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No. 958. Vol. XXIX. Week Ending June 26th, 1928.

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TO & FROM YOUR EDITOR

ALL FREE!

FIRST and foremost this week comes my bit of jolly good news. The splendid series of Free Gifts about which I told you last Monday will start in a **FORTNIGHT'S TIME!** The secret is disclosed. The giddy cat is out of the bag. I am not holding anything back from you, my chums. In two weeks' time there will start the distribution of the finest set of real action, cut-out, stand-up photos of the leading cricketers of our day. And, of course, in the series will be included all the top-sawyers, and A.I. champions from the land of the jumping kangaroo, as also our best men who play for this Old Country.

TALK ABOUT GOOD NEWS!

For long enough past I have been keen as mustard to mark my appreciation of the loyalty shown by all my chums, to the **MAGNET**. How was it to be done? Something special. Something that would give you pleasure all round. Well, in this cricket year it struck me that a real proper gallery of action photos—which are more than portraits, but splendid figures of our Australian visitors and prominent members in English cricket—would meet the case. These action photos will stand up in life-like fashion on the mantelpieces of thousands of "dens" up and down the world. They will add immensely to the interest of any room. You have all stood by the **MAGNET**, and, thanks to you and your support, the famous paper has got an extra move on these last weeks. And then, of course, I am out, too, for my own hand, or, rather, for the **MAGNET** in all this. I know how things pan out. Fellows will come into your place and spot these dashing photos. "Hallo," they will exclaim, "where did you get those?" "Oh, the **MAGNET!**" you will reply. So the fame of the best yarn paper in the world will spread some more. Don't forget, either—and you aren't the least bit likely to—that these Free Gifts will also go to readers of our Companion Paper, the "Popular." Most Magnetites read the "Popular." Those who don't should.

DO IT NOW!

There will be a perfect splash of a rush these next weeks! There's no beating about the bush. This is the grandest chance yet, and these stand-up photos will be wanted by everybody. So don't get left. Order early, and give the newsagent a breather. He will be serving out the **MAGNET** and "Popular" like hot cakes. He does not want to disappoint anybody. Same here! You will get the most wonderful series ever offered. You can form a real gallery of the big men of the wicket, each one true to character and a work of art. I have made this new stunning feature absolutely free to all my countless chums. No coupons. No preliminaries. Just free! It is one up to the **MAGNET**. It has been out to score. It has scored, but it is the paper that never stops short at a single triumph. It keeps on keeping on, winning more readers, getting fresh laurels. One more word. Pass this news on to all pals who have not yet joined the army of Magnetites. They'll thank you for the straight tip, for the **MAGNET** is a winner all the way. Remember—a fortnight's time!

FOR NEXT MONDAY:

"THE PUNISHMENT OF PONSONEY!"

By Frank Richards.

This is the sequel to the magnificent story you now have in your hands, and on that account alone—apart from its outstanding merit—Magnetites should make certain of reading it.

"THE PHANTOM OF THE DOGGER BANK!"

As this is the final instalment of our thrilling detective and adventure story you will need little urging from me to read it. It's prime!

THE CRICKET SUPPLEMENT.

And there will be, of course, another topping four-page supplement devoted to King Cricket, to which, by the way, S. F. Barnes, the bowler who "did it" when we last won the "ashes," contributes a fine article. Look out for it. Chin, chin, chums!

YOUR EDITOR.

A NEW MAULY! Lord Mauleverer may be a "born tired" slacker where lessons or sports are concerned, but he can be lively and plucky enough in emergency!



A Magnificent New Long Complete Yarn of the Chums of Greyfriars, introducing Cecil Ponsonby, the Cad of Highcliffe, and Marjorie Hazeldene & Co., the Cliff House girls.

By
FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Getting a Move On!

"MAULY!" Lord Mauleverer of the Greyfriars Remove, sat up on the sofa in Study No. 12, and ejaculated:
"Oh dear!"

A moment before, Lord Mauleverer's eyes had been half closed, and he had been looking drowsy. Now he looked wide awake, and a little alarmed, as Bob Cherry's powerful voice echoed along the Remove passage.

It was a warm afternoon; a half-holiday at Greyfriars. Judging by appearances, Lord Mauleverer had intended to spend a good part of his half-holiday on the study sofa. After a good rest, to recover from the exertion of morning classes, his lordship intended to walk gently down to Little Side, and watch the cricket from a deck-chair under a shady tree. That was quite enough exertion for one afternoon, in Mauly's opinion.

Hence his alarmed look as Bob Cherry shouted his name in the Remove passage—and heavy footsteps followed the shout, coming along towards the door of Study No. 12.

"Oh, gad!" murmured Mauleverer.

For a moment he sat on the sofa thinking hard. Then he rose to his feet, and tiptoed across the study, to a big Japanese screen that stood across one corner.

Just as the heavy footsteps reached the study door, Lord Mauleverer reached the screen, and slipped out of sight behind it.

Bang!

The door flew open.

Bob Cherry of the Remove was nothing if not energetic in all his actions. There was a crash as the door, flying open, came into violent contact with a chair, and sent it hurtling across the room. Bob's cheery, ruddy face looked into the study.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Mauly—Mauly, old man! Ready?"

Behind the screen, Lord Mauleverer leaned on the wall, motionless, silent. He scarcely breathed.

Bob stared round the study. He had expected to find Lord Mauleverer there. But his lordship was not to be seen.

Harry Wharton's voice called along the passage:

"Buck up, Bob! We're waiting!"

"Bring that slacker along!" called out Frank Nugent.

"He's not here!" answered Bob, looking round the study with a puzzled expression. "Blessed if I know what's become of him! I know he came up to his study. But he's gone!"

Harry Wharton & Co. came along the passage and looked in Study No. 12. The chums of the Remove looked very cheery and bright, as if they expected to enjoy their half-holiday—as indeed they did. Johnny Bull was carrying a picnic-basket slung on his arm, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had a bag in his dusky hand. Evidently an excursion had been planned for the afternoon.

"Why, where the thump is he?" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "I'm certain he was in his study."

"Echo answered where!" grinned Nugent. And Hurree Singh added, in his weird English, that the wherefulness was terrific.

"Stole away!" chuckled Johnny Bull. "He doesn't want the walk to the old priory, the lazy slacker."

"I told him we were starting at two-thirty," said Bob. "It's half-past two now. I told him he was coming with us. I specially explained to him that the walk would do him good. It was all arranged."

Behind the screen Lord Mauleverer grinned faintly.

It was one of the amiable Mauly's weaknesses that he never could say "No" to a fellow if a fellow insisted. Bob, in the belief that a little exertion would do Mauly good, had insisted. Nevertheless, his lazy lordship was not looking forward to a walk of two miles to a picnic, with a similar distance to walk home afterwards. Mauly always followed the line of least resistance. The easiest thing was to keep out of sight when the picnickers started. Mauly did the easiest thing.

"Well, he's jolly well disappeared," said Harry Wharton, with a laugh.

"Let's get off, then."

"Let's!" assented Nugent.

"But I told Mauly he was coming," said Bob. "I told him plainly that if he wasn't ready, I was going to take him by the scruff of the neck and run him

along. Couldn't put it plainer than that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Besides, we're calling at Cliff House for Marjorie and Clara," went on Bob. "They like old Mauly. Hazel's started already, and he will have told them that Mauly's coming. He's got to come!"

"He's too jolly lazy," said Johnny Bull.

"That's why," answered Bob, "it will do him good!"

"He's dodged us," said Harry Wharton. "Can't waste the afternoon rooting about after that blessed slacker. Let him rip!"

Bob Cherry shook his head. When Bob had made up his mind, his mind was made up. He liked Mauly, and for that reason often took the trouble to shake him up out of his slackening ways. When Mauly was too tired to turn out of bed at rising-bell, Bob always had a wet sponge at his service. Possibly Mauly was not so grateful as he might have been for such kind attentions. He liked Bob Cherry, but Bob undoubtedly gave him a very tired feeling.

"He can't be far away," said Bob. "I shouldn't wonder if he's in the study all the time."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Mauly!" roared Bob.

Behind the screen in the corner, Lord Mauleverer almost held his breath. Bob's powerful voice was almost unnerving at close quarters to the sensitive system of Herbert Mauleverer.

"Mauly!"

"Oh, come on!" said Johnny Bull. "Bother the blessed slacker!"

"Wait a minute!"

Bob Cherry picked up a cushion from the sofa. The screen in the corner was the only possible hiding-place, and Bob had a strong suspicion that Mauly had dodged out of sight behind it. But he did not pull the screen away. There were other methods.

He swung the cushion into the air, and it flew over the screen, and dropped behind it.

"Yaroooooh!" came a sudden yell.

"He's there!" chuckled Bob.

Crash!

The screen pitched over as his lordship staggered against it. The cushion had landed fairly on his hidden head.

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"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Hullo, hallo, hallo! There you are, Mauly!" said Bob Cherry agreeably. "Had you gone to sleep in that corner?"

"Yaas—no—oh, gad!" gasped Mauly. "We're ready, old man. Kim on!"
 "I—I say—"
 "No need to say anything, old bean. We've got the tuck, and we're all ready. Hazel's gone. Get a move on. You want to picnic with Marjorie and Clara, I suppose?"

"Oh, yaas! But—"
 "This way, old man," said Bob, taking Mauly's arm. "Where's your hat? Chuck him his straw, Franky. Now you're all right."

"But—"
 "Quick march!" said Bob.
 "But—"
 "Are you a belted earl, or a billy-goat?" demanded Bob. "No time for butting now. We're waiting. You fellows get going. I'll help Mauly along. You're tired, aren't you, old bean?"

"Yaas!" gasped Mauleverer.
 "I thought so! I'll help you."
 "Oh, gad!"
 Bob Cherry, with a firm grip on his lordship's arm, marched out of the study. Lord Mauleverer's arm accompanied him—and, needless to say, his lordship accompanied the arm. In the passage Bob broke into a run, and as he still had a vice-like grip on Mauly's arm, Mauly had to break into a run, too. They raced along towards the Remove staircase, Bob Cherry grinning and Mauleverer gasping.

"I say, you fellows—"
 Billy Bunter rolled out of Study No. 7. He rolled out at an unlucky moment for himself.

Two fellows going at top speed could not stop themselves just because the Owl of the Remove butted into the way.

Crash!
 Bump!
 "Yarooooop!" roared Bunter, as he sat down.

"Oh, gad!" gasped Mauleverer.
 Bob Cherry staggered for a moment. But he rushed on, and his hapless lordship had to rush with him. Harry Wharton & Co. followed, laughing. Billy Bunter sat and roared.

"I—I say—" stuttered Mauleverer.
 "Keep moving, old man!"
 "Hadn't—hadn't we better see whether we've hurt Bunter?" gasped Mauly.

"That's all right! I know we have."
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry went down the Remove staircase three steps at a time. Lord Mauleverer went with him, hopping like a kangaroo. When they reached the big door of the House his lordship was almost in a state of collapse.

"Shall I help you across the quad, Mauly?"

"Ow! No! Ow!"
 "Think you can manage without help?"

"Oh, gad! Yaas! Oh, dear!"
 "Good man! You're bucked up already, you see," said Bob encouragingly. "Didn't I tell you that a little exertion would do you good?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 Lord Mauleverer walked to the gates with the grinning Removites round him. The prospect of a two-mile walk was still dismaying; but not quite so dismaying as the prospect of further assistance from the exuberant Bob. His lordship resigned himself to his fate, and

even smiled a wan smile as he walked out of the school gates with the cheery chums of the Remove.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Ponsonby Asks For It!

"GREYFRIARS cads!" remarked Cecil Ponsonby.
 Three juniors of Highcliffe were sitting on a fallen trunk as Harry Wharton & Co. came along a field path, taking a short cut towards Cliff House School.

Ponsonby, Gadsby, and Monson, of the Highcliffe Fourth Form, frowned at the sight of the Greyfriars fellows. There had never been any love lost between Ponsonby's set at Highcliffe School and the chums of Greyfriars. Had the Highcliffians been in force, the Removites would not have passed them without trouble; but as they were three and the Removites were six, Ponsonby & Co. were not thinking of a ragging. But Pon could not restrain an unpleasant remark as they passed.

The knuts of Highcliffe were smoking cigarettes as they sat on the trunk, shaded by the branches of an oak from the summer sun. It was their way of enjoying a half-holiday, not really a very enjoyable way.

Ponsonby made his remark to Gadsby and Monson, as the Removites came along the path, fully intending them to hear. They did hear, as a matter of fact, and Bob Cherry's eyes glinted; but as Wharton walked on without taking heed, his comrades followed his example. Wharton did not want a "row" on the way to Cliff House School; and Ponsonby and his unpleasant remarks did not matter, anyhow.

But Ponsonby was a fellow who was encouraged by impunity. As his first remark was not heeded he proceeded to make some more.

"What a crew!" he remarked cheerily.

"What a gang!" assented Gadsby.

"What a mob!" said Monson.

Bob Cherry halted.

"Come on, Bob!" said Wharton. "We don't want to be late, you know."

"It wouldn't take a minute to push Ponsonby's nose through the back of his head," suggested Bob.

"Oh, rats! Let the silly ass rip! Come on!" said the captain of the Remove. "What does he matter?"

"The matterfulness of the esteemed and ridiculous Ponsonby is not tetrific!" remarked Hurree Singh.

"That's the nigger," said Ponsonby, as if pointing out Hurree Jamset Ram Singh to his comrades. "I hear that he's a prince in his own country—Prince Snowball, I think his name is, or Prince Darkey, or something!"

"My esteemed Ponsonby—"

"I understand that he was sent over here to be civilised," went on Ponsonby. "They don't seem to have made much progress with him so far, judgin' by appearances."

Gadsby and Monson chuckled. The crimson came into the dusky cheeks of the nabob of Bhanipur.

"I suppose you think that's funny, Ponsonby?" said Bob Cherry, stopping directly in front of the leader of the Highcliffe nuts.

Ponsonby looked at him with supercilious coolness.

"Did you speak to me?" he asked.

"You know I did, you silly ass!"

"Please don't then," drawled Ponsonby. "I was speakin' to my friends,

not to you. I'm rather particular whom I allow to address me."

"Look here—"
 "Excuse me, I'd rather not," said Ponsonby politely. "My headmaster has warned me against getting into conversation with low characters while out of gates on a half-holiday."

Gadsby and Monson chuckled again. Really, the superb Pon was in good vein this afternoon!

Bob Cherry glared. In a wordy warfare he knew he was not Ponsonby's match. But when it came to action the advantage was on his side. So Bob proceeded to action.

Having made his remark, Ponsonby turned his head away, with lofty indifference, as if ignoring Bob's existence. The next moment, however, his lofty indifference vanished as a heavy hand descended on the crown of his shining silk hat.

Crunch!

"Oh!" roared Ponsonby.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Greyfriars juniors, and even Lord Mauleverer chuckled.

Ponsonby leaped to his feet, clutching at his hat. The handsome silk topper looked more like a concertina now, and it was driven down round Pon's ears. He grabbed it off, his face red with rage.

"You cheeky ruffian!" he yelled.

"Have another?" asked Bob Cherry. "You've only got to keep on cheeking your betters, old bean."

"You—your rotter!" Ponsonby gasped with rage as he stared at his crunched hat. "By gad, I'll smash you!"

As a rule, Ponsonby was not a fighting-man, if he could help it. But there was a limit; and the crunching of a handsome and expensive silk topper was, apparently, the limit. Ponsonby clenched his hands and rushed at Bob Cherry, hitting out furiously.

Bob backed away a pace or two, and his hands came up. He grinned over them at the infuriated face of the Highcliffe junior.

"Come on, old bean!" he said cheerily.

"Give him a jolly good lickin', Pon!" called out Gadsby.

"Oh, do!" grinned Bob.

"The lickfulness will be a boot on the other leg, in my esteemed opinion," chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"That's for your nose, Pon!" said Bob. And it was!

"Ow!"

"That's for your eye!"

And again it was so.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, floor him and come on!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "These Highcliffe duffers can't scrap! Why waste time?"

"Oh, give Pon a chance!" chuckled Bob. "Pon's burning with rage and thirsting for gore. Come on, Pon!"

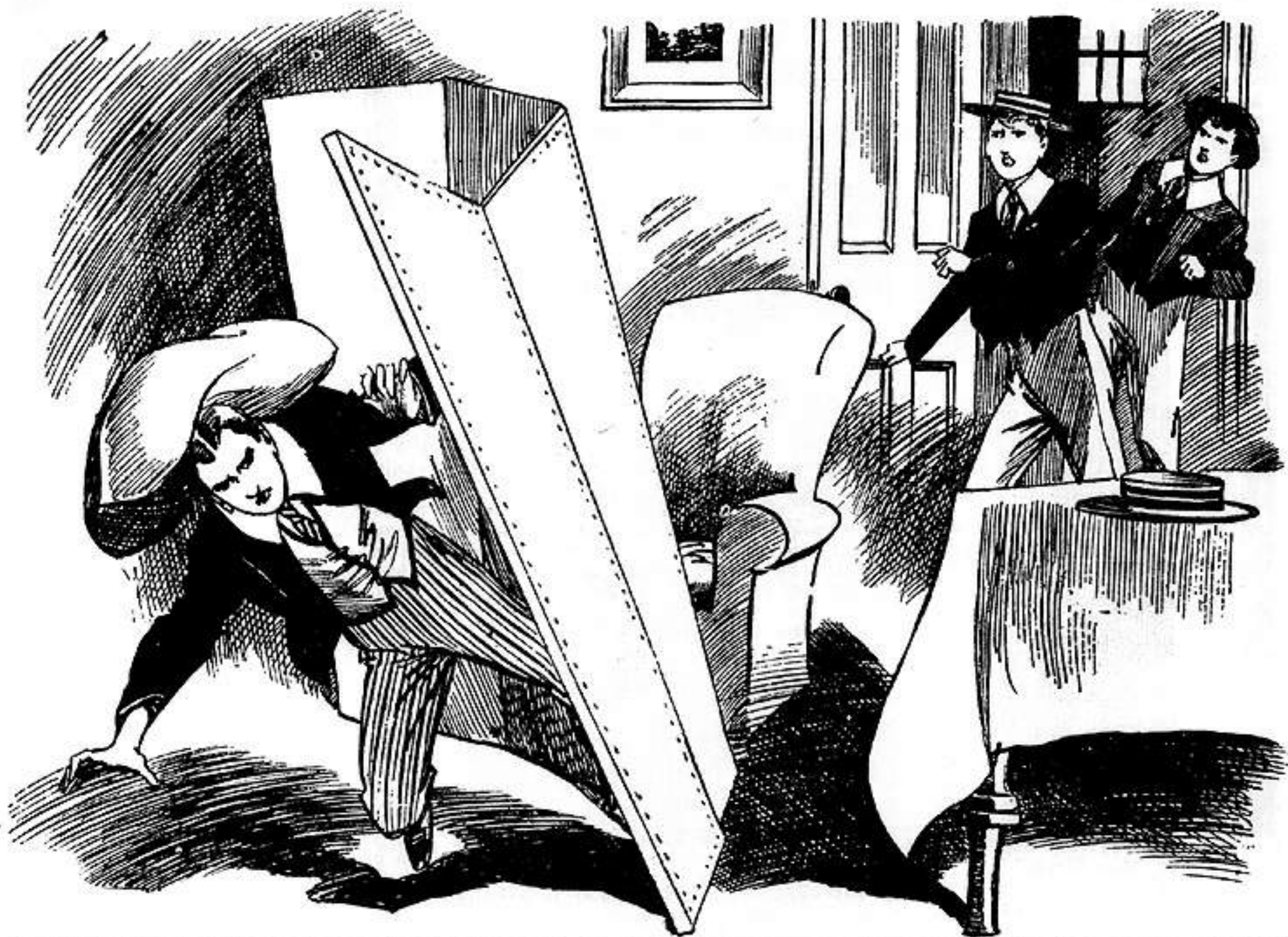
Ponsonby came on savagely.

But his furious blows did not get through Bob Cherry's guard, and Bob's somewhat hefty knuckles rapped again and again on Pon's handsome features—which grew less and less handsome with every rap.

Gadsby and Monson had risen to their feet, and they looked on with dark faces. Ponsonby, in his rage, was doing his best, and perhaps hoped for a victory; but it was clear to his comrades that Bob was only playing with him.

Johnny Bull passed the picnic-basket to Nugent, and tapped Gadsby on the shoulder. Gadsby backed away sharply.

"Like to join in, Gaddy?" asked Johnny Bull. "What's the good of standing by, looking on at a scrap?"



"Mauly!" roared Bob Cherry. He picked up a cushion from the sofa. The screen in the corner was the only possible hiding-place, and Bob had a strong suspicion that Mauly was behind it. He swung the cushion into the air, and it flew over the screen and dropped behind it. "Yaroooooh!" came a sudden yell. (See Chapter 1.)

Like to put up your hands and keep Pon company?"

"Good egg!" exclaimed Harry Wharton heartily. "And I'll accommodate you, Monson! No good wasting time."

"Here, you keep off, you ruffians!" exclaimed Gadsby, in alarm. He retreated round the trunk upon which the knuts had been sitting, and Monson followed him with ludicrous haste.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Buck up, Bob!" said Wharton, laughing.

"Oh, all right!"

"You rotter!" panted Ponsonby, pushing on hard.

Bob grinned serenely.

