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The Boys' **REALM** OF SPORT AND ADVENTURE



PETE'S EASTER EGG!

A Side-Splitting long Complete Topical
yarn of your old favourites . . .
JACK, SAM and PETE!

EGG-RANOYED!

"Oh, yes, Gumboil am bery egg-ranoyed wid me—I neber met a more bad-tempered old hoss! Somehow, I hab got an idea dat he don't like Easter; dere am too many eggs and too much egg-citement about it!"

JACK SAM & PETE!

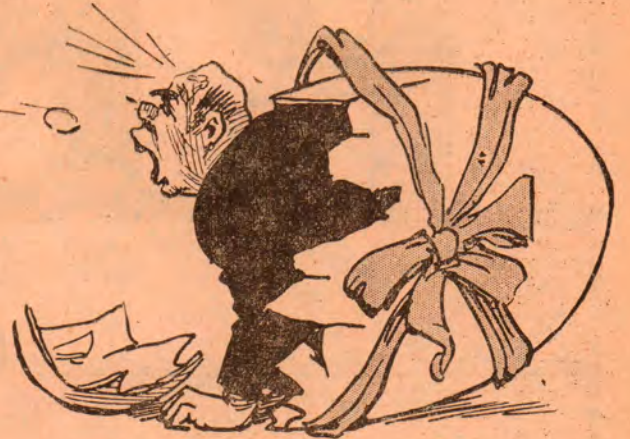
by Gordon Maxwell

HATCHED!

"De way dat Gumboil hatches himself out ob de big egg am 'bout de funniest ting I hab eber seen. If he'd had a couple ob feathers in his hair, I should hab mistaken him for a spring chicken!"



This Week's Screamingly-Funny Topical Long Complete Yarn!
PETE'S EASTER EGG!

**The 1st Chapter.**
Pete's Pals!

THERE were still people in the seaport town of Seahaven who were puzzled about Player Manager Pete, of the Rovers—people who did not know whether he was a stark, staring mad-man or merely a big-hearted, eccentric with money to burn.

Pete had done some extraordinary things since he had been in Seahaven.

For instance, there was the memorable occasion on which he had forced Amos Gumbriel, the mayor, to stand on his head in the middle of Market Square. This episode was only one of many in which Pete had figured, and it was seldom indeed that Amos Gumbriel was not involved. For Pete and Amos were enemies of long standing, and the Rovers' player manager was never so happy as when he was having a joke at the great man's expense.

And Amos, it must be remembered, asked for all he got.

A wealthy, tight-fisted bully, he was the most influential man in the town, an unscrupulous schemer, who had a finger in all manner of financial pies. The great ambition of his life was to own and control the Rovers, the local football club; he had been well on the way to realising that ambition until Pete had appeared on the scene.

Gumbriel's chagrin will be understood when he heard that a total stranger had bought up practically every share in the concern and had installed himself as player manager.

Amos had never forgiven Pete; neither had he lost a single opportunity of doing his man an injury. Indeed, he had created opportunities, stopping at nothing that he might wreak his vengeance upon the dusky-faced giant who treated his hatred as though it were a good joke.

Time and again did Gumbriel plot to get the better of his enemy, but on each occasion his deep-laid plans recoiled upon his own head. Yet, despite these significant happenings, there were times when he tried to console himself with the thought that his enemy was not wholly sane.

And then came the day when he was finally convinced that Pete was not responsible for his actions.

It was a bright morning in early April, and Amos was swaggering down Fore Street on his way to Gumbriel House, a block of office buildings that occupied an important position in Seahaven's principal thoroughfare.

Having reached his destination, he paused on the broad stone steps and gazed at the crowd surging up the hill; an ugly light leapt into his close-set little eyes when he noticed that Player Manager Pete was responsible for the mild commotion.

"What's the black scoundrel up to this time, I wonder?" mused the mayor, a tinge of angry blood creeping into his bloated features. "What's he doing with all those filthy little gutter-snipes? The sooty-faced imbecile must have started a home for waifs and strays! He's mad, right enough, and he'd look thoroughly at home in a padded cell!" He gave a throaty chuckle at the thought. "I'll see what can be done in the matter! But what's his latest bit of lunacy?" he asked himself, as Pete's mighty guffaw

rang out above the din of traffic. "What's he going to do with that menagerie?"

The menagerie to which his worship referred was made up of about two score of ill-clad, grubby-faced urchins who had followed Pete out of dockland, the slum-quarter of the town. The urchins were of all shapes and sizes—lean urchins, chubby urchins, tall urchins, and diminutive urchins, whose feet only just reached to the ground. There were urchins slightly soiled, and urchins who were downright disreputable, but one and all appeared to be excited and happy.

"I tink we'll do a bit ob shopping in here, boys," observed Pete, halting in front of a high-class confectioner's. "Follow your uncle, and be sure to keep your hands in your pockets when you tink de young lady assistants aren't looking your way!" He glanced round at the eager-eyed crowd of youngsters. "Understand?" he asked, with a slight change of tone.

"Yessir!" came the shrill chorus. "Den come on!" grinned Pete, thrusting open the massive plate-glass door and leading the way into the shop. "And don't forget dat any gent who doesn't behabe himself will get a biff ober de cranium! M'yes!"

A narrow-shouldered, acid-faced young man came hurrying forward as the army of grubby urchins trooped into the shop close upon Pete's heels.

"Get outside at once, you thieving little brats!" he shouted, his hatchet features becoming red with anger and indignation. "Clear out, before I put the police on you!"

The youngsters had heard that tone of voice before. Most of their number swung round instinctively and prepared to bolt with all possible haste.

"Stay presactly where you are, lads!" cried Pete, in a gentle bellow; and he was only just in time to stop the stampede. "Now, my dear old hoss," he ran on, turning to the acid-faced young man, "I want to know if you are de proprietor ob dis establishment!"

The young man flushed anew and fingered the few limp hairs that were sprouting from his narrow upper lip.

"No, I'm not the proprietor!" he announced, with a pompous air; "but I happen to be the manager!"

"Quite so," nodded Pete; "dough how you happen to be de manager I really don't know! Personally, I don't think you are capable of managing an ice-cream barrow!"



"What do you mean, sir!" bleated the young man, as the girls behind the counter giggled explosively. "Do you think I'm going to allow those light-fingered little ragamuffins to have the run of the shop? It may interest you to know that I am held responsible for any goods that are stolen!" he added, glaring round at the grinning urchins.

"Quite so, old hoss," grinned Pete; "but I don't see how dat gibes you de right to insult all dese customers!"

"What customers?" demanded the youthful manager.

"Why, all dese gentlemen!" answered Pete, embracing the army of urchins with a sweep of his arm. "Smatter ob fact, dey have come into your shop to buy free-four fousand Easter eggs! Still, if you would rader insult dem dan serbe dem—"

"Not at all, sir—not at all!" cried the manager, in a mild panic. "As you know, all our goods are high-class and on the expensive side, so I did not imagine for one moment—"

"Presactly!" grinned Pete. "You tought my friends hadn't got any money—eh? Well, dey hab got plenty ob cash, as it happens! Ain't dat so, boys?"

"Yessir!" came the shrill chorus. And the acid-faced young man gasped in amazement as about fifty one-pound notes were waved in front of his goggling eyes!

The 2nd Chapter.
Eggs!

"YAH, yah, yah!" roared Pete, as the manager steadied himself against the counter.

"I forgot to mention dat my friends are all millionaires in disguise! Now, old hoss," he said, as the young man remained flabbergasted and popeyed, "I suggest dat you serbe dese gentlemen wid your own lily-white hands! Seems to me dat is de berry least you can do, seeing dat you hab gone out ob your way to insult dem! M'yes! Furdurmore, I tink your boss would agree wid me!"

The manager thought so, too; for

his boss was a hard-headed, tight-fisted business man, with the soul of a cash-register.

"What can I get for you, sir?" he asked, walking across the shop and addressing Tibby Slack, a button-nosed, tousled-haired little fellow, whose head and shoulders protruded from a pair of his father's old trousers.

Tibby scratched his head as an aid to thought.

"What 'ave you in the way of Easter heggs?" he asked, in what he imagined to be cultured accents.

"About what price do you wish to pay, sir?" asked the manager, flushing hotly as he found himself surrounded by a ring of grinning faces.

"Oh, don't trouble yer 'ead about the price, my good feller!" begged Mr. Slack loftily. "Strictly between ourselves, I want this hegg as a present for my girl—Lady Dora Dripping!"

"Yah, yah, yah!" roared Pete, adding his thunderous guffaw to the yell of laughter that echoed through the shop. "I didn't know dat you moved in Society circles, Tibby!"

"I've a very handsome egg at fifteen shillings, sir," said the manager.

"Ah, well, I suppose I must put up with that if you ain't got nothing better," drawled Mr. Slack, producing a pound note from the lining of his battered bowler hat. "You might tell your guv'nor that Lord Limejuice looked in this morning, will you?"

"Yah, yah, yah!" laughed Pete, as the amazed manager stared blankly and hurried away to get change. "Go ahead and get what you want, lads; dese young ladies will serbe you!"

The crowd of urchins needed no second bidding, and within a matter of ten minutes there was scarcely an Easter egg left in the shop.

The narrow-shouldered manager was smiling and obsequious as he hurried across the floor and opened the door with a flourish.



SMACK! Gumbriel, wedged in the crate of eggs, received the bladder of lard full on his head. The crowd of urchins joined in the fun; they picked up the eggs which were rolling about and flung them at the mayor. "Yah, yah, yah!" roared Pete. "Enjoy yourself while you're young, Gumboil!"

"Y-yes, sir!" stammered his victim, in a state of panic. "You—you're the lady mayoress!"

"Yah, yah, yah!" laughed Pete. "Dat's a good one, Gumbail, old hoss!"

"Lady mayoress!" snorted Gumbail, still shaking the young man. "Take that, you impertinent hound!"

"That" was a vicious swipe that sent the recipient reeling. A threatening murmur broke from the urchins as the young man tottered across the pavement, and the murmur became a shrill yell of anger when his worship went after his victim and gripped him fiercely.

"I'm going to teach you a lesson, you spineless hound!" he bellowed, swinging his ebony walking-stick above his head and preparing to belabour his man. "I'm just in the right mood to cut lumps out of you!"

Simpson's Stores adjoined the confectioner's, and piled high in front of the shop-window was a brave display of bacon, butter, biscuits, lard, and tinned goods of all descriptions.

"Look out!" came a frantic shout from the grocer's assistant, as Amos steered his wriggling victim towards a monster crate of eggs. "Hi! Go easy, mister, or—" But it was too late.

Overwhelmed by the mayor's superior strength, the young man fell backwards, and landed with a catastrophic force which sent a shower of "Best New Laid" flying in all directions, and a mighty shout went up, as his portly assailant fell flat on top of him, and the crate gave way beneath their combined weight, splintering into a species of matchwood.

"Yah, yah, yah!" roared Pete. "Enjoy yourself while you're young, Gumbail, old hoss!"

The younger man was thoroughly roused by this time, and looked wild-eyed and unpleasantly eggy as he wrenched himself out of his worship's grasp and leapt to his feet.

Amos, in some extraordinary manner, had managed to wedge his massive bulk into what was left of the crate, so he was absolutely helpless to defend himself when his enraged victim snatched a big bladder of lard off its pedestal and planted it firmly upon the hairless apex of the mayoral dome.

Smack!

"Yah, yah, yah!" roared Pete, as Amos failed utterly to see the humorous side of the incident. "I don't tink I had laughed so much since Uncle Herbert caught his nose in de mouse-trap!"

Scores of eggs were rolling away across the broad pavement, and the temptation to enter into the spirit of the proceedings was altogether too strong for Tibby Slack and his yelling cronies.

"Come on, boys!" cried the button-nosed urchin, aiming like a Bisley marksman and smiting the mayor on the chin with an egg that had passed the first flush of youth. "Gummy's been askin' for this!"

"Up, the Rents!" shouted the other urchins, diving for ammunition.

Roused by this cryptic war-cry, the bright-eyed youngsters began an intensive bombardment which speedily smothered the great man from head to foot, and he was bellowing like an enraged bull as he tore himself out of the egg-crate and glared round at his assailants with goggling eyes.

"I know who you are, you brats!" he bellowed, his massive body quivering as he shook his mighty fists above his head. "I recognise you, and I'll make your parents pay dearly for this outrage! You'll all be skinned alive for this business! I—Ooooooh!"

It was the narrow-shouldered manager of the confectionery who swung another bladder of lard and slammed it flush over his worship's bloated countenance, and the air of Fore Street was rent by shouts of hysterical laughter as Amos clawed blindly at the sticky mess and emitted strangled, gurgling noises which Manager Pete could not associate with any known language.

"Come along, boys!" he shouted, as he saw two blue helmets bobbing their way through the press of people. "Follow your uncle!"

"Coppers, lads!" hissed little Slack. "Come on!"

The low-voiced warning was quite enough for his cronies, and Pete and his youthful companions had vanished completely by the time two frowning constables appeared upon the scene.

The 3rd Chapter.

Rackett's Rents!

"H" M! So dis is where you live, is it?" asked Player Manager Pete, his dark eyes upon the grimy, flat-faced block of tenements that were known as Rackett's Rents. "M'yes! Presactly! I must say dat it looks to me as dough a coat ob paint wouldn't do dem any harm!"

A yell of ironical laughter went up from Tibby Slack and his cronies.

"Coat o' paint!" echoed Tibby, a wealth of scorn in his thin voice. "Why, there's a great big 'ole in our roof, but do yer think old Gumbail will patch it up with a few slates? Not likely, guv'nor! He told farver that it wouldn't pay 'im to spend a penny on these 'ovels!"

pay 'is rent! 'E's a real beauty, is 'is nibs, and we all love 'im 'cause 'e's got a nice, kind face!"

Pete nodded his woolly head and looked up and down the narrow, sunless street. Poverty and squalor met his gaze on all sides, but the real eyesore was the block of grimy tenements that were obviously in the last stage of dilapidation.

"I see dat one ob de blocks is empty," he remarked, nodding to a building that appeared to be in a slightly worse condition than the others.

"That's so, mister," agreed Tibby Slack. "A decent puff o' wind would blow it down, but I don't suppose it'll be empty for long. Poor people 'ave got to live somewhere, y'know, so Gummy ain't worryin'!" Then: "Perishing pars-nips!" he ejaculated, his bright little eyes fixed upon the portly figure that was swaggering down the narrow street. "It's 'is nibs 'imself, and I'll bet 'e's going to kick up old 'Arry about what 'appened in Fore Street!"

Pete turned in leisurely manner

Amos was on his guard at once.

"Me!" he blustered, glaring round at the crowd of open-mouthed urchins. "Do you think dat these disreputable hovels belong to me, you black maniac? I'll admit dat I'm acquainted with the owner of this—er—valuable property, and I've no doubt dat I could arrange matters for you if you wish to do a deal!"

"And you tink de owner would rent de building to me for, say, fibe-six months?" pressed Pete, pretending to fall for Gumbail's bluff.

"I'm sure of it, my dear fellow," exclaimed Gumbail, rather eagerly. "Indeed, I know it! I suppose your plan is to rent it from the landlord and sub-let the rooms, eh?"

Pete nodded. "Presactly!" he said, with a meaning light in his eyes.

"You're a cunning blackbird!" chuckled his worship, leaning forward and giving his visitor a playful dig in the chest. "Strictly between ourselves," he added, lowering his throaty voice, "I don't mind telling you that being landlord in these

for you'll have no difficulty in getting tenants. What's more, never hesitate to kick 'em into the street if you don't get your rent on the nail!"

It was only with an effort that Player Manager Pete fought down an impulse to take the mayor by the scruff of the neck and kick him from one end of Rackett Row to the other; but he managed to console himself with the thought that he was going to hit the great man where it would hurt him most—to wit, in the pocket.

"M'yes!" he muttered thoughtfully. "I'll bear dose words in mind, old hoss. Now, den," he said briskly, coming to a decision, "I'm willing to rent dat building for six months. How long will it take to arrange matters?"

There was a gloating, exultant light in the mayor's close-set eyes as he rubbed his podgy hands together.

"I've no doubt that my friend could get all the necessary papers through by to-morrow morning," he answered "so I shall be able to clinch the deal on his behalf if you come to my office at ten o'clock. How will that suit you, my dear fellow?"

"Dat arrangement will suit dis child down to de ground," answered Pete, with a cherubic smile. "I'll be wid you at ten o'clock—as de cow flies!"

Pete was as good as his word, for the Corn Exchange clock was striking the hour when he presented himself at Gumbail's office on the following morning.

The mayor was showing his big horse teeth in a grin as he waved his visitor to a comfortable armchair.

"I saw the owner of Rackett's Rent last night," he announced, pushing a box of choice cigars across his desk, "and he asked me if I would mind doing the whole of this business on his behalf. As a matter of fact," he ran on, lowering his husky voice to a confidential tone, "he doesn't wish his name to figure in the—er—deal!"

"Quite so," nodded Pete, fully appreciating the other man's cunning. "So your name will appear on de documents as owner ob de property?"

"Exactly, my dear fellow!" cried Amos. "This deal will be between you and myself. And may I say that your grasp of detail does you great credit?"

"You make me blush!" declared Pete, looking rather coy. "But about dose documents!"

"Yes, yes," said Amos, opening a drawer and producing some legal-looking papers.

"Everything's straightforward, so we'll have the whole business settled within ten minutes!"

Amos Gumbail spoke the truth for once in his life, for in less than nine minutes the tumbledown, dilapidated house in Rackett Row was rented to Player Manager Pete for a period of six months.

"And that," grinned Amos Gumbail, slipping Pete's cheque into his pocket-book. "is that!"

"Smatter ob fact," observed his visitor, pocketing the legal documents, "dat is not presactly dat!"

The grin died out of Gumbail's close-set eyes, for there was a note in the other man's voice that puzzled him.

"What do you mean?" he snarled, with a characteristic change of manner.

"Just dis," answered Pete. "In de first place, my dear old Gumbail, I happen to know dat you are de landlord ob Rackett's Rents!"

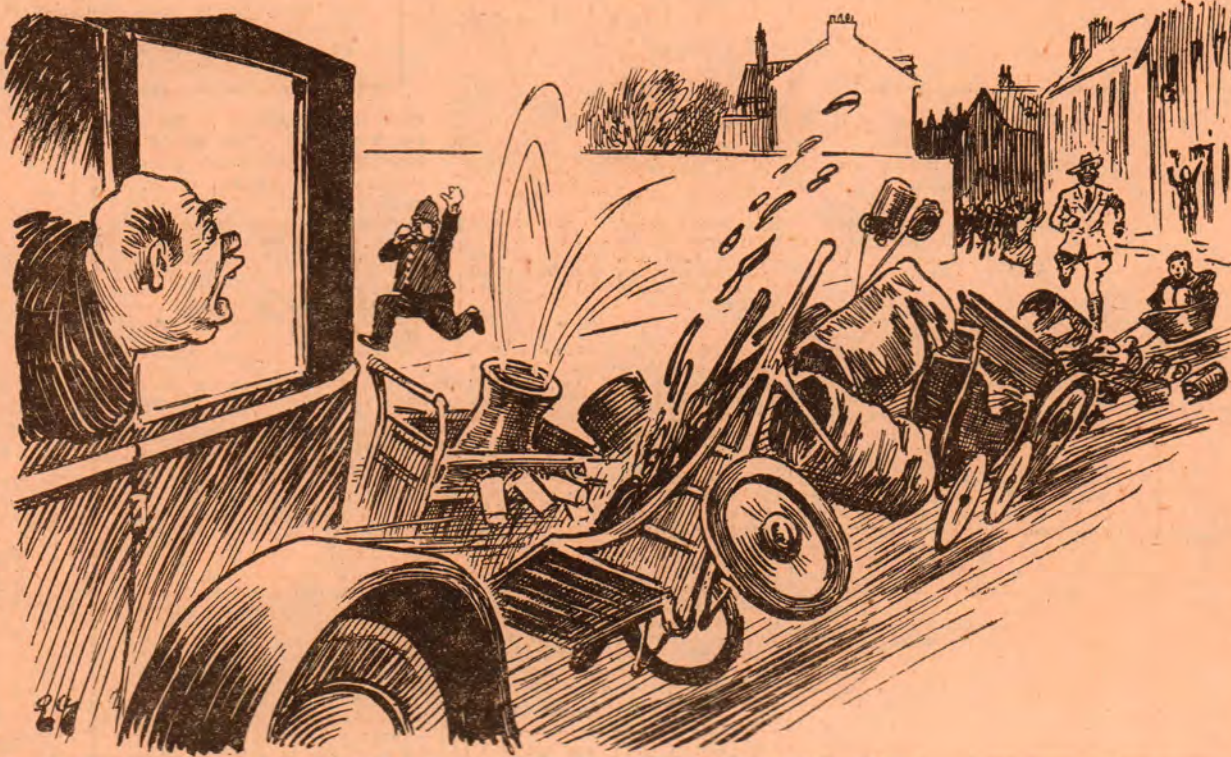
"Who told you that, you black hound?" shouted his worship, with a savage malediction. "Have those filthy little guttersnipes been talking? Have the lying little brats—"

"You needn't say any more, my dear old hoss," cut in Pete, "cause I would rader believe a little guttersnipe dan his worship de mayor ob Seahablen! M'yes! I will now proceed wid my intelligent observations! In de second place, Amos, I am ob de opinion dat it is your duty, as landlord, to repair and redecorate de house dat I hab rented for de period ob six months!"

"I'll see you to Halifax before I'll spend a penny on the place!" bellowed his worship, thumping the top of his desk with a big fist. "I've never heard of such a thing, you black scoundrel!"

"Dat's a bery loose statement, old hoss," declared Pete, "for you are hearing it now! What's more, dat

(Continued on the next page.)



MASCOTS FOR THE MAYOR!

An ear-splitting din broke out as Gumbail's car moved off. It was caused by a number of strange articles that were fastened to the rear of the limousine. They included a milkman's handcart, a cat's-meat barrow, a perambulator, and a platoon of pots and pans. "You must be very superstitious to want all dem mascots, Gumbail!" yelled Pete, as he tore along behind. "I got an idea dey will bring you a lot of unluck!"

That's what 'is nibs said, mister! 'E'd let 'em fall down rather than spend a quid or so in 'aving 'em done up!"

"Is dat so," murmured Pete thoughtfully. "You're quite sure dat he owns these Rents?" he asked, after a short pause.

"Course I'm sure!" growled Tibby; "but I don't mind betting that 'e wouldn't own up to it!" he added shrewdly. "It wouldn't look nice, seeing that 'e's the mayor o' the town!"

"Den—" "A long-nosed, herring-faced agent collects the rents for 'im," cut in Tibby. "But old Gummy does show up sometimes—specially if any of us are a week be'ind in paying! And then he kicks up a row and boots someone out! It don't matter to Gummy whether the pore bloke's ill or out of work—out 'e goes if 'e can't

and saw that it was Mr. Amos Gumbail who was bearing down upon the crowd of scared-looking urchins. Apparently, the mayor had managed to clean himself up, and he had turned to the Rents to exact speedy vengeance.

"Morning, old hoss!" he cried, as his worship glowered at him with black hate in his close-set little eyes. "Hab you come along to admire dese gems ob architecture?"

"Mind your own business, confound you!" snarled Amos, his heavy features purple with rage. "What the deuce are you doing down here, anyway?"

