

GRAND ARTICLE BY MAURICE TATE
INSIDE.

No. 957. Vol. XXIX. Week Ending June 19th, 1920.

The Magnet 2^d

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THE PRISONER OF THE PUNISHMENT-ROOM!

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TO & FROM YOUR EDITOR

FREE GIFTS!

I KNOW for a fact that any par under this heading is sure to receive your close attention, for do we not all like "*something for nothing*"? And yet, perhaps, in dealing with such old staunch chums, I ought not to make use of that term in italics, for these Free Gifts are well deserved; you have done something to earn them, as witness the rapid strides the MAGNET has made this year. Thousands of new readers have joined our merry band, and you, to a great extent, are responsible for their introduction. Therefore, if Free Gifts come your way, 'tis only right and proper, and there should be no feeling of obligation. Still, the heading at the top of this par must remain, for it is literally in order; 'tis, too, a combination of words an editor likes to make ample use of. But enough of this chin-wag; you want me to get down to brass tacks, naturally. Now, these Free Gifts, my chums, are scrumptuous; they're real cut-out action photos that stand up on their own bases!

LEADING THE WAY!

Of course, the leading players in the Australian and English teams are represented in this series—that goes without saying, when we are in the midst of Test matches. And for that reason I take it these wonderful stand-up photos are doubly worth collecting. No, there's no catch in this scheme. There are no coupons to fill up; no puzzles to solve. You will remember, the thoughtful ones amongst you, that at the beginning of the year I promised you these things if you pulled with me. Well, you've done your bit; some of you more than your bit. The good old MAGNET is still soaring. The result is Free Gifts for you.

WHEN?

That single word I can see—in imagination, of course—shaping on every lip. Of course, you are dying to know the date this grand treat starts. Well, it "*comes off*" in a few weeks' time. That may sound disappointing to you at first sight; but you must realise that an editor has to play his cards to the best advantage. Therefore—"a few weeks' time." But wait a moment. Knowing that so many of you chaps read the "*Popular*" every week, I have decided that you should be doubly rewarded for your loyal support. Now, listen here! These Free Gifts in the MAGNET will run concurrently with similar Free Gifts in the "*Popular*." Isn't that a scorcher? What-ho! You will buy the MAGNET in the usual way, and you'll find a Free Gift inside it; you will buy the "*Popular*," and, hey presto! out will pop another Free Gift. And each paper will help to build a series—that word is worth the italics, for this Free Gift scheme doesn't stop with one week's issue—of the most famous cricketers amongst the Australian and English teams. No need for me to remind you about keeping an eye open for next week's Chat—you'll do that off your own bat, I'll warrant.

For Next Monday:

"THE SLACKER'S AWAKENING!" By Frank Richards.

Readers have been asking for a Mauleverer story quite a lot recently. Well, they'll be pleased to read next week's topping yarn, for Mauly has quite a lot to do in it, as also has Ponsonby of Highcliffe. And let me whisper it—Marjorie Hazeldene comes into the limelight again. Next week, then.

"THE PHANTOM OF THE DOGGER BANK!"

There will be another grand instalment of this powerful detective story next week—that goes without saying.

THE CRICKET SUPPLEMENT!

Letters from a representative number of MAGNET readers all go to prove the popularity of this Supplement, and no one is more pleased than your humble. In next week's special Supplement, Harry Howell, the Warwickshire and England cricketer, gives us a signed article, entitled: "*Killing Off the Fast Bowlers!*" Mind you read it! (Cheerio, chums!)

YOUR EDITOR.

Bunter's Barring-In!

By
**Frank
Richards**

Being confined to the punishment-room doesn't worry Billy Bunter of the Remove at Greyfriars, so long as he can get some grub!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Prisoner of the Punishment Room!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry of the Greyfriars Remove had a powerful voice. According to the Remove fellows, even his whisper could be heard from one end of the Remove passage to the other. When he fairly let himself go the result was one that the celebrated Stentor himself might have envied.

Bob was letting himself go now.

It was early morning at Greyfriars; breakfast was over, and first lesson not yet due. In a secluded spot at the back of the school buildings, screened by two or three old oaks, Bob Cherry was standing, with his head thrown well back, his mouth open, shouting. And Bob's shout could have been heard for a considerable radius on all sides.

Far above the tree-tops, peeping out among the old red roofs, was a little dormer window. It was the window of the solitary apartment which was used at Greyfriars School as a punishment-room.

Bob Cherry's stentorian hail was directed to that little window.

It was but seldom at Greyfriars that the punishment-room had a tenant. Indeed, its existence was seldom remembered by the Greyfriars fellows.

For once, however, it had a prisoner, confined within its solid walls, its barred window, and its thick oaken door.

Billy Bunter of the Remove was there!

Billy Bunter, at ordinary times, was nobody in particular, and where he might happen to be was a matter of the greatest unimportance. Nobody ever minded where Bunter was, so long as he was not near at hand.

But Billy Bunter shut up in the punishment-room was a different Bunter. Every Removite could sympathise with a fellow who was down on his luck. And Bunter was down on his luck, with a vengeance. Never had any Greyfriars man been so absolutely down on his luck as William George Bunter now was.

Hence the little gathering in that secluded spot behind the school under the high window.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh, stood round Bob Cherry while he shouted. The idea was to convey a word of sympathy to Bunter, to let him know that he had not been forgotten. Bunter had spent the night in the punishment-room—his place had been vacant at the Remove table at breakfast. What was going to happen to him no one knew so far; but they knew that it was going to be something unpleasant. So the Famous Five had walked round to give Bunter a cheery word before they went in to class.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry's powerful voice rang far and wide. Frank Nugent put his fingers to his ears.

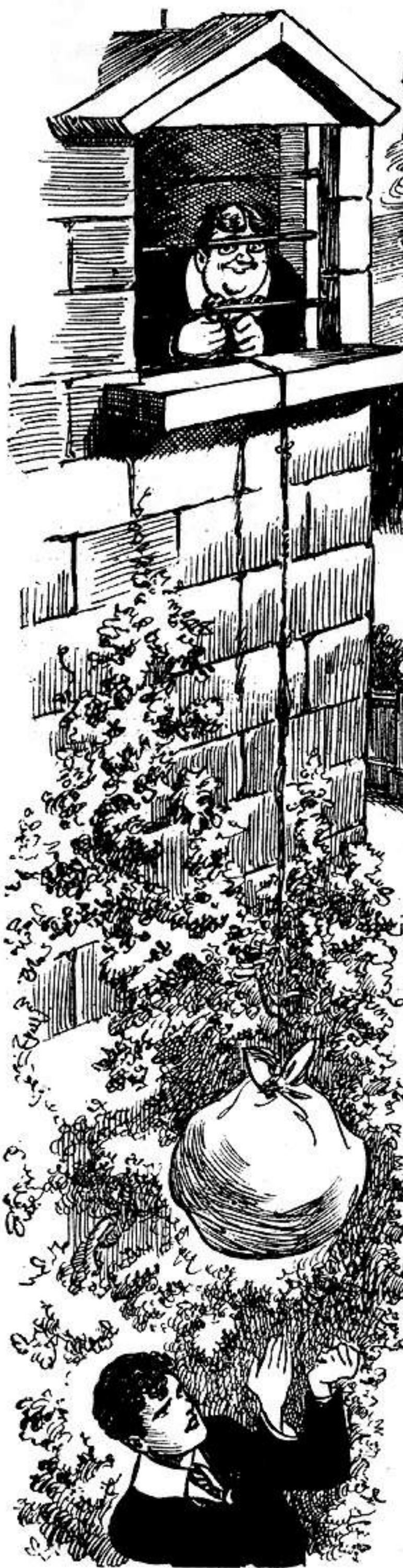
Bob had to put steam on, as it were, to make his voice reach to the high window. But at close quarters it was a little deafening.

"Bunter! Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunt!" roared Bob.

"Go easy, old man!" murmured Johnny Bull. "They'll hear that as far as Courtfield."

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"Bunter must hear it, unless he's gone deaf," said Harry Wharton.

"The deafness must be great, unless the deafness is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I fancy all Greyfriars can hear it," grinned Nugent. "Go easy; we don't want to bring Mr. Quelch here."

"He's heard!" said Bob. "There he is!"

From the little window high above a bullet-head suddenly projected. A fat face, adorned by a pair of big spectacles, looked down at the juniors.

"I say, you fellows!"

It was the voice of Billy Bunter, faint in the distance above.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Good-morning, old fat man!"

The juniors waved their hands to Bunter. It was difficult to carry on conversation at the distance; the exertion was great. And there was very considerable danger of the shouting reaching other ears. It was strictly forbidden for any fellow to hold communication with a prisoner in the punishment-room on the rare occasions when a prisoner was there. Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, would certainly have come down heavy if he had discovered the Famous Five on their charitable mission of cheering up the captive.

Bunter waved a fat hand back.

"I say, you fellows!" he shouted. "I say, I've had a rotten, measly brekker! Hardly anything to eat. I say, can you get a fellow some grub?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors had expected to find Billy Bunter full of worry and anxiety over his position and his uncertain prospects. But the fat mind of the Owl of the Remove was occupied by a much more pressing matter. He might be flogged—he might even be "bunked" from Greyfriars. But the immediate and pressing question was breakfast.

"I'm frightfully hungry, you know!" bawled Bunter from the high window. "I say, you fellows, if I let down a string, you could hook something on it, you know. You don't want a fellow to starve!"

"We'll try—" Harry Wharton was beginning, when Nugent interrupted him with a whispered warning.

"Cave!"

"What—"

"Quelch!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Round a corner of the building came the angular figure of Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove.

Possibly Mr. Quelch had been keeping an eye open that morning, suspecting that some attempt might be made to communicate with the prisoner. Probably he had heard the stentorian voice of Bob Cherry. At all events, there he was, with a glitter in his gimlet-eyes, and a thunderous frown on his brow.

There was no time for retreat. The Famous Five were fairly caught. Bunter, at the window above, shook a fat fist at the top of Mr. Quelch's head. But the Remove master's eyes were fixed on the five dismayed juniors who stood before him.

"Wharton!"

"Ye-es, sir!" faltered the captain of the Remove.

"What are you and your companions doing here?"

"Hem!"

Really it was unnecessary to answer the question. Mr. Quelch knew perfectly well what the chums of the Remove were doing there.

"Are you speaking to a boy confined

in the punishment-room?" went on the Remove master.

"Hem! Yes, sir."

"Are you or are you not aware that communication with a boy in the punishment-room is strictly forbidden, by order of the Head?"

"Um! Yes, sir."

"Then you are deliberately disobeying the commands of your headmaster, Wharton—you, the head boy of my Form!"

"Oh dear!" murmured Wharton.

Really he had not quite looked at the matter in that light. But it was clear that Mr. Quelch was in a very angry mood, and it was useless to argue with him. A Form master had to be given his head.

"Each of you will be detained one hour after class to-day," said Mr. Quelch. "If you are found near this spot again you will be caned! Go!"

The Famous Five went without another word.

Mr. Quelch glanced upward. His eyes met those of Billy Bunter staring down from above.

"Bunter! Go away from the window at once!" he called out.

"Eh?"

"Go away from the window!"

"What?"

"Go away from the window!" shrieked Mr. Quelch, growing very red in the face.

Bunter blinked at him. Mr. Quelch was annoyed with Bunter; but Bunter, on the other hand, was annoyed with Mr. Quelch. Possibly the Owl of the Remove considered that, being already booked for severe punishment, he had little to lose by "cheeking" his Form master.

He put a fat hand to a fat ear, as if to listen carefully.

"Can't hear you, sir," he called back.

"Too far off, you know."

"You untruthful and impertinent boy—"

"Eh?"

"You can hear me perfectly well, Bunter."

"What?"

"As I can hear your voice at this distance, Bunter, it is perfectly obvious that you can hear mine, and you are, therefore, prevaricating, Bunter!" hooted Mr. Quelch. "You will not improve your position, Bunter, by this studied impertinence."

"Would you mind saying all that over again, sir?"

"Wha-a-at?"

"You see, I can't hear you at this distance."

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "I—I—"

"Did you speak, sir?"

"You can hear every word I utter, Bunter!" shrieked Mr. Quelch.

"Not at all, sir—not a word! Not a syllable!" said Bunter cheerily. "I can see you making faces, that's all, sir!"

Mr. Quelch gave a gurgling sound, and turned away. His angry and indignant frown was described by this impertinent junior as "making faces." He strode rustling away, and Bunter grinned after him from the dormer window. The prisoner of the punishment-room felt that he had, to some extent, got his "own" back on his Form master—though whether that was likely to be for his benefit in the long run was another matter!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bunter's Sentence!

"THE Head!"

"Phew!"

"Poor old Bunter!"

"His number's up!" said Skinner of the Remove. "It's the sack this time, for a cert!"

Skinner of the Remove seemed to find something entertaining in that idea. But most of the fellows looked very grave.

Harry Wharton, in fact, looked quite troubled. If it was the "sack," he felt that it was hard cheese on Bunter.

True, the Owl of the Remove had asked for it. But Bunter was every kind of an ass, and really it was hard to take him seriously at all.

Peter Todd was looking worried, too. As Peter was Bunter's study-mate in No. 7 in the Remove, it might have been supposed that Peter would envisage the prospect of the "sack" for Bunter with great equanimity. Undoubtedly Study No. 7 would have been a much more agreeable spot without the Owl of the Remove. Nevertheless, Peter was worried and troubled.

A good many Remove fellows had gathered to watch the Head on his stately way. Dr. Locke, the headmaster of Greyfriars, accompanied by Mr. Quelch, was turning into the old dusky corridor that led to the punishment-room. That corridor led to nowhere else, so it was obvious that the Head was going to see Bunter.

It seemed only too probable that he was going to see him to pronounce sentence upon him. His face was very grave; and Mr. Quelch's face was graver still. The fate of William George Bunter hung in the balance. Was the Head going to pronounce the dread sentence, "Boy! You are expelled from Greyfriars!"

"It's too thick," Peter Todd muttered to Wharton. "Bunter's only a howling ass, but the Head doesn't know him as we do. Bunter's enough to provoke a giddy saint, but—but—"

"But it's too thick!" agreed the captain of the Remove.

"Look here, suppose you spoke to the Head, as captain of the Form, you know," suggested Peter.

Harry Wharton hesitated.

"It wouldn't be any good," he said. "The fat junior has fairly got Quelch's back up."

"I know! But you might put in a word for him," said Peter. "It wouldn't do any harm."

"I'll try!" said Harry.

And as the headmaster and Mr. Quelch moved along the corridor towards the punishment-room, Wharton cut in to intercept them. It required some nerve to interrupt the Head at so grave a moment; but the captain of the Remove felt that it was up to him to speak a word for the fat and fatuous Owl.

"If you please, sir—" he began diffidently.

The Head stopped with a look of surprise.

"What is it, Wharton?"

"About Bunter, sir, if you'll allow me to speak," said Harry, faltering a little. The Head's expression was kind enough; but the Remove master was beginning to glare.

"Kindly do not interrupt Dr. Locke, Wharton," said Mr. Quelch severely.

"Retire at once!"

"But, sir—"

"Retire!" rapped out the Remove

master, and as the Head made Wharton a sign to go, he retired.

Evidently nobody was to be allowed to put in a word for Bunter. The two masters went on their stately way, and Wharton rejoined the group of Removites at the corner of the passage.

"Nothing doing!" he said ruefully.

"Poor old Bunter!"

"Hard cheese!"

"Awfully hard cheese, isn't it?" said Skinner satirically. "I suppose you fellows feel it a lot! Still, you'll feel still worse if Bunter stays on, you know. That would be really serious!"

But the Remove fellows were not in a mood for Skinner's little jokes. When a fellow was down on his luck, it was no time to be funny.

"Oh, can it, Skinner!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Shut up!" said Squiff.

"Be decent, you outsider!" growled Bob Cherry. "It's no joke for a fellow to be bunked."

Skinner took out a pocket handkerchief and sobbed. Some of the Remove fellows grinned at that.

"P-p-poor old Bunter!" sobbed Skinner. "Fancy never seeing p-p-poor old B-b-bunter again—never hearing him say any more that he's expecting a p-p-postal-order! Boo-hoo!"

The next moment Skinner's affected grief was changed into the genuine article, as Bob Cherry grabbed his collar, and banged his head on the wall.

"Yarooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! You rotter!" roared Skinner, wriggling away from Bob's grasp.

"Ow! My napper! Ow!"

Mr. Quelch looked back along the corridor.

"What—" he was beginning.

Before he had time to proceed further, the Removites had vanished from sight. Mr. Quelch frowned, and pursued his way with the Head.

Taking a key from his pocket, Mr. Quelch unlocked a large oaken door that barred the corridor. Leaving the big door open behind them, the two masters walked on to the end of the corridor, and arrived at the door of the punishment-room.

This was a small door set in a deep stone recess. The punishment-room was a solitary spot in the oldest part of the Greyfriars buildings, and in ancient days had been a secluded cell for penitents—in the days when Greyfriars had been a monastic establishment.

The door opened outwards, and was secured by two strong iron bars that fitted into sockets in the stone on either side. Any fellow barred in the punishment-room had no chance whatever of getting out.

Mr. Quelch removed the two bars, placed them against the wall, and pulled the door open.

Dr. Locke rustled into the room, and Mr. Quelch followed him in.

Billy Bunter was sitting dismally on the edge of a little iron bed, and he jumped up as the masters entered.

The little room was dusky, lighted only by the dormer window that looked out over the leads and red roofs, and was barred with iron. There was the minimum of furniture in the room. On the little table was a tray, bearing the breakfast crockery, but not a scrap of food. Bunter had finished up his breakfast, such as it was, to the last crumb.

The fat junior stood and blinked at the Head through his big spectacles. That he was "for it" Bunter knew, and he was greatly relieved to see that



"You have been flogged before and it does not seem that this form of punishment does any good," said the Head sternly. "Not at all, sir," gasped Bunter. "I—I don't think a flogging would do any good at all." "I have decided," went on the Head, "to order you a week's confinement, Bunter, on a spare diet."

"Oh!" (See Chapter 2.)

the Head did not bring a birch under his arm.

Dr. Locke fixed his eyes upon Bunter.

"Bunter!" he said in a deep voice.

"Yes, sir! It—it wasn't me, sir!"

"Eh?"

"I—I mean—" stammered Bunter.

"Silence! Listen to me, Bunter!"

"Oh, certainly, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"It—it's such a pleasure to listen to you, sir."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

"It is really, sir," said Bunter. "I mean it, sir! I—I always listen to you with pleasure, sir. I don't think that it's awful to have to listen to your jaw, sir, like the other fellows!"

"Bunter!"

"I—I mean it, sir. I think—"

"Silence, Bunter! Your Form master has reported your offences to me, and they are very serious. You have displayed slackness and idleness for a very long time. Mr. Quelch, sacrificing his own leisure, ordered you to come to his study for an hour's extra tuition every day. Instead of displaying gratitude for this—"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bunter involuntarily. Gratitude for 'extra toot' was quite a new idea to him. Extra toot did not make him feel grateful—it made him feel homicidal.

"You deliberately absented yourself," went on the Head. "You scribbled a ridiculous message to give a false impression that you had done a foolish and rash act. You were found hiding in the Remove dormitory by your Form

master late last night. It is impossible, Bunter, for you to be allowed to continue giving such trouble to your Form master."

"I—I feel that, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Oh! You feel that, Bunter?" asked the Head.

"Oh, yes, sir, quite! I—I'm quite willing for Mr. Quelch to stop giving me extra toot—I mean extra tuition, sir!"

"Bless my soul!" murmured the Head, while Mr. Quelch fixed on Bunter a glare somewhat like that of the fabled basilisk.

"I'm sure I'd rather Mr. Quelch didn't take the trouble, sir," said Bunter eagerly.

"Silence! You have caused alarm and trouble in the school, Bunter, and I have considered very seriously whether to send you away from Greyfriars."

"Oh, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"You have been flogged before, and it does not seem that this form of punishment does any good," said the Head.

"Not at all, sir! I—I don't think a flogging would do any good at all, sir! I—I think it would do harm, sir!"

"I have decided," went on the Head in a deep voice, "to order you a week's confinement in the punishment-room, Bunter, on a spare diet."

"Oh!"

Bunter gazed almost wildly at the Head. Floggings and expulsions were nothing to this. A week in the punishment-room was bad enough—but on a

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spare diet! Eating was Bunter's chief interest in life. His fat brain swam at the awful thought of a week on a spare diet.

"You will be allowed out twice a day for exercise," said the Head. "The rest of your day will be spent in this room, Bunter. Mr. Quelch will supply you with tasks to occupy your time."

"Oh!"

"According to your progress, Mr. Quelch will, at his discretion, lengthen or shorten the period of detention," said the Head. "I shall leave the matter, from this moment, in your Form master's hands."

