

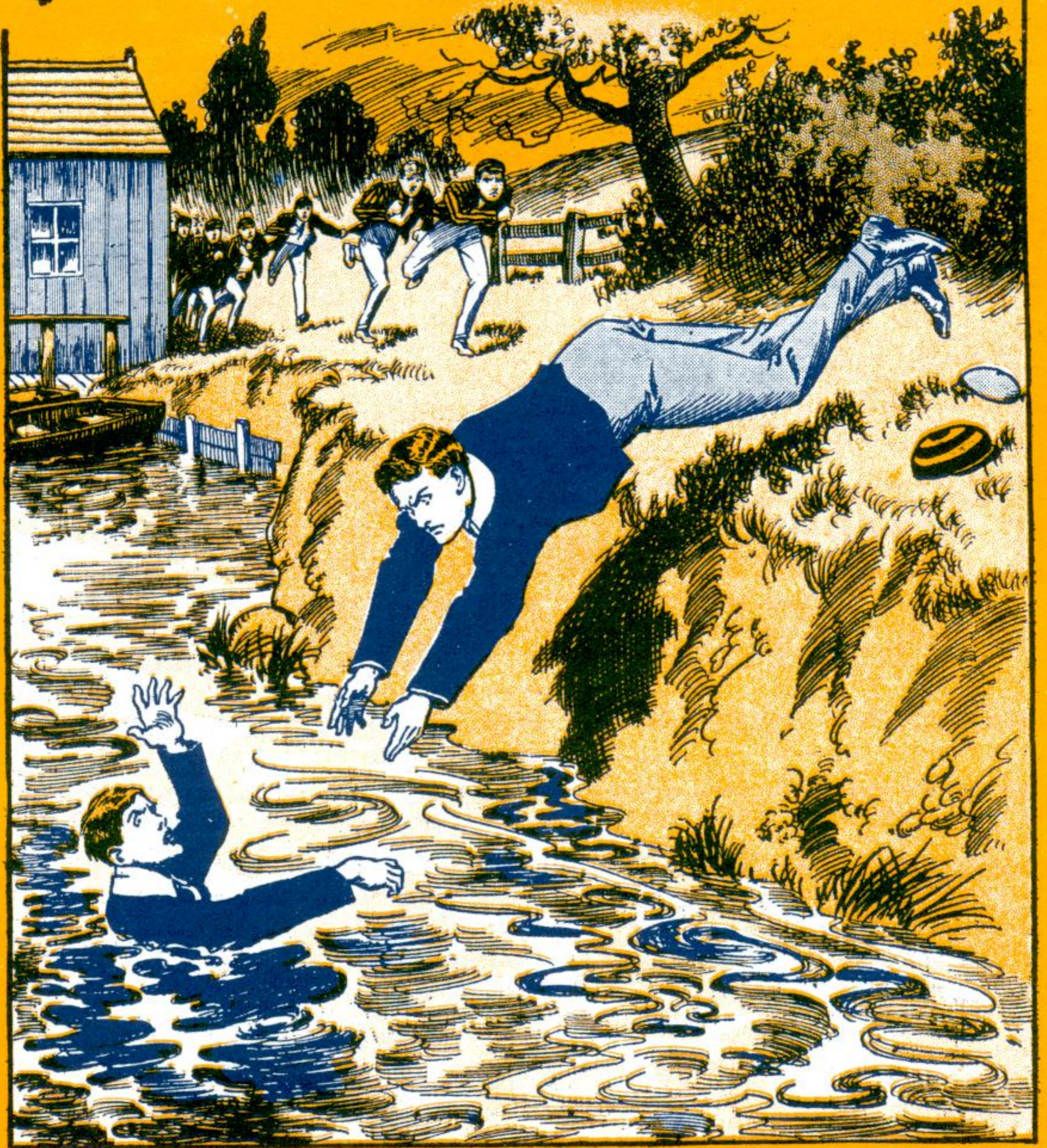
In this issue: **“THE HAND OF FATE!”** A Magnificent Story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars School.

No. 805. Vol. XXIV.

Week ending July 14th, 1923.

The Magnet 2^d

Library
of
School & Detective Stories.



MAN OVERBOARD!

(A thrilling incident from this week's splendid school story, inside.)

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





Our Companion Papers.

"THE BOYS' FRIEND." Every Monday.
 "THE POPULAR." Every Tuesday.
 "THE GEN." Every Wednesday.
 "CHUCKLES." Every Thursday.
 "THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL." Published Yearly.

"LANE BUNTER!"

IN a few brief words I have to refer to an excessively sad happening in next week's long complete yarn of Greyfriars in the MAGNET. It is grievous to relate that the porpoise has gone lame. At the same time, thanks to the dexterous handling of a most painful theme by Mr. Frank Richards, and the nimble wit the great author always displays, the tragedy is somewhat mitigated, and the reader is let down lightly—much more lightly than Bunter himself. You know what a perfect whale William George is for cricket. In the grand yarn fixed for Monday next he plays cricket. Bunter was modest about it; he knew he was not in his top form, but Wingate persuaded the Owl to think again. The captain of Greyfriars would not take "No!" for an answer, and the Owl had to play.

Enough has been said. Bunter was

not at concert pitch. It is otherwise with Mr. Frank Richards. It is a hilarious tale, one that will make you hold your sides. You will weep over the sorrows of the large lump of inefficiency represented by Billy Bunter, and when you have done laughing and mopped up the tears which laughter brings, I am sure you will hand over your copy of the MAGNET to some chum who is not as yet a reader. Watch how Bunter turns to account the shocking injury he received on the fateful field.

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The "Greyfriars Herald" is many-sided, and it has the good luck to possess a really brainy staff. The next issue will be devoted to the noble band of snobs. Now you get the genus snob everywhere. He is one of those institutions which cannot be helped. Sometimes his eccentricities merely provide food for mirth; sometimes he causes big trouble. In the new supplement you will find the snob dealt with from all points of view. It is good reading, and if any snob gets hold of it, the contents will do him good. But, of course, the born snob lives in dismal ignorance of his unhappy condition. That's the pity of it.

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Your Editor.

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1.—The First Prize will be awarded to the sender of what, in the opinion of the Editor and a competent staff of adjudicators, is the best Last Line received.

2.—Consolation prizes of 2s. 6d. will be awarded from week to week to those competitors whose efforts show merit.

3.—The coupon below entitling you to enter this competition must be either pasted on to a postcard, in which case your Last Line must be written IN INK directly beneath it, or enclosed separately in an envelope with your Last Line effort attached.

4.—Competitor's name and full postal address must accompany every effort sent in.

5.—Entries must reach us not later than July 19th, 1923, and MUST NOT be enclosed with entrance forms for any other competition. They must be addressed "MAGNET Limerick No. 14," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4.

6.—Your Editor undertakes that every effort sent in will receive careful consideration, but he will not hold himself responsible for coupons lost or mislaid, or delayed in the post. Proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of delivery.

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7.—This competition is open to All Readers of the Companion Papers, but the result each week will appear only in the MAGNET.

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Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

"MAGNET" LIMERICK COMPETITION

No. 14.

Said a lady to Constable Tozer,
 Who leaned on a lamp-post—the dozer!
 "Oh, tell me, I beg,
 The best way to Pegg?"

THIS EXAMPLE WILL HELP YOU:
 A month will elapse ere he shows her!

M.

CUT HERE



Not for some considerable time has the Greyfriars Remove had such a puzzle to unravel as that in which the mysterious Willesley twins figure. Right up to the last the author—in his own inimitable style—mystifies the reader as to how he will permit things to shape. Everyone loves a mystery, but few there are who can create them better than **FRANK RICHARDS**.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Wharton's Lone Hand!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! What's the matter, Harry?"

Bob Cherry, sticking his curly pate into Study No. 1 of the Remove at Greyfriars, spoke thus. Harry Wharton looked up.

"Nothing, really, Bob," he said. "I'm just thinking, that's all."

"You look as if it hurt. Now if it had been me—"

Bob paused, and his pause was expressive.

Wharton laughed. He knew what Bob meant.

Bob Cherry never bothered much about thinking except when he had to. With four staunch chums, all brainier than himself, he had been heard to say he did not see the necessity of it. When the time came for thinking out a problem of his own, which circumstances prevented his laying before them, Bob was very much under the weather.

"Head ache, Harry?"

"No. Why, Bob?"

"Well, mine would."

Harry laughed again. But Bob noticed that again his laughter hardly rang true.

He certainly had something on his mind.

"I'll leave you to it. But don't keep on thinking too long, old top! Finish up, come out, and knock the ball about. It will do you a heap more good."

And Bob went, showing more real feeling for his chum than many fellows cleverer than he might have done in his place. Whatever the defects of Bob Cherry's brains—and they were better than he was apt to think them—Bob's heart was assuredly in the right place.

Harry thought that, and then ceased to think about Bob altogether.

"Box or Cox?" he muttered. "Now, I can't help thinking it's Cox!"

It was the problem of the brothers Willesley that bothered Harry.

The Willesleys were twins. They were

so much alike that even when they stood side by side one could not distinguish one from another.

But they were very different in nature. Quentin Willesley was a good fellow and an all-round athlete.

Cuthbert Willesley was a complete rotter and an unmitigated slacker.

One of them was within the walls of Greyfriars at that moment. And Harry could not feel sure which of the two it was.

No other fellow in the school knew that there were two Willesleys.

The Head knew. Mr. Quelch knew. Both were fully aware of the circumstances in which Cuthbert had been sacked from Arundel House. Quentin had left that establishment at the same time.

But neither the Head nor the master of the Remove was aware that Cuthbert had been at Greyfriars at all, and, naturally, Wharton could not tell them.

He tried to think it all out now.

At the outset Cuthbert had come when Quentin should have come, having played a mean trick on his brother and got ahead of him.

Within a few hours Quentin had followed, had met his twin brother out of gates; Cuthbert had expected him to turn up, and had slipped into his proper place. Those few hours had been enough to make Cuthbert doubtful whether Greyfriars would suit him, and he had not at the time objected greatly to giving up his usurped place.

But—so it seemed—he had no sooner got away than he had made up his mind that it would suit him best to get back.

So that night he had tricked his brother beyond the walls, and had taken advantage of an accident to get himself inside.

Wharton did not know all the details of the quick change, but what Quentin had told him made him sure of that much.

Wharton drew a sheet of exercise-paper towards him, and wrote hard for several minutes.

Then he looked at what he had written.

It read thus:

"C. arrives—trouble with B."

("B." stood for Bolsover major.)

The notes went on:

"Q. takes his right place. Fights B.—licks him.

"C. gets in again. Sleeps here Tuesday night. Has a fight with Bunter after classes Wed. Lies down to him.

"C. asked to play cricket. Refuses. Q. tries to get him out of gates, but fails. Q. turns up on Little Side in disguise, puts the wind up C.; gets him outside, and comes back.

"Q. plays in second half of scratch game, and makes a fine century.

"Q. here that night. Everybody likes him. Good sort altogether.

"C. goes to Cross Keys instead of going home to Hampstead.

"Q. gets letter from C. saying that he is practically in pawn to Cobb at the Cross Keys for money lost at cards—asks help.

"Q. comes to me and tells me the story in brief. I understand now what Quelch was driving at when he said that the new fellow was a bit under a cloud through no fault of his own.

"Q. has an appointment to fight Temple in the gym after classes. He is worried because he can't be there and at the Cross Keys at the same time.

"I offer to be his second and to explain the delay to T. as far as I can without giving the secret away.

"T. gets ratty, and I have to fight him. Before we have finished one of the Willesleys comes back.

"Query—which?

"Looks like Q. He faces T., and fights.

"Knocked out pretty soon. Might happen to anyone. Nothing to go on there.

"Manner not like Q. Does not take his licking too cheerfully. But that is not enough to prove which of them it is.

"C. hates cricket. Q. loves it. Any chance of proving things here?

"If C. at G., where is Q.?"

That was where Harry had stopped. That last line made him think hard. His

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thoughts had moved as far as that before Bob had looked in, but he had not then got them marshalled upon paper.

"Box and Cox"—that was what he had called the twins, after the famous old play in which there is such a confusion of identities. But this was worse than Box and Cox.

And he—Harry Wharton—was the only fellow at Greyfriars who had a clue—the only fellow who could do anything!

For he was bound by his honour not to tell anyone.

And the more he thought of it the less he liked it.

If Cuthbert was at Greyfriars, where was Quentin?

He had gone out to visit the Cross Keys at his brother's urgent appeal for help.

If Cuthbert was the fellow Temple had knocked out, was Quentin still at the Cross Keys?

Harry added another line to his paper. "Better tackle the chap who is here."

That really seemed the most hopeful chance of elucidating the mystery.

But to do it he must get Willesley alone. It did not matter, from that point of view, which of the Willesleys it was. He had no right to speak before other fellows of what Quentin had told him in confidence.

Well, it ought not to be too difficult to get him alone before the day ended. There might even be a chance now. Most of the fellows would be at the nets.

Cuthbert would not be there. Wharton was pretty sure of that.

If Willesley was at the nets and playing well, then it was all right—that Willesley must be Quentin, and a word or two with him would set at rest all the doubts of the skipper of the Remove.

But if Willesley was not at the nets? Did that prove that he was Cuthbert?

No. Wharton saw that clearly. No one could be keener on cricket than he himself was, but he was sitting in his study, thinking hard, when he might have been on Little Side. And Quentin Willesley must have plenty to think about. His brother had provided him with that.

Harry thrust the paper of deductions into his pocket, and went off hopefully to the playing fields.

But he found no easy solution there.

A glance showed him that Willesley was not present.

He did not stay to watch what was going on. He went back to the quad.

No one about. No use in waiting till Willesley turned up.

The new fellow shared Study No. 12 with Lord Mauleverer, Sir Jimmy Vivian, and Piet Delarey.

Delarey and Vivian were both on Little Side. If Willesley was in his study there might be a chance to get him outside quietly, for it was more than likely that Mauly was asleep.

So Wharton went back to the study floor.

He tapped at the door of Study No. 12.

"Come in!"

That did not sound like Quentin. The voice was sullen, resentful.

But there was no proof in this. Quentin might have been through enough to make him feel anything but cheery.

Whichever of them it might be, he had been thrashed by Temple. Of so much Harry was sure. But he thought that Quentin would have got over any

chagrin he might feel at that in the time between one o'clock and five.

It was not only Temple, though. Quentin might be worrying about his worthless brother.

Another fellow in Wharton's place might have felt less ill at ease.

But the captain of the Remove, though the few fellows who did not like him did accuse him of butting-in on what was not his business, had real delicacy of mind. If he ever did butt in it was because he deemed it his duty to do so. The fact that Quentin had trusted him did not justify him in meddling with Quentin's affairs unasked. That was what he felt.

But—was this Quentin?

If Wharton could have been sure that it was not, all his scruples would have been flung to the winds. He would have felt no compunction about dealing drastically with a rotter like Cuthbert.

He walked in.

Mauly was snoozing on the couch. Willesley had a pack of cards on the table, and was playing a game by himself—some variety of patience, no doubt. Harry noticed the slimness of his fingers as he dealt the cards—noticed, too, the deft manipulation of them. Somehow that did not seem a bit like Quentin. No harm at all in a fellow playing patience. But Quentin Willesley had not struck Harry as being at all the sort of fellow for that, especially when he might have been at the nets.

"Will you come outside with me, Willesley? A minute or two will do. But we needn't disturb Mauly by talking in here."

The fellow who sat with the cards in his hands had it on the tip of his tongue to refuse, Harry was sure.

Cuthbert, surely!

"No—no certainty about it at all! Quentin might have repented having told a fellow, almost a stranger to him, so much.

"I'll come."

The words were spoken morosely. But the speaker got to his feet at once, and followed Wharton into the passage.

Harry was at a loss for a moment what to say.

"Well, what is it, Wharton?" asked the new boy impatiently.

"Look here, are you Quentin or Cuthbert?"

Now the rotter—and this was the rotter, as Harry suspected—was by far the cleverer of the twins.

His agile mind leaped at once to the correct solution.

Quentin had been talking to Wharton. He knew the counter to that, and he answered at once.

"What would you have known about Cuthbert if I hadn't told you?" he asked.

Wharton looked at him hard. Cuthbert returned his gaze unblushingly.

"I suppose that settles it," said Wharton.

And he went away.

Cuthbert felt inclined to call him back. It would be safer to try to make a friend of the fellow of whom Quentin had evidently made a confidant.

But Cuthbert was only capable of being bold for a brief time. The streak of yellow in him asserted itself now.

He could not talk to Wharton as though he were Quentin. Wharton would naturally want to take up the discussion where it had been left off, and

Cuthbert had not pluck enough to bluff in the dark.

So he let Harry go, feeling that it was dangerous, but dreading more danger if he stayed.

And Harry went, unsatisfied. Even now he was sure of nothing but the fact that he had a lone hand and a difficult hand to play.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

At the Cross Keys!

MEANWHILE, Quentin Willesley, the fellow who should have been at Greyfriars, was at the Cross Keys at Friar-dale.

He had been summoned thither by his brother, under the pretext that Cobb, the landlord, was keeping Cuthbert practically a prisoner until his bill and his card debts were paid.

There were no card debts, and the bill was a mere trifle.

Cuthbert had won money both from Cobb and his pal, Jerry Hawke. They counted themselves experts at cards, but they were not in the same class as Cuthbert Willesley.

The summoning of Quentin to settle his brother's pretended debts was a dodge, and an exceedingly dirty dodge. Hawke and Cobb had discovered what the relations between the two were, and had suggested to Cuthbert that they could get him back into Greyfriars and clear Quentin out of the way.

And now the rotter was back within the school walls, while the good fellow, who was worth a thousand of him, lay on a bed in a shabby bed-room at the Cross Keys, still unconscious.

Cobb had used more force than he had intended when he had thrust Quentin down the cellar steps.

Cuthbert had gone down when the landlord had feared to do so, and had come up to assure Cobb that there was no great damage done.

Then, having shelled out blackmail to Messrs. Cobb and Hawke, Cuthbert had hurried off to Greyfriars, where he had arrived in time to take at Temple's hands the licking that Quentin might—or might not—have taken had he been allowed to get to the gym.

Messrs. Cobb and Hawke had done very well out of the business, thus far. The money they had lost to Cuthbert had come back to them, with addition, in return for their help. Cobb had taken nearly ten pounds from Quentin in settlement of a fictitious debt. Both reckoned on getting more out of Cuthbert, whom they looked upon as in their clutches.

But they were not easy in mind.

In a way it might simplify matters that Quentin still lay senseless. But it tangled them in other ways. The two portly conspirators dared not call in a doctor, and they were afraid that the boy might die on their hands.

"An' a nice sorter thing that would be!" said Mr. Cobb.

"I don't think he's hurt real bad," replied Jerry Hawke, trying to take a hopeful view. "His head ain't cut. I reckon it won't be long before he comes to an' starts in to yell the 'ouse down."

"An' a nice sorter thing that would be!" repeated Cobb.

"You said that before. It's a mercy that he ain't begun yelling yet. One of us ought to go an' sit with him, to be ready against he wakes."

"It ain't so bad for you, Jerry

Full of sparkling humour, in Frank Richards' own style—

Hawke, as what it is for me. I've 'ad enough an' a bit over of trouble with Greyfriars, one way an' another. I shall lose my licence if this comes out!"

"Well, you had ought to 'ave thought of that before, old pal. But I don't want nothin' like that to 'appen. This place suits me, an' you an' me stand or fall together."

Mr. Cobb grunted. He did not quite see it in that light.

"I'll go up an' see 'ow he's gettin' on, anyways," volunteered Hawke, anxious to propitiate the publican, and by no means anxious to proceed with the argument.

For Mr. Hawke had no intention of staying at the Cross Keys if heavy trouble impended. He had had nothing to do with Quentin's fall down the cellar steps. He had not been present; and he was quite prepared to swear that he had known nothing of any designs upon the boy.

Cobb suspected as much, having the usual wrong 'un's distrust of another wrong 'un. He resented hotly the notion that he might be let in for serious trouble while Hawke went scot-free.

Therefore, when Hawke had been upstairs about five minutes, he stole after him.

He listened at the door. No sound came from within the room.

So Mr. Cobb sat himself down upon the topmost stair, lighted an evil-smelling cigar, and awaited developments.

Mr. Hawke, puffing away at another cigar of the same brand, sat by the bed on which Quentin lay, and also awaited developments.

It was now about a quarter to five. Bob Cherry had looked in at Study No. 1, and had found Wharton thinking hard. Bob had gone off to play cricket, like a good many others in the Remove, the fight between classes and dinner having prevented their getting a game then.

Harry was tackling Cuthbert, uncertain whether the fellow he thus tackled was Cuthbert or Quentin.

The minutes ticked themselves off. Harry had now come away from Study No. 12, still uncertain. He was hesitating in a course of action which presented itself to him as almost inevitable, yet which he strongly disliked.

