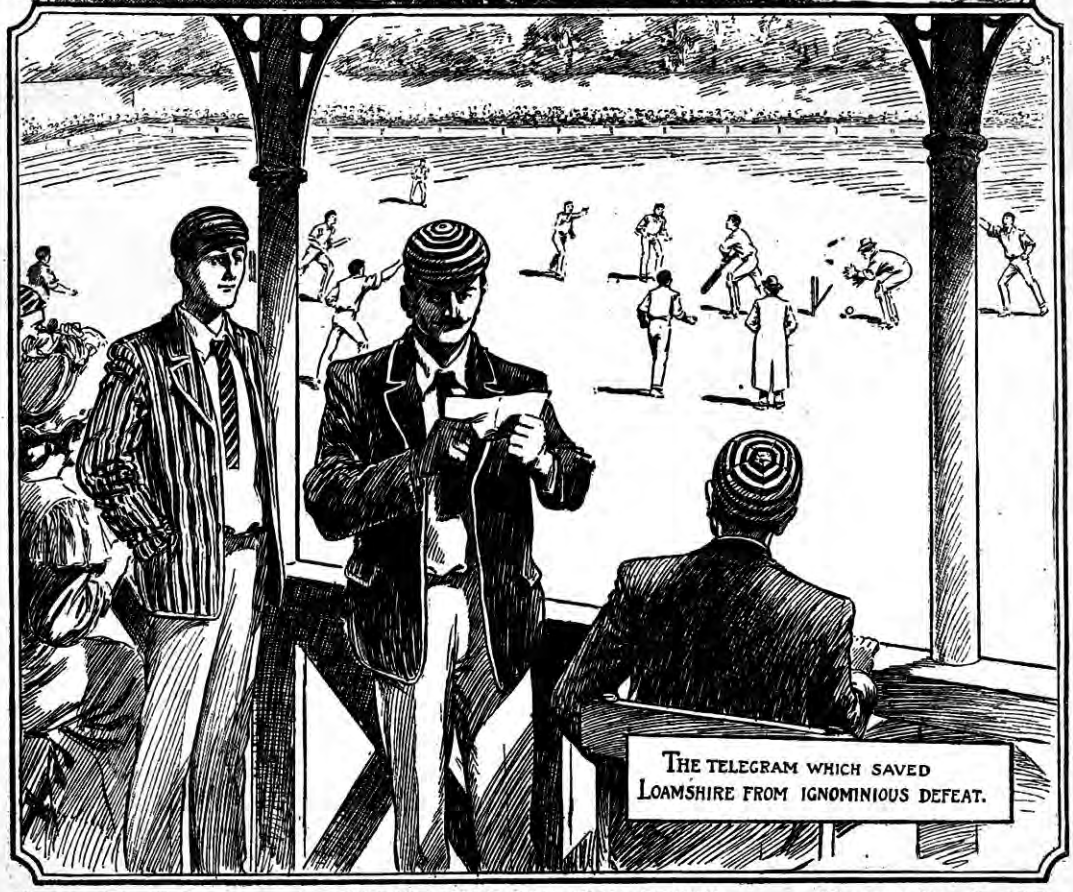
COMPLETE SWIMMING STORY by A. S. HARDY.

The Boys' Realm

of Sport & Adventure. 1d

KING CRICKET! By Charles Hamilton.



THE TELEGRAM WHICH SAVED LOAMSHIRE FROM IGNOMINIOUS DEFEAT.

No. 265. Vol. VI.] EVERY SATURDAY—ONE PENNY. [Saturday, June 29, 1907.

You Must Read This Grand Athletic Tale!



KING CRICKET!

A Fascinating New Story of County Cricket.

Specially Written for THE BOYS' REALM by One of Our Most Popular Authors.

*****

The Chief Characters in this Fine Story.

ARTHUR LOVELL, Loamshire's champion bat. He becomes a professional. His uncle is ruined by James Lagden.

KIT VALANCE, Loamshire's best bowler. He first comes to notice in the Colts' match, where he takes Arthur Lovell's wicket. Later he becomes Arthur's firm chum.

LEN VALANCE, Kit's twin brother.

GEOFFREY LAGDEN, an amateur and a good bat. He is bitterly jealous of Arthur Lovell, whom he hates and endeavours to injure. He is Arthur's rival for the hand of Molly Hilton. A snobbish character.

JAMES LAGDEN, who has ruined Arthur's uncle.

BLANE, Captain of Loamshire, and the steady friend of Arthur and Kit. He is Molly Hilton's cousin.

PONSONBY, Geoffrey Lagden's friend, and a man of similar character—snobbish to a degree.

The first instalment tells how Arthur Lovell distinguishes himself in the Colts' match, in spite of the efforts which Geoffrey Lagden puts forth to keep him in the shade. Soon after a change in his fortunes necessitates his forfeiting his status as an amateur and turning professional.

Kit Valance, Arthur's bosom chum, has a twin brother named Len who is not a credit to his family. Lagden bribes Len Valance to injure Blane in such a manner as to make it impossible for him to play in the next match against Yorkshire.

Len makes a bad blunder and strikes down Blane, the captain of Loamshire, with a foul blow in the dark, mistaking him for Arthur. Blane is unable to play in the coming match with Yorkshire, and Ponsonby is appointed in his place as captain. Being prejudiced against Arthur and Kit, Ponsonby gives them no chance in the important match with Yorkshire. Arthur is put in last, and by lunch-time Loamshire are all down for 78.

Yorkshire knock up a big score in their first innings, being four wickets down for 250 at the end of the day, through Ponsonby's refusing to allow Kit Valance to bowl. Fortescue, an amateur, discusses the situation with Arthur and Kit, and declares his intention of doing something in the matter, and to bring Ponsonby to his senses.

(How read this week's instalment.)

Ponsonby Gets a Shock.

ARTHUR and Kit looked at each other.

"What idea has he got into his head?" asked Kit curiously. "He's a careless fellow—just the kind to say things right out and start a row. I don't see what he can do. Half the amateurs are at the back and call of Lagden and Ponsonby."

"He may intend to wire to Colonel Hilton at Loamchester."

Kit snorted.

"Phew! That would be taking the law into his own hands, with a vengeance."

"I think he is reckless enough for anything. He feels as much as we do about the matter. But he may be able to do good by interfering, where we could only do harm," said Lovell thoughtfully. "If he can help Loamshire to make up for this rotten day's work, why, good luck to him, I say, whatever he intends to do."

"And so say I."

The drama had been hard worked that day. The fielding had been a constant fag, especially to those who did it well. But the night's rest set them up, and made them very fit for the following day's play.

The morning of the second day of the county match dawned bright and fair. There was still a dull greyness on the western horizon; but the rain that had threatened once the previous day had held off, and the weather seemed likely to remain fine.

When Arthur Lovell came upon Fortescue on the county ground before the match the young amateur nodded cheerfully to him.

He did not speak, however, and Lovell wondered why he had yet put into execution the plan, whatever it was, that had been hinted at the evening before.

The stumps were pitched, and Loamshire went out to field in the fresh morning air, and the ground was more packed with people than it had been on the first day of the match. The Yorkshire success was attracting the Tykes from all quarters to the Bradford ground to watch the fine play of Lord Hawke's team.

Tunnicliffe resumed batting in fine form, with the dashing Denton for his partner.

It was soon evident that a night's reflection had made no change in the tactics of the county captain of Loamshire. Ponsonby rigidly ignored Kit Valance. He could not prevent him from fielding, but the ball was not given to him on a single occasion.

Geoffrey Lagden was looking neither amiable nor cheerful. It was more his fault than anybody else's that Ponsonby had adopted this plan. He had never foreseen that he would not be able to twist Ponsonby round his finger to any extent he desired. Ponsonby's assertion of a will of his own had quite upset Lagden's plans. He felt that there would be trouble to follow.

Lagden had the bulk of the bowling, and he did his best. He could not touch the Yorkshire wickets. Tunnicliffe was caught out at last by Tweedie, and he retired with over a hundred runs to his credit. At the fall of Tunnicliffe's wicket the Yorkshire score read 340 for five, last man 105.

Hunter came in to join Denton. The Yorkshire batting was still going very strongly. The runs were piling up hand-over-fist, and the home score was enough to take the Loamshires' breath away—if they had had any breath left to take away after the leather-hunting the Yorkshire batsmen gave them.

The morning's cricket was of a dashing description, rapid scoring eliciting cheers from an excited and delighted crowd. At lunch the Yorkshire score stood at 400, still with only five wickets down.

In the interval, as everyone expected, Lord Hawke declared the innings at an end. The afternoon's cricket was to begin with Loamshire batting in their second innings.

Lunch was not a particularly cheerful meal to the Loamshires. Fortescue had been looking very thoughtful. He had not spoken to Ponsonby, so far, but now he found an opportunity of asking the Loamshire captain a question.

"I see Lovell's down for last man in again, Pon."

"Well, what about it?"

"You're going to leave it at that?"

"Yes," snapped Ponsonby.

"Of course, it's no good my offering you advice?"

"No good at all," said the Loamshire captain, with a sneer. "So you may as well save your breath."

Fortescue nodded, and walked away. No one saw anything of him for the next half-hour; but he was standing in the pavilion, with a quiet smile on his face which Ponsonby did not understand, when the first Loamshire batsmen went out to the wickets. Tunstall and Lagden were opening the innings for Loamshire.

"Mr. Ponsonby!"

The Loamshire captain, who was watching Lagden face Hirst's bowling, looking round irritably. A groundsman had come up, with a telegraph messenger in his wake.

"Well, what is it?" snapped Ponsonby.

"A telegram for you, sir."

Ponsonby took the telegram, and held it, unopened, in his hand.

"Thanks! Don't wait."

He crushed the buff-coloured envelope in his hand, and turned his attention to the game again. Lagden lived through the over, but it proved a maiden, and now Tunstall was facing the bowling of W. Rhodes.

Clack! It was the fall of a wicket at the second ball of the over. The Yorkshire crowd cheered.

Tunstall carried out his bat for a big round O, with dismay in his face. As he came towards the pavilion, Fortescue tapped Ponsonby on the elbow.

"Hadn't you better look at the wire?"

His voice was silky and insinuating.

"What the dickens does it matter to you, Fortescue?"

"It might be something important, you know."

"Next man in," said Ponsonby.

Chichester went out to the wickets. Ponsonby tore open the envelope, and glanced at the familiar dead-black lettering of the form within.

He gave a violent start. The message was brief, but extremely to the point:

"Play Lovell.—HILTON."

Ponsonby Gives In.

PONSONBY stared at the telegram in amusement and rage.

"Play Lovell.—HILTON."

It was plain enough. Colonel Hilton came straight to the point, like the bluff old soldier that he was, and there was no possibility of mistaking his meaning.

As he looked at that brief, direct message, the Loamshire captain felt all his deep-laid schemes crumbling to pieces round him.

Play Lovell! Then, the scheme was at an end, and he had risked Loamshire's success for nothing. Worse than that—for if Arthur Lovell succeeded, at the eleventh hour, in pulling the game out of the fire, his glory would be all the greater by contrast with the miserable show Loamshire had as yet made.

The thought that all his cunning planning, all the risks he had taken, would end in the glorification of Arthur Lovell—that was the bitterest pill for Ponsonby to swallow. Yet the only alternative was to enter into an open dispute with the head of the committee of the Loamshire County Cricket Club.

Surely a hapless plotter was never on the horns of a more painful dilemma! What was to be done? Ponsonby crumpled the telegram spitefully in his hand. His face was pale with stress of feeling. Some of the Loamshire men were looking at him curiously, wondering what the bad news was that the telegram had brought.

About Fortescue's lips there lurked a faint smile. It really seemed as if he knew, or guessed, what was in the telegram. Ponsonby caught his expression, and a sudden blaze came into his eyes. He stepped towards Fortescue as if he would strike him.

"You—you owe this to you!"

Fortescue met his eyes coolly.

"You owe what to me?"

"This—this infernal telegram!"

The young amateur elevated his eyebrows.

"I assure you that I did not send it to you, Pon."

"No; but you have communicated with the colonel—don't deny it! He would not act like this simply from the ordinary reports; he would trust my judgment. He has had some direct information—some complaint—from this pavilion."

"My dear Pon," drawled Fortescue, "what a knack you have for jumping to conclusions." "Do you deny it?"

Fortescue shrugged his shoulders.

"Certainly not."

"You—you have dared to appeal to Colonel Hilton against your captain?"

"Not on my own account, remember. You can treat me as you like—play me, or not play me, and I think I'm too good a sportsman to say a word. But when you leave the best man in the team out in the cold, and throw away a good chance of victory for no motive—"

"I am captain of this team. You had no right—"

"I am willing to allow the whole matter to come before the committee, if you are," said Fortescue significantly.

Ponsonby was silent. He turned again towards the field, staring towards the cricketers, but with unseeing eyes. It was useless to quarrel with Fortescue; the harm was done, and high words in the pavilion could not undo it, but would only make matters worse.

What was he to do? This happening was about the last he would have looked for. He had felt so excellent an opportunity of carrying out his plan at this out-match, while Colonel Hilton was detained at home in Loamshire by his nephew's illness.

The telegram had come like a bolt from the blue. And now what was to be done? He stood, gnawing his lip, trying to think it out. Certainly he could, if he chose, totally ignore the colonel's message. He was captain of Loamshire. He could refuse to be dictated to in the field, especially by a man who was a hundred miles away.

But the matter would not end there. If he defied the colonel, he defied the biggest gun in Loamshire county cricket—the backbone of the county club, the most influential man in the committee. And then, how long would he remain captain of Loamshire?

It would be a poor stroke of work to assert his independence in this instance, and to see the Loamshires utter on their next match under a new captain. But to play Lovell—to abandon his schemes—to undo all that he had done at so much risk—to make all his planning and plotting end by adding to the fame of the man he hated!

He gritted his teeth savagely as he thought of it.

A shout from the field interrupted his painful meditations. Haigh had sent down a ball which Chichester was tempted to hit out at, and he had done so, with bad results for himself. The leather sailed fairly into the hands of Lord Hawke, and the Tykes round the railings shouted out their appreciation of the fieldsman's catch.

"Brave!"

The ball was safe in the hands of the Yorkshire captain. He glanced at the umpire with a smile.

"How's that?"

"Out!"

Chichester walked away from the wicket. He had taken three runs in all, and his was the second Loamshire wicket lost.

The score read—2 down for 3.

Chichester came up to the pavilion, his bat under his arm, looking very crestfallen. Ponsonby glanced at him.

"Next man in," he said briefly.

Wentworth was next man in. Fortescue looked quickly at the Loamshire captain. Was he going to defy the colonel, then?

Ponsonby did not meet his glance. He looked after Wentworth, as the latter made his way to the wicket vacated by Chichester and took up his position there.

Fortescue bit his lip. Was this merely bravado on the Loamshire captain's part, or did he really intend to take no notice of the telegram from Colonel Hilton?

If the latter was his intention, he was pretty certain to rue it in the long-run, but there was no telling to what lengths his angry obstinacy might carry him now, before he had had time to reflect calmly.

But Fortescue could do nothing. He had done all that he could, and he realised that anything he might say now would be useless, or worse than useless, for it would only irritate Ponsonby and make him all the more obstinate.

If Colonel Hilton's telegram failed to move him from his purpose, the game would have to be played out as it had begun.

Fortescue, with a shade of anxiety on his face, watched the cricket from the pavilion. Haigh was still bowling, and Wentworth was about the last man in the world to be able to stand up against it. He did his best, but he was so hopelessly outclassed by the Yorkshire bowler that his best was a very poor show. He stopped two balls, but the third eluded his bat and whipped his middle stump out of the ground.

"How's that?" grinned Haigh.

And the umpire grinned, too, as he gave the batsman out.

The score read—3 down for 3, last man 0.

It was a score that was calculated to cause smiles among the spectators. What were the Loamshire men thinking of? Was this the team that had beaten Leicestershire at home and shipped them away?

Where were the men who had overcome Lionel Palairet and his fine team on the Taunton ground only the week before? Where was the Loamshire quality of which so much had been written and said at the opening of the 1907 season?

The spectators wondered—and laughed.

Some of the comments freely passed in the crowd reached the ears of the Loamshire members, and made them wince.

"And that team's goin' to meet t' South Africans next week," said a brawny old Tyke, with a loud guffaw. "I should like to see t' match. It will be a fine owd sight."

Maynard's name came down on the Loamshire list, but now even Ponsonby hesitated. Three down for three was a score that might have made the most obstinate captain pause and consider himself.

But Maynard already had his pads on, and his bat under his arm, and was walking out to pass Wentworth coming in.

Ponsonby hesitated, and was lost. Maynard went to the wicket before he had quite made up his mind whether to change his plans or not.

Ponsonby bit his lip. His glance was fixed with keen anxiety on Maynard, who was facing the last ball of the over from Haigh.

Still the Loamshire captain hoped against hope. Fortescue ground his teeth, but he did not speak. That was useless. He could only wait, in grim, savage anger, to see Maynard's wicket fall to the Yorkshire bowling.

The ball went down from Haigh, and Maynard stopped it dead on the crease.

Ponsonby breathed a sigh of relief. He was in a mood to be grateful for small favours, and he was grateful for this.

The field crossed over. Hirst was bowling again, and Geoffrey Lagden faced him. It was Lagden's first chance, and he made something of it. He not only lived through the over, but he put a run into Loamshire's score, and showed the thousands of mocking Tykes round the ground that Loamshire's batsmen were not all helpless before the home bowling.

Ponsonby's face brightened up a little.

Anything for a start, and Geoffrey Lagden had at least started scoring for his side! Now the bowling came to Maynard again, and it came from W. Rhodes.

Maynard was nervous. He had reason to be; but it was unfortunate, and a nervous batsman had no chance whatever of keeping up his wicket against the Yorkshiremen.

Down came the ball, and Maynard failed to stop it. There was a crash of a falling wicket.

Maynard stared at it in dismay. A mocking yell came from thousands of throats.

"How's that?"

"Out!" grinned the umpire.

Then came another shout.

"What price duck's eggs?"

Maynard's face was scarlet as he left the wicket. 4 down for 0, last man 0.

The Tykes grinned at the score.

"Duck's eggs are cheap to-day," they remarked to one another. "Poor old Loamshire!"

Ponsonby drew a deep breath. He had done all he could—more than was prudent. With the colonel's telegram before him, he dared do no more.

Left to himself, he would have played the game to-day, as he had planned it, to the bitter end. But now he dared venture no further.

"Lovell goes in next," he said, in a shaking voice.

The words seemed to be wrenched from him against his will. And Fortescue drew a breath of relief and keen triumph.

Ponsonby had had to give in. Was it in time to save Loamshire?

That was very doubtful; but at least, the farcical cricket that had so excited the contemptuous amusement of the crowd would be ended.

And there was a chance—a slight, slight chance—for Loamshire yet.

And many an anxious eye followed Arthur Lovell as he went out to join Lagden at the wickets.

How Arthur Lovell Played for Loamshire.

LORD HAWKE glanced at the Loamshire batsman coming in, and unconsciously his face became more serious and attentive.

That he was the best bat on the Loamshire side, his lordship did not doubt for a moment, and he knew that now the work of the Yorkshire fieldsmen was really to begin. So far, the Loamshire second innings had been child's play. Four wickets were down, and nine runs had been taken, and the score included three duck's eggs, as the crowd of Tykes gleefully noted. But a change was coming now, and Lord Hawke knew it.

And Rhodes knew it, too, and he waved the fieldsmen deeper as he prepared to send down the ball to Lovell's wicket.

Why Lovell had been last man in, in the first innings, and why he had not been played earlier in the second, were mysteries to the Yorkshiremen. They could only imagine that the new Loamshire captain did not know his business.

Perhaps some of them guessed more; but, after all, it was no concern of theirs, and they had benefited by the tactics of the Loamshire skipper.

Now, for some reason, he had changed them. And the thousands of Tykes round the field, recognising Lovell, left off grinning, and watched the fresh innings with a renewal of serious interest.

Rhodes bowled, and the ball broke in true for the middle stump. But Arthur Lovell was prepared for it. He was on his mettle now.

The late call to the wicket had taken him somewhat by surprise, for he knew nothing about the contents of Hilton's telegram, and, in fact, had not been near at hand when it was brought to the pavilion.

But he had gladly hastened to answer the call, and now he was ready to do his best for the old county.

He played that ball with as much ease as if it had been from a schoolboy's hand.

Clack went the bat, and the leather sailed away.

Away, and away, and a fieldsman springs at it in vain. It goes to the ground deep in the long field, and the batsmen are running.

Once, twice, thrice!

The ball comes in, but the batsmen are safe. They have changed places now, and Geoffrey Lagden faces the bowling of Rhodes.

Lagden's eyes are gleaming.

The poor Loamshire innings has been gall and wormwood to him; his keen desire to glorify himself has been baffled by the helplessness of his partners at the wicket.

He is far from pleased at the thought of Arthur Lovell's making a hit in the game after all, but he is willing to forget even his hatred of Lovell for the sake of a chance of effecting something himself.

With Lovell for his partner, he knows that he has a chance of piling up something for Loamshire; and so, for the time, envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness are forgotten, and Geoffrey Lagden is no longer the snob of the pavilion, but a keen cricketer, thinking only of winning for his county.

In this mood he plays up better than ever in his life before.

Rhodes sends him a ball that many batsmen would find it difficult to handle, and he swipes at it with all his heart, and sends it on its long journey.

Again they run, and run again!

Another ball, and this gives them three, and Lovell has the bowling again. He cuts away the last two balls of the over for a two and a four.

"Hurrah!" shouted Fortescue, in the pavilion; and he waved his hat.

And a good many others are hurrahing, too.

After the long frost a gleam of sunshine is welcome, and surely it was high time that the Loamshire innings looked up a little.

The Yorkshiremen are fielding deeper—it is needed. They have to deal with batsmen now who know their work, and are doing it well.

The over goes up, steadily at first, then by leaps and bounds.

Arthur Lovell is getting well set at the wicket, and Hirst, Haigh, Denton, and Rhodes in turn labour in vain to displace him.

And Geoffrey Lagden is showing unusual form. He has entered into the spirit of the thing, and is batting for all he is worth.

Runs are piling up for Loamshire, and though Arthur Lovell is putting on most of them, his partner at the wickets is doing well.

There is a cheer from Loamshire sympathisers when Lagden tops his fifty.

"Bravo, Lagden!" shouted Fortescue exuberantly.

Fortescue was ready to cheer anybody or anything now, in his delight at this revival of the Loamshire innings.

The Yorkshiremen were taking the batsmen very seriously now.

Nobody believed for a moment that Loamshire would succeed in making up their terrible leeway, but it was clear that Yorkshire's expected margin of runs when they won would be considerably cut down.

Ponsonby gritted his teeth as he looked on.

He wanted his county to win, of course, but the success of Arthur Lovell was very bitter to him.

It was such a clear proof that he had been in the wrong, that he could not fail to be aware that others would see it beside himself.

When Lovell had proved himself to be in such fine form, what explanation was his captain to give for refusing to play him in the first innings till the end?

And Lagden, too, was looking up so wonderfully now, that it was possible that the game might have been pulled out of the fire without Lovell's assistance at all.

Ponsonby, altogether, was in a most uncomfortable frame of mind.

Fortescue slapped him on the shoulder.

"This is all right, isn't it, Pon, old man?" he exclaimed.

Ponsonby looked daggers at him.

"I can see how you're enjoying it, Pon," went on Fortescue. "I wonder if we've got a chance of beating the Tykes after all, chappy?"

"Keep your confounded paws to yourself," snapped Ponsonby.

Fortescue laughed.

"My dear chap, I feel so pleased that I could hug anybody," he exclaimed. "If it turns out a win, you won't forget that you really owe it to me, will you?"

Ponsonby gave him a dark look.

"I shall not forget what I owe you, you may be sure of that," he said.

And Fortescue laughed again in his careless way. He knew that the Loamshire captain would revenge himself for that act of interference if he could, but the young amateur did not care.

So long as he helped Loamshire through this match, and put an end to the pavilion plottings that had nearly lowered the old county's colours, Fortescue was willing to leave the future to take care of itself.

Ponsonby stared gloomily towards the field. The scorers were being kept busy, as busy as they had been during the Yorkshire innings, and the figures were going up.

Arthur Lovell had knocked up ninety off his own bat, and still seemed as fresh as paint.

Not so the Yorkshire fieldsmen.

They had been given an amount of leather-hunting they had never looked for from the Loamshire captain, and they ruefully realised that the game wasn't to be the walk-over they had fondly anticipated.

When Lovell was hitting out, the active Tykes were flagging all over the field for the leather, and time and again it had to be tossed back to them by some grinning spectator.

The fieldsmen were showing signs of wear and tear, and so in point of fact was Geoffrey Lagden.

Lagden was by no means so careful in his way of life as the young professional, and in consequence he was not nearly so fit for the hard work of a long innings.

More than once Lagden had barely reached the crease with his bat in time to save his wicket from being stumped by the wicket-keeper.

There were now ninety runs to Lagden's credit, and he was keenly anxious to get over the century and his first century of the season in a first-class match.

But the hard work was telling keenly upon him, and Arthur Lovell's hard hitting put a strain upon him that he was less and less able to stand.

Lovell saw it well enough, and more than once he had slacked, and taken a run less than he might have taken had Lagden been in a fit condition to back him up.

He did not want another Loamshire wicket to fall if he could help it, nor did he desire Lagden to have an excuse for saying that he had purposely run him out.

And, as a sportsman, he was willing in every way to back Lagden up and help him to make his century, that round number so dear to the heart of a batsman.

But it was not to be.

Arthur was taking care that he did not run Lagden out, but Lagden himself was not quite so careful, and from his own miscalculation Arthur, of course, could not save him.

He had hit out at a ball from Denton, which seemed to him well worth a three, and two of them had been run in safety.

There Arthur would have stopped, for with the tail of his eye, as it were, he saw a fieldsman almost upon the ball in the long field.

But Lagden had calculated on the third run, and he was a bold and excited to think twice.

He was running again, and Arthur backed him up.

The young professional crossed the pitch like a champion sprinter, and his bat came home on the crease with a clump.

Lagden was quite safe, so lucky.

The fieldsman after the ball—who happened to be the Yorkshire skipper—straightened up, the leather in his hand.

To see where his chance lay, and to take instant advantage of it, was second nature to the nobleman who had so often led the White Roses to victory on the cricket field.

True as a die came the throw-in from the country—a long and a true throw-in that brought disaster to Lagden.

Arthur was safe, but Lagden was still panting on when the ball crashed on the wicket, the bat still a couple of feet from the crease.

Crash!

The wicket was a hopeless wreck, with one stump right out of the ground, and another reclining at an intoxicated-looking angle.

Lagden's bat clumped down. But it was seconds too late, and he knew it.

From the Yorkshire crowd came a tremendous cheer in greeting of that splendid throw-in from the hand of Lord Hawke.

"Hurrah!"

"Well thrown!"

"Oh, well thrown!"

His lordship came in from the long field smiling. The appeal was hardly necessary. The batsman, white with chagrin, carried out his bat.

There was a buzz of applause as he came up to the pavilion.

Ninety-two was a score which any batsman might have been proud of against such bowlers as Yorkshire was putting into the field, and Lagden had certainly done splendidly for his side, especially in contrast with the earlier batsmen.

But he was bitterly disappointed in not making the century.

And all the more so, because Arthur Lovell wanted only two runs to the hundred, and was pretty certain to make them and a good many more.

Ponsonby slapped Lagden on the shoulder.

"Well done, Geoff; well done, old man!"

Lagden nodded without speaking.

At that moment his disappointment was keener than his satisfaction at having lived so long against the Yorkshire bowling.

"Next man in."

Tweedie, the Scotsman, went to join Arthur Lovell at the wickets.

Tweedie was canny, and there wasn't an atom of gloominess in his nature. He was quite content to keep up his end and leave the brilliant young batsman to do the scoring.

And as a stonewaller he did well.

