

26 Newland Place. 2a

FIVE LONG, COMPLETE STORIES INSIDE!

THE BOYS' REALM

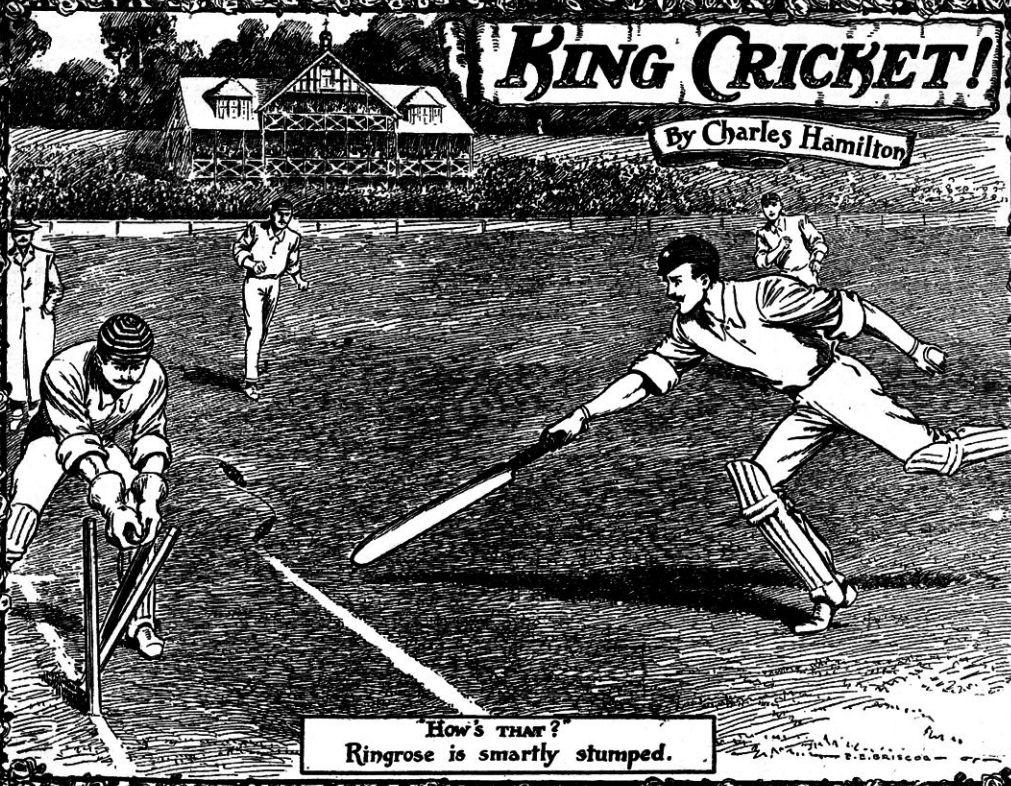
of Sport & Adventure.

SUMMER
DOUBLE
NUMBER

2^D

KING CRICKET!

By Charles Hamilton



How's THAT?
Ringrose is smartly stumped.

FROM YOUR EDITOR'S CHAIR.



Your Editor is always glad to hear from you about yourself or your favourite paper. He will answer you by post if you enclose a stamped addressed postcard or envelope.

Long instalments of our four thrilling serials will also appear. Also, for the next issue, there will be one of the best penny numbers I have published for quite a long time.

THE RETURN OF NELSON LEE.

Of late I have received one or two letters from my readers bemoaning the fact that Nelson Lee does not appear in Mr. Maxwell Scott's school tale, "The Fighting Fifth." It seems that my friends are desirous of reading more of the adventures of this celebrated detective, and are therefore rather disappointed at his not appearing in the story which is now before us.

Latest Portrait of YOUR EDITOR (H. E.). Controller of THE BOYS' REALM - Saturday. THE BOYS' FRIEND - Tuesday. THE BOYS' HERALD - Thursday.

Our Double Number.

At last I am able to put into the hands of my many loyal supporters what I consider to be the finest double number of THE BOYS' REALM I have ever published. I am well aware that it is a difficult matter for an editor to please everybody, but I feel sure of this, that when my friends have perused the many attractive features which this number contains they will be absolutely satisfied that they have had their money's worth.

On Saturday next THE BOYS' REALM will return to its usual size and price—16 pages priced one penny. In the number published on that day I shall present to my readers, as I have been doing for a long time past, two fine, complete tales of sport and adventure. The first will be entitled "THE LAST INNINGS," and will be a magnificent story of school and cricket from the mastery pen of Mr. Jack North.

KING CRICKET.

If, later on, Loamshire realized that they could not do without him, and the colonel renewed the offer, heard in by the committee, the case would be altered. At present the feeling of the club would be dead against Arthur, and certainly not the ideal captain. "I suppose you know your own interests best, Lovell," said the colonel somewhat stiffly.

Well, well, I am sorry for their disappointment, but I have remarked in the opening paragraph of my Chat, it is a difficult matter for the editor of a paper to please everybody. As regards my friends who are disappointed by my readers which will, I think, appease any little disappointment some of them may be feeling. It is this: In this week's instalment of our Thursday evening paper, "The Boys' Herald," there appear the opening chapters of a powerful new story of Nelson Lee, by Mr. Maxwell Scott, entitled "THE IRON HAND."

And after reading this yarn right through from beginning to end, I have come to the conclusion that it is the very greatest. Nelson Lee, the hero of the "Fighting Fifth," is the subject of the chapters of "The Iron Hand," in the illustrated by "Val" clever pictures, and I am positive that it will be voted by everyone the finest detective tale they have ever read. If my friends do not agree with me after reading the first few instalments, I shall be very, very much surprised indeed. You can get your copy of "The Boys' Herald" to-day, price 1d.

A Private Detective.

It so happens that the very first letter I pick up this week in from a reader living at Hastings signing himself "Jack," tells me he would like to become a private detective.

Let me straight away tell my young friend that as a rule, the private detective has had some experience with an official body before starting in this calling for himself.

acted by envy and jealousy; and that was his fault. He felt that the colonel was misjudging him, but there was no help for it. Fortescue, too, was just as far from comprehending his real motives. He referred to the subject of his own school in a very complimentary manner, and he would not captain Loamshire against the South Africans.

"No; not wholly, I suppose. Stage fright is a—eh? An attack of nerves?" "Hang it, no!" said Fortescue. "You've had a fearful bore, I've no doubt," said Arthur quickly. "No; not wholly, I suppose. Stage fright is a—eh? An attack of nerves?"

Many of the private detectives in London have been employed upon the various police forces throughout the country. I am afraid I shall have to dampen the hopes of my reader by telling him that boys, as a rule, stand very little chance of becoming private detectives—that is to say, stand very little chance while they are young.

The ordinary routine which is followed in the making of a detective is pretty much as follows: A young man joins the police force—let us say, for example, the Metropolitan Police Force. For a year he serves as a plain, ordinary constable, during which time his conduct is closely watched by his superiors. If he behaves well, and shows signs of being a good criminal, he is then drafted into the detective section, and here his real chance comes to him. As a detective police-officer he will be employed upon all the most serious cases, such as burglaries and other crimes. According to the ability, astuteness, and intelligence he displays, so will his progress be until at last he climbs to the very topmost rung of the ladder in his profession and becomes a chief detective inspector.

It may take him some years to reach this level, or he may get there in a few years; a lot depends upon himself. This is the way in which official detectives are made, but if a private detective he will have to possess a natural aptitude for the ferreting out of information; in fact, he will have to have a brain that can be the ability to piece together clues, to follow them up discreetly and successfully, is given to very few men indeed, and these few are the successful private detectives who are to be found in the big cities of the universe.

I used to know one private detective who was a famous man. I am not going to mention his name, but he was a man of great ability and he lived in one of the finest thoroughfares in London, in a palatial suite of apartments. Of course, he was a man of education and tremendous ability. He was a man who held more in respect to his brain than any other individual. He has watched over the welfare of many sovereigns and persons of high position, and he has been successful in many cases which have often saved them from real peril.

Of course, such men as this are very rare; but if you have any brain, and any other what heights even a private detective can rise.

DAILY MAIL.

"The rotten outsider hadn't the nerve, after all," said Legden. "Of course, when you come to think of it, he would." "We would have made his life a burden if he had ventured to take the lead over us, that's a dead cert. It's all along that he wouldn't have the confidence."

"Perhaps he's beginning to know his place," said Chichester. "Can't think what the fellow's got into his head. He's a snobby about it. He doesn't like Lovell declining." "Like his book to decline!" said Fortescue. "I beggar, it seems to me!" chimed in Fortescue. "Like his blooming check to exist at all, as a matter of fact."

"I can't quite believe the story, for one thing," said Arthur frankly. "That James Lagden swindled my uncle I am certain, but I have had to say 'yes' to a number of his tracks too completely for anyone to find him out." "But Len is employed in his office," said Kit. "and he seems to be taken into his confidence a lot. To do his dirty work, as a matter of fact!"

Does He Get Enough Sleep?

"G" BORB'E W. is a Cambridge reader of THE BOYS' REALM, and he tells me he is sixteen, and in an office. He has to get up every morning at three, and he finishes his work at two o'clock in the afternoon. Now, although he finishes as early as this, my young friend does not, as a rule, go to bed until before nine o'clock; in fact, I rather suspect that it is often after nine when he retires to rest. Now, he would like to know whether this gives him enough sleep. He tells me that usually, between two in the afternoon and nine o'clock at night, he either walks, plays cricket, or goes for a bicycle ride. Honestly, I do not think that my young friend gets enough sleep. At his age he ought to get at least eight hours, and if he takes my tip he will go to bed certainly—well, before eight o'clock at night.

A Cricket Question.

HORACE FULLER, a Manchester reader of THE BOYS' REALM, has asked me in my Chat the following question: "In my Chat the umpires as issued by the committee of the M.C.C. Certainly I will, Horace. Here it is: The hours of play signalled by waving the hand from side to side. Byles shall be signalled by raising the open hand and touching it with the hand. Wides shall be signalled by extending both arms horizontally. The decision 'out' shall be signalled by raising the index finger above the head."

Umpires should wait until a signal has been answered by the scorer before allowing the game to proceed.

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

On guarding a decision the umpire should make sure that the batsman understands what the decision is. As with my friends would make a point of writing to me when in difficulty concerning their sports. As I have set aside THE BOYS' REALM and pastime I am sending you this to answer in my weekly Chat questions similar to that sent me by Horace Fuller. I hope that this response will cause you a number of boys and young men to write to me for information or advice concerning their favourite sport.

YOUR EDITOR (H. E.).

THE 1st CHAPTER.

The Ambuscade—How Dannie Saved the Column—Ginger Deserts.

It was towards the close of the day, and the sun had no chance to get through the canopied foliage...

Behind the sergeant walked Dannie, with his bugle swung at his side, and then came the Staffs...

"I don't like this," he muttered. "I'm a regular, but for a fair and square fight; but looking for ambuscades isn't to my taste."

"Ambuscades be blowed!" answered Toddy Binks. "Then Looshai boggles ain't within twenty miles of us, I don't know what made the colonel so nervous."

"Well, there ain't much farther to go," said the sergeant, and went on marching...

"I wish Ginger was here," remarked Dannie. "It seems lonesome without him. He's a good soul, and if anything was to happen to me..."

The lad paused. The native guide had stopped, raising a hand to his ear. He listened...

A curved knife was buried in the breast of the chief who had been talking so bravely...

"It's an ambuscade—a big one!" he gasped. "By a despatch of an arrow, a flash of fire, a blow! Give the signal! Save the colonel and the boys! Save them!"

The sergeant's heart was shut off, but the appeal had been heard by the gallant young bugler, who was swelling with two powerful lungs...

There was a chorus of bloodthirsty yells. Binks and the other members of the column port Dannie dropped the bugle, swayed, and pitched headlong into the thickets at the base of the tree.

The savages rushed upon the brave lad, and that he was not dead, the bullet having merely grazed his skull. They would have slain him in their passion, but at the command of one of the party Dannie was hauled to his feet...



HOW GINGER TRICKED THE LOOSHAI.

It was a wise precaution, as has been seen. The note of alarm, the signal agreed upon, warned the column of their danger.

"You see me free, sir," he said to the colonel; "but they've got Sergeant Raikes and Dannie Norcott and Toddy Binks, and they're taking them to their stronghold, Old Bobogee, the Looshai chief, can talk English fairly well—he learnt it when he was in prison down at Lahore..."

"I can do nothing without the mule-gun," he said. "I must wait here until they arrive... 'Quite right—quite right,' assented Major Mumbles. 'We must have artillery.'"

ger, as a daring plan occurred to him. "The youth will lead me to the fortress, and I believe I can get Dannie and the others away," he went on, with tears in his eyes.

"I don't know!" he said, the old idea that he can rescue his prisoners. "He will lose his own child, and serve him right!"

"I'll teach him a lesson he won't forget in a hurry," the colonel replied grimly. "But remember, that you must be quick." "He added, 'though Larkins is a plucky fellow, I admit, he hasn't a ghost of a chance. He has gone to his death!'"

THE LEAGUE OF YOUNG ATHLETES.

SECTION 1.—SWIMMING.

Table with 4 columns: Age 12-15, Age 16-18, Applicants must swim, Applicants must swim. Lists distances in yards and times in seconds.

SECTION 2.—RUNNING.

Table with 4 columns: Age 12-15, Age 16-18, Applicants must run, Applicants must run. Lists distances in yards and times in seconds.

Application must be made on the Form below, and must be accompanied by details of the performance, vouched for by a headmaster, clergyman, trainer, or some responsible adult person approved by the President.

I (Name) (Address) desire to become a member of this Institution. Enclosed I send particulars of my performance.

To obtain a BOYS' REALM Standard Medal, in addition to the handsome Diploma awarded gratis, applicants should send six of the above Forms cut from one issue of this paper.

THE 2nd CHAPTER. The Big-Pot Sahib Arrives—Bobogee Revealed.

