

HEALTHY STORIES OF FOOTBALL AND ADVENTURE!

The Boys' Realm 1^o

Football Series

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

No. 194. VOL. IV.]

EVERY SATURDAY—ONE PENNY.

[SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH, 1906.]

THIS FINE STORY IS NOW STARTING.

YOU SHOULD READ IT!



The = Blue = Crusaders.

Arthur S. Hardy's Enthralling New Football Serial.

Although this story is in the main a work of fiction, many of the chief incidents are founded on actual fact. Names of places and characters have been altered for reasons that are obvious; but the whole story has been constructed upon the history of one of the most famous of present-day football clubs, whose name is inscribed among the immortals who have won the English Cup. Those who are familiar with the histories of our famous League Clubs in South and North are quite aware of the fact that most of them have risen from very small beginnings. In this story Mr. A. S. Hardy will tell, in his most graphic manner, how a club founded by a few lads in a most modest way rose, in time, to be one of the most famous in the Kingdom, winning ultimately both the Football Association Cup and the Championship of the League.—YOUR EDITOR.



THE PENALTY KICK.

The ball rose, hit the underside of the crossbar, and plumped down wide of the athletic goalkeeper's reach. The Blue Crusaders had equalised right on the call of time.

THE 1st CHAPTER.
True to His Trust.

LICK!

Dick Melton stopped suddenly, and stood silent, still, with every nerve in his body quivering.

The silence and darkness of midnight brooded over the vast mill. And faintly, but quite audibly in the dead stillness, that sudden and unexpected sound had fallen upon his ears.

Motionless he stood, listening intently.

What could it mean?

He knew that it could have but one meaning. It was the sound of a key turning in a lock, and it came from the manager's office. There were burglars in the mill!

And he was alone! Cheerfully enough the young operative had taken the place of Dixon, the night-watchman, who was down with influenza. He had paced his lonely round, through the dark and deserted mill, thinking mainly of the impending football match between Millfield Nomads, of whom he was captain, and the Blackville Wanderers, who were coming to Millfield on the following Saturday.

But at that faint sound from the manager's office he came to a sudden sense of his position. Burglars—and he was alone!

But on the football field Dick Melton had learned decision and determination. It was only for a few moments that he stood, thrilling with the sudden sense of danger. Then he stole towards the door of the manager's office, noiseless in his silent shoes, and tried it with his hand. It opened to his touch, and a gleam of light struck upon his eyes. He drew a sharp, quick breath. A man was kneeling before the open safe, directing the light of a small lantern into the interior. He was alone, and Dick, with a smile of satisfaction, stepped into the room. The thief was slightly built, and did not look more than a match for the athletic young footballer, though evidently a good many years older.

It had struck Dick instantly that there was something familiar in the figure kneeling at the safe. As he stepped into the room, taking no further trouble to conceal his approach, the man leaped to his feet with a cry of alarm. The light showed a white, startled face and gleaming angry eyes. And the young operative started back in boundless astonishment.

"Mr. Cecil!"

The young man was glaring at him. He seemed undecided whether to spring at the throat of the watchman. The lad returned his gaze, his astonishment gradually giving place to disgust and contempt.

All Millfield knew that Cecil Fenwick, the nephew of James Fenwick, the great mill-owner, was a spendthrift and a ne'er-do-well. Dick knew that he was an idle, dissipated young man, but he had never dreamed of anything like this. But he could not doubt the evidence of his own eyes. He had discovered the young man in the very act of rifling his uncle's safe, and there could be no mistake about it.

"Hang you," said Cecil Fenwick at last, "what are you doing here?"

"I'm taking the place of Dixon, the night watchman," replied Dick. "I'm sorry to see you doing this, sir."

"You look a sensible lad. I suppose you know what this means to me. What will you take to keep your mouth shut?" said Cecil hoarsely.

Dick flushed hotly.

"Look here, it's no good my pretending anything; you've caught me in the act, and I may as well own up. I'll give you a hundred pounds to say nothing about what has happened here to-night," said Cecil, coming closer to the lad in his eagerness.

"I wouldn't touch your money," said Dick scornfully, "even if I knew where you got it from, and I don't."

"Will you promise me to say nothing? Look here, I tell you my uncle wouldn't thank you for giving him such information. You can be pretty sure of that. I've done you no harm, either. It won't benefit you to ruin me."

In spite of his disgust, Dick could not help feeling a sentiment of compassion for the wretched man, whose face was working and twitching with terror and eagerness. After all, what should he do? Cecil Fenwick saw the signs of yielding in his face, and went on rapidly.

"Look here, I'll make it two hundred pounds, and I'll stand your friend, too, and you know how much influence I've got with my uncle. What do you say?"

"I won't betray you," said Dick slowly, "if you put back in the safe all you have taken from it, and promise me solemnly never to do anything like this again."

Cecil looked at him in silence for a moment, a half-smile on his face.

"All right," he said abruptly, "it's a bargain. I hadn't time to take anything before you came in. You can lock up the safe. I'll go—"

"Stop a minute," said Dick quietly. "I cannot take your word. I shall have to search you and see if you speak the truth. I'm taking a big responsibility in this, and I cannot afford to run risks."

Cecil Fenwick's face was convulsed with rage. "You—you low hound, how dare you?" he hissed.

He made a swift step towards the door. Dick Melton sprang into his path.

"I'm certain now, Mr. Fenwick, that you have the money about you," he said quietly. "Will you give it up, or shall I summon help and—"

He got no further.

Like a tiger the young man sprang at his throat.