If it was Cuthbert at Greyfriars, then Quentin had been to the Cross Keys, and might still be there.

That was the thought which kept drumming in Harry's brain.

Might still be there—a prisoner! For certainly he would not stay of his own free will.

Hawke was at the Cross Keys, Harry knew. That fact made it all the more likely that there had been plotting, for Hawke and Cobb together were far more than twice as bad as either of them alone.

If Quentin was there, Cuthbert knew all about it. But, though it might be difficult to believe that one brother could so work against another, who had always been a good friend to him, Harry did not find it impossible. The fellow who had come out of Study No. 12 to speak to him was either Quentin in a bad mood or else as thorough-paced a scoundrel as a boy not yet sixteen could well be.

Wharton felt that he ought to go to the Cross Keys, and he hated the notion of going.

It was past five now. He must make up his mind soon. Frank Nugent would be coming in from cricket to tea. And the journey, if it was to be made, must

not be left till too late, or there would be lock-up to render it risky.

Wharton suddenly made up his mind to go. He ran downstairs, got his bike out of the shed, and hurried to the gates. Now that he had decided he was troubled lest he should be asked awkward questions.

But his chums were still at cricket, and only Billy Bunter was in the quad.

"I say, where are you going, Wharton?" asked the Owl of the Remove. "I'll come with you if you like, wherever it is. I've nothing in particular to do."

"I don't like. Go on doing it!" answered Harry.

"Oh, really, Wharton! There's no need to snap a fellow's head off for a civil offer, is there? I wouldn't go with you now if you went down on your bended knees to ask me!"

Wharton did not answer that.

He hastened on, and Bunter rolled to the gate in his wake.

Bunter was not specially intelligent, but he had known Harry Wharton so long that he understood him better than Harry thought.

He was sure now that the captain of the Remove was worried about something.

The notion of Harry's being worried struck no sympathetic chord in the heart of William George Bunter, if indeed there was a heart worth mentioning embedded anywhere among his fat.

But he was interested. Bunter's curiosity was almost as insatiable as his appetite.

He reached the gates in time to see Harry take the road to Friardale, and he rolled heavily along that road after him.

"He's up to something. I'm jolly sure!" he muttered. "It would be rather a lark to catch him out."

It was at just about this moment that Quentin came to his senses in the shabby bed-room at the Cross Keys.

When he opened his eyes he saw nothing but a dingy wallpaper, a dirty window, and a washstand.

Then he turned his aching head and saw Mr. Hawke.

Mr. Hawke was a complete stranger to him, but at a glance he decided that he preferred the other view.

But next moment the memory of what had happened flashed into his mind, and he realised that to ignore this red-faced, stout stranger would not help him. The fellow must have been in some way concerned with the events of the day.

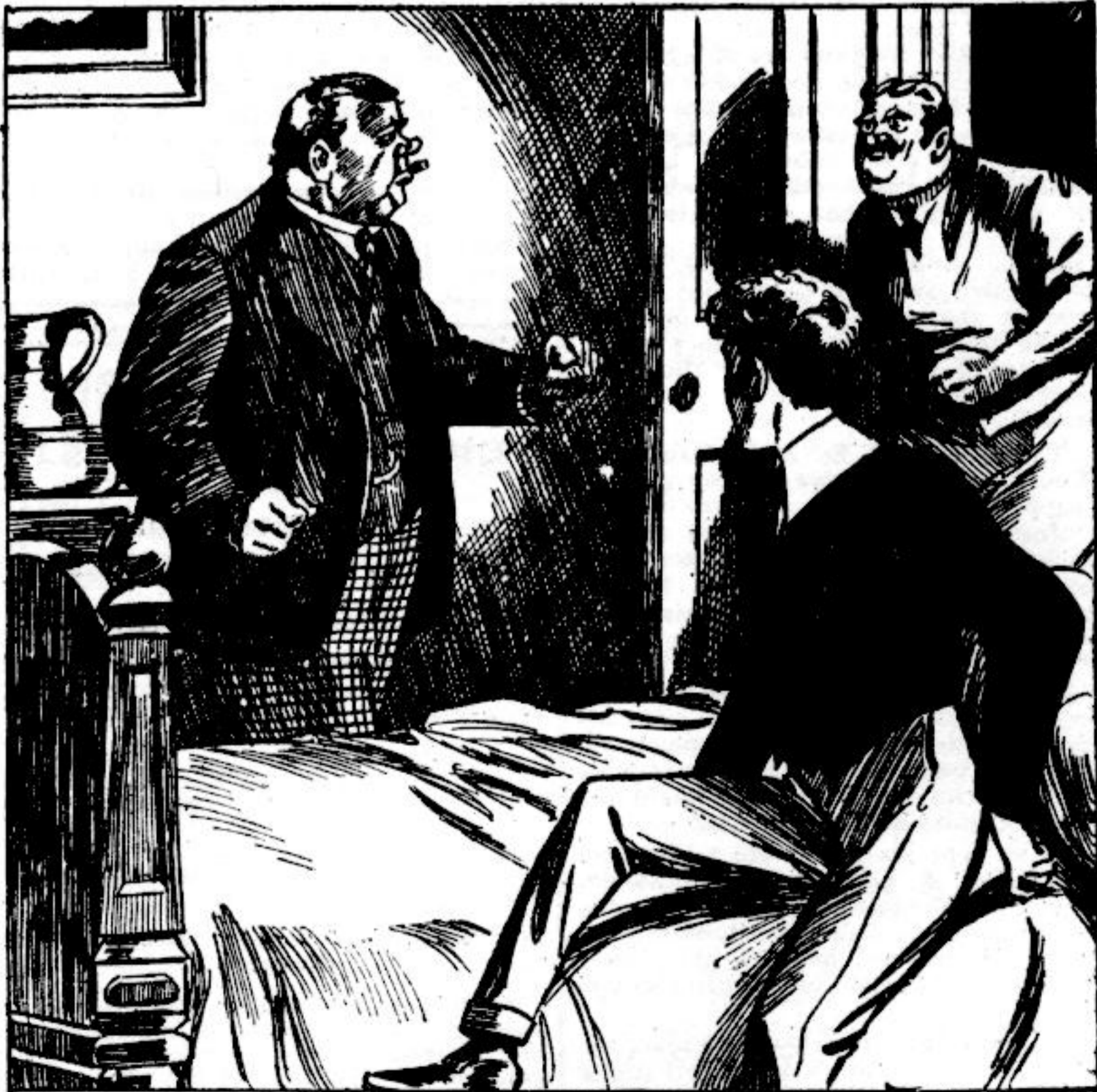
"'Allo, cocky!" said Mr. Hawke. "Feelin' better?"

He spoke in quite friendly fashion. He was relieved to see Quentin conscious again.

If Hawke had been obliged to clear out, he could never have come back to the Cross Keys, and the Cross Keys suited him. Moreover, he would have lost all chance of sharing in the proceeds of the blackmail of Cuthbert, and he had figured it out that there ought to be good profit in that.

"Who are you?" asked Quentin.

"I'm a friend," said Mr. Hawke ponderously.



"Wait till you're a bit better," said the bookmaker fawningly, "then I'll smuggle you out of this 'ole without that poor loony of a Cobb bein' any the wiser." "Oh, will yer, Jerry Hawke!" roared Mr. Cobb, appearing in the doorway. (See Chapter 2.)

—“Lame Bunter 1”—next Monday's Greyfriars story!

And he tried to look the part, but with small success.

Quentin thought that he was not at all a desirable friend. He might suit Cuthbert, but he certainly did not suit Quentin.

But this was not the time for making that clear.

"Then perhaps you'll tell me," said the boy, "why that rotter of a publican kicked me down the cellar stairs?"

Mr. Cobb, sitting outside, heard that, and awaited the answer with some eagerness.

Mr. Hawke was in no hurry to reply.

He got up, took his cigar, now burned down to a mere stub, from his mouth, and looked at it as though seeking counsel from it.

Then he walked over to the washstand and dropped the stub into the empty ewer.

Cobb heard his heavy tread. The publican had risen to his feet now. He turned the knob of the door gently, and left the door ajar.

Something gave Hawke counsel, though it was hardly likely that it was the cigar stub.

He came back to the bedside. Now he spoke with lowered voice.

"Between you an' me an' the gatepost, my lad," he said, "my pal Cobb ain't always quite accountable for his actions."

Outside, Mr. Cobb bristled with indignation. What did Jerry Hawke mean by saying things like that?

Inside, Quentin looked up with incredulity on his face.

"Oh, tell me another!" he said. "He wasn't so potty but that he could screw nearly a tanner out of me before he barged me down the cellar."

"That don't surprise me," answered Hawke. "There's no bounds to the cunning of lunatics. An' he was always a keen one for the rhino, was Cobb."

It was not good enough! Quentin was shrewd. His brother had been in this, and Cuthbert had not plotted with a lunatic, he was sure.

But he pretended to believe. His great desire was now to get out of this place at the earliest possible moment, and he thought that his chance might be better if he did not show this gross rascal that his silly yarn was seen through.

"That's queer," he said, sitting up. "You aren't his keeper by any chance, I suppose?"

"Just what I am! It ain't official, you know. If it got public that my pal Cobb was potty he'd lose his licence. So, bein' always fond of him, I stay here an' look arter him. See?"

"I see."

Quentin had now swung his legs over the edge of the bed. Apart from his aching head, he felt pretty much all right, and was sure that he was capable of a dash for freedom if he could see an opportunity for making one.

But he kept his head. He might ruin his chance if he acted precipitately. Though middle-aged and fat, this man and the rascal he said was a lunatic were both powerful, and between them they would be altogether too much for him in a struggle.

He noticed that the door was ajar, but he did not hear Cobb's heavy breathing outside, or, if he heard, failed to distinguish it from that of Hawke.

"Better lie down again, my dear boy," said the bookmaker fawningly. "You ain't fit to move yet. Wait till you're a bit better, then I'll smuggle you out of this 'ole without that poor loony of a Cobb bein' any the wiser."

"Oh, will yer, Jerry Hawke!" roared Mr. Cobb, appearing in the doorway, his face ablaze with wrath.

— — —

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Best of Brothers!

"DON'T be a dashed fool, Cobb! You—"

"A dashed fool, am I? But that ain't nothin' after I've been called a loony! You a pal, Jerry Hawke? Why, you're no better than a—"

"Now don't you go to say what you're bound to be sorry for arterwards, Cobb! I didn't mean no 'arm. I was just kiddin' this young 'un, that was all."

Hawke was retreating farther into the room. Cobb, looking dangerous, pursued.

Quentin saw his chance. Once he was outside he was safe from those two rascals. They had no rights over him. That might not matter much to them as long as they had him within the walls of the Cross Keys. But they would hardly dare even to pursue him once he was outside.

"Now don't you be vi'lent, Cobb!" protested Jerry Hawke. "If you'll on'y let me explain—"

"I 'eard you—ain't that enough? Tellin' that kid as I was a loony! But you shall pay for it, Jerry Hawke—you shall pay!"

Hawke had his back to the wall now. Cobb made a ponderous dash for him. Quentin Willesley made a light-footed dash for the door.

He took the staircase in two leaps, yet landed on his feet at the foot of it. Behind him pounded Cobb and Hawke, their differences forgotten in the knowledge that once he had won free he would be beyond their reach.

Suddenly Hawke pulled up—so suddenly that Cobb, who had somehow got behind him in the pursuit, though he had started first, cannoned into him, with

the result that both came down at the stairfoot.

"Clumsy ijjit!" snorted Cobb, getting up without bothering himself as to the discomfort he inflicted upon his dear friend in so doing.

"Yow-ow! You got your knee in my stummick, Cobb!" bawled the book-maker.

"Serve you glad! It's all through you that dashed boy's got away! You can go arter him an' fetch him back if you like—jiggered if I will!"

"What's the need?" asked Hawke, sitting up on the mat and rubbing his waistcoat.

"Eh? Well, if you can't see that—"

"Do we want the boy?" Cobb, standing over him, stared down. "I dunno as we do," he replied slowly, as though after a severe mental effort.

Jerry Hawke got up.

"Cobb!" he said. "You hadn't need grumble an' growl at me for stuffin' up the kid that you was a loon-attic, for if you ain't that you must be perishin' near feeble-minded! Of course we don't want him! He'd on'y be a expense for his keep, an' might have got us into trouble. Don't you see that?"

Cobb scratched his head, beginning to see.

"I promised the other boy as I'd keep him 'ere till I could get rid of him altogether," he said. "Make him believe as his pitch was queered at Greyfriars, an' cut off home. But what's a promise matter to a young scoundrel like that?"

"That's the talk!" said Hawke. "What does it matter? We've got some of the rhino out of both of 'em. The one that's just cut hadn't got much more, accordin' to your reckonin'. Very well, then, we've done with him. But not with the other—oh dear no! As long as he can raise a quid, Cobb, that quid's ours—yours an' mine, Cobb—an' he can't get away from it, though he reckons hisself no end clever. See, partner?"

"Come an' 'ave a drink, Jerry! I acted rough to you; but you 'adn't no real call to talk about me that fashion. No man likes to 'ave it said as he's weak in his intellecks. But I see your point. The on'y thing I'm feared of is that this kid that's jest got away should go an' blow the gaff, in which case there would be a holy row, an' no more cash from t'other one. But I s'pose we got to take that chance."

They proceeded together to the bar, once more on good terms.

Meanwhile, Quentin, bolting for freedom, had run into Harry Wharton, and had all but knocked him off his bike.

Harry saved a fall by a swift swerve, and jumped down.

"Hallo!" he said. "I say, Willesley, are you Quentin or Cuthbert?"

"Quentin, of course! Oh, don't be an ass, Wharton! Surely you know me?"

"Hanged if I do, though, not by your face!" replied Harry. "And the chap at Greyfriars says he's Quentin. I had my doubts, and it seemed to me that if he was lying, you must be here or hereabouts. But I didn't expect to have you rush into me and jolly near spread me all over the road."

"Just wondering whether it was possible to look in on Mr. Cobb, 'licensed to sell beer, wines, and spirits, and dealer in tobacco,' and ask the fat beast if he'd got a boy locked up anywhere about his place, weren't you?" returned Quentin, with a grin.

Messrs. Cobb and Hawke were watching them from a window now. They did not feel too easy. Harry Wharton was

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The great W. G. actually plays cricket! He stops a ball—

very far from being a friend of theirs, and any advice he might give their late captive was hardly likely to suit their book.

"My hat! Now I know you're Quentin! The other chap couldn't have said that, and grinned while he said it."

"True enough," answered Quentin. "No one would accuse Cuthbert of being exactly a cheerful bounder. He always was sour and nasty, and he's got worse lately. You mean to say you tackled him, Wharton?"

"Yes. It seemed to me the only thing to do."

"And how did he meet you?"

"He asked me how I'd have known anything about Cuthbert if he—that was you, of course—hadn't told me."

"That's Cuthbert all over!" said Quentin, with something almost like reluctant admiration. "He's a wrong 'un, Wharton; but, my word, he's smart! How many fellows do you know who would have jumped to the truth like that? Some of us might get it in five minutes—or five hours—or five days—that would be about my time—but not many at a flash."

"Not many," admitted Harry. "Skinner might—he's a cunning rotter, and his brains are really good. Smithy might—perhaps Toddy; but I can't think of anyone else. I know I shouldn't."

"Nor yet me. I say, Wharton, you are a pal!"

Harry flushed.

"I haven't done anything," he said. "I just came along to see—that was all. I didn't know what I could do—might have gone back without doing anything. But I did want to help. I feel that I should like to be a pal of yours, Willesley."

They had moved on a few yards, and a bend in the road now concealed them from the view of the anxious pair of rascals at the bar window of the Cross Keys.

"I wouldn't ask for a better one than you, Wharton," replied Quentin, holding out his hand. "If ever I can do anything for you, count on me. And let's shake on that."

They shook.

"And now tell me all about it," said Harry.

"I'm going to. I want your advice. I don't know a bit what to do."

He told his story, and Wharton listened, weighing every word.

It was not told tragically. One might almost have thought that Willesley regarded it as a joke that he should have been entrapped thus. He did not really think it funny; but one of the main articles of his creed was to make the best of things, rather than the worst, and, though his head still ached, and he had a good many bruises, it really did not seem to him that it mattered greatly that he should have taken a dive into the Cross Keys cellar at the urgent instance of Mr. Cobb.

But through all the lightness of his manner of telling the story, Wharton discerned what another in his place might have missed—an under-current of seriousness—of sadness.

The base treachery of Cuthbert disgusted, almost appalled Harry. It had disgusted Quentin; but it had not appalled him, because he knew his brother so well. This had gone altogether beyond anything Cuthbert had ever done before. But then their interests had never clashed quite so definitely before.



The two precious rascals raced down the stairs. Suddenly Hawke pulled up, and Cobb, who had got behind in the pursuit, cannoned into him. Crash! Yelling at the top of their voices the bookmaker and his associate sprawled at the foot of the stairs. (See Chapter 3.)

"I've sometimes wished I had a brother, Willesley," said Harry. "What you've told me makes me feel almost glad that I haven't. To be treated like that—it's too thick for anything! If it had been done to you by a fellow like Skinner, it would have been bad enough—but by your own brother!"

"It is pretty steep," replied Quentin. "But I figure it out like this, old man. I've got a brother, though he's a rotter. I have to stand by him as much as I can, because I promised the mater I would when—when she—she was dying, you know. But Cuthbert hasn't a brother, not to matter. If I get in his light, I'm no more to him than anyone else, and he never did put anyone else's interests before his own—see? He'd say, if he argued it out, that it wasn't by his choice we were born brothers, and he won't let an accident like that stand in his way."

"Well, his number's up now, anyway," Harry said. "Looks to me as though Cobb would be kicked out of the Cross Keys, too. And a jolly good thing that would be! He's done harm enough to some of our fellows—he and that fat brute Hawke between them."

"I don't know," said Quentin hesitatingly. "I said I wanted your advice, Wharton. I think I can see what it would be. But I'm not sure that I can take it."

"You never mean to tell me that you're going to let all three of them go scot free, Willesley?"

Quentin shrugged his shoulders. "Looks as if I should have to. I

can't get at those two fat villains without giving Cuthbert away, and—and oh, don't you see, Wharton, how impossible it is that I should do that? If I told the Head, and he believed me—"

"There isn't any doubt about his believing. You can prove it. I can help you to prove it, and I'm willing to!"

"I know you are. You're a pal, I tell you, Wharton! But what's going to happen to Cuthbert if it all comes out? He's made a giddy mucker of things already, one way and another; but this is worse than anything else he has done. Dr. Locke's sure to be frightfully put out. No limit to what he might do. Suppose he tries to get those two fat bounders sent to prison, who's going to guarantee that Cuthbert won't have to go with them? He was in it right up to the neck, and the Head might not see sparing him, or the judge and jury either."

"You're never going to let him take your place at Greyfriars while you stay outside?" asked Wharton sharply.

"I'm certainly not! That would be carrying the thing a bit too far. He wouldn't have any use for Greyfriars very long, really, and I'm afraid Greyfriars might get sick of him before he did of the school, even. Has he done anything very outrageous yet?"

"No. He's been licked by Temple; but that's nothing."

"Whew! I wonder he didn't back down."

"I think he would have done but that

but not being familiar with a cricket-bat, he stops it with his knee!

he was afraid of rousing suspicion. He knows that you never would have."

"Seems to me a fellow had better take a licking any time than cave in," replied Quentin simply. "It doesn't matter much about Temple licking Cuthbert. He would have licked me, I reckon, and I should have got hurt worse than Cuthbert did. What I've got to think out is some way of getting Cuth out of it and myself back, so that nobody knows but you. I don't mind you knowing, Wharton, but you can see how it would rot things up if the whole crowd knew even part of it."

"They wouldn't think any the worse of you. You'd come out of it all right."

"Perhaps. But I shouldn't fancy it. And I've got to think of Cuthbert, too. After all, there's no one but me likely to take much trouble about him."

"Seems to me, Willesley, that you are about the best brother I've ever run across. There's my pal Nugent; he's sacrificed himself for his minor more than once. But the kid is worth something; he isn't a bad sort, by long odds. I won't say he's specially grateful for anything Frank's done for him. But the more you do for your brother the less he seems grateful to you."

"I haven't done much, Wharton. I've only tried to do things. And I'm not really a good brother. I don't like Cuthbert! There, that's out! I can't like him. I like you and Delarey and Mauly and young Vivian, and I liked fellows at our old school. I was really fond of some of them; I'm not of Cuthbert. Right down in me, I can't stand the rotter!"

"Seems to me that makes it all the more decent of you."

But Quentin shook his head.

"No," he said. "Perhaps if I'd really cared about him I might have been able to influence him a bit. I don't know. As it is, I can't take any credit to myself. I say, Wharton, I can't find my hanky. Do you happen to have a spare one about you?"

