

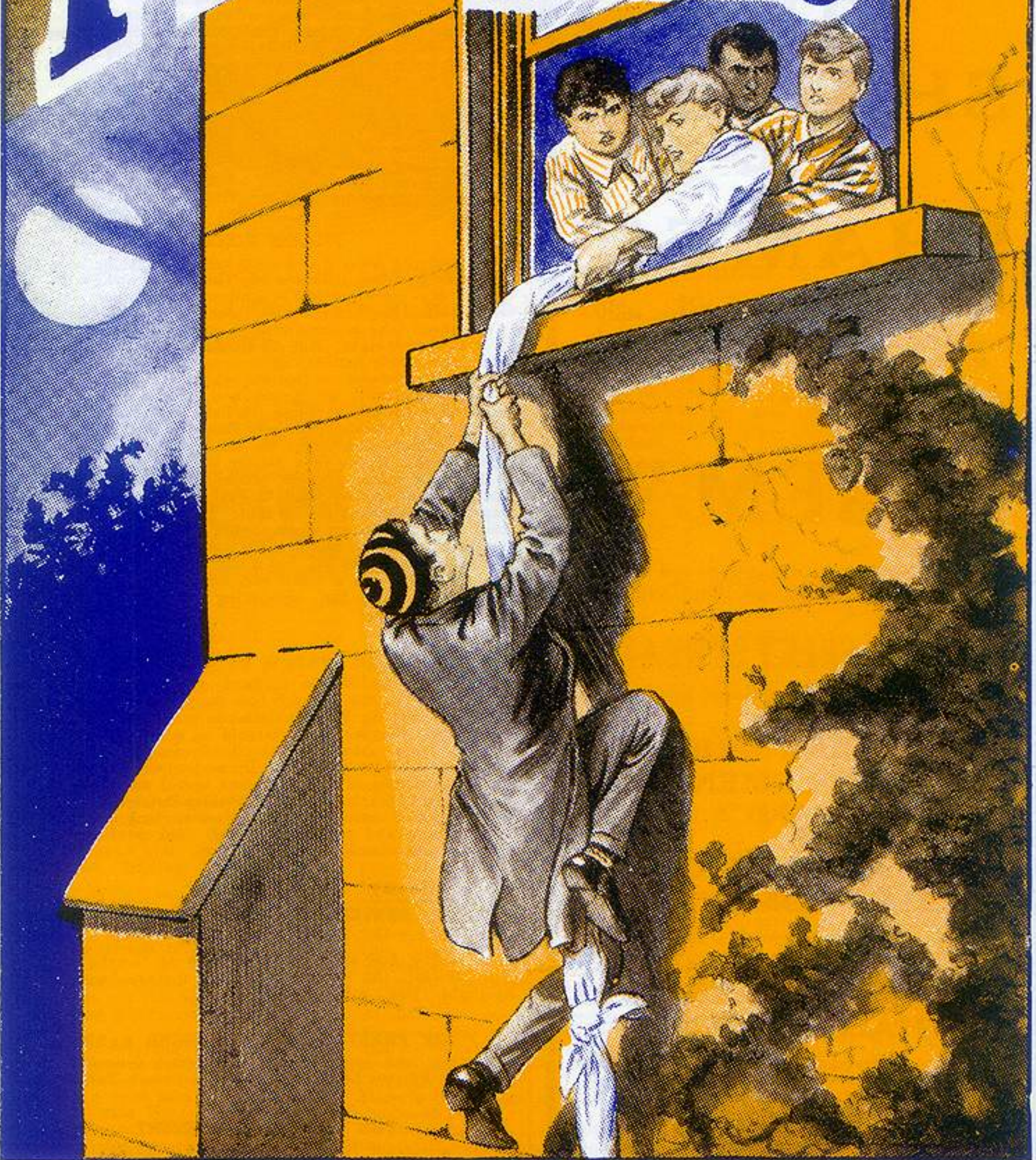
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No. 954. Vol. XXIX. Week Ending May 22nd, 1926.

# The Magnet 2<sup>d</sup>

EVERY MONDAY.

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(An unusual incident described in the extra-long school story of the Chums of Greyfriars, inside.)



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#### THE SUMMER SERIES.

**M**AGNETITES are beginning to get anxious about the Indian summer series of yarns I promised them a short time back, to judge by their letters. Well, take comfort, my chums, in the knowledge that these stories are in course of preparation. I have seen the opening yarn, and, my word, it's a "good 'un!" But you, doubtless, are on tenterhooks to know when this special series is due to start. Well, Magnetites can look forward to the first story in this series the first week in July. After all, July is not so very far ahead now, and, personally, I think it a far better plan for these stories to "kick off" in the warm weather—I hope I'm not too optimistic—for they will deal, as you already know, with India. And in India they do have a bit of warmth—lucky people! I'm not saying any more about these stories at this juncture, but I think the foregoing will satisfy my numerous correspondents who have been good enough to write me on the subject.

#### PILLION RIDING.

A Magnetite from Wandsworth tells me that he is in the habit of joy-riding with his boy chum who owns a motor-cycle. My correspondent's mother, it appears, is very nervous when her boy is out on these joy-riding trips, as she is convinced that pillion-riding is extremely dangerous. I think mother is right. But my chum, who is, without doubt, very fond of his mother, ignores her repeated appeals to give up this dangerous pastime, and now, feeling perhaps a little remorseful, he writes and asks me whether he should give up pillion-riding. I have very little to say in answer. My correspondent says that he would do anything for his mother—and yet in the next breath he admits disregarding her wishes in a matter which, were a census to be taken of public opinion, would show her to be right. The dangers on the road to-day are manifold, and it behoves all people to realise that. But the point I want to drive home is that my chum should be the first to save his mother any anxiety, and it is his duty as a son to stop this pillion-riding. After all, for a son who claims to be fond of his mother, it's a small sacrifice. Think it over, my chum, and hush the whispering of that little voice we call "self."

#### "THE SHADOW OF SHAME!"

This story, by Martin Clifford, which appears in the current issue of the "Gem," is a story in a thousand, and I strongly urge my MAGNET chums to read it. Cousin Ethel and George Figgins figure largely in it, and, having said that, the story—showing Martin Clifford at his best—needs little further recommendation from me. Gemites, too, are given the chance of bagging some useful money prizes in the simple "Scarlet Streak" Picture-Puzzle Competition which is based upon the thrilling serial story now appearing in our grand companion paper. Ask your newsagent for this week's issue, chums!

#### For Next Monday.

#### "BUNTER'S TREASURE TROVE!"

By Frank Richards.

A rattling fine story of the Chums of Greyfriars with Billy Bunter, the world's best mirth-maker, bang in the limelight. Don't miss it, boys!

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Another long instalment of this grand detective story, featuring Ferrers Locke and his boy assistant, Jack Drake.

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Also a special four-page supplement devoted to King Cricket, in which Cecil Parkin, of Lancs and England, and Maurice Tate, of Sussex and England, contribute signed articles. Mind you order this bumper issue of the MAGNET in good time. Cheerio, chums,

YOUR EDITOR.



**UNDER BUNTER'S THUMB!** That's the unenviable position of James Walker, a prefect at Greyfriars, who suffers Bunter's overtures of "friendship" with a fortitude that amazes the whole school!



A Magnificent New Long Complete Story of the Chums of Greyfriars, with James Walker of the Sixth in the leading role. By FRANK RICHARDS.

#### THE FIRST CHAPTER.

##### A Mystery!

"WHARTON!"  
James Walker, Sixth-Former and prefect of Greyfriars, called out the name sharply.

It was a bright, sunny morning, and Harry Wharton & Co. were sauntering in the quad in the interval between morning lessons and dinner.

As he heard his name called, Harry Wharton stopped and glanced round. His face set rather grimly as he recognised Walker.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Walker again! Better stop, Harry; only mind he doesn't box your giddy ears again, old chap!"

Harry Wharton flushed a little. It was certainly not many hours since Walker had boxed his ears—hard. And as he had done so in public, and as Harry considered the act more than unjustified, it was not at all a pleasant remembrance. Harry, in fact, felt his ear tingling yet.

But he stopped and faced Walker as the prefect came up to him. Walker nodded curtly to Bob Cherry and the others; it was hint enough, and they strolled on, leaving Harry with the senior.

"Well, Walker?" asked Harry curtly.

Walker's face was a trifle pale, but it flushed as the junior spoke. He eyed the junior almost feverishly.

"Look here, kid," said Walker, his tone almost nervous. "It's about what you said to me this morning. I'm—I'm sorry I lost my temper, Wharton!"

"Oh!"  
"I know your motive in speaking as you did was a good one," went on Walker. "You—you thought you were doing me a good turn by warning me."

"I did," said Harry quietly.

"I see it now, Wharton. But—well, it isn't usual for a senior to take advice from a junior. It made me waxy, and—and I was furious with you for defying me yesterday and going to Popper's Island."

Harry was silent. He eyed the prefect steadily. He had not yet admitted having been on Popper's Island, but he knew the prefect was well aware he had been there. And as the island was strictly out of bounds, he also knew that it was Walker's duty to report them.

Yet Walker had done nothing of the kind, nor had he shown any sign of going to do so. And though Harry, naturally enough, had no desire to be reported, he could not help feeling a certain amount of contempt for the fellow who put duty behind him.

At first the Famous Five had been amazed at his neglect to report them, but now they knew he had good reasons of his own for not doing so.

As a matter of fact, the Famous Five had seen Walker himself on the island late the previous evening. It was no wonder Walker did not dare to report them for an offence that he himself had been guilty of committing. If it became known, Walker was likely to get it far "hotter" than the juniors from the authorities.

Walker's attitude now proved that he knew that only too well.

"That's not all," went on Walker, his eyes glinting. "I was mad because you followed me last night—spied on me. Can you expect a fellow to be anything else but mad?"

"We did not spy on you, nor did we follow you," said Harry. "We were on the island yesterday afternoon, but we didn't follow you last night. In the afternoon we were chased by gamekeepers. I fell, and was knocked silly. At the same time I dropped my wallet. We went back late last night to get it, and we found it. You can believe me or not, just as you like, Walker!"

Walker nodded; he did believe. Harry's frank gaze and quiet manner convinced him.

"I—I'll accept that, Wharton," he said. "But—but there's something else I want to speak to you about. This morning you—you mentioned a man named Simmons—a man wanted by the police. You asked me if I knew he was

the man you saw me speaking to on the island last night."

"Yes."

"You told me what you suspected for my own sake, I know," said Walker thickly. "But—"

"I warned you because I knew that Bunter suspects," said Harry. "He saw the man on the island, and he saw you pack foodstuffs and things in a bag and start up river with them."

"What!"

"It's true," said Harry, eyeing the senior's startled face curiously. "He suspects, and you know what a tattler the fat worm is. That was one reason I warned you. Another reason was that I could not believe it possible that you were aiding and hiding Simmons knowingly. I could not believe it possible that you, of all people, would aid that scoundrel."

"Simmons is not a scoundrel!" said Walker savagely.

"Not a scoundrel!" echoed Harry blankly. "Then—then it isn't true, after all? We heard that he'd bolted with a big sum of money—money belonging to your aunt which she'd placed with his firm—a firm of solicitors in Melford."

"How do you kids know that?"

"Bunter told us first, and we heard Mr. Quelch talking about it afterwards this morning. The Head and Mr. Quelch—and everybody else, for that matter—are upset about it, because Simmons is a Greyfriars old boy. But if it isn't true—"

"It—it is true," said Walker, after a pause. "But why should you fellows think it is that man on the island, Wharton?"

"Because we found him hiding there; he looked like a chap hiding from justice; he was unshaven and bedraggled," said Harry. "We also found a knife with his initials on it—'L. S.'" said Harry grimly.

"You did?" breathed Walker.

"Yes. He pinched our grub, and we

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chased him. We found the knife near the picnic-basket."

"He—he paid for it; left money for it," said Walker.

"I know. Bunter collared the money," said Harry, smiling grimly. "The man also saved me from being collared by the keepers—hid me in the cave where he was hiding. But if he robbed your aunt and left her penniless, then he's a rotten scoundrel, for all that, Walker!"

"And you think he's Simmons just because of the knife, and because he happened to be on that island?" breathed Walker.

"Yes—at least, we suspect it. So does Bunter."

Walker's eyes glimmered.

"Then you're wrong, Wharton!" he snapped, his face flushing crimson as he spoke. "You silly little fools! As if that is any proof! Rubbish! The man you saw is not Simmons—I can assure you of that, kid."

"Then who is he?" asked Harry.

"I can soon tell you that," said Walker calmly, though his face was still red. "His name is—is Jackson, and he's a bookmaker. I—I met him there because I daren't meet him anywhere else. So you can put that idea out of your silly little heads right away, Wharton!"

Wharton said nothing. He knew the senior was lying.

"He's a bookmaker down on his luck," went on Walker, eyeing Harry's face narrowly. "He—he's making me help him by threatening to give me away for betting with him. Now you understand, and you can explain to your pals and Bunter."

Wharton was still silent.

"But I don't want it to get out, of course," said Walker. "You kids will oblige me by keeping your mouths shut. It will pay you to do so, too! I've just heard that old Popper is coming over to complain about yesterday. He's been on the phone to the Head this morning. Now I don't intend to report you. But if it comes out it will be your own fault. Got that?"

Harry nodded. His lip curled, and Walker flushed as he noted it. He seemed about to say something, and then he turned abruptly and walked away, clenching his fists as he went.

"Hallo—hallo!" grinned Bob Cherry, as Harry caught his chums up a moment later. "Well, he didn't kick up rusty again, then? We were ready to pile in if he did!"

"No," said Harry, frowning. "Listen, you chaps!"

And he told his chums what Walker had said. His chums whistled.

"Well, the rotten fibber!" breathed Frank Nugent. "That chap was no more a bookie than old Gosling is! It's all rot! That chap was Simmons, or I'm a Dutchman!"

"I think so, too," said Harry quietly. "It's amazing! But we'll do as he wants and say nothing, chaps. After all, we've no proof, really; it's only suspicions."

"And we don't want to ask for a flogging!" grinned Bob.

"No, we don't," said Harry, smiling grimly. "But it's queer—thundering queer! It beats me hollow!"

And the chums of the Remove strolled on with puzzled faces. It certainly was queer to say the least of it. If the strange man on the island was not Simmons, then who was he? And what connection had he with Walker, of the Sixth? And if he was Simmons?

If he was, then it was all the more bewildering. If he was the scoundrel who had robbed an old lady of her money, rendering her penniless, then why was Walker aiding and shielding him? If the old lady had been no relation of Walker's, then it would have been amazing enough, certainly. But the victim was Walker's own aunt.

It certainly was queer, to say the least of it.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Alarming for Bunter!

JAMES WALKER strode across the quad with a black and moody brow after leaving Harry Wharton. He felt bitterly ashamed and humiliated. Walker was a fellow who ranked high in the school—who could both play well and work well when he liked. That he was a close chum of Loder's—the black sheep of the Sixth—was not to his credit, nor the unpleasant fact that he sometimes "kicked over the traces," and joined Loder in his shady ways. Yet, though somewhat unreliable, and one whose standard of honour was not as high as it might be, he was not the fellow to shirk duty without feeling ashamed.

And he knew he had shirked it. He knew he ought to have reported the juniors who had transgressed, and he knew they knew it. Moreover, he had lied to Wharton, and he knew Wharton knew that he had lied.

It was no wonder he had felt ashamed and humiliated.

The fact that he had good reasons for shirking it—had the juniors only known it!—did not comfort him much, either. He knew that fellows of such sterling worth as Wingate or Gwynne would have either done their duty at all costs or have resigned their posts as prefects.

He hadn't the courage or wish to do either.

As he strode along his eye caught sight of a fat figure just emerging from the tuckshop under the ancient elms. It was Billy Bunter, and at sight of him Walker's face darkened still more, and he gritted his teeth.

He felt certain that the Famous Five would keep silent regarding the events of the night before; he did not feel the same certainty in regard to Billy Bunter by any means.

With a sudden impulse, he crossed to meet the fat youth.

"Bunter!"

Billy Bunter looked up, and became suddenly apprehensive at sight of the prefect.

"Y-yes, Walker!"

"You broke bounds yesterday, Bunter," said Walker, in a grinding voice. "You went to Popper's Island."

"Nunno! Not—not at all, Walker," said Bunter. "I never went near the place, Walker. If Wharton and those beasts said I did—"

"That's enough!" snapped the prefect. "I want no lies, Bunter! I know you went there. You know what this means, Bunter? Sir Hilton Popper is coming this morning to see the Head. He knows some Greyfriars fellows were on the island yesterday, but he doesn't know who they are. If I report you, it means a flogging. You understand?"

"Ow! Oh dear! But—but I say, Walker, it wasn't me. I never went near the island at—"

"But I'm not going to report the matter," went on Walker grimly, ignoring Bunter's protests. "I'm going to give you kids another chance."

"Oh!"

"It depends on yourself, Bunter, whether it comes out or not," said Walker. "Unless you want to be flogged, you'll keep that fat trap of yours shut about going yesterday! Understand, Bunter? You didn't go to the island yesterday, and you didn't see anything or anyone there?"

"Oh! Oh, no, of course not, Walker!" gasped Bunter, staring.

"That's not all, Bunter. I've heard that you fancy you saw me take a boat out last night and go up-stream. It was a mistake, Bunter. I never went out last night. If I hear you've repeated that lie to a soul, Bunter, I'll not only change my mind and report you, but I'll give you the licking of your life! Got that?"

"Oh, y-e-e-es, Walker!"

"Right! You can cut!"

And with that Walker strode away, his eyes glinting. Bunter watched him go blankly, and then a crafty grin spread over the fat junior's face.

He realised only too well what it must have cost the lofty senior to speak to him in such terms, and how it must have made him inwardly fume with humiliation. He also realised something more—that Walker was not thinking of him, Bunter, but of himself. He was in mortal dread of Bunter mentioning what he had seen the afternoon and night before.

"M-mum-my hat!" breathed Bunter. "I thought as much! I knew he daren't report us because he broke bounds himself, of course. But that ain't all. He's in a funk in case we tell about that chap Simmons—if it was that villain!"

And Bunter rolled on, his eyes glimmering behind his spectacles. Bunter had been very much puzzled about the whole affair as had the Famous Five. But he was certain of one thing now, and that was that Walker was in a "blue funk" lest they told of what they knew.

The thought made Billy Bunter grin. He had already been wondering dimly how he could make capital out of the strange affair. Now the unscrupulous young rascal fancied he saw a strange way—a clear way.

To have a fellow like Walker—a prefect and a fellow with a fair supply of cash—under his thumb was very pleasing to Billy Bunter.

Bunter felt thankful—exceedingly thankful—that he had not yet mentioned the matter to anyone save the Famous Five—who already knew more than he did.

He almost wished he had asked Walker to change a mythical postal-order on the spot, and he very nearly ran after the senior for that purpose. But on second thoughts he decided to leave it over for a time—business matters like that could wait. In the meantime he could be thinking out his plan of action.

"Hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter now, chaps!"

Bob Cherry's cheery voice interrupted the fat junior's musings at that point. Bunter blinked up to find the Famous Five before him.

"We're just looking for you, Bunter," said Harry Wharton. "You've been speaking to Walker?"

Bunter grinned.

"Just a little chat," he said. "Walker and I understand each other, you know. We're going to be great pals."

Harry Wharton looked at him hard. "You fat ass! What do you mean?" he snapped.

"Nothing. Nothing at all," grinned Bunter. "I say, you fellows, I hope you



don't propose to go tittle-tattling to every Dick, Tom, and Harry about yesterday?"

"Oh, my hat!"

Such a remark, coming from Billy Bunter, was the limit.

"You—you fat ass! Think we're gossiping, prying busybodies like you, Bunter!" snorted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"That's just what we want to see you about, Bunter," said Harry Wharton sharply. "Look here! If you don't want a flogging, and if you don't want to cause serious trouble for Walker, you'll say nothing about yesterday—whether you suspect anything or not."

"Really, Wharton," said Bunter loftily. "When I want your advice I'll ask for it, you know. I'm not likely to give my pal Walker away."

"Your whatter?"

"My pal Walker," said Bunter. "Matter of fact, I was going to warn you chaps to keep your mouths shut about it myself. You're such thoughtless chaps, you know. Walker knows he can rely on me. I told him I'd speak to you fellows about it."

"You—you fat fibber—"

"The best thing you fellows can do," said Bunter, shaking his head, "is to forget all about it. I've spoken to Walker, and he's promised he won't report us. Just keep mum and you'll be all right. Mind that!"

And Bunter was rolling loftily away when Harry Wharton grasped him by a fat ear and yanked him back.

"You fat ass!" breathed the captain of the Remove. "This is not a funny matter if you think it is. Have you told anyone about it yet?"

"Ow! No, you beast! I tell you—"

"That's a good thing for you, Bunter," said Harry, with relief. "Look here, you fat idiot; the matter is serious. We've no real proof that Simmons is the fellow we met on the island, and if you go gassing about it, it may lead to endless trouble."

"Not for us," said Bunter.

"For Walker!"

"I know that," said Bunter, grinning despite his burning ear. "It may mean the sack, and even prison for Walker. I've thought of that. It's jolly serious hiding a fugitive from justice, you know. Com-compounding a felony, ain't it? Walker knows it, too. He's in a blue funk lest we split."

"Shut up, you fat worm!" hissed Harry, looking sharply about him. "Don't I tell you that we're only guessing that fellow was Simmons."

"You are, but I'm not," grinned Bunter. "He, he, he! I say, isn't it queer that Walker's backing him up when it's Walker's own aunt the rotter's robbed?"

"Oh, dry up!"

"It's jolly queer, though!" grinned Billy Bunter—"queer to a fellow who can't see through it, I mean. A fellow like me with brains can, though."

"You—you can?" gasped Harry.

"Yes," said Bunter, lowering his voice and winking knowingly. "What about that one thousand quids—that's the amount the old girl's lost, ain't it? Well, supposing Walker's made it up to go halves with Simmons? What?"

Billy Bunter looked triumphantly at the juniors. They blinked at him. Evidently Bunter was quite serious in making that extraordinary suggestion. It was a suggestion that certainly would explain Walker's amazing conduct—if he was hiding Simmons. But it was a suggestion that did not appeal to the Famous Five.

They blinked at him, and while they blinked Bunter rattled on, lowering his voice still more.

"That's the game, you bet!" he grinned. "Well, that's where we come in, you fellows. You chaps have only got to promise to keep mum and leave the rest to me. We've got Walker in a cleft stick. He knows it. He's in a blue funk in case we gas about it. Well, think what it means having a chap like Walker under our giddy thumbs!—a perfect, and all that. Besides, he'll be rolling in cash soon if he is going halves with that rotter. Now, my idea's this. You fellows just keep mum and back me up, and we'll go fifty-fifty with all I can squeeze out of him. See? What a'you fellows think about it?"

And Bunter gave a fat chuckle and

The elderly gentleman sat down violently on the gravel, and Bunter did likewise. Both of them gasped—and gasped!

"Oh, my hat!" choked Harry Wharton. "Now for cyclones! It's Sir Hilton Popper!"

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Bunter's Idea!

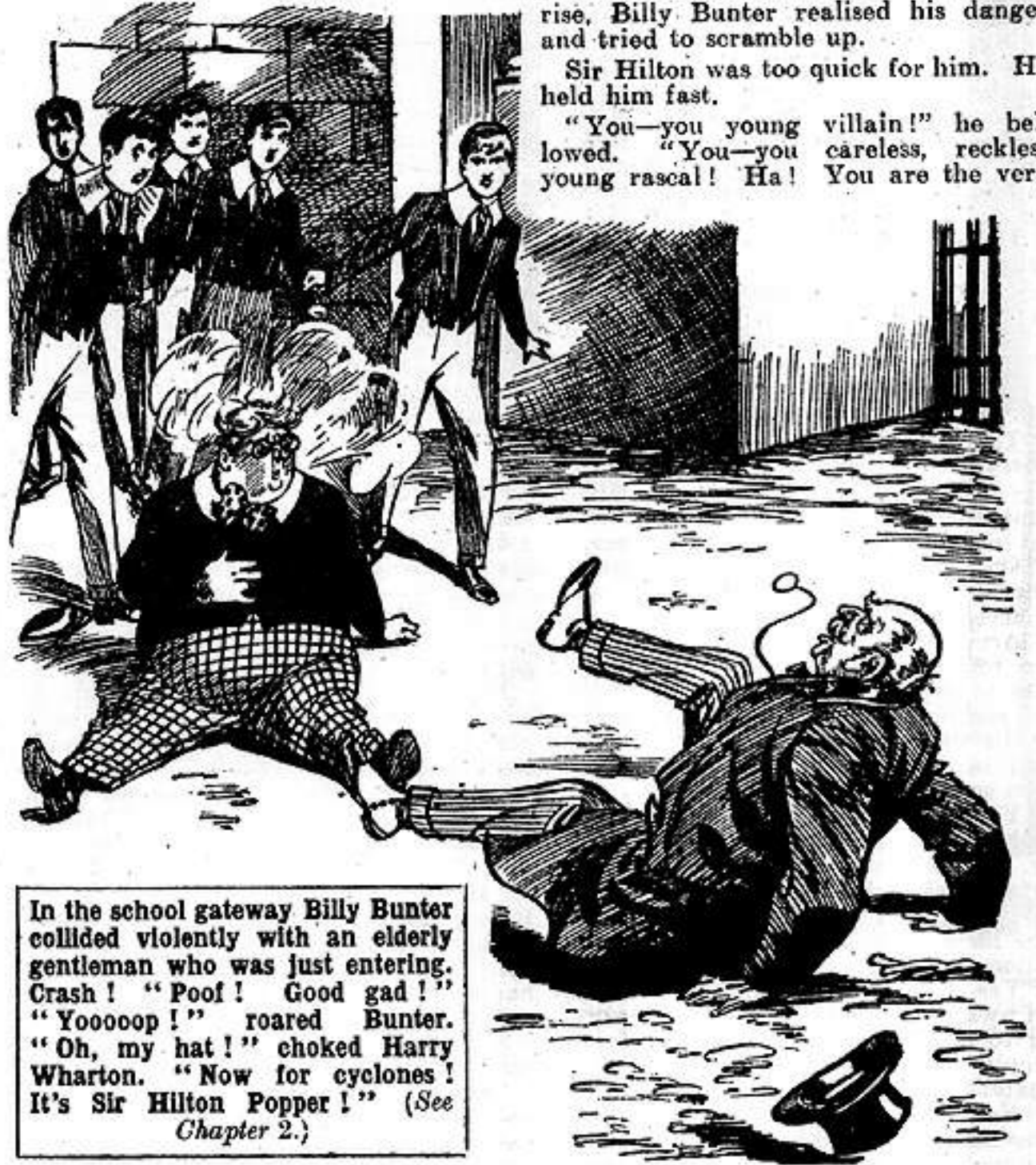
IT was. With his eyeglass dangling forlornly at the end of its silk cord, and with a face red as a beetroot, the old baronet sat and gasped and glared at Billy Bunter.