STORIES of the FOOTBALL FIELD



Dick Melton's Luck.

A STORY OF FACTORY AND FOOTBALL.

By CHARLES HAMILTON,

Author of "Football Fortune," etc.

Dick staggered back before the sudden ferocious attack, and Cecil, gripping his throat with both hands, strove to hurl him to the floor.

But quickly the lad recovered himself. He gave grip for grip, and Cecil Fenwick was forced back. His grasp was unloosed, and Dick slowly but surely bore him backwards. With a savage curse, Cecil dashed his fists into the stern, determined face of the young operative. Dick reeled for a moment, half blinded by the blows, but then his own right fist came into play. Fiercely he struck, and Fenwick gave a sharp cry as the iron-like knuckles crashed into his face. Then, drawing back his arm quickly, Dick repeated the blow with still more force, and Cecil Fenwick went to the floor in a heap.

The young operative stood looking down upon him with flashing eyes.

"Have you had enough, you scoundrel?" "Let me alone!" groaned Cecil. "I give in! Oh, I'll have a fearful revenge for this!"

"Will you? We shall see!"

Dick Melton stepped to the door. Cecil divined his intention, and his rage instantly changed to pitiable terror. He threw himself in the young operative's way, and grovelled at his feet.

"For mercy's sake don't summon the police!" he gasped. "Think what it means to me! I'm only a young man, and prison— Will you ruin my whole life? I didn't mean what I said just now. I swear it. For pity's sake let me go!"

Dick stopped, irresolute. Would he be doing wrong to let the wretched man go? He hardly knew. This lesson would probably keep the ne'er-do-well from evil courses in the future, for he was a greater coward than rogue. And what would be James Fenwick's feelings when his nephew was denounced to him as a thief?

"For pity's sake!" groaned Cecil, in an extremity of terror.

"I'll do it," said Dick abruptly. "If I'm doing wrong, Heaven forgive me!"

He searched the wretch, and took away the roll of banknotes he had stolen from the safe. He replaced it, closed the safe and locked it, and then pointed to the door.

"Go!"

"The key!" stammered Cecil. "I must replace it where—where I found it, or my uncle will suspect—"

Dick, after a moment's hesitation and doubt, returned him the key.

"Now get out of my sight."

And the detected scoundrel was only too glad to go. He went, with pale fear in his face, and rage and hatred and bitter disappointment in his heart. Dick Melton, in spite of his generosity, had made a bitter enemy that night—an enemy who would lose no opportunity of revenging himself. But of that Dick did not think as he paced his lonely round in the silent mill. One question troubled him. Had he done right in allowing the thief to escape, and promising to keep the secret? Certainly, it was too late to think about that now, but still the question troubled him.

THE 2nd CHAPTER.

A Bitter Enemy.

"HURRAH! Good old Dick!"

The shout burst from five hundred throats.

Millfield Nomads were playing Blackville, and round the field were gathered an excited crowd of operatives to watch the tussle.

Most of Dick Melton's fellow-workers from the Fenwick Mills were there, and they watched their comrade's fine football with high glee.

Blackville Wanderers were a pretty strong team, but it was clear from the kick-off that they had met their match in Millfield Nomads.

And it was equally clear that the life and soul of the home team was their young captain and inside-right, Dick Melton.

It was a goal, the first of the match, from the foot of Dick Melton, that elicited the burst of cheering that rang over Millfield Common.

"Good old Dick!"

And Dick's face was flushed with pleasure as he walked back to the centre of the field. He loved the great game with heart and soul, and he was never so happy as when he was playing it. And the cheers of his townsmen spurred him on to fresh efforts.

A tall, well-dressed gentleman, somewhat con-

spicuous as he stood among the plainly-clad mill-hands, was watching Dick's play with keen interest. He joined heartily in the cheer that greeted the goal, and after that his eyes scarcely left Dick for a moment till half-time.

"By Jove," he said to himself in the interval, "all I've heard about young Melton is quite correct. No mistake about that. And my idea of strengthening the Albion from local talent is a good one. As Hallam says, something will have to be done, and if we could get that young chap to sign on for us, I fancy we shall be all right. I'll watch him a bit further, and then speak to Hallam about it."

And Joseph Ashburn, manager of Millfield Albion Football Club, and a very well-known figure in League football circles, devoted his whole attention to the game when the young players came in again.

In the second half, the visitors, baffled at every turn by the home team, began to play roughly, and the Nomads presently adopted the same tactics, and the game assumed a somewhat rough-and-tumble aspect. But there was one player who played "the game" all the time, and did not allow himself to be provoked into retaliation. That one was Dick Melton. He played good, sound, clean football, and he had his reward, too, for the Wanderers could do nothing with him.

Many a time Manager Ashburn grinned with delight as he saw the young Millfield forward going through the Blackville halves and backs like a knife through cheese, and heartily he joined in the cheers that greeted Dick's second goal, and then his third. And when the match ended, with Millfield three to one, the mill-hands crowded into the field to shake Dick by the hand, and to shout out their triumph; and Mr. Ashburn walked back to Millfield with his mind made up.

Dick Melton had noticed the manager of the Albion standing in the crowd, and that had perhaps spurred him on, but he was far from thinking of what was in Mr. Ashburn's mind. That Mr. Ashburn had come there specially to see his play he never dreamed.

The game over, and having changed his clothes in the little dressing-ten, Dick Melton walked homeward. He was in a thoughtful mood, as he often was lately. He had not forgotten the affair at the mill, and he had wondered whether anything would come of it. He knew that Cecil Fenwick had gone away hating him bitterly, and it seemed to him that lately he had seen Cecil's hand in several things that had happened.