"Sit down, old bean!" he said.

And Ponsonby—hardly knowing how it happened—felt a sudden jarring on his chin, and he sat down quite suddenly.

"Ow!"

"Man down!" chuckled Nugent.

"Now come on!" said Harry. "We shall be late, at this rate."

"Must give Pon a chance if he wants to go on," said Bob. "Are you going on, Pon, or chucking it?"

"Ow! Wow!" Ponsonby caressed his damaged chin as he sat in the grass.

"Ow! You rotter! Oh!"

"Yes or no, old bean?"

"Hang you!"

"I suppose that means that the answer's in the giddy negative? Ta-ta, then—and mind your manners next time we meet!"

And Bob Cherry followed his comrades, who had already started. Harry Wharton & Co. disappeared along the field-path, leaving Ponsonby nursing

his chin, and Gadsby and Monson scowling. Ponsonby picked himself up, his brow black as thunder, gritting his teeth.

"Bad luck, Pon, old man!" said Gadsby, closing one eye at Monson. "A bit too hefty for you—what?"

Ponsonby rubbed his chin and his nose and his eye.

"I'll make the rotter smart for it!" he said.

"Give him a jolly good lickin' another time, what?" said Monson, and he closed one eye at Gadsby.

"Let's get after them!" muttered Ponsonby.

"What's the good? You don't want to tackle Cherry again, I suppose?" asked Gadsby, with a stare.

"There are other ways of gettin' even with a fellow, beside punchin' his nose," said Ponsonby, with an evil look. "They're goin' to picnic somewhere, and I've got my catapult in my pocket!"

"I say, that's jolly dangerous!" said Monson, shaking his head. "Better cut that out, Pon. Why, it's against the law, you know; you might be run in for bungin' things at a fellow with a catapult."

"Mind your own bizney, you ass!"

"I jolly well will!" said Monson sulkily. "If that's your game, you can play it on your own; I'm off. There's a limit!"

"Same here!" said Gadsby.

And the two juniors walked away together. Ponsonby, with all his elegant and superb manners, was little better than a ruffian when his evil passions

were aroused, and at such moments his comrades were almost afraid of him.

"Come back, you rotten funks!" shouted Ponsonby.

Gadsby and Monson walked on without turning their heads. Until Pon had had time to cool down they preferred his room to his company.

Ponsonby gritted his teeth.

He stood for some moments in hesitation before he quitted the spot. But when he moved it was not to follow Gadsby and Monson. With a savage, scowling brow, he tramped along the footpath in the direction taken by Harry Wharton & Co.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Picnickers!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Ready?" "Quite!" said Marjorie Hazeldene, with a smile.

Harry Wharton & Co. arrived at the gate of Cliff House School. Hazeldene of the Remove had gone over first, and he was waiting at the gate, with his sister Marjorie and Clara Trevlyn. Lord Mauleverer and the Famous Five saluted the Cliff House girls cheerily. Mauly had long been suffering from a tired feeling, but he seemed to buck up a good deal at the sight of the two smiling and pretty faces.

"You've kept us waiting," said Hazel. "Oh, only a minute or two!" said Marjorie.

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"Boys will be boys!" said Miss Clara oracularly.

"Sorry!" said Wharton. "We got delayed a little coming along—not our fault—"

"My fault really," said Bob ruefully. "I stopped to speak to a—fellow."

"What's the matter with your knuckles?" asked Hazel.

"My—my knuckles?"

"Yes—you've been barking them on something."

"Oh, nothing! You—you see—"

stammered Bob, reddening. "I—I knocked my hand on—on something and—"

"Somebody, you mean!" said Hazel. "What a chap you are for getting into rows, and no mistake!"

Bob's face was crimson now, and he would have given a great deal to hand out to Hazeldene of the Remove a little of what had been handed out to Ponsonby of Highcliffe. But as Hazel was Marjorie's brother, that, of course, was not to be thought of.

"Shall we start?" asked Marjorie softly; and her voice had the effect of oil on the troubled waters.

"Let's!" said Miss Clara.

"It's not far from here to the old priory," said Wharton. "Let me carry that parcel, Clara."

"It's a cake," said Miss Clara. "Mind you are careful with it. Miss Primrose gave it to us for the picnic. She's rather an old dear."

"Let Mauly carry it," said Bob. "Mauly's the most careful chap here. Aren't you, Mauly?"

"Oh! Yaas!" said Lord Mauleverer. "I mean I shall be very happy. Please let me take it, Miss Clara."

Clara shook her head.

"You're too lazy to carry a parcel," she answered.

"Oh, Clara!" murmured Marjorie.

"No; really, you know," protested his lordship, "it will be a pleasure—no end of a pleasure, you know—on my word! It's awfully good of you to have me at the picnic, and I—I was awfully keen to come, you know—frightfully keen. Do let me carry the parcel."

Miss Clara consigned the cake to the care of Lord Mauleverer. He put the parcel gingerly under one arm. The party started along the lane, taking the direction of the ruined priory in the wood. That was to be the scene of the picnic, to be followed by an exploration of the ruins.

"Tired, Mauly?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Yaas—I mean no! Not at all!"

"You can take a turn with this basket, then," grinned Johnny Bull.

"Oh, yaas!"

The picnic-basket was hooked on to Mauly's other arm. His lordship proceeded on his way, between the parcel and the basket—both of which were of a fairly good weight.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's jolly old Pon again!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as the party entered the footpath through the wood.

"Oh! It was Ponsonby you punched, was it?" asked Hazeldene.

Ponsonby's face looked out from among the trees for a moment, and then disappeared. He was gone from sight in a moment, and Harry Wharton & Co. stared after him in surprise. Ponsonby was apparently keeping an eye on the party, for what purpose the juniors could not imagine. It did not seem likely that he was looking for more trouble; he had had more than he wanted of that. Neither did the Remove fellows want any trouble, in the presence of the Cliff House girls, and they

were glad to see the Highcliffe dandy disappear.

"Pon's nose looked a bit damaged," remarked Hazeldene maliciously. "Is that where you barked your knuckles, Cherry?"

"Oh, cheese it!" muttered Bob.

"This way," said Johnny Bull, turning into a path through the thick green wood.

"That's the longest way," said Nugent.

"Yes—Mauly wants a long walk, don't you, Mauly?"

"No—yaas!"

"It's lovely in the woods in this beautiful weather," said Marjorie innocently. "Let's go the longest way round."

"Good egg!" said Miss Clara, in her boyish way. "I'm glad to see you bucking up like this, Mauleverer!"

"Oh! Yaas!" gasped his lordship.

He gave Johnny Bull a reproachful glance. He realised that it was a "rag," and now that he was landed, so to speak, he was to be made to exert himself.

It was, indeed, a very pleasant walk, through the scented woods on a summer's afternoon. All the party enjoyed the ramble, excepting Mauleverer. His lordship's manners were unexceptionable; and he kept up an amiable smile, but his tired feeling was growing and growing. Marjorie and Miss Clara were charming, no doubt, and it was very friendly of the Famous Five to insist upon Mauly enjoying the picnic along with them. But his lazy lordship was thinking of the luxurious sofa in his study, of the deck chair under a shady tree on Little Side at Greyfriars, and he suppressed a series of sighs. And the parcel and the basket were growing heavier at every step.

Crash!

"Oh, gad!"

"You frabjous duffer!" roared Johnny Bull. "You've dropped the basket! There's eggs in it."

"Oh, dear! Frightfully sorry, you know," gasped Lord Mauleverer.

"You—you—you burbling cuckoo—"

"Ladies present, Johnny!" said Bob Cherry chuckling. "Keep the rest for the Remove passage."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Johnny Bull picked up the basket. From a corner of it a sticky stream was oozing. Obviously the eggs had been damaged. Johnny Bull did not entrust the basket to his lordship again. Mauly walked on with only the cake under his arm. His tired and lagging footsteps brought him to the rear of the party, and he dropped a little behind, in the narrow footpath through the wood. When the party came in sight of the old priory, deeply embosomed amid the trees and thickets, Bob Cherry glanced round for Mauleverer and uttered an exclamation:

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Where's Mauly?"

"Dropped behind, I suppose!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Go back and give the blessed slacker a lift with your boot."

"Oh, he'll come along," said Harry Wharton. "Let's get the picnic ready. We're going to explore the vaults afterwards, you know—we don't want to waste time."

The juniors entered the ruins, by the shattered old gateway, of which only two mossy stone pillars remained. Masses of fallen masonry, half-hidden by thickets and long grasses and moss, glimmered in the sun. The juniors stopped before a vaulted opening, which gave admittance to the old vaults under the priory, and the basket

was set down and unpacked. A spirit stove was lighted, and a tin kettle set on it, and the few eggs that remained unbroken were sorted out. But Lord Mauleverer did not arrive.

"Mauly's lost himself," said Miss Clara.

"More likely gone to sleep!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Ten to one he's sat down to rest, and nodded off."

"I'll keep a chain on him next time I come to a picnic," growled Bob Cherry.

"And he was carrying the cake!" said Miss Clara plaintively. "It was a lovely cake that Miss Primrose gave us specially for this picnic."

"Oh, he'll turn up," said Harry Wharton cheerily. "He will be along with the cake by the time we're ready for it. Let's begin!"

And the picnickers began, sitting on the old stones, in the shade of the vaulted arch, and there was a cheery buzz of voices in the old ruins. There was tea, and there were eggs—a few of them—and ham sandwiches, and other things—but all the picnickers felt that there was room for that big cake—when it arrived.

But if they could have seen Lord Mauleverer, just then, they would have doubted the probable arrival of the cake.

His lordship had sat down to rest, in the grass at the foot of a tree by the path. He had intended to rest only a few minutes. But his noble head leaned back against the tree-trunk, his eyes closed, and before the few minutes had elapsed, Lord Mauleverer was fast asleep. The parcel containing the cake lay at his feet in the grass; insects buzzed slumberously round his resting head, and his lordship, oblivious of picnic and picnickers, glided happily into the land of dreams.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Giving Bunter the Tip!

"I SAY, Peter—"

"Chuck it!"

"But I say—"

"Silence in court!" rapped out Peter Todd.

Billy Bunter grunted discontentedly.

Matters were not going well with the Owl of the Remove that afternoon. Bunter who had a rare scent for anything in the nature of a spread—had spotted the preparations of the picnickers. Bunter had fully intended to join the picnic party. But for that unhappy accident in the Remove passage, undoubtedly Bunter would have done so.

But Bunter was fat and scant of breath; and when Bunter was winded, time was required for him to recover. He was still sitting on the floor of the Remove passage, gasping and spluttering, when Harry Wharton & Co. left the school gates behind them.

Bunter had followed them—too late. The picnic party had vanished when the Owl of the Remove blinked out of gates in search of them—and in which direction they had gone, was unknown to Bunter. So the fat junior rolled back to the House, to take counsel with Peter Todd. He found Peter in his study—Peter being busy that afternoon upon what he was pleased to call his "legal studies." But Peter, apparently, did not want to be interrupted. His replies to Bunter were short but not sweet.

Bunter elapsed into silence, blinking wrathfully at his study-mate through his big spectacles.

But he was not silent for long. Time was pressing; if Bunter was going to join the picnic party, it was obviously necessary to join it before the tuck was disposed of. It was of no use joining it afterwards. And he had a suspicion that Peter could put him on the track if he liked.

"Look here, Toddy," he exclaimed. "You know where those rotters are gone."

"What rotters?" demanded Peter Todd. "I know there's one rotter in this study, at any rate."

"That's so!" assented Bunter. "I never expected you to admit it, though, Peter."

"What?" roared Toddy. "I mean you, you silly owl."

"Oh, don't be an ass, you know," said Bunter. "Look here, those chaps asked me to their picnic—"

"Gammon!"

"At least, I was going," said Bunter. "You see, I'm bound to turn up, because the Cliff House girls will be there. Marjorie won't enjoy it if I'm not present. She's rather sweet in my direction: I—I say, Peter, what are you going to do with that book?" Peter Todd had lifted one of his hefty legal volumes.

"Chuck it at you, you cheeky owl!"

"Ow!"

Billy Bunter dodged in time. There was a crash as the weighty volume dropped to the floor.

"Look here, Toddy!" roared Bunter. "Don't play the goat. I want to get after those chaps before all the grub's gone. They forgot to tell me where they were going to have the picnic."

Peter Todd chuckled.

"You mean, they remembered not to tell you," he remarked.

"Give a fellow the tip, Peter," urged Bunter. "I shall have to hurry to catch them up. Which way did they go?"

"Towards their destination," answered Peter.

"I know that, fathead! But where's their destination?"

"The way they went," answered Toddy.

"You—you silly ass!" howled Bunter. "Can't you talk sense for once? I want to know where they are!"

"But they don't want you to know," chuckled Peter. "If you're at a loose end for the afternoon, I can tell you what to do."

"What's that?" asked Bunter suspiciously.

"Latin verbs."

"You—you—you piffing duffer!" gasped Bunter.

"You've had a week in the punishment-room, and extra toot for slacking and being a dunce," said Peter. "Now's your chance to see that you don't get some more. Sit down to your Latin grammar, and shut up. That's good advice."

"Catch me, on a half-holiday!" said Bunter derisively. "Look here, Peter, you know where those rotters are, and you might give me a tip."

"Dry up!"

"Have they gone to the old spinney at Friardale, or on to the cliffs, or to the old priory in the wood?" asked Bunter. "I'm pretty certain that it's one of them—but which?"

"As Inky would say, the whichfulness is terrific," grinned Toddy. "No good your trying to think it out. You haven't got the apparatus. Better dry up, and let me get on to work!"

"Oh, chuck that rot!" said Bunter contemptuously. "I don't believe the Head would let you, if he knew. Learning how to make out that black's white, and white's black. Yah!"

"MAGNET" PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 36.—Fisher Tarleton Fish (of the Remove.)



Fisher Tarleton Fish, who hails from "Noo Yark," arrived at Greyfriars full of American pep, business methods, and hustle. Not one of these things has Greyfriars taken kindly to, although the estimable Fishy has spent most of his school life in trying to convince his schoolfellows that these are the essentials of existence. Fishy's one and all-absorbing "hobby" is making money, and many are the schemes he has evolved with this charitable object in view. Alas and alack, the majority of these "business" wheezes have gone west, with dire results to their originator. But Fishy's confidence is as high as ever. A "dud" on the playing fields, a "big" talker rather than a big hitter when he's involved in a quarrel, Fishy must needs take a back seat amongst the more manly of his English Form-fellows.

Peter Todd glared. Peter, as the son of a solicitor, intended to follow some day in the parental footsteps. But Bunter's description of legal practice was not Peter's idea of it at all. Peter was young yet.

"You cheeky ass!" said Peter. "Dry up, or travel! I keep on telling you that you talk too much. Buzz off!"

"Tell me where those rotters are gone, then."

"Rats!"

"Just give me the tip, and I'll clear!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"Then I'll jolly well stay here!" said Bunter wrathfully. "A fellow can stay in his own study if he likes, I suppose? And I'll jolly well talk as much as I like. See?"

"Shut up!"

"Rats!" retorted Bunter independently.

Peter gave him another glare. Whether Peter's legal studies were of any use, may have been a question; but Peter was very serious about them. When he was "studying law," as he described it himself, he did not want to be interrupted—especially by Bunter. Bunter's conversation had no fascination for anyone but William George Bunter himself.

"I'll jolly well keep on talking if you don't give me the tip," said Bunter. "See?"

Peter Todd breathed hard.

"Will you dry up?" he demanded.

"No, I won't!"

"Will you travel?"

"No."

"Not unless I give you the tip?"

"That's it," assented Bunter. "Give me the tip, like a good chap, and I'll clear!"

Peter Todd rose to his feet.

"Mind, you've asked for it," he said.

"If you insist upon it, I'll give you the tip. But it's your own look-out."

"That's all right," said Bunter.

"You give me the tip, and I'll clear. That's all I want."

"Sure you want it?"

"Yes, ass!"

"Here goes, then," said Peter.

"Yarrah! Wharrer you at?" roared Bunter, as Peter Todd suddenly grasped him by his fat shoulders, and slewed him round facing the study doorway.

"Giving you the tip, old bean."

Crash!

Peter Todd's boot landed on the tight trousers of the Owl of the Remove, and Bunter flew through the doorway.

There was a bump and a roar, as he landed in the Remove passage.

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"Whoooooop!"

"Satisfied now?" asked Peter, grinning out at him from Study No. 7.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" roared Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove scrambled up.

"You—you—you beast!" he roared.

"Wharrer you at? You said you'd give me the tip—"

"I meant the tip of my boot!" explained Peter.

"Why, you—you—you rotter! You—you—" spluttered Bunter.

"I asked you if you were sure you wanted it," said Toddy. "Now you've got what you asked for you're not satisfied. There's no satisfying some people. But if that tip isn't enough, wait till I get a cricket-stump, and I'll give you another tip."

"Beast!"

"Just a tick!" said Peter cheerily, and he grabbed a cricket-stump from a corner of the study. "Now, then—Hullo! Gone?"

Bunter was gone.

Tips from Toddy were rather too painful. He had had one tip—and he did not wait for the tip from the cricket-stump.

The fat junior vanished down the Remove staircase, and Peter Todd chuckled, and returned to his legal studies. They were not interrupted again by William George Bunter. Bunter was still in the hopes of tracking down the picnickers; but most certainly and assuredly he did not want any more tips from Peter Todd.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Smithy's Way!

"SMITHY! I say, Smithy!"

Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, had a leg over his bicycle, when Billy Bunter hailed him. Tom Redwing, Smithy's chum, was with him, and about to mount in the road near the school gates.

Bunter rolled hurriedly out of gates. Peter Todd having been drawn blank, as it were, Bunter was seeking information elsewhere. He had already asked several Remove fellows, and they could not, or would not, give him any information. Indeed, Bunter's inquiries after the picnickers provoked a general grin among the Removites. The Owl of the Remove had finally determined to go forth in quest of the elusive picnickers, like a lion seeking what it might devour, so to speak, when he came on Smithy and Redwing with the bicycles.

"Well?" rapped out the Bounder.

"Buck up! We're just off! What is it, Bunter?"

"Hold on a minute! I'm looking for my pals—"

"Nothing in it!" said Vernon-Smith, shaking his head. "They will want too much looking for—if any."

"I mean Wharton and those other rotters!" growled Bunter. "They've dodged me—I mean, they've forgotten that they asked me to go to the picnic. I say, Smithy, do you know where they're gone?"

The Bounder grinned. Bob Cherry had borrowed his electric torch, with a view to exploring the vaults under the priory ruins, so Smithy knew the destination of the picnickers. But he was not disposed to help in planting William George Bunter upon the happy party.

"I know!" he assented.

"Well, you can tell a chap, I suppose?"

"Certainly. I can, but I won't!" said Smithy. "Good-bye, Bunter!"

He put his leg over his machine again.

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"Hold on!" yelled Bunter. "I say, I know you fellows are going to Hawks-cliff, and it's out of bounds. I'll jolly well tell Loder of the Sixth."

"Why, you fat rotter!" exclaimed Tom Redwing indignantly. Vernon-Smith dismounted again, with a glitter in his eyes. The Bounder of Greyfriars was not a fellow whom it was judicious to threaten.

"Oh, you'll tell Loder of the Sixth, will you?" he asked.

"Not if you act like a pal, old fellow," said Bunter. "You see, I'm looking for my friends, and you ought to help me. See? Loder would be jolly glad to know you chaps are going out of bounds; he's got a down on you, Smithy. One good turn deserves another—see?"

"I see," assented the Bounder.

"Well, then, give a chap the tip," said Bunter. "I—I mean—no larks—tell me where I can find those chaps."

"If they wanted you, they'd have asked you, Bunter," said Redwing.

The Owl of the Remove gave him a disdainful blink.

"Don't you butt in, Redwing; I'm not talking to you. Besides, it isn't only those fellows—the Cliff House girls are going to be there—I know Hazel went over to fetch them. They want me, if the others don't. I'm not going to disappoint Marjorie."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Jump on behind me, Bunter," said Vernon-Smith. "You can stand on the foot-rests; I'll give you a lift as far as the old spinney."

"Oh, good! You're a white man, Smithy."

"Jump on!"

"Dash it all, Smithy, you don't want to land Bunter on them, if they've got the Cliff House girls in the party," said Redwing. "You know that Marjorie can't stand that fat bounder at any price."

"Oh, really, Redwing—"

"Bunter's got the whip-hand," said Smithy gravely. "He's going to tell Loder and stop our little run if I don't give in. Isn't that so, Bunter?"

"Yes, it jolly well is," said Bunter.

"You see, there's no help for it, Reddy. Jump on, Bunter."

The two cyclists started, Bunter standing on the foot-rests of Smithy's machine, with his fat hands resting on the Bounder's shoulders.

Bunter was a considerable weight to carry behind his bicycle; but the Bounder was sturdy and strong. The machines glided away at a good pace.

Tom Redwing had a rather puzzled look. He could not understand Smithy yielding to a threat, especially from a fellow like Bunter. But Smithy seemed to have knuckled under at once.

The old spinney, where the Greyfriars juniors sometimes picnicked in the summer, was a good two miles from the school. Bunter had a lift for that distance, and he grinned a fat grin of contentment as he went. At this rate he would arrive on the scene as soon as the picnickers themselves, and there would be no danger of the good things being disposed of before his arrival.