"Sure thing. I've got a clean handkerchief in my pocket; you're welcome to that."

"Thanks, no end! See here, you'll have to be getting back directly. I see no chance of putting things right to-night. It must wait till to-morrow, I guess."

"But where do you mean to stay to-night?"

"Oh, I might run over to Courtfield, and put up at one of the hotels there! You bet I sha'n't take a bed at the Cross Keys, anyway!"

"I don't like it," said Wharton frankly. "I think the thing ought to be settled at once. But it's really your bizney, not mine."

"Right-ho! So-long; and don't you worry about me. I shall be all serene."

Wharton rode off then. Willesley set his face towards Courtfield.

Neither of them saw Billy Bunter, who had been watching them for the last five minutes or so from behind a hedge.

"That's a rummy go!" muttered Bunter. "Why ain't Willesley going back to the school? He might have ridden on Wharton's step. But he's going the other way. There's something queer in all this, I'm sure. Oh dear! I shall have to hurry, or I shall be late for tea. If Willesley don't hurry he'll be late for call-over. But I don't care, serve the selfish cad right!"

And Billy Bunter rolled away.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Butts In!

BUNTER was not late for tea. He made good time, as he could when he chose, and reached Greyfriars before most of the fellows had gone in from the quad to their studies.

Just as he had passed Gosling's lodge a gleam of something on the gravel caught his eyes.

He stooped and snatched up—a shilling!

Here was luck! Someone had been dropping money about.

Bunter might have inquired whether anyone had lost anything. A nice sense of honour would have dictated that course of action.

But Bunter's sense of honour was not nice. It was simply non-existent.

He straightened himself up hurriedly. No one had seen.

Then, being William George Bunter, he marched straight for the tuckshop.

A bob was not much. A bob was very little indeed. Bunter felt aggrieved with the silly ass who dropped it. He might just as well have made it half-a-crown while he was about it.

But a bob was better than nothing at all. It would buy a sixpenny rabbit-pie and three twopenny tarts or cakes. The Owl was not great on mathematics, but he did know that much.

Feeling that he had as good a right in the tuckshop as anyone else, he walked in boldly. It is true that Mrs. Mible had items on her books against the name of Bunter. But she must long ago have given up all idea of ever being settled with for those old debts, and that, to Bunter's mind, was as good as having them settled. The good dame would not refuse ready money.

He walked in boldly, therefore. Then he gasped.

Unless a fellow could be in two places at once, or unless there were such things as ghosts— But a fellow couldn't, and there weren't such things—anyway, they didn't show up in broad daylight.

But there sat Willesley!

He was the only fellow in the tuckshop when Bunter entered, and he was doing himself very well indeed. He had a dish of tarts before him, while a plate pushed to one side testified to the fact that he had been taking savoury stuff before sweet, for there were rabbit bones upon it.

Willesley looked up and scowled.

If Bunter had seen the smallest chance of sharing in that feed he would have forgotten in a second his wonder at seeing the new boy there.

Bunter's curiosity was very strong, but his greed was stronger.

But even if he had harboured any delusions as to the possibility of sponging upon Willesley again they would have been dissipated on the instant by the new fellow's words.

"Look here, Bunter, it isn't decent for you to come in here to spend money!" snarled Cuthbert. "If you've got any cash it belongs to me."

"Rats!" replied Bunter, regarding him in hostile fashion. "Don't you talk to me that way, or I'll give you another hiding! I can, you know. I'm a holy terror when I'm roused! You don't want another of my straight lefts, I suppose?"

And Bunter rapped upon the counter with his shilling—somebody's shilling, anyway. Finding was keeping in Bunter's code, but not keeping long.

Mrs. Mible came, and Bunter gave his order, got his goods—they seemed a

very small whack to Bunter—and was about to go, when it suddenly came into his mind that it might be worth finding out how Willesley, whom he had last seen going towards Courtfield, should be in the tuckshop when he entered.

Certainly Willesley had not passed him on the road. The more Bunter thought of it the more mysterious it seemed. There was something queer, too, about Willesley's talk with Wharton at Friar-dale. Why could they not have talked at Greyfriars?

It would be too much to say that Bunter guessed the truth. Yet in his fat brain was some hazy sort of notion that—well, that if you saw a fellow where he couldn't possibly be, then he wasn't that fellow at all, but some other fellow. Bunter had not really worked it out quite to that, but the explanation hovered, as it were, above his puzzlement.

He stared steadily at Cuthbert. Cuthbert went on eating.

But he felt as though his food would choke him.

There was something in that steady stare which almost frightened him.

Did Bunter know anything?

Cuthbert wished he had not said a word about the debt—which, by the way, was really owing to Quentin, not to him, since Quentin had paid him the cash, had promised to dun Bunter for the amount, and had kept his promise—with the result that might have been expected by anyone who knew the Owl.

"Come outside, Willesley," said Bunter at length.

He did not quite know why he said it. He had no real notion of what he was going to say to this fellow when they were outside together. It was almost as though he were prompted to that command.

Willesley obeyed.

The one clear idea in Cuthbert's mind at that moment was this, that Bunter was a fellow who could be bribed.

"Look here," he began, "I'm not going to have you ordering me about before that old girl in there! You may think you know something, but you needn't imagine there's going to be any profit in it to you if you get doing that kind of thing."

"I know what I know," replied Bunter oracularly.

The yellow streak in Cuthbert Willesley asserted itself then.

He might have bluffed Bunter. But he did not dare to attempt bluffing.

"Oh, hang it all!" he said. "I suppose you'll want paying to keep it dark?"

Bunter held out a greedy, podgy and dirty hand.

"That's about the size of it," he said. "Hand over a quid, Willesley, and nobody shall hear anything about it."

Cuthbert's hand went towards the pocket in which he kept his wallet. Then there flashed upon him the memory of how little was left in that receptacle. Cobb had taken most of it. If he had to pay this fat blackmailer a whole quid it would be awful—positively awful!

He tried bluff too late.

"I suppose you've seen Quen—Cuthbert, I mean, and he's been telling you yarns," he said. "You needn't take any notice of him, though; there never was such a liar as that fellow! If he says—"

But now Bunter knew.

Two of them! That explained it all. One of them going to Courtfield after yarning with Wharton on the road near

Billy Bunter as the injured cricketer will make you roar!

the Cross Keys; the other here when Bunter got here! There must be two; nothing else could explain it.

Quen? Why, that must be Quentin Willesley, and Quentin was the name of the fellow who was expected at Greyfriars! Bunter had heard it mentioned when Mr. Quelch had talked to Wharton about the new boy.

Cuthbert? Oh, yes, Bunter had it! This was Cuthbert, and the other was Quentin, though this one wanted to make it the other way round.

The fellows were going in to tea. In a minute or two Bunter and Willesley would be left alone in the quad.

Bunter did not hurry to speak. It was better that they should go first.

He was trying to size up the situation in all its bearings. The first lightning flash of inspiration was not enough to make him quite clear on every point. The one thing he was sure of was that the affair might be turned to his advantage if only he handled it properly.

Willesley had stopped short, dismayed at having let out so much, vaguely comprehending that he had done himself no good by that belated attempt at bluff.

Obtuse as Bunter ordinarily was, he could hardly fail to get at something like the truth now.

"All right, Cuthbert!" said Bunter.

That much he was certain of—this was the wrong twin!

No less than that. He did not know that the Willesleys were twins. He merely guessed it. But he was sure that they must be most extraordinarily alike.

This was the fellow he had licked—or had the credit of licking. This must be the fellow whom Temple had knocked out. But, surely, it was the other Willesley who had beaten Bolsover?

They had both been at Greyfriars, though not together. Only one of them ought to be there, for only one had been expected. And that was not this one.

Yet this one had been there first. Bunter was sure of that after seeing him in the tuck-shop. This was the Willesley with whom he had palled up, upon whom he had sponged.

Cuthbert's face showed him that his shaft had gone home. It had turned a sickly yellow.

For perhaps twenty seconds there was silence between them, and to both that silence seemed to last minutes.

Bunter's cunning told him that he might spoil a good thing by being too precipitate of speech. Cuthbert's cunning did not provide him with an answer to Bunter's taunt.

When he spoke all his notions of bluffing had been thrown to the winds.

He must bribe. He had not much wherewith to bribe, and there were difficulties in the way of getting more at once. But he must make a little go as far as possible.

"You've guessed it, Bunter!" he said, trying to smile amiably. "I wanted to come here; but our giddy old guardian, who has a down on me, let Quentin come instead, and was going to send me to a rotten show. I wasn't standing for it; would you, now? We're exactly alike, Quentin and I. So I came instead of him, see? And I jolly well mean to stick here. I'll swear blind I'm Quentin, and even old Scrutton himself—that's the solicitor chap who looks after us—can't prove I'm not, and Quentin himself can't, and—"

"You forget me!" spoke Bunter impressively.

"Not a bit of it, old chap!" replied Cuthbert, feeling positively murderous.

"You're going to back me up. We made friends right from the first, and we're going to stay friends, I hope."

It was going well! To Bunter it seemed that it could hardly go better. As long as Cuthbert had any cash—and he had seemed to be what Fisher T. Fish called "well heeled"—that cash was practically Bunter's.

But Quentin's cash would not be Bunter's if by any mischance Quentin were to replace Cuthbert.

Ergo, it was desirable that Cuthbert should stay inside, Quentin outside.

And, that important point settled, everything else in the relations of the brothers became of small account to Bunter.

"I'll back you up, old chap," said the Owl, blinking. "You can rely upon me. I never go back on my pals. I say, though, I'm frightfully peckish; let's go back and have something together. If you don't feel like eating any more, never mind; we can sit and talk while I get on with it; or you can cash up so much in advance to Mrs. Mimble, and I'll work it off if I feel like it, as I dare say I shall."

"But it's tea-time," protested Cuthbert feebly.

"Pffff! Tea-time! I'd like you to see what that means in Study No. 7. Three measly sardines among four of us, very likely. We're not obliged to go in to tea, you know. Come along, Cuthbert!"

And Willesley went.

"Don't you call me 'Cuthbert' before anyone else, though," he said.

"Oh, what's it matter? They'll only think it's a pet name," answered the Owl. "And, unless I'm very much mistaken, we're going to be such good pals that no one will be surprised."

Cuthbert writhed. He saw himself in the toils. It had not occurred to him that Cobb and Hawke had established a hold upon him; but he saw now quite plainly that Bunter had.

Bunter said nothing about having seen Quentin and Wharton talking together. Perhaps it had not yet entered his head that Wharton knew what he knew; or perhaps he did not want to alarm Cuthbert.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The One Outside!

"DEAR WHARTON,—I must hold you to your promise a bit longer yet.

"I know you won't quite like it, but you will understand that I must think of other things beside myself. And, even for my own sake, getting back to Greyfriars by showing Cuthbert up would not be any good, for I should not feel that I could stay after it. And I do want to stay. I like the school and the fellows no end.

"So I am doing my best to work out a plan that will let him down lightly, and I know you will help if you can. I have not got it properly worked out yet; but I think I begin to see how to scheme it.

"A letter to Courtfield Post-office, to



"Don't worry about me, Wharton," said Willesley. "I shall be all serene. So long." Wharton rode off on his bike, and Willesley set his face towards Courtfield. Neither of them saw Billy Bunter, who had been watching from behind a hedge. (See Chapter 3.)

Why does the Remove's champion porpoise take up cricket?

the name of 'Q. Willis' will find me. I sha'n't sleep two nights at the same place while things are like this.

"It's ever so decent of you to back me up.

"Yours ever,

"QUENTIN WILLESLEY."

That was the letter Harry Wharton got the next morning—a Saturday which will be ever memorable in the annals of Greyfriars.

He did not quite like it; in fact, he did not like it at all.

It seemed to him that Quentin was endangering his chances of putting things right by showing all this consideration to a fellow who deserved none at all.

But he had given his promise, and he must stick to it.

Looking moodily out of his study window, he saw Cuthbert and Bunter pacing the quad together. Bunter had flung a fat arm around Willesley's neck. They seemed on the friendliest of terms.

There was nothing unfitting in the association, but somehow Wharton did not like it. He wondered whether it was possible that Bunter knew the truth. It was easier to explain his seeming close friendship with the wrong Willesley that way than in any other.

For if Bunter knew, he would make his market out of the knowledge, Harry was sure. And, now that he came to look more closely, he saw that Cuthbert had not a happy face. He never had, for that matter, but at this particular moment his expression was almost fiendish.

A ray of hope came to Wharton.

No secret held by Bunter ever long remained a secret. If he did know of the twin tangle, he was certain to let out the whole story sooner or later.

And that would be all for the best. Harry himself might not tell, for his promise bound him; but he felt strongly that the only satisfactory way of settling the matter was by threshing it out thoroughly, and he could not believe that when it was thus settled, Quentin would be so completely upset as not to care about staying on at Greyfriars.

The bell for classes rang, and Harry hurried down. He passed Bunter and Willesley on his way into the Form-room, and noted that Bunter's jaws were stuck together by toffee. The other fellow was not eating. It was as easy to guess that he had paid for that toffee as it was that he grudged it.

Bunter was a persistent and industrious juvenile blackmailer.

Classes dragged on. Harry found it very difficult to keep his mind on the work for two minutes together.

He found himself gazing at Cuthbert's red head, two or three desks in front of him, and wondering where the fellow who ought to be in that place was, and what he was doing, and what this half-conceived scheme of his was, and how it would all end.

Quentin, outside, was wondering how it would all end, too. He had paid his bill at the hotel at Courtfield, resolute not to go back there that night in any case, but by no means certain that bedtime would find him in the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars.

He could not afford more than another night or two after this at an hotel. Cobb had levied toll upon him too heavily, and, like Cuthbert, he did not see any immediate prospect of more money from Mr Scrutton. The twins had liberal allowances of pocket-money, and, as a

general rule, could get more for the asking. But just now there was a difficulty about the asking in the case of each.

He found himself on the towpath beside the Sark, watching a barge pass slowly upstream.

The barge was not heavily laden. Apparently it had discharged most of its load on the way. A big, lazy-looking man walked by the horse, and a big, red-faced woman was hanging out sheets and towels to dry on deck.

"Morning", sir!" said the man, as he drew alongside Quentin.

"Good-morning!" answered Quentin civilly.

"It's a fine day for the time o' year," remarked the bargeman.

"So it is," Quentin replied.

He looked round like one who has had his attention called to a circumstance he has failed to note. That was the case, indeed. Quentin had not been thinking about the weather.

As the month was July, however, there was really nothing out of the way in the weather being fine.

"You ain't by no chance got a chaw of baccy on you, I s'pose, sir?" asked the bargee.

They were walking together now. Quentin was glad to have someone with whom to talk.

"No, I haven't," the boy returned, smiling. "But it looks as though there might be a shop farther along the river there where you might get some, and if you'd allow me, I should be pleased to stand you an ounce."

"That's right! There's the Fishermen's Inn by the bend there, an' as for lettin' you stand me an ounce, that I will, for you're a gentleman, an' the right sort. But I didn't mean it in no spongin' way. I meant a chaw, not a hull ounce."

"Oh, that's all serene," said Quentin.

"Stranger in these parts?" asked the bargee.

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AND

A Simple and Interesting Competition

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Order Your MAGNET Early!

"Yes."

There was just the slightest hesitation in replying, for Quentin did not feel sure that he could rightly describe himself as a stranger. But the man did not notice it.

"Ah! 'Tain't a bad country, this," the bargee said. "I've travelled a fair bit—bin as fur as Tonbridge, an' Readin'—that's farther, ain't it, sir? But I like the Sark best. I know all the locks an' all the keepers, an' they know me. Now you—I dessay you've bin to Lunnon, sir?"

"Oh, yes. In fact, I live there."

"Well, now! If they don't tell me it's a wonder of a place for chimbley pots. I reckon that would be right, now?"

"It's right, though I don't know that I ever thought of it before. You can see miles of them going in or coming out by rail."

Thus talking, they passed slowly on to the inn. There Quentin had some bread and cheese and ginger-beer, and the bargee some bread and cheese and beer without the ginger, and the boy bought the man his promised ounce of twist tobacco, and they parted, shaking hands like good friends.

Quentin did not linger at the inn. He did not greatly like the look of the people about the place, and in that he was no bad judge. That particular licensed house had been as bad an influence to a few Greyfriars fellows as the Cross Keys itself.

It was well past twelve when Quentin approached again that bend of the Sark which was nearest to the school. Here were the boathouse and the bathing-place. There was no bustle about either that morning, since it was Saturday, and the fellows had the afternoon before them.

Until he drew quite close Quentin had thought both deserted. Then he got a glimpse of one fellow, and a second glance showed him that it was Temple of the Upper Fourth.

He was half-inclined to turn back. He did not want to meet Temple.

But he remembered that the skipper of the Upper Fourth had licked him—by deputy. If he let Temple see that he was being avoided, it would look like sulking. And Quentin certainly would not have sulked even had Cecil Reginald really licked him.

He was not wearing a Greyfriars cap, though he had on the regulation Eton jacket under his dustcoat. There was no reason, that he could see, for Temple feeling suspicious about meeting him here. It was very unlikely that the swell of the Upper Fourth had any notion where Cuthbert was at that moment.

So he held on.

Temple had not seen him yet. Neither had two ruffianly fellows who had been sitting together on the sheltered side of the boathouse. But the two had seen Temple.

"Pipe that bloke's gold chain, Bill?" whispered one of them hoarsely.

"An' 'is tie-pin, with a reel dimant in it, Chob! Cash in 'is pockits to a amount as 'ud be useful to me an' you, also, I wouldn't wonder. An' there ain't nobody around."

"If you're on I'm on, Chob!"

"I'm on, Bill! Wodjer think?"

They sprang upon Temple before he saw them.

Taken utterly by surprise, Temple did as might have been expected of him.

It was not for nothing that he had in his veins the blood of ancestors who had fought at Cressy and Agincourt. Temple's faults did not include cowardice.

They tried to grab him, but he dodged neatly, and dealt Chob, the burlier ruffian, a beauty on the chin.

Chob was staggered. Bill got one next moment that made him think hard. It took him in the left eye, and made him see stars unknown to any astronomer.

But Temple was overweighted—handicapped, moreover, by his notions of honour, which forbade him using any but fair tactics even against opponents such as these.

Chob and Bill had no scruples. Their notion of fighting—when they had to fight, which in this case they had hardly expected—was an all-in one. They would kick, scratch, and even bite if they saw occasion.

It was lucky for Temple that there was at hand a fellow with pluck as sterling as his own.

Quentin dashed in.

Chob, down on his knees, had collared Temple's right leg, clinging to it while Bill danced round him with bearlike clumsiness, trying to get in a blow that would floor him, with Chob's help.

"And over your timepiece an' chain an' that there tie-pin, an' we'll let you go!" panted Chob.

"But I'm dashed if I'll let you go!" shouted Temple, lunging at Bill.

Then Quentin had Chob by the collar of his frowsy coat. He twisted hard and forced the fellow backward. Temple wrenched his leg free, and got another punch home on Bill.

But Bill got home with his heavy boot harder than did Temple with his fist, and the Upper Fourth skipper felt sick and giddy for a moment.

"I've got this brute! Pile in and win, Temple!" yelled Quentin.

A glance showed Temple what had happened. He knew now that he had only Bill to deal with. Chob was at least half as heavy again as Willesley; but the advantage of surprise had been with the boy, and he had the rascal in a grip that promised to hold for quite long enough to allow of Temple's dealing faithfully with Bill.

In less than two minutes it was all over. Bill was bolting down the tow-path, and Chob, wriggling up, tore himself from Quentin's grip and followed.

"Let him go!" said Temple, looking at his knuckles, which had been badly skinned by contact with Bill's teeth. "I'm no end obliged to you, Willesley! You're a brick to come to my help like that, by Jove!"

"What else could I do?" returned Quentin. "I say, Temple, did that brute hack you badly?"

Temple turned up the legs of his trousers and showed great, broken bruises, livid and red, on both shins.

"Pretty well!" he said, with a wry grin. "But it's no odds! They didn't get what they were after—thanks to you, old fellow!"

Quentin knelt and touched the bruises gently. There was something so genuinely friendly and sympathetic in the action that Temple felt a sudden wave of remorse sweep over him for the manner in which he had treated this decent fellow.

Had he but known it, he had nothing to feel remorseful about. He had given



One of the rascals, on the ground, had collared Temple's right leg, clinging to it while his confederate danced round him with bearlike clumsiness, trying to get in a blow at the junior. With a reassuring cry Quentin Willesley dashed to the rescue. (See Chapter 5.)

Quentin what might be called a formal kick, and had said one or two things in the course of his verbal encounter with him which had better have been left unsaid. But Quentin had paid all back with a smack of the face that he had felt for hours afterwards. And the rest of Temple's dealings with the twins, before and after that occasion, had been with Cuthbert.