Hirst and Rhodes tried to move him in vain; he would not be bit out at the most tempting balls, he would not be induced to take the slightest risk.

Meanwhile, Arthur Lovell was hitting away for all he was worth.

Rhodes greeted his century, which was quickly completed, for there were thousands of good cricketers on the ground, ready to cheer any good work by either side.

And he was still batting splendidly.

He had piled up 148 when Tweedie was clean bowled at last by George Hirst.

The Loamshire score read now: 260 for six wickets.

It was a mighty change.

And the best of it was—from the Loamshire point of view—that Arthur Lovell was still at the stumps, batting like a giant refreshed with wine.

There did not seem to be any reason why he should not complete his second century, if the Loamshire batsmen lasted him out.

"My hat!" muttered Fortescue; "and that's the bat whom Pon would have left in the lurch out of sheer spite. Nice sort of a captain would that be!"

"What did you say?" snapped Ponsonby, who was standing near him, and overheard part of his muttered words.

Fortescue grinned.

"Did I say anything? I was just thinking that Loamshire is awfully lucky to have such a captain as you are, Pon."

And Ponsonby scowled darkly.

Harding had gone in to join Arthur.

He also was a batsman of the stone-wall type, and quite willing to efface himself if need were for the sake of the side.

He blocked the bowling of Hirst and Denton and Haigh in the most exasperating manner—from their point of view.

He left the hitting to Lovell, and Lovell did it, and did it well.

But fate fell upon Harding at last.

Lord Hawke, with another deadly throw-in, sent him back to the pavilion; but the Loamshire score was now 315, of which 196 belonged to Arthur Lovell.

The scoring had been rapid, or rather phenomenal.

Lovell, made of iron as he seemed to be, was glad of a rest for tea, but he resumed batting with keen energy again, with Fortescue as his partner.

The latter grinned significantly at Arthur as they went out to the wickets.

"What do you think now, Lovell?" he queried.

Arthur looked at him inquiringly.

"I mean, about what I was saying to you yesterday," said Fortescue; "about what I told you I intended to do. I suppose you know you were down for last man in in this innings, the same as in the first, don't you?"

"Yes."

"And now you're in, and have knocked up close on 200 for Loamshire during the afternoon. A bit of a change, isn't it, Lovell?"

"Ponsonby has altered his mind, apparently."

"Yes; Colonel Hilton helped him to alter it with a telegram," grinned Fortescue. "You see, during the luncheon interval I wired to the colonel, and I blued quite a sum on that wire in giving him particulars."

Arthur Lovell laughed.

"We shan't win," said Fortescue, "but we have stopped the Tykes laughing at us; and that is something, isn't it? And with luck we may make it a draw."

"With luck," said Arthur quietly, "we might win."

"Do you think we've got a chance left?"

"Yes—with luck. If we pass the 400, Yorkshire will have to bat again to-morrow, and our bowling may be better this time."

"If Ponsonby plays Valance—" said Fortescue thoughtfully. "By Jove, it would be splendid to win after all! There's a chance."

And he went to his wicket.

Under the red westering sun the innings recommenced.

Arthur Lovell was batting against Hirst, and, splendid bowler as he was, George Hirst could not touch his wicket. He could not even make the first over a maiden, for after stopping a couple of balls Lovell began to hit out in his old style.

A 2, and then another 2, and there was a roar.

Arthur Lovell had reached his second century.

It was the first double century scored in Loamshire cricket—in first-class matches—for the season, and no Arthur had made a record.

Was it possible that Loamshire had a chance after all?

The board showed 319 for the second innings, which added to the 78 for the first, made a total of 397.

Loamshire wanted only three more to tie with Yorks.

Loamshire still had three wickets to fall, and it was plain enough that Arthur Lovell's would not be one of them.

The bowling came to Fortescue, and Haigh was put on, and he sent down some of his fastest balls to Fortescue's wicket, and his fastest were like four-pound-seven shells—at least, they seemed so to the batsman.

Fortescue played up gallantly, but his luck was out, and the third ball of the over laid his wicket in ruins. He made a grimace as he carried out his bat for 2.

Eight down for 321!

The Loamshire captain, in pads and gloves, stepped from the pavilion and came slowly down to the vacant wicket. He gave Arthur Lovell a dark look in passing, which the young batsman did not appear to notice.

Ponsonby took up his place, and Haigh began to send down lightning balls to him.

The Loamshire captain was not in good form. Anxiety and worry had "taken it out" of him, and he was in no condition to stand up to the flashes of lightning which Haigh called bowling. He played mechanically and dully. To his credit be it said that he did his level best. But the fact of that over was the last he had to play, for it whipped his off-stump clean out of the ground. He stared at it gloomily for a moment, and went back to the pavilion, with a duck's egg to his credit.

"Last man in!"

Last man in was Kit Valance.

The Loamshire champion bowler had watched his chum's splendid innings with pride and pleasure in his eyes, longing to join him at the wickets and help him out. But Ponsonby, though he had played Lovell in obedience to the colonel's wire, had not departed from his plan with respect to Kit Valance.

Valance had been left till the last; but as a matter of fact this had its advantage now, Arthur Lovell being still not out.

Between them the cricket chums were certain to pile up runs for Loamshire, for Kit, though his forte was bowling, was a sound and reliable fellow at the wickets.

Arthur gave him a cheerful nod as he came in.

There was still half an hour to play, and in that time much might be done. It began to look possible that the Loamshire innings would not finish till the morrow.

Hirst was bowling to Lovell again. The first ball was a boundary, and it was greeted with a loud cheer. Loamshire had passed the dangerous point now. The total score was three over the 400, and so it was now inevitable for Yorkshire to bat again on the morrow.

But how many runs would they be required to make? That was now the question.

The score was 404 when Haigh bowled.

Arthur Lovell seemed to be tireless, and boundary followed boundary, piling on the fours without giving him the trouble of stirring from the crease.

Kit Valance backed him up gallantly.

The Yorkshiremen were on their mettle now, and bowlers and fieldsmen vied with one another in their efforts to finish that innings.

It was in vain.

It was time at the close of play was drawing nigh, and still the batsmen were at the wickets, batting for all they were worth.

And the score for the second innings was now 380. And it was still going up.

Four more runs Lovell got, and another four, and a three. And now Hirst is bowling against Kit Valance's wicket. He is bowling like a man on his mettle. It wants five minutes to time, and George Hirst is determined that the Loamshire innings shall not extend to the third day of the match.

The first ball goes for two; the second is stopped; the third shares its fate.

There is a gleam in the eyes of George Hirst.

Down comes the ball again, and again it is stopped. It is the last over for the day, and still the batsman is there, apparently impenetrable.

Another ball, which also stops dead on the crease from the clack of the bat.

George Hirst grips the leather again.

Kit Valance waits for the last ball of the over. It comes down, and he plays it. But no! There is something unusual in that ball, which is too much for even his caution. It breaks in, and in a flash the bails are on the ground.

"How's that?" shouted Hirst, with a gasp of relief.

"Out!"

The last Loamshire batsman is out! All down for 391. And the day's play is over.

Yorkshire have to bat on the third day, with 70 to get to win.

There is no doubt whatever in the Yorkshire ranks that they will do it.

But will they?

(How Yorkshire fared on the following day will be detailed in next week's Summer Double Number of THE BOYS' REALM. Order your copy in advance.)

IMPORTANT!!! Next Saturday Our Superb Summer Double Number Appears! Order It Now!

FROM YOUR EDITOR'S CHAIR.



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

Your Editor is always glad to hear from you about yourself or your favourite paper.
He will answer you by post if you enclose a stamped addressed postcard or envelope.
Write to him if you are in trouble, if you want information, or if you have any ideas for our paper.
All letters to be addressed to the Editor of THE BOYS' REALM, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.
If your letter is not replied to here, it may be answered in "The Boys' Friend" next Tuesday, or "The Boys' Herald" next Thursday.
THE BOYS' REALM will be sent post free to any part of the world on the following terms: 12 months, 7s.; 6 months, 3s. 6d.; 3 months, 1s. 3d.—payable in advance by British stamps. Postal Orders or Money Orders to be sent to the Publisher, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.

To Junior Footballers.

IT is, perhaps, early days yet to talk about football, but as most of my friends are aware, football for boys and young men commences long before the official season opens on the 1st of September, and so, for the benefit of all enthusiastic footballers, I may mention that THE BOYS' REALM has a gigantic football programme in preparation, and it will be announced from time to time in the pages of our paper. Any boy or young man who is connected with a football club—no matter how large or how small the club may be—should make a point of watching the pages of THE BOYS' REALM. It is only by doing so that my readers can hope to learn of the many advantages which will be held out to junior football clubs during the football season.

Our Summer Double Number.

I AM sure that my friends are eagerly looking forward to next week's mammoth double number of our paper. I have been at great pains and expense to make this summer double number the best ever published, and I think that, when my readers glance at the list of contents at the foot of this page, they will see that they will have splendid value for their money. Where, save in my other boys' papers, could they hope to get such a budget of entertaining and high-class fiction by star authors for the small sum of twopence?

May I call the special attention of my friends to the fact that, instead of the ordinary-length instalments of our popular serials, I am practically giving them two instalments in one number. There will be 12,000 words of "King Cricket" in next week's issue, and 10,000 words of "The Fighting Fifth"; whilst "The School on the Cliff" will have three whole pages devoted to it. This alone should make my friends eager to get hold of next week's issue; but when I tell them that there are five long complete stories in our double number, as well as quite a host of valuable articles, I think that my readers will realise that their best plan is to place an order with their newsagents to-day, so that they may not be disappointed when the rush comes.

I have made arrangements with Mr. G. L. B. Coverdale, secretary of the East Riding of Yorkshire Football Association, to write a new series of articles for THE BOYS' REALM on

"How to Form a Football League."

The first of these will appear in our double number. There will also be a fine new competition on altogether novel lines, which will specially interest footballers. I am not going to reveal the nature of this competition this week, but I think my friends will be surprised when they find out how very simple it is. Altogether, I am certain that my readers will vote next week's issue marvellous value for the money.

He Has Cured Himself of a Hasty Temper.

SIDNEY S. is one of my friends living in our great capital who has written me a letter as to the way he cured himself of a hasty temper, and incidentally acquired skill at boxing. I recommend my chum's remarks to my readers because I recognise the value of boxing as a training for that command of oneself that is an essential to the success in life of every young Britisher. Accept my hearty thanks, Sidney S., for your most interesting letter:

"Dear Editor,—I have been a reader of your papers since they were first published, and I may say that I am as enthusiastic over them as I was nine years ago when I first started reading 'Boys' Friend.' Now, about the articles on boxing appearing in your paper. I think this is a branch of the Britisher's education that should be enforced just as much as the various scholastic subjects. When I was a lad at school I am sorry to say that I possessed a very hasty temper, which not only got me into endless scrapes at school, but at home as well.

"On my leaving school my master gave me a sound talking to on the disadvantages my hasty temper would cause me to have unless I learnt to control it. Just about this time the talk of our town was about a certain noted pugilist, who had just won a big contest. This caused me and a number of other lads to form a boxing club. Now, again, my hasty temper caused me to be disliked by my fellow-members until one night I was sparring with another lad, who has since become a famous boxer, and he accidentally struck me a bit hard. I at once offered to fight him, and I may say I got a jolly good hammering. This, I think, cured me of my temper, thanks to boxing.

"I should like to give a little advice to those who intend taking up boxing: 1. Start by boxing four one-minute rounds, with one minute rest between each, gradually working it up to four three-minute rounds. 2. Always have a good rub down after finishing; this will do you more good than an hour's exercise. 3. Avoid smoking and alcoholic drinks; these weaken the heart, make you box slowly, and spoil your judgment. The best exercises to follow are walking, sprinting, skipping, and ball-punching. Lastly, don't expect to be a champion in five minutes; there is only one way to gain championship honours—that is, box, box, box."

NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED!

LOOK OUT FOR THE

NEW

VOLUMES OF "THE BOYS' FRIEND" LIBRARY,

PRICE 3D. EACH.

No. 21—"PETE'S HOLIDAY."
A splendid NEW and original long, complete tale, dealing with the adventures of JACK, SAM, and PETE in Brighton and other holiday resorts, by S. CLARKE HOOK.

No. 22—"SPORTING LIFE."
An entirely NEW and original tale of SCHOOL, of CRICKET and of ADVENTURE at home and abroad, by A. S. HARDY.

ON SALE JULY 5th.

A Wonderful Bicycle Business.

THE story of a man's rise to fame and fortune from humble beginnings is always a fascinating one. And that is the story of Mr. Edward O'Brien, the world's largest cycle dealer. When Mr. O'Brien commenced business in Coventry some years back, his office accommodation consisted of a single room, five yards square. To-day Mr. O'Brien employs hundreds of workpeople, and supplies thousands of bicycles to all parts of the British Isles.

Readers of this paper who are seeking a really high-grade Coventry-made bicycle at prices considerably below the average sums charged by agents and makers, should communicate with Mr. Edward O'Brien, of Coventry, before definitely deciding upon making a purchase.

He Wants an L.C.C. Permit.

WO. C., of Upper Tooting, tells me that he is desirous of obtaining an L.C.C. permit for the coming football season, and he wants to know where he shall write for this. To obtain the use of grounds on which to play football in London parks, it is necessary to make application to the Chief Officer, Parks Department, London County Council, 11, Regent Street, W. According to the regulations of the L. C. C., such application must be made before June 1st of each year; but it is just possible that there still remain one or two grounds which have not yet been allotted for the coming season, so that W. C. C. should write to the above address at once.

Perhaps the information I have given my reader may be of interest to others who have been thinking of obtaining L. C. C. permits. They should make a note of the address of the Chief Officer, and see that they send in their applications next year before the stipulated date.

Emigration to Canada.

I HAVE received a letter from H. H. (Riversdale) in which he tells me he wants to know where he can obtain information concerning emigration to Canada. I may tell my friend that his best plan is to write to Mr. W. Weekes, Cleverton Farm, Chippenham, Wilts, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope, when he will obtain all the information he can possibly want. Another address he might write to is The Emigrants' Information Bureau, 31, Broadway, Westminster, S.W.

I must here warn my correspondent—as well as any other of my friends who are thinking of emigrating to Canada—not to have any dealings with emigration firms about which they know little or nothing. There are unfortunately quite a number of swindlers about who are bent on fleecing would-be emigrants—against whom I hereby warn all my readers. By writing to the addresses I have given, my friends may be sure of obtaining the best possible advice as to how they should proceed.

YOUR EDITOR (H. E.).

DAILY MAIL.

SOME OF THE GREAT ATTRACTIONS OF NEXT SATURDAY'S DOUBLE NUMBER.

FIVE LONG, COMPLETE STORIES—

A FRESHMAN'S BLUE.
Magnificent 12,000-word Complete Cricket Story. By 'JACK NORTH.

THE RAJAH'S RIVAL.
Enthralling Complete Polo Yarn. By A. S. HARDY

TOM BURTON, BUILDER.
Dramatic Story of the Building Trade. By a Popular Author.

DANNIE AND GINGER.
Clever Complete Army Story. By W. MURRAY GRAYDON.

THE MAN FROM SCOTLAND YARD.
A Fine Complete Story of Sexton Blake.

SPORTS ARTICLES BY FAMOUS ATHLETES—ILLUSTRATED.
DOUBLE-LENGTH INSTALMENTS OF OUR POPULAR SERIALS

Out on Saturday Next, July 6th—Price Twopence.

THE SALVING OF THE PENGUIN.

A COMPLETE YACHTING STORY.

By ANDREW GRAY,
Author of "A First-Class Passenger."

THE 1st CHAPTER.
The Dottrel Comes to Grief—A Friend in Need.

"HERE she comes! Ready with that storm-jib as quick as you can, Jack!"

There was an anxious note in Hal Burford's voice which did not tend to increase his crew's confidence. The jib-halliard had fouled aloft, and its serpentine coils had wound themselves round his ankles, until he seemed to be grappling with a boa-constrictor.

Away on the horizon a dark cloud spread apace, while the white line of foam, stretching from side to side as far as the eye could see, indicated that the expected squall was leaping upon them.

It had swept up with amazing swiftness, and was going to be a "snorter," as Hal's experienced eye could tell.

Forgetful that his crew, Jack Pinker, was only a "green-hand," the young skipper had delayed his precautions a little too long. The storm-jib should have been set by this time, and the Dottrel reefed down, ready for the battle with the winds.

As it was, her plight was awkward if not serious. Abandoning the half-set mainsail which he had just hastily reefed, Hal sprang forward.

"I'll look after that!" he shouted, and bundled his anxious crew aft. "Take the tiller, keep her head not too far into the wind, and keep her sailing, whatever you do!"

With a swish and a roar the squall descended upon them. The bows of the Dottrel plunged deep into the foaming wave crests as the wind smote her and beeled her upon her side.

Hal found himself clinging for life, with the little yacht lunging beneath him like a buck-jumper, and the loose halliard sawing viciously at his bare ankles.

"Helm hard up! Hard up, for Heaven's sake!" he roared as he tore at the stubborn rope. If he only could get his jib set it would be plain sailing.

His warning came too late. This was Jack Pinker's first trip in a small sailing-boat, and his knowledge of steering were of the haziest description.

The mainsail had already "taken charge"; the yacht was driven clean head to wind, and the frightened steersman found himself being knouted with coils of unstabbed and heavy blocks as the mainsail slatted and thundered in the squall.

What had happened to produce this pandemonium, or how to extricate himself from the crisis, he had not the least idea.

Hal was more alive to the dangers of the situation. The Dottrel's mainsail was old; in fact, the boat itself was chaffingly known as the sister ship to Noah's Ark.

Her skipper's fear was that the worn canvas would split under the furious strain now being flung upon it; nor were his fears unfounded. A hole the size of his hand was suddenly rent in the clew of the sail.

He sprang to the halliards to lower it, in the hope of staving off further disaster, but too late. The Dottrel had paid off, and the sail had filled. Crack, rip, swish! The damage was done. The mainsail was in a hundred shreds, and the little seven-tonner was, for the time being, at the mercy of the wind and waves.

Hal was down in the cockpit, up on deck again, aft, and forward as quick as a cat.

"Wha—what happens next?" spluttered Jack, clinging to the gunwale of the plunging boat, his face white with anxiety, and his eyes half blinded by the flying scud.

"Oh, we'll drop our hook, that's all!" was the serene reply.

Hal had drawn his sheath-knife across the lashings of the anchor, and was preparing to heave it overboard. All the rush and excitement had fizzled out of him in a second, and he was as cool as a cucumber again.

"We're not going to be shipwrecked, are we?" shouted Jack, only half assured by his skipper's calm.

"Shipwrecked, my aunt!" was the laughing reply. "You're as safe here as if you were at home in bed! We'll let this squall blow out a bit, then rig a trysail and carry on into Prittlesea. If we can't we'll run back to the Thames, that's all."

"But it will be dark soon. And the barometer has been tumbling down like one o'clock!"

"Well, we can't help that, old man. Those that go down to the sea in small boats have to put up with these little freaks of fortune, and make the best of any hash they get into. Hallo! Here's a boat standing towards us! She's going to give us a hail, I expect."

A smart fifteen-tonner, all white paint and bright varnish, was coming thrashing down under their lee. Standing by the steersman, who looked to be a professional yacht-hand, was a fat little man in yellow oilskins, while a gawky youth in equally resplendent attire clung somewhat nervously to the shrouds.

From the fo'c'sle hatch a red-faced lad had pushed out his head, and was regarding the tumbling sea with no evident satisfaction.

"Yacht ahoy!" howled the little fat man.

"A-h-o-oy!" bawled Hal in reply.

"Ye want any help? Shall we give you a tow?"

Hal looked at Jack. Like all small-yacht sailors, he loathed the idea of accepting assistance, for outside help—at any rate, of a professional kind—on the sea is an expensive luxury, and one only to be indulged in in peril.

Here was a brother yachtsman, however, offering aid, so there was no likelihood of salvage being demanded.

A salvage fee was out of the question in any case. The Dottrel, to put it frankly, was not worth it; while her young owner and skipper, Hal Burford, was as poor as a church mouse, and could only indulge his passion for seasailing by stinting himself to the uttermost farthing over all else.

"What do you say, Jack? I leave it to you."

"Well, I say take the chance. I don't like the look of things at all."

"Oh, bosh!" laughed Hal. "This is merely a bit of a breeze-up; but still, a lift in to Prittlesea won't come amiss—particularly as the wind is going to come out nor'-east, if I'm not mistaken."

A hail of thanks and consent to the Samaritan help met the ear about in a trice, and she came beating back to the weather of the Dottrel.

Hal did not quite like the way in which the little fat man was rubbing his hands, as if in self-satisfaction; but he caught the rope which came whistling over him, and made it fast to his own anchor bitts.

In a few seconds the little seven-tonner was butting through the short seas astern of her bigger sister, and a look of comparative relief began to steal into Jack Pinker's face.

"Ahoy, there!" came the fat man's voice again. Hal was clearing the remnants of the tattered mainsail and making all snug for the trip. "What's your name and tonnage?"

"Dottrel. Seven tons. Owner, Burford!" yelled Hal. Then, as sudden misgivings seized him, he added: "What do you want to know for?"

"Oh, just thinking of the salvage, that's all!" was the cool reply.

"Salvage! You don't mean to say you're going to claim salvage from us?" shouted Hal, with rising dander.

"Of course I am! What d'yer think I'm doing all this dirty work for—love?" screamed the fat man, in tones of assumed indignation.

"Great Scott! I thought you were a gentleman!" snapped Hal, glaring at his Good Samaritan as if he could eat him.

The gibe set the fat man dancing about with rage.

"An' I thought you was a yachtsman!" was the heated retort down wind. "D'ye flatter yourself I'm going to pull you out of the jaws of death, so to speak, for nothink? No; not for five nor ten pounds neither! This is a twenty-quid job, this is, or my name ain't Josiah Widger! I'll teach you to tell me I ain't a gentleman, you young jackanapes!"

"Twenty quid!" gasped Jack, who had been listening to this conversation in amazement. "Why, the old tub isn't worth twenty all told!"

"Thank you for nothing!" retorted Hal, turning upon him viciously. "Still, we've been fairly had. The old beast has got me by the scruff, and knows it! Jaws of death!" he snarled in disgust. "Twenty quid! I'd like to wring the old cad's neck! Did you ever hear of such a ruffianly, unsportsmanlike swindle?"

As Jack had really heard very little connected with yachting, he kept a discreet silence. The wind was blustering round to the north-east, as Hal had prophesied. He didn't know why it should do this, or what extra villainy it was going to hatch in its new quarter.

He only knew that the ancient and, to all appearances, rickety Dottrel was at the business-end of a stout tow-rope, and he didn't care much how long she remained there.

"I'll cast off and chance it, I'm changed if I don't!" exclaimed Hal suddenly, preparing to release the coils of hawser.

"Don't be an ass!" said Jack hastily. "You say he's got you fair. You've given him the name of your boat, and he has three witnesses that he picked you up disabled in mid-ocean."

"Mid-ocean be hanged!" retorted Hal. "Why, we were as safe as houses! Still, you're right. We'll carry on; at any rate, until I've bent a try-sail, and then we'll cast off his tow-rope and tell him to go to Jericho!"

The young yachtsman had dived into the cabin while he was speaking, and the finish of the sentence was muffled in the cavernous recesses of the fo'c'sle. He emerged after much grunting and puffing, pulling a bundle of stout canvas after him.

The fat owner of the Penguin—they could just distinguish the fifteen-tonner's name in the gathering dusk—regarded the operations with irritating satisfaction and complacency.

The gawky youth—obviously Widger junior—had relinquished his feverish grip of the shrouds to come aft and grin at them.

"If ever I meet that long-legged lout ashore," growled Hal, glaring fixedly at him, "I'll rope's-end him so that he'll have to stand up for a month!"

Though the Dottrel rolled like a tog, it did not take long to bend the try-sail to the boom and make it fast for hoisting, but when all was ready Hal sat down to bide his time.

Prittlesea was still six miles off, and he had no great opinion of the Dottrel's handiness in jury-rig. When he did let go the tow-rope ultimately, it would be at a point where there would be no doubt as to her fetching harbour in comfort.

As Hal Burford sat there in his grimy oilskins, ancient sou'-wester, and sea-boots, he looked the very picture of a sea-rover. Nature had built him for a sailor's life, and circumstance had made him a junior clerk in a City bank.

Ever since he had accumulated three sovereigns of his own, however, he had thrown himself into his pet hobby—commencing with a prohistoric open boat, which he had patched into some sort of seaworthiness, and progressing through a series of "death-traps" and "coffin-ships," until kind Fate had thrown the Dottrel in his path.

Before he was out of his teens he was one of the best yachtsmen in the Thames and Essex estuaries, and as a racing "crew" he was worth his weight in gold to any skipper.

Hal's last task had been to trim the riding-light, and this storm-proof lantern was put ready to hand in a bucket, to mask its rays from the eyes of the steersman. The binnacle lamp of the lifeboat compass was also lit, and Jack watched the swaying dial with a landsman's awe.

Now that all was taut and ready for action, Hal sat brazed against the weather combing, dodging the slapping sprays and glaring with indignant eyes at the Penguin, clawing along ahead of them.

"The boast! The bounder! The unsportsmanlike cad!" he would ejaculate every now and then.

And Jack Pinker, seeing how strong a tide was running in his skipper's mind, had the sense to hold his peace.

THE 2nd CHAPTER.
A Wild Night—On the Rod Spit—Man Overboard.

THE entrance to the little harbour of Prittlesea is not the easiest thing to negotiate in gathering dusk and a humming nor'-easter.

There are sands to the right and sands to the left and in front, and on all sides bob parti-coloured buoys, flat-topped like drums, round like push-balls, and conical like torpedoes, warning the seafarer of the hidden shoals.

One alone is adorned with a light—the Knell gas-buoy—and Hal's eyes were fixed on this glimmering spark, now scarcely visible in a fresh squall, which had suddenly descended on the sea.

The wind had piped up with redoubled energy, and the rain stung the face like a whiplash. Possibly this accounted for the random steering of the helmsman ahead, for he was shaving corners in a fashion which sent Hal's heart into his mouth.

For his own light-draft ship he had no fears, for she could sail across shoals, where the bigger boat must strike the sand.

And to strike the sand on an ebbing tide, in a nasty sea, is a thing to shudder at.

"I wonder if that chap knows those waters?" he exclaimed suddenly, as the Penguin threatened to take a greater risk than usual. "If he's working by the chart, he'll find himself in trouble, for the sand has been silting steadily for years. Hi's hearing away a bit now, though, luckily for him, or he would have picked up the Gullet for a dead cert. in another fifty yards."

"What would have happened, then?" asked Jack nervously.

The deepening night, the glimmering wave-crests leaping out of the darkness, and the breathless smother of rain, which every now and again descended upon them, blotting out even the Penguin from their view, were beginning to reawaken all sorts of torturing fears in his breast.

Nor were these relieved when Hal turned silently and dived into the little cabin, emerging with a lifebuoy, which he flung down on the floor of the cockpit.

The glimmer of the lantern in the pail showed, too, that he was stowing a brace of lifebelts into an open locker at their feet.

"We shan't need 'em, of course," he explained, with exaggerated cheeriness; "but it's just as well to have them handy."

Supposing we ran aground and went to pieces?" asked Jack again, determined to know the worst.

"Well, we've got these and the dinghy," answered Hal, nodding to a tiny cockleshell of a row-boat, which sheered and bucked at its tether astern of them.

Jack thought he might just as well be asked to trust his life to a walnut-shell in such a tumbling sea.

If he had had a little more pluck, he would have reached for a lifebelt and buckled it on; but Hal fell to whistling as if at that moment, and he shrank from showing the white feather.

The gas-buoy staggered and winked at them like a drunken man as they passed, and the Penguin eased her sheets and bore away, with the Dottrel jerking in tow.

The battle of wind against tide had knocked up a villainous sea here, and the seven-tonner plunged like a maddened steer.

