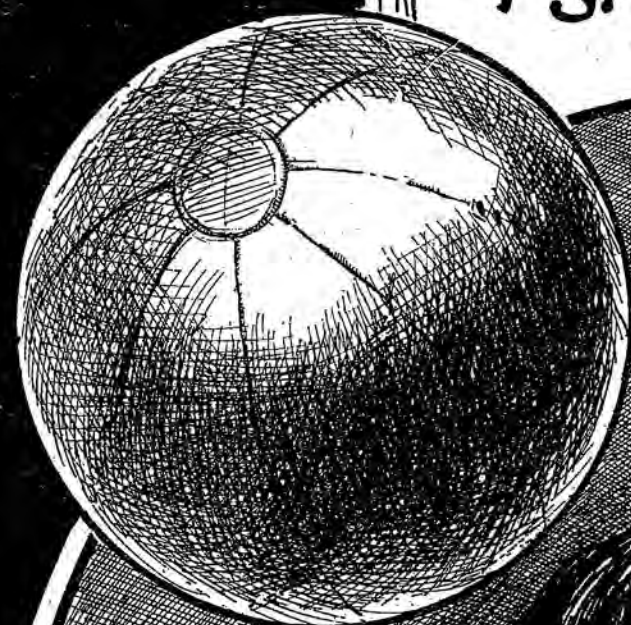


Great New Football Tale by A. S. Hardy.

The Boys' Realm 1^o

of SPORT AND
ADVENTURE

24
PAGES



"CAPTAIN
JACK"

BY
A. S. HARDY

MAMMOTH 24-PAGE FOOTBALL DOUBLE NO. 1



REDFERN MINOR.

A Rattling Double-length Instalment of Charles Hamilton's Fascinating School Tale.

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS ARE:

SIDNEY REDFERN, a bright, fun-loving lad who is a new pupil at St. Dorothy's School. Sidney has an elder brother at St. Dorothy's.

ARTHUR REDFERN, who is a prefect in the Sixth Form. Arthur Redfern is inclined to be easily led, and is under the by-no-means-good influence of

RANSOME, another Sixth-Former, a slacker, and a good-for-nothing.

SKELTON and **BROWN**, two Fourth-Formers, and leaders of the Classical side of St. Dorothy's.

TAFFY MORGAN, **VERNON**, and **RAKE**, the leaders of the Modern side at St. Dorothy's, deadly rivals of Skelton and Brown.

At St. Dorothy's there is a deadly and everlasting feud existing between the Classical and Modern sides. At the time of the arrival of Sidney Redfern, the captain of the Fourth Form, who has always been elected from the Classical side, has just left, and affairs are in a complicated state. There are exactly as many Classics in the Fourth as there are Moderns, and the result of the election for a new captain is bound to be a tie. Now Sidney Redfern has arrived, however, his vote will turn the scale one way or the other.

After much persuasion from both sides, Sidney votes for the Classics, to the rage and humiliation of the Moderns.

A few weeks later St. Dorothy's is playing a cricket match away with a rival school named Lexham. This is a very important match, and all St. Dolly's intend being present. The Moderns concoct a plan to get the better of the Classics. They hire a brake to drive them to Lexham, and knowing their rivals intend walking, hope to pass them on the road in triumph. Redfern minor, however, discovers their little plan, and when the brake arrives at the school the following day, the Classics take possession of it. No sooner have they got seated than the irate Moderns appear on the scene, and dash forward with hoids of rage.

(Now read this week's instalment.)

No Chance for Taffy.

LOOK out!" Right down the lane towards the Classical juniors rushed the enraged Moderns, with Taffy & Co. at their head, breathing vengeance.

The barefaced attempt to raid their brake, under their very noses, as it were, had taken away Taffy & Co.'s breath for a moment.

But only for a moment! Now they were coming upon the scene at top speed, and it was pretty clear that there would be a fight for the brake.

But the Classics were ready.

Redfern minor and Benson were at the heads of the leading horses, dragging them round in the lane. Phipps and two or three others had hustled the dazed driver from his seat, and he was standing in the road now, scratching his head in blank amazement. Skelton and Brown and a dozen more Classics formed up as quick as lightning to defend the brake, planting themselves between the captured vehicle and the oncoming Moderns.

It all passed with wonderful quickness. The Classics had laid their plans well.

Before the Moderns could arrive upon the spot, the brake was swung round in the road, and Redfern had clambered into the driver's seat, and gathered up whip and reins.

The great vehicle, with its four horses, was in motion just as the Moderns met the Classics with a terrific impact.

There was a wild and whirling combat in the lane, Skelton and Brown and their merry men manfully holding their own against the rush of the Mods.

Outside the gates of St. Dolly's a crowd of Sixth-Form cricketers, ready to go to Lexham, looked on at the scene in surprise and amusement. Lunsford was laughing heartily, and most of the fellows joined in. The only grave face in the Sixth-Form team was Redfern major's.

But the juniors were not even conscious of the lookers-on. All their attention was taken up by the affray for the brake.

Redfern minor cracked the whip, and the horses broke into a rapid trot, the brake rattling along merrily behind them.

"All aboard!" shouted Redfern.

"Cut!" yelled Skelton.

And the Classics rushed for the brake,

leaving the Moderns in possession of the battle-field. The Classical object, of course, was to escape with the brake; but Taffy did not mean to let them do it if he could help it.

"Come on!" he roared. "They've got the brake!"

Classicals were already crowding into it, but the laggards were mingled with the Moderns, and some of them were still running breathlessly behind and alongside when Taffy & Co. hung on behind.

But the situation was now in the hands of the Classics.

Skelton and Brown, and the rest inside the brake, lent helping hands to their friends below, dragging them in one by one. At the same time they dealt shoves and pushes to the Moderns who attempted to clamber into the brake, and there was many a heavy bump on the hard, dusty road.

Rake made a rush past the brake, and tried to collar the horses, but Redfern was on the look-out.

The long lash of his whip cracked in the air.

"Hands off!" he roared.

"Rats!" gasped Rake.

Crack!

The long lash curled round Rake's legs, and he gave a wild howl.

Redfern, laughing breathlessly, cut at his legs again, but Rake made a bound to the hedge, and escaped. But he did not try to get to the heads of the horses again.

Redfern looked back over his shoulder.

The Classics, helped by those inside, had clambered in, and the brake was pretty full. The Moderns were clinging on behind, or else running alongside, shouting out breathless but dire threats.

"All in?" called out Redfern.

"What ho!" said Skelton.

"Good!"

And Redfern shook the reins and cracked the whip. The horses broke into a faster gallop, and the brake rattled along at a spanking rate.

The running Moderns fell behind at once. Those who were clinging to the brake were dragged along with their boots shrieking on the road, and two or three of them let go and rolled in the dust.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skelton. "This is where we grin! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" howled the Classics.

Three or four Moderns were still holding desperately on.

Taffy was trying to climb in, with a grim and determined face. Vernon was ably seconding him. But the others, one by one, dropped off. They could not stick it out.

Skelton grinned down at Taffy.

Taffy was very red and excited, but hanging on like grim death. His blood was up, and he would not have given in for worlds.

"Better chuck it!" said Skelton.

"Yah!"

"Drop it, my son!"

"Br-r-r-r!"

Taffy made a desperate effort. He got his knee on the brake, and was about to hurl himself head first, recklessly, into the sea of legs, when Skelton and Brown and Benson seized him.

They gently pushed him back, so that he hung on again as before, glaring up at them with a face like a beet-root.

"You rotters!" he gasped.

"That's all right!" said Skelton. "Hang on, old man! I like to see your cheer-

ful face around. It reminds me of a white rabbit I used to have."

