! There came a crack,
The groaning branch gave way;
A human form came hurtling down,
At Popper's feet it lay.

And then a dreadful scream arose:
"Help! Murder! Fire! Yarooo!
My spine is shattered, I'm afraid,
My neck is broken, too!"

The hunting-crop then rose and fell
On Sammy's fallen figure;
Sir Hilton, in a royal rage,
Laid on the strokes with vigour.

Did Sammy, 'neath that rain of blows,
Preserve a Spartan silence?
Good gracious, no! The noise he made
Might have been heard a mile hence!

He crawled away to Greyfriars School
As sore as sore could be;
And now he sadly tells the tale
How he was "up a tree"!

A NIGHT ALOFT!

(Continued from previous page.)

darkness, but he could see no sign of it.

"I can't possibly make the descent until I recover my lost nerve!" he muttered. "I shall have to stay up here until help comes—and that means a night aloft!"

He was sitting on that part of the wethercock which was marked "W." He wondered what the letter stood for. "Windy," most likely, for it was certainly jolly windy up there. He was whirled round and round on the swinging wethercock until he grew quite dizzy.

Faintly from below came the voices of his chums:

"Jolly!"

"Come down, you ass!"

"You'll be blown away if you stay up there much longer!"

Jack Jolly peered down into the black abyss, and he uttered a shriek of terror.

"I—I can't come down, you fellows! I've lost my nerve, and I can't find it anywhere! I think I must have left it behind in my study! Don't stand down there like graven images! Come up and reskew me!"

But neither Merry nor Bright had the nerve to attempt a reskew. They did not profess to be skilled climbers. Merry, who was rather a good skoller, had once climbed to the top of his class; but that was the biggest climbing feat he had ever performed. And Bright had often assended a flight of stairs; but that was the limit of his prowess.

"What can we do?" asked Merry, ringing his hands helplessly.

"We can do nothing," said Bright.

"I wouldn't attempt to shin up that steeple—not if I was offered a tanner! Jolly will have to stay where he is until help comes. Pity he didn't take a parrashute up with him!"

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"Yes, rather!"
"Shall we go and fetch a ladder?" suggested Bright.

"That would be no use. Where could you find a ladder ten thousand yards high?"

"Perhaps we could tie about a hundred ladders together?"

"Don't talk rot! That would take us all night, and Jolly will be blown away by dawn, unless help comes!"

Jack Jolly was still clinging desprightly to his perch. He was whirled round and round by the force of the wind, and it was like being on the roundabouts when they were eggseeding the speed limit.

When dawn came he had reached the end of his tether. He was cold and cramped, hopeless and helpless. And he was just thinking of ending it all by taking a nose dive into the churchyard, when a sudden whirring sound close at hand brought hope to his breast.

"An airoplain!" he cried joyfully.

It was indeed an airoplain that came darting towards the church steeple. The pilot had seen Jack Jolly's plight, and was determined to reskew him. He shut off his engine when he was within a few feet of the steeple; then he thrust out a sort of boathook, and hooked Jack Jolly by the collar and hauled him into the airoplain.

This may seem impossible to certain readers with critical minds. But they must remember that fiction is stranger than trooth—my fiction, at any rate.

The airoplain landed in a meadow near by, and Jack Jolly's chums fell upon his neck and embraced him. And they eggstracted from him a sollum prommis never to go climbing again!

THE END.

TIPS FOR TREE CLIMBERS!

By Tom Brown.

LIKE everything else, tree-climbing is an art that can only be acquired by constant practice. You cannot expect to become a proficient tree-climber at the first time of asking, any more than you can expect to handle an aeroplane, or a punt, or a motor-car, without previous experience.

Most fellows make the mistake of trying to run before they can walk—that is to say, instead of selecting a short tree to start with, they try to climb to the top of a lofty poplar. When they get about ten feet up they lose their nerve and their grip, and the result is a nasty tumble, which often necessitates a week or two in the sanny. The moral is obvious. Start with something small, like a currant-bush, and gradually work up till you get to the poplar stage.

It is difficult, without diagrams, to give instructions in the art of climbing. The hands, the knees, and the feet play an important part, and the one cannot operate successfully without the other. They must all work in harmony. Don't attempt to climb a tree with your hands only, letting the rest of the body dangle into space. And don't attempt to hang on to a tree-trunk by your ankles, allowing the hands to go free. Skilled acrobats like Wun Lung can do this with impunity, but the raw novice is likely to get a painful shock!

One of the drawbacks to tree-climbing is that it reduces a fellow's trousers to ribbons. Our modern trousers are not made to stand the wear and tear of tree-climbing. It is high time that some tailoring genius invented a special pair of bags to be worn by the tree-climbing fraternity. Until this comes about, the nether apparel of the average tree-climber will be "A thing of shreds and patches."

[Supplement iv.]

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY—PRICE 2"

TREASURE TROVE!

(Continued from page 12.)

"The Head will look on this as terrific cheekfulness!"

Bob Cherry grinned faintly.

"Perhaps it is," he remarked. "The vaults are out of bounds, and we've better be in. And—and the Head will be awfully waxy about our having a key. He will know we got it made. I was doubtful about it when that ass Fishy suggested it."

Harry Wharton nodded, his brows wrinkled in thought.

"It's rotten!" he said. "Anyhow, let's think it over, before we begin thumping on the door. Plenty of time for that."

"Ye-e-e-es!"

The chums of the Remove descended the winding stair again to the vaults. The matter wanted thinking out—not that thinking seemed of much use. They were locked in the vaults, and only one way out was known, since the old passage to the Priory had been bricked up.

"We shall be missed at call-over," Bob Cherry remarked. "Then, as some giddy master must have found the door unlocked, they'll guess where we are. It's bound to come out!"

"I wonder—" said Harry slowly.

"Go it! If you've got an idea—"

"Well, you know there used to be a passage to the Priory under the woods. It's been bricked up, and nobody can get through now. But there may be other ways out. If we can find any—"

"The if-fulness is terrific!"

"According to the legend, there's a tunnel from the sea-caves," said Harry. "The story goes that smugglers, or pirates, or conspirators, or some of the old johnnies who used to go round looking for trouble, used the tunnel, and stored their plunder in these vaults, and held their revels here. It's known that the vaults were used by conspirators in Chamwell's time, when they used to plot to bring back Charles the Second, before the Restoration. Well, if there's a tunnel to the sea-caves, that would let us out—if we could find it."

"My hat!" groaned Bob Cherry. "We came down here to hunt for a giddy treasure, and it's come to hunting for a dashed old tunnel to get out! What a sell!"

"Well, it's worth trying," said Harry. "There'll be a fearful row if we are caught here, and taken to the Head!"

"No doubt about that," said Nugent.

"I suppose there's a chance," said Bob. "We may as well try, anyhow. It's worth a bit of trouble to get out of a Head's flogging."

"Yes, rather!"

The juniors reluctantly dismissed from their minds the thought of tea in the study. They resumed their search of the vaults; not now hunting for a clue to the treasure, but for the supposed tunnel to the sea-caves. Wharton had brought a pocket-compass to assist in the quest, and by its aid the juniors were able to traverse the subterranean recesses to a point nearest the sea. It was a labyrinth of vaults that opened before them, that had extended, in

ancient days, under old monastic buildings that had disappeared centuries ago.

The sea-caves, on the Bay of Pegg, lay south-east of the school, and in that direction the compass led the explorers. They traversed vault after vault, din arch after arch, dusky, damp passage after passage, till they knew that they must be at some distance from the school. Then, at the end of a stone-flagged passage, they found their way suddenly barred by solid stone.

"Hello, hallo, hallo! All change!" said Bob, with a dismal attempt at humour. "Terminus!"

"Oh, don't be funny!" groaned Johnny Bull. "This giddy atmosphere is making me a bit sick!"

"The samefulness affects my esteemed self!" mumbled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"All the same, there's ventilation somewhere, or the air would be quite poisonous," said Harry Wharton.

"Not enough for comfort," said Nugent. "This show wouldn't have been passed if they'd had sanitary-inspectors in those days!"

The juniors grinned feebly. Their long imprisonment in the gloomy vaults was rather affecting their spirits.

"Well, we're stopped here," said Bob. "Blessed if I know what they ever built this passage for, leading absolutely nowhere."

"They wouldn't build a passage leading nowhere. There's some way on, if we could find it."

"A giddy secret door—what? Thump on the wall, and see if you can make anything move."

The juniors moved along the stone wall that closed the passage. It was built of the stone from the old quarries near Courtfield, like many of the buildings of Greyfriars itself. The stone was in large, solid blocks, and if any of them moved in some secret manner, to leave an opening, the juniors were unable to discover the means. They desisted at last.

"Nothing doing!" said Bob. "We've got to tramp back and bang on the jolly old door and own up! Br-r-r-r!"

Wharton turned the light to the flagstones of the floor.

"Might be something there," he said.

"Feels solid enough," said Bob Cherry. And he raised his foot and stamped hard on the old flag he was standing on.

The next moment a wild yell rang through the subterranean passages. The light that had gleamed on Bob Cherry gleamed on a square opening in the stone floor—and Bob Cherry had vanished from the sight of his comrades.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Secret of the Vaults!