With the agility of a slack-wire equilibrist, Hal clambered along the diminutive deck—now balancing himself as the hull sagged from under him, now clutching at stay or shroud as it reared up to meet the next precipitous wave. Jack shuddered to watch him. A single false step, and then what could save him? In oilskins, pea-jacket and sea-boots, Hal could not battle for five minutes in that raging cauldron, strong swimmer that he was.

As for lending a helping hand in such an emergency, Jack felt he would be as useless as a week-old babe.

For many minutes Hal stood clinging to the wire shrouds, his eyes straining out ahead into the dusk. And every now and then Jack caught the pale glimmer of his face as he turned to note the bearings of the Knell buoy, now far astern.



The dinghy slid away beneath Hal's feet, and he made a frantic clutch at the bowsprit as a wave swept him along the yacht's side.

"What the dickens is the ass up to?" he cried suddenly, clattering down from the cabin-top into the steering-well, and glaring at the compass-card.

"The idiot will be on Red Spit in a brace of shakes if he doesn't take care! I don't believe he's ever been in these waters before, or he'd allow for the set of the tide. I bet he thinks the Spit buoy's on his starboard bow, and it's a quarter of a mile to port. He'll pile her up in a minute, and then there'll be a scrimmage!"

Suddenly realising that this was all Greek to a landsman's ears, Hal floundered to the deck once more, and clawed his way forward.

"Ahoy, Penguin—aho-o-o-y! Do you know where you are?"

The gruff reply was swept to windward by a sudden gust, leaving Hal none the wiser.

Yet only a ten-fathom tow-rope linked the two yachts.

"You're driving slap on Red Spit! Ahoy! Ware, Red Spit!" he trumpeted through his hands.

"Go and eat coke!" was the curt retort in the fat man's voice, this time through a megaphone.

"They're dotty!" exclaimed Hal, clearing the jib-halliards in haste. "Stand by with the sheets, Jack! I'm going to hoist sail and cast-off. If they want to fling their craft away, I want to keep mine."

Up went the little triangular patch of canvas, to a chorus of deep grunts as Hal swigged the halliard taut.

A few turns of the stout hawser cast it loose from the bitts, and it disappeared like a snake over the side.

"Up helm, Jack—up helm hard, or we'll be on the worst bit of stuff horseboats! There, what did I tell you? The old fool's done it!"

As the Dottrel swung on her heel and raced at right angles to her original course, they saw the Penguin butt full tilt on the treacherous Red Spit, and wallow on her side like a wounded duck.

The sight had a fearful fascination for Jack Pinker, and he clung to the tiller, watching the blur of the canted hull and wreckling canvas, until a sharp command brought him to his senses.

"Gibe her and run her up to the wind! We must get the try-sail on her!" shouted Hal, above the whistling gale.

Round flew the Dottrel's nose to wind, and up went the three-cornered storm-sail.

"Now, let her off a bit!" bawled Hal, coiling down the halliard; for at no time is method and neatness more necessary than in such moments of crisis. A tangled rope may bring disaster with amazing swiftness.

Hal had scarcely belted the sails and heeled the Dottrel to her deck planks, when Hal was back at Jack's elbow, and his hand on the tiller.

"Look in that locker there for a coil of rope! Have it ready!" he jerked.

With the try-sail flattened hard in, the seven-tonner thrashed to windward through the short, steep seas in encouraging style.

Jack realised that the tables had been suddenly turned; that the rescued were now to be the rescuers; that grim and dangerous work lay ahead. And, strange to say, he found himself growing calm and cool as his chum beside him.

"We must beat up to them, and give them a hand, if we can!" roared Hal in his ear, for a fresh squall had pirped up out of the pitchy blackness, and wind and waves made pandemonium.

The Penguin, which had become but a blurred mass on the seething waters, now began to assume shape as the Dottrel drew towards her.

She was heeled almost on her beam-ends, lifting on each wave-crest, and then bumping on the sand-bank, with a shock which made every plank crack and quiver.

"Why don't they get her mainsail down?" said Hal, watching her with anxious eyes.

Something had jammed aloft, evidently, for the yacht-hand was seen scrambling his way up the shrouds, with the intention of clearing it.

In the Penguin's plight, the task was difficult and dangerous; but the man clutched the gaff and flung his weight pluckily upon it, with the intention of forcing it down.

It came with a run. An extra vicious wave lifted the hull at the most critical moment. The mast whipped upwards, and the man was flung headlong from his hold into the sea.

His yell of terror was echoed by his fat master and Jack simultaneously.

As for Hal, he dived for the coil of rope, and, throwing the Dottrel into the wind, hove her to, and seemed to wait for the man to be swept by the tide towards him.

Up bobbed the man's head. He gave a few floundering strokes, then was overwhelmed again, and reappeared a few yards nearer to them.

It was obvious that he was a poor swimmer, and his heavy clothes was dragging him down.

Here, Hal, tie that rope round me, and let me go to the other him!" said Jack, flinging off his oilskins.

"You think you can venture it?" replied Hal, with relief, noosing the rope as he spoke. "I'd go myself, only there's the boat; she might run away with you."

"No; I'll go! I'm no use in any other way; but I can manage this. Stand clear; I'm ready!"

"Take a lifebelt—you'd better!"

"No; I'll chance it without. It would only hamper me."

Just as the man's head rose above the waves, Jack dived in, and, with powerful "trudgeon" stroke, drove his way towards him.

Peering over the gunwale of the Penguin, deluged with flying spray, the little, fat man watched the gallant effort with breathless anxiety.

The unlucky sailor, now at his last gasp, was his only hope. For the first time he was realising that owning a yacht, and being able to handle it, were two very different things.

His gawky son was more helpless even than he, for the only man he's a fool, but a coward. Both Widger junior and the cabin-boy had long since bolted below decks, and their yelps of terror were audible even above the shrieking of the wind and the bumping of the stricken hull.

A arm-over-arm Jack cleared his way to where the man was struggling.

At last Hal heard his shout, and began to heave in cautiously on the lifeline.

"Steady, old man—brave!" he exclaimed, as Jack pulled himself on board, panting, after his struggle.

The man was unconscious, and it took the united efforts of the two chums to drag him into safety.

THE 3rd CHAPTER.

Turning the Tables—A Rescue in Mid-sea—Abandoned!

LEAVING Jack to get the man into the cabin and dose him with brandy, Hal got the Dottrel under way again, and edged her as near to windward of the wallowing hull as he dared.

Hal, like all yachtsmen, had an inveterate dislike to appealing for professional assistance. A flare—a blanket, soaked in paraffin, and set ablaze—would have brought a tug out to Pritlesea in bot, by the time she arrived, the Penguin, if she was going to pieces at all, would be in flinders.

Hal was confident he could rescue the remainder of them, but he wished to do more than that, if possible.

If he had had a couple of skilled sailormen with him, he was certain that he could have got her off the sand—that is, if she had not already taken a hole in her side.

If the wind had not increased in fury, it certainly had not slackened. The short seas coursed and crossed on the shoal-water in a way that made the little seven-tonner stagger and reel like a drunken man.

Hal was still in two minds as to what he was going to do, when Jack reappeared at his elbow.

"How is he going on? All right?" shouted Hal in his ear.

"No. Done up; weak as a rat. Seems to have gone to sleep."

This shattered Hal's hopes of salvaging the Penguin. Mr. Josiah Widger, he could see, was a broken reed to rely upon, and as for his son and the cabin-boy, their howls could be heard above the storm.

"What's on now?" asked Jack.

"We must get a line on board, and take them off. Haul in the dinghy, and bail her out. I'll get out the hawser."

While Jack Pinker wrestled with the struggling dinghy, which seemed to plunge and jib like a frightened horse, Hal was dragging out a coil of bass hawser from the forepeak.

Having thrown off his oilskins and sea-boots, he rove a lifeline in a bowline under his armpits, and flung himself into the boat.

"Heave her to now!" he roared, as he took to the short oars and pulled desperately in the direction of the doomed yacht.

The Dottrel, which had crept to windward as near as Hal dared let her, now lay head to wind, hovering on the very edge of the churning sand-bank.

With short, vicious digs of the oars, Hal was driving the tiny dinghy through and over wave-crest into the lee of the Penguin.

The water flew over her gunwale in solid bumps. Gradually from ankle-deep the rower was submerged to the knees. Only ten feet now separated him from his goal. The little row-boat sagged lifelessly under him, then seemed to collapse.

Rising, Hal had just time to fling the coils of hawser on board the Penguin, and then jump for her shrouds. But the dinghy had been overwhelmed at last. It slid away beneath his feet, and he made a frantic clutch at the bowsprit as a wave swept him along the yacht's sides.

In a minute he was on the deck; in two he had made fast the end of the hawser to the anchor-bitts, and was clawing his way to where the fat man clung in helpless bewilderment.

"Well, you're a plucky young chap, I must say!" he gasped. "I wouldn't have done it—not for a thousand pounds!"

Hal was quite ready to believe that.

You'd better scramble along that rope and get aboard," he said quietly.

"What, are we really shipwrecked? You don't mean to say the blessed yacht's done for? I paid two hundred and fifty for her!" said Mr. Widger, as if this information affected him.

"It looks like it," said Hal.

Mr. Widger opened his mouth in blank dismay, but shut it promptly as a spray-head leapt over the weather-gunwale and burst like a waterspout in his face.

At the same moment the Penguin was lifted bodily and flung down on the sand again with a jolt which jarred every tooth in their heads.

This was the signal for a wild shriek to arise from the cabin. There came a scuffling and a scrambling, and the square hatchway appeared Widger junior and the cabin-boy, fighting feebly to escape. Both were in the last stages of sea-sickness as well as of terror.

"Pa—pa!" howled the gawky youth, punching the cabin-boy's bullet-head in frenzy.

"What is it, George!" demanded Josiah Widger, rolling his eyes.

"The bottom's fallen out! Quick—get me out of this! I'm drowning!"

"And me, too!" moaned the cabin-boy, getting his elbow on top of Widger junior's head, and stuffing him back into the darkness with a last herculean effort at self-preservation.

"You'd better clear!" said Hal, scarcely able to suppress a smile even in the midst of peril.

"Yes, I suppose it's all up!" moaned Widger, scrambling like a crab along the slanting deck. "How do I get along this rope?"

"Yes, I'll make this lifeline fast in case of accidents. My friend will haul you in from the other end. When you get on board, cast it loose for the next."

Mr. Widger clutched the rope gingerly, and fell overboard like a sack of potatoes. For a few seconds he managed to cling to the straining hawser; then he was torn from his grip by a wave, and finished the rest of the journey like a half-drowned puppy on the end of a string.

Widger, junior, submitted to be noosed up in the same way; but when it came to jumping overboard, he flung himself on the deck, and defied Hal to lay finger on him.

Hal promptly toppled him overboard, and left him to follow in his father's footsteps. The cabin-boy was last, and Hal had to treat him in like vigorous fashion

When he was alone he decided to satisfy himself that Widger junior's announcement that the bottom had fallen out was true.

To his amazement the Penguin seemed to have taken little harm, and though the seas thundered on the planks outside, little more than a foot of water was awash in the cabin.

If only he had one good hand to assist him she might be saved yet. It was already just upon low water. With the flood-tide the sea would go down, and in an hour she would float of her own accord.

Good sailor as Hal was, he knew a fifteen-ton boat would be too big a handful for him singly in such stress of weather.

Still, with some of the wreckage cleared, and the Dottrel standing by, he was inclined to chance it.

It was a pity his chum Jack Pinker was not a more experienced crew. Of his pluck there was no doubt, after his desperate rescue of that night; but more than courage would be wanted here. Besides, there was his own beloved boat to be worked into port.

Hal went on deck and gave the Dottrel a hail. Jack answered, and leaving Mr. Widger—who seemed to know a little about sailing—in charge, he scrambled along the hawser to the deck of the stranded yacht.

"What's up?" he panted, as he clambered on board.

"I'm going to try and work the boat into Prittlesea. There's just a sporting chance. She'll be afloat in another hour. Help me now to get this mainsail stowed and all this muddle of loose ropes sorted out. Then we'll pump her out, and you can return to the Dottrel and stand by me."

"Wake that yacht-hand up, and get him to take charge. Don't rely on Widger; he's an ass as well as a cad!" added Hal, with sudden recollection of the fat man's salvage claim.

"Well, he would be turning the tables with a vengeance!" said Jack, glancing round the handsome deck. "Why, if the Dottrell was worth twenty quid, what price this little lot? I suppose, after the man has made such a beast of himself, he'll put in a claim against him."

"Hang it all," expostulated Hal, with disgust, "what do you take me for? If other people like to try and make profit out of another's misfortune, let 'em. I'm not that sort."

"Sorry, old chap! I didn't mean anything," mumbled Jack.

But Hal was already grappling with the work of stowing the sodden canvas of the dragged main-sail. A fresh squall struck them before it was half completed, tearing the sail from their clutches, and flinging it out wide again to trail in the tumbling waves. For a few minutes they had to cling for their lives. Hal watching with anxious eyes the Dottrel straining at the hawser.

The moon had peeped out for a second between the scudding clouds, and the seven-tonner was silhouetted as if cut in black velvet against the silvered waves.

"Ahoy there! Ain't you coming?" yelled Mr. Widger feverishly, as the moon was blotted out suddenly, and the widening waste of water was plunged into darkness again.

"Wait a bit!" yelled Jack, as they clawed afresh at the stubborn sail.

A mumbled response came back on the singing gale, but what it was they could not hear.

We're going to get another snorter in a minute. Work like the dickens, while we've the chance!" said Hal, heaving manfully.

The impending squall was certainly a snorter. Every ounce of venom the winds were capable of seemed to have been compressed into the furious blast which now swept down on them.

The Penguin heaved and groaned beneath them as they clung under shelter of the sloping deck. It was impossible to look to windward to see what the fate of the Dottrel might be.

Still, Hal knew she was a staunch craft, and if handled with luck by her curious crew she would ride through.

Suddenly something pliant and heavy flew in over the stern with the driving spindrift, and smote Hal across the neck.

The shock dazed him for a moment, but he reached out and caught the thing that had struck him. It was a rope, and by its briefly surface he knew that it was the bass hawser which had tethered their craft.

"By Jomini, she's broke adrift!" he roared, and scrambled on to the weather-gunwale, braving the thrashing waves to get a better view of her.

To leeward, blowing like an autumn leaf before the gale, was the Dottrel, a black blur, gradually vanishing into the grey darkness.

"Broke adrift, you say?" said Jack, examining the end of the rope. "This hawser has been cut through with a knife!"

"Well I'm hanged!" exclaimed Hal.

"You're right. The hounders have left us here to our fate while they slipped their cable and ran. The unmitigated cowards! The double-dyed dastards! The—everything else you can think of!" he finished, with clenched teeth.

"But how about ourselves?" inquired Jack, beginning to turn cold at this fresh prospect of danger.

"Oh, we're all right. I'm not worrying about that. This puff is the last we shall see of the brute. I'll bet. It'll clear after this, and with the tide making now, the sea will gradually subside, and we shall be afloat again in an hour."

"But, I say, of all the cold-blooded little boulders, that brute takes the biscuit! For all he knows or cares, we may here till we drown. By jingo, I was feeling too much of a gentleman to claim my salvage money before, but I'll do it now! I'll squeeze him to the last farthing, the fat, flabby, greasy little pirate—the white-livered traitor!"

Hal continued his description of Mr. Josiah Widger at intervals, while the work of clearing the Penguin's gear went forward.

When the yacht was pumped out, and all was ready for making sail when she refloated, he got a stove and coffee-pot to work, and elaborated various schemes for vengeance on the man who had so shamelessly left them in the lurch. They were never put into operation, however.

In due time the tide rose, and picked the battered Penguin from her uneasy bed. Then, under close-reefed sails, and with Jack working the pump for all he was worth—for she still leaked considerably—they crawled into Prittlesea to a safe berth on the mud.

The Dottrel did not put in an appearance, nor did her anxious owner hear of her for two whole days.

Then inquiries elicited the fact that she had arrived on the night of the gale in the little harbour of Bridewell, and that her crew of three had left her there, and had driven off in the early morning to the railway-station seven miles away.

The two chums never set eyes on Mr. Widger again. The night's experience seemed to have effectually cured him of his brief infatuation for the sea.

Hal put in a thumping salvage claim as a punishment for his treachery, and was simply staggered when he received the following curt note on a postcard.

"Claim received. Take the yacht in settlement. Have no further use for her.

"JOSIAH WIDGER."

There was not a line of explanation or regret. Still, Hal was more than satisfied with the bargain.

The Penguin being likely to prove too big a drain on his slender purse, he put her up for sale, together with the ancient Dottrel.

With part of the handsome price they fetched, he bought the Kittiwake, as smart a six-tonner as you may find on the east coast. The balance he put by in the bank.

Now he and Jack Pinker sail as partners, and when o' nights they lie in their bunks and listen to the breeze humming in the shrouds, their thoughts somehow hark back naturally to their good friend Widger, and that wild scramble on the Red Spit.

THE END.

(Every reader of this splendid story should peruse Mr. Gray's grand school story, "Despised by the School," now appearing in "The Boys' Herald.")

SANDOW'S BOOK FREE.

All readers of THE BOYS' REALM desirous of becoming a credit to the British Empire, and having a deep sense of Patriotism, should apply at once for the above Book, which would prove a capital assistant, inasmuch as it would show how to become Strong and Healthy, clean in mind, and strong in body, and at the same time show the best apparatus to bring about this glorious result.

NOTE THIS SPECIAL OFFER.

To every reader who writes at once the publisher will send a Copy of this valuable Book Free.

Address No. 4, Sandow Hall, Strand, London, W.C.

The Fighting Fifth



A TALE OF NIPPER AT ST. NINIAN'S SCHOOL.

BY POPULAR

MAXWELL SCOTT.

THE OPENING CHAPTERS IN BRIEF.

CHOTA LAL NATH CHANDRA DAS, an Indian prince, and a new boy at St. Ninian's School, who is placed in the Fifth Form. He is in possession of a certain gold locket, around which centres a mystery.

OTTO HEINRICH, a mysterious German, who strives by foul means to obtain possession of the gold locket.

ROBERT HAMILTON (NIPPER), **DICK STARLING**, Nelson Lee's wards.

GARDNER, PROCTER, RUSSELL, ARKLE, pupils at St. Ninian's School.

Gardner is in difficulties with a bookmaker, and the mysterious German, knowing that the boy is aware of the place where Lal has concealed his locket, offers to pay the lad's debts on condition that he obtains it for him. Gardner, in desperation, consents to do so.

Nipper's study is visited in his absence by some of his rivals, who considerably upset things therein. As he and his chums are having supper that night Nipper is astounded to see the others gasp and choke, then rush to the fireplace.

"What's up?" he asks in surprise.

(You read this week's instalment.)

Gardner is Caught in the Act.

"PARAFFIN," spluttered Bob, with a shudder of disgust.

"Mum-mum-mum!" gasped Wagstaffe, making the most frightful contortions. "Mum-mum-mustard!"

He gulped down a mouthful of bread-and-marmalade; then he sank back limply into his chair and feebly called for water.

"I know who did it!" cried Lal, when a brief investigation had revealed the trick which had been played. "It was Proctor and Russell! When I escaped from the Grammarians, and came back to the school for help, I met Proctor and Russell in the passage outside our study door. I remember now that they both looked jolly well taken aback when I rushed into the passage, but it didn't occur to me at the time that they'd been monkeying in our study. They must have just come out before I arrived."

"And those are the bounders you wanted to give a slap-up feed at Pye's!" growled Wagstaffe, glaring at Dick.

"Well, I'm beaned instead!" said Nipper. "We'll be even with 'em for this. We'll raid their dormitory to-night, and give 'em a feed of hairbrushes and knotted towels!"

The school clock chimed a quarter to midnight. Nipper slipped out of bed and thrust his feet into his bed-room slippers. The other occupants of the Ranters' Fifth-Form dormitory—nine in number—followed his example.

"Locket and wet your towels," whispered Nipper.

Each boy secured his towel, tied a big knot on the end, and dipped it in his water-jug.

"Now collar your brushes," said Nipper.

Each boy armed himself with his own particular hairbrush.

"Now follow me," said Nipper.

"Half a mo'!" said Wagstaffe. "How would it be to take the jar of marmalade along with us, and dab some of the stuff into their mouths before they're fairly awake?"

"Not a bad idea," said Nipper, nodding his head. "Wait here half a minute, while I slip down to the study for the jar."

Nipper's study, as the reader may remember, was on the ground floor, and was lighted in the daytime by a window that overlooked the quad.

Leaving his nine companions in the dormitory, Nipper stole downstairs, and had almost reached the study door when he was amazed to perceive a feeble glimmer of light streaming through the keyhole.

"Otto Heinrich!" he gasped, quivering from head to foot with suppressed excitement. "He has broken into the study again, and is searching for the locket!"

Scarcely daring to breathe, he crept to the outside of the door and peered through the keyhole. Then a look of incredulous horror crossed his face.

It was not Otto Heinrich who was in the study. It was Gardner!

He was kneeling on the floor with a lighted taper in his hand, and had just prised up the end of the loose board behind the desk. Almost at the same instant as Nipper applied his eye to the keyhole, Gardner thrust his hand beneath the board and drew out the locket which Lal had concealed there the day before.

He then replaced the board, rolled back the edge of the rug, rose to his feet, and moved towards the window, which he had previously opened.

This last-named move took Nipper by surprise. He had expected Gardner to leave the study by the door. Seeing him move towards the window, he flung the door open and sprang into the room; but even as he did so, Gardner dropped the taper with a startled cry, and vaulted through the window.

Goals of Fire.

QUICK as thought Nipper kicked off his bed-room slippers, sprang across the room, and leaped through the open window.

Gardner was then nearly half-way across the quad., and was running with the swiftness of a hunted hare. Swiftly as he ran, however, he was no match for his fleet-footed pursuer; and even as he darted through the quadrangle gate Nipper dashed up from behind and caught him by the arm.

"You—you thief!" panted Nipper, trembling with mingled scorn and indignation. "Give me that locket back at once, or I'll shout for help and rouse the whole school!"

Gardner's face was as white as death, and his brain was reeling with terror and despair.

"Locket! What do you mean?" he faltered, in a feeble attempt at bluff.

"You know very well what I mean!" retorted Nipper hotly. "I was watching you through the keyhole. I saw you prise up the flooring-board and take the locket out of its hiding-place. And you a St. Ninian's boy! Why, I hadn't seen it I wouldn't have believed it! I knew we had some rotters at the school, but by gad! I never thought we had a thief among 'em!"

Gardner cowered beneath the contemptuous glance of Nipper's flashing eyes.

"I'—I——" he began. Then his self-control broke down, and he burst into a fit of hysterical sobbing.

Nipper's heart was as tender as a woman's. At the sight of Gardner's tears his anger melted like snow before the noonday sun.

"Here, I say, don't go on like that!" he said. "Give me the locket, and—and we'll say no more about it."

Gardner drew the locket from his pocket and handed it to Nipper.

"I didn't mean to steal it," he said, in a husky voice. "I only meant to borrow it for a few minutes. I'm not a thief; but—but I was hard up, and that fellow Heinrich tempted me."

"Heinrich!" gasped Nipper. "Is he at the bottom of this?"

Gardner nodded. Nipper laid his hand on his arm and drew him into the quad.

"Come back to the study, and tell me all about it," he said.

Without a word Gardner followed Nipper back into the study, where Nipper closed the window, shut the door, drew the curtains, and lit the gas.

"Now, what has Heinrich to do with this affair?" he asked.

In reply to this question, Gardner told him the whole wretched story—how he owed Joe Fisher five-pounds-ten, which he could not pay; how the bookmaker had threatened to appeal to the Head if the money were not forthcoming by Wednesday night; how Heinrich had followed him from the public-house, and had asked him if he knew where the locket was; how he remembered hearing Lal say he would hide it under the flooring-board; how Heinrich had offered him twenty pounds if he would bring the locket to him, and allow him to examine it for a few minutes.

"He wouldn't tell me why he wanted to examine it," he continued. "He said that was a secret he was pledged not to reveal. But he swore he didn't want to steal the locket! He swore he would give it back to me as soon as he had examined it. In fact, he said I could hold a loaded revolver to his head, if I liked, while he was examining it. In the end, to make a long story short, I told him to be in that plantation opposite the school gates at midnight to-night, and I promised to get the locket and take it to him.

"So now you know everything," he concluded. "I've been both a fool and a scoundrel, but I'm not a thief, thank Heaven! And if you hadn't nabbed me I should have put the locket back as soon as Heinrich had examined it. You believe that, don't you? Say that you believe me."

His tones and manner were too sincere to admit of doubt.

"Yes, I believe you," said Nipper.

"Thank you," said Gardner simply. "There'll be plenty of hard things said about me after I've gone, but I wouldn't have liked to think that any of my old schoolfellows believed I was a thief! And now I think I'll go to bed," he said, rising to his feet. "Good-night! It will be the last time I shall ever sleep here!"

Again his self-control gave way, and, sinking back into his chair, he buried his face in his hands and sobbed like a child.

"Oh, what a fool—and worse than a fool—I've been!" he sobbed. "For years my poor old mother has pinched herself to keep me here, and this is how I've repaid her! To-morrow Joe Fisher will go to the Head, and I shall be expelled—expelled for betting! Drummed out of the school! It will break my mother's heart!"

For a moment Nipper gazed at him in pitying silence; then he softly crossed over to the desk, opened it, and took out a five-pound note which he had received from Nelson Lee the day before.

"Cheer up, old man! You're not going to be expelled yet," he said, laying his hand on Gardner's heaving shoulder. "You say you've only ten shillings, and you owe Joe Fisher five-pounds-ten. Here's a fiver I got from the guv'nor yesterday. If you'll have it I'll be glad to lend it to you; and then you can put your own ten shillings to it and pay Fisher, and the Head will never know anything about the matter."

Gardner raised his head, and gazed at Nipper with incredulous eyes.

"You—you'll land me five pounds," he gasped—"after all that's happened?"

"I will," said Nipper; "but I should like to make one condition. At least, I won't make it a condition; but—well, I don't want to preach, old man!—but don't you think it would be a good thing if you made a resolution never to touch another card, or make another bet, so long as you remain at St. Ninian's?"

"I never will," said Gardner fervently—"never again as long as I live! I've had my lesson. But—but I can't believe you're serious. You can't really mean to lend me all that money?"

"Well, there it is!" said Nipper, placing the note in Gardner's trembling hand. "That's serious enough, isn't it?"

"How can ever thank you?" faltered Gardner, in a choking voice.

"I don't want any thanks," said Nipper. "Pay Joe Fisher his money to-morrow, and, so far as I'm concerned, nobody shall ever hear a word of what has happened to-night. I'm going to bed and forget all about it. I'm going to collect a few of our chaps, and try to collar Heinrich."

A look of alarm crossed Gardner's face.

"But you said you wouldn't tell anybody what had happened to-night," he said.

"I'm not going to tell anybody," said Nipper. "I'm simply going to say that I've discovered that Heinrich is skulking amongst the trees outside the school gates. There's a warrant against him, you know, for breaking into this study the other week, and I'm going to ask the fellows in our dormitory to help me to arrest him. Don't be afraid. I've pledged my word, and your secret is safe with me. Your name will never be mentioned. Now, off you go to bed!"

"What a time you've been!" growled Dick, when Nipper returned to the Fifth Form dormitory. "I'm afraid you haven't brought the marmalade-jar, after all!"

"True for you, sonny!" said Nipper. "But we aren't going to raid the Germs' dormitory to-night. Germs is half, and something very much better in, if you chaps are game to help me. That scoundrel, Otto Heinrich, is in the plantation outside the school gates!"

"How do you know? Who told you? Have you seen him?" chorussed half a dozen eager voices.

"Ask no questions, for I sha'n't answer 'em if you do," said Nipper. "The information I've received is private and confidential. Suffice to say, as the poet remarks, Otto Heinrich is in the plantation. Who's game to help me to collar him? Hands up!"