"You-you-you—"

"By Jove, chappy, I can't hold on!" gasped Vernon.

"Oh, stick it out!" said Brown III. imploringly. "You don't how much we shall miss you!"

But Vernon was spent. He dropped into the road, in a cloud of dust.

Taffy Morgan hung on fiercely.

"Ain't he a regular bulldog!" said Skelton admiringly. "This is what I call sticking to a thing. He looks thirsty, too. Did you put that bottle of lemonade in your pocket, Spratty?"

"Yes, rather!" said the fat Classical. "I'm just going to have a swig, too. I'm full of dust."

"Hand it over!"

"Eh?"

"Hand over that lemonade!"

"But I—"

"Hand it over, you fat ass!" roared Skelton.

"Who's captain of the giddy Form?"

"Yes, that's all very well," said the Classical Falstaff. "But I've only got one bottle, and I'm jolly dry. You're not going to drink it?"

"Drink it? Certainly not!"

"Oh, that's all right, then!"

Spratt handed over the bottle of lemonade. Skelton opened it. Taffy met his eyes, and glared.

"If you dare—"

"You look so dry," said Skelton sympathetically. "Have a little, just a wet, you know!"

And he calmly proceeded to pour the lemonade over the red, perspiring face of the Modern junior.

"Ow!" roared Taffy. "Ow! Yow! Gr-r-r-r!"

Spratt gave a yell.

"Gimme that lemonade! You said—"

"I said I wasn't going to drink it!" said Skelton. "I'm not, am I? It's for Taffy. Taffy's dry."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Brown. "He's not very dry now!"

"Gr-r-r, b-r-r-r, b-r-r!" gurgled Taffy.

"Finish the bottle, old chap!"

But Taffy had had enough.

He dropped into the road, and remained there in a sitting posture, his crimson face



"Beastly thieves!" said the dusty, dishevelled and panting Taffy, glaring up at Redfern and his chums, and shaking his fist angrily.

streaming with perspiration and lemonade, as he blinked furiously after the brake.

And the Classics sent back a yell of laughter as the brake rushed on; and the last thing Taffy saw as they turned the next corner was Skelton triumphantly waving the lemonade bottle in the air.

The Lexham Match.

LEXHAM seemed to have turned out in strong force for the cricket match.

The Lexham people backed up their team through thick and thin, and half the town was round the cricket-ground that afternoon. They backed up the eleven, in some cases, not wisely but too well. For it was an open secret that, on the occasion of many of the town matches, money changed hands on the Lexham ground.

Men who called themselves sportsmen, but who, as a matter of fact, had no conception of what true sportsmanlike feeling is, laid their money on the matches as they would have laid it on horse-races—with the natural result that there was a certain amount of blackguardism always to be discovered by a keen eye on the Lexham ground. Many of the St. Dolly's fellows, however, were quite ignorant of it, and never thought of anything of the kind. But anything of that sort was not likely to escape Ransome.

Ransome was in an anxious mood that afternoon. Arthur Redfern had hardly spoken to him since his suggestion that Redfern should play his side false. What decision Arthur had come to, the cad of the Sixth did not know. He had expected a struggle on his victim's part, but he had not anticipated that Arthur would keep it up as long as this; and he had accompanied the Sixth Form team to the ground in an extremely uneasy state of mind.

The hard work Lunsford had done with his team, and the wonderful improvement in the St. Dorothy's form, had leaked out, and everybody in Lexham knew that the town team would have a hard fight to win, if they won at all.

Lexham had always taken the St. Dolly's match in an almost patronising way, feeling their superiority to what they regarded as a team of schoolboys.

But some of the team, who had seen the Saints at practice, had modified their opinion considerably.

Lunsford had worked wonders with the school eleven. There were batsmen and bowlers in his eleven who could have made a decent show in a county match. Lexham was booked for a hard tussle, if not for a defeat.

The worst of it was—from Mr. Cunliffe's point of view, and Ransome's—that some of the bookmakers who turned an honest penny on the Lexham ground, knew more about the St. Dolly's form than they did—and knew it earlier. Enthusiastic Lexham men, willing to lay any odds on their favourites, had been glad to find the "bookies" willing to take their bets. Mr. Cunliffe himself had laid as much as four and five to one on Lexham, and had chuckled to himself when the bets were booked, feeling that he had a sure thing.

What he gradually learned of the St. Dolly's form later made him feel less jubilant. His "dead cert.," like so many "dead certs.," was turning out terribly uncertain, after all. And as Mr. Cunliffe had laid the odds, he stood to lose, in the event of a Lexham defeat, four or five times as much as he stood to gain by a victory. A Lexham defeat meant that he would have to hand out more than a hundred pounds. And Mr. Cunliffe meant to make a very hard fight before he parted with such a sum of money.

Ransome was in the same boat. He was too closely connected in his dealings with the rascally publican to dare, or care, to abandon him now. His business was to see that St. Dolly's did not win, and the inclusion of Arthur Redfern in the team had given him his chance, so he thought.

But if Arthur cut up rusty!

Ransome felt himself turn cold at the thought. Arthur was his last chance, and if Arthur failed him, he was ruined.

He approached Redfern major as the latter stood at the entrance of the pavilion, looking moodily over the green, sunny field. Arthur saw him coming, but avoided looking at him.

But Ransome was not to be rebuffed.

"I want to speak to you, Arthur," he said, in a low voice.

Redfern major nodded.

"Go on."

"What are you going to do?"

"Play the game."

"I know you are going to play," said Ransome, affecting to misunderstand. "What I mean is, are you going to desert me?"

He spoke in a low, cautious voice. Arthur looked at him.

"Desert you?"

"Yes. You know what I suggested to you?"

"I remember."

"You will not fail?"

"I will not fail my side in the match."

"Then you will fail me?"

"Don't be a fool! I ought to answer you with my fist on your jaw!" said Arthur savagely. "Do you think I'm a liar and a traitor, to—"

"Hush!"

"Well, let me alone, then!"

"Do you understand," said Ransome, in a low, tense voice—"do you understand what this means to both of us? Cunliffe—"

"Hang Cunliffe!"

"Gladly, if I could! But I can't, you see! He's got our paper. You know what he's threatened if he's not settled with to-night!"

Arthur, don't be a fool! You know it will be ruin to you if the school win!"

"I don't care."

"But I care!" said Ransome savagely.

"After all, it's only a cricket match!"

"Oh, you don't understand!" said Arthur, with bitter scorn. "You can't understand!"

"I understand that it would be madness to be expelled from school, and ruined for life, for the sake of a game?"

"You can't understand!"

"Then you mean to play your hardest, and win for the school?" said Ransome, hardly able to suppress the rage in his breast.

"Oh, that's too thick! A game of cricket doesn't depend on one man, as a game of football might," said Arthur slowly. "I shall play my best, of course. But it's very likely that Lexham will win."

Ransome gave him a quick glance.

It dawned upon him that Arthur, after all, might be only juggling with his own conscience, and trying to deceive himself.

"Suppose we have a run of bad luck in our innings?" said Arthur. "It's a single innings match, as you know. We mayn't have a chance. Who knows?"

"I think I see."

"Anyway, if I were inclined to play the traitor, I shouldn't do it until the last moment!" said Arthur bitterly.

Ransome looked relieved.

"I understand you."

"I don't think you do!" said Arthur, with a scornful smile. "I don't say I hope the school will win. I don't want to be ruined. But I'm going to play up for St. Dolly's. And I'd do it, too, if it were prison that waited for me instead of the sack."

And he turned and walked away, without giving Ransome an opportunity of replying. The cad of the Sixth stood biting his lips. With Arthur in this mood, anything might happen. Ransome was likely to pass a very unpleasant and anxious afternoon at Lexham.

