

ALL ABOUT OUR GRAND FREE GIFTS—INSIDE!

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The Magnet 2nd Library

EVERY MONDAY.



CECIL PONSONBY LEADS HARRY WHARTON & CO. INTO A TRAP!

(A dramatic incident from the long complete school story—within.)

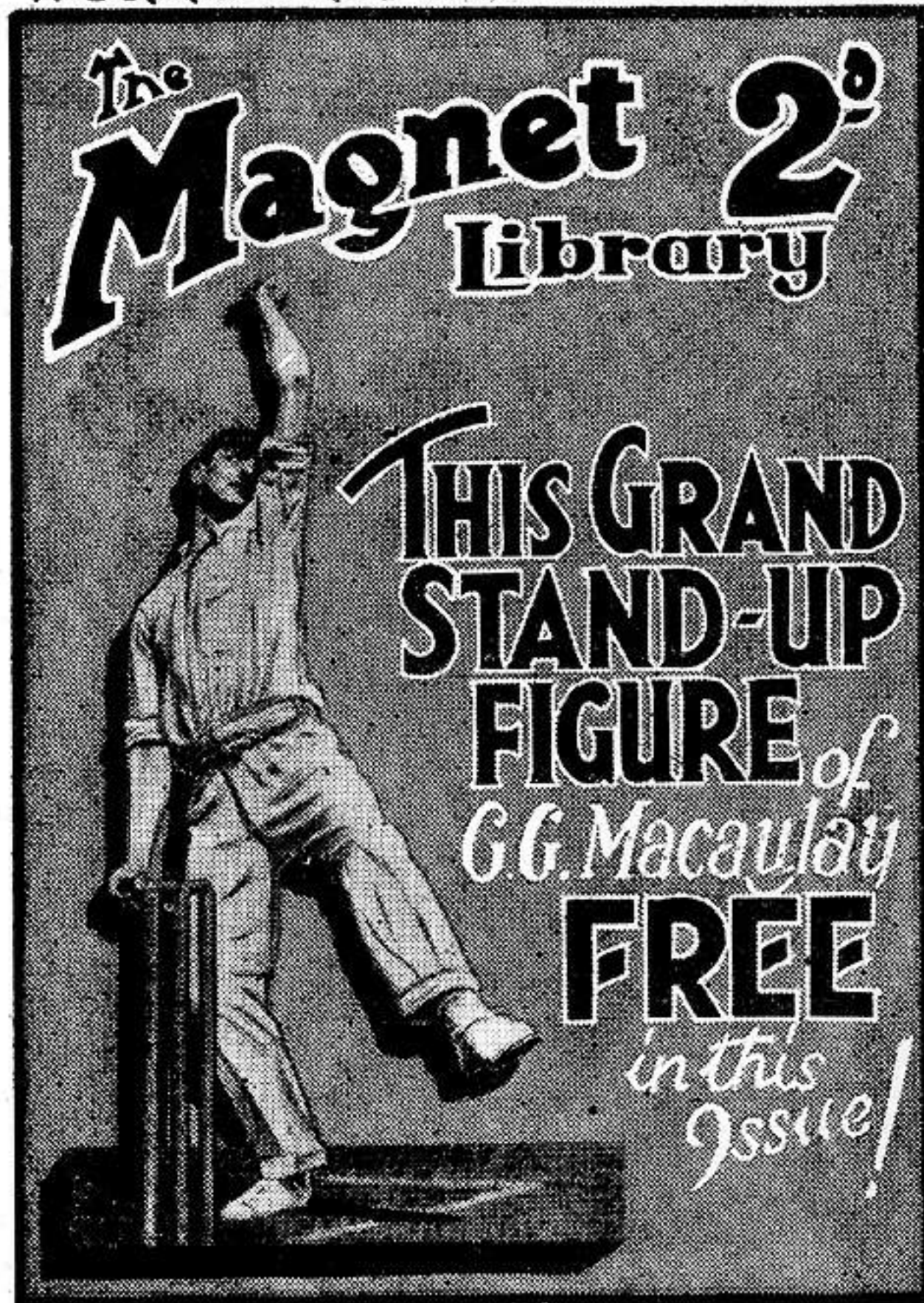
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To this excellent life-like photo of Macaulay you will be able to add, from week to week, the pick of the AUSTRALIAN and ENGLISH cricketers. Won't the complete set look dandy on your mantelpiece! Won't your friends envy you? Gee, boys, this is no occasion for modesty; the "MAGNET" FREE GIFTS WILL BE SOUGHT AFTER BY EVERY BOY AND GIRL IN THE WORLD. MIND YOU'RE ONE OF THE FIRST TO JUMP IN AND SECURE THIS "SOMETHING FOR NOTHING" TREAT.

PONSONBY THE TRICKSTER! When Cecil Ponsonby, of Highcliffe, accepts a challenge to do battle with a Greyfriars fellow, it's time for that fellow to get suspicious, for Ponsonby has about as much fight in him as a burst balloon and hopes to evade the consequences of that challenge by trickery!



A Magnificent New Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., at Greyfriars, introducing Cecil Ponsonby, the Cad of Highcliffe.

By
FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bunter Knows Best!

"BUNTER!"
"Rats!"

"Look here, Bunter—"
"Bosh!"

"You fat duffer—" roared Bob Cherry.

"Chuck it!" said Bunter.

William George Bunter, of the Greyfriars Remove, seemed to be in an independent mood.

It was morning break at Greyfriars; and in the quadrangle, Harry Wharton & Co. were gathered round Billy Bunter.

It was but seldom that the Famous Five, of the Remove, sought the company of Billy Bunter; generally, they rather avoided it if they could.

Now they all seemed to want to speak to him; and they were all speaking at once, and with emphasis.

"You silly owl!" said Harry Wharton, in great exasperation. "You've got to listen! I tell you—"

Bunter held up a fat hand.

"I've said chuck it, and I mean chuck it," he said. "I'm dealing with this matter. Wharton—that is, the Head and I are dealing with it together. I don't want any advice from you fellows. When I want any, I'll ask for it, see?"

"But—" began Frank Nugent.

"You needn't butt in, Nugent. Chuck it!"

"My esteemed fatheaded Bunter—" began Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Chuck it, Inky!"

"Look here—" roared Johnny Bull.

"Rats!"

And Billy Bunter, independent and lofty, turned to walk away, with his fat little nose elevated in the air. For once, owing to peculiar circumstances, Billy Bunter was a person of some importance; and it was like Bunter to make the most of his unusual and temporary importance.

He turned his back on the Famous Five, to walk away; but he had taken only one step when a grip of iron fastened on his collar, and he was swung back.

"Ow!" howled Bunter.

With Bob Cherry's powerful grip on his collar, Bunter spun round like a

very fat humming-top. He faced the Famous Five again, gasping for breath. "Now, you cheeky fat duffer—" growled Bob.

"Ow! Wow! Leggo!" roared Bunter.

"Oh, kick him!" exclaimed Johnny Bull impatiently. "What he wants is kicking, and kicking hard!"

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Listen to me, Bunter," said Harry Wharton. "You're going over to Highcliffe with the Head when we go in to third lesson—"

"Yes! Leggo my collar, Bob Cherry, you beast."

"The Head's going to complain to Dr. Voysey about that cad Ponsonby and—"

"Leggo!"

"And you're going as a witness," said Harry. "As it happens, you were the only fellow that saw Ponsonby playing that rotten trick yesterday at the old Priory. We all know that he did it, but you were the only fellow that saw him."

Billy Bunter jerked his collar away from Bob Cherry's grasp, and blinked wrathfully at the chums of the Remove through his big spectacles. But he did not venture to roll away again.

"Now," went on the captain of the Remove, "Ponsonby's a rotter, and a rank outsider; and he played a dirty trick on us in shutting us up in the priory vaults. But we wanted to deal with him ourselves about it, and we should not have mentioned him to the Head—we didn't see him close down the stone after us, and we needn't have given him away. But, of course, you had to blurt it out."

"I considered it my duty to state the facts," said Bunter loftily. "I don't call it a joke, to shut fellows up in those dashed vaults, where we might have starved for days before we were found. I was jolly late for tea, as it was. That's serious."

"Anyhow, you've told the Head, and he's going to see the Headmaster of Highcliffe about it," said Harry. "That can't be helped now. He's taking you with him as a witness. Ponsonby doesn't know that he was seen, and very likely he will deny the whole thing."

"Most likely," said Bob. "A whopper

or two don't cost that Highcliffe cad very much."

"Think I don't know that?" said Bunter scornfully. "Of course Pon will tell lies—it means a flogging for him. But I shall jolly well fix him. You leave it to me."

"Whether you fix him or not doesn't matter much—if he gets off the flogging, we shall handle him for what he did," said Harry. "What I want to warn you about is, stick to the truth when Dr. Voysey asks you questions about it. None of your confounded fibbing."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"State what you know, and nothing that you don't know," said the captain of the Remove. "Do you understand?"

"Rats!"

Wharton compressed his lips.

"You fat duffer," he said. "It was rotten giving Ponsonby away to the Head, anyway—we shouldn't have done it. Some of the Highcliffe cads will make out that it's not playing the game."

"Let 'em!" said Bunter.

"If Ponsonby denies it, the other fellows there will believe him, or at least take his side. And if you tell any of your usual lies—"

"Look here—"

"Can't you understand?" exclaimed Wharton angrily. "If you exaggerate or tell any lies, you will be bowled out, and it will look as if we're bringing a false accusation against a fellow we dislike. That's what we're afraid of!"

"Bosh!"

"Keep to the exact truth—"

"And let that cad get off a flogging, after he shut us up in those beastly vaults!" exclaimed Bunter warmly. "I can jolly well tell you that I'm not letting Ponsonby off. I was late for tea—"

"You silly ass!" roared Bob.

"We might have spent a night in the vaults," exclaimed Bunter indignantly. "Might have pitched into some pit or other, in the dark, and all sorts of things. I'm not letting Ponsonby off, I can tell you. He's not going to get off by telling whoppers about it. That's a game two can play at, see?"

The Famous Five glared at Bunter, in deep exasperation.

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It was sheer ill-luck, from their point of view, that Bunter had been the witness, and the only witness, of Ponsonby's dastardly action the previous day.

The matter was serious—so serious, that Bunter was not perhaps much to blame for having told Dr. Locke what he knew. So long as he kept to the exact truth in the matter, there was no harm done. But the Co. knew their Bunter. It was almost a physical impossibility for Bunter to keep to the truth.

The Head of Highcliffe would not be willing to find a Highcliffe fellow guilty of such an action. He was certain to question Bunter closely.

Bunter was deeply incensed by his fright in the priory vaults. He was determined to make Ponsonby "sit up" for it. And if he added his usual fanciful details to the story, it was quite likely that the whole thing might be dismissed as a false accusation.

Ponsonby's escape from punishment did not matter much—the Famous Five were prepared to deal with that detail themselves at a favourable opportunity. But it mattered very much indeed if their old enemies at Highcliffe had a chance of declaring that a false accusation had been brought. Bunter did not seem to see it; but Harry Wharton & Co. saw it very clearly.

Clang!

It was the bell for third lesson.

Bunter grinned.

"You leave it to me," he said. "I'll fix Ponsonby. I'll see that he doesn't get off a flogging. That's all right. I don't want any advice from you fellows. Leave it to me."

"Stick to the exact truth, Bunter—"

"Don't I keep on telling you that I don't want any advice?" said Bunter. "Chuck it, you know!"

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"Will you try to understand, you fat idiot?" he said. "We've got friends at Highcliffe as well as enemies. Nobody cares what Ponsonby thinks, or Gadsby, or Monson, or any of that set. But we don't want Courtenay or the Caterpillar to believe that we've descended to such a thing as telling lies about a fellow we dislike."

"You can't teach me anything, Wharton," said Billy Bunter disdainfully. "Save your breath, old man."

"I tell you—"

"Time you got in to class," said Bunter. "You'll have Quelch after you, if you're late."

The bell had ceased. Harry Wharton & Co. had to start for the Form-room, leaving Bunter to his own devices; and they went in a deeply uneasy mood.

Billy Bunter grinned after them as they departed.

"Silly chumps!" he murmured. "I'm jolly well not going to let them dictate to me, I know that. And I'm jolly well going to see that Ponsonby doesn't get off a flogging. What-ho!"

And Bunter rolled away to the Head's house, greatly pleased at the prospect of booking Ponsonby for a flogging at Highcliffe, and still more pleased to escape third lesson with Mr. Quelch.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

In Suspense!

"WHAT'S Pon been up to, Franky?"

It was De Courcy of the Highcliffe Fourth, otherwise known as the "Caterpillar," who asked that question in the quad at Highcliffe. The Magnet Library.—No 959.

cliffe. Frank Courtenay, the junior captain of Highcliffe, glanced at him.

"Pon?" he repeated.

"Pon!" said the Caterpillar. "You're not interested in Pon, are you, Franky?"

"Very little," said Courtenay dryly.

"That's where we differ," said De Courcy. "I've told you lots of times that I regard Pon—dear old Pon—as an interesting study. Pon's been up to somethin', and he's afraid of the chopper comin' down."

Courtenay shrugged his shoulders.

He was Ponsonby's cousin, but there was no love lost between him and the blackguard of the Highcliffe Fourth. They had never been friends, and they saw little of one another. Out of the Form-room Courtenay's thoughts just now were given chiefly to cricket—a matter which did not interest Pon and his select nutty circle.

"Well, I suppose the chopper will come down on Pon sooner or later," said Courtenay. "He keeps on asking for it."

"And he won't be happy till he gets it," smiled the Caterpillar. "But I really believe it's serious this time, Franky. Did you notice Pon at all yesterday afternoon?"

"Not in the least. I was at cricket, where you ought to have been, Caterpillar," added Courtenay.

"Mea culpa!" sighed the Caterpillar. "What a lot of things we ought to do that we don't do! As that Inky bloke at Greyfriars would put it in his jolly variety of the English language, the oughtfulness is more terrific than the performfulness!"

Courtenay laughed.

"Well, loafin' about and wastin' my precious time, you know," went on the Caterpillar lazily. "I noticed that Pon went out with Gaddy and Monson. Gaddy and Monson came in without him."

"Did they?" said Courtenay indifferently.

"Pon came in later," said De Courcy. "I shouldn't perhaps have noticed him, but I heard Drury askin' him what was the matter. Pon was lookin' quite white an' upset. I asked him whether he had seen a giddy ghost, and he answered quite rudely."

The Caterpillar broke off, with a grin. "I'm borin' you, Franky?" he said.

"Oh, no; go on," said Courtenay.

"I'm sorry if Ponsonby has landed himself into real trouble at last. But a fellow who meets bookmakers and racing-touts outside the school is asking for trouble. The wonder is that he hasn't landed himself before."

"I don't think it's anythin' in the racin' line this time," said the Caterpillar thoughtfully. "Pon's been up to somethin', and he's afraid—goodness knows of what. Look at him now."

The Caterpillar nodded in the direction of a group of juniors near the House steps—Ponsonby, Gadsby, and Monson. Courtenay glanced at them.

Undoubtedly Ponsonby of the Fourth did not look his usual cheery and nutty self.

Gadsby and Monson were talking. Pon was quite silent. There was a cloud on his brow, and he seemed buried in thought. Occasionally he started to attention, as it were, to answer some remark from his companions, only to plunge again into gloomy meditation. His glum abstraction was observed by Gadsby and Monson, who exchanged significant glances.

"Looks bright an' chippy, doesn't he, Franky?"

"He looks as if his horse had come in

eleventh," said Courtenay. "I've seen him looking like that before."

"Somethin' more serious this time, old bean," said the Caterpillar. "Gaddy and Monson don't know what it is, and they'd know if it was a racin' disaster. Let's go and speak a cheery word of comfort to him, Franky. There's time before third lesson."

"Oh, rot!" said Courtenay.

"Dear man, are you losin' your tender-hearted consideration for the unhappy an' afflicted?" asked the Caterpillar reproachfully. "Pon's down on his luck, and a little bright an' genial conversation might buck him. Come an' help me buck up poor old Pon."

The Caterpillar strolled towards the Knutty group at the steps, with his hands in his pockets and a lazy smile on his face. Frank Courtenay did not follow him, however. The Caterpillar had once been a member of Ponsonby's nutty circle, and he still regarded them with a good-natured tolerance; but his graver and more serious chum did not find it so easy to tolerate idleness and slacking and shady blackguardism.

De Courcy nodded cheerily to the three nuts.

"Anythin' I can do?" he asked.

Ponsonby came out of his gloomy abstraction again, and looked at him with rather hostile inquiry.

"What are you drivin' at?" he asked gruffly.

"Seein' a man in trouble, my natural impulse is to lend a helpin' hand," explained the Caterpillar.

"Who's in trouble?"

"You are, old bean."

"What utter rot!" said Ponsonby, flushing. "What's put that silly idea into your silly head?"

"Your bright an' cheery looks, old bean," said De Courcy. "I don't know what you were doin' yesterday afternoon, though by that swellin' on your nose, I gather that you went out lookin' for trouble an' found some. But you're not mournin' over your lost beauty—what?"

Gadsby and Monson grinned, and Ponsonby scowled, and passed his hand over his swollen nose.

"I had a row with a Greyfriars cad!" he muttered.

"Licked him, I hope?"

"It was a friend of yours—at least, of Courtenay's," said Gadsby. "That blighter with the hoofs—Bob Cherry!"

"Is he a friend of mine?" asked the Caterpillar thoughtfully. "Yaas, I believe so. I believe in keepin' on friendly terms with a man with a four-point-seven punch. You woke up the wrong passenger, Pon."

"Mind your own bizney!" snapped Ponsonby.

"At the present moment, dear man, I'm mindin' yours," said the Caterpillar imperturbably. "Don't mind me, it's only my way—pretty Fanny's way, you know. I see you in a sad and moulty state, an' I've trickled along to comfort you."

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

"So it's something to do with the Greyfriars chaps," went on the Caterpillar. "Scrappin' with Bob Cherry. I needn't ask who was licked. An' I needn't ask who was to blame—Cherry's a chap who never quarrels, if he can help it. An' he must have let you off rather lightly, or you would have a bigger nose than that. What did you do to him afterwards, Pon?"

"Nothin', you silly ass!"

"Then what are you frightened about?"

"Who's frightened?" exclaimed Ponsonby savagely.

"You are, old bean," said the Caterpillar placidly. "You're afraid of somethin'—simply twitterin' with nerves. Have you been doin' somethin' horrid blackguardly, Pon—playin' some trick a little thicker than usual? Is it goin' to be the long jump for you this time when it comes out?"

Gadsby and Monson exchanged a quick glance. Ponsonby bit his lip hard, with a look of hatred at the Caterpillar. It seemed as if the Caterpillar, with all his lazy nonchalance, was able to read the dandy of Highcliffe like an open book.

"Look here, Pon, what did you do after we left you?" asked Gadsby uneasily. "We jolly well know there was somethin'. You went after the Greyfriars picnic party——"

"And you looked frightfully out of sorts when you came in later," said Monson. "Have you put your foot in it somehow, Pon?"

"Oh, dry up!" said Ponsonby. "I never saw the Greyfriars fellows again yesterday afternoon. I went for a ramble along the cliffs."

"Admirin' the scenery, an' all that?" asked De Courcy with a grin. "Yes, I know your poetical nature, Pon—I can believe that. Did you heave a stone at Cherry's head from behind a tree, and leave him for dead?"

"You silly chump!" snarled Ponsonby.

"Somethin' of the sort, what?" grinned the Caterpillar. "An' you did more damage than you intended, bein' a bit wrathful at the time. How lucky I came along to comfort you, dear man. It can't be quite so serious as you suppose, or Wharton would have mentioned it when I saw him."

Ponsonby started violently.

"You've seen Wharton of the Remove at Greyfriars?"

"Yes."

"When?" exclaimed Ponsonby eagerly. "You've seen him since yesterday afternoon?"

"Last evenin', dear man," said the Caterpillar with a curious look at Ponsonby. "Yesterday evenin', as I was ramblin' homeward from a stroll, late for callin' over, my wayward footsteps took me past the gates of Greyfriars. Wharton and Bob Cherry happened to be there, an' I paused to exchange a word with them—an idle word in passin'. An' they never said that anything had happened."

"Then they got out last night?" exclaimed Ponsonby involuntarily.

"Out of what?"

"Oh, nothin'," said Ponsonby hastily. "Nothin' at all."

"You perplex me more than ever, dear man," drawled the Caterpillar, eyeing Pon very curiously. "What on earth have you been doin'?"

Ponsonby laughed.

For whatever reason, it was clear that the information De Courcy had given him, had lifted a weight from his mind. The harassed look of care was gone from his brow now.

As a matter of fact, Ponsonby, hardened young rascal as he was, had been deeply troubled, and indeed scared, by the trick he had played on the Greyfriars party at the old priory. Two of the Cliff House girls had been with Harry Wharton & Co., and had been shut up in the vaults when Pon had closed the stone on the explorers. To tell what he had done was to ask for severe punishment; but to leave the party shut up in the vaults for a long time was impossible. Ponsonby had acted in anger and malice, without reflection—reflection had come afterwards.

And the thought that the juniors might have been shut up in the vaults all night—that some catastrophe might have happened to them there—had scared Ponsonby, and given him a sleepless night.

He had not dared to make any inquiry, lest by doing so he should reveal his own guilt. And yet he knew that if the juniors, and the Cliff House girls, had not returned to school—if they had not escaped from the vaults, and if their whereabouts were unknown—he had to speak. In the circumstances, it was no wonder that Ponsonby had been harassed by care since his reckless act of revenge.