Every boy held up his hand, and in little more time than it takes to tell pyjamas were doffed and outdoor garments donned. Then, with Nipper at their head, the ten boys stole downstairs, crept out of the house through Nipper's study window, and glided down the drive.

But their quest was foredoomed to disappointment. Heinrich, fearing that Gardner might betray him, was not waiting in the plantation, but had concealed himself in the shadow of the lodge, just inside the school gates.

As Nipper and his chums filed past his hiding-place, the German caught enough of their conversation to divine what their object was; and as soon as they had crossed the road and had entered the plantation he glided through the gates and walked rapidly away in the opposite direction.

"Yes, I know it looks beastly mean of me!" said Nipper to his four chums at breakfast-time next morning. "I'd like to tell you what happened last night, and why I thought Heinrich was in the plantation, but I can't. Don't get huffy. Something occurred last night which involves another fellow's honour, and I promised not to give him away."

"Had it anything to do with the locket?" asked Lal.

"Yes. I don't mind telling you that it had," said Nipper. "And that reminds me——" He took the locket from his waistcoat pocket and handed it to Lal. "Please don't ask any questions, old man!" he said. "Just take that locket to Mr. Rant, and ask him to keep it. It's no longer safe to hide it in this study."

After a futile attempt to extract some further explanation, Lal took the locket, and made his way to the housemaster's study.

"Please, sir, would you mind taking charge of this locket for me?" he asked. "So many attempts have been made to steal it that I'd rather not have the responsibility of it any longer."

"I'll take charge of it with pleasure," said Mr. Rant. "What's more, I'll guarantee to hide it somewhere where the cleverest thief in the kingdom couldn't find it! Don't go," he added, as Lal turned to leave the room. "You may as well see where I hide the locket. Shut the door. Now, come this way." He led the young Hindoo across the room, and pointed to the carving of the old oak panelling. "You see that square?" he said. "Press on it with your finger."

Lal pressed the spot which the housemaster had indicated, and instantly the panel flew open, disclosing a shallow recess about the size of a cigar-box.

"Clever, isn't it?" said Mr. Rant. "That must have been there ever since the school was built, but I only discovered it, quite by accident, a few days ago. You are the only person except myself who knows of its existence. Do you think your locket will be safe in there?"

"As safe as the Bank of England!" said Lal.

"I need hardly say," said Mr. Rant, when the locket had been deposited in the recess and the panel had been closed, "that I rely on your discretion not to speak of this to anybody else in the school."

"Not even to Nipper, sir?" said Lal.

"Not even to Nipper," said Mr. Rant. "You promise?"

Lal readily gave the required promise, and the locket was thus consigned to a hiding-place that was only known to Mr. Rant and the young Hindoo.

And yet—but we must not anticipate.

The Open-air Meeting.

"WELL, what's the giddy programme for this afternoon?" asked Dick, that same afternoon when the five chums assembled in their study after dinner that same day.

"What's the matter with tea at Pye's?" suggested Wagstaffe.

"That'll do to wind up with," said Dick. "But we want something to fill in the time between now and tea."

"Let's walk over to Hampton Wingrave, and have tea at Mother Oakley's," suggested Bob.

"We ought really to stay in and manufacture some scent for the paperchase on Saturday," said Lal.

"Garn!" said Nipper rudely. "We can do that any time. We're not going to waste a half on making scent."

"Old Boswell is holding an open-air meeting in the market-place this afternoon," said Dick.

"Quiggin is the chairman, so there's bound to be some fun and mocking around. Let's go and give 'em a helping hand."

After some discussion, Dick's proposal was carried, and a few minutes later the five chums set out for the market-place. They soon discovered that there were about twenty Ninianites who had decided to give the worthy chemist a "helping hand," for at the gates they fell in with Proctor and his chums also going to the meeting, and at the end of the village street they overtook a party of juniors, likewise bound for the market-place.

The meeting had already started when the Ninianites arrived. A platform had been erected under the shadow of the market-cross, in the centre of the square; and from this platform which was surrounded on three sides by a jostling crowd of villagers, Sergeant Quiggin, with a new wooden leg, was delivering what he called "a few promiliuary hobservations." In addition to the sergeant himself, there was also on the platform the candidate—Mr. Boswell—and three or four of his leading supporters.

"You all know me," the sergeant was saying, when Nipper and his chums appeared on the scene. "I'm a plain man——"

"Very plain!" shouted a rude voice in the crowd.

The sergeant paused and glared at the interrupter; then he pealed off his coat and rolled up his shirt-sleeves.

"Wot was that remark you made, Bill Deakin?" he inquired, spitting on his hands.

"I didn't make no remark," said the interrupter hastily. "Trust as I'm standin' 'ere, I never hopened my mouth!"

The sergeant smiled a beatific smile and put on his coat again.

"As I was sayin'," he continued, with one eye on Bill Deakin, "I'm a plain man, and I ain't in the 'abit of mincin' my words. There are two candidates afore us at the present moment appealin' for our sufforin's. One of 'em is our old friend, Napoleon Bonaparte Boswell—[loud cheers]—a native of this district, the world-renowned inventor of the famous Boswell Beans for backache, and a man wot most of us 'ave known all our lives.

"The other—I don't want to say nothin'

THE FIGHTING FIFTH.

(Continued from the previous page.)

unkind about 'im—is a knock-kneed, flat-footed, spindle-shanked, sock-eyed, pasty-faced kid-wallopер, wot none of us ever 'card of till he shoved 'is long, thin nose into the place six months ago. Now, I puts it to you, as man to man, is there any sort o' doubt as to which of those two blokes ought to be elect as our representative on the County Council? I pause for a reply."

It was not often that Sergeant Quiggin made an untrue statement, but he certainly made one when he said he would pause for a reply. Instead of pausing, he suddenly clapped his hand to his ear, and let out a yell that would have turned a steam-whistle green with envy.

"You young varmints!" he roared, shaking his fist at Nipper and his chums. "That was one of you!"

"What was?" demanded Nipper.

"You fired at me with a catapult!" shouted the sergeant. "If it wasn't a catapult, it was a shoe-pooter—I mean, a pea-shooter!"

"I swear we didn't!" said Nipper indignantly.

"Well, somebody did!" retorted the sergeant, tenderly rubbing his ear. "Something hit me on the hear, and stung like a red-hot needle!"

"Perhaps it was a wasp that stung you?" suggested Mr. Boswell. "Let me—— Ouch! Ow-w-w-w-w!"

The worthy chemist leaped into the air, upsetting his chair, and frenziedly rubbed the back of his hand. At the same instant one of his supporters on the platform suddenly uttered an anguished howl, and toppled backwards off his chair.

The crowd looked on in stupefied bewilderment, while the three on the platform danced with rage and pain.

"Somebody's firing at us with a catapult!" bellowed Mr. Boswell. "Where are the police? If I could only find the ruffian who——

"I see him!"

The shout came from Nipper, who, at that moment, espied a boyish figure on the roof of one of the houses on the opposite side of the square.

"There he is!" he cried, pointing to the roof. "Now he's gone! It's one of those louts from the Grammar School! There must be a ladder in the yard at the back of the house. Come on! Let's collar him and give him beans!"

Led by Nipper, the Niniantes dashed across the square, and pelted down the passage which led into the yard at the back of the house.

But they were too late. A long ladder, reared against the back of the house, and a fleeting glimpse of a Grammar School cap, vanishing over the wall at the end of the yard, were all they saw; and by the time they had scaled the wall, the owner of the cap had disappeared.

"Well, did you capture the miscreant?" inquired Mr. Boswell, when Nipper and his companions returned to the market-place.

Nipper shook his head.

"No such luck!" he said. "But we saw the bounder's cap. He was one of the Stewed Onions lambs!"

"Stewed Onions," it will be remembered, was the Niniantes' nickname for Dr. Stuart-Unwin, the headmaster of the Grammar School, and Mr. Boswell's rival for the vacant seat on the County Council.

"You hear that?" cried Mr. Boswell, turning to the crowd. "The author of this dastardly outrage was one of the boys from the Grammar School, and was, doubtless, incited by his headmaster to break up our meeting and prevent me having my views before my fellow-electors. After such evidence of the despicable methods which my unscrupulous opponent is prepared to adopt in order to——"

Rum-ti-tum-ti-tum-tum; rum-ti-tum-ti-tum-tum!

The concluding portion of Mr. Boswell's sentence was drowned by the skirl of a drum-and-fife band, which was playing—murdering, would be a better word—that well-known ditty, "See the Conquering Hero Comes!"

Mr. Boswell glanced apprehensively at Sergeant Quiggin; then his eyes and the eyes of the crowd turned in the direction from which the strains proceeded.

Nearer and louder grew the sounds, and presently there marched into the square a dozen members of the Grammar School band—four with drums and eight with fifes. Close on their heels followed Trilby, the Grammar School donkey, carrying on her back a limp-looking "guy," whose face—a painted mask—was a lifelike representation of the classic features of Napoleon Bonaparte Boswell!

Arnold and Crosby—one on each side—were leading Trilby by the bridle. Behind them marched Fleming and Tattersall, carrying a paper banner, on which was inscribed "Vote for Stuart-Unwin, and give Boswell Beans!" Last of all, bringing up the rear of the procession, came half a dozen Grammarians, armed with singlesticks.

If Arnold and his chums had counted on creating a sensation, they certainly succeeded in their object. Mr. Boswell's face turned all the colours of the rainbow; Sergeant Quiggin foamed at the mouth; whilst the crowd set up a shout of laughter that was heard a mile away!

But there was one thing the Grammarians had not counted on. They had not counted on finding a contingent from St. Ninian's at the meeting. But a rude awakening was in store for them; for, turning before the tail-end of the procession had filed into the market-place, the Niniantes were upon them, and the strains of the band were drowned by a resounding yell of:

"Niuian's, Ninian's, Ninian's!"

"Great Scott! We've dropped into a hornets' nest!" gasped Arnold. "There's a crowd of Niniantes here! Close up, you chaps! Surround the guy! Form a hollow square, with Trilby in the middle!"

His orders were quickly obeyed, and then the fun began. For a few moments a terrible war was waged between the rival parties, and in the mad rush, Trilby became the butt of innumerable blows.

This was more than donkey-flesh could stand. With a snort of terror, the irate moke charged through the ranks of the struggling combatants, and galloped up to the platform. Grammarians and Niniantes tore after her, the former intent on defending the guy, and the latter intent on securing it.

Terrified by the uproar, Trilby made a frantic attempt to mount the platform. This feat she effected; but bringing matters to a climax, for no sooner had she planted her fore-feet on the rickety planks than the whole structure ignominiously collapsed, and the donkey and the guy, together with Mr. Boswell and Sergeant Quiggin and the other occupants of the platform, went reeling to the ground in one glorious, inextricable jumble!

What followed was comparatively tame. Ere the Grammarians could rescue their guy, the Niniantes pounced on it and literally tore it into shreds. In the confusion that ensued, Trilby made her escape and bolted in the direction of the Grammar School; and, after a series of fiercely-contested hand-to-hand encounters, the Grammarians finally took to their heels and followed Trilby's example.



Close on the boys' heels followed Trilby, the Grammar School donkey, carrying on her back a limp-looking "guy," whose face—a painted mask—was a lifelike representation of the classic features of Napoleon Bonaparte Boswell!

"But we broke up old Boswell's meeting" said Arnold, when he and his chums gained the shelter of their own grounds. "So the laugh is on our side, after all!"

Comedy and Tragedy.

IT was a great idea, a noble idea, a Napoleonic idea! One knows not which to admire the more—its simplicity or its audacity. And it all flashed into Theophilus Wimple's brain in less time than a man could count six.

It came about in this way.

The landlord of the Station Hotel, the principal licensed house in Cleveden, was also the proprietor of a small livery stable, which was under the general supervision of a somewhat elderly ostler named Bartlett.

Mr. Wimple, having heard that Fraulein Hoffmann was an accomplished horsewoman, determined to take riding-lessons; and on the Friday after the meeting in the market-place, he sought an interview with Bartlett. The latter readily agreed to give him a course of lessons, but explained that he could not begin—as Mr. Wimple wished him to do—on the following afternoon.

"Saturday afternoon is allus a busy time with me," he said; "and to-morrer I shall be busier than common. Fust of hall, I've got to meet the two o'clock train an' drive a party to 'Ampton Wingrave. It'll be close on four when I get back; an' at 'arf-past four I've got to call for a young lady an' drive her to Colonel Trevor's place."

Colonel Trevor was a retired Army officer who lived at the Grange, about six miles from Clevedon. His youngest daughter was a pupil at the Cambridge House Collegiate School—at which, as the reader will remember, Fraulein Hoffmann was the assistant German mistress.

Mr. Wimple, of course, was aware of these facts, and also knew that Colonel and Mrs. Trevor had on several occasions invited Fraulein Hoffmann to visit them at the Grange. It needed, therefore, no special discernment on Mr. Wimple's part to enable him to make a shrewd guess at the identity of the "young lady" to whom the ostler referred.

His orders were quickly obeyed, and then the fun began. For a few moments a terrible war was waged between the rival parties, and in the mad rush, Trilby became the butt of innumerable blows.

This was more than donkey-flesh could stand. With a snort of terror, the irate moke charged through the ranks of the struggling combatants, and galloped up to the platform. Grammarians and Niniantes tore after her, the former intent on defending the guy, and the latter intent on securing it.

Terrified by the uproar, Trilby made a frantic attempt to mount the platform. This feat she effected; but bringing matters to a climax, for no sooner had she planted her fore-feet on the rickety planks than the whole structure ignominiously collapsed, and the donkey and the guy, together with Mr. Boswell and Sergeant Quiggin and the other occupants of the platform, went reeling to the ground in one glorious, inextricable jumble!

What followed was comparatively tame. Ere the Grammarians could rescue their guy, the Niniantes pounced on it and literally tore it into shreds. In the confusion that ensued, Trilby made her escape and bolted in the direction of the Grammar School; and, after a series of fiercely-contested hand-to-hand encounters, the Grammarians finally took to their heels and followed Trilby's example.

"Is it—Fraulein Hoffmann whom you're going to drive to the Grange?" he asked.

"Yessir!" answered Bartlett. "She's goin' to spend the week-end there, an' I'm goin' to drive 'er out to-morrer afternoon, an' bring 'er back on Monday morniu'."

And then it was that the great idea leaped into Mr. Wimple's brain like a flash of inspiration!

Drawing the ostler aside, he slipped half-a-sovereign into his hand and whispered something in his ear. Bartlett vigorously shook his head; but presently, under the influence of Mr. Wimple's persuasive tongue, he began to yield.

"I'd like to hoblige yer," he said, "but I've got my wife an' family to think about. The boss would sack me if he 'eard of it."

"But he need never know," said Mr. Wimple eagerly. "I could meet you and change places with you at the bottom of the road below Fraulein Hoffmann's cottage; and after I'd driven her to the Grange, you could meet me at some lonely spot on the way back, and change places with me again."

"You're sure you don't mean the young lady no 'arm?" asked Bartlett.

"Harm?" cried Mr. Wimple. "Why, I worship the very ground on which she treads; and I would willingly shed the last drop of my blood to save her a moment's pain. I have adored her ever since she came here, but I haven't got an opportunity of declaring my love. She avoids me—she shuns me—keeps out of my way—not because she dislikes me, but because she is naturally shy and of a timid and retiring disposition. If, however, you'll do as I wish, I shall at last obtain the chance for which my soul so ardently longs."

"I ain't so sure of that," said Bartlett, shaking his head. "When the young lady sees yer on the box and reckernises who yer are, it's ten to one she won't get into the victorier."

"But she won't recognise me!" said Mr. Wimple triumphantly. "There are to be some amateur theatricals at the school on Foundation Day, and a large assortment of wigs and false beards has already arrived. With the aid of these I shall disguise myself, and shall not reveal my identity until we have left the village far behind and have reached the lonely open country. Then, when my love and I are alone, far from the madding crowd, with only the birds of heaven to listen to my burning words, I shall throw off my disguise and declare my all-consuming passion!"

His eloquence had the desired effect.

"I can't refuge yer!" said Bartlett, holding out a horny hand. "I was young meself once, an' I know what it is to be in love! Gimme another 'arf-quid, an' I'll do it if I get the sack next day!"

* * * * * * * *

Fraulein Hoffmann lived in a pretty little cottage on the Hillfoot Road, about half a mile outside the village. She had rented the cottage—furniture and all complete—shortly after her arrival in Clevedon, and had taken up her residence there with a devoted maid, whom she had brought with her from Germany, and who rejoiced in the not uncommon name of Gretchen.

A few minutes after half-past four on Saturday afternoon a rather ancient-looking victoria drew up outside the garden-gate of this cottage. The vehicle was driven by a young and rather mettlesome horse, and on the box-seat sat the redoubtable Theophilus Wimple—his scarlet locks concealed beneath an ill-fitting, coal-black wig; his face almost completely hidden by an enormous set of iron-grey whiskers and moustache; and his podgy form encased in a suit of dark-green livery, of which the coat was three sizes too big for him and the trousers two sizes too small!

"It was not Herr Bartlett, I see," said Fraulein Hoffmann, when she came to the gate, followed by Gretchen with her bag. "You vas a new driver, hein?"

"Yaas, mumm!" said Mr. Wimple, in a deep, bass voice.

"I hope you vas a goot driver," said the German mistress, as she took the bag from Gretchen and placed it in the victoria.

"Yaas, mumm!" said Mr. Wimple again. "I've driv' the crowned heads of Heurope, at one time or hanother, and I've never 'ad a haccident yet."

Fraulein Hoffmann regarded him somewhat dubiously. That was not true, as Mr. Wimple had been told, that she was an accomplished horsewoman," but she knew enough about driving to know that Mr. Wimple was holding the reins in the wrong hand, and by no means in the orthodox fashion.

"If you are a goot driver," she said, "vy do der reins in der wrong hand hold?"

Mr. Wimple nearly fell off his box in his confusion! Up to then it had never occurred to him that there was a right and a wrong way of holding the reins.

"I'm left-'anded!" he said, as a brilliant inspiration came to him. "All hour fam'ly are! We're born so. We always drive like this!"

This explanation appeared to satisfy the Fraulein, for she stepped into the victoria and took her seat.

"You know vare you to drive me are?" she said.

"Suttingly—to the Grange!" said Mr. Wimple.

"Do you der vay know?"

"Hevery hinch of it!"

Fraulein Hoffmann turned to the maid, who was still standing on the pavement outside the garden-gate.

"Good-bye, Gretchen!" she said, in German. "I shall be back on Monday morning. Now, driver, I vas ready," she added, in English.

In order to reach the Grange, it was necessary for Mr. Wimple to turn the carriage round, drive down the hill, cross the river, and follow the road which ran past the gates of St. Ninian's. If he had been a wise man, he would have turned the victoria round before his face stepped in. As he had neglected to do so, it was necessary for him to do so now."

"Gee up, old boy!" he grunted, tugging at one of the reins. "Here—I say—whoa!—that's the wrong way, you idiot!"

But it was not the horse that was the idiot. Mr. Wimple had pulled the rein which was nearest to the pavement, and the horse, as a matter of course, stepped on to the pavement and poked his head into Gretchen's face!

The maid let out an ear-splitting shriek which so startled the horse that he began to back, pushing the carriage across the road, and finally ramming the rear-end in the railings on the opposite side!

"Let me get out!" cried Fraulein Hoffmann, staggering to her feet in an agony of terror. "You cannot drive! I shall pe killed! I vill not to der Grange!"

Before she could complete the sentence, the horse wheeled round with a suddenness that flung her back into the seat; then, with an impatient toss of his head, he broke into a trot and trotted briskly down the hill.

Mr. Wimple, who bobbed up and down, and swayed from side to side in unison with the jolting of the carriage, was quite as frightened as Fraulein Hoffmann. When, however, the bottom of the hill was reached without mishap, his courage began to revive.

"He's a little bit frisky, to-day!" he called out over his shoulder. "But I don't think we'll have any more trouble now!"

But that was where Mr. Wimple made a big mistake.

(Special long instalment in next week's double number.)

SANDY'S SWIMMING MACHINE

A Marvellous New Story by CLEMENT HALE.



(1) Higson learns to swim with the help of Sandy's machine. (2) Sandy saves the Mayor from drowning. (3) The Mayor rewards Sandy with a fiver, and tells him he will restore the swimming machine which has been destroyed by his orders.

THE 1st CHAPTER.
A Gallant Rescue—Sandy Interviews Mr. Dingley—His Plans for a Swimming Machine.

"HI! Come off the pond, you young fool! Do you want to be drowned?"

Sandy MacClure took his hands out of his pockets, and with the right bockoned to a little boy of some ten or eleven years of age, who had constructed a raft out of two or three two-inch boards which had been inaccurely lashed together with thongs of long coarse water-grass, and who, standing erect, was cautiously making his way across the Dingley pond to the other side.

The little boy was dressed in a velvet suit, decorated with real silver buttons, and, as Sandy well knew, he was the son of John Doughty, Mayor of Middleton, one of the biggest contractors and builders in the Midlands. As he heard Sandy calling to him he grinned.

"Where did you get that raft from?" asked Sandy again, yelling at the top of his voice.

"Begun boys left it," said the little boy, working his raft round in a circle in the middle of the pond.

"Well, you know, you'll get into trouble for this," said Sandy. "You wait until your father sees you."

"Father won't know. And I suppose I can do as I like!"

"A nice thing for a kid of your age to say!" cried Sandy indignantly. "Just you come off that pond at once, will you? It's frightfully deep. There isn't foothold anywhere, not even at the edge of the banks. You can't swim. If you get in you'll drown."

"I'm not afraid. Just as if I should fall in!".

Sandy looked at the raft with a critical eye. It seemed to him that the boards were beginning to part at one end.

"Look here," he cried, faking a round object out of his pocket, "I tell you what it is. I'll give you this peg-top if you'll push that raft ashore, and promise never to go out on the pond again."

"I can't want your peg-top!" said the child defiantly. "I've got plenty of my own. I can buy one whenever I like."

Sandy pulled his reddish hair in perplexity. He realised the danger that threatened the little boy, and yet he was utterly helpless.

Presently a rustic came sauntering across a field towards the pond. He stared open-mouthed at the boy in the velvet suit when at last his dull, expressionless eyes rested on him.

"Hi, young Master Doughty!" he shouted. "Come off o' that pond, will yer, dang yer! Your feyther will give you a fine spanking for this."

The little boy was frightened now. He didn't much mind about the presence of Sandy, whom he had recognised as one of the boys from the Public School up above Middleton; but this rustic, who had often worked for his father, and who frequently came on business to the Gables, where Mr. John Doughty lived, would be sure to tell his father about it; and, flurried, the youngster thrust his paddle of wood into the water, and tried to urge his raft on towards the bank upon which Sandy stood.

The effort was fatal, for losing his balance through leaning too far over towards the termination of the stroke, the boy toppled into the water.

A frightened scream rent the air, and struggling madly, with his hands wildly clutching at the air, the little boy disappeared beneath the surface.

"He'll drown—he'll drown!" yelled the rustic, dancing about in dismay. "Poor Mr. Doughty! Poor Mr. Doughty!"

Sandy, who all along had been expecting the accident, had his coat off in a moment, and the next was swimming powerfully towards the drowning lad.

Little Doughty's efforts were doing more to endanger his life than had he kept quite still, and it was as, fiercely struggling, he rose to the surface for the third time that Sandy reached him, and, gripping his coat-collar in a vice-like grasp, turned and swam with him towards the steep bank of the pond.

The rustic remained on the other side staring. The shock had been so great that he had not the sense to run round to Sandy's assistance, and when he reached the side of the pond there was Sandy holding his unconscious burden up, whilst he trod water and yelled to the man for help.

"Give me a helping hand, you fool!" he said. "I can't get out with the boy weighing me down."

The man understood, and began his tardy journey round to the other side.

The Dingley Pond, named after the farmer whose land on both sides could just be seen over the edge of a rising hill, was of large size, and it took the lumbering rustic some time to get round. Even then he hadn't the brains to afford help in the simplest way, and it was a minute or more before he managed to get hold of young Doughty and to haul him ashore.

Then breathless, but little the worse for his adventure, Sandy clambered out and shook the water from his clothes.

"What 'ave you going to do wi' 'un?" asked the rustic, scratching his head and staring at the apparently lifeless form of little Doughty, who lay stretched out on the ground where he had placed him.

For answer Sandy bent over him and unfastened the youngster's collar and coat. Then he turned the little chap over on to his side, with his head resting on his forearm, and drew out his tongue.

Tieing the tongue firmly to the lower jaw, so that it should not fall back and stop the air passages, with a handkerchief which he took from his pocket, Sandy then turned him over on his back again, and began to listen for the sound of breathing. None came. The boy then took a silver watch out of his waistcoat-pocket, opened the case, and placed the bright metal to little Doughty's mouth. It was instantly dulled by the moisture emanating from the rescued boy's body, and with a sigh of relief Sandy replaced the watch, and set to work with might and main to restore the life he had saved.

After working vigorously for several minutes the youngster's natural breathing was restored, and, with a sigh of relief Sandy stood erect, caught the tiny little chap's form up in his arms, and began to run with him as hard as he could towards Farmer Dingley's cottage over by the wheat-field.

The rustic, who had watched the schoolboy in wondering amazement, shook his head doubtfully, and never took his eyes off him until he saw him disappear inside the Dingley dwelling-place. Then, shaking his head, he walked slowly round the pond, looking at the water as if he thought that by rights young Doughty's body ought to be resting deep down in the depths, murmuring: "Well, I be blowed! Well, I be blowed!"

Meanwhile, the quick-witted young Scotsman had reached the farmhouse. Here he astonished the farmer's wife by pushing open the door and bursting into the parlour with his half-conscious burden in his arms.

"Mrs. Dingley," said the schoolboy, speaking rapidly, "it's young Doughty, the mayor's son. He was playing at boats on the pond, and fell in. I got him out. But he hasn't half come round yet. You'll want to put him to bed and rub his body with a flannel. Place some hot bricks or hot water-bottles at his feet, between his thighs, and at his armpits. It's the only thing that will restore his circulation properly. Poor little chap, I thought it was all over with him; and I warned him of the danger, too."

"Bless my soul and body!" was all the astonished farmer's wife could say; but being a quick-witted woman she set to work with her preparations without delay, and soon young Doughty was fast asleep upstairs in the good woman's own best bed-room, but little the worse for his accident.

Sandy had been put to bed in one of the maid's rooms whilst his clothes were being dried, and at ten-time, when they brought them up to him again, he was told that the farmer was home, and that he was to have tea with them downstairs.

Now Farmer Dingley had always been regarded as a bitter enemy by the schoolboys. He was always up at the schoolhouse complaining of some mischief the boys had been up to, and many and many a time had he chased them, whip in hand, when they had dared to play at hare and hounds across his fields.

He glowered at Sandy from beneath a pair of bushy eyebrows when the lad entered the parlour.

"Why, it's Sandy, housewife!" he cried in astonishment. "The young varmint I've always promised a thrashing to if ever I could lay hands on him. And he went and saved young Doughty!"

"It wasn't anything really, Mr. Dingley," said Sandy, coolly seating himself in one of the farmer's best chairs. "Anybody could have done it who could swim. But that's what I'm always complaining about. Here you have a few hundred yards away as dangerous a pond as you could find anywhere in England. There's always being someone drowned in it. You can't keep the boys out of water in the summer when the sun's hot. The boys of Middleton ought to be taught to swim. There aren't any public baths, and you've always set your face against boys learning in the pond. They could learn easily enough, you know, if they were only given some apparatus to practise with."

The farmer opened his mouth wide. Mrs. Dingley burst into a roar of laughter.

"What do you think of him, wife!" asked Farmer Dingley. "He's got more assurance and cheek than the mayor himself. Give 'un some tea and cake."

Sandy set to work with a will on the good fare provided him. Then, with his mouth full of cakecrumbs, he turned to the farmer.