Lunsford, of St. Dolly's, and Barber, the Lexham skipper, had tossed for choice of innings. Barber, a big, powerful fellow, a couple of years older than Lunsford, had a post in an engineering works in Lexham. He was a frank, good-natured fellow, and on very good terms with the St. Dolly's skipper. Lunsford won the toss, and elected to go in first.

Barber led his men out to field, and a fine side they looked, in spotless white, with healthy, sunburnt faces. They were greeted with a cheer from the crowd that mustered thick round the ropes.

Among the Lexham people were to be seen a crowd of the caps and straw hats of St. Dolly's.

It was the last big match of the season at St. Dolly's, and the hardest as well, and more than half the school had come over. There were plenty of the Fifth and Sixth, and crowds of juniors—Classicals and Moderns. Classical and Modern seniors were both represented in the eleven, and the fags of the two sides had come to cheer their men with all the force of their lungs—and to cheer anybody and anything, as a matter of fact, so long as they cheered and made plenty of noise about it.

The Classical brake had arrived in fine style, and was drawn up in the lane bordering the cricket-field. Many of the Classical juniors preferred to remain in the brake, from which an excellent view of the field could be obtained; and they also wanted to be on guard in case of an attempt on the part of the Mods. to recover their vehicle.

If they had left it unguarded, Taffy & Co. would no doubt have carried it off; but they were not likely to attempt to rush it while it was garrisoned. The most warlike of the juniors would have voted it bad form to begin a scrimmage on other fellows' ground.

Benson and about a dozen Classicals stood up in the brake to watch the match, but Redfern and Skelton and Brown strolled about the field. Redfern, as a new boy at St. Dolly's, had never been to Lexham before, and he wanted to have a look round. He exchanged

looks of satisfaction with his chums when Lunsford won the toss.

"Now we shall see some batting," said Skelton. "There's going to be a surprise for Lexham, my beloved earers. They don't know our Form yet!"

Skelton said "our Form" quite as if he were a full-fledged member of the Sixth-Form team.

Redfern grinned.

"Good! Lexham look a fine lot, but I think we shall match them. My brother—"

"Your brother will do wonders," said Skelton solemnly. Redfern, naturally, was rather full of his major's cricketing exploits that day, and Skelton and Brown had had to listen to a considerable number of anecdotes on the subject. "When your major goes on Lexham will be done in—absolutely done brown!"

"What ho!" said Brown. "I'm going to watch Barber, to see if he swoons."

Redfern laughed.

"Oh, don't be funny!" he said. "If you had a major like my brother Arthur, you'd be gassing about him all day."

"Well, I dare say we would," admitted Skelton. "He's a good cricketer, I allow that, especially as a bowler. But can he bat?"

"I should think he can!" exclaimed Redfern indignantly. "Haven't I seen him send a ball over the gym at St. Dolly's?"

"He won't do that to-day."

"How do you know he won't?" demanded Redfern warmly.

"Because we're too far from St. Dolly's," grinned Skelton.

And Redfern laughed. He was in a high good humour that afternoon. The victory over the Moderns, who had not yet arrived on the field, had cheered all the Classicals. But Redfern had additional cause for elation. To have a major in the school team was to be a great man. It was all very well for the fellows to say that it was "up against" a chap to have a brother in the Sixth. So it was, in some ways; but on the occasion of a big match, a brother in the school side meant glory. The Classicals treated Redfern with unusual respect on account of it—and even listened, several times, with great patience when he related how Arthur had played cricket at home in the holidays, and how he had done the double hat-trick against the Slowcombe Sloggers, and had knocked a ball through the window of a passing train, and performed other wondrous exploits.

Skelton had been trying to discover the order of going in, but he did not dare to venture too near the pavilion. But they knew how St. Dolly's were beginning, at all events, when Lunsford and Arthur Redfern came out to the wickets.

"My hat!" exclaimed Skelton, as he looked over the heads of the crowd, from his perch on top of the fence. "Your major's going in first, Reddy!"

"Jolly good!" said Reddy.

The Lexham fieldsmen were in their places. Woods, the most dangerous bowler on the Lexham side, was sending down some trials to the wicket-keeper.

"That chap's in good form," said Brown.

"Looks like it!"

"Hallo," exclaimed Skelton, looking round into the road behind them, "here come the Weary Willies!"

The three juniors, who were sitting in a row on the fence—a rather dangerous position to any but juniors who had as many lives as cats—looked round into the road, and grinned gleefully as the dusty Moderns came in sight.

Taffy was the first, and his face was crimson with heat and exertion, and presented a curious appearance with its admixture of dust and lemonade. He had wiped it with his handkerchief, and reduced that article to the state of a sticky rag, without improving his face very much.

"Cheer-ho!" shouted the three Classicals.

Taffy looked up.

"Had a nice walk?" asked Brown.

"Find the road all right?"

"Oh, it's not so dusty!" said Redfern. "I mean, it's not so dusty since Taffy rubbed his face on it. He's collected up a lot of the dust, you see."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You beastly thieves!" said Taffy, glaring up at them. "You Classical toads!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Taffy tramped on, and went into the field. Vernon and Rake followed him, and in twos and threes the dusty Moderns continued to arrive. But, long before they were all on the ground the match was fairly under way.

Not Out!

ARTHUR REDFERN dropped the end of his bat upon the crease and faced the first over. Woods, of Lexham, had the round red ball in hand, and was backing away for a run. The eyes of the whole crowd were on the pitch now, but probably no gaze was so keen and so eager as that of Ransome, of the Sixth.

What would Arthur do?

He looked as if he meant to play up for the school, and well Ransome knew that it was only too possible that, amid his comrades, under the gaze of hundreds of eyes, Arthur would forget every other consideration, and yield to the natural desire to cut a fine figure at the wicket, and run up the score for his side.

Ransome, fearing that his face might betray him to the St. Dolly's cricketers, had strolled away from the pavilion, and he stopped near the fence on the roadside, to look on at the match.

He did not notice the three juniors perched on top of the high fence; his thoughts were on the cricket-pitch. There was a rise in the ground near the fence, and Ransome had a good view of the game over the heads in front. He leaned back against the fence, his hands deep in his trousers-pockets. Although he did not observe the juniors, they had glanced at him. They were careful not to attract his attention, however. Their position was not the safest, and a Sixth-Former might have felt called upon to call them down.

"They're bowling!" said Skelton suddenly. Woods had taken a little run, and the ball was going down.

Clack!

Arthur Redfern stopped it dead on the crease.

The ball was returned, and the bowler sent it down again, and now the bat was seen to gleam in the sunshine.

Clack again!

And the ball was on its journey.

"Bravo!" roared Redfern minor. "Well hit!"

"Go it!" shrieked Skelton.

The batsmen were running.

Once, twice, thrice!

Three to begin with! The ball came in, and now Lunsford had the bowling. The skipper of St. Dolly's squared his mighty shoulders to the task. Lunsford was famed as a hard hitter, and he gave the Lexham men some leather-hunting now which was rather an eye-opener to them.

Two—and then 4!

The St. Dolly's crowd yelled. It was a ripping beginning. Lexham looked surprised. Woods was their best bowler, and was supposed to have a big chance in the next colts' match for the county. Yet here were a couple of schoolboys standing up to him as Hayward and Jessop might have done!

It began to be clear to the Lexham folk that the match was not to be the easy affair it had been of old; that they were out for a tussle. But most of them, after their first surprise, welcomed the discovery. The cricket was likely to be livelier, and more worth watching. Three again for Lunsford, and then Arthur

received the last ball of the over. It brought him 3.

It was a total of 15 for St. Dolly's for the over, and a start like that was enough to make the Saints yell. And they yelled.