OLONEL PODGERS had been correctly informed in regard to the Looshai fortress, which stood on the bank of the wild jungle. It stood on the flat summit of a steep hill...

"A Feringhee—a Feringhee!" The tumult spread, and when the savages ran to the main-gate, hurrying from all directions, they saw that a Feringhee was indeed approaching...

"You've big foot!" answered Bobogee, in broken English. "Where other Feringhees!" "They have far off, in camp, said Ginger, pointing to the distant plain where all the boys were watching him with sinister, cruel eyes.

"What the devil did he want with your dogs?" asked the major. "I don't know! It has some fool idea that he can rescue his prisoners. He will lose his own child, and serve him right!"

"I'll teach him a lesson he won't forget in a hurry," the colonel replied grimly. "But remember, that you must be quick." "He added, 'though Larkins is a plucky fellow, I admit, he hasn't a ghost of a chance. He has gone to his death!'"

"We big pot, you trust me. You take my offer, let me stop 'ere all night. To-morrow we go away, many soldiers down to Kolapur, send food and rifles to your village. Then you set captives free, and that make peace. Me no fight your people."

"You brave man, speak wise words," answered Bobogee. "You send what you promise, then me give you two Feringhees. But you no catch the spy who told me you people verry angry with him. He spoil the trap what he set for your soldiers, and in the morning he has shot dead my men."

"I'll have to agree to your terms," he said reluctantly. "You give me two prisoners, keep the young one, and send me the other one. So far, the trick had worked well. A friendly footing had been established, and when the visitor offered had been explained to the colonel, and they were satisfied of this, although it was evident from the fact that they remained silently by the gate, that they had some treacherous—of an attack by the British column. The sun had now set, and twilight was gathering, but the chief was still so large, but in the centre of the enclosure, hung with weapons and skins, where they seated themselves side by side on the floor. Food was set out on the ground, and a young woman and child, who they had eaten, and the woman had departed, the chief dropped a leopard-skin over the doorway, and then produced three bottles of champagne from under a pile of rugs.

Ginger could hardly conceal his joy. He flicked his eyes at it, and then he said: "Wot-ho! I'm in luck!" he told himself. "Fancy the old scoundrel bragging of his loot, and a staid old man as he is, and he's got his chance like this. Glory be! It looks as if my little game was going to work all right."

Bobage broke two of the bottles, snapping the cork with a dagger, and handed one to the Slogger.

"Now we have your friendly talk," he said. "You've done it, and you've got the Slogger."

"Ere's to your fine health! May your shadow never grow fallen!" The night wore on, and it was quite late when the Loochai village, the chief finished one bottle, and started on a second, not observing that most of his guests were being seized and taken to the stocks, or several hours old Bobage's tongue ran glibly, as he boasted of his prowess, and told blood-curdling tales, but his voice was growing thicker and thicker, more incoherent, and at last, closing his eyes, he sank back with a grunt and a gasp, and his head fell forward, and he quivered him, and he was in a heavy, drunken slumber.

"The settles 'im, as I 'oped it would," murmured Ginger. "'E's bowled out, thanks to the rajah'sissy stuff. And now to play the game."

"A brave soldier's chance had come, and it was a better one than he had counted on, though his task was perilous and uncertain. He crawled on hands and knees across the middle of the enclosure. He made rapid progress, and at last he drew near to a large hut, built up against the palace wall, and which he knew the village, that looked like the one which Bobage had indicated to him.

He was not certain that it was the right place, but all doubt was dispelled when, as the moon emerged from the clouds, a man suddenly rose by the doorway where he had been crouching. It was a tall, thin man, with the creasing figure; but before he could utter a cry or raise his matchlock the Slogger leapt upon him and dealt a quick, hard blow with the butt of his pistol.

Down went the Loochai, stunned by a rap on the head, and he lay motionless on the ground. The thick rope that secured the door, Ginger pushed it inward and entered the hut. By the light of a single candle he saw that the window opposed to him, and by a hole in the roof, he observed that a number of big wooden idols stood on pedestals along the walls; and then, as he saw three dusky forms lying on the floor, the voice of Toddy Binks said eagerly:

"Blest if it ain't a Tommy! We're saved, boys!"

"Keep quiet!" bade Ginger. "Don't make a sound, for your lives!"

"I'll be bound," said his fettered comrades with his knife in his hand. Swiftly he cut the ropes that bound them, and one by one, Dannie, Raikes, and Toddy Binks, and the Slogger, with their cramped limbs, almost too glad and grateful for words.

"Good old pal," said the lad. "I knew you'd do your best for us!"

As he spoke he was interrupted by a husky shout close by, and the next instant the village was ringing with a wild clamour.

THE 3rd CHAPTER.
The Siege of the Hut—Ginger Has an Idea—How the Sloggers Escaped.
THE alarm was given by an unexpected sound, that for a moment the startled soldiers did not move.

"What a row!" gasped Sergeant Raikes. "Does any one see us?"

"It does!" exclaimed Ginger, as he sprang to the door and pulled it open. "It's the sentry, but he's asleep, and he's in a bad way, and he's come to. Look at the beggars! The game's up, boys, and we'll 'ave to fight."

"He was right. It would have been madness to rush out into the bright moonlight, for, standing in so many of our usual traps, were close to the hut, bounding forward by scores.

"We're done for!" groaned Toddy Binks. "They won't have any mercy on us!"

"They won't have any mercy on us!" We may find some way out of this trap if we can get a heathen's spell. That's the first thing to be thought of. We'll have to grab them idols, and we'll block the door."

"The suggestion was promptly accepted upon. The door was first to be secured, that it opened inward—and while the sergeant bore his weight against it, the others hurriedly brought up the sentry, and he was bound close to them up in a barricade. It was done just in time, for the savage tribesmen were now pounding upon the door, with angry cries.

"What a row!" cried the Slogger, as a louder tumult was heard not far off. "They've found old Bobage, and they're trying to waken him, and he's stirring up a hornet's nest, and no mistake!"

More Loochais had joined the others, and the chief was the first to reach the window, starting, as he saw the weight of one of the big wooden images. He hoisted it over and let

"It won't be long till they get in," declared Bobage.

"Not if they batter it with a log," Dannie said gloomily. "That's what they'll do next. The planks were splintering, and the barricade was shaking ominously. Ginger was almost in despair. His daring plan had failed, and he and his companions could expect no mercy from the savages, who were enraged by the trick that had been played upon them.

"It's the fortune of war," said Sergeant Raikes. "We'll die like heroes, boys."

"We ain't dead yet," replied Ginger. "Lucky I've got a pocketful of cartridges. And now watch me give the beggars a dose."

"With that he jabbed his sword out through the logs with one hand, and with the other, putting his revolver to a crevice, he fired three shots. There were several yells of agony, followed by howls of rage.

"You've winged a couple of them!" exclaimed the lad. "Give them another dose!"

"I'll only make them worse," said Binks. "They'll be like fends when they get hold of us."

"You leave them to me," bade Ginger. "I'm tryin' to gain time—that's wot my object is."

There was now a lull. Dismayed by their losses, afraid to renew the assault, the savages went now silently discussing what should be done. Not a sound could be heard, except the groans of the wounded.

"They'll soon be at us again," said the sergeant. "They're plotting some sort of devilry."

"Only for they 'old off for a time!" muttered Dannie. "And they'll do that. Knowin' that they 'ave us in a trap, and believin' that we 'aven't a ghost of a chance to get away, they

go. There was a rolling, grinding noise, followed shortly by a heavy splash.

"'Ark, boys!' he said. "The Loochais yelled excitedly for a moment, and then they were silent again."

"That's done it!" whispered Ginger. "The beggars think we're escapin' by the window! They imagine that wot they 'ard was one of us tumbled down the 'ill, and they can't see for the palisade! They're waitin' to make sure, and if we properly deceive them they'll scuttle down to the stream as fast as their legs can carry them. Over with the rest of you! 'Eathen images, boys! One for each of you! Let them rip!"

Out of the window went Dannie's idol, and two more quickly followed, dropped by Toddy Binks and the sergeant. Splash, splash, splash! Then silence, and then, a moment later, a shrill and furious clamour that receded as suddenly as it rose. The Loochais were dispersing, neatly felled, and when the soldiers hastened to the other side of the hut and peered through the chinks of the logs, there was not a savage to be seen, though they could be heard from right and left.

"Glorious! We've tricked them!" declared Ginger. "They think we've got away! They're 'urryin' down the 'ill as fast as they can to look for us in the water! Now's our chance, boys! Now for the gate!"

In frantic haste the barricade was torn away, and as the door fell inward, with broken hinges, the four Sloggers sprang over it and dashed across the village. On they went among the deserted huts, in the bright moonlight, until they were close to the gate. Then they yelled greeted them, and they saw in front of them a dozen Loochais armed with spears and matchlocks.

which had been overtaken by the musk-guns and was advancing to the attack, was not far off. When the four Sloggers came in sight, to one of them, who was a Podge, received his sword back, and listened grimly to the thrilling tale that Ginger told him.

"You are under arrest, Larkins!" he said, in a stern voice, and with a frown. "You are under arrest, Larkins!" "I want to fight, and you are under arrest, and then I'll stand my punishment, sir!"

"Very good," agreed the chief, "replied the colonel. "You have on the bet, Slammers," he added to the doctor, with a twinkle in his eye, "and I am heartily glad that I have lost."

"The Loochais were at first defiant, confident of being able to hold out. They shouted threats and insults, but when they saw that they could not change their time when the shells began to fly from the unlimbered guns, which were hidden by the trees, they were soon brought to a better mind. In the course of half an hour the gate had been battered in, part of the stockade was down, and some of the huts were in flames; and the British flag was hoisted over the fortifications at the middle of the afternoon, many of the Loochais were at first defiant, confident of being able to hold out.

"You've got to give up, Larkins," said Colonel Podgers, as he approached the culprit. "You are under arrest, and you will be sent to the stocks for your insolence and insubordination. I cannot overlook such a grave offence, committed in time of war."

"No, sir, of course not," replied poor Ginger. "I'm sorry, but I'm under arrest."

And with a dismal countenance he was marched off to a temporary guard-house, which happened to be the hut in which he and the Loochai chief had enjoyed the stolen champagne.

"We find the prisoner guilty of desertion, with extenuating circumstances." Such was the result of the trial, and it was a solemn moment, a solemn scene, when the word fell from the lips of the colonel, who had arisen to his feet with Major Mumbles on one side of him and two captains on the other. The court-martial had been held under a spreading tree in the middle of the village, and it had not taken the officers long to arrive at a verdict. Near-by the Sloggers were drawn up, and now every eye was fixed on Ginger, who seemed to feel the gravity of the occasion.

"Have you anything to say, Larkins?" asked the colonel, in a stern voice.

"I'm sorry, but I'm under arrest," answered Ginger, standing very straight. "I deserted, and that's all there is about it. But—"

"I don't suppose there is," answered Ginger, standing very straight. "I deserted, and that's all there is about it. But—"

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"My name Podgers," Ginger said, as he saluted the chief. "Me officer sahib, much big pot."

won't be in a 'urry to wipo us out. But there's many a slip between the cup and the lip, as the old sayin' goes."

"What do you mean?" inquired Dannie. "You don't suppose there's any hope for us?"

Ginger did not answer. He loaded his revolver again, glanced up at the hole in the roof, and then, as he saw the sentry peering through the window at the rear, he looked out and down.

"Any show there?" asked Binks. "Not much of a one," was the reply. "The 'ut is built flush up with the brow of the 'ill, and this wall 'angs a bit over the edge, but the 'illside is too steep for a goat, and down at the bottom the stream is dashin' among rocks. We'd be sure to break our limbs or our necks if we were to drop. Then, as he saw the sentry peering through the window at the rear, he looked out and down.

"Let's risk it," urged the sergeant. "I'm willing to—"

"Never mind that now! Fetch one of them idols ere, every cent of you, and be jolly quick about it!"

The mysterious order was obeyed, and Ginger was the first to reach the window, starting, as he saw the weight of one of the big wooden images. He hoisted it over and let

"The next instant the fight had begun. Several matchlocks roared, and the aim was poor, and nobody was hit. A big savage rushed at Dannie, but before he could use his spear the boy ran round the chest. Meanwhile, Ginger was emptying his revolver, firing rapidly, and when five of the Loochais had fallen, he rested his heart and fed, leaving the way clear.

"Hurrah, we've done it!" shouted the sergeant. "A moment later the massive gate had been unbarred and opened, and Ginger and his rescued comrades were tearing down the steep path, at the risk of breaking their necks. They reached the bottom of the hill and vanished in the jungle, while behind them, from village and stream, rang the cries of the baffled savages."

"The 4th CHAPTER. The Storming of the Fortness—The Court-martial—After the Sentence."

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SPECIAL LONG INSTALMENT THIS WEEK!

THE SCHOOL ON THE CLIFF.

A Magnificent New Story of Stirring Adventure.

By E. HARCOURT BURRAGE.



THESE ARE THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS IN THIS FINE NEW STORY.

- JACK JAUNTY, a lad of unknown parentage, who, as a baby, was cast up on the shores of an island of the village of Sternacrag.
THE STRANGER, a curious character who resides alone on an island called the Bowl. He it was that rescued Jack Jaunty from a watery grave.
BOB BAXTER, an old fisherman, in whose charge the Stranger put Jack Jaunty until he was old enough to be sent to the School on the Cliff at Sternacrag.
PEYER PINNICK, a morose, unapproachable fisherman, who nurses his malicious graveness against the Stranger and against Jack Jaunty.
DAN CALLIS, ASHBY DOWNY, GERARD HOPKINS, and NICKY HOPKINS, pupils at the School on the Cliff.