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove knew how much mercy he had to expect from his intensely-exasperated Form master. The Head, in Bunter's opinion, was a beast, but with certain redeeming qualities. Mr. Quelch was a beast without any redeeming qualities whatever. The prospect was appalling.

"I recommend to you, Bunter, industry and application to your task," said the Head. "By industry and respect you may regain the good opinion of your Form master, which you have now lost. I have no more to say, excepting that I trust you will show improvement, and thus induce your Form master to modify your punishment."

And with that the Head retired.

Bunter was left alone with his Form master, blinking at him in dismay.

Mr. Quelch placed a paper on the table.

"Bunter—"

"Oh dear!"

"I have prepared an exercise in deponent verbs for you."

"Ow!"

"I shall expect this exercise to be finished, Bunter, when I revisit you."

Groan!

"I now leave you to study, Bunter."

Mr. Quelch stepped out of the door, pushed the door shut, and the iron bars clanged into place. The footsteps of the Remove master died away down the long corridor. The heavy oaken door, half-way down the passage, slammed shut, shutting off the prisoner from all sound of the school. Bunter was left to silence and meditation—and study, if his fancy turned to it.

But his fancy did not turn to it. Deponent verbs had no attraction for him.

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter.

He rolled to the little window, and perched himself there, his head pushed out between the bars. From that perch he watched, his task lying forgotten on the table. Bunter was watching and waiting—waiting for morning break, and watching for the sight of some of the Remove fellows.

The Head had told him that by industry and application he might regain his Form master's good opinion. Billy Bunter did not look much like regaining it, at this rate.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Up a Tree!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. came out of the Remove-room, after second lesson. Billy Bunter's place in the Remove had been vacant that morning; it was evident that he was not to rejoin his Form, whatever was to become of him. Some of the Removites had thought of asking Mr. Quelch, but Mr. Quelch's

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expression was not encouraging. The Lower Fourth came out for morning break, still mystified as to Bunter's fate.

"What about going round and giving him a word?" asked Bob Cherry, rather doubtfully.

"Oh, chuck it!" said Johnny Bull. "We've had some, you know. An hour's detention this afternoon is good enough for me."

Wharton shook his head.

"Can't be done," he said. "Quelch's ratty enough already; and he's got his eye on us. I suppose Bunter's still in the punishment-room."

"Must be," said Bob. "Poor old Bunter! Still, if he isn't sacked, we needn't worry. He's asked for the rest."

Peter Todd joined the Famous Five.

"Bunter's not gone," he said. "I've asked Trotter—he's got orders to take Bunter's dinner to him while we're at tiffin. They're going to keep him a giddy prisoner."

"That won't hurt him," said Nugent.

"No; it's letting him off lightly, considering the way he cheeked old Quelch," said Peter. "I believe the Beak would have sacked any other chap for it; but he knows that Bunter is a blithering idiot, of course, and makes allowances for him."

"That's it," assented Wharton.

"Still, it's rather hard cheese, shut up by himself," said Peter. "He won't get anything extra to eat."

"Poor old Bunter!" chuckled Bob. "Fancy Bunter living on only enough for one chap!"

"And he won't be able to talk, unless he talks to himself," said Toddy. "And next to eating, Bunter likes wagging his chin. Of course, it's rather a relief not to have him in the study for a bit. Absence makes the heart grow fonder, in Bunter's case. Still, it's hard cheese, and I was thinking we might give him a word."

"We've got detention for speaking to him this morning," said Bob Cherry. "You will have to shout to make him hear up there, and depend on it somebody else will hear, too."

Peter nodded.

"I know! But I'll chance it, I think."

And Peter Todd walked away—to circle round the school buildings and approach the forbidden spot with great caution. Squiff came out of the House and called to the Famous Five.

"Seen the new notice on the board?" he asked. "Quelch's just posted it up! From the old chapel to the wall of the Head's paddock is out of bounds for the Remove."

"What on earth for?" asked Nugent. Squiff grinned.

"That covers the ground for a hundred yards from the window of the punishment-room," he said. "It's to keep the fellows away from Bunter."

"So it does!" agreed Wharton. "Better keep clear! Quelch will speak to some of the prefects about it."

Loder and Walker of the Sixth came out of the House, glancing about them. They looked very fixedly at the Famous Five. Evidently Wharton was right; Mr. Quelch had spoken to the Sixth Form prefects on the subject.

Loder and Walker moved off, and their steps took them in the direction taken by Peter Todd.

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged glances.

"They're going to see if anybody's mooching round to call up to Bunter," said Frank Nugent. "They'll catch Toddy fairly in the act."

The juniors followed the two prefects, as far as the old chapel, which was the new boundary for the Remove in that direction. Loder and Walker strolled onward.

"May as well give Toddy the tip, anyhow," said Bob Cherry, and he lifted up his powerful voice and roared: "Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

The two prefects turned round.

"What the thump are you shouting for, Cherry?" exclaimed Loder angrily.

"Eh! Can't a fellow shout in morning break?" asked Bob innocently.

"Take fifty lines!"

"I say, Loder—"

"And clear off!" snapped Loder. "Now, then, off with you."

The juniors departed, and Loder and Walker resumed their way. They rounded a corner of the buildings, and came under the old oak trees that grew under the high dormer window.

Loder looked round him with a puzzled air. There was no one in sight.

"That's jolly odd," he said. "I was certain that that young rascal was yelling to warn some pal of his here."

"I thought so, too," said Walker.

Loder looked up.

From the barred window high above, a bullet head was projected, a great deal like the head of a tortoise coming out of its shell. The big spectacles of Billy Bunter glimmered down.

"Toddy! I say, Toddy!" he was shouting.

"Todd's been here, then," said Loder. "He must have cleared off when Cherry warned him."

"Toddy!" yelled Bunter. "Can't you answer a chap? I say, Toddy, I'm fearfully hungry."

Loder and Walker, under the branches of the oaks, grinned. The short-sighted Owl of the Remove evidently had not seen them.

"Where are you, Toddy?" bawled Bunter. "I saw you a minute ago, you ass! I say, Toddy, I've had hardly anything to eat this morning! Toddy! I say, Toddy! Can't you speak? What are you keeping out of sight for, Toddy? You silly ass, I know you're there."

"He knows he's here, does he?" grinned Loder. "I fancy I know where he is, too; he shinned up a tree when we came along, what?"

Loder leaned his head back, and stared up into the branches of the oak tree above him. Deep among the foliage he made out a boot—all he could see of Peter Todd—but enough.

"Toddy!" bawled Bunter, from the high window.

"You can come down, Todd!" chuckled Loder. "I know you're there—I can see your foot, you young ass!"

"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Walker.

There was a grunt in the oak tree, and a rustling of the foliage. Peter Todd came into view, swinging down to a lower branch. Bunter had effectually given him away, and it was useless to remain in concealment any longer. From the lower branch he looked down on Loder.

"Drop!" said Loder. "You're out of bounds here, Todd! This means six for you."

Loder slipped his ashplant down into his hand.

Peter's eyes gleamed.

This was an opportunity for the bully of the Sixth to use his cane, and Loder did not mean to lose the opportunity. He waved the cane at the junior on the branch, with a grin.

"Drop!" he rapped out.

"I say, Loder!"

"Drop, I tell you!"

"Oh, all right!"

Peter Todd dropped—on Loder! Gerald Loder certainly had not intended that, but that was what happened. Right on the prefect's head dropped Peter.

"Yaroooh!"

Loder curled up under the falling junior, and went sprawling in the grass. Peter Todd's fall was broken; and to judge by the fiendish yell from Loder, Gerald Loder was broken, too!

"Ow! Oh! By gad! Yooooop!" spluttered Loder, as he sprawled on his back, with Peter sprawling over him.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Peter.

"Collar him, Walker—collar him!" yelled Loder. "Oh, gad! Ow!"

Walker made a clutch at Toddy, which was eluded, Peter Todd jumped away and fled.

Loder sat up, dazed and breathless.

"Ow! Groogh! Stop! Stop him, Walker! You silly ass, why don't you stop him?"

Loder scrambled to his feet, and rushed in pursuit. The bell was ringing now for third lesson, and Peter Todd made a straight line for the Remove Form-room. Loder spotted him in the doorway of the House, and spotted him again in the Form-room passage.

The fleeing Peter dashed into the Form-room, where the Remove were gathering for third lesson. A minute later, Loder dashed in, grasping his cane, and red with rage.

"Now, you young scoundrel!" he bawled.

"Loder!"

Mr. Quelch, at his high desk, stared at Loder, in astonishment and grim disapproval. Loder halted suddenly. It had not occurred to him that the Remove master was already in the Form-room—he had been too excited and enraged to think about Mr. Quelch at all.

"Oh!" he gasped. "I—I didn't see you, sir—"

"I presume not, Loder, or you would not have used such expressions!" rapped out Mr. Quelch. "I presume not, indeed! Is this, Loder, the dignified deportment that becomes a prefect of the Sixth Form?"

The juniors grinned. There was not much dignified deportment about Gerald Loder at that moment.

"Sorry, sir!" gasped Loder. "That young rascal—I mean—Todd—"

"You may leave this Form-room, Loder!"

"Yes, sir, but Todd—"

"Enough! Leave this Form-room."

And Loder left the Form-room—much to the relief of Peter Todd.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

After Dark!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH, the Remove fellow who rejoiced in the nickname of the Bounder of Greyfriars, rubbed his hands hard as he came up into the Remove passage some time after class that day. The expression on the Bounder's face was both grim and glum. Several fellows in the Remove passage and the study doorways grinned as they looked at him.

"You had it, too?" asked Peter Todd.

"Ow! Yes."

"Talking to Bunter?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Yes!" grunted the Bounder.

"Hard cheese, old chap."

The Famous Five had put in their hour of detention after class, and had just come up for tea in the study. The

Bounder stopped at the doorway of Study No. 1, still rubbing his hands.

"Three on each paw!" he said, with a grimace. "And Quelch says that next time it will be bending over."

"Better not have a next time, Smithy," grinned Skinner, who was lounging in the passage. "What does Bunter matter, anyhow? I haven't been round to see him."

"You wouldn't!" said Smithy curtly.

"Well, what rot!" snapped Skinner. "Nobody cares a rap for Bunter! What's all this tosh, just because he's got what he's asked for?"

"He's down on his luck," said Bob Cherry. "That makes a difference, Skinner."

"Bosh!" said Skinner, and he walked away. Skinner of the Remove, at least, was not likely to run any risks for the sake of the fat captive of the punishment-room.

Skinner was in a very small minority, however. Now that the Owl of the Remove was so severely up against it, there was a good deal of sympathy for him in his Form. Possibly, too, the fact that it was forbidden to speak to him put a sort of temptation in the way of the juniors. It was rather a lark, and rather an adventure, to dodge round the buildings, keep a keen eye open for masters and prefects, and call up a word or two to Bunter. Fellow after fellow had been caught at it, and a good many canings had resulted during the day.

After one caning a fellow usually

"chucked" it. Mr. Quelch's canings were not to be despised; neither was Loder's ashplant laid on lightly.

So towards tea-time the visits to that secluded spot had dropped off. The Bounder was the last to try it on, and the way he was rubbing his hands showed that he had had to pay a severe penalty. It was probable that Bunter was not getting on very fast with the deponent verbs Mr. Quelch had provided him with. He seemed to spend most of his time that day at the little dormer window, blinking out to catch sight of a friendly face.

Twice during the day had Bunter emerged for an hour's exercise—but each time it was while the Remove were in class. At the end of each hour of freedom he had been rounded up and marched back to the punishment-room. For the rest of his time Bunter had been alone, excepting for the visits of Trotter with meals, and one call from Mr. Quelch—to see how he was getting on with deponent verbs. Mr. Quelch had found that he was not getting on with them at all, and Bunter was further than ever from regaining the good opinion of his Form master—if he attached any value to that asset.

No doubt Billy Bunter was growing bored with his own company, and watched eagerly for a fellow to come round under the window. But it was getting altogether too risky now.

Vernon-Smith rubbed his hands, and



"Drop!" rapped Loder. "I say, Loder—" began Peter Todd. "Drop, I tell you!" broke in the prefect harshly. "Oh, all right," agreed Toddy, and he dropped—right on Gerald Loder! "Yaroooh!" roared the prefect.
(See Chapter 3.)

rubbed them again, and winced. The Bounder was hard and tough, but Mr. Quelch had made him sit up and take notice, so to speak.

"I've had a word or two with the fat chump," said Smithy. "He's got a week of it to go through. What seems to worry him most is that he's going to have a thin time in grub."

"On horror's head, horrors accumulate, as jolly old Shakespeare puts it," remarked Bob Cherry.

"That would hit him hard," said Harry Wharton, with a smile. "I wonder if—" He paused.

"I was just thinking the same," said the Bounder. "Of course, he deserves all he's got, and more. He's getting off cheap, in fact. Still, the little beast is up against it, and if they're only giving him enough grub for one, it will be a change for him, and no mistake. What price making up a bundle of tuck for him?"

"Quelch would be frightfully wild," said Nugent.

"I wasn't thinkin' of mentionin' it to Quelch," said the Bounder.

"Ha, ha! No! But the prefects are on the look-out, as well as Quelch. You've just been spotted."

"After dark it will be safer," said Smithy. "We can get the stuff all ready, and shove it somewhere in a bundle. One of us can sneak out of the House in prep, and give Bunter a whistle. He will let down a string, and we can tie a cord on it for him to pull up the bundle. I told him we'd fix it if we could. Dash it all, the silly ass is in a scrape, and we might take a bit of risk."

"Agreed!" said Harry at once.

"It will be all right," said Johnny Bull, after some thought. "The prefects will chuck it after dark, when we're all supposed to be in the studies. Safe as houses if we're careful."

"We'll fix it up somehow," said the captain of the Remove. "I don't blame Quelch for giving him a rough time; but, after all, Bunter's in our Form—he's a Remove man."

"Hear, hear!"

Over tea in Study No. 1 the Famous Five and Smithy talked it over, and arranged the details of the little scheme.

Undoubtedly there was risk attached, and, in case of discovery, the punishment was certain to be severe. It had been noted during the day that the canings of the offenders had grown more and more severe. And those canings had been merely for "mooching" round the school and calling up a word or two to Bunter's window. For smuggling "tuck" to the prisoner the punishment was certain to be much more severe.

But the chums of the Remove resolved to risk it. The thought of the hapless Owl, locked in the lonely room, with no company but his own, appealed to their compassion. Nobody had ever found Bunter's company entertaining, and it was not to be supposed that he found it very entertaining himself.

After tea the juniors dropped into Mrs. Mumble's little shop, and various purchases were made, each contributing according to his means. Quite a handsome spread was collected, and packed carefully into a bundle and tied up with string.

That bundle was safely hidden in a crevice of the old chapel wall, with a strong cord wound round it, ready for use later.

The juniors left it there, and were very careful to keep away from the forbidden precincts. It was wise to lull suspicion as much as possible. Indeed, when dusk was falling, Loder of the

Sixth was noticed strolling round the house, with his ashplant under his arm. And a few minutes later yells were heard, and Russell of the Remove came back to the House wriggling. Once more a sympathiser had been caught in the act and summarily dealt with.

Harry Wharton & Co. went to their studies for prep. Wharton and Nugent were working in Study No. 1, when Vernon-Smith opened the door and looked in. It was after dark now.

"Who's goin'?" asked the Bounder.

Wharton rose from the table.

"Little me," he answered.

"I don't mind goin'," said the Bounder. "In fact, I think I'd better. You'd get it hotter, bein' head of the Form, and a model to all the Remove."

Wharton shook his head.

"It's up to me," he said. "I'll go! You've fixed it with Bunter to let down a string when somebody whistles under the window."

"Yes, that's understood."

"All serene, then."

The captain of the Remove left the study, and left the House by way of the window of the Remove box-room. He dropped from the leads to the ground, and in a few minutes arrived at the spot where the bundle had been hidden. With the bundle under his arm, he circled cautiously round the school buildings, and reached the bunch of old oaks under the high window of the punishment-room.

The evening was dark—the moon had not yet risen. All was still and quiet; apparently the prefects had given up keeping watch. Wharton listened for a few moments, and then whistled.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Tuck for Bunter!

BILLY BUNTER groaned dismally. His first day in the punishment-room had drawn to a close, and the thought of six similar days to follow plunged Bunter into the deepest depths of tribulation.

The prospect really was appalling.

Bunter was a gregarious fellow; he never was alone when he could help it, excepting on the occasions when he had tuck to dispose of. Then he generally preferred solitude. On all other occasions he preferred company, finding pleasure in listening to the music of his own voice. That nobody else shared the pleasure did not matter to Bunter; he was not much given to thinking of anyone else.

Certainly he would have enjoyed listening to his own voice now if he had chosen to talk to himself. But that did not appeal to him at all.

He was dreadfully bored with solitude. Mr. Quelch had kindly provided against boredom with a task in deponent verbs. But boredom was better than Latin verbs, and Bunter had let his task severely alone.

Most of his time was spent at the window, blinking out in quest of a friendly face. In this awful state of affairs Bunter felt that it was time for all his friends to rally round. It was doubtful whether Bunter would have risked a licking for any other Remove fellow. But he cheerfully expected other fellows to risk lickings for him.

He had had quite a number of visitors early in the day. Later in the day they had tailed off; Russell had been the last. And Billy Bunter, as he blinked from the high window into the gathering shades of night, felt neglected and deeply injured. Here he was, shut up

by himself, lonely and bored, and fellows did not come to speak to him because they were afraid of canings! Worst of all, unkindest cut of all, nobody had even attempted, so far, to smuggle anything to eat into his prison. In the daylight such an attempt was too risky—in fact, impossible. But Bunter did not think about that; he was thinking of the famished state he was in, and feeling deeply injured.

The prisoner's fare had been ample, in Mr. Quelch's view. It was plain and wholesome, and enough for one.

Enough for one, however, was not enough for Bunter. After a day of such thin diet he had a feeling that he was fading away. He felt that he had almost forgotten the taste of jam and the flavour of cake. And all those beasts were keeping clear of him, when they jolly well knew how frightfully hungry he must be.

As the darkness deepened Bunter blinked more and more hopelessly from the high window into the thickening shadows, and groaned in anguish of spirit. Better than this would have been a Head's flogging—or even the sack from Greyfriars. Anything was better than a shortage of foodstuffs. Bunter was beginning to understand now how shipwrecked mariners felt in an open boat at sea.

There was a candle in the room, but Bunter had not troubled to light it. With his head pushed through the opening of the window-bars, he blinked and blinked into the darkness.

Suddenly there was a whistle below.

Bunter started—so suddenly that the back of his head knocked on the transverse bar of the window, and he gave a howl.

"Ow! Wow!"

The whistle was repeated.

"Is that you, Smithy?" shouted Bunter.

"Shut up, you silly ass!" came back a call from below.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Quiet!"

Bunter realised that silence was golden. Smithy had told him that a whistle was to be the signal that tuck was below, ready to be drawn up. The Remove fellows had not forgotten him, after all. If there was tuck below, waiting to be drawn up, Bunter did not want a master or a prefect to be attracted to the spot. Without a word more, therefore, he prepared to let down a string.

He had the string all ready, made up of strips of a handkerchief, odd bits of string he had found in his pockets, and other odds and ends. The end was weighted with a penknife, to keep it from blowing out of reach in the wind. Bunter reached out as far as he could, and lowered the string. Lower and lower went the penknife, and suddenly Bunter felt a jerk on the string. Harry Wharton had caught the weighted end.

Wharton tied on the cord, and jerked the string again as a signal to Bunter to pull. But as this had not been pre-arranged the Owl of the Remove did not catch on. Bunter's fat intellect worked slowly, when it worked at all.

"I say, Wharton—"

"Shut up, you ass!" hooted Wharton. "Pull!"

"Oh! All right!"

Bunter drew up the string. In a couple of minutes his fat hand grasped the end of the cord attached to it.

"Good!" he murmured.

He pulled on the cord. A heavy weight was attached to it, and Bunter heard the bundle brushing against the old ivy on the wall below. The bundle

reached the window at last and jammed against the bars.

Bunter's fat hands clutched at it.

His little round eyes were gleaming behind his spectacles now. There was tuck in the parcel—plenty of it, to judge by the weight and the size. From the depths of woe William George Bunter was transported to the seventh heaven.

The bundle was too large to pass between the bars. Bunter proceeded to unfasten it on the window-sill outside. He drew its contents in, and landed them safely. One article, however, slipped from his fat fingers and rolled off the sill. It was a cake.

"Oh dear!" gasped Bunter.

"Whooop!"

There was a sudden howl below. Wharton, standing below and looking up at the window, had caught the cake—on his chin. He staggered back and sat down.

Bunter pushed his head out anxiously.

"I say, Wharton—"

"Ow!"

"I say, I've dropped a cake! I'll let the cord down again, and—"

"Shut up!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

There was a sound of receding footsteps. The captain of the Remove was departing.

"I say, Wharton!" shouted Bunter.

