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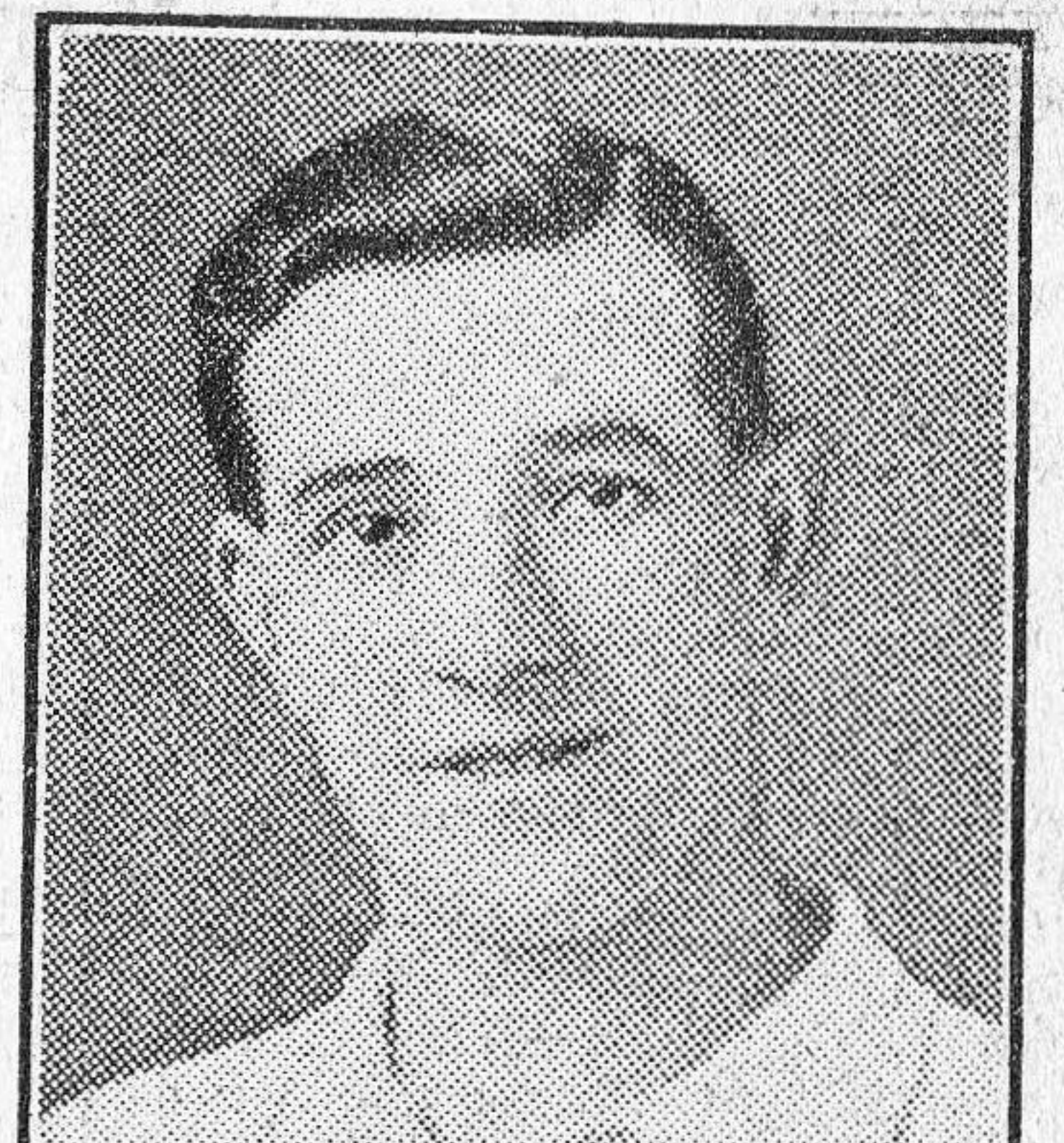
[Week Ending November 18th, 1922.



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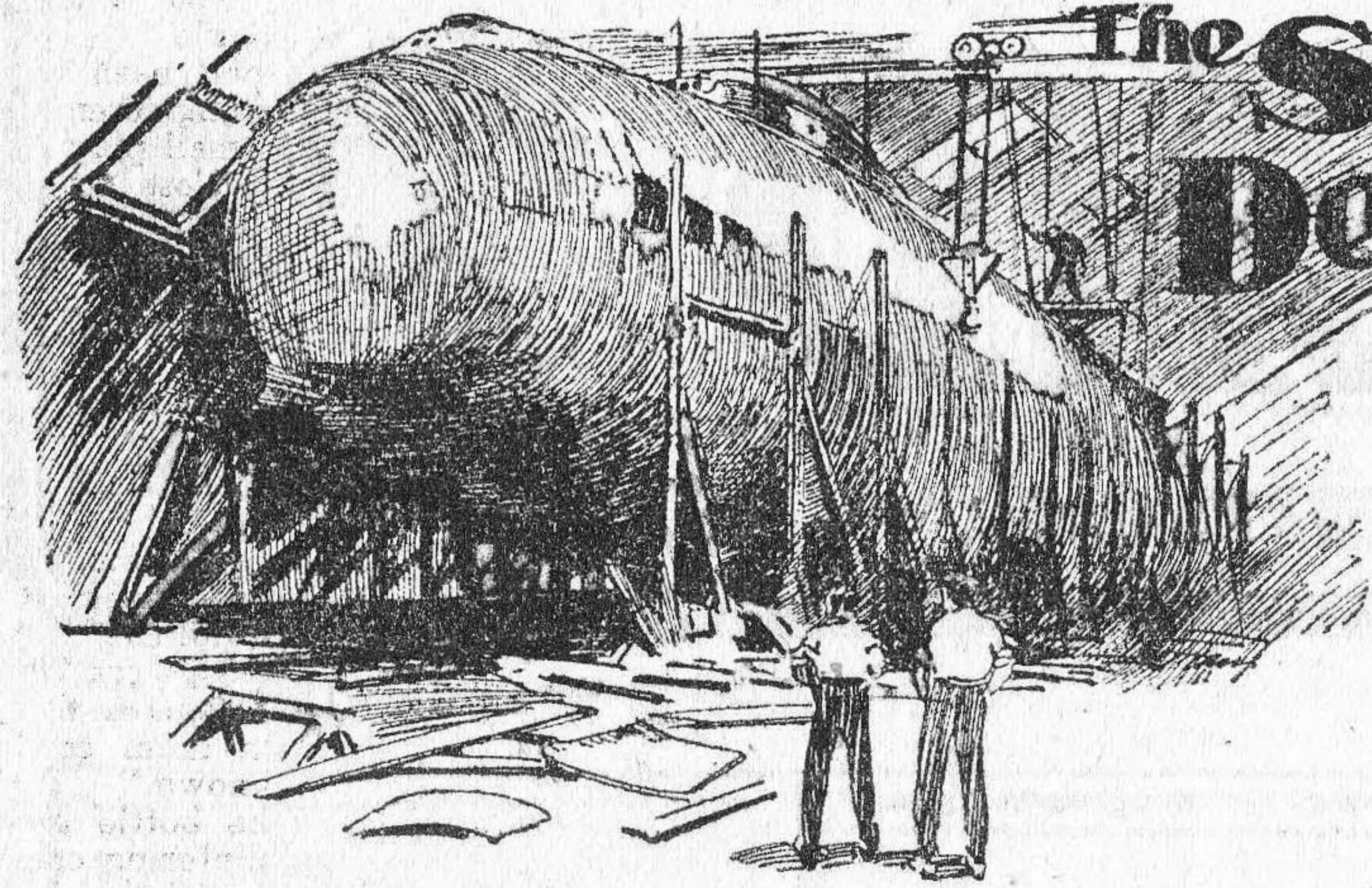


THE MAGIC METAL!

Even as the three boys watched, the great plate of metal, weighing upwards of a hundred pounds, was suddenly wrenched from the sand-bed and flung through the roof of the building. Then came a furious storm of wind which rushed through the shed, lifting the chums from the ground and dashing them against the walls!

(This Amazing Story of Modern Adventure begins on page 206. Turn to it at once!)

You will enjoy reading how Tim's jape resulted in an important scientific discovery!



The Space Destroyer!

A Magnificent Story of Science and Adventure.

The 1st Chapter.

The Experiment!

When Jesmond Kennedy's will was read, his friends, without exception, predicted a quick dissipation of his riches, and early disaster to Sidney, his son and heir.

Himself a keen engineer and the inventor of the world-famous Kennedy Rotary Spindle, Jesmond had lived long enough to realise that his instincts for practical originality had descended to Sidney, and, determined that his son's genius should be absolutely untrammelled, he had left to him his "entire fortune to make or mar his own life, as his own ability and energy directed."

For many a day after the reading of this strange will, Sid was disconsolate at the loss of his father, and he moodily wandered from room to room of the great house, feeling depressed and listless, and, truth to tell, giving but scant heed to the riches he had inherited.

One day, however, his chum and near neighbour, Ken Thornton, came to him with excitement written on every line of his homely features. Now, Ken, a keen and clever student of chemistry, was usually both reserved and shy, and Sid knew at once that something of great moment must have occurred, and he listened to his chum with newly-awakened interest.

"Sid, old man, I believe it's possible!"

"What is?" asked his mystified friend.

"Why, to produce a metal that is going to make steel about as obsolete as an ancient Briton's coracle."

"Rather a tall order, isn't it?" smiled Sid, "for steel is about the most useful thing mankind possesses."

"You just allow me the use of your workshop for a few days," replied Ken, "and I feel sure I'll surprise you more than you think."

He was answered by a subdued chuckle from behind, and, turning swiftly, he beheld the grinning countenance of a youth of about his own age, whose merry eyes, freckled face, and tip-tilted nose formed an almost irresistible combination of good humour and pertness.

"Like you surprised him," said the newcomer, "when you made the white gas that was going to put all the lighting companies into bankruptcy; but, instead, only succeeded in burning Sid's old workshop to the ground."

As he finished speaking Tim Baynes threw himself into an attitude of defence, for "leg-pulling" was a common diversion between the three chums, and many a pretty sparring-match had ensued from Tim's nimble ability with his tongue.

To-day, however, Ken refused to accept the challenge.

"Oh, accidents must happen occasionally, even with the brainiest of inventors," he answered airily, "but come along, Sid, let us get down to the shop; and if you, Timothy, will promise to be a good little Eric, we'll let you sit on one side and watch us make history, me lad."

Tim smiled at the idea of accepting this passive role, but he was curious to learn what Ken was up to, so he followed the others in silence.

Sid's shop was a never-failing source of attraction to Tim, although he openly admitted that he understood as little of its mysteries as a billikin understands a billy-can.

The shed which they now entered was placed in the centre of the field, about three minutes' walk from Sid's house. It was of noble proportions, being about sixty yards in length and

thirty in width, and the interior had been fitted up partly as a chemist's laboratory and partly as an engineer's work-room. At one end an array of bottles, retorts, test-tubes, and all the paraphernalia of modern chemistry filled half a dozen shelves, whilst the other end was occupied by a model electric blast-furnace, lathes, and a bewildering display of highly-polished tools.

The friends now busied themselves with making a bed of sand to receive the molten metal that would eventually become the marvel which was "going to make steel as obsolete as an ancient Briton's coracle," or so Ken confidently asserted.

There followed several days of real labour, but test after test failed to fulfil expectations and each day saw Ken grow more and more despondent, and his chums increasingly sceptical.

One afternoon, Tim, who had journeyed to the village in quest of stores, returned to the workshop to find it deserted, and a note from Sid informing him that they had gone to the house for tea, and asking him to follow. Nothing loath, Tim crammed the note into his pocket, and was about to depart, when he caught sight of the latest attempt to find Ken's elusive metal. Thoughtfully, he crossed to the sand bed and stood contemplating the smoking, semi-cooled substance.

Then slowly a grin spread over his features.

"They are clever chaps," he chuckled, "and very 'sky-an-tific.' Now, I wonder what they'd think if this sticky mess changed its colour whilst they were tea-drinking?"

For a moment he eyed the rows of bottles doubtfully.

"Sea-green, purple, pink," he murmured. "Oh, here we are—brown!"

Grasping a large bottle, full of a liquid that looked like brown varnish, he grinned cheerfully, and, turning to the sand-bed, quickly emptied its contents on to the partially-cooled metal; then, replacing the empty bottle on the shelf, strolled happily off to the tea-party.

When the three chums returned to the "shop," they naturally made straight for the sand-bed, and to Tim's secret amusement, Sid and Ken simultaneously uttered loud exclamations of surprise.

The metal that had been a dark, dull grey when they left the workshop was now a deep bronze, from which a faint golden glow emanated in the gathering dusk.

"Great smokes!" gasped Ken. "What can possibly have happened to the stuff? Am I seeing visions, or is it just a simple nightmare?"

"It's more likely," answered Sid, "that some enterprising idiot has been tampering with the stuff in our absence."

He looked suspiciously at Tim, but that youth was staring innocently at the mysterious mixture, and trying hard to work as much astonishment into his expression as a growing desire to hysterical laughter would permit. So intently was he solemnly glaring at the inoffensive sand-bed, that a hasty signal from Sid to Ken passed unnoticed, and the next moment he was lying on the ground with Sid astride his chest, and Ken looking down on him with ill-concealed satisfaction.

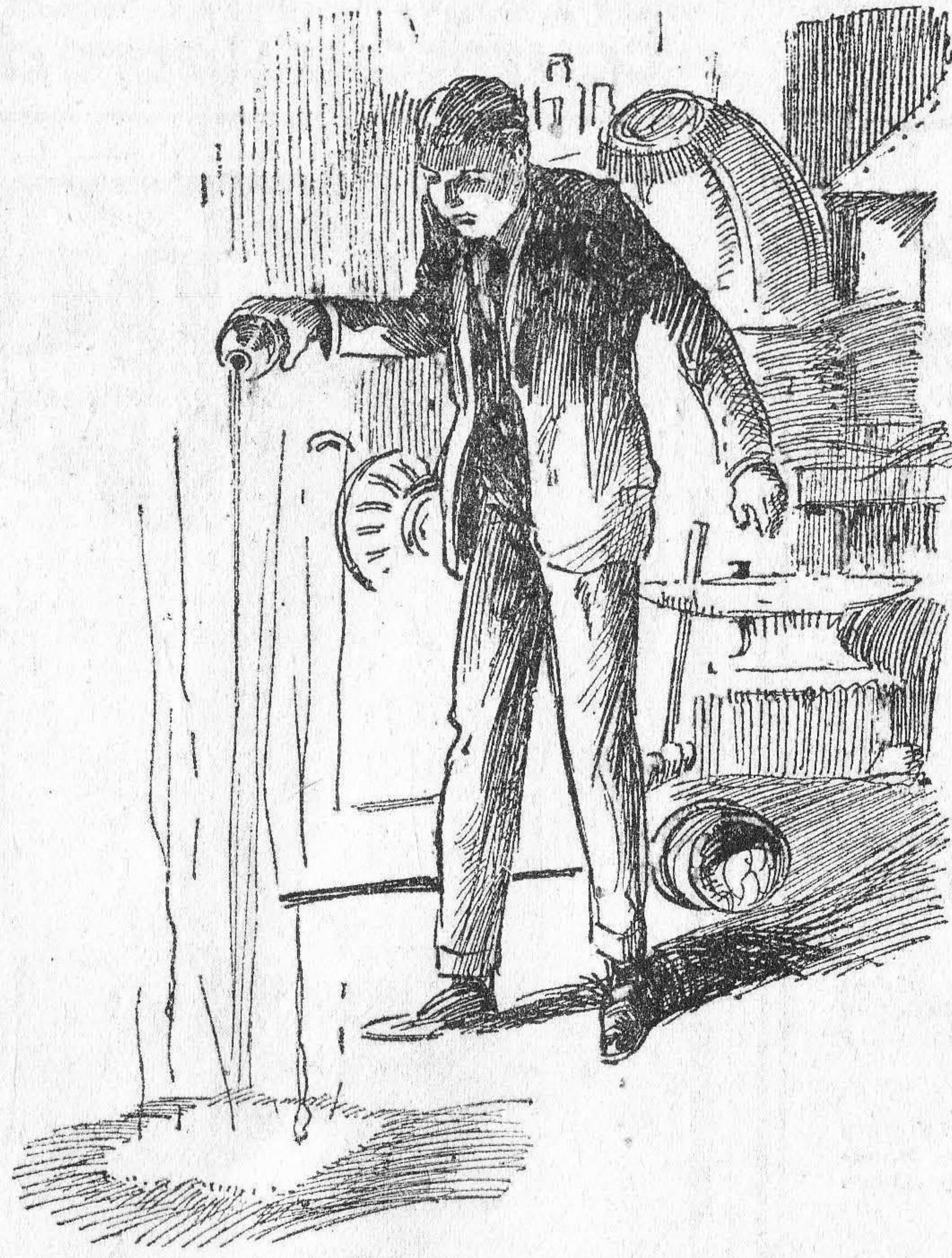
"Own up, old chap," said Sid; "that virtuous expression on a monkey-face like yours would not deceive a babe in arms. Own up, you beggar!"

"Oh, pax, you fellows!" gasped Tim. "I only wanted to see if—"

A sudden startled exclamation from Ken caused them to look once again

towards the sand-bed, and astonishment left them bereft of speech and movement.

In the gathering darkness of the short winter afternoon the faint glow from the metal seemed to have grown stronger; and then, to their unbounded amazement, the metal actually began to quiver and to sway gently from side to side. Even as they watched, the movement became momentarily stronger, and the great plate, weighing upwards of a hundred pounds, was suddenly wrenched from its nest, and, as if flung by the hand of some titanic Cyclops, crashed through the roof of the building, and disappeared into space.



THE JAPER! Tim grinned as he quickly emptied the contents of the bottle on the partially-cooled metal. "Now, I wonder," he murmured, "what Sid and Ken would say if this sticky mess changed its colour whilst they were at tea?"

It was followed almost instantly by a furious storm of wind that rushed through the shed, wrecking all that came in its way, and the chums—fortunately escaping the full fury of the whirlwind—were lifted helplessly from the ground, and flung violently against the walls of the building.

The 2nd Chapter. Auranium!

Sid awoke to consciousness, to find the white, scared face of Tim bending anxiously over him, and to hear that thoroughly frightened youth give a sigh of relief.

"Thanks be that you are alive!" he faltered. "Lie still whilst I go and look after poor old Ken."

Even as he spoke they heard Ken call faintly from the far end of the shed, and Tim hurried over to him, followed more slowly by his dazed and aching chum. They found Ken sitting up, his hand to his forehead.

"An earthquake in England!" he was muttering. "Who ever heard of an earthquake in England?"

"What's troubling you, old man?" asked the now repentant Tim; for in some dim fashion he sensed the fact that his joke had had unforeseen and startling consequences.

"The earthquake!" replied Ken. "Look what it's done! Look at the mess it has made of the roof!"

Following the direction of his pointing finger, they gazed upwards, and, to their astonishment, they perceived that a huge rent had been torn from the roof, and that practically the whole of the heavy woodwork had disappeared, leaving but a remnant of jagged and splintered stumps jutting from the four walls.

"Good gracious!" gasped Sid. "This is no earthquake, Ken, it's a—"

He paused, and the others waited in silence whilst he stood looking round the wrecked shed, bewildered and disbelief on every line of his face. He seemed to have forgotten the presence of the others, and he now returned to the centre of the shed and bent down to examine the remains of what had once been the sand-bed.

The others followed quietly, and they heard Sid muttering incoherently to himself.

"If only it were true! But no, it cannot be; it's utterly impossible!"

"Never mind what it is," said Ken anxiously. "Let us get out of the place. We can straighten it up tomorrow."

"If that plate of metal is not lying in the field outside," continued Sid, taking no notice of his chums, "then the unbelievable has happened, and

"Very well! Don't kick me when you have heard what an idiot I have been. When I read your note I was about to follow you to the house, when I noticed your latest experiment cooling off in the sand-bed. Well, Ken's idea of a new metal has proved a wash-out so far; and, knowing what scientific jonnies you both are, I thought it would do you no harm to have something really interesting to puzzle over. From the 'stinks' department I took the dirtiest-looking mixture I could find, and I poured it into the sand-bed."

He looked ruefully up at the broken roof.

"I can hardly believe even now that so simple a thing as that could have been responsible for what has since happened."

"Then I think differently," replied Sid. "Show me the bottle you picked up."

Tim crossed to the shelves, quickly found the bottle he had misused, and silently handed it to Sid, who was evidently labouring under great excitement.

It was by now growing distinctly dark; but, fortunately, the dynamo had escaped injury, and whilst Ken switched on the lights, Sid examined the bottle that had once held the brown liquid.

"Aqua-vitae!" he muttered curtly, then tacked the bottle under his arm. "Come along, chaps, let's get up to the house—and then I'll surprise you."

He strode away, purposely refusing to answer any questions, and left the others in the rear eagerly discussing their adventure whilst they turned off the lights and followed at a more sober pace.

Arrived at the house, they found Sid already ensconced in his snugger, feverishly scribbling in a writing-pad as if his very existence depended on his speed. As they entered he appeared to have finished, for he dropped the pencil and carefully read over what he had written. He looked serious and half-frightened when he eventually glanced up from the paper, and something of his mood entered into the others as they quietly sat down to listen to him.

"When that gust of wind came," he began abruptly, "it unfortunately knocked the senses out of us, but I can guess fairly well what happened."

"But I was already lying on the floor," interrupted Tim, "and because of that, I escaped injury from the whirlwind that threw you fellows."

"And what did you see?" demanded Sid.

"Very little that I could understand, but this I did see. Simultaneously with the whirlwind, a dark object seemed to spring from the ground and to dash through the heavily-timbered roof, as if it had been made of tissue-paper."

"And that dark object was, of course, our sheet of metal," replied Sid, whilst Ken looked from one to the other with dawning comprehension. Tim, however, was utterly at sea, and shook his head ruefully.

"Ten years ago," he murmured, "I would have said it was a banshee, but now—the metal has certainly vanished—so I can pass you a vote of confidence. What next?"

"Listen, chaps," replied Sid, "but understand that this is a secret that must go no further for the present. The new metal we were seeking has, despite our repeated experiments, proved but a will-of-the-wisp, and we were about to abandon the business in disgust." He paused impressively.

"If what I think has really happened, it has been left to Tim and his joke to reveal to our lucky selves the most wonderful and startling discovery this old world has ever known."

"And that is?" queried Ken. "The neutralisation of gravitation!" Sid solemnly announced.

"What do you mean?" asked Tim faintly. "Put it in English, Sid, and don't throw your jaw-breakers about so carelessly."

"Well, you know all about Newton and his apple-tree," smiled Sid. "Every kid at school understands that the apple dropped to the ground because of this mysterious gravitation. What every school-kid does not know is that as the earth attracts everything within its radius to itself, the sun by this same force of gravitation keeps the earth and the whole solar system revolving round it with a mathematical exactitude that would shame the finest timekeeper ever made by mankind."

"And by the neutralisation of this force of attraction," supplemented Ken, "you mean that we have accidentally discovered something that will soar outside the earth's atmosphere."

Follow the Wonderful Adventures of Sid, Ken, and Tim on their Exciting Voyage into Space!

"Exactly," answered Sid, "even more than that. Cannot you understand that man has always been tied to earth because of this only partly-understood force of gravitation? Even the flying man, however high he ascends, must at last return to earth because of this force; but now, if we can reproduce Tim's lucky fluke, man is at last free; the prison door is ajar, and the illimitable expanse of space awaits the venturesome explorer."

"But what good will that do the explorer?" asked Tim. "Even if he ventures into space, well, space is nothing! To me it merely seems rather an elaborate method of committing suicide."

"I entirely disagree," replied Sid. "Suppose we do reproduce this metal, and with it we build a ship of space? In that, there would be no difficulty in flying into the unexplored void."

"Oh, that's not what's troubling me," grinned Tim. "Granted it's easy enough to get away from earth, it is the return journey I'm thinking about."

"That should present no great difficulty," answered Sid, "for only a portion of the ship would be covered by this new metal, the plates of which would be controlled from the interior and adjusted to any direction from which we wanted to move. It follows that the portion that was not so covered would be attracted to the nearest thing that possesses gravitation."

"Exactly as a magnet attracts a needle," supplemented Ken practically, "and I, for one, am all eagerness to go further into this business."

"But what about this ship of space, as you call it," objected Tim. "Surely its weight would prevent it moving?"

"Oh, no," smiled Sid. "Put a sheet of this metal—which I suggest we call auranium—under this house, and the house would be lifted into space as easily as a feather is blown into the air. The only difference is that the feather is eventually pulled back to earth, whilst this house would recede further from the earth just so long as auranium intercepted earth's gravitation."

For several minutes both Tim and Ken plied Sid with further questions, but eventually Ken looked at his watch, then rose hurriedly from the table.

"Well, it is certainly a wonderful thing that has happened, but we can do nothing more to-night, and it's getting time for bye-bye."

"Then to-morrow you chaps will be here early," suggested Sid, "and we'll see if we can reproduce this auranium. In the meantime, it is agreed that we keep to-day's happenings absolutely to ourselves?"

The others gave the required promise, and the three chums separated at Ken's door, subdued and serious; even Tim for once omitted to rouse the household with his usual hilarious "Good-bye-ee."

The next morning saw them early at work, and whilst Tim journeyed to town for a fresh supply of aquavitae, the others were busily preparing a new sand-bed, and gathering together all the materials necessary to the great experiment.

In the afternoon, the previous day's programme was strictly adhered to. The same quantity of alloys were melted in the furnace and run off into the sand-bed, the exact time was allowed for cooling, and, finally, the brown liquid was added.

Although it was by now long past their usual tea-time, the chums could think of nothing but their fascinating experiment, and they waited in anxious silence for success or failure. They watched the steaming liquid change by almost imperceptible degrees from grey to reddish bronze, and as the colour deepened, the elusive golden glow of the previous day was repeated.

According to Sid's careful calculations, the time was now drawing near that would decide for good or ill, and on his suggestion they took the precaution of standing near the open door. From that position the metal was hidden from their view, and for some time nothing happened, except that the shimmering light assumed a stronger and deeper hue.

And then, quite suddenly, the amazing happenings of yesterday were repeated. The sudden violent whirlwind, so fierce that it sent them staggering backwards; a momentary vision of some dark object ascending at an incredible speed, and then—darkness!

This time the dynamo was completely wrecked, but fortunately the chums had provided themselves with electric torches, and they advanced gingerly to the centre of the shed. What had once been an orderly and

closely-packed bed of sand was now scattered far and wide; most important of all, the sheet of metal had disappeared.

There followed an animated discussion in the darkness of the workshop, and after mutual congratulations on their amazing discovery, they adjourned to Sid's snuggerly to partake of a greatly-overdue tea.

"Well, it is certainly some secret we've tumbled on," laughed Tim, who was steadily ploughing his way through a young mountain of hot buttered toast; "but what use do you chaps intend to make of our knowledge?"

"Whilst you were away this morning," replied Sid, "Ken and I discussed that very subject. There are two ways we reckon we can make use of it, and as you are of the honourable company I'll explain. First, the formula is known to us three only; we can patent it as a heavy-weight lifting machine, and so make a fabulous fortune."

"Then all we get out of it," grimaced Tim, "is money. Surely you, you old beggar, have enough filthy lucre already without trying to grab more."

"I said there were two ways," reproved Sid. "The second is that we should try and build a space-ship ourselves. Of course, you are not much good, Tim, except as an unskilled labourer"—Sid dodged a cushion—"but Ken and I between us reckon it is not beyond our skill. The question is, dare we venture?"

"I, for one," stolidly answered Ken, "am willing and anxious to chance it."

"And I," echoed Tim, "certainly want cash, but I want the fun even more."

"Then that settles that," answered Sid. "We are all of one mind. Adventure first, cash a bad second; but you fellows have your parents to consider, don't forget that."

The faces of his friends lengthened as they realised that they were not quite free to do as they wished.

"But you are not going to leave us out of this?" cried Tim.

"Oh, go easy!" said Ken, the practical. "We have to make the ship first, then it will be time to worry about the voyage."

In the days that followed Sid's engineering genius proved invaluable, and with many helpful suggestions from Ken—and, more rarely, a hint from Tim—the rough plans of the proposed space-ship were gradually drawn up; then section after section came under review, was condemned or approved, frequently altered, and only after passing a searching examination, finally passed.

Next a host of workmen appeared in the grounds, and under Tim's directions the skeleton of a new and larger workshop soon became visible, the chums being particularly careful that the building was topped by a movable roof. While Tim was fully occupied with the workshop, and Sid concentrated on the all-important plans, Ken was equally busy interviewing managers and directors of many famous engineering firms.

His travels took him to Birmingham and Sheffield, Barrow and Birkenhead, and then far north to Sunderland and Glasgow. In each of these smoke-ridden towns an order was given for certain sections of steel or aluminium plates; each order being so placed that one particular firm, or even town, could gain no clue to the ultimate use of the portion they supplied.

Ken was subjected to much politely-worded curiosity, but he cleverly side-tracked each of his interrogators, and as he paid cash on the understanding that each contract was to be fulfilled by a specified date, he had but little difficulty in getting the work started.

It was Sid, however, who undoubtedly had the hardest task to overcome, for he was faced with the apparently insurmountable difficulty of how to claim "Aurantium" to

earth until such time as they were ready to give its uncanny powers full liberty of action. Only after numberless experiments, and many days of hard thinking and weary headaches, did he eventually solve this problem, as will be shown hereafter.

In less than a month the new building was complete. Now one huge case after another began to arrive, and was portaged within the workshop. The time came when the last anxiously awaited package was delivered, and the last of the workmen was paid off, and had departed.

Henceforth the three chums worked behind closed doors.

The 3rd Chapter.
Into the Void!

For over three months the chums laboured without intermission; they met early, worked steadily through the long hours of the day, with but short intervals for hastily-snatched meals, and they parted late at night. A great amount of labour was saved by Ken's forethought in ordering standardised parts for the hull or sheath, the assembling of which presented but little difficulty, and in eight weeks they had commenced work on the interior fittings. This



OFF INTO SPACE! It was all bustle and confusion as the three boys climbed into the Celestial Pearl. The menfolk, not believing that the ship would fly, cheerfully shook hands with the lads!

also was soon accomplished, and the last and most important stage of their work was now entered upon. The actual manufacture of the accidentally-discovered Aurantium was, of course, easy, the only question being how to harness it to the ship-of-space until they were ready to test its ability to carry them into the void.

As already stated, Sid had evolved a plan, and this they now proceeded to follow. They had decided that it would be necessary to cover one half the ship with aurantium, this outer covering to be made in twenty great sections, each acting separately, and each and all controlled from one switchboard within the hull. It has already been shown that when aurantium reaches a certain degree of coolness it vanishes into space like a meteorite; but now, soon after the molten liquid had been run into its bed of sand it was hoisted, bed and all, high over the space-ship, and then gently lowered into its appointed place; thus, as each additional plate was riveted on to the top of the hull, the latter became, if anything, more firmly attached to earth, for only

when the greater portion of these plates were reversed to the under side of the hull would gravitation be intercepted, and so force the ship-of-space away from earth.

At last the twelve weeks of herculean effort were ended, and the result, resting within a great cage of scaffolding, bore a distorted resemblance to some overgrown egg, whose shell had softened and elongated to twice its length. The body was composed of aluminium, strengthened with numerous bands of steel, and from the upper portion almost to the centre or broadest part, both aluminium and steel were hidden beneath the bronze-coloured auranium. For look-out purposes the hull was pierced by six windows of thick plate glass, three on each side, and these in turn could be protected and strengthened in case of need by shutters of steel.

The interior was divided into three sections, the centre for use both as an observation and living room, the smaller sections at either end for use as a store-house and dormitory respectively.

During the morning all stores had been carried aboard and carefully checked. These comprised quantities of tinned and concentrated foods, many cylinders of oxygen, tanks of

twice expressed a fear that this thing might fly, but I have soon laughed her out of that ridiculous fancy."

"And so has Ken's mother; but it is ridiculous, and, like you, I know the impossible is impossible."

Whilst the fathers had been conferring apart, an interesting ceremony was taking place on a small platform that had been erected close to the space-ship. Ken's mother had received from that youth a small bottle of wine; and now, with smiling face, she advanced to the edge of the platform.

"Ship of mystery," she said loudly, "ere you depart to cut a virginal path through the void you must be christened, as your more prosaic sisters have been from time immemorial. Of your capabilities we know little, but if you fulfil the hopes of these dear youths of ours, we pray you, oh, so humbly, to guard them tenderly and to return them safely from the dread unknown." She paused, then raised the bottle aloft and threw it with a splintering crash high up against the bows of the ship. As the wine bubbled to the ground in a creaming stream, she cried aloud, "Ship of mystery, we salute you, and name you 'Celestial Pearl.'"

A ringing cheer from the chums was followed by a silence that was broken only by the drip, drip of the wine falling from the ship to the ground.

"Well, boys," said Mr. Thornton at last, "shake hands, and let us see you start before we go home to tea."

As he spoke he smiled at the ladies and winked knowingly at them.

"You must be safely off the premises before we start, sir," answered Sid, as he led the way towards the door of the shed. "When the Pearl does start moving she is going to create some disturbance to the atmosphere hereabouts."

At the door the ladies looked scared and doubtful, and in each mind ran the same thought. Of course, it did seem preposterous, and their husbands had ridiculed the idea. But suppose there was something in what the boys had said?

Their husbands, only that same morning, had again laughed at their silly fancies, but the thought would persist. Suppose that sinister-looking monster did actually leap heavenwards and vanish from human ken?

The men-folk, however, seemed quite jovial, and cheerfully shook hands with the chums, and after the ladies had kissed them, including the embarrassed and blushing Sid, they departed, and Sid promptly secured the door against intruders during their coming absence.

And now all was bustle and excitement.

A final search to be sure that nothing had been overlooked, then the chums climbed through the side door, carefully secured it behind them, and made a hurried survey to see that everything was shipshape.

Sid, who had unanimously been voted the commandership, immediately took his stand at the operating-board, and as his hand hovered over the switches he called to the others, "Ready, boys?"

"Go ahead," replied Ken.

Even now Sid hesitated, for he realised to the full the solemnity of the moment; then, pulling himself together, he grasped a white handle that was particularly noticeable amidst its ruddy companions; this was the central switch that was only to be used for starting purposes, and, overcoming his hesitation, he quickly deflected it.

Nothing happened! Not the faintest quiver or movement took place within the silent Pearl, and three disappointed youths looked disgustedly at each other.

"What a beastly wash-out!" cried Tim.

"No wonder our people so readily agreed to us coming!" said Ken bitterly. "Better let us get out and see if we can find what the trouble is."

"Not so much hurry, old chap!" protested Sid. "Just suppose that we are already in space."