As for his welcome when he arrived, he was not bothering about that. The Famous Five could not very well kick him out in the presence of Marjorie and Clara, and so long as he was not kicked out, what was there to worry about? Bunter was not troubled in the least by thinness of skin.

The Bounder put on his brakes at last.

"Here we are, old fat bean," he said.

"Bunter, you can jump down."

The Owl of the Remove alighted.

"Much obliged, Smithy, old man!" he said. "I'll ask you to my next study

spread. I'm expecting a postal-order and—"

"Good!" said the Bounder. "But what are you obliged for, specially? Lookin' forward to a walk home?"

"Eh! Didn't you say the picnic was in the spinney?" exclaimed Bunter, suddenly alarmed.

"Nothin' of the kind. I said I would give you a lift as far as the spinney," said the Bounder coolly. "I don't intend to tell you where the picnic is, old bean—except that it isn't in the spinney."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Redwing, greatly entertained by the expression on Bunter's fat face.

"Why, you—you beast—" gasped Bunter.

"You've got a two-mile walk back to Greyfriars," said the Bounder cheerfully. "After that you can tell Loder what you like. Good-bye."

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

"Sit down and rest, old fat man," said Vernon-Smith, and he gave the Owl of the Remove a gentle push.

Bunter sat down in the dusty lane.

The two cyclists remounted, and continued on their way towards Hawks-cliff. Bunter sat and blinked after them, in a state of fury, mingled with dismay. Evidently he was nowhere near the picnickers; that lift from the Bounder had taken him in quite the wrong direction.

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter.

He picked himself up, and shook a fat fist after the vanishing cyclists. He had wondered whether the picnickers had selected the spinney, the old priory, or the cliffs for their picnic. He was close to the spinney now, and he knew that they were not there. He had the choice of two directions to take, and either was a long walk. If he chose the right direction there was a chance yet; if he chose the wrong, the case was hopeless.

"Beast!" groaned Bunter.

He thought the matter out. If the rotters were picnicking on the cliffs the search might be a long one—the cliffs were very extensive. If, on the other hand, they were at the old priory, he would find them at once when he arrived there. That consideration decided Bunter; and he started wearily upon a footpath that led in the direction of the old priory.

Bunter was not a good walker, and the way was long. And as he tramped wearily on his way, it was borne in upon his fat mind that, even if he had chosen the right direction it was extremely probable that he would arrive after the picnic was over, and at that awful thought Billy Bunter groaned a deep and dismal groan.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Unfortunate for Bunter!

"MAULY!"

Billy Bunter brightened

up all of a sudden.

He was getting near the old priory, tramping with dragging feet along a shady, leafy footpath, when he sighted Lord Mauleverer of the Remove.

Lord Mauleverer did not sight him.

His lordship's eyes were closed, and he was breathing the regular respiration of slumber. Insects buzzed round his noble head unheeded. Leaning against the tree-trunk, in his soft couch of grass, Mauly slumbered in peaceful contentment, lulled by the buzz of the innumerable insects, and the rustle of leaves in the summer breeze.

Billy Bunter came to a halt, and grinned.

As Lord Mauleverer was a member of the picnic party, evidently Bunter was on the right track. That was a comforting discovery. Apparently his lordship had dropped behind, and had sat down to rest, and had been overtaken by slumber—which was very like his lordship indeed.

Bunter was about to stretch out his fat hand, to shake the schoolboy earl into wakefulness, when he spotted the parcel at Mauly's feet.

It was Bunter's lucky day, after all. He did not need telling that the parcel contained some of the provisions for the picnic, entrusted to Lord Mauleverer for transport. Bunter picked up the parcel, and instead of waking Mauly, he tiptoed away from him on the soft grass, very careful indeed not to awaken him.

He did not go far. He plunged in among the trees on the other side of the footpath, and sat down, concealed by the thick hawthorns and tall ferns that grew among the trees. There he opened the parcel, and his round eyes grew larger and rounder with satisfaction as he blinked at the cake—a large, fragrant, fruity cake, which Miss Penelope Primrose, the headmistress of Cliff House School had so thoughtfully presented to the picnickers, and which most certainly she had never intended for Billy Bunter. But as the poet declares, "Full many a shaft at random sent, finds mark the archer never meant." Thus it was with that beautiful fruity cake. Instead of gracing the picnic in the old priory it disappeared rapidly under the attack of a single picnicker—who was a host in himself in this line.

Bunter's fat face wore an expansive grin, as he tucked into the cake. Undoubtedly this was his lucky day.

The cake was large—quite large. But its size was speedily reduced; it grew smaller by degrees and beautifully less.

Where Bunter put it all would have puzzled an onlooker. His stowage capacity was wonderful, and he was always ready to take the risk of loading beyond the Plimsoll line. His fat jaws worked incessantly, and the big cake grew smaller and smaller, and it had almost vanished, when Bunter suddenly heard a footstep on the path close at hand.

He blinked round in alarm, with his mouth full.

Fortunately, he was well hidden, if that beast Mauly had awakened and was looking for the cake; or if the other fellows had come back for him.

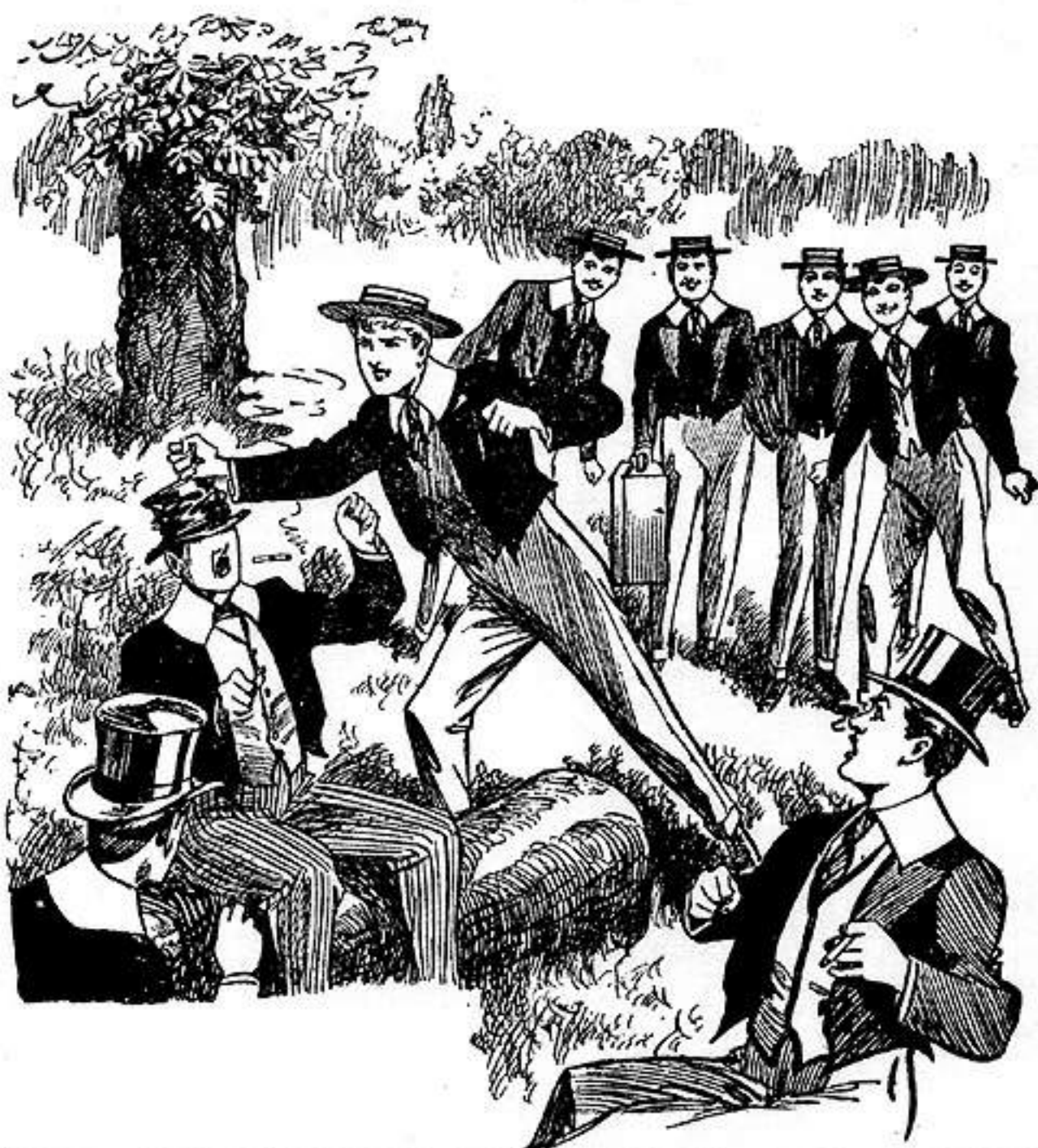
The Owl of the Remove kept well in cover as he blinked through the interstices of the thicket towards the footpath.

It was not Mauly whose footsteps he heard—Mauly was still fast asleep under the tree. And the footsteps did not approach from the direction of the priory, but from the opposite direction. Probably a casual passer-by, Bunter concluded; but he kept carefully out of sight, all the same. He was taking no risks with the cake, even the remnant of it.

"Pon!" he breathed, as he suddenly sighted a rather elegant figure through the bushes.

Bunter almost held his breath.

He did not want to meet Cecil Ponsonby, of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe School. It was only too likely that Pon would have bestowed a cuff or a kick on him in passing, Bunter being a fellow who could be cuffed or kicked with impunity. And the expression on Pon's face, at this moment, was not agreeable. His hat had a crunched look, there was a red swelling on his nose, and a dark mark under one eye. Pon looked as if



"Look here——" said Bob Cherry. "Excuse me, I'd rather not," said Ponsonby politely. "I've been warned against gettin' into conversation with low characters." Having made his remark, Ponsonby turned his head away with lofty indifference. The next moment, however, his lofty indifference vanished as a heavy hand descended on the crown of his shining silk hat. Crunch! "Oh!" roared Ponsonby. (See Chapter 2.)

he had been in the wars. And his expression was extremely malevolent.

Ponsonby came to a sudden halt.

He had spotted Lord Mauleverer asleep under the tree by the path, just as Bunter had done ten minutes before.

He stood and stared down at the Greyfriars junior.

Mauleverer had not handled Pon in the recent row. He had looked on, yawning, with his hands in his pockets, while Pon was handled by Bob Cherry. But he was one of the party, and all Ponsonby's malevolence was roused by the sight of him. Bunter, blinking on through his big spectacles, watched Pon breathlessly. The fellow was cad enough, and ruffian enough, to kick a fellow in Mauly's defenceless position, and Bunter was much exercised in his mind. Even Bunter did not like the idea of looking on idly while Mauly was being taken at such a disadvantage.

Mauleverer's eyes suddenly opened.

Possibly Pon's footsteps had awakened him, or some instinct warned him, even in slumber, that an enemy was at hand. Ponsonby had stepped near him, with clenched fists and gleaming eyes, and that angry face was fairly bending over Mauleverer as he awakened.

"Oh, gad!" ejaculated his startled lordship.

Ponsonby started back, unclenching his fists. Exactly what he had intended cannot be said; but certainly his intentions had been hostile.

"By gad! I've been asleep!" he said,

rubbing his eyes. "What were you goin' to do, you rotter?"

"Nothin'!" snapped Ponsonby.

"Well, keep your distance, and do it," said Mauleverer. He glanced into the grass. "Where's that cake?"

"Eh?"

"Hand it over!"

"What the thump do you mean?" snarled Ponsonby. "Don't talk to me. I bar Greyfriars cads!"

And Ponsonby moved away. But Lord Mauleverer, with an activity very unusual in his lazy lordship, sprang into his path and stopped him.

"That won't do, Ponsonby," said his lordship quietly. "Hand over that cake! If it were mine I'd let you bag it, to save trouble. But, you see, it isn't mine; it was entrusted to me. Sholl out!"

Ponsonby had stopped. He had no choice about that, with Lord Mauleverer blocking his way. He stared at the Greyfriars fellow in angry surprise.

"I don't know anythin' about a cake, you burbling ass," he said. "What should I know about your silly cake? Let me pass!"

"You haven't pinched it?"

"No, you footlin' ass!"

"Then where is it?"

"How should I know—if you ever had a cake? Let me pass!" shouted Ponsonby angrily.

Bunter, in the cover of the thickets, grinned. The situation was developing interest, from Bunter's point of view.

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He even forgot to munch the remnant of the cake as he watched.

"That cake was here," said Lord Mauleverer. "A rather heavy parcel, with a cake in it. I laid it down when I sat under the tree to rest. It's gone!"

"I don't care a rap whether it's gone or not."

"That's not the point, dear man. You see, I care, and that's the point," said Lord Mauleverer placidly. "I don't want any trouble with you, Ponsonby. I'm sure—"

"You'll get it without wantin', if you don't let me pass, you fool!"

"You can call me names, if you like," assented Mauly. "It's not worth the trouble of punchin' your cheeky head for that. But I must have the cake. I can't tell Miss Clara that I've lost her cake. You see that—"

"Go and eat coke!"

"Hand it over, and save trouble," urged his lordship. "It's really too hot to-day for fightin'."

"You silly idiot!" said Ponsonby, in a concentrated voice. "I tell you I know nothin' about your silly cake. You've lost it somewhere, I suppose."

"You can see the place where it was lyin'," said Lord Mauleverer. "It has been picked up. Where is it, Pon?"

Ponsonby eyed him savagely. But for his earlier encounter with Bob Cherry he would probably have attacked Lord Mauleverer at once. But his handling by the energetic Bob had taken a great deal of the vim out of Pon.

"I haven't seen it, on my word," said Ponsonby, forcing himself to answer civilly. "Isn't that good enough?"

"Yaas, if a fellow could believe you," said Mauly. "But you're well known to be a frightful fibber, Ponsonby."

"You silly ass! I dare say somebody has come along the path and pinched it while you were asleep."

"Well, hardly anybody uses this path," said Lord Mauleverer. "You were bendin' over me when I woke up, too. You were up to somethin'."

"Can't you see that I've not got your silly cake?" howled Ponsonby. "Do you think it's stuffed into my trousers' pocket?"

"You've pinched it, anyhow. Just one of your tricks. I dare say one of your pals has got away with it—Gaddy, or Monson—"

"They left me more than an hour ago."

"Or you've chucked it into the bushes to bag later," said Lord Mauleverer. "Is that it?"

"I haven't seen it, you dummy!"

"That's not good enough," Lord Mauleverer pushed back his cuffs. "Now then, you know I object to scrappin'; too much exertion for me. But I'm bound to have that cake. Will you hand it over?"

"You silly idiot—"

Lord Mauleverer sighed.

"I can't go on without the cake and tell Miss Clara that I let a Highcliffe cad pinch it from me. Put up your hands!"

"You—you dummy!"

Ponsonby backed away in alarm.

Lord Mauleverer followed him up.

"I'm goin' to have that cake," he said. "It's a rotten shame to make a fellow exert himself on a warm afternoon. But I'm goin' to thrash you till you hand out that cake. Now then!"

And Lord Mauleverer, screwing up his energy to the sticking-point, advanced upon the dandy of Highcliffe with a very warlike look.

Ponsonby had to put up his hands. He put them up, and met Lord Mauleverer's

attack with savage fury. Mauly was nowhere in Bob Cherry's class as a fighting-man, and Ponsonby had a good chance—at least, as good a chance as his lordship. But Mauly, lazy as he was, had boundless pluck, and in that quality Pon was a little wanting.

For three or four minutes the juniors fought hard, and Mauleverer gasped as Pon's blows came home. But he gave as good as he received, and Ponsonby liked it less and less.

He backed off the path into the thickets, and Lord Mauleverer followed him, panting but determined.

"Hand over the cake, old bean, an' save all this trouble," he urged. "I'm goin' to wallop you till you do, you know."

And he pressed on, harder and harder, Pon backing more and more, till, all of a sudden, the Highcliffe fellow turned and fairly bolted through the thickets.

"Oh, gad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. "You rotten funk, come back! Do you think I'm goin' to race after you on a hot afternoon? Stop!"

Crash!

Bump!

"Yarooooop!" roared Billy Bunter.

Ponsonby, bursting in hot haste through the thickets, had, of course, not the faintest suspicion that a fat junior of Greyfriars was hidden there. He came on Bunter suddenly and unexpectedly, charging him over like a runaway bull.

Bunter went sprawling, and Ponsonby sprawled over him, breathless and amazed. Bunter roared frantically.

"Ow! Yow! Gerroff! Beast! Ow! Help! Yaroooooh!"

"Great gad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. "What the thump—"

"Ow! Wow! Help!" yelled Bunter.

Ponsonby scrambled up dizzily. He scrambled up with a knee on Bunter's chest and a hand resting on Bunter's fat little nose. The yells of Billy Bunter were absolutely unnerving.

Ponsonby gained his feet. Mauleverer was close behind him, and he darted into the thickets again and raced away among the trees. Bunter sat up and bellowed.

"Yow, wow! I'm injured! Yaroooh! I'm killed! Wow! My neck's broken! Whoop! Help! Yaroooooh!"

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Culprit!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! That sounds like Bunter!"

"It does!" grinned Johnny Bull.

The picnic in the old priory was over—excepting for the cake. Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull had left the picnickers and strolled back along the woodland path to look for Lord Mauleverer. A roar not unlike that of the celebrated Bull of Bashan burst upon them all of a sudden, and they recognised the dulcet tones of William George Bunter of the Remove.

"Yaroooooh! Help! I'm killed! Whoooooop! Ow! My leg! Wow! My nose! Yoop! My back! Yaroooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Those sounds of lamentation ought really to have made the two juniors extremely serious and sad. Instead of which, they burst into a laugh, as they ran up the path to see what had happened to Bunter. Guided by the terrific yelling of the Owl of the Remove, they turned from the footpath into the thickets, and came on the scene of woe.

Bunter, sitting in the trampled grass,

clutching his spectacles in one fat hand, and a chunk of cake in the other, was roaring as if for a wager. Lord Mauleverer stood staring down at him.

"Great gad!" his lordship was gasping. "For goodness' sake, Bunter, put the brake on! You're deafenin', old chap!"

"Yaroooh! Beast! You don't care whether a fellow's fatally injured!" howled Bunter. "My back's broken! Ooooooop!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry, as he came up behind Lord Mauleverer, greeted that noble youth with a hefty smack on the shoulder. Then it was Mauly's turn to yell.

"Ow! Oh! What—"

His lordship staggered and spun round.

"Oh! You!" he ejaculated. "You silly ass! You've nearly fractured my shoulder-bone! Ow!"

"What's the row?" asked Bob Cherry cheerily. "Who's been killing Bunter? Why didn't they make a good job of it, and stop his row?"

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

"It's that Highcliffe cad, Ponsonby!" gasped Mauleverer. "He pinched Miss Clara's cake while I was asleep, and I was thrashin' him, you know, to make him cough it up, and he bolted, and he seems to have run over Bunter. Blessed if I know what Bunter was doin' here."

"Ponsonby bagged the cake?" exclaimed Bob.

"Yaas—must have bagged it while I was nappin', you know. He was bendin' over me when I woke, an' the cake was gone. Now he's got clear," added his lordship ruefully.

"He may have got clear, but the cake hasn't," said Johnny Bull, pointing to the large chunk clutched in Bunter's hand. "Looks to me as if it was Bunter pinched the cake."

"Oh gad!" ejaculated his lordship. "Pon said he hadn't; but he's such an awful fibber, you know. Is that the cake, Bunter?"

"Ow! I'm injured—"

"Never mind your injuries now!" said Bob. "Did you pinch the cake from this snoozing fathead?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Did you?" roared Bob.

"Ow! My back's broken!" wailed Bunter. "I'm suffering frightfully! I believe the spinal column of my leg is broken, too. Ow! I shall have to go home on an ambulance—wow!"

"Did you bag that cake?" shouted Johnny Bull.

"My back—"

Bob Cherry chuckled. Bunter evidently wanted to keep to the topic of his injuries, and not to discuss the cake at all.

"You can't get up?" asked Bob.

"Ow! No!"

"Then we'll help you. You take his other ear, Johnny!"

"Ha, ha! Right-ho!"

"Whoop!" roared Bunter, as he was helped to his feet with a grasp on either fat ear. "Yaroooooh! Let go! I'm all right now! Yoop! I—I feel better. Leggo, you beasts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter gained his feet with wonderful celerity considering how injured he was. He jerked his fat ears away and rubbed them. In spite of the fact that his back was broken, he seemed to feel most pain in his ears now. Perhaps his back was not quite broken.

"Now, about the cake—" grinned Bob Cherry.

"I suppose Bunter had it," said Lord Mauleverer. "The fat boulder must

have bagged it before Pon came along. But I didn't see him, and I saw Pon. And what was a fellow to think?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've been punchin' Ponsonby for nothin', you know," said Lord Mauleverer ruefully. "Punchin' him hard, you know—and all for nothin'!"

"Oh, never mind that! The more Pon's punched the better he is!" said Bob. "You needn't worry about Pon."

"Eh? I wasn't," said his lordship innocently. "I was thinkin' of all that exertion for nothin', you know. Frightful waste of energy; and I was tired already. And the cake's gone—Bunter's scooped it! Oh dear!"