Mr. Bell, the manager of the mill, a hard and cold man, had been especially snappish to him for the last few days, and it looked to Dick as if the manager was seeking an excuse to discharge him. He was doubly careful to give no cause for such a step, but he felt that if the will was there, the way would not long be wanting. Then Mr. Fenwick, with whom, of course, he very seldom came in contact, had frowned on him in passing through the mill, and as the millowner was usually the most urbane of men to his employees, Dick could not help thinking that the great man had heard something against him.

Trivial circumstances, perhaps. But to a mill-operative, to whom being out of work for a single week is a terrible happening, not so trivial. Dick had not only himself to think of. His father was long dead, and he was the sole support of his mother. Lately more than one mill had been shut down in Millfield, and if he fell out of employment, he knew that it might be long, long before he got in again.

In the excitement of the football-match he had forgotten his worries, but they came back blackly into his mind as he walked homeward in the winter dusk. Suddenly looking up, as a figure came unsteadily into view, he recognised Cecil Fenwick.

Fenwick recognised him at the same moment. He came towards Dick instantly, with a lurching gait, that showed that he had been drinking. Dick tried to avoid him, for he saw in the evil, drink-flushed face that Cecil was bent on a quarrel; but the young man did not mean him to escape. He planted himself full in Dick's path.

"You young hound! Stop, will you?"

"I'm in a hurry to get home, sir!" said Dick civilly.

"Don't answer me, you insolent puppy! I've had enough of your cheek! I told you I'd be

revenged! And so I will! I am

you out of the mill!" The drunk-
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bitterly.

"You're sorry now you ditched
beters—eh?" sneered Cecil.
"No," said Dick steadily. "I
I prevented you from robbing
And you had better look-out
desperately. "You may force me
the whole story in self-defence!"
Cecil grinned.
"Do so, and be locked up for
can you prove, you fool? The
the mill that night I was out of
How are you going to prove I was
you fool? You had your chance
didn't take it! Now you are
you say a word, I'll have you
for libel, by James!"

Dick felt sick at heart. He knew
true that he could do nothing. On
chuckled as he saw the expression
operative's face.
"Feeling sorry for yourself?"
"I'll make you sorrier yet!"
"You coward! You cur!"
bitterly.

"Here! Better language!"
the light came he carried, Cecil
fairly across the face with it.
That was the last straw.
enough, and now he gave way to
Springing forward, he wrenched
Fenwick's hand, and elashed him
face, and then slashed again and
gave a wild yell, and staggered
his footing on the edge of the
was a mighty splash, and the
Mills was half-buried in horrible
Y
slime. Leaving him gasping and
Dick tossed the cane over the hedge
away.

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Mr.
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young
fully.
"Yes. You will take a week's
of notice, and leave the mill
said the manager. "Good-morning,
"May I ask why I am discharged?"
"I will tell you," broke in the
a loud voice. "You are disre
insolence and ruffianism! You
assaulted my nephew on Saturd
Dare you deny it?"
"He attacked me first, sir. I
myself!"
"Pooh! Nonsense! Why should
you, a mill-hand? Don't tell
word, sir! When I saw the
upon my nephew's face, I determi
you to prison. Upon reflection, I
fied with discharging you, but I
any future employer whom you
us shall know your true charact
Not a word!" thundered the
"Go!"
He l

And Dick went. He could do
He drew his money, the miserab
shillings that was all the barrier
and hunger, and left the mill, w
faltering steps. At a little dist
great gates he came face to fa
Fenwick.

"Got the sack?" grinned his
with enjoyment at the lad's d
"I told you so! I fixed it for
not done with you yet; I'm goi
out of Millfield. Try and get
this town and see the kind of
get, that's all!" He rubbed his
out and aching face. "You do
those blows you gave me cost
Dick was too dispirited to be
miserable by his enemy's spiteful
did not answer, but gave Cecil
that stung him, and made him
when the lad had passed.

"So he still carries his head
Cecil. "I'll bring it low enoug
he tries to get another job, and
marked by every employer in
violent and dangerous character"
"I'll drive him from the town!
safer, too. He would not be
spoke out now; but things may
future, and—and then he might
to."

Dick's unexpected return to his
Mrs. Melton what had happened.
nothing to her before, hoping
But he wasted no time. At once
weary, weary hunt for employ
it in vain. That day and the
next. Everywhere he went he
the same answer. No one was
some of the places, he thought,
had a chance. But an enemy
been there before him. Cold loo
pish answers warned him of it.
had kept his word.

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"DAVE THE BARGEBOY," by David Goodwin, author of "The Boy Bargeowners," will start THE REALM in a fortnight's time.

What was to be done? Leave Millfield? Leave his home, all his friends, his football club, all the scenes he had ever known? There was nothing else for it, and sadly enough he made up his mind to the inevitable. But on Thursday morning came a gleam of light. The post brought a letter from Mr. Ashburn, the manager of the Albion Football Club. It contained simply a request that Dick would call at the manager's house that evening. Dick read and wondered; and his heart beat with hope. "What can it mean, Dick?" said his mother. "You do not know Mr. Ashburn?"

"No, mother. He came to see our match at Saturday. I don't know what he can want with me. But I know he's a kind-hearted man, and he may have heard somehow that I am out of work, and may mean to give me a job at the football ground."