No answer.

"Wharton!" yelled Bunter. The beast was actually going without stopping to send up the cake again. Bunter quite forgot caution in his excitement and alarm, and he fairly bawled. "Wharton! I say, Wharton!"

A voice floated up from below—not the voice of Harry Wharton.

"Caught you, have I?"

It was the voice of Gerald Loder of the Sixth.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bunter, and he closed the window hastily. Evidently the captain of the Remove had been spotted.

"Silly ass!" murmured Bunter. "I jolly well sha'n't get that cake now! Fathead!"

With that Bunter dismissed Wharton from his mind and proceeded to light his candle and examine his prize.

Meanwhile, the captain of the Remove was led away, with Loder's hand on his shoulder, not in a happy mood. Loder, with a grinning face, led him into the House and direct to Mr. Quelch's study. Loder tapped at the door of that dreaded apartment and marched his captive in.

Mr. Quelch looked up inquiringly.

"Another junior communicating with Bunter, sir!" said Loder. "I should not have caught him only I heard Bunter shouting to him."

The Remove master frowned.

"Wharton! You have left the House after lock-up for the purpose of communicating with Bunter in the punishment-room."

Wharton did not reply. The case was clear enough. He was only too glad that Loder had not spotted the tuck going up to Bunter's window. The matter was serious enough without that.

"Only this morning I gave you detention for the same offence, Wharton!"

Mr. Quelch selected a cane.

"Thank you, Loder!" he said. "I am much obliged to you."

"Not at all, sir," said Loder, with a smirk; and he left the study.

Mr. Quelch rose, cane in hand.

"On this occasion, Wharton, I have no alternative but to make your punishment severe. Bend over that chair!"

It was "six"—and the six were well laid on. Harry Wharton was quite pale when he resumed the perpendicular.

Mr. Quelch pointed to the door with the cane.

"You may go, Wharton! As head boy of the Remove, you should know better. Kindly inform the rest of the form that any boy attempting further communication with Bunter, or approaching the spot which I have placed out of bounds, will be reported to the Headmaster for a flogging."

"Yes, sir!" gasped Wharton.

The captain of the Remove was twisting painfully, as he made his way back to the Remove passage. A dozen fellows were waiting for him there.

"Spotted?" asked the Bounder.

"Ow! Yes!"

"And the tuck?" asked Peter Todd.

"Blow the tuck, and blow Bunter!" groaned Wharton. "Bunter got the tuck all right—ow! He dropped a cake on my head—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly asses! There's nothing to cackle at. He yelled to me, and Loder heard him—ow! I've had six. And Quelch says that any fellow going near the fat bounder again will be reported to the Head for a flogging!"

The Bounder whistled.

"That does it!" he remarked. "A Head's flogging isn't good enough! I'm keeping clear after this."

"Yes, rather."

"The clearfulness will be terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Wharton went into Study No. 1 to finish his interrupted prep. He did it standing. It was quite a long time before the captain of the Remove felt disposed to sit down.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Sat Upon!

"GOOD! Oh, good!"

Billy Bunter's fat face was beaming.

Forgotten now was the thin diet of the day, the solitude of the punishment room, the dismal prospect in store. The light of the candle glimmered upon an assortment of tuck, which made Bunter's mouth water simply to look at it. What was happening to Wharton he did not know, and he had no time to think about that. That handsome spread on his table was sufficient for Bunter to think about.

One cake had been lost beyond recovery—but there were two other cakes. There was a bag of jam-tarts. There was a bag of biscuits. There was a bag of meringues. There were apples and oranges and bananas. There was half a cold chicken, and there were baked potatoes. There were other good things; and it was no wonder that William George Bunter beamed over them—no wonder that he had no time to think about Wharton.

"Oh, good!" he gasped.

Bunter lost no time.

He was famished, for one thing; and there was danger of interruption, for another.

The cold chicken and the potatoes vanished first, and Bunter felt better.

Then the cakes followed, one after another.

Possibly the Removites, in making up that bundle of tuck, had supposed that such a supply would last Bunter for days, eking out the thin diet to which he was allowanced. If they supposed so, however, they did not know their Bunter.

The fat junior's jaws worked as if by

machinery. In these blissful moments, he was having the time of his life.

The meringues went down rapidly, and then even Bunter slacked down a little, though he was not finished yet.

Other good things followed, more slowly, but methodically, disappearing one by one.

"Oh, good!" murmured Bunter, again.

Then he gave a sudden start.

The sound of a key turning in a heavy lock came to his ears. The door in the long corridor was being unlocked; which portended a visit to the punishment-room. The other rooms along the corridor had long been disused, and were never visited.

From the corridor door, to the door of the punishment room itself, was only a few yards—Bunter had scarcely a minute in which to act.

He acted promptly.

Bunter was neither swift nor active as a rule, but the present occasion was exceptionally important. If the visitor—doubtless Mr. Quelch himself—discovered that tuck had been smuggled into the room, what remained of it would be taken away, and precautions would be taken to prevent a repetition of the smuggling.

So the case was urgent.

Bunter had turned the jam tarts out of the paper bag, and they lay in enticing array on the table. There was no time to repack them in the bag. There was no time to hide them under the bed. Bunter swept them off the table to the seat of the single chair the room contained, and pushed the chair under the table as far as it would go. The stack of jam-tarts was hidden from sight now—unless the chair was pulled out.

That occupied only a few moments. Then Bunter pitched a bag of biscuits into a corner, and jammed a tin of toffee into his pocket. Some remnants of the feed remained, and he swept them off the table to the floor; it was all he could do, for the bars were being removed now from the door.

Never had the Owl of the Remove acted so swiftly.

The door opened.

Bunter stood up, facing the door, with a beating heart and a crimson, guilty countenance.

It was Mr. Quelch who entered.

The Remove master stepped in, and stood aside for Trotter, the page, to follow him.

Trotter bore a tray, upon which were bread-and-cheese, and a glass of milk. This was Bunter's frugal supper.

Trotter gave the fat junior a commiserating look. Then all of a sudden his eyes gleamed. Bunter, from the direction of his glance, saw that Trotter had spotted the bag of biscuits lying in the corner of the little room.

The fat junior trembled.

But Trotter did not speak. He was a good-natured youth, and though he had no special cause to like Bunter, he could feel for a fellow who was down on his luck.

Trotter grinned.

"Your supper, Master Bunter," he said, and he closed one eye at the Owl of the Remove. It was a "tip" to Bunter to get that bag of biscuits out of sight if he could.

"Thank you!" stuttered Bunter.

"You may go, Trotter," said Mr. Quelch. "You may take away the tray to-morrow morning when you bring in Master Bunter's breakfast."

"Yes, sir!"

Trotter departed.

"Now, Bunter, you may sit down to

your supper," said Mr. Quelch, "I shall remain, as I have to speak to you."

"Oh, yes, sir!" stammered the fat junior.

For once, Billy Bunter was not very keen on supper. Bread-and-cheese was a wholesome diet; but it was not tempting after the excellent things Bunter had already consumed.

But it was necessary to avoid arousing Mr. Quelch's suspicions. And Bunter, though he was not keen on supper, was equal to it. He started on the bread-and-cheese, standing at the table, blinking uneasily at the grim, rigid figure of the Remove master.

"You may sit down to your supper, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, not unkindly. Bunter palpitated.

There was only one chair in the room, and that was shoved under the table, to keep its cargo of jam-tarts out of sight.

Bunter could not pull it out, to sit on it, without revealing a dozen rich and juicy jam-tarts to the astonished gaze of the Form-master.

"Oh!" he gasped. "Thank you, sir! If—if you don't mind, sir, I—I'd rather stand. I—I've been sitting down a lot to-day, sir."

"As you please, Bunter!"

"Thank you, sir!" gasped Bunter, much relieved.

Mr. Quelch eyed him keenly. There was something indescribably guilty and surreptitious about Bunter's look. But the Remove master concluded that it was due to the fact that Bunter had been slacking, and had no finished task to show.

"I trust," said Mr. Quelch, in a deep voice. "I trust, Bunter, that you have not wasted your time to-day."

"Oh, no, sir!" said Bunter. "I—I wouldn't think of such a thing, sir!"

"Have you finished your task?"

"Not—not quite, sir!"

"To what extent have you progressed with it, Bunter?"

"I—I've thought it out, sir," stammered Bunter.

"What have you written down?"

"N-n-nothing, sir!"

Mr. Quelch raised his eyebrows.

"You have written nothing, Bunter?"

"Nunno, sir!"

"Upon my word!" exclaimed the Remove master. "You seem to be absolutely incorrigible, Bunter."

"You—you see, sir, I—I've been thinking over it," said Bunter. "I—I have given it a lot of—of reflection, sir. I—I'm rather keen on deponent verbs, really, sir."

"I presume that you do not expect me to believe that statement, Bunter."

"Oh, sir! I—I hope you can take my word."

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"The Head's advice is apparently quite lost upon you, Bunter. You have wasted a whole day in idleness. I have some little time to spare now, however, and I will take you through your exercise."

"Oh, dear!" groaned Bunter.

"Finish your supper, and then we will begin," said Mr. Quelch grimly.

He stepped to the table and put his hand on the back of the chair to pull it out, evidently with the intention of sitting on it.

Bunter watched him in terror.

"Oh, sir! I—I say——" he stuttered.

"I—I wouldn't sit on that—that chair, sir! It's—it's rather rickety, sir. I—I find it more comfortable sitting on the bed, sir."

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"Nonsense!"

"I—I assure you, sir——" gasped the terrified Owl.

Unheeding him, Mr. Quelch pulled the chair out and sat down. It did not occur to him to look at the seat of the chair before sitting down—he was looking at Bunter.

Squash!

As the Form master's weight landed on the stack of jam-tarts, there was a horrid squashing sound.

Bunter gasped.

Mr. Quelch's face was a study for a moment! For that moment he sat quite still—on the tarts! Then he jumped up!

The seat of the chair was a squashy mass of jam and pastry. Squashed tarts clung to the Form master's gown, and whisked round him as he whisked round from the chair.

"Goodness gracious!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

He stood petrified, staring blankly at the squashy mass on the chair. And Bunter, in terrified silence, waited for the earthquake.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Last Straw!

"BUNTER!"

"Ow!" groaned Bunter.

The game was up now that was clear.

Mr. Quelch gathered up his gown and blinked at the sticky fragments of tarts that adhered to it. Then he stared at the squashy seat of the chair again. Then he fixed his eyes on Billy Bunter and spoke in a voice that resembled the rumble of thunder.

"Bunter! What does this mean?"

"Oh dear!"

"Whence came this pastry?" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Ow!"

"Food—unhealthy and unwholesome pastry—has been smuggled into this room!" hooted Mr. Quelch. "Bunter, I demand to know at once whence you obtained this supply of unwholesome food."

"I—I don't know, sir," gasped Bunter.

"You do not know!" exclaimed the Remove master.

"Nunno, sir! I—I've never seen the—the tarts before, sir! I—I don't know anything about it, sir!"

"This food has been smuggled to you, Bunter."

"Has—has it, sir?"

"No doubt it was Wharton—I understand now upon what he was engaged when Loder found him below your window. I should have punished him more severely had I been aware of this. Bunter, you have been surreptitiously supplied with food by Wharton."

"I—I'm not responsible for what Wharton does, sir!" groaned the hapless Owl of the Remove.

"You must have drawn the food up to the window, Bunter, by means of a string or cord."

"Oh, no, sir! I—I wouldn't."

"It is useless to prevaricate, Bunter, now that your wrongdoing is discovered," thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Is—is it, sir? Oh dear!"

Mr. Quelch gave the hapless Owl a glare, and proceeded to search the room, Bunter blinking at him in dismay. The bag of biscuits soon came to light, and some oranges and apples. Mr. Quelch piled them on the table.

"Is that all, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir!" groaned Bunter.

Mr. Quelch rooted under the bed, and

found a coiled cord there. He added it to the pile on the table.

"Is there anything of a comestible nature in your pockets, Bunter?"

"Certainly not, sir!"

"Turn out your pockets!"

"Mum-mum-my pockets, sir?"

"At once!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

Bunter palpitated and turned out his pockets. The tin of toffee came to light and a bag of sweets.

"That, I presume, is all," said Mr. Quelch. "Bunter, this is an extremely serious matter."

"Ow!"

"This food will, of course, be taken away. Precautions will be taken against a repetition of the offence. You will not be allowed to defy all the laws of the school in this manner, Bunter."

Bunter only groaned. It was only too clear now that no more tuck would be smuggled into the punishment-room.

"Every precaution will be taken," repeated Mr. Quelch. "I shall leave you now, Bunter, but I shall return again shortly. Measures will be taken to prevent you from calling or making signs from your window to rebellious and disobedient members of the Form."

Mr. Quelch gathered up the tuck—what remained of it—and left the punishment-room, and the door closed. Bunter sat down on the bed and groaned. His only comfort was that he had consumed the greater part of the supply before Mr. Quelch had arrived.

He waited dismally.

In about half an hour Mr. Quelch returned, and he came back accompanied by Gosling, the porter.

Gosling gave Bunter a crusty grin; but Mr. Quelch deigned to take no notice of him whatever.

"Kindly secure the window as I have directed you, Gosling," said the Remove master.

"Yessir!"

Bunter watched Gosling with lack-lustre eye. Mr. Quelch watched him with implacable grimness. Obviously the Remove master did not intend to give Bunter any further chance of opening communications by means of the window.

There were three transverse iron bars set in the little deep window-frame. Between them there was space enough for a fellow to put his head out, as Bunter had done many times.

Gosling proceeded to change all that.

He had brought a supply of strong wire with him, and this he crossed and recrossed over the bars in a close network. The wire was secured to the window-frame by staples driven deep into the wood. The knocking of Gosling's hammer echoed through the room, and along the deserted corridor.

Bunter watched with deepening dismay.

By the time Gosling had finished a strong and immovable wire network closed over the bars a good deal like a big spider's web.

No space was left now for a head to be put out; no room even for a hand to pass through to push the window open. The window was shut, and destined to remain so. There were a chimney and a ventilator in the room, so Bunter did not need air from the window. He was not thinking of that; he was thinking of the effectual cutting off of all communication with the Remove fellows. No one below could have heard a shout from the interior of the punishment-room with the window closed. And the door, of course, could not be approached, as it

was cut off by the second door half-way along the corridor. Bunter was as safe now in the punishment-room as Robinson Crusoe on his island.

"That will do, Gosling."

Gosling left the punishment-room.

"Bunter—"

"Oh dear!"

"I trust, Bunter, that you will have the grace to regret the excessive trouble to which you have put me."

Bunter blinked at his Form master. He was not feeling very repentant on that score, as a matter of fact.

"I shall now leave you," said Mr. Quelch. "You may go to bed now, Bunter, as I intend to take your candle away."

Groan!

"Kindly waste no more of my time, Bunter."

"Oh dear!"

Ten minutes later the barred door shut in the Owl of the Remove. Mr. Quelch's footsteps died away in the distance.

For some minutes there was deep silence in the punishment-room. Then a sonorous sound echoed and re-echoed through the lonely apartment. It was the vigorous snore of William George Bunter. The Owl of the Remove had forgotten his troubles in sleep.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Waxy!

"MIND your eye to-day, you fellows."

Vernon-Smith made that remark early the following morning. He made it after catching a glimpse of Mr. Quelch, his respected Form master.

But the Remove fellows did not need the warning. One glance at Mr. Quelch was sufficient to make them aware that they had better be upon their very best behaviour that day.

At breakfast, Mr. Quelch wore a formidable frown.

His Form were very quiet and circumspect. Temple, Dabney & Co. grinned across at them from the Fourth Form table; Hobson and his friends in the Shell also seemed to be rather entertained. Mr. Quelch in a "tantrum" had his entertaining side—to fellows who did not belong to his Form. In such a mood the Remove found him far from entertaining.

Bunter, of course, was the root of the trouble.

Mr. Quelch had been greatly troubled and worried by the fat slacker of his Form, and drastic measures had been taken. Mr. Quelch considered that that was quite enough, without the other members of his Form joining up to disregard his authority, and display sympathy for a young rascal who deserved more than he had received.

He was displeased with his Form, and he let them see it. They were left in no doubt at all upon that point.

The general anticipation of the Remove was that they would have a rough time in the Form-room that morning. They were not looking forward to classes with anything like eagerness. For once, it was a relief to know that there were "maths" that day, mathematics being done with Mr. Lascelles. It was a still greater relief to know that French fell due in the afternoon. Monsieur Charpentier was more than welcome as a change from Mr. Quelch in his present frame of mind.

"All the same, we shall get mustard,"



"I wouldn't sit on that chair," gasped Bunter. "It's—it's—it's rather rickety, sir." "Nonsense!" snapped Mr. Quelch. It did not occur to the Form master to look at the chair as he pulled it out from the table and sat down. Squash! As Mr. Quelch landed on the stack of jam-tarts, there was a horrid squashing sound. "Bless my soul!" he gasped, leaping to his feet. (See Chapter 6.)

Bob Cherry remarked after breakfast. "I'm going to be awfully good."

"Same here," said Harry Wharton with a laugh. "I'm glad I put my beef into prep last night."

"There'll be trouble, all the same," said Nugent. "I say, Mauly, how much prep did you get through?"

Lord Mauleverer sighed.

"None," he answered. "I went to sleep, and forgot."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Then you had better hope that you don't catch Quelch's eye this morning," chuckled Bob.

"What a life!" sighed his lordship.

"Blessed if I wouldn't rather be in the punishment-room than in the Form-room this mornin'," remarked the Bounder.

"Poor old Bunter!" said Mauleverer.

"Mauleverer!" Mr. Quelch's voice struck in, as he passed the group of Removites in the corridor.

"Oh! Yaas, sir!" gasped Mauly, spinning round.

"What did you say, Mauleverer?"

"I—I said 'Poor old Bunter,' sir!" stammered his lordship. He did not like the look in Mr. Quelch's glinting eye.

"Does that remark infer, Mauleverer, that you regard Bunter as having been unjustly punished?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, sir! No, sir! Oh, no, sir!" stuttered Mauleverer.

"I am glad that you do not mean to infer that, Mauleverer. I should feel compelled to punish you very severely for such an expression of opinion, and

such an impertinent criticism of your Form master and headmaster!" boomed Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, sir!" gasped Mauly.

Mr. Quelch rustled on with a knitted brow. The juniors gazed at one another.

"Some tantrum!" murmured the Bounder. "Mind your eye to-day, my sons—mind your eye!"

There was no doubt that it behoved the Lower Fourth to "mind their eye." On that point there was not the shadow of a doubt.

Their worst forebodings were realised when they gathered in the Form-room.

Every fellow who had been a little careless with his "con" trembled at the prospect of meeting the Form master's eye.

Lord Mauleverer was called on to construe first of all. His "con" would have made the Remove chuckle at any other time. But they were not in a humour for chuckling now.

Mr. Quelch scarified the unfortunate Mauleverer with his tongue, and then introduced the cane into the matter. His lazy lordship had reason to regret that he had gone to sleep and forgotten prep.

Lord Mauleverer was the first victim. Bob Cherry came next, for shuffling his feet. On any other occasion a sharp word would have been deemed sufficient. On the present occasion Bob was rewarded with three hundred lines. Bob did not shuffle his feet any more.

First and second lesson passed off in an atmosphere of thunder. It was an

immense relief to the Remove to get out of the Form-room for morning break.

But they looked forward to third lesson with dismay. The afternoon, fortunately, was to be given to maths and French. But there was still third lesson with Mr. Quelch, and nobody was likely to enjoy it.

Not a fellow in the Remove walked round the School House to yell up to Bunter's window. The thing was getting past a joke now; Mr. Quelch, only too clearly, was not to be trifled with. The vicinity of Bunter's window, already placed out of bounds for the Remove, was avoided as if it were a plague spot.

"We're going to have a jolly time in third lesson!" groaned Bob Cherry. "It's really all that fat duffer Bunter's fault. Bother Bunter!"

"Quelch goes to see him in break," said Skinner. "Let's hope he will take it out of Bunter, and give us a rest."

It seemed probable enough that Mr. Quelch would "take it out" of Bunter, though doubtful whether the result would be a rest for the Remove. He had been seen going along the corridor that led to the punishment-room with his cane under his arm.

The bell rang at last, and the Removites reluctantly repaired to their Form-room.

Mr. Quelch was not yet there, and greatly to the surprise of the juniors, he had not arrived when the bell ceased to ring. As a rule, Mr. Quelch was punctuality itself.

"Late," said Bob Cherry, with a glance at the Form-room clock. "Giving Bunter beans, I suppose, and forgetting little us."

"The forgetfulness is the esteemed boon and blessing," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Yes, rather!"

The minutes ticked away.

Mr. Quelch did not appear.

It was undoubtedly a relief to the Remove. Minute after minute ticked away, and there was no lesson. They had looked forward to a third lesson with deep misgivings, and now that it had come they were left to loaf about the Form-room in idleness, neglected or forgotten by their Form master.

