

Every Boy Should Join Our Correspondence College! (SEE PAGE 488.)

THE Boys' Herald 1d

A Healthy Paper for Manly Boys.

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EVERY THURSDAY—ONE PENNY.

WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 10, 1906.

A Tale of
St. Basil's School.

TRUE AS A DIE.

By Clever
HENRY ST. JOHN.

(The opening chapters, specially re-written, will be found on the next page.)

Punished—A Battle Royal.

"A VERY serious breach of discipline has been committed," said the Head. "Under a mistaken idea that they were being entertaining, certain boys of this class have been holding up a master to ridicule. I think I need hardly explain anything further. The boys who are responsible for the production of this will please step out into the middle of the room. I say, every boy who has had any hand whatever in the production of it."

Bimby groaned as he got up and looked at

Earle junior, who sighed sympathetically. Bimby went into the middle of the room, followed by Earle, then by Malcolm. Eldred rose, and sat down again; then rose, and very unwillingly took up his stand with the others.

"Are there no more?" asked the Head. "No more but you four? I fancy, Huggins, you should be here, too!"

"He wants to compliment you about your poem," whispered Wilkington. "I heard him say it was a bit of all-right myself."

"I am very pleased," said Huggins. "I know it is good, but it ought to have all been—"

"Huggins!"

"Yes, sir, I am now coming," said Huggins. He advanced into the middle of the room, and took up his stand by the unhappy-looking Eldred.

"I should say, sir, that there was a great deal more, but that was left out," he said to the Head.

"Indeed! I am pleased to hear it."

"You would perhaps like to read it. I am glad to say I got back the papers from Bimby and—"

"Be silent, if you please!" said the Head.

"Shut up, you idiot!" growled Eldred.

"You'll make him worse."

"I require full particulars about this," the Head said, taking the journal up. "Who drew this picture?"

"I did, sir," said Malcolm, turning fiery red.

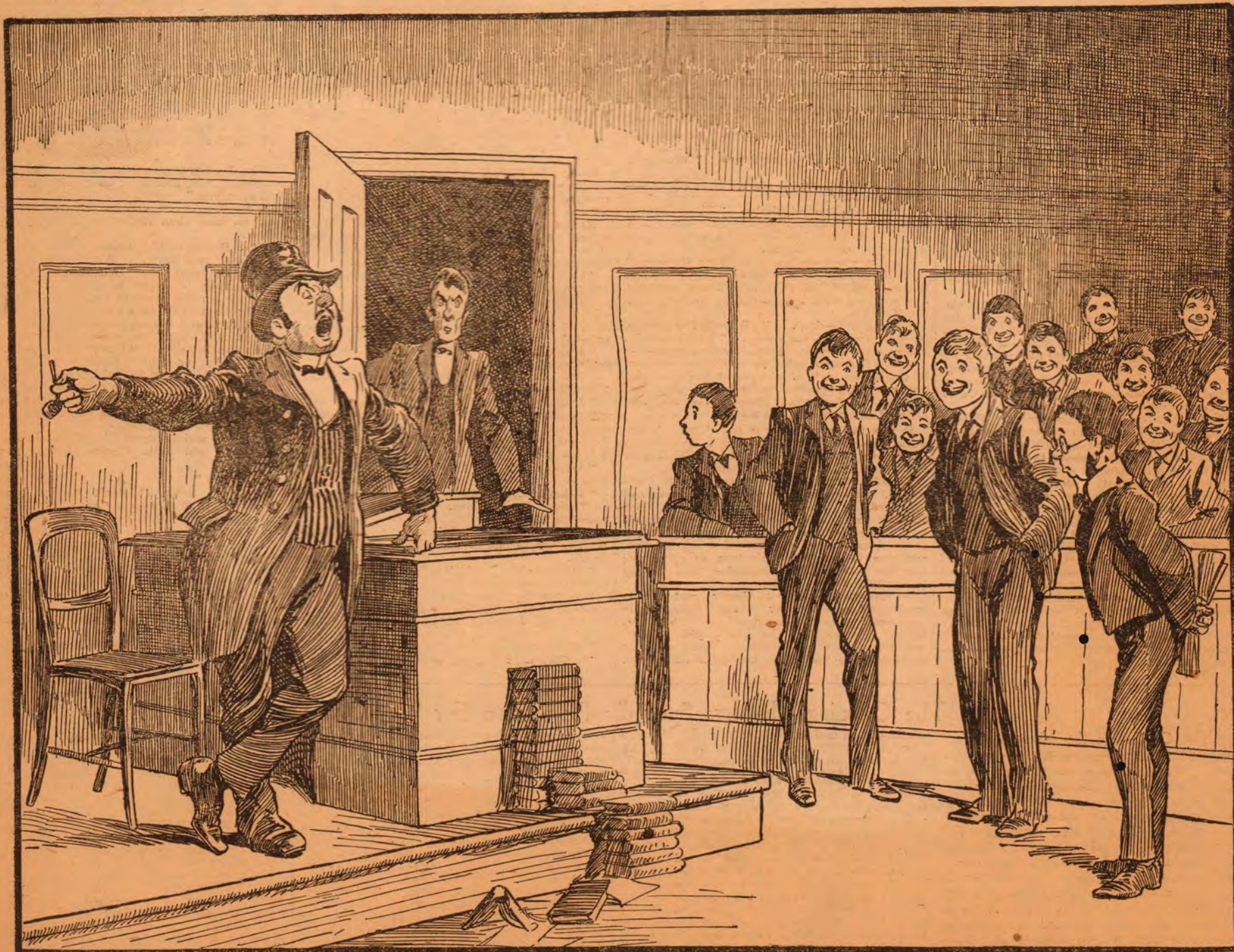
"It was a very unkind and ungenerous thing to do," the Head commented. "I will do you the credit, Warrington, to suppose that you thought it was humorous; but to my mind it

is extremely objectionable, and in very bad taste. Besides, I am sorry to see that you possess such a command of slang."

"I—" began Bimby eagerly.

"Hold your tongue, sir! I will come to you in your turn," said the Head. "As I was saying, Warrington, you have a decided talent for drawing, of which you are making very bad use. You will write me out five hundred lines, and I trust that you will never be guilty of such an ungenerous act again. Believe me, there is nothing funny in holding up a schoolfellow to ridicule and contumely."

It was very unfair. Malcolm had made the sketch to Bimby's instructions. Certainly it had been a caricature of Wilshin, but a very harmless one until Bimby had put the objectionable wording underneath.



Benson stood up, and, leaning on Mr. Withers' desk, waving time with his pipe in his right hand, started again. "Here a sheer hulk lies poor Tom Bowling—" "Good gracious me!" Mr. Withers stood at the open doorway transfixed. (See this week's instalment.)

TRUE AS A DIE.

(Continued from the previous page.)

Malcolm bit his lip, and took his punishment in silence, and the Head passed on to Eldred.

"And your part in this business, sir?" asked the Head.

"I—I wrote the personal paragraphs," said Huggins eagerly, "and they were really even better than those that Bimby put in. I suppose he didn't want me to have too much praise. Some people are so jealous!"

"You can go and sit down, Huggins," said the Head. "You have been merely guilty of folly. Your poem, as you call it, is not a poem at all, but a mere stringing together of words that produce drivel. I trust that in future you will strive to occupy your time to better advantage."

"I don't care what you say," Huggins burst out. "I don't care a bit. Everyone who's seen my poem says that they are—"

"Go and sit down!" thundered the Head. Huggins went to his seat.

"And your part in this sorry business, Earle?" demanded the Head.

"I wrote the article on Mr. Withers," said Earle defiantly.

"I am sorry to hear it. I thought better of you. I did not think that you would have written anything that was calculated to cause pain and annoyance to your master."

"I didn't," said Earle. "It was never meant that he should see it. He never would have seen it if it hadn't been for a—"

"Silence! You seem to be anxious to blame others when you yourself only are to blame. Stand aside! You, Bimby?"

"I—I believe I did the rest," said Bimby; "and I got the whole thing up. It was my idea."

"You two boys will each receive a thrashing," said the Head. "Mr. Withers, your cane, if you please!"

Mr. Withers looked on with keen enjoyment, though he tried to assume an expression of shocked indignation.

Bimby was operated upon first, and went back to his seat, walking carefully, and sitting down with great circumspection. Then Earle followed him, looking sad and thoughtful.

"I trust that this will be a lesson to you all," the Head said, as he tore up the first and last copy of the "Three Corners Journal." "No one admires genuine fun more than I do, but objectionable nonsense of this sort must be stopped. You two boys to whom I have given lines will bring them to my study to-morrow evening before preparation, or as many of them as you have finished by that time."

And this was the beginning of the deadly feud between the Wilshins and the Three Cornerers, a feud that was fated to cause considerable trouble before the term came to an end.

"Of course, those bounders will try and make out I sneaked," Wilshin said to Gerring. "But that's all rot, of course. How could I sneak about a thing I didn't know anything about? I'd never even seen their rotten paper, had I?"

"Of course you hadn't!" said Gerring. "Anyhow, let 'em say what they like! We can do that lot down any day, and what's more, we've got Withers on our side."

Yes, the Wilshins had certainly got Mr. Withers on their side. When school was over that afternoon Mr. Withers made a little speech. He pointed out that he had never been so insulted in his life, and he considered that the Head had dealt much too leniently with those concerned.

"Compared with the conduct of Earle and Bimby, and the rest of them," Mr. Withers said, "it is with pleasure that I recall the manly, straightforward action of Wilshin. Wilshin was probably aware that this so-called journal contained some scurrilous abuse of myself, and he seized it, and would no doubt have destroyed it had I not insisted on taking it from him. Certainly Wilshin did not wish to get his schoolfellows into trouble, and it was with reluctance that he gave me the paper. I think Wilshin's behaviour in the matter was admirable, and I shall hope to see him reinstated as captain of the Fourth Form at a very early date."

Mr. Withers concluded amid loud cheers from the Wilshinites.

"That's what I say! Quite right!" said Peters, slapping Wilshin on the back. "Wilshin's one of the best!" he added confidentially. "One of the very best, you chaps!"

"I always said so," said Gerring. "He's straight, that's what he is—a straight man!"

"He's going to get it straight in about two ticks!" muttered Earle darkly.

Mr. Withers collected his books together and put them into his desk. Then he shut it up, and moved towards the door.

"Though not captain of the Fourth Form, Wilshin," he said, "I prefer to leave the conduct of the Form to you while I am out, and until Hacker's arrival."

Then he went out and closed the door after him, and Earle junior arose slowly from his place.

"Of course, those brutes will want to make out I sneaked," Wilshin was saying to his cronies. "They've been trying to get something up against me for a long time past. Well, let 'em! It won't hurt me!"

"Serve 'em jolly well right! They deserved all they got, and a bit more," said Gerring. "I say that the Head is right. It's rotten bad form for—"

Gerring subsided suddenly, as Earle junior pushed him on one side.

"Well?" said Earle junior.

"What do you want?" he said. "You clear out! I'm talking to my friends. Shove off!"

"Remember what I called you outside by the five's-court this afternoon," asked Earle.

"You didn't call me anything. You know better."

"Oh, do I? Well, I'll say it again! I say you are a rotten sneak and a filthy cad! You've done a thing no chap in the Fourth has ever done before, and, in case you forget it, take that—"

Earle drew his hand back and smote Wilshin across the face with his palm. It was a good old-fashioned smack—one that went off like a pistol-shot, and stung enough to bring tears to Wilshin's eyes.

Stung and smarting, blinking to keep back the tears, Wilshin made a rush. He struck out with his right, and caught Earle junior one on the under-jaw, that sent him spinning backwards against the imitation marble pedestal, on which was perched the bust of Homer.