And Dick presented himself at the house of Mr. Ashburn, little dreaming of what awaited him. He was shown into the dining-room, where Mr. Ashburn was seated with a man whom Dick recognised at once as Hallam, captain and centre-forward of the Albion.

"Glad to see you, Melton," said Mr. Ashburn, shaking him cordially by the hand. "You've seen Mr. Hallam before. We have been talking about you. Mr. Hallam quite agrees with my opinion, that you would make a valuable recruit for the team. Are you willing to join the Albion and play for Millfield?" Dick almost staggered. He could hardly believe his ears.

"Play for Millfield!" he said faintly. "Yes, my boy," said the manager, with a smile. "I take it you are willing?"

"Oh, sir!" "Poor Dick could say no more. Astonished and delight rendered him dumb. But his looks were eloquent. Mr. Ashburn turned to Hallam, with a smile of satisfaction.

"You'll take him in hand, then, Hallam, and your trainer will put him through his paces. I'll join at once, Melton? You are employed in a mill, I believe."

"I have left the mill, sir," said Dick, recovering himself a little.

"Ah, will you tell me why?" "I was discharged on Monday, sir, without character," said Dick bravely. "Mr. Fenwick was too angry to listen to me. His nephew sacked me, when he was intoxicated, and I fended myself. I swear that that is the truth. Perhaps I lost my temper and hit him harder than I should have done. But Mr. Fenwick—"

"I've no doubt about it," broke in Hallam. "Young Fenwick is the biggest blackguard in Millfield, and a drunken brute into the bargain."

Mr. Ashburn pursed his lips. "Well, well, we shall see. Meanwhile, you are on trial, Melton; but your salary will commence at once."

Dick stammered out incoherent thanks. When he left the manager's house he hardly knew whether he was standing upon his head or his heels, so great was his amazement and joy. He went home to acquaint his mother with the good news, and the poor widow received it with expressions of thankfulness.

THE 3rd CHAPTER.
The New Recruit.

Dick did not take Mr. Ashburn long to make up his mind about his new recruit. Both Hallam and the trainer concurred in the manager's opinion of Dick, who, indeed, seemed never before to have given satisfaction. He was playing the game he loved, he naturally put his heart into it. After his first few days' practice at the Albion ground, Mr. Ashburn was not only satisfied, but was blessing the good fortune in securing such a recruit.

He fully believed Dick's account of the reason why he had been discharged from the mill. When Cecil Fenwick heard that the boy he hated had been taken on by Mr. Ashburn, his rage knew no bounds. He called upon the manager and did his best to injure Dick, but fortunately for himself, his spite was so evident that the keen-eyed manager of the Albion looked through him, and read his motives easily enough. His answer, therefore, was short and sharp, and Cecil left the house disappointed and aged.

"But I will settle him yet!" he muttered. "Dick, meanwhile, had almost forgotten his own existence, in the happiness of his new life. At first he could hardly believe in his luck. The Albion men generally gave him a cold reception. He worked hard, and improved his form rapidly, and had the satisfaction of seeing that he fulfilled his employer's expectations."

"You'll do, Melton," Mr. Ashburn said to one day. "I shall play you in a reserve match on Saturday, as a final test. Saturday you will play inside-right in the first team, and Cecil Fenwick will go into the reserves."

Dick felt sorry for Clarke, but, of course, it was the manager's duty to play the best man available, and Dick's to obey orders.

Cecil Fenwick had kept himself informed of Dick's progress. This was not difficult, as he was most of the Albion men, his uncle having interest in the club. He came to see the reserve match. He could hardly believe that Dick would go into the Albion first team. If he did, Cecil had all unconsciously done him good turn in driving him from the mill. He hated the game with a kind of savage hatred.

The Albion first team was away, and the reserves were playing a visiting team. Dick sat at inside right, and his performance there was splendid. New as he was to first-class foot-

ball, it was clear that he was the pick of the bunch, and he did magnificent work for his side. The home team won easily, with three goals to nil, and of the three, one was taken by Dick, and a second scored from a pass by him. He was loudly cheered, but there was one savagely scowling face in the crowd. It was Cecil Fenwick's.

Fenwick strode away from the ground still scowling. He knew that nothing now could stop the young footballer's career; nothing could prevent his winning a great name in Millfield. Unless—Yes, there was one means that could be used.

"He is to displace Clarke in the first team, so they say," muttered Cecil. "Well, I'll see what I can make of Clarke. Surely it will be easy to induce him—"

He did not finish the reflection, but his face cleared at the prospect of yet ruining the chances of the boy he hated. Clarke, as a matter of fact, did not take his displacement kindly. Like many strictly mediocre footballers, he had a great opinion of his own powers, and he was inclined to be sullen and snappish when he received the manager's notification. But Dick was very careful to show no trace of "side" or uppishness. His frankness and good-nature somewhat mollified the displaced forward.

During the week, Cecil Fenwick found an opportunity of speaking to Clarke. He commenced with a sneer at the new recruit, and condemned the manager's folly, in which Clarke quite agreed with him. Then he approached more delicate ground.

"I take it you have no special liking for that puppy, Clarke?" he remarked.

"I can't be expected to, can I?"

"Certainly not. You wouldn't be sorry to shove him out of the team?"

"I can't say I should; but what on earth are you getting at?" asked the other, mystified.