But he was relieved now.



"Boy," said Dr. Voysey sternly, "you have made a false accusation." "Oh, crumbs!" gasped Bunter. The Head of Highcliffe turned to Ponsonby. "You are quite cleared in my eyes, Ponsonby," he said, "and I trust you are cleared in Dr. Locke's also." "Nothing of the kind!" said Dr. Locke. (See Chapter 4.)

If Wharton and Bob Cherry had escaped, all the party had escaped, and there was nothing for him to fear. And Ponsonby still believed that his act was known to no one but himself. Harry Wharton & Co. might suspect him, but they could prove nothing.

The Caterpillar, keen as he was, was puzzled. Ponsonby's relief was more than visible in his face—the cloud of care was quite gone. With that weight of dread lifted from his mind, he was again the cool and insolent dandy of the Fourth.

"Well, I'm glad I've brought comfort to the unhappy, and solace to the giddy afflicted," drawled the Caterpillar. "But——"

"What rot!" yawned Ponsonby. "I

know nothin' about the Greyfriars cads, an' want to know nothin'."

"You haven't been playin' a scurvy trick on them?"

"Not at all."

"And you're not feelin' bucked all of a sudden at hearin' that they are safe?"

"Not in the least."

"George Washington was a fool to you, Pon," said the Caterpillar admiringly. "You could give him fifty in a hundred an' beat him easily."

And the Caterpillar strolled away with his hands in his pockets. Gadsby and Ponsonby looked keenly at their comrade.

"Now that ass is gone, Pon, you can tell us what you did," said Gadsby in a low voice.

Ponsonby laughed.

"I gave those rotters a scare, that's all," he said. "They went down into the priory vaults, and I closed the stone after them. They seem to have got out all right."

"Oh, gad!" said Monson. "I—I say, that was awfully thick, Pon. Anythin' might have happened to them."

"No wonder you've been lookin' ghastly," said Gadsby. "Did you suppose they'd been there all night? Oh, Pon!"

Ponsonby shrugged his shoulders.

"There's the bell," he said.

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Ponsonby was looking quite his usual self as he strolled into the Fourth Form room with his friends. Mr. Mobbs, the master of the Highcliffe Fourth, came in to take his class. Third lesson with the Highcliffe Fourth Form was interrupted, however, a little later. There was a knock on the Form-room door, and Mr. Mobbs opened it.

"What's up now, Franky?" murmured the Caterpillar, as Mr. Mobbs came back to his class with a very grave face.

"Ponsonby!" said Mr. Mobbs.

The dandy of Highcliffe started.

"Yes, sir!"

"Your presence is required in Dr. Voysey's study," said Mr. Mobbs. "Dr. Locke, the headmaster of Greyfriars, has called."

Ponsonby's heart beat faster. But he remained cool. Something was known, or suspected, he knew that at once. And he knew that he needed all his coolness. He was Mr. Mobbs' favourite, and he was regarded with indulgence by the Head; but he knew that matters would be very serious for him, if the truth became known.

"Indeed, sir!" said Ponsonby. "I suppose that the headmaster of Greyfriars has not called on my account?"

"It would seem so, Ponsonby," said Mr. Mobbs, eyeing him. "Has there been some fresh dispute between you and the Greyfriars boys?"

"I had rather a row with a Remove fellow yesterday afternoon, sir," said Ponsonby. "He struck me. I had to defend myself."

"Quite so, Ponsonby; but such a trifling matter as that would not cause Dr. Locke to call here. Was there nothing else?"

"Nothin' that I am aware of, sir!"

"Well, you had better go to the Head's study at once," said Mr. Mobbs. "Certainly, sir!"

And Cecil Ponsonby, with a careless and negligent air, walked out of the Form-room.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Accused!

BILLY BUNTER sat silent in the Head's car as it glided swiftly along the Courtfield road to Highcliffe School.

Bunter was fully conscious of his importance in making that journey in the

august company of his headmaster. He was only sorry that the other fellows were in class, and could not watch him depart. He was consoled, however, by the knowledge that he had left Harry Wharton & Co. in a disturbed and uneasy frame of mind. They had wanted to dictate to him, and Bunter considered that he had jolly well put them in their place and shown them who was who and what was what—which was satisfactory to the Owl of the Remove.

The fat junior had intended to venture upon a little cheery conversation with his headmaster during the run to Highcliffe. The expression on Dr. Locke's grave face, however, discouraged him. In Bunter's charming character obtuseness was delightfully combined with impudence. But one glance from the Head was enough to take the impudence out of Bunter, and he sagely decided not to waste his conversational gifts upon so very discouraging a hearer.

So the journey was made in silence, and they arrived at Highcliffe School without Bunter having opened his capacious mouth at all. Dr. Locke was shown at once to the Highcliffe headmaster's study, and Billy Bunter followed him in.

The Head of Highcliffe and the Head of Greyfriars met with cold and formal courtesy.

Dr. Voysey had been apprised by telephone that the Greyfriars master had a serious complaint to make, and he was not particularly desirous of hearing it. However, he was courteous, and he begged Dr. Locke to be seated, taking no notice whatever of the Owl of the Remove. Indeed, he did not seem to see Bunter. Whatever importance the fat junior had was evidently lost upon the old gentleman.

After a few words of civility, Dr. Locke came to business. He was a busy man himself, with little time to waste. Dr. Voysey, as a matter of fact, was not a busy man, though he should have been as headmaster of a public school. He was old and he was negligent, and most of his duties were left to his staff, with little supervision; which accounted a good deal for the state into which Highcliffe had fallen—a state which the Caterpillar described as "dry rot."

Dr. Voysey's face became serious enough as he listened to what Dr. Locke had to say. And his expression was incredulous. He did not want to

believe anything of the kind about a Highcliffe fellow, and he did not intend to believe it if he could help it. At all events, he wanted proof, as was natural enough.

"This is a grave matter, Dr. Locke!" he said, in his old, wheezy voice. "You say that a boy belonging to this school—"

"Ponsonby, of the Fourth Form."

"Quite so. Ponsonby, of the Fourth Form. You say that he deliberately shut up certain Greyfriars boys in the vaults under the ruined priory—at great danger to them?"

"The danger was considerable, and the most serious circumstance is that two girls belonging to Cliff House were in the party," said Dr. Locke. "I imagine that they were very much frightened."

"No doubt. If Ponsonby was guilty of such an act, I need not say that his punishment will be very severe!" said Dr. Voysey. "He will be flogged with the greatest severity; but you will appreciate, of course, that the case must be made absolutely clear. I will send for Ponsonby and question him in your presence!"

Dr. Voysey rang, and sent the page to call Ponsonby to his study.

Then he seemed to become aware of Bunter's existence for the first time.

"This boy—" he said.

"This boy—Bunter—was one of the party shut up in the vaults," said Dr. Locke. "He actually saw Ponsonby, and I have therefore brought him with me."

"I saw—" began Bunter.

Dr. Voysey stopped him with a gesture.

"Kindly wait until Ponsonby is here," he said.

"I think—" recommenced Bunter warmly.

"Be silent, Bunter!" said Dr. Locke.

"Oh, yes, sir!" said Bunter; and he relapsed into wrathful and indignant silence.

Not a word of sympathy or concern from Dr. Voysey to a fellow who had been shut up in earthy vaults for hours and kept late for his tea! Dr. Voysey did not seem to think that it mattered; indeed, did not seem to think of it at all.

There was a tap at the door, and Cecil Ponsonby entered.

He took no notice of the Head of Greyfriars or of Bunter, but fixed his eyes on his own headmaster. His manner was cool and unconcerned, his look expressing only a faint surprise, as if he wondered why he had been sent for.

"You sent for me, sir?"

"Quite so, Ponsonby," said Dr. Voysey. "Dr. Locke has called here to make a very serious complaint concerning you!"

"Indeed, sir," said Ponsonby airily. "I am quite unconscious, sir, of having offended Dr. Locke in any way."

"You jolly well know—" began Bunter hotly.

"Be silent, Bunter, until you are told to speak!" said the Head of Greyfriars.

"Oh, yes, sir!"

Bunter relapsed again into indignant silence.

"You are accused, Ponsonby, of having—er—of having shut up certain Greyfriars boys in—er—certain vaults," said Dr. Voysey. "It seems that some boys belonging to Greyfriars School went yesterday afternoon to—er—explore some vaults which appear to exist under an old ruin in Friardale Wood. Either by accident or design, a—er—certain stone was closed after they had entered, and they appear to have been

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—in fact—shut up in the vaults. You are accused of this."

"I, sir!" ejaculated Ponsonby.

"You deny it?"

"Certainly, sir!"

"Were you at the ruins yesterday, Ponsonby?" asked Dr. Voysey.

"He jolly well was——" Bunter restarted.

"Silence, Bunter!"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

It seemed to Bunter that he never would be able to get going at this rate. He felt bitterly that his own headmaster was not backing him up as he should have done.

Ponsonby reflected rapidly. He realised that there were too many witnesses of his presence at the ruins for that circumstance to be denied with safety.

"I did stroll to the ruins, sir," he said. "I was goin' to do some sketchin'. Mr. Mobbs has been kind enough to praise my sketches rather, sir, and I thought I would sketch the ruins. No harm in that, I hope, sir?"

"None whatever," said Dr. Voysey. "A very creditable and harmless way of spending a half-holiday, in fact."

"Oh, crumbs!" ejaculated Bunter, quite overcome at the idea of Ponsonby spending a half-holiday in a harmless and creditable manner.

Dr. Voysey turned his glasses severely on Bunter.

"Perhaps you will request this boy Bunter not to interrupt Dr. Locke?" he suggested.

"Bunter, do not interrupt."

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"Kindly tell me what you did at the ruins yesterday afternoon," resumed the Head of Highcliffe.

"I found some Greyfriars fellows there, sir," said Ponsonby. "As I wished to avoid a quarrel, I decided to go. They treated me rather roughly, bein' a crowd against one fellow; but I have not thought of makin' any complaint, sir. I hope I am not of the complainin' kind. I should not like to waste your time over such a trifle, sir."

"Quite so, Ponsonby," said Dr. Voysey approvingly. "I regret very much that disputes seem to occur continually between boys of the two schools; but certainly I do not think that a complaint should be made about every trifling occurrence."

Dr. Locke compressed his lips.

"This is not a trifling occurrence, sir," he remarked rather tartly. "Great harm might have resulted from the outrage committed by Ponsonby—for it was nothing short of an outrage."

"It was a rotten trick——" Bunter began.

"If this boy, Punter, or Bunter, does not keep silent I do not see how we are to get to the bottom of this affair," said Dr. Voysey, peevishly.

"Be silent, Bunter!"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"You left the ruins, Ponsonby. Where were the Greyfriars boys then?"

"They were in the old priory, sir, rootin' about," said Ponsonby. "I did not notice especially what they were doin'."

"Did you see them go down into the vaults?"

"No, sir."

"Did you know they had descended to explore the vaults?"

"Not in the least, sir," said Ponsonby, with cool hardihood.

"MAGNET" PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 37.—George Tubb (of the Third).



As the leader of the lags of the Third Form at Greyfriars, George Tubb undoubtedly deserves a place in this gallery. Just take a peep at his chivvy and read for yourselves the cheeky confidence that oozes out of it, the self-assurance of the born leader. It's an attractive face, too—wholesome and typical of the British boy. Mr. Twigg, the master of the Third, doubtless considers young Tubb to be a bit of a scamp, for he devotes more attention to matters outside the class-room than to matters inside it; but the Third, as a whole, think the world of George Tubb. Certainly he's a vigorous champion of their rights—and their wrongs. And at planning a "rag" young Tubb shows wisdom far beyond his years. Possesses a staunch chum and counsellor in Percival Spencer Paget.

"Why, you——" gasped Bunter.

"Be silent, Bunter!" snapped Dr. Locke. "How dare you speak?"

"Oh, sir—yes, sir!" stuttered Bunter.

"Really, this boy's interruptions are intolerable!" said Dr. Voysey, with a glare at Bunter. "Did you, Ponsonby, return to the ruins after the Greyfriars boys had gone down into the vaults and close the slab of stone after them?"

"Certainly not, sir!"

"Very well! Dr. Locke, if you desire to question Ponsonby——" said the Head of Highcliffe.

"I am ready, sir," said Ponsonby, with an air of respect and frankness. "I can only hope that Dr. Locke does not believe me guilty of such a rotten trick. Certainly, I am quite innocent of it!"

"I should be sorry to believe any boy guilty of such a dastardly action," said the Head of Greyfriars sternly. "But the case appears to me to be clear. The stone could not have closed of itself; it was closed by some malicious hand. You have denied that you returned to the ruins after my boys had gone down to the vaults, Ponsonby."

"Certainly, sir!"

"You were seen to do so, and to creep in a surreptitious manner towards the archway where the vaults open," said Dr. Locke.

Ponsonby's glib look faded a little. For a terrifying moment he wondered who had seen him. If it were some witness whose statement could not be doubted, some master or prefect of Greyfriars—— Ponsonby turned quite cold at the thought, but he kept his coolness.

"May I ask who saw me—or was supposed to see me, sir?" he inquired.

"Bunter," said the Head.

"Yes, rather!" said Bunter, able to speak at last. "You cad, I saw you—watched you coming, and saw you sneaking in. I wasn't going down with the other fellows, and I only followed them because I saw you sneaking up, and I knew you'd pitch into me if you found me alone, you rotter. The fellows thrashed you for letting off a catapult and hitting Marjorie Hazeldene with a stone, and that's why you shut them up in the vaults, and me, too, you awful blackguard!"

And Bunter blinked savagely at the dandy of Highcliffe, expecting to see him crumple up, as it were, under this burst of indignant accusation. He was surprised and disappointed.

Ponsonby looked at him coolly, shrugged his shoulders, and burst into a slight laugh.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter—as Usual!

"WHY, you cheeky rotter!" exclaimed Bunter.

"Silence, Bunter!"

"But, sir—"

"Do not use such expressions," said Dr. Locke. "I can understand your indignation, Bunter. But you must not express it in such a way."

Dr. Voysey pursed his lips.

"The matter seems to me far from clear," he said. "Bunter declares that he saw Ponsonby returning to the ruins and—"

"In a syrupstigious manner," said Bunter.

"In—in what?"

"A syrupstigious manner."

"The foolish boy means surreptitious, I think," said Dr. Locke.

"Oh! Quite so! But even if Ponsonby returned to the ruins he might have done so without malicious intent. Bunter did not see him close the stone."

"I was watching him all the time, sir!" exclaimed Bunter.

Ponsonby's eyes gleamed.

"You say you saw me close the stone?" he exclaimed.

"Yes; I jolly well did!"

The cautions Harry Wharton & Co. had impressed on Bunter had been of no avail.

Possibly Bunter felt that, as Ponsonby was lying, he was entitled to lie as well as Ponsonby. Or possibly Bunter would have slipped into exaggeration in any case. Bunter, indeed, hardly realised that he was lying. He knew that Ponsonby had closed the stone after the explorers of the vaults, and he knew that Pon knew that he knew. And verbal accuracy never had appealed to Billy Bunter.

"That alters the case a little," said Dr. Voysey. "Bunter positively declares that he saw Ponsonby closing the stone?"

"Positively and absolutely," said Bunter. "He jolly well knows I did, too."

"May I speak, sir?" asked Ponsonby in a silky voice.

"Certainly!"

"I think I'm entitled to say, sir, that Bunter is well known to be untruthful," said Ponsonby. "Any Greyfriars fellow will admit that."

"Oh, really, you know—"

"And he is speaking falsely now, sir, as I can prove," went on Ponsonby. "He says he saw me close down the stone. But he has already said that he had followed the other fellows into the vaults. Nobody who was in the vaults could possibly have seen who closed the stone."

Bunter started.

Dr. Locke started, too, a little; and Dr. Voysey looked very grim.

"I must question this boy, Bunter," he said. "With your permission, Dr. Locke—"

"Certainly, sir!"

"You followed your companions into the vaults, Bunter?"

"Ye-es, sir," gasped Bunter.

"You were with them when the stone was closed?"

"No—yes—yes!"

"How far were you from the entrance to the vaults?"

"I—I think—"

"Kindly answer me at once!"

"Only—only a short distance, sir," stammered Bunter. "A dozen yards—I mean a dozen feet—that is, a few feet, sir."

"Bunter!" said Dr. Locke, in a deep, warning voice.

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"It's immaterial, sir," said Ponsonby airily. "If he was in the vaults at all he could not see who closed the stone. There's a narrow, winding stone stair goes down to the vaults."

"I—I was on the stair," gasped Bunter, realising that he had put his foot in it—as he generally did when he departed from the truth.

"You were on the stair?" exclaimed Dr. Voysey.

"Yes," gasped Bunter.

"You have already said that you followed your companions into the vaults."

"I—I meant—"

"Well, what did you mean?"

"I—I—I meant that I—I was going to follow them into the vaults," stammered Bunter. "That's what I really meant to say, sir. It—it comes to the same thing."

"It does not come to the same thing," said Dr. Voysey grimly. "Dr. Locke, this boy is speaking untruthfully."

Dr. Locke's face was red.

"I am afraid so," he admitted. "I have no doubt whatever that Bunter saw Ponsonby creeping back to close the stone, as he first stated; but obviously it was impossible for him to have actually seen Ponsonby in the act of closing it."

"You do not ask me, sir, to accept the evidence of a boy who mixes what is possibly true, with what is obviously false?" asked Dr. Voysey dryly. "I should be very much to blame, I think, if I found a Highcliffe boy guilty on such evidence. I am bound to say that I do not believe a single word of Bunter's statements, and that I regard him as an utterly unscrupulous and untrustworthy boy."

"All the fellows know that Ponsonby did it!" gasped Bunter.

"They can know nothing of the kind, and what they may suspect is beside the point. You have lied, sir!" exclaimed Dr. Voysey. "If I were your Headmaster, I should punish you severely for having brought a false accusation."

"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Bunter.

Dr. Locke rose to his feet. His opinion was unaltered; but it was clear that the matter was at an end now. He could hardly expect the Head of Highcliffe to convict on Billy Bunter's extraordinary evidence.

"Ponsonby, you are quite cleared in my eyes," said Dr. Voysey. "I trust that you are cleared in Dr. Locke's also."

"Nothing of the kind," said Dr. Locke. "But I quite realise that I can say no more, in the circumstances, and I will take my leave, sir."

And with a sign to Bunter to follow him, the Head of Greyfriars quitted the study.

"You may return to your Form-room, Ponsonby," said Dr. Voysey. "You are quite cleared, and I can only hope that that unscrupulous boy will be adequately punished by his headmaster."

"Thank you, sir!" said Ponsonby.

The dandy of Highcliffe walked cheerily back to the Fourth Form-room. Gaddy and Monson grinned at him as he came in; Pon's manner showed that he had come through the ordeal with flying colours. The Caterpillar grinned, too. His opinion was that Pon had succeeded in lying himself out of a scrape—and that opinion was well-founded.

Pon was in high feather that morning. He had a narrow escape, and he knew it; but all was safe now, and he rejoiced accordingly. Billy Bunter, as he rolled back to Greyfriars in the

Head's car, did not rejoice. The Head did not speak a word during the return; but his expression was terrifying to Bunter. The Owl of the Remove quaked when, on arriving at Greyfriars, Dr. Locke bade him follow him to his study.

There, the Head gave Bunter a lecture on truthfulness, which he sorely needed. Bunter did not mind the lecture very much, but he had a deep apprehension that there was something worse to follow.

He was right.

Having talked to Bunter steadily for ten minutes, Dr. Locke introduced his cane into the affair, to impress his words more weightily upon Bunter's fat mind. When Billy Bunter left the Head's study, he was wriggling painfully, and groaning dismally—quite a contrast to Ponsonby of Highcliffe, whose interview with his headmaster had ended so satisfactorily.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bumps for Bunter!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. looked for Bunter, when morning classes ended in the Remove Form-room.

They were feeling deeply uneasy.

Bunter had not returned to the Form-room; and they did not find him in the corridors or the quad when they came out from class. It was not till they looked into Study No. 7 in the Remove passage that they sighted Bunter.

They did not discover him in a happy mood.

The fat junior was in the study arm-chair in a state of collapse, groaning dismally, and rubbing his fat hands.

He blinked mournfully at the chums of the Remove through his spectacles, as they appeared in the doorway.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here you are!" said Bob.

Groan!

"What's the matter with you, Bunter?" asked Wharton.

Groan!

"The matterfulness seems to be terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Groan!

"You've been over to Highcliffe with the Head?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"Ow! Yes!"

"What happened?" inquired Nugent.

"Ow! Wow! Wow!"

Bunter groaned dismally.

"I say, you fellows, it's rotten!" he mumbled. "A fellow expects his own headmaster to back him up! Oh! Wow! That cad Ponsonby has got off, after all and the Head has licked me. Ow! Wow! That old donkey, Dr. Voysey, didn't believe me—ow! or made out that he didn't! Wow! And the Head has given me six on each hand—ow!"

"You fat idiot—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"I suppose that means that you told crammers at Highcliffe, just as we thought," exclaimed the captain of the Remove angrily.

"I may have put in a few details," said Bunter cautiously. "I wasn't going to let Ponsonby off if I could help it. He had the cheek to deny that he shut us up in the vaults."

"He would!" said Bob Cherry contemptuously.

"And when I said I saw him—"

"You didn't see him," snapped Wharton. "Nobody saw him shutting up the stone. We knew he had done it, but you didn't see him do it any more than we did."

"Practically saw him, you know," urged Bunter. "I saw him sneaking up, and knew what he was sneaking up for. Wasn't that near enough?"