"Look out!" yelled Peters. But neither Wilshin nor Earle was troubling to look out, and down came old Homer with a smash, and spread his fragments far and wide. Up in the corner Wilshin and Earle were at it like a couple of tiger-cats. Earle was in the corner with his back against the wall, and somewhat hampered by the confined space, so that Wilshin looked like getting the best of it.

"Come out in the open!" bellowed Bimby. "I say, come out in the open, you cad, and fight fair!"

"You shut up!" yelled Peters. "Mind your own business!"

"It's Earle's doing; he started it, and he'll— You beast!"

"Come on!" yelled Bimby. "Three Corners, come on." He himself picked out Peters and drove his left fist into Peters's eye by way of starting the entertainment.

"Wade in—wade in, you Three Corners!" yelled Cobb, making a straight dive for Gerring. Gerring backed, but Cobb caught him and sent him spinning with a right-hander straight from the shoulder.

"Don't hit—don't hit!" yelled Samuels, trying to clamber over a desk. "I ain't done it. I ain't done nothing. Beside, you owe me—"

Cobb's foot interrupted the rest of the sentence. It caught Samuels at a moment when he presented a grand opportunity for a rear attack, and Samuels went soaring through the air, and alighted on his face on the floor.

It was hot work while it lasted, and deadly work, too. Earle had succeeded in breaking away from the corner, and he and Wilshin were the central figures in the great struggle.

Malcolm found himself engaged with Cartwright. Cartwright was on the large size, and hit hard, as Malcolm soon found out. But Malcolm could hit hard, too, and it was a fairly even thing between this pair. Now Cartwright received an injury, and backed a step or two, and now it was Malcolm's turn to give way; but the rest of the Wilshinites were getting decidedly the worst of it.

Socrates had followed Homer, and lay in small pieces of plaster on the floor, where he was ground to dust by the feet of the combatants. The blackboard tottered and fell with a crash, coming down a-top of Samuels, who had crept behind it for refuge.

Even the raised platform, sacred to Mr. Withers, was besieged by Jordan, who, arming himself with Mr. Withers' cane, proceeded to lay flat with the heads and ears of all who came within reach.

It was a din, an ear-splitting noise. Dust was rising from the floor and the ruins of Socrates and Homer in great clouds, and through the mist Huggins, who had climbed for safety on to the window-sill and was clutching the window-sash for support, could dimly see the struggling forms of the combatants.

"Do you give in, do you surrender?" shouted Bimby, who had settled with Peters and was looking for a fresh foe. "Give in, you wasters—surrender!"

"Surrender be blowed!" Jordan aimed a blow at Bimby's head with Mr. Withers' cane.

"You've cut my ear off, you howling waster!" shrieked Bimby. "You've cut my ear off!" He made a rush at the platform, but Jordan hacked and slashed with the cane.

"Come down and fight fair. Come down and—"

Bimby dived suddenly and caught Jordan by the foot. Jordan, finding himself going, seized on Mr. Withers' desk, but it proved an unstable support, and down it came, with Jordan underneath it, and Bimby underneath the lot.

But Bimby was up first, and, rolling over Jordan, shouted:

"I'll show you to bung desks at me, you cad!" "I'll show you—" Jordan tried to get up, but Bimby clung to him, and Earle and Wilshin tripped over them.

Clang, clang, clang! went the tea-bell, and the door opened, and Mr. Withers put his head in.

"In the name of goodness!" he gasped. "In the name of wonder—stop! I say stop!" He rushed into the fray, striking out blindly. "I say stop; I won't have it. I never in my life—I say—stop, you fiends—you young—"

Bash! Something caught him full in the face. It was the duster which he used to rub the blackboard clear of chalk with. And as the duster had been in use from time immemorial, it was well loaded with chalk. In an instant Mr. Withers was enveloped in a great white, choking cloud, which half blinded and choked him.

With his eyes and throat full of chalk-dust, Mr. Withers groped out and caught an ear, on to which he held.

"Leave go! I say leave go! What—"

Mr. Withers did not leave go, he held on till the dust settled a bit, then he saw that it was Hacker whom he had captured.

"If you've done with my ear, sir," said Hacker, "I'd be glad to have it."

Mr. Withers let go.

"I did not know it was you, Hacker. I was— As you see all this dust, this chalk. This is disgraceful, abominable, unheard of! Good gracious me, what is this underfoot?"

"It's the old gentlemen fallen off their perches," said Hacker. "They've been going it. I fancy I heard an awful hullabaloo, and I came in!"

Clang, clang! went the tea-bell again.

"They are all in it. All the lot—one as bad as another, except that lunatic chap Huggins. He was on the window-sill as I— Hallo!"

Hacker paused. There was a wail of terror, a crashing of breaking glass, a momentary view of a pair of feet, and Huggins had vanished through the window.

"He's fallen out," said Hacker, somewhat unnecessarily.

"They seem to be smashing up everything," said Mr. Withers, wiping the dust out of his eyes. "I want to know who threw that duster at me."

"I didn't. I give you my word I never did," said Samuels.

"Not much good asking," said Hacker. "You'll never get the truth of it."

"I suppose not," Mr. Withers sighed. "There will be no half-holiday for this Form next Saturday. And all weekly pocket-money will be forfeited until the damage that has been done is made good!"

"What about the kid that fell out of the window?" asked Hacker.

"I don't know at all, it is nothing to do with me," said Mr. Withers. "He will probably come back!"

Huggins did come back in about two minutes. He was cut in one or two places, and weeping loudly.

"Do be quiet!" said Mr. Withers. "I won't have that horrible noise!"

"I—I wish it was you who fell out of the window," said Huggins. "Serve you right if it was you. I wish it was you. I wish you had broken your—"

"Hold your tongue, sir!" shouted Mr. Withers. "I shan't. I'm going to say what I want to say, and I won't be shouted at by anyone! I say I wish—"

Hacker grabbed Huggins by the shoulder and shook him till his teeth rattled.

"Now dry up!" he said, pushing the youth into a corner. "Shut your face. Savvy?"

"My name's not Sammy, and—"

"Oh, shut down!"

"The tea-bell has rung twice," said Mr. Withers, "but as you are all in such a horrible condition, not fit, in fact, to sit down with pigs, Hacker and I will go into tea alone! What are you laughing at, Bimby? How dare—"

Mr. Withers paused. "You are an impertinent fool!" he said heatedly. "Go and clean yourselves, all of you!"

Benson Calls—A Matinee Performance—A Foul Injustice.

"I'll bet Withers means to make a bit on it. How much were the old jossers worth, anyway?" Bimby demanded.

It was Saturday afternoon, and, after having been mulcted of their week's pocket-money, the Fourth Form sadly and sorrowfully sat itself down to write imposts, while the rest of the school went out to the football field.

There was a match to-day between the Sixth, with a few chosen members of the Fifth, and Wickenhall Town, a match that the Fourth would not have missed for all that it could see.

Earle looked up at the clock.

"Kick-off in two minutes," he muttered gloomily.

"Don't—don't, I can't stand it," said Bimby, pretending to weep. "My little heart will break!"

"Dry up, and don't be an ass. It's rotten, rough luck, the rottenest—"

Earle paused. "Of course Hacker is on the ground; he's playing! Where's old Withers?"

"Don't know, and not anxious," said Bimby. "I shouldn't care if I never saw him again."

"I mean, does the bounder think that we are going to stick here all the afternoon and slog, and never even trouble to come and look at us?"

"Shame! shame!" said Bimby.

"Well, I won't write a hanged word," Earle shut up his book with a bang. "I've a good mind to go to the match and take what comes of it afterwards. If I see the match Withers won't be able to rob me of that!"

"You shall not go alone, dear friend!" said Bimby. He, too, shut up his book.

But at that moment the Head came in.

"This is a very sorry spectacle," he said. "I am very annoyed to find that the whole of this Form is kept in!"

"So are we, sir," muttered Bimby.

"What did you say?" asked the Head.

"I said that we were very sorry to be kept in, sir."

"Yes, I suppose you are. I hope that your punishment will, therefore, have all the more effect upon you."

The Head went out, and scarcely had the door closed on him than there was a tap on the window.

"It's Benson—old Benson, from Greater's place," said Earle. "What on earth—"

"Open the window!" Benson put his hands to his mouth to make a speaking trumpet.

"Open the window, some of you!"

Bimby climbed on to a form and pushed the window open, and Benson put his head inside.

"Well, well, well," he said, "you do look nice and comfortable! What nice little boys, to be sure! Having a little mothers' meeting all on your own? I were passin' by, and I thought I'd look in and see how you was, some of you! There's young Master Warrington now. I knew his father—knew him well, as fine a gentleman he were as ever drew breath—"

"Come in and sit down!" said Bimby.

"Where's old Julia Caesar—him with the Roman—"

"Withers?"

"Any old thing. I don't mind. I say, where is he? Him and me ain't on terms of brotherly love. Well, it was like this. Benson leaned a little farther in through the window.

The Opening Chapters Specially Re-written For New Readers.

The Coming of the New Boy.

EVEN before Malcolm Warrington made his appearance at the famous old school of St. Basil's, Mr. Withers, the deservedly unpopular master of the Fourth Form, learnt something about the new boy's family history, which, with his usual mean and ungenerous spirit, he meant to use for the purpose of making Malcolm's lot an unhappy one.

Through reading a letter not intended for his eyes, he gathered that years before Warrington's father—who had held a high position in the Army—had been condemned on a charge of treason, and banished from his native land. Now, although many believed Colonel Ian Warrington guiltless of the charge brought against him,

his innocence had never been proved. Malcolm was quite unaware of all this, believing his father to be on service in India.

Friends and Foes.

Of course, Malcolm was sure that the charge could not be true; still, he was greatly upset.

The bullying and sneers Malcolm endured at the hands of his thoughtless schoolfellows were lightened by the friendship of Harry Belton, the school captain, a kind-hearted young fellow, who knew all about Warrington and the unhappy cloud hanging over his father.

Besides Belton, Malcolm also found he had temporary friends in Arthur Earle and Bimby, while those who made themselves his enemies were Wilshin, Gerring, Peters, and Cartwright.

Huggins Creates Amusement.

However, for a time attention was directed

away from Warrington by the arrival of another new boy, Wilberforce Huggins, who hitherto has been petted and spoiled by indulgent maiden aunts.

The peculiarities of Huggins provided the other boys with a great deal of amusement, especially as the innocent-minded youth set his back up against Wilshin, for whom he had conceived a cordial dislike. In Malcolm, however, the simple lad found a staunch supporter.

The Three-cornered Brotherhood.

But the fact that Warrington rescued Benson, the servant of General Greater, from drowning quickly changed the attitude of the better spirits of the school towards him. By Earle, Bimby, and Eldred he was invited to join their Brotherhood of the Three Corners—seemingly a great honour.

The New Paper.

It was unfortunate, as matters eventually turned out, when Bimby suggested that the Brotherhood should bring out a paper of its own. The idea was a good one, certainly, and met with instant support. Accordingly, the paper was brought out. But it happened to contain many little bits of information concerning Mr. Withers, Wilshin, and the rest of his crew, which were far from complimentary.

Unfortunately, Wilshin succeeded in getting hold of the paper. He handed it immediately to Mr. Withers, who, outraged at the personal remarks concerning himself made therein, at once took it to the Head. Very few minutes after, Dr. Headford made his appearance in the school-room with the paper in his hand.

(Now continue on the front page.)

"Outside," said Bimby. "Oh, at the Welcome Home—"

"As per usual. And Sam Poulter—that's the landlord—he said to me, 'I've got a drop of something, Benson,' he said, 'that will make your hair stand up on end, and sing 'Home, sweet home.' So there it was—me and Sam, and others—other gents. As I was saying"—Benson paused, and his watery eyes roamed round the room—"I knew his father, I did. A true gentleman he was, a man—a man. I could tell you things, I could. Things I've seen and did in my time. I were at the Battle of Inkermann, Tel-el-Kebir, Pass-of-what-you-call—um—Waterloo. Got 'em all mixed. I been to so many. You wait, and I'll tell you."