"Smatter ob fact," answered Pete, assuming his most innocent manner. "I was tinkin about renting dat house ober dere!" He nodded towards the empty building. "Are you open to rent it, my dear old Gumbail?"

slums is a mighty profitable business! Anything's good enough for this rabble, and there will be no need for you to spend a brass farthing on repairs and decorations!"

The mayor seemed to find something distinctly humorous in the remark, for he threw his bullet head back and roared with laughter.

"I don't think the landlord is likely to be much out of pocket, my dear fellow!" he chortled wheezily. "Haw, haw, haw! He doesn't believe in pampering his tenants!"

"So it seems," mused Pete, running his eyes over Rackett's Rents. "I s'pose if it wasn't for de wall-paper de places would fall to pieces!"

"I won't go so far as to say that," chuckled Amos; "but I'm willing to admit that the tenements aren't exactly luxurious! However, you needn't worry your head about that,

THE MORE YOU READ OF PETE, BOYS—THE MERRIER YOU'LL BE!

PETE'S CUP FINAL!

What a wind-up to the footer season! Pete always does things in style, and his own Cup Final is a real scream!



Pete couldn't get the Rovers to Wembley, so he has a Cup Final all to himself—and Pete provides the trophy. 'Nuff said!

Pete's eleven turns out against Gumbail's team for "Pete's Cup Final!" The game is good, what happens before it is better—but what happens after the match is the biggest joke of all! Read how the trophy arrives in a gigantic packing case; Gumbail unpacks it, and— But you'll read all about it next Wednesday!



(Continued from previous page.)

house is going to be painted and renovated from roof to cellar! What's more, it is going to be done to my satisfaction. Is dat quite clear, old hoss?"

Amos appeared to be upon the verge of apoplexy as he sat back in his chair and glared at his visitor with goggling eyes. The thick veins on either side of his forehead stood out like lengths of whipcord; the masseter muscles of his massive jaw showed like bands.

"I'm not a fool, he grated, after a tense silence "and you'll find that you've made a big mistake if you think you are going to get the better of Amos Gumbriel! No doubt you think you've been very clever in renting that Rackett Row tenement for six months, but I tell you at once that you'll never bully or bluff me into spending a pennypiece on the filthy hovel! So now we know how we stand, Mr. Player Manager Pete!"

"You refuse—"

"Absolutely! Emphatically! Decidedly!" snapped Amos, with flashing eyes. "You'll find the door behind you!"

"I know," grinned Pete; "but I ain't ready to go yet, Gumboil, old hoss! Smatter ob fact, we are only just beginning to understand each other. M'yes! You say you won't spend a penny on de tenement I hab rented—"

"I won't spend a farthing, you bone-headed imbecile!" snorted the great man. "I've told you about a thousand times—"

"Quite so," agreed Pete; "and now I am going to tell you something—but only once! Amos Gumboil," he ran on in grave tones, "I am going to hab you hounded out ob dis town in less dan twenty-four hours! Not a word, Amos! Listen to me! Seahaben is going to ring wid de news dat its mayor is a slum landlord ob de deepest dye; a callous oppressor ob de poor; a hard-hearted tyrant who won't spend a penny on making his wretched hovels even habitable! I'll plaster de town wid posters; I'll employ a hundred sandwich-men to parade de streets! Your infamy shall be known to all, Amos Gumboil!"

"You—you wouldn't dare!" gasped the mayor in a husky whisper.

Pete showed his strong, white teeth in a smile.

"Dere's nothing in dis wide world dat I won't dare, once I hab made up my mind," he declared. "I thought you knew dat, old hoss! Now, den," he added briskly, "what's it to be? Are you going to hab dat place renovated—"

"Yes, yes, yes!" bellowed Gumbriel, leaping out of his chair and shaking a mighty fist under Pete's nose. "This—this thing amounts to blackmail, you brass-faced scoundrel, but you know that you've got me where you want me!"

"Presactly," agreed Pete, getting to his feet and smiling into his enemy's blazing eyes. "And dere's just one ting more, my dear old Gumboil!"

"What's that?"

"De whole job has got to be finished before Easter Monday!" answered Pete. "Dat is most awfully important, old hoss!"

The 4th Chapter.

Ring the Changes.

AMOS GUMBRIL knew Pete well enough to be perfectly sure that his enemy was not the type of man to make empty, meaningless threats. So, that being the case, his worship lost no time in sending a battalion of painters, decorators, plumbers, plasterers, and carpenters to No. 3, Rackett's Rents.

He was taking no risks.

Truth to tell, he was in anything but a happy frame of mind, and his one idea was to fulfil his promise to the letter and so seal Pete's lips. For he knew quite well that his official position would be scarcely tenable if it were known that he was the landlord of Rackett's Rents, the most notorious eyesore in the whole of Seahaven.

It was on the morning of Thursday, the day preceding Good Friday,

when Player Manager Pete strolled down Rackett Row and halted outside No. 3. The dingy-looking house that had been in the last stages of dilapidation was now spick-and-span and pleasing to the eye, its fresh paint and varnish gleaming bravely in the spring sunshine.

"De job's almost finished, isn't it, Rupert?" asked Pete, turning to a stout, red-faced man whose dusty bowler hat and two-foot rule stamped him as foreman.

The red-faced man nodded.

"Just about," he answered. "We should be away from here in less than half an hour!"

"You seem to hab made a good job ob it, old hoss!"

"Orders!" returned the foreman tersely. "We was told to spare no expense! Why, we've even put in a bath-room!" he ran on, his watery, blue eyes protruding from their sockets. "A bath-room, mind you!" he emphasised almost fiercely. "Blow me if that place ain't fit for a dook!"

"I'm glad to hear it, old hoss," grinned Pete. "Do you mind if I hab a look round?"

If anything am worryin' you, old hoss, drop me a line. De latest batch ob letters am answered below.

J. R. (Rugby).—You hab cold feet at night; will I recommend you a quick way to get your feet warm before you go to bed? Slap dem wid a red-hot poker, old hoss.

Percy Naylor (Liverpool).—You hab caught a big frog; do I tink it would make a good pet, and if so, will I tell you how to feed and how to keep de aforesaid big frog? Percy, old hoss, you couldn't hab come to a better place for inflammation! I hab been a frog fancier for years; I hab got a room full ob silver mounted aquariums which I hab won in frog shows. Dere ain't no better pet dan a well-trained frog; if you let him off his chain at night and allow him de run ob de house, he will keep any amount ob burglars at bay. Feed him on peppercorns and raw rice to keep him fierce, and in de day-time keep him in a big kennel hung up by de parlour window. A couple ob tons ob birdseed twice a day will make him sing like a bulldog. Let him hab a couple ob ten-pound dumb-bells for exercise, and watch him in de mornings to make sure dat he washes well up behind his ears.

B. T. Kennedy (Walsall).—Another boy gabe you a black eye. You want me to tell you a good cure for black eyes in case you meet de same boy again and he gibs you anudder one. H'm! D'you mean to tell me, old hoss, dat you go about collecting

you would hab any serious objection to libing rent free?"

Joe Slack looked flabbergasted for a moment or so, and then a broad grin overspread his honest countenance.

"I've heard that you're a rare one for a joke—" he began.

"But dis isn't a joke, old hoss!" declared Pete. "I s'pose you hab noticed dat Number Free has been done up? Right! Well, I hab paid de rent ob dat tenement for six months, and I want you and de rest ob de people in dis house to move your goods and yourselves into Number Free as soon as possible. How many families are dere in dis building?"

"Seven, sir!"

"M'yes! Den tell dem dat dey needn't pay me any rent for six months if dey care to go into de

and I'll take your tanks for granted. But now buzz off and shift your goods into de odder tenement! Scatter!"

It was little over an hour later when Pete entered a public telephone box and rang through to Mr. Amos Gumbriel.

"Is dat you, Sunshine?" he asked, as the mayor's husky bellow bludgeoned its way over the wire.

"Eh? What's that?" roared Amos. "Who are you calling 'Sunshine,' you black-faced, half-witted hooligan? What are you wasting my time for, anyway? Out with it!"

"I want to speak to you about de tenement dat I rented from you," returned Pete; "de house in Rackett Row, you know!"

"Of course I know!" snorted Gumbriel. "It's Number Three!"

"Presactly!" agreed Pete. "Well, old hoss, I understood dat you were going to hab de place done up—"

"It has been done up!" roared Amos. "From roof to cellar! The workmen didn't leave de place until an hour or so ago, you maniac! The decorations have cost me a fortune!"

Pete Replies!



Address your letters to Pete, c/o The Editor, THE BOYS' REALM, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

black eyes? What do you do wid dem keep dem in an album. Anyway, a good cure am a pail ob whitewash administered ad lib. ("Ad lib," old hoss, am Swedish for "sloshed in de optic.")

Len March (Newcastle).—Is it true dat de middle ob de earth am a mass ob red-hot rock? I dunno, Len; if you sit tight for two-free minutes, I'll turn myself into a worm an' go down an' hab a look for you.

Jim Lyons (Penrith).—You am goin' fishing; how can you catch cod? Just a minute, old hoss. (Sammy!—What do you want, image?—Dere am an old hoss here dat wants to know how he can catch cod.—Tell him to stand in a draught!) Am you still dere, Jim? Sammy says dat de—"Scuse me a minute. (Sammy, de old hoss wants to catch cod—not cold!—Oh, cod? Tell him to try snail-bait or a worm.—Thank you, Sammy!) Hello, Jim! I got it right now; Sammy says dat to catch cod you must bait your hook wid a pail or a churn.

MAKE A PAL OF PETE!

Write him to-day! You can be sure of getting a reply—especially if you want to know something!

The foreman shook his head in a vague kind of way; he was obviously pondering upon the enormity of having a bath-room in a slum tenement.

The workmen had taken their departure by the time Pete concluded his tour of inspection, and his dark eyes were twinkling with a mischievous light as he passed out of the door of No. 3 and met Tibby Slack.

"Is your father at home, Tibby?" he asked.

"Yes, mister," answered the diminutive urchin. "I've told 'im all about you, and 'e says you ain't arf a lad! Do you want to see 'im, mister?"

"Yes, old hoss," grinned Pete. "At once—or a bit sooner dan dat, if you can manage it!"

"Chuck it!" grinned Mr. Slack, tilting his battered bowler hat to an angle, and striding off along the narrow pavement.

Tibby's father, a red-haired, pleasant-faced man, greeted Player Manager Pete with a broad smile.

"Of course, I know you by sight, sir," he said, as his visitor made himself at home in the stuffy little kitchen. "I always go down to de Rovers' ground when I can spare de money! But things ain't too bright down at de docks just now, sir."

"I know, old hoss," returned Pete. "You put in four days a week—if you're lucky!"

"That's so, sir," agreed Tibby's father, accepting a cigar from Pete's case. "I'm not grousing, sir, and we could get along champion if it wasn't for the rent! That's the chief worry; our landlord won't wait even a couple o' days—"

"Presactly," cut in Pete. "Smatter ob fact, old hoss, I want to know if

tenement dat's just been done up; but they hab got to get a move on, otherwise I may change my mind! Buzz off, old hoss, and desiccate de glad tidings!" Pete meant disseminate, but a little slip like that didn't matter. "Tell dem dat dey hab got to shift deir quarters in 'bout two shakes ob a baa-lamb's rudder! Off you go!"

Joe Slack needed no second bidding; there was something in Pete's manner which assured him that the Rovers' player manager was being perfectly serious for once.

Joe was absent for less than five minutes, and his homely face was one big grin as he burst into the little kitchen with a crowd of bright-eyed tenants at his heels.

"Get a move on!" cried Pete, as he was almost carried off his feet. "I hab no doubt dat you're all pleased,

"Den I'm 'fraid dere has been a mistake, old hoss!" declared Pete. "Number Free is still empty, and it looks as dough it's likely to fall down at any moment! De workmen made a mistake in de house, p'raps; in which case—"

"Stop talking, you woolly-headed windbag!" bellowed his worship from the other end of the wire. "I'm going down to de Rents at once! Ring off! Ring off!"

Pete was whistling softly to himself when his worship's thousand-pound limousine swung round the corner into Rackett Row and came to a standstill outside the door of No. 3.

"Where's that black villain?" roared Amos, leaping out of the handsome vehicle and glaring round for his enemy.

"Who are you looking for, old hoss?" asked Pete, his dusky countenance a picture of childlike innocence.

His worship emitted an ugly, grating laugh as he pointed a shaking finger towards the new decorated tenement.

"I thought the place hadn't been done up, you hound!" he shouted, his massive body quivering with fury. That's No. 3—"

"No, it isn't, my dear old Gumboil!" protested Pete. "De number plate on de door says dat it's No. 6—and number plates neber lie!"

The red light of suspicion flashed into his worship's little eyes.

"Then some blackguard has changed de plates!" he bellowed. "This is the house I rented to you—"

"Not at all, my dear, misguided old hoss," put in Pete. "Surely dat is de tenement you rented to me!" He was beaming brightly as he pointed to the tumbledown structure

that had recently been vacated by the Slacks and the other tenants.

"Dat's Number Free, as you can see by de plate on de door! Besides, it's empty, which is anodder proof!"

Amos Gumbriel removed his glossy silk hat and breathed hard, and his eyes were goggling from his head as he glowered up at the grinning faces which filled every window of the newly-decorated tenement.

"Then—then what is this carrion doing in—in a house that is fit for decent people to live in?" he demanded. "My workmen wouldn't be such fools as to do up a house that was occupied by—by these dock rats—"

"Yah, yah, yah!" roared Pete, who had, of course, changed the number plates. "Seems to me dat you are in a bit ob a mess, old hoss! Still, you can't blame dese people for living in de house dat you hab so kindly done up for dem!"

"But I didn't do it up for them!" blustered the mayor, his pouchy features turning a dull shade of purple. "There's been some trickery about this business—"

"I can't help your troubles, old hoss!" interrupted Pete. "All I know is dat you hab got to renovate dat odder house in double quick time, otherwise I shall carry out de threat dat I made free-four days ago! M'yes! I hope dat is quite clear to your washup!"

The 5th Chapter.

Gumbriel's Mascots.

THERE was a strange gleam in Pete's dark eyes as he met Gumbriel's smouldering gaze, and Amos was seething with white-hot fury as he realised that his enemy had managed to get the better of him once again. The mayor was no fool, and he realised that Pete had succeeded in ringing the changes on him; but what incensed him most was the fact that he wasn't in a position to hit back. To defy Pete was to risk disgracing himself in the eyes of the whole town, and the expression in Pete's dark eyes had warned him that it wouldn't pay him to take the risk.

"Very well, you black hound!" he snarled, swinging round upon his enemy. "You shall get your own way this time—"

"Meaning," grinned Pete, "dat your workmen will get busy at once! M'yes!"

Amos nodded his bullet head, stepped into the car, and slammed the door with a violence which threatened to wreck the vehicle.

"Yes, I suppose it does mean that," he grated, his purple countenance framed in the window, "but I warn you against running away with the idea that you've got the better of me, you grinning ape!"

"I hope you ain't cross wid me, old hoss!" said Pete contritely.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Joe Slack, from an upper window. "You're a real lad, you are, Mr. Pete!"

"Take your face away, fellow!" shouted his worship throatily. "Take it away! It offends me!"

"Your dial ain't exactly an oil painting, old man!" returned Mr. Slack. "But you'd look real 'and some with a lemon in your mouth!"

This gem of wit was received with roars of laughter by the other tenants.

"Silence, you carrion!" bellowed his worship, his bloated countenance distorted with fury.

"Who are you calling carrion, old frog-face?" demanded a scowling navy from the top storey.

"You, you impudent hound!" shouted Amos, thrusting his head and shoulders through the open window of the car. "I'll—Ow! Ooooooh!"

"Yah, yah, yah!" roared Pete, taking a mighty leap backwards as a deluge of boiling soapsuds descended upon his worship's bald head. "Good shot, my dear!"

"Don't you talk to my Willie in that coarse manner!" shrieked a lady from a window above, shaking a skinny fist at the mayor. "Say another word and I'll let you have the bath 'an all, you rude man! I'm a lady of few words, and I—"

"Stop it, woman, stop it!" bellowed Amos, mopping his streaming head with a bright red handkerchief. "As for you," he snarled, glaring across at Pete's beaming face, "you'll hear more about this affair!"

"And you're likely to hear more about something else in a moment, old hoss!" grinned his enemy.

"What do you mean by that, you scoundrel?" blazed Amos, who was almost past coherent speech.

"Nothing, old hoss, nothing!" replied Pete.

(Continued on next page.)

Has You Heard Dis One?



Has you eber heard about de time when old Sambo got a job in an hotel? You habent? Den dis ought to change de gloom off your countenhouse, old hoss!

"Hi, Sambo!" shouted one ob de guests. "I want a clean towel—dis one am awful!"

"Dat's funny!" said Sambo. "Eberbody in de hotel hab been usin' dat towel for de last two weeks, an' you am de just to complain!"

Tell your pal dat one, an' den watch him smole!



(Continued from previous page.)

"Home, Harvey!" shouted Amos, rapping on the glass partition and glowering at his chauffeur. "And drive like the deuce, you slug!"

A mighty cheer went up from the whole of Rackett's Rents as the car moved off, but a moment later the cheers were drowned by an ear-splitting, nerve-shattering din that must have been heard all over the town. Tibby Slack and his cronies were responsible for the deafening riot of discordant noise, for they had employed their peculiar talents in attaching all manner of articles to the back of Amos Gumbriel's new, thousand-pound limousine. Indeed, they had displayed quite a lot of ingenuity in making their choice.

For instance, a milkman's handcart, a cat's-meat barrow, and a stranger's bicycle had been pressed into service, and amongst the other things that clattered along behind the car were a dozen dustbins, a perambulator, a barrowload of fresh herrings, a platoon of old pots and pans, and a big bath, in which sat Master Tibby Slack.

"Keep on, you idiot!" roared Amos Gumbriel, as his startled chauffeur was in the act of applying his brakes. "The rabble's up to more mischief, but it's got nothing to do with us! Move, you maniac! Get some speed out of her!"

Clatter! Crash! Bang! Splash! Thud!

The tornado of barbaric noise increased in volume as the car shot forward and swung round the corner, leaving a mixed trail of milk, meat, and herrings in its wake, but it was not until he heard the shrill shriek of police whistles that Amos Gumbriel associated the ear-splitting racket with either himself or his car.

"Pull up!" he shouted, as two constables planted themselves in the roadway and waved their arms about. "Jam the brakes on, you fool!"

No sooner did the car come to a standstill than one of the constables wrenched open the door and fixed the mayor with an arctic eye.

"What's the meaning o' this, my man?" he demanded, feeling for his notebook. "We don't mind a motorist having a mascot, but this is going a bit too far!"

"Mascot?" snorted Amos, going red about the ears. "I haven't got a mascot, you idiot!"

"Now, now, that's quite enough o' that!" warned the policeman, as though speaking to a peevish child. "What's the idea? What's the meaning of it?"

"What's the meaning of what, you lunatic?" snorted Gumbriel, beginning to lose all control of himself. "You're talking through your helmet, so I think you'd better know that you are in the presence of the Mayor of Seahaven. I am Mr. Amos Gumbriel, fellow!"

"Well, what about it?" asked the constable in a tone of mild surprise.

It was a perfectly simple question, yet it seemed to take every puff of wind out of the great man's sails.

"Wh-what-what about it?" he stammered. "I'm the mayor, you thick-headed maniac!"

"I know you're the mayor," said the constable quietly. "You told me so just now. But that doesn't give you the right to scatter cats' meat and herrings about the streets of the town. And neither have you the right to flood the place with gallons of milk. You look like getting into serious trouble over this, my man!"

"Yah, yah, yah!" roared Pete, strolling up at that moment and raising his hat to the mayor. "You know, Amos," he said, wagging a fatherly finger under Gumbriel's ample nose, "I think it was very stupid ob you to tie all dose things on to de back ob de car. I know perfectly well dat boys will be boys, but I told you distinctly dat you would fall foul ob dat magnificent body ob men, de Seahaven police." He bowed gravely to the two constables, and continued: "As you explained to me, you are passionately fond ob a practical joke, but—"

"Don't pay any attention to the lying hound, officer!" shouted his worship, leaping out of the car and confronting his enemy with blazing eyes. "The whole affair's a put-up job, and I don't mind betting that this black scoundrel is at the bottom of it! You know the hooligan—"

"We certainly know the gentleman, sir," cut in one of the constables, somewhat sharply. "Mr. Pete gives very liberally to police charities, which is more than can be said for some exalted persons in the town."

"Yah, yah, yah!" roared Pete, as Amos stuttered and fumed. "I wonder who de intelligent officer is referring to, my dear old Gumbriel? I— Golly! Where's de fire!" he ejaculated, his eyes upon the yelling crowd that came racing out of Rackett Row.

"Ere 'e is! They've got 'im! The coppers 'ave nabbed 'im!" It was the wild-eyed purveyor of cats' meat who uttered the shout, and the cry was taken up by the milkman, the lady who owned the perambulator, and the cyclist, an insurance agent with a pronounced squint and a walrus moustache. The herring hawk—a burly young man in a striped jersey—was also among those present. Tibby Slack and his cronies helped to swell the clamorous mob that was making a bee-line for Goggle-eyed Amos.

"What do you mean by it, eh?" demanded the cats'-meat man, rushing up to his worship and grabbing him by the lapels of his morning-coat. "I s'pose you think it's funny, giving an open-air banquet to all the blistered cats in Seahaven? The moggies are 'aving the time o' their lives, they are; and it's my meat dat they're eating!"

"And what about my 'errings?" blustered the fish hawk, sweeping Gumbriel's silk hat off its perch.

"And my milk?" wailed the roundsman.

"And my pram?" shrieked a hawkfaced lady, sniting at his worship with a rolling-pin.

"And my bike?" barked the insurance agent, his walrus moustache bristling.

Amos Gumbriel looked absolutely flabbergasted as he gazed round at the circle of angry faces. The thing had happened with such startling suddenness that he was knocked completely off his balance, and he looked as cheerful as a fat worm at a woodpeckers' tea fight as he turned to the constables for sympathetic advice.

"Wh-what can I do?" he stammered.

"Pay up and look cheerful," grunted the younger of the constables. "You've had your bit of fun and—"

"I've had my what?" roared Amos, a paroxysm of white-hot fury surging through him. "Do you think—"

"De officer is quite right, my dear old Gumbriel," put in Pete soothingly. "De best ting you can do is to pay up and look cheerful!"

"It is, an' all!" snorted the cats'-meat purveyor. "Not dat I'd mind takin' the case to court!"

The idea of fighting the case in public did not appeal to Gumbriel in the least, and his fleshy hand was shaking as he fumbled for his notebook.

"I'll settle at once, you—you vultures!" he grated. "What was your stock worth, fellow?"

"Five pounds!" answered the cats'-meat man. "And I'm letting you 'ave the meat at wholesale price!"

Amos was muttering savagely as a banknote changed hands, but he was too angry and agitated to argue the point. Indeed, his one idea was to get out of the mess.

"Next!" he snorted.

"Six pounds!" said the milkman.

"Seven quid!" growled the fish hawk.

"Four pounds for wilful damage!" piped the insurance agent.

"Three pounds ten!" shrieked the hawkfaced lady with the rolling-pin.

Amos was breathing hard as he



mopped his moist forehead with his handkerchief.

"That leaves ten shillings!" he muttered fiercely; "ten shillings out of twenty-six pounds!"