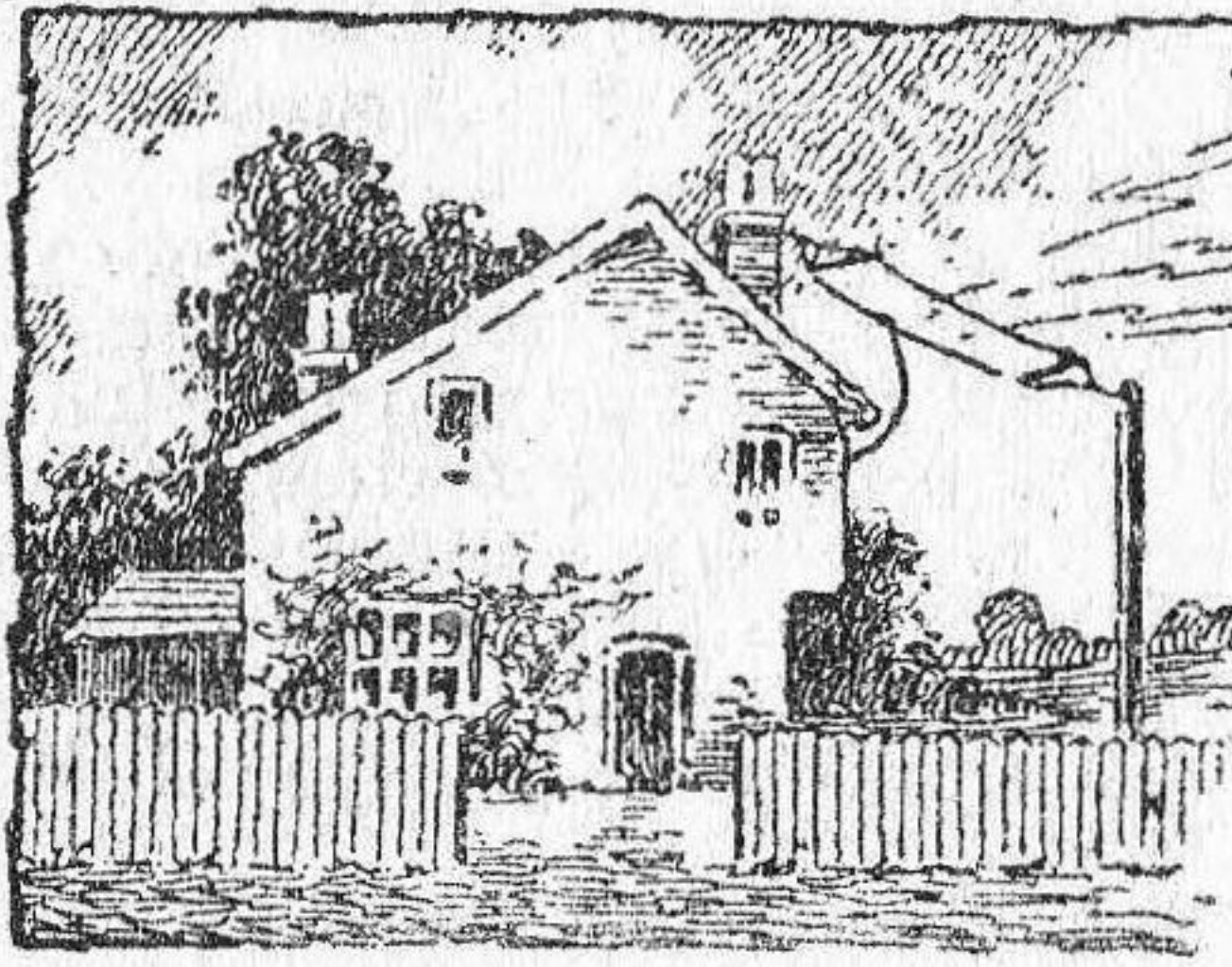
"But we cannot be," replied Ken, "for we have not moved."

"I think we have," said Sid. "You remember how aurantium vanished in a flash, as a finish to all our experiments. I venture to think that not only have we started, but that we have started so quickly that already we are several hundred miles from earth!"

(Is Sid's amazing statement true? You must not fail to read next Monday's long instalment of this splendid story. Tell all your pals about it and the other magnificent features in the enlarged BOYS' FRIEND.)

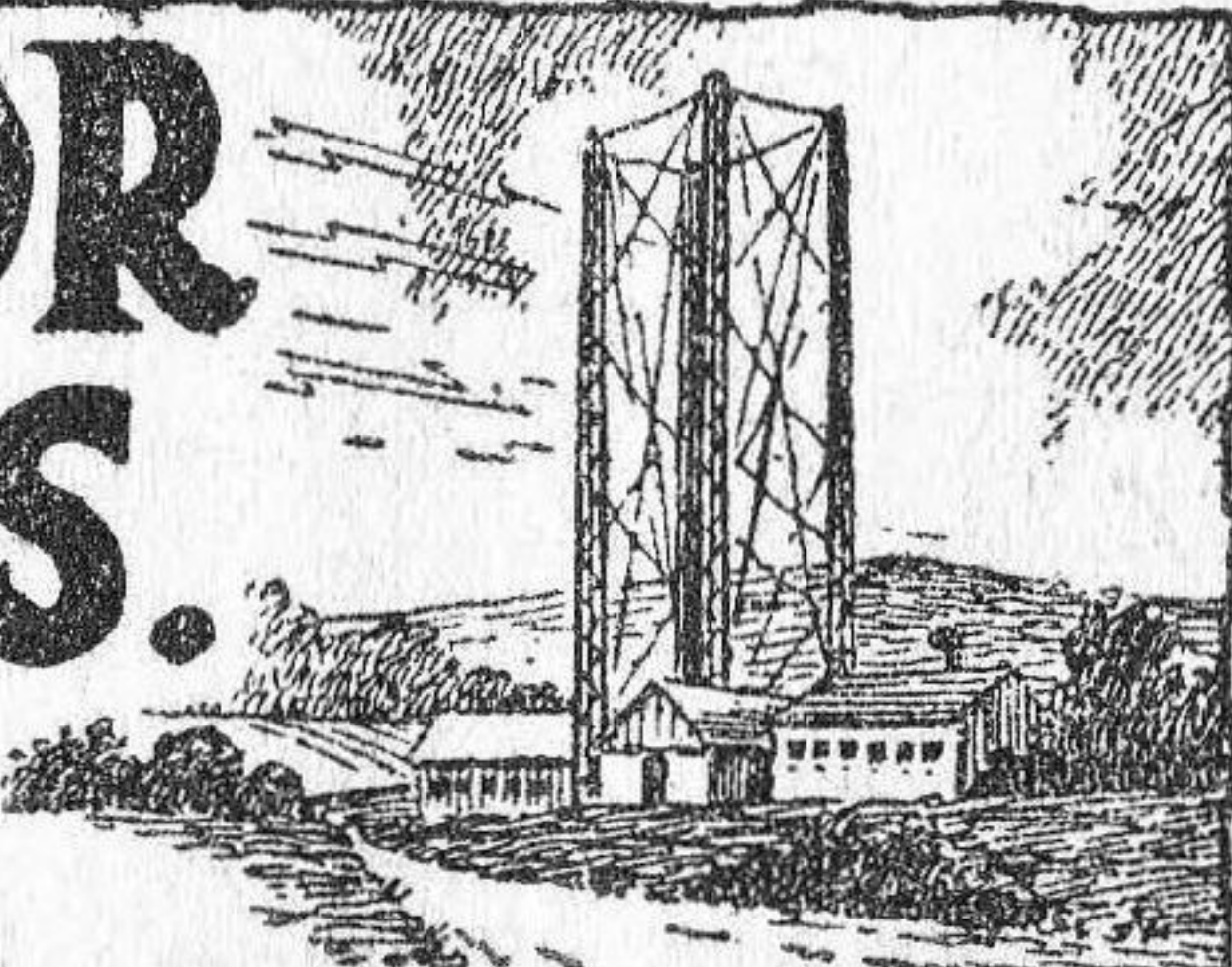
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SUMMARY TO LAST WEEK'S ARTICLE.

Last week Mr. Rattee gave full directions for mounting a crystal. "Valve receivers" are too dear for the majority of young wireless enthusiasts, but the "crystal receiver" can be made at home quite cheaply. Though crystals can be purchased already mounted in a little metal cup, it will be found better to buy the raw material, break it up into several pieces, and, after testing with the buzzer, mount them in as many metal cups. Crystals should never be mounted in steel or iron cups, but in those made of copper or brass. The end pieces of cartridge fuses or brass ferrules of old walking-sticks make excellent cups. To test the crystals, take an ordinary dry cell, a door bell with the bell removed, and a few feet of bell-wire. The telephones and tuning-coil will also be required. Connect the battery to the bell, leaving one of the wires disconnected at the bell, so that

the circuit may be made or broken at will, as is done with a Morse key. Now take the bell-wire, connect one end to the buzzer (vibrator) point of the bell, and with the other end make five or six windings round the tuning-coil, leaving the end perfectly free and unconnected. Place the piece of crystal in one of the cups, and pack it with tin-foil, leaving the surface of the crystal exposed. Place the "cat's whisker" of the detector on various spots on the crystal, making connection between the battery and the bell, so that the latter will buzz. When the buzzer signals are really loud in the telephones, the spot is a good one for wireless reception. By the same process test all the sides of the crystal, noting which side has the highest number of sensitive spots, and make that side the exposed or uppermost side of the crystal when mounting. Crystals may be mounted in tin-

foil packed closely about its sides; but it is better to use a low-melting alloy. This should be "Wood's metal," as with this alloy the melting-point can be obtained with the heat of an ordinary match. Solder of the ordinary type would completely injure the crystal. To make this low alloy, the following ingredients are required: mercury, 250 parts; bismuth, 50 parts; tin, 25 parts; and lead, 25 parts; and its melting-point is 115 degrees F. when soldering the crystal in its cup, melt just enough of the alloy to fill the latter, and then press the crystal into the alloy with its best and most sensitive side uppermost. During these operations every care must be taken not to handle the crystal unnecessarily, as by doing so its sensitivity is likely to be impaired. When the crystals are not in use, they should be wrapped in tissue-paper and put away from moisture and dust.

WHAT TUNING MEANS.

either the loose-coupler or the single wound inductance—especially when used with the crystal receiver described in the first of these articles.

Another means whereby one may tune is an arrangement of small coils of various diameters and lengths, made in such a way as to permit of their being connected or disconnected with the main receiving set in a quick and easy manner. This is best accomplished by using plugs or sockets, and winding the coils to the correct wave-lengths, each coil having a different tuning.

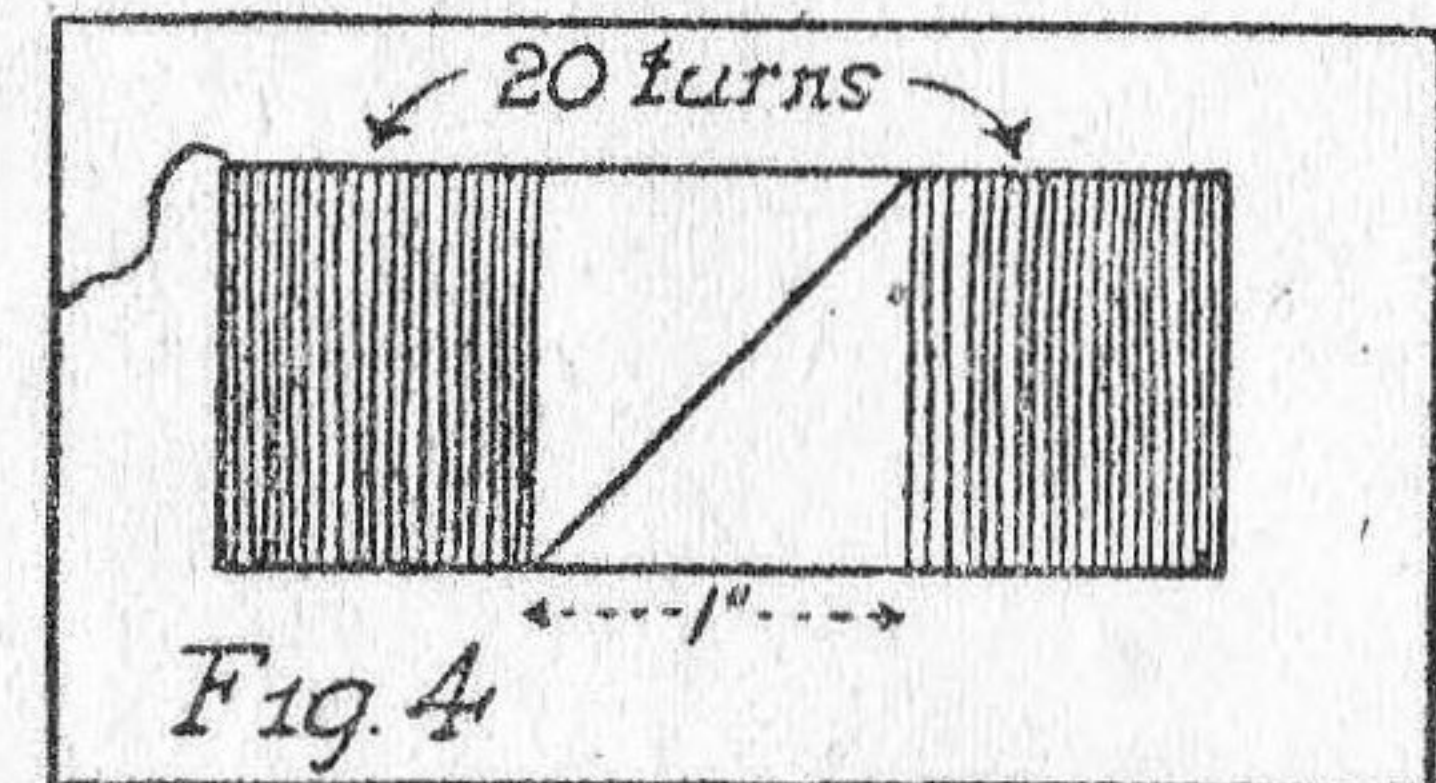
Other forms of inductance are honey-comb windings, slab coils, duolateral, basket, and several more to be described in a later article.

Still another very convenient form of inductance is the variometer. This apparatus consists of two coils, one revolving within the other, and since they are not too difficult to make, the following particulars are given

Take two cardboard tubes, one of four inches diameter and three inches long, and the other of such a diameter and length that it may be revolved inside the bigger tube without touching. Care should be taken that sufficient space is allowed to give clearance after the wire

cannot be too well emphasised, for the efficiency of the apparatus depends to a very large extent upon the accuracy and smoothness of this rotary movement.

About a quarter of an inch from the outer edge of the smaller tube bore a small hole, from which commence to

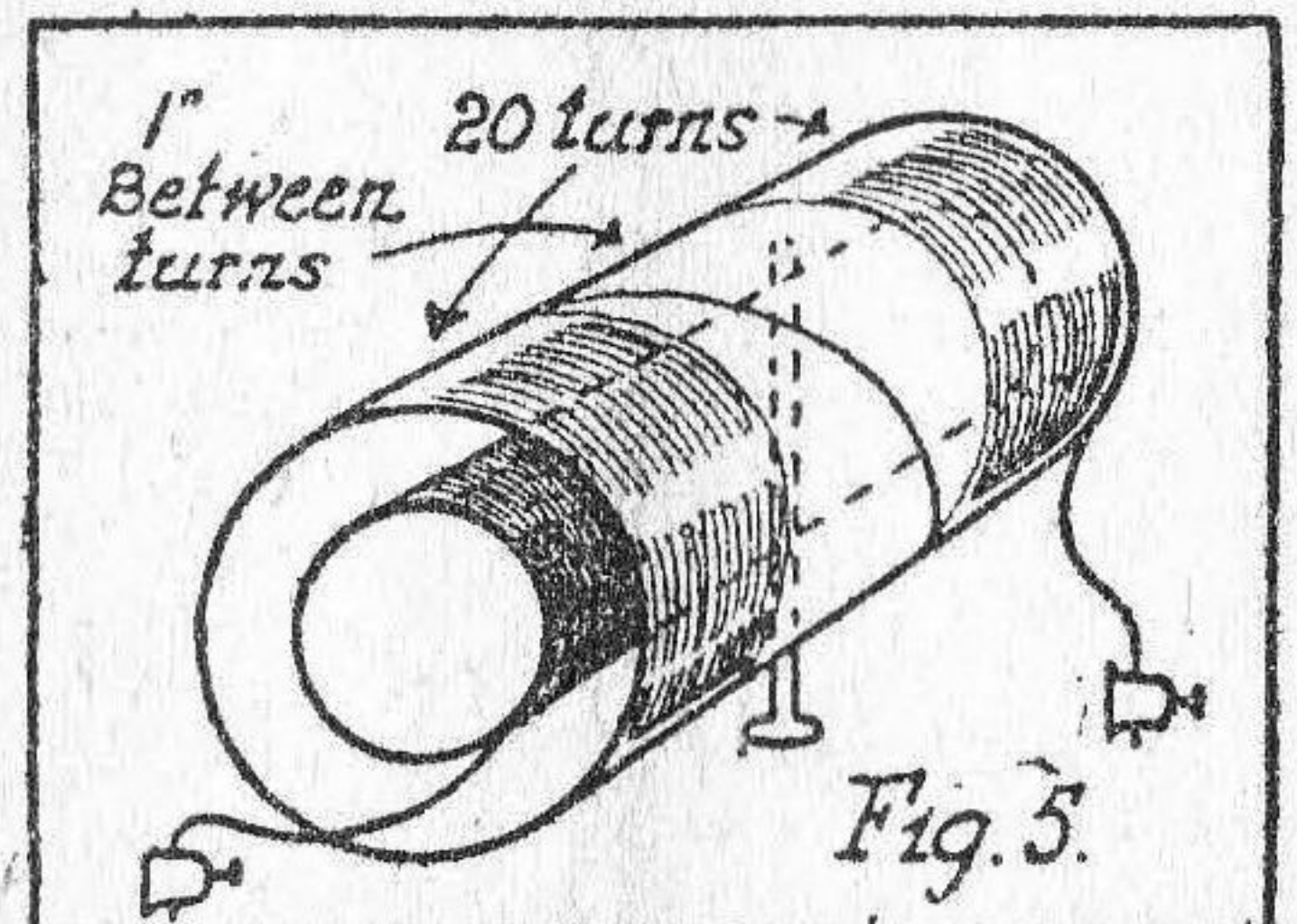


wind about twenty turns of No. 24 D.C.C. copper wire, special care being taken to keep the turns separated from each other

On completion of the twenty or so turns, leave a gap of about an inch, as shown in Fig. 4. Wind another twenty or so turns, and take the end through a small hole bored in the tube. About six inches of free wire should be allowed at both ends of the tube, and the windings may be made secure by dropping sealing-wax on to them, immediately over the two small holes.

Commencing in a similar manner, wind the larger tube in precisely the same way, care being taken to wind the wire in the same direction as that of the smaller coil. When both coils are wound, mount the smaller coil on a turning-shaft inside the large coil, and mount as shown in Fig. 5. The best means of fixing the shaft to the smaller coil is to fasten it with glue or sealing-wax, dropped on from inside the tube.

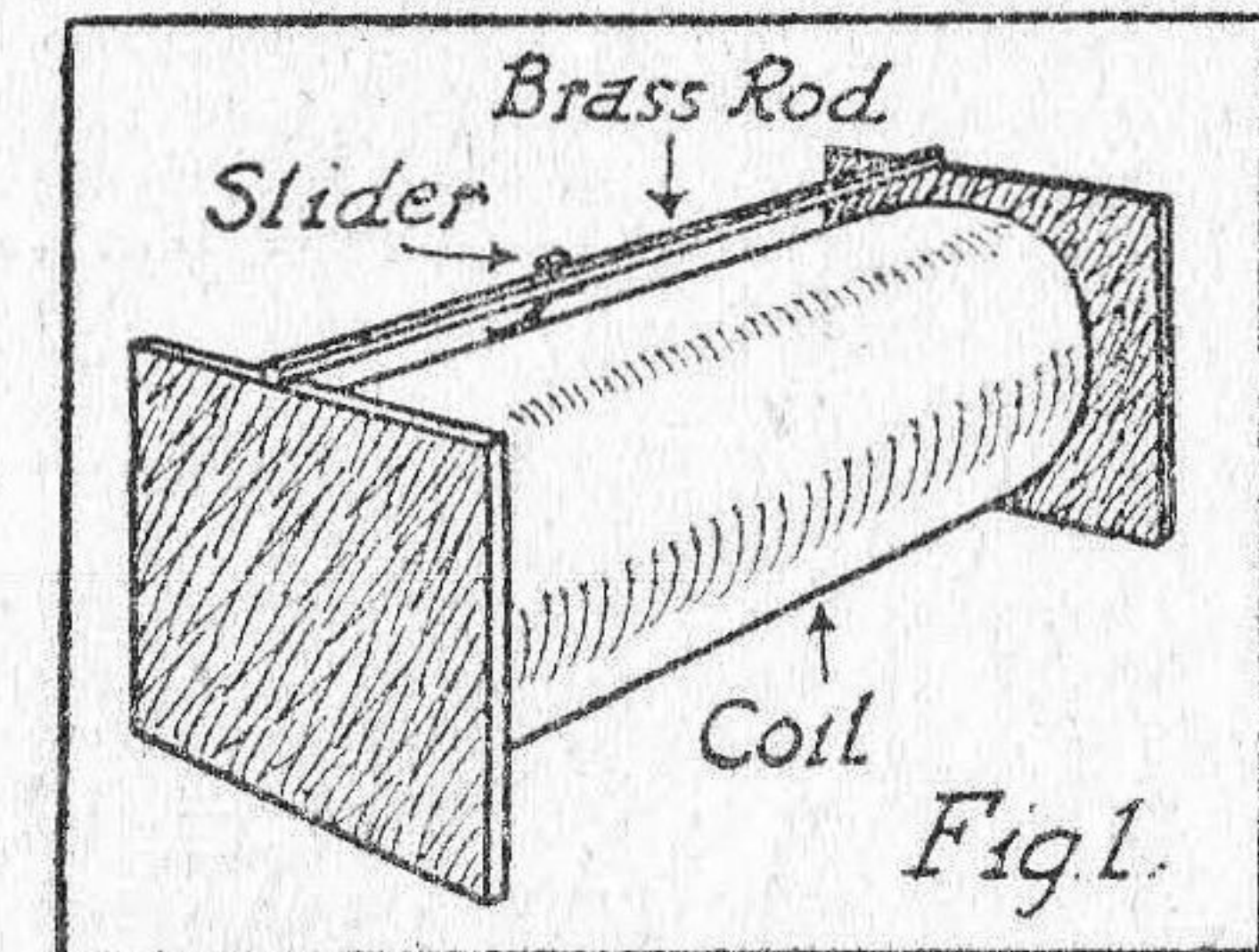
Connection should be made from one end of the larger coil to one end of the smaller coil, leaving plenty of loose wire to permit of the smaller coil being revolved. The two remaining wires should be carried to two binding-posts, as shown in Fig. 5, care being taken that the wire from the smaller coil is long



enough to permit of easy and free movement.

The shaft should not be turned through an angle of more than one hundred and eighty degrees, or a semi-circle, as, by doing so, the loose wires are liable to become twisted and broken. The coils should not be varnished, but should the amateur care to protect them from moisture, they should be treated with melted paraffin-wax

To be able to receive signals from any one particular wireless transmitting station without interference from all those other stations which it is obvious must be transmitting at the same time, it is necessary to use some sort of



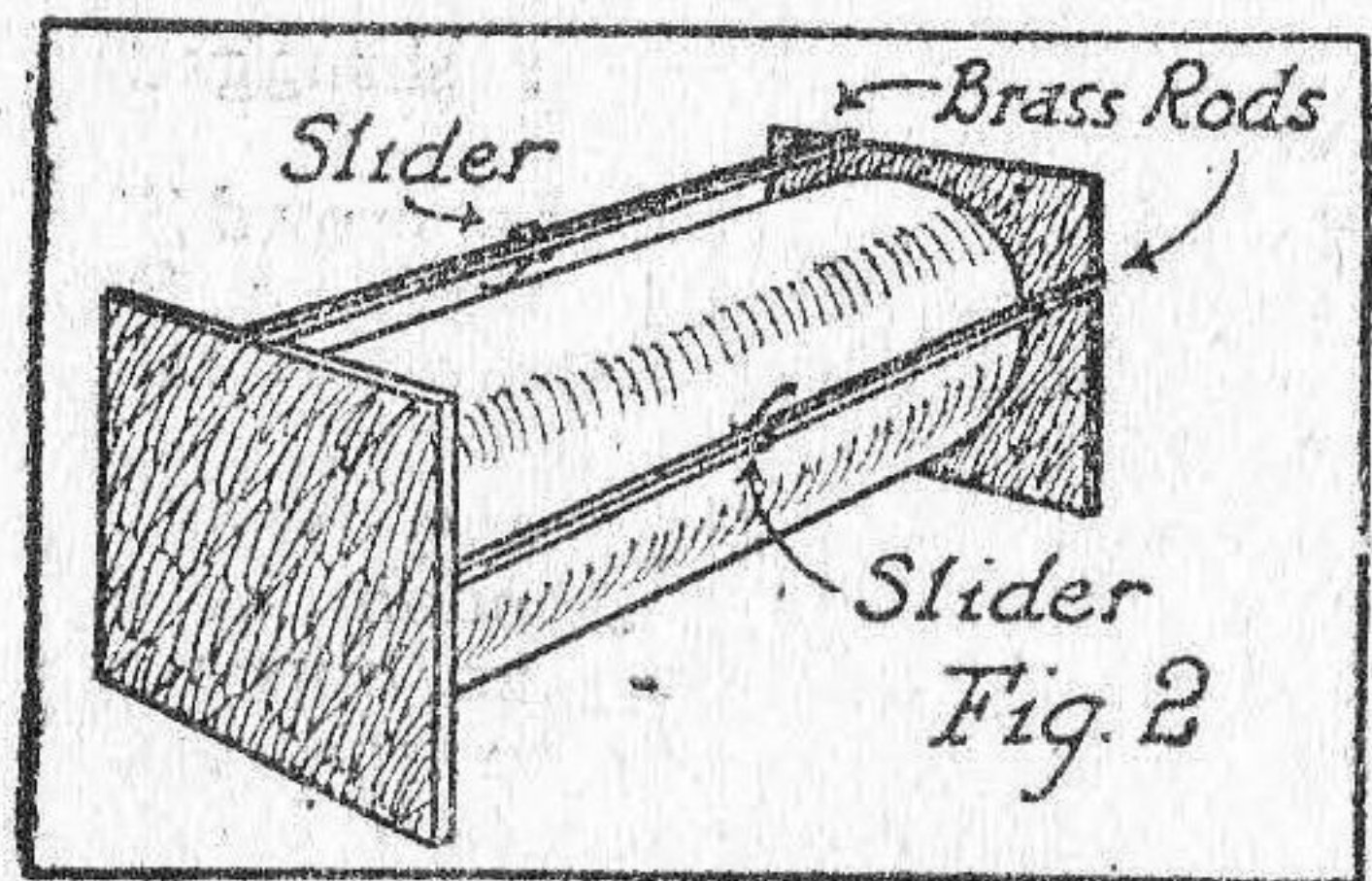
arrangement to serve the purpose of a "cut-out" for the unrequired signals. Such an arrangement is what is called a "tuner," and the instrument, as the name implies, "tunes" the receiving set to the same wave-length as that used by the transmitting station.

Broadly speaking, the tuner either increases or decreases the amount of wire in the aerial, or, in other words, by adjusting the tuner, the aerial is made longer or shorter, according to the wave-length of the transmitting station.

Much the same idea is obtained when weighing with a pair of ordinary scales. The material to be weighed is placed in one of the scale-pans, and weights are added or taken off until the two pans are balanced.

Now substitute the transmitting-station for the material to be weighed, and the tuning-coils for the weight; by adding or cutting out the turns of wire on the tuner until the transmitting-station is tuned we do much the same thing as when adding or taking out weights from the scale-pan until the two pans are balanced.

Though the principle of tuning is always the same, there are many types of tuners, among which are tuning-coils,



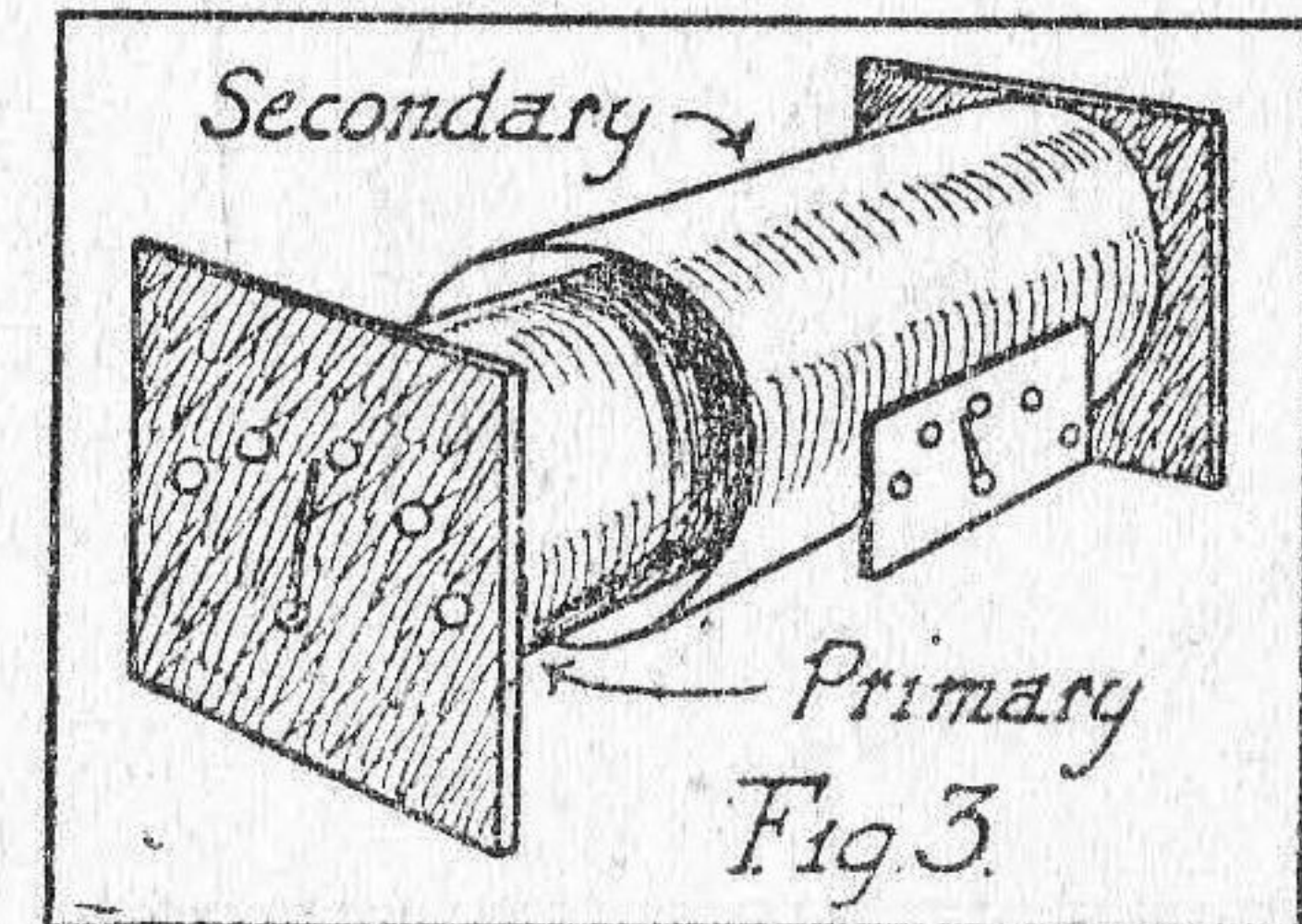
loose-couplers, variometers, variable condensers, etc.

With the exception of the variable condensers, all these tuners consist of coils of various designs, the most simple being the tuning-coil as described in the first article of this series. Another arrangement of tuning-coils consists of a form of cardboard wound with bare copper wire and provided with sliding contacts running on brass rod guides. Fig. 1 illustrates this form of tuning-coil, and by moving the slider along the brass rod either more turns of wire are put into the circuit or cut out, according to the direction in which the slider is moved.

If two sliders are used, as shown in Fig. 2, much finer tuning is possible.

Another form of inductance or tuner is the loose-coupler. This is made up of two windings, a primary and a secondary, with one sliding in the other, and each coil tapped at intervals, with each tapping brought out to a stud, as in Fig. 3.

By making several tappings and then connecting them to a multi-point switch, excellent results may be obtained with



has been wound on the inside tube, and it should be remembered that the smaller the space between the tubes the more efficient will the variometer be.

First find the exact centres of each tube, so that when a turning-shaft is fitted to the revolving tube and passed through the larger tube, the revolving tube may be turned freely and smoothly without touching the larger tube. The importance of accuracy in finding the correct position for fitting the shaft



Who is the most beautiful Screen Actress?

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is offered in this week's "Picture Show" (now on sale) in a simple and fascinating voting competition. Your answers to the above and similar questions may win you a big money prize. Why don't you try?

"MY STRANGE LIFE"

Read the opening chapters of this true, intimate life-story of a popular film star TO-DAY in "Picture Show." Perhaps you can guess who she is?

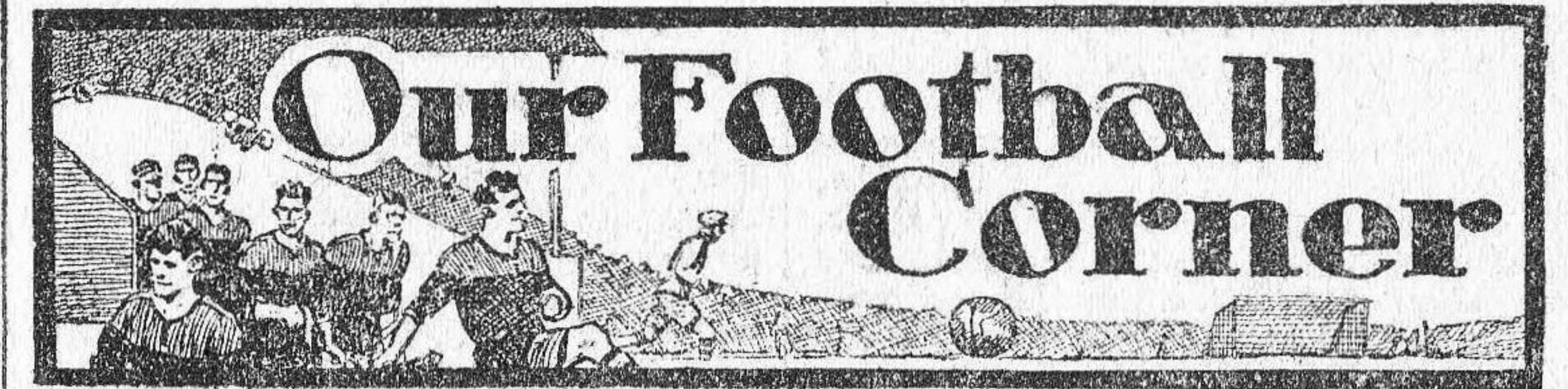
PICTURE SHOW

The Picturegoers' Favourite.