"BOB!"

Four horrified voices gasped out the name. Wharton sprang forward and knelt on the edge of the opening. Below was black darkness.

"Bob!" he panted huskily.

To the intense relief of the juniors an answering voice came from below:

"All serene!"

"Are you hurt, Bob?"

"Only a bump or two."

"Thank Heaven!" panted Harry.

He swung the bike-lamp into the opening, and the juniors stared down. The broad flagstone seemed to hang downward. It was evidently fixed as a trapdoor, and Bob Cherry's thoughtless stamp had by sheer accident struck the

hidden spring that worked it. Below, in the light of the lamp, the juniors made out a narrow stone stair. Bob had dropped on the stair and rolled down. Harry Wharton swung himself down, and dropped on the stair safely.

Then he was able to see Bob. There were a dozen steps, and Bob had picked himself up at the bottom of them, and was rubbing his knees and elbows ruefully.

"There's another giddy passage down here!" called out Bob. "This is the way on. Looks as if we've found the giddy secret!"

The Famous Five were soon gathered in the lower passage. Evidently this was the continuation of the passage above—the secret known, in the old days, only to the monks who had used it.

"This may be the giddy tunnel, or it mayn't," said Harry. "But it leads somewhere. Get on."

"I wonder if this is what Blagden discovered in his time here?" said Nugent. "He's supposed to have discovered something."

"Goodness knows!"

The juniors pressed on, Wharton leading with the bike-lamp held up. The air seemed fresher now, but they could see no sign of any communication with the upper air. Bob Cherry halted suddenly, and stooped, picking up a dull, rusted metal box that lay on the ground.

"Something the giddy old pirates left behind!" he said.

"Ha, ha! The giddy old pirates didn't carry matchboxes," said Johnny Bull, with a chuckle.

The juniors passed the matchbox from hand to hand, staring at it curiously. Obviously it was of modern manufacture, and was of silver. The monogram "P. B." was engraved in the metal on one side.

"P. B." said Harry. "That stands for Philip Blagden!"

"So it does!" agreed Bob. "Then that giddy Old Boy of Greyfriars was here before us about twenty years ago! This is his giddy discovery, that brought him back to look for the treasure."

"Looks like it!"

"Silly ass to drop a silver matchbox and leave it here—"

"Hold on!" said Harry. "It may have been left to mark something."

"Oh!"

"Blagden had to leave Greyfriars suddenly, you know. Let's look."

Wharton turned the light on the stone-flagged floor. Close to the spot where Bob had picked up the silver matchbox the stone had been hacked with an axe. Roughly hewn, the shape of an arrow could be traced.

"The giddy clue!" exclaimed Bob breathlessly.

The arrow-head pointed to the solid stone wall of the passage. The juniors examined the wall, and found that the big block of stone, exactly facing the arrowhead, was marked and scored at the edges. They understood what those traces meant. Someone—obviously Blagden—had attempted to move the stone with the aid of a crowbar. Long ago there had been a treasure-seeker on the spot, and he had failed.

"Looks as if there might be a giddy secret door here," said Bob. "But if there is, it won't open."

"Let's try."

That Blagden had made many attempts to find, and open, a secret door in the wall, indicated by the pointing arrow, was clear. But the juniors tried their luck, and for a long time they groped and thumped over the stone blocks.

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Hurree Jamset Ram Singh did not join in. He stood watching them, with a thoughtful expression on his dusky face.

"My esteemed chums——" he said at last.

"N. G.," said Bob. "What do you think, Inky?"

"If I may make a suggestive remark to——"

"Ha, ha! Go it!"

"The esteemed arrow was cut to indicate something, my worthy and ludicrous friends," said the nabob. "But the esteemed ancient johnny who cut it wished to leave a clue for himself, and not for anyone else who might follow in his footsteps."

"Naturally. What about it?"

"Then perhaps he may have cut the arrow pointing wrongfully," suggested Hurree Singh.

"Eh?"

"Suppose he wanted to point to a certain spot to help him find a certain place, but did not wish to leave clueful indications for anyone else? Then he might point the head of the arrow to a blank wall, and the tail of the esteemed arrow to the spot he wished to find again. It would pull the excellent leg of any searcher who followed after him."

"Great Scott!"

There were evidently possibilities in the nabob's sage suggestion. The juniors rushed across the passage, and began to examine the opposite wall. Here there were no traces of the crowbar. Plainly Hurree Singh's theory had never occurred to Blagden.

Two or three electric torches were turned on, and the juniors eagerly examined every inch of the ancient stone blocks. Bob Cherry thumped at the upper blocks, and kicked forcibly at the lower. In one spot he thought he detected a hollow sound. He kicked again, and there was a dull, grinding, wrenching sound, and the stone block moved back.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Eureka!" yelled Bob.

"Hurrah!"

A black orifice opened before the juniors. It was large enough for a man to crawl through, and Wharton dropped on hands and knees, and, holding the bike-lamp before him, crawled in. Beyond was a narrow tunnel, widening after a few yards.

"Come on!" shouted Wharton.

The juniors crawled through one by one, their hearts beating high with excitement now. Whether this was the "way out" they were seeking, or not, it was a thrilling discovery.

Wharton rose to his feet in the passage, and lifted the light. The passage opened into a vault.

"Come on!" he breathed.

Three or four dark, gloomy vaults opened one after another. The juniors stopped at last in a stone arch, which was closed by a door of ancient oak, hard as iron. Harry Wharton groped over the door. It opened to his touch.

There was a pale glimmer of light beyond. From somewhere, some faint gleam of daylight penetrated into the vault. Dimly at first, a strange scene opened before the eyes of the Greyfriars juniors.

"There—there's someone there!" gasped Bob.

"What!"

"Good heavens!"

And as they took in the scene, the juniors backed away from the door with pale, horrified faces.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Dead Men's Treasure!

HARRY WHARTON pulled himself together. His heart was beating hard, and his hand was shaking.

"Come on!" he said, a little unsteadily.

"We're going through with this!"

"But—but they——" faltered Nugent.

"Dead!" said Harry. "Dead, hundreds of years ago most likely. Come on!"

Harry Wharton led the way, and the juniors followed him in through the arched doorway.

It was a strange and terrible scene that was before them.

Evidently the old legend was true, that in ancient days the hidden vaults had been used by the old sea-robbers to store their plunder, and to hold revelry after their voyages. There was a large table in the vault, and drinking-glasses and tankards and silver goblets glimmered in the light. Three ancient oaken chairs stood round the table, and on the chairs three human figures sat.

The juniors gazed at them in awe.

The figures did not move. For the first moment, in the uncertain light, they had seemed living men; but it was easy to see that centuries had passed since they had lived. One of them sat with his face shrouded by a plumed hat. The faces of the other two could be seen, and they were the faces of skeletons—grinning skulls that seemed to mock at the horrified glances of the juniors.

There was a deep silence.

In that dim vault those skeleton figures had sat, undisturbed, for long, long years—on the table before them the goblets from which, in life, they had drunk deep draughts. A small, barred window, communicating with some well-hidden ventilating-shaft, allowed a pale gleam of light to fall into the vault. The lamp, held high by Harry Wharton, shone on grinning skeleton faces, on glimmering tankards, and on heaps and heaps, stacks and piles, of ancient coins—Spanish doubloons, English guineas and five-guinea pieces, French louis-d'or, ducats of Venice and Genoa, and coins of strange design that the juniors had never seen before.

It was the treasure!

What was the value of the coins on the table, and of the jewels that sprawled among the goblets, the juniors could not even guess. But they knew that the value must be great.

There was a long, long silence. Bob Cherry broke it at last.

"Treasure trove!" he said.

Frank Nugent approached one of the seated figures. A rusted sword in a rusted scabbard leaned against the arm of the old chair. Nugent touched the



"Hold on!" said Wharton. "The matchbox might have been left here to mark something. Let's look!" The captain of the Remove turned the light on the stone-flagged ground. Close to the spot where Bob had picked up the matchbox the stone had been hacked with an axe. Roughly hewn, the shape of an arrow could be traced. "The giddy clue!" exclaimed Bob Cherry breathlessly. (See Chapter 10.)

cloak, and it crumbled at his touch. He drew his hand away quickly.

Wharton caught his breath.

"What—what could have been the cause of this?" he muttered. "They died here, years ago—centuries ago, I suppose—died here, round the table where they had been drinking—why?"

"Goodness knows!"

"They may have lost the way out," muttered Bob. "Suppose—suppose someone shut them up here—fastened the stone we came through from the other side—left them to die here, so that he could come back later and rob them?"

"It's possible."

Strange thoughts of that old time came into the juniors' minds as they gazed, with awed eyes, at the skeleton figures. Some faithless comrade of the gang, perhaps, had played a treacherous trick, closing the secret exit on the pirates, if pirates they were. Their dress looked like the costume of Stuart days. Possibly they were one of the bands of Cavaliers who, after the triumph of the Roundheads, had taken to piracy, using the name of the exiled King as a pretext for robbery on the high seas. Conspirators, or pirates, or both, they had used the hidden vaults as a refuge and a place of arms, and here they had perished—why?