"I'll take that, mister!" cried Tibby Slack, snatching the note out of his worship's shaking fingers. "I've done murrer's bath a bit of no good, and ten bob'll buy a new one!"

The 6th Chapter.

Gumbriel Gets Hatched!

IT was Easter Monday, and Player Manager Pete had planned a special holiday treat for the youthful denizens of Rackett's Rents. It was to be a kind of garden-party, with plenty to eat and drink, and special presents for his guests. The affair was to take place in the open space in the rear of No. 3, and Pete had spent the whole morning in decorating the courtyard with flags and pennants, highly-coloured streamers, gay paper lanterns, and festoons of paper chains.

The big-hearted fellow was boyishly happy as he toiled, and his dark

eyes twinkled with excitement as he gazed at the monster Easter egg that was to be run out on a hawser and suspended over the courtyard. The egg was a massive affair, a bright red receptacle capable of holding a full-grown man. The idea was to fill it with toys and sweets of all descriptions, and, as a climax to the garden-party, it was to gape open into two parts and shower gifts upon the crowd of urchins below.

It was a happy idea, and Pete liked it well, and he was about to get to work upon the filling process when Mr. Amos Gumbriel came upon the scene. Pete was standing upon the iron balcony of the top storey tenement, so his surprise was absolutely genuine when the back door opened and his enemy appeared.

"What's all this tomfoolery about?" demanded Amos, his little eyes smouldering as he glared round at the gay decorations.

"What tomfoolery, old hoss?" asked Pete in a quiet voice.

"Why, all this, you maniac!" snorted the mayor, embracing the scene with a wave of his pudgy hand. "What are you going to get out of it?" he asked brusquely. "Nothing?"

"Dat's just where you're wrong, my dear old Gumbriel," smiled Pete. "I'm going to get quite a lot out of it—a lot ob pleasure, dat is."

"For instance, I shall hab de satisfaction ob knowing dat I hab brought a spot ob sunshine into de lives ob dese poor people who are forced to exist in your filthy tenements, Mr. Slum Landlord!"

Amos Gumbriel snorted angrily. "That sort of talk sounds noble and fine," he jeered. "But you can't throw dust into my eyes, my fine fellow. Only fools fling their money about, and you can't kid me that you're giving something for nothing. I don't know what your game is, but I'll bet it's pretty shady."

"Hab it your own way, my dear Gumbriel," returned Pete in a meek voice. "Smatter ob fact, I'm going to gib de boys and girls an Easter treat, and I should like to mention dat all donations, no matter how small, will be tankfully received!"

Amos stared in blank amazement for a moment or so, and then he threw his bullet head back, and roared with throaty laughter.

"You're—you're not suggesting that I should aid you in your madness, are you?" he asked, dabbing his eyes with a silk handkerchief. "I wouldn't dream of giving you a brass farthing towards this affair! The better you treat this rabble the less they think of you! All they understand is firm treatment, and you'll find that you've burnt your fingers before you're much older!"

"M'yes," murmured Pete thought-



GUMBOIL HATCHES OUT! As Pete pulled the cord, the giant Easter egg gaped open, and Gumbriel shot swiftly downwards. Below the crowd were waiting to catch him in the big sheet, while on every side went up roar after roar of laughter at the mayor's discomfiture.

fully. "So you won't subscribe a fiber towards de festivities?"

"No, I won't, you imbecile!" shouted Amos. "What's more, I absolutely forbid you to go through with this nonsense! There's not going to be any Easter treat—and that's that!"

Pete lifted his eyebrows until they almost touched the roots of his woolly thatch.

"Is dat so?" he murmured, with a broad grin.

"Yes, it is so!" snapped the mayor. "This courtyard is my property, so my word is law! You'll take those decorations down at once, my fine fellow; I refuse to encourage you in your latest lunacy! I won't have my tenants pampered!"

"H'm! I'm sorry to hear dat, old hoss," said Pete, rubbing his smooth chin reflectively. "'cause it makes tings kind of rader awkward for dis child! You're quite sure dat you're going to stop my treat, old hoss? I mean, it ain't an idle rumour, or anything like dat!"

Amos gave a wild laugh.

"Sure!" he snorted, his throaty voice echoing through the courtyard. "I was never so sure of anything in my life, you poor fool! All these lanterns and streamers must be destroyed immediately, so I'll give you a helping hand by smashing that ridiculous thing—just to start with!"

No sooner did the words pass his lips than he swung his heavy walking-stick above his head and leapt towards the monster Easter egg; and the stick had just started upon its downward journey when Pete darted forward and caught the upraised wrist in a grip of steel.

"Just one moment, old hoss!" he begged, as Amos struggled and kicked in a frantic effort to free himself of the crushing pressure that was numbing his wrist. "I should hab been bery cross wid you if you cracked my Easter egg! M'yes! Dat's an extra-special bit ob hen fruit, Gumbriel, old hoss, so I should like you to hab an extra-special look at it!"

"I don't want—" began his worship, struggling like a madman.

"What you want hasn't got anything to do wid it, old hoss!" Pete informed him. "It is my wish dat you should go inside de shell and make a noise like a chick, so it stands to reason dat you hab got to go inside! M'yes! Precisely!"

"I tell you that I won't—"

"And I tell you dat you will!" grinned Pete. "Smatter ob fact, de whole ting is as good as settled!"

Handling the big man as though he were a fractious child, Pete held him by the collar and the rear portion of his trousers, and heaved him through the open top into the interior of the giant Easter egg; and the air of Rackett's Rents was still vibrating with wild cries for help as the lid closed down over Gumbriel's neck!

"Yah, yah, yah!" roared Pete, as Gumbriel opened and shut his mouth in an effort to find words. "What are you laughing about, Gumbriel, old hoss?"

"Let me out, you black barbarian!" yelled Gumbriel. "Help! Police! Murder! Release me at once, you black-faced, snub-nosed, lop-eared brute!"

"Yah, yah, yah!" shouted Pete. "Now make yourself comfy, old hoss, 'cause you're going for a little ride! Are you ready, Mr. Gumbriel?"

His worship's reply to the polite question was a flow of flowery invective that could not have been equalled even by the dock labourers of Rackett's Rents, and he positively excelled himself when the giant egg, attached to the hawser, went sailing away, bearing Gumbriel upon the first stage of his aerial voyage.

Loud were his protests and threats as he was carried over the well of the court, and the egg was tossing like a dinghy in a heavy swell by the time it reached its destination, and Pete left it to dangle in mid-air.

The courtyard was seething with a yelling, bright-eyed crowd as Pete ran down the winding iron staircase and joined his guests, and within a short matter of seconds the riot of fun and feasting was in full swing.

Prodigious quantities of food and drink disappeared miraculously in a record space of time, and it was not until Tibby and his companions began to breathe with something very like physical discomfort that Pete made his way up the winding staircase to the top storey, and disappeared into the back door of the tenement. An expectant silence fell upon the assembly as he was lost to sight, but a yell of excitement broke

(Continued at foot of next page.)

This cheery chat tells you all about the Scottish Cup Final, which takes place next Saturday.

AS another football season draws to a close, so comes along the Final Tie for the Scottish Cup. A picture of the cup is before you—quite an unpretentious-looking trophy, isn't it? Yes, but what tremendous struggles have been waged for its possession—struggles which thrilled.

A Fiver Apiece.

Our picture shows the original cup purchased exactly fifty-four years ago for the sum of £50. Queen's Park, greatest of amateur clubs, headed the list of subscribing clubs with a subscription of £5, and seven other clubs followed suit with a fiver apiece—Vale of Leven, Third Lanark, Clydesdale, Eastern, Dumbreck, Granville, and the Rovers. The Scottish Football Association, not then a year old, gave a subscription of £10, and so the £50 required was secured.

Sixteen clubs took part in the first contest for the trophy. Five of them are still alive—Queen's Park, the pioneers of soccer in Scotland, Vale of Leven, Dumbarton, Kilmarnock, and Third Lanark. All have won the Cup. Queen's Park have been holders on ten occasions. They won the first three Finals, going through all the ties and having only one goal scored against them, a remarkable record.

Queen's Park were then in a class by themselves. In the first Final they walloped Clydesdale by 2-0; in the second they outed Renton by three clear goals; and in the third they defeated Third Lanark by 2-0. In the following season Queen's were beaten for the first time in any game. In the fifth round of the ties Vale of Leven knocked them out by two goals to one, and went on to win the Cup, defeating Glasgow Rangers in the Final by 3-2.

All the Winners.

This precious old Cup has been competed for forty-eight times. The competition was suspended during the Great War. This season's Final will be the forty-ninth. Celtic, a club that came into being long after Queen's Park and Rangers were famous, has won the trophy on eleven occasions. Glasgow Rangers, the most disappointing cup fighters in Scotland, have won only four Finals, the last away back in the first years of the century. Heart of Midlothian can also claim four Final victories Renton, Third Lanark, and Hibernian two, and Dundee,

SCOTLAND'S

Dumbarton, Falkirk, St. Bernard, Kilmarnock, Partick Thistle, and St. Mirren one apiece. And what's more, Celtic have figured in eighteen Finals, Queen's Park in a dozen, and Rangers in eleven.

One of the most memorable Scottish Finals was that between Celtic and Heart of Midlothian, played on Ibrox Park, in 1901. This was what is known as "Bobby Walker's Final." In his day Walker was the finest inside-right in Britain, and was the football idol of Scotland for years. He played the game of his life for Hearts in this last round, and won the match and the Cup. Yet never a goal did he score—no, not one. Listen!

Wonderful Walker!

It was a wild, wet afternoon when the teams lined up. The ground was soft—just right for Bobby Walker's plodding play. It suited this prince of dribblers, and a merry dance he led the mighty men of Celtic—strong, skilful, subtle players and schemers. Nearing the close Hearts held the comfortable lead of three to one. For every Heart's goal Walker had drawn the Celtic defence, and made scoring easy for his mates. Then came a brilliant Celtic rally, and in five minutes the scores were flush—three all. A Celtic forward, Sandy M'Mahon,



THE SCOTTISH CUP!
This trophy cost £50 just fifty-four years ago!

smilingly chaffed Walker, and told him that a drawn game would be quite satisfactory to the Celts.

But Sandy reckoned without the wonderful Walker. Bobby had not yet shot his bolt. He had one more

BIG DAY!

card up his sleeve, and he played it with consummate skill and artistry. There was only three minutes of the game to go. The ball was kicked off. It quickly came to Walker, who was a genius at finding perfect position, and he, with a clever dribble and subtle pass, opened out play so beautifully that the Celtic defence was bewildered; in their bewilderment he got the ball again, dodged a rushing and plunging Celtic half-back, planted the ball adroitly down the middle for the centre-forward to tip it into the net. Heart of Midlothian 4, Celtic 3. What a Final—full of fire and devil, with Bobby Walker the wonder worker of the twenty-two!

In Ten Minutes!

You have heard it before—"There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip!" I thought so. Well, in the whole history of Scottish Final ties there is nothing to touch Clyde F.C.'s slip. It was intensely dramatic. Like this. In the spring of 1910 Clyde and Dundee reached the Final, and faced each other on Ibrox Park. Clyde, five minutes from time, held the very comfortable lead of two clear goals. Spectators were flocking from the ground in thousands, sure that Dundee had lost. But with three minutes to go Dundee took Clyde by surprise, and scored.

Here's where you learn quite a lot of things you didn't know about football over the Border.

With two minutes to go they surprised them again, and the match was all square. In the next minute Clyde surprised themselves by missing two perfect pinches.

So sure were the reporters that Clyde had won that they had phoned—Clyde 2, Dundee 0—to their offices, and the papers containing Clyde's "victory" were on sale in the streets. So sure were thousands of Dundee supporters that their favourites were out that they fled from the ground ten minutes from time, and were far away from the scene when Dundee pulled the tie out of the fire by two of the most dramatic sweeps ever seen in Scottish football. Hundreds of supporters had hurried to the railway station and embarked for home, and when they were told the result they could scarcely credit it. The replay was drawn—0-0—and the second replay was won by Dundee by 2-1. Truly a remarkable Final, in which fickle fortune smiled on the men from the banks of Tay.

Clever Celtic!

Glasgow Celtic won the Scottish Cup in the third year of their existence. From their inception the Celts have had a top-notch team. Only the best is good enough for them. Why, in their first season they entered four cup competitions, and in every case the club that beat them won the trophy at stake. Third Lanark clouted them in the Scottish Final by 2 to 1, on April 9th, 1892; they played their first winning Final on old Ibrox. Their opponents were Queen's Park. Have a twig at the teams.

Celtic: Cullen; Reynolds and Doyle; Maley, Kelly, and Gallacher; M'Callum, Brady, Dowds, M'Mahon, and Campbell.

Queen's Park: Baird; D. Sillars and W. Sellar; J. Gillespie, Tom Robertson, and D. Stewart; W. Gulliland, T. Waddell, J. Hamilton, J. Scott, and W. Lambie.

The amateurs played with great calm and skill. They had the Celts guessing in the first half, and looked good winners when they crossed over leading by a goal to nil. But Celtic were a different Celtic in the second half. They made rings round the amateurs, and ultimately ran out winners by 5 goals to 1. That was the Celts second Final. They have now played in eighteen, and have won the Cup eleven times, a record which will take some whacking.

WHERE MOST OF THE SCOTTISH CUP FINALS ARE PLAYED.



HAMPDEN PARK, GLASGOW. This is the venue for most of the Scottish Cup Finals, and it holds the record for the largest number of spectators that have ever witnessed a football match—this was at an International match between Scotland and England on March 23rd, 1912, when 127,307 people were in the ground. It is the home of Queen's Park, the famous Scottish amateur club; they are nicknamed "The Spiders."

JACK SAM & PETE!



(Continued from previous page.)

out when he reappeared carrying a big linen sheet.

"Silence, ladies and gents!" piped Tibby.

"I s'pose you hab all heard about Humpty Dumpty, the old hoss who had a great fall?" cried Pete, with a broad grin. "Well, I am about to introduce to your distinguished notice a Humpty Dumpty ob your bery own! All ob dose who remember deir geography will know dat de original Humpty Dumpty had a great fall and landed upon de back of his neck. Well, I hab every reason to believe dat my old hoss is about to do likewise—only more so! M'yes!" He beamed down at the sea of upturned faces. "Catch!" he cried, dropping the sheet over the side of the balcony. "Now, den, what you boys and girls hab got to do is to catch my Humpty Dumpty as he falls, so all ob you will hab to gib a hand in holding de sheet under de Easter egg! Dat's de idea! An' when you hab caught Humpty Dumpty, you know what to do wid him. M'yes! Are you ready?"

"Yessir!"

"Den watch closely, my pippins!" Pete's dusky countenance was one big grin as he tugged at the length of cord that was attached to Gumbriel's prison, and a shrill yell of excitement went up from the delighted urchins as the monster egg gaped

(Continued in col. 5—this page.)

GRAND CUP FINAL NUMBER!

SPECIAL ARTICLES—NEW FEATURES—NEW STORIES!



Stunning New Serial!

"LUCKY JIM!"

Coming next week—the opening chapters of a corking new serial. Jim's lucky, all right—and he can play cricket, fight, and drive a racing car. "Some" lad! "Some" story!

Arthur S. Hardy Again!

"—EIGHT—NINE—OUT!"

The first yarn of a smashing new full-of-fun boxing series. You'll enjoy these rollicking behind-the-scenes stories—and no writer is more popular than Arthur S. Hardy!

One of His Own!

"PETE'S CUP FINAL!"

Of course, Pete's got to have a Cup Final! He can't play at Wembley, so he organises a Final of his own! This yarn is a real mirth-maker; you'll chuckle from start to finish!

"ALL THE WINNERS AT WEMBLEY!"

Extra-special pictorial feature—all about the Cup Final.

Heaps of other fine articles, cartoons, chats, etc.

OUT ON WEDNESDAY!

JACK SAM & PETE!



(Continued from col. 1—this page.)

slowly open and the purple face of his worship the mayor peered down into the crowded courtyard below.

He saw his peril at once—it was only too real.

"Help, help! Save me—save me!" he bellowed, clinging on in a frenzy of terror. "Police! Save—Ouch!"

Losing his grip, he shot out of the egg and sailed swiftly through space, his arms and legs waving like the tentacles of a demented octopus, and no sooner did he bulge the middle of the sheet than he was rolled up in its folds, and dragged across the cobbles towards the street.

Stifled howls mingled with the riot of shrill laughter as he was rushed along Rackett Row and dragged across to the bank of the sluggish canal. But the wild howls became a subdued murmur when his worship was lifted up, swung backwards and forwards three or four times, and then sent flying through the air into the hold of a refuse barge that happened to be gliding past at that very moment.

Amos Gumbriel's luck was clean out!

THE END.

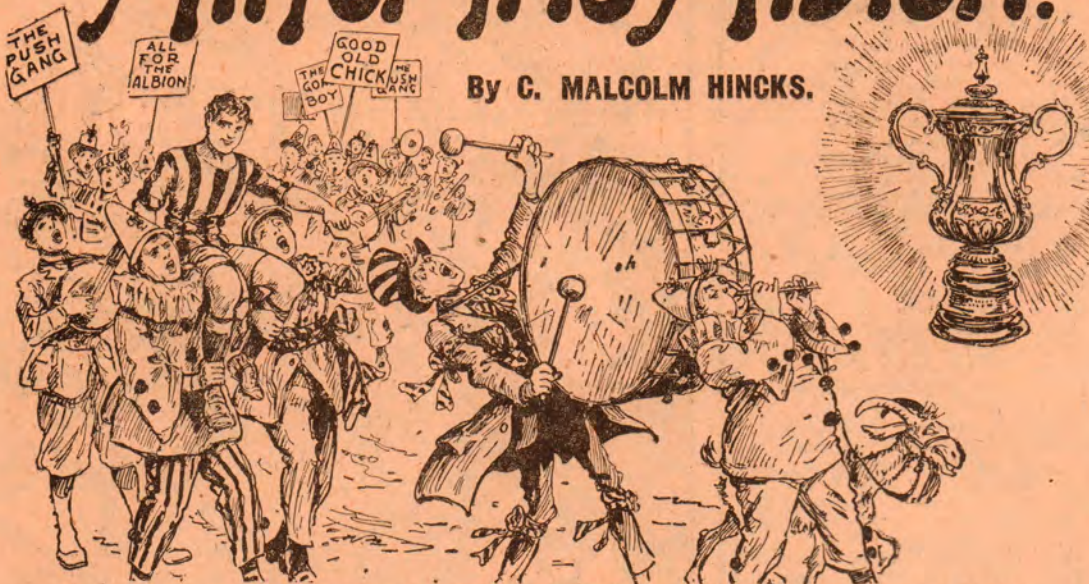
("Pete's Cup Final!" next Wednesday. It's a real riot of fun. The next issue of the REALM will be packed with topical Final features. Order your copy now!)

FOOTER
FAME!

The Albion are battling for promotion, and they're booked for the Final. The lad who's done it all is Chick! Start now on this week's stirring chapters!

All For The Albion!

By G. MALCOLM HINCKS.



ANOTHER SMASHING INSTALMENT OF OUR STIRRING CUP-FIGHTING SERIAL.

GET TO KNOW—

Chick Chandler, a clever young footballer and manager of Oldford Albion. Chick makes an enemy in

Fred Tomlin, whom he has deposed from the centre-forward position. The young manager forms the "Push Gang"—which consists of all the young footer enthusiasts in Oldford—whose aim is to stimulate enthusiasm in the town for the Albion. Their mascot is a goat named Buster. Chick's three chief lieutenants are Sam Snodger, Bonser—commonly known as Bones—and pretty

Marjorie Mainland. Marjorie, unknown to herself, is heiress to £10,000. The only person, other than a lawyer, who does know this is Fred Tomlin.

The Albion win their way into the final of the F.A. Cup, and go to Cleesby for special training. Gregson—a rascally Albion director—and Tomlin plot to prevent the team winning the Cup.

Meanwhile, on the cliffs at Cleesby the Albion players are kicking a ball about, when suddenly part of the cliff crumbles away and Darkie Green, the team's brilliant winger, disappears over the edge.

(Now get down to this week's stunning chapters.)

Chick to the Rescue!

CHICK CHANDLER stood on the Cleesby cliffs, dazed with horror at the disappearance of the footballer. It did not require that hoarse speech of Sandy's to point out what that disappearance meant, but it was the thought of his colleague lying lifeless on the rocks far below that made Chick sick at heart, made him hesitate about approaching the spot where the edge of the cliff had given way and taken their companion with it.

"Help!"

And, with a hoarse cry, Chick was running for the edge.

"Steady, mon!" cried the more cautious Scot.

"But he's alive and calling for help!" cried Chick excitedly.

"Och, but there's no sense in you going over yon treacherous cliff, too! Get down on your stomach, mon, and I'll hold on to your feet."

Sandy looked as relieved as Chick himself; but even in his relief and excitement he was cautious, and a moment's thought showed Chick that his proposition was a sound one. So, nearing the edge, he went down on all fours, and Sandy gripped his ankles.

"Help!"

"Coming!" shouted Chick, though he had not the vaguest idea how he was going to help.

All he knew was that, in some miraculous way, Darkie Green had saved himself from falling on to the rocks below, and, judging by the sound of his voice, could not be very far down.

The cliff showed no sign of giving way further, and presently Chick's head and shoulders were over the edge. There, twelve or fifteen feet below him, was Darkie Green!

The inside-left's face was as white as the chalk of the cliff, and he was clinging desperately to the roots of a gorse-bush that was growing in a great mass of hard chalk.

"Hang on!" shouted Chick. "We'll soon get help!"

"I can't hang on much longer; I'm nearly done!" came Green's agonising reply.

Chick's keen eyes examined the cliff. There was no foothold for his unfortunate colleague; it was a sheer drop of about a hundred feet to the rocks below, but on the upper part there were a few firm-looking projections that offered a foothold, and near to Green a small ledge.

"I'm going down to him, Sandy," he said quickly. "You go and get help—half a dozen men and a length of rope—and, for pity's sake, be quick!"

"But, mon, it's awfu' risky, and maybe the pair of you will—"

"Don't stop there arguing!" snapped Chick. "I'm manager of this outfit, and my word goes!"

Reluctantly the Scot dashed off towards a row of cottages in the distance, and without a moment's hesitation Chick lowered himself over the edge. A piece of chalk gave way under his foot; but he had got a firm grip with his hands, and quickly had another foothold. Nevertheless, the sound of the big lump of chalk falling on to the rocks below was certainly not an encouraging start.

"I can't stick it!" came a hoarse shout from Green.

"You must, man! I'll be with you in a tick, and we'll soon have help!"

His encouraging cry nerved Green to make another desperate effort, though he felt that his arms were being pulled from their sockets, and he was dazed by the shock of his fall caused by the crumbling cliff. And then that terrible weight of his body was eased, a hand was under his right foot.

"Don't look down!" said Chick sharply. "I can ease you a bit, and they'll soon be here with a rope. How did you manage to save yourself?"

"I grabbed at this bush as I was going over; that's what gave my armpits socks as it caught up and brought me up with it. Are you all right?"

"Quite!" replied Chick cheerfully.

Few people would have believed it. He was standing on a narrow ledge below and a little to the right of his colleague, and only by leaning out somewhat precariously was he able to give him that support just in the nick of time.

A man looked over the edge—a scared-looking holiday-maker.

"They're bringing a rope and a crowbar—soon have him up!"