S. G. Rattee.

(No wireless enthusiast must miss Mr. Rattee's article on "Making Inductances or Tuning Coils," in next week's bumper number of the BOYS' FRIEND. Don't forget! Two real hand-coloured glossy photos are given free again next week. Tell your pals!)

A FOOTER ARTICLE YOU MUST READ!



Liverpool.

One of the surprising side-lines connected with big football is the way the "habits" of the clubs change even though the players remain the same. In the doings of the Liverpool club this season, as compared with last, we have a striking example of this strange fact. Last campaign, as my readers are well aware, Liverpool won the championship of the First Division, thus claiming the title of the best team of the season, but it was noticed that in the performance of this feat they owed more to their defence than to their attack.

Indeed, there were several clubs who finished below Liverpool in the League-

was Alfred Maitland, the left full-back of South Shields. For thirty years or more the English League representatives have never played in an inter-League match a man who had not the right birth qualification to play for England. When Maitland was chosen to play for the Football League, the selection people thought that he had been born in England. On the morning of the match against the Irish League, however, somebody discovered that Maitland had been born in Scotland, and was therefore not eligible to play for England, though there was no actual rule to prevent him from playing for the English League

Saving a Big Disappointment.

However, as no man who had been born in Scotland had played for the English League for a matter of thirty years or so, the heads of the English League team held a consultation on the morning of the match. As a result of this a reserve full-back was wired for, but though he arrived in time, Maitland eventually played, as it was felt that after he had been chosen, and as there was no actual rule broken, it would be too big a disappointment for him if the South Shields man was not allowed to turn out. So he played, and put up a jolly fine game, too.

Possibly the success of Maitland may have the effect of drawing the attention of the Scottish International selectors to his ability, and he is fully entitled to play for Scotland should they think fit to choose him, for although he left Scotland and came to England when he was only two years of age, he is Scottish so far as qualification for appearance in an International match goes.

Playing for Two Countries.

Even if Maitland had actually played for England in an International match, he would not have been the first player who had appeared for a country for which he was not qualified by rule. There is, for instance, the very notable case of a Sheffield United outside-left named Evans. Everybody thought he was Welsh, as we suppose he ought to have been with the name of Evans, and he played ten times for Wales in International matches. Then it was found out that he had actually been born in England, and that all the time he had been playing for Wales he had no real right to do so. When the fact was discovered he was forthwith chosen to play for England,



C. WALTERS. (Tottenham Hotspur.)

table last season who scored more goals, but there was no side whose defenders gave away a smaller number of goals to the other fellows. Not to put too fine a point on it, we might say with a fair amount of confidence, that the defenders of Liverpool won the championship for the side last season.

Some Wonderful Goal Scoring!

Now, this season the Liverpool team is made up almost exactly as it was last, and the side is going so strongly as to suggest that they may perform the remarkable feat of winning the championship of the First Division two seasons in succession. But the peculiar part of the business is this; that whereas last season the forwards got very few goals, this season they have proved in wonderful form. By way of showing this to be true, we can point to the fact that in their first five matches at home this season Liverpool scored no fewer than twenty-three goals—four times out of those five games they scored five in a match, and notched the other three in the fifth contest.

The Part Confidence Plays.

It is not at all easy to account satisfactorily for this change of habit; this jump by the same players from comparative ineptitude in front of goal to sparkling form. Perhaps more in the matter of goal-scoring than anything else does confidence play its part, and it may be that the explanation of the wonderful shooting of the Liverpool forwards is to be found in the fact that they started the season well in this direction. This good start gave the forwards the necessary confidence in their ability to find the net, and the great thing about confidence is that it enables the men who possess it to play their natural game.

Let us suppose, to show the other side of the picture, that here is a team which has gone for several weeks without doing much in the goal-scoring line. The forwards get desperately anxious to be doing something which will tell on the score-sheet, and this very anxiety may well be a drawback to success. To put the matter in another, and a perfectly simple way, we can say that it is easy to score goals when you are scoring them, and frightfully difficult to get into the way of scoring when a bad patch has been struck.

A Mistake over a Full-Back.

The first representative matches of the season have already been played, but so far as England is concerned, the Inter-League games and the International matches against Ireland and Wales, are rather looked upon as trials with a view to finding a team which will prove good enough to beat Scotland next April. The desire to win that International game is in the hearts of every true Englishman, and apart from the Cup Final, the match against Scotland may be regarded as the classic of the season. All the same, footballers are quite pleased when they find themselves in the inter-League teams, or the International matches against Wales or Ireland.

In the recent inter-League game between the Football League and the Irish League, one member of the Football League team came very near to being left out of the side at the last minute. This



A. MAITLAND. (South Shields.)

which he did on four occasions. To few people come the privilege of playing for two countries at any game, but Evans was a notable exception.

The Fastest Man in Football.

From time to time football enthusiasts find it interesting to compare notes as to which player in the game is the fastest. Different people have different opinions, and there are quite a number of first-class footballers who can move at a really good pace when they get going. Gill, of Cardiff City, for instance, has won many prizes on the running-track. Personally, however, I should be inclined, at the present moment, to stand by Charles Walters, the Tottenham Hotspur centre-half, as the fastest man in football over a short distance. I have never yet seen a forward who could give Walters a start, and, of course, his pace is most valuable in helping him to overtake an opponent who is racing for goal.

"Goalie"

(Another splendid footer chat next Monday.)

The crowd believed that Rollo Dayton had bribed his opponents to lose the match. They little knew that the sinister Duke was pulling the strings in the background!

The Bad Patch!

BY
WALTER EDWARDS

Another Splendid Footer
Story, featuring Rollo
Dayton and the Duke!



The 1st Chapter. A Surprising Start!

Big John Vaughan, having been ordered a complete rest, the Hon. Rollo Dayton became player-manager of Chelsea Villa, and from the moment the famous amateur took the reins, the club could do nothing right. The Villa started the season in fine style, but with the change of management their luck deserted them, and this state of affairs caused the sportsmen down Chelsea way to almost weep with disappointment and chagrin.

There appeared to be no reason for the sudden rot which had set in, but the fact remained that the Cup-holders had struck a bad patch. They could not win a game; they lost matches, which in the ordinary way, would have yielded them two certain points and an appreciable addition to their goal average.

Press and public had a great deal to say about the matter, but neither excuses nor recriminations served any useful purpose. They never do.

Like many another club in the past, Chelsea Villa had struck a losing vein, and each week found them sinking steadily towards the foot of the League table; and so swift was their descent that the omniscient sporting scribes warned them that they would drop clean through unless they pulled themselves together.

Then came the home fixture against Bramwich United, a team which had done moderately well since September. Nothing brilliant was ever expected of them, for they ambled through season after season in a stolid, unemotional way. Few "pars" were devoted to them in the papers, for they did not possess a player of outstanding merit.

The game against Chelsea Villa took place in early November, on a bleak Saturday afternoon, yet the spacious enclosure was well filled when Lewis, the home skipper, led his men on to the field, which was heavy and greasy after the heavy rainfall of the previous day.

Fully thirty thousand persons had passed through the turnstiles, yet the appearance of the local eleven caused little animation. The Chelsea supporters were disgruntled, and they took no pains to hide the fact.

A half-hearted cheer and a volley of ironical remarks greeted the Villa; the average crowd is notoriously fickle.

"Let's have another win to-day, Chelsea!"

"Wake up, the old gentlemen!" Lewis and his men smiled rather grimly as they spread out and took pot-shots at Giles, between the sticks. Rollo Dayton, who looked as debonair as usual, slammed home a shot which flashed past the goalkeeper with the speed of a meteor, giving him not the ghost of a chance, and a derisive laugh welled up from the crowd.

"Save a few o' those for Bramwich, Dayton!" yelled a shrill voice from the terrace, and a rumble reverberated round the ground.

Rollo ran his slim, muscular hand over his smooth hair, and turned to Dr. Dagnall, his inside partner.

"They're a cheery lot of birds, aren't they, old egg?" he smiled, with the rays of a watery sun glinting upon his gold-rimmed monocle. "Should we win to-day, most of them will die of heart failure!"

Dagnall gave a broad smile.

"H'm!" he returned sceptically, "I don't think there's much chance of the local undertakers having to work overtime, old man!"

"The perfect little optimist!" taunted Rollo, darting forward and trapping the ball.

The visitors made their appearance at this moment, and they looked very trim in their spotless jerseys and knickers as they trailed after Wallaby, their skipper, a tall, gaunt man, with a long narrow body and an abnormally small head. His features were clean-shaven and pale, and he peered at the world through a pair of enormous horn-rimmed glasses.

The sprinkling of Bramwich supporters which had travelled south gave their men a cheer, whilst a few of the local wits found in Wallaby a butt for their talents.

"Dekko the human 'atpin!" "What about the old clothes' peg?" "Don't stand sideways, Wallaby, or we won't be able to see you at all!"

The Bramwich skipper was used to this sort of chaff, and he merely shrugged his narrow shoulders and grinned in his usual vacuous manner.

Mr. Barlowe, of Manchester, was the referee, and he lost no time in whistling the respective captains to the centre, where the trio gripped palms.

Wallaby greeted Rollo, who had sauntered up with Lewis, as though he were a long-lost brother, pumping his hand up and down with a fervour which was almost embarrassing.

"You look fit, remarkably fit, old man!" he declared, his pale face creasing into a grin; and Rollo was still convinced that he had never met the queer-looking fellow before.

However, this was no time for a discussion.

"Oh, I'm just about to sit up and take a little nourishment, though the doctor forbids me to eat anything other than food!" confessed the youngster gravely.

A cackle broke from Wallaby. "Tee hee!" he giggled. "You always were a funny fellow!"

A little puzzled frown puckered Rollo's broad brow, for his conviction that this was his first meeting with Wallaby was now stronger than ever. The Bramwich skipper was making a mistake, of course. Still, it was very strange, for all that.

Up went the coin, and the luck was with Wallaby, and a sibilant gasp of surprise escaped the crowd when it was seen that he decided to face the sun, which was shining with a cold, white brilliance.

"What's up with you, 'Airpin?" demanded the Bramwich faction in disgust.

The Chelsea Villa players were also surprised at the amazing decision, for Wallaby had nothing to gain by setting his men to face the sun. He did not even have the advantage of the wind.

Both Rollo and the referee gazed at the tall fellow in bewilderment, and he deliberately winked knowingly at the Villaskipper.

"How's that for a start, old man?" he asked, a cunning light dawning in his eyes; and Rollo, at an utter loss to understand the strange question, made no reply.

"I fear that the human hairpin is up the pole, old egg," he confided to Dagnall, as the teams lined up for the kick-off; and his strong jaw jutted forward as he found Wallaby leering at him.

The referee glanced at his watch,

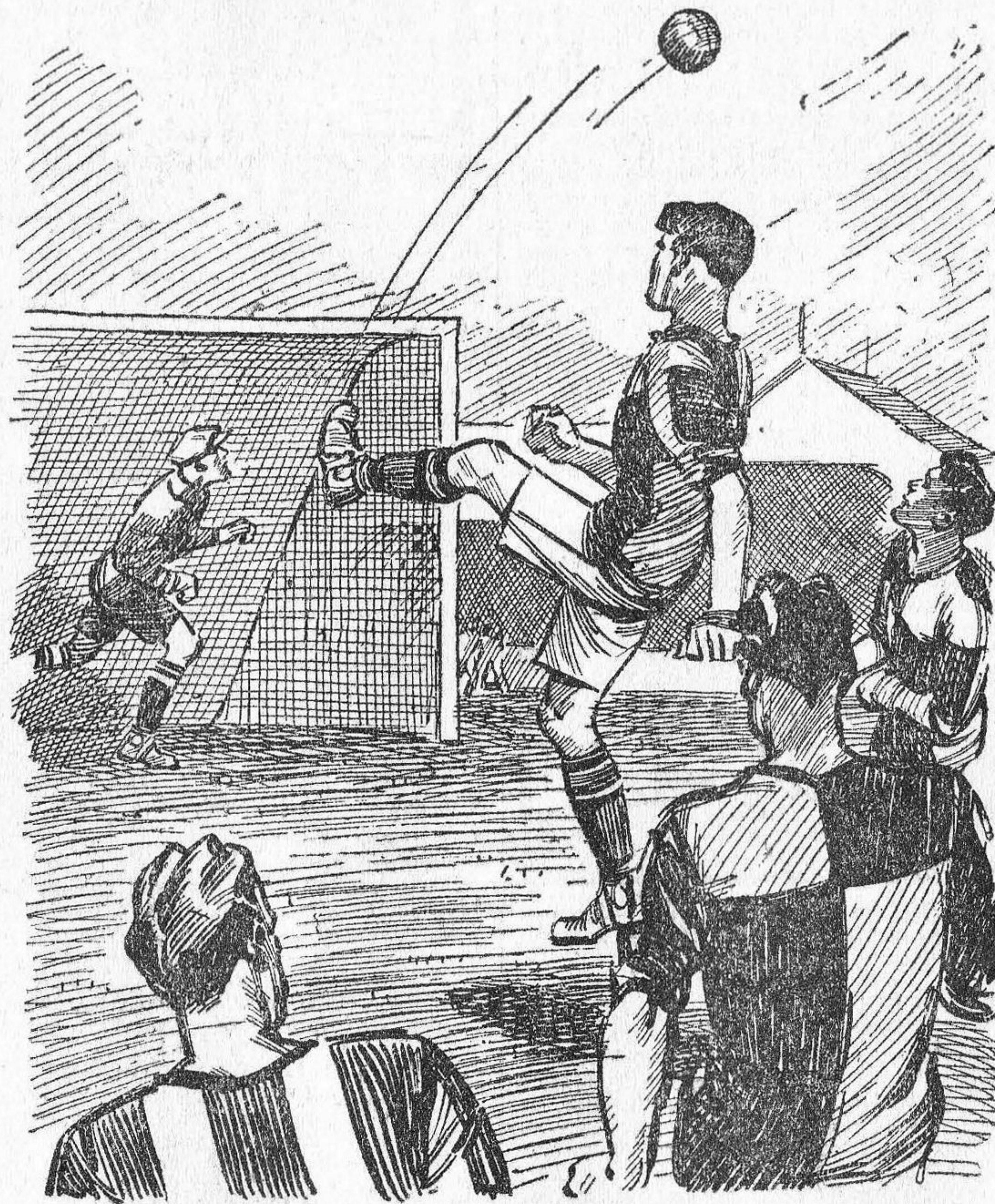
ticked off three seconds, and then blew his whistle; and Rollo set the ball in motion, passing to Britton.

The Londoners played their usual team, with Giles in goal, Storm and Gideon at back, and Crispin, Lewis, and Perne in front of them. Rollo led the attack, with Stapleton and Dagnall on his right, and Britton and Terle on his left.

Facing them were:

Moyner, Kay, Dene, Brown, Lowe, Starkey, Wallaby, Dawson, Grone, Martin, Joynder.

Britton slipped between Dene and Brown, who appeared to be sluggish in their movements, and pushed the leather out to Terle, the fleet-footed little winger, who made no mistake. Taking the pass on the run, he set



DELIBERATE MISJUDGMENT! Boomph! Wallaby sent the ball soaring away to the right, over the roof of the clubhouse. A groan broke from the lips of the Bramwich supporters, but the player appeared to be in nowise perturbed.

off down the line with a remarkable turn of speed, leaving Dawson to amble along in his wake.

Reaching the corner-flag in record time, he put over a centre which swooped clean into the goalmouth; and it was Rollo Dayton who trapped the ball and prepared to take a shot.

Three or four Bramwich players were within a yard or so of him, yet none of them made any attempt to tackle him. They stood still and waited for him to kick. They might have been transfixed.

"At him!" roared the visitors' supporters excitedly. "What are you standing there for, you idiots?"

"Tackle him!" But the Bramwich players were deaf to the shouting, and they did not come out of their momentary

trance until Rollo had raised his foot and beaten Joynder with a shot which the average goalkeeper would have saved with ease, for the youngster somehow caught his toe in the turf when shooting.

Too late, the visiting forwards came to life and rushed straight at Rollo, but this did not save them from the wrath of the enthusiasts from Bramwich.

"What's the matter with you, United?" demanded a score of indignant voices.

"Don't go to sleep!"

Highly elated at the early success, the Chelsea Villa players almost carried their centre down the field; and, much to their surprise, they found that Wallaby and his men were also looking quite pleased with the state of affairs.

The teams lined up, and the Bramwich captain grinned across at Rollo Dayton.

"That's one for you, anyway!" he said, in a low voice; but the words came plainly to the ears of Mr. Barlowe, the referee.

He said nothing, but a puzzled look crept into his shrewd eyes, for it occurred to him that there was some deeper meaning in Wallaby's innocent remark.

The 2nd Chapter.

The Ref. is Suspicious.

It was a very worried youngster who leapt forward when Dene touched the ball to Kay, for there was something sinister in the manner in which Wallaby was grinning. Furthermore, Rollo was at a complete loss to understand the meaning of the curious remarks which the fellow let fall from time to time.

Robbing Kay with ease—the forward seemed to place the leather upon his toe—Rollo set off down the field; yet, though the opposing players made some show of tackling him, they actually made no real effort to rob him. It seemed that it was all pretence, that they had no intention of stopping him.

"Call yourself a goalkeeper?" "Are you giving the match away, Joynder?"

"How much are Chelsea paying you, Wallaby?"

The visiting sportsmen were red with rage, for the fact that their team was not trying was all too palpable. Even the Chelsea supporters began to look suspicious and uneasy, for the extraordinary behaviour of the United might mean anything.

Wallaby and his men were still smiling blandly as Rollo was rushed down the field by the other Villa players; but the youngster was looking anything but happy. He felt sure that there was something fishy about the whole business, yet for the life of him he could not fathom what it was.

If Bramwich wished to deliberately lose the game it was no affair of his, yet he felt that they would not wish to do so without a sinister motive. Moreover, he did not like the expression upon Wallaby's crafty features.

The Bramwich faction was keeping up a running fire of caustic comment, and Mr. Barlowe, the referee, was gazing with narrowed eyes from Wallaby to the other players. The whole eleven seemed quite satisfied at the manner in which the game was progressing.

Dene kicked off for the second time in a matter of minutes, yet he did not pass to either of his inside men. Instead, he appeared to miskick, and the ball trickled across to Dagnall, who snapped it up and passed out to Stapleton, the lanky winger.

It was heavy going, but the big fellow made fine headway, brushing past Moyner as though he did not exist; and the Bramwich winger might not have done so, for all the trouble he gave Stapleton. He made a half-hearted effort to intercept the flying figure, failed ingloriously, and turned away, with a grin, not even attempting to follow up.

This incident roused the fury of the little knot of sportsmen from Bramwich.

"Wake up, Moyner!" "What's the matter with you, man?"

"It's a faked match!" "What about it, ref?"

There was not the slightest doubt that there was something amiss, and Mr. Barlowe looked very grave as Stapleton beat Grone and Martin with childish ease, and scored with a shot which did little more than trickle over the line.

He blew his whistle, and pointed to the centre, and then, to the roar of thousands of angry, indignant voices, he beckoned to the whole twenty-two players.

He had something to say to them.

The 3rd Chapter. The Penalty Kick!

The wild shouting of the infuriated crowd died down as the players swarmed round the tight-lipped referee. Mr. Barlowe looked grave and determined as he allowed his shrewd eyes to travel from one face to another.

The Bramwich fellows were grinning covertly, whilst the expression upon the faces of the Villa players was one of bewilderment.

"I may be wrong," said the referee quietly, "but I've an idea that your men aren't doing their best, Wallaby, and the crowd seems to be of the same opinion."

The visiting skipper shrugged his narrow shoulders.

"To blazes with the crowd!" he snapped, with a sly wink at Rollo. "We know what we're doing to-day, don't we, Dayton?"

Rollo was undoubtedly the most puzzled man in London at that moment, but he had no opportunity of making a reply to the baffling remark.

"The Bramwich players are slacking. It is obvious to everybody, and this sort of loose play won't do!" continued Barlowe earnestly. "The crowd pays to see decent football, and it must have its money's worth. This sort of play will lead to disorderly scenes, or worse. I do not pretend to understand the meaning of your slackness, and I am loath to think that it had anything to do with bribery or any of that nonsense!"

He looked straight at Wallaby. "Now, my lad, play up for all you are worth, or I may have to take drastic action."

The players trotted away to their respective positions, and the ball was placed in the centre, and a loud cheer rang out for the referee.

Heep! Dene tapped the ball to Brown, who in turn passed out to Lowe, and the winger at once proved that he had

(Continued overleaf.)

The Bad Patch!



BY WALTER EDWARDS
(Continued from previous page.)

a good turn of speed. He went away down the line like the wind, forcing even little Terle to exert himself.

Making the corner-flag without mishap, he put a centre across, but he kicked a little bit too hard. The ball flashed over the bobbing heads, and Moyner ran in to meet it. Timing matters to a nicety, he lifted the leather clean into the goalmouth, and a scramble ensued, and Storm, losing his head in the excitement, gave a prodigious leap.

Whether he fouled or not is open to doubt, but the referee was of the opinion that he did.

The whistle shrieked, and Barlowe pointed a rigid finger at the ominous whitewash blob. His face was set and expressionless, the shouting of the crowd meaning nothing to him.

The ball was placed in position, and the players lined up on either side of Wallaby, who was to take the kick. The din died away. Nobody seemed to breathe.

Dancing about on the goal-line, Giles looked about as comfortable as the proverbial cat on hot bricks, his body swaying from side to side, his eyes bright; yet he had small cause for worry.

A solemn hush settled upon the enclosure as the Bramwich skipper prepared to try his luck, but a shout of derisive laughter rose to the heavens after Wallaby had ambled forward and lashed out with all the power of his leg.

Boomp!
The staccato sound of leather meeting leather rang out upon the chilly air and then the ball soared away to the right, and skimmed the roof of the clubhouse.

A groan—a mixture of rage, disappointment, and disgust—broke from the lips of the Bramwich folk, but Wallaby appeared to be in nowise perturbed. He looked quite satisfied with himself as he grinned at Rollo, whose clean-cut features were masklike.

"How's that?" he asked in a penetrating whisper. "We may as well do the job properly whilst we're about it! Eh, old man?" Then he swung round, a guilty expression upon his cunning features, for Mr. Barlowe was at his elbow.

Every line upon the official's face proved that his suspicions had been more than confirmed, and the penetrating look he shot at Rollo Dayton made the fair-haired amateur flush.

Rollo, now thoroughly worked up and determined to get to the bottom of the mysterious affair, strode across to the Bramwich skipper.

"Look here, Wallaby," he snapped, "what's your little game? Your fellows have been behaving in a jolly queer manner right from the kick-off. Now then, what is the meaning of that last remark? Out with it!"

Still with that habitual crafty expression upon his face, Wallaby grinned at his questioner.

"Oh, it's nothing—nothing, old man!" he declared, waving a skinny hand and preparing to walk away.

Rollo would not be satisfied with the evasive answer, however, so he shot out a muscular hand and swung the lean fellow round. He tapped him upon the chest with a strong forefinger—and the tap was anything but gentle.

"That's not good enough, my son," he declared sharply. "There's some very funny business going on this afternoon, and I should like to know what it is. What's more, I mean to know, even if I have to shake the truth out of you! I wish to make that quite clear!"

The cunning smile faded from the Bramwich skipper's gaunt features, and a tinge of colour mounted to his narrow brow. His skinny fists clenched as he fixed his smouldering eyes upon his questioner.

"I don't mind your trying this play-acting stuff to throw dust in the ref's eyes," he snarled, shooting a glance at Barlowe, "but when you start threatening me you run up

against the wrong party, Mister Blooming Dayton! Got that?"

Rollo nodded. "Go on," he said very quietly. "Give me any more of your lip," continued Wallaby in threatening tones, "and I'll give the whole show away! I'll tell 'em all I know! Then where will you be, Mister Clean-Sport Crusader?"

The Bramwich fellow rapped the words with the venom of a striking snake, and Rollo Dayton almost staggered. Yet in that brief moment he began to see light, to realise that he and the other Chelsea Villa players were the victims of a deeply-laid plot.

There was no time in which to reason the matter out, yet something told him that a master mind had engineered the affair, that a person other than Wallaby was pulling the strings.

And before his troubled eyes there swam the clean-cut features of the man who called himself the Duke, the "crook" who had vowed to bring himself and the club to the dust.

Daggers, Lewis, and the others crowded round the pair, looking from the pale face of the amateur to the flushed cheeks of Wallaby, whose lean body was quivering.

Rollo's natural impulse was to grip the fellow and shake the truth out of him, but he managed to hold himself in hand.

The interruption did not last more than a matter of seconds, yet the crowd was already yelling lustily; and the referee looked as though he were bearing all the troubles of the universe upon his broad back.

He strode up to the two players and stepped between them.

"Now then," he snapped stily, "I've had enough of you fellows this afternoon! This tom-fool business has got to stop, or I'll order you off! There will be an inquiry, anyway, for there are certain remarks of Wallaby's which can mean anything. This is a very curious business, Dayton, and the F.A. must hear of it!"

This was a record speech for Barlowe, who was a man of few words; and his tone proved that he had made up his mind that everything was not straight and above-board. His very glance was suspicious.

Rollo, for his part, did not know which was the best course to pursue; he was in a maze, and his head was buzzing with Wallaby's threatening words. "I'll give the whole show away!"

"What 'show' did he mean?" asked the youngster in bewilderment. He had never seen either Wallaby or the other Bramwich players before, yet—

"What's the matter, Dayton?" "Wake up, Bramwich!" "Get a move on, ref!"

Another cataclysm of impatient cries broke out, and Barlowe glanced at his watch. He was pale and agitated being unable to make head or tail of the extraordinary business.

"Come along, get going!" he said briskly. "We'll thrash this affair out after the game!"

Rollo nodded and looked straight at Wallaby, who grinned uneasily under the piercing gaze.

"And the affair is not the only thing that will get thrashed," he said meaningly, slowly closing his muscular fists.

The 4th Chapter. A Message for Rollo!

The ball was placed in position, and Giles took the goal-kick, and it was at once obvious that the Bramwich eleven meant to continue their amazing tactics. They were doing all in their power to let the Londoners break through and score!

Such a state of affairs had surely

never happened in the history of the game.

The United was not trying, for the forwards did not exert themselves, and the backs tackled in a half-hearted manner, which made it child's play for the Chelsea attack to break through and beat Joynder, who seemed to have forgotten everything he had ever known about the art of keeping goal.

He repeatedly muffed shots which a schoolboy could have saved, and half-time arrived with the Villa leading by nine goals to nil.

Yet there was no sign of triumph or elation about Lewis and his men as they trooped from the field, for something warned them of impending trouble.

And, added to this premonition, part of the crowd had long since formed a theory to account for Bramwich United's poor display. After all, Wallaby and his men had not even tried to disguise the fact that they were giving the game away, so Rollo was in nowise surprised when hundreds of angry and disgusted voices hurled abuse at the Villa players as they made for the dressing-room.

"How much are you paying Bramwich, Lewis?" asked a score of wild-eyed spectators, shaking their clenched fists at the tall skipper.

"Call yourselves sportsmen!" "What will Big John say about it, Dayton?"

"How about the Clean-Sport Crusaders now?"

These and many other remarks of a like nature were shouted at Lewis and the player-manager; but they took no notice, merely tightening their lips and walking straight ahead. They knew that to remonstrate with the spectators in their present mood would only make matters worse.

Wallaby was still grinning as he slouched across the turf, and he also came in for his share of vituperation; but the fact did not trouble him.

Indeed, his amusement seemed to increase as the hoarse voices rose to a roar.

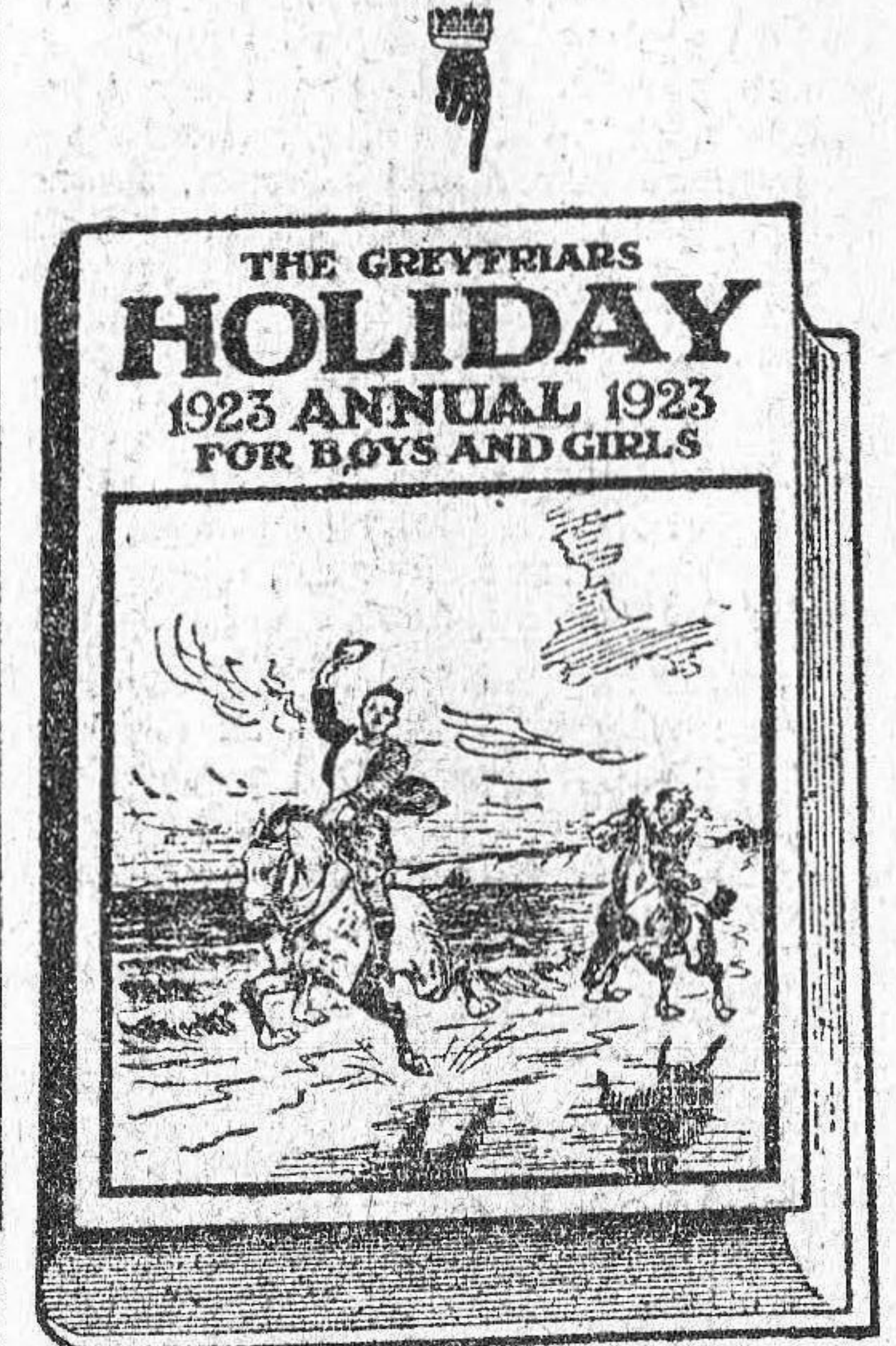
"How much are you getting out of this dirty business, you scoundrel?" demanded a red-faced old fellow in the grand-stand, waving his umbrella threateningly.

Wallaby, who was about to pass down the stone steps to the dressing-room, halted for a moment and tapped the side of his nose with a cunning gesture.

"Wouldn't you like to know, old man!" he grinned; and the words were tantamount to a confession that the home side had bribed the United to lose the game.

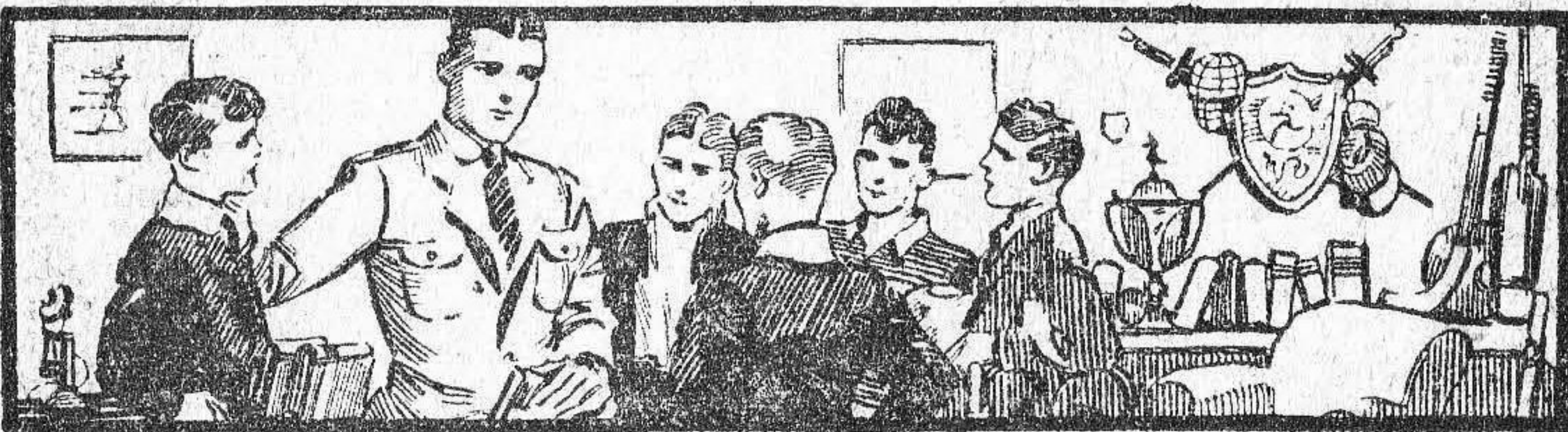
Wallaby's words travelled from
(Continued on the next page.)

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In Your Editor's Den



Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers upon any subject. Address your letters to: Editor, "Boys' Friend," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

THE NEW TIMES.

Well, here you have the grand bumper number in your hands. Just look carefully through its pages, and see if all the forecasts of what was to come in connection with the old "Green 'In" were not correct. I know there will be only one verdict, and that all my chums and supporters will say that the enlarged "Boys' Friend" is well worthy of its great traditions.