"No; you fat rotter, it wasn't! Why couldn't you stick to the exact truth, as we warned you?" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"So you told lies, after all, and made the Head of Highcliffe believe that it was a put-up story!" exclaimed Wharton.

"We knew he would!" said Nugent. "Bunter couldn't stick to the truth if he tried—not that he's ever tried."

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"It's rotten," said Harry. "It puts us into a rotten position all round—as well as getting Ponsonby off. Courtenay and De Courcy may believe that we've put up this story against Pon—Pon and his friends will make the most of it. All because that fat rascal couldn't stick to the truth for once."

Groan!

"Bump him!" said Bob Cherry.

"I say, you fellows—" roared Bunter.

But it was useless for Bunter to protest. The chums of the Remove were too intensely exasperated. In the first place, Bunter had brought the Head into the matter; in the second place, he had lied and made the accusation look doubtful, if not actually false. The juniors collared William George Bunter and jerked him out of the arm-chair.

Bump!

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

Bump!

"Whooooooop!"

Bunter was left roaring in Study No. 7, as the Famous Five walked away with clouded brows.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"What on earth's the row?" asked Peter Todd, coming into his study, and staring at the fat junior as he sat on the floor. "What's this game, Bunter?"

"I say, Toddy," gasped Bunter. "Look here, I've been licked by the Head, and ragged by those rotters! You go after Wharton and give him a jolly good hiding, Toddy. I'll hold your jacket."

Peter Todd chuckled.

"What did they do?" he asked.

"Bumped me!" gasped Bunter.

"Twice!"

"Did they kick you?"

"Eh! No!"

"That was a mistake," said Peter Todd gravely. "But if they didn't. I will, old fat man. Where will you have it?"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Say where!"

Bunter squirmed away and scrambled to his feet.

"Look here, you beast!" he roared. "You're a worse beast than the other beasts! Keep off! Yaroooh!"

Bunter dodged out of Study No. 7, leaving Peter Todd laughing.

Meanwhile, Harry Wharton & Co. were holding a consultation in Study No. 1. That Ponsonby should escape with impunity, after what he had done, was not to be thought of—from the point of view of the Famous Five. It was, as Bob Cherry said, the limit; and his chums agreed.

"The terrific thrashfulness is the proper caper!" suggested Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Harry Wharton nodded.

"Pon's got off a flogging by some hard lying," he said. "We don't care

about that—so long as he answers to us for what he did. He can pick whichever one of us he likes—with or without gloves. Even Ponsonby can't refuse that."

"Good!" said Bob.

"One of us can bike over to Highcliffe after classes, and give him a message—leaving him to fix time and place," said Harry. "If he doesn't come up to the scratch we'll think of something else. One thing's jolly certain—he's not going to get off scot-free after shutting up Marjorie and Clara in the vaults—he's got to learn that there's a limit."

"Yes, rather."

"The ratherfulness is terrific."

And after classes that day Bob Cherry

friars junior, till Bob disappeared into the big doorway of the House.

Cecil Ponsonby returned to his seat with a thoughtful brow. He was not unconscious of the fact that Gaddy and Monson were grinning at one another.

"After you, Pon, what?" asked Gaddy.

"I suppose you expected trouble, old bean?" remarked Monson.

Ponsonby gave his friends an unpleasant look. He had, as a matter of fact, expected trouble. He had been giving the matter a good deal of thought that day. But he answered airily:

"I dare say that cad has come over to see Courtenay about the cricket. Courtenay's lot are playing Greyfriars in a week or two, you know. No bizney of mine."



"Cherry," said Mr. Mobbs sternly, "have you come here to pick a quarrel with Ponsonby of my Form?" "I've come here to bring him a challenge!" answered Bob sturdily, "and if Ponsonby's spoken about it, perhaps he's told you the reason!" (See Chapter 7.)

wheeled out his bicycle and pedalled away on the Courtfield road, heading for Highcliffe.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Ponsonby's Way!

"GREYFRIARS rotter!" said Gadsby.

Ponsonby glanced up. Pon and Gaddy and Monson were in their study at Highcliffe, at tea, when Gadsby glanced from the window, and discerned the stalwart figure of Bob Cherry crossing from the gates.

"Where?" asked Ponsonby.

"Here?"

"Just comin' in."

Ponsonby stepped to the window. His brows contracted at the sight of Bob Cherry, and he watched the Grey-

The study door opened, and Vavasour of the Fourth came in. Vavasour gave Pon a rather curious look.

"There's a Greyfriars cad askin' for you downstairs," he said.

"Let him ask," said Ponsonby.

"You're not goin' to see him?"

"Why should I? I don't know any of those outsiders, and I've nothin' to do with them."

"He's talking to Courtenay and the Caterpillar—"

"Let him talk."

"I fancy it's a challenge or somethin'—"

"Oh, rot!" said Ponsonby. "There's been too much raggin' with those Greyfriars cads lately, an' I'm fed-up with it. Mobby is down on it, too. I'm keepin' clear of them."

Ponsonby's friends looked at one another.

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"The Head's warned me to avoid trouble with them," said Ponsonby, with a faint flush in his cheeks. "I'm not goin' to get into a row with the Head because a Greyfriars ruffian is lookin' for trouble. Let him go and eat coke!"

"Oh, absolutely!" said Vavasour.

There was a tap at the door and it opened again. This time it was Rupert de Courcy who looked in, with an urbane smile on his face.

"Pon here?" he asked. "Oh, here you are, Pon! Am I interruptin' you?"

"You can come in," said Ponsonby.

"Thanks! I will."

"Take a pew, Caterpillar, old man," said Gadsby. "We're havin' a game of nap after tea. You'll join up?"

De Courcy shook his head.

"Franky would be shocked," he said gravely. "Besides, there's other business on hand. I've come to offer to be Pon's second."

"I'm not lookin' for a second," said Ponsonby.

"But you'll want one, dear man. There's a Greyfriars man come over, and he's waitin' downstairs. I undertook to be a messenger as Bob Cherry isn't exactly persona grata in this study. Everythin' is to be arranged pleasantly and amicably. You choose time and place, and pick out your giddy opponent."

Ponsonby set his lips.

"I'm not scrappin' with those cads," he said. "The Head's spoken to me specially on the subject of raggin' with Greyfriars."

"Shouldn't you have thought of that before you shut them up in the vaults yesterday?" suggested the Caterpillar gently. "It's a bit late in the day to think of it now, Pon."

"Mind your own bizney."

"Of course, we all know what a peaceable chap you are, Pon, and how strong you are on law an' order, an' all that," said the Caterpillar, with a bland smile at the grinning knuts. "But may I point out that if you refuse this challenge, after what you've done, you're rather lettin' Highcliffe down? They'll say over at Greyfriars that we're showin' the white feather on this side."

"They can say what they like," said Ponsonby sullenly.

"They'll be saying it here, too, Pon, if you don't play up," urged the Caterpillar, with gentle insistence. "I've heard the whole story now, and it was thick, Pon—very thick. You ought to have remembered that there were girls in the party, when you shut them up in the vaults—you ought really to have remembered that, Pon. If you're hard up for a second, I don't mind actin' for you."

"There's the door!" said Ponsonby.

"You won't see Cherry, then?"

"No."

The Caterpillar sighed.

"The fightin' spirit of Highcliffe seems to be dyin' out," he remarked. "But perhaps you'll think it over, Pon. We're goin' to give Cherry tea in our study—and if you like to drop in and fix matters up, in a friendly way, you'll be welcome. Think it over, dear man."

And the Caterpillar ambled away.

Ponsonby looked round at his friends. He did not fail to read the expressions on the faces of Gadsby, Monson, and Vavasour.

"You fellows think I ought to accept?" he exclaimed.

"Well, how the thump can you refuse?" asked Gadsby testily. "All very well to spin a yarn to old Voysey, but

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the Greyfriars men know what you did, and you're bound to answer for it. You could have let them alone if you'd liked, couldn't you? If you back down now it lets us all down."

"Absolutely," said Vavasour.

"If you think I funk a scrap with them—" began Ponsonby savagely.

"Well, if you don't, now's your time to play up," said Monson. "I know what the fellows will say if you don't take it on."

Ponsonby drew a deep breath.

"If you fellows think I ought to take it on, I'll do it," he said. "You can get on with your game. I'll trot along and see that Greyfriars cad."

"Good man!" said Monson.

Ponsonby left the study.

He closed the door after him, and glanced along the passage towards Courtenay's study. The door of that room was open, and he could hear the voices of three juniors within—among them the powerful voice of Bob Cherry of Greyfriars.

But Ponsonby's footsteps did not stray in the direction of that apartment. He went quietly downstairs, and tapped at the door of Mr. Mobbs' study.

The master of Highcliffe Fourth greeted him with a nod and an agreeable smile. Mr. Mobbs was always pleased to see his dear Ponsonby. Once Mr. Mobbs had been asked to Ponsonby's home in a vacation, and had basked in the sunshine of Ponsonby's noble pater and Ponsonby's lofty connections. He lived in hopes of being asked again—and that depended on Pon.

"Come in, my dear Ponsonby!" he said.

Dear Ponsonby came in.

"You'll excuse my botherin' you, sir," he said. "I'm in a rather difficult position, and you've been kind enough to tell me, sir, that you're always willin' to give a fellow advice. My father has told me never to hesitate to ask your advice, sir—he respects your judgment very much."

Mr. Mobbs beamed.

"My dear boy," he exclaimed, enormously bucked by the information that a peer of the realm respected his judgment, "I am, of course, entirely at your service. I regard myself as being in loco parentis, Ponsonby, while you are at Highcliffe and in my Form. What is the difficulty?"

"You are aware, sir, that there's been a lot of trouble with the Greyfriars fellows," said Ponsonby. "Dr. Voysey has warned me to keep clear of them and avoid further disputes."

"I trust, Ponsonby, that you will carry out the Head's wishes. I quite understand that your own high spirit might lead you in a different way," said Mr. Mobbs. "You must remember, however, that disputes with these—these persons are beneath you. They are not entitled to your notice."

"A fellow doesn't like to refuse a challenge, sir," said Ponsonby.

"No doubt. But you must not allow a quarrel to be forced upon you, Ponsonby," said Mr. Mobbs. "Indeed, as your Form master, I must forbid you to do anything of the sort."

"If you put it like that, sir—"

"I do, Ponsonby—most decidedly. I am answerable for you to your noble parent, and I cannot allow anything of the kind."

"Well, sir, I thought I'd ask your advice," said Ponsonby. "You advise

me to refuse to see the Greyfriars fellow who has come over here to pick a row with me?"

"Here?" exclaimed Mr. Mobbs. "Here—at Highcliffe? What impudence! Certainly you must not see him, Ponsonby! Where is this impudent boy now?"

"He's a friend of Courtenay's, sir, and is in Courtenay's study now. Perhaps, sir, if you spoke a word to him, he would clear off and let the matter drop."

Mr. Mobbs jumped up.

"Certainly I will speak to him—and emphatically, too. I have never heard of such impudence! I am aware, Ponsonby, that you have been molested by these—these persons outside the school gates. But to come here to Highcliffe, to force a quarrel, it really is unheard of! I will see this impudent boy at once!"

And Mr. Mobbs, in a great state of indignation and anger, whisked out of the study and started for the Fourth Form passage.

Ponsonby strolled away with a smile on his face.

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THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Wrathy!

BOB CHERRY sat down cheerily to tea in Courtenay's study. In spite of the troubles with Ponsonby & Co., the friendship between the Famous Five, of Greyfriars, and Courtenay and his set at Highcliffe remained unbroken. Frank Courtenay sometimes felt his position difficult, between the two parties; but he had little to do with Ponsonby & Co., who were slackers in class and slackers at games, and had nothing in common with the captain of the Fourth. Courtenay would willingly have backed up fellows belonging to his own school if Ponsonby & Co. had played the game—which Pon & Co. never did. The story of what had happened at the old priory incensed him deeply; while it had only made the Caterpillar smile cynically, and remark that "dear old Pon was excellin' himself."

Courtenay was conscious, too, that Pon's refusal of the Greyfriars challenge "let down" Highcliffe; and he was glad to keep Bob to tea, in the hope that Ponsonby would think it over, and decide to play up before the Remove fellow left.

So when there were footsteps in the passage, approaching the study doorway, his rather clouded face cleared a

little. He supposed that it was Ponsonby coming, after all. The Caterpillar grinned.

"Dear old Pon's thought it over," he said. "His pals have bucked him up, I fancy. Trot in, old bean! Oh gad!" added the Caterpillar, as the thin form and meagre face of Mr. Mobbs appeared in the study doorway.

The three juniors rose to their feet at once.

"What? What did you say, De Courcy?" exclaimed Mr. Mobbs.

"Excuse me, sir—I thought it was Ponsonby comin' in," said the Caterpillar. "I wouldn't have addressed you as 'old bean,' sir, if I'd known. So kind of you to come to tea with us, sir!"

"I have not come to tea, De Courcy. I understand that there is a Greyfriars boy here?"

"A friend of ours, sir," said Courtenay.

"I am sorry, Courtenay, to find that you have such a friend," said Mr. Mobbs severely. "This boy—what is his name?"

"My name's Cherry, sir," said Bob, rather grimly. "And I don't see why

NOISE!

GIFTS!

GIFTS!

week's "Magnet."

Price as usual—Twopence.

you should be sorry to find that Courtenay has such a friend, Mr. Mobbs."

"No impudence, boy!" snapped Mr. Mobbs. "If you have come here to speak to Courtenay on matters connected with games, I have no objection, of course. I hardly approve of cricket matches between this school and Greyfriars, but I have no desire to interfere in such matters. But I have reason to believe that you have come here to pick a quarrel with a boy in my Form."

Bob's lip curled.

"Has Ponsonby told you that, sir?"

"I decline to be questioned, Cherry! I regard your question as impudent!"

"Mr. Mobbs!" exclaimed Courtenay, with a flushed face. "Please remember that Cherry is a guest in this study."

"You should not treat a boy as a guest, Courtenay, when he comes here with such intentions!" snapped Mr. Mobbs. "Cherry, I demand a truthful answer from you!"

"You'll get a truthful answer or none, sir!" said Bob disdainfully.

"Have you come here to pick a quarrel with Ponsonby, of my Form?" demanded Mr. Mobbs.

"I've come here to bring him a challenge," said Bob sturdily. "If Ponsonby has told you about it, perhaps he's told you the reason—"

"I am aware that a false accusation has been brought against Ponsonby," snapped Mr. Mobbs.

"The accusation was true."

"Do not bandy words with me, Cherry! Ponsonby has been forbidden by his headmaster to enter into any quarrels with Greyfriars boys, and nothing of the kind will be allowed. You will leave this school at once—at once, sir, and without seeing Ponsonby!"

"Oh gad!" murmured the Caterpillar.

Courtenay's face was crimson.

"Very well, sir," said Bob Cherry quietly; and he picked up his cap. "I'm ready to go. But you can tell Ponsonby that he will not get off, all the same, and that he's got to answer for the dirty trick he played on us and the Cliff House girls."

"Do you think that I shall carry an impudent message for you?" hooted Mr. Mobbs. "I shall complain to your headmaster of this outrageous proceeding on your part, Cherry! Now, leave this school. I shall myself conduct you to the gates, and see that you cause no disturbance here before leaving."

"I'm sorry for this, Cherry," said Courtenay, in a low voice.

"Oh, all serene!" said Bob. "If Ponsonby's cad enough to bring the masters into it, it can't be helped. Ta-ta!"

"Follow me!" thundered Mr. Mobbs. "Waiting for you, sir!" said Bob cheerily.

Mr. Mobbs, with an angry snort, strode out of the study, and Bob followed him. They went downstairs, and a good many Highcliffe fellows stared at them curiously as they left the House.

Mr. Mobbs strode away towards the gates with his hurried, jerky step, his face red with anger. Bob Cherry walked after him cheerily. At the porter's lodge he took his bicycle.

"Now go!" snapped Mr. Mobbs.

"I'm off, sir!" said Bob. "Keep your wool on!"

"What—what?"

"Keep your wool on!" said Bob, as he put a leg over his machine. "Nothing to get excited about. Take it calmly."

Two or three Highcliffe fellows, lounging about the gateway, grinned. Mr. Mobbs became crimson with rage.

"Cherry! You impertinent young rascal—"

"Ta-ta, old bean!" said Bob.

"Upon my word—" gasped Mr. Mobbs.

He made a rush at the junior, with the intention of boxing Bob's ears as he went.

At the same moment the pedals revolved, and the bicycle shot forward, carrying Bob out of Mr. Mobbs' reach. Mr. Mobbs' uplifted hand swept downward with terrific force, and, meeting with no resistance, had the effect of overbalancing Mr. Mobbs. He pitched forward and dropped on his knees.

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Mobbs.

Bob glanced over his shoulder, and burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh! Ow! You—you young rascal!" Mr. Mobbs scrambled up in a fury.

"Boy! Stop at once! I—I—I—"

Mr. Mobbs rushed after Bob Cherry. Bob drove at his pedals, and raced away, laughing, with the angry Highcliffe master rushing on his track. In a few moments, however, Mr. Mobbs realised that the chase was hopeless, and he halted, gasping for breath, and red as a turkey-cock. Bob Cherry waved a cheery hand to him from the distance, as he vanished along the Courtfield road.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The White Feather!

"WHARTON!"

"Yes, Wingate!"

"Mr. Quelch's study," said the captain of Greyfriars. "Take the other young rascals with you."

"Which?" asked Harry.

Wingate grinned.

"Cherry, Bull, Nugent, and Hurreo Singh," he said.

"Oh! Anything wrong, Wingate?" inquired the captain of the Remove.

"Looks like it!"

Wingate of the Sixth walked away down the Remove passage. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent looked at one another rather blankly. They had been about to begin prep in Study No. 1 when the prefect looked in with his message from their Form master.

"What is it this time, I wonder?" asked Nugent.

"Goodness knows!"

The three other members of the Co. were called, and the Famous Five proceeded downstairs together.

"For it, you chaps?" called out Skinner of the Remove. "Put some exercise books in your bags, dear men. You'll need them."

Harry Wharton & Co. went down the Remove staircase unheeding Skinner. Whether they were "for it" or not, they did not know, but the summons to their Form master's study was ominous.

"I ratherfully think it is the esteemed Ponsonby again," remarked Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh.

"We haven't touched him—so far," said Harry.

"We're going to," said Johnny Bull. "But I suppose even Pon isn't howling before he's hurt."

"But the excellent and ludicrous Cherry has been over to Highcliffe to see him, and was turn-outfully excluded by the ridiculous Mobbs," said the dusky junior. "There has been an esteemed complaint from Highcliffe, in my estimable opinion."

"Shouldn't wonder," said Bob. "Just like that little cad Mobbs to ring up on the telephone, and make out that I cheeked him, or something."

"And you didn't?" asked Nugent.

"Well, I told him to keep his wool on," argued Bob. "And he fell over trying to punch my head. I never asked him to punch my head."

"Depend on it, it's Mobbs," said Wharton. "Inky's right. Well, it can't be helped."

The Famous Five presented themselves in Mr. Quelch's study. They found the Remove master with a frowning brow.

"Come in!" said Mr. Quelch. "I have to speak to you boys very seriously."

"Oh, sir!" murmured Wharton, while his comrades looked as innocent as they could.

"I have received a telephone message from Highcliffe School, from Mr. Mobbs, the master of the Fourth Form there."

"Oh!"

"It appears that you visited Highcliffe this afternoon, Cherry?"

"Yes, sir."

"Mr. Mobbs informs me that you went there to seek a quarrel with a boy named Ponsonby."

"Hem!"

"And that he ordered you to leave, and that you treated him with personal disrespect, Cherry?"

"I left at once, sir."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 959.

"I am aware that you boys have friends at Highcliffe School, with whom you have games fixtures," said the Remove master. "This undoubtedly necessitates visits and meetings occasionally. At the same time, it is the Head's wish, and my wish, that the incessant disputes with other of the Highcliffe boys should cease. Mr. Mobbs has requested me to order boys in my Form to keep away from Highcliffe, and I cannot refuse."

"Oh, sir!"

"If this causes inconvenience, you have only yourselves to thank," said Mr. Quelch. "You will understand that from now until further notice, Highcliffe School is placed out of bounds for you."

The Famous Five looked grim.

"I am aware that you feel a deep resentment towards Ponsonby," went on Mr. Quelch. "He acted in a dastardly manner towards you, I believe, and he has contrived to escape punishment from his headmaster. But I trust that you boys have not thought of taking the law into your own hands on this subject."

Mr. Quelch scanned five faces very keenly. The juniors did not reply, but it was not difficult for him to read their thoughts.

Undoubtedly the Famous Five had thought of taking the law into their own hands with regard to the dandy of Highcliffe, and were still thinking of it.

"I am afraid that you had some such idea," said the Remove master severely.

"Hem!"

"You must dismiss such an idea from your minds at once. Ponsonby has acted very badly, but, fortunately, no harm came of his action; and there is, after all, no definite proof against him. You five boys are not to go to Highcliffe, or near Highcliffe, until I give you permission."

The chums of the Remove were grimly silent.

"Highcliffe School is, for the present, out of bounds for you," said the Remove master. "You understand me?"

"Yes, sir!" said Harry.

"I trust that this matter will close here," said Mr. Quelch. "But I am bound to warn you, that if you break bounds in the direction of Highcliffe, you will be very severely punished. That is all. You may go."

And the Famous Five went.

They did not speak till they were back in the Remove passage. Then Bob Cherry said laconically:

"Done!"