Billy Bunter glared back at him—he was far too terrified to think of doing anything else at the moment.

But as Sir Hilton made a move to rise, Billy Bunter realised his danger and tried to scramble up.

Sir Hilton was too quick for him. He held him fast.

"You—you young villain!" he bel-lowed. "You—you careless, reckless young rascal! Ha! You are the very



In the school gateway Billy Bunter collided violently with an elderly gentleman who was just entering. Crash! "Poof! Good gad!" "Yooooop!" roared Bunter. "Oh, my hat!" choked Harry Wharton. "Now for cyclones! It's Sir Hilton Popper!" (See Chapter 2.)

waited for the Famous Five to tell him what they thought of his great wheeze.

They did not keep him waiting long—nor did they tell him in words.

They just went for the egregious Billy Bunter, and Bunter howled fiendishly as five boots clumped home on the rear of his podgy anatomy.

"Yarooooooh!" roared Bunter. "Ow-ow! Oh crumbs!"

He leaped madly to escape, and then as Bob Cherry leaped after him, he bolted for his life, roaring. Bob followed for a dozen yards and then halted. But Billy Bunter did not halt. Still under the impression that Bob was at his heels, he fairly flew for the gates, and in the old gateway he collided violently with an elderly gentleman who was just entering.

Crash!

"Poof! Good gad!"

"Yooooop!" roared Bunter.

young jackanapes I have come to Greyfriars about!"

This was not very cheering news for Billy Bunter.

He fairly trembled in the grasp of the irate Sir Hilton.

"Gad!" panted Sir Hilton. "Adding insult to injury! The very young rascal! My man expressly stated that one of the young—groooh!—villains was abnormally fat! It is—gerrgh!—unlikely there can be two such—ow-yow!—disgustingly fat persons at Greyfriars!"

"Ow!" groaned Bunter. "Ow! Oh dear!"

Wingate, who had witnessed the "accident," came hurrying up, and with his aid the angry baronet staggered to his feet—still retaining a fierce grip on the unfortunate Billy Bunter.

He shook Bunter until the fat junior's eyes almost started from his head, and



his big spectacles fairly rattled on his podgy nose.

"Not content with trespassing on my property," bellowed Sir Hilton, his breathing a little better now; "but you have added insult to injury by assaulting me. Ha! Gad! This—this is beyond all reason! You shall suffer severely for this, my fine fellow!"

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter. "Ow-cw! Leggo, sir! Sto-op sh-shaking m-mum-me! You—you'll have my glasses off in a—yow-wow!—minute! If they fall and break—"

"Sir Hilton—"

Mr. Quelch came hurrying up. He stared at the haughty, arrogant baronet with the fat, squirming Billy Bunter in his grasp.

"Sir Hilton," he gasped, "what—what ever is the matter?"

"Matter?" bellowed Sir Hilton. "I have been grossly assaulted by this disgustingly fat young villain!"

"A-assaulted!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch. "Impossible, Sir Hilton!"

"Nonsense!" returned Sir Hilton, in a voice that made the Remove master jump. "It is not only possible, but it's the fact, let me tell you, Quelch. I had just left my car and was walking through the gates, when this—this overfed young jackanapes charged into me and sent me to the ground violently. Ha!"

"Bless my soul! Bunter—"

"Ow! Oh dear! It was an accident, sir!" groaned Bunter. "These fellows will tell you it was an accident, sir."

"That's quite true, sir," said Bob Cherry, stepping forward ruefully. "It—it was really more my fault than Bunter's. I—I was chasing Bunter, and he crashed into Sir Hilton Popper."

"Oh!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, in great relief. "I am exceedingly glad it was an accident! You—"

"Accident!" gasped Sir Hilton, his face red with rage. "Is that all you have to say in the matter, Quelch? It was reckless and dangerous carelessness on the part of these young rascals. I shall insist upon Dr. Locke punishing them severely!"

"You may safely leave the matter in my hands to deal with, Sir Hilton," said Mr. Quelch, rather tartly. "The boys certainly should not have been rushing about in such a dangerous manner. You have come to see Mr. Locke, Sir Hilton—"

"Yes, I have, Quelch. Doubtless you are aware that I telephoned this morning to say that I would come to lay a complaint against certain of your pupils?"

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Quelch, compressing his lips slightly. He knew Sir Hilton had phoned, and he had guessed it was to lay a complaint, because Sir Hilton's visits always were for that. Sir Hilton was not very welcome at Greyfriars for that very reason. But he was a governor of the school, and he had to be treated with due care and consideration.

"That complaint," snorted Sir Hilton, glowering at the terrified Billy Bunter, "concerns this young rascal among others as yet unknown."

"I regret to hear that, Sir Hilton. What has Bunter been doing?"

"He has been trespassing on my property—on my island, sir!" snorted the fussy old baronet. "My keepers and I myself chased the young rascals, but they escaped me by a trick. Jackson, one of my keepers, however, caught a glimpse of them, and he stated that one of the young villains was exceedingly fat and that he wore spectacles."

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"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch, staring at Bunter.

Bunter was about the last junior he would have suspected of daring to trespass upon Sir Hilton Popper's property. It was not a safe thing to do at any time.

"It—it ain't true, sir!" gasped Bunter feebly. "I haven't been near the island, sir—I wouldn't! I—I respect Sir Hilton too much to trespass on his property, sir!"

"Huh!" grunted Sir Hilton. He glowered at Bunter. "Such talk will not go down with me, you young rascal! My man says the boy he saw was abnormally fat, and wore spectacles. There is no other boy at Greyfriars so disgustingly fat—at least, I hope not, by gad!"

"Oh dear! Oh, y-e-es, sir!" stammered Bunter. "There's my brother Sammy. And Johnny Bull is fat—perhaps it was him your man saw, sir?" added Bunter hopefully.

Johnny Bull snorted, and there was a chuckle. Mr. Quelch suppressed it with a look.

"Nonsense, Bunter!" he snapped. "The description certainly does fit this boy, Sir Hilton," he went on grimly. "However, if you wish to see Dr. Locke in regard to the matter, he will doubtless call upon Bunter to explain his movements yesterday afternoon. Bunter!"

"Yessir!" groaned Bunter dismally.

"You will go indoors and remain there in case Dr. Locke sends for you," said the Remove master. "Perhaps you will be good enough to accompany me, Sir Hilton."

Grunt!

Mr. Quelch started for the School House, and Sir Hilton strode after him, glaring round at the crowd, many of whom were grinning. There was little respect for the crusty, irritable old gentleman at Greyfriars.

Bunter blinked after them dismally.

"Oh crumbs!" he groaned. "I say, you fellows, I'm done for unless you chaps back me up!"

"Eh? How the thump can we back you up, Bunter?" said Harry Wharton grimly. "We're in the soup ourselves, I can see that."

"It was all your faults!" groaned Bunter, almost tearfully. "If you chaps hadn't insisted upon me accompanying you yesterday this wouldn't have happened."

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Blessed if I knew we insisted upon you coming, old fat man!"

"Of course you did. Look here, you've got to do something. I shall have to prove a—an arabi."

"A—a whatter?"

"An arabi!" groaned Bunter. "Prove I was somewhere else at the time, you know. I tell you what—you tell the Head I was with you chaps at Courtfield all the afternoon, Wharton. That's it," said Bunter, brightening up. "I'll tell the Head that, and you chaps back me up."

"You fat ass! Think we're going to tell fibs?" snorted Johnny Bull. "I suppose you mean an alibi, you fat ass!"

"Well, if it all comes out it'll be your own faults," said Bunter, glaring round him. "I'm not going to be the only one to suffer, I can tell you! You chaps are in it as well as me."

"Well, if we're in it we're in it," said Harry Wharton. "But we're not telling any fibs, either to save you or ourselves, Bunter. Understand that!"

"Beasts!"

"You'd better get indoors!" said Harry grimly. "No good risking

making the Head or Quelch waxy by keeping 'em waiting, Bunter."

"On dear! I say, you fellows, don't be beasts, you know. What's the good of getting a flogging when you can get out of it so easily? You might back a fellow up."

"Not by telling fibs!" said Harry flatly.

"Oh dear! Beasts!"

Bunter rolled dismally towards the School House. He was undoubtedly "for it," unless he could prove an alibi. And he mentally vowed that the Famous Five should also be "for it." He saw no reason why they should get off scott free while he suffered.

And Harry Wharton & Co. watched him go with glum faces and dismal thoughts. They were feeling just as unhappy as Bunter. They knew only too well that Billy Bunter would drag them into it either by accident or design.

But Bunter wasn't "bowled out" yet.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### Walker Agrees!

"MUM-MY hat!" Billy Bunter paused, his eyes gleaming behind his large, round spectacles.

It was just as Bunter was about to enter his own study that the idea occurred to him. It was not a praiseworthy idea by any means—Bunter's rarely were. But it was a brain-wave, and it brought a gleam of hope to the dismal face of the fat junior.

Wharton & Co. had refused point-blank to save him. They had chosen the risk of a flogging rather than tell a "fib" to save him and themselves. But there was someone else who wouldn't, and that someone was James Walker of the Sixth.

Walker would never dare to refuse, and he was not likely to have any scruples about telling the truth. Hadn't he told both the Famous Five and himself awful fibs only that morning?

Bunter almost grinned at the thought.

Certainly it was a risky proceeding to tackle a senior and a prefect for such a purpose. But Bunter had already made up his mind to tackle Walker in more risky ways.

Walker would never dare to refuse. Walker was in a cleft stick. For his own sake he would willingly agree to back him up. And Walker was a prefect; his word would be accepted without question—by Mr. Quelch and the Head, at all events. And they were the only two that mattered. Blow Sir Hilton Popper!

That was how Bunter looked at it.

He rolled along to the Sixth Form passage quite cheerfully, and knocked at Walker's door. Walker was in, and he greeted Bunter with a black look as the fat youth rolled in. Loder also was in the study, and he promptly pointed to the door as he sighted Bunter.

"Outside!" he snapped. "Outside, you little sweep!"

"Oh, really, Loder!" said Bunter, blinking at Walker. "I've come along to see Walker. It—it's on private business, and Walker knows what it is."

Having said that, Billy Bunter rather held his breath, and prepared to leap for the door, if necessary. It was the first test for Walker, and he would soon know if Walker would "toe the line" or not.

Walker did.

As Loder made an angry stride towards the fat junior, Walker stepped forward, his face a trifle flushed.



"Hold on, Loder!" he stammered. "It—it's all right; I do want to see the kid. Leave him with me for a bit, old chap."

Loder stared at his chum.

"You've got business with that little sweep—a fag out of the Remove!" he gasped. "Great pip! I was just going to boot him out for his confounded cheek."

"Well, don't!" said Walker curtly. "It's nothing really, old chap—nothing that really matters. But—but I'd rather see him alone, if you don't mind."

"Good gad!"

Loder stared at Walker, and he stared at Bunter. Then he grinned.

"Great Scott! Is Bunter making a hook, or what?" he remarked, with heavy sarcasm.

Walker bit his lip hard.

"Don't be a fool!" he snapped angrily. "Dash it all, what business is it of yours, Loder? Clear out, and let the kid say what he's come to say."

"Good gad! Certainly, old chap. If you prefer his charming society to mine, I'm sure I don't mind."

With that Loder strolled out, grinning. The thought that Walker of the Sixth had "business" with Billy Bunter seemed to entertain him highly.

Walker closed the door after him, and regarded Billy Bunter savagely.

"Well?" he snapped. "What is it, Bunter?"

Bunter's heart failed him a little, but he stood his ground.

"It—it's like this, Walker," he said dismally, "I'm for it over yesterday."

"What—what do you mean, Bunter?"

"I was seen on the island yesterday," groaned Bunter. "Old Popper's here now, and he says one of the keepers spotted me. He swears I was the chap. It—it means a flogging for me, Walker."

Walker drew in his breath.

"Well," he said, his lip curling, "what's that got to do with me? What have you come to me for, you cheeky little sweep?"

"Well, I shall be flogged or licked, at least," said Bunter, his eyes glinting. "I thought you might help a chap, Walker. You could easily say I was fagging for you yesterday, or that you sent me somewhere—prove an—an alibi, you know."

Walker blinked at him as if he could scarcely believe his ears.

"You—you impudent little rat!" he gasped at last.

"Oh, really, Walker!" said Bunter. "You've no need to talk like that. I'm really doing you a good turn by giving you the chance to save me from a licking. If I'm taken before the Head, I might easily let something out that—Here, leggo! Oh crumbs! Yarrooogh!"

Bunter's remarks ended in a yell as Walker, his face flushed with sudden fury, grasped him and shook him savagely. To be talked to like that by a Removite—and a fellow like Bunter—was too much for the prefect.

"You—you cheeky, impudent little worm!" he hissed. "I'll see if you'll threaten me, by gad!"

Shake, shake, shake, shake!

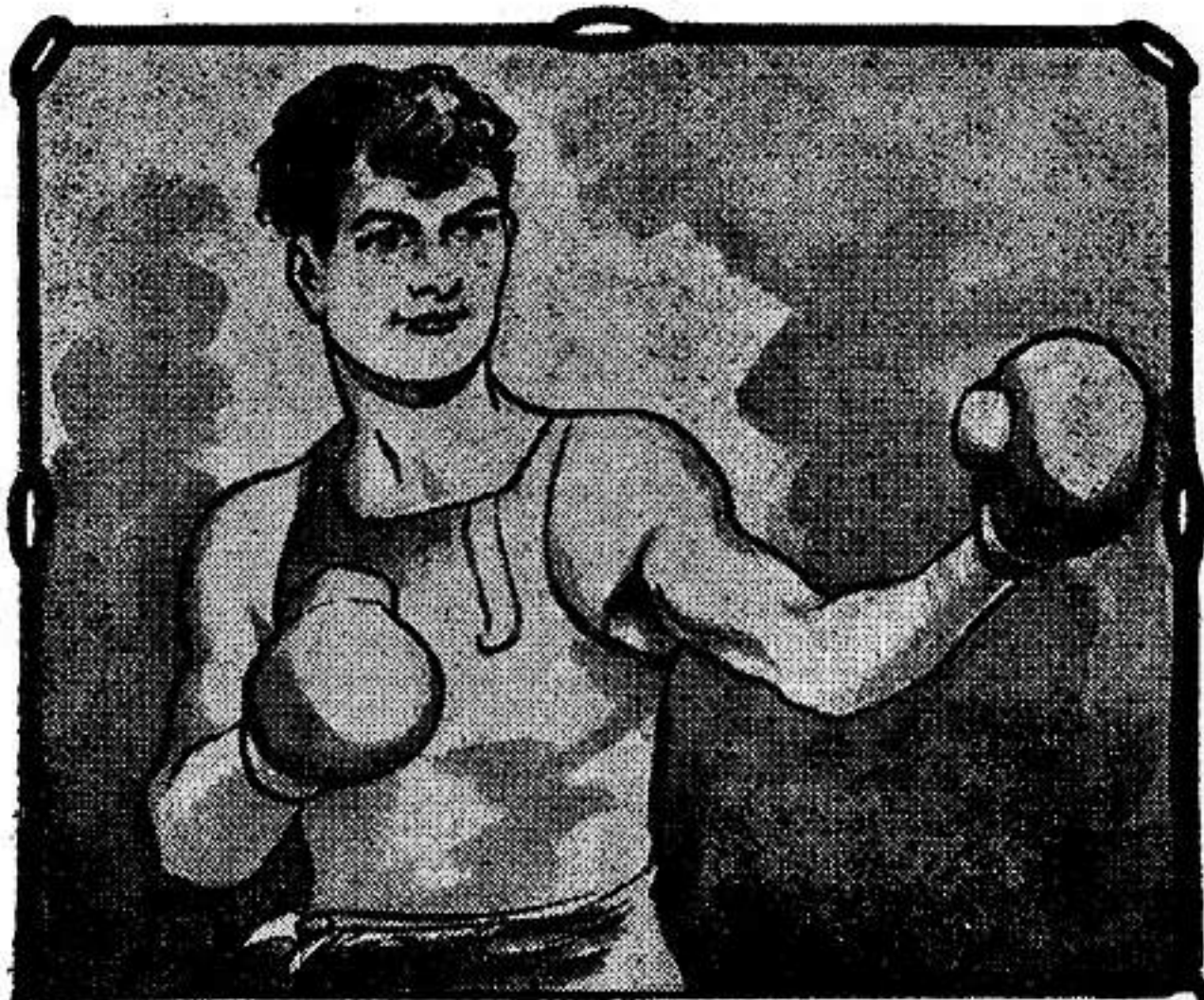
"Wow-wow! Oh crumbs! I say, I'll tell—Yow! Stoppit! Stop shaking me, you beast! Yoooop! Help!" roared Bunter.

In the prefect's powerful grasp Bunter shook like a great fat jelly. But his yells were far from being shaky.

"Yow! Stoppit, I tell you! Lemme go, Walker! Help! All right," roared Bunter furiously. "I'll tell everybody! Yow! I'll tell everybody about Simmons, and about you hiding him! Yoooop! Here's Loder again. I'll tell him. Yow-wow!"

## "MAGNET" PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 34.—Richard Russell (of the Remove).



Regarded once upon a time as a coward by practically all his form fellows, but now able to hold his own against all comers. A real good sort and a consistent supporter of the Remove skipper, Wharton. Thanks to the coaching of a professional boxing trainer, Russell fairly "found his feet," and on one occasion—in the enforced absence of Bob Cherry—he represented the junior section of Greyfriars in the Public Schools Competition at Aldershot, where he won honour for his school. A very staunch friend, as is shown by the fact that he once sent the whole school to Coventry rather than desert Donald Ogilvy, when the Scot was in heavy disgrace. A good sportsman, a good scholar, and a member of the Amateur Dramatic Society. "Digs" in Study No. 3 in the Remove.

Walker stopped shaking the fat junior abruptly. The door had opened and Loder's grinning face looked in. Bunter sat down as he was released, with a thump and another howl.

"Hallo! That how you treat your business acquaintances, Walker, old chap?" he inquired.

Walker's face flushed red. But he looked far more alarmed than angry now. Quite suddenly he had realised what Bunter's threats meant, and the danger he was running.

"Get out!" he hissed, glaring at his chum. "Can't you clear, and mind your own dashed business, Loder? Get out!"

He jumped forward and kicked the door shut almost in Loder's face. Then he turned to Bunter, who had not dared to get up.

"Get up, Bunter!" he breathed, striving to control his rage. "Stop that row, for goodness' sake, you fat ass! Look here. Tell me again what you were saying just—just now. You say that Sir Hilton Popper knows you were on the island yesterday, and that he's with the Head now?"

Bunter groaned and got to his feet. But as he noted Walker's face he forgot his aches and he chuckled inwardly. If any fellow's face showed fear Walker's did.

"It—it's true, Walker!" he gasped, his eyes gleaming. "Old Popper's keeper

spotted me and described me. Unless I can prove I was somewhere else, I'm in the soup."

"And if you are in the soup," said Walker thickly, "you mean to drag other people into it, too. Is that what you mean, Bunter?"

"Not at all," said Bunter. "But you—you know what the Head is, Walker. He—he worms everything out of a chap. I might easily let something out and get—get Wharton and those chaps into trouble. And—I might mention you, by accident, you know. That is, unless I could prove I wasn't there."

"I see," said Walker; and he did see. The covert threat in Bunter's words was only too clear. "And—and you want me to swear you were with me?"

"Yes; that's it, Walker!" said Bunter eagerly. "You'd be safe, and we'd all be safe then. See?"

Walker nodded.

"But I was on the cricket field most of the afternoon," he said, trying to speak carelessly. "I expect we can work it, Bunter. I wouldn't like to see you licked just for that."

"Oh, no," said Bunter with a smirk. "I'm sure you wouldn't, Walker, old chap!"

Walker bit his lip, but he decided to ignore the "old chap."



"You'd better say I sent you to Courtfield, Bunter," he said. "I sent you to fetch my new cricket blazer from Jones', the outfitters. If the worst comes to the worst and the Head makes inquiries, I can easily square the chap there to play up. I happen to know him well. Understand?"

Bunter grinned.

"Yes, old chap. Then it's all right if I tell the Head that?"

"Yes, yes!"

"You'll really back me up, old fellow?"

Walker almost lost control of himself again at the familiar "old fellow," but—luckily for Bunter—he did not quite.

"Yes, I'll back you up, Bunter," he said. "Now clear out! And—and mind—no more of this sort of thing, Bunter! I can stand a bit, but—don't go too far."

Bunter nodded to show he did understand. Unfortunately, the fat youth never did know when he was going "too far." He was feeling more confident now, and fairly sure of his ground.

"Certainly, Walker, old fellow," he said. "I quite understand. There—there happens to be another little matter I came about, though, old chap."

"Well?"

"I happen to be rather hard-up," said Bunter, eyeing his victim narrowly. "I was expecting a postal-order this morning, but it hasn't turned up. It's made it rather awkward for me financially. An awful nuisance, you know! I was wondering if you could cash it for me—in advance, you know."

"Why, you—you—"

"It's only for five bob," explained Bunter carelessly. "I'll hand it you the moment it comes in the morning, old fellow. Mind you, it's only a little loan, and I shall insist upon repaying it—when the postal-order arrives."

Walker's eyes were glinting now.

"You—you little rotter!" he hissed. "You—you blackmailing little cad!"

"Oh, really, Walker!" said Bunter indignantly. "That's a rotten thing to call a chap. If you call me that again I shall go to Wingate and make a strong protest."

"Get out!" breathed Walker, controlling himself with a mighty effort. "Get out, you little sweep, before I hoof you out!"

"Oh, all right!" grunted Bunter. "Now I come to think of it, I ought to see Wingate in any case. The fact is, I'm worried about that chap on the island, Walker. If he is that chap Simmons, then it's a chap's plain duty to report that he's there. One owes it as a good citizen to aid justice, you know!"

"You—you think so, Bunter?"

"Certainly! Some fellows," said Bunter loftily, "don't know what their duty is. They don't even realise that they're risking imprisonment by aiding and abetting a fugitive from justice. I hope I know what my duty is, though. I think I'll ask Wingate's advice about it. He'll know what to do, won't he, Walker? Well, I'll be off. I want to catch him before dinner, old chap."

And Bunter was rolling to the door when Walker spoke.

"Stop!" he said hoarsely. "Hold on, Bunter!"

"Certainly, old chap."

Walker took a handful of change from his pocket. His hand was shaking with fury. But he picked out two half-crowns and handed them to Bunter.

"Now get out!" he breathed.

"Thanks, Walker, old chap," said Bunter, placing the coins in his pocket with a fat smirk. "Mind, this is only  
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a loan. I shall insist upon repaying the loan in the morning—if my postal-order comes. You won't forget the other matter, will you?"

"No. I won't forget, Bunter."

"Good man!" said Bunter cheerily.

And he rolled out, giving Walker a cheery nod as he did so. In the passage outside he met Wingate.

"Hallo! Here you are, Bunter," he grunted. "Come along—Head's study at once!"

"Certainly, Wingate!"

Bunter rolled after Wingate quite coolly. In the corridor outside the Head's door five juniors were hanging about. They were the Famous Five, and they eyed Bunter glumly. Bunter gave them a cheery nod, and passed into the Head's study after Wingate. He left the Famous Five staring. Bunter didn't at all look like a fellow who was "for it," and they were amazed.

Inside the Head's study, however, Billy Bunter, although outwardly calm, did not feel at all calm. With the Head was Mr. Quelch and Sir Hilton Popper, and all eyes turned upon him as he rolled in.

"Bunter," said Dr. Locke severely. "I wish you to tell me where you were yesterday afternoon between the hours of two and five?"

"Oh, yes, sir," said Bunter. "I was in Courtfield, sir."

"You—you were in Courtfield, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir. Walker sent me to Jones' for his new cricket blazer."

"Bless my soul! Then you did not go up the river, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Huh! Can you prove that, boy?" snorted Sir Hilton.

"The matter can very easily be proved, Sir Hilton," said the Head a trifle stiffly. "Wingate, will you kindly ask Walker to come here for a moment?"

"Yes, sir."

Wingate quitted the room, and when he returned a few moments later Walker of the Sixth was with him. Walker's face was a trifle pale, but he was quite cool and collected.

"You sent for me, sir?"

"Yes, Walker. I merely wish you to substantiate a statement made by Bunter. He states that you sent him into Courtfield yesterday afternoon, Walker."

"That's so, sir. I sent him to Jones' for my cricket blazer, as they had not sent it as promised. The shop was closed, though, and Bunter came back without it," said Walker calmly.

The Head smiled and turned to Sir Hilton, who looked none too pleased.

