

AND XMAS WEEK ISSUE! SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS!

the Boys' Realm 1^d

Football Series

A BRIGHT AND UP-TO-DATE PAPER FOR ALL BRITISH BOYS AND YOUNG MEN.

186. VOL. IV.]

EVERY SATURDAY—ONE PENNY.

[SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23RD, 1905.]

TOM TARTAR AT SCHOOL.

Our Enthralling Tale of School Life.



JERRY DOES PENANCE!
WARD THROUGH THE VILLAGE MARCHED WOODEN
WITH SAM SMITH AND CAUTIOUS JOHNNY, AND A
OF OTHER BOYS BEHIND HIM. "PLAY UP, THERE!"
TOM TARTAR.

YOUR EDITOR'S XMAS

HOW H.E. AND HIS STAFF SPEND YULETIDE.
By THE SUB-EDITOR.

WHILST readers of THE REALM are celebrating Christmas in their own particular ways, those who are responsible for its production are having a real good time with their chief at his own ancestral home, situated within a twenty-mile radius of the great metropolis from which THE BOYS' REALM and its allied papers emanate. Your Editor has for many years past made a practice of inviting his staff to spend Christmas with him, and just for those few days business is set aside, the puckered lines on the foreheads smooth out, and broad and good-humoured smiles are to be noticed on every countenance.

Let me in a few words relate to my readers how we celebrated last Christmas. Picture to yourselves, my lads, a roaring fire in a lofty, richly decorated, and spacious apartment, and gathered round the fire, ensconced in luxurious easy-chairs, are your Editor and his staff. There is Harry Belbin, looking merrier than ever; there is Miss Nancy Price, the pretty young stewardess whose stories so delight the readers of "The Woman's World"; there is, sitting by her side, her arm entwined within that of Miss Price, the Editress of "The Woman's World" herself, looking as charming as ever. Then there is Mr. A. S. Hardy, disputing

In loud and resonant tones,

which can be heard above the general buzz of conversation, with the Football Editor of THE REALM as to the probable results of the coming great Cup-ties. Little Henry Turville can also be described, and by his side sits the sub-editor of our Tuesday companion paper. This tawny-moustached individual wears his usual sweet smile—the smile that won't come off. No matter how harassed he may be, there is always a grin on his face, and as we look at him now we see him bubbling over with good-humour and general mirthfulness. All the other members of the staff are present down to the office-boy himself, who feels that without him the proceedings would be a signal failure. In the very centre there is one figure which stands out above all others. It is your Editor, looking as happy as can be, smiling on the men who have helped him to make the journals he controls the premier papers of their kind in the land.

Even as we watch the glad scene there is a general rise, and the party adjourn to an apartment situated at the further end of the mansion, an apartment where it is rumoured Dick Turpin frequently laid down his weary self and slept after a prolonged ride from a distant part of the country. For the time being the room has been turned into a miniature theatre, and, under the direction of Mr. A. S. Hardy, who once was an actor, a select company of the staff commence the performance of

a pretty little playlet,

the argument being something after the following:

"A good old country parson has a pretty daughter, and an unscrupulous adventurer seeks her heart and hand. Of course, his suit is rejected, and the rascal threatens to kidnap the fair maiden. This the hero prevents, and the affair ends happily in the discomfiture of the villain and the triumph of virtue. Curtain!"

The country parson is impersonated by Mr. Hardy himself. His daughter is Miss Nancy Price. The villain and the hero are respectively Harry Belbin and Henry Turville, and when the dapper little hero dashes on from the wings at the psychological moment and rescues Miss Price from the toils of the brilliant and genial author of "Cockey and His 'Am-bone," the applause is tremendous.

The playlet over, the party adjourn to dinner. And such a dinner! There are doubtless many fine feasts partaken of at Christmas-tide, but none can compare with that to which your Editor and his staff sit down; and as the merry party partake of the viands, quips and jests are exchanged at one another's expense, and yet in such a good-humoured way that none can take the slightest offence.

Speedily the barons of beef,

the boars' heads, the game-pies, the profusion of turkeys, the plum-puddings and the mince-pies, not to mention the hosts of other delicacies, disappear, for the young men who work under your Editor are one and all blessed with hearty appetites. When the last course has been served, and been partaken of, the office youth, resplendent for the first time in a white shirt, hands round the cigars and cigarettes, and the various guests compose themselves in easy attitudes.

Then comes the toast of the evening, proposed by the Football Editor:

"The Chief—Heaven bless him!" he cries. And even as he does so, and the glasses clink together, there comes wafting into the room the

strains of the waits beneath the window, singing the good old Christmas melody:

"A fine old English gentleman—
One of the olden time."

Everyone recognises instantly how appropriate is the interruption, and with one voice they all exclaim:

"May they come in?"