Our story opens on a warm sunny day. Dan Callis, a pupil at the School on the Cliff, and a bully, is being teased by a handsome, six-footed, and well-to-do young man, who is standing on the beach of the Cliff. Jack Jaunty is not to do so, but a little later the lad is discovered on a ledge half-way down the face of the cliff. In this perilous position he is rescued by Jack Jaunty. A stranger arrives at Sternacrag that afternoon, and picks up an acquaintance with Peter Pinnick, a surly fisherman, questions him about Jack Jaunty, and then, after a new boy arrives at the school. His name is Mark Ricketts, and he makes a bad impression on the other boys. Jack Jaunty and his chums play a joke on Peter Pinnick, who swears revenge. Jack makes friends with some new arrivals, including Nicky Hopkins and his daughters. He takes them for a tour of inspection around the cliffs.
(Now read this week's long instalment.)

THE 13th CHAPTER (continued). Mr. Ferrula and Mr. Redditch Come to Bowls.

It was half-past six—a nice hour for a bathe on a warm morning; and, having dressed and provided himself with towel and drawers, Mr. Redditch hid him down to a favourite spot by the sea. It was rather early for the boys, who, as a rule, did not appear before seven o'clock; but the demon of mischief had aroused Mr. Ferrula, and he was there preparing for a dip. He, too, had passed a few minutes in the sea. "Good morning!" he gave his brother tutor was of a husky description. This customary greeting was all that passed between them until they had been freed up by the sea. Neither were particularly good swimmers; as a fact, they never went out of their depth, and were much given to standing on one leg and swimming with the other, a style of natation which goes down with the inexperienced observer, but never deludes the professional. A short stay in the sea sufficed for both, and, dripping like two incertens, they emerged therefrom and walked to the rocks, on which their clothes lay in a heap. Still nothing was said. Towels were put to work, and the operation of drying themselves was briskly on. Suddenly Mr. Redditch began to sing: "Oh, Fate be kind to me, and let me marry soon, And give me as a bride the fair Miss Harrison." To do him justice, he did not intend to sing aloud. The words seemed to come out in spite of him, and as they fell upon the ears of the startled Ferrula, that gentleman ceased his drying operations. "So it's you who's got them?" he said. "Redditch, you are a fool!" "Ferrula, you are an idiot!" "Oh, indeed!" "Yes; to think that you should aspire to the hand of so fair and sweet a creature! She doesn't like bad paste!"

This was personal, and, as one sin begets another, so did this unkind remark beget another personality. "She hates curly hair," said Ferrula, "especially when it grows like a wisp!" "Sir, you are insulting—I am!" "Take that!" It was not exactly a blow in a legal sense of the word; but a well-worked flick with a towel to both painful and exasperating, and that was what Mr. Redditch gave his brother tutor. Ferrula hit back with his towel, and before they could stop themselves, they rushed headlong into a rough and tumble fight. It was a contest between two gladiators clad in nothing but bathing costumes. It was a deadly struggle, for they rolled about the sands, and being in a damp condition, covered themselves with gritty particles, even to their eyes and hair. Ere long exhausted nature gave in. They were not in training for a long fight, and both collapsed at the same moment. Letting go, they drew apart, and in a sitting position dusted the sand out of their eyes. Then, to their dismay, they found that fully a score of boys were assembled, and no doubt, judging by their faces, had enjoyed the spectacle. The moment they were observed the boys scattered on either side, and, losing off their clothes, plunged into the sea. Sounds of laughter echoed around as the tutors, having had another dip to wash the sand off, proceeded to dress. Both felt they had been humiliated and exposed to ridicule that might be lasting, and each blamed the other.

But behind there was a deeper feeling. They both loved the same woman. And what of her? Well, she was at that very hour sunbathing at the distant beach near the Folly, in attendance on Ivonne and Laura, who, in the prettiness of bathing-dresses, were displaying themselves in the sea. When they returned, they exhibited no sign of fatigue. "We could swim to the Bowl," said Ivonne. "I am sure of it," said Laura, "for the deeper the water is, the more buoyant we feel." "Suppose we try to-morrow?" suggested Ivonne, as they each donned a long cloak to hide their bathing-dresses, and set out for home. "Try what?" asked Miss Harrison, who had been absorbed in a book. "We thought of trying to swim to the Bowl," said Ivonne. "You must be mad!" replied the governess. "It is miles away." "About three, that funny old coastguard-man told us," said Ivonne. "You cannot swim three miles." "We can try," said Laura. "And get drowned," returned Miss Harrison. "If you talk such nonsense, I must speak to Mr. Bellon." "We won't talk about it any more," said Ivonne. Then, in a low tone, she added for the ear of her sister.

"But we can try to do it." "Don't forget," said Laura, in the same way, "that we shall have to come back again." "There is only one man living there," said Ivonne, "and we could land in a quiet place where he would not see." "Papa could bring a boat and fetch us back." "It would be fun, wouldn't it?" "Just! I wonder if Jack could swim so far?" "You talk a great deal about Jack, Ivonne." "That don't matter to you, Laura, does it?" "No; I suppose not. Come, we shall catch cold, if we don't make haste home and change." They ran off to the Folly, and Miss Harrison, with an hour to spare and released from duty for the time, wandered back in the direction to Sternacrag.

THE 14th CHAPTER. The Work of Jealousy.

THE governess walked very slowly, absorbed in her book, until she was startled by a cry overhead. Looking up, she saw a man rolling down the face of the cliff, which happily just there was not perpendicular. The person thus involuntarily descending by leaps and bounds was dressed in dark clothes, a strong contrast to a very bushy head of red hair. Behind him followed a soft felt hat, which, no doubt, was on his head when he started on his rapid journey. Miss Harrison was terrified, but she, being a sensible sort of woman, did not scream or go into hysterics, or run away, but waited to see if she could be of any help to this unfortunate man. As he did not fall far, but simply rolled, the chances of his not being seriously injured were in his favour.

On no case, tazing quickly, clutching at every projection in vain, and finally rolled to the feet of Miss Harrison, where he lay, the most heated and mangled being in the form of a man she had ever set eyes on. He had no breath for speech, but his eyes spoke clearly enough in this way: "I was seeking thee, fair maid, whom I fondly love; but this is not exactly the way I intended to come into thy beauteous presence."

Not to make any needless mystery about this rapid arrival, we at once admit that it was Mr. Redditch. Miss Harrison felt very sorry for the hapless tutor, but it required all her moral strength to keep from laughing and to screw her face into a look of pity.

"It was a terrible fall," she said, after a long pause. "It was," groaned Mr. Redditch, as he got upon his feet; "and so sudden!" "Really; how was it?" said Miss Harrison. "I was walking along the edge of the cliff," said Mr. Redditch, "when, looking down, I espied you. I howled, and, I suppose, bowed too much—in fact, I bowed myself over." Miss Harrison pulled out a handkerchief and

put it to her face, presumably to hide her anguish. Mr. Redditch, feeling himself quietly all eyes to see what damage had been done, went on: "It was a nasty fall, and I suffered as if I had travelled through rough the air; but, if I do not care, I would do more for your sake." "I am glad you are not much hurt," said Miss Harrison serenely. "Good-bye, Mr. Redditch, incontinence in walking, but myself as well. What a beautiful morning! I hope you will enjoy your walk back to the school!" She was gone—vanished in a floating kind of way from the misty eyes of the tutor, and he was left wondering what her sudden departure meant. "Now, am I annoyed or pleased?" he asked himself.

He thought the latter. No doubt she was moved by his pathetic words, and, being unable to respond to once to them, had hid her forehead.

"Like a startled fawn," he said, as he proceeded on his way.

His wild flight down the cliffside had given him a good shaking, and bruised the more prominent parts of his legs and arms. He felt some inconvenience in walking, but he got down pretty well until it came to ascending the cliff, which he did by one of the zigzag paths cut in the rock for a few numbers, or he would have. On reaching the top he was far from pleased to find Mr. Ferrula seated on the ground, convulsed with laughter.

"What's the matter with you?" growled Mr. Redditch. "I saw it all—ha, ha!" roared Mr. Ferrula. "You saw it all—far and very far for so brief an interview with the dear girl!"

"Oh, you are banged!" said Mr. Redditch, as he rolled away. "Somehow, the story of Redditch's acrobatic feat got round the school, and the amusement of the boys was prodigious. Nicky needs no more of a reach of it on one side of his slate, and has forgotten all about it. The result was that when he presented an imperfect sum in exchange and barter for the inspection of Mr. Redditch, that gentleman, instead of turning over the slate, beheld the work of art, crude in its conception, but unmistakable in its subject.

Acting on the impulse of sudden anger, the tutor, in his head, used the crown of Nicky's head, with the result that it was broken, and the frame fell about his neck.

Mr. Bonington happened to be absent from the school, and, as the tutor had had something to say about this exhibition of temper, Nicky took it quite coolly, and, removing the frame from his neck, laid it upon the tutor's desk.

"I shall want another slate, please," he said. "Hopkins," said Mr. Redditch feebly, "I have been a fool, but you are a very tiresome boy. Resume your seat."

When Nicky returned to his place, Will Raddle, in a tone of anxious inquiry, asked him what he had been rooked in with.

"For I should like to be good for mine," he said. "I say, yours is bump-proof." "I've got a bump on it as big as a muffin, if it is," replied Nicky.

The return of Mr. Bonington restored the usual silence to the school, and there the matter ended.

It was a half-holiday that afternoon, and, the day having kept fine, the boys were allowed to go out and employ themselves as they pleased until tea-time. Jack thought he would like to go up to the Folly, and so had no objection, and he agreed to go with Gerard, Nicky, and Will for a walk.

"I've been in a fancy for exploring the cleft," he said, as they started out. "Against the rules," said Gerard. "Bonington says it's dangerous."

"I've been thinking about the speech Jack rather lately; but we need not go very far in that direction."

The cleft was near and beyond the Folly, and that was why Jack wished to go. He might have the opportunity of speaking to or seeing the governess, and he was sure to be aware of his main object, for they exchanged glances and smiles, but were wise enough not to say a word about it. Jack was a thoroughly good fellow, but he knew how to stand upon his dignity with both friend and foe.

To the cleft they went by way of the sea, and, the tide being favourable, they penetrated into rugged depths. It was certainly a peculiar and rather forbidding place, but once in they picked their way among the stones strewn about right up as far as they could go.

"A fellow wedged in by a fall," said Gerard, pointing to the narrow termination, "would have a worse chance of getting out. It is all solid rock a foot from the summit."

"Fancy coming down into it head-first!" said Nicky, with a shudder. "If you ever go to it alone," remarked Will Raddle, "you are bound to do it."



Peter Pinnick had perched himself on a barrel, and was addressing a knot of fishermen, bragging about what he had done, and exhibiting the money he had received.

Look Out for Announcements Concerning Our Great Football Campaign Very Shortly.

boys' appetites as usual, they did little but glare at each other and scowl, indifferent to or unaware of the fact that two-thirds of the school had no school, and the hatred he knew exactly what was the time of day.

The next morning after this event Mr. Redditch received a note from Mrs. Belton, to mark that that of Sternacraig upon it. The writing was apparently feminine, and looked as if it was crumpled up as if the writer had laboured hard to turn out a nice piece of calligraphy.

As Mrs. Ferrulla rarely received any letters, a note of a very interesting nature, this was a red-letter day even in his life. He did not open it at the breakfast-table, where all the morning he had been reading and watching the polite Gruetlon, but put it into his pocket for perusal afterwards, in a quiet corner of the room, to which the tutors were allowed access, he pursued.

As it was not a very long one we may here give it verbatim, with the two or three mispellings he observed in it.

"Dear Mr. Ferrulla.—Believing you to be a man of honour, I venture to apply to you to help me in my hour of distress. I am in great troubles to contend with, and have nobody to confide in, as it is a matter I do not wish Mr. Gruetlon to know anything about. Now a friend to me, do I find out that I am in a bad way, I will in secrecy impart to you the cause of my misery. I was thinking that the Cleft would be a safe place for your pen, as I was writing very early in the morning—as soon as it is daylight. I cannot name any exact morning, as I was so dazed and going without being noticed; but will you come tomorrow morning until I can join you? Do not let that ruin Mr. Redditch know anything about this.—Your true friend,

"MOLLY HARRISON."

"P.S.—Please do not write back again, as it might be traced back to me by Mr. Redditch.

"Will I go? Rather," said Mr. Ferrulla, as he kissed the letter again and again. "Will I go with you?"

It certainly puzzled him a little to find that a governess was not quite certain of her spelling, but he knew as well as anyone that she would not be always perfect, and it was no affair of his.

THE 10th CHAPTER. A Risky Adventure.

It was enough for Mr. Ferrulla that the governess wished to see him—to confide in him; and when confidence was established would it not lead up to a warmer condition of things—over into matrimony?

He was not contented with what just as soon have thought of standing up in the school-room, and reading that precious letter for the edification of all therein assembled.

but he got through his duties somehow, and as soon as evening came he staggered rather than walked upstairs, and lay down as he was in his clothes upon his bed.

He was aroused by the ringing of a bell, and, springing up, found broad daylight with him as usual. He got up, and looked at his watch. It had stopped.

"What's this?" he gasped. "That's the breakfast bell. I've slept all night!" He so he had—in his clothes. Poor Mr. Ferrulla!

He made the best toilet he could under the circumstances, and hurried downstairs. The boys were streaming into the breakfast-room with appetites sharpened by early rising. Mr. Redditch had not yet appeared. His chair reposed in the hall, and he was seen only when he suddenly popped into the room, as light and beaming as a sunny morning in May.

"Is that late," he said cheerily; "but have been kept by the leatery of the morning—and—other things. I really forgot how time was flying."

He and Mr. Ferrulla had each an urn, and in a skilful, rapid way they filled the tacepans and passed them round. Mr. Ferrulla helped himself, and was also to some extent to compound which cheer without intoxicating when the voice of Mr. Redditch was heard saying:—"What a delightful walk it is to the Cleft!"

Then Mr. Ferrulla choked. He saw now why his brother tutor was so cheerful. He had been to the Cleft with Miss Harrison. There he had seen her, and she, disappointed by the non-arrival of Mr. Ferrulla, and feeling that she was scoffed at, had scorned, and accepted the attentions of his brother tutor.

