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

No. 200. Vol. IV.

EVERY SATURDAY—ONE PENNY.

[SATURDAY, MARCH 31ST, 1906.]

DAVE THE BARGE-BOY.

A TALE OF ENGLAND'S WATERWAYS: BY DAVID GOODWIN.



"HOORAY! HOORAY!" CRIED DAVE EXCITEDLY, FOR THERE WAS THE VANGUARD RIDING AT ANCHOR IN THE MAIN CHANNEL OF THE RIVER. BOTH BOYS SHOUTED FOR VERY JOY.

(The previous chapters re-written will be found on the foot of the next page.)

The Siege of the Old Chapel.

"My eye!" spluttered Cecil, coughing, as the smoke began to fill his lungs. "This is too thick altogether. Dave, what's to be done?"

"Pile up the stuff!" said Halkett's voice outside triumphantly. "Put some wet turf on it as well. We'll have them smoked to a kipper!"

The stinging reek came curling through the openings in great wreaths, filling the chapel, for the draught drove it inwards. Dave searched swiftly round the place for some way of letting it out.

"Keep it up!" cried Peter Craye—"light fresh ones against the window-slits there. Half an hour of this'll lay the brats out! Bring some of that wet fern-brake; that's the stuff!"

Both boys were soon coughing and choking desperately. The smoke seemed to rack their lungs to pieces, and their eyes were streaming.

"Take off your neck-cloth an' wind it over your mouth," said Dave. "There must be some way to let the beastly stuff out."

"I'll let them tan me into a haddock before I give in!" choked Cecil. "Will the door burn down?"

"No; too thick an' too much iron. But we've got to get over this somehow; we shall go unconscious if it ain't stopped, an' they'll have it all their own way. We must smash the door out o' that window an' let it out.

I don't think they can reach from the outside. Bear a hand here!"

He seized an old broken crowbar that lay on the floor, and jammed the end under the boards that filled up one of the side windows. Both boys swayed on the end of the bar with all their might, and up came two of the planks with a bang. A gush of fresh air swept in through the open space, and the half-choked prisoners gasped with relief as they drank it in. The smoke went eddying round the building.

The interior of the chapel was higher than the ground outside, and Dave thought the besiegers would not be able to reach the window. At the two narrow alits in the opposite wall fresh fires were hoisted up on branches, sending in still more smoke; but now there was a

through draught this was driven back, and the smoke thinned.

"Now's your time!" yelled Halkett's voice. "We've got to rush 'em!"

"Look out!" exclaimed Cecil. "The window!"

A form loomed at the open space of the planks, where there was just room for a man to get through. It was Peter Craye, for he had had a "leg-up" from outside, and was just about to spring through and enter the chapel. His dead-white face shone through the smoke, and he called to those behind him.

In a moment Dave whipped the revolver from his pocket, cocking it with a click, and presented it at Craye. The man gave a cry, and flung himself backwards, so that he fell bodily out again upon those who had helped

The Captain of Clyffe.

A Stirring, Complete School Story.

By CHARLES HAMILTON, Author of "Football Fortune," &c.

In the Football Field—The Rival Candidates.

NOW'S your time to "Buck up, Clyffe!" The shouts burst from a hundred throats.

It was a moment of thrilling excitement on the Clyffe College football ground. Clyffe was playing St. Anselm's. The game had been a gruelling one, and, so far, honours had been even. In the first half a goal had fallen to each team, and in the second, in spite of vigorous efforts on both sides, there had been no further scoring. Now it wanted only three minutes to time.

Clyffe seemed to have the upper hand, doing most of the attacking; but the St. Anselm's defence was sound, and the Clyffe forwards simply could not get through. It looked as if the match must end in a draw, when suddenly with a fine combined effort the home forward line broke through the Saints' and brought the ball goalward with a rush.

"Buck up, Clyffe!" The college lads shouted and waved their caps, wakened to sudden wild enthusiasm. It was not to be a draw, after all! Arthur Lawrence, the college centre-forward, had the ball, and he passed out to Sidney Sharp on the left as he was tackled, and Sharp let the outside winger have it. In it came, again to Sharp, who dribbled it forward, while a St. Anselm's back rushed to bar his path.

