FIRST SPECIAL FOOTBALL NUMBER

THE BOYS' REALM

of Sport & Adventure

1d

A LAD OF THE LEAGUE!

Powerful New Football Story Starts To-day!

By ARTHUR S. HARDY.

AN ANXIOUS MOMENT!

No. 275. Vol. VI.] EVERY SATURDAY—ONE PENNY. [SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1907.

SILVER CUPS AND MEDALS FOR FOOTBALLERS!

Opening Chapters To-day!

A LAD OF THE LEAGUE!

Opening Chapters To-day!

A Powerful New Football Story of Absorbing Interest. By ARTHUR S. HARDY.

THE 1st CHAPTER.
At Renton College—Half-Time—To Play for the School.

"GOAL!"

There was no doubt about it. After playing for thirty-five minutes, the Reds' centre-forward had caught the Blues' backs napping, and with a swift low drive into the far corner of the net he had put the Reds one goal ahead.

The autumn leaves were falling fast, but the turf of the Renton College football-ground was as green as in early spring, and like velvet-pile under foot.

Besides the players who were participating in the freshmens' match—Reds versus Blues—there were not a dozen people on the ground, and these were schoolboys who thought they might have a chance of distinguishing themselves in some later game, and who wished to see what the form was like.

Huish, in goal for the Reds, rubbed his hands together gleefully.

"Northcote," he said, addressing himself to a handsome, curly-headed youth who stood near, and who was playing right full-back, "there's the making of a fine side in the school this year. I've never seen so many freshmen play so well at one time. Your form has been remarkable. I'm not at all sure that you're not the best back on the field, and the others three played for the school last year. What you've got to do now is to keep your eye on William Jepson, the Blues' centre-forward. He's a regular terror, and fond of charging. He carries a lot of weight, and you'll not stop him easily unless you're alive. Averdale don't count. He captains the Blues, it's true; but they've only honoured him because of his title. There's many a better player than he on their side."

Guy Northcote nodded.

"I've marked Jepson already, thank you, Huish," he said. "He certainly is very dangerous. But I mean to stop him if I can."

There was no time to say any more, for the ball had been placed in position in the centre of the field again, and on the referee blowing his whistle, it was set in motion, and the Blues' forwards came charging along at a rare pace, slipping the ball past the Reds' halves by judicious and well-judged passing.

Before Guy Northcote quite realised what had happened, he found himself faced by Jepson and the Blues with their inside right, the latter having the ball. It was two against one, and Guy thought he stood a poor chance of coming out on top this time. However, he remained as cool as a cucumber, setting his wits to work to try and anticipate the movement of the other side.

One quick glance told the back that Goalkeeper Huish was on the alert. Then he saw the Blues' inside man urge at him with a rush, juggling with the ball. He waited for the inevitable pass to Jepson, who was well placed in front of goal. He made a sign to his fellow back to move up field a little so that Jepson might be put off side; but Jepson, not to be caught, dropped back a yard in order that he might be behind his comrade playing the ball.

Then the Blues' inside man passed back to his waiting half, the ball as quick as lightning transferred to Jepson, and the next moment Guy and the centre-forward met together in a charge.

No one had ever been known to bustle Jepson aside on the Renton playing-field, and the big man stood, longing for the fray, waiting.

To his amazement, however, he was caught cleanly shoulder to shoulder, and down he went, the thud of Northcote's boot meeting the ball resounding in his ears as he fell, telling him that the back had cleared.

He picked himself up, feeling sheepish, and cast a critical side glance at the cool-headed Reds' back. He noticed for the first time that Guy was a finely-built fellow, with the neck and shoulders of an athlete, and a depth of chest and a roundness of limb that spoke of great physical strength.

He made a mental note.

"He's good enough," he murmured.

By this time, encouraged by their success, the Reds' forwards were swarming round the Blues' goal again, and boof! into the net the ball went once more, the goalkeeper sprawling full length just a moment too late to save.

Jepson didn't quite like it. As captain of the school eleven, he had picked, as he thought, the stronger side for the Blues. How came it, then, that they were being worn down? Lord Averdale, of course, was obviously a weak spot. He handicapped the forwards instead of assisting them, for he was none too strong; but that did not account for their being beaten.

Jepson had not far to look for the reason. The new man, Guy Northcote, at back for the Reds, was not only keeping the Blues' forwards out, but feeding his own so well that they always had the ball. He was doing a half-back's work as well as his own.

Jepson's face was serious as he prepared to kick the ball off again. Lord Averdale was operating at inside left for the Blues.

"That brute of a back charged you unfairly," said his lordship. "I'd have my revenge for that, Jepson, if I were you."

"It was a fair shoulder charge, Averdale," returned Jepson, smiling. There was nothing wrong in it. I underrated my man, that was all."

There was no time to say any more, for the whistle went, and they were soon in the whirl of the game again.

After a minute or so passed in some give-and-take play, the ball being often in touch, the Blues' forwards broke through, and with Jepson passing cleverly to Averdale, the titled player had a fine chance of netting. Deliberately he set himself to take the kick. He thought no one was near him; but just as he sent the leather flying towards Huish—who, by the way, did not look like being beaten—a form flashed up out of nowhere, as it seemed—a form wearing a red shirt—and the ball was broasted to fall at Guy Northcote's feet, and he punted down the field again, where, with a lunging kick, a Red half sent it into touch just as the half-time whistle blew.

The schoolboys were not all fit, and many of them at once threw themselves down upon the ground, glad of the respite, for the sun that blazed steadily down upon them had rendered playing something like a hardship after the first twenty minutes of the game.

"Jepson," said Lord Averdale, as he sat himself down by Jepson's side, "a thought has just struck me. Have you noticed anything remarkable about this new chap Guy Northcote?"

"No," returned Jepson, smiling. "He seemed to me to be a splendid chap, that's all."

"Well, I'll tell you something," said Lord Averdale. "Among all the splendid portraits that hang in the long gallery at Skelton Castle—you remember seeing them when you spent the last autumn vacation with me—is one of an ancestor of mine—Philip Fairclough, who fought against the Scottish rebels at Culloden; you may remember it—the portrait in Tartan, with the red hair and the piercing blue eyes. Well, this Guy Northcote is exactly like him. Indeed, with an effort of the imagination, you can put him in Highland dress, one might think he had sat for the portrait."

Jepson rolled himself over lazily until leaning on his elbows as he stretched himself full length on the grass he was able to gaze up at his companion.

"You don't say, Averdale!" he ejaculated.

"Now, look here," the aristocrat went on, "my Aunt Mary, who is dead, poor thing, the earl's youngest sister, married a Northcote."

"Indeed!"

"Fact! Now, supposing this Guy Northcote happened to be her son? He'd be my cousin. And as my other paternal Aunt Lucy died a spinster, if he is my Aunt Mary's son, he is heir presumptive to the title. I shall become Earl of Sefton when my father dies, and if I remain unmarried, and have no children, and something happens to me, this Guy Northcote must come into the title. Just imagine him coming in for the Fairclough estates and the wreck of the fortune that is left!"

He glanced with a troubled expression on his handsome but somewhat weak face in the direction of the goal, where Guy stood talking to the Reds' goalkeeper, Huish. After a while he got up and strolled carelessly over to Guy's side. His thoughts were troubling him. He was not at all pleased at having a poverty-stricken cousin at Renton.

"We've met not once before," he said, eyeing Guy rather insolently. "It has occurred to me you might be a cousin of mine. Is that so?"

Guy regarded Lord Averdale in amazement.

"I was not aware of it," he answered, walking a pace or two with his lordship.

"What was your mother's name, and where did your father come from?"

The boy coloured. The aristocrat's rudeness was difficult to bear.

"I do not know that I need answer your questions," he said stiffly. "My father died in Africa when I was about three years old. He had been wounded whilst hunting big game, and the fever finished him. I do not know all the truth about it. He was a Hertfordshire man, and was born at Steadford Manor, near Hatfield. My mother's name was Mary. I had always been led to believe that she came from a titled family, but have been kept much in the dark about my affairs all my life."

Lord Averdale looked Guy up and down with a sneer curving his lips. He could have put Northcote right had he wished. He could no longer doubt that they were actual cousins. He had often heard his father speak of his dead Aunt Mary's marriage. Her husband, Percy Northcote, was the only son of a Hertfordshire gentleman who had ruined himself through reckless speculation. The Northcotes had lived at Steadford Manor. Percy Northcote had been killed whilst hunting in South Africa, whither he had gone to try and amass a fortune, leaving his wife behind him. The shock of his death had killed her. Up till now Lord Averdale had not known that she left a son. He felt equally sure his father did not know, or, if the earl did know, he had not cared a straw. He had ceased to take the slightest interest in his sister when she had disgraced the family—as he called it—by marrying the impecunious but handsome Percy Northcote. And after all these years he was to meet an unknown and despised cousin on the Renton football-field. Lord Averdale felt angry.

As he glanced at his handsome cousin, he was forced to admit that, in physique, in feature, manly bearing, and appearance generally, he was decidedly his cousin Guy's inferior.

"I don't believe a word of it," he said, shortly and rudely, turning away. "It's all a lot of bolstered-up lies. You'd better not claim a relationship with me at Renton, Northcote, or you and I shall quarrel."

Guy stood staring after him in speechless amazement. What did it all mean? he wondered. His life up till then had been hidden in mystery. There was an uncle, who called himself Uncle Benjamin, and a solicitor, James Redmayne, who together acted as his guardians, who had paid for his schooling, and who kept him when the vacations arrived. He lived, then, in chambers in Gray's Inn. But neither of them had ever suggested that he was related to Lord Averdale and the Earl of Sefton. All he had been told was that he had expectations, and that one day he might occupy a high social position.

"I must see Uncle Garside and Redmayne at once," he murmured, "and find out the truth about this. I intend to be kept in the dark no longer. I am old enough to know the truth about myself. I wonder what it all means?"

But he had no time for self-questioning, for the referee had whistled the teams up, and upon the men crossing over and taking up their new positions, the game recommenced, both sides playing with the keenest zest, well refreshed by the interval.

Lord Averdale was in an ill humour. Every time he came near Guy Northcote, he set himself deliberately to encounter him, dribbling the ball near, and trying to pass him. He might as well have tried to pass a mountain, for Guy was just as effective in stopping him as the mountain would have been. This successful opposition irritated Lord Averdale, who considered he had been spoilt at Renton. When the game had been in progress fifteen minutes of the second half, no goals having been scored, Jepson and Averdale, of the Blues, managed cleverly to get through, and, calling for the ball, Averdale was given it by his unselfish comrade, and made for goal and Guy. This time he meant to beat the Reds' back by fair means or foul. He rushed towards him, sending the ball just past the back. His foot went out. He tried to deliberately trip Northcote up. But Northcote was the quicker, and, checking the movement with ease, he sent the forward sprawling full length on the turf as he had done Jepson earlier in the match.

Lord Averdale fell heavily, and he limped when he picked himself up. The field seemed to be spinning round. A thousand lights darted before his eyes. He felt faint. His breath came in short, sharp gasps. Never had he been upset so completely since he had played the Soccer game.

They stopped the match to give him time to recover.

As soon as he could speak, he waved the crowding players away.

"Give me air!" he cried irritably. "I don't want you hanging round! Where's Northcote?"

"Here," said Guy, stepping forward. "I hope I didn't hurt you, Averdale. But I think you must admit it was your own fault."

The aristocrat coloured to the roots of his hair.

"All right," he said. "You shall suffer for this, Northcote. You evidently don't know the rules of the school. You give yourself airs. We have a way of teaching new-comers their places. As you don't know yours, we'll show you."

Guy Northcote shrugged his shoulders and turned his back on the infuriated captain of the Blues. He was quite indifferent to his threats.

For the remainder of the game Averdale was careful to avoid Guy, and it was the same old story—the Reds were too strong for the Blues. Two more goals were scored by them, whilst right on the stroke of time Jepson managed to break through, and, beating Huish at close quarters, put on the Blues' solitary point, the Reds winning the trial match by 3 goals to 1.

"There's one chap we shall have to play for the school," said Jepson, to Huish, as they ran towards the schoolhouse when the game was over, "and that is Guy Northcote! My stars, what a back! He'll be an International inside five years if he continues to play the game, you mark my words!"

And Huish was disposed to agree with him.

THE 2nd CHAPTER.
Northcote's Room—The Ragging—Guy a Match for his Tormentors—Jepson Friend—The Telegram.

A half-past nine that night Guy Northcote sat in his private study poring over his books by the light of a paraffin lamp set close by on the table. His rooms were poorly furnished. But then, he had purchased a lot of odds and ends from the school porter, not being able to afford more. And, after all, he thought, what did it matter?

He had no position to keep up, nor an endless purse like some of the lads at Renton. But Guy Northcote did not grieve. There were many things in the world far more desirable in his eyes than money, and, gifted with a clean bill of health, more than the average share of strength and intelligence, and nothing to worry about, he found life pass pretty easily wherever he might be.

He had forgotten all about the school match, and the insolence of Lord Averdale, his supposed cousin, and was fully immersed in his Plutarch, when his study door was suddenly opened and a troop of lads came in. There were a dozen of them, most of them big, burly chaps, and the majority of them were unknown to Guy Northcote, who had kept pretty much to himself since he joined the school at the beginning of the term, now a fortnight ago. Lord Averdale was with them, however, and so was Jepson.

Guy Northcote got up, placing the book he had been reading quietly on the table. He foresaw trouble, for most of the faces before him wore a vindictive smile.

"What can I do for you?" he asked politely, for previous school experience had taught him the value of tact. "It's good of you fellows to give me a look in. I've not had anybody visit me since my arrival at Renton."

The visitors, with the exception of Jepson, grinned. Jepson looked grave, and was regarding Guy with a thoughtful look.

"It's a fine thing, Pilling," said one of them, a big-boned, broad-shouldered hercules, "that everybody who gets this suite of rooms finds trouble. You remember last term we had to smash up Taylor's things? It's a kind of frailty."

"If you want anything to smoke," said Guy, with a quiet smile, for he showed no sign of fear, "there is a box of cigars, a box of cigarettes, and a pound tin of tobacco in that cupboard in the corner. I don't smoke myself, but I thought you would consume it among my friends. I'm afraid I haven't anything to offer you to drink, unless you care for ginger-beer. There's plenty of that, and some cider. That's all I have to offer. And, barring a bit of bread and cheese and a pot of jam, I'm afraid you won't find much to eat."

The visitors exchanged meaning glances, and for a moment seemed not to know how to proceed.

However, Lord Averdale, whose cheeks were flushed, and who, it is to be feared, had been taking a little more wine than was good for him, just to keep his pecker up, as Pilling had said, advanced a step or two.

"Let's have done with this rot," he said. "Look here, Northcote, we've not come here on a friendly visit. You insulted me on the football-field to-day, and that's the sort of thing we permit no freshman to do at Renton. You've got a lot to learn in manners, since you haven't got any. Now then, Pilling, open that window."

The window, which was a large one of the French pattern, opening outwards in two halves, looked out upon the quadrangle. Pilling had turned the catch, and forced the windows open in a jiffy.

One or two lights could be seen gleaming from similar windows near by, but the great schoolhouse looked dark and silent, and the cement walk and the grass plot that filled the centre of the quadrangle, was plunged in darkness, the moon shining just above it, and touching the turrets and spires of the magnificent old building with points of silver.

It was a cool, mysterious night. Everything seemed as silent as the grave. There might be a proctor prowling about somewhere, but the master's houses were on the far side of the schoolhouse, and out of hearing.

"Got hold of that 'tea-tray,'" said Lord Averdale, leaning on the table and pointing to a small Bord piano that had seen much wear and tear, and which stood against the wall.

Half a dozen of the visitors seized it, lifted it bodily, and staggered across the study with it towards the window. By this time Guy Northcote was white to the lips. He understood their game only too well. This was what they termed a "rag," and it had been clearly organised by Averdale. Jepson stood looking on with his hands in his pockets and his face somewhat glum.

"Stop a moment, Averdale!" he cried, in his deep, full voice. "Don't you think you chaps had better think a bit before you go any farther? Northcote hasn't done any of you any harm. It's not quite fair, is it?"

"Shut up!" growled Averdale. "You've got no call to interfere, Jepson. If you're not careful, we'll turn your place inside out, and you've got one or two valuable pictures, and a lot of books and things that you wouldn't like burnt. Up with the piano, boys, and into the quad with it."

The six responded with a cheer. They hoisted one end of the piano on to the window-sill, pushed the body of the instrument with all their might, and crash!—with a jingle and a thud that could be heard all over the building, Guy Northcote's piano smote the hard cement below, the wood splintering to bits as it struck.

Averdale seized a chair, and sent it flying after the piano.

"Now, out with the pictures and the books!" he yelled.

Pilling hauled a coloured print from the wall, dragging the nail and a portion of the

plaster with it, and shied it out. The others made a raid on the bookshelves, or seized anything that was handy.

Then Guy Northcote stepped forward. His face was white, his eyes blazed with suppressed fury, but when he spoke his voice was quite calm.

"He's a dangerous chap to tackle," muttered Jepson, on whom none of these signs were lost.

"I don't see why you should smash up my things," said Guy quietly. "I've done nothing to deserve it. If you're an outsider, I might be able to understand. I haven't the money to restore the things you're destroying. If you want to rag, why not rag me? I'll tell you what I'll do. You say what grievance you've got against me, and if I can't satisfy you with my explanation, I'll fight the best man amongst you in order to give you satisfaction. What do you say?"

"Bosh!" said Pilling. "Look here, Northcote, I may as well tell you that we've no real grievance against you. You seem to have taken it very well, which is also in your favour; but the order was sent out that you were to be ragged, and ragged you've got to be. It's no use kicking. You'd better just take it quietly. Now then, out with the rest!"

He shot an armful of books into the quadrangle as he spoke, and returned for more, and the others, cheering wildly, sent the ornaments, the cups, saucers, glasses, knives, forks, table-linen, and everything the cupboard contained out, too.

Then the rest of the pictures—none of them of any value—were ripped from the walls, and two enterprising youths loosened the nails that held the overmantel in place, and this they carried to the window and fired out, the jingle and crash of the shattering mirror being heard far through the night, sending the bats and owls that roosted in the chestering sky that clung to the old building flying into the air.

And now Averdale, who had crossed to Guy Northcote's desk, seized a photograph frame, containing half a dozen photos, from the back of it.

"Hallo!" he cried. "Here's Northcote at all ages, and his daddy, too. I shouldn't wonder by the look of it. And there's a lock of hair. What an heirloom! Well, it's got to go after the other rubbish."

He reeled towards the window; but ere he could reach it he was stopped by Guy, the photograph frame was torn from his grasp, and with a tremendous hit Guy stretched his cousin full length on the floor.

Then he turned on the others like a fury, for his blood was up. He had kept himself in check, fearing what the consequences might be if once he let himself go; but now he turned on his enemies like a madman.

Pilling he hit clean off his feet with a terrific smack on the jaw, and a couple of others he seized and hurled through the door into the passage as if they were mere children.

"Out of this!" he cried. "I give you fair warning, I'm dangerous to meddle with when I am roused. Out of it, or it will be the worse for some of you!"

Averdale picked himself up. He was bleeding slightly from the mouth, and the blow had sobered him.

"Come along, Jepson!" he said. "Don't stand there like a fool! On to him. He's got to be taught his lesson."

"I'm not going to aid you in your dirty work!" answered Jepson. "I merely came because I thought some of you might go too far. You tackle him yourself, Averdale, since you are so keen on it. You won't catch me helping you. I'd sooner stand by Northcote."

Averdale, angered at this rebuff from his particular comrade and chum, turned to the others, of whom Pilling had picked himself up from the floor, looking sick and ill, for the blow had knocked him silly.

"On to him!" he cried. "Come on, all together!"

They advanced at a rush. Guy, seising a chair from the floor, hurled it at them, scattering them like ninepins; then, getting hold of Averdale, he hurled him through the door, and rushing at the others, he hit them over right and left, finally throwing Pilling at Averdale as the aristocrat was coming on again; and the others, having had enough of it, beat a hasty retreat, for Guy had got another chair up in his hands.

They rushed into the passage, and Guy, darting in the door, shot the bolt and locked it. He took a deep breath, and looked round to find himself face to face with Jepson.

"Northcote," said the manly captain of the school eleven, "I'm sorry this has happened. I did not wish to start fighting. Averdale wields enormous influence here, and he seemed to have all the say. It was no use me actively interfering. They would have ransacked my place, too; but besides, it would have made matters worse."

Then he eyed Guy up and down.

"By jingo," he said, "you must be as strong as an elephant! Fancy you being able to chuck Pilling out headlong about like that! You'd have killed them if you'd hit out, upon my soul you would!"

Guy looked ruefully round him.

"A pretty mess they've made of my study!" he muttered. "I've got no money to get any more things with. What the deuce am I to do?"

"Oh, they'll have got over this by the morning," said Jepson; "and they'll have a whip round to find some new furniture for you. Hallo! What the deuce is that?"

Well might he ask, for a howl as of a thousand dervishes came up from the quadrangle, and a light flickered on the brown brick walls.

Guy followed Jepson to the window, and looked out. He saw that the beaten enemy had piled his things in a heap, had poured the contents of a can of petrol on them, and had ignited it.

The spirit had fired instantly, and already the pile was in a blaze. There was no saving the goods now. Pilling, Averdale, and the rest had joined hands, and were dancing round the bonfire in a perfect frenzy, shouting like madmen.

Then of a sudden a figure darted through a gateway, and ran towards them. Instantly a cry of "Proctor!" arose.

But they didn't care. Under Averdale's leadership they had defied the proctors—nay, the Head himself ere this. Proctor it was. A moment later Herbert Mainwaring, M.A., one of the under-masters, came up. He, smiled grimly.

"Your escapade is known," he said. "Averdale, I shall be surprised if the Head doesn't send you down for this. Meanwhile, here's a telegram for you. It's just come up from the town, and as it was urgent I brought it to you without delay."

"I don't want any telegram!" cried Averdale. "More fuel for the fire, boys. Let's go back to Northcote's rooms and break the door down!"

The proctor held out the orange envelope to the boy.

"You'd better read it, Averdale," he said quietly.

Something in the man's tones frightened the boy, and, stepping out of the ranks, he took the envelope, tore it open, and, straightening out the enclosed sheet, read the message by the light of the bonfire.

"Good heavens!" he cried, his voice shaking with emotion. "My father, the Earl of Sefton, is dying!"

An exciting incident from "The Terror of the Remove," David Goodwin's Great New School Story now commencing in our Wednesday Companion—"The Boys' Herald."

THE 3rd CHAPTER.

A Friendly and Business Visit—Guy learns the Truth About Himself—His bold Resolution—Burning His Boats—Guy Decides to leave Renton.

IT was early morning, and Guy Northcote sat on his window-sill, looking down at the pile of ashes which lay heaped on the cement below. This was all that remained of his belongings, and the twisted wires and steel pegs lying here and there were the only evidence that a piano once had been.

As he glanced gloomily round, wondering what he was to do, he suddenly caught sight of one of the school porters ushering a gentleman through the quadrangle in the direction of the gateway that led to the flight of steps giving access to the floor on which Guy's rooms were situated.

Immediately behind them followed a tall, well-dressed man of about fifty, whose general appearance suggested something of a solicitor, or someone connected with the law.

"My Uncle Benjamin and James Redmayne!" ejaculated Guy. "Whatever has brought them here at this early hour of the morning? Something important, I have no doubt. Well, they are the very men I wish most to see."

A minute later they entered Guy's rooms. The porter withdrew, leaving them to stare in astonishment at the wrecked apartment.

"What on earth have you been up to, Guy?" asked Benjamin Garside, a man still in the prime of life, whose good-humoured features bore a strong expression which no amount of self-training could subdue.

"Averdale and some of the boys 'ragged' my place last night," Guy explained. "Fortunately, they left my bed-room alone, so that I had a place to sleep in. Well, Uncle Garside, what has brought you here? I'm glad you've come. If you hadn't I should have written asking you to do so to-day."

Benjamin Garside carefully closed the door, and, coming back to Guy and James Redmayne, he smiled mysteriously.

"We've come to talk over your future prospects, my boy," he said.

"I'm glad!" answered Guy, taking a seat upon the table, all that remained, with the exception of a single chair, of his belongings of the night before. "That was what I wanted to speak to you about."

Garside looked astonished.

"I don't understand, my lad," he said.

"Well," said Guy, "I want to know who I am. Yesterday, on the football field, Lord Averdale was very rude to me, suggesting that I might be his cousin. Is it true? Was my father the Percy Northcote who married Mary Fairclough, youngest sister of the present Earl of Sefton?"

Garside and Redmayne exchanged meaning glances.

"It is perfectly true, my boy," said Garside quietly, "and I am not at all sorry that you know, because it will make our explanation so much easier."

"Averdale really is my cousin," said Guy Northcote somewhat gloomily. "Then, Uncle Benjamin, judging from that, I should say you are no relation of mine whatever?"

Garside showed his teeth in a wolfish grin.

"You have guessed correctly, Guy," he said, "I am no relation of yours, neither is James Redmayne, here. He was your mother's solicitor, and it was through him that I brought you up, saw to your education, and looked after you as a father might have done."

Guy slipped off the table and paced up and down the room full of thought.

"I don't see why you should have done that," he said, troubled; "unless my parents left money, which I have always been led to believe was not the case."

"It was not," interjected James Redmayne. "When everything had been disposed of, there was not enough to pay the creditors' and the cost of your dear mother's funeral came out of my own pocket."

"Then," said Guy, clenching his hands, "does that mean that I have been living on charity all my life? Would it not have been better to have told me as soon as I was old enough to carry on my own living? I am here at Renton College under false pretences. I cannot afford to go to Oxford. It will be best for me to leave here at once, and for the rest, as soon as I am able to pay you back for all your past kindness to me, I will do so, Mr. Garside."

Guy adopted a purely formal tone, and the older man compressed his lips as he foresaw trouble in dealing with Guy Northcote. Though he had brought him up, supervised his education, and had him with him ever since he was a tiny child, Garside had never held any real control over the lad. What would happen when he told Guy the real motive he had in looking after his welfare so long? Still, the plunge had to be made, and the sooner it was done the better.

"Guy, my boy," he said, "I'll tell you why James Redmayne and myself have taken such an interest in you. Apart from the fact that we loved you, there was a great and brilliant future before you some day, which, when you had come into your own, we counted on to recompense us for all our outlay and devotion to you."

"Will you be good enough to explain?" said Guy, stopping abruptly and facing the man.

"Earl Sefton had never possessed a very robust constitution," Benjamin Garside went on, shifting his glance restlessly about the room as he spoke, "and it is surprising to me that he has lasted so long. Most of the Faircloughs are weedy degenerates, whom I realised years ago could not be expected to last the allotted span. I was right. One by one they have passed away while you were growing into man's estate, until only the earl and his son, the present Lord Averdale, remained. Last night the earl was seized with a stroke of paralysis. He cannot recover. Within a week Lord Averdale will be Earl of Sefton, and you will become Lord Averdale. Within a year or two, perhaps you yourself will be Earl of Sefton. Now, I dare say you can see why we have taken care of you, and had you educated like a gentleman instead of leaving you to go to the dogs as we might have done."

"Your interest in me was not founded on affection, said Guy sternly, gazing at Benjamin Garside in contempt. "You had mercenary motives all through."

"I must admit, as James Redmayne here would do, that we had an interest," said Garside, avoiding the boy's look; "but still, we were fond of you. You know that, do you not, Guy?"