He grabbed the edge of the sill, and tried to pull himself up; then, with inside assistance from Earle and Bimby, he managed to get one leg over, then the other, and rolled on to the floor.

"Well, well, well," he said, "this is like home! What is home without a mother?" Benson sat on the floor and looked about him. "I say, what is home without a mother? That's it. That's it. Help the old gentleman up!"

Bimby and Earle dragged him up and conducted him to Mr. Withers' chair, on which he sat down.

"Look here, I've got no hand in this business," said Wilshin audibly. "I object to it! Who is the fellow—"

"What!" Benson got up, gripping the arms of his chair. "Feller—who's that who says feller to me? Who says—I say, who says feller? That pimple-faced cabbage? Here, give me something!" He looked round, and seeing the ink-pot on Mr. Withers' desk, seized it, and flung it at Wilshin's head. Fortunately for Wilshin, Benson's aim was bad, and the pot smashed against the wall, leaving an unsightly mess where it struck on a gaudily-painted map of South America. "Never mind! Don't bother!" Benson waved his hand. "Let the girl clean it up in the morning. Let's have a song. Wait a minute, I'm going to get me pipe on."

"This'll mean trouble," said Wilshin darkly. "You brought this idiot in here—"

He glared at Bimby and Earle. "Better run and tell, hadn't you?" said Bimby, with withering sarcasm. "Better hurry up and sneak."

"Now, then, we are all right," said Benson as he lighted up. "What's the first item on this here programme? Who'll sing a song?" Nobody accepted the invitation, but after hesitating for a moment, Huggins got up.

"I couldn't sing a song—" he began. "Then sit down, winkle face!" said Benson politely.

"I could recite a poem," said Huggins. "Bravo! Bravo! Do it nice, me little man, and I'll give you a kiss. Oh, silence! Silence! Silence for little winkle face, and his recy-what-you-call—ms!"

"My poem," said Huggins, "is written by myself, and is called, 'My Faithful Dog.'"

"Was sat?" asked Benson. "Fearful what?" "Faithful dog!—My faithful dog!" said Huggins, in his shrill, high voice. "It is a pathetic poem."

"Get out your hankeys," said Bimby. "Excuse me if I sob."

"My faithful dog! My faithful dog!" said Huggins.

"You said that afore! Get on with it!" said Benson. "What about your blooming faithful dog?"

"This is the poem. Do not interrupt," said Huggins. "It begins, 'My faithful dog, my faithful—'"

"Try a cat for a change. That's five faithful dogs you've got. I hope, young feller, as you have licences for 'em all!"

"My faithful dog! My faithful dog—"

"If you say that agen, I'll bung something at you!" said Benson. "Here, wait a moment. This is where we breaks off for liquid refreshment."

He brought a bottle out of his pocket, and took out the cork and put it to his lips.

Meanwhile, taking advantage of Benson's occupation, Huggins sailed in.

"My faithful dog, my faithful dog, I love you very much. I love your shaggy, dark-brown coat. You are so good and kind!

And follow me wherever I do go. That is why I love my faithful dog. My faithful dog, my faithful dog, I—"

"What's he still at it?" bellowed Benson. "That there young hump is still getting his faithful dog off his chest! Sit down! Sit down! Silence! Order! Shut up! Now, we'll have a song."

"But—" said Huggins.

"Ten days without the option of no fine!" said Benson. "Take the prisoner away. Now then, all together, 'Ere a sheer hulk lies poor Tom Bowling, the darling of the crew.' Join in, can't you, some of you? 'No more he'll hear the er-er-tempest howlin', for death—" I can't sing a-sittin' down. I'll stand up to it."

Benson got on his feet, and leaning on Mr. Withers' desk, waving time with his pipe in his right hand, started again.

"'Ere a sheer hulk lies poor Tom Bow—" "Good gracious me!" Mr. Withers stood on the open doorway transfixed. "What does this mean? Who—how—who admitted this person?"

"Set down at the back, and don't make no noise!" said Benson. "I'm singing! I'll start agen. 'Here a sheer hulk lies—" "Stop this! Stop this instantly, and leave this place at once!" shouted Mr. Withers.

"Hullo! Why, it's old Nosey Parker, and I

never knew it!" Benson broke off. "Old Nosey! Well, well, well!"

"You impudent fellow! Go! Leave this place at once! I do not know how you gained admittance, but you are trespassing! Your presence here is an insult, and I shall take good care that your master is made acquainted with your impertinence!"

While Mr. Withers talked, Benson stood gravely beating time with his pipe-stem.

"Ain't he a little oratorium, as the saying is? Don't he speak nice and quick? Go on, let's have some more!"

"I tell you I will not have it!" shrieked Mr. Withers. "Go away at once! Leave, I say! Immediately! Begone!"

"This is where the tragic comes in," said Benson, smiling. "Look at him; ain't he a little pieter—with his nose and all?"

"This is—is—" Mr. Withers stuttered; he advanced towards his desk. "I say, fellow—I say, go away! You have no right here—no right at all; you are intruding on these boys—I will not explain! Go away! Do you hear me, or shall I be obliged to send for the police?"

Benson stood looking down at Mr. Withers, still beating time with his pipe, and smiling inanely at the angry master. Then he reached over and put one hand caressingly on Mr. Withers' head.

"There was a time," he said thickly, "when me and him didn't hit it. Now I love him. He's dearer to me 'n anything. He's the apple of me eye, and the pride of me—"

"Take your filthy paw off me!" shouted Mr. Withers. "This is too much! Wilshin, go for Hacker! Tell him—"

"Hacker is at football, sir," said Wilshin.

"Yes, yes; then fetch Dr. Headford! No—no, he has gone out! Was anything more unfortunate? I say, man—" Mr. Withers turned—"you must go! You have no right here! Besides, you are drunk!"



With a terrific crash Mr. Withers' desk was overturned, and fell to the floor raising a cloud of dust. At the same moment the master himself appeared on the scene of chaos, to receive a chalky duster full in the face.

"Never let it be said!" said Benson seriously. "Don't say the word! It is not drunk, but tears of joy, you see!"

"He must be put out!" said Mr. Withers.

"He must be instantly put out!"

"For to-night we'll happy be, for to-night we'll happy be, for to-night we'll happy be, to-morrow we'll be sober." Now, then, altogether—"For to-night—"

"Enough! I will not have it! Wilshin, your assistance! Gerring, Earle, some of you, put this man out!"

Wilshin got up, and Gerring and Peters followed his example.

"Put him out, sir?" said Wilshin.

"Yes, I say, put him out! Earle—"

"I am not going to interfere," said Earle.

"It is not my business."

"Do what I tell you!" shouted Mr. Withers.

"I am not going to!" Earle put his hands into his pockets. You haven't the right to order us to do what you don't want to do yourself!"

"Earle, how dare you?" screamed Mr. Withers. "Gerring, Wilshin, and the rest of you, forward! Seize that fellow, and put him out!"

"Meanin' me?" said Benson, suddenly waking up. "Meanin' me? Come on, then!" He gripped the chair on which he had been sitting, and swung it in the air, then lurched forward and fell against the desk, knocking it off the platform, and sending it crashing down almost on top of Mr. Withers, Wilshin, and Gerring.

"There it goes, silly old thing!" said Benson. "Accidents will happen in the best regulated families. Well, well, well, don't bother! The girl'll clear it away in the morning!"

"Drag him down!" cried Mr. Withers. "This cannot be permitted! I say, drag him down!" He danced up and down with excitement, and ordered Wilshin and the others forward, while he himself occupied a safe position in the rear.

But Benson, in spite of his age and infirmity, looked dangerous, and Wilshin and Gerring and Peters approached with hesitation.

"Now, you—you must really go, don't you know!" said Wilshin nervously.

"You come nigh or near me, and I'll pull your nose out as long as old Parker's over there," said Benson. "You know me—Sergeant Benson, late Har, Hem, Hel, Hi, and don't you forget it! What-ho, without there, bring me me trusty sword!"

"I say, but you know—don't you—you know," said Wilshin.

"I say, turn the fellow out!" shouted Mr. Withers. "Out with him at once!"

"Look here, sir, have a go at him!" said Wilshin. "He'll mind you, perhaps."

"He will not! I will not interfere, I say!"

"Let's have a song and dance," said Benson.

"I'll sing you a song, Rum ti, tum ti, too-roo-looral, It ain't very long, Rum ty tum—"

Benson commenced to dance, capering about on the platform like a performing elephant, while the boys shouted with laughter.

"Nimble, ain't I, considering I'm turned twenty-five?" he shouted, delighted that he had an appreciative audience. "Lor, but that's nothing! I'll show you!" He stooped down suddenly, and before anyone knew what he meant to do, he turned head over heels, and, falling off the platform, landed on the floor, with a terrific crash, at Mr. Withers' feet.

Then he sat up, all fuddled and dazed, rubbing the back of his head.

"Coward!" he said, glaring at Mr. Withers.

"Coward! You struck me!"

"Now, then, Wilshin—quickly!" cried Mr. Withers. "I say, Wilshin, come!"

Wilshin and the rest hurried themselves on top of Benson, who, though down, was far from being

"I—I will fetch the police!" he gasped. "This is beyond endurance! I will have you locked up, you brute! I—"

Mr. Withers darted towards the door, and flung it open. There was just a chance that the Head had come back from his walk, and Mr. Withers flew to his study to see.

The Head had come back, and as the door flew open, and Mr. Withers tumbled in, he looked up in surprise.

"Mr. Withers! Why—" The strong aroma of the whisky caught the Head's nostrils, and a stony glare of deeply-rooted suspicion came into his face.

"Mr. Withers, how dare you intrude on me in this manner, sir? What does this mean?"

Everything was against Mr. Withers so far as appearance went. His nose—his most prominent feature—had been rubbed against the floor, and was showing signs of wear and tear, his clothes were anyhow, and covered with dust, his collar gone, and then that abominable smell that there was no mistaking.

The Head rang the bell on his table sharply.

"Not a word, sir!" he said. "I must confess that this is a most painful—a most humiliating and painful experience for me!"

"It's nothing to what I've suffered!" cried Mr. Withers. "I say it's nothing to what—I've been attacked—a brute of a fellow—"

"Enough, sir!" The Head held up his hand, and turned to the door as it opened. "Toogood, conduct Mr. Withers to his room, if you please!" he said firmly.

"Conduct—what—oh!" Toogood broke off suddenly and clapped his hand over his mouth.

"Now, you come along!" he said persuasively.

"You come along, do! Lawks, talk about a walking distillery!"

"Get him to his room at once before any of the boys return," said the Head.

"What does this mean?" shouted Mr. Withers.

"I say, what does this mean? Do you dare to impute, to insinuate that I am intoxicated? I—great goodness, this is too much!"

"That's what we think," said Toogood.

"You come along nice and quiet like a good gentleman."

He gripped Mr. Withers by the arm, and dragged him a step towards the door.

"Go, sir!" thundered the Head. "Go at once! I will not allow you to disgrace yourself, me, and the school! I say, go at once!"

"Bless me," stammered Mr. Withers, "you've taken leave of your senses! I tell you I have been grossly ill-used. I tell you that I have been—"

"We've heard that old tale afore," said Toogood. "Now, you come along."

Mr. Withers fought, but Toogood was sturdy, and Mr. Withers found himself drifting towards the door.

"I say, I demand—I demand as my right," he shouted, clutching at the door-handle to save himself—"I say, in the name of justice, of reason, of—of anything—Leave go, you confounded fellow! Leave go, do you hear?"

"I'm partial to a drop of whisky myself," said Toogood, "but there's a limit, and you've gone past it, master! Now, you come along and lie down!"

He dragged Mr. Withers' hand from the handle, and the Head pushed the door to after them. For a moment a silent struggle went on in the hall outside, then a series of bumps and stifled yells, followed by silence.