Shut in the vault, deprived of the chance of escape, with abundant wine in innumerable flasks, but with food failing them, had they gathered round the table for a last wild drinking-bout as they felt death creeping on them?

It seemed so; but what had happened in those dark old days could never be accurately known.

"Let's get out of this," said Nugent at last.

His face was very pale.

The juniors left the vault.

Slowly, with grave and saddened faces, they made their way back the way they had come.

In silence the juniors regained the passage where the rough hewn arrow had given them the clue to the secret vault.

There they paused.

"We'd better get back to the school," said Harry Wharton slowly. "No good hunting for a way out now. We shall have to tell about this, so there's no question now of keeping it dark. Let's get back."

"And the sooner the better," said Nugent, with a shiver.

In silence, still feeling the eerie effect of the strange and terrible scene they had left behind them, the juniors retraced their steps along the gloomy passages, and reached, at last, the school vaults.

They ascended the winding stair to the oaken door, and, to their surprise, found it open. Voices came to them as they ascended to the door; they heard Mr. Quelch's voice:

"The door certainly was unlocked. I found it so. A Remove boy pointed out the fact to me. It did not occur to me that anyone had gone down; but, since five juniors were missing at roll-call—"

"They may be out of gates, sir."

It was Wingate's voice.

"Possibly; but I am very anxious to—"

Harry Wharton stepped out at the door.

"Here we are, sir!" he said quietly.

Mr. Quelch started, and gave him a stern look.

"Follow me to the Head at once!" he said.

"Very well, sir."

And the Famous Five followed their Form master. But they went without much apprehension. They had discovered the secret of the vaults, they had unearthed the legendary treasure of



"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Eureka!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Hurrah!" roared the Co. A black orifice opened before the juniors. It was large enough for a man to crawl through; and Wharton dropped on his hands and knees and, holding the bike lamp before him, crawled in. Beyond was a narrow tunnel, widening after a few yards. "Come on!" shouted Wharton. (See Chapter 10.)

Greyfriars, and what they had to tell was more than enough to placate the Head.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Fishy's Reward!

"WHARTON!"

"Cherry!"

"You've found it?"

"My hat!"

"Honest Injun—what?"

A crowd of excited fellows surrounded the Famous Five, a few minutes after they had emerged from the Head's study. The news spread through the school like wildfire.

For an hour at least the Famous Five were kept busy, while they snatched tea in their study at the same time, telling the fellows over and over again what they had discovered.

"I guess I'm on in this!" roared Fisher T. Fish, shaking a bony fist at the Famous Five. "Mind, I'm on in this! You hear me?"

"Tell the Head about it!" grinned Bob Cherry. "The thing's in his hands now. All the masters are going down with the Head, and we're going to guide them, after tea. Tell the Head you won't let him touch the stuff, Fishy."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess I'm on! I guess I—I—"

"It's all Fishy's doing," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "He gave us away to Quelch—at least, he told Quelch that the vaults door was unlocked, and it was locked on us. We were trying to find another way out when we got on to the treasure. We might never have found it if Fishy hadn't been such a rotter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Fishy ought to be rewarded," said Vernon-Smith.

"I guess so—I guess—"

"Collar him!"

"Hyer, I say, I reckon—I calculate—yaroooop!"

Fisher T. Fish was duly rewarded with a severe bumping, and was then kicked out of Study No. 1. He went raging down the passage, rubbing his bumps, and fairly spluttering with apprehension of losing his "whack" in the discovered treasure.

There was a ceaseless buzz of voices in and around Study No. 1, and the Famous Five had to tell the tale over and over again, till they were called upon to guide the Head and several other masters to the hidden vault of the skeletons. Fisher T. Fish strove to follow the party through the oaken doorway, but Mr. Quelch ordered him back sharply.

And Fisher T. Fish limped away.

Greyfriars School talked of little else but the "treasure trove," and the strange discovery in the hidden vault, for many a day to come. Antiquaries and archaeologists came from near and far to investigate; innumerable ancient and bald-headed gentlemen came and displayed the keenest interest in the matter.

But interest in the matter—in Study No. 1, at least—waned before very long. The big matches were coming along, and King Cricket reigned, and by the time the Rookwood match was due Harry Wharton & Co. had almost forgotten about "Treasure Trove."

THE END.

(Be sure and order next Monday's MAGNET well in advance, for in addition to the usual long story of Harry Wharton & Co. there is a simple competition offering a magnificent "Royal Enfield" Bicycle to the winner, also the start of a superb old-time serial story, entitled "Sherwood Gold!" Tell all your pals about these wonderful attractions, chums.)

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BUCCANEERS The MAIN!

No. 7.—MARCOONED ON THE
CARIBS' ISLE!

(Continued from page 2.)

been the signal for his own death. He forced it back just in time, and then his bound limbs stiffened into rigidity as he watched the procession which was passing before his eyes.

Down the valley was passing a band of fully a hundred savages, arrayed in eusanguined skins and feathers, and armed with war-clubs and spears. Their faces were the most hideous Gerald had ever seen, for they were distorted by cruelty and bloodthirstiness such as no words could adequately describe.

And marching among the savages, with their hands tied behind them, were Captain Royce and twelve of the crew of the Rose.

Gerald guessed how it had happened. The captain of the buccaneers and some of his men had landed on the isle in search of water, they having fallen into the same error as the Spanish don in supposing that the isle was uninhabited.

The savages had suddenly pounced on them. That the buccaneers had not given in tamely was evidenced by the fact that not one of the prisoners were unwounded; some were but slightly hurt, but more than half could scarcely drag their way along.

Gerald knew that they were being led to a death of torture, and then an amazing discovery burst on him.

He was on the Caribs' Isle—on the isle of the hidden treasure, of which he could make himself practically king if he could but get free and use the secret he possessed!

It seemed too strange to be true; but the old Plymouth sailor who had given Gerald the secret of the isle had described the Caribs too often and minutely for the youth to make a mistake. One conclusive proof was that they had dangling on their wrists bracelets of twisted gold and sharks' teeth, such as were known to no other savages in the South Seas.

"Oh, if I could only break free—if I could only break free, and save my captain and comrades!"

Gerald's lips did not speak the words, but they throbbed in his brain, and were echoed in every fast beat of his heart. The Caribs had not seen him, for he had been thrown into long grass, which almost covered him,

and he lay motionless, so that not a green blade quivered to betray his presence.

The savages and his companions passed him so closely that he thought that the feet of some of them were certain to crush on him.

But they did not do so. He bit his lip till the blood came to keep himself from calling out to his fellow-buccaneers. His good sense told him that if he yielded to the impulse to do this he would but be throwing away his own life, without doing his friends any good.

But if he could get free in time he might save them all!

The Caribs were jewel worshippers, and they had a law that whoever became possessed of a large diamond, which they called the Light of Life, should be their chief, and that his word should be as the law of life and death among them.

This diamond had been hidden away by its last possessor in order that he should not be robbed of it, and he had died without revealing the secret to anyone.

But John Pilgrim, the Plymouth buccaneer, had been wrecked on the isle, and had discovered the secret hiding-place by accident. He had not, however, succeeded in getting the diamond into his hands, but had been compelled to flee from the isle on a raft, in order to escape the hot pursuit of the Caribs, who would otherwise have killed him ere he could seize the fateful gem.

He had been picked up by a passing ship, and had fully intended to return to the Spanish Main himself; but events had prevented this, and he had given the secret to Gerald Leigh when he was on his deathbed.

If Gerald could but lay hands on the Light of Life before his comrades were massacred by the ferocious Caribs!

So intent was he on doing all he could to save them that he scarcely gave a thought to his own peril. As soon as the savages were out of sight he tugged frantically at the cords which bound his wrists. In vain! The cruel bonds held fast, and the sole results of his straining were to cut his flesh to the bone and draw the cords tighter.

What sound was that?

He ceased his efforts suddenly to listen intently. There was a rustling sound in the undergrowth! It was so faint as to be next to inaudible, but it was full of nerve-shaking omen, for it announced the stealthy approach of some savage beast.

As Gerald heard it, and realised what might happen to him at any second, a shadow came between himself and the moon; and, gazing up, he saw the livid, greed-convinced face of Don Balthasar de Cordova gazing down at him.

"I have come back to give you a last

chance!" the don said. "Will you tell me the secret of the Caribs' Isle if I will promise you your life?"

Gerald made a swift, writhing movement, for he thought that the wild beast hidden in the undergrowth was coming nearer. But the Spaniard thought that this movement signified that the young buccaneer had somehow broken his bonds. Swiftly the Spaniard snatched out a knife, and stabbed at Gerald.

The sharp blade missed its mark, but, instead, struck against the cords which bound the youth's wrists, and shaved through them as if they had been packthread.

The young buccaneer's hands were free, although his ankles remained bound. Writhing himself round, he grappled with his Spanish foe. The two fought, rolling over and over; and from the undergrowth behind them emerged a huge black-and-yellow-striped jaguar, which crept upon them with stealthy, deadly sureness!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Precious Diamond!