"It is obvious that your man was mistaken, Sir Hilton," he said, his voice showing his relief. "Walker is a prefect, and you can, of course, accept his statement without question. The boy was undoubtedly not Bunter. I will make inquiries, and should I discover the guilty boys I can assure you that they will receive severe punishment."

"Huh!" Sir Hilton grunted, but in face of Walker's statement he could scarcely do anything else.

"Thank you, Walker; that is all," went on the Head. "Bunter, you may go," he added quite kindly to that fat junior.

And Bunter went, promptly enough. He was grinning when he met the questioning faces of Harry Wharton & Co. in the passage.

"Well?" breathed Harry Wharton.

Bunter chuckled.

"All serene, you fellows," he said cheerily. "I've saved you!"

"Then—then you didn't give us away?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Eh? Why should I give you chaps away?" inquired Bunter. "Certainly not! I hope I'm not the fellow to do a thing like that. I just explained that I never went near the island yesterday, and the Head accepted my statement without further question. It's rather lucky for you chaps that the Head has a high opinion of my truthfulness, isn't it?"

And Bunter rolled away cheerfully. The Famous Five stared after him.

"A—a high opinion of his truthfulness," mumbled Bob Cherry. "Oh, my hat!"

That was all he could say at the moment. And Harry Wharton & Co. went in to dinner feeling quite overcome. Certainly they were greatly relieved that Bunter had "saved" them. But they simply couldn't understand it, for all that.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### Walker Hits Out!

JAMES WALKER sat in an arm-chair in his study, with a black and moody brow. Walker's fag had just gone, after laying the tea, and Walker was expecting a visitor.

Gerald Loder was the visitor, and Walker was wishing he wasn't. Walker was in no mood for visitors just then. But he had asked Loder two days ago, and he couldn't back out now.

It was of Loder Walker was thinking now. He knew that Loder suspected that something was wrong, and he knew his fellow-prefect would try to worm something out of him during tea. Walker had not been himself for two days, and other fellows had noted that—a fact Walker was well aware of.

Though Walker and Loder were chums, there was little real friendship between them. Loder was much too apt to go too far for Walker's liking, and Loder wasn't the fellow to make real friends. Loder's sneers and sarcastic tongue were not likely to make him popular with anyone. Walker would certainly have been a better fellow without Loder's "friendship."

There was a tap at the door, and Loder came in. He nodded smilingly to Walker.

"Cheerio!" he said. "In good time, then! I'm not interfering with any other business interviews, I hope, old chap."

Walker gave him a savage look. He knew Loder was referring to his interview with Bunter at noon, and he knew Loder was curious about it.

"Oh, dry up, Loder!" he said. "I'm fed-up with your rotten sneers and hints. Give it a rest!"

"All serene," grinned Loder, dropping into a chair and lighting a cigarette. "Only it's rather funny, you know—especially in view of that Popper affair."

"What do you mean?" snapped Walker.

"Oh, nothing, my dear man!" said Loder, sending a ring of smoke ceiling-wards. "Only I heard how gallantly you stepped into the breach to save your dear pal Bunter from a licking."

Walker's face went red.

"I wasn't going to—to see the kid licked for nothing, Loder!" he muttered. "It—it was the only thing a fellow could do, you silly fool! The Head sent for me, and I just stated that I had sent Bunter to Courtfield. Nothing in that!"

"Nothing at all," yawned Loder. "Only I happened to be in a dashed punt up-river myself yesterday afternoon, and



I saw Bunter. He was going up-stream with some more Remove fags."

"Oh!" gasped Walker.

"And I saw them coming back," smiled Loder. "Bunter was with them. The Head would be rather interested if he knew that—what?"

Walker said nothing.

"My dear man, what is the game?" asked Loder, eyeing him very curiously. "Are you potty? I thought at first you were cut up about your giddy old aunt's loss. But it's something else, I fancy."

"Hang you! Shut up, Loder! Mind your own confounded affairs, can't you!" scowled Walker.

"Your manners are deteriorating, old chap. Only my little fun, old bean!" yawned Loder. "Gad! You're like a bear with a sore head, these days!"

"Let's have tea!" said Walker abruptly.

The two drew up to the table, and at that moment Billy Bunter rolled in. He smiled cheerily at Walker. That exasperated senior glowered at him. Bunter still smiled.

"Tea ready, Jimmy?" he asked. "I say, I think I'll stay to tea, if you don't mind."

"Good gad!" ejaculated Loder.

He was transfixed with astonishment. For a Lower School boy—and a little "sweep" like Bunter—to address a prefect as "Jimmy," and make such an announcement was the limit.

Walker's eyes glittered with rage. He already had fully realised that Billy Bunter intended to make the most of his knowledge, but he had never dreamed he would go so far as this.

"Get out!" he hissed. "You impudent little scrubby beast! Get out, before I kick you out!"

He pointed at the door. Bunter closed it—staying inside himself. He smiled genially at the two astounded seniors. He felt perfectly safe, and quite confident. Walker had already "toed the line," and he had also placed himself in a far worse position by backing him up over the Popper affair. If it came out that he had been to the island, after all, and not to Courtfield, then Bunter knew he was for a pretty stiff licking. But he also knew that Walker would be booked for something worse to him than a licking. Walker was a prefect, and he had flagrantly ignored his duty, and he had also lied to the Head.

If all came out, it would be a very serious matter indeed for Walker in more ways than one. Bunter knew that, and he felt quite, quite safe in going to any lengths. Bunter felt he was going to enjoy himself. It was always Bunter's little failing that he never knew when he was overdoing a thing.

It was not only the fact that he had a lordly Sixth-Former under his fat thumb that pleased Bunter, nor the satisfactory reflection that in Walker he had a horn of plenty—someone to keep him supplied with unlimited tuck-money. But Walker had kicked Bunter many times and oft, and he had also lined and caned him many times and oft. And Bunter had a certain amount of spite and vengefulness in his complicated make-up. He was resolved to make James Walker pay for those kickings and lickings and linings in more ways than one.

"Oh, really, Walker, old fellow, that's rather thick!" he said indignantly. "After my backing you up like I've done, you know. Many a fellow would refuse to remain friends with a fellow like you, under the circumstances."

"You—you—"

"Of course," went on Bunter, "if you

really wish me to go, I'll go, Walker. I've no doubt Wingate will be glad to see me. I think I'll trot along there now, you know."

And Bunter started for the door, fully expecting Walker to call him back. But before Walker could open his mouth to speak, Loder took a hand in the game.

Bunter certainly had Walker under his thumb, but he hadn't Loder—a little fact Bunter had overlooked.

He discovered it now.

As Bunter turned for the door Loder jumped up from the table, and with one long stride he reached Billy Bunter. Then he took Bunter's fat ear between a finger and thumb and twisted it hard.

"Yoooooop!" squealed Bunter, in dire anguish.

But Loder hadn't finished. Next he lifted his boot and kicked Bunter, not once, but many times.

Kick, kick, kick, kick!

They were hefty kicks, and Bunter's yells rang out far and wide.

"Take that, and that, and that!" gasped Loder. "I'll teach you to talk to prefects like that, you scrubby little beast! If Walker won't deal with you, I will!"

"Yarroooooop!" howled Bunter. "Ow! Oh crikey! Yoop! Stop it! Walker, stop him! Yarrooop! Yow! Oh, help! Stop him, Walker! If you don't, I'll tell—yoop—everything! I'll tell him about—Yoop!"

It was fortunate Loder kicked Bunter again just in that second, or Bunter would doubtless have let something out in his frantic rage and pain.

Walker realised it only too well, and he leaped up and grasped Loder savagely.

"Let him go, Loder!" he snapped furiously. "Dash it all, leave the kid alone!"

"Wha-a-at!"

In sheer astonishment, Loder stopped kicking Bunter, though he did not release him. He blinked at Walker.

"Let him alone!" he repeated. "You mean to say you're going to stand talk like that from this little sweep, Walker? You must be mad—potty, you silly fool! I'm going to teach—"

"Let him go!" snapped Walker, his eyes glinting dangerously. "I'm about fed-up with your dashed interference!"

"Good gad!" said Loder.

"Yes; make him lemme go, Walker!" wailed Bunter. "Make the beast lemme go! Go for him, and kick him out! Don't stand this rotter buttin' in—Yarroooooop!"

Bunter's voice ended in a wild yelp as Loder kicked him again. Such remarks from Bunter were too much for Loder. But as he raised his boot to kick again, Walker grabbed his arm savagely.

"Loder," he hissed, "I don't want to quarrel with you, but if you don't leave this—this kid alone, I shall chip in and stop you!"

"You—you'll what?"

In sheer surprise, Loder released Bunter, and Walker grasped the fat youth and pointed to the door, his eyes burning.

"Get out!" he snapped. "Get out while you're safe, you little fool!"

Had Bunter been wiser, he would have got out quickly then. But Bunter never did the wise thing. Walker was well known to be more than a match for Loder, and Bunter was banking on this now. He had had a severe kicking from Loder, and he was determined Loder should pay for it—at Walker's hands.

"Oh, really, Walker," he gasped, his eyes gleaming vengefully, "I've come

to tea, you know! I'm not going. Make that beast Loder go!"

"Get out!"

"Sha'n't!" said Bunter. "Loder, you beast—Here—Yarrooop!"

It was really too much for Gerald Loder, prefect and Sixth-Former. He made a leap, and, grasping Bunter by the collar, fairly lifted him bodily across a chair. Then he snatched Walker's ashplant from the bookshelves.

Bunter yelled, knowing what was coming next, but what really happened next was never clear to Bunter. He suddenly felt himself released and rolled over with a bump on to the floor. When he blinked up, he found Loder and Walker at grips, fighting furiously.

Bunter almost fainted at the sight. Two prefects fighting was something quite new—and rather terrifying. But his eyes were not deceiving him; it was only too true.

Apparently Loder's action had been too much for Walker, just as Bunter's remarks had proved too much for Loder. As a matter of fact, Walker himself scarcely knew how it had started. But it had started, and now Walker started to vent his fury on Loder.

Loder returned the compliment. He had not struck the first blow, and he was raging. In the ordinary way he would have hesitated quite a long while before tackling Walker—Loder was no great fighting man—but he had no choice in the matter now. Walker's fist had struck him somewhere—he scarcely knew where—and he had struck back in a fury.

There was no drawing back now.

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

Across the study and back again the two seniors tramped, fighting furiously, their tempers entirely out of hand now. But it did not last long. Loder was a slacker and waster, and he had neither the pluck nor the power to keep going long.

A sudden drive under the chin sent him staggering back, and a second in the same spot finished him. He went crashing down on his back on the carpet, and he lay there, gasping and panting.

At that moment the door flew open, and Wingate, with several other fellows behind him, appeared. They stared at the sight in utter amazement.

So astonished were they that neither of them, apparently, saw Billy Bunter as that fat youth slipped past them and departed.

For once Billy Bunter was wise in his generation.

He had determined in his fat mind to have tea with James Walker. It had seemed a splendid idea to Bunter in more ways than one. To have been able to boast to his fellow-Removites that he had had tea with his pal, Walker of the Sixth, was something he had looked forward to with gleeful anticipation.

But now he decided to drop the idea. He had a fairly clear idea that he would be much safer away from Walker's study just then. Wingate was such a keen chap, and he might ask awkward questions. Besides, he had a rather vague idea that James Walker might not "stand" tea with him after what had happened.

So, postponing the treat of tea with Walker until a more favourable opportunity, Billy Bunter departed. He had done quite enough mischief for one day.

Walker saw him go, and he drew a deep, deep breath of relief.

"What in thunder does this mean,

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Walker?" demanded Wingate, aghast. "Great Scott! Loder—"

Loder staggered to his feet, his face fiendish. He did not look at Wingate or the others. He fixed his glittering eyes on Walker, and the look on his bruised face was not good to see.

"All right, Walker!" he breathed huskily. "I—I sha'n't forget this! I'll pay you out, you hound!"

And with that threat Loder strode out, mopping a cut lip, and with a face full of bitter malice.

"What does this mean, Walker?" repeated Wingate sharply.

"Get out, the lot of you!" was Walker's savage reply. "Mind your own dashed affairs! Clear out of my study!"

"But, dash it all—" Wingate was beginning, when he closed his lips and turned abruptly.

Already several juniors had arrived in the passage outside, and Wingate realised it would not do for such a matter to become public.

He nodded to the others and left the study, shrugging his shoulders. Walker kicked the door shut after them, and flung himself into the armchair, his face dark. His reflections were not pleasant ones. That he had quarrelled seriously with his "pal" Loder did not trouble him a scrap—indeed, he felt relieved rather than otherwise. Loder was, if anything, more dangerous as a friend than an enemy.

It was of Billy Bunter Walker was thinking, and he gritted his teeth at thought of the fatuous Owl of the Remove. Sooner or later he knew Bunter would let the cat out of the bag, either by accident or design.

He must prevent that at all costs—for a time, at all events. Bunter fancied he was going to keep Walker under his thumb for quite a long time. Walker knew that he wasn't. For himself—had Bunter only known it—Walker cared little. For breaking bounds he might lose his prefecture; he did not think it would be worse than that. It was not a pleasant possibility, but Walker would have faced that rather than remain under Bunter's fat thumb.

No; Walker was not thinking of himself, but of the fugitive on Popper's Island. At all costs it was vitally necessary that his presence there should not become known, and he was determined to prevent that happening whatever happened to himself. It was only for a time, after all, and when it was no longer necessary, Walker promised himself the satisfaction of dealing with Billy Bunter. This thought was some comfort, at all events, to Walker.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### The Night Bird!

**T**HAT night in the Remove dormitory, Harry Wharton woke up suddenly, dimly aware that someone or something had awakened him violently.

He blinked up sleepily, and was surprised to find a fat face, with strangely glimmering, round eyes staring down at him.

For a moment he felt that he was in the grip of a horrid nightmare, and that the face above him was a grotesque apparition. Then a voice smote his ear; it was a fat voice with a quavering note in it.

"Wake up, Wharton—wake up! Oh dear, it—it's burglars. I think!"

Wharton understood then. It was

not a nightmare at all, and the face was the fat face and glimmering spectacles of Billy Bunter.

Bunter was shaking him violently, and Wharton grunted drowsily and sat up.

"Chuck it, Bunter! What's the matter, you fat ass?"

"Burglars!"

"Rubbish! You've been dreaming, you fat idiot! Get off to sleep again."

And Harry was about to turn over to go to sleep again when Bunter grasped his arm and shook him.

"It's a fact, Wharton," he whispered frantically. "I saw him. He's just gone past the door now. Get up!"

The urgent note brought Harry Wharton into wakefulness this time, and he sat up again and stared through the gloom at Bunter.

"You fat ass! I tell you you've been dreaming."

"I haven't!" breathed Bunter. "I couldn't sleep, Wharton. I woke up fearfully hungry, and I remembered I'd left some toffee in the study that I meant to bring up to scoff in bed. I—I couldn't sleep for thinking about it. So I thought I'd go downstairs for it. But—oh, dear!—I was just peeping out to see if anyone was about and I saw it pass the door—a man!"

And Bunter shivered, his teeth chattering with fear.

Harry Wharton slipped out of bed. It was fairly plain that Bunter had indeed seen something.

"Stay here, Bunter," he said, slipping his feet into slippers. "I'll have a squint round anyway."

And Harry stepped to the door, and after peering out into the dim passage, he stepped outside. Then he stood and listened. He had been listening scarcely a minute when he heard rather stealthy footfalls along the passage.

Harry's heart leaped and, quick as a flash, he slipped back into the Remove dormitory again, closing the door almost to. Then he peered out, waiting for the unknown marauder to pass.

The next moment a vague form did pass—swiftly, and with scarcely a sound. It was rather alarming, and Harry's heart almost missed a beat, but the next moment he recovered himself.

Slipping out into the passage he trod in pursuit of the figure. It was most likely only a senior—from his height Harry knew he was not a junior—moving about the house for some queer reason; but, on the other hand, it might not be, and Harry was determined to make sure.

The next moment he was hard on the heels of the mysterious individual, and he followed quietly, keeping the figure just in sight ahead.

Harry did not think now that it was a burglar for one moment. Yet he was puzzled. The form ahead was most likely a senior. There were seniors in the Sixth and Fifth—fellows like Loder, and Carne—who sometimes did break bounds at night. But this fellow was in pyjamas, and he was scarcely likely to be going out of doors in pyjamas!

Harry was very curious to know what he could be doing out of bed at that time of night.

His eyes gleamed as the form ahead suddenly vanished into the box-room on the lower landing. The window of that room was unbarred, and Harry knew it was often used for the purpose of breaking bounds at night—Harry had used it himself. It looked as if the unknown was going out after all!

On tip-toe Harry moved to the door. It was slightly open, and he peered inside the room. It was a very small

room and Harry very soon recognised the fellow inside. He was leaning out of the open window, and Harry caught a glimpse of his profile.

It was Loder, of the Sixth. Even in the dim light Harry noted that his face was full of triumphant gloating. At first the junior thought it must be Walker.

Harry set his lips. Whatever Loder might be up to it was pretty certain to be something shady. He soon knew what it was.

Even as Harry glimpsed his face, Loder withdrew his head. He was breathing hard, and Harry clearly saw the vicious glint in his eyes.

He was muttering to himself, and Harry heard the words clearly—he could not help hearing them.

"Got you, my pippin!" he muttered savagely. "I'll teach you to knock me down, Walker, my lad! This puts you fairly in the soup! Now for waking dear old Wingate. Wingate's a whale for duty. I shall insist upon Wingate doing his dashed duty."

And taking a last look out into the dark quadrangle, Loder closed the window softly.

Harry drew in a deep breath. In that moment his mind worked swiftly. In a flash he realised what Loder intended to do—what it all meant!

Loder had evidently seen Walker leave his study and had followed him. It was clearly Walker whom Bunter had seen. And now, smarting from the thrashing he had received at the hands of his old chum, Loder was taking his revenge this way. He was going to wake Wingate, and to get Walker caught out of bounds at night—a very serious offence indeed for a senior and a prefect.

It would mean the sack for Walker most probably.

The spiteful, vengeful malice of Loder's proposed action made Harry clench his fists. But it made him do more than that.

Acting on sudden impulse he stooped and felt for the key of the door. The box-room was always kept locked, and it was there.

Click!

The key turned and the door was locked.

Harry stood motionless, scarcely aware that he had done it. He heard a sudden, startled exclamation within the room. Then the knob of the door rattled and shook gently. It was followed by a still more startled exclamation—an exclamation rarely heard at Greyfriars. Then came Loder's voice, hoarse with rage and sudden fear.

"Open this door! Open this dashed door, whoever you are!"

Harry Wharton did not obey. He trod softly away. Whether he had really done the right thing or not he scarcely knew. He knew that Loder's proposed revenge filled him with loathing for the unpopular prefect. Walker was doing wrong undoubtedly. He was a prefect whose duty it was to keep order and to see that the rules of the school were observed. Instead of which he was ignoring his duty, and breaking those rules himself.

Harry did not wonder where the prefect was going—he guessed that James Walker had gone up river to Popper's Island to visit the man there. Where Walker was bound for was beside the point, however. It was Loder's treacherous action that Harry objected to. Moreover, Harry hadn't an atom of respect for Loder—he was up against the juniors always, and they were up against him. Whereas Walker



—well, after all Walker was not a bad chap. Harry remembered dozens of careless kindnesses the good-natured Sixth-Former had done the Famous Five in the past.

Before Harry had reached his dormitory he was feeling deeply thankful he had taken the step, and he made up his mind what to do in the matter.

Bunter was sitting up in bed, with the clothes tucked round his knees, when Harry slipped in the dormitory, and Harry felt thankful he had not wakened anyone else.

"Well?" breathed Bunter. "D-dud—did you see him?"

"Yes," said Harry, with a low laugh. "It was Loder I saw, Bunter. The silly ass was out looking for trouble, as usual. I've left him to find it!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

He was greatly relieved. He had not thought it might be Loder, or some fellow like him, taking a night out. With a grunt, Bunter lay down to compose himself to sleep. Bunter might be willing to lose his beauty-sleep for a burglar, but not for a fellow like Loder.

"What about the toffee, Bunter?" asked Harry, smiling. "Going down for it?"

"Grooh! No fear!"

Bunter had evidently had enough of prowling, and scarcely a minute later his snore was resounding through the Remove dormitory. The fright had, apparently, taken away his hunger.

Harry lay down, but he had no intention of going to sleep. He knew that if Walker had only just gone he would be at least an hour away. He was resolved to wait.

For over half an hour Harry lay in bed, defying sleep, and then he slipped out of bed and awakened his chums. Cherry, Bull, Nugent, and Hurree Singh whistled softly as he told them what was "on."

"Phew!" breathed Bob Cherry. "Well, the rotten cad! You did jolly well right, Harry. My hat! This is a chance to settle one or two scores with that brute Loder."

"I'm not thinking of that cad," said Harry quietly. "I'm out to save Walker. I'm not going to see that dirty, treacherous hound Loder score, if I can help it."

"Rather not!"

Harry's chums were with him to a man, and very soon Harry had outlined his plan. The sheets were taken from their respective beds, and twisted into a rope, and tied securely to a bedpost. Then Harry softly raised one of the tall windows and carefully lowered the rope out.

It rustled down the ivy of the wall, and the end reached the ground safely.

Harry had already flung a few clothes on, and, with a whispered word to his chums, he slid over the sill and started to lower himself down the rope.

To an active, athletic fellow like Harry it was a simple matter. Moreover, the ivy growing against the old walls was thick and strong, and rendered his task doubly easy.

He soon reached the ground and without hesitation he started out for the school wall, keeping well into the shadows of the buildings. He had no fear of Loder seeing him, even if that trapped senior did happen to look out of the box-room window. That window was situated on the wing round the corner of the building, and Harry gave it a wide berth.

He soon reached the old elm which Greyfriars fellows for generations had used for breaking bounds. But he did



Loder fairly lifted Bunter across the chair, snatching at Walker's ashplant as he did so. "Yaroooop!" roared Bunter. Next moment he found himself suddenly released and, rolling over, saw Loder and Walker at grips, fighting furiously. (See Chapter 5.)

not scale the wall. He crouched down in the bushes beneath it to wait.

Harry expected to have a long wait; but, to his surprise, he had scarcely taken up his position when he heard a movement on the wall above him, and then a dark form slithered down.

"Walker!" he breathed. "Hold on!"

There sounded a startled exclamation in the gloom, and Walker—it was that senior right enough—stopped abruptly in his stride.

"What—who—who is that?" he gasped, his voice showing his sudden fear. "Is that you, Whar—"

"Yes, it's Wharton," said Harry swiftly, moving towards the prefect. "Hold on, Walker!"

Walker muttered something savagely, and then his hand closed fiercely on the junior's shoulder. Harry noted his glittering eyes in the gloom.

"You—you little sweep, Wharton!" snapped Walker. "Spying again!"

"No, I'm not spying again, Walker," said Harry quietly. "I'm here to save you from the sack, Walker. Loder has locked you out. He was going to waken Wingate and get you collared. It was his revenge for the hiding you gave him to-day."

Walker caught his breath. "Is—is that true, Wharton?" he said thickly. "It is. I know you're not a liar, Wharton. Tell me about it—sharp!"

Wharton told him, and Walker gritted his teeth.

"The hound!" he breathed. "The treacherous hound! I might have suspected this. He knew I was going out to-night. You say he is locked in the box-room?"

"Yes. We mean to leave him there, Walker. He deserves that and more."

"But—but how—"

"I'll soon show you," said Harry. "My chums are at the Remove dormitory window with a rope of sheets. They'll haul us both up. You can then slip back to bed, Walker."

"And—and Loder?" breathed Walker.

"He can stow in his own juice!" snapped Harry, his lips setting. "A night in the box-room will do him good, Walker. We owe him a good many scores, Walker, and we aren't letting him out. Besides, it would be too risky, in any case."

"But if he makes a fuss—"

"He won't. He won't want to be a laughing-stock, Walker. Besides, he can prove nothing against you. You'll be in bed asleep at rising-bell. Nobody will believe his yarn, especially when everybody knows he's got his knife into you. They'll never dream we helped you, and they know it's impossible to get into the House any other way but the box-room without help from inside. You're safe enough, Walker."

Walker drew a deep breath. "It—it's jolly decent of you, kid," he muttered. "I don't know why you should do this, but I sha'n't forget."



"Come on," said Harry briefly.

He led the way, and they hurried round to the gravel below the Remove dormitory window. Harry gave a low whistle, and almost at once the window went up, and then the rope of twisted sheets dropped down.

"You first, Walker," said Harry.

"You first, Wharton!" snapped Walker roughly.

"Right!"

Wharton swarmed up the rope, and vanished over the sill of the window. A minute later Walker had followed him into the Remove dormitory. Harry drew the rope in and pulled the sash down again.

"Thanks, you kids!" breathed Walker huskily. "I—I sha'n't forget this, I can tell you."

And with that Walker moved softly across the dark dormitory and vanished through the doorway, closing the door gently after him.

"All serene!" grinned Bob Cherry. "What price dear old Loder?"

"We daren't let him out, of course," said Harry. "He must stay where he is. If he kicks up a row, so much the worse for him. His story won't be believed—he hasn't a reputation for the truth—and it will only make the beaks suspicious of him. He's safe there until morning. It will give him plenty of time to reflect on his rotten conduct. He's bound to hear the servants moving about early in the morning, and he'll soon get one of them to let him out and tip them to say nothing."

And Harry proved to be right there. When the two seniors met eventually, Walker could not help smiling grimly. But Loder did not smile. The look he gave his fellow-prefect was an evil one. Walker had not yet finished with Loder's vengeful spite.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Walker's Request!

"YOOOOP! Oh, crikey!"

Crash!

"Yarrrooooooh!"