"I—I haven't, you know!" gasped Bunter. "I—I never saw your cake, Mauly. This—this cake came by post from Bunter Court this afternoon. That's why I came after you fellows—to whack out my cake with you. See? Only I couldn't find you, and so—I started on it. That's exactly what happened. I—I hope you can take my word."

The juniors gazed at Bunter.

The wrappings of the cake still lay in the grass, irrefragable evidence against the Owl of the Remove—if his remarkable statement had been credible otherwise.

"You—you hope we can take your word?" ejaculated Bob.

"Yes, old chap! You know me well enough for that."

"Too well!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Much too well! You've scoffed Miss Clara's cake, you fat villain. And we'll take you to Clara to be smacked! This way!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Johnny Bull. "Good egg! Come on, Bunter!"

"I—I say, you fellows. I—I've got to get back to Greyfriars now!" exclaimed Bunter, in alarm. "I've got some lines to do for Mr. Quelch!"

"They can wait! Come on!"

"I—I mean I've been asked to tea with the Head!" stuttered Bunter. "Can't keep the Head waiting, you know, when he's asked a fellow to tea!"

"The Head can wait along with the lines!" chuckled Bob.

"I—I must get back, you know. I've promised to give Wingate of the Sixth some bowling at the nets. You can't play fast and loose with the captain of the school, you know. I—I must hurry, or—"

"Wingate can wait with the Head and the lines! Come on! With all those engagements on your hands you ought really to have stayed in," grinned Bob.

"Too late now! I'll take one arm; you take the other, Johnny. And you walk behind him, Mauly, and kick him if he slows down."

"Yaas."

Billy Bunter was led along the footpath towards the old priory. The remnant of the cake, which Bunter had not had time to devour, but which was much too crumbly and sticky to appeal to anyone else, was jammed down the back of his neck. Bunter wriggled and squirmed as he was led away, and he was soon lagging. The prospect of facing Miss Clara as the purloiner of her cake did not attract Bunter at all.

"Now, then, Mauly—play up!" said Bob.

"Whoop!" roared Bunter, as Mauleverer's boot landed.

"Buck up, Bunter."

"Beast!"

Bunter bucked up for twenty yards or so, and then slacked down again.

"Pile in, Mauly!" grinned Bob.

"Look here, I can't keep on kickin'



Lord Mauleverer, panting but determined, followed hard on Ponsonby's track. "Hand over that cake an' save all this trouble!" he cried. "I'm goin' to wallop you until you do!" The Highcliffe fellow made a sudden dive through the thickets. Crash! Bump! "Yaroooh!" There was a wall of anguish as Ponsonby crashed into the fat form of Bunter, who was in hiding behind the thicket. (See Chapter 6.)

Bunter," said Lord Mauleverer plaintively. "It's really too hot for exertin' oneself. Can't you stick a pin in him or somethin'?"

"Yaroooh!"

Bunter bucked up again without waiting for a pin to be produced. He was marched into the old priory, and the picnickers there stared at him in astonishment.

"Where's the cake?" asked Miss Clara.

"Most of it's inside Bunter," said Bob. "The rest is down the back of his neck. He bagged it from Mauly while that silly owl was asleep. We've brought him up for judgment."

"Awf'ly sorry, you know," said Lord Mauleverer. "I seem to have nodded off, somehow, and that fat rotter came along and bagged the cake. I'll give him a jolly good lickin' if you like."

"Look here, you beast—"

"Never mind," said Marjorie mildly, "perhaps Bunter was hungry."

"Rot," said Hazeldene. "He's always hungry. Kick him, somebody." Hazel was the only member of the party who would have dreamed of characterising any remark of Marjorie's as "rot." No doubt he regarded that as a brotherly privilege.

"I thought that perhaps Clara would like to smack him," suggested Bob Cherry.

"I—I say, Clara—"

"Good egg!" said Miss Clara, jumping up.

Bunter jumped away.

"I—I say—keep off!" he yelled. "I'm jolly well not going to be smacked, I can tell you."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come here!" exclaimed Miss Clara.

Bunter backed off further. Whether Miss Clara was in earnest or not, he did not know; but he did not want to put the matter to the test.

"I—I say!" he gasped.

"Catch him for me, and bring him here!" said Miss Clara.

"This way, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry made a playful rush at the fat Owl of the Remove. At the same moment there was a whizzing sound, and Marjorie Hazeldene started up from her seat, clapping her hand to her face, with a cry of pain.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Thrashed!

"MARJORIE!"

"What—"

Bunter was forgotten at once. Marjorie was clasping her cheek, her face pale with pain. Clara and the juniors gathered round her at once, in amazement and alarm.

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"Something struck me!" said Marjorie faintly. "A—a stone, I think."

Bob Cherry's face set in an expression that was almost savage. He knew at once what had happened.

"It was a catapult!" he said.

"Some fool shooting with a catapult!" exclaimed Harry Wharton hotly. "Why, we—we—find him."

Marjorie sank down on her mossy seat again, still clasping her cheek, trying to keep back the tears of pain from her eyes. Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry rushed away in search of the unseen marksman, the rest of the party remaining round Marjorie.

There was a scampering of feet, and a rustling in the bushes that grew among the old ruins. Whoever it was that had used the catapult was in hasty flight from the spot.

"This way!" panted Bob.

The two Greyfriars juniors rushed furiously into the thicket. Then they sighted a fleeing figure, and shouted together:

"Ponsonby!"

The catapult was still in Ponsonby's hand, as he fled. Probably he had not expected so prompt a pursuit. He gave one scared glance over his shoulder as he heard the trampling behind him, and ran as if for his life.

But the Greyfriars fellows were not likely to let him escape.

In less than a minute, Harry Wharton's grasp was on his shoulder, and he was swung round.

"Let me go!" yelled Ponsonby.

"You cowardly rotter—"

Ponsonby struck savagely at the captain of the Remove. Wharton received without heeding a blow full in the face. His grasp tightened on Ponsonby, and the next moment Bob Cherry's grasp was on him, too.

"Bring him back!" said Harry.

"Let me go!" shrieked the Highcliffe fellow.

Unheeding him, the Greyfriars juniors dragged him back into the ruined priory, by his collar, Ponsonby's elegant boots scraping over the stones as he went helplessly.

"Here's the cad!" panted Bob Cherry.

"Ponsonby!" exclaimed Nugent.

Johnny Bull jerked away the catapult, which was still clutched in Ponsonby's hand, and ground it under his heel. Marjorie, with her hand still to the red mark on her fair cheek, looked at the Highcliffe fellow. Ponsonby stood in a ring of juniors, scared by the expressions on their faces.

"Don't touch him!" said Marjorie, in a low voice.

"Won't we?" said Johnny Bull, between his teeth.

"I—I never meant it to touch you, Miss Hazeldene," stammered Ponsonby, white with apprehension. "Believe me, I never dreamed it would hit you. You can't think I did."

"I am sure not," said Marjorie quietly. "Let him go, Harry."

"I—I swear—" panted Ponsonby.

"I believe that much," said Harry Wharton contemptuously. "I suppose even you are not cowardly rotter enough for that. But you meant it for one of us."

"I—I didn't; I—I was shooting at a sparrow!" faltered Ponsonby.

"That's a lie!" said Johnny Bull. "And even if you were catapulting a sparrow, you ought to be scragged for it."

Bob Cherry, with a grim brow, had taken out his pocket-knife, and was cutting a stick in the thicket. Bob, usually good-natured and forgiving to

a fault, was merciless now. Ponsonby had gone over the limit, as he often did; and this time he was to receive a severe lesson.

"I—I wish you would let him go," said Marjorie, with a faltering glance round at the stern faces. "I—I am not much hurt really. The stone only grazed my cheek—I am sure it was not intended for me."

"We can guess whom it was intended for," said Harry. "Bob was standing just beside you, and he would have got it, if he hadn't started towards Bunter just then. It was meant for Bob."

"I—I tell you—" stammered Ponsonby.

"Oh, cut out the lies," said Wharton, "they won't do you any good now, Ponsonby."

The dandy of Highcliffe gritted his teeth.

"Well, it was meant for Cherry," he said savagely, "and I jolly well wish he had got it, too."

"So do I," said Bob quietly. "But Marjorie got it, and you're going to squirm for it, you rotten coward."

"I—I wish—" faltered Marjorie.

"Rubbish!" interrupted Miss Clara. "If I were a boy, I'd jolly well lick him myself."

"Oh, Clara!"

"That's sense," said Hazeldene. "Cheese it, Marjorie— Look here, we're going to explore the vaults, and it's time we started. Come on—and you fellows can look after Ponsonby."

"Good!" said Wharton.

And Hazel, taking his sister's arm, led her into the vaulted opening, and Clara followed, and Lord Mauleverer and Frank Nugent followed her, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. Three fellows were left to deal with Ponsonby—three were more than enough.

Bob had finished cutting a stout switch. Ponsonby eyed him almost wolfishly, as he swished it in the air.

"You're not goin' to touch me with that!" he said between his teeth.

Bob looked at him.

"I'm going to thrash you till you howl," he said.

"You rotter—"

"That's enough! Bend him over!" said Bob.

Ponsonby made a desperate rush to escape. In a moment he was struggling in the grasp of Wharton and Johnny Bull.

His struggles availed him little. The two Greyfriars juniors swept him off his feet and brought him down into the grass, face down. There they held him.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

Bob Cherry laid on the lashes, with a grim, savage face. Ponsonby squirmed under the castigation, and yelled, and howled, and broke into language which certainly would have earned him the "sack" from Highcliffe had his headmaster heard him.

But it was all of no avail. The thick swish lashed, and lashed, and lashed again, till Bob Cherry's sinewy arm was tired.

"That's enough!" said Wharton at last.

Bob tossed aside the switch.

Ponsonby, released by the Removites, rolled over and staggered to his feet. His face was white with rage and pain.

"I—I'll make you pay for this!" he muttered thickly.

"Get out of sight!" said Bob Cherry. "Do you hear, you rotter? Get out of sight, before I handle you again!"

And Ponsonby limped away, muttering savage words as he went.

Bob drew a deep breath as the dandy of Highcliffe disappeared among the trees.

"He hasn't had enough," he muttered.

Wharton smiled faintly.

"I think that will do, Bob. It was a bit thicker than a Head's flogging at Greyfriars. Let's get after the others."

Bob Cherry nodded, and the juniors followed the rest of the party into the vaulted opening. Ponsonby was gone; and they supposed that this time he was gone for good. But the Greyfriars fellows were not finished with Ponsonby yet, as they were destined to discover.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Ponsonby's Blow!

"ALL together!" said Bob Cherry. "Oh, dear!" muttered Lord Mauleverer.

"Buck up!"

The juniors had gathered round the long, wide flagstone that covered the entrance to the vaults below the old Priory.

In the centre of the heavy flag was a rusty iron ring by which the great stone could be raised. But a great deal of strength was required to raise it, and only two fellows could get a grasp on the ring at once, and two schoolboys, howsoever sturdy, could not raise the heavy stone. But that had been foreseen, and a rope had been brought in the picnic basket. Bob knotted the rope to the iron ring, and all hands laid a grasp on the rope.

Then the juniors lined up to pull. Lord Mauleverer suppressed a groan as he lined up with the others. Billy Bunter backed into the shadows, still less inclined to lend a hand than the slacker of the Remove. But he was dragged out again by Johnny Bull, and had to line up with the rest. Even Marjorie and Clara lent a hand.

"A long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull all together!" said Bob cheerily. "Up she comes!"

The big stone rose on its side, and rested there.

A large orifice was revealed, with a dusky flight of stone steps leading down into shadowy depths.

"Looks horrid, doesn't it?" said Bob. "But we've been down there before, and there's nothing more dangerous than a lizard or two. And we've plenty of lights."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Bunter first!" said Bob. "Roll down, Bunter!"

"I don't think much of exploring those silly vaults," said Bunter. "I'll tell you what, you fellows. Let's walk to Friar-dale instead, and have tea at Uncle Clegg's. I'm hungry!"

"You must be, after scoffing that cake," said Miss Clara.

"Oh, really, Clara—"

"The hungerfulness must be terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But if the esteemed Bunter is funky of the dark the excellent and ludicrous Bunter can roll away."

"Well, I don't want to go alone," said Bunter. "That cad, Ponsonby, may be hanging about, and he would pitch into a chap—I mean I want the company of

(Continued on page 17.)

ANSWERS
Every Saturday — PRICE 2s

HARRY WHARTON'S Cricket Supplement

No. 8 (New Series). Vol. 2.

June 26th, 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.



Miracle Cricket!

Recalling some of the most wonderful feats in the history of the game.

IN every phase of cricket strange and wonderful things are happening continually, until it would seem that in no direction is there anything like them for quality. Consequently, it is always dangerous even to mention records which may never be broken, for even as the MAGNET goes to press with this article mentioning some records which are likely to stand for all time, it is possible that one or two of them may even then be in process of being broken. We have recently had a striking illustration of the fact that you never can tell what will happen in cricket. For years and years we had talked of the wonderful batting of W. G. Grace, and had wondered if ever the game would produce a batsman who would get near to equalling his record of 126 centuries in first-class cricket. Well, as you all know, Jack Hobbs passed that total of 126 last season, and is still going strongly. Will there ever be another batsman who will beat Jack Hobbs as a century-maker?

628 RUNS IN ONE INNINGS!

It is never safe to reckon the value, or even the merit, of an innings by the number of runs scored, and many "knocks" can be recalled when the innings has been of wonderful value and of real merit, though less than thirty have been scored. All the same, there is a certain fascination about big scores, and in this respect it is doubtful if there will ever be a boy who will beat the record individual effort of A. E. J. Collins, who, in a junior House match connected with his school, scored no fewer than 628 runs with his own bat in one innings. Some of us spend a lifetime of cricket without getting so many runs in all, I am afraid.

The highest individual score in a first-class cricket match is to the credit of W. H. Ponsford, a present member of the Australian touring team, who scored 429 for Victoria against Tasmania, but as in Australia matches are played to a finish, this total may be beaten sooner or later. It is very doubtful, however, whether the biggest individual total made in first-class cricket in England will ever be surpassed—the 424 of Archie MacLaren for Lancashire against Somerset in 1895. The time allotted to first-class matches in this country does not produce many opportunities for one man getting so many runs as this in a single innings.

RAPID SCORING!

The quick hitter is always a delight to the man round the rails, and most of our standard of quick scoring, so far as first-class cricket is concerned, were set by the one and only G. L. Jessop. Away back in 1911, however, there was a batsman who decided to go even better than Jessop. His name was Alletson, and his county Notts. The match was at the Hove, and Alletson so set about the Sussex bowling that he made 189 runs in ninety minutes, and in the latter part of his innings hit everything with such hurricane force that he made his last 89 runs in a quarter of an hour. Imagine the feelings of a poor bowler named Killick, who was hit for 34 in one over. Such hitting has never been known in first-class cricket.

Boundary Hits! "SCORER"

WHY have Notts had a team to be feared for quite a long time past?
Because they have nearly always had one or two Gunns with the team.

In a recent county match the game was held up while some sparrows were "shooed" off the pitch. I have said some hard things about slow cricket myself, but I give those sparrows best for the most cutting comment.

It is said that when Warren Bardsley was playing at Swansea, against Glamorgan in 1921, he hit a ball so far out of the ground that the inhabitants of the Welsh town have been looking for it ever since.

It is a rule of the M.C.C. that not more than £50 shall be allowed for advertising a Test match. So far as this season is concerned, we take it that more than this amount will be allowed to be spent in telling the people to stay away.

When the Australians were last in this country we tried thirty different players in Test matches, and yet did not succeed in winning a single game. Evidently a case of too many cooks spoiling the team.

The best cricket feat of the season I have heard of up to now was the performance of a player named Williams, who, in a match in Staffordshire, went in first, was not out at the finish, and yet did not score a single run. Can any of my readers supply a true cricket story to beat that one?

Quite a lot of ink has been used in discussing England's chances this season. And most of the ink has been of the blue-black variety.

There is some objection among cricketers who appear at Lord's because the tiles on the new stand roof are red—practically the same colour as the ball, and it is said that dropped catches are often the result. Just recently, Frank Mann, the Middlesex captain, put his objection to these red tiles in most emphatic form when he drove a ball and smashed two of the tiles.

It is told of Newman, of Hampshire, that he makes a habit of getting a wicket with the ball after one which has been hit to the boundary. In a recent match he did this three times, in order, I take it, to teach the batsmen to treat him with greater respect.

H. L. Collins, the Australian captain, wears a green and gold sweater on which is emblazoned the words: "Advance, Australia." Our bowlers try to change that motto into "Go back, Australia."

For many years past the Kent v. Surrey county match has been played at Blackheath. This season, however, the match against Yorkshire is to be played there, in the hope, I take it, that it will prove a Black heath for the northern county.

Queer Ways of Getting Out!

By
STUDENT.

JUST as a cat is supposed to have nine lives, so officially there are nine ways in which a batsman can be "out" at cricket. Perhaps it may interest some of my readers if, by way of a start, I tell them just what these nine official ways are. Here is the list of ways in which a batsman can be out: "Bowled, caught, stumped, leg before wicket, run out, hit wicket, obstructing the field, hitting the ball twice, and handling the ball."

Now, although it is true that the foregoing covers the whole range of ways in which it is possible to dismiss a batsman, there are some curious methods of getting out which may be referred to here—freak ways of being out, if you like—and I shall take all my instances from actual experiences, as distinct from imaginary cases.

I once knew a famous Yorkshire player who always declared that there was a tenth way of getting out, and that was to be umpired out. He was referring, of course, to mistakes made by umpires; but there is one case on record in which a batsman was literally "umpired out."

HARD LINES!

It was in a match between Sussex and Somerset, played at Taunton a few years ago. A player named Heygate, of Sussex, had not fielded during the Somerset innings, and, not being well, he really did not intend to bat. As events shaped themselves, however, when Sussex had nine men out in their last innings, they wanted only one run to win, and Heygate, though then dressed in his ordinary attire, and really not fit to bat, decided that he would do his best to get that one run. As quickly as he could he put some pads over his ordinary attire and went to the wicket. When he arrived there, however, the umpire would not allow him to bat, because he had broken the rule which says that there must not be more than two minutes between the departure of the outgoing batsman and the arrival of the incoming one. So Heygate was "out" before he was "in."

Some of the most curious ways of being out concern what is called the "leg before wicket" rule. Now, this rule is not really

leg before wicket at all, because it says: "If with any part of his person the batsman stops the ball which, in the opinion of the umpire at the bowler's wicket... would have hit the wicket, he is out."

Some little time ago Cadman, the Derbyshire cricketer, ducked his head to avoid being hit, as he thought. The effort was not completely successful, however, for the ball hit Cadman on the back of the neck. "Out!" said the umpire, when appealed to. And out he was, described on the score-sheet as "leg before wicket," but, in reality, neck before wicket!

A NOVEL "HAT TRICK."

In the old days, as you may have noticed from pictures, it was quite usual for batsmen to go to the wicket with top-hats on their heads, and history tells us that more than one batsman had to be given out because the ball knocked off his hat and disturbed the balls. In such cases the decision is "hit wicket." There was a case on rather similar lines a few years back when a batsman named Wright was struck with a ball on the heel with terrific force. The heel flew off the boot, and on to the wicket. He was out "hit wicket," because, according to the interpretation of the rule, a batsman's boot is a part of his person.

One of the most curious catches on record was made in a Saturday afternoon match at Brockwell Park, London. A batsman made a terrific high hit in the direction of the boundary. A player fielding out there ran to make the catch, but as he was almost under the ball he fell over a small boy who happened to be sitting on the grass. As the fielder fell he shot one foot right up into the air, and the ball fell on the spike of his boot and stuck there. The batsman was "out," of course.

As a last story, I may recall the case of a Gloucester man who was out in three different ways off the same ball. He jumped out to make a big hit, but only just touched the ball, which flicked off one bail. The ball was caught by the wicket-keeper, who immediately stumped him out. Thus was he bowled, caught, and stumped off the same delivery!

KILLING OFF THE FAST BOWLERS!

(Continued from page 15.)

A SHORT LIFE.

The lengthening of the county programmes must also have played its part in the killing off of the fast bowlers. Only the strongest men, physically, can stand the strain of a succession of matches which run almost without break from the beginning to the end of the season. Only the other day I met a fellow who is quite a good fast bowler in League cricket, and I asked him why he didn't take up a county engagement. His reply was this:

"No fear! I only play one half-day a week now, or two half-days at most, and I reckon I shall last even as a fast bowler till I am forty-five years old. You fellows who bowl fast every day in the week for several months won't last half my time."

I hope my friend was not a true prophet; but it is obvious that the strain of fast bowling is very great, and, consequently, it requires exceptional physique for a man to go for any real length of time as a successful fast bowler in county cricket.

A WICKET-COVERING HANDICAP.

It can be argued, too, that we have added quite recently to the difficulties of the fast bowler. This covering of the wicket idea is an excellent one from some points of view. But it doesn't help the fast bowler. The actual pitch is covered, but the outfield is wet when the game is resumed. And with a slippery ball the fast bowler is handicapped.

Harry Howell

AT THE NETS!

By "County Cricketer."

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

No. 4.—SCORING STROKES ON THE OFF SIDE.

THIS week I want to talk to you about the way in which scoring strokes on the off-side should be made from particular deliveries. By way of illustration, let me remind you that it is fatal to make up your mind what sort of stroke you will play before you know what sort of delivery is coming your way. But once you have "seen" the ball, and automatically, as it were, made up your mind as to the stroke you will play, then play it with determination and energy.

