

Remember  
Part 1 of

“Every Woman’s Encyclopædia.”

Ready  
Nov. 3rd.

Printing Set Coupon  
No. 9.  
See page 339.

# THE BOYS' FRIEND 1D

EVERY  
TUESDAY.

The object of THE BOYS' FRIEND is to Amuse, to Instruct, and to Advise Boys.

No. 490.—VOL. X. NEW SERIES.]

ONE PENNY:

[WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 29, 1910.

## YORKSHIRE GRIT! BY STACEY BLAKE



Stirring Incidents from "Yorkshire Grit." Our Superb New Mill-land Serial, Just Starting. Don't Miss It.







BY  
THE  
AUTHOR  
OF  
"THE  
ODDS  
AGAINST  
HIM."

# "EVER-READY JACK"



Our Grand Series of Complete Stories.

## THE ROAD TO FORTUNE.

WITH interest—to close account."

Jack Carton wrote in the words on the Savings Bank withdrawal form with a heavy sigh and a slight twitching of the lips, thinking with what pride he had opened the account that he was now closing by drawing two pounds and a few shillings interest.

Things had gone from bad to worse with him; it was useless to ask for a character at his last two places, and Mr. Gaythorpe, the grocer, who would have spoken well of him, had moved, and he did not know his address. For six months he had gone on drawing on his dwindling balance, greatly depleted by the gambling into which Lewis had tempted him, until now even that had come to an end.

And what was going to happen now?

The money he would obtain in a day or so would keep the home together for another two or three weeks, but unless he could obtain employment of some description by then, he could see nothing for it but for his mother to enter the dreaded workhouse, and for him to go tramping from city to city in the hope of finding casual employment.

Certainly Mr. Paulos, of Park Lane, the mysterious millionaire, who had sworn to ruin him, to hound him from each situation he obtained, had accomplished his threat, and he felt that even if he obtained a situation, he would not be able to keep it for long.

"It's cruel!" he muttered, as he descended the many stairs from the top floor of Dewson's Dwellings to go out and post the withdrawal form. "Everything seems to be against me, and I stand no chance of getting on."

He had confessed to his mother the whole story of his friendship with Lewis, and the money he had lost at gambling; she had spoken no reproach, but the look on her face had gone to Jack's heart.

As he walked back, he stopped to listen to a man singing at the corner of a road leading off the High Street. A shabby woman accompanied him on a portable harmonium, terribly out of tune, but the man's voice was good, and the words of the song came clearly to the boy's ears as he stood at the edge of the little crowd.

"Never look for trouble or for sorrow,  
Never, never quarrel with your job;  
Put off all your troubles till to-morrow,  
And remember that to-morrow never comes."

Jack drew in a deep breath. "By Jove," he said, "the song's right! What's the use of meeting trouble half-way? They used to call me Ever-Ready Jack, and I'll live up to the title. I'm not beaten yet, not by a long way."

He was whistling the tune of the song when he ran up the steps of Dewson's Dwellings.

A week later Jack Carton, with his

coat collar turned up and his hands deep in his pockets, was walking briskly towards Piccadilly Circus through the cold, drizzling rain.

He had seen an advertisement for a lad to do odd jobs at an hotel in Piccadilly, and after applying at two places in the City, had tramped westwards as a forlorn hope. His position was becoming desperate, his boots were down at heel, and his clothes becoming shabby, and yet he dared not spend any of his little store of money in replenishing his outfit.

He was sorry now that he had stopped to try the two places in the City, for it was nearly eleven o'clock, and he felt that many lads must have reached the hotel long before him.

He passed the front of the hotel where a porter in a gorgeous uniform stood just outside the lobby, and turned down a narrow street that led to the staff entrance where the advertisement had said applicants for the post were to attend.

There was no crowd at the door. Only a greengrocer's cart was standing outside, whilst a young fair-haired German stood checking the baskets as they were taken in.

Jack went up to him. "Where do I apply for the job that—"

"Job," laughed the German—"job! Vy he was gone long ago! Twenty, forty, oh, more zan that come here before nine o'clock. Ze manager pick one quick!"

Jack thanked him for his information in a dull voice, and walked back into Piccadilly again.

Another day was wasted! It was useless to apply anywhere now until the next day; the only thing to do was to tramp home on the off-chance that during the long walk he might see some building being constructed at which temporary hands were wanted, although he knew that, inexperienced as he was in hard, manual labour, he would stand little or no chance of getting taken on.

As he reached Piccadilly Circus, he heard a sudden cry of alarm in a woman's voice, and saw a little girl of about eleven or twelve dart from the side of a lady and gentleman that she had been walking with, and start to run across the road, apparently to look in the window of a large draper's shop that was filled with toys.

Then, almost at the same moment, came the harsh clang of a bell, and a motor fire-engine was seen coming down Shaftesbury Avenue at a great pace.

Clang, clang, clang!  
Traffic pulled to the sides of the road, the magic, awe-inspiring cry of "Fire!" was heard on every side. Policemen stopped the traffic from the side roads, and the great bustling, traffic-congested circus was sprung into confusion.

But Jack was not looking at the fire-engine, or paying attention to the shouts around him. He had seen the little girl jump back to avoid a quickly-moving taxi-cab, then apparently lose her head by the many shouts, half run forward, then turn back, and as she turned, slip on the greasy roadway and fall heavily right

in front of the great motor fire-engine that was almost upon her.

There was a cry of horror from the spectators, immediately followed by a slight, nervous cheer, for Jack, seeing that if the girl was to be saved, it must be done immediately, for it was madness to expect the driver of the fire-engine to be able to stop in time on such a slippery road, had sprung from the pavement, and dashed towards her.

Then it was all over in a few seconds. The boy reached the side of the pale-faced, frightened child, who was struggling to her feet, caught her round the waist, jumped backwards, and swung both himself and the girl clear just as the fire-engine, with brakes applied, skidded past.

He had a vision of a white-faced, brass-helmeted driver and a huge red vehicle, and then a woman had taken the girl in her arms, and a little crowd had collected round them.

A man, evidently the father of the child, turned round to thank her rescuer, and as he did so, he reeled, and stared blankly at the boy before him.

And Jack felt his heart beat quicker and the colour surge to his face, for the man whose child he had saved from certain death was the millionaire who had tried to ruin him and send his mother to the workhouse—Mr. Paulos, of Park Lane!

The millionaire, seeing the crowd staring at him, pulled himself together, and took a card from his pocket.

"Call on me at three o'clock this afternoon," he said, in a hoarse voice. "I—I can't thank you here. Policeman, call a cab, please. Don't forget, boy—three o'clock this afternoon."

Jack stood staring blankly at the card, whilst a constable assisted Paulos, his wife, and child, into a taxi-cab, and then the crowd began to melt away to go to their business, or to follow in the track of the fire-engine in the hope of getting a free entertainment.

"You'll get a fiver over that job with any luck," said a loafer. "Prosperous-lookin' bloke."

Jack laughed grimly, and moved away, thrusting the card into the breast-pocket of his jacket. What a strange irony of fate that he should have saved the life of his enemy's child—should have placed the man who had done his best to ruin him, under an obligation to him!

He went to a cheap eating-house and had some bread-and-butter and a cup of cocoa, then, after sitting there for some time reading a paper that a previous customer had left behind, he set out for Park Lane to interview the strange millionaire.

A supercilious footman with a powdered wig admitted him, and conducted him to a door at the end of the long, wide, thickly-carpeted hall, at which he knocked softly.

"In you go," he said to Jack, "and remember your manners, young shaver!"

Then Jack was in a luxurious study

facing the millionaire, who was seated at a desk close to a great roaring fire.

"Come here," said Mr. Paulos, in a strange, hoarse voice. "Fate has played a strange trick upon me, boy. I find myself under as great an obligation as man can be, to one whom I have done my best to ruin, one whom I hated as greatly as I love my daughter, whose life you saved. What do you want me to do for you, Carton?"

"Nothing," said Jack quietly. "I will accept no favour from you; you have played a cowardly game, but with all your millions you have not won yet. I'm glad I saved your daughter's life for her sake, and for her mother's sake. I want nothing from you, and I only came to tell you that you have not won yet."

Anger leapt into the millionaire's eyes for a moment, and then died away, leaving a look of great sorrow.

"Boy," he said softly, with a strange note of tenderness in his voice, "you heap coals of fire upon my head. I tell you I no longer wish you ill; your conduct this morning has wiped away all the bitterness I felt against you, and—and your mother. Let us be friends, for as I was a powerful enemy, so I can be a still more powerful friend, Carton. I can never repay you for what you have done, but let me do what I can. Won't you shake hands?"

But Jack stood stubbornly in the centre of the room, thinking only of the distress this man had caused him. His impulse was to defy the man and walk out into the streets to renew the battle, but, thinking of his mother, he fought down his own desire.

"We can never be friends, sir," he said, in a low, strained voice. "I said I would take nothing from you, and I won't, except this—give me a fair chance, cease to persecute me, and let me try to earn my living."

"Very well," said Mr. Paulos quietly, "I wish you no harm now—in fact, my great desire is for you to get on, so that I may atone for what I have done to handicap you. Won't you—"

"That is all I want, thank you, sir," said Jack, and the next moment was out of the room.

"A boy of spirit," said the millionaire softly to himself. "A smart, intelligent youngster. I must see that I don't lose sight of him."

He picked up the telephone on his desk, and summoned his private secretary.