Arthur Lawrence was left unmarked, and was in a splendid position to take a pass, and for a moment the Clyffe lads held their breath. Was Sharp going to keep the ball, instead of passing to the centre?

"To me—to me!" cried Arthur involuntarily, in dismay at the winger's selfish folly. But Sharp, with a muttered word of defiance, kept on, and was tackled by the back, and after a brief tussle, was robbed of the ball, which was sent right out to the touch-line by the grinning Saint.

The St. Anselm's supporters gasped with relief. It had seemed a certain goal for the college. But the Clyffe lads groaned in chorus, and the remarks that were addressed to Sharp from all quarters were the reverse of polite and complimentary. He had thrown away Clyffe's last chance, with only two minutes more to play.

But was the chance lost? Outside-left had stopped the ball almost on the line, and prevented it from going into touch, and before the Saints could worry him he sent the leather in with a long pass to Arthur Lawrence. Arthur's eyes flashed fire as he trapped the ball. Three Saints were almost upon him; but, eluding them, as it seemed, by a miracle, he shot for goal, and the leather just grazed the finger-tips of the custodian ere it found a resting-place in the net.

The crowd gasped, and then burst into a ringing cheer.

"Goal! Goal! Hurrah!" The whistle went, and Clyffe left the field the victors in a hard-contested game. In the dressing-room Jim Desmond, the college centre-half, slapped Arthur on the back.

"I fancy that last five minutes will have an effect upon to-night's voting, Arthur," he said. "I never saw so neat a goal as that, and after Sharp had thrown it away, too. His folly will cost him a good many votes, unless I'm much mistaken. He was willing to lose the game rather than let you kick the winning goal."

"Oh, I don't know that it was so bad as that," said Lawrence. "He doesn't like me, I know. But he was excited, and didn't stop to think."

"Rats! He's a rank rotter, that's what he is, and I shan't feel easy in my mind until I know for certain that there's no chance of his becoming captain of Clyffe!"

Jim Desmond was not alone in his opinion. As Sidney Sharp walked back to the school, in a savage temper with himself and the world generally, he heard many comments upon his selfish play, which had endangered the school's victory, and all of them unfavourable to himself. He realised that he had made a serious blunder. The approaching election of a new school captain was the question that was now agitating the whole school. Ransome, who had held the post, had suddenly left Clyffe, and there were two candidates for the vacant position—Arthur Lawrence and Sidney Sharp. Each was believed to have an excellent chance, and it was certain that the polling would be pretty close.

Both the lads were good all-round athletes and popular in the school. The election excited intense interest, and the result was very doubtful. But Sharp realised that his chances now were worse than they had been before the football match. An unsportsmanlike action is the last thing British lads can forgive, and he had been unsportsmanlike.

"You've made a bad impression, Sid," remarked his chum, Felton, "and it's a pity, be-

cause it won't wear off before the election; there's no time. You shouldn't have done it!"

"Oh, rats!" said Sharp irritably. "I knew that if he took the winning goal it would help him in the voting, and I had a chance—"

Felton shook his head. "Well, he took the winning goal, after all!" "It was his confounded luck! It was a fluke! But, hang it, he won't be elected! Clyffe doesn't want an unknown beggar's brat for its captain, and that's what Arthur Lawrence is, and the whole school knows it!"

Felton looked grave. "You've worked that for all it's worth, Sid," he said; "I think I should let it drop. After all, he can't help not knowing who his people are, and so long as he's a decent chap and a good sportsman, I don't see that it's anybody's business to throw it up in his face. To tell you the truth, I fancy you've done your cause more harm than good by harping on that string."

Sharp sneered, but he did not reply. All Clyffe knew that Arthur Lawrence's parentage was unknown; that he was a waif found in the London streets by Dr. Middlehurst, and adopted by the kind-hearted old doctor. Arthur's ungenerous rival never allowed that fact to be forgotten, and he had, as Felton put it, worked it for all it was worth in canvassing for votes. But it was very probable that he had done himself little good by these tactics.

The Election.

WHICH will win? That was the question the boys of Clyffe were asking themselves as the hour fixed for the election came round.