It is not easy to say exactly where each particular ball should be driven on the off-side, but I think we can lay down one or two general rules. A good-length ball which is straight—say, likely to hit the off-stump if it is not played—should be hit in the direction of mid-off. You do this, of course, because to make this stroke there is no necessity to take the left leg far across; it need only move ever so slightly, and the bat is as near as possible completely straight in making this stroke.

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If the ball is a little wide of the off-stump, then you will try to drive it between mid-off and cover-point; and the ball a little wider still should be driven between cover-point and point.

The most important action, other than that of the bat in making these strokes to the off, concerns the position of the left leg. The farther wide of the wicket the ball is, the farther should the left leg be placed across, in order to retain, as far as possible, the straight-bat effect. The left shoulder, too, should go over with the left leg.

I have seen many young batsmen, even in shaping to make a drive off a well-pitched ball which is wide of the wicket, push the left leg straight down the pitch. If you will try doing this you will at once see the effect: You have to strain the bat over, your body is all off its balance, and the bat, when you play the ball—if you do play it at all—is all out of the straight. By throwing over the left leg to play the forward stroke to the ball on the off-side you reduce the margin of error.

Imagine, for instance, that the ball which you have made up your mind to drive does something "funny"—turns a little more quickly than you expect it to do, or bumps. Unless you have thrown over the left leg and got your shoulder across, you will have little more than the thickness of the bat as a protection. But if you have thrown the left leg over you will have the length of the bat as a protection against the bump, and even if the ball does rise unexpectedly, you will still be able at the last minute to change your mind and play a good defensive stroke.

Here I want to instil into your minds that the farther the good-length ball is pitched off the wicket, the more difficult is it to make a good scoring stroke from it. It is very necessary to say this, according to my experience, for so many young batsmen seem to think that the ball which is wide of the wicket can be treated with contempt—that any sort of position is good enough from which to make a stroke at a ball which would not hit the wicket anyway. This is among the biggest of the fallacies, and I can assure you that an astute bowler will often send down a good-pitched one fairly wide on the off-side in the hope of tempting the batsman to have a wild go at it and give an easy catch. I would not lay it down as a principle that the wide ball should be left alone by the fairly accomplished batsman, but for young players I would most emphatically say that it is wiser for him to leave completely alone those deliveries which he cannot reach conveniently by throwing the left leg across than to take just a wild hit.

According to one article, the clock may be England's biggest obstacle in the Test matches against the Australians. But as we have put the clock back before, can't we do it again?

A well-known cricketer declares that one of the secrets of Yorkshire's success is that they have an additional method of getting rid of opposing batsmen, many of whom are "thought out" by Rhodes, Kilner & Co.



(Continued from page 12.)

my pals. I could lick Ponsonby with one hand, of course! Besides, I've been disappointed about a postal-order, and I happen to be short of money."

"Finished?" asked Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No," roared Bunter. "What's the good of rooting about in those mucky old vaults? Come along to Uncle Clegg's and—"

"Finished or not, it's time you rang off, old fat man. Chuck it!" said Bob. "Now then, follow your leader."

Bob turned on the electric torch he had borrowed from Smithy and started the descent of the steps into the vaults below.

Wharton had another electric torch. There was ample illumination.

"I say, you fellows—" urged Bunter.

But the fellows did not heed Bunter. One by one they followed Bob down the stone steps. Bunter caught Mauleverer by the arm.

"I say, Mauly," he urged. "You come along with me to Uncle Clegg's. You don't want to root into those dashed old vaults. You'd rather give it a miss, wouldn't you?"

"Yaas."

"You could lick Ponsonby, if he's still hanging about?"

"Yaas."

"Come on, then, old chap!"

"Rats!"

Lord Mauleverer was not at all keen on exploring vaults. Indeed, his lazy lordship was seldom keen on anything. But he was still less keen on enjoying Billy Bunter's fascinating company.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry's voice boomed up from below. "Mauly! Where are you, Mauly?"

"Comin'!" sighed his lordship.

"Do you want me to come and help you?"

"Oh, gad! No."

Lord Mauleverer followed on down the steps.

Billy Bunter blinked after him, the last of the party to disappear. He was annoyed. He had missed the picnic, excepting, indeed, for the cake, and a feed at Uncle Clegg's in Friardale seemed to him a vast improvement in the programme. Lord Mauleverer's company would have been a boon and a blessing, Mauly being amply provided with that useful article, cash. Bunter gave an angry snort as Mauly vanished below.

"Look here, I'm not coming!" he bawled down the opening.

"Good!"

"Beast!"

Bunter rolled away, and blinked over the sunlit ruins. The picnic being over, there was nothing more to be extracted from the party, and Bunter had no desire whatever to explore dark, shadowy vaults. But he did not want to be left on his own. He had a lurking doubt that Ponsonby might yet be hanging about in the vicinity, and he knew what Ponsonby would do if he came on a defenceless Removeite in his present mood. Bunter blinked this way and that way to ascertain whether the coast was

clear, and he started as he suddenly spotted the glimmer of a top hat among the green foliage across the ruins.

"That's Pon!" he muttered.

The next minute he saw Ponsonby, peering from the trees, with an evil face and glittering eyes, into the deserted ruins. The Owl of the Remove was too short sighted to see Pon's face clearly at that distance; but, dim as it was, he noted the evil expression on it, and it startled him. He backed hurriedly under the old stone arch.

"I say, you fellows!" he shouted down the steps.

There was no answer, save the echoing of his voice among the hollows. The Greyfriars explorers had moved on from the stairway.

Bunter blinked out into the ruins again uneasily.

Ponsonby was in full sight now.

Evidently he was satisfied that the coast was clear, and that the picnickers had gone down into the vaults. He was stealing quietly and cautiously towards the opening where Bunter stood, under the vaulted archway, almost the only part of the ancient priory that had been spared by the hand of time. Bunter promptly backed again. Ponsonby, obviously, was not gone, and did not intend to go yet. Bunter wondered what he wanted—unless it was to wreck the picnic-basket and the utensils that the party had left where they had picnicked.

On one point Bunter was quite certain—he did not want to meet Ponsonby. There was nothing for it but to follow the explorers, and Bunter hurried down the stone stairway to the vaults.

He was in deep darkness at the bottom of the steps. But in the distance, along the line of dim vaults, he could see the lights carried by the explorers. He stumbled after them.

"I say, you fellows!" he shouted, awakening innumerable echoes in the dusky old depths.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" boomed back the voice of Bob Cherry.

"Wait for me!" yelled Bunter.

"Buck up, then!"

Billy Bunter hurried on and rejoined the explorers in the tenth vault. There was certainly nothing to be feared in the vaults, unless it was damp and bad smells; but the shadowy darkness unnerved the fat junior, and he panted on in a great hurry till he reached the party.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Don't!" said Johnny Bull.

"Eh? Don't what, you ass?"

"Don't say! Don't say anything, old fat man! You talk too much."

"Look here, Bull—"

"Dry up, Bunter," said Hazeldene. "Somewhere about here is the passage that leads to Greyfriars—or, rather, used to lead there. It was stopped up some time ago, but you can follow it for a good distance. There was a skeleton found there once."

"Oh!" said Marjorie.

"We might find another—"

"Groogh!" said Miss Clara.

"These old vaults are jolly historical, you know," said Bob Cherry. "A lot of monks hid here once, in the reign of King What's-his-name—I forget which king it was—the man who dished the monasteries—"

"Make it Henry the Eighth," suggested Nugent.

"That's the old scout," agreed Bob.

"The monks are supposed to have buried their treasure round about here, and lots of people have looked for it, and found only lizards and toads and things."

"I say, you fellows—"

"There are a lot of passages leading in a lot of directions," said Nugent. "Jolly easy to get lost in them. Keep together."

"I say, you fellows," bawled Bunter, "do listen to a chap. That cad Ponsonby is in the old priory. I saw him coming, and—"

"And scuttled after us—what?" chuckled Bob Cherry. "So it's to Pon that we owe the pleasure of your company. I'll punch his head for it when I see him again."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What the thump does he want hanging about?" said Harry Wharton. "I suppose even Pon wouldn't be ass enough to pinch our picnic-basket?"

"If he's hanging about, it's to play some dirty trick," said Johnny Bull. "I don't see, though—"

Johnny broke off suddenly.

A sudden, heavy sound boomed and echoed through the dim spaces of the old vaults. It echoed and re-echoed, with a noise like rumbling thunder, and died away at last into silence. The explorers looked at one another with startled faces.

"What—what was that?" muttered Hazel.

Wharton set his lips.

"It sounded like—like—" He broke off.

"The stone!" muttered Bob.

There was a howl from Bunter. He understood—as the rest of the party did—then, what Ponsonby had been hanging about the ruins for.

"I say, you fellows, he's shut down the stone! We can't get out! Oh dear! The stone can't be lifted from underneath! Ow! We can't get out again!" howled Bunter.

"Shut up!" snapped Bob Cherry.

"Ow! We're all dead and buried!" roared Bunter. "You beasts, to bring a fellow here to be buried alive! I say, you fellows, you'll have to get out again somehow. Yaroooooh!"

Bunter roared still louder as Bob grasped him by the collar and knocked his head against a stone pillar.

"Now shut up!" said Bob savagely.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

Bob looked at the two girls. Both of them had grown pale. They did not need Bunter's terrified wail to tell them of the danger in which they stood. If the stone was closed—

"Let's get back and see," said Harry Wharton quietly. "I—I hardly think even Ponsonby would be such a rotter. He knows there are girls in the party and—"

"Let's see, anyway!" muttered Nugent.

The explorers hurriedly retraced their steps to the stone stairway. There was no glimmer of light as they looked upward. Wharton clambered hurriedly up the stairs. The opening was shut now. The heavy flagstone had dropped into its old position. Wharton felt over the cold, hard surface of the stone with his hand. The stone was immovable, as if it had not been moved for centuries. Well the captain of the Remove knew that it could not be lifted from below.

"The villain!" muttered Wharton.

There was no doubt of what had happened. The heavy stone, standing on its side, could not have shifted of itself. Indeed, Ponsonby must have exerted all his strength, to tip it over and make it fall into its old place. On the top step there was room for only two fellows to stand, and half a dozen could not have lifted the heavy stone on their shoulders. Ponsonby, above, could not have undone what he had done, if reflection had brought repentance. He was powerless.

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to lift again the great stone he had toppled over.

Wharton descended the steps again in silence.

In the glimmer of the two electric torches every face was grave and serious. Billy Bunter was whimpering. Hazel was shivering, and Miss Clara looked scared. Marjorie was quiet and firm.

"The stone's closed!" said Harry.

"Ponsonby, of course!" said Bob Cherry.

"Of course!"

"The rotten rascal!"

"We're shut in," said Harry, with a deep breath. "Pon couldn't raise the stone again if he tried. But—"

"Ow!" groaned Bunter.

"But he's bound to let it be known that we're here," said Harry. "He wouldn't dare to leave us shut up here—"

"Wouldn't he?" said Hazel. "You mean, he wouldn't dare to let it be known he'd played such a vile trick! He doesn't know that Bunter saw him sneaking back. He will keep it jolly dark!"

Wharton compressed his lips. He did not wish to say so for Marjorie and Clara to hear, but he could not help feeling that Hazel was right, and that there was little to be hoped for from Ponsonby.

"Somebody will come," said Bob. "I borrowed Smithy's torch, and Smithy knows we're exploring the vaults. If we don't turn up for roll-call, the Bouncer will know where we are, and he'll tell Quelchey."

"Thank goodness for that!" said Nugent.

"But we can't stick here till roll-call," said Harry. "It's hours from now, and—and the light won't last."

Bob Cherry clenched his hands. He would have given a great deal, at that moment, to be within hitting distance of the dandy of Highcliffe. It was Lord Mauleverer who broke the silence that followed.

"Let's try shiftin' the stone," he said.

"Impossible!" said Harry.

"Let's try, all the same."

"We'll try, but there's nothing in it," said the captain of the Remove. "You come up with me, Bob."

"Let me help!" said Mauleverer.

Harry Wharton smiled faintly.

"Bob's rather more hefty than you, old chap. There's only room for two to get at it."

Wharton and Bob ascended the dark staircase, and the party below could hear their panting breath as they exerted their strength on the weighty stone.

They came back at last, panting with their efforts, the perspiration thick upon their brows.

"Nothing doing!" said Bob.

And there was a grim silence, broken only by the scared mumbling of Billy Bunter. And as the Greyfriars party stood in silence and doubt, in the gloomy depths of the old vaults, Cecil Ponsonby, of Highcliffe, with trembling hands and a white, guilty face, was stealing out of the old Priory ruins—unrepentant, and yet terrified of what he had done, hurrying home to Highcliffe, with his guilty secret locked in his own breast.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Through the Darkness!

HARRY WHARTON spoke at last. He had been thinking the matter out quietly and coolly. His electric torch had gone out; but the torch Bob had borrowed from Vernon-Smith was still

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shining steadily. The juniors had intended to spend only half an hour or so in exploring the vaults, for which space the light would have been ample. But they had already been more than half an hour in the gloomy place, and it was evident that before long they would be left in darkness.

But for the presence of the girls the juniors would not have been dismayed. The Bouncer and Peter Todd knew where they were, as well as several other fellows, and if they did not return to Greyfriars search was certain to be made. Indeed, it was certain that even Ponsonby, dastard as he was, would never venture to leave them there, and would be forced to speak out, if he found that they were not rescued.

It was unpleasant enough, but the Famous Five could have stood it. But it was a different matter with Marjorie and Clara. Bunter, too, was in a state of whimpering terror, and Hazel was obviously scared. Lord Mauleverer, somewhat to the surprise of the Famous Five, was quite cool and collected. He had not shown the slightest sign of alarm or uneasiness.

"There's no real danger," said Harry quietly. "Nothing to get alarmed about; but I'm awfully sorry you girls should get landed like this!"

"It isn't worse for us than for you," said Marjorie, trying to smile. "Only—only—"

"We shall all starve to death here!" wailed Bunter.

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Sha'n't!" howled Bunter. "You know jolly well there was a man once lost in these vaults, and he wasn't found for days, and he was starving, and had to be taken to the hospital, and—"

"Cheese it, you fat ass!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"You rotters want me to starve to death!" howled Bunter. "That's why you brought me here, you beasts. You got me into this, Wharton, and you've jolly well got to get me out again."

"We oughtn't to have come, that's a fact!" muttered Hazel. "It was your idea, Wharton, and a jolly rotten one, if you ask me!"

"Hazel," said Marjorie softly.

Wharton gave Hazeldene a look.

"No good thinking about that now, Hazel," he said quietly. "We're here, and the question is, how to get out."

"We can't get out!" snapped Hazel.

"We've got to wait till we're got out, and it may be hours and hours—perhaps not till to-morrow. We may all have been poisoned by this foul air by then."

"Ow!" wailed Bunter.

"What's the good of meeting troubles half-way?" exclaimed Bob Cherry impatiently. "Your sister isn't so scared as you are, Hazel."

"My sister may like being landed in this by a set of silly duffers," growled Hazel; "I jolly well don't, and I tell you so plainly." And Hazel swung sulkily away.

Bob Cherry opened his lips, and closed them again. He could not tell Hazel what he thought of him, in Marjorie's presence. There was a distressed flush in Marjorie's face.

"I've been thinking," went on Wharton, taking no heed of Hazel. "You know the old passage that leads from the priory to the Greyfriars vaults—"

"It was boarded up long ago," grunted Hazel. "Fellows used to get into the vaults, though they were out of bounds, and the Head had the passage blocked. There's no outlet that way, and you know it."

"I know," said Harry, very quietly. "But we can make an outlet by hacking

through the woodwork. It will take time and trouble, but we can do it. If we hack one plank out, it will be enough, and we can get through to Greyfriars."

Bob Cherry brightened up.

"Good egg!" he exclaimed. "We can do that! We've got our pocket-knives—"

"A lot of good on thick boards!" grunted Hazel.

"We can get a board loose, and then slam a heavy stone at it," said Bob. "It's a jolly good wheeze!"

"What-ho!" said Johnny Bull.

"The wheezefulness is terrific!" exclaimed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Let us proceedfully set about it—the stitch in time saves ninepence," as the English proverb says."

"Does it?" ejaculated Miss Clara, and the juniors grinned.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh's English proverb seemed to have rather a cheering effect on the party.

"Come on," said Frank Nugent.

"Yaas, it's a good idea," said Lord Mauleverer, "and the sooner the better. That torch won't last much longer."

"I say, you fellows, I can't walk all that way underground!" howled Billy Bunter. "Look here, you ought to get that stone open somehow. I tell you I can't tramp a mile in this rotten, suffocating air."

"Stay here, then, on your own!" snapped Johnny Bull.

"Beast!"

"It's the best thing to be done," said Marjorie. "Let us try, at any rate. It would be terrible to be shut up here in the darkness till perhaps midnight—perhaps even till to-morrow. Let us go at once."

And that being settled, Bob Cherry led the way with Smithy's electric torch, and the rest followed him.

They tramped rather dismally along the succession of gloomy, damp vaults that stretched under the whole extent of the ancient priory. From the last vault opened the subterranean passage that led towards Greyfriars.

Harry Wharton & Co. had explored that old passage before, but it was new to Lord Mauleverer and the Cliff House girls.

An arched opening of stone gave access to it, with traces of where, in old days, an oaken door had been; but the old door had long vanished.

It was at the Greyfriars end that the passage had been boarded up by order of Dr. Locke, to keep adventurous fellows from penetrating into the subterranean depths from the school. A fellow who ventured into the old passages, with a light that failed, would have been in very serious danger.

The party entered the passage, Bob Cherry in the lead with the torch.

The light of Smithy's electric torch was dimming now.

Strange lights and shadows flickered and glimmered on the reeking old stone walls on either side.

"Keep together," said Harry Wharton, speaking in a low voice, under the influence of the eerie surroundings. "There are two or three passages branching off from this, and goodness knows where they lead; they've never been explored, that I know of. If the light goes, feel your way along the wall, and keep in touch."

"Might have shoved a new battery into that torch, coming down into a place like this!" snapped Hazel.

"I suppose we couldn't guess that Ponsonby would be hanging about to shut us in!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Oh rats!"

Marjorie gave her brother an appealing look; but Hazel's nerves were

shaken, and he slouched on savagely and sulkily. Billy Bunter kept close to Bob Cherry, and his eyes were fixed on the flickering torch, through his big spectacles, growing rounder with apprehension as the light dimmed more and more.

It was little more than a glimmer at last, and there was still a good distance to the school. That ancient passage, excavated in old days as a means of communication, in time of danger, between the Priory and the monastery of the Grey Friars, wound on at almost endless length, far under woods and fields.

The old stone walls reeked with damp; lizards and toads scuttled out of the way of the tramping feet.

"I say, you fellows, the light's going out!" wailed Bunter.

"Shut up!"

"Ow! We shall be left in the dark!"

"Keep along the wall," said Harry, as the light, with a last glimmer, suddenly flickered into blackness. "It's not far now—not more than a couple of hundred yards, I believe. Touch the wall as you go along."

"Yaas, old scout."

"I—I say, the wall's wet and slimy!" yelped Bunter. "I—I say, my—my fingers touched something—"

"Shut up!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Groogh! I—I trod on something and—"

"I'll jolly well tread on you if you don't dry up, Bunter!" said Johnny Bull in concentrated tones. "Get on, you fat funk!"

"Beast!"

Bunter rolled on, feeling his way along the wall, slimy as it was. He dared not leave it, lest he should wander from the path. On one side of the passage another passage branched off, as he knew, and from that another and another, a maze of subterranean tunnels—to which the old monks of Grey Friars had held the clue, lost long since.

In deep darkness, breathing heavily in the confined air, the hapless party felt their way along.

"It's not far now," said Bob Cherry.

"Only a few more minutes," said Nugent, by way of encouraging the Cliff House girls.

"All serene!" came back the voice of Miss Clara. "I'm not funky of the dark, like Bunter and Hazel!"

"Oh, really, Clara—"

Hazel gave an angry grunt.

"We've got some matches, some of us," said Bob. "Strike one every now and then, but don't waste them; we shall want them later."

"That's a good idea," said Harry, feeling in his pockets.

Bump!

"Ow!" howled Bob Cherry.

"What—"

"We've got to the end—ow! I've just bumped my nose on wood. Wow!"

There was a chuckle in the darkness.

Harry Wharton struck a match, and the light glimmered dimly out. It disclosed Bob Cherry standing close to a wooden partition that closed up the passage from side to side—rubbing his nose. The juniors had reached the end of the passage; beyond lay the vaults under the school buildings, where it would be easy to make themselves heard and to obtain release—once they were through the wooden wall.

The wall was of stout planks nailed to joists—fortunately, nailed on the farther side. It was a question of loosening or beating off one of the boards—not an easy task, but far from an impossible one.

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MIND YOU READ THE OPENING CHAPTERS!

The match went out, and Wharton struck another.

"Well, here we are!" he said. "There are plenty of loose stones in that old wall, and we can easily prise one out and use it to bung at those planks." He held up the flickering match. "All here, what?"

His voice changed the next moment.

"Marjorie! You're here, Marjorie?"

No answer.

"Marjorie was following me!" exclaimed Clara. "Marjorie! Marjorie! Where are you, Marjorie?"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Hazel.