It was amazing, and the Remove wondered what was up! They were not likely to guess. What was "up" was so extraordinary, so unheard-of, that no fellow in the Remove was likely even to guess what had happened.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Turning the Tables!

"**B**EAST!"

Billy Bunter murmured that expressive word as he heard a key turn in the corridor door.

He had breakfasted—a thin and meagre breakfast. From breakfast to the hour of morning break Bunter had work to occupy him. He knew that Mr. Quelch would visit him in break to see how he had progressed. But he had not done any work. His exercises still lay untouched on the table. He was hungry. Having eaten only enough for one, he was naturally famished. Work was out of the question.

Instead of wasting his time on exercises, Bunter was thinking over his deplorable position.

The Head had told him that he might regain his Form master's good opinion by industry and application; but if Bunter's release depended on that it

looked as if he would remain a prisoner for the rest of his natural life. Industry and application were not in his line. And there seemed no other way—only that impossible way—of softening the stony heart of Mr. Quelch.

The first day of imprisonment had been bad enough, relieved as it had been by visitors under the window and smuggled tuck. What was the second day going to be like, now that Bunter could not even approach the window, and it was impossible for tuck to be smuggled in?

It was awful to contemplate.

Once upon a time there had been a barring-out at Greyfriars, for a cause that seemed serious enough at the time, but which seemed to Bunter much less serious than the present state of affairs. Bunter's idea was that the Remove ought to rise as one man and demand his release, and institute a barring-out if the Head did not accede.

That was what the Remove ought to do. But it was fairly clear that the Remove wouldn't do as they ought.

They did not see eye to eye with Bunter. They sympathised with a fellow who was up against it, but they knew that Bunter was getting less than he had asked for.

As for a barring-out, Bunter had suggested that to the heroes of the Remove before his incarceration, and had thereby excited loud laughter.

A barring-out on Bunter's account seemed to tickle the Removites hugely, the bare idea of it. Bunter could not see anything to laugh at in the suggestion. But the other fellows evidently could, for they laughed loud and long at it.

Bunter, reflecting on his position, realised that he had no rescue to expect from the Remove. He had only himself to depend upon, and in the future he saw no hope. Nothing but industry, and applying himself to study, could save him from his punishment. And these resources were too desperate for Bunter even to consider them.

Bunter was, however, growing desperate.

Somehow or other he had to escape, if only to bag one stunning feed before he was recaptured and taken back to duranco vile.

As he heard Mr. Quelch's steps in the corridor without, his little round eyes gleamed behind his spectacles.

He listened to the Remove master taking down the bars from the door of the punishment-room. His breath came thick and fast. Was it possible—was it barely possible—to dodge out of the room when the Form master opened the door?

Suppose he charged right at Mr. Quelch and butted him! That would give him a chance. Such a charge, with Bunter's weight behind it, would be certain to floor the Form master, and while he was sorting himself out the Owl of the Remove could flee. It was quite feasible, only—

Bunter had almost resolved upon it when the door was drawn open and Mr. Quelch entered. At the sight of that gentleman Bunter's fat heart failed him. He realised that he would no more have dared to charge Mr. Quelch and butt him over than he would have ventured to charge a wild tiger in the jungle.

Instead of charging Mr. Quelch he backed away and blinked at him uneasily through his big spectacles. He noted, with well-founded uneasiness, that Mr. Quelch had a cane under his arm.

"Bunter! Are your exercises done?"

"Nunno, sir!"

Mr. Quelch advanced to the table.

"Bless my soul! You have not even touched your work, Bunter!" he exclaimed.

"I—I was just going to begin, sir."

"I have been too patient with you, Bunter," said the Remove master grimly. "I had hoped, Bunter, that solitude and meditation would bring you to some sense of your shortcomings. I have been disappointed, Bunter. I shall now cane you for your idleness."

"Oh, sir!" gasped Bunter.

Mr. Quelch pointed to the chair with his cane.

"You will bend over that chair, Bunter!"

Bunter breathed hard.

Charging Mr. Quelch over was not to be thought of. But the fat brain of the Owl of the Remove was working at full pressure now. Work and short commons, and imprisonment in the lonely room, and now a caning added thereto! It was more than enough to make Bunter exert his podgy intellect, on its highest gear, so to speak.

Mr. Quelch, standing by the table, was a little distance from the door, which stood open. Bunter breathlessly wondered whether he had time to scuttle away by the open door before the Form master could grasp him.

The Remove master, certainly did not dream that such thoughts were passing in Bunter's mind. If he had thought of it he would not have supposed that Bunter would have risked further punishment by a futile flight—for, of course, his pursuit and recapture would have been immediate.

But other thoughts, too, were working in Bunter's brain. Suppose he had time to slam the door on Mr. Quelch!

The thought made him gasp. Certainly no other Greyfriars fellow, howsoever reckless, would have dreamed of shutting up the Form master in the punishment-room. And Bunter was probably the least reckless member of the Remove. But it was a case of fools rushing in where angels might have feared to tread.

His chief thought was that he had had enough of the punishment-room, and more than enough of short commons.

If he could turn the tables on Mr. Quelch that gentleman would be able to take a turn in the punishment-room himself and see how he liked it. As for the consequences, they could not be helped. Bunter was already about as much up against it as he could be—imprisonment, thin diet, and a caning now due! Matters could not be much worse.

He blinked at Mr. Quelch, gasping for breath, with that amazing scheme in his mind, his heart beating fast.

He had proposed a barring-out to the Remove, and had been laughed at. But what price a barring-in? Barring in Mr. Quelch, and leaving him to stew in his own juice, as it were!

Mr. Quelch gazed at him. He could not understand the expression on Bunter's excited face.

He made an angry gesture with the cane.

"Do you hear me, Bunter?" he rapped out.

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped Bunter.

Was there time for a rush out of the doorway—a hurried slam of the door? Or would the long legs of the Form master cover the space too quickly? Would a grasping hand fall on Bunter's shoulder?

"Bend over that chair at once, Bunter!" commanded Mr. Quelch. And he swished the cane.

(Continued on page 17.)

HARRY WHARTON'S Cricket Supplement

No. 7 (New Series). Vol. 2.

June 19th, 1926.

No trouble or expense has been spared to make this supplement interesting and informative. In it all phases of cricket will be discussed by writers chosen from the foremost cricket authorities in the land. Readers may, therefore, rely upon the facts, figures, etc., mentioned from week to week in this supplement as being authentic.

HARRY WHARTON, Editor



SHALL WE BOWL THEM OUT? *by Maurice Tate*

(The famous Sussex and England bowler, discusses our bowling chances against the Australians.)

THERE are many questions which crop up concerning this season's Test matches to which we should be glad to find an answer from the English point of view. One of the leading questions, as it has been put to me scores of times since I got back from the last tour in Australia, is this: "Shall we succeed in bowling them out? Shall we be able to dismiss the Australians quickly enough to enable us to force a victory in three day matches?" It is a question on which there can be no really definite answer, because so much depends on the conditions obtaining, and the form of our bowlers in any particular game. But it is certainly a question which provides an interesting topic for discussion.

FOR "YEARS AND YEARS."

In the first place, as we are all aware, there is a vital difference between the Test matches played in Australia and the Test matches played in this country. Out there every match is played to a finish, and I confess that it seemed to me that some of the Test contests in which we took part out there lasted for years and years. They didn't, of course, but I got that impression when we had to start morning after morning on the business of getting the Australians out. Over here the Test matches are limited to three days, with the proviso that if the fate of the "Ashes" depends on the last one then that will be played to a definite conclusion.

ARE THREE DAYS ENOUGH?

From some points of view I think it is a matter for regret that we do not play the Test matches in this country under the same rules as in Australia—every one to be fought to a finish. However, that is a question which has been gone into most fully by the authorities, and without inquiring into the why and the wherefore, I suppose we may take it for granted that the difficulties in the way of playing the games in this country to an end, no matter how long they take, are insuperable. So we have to accept things as they are; and try to answer the question which now becomes just this: Will three days be a sufficient length of time for us in which to get the Australians out twice and yet leave our batsmen with sufficient time to get enough runs to give us the victory we so much desire, and which I think we have a very good chance of gaining?

IN ENGLAND'S FAVOUR.

It can be taken for granted that, given a certain type of pitch for the Test matches, we shall be able to bowl our opponents out. In this country we have plenty of bowlers who will, in my view, be good enough to get rid of the Australians if the clerk of the weather decides to turn on the sunshine after an hour or two of rain. It is in England's favour that we shall be at home if we do get this kind of pitch, because in the first place it will mean that the Australians are fighting under conditions to which they are not fully accustomed, and in the second place that we shall, at the last minute, be able to call up bowlers of our own who are specially deadly on the glue-pot sort of pitch. So one answer to the question of whether we shall get our

opponents out is: "Yes, if we get glue-pots." They might possibly be able to get our batsmen out for smaller totals under the same conditions, but with that aspect of the case I have nothing to do here.

NOT EASY TO MOVE.

However, it is too much to expect that the Test matches will all be played under conditions favouring the bowlers, or that if we get this variable weather the luck of it will all go our way. Nor do I think any of us would wish it so. We don't want the clerk of the weather to beat the Australians; we want to beat them by our own skill, with the luck running equal. And when I come to consider the chances of our getting the Australians out twice in three days provided the wickets are good, I am afraid I am not optimistic. In saying this, do not let it be thought that I am running down the ability of our bowlers. We have some good men—as good, I think, as our opponents will be able to put in the field. But I would have you remember that these Australian batsmen are not easy to move. By instinct and by training they are, first and foremost, defensive batsmen. Their play out in Australia does not teach them to take unnecessary risks, because time is of little importance in the matches out there.

THE TAIL ALWAYS WAGS.

Consider, also, this fact: That the Australians, for as long as I can remember, have had a reputation for playing a team in which there were ten or eleven batsmen. The side now in this country promises to be no different from those we have played against in previous years; it does not seem to have any sort of tail—except, perhaps, the sort of tail which can always be depended upon to wag most freely just when you think you are treading on it. Take one example. In the third Test match of the last tour in Australia we had sent back six of their batsmen in the first innings for 119 runs. If ever a set of bowlers seemed to be justified in rubbing their hands with glee, then we were in that position. Alas, if we counted our chicks it was too early. Ryder came in, stayed till he had made over two hundred, and we didn't send the last batsman back until the total was only eleven short of five hundred. Verily, they are a team of which you can only say they are all out when you can see the back of the last batsman.



The "World Beater."

THE "STICK IT" BATSMEN.

Not for one moment would I try to give the impression that the Australians are all stonewallers. They have free scoring batsmen among them, as doubtless some English bowlers will find out before the season has run its course. But these Australians can, if the situation demands it, turn on the seccotine almost without exception. The men of the present lot who have been here before have shown us that. Did not Collins bat for nearly five hours for 40 runs in a Test match at Old Trafford in 1921?

Maurice Tate

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 957.

A Peep at Trent Bridge!

WHERE THE FIRST TEST MATCH WILL BE PLAYED THIS WEEK.

AT the south end of Nottingham is a broad bridge which carries traffic from the London road over the River Trent. This bridge has just received a new coat of green paint, picked out with gold. It is difficult to say whether the authorities have done this in honour of the first Test match or not; in any case, the game will be played within a stone's throw of the bridge.

The Trent Bridge ground stands on the junction of the Grantham road and the road to London, and right in the centre is a pitch upon which the head groundsman has been working for close upon six months. It is on this pitch that the first Test will be played, and he has produced a wicket which will not crack in the hottest sun. It is essentially a batsman's wicket, and it will suit the Australians. But it will probably suit the England team, too!

A white-roofed stand runs around fully half of the ground—from the members' entrance in Bridgford Road to more than half-way round the Radcliffe Road side. This stand certainly will not hold all the people who will want to get into it, and rows of benches will be set outside the iron railing at the front. The lucky ones will probably get a better view from these benches than the folk in the stand behind them.

A new concrete stand has been built on the north side of the ground. It runs from the end of the covered stand to the old black benches which line the wall on the Fox Road side. In this corner of the ground are set the nets, and they use unusually long nets at Trent Bridge; they run all the way from the bowling-peg to behind the batsman, although they are covered in only above the wicket.

A second new concrete stand has been built between the benches and the ladies pavilion. The Notts management hope that next year they will be able to pull up the benches along the Fox Road wall and replace them with yet a third concrete stand, which will mean that there will be stands all round the big ground.

The ladies pavilion and the main pavilion are both built of well-weathered red brick, and to the right of the former pavilion stands one of the two scoreboards. The scoreboards at Trent Bridge are very cleverly arranged.

Behind the board are ten-sided wheels, each side being numbered. An aperture is cut in the face of the board, and the wheels are turned to show the necessary numbers. The black figures on the white ground present a perfectly flat surface, and can be seen from the furthest parts of the field.

The spoked wheel makes for easy manipulation, and is much more simple and effective than the roll of canvas with numbers on it which is in use on many county cricket grounds.

The second scoreboard is built above the covered stand on the Radcliffe Road side, and is adjacent to the Press-box.

There are three sets of dressing-rooms in the big, main pavilion. Those in the basement are used by the club and ground players. The Australians will be accommodated in two rooms on the first floor, and a pair of dressing-rooms on the upper floor will be used by the England team.

There are balconies in front of each of the Test Team's dressing-rooms, each commanding a view of the field. Each room is equipped with wash-basins, and there are baths just across the landing.

On the day of the match a ground steward will be posted outside each of the four dressing-room doors, just to see that the players are not worried by autograph hunters and other people.

The Trent Bridge ground is one of the finest in the country, and the whole of the turf is in magnificent condition, from the pitches in the centre to the edges of the ground.

The Notts Forest football ground is not very far distant; it is on the banks of the River Trent, about two hundred and fifty yards away, in a straight line. The Notts County football ground is on the other side of the river. Boot's—the chemists—have their ground close handy, and there is yet another athletic field between the Trent Bridge ground and the river.

Altogether, Nottingham has five sports grounds, very close to one another and near Trent Bridge. But, of them all, the Test match ground is the one that counts at this moment.

AT THE NETS!

By "County Cricketer."

A New Series of Articles which will tell you how to improve your cricket.

No. 3.—FORWARD STROKES.

READERS will remember that last week I made a special point of the necessity for playing with a straight bat, and also stressed the point that the right leg should never be moved away from the wicket in the direction of square leg, because to do that destroys the possibility of using a straight bat at once. Of course, this talk of the necessity for a straight bat does not mean that the bat should never be other than straight. There are certain strokes which demand the cross bat—the cut and the pull to leg by way of example. The fact remains, however, that the essence of batting consists in a straight bat first and foremost.

A CONTEST OF WITS.

The next big principle may sound a little bit silly to you, but, believe me, after watching scores of young lads at the nets, and trying to coach them, I am convinced that this bit of advice is really badly needed. It is: Watch the ball. In fact, I would go a little bit further and say that you must not only watch the ball, but watch the bowler even before the ball is delivered. Remember that batting and bowling become very largely a contest of wits. The good bowler will do everything in his power to try to conceal from the batsman what sort of delivery he intends to send down to him, and, for his part, the good batsman will strain every nerve; watch most minutely for any sign from the bowler as to his intentions. Watch the hand of the bowler as he comes towards the wicket, and then watch the ball from the very instant it leaves his hand.

The more I play cricket the more I am convinced that the difference between the really great batsman and the ordinary batsman is very largely a matter of eyesight. Obviously, the sooner the batsman sees the ball in the real sense—that is, sees what sort of a ball it is, where it is likely to drop, and so on—the sooner is he able to get into position for making a stroke or to prevent the ball hitting his wicket.

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A COMMON ERROR.

Connected with this advice of watching the ball there is another important point. Whatever other mistake you make, don't commit the blunder of making up your mind what sort of stroke you are going to play before the ball is sent down to you. I am absolutely convinced that there are hundreds of young batsmen getting out every match day because they decide to play a particular stroke before they know what sort of ball is coming to them. They don't treat each ball on its merits; and may I say to my young readers of the MAGNET that they won't become good batsmen until they drop all idea of treating each ball any other way?

KEEP THE BALL ON THE GROUND.

So that we can report progress in this matter of making strokes, I may divide them under two headings—forward play and back play. The good-length ball on anything like a true wicket is the one to which you must play forward. In making this forward stroke, the left leg should go out with the bat. In the case of a left-handed player, the right leg should go with the bat. If you have to go so far out that there is a danger of overbalancing, then I should say that, generally speaking, this is a ball which you ought not to have played forward at. Remember, too, you right-handers, that in all forward play the left shoulder should be kept out, because, primarily, in all forward strokes, with the exception of the big hit which is meant to go over the ropes, the ball should be kept on the ground. And you won't keep the ball on the ground if you push out the bottom of the bat first. There are some coaches who insist on the young batsman keeping his right foot flat on the ground even in making a forward stroke; but I can't say that I agree with this doctrine. I think, if you will watch most of the leading players, you will see that when they play a forward stroke they have lifted the right heel at the moment of impact, and that in completing the stroke they drag the right foot perhaps an inch or two over the line. This, of course, gives them the important follow-through which enables them to put power behind the bat.

(Next week "County Cricketer" will give you a few tips on "Scoring Strokes on the Off Side!" Look out for this feature, boys.)

BUNTER'S BARRING-IN!

(Continued from page 12.)

"Bunter's fat brain was still at full pressure. The brightness of his own intellect in that desperate emergency astonished himself.

Somehow, Mr. Quelch had to be got further away from the door. Once he was on the further side of the table, Bunter considered that he would have time for a sudden rush and a slam.

Bunter approached the chair, and instead of bending over it as directed, he picked it up and lifted it towards the window. The window was on the side of the room opposite the door.

Mr. Quelch stared at him, surprised by his proceeding.

"You need not move the chair, Bunter! What do you mean? Never mind—now bend over!"

Mr. Quelch followed towards the window.

He was now where Bunter wanted him, so to speak. Bunter did not bend over the chair. He backed breathlessly round the table, blinking at Mr. Quelch across that article of furniture.

"If—if you please, sir!" he stammered.

"Enough, Bunter! Come here at once!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "How dare you delay and waste my time like this! Come here at once and bend over this chair!"

Bunter panted.

It was now or never!

Gathering all his resolution, and taking his courage in both hands, as it were, he spun round, and rushed at the doorway.

In a second he was out of the room.

Slam!

Mr. Quelch, for a moment, stood transfixed. Then he rushed round the table and fairly jumped at the door, grasping the handle. The handle turned, and Mr. Quelch shoved hard at the door.

But as he shoved, there was a sharp metallic clang outside. It was the clang of an iron bar dropping into a stone socket.

Bunter was just in time—with not a second to spare! Mr. Quelch shoved at the door—shoved hard and harder—but he might as well have shoved at the solid old stone walls of Greyfriars. The door was fast; and the Remove master was a prisoner in the punishment-room. The tables were turned, with a vengeance!

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Barred In!

BILLY BUNTER gasped.

The first bar had clanged home just in time, securing the door, which creaked under the furious shove from within. One bar was quite enough to hold the door; but Bunter lost no time in slamming the second bar into the sockets.

Then he leaned on the wall, and panted.

Knock! Knock!

Mr. Quelch was knocking furiously on the inner side of the door. His loud and angry voice could be heard through the thick oak. But his voice had no terrors for the Owl of the Remove now.

"Bunter! Bunter! How dare you! Bunter!"

The fat junior grinned breathlessly.

Mr. Quelch was barred in—effectually barred in! Nothing short of a battering-ram would have forced open the door from the inside. Bunter was as safe from the Remove master, as if the

length of the equator had lain between them.

"Bunter! Have you fastened this door?" roared Mr. Quelch. Through the thick oak his voice sounded quite faint; in the punishment-room itself it rolled like thunder.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Unfasten it immediately!"

Bunter made no answer to that.

"You will be flogged for this insolence, Bunter!"

"Indeed, sir!"

"Yes, indeed!" roared Mr. Quelch.

"I have never heard of such insolence. Bunter, open this door immediately!"

Bunter cast an anxious blink along the corridor behind him. A dozen yards away was the old oak corridor door, which Mr. Quelch had left wide open, with the key in the lock on the other side. But no one was likely to come along that deserted corridor; it led nowhere but to the punishment-room. He was safe from observation.

Bunter leaned on the wall, and pumped in breath. His fat heart was thumping, but at the same time he was grinning victoriously. Captor and captive had changed places, and Bunter had the upper hand now. How long he was likely to keep it was another matter which the Owl of the Remove did not worry about at present.

Knock! Thump! Bang!

Mr. Quelch, on the inner side of the door, was growing emphatic.

"Bunter!" he shouted.

"Go it, sir!" chuckled Bunter.

"What? What?"

"Go it!"

"Bless my soul! Bunter, will you unfasten this door immediately? Have you barred this door, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Take down the bars at once!"