The Head opened the door and peeped out, and saw that Mr. Withers and his captor had gone.

"A horrible exhibition! I cannot understand it!" he said. "Presently I shall require an explanation. I cannot overlook such a terrible thing as this—no!"

Upstairs the unfortunate Mr. Withers had been hurled into his bed-room by Toogood.

"Now, then, off with them clothes!" said Toogood.

"Off with—with my clothes? What for? No; I refuse! I absolutely decline! I will not take my clothes off!"

"And I say you will! You are going to bed, and you are going to have a nice quiet sleep, and then you'll be better."

Mr. Withers stood in the middle of the room, and regarded Toogood with a look of stony despair.

"Man," he said, in a hollow voice, "do you suspect me of being drunk?"

Toogood sniffed the atmosphere.

"Suspect ain't the word!" he said briefly.

"You get aloof into bed!"

(To be continued in next Thursday's BOYS' HERALD.)

A WORD FROM YOUR EDITOR.

[I want every one of my chums who reads this notice to give it his most earnest and thoughtful attention, because in it I wish to say a few words about the wonderful institution I have started in connection with this paper and "The Boys' Friend," under the name of "The Boys' Friend" Correspondence College. With this issue of our paper you have an excellent opportunity of joining and of receiving the best instruction it is possible to obtain in those subjects you desire to take in the Civil Service examination, or to fit you for a literary or commercial career. It should be borne in mind that those who join first will be the first to receive their courses of tuition through the post. Another great advantage which "The Boys' Friend" Correspondence College boasts, in addition to the fact that it supplies the most thorough and up-to-date instruction practically free, of course, is an Employment Bureau, which has been established for the purpose of securing remunerative positions for those who have passed the college examination, and have obtained a certificate of merit from the Principal of the College. Therefore, my boys, hurry up your applications. Don't delay. Join now.]

YOUR EDITOR'S ADVICE



YOUR EDITOR (H. E.).

Your Editor is always glad to hear from you about yourself or your favourite paper. He will answer you by post if you send a stamped addressed postcard or envelope.

Write to him if you are in trouble, if you want information, or if you have any ideas for our paper.

All letters to be addressed to the Editor of THE BOYS' HERALD, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.

If your letter is not replied to here, it may be answered in "The Boys' Realm" next Saturday, or "The Boys' Friend" next Tuesday.

It will pay you to get a copy of each and see.

Controller of
THE BOYS' HERALD—Thursday.
THE BOYS' REALM—Saturday.
THE BOYS' FRIEND—Tuesday.

"Always Honest."

AS I have already announced to my friends, a sequel to this very clever and popular story was contemplated, and now I am able to tell them definitely that the new story starts in a fortnight's time, and that its title is

"HONESTY WINS."

For the benefit of my friends who are reading "Always Honest," I may tell them that the sequel to our present story will be quite a new tale, which new readers can take up, so I hope they will do me the kindness to advertise the fact that this new serial starts in two weeks' time, and that it will be written by Mr. Allan Blair and your servant, Hamilton Edwards.

I think all my friends will admit that the new story will be even an advance upon the last one, and that it will be read with intense satisfaction by all.

Free Education.

There is no question, to my mind at any rate, that the secret of Great Britain's strength—the force which keeps her at the head of all the nations—lies in education.

When the poor boy can obtain an education as easily as the son of the rich man, it will be a great and glorious thing for this country.

In a small way I am trying to help this movement, and I look forward to "The Boys' Friend" Correspondence College doing a great deal of good for lads who wish to get on.

There must be hundreds and hundreds, nay, thousands of boys who are desirous of taking up a course of shorthand or who wish to become journalists or writers, or who would like a course in English literature, and there must also be thousands of boys who wish to secure posts in the Civil Service.

Every one of these boys should write for particulars of "The Boys' Friend" Correspondence College. I am glad to say that the idea has caught on, and that the applications to take up the course are coming in steadily.

It is a simple matter to become a student of "The Boys' Friend" Correspondence College. Supposing you wish to enter for the examination held for Boy Clerks in the Civil Service, and you haven't the means to pay for an expensive course of tuition at one of the ordinary correspondence colleges, all you have to do is to cut twelve coupons out of either "The Boys' Friend" or THE BOYS' HERALD—three from one and nine from the other, or six from one and six from the other. So long as they are all from the same week's issue it doesn't matter.

Now, send these coupons in, sell or give away your copies of the paper from which they have been cut, and you will receive the first lesson of the course. In all there are only twelve les-

sons. You need not take a lesson every week if you cannot spare the time. You can take a lesson one week, and then the next a fortnight or three weeks later, if you like. Everything is arranged to suit the convenience of the boys who wish to take advantage of this wonderful offer.

Remember that the whole cost of the course is covered by sending the twelve coupons for each lesson, and each lesson includes not only the paper, which is sent to you, but criticisms and corrections by the staff of teachers and masters, who are retained especially for "The Boys' Friend" Correspondence College.

Set this offer against the charges which are made by any other correspondence college, and you will find how trifling is the cost to the lad who wants to get on.

This week, then, I want to spur on all my friends who are ambitious to take one of the courses. Let them try the first lesson, and if they find it too difficult, they can write to me, and perhaps I may be able to help them. Anyway, I want them to understand that I am offering them a first-class education at a cost which is quite nominal.

The Attack on "The Boys' Friend."

My readers will doubtless remember that last week I made reference to an attack on "The Boys' Friend" by Mr. Alderman Hugh Morton, of Newcastle, whilst trying the case of a lad who had been foolish enough to commit a most stupid and silly robbery—a robbery which obviously was of so little criminal intent that one can only sympathise with the parents and pity the lad, whose sense of right and wrong at the moment must have been missing. He condemns it as a paper of unwholesome reading.

Now, below I publish a statement which I have received from the father of the boy in question, and in this statement it will be seen that "The Boys' Friend" is exonerated from all blame. Naturally, the criticism of "The Boys' Friend" is also a criticism of THE BOYS' HERALD and "The Boys' Realm," for as all my friends know, all three papers are controlled by myself, and are run on exactly the same principle.

Statement by the Boys' Father.

I have noticed some of the Press reports of the safe robbery at Newcastle-upon-Tyne (with which my son was charged at the police-court of that city last week), and it seems to me that such reports are exaggerated and inaccurate, and tend to give the public the impression that the robbery was suggested by a copy of "The Boys' Friend" which was found upon the boy and produced in court, showing a picture of a man forcing open a safe.

A paper was certainly produced in court, which was said to have been found on the lad when he was arrested, but I did not read it myself, but concluded, from what was said by others, that the illustrations may have had something to do with the matter. But now I find, from what my son tells me, that he did not purchase the copy of "The Boys' Friend"

until the Saturday after the robbery, so that I have come to the conclusion that the issue of "The Boys' Friend" could not have influenced or suggested the crime, especially as I cannot find the illustration of breaking open a safe, which was alleged to be in its pages.

It is true there are pictures referring to a detective-story; but these are more likely to deter from crime than to suggest it, as they show the absolute folly of attempting anything of the kind.

I would also like to add that personally I am not much in favour of stories of that kind, and would really much prefer that my boy did not read fiction at all. He, however, is very fond of reading, and is a good scholar, and, as a man of the world, I know that there are many other books published which would be much worse reading for him than the tales in "The Boys' Friend." I am told that some books which were considered suitable for boys in Queen Victoria's time are regarded as classics, but are not at all likely to influence a boy for good in the long run.

I much regret that my boy was not a member of the League of Boy Friends, the rules of which are certainly very good.

Although I would much rather have preferred that my son should have devoted his time to solid and improving literature, I quite appreciate that boys will be boys, and that they like to read romantic stories such as are contained in publications like "The Boys' Friend." I have, however, done my best to prevent my son reading anything unwholesome, and I have consequently found it my duty to burn some books which he has attempted to read; but, as I have always thought "The Boys' Friend" was a good paper, I have never felt that I had occasion to burn it, as I have done with some other literature, and I am sorry if anything I have said has damaged that paper.

I have looked over recent issues of the paper, and can see that the Editor is trying to encourage his readers to live straightforward, manly lives, in which endeavour I wish him every success.

JAMES NESBIT.

Dated this twelfth day of January, 1906.

The Good the League of Health and Strength is Doing.

I am very pleased to find, from the letters which are reaching me, that the influence of the League of Health and Strength is real and lasting, that the good it does is appreciated, and that there are many boys in this country to-day who are able to say honestly that THE BOYS' HERALD League of Health and Strength has been to them the means of physical and moral salvation.

I do not want to preach, but I do want to draw the attention of my friends to the rules of this League, and to the fact that there are on all sides many dirty-minded boys, who have been drawn into bad habits—smoking, swearing, gambling, and worse.

To all these boys I want to address a word of warning—to tell them what little fools they are. I wish I could make them realise now the tremendous, fearful regret which they will experience when they are ten years older, when the

stupid practices of which they have been guilty are beginning to get in their deadly work, when their moral character, as well as their physical system, is debased and almost destroyed.

But I suppose that most boys won't listen. Those who do will have reason to be very thankful, and it is from those who have listened that the following letters come to me:

"Dear Editor,—I am taking the liberty of writing to you about THE BOYS' HERALD and myself.

"As for myself, I am ashamed to say that I was once the victim of a very silly habit, but, thanks to you, I have learnt how wrong and foolish I was.

"I may say that bad company first taught me the vile practice. I am glad to be able to tell you that I managed to give it up about four or five months ago. Now I feel an altogether different fellow. My energy has returned, and I really feel like my old self again.

"If you will reply to my letter in THE BOYS' HERALD, I shall be very grateful.

"Your devoted reader,

"S. S. Y."

This friend of mine confesses that, although he is much improved in health, yet there are certain weaknesses still left. I can only say to him that if he wants advice he must send me a stamped addressed envelope; then I shall be very pleased to be of help to him. As my readers can easily understand, it would not be well for me to deal intimately with this question in the pages of a paper like THE BOYS' HERALD, so that those of my friends who want advice regarding themselves should send me a stamped addressed envelope. They can be most certain that their names will be held by me in the strictest confidence, and even the clerk who takes down my reply to the letter will not be permitted to seal and address the envelope. The names and addresses will remain in my keeping, and no one will be permitted to see them.

The other letter is as follows:

"Liverpool.

"Dear Editor,—Just a few lines to let you know what THE BOYS' HERALD League of Health and Strength has done for me.

"One of my friends, who is not a reader of your paper, said to me the other day: 'George, how did you manage to give up smoking, and how is it that you don't swear now?' To which I replied: 'I have joined THE BOYS' HERALD League of Health and Strength.' Thereupon this chum of mine promised to join, too, and I sincerely hope he will keep his promise.

"I am sorry to say that my father wants me to stop reading your papers. I have told him that I will ask you whether reading them will do me any harm.

"I remain, yours sincerely,

"GEORGE BUCKSHALL."

To my friend Buckshall I would say, if he finds he cannot read all my papers, he must abandon those of them which he shall select. As for his parent's disapproval of my journals, it has always been my invariable rule to say to the boy who asks me if he shall read them: 'Certainly not, if your parent objects.' If your parent doesn't think from his own judgment that THE BOYS' HERALD is a paper fit for you to read, then, George Buckshall, I can only say to you I am very sorry for his judgment; but you must obey your parents' behest.

Football Competition Result.

In the Ninth Football Competition no fewer than two hundred and eighty-nine competitors sent in correct forecasts. The winning teams in the selected matches played on Saturday, January 6th, 1906, scored thirty goals. The sum of £7 15s. is therefore to be divided in prize-money. Consequently a post-office order for sixpence will be sent to each of the successful competitors.

YOUR EDITOR (H.E.).

"DAILY MAIL."

Our College Corner.

By the Principal of "The Boys' Friend" Correspondence College.