"My sister! Marjorie!"

"Marjorie!" shouted Bob, in alarm.

But there was no reply.

Wharton's heart sank.

"Marjorie must have left the passage," he said. "She must have turned the corner some way back. But why?"

"Good heavens!"

"Marjorie!" shouted Bob.

But only the booming echo of his voice answered him. Marjorie Hazeldene was out of hearing.

Wharton had only one more match. He struck it, and there was a pale, flickering glimmer over the startled faces of the party. And now it was seen that another was absent.

"Mauly!"

"Mauleverer, too!"

Wharton clenched his teeth.

"I—I think I know how it happened. They must have been feeling along the other side of the passage, where the branch passage turns off, and they turned the corner without knowing it."

"And—and where are they now?" muttered Nugent huskily.

"Goodness knows!"

"My sister!" groaned Hazel. "Lost in this awful place—and only that fool Mauleverer with her—"

"Thank goodness Mauly's with her, at least," said Harry. "All of you shout together. They may be within hearing, after all."

The whole party raised their voices in a shout. The echoing in the subterranean hollows was deafening. But no answer came back, save the booming echoes.

"We've got to find her—I mean them!" said Bob Cherry, between his teeth.

"Without a light—" muttered Hazel. "We shall all get lost, without finding them. Let's get out of this and get help."

The selfish fellow was thinking chiefly of himself, perhaps; but the counsel was good. With only a few matches in the party, it was obviously hopeless to begin a search in the maze of black passages far beneath the surface of the earth.

"Hazel's right," said Wharton, his face white. "We've got to get help. Get through this rotten wood as fast as we can, and come back with lanterns. We can't help them by losing ourselves."

It was evidently the only thing to be done. Once the main passage was left, there was no guide; every step might have taken them, in the darkness, farther from those they sought, instead of nearer to them. The juniors groped in their pockets for matches. Only a dozen could be found in all. They were struck one after another, to enable the Removites to pick out a stone to use as a hammer. Luckily, a large stone

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was found loosened in the ancient wall, and it was prised out.

"Stand clear!" said Bob.

With the heavy stone in both hands, Bob Cherry crashed at the nailed boards that stopped up the way.

Crash, crash, crash!

The board was stout and well nailed, but it was not intended to resist such an attack as that. Blow after blow fell upon the same spot, till the perspiration streamed down Bob's face. He gave in at length, and passed the stone to Johnny Bull, who took his turn at crashing it on the centre of the plank; and then Wharton took a turn. With a rending crash the plank gave at last, and there was an opening.

Then with their hands the juniors dragged the loosened plank away, and there was room to squeeze through.

"We know our way from here," said Bob Cherry. "It's only a matter of groping along the vaults to the stair that leads up to the school. You fellows get on; I'll wait here—"

"And I," said Harry. "Marjorie and Mauly may get along in time and find us here. You other chaps get through, and come back here with lanterns."

"I'll stay, too," muttered Hazel in a quivering voice. "I'm not going to leave my sister in this awful place."

"No need for more than one to go, if you come to that," said Johnny Bull. "I'll hang on here."

"I say, you fellows, I'll go!" gasped Bunter.

"Shove through, fatty!"

"Ow! Wow! Wow!"

"What's the matter, you fat dummy?"

"Ow! I can't get through! You'll have to smash down another plank!" howled Bunter.

"Get aside!" said Harry. The circumference of the Owl of the Remove was against him, and willy-nilly he had to stay. "Two had better go—you, Franky, and Johnny. Don't lose time."

"Right-ho!"

And Frank Nugent and Johnny Bull squeezed through the opening in the planks, and, with the aid of the last two or three matches, picked their way along the vaults under Greyfriars School to the old stone staircase that gave access to the school buildings above.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Lost in the Depths!

MARJORIE HAZELDENE stopped suddenly, with a sudden feeling of terror. In the dense darkness she had been feeling her way along the clammy stone wall, never doubting that she was following the same route as the others. Behind her she could hear the last of the party groping his way also—she did not know which of the juniors it was. Suddenly it came into her mind that she could not hear those in advance, and she halted and called:

"Olara!"

There was no answer from in advance. But a cheery voice came to her ears from behind.

"All serene, Miss Hazeldene! Keep your pecker up, you know!"

"Is that Mauleverer?"

"Yaas."

"I—I can't hear them," faltered Marjorie. "We seem to have lost them. Yet I have been feeling along the wall all the way."

"Same here," answered Mauleverer. "It's jolly odd—what? I'll jolly well shout to them—see?"

And Lord Mauleverer lifted up his voice and roared.

"Hallo! Call to us, you chaps! Hallo!"

Deafening echoes rang back from the subterranean hollows, but no answer. Marjorie, with a wildly-beating heart, listened, but heard only the ringing echoes.

"Great gad!" murmured Mauleverer. "They've missed the way, you know!"

"Or we have," whispered Marjorie.

"Oh, gad!"

"We—we are lost!" muttered Marjorie. "Good heavens!"

The girl's courage almost failed her at that fearful thought.

It was fortunate that it was not Bunter who was her companion in misfortune at that moment.

"Oh, don't worry, dear boy—I mean dear girl," said Lord Mauleverer cheerily. "We'll jolly soon find them again. After all, they can't be very far away."

"I—I believe there are very many of these passages; they wind for a great distance in many directions," faltered Marjorie. "If we have left the main passage—"

"But have we?" said Lord Mauleverer, still in the same cheery tone, though if Marjorie could have seen his face she would have seen that it was pale. "Let's find out that. Got a match?"

"No."

"Same here!" said his lordship ruefully. "Fathead, you know, not to have a box of matches about me. I'm beginning to be sorry that I never took up cigarettes. What? Ha, ha!"

Mauly's laugh sounded so cheery and hearty that Marjorie laughed, too, in spite of her growing terror.

"Never mind," went on Mauleverer, "there's more ways of killin' a cat than chokin' it with cream, you know. The passage we were followin' was at least a dozen feet wide. I noticed that while we had a light. That's what comes of bein' a rather observant chap, you know. The branch passages are narrower, I heard one of the fellows say. Now, give me your paw—I mean your hand—and we'll stretch across and see how wide this giddy passage is."

Mauly took the girl's hand and Marjorie stretched out her arm, keeping the other hand on the wall. Mauleverer

stretched out his free hand on the opposite side. It came in contact with the unseen stone wall.

His lordship whistled softly.

"By gad! We're off the giddy track," he said. "This passage isn't six feet wide. Well, all we've got to do is to follow it back and turn on to the main line—what? Easy as fallin' off a form."

"Yes," whispered Marjorie.

There was dread in her heart, but Lord Mauleverer's tone of easy confidence had a reassuring effect. She was far from guessing that Mauly did not feel anything like the confidence he imparted to her. Mauly's heart was like lead with apprehension—not for himself, but for his weaker companion. Lazy as his lordship was, slacker as he undoubtedly was, there was nothing like fear in Herbert Mauleverer's composition, and in his anxiety for Marjorie it did not even occur to him to give a thought to himself. And his laziness, his slacking, had dropped from him now like a cloak. Marjorie was in danger, and he knew it, and only he was there to save her; and the slacker of the Remove had become keen, alert, resolute—a new Mauleverer, who would have surprised the Greyfriars fellows who knew him.

"Keep in touch," said Mauly, as he groped back along the passage. "No good losin' one another—what?"

"Oh, no!" breathed Marjorie. "For goodness' sake, no!"

"All serene! We'll soon be on the main line—up line for Greyfriars—what?" chuckled his lordship.

He groped on, Marjorie following him closely. How far they had wandered from the main passage they could not tell; but the dread was in Mauleverer's heart that they had turned more than one corner. He had never explored those subterranean recesses, but he had heard from the other fellows of the maze of old stone passages there, branching off sometimes at right angles, sometimes, in a curve. In the dense darkness it had been easy to miss the route unknowingly, but it was not easy to find the way back.

"Here's a corner!" said his lordship suddenly. "Now, we were followin' the right side of the main passage, gropin' along, so we must have turned to the right—what? Now we're back—"

Lord Mauleverer broke off.

He realised that he was not back in the main passage.

"Wait a bit!" he muttered. "Don't move, will you, Miss Marjorie? You mustn't get out of the sound of my voice in this giddy darkness."

Lord Mauleverer groped about in the gloom; the new passage into which he had turned was less than three feet wide. Obviously, it was not the main passage, and he moved back to Marjorie. Close as he was, he might have missed her in the thick blackness, but he heard her voice.

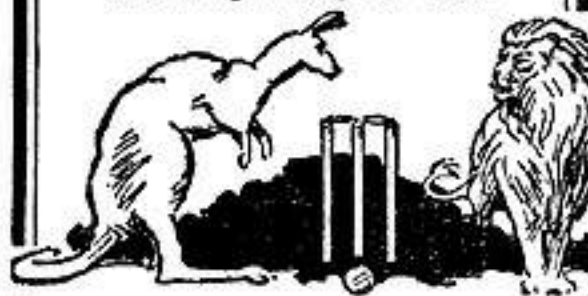
"Which way now?"

Lord Mauleverer breathed hard and deep. The tortuous windings of the maze of passages had deceived him, and he was utterly at a loss. But one thought was in his mind—to keep up the courage of his companion. To keep her courage up and see her through was the one thing needful.

"I fancy we've come a bit too far, Marjorie," said Mauleverer cautiously. "Rather overshot the mark, I think. Fault on the right side—what? The fellows will chip me no end when we come up with them. They think me rather an ass, you know—and I suppose I am. Bob Cherry would have landed

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you safe and sound before this—and it may take me half an hour."

"It's not your fault," said Marjorie. "Let us try again."

Something in her tone betrayed that she read Mauly's thoughts, rather than heeded his words, and had little hope that half an hour would be the term of their wandering.

"I suppose you're gettin' tired?" said Mauly gently.

"Yes; a little."

"Better take hold of my arm. We mustn't risk gettin' separated."

"Yes; let us try again."

Marjorie took Mauly's arm and they moved back in the darkness, Mauleverer groping along the wall. Suddenly he stopped as a booming sound echoed from the dim distance.

"What is that?" exclaimed Marjorie.

"The fellows shoutin'," said Mauleverer.

Marjorie gave a cry of relief.

"Then they are not far away."

"Can't be, can they, or we shouldn't hear their yellin'," said Lord Mauleverer cheerily. "Can you spot exactly the way it comes?"

Marjorie listened intently, as did his lordship. But it was impossible to detect the direction from which the distant shouting echoed. The hollow passages were filled with echoing sound, only the faintness of the echoing showing that the party were a good distance away.

"If we go right it will get louder as we go on," said Lord Mauleverer. "Move on—what?"

They moved on again, and the sound seemed to grow louder, encouraging them. Then it grew fainter. They tried back, but the echoing was still faint, and presently it died away altogether. It had been no guide to them; the echoes rang back from all directions. But the silence that followed was disheartening. Whether the distant party had ceased to shout or whether the passage they were now in was beyond the radius of the sound, Mauleverer could not tell.

"Longer job than I thought," said Mauleverer, speaking with determined cheerfulness as he felt Marjorie leaning more and more heavily on his arm and realised that the girl was worn with fatigue. "But don't worry, we shall come out all right."

"I—I hope so!" murmured Marjorie.

"Safe as houses," said Mauly. "You see, the fellows will have got out by this time, and they'll come back with lights, and search the whole place for us, what? Just a question of time."

Marjorie did not reply. Fatigue, and the heavy air of the subterranean passages, was making her dazed and dizzy. She stumbled several times, and Mauleverer's grasp tightened on her arm. Fear was growing in his heart—fear for Marjorie. He tramped on, helping her now, though fatigue was making his own feet heavy and slow. And the hopelessness of it was a weight on his heart—for he knew that it was as likely as not that they were tramping wearily in the wrong direction—further, perhaps, from those they sought. But it was futile to stop—and the schoolboy earl tramped on, hoping against hope.

Marjorie stopped at last.

"I—I can't go further," she whispered. "I can't."

"Oh, gad!" murmured Mauleverer.

Marjorie leaned heavily against the wall.

"If you leave me, you might find the others——" she said faintly.

"No jolly fear."

Lord Mauleverer stood and clenched



"I say, you fellows," bawled Bunter, "that cad Ponsonby is in the old priory. I saw him——" "What the thump for?" asked Wharton. "If he's hanging about, it's to play some dirty trick," said Johnny Bull. "I don't see, though——" He broke off suddenly as a heavy sound boomed and echoed through the dim spaces of the old vaults. The rest of the explorers looked at one another with startled faces. Had the flagstone been moved into place? (See Chapter 9.)

his hands. He felt baffled and helpless, and almost in despair. Without his companion, he could have kept on, tired as he was, always with a hope of emerging into safety. But, of course, that was not to be thought of. He listened hard, but there was no sound in the gloomy hollows.

Marjorie, half-fainting, leaned on the wall, exhausted. She had given up hope now.

"By gad, you know, we mustn't give in," said Lord Mauleverer. "Never say die, what? If you can't keep on, Miss Marjorie, I shall have to carry you."

The girl did not speak.

"The fact is, I—I rather think we're gettin' on the scent now," went on Mauleverer. "We've gone a long way round, I'm afraid—but I rather think we're gettin' back to the main line, Miss Marjorie."

But he knew that Marjorie knew that they were hopelessly lost—and that she knew that he knew it. But to remain there—to give up hope while life and strength remained, was not Mauly's idea at all. So long as he could place one foot before another, he would tramp on, seeking safety for his fainting companion.

"You must let me carry you, Marjorie!" he said gently.

She did not speak, and he understood that she was losing consciousness. He lifted her in his arms, and went forward. He was aching with fatigue, and the enveloping darkness, the mephitic atmosphere, made his own brain swim, and it was only by continual stern effort that he kept his head steady. In a sort of dreary dream, he tramped on in the darkness, with the girl's helpless weight dragging him down, but determined not to yield.

If he once yielded—if he once sank down under that overpowering weakness—all was lost and he knew it. He knew that consciousness, once gone, would not return, in that heavy and suffocating air—that even if they awakened, they would be past struggling again for escape. Search would be made—but search might go on for days in those winding depths, without discovering them. Somehow—somehow—he had to keep on—he had to carry his helpless burden to safety—somehow! He was staggering as he tramped on, dazed and dizzy; but an iron determination kept him going.

And presently, through his dizziness, he realised dimly that the air was less heavy and mephitic—he breathed more freely. In his dazed state, it was not easy to think clearly; but it came into

his mind at last that he was in a wider passage—and he felt a throb of hope, at the thought that possibly he was in the main passage again, on the way to escape and safety.

"Marjorie!" he muttered.

There was no reply; the girl had long been unconscious. Mauleverer exerted his remaining strength, and tramped on. From the darkness came a sudden flash of light. A shout rang and echoed.

Mauleverer tried to shout—but his throat was dry and husky, and to his own surprise, only a faint groan came from him. He staggered on. Lights danced before his dizzy eyes—sound echoed round him—as in a dream, he saw lights and indistinct faces; and then, suddenly, darkness engulfed him, and he sank down—down—down—

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

At Last!

"MR. QUELCH!" Peter Todd, of the Remove, looked into the Remove master's study at Greyfriars, with a startled face. Mr. Quelch glanced up impatiently from Latin prose papers.

"What is it, Todd?"

"I thought I'd better tell you, sir," said Peter. "Somebody's in the school vaults—knocking on the door, sir."

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch, in astonishment.

"As you have the key, sir," said Peter. "Lots of people have heard it, sir—it's been going on some time, so I came—"

"Quite so, Todd!"

Mr. Quelch rose, and took a heavy iron key from a drawer, and followed the junior from the study. With an extremely annoyed expression, the Remove master whisked away to the old corridor that led to the door of the vaults. A dozen fellows were collected there, listening to the knocking on the thick oak door.

Knock! knock! knock!

"Somebody's there, sir," said Temple of the Fourth. "They've been knocking for a quarter of an hour or more."

Mr. Quelch slipped the key into the lock, and turned it. The heavy oaken door swung open.

"Nugent! Bull!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, in angry surprise, as two juniors were revealed in the old arched doorway.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Frank Nugent.

"What does this mean, Nugent! You know that the school vaults are out of bounds!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch sternly. "And how did you enter the vaults—this door being locked?"

"We came from the old priory, sir, by the passage," said Johnny Bull.

"What? The passage is boarded up!"

"We broke open one of the planks, sir—"

"Upon my word!" exclaimed the Remove master.

"Somebody shut the stone on us at the old priory, sir," said Nugent. "It was the only way out. And—and the other fellows are there, sir—and Marjorie Hazeldene and Mauleverer are lost—"

"Good heavens!"

Mr. Quelch realised that it was a time for action, not for words. Inquiry could come afterwards. He asked a few brief questions, and within five minutes, he was descending into the vaults, accompanied by Wingate and

Gwynne of the Sixth, carrying lanterns.

The Remove master and the two prefects traversed the vaults, and reached the opening of the subterranean passage, where the gap yawned in the wooden wall. Harry Wharton & Co. were waiting there, in the darkness.

"Thank goodness you've come, sir!" exclaimed Harry. "Will you pass a lamp through—Marjorie Hazeldene is lost—"

"My sister's lost, sir!" said Hazel huskily.

"I say, you fellows—"

"You juniors will go to the school at once," said Mr. Quelch sternly. "Pull away another plank, Wingate, if you can, and make room."

Wingate and Gwynne dragged another plank loose, widening the opening. Mr. Quelch passed through, followed by the two prefects. Billy Bunter hardly waited for them to pass, before he pressed through the opening, and scuttled away to safety. The other fellows stopped.

"Let us help in the search, sir," said Wharton. "We know some of these passages—"

"You may come, Wharton and Hazeldene—the others will go to the school," said Mr. Quelch. "Go at once!"

And the juniors reluctantly went.

The search-party moved on down the passage, holding up the lights, and calling. Mr. Quelch's face was very grim. A hurried search was to be made—but he knew that a large search-party might be required; and that perhaps days would be spent in exploring every winding turn of the maze of passages. Even their rescue might come too late. But there was a chance, at least, that the lost ones were within sound of shouting voices and the gleam of the lights. That chance was to be tried.

"Mauly, Mauly!"

"Marjorie!"

"Mauleverer!"

The subterranean depths rang with echoes. But there came no answering cry.

Where was Mauleverer? Where was Marjorie? Lost—buried from sight and sound in those black depths.

But suddenly there was a shout from Harry Wharton.

"Quick!"

He raced on ahead of the lights. A figure appeared in the dimness—a figure that staggered and reeled as it moved, and bore an insensible form.

"Mauly!" panted Wharton.

Evidently Lord Mauleverer had found his way back to the main passage at last. Wharton rushed towards him, and the others came speeding up, and the lights flashed on Mauleverer's dazed face, and the white, still face of Marjorie Hazeldene.

Mr. Quelch lifted the insensible girl from the arms of Mauleverer. Wharton clapped his hand on Mauly's shoulder.

"Mauly, old man," he said huskily.

But Mauleverer did not answer, and Wharton was only in time to grasp him as he sank down. Mauleverer was at the limit of his endurance, and it was an insensible junior that the captain of the Remove supported in his strong arms.

"Give him to me!" said Wingate.

The captain of Greyfriars lifted Mauleverer as if he had been an infant. Unconscious of their surroundings, Marjorie and Mauleverer were carried along the passage, carried into the Greyfriars vaults, and up the staircase into the

school, where a buzzing, excited crowd of Greyfriars fellows greeted the sight of them.

Lord Mauleverer came to himself in his bed in the Remove dormitory. Harry Wharton was sitting by the bed.

His lordship blinked at the captain of the Remove.

"Hallo! What's happened?" he inquired drowsily. "I'm jolly well not comin' to that picnic—too much jolly exertion, you know—"

"Mauly, old man."

"Oh, gad!" Lord Mauleverer collected his wits, and remembered.

"Great gad! Is Marjorie safe?"

"Safe as houses, old chap."

"Oh, good!"

"You saved her, Mauly," said Harry.

"Thank goodness Bob made you come to the picnic, Mauly! If you hadn't been there—" Wharton's voice quivered. "Mauly, old man, you're a giddy hero. We'll never call you a slacker again. How do you feel, old chap?"

"Tired!" said his lordship.

Wharton smiled. There was no doubt that Mauly was tired—genuinely tired for once.

"Marjorie's all right—what?" he asked.

"Right as rain! The Head has sent Marjorie and Clara home in his car," said Wharton. "There's been no end of jaw, and the Head's going to Highcliffe about it."

"Poor old Pon!" said Mauleverer. "I suppose he didn't intend to do so much mischief; but it was a rotten, dirty trick."

Wharton's brow darkened.

"Ponsonby will jolly well have to pay for it," he said. "We shouldn't have mentioned him, but Bunter blurted it out. We'd rather have handled him ourselves. Now the Head's taken it up, and that will be a bit more serious for him. Hallo, here's the doctor!"

"Oh, gad, I don't want to see a doctor!"

Wharton smiled, and left Lord Mauleverer with the doctor. He went down to the Rag, which was crowded with Remove fellows, in a buzz of excitement over the affair. The remarks that were made about Ponsonby might have made even that hardened young rascal blush; could he have heard them. The general opinion was that Ponsonby would "go through it" severely when the Head laid his complaint at Highcliffe.

"Rot!" was Peter Todd's opinion. "Pon will wriggle out of it somehow."