"What the thump—"

Harry Wharton & Co. stopped dead in the passage and stared.

They were astonished and startled. And no wonder!

They were sauntering along the Sixth Form passage at the time when, without warning, a door suddenly flew open and a yelling bundle flew out and crashed on the passage floor.

The door was the door of Loder's study, and the bundle was Billy Bunter.

"Well, my hat!" stuttered Harry Wharton. "Bunter—"

"Ow!" groaned Bunter, staggering to his feet, and blinking furiously at the door of Loder's study, which had just crashed to again. "Ow-yow! Oh, crumbs! Oh, the awful beasts!"

"What have you been up to now, Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry, chuckling. "Trying to make a pal of Loder, old chap?"

"Ow-ow-ow-wow!" gasped Bunter, rubbing himself dismally. "Oh, the awful beasts! Said I was after their grub, you know! Kicked me time after time, and then booted me out—that's what Loder did, the awful beast! Ow-yow!"

"Tell your pal Walker about it!" advised Bob Cherry.

"I'm going to!" groaned Bunter, his eyes gleaming viciously. "Walker's already licked him once, and I'll make him lick him again!"

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"Oh, my hat!"

"As if I was after his rotten grub!" snorted Bunter.

"Of course not," agreed Bob Cherry sympathetically. "You never do go after grub, do you, Billy? It seems to come after you, doesn't it?"

"Groooh! Oh, crumbs! I believe I've broken my spine in two places, and dislocated all three of my collar-bones."

"Serves you right, you fat frog!" said Harry Wharton. "You shouldn't go round grub-raiding, and you ought to have more dashed sense than raid a Sixth-Former's cupboard, anyway!"

"I tell you I wasn't after his grub!" hooted Bunter. "It's all Coker's fault. He was after me—said I'd taken a cake of his yesterday when I didn't! Besides, it was a measly thing, anyway—hardly a blessed raisin in it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's nothing to laugh at!" snorted Bunter. "Anyway, that's how it was. Coker chased me, and I ran in Loder's study while he went past. Then Loder came in with that beast Carne!"

"And kicked you, eh? Well, it'll do you good, old fat man!"

"Beast! Anyway, I'm jolly glad I did go in now," said Bunter, his eyes gleaming. "I heard something that my pal Walker will be jolly glad to hear, I can tell you!"

"Listening again, you fat worm!"

"No, I wasn't. When Loder came in I dived under the table—that's how I heard it. Then that beast Carne kicked me under the table by accident and I yelled out. I couldn't help it. Then—would you believe it?—the beasts said I'd gone there after their grub."

"Well, you can consider yourself kicked for having taken Coker's cake," remarked Bob Cherry. "Poetic justice, you know!"

"Blow poetic justice!" said Bunter viciously. "I'm going to make Loder sit up for this, you fellows! I'm going to tell my pal Jimmy Walker all about it, and I'm going to insist that he thrashes him again. You fellows wait, and you'll see something."

And Bunter was making for Walker's study when Harry Wharton grabbed him by the arm. Harry's face was set hard.

"Hold on, Bunter!" he snapped, in a sharp voice. "I've been wanting to speak to you about Walker!"

"Go ahead!" grinned Bunter. "You've only got to come to me, old chap, and I'll see you get what you want—if it happens to be something Walker can do. He'll do anything for me, you know. We're great pals. What about a pass for to-morrow night? It's too late for to-night, of course."

Harry Wharton eyed the fat junior fixedly.

"Look here, Bunter!" he said. "You'll end in quod before you've finished!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"I can't think you realise what you're doing," said Harry grimly. "Do you think we can't see that you're blackmailing Walker, you fat idiot? You've got to stop it! You hear? It's got to stop!"

Bunter gave the juniors a lofty, indignant blink.

"Oh, really, Wharton," he said. "you mind your own rotten business, and just mind what you're saying, too! Mind your eye! I've only to speak two words to Jimmy Walker, and you're for it. I don't want to have to tell him to lay his ashplant about you, but if you give me any more cheek that's what I'll do. So mind your eye!"

"Why, you, you fat—"

"That's enough, Wharton!" said Bunter, raising a fat hand. "I can stand a bit, but when you start charging a chap like me with blackmail, you're going too far. Chuck it!"

With that dignified piece of advice, Bunter rolled away. Bob Cherry stared after him a moment, and then he leaped after Bunter. But Bunter was too quick for him. He jumped for Walker's door, flung it open, and dived inside.

The door slammed, and Bob Cherry gazed at it blankly.

"Well, my hat!" he said. "Isn't that fat ass the giddy limit?"

"It's jolly serious, though," said Harry, frowning. "The fat idiot doesn't realise the seriousness of what he's doing, of course! But that doesn't alter the fact that he's blackmailing Walker. We know he must have forced Walker to save him from old Popper."

"And we saw Walker hand him some cash this morning," said Johnny Bull, with a grunt. "We can't let this go on, Harry!"

"I know that," said Harry. "But I—"

"Going to see Walker now—about the knife, I mean?" asked Frank Nugent. Harry shook his head.

"No good going in now that fat ass is there!" he said, shrugging his shoulders. "Come on! We'll give Walker a look in when we know Bunter's gone."

And with that Harry led his chums away. The juniors had been about to visit Walker's study when they met Bunter so unexpectedly, but they decided to postpone the interview now.

And, meanwhile, Bunter had found Walker at home, and Walker did not look anything like so pleased to see him as Bunter seemed to be to see "his pal Walker."

He eyed the fat junior with glittering eyes as Bunter closed the door and faced him, panting and gasping.

"Here again!" he breathed, his hand straying almost unconsciously to his ashplant. "You—you little sweep!"

"Oh, really, Walker, old fellow—"

"Don't 'old fellow' me!" hissed Walker. "You—you'll be going too far with me, Bunter. I gave you some cash this morning. What are you after now?"

"Oh, really, Jimmy, old chap," grumbled Bunter, changing the mode of address a trifle, "that's rather steep after all I've done for you! Many a chap would have given you away long ago. In fact, I fully realise that I'm neglecting my duty as a good—good citizen in not letting the police know who that chap is hiding on Popper's Island."

"Shut up, you fat fool!" breathed Walker.

"Oh, all right, only I don't like the idea of com—compounding a felony, you know," said Bunter, shaking his head. "It's only my friendship for you that keeps me from doing my duty in the matter. Mind you don't do anything to break our friendship, old chap."

"How much do you want now?" snapped Walker, gritting his teeth with helpless rage. "You—you—"

"I haven't said that I want anything, Walker," replied Bunter with dignity. "That's rather a rotten thing to suggest, Walker. I feel almost inclined to clear out without telling you what I overheard Loder say. And I—"

"What's that, Bunter?" said Walker quickly. "You say—"

"Only two minutes ago," grinned Bunter. "I happened to be in Loder's study hiding, and I heard that beast

(Continued on page 17.)



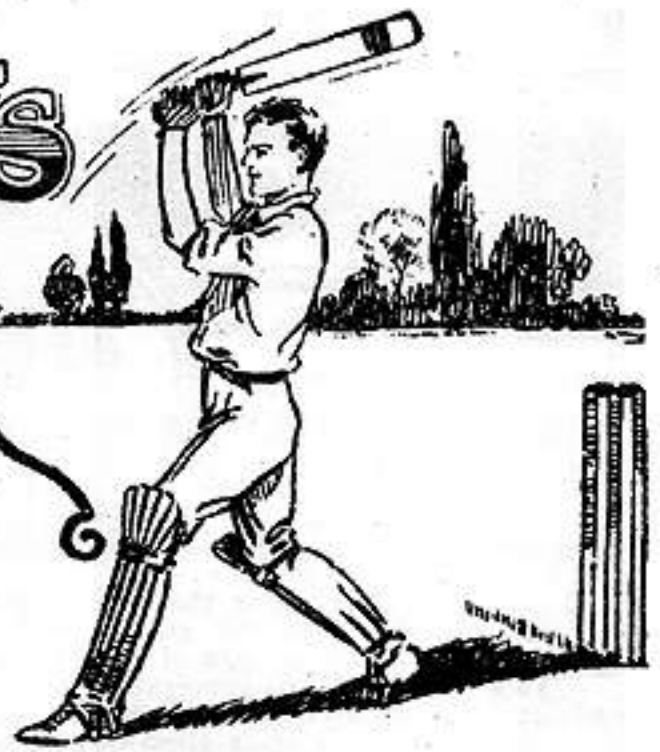
# HARRY WHARTON'S Cricket Supplement

No. 4 (New Series). Vol. 2.

May 22nd, 1926.

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

HARRY WHARTON, Editor.



## Boundary Hits! by "SCORER"

WRITING of Macaulay, Jack Hobbs says: "His batting is nothing to write home about, but it has always struck me that there is a too ready acceptance in England of the idea that runs should not be expected of a bowler." This is evidently one of those cases to which we have applied the proverb—he that expecteth nothing is not disappointed.

All balls in first-class cricket are now stamped and guaranteed correct as to size and weight by the makers. The worst bowler in our club says that this sort of guarantee is no good at all; he wants balls which are guaranteed to take wickets.

There is a fine dahlia of a creamy white colour which is named Jack Hobbs. It ought to grow well if set in the turf at the Oval.

The Australians' pet name for Collins, the captain of the side, is the "Little Corporal." Macartney is known as the "Governor-General." We can't tell you what our sergeant-major called Gregory when one of his fastest balls hit him in the ribs.

For the interest of our budding umpires, here is the correct and official method of signalling by umpires:  
Boundaries are signalled by waving the hand from side to side.  
Byes by raising the open hand above the head.  
Leg-byes by raising the leg and touching it with the hand.  
Wides by extending both arms horizontally.  
No balls by extending one arm horizontally.  
The decision "Out!" by raising the index-finger above the head.  
A hit for six by raising both hands above the head.  
We shall award a prize to the first umpire we see do all the signals correctly.

There is a story that when Joe Darling once captained an Australian team in this country he smoked a cigar given him by our present King, then Prince of Wales. W. G. Grace was also offered one at the same time, but did not accept. On top of this is the fact that England won the next Test match, but the suggestion that it was the cause and effect can be ruled out.

Hitch has now left the Surrey club to play as a professional in the Lancashire League, but we hear that the newspaper cartoonists are getting up a petition for him to come back, as pictures of the Surrey team without Bill Hitch's trousers seem all wrong.

F. R. Foster, who was in the England team which last won a series of Test matches, says: "Praise our men. Buck them up. Give them confidence. If a player makes a mistake, help him and forgive him. Don't run him down." Wouldn't it be better to say: "Don't run him out?"

It is generally agreed that googly bowlers are frightfully expensive if they can't find a length. They can also be very costly to the batting side when they do find a length.

There is nothing new under the sun. People are at this moment saying we shall lose to the Australians for lack of nerve. As long ago as 1880 "Punch" referred to a lost Test match in these terms:

"Well done, Cornstalks! Whipt us  
Fair and square.  
Was it luck that tript us?  
Was it scare?  
Kangaroo land's 'demon,' or our own,  
Want of 'devil,' coolness, nerve, backbone?"

## From Willow to Vicket!

### HOW A CRICKET BAT IS MADE.

BY way of a start to this article on how cricket bats are made, I am going to tell you something which I am prepared to wager some of my readers didn't know. It is that all the wood for the good cricket bats used in every part of the world is grown in England.

Somebody so ordered it that in England alone is to be found the right sort of soil and the right sort of atmosphere for growing the willow-tree, which provides the "substance" from which good cricket bats are made. That, at any rate, is something for which we can be thankful, as we can say that, even if the Australians beat us in the Test matches this summer, they will have had to use English bats to do it with. So that's that!

Now as to the making of a cricket bat. The willow is, as I have hinted, the tree which provides the wood from which good bats are made. The cultivation of these willows is a bigger business than some people would think, and in the counties of Essex and Norfolk especially it is possible to find men who make a substantial living out of the growing of willow-trees.

Though there are some sixty kinds of willow, there is only one which is of real use so far as the making of bats is concerned. This is popularly known as the white willow, though it has a long botanical name which I can pronounce, but, as I can't spell it, I am compelled to leave it out of these notes.

This willow grows from a mere sapling to a good-sized tree in about twelve years, and the higher it shoots up before it begins to fork the more valuable is it. Obviously, any old thing in the shape of a willow-tree will not do for the business of making a bat with which centuries can be scored with ease, provided you hit the ball in the right place. It takes an expert to pick out the best willows, for some which look good and healthy are rotten inside.

We can now imagine, however, that we have found the right sort of trees—the ones which even after cutting continue to meet with the approval of the expert eye. We can now step inside a bat-making factory to take a glance at the various processes which go to the making of the perfect bat.

The factory which I went into turns out scores of thousands of bats a year, as they need to do, seeing that there are county cricketers who use a dozen or more in a season, and who think nothing of discarding a new bat because they don't like the "feel" of it.

First of all, the willow-trees are cut into blocks which are roughly—but very roughly—the size of a bat blade. This cutting into blocks is done by a giant axe. After being for some time in the open air, these blocks are then conveyed to what are called drying sheds, and it may surprise you to know that they remain in those sheds for a year at least. This, of course, is the "seasoning" process.

Many of the cheaper bats are, to a large extent, cut to shape by machinery, but the good bats are hand-made. The blocks of willow, therefore, pass into the hands of the expert craftsman, who, with a suitable knife, gets to work at the business of shaving, paring, and generally cutting. I can't take you through the delicate process that produces the curved back to the bat while retaining the balance. Suffice it to say that it demands the trained expert to turn out the finished blade.

When the man with the knife has finished, the blade goes under a press, which exerts a pressure of several tons on the face of the bat, which is thereby hardened and compressed. Then the edges are hammered by machinery, and the blade is ready for the handle.

Although England produces the willow for the blade of our bats, we have to go to Singapore for the cane for the handle. Many strips of cane—you can tell how many if you look at the top of your bat—and strips of indiarubber are glued and pressed together, and thus you get the handle, all ready to be fitted into the blade. This is quickly done; the blade is sandpapered, and rubbed with a bone, which gives it the shine. Then it is ready for the making of runs, but don't forget when you get your new bat that it needs oil.

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# NOTHING LIKE A GOOD START!



## THE VALUE OF THE WORK OF THE FIRST PAIR OF BATSMEN.

At times I get a feeling that we are apt to take a lot for granted in regard to certain phases of cricket. This is certainly so concerning the first-wicket partnerships. We read that Hobbs and Sandham have again given Surrey a fine start by topping the century before being separated, and we just make a little note that it is fine of them to have done the same thing on so many occasions. Then we turn to another place, and find that Sutcliffe and Holmes have established Yorkshire in a firm position for the rest of the match by a splendid first-wicket stand. There are other cases which could be mentioned, too, of opening pairs of batsmen who make a habit of giving their side a good start. My point, however, is this: We note that this or that county has made a good start, but we seldom stop to think of the far-reaching effects of those first-wicket partnerships.

### THE CHAMPIONS' FOUNDATION.

The all-round ability of the Yorkshire side is recognised by every man who plays cricket at all. And I suppose that right down at bottom it is this all-round ability on all sorts of wickets which has brought such a fine harvest of championship successes to the county of many acres. But the remarkable way in which Yorkshire have discovered first-wicket batsmen must also have played quite an important part in the success of the side as a whole. In days of old we used to read how Brown and Tunncliffe had given Yorkshire a good send-off, and to succeed this pair the Yorkshire county has been fortunate in the possession of Holmes and Sutcliffe.

### THE NEW BALL DEMONS.

Now let us examine for a moment or two the task which is set for the men who open the innings of a side, and the effect of the game as a whole on the way they do their job. In the first place, it is obvious that, generally speaking, the opening batsmen have the greater number of obstacles with which to contend. In the first place, they have the bowling when the bowlers are fresh. Every captain, too, puts on what he considers his best bowlers for a start, while it should not be overlooked that there is a new ball at the start of the match, and things are possible with a new ball which, to the same extent, are not possible after the newness has worn off. There are quite a number of bowlers to-day who can make excellent use of a new ball; but, of course, the demon in this respect was George Hirst, that famous Yorkshireman who was always called up the minute a new ball appeared on the scene.

### WHAT THE AVERAGES DON'T TELL.

It is clear then that, in the ordinary course of events, the opening pair of batsmen face the best of the opposition attack. In passing, I may refer here to those abominations of cricket which are called the averages. It seems to me that if we have averages which will really show the merits of the players concerned—though individual merit should not enter into this cricket question—then those averages should show the position which a player occupies in his side's batting list. The man who goes in first is the player on whom the responsibility weighs most heavily. They know, those first-wicket men, that possibly the course of the whole match may be affected by the stand they make. I might put the matter in another way, and say that it does not by any means follow that you can reckon the value of the work of the opening pair by the number of runs these fellows actually score.

By

## W. W. WHYSALL

(the famous Notts and England Cricketer.)

### "NOTHING SUCCEEDS—"

Suppose for one moment that the first-wicket partnership is very quickly broken up—in the first over or two. The opponents are delighted, naturally, but they are rather more than delighted; they are apt to be inspired. The bowler getting wickets usually bowls better than the man who is not meeting with success. It is natural to be inspired by early success. Time after time I have seen batting sides run through in the most unexpected way, and at the end I have felt convinced that the secret of the collapse was to be found in the fact that the opening batsmen were got rid of quickly.

### HOBBS—CAUSE AND EFFECT.

The men in the field are more completely on their toes early in the innings than they are at the end of a long day of scouting, and just as the bowlers are apt to send them down better if they meet with early success, so are the fielders more completely enthusiastic to help the bowlers supplement that success. Not so long ago Surrey collapsed in rather a startling fashion against Lancashire, and some time later I was chatting with one of the Lancashire men about it. He declared that the moral effect of getting rid of Jack Hobbs quickly was amazing. The whole Lancashire team played as if inspired. And I should not be surprised to find that the moral effect on the Surrey team of the cheap dismissal of Hobbs was equally amazing from the other point of view. In cricket, as in many other things, a good start is half the battle.

### STOLID GEORGE GUNN.

The previous paragraph shows the effect of a bad start by the batting side very clearly. Consequently, there is little necessity to point to the other side of the story—the effect of a good send-off. The fine edge goes off the bowling, the fielders become a little less alert, and it is comparatively easy for the later batsmen to make runs at a fair pace, and thus cement the good start. This brings me to another point—the temperament of the opening batsmen. In making mention of this word temperament, there is a fine opening batsman who springs to my mind in my fellow-countyman, George Gunn. Many a time has the word stolid been used to illustrate the batting of George Gunn, and sometimes, too, he has been accused of excessive caution. Consequently, it may surprise my readers to know that by instinct George Gunn is what I should call a free-hitting batsman. But the making of runs quickly means the taking of risks, and, placed in the position of opening the innings for Notts, Gunn has always realised the important part he had to play.

### TEMPERAMENT.

In conclusion, it may be said that cricketers generally should not be so much affected by good and bad starts as they obviously are. Perhaps we shouldn't, but we are only human—or, at least, we English players are only human. One reason why we were defeated in Australia was that our opponents seemed to be less affected by what I might call outside considerations than we are.

W. W. Whysall

WHETHER Herbert Strudwick will play for England again in Test Matches this season, I don't know, but in any case there are two good reasons for prying into his affairs. One is that if he doesn't play again we shall be doing homage to a wonder-man who is not forty-six years of age, and the other reason is that if events show that he has finished his Test career, then this is the proper time to pay tribute.

You know, of course, that "Good Old Struddy" was the England wicket-keeper in Australia in the winter before last, and there were people out there who said that he kept better in that series than he had ever done before. In the term "Good Old Struddy" there is really nothing but affection. Take some friend of yours down to the Oval one day—a friend who knows nothing about cricket. And when, in the course of the match, your friend sees "Struddy" dashing from the wicket towards the boundary to chase a leg hit tell your friend that the chaser is forty-six years of age. He won't believe you, and neither would anybody else who didn't know.

It is often said, and Strudwick himself repeated the phrase to me only a very short time ago, that there are two sorts of fools who play cricket—the first is the man who bowls fast and the other is the fellow who keeps wicket to fast bowling. Well, somebody must bowl fast, and somebody must keep wicket to fast bowling, but the tale of the wicket-keeper is best told by his hands. Struddy's are just a mass of knots and gashes, but there are compensations in the job, as the Surrey keeper himself said.

"We used to have two rather fast bowlers in the Surrey team," he said. "One of them seemed to take a delight in knocking a finger out of joint, and the other took an equal delight in putting it back again!"

So many years have passed since Strudwick first kept wicket for Surrey that not many people now know the full story of how he got into big cricket. Hence it may be of interest if I recall the story as Strudwick himself tells it, as incidentally the story shows how desperately anxious he was to get on in the game which has claimed him.

"The first time I ever had the gloves on for cricket was in a small match at Mitcham, where I was born, and when I was playing for a team of choir-boys. I was about twelve years of age then. It was probably more by accident than design that I had to take the place of the wicket-keeper, but I found the position quite interesting, and so I stuck to it. You see, when you are behind the wicket you have a very good view of the play; know exactly what sort of bowling the fellows are sending down and get to know all the little points of strength and weakness of the men who bat. Anyway, as I say, wicket-keeping began to fascinate me.

"One of the supporters of cricket in the Mitcham district took a great interest in the doings of we lads, and it was his kindly advice and help which assisted me personally to develop as a wicket-keeper. When I got older I joined the Mitcham Wanderers cricket club, for whom Bale, who played for Worcester, then kept wicket. Bale was evidently wiser than I was, for I had no sooner got into the side than he gave up the gloves and the pads to me, and went in for batting and bowling instead of wicket-keeping.

"One morning at my home there was what might be called a red letter waiting for me. It was in the shape of a postcard asking me to go to the Oval and take "everything" with me. You will probably laugh at this, but in order to be on the safe side, I took balls, wickets, bails along with me, as well as my gloves and pads. I think I should have taken a roller and a dressing-room with me as well, if I could have carried them, so excited was I at the prospect of having a trial on the Surrey ground. When I got to the ground I was put through my paces, received one nasty blow with the ball, retired hurt, and was told that I was too young. I was then only sixteen years of age, but two years later my ambition was

## Good Old 'S

A nutshell biography of romantic figures of E

BY "PAUL  
(Our Travelling Cor



HERBERT STRU



# Struddy!

aph of one of the most  
es English Cricket.

PAUL PRY."

elli Correspondent.)

years was only one real delight in cricket and that was  
show in getting runs. But if it is really true that he  
s the doesn't enjoy wicket-keeping—and I fancy he is  
pulling a leg when he says he doesn't—then all I  
dy "can say is that good old Struddy deserves a Victoria  
the Cross for resolution. See him at the end of the  
her longest and most gruelling day in the field, and  
re he you will still see the alert little figure, bending  
Old low for every ball, ever ready to snap off the balls,  
tion and quick as lightning to take those snicks on the  
day leg side which have caused the downfall of many a  
And batsman at the very moment when he has been  
see telling himself that he had booked a boundary.

the There is a certain obvious joy of life about Struddy's  
the batting which is absent from his wicket-keeping.  
die Regular attenders rock with laughter when Bertie  
idn't wipes one to the boundary. No straight bat,  
orthodox stuff about his batting; he just swings that  
l the piece of wood round much as the reaper swings the  
here scythe. Often he misses altogether, and the people  
st is laugh again. They all love Struddy. However,  
allow let us do him justice, and say that there have been  
oody occasions when with the bat he has scored most useful  
et to runs, and there have even been occasions when he has  
kept his end up to enable other  
people to get the runs, for he is  
nearly always last man in.

He tells of one "very fine innings"  
which he played against the South  
Africans at Johannesburg in 1910.  
England were left with 244 runs to  
get for victory in the last innings,  
but 34 were still required when the  
little man, all bat and pads, joined  
Thompson, the Northamptonshire  
player. Struddy stuck there with  
his bat in front, letting the ball play  
it, and gradually the score mounted  
nearer and nearer to the total  
required for victory. Fourteen of  
them were ticked off, but then Thomp-  
son got out. And Strudwick carried  
out his bat, after being at the wicket  
for nearly half an hour, for the  
rand total of one, not out.

A very fine innings, don't you think?

## The Australians' Hefty Programme of work from May 19th and onwards!

- MAY.
- 19th.—Cambridge, v. Cambridge University.
  - 22nd.—Oxford, v. Oxford University.
  - 23rd.—Bristol, v. South of England.
  - 25th.—Lord's, v. Middlesex.
- JUNE.
- 2nd.—Birmingham, v. North of England.
  - 5th.—Bradford, v. Yorkshire.
  - 9th.—Sunderland, v. Durham.
  - 12th.—Nottingham, ENGLAND v. AUSTRALIA (first Test match).
  - 16th.—Sheffield, v. Yorkshire.
  - 19th.—Manchester, v. Lancashire.
  - 23rd.—Chesterfield, v. Derbyshire.
  - 26th.—Lord's, ENGLAND v. AUSTRALIA (second Test match).
  - 30th.—Northampton, v. Northamptonshire.
- JULY.
- 3rd.—Nottingham, v. Notts.
  - 7th.—Worcester, v. Worcestershire.
  - 10th.—Leeds, ENGLAND v. AUSTRALIA (third Test match).
  - 14th.—Liverpool, v. Lancashire.
  - 17th.—Glasgow, v. West of Scotland.
  - 20th.—Edinburgh, v. Scotland.
  - 24th.—Manchester, ENGLAND v. AUSTRALIA (fourth Test match).
  - 28th.—The Oval, v. Surrey.
  - 31st.—Swansea, v. Glamorgan.
- AUGUST.
- 4th.—Birmingham, v. Warwickshire.
  - 7th.—Cheltenham, v. Gloucestershire.

(Continued at foot of next column.)

# CRICKET ALL OVER THE WORLD!



By  
**WILFRED RHODES**

(the well-known England  
and Yorkshire Player.)

INTERESTING  
STORIES CONCERN-  
ING THE GAME IN  
MANY CLIMES.