H. E. nods his head, and the word is passed for the waits to be admitted. They are treated to a magnificent repast, and then, having eaten and drunk their fill, they entertain the assembly with song and joke till their stock is exhausted. They sing "The Mistletoe Bough," "The Roast Beef of Old England," and other popular Christmas songs, and the merry listeners are not slow to mingle their voices with those of the singers. Many a lusty chorus is bawled forth as the impromptu concert proceeds, and led by Mr. A. S. Hardy, the staff bursts out with the well-known chorus:

"For he's a jolly good fellow,
For he's a jolly good fellow,
For he's a jolly good fellow,
And so say all of us."

The "fellow" in this case, of course, being Your Editor.

At length the hat is passed round and the waits depart, and as they wend their way through the spacious grounds Your Editor and his staff hear, wafting on the breeze, the strains of

"God rest you, merry gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay"

the parting shot of the delighted itinerant musicians.

Dinner finished, the party adjourn and once more gather round the fire. Harry Belbin delights his conferees with some of his droll stories. It is a strange thing, but if there is a good story going the round friend Harry is sure to get hold of it. His pals know this, and so

everyone is silent,

especially the ladies, as he retails yet another yarn from his inexhaustible and inimitable store.

Then little Henry Turville comes to the fore and gives a splendid ventriloquist entertainment; after which Gus Fitzherbert, of "Jester" fame, breaks in with some of the latest jokes from the "King of Comics." The round of merriment and good fellowship seems endless. All are so engrossed in the enjoyment of the moment that none remember how time flies. Yet the hour is late, and we must leave the happy scene, content with our brief glimpse into the manner in which your Editor and his staff celebrate the festive season.

"Then give three hearty cheers, my lads,
For him who holds the helm,
For all the jolly fellows who
Have helped to make THE REALM—
"Hooray!"

THE SUB-EDITOR.

Football Results.

TENTH FOOTBALL CONTEST.

THERE were twenty competitors who only made one error apiece in connection with this competition, and the winning clubs scored 6 goals between them. A prize of 1s. 6d. has been sent to each of the twenty readers whose names and addresses appear below:

F. Miller, 97, Anthony Street, Liverpool; A. Kempster, 3, Regent Street, Leighton Buzzard; R. Ramsden, 1953, Breightmet, Bolton; L. G. Starnmore, 70, Harlesden Gardens, Harlesden, N.W.; J. Windross, 72, High Street, Worsbro' Dale, near Barnsley; E. Taylor, 58, Devonport Road, Stepney, E.; W. Johnson, 213, Chesterfield Road, Redley, Sheffield; H. Herbert, 12, Wallace Street, Warwick; T. Gardner, 5, Claxton Place, Shetleston; J. Bateheller, 7, Whitechapel Road, E.; F. Williams, 3, Wellington Terrace, Easton Road, Bristol; J. Nicholson, 27, Leopold Street, Gateshead-on-Tyne; G. Wilson, 9, Spencer Road, Bournemouth, E.; C. Thomson, Main Street, Sauchie, by Alloa, N.B.; P. Clifford, 104, Richmond Road, Paddington, W.; A. Scott, 26, Mount Road, Haverhill; L. Smith, 68, Kemp Street, Fleetwood; J. Meacham, 27, Napier Street, Burton-on-Trent; G. Couza, 270, Priory Road, St. Denys, Southampton; A. B. Greenman, 1, Salisbury Road, Watford, Herts.

Twenty-five consolation prizes were also despatched.

ELEVENTH FOOTBALL CONTEST.

In this competition there were five readers absolutely correct, and the winning teams scored fifteen goals. A cheque for fifteen shillings has been sent to each of the fortunate five. Their names and addresses appear below:

D. Neary, 13, Hardybotts, Wigan; H. Everett, 117, Cann Hall Road, Leytonstone; A. Keith, 12, Ruglan Street, Dundee; T. Davies, 130, Primrose Street, Tonypandy, Rhondda Valley; W. May, Swallow Nest, near Sheffield.

FOOTBALL



A FINE NEW FOOTBALL SERIAL
By CHARLES HAMILTON.

THE FIRST CHAPTERS RE-WITTEN BY THE AUTHOR.

WING to a sudden financial failure, Pat Clare's father has been obliged to remove that lad from Blackdale School. Mr. Clare attributed the disaster which he had suffered to his erstwhile friend, Abel Darrell, who had advised him to invest in a company which had gone smash. The man's name continually occurred in the wretched story which Mr. Clare told his son, a story of heartless villainy, poor Pat's father being the dupe. The blow was too much, and Mr. Clare's mind became unbalanced. Abel Darrell had a daughter, of whom Pat was very fond. He did not know whether Darrell was really a villain, and when he offered Pat a post in his office, the boy began to think that what had happened could not be his fault after all. "Perhaps he also had been misled," thought the boy.

Pat began his new life with the determination to be

cheerful and contented,

and to win his way upward by hard and steady work. It was not a pleasant change after his life at Blackdale.

With his new associates he was soon on good terms, as he usually was with everybody—with one exception. That was Glyn Elmhurst, Mr. Darrell's confidential secretary.