BETTER AND BETTER.

That's the ticket! Good as the present issue is those to come will be finer still. I have a mammoth programme of stirring stories by notable authors, while, as regards general features, the "Boys' Friend" is out to beat the best, and will do so.

NOVEMBER 18TH.

I think that date will stick in the mind of everybody. It marks the fresh era of success. The "Boys' Friend" has been winning all along the line since the distant days of the last century, and it can fairly be said it has always been up to date, just as it has been read all over the world. A friend up country in Queensland writes to tell me he read the old paper when he was a boy, and he is still reading it. It reminds him of the old days, naturally, and at the same time he knows he gets the best fiction in the ever-popular "B.F."

BON VOYAGE.

That's what everybody will say. We are travelling with a complete equipment of wireless, thanks to Mr. Stanley G. Rattee, a man who has forgotten more about radio work than the majority ever knew—and broadcasting wants a bit of understanding, you can take it from me, as Beckett would say when he safely delivers the K.O. And there will be a first-rate voyage for the "Boys' Friend," and a rousing send off. Three cheers! Thank you! And now three more!

A RALLY ROUND.

I will say this for our old favourites. They make a brave show in the enlarged "Boys' Friend." A glance at the bill for next week will be quite sufficient evidence of this satisfactory circumstance. Maurice Everard weighs in with an extraordinary telling instalment of his vivid serial, "South Seas Treasure!" Maurice Everard can write of the South Seas, and add tremendously to his reputation by doing so, but some people hardly ever think of the South Seas except in connection with a bubble which bursts there many long years since. Still, as there is nothing akin to a bubble about the firmly-established popularity of Mr. Everard, the matter can be left where it is.

"THE CURE OF THE SLACKERS!"

This is for next Monday. You will find it a topping yarn of schooldays by P. G. Wodehouse. It proves once again that

slackers were born to be cured. If some drastic measures were not taken, the trouble might become chronic, with awful results.

A WHIFF FROM THE WEST!

You will get a breezy memory fresher and something more next week, in "The Trailing of 'Quick-Draw' Peters!" by our old friend, Gordon Wallace, who gets more interesting and dramatic with each passing year. I will back Gordon Wallace against anybody for a thorough knowledge of the Wild West. He is just superb in this graphic tale, and you will remember the character of the impulsive personage Peters, who is so ready with his shooting-iron. This is a twelve-thousand-word tale, packed with merit.

HIS DISGRACE THE DUKE.

Rollo Drayton's arch foe, the Duke, is all alive and kicking in next week's story, "Three to One!" It is a prodigious effort on the part of Walter Edwards. As some folks put it, it just shows you—well, the plain fact is, it shows you a host of things, including the persevering, somewhat snake-like nature of the Duke.

OTHER FINE FEATURES.

Our other great new serial, "The Space Destroyer" is a story that would hold its own anywhere. It is a fascinating and altogether enthralling romance of sidereal exploration, and it leaves you busy imagining what may come in a not

far distant future. You will like next week's—the second brilliant instalment—even better than the first.

THOSE COLOURED PHOTOGRAPHS.

The new series of portraits will create a sensation. Next Monday I am giving the likenesses of two footballers who have won their way to success. First comes

W. R. WAINCOAT OF BARNSELY.

The second photo shows JOHN ELKES of SOUTHAMPTON.

There has been heaps of talk about the beautiful series of exquisitely hand-coloured photographs, which show the players in their club colours. They are splendid photos, glossy, revealing the highest finish of the photographic art, and will constitute a gallery of famous manipulators of the leathern sphere, absolutely matchless.

PLENTY MORE.

I am nowhere near the end of what I have to say, but, unluckily, space does not last for ever. There is Rookwood to be thought of, and you will find Mr. Owen Conquest at home, as usual, next week, ready to introduce you to further scenes in the variegated careers of Jimmy Silver, Bulkeley, Reginald Muffin, the amazing Gunner, and the rest of the cheery throng at the Sussex school.

What you will also find, without any trouble at all, in the next issue is a first-rate article on Wireless, by Expert Rattee, likewise the carry on of the Football Competition, to say nothing of a topping football article, which does masterly justice to the demands of the winter game. And in connection with all these things I have something more to add.

OUR COMPANION PAPERS.

Take a word of advice. It is well meant. There will be nothing to regret about it afterwards. Just keep your eye on what the "Magnet," the "Gem," and the "Popular" are doing these days. Our three magnificent Companion Papers are giving away a marvellous series of sports photos, and the new coloured covers, and all the astounding budget of high-class yarns leave all past achievements far behind.

Your Editor.

WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN ON SATURDAY.

Below will be found our expert's opinion of the probable results of the big games to be played on Saturday, November 18th. The likely winning side is printed in capitals. Where a draw is anticipated, both clubs are printed in smaller letters.

First Division.	Second Division.	First Division, Scottish League.
SUNDERLAND v. Arsenal.	BURY v. Manchester United.	ABERDEEN v. Kilmarnock.
LIVERPOOL v. Aston Villa.	Crystal Palace v. Barnsley.	Airdrieonians v. Celtic.
BIRMINGHAM v. Nottingham Forest.	DERBY COUNTY v. Bradford City.	ALLOA v. Hamilton Academicals.
STOKE v. Blackburn Rovers.	FILHAM v. Blackpool.	AYR UNITED v. Albion Rovers.
MANCHESTER C. v. Bolton Wanderers.	HULL CITY v. The Wednesday.	Clyde v. Hibernians.
BURNLEY v. Chelsea.	LEEDS UNITED v. South Shields.	DUNDEE v. St. Mirren.
Huddersfield Town v. Cardiff City.	Leicester City v. Southampton.	HEARTS v. Morton.
West Bromwich Albion v. Everton.	NOTTS COUNTY v. W'hampton Wan.	Motherwell v. Partick Thistle.
Preston North End v. MIDDLESBROUGH.	Rotherham County v. PORT VALE.	RANGERS v. Raith Rovers.
SHEFFIELD UNITED v. Oldham Athletic.	STOCKPORT COUNTY v. Coventry City.	Third Lanark v. Falkirk.
TOTTENHAM H'SPUR v. Newcastle U.	West Ham United v. Clapton Orient.	

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mouth to mouth with the speed of light, and an ugly, snarling cry broke from the crowd and floated through the open window of the Villa dressing-room.

Rollo Dayton nodded his fair head,

"What do you make of it, old egg?" he asked rather wearily. "The whole thing is beyond me. I don't see how Bramwich can possibly benefit by giving us the match!"

"Yet they are doing so," returned the Harley Street specialist, with knitted brows. "It's—it's inexplicable, and there's bound to be the dickens of a row about it!"

"Too true, old man," put in Lewis, the captain; "but I don't see that it can affect us. We've nothing to worry about, have we? After all, if the United like to get a licking to the tune of twenty odd goals—well, that's their funeral!"

Rollo Dayton, did not look at all satisfied with the position of affairs.

"There's more in this than meets the eye," he declared gravely, "and that Wallaby fellow looks too bucked with himself for my liking."

"The only thing to do is to play up," declared Daggars. "After all, we've done nothing to be ashamed of, although the crowd seems to think that we've bribed Bramwich, or some such rot as that!"

Again Rollo nodded, but his wide-set eyes were still troubled as he polished his monocle. Try as he would, he could not forget the face of the Duke, mocking, sinister, and triumphant.

The intermission soon passed, and the home side, instead of being greeted with the usual round of cheers, took the field to a volley of angry remarks and catcalls.

Bramwich United fared no better, although the hostile reception did not seem to worry them in the least. They merely grinned and exchanged winks, whilst Rollo Dayton felt the hot blood boiling in his veins.

Barlowe, who looked like a man who was determined to stand no nonsense, glanced from Wallaby to Dayton when the teams lined up. He then addressed all the players within hearing.

"You fellows have received all the warning you are likely to get from me," he declared harshly. "I'm anything but satisfied with the way things are going. Let any player give me cause and I sha'n't hesitate to order him off!"

He consulted his watch, and was on the point of blowing his whistle, when a cry came from the direction of the clubhouse.

"One moment, Mr. Barlowe!"

It was a director who shouted the words, and the referee turned, to find a diminutive telegraph-boy sprinting across the turf.

"Tallygram for Dayton, sir!" said the youngster breathlessly. Frowning slightly, Barlowe took the wire and handed it to Rollo.

"Don't waste time!" he said briefly.

The amateur took the envelope and ran his finger along the flap, afterwards extracting the sheet of paper. The message was short and to the point.

"Congratulations!" read Rollo almost dazedly. "Your scheme obviously worked like a charm. Promise—Wallaby another tenner.—VAUGHAN."

The 5th Chapter.

The Summons!

If Rollo Dayton had been puzzled with the events of the past hour, he was now quite unable to decide whether he was standing upon his head or his heels.

He remained quite still, scarcely breathing, with his eyes staring fixedly at the message, the words of which seemed to stand out in letters of fire.

Big John Vaughan, the managing-director of the club, had congratulated him upon the way things were going! And he was told to promise Wallaby another ten pounds!

What did it all mean? Had the whole world gone mad? Or was he the victim of a nightmare?

With his brain whirling, he raised his hand and ran it over his smooth hair, and in lifting his head his clouded eyes rested upon the grinning features of the Bramwich skipper.

"Is Vaughan quite satisfied, old man?" asked Wallaby, in loud tones; and it was only the impatient intervention of Mr. Barlowe which saved the fellow from the thrashing of his life.

"Come along, Dayton, we can't waste any more time!" snapped the

referee, as the shouting of the crowd increased. Rollo, who looked grim and pale, stuffed the wire into his pocket and waited for the whistle; and he looked like a man in a trance when Dene touched the ball to Brown and set the second half in motion.

Playing mechanically, his brain throbbing, Rollo scored another goal within six minutes of the resumption of play, and with a shot which gave Joynder ample time in which to bring off a simple save. The goalkeeper was seconds late, and the crowd, which was being worked up to a dangerous pitch, did not hesitate to give tongue; and Joynder received their candid opinion of himself and his goalkeeping.

He just grinned, however. Barlowe again cautioned the United, but their standard of play did not improve, with the result that ten minutes from full time found the Londoners leading by twelve goals to nil.

Chelsea Villa, despite the fact that they were uneasy as to what would be the outcome of the freak match, played a hard, bustling game, yet merely a sprinkling of their supporters had a good word for them. Abuse and ironical cheers was their portion, for practically the whole of the crowd was fully convinced that the home side, having sustained a period of defeat, had descended to bribery and corruption to wipe out the bad patch which threatened to spoil their record.

And everything pointed to the fact, of course, though Rollo contented himself with the thought that an official inquiry would bring the truth to light. To clear the good name of

the whistle found the home side victorious by a clear sixteen goals.

This would have been a wonderful performance under other circumstances, but it merely brought forth a round of jeers and mocking applause.

"Wonderful! Wonderful!" yelled a wag from the stand. "You'll all get a couple of caps apiece for this, Dayton!"

The journey to the dressing-room was anything but a triumph, and the Villa came in for more harsh words than did the visitors.

The crowd's sense of sport and fair-play had been outraged, and most of the scathing remarks were addressed to the Hon. Rollo Dayton, the player-manager and leader of the Clean-Sport Crusaders!

Walking like a man in a dream, with the yells of the disgusted spectators ringing in his ears, the youngster descended the stone steps, and passed along the echoing corridor to the dressing-room. His handsome features were set and unusually grave, for he knew that within an hour or so the whole country would be humming with the news of Bramwich United's sensational and altogether inexplicable defeat.

Also, he knew there were one or two papers which would make the most of the "story," hinting at bribery and the like. Thanks to the sinister machinations of the Duke, that had happened before.

The other players were also looking thoughtful, and nobody said a word as they started to peel.

It was the calm preceding the storm. The door opened, to admit Stone, a clerk. He looked across at Rollo.

to clear the club and himself of the charges which he felt sure were to be brought against them.

The Chelsea Villa board-room is a lofty, almost sumptuous apartment, and four men were seated round the polished table when Rollo crossed the threshold.

A grey-haired man, with a thin, hawklike nose and heavy black eyebrows, was at the head of the table, and Rollo at once recognised him as Sir John Tregannon. Sir John was something of a martinet, but a man who had the interest of professional football at heart. An offender received small mercy at his hands, and many a player had trembled before his scorching gaze and blistering tongue.

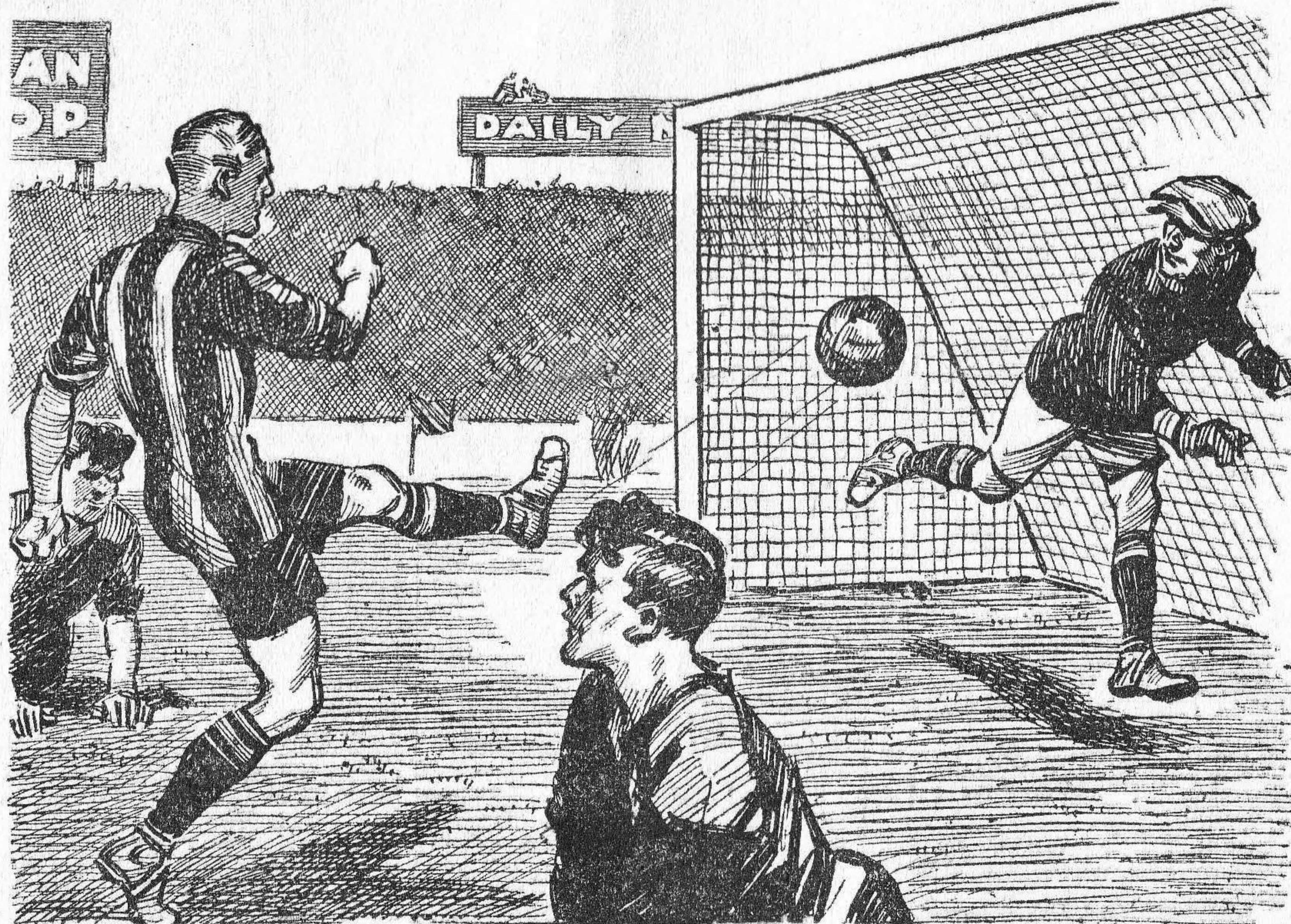
The other members of the F.A. also looked like men who were accustomed to be obeyed, and the eyes which greeted the amateur were anything but friendly. They were hard, impersonal, inquisitorial.

Squaring his magnificent shoulders, and holding his head high, Rollo jammed his monocle into position, and ran his mild gaze over the quartette.

"You wish to see me, gentlemen?" he asked, without a tremor in his mellow voice.

The calm manner in which the youngster asked the question seemed to take even Sir John by surprise, for he made curious clicking noises with his tongue, and became somewhat red about the ears.

"We do!" he snapped, his eyes glinting. "We're not satisfied with to-day's play, Dayton. There's something wrong—something fishy—something shady! Silence, sir! Listen to me!"



NO ATTEMPT TO SAVE!

Joynder, the stalwart Bramwich custodian, was standing alertly in the centre of his goal, yet he leapt away from the ball as Rollo Dayton placed it in the net!

the club should prove a simple matter, yet he realised that in the Duke he was fighting no ordinary person, but a man whose diabolical cunning was only equalled by his ruthless methods in getting his own way.

Hating Rollo, and having declared war upon Chelsea Villa, Rollo knew that he would leave no stone unturned to carry out his threat; and instinct told him that the Duke was at the bottom of this mysterious business, that his was the brain which had evolved a scheme which might ruin the famous club, and bring everlasting disgrace upon himself, Rollo.

Yet the "crook" had not shown his hand, which was unlike him; and the youngster wondered what the end of the game would bring forth.

Trying to put the myriad of perplexing questions from him, he threw himself into the play, and time and again he organised raids upon the enemy goal. The Villa played polished, sparkling football, yet their efforts were received with little else but sneers and ironical cheers, for the United scarcely made an effort to stem their rushes.

The game was little more than a travesty, a farce.

It was heart-breaking work for Lewis and his men, but they refused to slacken off, and the final blast of

"Sir John Tregannon is in the board-room, sir," he announced. "He wants to see you at once!"

The amateur raised his fine eyebrows.

"Sir John—" he began, with a little puzzled frown.

"Of the F.A.," put in Stone. "He's there with three or four other members, and they don't seem to be particularly pleased about something!"

The 6th Chapter.

Suspended!

The blow having fallen, Rollo Dayton became his usual imperturbable self; and, smiling quietly, he tubbed and dressed, humming discordantly as he did so.

"You fellows had better hang on for a bit," he said, as he used his silver-backed brushes upon his fair hair, making it as smooth as a billiard-ball. "I think there's going to be some fun!"

He spoke lightly enough, but once he passed out of the room his whole demeanour changed. His face became hard, and the mischievous twinkle faded from his blue eyes.

Rollo, as a matter of fact, knew that he was up against it—that he would need all his wits and ingenuity

Rollo flushed, and closed his lips, yet the set of his strong jaw should have warned Tregannon that he would not be allowed to go too far.

"I've already phoned to headquarters; and so serious is the matter, so far as the good name of football is concerned, that I have been given full powers to deal with you and the other players upon the spot. Here, sir—to-day!"

"There's not the slightest doubt that Bramwich United deliberately lost the game to you, and it was obvious to everybody that you had some understanding with Wallaby, the captain. I have already seen Mr. Barlowe, the referee, and he is of this opinion. He says that his suspicions were aroused right from the kick-off! Silence, sir! Hold your tongue, or it may be the worse for you!"

Again a little tinge of colour mounted to Rollo's fair hair; but he checked the hot, impetuous words which sprang to his lips.

"Also," continued Sir John, thumping the table with a hard fist, "I have interviewed Wallaby, and forced the truth from him!"

Rollo gave a perceptible start, and a mirthless smile twisted Tregannon's thin lips.

"Ah, I see you're surprised, Dayton!" he said harshly. "I have here,"

he ran on, tapping a sheet of paper, "a signed confession, in which Wallaby makes a clean breast of everything. He mentions how, on Tuesday last, you phoned through to Bramwich, and put a certain proposition up to him, and so tempting was your offer that he agreed to let the Villa win!"

Rollo's eyes were blazing, and blood slowly ebbed from his cheeks.

"That's a lie, sir—a black lie!" he cried, taking a step towards the table. "I certainly phoned through to Bramwich on Tuesday, but that was because I wished to speak to Mr. Dakley, the manager."

Sir John gave an unpleasant smile.

"Untruths will not help you, Dayton," he declared. "I have already questioned Dakley upon the point, and he has signed a declaration to the effect that he was away from Bramwich all day Tuesday, and that he could not possibly have done any business with you!"

"But I tell you—" Matters were getting desperate, and Rollo felt that the four walls of the room were contracting. That he was the victim of a cunning plot was certain, and it seemed that everybody had been bribed to bear false witness against him.

"There's one other point, Dayton," rasped Sir John judicially. "Where's John Vaughan?"

"He is on a motor tour, sir," Rollo answered quietly, the thought of the mysterious telegram flashing through his brain.

"Exactly," nodded Sir John. "And suppose I suggest that you received a telegram from him this afternoon?"

Rollo shot a shrewd glance at the hawklike face, and wondered if its owner were bluffing.

"Well, suppose you do?" countered the youngster.

"Not only do I suggest, but I state a fact!" snapped Tregannon testily. "That wire was from Vaughan."

"Well?"

Rollo raised his eyebrows. "What had he to say?" demanded the questioner, narrowing his keen eyes.

Rollo hesitated, became a prey to indecision, for he knew that the words upon the wire would tell heavily against him.

"I really don't know why I should let you into my private affairs, sir—" he began; and Sir John brought his fist down upon the table with a force which threatened to split the wood.

"There's no need to tell me, Dayton!" he cried. "I know! You can't throw dust into my eyes!"

He snatched Wallaby's confession aside, and there, lying upon the polished surface, was Vaughan's wire!

The youngster flushed, a great wave of anger passing through him.

"This is an outrage!" he cried, with clenched fists. "Somebody has picked my pocket!"

"Not at all," said Tregannon. "You happened to drop it, and somebody picked it up. Still, I can quite understand your feelings, Dayton!"

He glared at the grim-faced amateur for some seconds, and then cleared his throat.

"To sum up," he snapped, "I have already had a long talk with the F.A. upon this scandal, and I am going to deal with you at once. Wallaby and the rest of the Bramwich players will be punished in due course, as will John Vaughan, but you, as the chief offender, must not stay in the game for a moment longer; that can be helped. Professional football is a clean business, and we mean to keep it clean. We've no room for your sort, Dayton. We bound you out and keep you out! The sentence of the F.A. is that you be suspended sine die. You understand what that means?"

The last words were rasped, and Rollo Dayton staggered as though he had received a blow between the eyes.

"You mean—"

His voice was little more than a whisper; his eyes were clouded, as though he were suffering exquisite agony; he was white to the lips.

"I mean that you are suspended for life, Dayton!" snapped Sir John; and, with a nod of dismissal, he rose from his chair and walked from the room, with the other members at his heels.

Suspended for life!

The room seemed to whirl round Rollo, and he gave a little groan and sank into a chair, where he buried his fair head in his hands.

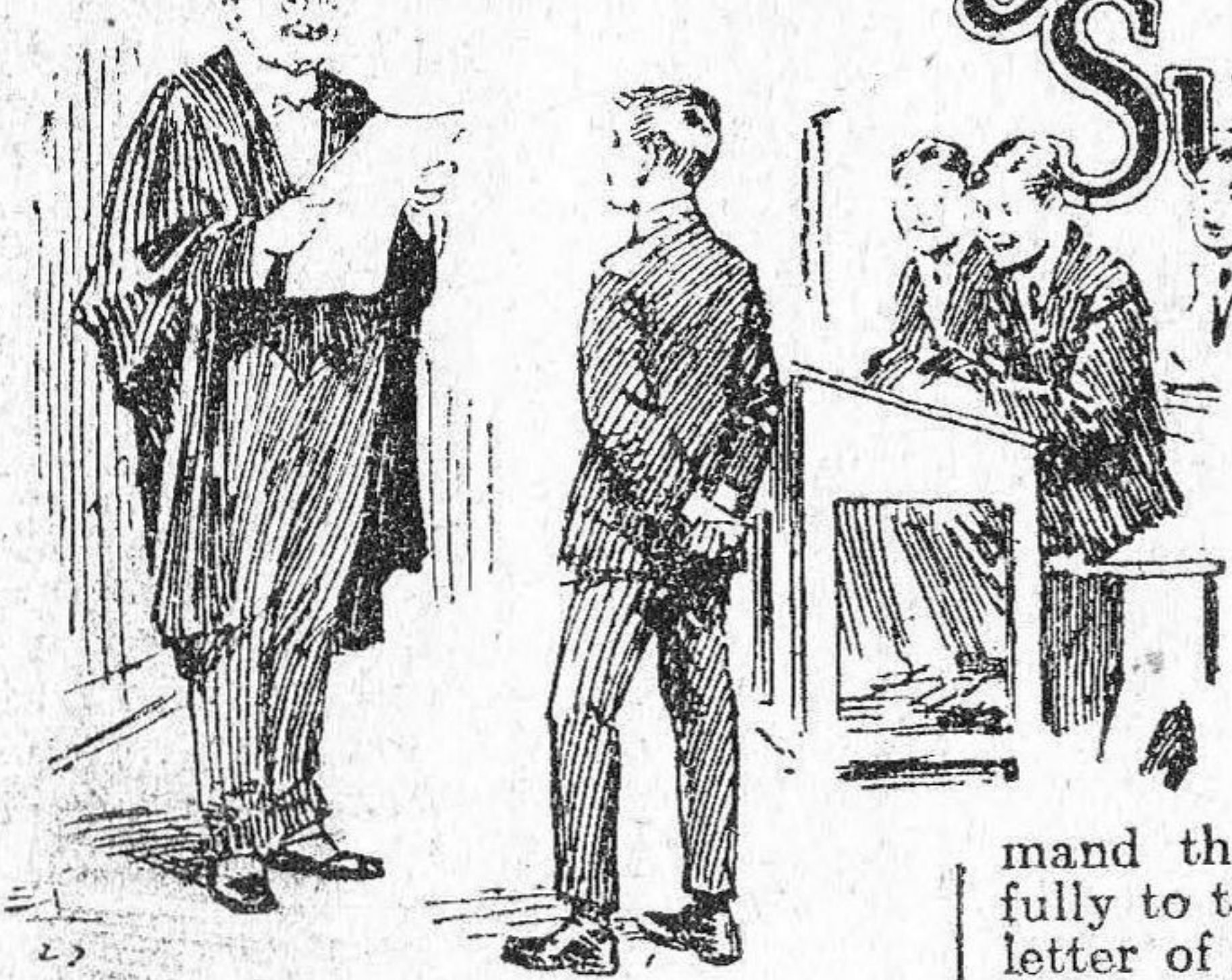
And before his eyes, as in a mist, he saw the clean-cut features of the Duke, sneering, taunting, triumphant.

THE END.

(On no account must you miss "Three to One!"—next Monday's long, complete story of Rollo Dayton and the Duke!)

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The Locksley Lines Supplying Trust Ltd by P. G. Wodehouse.



A School Story You Will Rave About.

The 1st Chapter. Dunstable's Impot!

Of all the useless and irritating things in this world, lines are probably the most useless and the most irritating. In fact, I only know of two people who ever got any good out of them. Dunstable, of Day's, was one; Linton, of Seymour's, the other. For a portion of one winter term they flourished on lines. The more there were set the better they liked it. They would have been disappointed if masters had given up the habit of doling them out.

Dunstable was a youth of ideas. He saw far more possibilities in the routine of life at Locksley than did the majority of his contemporaries, and every now and then he made use of these possibilities in a way that caused a considerable sensation in the school.

In the ordinary way of school work, however, he was not particularly brilliant, and suffered in consequence. His chief foe was his Form master, Mr. Langridge. The feud between them had begun on Dunstable's arrival in the Form two terms before, and had continued ever since. The balance of points lay with the master. The staff has ways of scoring which the school has not. This story really begins with the last day but one of the summer term. It happened that Dunstable's people were going to make their annual migration to Scotland on that day, and the headmaster, approached on the subject both by letter and in person, saw no reason why—the examination being over—Dunstable should not leave Locksley a day before the end of term.

He called Dunstable to his study one night after preparation.

"Your father has written to me, Dunstable," he said, "to ask that you may be allowed to go home on Wednesday instead of Thursday. I think that, under the special circumstances, there will be no objection to that. You had better see that the matron packs your boxes."

"Yes, sir," said Dunstable. "Good business!" he added to himself as he left the room.

When he got back to his own den, he began to ponder over the matter, to see if something could not be made out of it. That was Dunstable's way. He never let anything drop until he had made certain that he had exhausted all its possibilities.

Just before he went to bed he had evolved a neat little scheme for scoring off Mr. Langridge. The knowledge of his plans was confined to himself and the headmaster. His Form master would imagine that he was going to stay on till the last day of term. Therefore, if he misbehaved himself in Form, Mr. Langridge would set him lines in blissful ignorance of the fact that he would not be there next day to show them up. At the beginning of the following term, moreover, he would not be in Mr. Langridge's Form, for he was certain of his move up.

He acted accordingly. He spent the earlier part of Wednesday morning in breaches of the peace. Mr. Langridge, instead of pulling him up, put him on to translate; Dunstable went on to translate. As he had not prepared the lesson, and was not an adept at construing unseen, his performance was poor.

After a minute and a half the Form master wearied.

"Have you looked at this, Dunstable?" he asked.

There was a time-honoured answer to this question.

"Yes, sir," he said. Public-school ethics do not de-

mand that you should reply truthfully to the spirit of a question. The letter of it is all that requires attention. Dunstable had looked at the lesson. He was looking at it then. Masters should practise exactness of speech. A certain Form at Harrow were in the habit of walking across a copy of a Latin author before morning-school. They could then say with truth that they "had been over it." This is not an isolated case.

"Go on," said Mr. Langridge.

Dunstable smiled as he did so.

Mr. Langridge was annoyed.

"What are you laughing at? What do you mean by it? Stand up! You will write out the lesson in Latin and English, and show it up to me by four this afternoon. I know what you are thinking. You imagine that because this is the end of the term you can do as you please, but you will find yourself mistaken. Mind—by four o'clock."

At four o'clock Dunstable was enjoying an excellent tea in Green Street, Park Lane, and telling his mother that he had had a most enjoyable term, marred by no unpleasantness whatever. His holidays were sweetened by the thought of Mr. Langridge's baffled wrath on discovering the true inwardness of the recent episode.

When he returned to Locksley at the beginning of the winter term, he was at once made aware that that episode was not to be considered closed. On the first evening, Mr. Day, his Housemaster, sent for him.

"Well, Dunstable," he said, "where is that imposition?"

Dunstable affected ignorance.

"Please, sir, you set me no imposition."

"No, Dunstable, no." Mr. Day peered at him gravely through his spectacles. "I set you no imposition; but Mr. Langridge did."

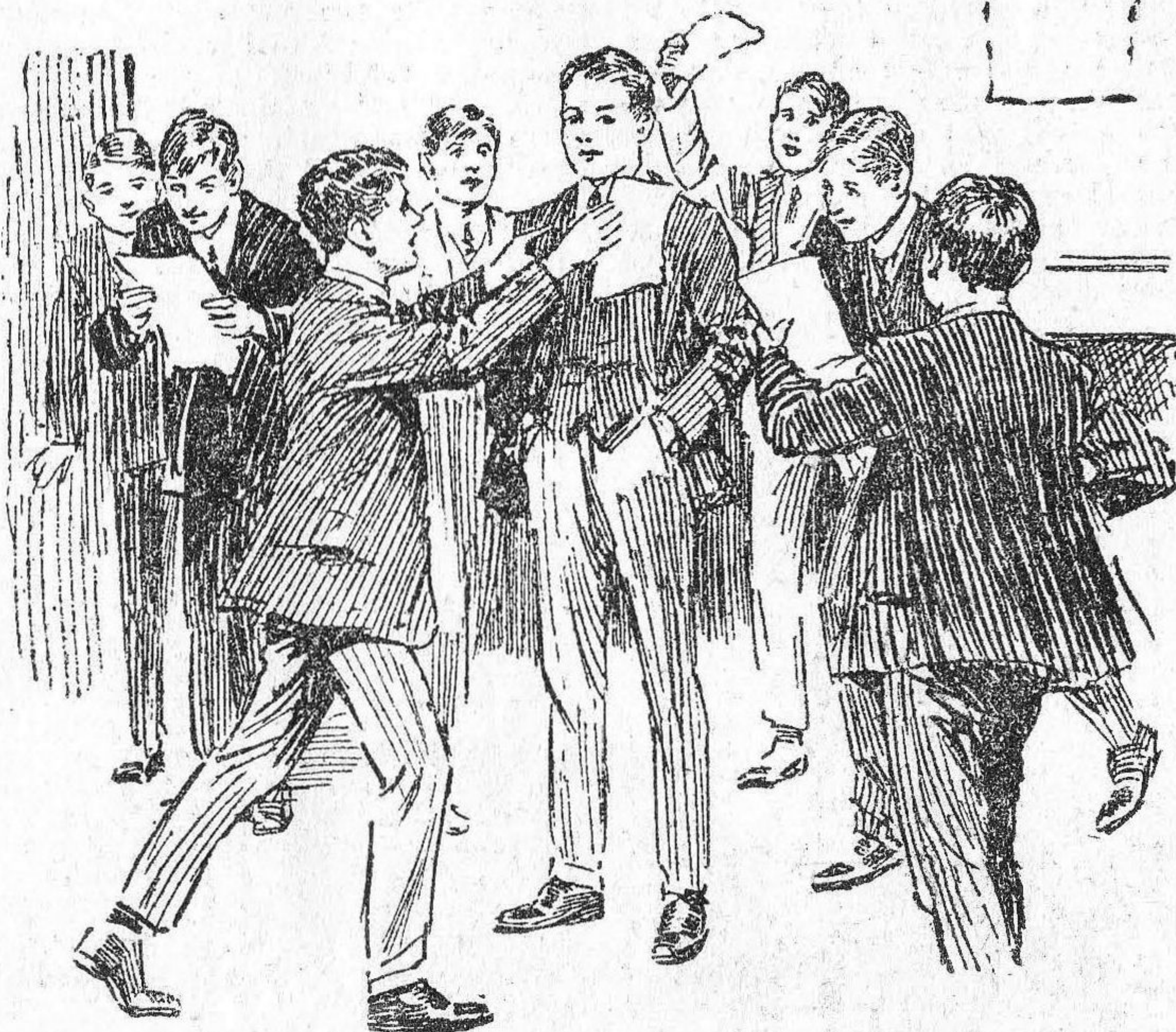
Dunstable imitated that eminent tactician, Brer Rabbit. He "lay low and said nuffin."

"Surely," continued Mr. Day, in tones of mild reproach, "you did not think that you could take Mr. Langridge in?"

Dunstable rather thought he had taken Mr. Langridge in; but he made no reply.

"Well," said Mr. Day, "I must set you some punishment. I shall give the butler instructions to hand you a note from me at three o'clock to-

morrow." The next day was a half-holiday. "In that note you will find indicated what I wish you to write out."