"Tell them to tie a loop in the rope for a foothold," called Chick, "and to be as quick as they can!"

He heard the man shouting. By now his arm was becoming numb, for Green was no light weight, and the task of maintaining his position on the narrow ledge, and at the same time supporting his companion, was anything but easy.

"Are ye all richt, mon?"

"Buck up!"

Down came the rope, with a loop made in it.

"Wait till I tell you to grab it, and then look slippy!" he commanded Darkie Green. And then, as

the loop drew near his outstretched hand, he called sharply: "Now!"

The footballer grabbed the rope, and almost at the same moment Chick's fingers closed on the loop and drew it over Green's shoe.

"Right away!" he called, and Green was being drawn up to safety.

To Chick it seemed a terrible time before the rope came down again, but some largish pieces of chalk came down unpleasantly close to his head. Then at last came the rope; thankfully he grabbed it, slipped his foot into the loop, and every muscle in his body seeming strained, Chick was dragged up, and he gave a sigh of relief when he saw the green grass again. Eager hands helped him over the edge, and a crowd of holiday-makers sent up a rousing cheer.

"Rather a near go!" was all Chick said, then turned to make anxious inquiries about Darkie Green.

The clever inside-left was still dazed from the shock, and his arms were stiff and painful, but to his and Sandy's great relief, he had not suffered any serious injury.

Chick tipped the men who had brought the rope and thanked the holiday-makers for their assistance. Then, shaking off the admiring crowd, he hurried back to the hotel, anxious to get the Albion trainer busy on the man who had had such an unerving experience, and to make himself look more presentable.

"You saved my life!" said Darkie Green hoarsely. "I don't know how to thank you!"

"My thanks, old son," said Chick cheerfully, "will be winning promotion this afternoon, and the Cup on Saturday!"

Fighting for Promotion.

THE perspiring crowd, so tightly wedged in the comparatively small ground that they could scarcely breathe, felt rather sorry for themselves. A few of the more thoughtful felt really sorry for the players.

And the players deserved their sympathy!

This was no ordinary end-of-the-season match between two clubs with little to gain or lose, when, in weather so unsuitable for the great winter game, staleness becomes apparent to all and players unblushingly slow up. It was a vital game—vital to the Albion because, should they win it they would go up to the premier division; vital to Cleesby Town because, should they lose it, they would be in the danger zone.

It was the sort of game that people would go far to see, and, with a big holiday crowd in Cleesby, thousands had been turned away, and the excitement was intense. But they had not seen the Finalists' true form.

Darkie Green, upset by his terrible shock that morning, was playing an erratic game, made worse by his terrible anxiety to do well. Two or three players found the glaring sun on this ground without a vestige of shade too much for them, and the Albion had good cause to be thankful to Chick, the cool and unfurried

Sandy McCraill, and their stalwart defence.

And now it was getting on for "Time." Each side had scored once, men on both sides were tiring, and a draw seemed inevitable.

"Two for one, and the Cup won, too!"

The members of the Push Gang who had made the long journey to Cleesby kept up the cry that had so caught on at Saturday's match, and the Albion players were all out to get those two points that would make them safe for promotion, and leave the result of their matches after the Cup a matter of comparative indifference.

But could they do it?

Suddenly there came a yell of delight from the excursionists from Oldfield. Sandy McCraill had neatly robbed a Cleesby man of the ball, dodged, swerved past another man, and sent a long, swift pass to Chick in the centre.

"Chick's off with it!"

The packed crowd craned forward. Two Cleesby men had been paying the young manager of the famous visitors a flattering amount of attention, thus greatly limiting his opportunities—especially in view of the failure of Darkie Green to live up to his usual form—but the Scot's swift pass had taken them by surprise, and Chick was away.

"Stop him!" cried the supporters of the home team, in an agony of anxiety.

But Chick swerved neatly round the man who rushed at him, transferring the ball from one foot to the other, and amid an ever-growing roar of excitement went on, with only a back and the goalkeeper to beat.

And the perspiring referee, rushing after him, was looking at his watch.

Panting players on both sides came rushing up behind them, a man was streaking in from the right wing.

"Shoot, man—shoot!" screamed an excited Oldford spectator almost hysterically.

And Chick Chandler shot between the back and the goalie, who had rushed out in a desperate endeavour to save.

The shot was a trifle high, however, and, to the Push Gang's dismay, it hit the crossbar and rebounded into play. Quick as lightning Chick dashed past the

Cleesby defender, who, at the critical moment, got his head to the flying leather, and sent it hurtling back again—into the net this time!

"Goal!"

The excursionists and a great number of the holiday-makers, whose sympathies were with the club that had created such a sensation that season, sent up a wild shout of delight, and they were still cheering when the final whistle went, almost as soon as the ball had again been kicked off.

"Mon," said Sandy McCraill, as he and Chick hurried towards the stand, "we've done it! We're a' richt for the First Division!"

"Near go," said Chick calmly. "Almost as near as our go this morning!"

In the stand people were shouting his name. The story of his heroic rescue that morning had got about, and thousands who had little or no personal interest in the match rejoiced at the triumph of the young man, whom they felt deserved to win.

There were no hot tubs to-day; but, instead, a peeling off of sticky shirts and shorts, a rush for the cold shower, a vigorous towelling, and a hasty change.

And then little Miskin came hurrying in.

"Splendid, boys—splendid!" he jerked. "Promotion! Huge success! Now the Cup! Great!"

He shook hands with all the players and with Tomlin, the trainer, who had once been so against the very young manager, but was now one of his most loyal supporters. It was not until he was outside with Chick that he showed he was not quite so happy as he appeared to be.

"You've done splendidly, Chandler! No man could have done better. If we'd been knocked out in the First Round for the Cup, and had yet obtained promotion, your managership would have more than justified itself. But I've set my heart on bringing off the double event, and making the name of the Albion famous for as long as football is played, and wherever it is played!"

"So have I," said Chick calmly.

"What's worrying you?"

"Green. He played a poor game this afternoon; and perhaps because of that you didn't all get together this afternoon. I know conditions were bad for good football, and that you won—which is the main thing—but you didn't seem to me to shape like Cup-winners."

"I agree. But, apart from the heat, you must remember that Green had had an awful shock, and that he was bruised and shaken. Then don't forget we've had a heavy Easter programme; and the keen anxiety for promotion, as well as fighting for the Cup, has been a big strain. We're a stale team, Mr. Miskin."

"But do you think you'll be fresh on Saturday?" asked the little chairman.

(Continued on the next page.)



A NARROW SQUEAK! Darkie Green, clinging with one hand to the branch, grabbed the rope with the other. At the same moment, Chick's fingers closed on the loop and drew it over Darkie's shoe. "Right away!" he called, and those above began to haul on the rope.

YOU LOOK
PASTY—
BEEN ILL?

The BINGO BOYS

NO—
BILLPOSTING

THEY ADVERTISE THE CUP FINAL!

WHAT
ARE THEY
—ACROBATS?

NO—MEN
OF "FEW
WORDS"

YOU MUST
SEE THE

C

COME

TO THE

CUP

FINAL

IT'S ALL
U—P
WITH US!

WE'LL NEVER
GET TO THE
FINAL
OURSELVES!!

COME
TO THE
CUP

ON SAT

PASTE

PASTE

ROLL
UP FOR
THE CUP
FINAL!

—ON
SATURDAY

COME
TO THE

CUP
FINAL





(Continued from previous page.)

"Yes. I'm going to let the boys have an easy time of it for a couple of days. They won't see a football, and I shall ease up a little in the training. I'm backing on getting that Cup!"

The chairman beamed.

"If you do it will be a wonderful performance!"

"It'll be a lick!" said Chick, with a grin.

The Final Foul!

ON the Thursday morning before the big match at Wembley—which was practically the sole subject of conversation among football enthusiasts—Fred Tomlin sat at his desk in the offices of Messrs. Henley & Henson, anxiously waiting for the senior partner to go out and keep an appointment.

The previous evening the victorious team had arrived back from Cleesby, and the great triumph of Chick—the sight of him driving from the station with pretty Marjorie, hemmed in by an excited, cheering crowd—had been like gall to Tomlin.

"I wonder what it will be like if they win the Cup?" a man standing near him had said.

But Fred Tomlin knew that Oldford Albion would not win the Cup! He chuckled softly to himself at

that. He and Gregson were the only people in Oldford who knew what was going to happen on the way to the Stadium, at Wembley—the thing that would startle the whole world, and send a few crooked men into the arena to battle with the formidable team from Westwick.

Tomlin looked up. Mr. Henley, silk hat on head, neatly rolled umbrella under his arm, was walking through the general office; and the outer door had no sooner closed behind him than Fred Tomlin had slipped from his stool, and was hurrying towards the senior partner's office.

Earlier that morning he had seen among the lawyer's private correspondence an envelope from the South of France, and knew that it must contain news of old Grover. If Marjorie Mainland's uncle was dead she might that day learn that she was heiress to ten thousand pounds, and that would be a handicap to his plans. On the other hand, the old man might be lingering on; and if he only lingered on for a few more weeks, and Chick Chandler was out of the way, Tomlin might still get a grip on that fortune, the greed for which had landed him in such an awkward position.

He had some papers with him as an excuse to enter the room. Mr. Henley was a systematic man; his pile of private letters that demanded his personal attention was on the desk under a handsome bronze paperweight; and, moving swiftly to the big mahogany desk, Fred Tomlin began to search eagerly among the letters.

"And may I ask what particularly interests you in my private correspondence?"

At the sound of the icy-cold voice Tomlin jumped violently, and, with frightened eyes, saw the elderly lawyer standing in the doorway.

"I—I was just tidying up your desk, sir!" he stammered.

"Don't lie to me!" snapped Mr. Henley. "I returned for a paper I had forgotten, and saw you deliberately searching among my private letters. You won't do it again! I'll have no spies in my office! You will go to the cashier and draw what is due to you, and leave my employ at once!"

"But, sir, I—"

"I'll listen to no excuses. Your work has been unsatisfactory for some time past, but I gave you another chance. You have finished yourself now. Get out, and never let me see you here again!"

Badly scared, Tomlin slunk out of the room without even the satisfaction of having found the letter for which he had been searching. This was a disaster! Not only was his chance of getting inside knowledge about Marjorie's fortune gone, but he had lost a good job; while his father had bluntly told him that Chick Chandler had not the least intention of re-signing him for the Albion, and his play of late would certainly not tempt any other club to pay him summer wages.

No one expressed the least regret at his departure from the office, for he had bullied those beneath him and fawned to his superiors. The cashier—who had had an interview with the senior partner—contemptuously paid him the money due to him, and Tomlin slunk out into Bank Street, feeling terribly sorry for himself. Only a comparatively small sum in hand, his banking account reduced to almost nothing by his plotting, one job gone, and his job as a footballer ending in a week!

"Hobbs won't get another penny out of me!" he said fiercely.

Then Tomlin set off for the big public-house kept by Gregson, the

(Continued at top of next page.)

TEN SHILLINGS FOR BIRKENHEAD!

IS YOUR CLUB HERE?

PRIZE FOOTER PARS.

Each week the Editor will award TEN SHILLINGS for the most interesting paragraph concerning a reader's football club. ALL CLUBS MENTIONED IN THIS FEATURE, other than that winning the first prize, WILL RECEIVE A TABLE FOOTBALL GAME! All letters should be addressed to the BOYS' REALM, "Prize Footer Pars," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4.



Jogging Along.

RAYNHAM UNITED (Upper Edmon-ton) are not rich, but they are wise and make do with what comes along in true philosophic spirit. They play in old blue and white shirts. Better teams joke about them, but Raynham goes on and aims high. After all, jokes kill nobody. Good luck, Raynham, and take a *Football Game* this week!

Swansea's Mettle.

MOUNT PLEASANT JUNIORS (Swansea) hold fifth position in the League, and have the honour of having three of their players in the first trial match. It has been a case of good luck and bad with them, for the last of three recent games was a draw. It might well have been otherwise, but the ball burst in the second half, and this necessarily hung up things a bit. Here's wishing you success, Juniors! You can get a list of physical exercises from Gamage, Holborn, London. (*Football Game*.)

A Little Champion.

ENTWISTLE JUNIORS A.F.C. (Rochdale) have just won three matches, but since then the demon flu has laid low half their players. Two members of the team—J. Lee and J. Whittaker, each fifteen years old—have been picked for the inter-League. Their goalkeeper, H. Fielder, who is fourteen and stands three feet ten inches, was left out because he was too small, but now the selection committee are calling themselves all manner of names and wishing they had picked Fielder, for he really is the best goalie in the League, and has earned the name of the "Little Wizard." Entwistle has a good motto: "Never be downhearted!" (*Football Game*.)

Leeds Leads.

QUARRY MOUNT COUNCIL SCHOOL F.C. (Leeds) have won the Schools Shield twice in succession, and intend to do the hat trick. They have only lost one match this season, and are level with York Road and Bramley. They have a grand reserve eleven, which still has to be beaten. (*Football Game*.)

Sportsmen All.

CARNO VILLAGE F.C. (Carno, Montgomery, Wales) would have broken a spell of bad luck only their centre-half and right-half joined the Army. Then an unfortunate accident put the finest shot in the team in hospital. However, four players have been drafted in from the next village, and there is to be a benefit match for the fellow in hospital. That's good hearing, Carno! (*Football Game*.)

Plucky Padiham.

CROSS BANK JUNIOR F.C. (Padiham) started last season minus jerseys and knickers, and the goals were made by

putting jackets down. This season Padiham progressed a lot, for not only did they get a new pitch, but a field which has real goal props. There was no League to join, but they played teams in the district, and they have won ten out of eleven games. Best win, 20-0, at home. (*Football Game*.)

Dublin Does Well.

CRESCENTVILLE F.C. (Dublin) are well fixed for a club-room. This is a shed by origin, but with an oil lamp and three long benches, it is nice and cosy. The twelve members pay twopence a week, and a team of friendly rivals loans them a set of jerseys. Crescentville has played up well in a set of six friendly games. (*Football Game*.)

Mud!

FEATHERSTALL ROVERS (Oldham) have a ground which is quite a mud-heap at the best, and when there is rain the slosh is simply terrific. But notwithstanding the depth of the mud, the Rovers manage to score. In their first match their opponents were a hefty lot, and the Rovers had a bad licking. But they won next time and every time since, and have collected sixty-four goals in fourteen games. (*Football Game*.)

Pep in Their Kick!

LYDIA JUNIORS F.C. (Birkenhead) filled up their first season with friendlies, and they play so hard that they have kicked four balls to bits. For their first game they borrowed a set of jerseys, and drew first blood. It looked like a defeat, 3-1, and the Juniors heartily disliked the look of it. So their prime goal-getter got extra busy, and this champion—by name Casey—netted four in the second half.

THEY WIN 10s.!

RAMBLERS F.C. (BIRKENHEAD) have just had to rub along haphazard, getting games when they offered—they might be called the "Rub Along" Ramblers! They have pulled off 15 victories out of 17, and they are perfect gluttons for goals, piling up 108 this present season with 46 against. They possess a posh goalkeeper named O'Brien; Murphy, the goal scorer, and O'Brien make a good partnership. In one match, when things looked black, up came Murphy and scored five. This turned the tables—and they looked much better the other way up!

They stick to the old "Play the game!" slogan. They have won fourteen out of sixteen. (*Football Game*.)

Hard Up For Fixtures.

POPULAR ROVERS (Coventry) will go five miles for a game if the other team has got a ball. (Secretary's address: 12, Poplar Road, Earlsdon, Coventry.) When they first started they could not play at all, but they speedily set that right, and now win every match. For next season they hope to have a home pitch, a club-room, and jerseys. But the play's the thing. Their inside-right is a fair marvel, and it's a treat to see him run. Take a *Football Game*, Rovers!

Seventy-nine Goals.

BELFAST JUNIORS (Belfast) play the game in a manner worthy of their country. Their colours are light blue with dark green armlets and white knickers, and their forward line is irresistible. The centre-forward—Billy Hood—has bagged a total of seventy-nine goals. (*Football Game*.)

Better Times Coming.

HOPTON UNITED F.C. (Hopton) got together enough money to rent a ground and buy posts and jerseys, but as Fate would have it, they did not register any wins at the start. Afterwards they did better and won half their matches. Later, however, they came into a bad patch and had to sell their ground and posts. But they are manfully doing their best, despite all setbacks. (*Football Game*.)

Everyone a Trier.

HIGHGATE F.C. (Edinburgh) came into being thanks to a raffle instituted by Miss Drysdale, University Settlement. The team includes Charlie Vesco, outside-right, the thirteen-year-old wonder, a budding International. Dod Anderson, inside-right, feeds the diminutive right-winger and scores goals. Daddler Aitken, centre-forward, is leading goal-scorer, with eighteen to his credit. The lads have the keenest possible sense of sportmanship. (*Football Game*.)

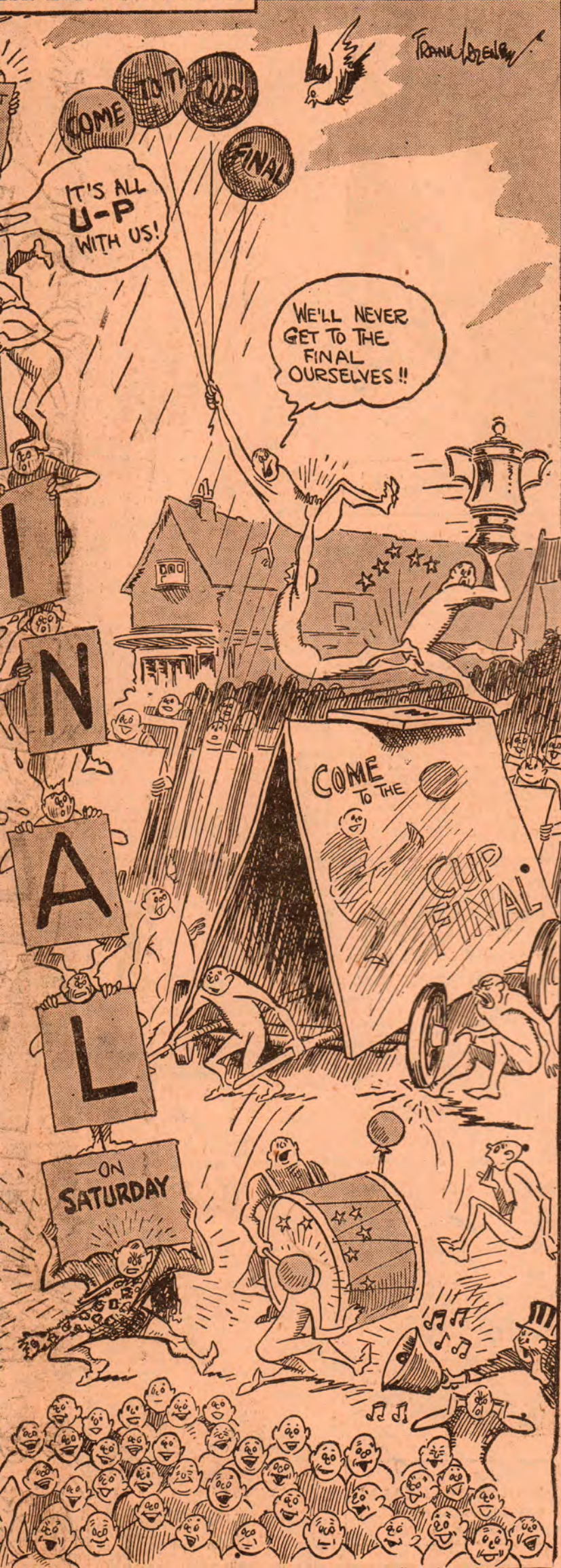
Big Scoring.

CRUSADERS F.C. (Reading) played friendly matches until the Reading Section of the REALM League came into existence. There was a bad patch for the Crusaders when they were beaten 13-1, but they wiped out that defeat with a win 20-0. They are real hard fighters, true to their historic name, and they can swallow disappointments, though it is as bad as biting on granite to find the team they had whacked dropped out of the League. Crusaders are on the look-out for a good goalkeeper. When they find him, they mean to give the club that whopped them by twelve a better game. (*Football Game*.)



GO BOYS

THE CUP FINAL!

NO -
BILLPOSTING

(Continued from previous page.)

treacherous director of the Albion. He was working in the big plot with Gregson. The florid publican had money and influence, and his cunning brain told him that he ought to get something out of him. If he kept the right side of Gregson he ought to be all right!

The publican was talking to a group of men in his saloon bar, but Tomlin's face evidently told him that something was wrong, for he quickly left the group and beckoned the footballer into his private room.

"What's the matter?" he demanded anxiously. "What's up?"

Tomlin told him, carefully suppressing the fact that he had been searching for a letter which might tell him when Marjorie Mainland was likely to come into the fortune to which no one suspected her of being heirless.

"That's nothing to worry about," said Gregson. "There'll be several vacancies in the Albion's team on Saturday after our little collision. You and your friend Huddleston will, of course, come in again, and I'll see that you're re-signed as a full-time pro."

"But suppose Chandler isn't hurt? That's what worries me. We may go and kill some chap who isn't in the way, and that lucky beggar get off without a scratch!"

"No one will get off without a scratch," said Gregson confidently. "The chap with the lorry knows what to do. The charabanc that is to carry the team to Wembley will

be a small sixteen-seater; my man's lorry is a five-tonner, and it will take the charabanc at speed. My man reckons that, even knowing what is coming, and being in the heavier vehicle, he'll get hurt; but he'll be well paid, and he knows if he didn't do what I wanted it would mean imprisonment and disgrace."

He chuckled cruelly. His hatred of Chick Chandler, his fury at having been defeated by such a youngster, had driven him almost mad in his desire for revenge, and he cared nothing of the consequences to other people so long as he achieved what he wanted.

"It seems to me that there's very apt to be a slip up," said Tomlin gloomily. He was in a pessimistic mood, and the other man's confidence rather jarred upon him.

"Nonsense! It's all perfectly clear. You've arranged to stay at the same hotel as the team, you give the driver of the charabanc the big rosette so that there can be no possible doubt about getting the right vehicle, you find out from him the route he is taking, and phone me at a pal's house in Wembley. The lorry will be waiting near, I give the driver his instructions, and—well, a few crocks and such reserve players as happen to be in town will fight for the Cup, and if it's the end of Chick Chandler, I sha'n't be sending flowers!"

At first Tomlin was shocked and scared at his callousness. Then he thought of how Chick had beaten him, how he had won Marjorie Mainland, and he felt he did not care what happened so long as Gregson's plot succeeded. He left Gregson, feeling in a rather more cheerful mood, and that afternoon and evening wandered idly round the town, which was in the throes of Cup-Final fever.

It was jarring to find Chick's name on everyone's lips, the whole town talking about him; but that was nothing to the jar that came the following morning when big Huddle-

stone, looking white and worried, turned up at his lodgings.

"It's Hobbs again!" he said in a troubled voice.

Fred Tomlin scowled.

"He won't get another penny out of me, Huddy! I've lost my job at the lawyers', and I'm nearly broke."

"Well, I got this letter from him this morning. It seems some pal of his in London wants to work him into some big job a gang have got coming on, and he wants to get to London, but he's broke. He reckons that he'd pass unnoticed in one of the crowded midnight football excursions. Let him have a couple of quid to pay his fare and have some cash in hand, and you'll be quit of him for good."