A GREAT number of letters have come to hand from readers in all parts, asking for information not given in the prospectus of this college, already advertised. Many readers, too, anxious for personal letters in reply to their communications, enclosed stamped, directed envelopes, and have by this time received their replies. As, however, some of the questions asked deal with items of general interest, many of them are referred to again below. Many readers have asked us to give instruction in other subjects as to which no announcement has as yet been made. This we shall do as the demand justifies it.

A great number of students have received their first sets of lessons, and have settled down to hard work. Already I can safely say that a more promising collection of pupils was never got together. Many wrote letters with the coupons which they sent in, and better written, worded, and punctuated letters than some of these I have never seen. If these students keep up through the twelve lessons as they have begun, I shall have a busy time writing letters

of congratulation after the next boy clerks' examination.

Before I proceed to deal with my correspondence, I will go over a few points which all must bear continually in mind.

First of all, then, let me deal with the time to be taken by students over each set of lessons. There is no rule as to the length of time a student must take over one set of lessons. Obviously, no rule could be made, because students are differently circumstanced as regards the time they can devote each day to study.

But, at the same time, I hope all students will endeavour to get through one set in one week. There is nothing like setting about the work in a brisk way; much better progress is so made. Besides that, the student must remember that there are twelve sets to be got through, including all the reading recommended in them, and that will extend to three months, taking only one week over each set.

With regard to the reading recommended in the various lessons, I want students to be very careful not to skip any of this. I know, of course, that there are many uninteresting passages in history and geography in regard to which the temptation to "skip" becomes almost irresistible. Everybody has had the same temptation, but you may rest assured that the successful men have fought it down. Do your reading thoroughly, then.

Now, there is another matter upon which I must say a word here. Many readers of "The Boys' Friend" and THE BOYS' HERALD have not

quite grasped the method of paying for admission to the B.F.C.C.

Each week, in both papers, a coupon is printed. Twelve of those coupons, all bearing the same number—in other words, all from the same issue of the paper—posted to me, will enable the sender to receive the first set of lessons—either Civil Service, Shorthand, or English Composition. A penny stamp must be enclosed with the coupons, to cover postage of reply. When he has worked that set of lessons, he must send in with his work for revision, twelve further coupons from the then current issue of either "The Boys' Friend" or THE BOYS' HERALD, to pay for the second set of lessons, which will be forwarded to him with his revised work in set one.

The coupons in "The Boys' Friend" and THE BOYS' HERALD are numbered alike—for example, the present coupon is Number 4, and the same number will be found in the issue of "The Boys' Friend," now on sale at all newsagents, and the intending student may therefore send in six from "The Boys' Friend" and the other half from this paper if he wishes, so long as they all bear the same number. A penny stamp must be enclosed with the twelve coupons.

I hope this matter is now quite clear, and that readers desirous of joining the college will send in their first twelve coupons to me this week.

"MOMUS" (Ireland).—The explanation above answers your query. Shall be glad to enrol you

as a student in the Correspondence College this week.

H. S. B. (Edmonton).—The B.F.C.C. is a university for students of all ages.

"A READER."—There are several branches of the Civil Service for which you could train, but it would be necessary for you to pass a doctor after the examination; and, from what you say in your letter, I gather you would not be able to do that. There is no reason why you should not learn shorthand, however; and perhaps you would like to go in for the English composition course as well.

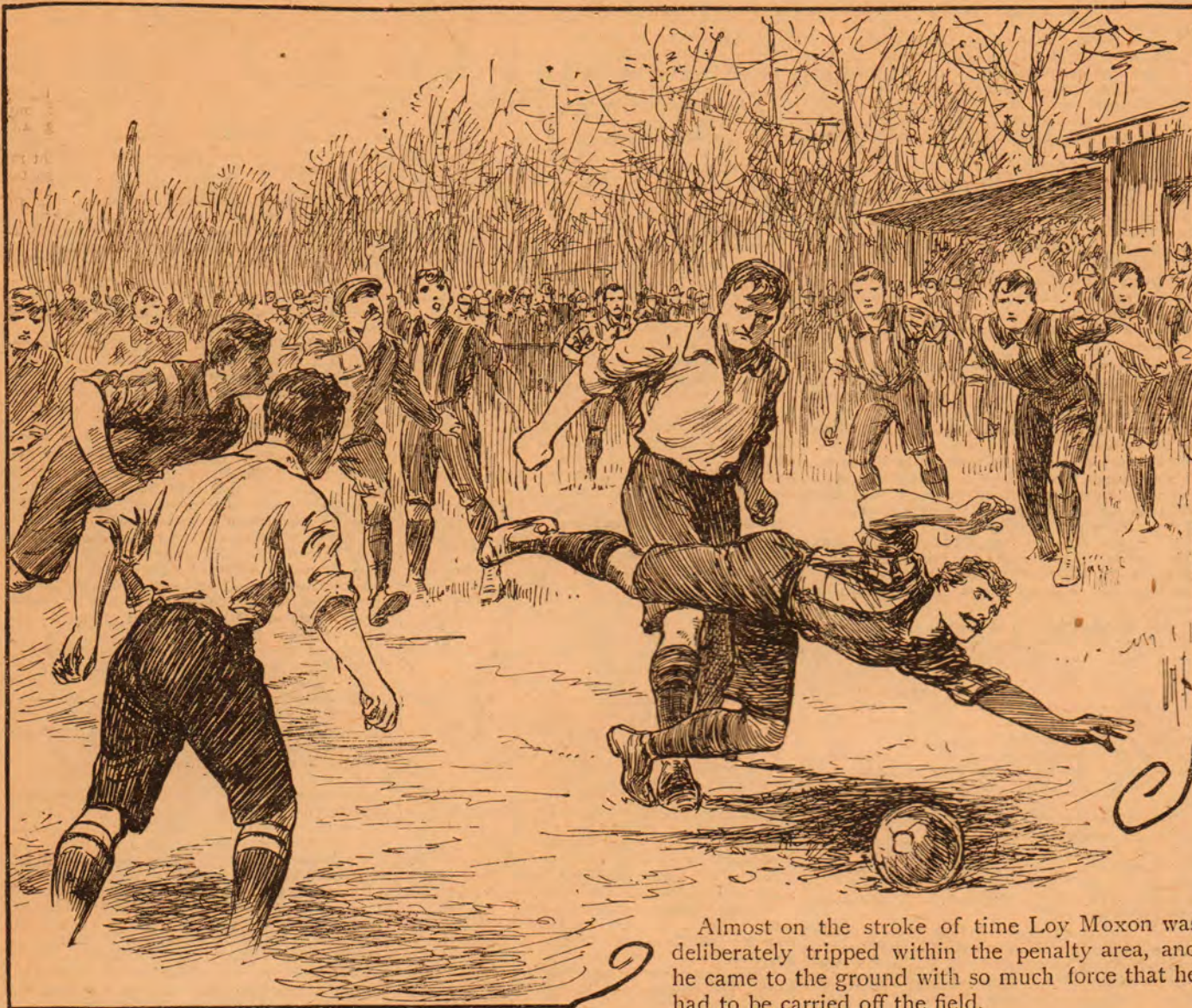
"ONE OF THE TRUSTY BAND" (Cardiff).—Thanks for your letter and for the good wishes from you and your friends. Doubtless you have read the full announcement about the college since you wrote, and I hope to see your name among the new students. I quite appreciate what you say about the impossibility of working in a class where others are playing. There is, of course, no fear of this with tuition by correspondence.

J. A. (Southsea).—You omitted to enclose the twelve coupons. Immediately we receive them we will forward you the first set—Civil Service course.

A. C. C. (Edmonton).—Thank you for your excellent letter and good wishes. Since you wrote you have read the announcements in this and our companion paper. From your letter, I should judge that you would not have any difficulty in passing the Civil Service examination, and I shall be glad to hear that you have decided to become one of our students.

The Football Detective.

By
MAXWELL
SCOTT.



Almost on the stroke of time Loy Moxon was deliberately tripped within the penalty area, and he came to the ground with so much force that he had to be carried off the field.

Fighting Many Foes.

VERY shortly after joining the ranks of the Newport Rovers as a professional, Frank Goodwin falls under a cloud which hangs over his life for many a long day. In an altercation with a former member of the Rovers' team—Sam Beach by name—Frank strikes his opponent in self-defence, and Beach falls over the edge of a cliff.

By a scoundrelly bookmaker—Joe Mumby, who is in league with Beach—Frank is led to believe that Beach has been killed. The bookmaker now uses his knowledge to the end of getting Frank to lose matches for his team. By this means Mumby hopes to make quite a snug little fortune. Frank, however, refuses to fall in with Mumby's scheme, and confides his secret to Nelson Lee, the famous detective. Lee at once sees through Mumby's subterfuge, and devotes his efforts to probing the secret of Beach's whereabouts. This eventually he does, and shortly after Beach meets his death.

The interest of the story also centres round Maggie Nemo, to whom Frank Goodwin is engaged; Captain Gaskell, co-heir with Maggie to a fortune of £100,000; and Josiah Moxon, a dishonest lawyer, who executed the codicil to a will making Maggie heiress to the £50,000. Moxon's son Loy, a player in the Rovers' team, also aids his father in his villainous schemes.

By Moxon Maggie is kidnapped, the lawyer hoping to be able to compel her to marry Loy. So far, neither Nelson Lee nor Frank Goodwin succeeds in discovering Maggie's place of imprisonment. Still, the detective scores a temporary triumph in securing the arrest of Joe Mumby. The rascal is brought before the magistrates and remanded on bail. Beach is now dead, so Mumby resolves on flight, but before doing so resolves to interview Captain Gaskell to sell to him the secret of Maggie Nemo's whereabouts.

Josiah Moxon, however, arrives upon the scene and denounces Mumby's treachery. A struggle takes place, in which Josiah Moxon is badly hurt. Mumby again takes to flight, and reaches Newcastle, where he remains in hiding with a fellow-bookmaker named Nix.

(From this point new readers can continue the story to-day.)

A Fresh Move on the Part of Mumby.

THE course of action which Mumby had mapped out for himself after his arrest had been divided into three stages, which might have been labelled (1) blackmail, (2) treachery, (3) flight.

Briefly summarised, his plan had been this:

First of all, he would force Josiah Moxon to bail him out of prison, by threatening to tell Nelson Lee where Maggie Nemo was imprisoned. Having thus regained his freedom, he would break his promise to Moxon, and would sell the secret of Maggie's whereabouts to Gaskell for the biggest sum he could squeeze out of him. He would then go to Newcastle and hide at the house of Caleb Nix, who had agreed to give him shelter, until such time as he was ready to complete the third stage of his plan, by crossing the Atlantic and starting life afresh in the United States.

Up to a certain point, as the reader knows, this plan succeeded to perfection. That is to say, Josiah Moxon, yielding to Mumby's threats, provided the money to bail him out; and on Monday night the bookmaker interviewed Captain Gaskell and offered to tell him where Maggie was imprisoned in return for a thousand pounds.

Gaskell, as previously described, offered seven hundred pounds; and Mumby was on the point of closing with the bargain when Moxon burst into the room and confronted him with a revolver. In the scuffle which ensued Gaskell was accidentally shot and Moxon was stunned. Mumby then took to flight, and after outwitting Nelson Lee he arrived at Nix's house, in Newcastle—not with a thousand pounds in his pocket, as he had hoped, but with one and fivepence halfpenny!

Nix was away from home when he arrived, but he returned on Tuesday afternoon; and when he learned that Mumby had come to Newcastle with less than eighteenpence in his pocket he expressed his views on the situation in clear and forcible language.

"If you didn't get any money from Captain Gaskell, why did you come here?" he demanded. "I don't keep a lodging-house for paupers, least of all for paupers that are wanted by the police! When you asked me if you could stay at my house till you were ready to start for America, you said you'd pay me a pound a day for every day you were here!"

"So I will," said Mumby.

"Out of one and fivepence halfpenny!" said Nix, with a coarse laugh.