EXPLANATIONS REQUIRED! "What's it all about?" asked a youth fluttering the leaflet under Dunstable's nose.

Why this comic-opera secret society business, Dunstable wondered? Then it dawned upon him. Mr. Day wished to break up his half-holiday thoroughly.

That afternoon Dunstable retired in disgust to his study to brood over his wrongs; to him entered Charles, his friend, one C. J. Linton, to wit, of Seymour's, a very hearty sportsman.

"Good!" said Linton. "Didn't think I should find you in. Thought you might have gone off somewhere as it's such a ripping day. Tell you what we'll do. Scull a mile or two up the river and have tea somewhere."

"I should like to awfully," said Dunstable, "but I'm afraid I can't."

looks," said Dunstable, collecting the sheets and examining them. "You can hardly tell which is which even when you know. Well, there goes three. My watch is slow, as it always is. I'll go and get that note."

Two minutes later he returned, full of abusive references to Mr. Day. The crafty pedagogue appeared to have foreseen Dunstable's attempt to circumvent him by doing the Greek numerals on the chance of his setting them. The imposition he had set in his note was ten pages of irregular verbs, and they were to be shown up in his study before five o'clock. Linton's programme for the afternoon was out of the question now. But he loyally gave up any other plans which he might have

going down with him. You can bring up your other arm to strengthen your grip, place a foot behind his same heel—right foot behind right, left behind left—keeping the other foot well back, straighten leg, throwing him backward.

You can place sole of foot at the back of his knee, shove forward strongly, and simultaneously jerk him back.

You can get very close to him, holding tightly slip your right foot across the front of his right ankle, lock the leg, and lift it backwards, at same time throwing him on his face.

If you are very strong you can lift him from the ground, lean back so as to take some of his weight upon your chest, release your right hand, and slip it to the back of his neck, thus getting a half-nelson. With a quick turn to your left, drop to the ground on your left side, probably bringing his shoulders to the mat. This throw is best when it is your right arm has the firm grip of the body.

If you require information concerning health or sport, write to Mr. Longhurst, c/o the Editor of the BOYS' FRIEND, enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope. He will be only too pleased to help you, and you will be assured of a prompt reply.

(Another helpful article next week.)

formed in order to help Dunstable with his irregular verbs. Dunstable was too disgusted with Fate to be properly grateful.

"And the worst of it is," he said, as they adjourned for tea at half-past four, having deposited the verbs on Mr. Day's table, "that all those numerals will be wasted now."

"I should keep them, though," said Linton. "They may come in useful. You never know!"

The 2nd Chapter. The Trust at Work!

Towards the end of the second week of term, Fate, by way of compensation, allowed Dunstable a distinct stroke of luck. Mr. Forman, the master of his new Form, set him a hundred lines of Virgil, and told him to show them up next day. To Dunstable's delight, the next day passed without mention of them; and when the day after that went by, and still nothing was said, he came to the conclusion that Mr. Forman had forgotten all about them.

Which was indeed the case. Mr. Forman was engaged in editing a new edition of the "Bacchae," and was apt to be absent-minded in consequence. So Dunstable, with a glad smile, hove the lines into a cupboard in his study to keep company with the Greek numerals which he had done for Mr. Day, and went out to play fives with Linton.

Linton, curiously enough, had also had a stroke of luck in a rather similar way. He told Dunstable about it as they strolled back to the houses after their game.

"Bit of luck this afternoon," he said. "You remember Appleby setting me a hundred-and-fifty the day before yesterday? Well, I showed them up to-day, and he looked through them and chucked them into the waste-paper basket under his desk. I thought at the time I hadn't seen him muck them up at all with his pencil, which is his usual game, so after he had gone at the end of school I nipped to the basket and fished them out. They were as good as new, so I saved them up in case I get any more."

Dunstable hastened to tell of his own good fortune. Linton was impressed by the coincidence.

"I tell you what," he said, "we score either way. Because if we never get any more lines—"

Dunstable laughed.

"Yes, I know," Linton went on, "we're bound to. But even supposing we don't, what've we got in stock needn't be wasted."

"I don't see that," said Dunstable. "Going to have 'em bound in cloth and published, or were you thinking of framing them?"

"Why, don't you see? Sell them, of course. There are dozens of chaps in the school who would be glad of a few hundred lines cheap."

"It wouldn't work. They'd be spotted."

"Rot! It's been done before, and nobody said anything. A chap in Seymour's, who left last Easter, sold all his stock lines by auction on the last day of term. They were Virgil mostly, and Greek numerals. They sold like hot cakes. There were about five hundred of them altogether. And I happen to know that every word of them has been given up and passed all right."

"Well, I shall keep mine," said Dunstable. "I am sure to want all the lines in stock that I can get. I used to think Langridge was fairly bad in the way of impots, but Forman takes the biscuit easily. It seems to be a sort of hobby of his. You can't stop him."

But it was not until the middle of preparation that the great idea flashed upon Dunstable's mind.

It was the simplicity of the thing that took his breath away. That and its possibilities. This was the idea. Why not start a Lines Trust in the school? An agency for supplying lines at moderate rates to all who desired them? There did not seem to be a single flaw in the scheme. He and Linton between them could turn out enough material in a week to give the Trust a good working capital. And as for the risk of detection when customers came to show up the goods supplied to them, that was very slight. As has been pointed out before, there was practically one handwriting common to the whole school when it came to writing lines. It resembled the movements of a fly that had fallen into an ink-pot, and subsequently taken a little brisk exercise on a sheet of foolscap by way of restoring the circulation. Then, again, the attitude of the master to whom the lines were shown

was not likely to be critical. So that everything seemed in favour of Dunstable's scheme.

Linton, to whom he confided it, was inclined to scoff at first, but when he had had the beauties of the idea explained to him at length, became an enthusiastic supporter of the scheme.

"But," he objected, "it'll take up all our time. Is it worth it? We can't spend every afternoon sweating away at impots for other people."

"It's all right," said Dunstable. "I've thought of that. We shall need to pitch in pretty hard for about a week or ten days. That will give us a good, big stock, and after that, if we turn out a hundred each every day, it will be all right. A hundred's not much fag if you spread them over a day."

Linton admitted that this was sound, and the Locksley Lines Supplying Trust, Ltd., set to work in earnest.

It must not be supposed that the agency left a great deal to chance. The writing of lines in advance may seem a very speculative business; but both Dunstable and Linton had had a wide experience of Locksley masters, and the methods of the same when roused, and they were thus enabled to reduce the element of chance to a minimum. They knew, for example, that Mr. Day's favourite imposition was the Greek numerals, and that in nine cases out of ten that would be what the youth who had dealings with him would need to ask for from the Lines Trust. Mr. Appleby, on the other hand, invariably set Virgil. The oldest inhabitant had never known him to depart from this custom. For the French master's extracts from the works of Victor Hugo would probably pass muster.

A week from the date of the above

meet the growing demand for lines and other impositions. While there are masters at our public schools there will always be lines. At Locksley the crop of masters has always flourished—and still flourishes—very rankly, and the demand for lines has greatly taxed the powers of those to whom has been assigned the task of supplying them.

"It is for the purpose of affording relief to these that the Lines Trust has been formed. It is proposed that all orders for lines shall be supplied out of our vast stock. Our charges are moderate, and vary between threepence and sixpence per hundred lines. The higher charge is made for Greek impositions, which, for obvious reasons, entail a greater degree of labour on our large and efficient staff of writers.

"All orders, which will be promptly executed, should be forwarded to Mr. P. A. Dunstable, 6, College Grounds, Locksley, or to Mr. C. J. Linton, 10, College Grounds, Locksley. Payment must be enclosed with order, or the latter will not be executed. Under no conditions will notes of hand or cheques be accepted as legal tender. There is no trust about us except the name.

"Come in your thousands. We have lines for all. If the Trust's stock of lines were to be placed end to end it would reach part of the way to London. You pay the threepence. We do the rest."

Then a blank space, after which came a few "unsolicited testimonials":

"Lower Fifth" writes: "I was set two hundred lines of Virgil on Saturday last at one o'clock. Having laid in a supply from your agency I was enabled to show them up at five minutes past one. The master who gave me the commission was unable

"What's it all about?" someone would ask, fluttering the leaflet before Dunstable's unmoved face.

"You should read it carefully," Dunstable would reply. "It's all there."

"But what are you playing at?" "We tried to make it clear to the meanest intelligence. Sorry you can't understand it."

While at the same time Linton, in his Form-room, would be explaining to excited inquirers that he was sorry, but it was impossible to reply to their query as to who was running the Trust. He was not at liberty to reveal business secrets. Suffice it that there the lines were, waiting to be bought, and he was there to sell them. So that if anybody cared to lay in a stock, large or small, according to taste, would he kindly walk up and deposit the necessary coin?

But here the public showed an unaccountable disinclination to deal. It was gratifying to have acquaintances coming up and saying admiringly: "You are an ass, you know," as if they were paying the highest of compliments—as, indeed, they probably imagined that they were. All this was magnificent, but it was not business.

Dunstable and Linton felt that the whole attitude of the public towards the new enterprise was wrong. Locksley seemed to regard the Trust as a huge joke, and its prospects as a literary jeu d'esprit.

In fact, it looked very much as if—from a purely commercial point of view—the great Lines Supplying Trust was going to be what is known in theatrical circles as a frost.

For two whole days the public refused to bite, and Dunstable and Linton, turning over the stacks of lines in their studies, thought gloomily that this world is no place for original enterprise.

Then things began to move. It was quite an accident that started them. Jackson, of Dexter's, was teasing with Linton, and, as was his habit, was giving him a condensed history of his life since he last saw him. In the course of this he touched on a small encounter with M. Gaudinois which had occurred that afternoon.

"So I got two pages of 'Quatre-Vingt Treize' to write," he concluded, "for doing practically nothing."

All Jackson's impositions, according to him, were given him for doing practically nothing. Now and then he got them for doing literally nothing—when he ought to have been doing Form work.

"Done 'em?" asked Linton.

"Not yet; no," replied Jackson. "More tea, please."

"What you want to do, then," said Linton, "is to apply to the Locksley Lines Supplying Trust. That's what you must do."

"You needn't rot a chap on a painful subject," protested Jackson. "I wasn't rotting," said Linton. "Why don't you apply to the Lines Trust?"

"Then do you mean to say that there really is such a thing?" Jackson said incredulously. "Why, I thought it was all a rag."

"I know you did. It's the rotten sort of thing you would think. Rag, by Jove! Look at this. Now do you understand that this is a genuine concern?"

He got up and went to the cupboard which filled the space between the stove and the bookshelf. From this resting-place he extracted a great pile of manuscript and dumped it down on the table with a bang which caused a good deal of Jackson's tea to spring from its native cup on to its owner's trousers.

"When you've finished!" protested Jackson, mopping himself with a handkerchief that had seen better days.

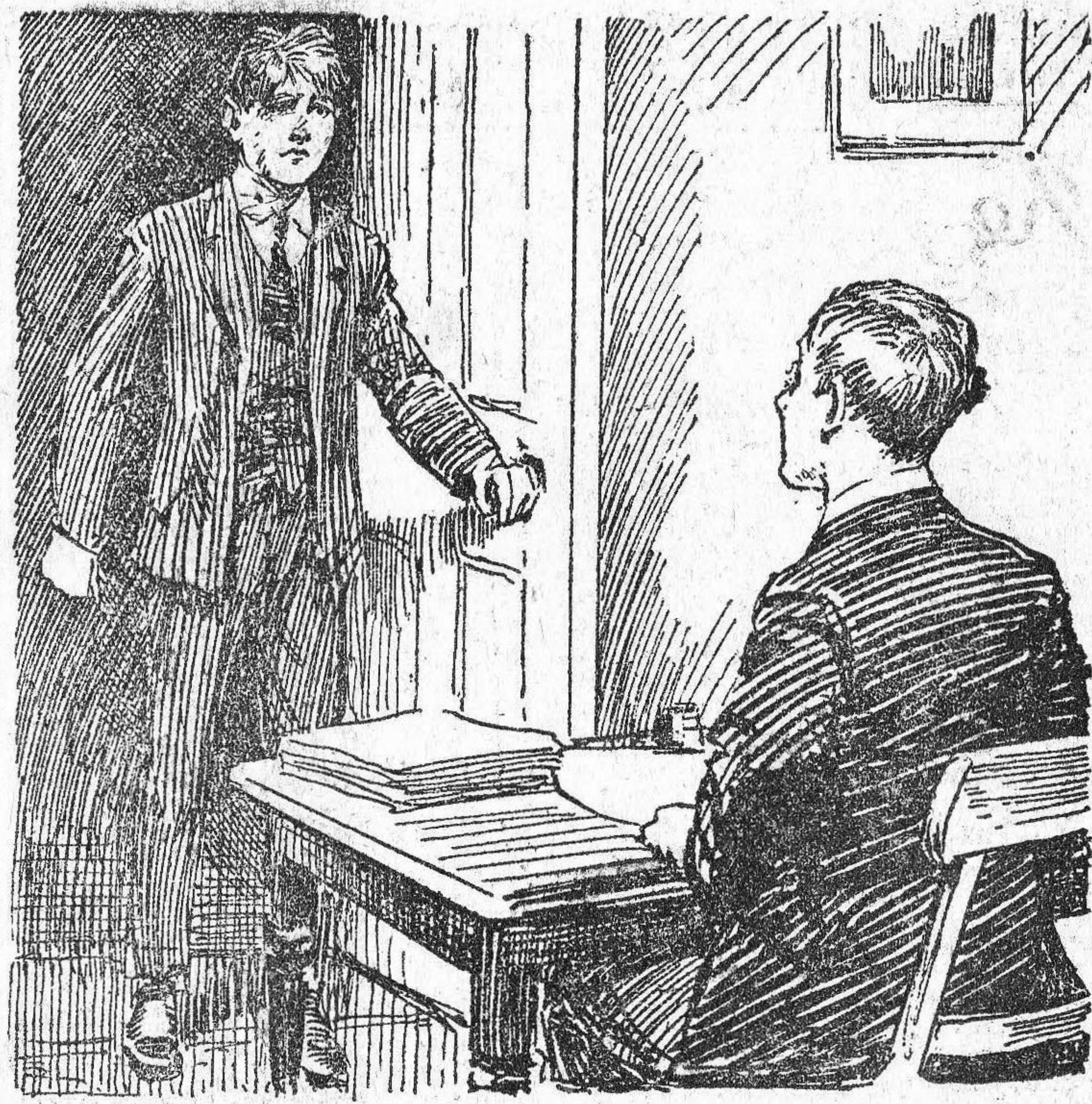
"Sorry! But look at these. What did you say your impot was? Oh, I remember. Here you are. Two pages of 'Quatre-Vingt Treize.' I don't know which two pages, but I suppose any will do."

Great Scott! What a wad of stuff! When did you do it all?"

"Oh, at odd times. Dunstable's got just as much over at Day's. So you see the Trust is a jolly big show. Here are your two pages. That looks just like your scrawl, doesn't it? These would be fourpence in the ordinary way, but you can have 'em for nothing this time."

"Oh, I say," said Jackson gratefully, "that's awfully good of you!"

After that the Locksley Lines Supplying Trust, Ltd., went ahead with a rush. The brilliant success which attended its first specimen—M. Gaudinois took Jackson's imposition without a murmur—promoted



UNPLEASANT NEWS! "Been scrapping?" inquired Dunstable as Linton, dishevelled and with one eye blackened, entered his room. "Yes, with Merrett," answered the hero,—"and the Trust's bust!"

confidence in the public, and they rushed to buy. Orders poured in from all the houses, and by the middle of the term the organisers of the scheme were able to divide a substantial sum.

"How are you getting on round your way?" asked Linton of Dunstable at the end of the sixth week of term.

"Ripping! Selling like hot cakes." "So are mine," said Linton. "I've almost come to the end of my stock. I ought to have written some more, but I've been a bit slack lately."

"Yes, buck up! We must keep a lot in hand."

"I say, did you hear that about Merrett in our house?" asked Linton.

"What about him?" "Why, he tried to start a rival show. Wrote a prospectus and everything. But it didn't catch on a bit. The only chap who bought any of his lines was young Shoe-blossom. He wanted a couple of hundred for Appleby. Appleby was on to them like bricks. Spotted Shoe-blossom hadn't written them, and asked who had. He wouldn't say, so he got them doubled. Everyone in the house is jolly sick with Merrett. They think he ought to have owned up."

"Did that smash up Merrett's show? Is he going to turn out any more?"

"Rather not. Who'd buy 'em?" It would have been better for the Lines Supplying Trust if Merrett had not received this crushing blow and had been allowed to carry on a rival business on legitimate lines. Locksley was conservative in its habits, and would probably have continued to support the old firm.

As it was, the baffled Merrett, a youth of vindictive nature, brooded over his defeat, and presently hit upon a scheme whereby things might be levelled up.

One afternoon, shortly before lock-up, Dunstable was surprised by the advent of Linton to his study in a bruised and dishevelled condition. One of his eyes was closed and blackened. He also wore what is known in ring circles as a thick ear.

"What on earth's up?" inquired Dunstable, amazed at these phenomena. "Have you been scrapping?"

"Yes—Merrett—I won. What are you up to—writing lines? You may as well save yourself the trouble. They won't be any good."

Dunstable stared. "The Trust's bust," said Linton. He never wasted words in moments of emotion.

"What!" "Bust" was what I said. That beast Merrett gave the show away."

"What did he do?" Surely he didn't tell a master?"

"Well, he did the next thing to it. He hauled out that prospectus, and started reading it in Form. I watched him do it. He kept it under the desk and made a foul row, laughing over it. Appleby couldn't help spotting him. Of course, he told him to

bring him what he was reading. Up went Merrett with the prospectus."

"Was Appleby sick?" "I don't believe he was, really. At least, he laughed when he read the thing. But he hauled me up after school and gave me a long jaw, and made me take all the lines I'd got to his house. He burnt them. I had it out with Merrett just now. He swears he didn't mean to get the thing spotted, but I knew he did."

"Where did you scrag him?" "In the dormitory. He chucked it after the third round."

There was a knock at the door. "Come in!" shouted Dunstable.

Buxton appeared, a member of Appleby's house.

"Oh, Dunstable, Appleby wants to see you."

"All right," said Dunstable wearily.

Mr. Appleby was in facetious mood. He chaffed Dunstable genially about his prospectus, and admitted that it had amused him. Dunstable smiled without enjoyment. It was a good thing, perhaps, that Mr. Appleby saw the humorous rather than the lawless side of the Trust; but all the quips in the world could not save that institution from ruin.

Presently Mr. Appleby's manner changed.

"How many lines have you at your house, Dunstable?" he asked.

"About eight hundred, sir."

"Then you had better write me eight hundred lines, and show them up to me in this room at—shall we say at ten minutes to five? It is now a quarter to, so that you will have plenty of time."

Dunstable went, and returned five minutes later, bearing an armful of manuscript.

"I don't think I shall need to count them," said Mr. Appleby. "Kindly take them in batches of ten sheets, and tear them in half, Dunstable."

"Yes, sir."

The last sheet fluttered in two sections into the surfeited waste paper-basket.

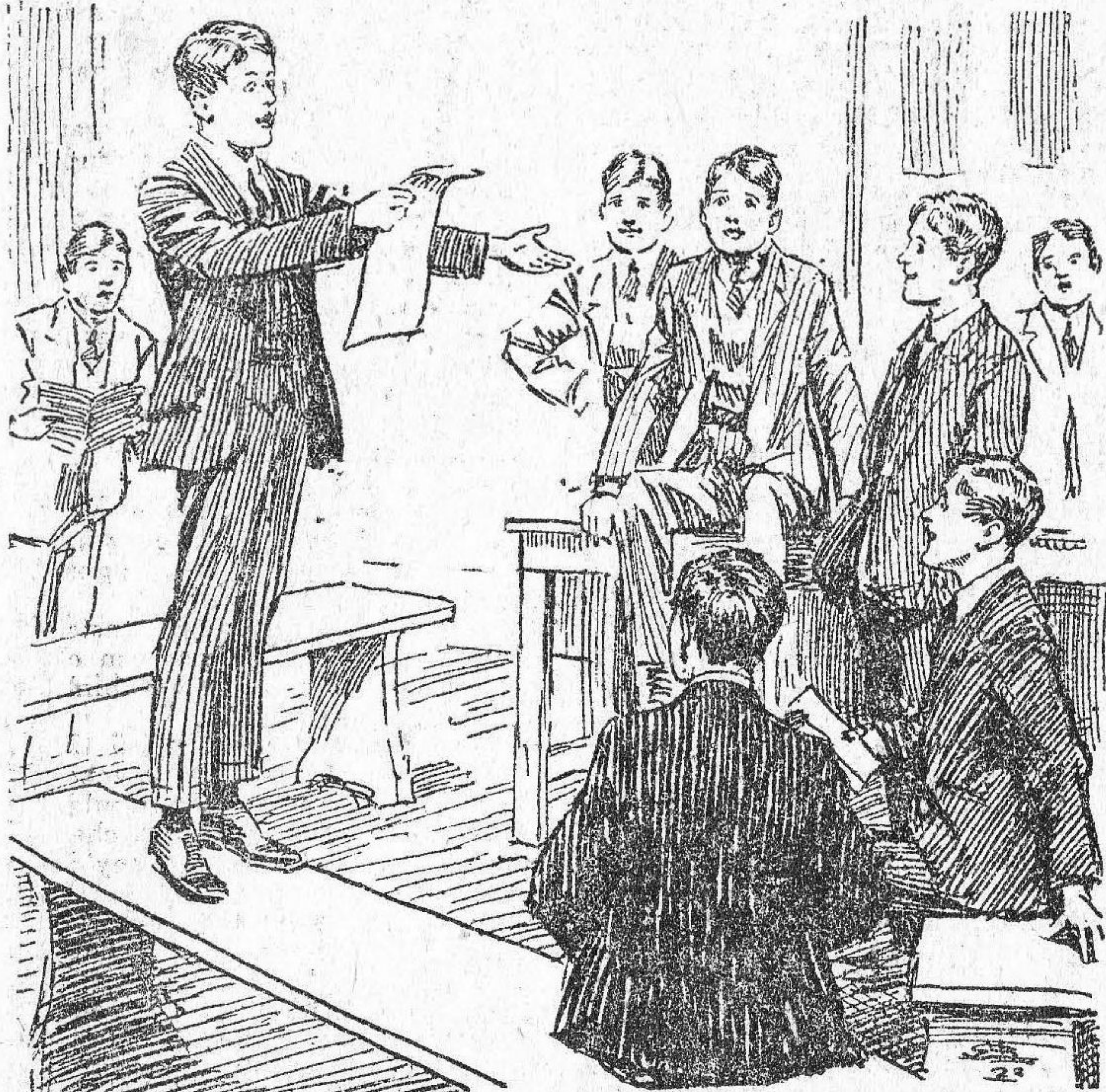
"It's an awful waste, sir," said Dunstable regretfully.

Mr. Appleby beamed. "We must, however," he said, "always endeavour to look on the bright side, Dunstable. The writing of these eight hundred lines will have given you a fine grip of the rhythm of Virgil, the splendid prose of Victor Hugo, and the unstudied majesty of the Greek Numerals. Good-night, Dunstable."

"Good-night, sir," said the president of the Locksley Lines Supplying Trust, Ltd.

THE END.

(You must not miss "The Cure of the Slackers!"—next Monday's splendid story by P. G. Wodehouse. Tell all your friends about the enlarged BOYS' FRIEND, and don't forget to mention that we are giving away TWO real hand-coloured glossy photos every week!)



DISCUSSING THE TRUST! The fellows flocked round when Dunstable mounted a form to read out the prospectus. There could be no doubt about the popularity of the Trust, for nothing else was discussed in the Form-room at the quarter to eleven interval.

conversation everyone in the school, with the exception of the prefects and the Sixth Form, found in his desk on arriving at his Form-room a printed slip of paper. Spiking, the stationer in the High Street, had printed it. It was nothing less than the prospectus of the new Trust. It set forth in glowing terms the advantages offered by the agency.

Dunstable had written it—he had a certain amount of skill with his pen—and Linton had suggested subtle and captivating additions.

The whole presented rather a striking appearance. The document was headed with the name of the Trust in large letters. Under this came a number of "scare headlines" such as:

- "SEE WHAT YOU SAVE!
- "NO MORE WORRY!
- "PEACE, PERFECT PEACE!
- "WHY DO LINES WHEN WE DO THEM FOR YOU?"

Then came the real prospectus:

"The Locksley Lines Supplying Trust, Ltd., has been instituted to

to restrain his admiration at the rapidity and neatness of my work. You may make what use of this you please."

"Dexter's House" writes: "Please send me one hundred (100) lines from Æneid, Book Two. Mr. Dexter was so delighted with the last I showed him that he has asked me to do some more."

"Enthusiast" writes: "Thank you for your Greek numerals. Day took them without blinking. So beautifully were they executed that I can hardly believe even now that I did not write them myself."

The 3rd Chapter. Closed Down!

There could be no doubt about the popularity of the Trust. It caught on instantly.

Nothing else was discussed in the Form-rooms at the quarter to eleven interval, and in the houses after lunch it was the sole topic of conversation. Dunstable and Linton were bombarded with questions and witticisms of the near personal sort. To the latter they replied with directness, to the former evasively.

Peele, as usual, makes himself unpleasant to the new boot-boy, who, until Jimmy Silver takes him under his wing, has rather a bad time of it!



Jimmy Silver's Protégé!

Another Splendid Story of the Chums of Rookwood School! BY OWEN CONQUEST.

(Author of the Tales of Rookwood appearing in the "Popular.")

The 1st Chapter.

The Kindness of Uncle James!

"Check!" Old Mack, the porter at Rookwood School, pronounced that word with emphasis.

And Jimmy Silver, who was coming in at the gates, glanced round to see what it was that had roused the ire of Mr Mack.

"Check!" repeated Mack. "But—" "Check!" said Mack, for the third time.

Old Mack was standing in the doorway of his lodge, with a frown upon his crusty brow. Before him stood a lad of about Jimmy Silver's own age and size—a rather striking-looking youth.

He had a slim well-knit figure. But his face was of a sandy complexion of a pronounced kind; and his hair was a sandy shock. Under his cap it showed a sandy rim.

There were sandy fellows at Rookwood; but this fellow was really remarkably sandy—of the sand, sandy, so to speak. He was not a new boy for the school, that was clear.

He was dressed in cheap, ready-made clothes that fitted him far from well; his boots were clean, but very worn; his wrists emerged from sleeves too short for him.

Jimmy Silver could not help wondering who and what he was. It was no business of Jimmy Silver's, of course. But Uncle James of Rookwood had a kind heart and the poorly-clad fellow rather touched it. Jimmy Silver always had a soft corner for a fellow who was down on his luck.

So instead of passing on his way, Jimmy Silver paused. He paused, although it was tea-time, and he knew that Lovell and Raby and Newcome had tea ready in the end study.

"You oughtn't to come to this 'ere gate!" said Mack sternly. "I said 'check,' and I mean check! A sticking of your tin trunk down in front of my lodge!"

"I'm sorry—" "I should 'ope so!" said Mack.

There was a small trunk, of the tin variety, lying beside the lad as he stood before the annoyed porter. It was locked and secured by a strap, and had apparently been borne hither on the shoulder of the shabby youth. Obviously, it contained the personal goods of the youth, indicating that he had come to the school for some employment or other. And that reminded Jimmy Silver that he had heard—and forgotten—that a new boot-boy was expected in the lower regions of the School House.

Apparently this was the new boots. "I didn't know," said the youth apologetically. "Someone on the road told me this was Rookwood School, so I came in."

"Check!" said Mr. Mack. "Boot-boys coming to my lodge! Like me to show you in to the 'ead, I suppose."

"Where am I to go, sir?" The "sir" placated Mack a little.

"Well, you ain't to butt in 'ere!" he said. "What's your name, young shaver?"

"Smacke—Timothy Smacke."

"Well, young Smacke, you clear out of this, and go round to the servants' entrance," said Mack. "You'll find it—if you look. Look till you find it—see? Then you ask for the 'ouse-keeper, Mrs. Maloney. And don't you show your sandy 'ead at these 'ere gates agin, or you'll 'ear of it!"

And with that old Mack withdrew into his lodge, and closed the door with a bang, almost on the nose of Timothy Smacke.

Jimmy Silver came across to Master Smacke and tapped him on the shoulder. Smacke turned round to look at him.

"I'll show you the way, kid, if you like," said Jimmy.

"You are very kind, sir."

"Bosh! Come along with me."

The youth picked up his tin trunk and set it on his shoulder. Townsend and Topham of the Fourth came in at the gates, and they stared at Jimmy and his companion. Townsend extracted an

eyeglass from his pocket and adjusted it in his eye, to bestow upon them a second and more scrutinising stare.

"By gad!" said Townsend. "My hat! chertled Topham. 'Who's your friend, Silver?'"

"Go and eat coke!" was Jimmy Silver's polite reply. "This way, Smacke!"

"Smacke!" repeated Topham. "Ye gods, what a name! Relation of yours, Silver?"

Smacke turned to the two juniors and touched his cap.

"If you please, gentlemen, I'm the new boot-boy!" he said.

"Oh, gad!" said Townsend, almost overcome. "A Fourth Form chap chummin' with a boot-boy! Just like those bouncers in the end study, what?"

"Oh, just!" said Topham, with a nod. "Come on, Smacke!" said Jimmy Silver, without heeding the nuts of the Classical Fourth.

Peele of the Fourth had followed Tomy and Topy in at the gates, and paused to listen to what was said. Now he chimed in.

"What's the cad doin' in the quad, if he's the boot-boy? Why don't you kick him out, Silver?"

Townsend and Topham, with lofty looks, walked on. Jimmy did not heed them; the minds of Tomy and Topy

were as lofty as they were vacant, and as vacant as they were lofty. They were not worth the trouble of knocking their heads together. But Cyril Peele, being offensive as well as lofty, deserved some little attention from Uncle James—and received it on the spot.

"Dear man," said Jimmy Silver, approaching Peele with a cheery smile. "I think I'll kick somebody out—and I rather think that it will be you, Cyril, old bean!"

"Look here—" roared Peele, jumping back.

Jimmy's grasp was upon him the next moment.

Timothy Smacke, with his tin trunk on his shoulder, stood and looked on with a rather curious expression upon his sandy face.

Jimmy Silver span Peele round in a grasp that Peele simply couldn't resist, and let out with his right boot.

Crash! Peele went flying out of the gates. He dropped on his hands and knees in the road with a roar.

"Come on, Smacke!" said Jimmy Silver cheerily.

"Yes, sir!" The boot-boy followed Jimmy. Cyril Peele sat up in the dust and blinked after them.

"Ow!" he gasped. "Oh! Ow!"

With a face of fury Peele picked himself up and limped in—possibly repenting him of his bad manners.

Jimmy Silver, dismissing Peele from his mind, led Smacke round to the servants' gate and rang the bell there. Tupper, the page, came to open the gate.

"New chum for you, Tuppy!" said Jimmy Silver cheerily. "This is Smacke, the new boot-boy."

"Ho!" said Tupper, eyeing the newcomer. "You can come in, Smacke!"

Tupper's manner was a little lofty; his position in the Rookwood establishment was superior to that of the new boot-boy, and Tupper's desire was that Smacke should understand that at the start. Jimmy Silver noted it, and grinned. Snobbishness was not confined to the dandies of the Fourth Form, by any means; it cropped up in the servants' hall—in his own way, Tupper, the page, was a smaller edition of the superb Tomy of the Classical Fourth.

However, Tupper led Smacke on his way, and both of them disappeared from the view of Jimmy Silver. The captain of the Fourth hurried away—his little act of kindness had made him late for tea.

The 2nd Chapter. Mysterious!

"Silver!" Jimmy Silver did not groan, but he felt like it. He was scudding into the School House, in a hurry to get to the end study to tea, when Bulkeley of the Sixth called to him in the corridor.

After keeping the study tea waiting while he looked after Master Smacke, it was rather hard cheese to be called on like this. Tea was ready in the end study, and Jimmy Silver, after a tramp on Coombe Heath, was more than ready.

However, Bulkeley was captain of the school, and Bulkeley's word was law. So Jimmy stopped in full career, turned round, and said as sweetly as he could:

"Yes, Bulkeley?" "Erroll of the Fourth is wanted," said the prefect.

"Thank goodness!" said Jimmy Silver. "Eh? What do you mean?"

"I mean I'm glad Erroll's wanted, and not little me," said Jimmy, with a grin. "I'm late for tea already."

"You young ass!" said Bulkeley, laughing. "Tell Erroll he's wanted in the Head's study, and he's to go at once."

"Right-ho!" Jimmy was taking two steps at once up the staircase, when Bulkeley spoke to him again.

"Silver—" Again Jimmy manfully suppressed a groan. He wondered resignedly whether he ever was going to get any tea!

"Yes, Bulkeley?" "You may as well give Erroll a tip," said Bulkeley. "If he knows anything about Mornington, he'd better be quite candid with the Head."

Jimmy Silver jumped. For the moment he forgot tea—hungry as he undoubtedly was.

"Mornington!" he repeated blankly. "The chap who was expelled last term," said Bulkeley, with a nod. "Have you seen anything of him since, Silver?"

"Yes," said Jimmy wonderingly. "We dropped on him during the vacation, when we were on tramp in the country—haven't seen him since that."

"Did he say anything about coming back to Rookwood?" Jimmy made an effort to remember.

"I dare say he did," he answered. "I know he'd like to come back—and I dare say he said so."

"You've not heard from him since." "Not a word."

"Well, give Erroll my message. The Head wants to see him, and if he knows anything about Mornington, he'd better be candid," said the captain of Rookwood; and he turned away with that.

In great wonder, Jimmy Silver went up the big staircase and into the Fourth Form passage. He stopped at Study No. 4, which belonged to Kit Erroll. Erroll had that study to himself since the expulsion of Valentine Mornington from the school.

Jimmy tapped at the door and entered. Kit Erroll was sitting at his table, with his books before him and a cloud of thought on his brow. He smiled faintly as the cheery face of Jimmy Silver looked in.

Jimmy gave Bulkeley's message tersely, and Erroll rose from the table, a strange expression on his face.

"I'll go," he said. "If there's anything up, come along to the end study and tell us when you're through with his nibs!" said Jimmy Silver.

Erroll nodded, and left the study. Jimmy Silver went on to his own quarters, where a savoury aroma of fish and chips greeted him—also three severe faces. Lovell, Raby, and Newcome had waited tea—it was rather a special tea—and they were peckish.

"You ass!" was Arthur Edward Lovell's friendly greeting.

"Late—as usual!" said Newcome. "Fathead!" remarked George Raby. "We've kept the stuff hot. It would have served you right if we'd scuffed it."

"Sorry, old nuts!" said the captain of the Fourth. "Trot it out! Famished. Don't waste time talking."