Guy Northcote strode up and down the room again. His brows were contracted in thought. His brain whirled round and round. He felt that he had been tricked—shabbily treated. He realised in that moment of horror what a sham the world was, and it was a cruel awakening for him. He had never been able to believe that his supposed uncle cared for him, now he knew he did not.

"Might I ask," he said sarcastically, "whether you have ever kept an account of the moneys you have expended on me?"

"The accounts have been carefully kept," said James Redmayne, interposing. "The bill amounts to some thousands of pounds now. We shall, of course, expect you to repay us that when you assume the title. Lord Averdale cannot live long. The earl will probably die to-night. His case was given up as hopeless before we left London to come here."

"Oh, it shall be paid!" said Guy bitterly. "Every penny of it. I am not likely to shirk my liabilities. At the same time, I must thank you both for your very disinterested friendship." He glanced round at the wrecked apartment.

"I am glad those chaps came here last night and broke my things up, he went on; "for it will make parting so much easier."

"Do you mean to suggest that you intend to leave Renton College?" said Garside sternly.

"Yes," answered Guy, stopping and looking the man he had believed for years to be his uncle straight in the eyes; "I do not intend to live any longer under your protection. I shall go to the Head to-day, tell him everything, and start for London, or wherever else I may choose to go, to earn my own living as soon as I possibly can."

"You must be mad!" said James Redmayne. What? Throw up your 'Varsity career—the one thing that half-mark's a man?"

"I want no half-mark," retorted Guy; "I am a son of the people—a beggar. There shall be no 'Varsity for me."

Garside and Redmayne exchanged glances.

"He has his father's wilful spirit," said the latter, holding up his hands in mock horror.

"You'd better change your mind," Garside put in. "After all, this is a pure business speculation on our part. And why should you mind where the money comes from that educates you, seeing that you will have such a fortune one of these days? Think! A calendar life only stands between you and a title. You will take your place in the House of Peers!"

"My resolution is made," answered Guy bitterly. "I know where to find both of you. Don't be afraid; you shall have every penny back that you have spent on me. And now I must ask you to leave me alone. I want to think."

Garside made a significant gesture to Redmayne.

"It's all right," he whispered. "Let him have his head now. We'll talk him over later on!"

"Very good, my boy!" he said, aloud. "We are staying at the Mitre, at Renton, overnight, so, if you wish to see either of us, come down. Meanwhile, think over what you have heard, and take things in the proper spirit, my lad."

With that they left him, never doubting that Guy would come to the Mitre that evening; and Guy for a while leant against the framework of the window, glancing gloomily upon the green turf of the quad. He knew his destiny at last.

For half an hour he remained deeply immersed in thought, then, with a tight compression of the lips, he walked into his bed-room.

"Yes," he said, "it is the only thing to be done."

And throwing open the mouth of his kit-bag he began to pack it in a fury of impatience.

"I'll leave Renton to-day," he murmured.

The 4th CHAPTER.

Bound for London—Passengers at Northampton—Guy Quarrels with a Boor—A Trick in Jiu-Jitsu—Benson Climbs Down.

JUST put that bag in the corner, William," said Guy to the school porter, as he opened the door of a third-class compartment on the London-bound train.

The man obeyed. Then he glanced wistfully at the handsome boy.

"Of course, sir," he said, "I'm awfully sorry you're going. It's wrong of you to slip away without giving any explanation, sir, I know."

"It can't be helped, William," answered the youngster. "I'm sorry to leave Renton, too. I feel I should be so happy here. But it had to be, and there's half-a-sovereign for you. Don't say a word about this. If inquiries are made about me, you know nothing—you understand? I just want to quietly disappear."

"You ought not have taken too much notice of the ragging, sir," said William, gazing wistfully at the boy. "Boys will be boys, and they'd all have been your friends to-morrow. And I did hear that the Head would have sent Lord Averdale down for it, only the news arrived that the earl was dying. It was only that saved him."

"It wasn't the ragging forced me to leave the school, William," answered Guy. "I had a far graver reason than that. You will know all about it soon, perhaps. Now leave me, there's a good fellow!"

The school porter touched his cap, and turned away. Guy seated himself in a corner of the compartment, and leaned moodily back. A minute later the whistle blew, and the train began to move. Glancing out of the window, Guy saw the red-brick turrets and the towers of the school showing above the trees in the distance, and watched them until a bend in the track hid them from sight. Then with a sigh he leaned back.

He had said good-bye to his school-life for ever, and was about to face the world. He had a couple of pounds, and some silver and copper in his possession, and that was all. He would have to find employment, and quickly, too, or starve. But he determined he would sooner starve than accept another penny from either Benjamin Garside or James Redmayne.

Renton, as everyone knows, is eighty and some odd miles from London. There is a frequent and rapid train service to town, and within two hours Guy would be at Euston Station.

When the train stopped at Northampton, the door of Guy's compartment was suddenly opened, and a smiling, good-looking youth leapt in.

"Come along, Benson!" he cried; and after him, in somewhat laboured fashion, clambered a man.

The latter closed the door, and put his foot against the handle, so that no one else might enter; then, taking a pipe and a pouch-of tobacco-pouch from his pocket, he proceeded to fill the former with rank shag and set light to it. Before the train began to move the compartment was full of smoke, and Guy, who objected to it, let the window down.

"This is not a smoking carriage," he said, glaring at the man; "and you might have asked for permission before you began to smoke."

"I smoke when I think I will," retorted the man; and he puffed away harder than ever.

Then, after wiping his face on the cushions of the carriage, he crossed to the window that Guy had let down and deliberately pulled it up again.

With a defiant glare in his eyes, and a grin on his lips, he then sat himself down again, and smoked away harder than ever.

The good-looking youth who was with him leant over and whispered to Guy.

"Don't take any notice of him," he said. "He's Benson, of the West London, and he's got one of his moods on."

"I don't care if he's got fifty moods on!" returned Guy.

Then the schoolboy stood up, lowered the window again, and faced the irate Benson.

"What did you let that window down for!" asked the man in a rage.

"I'll show you," said Guy.

With that he took a step nearer the objectionable passenger, reached out his right hand, and, seizing the pipe that rested between his teeth, he jerked it out of his mouth and hurled it out of the window.

"Perhaps you'll learn how to behave yourself like a gentleman now," he said quietly.

Benson sat for a moment aghast; then, with a howl of rage, he sprang to his feet.

"That was a presentation pipe," he yelled; "it cost thirty-five bob!"

"Then buy another," said Guy, "and take care of the next one."

Benson whipped off his coat.

"I'm going to teach you a lesson, my lad," he said grimly. "You're going to have the biggest hiding you ever had in your life!"

He rolled up his sleeves and displayed a pair of formidable forearms. He was a powerful man, and looked big enough to eat Guy. Still, the lad was not afraid, though Benson's companion was white to the lips. He was afraid of the consequences for Guy.

"Leave the boy alone, Benson," he said, "and behave yourself. It served you right!"

"Keep your own business," retorted Benson. "You're a nice sort of chap, you are. I'll come to Northampton to fetch you again, when you sign on for a new club, I will. I'll see yer hanged first!"

With that he made a rush at Guy; but the lad slipped beneath his arms, and cleverly got to the other side of him.

"Oh, you're as slippery as a eel, are yer?" cried Benson. "Well, so much the worse for you when I get hold of yer!"

He made a powerful blow at the boy this time; but it was neatly guarded, to the onlooker's amazement, and then Guy attacked. How Guy got hold of Benson the youngster who was looking on never knew, but it seemed as if he got a firm grasp of the lapels of the man's right hand, and, placing his own left under the arm and across the chest, and getting his knee behind Benson's somehow, he levered him over, and down the man went, with a bump. Guy was lying on top of him when they sorted themselves out. He still held both of Benson's arms, which he had stretched out full length, and he had locked his leg round the man's in true jiu-jitsu style. Benson writhed, yelling with pain as he did so, and tried to lever Guy off. But the might as well have tried to move a mountain; he was firmly held.

"Oh, oh! Let me go!" he yelled. "You're breaking my arm! Let me go!"

"Promise to behave yourself," said Guy, "and I will."

"No! Sha'n't! Oh, yes, I will! You're breaking my arm, I tell you!"

"And I will break it, too," said Guy, not in the least concerned, "unless you mend your ways. Do you promise not to molest me if I let you go?"

"No!"

Guy gave the man's arm a wrench.

"Oh, yes, yes! Mercy—mercy!"

Guy let the man up. Benson at once sat down on a seat, rubbing his arm ruefully, and glancing at Guy with anything but favour.

"I don't know any of the jiu-jitsu tricks," he said. "I'd smash yer, only I've given my promise. But we shall meet again, my lad, and then you won't get off so easily. As for you, Harwood," he went on, turning to his companion, "I'll have something to say to you when you're playing with the team. You won't find it a bed of roses, I give you my word. You might have helped a pal, instead of looking on."

"You're big enough and old enough to fight your own battles, Benson," retorted the lad. Then he leaned across and addressed Guy. "You're just from school, I take it?" he said.

"I am," answered the Renton boy, who had taken a liking to Benson's friend. "But I've left school for ever now. I've got no money, and shall have to earn my own living, and I don't know where to start."

"That's hard lines," answered the other; "and I know what it is, too. Once I was right down on my luck, and starving, and I'll tell you what I did."

The lad remained silent for a while; then, smiling across at Guy, he said:

"First of all, I'd better tell you my name. I'm Robb Harwood. Who are you?"

Guy Northcote hesitated for a moment. Should he give his real name, or an assumed one? Then, as he had already decided to leave no clue of his whereabouts for Garside and Redmayne to follow up, he made up his mind to adopt the latter course.

"My name's Guy Jones," he said, selecting the first name that entered his head.

"And a jolly good name, too!" said Harwood. "I like the common or garden flavour about it."

Guy smiled.

"Well, I promised to tell you my story," said his new acquaintance. "When I was quite a lad my father died. He was killed in a colliery disaster at Dudley, and I was left with my widowed mother to support. She worked at dressmaking, but there's not much to be made at that in such a district as Dudley. I was only a youngster, and used to do all sorts of odd jobs. I couldn't bear the thought of a pit life. I wouldn't have entered that pit where my father died for a thousand pounds. I had ambitions, but didn't know how to achieve them. I used to sit up at nights in my bed-room, and try to educate myself by the light of the bed-room candle. I got on slowly enough, but I managed to learn to spell correctly, and to write a decent hand. I used to kick a ball about with a lot of other ragamuffins in the waste ground beside the canal, and gradually I began to make quite a name amongst those rough-and-ready footballers as a dribbler. That was how I got my love of football. Then one day I managed to get a situation as a grocer's assistant. I didn't earn much money, but I was valuable to him, and he liked me, and things began to get on better at home. Well, about a year after that I joined the local football club, paying a half-crown entrance fee. It wasn't much of a club, but we had the cheek to call ourselves the Dudley Rovers. We got our matches where we could, and, though I say it myself, from the moment I joined the team their game began to improve, and matches began to be won, whereas they had never done anything but luckily draw on one or two occasions up to that time."

Guy looked with interest at the enthusiastic Harwood, who told his story in such a simple, straightforward way that one could not help but admire the lad.

"And you became a professional footballer?" he said.

Robb Harwood nodded.

"Yes," he said. "But that was not until a long time afterwards. Well, having built up the Rovers, I began to notice that they were becoming reserved and unfriendly towards me."

"They were jealous," said Guy, finding it easy to talk to his companion.

"Just so, they were jealous. Small-minded people like they are—and there are thousands like them, who wish to take all the credit of an accomplishment to themselves and give none—were bound to bring the club to ruin, and so I began to look about for another club. An Alliance team asked me to join them, and I accepted. I may say they had had a violent quarrel with the Dudley Rovers. I was with the Alliance Club two years, playing as an amateur, and then my mother died.

"She had been the one tie that bound me to Dudley, and when she had gone"—the poor fellow's voice shook a little at the remembrance of his mother—"I decided to leave the place for ever. I opened up negotiations with the secretary of a Southern League Club, and in September of that year I came South to join Tottenham Hotspur as a professional at two pounds ten shillings a week."

"So," said Guy, smiling, "you are the Robb Harwood who did so much for the Spurs? I might have known it. I am a public schoolboy, and ought to have a detestation of the professional in football, but I can't say I have. I am not even in sympathy with the Amateur Football Association. I have often been to see the Spurs play in my vacation. But what are you doing going to London now? Didn't you join Birmingham for the present season?"

"It was reported I had done so," said Harwood, with a smile. "But it wasn't true. I got Tottenham to release me, which they did without raising any sort of trouble, and thought of joining Birmingham. But my sympathies are all in London. I love the place, and I found I couldn't leave it, and so I have joined the West London Club that has entered the Second Division of the League, and is going to fight hard for promotion. They lost their match last Saturday, which won't do. But I have great hopes of them. My registration form was only passed by the Football Association on Saturday last, and I have been staying at Northampton. Benson here came down to fetch me to-day, and so now you know all about it."

The train was rattling and swaying over the metals, and the jerky movement had sent Benson to sleep. He was snoring loudly, but even at that disadvantage seemed more bearable than when awake.

"Now, tell me something about yourself," said Robb Harwood, the celebrated centre-forward, who had been thrice capped for England. "You say you have just left school. Any trouble?"

"Yes," Guy admitted, "but no disgrace, or anything of that kind. I discovered that I was living on the charity of people upon whom I had no claim whatsoever, and sooner than do that, I ran away from school, preferring to earn my own living."

"You've played football!"

"Many a time. Since I was a lad of ten, in fact."

"Any good at it?"

"A little."

"What position do you play in?"

"I have filled every position on the field, including that of referee," answered Guy, with a smile.

"H'm!"

Robb Harwood looked him up and down, and was visibly impressed by his physique. He had not forgotten how he had thrown Benson, either.

"You look as if you could play," he said. "What are your plans? Have you any money?"

"I have two pounds between me and starvation," said Guy. "And I have no home to go to. I am going to look for cheap rooms as soon as I get to Euston, and then I must find something to do quickly, or else there will only be the Army left. I shall have to take Benson's choice, and enlist."

"H'm!"

Harwood said no more, but leant back in his seat, thinking busily.

They were close to Euston now. Another minute or two and they would arrive.

He shook Benson and woke him up.

"Wake up, Benson," he said. "We are nearly in. Look to your bag. You've slept quite long enough."

Benson looked angry at having been awakened, and glared at Guy.

"You still 'ere?" he said.

"I should imagine so," answered Guy.

A minute later the train wound slowly into Euston Station, and as soon as it had come to a stand, the carriage doors were thrown open, and a crowd swarmed on to the platform. In the whirl and bustle and noise, Guy seemed to be swallowed up. Harwood leapt to the platform beside him, bag in hand, and then a crowd of athletic-looking youths came rushing up.

"Here he is!" shouted one of them. "Three cheers for Robb Harwood!"

"Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!"

The cheers were given until the station roof shook. Then a burly fellow grasped Harwood by the hand.

"My dear old chap," he said, "I'm glad to see you. We're all glad you've joined us. We need you to stiffen the forward line. Are you fit?"

"I should think so, Morris," answered Harwood. "I mean you're going to establish a record in goal for West London this year. That so?"

"Hope so," answered the West London goalkeeper modestly. "But you never know."

Another member of the team now came pressing forward to shake the hand of the International, and Guy Northcote thought it was time to go. Seizing his chance, he advanced to the youngster and held out his hand.

"Good-bye, Harwood," he said, "and the best of good luck!"

The famous centre-forward gazed at Guy in astonishment.

"Good-bye be hanged!" he said. "Didn't you say you had nowhere to go to?"

"Yes," answered Northcote.

"Very well, then, what are you going to do? Shall I tell you?"

"Yes," said Guy, laughing at the reproachful look in Harwood's face.

"You're coming with me, my lad! Now, don't say no. I won't take any refusal. How are all you lads going home?"

"We've got an omnibus," said Morris, the goalkeeper, with a grin. "We chartered it specially to give you a rousing reception."

"Well, then," said Harwood, "there's room for one more. Get hold of your bag, Jones, and come along."

"But——" Guy began.

"There are no buts about it. You've got to come along with me. I'll look after you until you get something to do."

Guy hesitated; but the frank, good-natured, generous expression on Harwood's face decided him.

"Very well," he said, "I will, and thank you."

"Are you going to take that youngster along with you?" said Benson, sidling up, and pointing to Guy.

"Yes," said Harwood. "Have you anything to say about it?"

"Only this," muttered Benson slowly—"that nothing would please me better. It'll give me a chance to have another go at him."

A few seconds later Guy Northcote, bag and all, was seated beside Robb Harwood on the roof of the motor-omnibus, and away it went full speed for Fulham.

The 5th CHAPTER.
At the West London Ground—The South-Eastern League Match — An Unwilling Goalkeeper — Henry Jones as Versatile Player.

FOR several days Guy Northcote—or, rather, Henry Jones, as he shall now be called—had been living with his friend and chum Robb Harwood in a little villa close to the West London Football Ground at Fulham.

His store of money remained pretty well intact. In the mornings his friend had been either out with the team on training walks or performing in the gymnasium, or with the ball at practice on the field.

On one occasion, tired of looking for work, Guy, much to Benson's disgust, had joined them in a ten-mile training walk, and on another he had turned out at Robb's request in the field, and had punted the ball about, Robb Harwood taking good care that the manager of the club, Arthur Stevens, should be there to see.

On the Friday afternoon the West London team departed for Grimsby, where they were due to play their fourth match of the season in the Second Division of the League, the three previous matches having resulted in a draw against Hull City, a draw against Derby County, and a defeat at the hands of Lincoln City.

This form was bad, and suggested a position at the end of the League table, when the season came to an end, and not one at the top.

Robb Harwood was not included in the team to play at Grimsby. Benson had had something to say to the trainer and the committee and manager about him, and he had been told to wait until the following Saturday, and turn out on the Saturday afternoon against the Luton Reserves in the South-Eastern League. They wished to make sure of his form, they said.

On the Saturday morning Guy Northcote returned tired from a long and fruitless tramp in search of work, and, throwing himself in an armchair, looked hopelessly at Harwood.

"Robb," he said, "you are the best fellow in the world. I don't know what I should do without you. I never imagined one could feel so utterly lonely in London. I can't get anything to do. I never knew it was like hunting work."

"Never mind," said Robb Harwood smiling. "Just peck in at a bit of lunch, Jones, and then come down and watch our reserves play in the South-Eastern League. We've got a pretty warm team, because they've been the first team up to full strength, and the play won't be so bad."

"I may as well do that as anything else, I suppose," said Guy, seating himself at the table as the landlady brought lunch in. "There won't be much chance of interviewing business people on a Saturday afternoon."

After luncheon Robb Harwood stretched himself full length upon a comfortable sofa, and lit his pipe. He was an abstemious smoker, but found that a pipe now and again soothed his nerves, though he was one who always fought the crusade against smoking. Guy took up a book, and amused himself by reading. At half-past two Robb Harwood looked at his watch.

"Come along, Jones," he said, "it's time we were off."

He caught up the handbag that he had already packed, and led the way downstairs to the street. Five minutes brisk walk brought them to the West London Football Ground, a palatial enclosure built on the banks of the Thames, as neat and as compact an arena as could be found within the four kingdoms.

Andrews, the assistant trainer, nodded a grumpy "good-day" at Robb. He was a quaint, quiet old stick, but a good-hearted man withal.

"Manager wants to see you," he said, not wasting his words.

"Anything particular?" asked Robb, puzzled.

"Don't know. Better go and see."

Robb hurried off to the manager's room, which was situated within the red brick and buff stone building in which the home team's dressing-rooms, gymnasium, reading and smoking-rooms were also included.

He was gone five minutes, and when he returned his face was beaming. He clapped Guy on the back.

"Old man," he said, "Birtles, the right-back, scraped his shin very badly this morning when monkeying about on his bicycle, and we haven't got a good man to take his place. The manager has asked you to turn out instead of him. What do you say?"

Guy hesitated.

"I don't want to bring any sort of trouble on you, Robb, if I fail," he said.

"Trouble! Trouble be hanged!" laughed Robb Harwood. "Here, Andrews, get a white shirt for Henry Jones—or have you one of your own, Jones?"

(Continued on the next page.)

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.

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—Wednesday.

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 Wednesday. 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. 9d.—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.

Back to Football.

YES, my friends, it is really true, we are back to football already. It seems but yesterday when we were talking about Cup Finals and League championships, and yet here we are at the dawn of the new season, summer having already fled. As has been our custom for some years past, we are welcoming the new football season right royally with a bumper football number, with which I trust all my friends will be thoroughly satisfied. I have tried to make this number a really stunning one, and I am sure all my loyal supporters will be glad to see the magnificent long opening instalment of Mr. A. S. Hardy's powerful new football serial this week. I have told my friends a lot about this story in earlier numbers of our paper, and I am not going to say anything more about it here, beyond urging every one of my readers to make a point of perusing the first chapters. Mr. Hardy tells me that this is really the finest athletic tale he has ever written, and I am inclined to agree with him. I shall be glad to know what my readers think.

Besides this new football serial, there appear in this number some fine new football articles by famous Internationals, which will, I am certain, prove of great help to those of my chums who desire to excel at the game. THE BOYS' REALM is a practical paper for young footballers, and I am bent on getting the very best authorities to write instructive articles on our national winter pastime. Mr. W. I. Bassett, Mr. Fred Spikesley, Mr. Alan R. Haig-Brown, Mr. Crawshaw, and a host of others will all contribute to our pages during this season, and my friends can be sure that anything they read written by these gentlemen is worthy of their best consideration, as they are thoroughly acquainted with their subject. I shall be glad if my chums will let their friends know about these articles. They should be read by every junior footballer.

Another great attraction of this number is the opening instalment of "Plucky Phil Farren," our new story of adventure and peril. I think that all my friends will vote this story to be one of the best of its kind that has ever appeared in our pages. Certainly it will well repay perusal.

OUR FOOTBALL LEAGUE.

I am much gratified at the way our Football League is being taken up by my many supporters. When I tell my friends that already no less than one hundred and twenty clubs have affiliated themselves to our organisation, and that applications are still coming in by every post, they will readily see how successful our great scheme is. Besides this, I have had a vast number of applications from various football leagues throughout the country for silver cups, and I am as my wife 'end how to satisfy them all. In another page there appears a list of the clubs which have joined our League up to Saturday August 17th, and also the names of some of the Leagues to which I have already decided to present silver cups. There is still time for your club to join, and you should make application to-day.

The New Threepenny Libraries.

UP to the present twenty-four Threepenny "Boys' Friend" Libraries have been issued from these offices. So great has been the success of these little volumes, and so huge the demand for them, that many of them are out of print, and are unobtainable at any price.

The two latest additions to this library are entitled "The Stolen Submarine," a tale of Nelson Lee and the Great Unknown, by Maxwell Scott; and "Pete, Detective," an entirely new and original story of Jack, Sam, and Pete, by S. Clarke Hook.

I am not going to say positively that these two new volumes will soon be unobtainable at any price, but, all the same, I should not be surprised if this were really the case.

You will understand my reason for this belief when I tell you a few particulars about the two latest volumes.

Well, first of all with regard to "The Stolen Submarine." This is a tale of Nelson Lee and the Great Unknown, by Maxwell Scott. Many thousands of my chums are already acquainted with that wonderful rogue, the Great Unknown, for some of his exploits have been related in a recently published volume, but undoubtedly the most astonishing feat that the great criminal ever accomplished was his stealing of a submarine. In the new volume out to-day this is described with all the skill of that renowned author, Maxwell Scott, and, more than that, the reader's interest is enchained to the very last line of the story—to the period when the Great Unknown has to acknowledge that Nelson Lee, the famous detective, is his master. Oh, it's a fine, exciting story is "The Stolen Submarine."

"Pete, Detective," is a story that is absolutely new, having been specially written by that versatile author, S. Clarke Hook, for our Library. If it were possible to discover which character in boys' fiction had ever caused the greatest number of hearty laughs, it would be found, I am sure, that Pete would win with millions of votes to spare.

It would be quite interesting to find the boy who could truthfully say that he had never at any time heard of the doings of the mirth-making trio, Jack, Sam, and Pete. In this new volume, out to-day, entitled, "Pete, Detective," my friends will be able to read how Pete played the part of sleuthhound with many hair-raising and side-splitting adventures. I earnestly advise my friends to give their orders to their newsagents with as little delay as possible. Each volume costs threepence, and each is now on sale.

An Adelaide Chum's Interesting Letter.

I KNOW my friends like to read the very interesting letters that reach me from our Colonial cousins abroad, for they invariably open new phases of life, and are altogether bright and informing. To my Adelaide chum, whose letter follows, I extend my hearty thanks.

"Adelaide.

"Dear Editor,—I have at last plucked up enough courage to write you. I am a resident of Adelaide, the capital of South Australia, and have been a reader of your papers for about three years. I take regularly 'The Boys' Friend,' REALM, 'Herald,' and 'Union Jack,' and I hardly know a boy who has not at some time or other read your papers. I have recommended them to all my chums, and they have all the same opinion—'ripping!' The stories are simply unsurpassed!

"Well, I suppose a little about my country and myself might interest you, so I will write about it to the best of my ability. I am fifteen years of age, and work at W. H. Bruce's, the merchant and importer. I am sending under separate cover a guide to Adelaide and environs, which may give you a good idea of our city, as you don't seem to hear much of South Australia, but more of Canada. I suppose we don't advertise it enough, but we are gradually realising the fact that we have better land to offer the emigrants than Canada.

The population of South Australia has been decreasing every year until four or five years ago, when the State began to come into prominence. New buildings have come up like lightning, the suburbs have grown, and Unley, one of them, has been declared a city. Electric trams will be in existence within a year, and new telephone exchanges are being built, and underground telephones being laid. Well, I suppose I must be closing soon, but before doing so I would strongly advise intending emigrants to book for South Australia, as the word 'unemployed' is unknown here. I want to try and visit Sydney and Melbourne, and I suppose I have a pretty good chance, as my employer, Mr. Bruce, has branches in both of these. I would like to see this letter in "The Friend," REALM, or 'Herald,' so wishing both you and your papers the best of which they deserve, I remain, yours faithfully,

S. BUTLER."

A Reader Who Won Five Silver Cups in One Week.

I AM well aware that I have a very large number of clever athletes among the regular readers of this paper, but, nevertheless, I was surprised, most agreeably surprised, to hear of the success of a young Kingston reader, who is now at Tiffins' School, Kingston, in Surrey.

Briefly, this is his record for one single week's performances. On July 17th he won the Tiffins' Challenge Cup for single sculls by two lengths. He also rowed in the Tiffins' School fours against the Kingston Grammar School, my chum's boat winning by one-third of a length. Three days later my chum won first place in his heat from scratch in the 220 yards running handicap at the Tiffins' School sports, and in the final came out second. He won the obstacle race, and, by jumping four feet six inches, won the prize for high jumping. Altogether he won five silver cups, and the championship of Tiffins' School.

That is a record that any lad can well be proud of, and in a modest letter to me my chum offers to send me his photograph. I shall be very pleased to see it, and perhaps I shall be able to reproduce it in THE REALM, so that my chums interested in athletics may see it also.

While I thank him very heartily for his letter, and also compliment him for his high athletic skill, I may mention that I am always interested to hear of the athletic performances of my chums at all times.

YOUR EDITOR (H. E.).

Daily Mail.

A LAD OF THE LEAGUE

(Continued from the previous page.)

"Yes; at home," answered Guy, laughing. "I'll go and get it."

"Well, look sharp. You haven't much time to lose."

Guy hurried away, and within ten minutes he was back again. Entering the home team's dressing-room, he divested himself of his everyday attire and got into his playing things. There was a badge on the left breast of his shirt, a school badge, and Guy noticed that one or two of the players cast curious glances at him, whilst others eyed his magnificently muscular frame with something akin to envy.