Bunter grinned. If Mr. Quelch expected him to take all this trouble for nothing, Mr. Quelch was doomed to disappointment.

"Do you hear me, Bunter?"

"I'm not deaf!"

"What? What?"

"I can hear you all right. Do you want me to let you out, sir?"

"What? I command you to do so instantly, Bunter!" boomed the enraged Remove master.

"Of course, sir, I don't want to keep you barred in," said Bunter. "I'd really like to let you out, sir. I—I only want you to let bygones be bygones, sir."

"What?" roared Mr. Quelch.

"If I let you out, sir, will you drop the whole thing?" inquired Bunter.

"No more extra foot—no more punishment-room—no floggings, or anything? I think that's not asking much, sir."

"Are you in your right senses, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir! Are you?"

"Upon my word!"

Thump, thump, thump! Crash! Mr. Quelch was probably damaging his hands by thumping so energetically on the door; and the crash showed that he had picked up the chair.

Crash! Crash!

There were sounds of the chair falling in fragments. Mr. Quelch had crashed it on the door not wisely, but too well.

Bunter cast another anxious blink along the corridor. He guessed that the Form master was trying to make himself heard in the school.

"Well, he's asked for it," murmured Bunter.

And the fat junior rolled away along the corridor, passing the big corridor door that stood open.

That door he closed.

The key was in the lock; Mr. Quelch had naturally left it there, to turn when he locked the door after his departure. As it happened, it was Bunter who locked the door—a contingency that Mr. Quelch had certainly never dreamed of foreseeing.

Bunter took out the big key, and slipped it into his pocket. Then he stood listening.

If Mr. Quelch was still crashing on the door of the punishment-room, he could not be heard. Two doors, and the length of the corridor, hushed the sounds.

"Safe as houses!" murmured Bunter. And he rolled away.

Mr. Quelch, in the apartment lately occupied by Billy Bunter, was still crashing. With a leg of the broken chair, the Remove master beat on the barred door almost in a frenzy.

Crash, crash, crash!

"Bunter! You young rascal! Bunter!"

Crash, crash!

"Bunter!"

Mr. Quelch desisted at last. He realised that Bunter was gone; he knew that the corridor door, once closed, shut off all sounds from the school. He rushed across to the dormer window.

Then he gritted his teeth.

His idea had been to put his head out of the window, and yell till he succeeded in attracting attention. He had forgotten, for the moment, the precautions he had taken to prevent Bunter from acting in that manner.

"Upon my word!" he gasped.

He dragged at the wire-netting over the window bars. But Gosling had done his work well. Under Mr. Quelch's own keen eyes, Gosling had not ventured to do it otherwise than well.

The network of wire was strong; the staples were driven into the wood deep and fast. Mr. Quelch could not break that network of wire any more than Billy Bunter could have broken it; he could not reach the window to open it, any more than Billy Bunter could have done so; he could not get at the glass to break it; he could not hope to make his voice heard to anyone below, any more than Bunter could have made his voice heard. Like the foolish fowler in the ballad, he had been caught in his own net. And he remembered, too, that the vicinity below the dormer window was out of bounds for the juniors, with the menace of a Head's flogging hanging over any fellow who ventured there!

Really, it was overwhelming!

Mr. Quelch was a thorough-going gentleman, and never did anything by halves. At this moment he rather wished that he had not been quite so thorough.

But who could have foreseen this?

Barred in!

It was almost incredible! But there it was. He was barred in, and he could not even guess when he would be released. By this time the Remove would be expecting him in the Form-room for third lesson!

Barred in!

Mr. Quelch's eyes gleamed, and he seized the leg of the chair and made another infuriated attack on the door. His crashing blows echoed and re-echoed in the punishment-room, from one old stone wall to another. Possibly that crashing attack on the door relieved Mr. Quelch's feelings a little. But it had no other outcome. A final crash, more forcible than the earlier ones, caused the chair-leg to break into

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halves—and one half flew through the air, narrowly missing the Form master's head.

Mr. Quelch desisted at last.

Quite fatigued with his efforts, the imprisoned Form master sat on the edge of Bunter's bed—there was no longer a chair to sit upon. He rested after his exertions, breathing hard and deep, with a glitter in his eyes that might have scared Bunter, could he have seen it. The wrath of Mr. Quelch—bottled up for the present by force of circumstances—was terrific. But, terrific as it was, it had to remain bottled up; he was barred in, and the date of his release depended upon the late prisoner of the punishment-room—W. G. Bunter.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Mysterious!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"What?"

"Bunter!"

"Great pip!"

Third lesson in the Remove-room—or, rather, the time allotted to third lesson—was drawing to its close, when there was a step at the Form-room door. The Removites, loafing idly about the room and chatting, made a rush to take their places, under the impression that their belated Form master was arriving at last.

But it was not Mr. Quelch who entered. Mr. Quelch was far enough away, and extremely unlikely—in the circumstances—to look in at the Remove-room. From the whole Form came a shout of astonishment as they beheld the new arrival. It was the ample figure of William George Bunter that rolled in.

He grinned cheerily at the astounded juniors.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Where did you spring from?" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Quelch let you out?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Exactly!" said Bunter, with a nod.

"You're let off?" exclaimed the Bounder.

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" said the Owl of the Remove. "I'm here, ain't I, Smithy?"

"Well, this beats me," said Vernon Smith, in great astonishment. "Quelch has been in a terrific wax all the morning. I thought he was more likely to skin you than let you off."

Bunter grinned.

He had no intention of explaining to the Removites how and where he had left his Form master. It was not often that Bunter realised that silence was golden; but in these peculiar circumstances, he realised it. The story would not have taken long to spread over the whole school, and Mr. Quelch's release would not have been long delayed. And that would not have suited Billy Bunter at all.

Bunter had thought the matter out, and his idea was that, after an experience of the punishment-room and shortage of diet, Mr. Quelch would be willing to come to terms. Bunter only wanted him to let bygones be bygones. That surely was not much for any fellow to ask? At least, that was how the matter presented itself to Bunter's fat intellect.

If Mr. Quelch chose to be reasonable, Bunter would let him out, and all would be—so to speak—calm and bright. If he did not choose to be reasonable, he could stay in the punishment-room till

reason came to his aid. He had expected Bunter, in the punishment-room, to meditate upon his short-comings and amend them. Why should not the same apply to himself? What was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander.

Probably no other fellow would have looked at the matter as Bunter did. Bunter's powerful brain moved in mysterious ways its wonders to perform.

For the present, all was serene. Here he was, back in the Remove, and with dinner in prospect. Dinner, indeed, occupied Bunter's thoughts much more than Mr. Quelch's peculiar situation. It was, of course, a matter of much greater importance.

Bunter rolled to his desk and sat down. The Remove fellows eyed him, still astonished. They simply could not understand how it was that he came to be at liberty. Mr. Quelch, that morning, had seemed in anything but a forgiving mood. Yet here was Bunter!

The fat junior grinned at his Form-fellows, enjoying the sensation caused by his unexpected appearance in the Form-room.

"I say, you fellows, you seem surprised!" he remarked.

"The surprisefulness is terrific, my esteemed Bunter."

"Surprised isn't the word!" said Bob Cherry. "I simply can't catch on to it. You were given punishment-room for a week, and now here you are let out on the second day—and Quelch was as ratty as anything this morning!"

"One of his jolliest old tantrums," said Peter Todd. "How have you worked round him, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter chuckled.

He was tempted to relate the master-stroke of strategy by which he had turned the tables on the Remove master. But again considerations of prudence held him back.

"Oh, I've had a talk with Quelch!" he said airily. "The fact is, I told him plainly I wasn't standing it."

"Gammon!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Blessed if I can understand it!" said Harry Wharton, in wonder. "Still, I'm glad to see you out again, Bunter. I hope you'll have sense enough not to get Quelch's rag out again."

"Who cares for Quelch?" said Bunter truculently. "I can tell you, I jolly well told him I wouldn't stand it. I put it to him plain. And he let me out—hem!—in fact, he was quite apologetic."

"Rats!"

"Believe me, he was," said Bunter. "These Form masters frighten you fellows—but I know how to handle them!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Wait till Quelch comes in!" chuckled Skinner. "By the way, where is Quelch? What has he cut third lesson for?"

Bunter felt a qualm. It occurred to him that Mr. Quelch's absence would excite remark, and lead to inquiry. He had not thought about that aspect of the matter before; a fellow couldn't think of everything at once—at least, Bunter couldn't. But Skinner's question showed him that the Form master's absence would have to be accounted for somehow.

"Where is he, Bunter?" asked Wharton.

Bunter breathed hard.

"Gone to catch his train, I think."

"Gone to catch a train—and leaving us to wait for him in the Form-room?" yelled the Bounder.

"Yes. I understand that his grandmother's ill."

"His—his grandmother?"

"Yes. He's quite fond of his grandmother, you know."

"My only hat! Did he tell you that?" asked Skinner.

"Yes, we had rather a chat," said Bunter. "He's had a letter—I mean, a telegram, from his—his grandmother, telling him that she's ill and wants him at once—see?"

The juniors stared at Bunter.

"Quelch's no chicken," remarked Nugent. "His grandmother must be jolly old—if he's got one at all."

"She is," agreed Bunter at once. "That's why Quelch is so anxious about her. She's an oxogenarian."

"A—a—a what?"

"Oxogenarian," said Bunter airily. "Frightfully old, you know."

"Do you mean an octogenarian?" ejaculated Wharton.

"I daresay that's it," said Bunter.

"I—I didn't quite catch the word, in fact. Quelch was rather in a hurry."

"To catch a train?"

"Exactly."

"I don't know why Bunter is telling these whoppers," remarked Peter Todd. "But they're whoppers, right enough. I wonder where on earth Quelch is all this time."

"Don't I keep on telling you?" demanded Bunter warmly. "He rushed off in a hurry to catch his grandmother—I mean, to catch his train because his grandmother's ill. She's got apocitis, or something."

"Apopo—which?" yelled Bob Cherry.

"I mean apoplexy—that is, appendicitis. Quelch told me all about it. He was awfully cut up—told me about it with tears in his eyes," added Bunter, by way of convincing detail.

"I wonder where he is?" said the captain of the Remove.

Bunter's convincing details did not seem to carry conviction.

"By the way, he gave me a message for the Form," said Bunter. "The class is dismissed. You fellows can cut."

"I don't think!" grinned Squiff. "We want something a bit more official before we cut, I think."

"Yes, rather."

"Well, please yourselves," said Bunter. "That's how it is. Any of you fellows got any toffee about you? I'm fearfully hungry!"

"Bow-wow!"

"Do you know whether there are any letters for me, Wharton? I'm expecting a postal-order."

"Oh, rats!"

The Remove fellows discussed Mr. Quelch's unaccountable absence, in great wonder. They did not venture to leave the Form-room until the usual hour for dismissal came. But as Mr. Quelch had not put in an appearance by that time, they went.

Bunter rolled out with them, in a cheery mood.

Whatever the fellows thought of Mr. Quelch's failure to appear, certainly they did not guess that Bunter had barred him in the punishment-room. Bunter's idea of a barring-out had appeared to them in the light of a jest; but certainly his barring-in would have seemed no joke, had they known of it.

At dinner, Mr. Quelch did not appear.

Billy Bunter appeared there, most unexpectedly; and all eyes in the dining-room turned on him. Bunter did not heed. He was devoting his very best attention to dinner—making up for lost time.

There was no dinner for the prisoner of the punishment-room; but really that was a matter of very little consequence, as the prisoner was no longer William George Bunter.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER. Called to Account!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. turned up for "maths" with Mr. Lascelles that afternoon, Billy Bunter along with them. Mr. Lascelles gave Bunter a glance. He was aware of Bunter's sentence, and was surprised to see him in the maths "set." He, naturally, concluded, however, that the fat junior had been released, as he was there, and he asked no questions.

Bunter did not enjoy mathematics. But even maths were an improvement on incarceration. He seemed quite cheery.

After maths, the Remove fellows had to turn up in Monsieur Charpentier's class-room for French. After the French class, they were at an end of classes for the day. Then Bob Cherry had time to write the three hundred lines he had earned early that morning for shuffling his feet while Mr. Quelch was in a "tantrum."

With some little assistance from his comrades, Bob finished his impot, and carried it to Mr. Quelch's study to be shown up. There was no answer to his tap at the study door, and he entered and placed his lines on the table. Mr. Quelch was not there, and Bob wondered again where he was. Apparently he had, as Bunter had stated, left Greyfriars for some reason of his own. There seemed no other way of accounting for his absence.

"Quelch's not in," Bob told his chums, when he came back from the Form master's study. "He seems to be gone. Jolly queer buzzing off like that without a word."

"The queerfulness is terrific!" assented Hurree Singh.

"I say, you fellows," Bunter rolled up to the Famous Five. "I say, what about tea?"

"Oh, run away and play!" said Bob.

Now that Bunter was at liberty again, and apparently at the end of his troubles, sympathy for him in the Remove had "petered out" quite suddenly and completely. It was not a case of absence making the heart grow fonder. Bunter's fascinating company did not seem to endear him to his Form-fellows, somehow.

"Oh, really, Cherry! After what I've gone through I think my friends ought to rally round me," said Bunter. "I think there ought to be a celebration—sort of house-warming, you know. I was thinking of standing a study spread myself—"

"Go ahead!"

"Only I've been disappointed about a postal-order. I think it's up to you fellows. I've spoken to Toddy about it, and he only said 'Rats!' Fancy that, you know!"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"I think we'll follow Toddy's example," he remarked. "Rats!"

"Rats!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"The ratfulness is terrific, my esteemed Bunter!"

And the Famous Five walked away. They were thinking of cricket practice, not of celebrating Bunter's happy return to the Remove.

"I say, you fellows, don't walk away while a fellow's talking to you, you beasts!" bawled Bunter. "I say—"

"Bunter!" Loder of the Sixth came

up, as Bunter was pursuing the chums of the Remove, and dropped a hand on the Owl's shoulder. "Bunter! What are you doing here?"

"Oh, really, Loder—"

"What are you doing out of the punishment-room?" exclaimed Loder. "How did you get out, you young rascal?"

Bunter squirmed out of the prefect's grasp.

"It's all right, Loder—" he gasped.

"Is it?" said Loder grimly, catching him by the collar. "You'll jolly well come along to your Form master, you young rascal. I shall take you to Mr. Quelch at once! Why, what are you grinning at?"

Billy Bunter had grinned involuntarily.

"Come along!"

"I—I say, it's all right, Loder! Quelch—I mean, Mr. Quelch—let me out, you know—"

"Then he can say so," grinned Loder.

"Come to his study!"

"He's not in his study, you know. He's left Greyfriars—his father's dangerously ill!" gasped Bunter.

"His father!" murmured Wharton.

"Run over by a traction engine," said Bunter hurriedly. "Telegram for Mr. Quelch, you know. He rushed right off to catch a train; only stopped to let me out before he went. See?"

Loder stared at him.

"Do you expect me to swallow that?" he demanded. "Come along with me at once, you young rascal."

Gerald Loder marched the Owl of the Remove away, with a grip on his collar. Evidently his impression was that Bunter had somehow escaped from the punishment-room.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at one another.

"Quelch's not in his study," said Bob. "I know that! He doesn't seem to be in the school; nobody's seen him since morning break. He must have let Bunter out—"

"He must have," agreed Wharton.

"But it's odd. Bunter might have dodged out when Quelch visited him—he's fathead-enough!"

"But Quelch would have been after him like a shot!"

"Yes. Blessed if I can make it out! Loder doesn't think he was let out, anyhow. Here they are again!"

Loder was coming back from Mr. Quelch's study, still with his hand on Bunter's collar. He called to the captain of the Remove.

"Wharton! Do you know where Mr. Quelch is?"

"No, Loder!"

"I tell you he's left Greyfriars!" howled Bunter. "He rushed off to catch a train—"

"Oh, cheese it!" snapped Loder.

"His grandfather's dangerously ill—run over by a motor-omnibus," urged Bunter. "Mr. Quelch told me so before he started."

"Dry up!"

"I suppose you can take a fellow's word, Loder?"



Gathering all his resolution, and taking his courage in both hands, as it were, Bunter spun round and rushed at the doorway. In a second he was out of the room. Slam! Mr. Quelch for a moment stood transfixed. Then he rushed round the table and fairly jumped at the closed door. (See Chapter 9.)

"I'd better take you to the Head," said Loder. "Come on!"

Bunter gave a yelp.

"I—I don't want to go to the Head! I—I say—Ow, wow! Leggo!"

Heedless of Bunter's frantic expostulations, Loder marched him away to Dr. Locke's study. Obviously, Bunter was in a state of great alarm at the prospect of an interview with the headmaster of Greyfriars.

"There's something up!" said Bob. "Bunter's yarns don't seem to agree with one another. All Quelch's ancient relations can't be ill at once—his father and grandfather and grandmother in a bunch."

"Ha, ha! No!"

"But what on earth does it mean?"

"Goodness knows!"

The chums of the Remove were quite perplexed, though they were as far as ever from guessing the facts. Loder of the Sixth arrived at the door of Dr. Locke's study, and knocked and entered. The Head glanced up in surprise at the sight of Bunter.

"This junior seems to have escaped from the punishment-room, sir," said Loder. "I can't find Mr. Quelch; so I thought I had better bring him to you, sir."

"Quite so, Loder! Bunter, how dare you leave the room in which you were detained by my order!"

"I—I—" gasped Bunter.

"Take him back to the punishment-room at once, Loder! Doubtless Mr. Quelch must have left the door unfastened by inadvertence."

"If—if you please, sir—" stuttered Bunter.

"Silence! Take him away, Loder."

"Very good, sir!"

Bunter was marched off again, this time in the direction of the punishment-room. In the passage he passed the Famous Five, with whom were now gathered a dozen other Remove fellows—the report having spread that the Owl was again in the grasp of authority. Bunter gave them a dismal blink as he passed.

"I say, you fellows—" he began.

"Shut up!" snapped Loder.

He marched Bunter onward, and the juniors followed, into the dusky old corridor that led to the secluded room. At the corridor door Loder had to halt. It was locked, and the key was not to be seen—being at that moment safe in Bunter's pocket.

Loder tried the handle of the door, and released it again, perplexed.

Bunter grinned.

"Perhaps you'll believe now that Mr. Quelch let me out?" he sneered.

"Bunter couldn't have got through a locked door, Loder," suggested Peter Todd.

"Or flown out of the window!" grinned the Bounder.

Loder, quite perplexed, retraced his way. The juniors, growing more and more interested in the proceedings, followed him back as far as the Head's study. Loder was mystified; it seemed impossible that the Remove master should have released Bunter without saying a word on the subject—and certainly the Head did not know, and the prefects did not know. Yet undoubtedly Bunter could not have escaped through a locked door.

Dr. Locke looked up in surprise and annoyance as Loder presented himself again with his captive.

"Dear me! What is it now, Loder?"

"The door in the old corridor is locked, sir," said Loder. "I can't get

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to the punishment-room. Bunter says that Mr. Quelch released him—"

"He could scarcely have done so without acquainting me with the circumstance," said the Head. "Please find Mr. Quelch and ask him to step here, Loder. Bunter, remain here for the present."

Loder left the study, and the Head resumed writing. Billy Bunter remained, in a very uneasy frame of mind, shifting from one fat leg to the other while he waited. It was tea-time, and Bunter wanted his tea; but evidently his headmaster was giving no consideration at all to that important matter. The Owl of the Remove blinked at the Head, wondering dismally how this was going to turn out.

It was half an hour before Loder returned. He came back with a very peculiar expression on his face.

"Well, Loder, where is Mr. Quelch?"

"He cannot be found, sir."

"What?"

"Mr. Quelch is not in the school, sir."

— — —

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Whacked Out!

DR. LOCKE rose to his feet.

To say that he was astonished would be to put it mildly. He was astounded.

"Do I understand you aright, Loder? You say that Mr. Quelch is not in the school?"

"I've asked nearly everybody in Greyfriars, sir," said Loder. "Nobody has seen him since second lesson in the Remove-room this morning."

"Bless my soul!"

"Some of the Remove juniors saw him going towards the punishment-room, sir," said Loder. "They have not seen him since. I find that he did not come to the Form-room for third lesson, and there was no third lesson for the Lower Fourth this morning. They waited in the Form-room, but Mr. Quelch did not come there."

"Extraordinary!"

The Head seemed unable to believe his ears. It really was incredible that so sedate and grave a gentleman as Mr. Quelch could have played a prank like this. For a Greyfriars Form master to disappear, leaving his class to wait for him in vain, was unprecedented—incredible—unheard-of. Yet it seemed to have happened.

"This afternoon the Remove were taken by Mr. Lascelles and Monsieur Charpentier," went on Loder. "Otherwise, I suppose, they would have idled about, as Mr. Quelch certainly is not here to take them. I have asked all the masters, sir, and they know nothing of his movements."

"I cannot understand this," said the Head.