The election was held in the great hall of



As Arthur Lawrence tied in his men, Major Outram started to his feet in amazement. "Who is that lad?" he cried.

the school, which was crowded with boys of all ages and sizes, and the buzz of talk was eager and incessant.

There was a cheer when the two candidates entered, but it was noticeable that the shout for Arthur Lawrence was heartier than the greeting of his rival. Sharp noticed it, and he snapped his teeth together. It indicated how matters were likely to go.

Mr. Mannering called for silence, and the buzz died away at last. And then Jim Desmond stood up to propose Arthur Lawrence. There was a cheer, and a numerous show of hands. Mr. Mannering carefully superintended the counting.

Then Felton proposed his candidature. There were hisses mingled with the cheers at this time, and the show of hands did not seem so great.

When the counting was completed, the boys awaited the result in breathless excitement. Every eye was fixed upon Mr. Mannering as he rose to make it known.

A pin might have been heard to drop in the great hall as he announced the result of the election:

"Arthur Lawrence, eighty-seven votes; Sidney Sharp, seventy-eight votes."

"I congratulate Lawrence upon being duly elected Captain of Clyffe by a majority of nine votes," said Mr. Mannering.

A ringing cheer burst forth from Arthur's supporters. It was followed by "He's a jolly good fellow!" in stentorian tones, and the neat little speech that Arthur made was punctuated by cheering.

Sidney Sharp set his teeth, and his face became as black as a thunder-cloud, as he strode from the scene of his defeat. He could not trust himself to remain in Arthur's presence, lest he should give way to the rage that consumed him. In the cool and quiet quadrangle he strode to and fro, his face contracted with anger, his brain full of black thoughts.

"I say, old chap"—it was Felton's voice; he had followed his chum with some vague idea of comforting him—"I'm awfully sorry. It can't be helped, though; and, after all, Lawrence will make a very decent captain for the school."

Sharp grated his teeth. "He shan't hold the post long!" he hissed. "I'll bring him down yet, the workhouse brat! I'll make him suffer for this!"

"I don't like to hear you talk like that, Sid," said Felton. "Take it like a sportsman!"

Sharp gave a sneering laugh. "I tell you I'll bring him down! He shan't be captain of Clyffe long! Yes; and I'll use any means to get the upper hand of him!"

"I don't think you mean that," said Felton stiffly. "But if you do, you'll have me against you, and the rest of Clyffe, I fancy. But you'll be sorry for talking like that when you are cooler, Sid."

And he walked away. Sharp gazed after him with a spiteful scowl. Then he gave a short, hard laugh.

"Yes, you're right!" he muttered. "I won't talk like that. But I'll do it. I'll keep a guard on my tongue; but I'll use any means, fair or foul, to bring Arthur Lawrence down to the dust!"

His Father.

STOP a minute, guv'nor! Can you 'elp a poor cove?"

Arthur Lawrence stopped. It was a week after the election, and the new captain of Clyffe was walking home to the school after a visit to the village. Arthur's face was very sunny as he swung along Clifton Lane.

He had not found his new post an easy one, especially as Sharp had shown very plainly that

Dr. Middlehurst would recognise me, seein' as I'm the father of the kid he took up twelve year ago."

Arthur turned deadly pale. "What do you mean?" he repeated, in an unsteady voice. "Who are you?"

"I'm Daniel Dunn, that's who I am, and you're my son, little Danny."

The captain of Clyffe stood as if turned to stone.

How often he had longed to learn the secret of his birth! He had sometimes questioned the doctor, but always the good old man had given him evasive answers. He had found the child in the London streets, that was all Arthur had been able to learn from him, and he had adopted him, giving him the name of a little nephew who had died, and of whom he had been very fond.

Now the reason of the doctor's reticence struck Arthur all at once.

The old gentleman had not told him more, because, if he had done so, he must have told him that his true father was a brute, a ruffian, a drunken loafer!

"You—you my father!" he muttered thickly. Daniel Dunn grinned.

"Yes, my lad, I'm your father. I sold you to Dr. Middlehurst—sold you for a five-pound note, if you want to know. Ha, ha! He felt sorry for the little kid, but he couldn't take it away from its lawful parent. Ha, ha! He gave me a five-pound note for you!" The ruffian grinned with enjoyment at the misery in Arthur's face. "It's a fact, and if you don't believe me, you can ask 'im. Ask him if he don't know the name of Daniel Dunn. Ask him if I don't tell the blooming truth, my pippin."