Elmhurst seemed to take a dislike to Clare from the first day of his coming to the mills; and although he made no open show of hostility, Clare could not fail to be aware of the feelings with which the secretary regarded him.

The fact was that Elmhurst looked on Pat as his rival for the hand of Madge Darrell. Hence his hatred of the boy. The Blackfield Ramblers asked Pat to play for them on an occasion soon after his change of life. He, of course, was only too willing to accede to the request.

The Attack on the Ramblers.

During the course of the game there was a deal of ill-feeling manifested towards the visiting team by some of the crowd. At length the onlookers got quite out of hand, and led by a rough, they poured over the barrier into the field of play. Quickly the Blackfielders made for the dressing-room, and awaited the coming onslaught.

A Clean Knock-out.

WITH equal indignation and dismay the Blackfield footballers in the dressing-room listened to the yelling of the Stoneham roughs outside. Pat, Nugent, and Oakley stood at the door ready to repel the rush they momentarily expected. But it did not come. The excitement of the crowd expended itself in yells and groans, which began to gradually die away.

Oakley drew a breath of relief. "They're going," he said. "It's a bit of luck for us that they haven't attacked us here. Phew! I shall give Stoneham a wide berth in future."

"A lot of unsportsmanlike rotters," said Nugent. "I suppose it's my fault for downing that chap. But this was certain to come sooner or later, for they lost their tempers as soon as they saw that their men had no chance of winning."

"That's right enough," replied Oakley. "But your punching that fellow's head gave them the excuse they wanted. If you had done as I told you we might have scraped through without such a fearful row. However, it can't be helped now, and the sooner we clear the better."

Nugent growled, but made no answer. The Blackfielders changed their things, and by the time they were ready to leave the uproar outside had quite died away, and they went out in a body. But they were not to get away so easily. Belton and a dozen or more roughs were waiting for their appearance, and as they came out the Barkley man came swaggering towards them.

"Don't be afraid," he said, with a sneer, as the Blackfield fellows drew closer together. "We ain't going to hurt you—"

"You're welcome to try!" rapped out Oakley. "Stop your jaw," exclaimed Belton savagely. "It's this bantam I've got a bone to pick with." He glared at Pat. "You hit me

when I wasn't looking. You don't dare stand up to me, man to man."

"Oh, yes, I do," said Pat promptly, "hiding would do you a lot of good, but I'm quite ready to give you one."

"All right. You shall have your chance now," said Belton, with an evil grin. He was years older than Pat, and much bigger than he, and he had no doubt of being able to defeat the young footballer in a stand up fight. And he meant to pay off old scores with a vengeance.

He began to take off his coat. Oakley caught Pat on the arm, looking very uneasy.

"I say, Clare, you'd better think before you take him on. He's a big brute, and as strong as a horse, and—"

"I think I can handle him," Pat smiled confidently. "Anyway, I'm going to try."

A ring was soon formed, and Pat, having doffed his jacket and vest, faced his adversary. His look was cool and calm, his eyes alert. He believed that he was fully a match for Belton, but he did not mean to give way a single point.

Belton began to attack, with an overconfidence that cost him dear. Pat gave ground at first, to test his adversary, and Belton pushed the attack harder and harder.

Suddenly Pat changed his tactics. Feigning with his right, and completely deceiving Belton, he let out with his left with a terrific crack upon Belton's ribs, and as the rough staggered back with a gasp, he followed it up with his right, planting his fist fairly in the savage face.

Belton tottered back and fell heavily to the ground.

"Bravo!" cried Oakley. "He won't be many more like that!"

And even Belton's friends grinned as they of them assisted the fallen champion to his feet.

His brow was black with rage, and he ground his teeth.

Like a bull he rushed at Clare, as soon as he had got his breath. He dealt blow after blow with lightning swiftness, but hardly one of them touched Pat. His guard was perfect, or nearly so. And soon Belton began to pant with his exertions.

And then, as his attack slackened, he "sailed in" with a will.

The ruffian gave ground, and Pat threw him up, and again and again his blows came home with terrible force.

At last an upper-cut from the right caught the rough on the point of the chin, and Belton fairly on his back.

He went down with a sounding crash, and there, staring up stupidly at Pat, dashed by severe punishment he had received.

The Blackfield fellows gave a delighted shout. A cleaner knock-out they had never before seen. And even Belton's companions grinned at the proof of Pat's fine display.

"Satisfied?" asked Pat quietly, as his adversary made no motion to rise, but lay blinking at him with evil eyes.

"Yes," grunted Belton. He staggered to his feet. His severe handling had taken all the nonsense out of him. "I give you best. I won't forget this."

And he slouched away with his associates, the Blackfield fellows walked towards the brake, which was waiting in the road to take them back to Blackfield.

"Scott, you did handle him a treat," exclaimed Oakley enthusiastically. "I fancy you know you were such a slogger. I fancy you as good with the mittens as at foot, saying a good deal. That chap will think before he tackles you again."