"Mother," cried Jack, two mornings later, "listen to this! It sounds likely, at least!"

He had been looking down the advertisement columns in the "Daily Telegraph," which he had borrowed from a man in one of the flats below, and this advertisement among the "Situations Vacant" had caught his eye:

"A smart lad wanted for grocery department of large stores. One who has had previous experience in both

the wholesale and retail trade preferred. Must have good appearance and address. Apply in person between 10 and 12 to-day, at the offices of the Empire Stores, High Street, Kensington."

"By Jove," cried Jack, as he hurried into his overcoat, "it looks as though my luck has turned at last!"

"Don't build on it too much, Jack," said his mother, for although Mrs. Carton was relieved to find that her boy no longer had a powerful enemy in the shape of the millionaire, she had begun to lose heart after his many failures to obtain work.

Jack had little money left now, but he felt to walk to Kensington would be false economy, even if he could do it in the time, so he travelled by bus and tube, and reached the huge stores about half-past ten, and, after asking his way to the office, found himself in a large waiting-room which was already full of lads and young men.

Jack's heart fell. Surely out of this great crowd someone would be found with better qualifications than himself, and with good references. For a moment he thought of going away, but a clerk had taken his name down, so he determined to wait his turn.

Every few minutes someone went into the inner office to reappear at varying intervals with looks of disappointment on their faces.

"Carton!"  
Jack, with a quickly-beating heart, went into the office to be interviewed by a short, businesslike man with a writing-pad before him, upon which he from time to time made some note.

Jack told his story simply, explained his experience, and how he came to have no reference from his last two places, showed the manager a letter from Mr. Gaythorpe, and then sat watching the man anxiously as he tapped the pad absently for a moment or so with his pencil.

"Chambers!" he shouted. A clerk appeared from another office.

"Tell the others the vacancy is filled," he said shortly; then, turning to Jack: "You can start on Monday for a month's trial, wages to commence a pound a week. Good-day!"

Jack thanked him hoarsely, and stumbled rather than walked from the room, his brain reeling with delight and relief.

A fortnight after Jack had been engaged at the stores, and was already doing well, he received a visit from a sprucely-dressed, clean-shaven little man with "lawyer" written all over him.

"My client," he said, after introducing himself, "is Mr. Paulos, and he wishes you to accept a sum of money—a large sum of money; no, don't interrupt—not for your own sake, but to move your mother into better quarters. It is absurd to let pride stand in the way of bettering your condition; besides, Mr. Paulos has already proved himself to be a good friend to you."

"Friend!" said Jack, with some bitterness.

"Yes," said the lawyer; "perhaps I ought not to tell you this, but at the same time, I think you should know it. Mr. Paulos is the man behind the Empire Stores. Seeing that you would take nothing from him directly, he caused the advertisement to be inserted in every London paper, and the manager had instructions to engage none but you. That gave you your chance, and so far, you have most creditably availed yourself of it. My client is deeply interested in you, and you are a lucky young fellow; you will rise, Carton, and rise rapidly, but meanwhile your mother has not the comforts that should be hers. Mr. Paulos wants to remedy it. Do you refuse?"

Jack sat staring blankly at the lawyer, astounded at what he had learned.

"Mr. Paulos, strange as it may seem in view of the great difference in your positions," added the lawyer, "wants to feel that you forgive him for some wrong he tells me he did you and your mother."

"I forgive him," said Jack, in a very low voice, fighting down pride and hate, "and I—I accept his offer to help my mother."

The lawyer clapped him on the shoulder.

"My lad," he said, "I'm delighted to hear you say that, for you are well on the road to success. I'm told you're nicknamed Ever-Ready Jack. Live up to that title, lad, for it's as proud a one as any peer's in Great Britain."

THE END.

("LADS O' LONDON," our grand new series of complete stories, commences next Tuesday in THE BOYS' FRIEND.)



There was a cry of horror from the spectators. The girl had slipped immediately in the path of the rushing engine. Jack, seeing the need for instant action, ran to where the child lay.

"Soldiers of Fortune," a Superb Serial, by Stanley Portal Hyatt—a New and Powerful Author—Commences the Week After Next in THE BOYS' FRIEND.



THE RAILWAY WAIF.  
(Continued from the previous page.)

had been stopped at Cowdon, duplicate keys had been furnished to the station-master there, in order that at any time it might be possible to inspect the strong boxes en route, and make sure of the safety of their contents. Otherwise, they were not opened again until they reached their destination.

"Those are what he was after," Jack replied at once, as the facts flashed through his mind. Then an idea suddenly occurred to him.

"Tell me," he went on, "did Peterson ever hear you and the traffic inspector discussing this idea, for holding up the Liverpool trains at Molton instead of here?"

Once again the wretched Clayton paused.

"Now you mention it, Mr. Postern, he did," at length he answered.

"He took part in the discussion, too, I suppose?"

"Yes; we used to talk it over together."

"Now, tell me the truth, Clayton. Did not the suggestion first come from him?"

"I can't say. I am not sure. Pr'aps it did."

"Think!" urged the Dodger.

"The first idea—the first suggestion that set you thinking about the proposal, was not it a remark of your friend, Peterson?"

"I believe you are right. I believe it was."

"I thought as much. Clayton, you are not a knave, but you are one of the biggest fools that ever existed. Do you see what he was after?"

"I can't say that I do," the other replied, sinking helplessly into a chair. He was weak and sick with fright at what the consequences of his indiscretions might be.

"Why, of course," the Dodger said, "as soon as he got possession of those keys, or of duplicates of them from the impressions that he's got, he will make an attempt to rob the strong boxes in transit. To throw off suspicion, he will not make that attempt until after the new arrangement comes into force and the keys have been transferred from here to Molton. He knows that suspicion will then centre round Molton and not round Cowden. Also, he is now too well known to everyone about the

station here in his present get-up for it to be safe for him to risk having to leave the train here after the robbery. At Molton he will probably not be recognised, and would not attract the same attention. If he knows for certain that the service is going to be altered, he will wait until the alterations come into effect. Did you tell him that I thought well of the idea?"

"Yes, Mr. Postern; as a matter of fact, he asked."

"Of course. That was the one piece of information he had to get before deciding on his plans."

The Dodger was weak and ill, but he had no time to think of himself. His brain had to work quickly. Two objects had to be achieved—the one to frustrate the robbery that he knew was imminent; the other, if possible, to catch red-handed both those who were engaged in it. Quickly his mind was made up. He must get to Calworth at once, report matters there, and obtain sanction for the steps that he proposed to take. A service engine was quickly in readiness.

"Now, Clayton," he said, as he was leaving, "try for once in your life to be a little less of a fool. See that everything I have told you is carried out to the letter. No one, no matter how well you know him, no matter who it is, not even the most trusted of the company's servants, must have a single opportunity of once getting near any safes or books of the company until the locks have been changed. I am afraid you will suffer for your part in this affair. There is no helping it. I am honestly sorry for you. Try to make amends by helping to lessen the consequences of your stupidity."

He sank back, tired and beaten, with aching head and torturing throat, against the back of the cab, as the engine pulled out to make the short run to Calworth.

One fear possessed him above all others. The Rip, if it was the Rip, would probably know by now from his accomplice that he had been observed taking the wax impression of the strong box keys. This, no doubt, would alter his plans. There was no saying, therefore, how soon he might be driven to make a desperate attempt to effect the robbery. An unremitting watchfulness would be necessary to prevent his success. So well did the Dodger know and appreciate the man's extraordinary skill, his cunning, his plausibility, that he felt he could

trust no one but himself to deal with him.

Time and time again Kelly had tricked those to whom he himself had been well known by sight, who were only too anxiously and eagerly on the look-out for some trace of him. Jack recalled that first occasion at Cowden, when even the company's skilled detectives had failed to see through his disguise. He thought of the way in which, day after day, Kelly had obviously been in close and intimate contact with Clayton, who, above all men, should have been quick to recognise him without being detected. Yet how could the Dodger himself single-handed maintain the sleepless watch which would be necessary?

If, as Jack hoped, Kelly had made his bolt unpremeditated, on the spur of the moment, it was quite likely that it had been impossible for Hepwick to communicate with him, and in that case the original plan would no doubt be carried out.

It was full morning when Jack reached Calworth. There was no standing on ceremony on such an occasion. With his face disfigured, discoloured, and blood-stained, his clothes dishevelled and begrimed, he made straight for the traffic-manager's house, and briefly reported the facts of the case. A few

moments later, and they were both on their way to the general-manager. A hurried consultation was held, as a result of which later that day the announcement was made that the next week an alteration in the London-Liverpool train service would come into force—namely, that all expresses between London and Liverpool which had hitherto called at Cowden would in future call at Molton instead, and then followed details of the times and of the supplemental services for Cowden necessitated by the alteration.

Unknown to any but the station-masters at Liverpool and London, different strong boxes were substituted for those generally in use. The guards of both Liverpool boat-trains were diverted to other duties, and their places taken by old and tried servants of the company. Detectives were instructed to travel in relays upon each train until further orders. Hastily and secretly these arrangements were carried out. Each official affected was told as little as possible of the reasons for the changes, and was ordered, under threat of instant dismissal, to give no inkling to anyone else of the changes that had been effected.

So perfect is the organisation of a great modern railway that before the 10.50 train for Liverpool had left

London that morning, the necessary steps had been taken, and so complete is the hold of the company over its individual servants that even the driver of the train, and the very inspectors who examined it preparatory to its start, had no inkling of what had occurred.