Redfern minor jerked off his cap, and waved it frantically round his head, and caught Brown a terrific swipe across the face with it.

"Ow!" yelled Brown. "Grooch!"

He rolled on the fence, and just clutched hold in time. His heels clattered against the boards as he held on. Skelton grasped him by the collar.

"Ow! Help, you idiots!"

"Hallo!" said Redfern. "Sorry!"

"You—you fractious goat!" gasped Brown.

"Wait till I get on the fence again, I'll make you sorry!"

"Lend a hand, Reddy!" gasped Skelton.

Redfern grinned, and fastened his grip upon Brown's collar. Brown was hanging on the fence and breathing wrath.

"Quite an accident, Brownie!" grinned Redfern. "Sorry!"

"I'll make you sorrier!"

"You'll make it pax, or you won't get on the fence again," said Redfern coolly. "Now, then, what's the verdict?"

Brown glared up at him.

"You—you worm!"

"Is it pax?"

"Yes, you sweep!" gasped Brown.

And his chums dragged him upon the fence again. He blinked at Redfern, who was laughing; but he had made it pax, and that was sacred.

Redfern major still had the bowling. He was doing well at the wicket. His handsome face was flushed, his eyes sparkling. There was no sign of weakness about his face now.

Ransome looked at him, and gritted his teeth. He knew what that expression upon Arthur's face meant. He was thinking of cricket now—thinking of it, living for it—all else was gone from his mind.

Unless his luck failed him, he was in for a splendid innings. And Ransome, who knew how Arthur could bat if he liked, felt a sinking at the heart.

All his scheming had come to this, then—he had failed. The dupe he had always twisted round his fingers had escaped him—and at the very moment when it was most necessary that he should submit.

There was no speaking to Arthur now—no signing to him. Ransome could only wait, and look on while all his hopes were defeated, biting his lips with rage.

He caught sight of a red face in the crowd—a red face with shifty, watery eyes—the face of Mr. Cunliffe, of the Green Man in Wyndale. He knew that the man was looking for him, but he made no sign. He had no desire to listen then to the threats of the publican. His control over Arthur was gone, and he could only hope that fortune would turn against St. Dolly's.

But that did not seem likely.

Arthur was batting splendidly. Never, it seemed to Ransome, had he seen the prefect in such wonderful form.

Any kind of bowling—fast, slow, or medium—that came down to him, he dealt with with perfect ease, and the trickiest ball never found him wanting.

Lunsford was caught out in the slips, and Mannerling of the Sixth took his place. Mannerling's wicket fell to a fast ball from Woods, and Cox took his place. Cox was dismissed in his first over. But all the time Arthur was keeping up his wicket, and piling up the runs.

And now, at every hit, the St. Dolly's fellows were cheering him thunderously. They had expected a great deal of Arthur. But they had never expected him to render better service than old Lunsford. But Lunsford was out, and there was Arthur batting away as if by machinery, as fresh as paint, with 50

(Continued on the next page.)

CLUB NOTICES.

CHALLENGES FROM READERS' OWN CLUBS. THESE ARE INSERTED FREE OF CHARGE.

WAVERLY C.C. (average age 15, weak) require fixtures for Saturday afternoons with Dundee, Lochore, or Downfield clubs.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, A. C. Donaldson, 46, Peddie Street, Dundee, Scotland.

FARRINGTON UNITED F.C. (average age 17) require matches for coming season. Colours, red jerseys, white knickers. Ground, Hackney Marshes.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, H. M. Pegge, 21, Griffin Buildings, Clerkenwell Road, E.C.

FISHPONDS ROVERS A.F.C. want matches home and away.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, H. W. Pearce, 15, Coronation Avenue, Fishponds, Bristol.

LIFTON A.F.C. (members of Devonport and District Wednesday League) have dates open for a few friendly matches home or away. Ground, North Downs.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, T. Budge, 16, Cannon Street, Devonport.

ASHLEY ROVERS F.C. (average age 17, medium) want away matches for the coming season within a radius of eight miles.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, G. Chapman, junr., 7, Herbert Road, South Tottenham.

VERNON F.C. (average age 18) have all dates open for next season. Also in want of a few good players. They also require a private ground, which they would share with another.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, A. G. Kitch, 47, Lethair Road, South Haringay, N.

SWAN A.F.C. (average age 17-18, medium) want friendly matches during September for two teams. Distance no object.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, J. H. Smith, 64, Bullow Road, Fulham, S.W.

MALBOROUGH UNITED A.F.C. (average age 15-16) require home and away matches for coming season, within three miles' radius. Nearly all dates open.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, John Spencer, 52, Malborough Street, Park Lane, Leeds.

PLYMPTON JUNIOR A.F.C. (average age 16) would like to arrange fixtures for the coming season with teams in Plymouth and district. Wednesdays only.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, F. G. Bond, Ridgeway, Plympton, Devon.

WELLINGBORO' FOSSE F.C. (average age 16-17) wish to arrange a match at Bedford in September, and at Leicester, on December 27th.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, F. Taylor, 21, Harrowden Road, Wellingboro', Northants.

PALACE OAK F.C. (average age 16) require matches for next season home and away. Have several dates open. Colours, black and gold. All postcards answered.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, H. A. Cooke, 87, Munster Road, Fulham, S.W.

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ST. JOHN'S JUNIORS F.C. 2nd XI. (average age 14, weak) want home and away matches. Ground, Ladywell.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, M. Dow, 61, 6 Block, Vine Street Buildings, Tooley Street, S.E.

ST. PAUL'S F.C. 3rd XI. (average age 14, weak) require matches; all dates open.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, S. James, 47, Roding Road, Clapton, N.E.

SEYMOUR AVONDALE F.C. (average age 16, medium) require home and away matches.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, A. J. Poyton, 1, Lowden Road, Lower Edmonton, N.

HAZLEWOOD F.C. (average age 17) have a few dates open for this season. Clubs in North London only need apply.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, J. Artie, 141, Hazlebury Road, Silver Street, Upper Edmonton.

CRESCENT A.F.C. (average age 17) require matches home and away in Liverpool and district for the coming season.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, O. S. Wallis, 38, Langrove Street, Everton, Liverpool.

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ST. STEPHEN'S JUNIOR A.F.C. 2nd XI. (average age 14) have all dates open for coming football season. L.C.C. permits.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, F. W. Dixon, 17, Bloemfontein Avenue, Shepherd's Bush, W.

FINSBURY JUNIORS F.C. (average age 17, weak) require a few away dates for the coming season. Hackney Marshes or North London preferred.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, A. Griffiths, 19, Durham Road, Canning Town.

ST. PANCRAS AND DISTRICT LEAGUE (average age 18) require strong teams for coming season. L.C.C. grounds allowed.—Apply to Hon. Secretary, P. Scragg, 31, Euston Road, King's Cross, N.W.

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runs all to himself out of the total, so far, of 80.

Redfern minor was simply crowing with delight.

"Isn't he ripping?" he exclaimed, giving Skelton an enthusiastic slap on the back that nearly hurled him off the fence. "What?"

"You utter ass!"

"He'll be not out at the finish, you bet," went on Redfern, unheeding. "Didn't I tell you so all the time?"

"No, you didn't."

"Well, I tell you so now, then."

"Hallo! There goes Fleet's wicket!"

"Not my major's, though."

Four down for 82! Lexham stared at the figures on the board. And this was the St. Dolly's match—this was the walk-over.

Fellows who had backed up their team recklessly, and taken any odds, began to look serious, and wish that they hadn't transferred the habits of the racecourse to the cricket-ground. They were likely to get a lesson if St. Dolly's went on like this.