"We don't really mean any harm in racing across your field, Mr. Dingley," he said. "Boys will be boys, you know. I dare say you did it when you were a kid. I'd like to know how many times you've been licked for stealing apples. If it was less than six, I'm ashamed of you!"

The farmer's face broadened out into a huge grin of delight, and he slapped his thigh in appreciation of the point.

"And look here, sir," Sandy went on, "if you'll only give me permission and will be willing to supply me with the timber, I'll undertake to rig up a swimming machine in the Dingley pond, by means of which all the boys in the village can be taught to swim inside a year. Have you got a piece of paper and a pencil?"

Mrs. Dingley, amused, gave the boy the materials he asked for, and with deft, skilled fingers he drew out a plan of a swimming machine, constructed on principles of quite primitive simplicity. Briefly, the idea of it was as follows: Taking the stump of a tree that grew on the side of the pond, the boy had the top sawn smooth, and across this lay a tapering length of timber, its longer arms stretching out over the water; its shorter one, on land, being terminated by a heavy, rough section of a tree-trunk, which acted as a counterweight. Driven through a hole bored in the tapering piece of timber was a heavy iron pivot-bolt, upon which the pole was able to swing horizontally in a half-circle.

"Now, sir," said Sandy, when he had finished his rough drawing, "you see the idea? You arrange a rope at one end, to which is attached a belt, fitted with a safety-hook and catch which, once fastened, cannot come undone of its own accord. Very well; this belt is placed round the body of the pupil and beneath his arms. The arm of the long pole has been turned in to the side of the bank on which the boy stands. He descends into the water, and is instructed how to strike out with his arms and legs, and, as he does so, the pole is brought slowly round, taking him farther and farther out into the pond until the widest portion of the half-circle has been described; then he gradually comes in to the bank again, and is drawn out. When he begins to swim of his own accord, the butt of the pole, or swimming machine, is not turned with him; but he can draw it round of his own accord as he swims. It's my own patent, sir. If you'll permit it to be set up, I think it would be of great advantage to the village."

The farmer looked first at the plan; then at the boy who had drawn it in amazement.

"By gad," he said, "you Middleton schoolboys are enough to take one's breath away! But, never mind, Sandy, my lad, give me your hand. You shall have your swimming machine as sure as my name is Farmer Dingley."

"Thank you, sir!" said the boy quietly. Then he added: "And now, sir, I should like you to promise me that you will say nothing about me saving young Master Doughty. His father is very down on us schoolboys; even worse than you were, I want you to say nothing about it. Mrs. Dingley told me that she would be able to make the velvet suit look as good as new by means of a damp cloth and an iron. I'm sure the boy won't want to say anything about the accident. He'd be afraid to. There's no reason why anybody should know. Carmen Robins saw the whole thing; but you know what a way he's got of forgetting everything he sees a minute after it has happened. He won't remember anything about it, I'll swear; but I don't want Mr. Doughty to know."

The farmer stroked his chin thoughtfully.

"Well, I'll not promise you I'll say nothing about it, my lad," he said. "It don't seem fair to keep it dark. You leave it to me. I promise you I won't speak about it without good cause. Will that satisfy you?"

"Yes, sir," said Sandy.

"You're a brave lad!" the farmer went on. "I'm proud of you, and the school, and even my land as much as they like. You can tell 'em so from me. And they may steal an apple or two if my men are not looking; but they're not to overdo it. Only, mind you, they're not to steal the pheasants' eggs."

"All right, sir," said Sandy; "I'll draw up some articles of agreement which they shall stick to faithfully; and I may have my swimming machine put up, sir?"

"Yes," said Farmer Dingley; "I'll have it put up for you myself, lad. And, what's more, I'll have diving places rigged up for you, and false bottoms put in the pond near to land so that there will be no fear of drowning to the lads who are just beginning to swim."

"Thank you, sir!" said Sandy, and he felt as proud as a king.

THE 2nd CHAPTER.
The "Turnabout" in Full Swing—John Doughty, Mayor of Middleton, Interferes —The Machine Destroyed.

SANDY MacCLURE'S swimming machine was in full swing. It had been going for a fortnight, and both in the morning and in the evening before and after school, the boys had been taking swimming lessons in hundreds, Sandy presiding and directing the whole affair with the tact and ability of forty, not sixteen; and Sandy was an undersized sixteen, too, being short and small for his age. But he had a brain, had Sandy, and was easy head of the school in classics, languages, literature, and mathematics.

At Middleton School they began to regard his action over the swimming machine, and his friendly intercourse with the town boys, with suspicion. Some of the schoolboys condescended to try experiments with the "turnabout," as they called Sandy's apparatus. These were a boy named Higson, of the Fourth, and another, named Swan, of the Fifth Form.

At six o'clock one fine summer's morning the three of them were down at Dingley pond. Sandy had had his swim, going across and across the pond and back again a dozen times, and had now rested himself by whilst Bevan, who was a bit of a swimmer now, thanks to the machine, had just done a swim from one point of the pond to another, and was sitting on the bank; and Higson, safely attached to the belt, had puffed and blown himself with terrific exertions to the widest part of the circle described by the point of the pole in its transit from one point of the bank to the other, and had stopped swimming, to remain suspended in deep water and grinning up at Sandy on the bank.

"Go on, you duffer!" said Sandy. "You'll never learn to swim if you don't stick to it. What's the use of you scrambling to where you are and then stopping? Suppose you hadn't the

machine to help you; if you stopped, you'd drown. Stick to it. Swim on, and take slower strokes; you'll never do any good whilst you use those short, scrappy jerks of yours. Don't be afraid; your body will float all right."

"Give the end of the 'turnabout' a shove, then," pleaded Higson from the water, and, with an exclamation of disgust, Sandy obeyed. A half-minute later Higson had been drawn from the water; the belt was undone, and he stood, grinning and well pleased with himself, beside Bevan, whose feet still dangled in the water.

"That's prime!" he gasped. "I feel as if I shall be able to swim in about a week. You're a genius, Sandy; that's what you are! Only you would have thought of that swimming machine.

At that moment up came Carman Robins, the man who had witnessed the saving of young Doughty. His eyes were lit up with quite a rational expression as he recognised Sandy.

"Morning!" he said. "You be the schoolboy who saved young Doughty. I like you!"

"That's all right," said Sandy, quietly, blushing nevertheless, for none of the schoolboys had heard of his feat. "We don't want to talk about that, Robins."

The man laid his right forefinger on the side of his nose and winked mysteriously.

"Sir," he said, "that be your idea of a swimming machine that Farmer Dingley put up there, beant it?"

"Yes," said Sandy, surprised that Robins should have the intelligence to even know that much.

"There's a row going on about it down in the town," Robins went on. "Some of the folk have been complaining that boys should be allowed to bathe in the pond. Some of the women have complained, and Mayor Doughty says the machine has got to be removed."

"What rot!" said Bevan angrily. "All the boys wear swimming costumes. They can't expect us to bathe in our walking things, can they? I never heard of such a thing."

Sandy looked at Robins searchingly. The man was a dull-witted fool, he knew. It was remarkable he could have even recollected what he had just said. Probably it was untrue.

"Who told you that, Robins?" he asked.

"I heard it, sir," said the carman. "I was at the town hall this morning when they were discussing it. Mrs. Dingley was there, too. She insisted on hearing what was said, as she said it was a public matter, and they couldn't keep her out. When they decided to remove the machine, sir, she gave them a bit of her mind, too, that I warrant she did."

"It must be the truth, Higson," whispered Sandy to his chum. "I have never heard Robins speak at such length in my life. Only something unusual could have made him do it."

"I know what prudish sticklers they are in Middleton!" cried Bevan angrily. "You see, I live here. They have never been accustomed to seeing boys swimming and bathing in Dingley's pond, although they've been used enough to hearing of them being drowned in it; and because it's something new, they're all against it. John Doughty is one of the worst. He's not half a bad old sticks, but he's an awful snob. Now he's made his money, all he thinks about is public rights, and public opinion, and all that sort of thing. The idea of a number of boys bathing in Dingley's pond a mile off the high-road, without his special sanction, would be sacrilege to him. He'll listen to all the old women have to say, and he'll satisfy them, too, by wrecking your swimming machine, Sandy, and burning the beastly thing."

"When's this to take place, Robins?" asked Sandy anxiously.

"Some time this afternoon, sir," said the carman; and with that he moved away.

The day that followed was that of torturing anxiety to Sandy MacClure. His very heart was centred in his swimming machine, and in the progress the town boys were making in the art of natation.

He was doing a public work he, a mere boy of sixteen!—and he was proud of it. What a record he would leave behind him when he left Middleton if he were left alone!

The thought that his machine was to be dismantled and destroyed terrified him all through the morning and afternoon school, and no sooner was the school dismissed for the day than, pushing his lesson-books into his desk, he rushed pell-mell out of the building, and outstripping the fleetest of the day boys from Middleton, who had heard of the impending disaster, and were rushing down the road that led to Dingley's pond, he soon reached the bathing-place, and here he paused, with a cry of dismay.

Well he might. His swimming machine was gone! There it lay upon the bank, its pole sawn into a dozen pieces. Two men were hacking at the stump of the tree upon which the pole had rested with woodmen's axes, and all the work that Sandy had achieved was neutralised in a single moment.

Sandy approached the scene of the destruction with his heart too full for words. A hundred or more villagers had gathered there, most of them the boys who had been learning to swim, and there were black and gloomy faces amongst them.

In the centre of the group stood John Doughty, Mayor of Middleton, a tall, well-built man of about fifty, whose long, pointed beard lent to his somewhat commonplace type of face an air of distinction.

He was flushed and angry. In front of him, with arms folded and his brows bent fiercely together, was Farmer Dingley. The two men were engaged in a fierce altercation.

"I tell you, Farmer Dingley," Sandy heard the Mayor of Middleton declare as he came up, "that this public nuisance must be stopped. These boys have no right to come bathing here, desecrating the pond. People have complained about it. There is a favourite walk past here, and no one likes to hear a lot of boys, clad only in their swimming costumes, shouting and yelling at all hours of the day."

"I tell you what it is, mayor," said Farmer Dingley, with a grim setting of his lips, "you and your grandmotherly council have been in office long enough. If you would interfere with the good work this schoolboy Sandy MacClure has been doing you are no longer fit to be Mayor of Middleton. If it hadn't been for this clever, brave-hearted lad, you would have no son now. He saved your boy at the risk of his life, brought him to my farmhouse, restored the life that was fast fading away, and never said a word about it, begging me to keep it secret. And this is how you repay him! You ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

"Saved the life of my son?" said the mayor, flushing angrily. "It's a lie!"

"It is no lie!" said Farmer Dingley, raising his voice. "Robins here saw it done."

"Is it true, Robins?" asked John Doughty, turning a pair of inquiring eyes upon the carman.

"It be, sir."

Then there was a movement in the crowd, and a little figure clad in velvet, with the well-known silver buttons, came running forward. Little Doughty's face was pale, and his eyes bright. He could never look at that fatal pond without a shudder.

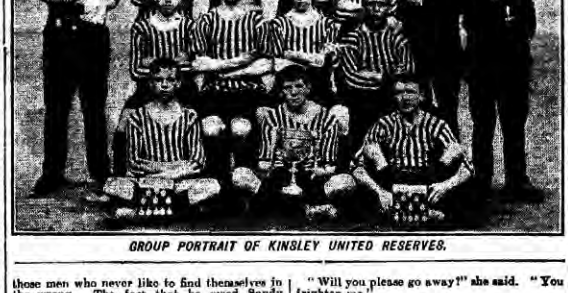
"Jack," said the mayor, "is it true that Sandy MacClure saved your life?"

"Yes, father," answered the little boy; "but I didn't say anything about it before, because I thought you would beat me for falling into the pond."

The mayor's face hardened. He was one of those men who never like to find themselves in the wrong. The fact that he owed Sandy MacClure such a debt, coupled with the thought of how he had wronged him, hardened his heart towards the lad, towards Dingley; in fact, towards all concerned.

"I don't believe a word of the story," he said. "Besides, the orders have been issued, and almost entirely obeyed. There shall be no more bathing in the pond."

And turning on his heel, he walked away.



GROUP PORTRAIT OF KINSLEY UNITED RESERVES.

THE 3rd CHAPTER.

The Prophecy—Caught in a Squall—How Sandy Read the Mayor a Lesson.

"MOTHER!"

"Yes, Sandy?"

"Do you see that man with the beard down there on the beach? He's just got out of that rowing-boat, and he's holding fishing-tackle and a string of fish in his hand. He's just paying the boatman, see?"

"Yes, I see him, Sandy. But what about him?"

And Sandy's mother—a pretty, middle-aged woman, well-dressed—bent her affectionate and inquiring eyes upon her son.

"Well, he's Mr. John Doughty, the Mayor of Middleton—the man I told you about, who broke up my swimming machine."

"The brute!" cried Sandy's mother; and she glared at John Doughty as he came up the beach towards the place where they were sitting in a shelter out of the sun as if she would like to kill him on the spot.

The mayor saw Sandy as he passed, noted how beautifully dressed the lady was who was with him, but took no notice. He was Mayor of Middleton, to be sure, and it was far beneath him to take any notice of such common folk as these.

"He's very conceited—very proud," said the lady. "I don't wonder at what he did, Sandy, now that I have seen him. The brute!"

The holidays were on, Middleton School had broken up, and Sandy was enjoying himself at Brighton with his mother, and having the time of his life, excepting that there were not quite enough boys about to please him.

"Do you know, mother," Sandy went on, gazing reflectively at the sea, "there's nothing I should like better than to give Mr. Doughty a lesson. I don't think he is really a bad sort of man; only that type, when he is successful, gets such a warped idea of things, doesn't he?"

"Yes. He was not born to greatness, and so cannot bear with it properly when it comes," answered Sandy's mother, smiling.

"If I could only save his life, as I saved his son's, then, for instance," said Sandy, "think how small he'd feel. It would do him a lot of good, wouldn't it?"

"You have very strange and romantic ideas, Sandy," said the fond mother, taking his hand and squeezing it, "and you are a very clever boy; but I don't think you can hope to save Mr. Doughty's life. He'd be much too heavy a man for you to manage in the water, for one thing."

"He'll do it, madam—he'll do it, lady. The boy was cut out for deeds of heroism such as that. He's clever. He's got a big future before him, and I'll tell you all about it if you'll cross my hand with silver."

The words startled them both, and as a shadow darkened the approach to the shelter, looking up, they saw a bronzed, ill-kempt, hideous old hag who, bending forward, was peering intently into Sandy's face.

Then, before Sandy could prevent it, she had snatched his hand. She looked at the lines in it intently.

"Ah!" she cried. "He has saved one life. He will save another. He will have his wish. It is curious how things turn out. He has inventive genius. He will make a great name for himself. He'll make a fortune. He'll be noble and proud in the end."

Mrs. MacClure shuddered. She opened her purse and gave the old woman a sixpence.

"Will you please go away?" she said. "You frighten me."

The old hag curtseyed.

"Thank you kindly, pretty lady," she said. "He shall have his wish. He will save the life of the man."

Mrs. MacClure was so affected by the strange manner of the woman, that she rose and returned to her hotel at once, and Sandy noticed that during lunch she was strangely silent and unlike herself.

The boy didn't think much about the incident. He had no belief in the uncanny or the supernatural. In the afternoon he walked along the promenade on the sea side of the King's Road, on the look-out for Higson and Bevan, both of whom were in Brighton, and presently, to his joy, he saw them coming along arm in arm—a couple of sunburnt schoolboys, ripe and ready for any mischief.

"Got any money?" asked Higson of MacClure.

"Yes," answered the boy; "mother gave me five shillings this morning."

"That's rippling!" said Bevan. "Now, I tell you what we're going to do. We're all going for a shilling sail. Out to the horizon and back again. It's jolly fine! Ever been?"

"No," answered Sandy.

"Higson's a rotten sailor," said Bevan contemptuously. "We went out yesterday, and he was frightfully sick. Still, he had been smoking, and I dare say that had something to do with it. I'm breaking him in. What do you say, Sandy?"

"I'm game," answered the Scotsboy.

And the three trooped down to the beach where the shilling yachts were beached ready for the sailing.

They got into one of the larger of the craft, and presently, to the merry music of accordion and violin, they scudded onward with a fairish breeze behind them, and gradually the shore began to recede.

Though the water had looked quite still when seen from the land, they found that there was a perceptible swell for so small a boat when at sea, and presently Higson, turning the colour of an unripe apple, thrust his head over the side of the boat, and emitted a groan that startled every other passenger, and made most of them look at one another in dismay.

Each was wondering when he in turn would come. Bevan looked a bit uncomfortable, too. Not so Sandy, as he stood erect beside the skipper of the Fairy Belle. He turned his face bravely to the wind and watched the tiny dinghies being rowed here and there, taking amateur anglers-in-fishermen to their moorings.

Presently the captain of the yacht gave orders for the sail to be partly lowered; and as his men set about this his keen eyes rested on a tiny sailing-boat, which, with canvas fully set, was bowling along at a smart rate to the greatly freshening breeze. The skipper's eyes studied the weather signs.

"There'll be a squall in a minute," he said. "Those fools out there will find themselves in trouble if they don't look out. Bear down upon them, Stevens!"

Stevens was the man who had charge of the helm of the Fairy Belle, and he altered the course of the yacht, and it was now bravely dipping her nose to the swell, so that the tiny sailing-craft ahead was in direct line with her. The bigger yacht gained swiftly.

Suddenly a puff of wind came, causing her mast to shiver and her sails to pull tremendously, and she plunged forward as if possessed.

At the same moment the skipper uttered a loud cry, and some of the passengers screamed, and, looking ahead, Sandy MacClure saw with horror that the sailing-boat in question had reformed to, and whose occupants he had been going to warn, had capsized, and that the two men it had contained were struggling in the water.

One of them had the good sense to cling to the upturned keel of the boat; but the other, struggling desperately and throwing up his arms, worked farther and farther from the side of the capsized boat, and was drowning fast.

The Fairy Belle gained rapidly, and presently, as the sails were furled and she was brought round beside the upturned craft, Sandy, springing on to the gunwale, dived into the sea, and, using his fast-trudgen stroke, bore towards the drowning man. In a moment he had seized hold of him.

"Keep still, sir!" he shouted. "Don't struggle, and don't cling on to me, or you'll drown us both!"

But he might have spoken into deaf ears, for the man instantly seized hold of him, and the two were at once locked in a death embrace. Sandy finding himself unable to free his arms from the tenacious grip of the drowning man. They went under. He fought and kicked, and came up half dazed. Still the man clung on. They rose to the surface, and sank again.

The end was near. It could not last much longer. Sandy saw a vast sheet of green above his aching eyes, and just as he was about to open his mouth in sheer exhaustion something caught hold of him, and he found himself drawn upward. They had fixed a boat-hook in his clothing from the Fairy Belle, and presently both he and his unconscious companion were drawn aboard.

* * * * * * *

That the old witch-woman of Brighton should have so accurately foretold his success of John Doughty, has always been an unexplained and unexplainable mystery to Sandy MacClure. He doesn't believe in the supernatural, and says she merely spotted a winner for once.

"She heard me express the wish," he said to Higson, when the two argued the point out; "and she did the best thing she could to earn a sixpence for herself. I don't think there is any more in it."

This was on the first afternoon of their return to Middleton School. The very next morning Sandy was summoned up to the mayor's.

John Doughty had never quite recovered from the shock of his immersion, and he was a much more considerate, kindly, unaffected man than ever; as the boy soon discovered when he was ushered into the library, and found him seated in a comfortable armchair, clad in a dressing-gown, with a pillow behind his head and some medicine on the table beside him.

When Sandy returned to the school his face was radiant with joy.

"What did the old buffer say?" asked Bevan.

"Oh, he gave me a fiver towards the school swimming fund," said Sandy modestly. "He said no end of nice things about me; saying he would look after my welfare when I left school, and all that sort of thing. He apologised for his hard and ungrateful conduct over having the life of his son, asked me to forgive him for destroying my swimming machine, and much more that I can't remember."

"And what about your swimming machine, Sandy?" said Higson.

"Oh, he's going to rig that up again, too!"

And, as a matter of fact, ere a fortnight had passed, the "turnabout" was in full swing again, and before the season came to a close there was scarcely a lad in Middleton who couldn't swim.

And what about the rest of the witch's prophecy as to Sandy's future? I think I can hear the reader ask. Well, you see, Sandy has only just left school. But he already shows signs of possessing marvellous inventive genius, and there are many who say the old beldam's prophecy will be fulfilled.

THE END.

JUMPING:

Mr. E. A. Baker, the Famous Jumping Expert, tells how REALMITES may excel at this sport.

High Jumping.

THERE are many boys who have the natural spring and agility required for high jumping, but there are few who make the most of their abilities. The style of jumping usually adopted by the youthful athlete in his efforts to clear the bar is that commonly known as the "Scissors" style—that is, running at the bar from the side, throwing one leg over the bar and following with the other. Little art is used in the action, and moderate performances only are achieved, or can be expected.

The "Scissors" is not the style by which big heights may be jumped. It has been discarded by all the crack jumpers, and a new method substituted, which, although it varies somewhat according to the peculiarities of the individual jumper, is modelled on much the same lines in each case. The purpose of this article is to explain the method so successfully adopted by present-day high jumpers.



Diving: Fig 2. The position of the body as it enters the water.

First, a word of preliminary explanation. The high jump is an event which nearly always takes place on grass. Competitors are allowed three jumps at each height, and the height at which jumping is started is mutually agreed upon between them. All measurements of heights are made from the ground to

the centre of the cross-bar.

Neither diving nor somersaulting over the bar is permitted. This rule was introduced in consequence of a weird method of clearing the bar which was adopted some years ago by Woolwich cadets, who dived over the bar head-first, landing on the other side on their hands.

The style or method adopted by expert high jumpers—men who clear over six feet—is somewhat complicated at first sight, but may readily be mastered if the instructions are carefully followed. It may be outlined as follows:

The bar is approached almost straight from the front. There is a slight swerve just prior to taking the leap from the ground, then the heel is dug into the ground, and a spring taken upwards. The right leg is thrown upwards at the same time, and the whole upward motion is aided by swing of the right arm and chest. These movements are intended to raise the body, and to get the right leg over the bar. In addition, however, a half-turn of the body is made as the athlete rises, so that when he reaches the topmost height of his jump he has his right side parallel to the bar. Having raised the body and swung the right leg into the air, the right leg is thrown smartly down on the farther side of the bar, and the left leg is simultaneously swung up, and then over the bar. The swinging up of the left leg is aided by bringing up the left arm smartly and

throwing the body back.

As the turn given to the body in rising will naturally prevent one, the jumper will alight with his face to the bar.

A simpler description of the method given above is as follows: The leap having been taken from the ground, the jumper flings up the right leg and arm over the bar. They are then swung downwards, while the left leg and arm are swung upwards, and at the same time the body is swung backward and outward to keep it from touching the bar. In rising to the bar, the jumper must make a turn that will bring his right side parallel to the bar. With jumpers who take off with the left foot the motions are the same; but the left foot and arm begin the movement.

By approaching the bar almost straight from the front in the initial run, all the muscles are used in jumping from the ground, whereas the old style of jumping from the side does not permit this. The young jumper should practise the style set out above, first of all at a low height, until he masters the way in which to turn when rising up to the bar. This turning movement must be learned before anything else. Then attention should be given to the swinging of the feet over the bar and the working of the body and arms, for it is here that much improvement in the height jumped may be made. Once the whole movement has been learned, the young athlete will find it possible to jump much higher than his efforts in the "Scissors" style permitted.

THE ED.

(Next week "Pole-Jumping" will be dealt with accompanied by practical diagrams.)

DIVING:

Mr. WILLIAM HENRY, Secretary of the Royal Life-Saving Society, coaches readers in the important arts of Swimming, Diving, and Life-Saving.

Swedish Diving.

THE learner should remember that the chief points to be observed in making a dive are—to keep the body, arms, and legs quite rigid, and in the same straight line. The hands placed over the head, palms downward, will form a wedge which will cut into the water, and open a way for the rest of the body to enter. The head must be so placed between the arms that it strikes the water with the forehead, and not the top of the head. Should there be an inclination to open the legs when in the air, the learner should place a small bit of paper between the knees, and try to hold it in that position throughout the dive. This method will have the effect of clipping the legs together, and help greatly in keeping them straight. As the learner increases in skill and confidence, he will desire to take his header from a greater height than three feet above the surface of the water, but

high diving needs much practice,

and must be progressive as well as carefully done, especially where the water is shallow.

Of all high diving, the Swedish method is the most graceful and elegant. The ordinary head-dive, as performed by the Swedes, is known as the "Swallow" or "Swan" dive, in which the position of the body in the air is as shown in Fig. 1.

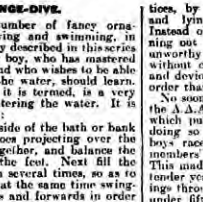
This dive is done either from a standing jump or with a run, the latter method being by far the best to watch, as it gives the diver the appearance that he has command over his muscles, strength of mind and nerve, and is master of his movement, particularly when performed from heights of fifteen to thirty feet.

The start for this dive is made with

an energetic run,

and the spring-off, outwards and upwards, is made with force from the end of the board. Directly the body has been launched into the air, the head is thrown back, the back hollowed, the legs straightened and closed, with the toes pointing well backwards, and the arms are flung out from the body to a horizontal line through the shoulders. This position is maintained until shortly before entering the water, when the arms are brought to the front, above the head, until the thumbs touch, and the entrance into the water is made in the position as shown in Fig 2.

This is one of the most fascinating dives, not only for the performer but also the spectator, as it has a most graceful and daring appearance when executed. Very often the impetus gained from the running spring sends the body thirty or forty feet from the spring-board, during which time the dive has the effect of the performer being on the wing, and flying through the air.



Diving: Fig 1.: The position of the body immediately after the spring off.

THE PLUNGE-DIVE.

There are a large number of fancy ornamental methods of diving and swimming, in addition to those already described in this series of articles, which every boy, who has mastered the ordinary methods and who wishes to be able to do "fancy" things in the water, should learn. The plunging dive, as it is termed, is a very favourite method of entering the water. It is accomplished as follows:

Stand as close to the side of the bath or bank as possible, with the toes projecting over the side. Keep the feet together, and balance the body on the balls of the feet. Next fill the lungs and exhaust them several times, so as to clear them thoroughly, at the same time swinging the arms backwards and forwards in order to assist in this operation. Then bend the body forward from the shoulders and bring the arms up so that they are stretched horizontally above the surface of the water, and the head buried between the shoulders. Then spring vigorously from the bank into the water, taking care to keep the body perfectly rigid. Do not dive too deeply, as this tends to retard the progress, but at the same time dive deeply enough. Practice will show the proper depth.

When the body enters the water the back of the hands should be facing the surface, the feet should be bent well back, toes pointing to the rear, and the thumbs locked.

On rising to the top at the completion of the dive, the arms and head should remain on the surface, the hands being bent round, something like the bow of a boat, the head being under water. Keep in this position until the impetus of the dive is exhausted, or until it is found necessary to raise the head to breathe.

Of course, only those boys who are accomplished divers should practise this fancy header.

(Next week an article on life-saving will appear in our Superb Summer Double Number. There is sure to be a big demand for this magnificent issue, so order it in advance to save disappointment. Tell all your chums about it! Price 2d.)

THE A.A.A.:

Mr. A. A. ELSON, winner of over 200 prizes, gives readers full details concerning the work of the Amateur Athletic Association, and tells them how to join.

Rules Concerning Boys' Races.

THE Association, while allowing a free hand to its affiliated clubs in the conduct of their own open sports, yet stipulates certain restrictions and conditions, which must be observed. A specially-printed entry-form, sanctioned by the Association, and containing, besides many of the general conditions and rules, the amateur status declaration mentioned previously, must be used for each entry, the entrant signing this, and thereby laying himself open to prosecution for fraud in the event of false statement being made with intent to mislead. This was found necessary to prevent the depredations of a certain portion of the professional element, who at one time went about the country picking up prizes—the outcome of liberal handicaps obtained by means of false statements on their entry-forms.