Robb Harwood bent over the badge.

"It's Renton College," he said, "and it's new. That's where you came from—eh?"

Guy coloured and nodded.

"Don't say anything to the others," he said. "I don't want anybody to know; " and I'll take the badge off as soon as I can get the chance."

Robb led the way on to the field when it was time for them to turn out, and Manager Arthur Stevens noticed with keen eyes that by far and away the finest lad in the team was the newcomer, Henry Jones. He took his seat on the clubhouse balcony to watch.

The teams, when they lined up, seemed about equally matched in physique, and they were mostly youngsters. There was little or no wind and what there was swept gently over the heavily-banked slopes at the Hammersmith end of the ground. This end Luton chose, their captain having won the toss from Robb.

At three-thirty precisely the referee blew his whistle, and the game commenced. The Luton men knew the position and worth of the great centre-forward opposed to them, and with great care they swept the ball past him.

Guy, who watched proceedings carefully, was surprised to see a strange carelessness and supineness about the West London play. A good many of the men did not seem to care much whether they played the ball or not; and the reserve goalkeeper, Hines, hands in pockets, stood in the centre of his goal, looking on with a sour expression on his face that did not promise well for his side.

Harwood, alert, and quick to think and act, formed a striking contrast to the others.

Guy presently found the half in front of him beaten, and himself faced by two forwards. He did not hesitate, but, with a determined rush, split them, and, securing the ball by sheer force of character, he dribbled through, and, having passed the centre line, he passed the ball to Robb.

The International was off in a moment, and, though chased by two blue-shirted halves, and tackled by the left full-back and brought down, he managed to get in his kick, and the ball, striking the angle of upright and post, shot into the net at lightning speed.

The crowd cheered a magnificent bit of play on the part of forward and back to the echo, and the cheers were renewed when Robb walked over to Guy and grasped his hand.

"Well played, old man," he said.

That goal stung Luton into action. They were keen on the ball from the rekick off with a vengeance; and having twice tried, but unsuccessfully, to beat Guy, they played on to the West London left-back, and presently three of the forwards swept through the West London defence.

Guy rushed swiftly across the field to intervene, as got to the front of the goal just as a Luton forward shot low and with terrific force. Hines, the goalkeeper, made no effort to save. Guy was going to leave the ball to him; but, noticing that the goalkeeper did not mean to try and save, he lashed out with his right foot, and, catching the ball fair and square just as it reached the goal-line, he sent it curling into the air with a tremendous volley that brought forth a salvo of applause.

When the game had been in progress twenty minutes, the Luton forwards, with a forward rush that would not be denied, well backed by a movement on the part of the halves, carried the ball to within a few yards of the net, and Guy, being unceremoniously hurled full length by a weighty shoulder charge, the Luton inside-right rammed the ball past Hines with the utmost ease.

Again the goalkeeper made no attempt to defend his charge, and the spectators began to hoot.

"Take him off—take him off!" they yelled.

Robb walked up to the goalkeeper.

"Really, Hines," he said, "don't you think you might try a bit?"

"I'll try when I'm treated properly," returned the goalkeeper sulkily.

Robb Harwood looked at Hines in distrust. It seemed indeed as if the goalkeeper were trying to lose the match for them.

All doubt was thrust on one side five minutes later, when Hines found himself confronted by a solitary forward, who from a perfect centre got the ball at his feet, whilst the Luton inside-left cleverly obstructed Guy, preventing him from getting near.

Hines did not even shape to save the shot, and it dribbled past him at a pace at which a schoolboy could have kept it out.

Robb's blood boiled. The spectators roared their displeasure.

"Send him off!" they cried.

Rightly or wrongly, Robb decided to act. Better play a man short than have such an unwilling goalkeeper.

"Leave the field, Hines," he said.

"What?" growled the professional, looking daggers at Robb.

"I am captain here. Leave the field. I'll have no arguing. Get off at once!"

Hines looked inclined to rebel against his sentence; but as the crowd continued to howl at him and looked threatening, he shrugged his shoulders and ran off, an outburst of cheering hailing his departure for the dressing-rooms.

"Now," said Robb, "you go in goal, Jones."

Guy took his place on the line, and presently he saw those ubiquitous blue shirts of Luton coming along with a whirlwind rush. A perfect centre saw the centre-forward again in possession, and with the utmost coolness he shot wide of Guy, towards the corner of the net. Guy took one look, then dropped to the shot, and, with two Luton men right on him, he managed, in some miraculous way, to get his finger-tips to the ball and curled it round the post.

The two men in blue stopped, astounded at the save, and a wild roar of cheering ascended to the skies that made the welkin ring.

And with that deafening roar ringing in his ears Guy lay still and motionless where he had fallen.

"Good heavens!" cried Robb Harwood, rushing towards him; "he's badly hurt!"

(The second instalment of this powerful new football tale will appear on Saturday next.)

"The Foundling of St. Basil's," by Henry St. John, Starts in "The Boys' Friend" This Week.

GOALKEEPING:

Mr. W. I. BASSETT, the Famous International, gives readers some useful hints on how to become a successful custodian.

I AM writing these articles, by kind permission of the Editor, especially for the boy footballer; but I have little doubt that the instruction contained here will not be read in vain by those of more mature years.

You want to be a footballer, do you? Well, to begin at the beginning, perhaps you want to be a goalkeeper. Fewer young fellows sigh to become goalkeepers than are blessed with a definite determination to excel as forwards; but then, there is only one goalkeeper as against five forwards in every team. But the post has come to be looked upon as one of the thankless sort. In plain language, the goalkeeper usually gets more kicks than halfpence. Of course, on the other hand, he is a privileged individual in that he must not be jostled and knocked over as other men are; in fact, under no circumstances must he be even hampered in the smooth execution of his duty.

He is a much more privileged individual than the goalkeeper was when I started football. It then required

a man of iron nerve

and of almost reckless demeanour to officiate between the posts. The Preston North End forwards, in the days of the famous James Belgers, were renowned for the summary way in which they went for the man who was guarding the posts, and each of the three Midland teams which I knew so well nearly a quarter of a century ago, had an inside forward whose particular duty it was to look after the custodian. In the West Bromwich Albion team the redoubtable Jem Bayliss was the one who was expected to handle the goalkeeper through the posts, and he often did so long before the ball came to hand. But then, that was a common practice in those days. You made a rush for the goalkeeper the moment the ball was seen to be on its way from the wing to the centre. John Brodie, the well-known International centre-forward of Wolverhampton Wanderers, who was the life and soul of their team, was also dreaded by goalkeepers. He was a powerful fellow, and his rush has become historic. Aston Villa had Tom Green, who formerly played for West Bromwich Albion, and he shows to-day signs of the work which he used to do in front of goal, for he broke his nose while engaged in the game.

But although the goalkeeper does not stand in dread of opponents as he did, he is still more likely to come in for a nasty accident than any other member of the side. If you get a tough scrimmage in front of goal, players are apt to forget that the goalkeeper is regarded as a sort of privileged being. They go for him for all they are worth, and although the referee's decision often tells them that they are performing an illegal act, it is possible for the goalkeeper to receive his damage before the referee can, by blowing his whistle, give effect to his ideas on the point. A goalkeeper still wants a certain amount of nerve to be thoroughly successful, and even though he has a much easier time than his predecessor had, the goalkeeper who is

nervous at a crisis

is of little utility to his side. He must still be able to stop a dangerous rush; he must still know when to dart out of goal and take the ball right from the toe of an oncoming forward, or from the toes of a line of oncoming forwards. Unless he can face a good rush, he had better reconsider his determination to become a custodian.

You should have stature on your side to be a good goalkeeper. There have been some fine goalkeepers who lacked stature. Billy Scarlett-stone was one. He showed marvellous agility in getting at the ball, and Williamson, of Middlesbrough, is not a giant. But

the best goalkeepers

have been big men. Jamie Richmond, the famous goalkeeper of Darwen, was a big man. Linacre, Robinson, George, Hawirey, and Bob Robertson were all big men, while Scott was a perfect giant. Stature is an advantage, although it is not absolutely an essential. A goalkeeper must have good eyesight—in fact, J. W. Robinson places this as one of the greatest gifts a goalkeeper can possess.

A goalkeeper should be able to use his hands and feet with equal facility, although he should always give preference to the hand (or, rather, hands) whenever possible. Always use two hands in preference to one. Every goalkeeper should be able to field the ball well, and also to punch the ball well, and he should be able to drop-kick and punt like a Rugby footballer. A good goalkeeper can often tell which way a forward is going to shoot, by watching his feet.

So far as practice goes, any exercise which renders the body supple and enables you to turn and twist with facility is excellent. Skipping and ball-punching you can never go wrong with. The best practice so far as real experience goes, is to have half a dozen players to keep banging at you with half a dozen balls. Under these circumstances you get a greater variety of shots in five minutes than you would get in the whole of an ordinary game. A goalkeeper should always follow some game in the summer. Robinson recommends baseball; but cricket is good enough to keep any man fit.

THE ED.

CYCLING:

Mr. A. E. WILLS, the holder of a world's record for cycling, tells readers how to excel at this magnificent sport.

AN instance of the indomitable pluck and perseverance under difficulties of the road record rider is the recent feat of Mr. C. W. D. C. Ball, of the Bath Road Club, when breaking the record from

Land's End to London.

He had rather a nasty spill in the first portion of his ride, but stuck to his task gamely, although naturally suffering from the effects of the fall. Then heavy rain, which drenched the rider for over two hours, and a howling wind, reduced him to a sorry plight, so much that he was minded to give up the attempt when scarce half the journey had been covered. A hot drink, however, and a few words of encouragement set him going again, and manfully he plugged through the mud, until he gained the Bath Road, when, the rain having ceased, he began to be more hopeful, and made much better progress. Ball finally reached Hyde Park Corner in good style, having covered the 304 miles in 20h. 56m. 5s., or 3min. 37sec. better than the previous record—a most notable achievement, if the disheartening mishaps of the earlier portion of the ride are taken into consideration. The machine on which this ride was made was on show at Holborn Viaduct afterwards, and it was interesting to note its mud-besprinkled condition, despite the mud-guards employed. One could imagine the effect that this coating of mud had on the working parts, and viewed with astonishment the fact that a record was accomplished under such conditions; yet this may be taken as little more than an average of the difficulties of a record-breaking attempt.

I have shown how necessary it is to train for some considerable time in advance in order to prepare for and overcome the severe exertion attached to a long-distance ride at racing speed, and that such training should take all sorts and conditions of riding. It is wise also to set much of your own pace. Gradually you will learn how to recognise the approaching signs of a "bad time," and when to take an "easy" with advantage.

Master Alex. Findlay, an Aberdeen member of the League of Young Athletes, who has won 26 medals for swimming and diving, etc.

The object in riding under varied conditions is to learn how to extricate yourself from the difficulties which all road riders have to encounter, difficulties from which the track cyclist is immune. The problems of traffic, hill-climbing, conditions of road, etc., do not affect the following behind pace (the method of riding most long-distance path races) on the track, whose principal aim is to shelter in behind his pacing machine, and pedal away for all he is worth, with little thought or care for aught else.

Above all, it is necessary for

a long-distance athlete

to be cyclist, runner, walker, rower, or otherwise—to be thoroughly in condition. The sprinter may scramble through a race successfully with the luck of a slow-run race, when not wound up, but the distance athlete will soon crack up if not fit, no matter how "big-hearted" he may be.

I have been struck with the pertinacity and whole-heartedness of long-distance road riders in their training methods. When I was riding in short-distance races on the path, a few weeks' training at the beginning of the season soon put me in form, and afterwards a few steady, practice-spins during the week, together with a race or two each Saturday, kept me in trim. But the road-racer has to undergo more strenuous exercise, although it is more varied, and he has more pleasant scenery to view than one encounters in riding round and round a track.

Taking my own case, now that I have taken up long-distance racing behind pacing machines I find that I have to do considerably more training than I did when riding in sprint races. That plenty of hard work, provided it is not undergone at a sacrifice of strength, agrees with anyone physically fit, may be instanced in the steady improvement which I have found in my own riding. I have won all my recent matches, which include a gratifying win over Louis Darragon, the 100 kilometre world's champion, during Bank Holiday week, and yet I feel stronger and more fit to-day than ever I did. I shall continue such regular practice-work so long as it is consistent with health and strength, as it means developing extra muscular power and stamina.

(To be continued.)

SWIMMING:

Mr. WILLIAM HENRY, Secretary of the Royal Life-Saving Society, coaches readers in the important arts of Swimming, Diving, and Life-Saving.

I BELIEVE that the instructions already imparted will be sufficient for all purposes of general utility, and that practice only will be necessary to make the novice perfect. I must also remind the reader that it is useless to try to become an expert without a careful attention to detail. A few trials are valueless. Many say that they have been to the baths regularly. By that they intend to convey the idea that they have devoted much time and care to the practice of swimming, but when one goes more fully into the subject one generally finds that a visit of once or twice a week has been indulged in, and that often much time has been spent standing about and shivering at the thought of entering the water.

If I had at first adopted such methods I am sure that at the present time I could not have been able to perform the many evolutions which are possible, and which interest so many to watch.

The ability to float motionlessly on the surface of the water, to move in any given direction without apparent effort, gives confidence and self-reliance, therefore is most important in any attempt to save life from drowning, but to

become an expert,

and to easily do all the movements that I am going to describe, it is necessary that the practice be regular and performed with care.

I know that speed, not grace, is the aim of most swimmers, and for that reason that portion of the art which commends it to the onlooker — who when he sees how neatly you perform several movements passes judgment upon your ability, and says how clever you are —is very often forgotten in the hunt for prizes, and often neglected in after life. I do not intend to imply that you should not practice speed-swimming; far from it. My object in saying what I have, is to draw attention to the fact that there is much to learn, even if one becomes the best of speed swimmers.

To be an all-round swimmer should be the aim of every one, and to attain this object daily practice is necessary, but when daily practice is entered upon care should be taken to avoid standing about the side of the bath, and thus getting cold. The whole time should be devoted to the development of a particular movement until that movement can be performed neatly, smartly, and with precision.

The advantages of fancy swimming are that, more than anything else, it imbues one with that power which enables one to move through, float in, and fully comprehend the meaning of every movement, whether of hands, or feet, or head, and its effect on the general position or

progress of the body

along the surface, downward, or under the water.

To do all this a knowledge is, of course, of primary importance. A swimmer cannot lay claim to be an expert unless he can float. As soon as that can be done well, scientific or fancy swimming will become easy, and a most fascinating exercise to him. Many of the feats which to most people seem wonderfully difficult are really very easily performed. There are, of course, a large number which can only be accomplished after many trials, and anyone who attempts them in an exhibition of skill will be sure to make himself ludicrous and absurd, unless he has previously had plenty of practice, and, therefore, is in a position to execute them with smartness and precision.

When he can do this he will be sure to gain the applause, not only of friends, but also the person who is always to be found at a bath looking for points.

In my next article I shall give my readers some instruction concerning the easiest in fancy-swimming, so that they may be able at any time to give an exhibition before the most critical of onlookers, and excite admiration. Every boy and young man who can swim at all should go in for fancy swimming, for he will attain a beauty and grace of movement by doing so that is denied his more ambitious friends, who go in for speedy swimming alone, in the hope of carrying off innumerable prizes.

Mind you, I do not decry speedy swimming, but the cultivation of fancy strokes is also most valuable.

(To be continued.)

FOOTBALL:

Mr. FRED SPIKESLEY, the famous International, chats with readers concerning the essential qualifications of a great player.

TO become a really great footballer it is necessary for a youth to possess, apart from skill, three qualities that do not appeal to the ordinary spectator—viz: Pluck, confidence, and position.

Pluck.

As the game is played now, great pluck is needed. The player must make up his mind not to flinch at the tightest corner. If he once shows the white feather his opponent will notice it instantly, and for the remainder of the game he will invariably be outwitted. Of course, there is always a certain amount of discretionary power to be exercised, but on the whole, when it is a near thing between a player and his opponent who gets the ball, it is advisable to take all risks, always providing everything is equal, especially as regards build and weight.

I am sure if statistics could be given of injured players, it would be found that the plucky men are not so susceptible to accidents as those who are half-hearted. Without pluck a player will allow his opponent to gain an advantage which will be beneficial to his side and detrimental to the players. Without pluck no young footballer can hope to succeed, as, in my opinion, science is a secondary consideration in the present style of football. Pluck with skill will make a great player, but skill without pluck will not.

Confidence.

Confidence is another essential a youth must possess to become a really fine footballer. There are many first-class players who have been possessed of the average—or more—ability of our present-day footballers, but through lacking confidence when the opportunity has occurred for displaying their abilities they have not risen above mediocrity, with the result that their club have not deemed it advisable to continue to retain their services. There are also players full of confidence but lacking in ability, and this class can never hope to succeed at the game. On the other hand, the player possessing great ability, but who is nervous and lacking in confidence, might become famous if he could once master his stage-fright.

I know the importance of the occasion when a young player is making his debut in high-class football and some 20,000 spectators are in attendance. Personally, I would never criticise harshly on these occasions. I think the Press should take a lenient view of a man's errors even though he does not realise expectations. No doubt he will be sensitive to the occasion, and if favourably dealt with papers he can get hold of likely to give a report of the match. If the Press notices are encouraging it may mean the making of him as a player, but if otherwise his name, as regards football, will become a nonentity.

I could mention dozens of players who have become really brilliant after being discarded by their first professional clubs, no doubt because they have been too nervous to do their abilities full justice. Such men on joining a fresh club, having gained confidence, put up a good show, and their original club cannot understand their becoming the brilliant players they do. But the opportunity does not always occur for young players to get these second trials. Hence I say, don't criticise young players harshly, but give them every encouragement to gain that confidence which it is necessary for them to possess before they can become successful footballers.

Position.

Now, as regards position, I am sure players do not take full advantage of this. It does not require energy, speed, science, or anything of that sort, but merely a quick thought to make a man take up an unmarked position. A player on the ball is always noticing in a series of quick glances the position of his own players, and nothing is more annoying than his having to dribble the ball himself because his comrades have not taken up unmarked positions, so that he can pass to one of them quite easily. The young player should always remember that his partners cannot receive the ball through his opponents' legs. Directly a man sees one of his own side on the ball and getting into difficulties, he should slip on the right or left of the man who is about to tackle. The player in possession will then find it quite easy to pass. He will be very quick to notice the position of his own colours when he needs aid, and will act accordingly. Every man should mind he is not covered by an opponent when his own side is in possession, but take in at a glance the most advantageous position to place himself in to receive a direct pass.

Although pluck, confidence, and position seem but small factors in a successful football career, I can assure my readers that without these a player will never attain to fame in football circles. If ambitious players will think this short article over, I am confident they will soon be able to improve their play and at the same time have some knowledge of the possibilities of their future in football circles.

(Next week: a splendid article by Mr. Alan R. Haig-Brown will appear. No reader should miss it.)

TEDDY LESTER'S CHUMS.

A Rattling New Tale of Slapton School.

By JOHN FINNEMORE.

THE OPENING CHAPTERS IN BRIEF.

TEDDY LESTER, a pupil at Slapton School, in Mr. Jayne's House. A popular character well known to readers of THE BOYS' REALM.

JIMMY WEST, nicknamed the Bat. A new boy at Slapton. He is an old chum of Teddy's.

DIGBY, SANDYS, and TO NAGAO (a little Jap), chums of Teddy Lester at Slapton.

CURZON, GIBSON, and PALMER, three bullies of Slapton School; also in Jayne's House.

The opening of a new term at Slapton School is made conspicuous by the arrival of Jimmy West. In appearance he is guileless and a little bit soft, but beneath this deceptive exterior he is as sharp as any inmate of Slapton. Curzon, Gibson, and Palmer at once fall foul of West, who shows them that in spite of his queer looks he can keep his end up.

On the first half-holiday of the term Teddy Lester and his chums go into the neighbouring town of Oakford. The river there is greatly swollen owing to the torrential rainfalls which have recently been experienced. The boys resolve to watch the scene.

(Now read the week's instalment.)

THE 9th CHAPTER.
The Cottage on the Flat.

"WE won't go down to the bridge again," said Teddy, as he and his two companions went along the High Street. "I'll take you to a place where the flood will be a splendid sight, and that's the weir at Miller Pool."

"Where's Miller Pool?" asked Ito.

"Down at the bottom end of the town," replied Teddy. "There's a big weir there, and it will be something to see a flood of this size thundering over it."

Teddy knew every inch of Oakford, and, under his guidance, the main street was left, and the boys threaded a series of narrow passages which ran down to the older and lower quarters of the little riverside town.

They soon came out on a terrace which stood beside the foaming, angry river. Here they saw a knot of people gazing with the utmost interest over the parapet. They ran and joined them, and found that the watchers had their eyes fixed on a post which ran down the wall and disappeared into the water.

"It's gone!" cried a man, as Teddy and his companions ran up. "The 5ft. 9in. mark's gone under. The river's a foot higher already than it was then."

The group of men, riverside workers one and all, boatmen, bargemen, and the like, looked at each other in wonder and dismay, then spread in all directions to carry the momentous news.

"What do they mean, Teddy?" asked Ito.

"Why," said Teddy, "on that post is marked the height of the different floods which have happened. I've heard that the highest of all was in 1559, when there was a most fearful flood, and a great part of the bottom end of the town was swept away."

"And now it's higher than that," said Ito.

"It is," replied Teddy soberly. "There'll be some mischief done in Oakford to-night."

"W-w-what's that?" cried the Bat, and pointed.

Out in the stream a huge mass of wood was rolling and tumbling and turning as it swept down the flood. Teddy whistled.

"That's a mill-wheel," he said. "The mills upstream are being dashed to pieces and swept away. Let's cut along and see it swept over the weir!"

The boys ran along the terrace, which soon became a little embankment. Suddenly they stopped and looked at each other in alarm. The embankment was shaking under them.

"Back—go back!" yelled Teddy. And they turned and darted fifty yards to the rear. Here they paused and drew deep breaths.

"By jingo," gasped Teddy, "that embankment's going! I felt it shake like a spring-board under my feet."

"So did I!" said Ito; and the Bat nodded assent.

"What mischief can be done if it goes!" said Ito quickly. "We must give the alarm at once that it is unsound!"

The boys looked eagerly before them, and saw that the embankment protected a little riverside flat, on which three two-storeyed cottages were built in a clump, their gardens spreading around them.

"If the river bursts through, it'll be all over those houses in no time!" cried Teddy. "Let's run and tell the people of the frightful danger they stand in!"

A winding path and a flight of steps led down to the little flat, and the boys flew along the path and down the steps at full speed. Not a soul was in sight. All the sightseers had been down to the bridge, and the clump of cottages seemed silent and deserted.

"Three houses!" cried Teddy, as the boys ran up to the cottages. "Take a house apiece, and tell whoever comes to the door to cut for their lives. The embankment's coming down!"

Teddy dashed at the first house. Ito at the second, the Bat at the third. Teddy knocked and thumped at the door. No answer. He seized the handle. The door was locked.

"Nobody at home!" thought Teddy. "That's all right!"

He sprang forward, and saw Ito turning from the second door.

"This place is locked up!" cried Ito.

"So was that!" replied Teddy, jerking his thumb over his shoulder. "I'll lay a guinea the people are up on the bridge watching the flood. But look! There's someone at home there!"

He pointed to the open door of the third cottage. The Bat had disappeared, but they could hear his voice hammering and stammering away to someone inside.

In rushed Teddy, and found Jimmy West doing all he could to warn a labourer's wife of her danger. But the poor old Bat was excited, and his infirmity was worse than ever. His tongue became tangled into such knots that the woman could not understand him.

"You must get away from here at once!" cried Teddy. "The embankment's coming down, and if it once gives way the river will be all over the flat here in a twinkling!"

"The river!" said the woman wonderingly. "I heard it was high, but surely it's not so high as that?"

"Yes, it is," cried Teddy. "You have no time to lose. Bring your children along, and don't lose a minute. Here, I'll carry this one!"

And Teddy bent to take a curly-headed little toddler about two years old which clung to its mother's skirts. A boy of four stood on the other side.

The woman now became convinced of the nearness of danger, and turned very pale.

"I'll run upstairs and fetch my baby," she said. "It's asleep there."

"Be quick, then!" said Teddy. "Don't lose a second! The embankment was shaking under us! The river is rising every moment. It can't stand long!"

But the danger was nearer than anyone dreamed. At this moment a great shout of excitement burst from the lips of Ito. He had stayed at the door to keep a look-out, and now he saw something which gave even his iron nerves a jerk, and brought a wild shrill cry of warning from his lips.

"It's going—it's going!" yelled Ito. "Too late—too late! We cannot escape!"

Teddy and the Bat rushed to the door in time to see a most majestic and tremendous sight. The upper part of the embankment was tottering over in ruin, and the yellow, tawny, foaming waves of the river were leaping madly through the gap.

With terrific speed and with deafening uproar the river burst through its bounds, and a wild flood swept across the flat.

For a second the boys stared spellbound at the ruin rushing upon them; then Ito seized the door and slammed it to.

"Upstairs!" roared Teddy. "Get upstairs, everybody! This room will be full of water in another moment!"

THE 10th CHAPTER.
In the Grip of the Flood.

THE Bat made one jump, and caught the little boy. The mother seized the younger child, and all scrambled up the narrow staircase which led to the upper storey. Teddy brought up the rear. As he set his foot on the stairs the crest of the advancing flood broke with a thunderous crash against the front of the house.

The door stood firm, but the window was beaten in at once, and a vast torrent of swirling water seethed into the little room.

It swept across the floor, put out the fire with a fierce hiss, and then at the next instant up rose chairs and tables, and floated round and bumped against each other in a flood of water five feet deep.

From the top of the stairs Teddy watched all this, and then stepped aloft to join his comrades.

"By jingo," said Teddy, "I didn't dream it was so near as this! We're cut off, and the water's all round us!"

"We are!" said Ito. "Just look out of this window!"

Teddy went to the side of his friend, and looked out. The flat, the garden, the fields near at hand had vanished. In their stead a vast sheet of yellow water was spread abroad, its surface tawny, its surface tossing and heaving like a wind-lashed sea.

"Oh, what shall we do?" wailed the woman —"what shall we do? My poor children will be drowned!"

"No, it's not so bad as that at present," said Teddy cheerily. "There'll be a boat along soon, when people see what a fix we are in."

"There's a man on the bank!" cried Ito; "and another, and another!"

Teddy looked out, and saw a little group of people on the nearest high ground, about sixty yards away.

"Give 'em a signal, Ito!" said Teddy.

And the little Jap hung half-way through the window, and waved his coat. The signal was returned at once, and Teddy murmured:

"That's all right. There'll be a boat along soon," he repeated to the frightened woman. "Don't you worry. We shall all get out of this little fix easily enough."

They waited for some time in silence. At every moment they expected to see a boat run into sight on the opposite bank. They had seen several in the town being run along on trolleys to points where danger threatened, and surely one would be sent here at once to rescue them.

But though a crowd grew steadily on the bank, no boat appeared, and Teddy grew uneasy.

"What are they dilly-dallying about?" he said impatiently. "Where's that boat?"

"The w-w-water's r-r-rising!" said the Bat.

"So it is!" said Teddy uneasily. "That looks as if more of the embankment had gone!"

Ito leaned as far as he could out of the window, and looked up towards the river.

"I can't see the embankment from here," he said.

"You can see it from a window at the back," cried the woman.

The three boys ran through the door to which the woman pointed, and rushed to the window of the back-room.