"It can't be," said Arthur hoarsely—"it can't be!"

"Can't it? I'll show you. I'll come up to the school and claim you afore the lot of 'em," said Dunn. "We'll see if he'll dare to try and keep a hinfant away from his lawful parent! Come on."

And he turned and slouched off towards the school.

Arthur ran after him and caught him by the shoulder.

"Don't," he cried, "for mercy's sake, don't! If I am your son, if you are my father, have mercy on me, and don't disgrace me before them all."

"Ashamed of your old dad, are you?" grinned Dunn. "I'll soon cure you of that! You're goin' to be the prop of my declinin' years, you are. I'm your father. Still, if you'd like to keep it dark, I've no objection, if you make it worth my while."

Arthur almost groaned with disgust. This his father!

If it were true, then all the sweetness and light of life was gone for him.

"I've no money with me now," he muttered unsteadily. "I—I don't want to be seen talking to you. Will you meet me to-night?"

"Yes, if you'll bring the spondulicks with you. Where shall I come? To the school?"

"No, no. The boathouse; there will be no one there. At eight o'clock."

"I'll be there."

Arthur Lawrence hurried on without another word.

His brain was in a whirl, and his face was like chalk. As he entered the quadrangle he saw Sharp, who came to speak to him. Arthur made a great effort to pull himself together, but he could not hide his agitation. Sharp looked at him curiously.

"I want to talk to you about the house match, Lawrence," he said. "You are going to captain Mannering's House, I suppose?"

"Yes. And you Abbott's House."

Sharp nodded, still eyeing him curiously.

"Exactly. I think—"

"Excuse me," said Arthur hurriedly, "I've got something to attend to now. I'll talk it over with you presently, if you don't mind."

"All right," said Sharp. "Some of the fellows are coming to my study at eight to talk it over. Will you come, too?"

"At eight?" stammered Arthur. "I—I've got an engagement then. There's plenty of time, the match isn't till Saturday week. We'll talk it over to-morrow."

Without waiting for a reply, Arthur crossed the quad and went into Mannering's House, to which he belonged. Sidney Sharp looked after him in blank amazement.

"What's the matter with Lawrence?" he muttered. "Has he gone off his dot, or—?"

A keen and cunning look crept into his eyes. "He looks as if he had something on his mind, with a vengeance! Is it possible that he is in a scrape—that our immaculate captain has done something to give me a hold over him? By James, I must see into this! Got an engagement for eight, has he? I'll know what that engagement is, my boy!"

He broke into a chuckle. He found the thought that the captain of Clyffe might be in disgrace a very amusing one.

He strolled away, and went into his study in Abbott's House. A letter lay on the table, and he picked it up and glanced over it. It was a letter from his uncle, Major Outram. His parents were long dead, and his uncle was his guardian, and he fully expected to inherit the major's fortune at some time in the future. The major was a widower, and now childless, owing to a strange misfortune which had befallen him long years before, and very rich.

Upon one part of the letter Sharp's eye lingered.

"I am sorry to hear that you lost the election, as I had hoped very much to see you captain of Clyffe. Who is this Arthur Lawrence? I shall try to run down to the school on Saturday for the House match, as I want to see you the victor. You assured me that you were certain to be-

come captain at the election, so perhaps your confidence as to beating Mannering's House is misplaced also. However, I hope to see a good game."

"The old fool!" muttered the dutiful nephew. "He's as keen on football as any Fourth Form kid, and as likely as not to out me out of his will if I don't play up like an international. Well, we shall beat Mannering's lot. And—and if this affair of Lawrence's gives me a hold over him, as I hope, I may be captain of Clyffe yet!"

Sharp Plays the Spy.

A COLD, clear winter evening. The starlight fell upon the river and the dark, deserted boathouse as Arthur Lawrence made his way down to the rendezvous from the school.