"Bunter says that Mr. Quelch left the school suddenly after releasing him," said Loder. "I did not believe a word of it, but—"

Dr. Locke turned his glance on the Owl of the Remove.

"Bunter is apparently the last person who saw Mr. Quelch," he said. "He may be able to enlighten us. Bunter, did your Form master visit you in the punishment-room this morning?"

"Yes, sir," mumbled Bunter.

"And what transpired?" demanded the Head.

Bunter tried hard to collect his fat wits. His usual flow of invention did not flow so easily under the stern, questioning eyes of the Head.

"You—you see, sir—" he stammered. "He—I—I mean he—he came and—and told me to—to cut—"

"Mr. Quelch told you to cut?"

"Yes, sir."

"I do not quite comprehend. What did Mr. Quelch tell you to cut?" asked Dr. Locke. "Do you mean the leaves of a book?"

Bunter blinked at him.

At Greyfriars the Head and the fags both spoke the same language, but they had different varieties of it. English as it was spoken in the Lower Fourth was not always easily comprehensible to the headmaster.

"I—I mean, sir, he—told me to bunk," stammered Bunter.

Dr. Locke frowned.

"Do you mean that Mr. Quelch told you to go?"

"Yes, sir," gasped Bunter.

"Then why do you not say so directly? I warn you to give direct answers to my questions, Bunter. You left the punishment-room with the permission of Mr. Quelch?"

"Ex-actly, sir."

"And where did Mr. Quelch go?"

"He—he left to catch his train, sir," mumbled Bunter.

Dr. Locke raised his eyebrows.

"Mr. Quelch left to catch a train?" he exclaimed.

"So—so he said, sir!"

"Mr. Quelch told you that he was going to catch a train?"

"That's it, sir!" said Bunter. The Owl of the Remove hardly realised that he was lying, in his intense anxiety to keep the Head from suspecting that Mr. Quelch was barred in the punishment-room. That the truth must come out sooner or later was certain; but Bunter had no time to think of the future. The present was enough for him to deal with—indeed, a little too much, as it turned out.

"This is very extraordinary," said the Head. "I can scarcely believe that Mr. Quelch hurried away to catch a train, without notifying me. Yet he does not seem to be here."

He fixed his eyes on the Owl of the Remove again.

"Did Mr. Quelch give you a message for me, Bunter, when he left?" he asked. "I presume that he must have done so, as apparently he stopped to speak to no one else."

As the Head obviously expected a reply in the affirmative, it was in the affirmative that Bunter replied. Besides, he realised that it was quite incredible that a Form master had suddenly left the school, without sending at least a word to the headmaster.

"Yes, sir!" he mumbled.

"What was the message?"

"He—he was called home, sir—all of a sudden—to see his grandfather, who—who's been run over, sir."

Dr. Locke almost jumped.

"His grandfather?"

"Yes, sir, his p-p-poor grandfather."

"Are you in your senses, Bunter? Mr. Quelch can have told you nothing of the kind. Mr. Quelch has no grandfather."

"Hasn't he, sir? I—I mean—his—his father, sir—"

"He has no father surviving, Bunter!"

"Oh, dear!" gasped Bunter. "I—I forgot, sir—what Mr. Quelch really said, sir, was that his brother had been run over by a telegram—"

"What?"

"I mean he had a telegram saying that his brother had been run over, sir!" stuttered Bunter. "That—that's how it was, sir!"



"Loder!" gasped Mr. Quelch, as the prefect unlocked the door of the punishment-room. "Yes, sir," said Loder. "The Head sent me to let you out, sir. Bunter's——" But Mr. Quelch did not wait for Loder to finish. He fairly flew past the prefect and fluttered and rustled down the corridor with flying gown. (See Chapter 14.)

Bunter gasped and blinked at the Head. Surely Mr. Quelch, if destitute of parents, had a brother at least! Bunter hoped that he had, at all events.

"The—the telegram came quite suddenly, sir," gasped Bunter. "Mr. Quelch was quite—quite knocked over, sir. He told me with—with tears in his eyes, sir."

Loder was watching the Owl of the Remove in growing amazement. That Bunter was lying was clear; but his reason for doing so was not clear at all.

"It can be ascertained, sir, whether Mr. Quelch had a telegram this morning," said Loder. "Trotter would have taken it in. I can ask——"

"I—I mean—it was a telephone!" gasped Bunter, in a great hurry. "Mr. Quelch had a telephone—I mean a telephone call—his brother rang him up to tell him he was run over——"

"His brother, who was run over, telephoned to him?" exclaimed the Head, almost petrified.

"Yes, sir—no, sir—I mean, the doctor telephoned—from the hospital, sir, where Mr. Quelch's father—I mean grandfather—that is to say, brother—where his brother was taken after the awful accident, sir. Mr. Quelch told me all about it, sir—he was—was awfully cut up. He was c-c-crying, sir."

"Nonsense!"

"He—he was, sir! He rushed off, and told me to tell you, sir. He—he had just time to catch his train."

"Bunter, I do not believe one word of your absurd and contradictory statements," said the Head, in a grinding voice.

"Oh, lor'!"

"If Mr. Quelch gave you a message for me, repeat it to me at once, and truthfully!" thundered the Head.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter. "He—he said——"

"Well, what did he say?"

"He—he said he—he had to see the doctor, sir——"

"To see the doctor?" repeated the Head, dazedly.

"Yes, sir—he was suddenly taken ill, and he—he rushed off to see the doctor, sir! Not to catch a train, sir—to see the doctor. That's what I really meant to say, sir!" gasped Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove was getting rather confused. In a calmer moment, even Bunter would scarcely have hoped to get away, so to speak, with this remarkable second edition of his story.

The Head stared at him as if dumb-founded. His silence encouraged the hapless Owl of the Remove.

"That's how it is, sir. He—he's gone to the doctor's, sir—for—for an operation, I think, sir. He may be gone for days. In fact, he specially said he would be gone for days. You're—you're not to expect him back, sir."

"Loder! Kindly hand me that cane!"

"Certainly, sir."

"Bend over that chair, Bunter!"

"Oh dear!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Now, Bunter——"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Silence!" thundered the Head.

"Now, Bunter, tell me the truth at once. Another falsehood and I shall cane you again. It is clear that you know where Mr. Quelch is and for

some unknown reason you are attempting to deceive me. Where is your Form master?"

"I—I——"

Whack!

The Head was at the end of his patience. Although Bunter did not seem to suspect it, his headmaster's time was of value; and more than enough had been wasted on Bunter, in the Head's opinion.

"Ow, ow, wow!" wailed Bunter.

"Answer me, boy—the truth!"

Whack!

"Ow! He's in the punishment-room, sir!" howled Bunter.

"What!"

"Great pip!" gasped Loder.

"It—it was an—an accident, sir!" wailed Bunter. "I—I closed the door on him quite—quite by chance, sir—never meaning anything of the sort, sir—I—I wouldn't——"

"Mr. Quelch is in the punishment-room!" gasped the Head. "In that case, why does he not leave the punishment-room? Is it possible that you have had the audacity and effrontery to fasten the door upon him?"

"I—I think——"

Whack!

"Ow! Yes! He—he—he's barred in," yelled Bunter. "Oh, dear! Stop it! The—the door got barred somehow!"

"Bless my soul!"

"The corridor door's locked, too, sir," said Loder staring at the Owl of the Remove. "Bunter must have locked it, and taken the key."

"I—I haven't——"

Whack!

(Continued on page 27.)

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A FORTUNE AT STAKE! Ferrers Locke and his assistant have risked their lives a score of times in order to discover the hidden wealth of Brek Katel, and at last comes the time for Ferrers Locke to test his theory!



The Phantom of the Dogger Bank!

An Amazing New Detective Serial, featuring Ferrers Locke and his boy assistant, Jack Drake.
(Introduction on page 23.)

Jack Drake Rides in State!

PROCTOR shook hands with Drake. Then, to Jack's eager demand, he explained how they were there.

"When I got the false order not to be at the quay I obeyed it," said Proctor. "Then you disappeared. Well, an' I was mighty nervous, though the message was as you had gone off to Brek Katel by land from Reykjavik. I soon found that was a lie. An' Tom Harper'll tell 'e I was like a madman. I was ravin' somethin' powerful when who should step out o' the Leith passenger-boat but John Carr. He had some men wi' him, too. Said he couldn't rest at home. The firm was goin' to Jericho, anyway, so he packed up an' cleared, meanin' to be in at the death agen Stromsund forbye all. 'Course, I told him my yarn. An' he was a ravin' lunatic, same as me, and nigh clapped me in irons."

Jack smiled faintly.

"We cruised we didn't know where. But, somehow, we found ourselves edgin' up to the nor'ard, round to the Brek Katel coast. Then we spoke a steam-whaler that had wireless. They told us they had picked up a funny message in morse. It was: LOCKE N COAST ICEL. Then two buzzes that might mean anythin'. 'Course, John Carr an' me we pounced on this bright bit o' news like a starvin' cat jumpin' on a mouse. We shoved the sea in front of us for the north coast fast as we could."

"We saw a steam trawler makin' down from the nor'ard, an' we hailed her, me speakin' through a megaphone. I asked them if they'd picked up any curious message by wireless. They said: 'What message?' Like a fool I told 'em; but I'm a seaman, I am, not a 'tec. Wither me if the feller talkin'—skipper he was, hang-dog sort o' faced ruffian—didn't well-nigh drop to the deck when he heard what the message was! And hang me if they didn't 'bout ship there an' then and go stormin' off for the nor'ard once more!"

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"John and me we was mighty puzzled. Then we reckoned she must be one o' Stromsund's trawlers. So we gingered up the stokers, an' gave chase."

"We'd been drivin' hard for a long while, an' the trawler ahead had the heels of us. But we followed at a smashin' pace. Then we lost her, but kept on the course. Soon, we see a thin, spiral o' smoke on the horizon, an' closin' in wi' the land, blest if we didn't see the smoke was on a headland, an' a steam trawler was anchored under the land."

"She up anchor an' cleared off soon's we hove nigh. An' we let her go, judgin' as you were all here, wanting assistance. We down wi' our hook, left a strong party in charge o' the trawler, an' a heap o' us came ashore, armed, and followed a crowd o' men staggerin' along with a great bundle o' what looked like blankets in the distance—"

"Stuff for smoking us out of this cave," interrupted Jack.

"So we see when we got here. Well, we kept cover, an' then we heard a bit o' rifle crackin' an' a fight. Stromsund's men were closin' in on these clusters o' rocks. We spread out, an' attacked to one side, where one man, we could see, was busy wi' a rifle, mighty gingerly wi' his shots, too, so we judged there was a shortage of ammo, an' he was keepin' men from gettin' to a position where was the only bit o' herbage in the place, it seemed—"

"That was Mr. Locke keeping Stromsund's men from getting an enfilading position at the water-hole," said Jack.

"Ay, ay, that was it, but we didn't know that till we got here, o' course. Well, we let 'em have it. An' things brisked up considerable. 'Twasn't long afore we had 'em all runnin' like billy-o—an' here we be!"

"Where's Mr. Carr?" asked Jack.

"Chasin' the remnants o' Stromsund's party off his bee-autiful park-like estate," chuckled Proctor. "Peter, here, is very anxious to meet his old shipmate again, and—"

"Ah, that I be, Blazes," said Peter Deane anxiously. "When'll he be back, Blazes?"

Shouts sounded outside, and someone came rushing into the cave. Deane, with a yelp, leapt forward, and placed his great, horny hands on John Carr's shoulders. Carr stared at him blankly for a second or two. Then he clasped at the poor, white-haired castaway.

Peter Deane! Peter Deane, by all that's wonderful! Or am I dreaming?"

"No dreamin', John," said Proctor, leaning on his rifle. "That's Peter, right enough. Ain't he grown young-lookin' and handsome?"

But Carr and Deane were pumping at each other's arms. And Peter was saying, wildly:

"See what I got o' yours on this 'ere perishin', witherin' Brek Katel you own, John." And he whisked off the seal-skins from the Viking "treasures."

Carr advanced in wonder. In the artificial light it looked like riches untold. The tawdriness of the hoard was not apparent. Carr's eyes seemed to start out of his head.

"So—so this was it?" he said in wonder. "This is what Stanislaw Stromsund wanted Brek Katel for?"

"I reckon so," said Peter, well pleased. Ferrers Locke stepped forward.

"Mr. Carr," said Locke, "this is all a welcome extra to your good fortunes. But I have something richer than even this to show you. Since Stromsund and his men have got away in their trawler, we won't bother further about them—yet. We are here, on Brek Katel, where we would all have to be to finish up this case. Peter, later on you'll lead me to that place where you before saw Stromsund blasting. We will first examine that. Then, to-morrow, Skipper, we'll have boxes of dynamite ashore, and that packet I handed to you for your care in Reykjavik, with the map and the bearings on it. We'll see what sort of an uncut diamond Brek Katel is."

The small party from the Stormcock

settled down in the cave. The main force had gone back, to stand by and defend the trawler, if necessary. So, after Drake had been examined and found to be sound enough, save for a terrible bruise which was causing him so much pain, Tom Harper and a couple of hands were left with Jack, and the rest set off in the wake of Deane to see the place where Stromsund had been blasting so many years ago.

They came back after an absence of seven hours. All were exceedingly tired, and ready for the meal Harper had prepared. Jack had already fed on the food he had been used to, before his holiday jaunt with Locke and Langsom on Brek Katel. And sweet he found the bread, and palatable the tinned meats and vegetables.

"How are you, my boy?" was Locke's first greeting.

"He looks a very great deal brighter," said Langsom, his handsome, fair face smiling down at Jack. "He is the boy who can joke at the cannon's mouth."

"I feel great, sir," said Jack. "I can even tell it is only numbness that is keeping me helpless—unable to bend at the waist. That'll pass off. What did you find, sir?"

"Oh, nothing but a mass of tumbled rocks. We can tell nothing till we get the dynamite up. Now, friends, a meal, then sound sleep for our trek to-morrow. When we get back to the spot, we'll see what'll turn up—encouraged by a few sticks of dynamite—"

"After Skipper Proctor turning up in the nick, sir," grinned Jack, "I sha'n't be surprised at anything a bit of dynamite might turn up."

The party fed, and smoked and chatted, then slept. And early the next morning the stores from the trawler arrived.

Locke had his marked map—the information that had been obtained at such great risk at Ingholdt Farm, Stromsund's home. And to everyone's surprise, Jack Drake got on his feet and walked as best he could to the entrance to the cave.

"What's that for, Drake?" demanded Locke sharply. "I told you to lie still."

"It's to show I'm all right, sir, and ready to go to take part in blasting operations," said Jack.

Ferrers Locke laughed.

"What nonsense," he said. "My boy, it is hard for you, after having participated in all our dangers, to be denied the thrill of seeing the mystery solved by an immense upheaval of rock and gravel. But it must be so. I would like—"

Here Langsom rose and held out his hand.

"The way is fairly good to travel, Herr Locke," said the big Dane, his eyes twinkling as he looked at Jack. "When we have taken the first load of dynamite and other things to the place, I will return with the trolley and wheel Jack across like—what is it you say?—like a nursemaid taking a baby for a—what is it you say?—ah!—for an airing in the park!"

Everyone laughed heartily.

"An' I'll go wi' Mr. Langsom an' give him a spell in pushin' the trolley," said Tom Harper.

"So will I, mate!"

"Me, too. Too bad for the young gentleman to be left out o' what he's been so invalluable in solvin'—"

"Here's another—"

"I'll push him at the trot," said Peter Deane.

"I'd carry 'im on me back if there weren't no trolley."

"What about it, sir?" asked Jack, turning to Locke and laughing.

"It's a rash man who disregards public clamour, Drake, my boy," smiled Locke, "so, as you are not damaged internally, you can go on the trolley if you like. One thing is certain—you cannot walk it, nor will I permit such an attempt to be made."

So Drake went on the trolley.

They arrived at the place after a trek of five hours. And Jack saw a great tumbled mass of rock, in extent about the size of a big football ground.

"Gosh, Stromsund used a bit of dynamite to heave up that lot!" said Jack.

"This is one of the spots marked with bearings," said Ferrers Locke, as he came over and stood beside Drake. "The men are just finishing. We have got a stick of dynamite here and there throughout the mass."

The work was completed soon. Then all were ordered to take cover. Locke, Drake, Langsom, Carr, Proctor, Deane, and one or two others got down into the cover they had chosen.

Jack saw the fuses lit, then the men running away from the wide, tumbled area of pumice rocks. Soon all were in cover, and anxious eyes watched as the fuses smoked merrily away.

At last it came! An explosion that seemed to send a tremor throughout the firmament was heralded by a mighty upheaval of great rocks, billowing clouds of dust and smoke and flying stones.

The very world seemed to burst before their eyes. Then came the sound—a rolling, dull explosion that trembled and re-echoed from the jokuls beyond.

John Carr bit his lip as he watched, tense, his fortunes to be made or marred by what that terrific upheaval would reveal.

.....

NEW READERS BEGIN HERE.

FERRERS LOCKE, the private detective of Baker Street, and

JACK DRAKE, his boy assistant, have been engaged by

JOHN CARR, owner of the Carr fishing fleet, to track down a steam trawler of Icelandic design, which, with name and number covered, has been cruising the Dogger in misty weather for the purpose of wrecking the gear of Carr's boats. This mysterious vessel, dubbed the *Phantom* by the fisherfolk, is carrying out its foul purpose under the leadership of

SCAR HOSKING at the bidding of **STANLAU STROMSUND**, whose sole object it appears, is to impoverish Carr, in the hope of making him dispose of Brek Katel, a big stretch of land in Iceland.

BLAIZE PROCTOR, admiral of Carr's fleet, and skipper of the *Stormcock*, on which Locke and Drake set off in chase.

After a series of thrilling encounters between the two trawlers the *Phantom* is captured. The investigator and his crew then steam for Ingholdt Farm, Iceland, the haunt of Stromsund, where Locke and Drake gain the confidence of **FREDERIC LANGSOM**, Stromsund's steward. The trio are unable to reach the *Stormcock* again, however, for they are captured by the enemy and marooned on Brek Katel, but not before Locke manages to tap a wireless message for help.

Following a track of human footprints, the marooned trio enter a cave, where they meet **PETER DEANE**, who has been marooned on the island for years. After supplying food and drink, Deane tells his story.

Stromsund returns later, to find Locke & Co. full of fight. Bombarded with flying lumps of rock, Stromsund and his satellites are beating a retreat, when Blaize Proctor and John Carr unexpectedly come upon the scene.

(Now read on.)

And as the last of the soaring rocks turned to come to earth, Carr was the first in the open, rushing forward, deaf to the warning shout from Ferrers Locke to look out for stray lumps that had gone higher than the rest.

Ferrers Locke and his party followed Carr, Langsom, Tom Harper, and a few others manfully trundling Drake along on the trolley.

What would they find turned up from the strata below that thick, lava-rock surface of Brek Katel?

A fortune for a so far unfortunate man, or a worthless mass of rubbish that would dash his hopes of business success for evermore to the ground?

Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake were as anxious as John Carr himself to see what that trembling upheaval had revealed.

Alarm by Night!

JOHAN CARR had fallen on to his knees beside the first break in the rocky ground. He heaved at the broken pieces of rock, the sweat standing out in beads on his forehead.

The others drew up alongside, and Ferrers Locke stepped out across the broken ground nearer to the centre of the upheaval. Here the Baker Street detective went down on to his knees, like John Carr, and began to shift the broken rocks to see what the substrata, turned up by the dynamite, had to reveal.

Carr was now nervously picking his way across towards Locke. The others waited on the fringe of the broken ground.

"What—what is there, Mr. Locke?" asked Carr, and there was a break in his voice. "I see nothing of value."

Ferrers Locke straightened his back.

"Don't give up hope yet," he said. "I'm afraid I can discover nothing of any value. There's a lot of pumice stone; but a million tons of pumice stone out on Brek Katel won't make a man's fortune for him."

"Then—then it's all a frost?" queried Carr.

"Not necessarily so," replied the detective. "It's Brek Katel. It's a land of disappointments. But that it is a land of supreme richness I am sure. Whatever good Brek Katel holds, she hides most effectively. It is a terrible land, a cruel land—"

"Cruel it is!" growled John Carr, clenching his fists in the intensity of his feeling. "I am a ruined man. I cannot now meet my creditors. I have ruined others—"

"Steady yourself, man!" said Locke, rather roughly. "Don't talk of ruination yet. We have other areas in this extensive, rock-strewn land to explore yet. Let us get back to the others."

Locke and Carr retraced their steps over the tumbled rocks and joined those standing at the lip of the shallow crater made by the dynamite explosion.

Proctor gripped Carr's hand as soon as his employer and friend was beside him. The old trawler master's face was grave and sympathetic.

"Ye don't need to say aught, John," he said huskily. "We could see, by your own actions, and the actions o' Mr. Locke. It's all a fizzle."