Lunsford stood in front of the pavilion, his honest face brimming over with delight. The fact that he was outdone in his own eleven didn't worry him. He grinned afresh at every big hit made by Arthur, and chuckled to his friends.

"My hat! Look there! That's a 4! Well run! Well run! Oh, well hit! That's a 2, at least. Go it, Arthur! My hat! Look at him! Jever see anything like it!"

And so on, and so on. Lunsford's glee was as good to watch as the match. It really looked as if Redfern major would, as his enthusiastic minor declared, stay in to the finish and end up "not out." First man in and last man out would be something of a record.

The tail of the innings was disposed of more rapidly by the Lexham bowlers. Lexham shouted itself hoarse over the hat-trick performed by Woods. But Arthur's wicket was still intact.

"Oh, hang him—hang him!" muttered Ransome. "The cur! To fail me like this! Why, I've never seen him bat like that before. He's doing it on purpose! Hang him!"

"Last man in!" exclaimed Redfern suddenly.

"My hat! Your major's sticking it out."

"What ho!" Redfern waved his cap again, and Brown dodged it. Redfern was waving it this time to Taffy, whom he had discerned on the roof of the pavilion. The Modern junior was seated calmly there, watching the match from that excellent coign of vantage at a considerable risk to his neck. "Coo-oo, Taffy!"

"Coo-oo!" called back Taffy. "I say, your brother's playing jolly well for a Classical!"

But Redfern only laughed. He was getting stiff with sitting upon the fence so long, but he hardly thought of it. He wouldn't have missed a second's sight of that match for anything. Was his brother to be "not out"?

"Ah, ere you are!" said Mr. Cunliffe, tapping Ransome upon the shoulder, and the cad of the Sixth started and looked down at the squat figure.

"This ain't accordin' to programme," said Mr. Cunliffe, his little shifty eyes sparkling with rage. "This is goin' to cost me a 'undred quid."

"I can't help it," said Ransome desperately. "I've done my best. He won't listen to me."

Cunliffe gritted his teeth. "He must listen to you," he said, in a savage whisper. "Get at him—after the innings. Speak to him. Remind him how it's to be. He may be able to make up for this in the Lexham innings. If not—"

"I'll do my best."

"You'd better! It'll be as bad for you as for 'im!" said the publican significantly.

There was a shout from the field.

"Well bowled!"

The tenth wicket was down. But it was not Arthur's. The prefect was "not out." The St. Dolly's fellows roared themselves hoarse. Eighty runs for Arthur Redfern out of a total of 170. First man in, and not out. No wonder the fellows roared. No wonder Redfern minor nearly fell off the fence in his excitement.

Ransome, gritting his teeth, plunged through the crowd towards the pavilion. His scheme had failed so far. But there might be time yet.

In Doubt.

ARTHUR REDFERN was standing in the midst of a crowd of St. Dolly's fellows, receiving congratulations from all sides. His handsome face was flushed and happy. He had done splendidly for his side, and for the moment that knowledge banished every other consideration.

Lunsford was slapping him on the shoulder as if he really meant to hurt him. The St. Dolly's captain was simply brimming with delight.

"Ripping, old fellow!" he said, for the tenth time at least. "Glorious! By Jove! I knew you'd do well, but I never expected you to keep you end up like this, against bowlers like the Lexham fellows. Bravo!"

Arthur laughed.

"You'll be giving me a swelled head soon," he remarked. "Draw it mild, you know."

"I tell you, it's ripping—splendid! What do you fellows say?"

"Magnificent!" was the general chorus.

"What ho!"

"Bravo!"

"If somebody could get a chap a ginger-pop—" began Arthur, laughing.

"Here you are, old man!"

Any St. Dolly's fellow on the field—with one exception—would have run a mile to fetch a ginger-pop for the hero of the hour. But there was one gloomy face now in the happy circle. Ransome was looking at Arthur with a bitter expression. Redfern major caught his glance, and his expression changed.

To Arthur, at that moment, the face of Ransome was like the death's head at a feast. It brought back the recollections he had been striving to keep out of his mind.

Ransome made Arthur a sign that he wished to speak to him alone.

The prefect affected to misunderstand it. He had no desire for a talk with Ransome then. He had made up his mind. He had resolved to follow the only manly course—to help his side to win the match, whatever might happen afterwards. He instinctively knew that if Ransome talked to him his resolution would waver. He turned away with Lunsford, and began to talk to him eagerly and excitedly, to give Ransome no chance to approach.

A bitter smile curled the lips of the cad of the Sixth.

He guessed Arthur's object at once, and Arthur's avoiding him was a sign of weakness that gave him hope. Some time before the Lexham innings commenced he would find a chance of getting Arthur to himself; and then

It was still possible to save the situation.

were glittering, but his voice was quiet and smooth as he said:

"You are mistaken! It's another matter! I want to warn you!"

Arthur looked at him quickly.

"Warn me! Of what?"

"I can't speak here. Come along a bit!"

Arthur hesitated, and was lost. Ransome drew his friend's arm through his, and they walked away. Where to find a secluded spot on the crowded field was a puzzle, and Ransome stopped behind the pavilion, where there was no window to overlook them, and they were momentarily out of sight of the crowd.

That anyone might be on the roof of the pavilion did not even occur to Ransome.

"Well?" said Arthur feverishly. "Quick, what is it?"

"You are in danger!"

"What do you mean? Danger—"

"Of being shown up before all the crowd! Cunliffe is here."

"I know. I saw him."

"He has come to claim his money."

"I have nothing for him, and he knows it."

"He knows, too, that you have refused to lose the match."

"Good!" said Arthur, between his teeth.

"This will be the end of that, anyway, however it ends for me. I am not his slave, the cur!"

"He is going to come up to you before the whole field, the Lexham fellows and all, and show you up."

"Here! Not here!"

"I'm trying to save you. Look here, I've got some money on the match—for you and me equally. If Lexham wins, we get fifteen pounds each, and that will clear off all Cunliffe's claims on us, and leave us something in hand."

"I wouldn't touch a penny of it."

Ransome was silent. The very passion of Arthur's words showed that his heart was failing him. The thoughts he had desperately tried to stave off were thronging in his mind now.

Expelled!

It was a terrible word!

He thought of the disgrace—of his mother's astonishment and horror—of the look that would come upon his father's face when he was told.

Could he face all that?

In excitement and enthusiasm, forbidding himself to think, he could have braved it; but now that his mind was forced to dwell upon it, his resolution wavered, and broke.

Ransome watched him keenly.

"Then you're going through with it?" he said. "You're going to face expulsion? Well, we'll go through it together, Arthur."