The young captain's face was pale, but calm and set. He had reflected deeply over his meeting with the tramp, and the man's claim to be his father, and he had decided that it was probably an impudent lie. Might not Daniel Dunn have learned some circumstances connected with him, and so gained a foundation for his assertion? Arthur resolved to make the rascal, at all events, prove his claim.

Dunn was waiting for him. The ragged figure lurched out of the shadow of the building as the young captain came towards it. Little did Arthur Lawrence dream that a stealthy form had followed him from the school, and that, when he met the tramp, the spy crouched behind an angle of the building close at hand to listen to their talk.

"Brought the rhino, my boy?" asked Dunn, whose manner showed that he had been drinking. "Got the shiners for your poor old dad?"

Arthur eyed him steadily.

"Before I yield to your demand," he said coldly, "I must be satisfied that you really are my father. How are you going to prove it?"

The hidden listener caught his breath. He hardly restrained himself from betraying his presence by an exclamation of amazement and exultation. This was more than he had dared to anticipate.

"Prove it!" chuckled Dunn. "That's easy enough. You've got a birthmark on your right arm, fr'instance, just above the elbow, a little red cross, now ain't you?"

Arthur's fortitude almost forebore him. It was true.

"Heaven help me!" groaned Arthur. "I suppose it's a true."

"True? Of course it is. What's the matter with it? Ain't I good enough for yer? S'elp me, I'll take some of yer airs and graces outer yer. I'll show yer up if yer don't part up some rhino!"

Arthur shivered with disgust.

"I can give you very little," he said heavily. "Dr. Middlehurst is very generous with me, but what I have will seem very little to you."

"Wot can you give me?" growled the man. "I have a sovereign now. Here it is."

Dunn's fingers closed on the coin greedily.

"That ain't much. When can I have more?"

"I can raise some money if I have time. It will not be easy."

"Ain't it yer dooty to 'elp yer old father?"

"Come here on Friday night, and I will give you another sovereign," said Arthur. "Stay, it will be best for us not to meet. Where are you staying? I can send you a registered letter."

"Send it to the Black Bull; Daniel Dunn, that's me. And arter Friday?"

"I will do what I can. It's no good talking longer now. Good-night!"

And Arthur turned on his heel and strode away, almost brushing against the crouching spy as he turned the corner. Daniel Dunn grumblingly went his way. Arthur strode to the school, in the blackest mood of despair.

He shut himself up in his study, and tried to think out the situation. The man was his father, there could no longer be any doubt about that. He was evidently quite willing to face the doctor, which was a proof of the truth of his assertions. What was the captain of Clyffe to do?

And the man was his father! Had he found his father to be a humble mechanic, unlearned, but honest and honourable, Arthur would have honoured and loved him.

It had often crossed his mind that his father was probably a workman, and he had never shrunk from the thought. But this drunken brute—this vile wretch who extorted money from his own son under threats. How could he feel for him anything but disgust and shuddering hatred?

There came an imperative tap at the door. Without waiting to be asked, the new-comer opened it and came in. It was Sidney Sharp.

The new captain.

A RTHUR LAWRENCE stopped in his restless pacing, and stared angrily at Sharp.

"What do you mean by bursting in in this fashion?" he exclaimed.

"Sorry," said Sharp coolly. "My business won't wait."

He closed the door, and came towards Arthur. Something in his look sent a chill to the heart of the captain of Clyffe. There was something so malignant, so spitefully triumphant, in it.

"What have you to say to me?" said Arthur coldly.

"It's about the captaincy."

"The captaincy?" said Arthur, in amazement.

"Yes. Do you think you are a fit person to be captain of Clyffe?"

"I don't understand you."

"Really, Mr. Dunn, you are very obtuse!" said Sharp, with an insolent smile.

Arthur staggered back.

That name, of course, told him that his enemy knew all; but he recovered himself in a minute, and his flashing glance of contempt made even Sidney Sharp quail.

"So you have spied upon me."

"We need not go into details. I know you as you are. Let us be plain. You beat me at the election, I know; but do you think you are a fit person to be captain of Clyffe, when at any moment that drunken scoundrel—excuse me for so speaking of your father—ahem!—may claim you before the whole school?"

"I—I don't know. Yes, perhaps you're right," said Arthur dazedly.