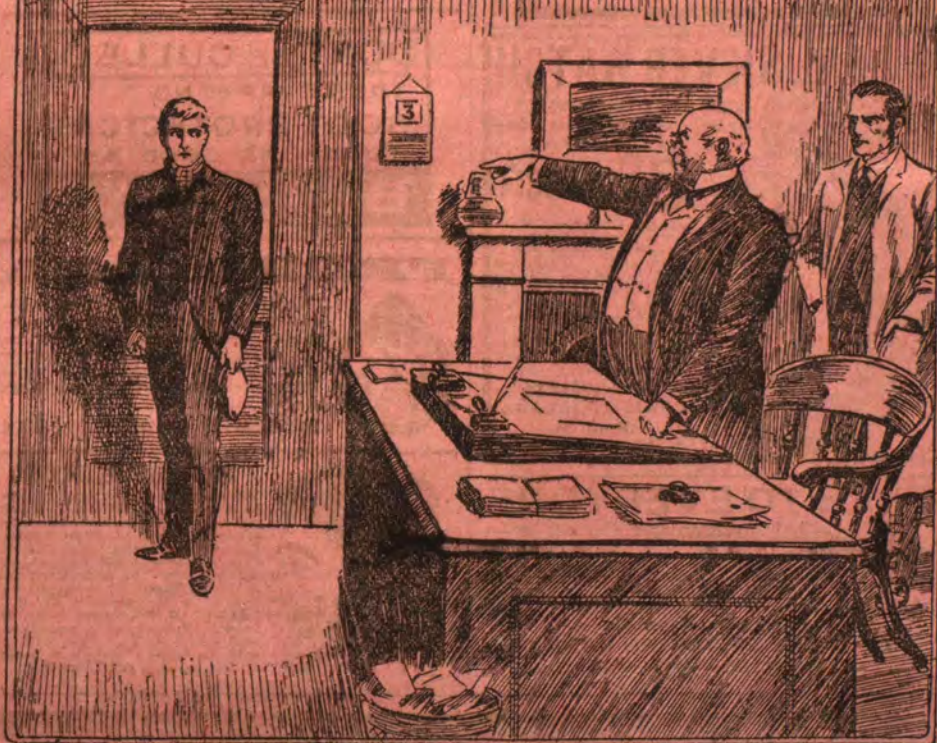
"Well, look here. I don't like him any more than you do. It's easy enough for a chap to give another a kick in a practice match, and you have plenty of opportunities. Make it impossible for young Melton to play any more this season, and I'll make it worth fifty pounds to you."

"You want me to foul a comrade in a friendly match?" said Clarke quietly—dangerously quietly.

But Cecil, in his eagerness, noticed nothing. "You'll serve yourself and me, too; and fifty pounds is a big sum," he said.

"You'd like my answer now, I suppose?"

"Yes."



"Upon reflection," said Mr. Fenwick, "I shall be satisfied with discharging you, but I warn you that any future employer whom you may refer to shall know your true character. Now go! Not another word!"

"All right. There it is." The footballer's fist shot out, and Cecil went flying. He found himself sitting in the gutter.

"You—you ruffian!" he shouted. "What do you mean by that?"

"Want any more?"

"N-no."

"Well, you'll get some more if you ever talk again like that to me, you cur! And now I'm going to tell Melton what you've said, and put him on his guard."

And Clarke did so, without delay. Dick listened with amazement; he had never dreamed that even Cecil Fenwick would descend so low as that. He grasped Clarke's hand.

"Thanks," he said simply. "You're a jolly good sort."

Cecil Fenwick picked himself up and went away in a towering rage. He had failed, and with most unpleasant consequences to himself. But the rancour in his heart was only intensified. It wanted now but two days to Dick's first League match, and Cecil swore inwardly that, in spite of Clarke's refusal, the young footballer should not be able to play. And so he set his wits to work, with what result we shall see.

THE 4th CHAPTER. A Dastardly Attempt.

DICK MELTON'S face was cheerful as he left the club ground after his usual practice on Friday afternoon, and turned his steps homeward. On the morrow he was to play in the Albion forward line against Manchester Rovers, who were coming to Millfield. The thought made his heart beat faster.

The early winter evening had closed in dark and foggy. The way to the cottage where he still lived was somewhat lonely, but no thought of danger crossed Dick's mind. He strode on cheerfully, thinking of the morrow and of his first League match, happy and a little excited in anticipation.

Patter, patter! There came a rapid rush of footsteps from the fog. Three burly forms loomed up round him with startling suddenness.

"There he is!"

"Out 'im!"

Sticks were whirling in the air to crash down upon his head. Dick Melton was taken by surprise, but the great game had taught him presence of mind and instant decision. Even as the hooligans loomed up from the fog he made a swift backward spring, and the descending bludgeons swept the empty air.

But the ruffians, with muttered curses, rushed full at him. From the fog a voice Dick knew shouted to them:

"Look out! Don't let him get away!"

There was no chance for the young man to get away. The hooligans were upon him, and he faced them desperately, shouting for help, though with but little expectation of being answered.

Again, by swiftness and luck, he dodged the blows aimed at him, and, springing forward, drove his clenched fist into an evil, bristly face. The hooligan went down like a log, gasping hoarsely. A bludgeon, missing Dick's head, clumped on his shoulder. The next moment another blow would have stretched him on the earth, and placed him at the mercy of the hooligans, but from the fog came a shout and a rush of feet.

"Buck up, Albion!"

Three stalwart figures came springing upon the scene. The hooligans went down beneath heavy blows like slaughtered oxen, and were glad to remain upon the ground, without attempting to rise. For they recognised in their assailants members of Millfield Albion, and they had had enough.

boys, and luckily we heard Melton shout, and came up in time. Now, your little game was to cripple him and spoil his football form, wasn't it? Out with it!"