Oh, yes; he saw it all, and seeing, as we have pointed out, he choked! It was such an overwhelming shock that he had to leave the room, and fully five minutes elapsed ere he returned, calm outwardly, but suffering inwardly.

Look Out for Announcements Concerning Our Great Football Campaign Very Shortly.

his breath, and speaking politely; "but it was hardly my fault."

"You're a blundering idiot!" said Dan, as he roused himself up.

"Nice walk," he finished, and any pursuit of him was now helpless. As Dan sauntered off, Gruetlon put his rumpled dress in order, and there was not a look on his face.

"Even a worm will turn when trodden on, and Gruetlon was not exactly a worm. There was more of the viper in him.

"The day which opened fine became overcast, and the rain was falling in the afternoon, when Mr. Bonnington was summoned from the school-room. A whispered message from Gruetlon told him that in a hurry, and the explanation caused that which was missing in the boy.

"Wonder what it is?" said Nicky.

"Mrs. Bonnington fainted," replied Will Redditch.

"Not she," said Nicky. "More likely a tramp stole something."

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for the Bowl, and when we all out ere the governess perceived what they were doing.

She cried out to them to come back, but they disregarded her, and in a state of terrible fright ran into the pupils, and alarmed Mr. Belton.

He at once came out, and launching a small volley of words in their direction, they went to their rooms to avoid further pursuit. By that time the girls were nearly a mile from the shore, and had got into a strong current bearing them away in a southerly direction.

Could they have swum as far as the Bowl they would not have been able to reach it. But by the tide right out to sea. Mr. Belton would not have been able to overtake them in time, because the girls were making them in their way back, and were getting exhausted.

"I really wonder what they were doing out there," thought Jack.

"Mr. Belton behaved well," said Mr. Bonnington. "It was a good thing for the Mermaid," said Mrs. Bonnington. "with some asperity."

"Because they were not there, my dear," suggested Mr. Bonnington mildly.

"You're a very good fellow," said Mrs. Bonnington. "with a woman's unreason."

"Because they were not there, my dear," suggested Mr. Bonnington mildly.

"Because they were not there, my dear," suggested Mr. Bonnington mildly.

Advertisements for various sports clubs and societies, including 'NOTICES AND CHALLENGES FROM READERS' OWN CLUBS'.

Advertisements for various sports clubs and societies, including 'NEWCASTLE F.C. (average, 15)', 'WYNDALE F.C. (average, 13)', etc.

Advertisements for various sports clubs and societies, including 'WYLLIFFE C.C. (average age, 14)', 'BURNLEY F.C. (average age, 13)', etc.



FRESHMAN'S BLUE.

By JACK NORTH.

A MAGNIFICENT DOUBLE-LENGTH STORY OF THE CRICKET FIELD.

THE 1st CHAPTER.

An Ancient Feud Renewed. A. J. BRUCE, captain of the Cambridge University Cricket Eleven, known to his intimates as "Poley"...

on Tuesday, and was in for a solid two hours with him on Wednesday evening, St. John's. "I was just come on to the ground. I want you to introduce me. Whycroft, of St. John's, tells me he's a naillin, good all-round man. He wants to make quite sure that he's goin' to turn out in the Fresher match."

"You can put him down for the first-class match without any doubts. He's a first-class I give you my word for that. I should say that nothing but bitter black favouritism will keep him out of the team—at there's no fear of that with old Potboy as captain!"

"That's all right, old Evidence! You come along and introduce us. That snob Wilford was at school with him, it seems; but he was half inclined to cut Dalleson dead just now, and I wouldn't ask him."

"Oh, Wilford!" said Poley; and his tone spoke volumes. Dick Dalleson was a proud man that night, and a happy man. It was a high honour for a Freshman to find the cricket captain giving great things from him, and making no bones about telling him so.

"We want to see whether the Kate's swan is really a swan, and not merely a goose," the Potboy had said. But I believe you're a bird of the right feather, Mr. Dalleson!"

But in all his pride and happiness Dick did not forget Wilford's unpleasant response to his greeting. It was evident that Wilford had not forgotten and forgiven. He had feared as much. The one drop of bitterness in his cup of joy when he knew that he had won the Cambridge scholarship, for which he had worked so hard, was the knowledge that his old enemy was up at Trinity, and a big man in the University Eleven.

He remembered the sneers that had made his life miserable during the last term that he and Wilford had spent at Wington together, before the latter, whose father had just then come out to a fortune, had gone to Eton.

Dick had been elected captain in preference to Wilford, and Wilford had never forgiven him for it. He remembered that row before the last match of the season, when his patience had given way at last, and his open hand had left a red mark on Wilford's cheek. He remembered the treacherous run-out that had followed, nearly losing Wington the match, and spoiling the school's unbroken sequence of victories. He remembered the thrashing he had given Wilford when the game was over. Yet all this was four or five years ago, and Dick had no wish to carry on the quarrel!

But to Wilford it was all as though it had happened yesterday. His hatred of Dalleson might have slept for a while; but it had grown rather than diminished in sleeping. The first

sight of his old rival had awakened it, strong and bitter as ever. He would shy at no dirty trick that would do that rival harm. Especially was he determined that, if he could in any way prevent it, Dalleson should not win his cricket blue!

THE 2nd CHAPTER.

A Ducking in the Cam.

WITHOUT achieving anything that looked at all remarkable on paper, Dick did good all-round work in the Freshman's match. The pitch was seven wickets for 118 runs represented better bowling than a much more sensational analysis gained on a glue-pot trick might have done.

Half a dozen others obtained a bigger aggregate than his scores of 38 and 45 gave him; but no man in the match made his runs in better style, and he gave nothing like a chance in either innings. "Perhaps it was his fielding that pleased the critics as much as anything, though. The neatness and quickness of his ground-work at cover-point, the accuracy of his returns, and the way in which he got to, and froze on to one extremely difficult catch, were worthy of Sidney Gregory or poor Johnny Briggs."

When the teams for the First Eleven v. Next Sixteen were made public, it was seen that Bruce had given Dalleson a place in the Eleven. This once again Dick found himself playing on the same side with his old enemy.

After Wilford's rudeness at their first meeting, Dalleson had quietly ignored him. So little did he show his feelings that, as yet, no one in the eleven except Bruce suspected that there was enmity between the two. But Bruce knew, and he was keeping a watchful eye on this man whom he distrusted.

Dick got that extra good ball a little too early in his innings against the Sixteen, and left for 7. Wilford made 85; and Bruce, for the second time in his life, rattled up a three-figure score. The total of the Eleven was 412; the Sixteen had to follow on after making 138, and were eventually beaten in an innings. Most of the bowling was done by Wilford and Dalleson, who accounted between them for 24 of the 30 wickets, the Blue having slightly the better figures.

No one was surprised when, in the list of names for the team to play against Yorkshire, the first "foreign" eleven to visit Fenner's that season, R. O. B. Dalleson, St. Catharine's, appeared. The names of the Blues playing were given first, in alphabetical order, then those of the three new men being

tried. Thus, the name immediately before Dick's was "F. W. Wilford, Trinity." Wilford gritted his teeth when he took up his "Sporting Life" and saw the juxtaposition of his names. It was like a slap in the face to him. He had not been able as yet to think of anything he could do to put a spoke in Dick's wheel. But his malice was bubbling over to an extent that made it absolutely impossible for him to keep silent.

As usual, Bruce and Dick were promptly snubbed. Then he tried two or three other members of the eleven, who did not appear especially interested in the subject. Finally he had to fall back upon his own particular cronies, who didn't actually care a hang about either Dalleson or the Light Blue Eleven in general, but who liked to team up with Wilford for the sake of what they got out of him.

It was with one of these that he was strolling by the river-side in the Cambridge Boat Club, Chesterton, on a glorious afternoon in May, only a day or two before the Yorkshire match. "Yes; the fellow's an absolute rank outsider," Bruce was saying. "At school he was up to all sorts of dirty tricks—would have been expelled from a bigger place, no doubt, but he's often seen to team up with Wilford at the tip-top schools. His people are no class, either. I had to give him two or three through good looks. But he's no class, either. I dare say I shall have to give him another before long."

"Seems a thunderin' pity that a chap like Dalleson should ever have a look-in for his Blue!" said the sycophant. "So it's Dalleson you're talkin' about, is it? Look here, I don't know you or are, but I tell you plainly that Wilford has tied—tied abominably, and like the devil, backbiting cur he is! As for his ever havin' thrashed me—well, whether you believe that or not is no odds to me. But if he has done it before, let him do it again. He's goin' to have the clance, right here and now!"

Dick Dalleson had not come to Cambridge merely to play cricket. He was reading hard, too. He had duly attended lectures that morning, and in the afternoon had paddled a mile or two down the river in a Canadian canoe, and then, landing, had settled down with his book against a willow—willow to study diligently a work which most people would have classed as desperately dry.

So absorbed had he been that he had hardly recognised the voice of the passers-by. Perhaps, had his own name not been mentioned, he would never have realised of whom they were talking.

"Stand out of my way, you ill-bred ruffian!" said Wilford haughtily.

"But for all the hauteur of his tone his cheeks had gone deadly pale."

"You say you've thrashed me," answered Dick. "Thrash me again, if you can!"

"I won't endeavour to fight with you!"

"No; backbitin' more in your line than fightin'! But, once for all, will you fight?"

"No, I won't!"

"Then into the river you go!"

He seized Wilford by the collar and the slack of his fannels, gave one mighty effort, and sent him splashing into the Cam. Then he turned to the sycophant.

"He's in no danger. Are you a swimmer?"

"No-o-o!" quavered the toady—a little man whom Dick could have dealt with one-handed.

"Good thing for you! I don't know but that you deserve a duckin' pretty nearly as much as your sweet friend does. Next time he tries to take away another fellow's good name

Then he passed on. Bruce, who hated snobbery, and who did not know Dick Dalleson, had not said a word.

"That Dalleson, the Kate's man—fellow that made a century against St. John's on Wednesday!"

"Really, my dear Bruce, I don't know," replied Wilford, making an unsuccessful attempt to thrust his own name in. "I don't know. Certainly his name is Dalleson. I should imagine he might be at St. Catharine's. He isn't at all the sort that's likely to be at Trinity."

To Trinity College both Wilford and Bruce belonged.

"What d'ye know of him?" asked Bruce abruptly. "Something Wilford always got his teeth on edge."

"Precious little. I am thankful to say! I had the misfortune to be at the same country grammar school with him for a term or two—though, by Jove, when the governor sent me there, I never cared to be cut-out—before I went to Eton. I had to give him a jolly good thrashing the day before I left. He ran him in for 100 in the last match of the season, and was idiot enough to blame me for it."

Bruce did not believe that story. He had gone into the way of being well under half of what Wilford told him.



Rostron cut Dalleson's fourth ball to point, and Holwood took an easy catch.

"The Iron Hand," by Maxwell Scott, starts in "The Boys' Herald" This Week.

ENTHRALLING LONG INSTALMENT OF MAXWELL SCOTT'S SPLENDID SCHOOL STORY.

The Fighting Fifth

MAXWELL SCOTT'S Enthralling Tale of School and Adventure.



THE OPENING CHAPTERS IN BRIEF.
CHOTA LAL NATH CHANDRA DAS, an Indian prince, and a new boy at St. Ninian's school, who is placed in the Fifth Form. He is in possession of a certain gold locket, around which centres a mystery.
OTTO HEINRICH, a mysterious German, who strives by foul means to obtain possession of the gold locket.
ROBERT HAMILTON Nipper, Nelson Lee's wards.
DICK STARLING
GARDNER, PROCTER, RUSSELL, ARKLE, pupils at St. Ninian's School.

Gardner is in difficulties with a bookmaker, and the mysterious German, knowing that the boy is aware of the place where Lal has concealed his locket, offers to pay the bookmaker's bill, on condition he obtain it for Gardner, in desperation consents to do so. That night Nipper and his chums plan a raid on the limpet's of a rival house at St. Ninian's. On their way Nipper hears a noise in his study, and throwing the door open discovers Gardner removing the locket from its hiding place. Gardner explains why he took the locket, and Nipper very generously lends him a five-pound note, and first signing a promise from him that he will do no more meddling.

Next day an under-master at St. Ninian's School, the admirer of Fraulein Hoffmann, an assistant-teacher at a girls' school in the village, Mr. Wimple, has ordered a horse and trap from a neighbouring stable to drive her over to a friend's house. He immediately goes and interviews the stable-keeper, and bribes him to let him (Mr. Wimple) drive the horse to his place. The stable-keeper, and Mr. Wimple turns up at Fraulein Hoffmann's house with an ancient victoria. He is disguised by means of a false beard and mustache. The horse is very lively, and Mr. Wimple fears that something serious will happen.

How road this week's long instalment.

Mr. Wimple's Plans End in Disaster.
 UP to a certain point Mr. Wimple's prediction proved more or less correct. It is true the off-wheel crashed at the corner of the parapet as they crossed the bridge; and it is also true that a hen was run over, and two children nearly Temple's farm. True it is, moreover, that the horse shied at a group of well-wishers, who were hooping loudly, outside the gates of St. Ninian's, and was only prevented backing the carriage into the ditch by the presence of mind of Lacey's jockey. With these exceptions, however, nothing occurred to seriously disturb Mr. Wimple's peace of mind until half the journey had been accomplished.

It must here be explained that the road which ran past St. Ninian's divided into two about a mile beyond the school gates. The main road followed the line of the coast, and eventually led to Eastbourne. The other road, which was known as the Tunbridge Road, ran due north for two miles and a half, and then divided into two forks, like the letter Y. The left-hand fork led to the Old Abbey, where some of my readers may remember the right-hand fork ran past the Grange, and ultimately led to Tunbridge Wells. At the point where the two roads meet it is to say, in the triangular space between the forks of the Y—was a thickly-planted wood, known as Finsley Wood.