A cry of wonder and fear burst from their lips, for they saw at this moment a vast new piece of the embankment break away, and a fresh flood of water burst into the hollow.

And now there reared itself on the very lip of the incoming flood a great tree. Torn away from the bank where it had grown for many years, an immensely heavy ash was being swept down the furious stream like a cork. Its branches had caught in the stones left in the bottom of the embankment, and the rush of the flood swung the butt upwards till it stood on its end, with its torn roots aloft. Then it swung over the embankment into the flood, and raced, swift as an arrow from a bow, towards the clump of cottages.

A cry of terror burst from every throat. Would it shatter the walls of the frail, old buildings? If so, their doom was sealed.

With wild eyes the boys watched the huge trunk hurled like a huge javelin against the slight cottage, on it came. Crash! The huge butt smote the end house and went through it as if the walls had been made of paper. Then it steered aside, caught in a fresh eddy of the flood.

The other two cottages rocked and trembled to their foundations, and for a moment the boys thought that the whole mass of building was going down in one common ruin. Then the tremor passed, and the boys found that the cottage in which they were still stood.

"I can't see in this end and not the other," said Teddy, with a long, indrawn breath. And the others nodded.

"What is it, eh? What is it? Are the houses coming down?" screamed the woman. "Oh, my children! My children! We shall all be drowned!"

"No, no!" called out Teddy. "Those two cottages are standing all right. A big tree bumped into the end one. But where under the sun is the boat?" he added.

And the three boys ran back to the other room to see if there were any signs of a skiff being launched to their help. But there was no token visible of any such thing. Fully two hundred people were gathered on the other bank, but no boat, no sign of help.

"Where's the boat?" cried Teddy impatiently. "They've had heaps of time to run a boat here. Hang it all, why don't they do something? If another big tree comes along, it might knock us to smithereens any minute."

"Yes, yes," said Ito, "why are they so slow? They must have seen the tree destroy the end house."

"There ain't no boat for us!" wailed the terrified woman. "There's too much to do elsewhere. If it's like this here, what's it like down at Miller Pool?"

Teddy caught his breath with a gasp. The woman's question was terribly right. What was it like at Miller Pool? The people in danger there would be numbered by hundreds. Every boat was busy and thrice busy.

THE 11th CHAPTER.
The Raft.

TEDDY prowled uneasily to the back to take another look at the embankment. As he reached the window there was a dull crash and a tremendous splash. Another great piece of wall belonging to the ruined cottage had given way and tumbled into the flood.

"The w-w-water's r-r-rising," said the Bat again. He was keeping his eye steadily on high-water mark, and it was making progress.

The boys gathered at the head of the stairs and looked into the flooded lower room.

The stairs were not enclosed, but ran down one side of the wall. As they looked, the water began to steam up the foot of the highest stair, and began to stream into the back-room. The room in which the woman and children were was up two steps again from the level of the back-room.

"We sh-sh-shall have to sh-sh-shin up to the r-r-roof next," remarked the Bat quietly.

"The question is, how long is the roof going to stand?" murmured Ito. "For my part, I don't fancy the whole place is going to stand long. There's too great a weight and rush of water for it."

"Right you are, old boy," said Teddy. "And look here, we've got to do something, and do it pretty quick. There's no boat for us, that seems pretty clear. Well, we're good for a shot at saving this poor woman and her kids, and ourselves as well."

"H-h-how?" said the Bat.

Teddy snapped his fingers.

"We'll build a raft," he said.

"Good!" cried Ito. "Good, Teddy!"

"One for y-y-you, Teddy, old m-m-man!" cried the Bat.

"Yes," said Teddy, "we'll build a jolly strong raft, and get ashore somehow or other. If this crazy old place will only stand under us for a bit again, we ain't done with by a long chalk."

"C-c-collar that t-t-table," said the Bat; "that's a g-g-good c-c-centre piece."

"So it is," said Teddy, and stepped down a couple of stairs into the water, and laid hold of a leg of the floating table.

They hauled the table on to the landing, and carried it to the front-room. That was the place to build the raft, for the water there was much quieter, the main rush being on the back of the house.

"We want a rope to lash things together," said Ito.

"So we do," returned Teddy. "I say, where's your clothes-line?" he called to the woman.

"It wor a-hangin' on the kitchen wall," she replied.

"Hard luck," said Teddy. "It's somewhere down in that flood now."

But within three minutes there was a joyful "Hoorooh!" from the Bat. He was salving chairs from the pool, and tangled round the back of one of them was the precious clothes-line.

With a yell of joy Teddy sprang forward and drew its dripping coils to land, or, rather, to the stair-head. Now they went to work in earnest.

They thrust the table through the window, and turned it legs uppermost. They cut the clothes-line into lengths with their pocket-knives, and lashed chairs and a washstand round it.

"Now for a door to lay square across the inside of the table!" cried Teddy. "How can we get one down? Are there any tools I can reach?" he cried to the woman.

"There's a heavy billhook hanging beside the stairs," she said. And she pointed out the place where the billhook was now far under water.

Teddy slipped off jacket and shoes, dived down, and soon reappeared, streaming with water, but billhook in hand.

The keen, heavy billhook, driven by Teddy's tough muscles, soon made short work of the hinges of the door. Down it crashed, and the Bat seized it with his long arms, and began to drag it towards the window, where Ito was holding on to the raft to keep it from floating away down the stream.

"The rope's finished," said Teddy. "How are we going to lash this door on?"

"I'll get a sheet," cried the woman, "and tear it up and use it! That'll make a good rope for that job!"

"So it will," said Teddy. "I'll lend you a hand."

"I say, West," said Ito, "just lay hold of the raft and hang on to it. I've got a little job to do."

The Bat took Ito's place, and the little Jap seized the heavy billhook and vanished into the next room. At the next moment the house rang with the blows he delivered on a piece of woodwork.

Teddy and the woman tore up a couple of sheets, and knotted them as fast as their fingers could fly. Then Teddy and the Bat lashed the door across the table.

"Hold it steady, Jimmy!" cried Teddy. "I'll just hop on and try it."

The Bat hung on to the raft more tightly than ever, and Teddy leapt on to it.

"It rides well!" cried Teddy, moving up and down the door. "Not half bad, though I say it myself. What's old Ito up to?"

At this moment Ito appeared and approached the window.

"How's that for a paddle?" he said quietly.

"Jolly good!" cried Teddy quickly, and the Bat slowly.

The little Jap had ripped up a strip of wainscoting, and fashioned it roughly into a paddle about five feet long. He looked attentively at the raft as it bobbed under Teddy's weight and movements.

"We can't all go at one trip," he said.

"Think not!" cried Teddy.

"I'm sure not," said Ito. "We should overload the ship."

"Then th-th-they m-m-must go f-f-first," said the Bat, nodding to the woman and her children.

"Right for you, Jimmy," said Teddy. "And I'll be the waterman."

"No, you won't," said Ito "I'll take that on."

"Not a bit of it!" cried Teddy. "Why shouldn't I have a dab at it?"

"For two reasons," replied Ito. "First, I am the lightest of the three, and the woman, the children, and I will make a plenty heavy enough load for that raft. And, for the next thing, I've done a lot of work at home in our native boat, the samurai. Teddy, you're brave, but I know a bit about paddling and steering."

The last word was barely out of his mouth when a shrill scream rang out behind them. They turned and saw a ripple of yellow water sweeping across the floor. The flood was invading their last refuge, and the woman screamed as the water ran round her feet.

"Come on!" shouted Teddy to her. "Jump aboard!"

Aghast with terror, and seeing that the little raft was the only chance of safety for herself and her little flock, the poor woman crept trembling through the window, her baby in her arms.

"Sit down hang in the middle of the door," said Teddy cheerfully, "and don't worry. My

partner will put you on the bank almost before you know you're afloat. He's about as useful as they make 'em."

Teddy held the raft steady, and the Bat's long arms came in very useful as he swung the other two children aboard and packed them close against their mother. The woman put one arm round the pair of them and held them closer still.

With a strip of the sheet-rope Ito had lashed his paddle loosely to one of the upright tables-legs, and now stood calm and steady, with the handle held firmly in both hands.

At this moment, above the roar of the flood, a shrill, ringing shout came over the water. The three brave lads had been too busy with their task to look aside for a moment, and they had not given a single glance at the crowd.

But the crowd had been watching them eagerly, and had not missed a single item in their preparations. When it was seen that the woman and children were aboard the raft, and that one of the brave comrades was about to get them ashore, a tremendous cheer of encouragement burst from the watching throng.

"I'right, old chap!" said Teddy to the little Jap.

"Right!" said Ito quietly. "Let her go! I'll soon come back for you."

"Good luck!" cried Teddy; and "G-g-good l-l-l-luck!" said the Bat.

Then the two latter released their grip of the raft, and the current swung it at once away from the window.

Teddy watched it critically as it floated off.

The yellow flood seized it at once, and began to spin it round and toss it up and down like a chip. But Ito soon put that right, and by a dexterous use of his paddle brought the nose round and held the raft steady in the current.

THE 12th CHAPTER.

The Fight with the Flood.

ITO did not attempt to do anything but steer, but this he did with wonderful skill.

The bank which bounded the riverside road curved round below and formed a little promontory. Ito aimed to steer his rather unwieldy craft into the bight formed by this promontory, where help could be afforded him from the shore.

Away spun and rocked the raft downstream, and yard by yard Ito worked the rude vessel and its precious freight ashore.

The excitement on the river bank was tremendous. After the one rousing cheer which hailed the start of the raft the people maintained a breathless silence, every eye fixed on Ito's struggle with the flood.

Among the crowd on the bank were Tom Sandys and Arthur Digby, those old and tried friends of Teddy and Ito — indeed, there were a score or more of Slapton boys there. The rumour had flown abroad—in the swift way that rumour will—that some Slapton boys were performing a daring deed, and a number of their school-fellows had rushed to the scene.

Tom and Arthur had recognised their friends, and were full of anxiety.

"Why, it's old Teddy," said Tom; "and Ito's with him, and that queer new chap that Teddy's been giving a hand to lately."

"How did they get there?" said Arthur.

"Can't say," said Tom. "You never do know where Teddy'll turn up. He's a bit of a stormy petrel. Where's a boat? Why don't they bring a boat along?"

But the boys soon learned why. The flood was simply devastating the lower end of the town, and the boats were doing all that could be done to save life and property. The cottage women had hit on the truth. The boats and boatmen were all engaged at Miller Pool.

When Ito left the ruined cottage with the raft, Tom and Arthur watched every inch of his progress with breathless interest.

"He's coming!" cried Tom. "He's swinging right across the flood. Noble old Ito!"

"Slapton for ever!" yelled Foulkes, who was one of the crowd; and the cry was taken up by every Slapton throat: "Slapton for ever!"

"Wait a bit—wait a bit!" came in anxious tones from an old bargeman who stood at Tom's elbow. "That brave lad ain't ashore yet, not by no manner o' means. I doubt if he's far enough in."

"What do you mean?" cried Tom.

"Why this, sir," said the old bargeman, who had spent a lifetime in learning the tricks and turns of a navigable river. "You see, there's a strong current inshore sweeping past our very feet. When he gets into that current it'll be very slow work forging across it. An' if so be as he don't get across in time he'll be carried past the point, an' then—"

The old man paused, and dropped the hand with which he had been pointing to his side. Tom drew a long breath and nodded. If the raft were once carried past the point of the promontory it would be swept full out into the raging stream, where trunks of trees, beams of destroyed buildings, and a thousand pieces of debris were hurrying along. Let one of these but strike the frail and clumsy craft, and both it and its hapless load would be beaten under the rushing water.

"If he only gets near enough, I'll sling this line aboard, an' we'll soon tow him in," continued the old bargeman; and he patted the rope, already coiled for throwing, which was laid over one arm.

In and in came the raft. Many in the crowd, who knew little of the tricks of the flood, were already hailing the landing with joyous shouts, but the old bargeman remained silent.

"Ah," he said at last, "there it be!"

The raft had touched the edge of the fierce current which raced round the edge of the little bay for which Ito was steering. The suck of the undertow swung the raft offshore, and began to hurry it downstream. The crowd gave a cry of anxiety and uneasiness. Why did not the raft come straight inshore, as it had been doing? Why did it swing away downstream parallel with the bank?

Ito knew why very well. He had recognised at once the danger of this swift, hidden current, and now he strove with all his might to drive the raft across it.

Slowly—slowly he forged across the darting stream, but swiftly—swiftly he was hurried down it. The promontory was drawing nearer —nearer—terribly nearer. Once that was passed the raft would sweep out to the broad bosom of the rolling flood, and nothing could save its load of helpless passengers.

"Throw—throw!" cried Tom to the old bargeman. "Sling your line out!"

But the old man shook his head.

"No use," he said briefly. "Couldn't reach 'em. No man on earth could sling that far."

And now the crowd set up a cry of despair, for the raft, despite the noble efforts of its gallant little steersman, began to swing steadily away. The savage undertow was mastering it and driving it offshore.

For two seconds Tom surveyed the scene with a set jaw and staring eyes. His brain was working at express speed. What could be done to save this heroic little chum, the poor mother, and the innocent children? In a flash he saw the only chance, and he leapt to it.

He seized the old bargeman by the arm and cried:

"Come on—come on! We can do it yet!"

The old man did not see what Tom meant; but he ran beside him, urged forward by the eager tones of Slapton's finest athlete, and Arthur Digby ran with them.

As they hurried on, Tom announced his plan in a few winged words:

"I am going to swim off the point there with a line. It is the only chance."

The experienced old riverman saw Tom's plan at once, and agreed.

"Ay, ay, sir, if ye've the mind to do it. 'Tis their only chance."

Away spun and rocked the raft downstream, and yard by yard Ito worked the rude vessel and its precious freight ashore.

They ran along the edge of the water and gained the point of the promontory. They had now well outstripped the raft, which was, however, steadily coming downstream, and not making an inch of way inshore, despite Ito's tremendous efforts.

Down went Tom's cap and jacket, off went his waistcoat and shoes; while the old bargeman made a noose ready for Tom's waist. The rope was adjusted, and, without an instant's delay, Tom leapt into the boiling stream.

Yard by yard Tom drove his way through the seething flood with long, powerful strokes. He, too, was driven downstream by the terrific rush of the water, but he strove to make his course as direct as possible lest he should swim to the full tether of the rope and yet fall short of the raft.

He had seen his gallant friend leap into the stream, and he redoubled his efforts to edge the raft inwards. There were now a few frightful moments of fearful tension for the crowd. Would the heroic comrades effect a meeting? Would the raft be swept by before Tom could gain it?

Then a cheer, a veritable roar of triumph, burst out. A strong hand shot up from the water and seized the side of the raft, then up bobbed a dark head, and Tom climbed aboard, amid the frenzied shouts of the onlookers.

The rescue of the raft-load was now quite easy. The line was held by many hands ashore where Arthur and the bargeman had been paying it out. Tom made the other end fast to a table leg, and the raft was swiftly drawn to the side, where several neighbours were waiting to take charge of the mother and her children.

Ito leaped nimbly ashore, utterly regardless of those who pressed upon him with praises and congratulations.

"Just help me to tow the raft upstream," he said. "I've got to make another trip to fetch off Teddy and the Bat."

"Don't trust that again. Better wait for a boat," cried the old bargeman.

"Impossible!" replied Ito. "Those crazy old cottages may come down with a run at any minute."

"Look, look, the houses are rocking!" cried several, and this cry silenced all objections.

It seemed doubtful that the houses would stand till the two brave boys left behind could be fetched off.

A score of willing hands aided Ito to draw the raft some distance up the bank, and again he launched on the brown bosom of the flood amid the loud cheers of the intensely excited crowd.

THE 13th CHAPTER.

Adrift!

AT the window of the flooded cottage Teddy and the Bat stood side by side, watching eagerly for the raft as it shot down towards them on the flood.

The rocking of the houses had warned them that the flood was undermining the foundations, and they knew that it was time for them to go.

"Good!" grunted Teddy. "We'll do it yet. Bat, my son, Ito is coming down on us in fine style."

The Bat nodded, and then stretched out his long arms. Ito was coming swiftly down towards them, steering with one hand, while in the other he held the old bargeman's line, which he had brought with him.

As he drew near the window Ito slung the line out. The Bat caught it deftly, and then he and Teddy soon pulled the raft up to the window.

"All aboard!" sang out Teddy gaily, and the two boys were beside their gallant comrade in a twinkling.

Ito dipped his paddle deeply in the water, and the raft shot away along the surface of the furious stream.

"I must send her more squarely across the flood this time," said Ito. "We had a near shave of being carried into the main stream last time. There is a terrific current inshore. Brave old Tom saved us though."

"Good old Tom!" said Teddy. "I saw him swim out with the line."

"I s-s-say!" cried The Bat. "L-l-look there!"

Teddy and Ito glanced over their shoulders in time to see another huge section of the embankment swing bodily away before the flood. Another vast yellow wave reared its tawny crest high above the crumbling masonry, then dashed forward with terrific and irresistible force. It rushed on with tremendous power, and smote the cottages, and they vanished completely, hurled down in utter ruin.

"Whew!" whistled Teddy. "We're off only just in time. If you'd been two minutes later, Ito!"

"Hold tight! Hold tight!" cried Ito. "The wave itself will be on us in a few seconds!"

The boys clung with all their strength to their tiny raft, every eye fixed on the huge wave darting upon them. Would it wash them from their hold? Would their tiny raft hold together in that frightful maelstrom of rushing water?

At the next instant, the boiling flood caught them in its awful grip. A vast mass of yellow water broke over them, and forced the raft beneath the surface, and sent it spinning round and round like a chip in a whirlpool.

But the gallant little raft still hung together, and rose nobly to the surface with its load of three drenched, breathless boys.

Teddy dashed the water from his eyes and looked round.

"Good, we're all here," he grunted.

Then his blood ran cold as Ito's quiet voice announced. "My paddle's gone. The wave has washed it to pieces."

"And we're being carried into the main stream!" yelled Teddy. "Look, the shore's much farther away! This now turn of the flood is setting offshore!"

"It is," said Ito.

"Then we must swim for it!" shouted Teddy. "Come on! Every second means we've farther to go to reach the bank."

He began to pull off his shoes, but stopped as a stuttering voice came from the end of the floor on which they were crouching and clinging.

"I c-c-can't s-s-swim!" said the Bat.

"That settles it then, old chap," said Teddy. "We'll stick to the raft and try to fit up another paddle."

The crowd on the shore set up a loud cry of horror and dismay when they saw the vast wave sweep the raft and its gallant band out into the main stream, but they were helpless, and could only watch its hurrying course.

On board the raft the plucky boys were busy as bees. Ito made a loop in the line and tried to noose a piece of floating driftwood. At the third or fourth attempt he secured it, and dragged it aboard. Then the boys went to work with their pocket-knives to hack a rough handle into shape.

By this time they had been carried right out into the open stream, and were being hurried downwards on the full rush of the flood. But out here the water was much smoother, and the raft rode quite easily, save that being under no guidance, she swirled round now and again as she darted on.

Twice or thrice a huge piece of wreckage came dangerously near, and the boys held their breaths until the danger passed. But soon Teddy's unquenchable spirits soared up as the piece of driftwood began to assume the shape of a rough paddle.

"We'll soon begin to work her in-shore again!" he cried. "And if we've only the luck to dodge these forests which have gone afloat, we'll land safe and sound yet."

Suddenly Ito raised his head.

"What's that frightful roaring noise round the bend in front?" he asked.

Teddy listened, and caught the sound. Above the uproar of the rushing flood, there rang, full and dreadful, a hoarse roar of horrible import. As he caught its meaning Teddy's face went as white as wood ashes.

"The weir! The weir!" he cried. "The weir! I had forgotten it!"

And now the raft swept round into full view of a danger which made all they had passed through sink into nothingness.

Straight in front of them the mighty flood swept over a deep weir, falling with hoarse thunder in a huge boiling cataract where nothing could live for a moment. Caught in that terrific, seething conflict of whirlpool with whirlpool the raft would be beaten under in an instant, and its occupants destroyed without the faintest chance or hope of escape.

"The paddle! The paddle!" cried Teddy.

"Forty paddles could not save us," said Ito, his gentle voice full of despair. "We are far too far out in the stream."

The Bat said nothing. He only raised himself, and gazed with staring eyes and blanched face on the awful destruction which lay so near at hand, and to which the furious stream was hurrying them at such frightful speed.

(This enthralling new school and adventure story will be continued on Saturday next.)

THE FIRST MATCH OF THE SEASON

A FOOTBALL STORY BY JACK NORTH

When the Excelsior forwards again came swinging down the field, and Dann put the ball neatly to the centre, Fred plunged forward and came heavily to grass. Archell's foot had been thrust out, and he had fallen over it.

THE 1st CHAPTER.
Sticking to His Club.

"I SAY, Freddy!"

"Yes, Jack."

The first speaker was Jack Reckless, centre-half of the Bramchurch Rovers Football Club, and it was his young brother Fred who answered. They were the best of chums, those two, though there was a wide disparity in their ages. Jack was twenty-seven, Fred barely seventeen.

"I'm commissioned with an offer to you."

It was the last week in August, and Jack Reckless had just come from the Rovers ground, where hard practice had been going on in the light of the setting sun—a sun that had poured down fiery rays all day, and had gone to its rest redly, betokening another broiling hot day on the morrow. Jack had had a bath and had changed before leaving the ground, but he was not cool yet.

Neither was Fred, for that matter. But Fred had not been playing football. He had been working late and hard at the shop. He was apprenticed to John Watkins, the cycle-dealer in Bramchurch High Street, and he was very keen on his trade, so keen and eager to learn that he bade fair to become Mr. Watkins's right-hand man in a short space of time.

Someone had brought in a badly-damaged bicycle. He was a stranger passing through the town, who had met with an accident, and wanted his machine put right before resuming his way next morning. It was half-past six then. Half-past seven was closing-time.

"Here, Fred, you're the man for this job!" Mr. Watkins had said. And Fred had started at once. The owner of the machine wanted it at nine o'clock in the forenoon. At half-past seven it was quite apparent to Fred that either he must stay after hours, or the owner must wait in the morning. He was only a casual customer. They would probably never see him again. But Fred knew his employer hated failing to redeem a promise, and Mr. Watkins had promised that the bicycle should be ready at the hour named. So the lad had stayed on. At half-past eight he had been able to leave feeling comfortably sure that an hour's work in the morning would finish the job; and as he went to work at seven, that left him a good margin.

Jack had come in while he was getting rid of the day's dirt before sitting down to supper.

"Is it a good offer?" asked Fred.

"Pretty fair, I think."

"Well, I don't want to leave Mr. Watkins, you know; an' I can't, anyway, because my indentures won't be out for another year yet."

"Oh, that won't be necessary. You can go on at the shop if you can square Watkins. It's just this: The secretary happened to be passing when you kids were practising last Saturday afternoon, an' he seems to have been rather struck with your form. He says that if you care to play for our reserves he can guarantee you a pound a week to start with, an' there's no reason why you shouldn't keep on with your work, as long as John Watkins would let you off when necessary. Of course, if that was all, it wouldn't be anything much. But that isn't all. If you train on as you ought to do, you'd be in the first team an' takin' the maximum wage before long—in two or three seasons, say."

The offer was a dazzling one to Fred. A pound a week, besides what he received from the shop, and increased wages to look forward to very shortly! He sat down on the edge of his bed and looked hard at his brother, who stood with one foot on a chair, his elbow on his knee, and his chin in the palm of his hand, regarding him.

"It's worth thinkin' over, Freddy. It isn't as though you were asked to chuck your trade at once. I'll go down an' see John if you like—he and I are old friends, you know—and I don't think he'll put difficulties in the way. Of course, you'd have to be away from the shop a good deal—all day Saturday once a fortnight, an' then there'd be the practisin' an' the trainin', though I might get you let off some of that."

Mr. Watkins wouldn't like it, Jack. He's gettin' to depend a good deal on me, you know. He gives me most of the tricky jobs now. Only to-night there was a gentleman came in with a badly jiggered-up machine. Front rim buckled

"Oh, I dare say you think you're indispensable, old man; but I guess cycle repairers are quite as easily come by as good-class footballers. I'll look in an' see John to-morrow."

"Wait a jiff, Jack! I'm not sure that I can. I s'pose I'd be wanted every Saturday for the reserves—not just now an' then?"

"I can't answer for that, not absolutely. It depends on your form. But I don't think you need have much fear."

"Tisn't that at all. What I mean is, if I joined there wouldn't be any chance of my playin' for the Excelsior?"

"Of course there wouldn't, stupid! If you're to have your pound a week you must sign on, an' once you've signed on you can't possibly play for any club but the Rovers."

"Then it's all off, Jack," answered Fred rather ruefully. "That didn't strike me at first, you see. I can't possibly do it."

"Why not? You don't mean to say you're goin' to let that little pifflin' kid's club of yours stand in the way of your playin' real football!"

"We play real football," replied Fred stoutly. "An' it isn't a little piffling club. You see if the Excelsiors don't do jolly well this season! We weren't so bad last, an' we're heavier an' stronger now, an' have got two or three good new members. An', besides, I couldn't back out after they've made me captain an' all that. You see, I started the club really. It would look jolly mean to desert it now for the honour an' glory of playin' for the Rovers' Reserves!"

"Honour and glory—and hard cash," answered his brother significantly.

"Oh, I'm not forgettin' the money, Jack. I'm very sorry to have to refuse that. But, on the other hand, I'm not sure that I quite want to be a pro. I love the game; an' I've got a feelin' that somehow I'd rather play it just for love of it. I don't mean that you pros. don't love it, or that I think anyone has a right to look down on pros. in general. You couldn't find better fellows than most of our Bramchurch players. But there's other sorts. Look at Dawburn an' Clubb in the Ecclesden team, the sort of brutes one wouldn't care to walk on the same side of the street with!"

"Well, I wouldn't say you're altogether wrong, Fred. You have a good trade, and one that suits you; it ought to pay you to stick to it. I wish sometimes that I'd stuck to my work. I could have managed that and the football, too, though I hadn't sense enough to see it at the time."

Jack Reckless had been an assistant at the big Board school in Bramchurch, when his fine play had led the Rovers to seek his signature. It had seemed a grand thing to him then to be making money enough to live well on without the five days a week drudgery that his calling had entailed. He had never thought then that in so comparatively short a time he would have to be looking forward with something like dread to the end of his football career. Not that he was nearly done with yet. But at twenty-seven one sees thirty-five much nearer than at twenty-one, and not many players keep their places in strong League teams after thirty-five.

"I say, Jack, I wish you'd come an' have a look when we turn out for practice again. You wouldn't call us a lot of kids then, I fancy, though there's no doubt you could give us some useful hints."

"I'll come, if there isn't any practice or trainin' for us. Ready for supper, Freddy? Come along, then."

THE 2nd CHAPTER.
A Motor-Bike Ride.

"YOU'RE right, Fred. The whole team shapes jolly smartly, an' you ought to win a lot of matches. Have you entered for the Junior Cup?"

"Oh, yes. Didn't I tell you?"

"Not that I remember. When's your first match? I don't mean Cup-tie; I know they don't begin just yet."

"We play Stoke Eaton next Saturday."

"Pretty strong, aren't they, for a village team? There was some talk of askin' that right-back of theirs, young Archell, the squire's son, to play for us; but the directors weren't quite satisfied that he was safe enough. He's an old Thirlestane boy, you know; goes up to Cambridge in the spring, I believe."

Fred nodded.

"I haven't seen him; but they talk a lot about him. I expect we shall find him pretty difficult to get past. I say, Jack, are you usin' your motor-bike this evening?"