IN the course of my cricket career it  
has been my good fortune to make four  
trips to Australia, four to India, and  
two to South Africa. Hence I suppose  
I may say I have done a considerable  
amount of globe-trotting. So the moment  
may be considered opportune for some stray  
thoughts on cricket in many climes.

### IN SIGHT OF SNOW.

My engagements in India have been with  
his Highness the Maharajah of Patiala, who  
is a great sportsman, with special liking for  
cricket, of which, in fact, he is a highly  
capable exponent. He has the record of  
making the biggest hit on his ground. It  
is a hit the natives often talk about, and,  
allowing for their passion for exaggeration,  
it must still have been a drive of very  
unusual height and length, for the Patiala  
enclosure is as large as that of the Leeds  
club at Headingley, and the ball was lifted  
out of the ground. Patiala is in the Punjab,  
about a thousand miles from Bombay; and  
as the nearest cities where one can meet  
many Europeans are Delhi and Lahore, both  
about one hundred and fifty miles away, it  
will be understood that we are not over-  
burdened with English company. The climate  
is delightfully cool—at least, at the time of  
cricket visits—and it is rather a strange  
experience to play the game with the sight  
of the Himalayas in the distance.

### A DANGEROUS GAME.

The cricket engagement itself is not exact-  
ing; in fact, there is an abundance of  
leisure, and this is inclined to pall upon one,  
especially when the novelty of the surround-  
ings has worn off. When there is a rainfall  
it is said to be dangerous to walk over the  
cricket field after dark, owing to snakes;  
but personally I never gave the reptiles a  
chance of an evening meal. During one of  
my visits to Patiala I went on a pig-sticking  
excursion, but I stuck no pig, and it took  
me all my time to stick on the back of one  
of the Maharajah's most noble-looking  
elephants. I decided after this to keep to  
cricket as a sport more in keeping with my  
"frame."

I have found a considerable advance in  
the cricket prowess of the Hindus during  
my visits. There are a number of good  
cricketers among them, but they nearly all  
suffer from the Asiatic's falling of im-  
petuosity. I have often been told how much  
they would like to send a Hindu team to  
England, but I do not think they are quite  
strong enough to tackle our leading county  
sides with real hope of success. The caste  
prejudices have been reduced to some extent  
by the influence of cricket in the dependency,  
but there remains much to be done in this  
direction.

### A GOOD START IN AUSTRALIA.

The first of my four visits to Australia

#### AUGUST (continued).

- 11th.—Lord's, v. XV. of Public Schools.
  - 11th.—The Oval, ENGLAND v. AUSTRALIA (fifth Test match).
  - 18th.—Maidenhead, v. H. D. G. Leveson-Gower's XI.
  - 21st.—Taunton, v. Somerset.
  - 25th.—Canterbury, v. Kent.
  - 28th.—Brighton, v. Sussex.
- SEPTEMBER.
- 1st.—Folkestone, v. An England XI.
  - 4th.—Chiswick, v. Civil Service C.A.
  - 8th.—Scarborough, v. C. I. Thornton's XI.
  - 11th.—Blackpool, v. North of England.

was in season 1903-4. I was told I should  
have the cover knocked off the ball when  
bowling out there; but as I took thirty  
wickets in the Test matches, and seventy-  
five in all games, with an average of a  
wicket for each 15 runs, the ball must have  
had a pretty thick cover. I started well,  
too, for the very first ball I bowled in  
Australia got a wicket. This was at  
Adelaide against South Australia. Hirst,  
Arnold, Braund, and B. J. Bosanquet bowled  
before I was called upon, and my first  
delivery found the wicket of F. T. Hack.  
In the second Test at Melbourne, when the  
weather gave us a real gluepot to bowl on,  
I had the good luck to take seven wickets  
in the first innings and eight in the second.  
On this tour Len Braund proved how won-  
derful a fieldsman at slip he could be. The  
crowd christened him "Birdlime" Braund.

### UNCOMFORTABLE "DIGGINGS."

Cricket in South Africa is not as pleasant  
as in Australia. There are long and dirty  
railway journeys, and the hotel accommo-  
dation left something to be desired, especially  
during my first trip with Mr. Leveson-  
Gower's team in 1909-10. The climax came  
at one place, where, on opening my window  
for a breath of fresh air, I had a full view  
and whiff of a dead cow! On another occa-  
sion Strudwick found cockroaches in his  
coffee. I like Cape Town the best of South  
African centres. The Newlands ground is  
one of the finest and most pleasantly  
situated I have seen. It is the only one in  
South Africa on which there is green turf,  
but the grass is coarse, and when I was  
there matting wickets had to be laid, as at  
all other South African smaller enclosures.  
These matting wickets, combined with the  
extraordinary clearness of the light, puzzle  
English batsmen at first, and have accounted  
for many early failures.

### BEYOND A JOKE.

A great joke—though some may say a cruel  
one—was played on David Denton in one of  
these South African trips. A party of South  
African and English cricketers arranged a  
motor outing, and a dead snake was placed  
on the top of the refreshment-basket. On  
the way one of the South Africans asked  
David to hand him a bottle of beer. Denton  
proceeded to do so, and, seeing the snake  
curled up, he gave a yell, and jumped clean  
out of the car. What he said to the joker  
afterwards may be left to the imagination.

### NEARLY A VOLLEY.

We struck Johannesburg in 1913-14 at the  
time the railwaymen had struck work.  
Martial law had to be proclaimed, and when  
we were leaving for a match at Randfontein  
we were held up by the Boer military with  
revolvers at the half-cock. The situation  
was not pleasant at the moment, but a  
permit and an explanation got us through  
without the firing of a shot. Probably my  
touring days are now over, but it will often  
be a pleasure to look back upon them and  
recall the many good friends I have met in  
both hemispheres.



# LITTLE FADS of Great Players!

THINGS TO LOOK FOR WHEN YOU SEE YOUR COUNTY PLAY.

**T**HERE are few things more interesting than the study of the little fads and foibles of other people. When I go to a cricket match I am, of course, primarily interested in the batting, the bowling, and the fielding; but I confess quite candidly that I find also a very great deal to interest me in watching the funny little ways of the players.

There are some fellows whom you would always recognise when at the wicket, even if you saw nothing but the funny little things they do with the bat, and there are bowlers, too, who have ways of their own: who have got into habits which do not really help them to obtain wickets, but which are nevertheless just characteristic.

Thousands of people have been amused in the past by the ways of Wilfred Rhodes when he is bowling. That very careful, steady tread of his to the wicket when about to deliver a ball became a source of constant comment when he was out in Australia some years ago, and it was indeed strange to hear the Australian spectators counting the steps—one, two, three, four—in a chorus which became a roar. But Rhodes has a step to the wicket which really tempts you to count. He has another funny little trick of dropping the ball on the ground, tucking up his trousers, and taking a good look round at the commencement of practically every over.

Mention of the ways of this famous Yorkshire bowler serves to remind me of Ryan, of Glamorgan. I have seen him time after time when, having picked up the ball, he will throw it to Mercer, fielding at mid-on, and then receive it back from this colleague while on his way to the spot from which he starts to run for the next ball he will deliver. Why in the world Ryan does this I have never been able to make out. It is just a habit.

Some cricketers won't be seen in a cap even on the hottest day—Arthur Carr is one of them—while others seem to find the cap almost indispensable even where there is no glare from the sun to be hidden from the eyes. Among the latter is Roy Kilner, of Yorkshire, and the folk who have studied him most tell you that they can tell what mood Kilner is in, and whether Yorkshire are fighting with their backs to the wall, by the angle at which this bowler wears his cap. How much of this is true I don't know, but I have certainly seen Kilner do some of his very best bowling feats when his cap has been so far from being straight on his head that it has almost been covering his left eye.

Undoubtedly one of the most interesting personalities of the cricket field to-day—and one of the most amazing characters—is Cecil Parkin, the Lancastrian. We shall never say that cricket has become too serious a game so long as we have men like Parkin. When he is batting he keeps the spectators in a continual roar of laughter. He will, for instance, shape to run after he has given the ball such a slight tap that for him to run would be suicidal. Then he will take a mighty swipe at a fast ball when it is already in the hands of the wicket-keeper. In bowling, too, Parkin is full of mannerisms. His favourite trick is that of putting his toe under the ball as it comes to him along the ground, and thus raising it to his hands without the necessity of stopping to pick it up. How many thousands of lads have tried to copy this trick I don't know, but I guarantee that my readers themselves, if they play cricket, have tried it, and found that it is not so simple as it looks when Parkin is doing it time after time with the greatest ease.

When bowling, Percy Fender, the captain of Surrey, has a funny little way of stooping in the middle of his run. He looks to all the world as if he is getting down to spy the middle stump of the fellow who is batting at the other end. The wide trousers of Bill Hitch, another Surrey player, have become famous, and there certainly always seems to be enough room in them for another person's legs as well as those of Hitch.

Patsy Hendren of Middlesex, whom everybody knows as about the best fielder in the game to-day, certainly doesn't suggest it when you look at him. He nearly always stands with his hands in his pockets, not because they are cold, but because he has got into the habit of doing this. Perhaps he hopes thus to lure the batsman into a false sense of security; kid them he isn't taking much interest in his work in the field. But, of course, Patsy is always terribly in earnest the minute the ball comes his way.

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Just as they have their little habits, so have our cricketers superstitions. Fanny Walden, the Northamptonshire cricketer and Tottenham Hotspur footballer, always puts his left pad on first when playing cricket, just as he always puts his left boot on first when playing football. If he put the right one on first he would, in his own opinion, be sure he was asking for bad luck.

Most of us would not think it was good luck to have a new hat stolen and an old one left in its place, but Maurice Tate holds such a view. In the summer before last, when he was staying at an hotel in Nottingham, somebody took Tate's hat—in a mistake, shall we say.

It was a new hat, and the one which was left was not new. But being without alternative, Tate put the old hat on, went to play in a match, and did very well indeed. He thought the hat had brought him luck, so he took it with him to Australia, and it is now among his prized possessions. Dick Tyldesley, of Lancashire has a lucky pair of socks, and it is his regret that they have now been washed so often that they won't fit him.

There are players who will not run for a single if it brings their score up to thirteen: they would rather dodge that unlucky number, and I could tell you of many famous players who carry horseshoes about with them in their cricket bags. All of which goes to show that cricketers are just ordinary human beings after all.

## A Word with the Umpire!

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

**N**ORMAN BAINES (Holloway).—Yes, it is quite likely that about the end of the War you saw Maurice Tate often in the Holloway Road, London, for he lived in that district for some years—long enough, in fact, to qualify for Middlesex, but he has never played for them, and if he wanted to do so now would have to go through another period of residential qualification.

**L. W.** (Manchester).—In Australia it is the invariable custom to play all Test matches to a finish, even though they may take a fortnight to get through. The only one of the Test games in this country which may be played to a finish is the last one at the Oval, and only then if it is necessary in order to arrive at a definite conclusion as to the destination of the "Ashes."

**H. CARTER** (Preston).—There is nothing to prevent Macdonald, the Lancashire bowler, from playing for Australia again this summer if it is considered advisable that he should do so, but I don't think there is much likelihood of his being asked, as such an action would come under the heading of the things that are "not done."

**F. SMITH** (Birmingham).—Pace may be a very valuable asset in a fast bowler, but don't get into the habit of sacrificing everything for sheer speed. The first essential is accuracy of length, but the minute you find that you are losing your length by trying to bowl too fast, pull down your pace again. You may get bad batsmen out with short-pitched balls, or full-tosses, but you won't get good ones out thus.

**F. KAINE** (Portsmouth).—All the Australian cricketers are regarded as amateurs, but it is a fact that they get paid for coming to England, and even get paid when they play out there. It is simply a matter of a difference of outlook on the amateur status as between England and Australia.

**F. PONSONBY** (Macclesfield).—The highest individual score ever made in this country in first-class cricket is A. C. Maclaren's 424 for Lancashire against Somerset in 1895. W. H. Ponsford, who is a member of the present Australian touring team, got five more than this playing for Victoria against Tasmania in 1923.

**R. MACDONALD** (Taunton).—Before they arrived in this country the Australians had their fixtures so arranged that they have a complete day off from cricket immediately prior to the start of every Test match—a very wise precaution, I may add.



"FANNY" WALDEN.





(Continued from page 12.)

Loder telling that beast Carne, you know."

"What was it?" snapped Walker, his eyes showing sudden interest. "You—you overheard what, Bunter?"

"It was nothing much," grinned Bunter. "Only I thought you ought to know it, old chap. I wasn't going to let Loder bowl you out and get you sacked, I can tell you. We're pals, ain't we?"

"Go on!" breathed Walker.

"Loder's fairly got his knife in you," grinned Bunter. "He knows you go out at night, and he's going to catch you if he can. I heard him telling Carne that he wasn't going to rest until he'd found out what game you're up to."

"Go on."

"He thinks you're going out to-night, and he says he's going to watch you and not let you out of his sight," grinned Bunter. "What do you think about that? You'd better look out, old chap."

Walker nodded. His face had gone suddenly pale.

"Was that all you heard, Bunter?"

"Yes; but it's enough, ain't it?" said Bunter. "Supposing—"

"Never mind that, Bunter," said Walker. "Here's half a crown. Now clear!"

Bunter chuckled and pocketed the half-crown. He hadn't intended to ask for anything this time, so he was pleasantly surprised. Walker was "toeing the line" with a vengeance!

"Thanks, old fellow," he remarked cheerily. "You can rely on me, old chap."

"Get out!"

Bunter grinned and got out. Walker lay back in his chair, his face showing the fear Bunter's news had brought there. He did not doubt the truth of it for one moment after the previous night's narrow escape. He knew the extent of Loder's bitter hatred and vengeance.

He was still sitting in deep thought when a tap came to the door and Harry Wharton came quietly in. Walker looked up, and his face cleared a little. He had not forgotten the previous night and what the juniors had done for him.

"Sit down, Wharton," he said. "What is it?"

Harry laid a pocket-knife on the table quietly.

"I'm sorry to worry you now, Walker," he said rather hesitatingly, "but—but I thought I'd better bring that to you. It's the knife we found on Popper's Island the other day. It belongs to that—that chap we saw there."

Walker nodded.

"And you brought it to me? Why?" he asked grimly.

"We—we saw you speaking to him, as you know, Walker," he stammered. "I didn't care to keep the knife any longer. It's rather a good knife, and it's not right to keep it when we know whom it belongs to."

"I understand," said Walker, flushing. "You—you can leave it to me,

Wharton. You—you haven't mentioned that chap to anyone, I suppose, kid?"

"No."

Walker nodded, and Harry was making for the door again, when Walker suddenly called to him. Walker's face had lightened as if an idea had occurred to him.

"Hold on, Wharton," he said. "I wanted to speak to you."

"Yes, Walker?"

"You did me a good turn last night, kid," said Walker slowly. "Would you be willing to do me another like it?"

"It all depends what it is," said Harry, staring. "If we can aid you in any way, Walker, we'll be glad to do it."

"I don't like asking a favour after what you did for me last night," went on Walker with an effort. "But—but I badly need help just now. I know no one I dare ask, and I know no one I could trust better than you kids. The fact is, I'm in a pretty desperate position, Wharton."

Wharton said nothing. He knew that without Walker telling him.

"Look here," said Walker, "I'm going to confide in you kids. The other day you asked me if I knew that the man on Popper's Island was Simmons, the solicitor who is supposed to have robbed my aunt—or at least, you suggested your suspicions to me."

"Yes."

"Well, he is Simmons," said Walker quietly. "I fagged for him when he was at school here. He was, and is, one of the best fellows living."

"But—but—" Harry gasped and stopped.

"I know it sounds queer for me to say that about a man who is supposed to have robbed my aunt of every penny she possessed," said Walker. "But you don't understand, and I am not at liberty to explain. I don't expect you to believe him on my word—you don't know him as I do. But I'm going to ask you fellows—you and your chums—to believe me when I say that I am not ashamed of what I am doing in helping Simmons."

Wharton said nothing.

"I'm risking a lot in helping him," went on Walker. "I'm being false to my duty as a prefect, and I'm going through the mill in other ways. But it won't be for long. Any day now something may happen that will release me from the task. But I've got to hold the fort until that happens. The police are after Simmons—you know that. They're not going to catch him if I can help it."

"It—it's risky for you, Walker!" stammered Wharton.

"I know that. I'm willing to face the risk. But I'm not going to ask you to face it, Wharton—not if I can help it. I'm going to ask you, though, to do something to help me—to save me from being collared. I give you my word of honour that I am not ashamed of what I am doing in helping Simmons, though I am ashamed of neglecting my duty here, and for other things I've been forced to do here."

"What do you wish me to do?" asked Harry. "I believe what you say, Walker."

"Thanks!" said Walker. "You saw what Loder was up to last night, Wharton? He tried to get me caught breaking bounds. He's going to try it on again to-night. He knows I'm going out."

"Oh!"

"I've got to go," said Walker grimly. "Last night I went, but it was in vain. I did not get the chance to see Simmons

or hand him the food I'd taken. I almost blundered into the keepers. They were watching the island. Old Popper must have seen Simmons. His men have been searching the island time after time lately. They can't find where he's hiding, though. It's a secret cave Simmons discovered when a kid here at Greyfriars. I've got to go again quickly, or Simmons will starve or have to give himself up. I suppose that mean old blighter, Sir Hilton, thinks it's a poacher or a gipsy hiding there. He means to catch him."

"And you—you're going to risk it and go there to-night?"

"Yes. But Loder knows I mean to go out. He's going to watch me go, and follow. Bunter overheard him telling Carne. I want to know if you and your pals can put a spoke in Loder's wheel again?"

"Oh!" gasped Harry. "I—I see."

"I wouldn't ask you only—well, I'm pretty desperate," said Walker, eyeing Wharton almost feverishly. "There's nobody I would dare ask but you fellows. You've been decent enough already, goodness knows. But—but—well, will you tackle Loder? If it ends in trouble I promise you that I'll take all the blame."

Harry smiled.

"We're always willing to tackle Loder without being asked, Walker," he said. "Yes, we'll deal with him if only to bowl the sneaky, spiteful rotter out."

"You'll do it?"

"Like a shot!" said Harry. "But—but it means breaking bounds, of course—unless we can deal with him like we did last night."

"Listen," said Walker. "I'm not going out late. I'm not risking that. I shall start just before dark. All I want you to do is to watch Loder, and if he follows to do what you can to stop him. He's keen to know what I am up to, and he's going to follow me."

"Not if we can help it!" said Harry. "That's settled, then. Leave Loder to us."

"Thanks, kid! I'll not forget you fellows when this is over," said Walker gratefully. "You'd better go and get your prep done now. Then you'll be on the spot to keep an eye on that cad."

"Right!"

Harry Wharton nodded and left the room. He had given the promise, and he meant to keep it—in fact, he was keen to keep it. And Harry's chums were keener still when they heard. They were quite looking forward to the task of dealing with Gerald Loder. But whether they were fated to be as successful as the night before remained to be seen.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### Trouble for Loder!

"HERE he comes!"  
"Quiet!" breathed Harry Wharton.

The Famous Five were crouching in the shadow of the boat-house on the banks of the Sark.

Dusk had faded into darkness, but a dim moon was rising now and it gleamed coldly on the rippling surface of the river. All was silent about them but for the musical murmur of the river past the raft. It was a mild night, with a warm breeze that stirred the leaves in the trees and ruffled the surface of the Sark.

The juniors were waiting for Gerald Loder of the Sixth, though they were



expecting to see Walker before they saw Loder. The juniors had decided not to wait at the school for Loder. They were taking no risks of missing him and letting Walker down. They had slipped out one by one and had made their way to the boathouse the moment Harry deemed it safe to risk it. And they had managed it without any trouble so far.

Now they were waiting, knowing that Walker would come to the boathouse, and that if Loder followed him they could not miss him.

Then a footstep had sounded on the cindered towing-path, and Frank Nugent had breathed the warning.

"Quiet!" breathed Harry. "It's Walker, I expect, but that sneaking cad is bound to be close behind him. Not a sound!"

"Rather not!" said Bob Cherry. "I suppose—"

"Dry up!" hissed Harry.

Bob Cherry subsided. The footstep came nearer, and a burly form loomed up and approached the boathouse doors. Apparently he possessed a key, for he soon had the big doors open. It was Walker, and in no time he had his light racing-skiff out, and had launched it. Then he pulled out into the stream and went speeding up-river at a good pace.

Still the juniors did not move, and the next instant what they had expected happened.

Along the towing-path came another figure. He stepped out from the hedge, stood for a moment watching the departing skiff, and then, as it vanished in the gloom, he gave a grunt.

"All right, my beauty!" he muttered aloud. "Up-stream, eh? I'm thumping certain it's the island! Gad! I'll soon dashed well find out his game yet!"

And with that muttered remark Gerald Loder vanished inside the boathouse. He was out the next instant, minus his coat and carrying his own skiff. He launched it, and then he ran inside again for his sculls.

"Now," breathed Harry. "Leave this to me, chaps! Loder seems jolly warm on the scent, but I'll soon damp his ardour a bit."

"But—"

"Quiet!"

Loder came out and shipped his sculls—or, at least, he started to ship them. But even as he bent down to do so, Harry Wharton acted like lightning.

Harry's chums did not know Harry's idea, and they were in an agony of fear lest he should allow the last chance to go.

They need not have worried.

In four quick strides Harry Wharton had reached Gerald Loder, and Loder never even got the chance to turn his head.

Harry's head took him in the rear, and, with a sudden, terrified yelp, Loder took a header over his boat.

He missed it by a hair's-breadth, and plunged headfirst into the river beyond it.

Splash!

It was a terrific splash—or, at least, it sounded terrific in the stillness, and the water that swirled up almost swamped the senior's craft.

"There!" murmured Bob Cherry, as the river closed over the head of Loder. "I fancy friend Loder won't do any sculling after that. Hallo, there he blows!"

Bob's chums nearly choked with suppressed laughter. Then, as they glimpsed Loder's head appear above the disturbed surface, Harry gave the

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word and they glided away, keeping well in the shadows of the hedge.

But they did not go far. They stopped twenty yards away and waited to see Loder's next move. They had not to wait long. Amid a gasping and gurgling, Gerald Loder half-swam and half-waded round his boat, and then he clambered out with difficulty. But he managed it at last, and then he stood on the staging streaming with water and almost mad with astonished fury.

For some moments he stood there, staring about him and breathing heavily, and then he took the sculls again and carried them inside the building.

"Oh, good!" murmured Bob Cherry. "He's had enough."

"I knew that would settle him!" grinned Harry.

The juniors did not move, however; they wanted to make sure. They watched Loder return to his boat. It was not an easy task to get the feather-weight racer out, but Loder was used to handling his own craft, and he got her out at last and carried the craft into the boathouse. Then he hurried out after shutting the boathouse doors, putting his coat on as he did so.

He came squelching along the towing-path, and the Famous Five did not wait to see more. They fled.

Loder heard them go—he could scarcely have failed to hear their flying feet on the cinders. But he still walked on, and then quite suddenly he stopped and listened.

The flying footsteps of the juniors had died away now, and silence reigned.

Loder turned abruptly and hurried back to the boathouse. He was inwardly raging with fury. But he was not done yet by any means, had the juniors only known it. Who the attacker—or attackers—had been the prefect could only guess, and he guessed they were the same fellows who had tricked him the previous night.

It was only too plain to Loder that Walker was on his guard, and had fellows to aid him. Loder's eyes glittered as the suspicion came to him as to who those fellows were. They were not seniors, he was quite certain, and his suspicions fell naturally upon the Famous Five, who had good cause to hate him.

"I'll find out, though, somehow," breathed Loder to himself. "And if I do prove it was those little sweeps, I'll thrash them to within an inch of their rotten little lives. As for doing me—well, we shall see friend Walker. I'm not done yet by a long chalk. By gad, no! I fancy I've got you fixed, you cad!"

Musing thus, Loder dragged open the boathouse doors again. His trousers were clinging uncomfortably to him, and he was shivering a little. But he did not realise it. He took off his coat again; and then, after squeezing some of the water from his drenched clothes, he carried out his boat again and launched it. Then he got his sculls, and a moment later he was speeding upstream, steering "by his toes."

As he pulled he looked ahead every now and again—he did not want to risk

blundering into Walker. In the dim moonlight he could see for quite a distance along the gleaming river, and he was ready to turn and race back at the first sight of a shadow on the water ahead, or the first sound of dipping sculls other than his own.

But he saw nothing and he heard nothing. He had his own ideas as to where Walker had gone—he had spied on Walker before this. He ignored the banks and only kept a look-out ahead.

The island loomed up ahead at last, without sight or sound of his enemy.

The most risky part of Loder's task had come, and Loder knew it. If Walker was on the island, then he would have to move cautiously and be ready to race back if necessary before Walker could glimpse his identity. Loder had a very wholesome respect for Walker's fists, and he knew what to expect if Walker did catch him spying.

He turned his light craft, and moved gently towards the island, backing slowly with his eyes scanning the dark foliage. He did not hide the difficulty of his task from himself, and he knew that his chance of finding Walker in the dark depended on luck more than anything else.

There was only a short length of sandy beach and grassy bank where a boat could land, and Loder was moving towards this when his eyes caught what they were searching for.

Against the bank, clear on the moonlit water was the dark shadow of a boat, and an oar, out at right-angles to it. There was no mistaking it.

"What luck!" breathed Loder.

He moved inwards gently, ears and eyes keenly alert. His stern glided gently alongside the empty skiff, and nosed into the sand.

It was then that the idea came to Loder.

"Gad!" he breathed. "The very thing! No need to risk trouble with the cad by spying round. I can fix him without that. He can swim, but I know he'll never risk a long swim like that at night. Here goes!"

He reached over and thrust the skiff off the little bank of sand it rested on, and sent it afloat with a strong push.