His expression of utter misery might have touched a heart of stone, and perhaps Sharp's was not wholly untouched. His manner became more civil.

"You must see it as well as I do, Lawrence. I think you ought to resign. If you do so, you may depend upon my silence; but if you do not, I frankly warn you that I shall consider it my duty to show you up in your true colours."

"Let me alone now," said Arthur, with an effort. "I'll—I'll think over it. Go! For mercy's sake leave me to myself for a bit!"

Sharp nodded shortly, and left the study. Arthur paced the room, his brain in a whirl, trying to think. Before he went to bed his decision was taken.

The next day Clyffe was stupefied to learn that Arthur Lawrence had resigned the position of captain of the school.

For this step he gave no reasons; not even to his chum Desmond. His look, which was almost haggard, showed that he was out of sorts; but he would not explain, even to the doctor.

Dr. Middlehurst had been greatly pleased when his protégée became captain of Clyffe, and he was astounded by Arthur's resignation. He remonstrated in vain, and was a little offended by the boy's apparently unaccountable obstinacy; but he had no resource but to accept the resignation, and a new election was appointed.

Of course, it was well known that it would be a walk-over for Sidney Sharp; and such proved to be the case, Sharp being elected by an overwhelming majority.

The mean-spirited lad had his wish at last. He was captain of Clyffe. He wrote off gleefully to tell the major; but, needless to say, he did not mention how Arthur's resignation had been brought about.

For Honour's Sake.

WHAT do you want?"

Arthur Lawrence asked the question in a tone of concentrated anger. Nearly a week had elapsed since the day Daniel Dunn had claimed him, and Arthur's life had been one long nightmare since that day. And now the sight of the rascal slouching towards him in the school playing-fields roused all the bitterness of his heart.

"Can't I see my own son when I want to?" sneered Dunn. "Don't you put on too many airs, my boy, or it may be the worse for you. Look here, I can't do with the few pounds you've let me 'ave. You must get me some more somehow."

His appearance showed very plainly where the money had gone. He looked as if he had hardly drawn a sober breath during the past week.

"I can't give you any more till the first of the month," said Arthur. "I shall have some more then, and you can have it all, though goodness knows what I shall do without it."

"I s'pose I shall have to wait, then," growled Dunn; "but give me something to get a drink, anyway. Half-a-crown will do."

With a gesture of repulsion Arthur gave him his last coin, and Dunn shuffled off. His look was very discontented.

"I've about sucked that mug dry," he muttered. "I fancy I shall do better if I go to the doctor. Only—only I might have to prove—But then he'd never face the disgrace. I shall have him tight enough."

Several Clyffe fellows had seen Arthur in talk with the loafer, but there was an expression upon his face which prevented them from making any remark about it.

It was time for a football practice match, and Arthur threw himself into the play with glad relief. Football seemed to take the taste out of his mouth, after an interview with that blackguard; and while he was playing the game he could forget his troubles.

There was always a keen rivalry between the two houses at Clyffe in sports, and at the present time the interest of the whole school was centred on the inter-house match, which was to take place on the Saturday.

Arthur, though no longer captain of Clyffe, was skipper of his house team, and Sharp, who belonged to Abbott's House, captained the other side.

Sharp had won the coveted position of captain of the school by foul play, but he was not so sure of winning the house match by fair; and his heart was set upon winning, both for the purpose of strengthening his position as captain of Clyffe and getting into his uncle's good graces; and he longed intensely to lower Arthur's colours on the football field.

He had come down to the ground to watch Arthur now, and his brow blackened as he did so. The house team was playing a scratch side of Mannering lads, and Arthur seemed to be in his best form. As he watched him, Sharp's doubt of his victory on Saturday began to change to a certainty of defeat.

The thought roused every evil instinct in his

nature. His teeth set, and a malignant gleam came into his eyes.

"By James, he shall lose, or I'll know the reason why!" he muttered.

And when the practice match was over, and Arthur walked up to the school, Sharp joined him.

"Look here, Lawrence, I don't want to be uncivil," he began, "but I've done you a favour."

"I paid your price," said Arthur contemptuously.

"Well, never mind that. I haven't said a word about what I know, and one good turn deserves another. I—I want you to stand out of the match on Saturday."