"No. Do you want to borrow it?"

"Yes, if you don't mind."

"All right. I know I needn't tell you to be careful with it."

Fred went off in high glee. It was Sunday afternoon. He had duly attended church with his father in the morning, and even Mr. Reckless, though he was one of the stern and unbending type, recognised that the boy, shut up in his workshop for some sixty-six hours at least in the course of the week, needed fresh air and exercise on Sunday, and made no objection to these evening spins.

With Jack's motor-bike to ride, Fred would have to go alone, since none of his friends had such a machine; but this mattered less since his particular chum, Tom Teundle, was unable to accompany him in any case, being laid up with a scalded foot.

Fred did not wait for tea. He got his mother to wrap him up a big slice of cake. It would be easy enough for him to get a cup of tea or a bottle of ginger-beer on the way to drink with it. At about five o'clock, when the streets were mostly deserted, because folk were indoors at the afternoon meal—which, in the sister-towns of Bramchurch and Eccleseden, means something much more substantial than wafer-like bread-and-butter and dolls'-house-like cups of a decoction that may or may not be "real China"—he was riding through Bramchurch High Street, sounding the "tooter" now and then out of sheer joy rather than because it was in any way necessary; then over the low bridge that spans the little River Brain, along Eccleseden Westgate Street, and out to the open country by way of the Causeway and Eastgate.

The motor-bike ran well and smoothly, carrying him without difficulty to the top of the steepest upgrades. It was glorious when one came to a stretch of straight, wide road to put her along at a twenty-mile-an-hour gait—it may have been a bit more than that, but Fred tried not to be tempted into exceeding the legal limit—and to feel the fresh air rush past, and see the country that lay ahead change as one sped on; still more glorious when his round-about route brought him riding, as it seemed, straight into a sunset of the most wonderful hues, flooding part of the undulating sweep of hill and dale with its level brilliance, leaving other parts in shadow.

His way now led towards Stoke Eaton. A mile or two on this side of the village there was an exceedingly awkward corner, high-banked, and at an acute angle. Remembering it, Fred slowed down to about six miles an hour, and took it very carefully on the proper side. But his precaution availed him little. Something it may have saved him, since the collision would have been worse had he been going at a higher rate of speed, and in the middle of the road; but it did not prevent the collision.

A motor-car, the only occupant of which was the driver, swept round that corner on the wrong side at a reckless pace. It was upon Freddy directly he had turned. He was within two feet of the bank then; closer he had no time or chance to get. The bonnet of the car almost struck him; the fore-wheel hit his machine somewhere, and sent him headlong into the bank.

The driver of the car could not have failed to see what he had done; but he never stopped—never even looked back. Once round the corner, he thrust the lever to full-speed, and his powerful car went singing down the road, with the red, setting sun behind it, at a pace that made a cyclist, who was wheeling his machine up Pilgrim's Hill, turn and gape after it with a very disapproving look.

Five minutes later, this same cyclist, a good-looking, bearded man of about thirty-seven, came upon Fred, who lay on the grassy bank half stunned, with the wreckage of what had been Jack's precious motor-bike strewing the road beneath him.

The car had not struck the boy anywhere. The shock had simply lifted him out of his seat and flung him upwards. He had had a nasty shaking, but there were no limbs broken, not even so much as a sprain, scarcely a scratch or a bruise.

"Hallo, youngster," cried the bearded cyclist, "are you hurt?"

"I don't think so," replied Fred. "I was flung off and landed up here."

"Good thing you did land up there. You're in luck not to have been smashed up. One of those blackguardly road-hogs, I suppose? I can see it wasn't just a spill on your own account."

"No; it was a car," answered Fred. "A chocolate-coloured car came rippin' round this corner on the wrong side at about ninety miles

an hour—well, more or less. I couldn't see the number, but I should know the driver again if I saw him. Quite a young fellow he was, not more than nineteen or twenty. He must have known he tumbled me over, the brute, but he never stopped!"

"Then it must be the same! I met that car as I came up the hill back there, and turned to look at it, because the speed it was going at struck me as excessive and dangerous. Chocolate-coloured, you say, and a young man driving? Was there anyone else with him?"

"No, I hadn't time to see much; but I'm quite sure of that."

"Then I can tell you the identification-mark—XXA 115. The sun shone right on the number at the back of the car as I looked round at it, and I can swear to it positively. Besides, it haven't met another car in the last three miles. This will have to be looked into, my lad. A brute that drives like that ought to be made to pay for the damage he does. By the way, I feel sure I know your face. Where have I seen you before?"

"I guess it must have been at John Watkins's shop," answered Fred. "The cycle-dealer in Bramchurch High Street, you know, sir. I'm apprenticed to him; and I remember you quite well. You'd had a bit of a spill yourself — buckled your front wheel, and bent a pedal-crank, besides several smaller bits of damage. You came in one evening, and wanted your machine at nine o'clock the next morning."

"And you're the lad who stayed after time to attend to it, and made a good job of it, too!" said the stranger heartily. "Your employer told me about it. 'Fred,' he called you. What's your other name?"

"Reckless, sir."

The stranger smiled.

"Sounds a little as though you might be in the way of having accidents; but I can vouch for the fact that this one wasn't your fault. You're the sort of lad I like, Reckless. You've got pluck, and you're not afraid of hard work. Is this your own machine, or Watkins's?"

"Neither, sir. It belongs to my brother Jack. He's centre-half in the Rovers' team, you know, and I dunno what he'll say to me when he sees it!"

"If you don't tell him it's his, he'll certainly never recognise it," said the stranger, with another of those winning smiles of his. "But, of course, he'll have to be told. I think you'd better let me go along home with you and help to explain."

"But it will be puttin' you to such a lot of trouble, sir."

"Not a bit of it! I assure you I don't mind. Look here, we'll pick up the remains and send a cart from the nearest village—Stoke Eaton, isn't it?—to fetch them."

The picking up was soon done; then the stranger and Fred walked on towards Stoke Eaton together.

"My name's Raynton," said the former. "I'm going to stay at Bramchurch for a few months, though I hadn't any definite idea of doing so when I went through the other day. I'm a writer, you know—make some sort of a living by spinning stuff out of my own brains—and I shift about pretty frequently, not having any encumbrances. Now, tell me something about yourself. What do you go in for besides cycling? Footer at all?"

"Oh, yes, rather!"

And Fred found himself telling this new friend all about the Excelsior Club, and the offer he had had from the Rovers, and his brother Jack; and never once suspecting that whether Mr. Raynton could be interested in it all, because it was so very obvious that he was interested.

"I'll come and have a look at you next Saturday afternoon," said Mr. Raynton. "Need to be something of a player myself, you know."

"Oh, I wish you would, sir! We'd be awfully glad, all of us, especially if you'd join us in a game. If you haven't played for some time, p'r'aps keeping goal would suit you best."

"Well, I won't promise; but I might try my hand at goalkeeping," answered Raynton. And his smile was so whimsical that Fred wondered what the joke was.

He was glad to hear Mr. Raynton's support when it came to facing Jack and his father. It was the latter he dreaded most; Jack was not likely to cut up rough, though the smashing of his cherished bike would worry him a good deal.

"It wasn't the lad's fault, Mr. Reckless, I assure you," said Mr. Raynton earnestly; "and you may depend upon me to help to see that the cost of the bike is paid for him. He deserves imprisonment. We may not be able to get him that; but, at least, he shall make good the loss of your son's machine!"

THE 3rd CHAPTER.
The Excelsiors' New Goalkeeper.

FRED saw Mr. Raynton several times during the next few days. Business brought that gentleman to John Watkins's shop twice, and he stayed talking a long time, for old John was something of a character, and, like most writing men, Raynton loved to talk with anyone who had a spice of originality in him.

It had not yet transpired who the owner of the driver of XXA 115 was; but both Fred and his new friend, as well as Jack Reckless, were still making inquiries. For some reason, which Fred did not know, Mr. Raynton seemed to feel sure that the car was a local one, though the letters XX were those of a county a hundred miles away.

"You needn't be afraid it won't be discovered, Fred. If we can't find out in any other way, I'll write to the local authorities of Westlandshire. But I think we shall find out without that; and I happen to know that those local authorities don't always like having questions addressed to them."

"You'll be sure to come down this afternoon, sir, won't you? It's our last practice. We've got a match on next Saturday, an' every Saturday right through the season."

"Oh, I'll come down! But you mustn't expect much o' me. It's too hot for that, and I'm getting too old."

But he did play, after all. Tommy Trundle's foot was not yet well, and thus one side was short of a goalkeeper. Tom had kept goal for the eleven during the preceding season fairly well on the whole, but by no means remarkably so.

With a brilliant man between the sticks the side would have won at least half a dozen matches that had been lost by narrow margins as it was.

It is not only by what he does that the really fine goalkeeper helps his side. More even than that does the confidence count with which the knowledge that there is a reliable man behind them instils the backs.

"Yes, I have kept goal before. But I hope you won't be disappointed with me after hearing that," Raynton had said, with a laugh.

Disappointed with him! Before the game was half over they were positively amazed at his form. The whole forward line of the Excelsiors was playing opposite to him, with Fred in the centre-forward position, Burton and Dann on the right wing, Blogg and Chesworthy on the left.

Fred was a nailing shot, and both Dann and Blogg could put powder behind their drives; while Chesworthy had a way of screwing the ball into goal, when apparently much too near the goal-line to have a chance to shoot, that had taken more than one custodian by surprise.

Yet, though they bombarded the goal with high shots and daisy-cutters, shots in the corners and shots directly at the goalkeeper, breast-high shots and knee-high shots, not one did that cool hand who kept goal in cycling-knickers and shirt-sleeves let through.

He kicked them out and kicked them out, gathered and hurled them out, threw himself at them and saved as if by miracle. Perhaps as much as his skill the boys appreciated the fact that he took the game seriously.

He liked the boys, too. He had learned from Fred that they were all Board-school fellows, and all now earning their living by hard work. Yet through all that hard-fought game not one oath or foul word did he hear; not once did he see a bit of dirty play.

He was a gentleman to his fibre, so take it for granted that a fellow from a Board school is of necessity a cad; but he was surprised to find how high a standard of conduct and fair play these lads had.

"Did you say your gentleman was a writin' chap?" asked Chesworthy of Fred at half-time. "I don't believe it. He's the Aston Villa or Newcastle United goalkeeper in disguise, that's what he is."

"You'd better put in plenty of your screwshots to-day, then," said Fred, grinning; "but he must have saved thirty shots at least."

When play ceased he was perspiring freely, but looked as happy as a man well could look. In truth, it was sheer joy to him to find that his old cunning had not deserted him, even though for five winters he had not fisted a ball.

"You fellows ought to win most of your matches," he said. "I take it that you were playing your second eleven against your first. Perhaps it would have been better practice for you if you had played the first defence against the first attack; but, anyway, your eleven is distinctly good value."

"The second eleven, with you in goal, was quite strong enough for us, sir," answered Fred.

"We should win all our matches if we had a goalkeeper like you, sir," chimed in Burton.

"I say, sir, will you play for us next Saturday?" asked Chesworthy, who had more cheek than most of them.

He was office-boy to a firm of solicitors, which may have accounted for the fact; but he had no right to give that invitation, for he was neither captain nor secretary of the Excelsior Club.

"I shouldn't like to keep your regular goalkeeper out," answered Mr. Raynton.

"But he can't play, anyway, sir. He's got a bad leg," cried Fred eagerly. "And even if he could, I'm sure he wouldn't mind. Old Tommy would be glad, wouldn't he, you chaps?"

"Course I would!" came the voice of Tommy Trundle, who had managed to hobble down with the help of two sticks.

"Well, I'll play, then—just once!" answered the "writin' chap."

THE 4th CHAPTER.
The Match With Stoke Eaton.

"YOUR ground's in capital order, Fred," said Mr. Raynton, as he walked on to the field on the Stoke Eaton Road which the Excelsior Club rented from generous George Winter, a well-to-do farmer, who charged them an absurdly small amount, and gave more than twice as much to the club by way of subscription as one of the vice-presidents.

"Yes, sir. We look after it ourselves, you see," answered Fred, with pride. "An' we've got all new goal-posts, painted with the club colours, an' new corner-flags this year. 'Tain't half smart, is it?"

The whole of the Excelsior team and several members of the visiting eleven were already on the ground kicking an old ball about; but the captain of the village team, young Arthur Archell, the son of the man who owned practically all there is in Stoke Eaton parish, had not yet arrived.

"He'll come in his motor, I expect," said Baldry, the Stoke Eaton goalkeeper.

And just then the toot-feut of a motor-horn was heard, and, leaving behind it a long, thick cloud of dust, a motor-car dashed up to the gate, and was pulled up short.

A fellow in a greatcoat jumped out of it, with a word to the chauffeur. Fred did not see him for the moment. All his attention was given to the identification-mark of the car, for it was XXA 115!

"I say, Mr. Raynton, look here!" he cried; and then turned, to recognise in the face of Arthur Archell that of the fellow who had smashed up the motor-bike he was riding, and left him, badly hurt for all that Archell could possibly have known, flung on the bank.

"Why, you're the fellow who bashed into me the other night at the corner by Pilgrim's Hill, an' smashed up my brother's motor-bike!" cried Fred impulsively.

He took a step or two forward. His attitude was no doubt a little threatening. It is not given to most of us to feel charitably towards anyone who has acted as Archell had done.

"Who're you callin' a fellow? What the deuce are you talkin' about?" asked Archell, with extreme hauteur.

"I said you were the fellow who ran into me the other evenin', an' so you are!"

"Don't you tell any lies! What are you tryin' at—blackmail, eh?"

"You had better moderate your tone!" said Mr. Raynton incisively. "The lad's right, and I can prove it, for I saw you directly afterwards."

"Who're you? I don't know you, an' don't want! You may be in the plot, for all I know."

"There no use your talking of a plot. You knocked Reckless here off the motor-bicycle he was riding, and completely smashed up the machine. Your evasions are utterly useless," said Mr. Raynton sternly.

"Well, suppose I did? It was an accident; might have happened to anybody. I can pay him for his beastly jigger, though I don't suppose it was worth much. I've got plenty of money—at least, my father has."

Raynton turned his back upon him in disgust. This was the product of a great public school, he thought; while Reckless and these chums of his were what Archell would have called "of Board-school caste!" But he checked the thought. After all, Thirlestane was not responsible for Arthur Archell. There is no making silk purses of sows' ears.

Archell took off his greatcoat and blazer, and revealed a sturdy figure in football costume.

"I say, some fellows are ready to begin!" he said. "Who's your captain, eh? Johnny with the beard?"

"No, I am," answered Fred quietly.

"Call then!" said Archell, looking rather annoyed.

He spun a florin in the air, and caught it on the back of his hand.

"Tails!" said Fred.

But it was heads, and Archell chose to kick with the wind, which that was blowing. He took right-back as his own place. The Stoke Eaton team were stronger-looking and considerably heavier on an average than the Excelsior eleven, most of whom were youngsters about Fred's age.

But Raynton's practised and critical eyes told him that they were slower, and not half as clever. He felt sure that his lads would win. Already he was beginning to think of them as his lads, short as had been the time he had known them.

They were a workmanlike lot in their shirts of pale green and white, and green stockings with white tops. He had never seen a junior team turn out in nearer and better style. The villagers all wore red shirts, except Archell, who sported the blue and gold of Thirlestane; but here their uniformity began and ended, for their knickers and stockings were of all sorts; and Baldry, the goalkeeper, wore a pair of long, white cricket flannels and a jockey-cap.

John Watkins was referee, and it would not have been easy to find a better one in Bramchurch, though he preferred junior games to matches of the League type.

From the start the Excelsior forward line got away in fine style, taking the ball past the opposing half-backs, and finding a determined raid on the Stoke Eaton goal.

But they did not find it easy to score. Baldry might be a "funny-lookin' ass," as Chesworthy said, but he was a really smart goalkeeper, and Archell and Dawson at back were a sturdy and determined pair.

Their play was marred by a good deal of roughness, though; and in this respect the public school boy, who ought to have set a good example to the rest fellows, was more to blame than his partner.

Not only did he use his weight with a vigour that often amounted to brutality, but he played foul. The Bramchurch lads did not mind hard charging, as long as it was fair; but they did strongly resent being pushed in the back, tripped, and hacked about the ankles; and all these devices were employed by Archell.

The first goal came from a penalty-kick given against him for a deliberate charge at Fred's back when he was close on goal. Reckless took it himself, and beat Baldry all ends up.

The second and third goals came quickly. The third Archell struck at with his fist as it was going through, and someone yelled "Hands!" Whether it was Archell himself or Dawson, no one quite knew; but certainly it was none of the Bramchurch lads. The referee made no answer to the appeal. To have given it would have been to penalise the wrong side, substituting a kick at goal, which might or might not score, for a goal already obtained.

Then the Stoke Eaton forwards got going. They were not particularly clever at passing; but they played a strong rushing game, and soon Mr. Raynton had to deal with several hot shots. None of them appeared to give him any trouble, though.

Half-time came with the score three—love. Just before the whistle went Archell had pushed Blogg off the ball with extended hands.

John Watkins walked up to him.

"Look here, young man," he said; "you've been playing a foul game all through. I don't like sending anyone off the field, but I shall most certainly send you off the next time you offend."

Archell turned his back rudely. In doing so he came face to face with Fred.

"Oh, I say, what's-your-name, I want a word with you—about that smash-up, you know! I don't want my governor to hear about it. Will you take twenty quid down an' say no more about it?"

"No, I won't," answered Fred. "It's my brother's machine, an' it cost a good deal more than twenty pounds."

"Well, look here, I might spring a bit more; though I should think that's fully all it's worth. What d'ye say to thirty?"

"I'll ask Mr. Raynton what he thinks."

"What's he got to do with it?"

But when Fred reached Philip Raynton the rest of the Excelsior team were gathered all round him, and Chesworthy was saying:

"My word, sir, you can't half keep goal! You must have done a lot of it!"

"Yes, he's had a good deal years ago."

"An' for some good teams, I guess!" chipped in Telfer.

"Well, I kept goal for Cambridge against Oxford, and three or four seasons for the Corinthians."

"Oh, rats!" said Archell quite audibly. But when his eyes met Mr. Raynton's contemptuous glance he turned away.

"I say, sir, if you're that Rayuton, you're an International, surely!" said John Watkins.

"Yes, they gave me my cap against Ireland," replied the Excelsior's new goalkeeper very quietly.

The boys looked at him in awe. But now the referee motioned them to line up again. Fred had just time for a hurried query to Raynton, the result of which was an intimation to Archell that no settlement could be made without further consideration and a reference to Jack.

If Archell had played a rough game during the first half, he was worse during the second, though for a quarter of an hour or so there was nothing that John Watkins, who had no sympathy with the ladylike game from which charging is practically eliminated, cared to penalise him for. But the climax came after Fred had dribbled past him and put on the fourth goal with a lovely low shot that gave Baldry no chance. Then the Excelsior forwards again came swinging down the field, and Dann put the ball neatly to the centre, Fred plunged forward and came heavily to grass. Archell's foot had been thrust out, and he had fallen prone.

John Watkins's whistle shrilled.

"Go off the field!" he said sternly.

"I won't!" cried Archell passionately.

"Then I shall stop the game and report you specially to the County Association!"

Archell went then. Deprived of their leader, the Stoke Eaton team tumbled to pieces, and the Excelsiors won their first match of the season by ten goals to nil.

The Thirlestane fellow had vanished before the game ended. He had left for Fred an insolent note, in which he said that he would pay £25 for the damage done, and not a penny more, and that if the offer was not closed with at once, Fred and his brother might whistle for their money.

"Then we must see his father," said Mr. Rayuton.

Fred would not have cared for that if he had had to face the irascible squire of Stoke Eaton alone. But with Mr. Raynton to do the talking, he did not mind a bit. Mr. Archell, who was very much of his son's type, blustered a good deal at first, but eventually paid the full value of the machine, and even offered Fred a solatium, which the lad proudly declined to accept. He had the pleasure of knowing that Arthur Archell would get a good wigging from his father; and that was much more than money to him.

"I say, sir, you'll play next week against the Grammar School, won't you?" asked Fred, of Mr. Raynton, as they rode back to Bramchurch together.

"Yes, I shall be pleased to, if I'm not keeping your chum Trundle out."

But of that match, and of others which followed it, future stories must tell.

THE END.

(Another tale of Fred Reckless will appear next week.)

Plucky Phil Farren

A Marvellous New Tale of Peril and Adventure.

BY A POPULAR AUTHOR.

THE 1st CHAPTER.
The Mystery of the Missing Desk-Key.

"UNDERSTAND, boys," said Mr. Radnor, the headmaster of the Brythewaite Classical School, fixing a pair of pince-nez upon his nose, and then peering above them at the class—"understand that I am determined to put an end to this absurd practical joking! It has become an intolerable nuisance. It is destroying the discipline of the school. It is creating ill-feeling among you, where good-fellowship only should exist."

Mr. Radnor cleared his throat, took off his pince-nez, and nervously put them on again. His glance travelled over the boys, and rested at last upon a handsome, bright-faced, and merry-looking lad of about sixteen, named Phil Farren, who had just winked at his chum, Arthur Castleton, seated in the row before him.

"There is—er—no need for me to mention the names of the leading spirits in these detestable forms of fun-making," continued the headmaster, "for they are well known to you all; but I wish to warn every boy in the class that, as minor punishments seem to have no avail, I shall have to take serious steps to stamp out the evil. The class is dismissed."

Eager to get out of the class-room, the boys instantly rose, and in orderly fashion began to leave their seats; but before the first was able to reach the door the master's voice rang out in a commanding tone:

"Attention, boys!"

The boys stood stock-still, and looked at Mr. Radnor in wonderment. That something of unusual importance had happened was evident. The master's face had become scarlet and worried-looking. First he dived a hand into his trousers pockets, then he felt in the pockets of his gown. What he expected to find was not there.

"Humph!" he muttered. "That's very, very strange!"

The master turned to his desk, fumbled at the lock, and a fresh exclamation broke from his lips.

"Has anyone seen the key of my desk?" he asked. "I am positive that I left it in the lock when I left the room a quarter of an hour ago."

No answer was returned the master as he glanced round the room, and he turned again to the desk. It was a high desk, made of mahogany, standing on four legs.

Mr. Radnor placed his hand on the sloping lid, and, to his intense surprise, it yielded to his pressure and flew upwards. To the wondering boys saw the master's head disappear within the desk, and heard the rustle of papers being moved as if he was searching for something; then his head reappeared again, and the boys noticed that the colour had left his face, that his nervousness had gone, and that his features had grown hard and set.

They had seen that look before, and knew then that something really serious had happened.

"Has anyone seen any boy near my desk this afternoon?" asked Mr. Radnor, in cold, commanding tones.

"Yes, sir," answered two boys in the same breath.

"Ah! Whom did you see, Morton?" asked the master, addressing a tall, fat, pasty-faced boy, who seemed to be always scowling.

"F-Farren, sir!" he replied nervously.

"And whom did you see, Farren?" said the master, turning to the other boy who had answered his question. "You saw Morton, I suppose?"

"No, sir," promptly replied Phil. "I saw no one. I was there myself. I was there when you left the room a quarter of an hour ago."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Radnor sarcastically. "Another of your little jokes, I suppose. What was he doing at my desk, Morton?"

The boys had begun to titter and to whisper among themselves, but now they became silent, as they looked intently at Morton, or "Piggy Morton," as he was called, and wondered whether he was going to "peach." Morton shuffled his feet, turned scarlet, and looked on the floor.

"He—he'll play some joke on me if—if I tell!" he stammered.

"Farren shall do nothing of the kind," said the master. "Morton, I command you to tell me what happened at my desk a short while ago."

"I am willing to tell you, sir—" began Phil: but the master silenced him.

"He—he put on your cap and gown, sir," stammered Morton, "took up a position at your desk, sir, and pretended that he was you. He—"

"I see—I see!" cut in Mr. Radnor coolly, frowning at Phil. "Farren disregarded my order to remain in his seat, and endeavoured to make fun of my position by mimicking my duties. Is that not so, Farren?"

"Yes, sir," said Phil; "but I did not look at it in that light."

"Possibly not," said the master sternly. "I will take until to-morrow morning's class to consider the punishment I shall give you, Farren; but in the meantime I must ask you to give up the key of my desk and the other article which you have taken as part of the joke."

"What do you mean, sir?" asked Phil Farren. The smile had vanished from his face, and he looked frankly and fearlessly in the master's face. "Do you accuse me of taking the key, and also some article from your desk?"

"You put the matter very bluntly, Farren," replied Mr. Radnor, a little nervously, "but that in effect is what I do mean. You no doubt have taken them in your mistaken idea of humour."

"Well, then, sir," said Phil, raising himself proudly erect, "allow me to tell you that no British boy thinks that thieving is a joke!"

Arthur Castleton and many of Phil's chums could not refrain from cheering this bold speech.

"Silence!" commanded the master, frowning angrily.

Brythewaite Classical School was only a small public school, and the Fifth Form, which is the only one that concerns this story, was taken by Mr. Radnor, the headmaster himself. On the afternoon with which our story deals Mr. Radnor had left the room for a while, taking off his 'Varsity robe and placing it upon his desk.

In his absence, Phil Farren had put on the master's cap and gown, and in his "mistaken idea of humour," as the master put it, had called several of his chums out for summary punishment.

The summary punishment developed into a scrimmage in which practically every member of the class had taken part. Suddenly there had come a cry of "Cave," and when Mr. Radnor appeared in the doorway every boy was seated at his desk, apparently as busy at his studies as at the moment when the master had left the room.

"You misunderstand me, Farren," said the master. "I do not wish to accuse you of thieving. Have I your word of honour that you have not taken the key and the other article I have referred to?"

"I assure you, sir, that I know nothing about them!" said Phil. "I am sorry now that I went to your desk, but I did not touch the key of it, or anything inside it."

"Very good, Farren. I believe you. The explanation of the mystery must be looked for elsewhere. Boys, you are dismissed."

THE 2nd CHAPTER.
The Disappointed Birthday Party.

TWO days had elapsed since the scene just described had taken place. No explanation of the mystery of the missing key and the other article had been arrived at. What this article really was had set the whole school conjecturing, but as Mr. Radnor did not choose to tell anyone, the wildest rumours were set afloat concerning it.

"Well crowned, Piggy!" laughed Phil. "Well crowned, king of the pigs!"

The sympathy of the boys was extended to their favourite, Phil Farren, the hot-headed, good-natured, handsome boy who was as full of pranks as an egg is full of meat, for they were of opinion that he had been badly treated by Mr. Radnor, while Piggy Morton was more disliked than ever, and openly denounced, even by the small boys, as a sneak.

For two days Phil Farren and his chum Arthur Castleton had hardly dared to laugh in their desire to please Mr. Radnor by refraining from practical joking.

But it was the most miserable two days they had spent in their lives, they declared, and the whole Fifth Form seemed as if a pall of gloom surrounded it.

But by the third morning this gloom began to wear off. Immediately after morning school, however, the remainder of it vanished as if by magic, and the principal factor in the changed conditions was the receipt by Phil of a letter.

It was Phil Farren's sixteenth birthday. Phil was an orphan, but he lived with an uncle and aunt, and they, having no children of their own, almost idolised him.

To commemorate his birthday they had sent him a postal order for half-a-sovereign. Phil was in the midst of a small group of admirers when the letter was given him.

"Pip, pip! Here's luck!" cried he. "Chaps all, you're all invited to tea in my study after school this afternoon. Don't get gorging at dinner, or you won't be able to do justice to my tuck-in. Here, Arthur, old son, you're going down to the village. Tell old Grandma Gregory to send me a half-crown cake with plenty of icing, a two-pound jar of strawberry-jam, two large tins of sardines, a dozen jam-tarts and pastries, and a pound box of preserved fruits."