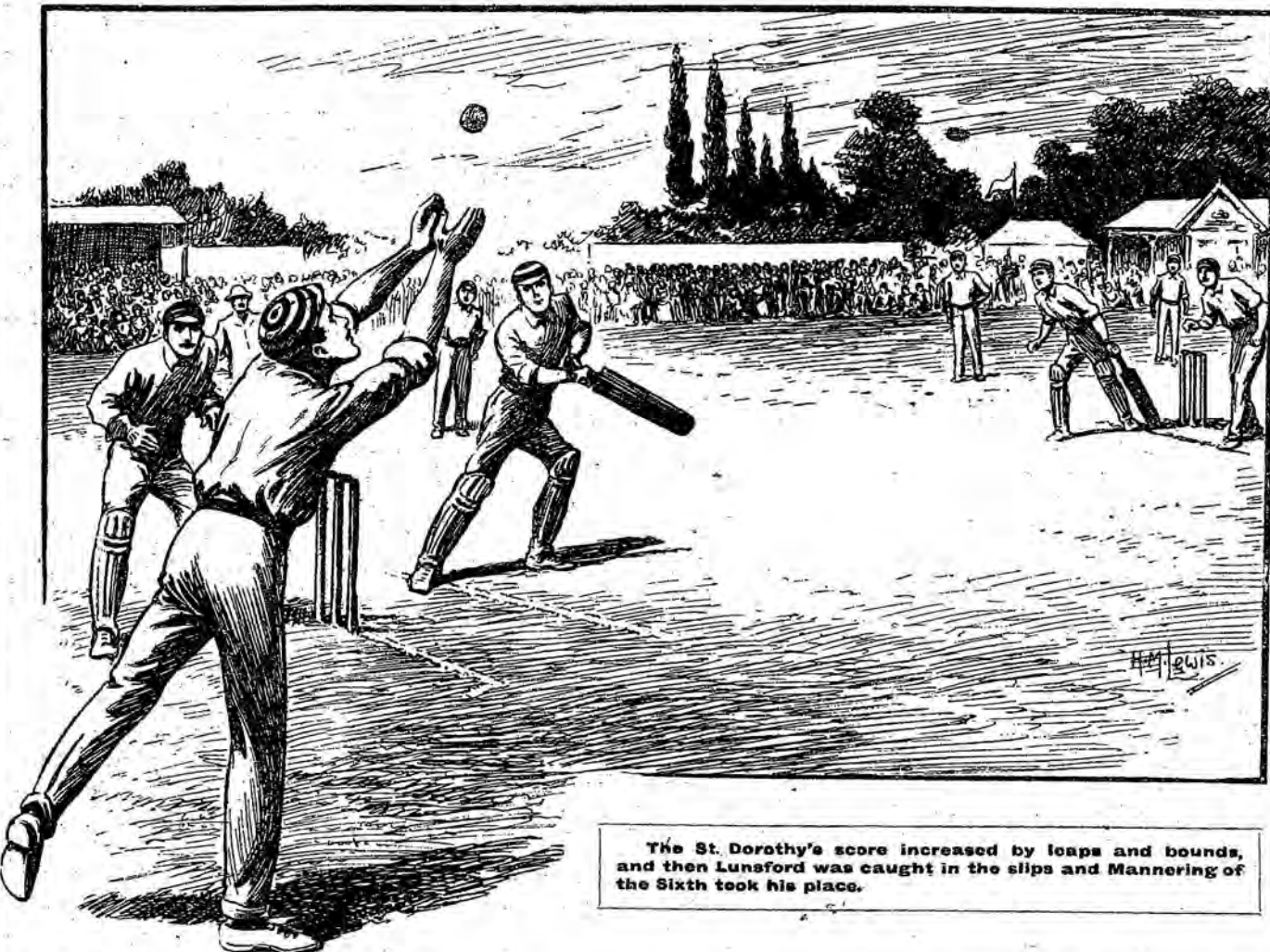
Redfern major was silent.

"That's all," said Ransome. "I thought I'd make a last appeal to you. I'm done. Do as you like—ruin yourself and me. I'm done!"

"It may not be so bad as that," muttered Arthur.

"You know it will be."

"I—I—I can't lose the match! Hang you!"



The St. Dorothy's score increased by leaps and bounds, and then Lunsford was caught in the slips and Mannering of the Sixth took his place.

The Lexham batsmen would put up a hard fight, and if the best St. Dolly's bowler failed his side, there was no reason why they should not get ahead on the innings, and beat the school. The fact that it was a single-innings match gave the school no chance to pick up afterwards.

And so Ransome watched for his opportunity.

Arthur Redfern, quite well aware that his whilom chum was watching him, kept with Lunsford, sticking to the St. Dolly's captain like a shadow, and keeping up an incessant talk to keep himself from thinking.

But Lunsford was presently called off to discuss some point with Barber, the Lexham skipper, and Arthur was left alone. It would have been only for a few moments, but Ransome did not lose the opportunity.

Arthur turned to go into the pavilion, when he felt a touch on his arm. Ransome looked him in the eyes.

"I want to speak to you, Arthur."

Redfern major compressed his lips.

"Let me alone."

"But—"

"I won't speak to you now. After the match."

"Then it will be too late."

"Not a word!" exclaimed Arthur violently.

"Not a word! I know what you are going to say, and I won't agree—I won't! That's flat!"

"I was going to say—"

"Enough of that! Leave me alone!"

Ransome almost choked with rage. But it was necessary to keep his temper. His eyes

"Yes, here!"

The unfortunate prefect turned white. He had not thought of that. He had gone on his way blindly, dismissing from his mind all thoughts of the consequences. Now that they were brought home to him, he shrank, as Ransome knew he would.

"The hound!" muttered Arthur hoarsely.

Ransome smiled in his bitter way.

"Well, you have done him an ill turn. He stands to lose a hundred pounds or more on this game."

"Serve him right," muttered Arthur fiercely.

"The cad! He has no right to bring his filthy racecourse tricks on the cricket-ground."

"That's neither here nor there. He's as mad as a hatter over the way you've served him. He's going to show you up before the crowd, and then lodge a complaint with Dr. Cranston."

"Let him!"

"Are you mad? You will be expelled."

"I don't care."

"You don't care! What do you mean?"

"I mean what I say!" broke out Arthur passionately. "I'd rather be expelled than live this dog's life any longer, ordered about by a cur like that. Let him do his worst!"

"It's not only you, it's me," said Ransome, between his teeth.

"You can look out for yourself."

"Is that what you call friendship?"

"Your friendship has been valuable to me, hasn't it?" said Arthur. "You led me into this hole, and now you're trying to make me a scoundrel into the bargain!"

What did you start on me now for?" broke out Arthur passionately.

"I wanted to save you."

"I should be a coward—a cad—a villain!"

"Nonsense! Such things are done every day! It's no worse than pulling a horse, and that's common enough on the turf, goodness knows! You know we lost money ourselves through a horse being pulled by the jockey."

"I know it!"

"Well, it's only tit for tat. We've a right to recoup ourselves by the same means."

"We haven't! I tell you—"

"Besides, it will get you clear of Cunliffe. You can make a fresh start, and never see the man again."

"There's something in that," muttered Arthur, licking his dry lips. "Oh, Heaven, I wish I had never seen him!"

"Make your mind up to it. After all, what is it? A game of cricket?"

"You don't understand!"

"I understand better than you do. What will you think, when you're a man—a ruined and disgraced man—to remember that your whole life was mucked up for the sake of a game?"

Arthur was silent. It was not the "game," it was his honour that was at stake, and he knew it; yet there was a speciousness in Ransome's reasoning that weighed with him. He was willing to catch at any straw.

"I don't know what to do," he muttered wretchedly. "How can I face the pater? I know what he will say. He's as hard as nails; he won't understand!"

"Of course he won't! He'd think more of the disgrace than of the result of a cricket-match, I should think."

"Hark! Somebody's calling me!"

"What will you—"

"I must go! I shall be missed!"

And Arthur darted away before Ransome could detain him. The cad of the Sixth gritted his teeth.

"He will give way!" he muttered. "He dare not face it out now! He will give in."

Ransome spoke with confidence, yet there was uneasiness in his breast as he slowly followed Arthur. He could not be sure. The Lexham innings would be a time of torment to him till the finish.

Neither of the seniors dreamed that other ears had heard their whispered words; neither thought of looking upward as they left the spot. If either had done so, he would have seen a white, scared face looking downward—the face of Taffy Morgan!

Taffy's Difficulty.

Taffy had heard every word. The modern junior had certainly had no intention of playing the eaves-dropper. He had perched himself on the roof of the pavilion for a good view of the game. After the St. Dolly's innings, he had sat there contentedly munching ham-sandwiches which he had brought in his pocket, while Vernon and Rake were at the refreshment-tent.