To return to Mr. Wimple. His intention was to declare himself as soon as he and his fair companion had reached the open country. When, therefore, St. Ninian's had been left behind, he began to think the time had arrived for "throwing off his disguise and declaring his all-consuming passion."

"I'd better wait till we're out of the Eastbourne Road," he muttered to himself; "but as soon as we reach the Tunbridge Road, I'll pull up and reveal myself."

Alas for his hopes and plans! When the

victoria turned into the Tunbridge Road, about a mile past the gates of St. Ninian's, the first thing Mr. Wimple saw was a well-known figure standing by the side of the road, with a large bouquet of flowers in his hand!

It was Montague Trigg, the mathematical master at St. Ninian's, and Mr. Wimple's rival for the hand and heart of Fraulein Hoffmann!

Mr. Trigg had learned—from Colonel Trevor himself, as a matter of fact—that Fraulein Hoffmann was coming to spend the week-end with them. Knowing that she would have to drive to the Grange, and knowing the route she was bound to take, he had purchased a bouquet, and had taken his stand in the Tunbridge Road with the object of waylaying her as she passed, and "scoring a point" off his hated rival.

As the victoria approached, he raised his hat and strode into the roadway.

"Pull up, driver!" he commanded.

"Pull up, indeed!" snarled Mr. Wimple, in the depths of his artificial beard. "Not likely!"

He gave the reins a vicious jerk, and the

horse broke into a canter. With unexpected presence of mind, however, Mr. Trigg sprang forward, seized the reins, and forced the horse back on its haunches.

"You insolent ruffian!" he thundered, glaring at Mr. Wimple. "Why didn't you pull up when I ordered you?"

"Half-crazy with anger and chagrin, Mr. Wimple snatched the whip out of its socket.

"Let go that horse's head, you—you—you animated stick of chalk!" he roared, brandishing the whip. "If you don't, I—I—I'll slash you across the face!"

Mr. Trigg stared at him in stupefied amazement. He recognised the voice.

"Good heavens! It's Wimple!" he gasped.

"Himmel! I perceive you was right!" Fraulein Hoffmann cried. "From der first, I tink dare was about him something peculiar."

"Peculiar!" asserted Mr. Trigg. "I should think there was! The ruffian has evidently concocted this vile plot with the object of kidnapping you! But fear not, dear lady! Montague Trigg is here to defend you! I will unmask this knavish clown!"

He uttered these words he loosed his hold on the reins, sprang on to the step, and made a grab at Mr. Wimple's artificial beard.

The beard, of course, came off in his hand; but even as it did so, Mr. Wimple clenched his fist and drove it with all his might into his rival's face.

With an agonised howl, Mr. Trigg reeled backwards off the step. In a wild attempt to save himself, he clutched Mr. Wimple's arm. Taken off his guard, Mr. Wimple was dragged off the box; and the next instant the two masters fell bounding into the road.

Then comedy suddenly turned to tragedy.

Startled by the uproar, and by Fraulein Hoffmann's piercing screams, the horse began to rear and plunge; and ere the two masters could scramble to their feet, ere Fraulein Hoffmann could alight, the terrified animal took the bit between his teeth and bolted up the road in a series of maddened leaps and bounds!

The Paper-Chase.
 A PASSING allusion has been made in a former chapter to a paper-chase in which Nipper and his chums had arranged to take part. This paper-chase, which was confined to the boys of the Fighting Fifth, took place on the Saturday after the meeting in the market square—that is, on the same afternoon as Mr. Wimple's ill-fated adventure with the victoria.

It was an ideal day for a brisk cross-country run; clear and sunny, with just that nip of frost in the air which lends such an exhilarating charm to outdoor exercises. The snow has practically disappeared; and the roads, thanks to a drying wind, were in almost perfect condition.

Nipper and Dick had been selected as the hares, and punctually on the stroke of two o'clock, each with a couple of bags of scent slung over his shoulders, they started off at a swinging trot in the direction of Hampton Heath.

Now, in the case of ordinary schoolboys, a paper-chase is usually a more or less serious athletic contest, in which comic incidents and startling adventures are conspicuous by their absence. But Nipper and Dick were not ordinary schoolboys! They had a knack of finding fun, and tumbling into adventures, in the least expected places, and the present occasion proved no exception to the rule.

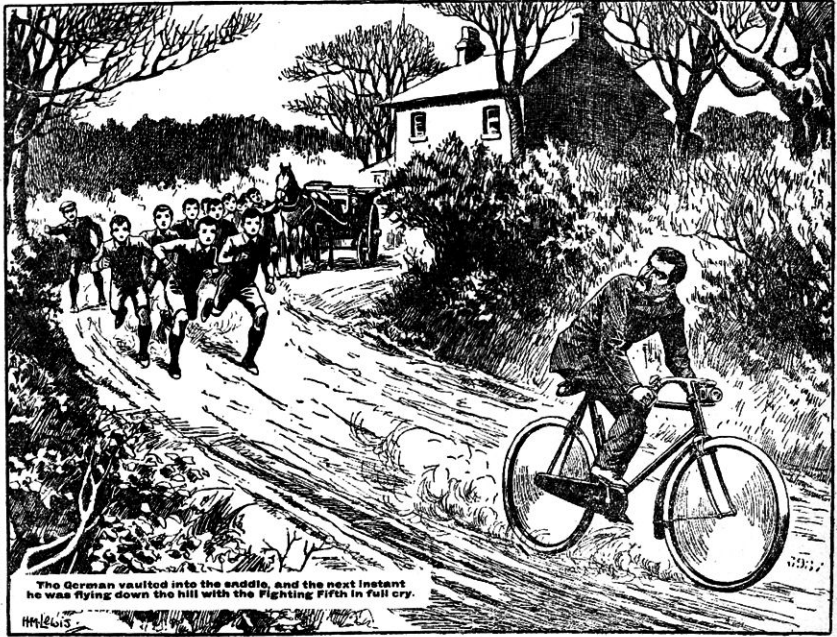
The fun began soon after they had crossed the old stone bridge which spanned the River Dene. From this point it was their intention to follow the Greystone Road for a little way, and then to strike across Hampton Heath. After crossing the bridge, therefore, they made for the Greystone Road; and no sooner had they turned into the road than their eyes fell on a couple of boys, one of whom was mounted on a wobbling bicycle, which he was evidently learning to ride, whilst the other was trotting behind him, with one hand on the back of the saddle.

Their backs were turned to Nipper and Dick, but the latter recognised them at a glance. The boy on the bicycle was Hyde; the one behind was Fleming. Both, as the reader will remember, were Grammar School boys; and both had taken part in that humiliating scene when Nipper, Dick, and Igh had been captured by the Grammarians and led in procession through the village.

"Harro!" cried Nipper, with a whoop of triumph. "Hyde and Fleming! Now's our chance to get a bit of our own back! We haven't time to pay 'em a lengthy call, but we've time to leave our cards as we pass by! Come on! You take Hyde and I'll take Fleming!"

Hearing Nipper's triumphant yell, Fleming hastily turned his head. At the sight of the two Ninianites, he spun round on his heels, letting go his hold on the bicycle-saddle, of course—and placed himself in an attitude of self-defence.

"Ow-ow-ow! Don't let go, you silly old!" screamed Hyde, as the bicycle began to wobble more violently than ever. "Catch hold, quick, or I'll be down!"



The German vaulted into the saddle, and the next instant he was flying down the hill with the Fighting Fifth in full cry.



At Simla—A Challenge Accepted—Captain Royston Tells of Rugby Days.

IN the smoking-room of the Cavalry Club at Simla sat three young officers. They were Captain Ian Keith, Lieutenant Talbot, and Lieutenant Grainger of the 4th Punjab Mounted Infantry, stationed at Simla, and they were taking a well-earned rest after an exciting time in the polo field, where they, under the direction of Captain Royston, of the 10th Bengal Lancers, who had explained their team, had just given a frightful drubbing to the best four that could be brought against them.

"By Jove!" cried young Talbot enthusiastically. "Whoever would have thought that Royston could lead a polo team like that? The way he played at back to-day was a revelation. I have never seen a man play so perfectly since poor old Hewitson's time." (Hewitson was a famous polo player who had been killed during the progress of a game by receiving a blow on the head with the head of a polo-stick after his horse had fallen over, and who had had no count in his day. "I don't wonder at Royston's sending that challenge to the Rajah now. It did appear to be ridiculous; and when a man can play like he can, and can pull a team together, I can only wonder at Royston's not doing it before.")

"I don't see why, with a little more practice, we four shouldn't play with him in the world."

"The Rajah is not in any hurry to reply to the challenge," said Lieutenant Grainger, helping himself to a drink of lemon squash. "Royston ought to have had a reply before now."

"He's got no reply," said Captain Ian Keith, lighting up a cigar. "The Rajah and he are at dagger's drawn when they were at Simla, and he has explained even now the strings their emity created all through the school. It wasn't Royston's fault, either. He was always a quiet, staid old stick. Jehampore was a different man to handle."

"As he is now," said Lieutenant Talbot. "He is an extraordinary man, to be sure. What other Indian ruler would employ Englishmen to manage and control his affairs? By the way, those three—Bailey, Simpson, and Mainwaring—are all old public-school boys. Bailey played for Roshampore, and was in their championship polo team before he came out here to join Jehampore. Simpson was with Raneelaj; but don't believe Mainwaring over rode a pony or wielded a polo-stick until he came out to enter the service of the Rajah. But they say that at No. 2 he is a revelation. Jehampore seems to have the ability to impart at his knowledge and knack of the game to everyone he comes in contact with."

"Well," remarked Lieutenant Grainger, "we haven't had four to know, I understand. Keith, Royston, with a bad fourth in me to back up you. It will be the greatest fun in this world for the Rajah to only accept Royston's challenge to a match. My worst work was set Simla dancing with excitement! I can see some of the ladies ordering special toilettes for the occasion."

"That should be a subject of no interest to you boys," said Captain Keith, laughing. "You are all a long way removed from being married men, you know—set of boys; nothing more!"

"Big boys," said Talbot, sticking out his chest.

"Well, I wish Royston would hurry up," growled Grainger. "There's a post just in. He ought to know whether there is a letter for him before now or not. Here's his tea waiting for him. It's getting cold."

At that moment the door of the smoking-room opened, and Captain Royston entered. He was the youngest captain in the Army, and his distinguished career lay before him, everyone said. In action he had proved himself to be a gallant soldier in line of poster; there was not a more capable or splendid organizer.

He held a letter in his hand. It was written on superfine paper, stamped with an elaborate crest.

A TALE OF ADVENTURE IN THE PLO FIELD BY A. S. HARDY.

"From the Rajah, Royston!" inquired Talbot, sitting upright.

"Yes," answered the captain.

"Does he accept your challenge?"

"Yes."

"Hurrah! hurrah! I say, Grainger, you'll have to practice like the very deuce! You are the least fit of the three of us, and, as you play No. 2, you must polish up your hitting. You have some very fast ponies, but, by George, you will want them against the Rajah's barbe! No. 2 is the easiest and pleasant place; but I don't think any of us will find it easy or pleasant against the Rajah's team."

"When are we to play?" asked Captain Ian Keith, his eyes sparkling at the prospect of the grim struggle ahead of them.

"Oh, Jehampore is generous!" said Royston, with an odd twinkle in his eyes, as though he could scarcely believe it possible. "The beggar must have changed a good bit since his Rugby days. It is impossible there. We can play either Saturday week, or Saturday fortnight, just as we please; or, if we prefer it, the Rajah will give us the right to practice. He expresses his willingness to journey to Simla and play on Saturday, if we like. What do you think about it?"

"Better not keep him waiting too long. It would be discourteous," said Captain Keith.

"We sent the challenge; we must be prepared to meet our opponents at the earliest possible date. Let us say Saturday week."

"Do you agree to that, Talbot, and you, Grainger?"

"Yes," responded the two lieutenants.

"Very well, then," said Captain Royston; "pour me out a cup of tea, one of you. I'll go and write the letter."

He seated himself at a table near by, and five minutes later the letter was written, addressed and sealed, and given to the native boy to put into the letter-box. Then, with a sigh of relief, Captain Royston joined his comrades, and leaned lazily back in his deep-seated armchair.

"How does the deuce come about that Bailey, Simpson, and Mainwaring, of the Rajah's polo team, happened to be such fine players? When he engaged them for their different posts, did Jehampore make a stipulation that they should be able to play polo, in the same way that Benson, the Shakespearean actor, is asked to engage actors who are good cricket players?" asked Captain Keith.

"I hardly think it was like that," laughed Captain Royston. "It just happened that the men were fine riders. There were a number of applicants for each of the posts, you see. Perhaps the Rajah had met these beggars at Roshampore, at Raneelaj, or Hurlingham, before he came out."

"What positions do they hold?" queried Grainger. "I have heard, but I've forgotten."

"Oh, Bailey is private secretary to the Rajah; Simpson is agent; and Mainwaring is a sort of general manager. He is a mighty good controlling force; he helps; has done wonders with the Rajah's affairs, controlling and managing like a genius. They say he is saving the Rajah an expenditure of £25,000 a year. Such a man is worth his place."

"And he's a splendid No. 3 at polo, too," said Keith. "Everybody says that; he's got some of the Rajah's own money."

"When you were at Rugby with Jehampore, how was it with you two became such bitter enemies?" asked Grainger.

"Oh," laughed the captain, "the 10th Bengal Lancers. I don't quite know how it began. It was in the cricket field, I believe. Jehampore was a mighty good batsman. He had something of the style of Ranjitsingh about him. His wrists were as supple as a woman's, and the way he got the ball away on the leg side was

a masterpiece. One day when he was fielding at point, and I at cover-point, a batsman cut a ball sharp. It was a possible catch, but wanted some holding. I can tell you, and though Jehampore tried hard for it, he didn't quite manage, and dropped the ball. I laughed at him. "Butter fingers!" I cried. And he picked the ball up, and hurled it at my head like lightning, as I dodged just in time, but it was a narrow shave. Well, you can imagine I felt in a dudge of a rage about it. After the match I asked him to apologise. He was always a stubborn beggar. He refused. If I had suffered any injury to my feelings, he said, he would pay me compensation. I told him he was an insulting young blackguard, and ought to be skinned. He got a knife out to me, and I knocked him down. He wounded me in the leg. He was a spiteful, crafty fellow, and a dangerous young buck at that."