"Isn't there something in the boat-house we could put on them?" Quentin inquired.

"Oh, never mind! I think I'll get back," answered Temple. "I don't feel like a long stroll now. Comin', Willesley?"

From the very bottom of his heart Quentin wished that he could accept that invitation. He wanted to go, and to refuse seemed churlish.

But how could he go?

"I— No, I don't think I'll come along just yet, Temple," he said, with a slight awkwardness unusual in him.

"As you like. Only—well, look here, Willesley! Let's wipe out everything that's passed! I'm sorry, an' I apologise for what I said to you!"

"And I'm sorry and I apologise, Temple! And please don't think that if I don't come it's because I don't want to. I have my reasons—really."

His words carried conviction. Temple was too well bred to inquire what his reasons were, but did not doubt that they were sufficient.

They parted on the best of terms. Temple was glad of that afterwards.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

What Happened by the Sark!

BUNTER had begun to drive Cuthbert almost mad.

It would have been bad enough if Cuthbert had had plenty of money, for in that case he would have been forced to comply with all Bunter's demands.

As it was, it was far worse. For Bunter would not believe that Cuthbert was short. It was useless to show a wallet practically empty. Bunter only winked, and asked whether Cuthbert saw any green in his eye. It was of little use to try to stall him off with a shillingsworth of toffee or half a dozen tarts. Bunter had no notion of accepting such absurd instalments of blackmail as that.

He had been promised a gorge after dinner, when other fellows were on the river or at cricket. That he would hold Cuthbert to his promise that miserable youth was certain. It was only his knowledge that Cuthbert feared to go outside, lest he might meet Quentin, that kept him from shadowing his victim.

Cuthbert had not money enough left to pay for Bunter's gorge. Driven to desperation by fear of what the Owl might do when he found his dearest hopes frustrated, he dodged out of gates directly after dinner was over, trusting to find some place of refuge for the afternoon. He had a vague idea of going to Courtfield and pawning his watch and chain, but his dread of

Get your pals to make the acquaintance of the great William George!

meeting Quentin stood in the way of that journey.

Bunter, who never failed to do justice to the good fare provided at the Greyfriars tables, had dined well. He had had two large helpings of roast beef, potatoes, and cabbage, and two of rhubarb-pie with sugar piled high over it. Thereafter he had bethought him that the best preparation for another square meal at about three o'clock would be a snooze, and he had settled down in the armchair in Study No. 7, with only Alonzo Todd, occupied with some improving volume, for company. Peter Todd and Tom Dutton had both gone to cricket.

"I suppose I ought to keep an eye on the rotter!" muttered Bunter sleepily. "But I've got him where I want him, I reckon! It's more than he dare do to kick! Wake me about five minutes to three, Lonzy!"

"What did you say, Bunter? I heard you mention that you desired to be awakened at five minutes to three, but I fear I did not gather for what reason you—"

"Oh, rats to you!" broke in Bunter crossly.

In two minutes his snoring was loud in Study No. 7. The patient Lonzy sighed, and went on reading that improving work.

Cuthbert, wandering aimlessly meanwhile, had come by accident to the towpath.

He was early. In a little while the boathouse would be thronged. But at present both those bound for the river and those who meant to spend the afternoon at cricket were getting into flannels back at the school.

He stood gazing down at the slow current of the river, silvery at a distance under the bright sun, but brown near his feet. He glanced with a sneer at the boathouse and bathing-place. Cuthbert abhorred cold water and detested hard physical exercise such as rowing.

Then he turned and looked back. Some of the earliest of those who were going on the river came towards him. He did not want to see them or be seen by them, so he started up-river.

He had gone about two hundred yards when he pulled up suddenly, and would have bolted but that the voice that hailed him seemed to hold him, making it impossible that he should start.

"Hallo, Cuthbert, you sneaking worm!"

It was Quentin's voice. And Quentin sat up on his dustcoat, upon which he had been lying in full enjoyment of the sun's warmth. The wind had died down now and the temperature had risen greatly.

Quentin here! Then Cobb and Hawke had been false to their promises—had taken his money for nothing; had swindled him!

His wrath against them was virulent. But for the moment it was a feeling less dominating than his fear of Quentin.

He felt that this time he had sinned beyond all forgiveness. He knew, though he would not have admitted it, that Quentin's long-suffering patience with him had been nothing short of marvellous—the more marvellous because, as he was well aware, Quentin was not the plaster saint that his brother sneeringly made him out to be, but a very human fellow indeed.

"I—I can't make out what you're doing here!" he gasped.

Quentin got up and came towards him slowly.

"I don't suppose you can!" he said. "You thought your sweet pals at that low pub were keeping me safe, didn't you? My word, Cuthbert, this last trick of yours was really beyond the limit! I shouldn't have thought even you could be such a dirty dog!"

"I—I don't know what you're talking about, Quen!"

"Oh, yes, you do, you rotter! You didn't care if I broke my neck when that fat publican shot me down the cellar steps, did you? It might have suited your book all right! But my neck's not so easily broken!"

Cuthbert licked his dry lips and made queer noises in his throat.

"This can't go on, you know!" said Quentin. "I was inclined at first to go straight to Greyfriars and see the Head. But if I'd done that you'd probably have had to go to quod—and a jolly nice thing that would be for the family name, wouldn't it? Not but that I believe you'll get there sooner or later!"

"It will be the same if you split now!" snarled Cuthbert.

"I'm not going to split! I mean to take the way that will give you a chance as well as me, though you don't deserve it! Tell you the truth, I didn't expect such luck as this! I've been wondering how I could get you out of gates, and here you come along as if you knew I wanted you!"

"I jolly well shouldn't have come if I'd known!" growled Cuthbert.

The worst of his fear had passed. Quentin did not seem to have any notion of manhandling him, and he did not mean to make the matter public. It would have been rather rotten to be convicted of plotting with Cobb and Hawke against his brother, but if Quentin meant to keep that to himself it was much the same as though it had not happened.

With the decrease of fear, anger and hatred asserted themselves.

He hated Quentin as he stood there with that smile on his face—he was smiling even now, though grimly. Why should Quentin always stand in his path? Why should Quentin have been born honest and jolly and likeable, so that he got on with almost everyone, while he, Cuthbert, never found anyone he could really like? If he had inherited from some ancestor a warped nature, that knew good from evil, but chose evil, was it his fault?

Quentin ought to see that it was not, ought to give way to him!

Instead of which there came from Quentin this matter of fact command:

"Hand over your cap!"

"What for?" snarled Cuthbert.

"Oh, don't pretend to be dense! You're not that, whatever you are. I'm going to Greyfriars now, and I'd better go in the school cap. You're going back to Hampstead—anyway, that's what you'd better do—and, again, you haven't any right to wear the Greyfriars colours. So hand it over and take mine."

It was just at this moment that Harry Wharton, coming along to the boathouse with his chums, caught sight of the two in the distance, and recognised them, though he might not have done so at once had not Quentin's cap been doffed, showing his auburn hair.

Then, suddenly, Wharton saw one fellow dodge aside, miss his footing, and tumble over the bank into the river—saw the other plunge in at once.

He thought that it was the fellow in the Greyfriars cap who had gone in first, but he could not be sure. He had only just caught sight of them when it happened.

Bob Cherry had seen, too, though, not knowing what Harry knew, he had not grasped the situation as Harry had.

"Man overboard!" he shouted at the top of his voice, and fellows came hurrying from the boathouse—Wingate and Gwynne, Temple and Dabney and Fry, Coker and Potter and Greene, Russell and Ogilvy.

They followed the Famous Five, and Johnny Bull, Inky, and Frank Nugent followed Harry and Bob, for, as it chanced, only those two had seen.

Harry and Bob raced as though for a prize. Behind them padded the feet of a dozen more, and Wingate and Temple drew nearly up to them, but not quite, for all their efforts.

They came to where two caps—one of the Greyfriars colours, the other a plain one—lay on the bank.

Some of them had torn off their blazers as they ran. Some stopped now to unlace shoes, with fingers that fumbled for very haste.

But Harry and Bob did not wait for that; Wingate and Temple did not wait for that. They plunged straight in.

There was no sign of the two who had gone in before them—the one who had stumbled, the other who had dived to his rescue.

Four came up spluttering as five more plunged in.

The four had found nothing. The five found nothing.

Now there were nine under water. Now others were in. On the bank there remained not one. All could swim, some better, some worse, and all did what they could.

Heads bobbed up—Gwynne's, Inky's, Russell's, Bob Cherry's. Then George Wingate came up, and he had something in his arms.

One of them was found, then! But was he found too late?

Somehow everybody knew that there had been two in the river, though how they knew they could not explain afterwards, and neither Harry nor Bob could remember telling the rest.

Wingate got his burden to the bank, and Coker and Gwynne scrambled out and relieved him of it.

"You fellows see to this chap. You know all about first aid, Gwynne," said the skipper. "One or two more of you come out and help—you, Nugent, and Dabney. I must go back."

And he plunged in again, and Dabney and Nugent obeyed him, and came out, though not too willingly.

Again and again they went under, the rest of them, till they were all but exhausted. But they found no sign of the second fellow.

"It's no go!" panted Wingate. "If we could find him now he would be dead, that's a certainty. He couldn't stay under so long and live. Let's get out. Anything doing, Pat?"

Gwynne stood up straight, and his face gave the answer. Coker looked up, and his told the same story.

"Dead?" asked Wingate, though he hardly needed a reply.

"I'm afraid there's no doubt of it," replied Gwynne gravely.

Wingate knelt and felt the heart of the fellow whom he had brought up out of the depths.

(Continued on page 17.)

Don't forget—Monday is MAGNET day!

THE GREYFRIARS HERALD

Supplement No. 133. HARRY WHARTON EDITOR Week ending July 14th, 1923.



HARRY WHARTON



MARK LINLEY



FRANK NUGENT



BOB CHERRY



HURREE SINGH



PETER TODD

NOTES & NEWS.
By **BOB CHERRY.**



ALL roads led to Friardale on Wednesday afternoon, and scores of Greyfriars fellows patronised the fair on the village green. None of the prefects went (for which we were truly thankful), and the Fifth-Formers pretended that they were too dignified to join in the revels. But I saw Horace Coker hop on to the roundabouts when he thought no one was looking, and I saw Potter and Greene sending each other heaven-high in the swingboats. As a matter of fact, the staid and dignified Fifth-Formers enjoyed the fun as much as anybody.

Some of the masters went to the fair, but they took no active part in the proceedings. We did not see the edifying spectacle of the Head indulging in coconut-shies, or Mr. Prout careering in a chariot on the roundabouts. I believe Mr. Prout was sorely tempted to "have a go" on the miniature rifle range, where one had to shoot at bottles; but he resisted the temptation, and we were jolly glad he did, for one of the showmen might have stopped a stray bullet. Mr. Prout considers himself a crack shot, but I don't think he would have cracked any of the bottles.

It was quite a good-class fair. The roundabouts were comfortable and up-to-date, and the swingboats were delightful. Some of the Greyfriars fellows ascended to a dizzy height, but there were no necks broken. The coconut-shies proved a great attraction, but it was much harder to hit a coconut than it looked. I only saw three fellows perform the feat—Vernon-Smith, Tom Redwing, and Dick Russell. Lord Mauleverer had five shillingworth of shies without capturing a coconut, and he was obliged to buy one at the finish!

Lots of choice presents were offered in connection with hoop-la, Aunt Sally, and other games. There was keen competition among us as to who could win the greatest number of presents. Tom Brown won. He captured no end of spoils, including a coffee-pot, a butter-dish, an alarm-clock, and a penknife. Bravo, Browney!

The showmen must have done quite well out of the Greyfriars fellows, for the average expenditure per fellow was five shillings. The biggest spender was Mauly, who got through twenty-five shillings in the course of the afternoon. The lowest spender was Billy Bunter, who spent sixpence, and that was borrowed. On the whole, it was a tip-top afternoon, and we enjoyed ourselves up to the hilt.

FISHY'S FAIR.
By **S. Q. I. FIELD.**

Fisher T. Fish, of New York City (He didn't stay there, more's the pity!) Thought of a wheeze so smart and sound: He'd hold a fair on the cricket-ground. He could not hire a roundabout, Price was too steep, I have no doubt. However, Fishy hired some swings, And they were really topping things. He went ahead with his great wheeze, Erecting dozens of marquees. All sorts of side-shows Fish erected, And a big business he expected. But Fishy's charges were so tall, He got no customers at all! Coconut-shies at one a penny— The Greyfriarschaps weren't having any! "A shilling for a swingboat ride!" Fishy announced, in tones of pride. "Walk up! I guess and calculate That you will vote my fair first-rate!" But Fisher T. Fish, of New York City, Soon chanted quite another ditty. "Hellup! Keep off, you silly guys, Or I shall have to black your eyes!" For quite a crowd had closed on Fish; A cricket-stump began to swish. And floating through the summer air Came yells of anguish and despair. "You profiteering cad!" cried Cherry. "We're sick of all your wheezes—very! Take that, you money-grabbing worm!" You should have seen old Fishy squirm. Alas, alack! That fair of his Had proved a most disastrous biz. Groaned Fish, "I reckoned I could trust 'em To rally round, and give their custom." Fisher T. Fish, of U.S.A., Took all his marquees down that day. And all were grinning, I declare, At the sad fate of Fishy's fair!

EDITORIAL!



By **HARRY WHARTON.**

ON the village green of Friardale a country fair has pitched its tents, causing great excitement at Greyfriars.

The high-and-mighty men of the Sixth aren't excited, of course. They consider it infra dig. to shy at coconuts, or to ride on the roundabouts. But the Removites are very keen on such pastimes, and so are the members of the fag fraternity.

There is heaps of fun and frivolity at a fair, and when Bob Cherry suggested a special number dealing with this subject, I clapped him on the back and applauded his brain-wave.

Country fairs are among our oldest institutions. Our grandfathers used to patronise them, and our great-grandfathers, too. The great march of progress has swept many things aside, but it hasn't been able to "put the kyboosh" on fairs, which are still held up and down the country.

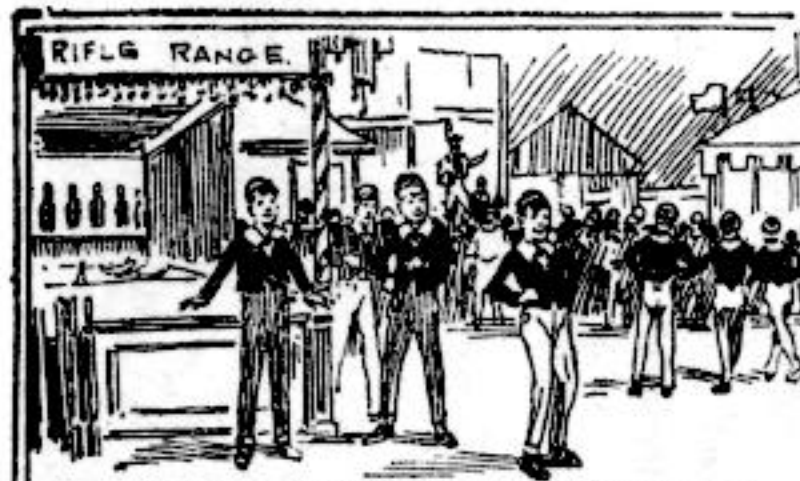
Merry-go-rounds and swingboats, and the many other attractions of a fair, have a charm of their own. And it is not surprising that the Remove Form marched down to the village in a body, in order to sample the delights of the fair.

The hard-working staff of the "Herald" has been busy with pen and pencil this week, describing the festive scenes. Special eye-witnesses, armed with notebooks, were at the fair, making a note of all the little comedies and tragedies that occurred. It was a sight for the gods to see Billy Bunter on the roundabouts, and to watch the short-sighted Owl indulging in coconut-shies.

Don't forget to tell all your pals about this special issue, that they may read of the fun of the fair, and rejoice with a great rejoicfulness, as Inky would say.

Other special numbers, packed with fun and humour, will be tripping gaily on the heels of this one.

Look out for our special Snobs Supplement—it's next!



THE FAGS AT THE FAIR!



BY DICKY NUGENT

"COMING to the fair, Dicky?" Sammy Bunter asked the queschun as I was fishing for tadpoles from the school fountain.

"Yes, rather!" I said. "Wear is it?"

"On the villidge green. Lend me a bob, Dicky, and you'll be a white man. The outlook's very black, bekawse I'm broke. I shall go purple in the face and have a pink fit if you refuse my rekwest!"

I lent the fat sponger a bob, and we went down to the villidge together.

Young Tubb passed us on the road. He didn't dane to take any notiss of us, bekawse he was riding on the step of Bob Cherry's bike. He passed us with his nose in the air. The little swanker! Wait till I can afford a Ford!

All the population of Friardale seemed to have assembled on the villidge green. The Oldest Inhabitant was there, leaning heavily on his krutches; and so was the Tiniest Toddler, who surveyed the proceedings from his pram, with a stick of barley-sugar in his mouth.

"Let's go on the roundabouts first," I said to Sammy Bunter.

"Are they safe?" he asked.

"Safe as howses!" I said skornfully.

But Sammy happened to get on a rickety hoarse, and when the roundabouts started he lost his ballance. He lost his head at the same time, figgeratively speaking, and went flying from his perch. Fortunately for Sammy, he fell clear, and didn't get mixed up with the mashinery, or somebody would have had to sweep up the peaces!

"Yaroooo!" roared Sammy, sitting up in the grass and feeling himself all over to make sure no bboans were broken. "Where's the proprietor of this show? I'll soo him! I'll claim heavy dammidges! It's a wonder I'm alive to tell the tail!"

I got off my hoarse as the roundabouts slowed down, and went to Sammy's assistance.

"No boans broken, I trussed?" I said, bending over him.

"No; but a cupple of ribs are missing from my chest!"

"Funny place to keep your ribs," I said. "But we won't stop to look for them. Let's go and have some cokernut shies!"

Believe it or not, as you like, but I bagged a cokernut with my first shot.

Sammy Bunter had no such luck. He herled one of the wooden balls with all his mite. It wizzed through the air like a rockitt, and hit Coker of the Fifth on the head!

"Yoooooop!" roared Coker, staggering back.

Sammy gave a gasp of dismay.

"Oh crumbs! What have I done?"

"You've certainly hit a Coker nut," I said, cracking a joak, "but it's the wrong one!"

Old Coker was simply furious. Nothing

could passify him. He rushed towards Sammy, and grabbed him by the collar, and shook him till his teeth rattled.

"I'll teech you to play skittles, with me as the skittle!" roared Coker.

Shake, shake, shake!

Sammy Bunter hadn't a breth in his body by the time Coker had finished.

Personally, I was vastly enjoying myself at the fair. But Sammy wasn't! He had been mixed up in two calamities inside five minnits; and therè was a fresh calamity to come.

I advised Sammy not to do any more cokernut shying, and I took him along to the minniture rifle-range.

You had to fire at a row of bottles, and if you nocked down six in six shots, you received a magniffiscent glass cake-stand.

Of corse, it was a difficult feet. The cake-stand had been there all day, and noboddy had yet won it.

"How ripping it would be if you won that cake-stand and made a present of it to your fag-master?" I said.

Sammy nodded.

"I'm going to have a shot at it," he said. And he paid his munney to the gipsy woman in charge, and picked up a rifle.

Sammy happens to be very short-sited. He took careful aim, and pressed the trigger.

Bang!

There was a terribul shattering of glass. But instead of smashing one of the bottles, Sammy's shot had hit the cake-stand and shivered it to fragments!

"You—you fat dummy!" I gasped. "You've been and shot the giddy prize!"

The old gipsy woman was in an awful stew, and Sammy Bunter found himself in the soup, for the old hag pursued him with a thick stick, and chased him from the fair ground. Sammy sprinted his hardest, but he couldn't escape all the blows that were showered upon him.

Did Sammy come back to the fair? No jolly fear! He'd had enuff!

Here's Something You Really Must Read, Boys—

"THE LURE OF LIMEHOUSE!"

By CAPT. MALCOLM ARNOLD.

A Grand Story of Mystery and Thrilling Adventure—appearing in our Champion Companion Paper—

"THE GEM LIBRARY."

It's a Real Treat of a Yarn!

THE MERRY-GO-ROUND!

By DICK PENFOLD.

I chose a horse named "Flying Ned,"
And nimbly leapt astride it;
"A splendid steed," the showman said,
"You'll simply love to ride it!"
The music then began to blare,
And I went whizzing through the air.

My wooden steed began to buck,
It jolly nearly threw me;
Although I'm not devoid of pluck
My face grew rather gloomy.
"Behave yourself, you beast!" I said,
And hung on tight to "Flying Ned."

The roundabouts increased in speed,
Until I grew quite dizzy.
I tried to calm my fiery steed,
His antics kept me busy.
He reared and bucked, he bucked and reared,
While all the gay spectators cheered!