"My stars!" cried Martin Blake. "Go easy, Phil! Have you come into a fortune? You're making our mouths water. We sha'n't want any of the school grub at all."

"And I say, Arthur," continued Phil, "tell grandma to buck up and let me have the tuck by four-thirty the latest. You'd better tell her to mark the basket 'Study No. 14,' so that there shall be no mistake."

"My lord, the carriage waits," said Arthur Castleton, with a mock bow. "And I mean your orders, my peerless peer, shall be attended to," and avoiding the impetus that Phil sought to give him with the end of his boot, he ran off upon his errand in the village.

Mr. Radnor was in a sour mood that afternoon. Just previous to dismissing the class, he said:

"Boys, I have given you three days now in order to supply the explanation to the mystery of the missing key of my desk; but none of you have come forward. Possibly you do not think it of sufficient importance. But you are mistaken. It is a very serious affair. The key, of course, is of trifling value apart from the annoyance its loss has caused me. It is not so, however, with regard to the other article. May I make one last appeal to one of you to come forward and state anything he may know about it?"

The master paused and looked round the room searchingly, but none answered him.

"I am determined to get to the bottom of this matter," continued Mr. Radnor. "It amounts to this, boys. I lock my desk, leaving an article of value inside it. I return to the room after being absent for less than twenty minutes to discover that the desk has been opened in my absence and the article abstracted. One of you who is now sitting before me must have opened it and taken out the article. I am assured that this was not done in any mistaken notion of joking. Will the boy who has done this thing come forward and confess it, and I promise to deal lightly with him?"

There was another impressive silence, but still no one answered.

"What was the article, sir?" inquired Phil, at last.

"A purse containing over thirty pounds in banknotes and coins," said the master.

A murmur of astonishment went round the room. This was unexpected news, far worse than any of them had imagined.

"I had hope before this," went on Mr. Radnor, "that the misguided boy who took this purse would have repented of his sin, and would have confessed it to me. I am very surprised and disappointed. I cannot yet think that there exists a thief amongst you. I still believe that there is some mistake—that there will be given me some explanation of the mystery. But it is my duty to the Form as well as to the whole school, that the shadow of suspicion should be removed from it as quickly as possible, and unless I hear news of the missing purse, I shall have to take serious steps to secure its recovery. That completes our studies for the day."

The boys left the room with chastened spirits. They were partly indignant at the Head's speech, partly disgusted, and for a long time discussions took place in the corridors, in the common-room, and out in the playing-fields about the matter. The most disgusted of all the boys, however, was Phil Farren.

"The thief's a cad—a rotter!" he exclaimed, in the hot-headed manner that was characteristic of him when roused. "The measly bounder, to put the whole class under suspicion! Yet it's quite true, as old Raddy says, that the thief must have taken his purse while he was out of the room."

"Half a motor-car!" chipped in Arthur Castleton, who was a little more philosophic than his chum. "Is it possible that Raddy put the purse in some other place and then forgot it?"

"No, no, no!" said Phil passionately. "Old Raddy wouldn't accuse any of us unless he was positively certain of himself. Didn't he refuse to tell us what the article was? That was to give him time to see if he could find it without putting it anywhere else, as well as to give the absolute cad who sneaked it a chance to return it to him. Hoofing out will be far too good for the rotter when he's caught. He ought to be put in prison. Tell you what, chaps, we'll form a detective agency and hound out the beast. It'll be no end of fun, and we'll be doing the school and old Raddy a good turn by discovering the dirty rascal and getting him hooked."

A chorus of assent went up from the half-dozen boys who stood in the corner of the common-room about Phil.

"Well, then, chaps," continued Phil Farren, "we can talk over the details at the brew. Step this way for Study No. 14, and what-ho besides yo, my gallant rapscallions, if ye haven't appetites that would make even Piggy Morton jealous!"

It was customary for the boys to take their meals in the dining-hall, but those who wished to have tea, especially in the Upper Forms, at their own expense and in their own studies,

PLUCKY PHIL FARREN.

(Continued from the previous page.)

could do so on giving notice to the housekeeper. Phil had arranged all this, and the moment the boys parted the study which he shared with Arthur Castleton, they saw the kettle singing merrily on the hearth, and the small study-table laid with a dainty white cloth, with seven cups and saucers, and all the other articles necessary for tea.

"Hooray!" said Phil. "Enter my noble noblemen, and welcome to you all. Martha" (the under-housemaid), "you giddy young thing, you have well earned your sixpenny tip, and I am your devoted admirer henceforth, and for ever; sit down my sons, we'll soon——"

Phil broke off short and looked across the table to Arthur.

"Where's the tuck, old dear?" he said. "Didn't you give grandma explicit instructions?"

"You bet," said Arthur, searching about the room. "Hasn't she sent the stuff? My word, I'll nip down to the village on my bike and give her a yard or two of red tape the same pattern as this," and he poked out his tongue.

Within five minutes he was back again.

"Grandma," he said breathlessly—"grandma said she sent a basket full of the tuck more than an hour ago!"

"Then rouse out, warriors," cried Phil, "and get on the giddy warpath! Some louts have collared our commissariat and are wolfing it for all they're worth! Quick march, double, the invasion commences!"

In fine good-humour the boys, headed by Phil, trooped out of the room and galloped down the corridor. A boy at the far end came out to see the reason for the noise, and he was instantly pounced upon and overpowered.

"Seen anything of a tuck-basket, prisoner?" asked Phil. "Answer truthfully or run the risk of being halved and quartered."

The boy—Henry Lawson by name—drew a box of matches from a pocket and pressed it open.

"It isn't in there," he said; "nor is it in my waistcoat-pocket, yet I suppose it was one of the ordinary-sized Farren baskets of tuck—one of those about as big as——"

"It is bigger than your box of sawdust, you ass!" said Phil, smacking Lawson's head. "Stop braying, or by my halidom, I will smite thee hip and thigh!"

"Look here, chaps," said Lawson, after this style of banter had continued for some time, and after there had been several scuffles, "I haven't seen anything of your tuck-basket, but I know that Piggy Morton has sent word round to his set that he's got a feed on. The tuck must be more than Piggy can manage single-handed, or they wouldn't be invited."

But Phil and his six chums were already on their way to Piggy Morton's study. Before they reached it within a few yards of the door they heard the noise of the tea-party, heard the clattering of the cups upon saucers accompanied by the excited talk of the guests.

"Steady, chaps," cried Phil, "mum's the word now!" He turned the handle of the door silently. "As I expected, it's locked. Get ready to rush in, my bonnie boys!"

He tapped upon the panel with his fingers. The tea-party became suddenly silent.

"Who is it?" asked Piggy Morton. "What do you want?"

"Is that you, Mr. Morton, sir?" squeaked Phil, in imitation of Martha, the under-housemaid. "I thought perhaps as how you might want a little more hot water, sir!"

There was a whispered consultation within. Some were for "running no risks," but Piggy was determined to "make it a gorge while we're about it," and he turned the key in the lock.

At that instant Phil and his cronies flew into the room. There were nine of Piggy's guests seated about the table, but the seven tackled them without a moment's hesitation. They couldn't tackle them all at once, however, for most of them still sat in their seats. Soon there was a chorus of howls. For Phil charged the fat Piggy, who fell back against the table, upsetting the teapot and the hot-water jug and pouring their contents into the laps of the guests.

After that the scrap became general. You couldn't see a single boy. They looked like a mob of two-headed, queer-bodied, struggling monsters. Every fight, however, lasts but minutes old. Piggy had cleared the tea-table in record time. As he sat down suddenly, he clutched at the table-cloth. It failed to support him, and the fat fugre, and his eleven stone of blubber went down on the floor, every article on the cloth slid towards him.

More than one cup and saucer cracked its sides with laughter upon the unfortunate Piggy's head. He had sardines, tea-leaves, and jam in his hair, and he sat surrounded by slops, pieces of bread-and-butter, cake and pastries. A large glass jar of strawberry jam rolled to Phil's feet as he surveyed his enemy through tear-brimming eyes.

He picked up the jar-jar, turned it upside-down, and stuck it on Piggy's head. The jam came down, glued itself tightly to Piggy's hair, and the jar stood erect.

"Well crowned, Piggy!" laughed Phil. "Well crowned, king of the pigs!"

Suddenly the door flew open, and Mr. Radnor, in cap and gown, stood on the threshold, looking on the indescribable scene with sour features.

"Every boy here shall be punished for his part in this disgraceful scene," said the headmaster, "but for the present I have more serious business in hand. Farren, follow me to my study!"

Phil fell suddenly sick. His face turned ghastly colour, and he reeled slightly. If the master spoke which Mr. Radnor wished to speak with him was more serious than the tea-party disturbance, then it was very bad indeed. Had it to do with the missing purse? Had the latter again suspected him? Was this the reason for his summons to the master's study? But in a moment the spasm had passed and Phil was himself again. Mr. Radnor, who had watched the boy's face keenly all the time, was clearly surprised when Phil held himself proudly erect and said fearlessly:

"Very well, sir, I am ready to follow you."

Mr. Radnor gave one more glance round the room, at the broken crockery, at the sheepish faces of the boys, at the general disorder, and then stalked from the room.

"Keep your pecker up, Phil, old son," whispered Arthur Castleton.

But Phil never answered his chum, and with his teeth set hard, and a look of determination in his big, blue eyes, he followed the master.

THE 3rd CHAPTER.
Mr. Radnor Finds Out His Mistake.

MR. RADNOR carefully shut the door after Phil, walked to the window, and stood with his back to it, so that the light shone on the boy's handsome, clear-cut features.

"Unhappy boy," began the master, "why did you not confess your—your—misdemeanour and save both of us the pain of this scene? For the sake of your future career rather than for the sake of the school, I was anxious that this matter should be settled without publicity. You have refused my invitation to come and make a clean breast of it all. But there is yet time! Will you confess now and save yourself disgrace? Will you——"

"Confess!" cried Phil, with a heated face—"confess? What do you mean, sir? What have I to confess? Why should I confess? You speak to me as if I were a criminal! How dare you, sir?" He clenched his hands, and his eyes blazed with passion. "How dare you speak to me in this way? Were you anyone but the headmaster of this school, I would punch your abominable insults down your throat. I would——"

"Ungovernable passion is no excuse," interrupted Mr. Radnor coldly; "it will only make matters worse. Do you recognise this?" he continued, drawing a leather purse from his pocket. "You start. I see you do. It is my purse. I found it on a shelf in the library. I also found that the money and the banknotes were taken from it, but in your carelessness you left behind you something that proves your guilt. Do you see this knife? Do you see that it bears your initials, P. F., not only engraved upon the blade, but also carved upon the handle? Do you deny that this knife belongs to you?"

Phil staggered back and clutched at the table for support.

"It is my knife," he said, without passion now; "I lost it over a week ago. But I have never seen the purse before. Whoever stole it placed my knife inside it in order to accuse me of the theft."

"The usual tale," sneered the master; "the tale I expected to hear. What have you done with the money, unhappy boy? I hear that you have lately been spending money lavishly, and have been inviting your friends to have tea with you. I saw some of the articles you had purchased but a little while ago. What have you done with the remainder of the money you found in the purse? You must leave the school. I cannot allow boys of evil reputation to contaminate my scholars, but if you tell me truthfully, there shall be no scene. You shall leave without disgrace."

"I tell you I know nothing of the purse, or of the money it contained!" roared Phil Farren. "I am not a thief, though you call me one a hundred times. You have no right to accuse me without proof. It is no proof that I committed the theft because you found my knife in the missing purse. That was put there by someone who hates me!"

"Farren, you are a misguided youth! There is no arguing with you. You must retire to the punishment-room. In the morning I will give you one last chance. Confess, Farren, and save those dear to you endless anxiety and pain. Confess, and save yourself disgrace!"

"I have nothing to confess," said Phil. "I am not afraid of your calling me a thief, for I have done nothing that I am ashamed of. I will go to the punishment-room, and you may keep me there for the rest of my life, but you will never get me to confess a crime I have not done."

With head erect, and eyes looking defiance, Phil Farren left Mr. Radnor's room, and after passing through a couple of flights of stairs, took a small room at the top of the building, overlooking a stream, and flung himself down on the little bed.

It was a very anxious class that assembled before Mr. Radnor the following morning. Phil's strange disappearance had been discussed, not only by the Fifth Form boys, but by the whole school.

Before the class opened, however, a boy named Frobsher got up from his seat and advanced nervously to Mr. Radnor, holding an envelope in his hand.

"I don't know what's become of Morton, sir," he said. "He shares my study, but I have not seen anything of him this morning. This letter, addressed to you, I found upon our table."

The excitement and curiosity of the class rose to fever-heat as they saw the master break open the letter, suddenly turn pale, and stagger back.

This is what he read:

"Dear Mr. Radnor,—By the time you open this letter I shall be far away. I cannot stay at the school any longer. If you look on the top shelf of the right-hand wall of the library you will find all the money and the banknotes that were in your purse. I took your purse and placed Phil Farren's pocket-knife inside it to revenge myself upon him for playing practical jokes against me. I took the purse when Farren put on your cap and gown, and while the rest of of the class were fighting. I also took Phil Farren's tuck-basket. It will teach him to leave chaps alone and not play jokes against them. As I should have been leaving in a few weeks, I have decided to go at once. I am sorry I took the purse, but it serves Phil Farren right.

"Yours truly,

"WILLIAM MORTON."

"Boys," said Mr. Radnor, after a while, "I have very painful news to tell you. Yesterday I sent Farren to the punishment-room because I believed that I had indisputable evidence that he had taken my purse from my desk. I have done him a very great wrong. I now learn by a letter from Morton, who has run away from school, that he committed the theft and endeavoured to place it upon Phil Farren's shoulders."

Mr. Radnor sank down into his chair and mopped his brow nervously.

"Poor Farren! If he was not so fond of mischief this would not have happened; but I need not have been so hasty in condemning him. I hope this will be a lesson to us both."

He leaned his head upon his hand, and sighed again, and the school was very silent. The boys glanced at each other very soberly, for they had seldom seen the master so deeply moved.

"Mr. Radnor," said Castleton softly, "can I go up and tell Phil?"

"Yes, Arthur, go," replied the master, rising from his seat. "Ask him to come down at once."

Arthur went with flying steps, pausing only to take the key of the punishment-room from Hoskyns, the prefect. Mr. Radnor looked at the clock, and said:

"Boys, it is time for prayers; but you will please keep your seats for a few moments until Farren comes down. He was accused before you all, and you have all heard me say that he was accused unjustly. It is proper that my apology to him should be equally public."

But suddenly a sound of clattering feet was heard, and Arthur burst into the school-room, shouting:

"Mr. Radnor, Phil is not there!"

"Not there?" echoed the master.

"No, sir; he's gone!"

"Gone?" repeated the master again. "But how can he be gone?"

"Why, I suppose he went through the window, sir, for it's wide open," answered Arthur coolly. "His things are scattered all around the room, and his——"

Mr. Radnor interrupted him in a horrified voice.

"The window! It is over the river! Oh, it cannot be that the poor boy has been driven to despair, and—and has drowned himself?"

"Oh, good gracious, no, sir!" cried Arthur, quite scared by such a preposterous idea. "That wouldn't be much like Phil Farren. Why, he's the best swimmer in the school! He has jumped into the river and swam ashore, I suppose, and started for home."

"Ah, I suppose, he has gone home!" said Mr. Radnor, drawing a long breath of relief. "I will write to him at once, and I hope we shall see him back in a few days."

But it was destined to be many long days before the master of Brythewaite School heard anything more of Phil Farren.

THE 4th CHAPTER.
Phil Goes On Ahead.

HAVING made up his mind that he could not remain to endure the humiliation of being accused of a theft which he had not committed, Phil had escaped from his room in the manner described by Arthur Castleton.

Remembering a plan which he had arranged with Arthur and Tom Rich and Will Henderson, he resolved to take advantage of the idea.

Accordingly, he made a bundle of his clothes, his watch, and his purse, which contained a small remnant of his last allowance of pocket-money, and wrapped them up securely in a waterproof coat, which was to have played a part in that proposed exploit—viz., to run away.

He then raised his window, tossed the bundle into the river, and dived after it. It was only by the merest accident that no one saw him, for the kitchen and all the housekeeper's rooms were on that side of the house, and as it was a warm day in early June, the windows were open; but no one chanced to be looking out just then, and Master Phil made his leap undetected.

He secured his bundle, swam ashore below the house, and speedily got into his clothes, which were a little wet, in spite of the waterproof coat; but Phil made no account of that.

Being dressed, he started with all haste for Brythewaite village, hoping to catch the three o'clock train for London.

It was true, as Mr. Radnor had supposed, that he set out with the intention of returning home; but Phil's intentions were not always carried out.

There was many a hard experience of toil and peril in store for him before they saw him in his uncle's house. He was just in time for the train, and was soon on his way to London.

But now his mind began to be troubled with thoughts of his aunt and uncle—how badly they would feel when he came to explain the reason for his sudden return home.

When they heard what had happened, would they credit his side of the story, or Mr. Radnor's? He thought they would believe him, and yet he hated to go home and tell them.

Besides, he would be expelled from the school, and he could imagine what a blow that would be to the good uncle who held him as a son, and had all a father's pride in his fine talents and rapid advancement in his studies; and to the loving aunt—his second mother—whose tender heart would be wounded so keenly.

The more he thought of these things the more he dreaded to go home; and when the train came to the station he got out in a most uncomfortable frame of feeling, and walked away, with no object except to put off as long as possible the moment when his bad news must be told.

Well, Phil did what many other high-spirited lads would have done under the circumstances—he made up his mind to run away to sea.

It was a rash idea, perhaps, but a courageous boy in trouble is apt to be rash, and Phil went straightaway to the docks. Of course, Phil did not get there without a great deal of trouble. He had arrived at Paddington railway-station, and not having the faintest idea where the docks were located, he trudged on and on until he suddenly noticed an omnibus bearing the magic words, "London Bridge."

"Of course," muttered Phil gleefully, "that is where the big steamships start from for Australia and New Zealand and our Colonies, hundreds of miles from England's shores. Lots of men have gone out to the Colonies, and have made their fortunes in next to no time, so I've often heard. If I can get out there, and when I'm a rich man I'll come back again to old England, and uncle and aunt shall have everything they wish for; and by that time perhaps Mr. Radnor will have discovered his mistake, and be ready to apologise for ever having for a moment thought that I was a thief."

All of which shows what little experience of the world our hero had, and how light-heartedly he was taking the most important step he had ever made in his life.

Accordingly, he jumped on the omnibus, paid his fare, and alighted at the foot of London Bridge. For almost an hour Phil leaned across the great stone parapet of the bridge, looking with wide-open eyes at the busy scene, at the great cranes hoisting the boxes and bales and the various oddments of cargo from the various vessels' holds; at the armies of labourers carrying packages and parcels of all sizes and of all descriptions from the vessels' decks along narrow planks into the huge, many-storeyed warehouses. It was a scene of hurry and bustle that quite fascinated the country boy, and he would have liked to have stayed there and have watched for hours.

"This won't do," he admitted at last to himself. "This won't get me aboard a ship as a sailor. I must go down those steps over there and ask the captain of one of the ships to take me aboard."

It did not take Phil long to reach the bottom of the steps and to walk along the wharf-side. But the noise of men shouting and the clanking of cranes, which had sounded dully on his ears when he stood on the bridge, was almost deafening when he was in the midst of it all. For the first time since he had left school Phil Farren was frightened, and almost wished he was back home again. Not only was the noise fearful to listen to, but he found himself jostled and pushed about by the hurrying porters and carriers.

Not one would stop to answer his question as to where he could find the captain of the vessel, but with an angry command to "Clear out of it, young jackanapes!" or something worse, he was pushed rudely aside, and more than once had a narrow escape of falling into the water.

At last Phil reached a part of the wharf that was comparatively deserted, and he sat down on a bollard, and, with a sob in his throat, wondered what he should do. Should he go back home, tell his uncle and aunt of the cruel accusation? Or should he, knowing his innocence, and feeling sure they would believe his word against that of Mr. Radnor? A lump rose in Phil Farren's throat.

"I'm a fool," he muttered passionately, "that's what I am—a downright fool! I'm always doing things without thinking, and always doing the wrong things. I'll go back home this minute. Far better to be a laughing-stock of everybody than to cause dear old uncle and auntie such sorrow and anxiety when they learn that I've run away. Besides, by running away, everybody will think I really am the thief."

Phil Farren brushed away a tear and got up on his feet as he heard a step behind him.

"Cheero, messmate! How's the wind?" exclaimed a rasping voice.

(The second instalment of this enthralling new tale of peril and adventure will appear on Saturday next, when Phil Farren will leave the Old Country in search of fame and fortune.)

WITH PICK AND LAMP.

A Magnificent Tale of Colliery Life.

By DAVID GOODWIN.

CONCLUSION.
Sully Tells the Truth.

THERE was a dead silence in the stall, save for the laboured breathing of the injured man as the two boys and the clergyman knelt by his side.

"I'm goin' to clear my soul of it at last," said the ex-viewer feebly, "and this is how it was. All these years I've been Kenyon Price's man. I've done his dirty work for him—an' I've held the whip-hand of him, too. We held each other fast, an' neither could betray the other though.

"I've kept you two young 'uns out of your own to fill my own pockets." His weak eyes fell upon Rodwell. "Mad Matt was the rightful owner o' half the Coed Coch, by right of his father, Vaughan Matthews. Matt couldn't get his rights, because his father had apparently left nothing to show that he'd any claim on the property. You thought Vaughan Matthews died without leaving any proof behind him. Well, that's where you're wrong."

Roddy and Tom glanced at each other.

"Vaughan Matthews did leave proofs—a written contract Kenyon Price had had to give him, and other papers showin' he was an equal partner in the Coed Coch, though not registered as such. These papers were enough to prove Vaughan legal partner of the whole concern and its profits in any court of law. Kenyon Price thought they were destroyed, but they weren't.

"When Vaughan Matthews died, I was the first to search his house. I got hold of those papers an' kept 'em myself, never sayin' anything about 'em. I knew what they were worth. No proof was ever found, and no wife. There wasn't anybody who knew Vaughan Matthews had been a half-partner in the collieries except Price and me. Price took the whole concern over into his own clutches.

"Let me shout them papers, and I said I'd found 'em and burnt 'em. He was angry, saying I ought to have given them to him to destroy with his own hands. He'd got a hold over me, you see—an old affair.

"He had to keep me in his employ after that, of course, as I knew his secret, and he didn't want me to talk. He took to puttin' the screw on me more and more, and I waited till the time was ripe, an' then showed my hand. I told him I'd got those papers, an' proved it, too.

"My, but he was in a rage! They were enough to put him in the felon's dock an' strip him of all he'd got, now it could be proved he'd robbed half the Coed Coch by fraud. Oh, he was furious! But he had to climb down. He offered me a round sum to give them up, but I wouldn't. I knew he could never show me up while I'd got those papers to hold over him. They made me safe.

"I traded on what I knew, and I blackmailed him. I'd £2,000 out of him for a start, an' from time to time a lot more. He daren't refuse, for if I'd got desperate and in want of money, I'd have shown him up, and taken whatever happened to me as well. He knew it. He tried to steal the papers from me more than once, but he could never find where they were."

Sully's voice grew feebler.

"But now I'm going I'll put it right. This gentleman, the rector, is witness of what I say. You'll find those papers in a cupboard in the middle front room of my house. The cupboard's got a false back to it, which will swing open if you press on two knots that you'll see in the wood wide apart. Press them both at once, slowly and evenly, and you will see before you a metal case in the cavity beyond, containing the papers. They will prove your right to Coed Coch, as heirs of the Matthews, without the slightest difficulty."

Sully spoke so low and haltingly that he could hardly be heard.

"I'm near the end o' my tether," he said weakly. "I suppose you boys are never likely to forgive me?"

"Forgive you?" said Roddy. "Why, yes, an' willingly, if it's any comfort to you, Sully."

Both the boys took him silently by the hand, and a lump came into Tom's throat. Greatly as the man had wronged them, he was paying the penalty now.

"That does me good," said Sully, in a whisper; "and now, maybe, you'll leave me with the chaplain, lads, for I want to make my peace."

The clergyman nodded gravely to the boys, and they left the stall quietly and went up the shaft. Before they were clear of the pits, the breath had left Sully's shattered body.

"Poor chap!" said Roddy, with a sigh. "He gained little enough by all his schemin' and trouble. Let him rest in peace. He had a hard life of it."

"Where to now?" said Tom, who was looking shaken and white after the catastrophe and the scene in the stall.

"We owe it to ourselves an' to Matt's memory to put this right without any delay. Let's go to Lawyer Williams an' take him straight to the house."

They did so, finding Mr. Williams at his office, and with much amazement he heard their story. All three at once went to Sully's house, where the lawyer obtained admission without delay, and they went to the room that had been indicated.

The false back to the old cupboard answered exactly to Sully's description, and worked just as he said it would. It was a cleverly-contrived hiding-place, and would have escaped the scrutiny of the keenest searchers for any length of time, provided they were not told of its secret. Inside was the metal case, and it contained the papers of which Sully had spoken.

Mr. Williams spread them out at once on the table, and pronounced them genuine. He set off at once again for his office, accompanied by the boys, and there they made a thorough examination and overhaul of the papers.

"It's as plain as a pike-staff," said the lawyer; "these papers prove your right to the Coed Coch beyond the shadow of a doubt, backed by Matt Matthews' will. My congratulations, boys!"

He shook hands heartily with the young partners, and was nearly as pleased as they were at the final success. Then his brow grew dark.

"Will you wait for me here awhile?" he said. "There is another matter to attend to, which I must not delay. I shall be back soon."

There was a pause after he had gone out, and the boys looked at each other meaningly.

"He's gone to let the police know, and arrange for the arrest of Kenyon Price!" said Tom.

"That's it, of course. He doesn't want us yet, I suppose. He's actin' for us legally. What a regular old show-up it'll be when Price is brought to trial. It'll shake half Wales!"

Nearly an hour later Mr. Williams returned.

"The whole matter is in the hands of the police," he said, "as regards the criminal part of it, and the law must take its course. Are you going back to Bryn y Garth, lad? I'll come up there to-morrow forenoon, and let you know how things are. You'll probably be wanted here in Bedford. For the rest, have no fear. You are owners of the Coed Coch Collieries, as you are of Bryn y Garth."

Next day, soon after eleven, Mr. Williams came to the cottage, looking grave and perplexed.

"I have extraordinary news for you," he said; "the police acted on my information at once last night. A warrant was made out for Kenyon Price's arrest, and two officers sent to execute it. But when they reached Plas Rhyll, the bird had ready flown. Not only that, but the police are utterly unable to trace him. It is now known that within an hour or less of Sully's death, he had taken with him all the ready cash he could lay hands on—a large sum of money, in any case, he must have got news of Sully's confession from the pits with astonishing quickness."

"By what I know of him and his methods," said Roddy, "I'm not surprised at that. Do you mean he's clean escaped, though?"

"As far as is known yet. The police are baffled, and it is believed he got out of the country at once by ship from Cardiff, and now may be anywhere upon the high seas."

The boys were silent.

"I don't know whether I'm sorry or glad," said Roddy, at last. "He did us many a black bad turn, an' we had a long fight with him. But here we are on top at the finish, and it's poor work kickin' a man when he's down. And now, sir, we're goin' to have a celebration banquet, right here, in Bryn y Garth cottage, with Dafydd in the chair, an' we'll be glad if you'll join us."