"Do you actually mean to say," said Grainger, "that he stuck a knife into you?"

"Yes; the wound was about two inches deep in the thigh. I tore the knife away from him, and knocked him down again. He cried like a baby then, and said that, by touching his face with my fist, I had dishonoured him for ever."

"I can understand his point of view, put in with these native beggars are sometimes ultra-sensitive."

"Well, I told him he was a young fool." Captain Royston went on, "and said that an English schoolboy never bore malice. I asked him to shake hands, but he wouldn't. He was as sulky as a pig."

"Was jolly decent of you anyway, Royston," said Talbot. "I suppose no fuss was made of his stabbing you, was there?"

"No; I took measures for the affair to be hushed up," answered Royston. "Well, after that, Jehampore and myself were at such daggers drawn that we were quite the laughing-stock of the school. No matter what sport I went in for, Jehampore would follow, and try to beat me at it. We ran against each other, wrestled with each other, swam each other, played five games each other, jumped each other—I can't tell you what we didn't do. I nearly always won, though there were one or two things I could not win—jumping, for instance. He was a marvel at that."

"And that was how you came to be known as the Rajah's Rival, I suppose," said Talbot.

"On the whole, I rather liked Jehampore. He had a dudge of a temper. There was no controlling his anger, whenever he used to meet me, he would foam at the mouth with rage. He swore he would kill me someday, and most of the schoolboys were relieved when at length he finished his schooling, and went down."

"How did you part?" asked Grainger.

"Oh, as usual," laughed Captain Royston. "I hit out with my hands, and wished him all sorts of good luck. He stuck his hand behind his back, swore he didn't see me, and didn't know me, and declared that he hoped I would go to perdition."

"Nice sort of man," said Keith.

"Oh, I don't believe he was really a bad sort of fellow. He was as kind as milk when his heart cut to beat me. If he could have done that I verily believe he would have been one of our really courteous and considerate, and even a most generous opponent. And see, though he always professed to hate me at Rugby, look how quickly he has renitied to my challenge."

"That's all right," said Grainger. "He has, as he thinks, an invincible polo team. Royston; but what is going to happen if you beat him

again? Will he act in the mad way he did at school? Remember, you are in India now, and Jehampore, in many ways, is all powerful. If he wished to exact his customary vengeance, he might easily do it here, you know."

"Oh, I am not afraid!" laughed the Rajah. "I am not afraid to beat him in the big match, my star is always in the ascendant against Jehampore, and I am ready and willing to wage a level hundred that we win."

The Great Polo Match—Jehampore Refuses to Have His Stand—Shortcuts Present the Whites and Blacks Restored.

THE polo ground at Simla presented a magnificent spectacle on the afternoon of the famous match between the Rajah of Jehampore's team, and that of Captain Royston was to be played.

The famous match between the Rajah of Jehampore's team, and that of Captain Royston was to be played.

The Rajah had paid a fabulous price for them, all told, and he might, in the event of putting the Rajah's polo-ponies in the world. Bailey, his secretary, Simpson, his agent, and Mainwaring, his manager, had each bought a pair of horses, but the Rajah had added to those of the Rajah, and these were no mean animals, either.

It was the intention of Captain Royston and his comrades had their work cut out if they meant to win, and the reason for the Rajah's triumphant start in the polo match between the famous polo teams in India, could no longer be wondered at.

The general opinion of those who had some reason for expressing an opinion at all, was that the Rajah's team would win.

The game was timed to start in the middle of the afternoon, and by that time every seat on the ground had been taken. The Indian prince, or more punctual than is usual with them, and the men, throwing off their lethargy, hurried their horses, though there was no vacant place to be had. And from early morning onwards the road leading to Simla was crowded with travellers, mostly Europeans, drawn, as by a magnet, by the attraction of the big match.

Two umpires had been appointed—in each case an officer attached to a Punjab regiment, and Lieutenant Colonel Sir Hugh Walker was to act as referee.

The Rajah and his three assistants were the first to make an appearance on the field. He was a tall, handsome Indian prince, of very distinguished carriage, and was dressed in quiet orthodox fashion. His team were plain but smartly dressed, wearing well-matched and brown boots.

They each wore the Barnard patent cork cap, that protects the head from a blow of the club, and their helmets were of the same material in height and physique. Altogether they presented a combination that called forth a murmur of admiration from the spectators.

The Rajah, serene and impassive, twirled his moustache as he waited for the appearance of the other players. He was a tall, slender, young man, and more boyish than ever, despite his flaxen moustache, was the first to turn out. He wore a broad red hand running across his forehead, and a white turban on his face as he held out his hand in greeting.

"How do you do, Rajah?" he said.

The native prince looked him straight in the eyes, ignoring the outstretched hand.

"You forget," he said icily, "you struck me a blow at Rugby. I bear the mark still. It is not my fault, but you are the one who forget that. We are enemies; is it not so?"

Captain Royston coloured deeply.

"The recollection is all mine. I assure you, since you will not accept my name, we must play as rivals—but believe me sincere when I declare that I have no malice against you at all, at least, can accept defeat with good grace."

The Rajah has out Royston," said a subaltern who had been standing by.

"By Jingo, it is an insult—and before the eyes of everybody, too. If I were Royston, I would knock his confounded head off."

"He did that at Rugby," was the dry answer.

Meanwhile a native servant, a dark, evil-looking fellow, who had been standing with the Rajah of Jehampore wherever he went, and who had noticed his master's refusal of Captain Royston's hand, reached the Englishman, and said, "The Rajah has sent you and me to join his friends, and to secure his stick for the game."

"I have a right to my dead, oh, my master," said he, in an intense whisper, "his English enemy of yours, I will kill him."

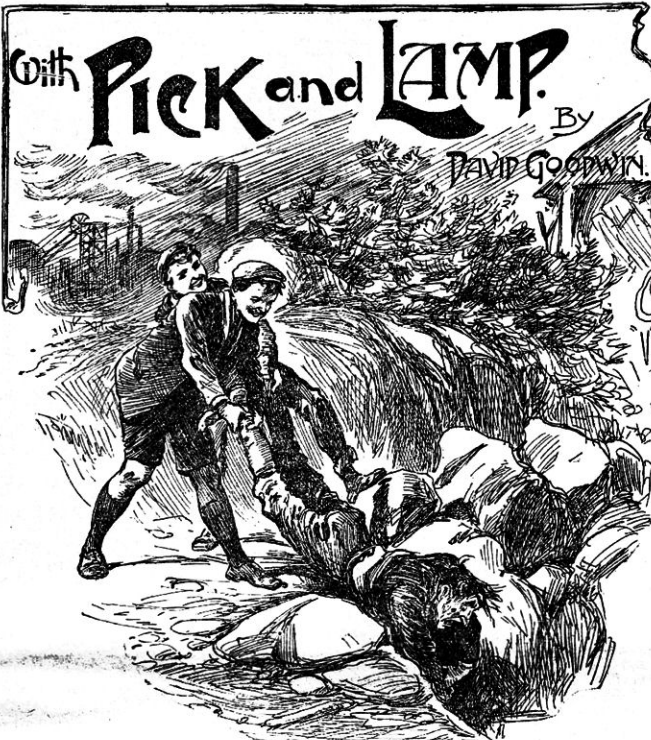
"You are a madman," said the Englishman, and rode off to join his friends, and to secure his stick for the game.

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"You are a madman," said the Englishman, and rode off to join his friends, and to secure his stick for the game.



Tom got up and grabbed one ankle. Roddy took the other. They heaved lustily, and the dishevelled and coal-smudged form of Mr. Sully, with a scratched and purple face, was drawn feet first out of the hole.

How the spirit came to grief.

BOTH the boys thought there was something decidedly familiar about the dark shape that came so quietly towards them. At first they had taken it to be one of the colliery watchmen, or also some spy of Kenyon Price's, set on to follow them. But, as the figure came nearer, Roddy went to an exclamation.

"It's Dafydd!" he said.

"Dafydd?" echoed Tom, in surprise.

"Hallo!" remarked the mighty prowler, quietly joining them in the hollow. "We meet again—eh? Was you found anything?"

"I say, what the dickens are you about, old cock?" said Roddy. "Is this where you spend your nights, ramnakin' round under the moon? How'd you know we were here?"

"I did not know," replied the young mountaineer; "put it seemed to me you was very curious about something, so I followed you as soon as I saw you."

"Curious!" said Tom. "There are others, it seems to me. Out with it, my giddy Wild Man from Borneo. What is it that brings you here?"

"A! Are you suspicious, whatever? You don't trust me—eh?" said Dafydd, fushing hotly.

"Of course we do, you chump! Don't we know each other by this time?"

"Well, I was come down here to learn a little about the Aberford Pit," said Dafydd, squatting down on the coal-dust so that it might understand more, and perhaps be of some use to you, I had been all o'er ter yard to-night too," he chuckled—"right past ter night watchmen's noses, and they never saw me."

"You're an uncanny bird, Dafydd," said Roddwell, grinning. "I shouldn't be surprised any time to see you oarcein' across the sky on a broomstick, or takin' a little trip to the moon."

"You aren't the Spirit of the Mine by any chance, are you?" put in Tom.

"The what?" said Dafydd.

"Well, he isn't you, aint?" replied Roddwell. "Never mind that; it's too long to explain here at this time o' night. But what we're thinkin', Dafydd, is that somebody puts his face to this hole in the ground here, an' talks to us down in the pits, like a mysterious voice."

Dafydd examined the fissure, dropped a scrap of coal down it, and probed it with a stick.

"Of course, he isn't you, aint?" he said; "but it is not impossible, whatever. I know of such a

place in the crags of Pen Idler, where you can hear a long wail through a little hole. Who was it that talks here, and why?"

"That's what we want to find out."

"Very well, then, if one of you hides in that bush yonder and watches for place next time you think it will happen, it should be easy to catch him."

An' jump on the top of his neck," said Tom; "that's what I've been thinking. He can't complain, whoever he is, if he's spotted playin' such a silly game."

"Just so," said Roddy approvingly, "and he'll be squatting down in the hollow like a rabbit, and prettily easy to stalk."

"I'll take the job on," continued Tom, "as you've got an appointment with him down below at knock-off time to-morrow."

"Right," said Roddy, raising; "and we'll catch the spirit on the hop, with any luck. Now, let's get out of here quietly an' lie low, like two rabbits, till the proper time."

They left the rough ground and withdrew northward to the edge of the moor, without encountering anybody on the way, which was natural enough, considering the time. But Roddy neglected no precaution to avoid being seen.

"Well, Dafydd, old boy," he said, "I take this real kind of you, for I never thought you took enough interest in these holes in the ground, as you call 'em, to loather about col-

"All right," said Roddwell; "what about grub?"

"Some bread an' cheese at Carthon village yonder will do me. You'd better get your whack at Mother Bunch's, an' look here if it come across the spirit, what an' I to do with him? We haven't settled that."

"If you can manage it, keep him busy till I arrive, I shall be just watch an' eat it. But it depends on circumstances, an' who the spirit is," chuckled Roddy. "You might even judge it better to just watch an' eat it, say nothing. I'll leave that to you, an' I know you won't make a mess of it."

"I'm not going to have all this watchin' for nothing," said Tom warily. "An' Roddy departed for the colliery."

He allowed himself a good breakfast at Mother Bunch's of baked potatoes and sausages.

"It ain't every day we tackle a spirit," he remarked to himself, "and I shall ever be fit to parley with the Prince of Darkness himself, let alone a mere colliery demon which talked through a blow-hole."

Things were still rather disturbed in the Coed Coch when he arrived, and groups of pitmen stood here and there, conferring together. It

THE FIRST CHAPTERS IN BRIEF.

each day. In the evenings they return to Starve-Crow Farm.

Roddy has a row with some Belgian pitmen who have a spite against him. They are driven off by Terry Lloyd, a friendly brewer, and depart with many threats for the future.

Much to the boys' surprise Kenyon Price invites them over to his home to see the seam and to talk over their land, and proposes to find the capital to start work on it on the condition that they could share in the proceeds. The boys refuse contemptuously, and Kenyon Price orders them to leave his house.

A few days later in the mine Roddy is astonished at a strange voice which smears the surface of the roof of a working. It is evident that the revivex extends to the surface of the ground, and that someone is talking to him from above. That night the boys set forth to look for the upper end of this natural speaking-tube on the coast. They discover and, at a moment later, the two lads see a dark figure creeping in their direction.

lories. But you've got lots of headpiece, an' you've got us to see many good turns in other ways, that the more you know, 'bout it the better."

"I was wanting to know just how things are down here," Roddwell replied, "for I can tell you, if anything was to happen to you two, and only me was left, I would make it hot for Kenyon Price! By gosh an' by gony, they would not boast about it long!" he added darkly.

"Mustn't be revenge-ful. It don't pay," said Roddy. "We don't mean to let anything happen to us. There's the daww breakin' in the east, an' in an hour or two's time we shall have to be at the top. Not worth while goin' back to Bryn y Garth."

"It's dry an' warm enough," said Tom. "Let's curl up in the heater for an hour, an' get a snooze till starlin' time."

"All right; I will get back to ter farm, an' look after things there," said Dafydd. "Grippe has to be fed. What are you do about breakfast?"

"We shan't suffer," said Roddy. "We'll get it in Aberford. So-long, Dafydd! See you later an' I reckon there'll be some news."

"The young hewers promptly lay down in the warm heater, and went to sleep as though they had not a trouble in the world. The sun was well up when they awoke—which they could always trust themselves to do at any given time—and after a wash in a brook near by, they were ready to start."