There are other and very needful restrictions, notably the one against betting, which will be dealt with in the next article. It will also be shown how the young athlete may enter and compete in sports under A.A.A. laws in his first season, both through a club and also directly, without club membership having been taken up.

Open races for boys

are no longer permitted at athletic meetings. An extract from the Amateur Athletic Association's laws bearing on this is as follows:

"Races for youths in the country, other than club races, shall be confined to boys under fifteen, resident for three months prior to the sports within a radius of five miles from the ground of the promoting club, and entries from boys under this age shall not be accepted for open events. Open races for boys shall not be permitted in the Metropolitan district (such district to be defined by a radius of twenty miles from Charing Cross). The law is not to prevent bona-fide scholars' races, confined to boys attending schools to be named in the prospectuses of a meeting, or races between the junior section of the various athletic clubs. It is imperative that separate dressing accommodation be always provided when boys are competing."

A few years ago an open race for boys was an event at every big meeting. Tiny toddlers and overgrown lads competed one with the other in heats and finals week after week. An extraordinary interest was evinced in these

races, and the ruling body was no doubt puzzled a little to understand this until certain revelations disclosed a series of abuses which the Association made haste to put an end to.

It was discovered, amongst other things, that gambling took place on these particular events, and that runners of tender years were made the medium of shady betting transactions of sharp practice which led a stop to these contests that were doing so much harm. It was ordained that boys' races should be confined to bona-fide club members' events, or to a restricted radius. This made it impossible to run a youngster of tender years at a series of different meetings throughout the season. Moreover, no boy under fifteen years of age may now compete with seniors in open events.

Therefore, it follows that if a boy under fifteen wishes to compete in

a running race,

he must join a club which has a junior section, and which promotes races for its juniors. Anyone over fifteen has the choice of competing in open events as an "unattached" competitor; or by joining a club affiliated to the Association he may compete both in open races and also in races for the members of his club only, of which there are generally at least twelve each season. Club membership fees average about 3s. 6d. per season.

To enter either an open or a members' event, every intending competitor must fill up an official form setting out his last four performances, and if not included in these the last performance at the distance then entered for, and give particulars of the last heat or prize won. He must state what start he was allowed, and in what position he finished. These particulars are to assist the handicapper. If our friend is a novice, then he puts this fact on record by writing on the entry form, "Have never competed in a race before"; but it is as well then to add details of age, height, etc., so that the handicapper may not think he is dealing with a "dark horse," and allot a safe handicap mark accordingly.

(To be continued on Saturday next.)

CRICKET:

Mr. ALBERT TROTT, the famous County Cricketer and Coach, gives some very valuable instruction to Ambitious Cricketers.

Fielding. *(Continued from last week.)*

THE bowler knows about the flight of the ball from the bat, and judges accordingly.

Now, why this exactness? Because nearly half the batsmen that get out during the season, owe their dismissal to a catch in the slips, and many with one hand. You must be able to hold a catch with one hand, and should practice it. For the left hand, begin slowly, and toss the ball up with the other,

catching as it descends.

Then get a friend to lob the ball from a dozen yards, and, as you find it easy to catch it, increase distance and speed; use both hands whenever possible.

Short slip must back up the wicket-keeper when the ball is thrown to him from mid-on, mid-off, or cover-point.

The greatest slip in my time was George Lohmann, who covered an immense amount of ground. A. O. Jones, the Nottingham captain, is another; so, too, is Len Braund, of Somerset. Once George Hirst was bowling for the Players against the Australians at Birmingham, and a delivery of his got up rather awkwardly on the leg-side. Braund, at first slip or short slip, thought what the stroke would be, and sprang to that side of the wicket, taking the ball with the right hand two or three inches from the ground, an example of brainwork added to agility.

A. C. Maclaren and R. E. Foster are well worth watching; but if you can **see** John Tunnicliffe in this position do so.

Point.

Point is an important position, but not easy to fill in ordinary games. Many stand too deep.

There is no exact place, for the distance must vary with the batsman. I think you must change as each batsman comes in, because one will play the ball in one way and one another. When a fielder there it was easy to find out how certain men played. No bad catch will ever do at point. Dr. E. M. Grace used to catch the ball within a few feet of the bat, as did Sir T. C. O'Brien, who now captains All Ireland.

The slower the bowling

and the wicket, the nearer in you can come. If you have a batsman who is nervous, a chance will be hard. Sid Gregory is a great cover-point, and the position is a busy one. See him continually rushing forward to save runs off gentle taps in front of the wicket. He backs up point, and runs after the ball hit past the fielders towards the off-boundary.

Many a difficult catch comes from mistiming the ball. They look very easy, but often have any amount of spin on.

The throw-in from cover and the picking up of the ball are important. Only serious practice will help. The action of picking up and returning the ball should be performed with decision and celerity. Point is the best position in the field, and it is you can serve your side well. Many of the balls you have to deal with will twist, and therefore be very difficult to judge. A leg-break bowler, or a left-handed one, will cause the ball to swerve enormously, and then both right and left hands must be used.

Third-man is a great position; the bowler will tell him exactly where he must stand.

A few stolen runs

need not upset him. He must throw in the ball from just below the level of the shoulder. Victor Trumper and C. O. H. Sewell, of Gloucestershire, are the best men that I know of in such a position. If the batsmen attempt a short run, return to the bowler's end—any hesitation and the men will steal runs, as, for instance, Clem Hill, the Australian bat, does.

Mid-off will stand about twenty-five to thirty yards from the striker's wicket, and will have plenty to do, and must back up the bowler when the ball is returned to him. Mid-on must back up too. The latter should stand some twenty yards from the batsman's wickets, in a line with that of the bowler, a few yards on the right-hand side of it.



Rising to the bar for the right leg to be thrown over. (See column 1.)

(To be continued in next Saturday's Summer Double Number.)

THE SCHOOL ON THE CLIFF.

A Magnificent New Story of Stirring Adventure.

By E. HARCOURT BURRAGE.



THESE ARE THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS IN THIS FINE NEW STORY.

JACK JAUNTY, a lad of unknown parentage, who, as a baby, was cast up on the shores of an island off the village of Sternecraig.

THE STRANGER, a curious character who resides alone on an island called the Bowl. He it was that rescued Jack Jaunty from a watery grave. Fourteen years have since passed away.

BOB BAXTER, an old fisherman, in whose charge the Stranger put Jack Jaunty until he was old enough to be sent to the School on the Cliff at Sternecraig. That is where we find him now.

PETER PINNICK, a morose, unsociable fisherman, who nurses an insatiary grievance against the Stranger and against Jack Jaunty.

DAN CALLIS, AARON DOWNEY, GERARD INGLIS, and NICKEY HOPKINS, pupils at the School on the Cliff.

Our story opens on a warm sunny day. Dan Callis, a pupil at the School on the Cliff, and a bully, is darint another lad, Gerard Inglis by name, to descend the Seagull's Cleft. Jack warns him not to do so, but a little later the lad is discovered on a ledge half-way down the face of the cliff (inset), in a most perilous position he is rescued by Jack Jaunty.

A stranger arrives at Sternecraig that afternoon, and plotting up an acquaintanceship with Peter Pinnick, a surly fisherman, questions him about Jack Jaunty. Peter is obliged against his will to tell the man all he knows.

Soon after a new boy arrives at the school. His name is Mark Ricketts, and he makes a bad impression on the other boys.

Jack Jaunty and his chums play a joke on Peter Pinnick, who swears revenge. Jack makes friends with some new arrivals at Sternecraig, a Mr. Bolton and his two daughters. He takes them for a tour of inspection around the cliffs. They presently arrive at a huge crevice in the cliff.

(Now read this week's instalment.)

THE 11th CHAPTER (*continued*).
The Rival Tutors.

IT was called the Cleft, and was a huge crack in the earth, wide in the direction of the sea, and narrowing like a wedge for a length of fifty yards inland, where it ended. The peculiarity of this cleft, or rent, was that its sides went sheer down to a level below the sea, and sometimes a very high tide would fill the bottom with water. It was a dangerous place for a man to come upon on a dark night. In the case of his falling into the narrow part, and getting wedged in, his fate would be horrible.

"What an awful place!" said Ivonne, with a shudder, as she peeped over.

"Don't go too near, my dear," said Mr. Bolton. "I really think it ought to be railed round."

"There has been some talk of it for a long time," said Jack, "but nothing has been done."

"It would cost very little," said Mr. Bolton, "and I think I must see to it."

He had previously introduced the governess to Jack as Miss Harrison, and as they marched back, she fell behind with Jack, asking him many questions about his history on the way. The bungalow was reached, and Jack, much against his inclinations, had to refuse an invitation to go in for a while.

"I have to be back by eight o'clock," he said with a smile. "Mr. Bonnington gives us a deal of liberty, but he likes his rules to be strictly observed."

At this moment the two ushers hove in sight. They had been for a walk inland, making a detour, and had come home with the same object as Jack, with the hope of seeing the inhabitants of the bungalow. Great was their amazement on finding Jack in familiar converse with them, and with the assumption of tutors, who consider they have a right to address their pupils anywhere, they stopped, and spoke to him.

"We hardly expected to find you here, Jaunty," Mr. Redditch said. "Old friends of yours, I presume!"

An introduction all round followed, as a matter of course, and the tutors were very effusive with their bows and verbal acknowledgments. Miss Harrison especially impressed them, and she, in her turn, appeared to find in them objects of interest, although, of course, not exactly the sort of interest they thought it was, and each appropriated it to himself.

After a short conversation, adieux were uttered, and Jack and the tutors started off for home.

"A charming family—a widower and two daughters," said Mr. Redditch enthusiastically.

"Delightful," said Mr. Ferrula. "Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington will, of course, call upon them?"

"If you suggest it—naturally."

"Really, Redditch, there is no occasion for you to be so sarcastic."

"Am I so?"

"You are, sir."

"You need not be so touchy, Ferrula."

"Am I touchy?"

"You are indeed. More touchy than you exhibited yourself to Miss Harrison."

"I was merely polite to an amiable lady."

"You fairly thrust yourself upon her, Ferrula."

"I'm sorry if I shut you out from making yourself agreeable, Redditch."

Then they both snorted and lapsed into silence, while Jack quietly chuckled to himself.

"Ho, ho!" he thought. "Both spoons on the charming governess. There ought to be some fun come out of this."

But he said nothing, and silence suited him just then. His thoughts went back to Ivonne, who had shown such an interest in his story, and he felt how nice it would be if he had a sister like her. Then he thought he would not like Ivonne as a sister, but as—well, he hardly knew what. She seemed to be so high above him that he could then hardly think of her on a level with himself. So Jack went back to school, and Gerard Inglis asked him where he had been. He said he had been "round about the bungalow," and seen the people there.

"And are they all Nickey said?" asked Gerard.

"All and more," replied Jack briefly. "I should say they are very nice people."

"I'm glad of that that Jack should say no more to so close a friend as Gerard, but, truth to tell, he was not in the humour to talk about his new friends. But he thought of them until he went to bed, and then he passed the night in dreaming of golden hair and bright blue eyes.

THE 12th CHAPTER.
Jim Baxter in a Strange Way—A Nocturne Row and Its Results.

GRUELTON, the house-porter, butler, and general servant of the school, was one of those men who seem to be born for service. He was tall, thin, and not absolutely ill-looking, but nobody could deny he was a very plain man. He was, at the same time, very quiet and genteel. Nobody had ever known him to be loud-voiced or rude; his manner as a domestic male-servant was perfect.

Jack, on coming down the following morning, found Gruelton in the act of coming upstairs.

By the way, we may as well mention that there were two staircases leading to the upper part of the house. One at the back, and the other at the front, and the boys used the former.

"A person wishes to see you, sir," said Gruelton. "One of the fishermen — Robert Baxter."

Gruelton never took liberties with the most humble. Bobs, Dicks, and Jims were not in his vocabulary.

"Thank you!" replied Jack. "Where is he?"

"By the side door, sir."

Jack went out, and found Bob pacing up and down in a state of suppressed excitement. He jumped to the conclusion that something had gone wrong with Jim.

"Now, Bob," he said, "don't give way. I hope he isn't dead."

"No, Master Jack," replied Bob; "but he's come home, and we can't understand him. He's like a daft boy. I want to know if you will come down and see him?"

"I'll do what I can, Bob," replied Jack, "but I fear it isn't in my power to do much."

It was then about half-past six, and his time was his own until half-past seven, when he was expected to study half an hour before breakfast. He and Bob set out for the cottage, poor Bob saying little, but every now and then giving vent to a suppressed groan. Jack felt nothing that he could say would help matters, and wisely was silent. He found Jim seated in the kitchen in an old armchair, usually occupied by Bob when indoors.

Mrs. Baxter stood behind it, with her arm round her boy's neck, looking the picture of misery. Jim's head turned towards the newcomer, but there was a blank look in the eyes that rested on him. He had the appearance of one who had been drugged.

"There he is, Master Jack," said Bob, with a moan. "Isn't it awful?"

"Jim," said Jack kindly, "don't you know me?"

"Dark—dark!" muttered Jim. "But look—there's a light, and glittering faces! Ugh!"

A tremor passed through his frame, and he put his hands before his eyes, rocking to and fro.

"That's the way he's been going on every time we speak to him," said Bob.

Mrs. Baxter's tears fell fast, but she wept silently.

"When I opened the door this morning," said Bob, "I found him standing on the step. He didn't seem to know a bit where he was; but, after staring at me, was going away, when I took hold of his arm and brought him in."

"But he must have known what he was doing to find his way here," urged Jack.

"It 'peared to me," said Bob, "that somebody might ha' brought him."

"I think, Bob," said Jack, "that you ought to fetch a doctor to see him. I believe he's had a terrible scare of some sort. Jim, look at me! Come, pull yourself together!"

But Jim took no notice of him whatever, nor of his father and mother, who implored him to look up and answer them.

"Shall I go for the doctor?" asked Jack. "It's only three miles to Dandy Bridge, and I think I can get there and back in an hour. Really—I really feel he ought not to be left, Bob."

"But won't you get into trouble, Master Jack?" asked Bob.

"I'll risk that. You stop here until I come back."

He was off like an arrow from a bow, and, bounding up the cliff, set out for Dandy Bridge. As he trotted along he took off the silken handkerchief he wore loosely about his neck, and tied it round his waist as an assisting power to his running.

The church clock of the straggling village pointed to twenty minutes to eight as he reached it, and as the doctor lived near it, he was soon panting by his door.

Dr. Bird was up and dressed, and, on hearing the nature of the case, he had his pony put into the gig and drove back at once with Jack. He was of opinion also that Jim had had a scare.

(Continued on the next page.)

OUR LEAGUE CORNER.

SECTION 1.

The following clubs in the Leagues mentioned have been awarded Boys' Realm Cricket Bats for the best performances on Saturday, June 1st:

HERSETT CRICKET LEAGUE.
Parkfield C.C.—Sec., Mr. F. Fryer, 26, Ullet Road, Sefton Park, Liverpool.
St. Paul's C.C.—Sec., Mr. C. Bradley, 57, Brookdale Road, Sefton Park, Liverpool.

NORTH LIVERPOOL DISTRICT AMATEUR LEAGUE.
St. Alban's C.C.—Sec. (of League), Mr. F. St. Ward, 118, Carisbrooke Road, Walton, Liverpool.

EAST LONDON CRICKET LEAGUE.
St. Paul's C.C.—Sec., Mr. H. W. Shepheard, 84, Glenarm Road, Clapton, N.E.

SOUTH LONDON CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEAGUE.
Handen C.C.—Sec., Mr. A. H. East, 58, Molesworth Street, Lewisham, S.E.

SOUTH-WEST MANCHESTER RECHABITE LEAGUE.
Hope of Manley C.C.—Supt., Mr. R. E. Livingstone, 30, York Avenue, Manley Park, Whalley Range, Manchester.

BEARWOOD AND DISTRICT LEAGUE.
Sandon Road C.C.—Sec., Mr. F. C. Wilmott, "Lynthorpe," Lordswood Road, Harborne.
St. Mark's C.C.—Sec., G. Owen, Police Station, Dudley Road, Birmingham.

MORE CUPS AND MEDALS AWARDED.

In addition to the Leagues already mentioned in former issues of our paper as selected to be the recipients of Boys' Realm Cups and Medals, the following presentations will be made:

Two Sets of Medals to—
SOUTH-WEST MANCHESTER RECHABITE LEAGUE.
Sec., Mr. A. E. Slator, Hovis House, Trafford Park.

Two Sets of Medals to—
HANLEY AND DISTRICT LEAGUE.
Sec., Mr. G. Parkes, 33, Copeland Street, Stoke.

Solid Silver Cup to—
BELFAST MINOR CRICKET LEAGUE.
Sec., Mr. G. K. Bamford, 3, Kirk Street, Belfast.

Two Sets of Medals to—
BELFAST CRICKET ALLIANCE.
Sec., Mr. G. K. Bamford, 3, Kirk Street, Belfast.

Solid Silver Cup and One Set of Medals to—
SOUTH LONDON S.S. UNION CRICKET ASSOCIATION.
Sec., Mr. W. H. Coombes, 5, Portland Place (South), Clapham Road, S.W.

OUR PRIZE BATS.

MORE LETTERS FROM DELIGHTED CLUB SECRETARIES.

"113, Mayfair Avenue,
"Ilford,
"Essex,
"June 5th, 1907.

"Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your bat, for which accept my best thanks. I hope to test it next week, also to make a few runs before the season is out.

"Again thanking you, yours faithfully,
"W. A. M. OFIELD."

"STOCKWELL REGINA C.C.
"40, Sidney Road,
"Stockwell, S.W.,
"June 6th, 1907.

"Dear Sir,—I have received the cricket bat awarded to my club by your most excellent paper, and beg to say that it has given great pleasure to all who have seen it.

"Please accept the best thanks of my club for the gift, we wish every success to THE BOYS' REALM.—Yours faithfully,
"H. A. MILLINGTON."

SUNDERLAND AND DISTRICT NONCONFORMIST LEAGUE.

LEAGUE TABLE UP TO AND INCLUDING SATURDAY, JUNE 1ST.

	P.	W.	L.	D.	Pts.
1. St. Bede's Adult School	6	5	0	1	11
2. Monkwearmouth P.C.L.	6	3	2	1	7
3. Newbottle Institute	6	3	2	1	7
4. Trinity Guild	6	3	3	1	7
5. Ballast Hills	7	3	3	1	7
6. Ravenswarth Street	6	2	2	2	6
7. St. George's Men's Own	5	2	2	1	5
8. Y.M.C.A.	5	2	2	1	5
9. Wesley Hall	5	1	1	1	3
10. Dock Street Institute	5	1	3	1	3
11. Cleveland Road	6	0	5	1	1

SECTION 2.

Your Editor has awarded prize bats to the following clubs, these having, in his opinion, put up the best show on Saturday, June 1st.

JUNIOR DIVISION.

Royal Garrison Artillery C.C.—Sec., A. H. Clapshaw, No. 2 Depot R.G.A., Fort Rowan, Gosport, Hants.

SENIOR DIVISION.

Camden C.C.—Sec., W. A. Beard, 3, Bayham Road, Camden Town, N.W.

The following table shows the position of the top clubs in each division up to and including Saturday, June 1st:

JUNIOR DIVISION.

	P.	W.	L.	D.	Runs for.	Runs agst.	Pts.
Rebecca Street C.C.	5	5	0	0	400	150	10
Wilton C.C.	5	5	0	0	427	248	10
Malden C.C.	5	4	0	1	195	78	9
St. Mark's C.C.	4	4	0	0	277	104	8
R.G.A.C.C.	4	4	0	0	326	206	8
Garfield C.C.	4	4	0	0	276	83	8
Primitive J'rs C.C.	4	4	0	0	167	105	8
Otley Celtic C.C.	5	4	1	0	158	99	8
St. Faith's C.C.	4	3	1	0	199	87	6
Oakley C.C.	4	3	1	0	234	144	6
Millwall C.C.	4	3	1	0	207	118	6
Sandon C.C.	3	2	0	1	119	137	5
Quinton C.C.	4	2	1	1	204	156	5
Harborne C.C.	4	2	2	0	213	206	4
St. Augustine's C.C.	4	1	3	0	86	125	2
Abbey C.C.	4	1	3	0	97	252	2
Proforians C.C.	4	0	4	0	81	129	0

SENIOR DIVISION.

	P.	W.	L.	D.	Runs for.	agst.	Pts.
Histon Excel. C.C.	5	5	0	1	224	197	11
Camden C.C.	5	5	0	1	211	211	10
Nelson Villa C.C.	4	3	0	1	179	105	7

MEDALS FOR GOAL-SCORERS.

It will be remembered that some time ago solid silver medals were offered to readers who had scored twenty-five or more goals for their clubs during the football season. The following are a selection from a host of letters from the recipients of these prizes:

"6, Claypath Terrace,
"Reading,
"May 31st, 1907.

"Dear Sir,—Many thanks for the exceedingly pretty silver medal which you were kind enough to send me for THE BOYS' REALM goal-scoring competition, and which reached me quite safely to-day.

"I trust you will accept my sincerest thanks for the same, which I appreciate very much. Wishing you every success, I beg to remain, yours faithfully,
"A Regular Reader" [W. SAYER.]"

"SYDENHAM A.F.C.
"Roseville,
"Dundonald
"Co. Down,
"June 1st, 1907.

"Dear Sir,—Many thanks for gold medal for John M. Knight. It is a lovely little medal.—Yours truly,
"W. T. THOMPSON, Hon. Sec."

"5, Clovelly Road,
"Anfield,
"May 31st, 1907.

"Dear Sir,—Thanks very much for the silver medal which I received quite safely. It has easily come up to my fullest expectation.

"Thanking you again, and wishing your papers every success.—I remain, yours very truly,
"ARTHUR WARRINGTON."

"50, Park Road,
"Brightlingsea,
"Essex,
"May 31st, 1907.

"Dear Sir,—Many thanks for the nice medal I received May 31st. As it has come as a surprise to me, I think almost a year and value it more than if I had been sure of winning one.—I beg to remain, yours faithfully,
"ARTHUR FRANCIS."

IMPORTANT!!! Next Saturday Our Superb Summer Double Number Appears! Order It Now!

"It's either that, or he's been drugged or drank himself into a state of idiotcy," he said.

It was eight o'clock when he dropped Jack at the school-room door and drove on to the village, where he could tether his pony, or get somebody to hold it, while he went down to the cottage.

Jack hurried to the school-room, where he was received by Mr. Redditch, with a stern question as to the cause of his late appearance. The explanation Jack gave sufficed, and he plunged into his books, metaphorically, head-first, and in the few minutes at his command acquired some idea of what he ought to have learnt in the full half-hour.

He noticed that Mr. Ferrula was also deeply engaged in writing, and, by his abstracted air and frequent pauses in his work, was evidently composing something. Jack thought no more of it at the time, but it was recalled to him afterwards by a slightly sensational incident which we shall relate anon.

It was not until noon that Jack heard any more about Jim. Taking advantage of the play-hour, he ran down to the cottage, and there found Mrs. Baxter busy with her house-work. Whatever mental suffering she endured, that had to be done.

"What did the doctor say?" Jack inquired.

"He had a big fright of some sort," replied Mrs. Baxter; "and like enough he may get over it, but Dr. Bird isn't sure when it will be."

Jack saw at once that it was almost a hopeless case. When doctors talk in that way the worst is to be feared.

"I'll warrant that Peter Pinnick has something to do with it," thought Jack, as he hurried down to the beach.

Pinnick was there, lounging about with a watchful look on his face; and Bob was mending a net. Aaron Downey, Dan Callis, Mark Ricketts, Nickey Hopkins, Will Raddle, and Gerard Inglis were in a boat together.

"Hallo! Where are you going?" cried Jack, annoyed to see them in company.

"For a row," replied Nickey. "Ricketts stands the boat."

"Does he?" said Jack, opening his eyes.

"Won't you come?" asked Mark, with an effort to appear jolly and hospitable.

But it was a miserable failure, and Jack was about to refuse when a thought flashed upon him. No one in the boat knew much about managing it.

"I'll come, thanks," he said, as he jumped in. "But you fellows ought not to go without leave."

"We shall get into trouble if we get drowned, of course," sneered Callis.

Aaron Downey and Mark laughed at this, and Jack smiled good-naturedly.

"It will be better to live and get into trouble. You must head her west, or we shall have the tide against us coming back."

"What matters when we have it against us?" growled Callis. "If you are not going to be agreeable, you had better go ashore again."

For his own personal comfort Jack would have done that in a moment, but he feared the rowers would make a mess of it. Dan and Aaron had the oars, and Mark steered, or professed to do so. Jack and Gerard sat in the bow, and Nickey was curled up in the stern.

"I say," whispered Jack, "what induced you to come?"

"Oh, Ricketts asked us, and we thought it better to be agreeable!" replied Gerard.

"Quite right, so far," said Jack; "but I don't understand this chumminess between Ricketts and Callis."

"They've been sidling up to each other these two days," returned Gerard.

The two rowers pulled hard, and, having the tide with them, they rapidly went eastward, bearing seaward towards a lone rock called the Sugar Loaf, which rose out of the sea, and at high tide showed about twelve feet of its crown. The keel was going straight for it, and Jack, knowing that all around it there were other rocks just under the water, sung out to Mark to give it a wide berth.

"Oh, he's all right! Let him alone," said Dan Callis; "he's an old hand with a boat."

"I should not have thought it," muttered Jack. "You must go wider, I say. Don't be a fool! There are a score of rocks about here standing like posts in the sea. You ought to give the Sugar Loaf a hundred feet berth."

"Thirty's enough," said Dan.

"More than enough," said Aaron Downey.

Crash! They were nearly a hundred feet from the Sugar Loaf when the catastrophe came. The boat struck sideways on a rock and turned right over, fairly emptying the boys into the sea. They could all swim, save Mark Ricketts, whose yell of alarm rung in Jack's ears as he struck out for the Sugar Loaf.

The boy was near him, but floundering about, and in a minute or two would have gone down but for Jack, who seized him by the back of his jacket, and pushed him ahead as he swam for the rock. They were all making for it, as the only place of refuge, and luckily for them it was not far away. The rearmost was Dan Callis, who was getting blown when half the distance had been covered—more from fear than a lack of swimming power.

"Give me a hand, Jaunty!" he cried.

"Can't just yet," replied Jack. "Go steady—don't flurry yourself."

Nickey was the first to reach the rock, and climbed at once right up to the summit. From that point of vantage he saw his companions in misfortune below. Will Raddle was not far behind him, and was already swarming up out of reach of the sea.

Next came Gerard Inglis and Aaron Downey. Then Jack with his charge, whom he thrust on the rock and bade him hold tightly to it. Dan Callis came last, and he was fairly pumped.

"Jaunty," he shrieked, "save me!"

Jack had got a foothold on the rocks, and, holding on by a jutting fragment above him, held out his hand to Dan Callis, who, apparently, was not aware that he had reached a place of refuge. As a matter of fact, he would have gone down but for Jack, who seized his outstretched hand and hauled him up out of danger.

THE 13th CHAPTER.
Poetry and Startling Prose.

"WELL, here we are," said Nickey, "and I'm glad it's no worse. I say, Callis, you funked terribly, you did."

Dan Callis lay upon the rock exhausted and sullen—angry with himself, Mark Ricketts, and everybody, and not so grateful as he might have been for what Jack had done.

"Doesn't an upset give you an appetite for dinner?" exclaimed Will Raddle.

"We may whistle for dinner if nobody sees us," said Nickey; "and the beach is quite clear. Everybody's gone to dinner."

On the lower part of the rock Jack Jaunty was sitting, heedless of the sea-spray which occasionally dashed into his face. He was thinking of—not of the recent accident, but of Yvonne, and wondering what she would have said or thought if he had been drowned.