"No—yes!" stammered Fenwick.

"All right, you cur! Chaps, there's a pond just handy yonder. He wants a lesson badly, to cure him of his dirty tricks. Now, Fenwick, will you stand up to Melton, and fight like a man, or will you take a ducking?"

"That's right," said Dick grimly. "Take your choice, Fenwick, for, by James, you shall have one or the other!"

And the footballers chorused approval.

"Look here, I'll give you a five-pound note each—"

"The pond, chaps! Drag him along!" cried Clarke.

"No, no!" yelled Cecil, in dire terror of being ducked in the freezing water. "Spare me that. I'll fight that—fellow!"

"And that fellow will give you a hiding you've wanted for a long time," said Dick Melton quietly.

There was no help for it. Cecil's hooligans had already crawled away in the fog and made themselves scarce. He was alone with the justly-incensed footballers, and he had to stand up in a fair fight to the man he had injured.

Round them the footballers formed a ring. Cecil knew that he would receive fair play. After all, he was six years older than his opponent, and he knew something of boxing. He braced himself for the fight, determined to do his best to defeat the young footballer.

And so they faced each other and began. In the dim, grey, foggy night they fought, with savage spite on one side and grim determination on the other.

But pluck and good condition told. Cecil's way of life had not fitted him for any trial of strength. Twice he went down under crashing blows, and at the second he refused to rise again. Dick had hardly been touched.

"Let him go!" said Dick contemptuously.

"Clear out, you cur, and thank your stars you've got off so easily!"

And Cecil picked himself up and vanished into the night. The Albion lads escorted Dick as far as his home, and left him at his door. Cecil's last attempt had failed. On the morrow Dick Melton would play for Millfield—and win, too, he was resolved.

THE 5th CHAPTER. The Manchester Match.

THE Albion men made no secret of that night's happenings, and all Millfield knew the next day of Cecil Fenwick's attempt to disable a home player before the match. It is probable that the young man's life would not have been safe if he had appeared that day in the streets of his native town. It was soon learned that he had quitted Millfield, and everyone heartily hoped that it was for good.

And shortly before the arrival of the Manchester team Mr. Fenwick came to the club ground. He came to see Dick. Somewhat to the amazement of the young footballer, the great mill-owner held out his hand in a frank way.

"I'm sorry I was misled in regard to you, Melton," he said. "My eyes have been opened lately, and last night's affair has made many things clear to me. My nephew has left Millfield, and I intend to adopt stern measures with him. Unless he changes completely he will never return, but I am giving him a chance in London. Meanwhile, I beg your pardon for having misjudged you. I will not ask you to return to the mill, because I can see that you have a splendid career before you as a footballer; but I may say that I shall watch your progress with interest, and hope to see you win fame and honour for our native town."

It was the amende honourable, and Dick was more than satisfied. Mr. Fenwick remained in the grand stand beside Manager Ashburn to see the great match.

The attempt upon Dick had given the match an interest even greater than usual in Millfield. The enclosures were crammed long before the time for the kick-off. When the players entered the field Dick Melton was greeted with a deafening cheer.

The day was somewhat foggy, but there was enough light for play. The teams lined up, both looking very fit. Manchester won the toss, and Hallam kicked off.

The Manchester men attacked gamely, but the struggle was soon in the visitors' half, and the Manchester citadel was besieged. There was a tussle right up to the goal, and the ball came suddenly out of a press of players, like a stone from a catapult, and whizzed in before the custodian knew what was going to happen.

"Goal!" roared the Millfielders; and another roar followed: "Bravo, Melton!"

Dick had taken the first goal for his side. After that the Manchester forwards made desperate attempts to get going, but with very indifferent success. But their defence was good, and no more goals were taken before half-time. The first half therefore ended with Millfield one up.

From the restart the game was lively and stoutly contested. Every man put his best foot foremost. Twice Dick sent in shots that made the enemy catch their breath. One hit the post and rebounded into play, and the other was saved by the goalkeeper by the skin of his teeth. Then the Manchester men, with a mighty effort, brought the play into the home half, and attacked the Millfield citadel. By strenuous play they overcame the defence, and scored a goal for Manchester.

There was now a quarter of an hour to play, and the game had been a gruelling one. Both sides showed signs of exhaustion. For some time the play was feeble, and the ball was knocked about in midfield. Then the Manchester men

DICK MELTON'S LUCK.

(Continued from the previous page.)

made a determined effort, and swept down upon the home goal.

The spectators held their breath. Were Millfield to be licked on their own ground? No!

A home back skied the ball, and a Manchester half headed it forward again; but a Millfield head—it was Hallam's—popped up and sent it over the line. Then forward came the Albion in a rush there was no resisting. Like a vision the scene had changed, and the struggle was now transferred to the visitors' goal. The ball was at Dick's feet when a Manchester half charged him behind and sent him sprawling.

"Penalty!" roared ten thousand voices. The referee's whistle was a shrilling one. Play was stopped, and Dick scrambled to his feet. A

penalty was awarded to Millfield, and Hallam looked anxiously at Dick.

Dick nodded cheerily. The fall had been a bit of a shock, but he was quite fit. Amid a hush of eagerness he took the penalty kick.

The goalkeeper, as he afterwards explained, was looking for a ball, and not a flash of lightning. Anyway, the ball was in the net, and the ten thousand voices roared applause.

In the few minutes that remained to play Manchester had no chance to equalise. Phip went the whistle, and the players trooped off the field. Millfield had won a hard-fought game by 2 to 1, and well deserved their victory.