Tomlin was on the verge of refusing, for two pounds seemed a lot to him now, but he remembered that if Hobbs turned nasty he could make things unpleasant for him, perhaps get him detained by the police, and ruin the big plot against Chick Chandler and his plucky team the next day—a scheme, by the way, which he had dared not confide even to his bosom pal Huddleston.

"Very well," he said, producing a couple of pound notes; "but tell him this is the last money he'll get from me. You get down to the 'rabbit warren' with it, and look in here for me by two o'clock, and we'll go to the station together."

"All right," said Huddleston. "I tell you I sha'n't be sorry to be finished with Hobbs. I reckon I've taken a good deal of risk, and I don't relish going to see him. If the police are still watching the place they might want to know what I was doing there."

"Pooh, they've nothing against you, and they're not all crooks in that slum. You could easily say that you'd been to see a pal who was down on his luck. Besides, our police are too slow to catch anything but colds!"

The big left-winger who had lost his place in the team through trying

(Continued on the next page.)

ALL THE LEAGUE LATEST!

EVERYTHING BOOMING AT BOLTON!



The Boys' Realm Football League



Any reader interested in the League should write to the Football Editor (enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope), who will send him the fullest possible information by return of post. His address is: THE FOOTBALL EDITOR, THE BOYS' REALM, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4.

This week's CRICKET LEAGUE notes will be found on page 45!

Ebbw Vale Section.

The new Ebbw Vale Section is going strong. The secretary is Mr. T. H. King, 5, Greenfield Terrace, Ebbw Vale, Mon., who is very keen.

I am sorry that it was not possible to fall in with Mr. King's request to loan him a Championship Cup for exhibition. These cups are specially made for each winning club. All interested can get an excellent notion of what they are like from the photographs on the registration certificates. The E. V. Section has been received with much local enthusiasm. Monmouthshire is very keen, and the response has been even better than was anticipated.

Reading.

Things are humming with the Section in the Biscuit Metropolis. Kennet Alliance have had a star turn—not a game lost. They brought off a victory (1-0) against Thames United. The Kennet lads are very smart and they mean to win the Cup. B. W. I. minors are a long way down the table, and deserve more luck—they are all-round triers.

Whitley Hall are right at the wrong end of the table, but they have a good forward line, even if their defence is on the weak side. That can be set right; give them time.

Forty-ninth Reading have shown rare mettle in some ding-dong struggles, while Crusaders and West Reading Swifts carry on the good tale. There is not much to choose between these teams. It has been hammer-and-tongs work all the way.

Observers are on the watch as to what will happen when Kennet Alliance meets West End United. Both these teams can set a stiff pace.

Portadown.

Registration certificates have been sent to two new clubs, who have come on the roll of the Portadown Section. These are Shamrock Rovers and Glenare Juniors. Good luck to them! Portadown is making fine headway.

Bolton.

Blackburn Road United A.F.C. have joined the Bolton Section. Mr. Morridge tells me that his committee have just bought two sets of medals for a knock-out competition, one set for the seniors, the other for the juniors.

Bolton Section is going great guns and will consist of four divisions next season; that much may be taken for granted.

The latest League table shows Bridge-water Celtic right on top. Bridge-water boasts a real fighting forward line of the invincible sort. Farnworth K.S.R., Bolton Central, Kay Street Mission, and Gregson Albion come in a bunch; evidence of pretty level work. Green's Eleven wants more luck and more ginger in defence.

Hope Hey United has nothing of which to be ashamed. Harper Green are looking out for a slice more luck.

Section "A" shows Bolton Central Reserves performing prodigies, with Haulgh United, Victoria Hall B.F., Victory Amateurs, and Halliwell Celtic all going strong. Victory Amateurs can boast of the possession of a corking forward line.

New Bury Celtic, Peel Rovers, and Westgate Rangers want better luck, and should get it. In successive games early in their programme these teams have shown admirable team spirit and real good shooting.

Nevison Street Athletic.

Bolton will have a useful recruit in this club. Nevison Street Athletic has a record of 16 wins in 19 games, with a goal average of 97 for and 25 against. They have a right back able to hold his own against long odds. All the same, they have not been as happy as they might, for their left-half was an absentee on one occasion. Then the centre-forward injured his knee and entered the passenger class.

Bolton Again!

Mr. Morridge tells me that the president has bought a silver cup and handed it over to the League. This is the Junior Championship Cup. The champion clubs of the two junior Leagues will play off for this trophy at the end of the season. All gate money goes to swell League funds.

Showers of Applications.

Bolton has been snowed under with applications from clubs who wish to join the League next season.

Only a Few More Weeks.

With the season running out one might look for a certain falling off in interest, but this is not the case. The last few weeks before the ringing down of the football

curtain is charged with more excitement than ever.

It is just now that one gets light thrown on a good many puzzles regarding form. In the final rush matters get cleared up. There are some brisk three-cornered fights, and a terrific pace is being set amongst the clubs heading some section tables.

Clubs which had lost hope thanks to real hard, bitter luck in the early stages, have rallied in the most amazing style. That's the way to wind up the season!

Table Turning.

Pleased to see some good pick-ups. Clubs which have been carrying the table have jolted themselves back to somewhere near the top. Some teams with prospects which were chilly in the extreme have played themselves into firm positions, which leaves something cheery to think over in the off months.

Dublin Section.

Reports of the Section's games are reported weekly in a Dublin sports paper, and everything is going well. Meathville has been doing big things. This club has even done better than the experts anticipated, and is right on top. Though some way behind, Alton R. have kept their pecker up and afforded some exhilarating displays. Ardilaun, St. Audeon's, and Richmond have one and all proved themselves good stickers.

Walsall.

A new club has been enrolled; this is Heath Hayes St. John's B.C.F.C.

The Walsall League table shows Pelsall Old Town still on top, but this position is being keenly disputed. Victoria Rovers still hold an unbeaten record, but Pelsall Amateurs are hard on their heels.

In the battle for promotion in Division "B" Pelsall Juniors and Leamore Juniors stand well. Lane Head wants more luck.

Some of the clubs are still a little behind with fixtures due to flu.

Lewisham.

The selection committee has been fixed up for the inter-Section match with Bexley Heath. This will consist of the League secretary and representatives from Catford and Brockley.

The two Catford clubs have challenged the Brockley half of the Lewisham Section to a match on April 23rd.

League positions show Glen on top, with the Nines a good second. Bellingham, Hildaine, and Myrtle are not doing so badly. There have been some admirable performances here, despite sundry adverse circumstances.

Glen has a fairly long start, but there are those who watch the doings of the Nines with much expectancy.

PRIZES FOR CRICKET PARS!

With the coming of the Cricket season, the "Prize Footer Pars" feature will be replaced by "Prize Bats and Balls." Paragraphs concerning cricket clubs are now invited, and they will be judged in just the same way as the football entries on the opposite page. Paragraphs and letters should be addressed to: "Prize Bats and Balls," THE BOYS' REALM, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4.

to let Chick and his colleagues down, grinned, explained that he would go on to his lodgings, have a hasty lunch, and pick up his bag and set off.

Outside, a motor-cyclist was fussing round his engine. He allowed Huddleston to get nearly to the end of the street, and then got going, to peter out again as the footballer set off along another long street, but he got going in time to see him set off along the road leading to the slum that was so popular with Oldford's criminal population. Then he rode ahead, apparently got lost, for he asked a loafer some questions; the loafer spent some time in giving him the right direction, and the motor-cyclist set off at a good speed.

Strangely enough the loafer followed Huddleston!

The burly footballer, quite unconscious of the interest he was arousing, of the net closing in upon him, knocked three times at the door of a dirty little house, and Hobbs opened it. There was relief upon his bearded face.

"What's he coughed up? A tenner?"

"No, nor a fiver," replied Huddleston, closing the door as he entered the dirty, narrow passage. "He's lost his job, Hobbs, and is pretty nearly broke. He's sent me with a couple of quid and it's the last you'll get out of him."

The crook's face darkened.

"Here, don't you two think you're going to throw me over like that? I know too much for that, my boy!"

"I tell you he hasn't got the money and I'm broke to the wide. I haven't had a winner for a week. You can't get blood out of a stone!"

Hobbs raved, he threatened wildly, he said he wished he had never seen Tomlin, and declared that he would get his own back on him. What right had he to lose his job when he'd got responsibilities?

"What's the use of two quid to me in—"

"Was that someone upstairs whistling?" asked Huddleston abruptly.

"Whistling?" Hobbs was alert; he turned towards the stairs.

The next instant the door burst open, and the loafer whom the motor-cyclist had been talking to, had Hobbs' arms behind him, something clicked, and the crook was kicking wildly!

"Don't be a naughty boy," said the loafer calmly. "We shall want you at the station, too, Huddleston."

Police helmets bobbed up in the doorway. Burly Huddleston, a most ghastly coward at heart, collapsed to the floor.

Fred Tomlin waited until ten past two, and then set off for the railway station.

"Huddy's made a mess of things, somehow!" he growled to himself.

But he had no idea how big a mess it was.

Off to Wembley.

OLDFORD CENTRAL had been the scene of a good deal of football excitement lately, and while the majority of people, confident that the Cup would come North, were saving themselves for the team's return, there was quite an animated scene on their departure for London to take part in the great match at the Stadium on the following day.

A contingent of the Push Gang, in the charge of Sam Snodger and his chum Bones, were travelling by the express that conveyed the team, and many more would travel by the excursion trains at night. The Push Gang's cheers echoed round the station, and there was Inspector Chandler, off duty now, his face flushed with pride, sitting with his wife and pretty Marjorie Mainland. Chick was coolly chatting to newspaper representatives on the platform outside the reserved saloon, while Sam and Bones were giving a suspicious guard a glowing testimonial of the character of Buster—the big white goat, and mascot of the Gang—without whom Bones was quite convinced the Cup would not come to Oldford.

"Absolutely bright and breezy," said Bones.

"Yes," agreed the guard, with an unfriendly glance at the venerable one. "He looks as though he might be a sight too bright and breezy. I've heard of this goat before, and the only condition on which I'll take him in my van is that the pair of you stop with him to look after him."

"I knew there'd be trouble with that giddy goat!" cried Sam fiercely.



CHICK'S WINNING GOAL!

Chick was ready. As the ball rebounded from the crossbar he dashed past the Cleesby defender, and got his head to the flying leather. With a jerk, he sent it hurtling back again—into the net!

"I'm not going to miss the fun of the journey with all the chaps to look after that thing, so don't you think it. Send Buster home with someone."

"Send Buster home!" gasped the horrified Bones. "We shouldn't deserve any luck at Wembley. Besides, we've paid his fare."

The two friends argued hotly, the venerable one listened with mild interest. In the end the guard compromised by agreeing to take the goat if the tall, thin youth, who was so devoted to him, stopped on guard, and Buster, shoved in the rear by Sam, was persuaded to enter the van and be chained to a ring.

Chick, escaping from newspaper men and a crowd of admirers, took a bundle of papers to the carriage containing his parents and pretty Marjorie, and then hurried back to the saloon.

Darkey Green, now completely recovered from his shock on the cliffs at Cleesby, was looking in the pink of condition. In fact, the whole team had lost that staleness that had been so apparent in Easter Monday's match—the match that had placed them among the aristocrats of the great game, and made them the most talked-of club in the country.

It was Chick who, for the first time in his young life, was feeling nervous. It would be such a splendid thing if they could win the Cup and establish a great record, and now, on the eve of the match, he was getting a little over-anxious. As the train rushed South he went along the corridor, sought out Marjorie, and took her along to the dining-saloon.

"Tell you what it is, little girl," he said. "I'm doing what I've told umpteen chaps not to do—getting jumpy."

"Oh, you're bound to be a bit nervy after the big strain you've had, Chick," said his pretty companion cheerfully. "But you'll be cool enough on the ground, because you'll know that the Albion won't stand an earthly unless you are."

Chick laughed. "That's very flattering, and I hope you're right. I say, I wish I could have got you in at our hotel, but I hope you'll be comfortable where you're fixed. I can see my mother has taken to you."

"She's a dear!" said Marjorie. "I'm going to do some shopping with her in the morning, and your father is going to look up a railway friend of his, so I sha'n't be seeing you until after the match, and then, I hope, you'll be carrying the Cup."

"Jove, I hope I am!" cried Chick Chandler, his face lighting up.

The long train glided into Euston Station, the team set off for a big hotel off Holborn. Marjorie and Chick's parents made for a smaller hotel in the Strand, and the members of the Push Gang made for their various destinations. Sam Snodger and Bones, with Buster in their care, changed into a local train for Willesden.

Bones had an aunt living in that suburb, so close to Wembley that it would only mean a short walk with the goat to the ground in the morning. She made the youngsters welcome, and Buster was tied to a stake on a patch of grass that was called by courtesy the lawn.

Having sampled the grass, and found it to his taste, the venerable one made a good meal, and ruminated over things in general, but about eleven o'clock the residents in the quiet suburban road heard a plaintive cry:

Maaaaa! Maaaaaaa!

The venerable one was feeling lonely. A boot hurtling through the air only just missed his head, a cricket ball caught him a nasty whack on the ribs, windows were going up all round, but Buster braved the bombardment. He was telling the world

that he was lonely, and he was not going to be put off by a few unappreciative persons.

Sam Snodger, roused by the din, came out looking furious, and as he approached Buster—who was surrounded by a number of missiles—a coathanger, flung from an upper window of the house next door, caught him on the side of his head.

The venerable one appeared to chuckle, and then started to sample the London grass again.

Wanted by the Police!

FRED TOMLIN was talking to the driver of the smart green charabanc that stood outside the big hotel off Holborn.

"We want you to wear this," he said, producing a huge orange and black rosette. "Let 'em see you're driving the Albion."

RUNNING A CRICKET CLUB.—No. 3.



GETTING YOUR KIT!

This breezy article gives you many valuable hints about getting cricket gear cheaply.



How's the club going on? Not so bad? Right!

You've gathered in as much money as possible, and you've secured a ground. Now, before you can play any matches, or have any practice, you must have some kit.

We are well aware that funds are low, especially as you've had, perhaps, to pay a fairly hefty sum for the rent of a pitch, so kit must not cost you too much for a start.

Essential Kit.

Let's consider what you need. You can't have less than two bats; it stands to reason, that you must have a batsman at each end of the pitch equipped with a bat, doesn't it? Then you must have two sets of stumps, complete with balls, one ball will do for a time, and perhaps you can manage with one pair of pads, each batsman having one of the brace.

How much will that lot cost? Let's look up a few catalogues!

A ball—one made of composition; not, of course, a real leather one—would cost you anything from eighteenpence to about five shillings. The more you pay for the ball the longer it will last, and the harder wear it will stand.

Picking up Bargains.

Then as to stumps and balls. Drop round a few second-hand shops in your district and ask if they have any old cricket apparatus. It's six chances to one that, among the odds and ends, you'll find a set or two of stumps in quite good order. Don't be frightened to snap them up if you think they're fairly sound. Even if they look a trifle old and worn, a little varnish will make them as good as new.

Of course, some of you will be able to afford a new set: very good—lucky chaps! You should not pay too much for the double set, however; don't jump at those that look the smartest. Those are probably the worst for hard wear. Get a good plain set of elm or oak, the former for preference. And don't necessarily go

all out for those with metal top protectors. Those without are quite as good, and will certainly cost you less.

As to pads—well, take another trip to your second-hand dealer's shop: he should be able to satisfy your wants in that direction. Even though the pads themselves look old, providing they are not broken or torn in any way, and the straps and buckles are good, or not too worn to be repaired, they will suit your purpose. A little pipe-clay or "Blanco" will soon make those pads look as good as new.

If, on the other hand, you'd prefer to have a new set of pads, get them full size: that is, of course, if you are not all small lads. If the latter state of affairs exists, try a size or two under maximum.

Your Bats.

Well, that's ball, stumps, and pads: now there is left the most important of the whole of your kit—the bats.

It is here that you will find you must spend the most of all your apparatus, too, for everything depends upon having first-class bats. It's a pity that most of you will not be able to afford willows made especially for one of the big cricketers of the day—Frank Woolley, Quaife, Hobbs, etc.

However, make the best of a bad job and get the best bats that you can afford. Say, anything above half-a-guinea to be spent on each bat. If, of course, you can afford more, so much the better.

When selecting your bats, try a few: see how they feel. Swing 'em; see if they suit your wrists. Some types of bat may be too heavy for your members;

"This ought to let anyone see that," said the driver, with a grin, as he pinned the big rosette to his white linen dustcoat. Reckon they'll take me for a director."

"I suppose you'll strike a regular procession as you get near the Stadium?" said Tomlin, with well-feigned carelessness. "How do you go from here?"

"Oh, I go the direct route—Oxford Street, Edgware Road, and Harrow Road. Some chaps dodge about to avoid the traffic, but there's not much in it."

Tomlin stopped chatting. The driver took him to be an official of the team, and was quite ready to talk. Then the team began to come out.

"You can come along with us, if you like, Tomlin."

Chick had followed the team out. He made the good-natured offer.

Not for a fortune would young Tomlin have ridden in that charabanc!

"Thanks very much, sir," he said, "but I'm expecting Huddleston, and I'd better wait for him."

"As you like," said Chick. "Right away, then!"

He was seated next to the driver, and Miskin was beside him. Tomlin stared after the charabanc as it began to move away, a strange expression upon his face, then he turned abruptly and walked back into the hotel, wondering where Huddleston could have got to.

Tomlin made for a telephone-box in the hall of the hotel, and soon heard Gregson's voice.

"Just left," said Tomlin a little hoarsely. "Oxford Street, Edgware Road, and Harrow Road."

"Right!" said Gregson at the other end of the wire.

Tomlin left the telephone-box. A man was speaking to the hall-porter at the entrance, and as Tomlin crossed the vestibule he came up to him.

"Is your name Frederick Tomlin?"

"Yes."

"Well, I am a police-officer, and I want a few words with you, Mr. Tomlin."

Fred Tomlin paled. What was up? If there was trouble, he must bluff out of it. Anyway, he had taken the step that stopped the Albion winning the Cup.

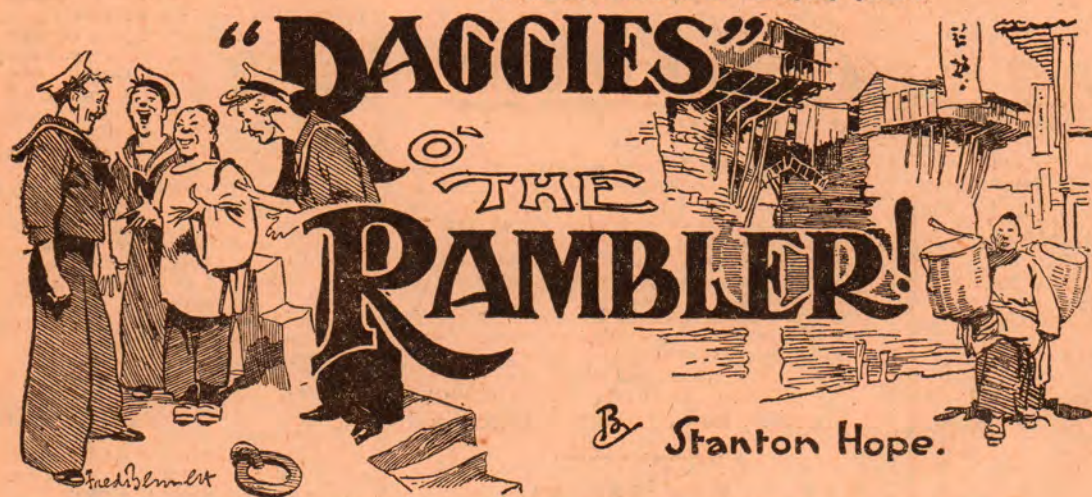
Only the survivors of a great team would get to Wembley that afternoon!

(Look out for the amazing concluding chapters of this grand story next Wednesday. And don't forget that a stunning new sporting serial begins in the REALM next week—"Lucky Jim!" It's a winner!)

All about
THE BOYS' REALM
CRICKET LEAGUE
on page 45.

SOMETHING LIKE
A THRILL!

The raggies pinch a train this week and take a joy-ride. But Wonky the pirate's got a train, too, and chases them! There's tons of thrills and fun in this jolly yarn!



A ROLICKING COMPLETE STORY OF FUN AND ADVENTURE IN CHINA!

The 1st Chapter.

The Kids of Kowpan!

"A WHOLE day's leave!" Merry "Shiner" Bright and his raggies, "Dusty" Rhodes and little Tich Bailey, stepped down the after gangway of H.M.S. Buzzfly, as though walking on air. If any faint regret marred their joy, it was that Woo Sam, the Chinese messboy, could not get off duty to accompany them. They had been temporarily transferred to the gunboat from the Rambler for special duty.

"Don't you young lubbers go too far!" warned Petty Officer Gurney from the head of the gangplank. "There's old Wong Kiang, the pirate, and his band of Chink ruffians somewhere in the country beyond the city. And you know what you can expect if you fall into their hands!"

"Ay, boiling oil!" rumbled Dusty. "We're unlucky blokes, petty officer, but I hope as we sha'n't be so unlucky as to get within reach of old Wonky's paws. Tootle-o!"

With their bell-bottomed trousers flapping, Shiner & Co. rolled along the Bund—or water-front—with the Leemoo Lake on their right hand and the Chinese city, sweltering in the sun, to their left. They had planned everything for their holiday in advance, and they came to anchor near the Temple of the One-Eyed Cat.

Near by, grazing in the shelter of some palms, was Corny the camel, mascot of the Buzzfly. Virtually he was the property of Shiner & Co., and he bared his great square yellow teeth in what might have been a grin as he set eyes on his young masters.

Corny was in a pleasant mood, and to show his affection he rubbed his great shaggy head against Dusty, pushing that luckless raggie backwards into a patch of prickly pears.

"Pack it up, you yellow freak!" hooted Dusty.

Laughing merrily, Shiner unhitched the line which moored Corny to one of the palms, and led him towards a thatched, barn-like building some distance from the temple.

It was in this building that the chums had put the fine new camel saddle they had made for their mascot, and, after giving a few cash coins to the old Chinaman who had minded it for them, they adjusted it on Corny's back.

It was a wooden saddle, painted red, and with room for three people. Corny seemed as pleased with it as the chums, and allowed them to clamber aboard.

"Good!" piped Tich. "Steer a course for the open country, Shiner matey! This is a jolly sight more comfy than riding bareback on his floppin' hump!"

"What about Wonky?" inquired Dusty, in a pessimistic tone.

"Hang Wonky!" piped Shiner cheerfully.

"Wish we could!" moaned Dusty. "It's about time he met a sticky end, after all the dirty games he's played!"

"Those pirates have pushed off to the marshes," remarked Tich confidently. "The country's as quiet as the mess-deck on a Sunday morning when the skipper's going his rounds. Let's keep on a westerly course; we're bound to bring up somewhere. Then Dusty can buy us a bit o' grub with the money he got from selling

This Week's Story:

SHINER'S
EXCURSION!

Bodger Lees and Horace Stoop his fan-tailed goldfish."

The market gardens and rice fields were left far behind, some miles of rough country were traversed, and at last a village hove into sight on the starboard bow.

"What-ho!" cried Shiner, bringing Corny's head round. "What-ho for a bowl of giddy old chop-suey for dinner!"

Corny loped along to the village, and the bluejackets dismounted.

"Tar me!" ejaculated Shiner. "Nobody seems to be at home! Place looks a bit knocked about, too, don't it, mates?"