"The donefulness is terrific!" remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Harry Wharton set his lips.

"Pon put Mobby on to me, of course," said Bob Cherry. "Now Mobby's put Quelch on to us. No good blaming Quelch, he's bound to keep the peace, if he can. But—"

"But Ponsonby isn't getting off so easily as all that," said the captain of the Remove.

"No fear!"

"We're bound to keep clear of Highcliffe now," said Harry Wharton. "This will blow over—it's got to, in fact—before the cricket match comes along. But Pon won't keep all that time. The rotter! Playing a dirty trick on us, and then cringing behind that little beast Mobby. Pon's got to be brought up to the scratch."

"But how?" asked Nugent.

"We'll jolly well send him the white feather," exclaimed Bob Cherry. "That may make him get a move on."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No 959.

"Fat lot Pon will care for that!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Well, even Pon will care, if all Highcliffe calls him a funk," said Bob. "Blessed if I thought even Pon was such a worm as this! We'll hand him the white feather. Even Pon won't be able to stand that!"

"We can't go over to Highcliffe!" said Nugent.

"We can send a letter with the giddy white feather in it."

"And Pon will chuck it into the study fire without saying a word."

"There's more ways than one of killing a cat, old scout. We can send it to another chap, with a special request to hand it on to Pon in company."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Good egg! What price the Caterpillar? He would do it!"

"That's the wheeze."

And that evening, after prep, a letter was written in Study No. 1, and posted—with an enclosure—addressed to R. de Courcy, at Highcliffe School.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Present from Greyfriars!

"FRANKY!"

"Hallo!"

"I had a letter this mornin'." "You have lots of letters, old chap," said Courtenay, with a smile.

"Anything special about this one?"

"Yes," smiled the Caterpillar. "A fellow's sendin' a giddy present to Ponsonby of our Form, and he's asked me to be the giddy go-between."

Courtenay stared.

"That's jolly odd," he said.

"Yes, isn't it? But as I'm asked, it wouldn't be civil to refuse, would it?" asked the Caterpillar. "I'm bound to hand over to Ponsonby the little present that's sent for him. I suppose I'm not entitled to keep it?"

"Eh? Of course not!"

"Besides, it's not a thing I should care to keep," smiled the Caterpillar. "It's a suitable thing for Pon—dear old Pon!—but really not my style at all."

"Well, you can hand it to Ponsonby, I suppose, whatever it is," said the captain of the Highcliffe Fourth, rather perplexed.

"Exactly. I want you to come along as a witness to the handin' over," said De Courcy. "Pon's a modest sort of chap, he would very likely want to keep dark a testimonial of this sort. There's a little party goin' on in Pon's study now—and it's a good opportunity. Will you trot along with me?"

"I was going down to the cricket—"

"Dear man, you can go down to the cricket afterwards, and I'll come with you. Let's get rid of this testimonial first."

"I don't quite catch on!"

"What's the need?" yawned the Caterpillar. "Let's go and see Pon, and hand him his jolly old present. I've been waitin' for a chance to catch Pon with his friends about him, so that there would be plenty of witnesses. By the way, what do you think of Pon refusin' the Greyfriars challenge, and gettin' Mobby to shoo them off?"

"I think he's acted like a coward, as well as a rotten ruffian," said Courtenay, with a frown. "It's a disgrace to Highcliffe. But that's nothing new for Ponsonby. Still, it's no business of ours."

"Isn't it?" said the Caterpillar. "A man doesn't like to see his school let down—and doesn't like fellows sendin' white feathers along. My idea is that Pon ought to be bucked up. After all, the fellow can scrap, if he chooses. If

he's afraid of gettin' his handsome features spoiled, he should keep out of mischief—what?"

"Yes. But—"

"Come on, then, and let's get it over. Hallo, Smithson!" called out the Caterpillar. "Come along to Pon's study!"

Smithson of the Fourth stared.

"Bother Pon!" he answered. "I've got nothing to do with Pon!"

"It's a presentation," said the Caterpillar gravely. "It's a complimentary letter, an' a presentation from admirin' friends of Pon at another school. It will be worth seein'. Come, an' bring your friends."

"Is it a lark?" asked Smithson, perplexed.

"You've caught on at once! It's somethin' in the nature of a lark," assented the Caterpillar.

"I'll come, then."

"Bring some more fellows. We don't want to keep it to ourselves," said De Courcy. "Mustn't be selfish, you know."

Smithson grinned.

"All serene, if it's up against Pon!" he answered. The superb Ponsonby was not popular with any but his own select circle at Highcliffe—perhaps not very popular even with them.

Courtenay looked puzzled and a little troubled, as he walked with the Caterpillar to Ponsonby's study. But the Caterpillar was airy and cheerful and good-humoured, as usual. He seemed to be enjoying the prospect of the visit to the dandy of Highcliffe.

There was a buzz of voices in Ponsonby's study, as the two juniors approached the door. Pon had gathered a little party of his friends to tea—with banker and cigarettes to follow, as was the custom in Pon's study. De Courcy tapped at the door, and turned the handle, but the door did not open. It was locked on the inside. Ponsonby could depend on Mr. Mobbs not to "catch him out," but he generally locked his study door on these occasions, to make assurance doubly sure. Even the superb Ponsonby had to keep up something like appearances.

De Courcy knocked again.

"Who's there?" called out Ponsonby.

"Little me."

"De Courcy? Go and eat coke!"

"Oh, let the old Caterpillar in!" said the voice of Vavasour. "He will take a hand in the game, if that cad Courtenay isn't with him!"

The Caterpillar laughed.

"Rats! I don't want him!" said Ponsonby.

"But I'm bound to see you, my dear man," drawled the Caterpillar. "It's important business, and it won't wait."

"They won't let you in," said Smithson, coming up the passage with Yates and Benson and several more of the Fourth. "They've got a game on, and they won't open the door."

"Needs must," said the Caterpillar. "If they don't open it, I shall burgle the study. Will you let me in, Pon?"

"No!" shouted Ponsonby.

"Smithson, old bean, hand me that stool from the window," said De Courcy. "I shall have to break the lock."

"You cheeky fool!" shouted Ponsonby.

"Dash it all, Pon, let him in!" exclaimed Gadsby. "We don't want a shindy here. If Mobby came up—"

"He sha'n't come in!" said Ponsonby furiously.

Crash!

"Rupert!" exclaimed Frank Courtenay, as De Courcy crashed the heavy stool on the lock of the door.

(Continued on page 17.)



Harry Wharton's Cricket Supplement

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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.

Boundary Hits! "SCORER"

THAT the education of a batsman is not complete until he has been bowled out for a duck was part of the belief of the famous W. G. Grace, of whom this story is told. A stranger happened to be playing in a team captained by W. G., who said to the unknown batsman: "Where shall I put you in?" "Please yourself," was the reply of the stranger; "but I may say I have never been out for a duck in my life." "In that case," replied W. G., "you can go in last, as you can't be much of a cricketer."

J. M. Taylor, the Australian batsman, is a dentist at Sydney. Yet in this country he has more than once found it impossible to keep his own "stumps" intact.

According to A. C. MacLaren, "the ambition of the modern school of batsmen is to keep their end up somehow or other in order to score from the occasional long hops which the smallest schoolboy could send to the boundary." To put Mr. MacLaren's sentiment in another way, he wants our batsmen to get on in jumps rather than wait for the long hops.

The favourite mascot of the Australians is a stuffed kangaroo. Our business is to knock the stuffing out of it.

Our office-boy says that it is asking for trouble to place a Carr at the head of the England team, because it only needs such a small alteration to put us in the Cart.

According to Collins, his captain, Woodfull, plays the average delivery later than any other first-class batsman. So far as he is concerned, evidently best late.

During a certain match the fielders missed catch after catch. "There's a regular epidemic," remarked one of the players. "Yes," replied another; "but you needn't worry—it isn't catching."

George Hirst says: "I often think that it would do every young cricketer good to be an umpire for three days." But it might not do him good if the players disagreed with the decisions given.

In order to play in a recent match the Kent players had to travel right through the night, and could only snatch a few minutes' sleep prior to the start of the game. No wonder some of them were caught napping.

There is difference of opinion as to whether good cricketers are born or made. Surely, however, Walter Lively can clinch the argument so far as he is concerned, for he was born at Battersea—where a batter should be born.

The MAN IN THE NIGHTSHIRT!

All about the Umpire's job and how it should be done.

IN ordinary club matches it often happens that somebody is pressed into the position of an umpire without any real knowledge or qualification for the job. In boy's matches, for instance, it is quite usual for members of the batting side to umpire while their colleagues are at the wicket. Now, everybody who takes on an umpire's job should know how to do it properly.

One very important thing for the umpire to remember by way of a start is that he is never supposed to give a decision as to whether a batsman is in or out unless an appeal is made to him. The umpire may think that a batsman has been caught at the wicket or is out leg before, but he must keep these views to himself unless some member of the fielding side asks: "How's that?"

It may also be as well if I define the duties of the umpire at each end. The one at the bowler's end is expected to give decisions concerning l.b.w., caught at the wicket, or run out at his end. That is why the umpire at the bowler's end stands immediately behind the wicket, which is the best position from which to view such incidents.

The umpire at the batsman's end decides cases of stumping, run out at his end, or catches of doubtful nature which are made by players nearer to him than to the other umpire.

From experience I have found that it is quite a common thing for the umpire at one end to ask the umpire at the other about certain points on which an appeal has been made. Now, as a matter of fact, the official instructions to umpires are against this attitude being adopted. The umpire whose job it is to give a decision should give such decision without appeal to the other umpire save in those cases which, owing to his view having been obstructed, he is unable to see what has happened. If the umpire does see the incident he should give his decision, and the batsman should always have the benefit of any doubt. In other words, you must never give a man out because you think he is out; you must be sure in your own mind.

One of the things I should like to warn every umpire against is being "bluffed" into giving a wrong decision. Sometimes a fielder, taking a ball low down, will throw it into the air to signify that he has made a catch. But it may not have been a catch at all; the ball may have touched the ground just as the fielder got his hands to it. In such cases the umpire must not be influenced by the action of the field, any more than he should allow himself to be bluffed into giving a wrong decision simply because a confident all-round appeal goes up.

How many umpires know exactly how they should signal certain events to the scorer? And, at the same time, how many scorers know the proper interpretation of correct signalling? For the benefit of both umpires and scorers, therefore, I give these "rules" of signalling:

Boundaries should be signalled by waving the hand from side to side.

Byes should be signalled by raising the open hand above the head.

Leg-byes should be signalled by raising the leg and touching it with the hand.

Wides should be signalled by extending both arms horizontally.

No-balls shall be signalled by extending one arm horizontally.

The decision "Out!" shall be signalled by raising the index-finger above the head.

"One short" shall be signalled by bending the arm upwards and by touching the top of the nearest shoulder with the tips of the fingers of one hand.

Besides signalling, the umpire should "call" distinctly for the information of the players.



JACK^{the} GIANT!

Looking up to J. M. Gregory—Australia's Express Bowler.

By "PAUL PRY"

(Our Travelling Correspondent.)

THERE is one thing about Jack Gregory which cannot be denied—most people simply have to look up to him. Personally, I hate interviewing people who stand six feet three, as the Australian giant does, because you always have a nervous feeling that the odds will be against you if it comes to a fight. But I would certainly rather stand up to Jack Gregory and ask him questions than I would stand up at the wicket and face him when he is sending down those express deliveries.

Well do I remember the remark of a great England batsman made respecting Gregory when he was here with the England team in 1921. "That fellow," he said, "ought to be barred. I believe most of our batsmen are out before they get in when Gregory is bowling."

EXPRESS DELIVERIES!

He really is frightening in a way. He starts to bowl some twenty yards away from the wicket, works up to express speed, and just before delivery makes what can best be described as a sort of Kangaroo jump.

If I may say so without offence, he looks very fierce, too, because he is in such deadly earnest; but, bless you, no greater-hearted cricketer ever went on the field. If by any chance one of his

lightning expresses should hit a batsman on the body or legs, then in the twinkling of an eye, long Jack, the giant, is there to express his regret, and to do everything possible to relieve the pain. Of course, Gregory never means to bowl at the man; the wicket is his object, and he has hit it far too frequently in recent years for any English



JACK GREGORY.

batsman to be really comfortable when facing him.

A TRUE SPORTSMAN!

There is little need for me to tell you that in 1921 it was Gregory mainly, backed up by McDonald, who skittled out the England batsmen time after time. The men met bowling faster than anything to which they had been accustomed. Let me add that Gregory is not all fierceness, however. He has the broad smile of the true sportsman when a specially good stroke sends one of his deliveries to the boundary.

Gregory ought to be a cricketer. His grandfather played for Australia in Test matches against England fifty years ago, and his father has played for our cousins as well. Then out in Australia he is a director of a business from the windows of which he can see the Sydney cricket ground. This business is hardware, and on the field Gregory is the man who can stand hard wear.

Like all the Australians, he doesn't greatly enjoy talking about his cricket; but he will talk of other things. With a twinkle in his eye, he told me that he plays both golf and lawn-tennis, and that, in his view, lawn-tennis is a better game even than cricket. I took that remark with a pinch of salt; but I would certainly rather play against Gregory at lawn-tennis than cricket, because in the former game you have a soft ball.

A GOOD ALL-ROUNDER!

I could fill all this supplement with stuff about Gregory, who, in spite of the fact that he is not quite so fast as he used to be, is even to-day the big personality of the Australia team in every sense. I should rank him well up
(Continued on page 16.)

Strange Tales of Lord's!

Some things you perhaps didn't know about the world's most famous cricket ground.

FOR the first two days of this week the chosen cricketers of England and Australia will be struggling for supremacy at Lord's—the world's most famous cricket ground.

It is not going too far to describe it as such, for if I could tell here the whole story of Lord's I should at the same time tell you practically the whole story of the game of cricket, from the days when there were no rules or laws regarding the size of the bat, the wickets, the ball, or the pitch. But as we cannot go into the whole story of Lord's, let me tell you just as briefly as possible some of the things which I guarantee you did not know about this famous ground which is, of course, the headquarters of cricket, and has been that for over a century.

THE RESULT OF A QUARREL!

In the first place, how did it come to be called "Lord's"? A peculiar name for a cricket ground, surely. I will tell you. One hundred and forty years or more ago there was a cricket club called Hambledon, which played on some fields on the outskirts of London. One day a quarrel broke out between the players of the club, with the result that a

number of them decided to leave and form another club. One, Thomas Lord, was a leading member of the club in those days, and he found for the new club a piece of land in Dorset Square, London. It was Lord's ground, because he owned it, and though Thomas Lord has now been dead and buried for nearly a century, Lord's it still remains.

A HEAVY BLOW!

The present ground, however, is not on the original site. Tom Lord took over the lease of a new ground in 1811, while three years later another move was made to the present site at St. John's Wood, London. Thus there has been cricket played on the ground for one hundred and fifteen years. The developments which had been witnessed in those years can well be imagined. The first primitive stand was burnt down in 1825, and all the original records of the club were destroyed. This was a sad blow to Tom Lord, who soon afterwards gave up his connection with the club, and many really big efforts had to be made to prevent the spot going into the hands of would-be builders.

CHOICE OF INNINGS!

I may tell you that for many years

after this, Lord's—this place of beautiful turf to-day—had the reputation of being the worst cricket ground in the country—a pitch so bad that it became a stock joke that every batsman looked carefully to see if his last insurance premium had been paid ere he went to the wicket! In 1886, however, the ground was re-laid, and twenty years later the present pavilion was built. In the early days at Lord's the game was played under very different conditions from those obtaining to-day. Choice of innings was always granted to the visiting side, who were also allowed to pitch the wickets wherever they chose. The stumps were then only twenty-two inches high and six inches broad, as against the present twenty-seven inches high and eight inches broad.

TEMPUS FUGIT!

In those long-ago days the bowling-crease was marked with a V-shaped cut. Such things as pads and gloves were unknown, and long-stop was allowed to use the biggest handkerchief he could find to stop the ball.

By steady steps, however, the laws of the game were revised, and even now once every year the rulers of cricket meet in the pavilion at Lord's to make any rule alterations considered necessary.

During the past winter further big improvements have been made at Lord's, including the erection of a fine new stand which cost nearly forty thousand pounds. On top of it is a weathervane, showing old Father Time standing over a set of wickets. If we could put back the clock, and bring Thomas Lord back again to see this modern ground, what would he say?

WHEN WE DID WHACK THE AUSTRALIANS!

The Inside History of England's Last Ashes Success.

By S. F. BARNES.

The bowler who "did it" when we last won the Ashes.

EVERY Englishman is hoping that this will be the season when the tide will once more run in England's favour so far as Test match cricket is concerned. Obviously, it is England's turn to win, for we have not been victorious in any series of matches since away back in 1912, and indeed in the fifteen Test games played between the representatives of the two countries since that time England has only once emerged successful. This, of course, is a matter for regret, and a lot of people are apt to weep and wail, as it were, over such a black record. But we needn't worry unduly. English cricket will come back—is coming back.

THOSE GOOD OLD DAYS!

It is not my business here to take on the role of prophet over what will happen during this present season. I have been asked to talk of the times when we did beat Australia; to recall again, for the benefit of cricket followers, that wonderful Australian summer of 1912 when we won four Test matches in succession. Don't get frightened that I am going to conjure up all the details of England's success in that year; rather do I propose to take more of a general summary, and see if there are not some lessons to be learnt from those now remote, but still vivid-in-memory days, when England did beat Australia.

A BIT OF BAD LUCK!

In these days we hear a lot of talk about good luck and bad luck, the "Horseshoe" Collins stuff, and that sort of thing. Well, luck will always play an important part in cricket, but I sometimes think there is a tendency to crumple under strokes of bad luck instead of the more satisfactory way of setting the teeth hard and determining to triumph even in spite of misfortune. That, at any rate, was the spirit of the team which went to Australia for their summer of 1911 and 1912. We had, right at the very outset, surely as bad a piece of luck as any side which ever toured "down under." Our captain, P. F. Warner, scored 151 against South Australia right at the start of the tour, and then became so ill that he never took bat in hand again during the rest of the trip.

THE SPIRIT WHICH WINS!

Such a start was enough to break the hearts of the party, but it seemed to strike us that there was all the greater

need for a big pull all round, and afterwards we showed, as a team—I think I can say this without being accused of boasting—the fighting spirit, without which no side can hope to beat the Australians. Some people in this country, pessimists mostly, talk as if the Australians alone had the fighting temperament. Well, as I say, we lost the services of our captain right at the start of the tour, and we lost the first of the Test matches by 146 runs. Thereafter we were never defeated during the tour, and I think I may say that we were never in real danger of losing another of the Test games. Anyway, we won the remaining four Tests with a fair margin in every case.

WHY FOSTER STARTED THE LEG THEORY!

In the foregoing I think you have a lesson it would indeed be well to remember just now—that the result of the first



S. F. BARNES.

match does not necessarily decide the result of the whole series. We got together as a team in close consultation. Mr. J. W. Douglas, who took over the reins of captaincy, still breathed the spirit of optimism, and after a start which made all Australia think they had a money-for-nothing job on, we became a force too strong for them to contend against. Everybody knows the part which Mr. Frank Foster's bowling played in those games. Between us we took sixty-six wickets out of the ninety-five which fell to English bowling in

the Test matches. And I specially refer to Mr. Foster's bowling to illustrate the benefits of consultation. The left-handed bowler who then captained Warwickshire has been good enough to say that he owed something of his success to my prompting him to adopt the leg theory. I certainly thought he would hold up the Australian batsmen by this method. He did, and took their wickets, too.

MY HAPPIEST MOMENTS!

Our resolution to show the Australian people that we could put up a fight received tremendous impetus at the start of the second game. We again lost the toss—more bad luck, you might say—but there followed for me a few moments of dream-time, for, with only one run scored off my bowling, I got rid of Kellaway, Bardsley, Clem Hill, and Warwick Armstrong. Without any mock modesty I may say that those few moments, the happiest of my cricketering life, did much to win us the second Test. It was a bit of bowling which put the whole team in good humour again. We felt our luck had turned. We were on our toes, on top of the Australians, and we never let go our grip for the remainder of the tour. There you have something of what might be called the psychology of cricket.

BOWLING WHICH BRINGS VICTORY!

Just let me say, as an additional word about the bowling of the 1912 touring team, on good wickets practically throughout, that success lay in the fact that we got pace off the pitch; and, apart from the really fast men, I think history shows that when the pitch is good it is the men who can make the ball turn and pick up pace at the same time who have been most consistently successful in Test matches. Therein is a lesson which should not be overlooked. Don't let me give the impression that all the bowling was done by Mr. Foster and myself. We were carefully nursed by our captain—never kept on too long—and Mr. Douglas showed himself a believer in the virtue of changing the attack. Incidentally, he never lost sight of the importance of putting on a bowler for a particular batsman.

RHODES AND HOBBS!

Of the batting in the tour when we did beat the Australians, I can only speak in general terms owing to the limited space at my command. But those who are old enough will remember some of the things done by Jack Hobbs and Wilfred Rhodes, who at Melbourne, in the fourth Test, when it was still possible for our opponents to turn the tables, scored 323 as the first wicket pair before they were separated. Think over that well, you coming lads who read these notes—that Wilfred Rhodes, the man who got into the Yorkshire team for his bowling, should open the innings as a batsman for England and help to set up a record first-wicket Test match partnership which may never be beaten.

S. F. Barnes

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Don't forget chums, next week's MAGNET contains a magnificent
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AT THE NETS!

By a County Cricketer.

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

No. 5.—THE ART OF BACK PLAY.