And so we leave Dick Melton, winning fame for himself and honour for his native town as the crack player of Millfield Albion.

THE END.

(Two fine long, complete tales on Saturday next. One will be an enthralling story of Slapton School, and the other one of Mr. T. C. Bridges' clever warder stories.)

FOOTBALL NOTES.

Notices and Challenges from Readers' Clubs Inserted Free of Charge.

[Readers should remember that these notices cannot appear until three weeks after they are received, owing to this paper going to press so long in advance of the date of publication.]

ARMADALE F. C. (average, 17) have open dates on and after February 3rd. Home or away.—Apply by letter to John Murray, 58, Crown Street, Glasgow.

AYLESBURY F. C. (13, medium) have a few open dates, all away—February 24th, April 14th, 28th, and several others.—H. Knight, 20, Winkfield Road, Wood Green, N.

ST. FRIDESWIDE'S 3rd 14 matches for March 10th, 24th, given and required if possible.—44, Benledi Street, Poplar, London.

NORWOOD WANDERERS 15 (week) want Wednesday matches away. All dates open.—Apply 63, Ladas Road, West Norwood.

St. JOHN'S A. F. C. (average) wanted for the remainder of the season a radius of three miles of Fishponds, Bristol.

ARMADALE F. C. require players.—Apply by letter to John Murray, 58, Crown Street, Glasgow.

ILFORD HAZELDENES Barking on Saturday, January 2nd, 1905. REALM League (2nd division), ended: New Barking, 2; Ilford, 1.

WE GIVE YOU FREE



This Gold-cased Lever Watch, guaranteed correct timekeeper, free for selling FIVE articles.



This Real Oak Drawing-room Clock free for selling FIVE articles.

As a huge advertisement your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling FIVE useful articles of jewellery at 1s. 6d. each.

NO MONEY REQUIRED.

Just send a postcard with your Full Name and Address, promising to return the Jewellery within four weeks if you do not sell it. On receipt of your postcard we will at once send the FIVE articles, which you can sell in a few minutes among your friends. When sold you will send us the 7s. 6d. received for same, and we will at once despatch absolutely free.

THE PRESENT YOU CHOOSE.

Together with the Jewellery will be sent a Catalogue of other presents which you may choose from, including Gramophones, Musical Chests, Real Silver Watches, Real Gold and Diamond Rings, &c., &c. And even though you only sell two of the articles we will present you with one of our Renowned 'Globe' Timekeepers, Guaranteed for Three Years. We want you to see our Jewellery, and judge as to the value yourself. You will receive the goods to-morrow if you send a postcard to-day. Address as follows:

SCOTTISH JEWELLERY EMPORIUM, DEPT. 18D, 205, BUCHANAN STREET, GLASGOW.



This strong Melodeon, double bellows, two sets reeds, free for selling FIVE articles.



Packet containing 4-dozen each Knives, Forks, and Spoons free for selling FIVE articles.

A STYLISH PAIR OF BOOTS FOR 6/6.

As an advertisement we send a PAIR OF LADY'S OR GENT'S BOOTS or SHOES to any Address on receipt of

6D. DEPOSIT

and upon payment of the last of 14 weekly instalments of 6d. each, making a total of 7/6 in all. A Handsome Present is Given Free. Our net cash with order price is only 6/6, or 7/- cash within seven days. Ladies can have either Lace or Button. Send size of Boot you are wearing and state whether strong or light weight desired.

CRAIG, CRAIG & CO. (Dept. B 5), 81, Dunlop Street, GLASGOW.

ABSOLUTELY TRUE.

£25,000 Prizes Given Away Free. No Money Required. We give away free to any person Solid Gold Rings of all descriptions, cutlery, Jewellery of all kinds, nickel silver timekeepers, besides hundreds of other useful articles which can be selected from our List. WE GIVE THESE FREE to any person selling 48 Beautiful Pictorial Postcards within 14 days. You can sell them in a day. It need not cost you a penny of your own money. We are also giving away free 20,000 Ladies' size and Gent's size Gun Metal or silver Lever Watch, 10 years' warranty, and perfectly timed to a second; also 5,000 Ladies' and Gent's Real Diamond Rings (solid gold, hall-marked). Send us a postcard with your name and address. Don't delay.—ACTE & CO. (Dept. 61), 85, Fleet Street, London, E.C.



Don't delay.—ACTE & CO. (Dept. 61), 85, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

£2 2s. WORTH

Lady's or Gent's Watches. SENT ON RECEIPT OF 6d.

Gent's 18-ct. Gold-cased Chronograph Stop Watch, Jewelled Movement, Perfect Time-keeper, warranted, or Lady's size, with pretty opal dial. Sent on receipt of 6d. and four stamps for postage. When received, if satisfactory you send 1/- more and 1/- weekly until 12/6 is paid up.

FREE GIFT.

A Handsome Silver-mounted Brial Pipe in case, or exquisitely pretty Brooch, is given to all sending full cash with order, or balance in 7 days.

McCarthy & Co. (Dept. 48), 44, Archway Road, London N.

MARVELOUS!!! This is the extraordinary recipients of our Magnificent Presents, i.e. A & B PEN, complete with filler and instructions, extra, GIVEN AWAY ABSOLUTELY FREE. EXPENSE TO EVERY APPLICANT for one 4d. Parcel of Stamps, etc., which contains Genuine Stamps, including Nyasa (Nyasaland), United States (Portraits), Straits Settlements, Tasmania, Cape of Good Hope, Roumania, Japan (Pictorial), Jamaica (Waterfall), set of four U.S.A. set of seven Queensland, etc., etc. A packet of "Superb" Stamp Mounts; and One Perforated extra. Don't Waste Money by writing elsewhere. Postal Order for 6d. (about 10d.) to pay for the Stamp and Postage, etc., and you will receive by return packed this Splendid Fountain Pen, with a Free also the ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE of HENRY ABEL & CO. BILSTON.