"Out of the money I get from Captain Gaskell," said Mumby. "As soon as he has recovered from his injuries—"

"But he may die from his injuries," interrupted Nix.

"Oh, no, he won't!" said Mumby. "According to this morning's paper, the bullet glanced off the bone without inflicting any very serious damage. He'll be all right in a fortnight or three weeks, the doctor says."

"Three weeks!" sneered Nix. "And do you suppose I'm going to give you free board and lodgings for three weeks, to say nothing of the risk of being had up by the police for harbouring a fugitive from justice, on the off-chance of

Gaskell getting better and stumping up? Why, Nelson Lee may have found the girl by that time, and where will you get any money then? No, no; I'm not playing at that game!"

And then Mumby showed his teeth. "Very well," he said calmly, "say the word—tell me straight that you won't let me stay here, turn me out—and I'll go to the police and give myself up. But remember, when I give myself up to the police I shall tell them it was you and I who attacked Nelson Lee last Friday night and stunned him and shut him up in that empty cottage on the moors."

That settled the matter. Nix hauled down his flag at once, and, after he had explained that he had never intended to turn his "old pal" out, it was settled and arranged that Mumby should remain where he was until he was able to resume his negotiations with Captain Gaskell.

That was on Tuesday afternoon. Next day the draw was made for the third round of the English Cup. The result was published in the evening papers, one of which Nix brought home with him on Wednesday night.

"Seen the draw for the third round?" he said to Mumby.

"No," said Mumby. "Anything interesting?"

"Rather!" said Nix. "Newport Rovers are drawn against Newcastle, at St. James's. There ought to be some money to be picked up on a tie like that. Everybody in Newport will want to back the Rovers, and everybody here will want to put his shirt on the United."

"Shall you have a flutter?" asked Mumby.

"You bet I shall!" said Nix. "I dropped close on a hundred pounds on the second round, and I mean to get my own back on this match."

"Which team will you back?"

"I don't know yet. On the face of it, of course, it's long odds against the Rovers, for they've two men on the injured list, Atkinson and Lockwood, and the match is on the Newcastle ground."

"Then why do you hesitate?"

"Because I'm afraid of Nelson Lee coming back into the Rovers' team. If he does, and Goodwin keeps his present form, it's six to four on the Rovers."

"You needn't be afraid of Nelson Lee," said Mumby, with a grin. "He's far too busy hunting for me to worry his head about football."

"Ah, well, I'll wait a day or two before I open my book," said Nix. "I don't want to be bitten a second time, and, anyhow, there's no hurry."

He waited until the following Saturday, when the Rovers, as the reader may remember, had a match against Manchester City. As Nelson Lee did not play in that match, Nix concluded that the newspapers were right, and that the great

detective had finally retired from the team. On the following Monday, therefore, he started operations, laying odds of two to one against the Rovers, at which figure, during the course of the ensuing week, he booked more bets (mostly in Newport) than ever he had booked in any single week before.

"I think I'll run down to Newport to-morrow," he said to Mumby on Friday night. "The Rovers have a match on their own ground against Wolverhampton Wanderers, and I may be able to pick up a few more bets on the Cup tie."

"I don't think you will," said Mumby.

"How's that?"

"Frank Goodwin and Tim Molloy are in Ireland playing in the International," said Mumby, "and Lockwood and Atkinson are still on the sick list. With four of their best men out of the team the Rovers are dead certain to be licked to-morrow, and, consequently, their supporters will be in no humour for backing them for the Cup tie next Saturday."

"I'll chance it, anyhow," said Nix. "Accidents will happen, you know, even in football, and if the Rovers should happen to win to-morrow afternoon there'll be hundreds of lunatics ready to back 'em for the match next Saturday."

Next morning, accordingly, Nix armed himself with a roll of betting tickets and journeyed down to Newport. He returned about seven o'clock in the evening, and the moment he entered the house Mumby saw that something was wrong.

"Is anything the matter?" he asked.

"Everything's the matter!" snarled Nix, flinging his bag across the room. "Nelson Lee has come back into the team, after all. He played for the Rovers this afternoon, and he's going to play for them again next Saturday."

"The odds have jumped up—as I knew they would—to six to four on the Rovers. And I stand to lose three hundred pounds if the Rovers win!"

"You'll have to hedge," said Mumby. "You've a week to do it in."

"Hedge!" said Nix, with a low, fierce laugh.

"With the odds at six to four on the Rovers, and I've been betting two to one against them! Do you think I'm made of money? I'll not hedge a single penny," he continued, striking the table with his clenched fist. "I'll stand by every bet I've made, and I won't lose 'em, either."

"But you're bound to lose your bets if the Rovers win," said Mumby.

"But the Rovers aren't going to win," said Nix. "The Rovers are going to lose, and you're the man who's going to make 'em lose."

"Me? How? Why? What do you mean?" stammered Mumby, in bewilderment.

"I mean you've got to stand by me as I've stood by you," said Nix. "You've had free board and lodgings here for nearly a fortnight, and now you've got to do something for it."

"But how?" asked Mumby. "How can I make the Rovers lose?"

"When I was in Newport to-day," said Nix, "I made inquiries about Moxon and Gaskell. Moxon got up for the first time last Sunday, but he hasn't been out of the house yet. Gaskell hasn't been out yet, either, but his coachman tells me he's practically all right again, and is going out for a short drive on Monday if it's fine."

"Well?" said Mumby, as his companion paused.

"You know where Maggie Nemo is imprisoned," said Nix. "Gaskell is willing to give you seven hundred pounds to tell him where she is. If you tell him, what will he do?"

"Murder the girl as quickly as possible," said Mumby.

"Exactly," said Nix. "And Frank Goodwin is in love with Maggie Nemo. And Frank Goodwin will be playing in the match next Saturday!"

"Well?" said Mumby again.

"When you threatened Goodwin with arrest unless he played crookedly, he defied you," said Nix. "In other words, when it was a question of sacrificing his honour or sacrificing his liberty, he preferred to sacrifice his liberty. But suppose it wasn't his liberty that was at stake, but the life of Maggie Nemo? Suppose he had to choose between playing crookedly and sacrificing the life of the girl he loved—which would he choose?"

Mumby nodded his head. He began to see what Nix was driving at.

"He would sacrifice everything—even his honour—to save Maggie Nemo's life," he said.

"Of course he would," said Nix. "Here, then, is my plan. You must write to Gaskell on Thursday, and tell him to come to Newcastle on Saturday, and bring the seven hundred pounds with him. You must tell him to come by the 12.10 train from Newport, which will land him here a few minutes before two, and you must give him the number of this house and the name of the street."

"Gaskell will reach this house about half-past two on Saturday afternoon. The match begins at three and ends at half-past four. When you've told Gaskell where the girl is imprisoned, he'll give you the money and go back to Newport. He'll leave Newcastle at four—the first train he can catch—and will arrive at Newport at half-past five."

"In the meantime, before Gaskell arrives, you must write two notes and address them both to Frank Goodwin. In the first note you must say something like this: 'I have just told Maggie Nemo's bitterest enemy where she is imprisoned. Whilst you are playing in the match this afternoon, her enemy will be on his way to murder her. If the Rovers lose, you will receive a second note at the conclusion of the match, which will tell you where she is, and if you wire at once to the Newport police, you will be in time to save her. If the Rovers win, the

The Football Detective.

(Continued from the previous page.)

girl you love will be dead by the time you return to Newport."

"In the second note," concluded Nix, "you will tell Goodwin where the girl is imprisoned. I will take the two notes to the football ground on Saturday afternoon, and I'll see that Goodwin receives the first note before the match begins. When he has read the note, and understands that Maggie Nemo's life is in his hands, do you think the Rovers will win?"

"I don't!" said Mumby promptly.

"Of course they won't," said Nix. "Goodwin will take jolly good care that Newcastle wins, even if he has to put the ball through his own goal. And the best of it is that nobody will suffer except those who deserve to suffer—Moxon and Gaskell. I shall win my bets; you'll get your seven hundred pounds; and at the conclusion of the match I shall hand your second note to Goodwin, and Maggie Nemo will be saved and set at liberty."

"Splendid! Splendid!" cried Mumby enthusiastically. "Nix, you're a genius!"

"You'll do it?" asked Nix eagerly.

"Rather!" said Mumby; and, sure enough, on the following Thursday, he wrote to Captain Gaskell, intimating that if Gaskell would come to 27, Carbrook Road, Newcastle, by the train which left Newport at 12.10 on Saturday, and would bring seven hundred pounds with him, he—Mumby—would tell him where Maggie Nemo was imprisoned.

The Secret Revealed.

GASKELL, like a good many other people, had come to the conclusion that Mumby had fled the country; and great was his surprise, therefore, and greater still his satisfaction, when he received the book-maker's letter on Friday morning.

Not for a moment did he hesitate as to whether or not he should accept the invitation. Within ten minutes of reading the letter he had written out a cheque, made payable to himself, for seven hundred pounds.

This he sent to his bank—the Newport branch of the National Provincial—with a note to say that he would call for the money later in the day, and would like it in Bank of England notes. True to his word, he called for the money in the course of the afternoon; and at noon next day (Saturday), he presented himself at the bookmaker's office at the Central Station, and asked for a first-class return to Newcastle.

Having obtained his ticket, he strolled on to the departure platform, where the first person he saw was Nelson Lee, whilst the second was Frank Goodwin, and the third was Loy Moxon.

Conscience, as Shakespeare assures us, makes cowards of us all. Especially is this true in the case of a guilty conscience. Gaskell was going to interview Mumby, in order to ascertain the whereabouts of Maggie Nemo, who had been kidnapped by Loy Moxon and his father. Maggie was Frank Goodwin's sweetheart, and Nelson Lee had been trying to find her for the past two months.

Small wonder, then, that Gaskell received a shock when he walked on to the platform and found himself confronted by Loy Moxon, Frank Goodwin, and Nelson Lee. Small wonder that his guilty conscience caused him to start and turn pale. He thought they were shadowing him.

A moment later, however, he caught sight of Patsy Regan and Tim Molloy, of Teddy Wilson and Sandy McAndrew, of Seymour, Jonas, Davy, and Mackie, of five or six of the directors of the Newport Rovers Football Club; of Tom Bellamy, the trainer, and Mr. Arkwright, the president.

And then the truth dawned on him.

His meeting with Nelson Lee and Frank and Loy was purely accidental. They were not shadowing him. Their presence at the station was simply due to the fact that they and the rest of the Rovers' team were going to Newcastle by the same train as himself, in order to try conclusions with Newcastle United in the third round of the competition for the English Cup.

"Hallo! there's Captain Gaskell!" said Frank to Nelson Lee. "I didn't know he was out again."

"He was out for the first time last Monday," said the detective. "He has been out, either walking or driving, every day this week."

"Have you been shadowing him?"

"More or less! But I haven't worried much about him, because I've good reason for believing that he's as ignorant of Maggie's whereabouts as I am. Moxon, of course, is the man I want to shadow, but Moxon is still confined to the house, or I shouldn't be going with you to Newcastle to-day."

"I wonder why he's going to Newcastle," said Frank, when the train steamed into the station, and the players crowded into the reserved saloon, whilst Gaskell took his seat in one of the first-class carriages.

"So do I," said Nelson Lee significantly. "Did you see his face when he first caught sight of us?"

"No."

"Well, he started and turned as white as a sheet. He was evidently terrified to find me here, which makes me suspect that he's up to some mischief. I wish I hadn't promised to play for the Rovers this afternoon."

"Why?"

"Because I'd dearly like to shadow Gaskell for the rest of to-day. Of course it's too late to back out now, but, at any rate, I can shadow him for a little while, and I will!"

"When?"

"When we get to Newcastle. We're due to arrive at ten minutes to two, and the match doesn't start till three; so I'll be able to shadow him for the best part of an hour."