"I don't like the look of it, mates," said Dusty, in a hollow voice. "Some of these dwellings have been destroyed, and not so long ago by the look of 'em. The place has been looted, too, and—and— Whiskery catfish! What's that?"

From amidst the dust and thatch of a destroyed building someone came creeping on all fours. Open-mouthed, the raggies watched as the figure came towards them, and breathed with relief when they saw it was a scared Chinaman.

The man was scarce recognisable as a human being at all. He was smothered from head to foot in brown dust, straw formed a nest on his head, and pieces of it dangled like uneven yellow bars before his face. Straw adhered to his robe as well, and, in spite of the heat, his teeth were chattering as he crept forward.

"Spike me! What's the matter, mate?" inquired Shiner. "Who's been pulling this village about?"

The Chinaman extended his yellow hands toward the water-bottle which Shiner wore on his hip, and the drink pulled him round somewhat.

"Village too muchee knocked about by bad Wong Kiang and fiends," he announced. "He muchee takee plissonner, but Tin Lung hide, and Wong no catchee!"

By questioning the Chink, who proved to be the local Chinese teacher of the mission school, the raggies found out what had happened. Wonky and his pirates had raided the village—which was named Kowpan—and had taken the villagers away as prisoners. They had also taken possession of the section of the Munchoo-Hoochow railway which ran near the village.

Tin Lung inquired if the young bluejackets were armed, and groaned with despair when they told him they were not. In quavering tones he admitted his fear that some of Wonky's pirates were still lurking in the abandoned village, having eaten too well of what they had stolen.

Hardly had he expressed his fear than a faint yell rose from somewhere near the centre of the village. That proved the last straw for Tin Lung's shattered nerves; quickly he discarded his long over-robe, and beat it for the blue.

"Queer kind of cove, mates," remarked Shiner. "Got the breeze up properly, he has. Still, there's certainly someone else here in the village, and I'm going to find out who it is!"

Dusty picked up the Chinaman's

robe and knocked the dust out of it. It was quite a decent garment, and of a blue colour, pleasing to the eye.

"You and Tich stay here!" grunted Dusty. "I'll creep forward wearing this robe, and if there are any of Wonky's pirates about, maybe they'll think I'm old Tin Lung, the schoolmaster."

Having tossed his round sailor's hat to Tich, Dusty muffled himself well in the robe.

"You see, I'll be the bait, mates," he added mournfully. "You two chaps keep me in sight, and if any pirates jump out, you can wade in and bag 'em!"

He paused, and added, with a gulp:

"And if anything happens to me, mates, write to mother back in Pompey, and tell her as Flossie can have the collection o' match-box lids I made on me last voyage."

Aping the shuffling walk of a Chinaman, Dusty ambled through the deserted village street. There was one fairly large building standing intact in the centre of the place, and from it came the sound of voices.

Having made sure that Shiner and Tich were following, Dusty crept up the two or three wooden steps, and found a door partly ajar confronting him.

There were folk inside this place, and Dusty was determined to see who they were. Gently he pushed the door a bit farther open, so that he might insert his head. Even as he did so a deluge of cold water descended on him, and something struck him a thud on the back of the neck.

"Ouch!"

Even before he had time to comprehend that a wooden bucket had been balanced on the top of the door and that he had fallen into the booby-trap, vigorous hands gripped Dusty by the robe and dragged him into the room.

He dashed the water out of his eyes, and gazed round about him, and was amazed to find himself in a mob of about thirty-five boisterous

Chinese kids. Some of them were armed with rattan canes, and, yelling excitedly, they began to whack the luckless Dusty over the head and shoulders.

"Crack, crack, crack!" "Ooch! Yow! Ooh-er!"

In the midst of the rumpus Shiner and Tich bounded through the door. The Chinese youngsters squealed in alarm; then, seeing that they were British tars, burst into joyous cries.

"Hi, you little yellow freaks!" cried Shiner. "What are you doing to our raggies?"

"We'll larn you to knock seven bells out of him!" piped Tich.

The Chink boys—who could all speak broken English, having been educated in the mission school—looked from Shiner and Tich to Dusty, squatting on the floor. The robe had fallen down from Dusty's head and had become torn open at the front, revealing a sailor's collar and part of a jumper.

"Ow!" exclaimed young Fan Mo, the ringleader of the school kids. "It is nicee Blitish saileeman. Heap solly. We tinkee you allee same our teacher Tin Lung, who makee do bunk."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Shiner. "See the joke, Dusty? They had it in for teacher, and when you bowled on the scene in your giddy robe they thought you were him!"

The joke also appealed to Tich immensely; but somehow Dusty failed to see it. He rose and wriggled his shoulders, which still smarted under the lusty thwacks of the rattan canes.

"Spiteful varmints!" he muttered. "No wonder old Wonky and his gang left the beastly little wasps alone!"

Suddenly one of the youngest kids, a moon-faced child of the name of Shoo Ti, set up a wild howling.

"Here, what's the matter with you?" demanded Shiner.

The rest of the kids took up the chorus, and the mission school was filled with their wailing. They had remembered again their hard lot—that their mothers and fathers had been dragged off by the pirate horde, and they did not know from where they were going to get their next bowl of rice.

The 2nd Chapter.

All Aboard for Hoochow!

"LOOK here, 'Arf-a-Mo," said Shiner to the ringleader of the kids, "you tell Shoo Ti and the rest of the howlin' mob as their kind uncles, Shi Na, Dus Ti, and Ti Chi, will take 'em for a nice walkee-palkee to Hoochow, but only if they turn off the giddy tap and behave themselves."

This Fan Mo interpreted to the rest of the school-children, and the little Chinks mopped their slant eyes on their sleeves. They were all willing and eager to go with the tars to Hoochow, especially as it was pointed out to them that a landing party of bluejackets would be certain to be sent on the track of the pirates. Then their fathers and mothers would be restored to them.

Before leaving the mission school, Shiner got them into file and told them it would be easier if they marched properly into Hoochow. Then he and his raggies led them

out into the dusty village street, singing the refrain of "The animals came out two by two, they all came out of the Ark."

Some of the smallest, including young Shut Eye, were hoisted on to Corny's red saddle, much to their delight; Tich clambered up and took charge of them.

All the others, with Shiner at their head, and Dusty bringing up the rear, ambled through the village, far enough behind the camel not to get the dust from his big splay feet.

"Shiner!" suddenly cried Tich from the back of the camel. "There's the railway right ahead, and some sort of a station!"

"Crumbs! Can you see anyone about, Tich—any of Wonky's pirates?"

"Not a soul on the horizon, Shiner," replied Tich. "And—spike me!—there looks like an empty train in the siding. If only there's a Chink engine-driver about we might get a lift for the whole bunch of kids into Hoochow."

"Wish we could!" breathed Shiner fervently. "I don't wonder at old Tin Lung doing a guy! However, mate, we'll risk the railway. Quick march for the station!" ordered Shiner.

In a few minutes the station was reached, and the Chinese school-children all trooped on to the platform, whistling Corny to follow them.

Meanwhile, Shiner & Co. inspected the one train in the siding, which seemed in good order. The carriages looked as though they had been built at the time of the Ark; but the mechanism of the engine seemed all right, and there was a good pile of coal and wood in the tender.

"All we want now is an engine-driver," remarked Dusty. "But there isn't one, so we're no better off than we were before."

Shiner gave him a dig in the ribs.

"Leave it to Uncle Shiner!" he cried. "My Uncle Ben, who was a driver on the Southern, hasn't given me rides for nothing. If you chaps'll help me to get water in the boiler, and a good fire going in the furnace, I'll take the merry old half-day excursion into Hoochow."

"Good for you, Shiner!" piped Tich.

"Now, stand by and watch your uncles pump water in the boiler," Shiner said to the kids. "You'll learn summat, too."

There was a thick hose from the top of the pump, and Dusty swung this into a hole at the top of the engine, while Tich helped him. Meanwhile, Shiner worked the old-fashioned handle of the contrivance. At once the water came through the hose with a sudden rush, and the hose squirmed out of the boiler like a great writhing serpent.

Swoosh!

The powerful stream caught Tich full on the chest and knocked him head over heels off the engine.

Tich shook the water from himself, and, trying to look dignified, strode past the grinning Chink children and rejoined Dusty on the engine. Without further difficulty they succeeded in filling the boiler, and next they turned their attention to the furnace.

With the aid of some wood and coal liberally splashed with oil they

(Continued on the next page.)



A CANING FOR DUSTY!

Crack! Crack! Crack! No sooner had Dusty, in his Chinese costume, entered the room than a mob of yelling Chinese youngsters piled down on him and got busy with their canes. "Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Shiner, who stood in the doorway with Tich. "See the joke, Dusty? They're mistaking you for their schoolmaster!"

managed to get a fire drawing well. While the three of them were stoking like niggers the Chinese children gathered round the cab, encouraging them to more mighty efforts.

"Phew! Whooh!" puffed Dusty. "I don't think I ever liked a bunch of kids less in me life! And to think we're doing all this hard work for their sake!"

"Cheer up, old pal!" piped Shiner. "I think the water's just about on the boil. I'll open the throttle a bit and see. Stand clear below there, y' little varmint!"

He opened the throttle a bit, but nothing happened; the train neither moved forward nor did a puff of smoke come from the funnel.

"Take that iron rake and climb for'ard, Dusty!" ordered Shiner. "Summat must be blocking up the smoke-stack. Go and have a look—see what it is."

Dusty made his way forward along the engine, climbed to the warm boiler, and peered down the funnel, while the kids below watched him with interest.

"I can't see nothing down here, mate!" he shouted back to Shiner.

So Shiner jerked the throttle well over. The result was immediate!

Choooh!

A blast of smoke and soot shot up from the funnel as out of a young volcano—full into Dusty's face. His hat went sailing aloft, and only by grabbing on with one hand to the funnel-rim did he save himself from falling overboard.

"Ow! Glub-glub! You did that a-purpose!"

Led by Fan Mo, the Chinese children doubled up and roared with mirth.

Never before had Shiner and Tich seen Dusty in such a nasty mood. When they helped him off the engine to the ground, he wanted to knock seven bells out of both of them, in spite of the fact that he could not see out of either eye for soot.

Young Fan Mo collected three heavy sticks and offered one to each of the chums so that they could "make plenty big slap-bang fight!" Only Tich, however, availed himself of the offer, and with his stick he chased the little Chink rascals into the train. By then Shiner had succeeded in getting all the soot out of Dusty's eyes.

After some argument it was decided that Tich should be fireman, and Dusty, guard. Shiner was about to swing into the cab when a thought suddenly struck him.

"What about Corny?" he asked. "You take him in the guard's van with you, Dusty," suggested Shiner.

Dusty thought that Corny would be better up in the cab with Shiner and Tich, but the other two got their way. After a great deal of difficulty they pushed Corny into the guard's van. Dusty blankly refused to go with him, however, and said he would ride on the engine with his pals, though he was too hot to do any work with the fire shovel.

They started off again; Tich, in singlet and trousers, wielded the fire-shovel like a Trojan, ably helped by Dusty's advice.

Now and again, Dusty varied his activities by sticking his head out of the cab to yell at the Chinese school-children, some of whom were trying to touch the telegraph poles as they went by.

Soon the train was chugging its way through a narrow pass between two ranges of hills.

Suddenly, as they rounded a bend, the chums saw that there was a switch line, and on it was another train with armed men on the foot-boards!

"Great pip, what shall we do?" cried Tich. "There's some of Wonky's pirates!"

"Go full steam ahead, matey!" answered Shiner grimly. "There's nothing for it now but to try and get past. The points are set all right and we can go through on the other line."

He opened the throttle full out, unheeding the yells from the pirates on the other train. As Shiner's excursion passed, the raggies saw that the stationary train was laden with captives—prisoners from the village of Kowpan, as was speedily made manifest by the wild greetings of the kids to their luckless parents.

And on the engine of the switched train was Wong Kiang, the pirate leader, himself.

The 3rd Chapter. Chased by the Pirates!

HARDLY had Shiner's train gone rumbling by at about fifteen miles an hour, than Wonky blew two shrieks on the whistle and started in pursuit. He had brought the captives from

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the village of Kowpan to this spot in the pass, and was just about to make them detain and march to his camp in the hills. The sight of those three young bluejackets, however—who on many former occasions had outwitted him and caused the capture of many of his own men—was like a red rag to a bull.

He started his train so suddenly that his pirate guards had only just time to scramble back into the compartments among the unlucky prisoners.

For a mile or two, Shiner held the lead; then Wonky's train began to catch up on the other line.

In the cab, Dusty peered back with gloomy face.

"Stoke up! Stoke up, Tich!" he yelled. "Spike me, old Wonky's overhauling us!"

"Here, come and do a bit yourself!" puffed Tich.

Both shovelled coal into the furnace for all they were worth, while Shiner looked out ahead to see if the line was clear. Even if it were, there could be but one end to this grim race, unless the "excursion" could get up more speed.

A pile of coal and wood collapsed forward from the top of the tender, and Dusty drove his shovel into it. As he did so, something that felt like the hind hoof of a mule, shot out and caught him in the belt, sending him staggering back against the furnace.

"Wow!" whooped Dusty.

He leaped forward with the back of his bell-bottomed trousers ablaze, and as he fell forward on the coal, a blackened fist shot out of it and caught him a hefty thump on the nose.

"Woops!"

Then—smack! Tich brought the shovel with a hearty thwack across the region of the fire on Dusty's trousers, and the luckless raggie shot head-first among the coal.

Tich's blow had the effect of putting out the small fire, but Dusty was too hurt to feel grateful. Moreover, he felt himself grasped by a

pair of black arms and suddenly involved in a wild wrestle among the coal and wood in the tender.

"Great whelks! Dusty's noddled a pirate!"

Shiner's exclamation was made as the doleful raggie, black all over, dragged an equally black Chinaman to his feet.

"No!" hooted Tich. "It's old Tin Lung!"

It was indeed the village school-master, who had taken refuge among the coal of the tender and had remained doggo until a small avalanche of coal had brought him down at the raggies' feet.

"Me heap sorry!" he cried. "No lun away from nicee sailee-boy anymore. Me t'inkiee Wong Kiang wantee chop off Tin Lung's useful and honourable head."

The excursion swung round a bend, and for the first time Tin Lung saw

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the pursuing train. It had long since cleared the siding on which it had been switched, and was now running on the same lines as the raggies' train.

"See the giddy old Puffin' Billy behind, matey?" demanded Shiner. "Well, Wonky and his pirates are aboard that. And if they noddle us, you can say tootle-oo to your cheery old figurehead right away."

Tin Lung gave a yelp of fear, and would have fallen back on the coal again save that Dusty grabbed him. Tich promptly pushed a fire-shovel into the Chin's hands.

"Stoke that furnace for your life, matey," urged the Little 'Un. "Both me and Dusty have got bellows to mend, and it's up to you to keep the home fires burning, so to speak. If you can't get another couple of knots out of this giddy old half-day excursion, we shall find ourselves coupled to Wonky's special afore long."

Egged on by the most doleful forebodings from the raggies—especially Dusty—Tin Lung shovelled coal with the same magnificent energy that he employed when wielding the rattan cane on young Fan Mo & Co. Even so, he could not get the extra two knots out of the ancient engine, and the raggies braced themselves for a sickening bump from the other train behind.

"D'you think Wonky will dare to do it?" inquired Tich anxiously.

"O' course he will!" moaned Dusty. "You know what a reckless bloke he is. He'll smash us even if he smashes himself in doing it. I believe," he added sadly, "as a railway accident is allus worse than a shipwreck. Stand by to abandon ship—I mean, jump clear o' the train."

"Not yet!" cried Shiner excitedly, as he peered forward. "There's a double line ahead, and some blokes near a signal-box."

At a good speed, Shiner's half-day excursion rattled and bumped over the points and raced towards the signal-box. The raggies caught a

glimpse of half a dozen bluejackets, who looked like an advance guard, in the shade on the far side. Petty Officer Gurney, who was in charge, was talking to the Chinese signalman.

"Hi!" bellowed Shiner from the cab, as the engine rattled past. "Switch those points over!"

In utter amazement Gurney leaped out from the shade of the signal-box and saw the pursuing train rushing up. In a flash he saw that there was likely to be a collision if the second train followed on the same line as the first.

With gratifying speed he shoved the Chinese signalman into the box and yelled to him to pull the switch lever. The startled Chink did so, and, instead of following on the same line as the excursion, Wonky's train swung over on the other track.

What it was all about, Gurney had not the foggiest notion. He had caught one glimpse of the coal-blackened, sweat-soaked raggies, and had heard Shiner's frantic shout. But even after the pirate express had passed, he was unaware that Wong Kiang, whom he was actually hunting, was the engine-driver.

In the cab of the excursion engine, Shiner & Co. rejoiced exceedingly that the immediate danger of a bump from Wonky's express was averted. Their satisfaction became less as the pursuing train came racing up on the double stretch of line until the engine was level with the carriages in which the Chinese school children were riding.

"Aho! there!" bellowed Shiner, leaning out of the cab. "Take your figurehead in, young 'Arf-a-Mo—and the rest of you, too! Duck your tuppennies under the seats!"

Two or three shots suddenly rang out from the pirate train. These had an immediate effect on the school kids, who hastily withdrew and scrambled desperately among themselves to get under the seats, as Shiner had advised.

Foot by foot, Wonky's train drew level with Shiner's excursion, until the two engines were rattling along side by side. The pirate chieftain shut off steam a little to keep level, and looked out of his cab along the barrel of a hefty-looking pistol.

"Make put hands up quick!" he ordered the tars, a grin on his yellow face. "You allee same chuckee up sponge?"

"No, matey," grinned Shiner in response; "we allee same chuckee piece coal!"

As he spoke, he let fly with a small chunk which caught Wonky full on the nose and knocked him headlong backwards on the steel floor of the engine cab.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Dusty and Tich. "Pelt 'em!"

Yelling to Tin Lung to keep stoking up the fire, Shiner & Co. bombarded Wonky and his fireman with knobby pieces of coal.

Smack! Crack! Smack!

The pirates yelled with the pain of the blows, and in a desperate attempt to avoid the bombardment, Wonky shut off steam to allow his train to drop behind.

Crack!

A chunk of wood aimed by Tich bowled over the notorious rogue for the second time.

"Bullseye, Tich!" cried Shiner. "Cigar or nuts?"

Leaning out of the cab, he watched the other train drop astern. Wonky was leaning out of the other engine and, having lost his pistol overboard, was shaking his fist vigorously.

Suddenly he seemed to make up his mind to a desperate course, and crouched for a spring. Directly the guard's van of Shiner's excursion came level with him, he leaped from the cab, clutched a steel rail which ran down vertically on the van's side, and swung himself through the small window.

"Spike me!" ejaculated Shiner. "Wonky's come aboard us!"

He started to clamber over the tender.

The 4th Chapter. Corny Does His Bit!

SHINER reached the first coach. Shinning to the roof of it, he ran swiftly along the swaying carriages of the train back toward the guard's van.

He was almost jolted from his perch as the train ran over another set of points. The double line had ended, and the track was single again. He paused and watched the other train, which had dropped well astern; he saw it come swinging inwards over the points and on to the single line also.

(Continued on next page.)

Approaching the van, Shiner paused on the swaying roof of a carriage to listen. Above the roar of the train came the sounds of violent thumping, as though a scrap were going on.

"Tar me!" muttered Shiner. "I was a chump not to have brought a lump o' wood along with me!" For all that, unarmed though he was, he leaped across on to the guard's van and shinned down the rail to the open window into which Wonky had climbed.

Meanwhile, Wonky had not been idle. When he had successfully made that leap from his engine and climbed into the guard's van of Shiner's train, he had got his subsequent actions figured out to a nicety.

Although he had lost his pistol, he had an array of deadly weapons at his belt, and his idea was to kill the guard first—whichever he might be—and then clamber forward on the train and deal with the driver and fireman.

Directly he alighted in the comparative gloom of the guard's van, he bounced up and drew one of the knives from his array of cutlery. Instead of a guard, he saw an ungainly nightmare which half filled the van—a thing with great square, yellow teeth, serpentine neck, flopping hump, splay feet, and brush-like tail.

"Yoo-h—wow!" shrieked Wonky.

Dropping his knife, he turned to clamber out of the guard's van again, when the big square teeth of the Buzzfly mascot fastened themselves upon the slack of his baggy blue trousers. The pirate chief whooped for mercy; but Corny, already put out about these new jolting quarters of his, had been waiting for someone to come along to make his protests. With a curious twist of his sinewy neck, he slung Wonky across the box-like compartment.

Thereafter followed a few exciting minutes—Wonky dodging about in the confined space of the van, with Corny slowly ambling round in circles after him. How the pirate escaped annihilation from those snapping yellow teeth and kicking splay feet was a miracle.

Crash! Bang! Two hefty blows from Corny's hind legs loosened the back of the ancient guard's van.

Thud! Another hefty blow, which missed Wonky by inches, knocked a strip of wood clean out of its place.

Only by the most amazing agility did Wonky avoid any serious harm. Incidentally, Corny got so dizzy twisting his neck round looking for him, that at last he could do nothing but blink and squeal.

A gloating grin spread over Wonky's evil face, and he tugged out a big, flat-bladed dagger from his armory. The camel should die!

Even as he flung up his arm to drive home a blow, the window of the guard's van was darkened. Next moment an athletic youngster, who looked rather more like a sweep than a bluejacket of the Royal Navy, swung inside.

Wonky, whose eyes had become accustomed to the comparative gloom of the van, recognised the leader of the famous raggies in spite of the coal dust. It was Shiner Bright, the boy who was responsible for the capture of so many of his own men—the boy he had vowed to kill!

Instead of striking at Corny, Wong Kiang gave a fiendish laugh of triumph and leaped at Shiner. So swift was the pirate's attack that Shiner was still on hands and knees, as he had fallen when he had dropped inside the van. He saw the silvery flash of the pirate's knife as Wonky hurled himself forward, and he did the only thing possible—rolled swiftly over on the floor. The dagger missed him by a fraction of an inch, and the point struck deeply into one of the floor boards.

Wonky tried to withdraw it; but, failing at the first attempt, left it quivering in the floor.

In a flash, he whipped another wicked-looking blade from his belt, and again launched himself at his intended victim. Up came Shiner from the floor with the resilience of a rubber ball; and, ducking under the knife, he crashed home a snorting left to Wonky's nose.

"What price the Navy! Take that, you old crocodile—and that!"

"That" and "that" were respectively two snorting hooks to the ribs. As Wonky staggered, gasping with pain, Shiner could see through the broken back of the guard's van—the pirate train coming up fast astern.

A cold chill ran down his spine at the sight. Did Wonky's pirate, who had taken charge of the throttle,

intend to bring about a smash? If so, it was good-bye to himself and Wonky and the camel in the guard's van!

Crack! Crack! Corny's hoofs thudded tremendously against the wooden back of the van, and already loosened, it went hurtling out on to the line, leaving a big square open space.

"Tar me!" ejaculated Shiner.

"You've done it now, Corny!"

Wonky, leaning against one of the three remaining walls of the van, was gazing wide-eyed through that opening in the back. The woodwork kicked out by Corny had fallen right across one of the metals, and the other train was steaming full into it!

Evidently the pirate in the cab saw the obstruction, but he was unable to pull up in time. The small bogey-wheels of the pursuing engine smashed the obstruction to splinters, but, at the same time, jolted so violently that they were flung off the metals. For nearly a hundred yards, the engine of the other train ploughed along the sleepers parallel with the rails, and then came to a coughing standstill.