Bob Cherry murmured, with a grin,
"That most absurd of mokes
Seems to be quite resolved to win
The Derby or the Oaks!
Just watch him buck, and rear, and prance;
He's leading Penfold quite a dance!"

What with the constant rush and whirl,
The tumult and commotion,
I felt as helpless as a girl
Crossing a stormy ocean.
And when at last the movements stopped,
Down from my perch I quickly hopped!

I carried many a bump and bruise
For days upon my body.
"When next I have a nag to choose,"
I then remarked to Toddy,
"I'll choose a gentle steed, instead
Of that mad creature, 'Flying Ned'!"

BRIEF REPLIES.

"Enthusiastic" (Liverpool).—"What about a Special Farming Number of the good old 'Herald'?"—It's coming, my dear boy. Keep your peepers open for further announcements.

"Explorer" (Rutland).—"I'm awfully keen on treasure-hunting. I quite enjoyed the 'Explorers' supplement which you published some time ago."—Here's a chance for you, then! Treasure estimated at £1,000,000 is supposed to be lying in the Wash! If you should be fortunate enough to find it, don't forget your pals on the "Herald."

"Gay Dog" (Wigan).—"We never see anything of Cecil Ponsonby in the 'Herald.'"—You'll see quite enough of the nutty Pon in our next issue!

"Curious" (Manchester).—"I've often wondered whether the Jack Drake we read of in connection with the great detective, Ferrers Locke, is the same fellow who stayed at Greyfriars for a short spell."—Wonder no longer. Our ex-schoolmate is doing great deeds in the detective line. Make his acquaintance again on page 20.

"Punishment for Pon.!"—next Monday's special story by Johnny Bull—



ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR!

BY TOM BROWN.

"BUNTER, this is the third time I have had to reprimand you for talking in class!"

Mr. Quelch's voice was tumultuous, like the roaring of many waters.

"Oh, really, sir—" quavered Bunter. "What were you saying to Skinner a moment ago?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"Ahem! I—I was remarking what a handsome Form master we'd got, sir!" said Bunter. "I was saying that you were easily the most good-looking master at Greyfriars, sir! Old Prout—I mean Mr. Prout, is fearfully ugly, and Mr. Hacker's got a face like a hatchet! But you, sir, except for a slight twist of your nose and the fact that you're beginning to get thin in the thatch, are quite handsome!"

The class tittered and Mr. Quelch frowned.

"Skinner," he rapped out, "was Bunter discussing my personal appearance with you?"

"No, sir!"

"Ah, I thought not! What was he saying?"

"He was saying how ripping it would be to go to the fair this afternoon, sir!"

"Well, of all the rotten sneaks!" growled Bunter, blinking indignantly at Skinner.

"Be silent, Bunter!" roared Mr. Quelch. "For continuously talking in the Form-room and for telling falsehoods, I forbid you to go to the fair this afternoon!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Billy Bunter had been keenly looking forward to going to the fair. He appealed to Mr. Quelch to give him some other form of punishment. But the Form master was adamant.

"Rough luck, Bunty!" said Bob Cherry, when the class was dismissed. "Quelch's fairly put the kybosh on your going to the fair!"

"No, he hasn't!"

"Eh?"

"I've made up my mind to go to the fair, and I'm jolly well going!" said Bunter.

"But supposing Quelch turns up at the fair, as he's quite likely to do? He'll spot you!"

"He won't!" said Bunter, with a chuckle. "I'm going to disguise myself!"

Bob Cherry gasped.

"You—you fat dummy!" he exclaimed. "How can you possibly disguise yourself? A fellow of your proportions would be recognised a mile off!"

But Bunter did not seem to think so. He paid a visit to the room where the Remove theatrical "props" were kept, and he found a long smock, such as a farmer's boy wears. Then he donned a yellow wig and proceeded to "make up" his face.

It was a futile proceeding, but Bunter was too obtuse to see it.

A fellow like Wibley, skilled in the

art of impersonation, could have disguised himself effectively in the smock and the wig. But Billy Bunter's rotundity of person gave him away, and it would have given him away whatever disguise he adopted. It was possible for a thin person to make himself appear plump, but it was not possible for a fat Falstaff-like Bunter to make himself appear slim.

Having donned the disguise, Bunter rolled out into the Close. The Famous Five were there, and they stared at him.

"Bunter!" shouted Harry Wharton.

The fat junior looked round.

"That isn't my name!" he said.

"What?"

"I'm not Bunter at all! I'm a farmer's boy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Johnny Bull tapped his forehead significantly.

"Potty!" he exclaimed. "I had a suspicion all along that the fat idiot had bats in his belfry!"

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Do you imagine that Quelch won't twig that disguise?" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Of course!"

"Then you imagine a vain thing, my tulip! Take my advice and steer clear of the fair this afternoon!"

But Bob's advice was wasted upon Bunter. He removed his disguise in order to go into Hall for dinner, and when the meal was over he became the farmer's boy again.

There was a big exodus of fellows from Greyfriars, for nearly everyone was going to the fair. Billy Bunter joined the procession.

Admittance to the fair-ground was free. This was rather fortunate for Bunter, since he had not a penny in his pocket. Like the seed in the parable, he had fallen on stony places.

Attired in the grotesque smock and wig, Bunter wandered round among the tents and marquees.

The roundabouts were shortly to be



The attendant grasped the fat junior by the scruff of the neck and pitched him off his steed.

set in motion, and Bunter scrambled on to the back of one of the wooden horses and clung tightly to its neck.

To the strains of harsh music the roundabouts started to perform their gyrations.

A man in a muffer was springing round from horse to horse, collecting the fares.

"Tuppence, please!" he said, when he came to Bunter.

"Ahem! I—I've got no small change!" said the fat junior.

"I can change a note," said the man in the muffer, looking grimly at Bunter.

The fat junior groaned, and started groping in his breast-pocket. The movement nearly unseated him.

"What an idiot I am!" he exclaimed, at length. "I've left my wallet behind! But I'll settle up later, old chap!"

"You'll settle up this minute or off you go!" said the man aggressively.

There was no sign of any payment being forthcoming, either in notes or coin, cheque or postal-order. Bunter was broke. And he was very nearly broke in another sense when the attendant seized him by the scruff of the neck, heaved him off his horse, and sent him sprawling to the ground.

Fortunately for Bunter, the roundabouts were slowing down at the time.

The fat junior sat up in the grass and roared:

"Yow! Oh! Ah! Grooh! You've broken my back, you beast! My spine's fractured in at least six places!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Famous Five, who had witnessed the incident.

"I say, you fellows!" said Bunter, scrambling to his feet—a rather remarkable achievement for a person whose spine was fractured in six places. "Lend me a tanner, one of you! I want to have some coconut-shies!"

In a moment of weakness, Frank Nugent advanced the money.

"Thanks!" said Bunter. "I'll settle up for this loan when my postal-order comes, Nugent!"

Bunter moved across to the marquee where the coconuts were perched in an inviting row.

"Three shies a penny, sir!" said an old gipsy woman.

Bunter took three wooden balls out of the box, and stood blinking at the coconuts—measuring the distance, as it were. Suddenly he gave a backward sweep of his hand, and the ball went flying—not in the direction of the coconuts, but backwards!

"Heads under!" yelled Bob Cherry, in alarm.

The juniors ducked instinctively. But Frank Nugent was the fraction of a second too late. The ball smote him with great force in the chest, bowling him over like a skittle.

Billy Bunter blinked round over his shoulder.

"Where did that one go to?" he asked.

(Continued on next page, column 3.)

—and "The Snob of St. Sam's!" by Dick Nugent!

WHAT I THOUGHT OF THE FAIR!



A Collection of Opinions from "Somebodies" and "Nobodies."

WUN LUNG:

Me tinkee the fair was perfectly ripping. Me chuckee at coconuts, and missee-missee, and ask man for money back. He say, "No savvy!" Me ridee on the roundabouts, and singee Chinese war-song as me whirlee round and round. Me also go in swingee-boats with Bunter, but he was so fat and heavy that my endee of the boat was up in the air all the time, and Bunter's endee never budgee! Me tinkee velly good sport at fair, and little Chinees solly it's all over.

BILLY BUNTER:

What did I think of the fair? Well, I thought it was jolly unfair! I threw myself hart and sole into the proseedings, and I was just beginning to enjoy myself when old Quelchy came along and marched me back to Greyfriars. You see, he had forbidden me to go to the fair, which wasn't at all fair. Why should Quelchy interfere in a fair's affairs, I should like to know? So long as the fair's a fair fair, and not an unfair fair, I don't think it fair that Quelchy should come poking his nose in! (How did you "fare" afterwards, Billy?—ED.)

LORD MAULEVERER:

I rather enjoyed myself at the jolly old fair, don't you know. But I had the misfortune to go to sleep on the roundabouts. I hung on to the neck of the wooden nag, and dozed right off. I was awakened by the showman, who said: "You've been round a hundred times, sir. That'll be sixteen-and-eight-pence, please!" Rather an expensive snooze—eh, what?

ALONZO TODD:

I do not approve of the unseemly hilarity which prevailed at the fair. I do not, in fact, approve of fairs at all. My cousin Peter took me on the roundabouts, and held my hand as we went whirling round and round. Although we were not on the ocean wave, I felt decidedly seasick! Peter then took me up in the swing-boats, and my poor frail neck was in grave danger of being dislocated. I was very thankful to escape with my life. Fairs are highly dangerous concerns, and I cannot think what the Government is about in allowing them. When my Uncle Benjamin, the eminent killjoy, gets into Parliament I shall persuade him to put through a Bill for the abolition of all fairs and circuses.

WILLIAM GOSLING:

Which I wants to forget all about the Friardale Fair as quick as possible. Finding time hang heavy on my hands, I hobbled down to the village green. "Hallo, Gossy!" says Bob Cherry, a-sighting of me. "Going to have two-penn'orth on the roundabouts?" "Well, I don't mind if I do, Master Cherry," says I. "'Op on to an 'oss, then," says

he. So I hops on, and the next minute I goes whizzing round and round like a catherine-wheel, as ever was! I hollers for the thing to stop, but nobody takes no notice. I was a prey to bitter com-motions, as a novelist would say. The world seemed upside-down, and every-thing was turvy-toppy, in a manner of speaking. When at last the thing comes to a standstill I says to Master Cherry, "No more joy-ridin' for me! Why, I might 'ave broke me blinkin' neck!" Master Cherry gives a chuckle. "That's all right, Gossy," said he. "You'd 'ave been able to claim 'eavy damages from the insurance company!" But that would have been precious poor consterna-tion for a broken neck, wouldn't it?

OUR SPORTS NEWS!

(Conducted by H. VERNON-SMITH)

The season of athletics is at its height. Cricket, running, swimming, rowing, and boxing contests are in full swing at Greyfriars, and several remarkable per-formances have been put up.

Chief honours go to Bob Cherry, who scored his first century of the season last Saturday, against Courtfield County Council School. Bob was in sparkling form, and he collected 105 of the best before being caught by Dick Trumper. Only one other Remove batsman has made a century this season. That is Harry Wharton. Incidentally, we trounced Trumper's team by the big margin of 137 runs.

The bowling honours go to Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the dusky trundler from India's coral strand. In the match against Courtfield "Inky" captured seven wickets for 28 runs—a remarkable achievement. The Nabob can make the ball break and swerve and spin in a most bewildering manner, and I often feel thankful that I'm playing on his side and not against him!

A friendly boxing match took place in the Greyfriars gym, on Tuesday evening, between those doughty rivals, Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry. The latter forced the fighting, but his opponent made a brave show, and refused to be knocked out. The fight went the full number of rounds, and Bob Cherry was awarded the verdict on points.

The Fifth-Formers have beaten the Remove at last! Not at cricket, but in a tug-of-war contest. It was only to be expected that the Fifth, with their superior weight and strength, would pull off this event; but they had to fight very hard for victory, and Coker's face was like a boiled beetroot at the finish owing to his exertions. Nothing daunted, we

have challenged the Fifth to a return contest.

Tom Brown, who is a great speed-merchant on a bicycle, won the five-mile cycle race organised during the week. Although he met with tyre trouble on the homeward journey, Tom Brown plodded on gamely, beating the second man home—Squiff—by a matter of three yards. The margin would have been much greater had Brown's tyres behaved themselves.

There will be a donkey-race on Pegg sands on Wednesday afternoon next. Open to all the Remove. Competitors are expected to hire their own donkeys, and they must be "weighed in" before they go to the starting-post. It is rumoured that Wun Lung will compete, and will ride on the back of Billy Bunter—an ideal donkey!

ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR.

(Continued from previous page.)

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Nugent did not join in the laughter. He certainly roared, but it was with anger, not with merriment.

"Yaroooooooh! You—you dangerous imbecile! You ought to be chained up! I lend you a tanner, and you show your gratitude by pelting me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter went on with his coconut-shies, and the Famous Five beat a retreat to a safe distance.

Needless to state, Bunter failed to capture a coconut. He took eighteen shots altogether, and they were all wide of the target. The wooden balls went flying in all directions, and there was quite a panic.

Mr. Quelch was striding towards the scene when Billy Bunter took his final shot. The Remove master had come to the fair to look for Bunter, and he had found him!

The ball sailed through the air and took off Mr. Quelch's silk hat as clean as a whistle.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry retrieved the Form master's hat, chuckling as he did so.

The thunderclouds gathered on Mr. Quelch's brow.

"Bunter!" he roared.

No answer.

Mr. Quelch strode up to the fat junior and shook him.

"Did you not hear me address you, Bunter?" he panted.

"Oh, really, sir—I think you must be making a mistake! I'm not Bunter! I'm a farmer's boy, and— Yow-ow-ow! Don't shake me like that, sir, or my glasses will bounce off and break!"

"You utterly stupid boy!" roared Mr. Quelch. "Do you imagine for one moment that I should be deceived by such a clumsy attempt at disguise? Your identity is perfectly patent to everyone! You have come to the fair in defiance of my express orders!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Come with me, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch sternly.

Master and junior left the fair-ground together. And when they got back to Greyfriars, Billy Bunter received fitting chastisement.

Mr. Quelch could not have spared the rod, because it was noticed that Billy Bunter took his tea that afternoon standing up!

THE END.

Always full of good cheer—the MAGNET Supplements!

THE HAND OF FATE!

(Continued from page 12.)

He rose, shaking his head. The others stood around him.

Then Harry Wharton gave them a shock.

"The question is—which of them is it?" he said.

"Which of them? What do you mean, Wharton?" demanded Wingate.

"It's no good trying to keep it back any longer," replied Harry, feeling as if at any moment he might break down. "Nobody knows but me—unless Bunter does—and that's only suspicion, anyway. But there were two Willeseys—twins—exactly alike outside. But two fellows couldn't have been more different in their natures."

"How can you know, Harry?" inquired Bob Cherry. "You only knew one of them."

"I knew them both! So did you. So did Mauly and Delarey and Vivian—oh, and lots more! It's a queer story. Perhaps some of you won't believe it. And I can't prove it."

He paused.

Greene stooped and took from the hand of the dead boy something white, soaked till it looked no more than a pulp.

He spread it out.

"Why, this is yours, Wharton!" he cried. "It has your name on it."

For a moment Harry Wharton stood like one dumb-stricken. Then he flung himself down on the grass by the side of the corpse, and his shoulders heaved with great sobs, though his eyes were still dry.

It was Quentin, then! Quentin, the fellow he had liked so well, cheerful, plucky, self-sacrificing—not the rotter Cuthbert, whom no one would have missed.

Every fellow there was wet through, but none of them thought of his own condition. Tragic matters were here, and Wharton's tearless sobs gave them a hint of something even more tragic than an ordinary death by drowning.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Wharton Explains!

"**H**ARRY!"

Bob Cherry shook his chum by the shoulder. He could not bear this any longer. He felt that he must know what it was that had hit Wharton so hard.

"Leave him alone, Cherry," said Wingate.

But Harry looked up.

"All right, Bob—all right, Wingate," he said. "It fairly knocked me over. But I see now that it doesn't matter a scrap whether this was Quentin Willesey or Cuthbert. For they must both have been drowned—they both went in."

He stood up, dry-eyed still. But his voice trembled as he went on:

"Quentin was a good chap—oh, the right sort every way you took him! It was he who made that century in the scratch match—it was he who licked Bolsover. But it was Cuthbert who came first—Cuthbert who let Bunter lick him—Cuthbert who was knocked out by Temple!"

They gasped. It was hard to follow all this. Some of them thought that Harry must surely have been dreaming.

But he seemed very sure of his facts. He continued:

"I lent this handkerchief to Quentin. I've told you already that they were twins, and so alike that no one could tell them apart. Well, at their last school there was some sort of trouble—I don't know what—I wouldn't ask Quentin—and Cuthbert was sacked. Their guardian took Quentin away, too. The headmaster wrote to Dr. Locke, explaining everything, and our Head made no trouble about taking Quentin, though he wouldn't have had Cuthbert at any price."

Harry paused. No one spoke. He went on:

"Cuthbert played a trick on Quentin, and got here first. We met him at the station, and thought him a rank outsider."

"So he was," said Johnny Bull. "I suppose he's dead, for certain, and I don't want to say anything nasty about him, but he was just about the giddy limit!"

"He seems to have been an out-and-out rotter!" said Harry. "Quentin followed him up. Cuthbert had expected him to do that, and it seems he must have thought that his safest plan was to meet his brother out of gates, coming from the station. Well, the upshot of it was that Quentin came along here then instead of Cuthbert. The rotter seems to have made up his mind for the time being that Greyfriars wouldn't suit him. But he soon changed it. You fellows remember that catch in the quad and the way the new chap threw the ball afterwards—a clean chuck farther than almost any of us could have thrown it?"

"We remember, Harry," said Frank Nugent.

"Well, that was Quentin. That was when he came in first. He was given a place in Study No. 12, and Delarey and Mauly and Vivian found him quite the right sort. But somehow that evening Cuthbert wangled his way in, leaving Quentin outside."

"I say, Wharton, this sounds a bit like a fairy tale, you know!" protested Coker.

Harry pointed to the still figure at his feet.

"Do you think I'd say anything that wasn't true in the presence of that, Coker?" he returned. "I know it sounds wild, but I'm asking you fellows to believe me, and I think most of you will."

"Go on, Wharton," Temple said. "No one but a silly ass would doubt you. Poor old Willesey! I can add something to Wharton's story when he's done."

"Quentin got in again somehow next day, and he thought Cuthbert had gone back to Hampstead, where they had been living with an old nurse," Harry resumed. "But the fellow had gone to the Cross Keys instead, and he must have made friends with Cobb and that blackguard Hawke. For there's no doubt that those two were in the plot. Quentin got a letter to say that Cuthbert was—well, you might say in pawn to Cobb for money lost at cards. It was then that he told me—after brekker yesterday morning."

Harry looked down at the dead boy, and two big tears welled from his eyes and rolled slowly down his cheeks. He was thinking of Quentin's kindness and generosity, of the story—guessed at rather than heard—of how he had stood by his worthless brother through thick

and thin as not one fellow in a thousand would have done.

He went on without wiping the tears away, and none who saw him thought the worse of him for that partial breakdown.

"He had to fight you, Temple; it was really Cuthbert who fell foul of you at first, but Quentin couldn't see any decent way out of it but fighting. He asked me to go along and get you to wait."

"I wish I'd known—I wish I'd known!" groaned Temple, stirred as he had seldom been in all his life. "You don't think I'm such an outsider that I'd have kicked if I'd known, Wharton, do you? Whoever thinks your story's too steep, I don't. The fellow I met first under the name of Willesey was an insufferable young cad. But the Willesey who smacked my face—Dabney and Fry saw him do it, an' they'll say the same—was a good sort. I—"

Temple stopped short, very near to giving way to emotion of which he would have been ashamed—though there was no good reason why he should have been ashamed of it.

"He went to the Cross Keys to answer his brother's S.O.S.," continued Wharton, "and they trapped him among them, and Cuthbert walked into Greyfriars again—just in time to take a hiding from you, Temple!"

"You're sure it was Cuthbert I licked, Wharton?"

"Quite sure!"

"My word, I'm glad! I shouldn't ever forget it as long as I lived if it had been this good fellow. But that rotter—"

"He's dead, too, Temple!" said Wingate softly.

"I don't care! It doesn't make a bit of difference to the way I feel about it. I can't feel sorry he's dead; I believe this chap died tryin' to save his worthless life!"

"So do I," said Harry. "Quentin could swim, I'm sure; he was the kind of fellow who could do pretty much anything. But Cuthbert—I shouldn't think he could."

"But you seem to be sure this is Quentin, so it would appear that he must have drowned, even if he could swim," Wingate remarked.

"Yes. It simply must be Quentin, for it was to him I lent my handkerchief—after he'd got out of the Cross Keys."

"How did he get out? Sounds as if you'd helped him, Wharton," said Greene.