"Perhaps she wouldn't think of me at all," he said, with a sigh.

A hand was laid upon his shoulder, and, looking up, he saw Mark Ricketts, who was seated just above him.

"I owe you my life," the boy said.



The two tutors rushed headlong into a rough-and-tumble fight. The boys roared with laughter as they witnessed the amusing combat.

"Oh, don't name it!" said Jack lightly. "Any of our fellows would do the same for you, and you may do the same for somebody else one day."

"I am afraid not," said Mark, shaking his head. "My way would be to get along for myself, and leave others to do the same."

There was a frankness in his confession which was really horrible, because he spoke as if his way would be the most natural thing to do.

Jack was glad he had saved him from drowning, but he did not want Mark to be grateful to him. The boy repelled him, in spite of the efforts he made to be agreeable, but he hesitated a moment before he accepted the proffered palm. How cold and clammy it was! He shuddered as he touched it, and then tried to laugh away the feeling.

"I am a fool!" he muttered. "The fellow can't make himself otherwise than he is."

He did not know it, but Mark was watching his face and making his own deductions from its expressions. There was a frown on his own as he lay back again.

"Hurrah!" cried Nickey above. "A boat—a boat! Saved! Let us sing 'The Roast Beef of Old England!'"

And then, without any apparent cause, he tumbled off his perch, fell upon Will Raddle, and, clinging to each other, the pair rolled into the sea. They came up all right, and scrambled out without assistance, to the music of the laughters of their friends.

Will was in a fearful "wax," and, but for his mouth being filled with salt water, he would have said all sorts of fearful things to Nickey. By the time the salt was out his wrath had evaporated, for an extra wetting, under the circumstances, was of no great consequence.

It was Bob Baxter who was coming to the rescue. From his house he had, after a short time at dinner, seen the boys on the rocks, and guessed what had happened. The overturned boat was already far out at sea, and he rightly put it down as lost for good and all.

"It's Peter Pinnick's boat," said Nickey; "and he won't charge for it—certainly not."

"It was my fault it was upset," said Mark, "and I'll pay."

Again it was apparent that he was generous by an effort, and nobody felt appreciation. He had done the right thing, but not in the right way, and so his offer fell rather flat.

Bob soon rowed to them, and, having skilfully brought his boat through the treacherous shoals, took them on board. As usual, he did not show any curiosity about the way the accident came about, but waited for somebody to tell him.

Nickey was the historian, and he was very much down on Dan Callis for being "Mister Knowall," and Dan bore his sarcastic remarks in sullen silence. When they were all safe on the beach, he said to Jack:

"You've got something else to crow about now."

"I am no rooster, if you are!" replied Jack severely.

They were all glad to be safe on shore again, but they were late for dinner, as Bob told them the bell had rung ten minutes ago. Off they set at a trot, and it so happened that Nickey was a bit short of breath and fell behind the rest. About midway along the cliff he saw a sheet of folded notepaper lying on the turf, and, acting on impulse, picked it up and put it in his pocket.

The result of their being late for dinner was they were all desired to stay in the house for the rest of the day. This was something in the way of affliction, for the weather was particularly bright and sunny, and it was especially hard to bear in the evening. But there they were in the school-room, with nothing to do but get up their lessons for the morrow; which, of course, they had little heart in.

Through the open windows floated the voices of their merry companions at cricket and other games upon the level land in front, and the scent of the sea titillated their nostrils in an aggravating manner.

"It's beastly dull," said Nickey, who had perched himself upon Mr. Ferrula's stool by his desk, and was gloomily surveying his companions in misery, who sat on scattered forms about the room, silent and depressed.

"Sing us a song, Nickey," said Jack Jaunty.

"Really I cannot. I have left my music at home," replied Nickey, imitating the voice of an affected lady, "and I've got a cold. Really you must excuse me this time."

"I will sing if you won't," said Will Raddle, mounting into the seat usually occupied by Mr. Redditch.

"Howl away!" said Nickey, thrusting his hands into his pockets.

Will Raddle began to sing in the most dolorous tones the "Song of the Slave," and had got as far as

"I had a dream, a happy dream—
I thought that I was free,"

when an exclamation from Nickey stopped him.

Every eye was turned towards Mr. Ferrula's desk, where its occupant sat, staring at an open sheet of notepaper he held in his hand.

"What have you there, Nick?" cried Jack.

"Nothing much," Nickey answered, as he slipped it back into his pocket. "I will show it you by-and-by."

"Is there any reason why we should not see it?" inquired Dan Callis.

"Who's 'we'?" asked Nickey.

"Why, Aaron, Mark, and myself," replied Dan.

This answer plainly indicated that some sort of bond, common enough in schools, had been established between the trio. A broad smile expanded Nickey's face.

"There's many reasons why you should not see it," he said; "and one is—you would not understand it."

"You are a cheeky little beast!" growled Dan, as he hurled his "Latin Grammar" at Nickey's head. The book missed its mark, and smashed the glass of a frame containing a specimen of Mr. Ferrula's penmanship; which, as far as flourishing went, left nothing to be desired.

"You've done it now," said Nickey.

"Clear the frame of the rest of the glass, and pick up the bits," suggested Aaron Downey; "then it won't be noticed."

Nickey slipped down from his seat so that Dan and his friend might carry out this suggestion, and as the frame hung in the shade the glass might possibly not be missed for the time.

There was no chance of Dan's confessing what he had done, and the others, naturally, would not peach: so the lost glass was destined to be added to the minor tricks performed by that "Mr. Nobody," who does so much that no one can explain.

Nickey went and sat down by Jack.

"It's poetry I've got here," he said, "written by Ferrula to a Miss Harrison. That's the governess at the Folly, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Jack. "What sort of stuff has he written?"

"Wish—more wash," replied Nickey. "Shall I read it to you?"

"No, thanks!" replied Jack. "It's not meant for me. You had better give it back to him."

This Nickey promised to do. Now, Nickey really meant to do so, but he was a careless little scamp, and as the evening wore away he forgot all about it.

Mr. Ferrula presided at supper, and Nickey did not recall it; but just as he was going up to bed he encountered Mr. Redditch on the stairs, and then, in his light-hearted, careless way, he remembered the poetry, and associated it with the wrong tutor.

"I think you dropped this outside, sir," he said.

"Thank you," replied Mr. Redditch, as he took the paper tendered him. "Possibly I did."

He could not read it then, as the staircase was rather dark, but took it away with him; and Nickey bounded upstairs to the dormitory, where, as usual, he was last in.

He now hurriedly undressed to get into bed before the light was put out, when he suddenly called to mind what he had done.

"Oh, here's a joke!" he groaned.

"What now?" asked Jack, who was already between the sheets.

"I've given Ferrula's poetry to Redditch," said Nickey.

"What on earth induced you to do that?"

"I mixed them up."

"I shouldn't be surprised if bloodshed came out of that mistake," said Jack sleepily. "I noticed the other day they were both struck with the governess. She is rather pretty and very nice."

"Well, I don't care," said Nickey. "It serves Ferrula right for scribbling such stuff as poetry. I've always hated it ever since I got spanked when a youngster, because I couldn't get hold of a little lamb. I used to say 'Mary had a little jam,' and I'm blessed if I could get jam out of my head."

Nickey's mistake was certainly an unfortunate one, and destined to have a lasting effect upon the two tutors. In the solitude of his chamber Mr. Redditch that night poured over about sixty lines of "the usual."

There was "dove" and "love," and "part" and "heart," and "true to death" in it; also a suggestion that, if his affection were not returned, he would fade away "like a gathered flower."

He read it with set teeth, which he began to grind when he finished. Then he sardonically laughed, and strode haughtily to his fourteen-inch-by-eight looking-glass, in which he gazed at his own reflection.

"And he—he," hissed Redditch, "presumes to be my rival! But he still, oh, turbid spirit! Keep calm; you may do that which you will be sorry for!"

Other people's poetry often has a disturbing effect upon us, and poor Redditch could not sleep for thinking of the gushing lines he had read. Two lines, slightly imperfect in the matter of rhyme, fairly haunted him:

"Oh, fate be kind to me, and let me marry soon,
And give me as a bride the fair Miss Harrison."

These touching lines he repeated a hundred times over in the course of the night, and when he arose in the morning they were the first utterance that escaped his fevered lips.

(This magnificent new serial will be continued on Saturday next in our Mammoth Summer Double Number. Look out for an extra long instalment of it.)

IMPORTANT!!! Next Saturday Our Superb Summer Double Number Appears! Order It Now!

CLUB NOTICES.

NOTICES AND CHALLENCES FROM READERS' OWN CLUBS. THESE ARE INSERTED FREE OF CHARGE.

ROEBUCK UNITED F.C. require home and away matches for next season.—Apply G. Henricks, 13, Brady Street Buildings, Mile End, E.

POPLAR WESLEYAN F.C. (average age, 15; weak) require matches for next season, home and away; also good players wanted, backs and halves.—Please write, enclosing stamped addressed envelope, to W. Hart, 14, Sturry Street, Poplar, E.

CENTRAL UNITED F.C. (average age, 16; medium) have all dates open, home and away. Ground, Southwark Park; L.C.C. permits.—Apply, A. H. Chrisman, 1, Elmira Villa, 141, Lansdowne Road, Tottenham.

CLARENCE F.C. (average age, 16; weak) would like fixtures for the following dates in 1907-8: October 2nd, home; December 28th, away; February 1st, away; and March 28th, home. Only clubs within five miles' radius of Clapham and Balham need apply to C. F. C., Hon. Secretary, 133, Hydethorpe Road, Clapham Park, S.W.

READING OLD BOYS F.C. (age, 16-18) require matches for all dates with good teams within ten miles of Reading.—H. Hart, Secretary, Battle Schools, Kensington Road, Reading.

MARLBORO' F.C. (average age, 15; weak) require matches for next season. All dates open. Ground, Peckham Rye.—Apply by post, A. E. M., Hon. Secretary, 62, Ossory Road, Old Kent Road.

WENLAKE F.C. require fixtures for season 1907-8; also a few good players. Small subscription.—Apply, W. Webb, 24, Old Street, Mile End, London, E.C., on Wednesdays or Thursdays from 8.15 to 9 p.m.

HARRHILLS BRITANNIA A.F.C. (average age, 14) have all dates open for 1907-8, except September 7th and November 2nd. Also good goal and left-half wanted; some must be of same average age and belong to Leeds or district.—Apply by letter to the Secretary, 92, Hilltop Mount, Leeds.

ROSBERY F.C. (average age, 15; medium) want away matches for coming season.—Apply, A. Mallon, jun., Hon. Secretary, 12, Buxton Buildings, St. John Street, Clerkenwell, E.C.

ALBION F.C. (late Fanshaw Athletic) have nearly all dates open for the coming season; also a few good players wanted.—Apply, Leon. O'Dell, 43, East Road, City Road, N.

HUNSLET RAGGED SCHOOL JUNIORS F.C. (average age, 15) are in want of dates for the coming season.—Apply, H. Holmes, Secretary, 77, Bk., Wilmer Grove, Hunslet, Leeds.

ASHINGTON BRIGADE A.F.C. (average age, 18-18) desire fixtures for next season with junior clubs in the Blyth, Bedlington, and Morpeth district. Have dressing-rooms and ground within easy reach of each other.—For particulars, apply to J. A. Gibson, Hon. Secretary, 20, Langwell Crescent, Ashington, Northumberland.

KIRKSTALL TEMPERANCE A.F.C. (average age, 14) require dates for 1907-8 within the district of Leeds.—Apply, Harry Teale, 17, Lennox Street, Kirkstall Road, Leeds.

WOODMAN ATHLETIC F.C. (average age, 16; medium) (1907-8) would like to play against any respectable club within three miles' radius of S.E. district preferred. Would also like to arrange match for December 25th a few miles out.—Write, J. O. Gosling, Secretary, 7, Lee Terrace, Trundley Road, Deptford, S.E.

ALBERT VICTORIA F.C. want matches, home and away, for the coming season; also some good lads to join. Young men are wanted for the adult team. Ground at Hackney.—Apply, W. Robinson, Secretary, 6, Hereford Street, Bethnal Green.

PEMBERTON ROVERS F.C. (average age, 16; weak) want matches and players. Dressing given and required. Small subscription. Gentlemanly lads only.—Write, or apply personally, after 7 p.m. to F. J. Sweeney, 30, Poplin's Court, Fleet Street, E.C.

ST. BARNABAS JUNIORS C.C., Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex (average age, 16) require matches on Wednesdays within ten miles' radius.—Apply, W. A. Stevens, 1, Cornwall Road, Bexhill-on-Sea.

AVONWICK C.C. (average age, 14½; weak) want matches at home and away with clubs within five miles' radius. All dates open.—Apply, S. Cooper, 22, Avonwick Road, Ladywood, Birmingham.

WANTED a few matches for the coming season (average age, 16); also a few members.—For particulars, apply to E. A. Gilbert, 27, Bolina Road, South Bermondsey, S.E.

SAINTS F.C. (average age, 14; very weak) have all dates open, home and away.—Apply, H. Boyce, 72, Hampstead Road, London, N.W.

VICTORIA C.C. require away matches for July 6th and 13th.—Apply, H. Mechlel, Hon. Secretary, Nine Elms, South Lambeth.

WANTED fixtures for 1907-8, home and away; also a few good players (average age, 16). Small entrance fee and subscription. Club also wishes to join a league.—Apply, Secretary, Harcourt United F.C., 3, Montagu Mews, South Bryanston Square, Marylebone, W.

CAMBERWELL C.C. (average age, 14) require away matches (S.E. district preferred). Many dates open.—Apply, S. Leonard, 1, Camberwell Green, Camberwell, S.E.

WANTED, fixtures for 1907-8, for Holbeck Prospect A.F.C.—Apply, L. Butler, Secretary, 23, New Scarboro', Beeston Hill, Leeds.

THE COVERDALE F.C. (average age, 18; weak) wish to announce that they are open to receive challenges from clubs for the coming season (Eastern district preferred). Also have vacancies for a good goalkeeper and left back.—Send stamped addressed envelope for particulars to Hon. Secretary, W. F. Culley, 56, Dixon Street, Limehouse, E.

NORTHDOWN ROVERS F.C. (average age, 15; medium) require, for season 1907-8, matches home and away; all dates open. A good goalkeeper and other players wanted.—Apply, A. Mason, 49, Winton House, King's Cross, N.

ST. BARNABAS F.C. (average age, 15) have all dates open home and away for next season, 1907-8. Only respectable clubs need apply. Three good players required.—Write, stating position, to V. Taylor, Hon. Secretary, "Glenmore," 57, Elsenham Street, Southfields, S.W.

BELMONT JUNIORS' F.C. (average age, 17-18) have all dates open for next season, 1907-8.—Apply, F. Robinson, Secretary, 159, Lavender Road, Battersea.

DOWGATE WORKS JUNIOR F.C. have vacant dates for home and away matches. Five mile radius.—Apply, N. King, Hon. Secretary, 121, Priory Street, Tonbridge.

ELTON F.C. (average age, 14) require a few good players; also all dates open for coming season for clubs in Longight or Rusholme district.—Apply, Jones, 3, Premo Street, C.-on-M., Manchester.

LATIMER ROVERS F.C. (average age, 15; weak) require players, all positions, for coming season; small subscription. Also matches wanted, home and away. Ground near Stepney Green Station; colours, blue and white.—Apply, by letter only, Herbert V. Dixon, 43, Portland Street, Stepney, London. E.

PIMLICO RANGERS F.C. want players for next season; small subscription and entrance fee. Also fixtures required (S.W. district preferred).—Apply, S. Knight, 10, Lillington Road, Pimlico.

WEST HAM CLARENCE F.C. (average age, 16–17) wants lads to help form the above club for the coming season; all positions; small entrance fee; matches wanted home and away.—Apply, H. Horne, Secretary, 23, Amity Road, Portway, West Ham, E.

WATERLOO CLAREMONT ATHLETIC F.C want a ground in Waterloo or Crosby district; would be willing to join a good club on amalgamation terms. As fixtures are already made out, an immediate reply, with all particulars, will receive instant attention. All applications should be addressed to A. M. Davies, jun., 57, Green Lane, Stoneycroft, Liverpool.

WANTED by the Fazakerley Junior F.C. (average age, 15) some smart players, including outside-left, centre forward, and outside-right. The club has already joined the Mersey League.—For further particulars, apply to J. H. Dixon, Lower Lane, Fazakerley.

A FEW LADS WANTED (average age, 17) to join football club for season 1907-8.—Apply, between 6 and 8 p.m., to S. H. Clark, 54, Norfolk Road, Dalston, N.E.

TWO LADS (15 and 16) wish to join a football club for coming season in the neighbourhood of Brixton or Clapham. Can play forward or half-back, and are willing to pay a small subscription.—Write, E. A. B., 3, Irving Grove, Stockwell, Brixton, S.W.

WANTED, any number of boys (ages, 14-19) in or near Birr to help to form a football (Association) team and to play matches. Communications to be addressed to James Carroll, Bridge Street, Birr.

LADS of the age of 13 to 15 wishing to join a junior football team in the neighbourhood of Stepney should communicate with W. T. Kenhope, 15, Repton Street, Stepney, E. Small subscription, and will try for Junior League.

TWO LADS (15 and 16) would like to join respectable football team for season 1907-8. Inside-right and right-half respectively. Within two miles' radius of Shepherd's Bush. League team preferred.—Answer, No. B., 68, Thornfield Road, Shepherd's Bush, London, W.

TOXTETH AND DISTRICT (Junior Football League) (age, 16; limit, 19) (awarded a Boys' Realm Challenge Cup last season) has a few vacancies.—Applicants should apply early to F. C. Harding, 45, Wellington Road, Garston, Liverpool.

WHITE STAR F.C. require two good backs for season 1907-8. Small entrance fee.—Apply, A. Evans, 117, St. John's Road, Hoxton, N.

Any lad residing in the S.W. district, wishing to join a football team for the next season, between age 16–17, should apply by letter to A. Peak, 60, Penwith Road, Wandsworth, S.W. Also matches wanted for the coming season at home and away.

GARFIELD F.C. (average age, 15–18) want good players for season 1907–8.—Apply, F. C. Harcourt, 124, Coningham Road, Shepherd's Bush, London, W.

ROVS (average age, 15–17) wishing to join a first-class football club in Fulham, should apply immediately to A. Wilson, 20, Racton Road, Fulham, S.W. (Club is in a league.)

A FEW PLAYERS WANTED (average age, 15-17) for season 1907-8; all positions; for Victoria Athletic F.C.—Apply, J. Crosley, 65, Hack Road, Tidal Basin, E.

YOUTH (age, 16) would like to join athletic or physical culture society, with moderate subscription.—Please send particulars to Albert Cowley, 55, Phœbe Ann Street, Queen's Road, Liverpool.

LADS wishing to join a respectable South London F.C. (two teams), for season 1907–8, are requested to apply at once to G. H. Beale, 12, Macbean's Buildings, Long Lane, Borough, S.E., who would be glad to sign on good players (state positions). Age, 14½ (probably league), 17, upwards; 2nd team, 15–17. Subscriptions, 2s. 6d. and 1s. 6d. respectively. Apply at once. No officers yet chosen. Ground, Clapham Common, L.C.C.

A YOUTH (age, 17) would like to join a football club for next season. Can play outside-right or centre-forward. Must be in the district of Lower Edmonton or Tottenham. Has been captain with one team for two seasons. Willing to pay subscription.—Send particulars to E. Mayo, "Echo" Offices, Fishguard, Penn., South Wales.



A Magnificent Tale of Colliery Life.

By DAVID GOODWIN.

THE FIRST CHAPTERS IN BRIEF.

Roddy Owen and Tom Hughes, two Welsh colliery lads, are the heirs of a certain Matthew Matthews, who was the rightful owner of the Aberford and Coed Coch Pits. But these collieries are in the hands of a man named Kenyon Price, who, by foul means, defrauded the late owner of them, and Roddy and Tom are determined to wrest them from his grasp.

The only other property left them by the late Matthew Matthews is a place known as Starve-Crow Farm. The boys, having been sacked from Kenyon Price's employ, go and take up residence at the little wooden shelter on this farm. Here they meet a wonderful little Welsh mountain boy named Dafydd Rees, with whom they become firm friends.

Whilst exploring their property they come across an old mine-shaft, and this they descend. They are astonished at the richness of the seam of coal beneath, and realise that with the necessary capital they could easily become rich men. They decide that they will set to work and save sufficient to start mining operations.

Roddy applies for a job at the Coed Coch Colliery. He is taken on, and Tom Hughes with him. The boys are at once set to work at hewers, and cause no little surprise at the large amount of coal tallied to them each day. In the evenings they return to Starve-Crow Farm.

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

Much to the boys' surprise Kenyon Price invites them over to his house to have a little private conversation. He mentions the seam of coal which runs through their land, and proposes that they should start work on it on the condition that he has a half share in the proceeds. The boys refuse contemptuously, and Kenyon Price orders them to leave his house.

The following day, in the pits, Roddy is attacked by the Belgians, and saves his life by dragging over an open shaft. His enemies would have had a bad time at the hands of the pitmen but for the intervention of a friend of Roddy's, named Terry Lloyd.

(How you read this week's instalment.)

Exit Leroy & Co.

"NAY, chuck 'em down shaft!" cried one of the more pitmen, pressing forward as Roddy ran up. "That's the proper place for 'em!"

"Hold on, for goodness' sake!" cried Roddy. "That's what they tried to do to me. You don't want to come down to their level, do you?"

"The best level for 'em is the shaft-bottom, an' there they can sink no lower, whatever!" cried a voice. The fierce clamour of the miners turned to laughter at this, though they were soon the less angry.

"The boy's right; we don't want to swing for such trash as those!" cried Terry. "Hurry up with that tram, ye slow-coaches! Now then, Roddy, which is the wan that wint for yo first?"

"Never mind about that," answered Roddy well, who saw that the Belgians would be lucky if they got off without broken bones. "Clear them out, an' let's get shut of 'em, that's all. They've had enough!"

The foreign gang certainly had. The floor of the road had been thoroughly wiped with them, and finicuffs were a new experience to Belgians. They were used to knifing or kicking or biting, but anything else that came handy when there was strife; but left-handers, straight from the shoulder and quicker than any artificial weapon, they knew nothing of—till now. One was sitting up with a pale face, propping bleeding nose, another lay doubled-up and gasping from a drive right on the "mark," and Leroy was wondering dizzily whether his jaw was broken. From all parts the miners were flocking to the spot, regardless of ordinary rules, and a cheer went along the lines, pushed by four or five pitmen.

"Mates," cried Terry, "hasn't the time come to shunt these frog-eatin' spalpeens out av Aberford?"

"Ay, it has! Out with 'em!" roared a score of voices.

"Didn't they thry to do in the best little hewer we've got, an' the same was only saved by a leap that the divil himself couldn't aqual?"

"They did! Gif them two dozen apiece with a rope's-end first!" cried Jenkins hotly.

"Let's be shut av them, that's the main thing! Come up, ye omadhauns!" cried Terry, jerking Leroy to his feet. "Don't waste your wars for gentlin' off widout broken necks. Into the tram wid 'em, boys!"

Those of the Belgians who tried to resist found it useless. They were picked up and slung into the empty trams like joints of meat, and there was a roar of approval as the pitmen ran up, and, seizing the tram, began to wheel it swiftly down the lines.

"Put young Roddy on the front," cried Terry, "an' little Tom can ride on top! It's their day out, begor! Now then, away wid the lot!"

"Men, men, what are you about? Stop this rioting at once!" cried Mr. Glass, trying to push his way forward. But he was swept away by the rush of miners, and off went the tram at a rattling pace, with the sullen, bewildered Belgians jolting about in the body of it, and Tom and Roddy, now enjoying themselves greatly, perched on the sides.

It seemed as if the whole staff of the Aberford was turning out to join in the procession. From every stall and side-road the pitmen poured, for the news had spread right through the workings. The presence of the Belgians had been a sore point for some time, and now it was known what had happened, the indignation was immense.

All discipline was thrown to the winds. The miners cared nothing for it. Viewers and overmen, even the underground manager, tried angrily to bring the men to their senses, shouting warnings of all sorts of pains and penalties. They might as well have tried to stop the Severn tide. No notice was taken of them, and before and behind the tram was a perfect army.

"Rubbish, shot here!" shouted Tom gleefully, as they approached the main shaft. "Who'll buy a job-lot cheap? Five foreign hewers, slightly damaged, to be sold at a great reduction. Don't all speak at once!"

Leroy raised himself in the tram, and shaking his fist at the pitmen, began to curse freely in Belgian. Somebody hit him on the head with a lump of soft coal, which burst all over him like a shell, amid a chorus of laughter, and Leroy sat down again. The others made no attempt to show themselves, but lay, very scared, at the bottom of the tram.

"Into the cage with it!" shouted Terry, and they slammed the tram right into the partition of the open lift, the boys jumping off. "A select party av pushers to go up wid 'em an' see the rest av 'em. Anybody who'd like to take a final kick at 'em, shtep forward!"

There were so many candidates for this honour that the cage would not have held a twentieth of them. Roddy and Tom, laughing till they could hardly stand, rather doubted whether the cage would be wound up the shaft at all, and whether orders had not been passed to stop it. But there was no difficulty. The cage drew its second storey up level with the road, the boys and as many men as the partition would hold entered it at once, and a rousing cheer echoed along the galleries as the big lift began to mount.

Viewers and everybody else in authority had been swept away by the excited crowd, and there was nobody to interfere. A number of pitmen ran round and went up by the cage of the "down-cast" shaft, further along.

Up went the cage, till its top compartment was level with the colliery road. There was a chorus of surprise from those who were waiting there, and then a shout of laughter as the tram was wheeled out with its load. The cage was then raised to bring the men in the lower compartment up to the level, and out they came.

"Don't get handlin' that cargo!" said Terry Lloyd to the men who were pressing round the tram. "They're our meat! You can come out now, ye omadhauns, if there's one o' ye wid legs to stand on."

The Belgians, blinking in the light of day, raised themselves in the tram and looked sullenly round. Two of them were swearing under their breath, and the others were whining dismally.

"Begor," said Terry, "if any av ye thinks ye've got a grievance, I'll give him satisfaction, an' I can't say fairer than that. I'll stand up to him wid me fists, an' he shall use his knife, too, if he likes; an' if I don't make him swallow it, the divil mend me! Any takers?"

There were not. The Belgians had had enough of Terry's prowess.

"Very well, then, out the lot av ye goes," cried Pat, "but I represent me brother's office, an' I see ye're not havin' any! If ye got your rights 'tis swingin' in a rope ye'd be! Come out o' that!" he added, lifting Leroy from the tram like a baby. "Come to me arrums!"

"Mates," shouted Terry, as all the workers in the yard and the pitmen from the down-cast shaft swarmed round, "we've shtood these Belgian riff-raff long enough! If we'd kept by the union we'd niver ha' allowed them in at all. But when it comes to pullin' knives an' raisin' Cain, we'll have no such thirty foreign thricks in the Coed Coch! So out they go, an' bad ness to 'em!"

"Right!" roared the crowd. "Let's get a hold!"

"What are you doing? What is the meaning of this outrage?" cried Mr. Sully, running out of his office like an excited terrier dog as he recognised the Belgians in the hands of the pitmen. "Are you all mad? Get to your work instantly!"

"Never mind him! Out wi' 'em!" cried Terry.

"Sully's pets!" roared a voice. And the crowd laughed grimly.

"You keep back an' shut your head," cried another, "or we'll chuck you in along with 'em!"

Mr. Sully drew back and effaced himself as quickly as possible. He was a man of power in the colliery, but a crowd of Welsh pitmen when thoroughly roused are not to be trifled with, and it needed a much pluckier man than the head-viewer to face them. They would not have stopped just then for any man in all Wales.