"Here you are, fathead! What makes you late?" asked Lovell.

"Doing deeds of kindness to benighted boot-boys, and carrying messages for old Bulkeley," explained Jimmy Silver, as he sat down to tea.

"Boot-boys!" repeated Lovell blankly. Jimmy Silver explained—without delaying operations on the fish and chips. Fish and chips, at the time, were really of more importance than explanations.

"Well, you're an ass!" said Raby. "But I'm glad you kicked Peele."

"Peele wasn't," said Jimmy. "But I hope it will do him good. But never mind the giddy boot-boy; there seems to be news of old Morny."

And Jimmy explained further—and his chums were interested at once.

It was odd enough, considering that he had thoroughly deserved expulsion from the school, that Valentine Mornington had left so many friends behind him.

He had signed, there was no doubt about that; but, then, he had repented, if only at the eleventh hour.

The Fisticul Fourth remembered that he had been a good sportsman, except when his perverse and passionate temper overcame his judgment, and they were rather prone to remember his good qualities than his bad.

And at that meeting during the vacation they had been very chummy with Morny, outcast from Rookwood as he was, and on the whole they would have been very glad if the Head had allowed him to return to the school.

But that, they knew, was impossible. Dr. Chisholm's decision, when once he had come to it, was like unto the laws of the Medes and Persians—there was no change to be expected.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were rather keen to see Erroll when he came back from his visit to the Head's study. They had finished tea, when a tap came at the door, and Erroll came into the end study.

"Well?" Four voices uttered that interrogatory monosyllable at once.

Erroll's handsome face was very grave. "Something's up!" asked Lovell.

"Yes. The Head's heard from Sir Rupert Staepoole—Morny's guardian. Morny's cleared off from Staepoole Lodge."

"Phew!" "The awful ass!" said Jimmy Silver. "I thought that he was on quite good terms with his guardian now."

"It seems that he is," said Erroll. "They haven't parted on bad terms. Morny left a letter saying that he hoped to get a chance to return to Rookwood."

"But that's impossible." "I know," Erroll nodded, with a troubled look. "I don't catch on to it. Goodness knows I want old Morny back, but I know there's no chance. He deserved what he got—I can't deny that, though he's my chum. There's no reason why the Head should pardon him—and he won't. Yet, in a letter I had from Morny a few days ago, he said practically the same thing. I had to show the Head the letter. He thought that, as Morny's best chum, I might know something of his movements—that's why he sent for me."

"But you don't," asked Jimmy Silver. Erroll shook his head.

"Nothing. I'm worried about it. It's impossible for Morny to come back here, and he oughtn't to have left his uncle's house, especially as they're on good terms at last. But there it is; that's what the Head told me, and I can't make head or tail of it. I wish I knew where Morny was."

"I suppose the jolly old baronet is rather upset," remarked Newcome.

"I suppose so. He's written to the

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Head to ask whether anything has been heard of Morny here. The Head can't tell him anything, of course. It's made him waxy again with Morny. He thought he'd heard the last of him—and he hasn't.

Erroll nodded to the chums of the Fourth, and left the end study, evidently very much troubled in his mind.

"Well, that beats it!" remarked Arthur Edward Lovell, with a whistle. "I say, what giddy scheme could Morny possibly have for getting back here?"

"Give it up!" said Jimmy Silver. "Talking out of his hat, I expect!" opined Lovell. "But I'll tell you what—if he really has a scheme on, I wish him luck."

"Hear, hear!" The Co. fully shared Lovell's opinion on that point. They wished the expelled junior luck, but that they would ever see him at Rookwood again they did not believe for a moment. But they puzzled a good deal over the mysterious affair.

The 3rd Chapter. Troubles Below Stairs!

"Look here, Sandy!" Thus Tupper.

The scene was the boot-room, two or three days after the arrival of Master Timothy Smacke, the new boot-boy. Smacke was engaged upon boots—there were endless, innumerable boots to keep Smacke busy; indeed, it was amazing how one youth of about fifteen could deal with so many boots. Tupper, resplendent in buttons, regarded the boot-boy, in his apron and shirt-sleeves, with loftiness and reproof.

Smacke looked up. "Who are you calling Sandy?" he asked.

"You!" said Tupper. "Cut it out!" said the boot-boy.

"No cheek!" said Tupper, wagging a podgy forefinger at the boot-boy. "I don't want any of it, Smacke! If you don't want to be called 'Sandy,' don't go around with a mop that colour and a face that colour! Why, you're so sandy you look as if you'd put the sandy colour on specially, like the young gents on their private theatricals. What are you grinning at?"

"You, old bean!" said Smacke affably. "What's biting you, Tupper? You ain't a good-tempered cove!"

"Good-tempered enough, when my inferiors know their place and keep it!" said Tupper.

"Got any?" asked Smacke. "Any what?"

"Inferiors."

"Look 'ere!" roared Tupper. "I've said I don't want any cheek, young Sandy, and I don't want any back-chat! Hasn't the 'ousekeeper told you that you're under me 'ere?"

"Right on the wicket!" said Smacke. "There you go—talking like the young gents!" said Tupper aggrieved. "Just as if you was a young gent yourself!"

"My mistake!" said Smacke, amicably. "But what's wrong, Tuppy? Don't I clean all the boots, and clean 'em clean?"

"Which you don't!" said Tupper severely. "I've 'ad a complaint. Mr. Dalton's boots this morning was a disgrace."

Smacke started. "The master of the Fourth? I turned out his boots in tip-top style, Tuppy, I did, really!"

"So you say!" sneered Tupper. "Well, Mr. Dalton's complained about his boots being dirty. Mrs. Maloney told me to speak to you. This is what comes of getting boot-boys from a blooming agency!" said Tupper. "I recommended a young cousin of mine, and Mrs. Maloney took no notice. You come from a blooming agency! You're no good!"

"Go hon!"

"No cheek!" roared Tupper. "Don't I keep on telling you that I don't want any cheek? You mind your p's and q's! You'll get sent back to your blessed agency fast enough, if you don't keep the boots clean!"

"If Mr. Dalton's boots weren't clean, they were tampered with after I left them at his door, Tupper," said Smacke quietly.

"There you go again! Tampered with! Nice language for a boot-boy to use!" sneered Tupper. "Think you're a gent, I suppose, because you've got a job in a gentleman's school! You mind your p's and q's, young Smacke!"

With that, Tupper flung out of the boot-room in great wrath.

Timothy Smacke went on polishing the boots, with a thoughtful expression on his face.

Later in the day, there came a tap at the door of the end study, and Jimmy Silver, who was there, called out cheerily: "Trot in, fathead!"

It was a sandy-haired, sandy-faced youth who "trotted in." Jimmy Silver stared in surprise at Master Timothy Smacke. He had not expected a visit from the boot-boy.

"Hallo, old scout!" said Jimmy, kindly enough. "Anything I can do for you?"

"Yes, sir," said Smacke, "if you'll be so kind."

"Give it a name!" said Jimmy. Jimmy Silver looked curiously at the new boot-boy.

"Have I seen you before, somewhere, kid?" he asked.

"Yes, sir; the day I came."

"I mean before you came to Rookwood?" Jimmy looked at him quite intently. "There's something quite familiar about your face."

"Sandy people are very much alike, sir, I think."

"That's the odd thing about it!" said Jimmy, eyeing him. "You seem to be like somebody I've known, who wasn't sandy. But I suppose I've never seen you before, as you say so. What is it you want?"

"You were kind enough to chip in, sir, the day I came, when a boy of this school was rude to me—"

"Pelee?" said Jimmy. "Never mind him, kid; there's black sheep in every flock, and Pelee's one of our black sheep."

"I don't mind him, sir, but he minds me," said the boot-boy. "Master Pelee has made himself very unpleasant several times; and in my position, sir, of course I cannot say anything."

"Oh!" said Jimmy. He was not surprised to hear it, though he wondered why the boot-boy had come to say this.

"I think, sir, that you would like to see fair play," said the boot-boy. "Mr. Dalton's boots were meddled with after I left them at his door, and it was done to get me into trouble. I think it must have been Master Pelee. It's a serious thing for me, Master Silver, to have complaints made. I thought, perhaps, you would see fair play."

"Oh, my hat!" said Jimmy. In such a case, Jimmy Silver was the very fellow to see fair play. But he could not help wondering how Smacke knew it.

How on earth did Timothy Smacke know that Jimmy, among the crowd of Rookwood fellows, was just the chap to come to in such a case? Certainly it showed amazing perspicacity on the part of a fellow who had seen him only once in his lifetime.

"You're sure of what you say, kid?" asked the captain of the Fourth, after a pause.

"I'm sure the boots were meddled with to cause me trouble, sir, and I think it was Master Pelee."

"Leave it to me, then!" said Jimmy Silver. "If Pelee's playing a sneaking game like that, taking it out of you because I kicked him, I'll jolly soon put a stop to it!"

"Thank you, sir!" Timothy Smacke hurried on to the stairs, and disappeared.

He left the matter in safe hands. Jimmy advanced on Pelee & Co. as they backed into their study.

"You're looking for trouble, Pelee, old man?" he asked. "Here's some—as much as you want."

"Get out of my study, Jimmy Silver!" roared Pelee furiously. "I'm going to the Head to complain of that cad! Do you think a boot-boy is going to be allowed to punch a fellow's face?"

"Certainly—if the fellow lays hands on him!" said Jimmy coolly. "And if you lay a complaint against Smacke, I shall

in that instant, the boot-boy's right came up, catching Pelee on the jaw in a clean upper-cut, and Pelee, with a yell of surprise and rage, went spinning back into his study, where he landed on his back.

The 4th Chapter. Painful for Pelee!

"Collar the cad!" "Rag him!"

"Hold him for me!" panted Pelee, struggling to his feet.

Smacke backed away across the passage, putting his hands up, his eyes gleaming over them. There was a rustle of feet, and Jimmy Silver came along the passage at top-speed, just in time to throw himself between the boot-boy and the cads of the Fourth.

Pelee & Co. jumped back with ludicrous haste as the captain of the Fourth interposed. They were not looking for hard hitting from Jimmy Silver.

"Cut off, Smacke!" muttered Jimmy in a low voice. "It's more than your place is worth to get into a row with the fellows here."

"Thank you, sir!" Timothy Smacke hurried on to the stairs, and disappeared.

He left the matter in safe hands. Jimmy advanced on Pelee & Co. as they backed into their study.

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"Rotten bully!" mumbled Gower. "Ow! Wow!"

"I'll make that boot-blackin' cad sorry for it!" muttered Pelee, between his teeth. "It's all through him!"

"Ow! Wow, wow!" Jimmy Silver smiled, genially when he met the three in the junior Common-room that evening. Pelee & Co. scowled, but they did not seem to be looking for vengeance—not upon Uncle James of Rookwood, at all events. Jimmy could guess easily enough that Pelee was thinking of an easier victim—he had not forgotten what Smacke had told him. And when Pelee "weighed in" again in that direction, it was the intention of Uncle James to take a hand in the proceedings.

The 5th Chapter. Caught in the Act!

Jimmy Silver moved his head slightly upon the pillow, and a sleepy smile glistened on his face.

The first grey dim light of dawn was creeping in at the high windows of the Fourth Form dormitory.

Rising-bell had not sounded yet; it was not due for a quarter of an hour. But in the Fourth Form dormitory, one fellow at least was stirring—one fellow who was about the last member of the Form to be suspected of a desire for early rising.

Jimmy—wide awake, although he seemed to sleep—watched Cyril Pelee from his pillow.

Pelee, moving quietly, almost noiselessly, dressed himself quickly, occasionally glancing along the beds to assure himself that the other fellows were not awake. It was unlikely that any member of the Fourth would awaken

drew a rag from his pocket. Evidently Pelee had come prepared.

He proceeded to rub blacking on the inside of the boot, and mud and dust on the outside.

"The awful rotter!" breathed Lovell. Jimmy made his chum a sign to be silent.

Having finished with one boot, Pelee proceeded to deal with the other; and when he had finished, Mr. Dalton's boots looked as if they had passed through exceedingly slovenly hands. The Fourth Form master was rather particular about his boots; and there was no doubt that there would be another complaint—more serious this time. A boot-boy who left boots in such a state was not likely to retain his situation long at Rookwood.

Pelee stood and regarded his handiwork for a moment or two with an evil grin. He was turning away when Jimmy Silver and Lovell appeared in the corridor, and the cad of the Fourth met them face to face.

Pelee started back, the grin dying away from his face. He stared at the two juniors blankly.

"You!" he stuttered. "You rotter!" roared Lovell, in great wrath. "Playing tricks on a boot-boy—to get the poor beast the sack! Ain't you jolly well ashamed of yourself?"

"I—I—I—" stuttered Pelee. "Have you finished with Mr. Dalton's boots?" asked Jimmy Silver, with calm politeness.

"I—I—I—" mumbled Pelee, utterly taken aback. "I—I—I— It's no business of yours, Jimmy Silver!"

"Your mistake, old bean!" said Jimmy Silver. "It's just exactly my business. You see, I've made it my business. Pick up those boots!"

"I—I won't!"

"You're going to take those boots to Mrs. Maloney, and tell her exactly the trick you've played!" said Jimmy Silver.

"I won't!" howled Pelee. "You'll tell her you played the same trick before, and that you did it to get Smacke into trouble, because I kicked you for insulting the kid the day he came."

"I—I won't!"

"Or else," said Jimmy calmly, "I shall call Mr. Dalton here and now, and report the matter to him."

Pelee gritted his teeth. "You can't prove I touched the boots, you interferin' rotter!" he panted at last.

"Our word against yours, if you deny it," said Jimmy Silver scornfully; "and I fancy my word's a bit more trustworthy than yours, Pelee!"

"Pick up the boots and come along!" snapped Lovell. "You're going to be shown up to the housekeeper, so that you can't play any more dirty tricks on a poor kid who's got his living to get."

Pelee clenched his hands. "I won't come," he said between his teeth. "And you can wake Mr. Dalton. I shall deny the whole thing!"

"We'll wake him fast enough!"

The door of Mr. Dalton's room opened. "No need to wake Mr. Dalton!" said a quiet voice, as the young Form master, in dressing-gown and slippers, appeared in the open doorway. "I am not a heavy sleeper, my boys, and your voices had already awakened me."

"Oh!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver. The master of the Fourth fixed his eyes on Pelee. The cad of Rookwood almost tottered back. Denying his rascality was not of much use now; he could see that Mr. Dalton had heard all, or almost all, that had passed. "Dicky" Dalton's brow was dark as he fixed his eyes on Pelee.

"So you, a Rookwood boy, have been playing a trick on a lad employed in this school!" he said. "A wretched trick, which might have cost him his place. Why have you done this, Pelee?"

"I—I—" He was cheeky!" muttered Pelee, with dry lips.

"That will do, Pelee! I shall report this matter to Dr. Chisholm, and request him to deal with you," said Mr. Dalton. "I shall also speak to the housekeeper, in order that you may have no future opportunity for such dastardly trickery, Pelee. You may go now!"

Pelee almost limped away. "Thank you very much for interfering as you did, my boys," added Mr. Dalton, and with a kind nod to Jimmy and Lovell he went back into his room and closed the door.

That morning, before lessons, Pelee of the Fourth had a caning in the Head's study that was quite a record. All that day Pelee looked as if he did not find life worth living; and it was probable that the cad of the Fourth would give the new boot-boy a wide berth afterwards. Jimmy Silver looked for Timothy Smacke after morning lessons, and found him in the boot-room.

"All serene now, kid!" said Jimmy. "There won't be any more tricks with the giddy footwear. You're all right!"

"Thanks, Jimmy, old top!" Jimmy Silver jumped.

"Wha-a-at!"

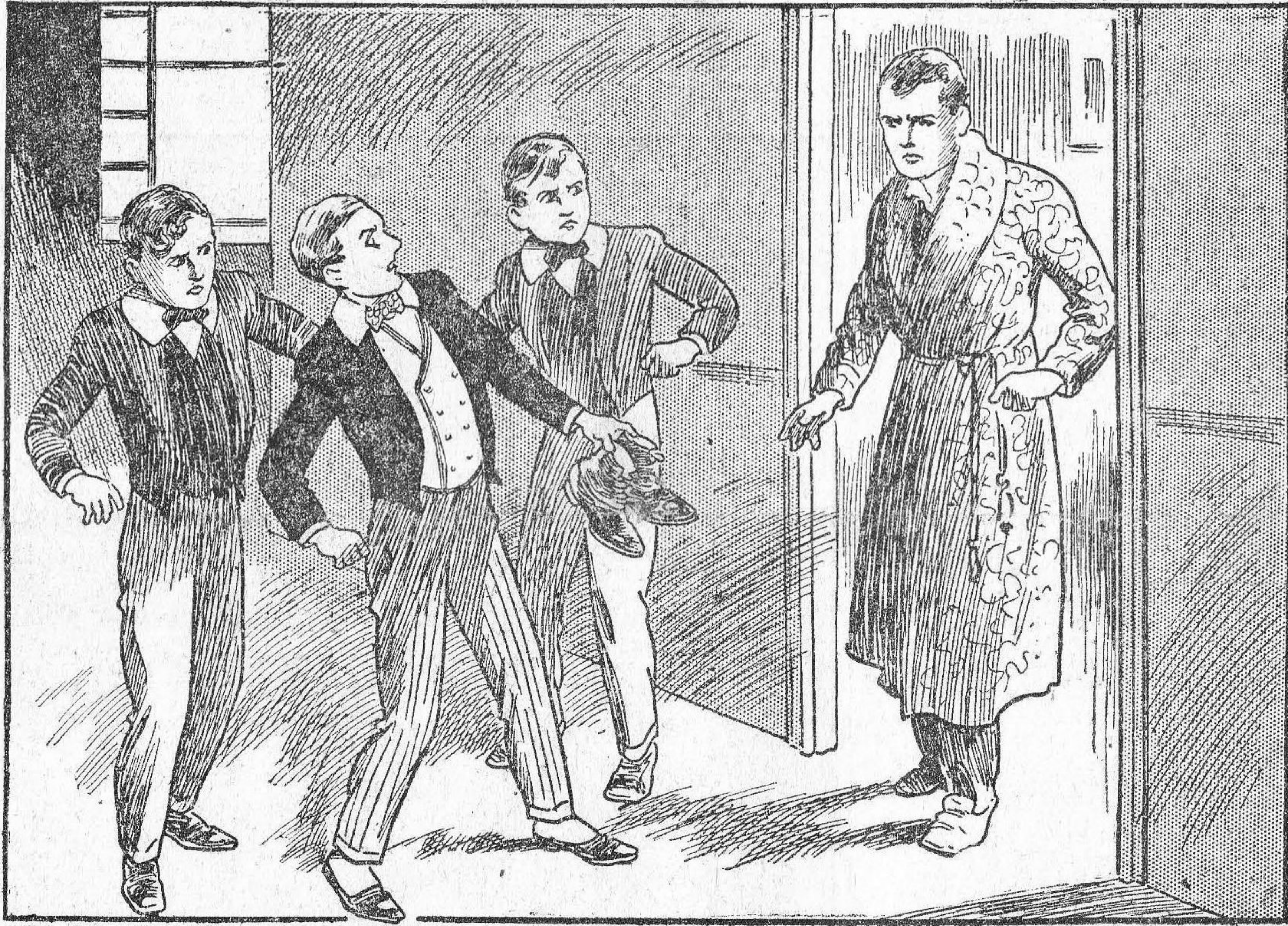
The boot-boy's face crimsoned. "Excuse me, sir!" he gasped. "I—I—I mean, I am much obliged to you, sir, for interfering so kindly!"

"Right-ho, sonny!" said Jimmy Silver good-naturedly; and he left the boot-room with utter wonder in his face.

For the boot-boy's voice, as he had spoken impulsively, unthinkingly, had sounded familiar in Jimmy Silver's ears. It recalled to him a voice he remembered—the voice of Valentine Mornington, the expelled junior of Rookwood. Jimmy Silver went up the stairs in a state of utter amazement.

THE END.

(Next Monday's magnificent story of Jimmy Silver & Co. is simply packed with exciting incidents. Ask your news-agent to save a copy of the Boys' Friend for you, in order to avoid disappointment.)



CAUGHT IN THE ACT! "No need to wake Mr. Dalton!" said a quiet voice as the young Form master appeared at the open doorway. Pelee staggered back, the dirty boots, evidence of his guilt, in his hands!

Timothy Smacke quitted the study, leaving Jimmy very thoughtful. As the boot-boy went down the Fourth Form passage, Pelee and Lattrey and Gower looked out of their study with grinning faces. The three cads of the Fourth had seen Smacke pass, on his way to the end study; and they were waiting for him to return.

"Hold on there, Smacke!" called out Pelee.

"Yes, sir!" said Smacke, stopping. "What are you doing in our passage?"

"I came to speak to Master Silver, sir."

"Like your cheek!" said Pelee. "You're an impudent young blackguard, Smacke!"

"Yes, sir," said Smacke. "And a dirty little ruffian!" said Gower. "Thank you, sir!"

"A horrid little toad!" said Lattrey. "Much obliged, sir!" said Smacke, unmoved. "Is there anything else, sir, or may I go now?"

Pelee gave him a scowl. It seemed impossible to "draw" Master Smacke. His manner was perfectly respectful, yet, at the same time, there was an inflection of scorn in his voice that cut Pelee to the quick. It was as if a grubby boot-boy had the unexampled cheek to despise Cyril Pelee of the Classical Fourth; and if that was the state of affairs, it was almost time for the skies to fall.

Jimmy Silver's kick had lingered in Pelee's memory. He did not care to tackle Jimmy on the subject; so he "took it out" of the boot-boy, as it were—a young victim being welcome so long as he could not retaliate. It was rather unfortunate for Smacke that he had attracted Pelee's notice; Pelee had a long memory and a malicious nature.

"Kick him out of the passage!" said Gower.

Smacke made a movement to pass on. Pelee suddenly reached out at him, to catch him by his shock of sandy hair.

His outstretched fingers touched the shock of hair, and in another instant that sandy shock would have been pulled. But

chip in and explain just what happened—so you'd better think twice, old scout."

"You meddlin' rotter—"

"Thanks! Where will you have it?" asked Jimmy.

Pelee, apparently undesirous of "having it" anywhere, dodged round the study table.

"Get out of my study—"

Jimmy Silver followed him round the table. Pelee made a break for the door, and Jimmy made a jump for Pelee. There was a yell of anguish from the cad of the Fourth as Jimmy grasped his back hair.

"You were going to pull Smacke's top-knot!" grinned Jimmy. "He seemed to object. Do you object, Pelee?"

"Yow-ow!"

"Suppose I tug it like that—"

"Yaroooop!"

"And like that!"

"Yooooooop!"

"And like that—"

Pelee yelled with pain and fury, and turned desperately on the captain of the Fourth.

"Back up!" he roared; and Gower and Lattrey, reluctantly enough, backed up, and the three closed on Jimmy Silver.

Uncle James of Rookwood grinned. He did not think his hands were too full, with three slackers like Pelee & Co. And he was right. Lattrey went in one direction and Gower in another, under a rapid left and right from the captain of the Fourth. Cyril Pelee put in one blow which made Jimmy's nose feel a little painful; and then Jimmy Silver put in a blow which made Pelee's nose feel very painful indeed. Pelee sat down on his study carpet with a bump.

"Nuff all round?" asked Jimmy Silver, glancing down at the three on the carpet.

"Ow! Ow!"

"Groooooogh!" Jimmy smiled and sauntered out of the study. Pelee staggered to his feet, dabbing his handkerchief to his nose.

before the rising-bell clanged out, but Pelee was cautious by nature.

Satisfied that all were sleeping, and that he was unwatched, Cyril Pelee quitted the dormitory, closing the door softly behind him.

Then Jimmy Silver showed activity. With a jump, he was out of bed; and in a few seconds he had shaken Arthur Edward Lovell into wakefulness.

Lovell awoke with a start. "Ow! Wharrer marrer?" he murmured. "Turn out, old top!"

"Grooh! 'Tain't rising-bell!" mumbled Lovell.

"It's little me—more important than rising-bell!" said Jimmy. "Pelee's just sneaked out of the dorm."

"Blow Pelee! Bother him!"

"We're going to bother him!" grinned Jimmy. "Turn out, slacker."

Arthur Edward Lovell grunted emphatically, and turned out of bed. It was a cold morning, and Lovell shivered and grabbed his clothes.

"Hallo, where are you fellows going?" came a sleepy voice from Rawson's bed.

"Rat-catching," answered Jimmy Silver. "What rot! Let the rats alone!"

"It's a human rat, and belongs to this Form!" explained Jimmy Silver. And without explaining further to the astonished Rawson, he quitted the dormitory with Lovell.

The two juniors went down the staircase quietly. They halted on the stairs and looked over the banisters, which gave them a view of the corridor in which Mr. Dalton's room was situated.

Early as the hour was, while all Rookwood slept, the boot-boy had been stirring. Mr. Dalton's boots, beautifully cleaned and polished, stood outside his bed-room door, left there by Timothy Smacke.

Pelee of the Fourth was just bending over them as Jimmy and Lovell sighted him.

Pelee picked up one of the boots, and

Another Splendid Win for "Bulldog" Holdfast!



The GENTLEMAN RIDER!

A Special 12,000-word
Complete Story of the Turf!

The 1st Chapter.

The "Agony Ad."—Who is "Miss Z"?

"Dene, old top, what do you think of this?"

Harry, otherwise "Bulldog" Holdfast, had just finished an excellent holdfast in the "dug-out" in his rooms in St. James's and over his coffee he had been glancing through the "personal" column of a morning newspaper.

The "agony" ads, as they are sometimes called, never failed to interest him. Experience had taught him that often the most innocently-worded advertisement of this kind held some deep, even sinister hidden meaning. He had correctly deciphered more than one in the past and found exciting adventures in consequence.

Dene, the ex-runner, who now acted as Holdfast's valet and general factotum, took the paper his master proffered.

His face betrayed no emotion as he glanced through the insertion Holdfast had ticked with a black-lead pencil, but his keen eyes glinted a little in interest.

"Young lady of gentle birth desperately in need of £5,000," it read. "Excellent security, but wishes to borrow from private person, and secretly. No professional moneylenders need apply.—Miss Z, Box 3265, 'Daily Wire' Offices, Fleet Street, E.C."

Dene shrugged his shoulders as he handed the paper back to Harry.

"It might be genuine, Mr. Holdfast, sir," he said. "On the other hand, and I think that's more likely, it may be some adventuress after easy money."

Holdfast nodded, as he playfully threw a piece of bread at Mrs. Dene's cat, then lit a cigarette.

"The 'easy money' notion struck me at first, Dene," he confessed. "Then, somehow, the advertisement occurred to me as being the real thing. I have read it through and through two or three times, and I am now feeling so curious that I have half a mind to reply to it. Miss Z! There's a hint of mystery and romance about her pseudonym, Dene, that appeals to me. It may be some young and beautiful girl who is in real distress—what?"

Dene seemed sceptical.

"She might be a pretty swindler, sir, with a plausible tongue. If I were you, I should be careful," he warned. "You're rich, sir, but that's no reason why some designing female should relieve you of five thousand of the best."

Holdfast laughed.

"You're a cautious bird, Dene," he chaffed. "I will reply, anyway. If Miss Z does turn out to be some female criminal, I fancy I may convince her that she has bitten off more than she can chew. Jerk me over some notepaper and an envelope, and I will pen the lady a few kind words."

Though Dene thought his adventurous master was probably asking for trouble, he knew that it was worse than useless to argue with Holdfast, when once he made up his mind.

He fetched the required stationery and laid it before Harry, who was already waiting with his fountain-pen in his hand.

Holdfast wrote a short note in response to the mysterious advertisement, saying that he would be willing to loan the amount required, provided the advertiser would call upon him and convince him of the genuineness of her security.

He posted the letter on the way to the club, into which he usually turned in the mornings, when he had nothing else to do.

Two days elapsed, and Harry Holdfast had almost forgotten about the advertisement, and the reply he had sent, when, on the third morning, Dene phoned him at his club that a young lady had called and was asking to see him.

"My hat! It's Miss Z, for a tinner, Dene, old top!" the "Bulldog" exclaimed. "Right-ho, I'll be home in a jiffy! By the way, what's she like?"

"As neat a little craft as I ever set eyes on, if you'll forgive me saying so, Mr. Holdfast, sir," came Dene's reply over the live wire. "She's a regular high-stepper, sir, if you follow what I mean."

"It is well, Dene," Holdfast returned. "I will be home even faster than I said."

Replacing the receiver on its hook, Holdfast obtained his hat and left the club. He walked rapidly, and in a very few minutes was letting himself into his quarters with his latchkey.

Harry determined that Dene had not been too enthusiastic as he entered the "dug-out."

A girl of about twenty-one or two rose rather timidly to greet him, and Holdfast decided that she was not only a lady, but

one of the most charming young women it had ever been his pleasure to meet.

She was attired in dark furs that suited her to perfection and enhanced the whiteness of her delicate skin. Her hair was of a warm reddish-brown, and gleamed with a hundred amazing tints of gold as it was caught by the cold autumn sunshine that streamed in through the window. Her lash-shadowed eyes were a little troubled and anxious, but that could not alter the fact that they were violet and very beautiful.

"Miss Z?" Holdfast murmured interrogatively, as he bowed.

Reassured by the smile that accompanied the "Bulldog's" inquiry, the girl nodded.

"I—I don't know what you think of me, Mr. Holdfast, for putting such an advertisement in the paper," she faltered. "But—for a moment tears seemed very near her eyes—"I am in desperate need of—of money, and I wanted to get into touch with someone I could trust to keep the transaction secret."

"And you think you can trust me, Miss Z?" Holdfast said, a smile that was calculated to put her at her ease, still hovering about his firm mouth.

"I—I am sure I can," the girl answered impulsively. "You see, I have heard of you and your doings, as has almost everyone, and you are always referred to as a brave man and a gentleman."

"Was this soft soap?" Holdfast wondered. Somehow, he did not think so. If the girl was a professional swindler, she was coming as near to taking him in as ever he had been taken in in his life.

Harry Holdfast begged her to resume her chair. With his keen eyes studying her beautiful face, he seated himself opposite her.

"I presume that I am now to know your true identity, Miss Z?" he suggested; but, to his surprise, the girl quickly shook her head.

"Oh, no! I cannot tell you that; nor can I explain why I want the money!" she returned, almost with a touch of alarm. "You see, the security I am prepared to offer for the loan I want is more than adequate, and—and there are reasons why I cannot disclose who I really am."

Holdfast waited as she took from the handbag she carried a leathern jewel-case. She snapped open the lid, and displayed to him a diamond necklace. As the sunlight caught it, the stones flashed and scintillated with a thousand dancing fires and seemed to fling back as if in derision.

"See!" she said. "This is worth much more than the sum I wish to borrow. I want it only for a little under three weeks, and if I cannot repay by that time, you can sell the diamonds and get back your money."

Holdfast held out his hand for the necklace. As he examined it, he saw that it was not only genuine, but that the diamonds were peerless. He was a fairly good judge of precious stones, and estimated that the necklace was worth six or seven thousand pounds, if not more.

As he raised his eyes and again fixed them upon his fair visitor, he found her leaning forward in her chair, an eager look in her wonderful eyes.

"You see that I have spoken the truth," she said. "Will you hold the necklace as security and lend me the money, Mr. Holdfast?"

Holdfast continued to eye her for a moment in silence. Then he gave an almost imperceptible shrug of his broad shoulders.

"You have spoken the truth about the value of the stones, Miss Z," he admitted. "But how am I to be sure that they are yours to offer as security for the money you request?"

For just a fleeting instant the girl did not seem to understand his meaning. Then, as it flashed into her brain, she sprang to her feet, her eyes blazing and her slender figure drawn up with a cold hauteur.

"You—you suggest that I might be a thief—that I might have stolen the diamonds! Oh, how dare you!" she cried. "Give me the necklace! I will go elsewhere!"

Holdfast did not, however, place the case in the hand she extended. He determined that her indignation was real, and that she was no adventuress.

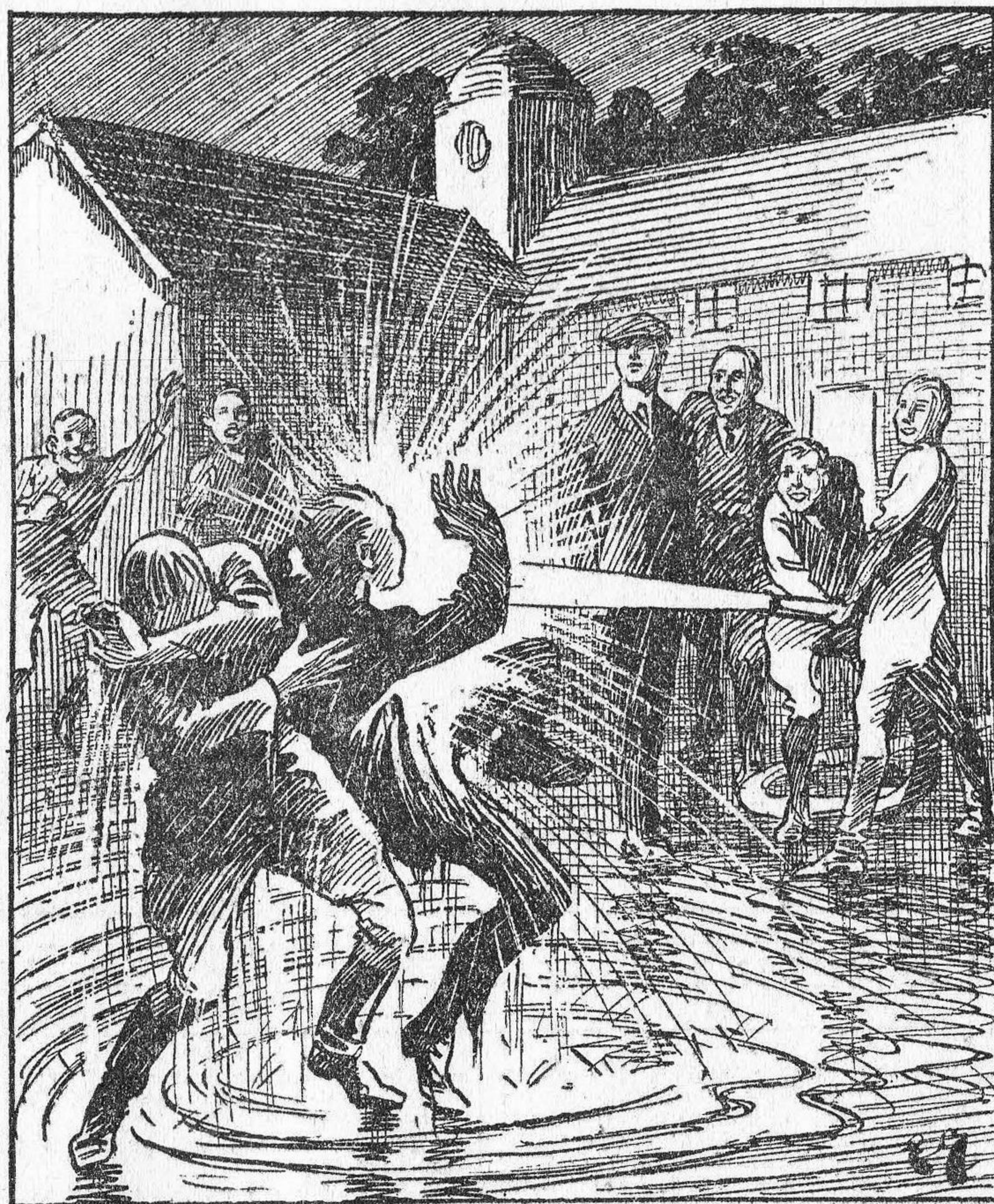
"Forgive me," he said. "You must realise that I do not know you and that you have refused to acquaint me with information as to whom you are. If I have seemed a little cautious, you will realise that, after all, it is only natural. Just suppose for a moment, Miss Z,

that you were some clever criminal. I advanced you £5,000 upon the stones and never saw you again. When I attempted to dispose of them the police would perhaps identify them as stolen property, and I should have to hand them over without getting back a penny of my money."