DON BALTHASAR was so intent on beating Gerald that he never heard the approach of the jaguar. In vain the young buccaneer tried to warn him of the peril which menaced them both.

His voice was drowned by a death-scream from the don.

The jaguar made its leap, and buried its teeth and talons deep in the body of the Spaniard, who happened to be the uppermost of the two antagonists at the time. Had their positions been reversed, and Gerald been on top, the young Briton would have been the victim.

"Santa Maria! Death has found me out!"

Shrieking the words of despair, the don struggled frantically, hopelessly, with his terrible enemy. He was dragged from Gerald, near whom he dropped his dagger.

In a minute the young buccaneer was free, and had leaped to his feet. He could do nothing for Balthasar de Cordova. The don was dead, and the jaguar was standing over him with glaring eyes and gleaming fangs.

It was no use to waste time over the dead when the living were in danger.

Sick at heart, but with unbroken courage, Gerald made his way from the valley, and, eluding some of the crew of the San Jacopo, who were seeking their captain, he shouted to them to beware of the jaguar and the Caribs, and then raced as fast as he could toward a lofty mountain which towered up in the centre of the isle.

His heart was sick with suspense when he wondered if Captain Royce and the others were still alive. Panting, staggering now and then, but never beaten, he went on—up and up.

Hark!

He stopped to look back, for ferocious yells were ringing in his ears, and he heard a cry in the Carib tongue:

"Death to the white youth!"

Some of the savages had seen him, and yelled to the others. A mob of shrieking, howling, coppery-skinned demons rushed up the mountain's side, bent on killing the young buccaneer.

Gerald was hemmed in by two foes.

"Death to the white youth! Death—death!"

The cry of the Caribs sounded nearer now! But it was essential that if Gerald was to win the diamond of fate he should go on a little farther.

Then the young buccaneer made his last effort. Staggering on for twenty paces more, he summoned up all his remaining strength, and tore from its place a great boulder which had been half embedded in the mountain. It rolled down the pathway, and from the hollow in the rocks which it had covered Gerald snatched the Light of Life.

In the nick of time!

As soon as they saw the gem, which glowed like living fire, they hung back with howls of terror. Not one of them dared to touch Gerald, whom they acknowledged their master. Captain Royce and the others, fortunately still alive, were set free, and the hoard of hidden jewels were handed over to Gerald, who, with his buccaneer comrades, got away from the Caribs' Isle, and safely rejoined the Rose, which, with the rest of the crew, was cruising about the island in search of them.

THE END.



The jaguar made its leap and buried its fangs and talons deep into the body of the Spaniard. "Santa Maria! Death has found me out!" Shrieking the words of despair, the don struggled frantically.

BE IN AT THE DEATH, CHUMS OF

The QUEST of the PURPLE SANDALS

No. 10.—THE TRIUMPH OF FERRERS LOCKE!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Race for Home!

BY the rail of the mail steamer *Nasalla*, in dock at Bombay, India, stood two athletic figures, garbed in white duck tropical clothing. One was Ferrers Locke, the famous English private detective; the smaller, Jack Drake, his astute young assistant.

For some time they stood gazing down upon the busy wharf in silence. The mails for England were being loaded forward. A procession of passengers were slowly mounting the gangway—British officers and Civil Servants, returning home for long expected leave; wives and children of Anglo-Indians, going to the homeland for residence, and a few wealthy natives, eager to see the sights of Europe.

A stout-looking native, wearing a white turban, with a gilt cockade, and an immaculate-cut suit of tussler silk, who was followed by two Sikh retainers, attracted the keen eyes of the sleuth.

Drake noticed the wealthy-looking Indian simultaneously.

"My aunt!" he muttered. "I should think that fellow is a giddy rajah, chief. I expect the beggar has palaces and jewels galore in his native State. I wonder who he can be?"

Ferrers Locke turned and made an inquiry of the fourth officer, who was passing at that moment.

"That's the Jam Sahib of Bhopur. He is a native prince who has kept himself in retirement for years. Few people know anything about him. Then he suddenly decided to make his first trip across the waters, and it was only yesterday that he booked his passage in this ship."

"Thanks," said Locke. "He's an interesting-looking sort of johnny."

At last all the mails had been stowed and the gangway lowered. The mooring lines were cast off, and to the accompaniment of the gruff bellow of her siren, the *Nasalla* drew slowly out of the dock and headed through the magnificent harbour, her nose pointing towards the bronze lighthouse and the open sea.

Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake remained by the rail, watching the entrancing panorama of the Gateway of India, as Bombay has been called. Soon the familiar sight of the Royal Yacht Club, the Apollo Bunder, the Taj Mahal Hotel and Calabar, faded from view astern, and India became but an indistinct blur on the horizon.

It was not without a thrill that Locke and Drake realised that they had begun their race for home, the prize for which was the acquisition of a sandalwood box.

For this was no pleasure cruise for the sleuth and his assistant. Long before they had set out from England on what was surely the most amazing quest upon which man had ever embarked.

A noted scientist named Professor Arnold Erskine had been slain at his residence in Dulwich, England. Locke had proved that the assassin was none other than Dr. Harvey Kruse, a specialist in tropical diseases who had practised in Harley Street. But Kruse had eluded the police and made his getaway from England.

At first Ferrers Locke had been hard put to find a motive for the crime. A summons into the presence of no less a personage than Britain's Home Secretary resulted in an amazing disclosure. It seemed that Professor Erskine had made the discovery of the age—the finding of a formula for the conversion of base metal into gold. The only paper in existence that contained this secret was not to be found among the professor's effects. But the Home Secretary, fearful of the financial chaos which would result if the formula became public, commissioned Locke and Drake to find that paper and destroy it at no matter what expense.

The whereabouts of the missing formula was a complete mystery, save that there seemed a slight clue in the last words spoken by the professor himself. These were, "Don't break open the sandals—" Speedily Locke had discovered that a pair of purple sandals were missing from the scientist's collection of curios. It seemed likely that the

eccentric professor had hidden the formula in one of these sandals for security.

Another person also held to this idea. This was Dr. Harvey Kruse, the man who had committed the crime. There began an exciting quest across the Atlantic, through Canada, over the Pacific, and across India, after the purple sandals, which passed through many hands.

At last Locke had tracked the footwear to Agra in the Punjab, and had broken them open, only to find them empty. Here, however, he picked up another clue. It was to the effect that when Professor Erskine had purchased the purple sandals in India long before, he had also secured a sandalwood box. In a flash a new theory occurred to the sleuth. A box had been sold out of the professor's collection of curios, and it appeared likely that it was in this article that the precious formula was hidden. Unluckily the astute Dr. Kruse, in disguise, had overheard, too, the conversation from which Locke had learned of the sandalwood box. And it was the thought of his great enemy being in possession of this knowledge that caused the furrows deeply to line the detective's brow as he stood by the rail of the *Nasalla* heading through the Indian Ocean.

Jack Drake was not possessed of the same sense of responsibility as his chief.

"Thank goodness we're well on our way at last, guv'nor," he said cheerfully. "I'll eat my sun helmet if we haven't left old Kruse in the lurch this time. It's odds that the police of India will get him, after the description you gave of the rotter before leaving."

Locke lighted a Burma cheroot with a thoughtful air.

"I wish I could believe that, my boy," he said. "In my opinion Kruse is a match for all the police in India. It's my one regret that we were not able to remain in Agra to get on his trail ourselves, but it's that sandalwood box we must get by hook or crook now."

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"Still, we jolly well know the scoundrel hadn't any money when he was in the Punjab," said Drake. "The crew of every ship leaving India will be carefully searched, and it's only by getting a berth before the mast that a man without money would be able to get away from the country. Besides, most of the crews employed are Lascars, and the doctor could never pass himself off as a Lascar in a thousand years."

"That's true," agreed Locke. "But it's this that worries me."

He took from his pocket a two-days-old copy of the "Times" of India. With his finger he indicated to Drake a column of news headed, "Two lacs of rupees stolen from the Maharajah of Bikhara."

"This robbery," said Locke, "took place at Onpur, in the province of Ahmedabad, which is between the Punjab and Bombay. Of course, Dr. Kruse might have had nothing whatever to do with the robbery, but there exists the possibility that he had. Now, two lacs of rupees are equal to fourteen thousand pounds. If Kruse had managed to get away with such a sum, he would be in an extremely favourable position for getting out of India."

"But—but it's impossible!" exclaimed Drake, astounded at the suggestion.

"We must regard nothing as impossible to Kruse," said Ferrers Locke seriously. "He has broken through the net of the law not once but a dozen times. We have had him between our finger and thumb, so to speak, and he has got away."

"Chiefly by luck," said Drake, thinking of the bad fortune which had been the lot of his chief and himself on their world-wide quest.

"By luck, to a degree—yes," said the detective. "But it was backed by an astuteness such as I have never seen revealed by any other criminal. We dare not hold Kruse too lightly, my boy. We must just make this dash to England as though the fellow was at our very heels."

The voyage from Bombay across the Indian Ocean to Aden at the Southern extremity of the Red Sea passed without incident.