"One, two, three, an' away wid ye!" cried Pat. And gripping Leroy by the collar and the slack of his breeches, he ran him across the yard at a surprising pace, straight towards the gates. The others followed in the same fashion, Tom and Roddy roaring with laughter mean while. The five Belgians were bounced and bounded over the yard, three of them being taken round by their captors and forced to run up mountains of coal and down the other side till, being rushed right out through the gates, they were pitched incontinently into a muddy ditch on the other side of the highway.

"There's good riddance to bad rubbish!" said Terry. "An' if it isn't a cheap get-off after nearly murderin' two o' our smartest bhoys, I'm no judge. The Coed Coch is done wid you, an' if any of us see your ugly faces in Aberford agen after this, then Lord help ye!"

The Belgians crawled out of the ditch and went their way. There was not a curse left in them, nor did any one as much as dare to look back or shake his fist. They were tired, and wanted to go. In another two minutes they were out of sight for good.

As for the pitmen, they returned leisurely to the yard, the boys with them, as if nothing had happened. Terry was the only one dissatisfied. He wished the Belgians had accepted his offer of "satisfaction."

"'Tis an opportunity missed," he said regretfully. "If any one av thim had been a man of his hands, there was the makin's of a jewel of a fight. Well, it's woke up the Aberford a bit, for things was gettin' dull. All the same, 'tis lucky 'twas the end o' the shift," he added. "There goes the whistle."

The first person they encountered, standing just outside his office, was Sully, white with rage.

"Every man who took part in this disgraceful business is dismissed!" he cried, in a voice that trembled with rage. "Do you hear? Dismissed!"

"Faith, then, ye'll have to sack the entoire shift," said Pat Lloyd coolly, "for there's not a man above or below ground that's not in it, and quite right, too!"

"The whole colliery at a standstill while the man riot!" shouted Sully, choking. "I'll make an example of the ringleaders, mark you that! They shall not only be sacked, but prosecuted!"

"What on earth is the matter here?" said a commanding voice. And Mr. Kenyon Price himself, just alighted from his motor-car at the side-entrance, came striding up to the office. "What is this urgent message that has called me out? Whom are you going to prosecute, Mr. Sully?"

"The worst rabble among the pitmen have started a general riot, sir," exclaimed Sully, "and disorganised everything! All work has stood still while they took command, and they have thrown out five of my best hewers by force! The Belgians!"

A shadow seemed to pass over the colliery owner's face, but he remained cool.

"If there has been any rioting, those who started it shall be dealt with as they deserve!" he said sternly.

He looked round, and caught Roddy's eye.

"See here, sorr," said Terry, stepping forward, "it's best ye should know the truth of it, for those five Belgians should niver ha' been in the Aberford at all. 'Tis against all rules. They've tried to murther young Roddy Owen this mornin', an' we chucked 'em out for that."

"Tried to what?" exclaimed Mr. Price; and Roddy winked grimly at Tom.

Terry refated in a few words how the foreign hewers had chased Roddy over the open shaft. Not a muscle of the colliery-owner's face moved as he listened.

"I put it to ye in raison, sorr," said Terry, "if it was any one but Roddy ain't right an' just. If your viewer sacks us for pitchin' the spalpeens out after they tried to murder some of us, sure, the union will be bound to call out every man-jack that works in the Coed Coch. We none av us want that; an' I'm sure, sorr," he added, with a touch of native blarney, "a foine, intelligent gintleman like yesilf wouldn't wish to interfere wid trade, an' cause a devastatin' strike, for the sake o' backin' up a handful o' dirty, knife foreigners!"

"You've a sensible tongue in your head for a hewer," said Mr. Kenyon Price. "This outrage by the foreigners is a serious thing. It is a mercy the boy was not hurt, though I can scarcely believe they would have done him any serious harm."

"Great Scott!" muttered Tom under his breath. "Of all the nerve!"

"Probably he grew frightened. But why were these Belgians taken into my pit, Mr. Sully?"

"We were—er—short of hands, sir," said the unfortunate Sully, "and they were good hewers."

"I have every confidence in your judgment, Mr. Sully, but do not let it occur again. In my pits," said Mr. Kenyon Price, throwing out his chest, "only my own countrymen shall be employed. I would rather my colliery stood idle than that it should be the British workman, the country's pride. My man," he added, turning to Terry, "rioting is a serious thing; but I am not sorry you took the law into your own hands for once. Besides, it saved a police-court case and a scandal to the colliery, which we do not want."

"Should think not!" chuckled Roddy aside.

"The Belgians were very properly—er—ejected by you; but there must be no more disturbances."

"Begor, there sha'n't be any!" said Terry. "I'll answer for ut. An' good luck to ye, sorr, for settlin' the matter so fair! 'Tis the ilegant judge ye'd make, intoirely!"

"There, there, my good man," said Mr. Kenyon Price, with a smile and a wave of his hand. "that will do. The shift is over, I see. Let the hands disperse quietly about their business."

And after one more careless glance in Roddy's direction, the colliery-owner stepped into his office, followed by Sully.

The Right of Way.

"TERRY," said Tom, "you've got a tongue on you that'd draw wild birds off the blessed trees. Who gave you the cheek to stand up to the almighty boss like that, an' talk him round?"

"Sure, I've seen you talk to him as free yourself," said Terry, "an' there was a lot at stake. 'Twasn't fair the bhoys sha'd be sacked for doin' the right thing."

"If it comes to cheek, I don't know whether you, or Terry, or Kenyon Price take the bun," said Roddy thoughtfully; "but I think I'd give the boss first place. He'd outface a brass statue; an' I wouldn't take Sully's job for all the money the colliery makes."

"How's that? Why d'ye say the boss has got cheek?" asked Terry, surprised.

"Never mind; it wouldn't do to explain. But I want to thank you, Terry, for bein' a real, thorough-goin' brick, an' all the other chaps, too. You stopped what might ha' been a precious ugly wind-up, when the Belgians were cornered down by the shaft. The men's blood was up, an' there's no sayin' what they'd have done. But the way you an' the others polished 'em out was rare. It was just the thing that was needed."

"I felt like chuckin' 'em down the shaft meself!" admitted Terry. "Gosh! It gave me the cold shivers to see you jump that place, fence an' all. I made sure you were gone."

"I didn't see it," said Tom. "It must have been a terror."

"Don't quite know how I did it myself," owned Roddy. "However, I got across, so that's all right. Well, we've got rid of the blessed aliens now, that's one comfort. What, goin', Terry? Give us a grip of your fin first. I owe you a lot. Come on, Tom, an' let's slip out of it before we have to answer a few thousand questions. Here's the hands comin' up the shafts like one o'clock!"

The two young hewers made the best of their way out of the yard. They knew nothing would be talked of for days at the Aberford except the shooting of the Belgians and Roddy's leap for life; and Roddy especially did not want to have to tell the tale a hundred times over to anxious inquirers who had not seen him do it. They both set out for Bryn y Garth without delay.

"Quite an excitin' little day it's been," remarked Tom; "an' now I don't mind ownin' up you were right about those five beauties."

"You can see for yourself that Sully set 'em on," said Roddy. "I'll bet a tanner a put-up job as anybody could guess at. He got 'em properly mixed up with us, gave 'em their chance, an' they were only too glad to use it. That big sweep Leroy stuck that can right in the way for me to trip over. Neat, wasn't it?"

"Wasn't it you who said we'd only need to keep clear of 'em," grinned Tom, "and not take part in any row, whatever happened?"

"So I said Roddy, flushing. "that's a fact. But what Leroy did would've made a cater-pillar get up an' kick. No fellow could have stood it. All the same, I feel it's my fault the thing happened at all, an' I ought to have avoided it."

"Don't you lose any sleep over it. When a crew like that means to pick a quarrel, it's a dead-sure thing they'll do it—if not one way, then in another. I wonder if Sully had that old shaft opened so as to bar the way?"

"Shouldn't wonder. If it was arranged it pretty neatly, an' shifting the Belgians in next to me as well. Don't you be too sure that we're much smarter than Sully. He's got a big head on him, though he don't have much luck."

"Well, I hope he won't have either, or it'll be a poor look-out for us. We've pipped him so far, though. I tell you what, this Aliens Act business makes a cheap precious hungry. Let's hurry up, an' see what Dafydd's got for us."

Rodwell was rather thoughtful on the way home, and on arriving they found Dafydd deep in the concoction of a hot-pot that smelt particularly savoury.

"Hallo!" he said cheerfully he caught sight of the pair. "You had had a hot time of it in ter pits to-day. A fery close shave—eh?"

"Who's told you about it?" said Tom.

"I was not need telling. I know from ter look of you. Is it not so?"

"Rather," said Roddy. "The temperature's been uncommon high, an' the weather stormy, though improvin' later."

And as they discussed the meal he told Dafydd about the day's doings in the Aberford. The young mountaineer sat back, and looked graver than usual.

"You see how I wass warn you?" he said. "You cannot go on taking these risks. Did you nefer hear of ter pitcher that went too often to ter well? How much longer do you expect to be, now?"

"Let's see," said Roddy, calculating, "there was £19 we had before, and £20 more less exes. That's £39. Then we shall have £4 or more to draw to-morrow, which is Saturday. I should say another fortnight in the Aberford ought to see us through easily."

"I shall pe fery glad when it iss over," said Dafydd moodily.

"Well, I reckon we sha'n't shed any tears ourselves," owned Rodwell. "But buck up! Are we downhearted? Hasn't Sully been made an ass of each time? It ain't such an easy game to play to out two youngsters in your own colliery without gettin' into trouble over it. He's smart, but he'll have to be smarter before he pulls it off."

"He will think less apout getting into trouble as ter time draws near," opined Dafydd darkly. "This Kenyon Price will put ter screw on him, and make him buck up. Yess, indeet. You look out!"

"We're doin' that all the time," replied Tom cheerfully. "I think there'll be peace, perfect peace, for a while now. The men are gettin' restive."

Next day proved he was right in both conjectures. The turning-out of the Belgians left the colliery in a much more peaceable state, and Sully, too, was hardly to the fore at all; but, on the other hand, the pitmen were less easy-going than formerly. They had settled down after their outbreak, but they cared less for discipline, and had a sort of air of doing as they chose.

For two days and over the week-end all went well, and the boys congratulated themselves. All they saw of Sully was an occasional glimpse of his dark eye fixed on them when they passed his office window, and that they troubled very little about. It was on the following Wednesday that Terry Lloyd rather surprised them by saying some defiant things about the management.

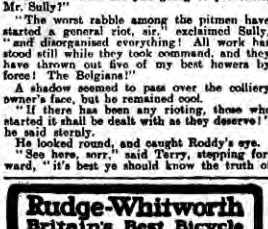
"The men seem to be gettin' up on their ear," said Roddy.

"Sure, yes," replied Terry; "the boss himself was flown yesterday in the yard, an' made us a speech."

"Did he, though? We knew nothin' about it."

(Continued on the next page.)

Rudge-Whitworth
Britain's Best Bicycle



Happy in all Weathers are riders of Rudge-Whitworths with their 10 years Guarantee of all the **81 models from £5,** packed free and carriage paid and no extra for Easy Payments.

64 page Art Catalogue sent post free. Write to RUDGE-WHITWORTH, Ld. Dept. 300 COVENTRY.



RUBBER STAMP OF YOUR NAME and ADDRESS post free. In FOUR lines. READY FOR USE. SELF-INKING. ERNEST WOOD & CO. ORMSKIRK-GUM-HARDY, MANCHESTER.

SEND 1/- DEPOSIT



This Handsome Free Wheel Bicycle will be sent to any address on receipt of **1/- DEPOSIT** and upon payment of the last of 24 weekly instalments of 2s., making **£2 8s.** in all. A plated gas-lamp free. Cash price, £2 10s. 6d. Ladies' or Gts. Models. Name this paper. F. B. THOMPSONS & Co. (Great Cycle Depot), Ilkeston.

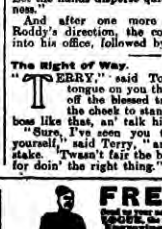
FREE TO ALL CYCLISTS.

Send your name and address and you will receive by return, Free, Post paid, an **"BIG ART CATALOGUE,** the finest ever published, which is of interest to every cyclist. It contains large handsome plates, beautifully executed in colours, showing every detail of the manufacture of a high-grade Bicycle, with all the latest improvements, the different styles of frame, the difference between inch-size work and cheap construction.

WITH THE FREE ART CATALOGUE you will receive the most liberal and marvellous offer ever made by any cycle manufacturer. Whether you can pay cash down or require Coventry Flyer, Guaranteed 3 Years, on small deposit and easy payments, which will be sent you free, post paid. Whether you are a cyclist or not, it will interest you. You cannot afford to be without it. Send a postcard to-day or order, explaining how we are able to send you a high grade Coventry Flyer, Guaranteed 3 Years, on small deposit and easy payments, which will be sent you free, post paid. Whether you are a cyclist or not, it will interest you. You cannot afford to be without it. Send a postcard to-day for part, payment free on carriage paid direct from the factory for your inspection and approval at less than Shop Prices. Delivered Free. We are able to offer you the cycle ten days and give it every trial and test you wish before your purchase becomes binding. If you like the cycle you can pay the small deposit and the balance by easy monthly payments to suit your convenience, which will be sent you free, post paid. Whether you are a cyclist or not, it will interest you. You cannot afford to be without it. Send a postcard to-day for

TRADE TERMS to a few riders in each district who apply immediately. Large profits readily made in spare time. Write or call to-day. Open evenings till 8.

MEAD CYCLE CO. Dept. 6 K Birmingham: 15, Bull Street. Liverpool: 81, Lancaster Chambers. London: 15, Charing Cross Rd. Dublin: 127, Gt. Brunswick St. Manchester: 161, Deansgate. Newcastle: 31, New Bridge St.



WORK FOR ALL.



We give a Nickel-Silver Thumbscrew or useful Umbrella, suitable for Ladies or Gents, or a Ballet Gold Ring, **FREE** to any person selling 48 Fancy Pictorial Postcards within 21 days. You can sell them at 1d. each. Send name and address—postcard will do.

BRITISH FINE ART Co.
(Dept. 85), 113, Strand, London, W.C.

ROYAL AJAX
WITH CLINCHER TYRES.



EASIEST MONTHLY PAYMENTS. Carriage Paid. Speedhead from **£2 10s** upwards. Write to-day for your magnificent **ART CATALOGUE** Post Free.

Easy and Cheapest Firm. THE BRITISH CYCLE MFG. CO. (1913), Ltd. (Dept. C.E.), 1 and 3, Berry Street, Liverpool.

STAMP COLLECTORS.

If you want a splendid packet of 20 different British Colonials FREE, including an obsolete GOLD COAST, ORANGE RIVER COLONY, and many others too numerous to mention, send a stamp for postage AT ONCE to "B B" STAMP CO., BARNET, and ask for approval sheets, and the free packet will be sent to you.

5 Motor-cycles 23 10s. GIGANTIC FACTORY SALE. Offered. 5000 new "Clincher Tyred" F.N. Cycles for £3 10s. by instalments; or, cash with order, £3 10s. Worth double. Free on rails Norwich; approval. Send no money. Send Post Card for full particulars.—Dereham and Cycle Co., Norwich.

FREE GIFT COUPON
Value 1d.
Send this Coupon and 1d. stamp for Sample Packet of Cocoa and Chocolate Cream Tablets.
Name
Address
Boys' Friend, 1/7/16.
Send to Dept. 6, Cadbury's, Bournville.

PRICE ONLY

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO TAKE GOOD PHOTOGRAPHS.
"THE RELIANCE"
CAMERA AND COMPLETE OUTFIT.
The Editor offers this very special bargain, comprising Camera and Developing Outfit complete, to all his readers at the remarkably low price as below.

CAMERA.

A positively Beautiful Instrument, Constructed on the Latest Ideas, neatly Covered with Black Leatherette Cloth, will carry Six Plates (3½in. by 2½in.) in Metal Sheaths, View Lens with Three Stops, Time and Instantaneous Shutter, Automatic Changing, Two View Finders, and Leather Carrying Handle.



OUTFIT.

Six Dry Plates, Packet of Printing Paper, Six Mounts, Ruby Dark Room Lamp, Packet of Developer, Packet of Fixing Salts. Two Celluloid Developing Dishes, Glass Measure, Printing Frame, Draining Rack, Glass Stirring Rod, 1 Bottle Concentrated Toning and Fixing Solution, and Book of Instructions.

WORTH MORE THAN DOUBLE.

HOW TO GET THERE.—Send a Postal Order for 8/6, addressed to The Novelty Dept., 12 and 13, Broadway, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C., with your name and address clearly written. Orders are executed in rotation, so do not delay, but make sure of this exceptional bargain by sending at once.

7/6 *Postage 6d. extra*

DRY PLATES IN PACKETS OF EIGHTEEN, PRICE 1s. 3d. POST FREE.
NOTE.—The above can be supplied separately at the following prices: Camera, 6/6, postage extra; and the Developing Outfit, 2/-, postage extra.
Foreign and Colonial Orders Postage Extra.

Every Up-to-Date Stationer and Newsagent Keeps
WRENCH PICTURE POSTCARDS.

IMPORTANT!!! Next Saturday Our Superb Summer Double Number Appears! Order It Now!

WITH PICK & LAMP.

(Continued from the previous page.)

"It was just afther you'd gone. He said that there was too much insubordination in the yard, an' that we mustn't think we could do as we liked. He'd overlooked a big disturbance last week, an' there mustn't be any more av it, or he'd have to take steps. Begor," said Terry indignantly, "he'd betther thry it." He daren't say too much. He knows our power, an' the power o' the union. He's got a lot av fat contracts comin' on, an' he daren't risk a strike."

"Rot!" said Roddy. "Don't have any rows; that's a silly business. What good does a strike do you, or anybody, over nothin' as all? All of us are drawin' good pay, an' there's no sense in it. Besides, you'll find K. P. a lot tougher than you think for if it comes to trouble."

"Begor, I shouldn't wonder!" said Terry, scratching his head.

"You've been talkin' to Jenkins too much, Terry old chap," said Tom. "He's been firin' your hot Celtic blood. By all moans take Belgians by the scruff of their breeches an' heave 'em outside; but don't let's get our pay stopped just for fun."

"Ay," said Terry, "an' we've easy stalls to work from to-day, our lot; up by the old gallery, where the seam's good an' thick."

"I thought there'd be a shift again," said Tom; "they can't keep us to any place long, it seems. Well, it's a change for the better, as you say. Let's to it!"

They went down the shaft, and had a long way to go to reach their destination, passing close by the entrance to the old gallery on their way. As those who have followed this history will remember, this place was an abandoned working, full of cracks and fissures, and lay at the far end of the seam.

"Remember the spirit of the mine?" said Tom, grinning, as they passed it.

"Yes," replied Roddy, recalling his conversation, several weeks back, with the unknown voice. "But the spirit's got past that now. He talks to us in his own luxurious dinin'-room at Plas Rhyll, when he's got anything to say."

"Do you think that was it?"

"I shouldn't bet on it; but I don't see who else it could be."

For the first day they worked in the new stalls, and found the coal very easy to get, though they did not make much more by it, as lower rates were paid for the easier seam, and results thus worked out about the same. It was on the Thursday that Tom, when half-way through the shift, had to send his pick to be sharpened, and the putter, as usual, being gone a long time with it, Tom walked down the workings to meet him.

Just as he was passing the old gallery he heard, unmistakably, the sound of a low whistle, twice repeated, coming out of the darkness beyond the entrance.

At first Tom was surprised at hearing any sound come from such a place; then he grew suspicious, but an idea came to him that made him smile.

"Can that come down the fissure that talked to Roddy last time?" he thought. "It's rum if it carries so far. Blowed if I don't go and see!"

He took the precaution of fetching a stout pick-shaft from the nearest stall, and, holding his lamp well above his head, entered the old gallery. He heard the whistle again, somewhere in the darkness, and, following the sound, traced it to a narrow crumpy opening upwards in the coal, about the level of his head. No sooner had he reached it than the whistle came down with quite a piercing trill.

"Don't blow your front teeth out," said Tom tentatively. "If it's anybody hidin' up to play a joke on me, let him come out an' have a taste o' my pick-shaft free gratis."

"Your pick-shaft wouldn't pass through me harmlessly, even if I stood before you," said a hollow voice, echoing and whispering down the fissure.

Tom grinned hugely at this.

"I s'pose you're the Spirit of the Mine?" he said, remembering what Roddy had told him.

"I am," said the voice, after a pause. "But you are not Rodwell Owen?"

"No; I'm his pal, Tom Hughes. You aren't much of a spirit if you can't tell that!"

"I have no eyes—only ears and a voice," said the hollow tones. "But bid Rodwell Owen come here, and he will hear much to his advantage. Not now, but at this time to-morrow. Let him not fail, for he will miss a great opportunity if he does not come."

"If you're goin' to make him another offer of partnership in Bryn y Garth, old cock, you'd much better save yourself the trouble," said Tom. "It's only waste of time."

"I will not; but I do not know of what you speak. What I have to say will be something very different."

"You're a pretty spry spirit, if you can tell it will be different when you don't know what I meant," said Tom.

"I should think you must be overproof. All right, I'll tell Roddy the message, an' he can do as he likes."

"Do so," said the voice, "or you may regret it."

"Shall I give him your love?"

There was no answer, and Tom, after examining the place thoroughly, returned, chuckling, to the stall. As soon as work was over and the chums joined each other, he told his partner what had passed.



The five Belgians were bounced and bounced over the yard, and forced to run up mountains of coal and down the other side. Tom and Roddy roared with laughter meanwhile.

"Ah," said Roddy, with interest, "did he, though? What was the place like?"

Tom described it.

"Yes; that's the spot. Same one. Very good; I'll go! Wouldn't miss it for a lot!"

"What d'you think he'll say?"

"Say? Oh, goodness knows! That don't matter a pin! But I'd like to put a pinch of salt on the spirit's tail, an' make him show himself. It'd be useful to us, I think."

"How the dickens can you? Where d'you suppose the blessed spirit is perched when he's talkin'?"

"That's what we must find out if we can, an' I don't see why it shouldn't be done. I've thought a good deal about that since last time, an' I've got an inkling. If you don't mind two hours less of sleep, we'll have a hunt round to-night," he added, as soon as they were out of the shaft and clear of the yard, "an' see if we can't spot it."

"What, down in the pit?"

"No, no! The chap who talks for the spirit is somewhere above ground, an' his voice travels down. We'll nose round on the quiet, an' have a good look for the place. It oughtn't to be very hard to find."

"But do you mean to say anybody up here on the surface could be heard all those hundreds of feet down in the bowels of the Aberford?"

"Yes, certainly. The fissure must run right through to the open air, an' it makes a natural speakin'-tube, don't you see? Such things ain't at all rare, though this is a pretty long one. There's no sayin' how the crack winds about before it opens in the old gallery; but a voice comes down it all right. Whoever does the talkin' must be above ground, because the voice comes from aloft, an' there ain't any higher seams worked above the old gallery."

"All right. You know more about such things than me," said Tom. "But who do you reckon the giddy spirit is? Any idea? By gum, can it be K. P. himself?"

"I should say not; but that's what I want to find out. Whoever it is, we shall have a big pull over him if we show him up."

"Right-ho! We'll do our very best to spot his nesting-place to-night," said Tom, with gusto. "We'll spirit the beggar, if we catch him! Shall we take Dafydd? He's a bit of a spirit himself, an' ought to know their habits."

They found, rather to their surprise, that Dafydd was absent from Bryn y Garth when they reached it. He had left a plentiful cold meal behind, ready for them, but he did not turn up to share it.

It was not the first time he had been about all night, however, and Tom took his turn to sleep under the awning by the shaft, with Gripe, a precaution they never neglected now.

When Roddy woke Tom, shortly after midnight, the moon was nearly due to rise, and the sky was clear. Gripe was left to do the rest of the guarding till daybreak, and the two chums set off along the road.

"Dafydd hasn't come back," said Roddy.

"Wonder what the chap's up to?"

"No accountin for him; he's a regular night-hawk," returned Tom. "I believe he can see in the dark, for that matter. Wish we could," he added, as he nearly fell into a dry water-course.

"There'll be light enough for what we want soon," said Roddy. "Mustn't stumble about like that when we get to the place."

"You don't expect to search the colliery-yard, do you?"

"Oh, no! It'll be a long way outside the yard itself. The workings run underground for nearly half a mile each way, as you know. Of course, I may be wrong, but we must have a try."

"It's like enough the whole tract of land is watched at night," said Tom. "We shall have to mind our eye. It'd be the dickens of a business if we got caught!"

"That's why you've got to quit stumbling," said Roddy.

Roddy led the way beyond the great yards and the sets of tram-lines, to the waste land that covered the colliery's surface beyond.

"Start from here," said Roddy, when they reached a spot near the end of the Coed Coch limits; "search every foot of ground that seems likely, for any sort of an opening."

They separated, and each searched by himself. They were a long time about it, with no result. It seemed to Tom they had very little chance of success, considering how little light there was, searching for an unknown fissure which might be hidden in a score of ways.

Presently, however, groping and peering about one of the old out-crops, he came across a small hollow, half screened by bushes, and at the bottom of it there was certainly a cranny of some kind, from which came a perceptible draught of air. Tom got a stick and poked down it. But he could find no bottom. The fissure curved gently downwards.

Tom waited till Roddy came his way, and then beckoned to him softly.

"What d'you think o' this one?" said Tom. His chum made a careful examination.

"Well done!" murmured Roddy. "You've beaten me, Tom. That's it, for a hundred! It's exactly about the right place, too. We must be nearly over the old gallery. We'd better——"

"Hist!" whispered Tom, catching him by the arm and pointing across the waste. "There's somebody stalkin' us! They're comin' this way!"

Both the boys crouched low in the hollow, as a dark form moved silently towards their hiding-place.

(Another long instalment of this enthralling yarn will appear in next week's Double Number of THE BOYS' REALM.)

THE LEAGUE OF YOUNG ATHLETES.



Running Medal.

A Great New Organisation affiliated to "The Boys' Realm," banding together Junior Athletes who have shown Marked Ability in given Sports by performing certain Feats set by the President.



Swimming Medal.

SECTION 1.—SWIMMING.

To any reader up to the age of 16 who can swim 100 yards will be awarded a handsome Diploma stating this fact and making him a member of the League of Young Athletes. In addition, a BOYS' REALM Third Class Standard Medal will be awarded to any reader who can perform one of the following tests up to and including 100 yards, a Second Class Medal for 200 yards, and a First Class Medal for 440 yards, in accordance with the conditions stated at foot.

Age 12-15. APPLICANTS MUST SWIM—		Age 16-18. APPLICANTS MUST SWIM—	
40 yards in	35 secs.	40 yards in	30 secs.
100 " "	1 m. 55 secs.	100 " "	1 m. 30 secs.
220 " "	4 m. 0 secs.	220 " "	3 m. 40 secs.
440 " "	8 m. 30 secs.	440 " "	8 m. 0 secs.

SECTION 2.—RUNNING.

Age 12-15. APPLICANTS MUST RUN—		Age 16-18. APPLICANTS MUST RUN—	
100 yards in	14 secs.	100 yards in	12 secs.
300 " "	45 secs.	300 " "	38 secs.
440 " "	60 secs.	440 " "	57 secs.
880 " "	2 m. 35 secs.	880 " "	2 m. 15 secs.
One mile "	5 m. 30 secs.	One mile "	5 m. 10 secs.

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

THE LEAGUE OF YOUNG ATHLETES.

I (Name).....

(Address).....

desire to become a member of this Institution. Enclosed I send particulars of my performance.

To obtain a BOYS' REALM Standard Medal, in addition to the handsome Diploma awarded gratis, applicants should send Six of the above Forms cut from one issue of this paper. The necessary copies may be bought or obtained from friends.

Printed and published weekly by the Proprietors, the AMALGAMATED PRESS, LTD., of 1, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, England. Subscription, 7s. per annum. Saturday, June 29th, 1907.
Communications for the Editor should be addressed—"The Editor, THE BOYS' REALM, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C."