"What?"

It was out now, and Sharp went on more easily.

"You heard what I said. You can easily make some excuse—you feel seedy, or—"

"You want me to give away the match, you mean?"

"Well, I want to win."

"And you think I am coward and cur enough to betray my side?" said Arthur, his voice trembling with rage. "You rotten hound!"

Sharp started, and the colour came into his cheeks.

"Better language, Mr. Dunn!" he said threateningly.

"Don't talk to me!" said Arthur. "Get away, before I hurt you. You're not fit to live in a school with decent fellows."

"You refuse?" hissed Sharp, pale with rage.

Arthur did not trouble to answer, but walked on swiftly. Sharp kept pace with him.

"Then listen to me!" hissed the schemer. "Play if you like, but I warn you not to win. I swear that if you beat us on Saturday I'll expose you before all Clyffe."

Arthur stopped and looked him in the face.

"I shall play, and I shall strain every nerve to win," he said between his teeth. "Now take yourself off, Sidney Sharp. One word more, and I'll knock it back down your throat!"

With a muttered curse Sharp retreated. He knew that the other would be as good as his word. He gritted his teeth as he walked away. Passing the college playing-fields, he went into Clifton Lane, and made his way to the village.

He entered the low public-house known as the Black Bull, careless of the fact that it was out of bounds, and asked for Mr. Daniel Dunn.

The loafer had just finished expending poor Arthur's half-crown in drink. He was not too intoxicated, however, to understand what Sharp wanted. The captain of Clyffe drew him into a secluded corner.

"Look here; do you want to earn five pounds?" he asked.

"Rather, me noble jukel!" stammered the ruffian.

"Well, look here, I'll show you how to do it. I know all about your dealings with Arthur Lawrence. You are his father."

"His long-lost dad," grinned Dunn. "Right you are; but how do you know?"

"Never mind that. You've been getting money out of him? Well, he hasn't much to give, you can take my word for it; and it will pay you better to deal with me. He plays in a football match on Saturday. I want you to be on the ground, and if the reds win—that's his side—I want you to claim him before all the school." He ground his teeth. "I want him shown up; but mind, only if the reds win. Will you do it?"

"If I'm sure of the five-pun' note."

"I'll give you a written promise, and you can return it when I give you the note."

"All right. I reckon I shall be able to get it out of you," grinned Dunn. "Rely on me. I'll be glad to round on 'im if only to pay 'im for 'is 'igh and 'aughty airs."

And Sidney Sharp went back to the college in a satisfied frame of mind. He had lately had a five-pound note as a birthday present from the major, and he would have given twice as much, if he had possessed it, to insure Arthur's downfall after the football victory; for that Arthur would win he hardly doubted now.

The Football Match—The Blow Falls—A Startling Discovery.

WHO—who is that lad?"

It was Major Outram who asked the question. The bronzed old soldier was beside Dr. Middlehurst in the pavilion. The boys of Clyffe thronged round the match-ground. The teams were just taking the field, and as Arthur Lawrence led in his men, Major Outram started to his feet, staring at him with amazed eyes.

The doctor looked at his guest in unbounded astonishment.

"That? That is Arthur Lawrence, my adopted son!"

"Your son!" The major passed his hand over his brow. "Excuse me, I must have startled you. His face struck me. He is so like one I knew—ah, so like!"

His glance followed Arthur, as if fascinated. The teams were lining up, the Mannering's looking very fit in their red shirts, and the Abbott's, too, cutting a very good figure in white-and-blue. Mr. Mannering, who was refereeing the match, put the whistle to his lips. The signal was given. Arthur, who had lost the toss, kicked off against a stiff wind. The game commenced with plenty of energy on both sides.

The rank and file of the two teams seemed pretty equally matched; but Arthur was head and shoulders above any on either side. Sidney Sharp saw it, and ground his teeth.

Arthur played up like an international. Again and again he broke through Abbott's de-

fence, and the backs seemed nowhere against him. Twice he slammed the ball into the net, and the first half ended with Mannering's two up. The change of ends after the interval brought the wind into Arthur's favour, and his side took full advantage of it.

Bravely the Abbott's fought, but they fought in vain.