LAST week I dealt with the way to play—and to score—from the balls on the off side which were pitched sufficiently well up to make a drive possible. Now we come to another very important part of the education of the young batsman—how to play back. There is little necessity to explain what I mean by that. There are certain deliveries which are not far enough up to make a good drive possible, and yet are not sufficiently short to render a "pull" advisable. To these deliveries on the wicket or just outside the off stump, it is necessary to play back—to play a purely defensive stroke, if I may put it that way. This does not mean that you are never going to score from such deliveries, because even in defensive play the bat can be made to hit the ball as distinct from the ball hitting the bat. All the same, back play is primarily with the object of defending the wicket.

A CHANGE OF METHOD!

In this connection I should like to point out that in recent times a change

has come over what are generally accepted as the best methods of defensive play. In the old days it was customary for the coach to teach the young pupil to keep his right leg firmly fixed to the ground in its original position when making a purely defensive stroke. Nowadays, however, most of our leading batsmen move the right leg backwards—that is, nearer the wicket—in their defensive play, while the right leg also goes across the wicket to the ball, which is pitched off the stumps.

THE ADVANTAGES!

Here I am going to say that the modern method beats the old method, and I am going to advise you to move the right leg back towards the wicket in making a defensive stroke. I am giving this advice because my experience proves that the batsman who does so move his right leg has a better view of the ball and a longer time to watch it from the pitch than he otherwise would, while in addition that right leg acts as an additional protection to the wicket. The art of back play lies in keeping the body and the bat in close companionship, if I may put it that way.

When the ball is pitched just off the off stump what is the real risk to the batsman who plays back? It is that he will get the ball on the edge of the bat, instead of in the middle of the bat, and thus be caught at slip off a "snick." My contention is that by moving the right leg backwards and also across the wicket to the ball which is just wide

of the off stump the batsman increases enormously his chance of getting the ball in the middle of the bat.

Next week I shall tell you about those delightful scoring strokes known as "cuts."

JACK THE GIANT!

(Continued from page 14.)

among the first six all-rounders in the game. He has scored centuries against England, and even during the present tour he made the first hundred hit by an Australian in this country. Here is a funny thing about him, though. He bowls right-handed and bats left. And, goodness, can't he hit! We often think about the Australian batsmen as stodgy, but there is nothing stodgy about Gregory's batting. He is their Woolley.

Strictly speaking, we should never call a man an all-rounder unless he is a good field, as well as a batsman and bowler. Well, Gregory is the finest slip-fielder I have seen for many a year. He once caught out five men in the slips in one Test match. "The trouble is," as a batsman whom he had dismissed with a great catch declared, "that the fellow has telescopic arms." That is certainly what they look like.

Finally, Gregory will be 32 years of age on the fourteenth of August, and when the order went forth that the Australians were not allowed to bring their wives to England, Gregory didn't worry, because he hasn't got a wife.

A Word with the Umpire!

(Readers' questions on matters appertaining to cricket will be answered under this heading from time to time. If you have a query for the "Umpire," send it in.)

R. Manning, Carlisle: In first-class cricket a new ball may be called for after two hundred runs have been scored off the one in use, and also at the beginning of each innings. The reason why so much importance is attached to this new ball rule, is because many bowlers are much better with a new ball than one which is worn. The new seam enables more spin to be imparted, and it is also easier to swerve with a new ball than an old one.

"Umpire," Croydon: You were perfectly right in your decision in regard to the bowler who "threw" the ball as distinct from bowling it. If either umpire is of opinion that the ball is thrown, he can call no-ball, irrespective of the end at which he is officiating at that particular time.

J. James, Manchester: You raise an interesting point, and I am repeating your question as it is of such general interest: "Five had already been run for a long, slow-travelling ball which went near to the boundary. When the fielder got there he kicked the ball over the boundary, which in the ordinary way was only four. What was the actual score to be recorded?" If I were the umpire I should regard the kicking as an overthrow, and call for nine runs to be added to the score—five which had already been run, and four for the over-throw. This sort of incident has actually happened in first-class cricket, but in any event, it is not "playing the game."

George M., Bristol: The law regarding the question of which batsman is run out reads as follows: "If the batsmen have crossed each other, he that runs for the wicket which is put down is out; if they have not crossed, he that has left the wicket which is put down is out."

F. McPherson (Leeds):—I can only trace ten men who have played cricket for England against Australia who have also played for England at Association football. They are—Jack Sharp, Makepeace, C. B. Fry, W. Gunn, Hardinge, Ducat, L. H. Gay, Hendren, R. E. Foster, and the Hon. A. Lyttelton.

K. K. (Manchester):—Yours is obviously a "Test" question, but, all the same, it is possible for a bowler to do the hat trick in three separate overs—in this way: The bowler takes the ninth wicket with the last ball of the over. The tenth he takes with the first ball of his next over, thus finishing the innings off. The team "follows on," the bowler takes his third wicket with the first ball he sends down in the second innings, and thus he does the hat trick.

F. O. (London):—Under the rules of the M.C.C., professionals playing for England in a Test match are paid £33 per match, the twelfth man receiving £22.

T. Smeadon:—The follow-on rule in first-class cricket in this country reads: "The side which bats first and leads by 150 runs in a three days' match, or by 100 runs in a two days' match, shall have the option of requiring the other side to follow their innings."

F. Shallcross (Mansfield):—There are a lot of people who have talked of Parker, of Gloucester, as one of our most promising young bowlers. He is certainly a good bowler, but seeing that he has played for the county since 1903, he scarcely comes under the heading of young. Up to the start of the present season he had taken 1,652 wickets at an average of just under 19 runs each.

R. Valentine (Dulwich):—On the average it costs the Surrey County Cricket Club about £70 a year for the necessary grass seed for use at the Oval.

Ken L. (Walthamstow):—In the rules concerning the qualification of a cricketer to play for a county it is laid down that a man who has no proper qualification for any county may play for the county the capital of which is nearest to his place of birth or residence. It is under this rule that L. G. Crawley plays for Essex.

F. Parkin (Leeds):—No, I do not consider that big hands are necessary for a successful wicket-keeper. Indeed, I have seen several "stumpers" whose hands are even smaller than the average, those of Oldfield, the Australian, being among them.



(Continued from page 12.)

"Dear man, I'm not the chap to take no for an answer," said the Caterpillar. "I'm goin' in. Haven't I told Pon it's important business?"

"I'll complain to Mr. Mobbs about this!" yelled Ponsonby.

"I'm sure I don't mind, dear man."

Crash!

There was a stir in the study at the second crash on the door. The knuts of Highcliffe understood that the Caterpillar was in deadly earnest.

"Hold on, Caterpillar!" called out Gadsby. "I'll open the door! Look here, Pon! We're not goin' to have the prefects up here to please you! Hold on a minute, Caterpillar!"

"Buck up, dear man. I'm waitin'."

The door was unlocked and thrown open. De Courcy stepped smilingly into the study and nodded urbanely to the enraged Ponsonby. Courtenay remained in the doorway, and behind him were Smithson and a crowd of the Fourth—more than a dozen fellows by this time, all curious and interested.

There were six fellows in the study—Pon and Gaddy and Monson, to whom the study belonged, and Vavasour, Drury, and Merton. Cecil Ponsonby turned a stare of rage and hatred upon the cool face of the Caterpillar.

"Now, what do you want?" he said between his teeth. "You've forced yourself into this study, where you're not welcome. What do you want?"

"Nothin'."

"Take it and go!" suggested Gadsby.

"Sorry to interrupt a gentleman at a little game," said the Caterpillar, with an amused glance at the cards and cigarettes on the table, "but I won't keep you long. I've received a letter, Pon—"

"What does that matter to me, you fool?"

"Pon, old man, your manners are deterioratin'," said the Caterpillar, with a pained look.

"Oh, cheese it!"

"I've got a letter from Greyfriars, and—"

"Hang Greyfriars!"

"Enclosing a little present for you, and—"

"A present for me?" exclaimed Ponsonby.

"Just that! I'm requested to read out the letter in the presence of your distinguished friends, and to hand you the present before witnesses—sort of testimonial from your admirers," said the Caterpillar. "I've taken on the job with pleasure, bein' one of your humble admirers myself, old bean."

Ponsonby stared at him in sheer astonishment.

"I don't know what you're drivin' at," he snapped. "I've told you that you're not welcome in this study, and I'm waitin' to see your back."

"Wait as patiently as you can, old bean," said the Caterpillar urbanely. "I'm quite aware that fellows don't have to wait long to see your back, of course—fellows who are able to put up anythin' like a scrap—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell from Smithson & Co. in the passage.

Ponsonby gritted his teeth.

"You cheeky cad! I—"

The Caterpillar was fumbling in his pocket. He drew out a letter, and a white feather.

"There it is, Pon—a present from Greyfriars."

And he tossed the white feather upon the table.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Up to the Scratch!

CECIL PONSONBY stared at the white feather.

His face was as white as the "present" from Greyfriars.

The other fellows in the study exchanged glances—some of them grinning. For a moment or two there was silence.

It was the Caterpillar who broke it.

"Gentlemen," he said, "lend me your ears, as the johnny says in the play. I've got a letter to read out."

Ponsonby did not speak. Even the cad of Highcliffe was not insensible to shame. He sat with his eyes fixed on the white feather, and the crimson was creeping into his pale cheeks. Smithson & Co., in the passage, were chuckling; even Pon's friends were grinning. Courtenay's face was dark. De Courcy, in his cool, drawling voice, proceeded to read out the letter from Greyfriars.

"Dear Caterpillar,—Highcliffe has been placed out of bounds for us, for the present, Mr. Mobbs having put it to our Form master. We can't come over and see Ponsonby, and we rather think that, in the circumstances, Pon won't accept an invitation to come over and see us."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Smithson.

Ponsonby drew a deep breath.

"Laughter in court, which was immediately suppressed," said the Caterpillar. "I'll go on."

"If you agree—as I think you do—that Ponsonby ought to answer for what he has done, will you stick this letter up where the fellows in your Form can see it, or else read it out to Ponsonby and hand him the white feather. If that doesn't screw up his courage to the sticking-point I suppose nothing will.—Yours sincerely, H. WHARTON."

"That's the lot," said the Caterpillar. "I felt called upon to oblige Wharton in this matter, as Pon has put Mobby up to interferin'. The question now arises, is Pon's courage screwed up to the stickin' point?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I never said a word to Mobbs!" said Ponsonby huskily.

The Caterpillar coughed.

"If you didn't, Pon, the way he butted into the affair was a remarkable coincidence. But, of course, we're all bound to accept your word."

"I don't think!" chuckled Smithson.

"Leavin' Mobby out of it," resumed the Caterpillar, "the question still remains, is your jolly old courage screwed up to the stickin' point, or have the Greyfriars men wasted their white feather on you for nothin'?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dash it all, you can't stand that!" muttered Gadsby.

Pon gave him a savage look.

"You can't, Pon, absolutely," murmured Vavasour.

"Oh, Pon can stand a lot of things," said the Caterpillar. "Pon's got a great gift of endurance. But the question is, can we stand it? Are fellows goin' to send white feathers to Highcliffe and

nothin' done? I'm not particularly thin-skinned myself, but I object to white feathers—I object very strongly! My idea is that Pon's fightin' blood ought to be stirred up somehow."

"You rotter!" muttered Ponsonby. "Do you think I'm afraid of those Greyfriars cads?"

"I think it looks like it, dear man. But I hope that's only what it looks like. After all, appearances are deceptive," said the Caterpillar. "I hope you are burstin' with bravery and the yearnin' for battle. You don't look like it, but I hope you are."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Chuck this, Caterpillar!" said Courtenay abruptly.

The Caterpillar shook his head.

"It's got to be settled," he said obstinately. "Pon's lettin' down Highcliffe, an' I object to it. Greyfriars have sent a challenge, and the challenge has got to be taken up. If Pon's a coward we're not all cowards here, I hope. Perhaps one of Pon's friends would like to take up the cudgels for him?"

De Courcy glanced round at the knotty circle.

There was a unanimous silence. Apparently nobody in Pon's select circle was keen to take up the cudgels.

"No offers?" asked De Courcy.

Silence.

"Then it's up to Pon," said the Caterpillar, "and if Pon turns it down we shall have to find another man. They're not goin' to say at Greyfriars that Highcliffe haven't a man to meet them. What's your answer, Pon?"

"Mind your own business, confound you!"

"I'm makin' this my business," said the Caterpillar. "I like those Greyfriars chaps; they're friends of mine—at least, friends of Franky's. But they can't send a challenge like this without gettin' a suitable answer. If you don't answer this letter, Pon, I shall answer it."

"You!" exclaimed Courtenay.

"Little me!" exclaimed the Caterpillar, with a nod. "Highcliffe have got to produce a champion to show that we don't all suffer from cold feet at this end."

"You've got no quarrel with them, you ass!"

"None at all, except that I object to white feathers bein' sent to Highcliffe. I don't blame them; they're actin' within their rights. But a Highcliffe man has got to meet their man, and pluck seems to be rather at a discount in this study. Unless I'm mistaken, and Ponsonby is really burnin' for battle an' slaughter!" added the Caterpillar.

"Funk!" roared Smithson.

Ponsonby bit his lip hard.

He glanced at the fellows in the passage—at Courtenay's dark, contemptuous face; and then he looked at his friends. It was borne in upon Ponsonby's mind that he had no choice left in the matter. There was a limit; and this was the limit.

"Don't be a goat, Pon!" whispered Gadsby anxiously. "Do you want to be cut by every fellow in the school? You'll never be able to hold up your head at Highcliffe again if you let this pass."

Ponsonby was only too clearly aware of that. Nothing would have pleased him better than to see the Caterpillar engaged in combat with the Greyfriars champion for the honour of Highcliffe. But he realised very clearly that it would not do.

He drew a deep, deep breath.

"Well, what's the verdict?" asked the

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Caterpillar at length. "I'm waitin' for your answer, Pon."

"You might have guessed my answer," said Ponsonby, as calmly as he could. "I want to keep clear of those Greyfriars ruffians—and it means trouble with the Head if I let myself be drawn into a row! But if they want trouble, let them have it. They can pick out their man, and I'll give him a jolly good hidin'! That's all!"

"Good man!"

"Hear, hear!" said Gadsby.

"Good old Pon!" chorused the knuts, much relieved.

Pon's lip curled.

"Make it Saturday afternoon; that's the next half-holiday," he said. "One of my friends will call at Greyfriars before then to make the arrangements. Now get out of my study, De Courcy."

"Pleasure, dear man," said the Caterpillar urbanely. "Best wishes for good luck, old man! You're in the wrong, of course; but I should like to see Highcliffe win. Like little me to be your second?"

"No, hang you!"

"Offer refused without thanks," said the Caterpillar. "No objection to my comin' along to see you knock the Greyfriars man into a cocked hat, I suppose?"

"You'll have nothin' to do with it!" said Ponsonby savagely. "All I want you to do is to mind your own bizney."

The Caterpillar smiled.

"And you won't mention the matter to Mobby?" he asked.

"Hang you, you know I won't!" snarled Ponsonby.

"Well, I thought you might in an absent-minded moment, you know," murmured the Caterpillar. "You see, if I answer this letter acceptin' the giddy challenge, you're bound to stand by it. And if you don't walk up to the jolly old field of battle, you'll be carried there—see?"

"What-ho!" chuckled Smithson.

And the Caterpillar strolled out of the study, leaving Ponsonby to enjoy his game of banker with his knutty comrades as well as he might. Probably Ponsonby did not enjoy it very much.

"I'm glad that's settled," said Courtenay, as he walked down to the cricket-field with his chum a little later.

The Caterpillar gave him a whimsical smile.

"Settled?" he said.

"Yes, it's settled now. After all, Pon isn't a coward. He's got a sense of shame at least. It's settled."

"I wonder," said the Caterpillar.

Which seemed to indicate that the Caterpillar had a lingering doubt still as to whether the dandy of Highcliffe had been brought up to the scratch.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Wants to Know!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Cut!"

"But, I say!"

Bob Cherry made a motion with his boot, and Billy Bunter "cut." But he did not cut very far.

Bunter wanted to know.

Monson, of the Highcliffe Fourth, had come into the House at Greyfriars and was speaking to Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry in the hall. Naturally, Bunter wanted to hear.

Bunter was keenly interested in the Highcliffe affair. Ponsonby's escape from punishment, so far, had deeply incensed Bunter. True, Bunter had not been the only victim of Ponsonby's dastardly trick at the old Priory; but

he was the only one that mattered, so to speak. What the fellows were going to do about Pon was an interesting question to the Owl of the Remove. Indeed, he had told Peter Todd that if the fellows didn't do something, he would himself call personally at Highcliffe and give Ponsonby a thrashing—a statement which made Peter chuckle. So when Monson came along that afternoon after class, Bunter was convinced that he ought to join in the discussion. Which was a point upon which the other fellows did not seem to agree with Bunter.

But Bob Cherry's boot was not to be argued with. It was a heavy and hefty boot, and Bunter knew its weight—from experience. So he scudded away in great indignation. From the banisters he blinked down at the juniors in the hall.

Then his little round eyes gleamed cunningly behind his spectacles. If the fellows were going to arrange a fight, they couldn't arrange it there. It would have to be kept from Mr. Quelch's knowledge, at least, and it was pretty certain that Wharton would take the Highcliffe envoy to his study to talk the matter over. Bunter cut away to Study No. 1 in the Remove and rolled into that celebrated apartment. A few minutes later he knew that he had judged correctly, as he heard the voices of the juniors on the Remove staircase. Bunter, listening inside the study door, heard them approaching Study No. 1. That was enough for Bunter.

He dived under the study table and lay low.

The door opened again, and Monson of Highcliffe came in, Wharton standing politely aside for him to enter. The captain of the Remove followed him in. Under the table, crouching very quietly, Bunter grinned to himself. The captain of the Remove had doubtless forgotten his unimportant existence. But Bunter was there, and he was going to know!

"Take a pew, Monson," said Harry.

"Thanks, I'll stand!" said Monson.

His manner was barely civil; he had not come to Greyfriars to be polite.

"Just as you like," said Wharton indifferently. "The fellows will be here in a minute or two."

"I've come over to speak to you, as I've said, not to interview all your Form."

"You've told me that it's a message from Ponsonby, and five of us are concerned in it," said Harry. "We won't keep you waiting."

Monson shrugged his shoulders and waited. Bob Cherry had gone to gather the other members of the Co., and he soon came into the study, followed by Nugent and Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Monson's come over from Ponsonby," Harry Wharton explained. "He's got a message. He's acting as Pon's second."

"Oh, good!" said Johnny Bull. "Then the white feather worked the oracle after all."

"The excellent and ludicrous Pon has come up to the esteemed scratch?" asked Hurree Singh.

"That's good news!" said Nugent.

Monson sneered.

"If you're all here I'll get on," he said. "I've got to get back to Highcliffe, you know!"

"Go ahead!" said Harry.

"In the first place, the matter has got to be kept dark," said Monson. "If that isn't agreed to, the whole thing is off. Dr. Voysey and Mr. Mobbs would both be down on Pon if they knew. And if you fellows can't undertake to keep it dark, call it off here and now."

"Oh, cut that out!" exclaimed Johnny Bull angrily. "We shall keep it dark enough, and you know it. It was Ponsonby brought Mr. Mobbs into the bizney."

"I'm not here to argue!" said Monson. "I want your word that it will be kept dark to tell Pon. You can't expect Pon to land himself into trouble with his headmaster to please you."

"We shall not say a word about it," said Harry.

"Very well, that's settled, then. Pon's prepared to meet any man you put forward, and I'm here to arrange time and place," said Monson. "The scrap can't take place either here or at Highcliffe, of course; it will have to be somewhere quiet. You've already said that you're willing to leave time and place to us."

"Quite willing," said Harry.

"The willingness is terrific."

"Pon fixes it for to-morrow—Saturday—afternoon; that's a half-holiday at both schools," said Monson. "The place is the old Army hut behind Courtfield Common. You know the place."

"We know it, and it will do as well as any other place," said Harry. "It's a good step from both schools."

"Four o'clock to-morrow afternoon," said Monson.

"Agreed."

"Ponsonby will be there with his second—me," said Monson. "Your man will be there with his second. You've given Pon his choice, and he picks out Bob Cherry."

"Oh, good!" exclaimed Bob.

"Very good!" said Wharton, both surprised and pleased. He had rather expected Nugent or Hurree Singh to be selected as less formidable members of the Co. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh gave Monson a rather scrutinising look.

"My esteemed Monson, I hope that this is not ludicrous gammon," he said. "We do not want to walk across the common to find that the esteemed funky Ponsonby is not there."

"You'll find Pon there, on time," said Monson, with a sneer. "If your man comes up to the scratch, he won't be disappointed."

"Rely on me!" grinned Bob Cherry. "I'd give a week's pocket-money to get my hands on the cad."

"That's settled, then," said Monson. "Two follows on either side—and nobody else."

"I suppose we can come as witnesses?" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"We jolly well shall," said Nugent. "We know your Highcliffe trickery—it would be like Pon to have a crowd of his friends there and turn it into a ragging."

"That's immaterial," said Monson. "The idea is to avoid a crowd, so that the matter won't get out. Pon's agreeable to all five of you coming, if you limit it to that. If Cherry's afraid to come with only his second let him bring four of you."

"Why, you cheeky cad——" began Bob hotly.

"Easy does it, Bob," said Harry. "Five of us will be ample. It would be very like Ponsonby to have a mob there to handle you alone, but we can deal with all of them if they turn up. The five of us could mop up Pon and all his friends."