Carr groaned aloud.

"Why did Stromsund blast at this very spot all those years ago?" asked Proctor of Ferrers Locke.

"To find what we have failed to find," replied the detective. "He had mining engineers with him, who can see by face

surfaces in the rocks things we cannot see. Furthermore, we do not know that Stromsund found what he was looking for in this spot. He may have struck it in one of the others. And they are each a four-days' trek from here."

Langsom stepped forward from his place beside the trolley on which Jack Drake sat, as keenly alive to the job in hand as any of them.

"Herr Locke," began Langsom, "I have specialised in geological surveys in my Iceland. Perhaps my knowledge may be useful to you—"

"If you can find gold in a stone," said John Carr bitterly, "if you can find jewels in pebbles, if you can find platinum in useless grit!"

"Perhaps you would make a survey across the blasted area with me, then," said Ferrers Locke in reply to Langsom.

"I, too, consider myself no mean geologist. But I see no signs of commercial value in the stuff we have turned up by our charge of dynamite. Come along, Langsom, we'll have another shot."

The twain examined the broken ground for three hours, but they came back beaten.

"Whatever richness Brek Katel owns," said Locke, wiping his hands on his handkerchief on rejoining the group at the edge of the crater, "she keeps it safely locked in her stony breast."

"Maybe Stromsund was disappointed here, sir," put in Jack Drake. "He must have had better luck at the other points of his survey, marked on your map. He wouldn't have gone to such lengths as to run the risk of sending out the phantom trawler on the Dögger, to wreck Mr. Carr's gear, so impoverishing him as to make him sell his most undesirable estate—"

"Quite so," replied Locke. "My reconstruction of the whole case hinges on that. Well, friends, it won't do any of us any good to stand moping here. So back we go, as quickly as we can."

The party reached the cave just after dark. And then all sat down to a meal, and after that a conference.

"The best thing to do now is to get back to the trawler," said Locke. "Proctor, you will navigate the Stormcock to such points on the coast as will put us in closest possible touch with the other areas marked on my map—the places where Stromsund had made the cross and the jotted bearings. Mr. Carr, you, Langsom and I, will be the surveying party—and Peter Deane, of course. His knowledge of this barren land will prove of the greatest assistance to us."

"Our first point from which to strike inland is about forty miles to the west. There a safe anchorage must be found for the Stormcock, the surveying party will go ashore, and a camp depot party to form a camp and wait for the return of our surveyors."

"Harper, I think you had better take command of the camp depot party. The idea is, of course, to minimise our hardship, for a four days' trek inland on Brek Katel is no mean undertaking."

"What about me, sir?" asked Jack Drake. "I'm beginning to feel fit enough to push over one of these big jokuls, and by the time the Stormcock gets to the next anchorage I'll be as fit as a fiddle—"

Locke smiled as he broke in on Jack's words.

"No, no, Drake, my boy! Not the next trip. If we make no discovery during that excursion, perhaps you will be fit to set out with us on the next one. You must stay with the skipper on the trawler and be ready for action."

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there, if necessary. Stromsund may still be nosing about in his vessel, you know. Indeed, I feel sure he is, so a strict watch must be kept on the Stormcock while we are away inland."

"Ay, ay, sir!" said Proctor heartily. "The Stormcock be our only link wi' the south, and I reckon we must watch her as carefully as we watch this here Brek Katel."

So, with that much settled, the tired party hauled out the bundles of blankets, divided the warm coverings between them, and snuggled down for the night, having arranged protection in the way of a couple of sentries outside throughout the few dark hours.

The next day, Deane having one last look over the cave which had been his home for so many years, the party set off for the boat, the Viking "treasure" having been loaded on to the trolley for conveyance to the trawler.

On board the Stormcock, Proctor soon had everyone in a bustle of preparation for the departure of the steamer from that spot. The anchor was weighed at dark, and the stout vessel thumped her way to the westward till dawn, when the patent log had registered a run of forty miles.

Skipper Proctor now headed the trawler in for the land, and, with the hand lead sounding constantly forward, the Stormcock groped her way in towards the rocks, to the accompaniment of the leadsmen's deep, rhythmical calls of: "By the deep—ten!" "By the mark—nine!" "And a quarter—eight!" And so on, as he called out the depth of the water in fathoms.

The north coast of Iceland is well charted, and Proctor had made for a deep fjord that opened for a few miles well into the barren land.

The old skipper was perfectly happy in his work. He liked nothing better than groping into places new to him. And, by the time the sun was well up the trawler was steaming slow between the precipitous sides of the fjord.

Everyone was interested in their new haven. Even John Carr looked about him eagerly. For all these barren rocks were his, and everything in the way of a natural harbour for deep draught vessels, as Ferrers Locke said to him as they leant on the rail, was of the highest importance—if Brek Katel really held anything of commercial value.

Drake was up and about, though he had to admit he couldn't run and leap just yet. And as the boy stood beside Locke, Carr, and Langsom, he drank in the wild scene of this rugged, steep-sided fjord with the greatest interest. It seemed like exploring, though the whole place was charted and had been well surveyed by government surveyors—the coastal part of it, at all events.

The fjord took a turn to the east about a mile from the entrance.

"We sha'n't be able to go far beyond that turn," said Skipper Proctor from the bridge. "The fjord narrows a lot round there, an' the chart marks it shallowing rapidly. We be registering six fathoms now, an' a clear bottom, an' that's sufficient for any freighter to float out an' in, if so be as there's anything in that wither'in' land to freight away."

They seemed to be landlocked when they made the turn.

"There be little enough room for us to

swing to one anchor," said Proctor, "an' it narrows more farther on. So we'll bring up here."

Proctor rang for the engines to stop, and then ordered Tom Harper to let go the anchor. The great rusty hook went down with a roar of out-running chain cable. And the Stormcock swung slowly round in the stream, till she was riding head to her anchor.

"Good holdin' ground," said Proctor. "She be all right. Now, sir, ye can go ashore wi' your party as soon as ye like. That there shelf o' rock over there looks to me like a fine natural wharf. I'll land ye all there, an' while you're away I'll just sound out the haven, an' see if there's enough water alongside any o' those natural rocky wharves, for a steamship to lie moored. Yon's an important point, if this here haven is to be a harbour o' commerce."

During the afternoon all the stores needed for the depot camp were ashore, and the crew of the Stormcock worked hard till dark, getting the gear up on the higher ground above the bounds of the fjord.

Locke gave Jack permission to go up and have a look over the country, so the youngster accompanied one of the carrying parties up to the top.

He saw a level stretch of barren, stony land, just like that on which Peter Deane had lived. It was a great plateau stretching away to the snow-capped jokuls in the distance.

He returned to the trawler. The climb had made him a bit tired, and he saw the advisability of his staying with Proctor instead of accompanying Locke and his party on their exploration jaunt inland. Indeed, he had to admit to himself that he was not yet fit for such a fatiguing and hazardous journey.

The next morning Locke set off with his company. Jack and Proctor climbed to the high ground and watched them out of sight. Then they returned to the Stormcock.

Proctor set his anchor watches, and Jack Drake put in a word, as the men were being told off in reliefs, to watch out for other dangers than the mere dragging of the anchor.

"Stromsund's still about," said Drake, "and he'd like nothing better than to capture the Stormcock now, with such a big party ashore on that awful plateau."

The men growled out their agreement with Jack, and said they'd be ready for the villain any time he cared to turn up.

"I reckon we be strong enough not to worry at all about Stromsund," said Proctor, as Jack and he turned in that night in the skipper's little state-room. "We've got a fine, strong company o' picked men."

"You're right," said Jack, in a tired voice, as he drew his blankets close up round his throat; "but we must guard against surprise, all the same."

Skipper Proctor and Jack slept soundly, the only noise on deck being the steady tramp of the two men on anchor watch. The trawler rode to her cable as quietly as in a lake.

The night was dark, though short. The season of perpetual light had passed, and no midnight sun shed its eerie light in the fjord.

Jack slept like a top. But an hour before daybreak he was awakened suddenly by the rush of feet above, and the sound of a gasp.

He sat bolt upright, with a sharp word of warning to Skipper Proctor. Proctor roused, and was fully awake in a second. Then the state-room door burst open, and one of the men of the watch came lurching in.

"Up ye get, skipper!" he gasped.

ANSWERS
Every Saturday — PRICE 2:—

"Bill's rousin' the others. There be four boats comin' up the fjord under muffled oars. An' from what we can see o' them they be packed tight wi' men—"

"On deck!" barked Proctor.

"Everyone to stand to!" barked out Jack, as the man whisked through the state-room doorway.

Then Proctor and Drake hastily pulled on their trousers and boots, and dashed out on to the deck.

Crippled!

THE bustle on the Stormcock was seen by the approaching boats, which were now very near. A wild yell went up from the men in the attacking boats, and now, knowing that they had been seen, they lashed savagely at the water with the oars, and the boats forged ahead towards the Stormcock from different quarters.

"Defend after-deck strongest!" bawled Skipper Proctor, as he ran aft, followed by Jack Drake.

The boats bumped against the Stormcock's side, and a rattle of pistol-shots sounded from them, the bullets spattering the Stormcock's rail, as a protecting barrage for the boarders.

Grappling-irons flew over the Stormcock's bulwarks, and clanged on to the decks. One or two held on the gunwales.

The firing now ceased, and men's heads appeared above the gunwales.

"At them, bullies!" shouted Proctor.

"Throw loose the hooks!" cried Jack, as he ranged up alongside Proctor and three trawlermen, to meet the first of the boarders on their side of the boat.

A fierce fight developed. And the forms of men went hurtling overside, to fall with a resounding splash into the water as the men of the Stormcock repelled the attack.

A huge man, bulking big as a bullock, loomed up before Jack. And the youngster ducked, and rushed in low. He gripped the big man round the waist, Rugger fashion, and hooked at his sea-booted legs with his foot. The man crashed over heavily.

As he went down, Jack saw his face, and the boy gasped.

"Scar Hosking!"

Hosking, snarling like a wolf, was up in an instant, and he came for Jack, his eyes blazing terribly. He had a huge marline spike in his hand, and Jack deemed it wisest again to duck, and try dodging tactics. It was out of the question for him to pit his strength against the strength of this brute. And his back hurt him terribly at every strenuous effort.

Drake got in a blow or two as he dodged about, just missing the terrible sweep with the marline-spike by inches. Then he tripped, and went flying on his face. The fall was his salvation, for a brutal blow aimed at the back of his head just missed as he pitched forward.

Jack squirmed round. He had tripped over a big fender made of coconut matting. There was a line attached.

Grasping this line, the boy rose to



Jack Drake gripped his man round the waist, Rugger fashion, and hooked at his sea-booted legs with his foot. The man crashed over heavily, and, as he fell, Jack saw that it was Scar Hosking. (See this page.)

his full height, and swung the huge fender round his head. Then he let go, and the fender flew towards Scar Hosking, catching him full in the face.

It was not a damaging blow, of course, for a fend-off, though heavy, is padded to take shock. But it brought Scar Hosking down flat on his back with a gasping curse, and Jack was on him in an instant.

A swift glance along the decks as he leapt on Hosking told Jack that the fight was going ill with the Stormcock's crew. Men were filtering through the defending screen here and there, and a fair-sized group of the attackers was gathered on the bridge.

One man saw Drake with a scientific wrestling hold on Hosking. He leapt down, and Drake had perforce to leave Hosking and tackle his new assailant, to prevent himself from being laid out senseless with the heavy splicing fid his new attacker carried.

Skipper Proctor was jammed up against the boat chocks, hitting out desperately. But he was surrounded by attackers, and was about done, for his gasps were painfully audible between the dull thud of blows and the thumps of falling men on the decks.

There was very little shouting. And as Jack turned like a tiger to meet his new assailant, Hosking lumbered to his feet, and, seeing Jack and the other struggling, sprang in.

Drake was helpless in the grip of the two men. He was dragged to the state-room, pitched in head foremost, bringing up against the bulkhead with a shock that momentarily robbed him of his senses.

As he dragged himself to his feet, another form came hurtling into the state-room, and down Jack went again. The newcomer was Skipper Proctor.

The old trawler-master was exhausted. And he sprawled on the floor and

lay there, though conscious, without making any effort to get up. He had not an atom of strength left in his limbs.

Jack tried the door. It was locked from the outside. He crashed his weight against it, the jar occasioning a fresh shoot of agony in the small of his back, where the big bruise was. And the only answer to the crash on the door was a coarse laugh outside.

"Skipper," said Jack, "the Stormcock's taken!"

Proctor dragged himself to a sitting posture with a groan.

"I didn't reckon as a trawler manned only by a complement o' fishermen, like Stromsund's, could have so many men," he gasped.

"There are other trawlers than the one Stromsund brought the gov'nor and me in to Brek Katel," said Jack. "I saw Hosking in the scrap. In fact, it was Hosking and another who downed me. And Langley was on the bridge with the men who had broken through our line."

"By hokey, an' that's bad hearin'," groaned Proctor. "Then—then—"

"It means Stromsund has been joined by at least one of his other trawlers—probably two more."

"Mr. Locke didn't reckon on this."

"No. The last we knew of Hosking was when we left him a prisoner at Ingholdt Farm. He must have rushed to his trawler as soon as he was free, and brought her round to Brek Katel at once."

"An'—an' Langley's maybe got another trawler to replace the one sunk by the collision wi' the barque."

"Exactly! Stromsund seems to have plenty of vessels under his orders. Ah, they're weighing the anchor."

The skipper and Jack listened. The anchor winch hissed and rattled, and

the Stormcock quivered as the chain cable was wound in.

"By hokey, they mean to steam out an' maroon the shore party!" cried Proctor. "An' I wonder what they'll do wi' us?"

"They won't give us safe conduct back to Reykjavik, to put the law in working against them, that's a sure thing," said Jack.

He broke off with a quick exclamation as the door flew open, and another form came hurtling in. It was Mac, the engineer, and Mac's sandy-coloured head at one spot was matted with blood. He flopped down on a locker seat and groaned.

"Ah kenned this would happen! Ah kenned it a' the time," he groaned, "wi' that dirty keelie Scar Hoskin' at the back o' it. Ah kenned it a' the time! Oh, ma poor heid! An' the engines!"

"What about the engines?" asked Jack.

"They're goin' to cripple 'em! Ah heard Hoskin' an' Stromsund talkin' about it. They're goin' to cripple ma poor ould coffee mill!"

But the clang of the engine-room bell, and the steady, slow stamping of the engines, did not seem to bear out Mac's remark.

The trawler began to quiver under her power, and the sense of movement was felt by those in the cabin. The bow-wash was heard, and, by the slewing of the trawler, they knew she was being headed for the sea.

Jack looked out of one of the portholes into the greying darkness. Dawn was breaking slowly, and the sheer rocks of the fjord slipped by one after another.

"What happened below, Mac?" asked Proctor, who was quickly recovering from his exertions in the fight.

"Och, when I was roused from my

bunk by Bill, I tumbled oot, an' ordered the bankin' of the fires, an' both stokers to stand to. Ah took the engines meself, waiting for signals frae the bridge. Then Ah heard the fight, an' no signals came through the telegraph.

"Ah was gettin' a good heid o' steam up, but I didna ken what was happenin' above, o' course. Ah was standin' to at the throttle, accordin' to orders in emergencies. Then yon kacked-faced Hoskin' comes tearin' into th' engine-room, followed by a bleary-faced specimen that might be the proprietor o' a Brig'toon tavern."

"Stromsund," broke in Jack.

"I didna ken the man. But Ah soon found he was the chief. There was a crood o' others ahint him, an' though Ah did ma best wi' a spanner, they had me grippit in a meenit. Ah was slammed in the lamp locker, an' I heard the wasters talkin'. 'We'll mak' well t' th' nor'ard,' Bleary-face was saying, 'then we'll tak' th' connectin' rods oot o' her an' leave 'em for the ice.' That means we'll be helpless through the autumn equinox on the edge o' the Arctic, an' when the ice comes it'll carry us all doon on Brek Katel again, an' there won't be a good gaun screw astern av her to drag us clear."

"By hokey!" roared Proctor. "The fiends! Ye see their lay, laddie? Leave us crippled for the ice-field to drive south. 'Tis wreck for a certainty!"

"On the rocks of Brek Katel. And it'll all look so natural," said Jack. "I see! Stromsund's a cunning brute—"

"He's the worst criminal unhung!" stormed Proctor. "Ye don't know what it means, in a helpless craft on the edge o' the Arctic, embayed by the winter ice, an' a murderous, rocky coast t' th' south'ard."

"Well, we don't want to get too excited about it," said Jack. "You don't need much imagination to know what

it means. The thing is, what are we to do about it?"

"Do? What can we do, wi' the ship in strong hands, an' us cooped up an' helpless. If I had that there bunch o' scallawags—"

"There's one thing we can do, and that is stop-raving about it all, skipper," said Jack. "To take it all calmly will be the best way for us to hit on some sort of a plan, if any plan there be."

For a day and a half the Stormcock plugged northwards. The three prisoners in the state-room were fed, but only sufficient food to keep them alive was given to them. Bread and water was their lot, and not much at that.

Through the portholes the prisoners could see two other trawlers steaming along beside the Stormcock. And a heavy wash was running towards the north-west—a following sea.

"The wind's foul for gettin' clear o' that ice," growled Proctor. "Wi' a fair wind to run south, we'd stand a chance, under any scraps o' canvas we could rig up. For I take it they'll make a job o' it, an' strip off our sails, too."

"You can reckon on that, skipper," said Jack. "Stromsund won't do things by halves. Ah, what's this?"

The engine-room bell was heard to clang. The engines stopped their stamping, and the Stormcock slowed down rapidly and was soon wallowing like a log in the seas.

For three hours some sort of work was in progress, and clanging blows were heard from the engine-room. Then a commotion was heard on deck.

Drake, Proctor, and Mac put their heads together to peer out of the only porthole that would give them a view. A group of men were struggling to the side of the trawler, carrying something heavy, which they heaved overside by canting it over on the rail.

"There go ma fine connectin' rods!" groaned Mac. "An' ye can bet they'll smash up the slide valve or somethin', so's we can't rig up the engines somehow."

The state-room door was unlocked, and Drake, Proctor, and Mac stepped out on to the deck.

Stromsund, Scar Hosking, and Langley held them up with revolvers.

"Just to say good-bye," said Stromsund, with a fiendish laugh. "Feel the nip in the air? Smell the ice? Well, it'll freshen you all up. You have a staunch ship."

Proctor, with a roar like an infuriated bull, rushed at Stromsund, and so sudden was his attack that Stromsund was struck before he could fire. Down he went to the deck, and Drake and Mac leapt in and struck up the firearms of Hosking and Langley as their weapons were swung round to send bullets crashing into Skipper Proctor's broad back.

To Leeward!

HOSKING closed with Drake, and Langley with Mac, who, though small and not so young as he had been, was a tough nut in a fight.

While his companions were still struggling, Skipper Proctor, his bearded face terrible in its rage, lifted Stromsund clean off his feet, and carrying him to the rail, with a mighty heave he sent the bulky form of the villainous trawler-owner overside into the sea.

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The men in the boat hard by, laughing, began to fish for Stromsund with a boathook.

Skipper Proctor now lurched into the fight between his comrades and Hosking and Langley. And, tearing Hosking from Jack he gave the youngster the chance of snatching at Hosking's revolver, with which the ruffian had been doing his best to brain Jack in the hand-to-hand struggle.

Drake now sprang back.

"Stop!" he yelled. "Stop, Langley and Hosking—or I'll shoot you where you lie!"

Mac and Proctor heard the detective assistant's sudden shout. And they tore themselves away from their opponents.

Langley was groping for his revolver, and Jack sent a shot whistling past his wrist.

"Never mind that, Langley," snapped Jack. "Put your hand out again, and I'll maim it! Get up and clear off, sharp, or we'll tip you overside into the sea, same as Stromsund—"

"Stay!" roared Proctor. "Boy, what be ye thinkin' of? We'll hold 'em as hostages—make Stromsund give us spares for the engine, or—"

"No good, skipper," said Jack curtly, jerking his head to Langley and Hosking as a sign for them to get over into their boat. "They'll only send an armed party over if we try that game. And perhaps finish us off at once," he added, in a lower voice.

Hosking and Langley made quick tracks for the boat riding at the Stormcock's quarter. And the boat then moved away across the water towards where the other trawlers were rolling and reeling; lying-to in wait for the boat.

Stromsund, dripping wet in the stern of the boat, rose and shook his great fist at the Stormcock. Proctor, still in a blazing fury—and Jack now saw how he had earned his name of "Blazes" in the North Sea Fleet—bellowed out his defiance in good, round nautical terms.

The boatload of men boarded one of the trawlers, the boat was hauled aboard, and the steamers got under way, and were soon distant on the tumbling sea to the south-west. Then Jack Drake and his two companions settled down to their work of finding out where their shipmates had been imprisoned, in order to set them free.