It did not go far—the drag of the sculls as they swished through the water, acting as a brake—but Loder did not worry; he knew the current would do the rest.

With the sculls dragging and swishing, threatening every moment to capsize it, the frail craft moved slowly away from the island, full in the grip of the current now. And Loder was just pulling away when a crashing sounded, and a figure came dashing headlong down to the water's edge.

"Stop!" came Walker's voice in an alarmed shout. "Loder—if it is you, Loder—Stop, you howling cad!"

Even as Walker shouted Loder saw him stumble and go crashing down, and he heard a cry of pain follow. But the next second he was up again, and he came stumbling down to the water's edge—limping badly now; Loder saw that even from the distance.

"Stop, you hound!" he shouted, his voice hoarse.

Loder did not stop. He gave a glance at the other craft, drifting slowly downstream, and then he started to pull in earnest, an evil grin on his sallow features. The next moment he was round the bend and Walker's voice died away in the distance.

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## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

## Loder's Revenge!

"WALKER'S for it!"

Peter Todd made that announcement the following morning as he met the Famous Five sauntering in the quad after breakfast. It was a sunny morning, and the chums were feeling pleased with themselves. They had "put it across" Loder, their "pet abomination" as Bob Cherry termed him, and they had also done Walker a good turn. They were feeling pleased with themselves in consequence. Certain they had not had the pleasure of seeing Loder since, nor had they had the pleasure of seeing Walker and telling him what they had done and receiving his thanks.

This last fact was worrying Harry a little. He had visited Walker's study twice the previous evening before bedtime, but each time he had found the study empty. Moreover, Walker had not visited them, and Harry had expected him to, in order to ask how things had gone. He felt convinced that Walker would be anxious to know that.

It was rather disturbing. Yet for all that, Harry did not dream that anything was wrong, and when Peter Todd strolled up with the announcement, Harry was naturally alarmed at once.

"Walker's for it," he echoed, looking suddenly at his chums. "What do you mean, Toddy?"

"What I say," grunted Peter Todd. "Walker—the silly ass!—was out of bounds all last night. He hadn't returned at rising-bell, and I believe he hasn't turned up yet. It's the high jump for Jimmy Walker this time."

And Peter Todd strolled on, shaking his head gravely. The Famous Five eyed each other, struck dumb with sudden, utter dismay.

What did it mean? What had happened to Walker?

They simply could not understand it. Yet it was true enough. They hurried indoors to make inquiries, and they very soon learned that the news was true.

The whole House was buzzing with it. Walker was missing—he had not been seen since before prep, nor had his bed been slept in.

It was alarming news for everybody, but still more alarming for Harry Wharton & Co. There was still some time to go before morning lessons, and they drifted dismally out of doors again.

They had just reached the quad when Billy Bunter came rushing up to them, his fat face ablaze with excitement.

"He's come—just coming in the gates now!" he yelled, pointing back at the gates. "Old Popper's got him. Oh, my hat! I say, you fellows, what d'you make of it?"

Harry Wharton did not know what to make of it at all. They stared towards the gates, and just then a little party of three came through them slowly.

One was the tall, angular figure of Sir Hilton Popper, the second was a burly gamekeeper, and leaning on his arm was a senior with white haggard face—a senior who limped badly as he walked.

It was James Walker, and at sight of him the juniors gave gasps of dismay.

"Oh, my only hat!" said Harry Wharton.

Just then Mr. Quelch, the Remove master, came out into the quad, and he almost fell down at sight of the three.



Acting on a sudden impulse, Harry Wharton stooped and felt for the key of the box-room door. Click! The key turned and the door was locked. He heard a sudden, startled exclamation from within the room. Then the knob of the door rattled and shook gently. It was followed by Loder's voice, hoarse with rage and sudden fear. "Open this door! Open this dashed door, whoever you are!"

(See Chapter 6.)

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed, in alarm. "Walker—Sir Hilton—What has happened? Walker, have you had an accident? Does this, then, explain your absence from the school?"

Sir Hilton rather stared at the Remove master.

"Huh!" he grunted. "Am I to understand that this—this boy's whereabouts were not known to you at Greyfriars, Mr. Quelch?"

"Most certainly not, sir! His absence has caused great anxiety and alarm. Dr. Holmes has been contemplating acquainting the police with the matter and asking their aid in finding him. But—but where have you been all night, Walker?"

Walker did not reply.

"Huh!" snorted Sir Hilton. "The fellow has lost his tongue, Mr. Quelch! I can very soon tell you that, however. He was discovered at a late hour last night lying in the undergrowth on my island up the river, sir! Yes, sir—on my island!"

And Sir Hilton snorted again.

Mr. Quelch was staggered.

"F-fuf-found on that island!" he stutored. "Is it possible?"

"Haven't I already told you that it is so?" snapped the crusty old baronet testily. "I received a telephone message about nine-thirty last night, and I understand it came from this school. It was to the effect that a senior boy from this school would be found on the island. I immediately got into touch with my men, and they searched the island and found this young scoundrel lying injured among the undergrowth. He has apparently sprained his ankle."

"Impossible!"

"Rubbish!" hooted Sir Hilton. "I have already told you, Mr. Quelch, that it is the fact. My men brought him before me, and, it being too late then, I had his injury attended to and placed him safely under lock and key until morning. I can get nothing out of the young rascal, and I have brought him

here to answer for his conduct. 'Trespassing on my land, begad! Huh!'"

If the hapless Walker had burgled his house and burned it to the ground the baronet could not have put more wrath into his snort.

Mr. Quelch looked at Walker, and Walker eyed him steadily in return.

"If you will be good enough to follow me, Sir Hilton—" said the Remove master.

"Begad, I will! Locke will not be able to find excuses for this young villain! He has been caught in the act!"

And Sir Hilton stamped up the School House steps after Mr. Quelch. After him came the gamekeeper and Walker, the latter giving Harry Wharton a glum shake of the head as he went inside.

Harry Wharton & Co. stared at each other.

"Well, that's done it!" breathed Harry. "Oh, what awful luck! That cad Loder did us, after all! He must have guessed where Walker was going, and he must have telephoned straight away on getting back to school to that mean old hanks. Oh, the treacherous sweep!"

"But what about Walker's boat?" gasped Frank Nugent. "Why couldn't he get back on that, chaps?"

"Goodness knows! I suppose his foot was too bad then to hobble even to the boat. It beats me altogether! Where was that chap Simmons when it happened, anyway?"

That was another of the questions the juniors could find no answer to, and they went indoors puzzled and dismal. They went along to their class-room, and on the way they met Loder. He gave them a malevolent grin, but he said nothing. The grin was enough for Harry Wharton & Co.

They went into their Form-room full of dismay, and full of rage against Loder. They had let Walker down badly, after all, though they could scarcely be blamed, as they realised.

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And, meanwhile, Mr. Quelch had reached the Head's study and led his followers inside. Dr. Locke was not in the room, but an urgent message soon brought him.

He did not look at all pleased on sighting Sir Hilton. The fussy, troublesome old baronet was one of his chief worries in life—a minor one, perhaps, but none the less irritating for all that.

"Sir Hilton—" began the Head.

Then he sighted Walker, and he started.

"Walker! Bless my soul! So you have returned, Walker! What ever has happened, boy?"

Walker remained silent, and it was Mr. Quelch who explained, helped by Sir Hilton Popper. The Head's kind old face set grimly as he listened, and he fixed a very curious look on Walker's composed face.

"Walker," he gasped at length, "what does this mean? What were you doing on that—that island at all, and especially at such a late hour? Answer me, sir!"

Walker said nothing for a moment. Then he looked up.

"I'm sorry, sir!" he said quietly. "But I cannot explain why I went there. I could not return, because my skiff had—had drifted away, and I could not swim the distance to the mainland because I had sprained my ankle badly. I fainted once, and then the keepers came and found me lying there."

"You are a prefect, Walker!" snapped the Head, in ominous tones. "You were aware that the island is strictly out of bounds to all Greyfriars boys. I have on more than one occasion made it known that the punishment for visiting it would be very severe. Yet you, a senior boy and a prefect, have disregarded rules and also my often stated views on the trouble caused by trespassers on that island."

Walker said nothing.

"That is not all, however," said the Head. "You have also broken the school bounds in leaving the school after lock-up without permission from a master! That alone is serious in the case of a senior and a prefect! Have you any reasonable excuse to offer for your conduct, Walker?"

"No, sir."

It was frank and calm if it was nothing else. The Head set his mouth firmly. To the Head, Walker's cool reply hinted of unconcern, almost insolence.

"Very well, Walker!" he snapped. "I will give you one more chance, however. Will you explain to me here and now why you went to the island at all at such an hour?"

Walker remained silent. But, though outwardly calm and collected, his heart was beating rapidly, and he felt almost sick with dread. He knew that his punishment would be very severe; it could be nothing less than severe. A junior might have escaped with a flogging; but a senior, high up in the school and a prefect—

Walker knew that expulsion was not only possible, but probable. Yet he remained silent.

The Head waited a full minute, and then he pursed his lips.

"Very well! It is enough!" he snapped icily. "I do not desire to be unduly harsh, however, Walker. You occupy a high position in the school, and you have, on the whole, a good record. I will give you until six o'clock this evening to decide. If you have not been to me before then to give your explanation, I fear that my only course

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will be to expel you! You will go to the sanatorium to have your foot attended to, and you will not leave the school precincts under any consideration whatever! You may go!"

"Yes, sir!" muttered Walker.

He hobbled from the room, Mr. Quelch giving him a commiserating glance as he passed him. Morning lessons had already started, and Walker went straight to his own study. On the table there he found a newspaper. It was that morning's paper, and it had been left there by Trotter, the page-boy.

Walker snatched it up, and looked through it almost feverishly. He gave a sudden bitter laugh as his eye caught something. It was the headline: "American Swindler Exposed," and underneath was a long article, which Walker scanned with gleaming eyes and a bitter twist round his lips.

He flung the paper down at last.

"So it's come at last!" he breathed. "But it's come too late, as far as I'm concerned! Gad! The sack! What will the pater say if it is that?"

And quite suddenly Walker's coolness left him, and he sat down at the table and rested his head on his hands. Loder had had his revenge, and it was a deadly revenge. But it was not of Gerald Loder, Walker was thinking of now. His thoughts were of home, and what his home-coming would mean to his people. They were bitter, hopeless thoughts.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### A Confession!

"ROTTEN!"

That was the view of the Famous Five—and a great number of others at Greyfriars in addition to the Famous Five. Whatever Walker's faults were—and he had a good number—he was popular, both in the Lower and Upper Schools. Loder little dreamed what a storm he would bring about his head when he did the thing that had brought Walker to this pass. For the suspicion that Loder had been the means of Walker's downfall had leaked out, and was soon common property.

Loder had been unpopular enough before, but his last treacherous action filled everyone with scorn and con-

tempt. He had had his revenge, but he was likely to pay dearly for it.

In their own study the Famous Five were discussing the matter with gloomy faces when a tap came to the door, and someone hobbled in.

It was James Walker, and the juniors stared at him uncomfortably. Walker smiled—it was a forced smile.

"Hallo, kids!" he said. "You've heard the great news, of course. There's a chance you won't get any more lincs or lickings from me—a dashed good chance!"

"I'm sorry, Walker," said Harry quietly. "We're all thundering sorry! We hope to goodness it doesn't come to the worst, though! We—we feel we let you down badly last night."

"What exactly happened?" asked Walker. "Yes, I'm afraid my dear old pal Loder has shot my bolt, so to speak!"

"We did our best," said Harry slowly. "We saw Loder come to the boathouse after you'd gone, and we watched him get a boat out. Then, just as he was about to get in I rushed up and butted him into the river head-over-heels!"

Walker grinned faintly.

"Go on," he said.

"We waited until he climbed out, to make sure he wouldn't do anything more in the way of following you. He took his boat in again, and started back for Greyfriars. We bolted then. We supposed he had had enough and had given the idea up."

"He hadn't," said Walker.

"We know that, of course, now!" groaned Harry. "He must have guessed where you were going, and telephoned to old Popper the moment he got back to Greyfriars."

Walker shook his head.

"He did that later," he said grimly. "He must have got his boat out again, for he followed me up the river. He came to the island and sent my boat adrift. I saw him just clearing out—though I only guessed it was he—and I rushed to try and stop him. It was then I stumbled and crooked my ankle!"

"Oh!" ejaculated Harry Wharton.

It was news to the juniors, and they gasped.

"Well, the howling cad!" breathed Harry. "That makes his rotten conduct worse, Walker!"

"It does, I suppose," said Walker. "Anyway, he must have gone back then, and phoned to Popper. It's done now, though, and can't be undone. I want you fellows to understand that I don't think you let me down at all. Far from it. You've been bricks over it all!"

"We weren't going to let that sweep score if we could help it," said Harry. "I only wish we'd taken more drastic measures now."

"They were drastic enough, kid," said Walker kindly. "It's done with now. But—but I'm going to ask you chaps to do something more for me now—one last request."

He drew from his pocket a folded newspaper and laid it on the table.

"I daren't leave the school—or, at last, I can't owing to my game foot," he said, "or I'd do it myself. But I'm not going to ask you to take any more risks for me. I ought not to have done so before, but I was pretty desperate. It's different now. I want this paper to reach Simmons, on Popper's Island."

"He—he's there still, then?" gasped Harry. "I—I thought that as the keepers found you alone—"

"I left him in the cave last night," said Walker grimly. "When I crooked and saw Loder clear, I tried to crawl

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back to the cave; but it was no good. I fainted once with the rotten pain. It was jolly hard getting through the undergrowth, and my foot was badly swollen. I shouted, too, but it was no good. Then, after I had lain there for some time I heard someone coming, and I shouted again. It was the dashed keepers, and they yanked me to Popper Court—took me across in their punt. They were decent enough, and if that old hunk Sir Hilton were half as decent he'd do!"

"You've gone through it, Walker!"

"I've got to go through it still worse," said Walker, his voice sounding suddenly thick and low. "It won't be pleasant to leave Greyfriars, kids, I can tell you! But I'm straying from the point," he went on, clearing his throat. "You see this paper. It is vitally necessary for it to reach Simmons as soon as possible. I'm not asking you fellows to take it, and I don't intend to, either. I just want you to get hold of someone—a fellow from outside—a villager will do—and ask him to take it to the island and hand it over to Simmons."

"But—but that will give Simmons away!" gasped Bob Cherry. "A villager is bound to talk—"

"It doesn't matter now if he does," said Walker bitterly. "Not so much, at all events! I'll give you a few bob to pay the chap for his errand. Tell him to stand by the old hollow oak—any villager ought to know where it stands—and whistle three times. That will bring Simmons out, and the paper can be handed to him. I hope he gets it before to-night, anyway—for my own sake as well as Simmons'," he added thickly. "I don't suppose anyone can help me now, but there's a chance Simmons can. Well, will you do this for me, kids?"

"Like a shot!" said Harry.

"Hear, hear!"

"The shotfulness is terrific, my esteemed and ludicrous Walker," said Hurree Singh softly.

"Here it is, then, and here's five bob, Wharton."

Wharton took the paper and placed it in his pocket. He hesitated, and then he also pocketed the five shillings Walker handed over.

"Thanks!" said Walker, in a low tone. "I'd like you to let me know when you've managed to get hold of someone, Wharton. Well, I'll be getting on now. I shall see you kids again before—before night."

He nodded and hobbled out.

"Come on!" snapped Harry the moment the door closed. "Get someone else on the job—eh? Not likely! We're going ourselves, chaps—at least, I am."

"And we're jolly well coming with you!" said Bob Cherry.

"Hear, hear!"

"Come on, then; we'll cut dinner for once and risk trouble. I don't think we're risking much by going to the island now. After what's happened there aren't likely to be any keepers about, and we know old Popper won't be there, blow him! We'll do it! And, what's more we'll tell that chap Simmons what a hole he's got poor old Walker into. It may do some good."

"Wonder what's in the paper," said Johnny Bull.

"Never mind the paper, let's get off!" snapped Harry.

The juniors got their caps and hurried out. They knew they were running a big risk, despite Harry's words to the contrary. But that fact did not trouble them much. They were used to running risks.

## ALL THE WINNERS!

### RESULT OF "PARS" COMPETITION No. 8.

A Table Footer Game has been awarded to each of the following competitors:

- S. BONFIELD, 15, Mimram Road, Welwyn, Herts.  
 ALAN SEATON, Verwood, Wimborne, Dorset.  
 W. F. J. COATES, 3, Hillier Road, Battersea, S.W. 11.  
 A. BASH, 34, Calabria Road, Highbury, N. 5.  
 E. K. ALLBROOK, Rosthwaite, Caterham Valley, Surrey.  
 ERIC H. THOMPSON, 27, Clyde Street, Lower Broughton Road, Salford.  
 JACK CROWTHER, 23, Westhill Avenue, Torquay.  
 R. BISHOP, 5, Stour Street, Canterbury.  
 G. C. MANNING, 296, Coronation Road, Bristol.  
 LESLIE LONGSTAFF, 51, Clive Road, Enfield, Middlesex.  
 EDWARD JACOBS, 121, Glenarm Road, Clapton, E. 5.  
 ALASTAIR MCPHERSON, 67, Charlton Road, Shirley, Southampton.  
 MASTER FRED MACRO, 42, Melford Terrace, Thetford, Norfolk.  
 STANLEY ALLEN, 29, Mona Road, Small Heath, Birmingham.  
 E. WALKER, 16, Crescent Road, Brentwood, Essex.  
 JOHN DOWNES, 2, Gillingham Road, Gillingham, Kent.  
 HOWARD SUTTON, 10, Regent Street, Birchills, Walsall.  
 WILLIAM LYNN, 130, Robertson Street, South Shields.  
 R. IRELAND, 812, Seven Sisters Road, South Tottenham, N. 15.  
 ARTHUR WARD, 89, Western Street, Swansea.

And Harry had a very good reason for hurrying. He had not failed to note the trace of hope in Walker's words when speaking of Simmons. Was it possible that Simmons could do something to help Walker in his extremity? Yet Simmons was in a desperate extremity himself. It seemed absurd to hope that he could.

The whole extraordinary affair, was puzzling from beginning to end, but the juniors did not worry their heads about it at the moment. Their one idea was to hand that paper in safety to Simmons. It seemed just an ordinary daily newspaper—indeed, the juniors had already noted that it was a popular daily, of that day's date.

At a trot, Harry led the way to the boathouse, and very soon the juniors had a boat afloat, and were pulling hard up-stream. The skiff fairly flew over the sun-lit water. The juniors approached the island with little regard of caution; indeed, they scarcely gave keepers a thought just then. They dragged the boat under the shelter of an overhanging bush, and they scrambled ashore and dashed off into the wood. They reached the old oak—the juniors knew it well, and Harry had very good reason to know it. There was a lump on his forehead still where he had crashed against its roots days ago.

Harry Wharton whistled thrice, and after a pause Bob Cherry did likewise.

Almost instantly there was an answering whistle, and the man whom they had suspected from the first to be Simmons came cautiously through the greenery.

He stared at sight of the juniors, then he smiled at them.

"You fellows come to see me?" he inquired.

"Yes."

Harry Wharton stared at the man curiously—rudely almost. His clothes were still stained and soiled, but he had shaved now. Harry guessed that Walker had provided him with a razor.

Certainly it had made a remarkable difference in his appearance. He looked handsome now, and his expression was certainly pleasing.

Harry Wharton handed over the paper, and Simmons took it, almost snatching it from the junior's hand. He opened it, scanning the pages feverishly, and at last he found what he sought. It was the letterpress headed "American Swindler Exposed!"

He scanned it swiftly, and then he laughed. It was a cheery laugh, and certainly not a laugh one would expect to hear from a scoundrel—a fugitive from justice. Yet he was a fugitive from justice, and the juniors eyed him very fixedly and without returning his smile. Harry Wharton & Co. could not forget that it was entirely owing to this man that Walker was in such deep trouble.

"Walker sent us with that," said Harry quietly. "I'm glad if it's brought news that is good. But—"

"It is good news," smiled the man. "I'll bet Walker was glad enough to see it. Well, it's let me out, and I sha'n't be sorry to leave this Robinson Crusoe dug-out of mine, youngsters. You were the fellows who came here the other day?"

"Yes."

"I can see you look upon me as a double-dyed villain yet," smiled the man. "You suspected from the first that I was Simmons, a man hiding from justice, a villain who had robbed a widow of her last penny?"

"Yes." Harry Wharton was not afraid of being frank.

"Yet you did not give me away," said Simmons. "Why?"

"I—I hardly know," said Harry curtly. "Unless it was for Walker's sake, and—well, I simply couldn't believe it possible. You—you were jolly decent to save me from the keepers that afternoon at risk of being caught yourself. I could not forget that."



"And because of that you felt I must be innocent?"

"All along I've felt that must be the case," said Harry, "and so have my chums here. It seemed impossible that Walker could back up a rascal who had robbed his aunt. We felt you must be innocent, and that you were only waiting for something to happen that would prove your innocence. The very fact that Walker was backing you up—was risking so much for you—seemed to prove that."

Simmons nodded. He was smiling curiously.

"Walker has told me about you fellows," he said. "I feel grateful to you for what you've done for him. I feel I owe you an explanation here and now. You shall have it. There's no reason for secrecy now. Well, I admit that I am Longford Simmons, a fugitive from justice."

The admission did not surprise the juniors now. But Simmons' next words did, however.

"I also admit," went on the man calmly, "that I bolted with a thousand pounds belonging to Walker's aunt."

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

### A Mystery No Longer!

"**W**HA-A-AT?"

The juniors stared transfixed at the smiling face of the man before them. Had he admitted that a few days ago they would not have been surprised at all. But they were surprised now. After what had happened, and after what the man himself had already said, they were prepared for a stout denial—a claim, possibly, that he was bearing the burden for another's sin. They had not expected a frank admission of guilt.

Yet he had admitted it now, and was smiling as he made that remarkable confession. He showed no sign of shame—far from it.

The juniors' eyes gleamed. A sudden gust of indignation took possession of Harry Wharton.

"You scoundrel!" he said thickly, careless of his words. "Are you not ashamed to confess such a thing—to rob an innocent old lady and render her penniless? Oh, you rotter!"

"I do not feel the slightest shame for what I have done," said Simmons.

"Shame!" exclaimed Harry fiercely. "Then perhaps you'll feel shame when you hear what your rotten, sneaking sponging has brought Walker to? I suppose you've played on his good-nature—persuaded him you were innocent with some lying story? You've ruined him. If he isn't sacked to-day, he will lose his prefecture, and be disgraced and heavily punished."

"What?"

It was Simmons' turn to stare, as if transfixed, at them. His face went suddenly drawn and white.

"You—you mean that?" he breathed.

"Yes. Walker was caught last night on this island. He was found with a sprained ankle in the woods here. He had been trying to reach you. A rascal—a fellow who hated him—gave him away to old Popper. His keepers captured Walker, and took him to Popper Court a prisoner. He has been there all night, and was brought before the Head this morning. He will be sacked for a certainty. That is why we are here now instead of him. Walker sent us. He still believes in you, you rotter!"

Simmons seemed to be utterly at a loss what to say. Presently he recovered his composure, however, and he looked at Harry grimly.

"Tell me all about it, youngster," he said quietly. "I fancy I can help Walker. I did not dream of this. I never even knew this island was out of bounds. Walker did not tell me; he knew, I suppose, that I should forbid him coming here if he did. When you were chased by those keepers, the other day, I believed you had been up to mischief in other ways. But, tell me all!"

Something in the man's quiet manner impressed the juniors, and he told all, though his manner was far from being anything but curt.

Simmons nodded when he had finished.

"It looks bad," he said. "But I think my story will have a great deal of influence with Dr. Locke. I will come back with you to the school at once."

"You—you'll what?" gasped Harry.

"I'll come with you now, and I'll do my best to clear matters up," was the calm reply. "But first of all, I feel I must make things clear to you fellows."

If I don't I shall fear assault and battery on the way."

He smiled grimly, and then he went on.

"I've already told you that I bolted with a thousand pounds belonging to Walker's aunt—a Mrs. Hubert Walker. Well, it is true enough. But I did not steal it—I merely borrowed it. The money now lies safely in Dr. Locke's study at Greyfriars."

"Great pip!"

"Yes, I suppose Dr. Locke would say something like that—though not so slangy—if he knew. But he doesn't know. I handed the money to Walker on my first night here. It was in notes, and Walker took the package, heavily sealed, and asked Dr. Locke to keep it safely for him. Walker did not tell the Head what it was, and the Head did not ask, fortunately. But I'll begin at the beginning."

He smiled again.

"As you know, I suppose, I am junior partner in a firm of solicitors at Merford. Mrs. Walker was a client of ours. She is rather a stubborn old lady and very self-opiniated. Very well. One day she came to me stating that she wished to invest all her savings in a certain oil company, an American affair. She seemed frightfully keen about it, too. Well, the moment I heard the name of the company I knew that she had got herself in the hands of American share swindlers, and I knew that the man behind it was a rascal who specialises in robbing old ladies and the like with his swindling companies. I warned her, of course, and strongly advised her to keep her money, and have nothing whatever to do with Jelks—that was the name he was dunning under over here. In fact, I begged and pleaded with her to drop the idea."

Simmons paused and grimaced.

"It was useless," he said grimly. "This chap Jelks had fairly cast his magic spell over her. She refused to listen. I talked and argued in vain. My senior also argued, and, finding it useless, he gave it up. I happened to know privately that a certain daily paper was investigating the business activities of our friend Jelks, and that it was on the point of exposing the scoundrel. That gave me an idea."

Again Simmons paused and grimaced.

"It was a mad idea—hopelessly mad—yet I felt it might come off. I realised that if only I could keep the old lady from handing over the cash until Jelks was exposed, all would be serene. So—well, when she handed me the cash to send over to friend Jelks, I just stuck to it, and stayed away from the office."