It was obvious that Jack himself was in no fit state that day, at least, to take any further active part in catching the train-robbers. So as soon as the machinery had been set in motion to give effect to the course that had been decided upon, he had placed himself in the doctor's hands. His hurts, though severe, were not serious, but rest was imperatively necessary, and still sore and aching, he made his way to Calgate Street and went to bed. The down boat-train, carrying a large consignment of bullion for shipment to the United States, reached its destination without incident. The up express in the evening carried no valuables. On the following day there was no sailing.

It was certain that whoever had been clever enough and persistent enough to plan the robbery upon the lines which it was clear had been thought out, would be informed on all these points. The third day—a Saturday—a further shipment of gold bars and minted coin was due to travel over the G.P.R. As a further precaution, the consignment was secretly diverted and carried in apparently innocent cement bags in the living-van of a goods express.

It was secretly guarded by a group of detectives disguised as navvies and platelayers. A similar precaution was taken with valuables travelling on the Monday, when for the first time the new train-service came into operation. Jack was now well enough to resume work, and at his own request was himself allowed to accompany the train, under the pretext that it was necessary for the traffic-inspector to see how the new system worked. That an attempt would be made on the strong boxes in the course of a day or two after the commencement of the new service he felt certain.

To precipitate matters, he allowed it apparently accidentally to leak out that a considerable amount of bullion was travelling by the G.P.R. on the following Wednesday. If the would-be thief was Kelly, the Dodger knew that he would know every item of information current at the railway, and so he ostentatiously gave it out that he was obliged to go to Bristol that day on urgent company business.

A SOLDIER OF FORTUNE.

Being Some Adventures of Stanley Portal Hyatt, Author of the New BOYS' FRIEND Serial That Starts The Week After Next.

AS you have already read in Your Editor's Den a grand new serial, entitled "Soldiers of Fortune," will be commencing next Tuesday week in THE BOYS' FRIEND. It is a story of stirring adventure and wild life in Rhodesia and other parts of the great African continent, and it has been written specially for our boys by Mr. Stanley Portal Hyatt.

It was a very happy idea on your Editor's part that led to this grand new serial being written. A short time ago there was published a somewhat expensive book entitled "The Diary of a Soldier of Fortune." Mr. Hyatt was the author, and in the book he gave his experiences as an engineer,

sheep station hand, nigger driver, hunter, trader, transport rider, explorer, blockade runner, and a host of other side-lines in human activity.

On reading the book, your Editor was so impressed by the splendid matter it contained that he wrote to Mr. Hyatt, and the outcome of a subsequent interview was the grand new serial now about to commence in our pages.

The following extracts from Mr. Hyatt's splendid book, reproduced with his permission, will show what an adventurous career he has led. The first experience deals with a journey of two hundred miles that took six weeks to accomplish.

"We followed the old Pioneers' Road as far as Macloutsie, but from that point onwards we had to cut our own track. . . . The abandoned waggons were the main point of interest on that old road. They stood

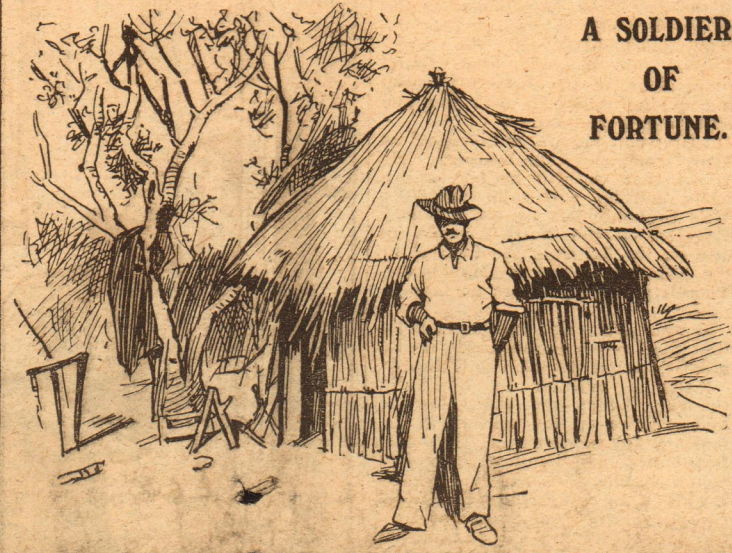
singly, in twos, in tens, in one place even thirty together. Here in a bare patch of sand there amongst the bush with the wild vines trailing over them. Some, but very few, had been looted, as was obvious from the broken cases lying round them, but the majority had their loads still intact, the buck-sails yet over them, looking as though they might have arrived a few hours before, and the cattle were away grazing. Then a stray gust of wind would raise a corner of the sail, and it would flap in the air, showing the stuff rotting and discoloured beneath it. Then you noticed that the hyenas had eaten the neck strops, and the yokes had rotted where they lay, and the wheels looked as though at the first jolt they would crumble into powder.

"And here were the black embers of a fire, all the white ash having been carried away by the summer rains; and a rusted iron pot over some bits of half-burned mopani log, which the white ants had attacked in vain. Some empty bully-beef tins off which the paper had long since peeled, a few pages of an illustrated paper—torn, yellow, and barely legible—a bottle or two, also without labels,

an oven in an ant hill,

and a rotten whip-stick showed where the transport rider had camped before the awful scourge caught him, and in a few short hours wrecked the work of a lifetime. They were intensely human, and therefore bitterly sad, those relics of the great disease.

"If the water were near to the stranded waggons, you would find the pool full of great, slimy fish, and if you were curious enough, or rash enough to strip and go in, you could grub out of the mud the skulls and bones of what had once been trek



Mr. Stanley Portal Hyatt, who is writing our next new serial, photographed outside his hut at River Camp.

A SOLDIER OF FORTUNE.

oxen; and when you tried to drink that water it gave you a queer, sickly feeling, and you thought perhaps more of the ruined transport rider than of the possible enteric; but, still, you had to drink it, even though it stank. You would gladly have walked ten miles to another pool, certainly, but for the fact that you knew it would reek as badly as, or even worse than, the one you were leaving."

**The Horrors of Real Thirst.**

"I wonder how many men have ever been thirsty? I do not use the word in the sense the cyclist, or the athlete, or the soaker does, but crudely, going back to elemental things. Hunger is bad. I have been hungry in civilisation, when I was dead broke, more than once. In the Far East I have lived for a whole month on boiled bats, and that is getting near the limit; but I would sooner

**be hungry a hundred times**

than thirsty once. Hunger is a slow and lowering thing; you lose strength and you lose heart, but it rouses no violent passions; its action is too prolonged for that, and the physical pain from it is comparatively small. It is a longing, rather than a suffering. Thirst is different. In a few hours it grows from a discomfort to an agony, and madness and murder are the natural, the inevitable results. I have seen a man shot for the sake of the basket of clams he was carrying on his back, and, starving though I was, reckoned the shooting a crime; but in Bechuanaland, on the one occasion when I was really thirsty, I would have shot a man for a cup of water.

"The incident occurred about twenty miles south of the Tuli River. The waggons were getting on with deadly slowness, and from the outspan where we were to the river itself there was not a drop of water. Twenty miles may not seem much in England; it would seem very little to me now, but then there was a handful of us youngsters, raw, soft, totally unacclimatised, and

whilst the Colonials, and those who had adopted Colonial ways, insisted on our trekking on ahead, alleging that the waggons could not carry water for us, they remained behind with the waggons—and the water-bags. We were told to start at dawn, and to follow a cart spoor to the Tuli, where we were to await the waggons. No white man ever carries a pack in Africa; even a seasoned old prospector will not try it, yet we had to take rifles, blankets, food, and water—and we had been little more than three weeks on the veld. Moreover,

**there were no water-bags,**

and we had to be content with vulcanite bottles, holding a pint each. We—my brother and myself—got on about five miles without a drink, then we opened his water-bottle, to find that, whilst it had been hanging on the buck rail of the wagon, someone had stolen half its contents. We got along another five miles fairly well; but the weight of our packs and rifles and the heavy sand underfoot was telling.

"It was about ten o'clock then, and the thirst began. Our pace was slackening down, and by midday we had added only a couple of miles, and though we had fought hard against the temptation, the water-bottles were empty. There were eight miles more to do, theoretically, really about twelve,

**the most ghastly trek**

of my life. We had to go on; we had to stick to our packs and rifles, and yet, with every step, the pain of the thirst increased. We were raw, and that was the main trouble; yet even an experienced man would have found it hard going under the conditions.

"By three o'clock the pain had become positive agony. I would have killed a man for a drink then. We stuck to it, just because we had to, because the only chance of relief was the water ahead. At about the sixteenth mile we came on another youngster who had started before us. The way we went off, in ones and twos, shows how raw we were.

He was lying down, sobbing, and I remember well the job it was to make him get up and come along.

"The water of the Tuli River, I can taste it still! Not only did it put a stop to the abominable agony of thirst, but, after we had drunk quarts of it, wallowed with our faces in the pool, sucking it up, we realised that it was the first clean water we had tasted since leaving the mail steamer at Port Elizabeth."

**A Lion on the Veldt.**

"Night after night the lions kept us awake by patrolling round the little hill, and growling. In some ways the training was good for those who, like myself, were raw to Africa. After a week or two of it, our point of view changed. Anger—or, rather, hatred—took the place of fear, and we grew to regard the pseudo king of beasts as a pest instead of as a danger.