ANSWERS
Every Saturday — PRICE 2:

"What-ho!" grinned Johnny Bull.
"It's settled, then," said Monson.
"We rely on you to keep it dark—if we find a crowd there we shall simply clear off and let you rip. Pon's not goin' to risk a floggin' from Dr. Voysey."

"Five of us, and nobody else," said Wharton. "That will be enough to see fair play. You can bring the same number."

Monson shook his head.

"Pon and I will be alone," he said. "We don't want it to be talked all over Highcliffe. The Head's down on these rows, and so is Mobby. We're willin' to trust you men to see fair play, if you're not willin' to trust us."

"The Caterpillar would be willing to come, and he wouldn't babble about it," said Nugent.

"We don't want him—he's no friend of ours."

"Well, that's your business," said Harry. "Four o'clock to-morrow afternoon; Bob Cherry against Ponsonby. We'll bring gloves. Nothing more to be said."

"Nothin'," said Monson.

And the Highcliffe junior left the study, and left the school. Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged glances.

"All serene now," said Bob. "I rather fancied the white feather would do it. Even Pon couldn't stand that."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"It looks all right," he said, "and we'll keep our part of the bargain—not a word outside this study, till after it's over at all events. I can't understand Pon being so keen on keeping it dark—I should rather have thought he would like an interruption—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But it seems straight enough," said Harry.

"It does," agreed Bob.

"Not a word to the other fellows, at present, then."

"Not a word."

And Harry Wharton & Co. left the study.

After they were gone, a fat junior rolled out from his hiding-place under the table, grinning. Unsuspected by all parties, Billy Bunter was in possession of the secret—a circumstance that was to have consequences unlooked-for by Harry Wharton & Co., and especially by Ponsonby.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Ponsonby's Plot!

THE Caterpillar wrinkled his brows, with a look of whimsical perplexity. It was Saturday afternoon; and there was a junior cricket match on at Highcliffe—Fourth against Shell. Frank Courtenay was thinking chiefly of cricket; and the Caterpillar, who was in the eleven, was booked for the afternoon—rather against his will. Courtenay was looking at the pitch after dinner. De Courcy strolling with him, with his hands in his pockets. He was not thinking of cricket.

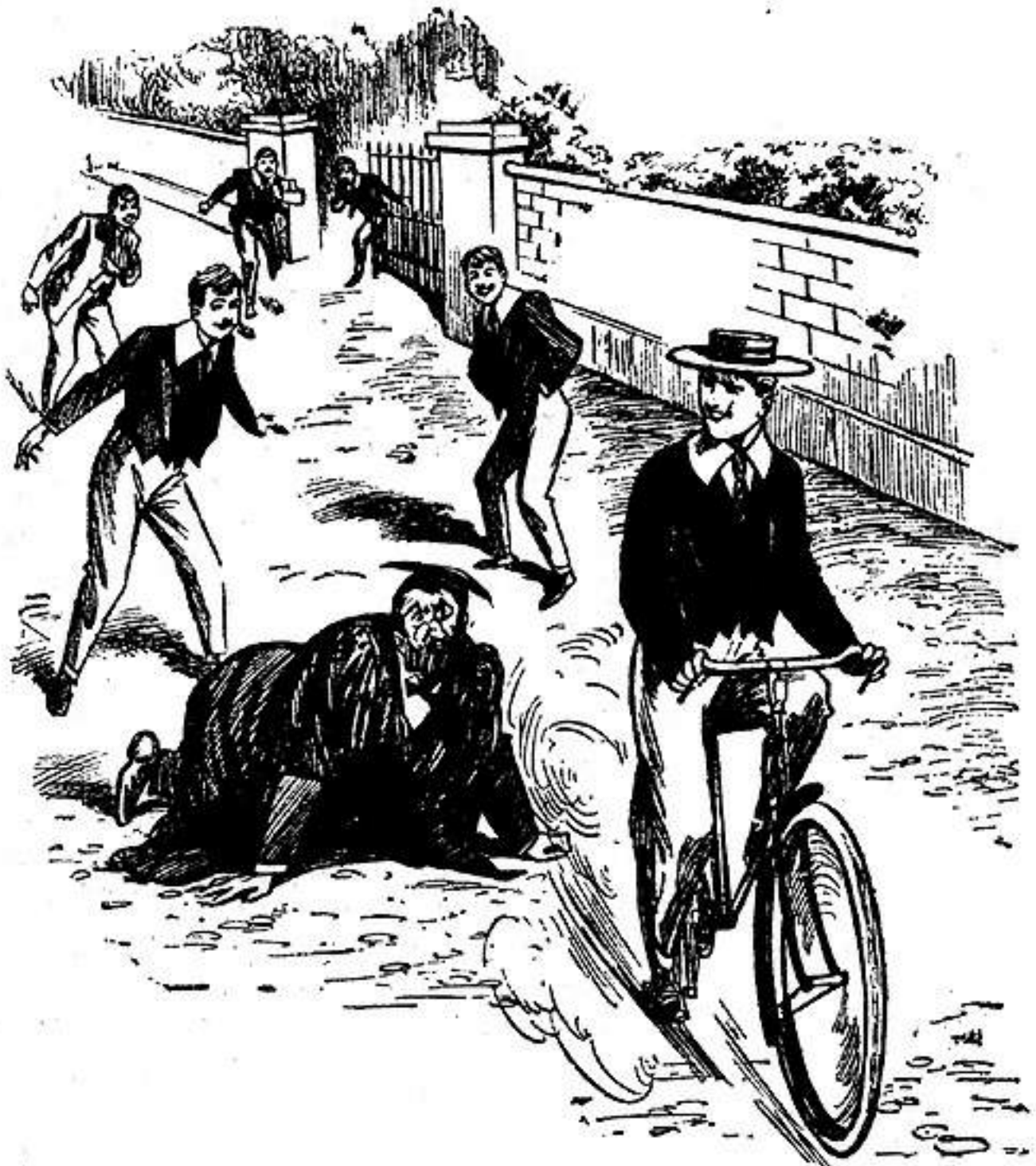
"It beats me, Franky!" he said at last.

"What does, Caterpillar?"

"About Pon."

"Oh, bother Pon!" said Courtenay, with a smile. "I hope we shall be beating the Shell this afternoon, while he's getting his beating."

"He will get a beatin', I fancy, if it comes off," said the Caterpillar. "But I'm beaten already, old bean—it beats me hollow. It seems to be all straight. Monson went over to Greyfriars and



As Bob Cherry's bicycle shot forward Mr. Mobbs' uplifted hand swept downwards with terrific force. Meeting with no resistance it had the effect of overbalancing him, and he pitched forward and dropped on his knees. "Oh!" he gasped. "Ha, ha, ha!" Bob Cherry glanced over his shoulder, and burst into a roar.
(See Chapter 7.)

fixed it up—Pon's meetin' Bob Cherry somewhere this afternoon, girdin' himself up for battle—he's been punchin' the ball this mornin' with great energy. The nuts are in high feather—they're proud of their Pon."

"Well, he was bound to play up," said Courtenay.

"You couldn't spare me this afternoon, Franky?"

"No fear!" said the captain of the Fourth decidedly. "Dash it all, Caterpillar, you don't want to cut the cricket?"

"N-no," said the Caterpillar hesitatingly. "But I really would like to see Pon play up—for once."

"Oh, rot!" said Courtenay. "Besides, I hear that he's taking only one man with him—his second. He wants the thing kept dark—and there's no doubt it would be stopped if the Head or Mobby got on to it."

"And Pon doesn't want it stopped?"

"I suppose not."

"They say that a leopard can't change his spots, or an Ethiopian his skin," murmured the Caterpillar. "But I shall begin to believe that they can, at this rate. Is Pon really goin' to stand up to a hefty fellow like Cherry in a fair fight?"

"He's left himself no choice about that, that I can see. He hadn't any choice from the beginning, really."

"But he was so jolly keen on puttin' it off. He dragged Mobby into it, you

know. A word to Mobby now would put a stop to it—and Pon's takin' all sorts of precautions for that word not to be uttered."

Courtenay laughed.

"If Mobby got to know the fellows would all know who had given him the tip," he said. "Pon's in his last ditch, really—he's either got to fight, or be hooted as a funk. Even his own set would be ashamed of him if he swallowed the white feather. Now, about this match this afternoon, I shall open the innings with you, Caterpillar—"

The Caterpillar suppressed a groan.

He was keenly interested, in a whimsical way, in the problem of Ponsonby; cricket did not appeal to him nearly so much. But cricket was the order of the day now.

At two o'clock the stumps were pitched, and the Caterpillar turned up on Little Side with the cricketers. Courtenay had forgotten Ponsonby by that time; and the Caterpillar had to dismiss him from his mind when the game began. The problem of Pon's proceedings that afternoon had to remain unsolved—by the Caterpillar.

The cricket match was going strong, when Ponsonby & Co. came out of the House and walked down to the gates. The nuts of the Fourth were not interested in the great summer game; they did not even cast a glance towards Little Side. The whole knotty party

walked as far as the gates with Ponsonby and Monson, and wished them luck when they started for Courtfield Common.

"Look here, why can't you let us come an' see the circus?" asked Gadsby. "We'd like to come, Pon."

"Absolutely," said Vavasour.

Ponsonby shook his head.

"A bargain's a bargain," he answered. "I've agreed to go with only one man, and I'm not goin' to let the Greyfriars cads think I'm nervous."

"Well, that's all right," said Drury. "But they wouldn't mind your bringin' your friends to look on. We want to see the scrap."

"Nothin' doin'," said Ponsonby.

And he walked away with Monson, leaving the knutty party at the gates, discontented and puzzled.

Monson, too, was puzzled as he walked along with the dandy of Highcliffe. It seemed to Monson that Pon was keeping something back—he quite failed to understand the new attitude of the superb Pon. If Pon was so keen to meet the Greyfriars champion, so keen not to run risk of interruption, it was peculiar, to say the least, that he had not accepted the Greyfriars challenge earlier. Monson felt that there was something behind it all—though he could not guess what.

"Look here, Pon, why can't you let the fellows come?" he exclaimed at last, as they struck across the common.

"No witnesses wanted," said Ponsonby, with a sour grin. "I can trust you, Monson. You can keep your mouth shut."

Monson looked very uneasy.

"Then, it's not straight?" he asked.

Cecil Ponsonby laughed sarcastically. "Do you think I'm goin' to be hammered by that ruffian Cherry?" he said, with a sneer. "I know a trick worth two of that."

"But you've agreed—"

"The five of them will be there," said Ponsonby. "Let them come! They will meet with a bit of a surprise, you'll see!"

"But—" began Monson.

"Oh, wait an' see!" said Ponsonby irritably.

Monson relapsed into silence, but his look was extremely uneasy as he walked on. The expression on Pon's face, and the evil gleam in his eye, might have made any fellow uneasy.

The two Highcliffians arrived at the old Army hut—a disused building in a solitary spot.

"We're jolly early," said Monson. "It's only half-past three."

Ponsonby smiled, and led the way into the hut.

From the outside, it looked solitary and deserted. But Monson started as he saw that it was tenanted. Four rough-looking fellows were sitting on a bench there, smoking pipes and playing oards. Monson stared at them. He knew them by sight; they were loafers from the Feathers Inn, up the river—a place much frequented by Ponsonby and his friends on half-holidays. At sight of Ponsonby, the quartette grinned and touched their hats.

"All ready—what?" said Ponsonby.

"What-ho, sir! You leave it to us," said one of the four, a man with a black patch over one eye and two of his front teeth missing.

"You know what you're to do, Hookey. You're not to hurt them—only a jolly good hiding all round."

"Leave it to us, sir!" grinned Hookey. And his comrades grinned and nodded.

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Monson caught Ponsonby by the arm and drew him out of the hut. He was looking greatly alarmed now.

"Pon," he breathed—"Pon! Are you out of your senses? You've got that gang here to pitch into the Greyfriars chaps?"

"Exactly! A quid each—and cheap at the price!" said Ponsonby coolly. "It's a little surprise for those cads—what?"

"You can't do it!" gasped Monson.

"Can't I?" sneered Ponsonby.

"You can't!" Monson looked quite scared. "There's a limit! You can't do such a rotten, cowardly, blackguardly thing—"

"Oh, can it!" interrupted Ponsonby savagely. "I went over to the Feathers last evenin' and fixed it up. You might have guessed somethin' of the sort, you fool."

"I might have guessed that you'd go in for foul play, I know!" panted Monson. "But it's too thick—it's too rotten. I won't have a hand in it!"

"Don't, then. You won't be wanted!"

"Pon, old man," pleaded Monson, "call it off before it's too late. Think

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of the disgrace! You'll be cut by all Highcliffe—"

"Oh, don't be an ass! Who's to know?" sneered Ponsonby. "Is anybody goin' to believe those Greyfriars cads if they complain? They're goin' to get a hefty thrashin' all round, which will stop them from lookin' for trouble for some time to come. Who's to know I set these rotters on? If they suspect, they can't prove it. They've already made one false accusation against me—"

"Pon!"

"All Highcliffe knows that Bunter gave false evidence in accusin' me before the Head. That helps. They can say what they like, and be hanged to them! My story will be that I came along, accordin' to arrangement, and found them rowin' with a gang of hooligans, and left them at it."

Monson stared at him. Ponsonby's plans were cut and dried—he could see that. And it was likely enough that his story would hold water. At all events, he was prepared to brazen it out.

Monson drew a deep breath.

"Pon, it's too thick—it's infamous! I'm not goin' to have a hand in it. Send those roughs away, or I'm goin'."

"Do as you dashed well choose—only hold your tongue!" said Ponsonby, in a tone of menace. "You and I know

a little too much about one another, Monson, to give one another away."

"I'll hold my tongue," muttered Monson. "But I'm goin'!"

And he went.

Ponsonby shrugged his shoulders. He lighted a cigarette, and loafed about the hut with his hands in his pockets till he sighted five figures on the common in the distance.

His eyes gleamed at the sight of Harry Wharton & Co. It was just four o'clock as the Famous Five of Greyfriars came up.

"Here we are again!" said Bob Cheery cheerily.

"Just in time!" sneered Ponsonby. "I began thinkin' that you weren't comin' up to the scratch after all!"

"Oh, cut that out!" said Bob contemptuously. "No need to chatter. Let's get going."

"I'm ready."

"If you're ready, there's no need to waste time," said Harry Wharton.

"The soonerfulness is the betterfulness," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I'm waitin'," said Ponsonby. "Come into the hut—there's plenty of room there, and we shall be out of sight."

"Right-ho!"

Ponsonby strolled into the hut.

"Blessed if I more than half-expected to see him here!" said Nugent. "He doesn't seem to have his second, either."

"But it's all serene now," said Bob. "Come on!"

Harry Wharton & Co. followed Ponsonby into the hut. The next moment there was a rush of feet.

"Look out!" yelled Bob.

But it was too late! Ponsonby of Highcliffe, with an evil grin on his face, stood back and watched—out of harm's way—while the five schoolboys, resisting desperately, went down under the rush of the gang of roughs.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Brought to Book!

"PETER, old man—"

"Bow-wow!"

"I could jolly well tell you something if I liked!" said Bunter.

"Not that I want to hear, old bean," yawned Peter Todd. "Give your lower jaw a rest."

"Oh, really, Peter—"

"And give me a rest!"

Billy Bunter blinked at Peter reproachfully. He had news—he was full of news; but Toddy's manner was not encouraging. Bunter almost resolved not to tell Toddy at all.

But not quite! It was difficult for Bunter to keep news in. Bunter liked to be the fellow who knew. He liked to be primed with the "very latest." Bunter was an indefatigable collector of news; and when he had collected it, it burst forth from him, as it were.

Peter had missed the Famous Five that afternoon, wondering why they were not on the cricket ground. He had wondered whether their absence had anything to do with Ponsonby of Highcliffe. Little as Peter guessed it, Bunter knew.

"I suppose you've noticed that Wharton and his mob are gone out, Peter?"

"Yes," yawned Peter.

"Guess where they're gone."

Peter took notice at last.

"Not to Highcliffe," he said. "That's out of bounds now."

"What price the old Army hut on Courtfield Common?" grinned Bunter. "Bosh!" said Peter. "No place for a picnic."

"He, he, he! It isn't a picnic," chuckled Bunter. "It's a scrap!"

"A scrap?" repeated Peter.

"Keep it dark," said Bunter.

"They're not telling anybody—Ponsonby made a point of that. Wharton told me in confidence—"

"Gammon!"

"Oh, really, Peter—"

"Piffle!"

"Well, that's what's on," said Bunter.

"I jolly well know it. I'm not telling anybody, of course! I just mentioned it to Smithy, and Russell, and Ogilvy, and Squiff, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter. "And to everybody who would listen."

"I'm telling you because you're my pal," said Bunter. "I knew you'd like to see the scrap, and there's plenty of time to get across to the hut, if you go on your bike. They don't know that anybody knows about it—they never dreamed that I was under the study table—"

"What?"

"I—I mean—Wharton told me in confidence—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you like to give me a lift on the back of your bike, Peter, I'll come," said Bunter. "I want to see Pon licked, but, of course, I can't walk all that way."

"Blessed if I see any sense in keeping it dark," said Peter. "Lot of good trying to with you around. If there's a scrap with Pon, I'm jolly well going to see it, I know that."

"Smithy said the same, but the beast refused to give me a lift on his bike," said Bunter. "You're going to give me a lift, Peter?"

"I'm not a derrick or a steam crane!" growled Toddy.

"Look here, you beast, you wouldn't know anything about it if I hadn't told you," exclaimed Bunter warily. "It's up to you."

Peter Todd hesitated. Giving Bunter a lift behind a bike on a billy road was no joke.

But he felt that it was, indeed, up to him, since it was owing to Bunter's information that he was going to see Ponsonby of Highcliffe licked. And that was a sight Peter was not willing to miss, if he could help it.

"Well, come on, Fatty!" he said:

And Bunter rolled after his study-mate to the bike-shed. Peter grinned as he saw half a dozen of the Remove there, getting out their jiggers. Billy Bunter had evidently been talking with considerable freedom already. Peter was not the first Removite let into the secret.

"You coming, Toddy?" asked Squiff.

"What-ho! I'm giving Bunter a lift," said Peter. "You fellows can take it in turns with me, if you like."

"No jolly fear!"

"Smithy and Redwing have started already," said Hazeldene. "I think Wharton might have told us what was on. I want to see that cad Ponsonby thrashed. I had a rotten time down in the vaults."

"They're walking," said Bunter. "Lots of time to catch them up. Time for a snack at the tuck shop, if you like, before we start."

"You can go and have a snack while I get off," suggested Peter.

"Will you wait for me?"

"No fear!"

"Beast!"

And when Peter Todd started, Billy Bunter was standing on his footstools

behind, holding on to Peter's shoulders, a method of transport that was not easy for the fat junior, and was decidedly cumbersome to Peter Todd.

Six cyclists started in a bunch on the Courtfield road, and as they turned into the path across the common, they sighted Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing riding ahead. Peter Todd and his companions followed on behind the Bounder and Redwing, all of them keen to be in at the death, so to speak. Had Bunter had time to spread his news farther, probably all the Remove would have been on the same trail that afternoon. They would all have been keen enough to see Ponsonby licked, for no one had any doubt as to the result of the combat. It was a licking for Pon, if he came up to the scratch. The only doubt was, whether he would come up to the scratch. Bunter had told fellow after fellow, until he found one willing to give him a lift to the seat of war. Walking did not appeal to Bunter, and his bike, as usual, was out of repair.

footpath, sounds came to their ears—sounds of a wild and whirling conflict going on inside the old wooden building.

"They're going it!" exclaimed Squiff.

"What the thump!" ejaculated the Bounder in amazement. "That sounds more like a dog-fight than a round with gloves on. There's more than one fellow scrapping there."

"I say, you fellows, I shouldn't wonder if Pon had a mob of Highcliffe cads there ready for them!" exclaimed Bunter. "You know his sort."

"Jolly likely, I think," grinned the Bounder. "If that's so, we've come along at the right time. Put it on."

"What-ho!"

The cyclists fairly flew now. The sounds from the old hut seemed to indicate that a terrific affray was going on



"I've told you once," snapped Ponsonby, "I'm waiting to see the back of you!" "Well, wait as patiently as you can," said De Courcy, urbanely. The Caterpillar fumbled in his pocket and drew out a letter and a white feather. "There's a present from Greyfriars, Pon!" he said, tossing them upon the table. (See Chapter 9.)

The old army hut came in sight at last, lonely on the farther verge of the common, with the brown woods behind it. Vernon-Smith looked at his watch.

"Just turned four," he said. "You said it was to be at four o'clock, Bunter?"

"Yes, old chap."

"Put it on, you fellows, or we shall be too late," grinned the Bounder. "Pon won't last many minutes, if he's really taking on Bob Cherry."

"He won't be in a hurry to begin, though," said Peter Todd with a chuckle. "I dare say they're not starting yet."

"They must be in the hut," said the Bounder, staring ahead. "Can't see anything of them. If that fat villain has been pulling our legs—"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Hark!" exclaimed Hazeldene.

As the cyclists drew nearer to the old hut, riding swiftly over the grassy

there, obviously something much more extensive and serious than a fight with the gloves on between two fellows.

Vernon-Smith, riding like the wind, was the first to reach the hut, and he jumped down, letting his machine spin whither it would, and rushed in at the open doorway.

"Great Scott!" he yelled.

For a moment the Bounder stood transfixed at what he saw—Harry Wharton & Co., penned up in a corner of the hut, defending themselves desperately against four hulking roughs.