When the seniors were speaking behind the pavilion, Taffy had heard them, and he was too utterly astounded and scared to know what to do, or even to think.

If the original St. Dorothy, after whom the old school was named, had suddenly appeared, and executed a cake-walk across the cricket-field, Taffy could not have been more astonished than he was now, when he heard two seniors of St. Dolly's discussing the selling of a first eleven match.

He remained with bated breath, a half-eaten sandwich in his hand, his face pale and scared, his eyes wide open, in a state that he would have described as flabbergasted. For some minutes he seriously thought that he was dreaming.

When the two seniors moved away, Taffy remained quite still, in the same attitude of utter and blank amazement.

It was some time before he moved or uttered a sound. Then he gave a low whistle.

"My only hat!" he murmured.

It was no dream—it was real enough. Arthur Redfern really intended to give the match away—for that was what Taffy could not fail to gather from his words.

A St. Dolly's fellow sell a school match!

"My hat!" murmured Taffy again.

It was incredible, but it was true!

What was he to do?

A great many fellows in Taffy's place would have decided that they could do nothing. It was no light matter for a junior in the Fourth-Form to take an active part against two members of the Sixth; one of them a prefect.

It would have been easy and safe to say nothing, to do nothing, to keep his own counsel, and keep clear of the affair altogether.

But Taffy never thought of doing that.

The match was in danger. St. Dolly's was to be sold! Somehow, anyhow, he had to prevent that.

But how?

Taffy threw his sandwich away, and dropped from the pavilion to the ground behind. His first thought was to go straight to Lunsford and tell him what he had heard. In such a case a warning to the cricket captain of intended treachery could not be called "sneaking."

Taffy cut away at top speed, but he had not taken three steps before he hesitated, and stopped again. What was the good of going to Lunsford? He could not possibly get the cricket captain alone at such a time, and to blurt out such a story before the other fellows—before the Lexham fellows especially—was impossible. Taffy would have died rather than have allowed a Lexham man to suspect anything of the kind for a moment.

Besides, would Lunsford believe him?

The story was so incredible that Taffy, who had heard with his own ears, had doubted whether he was dreaming. He had to admit that if another fellow had told him the story, he would have denounced it as a fairy tale.

What would be the use of a Fourth-Former going to the head of the Sixth, and telling him that one of his team—his best man—was leagued with a swindling betting man to give away the match?

Taffy could guess what Lunsford's answer would be?

The captain of St. Dolly's would probably knock him down, and give him a record licking later when they were back at the school.

Taffy thrust his hands deep into his pockets, and tried to think it out. The people were crowding up to the ropes again now, and Redfern & Co. were again on their perch on top of the fence.

Taffy started out of a deep reverie as he was tapped on the shoulder. Vernon and Rake were looking at him in amazement.

"What on earth's the matter, chappy?" asked Vernon. "You look as if you were trying to work out something in Euclid."

"Just what I was going to say," remarked Rake.

"I—I—I'm rather worried," said Taffy.

"What's the worry?"

"Look here, keep it dark if I tell you. I

wouldn't have a word about it said anywhere for anything. It's—it's rotten!"

"You can rely on us, chappy," said Vernon, in astonishment. "Blessed if I can see what's happened to you while we were going for the tommy. The second innings is just going to begin."

"Listen to this."

Taffy, in a low and agitated voice, poured out his tale. Rake and Vernon listened with blank amazement.

When he had finished they were staring at him, Vernon with his mouth wide open, and Rake looking like a fellow in a dream.

"Well, what do you say?" demanded Taffy.

"By Jove!" said Vernon. "Are you—er—quite sure—er—didn't dream it, you know?"

"Just what I was—"

"Look here—look here!" said Taffy wrathfully. "Don't be an ass! It's fact. What's to be done? I can't go to Lunsford; he wouldn't believe me. No good speaking to Redfern major; he's made up his mind, and he'd simply knock me flying. I've a jolly good mind to risk it with the skipper, but—"

"Hullo, they're beginning!"

"Hang it!"

"Let it alone," said Vernon cautiously.

"Let it alone for a bit, anyway. Perhaps you didn't quite catch on to what they said. Perhaps Redfern major was only stuffing him up, too. It's a jolly risky business to meddle in."

"Hang the risk! I—"

"Yes; but let it alone, and see how things go. If Redfern major plays any tricks we shall see it, and then we can decide."

"Well, there's something in that," Taffy admitted, after a moment's thought.

"Of course there is. Let's get back and watch."

And the Modern chums climbed to their coign of vantage on the roof of the pavilion again. The building was of a good size, and there was plenty of room for them there. The Lexham innings was just starting.

Redfern major, of course, was put on to bowl the first over. Splendid as his batting had been in the school innings, it was chiefly as a bowler that his captain relied upon him. Lunsford intended to give the Lexham innings a bad start, and he grinned gleefully as he handed Redfern major the ball.

"Go on and give 'em socks, old fellow!" he said. "They haven't done talking about your batting yet. Let 'em see how you bowl."

"All right," said Arthur.

There was such an absence of enthusiasm in his tone that Lunsford looked at him in quick surprise.

Arthur's face was dull and worried, but he tried to assume a normal expression as he met the eyes of the cricket captain.

"I say, old chap, you're all right, ain't you?" said Lunsford anxiously.

"Yes, of course."

"You look a bit seedy. Not tired?"

"Oh, no!"

"That's all right, then. My hat, I don't know what we should do if you went off your form. You know you're our best bowler."

"Oh, nonsense!"

"Fact, my boy. Of course you know it. But that's all right; I know you're going to give us the hat-trick."

Arthur laughed strangely.

"I hope so," he said.

And he went down the pitch.

Lunsford placed his men to field, and a cheer from the St. Dolly's fellows greeted them as they came on, eleven stalwart figures in white.

Arthur Redfern sent down a couple of trials to the wicket-keeper, with the sureness of delivery Lunsford was looking for. The St. Dolly's captain rubbed his hands.

"He's all right," he murmured. "And to think I came near leaving him out of the eleven as a slacker! My word!"

Barber and Williams came in to bat for Lexham. Barber received the first over from Arthur Redfern. The big Lexham fellow stood in an easy attitude at the wicket, ready for anything. He had heard of Arthur Redfern's powers as a bowler, and he was watchful.

"Go it, Reddy!" shrieked a voice from the top of the fence.

Arthur Redfern did not hear it.

He had glanced away from the pitch for a moment, and in that moment he caught a glimpse of the dark, threatening face of Mr. Cunliffe.

The prefect's eyes gleamed. The threatening expression on the publican's face awoke the angriest passions in his breast, and instead of wavering he set his teeth grimly.

The scoundrel should see that he could not frighten him. That was the momentary thought in Arthur's mind.

He backed away from the wicket, and took a little run, and sent down a ball that was breathlessly followed by the crowd.

Clack!

Barber stopped it, but he only just stopped it. A slightly worried look came over his face.

The ball was fielded, and Arthur sent it down again. Again the batsman just stopped it, but there was no score.

Arthur's eyes flashed.

The third ball came down on the wicket with a twist that might have baffled many a county batsman.

Crash!

The wicket flew asunder; the bails were on the ground, and the middle stump lying along

with them, and the Lexham captain stared at his wrecked wicket in amazement and dismay.

With one voice St. Dolly's yelled:

"How's that?"

And the umpire grinned.

"Out!"

Barber gave his wicket another look, put his bat under his arm, and walked out. One down for nought, and that one the skipper's wicket!

It was a good beginning for St. Dolly's.