"For some time our visitors got nothing bigger than a fowl, but at last a horse belonging to an Afrikaner was left out after dark, and the lions made short work of it. The following night

**a trap-gun was set**

over the little that remained, and when a party, consisting of about half a dozen white men, went out next morning they found a big male lion, wounded through the intestines, but still full of fight.

"I was not in the firing-party. If I had been, perhaps I should not be writing now, for it seems that bullets flew, mostly unaimed, in every direction. For a few moments the position was critical—a charging lion and empty cartridge-cases—but before anyone was hurt, the brute fell to the rifles of the two men who kept their heads. Then the carcass was borne back in triumph. I photographed it, and the Afrikaners told us how the great deed had been done."

(Another of these splendid descriptive articles next Tuesday in THE BOYS' FRIEND. "Soldiers of Fortune," our grand new serial, by Stanley Portal Hyatt, commences the week after next.)

"Soldiers of Fortune," a Superb Serial, by Stanley Portal Hyatt—a New and Powerful Author—Commences the Week After Next in THE BOYS' FRIEND.

and then joined the train by stopping it by signal just past Bushey.

Immediately following the engine came a locked baggage-van, in a partitioned compartment of which were deposited the strong boxes, the remainder being occupied by mail-bags and baskets. Following that was a composite coach, consisting of the leading guard's-van and a baggage compartment. Communicating by vestibule was the first of the long line of corridor coaches and saloons making up the train. In order not to excite suspicion the guard, in complete ignorance of the precautions that were being taken, travelled as usual alone in his van. In the leading compartment of the first passenger-coach travelled four armed detectives. Jack, on joining the train, took his place in the engine-cab.

The train was due to make one stop on the run, at Knightley, and as prearranged, at that point one of the detectives posing as an inquisitive passenger, strolled casually forward to the engine as if to examine the monster locomotive, and stood for a moment surveying it, long enough to give by preconcerted signal the information to Jack that the Rip had not apparently boarded the train in London, nor any man answering the description of Peterson. Meanwhile, another detective was carefully scrutinising the passengers who joined the train at the Midland city.

Without incident the train resumed its journey and started on its final dash to the western port. It scarcely slackened speed until it reached the incline to the riverside station. Then it became obvious to those on the engine that something was amiss. The driver whistled for the brakes as he shut off steam at the head of the down grade. There was no response from the leading van.

"That's what comes of always shifting our guards about," mumbled the driver as he sounded the whistle again. "It's impossible to run a train with strangers as guards." And he released the Westinghouse brakes gradually, pulling the train up with a jolt and a rattle several feet beyond her appointed station.

In an instant Jack was on the platform. He darted along to where the detectives sat, and springing into the compartment, cried:

"There's something amiss in the leading van! Come on!"

In a moment all five were tumbling through the vestibule in the guard's compartment. There they found the unfortunate man lying full length upon the floor, gagged and bound, with an ugly gash at the back of his head—a clear indication that he had been stricken down from behind before he could offer any resistance.

They pushed through to the mail-van.

"They've borrowed the poor fellow's keys," the Dodger said, as he noticed that the communicating door was unlocked, and swinging freely.

In the mail-van a scene of utter confusion met their eyes. Bags and baskets were scattered this way and that; the door of the strong-room compartment had been forcibly prised open, and an obvious attempt made to break into the strong boxes. "They were scared off, at any rate!" exclaimed Jack, with glee, as he saw that the attempt had been futile. "Now to examining every passenger."

Their inspection had been the work of an instant. Whilst two of the detectives remained behind in the guard's-van, Jack and the other two took up their stations at the gangway of the steamer. A couple of inspectors were told off to see that no one was permitted to pass from the platform, either by the road approach, or by the landing-stage. But not a soul in the least resembling Hepwick or "Peterson," or Rip Kelly, could be detected. Every step that could be thought of to insure each passenger by the train coming under supervision was adopted, and finally an exhaustive search was made throughout the large liner lying alongside.

Not a passenger, not a deck hand, not a stoker, cook, or steward but either consciously or unconsciously came under the examination of the Dodger before the great ship was allowed to depart. It was with a groan of disappointment that Jack began to realise that once again the miscreants had got clear away.

When the guard came to, he could throw little light upon the occurrence. He remembered giving the starting signal at Knightley, and re-entering his van. What had happened afterwards he had no very

clear recollection of. It appeared obvious that the would-be robbers had been secreted all along either in the guard's van or in the baggage car, and had taken the first favourable opportunity after passing Knightley to strike the wretched man down.

How or where the scoundrel, or scoundrels, had gained access to the train appeared a mystery. They must have taken their places before it had even pulled into the station in London. Access must have been gained through the connivance—probably unwittingly—of some servant of the company in the cleaning dock; of that Jack was certain.

Again, how, when, and where had they left the train? The only solution appeared to be a wild leap from the off-side of the van at the entrance to the tunnel heading the incline down to the riverside station. The speed at that point would not be more than fifteen or eighteen miles an hour, and a daring and reckless criminal would not hesitate to take the risk. At the worst he would be caught, as inevitably as he would be at the terminus, if he remained in the train; if he were successful he would be swallowed up in the slums of Liverpool before the alarm was raised.

This, to Jack, was the one clue worth following. Together with two of the detectives, he returned to the point at which it was obvious the thief must have left the train. There, sure enough, they found plain signs, in the disturbed metaling of the road-bed, that someone had jumped and fallen.

"He won't remain in Liverpool an hour," commented the Dodger. "He knows that we will be hot on his heels, and he will take no risks. He's probably left by the 2.5 from Edgehill on the North-Western, or else on the 2.0 from the Central by the Cheshire lines to Manchester. There's no saying where he may be now."

It was with a sick and heavy heart that the Dodger finally made up his mind to return defeated to Calworth.

"It's a million to one," he thought, "that the Rip, now he knows we're on his track, will not make a second attempt. He's been foiled after months of work, and he won't run the risk again."

This view was shared by the general manager, and little by little the careful watch on the Liverpool trains was relaxed. Some weeks had elapsed, when one day the Dodger was sent for by the G. M.

"This I think is your friend's handywork," exclaimed the latter, as the Dodger entered. He threw across a cable from the company's agents in New York as he spoke.

"On arrival Mauritania here today," it ran, "sealed bullion bags found to contain lead shot only; all bullion missing. Inquire your end. Claim lodged."

The Dodger stood aghast as he read the message.

"How in fortune's name has he done it?" he exclaimed.

"Probably with the connivance of the guard," replied the G. M. "I have had him put under strict watch already. The bullion referred to travelled by last Wednesday's boat train, and the bags were taken from the strong-boxes, apparently intact, at Liverpool, and deposited by our own porters in the ship's strong-room. They must have been changed before that, though, of course, we take up the attitude that they were probably changed on board ship. To me it is obvious that the robbery was effected between London and Liverpool, and in all probability between Knightley and Liverpool."

"Well, we have something to go on this time," answered the Dodger. "First of all, the man could not get seven or eight half-hundredweight bags aboard a train without attracting attention. Secondly, he must have had long enough to effect a substitution. Thirdly, he must have had an opportunity of copying the seal and of getting at the keys. And fourthly, he must have had an accomplice. We ought to be able to trace the sale of the bags or the shot, or the making of the seals and keys, at any rate."

"And if we do," answered the G. M., "I do not see that we are much better off. We all know that it must have been the Rip who did it, and we can hang him if we catch him without the necessity of bringing this home to him. The question is to catch him, and I do not see that we are any nearer that than we ever were."

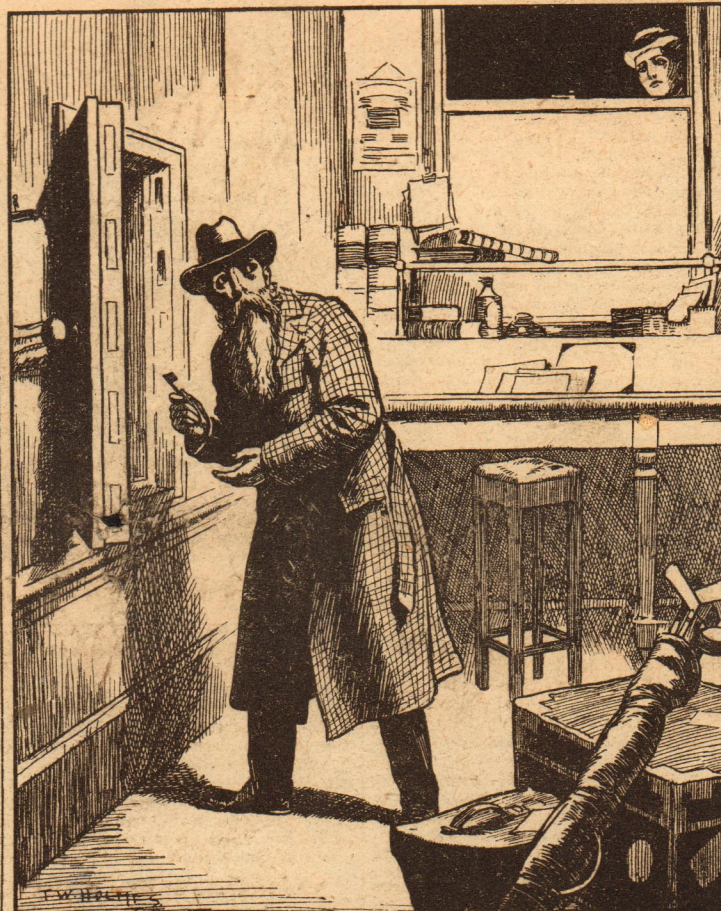
It was true, but the Dodger's indomitable spirits came to the rescue. "Well, at any rate, we will show

that we are not any less persistent than he is," he answered. "May I see what I can do to catch him?"