He crossed the saloon and spoke a few words to the trainer.

"I've some business to transact in Newcastle this afternoon," he said. "I shan't drive with the team from the station to the ground, but I'll turn up on the ground about a quarter to three. Have you any objection?"

"Not the slightest," said the genial trainer. "I wouldn't let one of the professionals out of my sight before the match begins—not for two minutes—but with you it's different, of course."

Half an hour later Loy Moxon also sought an interview with the trainer. He, too, had noticed Gaskell's guilty start, and his suspicions, like those of Nelson Lee, had also been aroused. And he, too, had decided to shadow Gaskell when they reached Newcastle!

"I want to call on a friend of mine in Newcastle, before the match begins," he said, to the trainer. "I suppose it will be all right if I leave you at the station, so long as I arrive on the ground in time to change before the kick-off?"

"Couldn't you call on your friend after the match?" asked the trainer.

"No. He's going away at half-past two, so I must go straight to his house when we arrive, or I shan't be able to see him."

"All right," sighed the trainer. "If you must, you must!"

And thus it came about that when Captain Gaskell walked out of Newcastle Central Station, and turned up Clayton Street, Nelson Lee was fifteen yards behind him, and Loy Moxon was fifteen yards behind Nelson Lee!

It was a repetition, with variations, of the scene of three weeks before, when Mumby had gone to see Gaskell, not knowing that Moxon was following him, and that Nelson Lee was following them both. But on this occasion it was Gaskell who was going to see Mumby, not knowing that Nelson Lee was shadowing him, and that Loy was shadowing them both!

It would be wearisome to enumerate the various streets and roads through which the two men dogged the footsteps of the unsuspecting captain. Suffice to say that after they had tracked him through the centre of the city, and past the new barracks, they finally saw him ring the bell of a small semi-detached house in Carbrook Road. They saw him admitted by a slatternly-looking woman (Nix's wife), and then, on glancing at their watches, they perceived it was twenty minutes past two.

As the match was due to begin at three, and as they were then at least two miles from the football ground, they had no alternative but to relinquish their shadowing; and after each of them had made a note of the name of the street, and the number of the house, they turned away and struck out for St. James's Park.

Meanwhile, in blissful ignorance of the fact that he had been shadowed, Gaskell had been conducted by Nix's wife to a small room at the back of the house, where Mumby was awaiting his visitor's arrival with ill-concealed impatience.

"Ah! Here you are at last!" said Mumby, when Gaskell entered the room. "You got my letter, then?"

"Of course," said Gaskell. "Otherwise I shouldn't have been here."

"You accept my offer?"

"Yes."

"You've brought the money?"

Gaskell drew out a roll of bank-notes. "Seven hundred pounds," he said. "These are yours on the conditions we agreed on at our last meeting, namely, that you tell me where Miss Nemo is imprisoned, and help me to make away with her."

Mumby shook his head.

"The second condition is off!" he said. "I can't help you to make away with the girl now, for if I returned to Newport I'd be nabbed by the police. You'll have to do that part of the business yourself, and you'll do it easily enough, for there's only a deaf old woman to be overpowered."

Gaskell gazed at him distrustfully.

"Do you mean," he said, "that you want me to give you seven hundred pounds, and in return you'll merely tell me where the girl is imprisoned?"

"Yes."

"But how am I to know that you aren't deceiving me? If I give you this money, and go back to Newport, and find that the girl isn't at the place you name—where am I then?"

"But she is there," said Mumby. "Why should I deceive you?"

"You deceived Moxon," said Gaskell. "Also Frank Goodwin."

Mumby winced.

"Well, I'll tell you what I'll do," he said. "Give me half the money, and I'll tell you where the girl is imprisoned. When you've killed her, you shall send me the other half of the money. That means that you'll be trusting me and I'll be trusting you."

After considerable discussion Gaskell eventually agreed to these terms, and seven Bank of England notes, each of the value of fifty pounds, passed from his possession to that of Mumby.

"Now tell me where the girl is," he said eagerly.

"You know Barnby Moor?" said Mumby.

"Yes."

"You know the four cross-roads, where the road from Newholm to Flockton crosses the road from Newport to Barnby?"

"Yes."

"Well, two miles beyond the cross-roads, on the Barnby road, there's an old, half-ruined mill. It's on the left-hand side of the road, and is partly screened by a belt of trees. That's where Maggie Nemo is imprisoned. She's locked up in an upper room at the back of the mill, overlooking the yard, and the only other person who lives at the mill is an old hag, named Nan Johnson, who's as deaf as a post, and who'll probably be dead drunk when you arrive."

Gaskell's eyes were glowing like live coals. His hands were trembling with suppressed excitement. At last the secret was his! At last Maggie Nemo was at his mercy!

He glanced at his watch. It was twenty minutes past three. He had been at the house an hour.

"Do you know what time the next train leaves for Newport?" he asked, in a husky voice.

"Four o'clock," said Mumby.

"Then, by Jove, it's time I was off," said Gaskell, jumping to his feet. "Good-bye. If your information proves correct, you'll receive the other three hundred and fifty by first post on Monday morning."

He walked back to the station, caught the train, and arrived at Newport at half-past five. Having chartered a hansom, he drove as far as the four cross-roads on the Barnby road. The rest of the journey he performed on foot, for obvious reasons, and at ten minutes past six he stood in front of the old half-ruined mill in which Maggie Nemo was imprisoned!

The Penalty-kick.

IT was ten minutes to three when Loy Moxon entered the visitors' dressing-room at St. James's Park. Nelson Lee followed a second or two later, and whilst the two late arrivals were changing their things one of the programme-sellers opened the door and inquired in a loud voice:

"Which of you chaps is Frank Goodwin?"

"I am," said Frank.

The programme-seller, a boy of fifteen, produced a sealed envelope.

"Somebody shoved this into my hand when I wasn't looking," he said. "As it's addressed to you, and marked urgent, I thought I'd better bring it at once."

Frank glanced at the address—"Frank Goodwin. Urgent and important. Please deliver immediately"—and recognised the writing at once.

Frank scanned the written note inside. "And this is what he read:

"By the time you receive this note I shall have told Maggie Nemo's deadliest enemy where she is concealed. Whilst you are playing football this afternoon her enemy will be hastening to her hiding-place, intent on murdering her. If Newcastle wins you will receive another note before you leave the ground, which will tell you where Maggie Nemo is in time for you to save her. If the Rovers win, the girl you love will be dead by the time you return to Newport."

"J. MUMBY."

Thrusting the note into his pocket, Frank took the field, and from the commencement of play flung himself into the fray with a vigour that was almost maniacal.

"Goodwin isn't playing his usual game this afternoon," said the critics in the stand. "Too much vigour, and too little science, you know! See that pass? There's science and judgment for you! Oh, well shot, sir! Hard luck!"

Nelson Lee had passed the ball across to Tim, and Tim had rattled in a glorious long shot which just skimmed the crossbar.

When half-time arrived, neither team had scored.

When the Rovers had gained their dressing-room, Nelson Lee drew Frank aside.

"Now tell me what's wrong," he said.

Frank thrust his hand into the pocket of his blue-striped shirt and drew out Mumby's note.

"That!" he said.

The detective read the note.

"This explains everything," he muttered, half aloud. "Mumby is evidently in Newcastle. He has just told Maggie's deadliest enemy where she is imprisoned. And Gaskell came to Newcastle to-day! And there will still be time to save Maggie when the match is over! Good!"

To Frank's surprise, he walked to the door of the dressing-room and called to one of the attendants. What he said to this attendant Frank could not hear, nor did the detective enlighten him.

"May I keep this note for the present?" asked Nelson Lee, returning to Frank.

"Certainly."

The detective walked across the room and placed the letter in the inside pocket of his coat, which was hanging on one of the pegs. And Loy Moxon saw him!

"Time's up," cried the trainer, a moment later.

And a moment later still the players were lining up for the second half.

Forty-four of the forty-five minutes passed without either goal being pierced.

And then came the dramatic moment of Frank Goodwin's life!

Almost on the stroke of time—with less than five seconds to go—Loy Moxon was deliberately tripped within the penalty area, and came to the ground with so much force that he had to be carried off the field.

Needless to say, the referee at once awarded the Rovers a penalty-kick. At this a few of the spectators booed, and the ignorant ones amongst them yelled that time was up. So it was, but the offence had been committed before the time for play had expired, and, according to the rules,

"If necessary, time of play shall be extended to admit of the penalty-kick being taken." Which meant, in the present case, that as soon as the ball had been kicked, and had either passed between the posts or had been caught by the goalkeeper, the referee would instantly blow his whistle, and the game would be at an end.

"Goodwin!" shouted Jonas, the captain of the Rovers' team.

Frank started, and his blood seemed suddenly turned to ice.

"You take the penalty-kick," said Jonas.

Like a man in a trance, Frank staggered to where the ball lay motionless on the ground. The rest of the players, both Rovers and Novocastrians, with the exception of the Newcastle goalkeeper, retired behind him.

Poor Frank! Surely no other human being was ever placed in such a position as he! On him, and on him alone, depended the result of the match—and the fate of Maggie Nemo!

If he deliberately failed to score, he sacrificed his honour, which was dearer to him than life itself.

If he scored, he sealed the fate of the girl he loved.

"Hurry up!" said the referee sharply. Frank raised his eyes to heaven, and a muttered prayer for guidance welled up from his aching heart.

"Help me to do what is right!" he prayed.

(To be continued in next Thursday's BOYS' HERALD.)

The League of Health and Strength.

For "Boys' Herald" Readers Only!

Briefly, the object of this important New League is the encouraging of boys to grow up into strong men physically and morally—true specimens of the great race and Empire to which they belong. To this end Your Editor has laid down the five following rules, with which every boy who wishes to become a member must comply:

NO SMOKING (TILL 21).

NO DRINKING OF INTOXICANTS AS BEVERAGES.

NO SWEARING.

NO GAMBLING.

NO EVIL HABITS.

In connection with this League of Health and Strength there is a SECRET PASSWORD, which is known ONLY TO MEMBERS, a handsome CERTIFICATE, and a beautifully-designed BADGE, which every boy should get and be proud to wear.

Conditions of Membership.—All one has to do to become a Member of this League is to fill in the following Application Form, and send it, with ONE Penny Stamp to cover the cost of posting certificate to Member, to the Secretary, BOYS' HERALD'S League of Health and Strength (Room 27), 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C. If, however, you desire the handsome League Badge, in addition to the Certificate, then you must enclose TWO of these Application Forms—cut from the current number of THE BOYS' HERALD, with your ONE penny stamp to cover cost of posting Certificate and Badge to you. Boys who are already League Members, but have not yet sent for their Badges, must enclose ONE Stamp and ONE Application Form only, with letter stating that they are already Members, and require the Badge alone.

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I THE UNDERSIGNED, being desirous of becoming a Member of THE LEAGUE OF HEALTH AND STRENGTH, do ALTOGETHER from Smoking until 21 years of age; To Abstain from Drinking Intoxicating Liquors as Beverages; Not to Use Bad Language; Not to Indulge in Any Form of Gambling; and To Steadfastly Keep from all Bad Habits.

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THE ORDEAL OF HUGH VANE.

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The First Chapters Specially Rewritten.

The Strange Experiences of the Escaped Convict.

BY an eccentric millionaire named Gotherby, who in his younger days had committed murder in Australia, Hugh Vane is left more than a million of money. Hugh is a convict in Dartmoor, undergoing ten years' penal servitude for a crime of which he is innocent. The young fellow, however, through the kindly assistance of a cattle-dealer named Pedgrift, escapes from prison, and reaches London. Here, disguised as a Mr. Harrison, he interviews the dead Gotherby's lawyer, Mr. John Carfax, but goes away without revealing his identity. No sooner, however, does he leave the lawyer's office than he is led by a strange man to a house where he meets with his uncle, Medwin Vane, who attempts to induce him to sign a paper making over Gotherby's million to him—Medwin Vane. This Hugh refuses to do, and in consequence is kept a close prisoner. He, however, effects an escape through the offices of a band of young hooligans calling themselves The Tigers.