"Phew!" breathed Shiner. "Safe from that quarter, at any rate!"

A savage howl from Wonky brought Shiner sharply back to the yellow peril that was with him in the damaged guard's van.

The pirate chieftain leaped away from the wooden wall so that Shiner should be between himself and the open back of the van. His slant-eyes glowed red with hatred as, dodging a snapping bite from Corny, he flung himself at the boy he hated.

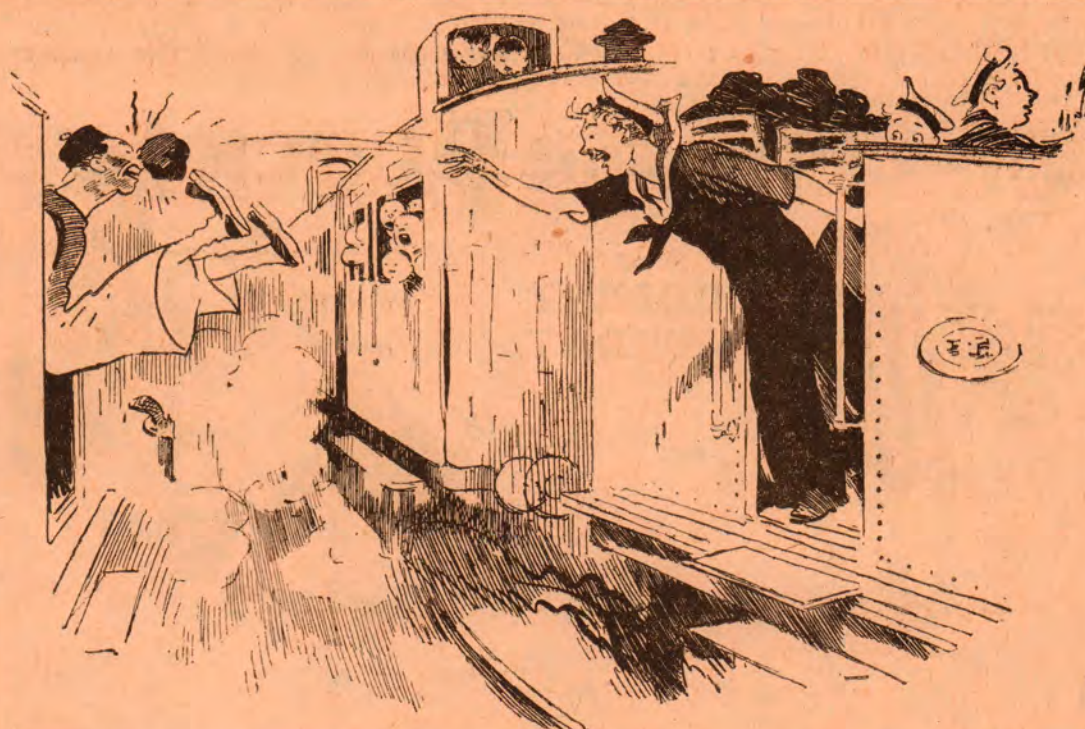
Shiner side-stepped with a speed which caused Wonky to half turn in bewilderment. Promptly the nippy bluejacket connected with a lightning left an inch above the belt. The blow brought Wonky's head forward as though jerked by an invisible string and—Crack! Shiner's right knuckles connected with his chin in a ripping uppercut.

Lifted completely off his feet, Wonky hurtled backwards. He struck against Corny's rough flank, bounded back off him and, spinning round, dropped in a heap.

Corny bared his great teeth and emitted a curious squeal; but, as he made a swift movement as though he would chew a piece out of the unconscious pirate, Shiner quickly yanked the captive aside.

"Behave yourself, old boy!" he admonished Corny. "Wonky's bagged at last! Spike me, I want to get him to Hoochow all in one piece!"

He rapidly cut the cord from two



SHINER SCORES A HIT! As the trains drew level, Wonky leant out of his cab, a hefty pistol in his hand—but Shiner was ready! He let fly with a chunk of coal, which caught the pirate full on the nose, and sent him headlong backwards into the engine!

or three old mail-bags with his jack-knife, and bound the pirate chieftain hand and foot. Hardly had he done so when the train came gradually to a halt.

Leaping out of the back of the guard's van, Shiner hurried forward to his chums in the engine.

"What have you stopped for, mates?" he loudly demanded.

"Water's gone off the boil, I think," returned Dusty. "Summat's gone wrong with the works somewhere."

"Well, we must get her going again!" cried Shiner. "I've captured Wonky, me hearties, and we've got to get him to Hoochow with all speed!"

Hardly had he spoken when Tich uttered a yell and pointed excitedly down the track. Coming round a near-by bend in the railway from the direction of Hoochow was a large landing party from H.M.S. Buzzfly with Commander Dill himself at their head!

The Buzzfly had learned of the raid by Wonky's pirates on the village of Kowpan and their capture

of the railway. Commander Dill himself had come ashore at the head of his men to make another desperate attempt to bag the elusive scoundrel who was terrifying the country. And the skipper and the landing party were amazed beyond words when Shiner dashed down the track toward them and announced that Wonky was already a captive!

There was much work, however, for the Navy to do. Commander Dill detailed certain of his party to get the half-day excursion moving again, and Wong Kiang, the school-master Tin Lung, Fan Mo, and the other kids, and Corny the camel were taken to Hoochow.

Shiner & Co., to their great delight, were allowed to join the naval contingent, black and dishevelled though they were. The pirates had abandoned the other train, and two or three other blue-jackets were detailed to take the refugees from Kowpan to Hoochow to rejoin their children.

Meantime, the advance guard, consisting of Petty Officer Gurney and six gallant tars, bagged all the

pirates who had made their escape from the derailed train. A hard march of the whole contingent and half an hour's snappy fighting resulted in the capture of all the others of Wonky's gang in their new stronghold in the hills.

Later came the great day when the commander-in-chief of the China Station himself came aboard the gunboat, and Shiner, Dusty, and Tich stood out before the whole ship's company.

To the breast of each of them was pinned a bright new medal, "for their gallant and invaluable services in action against pirates," as the admiral himself expressed it.

In the first dog-watch, Commander Dill assembled the whole ship's company again, and told them that the Buzzfly would shortly leave the China Station and sail for home.

The whole of the Canton waterfront reverberated with cheers from the excited bluejackets.

Commander Dill held up his hand for silence. The captain did not make a long speech, but what he said was to the point and went straight to the hearts of the assembled company.

He specially picked out Shiner & Co. for a few words of praise.

"You need no telling," he said, "what Boy Bright and his comrades have done for us. They had a real share in the capture of Wong Kiang, the pirate. And on several other occasions they have distinguished themselves."

At his words another terrific outburst of cheering took place.

"Look here!" muttered Shiner, under cover of the cheers. "I think it's time we slipped off!"

"Same here!" agreed Tich.

The three raggies tried to creep away. They might have succeeded but for the fact that a foot was suddenly shot out and Shiner crashed over on to his nose.

"Och!" he gasped angrily. "What clumsy clown did that?"

He picked himself up and found himself gazing into the features of Horace Stoop. But before he had a chance to do anything strong arms caught him. His chums were held likewise. And the raggies knew it would be unwise to resist. Commander Dill was speaking again. They could do nothing but listen.

"And so, my lads," the captain ended, "in three days' time we shall be sailing for home!"

Again the Canton waterfront reverberated with the lusty cheers of the merry bluejackets.

"Ray! Ray!" yelled Shiner, dancing the hornpipe in his delight. "What ho for good old Pompey and little Flossie and Sal!"

"And a whack of good old fish-and-chips!" cried Tich.

"Ay!" agreed Dusty, rather mournfully. "Anyway, it will be a bit of a change from curry and rice!"

THE END.

(A smashing new series of boxing yarns commences in next week's REALM. Don't miss the first great story—"EIGHT-NINE-OUT!"—specially written by popular Arthur S. Hardy.)

NOW'S THE TIME TO JOIN!

CRICKET MEDALS GIVEN AWAY!



The Boys' Realm Cricket League



All letters should be addressed to The Sports Editor, The BOYS' REALM, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4. Letters requiring a reply—

should be accompanied by stamps, or a stamped addressed envelope. The Sports Editor will send the fullest possible particulars of the Cricket League on application.



The 1927 Championship Medal.

Things are moving apace with the new formation, and this week has brought an interesting query from Mr. B. Stevens, the Secretary of the go-ahead Leicester Section of the Football League.

He is ready and willing to run a Cricket Section in his area, but he says that the average age limit of 18 years is a definite handicap. He wants permission to run a Senior Division with an average age of up to 21 years, as well as a division of 18 years.

This is O.K. under the circumstances—for this reason. The REALM Leagues are run for the benefit of junior clubs, but if out of the junior formation there arises a need for a senior division, there is no reason why one should not be formed. The senior clubs benefit by being welded together in the league, and the junior teams are helped a lot because the more divisions there are to a Section, the stronger the Section funds.

So cricket clubs in the Leicester area should get into touch with

Mr. B. Stevens,
7, Acorn Street,
Leicester.

Mr. Stevens is one of the keenest of all the keen secretaries in the REALM Football League, and I know that he is out to get ahead of everybody else so far as cricket is concerned. Clubs can be sure of his ready interest, and I strongly advise Leicester teams to get into touch with him immediately, because the new formation will be founded on the clubs which have played under the REALM during the winter season.

Liverpool and Bootle.
It has always seemed queer that Liverpool has never come up to scratch in the Football League—but the Liverpoolians have a chance to show what they can do in cricket, and the man who is giving them this opportunity is

Mr. H. R. Pickering,
271, Bedford Road,
Bootle, Liverpool.

Liverpool clubs anxious to get into the REALM organisation should drop him a line.

Another for Notts.

Another new area is that around Pinxton, which is on the borders of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire—this is to have a Cricket Section, which will be under the control of

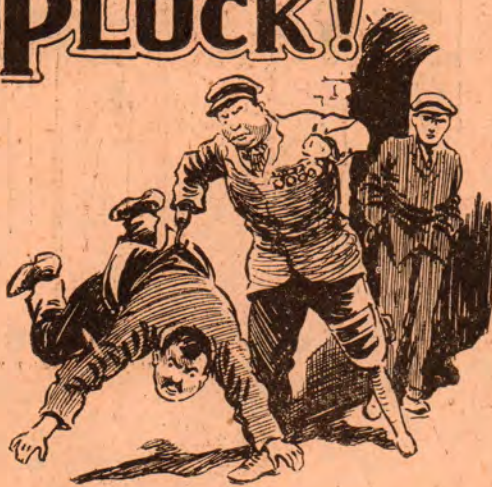
Mr. E. Vale,
Church Street,
Pinxton, Notts.

He is the man to write to—and don't forget to enclose a stamp for your reply.

GINGER PULLS Raggs' Rents to be sold up! The Ramblers are to lose their ground! 'EM THROUGH! Things are as black as they could be—but Ginger gets a wheeze. Read about his effort in the stirring chapters below!

GINGER=FOR PLUCK!

BY
ROBERT MURRAY.



How this Rousing Story Started.

UPON the death of his uncle, Terry Tyrill—popularly known as Ginger—finds that he is now the owner of Raggs' Rents, a block of tenements in the poor district of Steelvale; he also inherits the sum of five hundred pounds.

Raggs' Rents are in a shocking condition of disrepair, and Terry decides to spend the five hundred pounds in renovating them. He also decides to live there himself. Terry makes friends with Sergeant Boom—an old soldier who has a steel hook in place of his right arm and a wooden stump for his left leg.

Ginger joins Raggs' Ramblers, a team composed of boys from the Rents.

Henry Crocker—managing director of Steelvale United—wants to buy the Rents, but Terry—through his lawyer—refuses.

The Ramblers enter for the local Charity Cup Competition, and are drawn against Steelvale United. It does not seem as though Ginger's team can possibly stand any chance against the professional club.

To everybody's surprise, however—and, to Crocker's dismay—the Ramblers succeed in beating the 3rd Division team!

(Now read on.)

Good Enough for the United!

GINGER TERRY and his chums of the Ramblers never forgot the scenes and demonstrations that followed the finish of their sensational match with Steelvale United F.C.

The spectators went wild with delight over the well-deserved, though quite unexpected victory of the tenement lads. Though Henry Crocker had deliberately and spitefully placed his strongest team in the field, they had been soundly trounced in a manner that left no doubt as to the inferiority of the professional side.

Cheering like madmen, the people swarmed on to the playing area, despite the efforts of the police to keep them in check and Terry and his companions found themselves surrounded on all sides long before they could reach the shelter of their dressing-room.

The United team was utterly ignored save for a few boos and hisses, and were allowed to leave the field unmolested. By their unsportsmanlike behaviour and foul play they had hammered home the last nail in their club's coffin. The next time the United played at home there were not five hundred people in Steelvale who would trouble to attend the ground.

As Manager Wallis McKee had prognosticated, Henry Crocker had been hoist with his own petard.

"Bravo, the Ramblers! Well done, the tenement boys!"

It was useless for the footballers to attempt to escape. Despite their blushes and protest, they were lifted shoulder-high and carried in triumph towards their dressing-rooms.

It was a great day for Raggs' Ramblers. It was several minutes before the excited crowd would set the footballers down and allow them to reach their dressing-room, and then it was not before Sergeant Boom had made a brief speech, which was punctuated with bursts of laughter and shouts of approval.

The Ramblers had scarcely commenced to change out of their football kit when a pompous-looking official of the club thrust his head into their dressing-room.

"Mr. Crocker says you're to pack up and clear off these premises as quickly as you can!" he said brusquely. "You deliberately incited those hooligans to swarm on to the field and damage our pitch! Disgraceful proceedings! Mr. Crocker is thinking about taking action against you but he knows you ain't got sixpenn'orth of coppers amongst the whole lot of you!"

"You tell Mr. Crocker to go and eat coke!" thundered Sergeant Boom, with a menacing wave of his steel hook.

And the official vanished with more speed than dignity.

Tired, but thoroughly happy and contented, the footballers packed up their kit and made their exit from the ground that had been the scene of their great triumph that afternoon. There were still many people waiting outside to give them a final cheer, and they were

greeted in similar fashion at frequent intervals as they passed through the town on their way home.

Wanted—a Hundred Pounds!

THE Ramblers had decided to celebrate their great victory with a high tea, to be partaken of in Sergeant Boom's quarters, and to be followed by suitable musical honours. A whip-round was made, and several of the footballers dispatched on various errands to purchase cakes and meat-pies and other toothsome delicacies. Ginger was returning from a visit to the nearest dairy when he came upon a dejected figure standing outside the entrance to the Rents. It was Sally Norris, but the customary smile that had earned her that nickname of Sunshine was conspicuously absent. The pretty girl's mouth was trembling pathetically, and her blue eyes were heavy with unshed tears.

"Why Sally, what's the matter, old thing?" queried Ginger anxiously, setting down the jug he was carrying, and placing a gentle hand on the girl's shoulder. "Has anyone been upsetting you? Tell me who it was, and, by gum, I'll flatten 'em!"

Sally Norris dabbed at her eyes with a pathetic scrap of a handkerchief and smiled bravely.

"No, no; it's nothing like that!" she assured shakily. "It's Johnny! He's been taken bad again! He got so excited over the match this afternoon that he tried to stand up, and must have strained himself! The ambulance came and took him away to the hospital!"

"Poor old chap!" said Ginger sympathetically. "But you mustn't worry yourself, Sally. He'll get the best of treatment at the hospital. They'll make him as happy as a sandboy, and soon fix him up again and send him back to you."

Sally Norris shook her curly head. "They—they can't do much for him at the hospital," she said. "The surgeon told me so. He said that there was only one hope that Johnny would ever be able to walk again, and told me of some famous specialist in London who might be able to cure him. But it's impossible! He would want such a lot of money to come to Steelvale—over a hundred pounds!"

Ginger uttered a low whistle of consternation.

"Phew! That doesn't sound right!" he exclaimed. "Only a hundred pounds needed to set young Johnny on his feet again, and we haven't got it! And there's some people in the world who've got so much money they drive themselves potty thinking how to make a lot more. We must see if we can't get hold of a hundred pounds, Sally!"

The pretty girl stared bewilderedly at the young footballer.

"A hundred pounds!" she exclaimed. "We could never find a hundred pounds! It's impossible!"

"Nothing is impossible!" replied Ginger stoutly. "That's always been my motto, Sally, and I'm going to put it into action now. I'll get my think-box working, and see if I can find a means of raising the necessary dough to set young Johnny on his legs again! In the meantime, keep a stiff upper-lip, and don't worry! Johnny's quite O.K. where he is, and we'll run along and see him as soon as we're allowed to. I'll send him some books to-morrow."

Sally Norris smiled gratefully, and instinctively she gave Terry's arm an affectionate, confident squeeze.

"You—you're just wonderful, Terry!" she said shyly. "I don't know what I should do without you! There doesn't seem to be anything that you can't do!"

"Oh, isn't there?" Ginger muttered grimly to himself, a few minutes later, when Sally had darted away into the tenements.

"I guess I'm very good at making promises, but I reckon I've bit off a heap more than I can chew this time. A hundred pounds! Phew! That's a big order, but, by gum, it's wanted for a good cause! I'll wait till to-morrow, and see if Mr. Catchpole can do anything for me."

He had already mortgaged a considerable portion of his small income with the lawyer in order to purchase new Soccer kit for the Ramblers, but he was quite willing to stint himself still more if it was possible for him to raise the money that would enable young Johnny Norris to be examined by a specialist with a prospect of his being permanently cured of his infirmity.

The celebration high tea at Sergeant Boom's that evening was a great success, though Terry's enjoyment was somewhat marred by the thought of the conversation he had had with Sally Norris that evening.

The usual sing-song wound up the evening's pleasures, but this time there was no unwelcome interruption by Nobby Bowker or the Doolan Street gang. There was no doubt the bunch of hooligans had learned their lesson, and would not dare to interfere with Raggs' Ramblers any more.

Ginger had not forgotten his intention to visit Solomon Catchpole when the next morning came, and, after his usual bout of training with the Ramblers, followed by a hearty breakfast, he was just about to set out for the old lawyer's office when there came a hearty rat-a-tat on the door, and Mrs. Boyd approached him with an orange-coloured envelope in her hand.

"Telegram for you, Master Terry," she announced. "Is there any answer?"

Ginger shook his head as he tore the wire open and glanced surprisedly at its contents. By an extraordinary coincidence, it was from the very person he had been on the point of visiting.

He wanted to see Solomon Catchpole, and it appeared that Catchpole wanted to see him as well.

"Come and see me this morning. Important," the old lawyer wired.

"Something to do with the fire, I suppose," thought Ginger, as he put on his hat and coat and left the Rents. "Probably the insurance company has refused to pay out, or the police have taken

some action. Hallo! What's the matter here?"

The young footballer had reached the High Street, and his exclamation of surprise was occasioned by the sight of a large crowd that was gathered outside a big building that stood almost opposite the town hall.

There seemed to be considerable excitement and agitation.

"Hallo! What's happened? What's wrong here?" asked the young footballer of a bystander—"an accident?"

"An accident! It's a dashed sight worse than any accident!" replied the man gloomily. "The bank's gone bust and suspended payment! There was a run on it this morning, and they shut up their doors at once! And me out of work, and all my savings inside there! The officials ought to be lynched!"

Ginger Learns the Worst!

GINGER uttered a low whistle of consternation. He realised that this news would come as a terrible blow to many of the residents of Steelvale who deposited with the Steelvale & County Bank. Many would be left absolutely penniless, and numerous shopkeepers would be ruined by the bank's failure.

"It may not be so bad as it seems," said Ginger encouragingly to the man he addressed. "Perhaps the bank is only waiting for fresh funds, and will pay everyone in full as soon as they arrive."

From the bank it was only a short step to Solomon Catchpole's office, and Ginger had no thought of what lay in front of him as he swung briskly up the stairs and pushed open the glass-panelled door.

His cheery words of greeting died away on his lips as he caught sight of the old lawyer seated behind his desk. Solomon Catchpole was hunched despondently in his chair, with his chin sunk on his chest and a haggard, careworn expression on his face. There was a dull look in his eyes, and with a pen-holder he was stabbing nervously at a blotting-pad in front of him.

"Ab, it's you Terry, my lad!" he said, in a queer, strained voice. "Take a seat! You got my wire, then?"

Ginger nodded as he sank on to a chair.

"Yes, I got your wire just as I was on the point of setting out to make a call on you," he replied. "I wanted to see you on a little matter of business; but, of course, it can wait. You're not looking yourself, Mr. Catchpole. What's the matter?"

Solomon Catchpole's lips tightened, and he suddenly squared his narrow shoulders and glanced straight across at his visitor.

"Terry, my boy, I'm afraid I've some bad news for you!" he said. "You must prepare yourself for a bit of a shock!"

Even then Ginger did not know what was coming next.

"It's over that beastly fire, I suppose?" he said resignedly. "The insurance company has refused to pay out? It's rotten luck, but it can't be helped!"

Solomon Catchpole shook his head, and drummed his fingers nervously on the edge of his desk.

"No, it's nothing to do with the fire; it's worse than that!" he jerked. "I scarcely know how to tell you. I only hope you won't blame me. It was quite unforeseen."

Ginger stirred uneasily.

"I—I don't quite understand, Mr. Catchpole!" he exclaimed. "Whatever has happened, you may be sure that I

shan't blame you. You needn't be afraid to tell me."

"Did you notice anything out of the ordinary as you came through the town?" queried the old lawyer. "I take it you came past the town hall?"

Ginger frowned thoughtfully, and then sat up with a jerk as he realised what his companion was driving at.

"Great Scott! You mean that crowd outside the County Bank?" he exclaimed. "Of course I saw it! Someone told me that there had been a run on the bank and it had suspended payment. But I don't see how that—"

"You don't see how that affects you?" interrupted the old lawyer quickly, as though eager to get the matter over. "Of course, you did not know, my boy, that every penny of the money left you by your uncle was deposited in the Steelvale & County Bank! And it is the same with me! Everything I possess is in the same bank! I have banked with the County for years. I never dreamed that such a thing as this could happen!" faltered the old lawyer.

"So I—'ve no money left?" jerked Ginger. And even at that moment he was unselfish enough to be thinking of young Jimmy Norris, the cripple lad whom he had promised to help. "It's all gone? Of course, I can see it's no fault of yours, Mr. Catchpole. But I don't exactly understand what this means. How do I stand? What is to be done?"

Catchpole leaned back in his chair and stared gravely at the young footballer.

"From what I can see, there's only one thing to be done, my boy," he replied. "Bad luck has forced your hand in this matter. You will have to study your own interests above all others, and, if you will accept my advice, you will fall in with Henry Crocker's proposal, and accept the offer he has made you for the freehold of Raggs' Rents."

Accept Henry Crocker's offer for the purchase of Raggs' Rents!

The words stabbed into Ginger's brain like dagger-thrusts. He stared aghast at Solomon Catchpole, whilst a flood of colour surged into his cheeks and a gleam of indignation and determination crept into his eyes.

"Sell the Rents to Henry Crocker!" he exclaimed hotly. "Sell him the Rents so that he can have the people evicted and pull the tenements down! Not on your life, Mr. Catchpole! I'd rather starve than do that! I'd sooner sweep a crossing for a living! I'd sooner sell matches in the street! I'll have no dealings with Henry Crocker!"

Solomon Catchpole stared admiringly at the plucky lad, and shook his head again.