"Phew!"

The juniors gasped. They were beginning to understand a bit now. Their looks changed wonderfully.

"Mind you," went on Simmons, "I only intended just to lie low for a day or so, until the newspaper showed up friend Jelks. I'd been led to believe that its exposure was coming off almost at once. Well, it didn't come off at once—there was a hitch somewhere. Instead of that, something else came off. My senior partner, whom I'd fondly believed would never make a move in the matter until he was quite, quite certain that both the money and I had really gone, got the bobbies on my track. Well, I had to scoot in real earnest then."

"Phew! I should think so," said Harry blankly.

"It was jolly awkward," said Simmons. "Anyway, to cut a long story short, I

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remembered this little dug-out here, and I wrote a frantic letter to Walker, asking him to meet me here and to help me. He came, as you know, and he has helped me. I little dreamed what I was letting him in for, though. I think you know the rest. Anyway, the money's safe in Dr. Locke's study safe—or should be—and that is just why I'm not ashamed of what I have done."

"By Jove! I should jolly well think not!" said Harry Wharton, drawing a deep, deep breath. "No—no wonder Walker was willing even to let Bunter blackmail him rather than let the whole affair leak out. He knew what it would mean."

"Yes. He knew his aunt well, and he knew she would lose every penny of her money unless it could be kept from her until the exposure came. Well, it's come this morning. Here it is."

And Simmons pointed triumphantly to the newspaper heading: "American Swindle Exposed."

"I fancy that will send down friend Jelk's stock even with Mrs. Walker," he said. "Not only that, Jelks is to be kicked out of the country as an undesirable. So that's that."

"And poor old Walker," said Bob Cherry miserably. "He was thinking of you, too."

"Yes; he knew I was in a jolly awkward position, boys. He has been a real brick all through. He has showed pluck and the greatest unselfishness. And I'll see to it that Dr. Locke knows the full circumstances. You have no need to worry about Walker, boys. I am certain that Dr. Locke will be far more inclined to praise Walker than to blame him. You can take my word for that."

And Mr. Simmons, junior partner in the firm of Merrill & Simmons, proved to be quite right there.

On arriving at Greyfriars the juniors made their way indoors, cheerful in the knowledge that Walker's good name would be restored to him.

Mr. Simmons made his way to the Head's study, and Dr. Locke almost fell out of his chair as he recognised his visitor.

He jumped to his feet and fairly glowered at the man whom he believed had disgraced his old school.

"Simmons!" he gasped. "You have dared—you have had the brazen effrontery to come here—to visit me! How dare you?"

That was how Dr. Locke greeted his visitor; but after Mr. Simmons had been speaking for some moments the Head's grim face slowly relaxed, and his mouth began to open in sheer astonishment. And when his visitor had finished at length, Dr. Locke shook the hand of the Greyfriars Old Boy with great warmth.

"Bless my soul!" he murmured, almost smiling in his deep relief. "It—it is the most extraordinary story I have ever heard, Simmons. I—I really do not know what to say to you. But—but one thing is very evident, Walker shall certainly not leave Greyfriars. He has been gravely at fault, but I can understand the terrible position you had placed him in, and I agree with you that he has shown great pluck and praiseworthy self-sacrifice."

"I insist upon accepting all responsibility for what he did, sir," said Mr. Simmons eagerly. "I wrote that letter in great haste, and I did not pause to reflect I fear. I left Walker no choice



Loder came out of the boathouse and started to ship his sculls. But even as he bent down to do so, Harry Wharton had reached him and his head took Loder in the rear. With a sudden, terrified yelp, Loder took a header over his boat. Missing it by a hair's-breadth, he plunged head first into the water beyond. Splash!  
(See Chapter 8.)

but to do my bidding, and I fear he has suffered bitterly for it."

"He has certainly suffered quite enough," agreed Dr. Locke. "I will send for him at once, and tell him that no punishment will be meted out to him, and that he may take his usual place in the school."

The Head did. It was a joyful surprise to James Walker, and when leaving Dr. Locke's study he felt too full of gratitude to kick Billy Bunter, whom he met in the passage, much as he had looked forward to the time when he could kick him in safety. And then Walker sought out the Famous Five and asked them to join him at tea with Mr. Simmons. It was a high honour for Harry Wharton & Co., and they accepted readily enough.

It was a merry meal, and, later on, Mr. Simmons dined with the Head and Mr. Quelch. And after that Mr. Simmons disappeared from the eyes of Greyfriars.

That evening another event took place within the walls of Greyfriars. It took place in the gymnasium. Only Sixth Formers were present, and, at the ring of a bell by Wingate, James Walker and Gerald Loder faced each other in the ring with the gloves on. Loder had not wanted the gloves on—or off—but he had to have them on—the rest of the angry, disgusted seniors saw to that. What followed was not very pleasant for Loder.

Walker had a score to settle, and he settled it in the British way, giving Loder the biggest hiding that shady blackguard had ever had in his life.

But, though only seniors were present in the gymnasium, five juniors saw it all from the skylight of the gym—Walker had given the "wink" beforehand—and they enjoyed every moment of the fight. When Loder went crashing down for the last time, and Wingate counted him out, these privileged sightseers above raised a yell that almost made the seniors jump out of their skins down below. Loder had escaped trouble with the Head—luckily, Dr. Locke never did get to know who had phoned that treacherous message to Sir Hilton—but he had not escaped trouble with Walker nor the rest of his fellow-seniors. It was less than he deserved, but as he tottered from the gymnasium, aching in every limb, and sore all over, Loder felt that his punishment was quite enough.

THE END.

(There will be another topping yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, next week, chums, entitled: "Bunter's Treasure Trove!" by Frank Richards. This is the kind of story which goes down well with all Magnetites, so make no mistake about ordering next week's issue well in advance.)

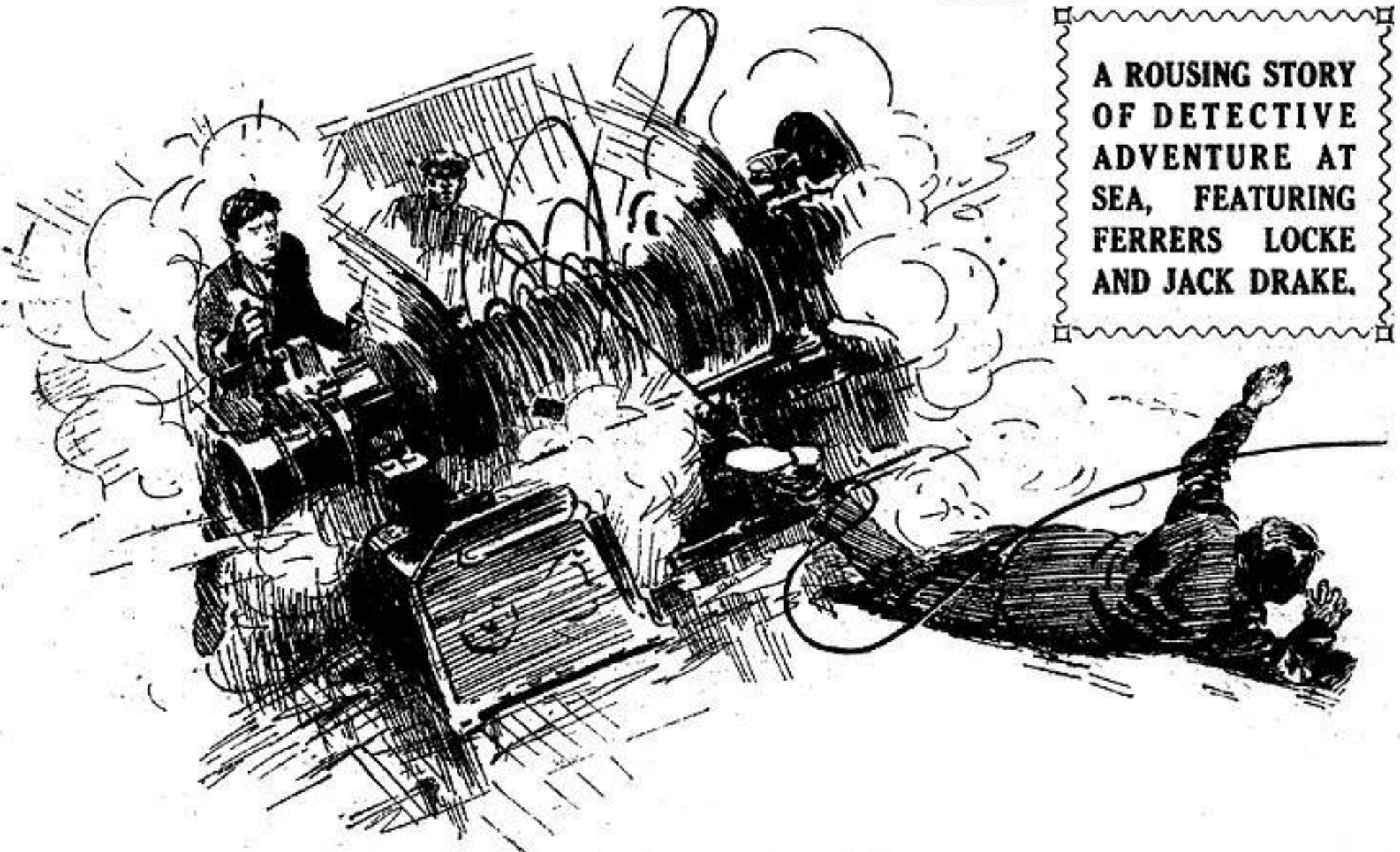
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 954.



NO KID-GLOVED PASSENGERS are wanted aboard Stromsund's trawler and, prisoners though they be, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake are told that they have to work for their keep!

# The Phantom of the Dogger Bank!

A ROUSING STORY  
OF DETECTIVE  
ADVENTURE AT  
SEA, FEATURING  
FERRERS LOCKE  
AND JACK DRAKE.



(Introduction on page 25.)

## Caught!

**F**ERRERS LOCKE, Drake, and Langsom spent the rest of the day in bed. Nothing happened to occasion a change of orders, so as it fell dark the trio left the hotel, and, led by Jack, made for the quay.

"It is fortunate that the sky has become cloudy," said Locke. "It will be as dark as a cloudy night in England in a few minutes. No one will see the trawler's boat making out into the bay, and that may possibly be fortunate. I shouldn't be surprised if Stromsund has some intelligent department of sorts in Reykjavik. Ah, here's the boat, all ready. Hi, you men, wake up, and sit up at your oars!"

Locke was about to step into the boat when he drew back suspiciously. The men did not seem anxious to wake up at all. Indeed, one or two were obviously bending over, feigning drowsiness.

"Back!" whispered Locke. "Back, Drake! This is a plant!"

But Locke's warning was interrupted by the men in the boat springing up and lashing out with their oars. Men from the quay behind came crashing down the steps, and Langsom was pushed forward violently, to cannon into the small of Ferrers Locke's back.

Jack Drake had stepped aside just in time, and he kept his feet, though Locke and Langsom had pitched forward, face downwards, into the boat, where half a dozen ruffianly fishermen piled on top of them.

Drake's brain worked swiftly. He leapt for the top of the quay where a chain hung over. He caught the chain, and swung his legs up as a burly fellow made a grab at his flashing feet. The man got a kick on the jaw for his trouble, and Jack, turning heels over head on the top, sprang upright, and dashed across the quay.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 954.

His escape from the causeway was no mean acrobatic feat! But men were hard on his heels. No one, beyond those chasing him, seemed to be about at that part. And two of the men seemed very speedy on their feet.

The young assistant ran as he had never run before. If he could only win clear he could raise the alarm and save Locke and Langsom. He could shout now, if he wanted to. But his breath was coming in gasps already; and he sensed a big, bony-fingered hand already stretched to his left shoulder. It was touch and go at best.

Suddenly, Jack's foot tripped on a steel hawser, and down he fell on his face with stunning force, not even having time to fling his arms out to break his fall.

The wharf buildings seemed to swim around him. He felt that they were receding from him, getting more blurry and faint and smaller every second.

Then he knew no more, for his head had thumped down on the hard stone of the wharf, and his pursuers laughed harshly as they picked him up like a sack of coals and carried him between them to the waiting boat, where Locke and Langsom lay on the bottom-boards, bound and gagged.

Still treating him as they would a sack of coals, they deposited him in the sternsheets with just that amount of gentleness required in deference to the bottom of the boat.

His captors, guffawing hoarsely, seated themselves, and a hang-dog-faced man in the stern said:

"Git 'long, quick! No knowin' when that there Blazes Proctor might happen along, thinkin' p'r'aps 'e oughter be at the quay arter all. Ship them oars, mates, an' row like blazes."

And the night being cloudy, no one saw that trawler boat rowing out to a steam trawler riding to anchor a little

distance out in Faxe Bay, steam up and ready for sea.

When Jack Drake came round he was first conscious of the fishy smell of a trawler. He was in some sort of dark hole down near the keelson of the ship. It was not pitchy dark, for light filtered in through a grimy port-hole in the steel side of the vessel.

Jack struggled to a sitting posture. He was pleased to find that his limbs were free. They had not bound him, at all events, so he could exercise his limbs a bit.

From the shape of the apartment, he judged he was up close to the bows. Also, water constantly slammed against the steel sides of the vessel, and occasionally the grimy porthole would be darkened by a dash of yellow water.

"Hallo, you've come round then, my boy?"

Jack started with surprise. Then his heart beat rapidly with relief. They had left him with Locke, anyway, and that was a great comfort.

"Gosh, sir, I nearly got away!" said Jack, "but I tripped over a hawser or something, and went down on my head. I'd have had assistance out to you in a jiffy if I'd won clear to a part of the town where I could raise the alarm. What's this hole we're in, sir?"

"The forepeak. Same sweet apartment I was imprisoned in once before—in the Phantom. Langsom fought when they bundled us down, so they gave him a tap on the head with a hand-spike. I'm afraid he has been rather badly hurt. I've managed to bring you round, my lad, but Langsom seems to have suffered severe concussion."

"He—he's breathing all right, sir," said Jack softly. "He could hear the steady respirations of the man as he lay on the old rope beside him."

"I think he will come round in time,"



replied Locke. "But he ought to have special attention."

"We're well out to sea, I suppose, sir, aren't we?" said Jack.

"Yes. Of course, I don't know where we're heading. But I judge we have been steaming for two hours."

"Crumbs! I wonder what they mean to do with us?"

"Not a pleasant thing to wonder about, my boy."

"N-no, I suppose not, sir. But still, we've been in tricky situations before in this case. Hallo! Someone's coming down."

**New Hands for the Trawl!**

**T**HREE big fishermen, each carrying a handspike, came down into the forepeak. They peered about.

"Don't try any fighting, my boy," said Locke calmly. "That will be useless—"

"'Tis well ye've come to that much sense, anyways," said one of the men. "What about that big bloke?"

"Still sleeping the sleep you've murderously put him to," said Locke.

"You'd better get him to more comfortable quarters, men, and have him attended to, or you'll be called to answer a charge of murder over this business."

"Mebbe three murders, so don't open yer mouth so wide," growled one of the other men. "You're fer the deck, an' we be going to shoot the trawl. Up ye come, quick an' quiet—"

"Best tell the skip about this big Dane," said the first man who spoke. "Mebbe he wouldn't want him to die here like a hog in a pig-pen—"

"Ay, ay, best tell 'im. But get these other two up on deck, sharp!"

Locke and Drake dragged themselves up the ladder, and clawed out on to the sunlit decks. They first looked round at the horizon. The Westaman Islands were in view to port, distant, but clear in the bright, northern atmosphere.

Other trawlers were out on the grounds, but distant. Their trawls were down and they were steaming steadily. The great otter boards of their own trawl were ready at the gallows for the shoot, and men were busy with spans and shackles.

Evidently they had just cleared the Iceland limit for foreign trawlers. For foreign boats are not allowed to shackle up their gear till outside that limit.

Men grinned at each other as they saw Locke and Drake. And the hang-dog-faced man who had been in the stern of the boat when they were captured at the quay at Reykjavik, came rolling towards them.

"Mornin'," he said.

Ferrers Locke stared at him coldly.

"I'm your skip," said the man, leering. "Been shanghaied, you have. Thought the days o' shanghaing was over, didn't you? Well, they ain't. This is one o' Stromsund's trawlers, though we be a foreign boat, in the view o' them Icelanders. Stromsund has got trawlers everywhere. He keeps two for the Dogger. I reckon ye know summat about them. But this 'ere particular craft is a honest fisherman. And we don't carry no kid-gloved passengers. Everyone works for his keep on my boat. So ye'll get below to the crew's quarters, have a nice breakfus', then tumble up instanter for jobs on the deck. You be deck hands, you two."

"Till you get instructions from Stromsund?" inquired Locke coldly.

"Ay, ay, till then. But don't you be

in too 'big a 'urry for them instructions to come through, matey. I reckon haulin' trawl is bad enough, but I don't reckon it be so bad as Stromsund's 'instructions.' Haw, haw!"

The man guffawed unpleasantly, and grasped his dirty, bristly cheek with a fish-scaly hand.

"Git below for breakfus' now," he said, jerking his head towards the hands' quarters. And Locke and Drake were pushed through the doorway.

Three men were in the apartment. Two were in bunks, asleep. The other grinned in the gloomy light as Locke and Drake blinked round.

"Make the best o' it, mates," he said. "There's some grub-oh, anyway."

"Well, I'm ready, even for that," said Drake, eying the lump of boiled bacon on the table, a fork jammed through it and into the wood to keep the lot from sliding off on to the floor.

"I suppose we had better break our fast and be thankful for it," said Locke.

With that, Drake and Locke sat down and began hacking at the bread and slicing the bacon. They were hungry, and did not see the force of going on hunger strike, whatever their misfortunes.

They were left alone below there for a matter of four hours. Locke went up on deck once, and inquired about Langsom.

"We got him fixed up nice and comfortable," said the skipper. "He's come round. Don't worry. I'll look arter him till them instructions come through."

Locke and Drake chatted with the man seated at the table with them. He had hurt his hand, and was unfit for work, much to his delight.

"Best if you had a maimed paw, too," he said cheerfully. "Lumme, it's no bobby's job trawlin' in a Stromsund boat, strike me if it is! Ah, there ye are, mates. You're for it! Best skip up

**NEW READERS BEGIN HERE.**

*FERRERS LOCKE, the private detective of Baker Street, and*

*JACK DRAKE, his boy assistant, have been engaged by*

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

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

*BLAIZE PROCTOR, admiral of Carr's fleet and skipper of the Stormcock, another trawler of the same type as the Phantom, on which Locke and Drake set off in chase.*

*After a series of thrilling encounters between the two trawlers, the Phantom falls into the hands of Ferrers Locke and his men. Leaving his capture in the charge of Carr, the investigator and his crew steam for Ingholdt Farm, Iceland, the haunt of Stromsund. Here, in the absence of Stromsund, Locke gains the confidence of FREDERIC LANGSOM, steward of the farm. Hosking appears unexpectedly upon the scene, but he is secured and imprisoned. After making investigations at the farm, Locke and Drake, with some valuable papers in their possession, and accompanied by Langsom, leave for the Northern Hotel to make arrangements for boarding the Stormcock. Their conversation is overheard, however, by a spy, who rushes off to warn Stromsund. (Now read on.)*

pretty slick, or the skipper'll be down for ye."

Jack looked at Locke, as the detective sat before him.

"A-a-all hands! Tumble up, there, t'haul trawl! Up on deck there, you below. No kid-gloved passengers on this ship, by thunder! Tumble up, an' smart!"

**The Menace of the Warp!**

**A**-A-ALL hands t' haul trawl! Tumble up, sharp, there!"

Jack Drake felt that things were going to happen. If he and Locke did not get above and put their hands to the net with the rest, then doubtless the rascally skipper would have alternatives in the way of indignities for the captives.

Ferrers Locke was sitting at the table, his mouth a straight line and his eyes glinting dangerously. Jack had seen that expression before, and he knew well what it portended.

It was inconceivable that Ferrers Locke would suffer the great indignity of putting his tail between his legs and obeying every wish of that villainous, hang-dog-faced skipper above. And yet that would be the most sensible thing to do under the circumstances.

Jack looked at his chief, and Ferrers Locke nodded, interpreting the boy's glance as one of inquiry.

"Please yourself, my boy. I should say that, as regards you alone, it would be best and most dignified to obey. With me, however, it is impossible. I am ready to put my hand to a rope or net with labourers under circumstances of my own choosing. But not in this way."

"Well, do you advise me to get up and join in, sir?" asked Drake.

"I do," replied Locke. "And for this reason. If you put your hand to the work I may be able to handle the skipper more easily. You have grumbled to me before that you have had no chance to have the experience of real fishing—doing the hands' work under such conditions as the hands have to put up with. Now's your chance. And you can rely on it being a trifle rougher than in the ordinary course of a fisherman's toil."

Locke smiled grimly. Then he continued:

"We'll both get above. It really sounds as if our rascally skipper is getting angry. Come along, my boy."

Together, Locke and Drake mounted to the deck. The winch was hissing and groaning as the big drum wound in the warp, and the trawler was rolling uneasily as the great trawl was lifted. The hands were all standing by ready for their labours, and they grinned unpleasantly as they saw Locke and Drake appear.

The skipper stormed over.

"Ye've been a blamed, long time makin' up yer minds!" he snarled. "Stand to it!"

Ferrers Locke stretched his arms.

"Yes, we've made up our minds," he said. "My assistant is anxious to have the experience of hauling trawl. But in my own case, of course, though I can put my hand to a job of work with anyone, I absolutely refuse to hook a finger in the meshes of that net."

"You—you—you—"

The evil little skipper spluttered with rage.

"Your remarks are hardly intelligible," broke in Locke. "But my training enables me to deduce things from outward signs. I take it you are angry."



"Angry!" The skipper snapped out the word. "By thunder, sir, if you flout my authority on this here ship, I'll take the extreme measures allowed by the law!"

"Don't talk of law, please!" broke in the detective. "Law is the one word you should not use to back up your arguments. I am a shanghaied person. Therefore, I have not signed on. Legally, you have not a leg to stand on!"

Here came a diversion. The winchman jammed over his levers with a yell, and the skipper leapt over beside him.

"Snagged!" rasped the winchman. "It's one o' these blinkin' rocks!"

"Slack away warp, then, ye blitherin' idiot! Slack it right out, an' then haul again. It should come then."

Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake watched as the great steel trawl warp writhed and twisted in its coils on the deck as the winchman gave slack. The trawl had evidently fouled a rock on the bottom. The idea of slacking away was to get the steamer back a bit, so that the haul could be made at a different angle.

"Now, then, haul again!" ordered the skipper. "She should come now!"

The winchman jammed over his levers once more, and the steam winch rattled away rapidly, drawing in the slack of the warp. The evil little skipper watched anxiously for the strain as the warp tautened, for then he would see if they were going to get the trawl clear of the rock or wreckage or not. If not, it would mean the loss of quite two hundred pounds' worth of gear.

Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake watched with great interest. Here they were about to witness one of the struggles in which deep-sea fishermen often have to engage. A snagged trawl! It means terrible labour, great hardship, danger, and discomfort, riding to the fouled gear, and trying a haul at different angles and at different states of the tide.

The decks become a shambles of gear and writhing coils of the warp. One has to have the alertness of a cat to escape the deadly menace of the warp, as it comes twisting and kinking across the deck, being wound in at highest speed. Many a fisherman has been winch-trapped on account of a kink in the warp getting a grip of his foot, with the result that, yelling in terror, he is drawn towards the great drum of the winch, and there stretched on the most diabolical torture-rack it is possible to contemplate.

Jack Drake knew all about this as he watched the progress of things on that trawler's deck. Skipper Proctor, in his bridge yarns with the boy, had related his own experiences in this connection. So Jack was on the alert for those curling, writhing coils of the warp as the steam winch rattled it in.

"Steady when ye feel the strain!" snarled the skipper to the winchman. "I'll go an' keek over at the gallus, an' see if she comes when the warp tautens."

The villainous little skipper came storming past Locke and Drake. Jack watched him closely as he approached, zigzagging along the rolling deck. His face was diffused with fury; but as Jack watched he saw his expression change. A look of most diabolical cunning came into his eyes. But it was

only a flash—gone as quickly as it had come.

Then the skipper drew near. "Git out o' the way, you!" he snarled, hurling his weight at Ferrers Locke, with such suddenness that the detective staggered sideways.

Jack Drake sprang forward with a cry of horror. Wild shouts sounded; startled gasps were heard here and there; and above it all the remorseless hissing and rattling of the winch.

Ferrers Locke's foot had caught in the warp. The grip had tautened, and the detective being flung flat on the deck, was being dragged towards that winch with horrifying rapidity. Even that villainous crew stood as if turned to stone.

"Stop haul! Brake, then reverse, quick!" snapped out Jack Drake, his voice cutting across the ears of the winchman like a whiplash. The man's trembling hand shot out to a lever, but missed it. The next moment he was hurled yards aside as Jack Drake sprang to the winch.

There was a clatter and clang, a grinding of brakes, then a frantic hiss of steam. And the warp from the drum sprang out in twisting coils, while the crew yelled and leapt clear.

#### In the Skipper's State-room!

**J**ACK DRAKE'S eyes were wide with horror as he stood to that winch and watched his chief being drawn to such a horrible death.

The winch did not on the instant obey the clashing over of the levers. A steam-engine never does. And in such a mishap as a man being winch-trapped, the whole thing is over in a few seconds, the victim secure in the terrible grip of the drum.

But Jack had the brakes on hard. He felt the grinding grip of them as he slammed down the lever. He felt the jerk as the slide valve went into adjustment for the reverse. The hissing steam wreathed and twirled round him and blotted out his view. The last thing he had seen was the foot of Ferrers Locke being actually lifted by the warp and coming close up to the drum.