"He deserved a good deal more than he got," said Clare. "But if he lets me alone in future I shall be satisfied."

They bowed away through the early dusk towards Blackfield. Oakley was very thoughtful. Clare glanced at him curiously.

"A penny for your thoughts, old chap," said presently.

Oakley laughed. "I was thinking that we shouldn't have long in the Ramblers," he said. "Your years will never be overlooked in a

TWO FINE COMPLETE FOOTBALL STORIES NEXT WEEK!

Blackfield, The United are almost wholly represented from local talent, and I fancy that as Colonel Darrell sees you in your best form, he will collar you for the United."

Pat's eyes sparkled.

"To play for Blackfield, in League matches—would indeed be something to live for! But he shook his head.

"I'm afraid you overrate my powers, Madge," he said, with a smile. "I don't deny I should be jolly glad to play for the town, but I don't think I'm worth the salt would be. But I don't expect to make such an impression upon the manager of Blackfield United. But does Colonel Darrell, then, come to see your father?"

"Very often. As often as he can, I believe. I've taken more than one man from our side," said Oakley proudly. "And as a matter of fact, he is coming to see us play the following Saturday on our own ground."

Philip Nugent's eyes glistened as Oakley said this. For a time his old rivalry with Clare had been quiet, but it was not dead. Clare's skillful play, and the encomiums that were heaped upon him, had touched the old chord of jealousy in Nugent's breast. And he said to himself that when next Saturday came he would play as he had never played before, and if a United player were chosen from the ranks of the Ramblers, the chosen one should be Philip Nugent, not Pat Clare.

Unconscious of the thoughts in his cousin's mind, Clare thought with cheerful anticipation of next Saturday's match. His mood would have been less cheery could he have known of the unpleasant surprise that was preparing for him in Blackfield.

On Blackfield Moor—The Plot Against Pat. WHEN Mr. Darrell's carriage drove up to the mill on Tuesday morning, and the manufacturer alighted and walked into his private offices, there was an unusual shade of preoccupation upon his brow. Pat Clare noticed it, and wondered casually what it portended, without guessing that it had any reference to himself.

When Elmhurst followed the mill-owner into his study, and after a few minutes came out, with a peculiar smile told Clare that Mr. Darrell desired his presence.

Pat could see now that something was amiss, but he quietly obeyed the summons. He found Mr. Darrell looking more disturbed than ever. The mill-owner's eyes dropped before the young fellow's clear glance.

"You sent for me, sir?" said Clare, wondering.

"Yes, exactly," said Mr. Darrell. "I have something to say to you."

"Yes!"

"The fact is," said Mr. Darrell, uneasily, "I am taking into the heart of the subject at once—the fact is, Clare, that it concerns your friendship with my daughter."

Clare waited in silence for his employer to continue. It did not require much keenness to see that the mill-owner was performing a task he was repugnant to him, and that, as a matter of fact, another was speaking through his mouth. And who that "other" was Clare was not slow to guess.

His silence seemed to increase Mr. Darrell's uneasiness.

"I hope you will understand my meaning, Clare," continued Mr. Darrell, still not looking at him. "Under the circumstances, considering the extreme change in your position, it is inadvisable for your friendship with Miss Darrell to continue. I trust that you will—er—agree to this in mind."

Certainly, sir. May I ask if you have mentioned this to Miss Darrell?"

"Er—certainly not."

"Your wishes will, of course, be obeyed; but it would be very unpleasant to me if Miss Darrell should think that I was avoiding her of my own accord. We have known each other since we were children, sir, and it never occurred to me that there could be any harm in our friendship. But, of course," added Clare, with a bit of a pause, "my position is, my position is different since my father's failure."

"I will see that Miss Darrell does not misunderstand you," said the mill-owner hastily. "That is all, Clare. You may go."

Clare went out quietly. He went back to his study, not heeding—and, in fact, not seeing—Elmhurst's glance of triumph.

His enemy had hit him hard this time, and he was perfectly well whence the blow had come. He did not once glance at Elmhurst.

In his changed fortunes he had two consolations—left—the game he loved; and Madge's friendship. The latter he must now resign; and, in spite of his courage and fortitude, his heart was very heavy.

He usually saw Madge at least twice in the week, but now the days passed without the meetings he had always looked forward to. He gave up all his spare time to training, and so kept himself busy; but he missed her sorely.

One day he received from her towards the end of the week, asking him why he never came to Fern House, showed pretty clearly that the mill-owner had not kept his word about explaining to the girl.

It was Clare's custom to take a walk on Blackfield Moor after lunch every day, extending it as far as time permitted. The day after receiving Madge's note—which happened to be a Sunday—he was striding along the moorland path at the usual hour, when he heard the tinkle of a bicycle bell, and Madge came by. As she passed him she stopped and dismounted.

Pat raised his cap, colouring a little.

"What have you not replied to my note, Pat?" asked Madge.