"Certainly," answered the other, "if the traffic manager can spare you."

#### Face to Face.

SO once again Jack started off on the apparently endless pursuit of his life-long foe. One question constantly recurred to him. What had become of the gladstone-bag which he had seen at Cowden Station, and which he was certain contained Lady Helen's bag? Clayton had been positive that Peterson had taken it with him. On the other hand, there had been no word from any pawnbroker or dealer, either in this country or on the Continent, of a transaction in precious stones corresponding with those lost by Lady Helen. The Rip was not a man to keep such condemning evidence in his possession for longer than he could help. He would not be likely to destroy them either, as he must have been in urgent need of funds. The contents of the bag were



Jack, looking through the window, saw the man abstract two keys from the safe and press them into the palm of his left hand. He was taking a wax impression.

principally jewellery, whose value lay in the precious stones. It was not a case of silver or gold ornaments that could readily be melted down beyond recognition. The stones, of course, would be torn from their settings before being disposed of; but, even so, some word ought to have been received of them.

The more he thought over the matter the more he regretted that he had not long ago inspected in detail every unclaimed article of luggage at Cowden.

"It would be just like the Rip," he thought, "to deposit his ill-gotten gains in the safe custody of the very company from which he had robbed them."

Clayton, he remembered, had not seen Peterson actually leave; all that he knew was that he had gone and that the bag had gone also. In the confusion attending the departure of an important train like the 11.15 night mail for the north, it would have been easy for Peterson to deposit a bag in the cloak-room without attracting much attention. There were probably dozens depositing and withdrawing articles of baggage.

Full of this idea, the Dodger started first for Cowden. He made a most exhaustive search through both the cloak-room and the parcels office, but found no trace of the missing bag.

It was late at night when Jack

finally made his way through the ill-lit streets of the squalid Midland town to his hotel. Suddenly he was conscious of peculiar, shuffling footsteps following him. They sounded strangely familiar. Once he looked round, but only caught a glimpse of a short, squat figure darting into the obscurity of a courtyard entry.

In a moment Jack was on the alert. There was something about the build of that dimly-seen figure, even in the fleeting glimpse he had had, that reminded him of the hunchbacked innkeeper of Thoston. He slowed down his pace, and strained his ears for the least sound.

In a moment or two he was rewarded. Distinctly he made out the sound of someone stealthily approaching behind. He walked on a few paces, as if he had heard nothing. Then when he judged that whoever was following was within a yard or two, at a point where they were passing a high factory wall, affording no chance of shelter, he spun round suddenly.

He was face to face with Hepwick, and he was unarmed, alone in a dimly-lit back street of a sleeping town. For a fraction of a second the horror of the situation possessed him. But next moment a great joy seized him that now at

"Perhaps," replied the hunchback; "if I was to let you catch me, but I am not such a fool."

Jack, his eyes riveted upon his opponent, weighed up the situation.

"Lead on, then," he said. "I promise not to do anything myself before you have shown me where to find Kelly. But I warn you fairly that you take your risk of anyone else catching you, and that once I have got Kelly, I shall do my best to get you too."

"I'm not afraid," sneered the other; "so long as you make that swine swing for it, I'll look after myself."

The Dodger noticed that Hepwick was reduced to little more than skin and bone, and was clothed in the poorest of rags. There could be no doubt that the wretched creature had been existing in the direst poverty. He had been afraid, of course, to show himself in the light of day, or to appeal for assistance. The very stranger might have recognised him as one upon whose head was set a price.

"This means," thought Jack, "that Kelly has played him false, as he has done everyone else, and the miserable creature is going to have his revenge." Aloud he asked: "Do you agree?"

"Yes!" snarled the other; and, turning, led the way down the street they were in, round a corner into a narrow back street, across a main thoroughfare, down another sordid little alley, and out on to a great open space, ill-kept, ill-lit and untidy, on to which was shot the refuse and the waste from the factories in the neighbourhood. Here and there in the uncertain light pools of dirty water glistened between great heaps of rubble, mountains of ash, broad plateaus of alkali waste. The broken ruins of a tumbledown cottage, roofless and gutted, stood up against the sky, half buried in refuse.

"Hold on!" said the Dodger. "Where are you taking me?"

The hunchback stopped abruptly and turned round.

"I am taking you to Rip Kelly's," he said surlily.

Even in that dim light the Dodger could make out the almost fiendish expression of hate which distorted his countenance as he spoke.

"But there are no houses out here," protested the Dodger.

"Do you want me to take you to him, or would you like to find him yourself?" snarled Hepwick. "If you think you know better than I do, you had better find your own way."

Jack did not at all like the prospect of passing longer than necessary in the company of this unscrupulous creature at so lonely a spot, but he saw the reasonableness of the ex-publisher's arguments. His natural caution told him that he might easily be falling into a trap. His anxiety to leave no stone unturned to run the Rip to earth urged him on.

"All right, drive ahead!" he said, after considering the matter a moment; and as they walked he continued: "By the way, what has happened to Captain King?"

"What's that got to do with you?" retorted the hunchback, without looking round.

"A good deal, I should think," replied the Dodger, "seeing the scoundrel tried to do for me! Is he with Kelly?"

"No, he ain't!" answered the other.

"Oh, he got away with you, I suppose?"

"You can suppose what you like. I said I'd show you Rip Kelly. I didn't undertake to do any more of your dirty work for you."

"All right—all right! Keep your hair on!" answered Jack. "I thought you might have a little grudge against Captain King as well."

The hunchback did not reply. They were now halfway across the great waste space, stumbling at almost every step over obstructions and rubbish in the dark. They blundered on noisily, clattering through collections of old tin cans or over stacks of shifting brick waste.

"How much further is it?" asked the Dodger.

"You'll see when you get there," replied the other.

(Another splendid long instalment of "The Railway Wai" next Tuesday in THE BOYS' FRIEND.)



YOU CAN START READING BELOW.

**"THE BLOT"**

**A GRAND NEW SCHOOL SERIAL BY MAXWELL SCOTT.**

**INTRODUCTION FOR THE NEW READER.**

Philip Ashley is a brilliant lad at the Council School, but has declined an offer of a scholarship because of his mother, who is so poor that she has to char for her living. But one day comes Phil's opportunity. Bravely he stops the maddened horses in Sir David Rendle's carriage, and saves the life of Elsie, his only child. It is the turning point in Philip's career, for by way of reward Sir David sends him to Rayton College, equipping him down to the smallest detail, and also engaging the lad's mother as a well-paid housekeeper. Phil starts, light-hearted and jubilant, on the journey to Rayton; but on the way a terrible revelation is made to him. Sir David's nephew, Godfrey Mortimer, who, in the presence of Phil's benefactor, has promised to shepherd him in his new surroundings, and show him every kindness possible between one schoolboy and another, turns out to be a humbug and a hypocrite. No sooner is the train clear of Highfield than Mortimer stirs up trouble; but Phil sets upon him, and holds him in check till at the next station some more Raytonians enter the compartment. The newcomers are friends of Mortimer, and when they hear Phil's story they christen him "The Blot." After being treated with much snobbishness, Phil arrives at Rayton College, and is made Mortimer's foe. From the time he enters the school plots of dishonesty, etc., are laid for him, and Mortimer does all he can to get Phil disgraced. Mortimer tells his uncle that Ashley plays cards for money, and relates to him the facts of the missing banknote which Phil is supposed to have stolen. Thus Sir David is most indifferent to Phil. Jim Cocker is a bookmaker, and is blackmailing Dr. Paul, the head-master of Rayton College. The demands for money from Cocker are becoming so frequent that the head-master finds it necessary to disappear from the college. On the afternoon of the head-master's disappearance Philip is pulled into a public-house by Jim Cocker, and is seen in this establishment by Mr. Sopworth. Philip is taken before Mr. Walker, and is to be isolated from the other boys until Dr. Paul's return. "You can now go back to your dormitory, and I will send for you as soon as the isolation-room has been prepared for you," says Mr. Walker to Phil.

*(Now read the splendid chapters below.)*

**Ragging the "R. A. T. S."**

"WOULD you believe it?" said Carfax. "I wouldn't!" said the ever-ready Holcroft. "I don't know what you're talkin' about, but I wouldn't believe it!"