It was as the ship was proceeding northward through the Red Sea, after leaving Aden, that something occurred which created a feeling of great uneasiness and insecurity to both Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake.

The pair shared a two-berth cabin. One night, after retiring early following a musical evening in the saloon, Ferrers Locke was about to turn into his bunk when a very slight protuberance at the foot of the coverlet caused him to draw back the blanket. To his astonishment, lying at the foot of his bed, was a queer-shaped, oval article covered with bristles.

"Well, I'm blessed!" muttered Locke. "Is this one of your pranks, my boy?"

Drake turned and looked at the object in his chief's bunk.

"Ha, ha!" he laughed. "Somebody is trying to take the rise out of you, sir. It's one of those dried parrot-fishes that some of the passengers bought in Aden. I saw a Somali chap hawking them near the landing-stage. But it was no jape of mine."

"That's the truth, Drake?" said Locke, eyeing the youngster keenly.

"On my honour, sir. See it's wet, see it's dry—"

He broke off as a knock sounded on the door and the steward entered with a glass of Perrier water and biscuits, which the sleuth had ordered to be brought to him.

"Here, my man!" said the detective, indicating the strange-looking stuffed fish in the bunk. "You don't know anything about this, I suppose? You didn't spot anyone slip into this cabin?"

"Not me, sir," replied the steward. "Seems as though someone wanted to play a prank on you. I've seen this old jape tried before. You get into bed and put your foot against those prickles and get a shock, as though you'd put your toes on a pin-cushion."

He put out his hand. Immediately a changed expression came over the detective's face.

"Wait, man, wait! For Heaven's sake don't touch it!"

Scared by the imperative tone of Locke's voice, the steward pulled his

hand away as though from a wasp's nest. But he had touched one little spike of the strange parrot-fish with his forefinger.

"Let me see your hand," said Ferrers Locke.

He clasped the fellow's wrist and gazed at his finger. A tiny spot of blood showed near the tip. Swift as lightning, Locke stooped down and sucked the tiny wound.

"Here, I say! What are you doing, sir?" demanded the astonished ship's steward. "That little pin-prick won't hurt me!"

"Perhaps not, my man," said the sleuth, "but it's well not to take liberties with even the smallest wound in this part of the world. Not for a moment do I think—"

He stopped suddenly as the colour faded from the steward's face.

"Great smoke!" gulped the man. "I—I feel like I'm going to faint, sir!"

Swiftly Locke put his arms round the man and lowered him gently on to Drake's bunk.

"Drake," he said, as he tore open the steward's collar, "go and fetch the ship's surgeon, and on no account let anyone touch that devilish parrot-fish when you return."

The doctor soon arrived in the cabin, and his examination of the unfortunate steward revealed the amazing fact that the man was suffering from the light effects of some poison that is obtained from the roots of an Indian plant.

In a few words Locke explained how the man had touched the curious object which had been put by some person unknown in his bunk.

"It seems to me," said the doctor, "that the poison must be on the bristles of that fish, but it's most amazing if such is the case. There's no doubt, though, that your promptitude in dealing with the wound has saved this man's life, for the poison is of the most deadly variety."

The steward was removed to the sick bay, and after a few hours of sickness completely recovered.

The parrot-fish was carefully lifted between two pillows and taken to the surgeon's dispensary, where it was subjected to various tests. The suggestion of the doctor was found to be correct. Upon each of the numerous spikes of the curio was a little of the deadly poison.

That night, when Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake had retired, they lay awake discussing the sinister occurrence.

"My aunt, what a lucky escape!" said Jack Drake, for about the tenth time. "Just imagine, chief, if you had got into bed and shoved your foot up against that beastly thing you would have been killed for a certainty!"

"Too true," agreed Locke. "It was no jape, as we at first suspected, my boy, but a most dastardly attempt on my life. We have an enemy aboard this ship. Who it is we must discover if we possibly can. But, by Jove, we must keep our eyes skinned for any further attempt he may make! Meantime, I must admit I am absolutely in the dark about this mysterious affair."

Then Drake voiced in words a thought which had been at the back of the detective's mind.

"Surely it—it couldn't be possible that Kruse is on board the Nasalla?"

"I can't credit such a thing," said Locke. "Before leaving Bombay I proved to my satisfaction that he was not among the crew. Every man was examined by the police. There was no chance whatever of his coming on this

The School Tale you must not miss reading:—



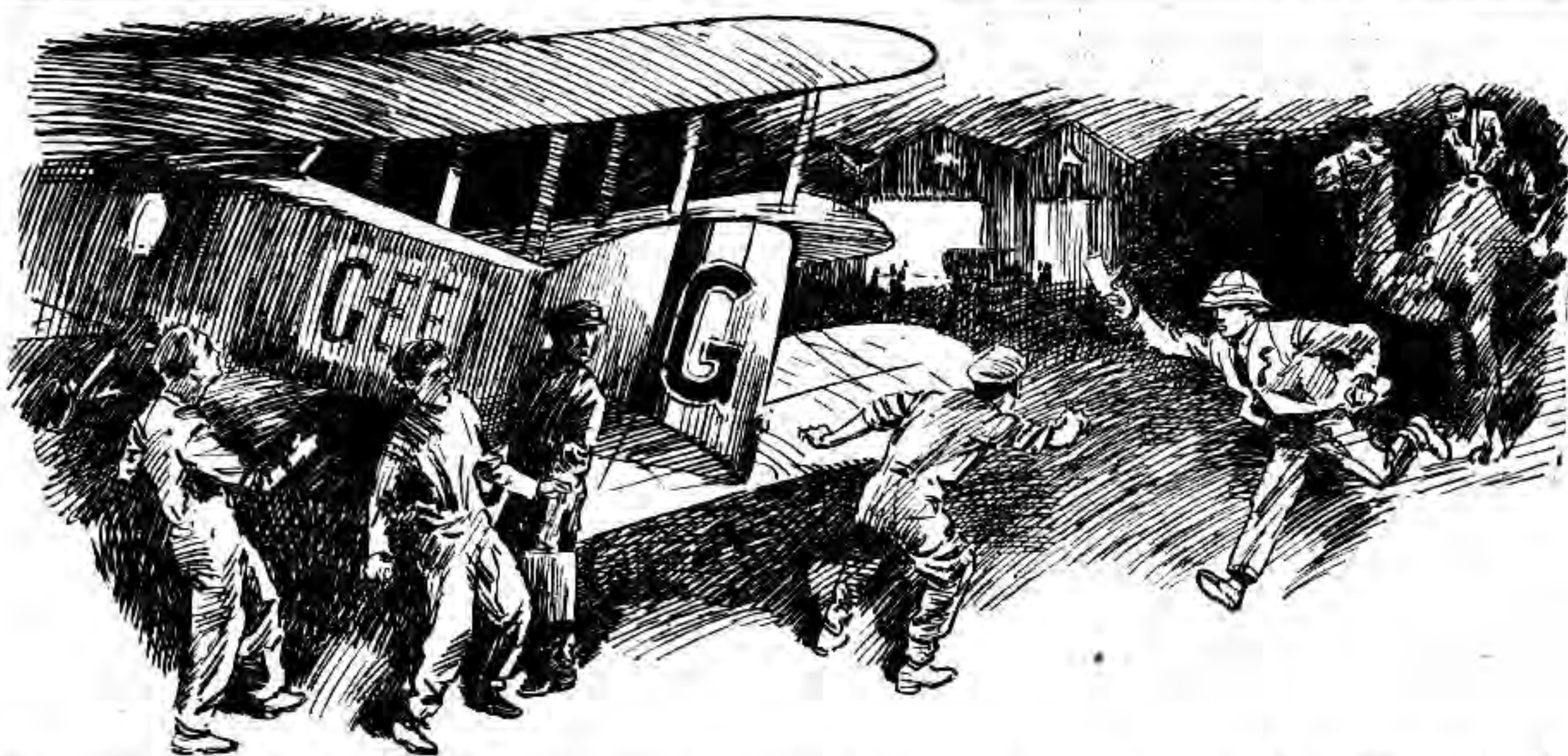
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IN THIS WEEK'S ISSUE OF
THE POPULAR



Outside some hangars a four-seater machine of the Maritimes Company was about to take off. The mechanics about it dropped back in astonishment as the two Englishmen on their camels dashed up and dismounted. (See page 24.)

ship as a stowaway. Of that I am positive. There is not a passenger who even faintly resembles the doctor. And yet who else would have any design on my life?"

And, despite the efforts of Locke and Drake during the next two or three days to elucidate the sinister occurrence, the affair remained an impenetrable mystery.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Through the Sandstorm!

BY the time the *Nasalla* dropped anchor at Suez, at the southern entrance to the Suez Canal, Ferrers Locke had decided on a plan which he hoped would get him and Drake home to England long before the liner even reached Marseilles.

"There is an air station near Cairo, my boy," he told Drake. "Instead of going to Marseilles and taking the Rapid train across the Continent, we will try to secure an aeroplane."

"My hat! That would be fine, sir!" said Drake, his eyes lighting. "But won't it be a rattling big expense?"

"Doubtless. But I'm sure the Home Secretary would approve of our incurring it. You will remember that he told us in London that we were to spare no expense, and in my opinion it is most important that we should be in England at the earliest possible moment."