"I was going to do so to-day, Madge. The fact is, I didn't know exactly what to say. Has Mr. Darrell told you what he said to me the other day?"

"No. What was it?"

"That our friendship must come to an end." Madge looked at him in wonder.

"Why?"

"We belong to very different stations now," said Pat, with a faint smile. "You are the richest heiress in Blackfield, and I am only a poor clerk. I suppose Mr. Darrell is right; though it seems very hard."

"The girl's face was very troubled.

"My father is acting under someone else's influence," she said, in a low voice. "I have thought for a long time that—" She checked herself. "I am sorry, Pat—I shall speak to papa. But of one thing you may always be quite certain, and that is, that nothing in the world will ever make any difference to the friendship, even if we do not see each other so much."

And she held out her hand frankly, and Clare clasped it, his eyes glistening. And at that moment there was the whirr of a bicycle, and Philip Nugent went by on his machine. He gave the two a single glance, and Pat, who looked up as he passed, was startled by the malignity in his eyes. He knew at once that Nugent imagined he had surprised a rendezvous.

Madge said good-bye to Clare, and rode slowly homeward.

When Pat returned to the mill he noticed that Nugent avoided him.

"Are you coming for a sprint to-night, Phil?" Pat asked when the day's work was ended, and they were putting on their coats to go.

stopped, as a reflection struck him. Someone was evidently at the hut now, and it might be scarcely safe to venture there. Honest folk were hardly likely to be there at that hour.

"But I can see who's there before I go in," he reflected. "I shall get soaked if I stick here."

And he strode on, tramping through the rotting furze, and in a few minutes reached the old cabin. The doorway, from which the door was long since gone, was unsheltered, and he was able to look without difficulty into the interior.

He could scarcely restrain an exclamation of surprise.

The flickering light of a candle stuck on a ledge fell on two men. One of them was unknown to Nugent, but the other he knew well. It was Glyn Elmhurst, the private secretary of Mr. Darrell.

What was he doing here, at such a place, at such a time? Nugent wondered. And, his curiosity getting the better of his sense of honour, he drew nearer to hear what the secretary was saying. But it was the other man's voice he heard as he came within earshot.

"Yes, but what did you ask me to meet you in this outlandish hole for, Mr. Elmhurst?"

"I didn't know it was going to rain, of course," replied the secretary. "Still, you needn't mind that when there is a ten-pound note to be earned."

The other's eyes sparkled. He was a short, thick-set man, evidently possessed of great muscular strength. Nugent could not see his face clearly, but the voice was that of a young man.

"What's the game, then?"

"An easy one for you. You play outside-left for the Bentham team to-morrow at Blackfield."

"Yes. What about that?"

OUR SIXTEENTH GRAND WEEKLY Football Competition.

(Which Every Reader Can Enter.)

Five Shillings a Goal for a Correct Forecast. For This Week Only.

Rules and Conditions.

The following Southern Division League Matches will be played on SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30th, and Your Editor offers a Prize of FIVE SHILLINGS for every goal made by the winning teams, and the total amount will be paid to the reader who most correctly forecasts the result of the matches to be played on that date.

What readers have to do is to strike out the Names of the Teams they think will lose. If they think any match will result in a draw, do not strike out either name.

All the forecasts must be made on the Competition Form given herewith. Competitions, marked on outside of envelope "Sixteenth Football Contest," should be sent to the Competition Department, THE BOYS' REALM Office, 7, Waltham Street, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C., so as to reach us not later than First Post Saturday, December 30th. Any forecasts received after that cannot be included in the week's competition, and will be disqualified. The Editor's decision must be considered FINAL, and all competitors who wish to enter for the Prizes offered can only do so on this understanding. In the event of the winning forecast being sent in by more than one reader, the weekly prize will be added to or divided at the discretion of the Editor. Another Competition will be announced Next Week.

THIS IS THE FORM. CUT IT OUT.

Norwich City v. Plymouth Argyle.
New Brompton v. Queen's Park Rangers.
Portsmouth v. Fulham.
Swindon v. West Ham United.
Millwall v. Brighton and Hove Athletic.
Tottenham Hotspurs v. Reading.
Brentford v. Southampton.

Name _____
Address _____

"No," said Nugent roughly. They walked homeward in grim silence. When they were almost at the door of their lodgings Nugent stopped suddenly.

"Mr. Darrell forbade you to meet Madge," he said abruptly.

"How do you know that?" ejaculated Pat. Nugent gave a shrug.

"I do know it. And I know how much you regard his orders. I have a mind to—"

He paused.

"You are quite mistaken," said Pat quietly. "The meeting you saw to-day was by chance."

"You don't expect me to believe that?" sneered Nugent scornfully.

The blood rushed to Pat's face. "The blood better part here," he said. "I don't want to quarrel with you, Phil."

"Suit yourself about that. I'm sick of you and your hypocritical friendship, anyhow."

Pat bit his lip.

"You shall not be troubled with either in the future," he said.