The angry light died out of the eyes of the girl who chose to be known as Miss Z, and she nodded.

"I quite see your position," she confessed. "But I assure you, Mr. Holdfast, that the necklace is mine to do with as I will." Her eyes grew suddenly misty and her lips quivered. "I should be very sorry to lose it, all the same, for it was my mother's, and she is now dead," she added. "But I think—I am almost sure I shall be able to pay back the money and reclaim it in the time I have mentioned."

Holdfast produced his cheque-book. He did not think he was making a mistake in the honesty of his visitor, and he felt he wanted to help her out of the anxiety and distress that he thought he could perceive under a brave exterior.



ROUGH JUSTICE! As the trainer turned on the water, the stable lads directed the hose upon Burton and Philip Hood. The icy stream almost knocked the plotters off their feet, and in a couple of seconds they were soaked to the skin!

He scribbled a "Bearer" cheque for £5,000, handed it to her, and, placing the necklace back in its case, carried it to his safe and locked it away.

He saw the girl to the front door.

"Repay when it is convenient," he said. "Interest"—as she mentioned it. "Oh, we can talk about that later. Don't distress yourself if you cannot get the money to pay back quite so soon as you anticipate. I promise I will give you plenty of grace before I think of selling the necklace."

She flashed him a look of gratitude.

"Thank you," she said simply.

For just an instant her small, gloved hand rested in his. Then she was gone and the front door had closed upon her.

Holdfast walked back to the "dug-out" and stood hesitating, his eyes thoughtful.

He trusted the girl, but in wondering why she had been apparently in such desperate need of the money, a sudden possibility occurred to him that was inclined to make his blood boil.

What if, for some reason, she were being blackmailed?

What if she wanted the £5,000 to hand over to some unscrupulous person who possessed a real or supposed hold over her? It was possible, and it would account for her anxiety to negotiate the loan and her eagerness for secrecy.

By James! If such were the case, it was up to him to see that the money

did not leave her hands, and that her enemy, or enemies, were discomfited.

At all events, he would watch where she went and what she did after she left his bank, if she went there at once to cash her cheque.

Holdfast donning up a cap and an overcoat. Donning them, he hurried from his rooms and made all speed to Coventry Street, where his bank was situated.

He arrived there just in time to see the mysterious girl emerging, tightly clasping her handbag. He was standing upon the opposite side of the street, and he swiftly turned and pretended to be looking into a shop window, for he did not wish her to recognise him.

She walked in the direction of Charing Cross Road. Holdfast shadowed her with the skill of long practice, and, quite unaware that she was followed, the girl went on until she reached the Strand.

Here she looked up at the buildings as she passed, as though seeking some address. Abruptly she pulled up and entered a palatial block of office buildings. Holdfast pulled his cap forward over his eyes and glanced into the entrance hall as he passed.

He was just in time to see Miss Z vanishing into one of the ground floor offices. He halted, entered the building, and approached the door that had just closed behind her. Then Harry Holdfast received one of the greatest surprises of his life.

On the door appeared in bold, black letters:

"STEWART & CO.,
Turf Commission Agents."

And his discovery could mean only one thing.

Miss Z had wanted the £5,000 to back some horse!

Although bookmakers in England are not allowed by law to take money before a race is run, Holdfast knew that few would refuse to break that law if a substantial cash wager was offered them.

This was also the destination of the mysterious Miss Z, and she was occupying another compartment away near the engine.

Holdfast had watched her go to the booking-office when he had followed her into Waterloo Station, and no sooner had she left the little window than he had employed an old trick to learn to where she had booked.

"Did my sister book through to Salisbury?" he had innocently asked the clerk. And the man had unsuspectingly replied:

"No, sir—only to Fleetbridge." Which was, of course, what the "Bulldog" had wanted to know.

He had taken a ticket to that place, learned that a train was almost due to leave, and, taking care the girl he was following should not see him, he had boarded it.

An hour's steady run found the train pulling up in a little rustic station. Holdfast, who had had the carriage to himself, cautiously peered from the window, and saw that only a very few passengers alighted.

Quite easily he picked out the winsome figure of his quarry, and noted that as she passed through the barrier the ticket-collector touched his cap in recognition.

Just as the train was about to resume its journey Holdfast leapt to the platform. He walked briskly to the barrier, and nodded cheerily to the railway employee.

"I seem to know that young lady who just passed through," he said, as he proffered his cigar-case.

"Everyone knows her in these parts, sir," was the man's reply. "She's Miss Enid Carew, the daughter of Sir Gilbert Carew, up at the Grange. The poor have reason to bless her in the winter, when times are hard. She does no end of good, without making a song about it."

"I was mistaken," Holdfast said carelessly. "I don't know her, after all."

He nodded, and, walking through the station, found himself in Fleetbridge's quaint and winding High Street. Across the road was an inn called the Barley Mow, which looked cosy.

Holdfast walked over to it and entered. He was growing uncommonly hungry, for it was now nearly two o'clock; but the landlord, a jovial and talkative rustic, speedily arranged to put that right.

He showed the "Bulldog" into a small room, where there was an inviting log-fire, and Harry was soon discussing an appetising cold meal. He drew the landlord into conversation.

Discreet "pumping" of mine host elicited all there was to know about Sir Gilbert Carew, of the Grange, and his daughter.

Enid was his only child, though there was a nephew named Philip Hood, who occasionally came to Fleetbridge for short stays with his uncle. Sir Gilbert came of a long line of baronets, and the house was one of the oldest mansions in Hampshire.

"A regular sporting old chap, I suppose, landlord?" Holdfast inquired casually, as he pushed aside his plate and lit a cigarette. "Owns racehorses, perhaps, and all that sort of thing—eh?"

"Bless you, yes, sir!" the innkeeper agreed. "And up to last year, when rheumatism began to cripple him, he used to ride to hounds with the best of 'em, though he must be nearly sixty. He's one of the true kind of sportsmen, too. Every horse he runs, though he don't run many lately, are triers. Sir Gilbert owns them purely for the sport. He has never gambled in his life, so that there's never any jiggery-pokery business about them, and they are out to win if they are good enough."

There sounded a rapping on the counter of the bar, and the landlord hurried away.

"Why, Mr. Philip, this is a surprise, sir!" Holdfast heard him say. "It's quite a time since you honoured us with a visit!"

"Yes, Highams," drawled another voice. "It's six months since I saw Sir Gilbert."

Harry Holdfast had pricked up his ears.

The visitor was evidently the nephew of Sir Gilbert Carew, of whom the landlord had spoken—Philip Hood. It was unlike the "Bulldog" to needlessly play the part of eavesdropper; but somehow some impulse urged him to listen as the young man and the innkeeper continued to talk.

"By the way," Holdfast heard Philip Hood say presently, "do you know if it's correct that my uncle is running his horse The Lurcher in the United Services Stables at Sandown Park?"

"I believe so, Mr. Philip," came the landlord's reply. "We've had Tom Felton, the crack cross-country jockey, down here two or three times lately, and I know that he has been up on The Lurcher at exercise, and put him over the schooling fences."

"So the sporting papers are saying," returned Philip Hood. "And it was just at that moment that Harry Holdfast rose, and sauntered from the little parlour into the sanded bar. "I suppose The Lurcher will be worth backing if he does see the post?"

Holdfast saw the landlord nod eagerly. "I mustn't say who told me, but I've heard the horse is going like a Grand National winner, sir!" he said, with a wink.

"Ah, that talkative beggar Parsons, the butler, told you, I'll be bound!" said the young man. "Still, never mind. It's up to you both to do yourselves a bit of good if you can."

Holdfast idly took up some darts he

The 2nd Chapter.

The Truth—An Old Man's Anger!

A quarter of an hour later Harry Holdfast was seated in the corner of a first-class carriage in a train bound for Fleetbridge, in Hampshire.

saw lying upon a table, and began to aim for the bullseye on the circular board hanging on the wall, while he was studying Philip Hood out of the corners of his eyes, and the scrutiny was not exactly impressing him favourably.

He saw a rather sportively dressed young man of twenty-five or so, with a pale face which bore unmistakable marks of dissipation. Yet, in spite of his rather unhealthy pallor, Philip Hood was sturdily built, broad-shouldered, and of muscular appearance.

He had a habit of narrowing his eyes and tugging at his slight dark moustache as he spoke. The grey overcoat and the check cap of somewhat pronounced pattern he wore suited him by reason of his hair being jet black, like his moustache.

It occurred to Holdfast that probably Philip Hood was not an overwelcome guest at the Grange, for he asked the landlord to supply him with a meal, and passed into the room where Harry had been served.

Holdfast settled his own score, and determined to while away the time by finding Sir Gilbert's house, the Grange, and taking a look at it. Although he half suspected that it was her father's horse, The Lurcher, that the girl had backed when she had called upon the Strand bookmaker, he could not be sure of it, and he was still ignorant of the reasons that lay behind her probable plunge.

He determined to remain at Fleet-bridge for at least a little longer, in order to try to satisfy his curiosity as to the motives that had prompted her doings of that morning.

He little dreamed then of the thrilling and unusual adventures towards which he was rapidly drifting.

Holdfast entered a little tobacconist's, purchased some cigarettes, and inquired his way to Sir Gilbert Carew's residence.

He had no difficulty in finding it from the directions the shopkeeper gave him. It lay some mile out of the little village, and, as it was situated in a hollow, Holdfast caught sight of it when still some distance away.

It was rather grim-looking as it reared itself blackly against the grey autumn sky. Parts of it dated back to the Tudor period, and through the ages it had become almost entirely covered with ivy, and the fury of countless years of wind and storm had set its turrets and gables crumbling.

To its right, and adjoining it, was a glaringly modern building, which looked incongruous. A spacious yard was attached to this, and away over the open country at its side Holdfast could glimpse hurdles and fences, which, he decided, formed a private training-stable. He quickened his step and neared the road that ran past the lodge gates, a maze of fantastic tracery in wrought iron.

He walked towards them by the high stone wall that enclosed the grounds of the old pile, and a few steps from the gates he had reason to chide himself for an incautious idiot.

The gates were suddenly swung open by an aged lodgekeeper, and a girl, attired in a neat riding-habit and hard felt hat, rode out into the road upon a spirited black horse.

She was Enid Carew, and, as there was no escape for the "Bulldog," she recognised him.

"Mr. Holdfast!" she cried, turning deathly pale. "Oh, you have followed me here, and found out who I am!" Then: "So you were afraid you might lose your money! You did not trust me, after all!"

Holdfast had never before felt at such a loss. The meeting was embarrassing, to say the least of it. The blood rushed up into his face, and he felt an out-and-out cad. It was a little desperately that he hastened to explain.

"No; it was not that I did not trust you," he said, as the girl walked her horse out of the hearing of the lodgekeeper, and he strode beside it. "I must confess that I was the victim of an almost overpowering curiosity after you had left my quarters, but my real object in following you, Miss Carew, was because you were obviously troubled and distressed, and I thought you might want a friend."

She was silent for a second or two as she pensively studied his open and ruggedly handsome face.

"No friend could save me and mine from the danger I have tried to avert, Mr. Holdfast," she said at length, a little sadly. "You have found out my identity. Have you also discovered why I wanted the money?"

"I think so—yes," Holdfast answered. "Was it your father's horse, The Lurcher, you backed with it?"

She nodded. "Come into the grounds," she said suddenly. "We cannot talk conveniently out here, and I feel that I can trust you with my poor little secret—that perhaps I was foolish not to tell you everything this morning. It will be a relief to have a confidant."

She slipped lightly from her saddle, led the horse back through the lodge-gates, and left it in charge of the lodgekeeper. Holdfast kept by her side as she walked through a yew-lined path leading towards the house.

"I wonder, Mr. Holdfast," she said, stopping abruptly, "if you can realise what it means to a man like my father to find himself suddenly poor? He is an aristocrat by right of birth, and his family was once one of the richest in the land. But heavy financial losses that came about through the war and the present high taxation have made him a comparative pauper. A year ago he mortgaged our old home and the surrounding estates for a large sum, hoping

to retrieve his fortunes. He invested it in certain Stock Exchange shares he hoped would boom, but the reverse was the case, and he was obliged to sell out at a heavy loss. Since then matters have gone from bad to worse, and he has found it impossible to pay the interest now due on the mortgage. He has been given a month's grace; but, unless he can pay by then, the mortgagee is determined to foreclose, and we shall lose this dear old place that has been our family's for three centuries!"

"So you thought of the idea of backing The Lurcher to try to save it?" Holdfast said quietly.

"Yes. If we had to leave the Grange, I think it would break my father up, and I love him better than anyone or anything else in the world!" she answered, with a sob in her voice. "For a very long time my father has not run any of his horses, for it is always a chance whether or no they can win and pick up prize-money, and to send them about the country is expensive. But when I thought of the chance The Lurcher must hold in the United Services' Steeplechase at the forthcoming Sandown Park Meeting, I urged my father to let him go to the post to please me."

"As soon as he consented, I inserted my advertisement in the paper for a loan of £5,000, and, though it nearly broke my heart to think of parting with that necklace even for a time—for it was given me by my mother shortly before she died—I had that in mind when I mentioned security. Mr. Holdfast, I beg of you to keep my secret! It would be a shock to my father, who is bitterly opposed to gambling, if he knew I had backed a horse; though, of

"I fancy his presence here is not unconnected with an interest in The Lurcher, Miss Carew," the "Bulldog" said. "I heard him speaking of the horse at the village inn."

"Perhaps so. He is an inveterate gambler," the girl answered, nodding. She suddenly turned and confronted Holdfast. "I wonder if you would like to see The Lurcher at work to-morrow morning?" she asked. "Are you sufficiently interested?"

Holdfast nodded, after a moment's thought. It would mean putting up at the inn for the night; but his time was his own, and that was of no consequence. He had all the Britisher's love and admiration for a sporting chance, as well as a keen liking for horses, and he felt anxious to see this animal upon which so much depended.

"I should very much like to see him gallop and jump," he replied.

"Then come to the exercise-grounds adjoining here by seven o'clock to-morrow morning," Enid instructed. "I shall be there to meet you, Mr. Holdfast, and I shall introduce you, as a friend from London, to father's trainer."

She led the way into a branching path that would take them into the drive at a point near the ivy-covered old house. And, meanwhile, Philip Hood had been shown into the library, and stood in the presence of the girl's father.

Save that rheumatism had twisted one of his hands and caused him slightly to limp, Sir Gilbert was a well-preserved man for his years. His white hair was brushed well back from his intellectual forehead, and, though his face was in these days growing careworn, his eyes were still alert and bright.

"Well, Philip," he asked, "what has brought you to the Grange?" His tone became a trifle bitter. "Scarcely just

soon after he was of age, then sponging upon Sir Gilbert.

When the latter had fallen upon lean times, Philip had gone to the money-lenders, and he was now enveloped in a sea of debt and financial difficulties, as will presently be seen.

"Well?" his uncle queried again, as the young man remained silent.

Impatiently Philip Hood tossed his unlighted cigarette into the fire. He came to his feet and stood before Sir Gilbert's chair.

"Uncle, I'm in the very dickens of a hole!" he said. "Unless I can find a large sum of money, and that soon, I shall either have to clear out of the country or be dragged through the Bankruptcy Court! But you may be able to help me," he added tentatively.

Sir Gilbert shook his head. "I have no money to spare, Philip," he assured his nephew coldly.

"It's not money I want this time, uncle," Philip Hood objected, an eager look creeping into his dissipated face. "It's only a little favour I want you to do me over a Turf matter. Have you noticed that Lord Hope's six-year-old, Gladiator, is now a sound favourite for the big steeplechase at Sandown Park?"

The baronet shrugged his shoulders. "The betting news never interests me, as you know, Philip," he said. "But I have read that Gladiator is thought highly of by his connections, and that he will probably win. Why?"

"Because I have backed him for every pound I possess, and also for every pound of credit I could raise with the book-makers, uncle," Philip Hood answered, his air not unlike that of a nervous person who suddenly takes a plunge into cold water. "If he wins I shall be able to pay my debts and begin anew. If he loses—well, I shall not be able to pay

forward, and his stick was upraised as if he would strike his nephew. His fine old face was working with anger, his eyes indignant, and the veins of his neck and forehead darkening ominously. "This amounts to a request that I shall be a party to your confounded swindling!" he cried. "How dare you, sir? Do you take me for as big a thief as yourself?"

He moved quickly past Philip, who had recoiled, a disappointed and vicious look in his eyes. Sir Gilbert flung back the French windows that opened on to a lawn near the drive.

"Go!" he thundered. "Go before I lose control of myself and strike you, old man though I am!"

He followed Philip out on to the grass, as the latter hurriedly backed through the windows.

"The Lurcher shall run whatever happens!" he said, and his voice plainly carried to Harry Holdfast and Enid, who had now gained the drive. "He shall run, and I hope he wins, to teach you that dishonesty does not pay! Be off, you scamp, and never darken my doors again!"

The old man caught sight of his daughter and her companion, as, stifling a bitter retort, Philip Hood strode away towards the drive gates. He advanced towards them, looking surprised, as he saw that Holdfast was a stranger.

Enid was resourceful. She quickly presented the "Bulldog," and said he was a friend she had become acquainted with in London. Then:

"What is the matter, daddy?" she asked, as the two men bowed.

Sir Gilbert, who was still angry, told Enid of how her cousin had confessed to making bets on Gladiator he could not pay should the favourite for the big steeplechase lose, and of how Philip had requested him—Sir Gilbert—to scratch The Lurcher to help him achieve what the baronet rightly looked upon as something very like fraud.

"But you won't dream of scratching The Lurcher, father?" Enid asked anxiously; and Holdfast found himself hanging tensely upon the old man's reply.

"No," Sir Gilbert answered, determinedly shaking his head. "As I told him, the horse shall go to the post, and I bone he wins, to teach Philip a lesson."

Enid shot a glance at Harry, in which was a great relief. And, down by the drive gates, Philip Hood had turned, and, with his pale face ugly, he was shaking his fist in the direction of the house.

He was registering a vow that, by hook or by crook, he would prevent The Lurcher winning the big race in three weeks' time. The horse should not even run, if he could help it!

The 3rd Chapter.

At Exercise—The Man in the Ditch.

Harry Holdfast stood silently behind the trunk of a gnarled tree in the vicinity of the private training grounds attached to Sir Gilbert Carew's residence.

It was ten minutes to seven on the following morning, and the "Bulldog" had just walked here from the village, after spending the night at the inn.

He was on the rise overlooking the Grange and its surroundings, and, as he had approached, he had seen some dozen heavily-clad racers being led from the stable-yard by a similar number of "boys." Enid, again in her neat riding habit, had followed on her superb black, accompanied by an elderly man, whom Harry Holdfast had rightly taken to be Sir Gilbert's private trainer, and a stalwart, horse-looking individual, whom he was later to discover was Tom Felton, the well-known cross-country jockey. The latter pair were mounted upon hacks.

Holdfast had been about to break into a run, so as to miss none of the schooling that was, apparently, about to take place. Then, however, he had halted abruptly, and, creeping to behind the tree, he had remained looking down towards a ditch lying between him and the training grounds.

In the hollow crouched a man's figure, and, from the light overcoat and the check cap of pronounced pattern upon his head, Harry Holdfast had little difficulty in identifying him as Philip Hood.

The young man raised a pair of glasses to his eyes, as Holdfast stood studying him. Away on the schooling grounds the horses were being unclipped, and it was plain that Philip Hood meant to watch, in the hope that The Lurcher would be amongst them, and that he would be able to gain some idea as to what the thoroughbred was capable of.

Harry Holdfast was smiling a little grimly as he tiptoed back from the tree, and then walked away, with a view to making a detour.

"It strikes me, Mr. Philip Hood, that it might be as well to keep an eye on you, and I think I shall at least prolong my stay here until you beat it from Fleet-bridge!" he muttered. "You are obviously concerned about the unexpected running of The Lurcher, and desperate; and desperate men sometimes do desperate things. I want to see that plucky little lady bring off her big wager, for it was made in a good cause, all said and done!"

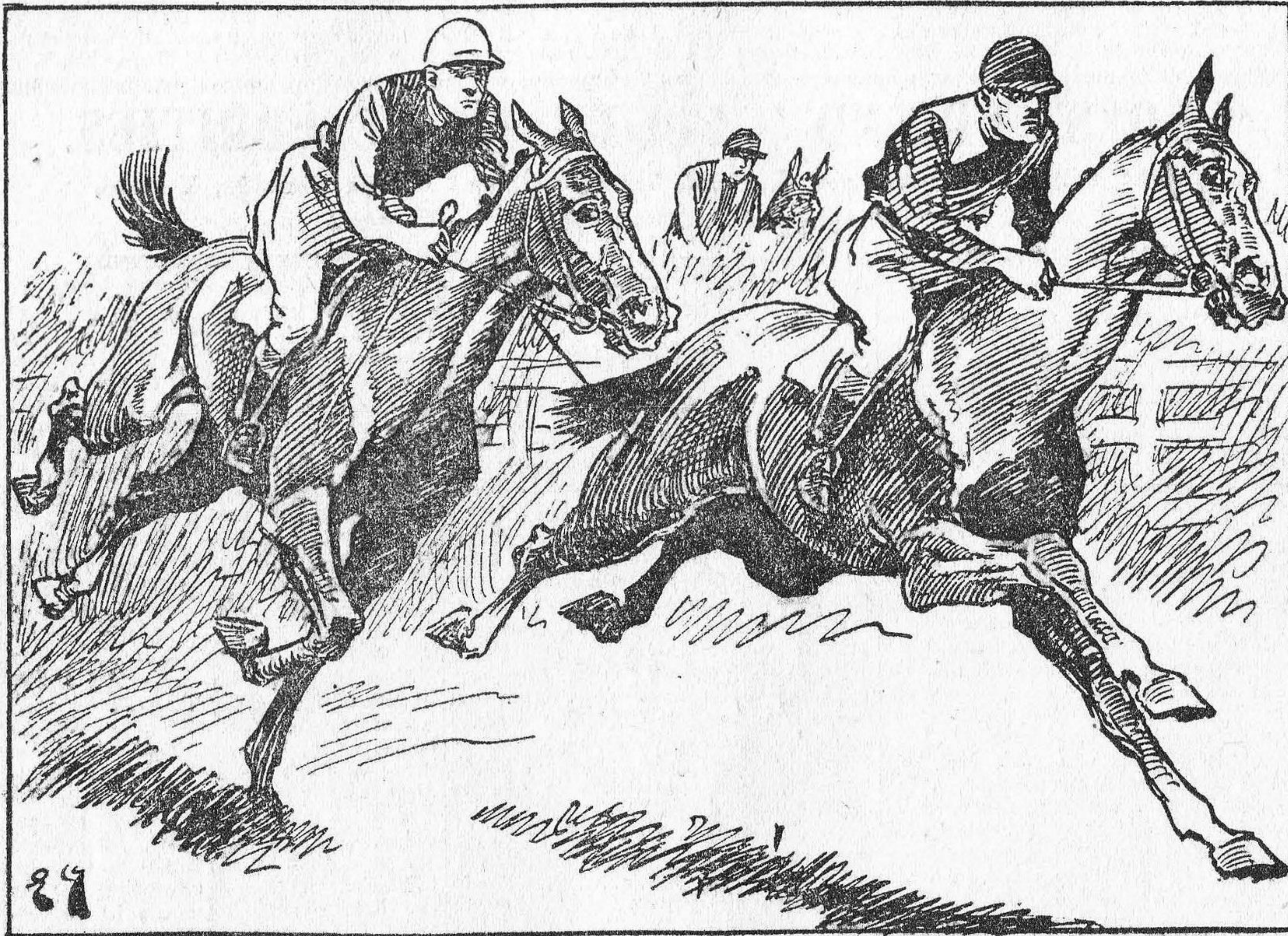
By reason of having to avoid Philip Hood, "Bulldog" Holdfast did not arrive at the exercise-ground until Tom Felton was finishing a fast two-mile gallop on The Lurcher.

Holdfast saw the racer come over the last two fences, and realised that, to use racing parlance, he "jumped like a cat," whilst his "run home" to where Enid sat with Johnson, her father's trainer, was made with a fine burst of speed.

"Well, Mr. Holdfast, what do you think of him?" asked the girl, as she found the "Bulldog" by her side.

Holdfast did not reply for a moment. He was studying The Lurcher, who was a fine, muscular, upstanding chestnut, who looked born to the jumping game.

(Continued overleaf.)



THE LAST FENCE! Over the obstacle The Lurcher and Gladiator soared. The Lurcher landed a trice and went after the favourite, whose lead had been increased to half a length!

course, he will have to know if The Lurcher wins, as I hope the horse will."

"You have my word that my lips shall be sealed, Miss Carew," Holdfast assured her earnestly. "Will you be able to pay off the entire mortgage if The Lurcher wins?"

"Yes," she answered, her eyes lighting up at thought of the possibility. "The bookmakers to whom I went this morning seemed to think nothing would beat Gladiator, the horse that has been made favourite in the ante-post wagering on the race. They said so frankly, and gave me a voucher agreeing to pay me twenty times my money if The Lurcher is first past the post."

Holdfast smiled at her novice's way of putting it. He understood, however, that she had been laid 20 to 1, and that she stood to win no less than £100,000 in the event of The Lurcher proving successful.

"And you can be quite sure of getting your money if all goes well, Miss Carew," he said. "Stewart & Company are sound people. I happen to know that. I am sure nothing would give me greater pleasure than to see The Lurcher win."

"He will win! I feel it—I know it!" the girl said eagerly. "And it will mean a new lease of life for poor old daddy. The money will do more than pay off the mortgage, as a matter of fact. There will be a comfortable sum over, which will make us quite well off again."

She started as a step sounded away on the drive.

"Why, here is my cousin Philip!" she exclaimed. "I wonder what he is doing here?"

Holdfast had also looked through the trees and seen Philip Hood striding towards the house. He was tugging at his moustache as he walked, and seemed to be deep in thought.

for the pleasure of asking after my health, I suppose?" he added.

For he knew his nephew for a ne'er-do-well and spendthrift, and, in his prosperous days, had again and again given him money to help him out of ugly scrapes.

"To be perfectly frank, uncle, you are right," the young man replied; "though I often think of you and wonder how you are."

He hesitated, nervously drumming a cigarette on the back of his case.

Philip Hood's nerves were apt to be what is known as "jumpy" of late. For years he had gone the pace, running through a fortune left him by his mother

even the credit bets I have made on him, to say nothing of the claims of my other creditors and—"

Sir Gilbert rose to his feet, gripping hard at the stick he had been obliged to use since the coming of his rheumatism.

"Philip, you are a dishonest scoundrel!" he said sternly. "What you have done is little better than swindling! You will take your winnings if Gladiator is successful, but cannot pay your losses if he loses, and you knew you could not pay when you made the wagers. I am disgusted with you! Why do you come here and tell me of your dishonourable doings?"

"Because I am desperate, uncle," Philip Hood pleaded. "When I backed Gladiator I was under the impression that The Lurcher would not be running, for none of your horses have seen a racecourse recently. Knowing the possibilities about The Lurcher, I would never have supported anything against him had I suspected differently. And now, as I hear you have had Tom Felton here of late, and that he has been riding your horse at exercise, I take it that your present intention is to send him to Sandown Park."

"The Lurcher will be sent to the meeting, and will take his chance," Sir Gilbert said, with another shrug.

"I thought so. Uncle, for goodness' sake don't endanger this one last chance I have of clearing myself."

"What do you mean?" Sir Gilbert demanded, his refined face growing even more stern.

"I mean that I want you to scratch him from the race, not to let him run," Philip Hood explained. "I came here with the express intention of begging you to do this. I fear The Lurcher, remembering what I have seen him do in trials here in the past; but with him out of the race, I believe nothing will beat Gladiator, and—"

"Stop!" Sir Gilbert took a sharp step

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The GENTLEMAN RIDER!

(Continued from previous page.)

He saw that the breathing of the horse had hardly quickened after his fast bout of exercise, and that he was clearly trained to the hour, and fit to race for his life.

"He is a splendid creature, Miss Carew!" he said at length. "I do not wonder you are confident about him." Holdfast was introduced to Johnson and Tom Felton. He watched the other horses given pipe-openers, then walked back to the inn for breakfast. He found Philip Hood had put up there, but he had already breakfasted, and gone out. Apparently, he had not stopped after The Lurcher had been given his spin.

Holdfast kept an eye open for Philip when, having attended to the requirements of the inner man, he strolled about the village. Suddenly he espied Philip standing in the little station. A train from London had just come in, and Holdfast watched, as he saw Philip joined by a short, thick-set, unshaven, and ruffian-looking man, whom Philip Hood at once began to converse with in an earnest manner.

The unshaven individual, who wore a suit of checks, a stock-tie, and a brass horseshoe pin, nodded at length, and left Sir Gilbert's nephew. Holdfast shadowed the man from the opposite side of the winding street, and presently saw him enter an ironmonger's.

Once the man was in the shop Harry swiftly crossed the road. Looking through the window, he saw that Philip Hood's acquaintance was buying a small serviceable hammer; and there was an angry light in the "Bulldog's" steel-blue eyes as he turned and walked away.

"So that's the game, is it?" he muttered. "The fellow was evidently wired for by Philip Hood yesterday, and means to lose no time in getting to work. Well, I shall have a share in your exploits, my stubbly-chinned friend!"

Away in Fleetbridge village a clock was solemnly striking the midnight hour, and over the Carew private training-stables hung the silence of the grave. A full moon bathed the stableyard in its pale light, and caused the several trees growing near the high wall enclosing it to cast weird shadows.

A stealthy footfall sounded, followed by a cautioning "S-sh!" in a man's voice. Two figures crept towards the high gates of the yard, and one stooped down so that his companion could mount to his back and grip the top.

In rather less time than it takes to write, the man had dropped silently over into the yard. There came the faint sound of bolts being drawn, and one of the gates opened to the touch of the shorter man, who had been left outside.

Together the marauders crept across the yard. "Names of the horses written over the boxes!" one chuckled, as they reached the boxes where the racers were housed. "Nice an' thoughtful of 'em, Mr. 'Ood-eh?"

"Shut up, Burton, and get it over!" snarled the voice of Philip Hood nervously. "Have you got that lock-picking tool of yours?"

"Of course, I have!" Sam Burton, the man who had joined Philip in Fleetbridge that day, racecourse hanger-on and crook in general, chuckled again. "Ere's The Lurcher's box," he said, as he strained his eyes and read the neatly-painted name over the door. "I'll have the lock mastered in about two shakes of a duck's tail, then—well, then it'll be just one smart tap with the hammer over the hock, an' The Lurcher won't run in no United Services' Chase! You can bet yer life on that, gov'nor!"

For several minutes the burly scoundrel was doing something before the door of The Lurcher's box. Then the lock clicked, and he drew the door quietly open. Next moment he had tossed a halter over the steeplechaser's head, and led him out into the moonlit yard.

Philip Hood accepted the halter, and held the racer. Sam Burton threw from his pocket the hammer he had brought in Fleetbridge that morning, and, stooping, raised it to strike at the hock of the horse.

Had the hammer fallen, The Lurcher would have been lamed for weeks to come. But it was not destined to fall.

A well-built man had been lying at full length on top of the wall shutting off the stable-yard from the road, invisible because of the shadows thrown by a tree overhanging the wall at this point. He had dropped like lightning into the yard as Burton had taken the hammer from his pocket and stooped, and now with one bound, he was on the would-be nobbler.

A startled gasp broke from the lips of Sam Burton, and his hammer clattered to the cobblestones of the yard, as he felt a steel-like hand grab his collar.

He was jerked upright, whilst, at the same moment, the man who had been watching the conspirators, clutched at the arm of the amazed Philip Hood, and pulled him towards him. Before Philip quite realised what was happening, his coat-collar was also gripped, he had been flung to his knees, and his head had been

cracked against that of Burton with a vigour that caused him to see a host of hitherto undiscovered stars.

"You worms!" the voice of Harry Holdfast grated through clenched teeth, for the newcomer was he. "So you thought you'd make sure of The Lurcher not running by having him nobbled, Mr. Philip Hood, did you? Well, your little game didn't come off!"

Again he cracked the heads of the two rogues together, then hurled them down, half-dazed. Lights had flashed out in the loft-like quarters of the stable-boys situated over the boxes, and now they came hurrying down a wooden staircase into the yard, with Johnson, the trainer, at their head.

"Believe what I told you this afternoon, now, Johnson?" Holdfast inquired. "You know the programme, my lads! Carry it out!"

Philip Hood and Sam Burton had scrambled to their hands and knees. Both gained their feet and made for the gates at a run, but a couple of stable-lads, with horsewhips in their hands, headed them off, whilst two others uncoiled a hose which was affixed to a hydrant.

As Burton and Philip Hood were driven away from the gates, the trainer turned on the water, and the lads with the hose

Holdfast had sent Dene down to Fleetbridge, and the faithful valet was taking it in turn with the trainer, Johnson, to keep a constant guard over The Lurcher.

The horse was going "great guns" in his work, and, as it was impossible for him to be "got at" now, it was certain he would go to the post fit and well, two days hence. But Holdfast was beginning to doubt whether, even so, he would have a fair chance of winning.

In keeping watch in various disguises on Philip Hood, who lived in a fourth-floor flat in a towering building in Maida Vale, Holdfast had on several occasions seen the young man meet and converse with Tom Felton, the jockey, who had been retained to ride The Lurcher in the important steeplechase.