It was Wednesday afternoon. Holcroft, in flannels, was lying on his back in the shadow of one of the trees on the edge of the lawn. Carfax had just joined him, coming from the direction of the school-buildings. He was also in flannels. "What do you think?" said Carfax. "Nothing," yawned Holcroft, fanning himself with his cap. "It's too hot to think this afternoon." "You might let a chap tell his news," growled Carfax, in an aggrieved voice. "Who's preventin' you?" said Holcroft sweetly. "I'm simply dyin' to hear it. Cough it up!" "The 'Rats' are goin' to give another show," said Carfax impressively. "The 'Rats,' it will be remembered, were the R. A. T. S.—in other words, the Rayton Amateur Theatrical Society—of which Tubb was president, playwright, stage-manager, leading actor, and several other things. Holcroft sat up and became interested at once. "Never!" he said. "I thought Rutherford and I had knocked that

foolishness on the head when we smashed up their performance of 'The Pirates' Revenge.' "Well, you thought wrong," said Carfax. "They're goin' to give another show, and they're goin' to take jolly good care, they say, that none of our crowd get in this time." "Another performance of 'The Pirates' Revenge?" "Oh, no! It's to be a new play this time—a historical play, written by Tubb, with a king in it, and a knight in armour, and a fat old friar, and goodness knows what besides!" "Who told you all this?" "You know that room behind the gym, where Hogan keeps his garden tools? Well, I was passin' that way just

now, when I heard voices in the room. Tubb was one that was speakin' and Rigden was another, and I heard 'em say something about 'scenery' and 'footlights.' So, of course, I wanted to see what they were doin'." "Of course," said Holcroft. "I should have felt like that myself. Go on!" "The door was shut, but the window was open," continued Carfax, "so I dropped on my hands and knees, and crawled up to the window, and took a careful squint." "And they were rehearsin' the new piece?" "No. They weren't rehearsin'; they were makin' things for the play." "How many of 'em were there in the room?" "Only four. Tubb, Card, Rigden and Pritchard." "Did they see you?" "You bet they didn't! I took good care of that. I watched 'em for a minute or two, and listened to 'em talkin' about the new play, and then I came to tell you, because I thought—" He paused and grinned. "I think so, too!" said Holcroft, jumping to his feet. "I quite agree with you. Where are Rutherford and Pettigrew?" "Gone down to the village. They won't be back for hours." "Any other of our chaps about?" "I don't think so. Most of 'em are on the river." Holcroft sighed. "That's a pity," he said. "Two of us can't do much, at such short notice, too. However, we'll do what we can. Come on!" In the meantime, all unsuspecting of the trouble that was brewing, Tubb and his three companions were hard at work preparing for their forthcoming play. Tubb, with the aid of a large

bottle of gum and several sheets of coloured paper, was manufacturing a paper crown. Card, who was to be the "fat old friar" of the piece, had sneaked a pillow from his dormitory, had ripped it open, and was stuffing the feathers into an artificial "corporation." Rigden and Pritchard were wrestling with a tin bowl, which they were trying to convert into a helmet. "There!" said Tubb presently. "That's about finished, I think. How does it look?" He placed the paper crown on his head, and assumed what he fondly imagined to be a "regal" expression of countenance. "It looks all right," said Card, "but it's a pity it hurts so much. However, you'll get used to that, I expect, when you've worn it a time or two." "What do you mean?" demanded Tubb. "It doesn't hurt at all." "Then why are you pullin' such a horrible face?" inquired Card. "You look as if you were in awful pain." "As if you had the toothache," said Rigden. "Or as if you'd eaten a sour apple," said Pritchard. "Kings always look like that, I expect," said Card. "That's what Shakespeare meant when he said, 'Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.'" Tubb glared at him. "I'll make your head uneasy if you don't shut up!" he growled. "How's the helmet comin' along?" "It isn't coming along at all," said Rigden. "The beastly thing won't bend into shape a bit. Why didn't you order a helmet along with the other things?" "Want of funds, dear boy," said Tubb. "We can't afford to hire everything. We've got to make some of the things ourselves; but, talkin' about the other things, isn't it time that Hepworth and Jackson were back?" Hepworth and Jackson, it should be explained, had gone down to the station for a basket of costumes and other properties which the "Rats" had hired from a London theatrical outfitter, and which were expected to arrive that afternoon. "Yes, they ought to be here before long," said Card. "Unless the train is late." "Listen!" said Rigden. "I think I hear them comin'." "I don't hear anything," said Tubb. "I heard footsteps, I'm sure," said Rigden. He was right. But the footsteps were not those of Hepworth and Jackson. They were those of Holcroft and Carfax. "Go to the door and see if you see any sign of them," said Tubb. Rigden walked over to the door and turned the handle. "Hallo! What's up?" he exclaimed. "The door won't open!" "It does stick sometimes," said Tubb. "Give it a good, hard pull." Rigden pulled his very hardest.

The door yielded an inch or two, and, on peering through the chink, Rigden saw that a rope had been looped round the outside handle and tied to one of the iron railings at the back of the gymnasium. "Somebody's tied up the door!" he gasped. There was a burst of mocking laughter outside. Tubb sprang to his feet with a cry of dismay, and even as he did so, the grinning faces of Holcroft and Carfax appeared at the open window. In Holcroft's hand was the end of a garden hose-pipe which he and Carfax had fixed to a neighbouring hydrant. In each of Carfax's hands was a paper bag full of soot. "Four little rats sat down to spin!" said Holcroft. "Pussy passed by, and she looked in! Hope we're not disturbin' you, dear boys! Ah! Would you?" Rigden had snatched up a pair of Hogan's garden-shears, and had pushed the long, thin blades through the chink of the door, with the intention of trying to cut the rope. But Holcroft was too quick for him. Thrusting the nozzle of the hosepipe through the window, he pointed it at Rigden and turned on the tap. Swish! A foaming jet of water hissed across the room and swatted Rigden on the side of the head, nearly knocking him off his feet and causing him to drop the shears with a howl of mingled rage and pain. "No you don't!" Card had made a dash for the window. Quick as thought Holcroft turned the jet in his direction. It smote him fair and square between the eyes, and sent him reeling back into Pritchard's arms. Down went Pritchard, with Card on the top of him; and the next instant the two boys were floundering and writhing on the floor, trying in vain to dodge the stream of water with which Holcroft, with many gibes and taunts, mercilessly bombarded them. Of course, while Holcroft was attending to Pritchard and Card and Rigden, he could not keep watch on Tubb at the same time. Hoping to take advantage of this fact, Tubb clenched his fists and sprang towards the window. But if Holcroft was not watching him, Carfax was. Whizz! Carfax hurled one of the paper bags at Tubb. It struck him in the face, bursting as it did so, and enveloping him in a cloud of soot, of which many particles found their way into his eyes, and up his nose, and down his throat. Half-blinded and half-choked, Tubb danced and gesticulated, and coughed, and spluttered like one demented. "Poor 'ickle fink!" jeered Holcroft. "Didums have a bad cough? Have a drink, darlin'!" He turned the hose on Tubb, who instantly executed a lightning back-somersault that would certainly have earned him a double encore on any music-hall stage in the kingdom. "Now, you'll have this?" inquired Carfax, holding up the second soot-

bag, while Holcroft played on each of the four boys in turn with the hosepipe. "Don't all speak at once." "If you dare—!" began Rigden, when the gushing torrent struck him in the mouth and rendered further speech impossible. "You howling cads! We'll pay you—!" began Pritchard, but before he could say more the jet of water smacked him on the side of the head and spun him round like a teetotum. By this time the floor was nearly ankle-deep in sooty water, on which Tubb's paper crown, now limp and sodden, floated like a forsaken derelict. Raging, but helpless, the four boys took cover behind an empty corn-bin, which stood in a corner of the room. Here they held a hurried council of war, as the result of which they suddenly sprang from behind the bin and made a concerted rush for the window. "The enemy charge!" roared Holcroft. "Prepare to repel boarders! Man the guns! Fire!" The second soot-bag burst in Card's face, and Card, after staggering back a step or two, sat down on the floor with a howl and a splash. The jet from the hosepipe oscillated swiftly from side to side, now spouting into Pritchard's face, now into Rigden's, now into Tubb's. To make headway against it was impossible. Gasping and spluttering, the four boys beat a hasty retreat, and once more took cover behind the bin. Holcroft turned off the jet, and he and Carfax, leaning their elbows on the sill, thrust their heads and shoulders through the window. But Holcroft kept his hand on the tap, ready to turn it on again at an instant's notice. "Dismal sort of place, isn't it?" he murmured, glancing round the room. "Dismal, damp, and dirty," said Carfax. "Just the sort of place for rats," said Holcroft. "I wonder if any of 'em are at home?" He rapped on the window-ledge with his knuckles. "Anybody in?" he called out. "Is this the box-office where you book your seats for the next performance of the performin' rats? My friend and I—"

The sentence was never completed, for at that moment Holcroft's ankles were seized in a vice-like grip, whilst at the same instant another pair of hands clutched Carfax's ankles. The owners of the hands were Hepworth and Jackson. As already stated, they had been to the station for a hamper of costumes and other things from London. The hamper had not arrived, and the two boys had returned to the school just in time to see Holcroft and Carfax, after turning off the hose, lean their elbows on the window-sill and thrust their heads and shoulders into the room. What happened next the reader can doubtless guess. With a stealth that would not have disgraced a couple of Red Indians, Hepworth and Jackson crept up behind their unsuspecting victims; then Hepworth made a grab at Holcroft's ankles, and Jackson made a grab at Carfax's.

Never was a surprise attack more neatly planned or more successfully carried out. Almost before Holcroft and Carfax realised what was happening, their feet were dragged off the round, their legs were swung into the air, and they were shot head-foremost through the window into the room. Ere they could scramble to their feet, Tubb and his three companions dashed from behind the bin and flung themselves upon them with shouts of gloating triumph. Hepworth and Jackson hurriedly climbed through the window and sprang to their chums' assistance. Fighting and struggling, and scattering sooty water in all directions, Holcroft and Carfax battled gamely to regain their freedom; but the odds were too many for them, and in little more time than it takes to tell the tables were completely turned, and Holcroft and Carfax were prisoners in their rivals' hands.