The advantage of going to Cairo, which could be reached easily by train, was that in the event of their being unable to secure an aeroplane they could go by rail to Port Said. Here at the northerly end of the Canal they could board the *Nasalla* again if necessary.

As is usual with liners proceeding East, quite a number of the first-class passengers availed themselves of the opportunity of visiting the Egyptian capital, close by which are the famous Pyramids and Sphinx.

Among the number the sleuth and Drake noticed the Jam Sahib of Bhopur, who had kept very much to his cabin on the journey through the Indian Ocean and Red Sea. Certainly none of the white passengers had attempted to converse with him, and it was common knowledge in the ship that the Jam could speak no other language but Hindostani. His two Sikh servants

accompanied him, and a small amount of personal luggage.

The train on which the passengers of the *Nasalla* travelled to Cairo reached the capital just after the sun had set.

Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake were among the first to leave the station and board one of the taxicabs which were plying for hire outside. As they drove off to call at the offices of the Maritimes Aero Company, Jack Drake, glancing through the small window in the back of the cab, happened to notice that their fellow passenger of the liner, the Jam Sahib of Bhopur, had entered a closed motor-car. He pointed out the fact to Locke, and that the two Sikh servants were returning to the station.

"I expect old Jammy is going to put up at Shepherd's Hotel, or one of the other posh hotels," said the boy.

Nothing else was thought of the matter just then, though subsequent events brought the seemingly trifling incident vividly to the minds of the pair.

There was a smart French under-manager at the offices of the Aero Company, and to the man Ferrers Locke explained in fluent French his desire to hire an aeroplane for the journey to England.

The Frenchman shrugged his shoulders.

"I am exceedingly sorry, m'sieu," he said in the same language. "The only machine available has been booked already. We had a wireless message from s.s. *Nasalla*, asking us to reserve it for the Jam Sahib of Bhopur."

"The Jam Sahib!" exclaimed Locke. "But we saw him not fifteen minutes ago!"

"That may be, m'sieu," said the Frenchman suavely. "We sent our car to the station to meet him. He is proceeding direct to Teulah, our aerodrome five miles from the city, and is starting for England to-night."

Locke gritted his teeth with annoyance that the wealthy prince had unconsciously stolen a march on him in this fashion. But there was yet a faint hope that he might be able to make the journey in the one available aeroplane.

In a few terse sentences he explained to the under-manager the urgent necessity for his reaching England. From his pocket he took his credentials, which had been given him in London by the

British Home Secretary himself before the great quest had started.

The Frenchman was duly impressed. If the Jam Sahib of Bhopur was willing he saw no reason why Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake should not proceed in the same machine, which was a four-seater aeroplane.

He telephoned to the manager, who lived nearby, and this worthy gentleman also showed his willingness to help the famous English detective, of whom he had heard by repute.

Speedily another motor-car owned by the Aero Company was summoned. Meantime, the under-manager wrote out an order to the pilot of the machine engaged by the Jam Sahib, giving the company's authority for the conveyance of the extra passengers.

Ferrers Locke wrote a traveller's cheque for one hundred and forty pounds, the price of the two passengers from Cairo to Croydon. Five minutes after the signing of that cheque Ferrers Locke was sitting in the closed motor-car, with his young assistant opposite him, being whirled through the streets of Cairo on the initial stage of the journey to Teulah.

The sun that evening had set in an ominous haze of purple. Now a low, moaning sound rose in the night, and the hot breath of the desert swept the streets of the city, bearing with it clouds of choking dust.

Locke drew up the windows of the car and turned to Drake, furrows of worry on his brow.

"It would be just our luck, my boy," he said, "if a sandstorm should prevent us reaching Teulah. However, we must hope for the best."

The French driver kept on his way, evidently hoping for the best, like his passengers. But when he had gone a little way along a road outside the city, bordered by the Nile on one side and the desert on the other, he brought the car to a halt and leaped from his seat. Opening the door of the vehicle on the leeward side, he addressed the detective.

"I can go no farther, m'sieu," he said. "The storm is getting worse. Soon the road will be piled with sand."

"Hang!" said Ferrers Locke. "We have jolly well got to get there by some means!"

Peering out, he saw some camels kneel. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 855.

ing by the roadside and providing shelter from the driving sand for their Arab masters.

"Wait here a minute, my man," said Locke briskly to the chauffeur.

He walked forward in the teeth of the storm and reached the side of the Arabs. Fortunately, one of the men could speak English, and to the fellow Locke explained his desire to get to Teulah at the earliest possible moment. But, despite tempting offers, the Arabs, after discussion, refused to hire their camels for the purpose.

"Then I will buy a couple of the brutes!" cried Locke, drawing a bundle of notes from his pockets and flourishing them before the eyes of the natives. Then the men came to terms. It was an expensive arrangement for the sleuth, but he achieved his object, when two of the riding camels were given over for the use of himself and Drake.

He shouted to the French chauffeur to return to Cairo, and summoned his young assistant.

"Into the saddle, Drake, my boy!" he cried. "We'll get to Teulah yet. These Arabs say that the storm will not last long, and for the next couple of miles we can easily follow the course of the Nile. If by then the storm has not died down we may have to wait a while."

Perched on the backs of the swift riding camels, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake set off again on their journey. The hot, driving wind hurled the desert sand into their faces until they were almost blinded. But the camels loped on without much urging.

Gradually conditions grew better. The wind died down and the stars peeped out from a blue-black sky overhead. Presently they saw lights across the desert.

"The aerodrome!" cried Drake. "The plane surely won't have left yet. Even if old Jammy did arrive there before the storm started, the machine would never have taken the air in that sand-storm."

The camels raced on their broad, padded feet, moving swiftly and easily over the undulating desert. Ahead, the sound of an aeroplane-engine caused Locke to urge his beast on faster.

Outside some hangars a four-seater machine of the Maritimes Company was about to take off. The mechanics about it dropped back in astonishment as the two Englishmen on their camels dashed up and dismounted.

Ferrers Locke staggered towards the nose of the machine and waved the order he had secured at the company's office to attract the attention of the pilot. The pilot throttled back his engine and examined the paper.

"Very well, m'sieus," he said in French. "Please enter the machine."

A small ladder was hastily placed against the body of the aeroplane, and Ferrers Locke motioned to his young assistant to get in first. Immediately the dusky face of the Jam Sahib of Bhopur gazed out. He rapped off an angry query in Hindustani, and tried to bar the entrance of the Englishman. So rude was the fellow's demeanour that young Jack Drake did not stand on ceremony.

He stumbled up the last step of the ladder and thrust his head sharply against the cummerbund of the Jam Sahib.

"Oh, go and eat coke, Jammy!" he said cheerfully.

Caught off his balance, the illustrious Jam Sahib of Bhopur sat down with a resounding thump on the floor of the aeroplane.

Drake scrambled over him; and Locke, following, jerked the burly native into an upright position, and then pushed

him, protesting violently, into one of the wicker armchairs. Hardly had he done so when there was a roar as the engine was opened out. The quivering of the aeroplane body gave place to a curious, lurching movement as the machine started to taxi along the ground. This in turn was followed by a swoop as the machine took off into the air.

"Three cheers!" cried Drake exultantly. "We're off! Hurrah for merry old England!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Dash by Air!

FOR some time after the aeroplane had left Teulah, Egypt, on the first stage of its long journey to England, the Indian passenger remained morose and silent. The Mediterranean was crossed without incident, and a landing made at the extreme south of Italy. Then the journey was continued via Rome and over the Alps to Paris. Long ere this the Jam Sahib of Bhopur had seemingly recovered from his annoyance at the presence of the two white men. He refused, though, to enter into any conversation with them. Not that this mattered, considering that the only words Locke and Drake had ever heard him utter were in Hindustani, a language with which they were not conversant.

Although there seemed no need for any particular precaution, Ferrers Locke arranged with his assistant that one of them should always remain awake while the other slept. Once or twice he had noted a curiously cruel and sinister expression on the lips of the Hindu. It was this, perhaps, that roused in his mind a suspicion, which he did not even mention to Drake, so unreasonable did it seem.

But by the time Paris was reached his uneasiness had increased to such an extent that he hit on a plan for the relief of his own broodings. After the machine had landed, and while the mechanics were busy on her engine, the three passengers strolled about the aerodrome. After a short time the Jam Sahib returned to the machine and seated himself.

"Now, Drake, my boy," said Ferrers Locke, "you go and stay near the aeroplane, but do not let the Jam Sahib see you. I have a little business I want to attend to before we leave."

Without question the boy went off.

Ferrers Locke hastened into the office of the company and secured an interview with the French official in charge. The production of his credentials caused the man to promise any help he could give to the famous English investigator; and then, having made certain that the interpreter attached to the aerodrome could speak Hindustani, among several other languages, Locke made a request which took the French official's breath away.