Hence the "Bulldog" being uneasy in his mind. Tom Felton was a popular crack cross-country jockey, who would surely be making an income that would place him above the temptation of a bribe, and Holdfast was puzzled. The fact remained, however, that he was in touch with Philip Hood, and, popular though he was, straight though rumour declared him, Harry feared that Tom Felton might not ride to win when he found himself astride The Lurcher at Sandown.

At the moment when our chapter opens, disguised by a fair wig and a yellow false beard and moustache, Holdfast was watching the entrance to the building in which Philip Hood had his flat. It was nine o'clock at night, and the absence of a moon made the quiet, residential road very dark. But there was a light over the entrance of the block of flats, so that from where he stood on the opposite pavement, Holdfast could see everyone who entered or left.

Harry had located the exact position of Philip Hood's flat, for he happened to have a friend who occupied that directly above on the fifth floor. It had been through a chance conversation with his acquaintance that he had done this, and

Still bewildered, his literary friend nodded, and Holdfast went to the window of the sitting-room which they had now entered. Gently he raised it and looked down into the gulf which lay between him and the courtyard, fifty to sixty feet below. A light emanating from the flat beneath told him that Philip Hood and his visitor were occupying the corresponding room directly below.

Harry Holdfast left the window open, and hurried into his friend's bed-room. He knotted together two sheets and a blanket, which he hastily stripped off the bed. Carrying these back to the sitting-room, he made one end fast to the leg of a sofa, which he dragged beneath the window. He tested his impromptu rope, then lowered the free end out over the sill.

"Jumping snakes! You'll break your neck!" Brownlow protested, as he realised his friend's intentions. But Holdfast only shrugged grimly, and next moment he had backed out of the window, taken a firm grip on the knotted bedclothes, and was swinging over the awful drop.

Down, down he went, until he could gain a foothold on the sill of the window of Philip Hood's sitting-room. Standing upon it, he applied his eye to a chink between a lowered blind and the window's framework, and he saw that Tom Felton was standing before Philip Hood, who was sprawling in an easy chair.

"Then you won't let me off this piece of crooked work, Hood?" the jockey was saying. "I tell you that I hate the idea of it! I've ridden straight for the last ten years, and—"

"But you didn't ride straight in the City and Suburban of 1910, when you 'pulled' the favourite, Bluebird, and made Larkin, the bookmaker!" Philip Hood sneered. "You were little more than an apprentice in those days, it's true; but the letter you wrote him would still get you 'warned off,' if I made it public. You have got to 'pull' The Lurcher, or make him fall or something, to stop his winning. If you don't, I'll

"BOYS' FRIEND" FOOTBALL CELEBRITIES.

A brief narrative about Ernest England, Sunderland, and George Brewster, Everton, whose photographs are given away with this copy.

GEORGE BREWSTER, Everton Centre-half and Captain.

Other things being equal, it is usually considered that the man who plays at centre-half in a football team is in the best position for captaining the side. This season, George Brewster, the centre-half of the Everton team, has taken on the role of captain, and from that position is helping the side, both in regard to general tactics and advice to his colleagues.

Like many other men who are now to be found in English football, Brewster is a Scot, for he was born in Aberdeen. Also, like most Scots, this present pivot of the Everton team started playing football as soon as he could toddle, so he says. Anyway, he was very quickly in the team when he went to school, and although there are many players who have chopped and changed about during the later days of their career, in the case of Brewster it is rather a remarkable fact that he started as a centre-half, and has stuck to the position ever since. In this position he is best able to make the utmost use of his fine height and weight, for he stands fully six feet, and weighs thirteen and a half stone. Hence, when he charges

an opponent in possession of the ball, it is generally the opponent who moves, and who knows that he has been charged.

As a lad Brewster played in many local teams, and he helped one club in the Aberdeen Junior League to win the championship of their section, and also to win at least once every competition for which the club entered whilst Brewster was lending a hand. The young Scot who shows promise of having football genius in his boots is not allowed to stay long in the junior side of the game, and in 1913 he played his first match in the best company on behalf of Aberdeen against the Celtic.

As you know, the "Celts" are one of the strongest sides in Scotland, and hence the present Everton captain had every right to be pleased with his debut, seeing that Aberdeen beat their famous opponents that day by three goals to nothing. For three seasons he helped Aberdeen, and then the war came to interrupt his career, for he saw service with the Royal Engineers in France. It was in January of 1920 that he joined the Everton side, and the Goodison people have been well pleased with their bargain.

ERNEST ENGLAND, Left Full-back of Sunderland.

In these days Sunderland have on their books many famous players for whom they have paid high transfer fees. But in Ernest England, the left-back, they have a player who was brought out by the club, and who has not yet played for any other first-class side. What is even more to the point, however, is that England is steadily winning his way to recognition as one of the best defenders in the country. He is quick, and full of resource, while he has a way of getting the ball square on his boot, which makes it travel a fair distance whenever he "sees it."

For some reason or other he is known at Roker Park as "Mac," and is among the most popular members of the team. Born at Shirebrook, he did not come into any sort of prominence till after the war, and it was not until the 1919-20 season that he gained a regular place in the side. He was then looked upon as a right full-back, but has now moved over to the left. England played in thirty-eight League games for his side last season, and we may well look forward to the day when he plays for England—as he ought to do with such a name.

directed the hissing jet on first one, then the other. The icy stream of water almost knocked them off their feet, and in a couple of seconds both the plotters were soaked to the skin.

The water followed them mercilessly until, gasping and panting, they had again reached the gates, and, unhindered this time, passed through. Holdfast laughed softly as he listened to their running feet on the road outside.

"You were right, sir, in what you came and told me to-day," Johnson said to Harry. "But what's it mean, sir? One of those men was Sir Gilbert's nephew, Philip Hood?"

"Yes, it was he right enough, Johnson, though, in case his confederate came alone, I did not think it necessary to tell you to-day that he was concerned in the attempt at nobbling," Holdfast rejoined. "He stands to lose a fortune if The Lurcher wins, and for that reason the horse will be in danger until after the race. He will have to be watched and guarded night and day!"

The 4th Chapter. Daring Work—Holdfast's Master Stroke!

"Bulldog" Holdfast was worried. Over a fortnight had elapsed since Philip Hood had made his dastardly attempt to put his uncle's horse out of the running, and in two days time the important steeplechase at Sandown Park would be decided.

Philip Hood and his accomplice, Sam Burton, had left Fleetbridge on the morning following their discomfiture, and, although they were unaware of the fact, Harry had followed them to London. Sam Burton had left Philip Hood as soon as town was reached, and Holdfast, who had deemed it advisable to keep an eye on Sir Gilbert's nephew, had seen no more of the scoundrelly tout.

the "Bulldog" little dreamed at the time how useful the knowledge was to prove later.

Holdfast stiffened, his eyes going very keen and hard.

The very man who had been in his mind—Tom Felton, the jockey—had approached the block of flats on the other side of the road and entered.

"Humph! He's going to see that blighter, Hood, for a certainty!" Harry muttered to himself, as the jockey disappeared into the entrance hall. "By Jove! I'd give anything to know what the game is, but there doesn't seem a way of finding out, unless—My hat! I wonder if it would be possible?"

A look of excitement had leapt into his eyes. He waited only long enough to give the jockey time to be taken up in the lift to Philip's floor, then crossed to the building, and himself ringing for the elevator, was taken up to the floor above.

He was outside the flat of his friend, who was a journalist.

He knocked, and George Brownlow—that was his acquaintance's name—opened the door and regarded him askance, as the "Bulldog" made to enter the hall.

"It's all right, it's I, Holdfast," Harry said, laughing as he remembered that he was disguised. "I want you to help me in a little acrobatic stunt, Brownlow, old top, if you will."

"Well I'm dashed! What are you gadding about in those whiskers for, old fellow?" gasped the journalist, in amazement. "Is it that—"

"No time to explain now, old bean!" interrupted Harry. "At least, I cannot tell you more than that I want to try to overhear a conversation I believe is going on in the flat below. Have I your permission to do as I like the next few minutes?"

send that letter, which I now hold, to the Stewards of the Jockey Club, as sure as my name's what it is!"

Holdfast had heard enough. He climbed back to the window of his friend's flat above, scrambled through, and drew up the rope of bedclothes.

It was twenty minutes later that, having left Philip Hood, the jockey, Felton, ran into Holdfast, who had now discarded his disguise, near the Marble Arch. Holdfast was apparently surprised to meet him. The jockey told the "Bulldog" he would be giving up riding after that season and taking to training. Holdfast said he thought of buying a few racers, and putting them in Felton's care.

The jockey accepted an invitation to chat about this in Holdfast's room in St. James'. Once in the "dug-out," Felton received the surprise of his career.

Harry showed him a pair of handcuffs, a relic of one of his adventures. Before the jockey knew where he was, the fetters had been snapped upon his wrists, he had been pushed into a chair, and bound to it.

"What the dickens does this mean, Mr. Holdfast?" he demanded angrily, as he strained impotently at his bonds.

"It means that you are here, my friend, until after the big Sandown steeplechase," Holdfast told him grimly. "I want to see The Lurcher ridden to win, not to lose, and I am taking no chances!"

The 5th Chapter. Sandown Park—The Big 'Chase'!

An atmosphere of expectancy and suppressed excitement hung over Sandown's crowded enclosures. The two minor events that had set the ball rolling were over, and it wanted but a quarter of an hour to the race of the afternoon—the United Services' Steeplechase.

In the saddling enclosure stood Sir Gilbert Carew and his daughter Enid, and on the face of the girl was a look of anxiety. It was reflected in a lesser degree on the countenance of Johnson, the trainer. The Lurcher stood near ready to be saddled, held by a stable-lad; but, with the other horses mounted and preparing for the parade, there was no sign of the jockey who had been retained to ride the baronet's animal.

"Where can Felton be?" Enid asked at length, when the rest of the field for the big race—a baker's dozen in all—was passing out of the enclosure.

"He will not be here to ride The Lurcher, Miss Carew, which is as well for the horse's chance," a quiet voice said at her elbow.

The girl turned sharply, and uttered a cry of blank amazement.

Wearing her father's colours and carrying The Lurcher's saddle, "Bulldog" Holdfast was confronting her, his hand to his jockey's cap in a salute.

"Mr. Holdfast—you!" Enid cried. "But these clothes! Does this mean that you are going to ride my father's horse?"

"Yes, I obtained his permission this morning," Holdfast answered, and a significant smile passed between him and Sir Gilbert. "I cannot stop to explain all to you now, but I was afraid, for very good reasons, to allow Felton to have the mount, and, with this solution in view, I managed to renew a riding licence under National Hunt Rules I used to hold. I go to scale at round about Felton's weight—12st. 6lbs.—and have had to declare only two pounds over."

With the surprised Johnson giving him a hand with the saddle, Holdfast made The Lurcher ready for the big struggle, and swung himself on to his back.

A couple of minutes later Philip Hood, who was in the stand, uttered a gasp of amazement as he saw his uncle's horse cantering after the others, who had now gone to the starting-post, and realised that the man on The Lurcher's back was not the jockey whom he held in his power.

There was some delay at the post, then: "They're off!"

The cry welled up from thousands of throats, and the clanging of a bell confirmed it. The horses had all got well away, with Holdfast and The Lurcher lying near the favourite, Gladiator, who had started a very warm order indeed.

Still almost together, the fourteen starters took the first fence. A bay called Sainly Lad fell, and flung his jockey head-over-heels; but he was a rank outsider and of little account.

Holdfast had done a good deal of riding in his time, and a glow of admiration thrilled through him as he felt The Lurcher moving beneath him like a well-balanced piece of machinery. He was going more than well, though there was little in it as yet.

The next fence and the next were safely negotiated, and the field was beginning to tail off. A cerise jacket dropped behind, and a horse named Suspended was finished with. With another half-mile covered, Goldfish, King's Jacket, and Silver Daisy had joined him in the rack.

For over two miles out of the three that formed the distance of the event Holdfast allowed The Lurcher to run his own race. Then, with a touch of his hands, he called upon him to do his best.

As Enid watched from the place she had taken with her father in the stand, the colour came and went in her delicate cheeks in excitement. As the last fence was neared Gladiator and a horse called The Spider were leading, with The Lurcher lying third; but "Bulldog" Holdfast was sitting down to ride in very real earnest now.

Low over The Lurcher's neck he crouched, seeming fairly to lift the horse over the ground. The Spider was overhauled and beaten, and now The Lurcher and Gladiator raced for the final jump, with the latter leading by about a neck.

Over the obstacle both soared. The Lurcher landed a little awkwardly, and pecked slightly. But Holdfast had him steadied in a trice, and went after the favourite, whose lead had been increased to half a length.

Into the run home the two horses thundered, and nearer and nearer crept The Lurcher to Gladiator. With the winning-post but twenty yards distant, they were racing neck and neck, and the crowd was yelling their names alternately.

People caught their breath. It almost looked like ending in a dead-heat. But, no! As the two animals swept past the post The Lurcher had his long, velvety nose in front.

He had won by the shortest of short heads, and Enid Carew's big wager was landed.

Holdfast was a little sorry for Felton when he released him from the "dug-out." He telephoned Philip Hood, who, facing ruin, was hurriedly packing to clear out of the country.

"I am the man who bumped your napper against your accomplice in the stable-yard that night, old top!" the "Bulldog" said. "I am also the bird who rode The Lurcher to-day. A word of warning. If that letter you hold of Felton's ever reaches the Jockey Club I'll find you wherever you are, and give you the hiding of your life! Then there will be a charge of attempted nobbling made against you."

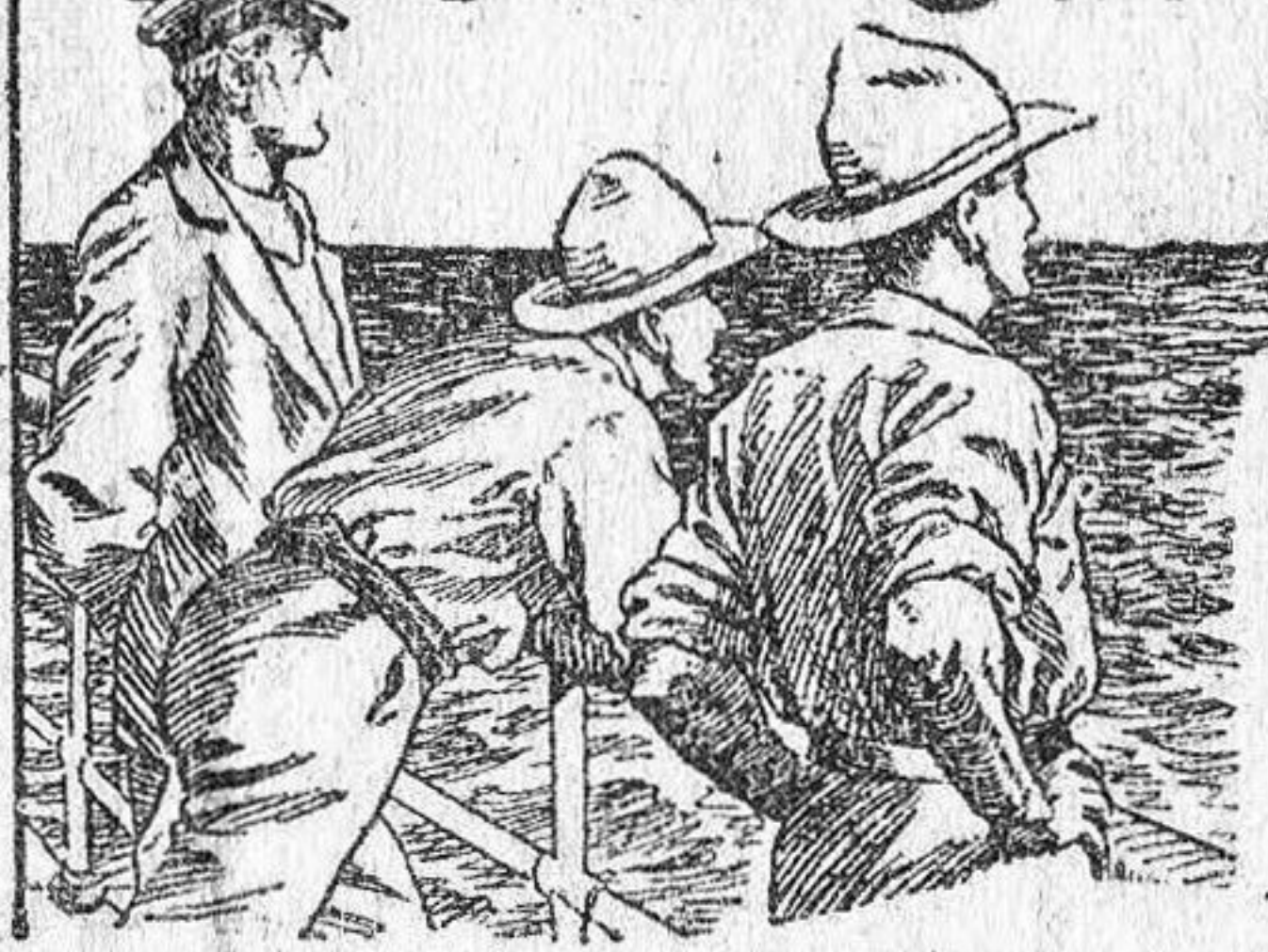
Philip Hood reviled him furiously over the live wires, but he took the advice. Felton's one slip was never disclosed to the stewards, and he is now one of the most prosperous of trainers.

THE END.

(The Trailing of 'Quick-Draw' Peters! next week's special 12,000-word story, is a splendid yarn of the West, written by that old favourite, Gordon Wallace. Order your copy of the BOYS' FRIEND in advance from your newsagent.)

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The 1st Chapter.

A Bid for a Fortune!

Stanton Hilliard turned sharply as the door opened, and motioned the waiter to place the tray, with its bottle and glasses, on the table near the fire.

"Thank you, my man; that will do nicely!" he said, in a smooth, cultured voice. "And remember, will you, that this room has been specially reserved for me—in other words, when my friend arrives, please show him up, and see that we are not disturbed."

Delks, for thirty years head-waiter at the Falcon Head, nodded understandingly, and pocketed the coin which the immaculately dressed Hilliard carelessly tossed on the table.

"Certainly, sir, I will see to it! I have not forgotten that Mr. Marks will arrive by the eight-twenty, and the hotel bus will meet him, sir. I will see that no one disturbs you."

Hilliard nodded, and, moving towards the fireless grate, set one foot on the bars, and, for the twentieth time that day, drew a carefully-folded newspaper from his pocket.

"A million in it, if there's a penny!" he muttered, half aloud. "And to think, after waiting all these years, after abandoning the idea as hopeless, something should happen to bring the matter to life again! Yes, I wonder what Marks will say?"

He paced the long, low-ceilinged room in a fever of impatience, smoked several cigarettes, and at length fell back on a long and expensive cigar. Even when he had not a penny of his own in the world, Stanton Hilliard's tastes were always expensive.

By the time this was half smoked, darkness, aided by a dank drizzle of rain, was beginning to fall, and the hotel bus rumbled heavily into the yard. Peering from the curtained window of the inobtrusive hostelry, purposely selected for its remoteness from the busy seaport town, Hilliard was relieved to see a tall, cadaverous man in a long ulster coat and slouched hat, which effectually concealed his unpleasant features, descend and surrender his bag to the porter.

At this moment Delks appeared, and Hilliard heard him say:

"The gentleman is waiting for you upstairs. Follow me, sir!"

"Pretty beastly sort of a hole to appoint as a rendezvous!" Sebastian Marks muttered, as he greeted his companion.

"What, in the name of thunder, have you brought me here for? I guess I'll be glad when we start to get busy in Paris!"

Hilliard smiled complacently, and motioned the other to a chair facing him.

"We're not going to Paris, my friend. That stunt is off!" he said, filling both the glasses. "Drink that, and get yourself into a cheerful frame of mind. I've something to tell you. I've come to the conclusion that the game we've been playing, in the long run, doesn't pay. While one is free one has a good enough time; but, considering half your precious life and mine has been spent behind prison walls, under one name or another, I decided this morning, after reading a certain paragraph in the newspaper, to return to an early love of long ago, where the prize is greater, the risks practically nil, and start on a venture which promises interest and enjoyment, not to say excitement, from beginning to end. Read that!"

He pointed to a report which occupied the best part of two columns, broken up with a couple of photographs.

When Marks at length broke the silence his manner was far from mollified.

"Well, so far as I can see, there's nothing in this but the story of three fellows—John Brereton and his two nephews, Tom and Hal Brereton—who have been decorated by the King for what is, call an unparalleled feat of deep-sea diving. I'm not interested in the very least!"

The other laughed sarcastically.

"My dear Sebastian, you have no imagination! I'll tell the story in my own way, and, afterwards, fill in a few gaps for your edification. You will remember that the incident to which the paragraph relates occurred on April 13th last, when a British Government submarine of the latest pattern, sank in a tremendous depth of water, and failed to rise. Within half an hour, tugs, destroyers, and a couple of ten-thousand-ton battleships, to say nothing of a tender, carrying Government divers and diving apparatus, were on the spot. The divers went down, but not one of them could reach the submarine—couldn't stand the pressure, depth being too great. Then up steps a famous diver—from the fishing-village, mark you!—and he says very quietly, 'If there's a man alive who can work under water at such a depth, it's one of us three'—meaning himself and his two nephews. We needn't make a long story of it, because the proof lies in this belated report, that medals were pinned on the breasts of these three—John, Hal, and Tom Brereton

and they were congratulated on accomplishing a task hitherto unrecorded in the annals of underwater work. At that tremendous depth, easily beating all former records, these three chaps went down, and, after working many hours on the submarine, succeeded in passing hawsers round the hull, by means of which the battleships raised the submarine to the surface, and so saved every life on board. And to the writer of the paragraph, who later interviewed John Brereton, that worthy modestly remarked that he had yet to tackle a depth capable of defying either him or his nephews, provided the diving apparatus was working properly."

Marks took another sip at his glass.

"Very plucky of 'em, and most interesting, I'm sure. But what all this has to do with a couple of crooks like you and me, who live on our wits, I don't know. I've never yet seen you waste time on anything which didn't promise profits. What's the idea, anyway?"

Stanton Hilliard stretched his huge arms.

"My dear Marks, although for many years you and I have been brothers in rascality, I've never yet let you or any man into my real life history. But this—tapping the sheet—this alters everything. It opens the door to untold wealth for you and me. I suppose, Marks, it has never occurred to you that Stanton Hilliard isn't my real name?"

"I've never thought much about it, chief."

"Perhaps not; but, anyway, you may as well know that I and my cousin, the present Sir Leonard Maynard, lived with our uncle, Sir Robert Maynard, at Maynard Court, in the county of Dorset. Sir Robert was a strange man, who gave up his life and his fortune, chasing what for years I regarded as a myth. He held certain documents relating to a sunken privateer lost by an ancestor of his who had captured it from the French in Nelson's day. This privateer, loaded with loot, was lost somewhere in the South Seas, either among the Marquesas or the Friendlies, I don't quite know which. Anyway, the old man knew, because he had the papers, and once, some fifty years ago, he spent a huge sum in fitting out an expedition to raise the ship."

"And, of course, failed," mocked Marks ironically.

"Yes, and no," was the astonishing answer. "He located the vessel, and, what is more, he brought back plate and coin to the value of something like seven thousand pounds, which had been washed out of her. That plate, my friend, reposes to this day in the vaults of my cousin Sir Leonard Maynard's home."

"But if he found so much, why couldn't he get the lot?"

"Because," replied the other, "the privateer, like the submarine you've been reading about, lay in very deep water. He took several divers, but only one succeeded in reaching her; but unfortunately for Sir Robert, and fortunately for you and me, the fellow died half an hour after bringing the loot to the surface. The pressure proved too much; he expired from hæmorrhage, as any diver, except John, Hal, or Tom Brereton, would do. Now, then, do you see the drift of my argument?"

"You propose engaging these Breretons to go out to the South Seas and dive for the sunken ship?"

"Exactly!"

"But you forget one all-important thing. You haven't the plans."

"No, but Sir Leonard Maynard has, and he is a poor fool without a penny in the world, living like a hermit. And there, Marks, without servants or friends, he spends his life dreaming of what might be if only he could lay his hands on the rest of the Frenchmen's gold."

Marks' cunning eyes gleamed at the thought of so much wealth, but he did not lose his grip on the situation.

"But you said a moment ago he had in the house ornaments and vessels to the value of seven thousand pounds. Why doesn't he use it to fit out an expedition on his own?"

Hilliard lowered his voice.

"For several reasons. To begin with, they are heirlooms, and therefore can't be turned into cash. Also, he is in failing health, and a sick man would do no good on such a venture. And lastly, and most important of all, I suppose he has never been able to find a diver capable of getting so far down in deep waters. Good gracious! The irony of it, Marks! To think that these Breretons live within a mile or two of my cousin Leonard's place!"

"Then you know them?" Marks suggested.

"I know old John Brereton. The boys weren't born when I stayed as a lad at Maynard Court. So you see, my friend, two things only stand between us and a

million of money—the papers held by my cousin, and the services of these Breretons."

"But do you think we can get either?" Marks' throaty voice dropped to a whisper.

Hilliard's right hand came down with a resounding bang.

"We've got to get both!" he muttered. "Don't you realise, man, that for an hour of dark night work we can be rich. Sir Leonard keeps the papers relating to the lost privateer in a bureau in the library at Maynard Court. He has never troubled to lock them away, thinking they were of no value to anyone. We can lay our hands on the divers, on the charts, and, with the assistance of a friend of mine, who is ripe for any work promising high dividends, we can lay our hands on the capital to fit out a steamer. Now, Marks, are you for this, or for the trip to Paris?"

"Don't be silly, chief." was the other's reply. "Of course, I am for the trip to the South Seas!"

The 2nd Chapter.

The Maynard Court Mystery!

The day had drawn in dark and thunderous, and away to the left, beyond the waste of tumbling waters, the sun had dropped, blood-red, behind the looming mass of the headland.

The stiff breeze which had blown all day long up-Channel, was dashing the rising breakers with stupendous force against the rock-bound coast. So rapid, indeed, had been the rising of the wind that Hal and Tom Brereton, fishing from their open boat some eight miles out, had wisely decided to make no attempt to reach the tiny harbourage of Bridley Chine, but, with sails full set, to drive before the wind over the storm-lashed

bar of Corfe Bay, some ten miles to the east.

It was an annoying course to have to take, seeing that when the anchorage was reached, and their boat was drawn high and dry above the incoming flood, a long, dreary walk of some six miles by the coast path lay between them and their home.

"Unless, of course, we bust a couple of bob apiece, and wait for old Bill Sedley's motor-bus," said Tom, the younger of the two, a fair-haired, slender lad, in strange contrast to his big-limbed, deep-chested brother.

Hal Brereton laughed.

"My dear old chap, to-day's catch wouldn't realise four bob all told, and I guess Uncle Jack would stare if we told him we had blown half the week's rent on riding in a motor-bus. No, Tommy, old boy, it wouldn't do. We've got to

(Continued on the next page.)

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SOUTH SEAS TREASURE!

By MAURICE EVERARD.

(Continued from previous page.)

foot it, and by the cliff path, too. Ugh! We're in for a dirty night, and no mistake. Better let me walk on that side, boy. The path runs mighty near the edge.

Tom Breton playfully pinched his brother's strong arm.

"I guess if anyone toppled over it had better be me than you, Hal. Uncle Jack would need you if we got another job like the sunken E 69."

Hal smiled grimly. "No such luck! I'm afraid those jobs don't come very often," he replied. "We must make the best of our sea fishing while Uncle Jack lives. Later, if anything should happen to him—well, I'd rather not think about it."

They strode on for the best part of an hour, no word passing between them save when Hal, who insisted on taking the lead, shouted a warning above the screech of the wind when the path ran perilously near the cliff-edge. In a little while their pace slackened, as their difficulties were increased by a blanket of mist.

"Look here, old chap!" said Hal, stopping suddenly and holding up his right arm to keep his brother back. "I've got off the track a bit, and we've narrowly escaped dropping into St. Catherine's Gap! Look!"

He reached out, and, catching Tom's arm, cautiously drew him to his side. Together they peered through the gloom. Within a few feet the cliff dropped sheer to a whirling eddy of foam far below.

"Well, what's to be done?" questioned Tom. "We can't stay here all night!"

"There's only one thing, Tom," answered Hal practically. "To turn round and cut across country through Sir Leonard Maynard's place."

Tom guffawed. "That's all very well! But you, know what a terror he is for trespassers! As like as not when we pass the mansion

he'll appear at a window and blaze at us with a blunderbuss!"

"I reckon I'd rather chance that!" said Hal, buttoning up his coat. "It shortens the distance by a good three miles, and we needn't make much noise when passing the house. We don't want to upset Sir Leonard."

"Pity he hasn't enough cash to keep the place up in the old style," Tom remarked when they came upon the old mansion, rearing its corner turrets and gables like ghostly arms through the wraithlike mist.

"His father's fault," agreed Hal, "for spending all his fortune fooling about in foreign parts. I wonder what truth there is in that old yarn about the millions of pounds' worth of treasure lying in a privateer somewhere in the South Seas? They say that if it could be found, every penny would belong to Sir Leonard."

"I'll have a talk to him one day about it," said Tom jocosely. "Hallo, Hal! Did you see someone moving over there against the trees?"

Hal Breton drew up. "I don't know. I rather fancy I did. It looked to me like a man stealing towards the drive. Yes, there is someone near the bushes! Hi, there—you!"

He raised his voice; but more sharp was the cry that rang out as a light leapt up suddenly behind one of the windows of the mansion and a splintering shower of glass dropped into the courtyard below.

"Help! Help! Thieves! Help!" And then, swift on the call, came the sound of a pistol-shot. The light snapped out and the sounds of tumult ceased.

"I'll go to the house!" yelled Hal. "Murder's being done, or something very like it! Search those bushes, Tom, and if you find that fellow, hang on like death!"

Tom needed no second bidding. He doubled back, and, crossing the drive,

worked his way stealthily towards the spot where he judged the man to be.

As a dry twig snapped under his weight, a cautious whistle sounded only a few yards away. Tom went down on hands and knees, crept gently forward, and seeing a figure crouched in the shadows, launched himself upon it.

So unexpected was the onslaught that, taken by surprise, the fellow rolled over on his back, with Tom on top of him. Instantly two pairs of arms were locked in a struggle, from the start of which Tom had the mortification of knowing he would be beaten.

Remembering his brother's last words, however, he struck back and hung on.

Twice he succeeded in delivering a punishing jab, and once an unscientific uppercut nearly gave him the victory, for the big man reeled heavily and dropped on one knee.

"Now, who are you? And what's your business here?" Tom shouted, rushing in with the idea of fastening a grip on the other's throat.

But something heavy—a short, loaded stick—flashed upwards, and, catching him on the point of the jaw, knocked him senseless into the grass.

The stranger rose, and kicked the prostrate boy with a force that rolled him over.

"That'll teach you not to interfere in what doesn't concern you!" he growled. His words fell on deaf ears, for Tom's senses had been scattered like chaff in the wind. "I wonder—"

He abandoned as swiftly as formed the notion of ascertaining who his youthful assailant might be, as, with a heavy bang, the front door leading on to the terrace clanged shut, and a figure which he recognised as his accomplice came running swiftly towards him. Without further ado he pocketed the life-preserver, and, joining his companion, ran in the direction of the distant woods.

Meantime, while Tom had been engaged with the man in the drive, Hal had leapt the low terrace wall to pass along the front of the house. He was brought up after a few yards by the sight of an open ground-floor window. He raised the curtain billowing in the night wind, and entered a room which was in darkness.

His heart beat fast, and his pulses

leapt, at the sounds of a struggle going on overhead. He suffered a second's delay in finding the door; but, flinging it open, he found himself in a wide, panelled hall, faced by a flight of shallow steps. Up these he bounded three at a time.

It is possible that Sir Leonard's assailant heard him coming, for the tumult above ceased abruptly, and a second pistol-shot rang out, followed by a thud and a low moan of pain.

Hal darted down the long corridor, with his hand along the wall until it came in contact with a switch. A blaze of light leapt up, and his glance came to rest on a dark stain beneath one of the doors.

Quickly he turned the handle, only to find the door locked from the inside.

He drew back, and, launching himself forward, threw all his weight on the woodwork. The door gave with a splinter of panelling, and, pitching forward, he stumbled heavily over a prostrate form.

Hal bent down, and pilloved the injured man's head against his shoulder.

Sir Leonard moaned, and tried to struggle into a semi-upright position; but the effort proved too much, and he slid back, a dead weight, in Hal Breton's clasp.

Gently the boy set him upon a sofa, and, switching on the light, stared round.

Then a voice floated up from below, and Tom, plastered with mud from head to foot, and with blood trickling from an ugly wound on his chin, staggered weakly in.

"Thank goodness, you're all right, Hal!" he muttered, pressing his hand to his head. "Some brute—a big chap—I couldn't see his face—knocked me silly!" Then, staring in horror at the form on the sofa: "Is Sir Leonard dead?"

"I don't know! Fetch a basin of water—and some spirits, too, if you can find any! I'm going to telephone for a doctor, and then to the police! I'm afraid those chaps have got right away!"

Towards ten o'clock a car containing the local doctor, a police-inspector, and a constable drove up. Dr. Harman took the patient in hand, while Hal and Tom detailed all that had happened to the police-inspector.

"Could either of you recognise the two

men again?" Superintendent Crutchett asked.

"I certainly couldn't," replied Tom. Hal, too, was unable to give information likely to be of service. So while the doctor attended to the injured man the two boys stood by, watching Crutchett and his subordinate making an inspection of the premises. The suggestion of burglary was swiftly discounted, seeing that the few valuables which lay about had not been touched, and no attempt had been made to force the library safe. Both the motive and the perpetrators of the affair were shrouded behind an impenetrable cloud.

About midnight the doctor joined Crutchett in the dining-room, and made his report.

"Maynard's condition is critical," he said, as he placed his stethoscope in his pocket. "The bullet, impinging on the base of the skull, has caused serious damage. In addition, a heavy blow has caused a fracture, from which one of two things may result. Either Sir Leonard will lose his life or his reason—at the moment I cannot say which. I have phoned for a specialist and a couple of nurses. You must keep in touch with me, Crutchett, and with the boys, too. At any time their evidence may be needed."

The weeks dragged on, and though the baronet did not die, when at length he emerged from the grim contest it was with his health broken, and a cloud upon his mind which no effort on the part of the specialists could dissipate. So the summer passed in a succession of troublous days for the Bretons, with the shadow of poverty darkening their cottage home. And though the sun shone warmly on the brown sands and the blue waters of the bay, the owner of Maynard Court could throw no light on the mystery behind the foul work which had robbed him of something more than his reason. Nor as yet had Stanton Maynard, alias Stanton Hilliard, and his companion, Sebastian Marks, made a second move in the desperate game to which they had set their hands.

(There will be an extra long instalment of this gripping story in next Monday's BOYS' FRIEND. Tell all your friends about the REAL hand-coloured photos that are given away.)

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