"No. I didn't; I went along—I'd got no end worried. But he'd managed it for himself. Set Cobb and Hawke scrapping together some way, and bolted while they were at it. He'd left his handkerchief behind, and I'd a clean one in my pocket, so I let him have it."

"Why didn't he come back to Greyfriars with you and see that things were straightened out at once?" asked Wingate. "I can see that there were complications that weren't easily explicable; but that was the right thing for him to do, and it would have helped no end that he had told you about it before he went to the Cross Keys."

"He wouldn't, because he hated letting Cuthbert in for all the trouble that would have followed," answered Harry. "He said Cuthbert might have to go to prison for it; and even if that didn't happen, he couldn't bear to stay on at Greyfriars if it all came out. It doesn't matter that it should come

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out now. You don't think I'm wrong to tell, do you, Wingate?"

"I consider you're dead right, Wharton," answered the skipper of Greyfriars. "You couldn't keep it dark in the face of what has happened, in my opinion."

There was a murmur of assent. Everyone there agreed with Wingate.

Harry Wharton thought only of Quentin Willesey's generosity and self-sacrifice. It had not occurred to him that he had done anything. But most of those present—and especially those who knew of his fight with Temple for Quentin's sake—realised that he had shown himself, as so often before, utterly loyal and unselfish.

Wingate laid a hand on his shoulder.

"Hurry up, Wharton!" he said. "We sha'n't take any harm from our wet clothes; the afternoon's warm enough. But the sooner a doctor sees poor Willesey's body the better. I wouldn't have stayed to hear you but that I'm absolutely certain he was dead when I brought him up. And then I'm afraid you'll have to tell your story all over again to the Head. But don't you mind that; I'll back you up for all I'm worth. You've behaved well through this, Wharton, and I shall say the same even if the Head differs—though I don't think he will."

"There isn't much more to tell," said Harry. "When we came along just now I caught sight of those two. One stumbled in, and the other plunged in after him. You saw that, didn't you, Bob?"

"Yes, I saw it, Harry," said Bob Cherry.

"This was the fellow who plunged in," said Wingate, looking down at the still face. "Well, he died man fashion—there's that much comfort in it, anyway. But I can't feel that that is enough. You've given me the picture, Wharton, of a youngster that Greyfriars would have come to be proud of—and he lies there!"

It was not only down Harry Wharton's face that tears rolled now. Bob and Frank Nugent were not dry-eyed; and Johnny Bull blew his nose loudly, and Inky had a difficulty in keeping his face stoical, and Cecil Reginald Temple turned his away, because he was not willing that even his dearest chums should see it.

Some of them fetched from the boat-house materials for an improvised stretcher, and upon that they carried the dead Willesey to the school. The doctor was summoned from Friardale, and Wingate, without waiting even to change his clothes, went to the Head.

The news reached Little Side, and Sir Jimmy and Delarey and Squiff and Tom Brown were among the first to hurry to the sanatorium, where the body of the drowned boy lay. All cricket stopped. In the face of tragedy such as this no one cared to go on with a game.

Mauly came and looked at the still face.

"He was a good chap, begad!" he said. "I'm glad in a way that there were two of them, because if there had been only one I'd never have been able to make things fit in this world, begad! But now I know that this was the cheery fellow we liked so well, an'—an'— Oh, I say, it's rotten rough luck he should be dead, begad!"

Squiff and Delarey and Tom Brown looked, said nothing, and went away very quietly. When the Afrikander detached himself from his staunch chums and went off alone to Study No. 12 neither of the other two made any comment. They understood. Piet was taking this hard. He also had come quickly to be fond of Quentin.

But Sir Jimmy stayed, sobbing as if his heart had broken. For Sir Jimmy had dreamed dreams of a chum all his own—a chum such as the Spadger had been to him in Carker's Rents—such as he had never had at Greyfriars, though many fellows liked him, and he liked many. And the dreams were dead, and Sir Jimmy wept for them as well as for the dead Willesey.

The story had spread. By the time Wingate had told it to the Head almost all Greyfriars had learned it from various sources. There was no use in trying to suppress it. Coker and Potter and Greene, Dabney and Fry, Russell and Ogilvy—all told it to interested auditors. Gwynne explained to the seniors.

But Temple would not talk to anyone about it, and none of the Famous Five felt like discussing it.

To the ears of Billy Bunter it came, and at once Bunter saw a chance of fame—or of notoriety. It is doubtful whether Bunter could distinguish between the two.

"Oh, really," said Bunter, "if Wharton says he's the only chap who knew all about it, he's making a false claim. I knew; but it was Cuthbert who told me about it, not Quentin. You see—"

Squiff took him by the ear, and Squiff's face was grim, not humorous, as it generally was when he had occasion to tackle Billy Bunter.

"You knew, you fat rotter!" thundered Squiff. "You knew that a foul

cad was keeping another fellow worth ten thousand of him out of his rightful place, and you kept it dark, you bloated criminal! Why, you're almost as bad as the sweep himself!"

"Yaroooh! Leggo my ear, Field! You hurt, you beast!" howled Bunter. Squiff let go.

"I'm sorry I touched you," he said, in tones of utter contempt. "You aren't fit for a decent fellow to touch."

"Bump him!" shouted someone. But Bunter was not bumped. The occasion was too grave for that. By bed-time Bunter himself had come to see the gravity of it, and was as truly repentant as he was capable of being. He would do the same again, no doubt, if a chance offered; but for the present he really had a distinct notion that blackmail was not at all the correct thing, and that connivance in such a wicked scheme as Cuthbert's was dead off.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Greyfriars!

THE Head was very kind to Harry Wharton. He spoke no word of blame.

"I recognise the fact that you were put on your honour, Wharton," he said. "That admitted, it follows that you could not tell, though, when once this terrible thing had happened, you rightly considered that the seal of silence was broken. You stood by the—the poor boy like a true friend. You may comfort yourself with that thought."

Then Dr. Locke turned to Wingate.

"I am afraid, Wingate," he said, "that we can do nothing in the matter of those two scoundrels at the Cross Keys."

"But surely, sir, they were as much responsible for this as anyone? They—oh, you don't mean to say that they'll get off scot-free?"

"What do you think, Mr. Quelch? We have no evidence against them. The story this poor fellow told Wharton was undoubtedly true. But who is to prove it? Wharton's swearing that he heard it would not be accepted as proof. The men would deny it totally, of course."

"You are right, Dr. Locke. For a moment I had a wild hope that the plague spot of the Cross Keys—so I regard it—might be wiped out once and for all. But you are unquestionably right. Cobb has yet to be given enough rope to hang himself with, I suppose. I think he must do it sooner or later."

"The river must be dragged for the body of the other unfortunate boy," said Dr. Locke. "I cannot accept responsibility for anything that happened to him, but I do feel that I must have that done."

"I'll see about it, sir, if I may," volunteered Wingate, keen to get away from the sight of the drawn and worried faces of the Head and Mr. Quelch.

"Thank you, Wingate! I feel sure that proper decorum will be preserved by every boy at Greyfriars. A terrible event has taken place, and, though we must go on with our work and the ordinary routine of living—well, I am sure you understand, Wingate."

"I don't think there will be any need for even a hint to the fellows, sir," replied the skipper. "This has fairly knocked most of them over."

Wingate was right. Half the school went down to the Sark when the river was dragged; but it was a curiously quiet crowd. There was excitement, but it was restrained and subdued.

RESULT OF

"Magnet" Limerick Competition (No. 8).

In this competition the first prize of £1 1s. for the best line sent in has been awarded to:

MISS SYBIL YORKE, Tregunna, St. Breock, Cornwall, whose last line was:
There were two persons there, "Raising Cain."

Four consolation prizes of 2s. 6d. each have been awarded to the following:

J. W. McDOUGALL, 16, Kingsthorpe Road, Sydenham, S.E. 26.
STANLEY WALKER, 109, Wolseley Road, Sheffield.
MISS A. L. SMITH, Mona Cottage, Brent Knoll, Somerset.
D. L. POWELL, 7, Errington Road, Colchester.

Look out for our special Scouting Article—coming soon!

The dragging had no result. The body of the other Willesley was not recovered. Sunday was a day of gloom, and Monday was little better.

"It will be a dashed good thing when the funeral's over," said Harold Skinner. "I don't want to say anything against Willesley—I didn't really know the fellow, or the two fellows, if there were two—but—"

"Skinner," said the Bunder incisively, "are you in any sort of doubt that there were two of them?"

"Well, we've only Wharton's word for that, and Bunter's, which is worth just a bit less than Wharton's," replied Skinner hastily.

"Wharton's word is good enough for the rest of us. I've a bad leg, Skinner, but unless you're outside before I've counted five I'm goin' to kick you hard."

And Harold Skinner fled the Common-room at once.

Tuesday came. The morning seemed endless. But the afternoon came at long last, and the fellows lined up in their Forms in the quad to follow the body of the dead Willesley to its last resting-place.

Then came a most dramatic surprise. Gosling, standing at the door of his lodge, started back with an exclamation of fear, and Harry Wharton broke out of the ranks, and ran to meet the fellow who entered the gates.

For, though he was not smiling, though his face was full of anxiety, the fellow who came was Quentin, not Cuthbert! Harry was sure of that from the moment he set eyes on him.

"I say, how did it happen; where have you been?" he gasped.

"Which of the Willesleys are you?" demanded Wingate.

Quentin's face went ashy. Intuitively he knew the truth. But he spoke up bravely.

"I'm Quentin," he said. "Do you mean that—that Cuthbert was drowned?"

"Yes. He's to be buried to-day, and we were all sure that it was you," answered Wharton, his voice trembling. "He had my handkerchief in his hand. How did he come by that?"

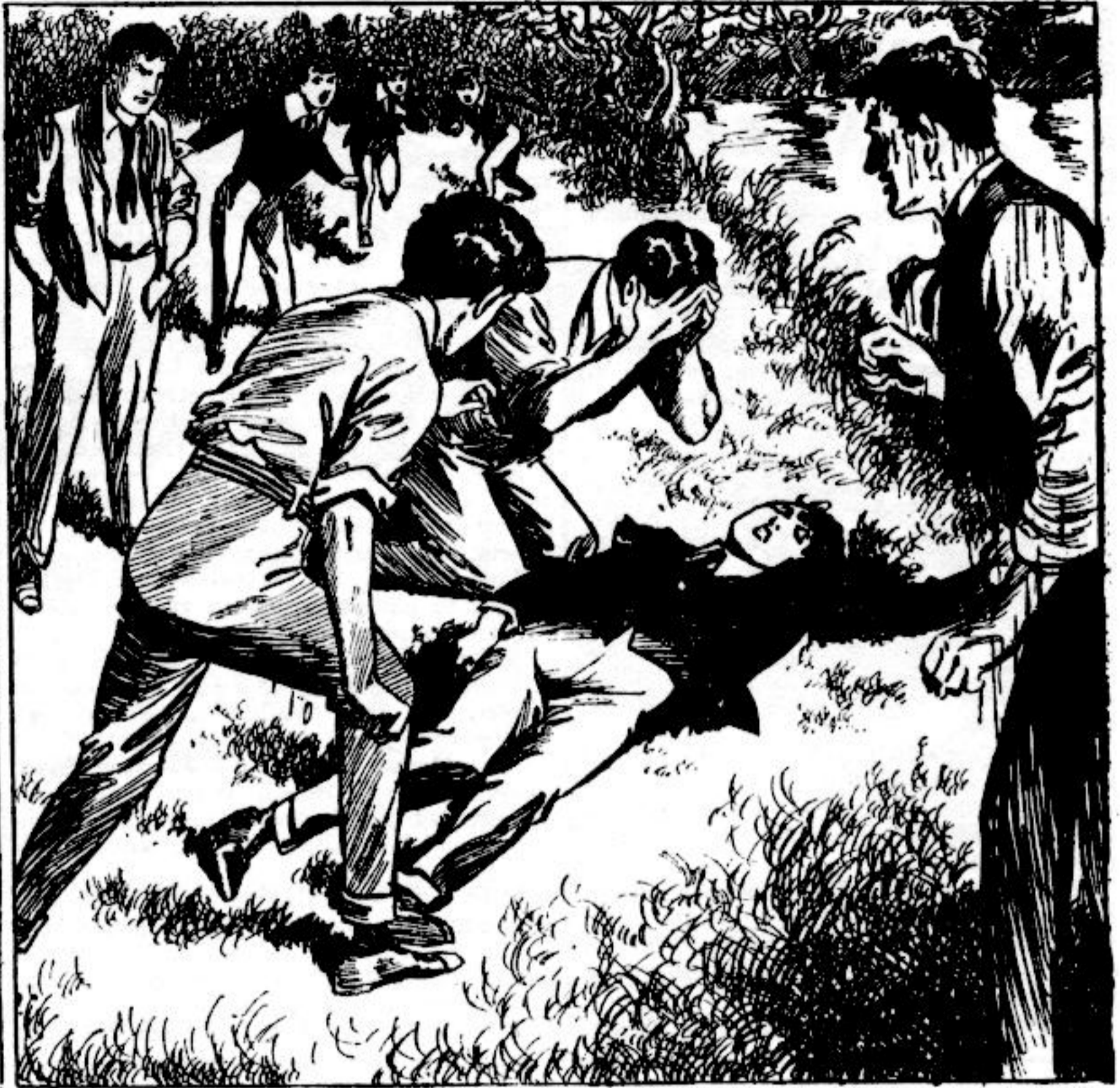
"He grabbed me when I jumped in, and it must have come out of my pocket then. I don't know much about it. I can swim all right, but Cuthbert grabbed so hard that—well, I suppose I lost consciousness. He didn't really mean to drag me under, of course. The next thing I knew was that I was in the cabin of a barge, with a man I'd talked to in the morning bending over me. I don't think he could have seen what had happened. The current must have carried me down somehow round a bend in the river, and I'd told him that I wasn't living in these parts—that my home was in London. He's a rough sort of chap, very simple and ignorant, though ever so decent, and he and his wife had agreed that it was no good putting me on the bank. They could look after me all right on the barge, and they were in a bit of a hurry. It was hours before I came to at all, and after that I had a relapse. I don't know much about the last two or three days. So—so Cuthbert's dead?"

"Yes," murmured Harry Wharton.

There was a crowd round them now.

"And you were all lined up for the the— Well, I'm not sure that it isn't all for the best. I'm sorry, but I'm not sure. Cuthbert didn't give himself or anyone else a chance, but—"

Then he fainted in Wingate's arms.



For a moment Harry Wharton stood like one dumb-stricken. Then he flung himself down on the grass by the side of the still and silent figure, and his shoulders heaved with great sobs. (See Chapter 6.)

The Head came up just at that moment, and the situation was explained to him.

"Carry him indoors, poor lad!" he said to Wingate. "We must try to make up to him for all that he has gone through."

And within ten minutes, while Quentin still lay in the sanatorium, dead to the world for the time being, but only for the time being, the funeral cortege passed out of the gates of Greyfriars. Before the true Willesley had come back to consciousness earth had been piled above the body of his brother.

Thus was the twin tangle settled.

Quentin was badly knocked over. For a fortnight he had to stay in sanny. He had many visitors there. When he left Greyfriars he had at least a dozen chums. Sir Jimmy Vivian came first of them all, perhaps, though Harry Wharton might have disputed the place with him, and Quentin was no end fond of Mauly and Delarey, Squiff, and Tom Brown.

He said, when he went away to recuperate at Brighton, that he could not bear to come back. But the Head said that he hoped to see him back again, and Quentin's chums share that hope yet.

THE END.

(There is another brilliant story of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars by your favourite author in next Monday's MAGNET, entitled "Lame Bunter!" You want a real laugh? Then be sure and read this ripping yarn, chums!)

FACTS!

From Liverpool to Melbourne by sea is 11,555 miles.

The sweet potato will give a crop of five tons to the acre.

Lard contains 20 per cent of water; olive oil only 2 per cent.

A silver penny of William the Conqueror has fetched £32.

A sack of flour weighing 280 lbs. will make about 400 lbs. of bread.

St. Bartholomew's Hospital was founded in 1547; St. Thomas' a year later.

The canal from the Severn to the Thames was completed in the year 1789.

There are still in existence some British banknotes dated 1798, and printed on satin.

The altar at Chester Cathedral is made of wood from many different trees native to the Holy Land.

The Brooklyn Suspension Bridge cost £3,100,000, which is half a million more than the cost of the Forth Bridge.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 865.

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P. A. Powell, Bell Street, Beulah, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere.

Geo. W. Peach, 32, Sneinton Boulevard, Sneinton, Nottingham, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere.

Leslie Height, Nyah West, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere for the exchange of stamps.

Edward Barnett, 21, Chiswick Lane, Chiswick, W. 4, wishes to correspond with readers abroad; ages 13-15. All letters answered.

Charles Oulton, Little Stoke, near Stone, Stafford, wishes to correspond with French readers with a view to learning French.

Alfred Goslett, Treaty Cottage, Albert Road, Woodstock, South Africa, wishes to hear from anybody interested in amateur magazines, as he wants some tips about them.

David J. Lacey, 254, Barking Road, East Ham, E. 6, wishes to correspond with readers interested in chemistry and chemical magic; also with amateur journalists.

Miss M. Hawkins, 22, Elmsleigh Road,

Weston-super-Mare, wishes to correspond with readers.

Miss N. Smith, 36, Quantock Road, Weston-super-Mare, wishes to correspond with readers.

Miss Celia Thomas, 21, Ernest Street, Merthyr Tydvil, Glam, wishes to correspond with readers; ages 15-16; subjects, sports and photography.

Herbert Foundhere, 56, Barkerend Fold Road, Bradford, wishes to hear from readers interested in his free book list. All letters answered.

D. C. Richardson, 115, High Street, Lees, near Oldham, wishes to hear from readers willing to join his stamp club.

Frederick Fullerton, Northern Buildings, Magazine Street, Londonderry, Ulster, Ireland, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere; interested in stamp-collecting, photography, and all sports. All letters answered.

Tom Ludlow, 22, Dexter Street, Derby, wishes to correspond with readers about the Companion Papers.

Aubrey Benette, P.O. Box 236, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere; all subjects.

Miss Maisie Lennard, 3, Evelyn Road, Skewen, Glam, South Wales, wishes to correspond with readers interested in sports in Australia, Canada, and South Africa; ages 15-16.

Miss Clarice Maybury, 57, Windsor Road, Neath, Glam, South Wales, wishes to correspond with readers interested in sports and politics in Australia, Canada, and South Africa; ages 15-16.

The amateur magazine called the

"Young Britisher," started by S. Coombes and W. E. Skelton, will be circulated on May 3rd. Letters requested from all readers of the Companion Papers. Address, 104, Ann Street, Plumstead, S.E. 18.

Kamdin A. Bharucha, 10, Sholapur Road, Poona, India, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere. All letters answered. He is keen on the Companion Papers, and collects postcards, coins, stamps, and books.

Miss Dorothy Vickers, Belle Vue Farm, Stanhope, Co. Durham, wishes to correspond with MAGNET readers anywhere, but preferably Canada, Africa, and New Zealand. All letters answered. Interested in reading and sports. Ages 15-17.

Jack William Smithers, c.o. Post Office, Victoria Park, Perth, Western Australia, wishes to correspond with readers in England and other countries.

J. Tees, 763, Dorchester Avenue, Winnipeg, Canada, wishes to correspond with stamp collectors (any age) all over the world.

G. O'Connell, 262, Amiss Street, North Carlton, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wishes to hear from a reader who is running a club.

Fred Matthews, 2, Oaklands, Landguard Road, Shanklin, Isle of Wight, wishes to correspond with readers in France, Belgium, Russia, and Spain; ages 16-18.

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WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

Here is a splendid Cricket competition which I am sure will interest you. On this page you will find a simple history of Leicestershire Cricket Club in picture-puzzle form. What you are invited to do is to solve this picture, and when you have done so, write your solution on a sheet of paper. Then sign the coupon which appears below, pin it to your solution, and post it to "Leicestershire" Competition, MAGNET Office, Gough House, Gough Square, E.C. 4, so as to reach that address not later than Thursday, July 19th, 1923.

The FIRST PRIZE of £5 will be awarded to the reader who submits a solution which is exactly the same as, or nearest to, the solution now in the possession of the Editor. In the event of ties the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. The Editor reserves the right to add together and divide the value of all, or any, of the prizes, but the full amount will be awarded. It is a distinct condition of entry that the decision of the Editor must be regarded as final. Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

This competition is run in conjunction with the "Boys' Friend," "Gem," and "Popular," and readers of those journals are invited to compete.

I enter "Leicestershire" Competition, and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final.

Name

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M.



Horse-racing has done much for this country ; it has ensured a breed of horses unequalled in the world. But there is a bad side to racing as well as the good one. In this thrilling detective story Ferrers Locke crops up against a shady gang of rogues whose activities on and off the course bring discredit upon a sport which has often, and rightly so, been styled "the sport of kings."

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Knife!