"I want you, sir, to go across to that aeroplane, and represent yourself to be an official doctor. By means of your interpreter tell the Jam Sahib of Bhopur that, owing to an outbreak of smallpox in England, it is necessary to make sure that each passenger is vaccinated. Make him let you see each arm—and take particular notice of the right. The Jam Sahib is an enlightened man, and, in all probability, will have been vaccinated in India at some time or other. If he has not been, you must offer to vaccinate him. He will probably voice an objection to undergoing vaccination at this period. Then, under protest, you can agree to allow him to proceed on his journey, merely issuing a warning that

he might find himself quarantined on the English side."

The French official had given his word to assist the detective, and he did not go back on it. In company with the interpreter, he went to the aeroplane. It was fully fifteen minutes before he returned.

"Well," said Locke eagerly, "did you see the man's right arm, m'sieu?"

"I did, m'sieu," replied the Frenchman. "The Indian gentleman was most annoyed, and at first blankly refused, but when he saw that no one was about, and learned from my lips that he might not be allowed to proceed on his journey, he bared his right arm to show me that he had indeed been vaccinated."

"And what else did you see," asked Locke—"anything?"

"He bore a curious mark on his arm, m'sieu. It was like a snake about to strike."

"The brand of the poised serpent!" muttered Locke.

Directly his face assumed a satisfied expression, and he thanked the French official very heartily for the help that had been rendered.

Returning to the aeroplane, he entered, with Jack Drake at his heels. The pair seated themselves, and entered into an animated conversation, but the sleuth said nothing of the amazing discovery he had made.

The journey was continued. The broad silver ribbon of the English Channel, with its tiny, toy-like boats came into view far below, and then came a continuous bird's-eye view of England.

It was when the smoke of London could be discerned far ahead, and the aerodrome of Croydon was almost beneath them, that Ferrers Locke leaned across to the narrow passage-way down the centre of the aeroplane toward the immaculate-clad form of the turbaned Indian.

The Jam Sahib was gazing through the window, and did not notice the movement. But he swung sharply round as he felt a sudden firm pressure against his ribs.

An exclamation in Hindustani left his lips, and his eyes dropped. His brown skin assumed a curious dead appearance as he saw that in the hand of the Englishman was an automatic pistol, the muzzle of which was held firmly against his coat, and a voice rang sternly in his ears:

"The game's up, Dr. Kruse!"

At first the coloured passenger tried to bluff it out. He spoke volubly in Hindustani, but Ferrers Locke smiled grimly.

"It's not a bit of good," he said, "you're a clever man, Dr. Kruse, but you're up against it this time, and you may just as well acknowledge the fact. It's clear to me that you were concerned in a certain big robbery in India, and so obtained a considerable sum of money to enable you to leave the East. Your amazing cleverness in adopting the role of the Jam Sahib of Bhopur, who personally was unknown to anyone in Bombay, or on the Nasalla, was a masterpiece of ingenuity; but it's my job to be suspicious, and I had just the faintest suspicion of you from the time I discovered you were so mighty anxious to get post-haste to England. By a ruse I secured in Paris the evidence I wanted; the doctor who was so pertinent in his inquiry about vaccination was put up to it by me. The brand mark of the poised serpent on your right arm gave you away."

While young Jack Drake sat looking

on in astonishment, the lips of the disguised master-crook worked in impotent fury. So confident had he been that his disguise would not be penetrated that he had imagined himself already safely on English soil. Now he saw that within a quarter of an hour he would be handed over to the British police.

For the first time his amazing self-control deserted him completely. Abuse in English rolled from his tongue in a string, but Ferrers Locke listened to it unmoved, his pistol as steady as a rock, pressed against the crook's ribs.

The aeroplane took a sudden tilt, and swung in a circle. Jack Drake gripped the arm of his wicker chair firmly, an alarmed expression on his face.

"It's all right, my boy," said Locke, with a laugh; "the pilot's banking preparatory to landing."

In great circles the machine swooped lower and lower towards the land, and then headed straight for the great open space before a row of hangars. A tall fence suddenly seemed to rise up ahead, and Drake, glancing out of the window, leaped to his feet.

"Great pip, chief," he cried, "the chap's cutting it pretty fine! He—"

It was all he had time to say. The machine gave a sickening lurch on its side, and the splintering of glass and woodwork, mingled with an agonised human cry, announced the wreck of the four-seater.

The aeroplane had crashed!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Professor's Secret!

WHEN Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake next opened their eyes they found themselves surrounded by a group of civilians and uniformed ambulance men. The first thoughts of each was for the other.

The sleuth had sustained a terrible bruise on the back of his head, but there

was no fracture of the skull. Drake had been injured on the head, and had been rather badly cut on the right arm by broken glass.

"You had a miraculous escape," said a man, who proved to be the doctor employed by the air company.

"Where are we?" inquired Locke, gazing about him, still with a dazed expression on his face.

"In the Customs Depot at the aerodrome," replied the doctor. "You've been here for more than fifteen minutes."

"And the pilot and the other passenger," asked Locke—"what of them?"

"The pilot sustained a couple of fractured ribs, and is now on his way to the Croydon Cottage Hospital," was the reply. "He will be all right in a week or two. By a miracle, the native prince who travelled in the machine was uninjured."

Despite the protests of the doctor Ferrers Locke staggered to his feet.

"Order me a motor-car! I must reach London as quickly as possible!"

In a few terse sentences he explained the situation. At his behest the telephone bells were set ringing, the Croydon police and Scotland Yard were notified that Dr. Harvey Kruse had landed in England, and was on his way to the metropolis in one of the fast motor-cars of the Maritimes Air Company.

Within ten minutes Locke and Drake were also on their way to town. Their first call was at the curio-shop of Hawthorne's in the Waterloo Road. It was here that Ferrers Locke hoped to pick up some clue regarding the sandal-wood box which he was so anxious to possess. The curio-dealer himself was out, but his young assistant, the Irish boy named O'Grady, was dusting the many strange curiosities and objets d'art which the fusty premises contained.

The youngster immediately recognised

Locke and Drake, who had sought his help on an occasion many weeks before.

"My boy," said Ferrers Locke, "a number of curios belonging to the collection of Professor Arnold Erskine, whom you will remember was killed in Dulwich, were sold to you. You once were able to render me a great service by putting me on the track of a pair of purple sandals. Can you remember if a sandal-wood box of Indian design came into the possession of your master?"

"Bejabers an' I do, Mistah Locke!" replied the Irish lad. "Sure 'twas only sold three weeks back."

"To whom, my boy?" inquired Locke eagerly. "What was the name of the purchaser? Describe him to me."

Michael O'Grady scratched his head.

"Bedad, now you've cornered me, sorr. It was a gentleman, and he came in a moighty foine car. And it was the car that I noticed most."

"Then what did that look like?" persisted Locke.

"Sure 'twas a beauty! It was a blue colour, and had a badge on the bonnet."

"A badge! A mascot, you mean?"

"Sure, it moight have been; but it was the queerest mascot I have ever seen. It was a metal shield wid a star in the middle and a lot o' spoikes all round it."

"Spikes?" said Locke. He took a notebook and a pencil from his pocket. "Here, O'Grady, draw it for me."

The Irish lad scratched his head, licked the pencil, and laboriously drew a diagram on a clean leaf of the book. When he had finished Ferrers Locke looked at the drawing, his brow furrowed in a puzzled frown. Then a light dawned on his face.

"By Jove!" he said. "It's the crest of India! Perhaps it was some official at the India Office. The clue is worth following up."

Pressing a pound note into the hand of the Irish boy, he hastily led the way out



"Great pip, chief," exclaimed Drake, "this chap's cutting it pretty fine! He—" It was all the lad had time to say. The machine gave a sickening lurch on to its side, and the splintering of glass and woodwork, mingled with an agonised human cry, announced the wreck of the aeroplane. (See this page.)

of the shop and entered the waiting motor-car.

"Drive to the India Office," he ordered the chauffeur, "and stop at Scotland Yard on your way."

The run to Scotland Yard, situated on the Thames Embankment, was made within a few minutes. Here Ferrers Locke met his old friend, Inspector Pyecroft, who, after many disappointments, had found his way back to England from Canada.

Locke invited the inspector into the car, and he, Drake and the Scotland Yard man held an animated conversation as the vehicle swung round into Whitehall. Locke gave a potted account of the many adventures which had befallen himself and Drake in their quest of the sandals, and during their mad race for home.

Pyecroft, on his part, was able to give one minor piece of news which, by a coincidence, he had read in the paper on the previous day. It was to the effect that the Jam Sahib of Bhopur had returned to his residence in Katman after a long secret visit to a monastery in the Singore Hills.

By some means Dr. Kruse had evidently learned in India that the Jam Sahib had gone to the monastery and, having relieved the Maharajah of Bikhara of two lacs of rupees, had considered himself safe in adopting the character of the former.

Disembarking from the motor-car at the India Office in Whitehall, Ferrers Locke demanded to see the head official, who happened to be in the building at that late hour.

After a brief delay he was shown into the presence of Sir Hildebrand Dyer, the Under Secretary for India. Of this illustrious personage he inquired whether it was known that a member of the India Office staff had purchased a sandal-wood box in the Waterloo Road.

"Well, upon my word, this is remarkable, Mr. Locke!" exclaimed Sir Hildebrand. "This is the second time tonight I have had this query put to me. I was the man who purchased that box."