But one face in the crowd—a face already red and angry—became absolutely purple as the wicket fell. Mr. Cunliffe muttered things that it was not good to hear, and in his rage he shook his fist at the bowler. The action passed unnoticed by those round him, but three keen pair of eyes on the pavilion roof noted it. And so did Arthur Redfern.

"Did you see that?" muttered Taffy breathlessly to his chums.

Vernon nodded.

"Yes, chappy. Cunliffe is waxy, but it's all right about Redfern major. He's playing up like a man."

"Looks like it, so far."

Redfern minor, Skelton, and Brown, in a row on top of the fence, were clapping their hands and shouting themselves hoarse.

"Wasn't that a beauty?" demanded Sidney Redfern. "Wasn't it a duck, eh?"

"It was!" said Skelton. "It were!"

"What-ho!" said Brown III. "Your major can bowl, Reddy. I always said he could bowl. Why, we're going to beat Lexham hands down this time!"

"Look! There he goes again!"

Redfern minor was watching with all his eyes.

Never had he felt so proud of his brother as he did this day.

The over finished without the fall of more wickets; but Arthur had more than satisfied his friends. One down for nought was good enough!

Arthur went into the field, and his position brought him near to the ropes. Ransome stepped over and went quickly towards him. It was a bold thing to do, for the cad of the Sixth had no desire to be mixed up openly in the matter; but he had no other resource just then. Arthur, who did not see him, started as he heard the whispering voice over his shoulder.

"Look out after the match!"

Ransome stepped back before Arthur could think of replying. The prefect looked at him quickly, and looked away again. But his face was pale.

Arthur's Surrender.

LEXHAM began to score now. There was no doubt that they had a fine array of batsmen, capable of keeping their wickets up against any ordinary bowling.

Lunsford himself, though a good slow bowler, made little impression upon them. But Arthur's bowling was something quite out of the common. Now fast, now slow, now medium in pace; but always clever, always tricky, it was a bowling that needed a lot of getting used to, as Barber had remarked to his comrades. He gave a batsman no chance of getting set. There was nothing to indicate what kind of ball it was going to be till it came. Then it was too late. But the change bowlers of St. Dolly's contributed to the Lexham score, and when Arthur was off the bowling-crease, Lexham were going strong.

Arthur had started splendidly. But, to Lunsford's dismay, he began to notice a falling off in his form after the first half-dozen overs.

The bowler had taken two wickets in all; and that, strange enough as it seemed to the St. Dolly's fellows, seemed likely to be his total.

His bowling, from the most dangerous on the field, became the most harmless.

Lexham, it is true, did not knock up many runs off his bowling. But the wickets did not fall. And they scored off the other bowlers.

Lunsford looked on in growing surprise and disquietude.

What was the matter with Redfern major? On top of the fence the row of Classical juniors were dumb.

Redfern minor couldn't understand it. "Something's wrong with Arthur," he murmured presently, when another over of tame bowling resulted in nil.

"I rather think so," remarked Skelton, with emphasis. "Curious, too! He was always considered better as a bowler than as a bat."

"Well, he's done jolly well for St. Dolly's, anyway," said Redfern warmly.

"All right! Don't get excited! I know he has!"

"He'll pull round soon, you'll see."

"Blessed if it doesn't look as if he wasn't trying!" said Brown III.

Redfern minor turned red.

"Not trying! Of course he's trying! Don't be an ass!"

"Keep your wool on!"

"Then don't talk rot!" said Redfern minor. But he was looking very perplexed himself. Why had all the nerve gone out of Arthur's bowling in that curious way?

"He won't have much of a chance to pull round, either," said Skelton. "Lunsford isn't putting him on so much now."

"What rot! I should really have thought Lunsford would have more sense!" said Redfern minor. "Arthur's all right!"

And neither Skelton nor Brown ventured to

deny that he was all right. Redfern minor was so apt to be touchy about his brother.

But while the Classical juniors were perplexed, the Modern chums on the roof of the pavilion understood the cause of the change only too well.

Taffy's face was dark and worried.

Arthur's good start had been a brief defiance to the man in whose power he was; but it had not lasted. The Modern chums had seen Ransome speak to him on the field. They knew what it meant, in the light of Taffy's discovery.

Arthur Redfern had given in, if he had meant to resist, and his poor bowling was done intentionally. He was slacking off.

The chums of the Modern side looked at one another in something like horror. To betray one's side in a match seemed so unheard-of to them, that for a long time they tried to think that it was otherwise. But Arthur's continued poor show left them no choice in the matter.

He was giving the game away.

"My hat!" said Taffy, at last. "You fellows can see for yourselves now! He's been frightened into this—he hasn't much pluck. He's losing on purpose!"

"Looks like it, my dear chappy."

"Just what I was going—"

"We've got to do something," said Taffy, interrupting Rake. "I'm not going to see a first eleven match chucked away like that! The worm! Look at the Lexham score—"

"Can't see it from here."

"Ass! I mean, think of it! They're 90 now for four wickets—90 for four! They want 81 to win, and six more wickets to do it. Calculate what that means."

"A licking for St. Dolly's," said Vernon, gloomily.

"Yes—if this goes on."

"What can you do?"

"Something or other. Hang it!" said Taffy.

"There's Lunsford. I might speak to him in the tea interval. They're knocking off for tea soon. But—"

"My hat!"

"What's the matter?"

"I've got an idea! Why not speak to Redfern minor?"

"Redfern minor?"

"Yes. He might put it to his brother. He could speak to him in the tea interval, you know, and put it straight. A chap can put things straight to his own brother. Reddy major would knock you off your pins as soon as look at you; but he'd have to listen to his minor. See?"

"My word! That's a jolly good idea!" exclaimed Taffy, glad to see any ray of light in his difficulty. "I'll jolly well speak to young Reddy about it. Of course, he's a Classical rotter; but at a time like this—"

"At a time like this, chappy, we're not Classicals and Moderns, but we're all St. Dolly's fellows, and sticking together."

"Right-ho! I'll jolly well put it to him. You chaps stay here."

And Taffy slipped down from his perch, and scuttled off towards the fence, where the Classical chums sat in a row. Redfern minor was looking a little less cheery now. He felt that there must be something the matter with Arthur, and it troubled him.

Skelton was the first to sight the Modern junior.

"Hullo, Modern worm!" he greeted. "How do you like walking as an exercise?"

This allusion to the capture of the Modern brake by the Classicals would have "drawn" Taffy at any other time; but just now he had more serious matters to think of. He did not even look at Skelton.

"I say, Redfern minor," he called out, "I want to speak to you."

"Speak away."

"Come down here, then."

"Rats!"

"It's important."

"More rats!"

"It's about your brother," said Taffy, desperately.

Redfern's expression changed at once. The earnestness in Taffy's troubled face struck him as he looked at the Modern junior. What could Taffy have to say about his brother?

He slipped down from the fence and joined Taffy, Skelton and Brown remaining where they were, but looking after him curiously.

"Well, what is it, Morgan?"

"Come here."

Taffy dragged him out of hearing of the others. Redfern waited in astonishment. The Modern junior was plainly very much excited.

"It's about your brother," said Taffy, in a hurried whisper. "I thought I'd better speak to you, so that you could speak to him."

"Speak to him?"

"Yes; and stop what's he's doing."

"What do you mean?"

"I'll explain: I heard him talking it over—your brother and Ransome. I think you ought to speak to him—it might do some good," said Taffy breathlessly and a little incoherently. "You see—he—"

"What do you mean? What is he doing?"

"He's giving away the match to Lexham!"

Redfern minor started as if an adder had stung him. He stared at the Modern junior blankly for a moment, and then he drove out his right fist straight from the shoulder, and Taffy went rolling heels over head on the ground.

(Another rattling instalment next week, when our great new serial, "The Army Champions," commences.)