Again and again the enemy broke them up, and presently, when by a desperate effort Sharp got through and his men were besieging the Mannering goal, Jim Desmond sent the ball out to Arthur, who, wrapped with it, and, drabbling it nearly the length of the field, shot for goal, and beat the custodian hands down. The air rocked with the cheers that greeted his feat.

"Splendid!" cried Major Outram, with sparkling eyes. And the doctor echoed "Splendid!"

The whistle went at last, and the score was five for Mannering's House against one for their adversaries. And then the ground was invaded by a crowd of Manneringites, who seized Arthur, and carried him back to the dressing-room, amidst frantic cheers.

But in the midst of his triumph Arthur's heart turned sick within him as he saw the evil, bloated face of Daniel Dunn, and heard the loafer's raucous voice.

"Well done, me boy! Yer old father's proud of yer! Lemme git to him! I'm his father, I tell yer! He's my Danny, he is!"

Arthur struggled to the ground. The loafer was pushing towards him. It had come at last, then! The blow had fallen!

The boys of Clyffe looked at one another. Dr. Middlehurst was hastening to the spot, and way was made for him. The loafer grinned at him impudently.

"I've come for my boy. He's mine, ain't he?"

The doctor turned deadly pale. His hand fell protectingly upon Arthur's shoulder.

"He is mine now! You shall never claim him!"

The ruffian was about to speak again, when a sudden and terrible change came over his face. He turned to fly, but too late. Major Outram was upon him with the spring of a tiger.

"I've found you at last!" The major shook the man like a rat, till his teeth rattled in his head. "You brute! You villain! Where is my boy? Speak before I choke the life out of your vile carcase! Where is my boy?"

"Lemme go!" gurgled Dunn. "You're killing me!"

"In Heaven's name, what does this mean?" gasped the amazed doctor.

The major tightened his grip upon the wriggling rascal.

"It means that I've found this scoundrel at last. He blighted my home. I sent him to prison for a robbery twelve years ago, and in revenge he stole my infant son. I found proof that he had committed the outrage, but never was I able to get on his track—never till now. But now he shall not escape me. Wretch! What have you done with my boy?"

"Mercy!" gasped the terrified wretch. "There he stands! Lemme go!"

He pointed to Arthur Lawrence.

There was a general gasp of amazement. The major stared from the loafer to the amazed boy. Arthur stood like one in a dream.

"I saw it in his face!" gasped the major at last.

"It isn't true!" broke in Sidney Sharp, in a strange, cracked voice. "Uncle, don't believe him. They're acting in collusion. Send that lying scoundrel to prison!"

Sharp was almost beside himself. He realised what he had done; that he had been the means of finding the major's long-lost son, of robbing himself of all chance of being his uncle's heir, and he was mad with rage and spite. But his interference had an unlucky result for himself.

"Send me to prison, you young 'ound!" yelled Dunn. "Why, gentlemen, that's the werry bloke as made me come 'ere to show up young Master Outram as being my son! He offered me five pun to come here and disgrace him if he won the football match!"

"It's a lie!" screamed Sharp.

"Is it? 'Ere's his own paper to prove it!"

Sharp snatched the paper from the ruffian's hand, and tore it into fragments, panting. But the action was enough; it proved all that the paper could have proved.

"Sidney, you have disgraced yourself," said Major Outram sternly. "Dr. Middlehurst will know how to deal with you. As for me, I am firmly convinced that this lad is my son."

The major gripped Arthur's hand, while the tears started to his eyes.

"My son! My own lad!"

Daniel Dunn took the opportunity of slipping away. But neither father nor son noticed or cared for his going.

Arthur Lawrence had found his father at last. Daniel Dunn disappeared, and was never seen near Clyffe again. Sidney Sharp was at first doomed to expulsion, but Arthur, his heart softened by his new happiness, and always generous, interceded for his old enemy, and his sentence was rescinded. He remained at Clyffe; but he was compelled to resign the captainship, and, though he lived down his disgrace, he was never popular. Arthur was re-elected to his old position, and ere Major Outram left the school he had the pleasure of seeing his new-found son captain of Clyffe.

THE END.

(Next week a grand story of the boatrace. Mind you read it.)