Harry Wharton nodded, and set his lips. It seemed to him only too probable that the dandy of Highcliffe would somehow contrive to "wriggle" out of the consequences of his dastardly action.

"If he does—" said Harry.

"If he does, we'll jolly well take the matter in hand," said Bob Cherry grimly. "Ponsonby isn't getting off this time."

And on that point there was unanimous agreement among the Famous Five of Greyfriars.

THE END.

(Cecil Ponsonby had acted in a way it was impossible to forgive, and Harry Wharton & Co. unanimously agreed that the Highcliffe knut should be brought to his senses. You will read how thoroughly they carry out their intentions in next week's magnificent yarn, entitled: "The Punishment of Ponsonby!" Frank Richards has put some extra "meat" into this great story, so no "Magnetite" should miss reading it!)

A RACE FOR LIFE! More under water than above it, the disabled vessel carrying Jack Drake and his companions heads for land; and her chances of reaching it in safety are about a hundred to one against!



(Introduction on page 24.)

"Breakers Ahead!"

MAC'S report from the engine-room was:

"Nae good at all attemptin' aught with the engines. A job for the shops. She'll no steam again till she's had a month in the Tyne—"

But it was a far cry to the Tyne from north of sixty-five, with the autumn equinox approaching, and the ice crowding south and farther south round Jan Mayen, till the big floes would crash and splinter on the rocks of Brek Katel, on the northern coast of Iceland.

And, as Proctor said again and again, the Stormcock would keep them company—unless a miracle happened.

The miracle did happen, too, in the shape of a gale of wind from the north-west after they had been rolling and lunging sullenly for three days.

Proctor said that, by all the laws of winds and seasons, the winds should have been easterly, or, at best, north-east. And here was a howling gale coming down from the north-west—a perishing blast that struck through them like a whetted knife, the deadly, frozen breath from northern Greenland and the Pole.

But the unfortunate ship's company of the Stormcock did not cower and grumble about the deadly chill of it. They donned the warmest clothing they could muster and got busy rerigging tarpaulins for sails to replace those the first white squall had whipped from the gaffs and booms like tissue paper.

The trawler banged and shivered and reeled in the big sea that quickly rose. The blue skies clouded over with leaden-coloured flying scud, and the first blizzard of the season swept down on them.

"It'll blow itself out before long," gasped Proctor, as he put his hand to the rigging with the rest. "It'll circle round to dead northerly about the Arctic Circle, then get more casting in it till it's blowing straight on to Greenland. It'll still be fairly warm autumn weather for them on Brek Katel. 'Tis up to us

to push this old wallowin' tub through it as far east an' south as we can before the gale fails us. Ready wi' the fore stays! there? Then run it up sharp, and sheet home before it slats itself to ribbons like the last one."

The desperate labours of the whole company of the disabled trawler resulted in quite a commendable job in the way of tarpaulin sails. And, pointing south-east, the heavy, steel-built vessel roared on.

"There be no ice can catch us while we be travellin' at this rate," chuckled Proctor. "But, by hokey, I do wish those curs had left us navigatin' instruments! I don't know where we be, nor where we be steerin' to—"

"Only thing is to keep as far east as possible," said Jack.

"Ay, ay! That's the ticket," said Proctor. "I sha'n't grumble if we get in the track o' a whaler cuttin' it rather fine in makin' south from the west'ard o' Spitzbergen. She'll be a poor sort o' a ship if she don't give us a pluck when this bully wind fails."

On flew the trawler, thundering in the now heavy seas. Mac was supervising below. There was not much for him to do, but he had to keep a head of steam up for the steering. And Proctor also said that there's no knowing when they'd want to have power for the anchor winch.

The Stormcock was a brute to steer, with her big screw dragging astern and the snashing, following sea crashing up constantly under her counter, often breaking aboard and sluicing over her decks in a way that, in other circumstances, would have made Proctor head round into the wind and heave her to under her rough canvas.

But she was flying to safety. And, as Proctor chuckled as he stood in the wheelhouse with Jack, he'd let her fly for as long as she would.

"We'll helm down to head into the wind when she broaches to," said Proctor, rubbing his hands together. "An' when she does that it's good-bye

to all, an' a watery grave for the Stormcock an' all aboard -o' her." But the stout little vessel did not broach to. Her head canvas and the very impetus of her rush before the wind, the very recklessness of the driving she was getting, were her salvation. More under water than above, she scudded on, and the terrible ice danger astern was growing more and more distant as the hours sped.

As darkness fell Jack heard Proctor snarling at the man at the wheel.

"What's frightenin' ye?" flashed the skipper to the man.

"'Fraid o' havin' her pooped, skip," said the man, throwing another frightened glance astern at the ragged, roaring top of a great comber that came hurtling for the Stormcock's stern.

"Wither your eyes!" roared Proctor. "You ain't dancin' a lady round a ball-room, but runnin' for your life, man! I'll have her four more points to the east'ard; so put over that there wheel, or I'll knock ye silly an' take the spokes meself!"

And Jack knew from that that Skipper Proctor feared something in the way of danger which he had not so far confided to anyone.

Despite the frightful exposure entailed in the job—and the danger, too, for the Stormcock was being swept clear of all sorts of things on the decks—Proctor ordered a double look-out in the crow's-nest. Even the quarter gallows were twisted and bent by the smash of the seas. And the wheelhouse itself was in imminent danger of being wrenched from its rivets.

"As ye value your lives," was Proctor's orders to the men, as they prepared to mount to the crow's-nest, "ye'll glue your eyes to the south-east! An' the first hint o' breakers brings one o' ye down sharp to warn me!"

So that was the trouble, Jack told himself. A deadly lee shore. That was why, at terrific risk to the safety of the trawler, Proctor insisted on more

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easting in the course. Even with this north-westerly gale, he feared that they would not clear Iceland. The northern coast of Iceland! Brek Katel! The land of disappointment and disaster!

Jack turned in, however, and tried to sleep. But the ten hours of darkness dragged by like a lifetime, as the Stormcock roared and foamed and trembled under her desperate running for safety.

As dawn broke, wild and ragged in the east, Jack turned out and joined the haggard skipper in the wheelhouse.

Proctor grinned weakly.

"The old box has stood through the night," he said. "Here's the blessed light o' day comin', an' no sign o' land yet—"

"Let Harper take the bridge, skipper," said Jack. "You turn in and get a bit of sleep."

Skipper Proctor laughed.

"Sleep! Me! Wi' Brek Katel somewhere under our bows! Boy, ye be mad! I couldn't sleep if you was to press a chloroform pad over my mouth, or give me a clout wi' a capstan-bar! Why—"

The door of the wheelhouse burst open, letting in a flood of sea that came raging forward from over the stern, and one of the look-outs, blue with the cold and his teeth chattering.

"Land ahead, skip!" jibbered the man. "An' breakers a full mile an' a half this side o' it!"

"Down wi' the helm, you at the wheel!"

"Down! 'Tis madness, Blazes! We'll broach to!"

"Down wi' the helm a bit, I say!" roared Proctor. "Broach to or no broach to, I'll haul my wind, or sink her as she lays over from it!"

Proctor sprang to the wheel and forced it over a few spokes, the hand trying to pull it back amidships again.

Jack gripped the man's shoulder and pulled him away from the wheel.

"Leave it to Proctor, you madman!" he said.

"Mad! It's him that's mad!" roared the man.

"He was steering by the wind before you were born," said Jack. "Stand back!"

The Stormcock lurched round into the wind, and a mighty sea poured over her decks abeam. The wheelhouse creaked, then a splintering and tearing sound was heard. Instinctively, all threw themselves flat on the decks, clawing to hold themselves from sliding down to leeward.

What happened next no one rightly knew. But the wheelhouse was gone; and Proctor, the wind buffeting his grey whiskers, had his weight on the wheel, one eye cocked out to windward as he nursed the trawler in the troughs of the enormous seas.

Jack clawed up beside the skipper. He saw the decks of the Stormcock swept clean. But the masts stood, and Tom Harper was leading a few hands in hauling in the booms to meet the wind at its new plane.

Proctor looked to leeward. And Jack saw the wildness of his eyes. He looked over, too. There was land—black and bold.

Proctor saw the glance, and he put his lips close to Jack's ear.

"Langanaes!" he bellowed. "East-ernmost point o' Iceland. Another two mile to the east'ard an' we'd be safe. But she won't weather it! We're done!"

Proctor now ground the wheel hard up, and the Stormcock began to scud like mad again for the bold headland.

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Then over, over the splendid old skipper pressed the spokes till the rags of sails boomed over to the other side and the seas poured on to the starboard side of the vessel.

"Loggish—wi' water!" bellowed Proctor into Jack's ear. "No power to pump dry!"

The trawler was now heading westward, and the great headland of Langanaes drew over the port quarter. Proctor, it seemed, was deliberately sailing to disaster.

Breakers were weathered within a quarter of a mile to leeward.

"Don't want to hit them things yet!" roared the skipper to Jack.

"What's the idea, skipper?" bawled Jack, as he clung to the wheel with Proctor.

"Can't save her! Make her climb the cliffs if I can. Anyway, crash her in so's we get a dog's chance to save ourselves. Look out, sir! Hellum's up again! Now we run for it, an' stand by for the crash!"

Ghastly, great spouting rocks flew by on either hand as the trawler, wind dead aft once more, scudded on. The land loomed up ahead like a towering mass. There was one shock, sickening scrape, then a heavier lurch forward.

Drake clung to the wheel for hold. Proctor gripped for dear life also. And the Stormcock then struck heavily, reeled over to port, and the roaring combers breaking over her, flung spray hissing to the mastheads!

Safe Ashore!

THERE was no possible chance for the ship's company of the Stormcock to see whether it would be possible for them to get ashore from the grinding and heaving wreck.

.....

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 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 STANILAU 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, in which the Phantom is captured, Locke and Drake visit Ingholdt Farm, the haunt of Stromsund, where they gain the confidence of FREDERIC LANGSOM, Stromsund's steward. The trio are unable to reach the Stormcock, however, for they are taken prisoners and marooned on Brek Katel, where they meet PETER DEANE, an old friend of Carr, who has been shipwrecked on the island for years.

Stromsund returns to gloat over his success, but, thanks to the timely arrival of Carr and Proctor, he is beaten off. Locke and a party of surveyors set off to explore the land, leaving Proctor and Drake and a handful of men to guard the Stormcock. Against such great odds Drake & Co. are easily overpowered. The trawler is then crippled and, with its crew aboard, left helpless in the ice-field at the mercy of wind and tide.

Rigging up sails made of tarpaulins sewn together, the stranded crew await their fate.

(Now read on.)

The spray flew round masthead high, hissing up into the howling wind at each fresh bursting comber, and twirling about like a mountain mist as the thundering billows receded.

Jack Drake was still clinging to the wheel with Skipper Proctor. No word could be spoken. All they could do was gasp and hang on and wince at each fresh crashing bump as the trawler settled on the rocks.

"Gosh, I hope she doesn't slide back into the deep water!" Jack thought, as he lowered his head to miss another sluice of icy water. And exactly the same thought was passing through Proctor's mind at the same instant.

The Stormcock was getting well jammed into place. For one thing, she was settling down. Also, the tide was dropping. After twenty-five minutes of torture to those unfortunate seamen the big trawler remained steady, and the great seas burst and hissed lower down, the spray falling more lightly on the clinging forms about her slanting deck.

Proctor made the first move. He crawled forward on to the bridge, dropped down to the well-deck from where the bridge-rail had been, then, using the raffle of gear that had come down from the foremast as a life-line, he hauled himself forward.

Jack Drake followed the skipper's wake. They came to the break of the anchor deck, and, inside one of the forepeak doors, they were able to talk.

"What do you think, Skipper?" shouted Jack.

"She's fast—come to her last anchor-age, for sure!" replied Proctor, bawling to be heard above the wind. "Chief thing to discover now is if we be within reachin' distance o' the shore proper. She's too fast to slide back now."

"Let's climb up on the anchor-deck. Then we'll see!" cried Jack.

And Proctor nodded.

The pair crawled past the anchor winch, and then out to the twisted rails in the eyes of the vessel. A fresh sheet of hissing spray passed over, and the salty drizzle from it settled. Then the skipper and Jack could see.

"Great snakes, you couldn't have done it better if you'd steamed in in a summer calm!" yelled Jack, his heart bounding with renewed hope.

"I thought I wouldn't be wrong by steerin' where the water was blackest!" bawled back Proctor, with a ring in his voice. "By hokey, if we'd struck some o' them outer rocks, we'd be done."

Other men were now clawing forward on to the anchor deck.

"We'll be able to salve camping-gear while the tide's out!" yelled Jack.

"Ay, ay! Boys, get busy! I'll have a sort o' breeches buoy arrangement rigged up to them rocks ashore, an' we'll ferry across blankets, food, pots an' pans, oil, fuel, tarpaulins, spars, an' what not. Trembath, you're a good seaman, get a breeches buoy rigged up to the rocks, an' Master Drake an' me will overhaul what stores we can get at, an' sort out them things we'll need most—"

The men worked with a will. They cheered lustily as they realised how easy it would be for them to save themselves. And volunteers to plunge into the short gap of water between the wreck and the shore with the first rope to haul across the cable were many.

Trembath, the third-hand on Proctor's North Sea trawler, took the line himself, and by the time Drake and Proctor came forward they found the cable stretched taut, and a big canvas bag slung under it, with its pulleys and hauling-lines all complete.



Ferrers Locke swung round and held up the great lump of yellow rock. "What is it, sir?" demanded one of the party eagerly. "Gold?" "Not quite," said the Baker Street detective, with a smile. "But it can be turned into gold." (See page 27.)

"That's the ticket, lads!" cried Proctor. "We got a heap o' stuff ye can get busy wi', outside the state-room door. Mac an' his greasers are busy handin' more up from below—the floatin' stuff. An' h'ave ashore any spars on the deck, an' our old tarpaulin sails. They've sarved us well, so far, an' will sarve us again. Every scrap o' rope ye can lay your hands on, too."

The Stormcock was flooded below, but the receding tide was enabling the water level in the stores to drop considerably.

"By hokey," said Proctor, as he and Drake descended a few steps towards where the food was stored in the lazaret, "the way the water's drainin' out as the tide drops looks as if she's got no bottom left."

"I don't suppose she has, skipper," chattered Jack, the cold having struck right to the marrow of his bones, it seemed. "I expect we left her bottom thirty yards astern when we first struck. Well, we'll be able to get some of the cases up in another hour's time, for sure."

Throughout the low tide the company worked like Trojans. And the great pile of stores jammed up in a niche of rock high above high-water mark, grew and grew till it seemed quite a mountain of soaked and sodden gear, great soggy sacks of meal and flour, dripping rope and canvas coverings, boxes of iced fish, big spars sticking up out of the mass like beacons, tackle-blocks, bales

of blankets, lamps, even the galley stove, and so on.

When the tide came in again, and the poor wrecked Stormcock abandoned, felt the water sluicing about her deck and spouting up through the companion-ways like fountains, quite a good part of the salvaged gear was being hoisted by tackles to the scrubby land on top of the cliffs.

Just before dark, with the yelling of the wind in their ears and the sullen booming of the seas below, Proctor called the roll. Every man was present, though there were some casualties in the way of broken arms, sprained wrists, and scores of cuts and bruises.

They explored in the twilight, and found a niche between two great black rocks, over which they spread and lashed down two tarpaulins. The galley stove was lit, and the trawler-boy got busy preparing food, glad of the opportunity to be before the blazing fire to get some warmth into his bones.

That men in such a predicament should be in high good humour does not seem natural. But, when what might have been is considered, the Stormcock's crew had every reason to be jubilant. They were on hard, firm, steady land. They had plenty of water and food, and once they could dry off the blankets and their own clothes they would be able to keep warm and cosy. The salvaging of the galley stove, too, was a great idea. It came from Jack himself, and it meant that they could have

cooked food, just the same as if they were still safely at anchor in the Stormcock.

They made a big standing camp, there on Langanæs, and then Jack Drake and Skipper Proctor headed a small expedition to travel to Brek Katel, find Locke and his party, and lead them all back to Langanæs, where, doubtless, they would eventually be seen from the sea and picked up.

It was a week's hard march. They passed Peter Deane's caves on the fourth day. And two days later, about at the end of their strength, they were delighted to see a camp ahead.

A Sporting Offer!

MEN came running out to meet them—Tom Harper and one or two others—and great was the handshaking and back-slapping that went on. It was a stroke of luck meeting Harper's camp on the route they had chosen. Their original idea had been to find the fjord, and then work back to Harper's depot camp from there.

"Mr. Locke an' his party are scourin' the coast for signs o' ye all," said Harper. "So that fiend Stromsund crippled your engines, Mac? An' Hoskin' and Langley in it, too—eh? By thunder, they be all about, then. But come along, bullies, we'll feed ye

up an' ye shall rest now. Mr. Locke'll be back to-morrow mornin'."

The shipwrecked party slept like tops that night. And in the morning when Jack woke he found Ferrers Locke outside the tent, listening to Harper's account of the adventures of the Stormcock, as told to him by Proctor and Jack.

Ferrers Locke's face lit up as he saw Jack. He strode towards him, and the famous private detective and his young assistant had the warmest hand-grip they had ever experienced.

"You won't forget Brek Katel in a hurry," laughed Locke.

"No," replied Jack, with a grin; "and we've got to get clear of it before we can attempt any of the forgetting stunts."

"That's true," said Locke. "And to tell you the truth, Drake, it's a mighty problem. An overland route seems the only way. And yet those big, snow-capped jokuls seem an insurmountable obstacle—"

"For Heaven's sake, don't say we'll be trapped here for the winter, sir!" cried Jack.

"I'll say nothing, then," smiled Locke, "till we know. In point of fact, we are marooned here. But we have plenty of stores now you have salvaged so much from the Stormcock at Langanaes; so a winter here won't be so serious as it otherwise might be."

"Crumbs, what a place to spend the winter in!" gasped Jack. "As per guide book—Brek Katel, warm, mild climate, tropical plants in the gardens, sheltered situation. Who wants to go to Torquay?"

The men who heard guffawed loudly at Jack's joke. But breakfast turned all thoughts to matters of the inner man, and a hearty meal was partaken of by all.

When the meal was over Ferrers Locke rose to speak.

"My lads," he said, "you have all had a very hard time. And the way you have endured the cruel blows we have experienced makes me feel that you are ready for anything that may be in store in the future."

"Now, it's asking too much of you fellows to expect you to keep on keeping on without knowing how much use your suffering is likely to be. Well, for my part, I'd settle down to future work, even if it does mean a winter in Brek Katel, with a much better heart if I knew that all our trials were not to be in vain. It is out of the question to slink off now, even if we had the means, without first sifting this business of the great value of these desolate wastes, as proved by the fact that Stromsund has wanted to buy them from Mr. Carr here."

"As you all know, Stromsund is the man who was responsible for all your troubles on the Dogger Bank. I refer to the phantom trawler which wrecked your fishing gear, and on many occasions endangered your lives. I have proved, so far, that Stromsund was doing this to endeavour to force Mr. Carr to sell this land on which we are camping. Mr. Carr, having been successful in business, turned down all advances by Stromsund's agent to buy this land for twenty thousand pounds. So, with his phantom trawler, Stromsund endeavoured to cause Mr. Carr such money losses that he would be compelled to sell Brek Katel to help him through. Mr. Carr has been firm, and has refused to sell."

A muttering growl from the rough men squatting about denoted their interest in Locke's words, their sympathy with Carr, and, above all, their anger at Stromsund's villainy.

"Mr. Carr has empowered me to put this offer before you, men. You would all be quite within your rights now to concentrate on the business of saving your hides. You are shipwrecked seamen, so your articles are automatically cancelled by reason of the shipwreck. But I venture to think that, as sportsmen, you will want to complete the good work you have done before settling down to the business of getting away home—"

"Hear, hear, sir!"

"We ain't going to throw up the sponge now, sir!"

"Not 'arf! We bain't goin' to give best to that murderin' Stromsund, an' that scallawag Scar Hoskin', sir!"

Ferrers Locke smiled.

"I knew that was what you would say," he said. "Well, Mr. Carr has generously offered this. Beside your usual pay, he offers you a gratuity of fifty pounds a man—"

Cheers interrupted the detective. But Locke held up his hand.

"Or," continued Locke, "no pay, no gratuity, but a tenth share between you of the value of Brek Katel as proved after my case is finished. Now, which shall it be?"

The men were dazed for a few minutes. And they put their heads together and talked it over, many a hot argument breaking out. Tom Harper was engaged in a very hot dispute with Trembath, his old shipmate. At last the men were quietened down, and Tom Harper spoke.

"For me, sir," he said, "the share is the thing, me bein' partial to a bit o' a gamble, specially so seein' as Mr. Carr, it seems, be gamblin' his whole fortune on this here Brek Katel. But there's them don't see it like me. Would ye tell me, sir, for the benefit o' some o' the others, how that tenth share would be paid?"

"Certainly!" said Locke. "The land will be revalued. Say it proves to be worth a hundred thousand pounds—well, ten thousand pounds would be divided between you fellows. That would be a matter of nearly four hundred pounds each. This sum would be paid over within twelve months, or it could be left as an investment, so that its owner could draw the dividends—"

"By hokey, I plump for the share now, Harper!"

"Me, too!"

"An' me—"

"Hold on a bit!" said Locke. "The land may not be worth ten thousand—in fact, it may prove to be practically worthless. What then?"