The crew had been imprisoned in various places. The ship's bunch of keys, which had been taken from Proctor, was found in the wheelhouse; and as the three went through the ship, their numbers swelling as they released half-starved men from the crews' quarters, the lamp-room, the forepeak, etc., Jack tried to calm Proctor.

"We're all relying on your seamanship now, skipper," said Jack, "so it's your duty to stop blazing away at our misfortunes and see what can be done in the way of getting the Stormcock moving. Maybe we could rig up something jury-fashion from tarpaulins to get the trawler steering—"

"She'll not steer anywhere but to the nor'ard," growled Proctor, quickly calming down. "But ye're right. It's up to me to do me best now."

They had been left plenty of stores, and they all made a hearty meal of tinned beef and biscuits, and hot coffee which the cook was not long in preparing. The trawlerboy was a good cook but a bad sufferer, and he was loudest in his lamentations at their predicament. But Skipper Proctor soon put him to rights.

"Stow the gaff, boy!" he bellowed.

WINNERS OF "PARS" No. 10.

A Table Footer Game has been awarded to each of the following competitors:—

Edward Fry, 55, Malden Hill Gardens, New Malden, Surrey.
J. Woolford, 101, Calcutta Road, Tilbury Docks, Essex.
E. Evans, 55, Elizabeth Street, Walworth, S.E. 17.
L. W. Stevens, 20, St. Margarets Avenue, Harringay, London, N. 15.
F. Knight, 46, Dickens Road, Portsmouth, Hants.
Arthur Healy, 42, Dieppe Street, West Kensington, London, W. 14.
D. R. Hopper, 8, St. Matthew Street, Boulevard, Hull.
Ronald Burt, 7, Hutton Grove, North Finchley, London, N. 12.
A. Reed, 51, Daniels Road, Nunhead, S.E. 15.
Bernard Bonner, 69, Edward Street, Grimsby, Lines.
A. T. Bullen, 10, South Street, Guildford, Surrey.
P. G. McNamara, 7, Carlton Terrace, Waterworks Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.
F. Moore, 7, Cross Street, Wellingborough, Northants.
G. Harrison, Old Dalby, Melton Mowbray.
J. T. Stephens, "The Nook," Childswickham, nr. Broadway, Glos.

"Or, I'll come the old nor'ard o' the Dogger smack skipper bisney with ye!"

And this being the first time the trawlerboy had seen Skipper Proctor living up to his name of Blazes, he counted the danger of the advancing ice as naught compared to his fresh danger at Proctor's hands. And he became the most willing and hardest-working person on the ship.

They rigged up sails made of tarpaulins sewn together. And with these miserable contrivances on the fore and mizzen masts, the trawler's head was brought round to face the south-east. But she would point there, and no more. She sagged two yards to leeward—that is, towards the north, for every yard ahead. And Proctor stamped about in a fresh rage.

(The chances of the Stormcock's battling through to safety are about a hundred to one against; but there are stout hearts aboard her. Mind you read next week's fine instalment, boys.)

BUNTER'S BARRING-IN!

(Continued from page 21.)

"I—I mean, here's the key!" howled Bunter.

"Bless my soul! Loder, take that key, and please lose no time in releasing Mr. Quelch! Ask him to come here immediately. Bless my soul!"

Loder hurried away. Billy Bunter would gladly have followed him from the study; but a glance from the Head stopped him. Bunter had to await the arrival of his Form master—and he fairly cringed as he waited. It was borne in upon his fat mind, at long last, that barring in Mr. Quelch was not quite so brilliant a wheeze as he had supposed. Under the stern eye of the Head, the hapless Owl waited and quaked.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Alas for Bunter!

"UNHEARD of! Unprecedented! Incredible!"

Mr. Quelch, pacing the punishment-room with swishing gown and thunderous brow, murmured those words to himself.

It was six o'clock.

For seven hours the Remove master had been a prisoner in the punishment-room, barred in by the unspeakable Bunter.

His description of the incident was undoubtedly correct. It was unheard of, it was unprecedented, it was incredible! But the unheard of, the unprecedented, the incredible, had happened. For there was Mr. Quelch, shut off from all Greyfriars, barred in the narrow room, pacing and pacing—a good deal like a tiger in a cage.

It was not only an outrage on the Form master's dignity, though that was bad enough. It was not only an act of mutiny, though that was of enormous seriousness. But Mr. Quelch was hungry. He had had no lunch, he had had no tea. He was not so keen on such matters as his hopeful pupil, W. G. Bunter. Nevertheless, the demands of his inner man were peremptory. He was hungry, and he was more and more enraged with every passing moment.

And there was no help.

He would be missed, of course, and searched for, but who would think of searching for him in such a quarter? If Bunter held his tongue, the truth might never be known till the fat junior chose to speak. A night in the punishment-room, without supper, was a dismaying prospect. And the next day, and the next, and perhaps the next!

Mr. Quelch paced and paced.

He had hammered on the door till he was tired, but he knew that the sounds could not be heard. He had made attempts to reach the window, but Gosling had secured the wire over it too well. The Remove master was a helpless prisoner, reduced at last to pacing and pacing and pacing, and contemplating the probable length of his imprisonment. And from that contemplation he derived no solace.

How long was he to stay there? What did that young rascal, that young scoundrel, that young villain, intend? Did he intend anything, or had he simply dismissed the matter from his fatuous and unreflecting mind?

Suddenly the Form master ceased pacing, and listened. There was the grating of a key in a lock, and then footsteps in the outer corridor. Then a sound of bars being removed from stone sockets.

He set his lips hard.

Was it Bunter returning, or— The door opened, and Loder of the Sixth appeared.

(Continued overleaf.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 957.

"Loder!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.
"Yes, sir," said Loder. "The Head sent me to let you out, sir. Will you go to his study, sir? Bunter's there."
Mr. Quelch did not wait for him to finish. He fairly flew past Loder, and fluttered and rustled down the corridor with flying gown. He was gone in a moment.

Loder chuckled.
"The fellows will chortle over this!" he murmured; and he departed for the Sixth Form passage, to set the studies in a roar with the story of Mr. Quelch's amazing experience at the hands of a member of his Form.

Mr. Quelch reached the Head's study. The expression on his face as he entered made Billy Bunter jump.

"My dear Quelch!" exclaimed the Head.

"Dr. Locke, I—I have been—barred—in—imprisoned! That—that boy"—Mr. Quelch pointed a finger, that trembled with rage, at Bunter—"that—that rebellious young rascal!"
"Calm yourself, my dear Quelch," said the Head. "I am aware of the enormity of Bunter's offence. Bunter will be severely flogged."

"Ow!"
"Most severely!"

"Wow!"
"And taken back to the punishment room!"

"Oh dear!"
The Head picked up his birch.

Harry Wharton & Co., in the passage, heard a sound of steady, rhythmical swishing, accompanied by a series of terrific yells. They had wondered what would be the outcome of Bunter's interview with the Head. So had Bunter.

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All doubts on the subject were set at rest now. This was the outcome.

"Poor old Bunter!" murmured Bob Cherry.

Once more the Remove sympathised. Indeed, Bunter was in need of sympathy now—if sympathy could do him any good.

The Head was seldom severe, but he could be severe when he felt that severity was needed. He seemed to feel that it was needed now.

When Bunter limped out of the Head's study he looked in a collapsed state. He blinked mournfully at the Removites, as Mr. Quelch led him away. It was not, after all, Billy Bunter's lucky day.

The Head and Mr. Quelch both took an extremely serious view of his conduct. Bunter, once more in the punishment-room, on a thin diet, and with a flogging to the good, probably took a serious view also. But the rest of Greyfriars chortled over the story. William George, more down than ever on his luck, was in fact the only fellow in the Remove who did not chuckle loud and long over Bunter's Barring-In.

THE END.

(Now look out for another topping yarn of the chums of Greyfriars, entitled: "The Slackers' Awakening!" You'll find it in next week's issue, boys.)



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Matches between England and Australia. By "Umpire."

THE Test match between England and Australia last Saturday began at Nottingham on a day which was the chosen of the two countries have faced each other in Test matches proper. Naturally, in the course of such a long series of matches—matches in which the result has hung on a thread until the very last ball has been bowled. Indeed, there have been so many close finishes that I don't have space in which to recall them all here. But the most memorable of the finishes may well be recalled—a few of the games when we have all worked ourselves up to fever-heat, when we have been swung this way and that with tense excitement.

It is not really easy to decide which was the most exciting match of all, but certainly there was one in the last series of games out in Australia which takes a lot of beating. This was the third game, played at Adelaide, and when I tell you that in the course of the match there were no fewer than 1,407 runs scored, then I think you will agree that a margin of eleven between the two teams at the finish was as close as could reasonably be expected.

THE AUTHORITIES PROVED GOOD PROPHETS!

The match was a specially vital one for England, for we had then lost two of the Tests, and had to win the third to keep a fighting chance. England was over a hundred behind on the first innings, but, dismissing the Australians for the moderate score of 250, had a chance to win. Our fortunes ebbed and flowed until, when close to the close of the sixth night, the game was in that remarkably exciting position that we required 27 to win, and had two wickets to fall. Could we do it on the last day?

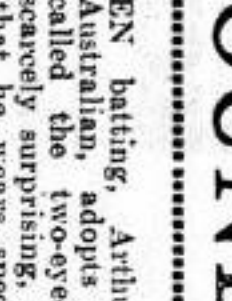
The authorities in charge of the ground at Adelaide decided to admit the people free to this last thrilling stage of the struggle, and nearly forty thousand people attended to see whether the last two wickets of England could get those 27 runs. Gilligan, the captain, was out when we still wanted 18 to win. Strudwick was last man in—what exciting finishes this Surrey wicket-keeper has taken part in!—but the hopes of an English victory did not materialise. With 12 runs still wanted, Freeman, of Kent, was caught by the wicket-keeper, and all that remained was the enthusiasm of the Australian crowd, who dashed across the field to carry their heroes shoulder-high to the pavilion.

So far as Test matches in this country are concerned, perhaps the summer of 1902 provided us with the most exciting time of all, for in that year there were two of the games which hung by a thin thread. For sheer breathless "on the rack" business I have never been connected with any sporting event which equals the Test match at Old Trafford, Manchester, in that memorable year of 1902. The details of the scoring don't matter, but you can get a good picture of what the finish was like when I tell you that when the last man came in—Fred Tate, the father of Maurice Tate—we wanted eight runs to win.

LOSING BY THREE RUNS.

Now, Tate had no sooner got to the wicket than rain began to fall, and an adjournment had to be made for three-quarters of an hour. Try to realise, if you can, all the pent-up feelings of the people during that period of waiting while the rain fell. The MUGNET LIBRARY—No. 957.

Matches between England and Australia. By "Umpire."



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BOUNDARY HITS!

By "SCORER."

WHEN batting, Arthur Richardson, the Australian, adopts what is commonly called the "two-eyed stance." This is a scarcely surprising, perhaps, in view of the fact that he wears spectacles while at the wicket.

"Why don't you read Macaulay's books?" asked a literary man the other day of his friend, and he was startled to get this reply: "I know he's a first-class cricketer, but I didn't know he wrote books!"

According to Frank Foster, the captain of a cricket team should always be ready, when things are going badly, to brighten the outlook with a few cheerful words. How would this do for a sample when your opponents have made 400 without the loss of a wicket? "Come on, my lads! They're nearly all out!"

Not every cricketer has so fitting a name—Bowles—as the new Worcester man. He is always trying to live up to his name, and succeeds when he "bowles" them out.

Masseurs are in regular attendance at the Test matches in Australia, and Jack Hobbs suggests that we ought to copy the same idea in England. Such a precaution would certainly prevent our players being referred to as "big stiff."

Between cricket and football there is often this point of difference. In football we have shots called the "two-eyed stance." This is a scarcely surprising, perhaps, in view of the fact that he wears spectacles while at the wicket.

The new captain of the Yorkshire second eleven is Mr. R. C. Chester Constable. With a name like that we hope he won't forget himself and run his opponents in instead of running them out.

Walter Brearley, who was at one time a most excellent fast bowler who got a lot of wickets for Lancashire, is now known as Lord's as the captain. He is acting as voluntary coach to a few cheerful words. How would this do for a sample when your opponents have made 400 without the loss of a wicket? "Come on, my lads! They're nearly all out!"

Jack Gregory, the Australian, very often bats without gloves on his hands, but it does not necessarily follow that when he was a boy he had his knuckles rapped at school so often that he doesn't mind an occasional rap on them now.

Cecil Parkin says that fifteen players should be summoned to each Test match. Perhaps the Lancashire man will add to our knowledge by telling us how many players should be summoned after the match for not doing what was expected of them.

11 WICKETS FOR 82!

"Paul Pry" gives us a few tips about Grimmett, the "hop-o'-my-thumb" Australian.



Italian who skittled England out in one of last year's Test Matches.

HAVING run the rule over the whole of the Australian cricketers now in this country, I am going to award a first prize to Grimmett as the most interesting character of all. In several ways he is really quite unique. In the first place, you should see him standing alongside Jack Gregory. This fast bowler, as you know, is well over six feet in height, but Grimmett, on the other hand, is the smallest member of the whole party, for, even when he stretches up to his full limit, he can only just touch five feet two. There is a story to the effect that on one occasion when the Australians were travelling by train they took full tickets for fifteen of the men and one half-fare ticket. This half-fare ticket was given to "little boy" Grimmett, for it is added that he got through with the half-fare ticket. I tell you that yarn as it was told to me, but I don't suppose it is really true; but clearly a fellow who only stands five feet two in his socks can't be said to have overgrown his strength.

In addition to being the smallest man in the team—a regular hop-o'-my-thumb—Grimmett is also an interesting character from other points of view. Really, he is funny when he is bowling, with quick little "stammering" strides, as they have very properly been called. Then he is different from most good bowlers in that he brings his arm more round than over.

A DRAMATIC CHANGE!

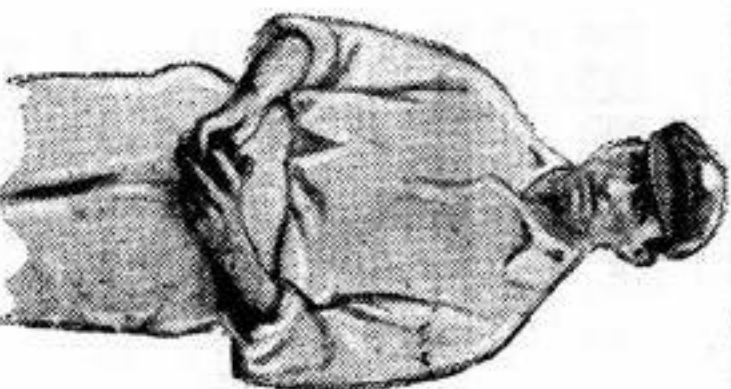
Don't make any mistake about Grimmett being a good bowler, however. He has perhaps the most wonderful command of length of any man at present in top-class cricket, and has already established something of a reputation even against English batsmen, although this is, of course, his first visit to this country.

One of the most amazing things about Test cricket from the Australian standpoint is the manner in which they have from time to time produced fellows who have been wonderfully successful in their first Test match. Grimmett is one of these fellows. When our team was last in Australia, Grimmett did not play in any of the first four games; but as in the fourth match the Australians had been well beaten, the selectors evidently thought the time had come to make a change in their team. One change was a dramatic and unexpected one, for they brought in "Charlie"—that is, what everybody calls Grimmett in Australia—for the fifth match.

A FINE ANALYSIS!

The last Test match was nothing more or less than a personal triumph for this new-comer to Test cricket. In the first innings he took five wickets for 45 runs, and in the second innings he did even better still, sending six of the best England batsmen back to the pavilion, and only having 37 runs hit off him. Thus he took in his first Test game eleven wickets for 82 runs. What a start! (Then Bill, who knows as much about Test cricket from actual experience as most people, described that bowling performance of Grimmett's as one of the best he had ever witnessed. No wonder he was immediately car-marked for the trip to England.)

Now, I want to tell you some more strange things which I worked out of Grimmett when I talked to him. You see, I can always ask questions of a little man much more confidently than I can of a big one because I am not so likely to get punched hard for being cheeky. Well, Grimmett



G. V. GRIMMETT.

Rather more than ten years ago the spirit of adventure seized Grimmett, and one day he sailed for Sydney. There he played cricket, and, just to illustrate his roaming disposition, let me tell you that he played in every State in the Australian Commonwealth before settling down at Adelaide. Many people describe him as a "goofle" bowler, and it is certainly true that he sends down the "wrong 'un" from time to time. But it is the remarkable accuracy of length, coupled with a "zip" off the pitch which makes his leg-breaks so dangerous, and which enables him to get most of his victims. Indeed, such an authority as Jack Hobbs has told me that Grimmett's "wrong 'un"—his googly ball—can be seen a mile off. Like all the Australians, he can bat a bit when necessary, but not enough to justify him in talking about it a lot. (Our Travelling Correspondent has something to say about Satchell, the famous Yorkshire player, next week. Mind you read this article.)

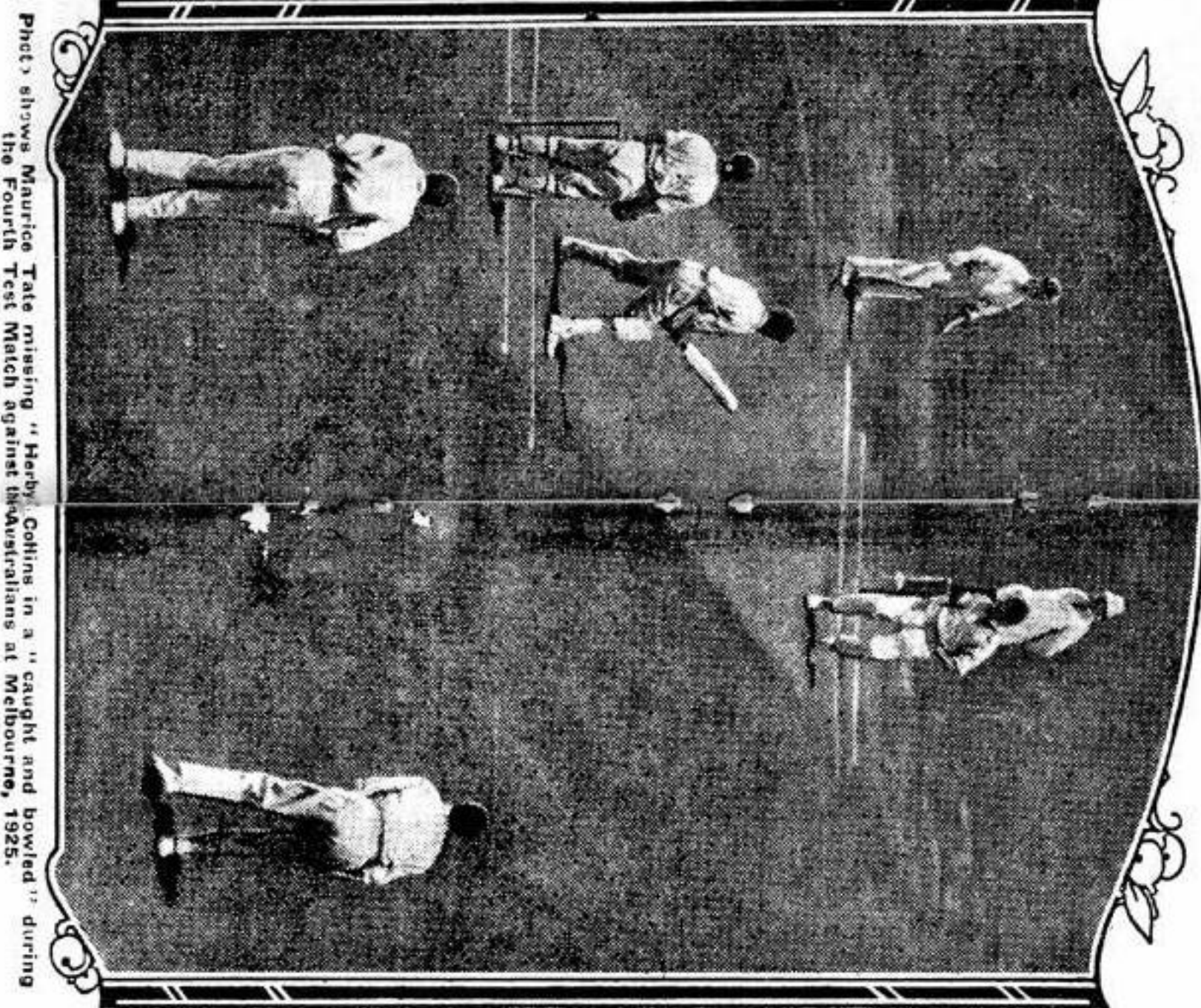


Photo shows Maurice Tate missing "Harby" Goring in a "caught and bowled" during the Fourth Test Match against the Australians at Melbourne, 1925.