And he turned away.

"Have you heard of the Ramblers' latest recruit?"

"A chap named Clare?"

"Yes. He is the best stuff the Ramblers have ever played, and I give you my word that he will simply walk over you!"

"Will he?" said the other, evidently nettled. "I suppose you didn't fetch me here to tell me that, did you?"

"Yes. And something else. You want to beat Blackfield to-morrow?"

"Of course; especially as I have some money on the result."

"All the better. You can take it from me that you won't win unless Pat Clare is got rid of early in the game. That's plain speaking."

The other was silent.

"On Saturday Colonel Darrell, who is our manager—I suppose you know I play for United?—is going to see the Ramblers play. He's been talking a lot about wanting new blood in United, and I fancy that if he sees Clare at his best he'll be greatly taken with him. I don't want Clare in the team. To put it plainly, if you lay him out on Saturday you will save your side and do me a big favour. You needn't hurt him too much—only just put him out of the game. And there's a ten-pound note at the end of it. If rumour speaks truth, you have done business of this kind before."

"That's neither here nor there. I don't see why I shouldn't oblige you, Mr. Elmhurst. We simply must win to-morrow, or I shall be a liver out of pocket. Our chaps have been talking a lot about this Clare, and I should like to take him down a peg."

"It's a bargain, then?"

"Yes. But keep it dark. If a whisper of it got out I should get my neck broken by my own side, I reckon."

"Mum's the word, of course! I—Great Scott!"

"What's the matter?"

"I saw a face! Come on!"

The two men rushed out of the cabin and stumbled over Nugent, who had hesitated whether to take to his heels. But he had no time to make up his mind. Elmhurst's grip was upon him, and he was dragged into the light.

"Why, it's Nugent! What are you doing here, you rat?"

Nugent jerked himself free.

"I came to get shelter from the rain," he said calmly.

"And you have heard what I was saying to Sharp?"

"Every word."

Elmhurst glared at him, at a loss what to do; but Nugent went on coolly:

"You need not be alarmed. I have no intention of giving you away."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that I hate Pat Clare as much as you do, and that if he is fouled to-morrow and put out of the game, nobody will be more pleased than I," said Nugent, with a savage laugh. "So you need not be afraid of my giving him any warning."

Elmhurst looked at him curiously, and then broke into a short laugh.

"Ah, yes, I forgot. You have no more cause to wish him well than I have. It's all right, Sharp."

Sharp was looking at Nugent a good deal like a dog about to spring. At Elmhurst's words he nodded rather sullenly. He was far from pleased to have his intended villainy known to a third person, even though there was no danger of betrayal.

"All right!" he growled.

"You won't fail me, Sharp?" said Elmhurst, as the Bentham forward turned up his coat-collar to go.

"No; but when shall I see you again?"

"No need to see me. It won't do for us to be seen to meet, and I don't want to come here again."

"Good enough!"

And Sharp departed. Soon after, Elmhurst and Nugent quitted the cabin on the moor, and walked back to Blackfield together. Neither spoke on the way. Each was busy with his own thoughts. There was shame mingled with the satisfaction Nugent felt when he thought of the morrow's match; but he did not repent.

Foul Play.

THE rain ceased before midnight, and the morning dawned bright and sunny, as Pat Clare was glad to note when he looked out of his window. He had heard the drops pattering outside when he went to bed, and had woken up several times to think of the football-ground.

He looked forward to the afternoon with a great deal of pleasure. He knew that Colonel Darrell was coming to see the match, and it was more than probable that he would bring Madge with him.

The colonel was Mr. Darrell's brother, but as unlike the plump, prosperous manufacturer as can be imagined. He was tall and straight, with grizzled hair and moustache, and the manner of a martinet.

Withal he had a thoroughly kindly heart, and he was a staunch devotee of the great game. He was manager of Blackfield United Football Club, and the town's fame in the football field was as the apple of his eye.

Clare knew him very well, the colonel, who lived in Blackfield, having frequently brought Madge over to Blacklake in the old days to see the school matches there.

It would seem like old times again to play with Madge looking on; and besides, Pat had not forgotten Oakley's words about the colonel's purpose in coming to see the match. The thought of being asked to play for the town made his heart beat.

He noticed that Philip Nugent avoided him that morning, and was grimly silent when they came together. That, however, did not surprise him after the words they had exchanged the previous night.

The old ill-feeling had broken out more bitterly than ever. Pat had hoped that it was gone for good, but it had only slumbered. There was no ill-will in Pat's heart, but he realised that he must expect nothing else from Philip Nugent.

But he was far from dreaming of the thoughts that were in his cousin's mind. He had not the faintest suspicion of the treachery planned for the afternoon. If he had been warned of it he would probably have scouted the idea.

He was early on the ground in the afternoon. There was a big crowd present, as there always was, to see the Ramblers play. Blackfield Mills were there almost to a man. The kick-off was to be at 2.30. The Ramblers were in high spirits, anticipating a good game.