**The "R. A. T. S." Revenge.**

"NOW, what shall we do with 'em?" said Tubb, when they had unfastened the door and used the rope to bind their prisoners. "There's no hurry. We've all the rest of the afternoon to play with them. Rutherford and Pettigrew are down in the village, and the rest of the Paulite insects are up the river, so there's no fear of our bein' ragged."



Philip staggered back with a choking cry of grief and dismay. On the floor was an ink-stained chaos of torn papers and mutilated books. The dog was squatting on the bed with the remains of a book in his mouth. Water was pouring over the edge of the lavatory basin, and was flowing across the floor in an ever-widening stream.

Rutherford and I had knocked that









him from a smart and dashing man of the world into a shambling wreck. He was seated on a shabby horsehair couch, and was fumbling with a handsome ring he wore, one of the few relics of his vanished grandeur.

"Well, Mr. Ruggles," he said, trying to speak jauntily, "I am glad you came. You see that I win, for I sent to you. But that does not signify. I want to tell you something about the Vercester case. I do not wish the man who is my brother to suffer for my crime. You should take this down."

He need not have said that, for the detective's fountain pen was already flying across the pages of a notebook.

"I planned the attack on the Vercester Bank. I shot the night-watchman, poor chap! It was all my doing, and Dick, who is standing his trial for murder down at Leeds, is shielding me because I am his brother. Put it all down, and I will sign."

Then Ruggles was holding out the page for him to sign.

The man signed, and then, ere he could be prevented, he deftly turned the stone—a big ruby—of the ring he wore. It was done in a second. He placed the ring to his lips, and had swallowed something which lay in the tiny cavity.

He was smiling at the detective then.

"Your hand, Nephew Tom," he said quietly. "Ah, Mr. Ruggles, you did not think that I was going to allow you to take me, did you—I who have had kings for my friends? Portland or the rope! Oh, no! But I was weary of the chase. You prevented me leaving England, but—well, I'm away now. Au revoir!"

His head sank back, and Ruggles leaned over him. The poison in the ring, one of the subtle products of South America, had done its work. The man was dead. Ruggles touched the boy's arm.

"Come! We have much to do." The new day had begun, and, as Ruggles knew, that day would see the end of the trial of the man at Leeds. It was for him to remove the shadow of the rope which hung over the elder Grant's life.

The two hurried back to the detective's lodgings. Tom was very silent. Ruggles and he went north by the newspaper train which glided out of King's Cross into the darkness.

The scene in the court-room as they squeezed themselves in was one of painful excitement. The jury had just returned into court, and had delivered a verdict of guilty. How could they do otherwise? The prisoner was his own accuser. Amidst a tense hush the judge placed the black cap on his head.

And then Ruggles spoke. The police on duty had made a way for him.

"My lord," he said, in ringing tones, "I have here the confession of the criminal! The man in the dock is innocent!"

A thrill passed through all present. Ruggles was beckoned up to the bench. There was a hasty whispered colloquy. Then his lordship was addressing the prisoner with some emotion.

"Mr. Grant," he said, "you are free! It is not for me at this moment to press inquiry into the reasons which have prompted you to act as you have done. Noble motives are sometimes likely to lead a man astray. You can leave the court, sir."

A few minutes later Mr. Grant was seated in a private room at a large hotel listening to what Ruggles was telling him.

"And my secret, Mr. Ruggles?" he asked.

"It shall be respected, sir, by Scotland Yard."

Mr. Grant breathed a sigh of relief.

"I felt I had to save him," he began. Then he stopped, for a servant tapped at the door and handed in a letter.

"For Mr. Grant," he said.

Tom's father released his son's hand which he had been holding, and opened the note, to give a gasp of pleasure.

"It is from the directors," he said, "expressing their unabated confidence in me."

"They are right, sir," said Ruggles quietly.

The death, amidst squalid surroundings, and deprived of all his old power, of the man who had magnetised Europe was a nine days' wonder. Then even his career, and the astonishing discovery in the charred ruins of the house in Grosvenor Square of a number of printing presses by means of which the banks had been flooded with imitation notes, faded from the public mind.

THE END.

# HOW TO DEVELOP MUSCLE.

A Superb Series of Articles Specially Written for the BOYS' FRIEND by the World-Famed EUGEN SANDOW.

**I**N my mind's eye, I can see the great majority of THE BOYS' FRIEND readers going through their exercises regularly six mornings a week, and performing them as conscientiously as if I were there directing their movements. I hope, and feel sure, that this mental picture of mine is correct, for I have almost invariably found that youthful physical culturists are the most enthusiastic.

Enthusiasm is a grand thing; it lightens labour, smooths the hard, rough road to success, and brings out all the good qualities of mankind. If there were no "tryers" there would be no successes, and if there were no enthusiasts in the world, what a dull place it would be!

So, if you are to be successful in your search for strength, you must put all your heart and soul into the work, aim high, make up your mind to be the strongest and best-developed fellow in your school, or office, or place of business, set about your self-imposed task—it will be a comparatively light one—with energy and vim, and success will not be denied you.

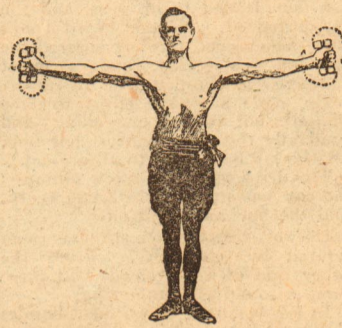
It was just such a task which I set myself when I was a delicate lad, and my success should be a beacon to guide you on your way. You, however, start under happier auspices than I did, for I had to find out every inch of the way, whilst here, in these pages, you have the route well mapped out for you, which it took me years to discover.

This week I am giving you what appears to be an unnecessary exercise at first glance, but which really is a most necessary one, from the fact that it is devoted to the strengthening of the wrist. The wrist is very often one of the weakest parts of the body, and quite as often the most neglected.

Heavy-weight lifting, and many feats of strength, depend upon great strength of wrist, and the movements I give you here will strengthen the

wrist quicker than anything I know—and I have a fairly extensive knowledge of the subject.

To perform this movement correctly, and obtain the proper benefit from it, it is necessary that you have some fairly weighty article to grip, and you will find the Grip Dumbbell the best for the purpose, as it demands stronger gripping to keep the halves together, and it is the best weight to practise with.

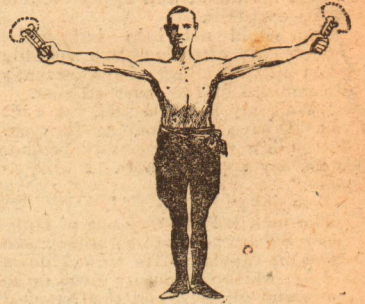


EXERCISE 5.—READY POSITION. Stand erect, extend both arms in a line with the shoulders.

MOVEMENT: (a) Bend the hands backward and forward upon the wrists, grinding the muscles well in. (b) Rotate each hand simultaneously and quickly on the axis of the wrist. Muscles: (a) Flexors and extensors of the forearm. (b) The pronators and supinators.

Try and make the hands almost touch the forearm when bending them forward, and get them at right angles to the arm when bending them backward in the first part of the movement. Do this for about a dozen times, and then practise the other movement by making the hands perform a complete revolution. Start with the palms upwards, and rotate them forwards until the palms are upwards again. Then bring them back to the original position.

Quite tiring work, isn't it? Give the wrists a minute's rest, and then hold the dumbbells with the end of the palm of the hand and the forefinger stretched along the handle as shown in the second illustration.



EXERCISE 6.—READY POSITION.

MOVEMENT: Circle the bells to the front by a circular motion of the wrist, with a slow, steady movement, keeping the free end of the bell pressed in as close to the forearm as possible. Muscles: Supinators, flexors and extensors of the forearm.

EXERCISE 7.—READY POSITION.

As in Exercise 6. MOVEMENT: As in Exercise 6, but circle the bells in the reverse direction. Then, holding the bells in the same position, circle them in the reverse direction.

I think you will find this quite sufficient for one week, but do not "scamp" the work because you feel tired for the first day or so.

In a few weeks' time your grip will be so strengthened that you will become a "demon handshaker," and possess the hold of a bulldog.

EUGEN SANDOW.

Please tell all your friends that EUGEN SANDOW is writing a superb new series in THE BOYS' FRIEND, and also that "SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE" starts the week after next.

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# SEXTON BLAKE; FOREMAN



Being a Grand New Serial  
of the Great Detective, and  
His Assistants Tinker and  
Pedro.

### NEW READERS START HERE.

The opening of this story finds Sexton Blake, the famous detective, with his young assistant Tinker, on the night previous to their embarkation to East Africa on a pleasure shooting trip. At the very last moment this long-anticipated holiday is abandoned.

Sidney Temple is a young engineer, at present engaged in a large undertaking at Redcliff Dale to construct a scheme of supplying three neighbouring towns with water from a broad, swift river. This clever young engineer will make his name famous in the engineering world if he can only successfully finish the job in the contracted time. Everything goes well for six months, but now some unknown enemy is destroying all his plans and completed work.