Jack groaned as the steam clouded round him—groaned aloud. It needed a sharp winchman to save Ferrers Locke's life, so what hope had Drake of accomplishing it, when the accident was half-over before he had got hand and foot on the levers?

Look Out for  
a Special  
"DAVID  
GOODWIN"  
Serial—  
Coming Along  
Shortly, Chums!

He heard the loosening coils of the warp tap-tapping on the steel deck as the winch rattled on the reverse. But the steam still blinded his vision, so he did not know how Ferrers Locke was faring as those loosening coils threw him free of the drum.

Sick at heart, Jack at last shut off power, then sprang round the winch. The first thing he saw when clear of the steam was Ferrers Locke being helped to his feet by two men. And the detective, though his face was white, was conscious and actually smiling weakly.

Locke held out his hand to Jack. "Thank you, my boy!" he said. "A near thing that! Look at my foot."

Locke held his right foot out towards Jack, and the boy felt giddy as he stared at it. The heel and the sole had been torn off the upper part of the boot! But the detective's foot, though numbed, was quite unurt.

"How many of you men saw how that happened?" asked Locke, flashing round on the group of rough fishermen standing by. "How it was I got caught in the warp, I mean."

"None o' us," growled a man close by. "None o' us, Mr. Bloomin' Detective, so don't you go for to think ye can trump up any case agen our skip. 'Sides, I reckon you won't have no use for cases before long. Still, I won't go for to say as that'll be worsen'n being winch-trapped, by thunder!"

"That's the opinion of all of you?" asked Locke coldly, looking round at the sullen faces about him.

"Ay, ay, all of us," said another man. "None of us saw nothing, so there ye are."

"I see," replied Locke, limping off towards the skipper's state-room, into which the rascally little skipper had disappeared, doubtless afraid to witness the effect of his own handiwork. "Come along, my boy; we'll see if we can get an explanation from aft."

Locke and Drake passed along the decks, the scowling men not interfering in the least.

"Stand by the winch—you!" snarled the mate. "See if she'll come now. If that there trawl be properly snagged, by thunder, ye can take it, mates, as there's three blamed jonahs aboard!"

Locke and Drake heard no more. They opened the state-room door, and there they saw the villainous skipper sitting at the table with a revolver in his hand.

"I'm keepin' this li'l toy like this 'ere," snarled the skipper viciously. "Well, what ye got t' say?"

Locke entered the state-room, Jack following, and sat down on a locker.

"I just want to bring something to your notice," said Locke calmly. "You relieved me, my assistant, and Mr. Langsom of all we had in our pockets."

"Well, what of it? And I'll keep it all, too."

"Certainly," replied Locke coolly. "Most certainly, if you want to. But have you looked at all the papers? I'd like you to read, mark, and inwardly digest one of them, at all events."

The skipper, without shifting his weapon, flicked open a drawer and grabbed the handful of papers. He plumped them down on the table, and Locke and Drake saw that they were the papers that they had been carrying in their pockets when they were captured at the quay at Reykjavik.

"That long paper, there, with the seal on it," said Locke. "Just read that, will you, and then judge whether you want





Suddenly from the quay behind men came crashing down the steps, and Langsom was pushed forward violently. He cannoned into the small of Ferrers Locke's back, and both pitched forward into the waiting boat. (See Page 24.)

to have the fate of my assistant and me on your head, or whether you will leave Stromsund to bear his own responsibilities."

The evil little skipper opened the paper and read. It was the Home Secretary's authority to Locke to carry out his investigations anywhere, and in whatever manner he considered necessary, in British possessions.

It was an important-looking document, and it impressed the ignorant skipper very greatly. Great beads of perspiration started out on his forehead.

"That," said Locke, pointing at the paper, "is quite apart from the fact that I am one of his Majesty's liege subjects."

Jack Drake grinned inwardly, for the skipper could be as much one of his Majesty's liege subjects as Locke himself; but the important-sounding expression impressed the evil, ignorant little man greatly, and the sweat on his brow broke out afresh.

"I reckon Stromsund'll send word soon," he said thickly. "Anyhow—"

"Bear in mind, also," broke in Locke, emphasising his words with his forefinger, "that I am not alone in this case. Who captured me on the quay at Reykjavik is, you may be sure, well known to my colleagues. So, my friend, greatly as I dislike you, I am sorry for you if Stromsund does not turn up soon and take this terrible responsibility off your shoulders."

"I—I—I—" began the skipper.

But an interruption came.

"Spans-o!" sounded from the deck. "Stand by to secure the bag, mates."

"Is it necessary for us to go on deck

and haul the net?" asked Ferrers Locke, his tones like ice.

"I—I—" stuttered the skipper. "Oh, hang you, do what ye like, but don't give me no trouble. Stromsund'll be lettin' me know soon, anyways. Do what ye blamed well like, but stand well clear o' everything, that's all."

"That wasn't your wish a little while ago," said Locke; but the skipper had slipped out on deck, putting his revolver in his side-pocket as he passed through the doorway.

Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake remained in the state-room. Through the portholes they saw the great bag of the net slung up over the pound, and the cod-end emptied of its catch. It was a splendid haul, big codfish predominating, as they could see.

Drake went out on deck to see if he could get to where Langsom was imprisoned. He walked towards the pound, or place into which the contents of the cod-end are emptied on a trawler. The men were busy with the catch, sorting, and clearing the rubbish. There were, beside the cod, numerous "soldiers," with their bristly scarlet coats, the ugly monkfish, with gaping jaws, the "lumpfish," the "catfish," with a bite worse than its bark, great ling, and numerous other fish Jack had never seen.

But, greatly interested as he was in a haul in Icelandic waters, Drake's desire was to get down to Langsom. Everyone seemed busy, however, and took little notice of him. The men were gutting rapidly, the mate was packing away the fish in the ice, and the skipper was bossing around here and there.

At last Jack got beside the skipper.

"We'd like to see Mr. Langsom," he said.

"Ye can blamed well go down to 'im an' stop there," said the man, "you an' your chief. Wonder I didn't think o' it before. Hi, you, take our blinkin' passengers down to where ye've fixed up that there big Dane. They can look arter him. An' he needs a bit o' lookin' arter, from what I've seen."

The man, wiping his fishy hands on a piece of cloth, led Jack aft. Drake called to Ferrers Locke as they passed the state-room, and the two followed the hand to the lamp-room, where a rough bed had been rigged up.

On the dirty couch lay Langsom, conscious, his face drawn and white.

"Ah, here you are, Herr Locke!" he said. "I am pleased. I did not know what had become of you, and they would tell me nothing—nothing! What is the happenings?"

"A lot has happened," smiled Locke, as the trawler-hand closed the door on them. "But first, Langsom, how are you?"

"I have had a bad knock, but I am all right," replied the Dane. "Now, Herr Locke, what has happened?"

"First of all," said Locke, holding out his sole-less boot, "they tried to winch-trap me, and very nearly succeeded—would have done but for the promptness and presence of mind of my assistant. But that is all over. I have greatly frightened the villainous skipper of this trawler, so I think he will let us all alone until Stromsund sends word and takes the responsibility of holding



## "THE PHANTOM OF THE DOGGER BANK!"

(Continued from previous page.)

us prisoners off the skipper's shoulders."

"Ah, he will have no pity, no mercy, this Stromsund!" said Langsom.

"I don't suppose he will," remarked Locke. "We must hope that the Stormcock will get on our track, that's all. But Proctor, though a most worthy man, is slightly dull of brain where any problem does not come under the heading of seamanship or fish. It is useless making plans, in any case. We must see how the adventure develops before we worry our heads about how to wriggle out of the mess."

Locke and Drake examined Langsom carefully.

"You are, as you say, all right, my friend," said Locke. "You must rest your mind as well as your limbs. But

don't try to sleep, though I fancy sleep will not do you any harm. The concussion was slight, and it happened many hours ago now."

The three chatted together for a long while, and so skilfully did Locke handle the conversation that Langsom and Drake began to forget the deadly peril of their situation.

In the afternoon shouts sounded on deck, the thumping of a coil of rope on the steel plates above, then the bump of a boat, and the disturbance of someone coming aboard.

Soon after the skipper and three hands came to the lamp-room.

"Out ye get!" said the skipper. "Up to my cabin, and slick's the word!"

Langsom could walk quite well. And the three passed up on deck, Locke leading the way to the state-room.

The detective opened the door, and the three passed in. Then they halted dead, and a sudden silence fell in the

little apartment: for there, at the table, behind a revolver, sat a heavy-featured man. His face was puffy and sallow, his narrow-set eyes glistened cruelly beneath heavy brows. His thick-lipped mouth was working strangely, like a dumb, savage beast in a rage. If ever hate showed in a man's expression, it was never clearer than in the face of this man.

Langsom uttered a sharp, quick cry, and took a pace back. Ferrers Locke had halted dead, his eyes steely, his jaw set, and his shrewd chin stuck out in a determined way.

It was Stanislaw Stromsund, so lately Langsom's employer, and the instigator of all the cruel outrages by the phantom trawlers on the Dogger Bank!

(What will happen now that Ferrers Locke and Stromsund are face to face? Look out for some thrilling developments in next week's instalment of this splendid yarn, boys.)



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# NOTHING LIKE A GOOD START!



THE VALUE OF THE WORK OF THE FIRST PAIR OF BATSMEN.

By **W. W. WHYSALL**

(the famous Notts and England Cricketer.)

At times I get a feeling that we are apt to take a lot for granted in regard to certain phases of cricket. This is certainly so concerning the first-wicket partnerships. We read that Hobbs and Sandham have again given Surrey a fine start by topping the century before being separated, and we just make a little note that it is fine of them to have done the same thing on so many occasions. Then we turn to another place, and find that Sutcliffe and Holmes have established Yorkshire in a firm position for the rest of the match by a splendid first-wicket stand. There are other cases which could be mentioned, too, of opening pairs of batsmen who make a habit of giving their side a good start. My point, however, is this: We note that this or that county has made a good start, but we seldom stop to think of the far-reaching effects of those first-wicket partnerships.

### THE CHAMPIONS' FOUNDATION.

The all-round ability of the Yorkshire side is recognised by every man who plays cricket at all. And I suppose that right down at bottom it is this all-round ability on all sorts of wickets which has brought such a fine harvest of championship successes to the county of many acres. But the remarkable way in which Yorkshire have discovered first-wicket batsmen must also have played quite an important part in the success of the side as a whole. In days of old we used to read how Brown and Tunncliffe had given Yorkshire a good send-off, and to succeed this pair the Yorkshire county has been fortunate in the possession of Holmes and Sutcliffe.

### THE NEW BALL DEMONS.

Now let us examine for a moment or two the task which is set for the men who open the innings of a side, and the effect of the game as a whole on the way they do their job. In the first place, it is obvious that, generally speaking, the opening batsmen have the greater number of obstacles with which to contend. In the first place, they have the bowling when the bowlers are fresh. Every captain, too, puts on what he considers his best bowlers for a start, while it should not be overlooked that there is a new ball at the start of the match, and things are possible with a new ball which, to the same extent, are not possible after the newness has worn off. There are quite a number of bowlers to-day who can make excellent use of a new ball; but, of course, the demon in this respect was George Hirst, that famous Yorkshireman who was always called up the minute a new ball appeared on the scene.

### WHAT THE AVERAGES DON'T TELL.

It is clear then that, in the ordinary course of events, the opening pair of batsmen face the heat of the opposition attack. In passing, I may refer here to those abominations of cricket which are called the averages. It seems to me that if we have averages which will really show the merits of the players concerned—though individual merit should not enter into this cricket question—then those averages should show the position which a player occupies in his side's batting list. The man who goes in first is the player on whom the responsibility weighs most heavily. They know, those first-wicket men, that possibly the course of the whole match may be affected by the stand they make. I might put the matter in another way, and say that it does not by any means follow that you can reckon the value of the work of the opening pair by the number of runs these fellows actually score.

### "NOTHING SUCCEEDS—"

Suppose for one moment that the first-wicket partnership is very quickly broken up—in the first over or two. The opponents are delighted, naturally, but they are rather more than delighted; they are apt to be inspired. The bowler getting wickets usually bowls better than the man who is not meeting with success. It is natural to be inspired by early success. Time after time I have seen batting sides run through in the most unexpected way, and at the end I have felt convinced that the secret of the collapse was to be found in the fact that the opening batsmen were got rid of quickly.

### HOBBS—CAUSE AND EFFECT.

The men in the field are more completely on their toes early in the innings than they are at the end of a long day of scouting, and just as the bowlers are apt to send them down better if they meet with early success, so are the fielders more completely enthusiastic to help the bowlers supplement that success. Not so long ago Surrey collapsed in rather a startling fashion against Lancashire, and some time later I was chatting with one of the Lancashire men about it. He declared that the moral effect of getting rid of Jack Hobbs quickly was amazing. The whole Lancashire team played as if inspired. And I should not be surprised to find that the moral effect on the Surrey team of the cheap dismissal of Hobbs was equally amazing from the other point of view. In cricket, as in many other things, a good start is half the battle.

### STOLID GEORGE GUNN.

The previous paragraph shows the effect of a bad start by the batting side very clearly. Consequently, there is little necessity to point to the other side of the story—the effect of a good send-off. The fine edge goes off the bowling, the fielders become a little less alert, and it is comparatively easy for the later batsmen to make runs at a fair pace, and thus cement the good start. This brings me to another point—the temperament of the opening batsmen. In making mention of this word temperament, there is a fine opening batsman who springs to my mind in my fellow-countyman, George Gunn. Many a time has the word stolid been used to illustrate the batting of George Gunn, and sometimes, too, he has been accused of excessive caution. Consequently, it may surprise my readers to know that by instinct George Gunn is what I should call a free-hitting batsman. But the making of runs quickly means the taking of risks, and, placed in the position of opening the innings for Notts, Gunn has always realised the important part he had to play.

### TEMPERAMENT.

In conclusion, it may be said that cricketers generally should not be so much affected by good and bad starts as they obviously are. Perhaps we shouldn't, but we are only human—or, at least, we English players are only human. One reason why we were defeated in Australia was that our opponents seemed to be less affected by what I might call outside considerations than we are.

*W. W. Whysall*

WHETHER Herbert Strudwick will play for England again in Test Matches this season, I don't know, but in any case there are two good reasons for prying into his affairs. One is that if he doesn't play again we shall be doing homage to a wonder-man who is not forty-six years of age, and the other reason is that if events show that he has finished his Test career, then this is the proper time to pay tribute.

# Good Old "Struddy!"

A nutshell biography of one of the most romantic figures in English Cricket.

BY "PAUL PRY."  
(Our Travelling Correspondent.)

You know, of course, that "Good Old Struddy" was the England wicket-keeper in Australia in the winter before last, and there were people out there who said that he kept better in that series than he had ever done before. In the term "Good Old Struddy" there is really nothing but affection. Take some friend of yours down to the Oval one day—a friend who knows nothing about cricket. And when, in the course of the match, your friend sees "Struddy" dashing from the wicket towards the boundary to chase a leg hit tell your friend that the chaser is forty-six years of age. He won't believe you, and neither would anybody else who didn't know.

It is often said, and Strudwick himself repeated the phrase to me only a very short time ago, that there are two sorts of fools who play cricket—the first is the man who bowls fast and the other is the fellow who keeps wicket to fast bowling. Well, somebody must bowl fast, and somebody must keep wicket to runs, and there is no doubt that the wicket-keeper is best told by his hands. Struddy's are just a mass of knots and gashes, but there are compensations in the job, as the Surrey keeper himself said.

"We used to have two rather fast bowlers in the Surrey team," he said. "One of them seemed to take a delight in knocking a finger out of joint, and the other took an equal delight in putting it back again!"

So many years have passed since Strudwick first kept wicket for Surrey that not many people now know the full story of how he got into big cricket. Hence it may be of interest if I recall the story as Strudwick himself tells it, as incidentally the story shows how desperately anxious he was to get on in the game which has claimed him.

"The first time I ever had the gloves on for cricket was in a small match at Mitcham, where I was born, and when I was playing for a team of choir-boys. I was about twelve years of age then. It was probably more by accident than design that I had to take the place of the wicket-keeper, but I found the position quite interesting, and so I stuck to it. You see, when you are behind the wicket you have a very good view of the play; know exactly what sort of bowling the fellows are sending down and get to know all the little points of strength and weakness of the men who bat. Anyway, as I say, wicket-keeping began to fascinate me.

"One of the supporters of cricket in the Mitcham district took a great interest in the doings of we lads, and it was his kindly advice and help which assisted me personally to develop as a wicket-keeper. When I got older I joined the Mitcham Wanderers cricket club, for whom Bale, who played for Worcester, then kept wicket. Bale was evidently wiser than I was, for I had no sooner got into the side than he gave up the gloves and the pads to me, and went in for batting and bowling instead of wicket-keeping.

"One morning at my home there was what might be called a red letter waiting for me. It was in the shape of a postcard asking me to go to the Oval and take "everything" with me. You will probably laugh at this, but in order to be on the safe side, I took balls, wickets, bails along with me, as well as my gloves and pads. I think I should have taken a roller and a dressing-room with me as well, if I could have carried them, so excited was I at the prospect of having a trial on the Surrey ground. When I got to the ground I was put through my paces, received one nasty blow with the ball, retired hurt, and was told that I was too young. I was then only sixteen years of age, but two years later my ambition was

realised to a certain extent, for I was taken on the ground staff at the Oval.

Personally, I always regard the wicket-keeper as a sort of martyr, and I got the feeling when looking at Strudwick that he has the same idea. In fact, he once said that there was only one real delight in cricket and that was getting runs. But if it is really true that he doesn't enjoy wicket-keeping—and I fancy he is pulling a leg when he says he doesn't—then all I can say is that good old Struddy deserves a Victoria Cross for resolution. See him at the end of the longest and most gruelling day in the field, and you will still see the alert little figure, bending low for every ball, ever ready to snap off the bails, and quick as lightning to take those snicks on the leg side which have caused the downfall of many a batsman at the very moment when he has been telling himself that he had booked a boundary.

There is a certain obvious joy of life about Struddy's batting which is absent from his wicket-keeping. Regular attenders rock with laughter when Bertie wipes one to the boundary. No straight bat, orthodox stuff about his batting; he just swings that piece of wood round much as the reaper swings the scythe. Often he misses altogether, and the people around us do him justice, and say that there have been occasions when with the bat he has scored most useful runs, and there have even been occasions when he has kept his end up to enable other people to get the runs, for he is nearly always last man in.

He tells of one "very fine innings" which he played against the South Africans at Johannesburg in 1910. England were left with 244 runs to get for victory in the last innings, but 34 were still required when the little man, all bat and pads, joined Thompson, the Northamptonshire player. Struddy stuck there with his bat in front, letting the ball play it, and gradually the score mounted nearer and nearer to the total required for victory. Fourteen of them were ticked off, but then Thompson got out. And Strudwick carried out his bat, after being at the wicket for nearly half an hour, for the grand total of one, not out.

A very fine innings, don't you think?



HERBERT STRUDWICK.

## The Australians' Hefty Programme of work from May 19th and onwards!

- MAY.
- 19th.—Cambridge, v. Cambridge University.
  - 22nd.—Oxford, v. Oxford University.
  - 23rd.—Bristol, v. South of England.
  - 27th.—Lord's, v. Middlesex.
- JUNE.
- 2nd.—Birmingham, v. North of England.
  - 5th.—Bradford, v. Yorkshire.
  - 9th.—Sunderland, v. Durham.
  - 12th.—Nottingham, ENGLAND v. AUSTRALIA (first Test match).
  - 16th.—Sheffield, v. Yorkshire.
  - 19th.—Manchester, v. Lancashire.
  - 23rd.—Chesterfield, v. Derbyshire.
  - 26th.—Lord's, ENGLAND v. AUSTRALIA (second Test match).
  - 30th.—Northampton, v. Northamptonshire.
- JULY.
- 3rd.—Nottingham, v. Notts.
  - 7th.—Worcester, v. Worcestershire.
  - 10th.—Leeds, ENGLAND v. AUSTRALIA (third Test match).
  - 14th.—Liverpool, v. Lancashire.
  - 17th.—Glasgow, v. West of Scotland.
  - 20th.—Edinburgh, v. Scotland.
  - 24th.—Manchester, ENGLAND v. AUSTRALIA (fourth Test match).
  - 28th.—The Oval, v. Surrey.
  - 31st.—Swansea, v. Glamorgan.
- AUGUST.
- 4th.—Birmingham, v. Warwickshire.
  - 7th.—Cheltenham, v. Gloucestershire.
- (Continued at foot of next column.)

# CRICKET ALL OVER THE WORLD!



By **WILFRED RHODES**

(the well-known England and Yorkshire Player.)

INTERESTING STORIES CONCERNING THE GAME IN MANY CLIMES.

IN the course of my cricket career I have had my good fortune to make four trips to Australia, four to India, and two to South Africa. Hence I suppose I may say I have done a considerable amount of globe-trotting. So the moment may be considered opportune for some stray thoughts on cricket in many climes.

### IN SIGHT OF SNOW.

My engagements in India have been with his Highness the Maharajah of Patiala, who is a great sportsman, with special liking for cricket, of which, in fact, he is a highly capable exponent. He has the record of making the biggest hit on his ground. It is a hit the natives often talk about, and, allowing for their passion for exaggeration, it must still have been a drive of very unusual height and length, for the Patiala enclosure is as large as that of the Leeds club at Headingley, and the ball was lifted out of the ground. Patiala is in the Punjab, about a thousand miles from Bombay; and as the nearest cities, where one can meet many Europeans are Delhi and Lahore, both about one hundred and fifty miles away, it will be understood that we are not overburdened with English company. The climate is delightfully cool—at least, at the time of cricket visits—and it is rather a strange experience to play the game with the sight of the Himalayas in the distance.

### A DANGEROUS GAME.

The cricket engagement itself is not exacting; in fact, there is an abundance of leisure, and this is inclined to pall upon one, especially when the novelty of the surroundings has worn off. When there is a rainfall it is said to be dangerous to walk over the cricket field after dark, owing to snakes; but personally I never gave the reptiles a chance of an evening meal. During one of my visits to Patiala I went on a pig-sticking excursion, but I stuck no pig, and it took me all my time to stick on the back of one of the Maharajah's most noble-looking elephants. I decided after this to keep to cricket as a sport more in keeping with my "frame."

I have found a considerable advance in the cricket prowess of the Hindus during my visits. There are a number of good cricketers among them, but they nearly all suffer from the Asiatic's falling of impetuosity. I have often been told how much they would like to send a Hindu team to England, but I do not think they are quite strong enough to tackle our leading county sides with real hope of success. The caste prejudices have been reduced to some extent by the influence of cricket in the dependency, but there remains much to be done in this direction.

### A GOOD START IN AUSTRALIA.

The first of my four visits to Australia

- AUGUST (continued).
- 11th.—Lord's, v. XV. of Public Schools.
  - 11th.—The Oval, ENGLAND v. AUSTRALIA (fifth Test match).
  - 18th.—Maidenhead, v. H. D. G. Leveson-Gower's XI.
  - 21st.—Taunton, v. Somerset.
  - 25th.—Canterbury, v. Kent.
  - 28th.—Brighton, v. Sussex.
- SEPTEMBER.
- 1st.—Folkestone, v. An England XI.
  - 4th.—Chiswick, v. Civil Service C.A.
  - 8th.—Scarborough, v. C. I. Thornton's XI.
  - 11th.—Blackpool, v. North of England.

was in season 1903-4. I was told I should have the cover knocked off the ball when bowling out there; but as I took thirty wickets in the Test matches, and seventy-five in all games, with an average of a wicket for each 15 runs, the ball must have had a pretty thick cover. I started well, too, for the very first ball I bowled in Australia got a wicket. This was at Adelaide against South Australia. Hirst, Arnold, Braund, and B. J. Bosanquet bowled before I was called upon, and my first delivery found the wicket of F. T. Hack. In the second Test at Melbourne, when the weather gave us a real gluepot to bowl on, I had the good luck to take seven wickets in the first innings and eight in the second. On this tour Len Braund proved how wonderful a fieldsman at slip he could be. The crowd christened him "Birdlime" Braund.

### UNCOMFORTABLE "DIGGINGS."

Cricket in South Africa is not as pleasant as in Australia. There are long and dirty railway journeys, and the hotel accommodation left something to be desired, especially during my first trip with Mr. Leveson-Gower's team in 1909-10. The climax came at one place, where, on opening my window for a breath of fresh air, I had a full view and whiff of a dead cow! On another occasion Strudwick found cockroaches in his coffee. I like Cape Town the best of South African centres. The Newlands ground is one of the finest and most pleasantly situated I have seen. It is the only one in South Africa on which there is green turf, but the grass is coarse, and when I was there matting wickets had to be laid, as at all other South African smaller enclosures. These matting wickets, combined with the extraordinary clearness of the light, puzzle English batsmen at first, and have accounted for many early failures.

### BEYOND A JOKE.

A great joke—though some may say a cruel one—was played on David Denton in one of these South African trips. A party of South African and English cricketers arranged a motor outing, and a dead snake was placed on the top of the refreshment-basket. On the way one of the South Africans asked David to hand him a bottle of beer. Denton proceeded to do so, and, seeing the snake curled up, he gave a yell, and jumped clean out of the car. What he said to the joker afterwards may be left to the imagination.

### NEARLY A VOLLEY.

We struck Johannesburg in 1913-14 at the time the railwaymen had struck work. Martial law had to be proclaimed, and when we were leaving for a match at Randfontein we were held up by the Boer military with revolvers at the half-cock. The situation was not pleasant at the moment, but a permit and an explanation got us through without the firing of a shot. Probably my touring days are now over, but it will often be a pleasure to look back upon them and recall the many good friends I have met in both hemispheres.

*W. Rhodes*