"Even now I am afraid you don't quite appreciate the situation, Terry," he said slowly. "You have no option in the matter. I admire the chivalrous attitude you have adopted, but nothing now can save your tenants from being evicted and the Rents pulled down."

"Is there nothing else that can be done, Mr. Catchpole?" Ginger appealed huskily.

"I can see nothing," replied the old lawyer candidly. "It is a case of Hobson's choice, my boy. There is no reason why you should leave yourself penniless with an empty, condemned tenement on your hands when you can sell the property for a sum that will put you on your feet and give you a start in the world."

"I must have a little while to think

(Continued on next page.)



TURNING THE TABLES! A gasp of amazement came from Solomon Catchpole as Ginger made his astounding proposal. The manager of Steelvale United glared amazedly at the lad. "You want to buy up the United?" he gasped. "You must be crazy!"

this over," Ginger said, rising to his feet and gripping the old lawyer sympathetically by the hand. "I am sorry you have lost a lot of money in the bank as well, Mr. Catchpole!" he added earnestly. "But, after all, we are not the only ones, are we? There's plenty worse off than we. I'll come along and see you again to-morrow and let you know what I've decided to do."

Ginger scarcely knew where he wandered during the next couple of hours. He was like a boy in a dream as he paced the streets, with his head sunk on his chest and his hands jammed deep in his pockets. At last, worn out, he returned home, still with his problem unsolved.

Ginger's Great Scheme!

It was ten o'clock the next morning when he set miserably off for Solomon Catchpole's office. He had made up his mind what to do. There was still a haggard-faced crowd of people standing hopefully outside the premises of the County Bank; but the doors and windows remained barred, and it had been announced in the papers that the bank would remain closed until the Receiver had examined the assets and the auditors had completed their work.

Solomon Catchpole was not alone when the lad entered his office. He was in company with an elderly man, whom he introduced as Mr. Burrage of the local Housing Committee.

The old lawyer was looking a little more cheerful, and he gave Terry a faint smile of encouragement.

"I fancy we have overcome one little point that seems to have been worrying you, young Tyrill," said Mr. Burrage kindly. "Even though Raggs' Rents will have to be condemned, the occupants will not be evicted homeless into the streets."

Ginger's face lit up at once.

"I am able to offer them temporary alternative accommodation," went on Burrage. "Some months ago the council bought up several big houses in Marsden Lane. They have been converted into flats, and your tenants will be allowed to occupy them at a nominal rental until other tenements are available."

"By James, that's great news!" cried Ginger, with a huge sigh of relief. "No one will mind moving under those circumstances. I—I suppose you couldn't find the Ramblers a football ground as well?"

"Well, I can scarcely go as far as to promise that," smiled Mr. Burrage. "That is beyond my province."

"When you have sold the Rents you should be able to hire a football ground," suggested Solomon Catchpole meaningly.

Ginger hesitated for a moment, and then shrugged his shoulders resignedly.

"I suppose I've got to do it," he said reluctantly. "But I wish it was to anyone else but Henry Crocker! It goes against the grain to do business with him!"

Mr. Burrage took his departure, and Solomon Catchpole, glad that the whole affair had been settled, seized the telephone and rang up Henry Crocker's private office.

"He's calling for his lawyer, and coming along here at once," he announced, as he replaced the receiver.

"We'll have the whole business signed, sealed, and settled in half an hour, barring the transference of the title deeds. Great Scott! What's the matter, boy?"

Ginger, who had been standing by the window staring moodily out into the street, thinking what a wrench it would be to part with Raggs' Rents, had suddenly spun round on his heel with a queer cry of excitement, and, snatching up his cap, leaped towards the door.

"Shan't be long! Keep Crocker here until I come back!" he jerked. "Suddenly thought of something!"

He had indeed suddenly "thought of something" as he hurried himself pell-mell down the narrow stairs. Quite by chance he had caught a glimpse of John Jackson, the late manager of the Steelvale United F.C., striding along the opposite side of the street, and instantly an amazing, astounding idea had flashed into the young footballer's brain.

His eyes were blazing, and his heart was throbbing with excitement as he dashed out into the street and across the road, regardless of the traffic.

John Jackson was still in sight, and he caught him up just as he was ascending the steps of his hotel. His face was set in gloomy, disgruntled lines, but it lit up at once as he saw who it was had accosted him.

"Hallo, Terry lad!" he greeted

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heartily. "Glad to see you! My word, but you and your team have made a name for yourselves! You knocked smoke out of the United! The finest game I've seen for many a day! Come inside!"

He led the way into the smoking-lounge, and Ginger's lips were trembling with eagerness as he confronted the football manager who had tried so hard to get him signed on for the United.

"Can't stay a minute, Mr. Jackson!" panted the young footballer. "I want to ask you a question. Are you still wanting to get control of Steelvale United?"

"Wanting!" echoed Jackson bitterly. "I've done everything I can to try to persuade Crocker to sell me his shares, but he won't hear of it!"

Ginger laughed happily. "I've a proposition I want to put to you," he said, and spoke rapidly for several minutes.

At the end of that time the other occupants of the smoking-lounge were amazed at the spectacle of Ginger and John Jackson positively dancing in the centre of the floor, shaking hands, and laughing and shouting like a couple of schoolboys.

"You're on, Terry—you're on!" cried Jackson, his eyes blazing with delight. "I believe I'd have done the same thing had it come my way! Go ahead and fix things up. I'll wait here for you."

Ginger was off like a rocket, and pelted straight back to Solomon Catchpole's office. Henry Crocker and his lawyer were already there, and the latter was tramping impatiently up and down the room, with his hat on the back of his head and a big cigar in his mouth.

"Oh, here he is!" he grunted, doing his best to disguise his satisfaction as Ginger came through the door. "Come to your senses at last, have you, my lad? I knew you'd have to give in at the end! Let's get busy, Catchpole!"

"Mr. Crocker wanted to alter his terms, but I wouldn't hear of it!" said Solomon Catchpole, as he seated himself at his desk.

"As it happens, I've decided to alter my terms," said Ginger coolly.

"What?" roared Crocker furiously. "By James, I'm not standing any shuffling! I won't increase my price by a penny-piece!"

"You haven't been asked to!" replied Ginger shortly. "But there's only one price I'll accept for the freehold of Raggs' Rents, and you can take it or leave it!"

"And what is it?" queried the man suspiciously.

"Fifteen hundred pounds in cash and all the shares you possess in the Steelvale United Football Club!"

A gasp of consternation burst from the other occupants of the room. Solomon Catchpole made a feeble gesture of protest, and Henry Crocker glared amazedly at the lad.

"You want to buy up the United!" he gasped. "You must be crazy!"

"Perhaps I am, but that's beside the point," smiled Ginger. "You've heard my terms. Are you going to accept them? You have no real interest in the United. You've done your best to ruin the club! Perhaps someone else can make a 'do' of it!"

Henry Crocker chewed suddenly at his cigar. Dog-in-the-manger to the last, he was reluctant to consent, but he knew that it was only by purchasing Raggs' Rents that he could save himself from certain bankruptcy.

"Have it your own way!" he growled.

"You can—" "One moment!" interrupted Solomon Catchpole anxiously. "I am not going to allow my client to buy a pig in a poke! I have heard the United is in a very bad way. What exactly is the situation?"

"Not nearly so bad as is made out!" lied Crocker desperately. "The club is certainly at the foot of the League and the capital is practically exhausted, but there's no mortgage and a twenty-five years' lease of the ground still unexpired. Leave the boy alone if he wants to buy the club to play about with!"

Ginger nodded reassuringly to the old lawyer, and went across and whispered in his ear for several minutes, whilst Crocker stood looking on suspiciously. He couldn't understand why Terry wanted to buy his shares in the United, but it meant that he was purchasing the Rents at a considerably lower figure than he had originally offered.

For half an hour the two lawyers busied themselves with legal documents and title deeds that were as so much Greek to Ginger. Several times he was called upon to sign his name, and then all the necessary formalities were completed.

"You want Mr. Crocker's shares in the Steelvale United Football Club transferred in your name?" queried Digby Soaks, Henry Crocker's legal representative.

"No," replied Ginger sweetly. "I want them transferred to Mr. John Jackson."

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"What!" Henry Crocker bounded to his feet like an electrified elephant, his eyes bulging in their sockets. "John Jackson!" he roared. "You mean to say you have bought those shares for that cockshoop blunder John Jackson? I won't hear of it! This is a swindle! Soaks, the deal is off!"

"Too late, Mr. Crocker!" replied the lawyer crisply. "The deal has been settled! Mr. Tyrill is perfectly entitled to transfer the shares to whom he pleases!"

Crocker purpled with chagrin. He swallowed hard several times, threw a murderous glance at Ginger, and, crumpling his hat back on his head, stalked furiously out of the room, with Digby Soaks trailing behind him.

If old Solomon Catchpole was completely mystified and bewildered by Ginger's strange behaviour, it did not take the lad many minutes to explain the situation to him.

"I bought the shares for my friend, John Jackson, because Crocker refused to let him have them out of sheer spite," he informed him hastily.

"Jackson used to manage the United, and I know jolly well that, once he has control of the club, he'll make a roaring success of it and pots of money as well. All the people who used to support the United will flock back when they hear that Crocker has gone and Jackson has taken his place."

"But—but where do you come in?" queried Solomon Catchpole vaguely. "I thought you had taken the shares in the nature of an investment."

"And it is an investment—an investment for myself and all my chums!" chuckled Ginger. "You just wait, Mr. Catchpole! I haven't time to explain now, but I can assure you that you haven't heard the last of Raggs' Ramblers. And I haven't lost any money over this deal. Mr. Jackson is buying the shares from me at top price, and he'll send the cheque on to you as soon as the script has been delivered. And, of course, he is doing something in return for what I have done for him; but that's a secret for the moment."

Away went the young footballer dashing back to the Station Hotel, where John Jackson was pacing impatiently up and down the smoking-lounge, puffing feverishly at a cigar. One look at Terry's radiant countenance told him that the lad's mission had been successful.

"You've got them? Crocker consented to your terms? He didn't suspect anything?" he queried eagerly.

"Yes, you're the new boss of Steelvale United, Mr. Jackson!" chuckled Ginger delightedly. "Crocker didn't suspect anything at first, but, by gosh, you ought to have seen his face when I asked to have the shares transferred in your name!"

"By James, this is the happiest day of my life!" exclaimed John Jackson, a trifle huskily, as he gripped the lad's hand. "You'll never regret what you've done, my lad. I'll have Steelvale United booming right up at the top of the tree before I've finished with the club! There's not much time left now, but, suffering snakes, you wait until next season! Our position will be at the top of the League instead of at the bottom, where we are now! And we won't be there long!"

Ginger suddenly became more serious. "Well, I've done my part, Mr. Jackson," he said meaningly, "and I should be obliged if you'd come along back to the Rents with me and do your little act. My hat, I'm just waiting to see the boys' faces when they hear what's happened and what's going to happen!"

"I'm with you there!" chuckled John Jackson. "They'll think I'm pulling their legs at first, I dare say, but they'll know better when we get 'em up to the ground."

Nothing would satisfy John Jackson but that they should find a taxi to drive them to Raggs' Rents.

All Right for the Ramblers.

Ginger was not surprised to find Raggs' Rents in a high state of excitement when he and John Jackson alighted from their cab and strolled into the courtyard. The place was packed, and there was a deafening babel of voices.

Ginger guessed that Mr. Burrage had already been along to inform the tenants of the change that was about to take place, and it was easy to see that the news was not unwelcome to the tenement dwellers.

They were only too willing to transfer to the big, well-built houses in Marsden Lane that the council had converted into flats.

But Sid Yates and Tom Carter and the other members of the Ramblers' team looked none too pleased with themselves

as they stood in a body outside the porter's lodge.

"We've heard all about it, Ginger! Sergeant Boom told us as soon as the housing bloke had been!" said Sid Yates gloomily. "We—we're sorry to hear you lost all your brass in the bank failure and had to sell the Rents!"

"Is that what you are all looking so blessed-blue about," asked Ginger, with a mischievous twinkle in his eyes, "or don't you want to move? You'll find Marsden Lane a dashed sight more comfortable than Raggs' Rents!"

"Yes, I dare say," replied the Ramblers' goalkeeper, with a dejected shrug of his shoulders. "All the womenfolk and so on are mighty bucked to be moving. But—but what about the Ramblers, Ginger? What are we going to do about a ground? Where are we going to play our home matches?"

"Yes; what about a ground?" echoed Tom Carter, looking as though he was on the verge of bursting into tears.

"I'd forgotten all about that!" exclaimed Ginger, doing his best to look perplexed and dismayed. "Perhaps Mr. Jackson here wouldn't mind us playing our home matches on his football ground?"

All eyes were fixed expectantly on John Jackson, and the latter entered heartily into the joke.

"Only too delighted!" he assented willingly. "My ground is at your disposal any time you require it!"

"My hat!" cried Sid Yates delightedly. "But where is your ground, sir? What club does it belong to?"

"The ground's at the upper end of Tiptree Lane. It belongs to Steelvale United."

Sid Yates' face dropped again, and he and his chums stared uncertainly at one another, wondering if this strange friend of Terry Tyrill's was trying to take a rise out of them. They were not in the mood for silly jokes at that minute.

Ginger stepped forward at once.

"Boys, what this gentleman has said is perfectly true," he said bluntly. "The best way I can explain is by making a proper introduction. Mr. Jackson, please meet my chums of the Ramblers' team. Boys, this is Mr. John Jackson, the new boss of the Steelvale United Football Club!"

A simultaneous gasp of surprise burst from Sid Yates and his companions, and every eye was turned incredulously in the direction of John Jackson. "What! The new boss of the United!" ejaculated Tom Carter. "What d'you mean, Ginger? What about Henry Crocker? What's become of him?"

"He's cleared out!" smiled Ginger. "He's sold his controlling interest to Mr. Jackson here, and Mr. Jackson's going to put the United on its feet again—that is, if you're willing to help him."

"Help him!" echoed Sid Yates. "How can we help him? What have we to do with the United?"

"How would you like to have something to do with the United?" asked John Jackson, stepping to the front. "Have any of you fellows an ambition to become professional footballers? What would you say if I asked you to sign on for the United?"

"Sign on for the United!" Sid Yates' eyes almost popped out of his head. "Great jumping Jerusalem, are you trying to lead us up the garden, sir? Ginger, what does this mean? Is—is your friend trying to pull our legs?"

"Pull your legs be hanged!" cried Ginger. "Mr. Jackson means exactly what he says. He saw us play on Wednesday, when we beat the United to a frazzle, and it's his opinion that the team that beat the United is good enough to take their place in the League. At least, he's willing to sign us on and see what sort of a show we make. I don't say that we'll all find a permanent place in the first team; but there's nothing wrong with playing for the reserves, is there?"

"The United Reserves!" gasped Huggins, looking as though he was on the verge of fainting dead away. "Suffering cats, I'd give my ears for the opportunity of playing for the reserves!"

"Mr. Jackson is not asking you to make such a big sacrifice as all that," said Ginger gravely. "And the subtle dig created a roar of laughter, for Huggins was endowed with extraordinarily large ears, which stuck out on either side of his head like bat's wings."

"I shall be in my office on the United ground to-morrow morning from ten to twelve," said John Jackson. "I shall have plenty of professional forms ready, and I shall be pleased to sign on the whole bunch of you, and put your registration through so that all of you will be eligible to turn out for the United on Saturday afternoon. I'm willing to put you to the test by playing your entire team—exactly the same team as beat the United yesterday."

"On Saturday!" exclaimed Sid Yates, clutching at Huggins for support. "But the United are at home to Stockley on Saturday! They're top of the League, and have only lost one away match this season!"

"Well, that ought to prove a pretty sound test for you fellows," said John Jackson meaningly. "If you can beat Stockley, you can take it for granted that you'll all keep your places in the first team."

A sudden roar of mingled excitement and delight burst from the tenement footballers. All at once it had dawned on them that John Jackson meant

(Continued on next page.)

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GINGER=FOR PLUCK!



(Continued from previous page.)

exactly what he said. They had only to present themselves at the United ground the following morning to become fully-fledged professional footballers, and on the Saturday afternoon Raggs Ramblers would have donned new colours, and would take the field to meet Stockley, the strongest and most successful club in the Northern Division of the Third League.

"Don't thank me; thank young Tyrill here," pleaded Jackson, as the elated lads swarmed around him. "I should never have been able to get control of the United if it hadn't been for him."

Cheer upon cheer echoed through the courtyard of the Rents, and a lump rose in Ginger's throat as he suddenly caught sight of the dejected figure of Sergeant Boom, standing forlornly outside the porter's lodge, puffing fiercely at his unlighted pipe, and doing his best to look pleased at the unexpected good fortune that had befallen the team of footballers he had trained so proudly and thoroughly.

"Guess they won't need me no longer!" the old soldier was thinking gloomily to himself. "Good luck to 'em, though! I allu thought they was good enough for professional football, instead o' wasting their time on that mudheap at the back of the Rents. Why—"

"Sergeant Boom!" It was John Jackson who had spoken, prompted by a whispered remark from Ginger, and the old soldier sprang to attention at once, and came stamping across, with his head thrown back and his steel hook swinging by his side.

"Lads, you're not going to lose your old trainer!" cried John Jackson, laying a friendly hand on the sergeant's shoulder, and turning towards the crowd of excited footballers. "He's going to serve the United in the same capacity, and if he does his job as well in the future as he has done in the past, I shall have control of the fittest team in the whole of the British Isles! Three cheers for Sergeant Boom, the man who has made Raggs Ramblers what they are to-day and what they are going to be before the season is out—the pride of Steelvale!"

And again: the cracked, crumbling walls of the doomed Raggs' Rents echoed to a roar of cheering that brought people flocking to their windows, to gaze down wonderingly at the little crowd in the courtyard below.

"Three cheers for Sergeant Boom!"

"And for John Jackson!"

"And for Ginger!"

The troubles of Ginger and his chums were at an end. Though the Rents were doomed, the Ramblers were only just entering on a career that was to lead them to a high and proud position in the football world!

The Match of the Season!

JOHN JACKSON himself saw to it that the local newspapers were immediately informed that the controlling interest in the Steelvale United F.C. had passed into his hands, and the following morning the whole town was thrown into a frenzy of amazement and excitement when it became known that the new owner of the club had invited Raggs' Ramblers on board to sign on as professionals with the United.

It was a daring move that was approved in every quarter, for Steelvale had quite taken the Ramblers to their hearts after their brilliant victory over the United the previous Wednesday.

A sign of the times was the crowd of football fans which, for no apparent reason, was to be seen clustered outside the ground on the following morning when Ginger Tyrill and his chums turned up to put their signatures to the forms that were to make them professional members of the club.

Sergeant Boom was the proudest and happiest man in the world when he commenced his official duties as trainer that day. There was little friction; the other players who had made such a poor show that season had quite resigned themselves to the fact that their services would very soon be dispensed with, for John Jackson had already informed the majority of them that they had been placed on the transfer list.

Saturday witnessed one of the most astounding scenes that had been seen in Steelvale for many a long day. It seemed as though ninety per cent of the population was determined to gain a good point of vantage to witness the game between Stockley and the eleven young footballers who had once been scornfully referred to as the "Ragged Ramblers."

Loud before the gates opened several hundred people were congregated in Tip-tree Lane. Every minute their numbers were augmented, and when at last the turnstiles did start clicking there was no cessation until long after the time appointed for the kick-off.

The stand was packed; in the front row sat Sally Norris and her crippled brother, who had been released from hospital the previous day.

The teams lined up, and the game started.

The shrill of the referee's whistle found Ginger quite cool and composed, and he slipped the ball across to Tyrant, who made good ground before he transferred to Swift, on the opposite wing.

Swift lived up to his name, and he went away down the line like a flash; but, though he eluded the halves, the back tackled him before he could get in his centre, and sent his forwards moving with a well-judged pass.

In a trice the ball had been carried to the other end of the field. The

Stockley right wing combined in a dazzling movement that beat Weir completely for speed, and Tom Carter could do nothing to prevent a beautifully placed centre that the centre-forward promptly rammed into the net with a drive that shook the posts.

It was first blood to Stockley, and Henry Crocker, seated in the stand, waved his hat and yelled like a lunatic.

"What did I say?" he jeered. "Stockley will wipe the ground with those louts! They don't stand a dog's chance!"

But Crocker was wrong. Within the next few minutes things began to happen. Undisturbed by their early reverse, the United sailed to the attack, and within sixty seconds Ginger had made the scores level with a scorching

drive that went into the net like a cannon-ball.

The second half was even more thrilling than the first. Honours were even; there was nothing to choose between the two teams, and just when it seemed that the game was bound to end in a draw, Ginger dribbled brilliantly almost from one end of the field to the other, and secured a victory for the United with a shot that the goalie never saw.

Henry Crocker left the ground a chastened, discomfited man. Meanwhile, the crowd swarmed on to the pitch and carried Ginger and his chums shoulder-high to their dressing-room.

Sally Norris and her crippled brother, seated in a wheel-chair, were waiting outside the ground when Ginger emerged half an hour later.

"Terry, you were just splendid!" said the pretty girl, tears of pride and delight standing in her blue eyes. "But I expect you'll be leaving Steelvale before the season's over."

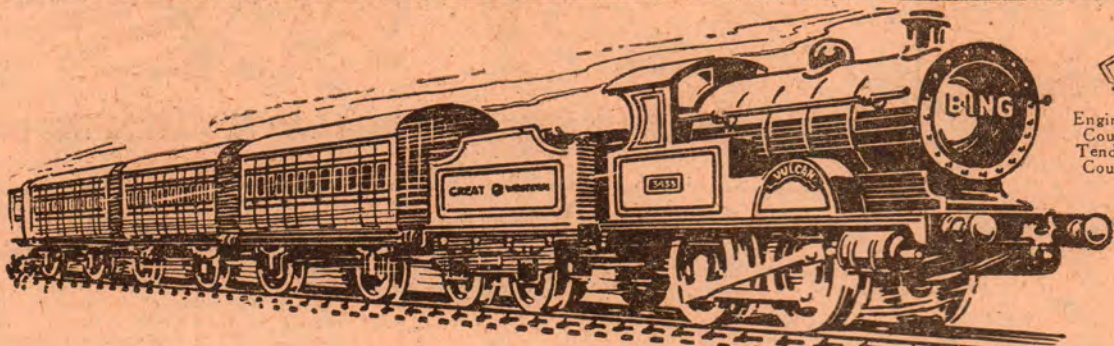
"If ever I do," said Ginger, "I hope I'll have the right to take you and Johnny with me, Sally!"

The girl's cheeks crimsoned. Before many years she was destined to become Mrs. Tyrill, wife of the greatest international centre-forward in the British Isles.

So here's good-bye and good luck to Ginger and his chums of Raggs' Rents!

THE END.

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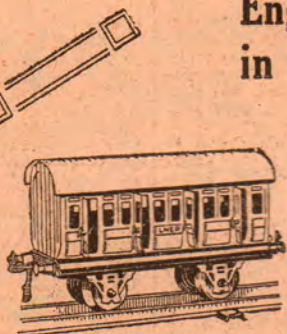
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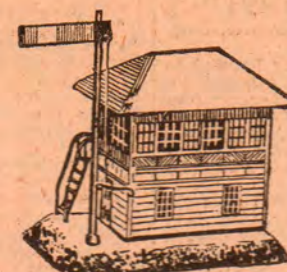
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