"**T**HEY'RE off!"
The restless patches of coloured silk at the five furlongs starting point suddenly swept forward in a straight line. Simultaneously there was a murmur of excitement among the densely packed throngs which lined the Epsom racecourse.

Ferrers Locke, standing with Jack Drake by the rails facing the grandstand, kept his field-glasses to his eyes and gave an approving nod.

"They've got away to an excellent start, my boy," he said. "We shall soon know now whether it is to be a walk-over for Sir Digby's selected."

The race was the two-thirty, the second event on the programme. That grand old sportsman, Sir Digby Graeme, whom Ferrers Locke knew well, had entered two candidates for the race. They were Larrikins, a not very imposing-looking chestnut, and Starglow, a fine, upstanding, jet-black colt with which he had declared to win.

The majority of the public had decided that there was only one horse in the race—Starglow. They had made the jet-black colt favourite, and the starting-price was six-to-four on. The second favourite was Calabash, owned by the Honourable Selbey Sattray, quoted at three-to-one against.

The luck of the draw had favoured Starglow. The colt, with the famous jockey, Tony Dodd, up, had acquired the inside berth on the rails. And as the horses came into the straight, the jade green and white hoops—the Graeme colours—were prominent.

The excited murmurings of the throng quickly evolved themselves into loud shouts of encouragement to the favourite.

"Starglow! Starglow!"

"Come on, Tony!" cried Jack Drake,

his eyes dancing joyously. "You've got it by a street!"

For three furlongs Starglow gradually increased his lead. Then it was seen that Calabash was making a big effort to overhaul the leader, and was actually gaining ground.

Fresh hope filled the hearts of those members of the public who had preferred backing the Selbey-Sattray colt at three-to-one rather than the short-priced favourite.

"Calabash! Calabash!"

Tony Dodd was riding magnificently. Yet there was something now about the action of the jet-black which was not altogether satisfactory. Starglow was swaying slightly, and seemed in imminent danger of fouling the rails.

"My giddy aunt," muttered Drake, "the colt seems tired."

Locke took the glasses from his eyes, for the racing thoroughbreds were now less than a furlong from home.

"Extraordinary! Very extraordinary!" he said. "The colt won his last race of seven furlongs easily, and Sir Digby assured me when I ran across him in town yesterday that he was trained to the hour and would have a walk-over in this event."

Then, with Calabash but a length behind the favourite, an amazing thing happened. There was the flash of steel as a long-bladed knife described a semi-circle in the air in front of the leading horse and stuck, quivering, in the turf.

"Great pip!" gasped Jack Drake. "Who threw that?"

A loud shouting arose among the crowd behind the rails a short distance from where the famous sleuth and his assistant were standing. There was a restless movement among the throng, too. Drake, although he had not seen the man who had thrown the knife, felt sure that the scoundrel was being dealt with by the crowd.

But Ferrers Locke, who also had seen the knife go quivering into the green turf of the racecourse close to the hoofs of the leading horse, kept his eyes glued on the runners.

The strange incident had not affected the running of Starglow. But it was clear that the colt was not at his best. Calabash, amid a frenzy of shouting and cheering, drew level, and then went on to win a gruelling race by half a length.

The rest of the field, with the exception of one horse, were well bunched. The hoofs of one of the runners struck the handle of the knife and sent the weapon hurtling along the turf. And there it lay exposed flat on the ground, while in a thunder of hoofs and amid flying lumps of turf, the thoroughbreds passed over it.

Tailing the field by fully three lengths came the despised chestnut colt, Larrikins, which was Sir Digby Graeme's other candidate. The horse glimpsed the glistening blade lying on the turf. Its eyes dilated, and it swung in a wide semi-circle out on the course.

Its jockey, Bob Jenkins, struck the animal smartly with the whip. Larrikins swung back sharply towards the rails and again glimpsed the knife. Then in a frenzy of fear the colt leaped into the air.

"Look out!" shrieked Ferrers Locke.

He and Drake ducked down smartly. With cries of terror, others near them flung themselves aside as the racehorse cleared the rails and came stumbling to earth among the throng.

As though by a miracle no one was seriously hurt. Fortunately, the crowd had not been quite so dense at this point as at some of the other parts of the course. One man, struck by the horse's shoulder as the maddened beast descended, let out a wild howl of pain and fear. But, before Larrikins could do any more harm, Locke sprang up and grasped the animal by the bridle.

"The Invisible Knife!"—next Monday's sensational Ferrers Locke story!

The jockey had retained his seat in the saddle. He kept the horse's head down by a tight grip on the reins. And this aided Locke and Drake and one or two others in getting the colt under control.

But Larrikins was plainly very nervous and upset. There was a red glow of fear in the animal's great dark, luminous eyes. It was sweating out of all proportion to the exertions it had made in the race. The supple muscles under the glossy chestnut coat rippled and twitched. It pawed the ground restlessly.

A couple of burly policemen elbowed their way through the crowd, while another retrieved the knife from the course. The man who had been struck by the horse was taken charge of by members of the Ambulance Corps, though it turned out that he was more frightened than hurt.

From the direction of the enclosure on the other side of the course Sir Digby Graeme and "Big Bob" Benton, his trainer, came hurrying on the scene.

"Has the horse hurt anyone?" was the owner's first anxious inquiry.

When his mind had been relieved on this point, he ran his eye over Larrikins.

"The horse doesn't seem to have come to much harm, either," he said. "It's jolly lucky that things have turned out so well. What happened exactly, Jenkins?"

The jockey, obviously puzzled by his extraordinary experience, shook his head.

"Blest if I know, sir. I thought I saw something lying on the course. Then Larrikins went mad."

"What was on the course?" asked Sir Digby, who had not seen the knife incident.

It was Ferrers Locke who replied. "A knife," he said.

Sir Digby swung round and gave an exclamation of pleasure at the sight of the detective.

"It's a surprise to see you here, my dear Locke," he said, shaking the sleuth heartily by the hand. "You didn't tell me yesterday that you were coming to Epsom. And why are you not in the enclosure?"

"Drake and I were at a loose end to-day, so we just blew down to see the racing. We thought we should feel more

at home here than mingling among you aristocrats, you know."

"Rot!" retorted the racehorse owner to Locke's laughing remark. "At any rate, you must come home with me and have some dinner this evening. But what's all this business about a knife being on the course?"

At that moment the constable who had retrieved the knife from the course came forward and exhibited the article.

"Here's the weapon, sir," he said. "Strikes me it was thrown at Tony Dodd. The thing fell on the grass, and your boss shied like billy-o when he spotted it."

Sir Digby Graeme and Big Bob Benton exchanged glances.

"By Jove," said the owner, "can it be that Larrikins remembered that unfortunate experience he went through as a foal, Bob?"

"I guess that explains it, sir," answered the trainer. "I've noticed on one or two occasions how strangely Larrikins has acted when anyone has handled a knife near him."

Turning to Ferrers Locke, the owner explained.

"As you know, Locke," he remarked, "a thoroughbred racehorse is an extremely highly-strung and sensitive animal. When Larrikins was a foal a man who bore me some fancied grudge tried to maim one or two of my animals. The only damage the madman succeeded in doing before he was overpowered was to slash Larrikins across the side of the head with a large knife. You can just distinguish the scar now if you look closely enough."

"I see. And the horse has never forgotten it?"

"That's my idea. As Bob says, the sight of a knife is quite sufficient to completely upset him. It was most unfortunate that he saw this weapon lying on the racecourse to-day. It's a wonder Larrikins didn't kill someone!"

He paused, and then drew closer to the detective.

"Look here, Locke, old man," he said in a lower tone, "have you got much professional work on your hands these days?"

"Not a great deal at present."

"Good! Well, I should like to engage the services of yourself and Drake on some investigations. Apparently to-day someone made an attempt either to injure Starglow or Tony Dodd, who is my first-string jockey. Three months ago a mysterious fire broke out in my stables, but this luckily was got under control. Only six weeks since, one of my horses was doped, and galloped twice round the Hurst Park course before it could be stopped."

Here Big Bob Benton, who had come to the side of Sir Digby, interposed.

"I fired the stable-hand, Mellor, on account of that job, sir," he remarked.

"Yes, I know you did, Bob," replied the racehorse owner. "And you were probably right in thinking that he was concerned in the matter. He was the only one who had anything to do with the horse just before the race except Dodd himself, who is above suspicion. But I think you will agree with me that it would be an excellent thing if Mr. Locke would look into affairs for us."

There was a solemn look on the round, genial face of the well-known trainer as he acquiesced.

"A splendid idea, sir," he said. "I'll willingly give Mr. Locke all the assistance in my power."

"I am sure you will, Bob." He turned to Jenkins, who had dismounted and was standing by the side of Larrikins, fondling the animal. "You had better get the colt back to the paddock, Jenkins," he said. "You can take him across the course above the judges' box. I will see you in the enclosure later."

"Very good, sir."

There had been a little boing intermingled with the excited murmurings of the throng about the group of racing men. And as the colt moved off this boing increased in intensity.

Sir Digby turned to Locke with a wry smile.

"I don't wonder," he remarked. "Not only did some of 'em have a narrow squeak from one of my horses, but most of 'em must have lost money on the favourite. I am absolutely puzzled at the running of Starglow."

"Same here, sir," said Big Bob Benton. "The horse didn't run as though it were fit. Yet I'd have staked my reputation it was trained to the minute for the race to-day. It's a fair knock-out!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

On the Trail of the Ginger-haired Man!

DURING the conversation between the racehorse owner and the trainer the keen grey eyes of Ferrers Locke had been on the knife held by the police-constable. Having whispered his name into the ear of the man in blue, the famous private sleuth asked:

"You have no objection to my examining that weapon, I suppose, officer?"

"Certainly not, sir." The policeman handed over the knife, looking a few inches bigger round the chest at having been addressed so deferentially by the detective whose name was a household word throughout the English-speaking world.

Ferrers Locke turned over the weapon in his hand. It had a long, broad blade, which would fold back into its plain wooden handle.

"Curious kind o' knife, that, sir," remarked the police-constable. "I don't

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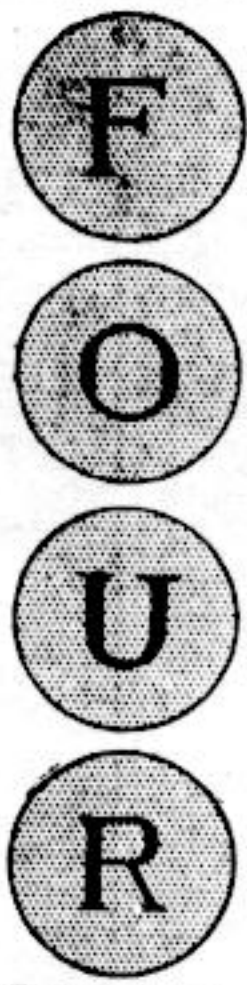
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remember having seen one like it before. It ain't the sort o' jack-knife usually carried by any racecourse tough."

"No," agreed Locke. Then raising his eyes he inquired: "By the way, is the man who threw this weapon in custody?"

Jack Drake, who had been making a few inquiries of his own from another constable, supplied the answer.

"I understand that the chap got away in the confusion, sir," he said. "Some think it was a little chap in shabby clothes who threw it. But no one is quite certain. Anyway, the fellow must have squirmed away through the crowd directly he had done the deed."

"Possibly he had an accomplice or two near him who helped to let him through," commented Ferrers Locke. "Still, there is a possibility that Dodd, the jockey, may be able to throw some light on the motive."

His gaze dropped to the knife again.

"Not much to be learned from that, sir," said the police-constable ruefully.

"Not as much as we could desire," replied Locke. "The knife was made by Broughton & Broughton, of Sheffield. It is of the type which is sent out to such places as the West Coast of Africa for sale to the natives. I should think that the man who owned it was a sailor, or connected with the sea in some way. He is evidently a man of tidy habits, smokes Navy plug, and had a burst liquor flask in his pocket this afternoon."

Not only the policeman, but everyone else standing round looked at the sleuth in surprise.

"Bless my soul, Locke!" exclaimed Sir Digby Graeme. "How the mischief do you figure all that out?"

"Simplicity itself," replied Ferrers Locke, with a smile. "The knife is stamped with the manufacturer's name on the blade. Broughton & Broughton make for export only, and I myself have seen this type of knife for sale in such places as Sierra Leone. There is evidence on the blade that the knife has been used for cutting Navy plug tobacco. Particles of this black kind of tobacco can be clearly seen near the hilt. The handle is damp, and the wood emits an odour of liquor. There is a short bit of white cord tied to the ring at the end of the handle. It is tied with a reef knot such as sailors use. The ends of the cord have been neatly trimmed with scissors, clearly showing that the owner of the weapon is a man of tidy habits."

"Wonderful!" cried Sir Digby, in frank admiration. "Perhaps you would like now to interview Tony Dodd? We have just time to get across the race-track before the next race."

Ferrers Locke handed the knife back to the police-constable, thanking the man for having let him see the article. And, greatly gratified, the limb of the law went off in search of an inspector, whom he astonished with some very remarkable deductions. He forgot to mention that Ferrers Locke had made those selfsame deductions in his hearing a few minutes previously.

Crossing the race-track, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake, in the company of Sir Digby Graeme and Big Bob Benton, the trainer, entered the enclosure. A number of aristocratic friends of the racehorse owner intercepted him with a volley of questions. But Sir Digby shook off these unwelcome inquirers and led the way to the paddock.

Here they found the defeated Starglow, standing listlessly in the charge of a stable hand. Beside the jet-black colt were Tony Dodd, the jockey, and a

portly gentleman whom Ferrers Locke at once recognised as a well-known veterinary surgeon.

"Ah, Pelham," said Sir Digby to the surgeon, "have you followed out the wish I expressed to you in the enclosure and examined the horse?"

"I have, Sir Digby," answered the vet.

"Well, what's the verdict—dope?"

The veterinary surgeon shook his head.

"No," he said decidedly. "This horse has certainly not been doped."

"Then what the dickens was wrong with its running?" said the owner, with a helpless gesture. "Have you no explanation to offer for the colt's extraordinary performance?"

"None, save a very ordinary suggestion. The horse was not fit."

The big, genial-looking trainer of the Graeme string of thoroughbreds drew himself up proudly.

"Are you suggesting, sir, that the colt was not trained properly?"

the owner hastily. "You have my entire confidence, Bob. I am sorry for you more than I am for myself. I know you have taken this to heart very much. After all, a racehorse is not a machine. The colt may have come over queer suddenly for no reason we could discover, and was not in the mood for racing. It was bad luck—bad luck."

"Bad luck for me, too," said Tony Dodd, the jockey. "The Stewards of the club are going to hold an inquiry into the running of Starglow. I know what that means—an inquiry into my riding."

"They cannot possibly bring any accusation against you, Tony," said Sir Digby reassuringly. "Personally, I am satisfied that you rode the colt to the very best advantage. The horse was at fault, not the rider."

"Thank you, Sir Digby," said the jockey. "I couldn't exactly leave the horse and come on to the winning-post by myself. The colt gave me the impression of being out of sorts. There seemed no life about him."



Terrified by the sight of the knife lying on the course, Larrikins swerved violently, and then leaped frenziedly over the rails. "Look out!" shrieked Ferrers Locke. The crowd scattered like chaff before the wind as the racehorse landed amongst them. (See Chapter 1.)

The dignified inquiry made the surgeon look uncomfortable.

"My dear Benson," he said, "you are the last man against whom I should cast aspersions. I am sure you are a perfectly honourable man. Not a slur has ever been cast against your character on or off a racecourse—I realise that. I do not wish to give the impression that I hold the view that Starglow has been improperly trained. But—but are you sure that all your stable hands are to be trusted? None of them could upset the physical condition of the horse without your knowing it, I suppose?"

"I should say it was not at all likely," said the trainer coldly. "Starglow was tried out on the downs this morning under my direct supervision. He gave every satisfaction. Had I even faintly suspected he was not up to form, I should have warned Sir Digby of the fact."

"Tut, tut, of course—of course!" said

Sir Digby turned to Ferrers Locke. "Are there any questions you would like to ask Dodd while he's here?" he asked.

"Yes," said the detective. "You are aware, Dodd, that a knife was thrown from the crowd and fell in front of your horse during the race?"

"Yes. I knew someone had chucked something. I didn't know it was a knife until I came in with the colt and heard the rumours flying about."

"It was a knife heavy enough to have inflicted severe injury upon you or the horse had it reached its mark," said the sleuth. "As one of the leading jockeys, you must have made enemies either through jealousy or some other cause. Has your life ever been threatened?"

"I don't remember any threat against me which I thought seriously of."

"Perhaps you are of that happy disposition which refuses to take things

seriously," said Locke. "There is no enemy then whom you believe capable of throwing a knife at you?"

"No." Tony Dodd paused and wrinkled his brow in thought. "The only chap I know who thoroughly hates me is Larry Symonds. He was a chemist at Chelbourne, where I come from. But he got into monetary difficulties and went wrong. Two or three times he's tried to 'get at' me over the horses. The first time he wanted some secret information about a certain gee. Last time he suggested a shady stunt whereby I was to bring home a favourite second to let another horse win. I threw him out of my house on the back of his neck."

"Then one man has a grudge against you, probably," said Locke, with a light laugh. "Tell me all you can about the appearance and habits of Larry Symonds."

The jockey did so, but there was nothing in the description to suggest that the rogue, Symonds, and the owner of the knife were one and the same person.

After a few further questions to Tony Dodd, the detective addressed himself to Sir Digby Graeme.

"You told me a while back, Sir Digby," he remarked, "of a rather curious incident which occurred in connection with this other colt of yours—Larrikins."

"You mean the reason Larrikins is so scared of cold steel?" said the racehorse owner.

"Yes. You stated that a madman had slashed the horse on the face. What was the name of the man, and what became of him?"

"The fellow's name was Ralph Crane. He was a good-for-nothing individual who tried to subsist on the charity of soft-hearted racegoers. But he was as mad as a march hare. After the attempt to put Larrikins out of action, he was committed to a mental asylum, where he died last winter."

"H'm! Well, he was not the man who threw the knife to-day, needless to say. Now, Sir Digby, Drake and I will be moving. There is a matter connected with this knife-throwing mystery which we should attend to without delay. Nothing like striking while the iron's hot."

"Well, you've hit on one or two clues to go upon," said Sir Digby Graeme. "Good luck to you both! If you can, run up to dine with me this evening. My place is the Manor, just to the north of Epsom. Dinner will be served at eight."

Having taken leave of the racing men, Ferrers Locke ushered Drake through the throng in the paddock towards the exit from the course.

"We're seeing no more racing to-day, then, sir?" said Drake.

"No; it is business now, my boy. We must pay a visit to all the inns in the neighbourhood. In all probability, if the miscreant who threw the knife at Star-glow was not pursued, he will feel safe and make for some hostelry for a pick-me-up. If he is one of a regular gang of crooks that infests the Turf, he will avoid the railway-stations for a while. For he will know that the stations are the first places to be watched by the force after an outrage of any kind."

That Locke's reasoning was along the right lines was proved later in the afternoon. The pair visited several inns and made a few cautious inquiries. Then, just as they were fearing that they were doomed to disappointment, they entered the Saddle Inn, and saw a small ginger-

headed man engaged in conversation with the genial proprietor of the place. The little man had his hand behind him under his coat-tail. And the eagle eye of Locke was quick to notice that the lining of the coat bore a distinct stain.

The detective and Jack Drake, who had drawn their hats well over their foreheads, sauntered in and took up a position near the ginger-headed fellow. Locke gave the innkeeper an order and lighted a cigarette.

The little man glanced up at the newcomers with shifty, rat-like eyes.

"Hallo, mates!" he said. "Have you heard the result o' the four-thirty?"

Locke shook his head.

"I was a-going to ask you the same question, mate," he remarked.

"Huh!" grunted the ginger-haired fellow. "I dunno what's been going on. I ain't been up on the Downs."

But there was something in the tone of the remark which told the experienced sleuth that the man was lying.

A pause ensued, and Ferrers Locke paid for his order. Then he glanced down at the man near his side, and said:

"Say, mate, what you been a-doin' to your coat? You've got it all spotted like at the back."

The ginger-haired fellow scowled.

"Yes, hang it!" he snarled. "I had a glass flask wi' something good in it in my pocket. Must ha' bumped against the barrier at the station this afternoon, 'cause the beastly flask broke. Nigh on half a pint o' good liquor went west."

The detective concealed the satisfaction he felt.

"Bad luck!" was his comment. "Maybe you'll have something wi' me?"

The man readily accepted, and became more friendly disposed. But he had glib answers ready for one or two cleverly-put questions with which the sleuth attempted to trap him.

Presently Locke tossed away his cigarette and drew out his pipe. He felt in one pocket after another, and gave an exclamation of dismay.

"Crumbs! Ain't that unlucky?" he said. "Run clean out o' baccy! Can you spare a pipeful, mate?"