FREE TO

We give a Nickel Silver Timekeeper, Case of Spoons, etc., to any person selling 48 Penny Pictorial Postcards within four weeks. You can sell them amongst your friends in a few minutes. Write at once—a postcard will do.

THE PICTORIAL CARD CO., 57, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

IF YOU WANT

If you want Gold Coast and other rare Stamp packets write at once to STAMP CO., GRANVILLE, packet contains 50 different, including Gold Coast, Persia, 2 China, Cuba, Shanghai, Costa Rica, etc.

WORK FOR ALL.

We give a Nickel Silver Timekeeper and Mexican Silverine Watch Chain, with guarantee to keep correct time for three years, or a Lady's or Gent's Rolled-Gold Ring, free to any person selling 48 Penny Pictorial Postcards within 14 days. You can sell them in an hour. Send name and address (Postcard will do).

BRITISH FINE ART CO., 115, STRAND.

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READ THE TRUTH.



We give you a Nickel Silver WATCH, or a Real Silver-mounted Umbrella, suitable for Lady or Gent, or other present as per list, for selling SEVENTY-TWO Up-to-Date Penny Postcards (Assorted) in ten beautiful colours (Works of Art). We allow five weeks for selling. Send name and address—postcard will do.

National Postcard Exchange, 86, Rosebery Avenue, London, E.C.

BLUSHING.

FREE, to all sufferers, particulars of a proved home treatment that quickly removes all embarrassment, and permanently cures blushing and flushing of the face and neck. Send stamped envelope to Mr. F. C. TEMPLE (Specialist), 9, Fugh Place, Golden Square, London, W.

A REAL SILVER WATCH

FOR 6/6 JUST AS AN ADVERTISEMENT We send this WATCH to any address on receipt of

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and upon payment of the last of 14 weekly instalments of 6d. each, making a total of 7s. 6d. in all. A Handsome Chain is Given Free. Our Net Cash with Order Price is only 6s. 6d. or 7s. Cash within 7 days. These Watches are Real Silver, Government Stamped Cases, 1-plate, jewelled movement, and perfectly timed. Guaranteed 5 years.

Send to-day to CRAIG, CRAIG & Co. (Dept. 5), 81, Dunlop St., GLASGOW.

FREE TO EVERYONE.

We give an Air Gun, Watch, or Melodeon Free to any person selling 72 Penny Pictorial Postcards within 4 weeks.

When sold, send us the 6s., and we will forward you either of the above-mentioned Presents. Write at once (a postcard will do).

THE IRISH PICTORIAL CARD CO., 9, Maylor Street, Cork.

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BEFORE.

BOYS! KEEP YOUR FEET WARM



London House, Mayfield, Sussex. January 17th, 1905. Gentlemen,—Please send me six pairs of your "Loofite" Medicated Socks, sizes as follows: 2 ladies' (4) and 4 gents' (8). It is now eight weeks since I tried your Medicated Socks, and am able to say with the greatest pleasure and thankfulness. The sharp rheumatic pains, which at times have been positively excruciating, have now completely left me. It seems like a new lease of life, and this I can only put down to the "Loofite" Medicated Sock. I cannot say you have exaggerated in any single instance what you claim for your sock. I enclose postal order for the 6 pairs of socks. Again thanking you, I remain, yours truly, (Signed) MARCHAND KNIGHT.

This is the distressing cry now the cold, wet weather is with us. Tender and Inflamed Feet, Corns, and Rheumatic Pains in the joints soon unnerve and cripple an otherwise healthy person.

BUT WHY SUFFER? When

"LOOFITE" MEDICATED SOCK,

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kills the pain, heals the Tender and Inflamed Foot, absorbs the shock when walking or running, and keeps the feet at an even temperature; while the combination of the Boracic Acid, Pine Oil, &c., drawn by the warmth of the feet into the system CURES RHEUMATISM and SCIATIC PAINS. Tender, Offensive, and Inflamed Feet, Corns, Chilblains, Rheumatism, and Sores are prevented and cured by wearing the "Loofite" Medicated Sock. Get a pair at once and enjoy a good walk. It will only cost you 6d. When ordering say what size boot or shoe worn (whether ladies' or gents'), and send postal order 6d., and a penny for postage (Foreign and Colonial orders 1s. extra), to MORTON'S LONDON TOILET STORES (Dept. H), 159, Rye Lane, London, S.E.

Kirkdale, 35, Chatsworth Rd., West Dulwich, February 19th, 1905.

Dear Sirs,—Would you be good enough to forward me another pair of "Loofite" Socks, size 6 I am so delighted with them, and find them very beneficial and stimulating for the feet. I always wear very thin shoes, and, walking a great deal, used often to get my feet damp, and, being very susceptible to colds, with disastrous results. Since wearing the "Loofite" Medicated Loofah Sock I find, in damp weather, myself quite free from colds; also my feet do not ache when walking long distances.

I therefore feel very grateful to the inventor, and hope to recommend them on every possible occasion. Believe me to be, yours faithfully, (Signed) MRS. L. SCOTT.

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HAVE YOU SEEN THIS WEEK'S "BOYS' FRIEND"?