"I told you," said Tom, with a grin, "you'd get those fees some day, Mr. Williams. We can afford to pay 'em now. Come on, Dafydd, and I'll give you a hand with the grub!"

Kenyon Price was never captured, and up to date, at any rate, he has had the good sense not to return of his own accord. The law's slow, but its arm is long. Where he is now is beyond the writer's knowledge.

Roddy and Tom are now the owners of Coed Coch Collieries, whose output and profit they have nearly doubled, and their pitmen have the name of being the best-treated colliers in Wales.

Finding themselves the proprietors of two huge concerns, and so enormously wealthy that the two together were rather an embarrassment, they held a consultation over the future of Bryn y Garth, and decided to make a free gift of it to the nation, for the use of the Admiralty. The gift made a great stir, for no finer steam-coal exists in the world, and the Royal Navy is now the richer for a practically inexhaustible coal field that ensures his Majesty's ships an unfailing supply of the fuel without which they cannot move.

In gratitude for the gift, a baronetcy was conferred on each of the young partners by the Government. They made Dafydd a legal partner in the Coed Coch, with a full third share of its income, which runs well into six figures. Dafydd settled down in a mansion which he bought near Bryn, where he lives amid unlimited ponies, dogs, and live stock, with the shooting over as many miles of moorland as he can see from the summit of Bryn Manor Mountain.

The young trio are still the greatest friends, and the happiest times Sir Rodwell Owen and Sir Thomas Hughes know, are when they are climbing the crags, or cantering their shooting-ponies across the wild purple moors, in company with Squire Dafydd Rees, of Bryn, among the grouse and the heather.

THE END.

THE BOYS' REALM FOOTBALL LEAGUE.

FULL LIST OF CLUBS WHICH HAVE ALREADY BECOME AFFILIATED TO OUR GREAT ORGANISATION.

SECTION I.—"THE BOYS' REALM" LONDON LEAGUE.

Division I. (North of the Thames).

JUNIOR SECTION.

St. Saviour's Old Boys (Paddington).
St. Paul's F.C. (Homerton).
Clapton United (Upper Clapton).
St. Paul's Athletic (Haverstock Hill).
St. Michael's Junior (Poplar).
Albert Victoria (Bethnal Green).
Lynton Athletic (Stepney).
Grosvenor F.C. (Stepney).

SENIOR SECTION.

Norland United F.C. (Shepherd's Bush).
Windsor United (Langham Place).
Malden F.C. (Kentish Town).
Crescent Rovers (Bethnal Green).
Barnsbury United (Barnsbury).
Harefield Baptists (Harefield Green).
Coverdale F.C. (Paistow).
Park Athletic (Custom House).
Charterhouse Swifts (Holborn).
Clifton United (Barnsbury).
Victor Swifts (Kensington).
Goldney United (Paddington).
St. Michael's F.C. (Maida Vale).
Malrose F.C. (Edmonton).
Greysminster F.C. (Shepherd's Bush).
Portland Albion (Tidal Basin).
Norwood Juniors (Southall).

Division II. (South of the Thames).

JUNIOR SECTION.

Good Treasure F.C. (Blackfriars).
Lilley Athletic (Camberwell).
Chichester Rovers (Deptford).
St. Barnabas (Southfields).
St. Mary's (Greenwich).

SENIOR SECTION.

St. Jude's (Southwark).
Chesham Rovers (Pimlico).
Silverdale F.C. (Upper Tooting).
Collier's Wood Reserves (Tooting).

SECTION II.—"THE BOYS' REALM" SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

(Open to clubs in England and Wales South of a line drawn across the country between Cardigan and Hunstanton.)

JUNIOR SECTION.

St. Paul's Junior (Smethwick).
St. Mary's F.C. (Warrington).
Malvern United (Southampton).
Ludlow Athletic Reserves (Southampton).
Park Argyle F.C. (Southampton).
St. John's Mission (Birmingham).
Southport Crescent (Southport).
Oxford F.C. (Southampton).
Albany United (Cardiff).
Newbury United (Newbury).
Sutton Rovers (Sutton).
Wellfield United (Warrington).
Eastleigh Argyle (Eastleigh).
Teanfield Lea Rovers (Tantobie).

SENIOR SECTION.

Oxford Albions (Warrington).
St. Mary's Argyle (Southampton).
Loughton Foresters (Loughton).
Victoria Road Institute (Northampton).
Luton Highfields (Luton).
West Smethwick E.M.I. (Birmingham).
Teesdale F.C. (Luton).
Fareham Athletic (Fareham).
Wellfield F.C. (Warrington).
Pear Tree Avenue F.C. (Itchen).
Guild Juniors (Portsmouth).
Harefield Baptists (Middlesex).
Clifford United (Southampton).
Wolverton Crusaders (Wolverton).
White le Head Red Stars (Tantobie).

SECTION III.—"THE BOYS' REALM" NORTHERN LEAGUE.

(Open to clubs in England and Wales North of a line drawn across the country between Cardigan and Hunstanton.)

JUNIOR SECTION.

St. George's F.C. (Gresley).
Eton Rangers (Winshill).
Manchester United (Manchester).
St. Chad's (Leeds).
Newtown Brl. F.C. (Leeds).
Salem Athletic (Newcastle).
United Methodist (Manchester).
Christ Church Juniors (Burton).
St. Saviour's (Preston).
R.D.A. Juniors (Bradford).
Princeville Clarence (Bradford).
Longwood Church (Longwood).
Stanley Juniors (Rochdale).
Oldham Edge F.C. (Oldham).
Hanley F.C. (Southport).

SENIOR SECTION.

Corinthians F.C. (Chapeltown).
Llechid Swifts (Bangor).
Unity Mission (Sheffield).
Bertram F.C. (Bradford).
Northgate White Star (Bradford).
Penhelig Allanna (Warrington).
Salem Athletic (Bradford).
Nelson Villa (Sheffield).
West Leigh United (Leigh).
St. Andrew's (Chilton Moor).
Colne Church Juniors (Colne).
Oswald United (Leeds).
Upton St. Peter's (Dipton).
Wellfield F.C. (Warrington).
Pontefract Celtic (Pontefract).
St. Mary's (Castle Town).
Corinthians F.C. (Hull).
Princes Field N. Ch. (Leeds).

SECTION IV.—"THE BOYS' REALM" SCOTS LEAGUE.

JUNIOR SECTION.

Moorpark Crusaders (Renfrew).
Western Thistle (Glasgow).
Rosebank F.C. (Greenock).
Hawthorn Villa (Leith).
Leighton Thistle (Edinburgh).
Glenroy F.C. (Aberdeen).

SENIOR SECTION.

Grange Albion (Edinburgh).
Mayfield F.C. (Glasgow).
Govan Thistle (Govan).
Glenmore F.C. (Oban).
3rd Ruthergien Hearts (Glasgow).

SECTION V.—"THE BOYS' REALM" IRISH LEAGUE.

JUNIOR SECTION.

St. Aloysius (Londonderry).

SENIOR SECTION.

Dungannon United (Dungannon).
Crusaders F.C. (Dublin).

THIS FORM FOR SINGLE UNATTACHED CLUBS ONLY.

Date..... Club.....
Playing Ground .....
Average Age of Members .....
Colours .....

The above club is desirous of entering THE BOYS' REALM League (Section .....), and the members agree to conform to the conditions governing the contest, and to abide by the decision of Your Editor, the Secretary, and a referee in any case of dispute.

Secretary's Name .....
Address .....

FOOTBALL LEAGUE SECRETARIES READ THIS:

Your Editor is prepared to present a Large Number of Solid Silver Challenge Cups to Certain Bona-fide Football Leagues throughout the country. Secretaries of Leagues desirous to possess one of these handsome Trophies should make application now. Form of application will be found below.

THIS FORM FOR FOOTBALL LEAGUES ONLY.

Name of League .....
Year of Formation .....
Number of Clubs in League .....
Secretary's Name and Address.....
.....

This form, together with full particulars of the League, to be addressed to the Secretary, THE BOYS' REALM League, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.

YOUR EDITOR has already promised to present the following Leagues with Solid Silver Trophies:—

WORTHING AND DISTRICT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS LEAGUE.
Sec., Mr. F. C. Winton, 24, Eastcourt Road, Worthing.

STAMFORD HILL AND DISTRICT JUNIOR LEAGUE.
Sec., Mr. S. Greaves, 29, Culrose Road, West Green.

MONMOUTHSHIRE JUNIOR ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL LEAGUE.
Sec., Mr. F. C. Powell, Temple Cottage, Tredegar.

SOUTH LONDON CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEAGUE.
Sec., Mr. S. Hudson, The Schools, Creed Place, Greenwich, S.E.

CONSETT AND DISTRICT JUNIOR FOOTBALL LEAGUE.
Sec., Mr. A. S. Westhorpe, 35, Rosebery Terrace, Consett, R.S.O.

CLUB NOTICES.

NOTICES AND CHALLENGES FROM READERS' OWN CLUBS. THESE ARE INSERTED FREE OF CHARGE.

MARKINCH THISTLE F.C. (average age 15-16) require matches for the coming season, home and away, within nine miles' radius.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, Robert Mitchell, Ellershie Place, Betson Street, Markinch, Fife, N.B.

ST. PAUL'S (Portman Square) F.C. (average age 17, weak) have all dates open for season 1907-8.—Only teams within half-an-hour's radius need apply to Hon. Secretary, Mr. James Wells, 3, Bridport Street, Regent's Park, N.W.

LARKESTON F.C. is open to take on any matches for following season.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, J. McBain, 94, Plantation Street, Govan.

EDMONTON MELROSE F.C. (average age 18) require matches with teams within two miles' radius of Edmonton.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, C. H. Russell, 47, Hartington Road, Lower Edmonton.

PARTICKHILL F.C. (average age 16) requires matches for the coming season within ten miles of Glasgow. All dates open.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, W. W. Robertson, 320, Dumbarton Road, Partick, Glasgow.

PRESTATYN ROVERS F.C. (average age 16-17) require matches, home and away, for coming season, within nine miles' radius of Prestatyn. All dates open.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, O. T. Jones, Olive Villa, Prestatyn.

ABBEY SOCIAL (average age 18, medium) require matches, home (Feltham), October 5th and alternately; away October 12th and alternately. Private only. Also B team (average age 18, weak) all dates.—Apply Pernitta Antiwark Park.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, T. J. Reardon, 167, Long Lane, Bermondsey, S.E.

ABERDARE THURSDAY JUNIORS A.F.C. (average age 16) want matches for season 1907-8, for home and away. Also require good goalkeeper.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, E. Evans, 33, Seymour Street, Aberdare.

LADYBOURNE UNITED (average age 16, weak) require matches, home and away.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, W. C. Hasker, 26, Hawley Road, Kentish Town, London, N.W.

HILLSIDE CLARENCE F.C. (average age 15½) require dates for 1907-8.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, F. Shaw, 60, Woodhouse Lane, Leeds.

LACOSTE ATHLETIC F.C. (average age 15-16) want every Saturday, home or away, within five miles of Edinburgh.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, H. Smith, Glen Lea Cottages, Gorgie, Edinburgh.

GROVE ALBIONS A.F.C. (average age 17) require matches for the coming season 1907-8, home and away, with clubs within eight miles' radius of Warrington.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, S. Morris, 187, Oxford Lane, Warrington, stating age.

RENSHAW ST. JOHN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL A.F.C. (average age 15-16) have vacancies for the coming season.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, L. Wyatt, Henshaw, Yeadon, near Leeds.

SOUTHEND VICTORIA F.C. (average age 17, medium) want match on Boxing Day afternoon (away) in London, or near. Only respectable clubs need apply. We have also one dozen green jerseys, with yellow low-necked collars, at 18s. the dozen. Cost 28s. Also one last season.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, J. Patten, 5, Brighton Road, London Road, Southend-on-Sea.

GRANVILLE UNITED F.C. (average age 16, weak) would like to join a football league in West London. Also require matches for coming season. All dates open.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, Jas. Walker, 156, Railway Approach, Shepherd's Bush, London, W.

EXCELSIOR F.C. have all dates open for coming season. Also require a few new members.—Forwards preferred.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, F. W. Smith, 51, Appleford Road, North Kensington, W.

ST. MARY'S UNITED F.C. (second XI.) require home and away matches, six miles' radius of Croydon.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, 8, Lower Addiscombe Road, Croydon.

ST. JAMES' A.F.C. (average age 16-19). Prefer Sunday-school teams within five miles of five miles of Leeds.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, Ernest Hancock, 3, Places Square, Ellerby Lane, Easy Road, Leeds.

ELMSDALE UNITED F.C. (average age 17, weak) want matches, home or away. All dates open. Ground, Tottenham Marshes.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, Ernest Rock, 84, Woodlands Park Road, Harringay, London, N.

SIDCUP ROVERS F.C. (average age 15, weak) want matches for coming season. All away dates open.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, M. Dixon, 33, John's Place, Sidcup Street, Regency, S.

THE WOODBRIDGE CHAPEL F.C. require away matches for coming season 1907-8. All dates open.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, Charles McNie, 24, Woodbridge Street, Clerkenwell, E.C.

ACTON ARGYLE F.C. (average age 16) have dates open from September to April. Matches anywhere within four miles of Shepherd's Bush.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, H. Foren, 8, Devonport Road, Shepherd's Bush, W.

SCRIVEN A.F.C. (Knaresborough) (average age 18) required fixtures with Leeds club at Leeds on Saturday, December 21st, and return at Scriven Easter Monday. Excursion fare is 1s. 3d. return.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, J. P. Bradford, Scriven, Knaresborough.

CROWN ATHLETIC F.C. (average age 17, medium) would like to arrange fixtures for coming season; all dates open.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, E. G. Mottlock, 103, Vicarage Street, St. Leonards Road, Poplar, E.

GOOD TREASURE F.C. want matches home and away for the coming season.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, A. Lowers, 9, Ontario Street, S.E.

THE CROWN F.C. (average age 14, strong) require home and away matches for teams of the same average.—For particulars, apply to Hon. Secretary, T. Honour, 66, Thurgate Road, Notting Hill.

GOSWELL UNITED (average age 15, weak) have all dates open, away preferred; also a few players wanted, all positions.—Apply between 8 and 9 o'clock to H. Clayton, 2, Mulberry Place, Upper Charles Street, Goswell Road, E.C.

AURION INVICTA (average age 17, strong) have open March 9th (home); and November 30th, January 11th, 25th, February 8th, 22nd (away); also Boxing Day (away).—Apply to Hon. Secretary, F. Pescud, 11, Clack Street, Rotherhithe.

STANLEY RESERVES F.C. (average age 15½) have most dates open; only respectable teams need apply; ground, Wormwood Scrubbs. Also one or two good players wanted, age 15-17.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, W. G. Bidgway, 39, St. Mark's Road, North Kensington, W.

WILTON F.C. (average age 16-17) have most dates open.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, H. Grinyir, 13, Wilton Road, Shirley, Southampton.

FREE INVINCIBLE JUNIORS F.C. (average age 14, weak) have all dates open for the coming season; home and away matches. Ground, Hackney Marshes.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, Mr. Cotter, 5, Green Terrace, Rosebery Avenue, E.C.

KIRBY BANKS A.F.C. (average age 15½) require dates for 1907-8; all dates open; Belmont six miles' radius of Leeds.—Apply by letter to Hon. Secretary, A. Grainger, 23, Lodge Avenue, New Wortley, Leeds.

ST. BARNABAS F.C. (average age 15, medium) have the following dates open for matches with respectable clubs:—November 7th, December 14th, January 25th, February 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, March 7th, 14th, 28th, April 4th, 11th.—Write to Hon. Secretary, 1, Tuffy Terrace, Glennore, 57, Elsenham Street, Southfields, S.W.

RAVENSWOOD F.C. (average age 16, medium) have all dates open for away matches with respectable clubs in London.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, R. Woodward, 8a, Trentham Street, Southfields, S.W.

CRESCENT UNITED A.F.C. (average age 16) require matches home and away in Leeds and district. —Apply to Hon. Secretary, N. B. Houghton, 18, St. James' Square, Portland Crescent, Leeds.

CITY JUNIORS A.F.C. (average age 14, weak) require fixtures within four miles' radius of Cardiff.—Write, stating open dates, to Hon. Secretary, E. Jenkins, 89, Donald Street, Roath Park, Cardiff.

HIGHFIELD S.S.A.F.C. (average age 15-16) want matches in the Leeds district. All dates open. Apply to J. Auty, 29, Privilege Street, Wortley, Leeds.

N.E.R. CELTIC (average age 16) have all dates vacant.—Apply to Secretary, B. Everett, Passengers' Audit Office, N.E.R., Newcastle-on-Tyne.

BLYTH JUNIORS F.C. (average age 15-16) require home and away games; fifteen miles' radius.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, B. Cole, 98, Waterloo Road, Blyth, Northumberland.

MERSEY JUNIOR FOOTBALL LEAGUE.—Vacancies in the First Division (average age 16-17) and Third Division (average age 14½). Gold-centre and silver medals.—Apply at once to Hon. Secretary, T. G. Hughes, 68, Waverton Vale, Picton Road, Liverpool.

BOY (15½) is desirous of joining a football team connected with the Church of the Thames. Fairly good player. Any position except goal. Willing to pay any reasonable sub.—Apply to C. J. Turnadge, Clerk of Works, Server, 117, Whitfield Street, Tottenham Court Road, W.

TWO LADS (16 and 17) wish to join a respectable football club for the season 1907-8. Can play any position on right wing. League preferred. Within four miles' radius of New Cross.—Write, stating full particulars, to W. Humphries, 8, Egmont Street, New Cross.

TWO LADS wish to join a respectable football team for the coming season.—Apply to G. L. Dunbar, 35, Castor Road, Alsatree, Liverpool.

ANY Club or team near Leicester that wants a goalkeeper (age 14) should apply to W. White, 22, Frankland Street, Leicester.

TWO LADS (17) wish to join a respectable football club in the neighbourhood of Forest Gate or Leytonstone.—Apply to H. A. Brooke, 137, Cann Hall Road, Leytonstone.

A LAD wishes to join football club in or near Glasgow Can play inside- or outside-right. Willing to pay subscription if preferred.—Write, or call, to A. Fyfe, 14, Polmadie Street, Glasgow. At home Monday or Wednesday from seven to eight.

LAD (17) wishes to join football club. Can play any position except goal. North-East district preferred. —Apply to A. Killington, 3, Mansfield Street, Haggerston, N.E.

TWO LADS (15½ and 16) are willing to join a respectable football club within four miles of Battersea Town Hall.—Apply to W. Woolley, 8, Shellwood Road, Battersea.

TWO LADS (16 and 17) wish to join a football club for season 1907-8; centre-forward and inside-right; any club near Shepherd's Bush.—Apply to J. Simmonds, 4, Queen's Place, Holland Park, W.

LAD (16) wishes to join a respectable football club in Tottenham or district; can play anywhere on right wing; willing to pay fee if required.—Write to N. Church, 71, Sweet Briar Walk, Edmonton.

A FEW respectable lads (average age 15-17) wanted to form a football club; also want a few away dates.—Apply to Charles Simmonds, 174, Coventry Street, Bethnal Green Road, London, E.

THREE BOYS (15-17) wish to join fairly respectable football team; can play anywhere in forward line. The club to be in the vicinity of Islington (Barnsbury). Would not object to small subscription.—Apply to A. G. 28, Rheidol Terrace, Islington, N.

NOTTS JUNIOR F.C. (average age 14-16) want players for all positions; subscription 6d., and 1d. per week. Meadows district. Boys in the city preferred.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, J. Holmes, 91, Waterway Street, Meadows, Nottingham.

WANTED, by respectable team in City and Suburban District League, good players for all positions, between 18-20 years. Good goalkeeper, centre-forward, and outside-left wanted.—Apply at once by letter to A. Owens, 7, Bedford Secretary, 1, Holt Road, Liverpool, or personally, after 7 o'clock, to club-room, 15, Sydney Place, Edge Hill, Liverpool.

WILTON F.C. (average age 18) require few players to complete Second team; must pay small subscription.—Apply to the Hon. Secretary, W. Grover, 10, Stratford Place, Ivy Lane, Hoxton, N.

LAD (17) would like a trial in a Thursday afternoon football team within four miles of Stratford. Can play any position in right except half-back. Will pay subscription.—Apply to W. Adams, care of Thomson and Co., 200, The Grove, Stratford, E.

WANTED, players, any position (average age 16-18); also fixtures for the coming season, 1907-8; all dates open.—Apply by letter or p.c. to A. E. Bucknell, 29, Ashwin Street, Dalston, London, N.E.

TWO LADS (16) wish to join a football club for the following season in the district of Forest Gate and Leytonstone.—Apply to S. Kildare, 80, Ramsay Road, Forest Gate.

WHITEFORD F.C.—Those interested in the Dennistown Whiteford F.C. will be pleased to see that Robert Dowie has been elected captain, W. Harrower subcaptain, John Harper treasurer, and John Harrower secretary. Secretaries please note our secretary's address is John Harrower, 513, Alexandra Par, Dennistown, Glasgow.

GROUND WANTED for football season 1907-8. Church, and near Horsleydown.—Apply to A. McMillan, 36, Queen Elizabeth Street, Horsleydown, S.E.

THE SCHOOL ON THE CLIFF.

A Magnificent Story of Stirring Adventure.

By E. HARCOURT BURRAGE.

The Stranger Finishes His Story—Conclusion.

"WITH this came calmness and reason. I read the announcement of Mark Ricketts' marriage with Ethel in an English newspaper," said Parlieton, and a year after a young fellow I had known in Devonshire fell across my path, and brought me the tidings that a boy was born. I turned my back on America and came home. I was much changed, and nobody knew me, and I determined to remain incognito, and lead the life of a hermit.

"One morning I saw that the Bowl was for sale, and I went to the office of the solicitor who had the matter in hand, and paid for the island in gold. Little did I think what was going to happen. I thought I had shut myself out of the world and buried the past for ever, but it was not to be.

"On the night of the awful storm I went down to the beach to see if I could render any assistance, and saw lying upon the sand the bodies of men and women who were past all help. Suddenly from behind a boulder stole a man—a vile, ghoul-like creature—who commenced to rob the dead. I disturbed him, and he fled; but I recognised him as Pinnick, and saw that he had secured something—a packet of papers. But I did not follow him, for at my feet, white and cold, lay Ethel Ricketts—dead, but holding her child, alive and crying piteously, in her arms."

Bob Baxter's hair was now on end, and Jack's face was deadly pale.

"Need I say who that child was, or that he is facing me now?" Parlieton continued. "The woman I had loved had come to my feet in a mysterious manner, and though I was quiet and silent, I gave me her son to protect and love. Not far away lay Mark Ricketts, with his head pillowed on his arm, as if he had fallen gently asleep.

"I brought you to this house, Jack, and then returned to the beach; but a mighty sea had carried away the bodies of your parents. The mission of the dead had been accomplished, and they sleep in peace in some ocean cave.

"I need not tell how I sent for Bob Baxter, and entrusted you to him and the care of his good wife, how you grew sturdy and strong under the name which, from this hour, you must answer to no longer. You are Mark Ricketts, and here are the documents to prove it, and more, the deeds by which you can claim the estates in Mexico.

"Your father and mother were outward bound when the wreck took place, and no sooner did Terrapin hear of the accident than he set to work to make himself master of the situation. He thought at first that you had been drowned, and brought his own boy up in your name; but he recognised you later on, and employed Pinnick to encompass your destruction. Pinnick had the misfortune to fail, and I relieved him of them, to his bitter disappointment. Ignorant, brutal, yet crafty, he had kept the secret of the papers from Terrapin, determining to have his full share of the plunder; and Terrapin was only waiting until his unhappy son came of age to declare on oath that he was the heir, and that Pinnick had rescued him from the wreck."

"The wonder to me, sir, is," said Bob Baxter, "that the lawyer did not recognise you."

"I believe he did," Parlieton replied; "but he was too crafty to make himself known to me. He thought I had no proofs of the identity of the real Mark Ricketts, and let me go my way. With all my cunning I thought that the game would be all his own; but he overreached himself and fell."

Parlieton rose slowly and took our hero's hands.

"Jack," he said—"I must call you so now, for it comes to me naturally—you will go with me to London to-morrow, where everything is prepared to restore you to your rights. My work is done, and I am satisfied, trusting that I have done my duty."

Our hero could not speak; sobs were choking his utterance; but soon the floodgates of his heart were opened, and a gush of tears came to his relief.

* * * * * *

Old Father Time had been as busy as usual, and years slipped quietly away.

One day Sternerag was on fete, and Bob Baxter, still hale and hearty, wearing a tremendous white favour on his breast, moved slowly and thoughtfully towards the church.

That some important ceremony was pending was evident by the concourse of people that filled the church.

A general truce had been proclaimed all round, and it was well that it should be so, for Mark Ricketts, once Jack Jaunty, had returned from Mexico, and Ironne Belton was to become his wife that very day.

Jim Baxter was over the water, looking after a cattle-run on Mark's estate, and had proved himself faithful and true. Our hero would have brought him over, but he refused.

"No, sir," he said; "I am better where I am. Tell the old people that though there are so many miles between us they are always near me."

The magic mirror at which we have been peeping so long grows misty, but some of the faces are still distinct.

For instance, Nickey Hopkins and Will Raddles insist upon coming to the front, and for a moment we see them very happy and contented with their wives. Will's spouse answers to the name of Laura.

In the background there are two shadowy forms, who keep their faces averted, men of low repute, known as Dan Callis and Aaron Downey, who vanish from the scene. We can see no signs whatever of Pinnick and Terrapin. The mirror shows them not.

Again the mirror brightens, and we see the man we have so long known as the Stranger, leading a little boy by the hand. They walk down to the seashore, and Parlieton points to a spot and says:

"Mark, it was here that I found my great good luck. The ocean gave me a treasure, a lad with a nature as sound as the rocks that tower above us, and a heart of sterling gold."

"You mean my father?"

"Yes. But hush! Here he comes!"

THE END.

INDIGESTION

Indigestion attacks old and young, rich and poor, and terrible are the consequences of neglect. The disease that robs you of the power to digest your food, robs you of the very source of life itself. Slowly your strength ebbs away; you are tortured with pain, and life becomes a misery. Be warned! Take Mother Seigel's Syrup, the real cure.

BILIOUSNESS

To cure Biliousness you must strengthen your liver, so that the flow of bile may be regular and even. Too much bile is as bad as too little, and both cause untold suffering. Mother Seigel's Syrup tones and cleanses the liver; it quickly restores healthy action and cures your biliousness.

CONSTIPATION

Constipation should never be neglected; it fills your blood with impurities and sows the seeds of dangerous diseases. Mother Seigel's Syrup regulates your bowels, cleanses your blood, ensures good digestion, and thus absolutely cures constipation.

ARE ALL CURED BY

MOTHER SEIGEL'S SYRUP

The 2/6 Bottle contains Three Times as much as the 1/1½ size.

NOW ON SALE!

No. 25—
THE STOLEN SUBMARINE,
A Thrilling Tale of Nelson Lee, Detective, and the Great Unknown.
.....By MAXWELL SCOTT.....

&

No. 26—
PETE, DETECTIVE,
A New, Original, and Laughable Tale of JACK, SAM, AND PETE.
.....By S. CLARKE HOOK.....

THE BOYS' FRIEND 3d. LIBRARY.

KING CRICKET!

A Fascinating 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.

Arthur Lovell, owing to the ruin of his uncle, has to forfeit his status as an amateur player for Loamshire and turns 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 Arthur.