Every member of the Famous Five showed serious signs of damage. The struggle had not gone on long, but the weight against them was overwhelming.

But they were fighting gamely, and Hookey and his gang were by no means having things all their own way, as they had expected.

The Bounder stared for a second, and THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 959.

then, with a shout to his comrades, he rushed into the fray.

Peter Todd was the next, leaving his bike and Bunter strewn on the ground. Then came Squiff and the others, each, as he saw what was going on, rushing in to the rescue of the Famous Five.

Ponsonby's face was white with rage. The sudden and unexpected arrival of eight Remove fellows changed the aspect of affairs at once. Burly and bulky as they were, Hookey and his gang had no chance against such odds.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry, as Smith rushed in. "It's the old Bounder! Come on, Smithy! Toddy, too! Squiff! Pile in, you chaps!"

"Hurrah!" gasped Johnny Bull. The Remove fellows did not need telling to pile in—they were piling in with terrific vim, hitting right and left. And Ponsonby, white with rage, and with fear in his heart now, cut across to the doorway to escape before it was too late. And Ogilvy of the Remove, as he saw him cut, cut across, too, and collared him by the neck.

"No, you don't!" said the Scottish junior grimly.

the roughs did not heed him. They could not have helped him if they had stayed, and they did not think of staying. In a couple of minutes they were out of sight.

And then the Remove fellows gathered round Ponsonby as he lay sprawling under the grinning Owl of the Remove. He stared up furiously at Harry Wharton's scornful face.

"So that's why you wanted it kept dark, you cad!" panted Wharton. "Because you had that gang waiting for us here!"

"And you walked into the trap, you silly asses!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Well, who'd have thought—" began Bob Cherry.

"I should have—dealing with Ponsonby," said the Bounder, shrugging his shoulders. "Jolly lucky for you, as it turns out, that Bunter was spying on you yesterday when you were talking to Monson."

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Why, you fat rascal!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Well, I like that!" exclaimed Bunter indignantly. "Here I've come to the

He donned the gloves sullenly, and toed the line.

And what followed was watched with grim satisfaction by the Greyfriars crowd—though there was little satisfaction in it for the cad of Highcliffe. The hour of punishment had come—and Ponsonby's punishment was not light.

"Franky, old scout!"

The Caterpillar strolled into Courtenay's study at Highcliffe, with a grin on his face. Cricket was over, and Courtenay had gone in to tea; but the Caterpillar had been round for news.

"Well?" said Courtenay, with a smile.

"I've seen Pon."

"Oh, he's come back, then?"

"What's left of him," said the Caterpillar. "I think Mobby will be shocked when he sees him. Pon's lost his beauty. He seems to be in a ragin', tearin' temper, too; he said some quite rude things when I looked into his study to sympathise."

Courtenay laughed.

"Looks as if it wasn't a Highcliffe

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Ponsonby struggled furiously.

"Let go!" he yelled.

"I don't think!" grinned Ogilvy. And Ponsonby of Highcliffe went to the ground with a crash.

"Bunter!" yelled Ogilvy.

"Ow! Wow!"

"Sit on that cad and keep him safe!"

"Oh! All right!"

Bunter had sprawled when Peter Todd dismounted in a hurry, but he picked himself up now, and promptly planted himself on Ponsonby. Under Bunter's weight the cad of Highcliffe had no chance. He gasped and collapsed.

Ogilvy rushed into the fray; but it was almost over now. With eight sturdy fellows to help them, the Famous Five were more than able to deal with the gang of racing roughs. Hookey and his gang had expected to earn their "quid a time" quite easily. They found now that it was very hardly earned indeed.

"Give 'em beans!" roared Bob Cherry.

And Hookey & Co., knocked right and left and with hardly breath left to run, struggled for the doorway at last, and fled. They were glad to get out of the reach of the Removites, and they started for the horizon at the best pace they could put on. Ponsonby yelled to them desperately as they fled, but

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rescue, and saved you, and—and—"

"Never mind Bunter," said Johnny Bull. "Let that cad Ponsonby get up! His precious friends are gone now, and it's time for Pon to face the music."

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

"Feeling up to a scrap, Bob?" asked Vernon-Smith. "You look a bit knocked out. You can leave him to me if you like."

"No jolly fear! I can handle him!"

Ponsonby struggled to his feet.

He cast a hunted look round him. The Greyfriars fellows made a circle from which there was no escape.

"Ready?" asked Wharton grimly.

Ponsonby panted.

His plot had failed—it had come near to success, but it had failed. And now—now he was there at the appointed place, with no choice but to face his opponent. He was alone in a hostile crowd. He knew that he could depend on the Greyfriars fellows for fair play. But fair play was not what the dandy of Highcliffe wanted.

Wharton unpacked the gloves, and threw a pair to Ponsonby.

"Waiting!" said Bob grimly.

Ponsonby drew a deep, deep breath. There was no help for it now; he was in his last ditch. Even a rat will fight in a corner—and Ponsonby was in a corner.

win," said the Caterpillar. "But to judge by dear old Pon's looks, he's been through a terrific scrap—quite terrific. I never thought he would, but he has! His fightin' blood must have been fairly boilin', judgin' by his looks. He must have stood up to it like a Trojan—or perhaps they made him. He seems very cross—he's quarrelled with Gaddy, and chucked a flower-pot at Monson—and he was quite rude to me when I offered my respectful sympathy. Mobby will be quite shocked when he sees Pon's features, and I suppose there will be another row with Greyfriars about it. What a life!"

But the Caterpillar was wrong for once. Ponsonby, though it was a long time before he recovered from the effects of his thrashing, was careful to say nothing, and to make no complaint. He did not want to make public the full story of what had happened on Courtfield Common. And the Greyfriars fellows, on their side, said nothing, and so the matter ended with the Punishment of Ponsonby.

THE END.

(Now look out for next week's grand long complete yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled: "The Japer of Greyfriars!"—the first story of the long-promised "Indian" series. You'll enjoy every line of it, boys.)



(Introduction on page 24.)

Timely Aid!

GREATLY heartened, Drake and Deane camped down for the night. And in the morning, recklessly finishing what was left of the food supply they had been able to carry, they set off towards the belching smoke on the skyline.

That last day was the worst trip of all. And as the sun went over to the west they staggered on, knowing that the next twenty-four hours would seal their fate. But again they had to camp with no sign of any civilisation.

In the morning, after a drink of coffee each, they set forth again. Jack set the course for a valley they could see ahead. If any civilisation was handy, that valley would have signs of it. And Ferrers Locke's assistant was not mistaken. What was surely a rough track came across their line of march.

Their hopes again revived. Jack and Deane shook hands as they stood on the track.

"It peters out to the north," said Jack, "so presumably it leads to somewhere to the south. I should say it's a sheep track."

"Ay, ay; likely so," said Deane. "Over t' other side o' the hill, where the stream went, there's mebbe some rough pasture. Probably them Icelanders druv their sheep over there."

"In that case," replied Jack, "we're not far from a farm. It was a sheep track, right enough. See, a pony has been along it, too."

On they tramped, stumbling in their weakness occasionally. Evening came, but still there was no sign of a friendly roof ahead.

The worn-out travellers sank down to rest with throbbing heads and aching limbs. And their sleep was troubled, as sleep often is to the over-wearied. For both Deane and Drake were on the point of helpless exhaustion.

The sun was up when Jack woke. And as he opened his eyes he thought that his senses were wandering. For he was looking into the flat-featured face of an Icelandic, who was jabbering something in a tongue he could not understand.

The young assistant struggled to sit

up, and the man helped him. And the pressure of his arm under the boy's shoulders seemed to bring Drake to a thorough realisation of things.

"Gosh, we're saved!" he muttered, sweeping his hand across his brow. Then he addressed the man in Danish, a rough knowledge of which he now had.

From him he elicited the fact that they were quite near a farm. It was a place miles from any village, but they would be fed, and could rest there. Then they could be taken to the nearest village on ponies.

Jack woke Peter Deane and swiftly told him the news. Deane sat up with a stupid expression on his face. But as the realisation of their salvation came to him he laughed, with a curious sort of croak in his throat.

"We've won through, then," he said, repeating it again and again. "Ay, we've won. Iceland ain't killed old Peter Deane yet, nor will it!"

There followed, after a day's rest and nourishing food, four more days of trying travel by pony. Jack had the money roll Locke had given him, and he and Deane paid well everywhere they got rest, food and shelter, and fresh ponies.

Villages, farms, hovels, grassy valleys, little grey churches, stone walls, and so on, now took the place of the open, wild, rocky, dead country of the north. And, though they now had enough in the way of food, good rest in beds at night, and ponies to ride on, it was with a feeling of great relief when they saw their last guide halt and wave his crooked stick towards the south-east.

"Reykjavik!" said Jack. "Right-ho! lead on into the town, and I'll pay you off, with a bit over, for this joyful ending of our journey."

"It's a sure thing," said Deane, as the pair settled down luxuriously in their room in the hotel where Locke and Drake had stayed before, "that if we had all set off from that there Brek Katel in a body we'd ha' died, to a man, out on the jokuls, there—"

"You're right," replied Jack, as he contentedly settled down between the sheets. "The guv'nor knows what he's about. You and I were the only ones

who could stand a dog's chance of getting across, and Mr. Locke could see it!"

"We saved two days easy, by jumpin' them ravines," remarked Deane.

"Oh, let's forget them!" cried Jack. "I don't want to dream about jumping those beastly ravines again! You turn down the light, Peter, and be ready to be up bright and early in the morning, and we'll go round to that firm of British tug-owners down on the quay and see what we can get in the way of a ship to go and fetch the others."

Menace in the Mist Squall!

BY evening next day a stout little tug belonging to the Westman Salvage Company, Limited, went blustering out of Faxa Bay.

Deane and Jack Drake stood in the wheelhouse with the jovial skipper.

"Sure, there be nothin' to be done wi' the wretched Stormcock?" asked the skipper of Jack.

"She's there for good, unless she's worth dismantling as she lies," said Jack. "Anyway, Mr. Carr, the owner, is ashore, and he'll tell you whether he wants you to start salvaging her engines, gear, and fittings, and what not. This trip, however, is to bring them all safely back to Reykjavik."

By dawn, Portland was distant over the port quarter. Ingolds Hofde and the Horns were passed, the latter in view just as it was falling dark.

At dawn Jack woke to find the tug lying to in a slamming sea. He dressed and hurried up from the little cabin.

The tug-master was searching the coast with marine glasses. He turned as Jack stepped over beside him.

"There y'are, sir," said the skipper, handing the glasses over. "Langanaes! There's your poor old wreck on the rocks, and there's men up on the headland above, wavin'. I'm afeared I can't go too close in wi' the tug. But I'll sweep her in between that black reef an' the mainland, and we can take your pals aboard by the boat. Yours must ha' been a smart skipper to miss that there black reef and pile the Storm-
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 959.

cock up close under the cliffs like that—"

"Yes, he's a smart man, and it was smart work, I can assure you," said Jack, taking the glasses, and focussing them to his own sight. "Gosh, the water's spouting up through the hatchways in the deck of the Stormcock like umpteen waterspouts, isn't it?"

"Ay, ay, sir! There's a heavy sea slammin' in on the rocks, though it don't look very bad from here. I'll manoeuvre the tug in, an' then we can get busy. Hi, Jamieson, get the other hand an' clear the boat ready for shootin' over. We're going in now."

The way Jack Drake and Peter Deane were greeted when they went ashore in the tug's boat was lively, to say the least.

Ferrers Locke and his party had moved out to Langanaes, and there they had made themselves comfortable enough, being campmates with all the salvaged gear and the galley stove.

Locke had worried a great deal about Drake and Peter Deane, especially since the tug did not arrive till four days after she had been expected.

It took the whole day to get everyone aboard the tug. And then there did not seem much room for any more! Every available scrap of accommodation was taken up, and still there were men over who would have to spend the nights on deck.

Locke, Carr, Drake, Langsom, and Proctor crowded into the little cabin with the skipper of the tug.

"Seen anything of Stromsund?" asked Jack, of Langsom.

"No; he did not show himself," replied Langsom; "and I, for one, am glad that the last has been seen of him. This fast little tug will soon take us clear of these waters—"

"Sure we have seen the last of him?" asked Jack. "He's nosing about somewhere in the vicinity, you know."

"Well, he'll have to be quick if he wants to try another move, will he not?" smiled Langsom. "We shall be rounding the Horns by midnight, and then there will be plenty of company for us. There will doubtless be many trawlers at work on the south-eastern banks."

"H'm! That won't stop him if he has a trump card up his sleeve!" said Jack. "A man who will send a 'phantom' trawler out on the busy Dogger to wreck gear and blow up nets won't let a few lumbering steam trawlers with their trawls down prevent him from doing anything he wants to. No, Mr. Langsom, to tell you the truth, I sha'n't be easy in my mind till I see the breadth of Faxø Bay under our bows."

"Ah, you investigators, you are always cautious!" laughed Langsom. "For my part, I do not believe we will ever again hear of Herr Stromsund. I would like his farm out Hecla way. It seems wrong that such a villain should still be the owner of Ingholdt and master of all the good people there."

"Well, it can't be helped, unless Mr. Carr sues him for damages," said Jack. "If he does that, Stromsund, first of all, will have to be caught, and secondly, I expect his estates will have to be distrained on for the terrible amount of money he has caused Mr. Carr to lose. So, if you ask me, I'd say that Ingholdt Farm will change hands all right."

A man poked his head down through the cabin skylight.

"There be two trawlers hard by, skipper," he said. "They don't seem to be fishin', and they be actin' funny-like—"

The tug-master rose to go on deck. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No 959.

Locke, with a queer glance towards Jack Drake, followed. Drake also rose and prepared to go on deck.

A long, lumpy sea was running, and the darkening sky was overcast, with a hint of rain in it. The brave little tug plunged on on her southward course, bursting the seas to white foam at her forefoot.

The crowded decks were a scene of great excitement.

"I tell 'e, mate, 'tis them!" one man was saying.

"Ye canna tell," broke in a man from Leith. "Icelandmen are Icelandmen, an' ye canna tell one frae another—"

"Strike me, I know, mate!" cried the first speaker. "Ain't I right, Jim? Why, there's that bit o' broken rail near the after gallus! Hi, Mr. Locke, sir, them's the trawlers what took the Stormcock up north, an' then crippled her engines!"

Ferrers Locke was examining the trawlers through glasses. But the light was bad. At last, however, he swung round on Proctor, who was standing close behind him.

"They are Stromsund's boats, Proctor," said Locke swiftly. "He is up to some fresh villainy. Can you, as a seaman, divine his intentions?"

Proctor stared over under his bushy grey brows.

"They be closin' in," he said. "One's goin' to port a bit. They be— Wait! By thunder, I got their move, sir! They've got the heels o' us in this lump o' a sea, an' they're goin' to get on either side o' us an' close in when it gets too dark for them other craft to see. They be goin' to nip us—crush us!"

"Tug-master, you hear that!" said Locke, swiftly.

The skipper of the tug was shaking like a jelly.

NEW READERS BEGIN HERE.

FERRERS LOCKE, the private detective of Baker Street, and

JACK DRAKE, his boy assistant, have been engaged by

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

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

BLAIZE PROCTOR, 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 his crew steam for Ingholdt Farm, Iceland, the haunt of Stromsund, where Locke gains the confidence of FREDERIC LANGSOM, Stromsund's steward. Before they can reach the Stormcock again they are captured by the enemy and marooned on Brek Katel, where they meet PETER DEANE, who has been marooned on the island for years. Their anxiety, however, is lessened by the timely arrival of Proctor and Carr.

Drake and Proctor, left in charge of the Stormcock while Locke and a surveying party explore, are taken prisoners by Stromsund; but, thanks to the strategy of Proctor, they are able to rejoin Locke, who has since found Brek Katel to be a land possessing great mineral wealth.

Drake and Deane then set off for Reykjavik to fetch help. After many hours of hazardous tracking across the mountains they at last sight Hecla.

(Now read on.)

"What—what—" he began. "Look a here, sir, there wasn't nothing about the possibility o' this sort o' thing in the terms o' the charter o' this here tug—"

"I don't want to hear about that!" snapped Locke. "You see the intention. You'll act!"

"Wh—what—what shall I do, sir?"

"Good heavens, man, act—act! They're closing in rapidly on us now and—"

Skipper Proctor gripped the tug-master by the shoulder and dragged him towards the wheelhouse.

"If ye want any promptin' as to what to do, here's one will prompt ye!" he barked. "Mac, get below an' talk gently to the engineer, an' stand for orders through the speakin'-tube, same as we've often done on the Stormcock. Mr. Locke, sir, get the boys to stand to for anythin' on deck—"

Drake felt Langsom towering above him.

"You were right," said the Dane. "We haven't seen the last of Stromsund yet."

A rain squall hissed and lashed across the tug at that instant, and the big steam trawlers on either side were blotted from view for a few minutes. But when the squall passed, wild cries of alarm went up from the men crouching on the decks of the tug.

For the big, heavy trawlers had closed in more, and their sides towered above the little tug, black and menacing, as the three vessels smashed on in the seas, neck and neck.

On the bridge of one of the trawlers stood Stromsund and Langley, and on the bridge of the other Scar Hosking, the great weal on his face plainly visible.

Stromsund had his last desperate move to make. And the stout little tug with its freight of human beings, it seemed, would be crushed between those reeling, gleaming sides like an eggshell beneath a cartwheel!

A Twist of Fortune!

WITH his hands gripping the rail, so that his knuckles showed white, Jack Drake watched the two great trawlers on either side.

His mouth was set in a straight line; his eyes were narrowed, and a hard light shone from them.

"So this is it, as Proctor would say," said Jack. "After all our trials—after a deadly trek on foot across Iceland!"

Ferrers Locke was strangely calm as he lounged across the rail beside Jack.

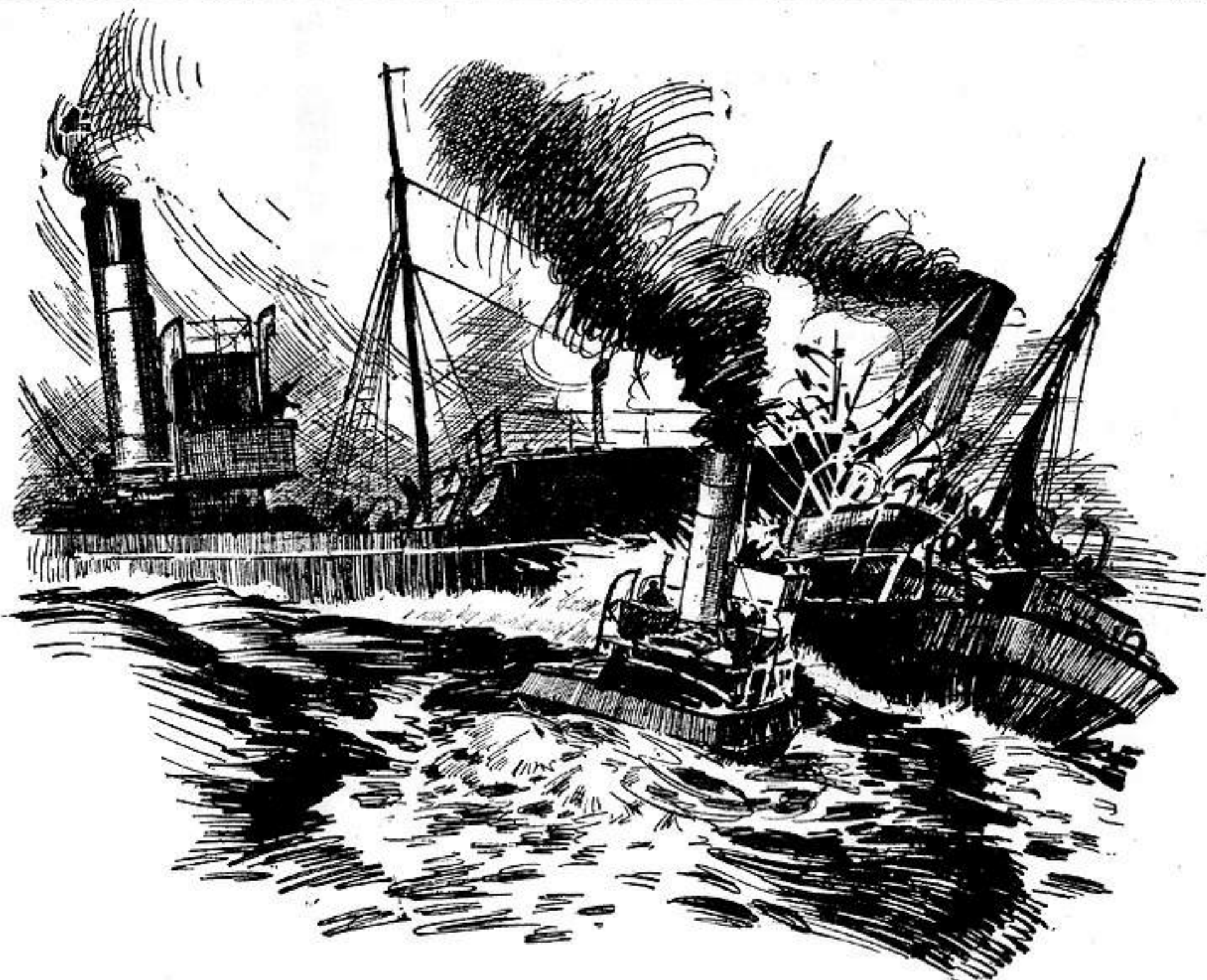
"We've been in as bad a situation before," said the famous private detective—"and Proctor's at the wheel!"