"What are the Bentham players like, Oakley?" asked Clare, as he met his captain in the dressing-room.

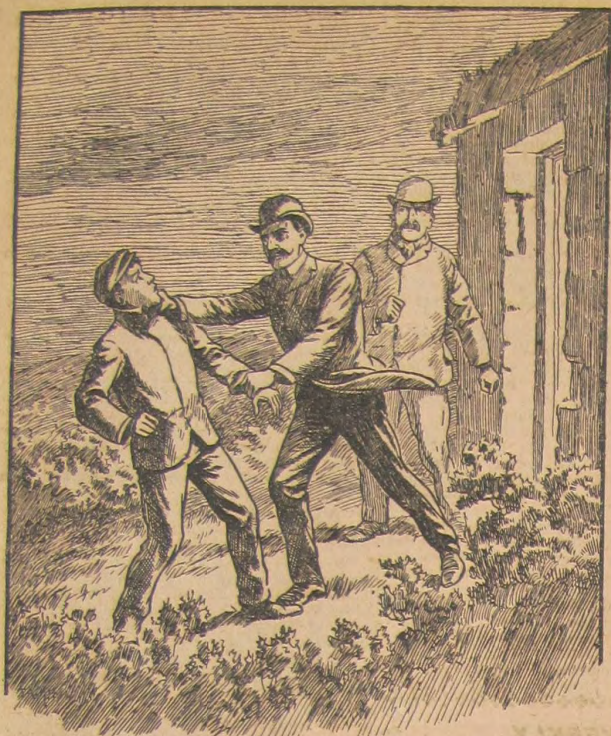
"Tough," replied Oakley cheerfully; "a hot lot. Nothing like the Cherubs we played last Saturday, though. Tough, but they play fair. It will be a good game."

"I'm glad of that. Have you seen Colonel Darrell?"

"Yes; he's sitting on the right as you go in. You'll see him."

"Is he alone?" asked Clare carelessly—a care-

IN A FORTNIGHT'S TIME a new story relating the further adventures of Tom Tartar will commence. Look out for it!



Elmhurst's grip was on the cavedropper, and he was dragged into the light. "Why, it's Nugent!" he ejaculated in surprise.

at the right moment he let Oakley have the ball in a long pass. The backs had been deceived, and Oakley was clear for the goal. He sent in a quick, high shot which puzzled the goalie, and there was a roar round the field.

"Goal!" Colonel Darrell joined in the burst of cheering.

"By Jove, Madge, that is excellent!" he exclaimed. "It was Oakley kicked the goal, but Pat Clare who gave it him."

Oakley, who was as generous a fellow as ever breathed, slapped Clare on the back as they lined up again. He was full of satisfaction.

"It was your goal, Clare!" he exclaimed. "It's a good beginning."

Nugent looked quickly at Sharp. The Bentham outside left was biting his lip. He had intended never to let Clare pass him, but so far he had failed. He understood Nugent's look, but made no sign.

But he had made up his mind, and when the play recommenced he was on the look-out for a chance of fouling the home right-winger.

Price obtained the ball, and the Bentham forward line broke away, and, passing from one to another, brought the leather right up to the field. The home backs were equal to the occasion, however, and once more the ball was sent to mid-field.

Nugent was upon it the next moment, but, tackled by the Bentham halves, he was compelled, much against his will, to pass in to Clare, who trapped the ball and raced away.

The next moment he was rolling over on the turf, fairly charged off his feet by Sharp, who fell also with the force of the impact.

A Bentham forward had the ball in a second, and flew with it, dribbling it right into the home half, and by a combined effort the visitors broke through the defence and scored a goal.

Pat Clare picked himself up. The charge was not exactly a foul, but he felt that the Bentham winger had used a spiteful force that was quite uncalled for, and he resolved to keep his eyes open for further tricks from Sharp.

A lurking grin on Sharp's face added to his conviction that the forward had marked him, and meant mischief.

The score was equal now, and there seemed hardly a pin to choose between the two teams. They lined up again, and Oakley kicked off, and the home forwards followed that up by an immediate advance in force.

By sheer fine play they worked their way forward, leaving the Bentham front line nowhere, and scattering the defence of the halves.

Nugent had the ball, and, again, against his will, he was forced to let Clare have it. Clare was instantly tackled by a full-back, who more by luck than anything else robbed him of the ball and drove it to the eagerly waiting forwards.

Clare, however, was not to be denied. He seemed to move like a streak of lightning, and he was on the ball again before the enemy. He was just kicking when Sharp sped up and kicked out blindly.

Clare gave a cry of agony and staggered, and fell heavily to the ground.

For the kick of the Bentham winger had struck him just above the ankle with terrible force, and all his courage could not suppress the groan that rose to his lips as he writhed upon the ground.

The referee blew his whistle, and the game stopped. The players gathered round Clare, and Oakley knelt beside him.

"Badly hurt, old fellow?"