Arthur Lovell is thus prevented from playing for Loamshire for two or three weeks, and in the meantime the team fare more or less badly.

Both Arthur Lovell and Kit know who are the cause of their sufferings, but agree to say nothing. At length the young fellow recovers, and in the match against Sussex played at Brighton he does wonders, and is carried shoulder high off the field at the close of his innings.

(Now read this week's instalment.)

Sussex Follows On—A Win for Loamshire.

BRIGHTON was basking under a blaze of August sunshine. Visitors to the popular seaside resort were there in thousands, and in crowds they had poured into the enclosures on the county cricket ground at Hove to watch the second day's play of the match with Loamshire.

Loamshire's splendid innings on the first day was talked of far and wide, and when the time came for Sussex to bat against the visiting team, there were not many seats to be had, nor was there much standing room left for latecomers.

The weather was ideal—bright, dry summer weather—with a cool breeze to refresh the cricketers. Natives and holiday-makers, Sussex folk and strangers, joined in a cheer as the Loamshire men came out to field, eleven stalwart figures in spotless white. The men from Loamshire looked very fit, and most fit of all was the batsman who had knocked up so brilliant a score on the previous day.

Arthur Lovell's exertions had certainly not tired him. This morning he was looking as fresh as paint. The spectators pointed him out to one another as the man who had knocked up 210 not out for his side, staying through a whole innings from start to finish.

Lovell went to field at point, his usual position. Kit Valance took the ball for the first over. He sent down a few trials to Tunstall, who was keeping wicket, and his delivery showed that he was in fine form.

There was a cheer again as the Sussex batsmen came out of the pavilion—C. B. Fry and Cox—and went to the wickets.

Fry, when he returned to cricket after his long absence, had not at first shown his old form, but of late he had been coming but stronger, and the spectators were in high hopes of seeing an innings in the old style.

The Sussex giant commenced very cautiously, playing Kit Valance's bowling with great care, evidently fully aware that he could not afford to take risks with the champion bowler of Loamshire.

The over proved to be a maiden, and then Geoffrey Lagden was put on to bowl against Cox's wicket.

Cox cut the bowling all over the field, and at the end of the over he had counted 14 to his credit.

Ponsonby made a wry face. He knew perfectly well that that over would have been better given to Tweedie, the Scottish professional in the Loamshire team, but Ponsonby was not the man to place the game before personal considerations.

Under the keen and exacting eye of Colonel Hilton, he simply dared not ignore Lovell and Valance as he would have liked to do, and as he had done on another occasion.

But for the rest he considered that he was entitled to please himself; and so he gave his own friend every chance, which unfortunately Lagden was able to make very little use of.

Against an average batsman, Geoffrey Lagden usually did passably well; but with a strong man at the wickets, he required luck to effect anything—and his luck was out now.

Kit Valance bowled again to C. B. Fry, and the Sussex captain scored 5 for the over, and so still had the bowling when Lagden commenced from the other end.

He punished Lagden's bowling in a way that elicited cheers and handclaps galore from the crowded enclosures.

Two boundaries, a 2, and another 2, then a boundary again, showed that the Sussex chief was quite in his old form when he had a bowler he could deal with.

Ponsonby's face grew longer, and he spoke to Geoffrey Lagden as the field crossed over.

"I shall have to give you a rest, Lagden."

The amateur scowled.

"I haven't got my hand in yet, Pon."

Ponsonby shrugged his shoulders.

"But Fry and Cox have, and they're piling on the runs. I shall have to leave you out, I say. I'll do my best for you."

There was no time to argue. Kit was bowling again, and again the over proved a maiden. Then the ball was tossed to Tweedie, and the Scottish professional went on. Kit Valance went into the field.

Clack!

The ball shot from Fry's bat, and the batsmen started to run.

Then there was a sudden whoop.

"Caught!"

"Well caught!"

C. B. Fry stopped and looked.

"Caught!"

"How's that, umpire?"

The ball was in the hands of Kit Valance.

The Sussex chief had been caught out by the Loamshire champion bowler at third man, and the umpire's verdict was inevitable.

"Out!"

The field rang with cheers.

"Bravo!"

"Well caught!"

C. B. Fry carried his bat back to the pavilion. It had been a difficult catch, but Kit Valance had done it, and Fry was dismissed for 21 runs.

Relf came in to join Cox at the wickets. But Relf did not stay there long. He had knocked up 8 runs when Kit Valance bowled against him, and bowled his middle stump clean out of the ground.

Killick was next man in.

Now the batting had something of a show again, and the runs came. Kit Valance delivered three overs without taking a wicket, and then Ponsonby gave him a rest. Not that he needed one, but the Loamshire skipper was inclined to do as he liked, and he liked to give Geoffrey Lagden another chance.

Lagden made little of it; but, as it happened, a low drive by Cox went fairly into the hands of Arthur Lovell, and the umpire's sententious "Out!" followed.

Sussex were now three down for 48.

Dwyer joined Killick, and between them they piled on runs, Killick doing most of the hitting, and the Australian backing him up well.

But Lagden's bowling was so evidently not up to the form of the batsmen that Ponsonby had no choice but to give him another rest; and now the bowling was divided between Kit Valance, Tweedie, and Arthur Lovell.

Between them the three professionals of the Loamshire team made things "hum."

Killick's wicket fell to a "googly" from Kit Valance, and Dwyer was dismissed for 15 by Arthur Lovell.

Five down for 80.

The innings could not be called brilliant, but considering the bowling and the fielding that Sussex had to face, the score was a very respectable one. For Lovell and Valance were in their best form, and when they were like that, they were dangerous to the best batsmen that ever wielded the willow.

Another wicket fell to Lovell from a throw-in from the country, the ball crashing right on the wicket a second before the bat came home to the crease.

Six down for 90.

And now Kit Valance was bowling again, and going through the "tail" of the Sussex batsmen like a scythe through grass.

He took a little run, and the ball left his hand like a bullet, and broke in upon Butt's wicket before the astonished batsman knew it was there.

Crash!

Down went the wicket, the middle stump lying on its back, the bails on the ground. There was a cheer from the crowd.

"Well bowled! Hurrah!"

Leach took Butt's place at the wicket. He looked out for that lightning ball with all his eyes. But unfortunately for the Sussex man, it was not that lightning ball that came again, but a slow ball with a break on it that was quite unlooked-for, and the next moment the bails were on the earth.

The batsman returned to the pavilion, the board showing a 0 to his credit; but that he was not to blame was soon shown by the fate of his successor at the wicket. It was the bowling that was too much for any batsman.

Relf—the younger Relf—was next man in.

He faced the bowling valiantly, like the good cricketer that he was, but the "googly" that came down was too much for him, and no wonder.

In a flash the leather was among the timber, and the bails were down, and the crowd were shouting and clapping frantically over the hat trick.

"Last man in!"

Yes, it had come to that. Lunch-time not due yet, and the last man was going in for Sussex—going in with a serious, solemn face, as was natural under the circumstances.

Colonel Hilton, in the pavilion, rubbed his hands.

"By Jove!" the old county cricketer exclaimed. "They'll be all down before lunch, and they shall follow on this afternoon! By Jove!"

The colonel's words were prophetic.

Last man in faced Kit Valance, and guarded his wicket with extreme care—perhaps just a little too much care. At all events, when the ball broke in for the off stump, it escaped his bat by inches, and the crash of a falling wicket followed.

"Out!"

The crowd roared.

"Hurrah!"

"Well bowled!"

And a storm of hand-clapping swept over the ground.

The last wicket was down. Vine was not out for 6. The tenth wicket had fallen with the score still at 90, and for that score Sussex were out.

It was close on lunch-time, and during the interval there was a great deal of discussion among the spectators as to whether Loamshire would require Sussex to follow their innings. There was no doubt about it in the pavilion.

Sussex had taken 90 runs against Loamshire's 310 in the first innings, and the Loamshire men had no thought of batting again.

After lunch, as the crowd streamed back into the enclosures and the pavilion filled again, it was known that Sussex were following their innings, and curiosity was keen as to how the southern cricketers would fare in their second essay.

The innings was opened by Fry and Relf. There was a brief spell of hope for the southern county, Fry knocking up 50 before he was caught out at point by Arthur Lovell. But that was the last glimpse of success.

Sussex batted well and bravely, but the bowling was too strong for them. Many a Sussex man, looking on as his side went down before the Loamshire attack, thought of Ranjitsinhji with a sigh.

Fry had batted well, though he was not, perhaps, quite in his old form yet. If Ranji had been there things might have gone differently, said many in the crowd. Loamshire, at all events, would not have found the victory so easy.

But Prince Ranjitsinhji had long since hied back to his native land, to become a great and glorious "jam," and the "orphans" of Sussex went down fast before the Loamshire attack.

Five wickets fell to Kit Valance in the home county's second innings at a cost of 18 runs, and once more the hat trick gladdened the eyes of the excited spectators.

The end came well before the time appointed for the drawing of stumps.

The Sussex total was exactly 100 when the last wicket fell to a deadly slow ball from Kit Valance.

The match was over! Loamshire had won by an innings and 120 runs—a victory sweeping enough to make the Loamshire cricketers feel extremely satisfied with themselves.

It was indeed a splendid victory, and as carnival of more successes to come. Loamshire, at last, were fairly embarked on the tide of victory—the tide that swept them towards the coveted goal—the County Championship!

Black News.

THERE was but one of the Loamshire cricketers who left the field in a black humour; it was Geoffrey Lagden.

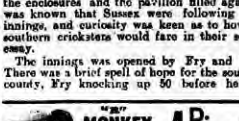
Favoured or unfavoured by the powers that were, his efforts to outshine Loamshire's champion had always ended in the same way, and of late his luck had been worse than ever.

His attempts to discredit Arthur Lovell in the Loamshire Club, to drive him from it, had scomed at one time likely to be crowned with success; but that time was now past.

Arthur Lovell was still a professional; he was still the "all round player" upon whom Lagden and his set had affected to look down. But his standing in the club was undergoing a change. His absence for a time from the side had shown his comrades, professional and amateur alike, how much he was worth to them.

His splendid success since rejoining Loamshire had done more. From the moment when he had been carried off the field by his comrades after a magnificent innings, he knew

(Continued on the next page.)



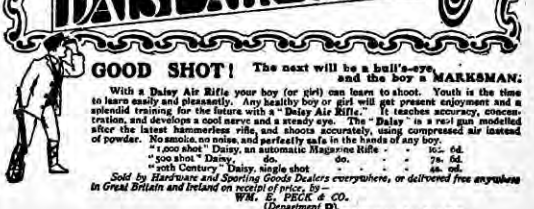
Including LABUAN (Monkey), PARAGUAY (Lion), set of 3 Jan Mayen, 3 unused Philippines, 3 very old Cuba, Transvaaal, Chiles (Condor), U.S.A. (round), 3 Argentine, Mexico (eagle), Orange Fr., Ivory Coast, obsolete Rhodesia (map), Upper Senegal Niger, etc., etc. 50 pages FREE list free. 300 illustrations. Thousands at bargains.
We are the publishers of "Title" Albums. Send for particulars.
ERNEST WOOD & CO.,
Charlton-cum-Hardy, MANCHESTER.

TRADE TERMS TO FEW RIDERS
In each district who apply immediately. Large profits easily made in spare time.
Country Cycles
Warranted five to ten years; best tyres, coasters, variable-speed gears, and all latest improvements; 36 models.
FROM £3. 10 Packed free, Carriage paid.
Old machines taken in part exchange.
750 Second-hand and Shop-soiled Cycles, all makes as good as new, from 30/- Great Clearance Sale.
Easy Payments from 2s. monthly, at 10% discount off catalogue prices; 2½% discount for cash. Every transaction in confidence. No deposit or references required. Thousands of testimonials from delighted customers.
Cycle accessories and repairs at half usual prices. Write or call at once for our big Free Art Catalogue and special offer on sample machine. Open till 9 p.m.
MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. 6 M
Liverpool: *81, Dale St.* London: *15, Charing Cross Rd.*
Glasgow: *168, Buchanan St.* Dublin: *187, Gt. Brunswick St.*
Manchester: *168, Deansgate.* Newcastle: *81, New Bridge St.*
Established 20 years.

Rudge-Whitworth
Britain's Best Bicycle

By Special Appointment to H.M. King Edward and the Prince of Wales.
The New Catalogue (post free) should be in every rider's hands. The celluloid handlebar fitted is the latest and smartest. From £4 10 0 cash. Only obtainable from any other exclusive points is fully described in it. Write at once to Rudge-Whitworth Ltd. Dept. 300 Coventry.

STAMPS WORTH HAVING.
Record Value. Absolutely Unequalled.
Grand 2s. "Empire Packet" for 2d.
This beautiful packet contains over 100 Genuine Stamps, including Grand Set of 5 Canadian Jubilees, Set of 5 Japanese Empire, Beautiful Set of Mexico, India, Victoria, Set of Venezuela (unused), Costa Rica (unused), South Australia, 17 A.s., Ceylon, Unused (unused), Germany, 1 Mark, Ivory Coast (unused), Set of New Zealand, Oblong French Colonial, Set of Mexico (unused), etc., etc. Splendid Perforation Gauge. Price 2d., postage 1d. extra (abroad 6d.); one lot only to each applicant. Extra lots 2s. each.—G. EDWARDS & Co., Stamp Dealers, 15, Cheshire Road, Smethwick.

THE DAISY AIR RIFLE

GOOD SHOT! The next will be a bull's-eye, and the boy a MARKSMAN.
With a Daisy Air Rifle your boy (or girl) can learn to shoot. Youth is the time to learn easily and pleasantly. Any healthy boy or girl will get present enjoyment and a splendid training for the future with a "Daisy Air Rifle." It teaches accuracy, concentration, and develops a good nerve and a steady eye. The "Daisy" is a real gun modelled after the latest hammerless rifle, and shoots accurately, using compressed air instead of powder. No smoke, no noise, and perfectly safe in the hands of any boy.
"1,000 shot" Daisy, an automatic Magazine Rifle - - 10s. 6d.
" 500 shot " Daisy, do. - - 7s. 6d.
" 20th Century " Daisy, single shot - - - 4s. 6d.
Sold by Hardware and Sporting Goods Dealers everywhere, or delivered free anywhere in Great Britain and Ireland on receipt of price, by—
WM. E. PECK & CO.
(Department 6),
8, Bradford Avenue, London, E.C.

KING CRICKET.

(Continued from the previous page.)

that there was a change, and Geoffrey Lagden knew it, too.

Fortescue, among the amateurs, had always stood up for Lovell. Others now seemed to have come round to Fortescue's way of thinking.

Sneers and innuendoes from Geoffrey Lagden seemed to fall upon ears grown strangely deaf to them, and had Lovell chosen there is not the slightest doubt that he might have become on intimate friendly terms with nearly all the side. He did not choose. He was not the kind of man to be pitied up in a good humour and dropped again in a bad one. But he was cordiality itself to those who chose to be cordial to him, while at the same time preserving his independence, and keeping his position well in mind. And once again, as he saw the new turn things had taken, the idea of Lovell as county captain crossed Colonel Hilton's thoughts.

All this was gall and wormwood to Geoffrey Lagden. The influence was departing from his hands. The season was wearing on, and he had not made the name he had hoped to make in county cricket. He had not "played the game," and he had to pay the penalty of being unsportsmanlike; but the knowledge of that was no comfort to him.

"Geoffrey!"

He looked up, none too amiably, at the sound of his father's voice. He had just walked out of the pavilion on the Hove ground, his hands in his pockets and his brow moody. But as his eyes fell upon James Lagden's face his expression changed. Never had he seen that cold, self-contained banker look like that before.

James Lagden was pale as death; his lips seemed afflicted with a nervous twitching, and his eyes looked hollow and sleepless. More than one curious glance had been cast at the well-dressed banker on the cricket ground as his pale, trouble-stricken face was seen.

"Father, what is the matter?"

"Come with me, Geoffrey. I have something important to say to you. I want your help."

Wonderingly the young man followed the banker. They left the county ground, and not till they were out of all possible danger of curious eyes and ears did the banker stop.

"Father, what has happened?"

"Have you seen Len Valance?" asked Mr. Lagden, without replying to the question.

Lagden looked at him in amazement.

"Kit Valance's brother?"

"Yes."

"No, I have not seen him."

"Don't trifle with me, Geoffrey. I know that you have dealings with Len Valance. It's no business of mine, but I have had my suspicions. Tell me the truth for mercy's sake—for both our sakes! Do you know where to find Len Valance now?"

The uneasiness—or, rather, the terror—in the banker's face still more astonished Geoffrey. He began to wonder whether his father was quite right in his head.

"No, dad, I don't know where he is, or where to find him," he replied. "I have communicated with him once or twice, but I wrote to your office in London. Has he left you?"

The banker nodded.

"He has left your employ?" asked Lagden, in astonishment. "But it is not so very long since he asked my influence with you to save him from dismissal."

James Lagden gave a bitter laugh.

"He had his purposes to serve by staying with me, I suppose."

"What purposes?"

"He has left me, and he has taken with him a bundle of important documents."

"Ah, I see! He has robbed you?"

"Yes."

"Have you set the police on his track?" asked Lagden excitedly. "Isn't there a clue?"

"I have not mentioned the matter to the police."

"Why not?" exclaimed Lagden warmly. "The scoundrel must be brought to book. It will be a good show-up for Kit Valance. The county committee will consider a little, I imagine, about employing the brother of a man sent to prison for theft."

"I cannot!"

"You are not thinking of me, surely? Len Valance will very likely try to disgrace me from revenge, but he has no proof to offer. I should laugh at his allegations. Any statement coming from a man arrested for robbing my father will be laughed at by the public. Never mind what he could say. It will have no effect—after he is arrested. For goodness' sake set the detectives on his track at once."

"You don't understand."

"No. I don't understand. Why are you thinking of sparing that rascal, pater," said Geoffrey impatiently. "Explain, then."

"The documents he has stolen are not securities; they have no intrinsic value. They are private papers—letters and records dealing with the affairs of the company in which Arthur Lovell's father lost his fortune."

Geoffrey Lagden started.

"But—but what are these papers? What had you to do with old Mr. Lovell losing his fortune? Once or twice I have thought that—that——"

The banker gave a hard, mirthless laugh.

"That I helped him realise the loss? Well, you were right. I will be frank with you, Geoff, for in the pass things have come to only a desperate effort can save us, and we must work together. If justice were done"—the banker's voice sank low—"if justice were done, I should have to restore to Mr. Lovell fifty thousand pounds!"

Geoffrey turned pale.

"And that would mean——"

"Ruin!"

"Ruin?" Geoffrey was white to the lips. "Father—ruin?"

"Yes, ruin. And that is not the worst. If those documents are made public it means worse than ruin; it means disgrace—it means—prison!"

"Good heavens!"

"We must find Len Valance; we must induce him to give up the documents—buy them at any price, or take them by force—or we are ruined! That is what I have come to tell you, Geoffrey!"

The Proofs.

"LEN!"

Kit Valance uttered the name sharply. The cricket comrades were sinying at the house of a friend near Hove, and Kit Valance was coming up the lane, after leaving the county cricket ground, when he caught sight of his brother leaning on the gate and smoking a cigarette.

For once the young bowler's face did not darken at the sight of the scapegrace. He knew that it was probably the letter he had himself written to Len that had brought the young ne'er-do-well down to Brighton. Len was evidently waiting there for him.

Len Valance nodded coolly to Kit. He was relieved to see that Arthur Lovell was not with the young bowler.

"Where is Lovell, Kit? I understood from your letter that you have made it up with him."

Kit's brow clouded for a moment.

"Yes, Len. I discovered that he was in the right; that you were fully as great a scoundrel as he deemed you."

The scapegrace laughed. Hard words came very lightly to him; he was used to them. And he did not want to quarrel with either his brother or Arthur Lovell now.

"Well, you wrote to me asking me exactly what I could do in this affair of James Lagden and Lovell's uncle. I had already told you that I could lay my finger on proofs that James Lagden swindled old Mr. Lovell in the most barefaced manner. Lovell refused to have any dealings with me. Does your letter mean that he has changed his mind?"

Kit shook his head.

"I have not spoken to him about the matter. I wanted to see you first. He is staying to talk with Colonel Hilton, and I came on, as I thought you might be here."

Len Valance nodded with satisfaction.

"Good! I would rather not meet him just now. We can settle this between us. Shall we talk here, or shall I come into the house?"

"We can talk here very well."

Len laughed again.

"Very well. Since I saw you last I have kept my eyes open, though Lovell refused to employ my services. I had an idea of going to his uncle, who, after all, ought to be interested in the matter, even if he is in bad health. However, here we are. Now, you know, of course, that Mr. Lovell's money was invested in a concern in which James Lagden was also interested?"

"Yes, and he lost fifty thousand pounds in it."

"Exactly; every shilling of which went into James Lagden's pocket."

"Can you prove that?"

"Easily. There was a rascal named Isaac-

A fierce blow under the ear sent Geoffrey Lagden reeling. The cane crashed to the ground, and Lagden followed it there.

son who appeared to be prime mover in the affair, and who fled when the crash came, and was supposed to have made away with most of the money. As a matter of fact, this Isaacson was only a tool of another—a sort of dummy, you know, behind whom the real scoundrel worked and carried out his schemes. Isaacson was never more than that. You can guess whom the real rascal was."

"James Lagden?"

"Just so."

"But the proof?"

"The proof exists in black and white. Letters which passed between Isaacson and Lagden, and documents relating to the concern, containing particulars of its doings, and showing it to have been a rank swindle from end to end, and the work of James Lagden from start to finish—I can lay my finger on them when I choose."

A troubled look came over Kit's face.

"You have, then, as Lovell guessed you would, spied on James Lagden, and turned his confidence to your advantage, and——" Len, I can have no hand in it. I hoped to hear something different. I can't take a hand in a game of that kind. The thing ends here."

Len Valance gave a disagreeable laugh.

"Do you think so? My dear brother, you don't know me. I am working for myself first of all, and I have not been working for nothing." As soon as I knew that these documents existed I determined to possess them."

Kit started.

"What have you done?"

"They were kept in James Lagden's private safe, to which no one but himself had the key." The rascal grinned. "That baffled me for a time, but only for a time. He kept them. He never dreamed that they could ever see the daylight, and they contained proofs of Isaacson's guilt, in case that fellow should ever cut up rusty; but I fancy that when James Lagden discovers that they are gone he will wish that he had destroyed them."

"Do you mean that you have taken them?"

"Yes."

Kit drew a deep breath.

"And you have been through them. You are certain that they will prove what you say?"

"I know it. Once these papers are published to the world, James Lagden is a ruined and disgraced man."

Len rolled the words over, as it were, on his tongue as if they had a relish for him. James Lagden was not a master to be loved, and he had been very hard with the scapegrace. It was Len's turn now.

"He will have to disgorge the Lovell fortune," he went on, "and if he can save himself from prison it will be by only one means—a bullet through his head."

Kit shuddered.

"The papers are in my hands," went on Len. "I intend to make the best terms I can with them. I've no cause to like Arthur Lovell. He has treated me like a dog. As a matter of fact, I'd as soon make terms with the Lagdens, only I fear to deal with that cunning fox of a banker. I have done him this time, because he never feared me; but if I give him a chance he will get the better of me. And—and I hate him!" Len snapped his teeth. "He has kept me well under his heel, and never neglected to tread hard if he thought I needed it. I hate him—more than I do Lovell! And—and Lovell is a man of his word. If he made a bargain he would stick to it."

"You may be sure of that."

"The documents are worth fifty thousand pounds to him—or to his uncle, which is the same thing—to say nothing of revenge upon the Lagdens for the way they have treated him."

Kit's lip curled for a moment in a strange smile.

"What do you say, Kit?"

"Lovell is not the man to care for revenge upon anybody," replied Kit. "So long as mere justice were done, he would be satisfied. But——"

"You think he will take exception to the way I became possessed of the documents."

"Yes."

"It is folly! The papers are in my hands now. Any detective employed by Lovell to discover the truth would have done as I did. Here are the proofs of a crime. It is folly to say that it was not justifiable to take them."

Kit nodded.

"Perhaps so. I agree with you in part, though only in part. I will speak to Lovell, and see what he says. That's all I can promise."

"Try to make him see reason, then," urged Len. "I ask only a thousand pounds for my share. That is reasonable enough, I think. It is only two per cent. on what I shall recover for him. Lovell has not need me well; but I am willing to let by-gones be bygones. There is his uncle, old and feeble, and in need of comforts. Remind him of that. I ask only a thousand pounds."

Kit made a scornful gesture.

"Lovell will not quarrel with you on the score of money. If he decides that he is justified in making use of the papers, he will pay your price without cavil."

"He is fully justified——"

"That is for him to decide. I had better talk it over with him before you meet him. Have you the papers with you?"

Len grinned.

"No. They are in a safe place, ready to be produced when wanted. James Lagden must have discovered before this that they are missing—and that I am missing, too—and put two and two together. He is quite capable of having me murdered to keep me silent now that I know so much. The world will be astonished when it learns what kind of a man that respectable banking magnate really is."

"Are you speaking seriously, Len?"

"Quite. He would count my life no more than I count a goat's to secure his safety and the fortune he has stolen."

"Then you had better take care, for he is down in Hove. I saw him on the county ground before I left, and I noticed he was looking very disturbed."

"No wonder! Thanks for the warning. I shall take care. When shall I see you again, Kit?"

"I will write to you as soon as I have consulted with Lovell."

"Very well. You know my address in Brighton. Ta ta!"

The scapegrace lounged away up the lane, his cigarette glowing in the thickening dusk, and Kit Valance entered the garden gate and walked up the path, his brow very thoughtful.

Fortune and a restoration to his old position were in the hands of Arthur Lovell, if he chose to take them.

More than his old position, for there was not the slightest doubt that, other difficulties being overcome, the post of county captain would again be offered him.

And if, under such new circumstances, it were offered, there was no reason why he should not accept it, and especially since the marked goodwill which nearly every member of the team showed towards him.

Captain of Loamshire! Captain of the champion county in the match with the best of England, in all probability. Kit's eyes sparkled at the thought. Truly, his friendship would have been a boon to Arthur Lovell if he could help to bring that about.

(To be continued on Saturday next.)

Football and How to Play it.

By WILLIAM McGREGOR

(The Father of Football League).

The above valuable addition to football literature has just been published, and is the first volume in a new series of books on sport, entitled "The Burleigh Sports Library."

The book is well printed and illustrated, is full of information relating to our favourite winter pastime, and should be obtained by every one who takes an intelligent interest in football. It includes chapters on "How to Excel at Football," "Hints to Young Players," by William McGregor, in which this talented expert deals with the question of training, and advises as to the best means to be pursued by the young fellow who really has an ambition to excel at football."

Other subjects dealt with are: "Our International players, and what can be learnt from their style of play," "The English Cup, 1907-8," "First, Second, and Southern League Fixtures for 1907-8," etc., etc., in fact, the volume is a combined Football Annual and Encyclopædia.

We have much pleasure in announcing that arrangements have been made whereby for a short time EVERY READER OF "THE BOYS' REALM" CAN OBTAIN A COPY OF THIS BOOK, POST FREE, but to avoid disappointment, application should be made at once.

Address your letter **The Burleigh Sports Co., No. 73, Mildmay House, Burleigh Street, Strand, London, W.C.**

Printed and published weekly by the Proprietors, the Amalgamated Press, Ltd., of 1, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, England. Subscription, 7s. per annum. Registered for transmission to Canada at Magazine Postage Rates. Saturday, September 7th, 1907. Communications for the Editor should be addressed—"The Editor, The Boys' Realm, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C."