Feeling in more genial humour, the little man at once drew out a pouch of tobacco, and handed it over. One glance told Locke that it was cut Navy plug!

"Just what I like!" exclaimed the sleuth, as he filled up. "I've been a sailor myself in my time."

This remark "drew" the little man at once. And for some minutes the two discussed ships and ports and especially the West Coast of Africa, which the donor of the tobacco appeared to know well.

It was during this interesting chat that the potboy of the inn approached and touched the ginger-haired man on the arm. The latter looked relieved, thrust out his hand, and the lad pushed a folded piece of paper into it.

"Well, I must be trottin' along now," said "Ginger" to Locke and Drake. "So-long, you chaps!"

"Who's that fellow?" Locke asked the innkeeper when the little man had gone outside. "Seems a decent sort o' fellow."

"Never seen him before," replied the proprietor. "Perhaps my boy knows."

But the potboy denied all knowledge of the ginger-haired man. He stated that while he had been sweeping outside the inn a smartly-dressed man with race-glasses had asked him to take a note to the "red-haired chap" inside the hostelry.

"Did you look at the note, youngster?" asked Locke.

The boy flushed up.

"There was nothin' in it," he said—"only some numbers."

Locke did not delay longer. He and Drake left the inn and, sighting their quarry, slouched along well in the rear of him.

"By Jove, we're in luck!" whispered the sleuth. "Ginger's the chap who threw the knife at the Epsom meeting to-day, or I'll eat my best Sunday hat! But he's probably only one of a gang. We must proceed cautiously in dealing with him."

"We've hardly sufficient evidence to have him arrested yet, anyway, sir."

"No," returned Locke thoughtfully.

"Besides, he may be of more use to us at large than behind prison bars. Remember, Sir Digby wishes us to investigate other curious affairs apart from that knife-throwing incident. Ginger may or may not have been connected with them. It's clear, though, that our job at present is to shadow this fellow and try to find out more about him and his mates."

"Evidently he was only waiting at the Saddle Inn for that note," said Drake. "He must have been expecting one. You noticed how he pushed off after the boy had handed it over to him?"

"Yes; and if the lad was speaking the truth, the message is in cipher," replied Locke.

Chatting quietly together about the case, the two followed the man to Tattenham Corner Station. Here the fellow booked a ticket to Croydon. And, unnoticed by him, Locke, who had overheard, bought a couple of tickets to the same station.

The shadowers watched their quarry take a seat in a third-class carriage in the train. Locke motioned to Drake to get into the compartment just behind. He himself walked a few steps forward along the platform.

Glancing into the next compartment, the detective saw that the little ginger-haired man had ensconced himself in a corner seat on the platform side. The fellow's back was half-turned, and he had taken the piece of paper from his pocket, and was glancing over the note.

Peering through the window, Ferrers Locke was able to see easily what was on the paper. But he was none the wiser for the survey. For the paper merely bore the following:

"27272. 19451. 20366. 97349. 73776.—L."

As Locke slipped away and took his seat in the compartment with Jack Drake, there was no doubt in his mind about one thing. The note which the suspected man had received was in cipher. Whether Locke would be able to get the note and solve the cipher was another matter.

The train made a quick run through to Croydon. Here the man with the conspicuous hair alighted. With the consummate skill born of long practice, Locke and Drake shadowed him. Not once did they make a slip which afforded their man any suspicion that he was being tracked.



A universal favourite—"Tiger" Ferrers Locke!

The man made one or two calls at hostelrys, and at an S.P. and O. establishment he partook of a cheap but hearty meal of sausages, with potato and onion trimmings. After that he proceeded direct to a dingy apartment-house in a back street.

Locke and Drake came to a halt near the house.

"Wait here, Drake, my boy," said the detective.

The youngster nodded, and thrusting his hands deep into his pockets, lounged against a wall. Locke, with stealthy steps, entered the apartment-house and went upstairs. He was just in time to see the ginger-haired man enter a room and close the door. The sound of a key turning in a rusty lock told the sleuth that the fellow had shut himself in.

He was just creeping down to the street again when a stout woman, with her sleeves rolled up, came out of a door on the first landing and accosted him.

"What d'you want 'ere?" she asked suspiciously.

Locke was quite equal to the occasion. "Say, missus," he said, "does a bloke named Joe Smith live in this 'ere building?"

"No, he don't!" snapped the woman.

Jerking his thumb over his shoulder towards the door on the second floor, where he had seen the ginger-haired man disappear, the detective said:

"Thought my pal Joe lived on the second floor 'ere. Sure that ain't his room, missus?"

"No, it ain't. The bloke known as Seaman Crane lives there—the 'Rat' some call him—a good-for-nothin' worm as ever was!"

A sudden thought flashed through Locke's brain. Crane! He had heard that name before.

"Seaman Crane!" he echoed. "Not the brother o' poor old Ralph Crane, surely?"

"Dunno!" returned the woman curtly. "An' what's more, I don't want to know nothin' more about Seaman Crane neither."

She turned away, and Locke, seeing that there was nothing more to be learnt from her, made his way out into the street and rejoined Drake.

"My boy," he said, "I am convinced we are on the right track now. The man we have been shadowing is named Crane. And, if you remember, it was a Ralph Crane who injured Larrikins by slashing the foal with a knife."

"Phew!" whistled Drake. "That's jolly interesting. Perhaps it was Ginger Crane who threw that knife to-day. If so, he must have madness in his blood, too."

"I shouldn't be surprised," returned Locke. "The fellow is known as Seaman Crane, or the Rat. We will hang about this neighbourhood for a time. If he comes out I will shadow him again. You will slip upstairs to the second floor of the apartment-house and enter the door which faces the top of the stairs. Have a look over his gear and see if you can find any trace of a cipher."

A long and tedious wait ensued. But as dusk was giving place to darkness, Crane came out of the house and slouched down the road towards the trams. Immediately Locke set off after him while Jack Drake slipped into the house.

Seaman Crane, known also as the Rat—a nickname that suited him admirably—boarded a tram and proceeded to a better part of Croydon. Entering a

mews, he shinned over the wall of a back garden and approached a small detached villa. Locke, drawing himself up so that he could peer over the wall, saw the fellow slink to the back door and knock. The door was opened, and the man was admitted.

After waiting a few minutes, Ferrers Locke himself shinned over the wall. He saw a light flash on in a room on the first floor at the side of the house. Then someone drew down a green venetian blind.

Close to this side of the villa was an old pear-tree. The detective cautiously made his way to it and climbed into its branches, hoping to get a glimpse into the room.

There was a small chink between two of the lower slats of the blind. Through this Locke was able to obtain a view of a small portion of the room, though not of the inmates. The place, from what he could see of it, appeared to be fitted

Ferrers Locke emitted a hoarse gasp. He threw out his hands to clutch the window-sill, missed it, and went crashing down to earth. Simultaneously with his fall, there was another crash as of splintering glass. The centre of the branch had struck against a cucumber frame, and it was this which had been shattered to fragments.

Voices sounded loudly from the room above, the blind was thrust aside, and the window thrown up. Two heads peered out. But Locke, though badly bruised and shaken by his fall, had squirmed quickly among some rose-bushes and lay perfectly still.

It was a tense moment as the two men gazed down. Had they had an electric torch to shine downwards they must have discerned the shrinking form of the sleuth. As it was, they saw nothing save the fallen branch lying across the cucumber frame.

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up as a chemical laboratory. He could see, among other things, the corner of a small shelf or table, on which stood a large bottle of chemical.

A faint hum of voices filtered through the window. Locke gradually worked his way along a branch and drew nearer to the window-pane.

Suddenly, one of the inmates of the room spoke in a louder tone, and the listening sleuth caught a few of the words which were spoken.

"Not my fault, Larry—this other bizney—with a three-year-old—cert if ever there was. Sabre—lick the bunch."

Needless to say, these odd scraps of conversation were almost as Greek to the listener. But Locke made a further effort to get his ear to the window-pane. He shifted still farther out on the branch. And then there was a terrific crash. The bough of the pear-tree had broken close up by the trunk!

"Wonder how that came to happen, Larry?" muttered the voice of the Rat.

"Must have been the wind," replied the man addressed as Larry. "It's sprung up a bit. I said to the gardener only to-day that that bough looked pretty rotten. He said it was O.K., but he was mistaken. Mighty lucky the branch wasn't blown down when someone was under it."

With an inward sigh of relief, the detective heard the window being closed and the blind rattle back into its place. But he waited fully a minute before moving. Then, stealthily, he took his departure from the garden.

Knowing that all chance of overhearing the conversation between the men in the house had been lost, he took a note of the building. It was called Acacia Villa, and inquiries in the neighbourhood elicited the fact that it was occupied by a man named John Grant.

A pleasant surprise in store! Full announcements next Monday!

As Ferrers Locke hastened back to the apartment-house where he had left Drake, his face, though thoughtful, wore an expression of satisfaction.

"If John Grant and Larry Symonds, the enemy of the jockey Dodd, aren't one and the same person I'll eat my boots!" he muttered. "And now to learn what Drake has discovered!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Big Race at Lingfield!

"HALLO, my boy!" Ferrers Locke breathed those words as he entered the room of Seaman Crane on the second floor of the apartment-house in Croydon. They were addressed to his young assistant, who was poring over a book on a plain deal table.

Not having seen the boy outside the house, the sleuth had entered.

As Drake looked round with a start, Locke spoke again in the same quiet tone.

"Well, what luck?"

The boy pointed to a piece of paper which he had straightened out, and at a dictionary which lay open in front of him.

"I found the cipher message crumpled up on the floor," he said. "And after a search I raked out this dictionary with a number marked in pencil against all the commonly used words. I've looked up the cipher numbers in the book, but I can't make any sense out of the message. I was just going to try twisting 'em round."

The two set to work and tried other combinations of numbers. After two or three attempts they hit upon the solution thus: Beneath the numerals 1234567890 they set down 5678901234. The first number in the cipher message—272727—thus became 616161. This number looked up in the dictionary proved to be the word "Come." The deciphered message read, "Come to me ten to-night.—L."

"Eureka!" said Locke. "Crane went to Acacia Villa at ten, and he met Larry Symonds, who obviously was the sender of the message. Now put the paper and the dictionary where you found them, and let us get out of this."

Not anxious to be found in the house should the Rat return, Locke hurriedly ushered Drake out.

"We'll get back to Baker Street for a night's rest now," said the sleuth when they were outside. "I suspect strongly that Symonds and Crane are but two members of a gang of Turf crooks. We must collect more evidence against them and try to discover their accomplices. You must return to that apartment-house, my boy, as opportunity serves, and copy out the numbers of that dictionary. This can be done in a similar kind of dictionary, which you must buy. With the key of the crooks' cipher in our hands we may learn much more."

On the following day Ferrers Locke called alone on Sir Digby Graeme at the Manor, Epsom, to report progress. When the sleuth was shown into the library Sir Digby was speaking at the telephone. But the racehorse owner hung up the receiver even as Locke made to withdraw.

"Ah, good-day, my dear Locke!" said Sir Digby. "I've had a little business to attend to, but I'm free now. Benton just rung up to say he's got my latest

purchase down at the stables—a three-year-old called Sabre. I bought him from Gus Welton, the Newmarket owner, and I expect the colt will pick me up some prize-money before the season's over."

"Sabre!"

Locke muttered the word as though to himself. A recollection of the few words he had overheard at Acacia Villa on the previous night flashed through his brain. But he did not speak his thoughts to his host. Instead he said:

"Well, Sir Digby, what was the result of the Stewards' decision on the running of Starglow yesterday? I've not had time to look at the paper; I had a whole mass of correspondence to attend to this morning."

"The vet gave evidence that the horse had not been doped," replied the owner. "And Bob Benton and one of my stable hands named Noakes definitely stated the horse had been trained to the hour. Consequently the Stewards' inquiry ended in smoke, so to speak."

The conversation drifted into other channels. Locke mentioned one or two

For some days afterwards the detective was not able to give the Turf case his undivided attention, owing to a complicated case of national importance that he had to undertake. But he felt that no harm would be done by his lying low for the time being. No less than half a dozen times, however, did Jack Drake visit the apartment-house in Croydon. And the boy, seizing favourable opportunities when the Rat was away from his lair, made a complete copy of the numbered dictionary.

It was on the first day of the Lingfield meeting that Jack Drake accomplished another good piece of work. Creeping into the house at Croydon in the absence of Symonds, he copied some numbers off a blotting-pad. Returning to Baker Street, he deciphered these and showed the result to his chief. The message ran:

"All correct. Both horses died last night."

"What the thump does that mean?" said the boy.

Locke furrowed his brow and rang up Sir Digby. After a brief conversation he hung up the receiver.

"No horses have died in the Graeme stables, at any rate," said the sleuth. "Another possibility occurs to me. I am going to make a search of Symonds' house if I can. Maybe some clue to the mystery can be found there."

The detective spent the afternoon and evening in the vicinity of Acacia Villa. But although the first day's racing was on at Lingfield, Crane did not leave the house.

Temporarily frustrated in his object, Locke returned to Croydon on the following day with Drake to keep watch. But it was not until nearly noon that Symonds, dressed for the races, left the villa, and the coast was clear for the search.

Leaving Drake on guard outside, the detective entered the house by the back, and remained in it for upwards of an hour. When he came out again his face was flushed with excitement.

"By Jove, my boy!" he cried. "We must get to Lingfield with all speed! No time for talk now. Let's get a taxi!"

They had no difficulty in finding a taxi, and were soon bowling rapidly along to the racecourse.

The park was thronged with people. The dull murmuring of the great crowd was cut by the raucous cries of the bookmakers. An air of intense expectancy was over the course.

Locke bought tickets for the enclosure, and he and his assistant passed through the turnstiles.

"Keep your eyes skinned for Sir Digby, my boy!" said the sleuth.

Twice he paused, once to glance over the course and once to look at the board of a bookmaker who displayed a conspicuous sign:

"JERRY TOMS. THE OLD FIRM." The horses were going to the five furlongs' starting-gate for the Great Foal Plate. The colours of the rival jockeys could be discerned easily as the horses trotted over the smooth, green turf. Larrikins was a starter, and his price, according to the bookie's board, was fifty-to-one against.

Locke and Drake looked feverishly about them. But it was difficult to pick out individuals among the fashionable crowd in the enclosure.

Suddenly the tinkling of a bell came to their ears. An excited murmur ran through the throng of spectators.



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of the discoveries he had made, and his reason for not making any immediate move for the arrest of Seaman Crane.

"By the way," said Ferrers Locke, "I should like a list of the engagements of your horses. When will your colours next be seen on a course?"

"At Lingfield Park, on the second day of the meeting, Larrikins is entered for the Great Foal Plate." Sir Digby gave a chuckle. "It seems to me," he went on, "that the colt has as great a fear of passing a winning post as he has of seeing a bared knife. However, I shall let him run. It will be exercise for him. But I advise you not to put any of your savings on him, Locke. He's got no more chance of winning than a steam-roller has of beating the road-racing records."

Locke laughed at the old sportsman's good-humoured advice, and accepted an offer to see Sabre in the stables. The colt was fawn in colour with a white "shirt-front." It was a likely-looking animal. After a further brief conversation with the owner, Locke took his departure.

"They're off!"

The race for the Great Foal Plate had started!

The horses, a mere patch of brown moving over the green turf, and surmounted by little splashes of colour, were sweeping down the course. Locke and Drake stood still and watched.

Closer and closer came the runners. The shouts, which at first could be heard from farther down the course, died away. An ominous silence took their place. Then exclamations of surprise arose in the enclosure.

"Larrikins! Larrikins leading!"

There was no doubt about it. The despised fifty-to-one chance, with Sir Digby's second-string jockey up, was ahead of the field. The jade-green and white hoops were easily to be distinguished. And what was more, the colt, lying close to the rails, appeared to be increasing his advantage.

Then in a muffled thunder of hoofs the thoroughbreds swept by the enclosure. The Graeme colt was running as he had never been seen to run before. The supple muscles fairly rippled beneath his glossy chestnut coat. And at the speed of an express train Larrikins shot past the post an easy winner by full two lengths!

"Jumping Jimmy!"

A quite respectable-looking old sportsman standing near the detective took off his white top hat as he made that remark in a flabbergasted tone. He had lost heavily—but he was in good company. Hardly a person present among the sportsmen had backed the colt.

A few cheers that arose died away. The numbers went up in dead silence. It was unbelievable! Amazing!

As a general movement was made for the paddock, Locke and Drake again set off on their search for the owner of Larrikins. And it was in the paddock a few minutes later that they ran him to earth.

"Why, hallo, Locke!" cried Sir Digby. "This is an unexpected pleasure. I suppose you've come to congratulate me—"

"I've come to bring you an unpleasant surprise, Sir Digby," whispered Locke in a tense tone. "You must immediately notify the Stewards and forfeit the race won by your horse."

Sir Digby gazed at the sleuth open-mouthed.

"Forfeit the race!" he echoed. "Forfeit the race which Larrikins has just won?"

"No," answered Locke. "Forfeit the race just won by Sabre!"

Big Bob Benton, the genial-looking

trainer of the Graeme string of horses, who had come up, overheard the remark. His face was a picture of surprise and consternation, as was that of Sir Digby himself.

"Good heavens, Mr. Locke!" he gasped. "What the dickens are you saying? You must be mad!"

"Indeed you must, Locke!" said the owner.

"I'm perfectly sane, Sir Digby," said the detective. "You have been the victim of an unscrupulous gang of rogues. I can lay my hands on the ring-leader at any time."

Big Bob Benton gazed about him as though expecting to see the someone nearby on whom the detective had designs.

"Who?" he asked.

The reply astounded him.

"You!" said Ferrers Locke.

Next instant a pair of handcuffs snapped over the trainer's wrists. Benton struggled and Sir Digby protested, but all to no purpose.

Locke beckoned to a policeman and whispered a few instructions, and the racehorse trainer was led away.

Locke walked up to the colt which had come in after winning the Plate and flashed the blade of a jackknife under its eyes. But the horse did not even flinch.

"You see, Sir Digby," said the sleuth, "this colt is not Larrikins. If he were, he would have jumped out of his skin almost at the sight of that knife."

Sir Digby Graeme wiped his brow with a silken handkerchief.

"Bless my soul!" he muttered. "I feel all knocked in a heap. What does it all mean?"

"It means," said Locke, "that, unknown to you, arrangements were made that the good three-year-old Sabre which you purchased recently should run in this race in the place of the poor two-year-old Larrikins. A clever chemist and utter scoundrel named Larry Symonds dyed Sabre a chestnut colour. And he did his job so well that not even you were able to detect the fraud."

"But—but how could he get at the horse?"

"The rogue Benton fixed that. He told the stable-hand, Noakes, to let Symonds into the stables on the night before last, and the job was done then."

He briefly told the owner about the cipher messages, and mentioned the one "All correct. Both horses died to-night."

"You remember my ringing you up and inquiring whether any of your

horses had died, Sir Digby. When I found there was nothing amiss in that way, another solution struck me. Apparently, Symonds had told a rascal named Crane, who was a tool of the bigger rogues, to send a message to Benton in confirmation that the job was done. Crane, an illiterate man, set down the number for the word 'died' instead of 'dyed.'"

"I see. And Benton and Symonds, I suppose, have quietly backed Larrikins to win a big sum to-day? I myself had nothing on the horse."

"I expected that," said Locke. "Knowing that Sabre would beat any two-year-old if it ran under the name of Larrikins, the rascals doubtless backed the horse heavily. They stood to win large sums of money. But, of course, the horse will be disqualified, and they'll get nothing—except a term in gaol."

Sir Digby stroked his chin thoughtfully as he moved towards the Stewards' room.

"Then I suppose Benton was responsible for the bad running of Starglow at Epsom?"

"He was. I have found evidence of that and of other matters in books which Larry Symonds had in his house. Benton tired Starglow out at exercise so that the horse was not fit. He and Symonds had their money on Calabash, the rival horse."

"And the knife-throwing incident?"

"Seaman Crane, commonly known as the Rat, was put up to that by Symonds, who hated Tony Dodd. Symonds told the Rat to injure the jockey. And Crane, being half mad, adopted that method of accomplishing the feat. The gang were concerned both in that matter of the fire in your stables which took place some time ago, and also in the horse-doping incident."

Later that afternoon, from information supplied by Locke, the police arrested Larry Symonds, Seaman Crane, and Noakes, the stable-hand. The two first-named and Benton each received long terms of imprisonment, whilst Noakes got off with a lighter sentence. Thus, thanks to Ferrers Locke and his able young assistant, one of the most unscrupulous and dangerous gangs which had ever infested the Turf were brought to book at last!

THE END.

(Another superb story of the World's Wonder Detective next Monday, entitled "The Invisible Knife!" by Owen Conquest. This must rank as one of Ferrers Locke's most complicated and bewildering cases. Order your copy early, boys!)

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