"I—I'm afraid so," groaned Pat. "You'll have to finish without me, Oakley."

Oakley's brow darkened, and his eyes flashed fire.

"You cowardly hound!" he cried, with a fiery look at Sharp, who stood looking on with an ill-concealed grin. "You aren't fit to play with any decent team!"

"It was an accident," growled Sharp. "You did it on purpose. I never saw anything so deliberate. Where's the referee?"

"No need for the referee," broke in Price grimly. "I saw it clear enough, and I tell you our side don't want to win by foul play. Sharp, you'll get off the ground instantly, do you hear?"

Sharp scowled like a demon.

"It was an accident."

"Accident he hanged! You're a foul player, and this isn't the first time you've disgraced your colours. It had better be the last, though, if you ever want to play for Bentham again. Get off the field!"

"But—"

"Get off, or I'll kick you off, and that's all about it!"

And the Bentham captain looked as if he would be as good as his word, and Sharp realised that he had to go. With a black scowl he turned and made his way to the exit, a storm of hisses and hoots greeting him from the crowd.

Oakley and Tarrant helped Pat to rise. He was as white as a sheet, but he had himself under control now, and he did not allow another sound of pain to pass his lips. But it was clear that he would be able to play no more.

His comrades helped him off the ground, and he sank into a seat in the dressing-room. There was a big bruise forming on his leg, and the pain was exquisite.

"I'm sorry, Oakley," he said, with a rather tremulous smile, "you'll have to finish a man short, but as Sharp is sent off you'll be equal."

"Only we've lost our best man, and they haven't," said Oakley ruefully. "Still, we'll do our best, Clare. Well, we must get back."

Madge had seen Pat helped off the field, and her own face had turned almost as pale as his.

"Pat is hurt, uncle," she said, in a low, tremulous voice.

"I'm sorry," said Colonel Darrell. "I wanted to see how he shaped. Sorry for Pat, too, of course," he added, smiling at his niece's reproachful look. "There, I'll go in and see how he is, Madge—just to please you."

"Thank you, uncle."

The colonel's name was "Open sesame" in the Blackfield football world. He left his niece and went into the dressing-room.

In a few minutes he was back.

"It's all right," he said, in reply to the girl's anxious glance. "Only a bruise, but Clare won't be able to play again."

"Poor Pat, how he will feel it!"

Yes, especially as his side will have a tussle to win without him, I fancy," said the colonel, his keen glance on the players again. Madge looked, too, but her thoughts were not on the field, but with Clare, and the match had lost most of its interest for her.

The two teams—each a man short—were playing the one-back game. But Bentham had gained an advantage, for, as Oakley had said, the home team had lost its finest player, while the visitors had several better than Sharp.

Half-time came before any change had been made in the score, the account being still one to one when the whistle blew for the interval.

"We shall have to buck up, you know," Oakley exclaimed, as he towelled himself. "They mean to win. How are you doing now, Clare, old chap?"

"Pretty rotten!" Clare confessed. "I shall have to ask for your arm bandage for the match is over, Oakley. I fancy I shall be for a day or two."

"That fellow ought to be jumped on the spot," claimed Oakley. "I wonder what made you pick on you? You haven't put his back any way, have you?"

"Not that I know of. I never saw him like to-day."

"It was such a deliberate thing. If somebody had put him up to do it," Nugent buried his face in a towel to wipe the colour that rushed to it. For the moment he wished that he had done the thing, and warned Clare of what he had done in the cabin on the moor; but the feeling was only momentary.

When the whistle called the teams to the field again it was gone, and he thought of nothing but distinguishing himself in Madge's eyes, and gaining the approbation of the manager of Blackfield United.

The home team were in for a struggle was evident from the start. Bentham attacked all the time, and the visitors were scarcely ever out of the home half. The Bentham goalkeeper flapped his arms, keep himself warm, having nothing to do. Rambler in goal, on the other hand, was upon to save as he had seldom been called upon before.

The visitors rained shots in upon him, but he gallantly stood the test; and at last he fisted out a ball, a home back got possession of it, and sent it out to Phil Nugent, who, for the first time since the interval brought the visitors' side of the half-way line.

The Bentham halves were upon him at once, but the Ramblers were making a valiant effort, and they backed him up well. He sent the ball to Oakley, who passed the Bentham second line, and drew the attention of backs upon himself. Then, instead of going in the ball, he changed his foot like lightning and let Nugent have it back.

The next instant Nugent had rushed it in, the ball was trying to climb up the back of the net.

"Well done!" cried Colonel Darrell, clapping his brown hands.

And the onlookers cheered vociferously.

(Another instalment of this exceptionally fine football story will appear on Saturday next. Your Editor wants you to do him the favour of showing this copy of THE REALM to a friend who does not at present read his paper. Will you do it?)



Sharp sped up and kicked out blindly. Clare gave a cry of agony, staggered, and fell heavily to the ground. The referee blew his whistle, and the game was stopped.