"It's no use my going near Mother Bunch," said Tom, "as I'm not goin' down the pit to-day. The locs that's seen of me the better, shall wait till later, an' go and lie up at the proper place in good time."

"All right," said Roddwell; "what about grub?"

"Some bread an' cheese at Carthon village yonder will do me. You'd better get your whack at Mother Bunch's, an' look here if it come across the spirit, what an' I to do with him? We haven't settled that."

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did not altogether please Roddy, who had no wish to see a strike or a lock-out interfering with his earnings just at a moment when he had nearly made up, and he imparted this idea to Terry Lloyd as they went to get their safety lamps.

"Sure, the British workman isn't to be thridden under foot by bloated capitalists," protested Terry.

"What's your notion to do is to work off some of your wrath on the coal-seam, an' make up a good tally," replied Roddy. "You're getting too full of beans of your own. Fearless being peace an' no ructions, is what's needed. Come on an' let's get to work."

"You're it all! Bodad, I'll work it off on Sully," he thick head one o' these days," snorted Terry.

"Oh, by all means! I've nothin' to say against Sully," said Roddwell cheerfully. "At least," he added to himself, "if somebody else don't do it before you get a chance."

Terry was in a fine hewing mood that morning, and Roddwell worked hard to keep pace with him. Tom's absence had to be considered, and was some small loss to the earnings of the young hewers. Roddy could not anywhere near make up for this, of course; but he did his utmost, and quite astonished Terry and the putters.

Throughout the work he was wondering how the interview at the fissure would turn out, and what the unseen speaker would have to say. He had long expected that much profit would come from that, and was glad the time was fixed nearly at the end of the shift. It seemed an unusually long day in itself, and when at last the time neared, he rose and went with alacrity towards the old gallery.

The under-viewer, who looked after that section, and Tim in the road, but did not ask him why he was leaving his work.

"They've got orders not to pull me up, I suppose," thought Roddy. "Well, here goes!"

He made his way along the dark, deserted working, and when he came to the fissure he put down his lamp and stopped. For some time there was no sign or sound. Roddy began to wonder what whether the night watchman had been noticed, and the scheme spoiled.

"It's still no certainty that we hit on the right place," he mused. "I hope we've not been wrong in our guess."

A soft whistle came down the fissure just at that moment, and Roddy's face expanded in a grin.

"Spirit aho!" he said. "Is that you? Speak up!"

"It is I!" he echoed the hollow voice through the slit in the coal.

"I began to think you wasn't goin' to turn up. You asked me to come here, didn't you?"

"I did," said the voice. "I have a proposal to make to you."

"Not about Bryn y Garth, I hope. It ain't in the market. An' besides, I don't deal with spirits," said Roddy.

"It is not. I know nothing of the place you mention."

"That's the whopper, start with!" interjected Roddwell.

"Boy, your language is irrelevant, and becomes you a little. If you know to whom you speak."

"I rather fancy I do know."

"You are mistaken. You cannot know me. I am not a spirit."

"If I had you within kicking distance," growled Roddy, "I believe I'd find a place on you solid enough for my foot to land on! Why don't you come out here, an' let me see you? Do you take me for a kid out of the nursery?"

"I say you do not know who I am, nor ever will," rumbled the spirit.

"I don't!" In a short time I think I shall know more than you reckon on. However, what's this proposal, if it's nothing to do with Bryn y Garth?"

"It has to do with the Coed Coch, and no other. You have a powerful and a wealthy ally in the friends in your path. He hates you exceedingly."

"That's the first truth you've spoken as yet. But it's not news. I don't need any spirit to put me up."

"Would you like to get the better of Kenyon Price?" whispered the voice.

"Yes, an' I am the man to do it."

"I rather think we are gettin' the better of him," he replied, with a wink at the wall, "as far as things have gone. That's my impression."

"You may think so; but he is far too powerful and rich for you to overthrow unaided. Yet, an' I am the man to show you how to worst him. With my help, you can out him from his wrongful ownership of Coed Coch, and give it from him your rightful share of this great mine."

"Oh," said Roddwell, "then you admit Tom and I are the rightful owners, do you? You want to get it from me?"

"I admit nothing," boomed the hollow voice. "I acknowledge nothing. I deny nothing. I am the man to show you how these things are aloof from me. But I promise you your lawful share of all this wealth and power, and I can fulfil it if you trust me."

"You stop me makin' speeches through your hat, an' talk sense," said Roddwell, "we should get on faster."

"I am not a man to stop me!"

"Who are you?"

"The Spirit of the Mine."

"The Spirit of the Mine," said Roddy, in disgust. "Go on, then, if you've anything more to say."

"You are willing, then, to be guided by me!"

(Now read this week's instalment.)

"The Iron Hand," by Maxwell Scott, starts in "The Boys' Herald" This Week.

CAMPING OUT IN CANADA.
How the Colonial Boy Spends His Summer Holiday.

THOSE readers of THE REALM who have experienced the numerous joys of camping out in some rural part of the country, and who have exactly all the pleasures of such a holiday, will realise how thoroughly the Canadian boy who camps out can enjoy himself. He can get right away from the haunts of man into the recesses of the vast backwoods, and there enjoy himself to his heart's content, without fear of being disturbed by the police or being hauled up for damaging public property.

Mr. William Henry, the secretary of the Royal Life-Saving Society, who has recently been contributing to our paper, has sent Your Editor a little pamphlet giving particulars of how Canadian boys camp out. The shores of Lake Temagami are selected as the camping-place, and under the conductorship of Mr. Arthur Cockrane, of Upper Canada College, Toronto, the thing is a huge success. The camp is affiliated to the Royal Life-Saving Society.

Camp Temagami is a rendezvous where boys of various schools meet most during the summer and, under capable supervision, spend their holiday in instructive recreation and pleasure.

Living close to Nature, camping in the woods, on the trail, boating, swimming, fishing, and exploring in the heart of the best camping country in the world, gives increased strength and vigour, and a valuable physical education in the best and most natural manner possible, and also satisfies the need felt by all of a change from the conventional life.

Among the varied experiences of a season in camp, a boy frequently finds it necessary to use his judgment and act quickly on his own initiative, such training making him alert and self-reliant.

Picture a lake whose shore-line is eight hundred miles, in shape like a starfish, containing



GROUP PORTRAIT OF RETFORD SOUTH END FOOTBALL CLUB, 1907.

How to Form a Football League.

An Instructive New Series of Articles by
G. L. B. Coverdale, Sec. East Riding of Yorkshire Football Association.

I.—Preliminaries.

IT is with some trepidation that I begin to write on this subject, for although I have had a hand in the forming of a good many leagues and competitions, it is quite another thing to put that knowledge into writing, owing to the immense amount of detail work incurred. The neglect of one small item may upset the whole arrangements.

Clubs who have perhaps been playing a year or so in friendly matches, get a hankering after Competition football, and when there are about a dozen clubs of a similar strength within reasonable distance of each other, the time is ripe to start a league. It will only require one club to take the initiative, and the others will quickly fall into line.

Before anything is actually done in the matter, a "feeler" should be thrown out as to whether the league will receive the sanction of the County Association: in fact the association might be written to by the prime mover of the league, and it is practically certain that a member of their council who lives in the district of the proposed league will immediately come forward and help the new organisation on its way.

A circular letter should be sent to all clubs likely to join, calling a meeting of representatives at some convenient centre.

At this meeting the chairman, treasurer, and secretary should be elected, and should be empowered to draw up the rules of the league, with which I propose to deal in my next article. The annual subscription for each team to the league should be fixed at this first meeting, and should be anything from 2s. 6d. to 5s. per club. It is practically impossible to run a league on the subscription of the clubs alone, and as a contingency some outside help must be obtained. Therefore, the only course open is to ask some influential gentleman in the district, if possible the local M.P.—never mind whether he is a Tariff Reformer or a Free Trader—to be

the president of the League, and if he consents it will probably mean that

the income of the league benefits to the extent of a guinea.

There should also be an unlimited list of vice-presidents—a donation of 5s. or over by any gentleman entitling him to this honour. At this preliminary meeting it is as well to discuss several other points, which will enable the sub-committee to draw up the rules to the satisfaction of the clubs. One representative from each club in the league should form the full committee. The title of the league should also be decided upon. When these various points have been settled, nothing further can be done until after the sub-committee meets and drafts the rules. It is far better to leave the drafting of the rules to the three named above than to the full committee, as "too many cooks, etc."

I have made no mention of any trophy or cup for the league, which is perhaps the most important thing to think about; but now, when young clubs have such a good friend as THE BOYS' REALM, who literally gives silver cups with no stint, this should not present any great obstacle.

Even if a league should not be fortunate enough to secure

a "Boys' Realm" Cup,

the district who only wants approaching in the right way, and who will then step into the breach and present a trophy. But still, a trophy isn't everything, and the great thing is good and gentlemanly football. I remember the first year I was secretary of a club, we won the league without losing a match, but we never got either trophy or medals. From a football point of view, however, it was as good a league as anyone could have wished.

I propose in my next two articles of this series to give in full a set of rules suitable for a junior league. These rules, which are some thirty in number, combine what I consider the best features of the rules approved by five of the largest county associations in England.

(To be continued on Saturday next.)

OUR NEW COMPETITION.

WHO IS IT? That's all we want to know.

Below are the portraits of six enthusiastic footballing readers of THE BOYS' REALM. Do you know them? To the reader who identifies any one of them, and whose letter is the first correct, a prize of five shillings will be awarded. There are no other conditions. Perhaps your own portrait appears here this week, or that of your bosom friend. Anyway, if you recognise one of the faces, write at once to "Portrait," BOYS' REALM Office, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C., stating whom you think it to be. Ward your letter thus: "I think that No. — (here give number as under portrait) is (here give name of the person you think it to be). He is a member of ——— Football Club. All letters for must reach this office by Saturday, July 13th. Another six portraits will appear next week.



No. 1.



No. 2.



No. 3.



No. 4.



No. 5.



No. 6.

FORMING A SWIMMING CLUB.
Hints to Novices Who Intend Doing So.

EVERY youth and young man who knows how to swim should join a club, if he is at all possible. By so doing so he will not only be much more sport than if he was to take his swim by himself, and he will also have an opportunity of competing with the other members of the club, and perhaps carrying off one or two valuable trophies.

Some of the readers of THE BOYS' REALM, however, may not be able to join a club simply because they do not know of one suitable in their neighbourhood. Under such circumstances, the best plan for a young fellow to adopt is to start a swimming club on his own. He can do this in two ways. He can personally canvass amongst his friends, and find out those who would be willing to join such a club, or he can advertise in

the club notice columns

of THE BOYS' REALM for youths who would like to join.

A general meeting of those who desire to become members should then be called, and a chairman elected.

It is a good plan to get a gentleman of some standing in the neighbourhood to occupy the chair, as this will prevent the conversation taking a frivolous turn, and will save a sad waste of time by keeping those who attend strictly to business. The local clergyman or minister would be an admirable chairman, and if he is willing, he might be elected president.

The proceedings at this first meeting of the swimming club consist of electing a secretary and treasurer, the drafting of rules, the fixing on the name of the club, and the subscription to be paid by the members. The club colours must also be settled upon. It is desirable that the name and colours of the club should not be the same as those of any similar organisation in the neighbourhood.



Master F. G. Bangs, Secretary of Buxton C.C. and Harcourt Rovers F.C.

tions in the neighbourhood, as this often leads to mistakes and unpleasantness. The entrance fee need not be more than

one shilling per member.

The captain and vice-captain are not elected; the honour of holding these coveted positions being swum for at the first meeting of the club. The member who proves himself to be the champion swimmer becomes captain, the second best vice-captain. A great deal of jealousy is saved by this method, and the best man is certain of becoming captain.

It is advisable to have about half a dozen vice-presidents, as there are many gentlemen who, together with the president, are looked to to help the club out of any financial scrapes it may be liable to. It will be seen that vice-presidents are very useful people to have about.

The next points to be settled are the headquarters of the club and the times of meeting. In the case of large towns and cities, the headquarters must of necessity be

the local baths

and special facilities are generally offered to bona-fide clubs by those who own the baths, whether they be in the hands of the district council or of private people. The ordinary price of admission to first-class baths is sixpence, but, by showing club cards, it can be reduced to a few pence. In some instances, for fourpence, a considerable reduction when a frequent bath is indulged in. The time of meeting must be fixed. It will be seen that vice-presidents are usually best.

At the close of the season the races should be held. Some outsiders, who understand what he is about, should be asked to handicap the members, to prevent favoritism. The value and nature of the prizes awarded, of course, depends on the size of the club's finances, but it is sometimes possible to induce a gentleman interested in swimming to present a cup. There is no harm in trying, anyway.

As a swimming club run on these lines, with an enthusiastic secretary to do the necessary clerical work and arrange races, etc., cannot be so easily broken up, it is a good plan to form such an organisation should see that they adhere to the principles laid down in this article.

THE END.

Master Ernest Smith, a clever swimmer and member of Halifax Swimming Club. On the left are some of the prizes he has won.

twelve hundred or more islands of varying sizes, and whose limpid waters, clear as crystal, fairly teem with fish of almost every species, around whose shores is a vast, silent forest of giant pine, undecorated as yet by the woodman's axe. Such is Lake Temagami.

Life in Camp.
The boys live in tents or log cabins, which they are taught to build for themselves, those of about equal age—or special chums—being together.

Boys are taught to swim, and soon become adepts at managing a canoe or rowboat. The water is shallow, with a firm, sandy bottom for a considerable distance in front of camp, and this advantage, combined with the fact that help is always near, practically eliminates danger.

A regular course of instruction in swimming is given, the certificate or medalion of the Royal Life-Saving Society being granted to those who learn something of the useful side of swimming, that it is necessary one should know before he can feel really at home in or on the water, or be well fitted to assist others in need.