"You?"

"Yes. The box was in the window of a little curio shop, and I took a fancy to it. The price being right I pur-

chased it, and it is now among the exhibits in the India building at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley."

"By Jove!" said Ferrers Locke. "Then, sir, I must ask you to come to Wembley with me immediately, and have that box handed into my possession. I have the authority of the Home Secretary himself." He showed his credentials, and said as the two men left the room together: "But who put the question regarding the sandal-wood box to you other than myself to-night, Sir Hildebrand?"

"I thought it was the police," answered the under secretary. "Some time before you came in someone rang me up on the telephone and inquired about the box."

"Kruse!" muttered Locke, between his clenched teeth.

He almost ran down the stairs of the India Office with the portly under secretary puffing like a grampus behind him. Hopping into the car after he had ushered Sir Hildebrand in, he rapped a curt order to the driver to go out to Wembley as fast as he could possibly make the car travel.

Fortunately the streets of London were not so crowded with traffic as in the rush hours of the day, and the driver was able to get along without interruption. Twice zealous constables stopped him for exceeding the speed limit, but the presence of Inspector Pyecroft in the car smoothed matters over. Then within half an hour they reached the north entrance of the greatest exhibition the world has ever known.

It was closed to the public, but there were officials on duty near the main entrance. The credentials of Ferrers Locke and the under secretary for India proved an open sesame, and the great gates were unlocked and the whole party moved swiftly toward the Indian pavilion.

The moon peeping out from behind a bank of cloud shed a soft glow upon the beautiful structure which represented India's effort in the exhibition, reminding Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake of the beautiful Taj Mahal and Jamma Masjid Mosque in that wonderful land of the Far East which they had left so recently.

With a curt exclamation to a couple of astonished sentries near the entrance to the pavilion, the party reached the portals. They hurried across the great square to the door of the pavilion itself. An official turned the key and pushed the door open for the others to pass in. Ferrers Locke, with Jack Drake and the others close on his heels, dashed in. The light of his torch suddenly pointed like a great white ghostly figure across the building. Immediately a hoarse exclamation left Drake's lips.

"Look out, chief! Kruse is here!"

By a stall, still in his disguise, in which he had travelled from India, Dr. Harvey Kruse was standing with an object held between his two hands. It was the sandal-wood box which he had just broken open. Next, to the amazement of the onlookers, the doctor fell with a crash to the floor, while curious-smelling fumes percolated through the building.

Ferrers Locke stopped short in his stride.

"Back, back!" he cried. "Get back for your lives!"

Well did the astute detective know what odour was that which had faintly reached their nostrils. It was of hydrocyanic acid, a single breath of which is sufficient to solidify the lungs and coagu-

late the blood and produce death within a few seconds.

Just outside the building the party stood and gazed at one another with horrified faces, as Ferrers Locke explained his theory of the horror within the pavilion.

"Now we can understand," he said, "what the old scientist, Professor Arnold Erskine, meant when with his last breath he said 'Don't break open the sandals—' He meant don't break open the sandal-wood box, and the reason he issued the warning was because a chamber in it was filled with this deadly acid, which can bring so terrible an end to a human being. In all probability, the formula which I have been seeking these many weeks is also in that box, and the acid was the device of a disordered brain for protecting its secret. It would have been useless for us to have gone to the assistance of the unfortunate man who broke open the box—he was dead almost as he fell!"

Assistance was summoned, and by various scientific processes the deadly fumes of the hydrocyanic acid were removed from the pavilion. Then Ferrers Locke and his party, in the company of a doctor, who had been summoned, entered the place. The theory of the sleuth was proved to be true up to the hilt. Dr. Harvey Kruse had met a terrible end with his hand almost upon the professor's secret. As it was, Ferrers Locke himself secured the formula at long last, and, taking it to Downing Street, destroyed it in the presence of the Home Secretary himself.

Great was the monetary reward which was given to Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake, and the grateful Home Secretary even hinted that he would be pleased to recommend the famous sleuth for a title as a recognition of his great services to his country.

This latter Ferrers Locke refused. His chief satisfaction was found in the knowledge that Britain was saved from the effects of a financial chaos, and that the world was rid of the greatest criminal who had ever breathed—the man who, beside himself and Jack Drake, had made the journey right round the world on that most amazing quest.

THE END.



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A GRAND SURPRISE!

IN addition to the magnificent new serial which starts in next Monday's bumper issue of the MAGNET, there is a simple competition that will, I feel sure, prove a great attraction to my many thousands of readers. There is nothing difficult about it; on the contrary, it is simplicity itself. All that is required is to take three letters out of a name of a popular Greyfriars character and build up a phrase from them. For instance, the character to be dealt with in next Monday's competition is Billy Bunter. Now there are many pithy remarks my reader-chums can make by taking three letters from the fat junior's name and building on them. For example, take the letters B. U. T. From these you can build the phrase—Bags Unlimited Tuck. You see how easy it is?

SPLENDID "ROYAL ENFIELD" BICYCLE!

How's that for a ripping prize? The goods, I can hear you saying. Well, each week, to the sender of the effort which, in the opinion of your Editor and a competent staff of adjudicators, is considered the best, a ripping "Royal Enfield" Bicycle will be awarded. Think of it, chums! Here's your opportunity of putting Shanks' pony in the background, of seeing the glories of the English countryside under ideal conditions, and of keeping yourselves fit into the bargain. This is a splendid chance for you all. Make the most of it!

"SHERWOOD GOLD!"

By Francis Warwick.

Now you will be able to test the truth of the glowing remarks I have made in regard to this brilliant new serial; for next Monday's MAGNET sees the opening chapters of this stirring old-time yarn well on the way. I still maintain that nothing as good has ever appeared before in the pages of your favourite paper, and I anticipate an extra large mail from my reader chums next week containing appreciative remarks. Be well advised—order next Monday's MAGNET well in advance. There's bound to be a terrific rush for it, and don't, like Fisher T. Fish did in "Treasure Trove," get left!

"DRUMMED OUT OF GREYFRIARS!"

By Frank Richards.

How's that for an intriguing title? You are all curiosity to know who it is that fills the leading position on the Greyfriars stage, I'll wager. Well, I'll let you into a secret—William George Bunter is the guilty person. The fat and fatuous Owl of the Remove finds

himself in deep waters, a state of affairs brought about by his insatiable appetite and his usual state of impecuniosity. There's no knowing what William George wouldn't do for grub, glorious grub! Of consequences Billy Bunter never reckons—until they arrive. His motto might be "Live for to-day and let the morrow take care of itself." All very well in its way, but it has its drawbacks, as you will gather from reading

"DRUMMED OUT OF GREYFRIARS!"

By the way, this magnificent story is extra long, and to make room for it I am holding over the "Herald" Supplement until the following week. I am doing this in response to the requests of many thousands of readers who have clamoured for "longer Greyfriars yarns."

ON DIT!

They do say that the porpoise is thinking of celebrating this blithe, gladsome summertime by doing a record walk on the old, old track from John O'Groat's to Land's End. You can believe this, or not, just as fancy takes you. You can picture it, if your imagination is of the fertile brand—Bunter having a bright and early breakfast, say a couple of melons, a gallon of hot coffee, the fore-quarter of a pig, some fried eggs, etc., etc., and then merrily footing it from north to south. Nous verrons, as the Gauls used to say to Julius Caesar. It would be very wrong, too, to treat the cheery little rumour with cold scepticism, for Bunter's future is full of vast possibilities.

WHAT ABOUT IT?

I dote on questions, but if I sat up all night with the traditional wet towel carefully clamped to my aching brow I could not answer all the keen interrogations which reach me. For instance, did Mick go back to Greyfriars after Christmas? I do not know. Possibly; but Frank Richards is dumb on the point. Will Willesley return? The answer is the same. Having done his job, most likely not. Is Wingate of Clavering the same as our old pal Wingate, who makes Bunter shiver in his shoes? Yes, just the same, only better and wiser.

"THE SECRET OF THE GALLEONS!"

By Roland Spencer.

Our Companion Paper, the "Gem," has a notable scoop in its wonderful new serial starting this week. "The Secret of the Galleons" is a tale of brave deeds, of things long hidden in the fastnesses of the deep, and of the glamour of bygone. We know how in the old days well-found ships sailed from the West en route to Spain laden with such treasure as has not been dreamed of since the times of King Solomon. Some of these vessels never reached port. They encountered storms and enemies. Safe harbourage in Spanish waters was not for them! Their golden cargo would never be transferred from the quay to the backs of mules ready for the long journey to the Court of the King in Madrid. Ships were lost—for ever, so it was thought; but in certain instances trace was kept of the spot where the disaster had occurred. At some distant day there might be a chance of salvage! The new "Gem" serial deals with a certain quest for one of the argosies which went down with all hands. It is a secret of the deep which will thrill all who read it.

A BELFAST SUPPORTER.

A special request reaches me from J. Simons, 13, Hanover Street, Belfast, Ulster. This reader much wishes to get into touch with Jewish MAGNET readers, ages 18—19, anywhere.

Your Editor.



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