Sexton Blake and Tinker,

disguised as navvies,

obtain employment in the workings of this great scheme at Redcliff Dale. This village is better known by the fancy name of "Ginger Town," and the famous detective and his assistant get lodgings at the cottage of Job Peckchaff some distance away from the workings.

Black Jock is an exceedingly harsh and suspicious foreman, under whom Tinker is working. In the night the work of months is mysteriously made a complete wreck, and the machinery put in a dishevelled condition.

So far, Sexton Blake has not struck

the slightest clue to the mystery he has come to solve, and nothing but ruin stares Sidney Temple in the face.

The detective, now known as Bob Packer, is promoted to ganger, or sort of petty foreman.

One Sunday Sexton Blake pays a visit to Sir Richard Blaise. There being insufficient water to enable the grinders to work, they threaten to put an end to this great engineering scheme. The gang is being led by Black Jock, who had been dismissed from the works for making a merciless attack upon the great detective and his assistant.

Blake departs from Sir Richard's house, and is most unmercifully attacked by a gang of grinders and placed in a lonely hut in the woods, where Tinker finds and releases him. Sexton Blake afterwards makes his way to the workings, which he expects the ruffians are going to raid.

Tinker is sent to the military barracks, some distance away, to obtain assistance. He rides the journey by cycle, and is pursued by Bates upon a powerful black horse. Tinker is chased at break-neck speed along the road, but at last Bates comes abreast with the detective's assistant and hurls him clear over a bridge on the road into the river.

(Now read on.)

### Tinker at the Barracks.

BATES gave a hoarse laugh of triumph. He evidently took the action for a spill, and thinking further trouble well taken off his hands, he turned his horse and rode away.

"They'll find him somewhere a mile or two down the river to-morrow," the villain chuckled, "but his message 'ud come a bit too late then! The soldiers aren't likely to trouble us to-night!" And the hardened ruffian rode on.

Tinker's wild plunge had been no accident, as the reader may have guessed. It was a deliberate and daring act—desperate, but the sole chance of escape that offered.

He struck the water anyhow, for he had no chance of shaping himself for a dive.

The bridge was high, and the impact with the water knocked the remaining breath clean out of him.

He sank like a stone. But the chilly plunge cleared his brain and revived him magically. Rising to the surface, he struck out for the bank. But it was no easy matter to reach it, spent as his strength still was, for there was an outlet, or sluice, not far away to relieve the pressure of the pent-up river, and the water, making for this, formed a powerful current along the bank he had to reach.

Again and again the swift eddy mastered his tired limbs and threatened to sweep him down into the sluice.

But he battled through it somehow, and, gaining the bank at last, seized a strong bush that grew there, and hauled himself out.

A moment's pause to recover breath, then, shaking some of the water out of his clothes, he set off at a run towards the barracks—happily, now close at hand. The gates were not yet closed when he arrived there. For the crowded events of that evening, long as they take to relate, had all passed within a couple of hours, and it was now only about nine o'clock.

The sentry at the gate halted in his stride, and tried to stop him, but Tinker dodged past.

He had no time for explanations! Luckily he knew the run of the barracks fairly well, for Mrs. Peckchaff had a brother, a sergeant, in the regiment quartered there, and, making his acquaintance, Tinker had been shown over the building, and,

with his trained memory, did not forget the general plan of it.

He made straight for the officers' quarters—for the mess-room, in fact, where he knew he was most likely to find the colonel at that hour.

A second sentry at the entrance to the passage also tried to stop him. Tinker dodged him too.

A third, at the very door of the mess-room, hearing his comrade call out, and seeing the wild figure dashing towards him, threw his rifle across the passage to bar the way.

Tinker dodged under it, threw open the mess-room door, and darted in.

A blaze of light, a blur of scarlet uniforms met his eyes. He heard cries of amazement as every officer started from his chair at the queer apparition that burst upon them.

Several hands were thrust out to seize him. But Tinker avoided them all, and dashed to the head of the table, where Colonel Carson, the grey-headed commander of the regiment, was seated.

Then Tinker stopped in sudden dismay.

Beside the colonel sat the gipsy squire!

### Ordered Under Arms.

I F Ardoise, who was there as a guest, knew Tinker, he did not betray the fact by anything in his glance, merely staring at the boy with a half-amused smile as though he had been the regimental pet monkey who had got loose and burst into the room.

"What, in the name of amazement, is this?" exclaimed Colonel Carson, half rising from his chair.

Tinker quickly recovered his wits. "I have a letter for you, sir," he said.

And he drew out the sealed letter, which, having been in an inner pocket, was luckily not saturated, although it was decidedly moist.

"A letter!" said the colonel sharply, looking at the boy as though he thought him an escaped lunatic or the victim of some practical joke. "How came you here in this state? How on earth did you get past the guard?"

"It is from Sir Richard Blaise, and is most important, sir!" said Tinker, holding out the letter.

Tinker, who had the gift of seeing much without apparently looking anywhere in particular, noticed a

sudden gleam in Ardoise's dark eyes at the mention of Sir Richard's name.

That name, too, or the boy's earnest tone, seemed to impress the colonel. He took the letter, broke the seal, and read the blurred lines.

He gave a slight ejaculation as he finished its perusal.

"No bad news, I trust, colonel?" asked Ardoise suavely.

"Judge for yourself, sir," said the officer, laying the letter before him.

Then, rising and glancing around the table at his officers, he said:

"Gentlemen, I require you all to remain in quarters to-night. Major Clarke, order the entire Second Battalion under arms! Two companies to parade immediately in light marching order, each man with five rounds of blank, except the rear ranks, who will carry ten rounds of ball."

The major saluted, and left the room, the officers of the battalion under orders following.

Ardoise laid the letter down, laughed, and said:

"Really, colonel, the whole thing is a mare's-nest! Sir Richard Blaise has grown nervous with increasing years. He exaggerates this trivial affair. I know these terrible malcontents well—poor wretches!—and would guarantee to disperse the whole lot of them with half a dozen policemen!"

The colonel's face stiffened.

Although Ardoise, from his position in the district was occasionally invited to the regimental mess, the old officer, for some reason he could not define, had never liked him.

"That is no concern of mine, sir," he said coldly. "As a justice of the peace, Sir Richard has a right to call upon a King's officer for assistance if he deems it necessary."

And he turned away.

But I protest against any display of military force as needless and likely to create mischief where none need have been!" said the Gipsy Squire. "And recollect, Colonel Carson, that I, too, am a magistrate!"

"Then, sir, your duties lie elsewhere to-night!" said the old officer, bowing stiffly.

Ardoise bowed as stiffly in return, and with a smile upon his lips but an evil light in his eyes, walked calmly out of the room.

The colonel turned to Tinker, and said:

"Tell Sir Richard that I have ordered a strong detachment under arms, but that I shall keep them in barracks until I receive a further message from him."

"But stay, lad!" he added quickly, as Tinker was about to hurry away. "Your clothes are drenched! How came that?"

Tinker told him that an attempt had been made to stop him on the road, and that he had got away by a leap into the river and a swim across it.

"A lad of pluck and dash! Pity he doesn't wear the King's scarlet!" muttered the colonel under his grey moustache. "So the road was actually picketed—eh? Proof enough that Sir Richard's fears are well-grounded." Then, aloud to Tinker:

"But you are shivering, lad. Drink this before you go!"

It was a glass of wine he offered. At any other time Tinker would have refused it, for he never touched strong drink. But his sodden clothes struck deadly chill to his limbs. He took the wine and drank it off, and, unused as he was to such stuff, it instantly sent a fiery glow through his veins.

He felt almost himself again, and he hurried out into the barrack-yard.

The broad parade-ground—deserted when he crossed it but a few minutes ago—was now astir with martial activity, and made a stirring picture even in the dim light of the wan moon.

Bugles rang out, the drums throbbed in short, sharp rolls, and their imperative summons was answered by the hurrying tread of the men as they poured from the buildings at the trot and fell in with the beautiful precision of British infantry, their arms glancing in the moonlight, and their scarlet coats lending a sudden flash of colour to the scene.

It was a gallant sight, but Tinker gave it only a passing glance as he hurried by.

At the gate he halted and drew back, for Ardoise was there in the act of mounting a fiery and mettlesome horse. Tinker waited only until he was in the saddle and had dashed out through the open gate, then he followed.

The Gipsy Squire was just visible, trotting down the road towards Slagford at a sharp pace. Tinker turned the other way—towards the bridge over the river.

He found his bicycle where he had left it beside the parapet of the bridge, and found it, too, not much the worse, beyond a slightly bent handle-bar. He was soon mounted and riding away at top speed, making for Job Peckchaff's cottage, where he meant to pull up and change into some dry clothes.

This would not cost many minutes, as the cottage lay on his road to the works.

Job himself was at the garden gate as he rode up, smoking a final pipe before turning in.

"What's this, lad? Where 'a' ye com from?" he wanted to know. "What's all that stir yonder? Doan't Oie hear the drooms an' troopets going oop at the barracks? What's amiss?"

Tinker hastily told him of the threatened riot and attack on the works.


"By goom, Oie must have a hand in that!" exclaimed the big Yorkshireman. "The woife's been going it summat awful with her tongue to-day. She's gone to bed with a headache, an' small wonder, it'll do me a world o' good to let off me feelings on these varmint with me fists! Oie'll come with thee, lad."

"Look sharp, then!" said Tinker. "I shall be off in a jiff."

He made his change with amazing speed, and soon came out ready to start.

(Continued on the next page.)


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