The men looked at each other, and there were some discussions.

"Stromsund offered twenty thou," said one man.

"Ay, but mebbe he was mistaken—"

Tom Harper broke in angrily.

"Look 'e here, shipmates!" he cried. "Here's a gentleman gamblin' his fortune makin' ye a sportin' offer. An' ye're mouthin' away about it like so many jackals. Let him who won't meet a sportin' offer wi' a sportin' acceptance stand out, an' I'll punch 'is bloomin' 'ead!"

"All right, mate, it's a big thing. I'm for chancin' it, anyway."

"Me, too!"

"You bet we will."

"Passed unanimously, sir!" said Harper to Locke. And John Carr, sitting down beside Jack Drake, Deane, Proctor, and Langsom, smiled faintly. "We takes Mr. Carr's sportin' offer, an' we'll gain a lot or lose all wi' him."

Ferrers Locke looked round.

"I expected that, my lads," he said. "Well, this being so, and since we're all partners together in business, you'll have no objection to a gruelling three days' work to find out what this great wealth in Brek Katel is?"

"No, no, sir! Carry on!"

"We'll save our hides, an' interview our bankers arterwards, sir!"

"It's me for a bloomin' cheque-book when we gets home to Lowestoft again."

"Right!" continued Locke. "All rested, fed, and full of energy. Lead on, Langsom, and we'll explode those charges we have put in out Three Peak Hill way."

Langsom heaved himself on to his long legs, and, with the party following in a bunch, he and Locke, Proctor, Drake, Deane, and Carr, set off towards where three black peaks of a not very distant hill showed up on the skyline.

It was a four hours' march. And when the party got to the place excitement ran high.

"Stromsund worked here some years ago, men," said Locke. "But we must turn up the ground again before we can tell if he found anything. Select your cover. Now then, Carr and Langsom and Deane, off to the different points, and light the fuses when I raise my hand."

It was a rugged scene, and the men in it seemed as rugged as the rocks which abounded. Tense, bearded faces stared out across the wastes. Stout hearts which felt no tremor at the crash of a billow were now beating heavily as they watched Locke, Carr, Langsom, and Deane moving out to their different positions.

At last, after an eternity, it seemed to the men, Locke raised his right arm to its full height. Langsom, Carr, and Deane knelt down, and Locke followed suit. Then, one by one, they rose, and ran off like hares for cover.

The seconds dragged like minutes, the minutes like hours. Then suddenly the whole world ahead seemed to be heaved sky-high. Great, billowing masses of dust and smoke rolled upwards. Huge rocks were seen to fly into the air. The ground beneath the feet of the crouching men seemed to lurch. And a terrific, grumbling roar seemed to make the very air above tremble.

Boom! Rumble-rumble! Boom! Boom!

The explosions followed one another quickly. And before the flying pieces had settled men were running towards the crater, gasping, stumbling over each other in their eagerness. It was the biggest gamble any there had ever indulged in!

A Hazardous Journey!

LOCKE, Deane, Carr, and Langsom had converged to one point as they ran forward as eagerly as the rest to see the result of the explosion. And they were on their knees as the group of men, headed by Jack Drake and Skipper Proctor, drew up.

John Carr, his hands trembling violently, had risen to his feet, a great lump of golden-yellow rock in his hand.

Locke had another, Deane another, and Langsom was filtering a quantity of yellow dust through his fingers.

"What be it, sir?" demanded the men eagerly. "Gold?"

"Great snakes, it be gold dust Mr. Langsom has—"

"Not quite," smiled Ferrers Locke, as he swung round on the men, the great lump of bright yellow rock held towards them. "But it can be turned into gold. Langsom, tell us what this is."

Langsom rose.

"It is sulphur," he said. "As far as I can see from the dust it is pure unadulterated sulphur, and worth four shillings per hundredweight. The land must be full of it—made of it. Millions of tons of the stuff, and pure, ready for market without refining. It is indeed a mighty fortune. If it is here, it must be everywhere, at varying depths. There will be no question of mining. It is just below the surface, and can be quarried out—"

"Wi' big freight ships in the fjord there, ready to take it away," said Proctor.

"And flat, level land along which a light railway can run at the minimum of expense," said Locke.

"No outlay for wharves, no dredgers required to make a channel, and no refinery," put in Jack Drake.

"I would say, Herr Carr," said Langsom, turning to John Carr, whose heavy face was working strangely, "that you are—what do you call it?—a millionaire!"

"By hokey! An' us with a tenth share!"

"Twasn't hardly fair. 'Tis too easy for—"

"If ye think John Carr's a man who would go back on his word, ye think a lie!" broke in a trawlerman hotly. "For me, I'm goin' to have my whack. But I'm leavin' it in the company, an' will be content wi' my dividends an' a little cottage wi' a painted flagstaff in the garden."

"Lads," cried Tom Harper, "we're all made men, if we can get back out o' this perishin' land. But I move: that any man as presses Mr. Carr for money down till he's got everything workin' an' all money worries off his mind, shall meet wi' a rough house—"

"Hear, hear, shipmate!"

"There's none wants to do that, Tom."

"I reckon the dividends will be better than the boodle, meself."

"If so 'tis he's a millionaire, we're bloomin' gentlemen!"

The men talked and chattered like a crowd of children as they tramped happily back to camp. And Jack Drake strode along beside Ferrers Locke.

The Baker Street detective had taken the discovery more calmly than anyone else.

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Keep Your Peepers Open for It, Chums!

"You reckoned on that, sir?" said Jack, as he kept up beside Locke.

"Yes, my boy, I reckoned on sulphur," said Locke quietly. "Those sulphur springs and the sulphur river which was our despair when we first landed here, set me thinking on that possibility. Carr is indeed a fortunate man. And—do you realise it, Drake?—our case is finished."

"Stromsund & Co. are still at large, sir."

"True," said Locke; "but my job was to solve the mystery of the Phantom of the Dogger Bank. It is now up to Carr to bring Stromsund to book."

"Yes, I suppose we've done our whack, sir," said Jack. "But we're not off Brek Katel yet, and Stromsund is still nosing about somewhere."

"Well, I shall take a holiday now," smiled Locke. "I've finished thinking and worrying about this business. Our job now is to get home—"

"And the only A B C we had went down in the Stormcock, sir," said Jack. Locke laughed.

"Yes, we have a big struggle ahead of us, Drake, my boy. I've been think-

ing about that, too. How is your back?"

"Proctor kept washing it with sea water for a matter of three days," grinned Jack, "and now I'm quite fit again."

"Well, I think you will have to embark on a very hazardous journey, my boy. My idea is this. You are the best climber and leaper in the company, barring poor old Peter Deane. You and he must set off to journey to Reykjavik overland. Deane knows his Iceland—that is, its own peculiar dangers—and his knowledge will be necessary to you. He is like an ape for climbing and leaping. You and he could win through where others would fail. I think it is the only way."

"Well, I'm ready, sir. A rucksack each, containing grub for a few days, and a couple of blankets each will be all we'll need, barring a compass."

"It will be a terrible journey, my boy."

"Not more terrible than spending the winter on Brek Katel, gloating over our sulphur hoard, sir," replied Jack. "I'm ready for it, sir, if Peter Deane is."

(Continued on next page.)

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"He'll be quite eager, I know," said Locke. "I've sounded him about it already. He said he'd have done the journey long ago if it hadn't been his fixed idea that he must stay and guard that Viking treasure. By the way, that has gone down in the Stormcock, I suppose?"

"No; I forgot to tell you," said Jack, "since the treasure was so unimportant. Stromsund looted it from the Stormcock. So he'll get something for his trouble, after all."

"It's a fawdry lot," mused Locke. "But they were curios I'd have liked. Still, Stromsund has them—"

"What if Stromsund lands his men and advances on us, sir?"

"It is a possibility we must guard against. I think it would be best for us to select some position a long way inland for our camp—some place which Stromsund could not reach except by hazardous journeying. Thus he will be unable to attack in strength and well-armed—"

"And when I get to Reykjavik with Deane?"

"You will charter a steam-vessel of some sort and come round to pick us up. It will be quite another six weeks before the ice closes in round Iceland. Even so, by careful navigation, a stout steam vessel could move through the floes and pick us up at the fjord—"

"Or Langanaes, sir," said Jack. "I should say that Langanaes would be a good place to move to. All the stores are there, anyway, and most of the men. And from what I saw of the ground behind, a handful of stout men could hold it against a regiment of soldiers. It's the roughest bit of rock-country I've ever seen."

"It has crossed my mind," said Locke. "Ah, here we are at the camp again, like a lot of hungry wolves! Well, Drake, we will feed and sleep, and to-morrow we can settle details of your journey with Deane and our own move as to which spot we shall camp in, to wait for you and the rescue boat."

Two days passed, during which time fresh blasting was done at widely different points, each operation proving

the existence of sulphur in huge quantities.

And then Jack Drake and Peter Deane, simply but efficiently equipped, set off for their hard journey to the south.

They turned and waved to those standing outside the camp when they came to the first of the broken ground. Then they pushed on towards the great snow-capped mountains.

They tramped steadily on all that day, and as the sun was sinking in the west, tingeing the snowcaps of the jokuls to a faint pink, Drake and Deane, footsore and tired, topped the crest of their first big climb.

The sun-reddened, rocky country stretched before them for miles. There were black, ugly-looking ravines, the spouting and wreathing steam of hot springs here and there. Old volcanic craters yawned upwards on the sides of the great mountains.

There was not a sign of life, and what vegetation there was merely a clump of tussock grass here and there. It was the wickedest-looking bit of country Jack had ever seen. And it struck a chill into his heart. For they had to conquer that—a good hundred and fifty miles of it.

"Gosh, Peter, we've got our work cut out!" gasped Jack, as he stood beside the round-shouldered form of Deane.

"And quick," replied Deane. "Thirty mile a day, it must be, young sir, an' no accidents. Or it's a nameless grave for you an' me in this perishin' all-forsaken country."

A Long, Long Tramp!

THEY camped that night in the shelter of a huge, overhanging rock. By dawn they were up, and partook of a nourishing breakfast of dried meat and hot coffee. Then Peter Deane packed the rucksacks while Jack opened up the map, got out the prismatic pocket compass Locke had told Procter to hand over to him, and planned out the direction of their day's journey.

They took the direction of least resistance to the next point from which they

could observe ahead to the south-east. This took them close to a great, ugly black fissure that made Jack shudder to look at it. And, farther on, they came up to a great, boiling bog, across which they could not hope to pass. So they skirted this, lengthening their journey by many miles.

"There may be worse to overcome yet," gritted Drake, as they spent precious hours skirting round the bog of boiling mud, "so we won't begin to grouse about things till later on. Peter, old scout, to-morrow morning we'll steer clear of any bits where there's a hint of steam—"

"It will be all right so long as we don't blunder into any of these death traps," said Deane. "We can reckon on them where there's a hot spring. We must be careful, too, fordin' or swimmin' rivers. There's treacherous suction holes in volcanic country, like this, as I well know."

"Well, we won't go whiling the golden hours away bathing in limpid pools, then," said Jack.

They travelled thirty-five miles that day, but, as the crow flies, they had not done eighteen.

"This won't do, Peter," said Jack wearily, as the pair stretched themselves out in their blankets for the night.

"We must reckon on better luck," said Deane. "Brek Katel's a paradise compared to this!"

The third day saw better progress, and by the end of the fifth day, when their food was about done and they began to feel desperate, Jack gave a wild whoop as he first topped the ridge of a hill they had been climbing.

"Hecla ahoy!" he yelled. "There you are, Peter, the old mountain smoking away as cheerily as ever—"

Deane stared out towards where Drake was excitedly pointing, and he saw the billowy smoke in the sky.

"Ay, yon's Hecla," he said. "We be gettin' into Hecla country now. Another day, an' we should see a buildin' o' some sort somewhere."

(Look out for the concluding chapters of this powerful and thrilling yarn next week, chums.)



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Cut out the Snobbery!

By OLD PRO

A Plea for more Sporting Treatment for the Professional Cricketer.

WHETHER we beat the Austrians this summer or whether we don't, their visit will be memorable for at least one thing: it has caused the stick-in-the-mud authorities at Lord's to reduce the dividing line between the amateur and the professional player. In the next Test match at Lord's the paid and the unpaid will share the same dressing-rooms—a thing which has never happened before in the history of the famous ground. Obviously this is a step in the right direction; it cuts a bit of the snobbery out of cricket, and is bringing nearer the day when we cut out the snobbery completely.

WHERE'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Speaking as a professional player, there does not seem to me to be anything more humiliating than that the amateur players of a team should walk on to the pitch out of one gate—the front gate—while the professional players of the same team walk out of another gate—a back gate, as it were. If men play in the same team, why shouldn't they be treated as equals?

As I see it, there is no disgrace in being paid for playing cricket; it is to me an honourable profession to which a man gives all his available time during the summer months, and to qualify for which he puts in a long period of apprenticeship. The only difference between the amateur and the professional player is that the amateur has to use a popular phrase, been born with a silver spoon in his mouth; with so much money that it is unnecessary for him to be paid in order that he may buy bread-and-butter for himself and those dependent upon him.

A MOVE IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

To be quite fair to the amateur cricketer, let me say just this—that the snobbery which exists in the game—the dividing line between the paid and the unpaid—is not of the amateur's

seeking. Most of the unpaids are jolly good fellows who treat the professional members of their teams as equals. But officially there still exists a snobbery which ought to be cut right out. The new regulation providing for amateurs and pros to occupy the same dressing-rooms is a step forward; the placing of professionals on the Selection Committee is another step, but there still remains something to be done.

AN UNPLEASANT FACT.

Here is a fact which will probably surprise you. When the Australians were in this country in 1921 the professional members of the England team were left to find their own accommodation in the towns in which the Test matches were played. Rooms in the best hotels were reserved for the amateurs, but the "pros" were left to fend for themselves. And this is what happened. When some of our "pro" players arrived at Leeds late on the eve of the Test match, they had great difficulty in finding proper rooms at all. Nearly all the hotels were full up.

A moment's reflection will serve to show that it doesn't help England's chances of winning if some of her players spend half the night prior to a Test match in hunting for a bed in the town in which they are to play. No wonder some of the fellows got into a bad temper and declared that England deserved to lose.

It was said by way of excuse that the authorities could not book the rooms for the "pros" because they did not know who would play. Could any excuse be siller? They might not have known who would play, but they knew that some "pros" would want rooms could have been booked months beforehand. I suggest that as the amateurs and the pros are now allowed to share the same dressing-rooms, even at most conservative Lord's, they should stay at the same hotel for every match.

NICELY PUT!

We are not even consistent in this matter of distinguishing between the paid and the unpaid. All the members of the present Australian team will, at the end of the tour, receive a substantial financial reward. In fact, they will get more money than our "pros" got when they went to Australia. Yet the Australians are, one and all, treated as amateurs by our cricket authorities.

To cut out the snobbery, too, we ought to cut out that match with the horrible title—Gentlemen v. Players. It is a distinction which is absurd. One man I used to know—his name was Craig, and he was called the Surrey poet because he used to go round the Oval selling cricket verses—got over this snobbery most artfully. All the Gentlemen are players," he used to say, "and all the Players are gentlemen."

"REMEMBER, the member! the twenty-fifth of November!" That is what can be called Yorkshire's revised version of the fifth of November slogan. Yorkshire cricket enthusiasts—and every-

Century Sutcliffe! "Paul Pry," our Travelling Correspondent, noses his way into Yorkshire—and gets the story of one of the finest cricketers in England.

body in Yorkshire is a cricket enthusiast—and every reason to remember the twenty-fifth of November. On that day Herbert Sutcliffe and Percy Holmes, the two men who have scored over a hundred runs for Yorkshire before being separated at the start of an innings over a hundred times, were both born. Holmes was born seven years before Sutcliffe, but they have both become twins in the cricket sense, and all Yorkshire is proud of them. I must now say good-bye to Percy Holmes in order to talk about Herbert Sutcliffe. Pudsey is nearly as famous as Wigan as a stock place round which the musical-hall artist weaves his jokes, but Pudsey has this claim to recognition; that it was the birthplace of a man who set up some wonderful cricket records. It is not always easy to get a man to talk about the proudest moment of his life, and when I put the question to Sutcliffe he hesitated for a few seconds. Once he started to tell me that his proudest moment was on his return from Australia after the last tour when he found all Pudsey waiting to welcome him. But in the middle of this story he switched off, and declared that really his proudest moment was at Melbourne during the second Test match. In that game Sutcliffe accomplished a feat which had never previously been put down to the credit of any English batsman—that of having hit two separate hundreds in one Test Match. Indeed, even now there are only two players who have scored two separate hundreds in a Test game between England and Australia, and Warren Bardsley is the other fellow.

A NEW RECORD!

But to hark back to his proudest moment. Sutcliffe says he will never forget the whole of the Australian players lining up to shake hands with him, and congratulate him on his feat. "What can a player of any game desire more," he asked me, "than to be congratulated by every member of the opposing side, and at the same time be made to feel beyond all shadow of doubt that the congratulations come right from the heart?"

This bit of Yorkshire grit was rather a long time in the making, or perhaps we might say that it was rather a long time before his abilities were recognised at their full value. Sutcliffe came into Yorkshire cricket in 1911, and by way of starting a particular regard him as their hero.



H. SUTCLIFFE.

Each man laughed as he read it. In the end Sutcliffe asked what the joke was. "Oh," came the reply, "the same old in exactly the same words!" Sutcliffe, having a sense of humour, enjoyed the joke at the start of an innings over a hundred times. The "arrival" of Sutcliffe as a record-breaking batsman provides a perfect illustration of the adage that genius is simply an infinite capacity for taking pains. Sutcliffe was born with cricket blood in his veins, and though his father never rose to any great heights outside local play, there are some who say that the father was just as good a batsman as the son who was or will be. But Herbert, the boy, made cricket his study, and people who have known Sutcliffe all his life will assure us that there never was a lad who put in more hours at batting practice than this bit of Yorkshire grit. He came under the eye of the Yorkshire authorities before the War, but did not play for the county.

AN ATTRACTIVE BATSMAN!

During the War, when he was stationed at York, he still carried on his batting practice whenever possible, and once I saw him indulging in his favourite game in a private road behind his home with a handful of small boys as companions. He is a quiet, unassuming sort of fellow; often, indeed, giving the impression of being a bit shy. But when you know him you begin to realise that he is full of humour—still a boy. See him go to the wicket with Percy Holmes to open the innings for Yorkshire. He will take a look round and then stand at the end where he will receive the bowling first. Holmes smiles a big smile every time Herbert does this, and between them this passion for taking the first ball is evidently a standing joke. To watch Sutcliffe make a century is a sheer delight. He is not, as a rule, a lightning scorer, but he is always an attractive batsman, as polished and graceful in the making of every stroke as any of the great players of the game.

Light on his feet, he always makes a century in a sheer delight. He is not, as a rule, a lightning scorer, but he is always an attractive batsman, as polished and graceful in the making of every stroke as any of the great players of the game. He is not, as a rule, a lightning scorer, but he is always an attractive batsman, as polished and graceful in the making of every stroke as any of the great players of the game.

KILLING OFF THE FAST BOWLERS!

Why is our task made more and more difficult? By HARRY HOWELL. The Warwickshire cricketer who went to Australia with the last English team.

THERE is scarcely any necessity for me to emphasise unduly the fact that English cricket in these days has not too many really good fast bowlers. Nor do I claim any sort of originality for the suggestion, because it has certainly been driven into us most consistently within the past few years. When the Australians were here a couple of summers ago they brought with them two fast bowlers—Gregory, and the man who is now playing for Lancashire, McDonald. As everybody knows, our visitors also brought with them what was pretty nearly an Australian summer, which means that the wickets which awaited them up and down the country were of the kind on which their fast bowlers were most likely to succeed. They did succeed, and the Australians won the Test matches.

OPENING OUR EYES.

Then, of course, the cry went up—where are our fast bowlers? It was pointed out more than once that there was really nothing very remarkable in the fast bowling of Gregory and McDonald—though with this point of view I do not agree. However, the real reason why our batsmen could not withstand the attacks of these fast bowlers, so it was said, was because we had so few fast bowlers in this country against whom our batsmen had been given opportunities for practice. It having been demonstrated by the Australians that fast bowling was the stuff with which to get rid of batsmen when the wickets were good, the demand for more fast bowlers in this country followed naturally. The same cry for express men is still going up to-day, and it is safe to add that so far as the majority of the counties are concerned, no satisfactory answer is being received. Why?

REAPING WHAT WE HAVE SOWN.

I will try to answer the foregoing question; but, first of all, let me say quite frankly that I realise the difficulty of my position. I am by way of being a fast bowler myself, and, consequently, my point of view may not be an entirely unbiased one. Still, if I am willing to admit that there may be another and very different side to the story, there can be no harm in my attempt to explain the dearth of fast bowlers in big cricket to-day. First of all, so it seems to me, we are in this particular respect going through a very familiar process—reaping what we have sown. Within the memory of most of us fast bowling became—shall I say?—an out-of-date fashion, while new ideas gained in popularity. To my mind, that persistent hammering at the idea that it was not necessary to bowl fast in order to get wickets was at the root of the decline of fast bowling in this country.

HOPING AGAINST HOPE.

Yet, in passing, attention may be drawn to the undoubted fact that just as



HARRY HOWELL.