That certainly was a fact to inspire confidence. But short of getting up out of the water and flying away, there seemed no hope for the tug, if, indeed, Hosking and Stromsund did resort to such a desperate last move as to close in on the tug and crush her between their stout steel sides.

"Will they do it?" muttered Jack. "Will they dare?"

"They will dare all, my boy. They have done so before, so what hesitation will they have now we have driven them to desperation?"

Men were crowding aft on the tug, standing by the boat which had been unlashd and was ready to launch over the taffrail into the water. In the waist other men were busy unlashd the salvage-buoys, the duns and the raft-floats—anything that would be water-borne in the event of the tug going down.



Like great icebergs the two heavy trawlers crashed together—crashed with a fearful sound of tearing steelwork. But the small tug, ably handled by Proctor, remained unscathed. (See this page.)

Ferrers Locke looked calmly on at the preparations of the gasping, frantically working men.

"For my part, I'd as soon be without any means of support, save my own swimming powers, Drake," he mused. "A wetting to-night will mean death from exposure in three or four hours. Ah, see Proctor!"

Jack swung round towards the wheel-house. The bleak, bearded face of Skipper Proctor, looking distorted through the wet glass, was pressed close to the panes. He was watching the trawlers on either side—watching like a lynx with its prey close by. They saw Proctor hold up his hand, then drop it quickly.

Suddenly the big steam-trawlers on either side altered course, and came slamming in towards the little tug; that the tug would be crushed like a nut in the nut-crackers seemed certain.

Men shouted and yelled, some in fear, some in furious defiance. Then, it seemed as if by a miracle, the tug's way was checked. She stopped dead, like a motor-car under its brakes, and then began to go astern, the water boiling and surging in creamy foam about her bows.

There were shouts of dismay from the trawlers as the two great vessels crashed in towards each other. The wheels were forced hard over desperately, Hosking and Stromsund putting their own hands to the spokes.

But their effort to avert disaster was too late. The tug was not now where she should have been, according to all

the laws of water resistance and a vessel's way through the sea. There was now no buffer or shock absorber in the way of a small tug between the heavy trawlers. They crashed like a couple of icebergs coming together—crashed with a fearful sound of tearing steelwork, hissing steam, and wild cries from the men.

The tug was astern, her company gasping in surprise at the turn of events. Stromsund's trawler seemed to be trying to climb right over Hosking's, trying to override her, to roll her under to her doom.

Hosking's vessel reeled from the shock, and took a heavy list to starboard. The great armoured bows of Stromsund's boat was jammed tight in her side. And the frantic shouts of Hosking and his men came to the ears of those on the tug.

"Full ahead—full ahead!" Hosking was bawling. "Keep jammed in the hole or we sink like a stone!"

Stromsund, however, was looking about him with fear on his big, flabby face. This was beyond his reckoning. The tug was free to dash off to the nearest bunch of trawlers and close in round the damaged vessels, to the rescue. A rescue meant arrest, arrest trial, and trial—Well, the charge against him could easily be murder.

"Full astern, Langley!" bawled Stromsund.

And Langley, at his post in the wheel-house of Stromsund's boat, which, compared to Hosking's craft, had suffered little in the collision, jammed the handle

of the engine-room telegraph hard over. Clang-clang!

The great trawler drew away from Hosking's boat, leaving the gaping hole free for the water to rush in unchecked. Already Hosking's craft was down a foot deeper in the water. And her heavy list to starboard was increasing every second.

The yells and curses that flew towards Stromsund and Langley were terrible. He was leaving his confederates to drown. His vessel, with no worse damage than twisted bows, would steam off with all its power, leaving Hosking and his men to their fate—either death by drowning or rescue, arrest, trial, and—

"My boy," said Ferrers Locke, as he leaned on the rail of the tug, watching the tragedy ahead, "Stromsund is the vilest and most callous person I have ever come up against in my career. I hardly can believe that the man is human—"

"He is not, Herr Locke," sounded the deep voice of Langsom from behind. "He is a fiend from the pit, and it reddens me with confusion to think that once I worked for him as a servant."

"He's going off!" gasped Jack Drake. "See, she's swerving round—making off at her best speed, towards the north and—"

"And Hosking and his fellow lambs are bawling for rescue," cut in Locke. "We must go carefully here. Where's Proctor? Ah, here you are, skipper! Well, how are we to set about saving

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Hosking and his men from that sinking trawler?"

"And tell us quick, skipper," said Jack Drake swiftly. "She's listing more—see! Gosh, I believe she's going—"

Hosking—the Shipmaster!

"SHE won't go yet," said Proctor. "She be all right for another half-hour. Well, sir, matter o' seamanship, we'll get a line aboard o' her, an' then hold the tug close by while the men scramble through the water along the line, an' board us. We'll be a full house when they be aboard o' us, though, an' I'm not providin' against any further treachery from Hoskin'."

"Well, we must save them," said Locke, "so get busy, Proctor. Get that line aboard, and I will arrange things so that there won't be any fight in the villains when they get aboard the tug."

Skipper Proctor mounted to the wheel-house, and Jack Drake heard him handling the skipper of the tug with as much tact as one could expect to experience at a meeting of diplomats.

"Mr Locke wants your advice as to the best way to rescue them trawlermen, skip," said Proctor to the tugmaster.

"Best way is t' get a line aboard o' her, an' let the curs rescue themselves!" growled the tugmaster.

"I was reckonin' that'd be the way," replied Proctor, "an' hearin' you say so shows I'm right. Well, what about it?"

"I'll want your men to help."

"They'll help all they can, an' obey your orders," said Proctor.

The tugmaster went down into the waist, and gave some orders to his own men. Then he mounted the wheel-house again.

Proctor had lit his pipe, and was smoking placidly.

"How did you work that stunt of the tug not being where she ought to have been when the trawlers closed in, skipper?" asked Jack.

Proctor laughed.

"Easy!" he said. "We be in thirty fathom o' water now. When I reckoned the time was near for the crash, I ordered the kedg anchor over the

stern, attached to a four-hundred-fathom warp. Then Harper paid out the warp, the anchor, o' course, being fluked into the sea-bottom—an' good clay holdin' ground it be just here, too!"

"The confusion on our decks was enough camouflage for Harper's work. Them on the trawlers didn't suspect. I held up my hand when I saw them closin' in, an' at the signal Harper checked the kedg warp. Mac slammed hard astarn wi' the engines at that instant, so, o' course, there we stopped dead, ridin', in point o' fact, to an anchor over the stern."

"Well done, Proctor!" nodded Locke. "Crumbs, you're a genius!" gasped Jack Drake.

"No, I bain't!" said Proctor. "I'm a seaman that must think o' these things. I've felt the trawler's gear snag on a wreck on the bottom, bringin' us up just like to an anchor too often not to think o' a little dodge like that for gettin' out o' this mess. Stromsund was tryin' to land us into—"

The tug was at last manoeuvred so that the line could be thrown, and as the first man came splashing across, Ferrers Locke went down amongst Carr's men and told them to secure and disarm each man as he came aboard.

"Take even his jack-knife away," said Locke, "and pack as many as possible below into the fo'c'sle, gear-rooms, lamp-room, and so on, and lock them in."

This was done with a deftness which showed the men's enjoyment in the proceeding.

"There y'are, lantern-jaw! Ye can eat your bully wi' a bit o' stick!"—this as a knife was cut away from its lanyard round the waist of a half-drowned newcomer to the tug. "This'll do, sweetie, for me little four-year-old son 'way back at Lowestoft to play wiv!"—this as a huge, six-chambered, long-barrelled Colt revolver was jerked out of a man's side-pocket. "Ye won't want a toothpick aboard this packet, mate!"—this as a concealed marlin-spike was wrenched from under another arrival's oil-frock.

So it went on, and the pile of miscellaneous weapons grew on the deck of the tug.

There was now a great commotion at the other end of the rope. The big trawler was nearing the end. She was lurching dangerously, and men were fighting for next turn to get along the rope to safety.

Hosking stood, head and shoulders above the others, the great red weal down his face vivid and plainly seen from the tug. The huge ruffian was hitting out right and left, felling men to the deck. And his primitive methods were having the desired result, for out of chaos at the end of the rope came order. And the work of rescue went on.

The tug was becoming congested, to say the least. All accommodation below was now full of wet, bedraggled, miserable men. And guards were told off to stand over the growing group of rescued men on the deck.

Hosking was now actually lifting men over the side of the sinking trawler and setting them off along the rope. One poor wretch clung to the rail with his hand, afraid of the dash through the sea. Hosking stamped on his knuckles and made him let go, then pushed him out along the rope, to struggle to safety or drown.

Another man was made to attempt

the journey by having Hosking's sea-boot jammed in the back of his neck, so that he could be pushed off well along the rope.

The trawler was all but going now. At every lurch her waist became awash. And Hosking got the last man off along the rope with the greatest difficulty. These last few men were the cravens, or those who had quite lost their heads in the terror of their position.

"Hosking's done!" said Proctor. "She going—going—"

Hosking, the last man to leave the trawler, launched himself out along the rope.

"She's down. The rope'll part on our rail. Hosking's done!" repeated Proctor.

But as all watched with tense faces as Scar Hosking struggled on through the surging wash, frantically hauling his heavy form through the water hand over hand, they saw the man stop and look back.

His trawler was down, half her smoke-stack already below, and, with cool deliberation, the man released his hold of the rope with one hand, dived that inside his oilskin, out flashed his knife, and the rope was cut behind him just as the masts of the trawler disappeared below the surface.

Then, coolly, hand over hand, Hosking hauled himself along the free rope to the rail of the tug, where willing hands helped him up on to the deck.

Skipper Proctor stood face to face with his old enemy.

"You be a double-eyed villain, Scar Hosking!" said the old trawler-master. "But, by gum, you be master o' ship, too! An' for that I take some o' the credit, seein' it was me trained ye to the trawlin'. If ye hadn't acted like a man, seein' all the hands off safe before ye looked to your own skin, then, by gum, I'd ha' drawn a knife across the strands o' that rope myself!"

"An' mebbe it'd ha' been a good thing for me if ye had done it!" snarled Hosking, roughly brushing aside those who stood round him and joining the cowering group of his companions forward.

They all got back to Reykjavik safely. Hosking and his men were secured, and an extradition order was put into force. So everyone returned to England, Langsom as the guest of Locke and Drake.

Information regarding Stromsund as a "wanted" man was published. And trawlers kept a sharp look-out for his vessel. All possible ports were watched, but no news of the villain came to hand.

Ingholdt Farm was kept under observation. But neither Stromsund nor Langley returned to it. John Carr offered a big reward for the arrest of Stromsund, and, with this inducement, vessels in the far north made it part of their business to examine all passing craft in an endeavour to recognise the fugitive trawler in which Stromsund and Langley and the rest were trying to evade the clutches of the law.

But had Stromsund's ship been the Flying Dutchman herself, she could not have been more elusive. Absolutely no news came regarding her.

The Way of the North!

JOHN CARR got very busy on his return to England. With Stromsund still at large, Carr felt disinclined to wreak his vengeance on a tool, such as Hosking was, though
(Continued on page 28.)



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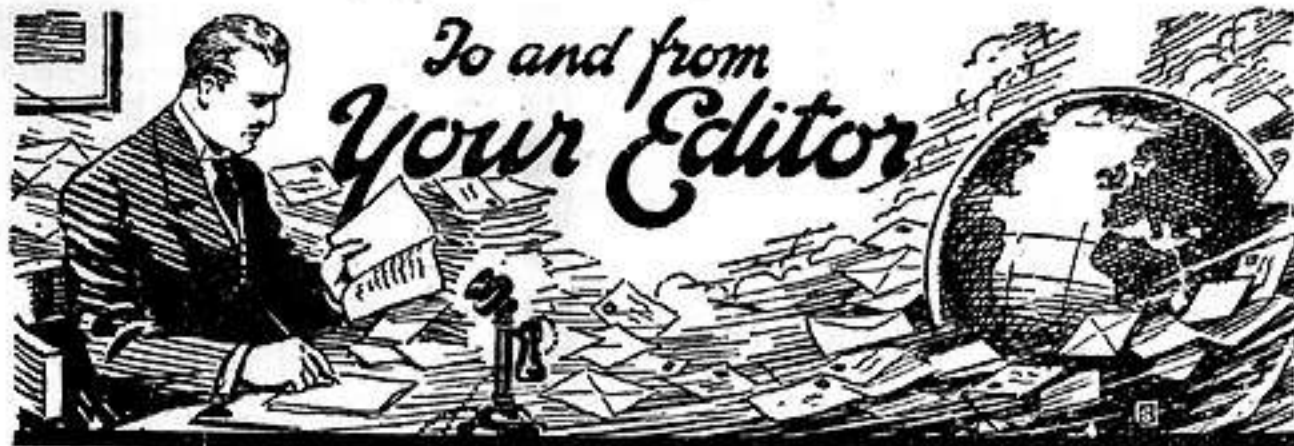
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THE WEEK!

NEXT week is the week all you chaps have been looking and longing for—and I don't wonder at it! It's a week any chap would look forward to. Free Gifts! How I longed for such things as a boy. But in those days such treats only came once in a blue moon. (I'm not quite sure how often that comes in a lifetime.) But, still, what we're concerned with now is the MAGNET Free Gift week. And it doesn't stop at one week. Not a bit of it! These gorgeous cut-out, stand-up, real action photos of Australia's leading cricketers, to say nothing of those players who represent good old England, will come as a great boon and blessing to you cricket fans, for the MAGNET Free Gift scheme goes on for weeks. Got that? Not one Gift and then a mild finish. Remember, you've the chance to collect a series of these wonderful photos from week to week.

NO COUPONS!

You'll all be pleased at that announcement. Not infrequently, in order to get a Free Gift, you have to do something; you have to fill in coupons, or you have to solve puzzles, etc. Not so with the MAGNET. All you have to do is to go on buying the paper that has always stood you well. You pay your twopence and you get a magnificent Free Gift—a gift that will arouse the envy of all your chums who behold it. Isn't it just great? Isn't it just stupendous? Why, already heaps of Magnetites have written me on the subject; they have not forgotten last year's Free Gifts. "If this year's Free gifts are anything like as good as you gave us last year," says one enthusiast, "the good old MAGNET will increase its circulation by thousands." Now, that chap is something of a prophet. Of course, an editor likes to see his circulation on the up-grade. It's very nice to get the weekly net sales figures showing an increase of thousands. But, all the same for that, I want my old pals—by that I mean my regular readers—to make certain of these gifts. If any of my old chums missed this stupendous treat through being casual, I should feel upset, even although the fault would lie with them. You simply must step in and order your MAGNET at once.

THE COMPETITION!

Of course, with a big "boom" number like the one I have prepared for next week, it would seem incomplete if I omitted to include a competition. Money prizes are always attractive, and, as you all know, they interest a large percentage of MAGNET chums. Well, it would not be fitting that this coming week's bumper issue should be launched with-

out a competition, so you competition fans will find something of additional interest in your favourite paper next week. The prizes are good—extremely good. But you'll know more about them next Monday. And—wait a minute—I don't stop there. What about the serial, some of you will be saying. What, indeed! By David Goodwin. Just think of it, my lads—David Goodwin! Can you beat it? Can you point out another paper with a programme half as good as ours, with a new David Goodwin serial in it, written specially for the occasion? And "CURLEW ISLAND!" is some serial, my chums, take my word for it. You'll be gasping for the following week's instalment the moment you reach the curtain of the



opening instalment. The yarn deals with a young, happy, care-free lad who helps his uncle in the dangerous pastime of inventing high explosives. Perhaps, as a natural consequence, Tommy Comber's spirits are high, too. But would you like to be hauled up in a court of law and charged with the murder of your uncle, as is the case with poor old Tommy? It's rough, for, of course, Tommy is innocent—as innocent of the dastardly crime as someone else is guilty of it. But the evidence—In a court of law, much store is set, of necessity, by the evidence. And poor old Tommy goes to—But there, I'm letting my sentiment run away with me. What happens to Tommy you will learn in the way David Goodwin loves to tell—in the way you all love him to tell; in short, David Goodwin's inimitable way. And this grand serial—grand it is in every line—starts next week. Isn't that a real treat? Isn't that enough to send you scampering round to your newsagent right away with that order for next week's MAGNET? Well, it ought to be.

OUR SUMMER SERIES!

For weeks I have talked about this really topping summer series of Greyfriars stories. When I say Greyfriars stories, perhaps I ought to make an amendment, for the series will deal with the adventures of Harry Wharton & Co. and Inky, of course, in far-off India. Of course, Billy Bunter will be in the party. No summer series away from Greyfriars would be complete without the fascinating society of William George Bunter. Well, this grand series, my lads, is going to start in Next Week's FREE GIFT NUMBER! You see, I'm going to whet your appetites in the Free Gift line and make you ask for more. The same, of course, applies to the new reader who will pick up the MAGNET for the first time, doubtless attracted by the Free Gifts. But he's bound to read the school story, and then he'll be wondering how it was he never came to read the stories of Harry Wharton & Co. before. Thus, when he comes to the start of the Indian series—remember, it begins simultaneously with the Free Gift scheme—he'll be quite prepared to kick himself for not having bought the MAGNET before. All the same for that, he'll be pleased, as you all will be, for these Indian stories will make MAGNET history.

THE "POPULAR"!

I must make mention concerning our



popular—that's not meant to be a pun—companion paper, for in next week's issue, too, will be given away free a topping cut-out action photo of J. S. Ryder, the Australian cricketer. This double treat—we can couple the MAGNET and "Popular" thus—will give you chaps the chance of a lifetime to collect the finest set of world-famous cricketers ever offered to readers of any paper. Take the tip for what its worth. In any case, you'll see the MAGNET's Free Gift next week, and I'll wager you'll be after the "Popular" Free Gift "toot sweet." 'Nuff said!

"CURLEW ISLAND!"

I might use the same words here as I used above. You'll be after this serial story like Billy Bunter gets after some freshly made tarts. And, like Bunter, you won't be satisfied; you'll want some more!

YOUR EDITOR.

THE PHANTOM OF THE DOGGER BANK!

(Continued from page 26.)

the man deserved all the punishment the law could give him.

"I will not punish one of the underlings while the chief villain is free!" Carr had stated emphatically.

So, agreeing with Hosking for the matter of his first arrest to be forgotten, Carr quashed the case against Hosking by withdrawing his charge. So Hosking was free. And, in gratitude to the trawler-owner, Hosking gave Carr a fair amount of information about Brek Katel, which enabled some solid work to be done in regard to working the sulphur business the very next spring.

The men who had so bravely stuck to their work under Locke found themselves very comfortably settled for life with the share which John Carr had so generously given to each. And many a cottage with a white-painted flag-staff in the garden had an ex-trawlerman as its tenant or owner; a man whose yarns of wild adventure in Iceland and the far northern seas held the neighbours spellbound during yarning hours in the evening.

The very first year the sulphur business became a great paying concern, ably managed by Langsom, who was glad to have the opportunity of saving. John Carr offered the big Dane a princely salary as works manager on the

spot—that is, Brek Katel. Also, Langsom was granted shares in the company as a gratuity for his services throughout the struggle which John Carr had had with Stromsund.

Proctor became a director of the Brek Katel Sulphur Supply, Limited, and worked shoulder to shoulder with his old shipmate, John Carr. The business reaped rich rewards from the outset. The sulphur on Brek Katel, pure and unadulterated as it was, seemed inexhaustible.

And one day, when Jack Drake and Ferrers Locke had motored out to Lowestoft to see their old comrades, they all sat in luxurious comfort in John Carr's library.

"You said I'd be a rich man when everything seemed to be smashing up, Mr. Locke," said John Carr, whose stout form was wedged comfortably between the arms of a big leather-covered armchair. He puffed at his cigar with a thoughtful face for a few minutes. Then he spoke again. "You were right. But how you knew—"

Ferrers Locke laughed.

"It was simple; for a detective, who has met the Stromsund breed so often," he said. "Men like Stromsund don't go to such great lengths as wrecking the gear of peaceful trawlers—going to the expense of running a phantom trawler for the job, too—in order to make another man sell him a stretch of land, unless that land is in some way very valuable. I was backing a pretty safe thing when I became mortgagee of Brek Katel, and it has turned out a splendid investment."

John Carr smiled a comfortable smile.

"Ah, well, we're more comfortable

here than in Peter Deane's cove on Brek Katel," he said, with a contented sigh.

Deane, sitting near the window, grinned. Deane had been made a sleeping partner in the business. Though he seemed dreamy and far-away in thoughts at times, his brain was fairly clear, and there was now no trace of craziness in the old trawler-man.

"Only thing is, Stromsund got that there Viking treasure I guarded for so many years for you, John," he said, with a laugh. "I expect it's with him now, somewhere in the far north—"

"I wonder what has happened to him, and to Langley?" put in Jack Drake.

Proctor winked a ponderous wink towards John Carr and Deane.

"I reckon the northern seas know a thing or two," he said.

"What do you mean?" said Locke.

"You, sir, a detective, an' don't cotton on to it?" he said.

"Well, I have an idea?" said Locke, with a smile.

"What I mean is that the far north has its own way o' squarin' up accounts, sir," said Proctor. "I reckon Stromsund has got that there Viking treasure all right, an' that he'll keep it for all time, an' that the northern seas will keep 'em both pretty safe, too."

"Ay, ay, the northern seas often square up accounts that way," nodded Peter Deane.

And Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake agreed that perhaps it was so.

THE END.

(Now get ready for the first instalment of "Curlew Island"—our wonderful new serial from the pen of famous David Goodwin—which will appear in next week's MAGNET.)



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