When competent, examinations are held and awards given in the following order of merit:

1. Elementary Certificate.
2. Proficiency Certificate.
3. Bronze Medalion.
4. Silver Medalion.

The latter being given to those who have successfully passed all the tests. The holder of the medalion of the Society, and, in addition, are able to perform several aquatic feats, which include the ability to rise to the surface of the canoe under two minutes, to swim a quarter mile in ten minutes, to take a clean header from a height of ten feet, to back dive from a punt, to undersurf on surface of the water, forward and backward somersaults, motionless floating, or "torpedo" for twenty feet, and prove thorough ability to handle skiff and canoe.

Very few so-called expert swimmers are able to perform all these feats, yet it is astonishing when a lad can learn in a few weeks, careful tuition and a determination to succeed.

THE END.

"The Iron Hand," by Maxwell Scott, starts in "The Boys' Herald" This Week.

said, "and I have the honour to present to you our estimate for the Town Hall specification."

"The town clerk took the copy with a smile which broadened as he noted the evident discomfiture of Smithers. Mr. Smithers looked not only very disappointed but a trifle uneasy."

"Where's your brother, boy?" he asked. "Or—er—Wilmer?"

THE 4th CHAPTER. The Missing Title Deeds.

WILMER Dickson got back to the yard and the first person he met was Tom.

tell you. Every time anyone came down the yard I had been trying to attract their attention. The noise seemed to hear. Then at last I heard one of the men come into the stable, and I kicked for all I was worth, and old Tom Stokes came up and let me out. Now I recollect it is time I had breakfast. Come inside and tell me about the Town Hall job."

"Old Smithers was there, and asked where you were."

"Old scoundrel! I'll bet he knew better than anyone else!"

"Do you think that he—"

"He may have helped, but I doubt if he would have run the risk of being caught. All the same, he must have known about it, though I expect that Wilmer actually did the job. You see, Wilmer knew that I always go into the stable first thing, before anyone is about."

"How could he have known that?"

"Easily enough, by a ladder into the loft and then down again inside. Well, what happened next?"

"Smithers looked jolly uncomfortable. You see, I only got there on the stroke of the clock, and as he was the only other builder there, he had made up his mind that it was going to be a walkover for him. When he found we had got it he was awfully sick, and Longman chipped him a bit, which made him worse, and so he yelled out that we could never do it, and that we would not be able to get a guarantee. What is that?"

"Why, I have to show them that we have sufficient capital—ready money—to undertake the job."

"Oh, yes! Longman said that, and asked if you would go round and see him."

"Yes, I will," said Tom thoughtfully; "but I shall have to go and see the bank first. I'll go now. You had better go and mind the office, and let the boy go to his dinner."

Presently Tom followed his brother into the office, and commenced searching for something in his desk. His brow was wrinkled in a deep frown, and he looked worried.

"What's up, Tom? Look anything?"

"Yes; some papers. I thought they were in the safe, but I can't find them. Well, they are not here," he continued, as he shut the desk again. "Have you taken anything out of the safe?"

"Only the estimate, this morning. What have you lost?"

"The title deeds of the house and yard."

"Is it important?"

"Yes, it is. Look here. We have got to get the ready money for this Town Hall job. To do so I intended to raise a mortgage, from the bank, on this place, which is the only bit of property we have got left. But I caught it that without the deeds, and now they have gone. If we do not find them we shall lose the job after all."

"They went back into the house and again ransacked the safe, but without avail."

"I'll swear they were in here, saw them only a day or two ago. There was a large envelope."

"Perhaps the burglar—Wilmer—took them last night. He got the safe open."

"Not likely; they would be no use to him—or Smithers. They would not know that I wanted to raise money on them."

"What will happen if we do not find them?"

"It will mean a lot of legal business, which means time and money. It would be a matter of months before we could raise a mortgage, and the Town Hall affair is urgent. If I do not show them by Saturday that I am prepared to undertake it, they have the option of cancelling the contract and going to someone else."

Every nook and cranny was ransacked over and over again. The safe, the bedroom in which it stood, and the office were searched thoroughly by the two boys, but without success, and when they returned they retired to rest, they were both dejected, but not defeated.

The following days were anxious ones for the two boys. Tom paid his visits to the bank, and when they returned he looked, if anything, more worried than before. He also had an interview with his solicitor, from which, however, he derived but little consolation.

When Friday morning came he was almost in despair.

"Why don't you go and see Longman?" asked Dick. "He was very friendly. Perhaps he could do something."

"It is not likely," replied Tom. "but there is no harm in trying." And he went.

"I am afraid I cannot do much," he said; "but there is one thing perhaps I can do. Sit down here and write me a formal application for an extension of time—say, a week. There is a meeting of the council this morning, and I think I can get it granted. The mayor, as you know, is very friendly with Smithers, and will probably oppose it, but Smithers is not popular among the council generally, and I have no doubt you will get the extension if I can do. For the rest, I should advise you to advertise for the recovery of the deeds, and put the matter in the hands of a solicitor. If you think you will have anything to do with it you might be able to frighten him into giving them up."

In the afternoon Tom got a note from Mr. Longman, saying that the extension had been granted, and later on he met Smithers in the street.

Smithers was not in the best of tempers. He, of course, knew how things were going, and had made sure that, by the following day, the council would have passed his resolution, with Burton and Co., as a necessary consequence, would come to him to do the job, on what he flattered himself would be his own terms.

"You think you will have more than you can chew with the Town Hall contract," he said.

"All I can hear a lot of things in a little while this," said Tom gaily. "Only the other day I heard something which would put one of our most respected tradesmen into quod, if it were more generally known—as it may be," he added.

Smithers was silent. Tom could see that his heart had told.

"I wonder if he has the deeds?" he thought. "What is the matter with the Town Hall contract?" he asked aloud.

(Continued on the next page.)

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"The Iron Hand," by Maxwell Scott, starts in "The Boys' Herald" This Week. 76 Postage 6d. extra. WRENCH PICTURE POSTCARDS.



The crowd gave a loud cheer as they caught sight of Tom with the child in his arms. Another fireman ran up the ladder and took her from him.

"Report says you can't get a guarantee. Of course you can't. I told Longman so when you first got the contract. You two boys, who ought to be at school, seem to think you know more about building than a man who has been in the trade all his life. Why, you have sacked the only man in your business who knows anything about the trade."

"Meaning your friend, Mr. Wilmer, I presume?"

"He is no friend of mine," said Smithers sharply, with hesitation.

"What is he doing now?" asked Tom innocently.

"Drinking himself to death," said Smithers, thoughtfully.

"Oh, so you are still in communication," thought Tom.

"Yes. No I understood from the police," he said.

Smithers looked genuinely surprised, and presently went off, leaving Tom still uncertain as to whether he knew anything about the missing deeds.

THE 5th CHAPTER.

Tom and the Rescue—Smithers Goes in.

N the wall of the boys' bed-room was a curious-looking instrument, like a large electric bell. This was the fire alarm, connected by an electric wire with the headquarters of the Shepton Voluntary Fire Brigade, of which Tom was a member. Just before midnight the boys were awakened by three loud strokes from the bell. At the first one Tom sat up in bed, at the second he sprang to the floor, and before the third rang out he had opened the cupboard by the bedside and was taking out his uniform. Dick was also out of bed, and was groping for the matches.

"How many was it?" he asked, as he lighted the gas and began to get into his clothes.

"Three. I think," was the reply. "Wait a minute, and we shall see."

After an interval of half a minute the gong sounded again—two, two, three.

"Three," said Tom, pulling on his long boots. "That's the Bridge division, the worst part of the town."

He caught up his belt and ran downstairs, buttoning his tunic as he went, closely followed by Dick, who had put on his jacket and knickerbockers over his nightgown.

Together they raced up the street to the fire-station, which was brilliantly lighted. Herrick, the resident engineer, an old hand from the Metropolitan Brigade, had already lit his fire in the engine, and was getting out the hose-lead.

"You are first, Burton," he said. "It is one of these tenement houses at the bottom of Acres Lane. You had better cut on with the

real, and I will send on as soon as some more arrive."

The two boys ran off with the hose-lead to Acres Lane, by a narrow street leading down to the river. At the bottom were half a dozen high houses, the windows were lit out in flats. Smoke was pouring from the doorways and front windows of one of these.

A small crowd of neighbours and loafers from the public-houses had already gathered, and the inmates were rushing out into the road, half-dressed, and trying with them such articles as they had managed to lay their hands on in their sudden flight.

Tom, with the rapidly born of constant drilling, fixed his hose to a hydrant, and told Dick to turn on the water, planged through the aperture, and ran into the house.

The fire, he found, proceeded from a back room on the ground floor, which was already a blazing furnace, and though he poured water into its jaws, it seemed that it was already too far advanced for his

single jet to have any appreciable effect.

A faint cheer, from outside, announced the arrival of the escape.

"It is to be hoped that the steamer will come soon," said Tom to himself, "or the place is done for."

He was standing in the doorway of the room, playing the hose on the ceiling and walls in a vain attempt to prevent the fire spreading, when the ceiling and part of the floor above fell with a crash. The flames at once rushed through the aperture, and he saw that the room above was already well alight. It seemed but a matter of minutes before the whole house would be ablaze from top to bottom. The heat was already terrific, and, although soaked to the skin, he felt as if he were being roasted alive by these awful flames. Would this never come? It seemed hours, though in reality it was only a few minutes, before he saw helmets gleaming through the smoke around him. A moment later, with a roar louder than that of the fire, a huge column of water was flung into the furnace before him, and he knew that the steamer had got to work. Another fireman came and relieved him of his hose, and he retired to the street. The escape was now removed from the wall of the house, and was standing in the road.

"All out!" he called the escape fireman.

"Yes, I should hope so," returned the other.

"Look at it."

It was indeed a fearful sight. Smoke and flames were pouring from every crack and crevice, and the firemen were expecting every moment that the roof would fall in.

Tom caught sight of Dick, on the edge of the crowd, beckoning to him to come.

"That is where Wilmer lives," he said, as Tom approached.

"Yes," said a woman, standing near.

"Mrs. Wilmer went out just before the fire started, to fetch her druggist's hand, I expect. I wonder if she took the child with her? I haven't seen her brought out."

At that moment a frenzied woman rushed, screaming, through the crowd, and would have entered the burning house had not the firemen prevented her.

"My child—my child!" she screamed.

"It is Mrs. Wilmer," said Dick.

"There is no child there," said a fireman. "Everyone has been brought out of the house."

"Which room—quick!" asked Tom.

"The woman pointed to a window on the top floor, as yet untouched by the flames, but which was belching thick clouds of smoke.

went to the window myself. Besides, it is madness to try to enter now."

Tom made no reply, but swung the escape round, and, with the help of an onlooker, got in position and ran up the ladder.

The crowd gave a shout, partly of encouragement, partly of fear.

"Don't let him go!" exclaimed a woman. "Why, he is only a boy!"

"Bravo, Tom!" shouted Dick; but, like a good many others, he held his breath as he saw his brother disappear through the window.

Tom scrambled to the floor and stood by the window. The heat and smoke were stifling, and the room was perfectly dark save for a red glow in the further corner, whence came an ominous crackling sound.

The child was well known to him, and he called "Nellie, Nellie!" but there was no answer. Then he started to grope round the room in the darkness, but he was driven back to the window for air, but at the third trial he found the bed, and, spreading his hands over it, felt the limp form of the child.

The next moment he was at the window with her in his arms, just as, with an appalling crash, the floor of the room gave way and the flames surged up around him. He clutched the window-sill as he felt the floor giving way, and lunged there in sight of the crowd, who gave a loud cheer, when the child was seen by the child in his arms. Another fireman ran up the ladder and took her from him, and, clambering across the sill, Tom followed him down to the ground, amid the frantic cheers of the crowd. His tunic was considerably the worse for the adventure, but, beyond some slight burns on his hands and face, he was unharmed.

Little Nellie Wilmer lay upon the ground, very white and still, but, thanks to the brave young fireman, still living. By her side her mother knelt, weeping tears of gratitude, while the father, sober enough now, stood by insouciance.

The next morning Wilmer called at the office to see Tom Burton. He looked very sheepish, and fingered his hat nervously while he was speaking.

"I—I can't thank you enough for what you did last night, Master Tom," he began, in a broken sort of voice. "This here, he continued, pulling a packet, which Tom recognized as the missing deeds, out of his pocket, "is your property. I took it out of the safe the other night, when I broke in here like a burg-

lar. I thought it was the estimate. When I found what it was I only kept it to spite you, because you turned me off. It is the drink and has brought me to this—the drink and Smithers. He lent me money, and then put the screw on, and then swore he would sell me out. I did not give him information about the business. He'll do it, too, and—well, I suppose you will send for the police," he concluded piteously.

"What a miserable cur the fellow is!" thought Tom.

"Did Smithers tell you to break in here?" he asked aloud.

"Yes."

"And to tie me up in the lot?"

"Well, I don't think we need trouble the police. You come and make an affidavit to that effect, and, while I hold that, neither of us need fear any more trouble from Smithers."

Tom was right.

That night he had an interview with his trade rival, Smithers, who first refused him audience, but, not so denied, Tom forced his way into the man's presence. The angry words of defiance that rested on the contractor's lips were never uttered.

"The game is up, Smithers," said Tom coolly. "Wilmer, out of gratitude to me for rescuing his child, has told me everything. If you are wise you will fight me fair, or—I tell you—we will make a criminal prosecution of it if you like, and you shall be given every chance of defending yourself at the sessions. Wilmer's signed affidavit and his evidences will be brought against you. You can bluster it out if you prefer it. Come, what do you say?"

"Say! What could Smithers say? He broke down, and he was very valuable when Tom left him."

The Burtons got their contract. They fulfilled it to entire satisfaction, and so it came about that the old firm was restored to its old-time prosaige, while Smithers's concern received a severe blow, from which it never entirely recovered.

THE END.

(Next week a grand complete cricketing story, by Jack North, and a thrilling tale of the cycle track, by A. S. Hardy, will appear in THE BOYS' REALM, which will return to its usual size and price—sixteen pages, 1d.)

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