That same day Hugh rescues a crippled lad named Jimmy Candler from a burning house. By the Candler's the escaped convict is treated with the greatest kindness.

Leaving the Candler's, Hugh resolves once more to see Mr. Carfax. To him he confesses that he is Vane, the escaped convict. Carfax, believing in his innocence, promises to aid him. But at this moment a man's voice sounds without the lawyer's office.

"That voice," says Hugh hoarsely, "is the voice of Medwin Vane, my uncle. 'If he finds me here I am lost!'"

Hugh Vane Runs the Gauntlet Again.

A FAINT smile came into John Carfax's impassive face.

"The situation promises to be an interesting one," he said, in a low voice. "In view of what you have just told me I am by no means averse to an interview with Mr. Medwin Vane. And I really don't see why you should not be present at it, too. Unfortunately, we cannot provide you with an adequate disguise at a moment's notice. But I have an idea." He turned as he spoke, and pointed to a huge safe set in one corner of the room.

"There is your hiding-place," he said. "In with you. I'll leave the big door ajar. And I need not impress upon you the need for lying low. Under no circumstances must you come out until I have got rid of your uncle. Remember that he is a wealthy, influential banker, that you are an escaped convict with a price upon your head." He swung open the great steel door of the safe. Hugh slipped inside the somewhat novel hiding-place.

"I won't shut it quite," whispered the lawyer, "as the lock is a somewhat complicated one, and there is not the best of ventilation when it is closed."

He turned away and sat down once more at his table. All the while Medwin Vane had been storming at the clerk in the outer office. Hardly had the lawyer taken his place at the table and began to busy himself in the papers spread out there before his second in command entered the room, paler than his usual wont, and evidently labouring under great stress.

His jaw dropped as he found his employer alone. Where on earth had the man, whom he had ushered into the room, vanished to? There was no back way out of the office. And yet—

"Well," said Carfax calmly, "what is it now?"

"Mr. Medwin Vane says he must see you at once, sir," stammered the clerk.

"Then show him in," replied Carfax quietly. The other disappeared to usher in the banker almost immediately.

Carfax never rose. He leant back in his chair and folded his arms across his breast.

"Mr. Medwin Vane, I believe," he said suavely; "to what am I indebted for this honour?"

The banker hesitated for a moment or so. The two men looked into one another's eyes without speaking. Each realised that he was face to face with a determined will. It was as though they were two duellists face to face with naked weapons, each waiting for the other to make the first feint in the contest.

Medwin Vane came to the point with surprising directness.

"I want you to tell me where my nephew, Hugh Vane the convict is?" he said coldly, his steely eyes glittering ominously.

Carfax raised his eyebrows. And although Medwin Vane watched him as intently as the proverbial cat looking at a mousehole, he could not detect the faintest glimmer of surprise or fear in the pale, resolute face of the man of law.

"What an extraordinary question!" said John Carfax gently. "May I ask you to be a little more explicit?"

"I congratulate you on your coolness, Mr. Carfax," the other went on, with a latent sneer in his voice, "but at the same time you do not evidently appreciate the gravity of the situation. I know for a fact that my nephew called upon you yesterday. I know as well that only a short time ago a man, disguised as a gutter-merchant, called upon you here. He has not

sickness. It is impossible that you can have learnt what you say you have from his lips."

Silence followed this deliberate statement. A dull wave of colour crept up into Medwin Vane's face. For he realised that he had met a foeman worthy of his own cunning steel. Apparently, he did not hold all the trump cards in his hand.

"I have not come here to split hairs with you, Mr. Carfax," he replied coldly. "Either you tell me where Hugh Vane is or I shall summon a policeman and give you in charge."

Then John Carfax did a strange thing. He struck a bell on the table close to his hand sharply, twice. In an instant his clerk appeared. The lawyer scribbled a sentence in shorthand on a sheet of notepaper and handed it to his subordinate with the words:

"See to that as quickly as you can." The words he had written were:

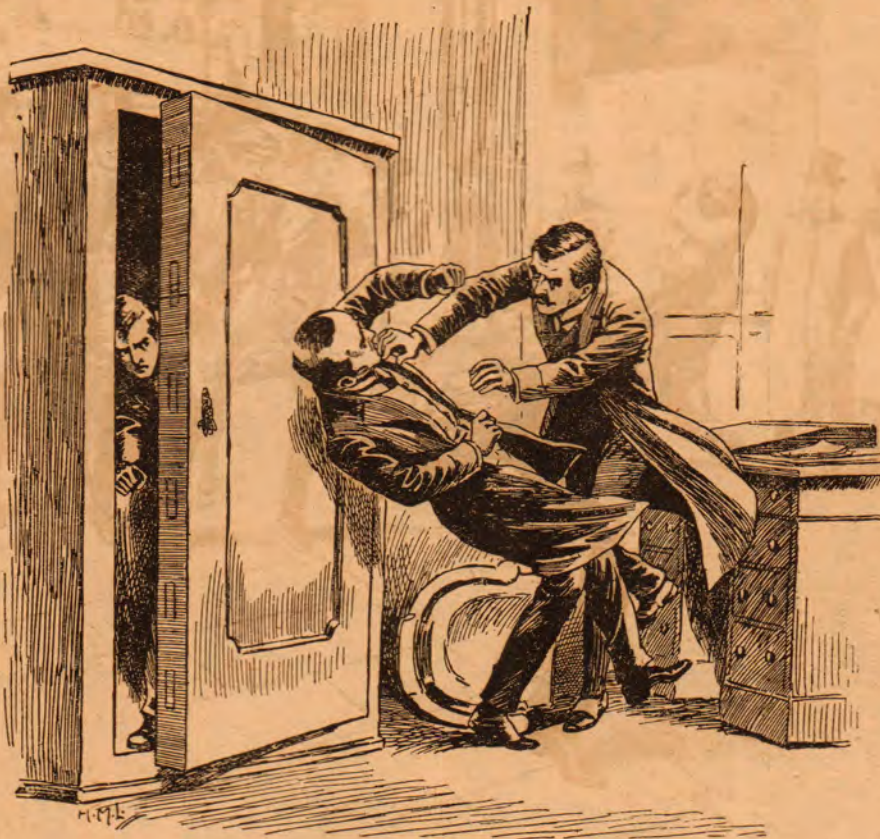
"Go round to the Napier Hotel, off the Strand, discharge the bill of a Mr. Arthur Harrison who has been staying there and bring back his personal effects."

The man mastered the note with remarkable quickness and disappeared.

Then the lawyer looked the banker squarely in the face.

"If you have nothing more to say to me, Mr. Vane," he remarked easily, "I should be glad if you would make it convenient to close this interview. My time is precious, and I have my clients' business to attend to."

Carfax's wonderful composure, his amazing coolness in face of the dilemma in which he had been placed, tore the last shred of Medwin Vane's composure away. Hitherto, the banker had presented a cool, calm front to his enemy, for enemies these two men were beyond a doubt. But now, with a cry of anger, Vane hurled himself at the other, who rose from his chair



The lawyer was sent crashing backwards against the door of the big safe, the safe in which Hugh Vane crouched. The door banged to with a resounding clang.

been seen to come out. My spies have your place under surveillance. The tray that he had round his neck is in your outer office. Once more I repeat: Where is the criminal? Confess and I will see that nothing is said about your conduct in the matter. Though I know that it is of considerable importance to you to hide Silas Gotherby's heir. Oh, yes, I'm perfectly frank with you. For you see I hold most of the trump cards."

Surely John Carfax must have been made of ice and whipcord instead of ordinary human flesh and blood. For realising as he did at that moment the subtle, dangerous nature of the man he had to deal with, realising, too, that he was in a most awkward, dangerous position, that only a miracle lay between him and imprisonment, if not worse—the laws against persons harbouring an escaped convict are very severe, indeed—he, nevertheless, presented an unruffled front to the banker, as he said smilingly:

"You seem to know a good deal more about my business than I do, Mr. Vane. May I ask you who it is you mean when you talk of Silas Gotherby's heir?"

"Certainly," replied the other promptly. "As soon as the news of the convict's escape was public property I put myself in communication with the authorities at Dartmoor Prison. In that way I learnt of the death of this Silas Gotherby, and heard from the governor's own lips that he had witnessed Gotherby's will and posted the document to you here. There is nothing very wonderful about that, is there?"

"Yes," retorted the lawyer, like a needle for quickness, "there is. The governor of Dartmoor gaol lies unconscious on a bed of

as his adversary sprang round the table, by no means desirous to be caught thus at a disadvantage.

As it was Medwin Vane proved too quick for him. The lawyer, even as he rose, was sent crashing backwards against the big door of the safe, the safe in which Hugh Vane crouched, tingling with the impotence that kept him powerless to become anything more than a passive actor in the drama.

The door banged to ominously. But for the moment the action passed unheeded. Carfax had quite enough to do to defend himself from the onslaught of the banker without stopping to consider what had happened to the unfortunate fugitive.

For now Hugh Vane was boxed up in an airtight receptacle, a prison from which the strength of a Hercules would have been insufficient to allow him to break loose.

Yet but for the safe Carfax would have gone crashing to the ground, and there is no saying what Medwin Vane might have done to him under the influence of the mad rage that possessed him. And, indeed, there was justification for the banker's fear. He could not blind himself to the fact that Hugh had given him the slip, notwithstanding the cunning trap into which the convict had been lured. And Hugh must know now that his uncle had, indeed, an object for laying him by the heels.

For Medwin Vane, never fancying that Hugh could have broken loose from the trap into which he had been enticed the night before, had showed his hand with a freedom that might spell ruin to his vile schemes unless his nephew were recaptured. Carfax held the key to the mystery

of Hugh's disappearance. He would drag the truth from the lawyer by fair means or by foul!

But in spite of advancing years, in spite of his lean, slight frame, John Carfax, an abstemious, careful liver from his youth up, was possessed of no slight strength.

He closed at once with his adversary, and for a few moments nothing was heard save the short, stabbing gasps of the two men as they swayed from side to side wrapped in each other's embrace.

And what the upshot of the tussle would have been I cannot tell you, for midway in the fight something happened that caused both men to spring apart and stand glaring into each other's faces, with their primitive passions gripping them to the exclusion of any consideration of diplomacy or finesse.

It was from the safe that the interruption had come that gave them pausing space.

Tap! tap! tap! The sound, faint though distinct, fell on the ears of both.

Carfax's heart sank within him. He knew well enough what the sound meant. Hugh Vane was making a frantic appeal for rescue. He was face to face with death by suffocation inside the safe. And he would have been more than human could he have remained passive within the steel walls of his prison, in the pitch darkness of his narrow dungeon, while the sounds of the conflict reached his ears to add to his horrible plight.

"What's that?" said Medwin Vane hoarsely, his lips parted, his gums bared in an altogether beast-like expression. "What is it I say?"

Carfax turned without a word. A moment more and he had shot back the intricate levers that controlled the mechanism of the safe-door. Yet he did not open the chest. He stood before the slightly opened portals, trying to think out some plan whereby he might yet save the convict from discovery and recapture and himself from the serious consequences that would inevitably follow the disclosures.

And Hugh himself—you may be sure the young man made no further sound. It was only the direst necessity that had made him rap upon the steel wall of his prison, the horrid tightening feeling across his chest as the tiny supply of oxygen inside the safe became vitiated and inadequate, as he realised that unless the door were opened he must perish of suffocation. Words fail to convey the blessed relief that came to him as the purer air from without filtered through the chink once more, and allowed him to fill his lungs freely once again.

"The safe!" Could that be his uncle's voice that was speaking? There was something inexpressibly horrible in the way Medwin Vane mouthed out the words "The safe! Who is in there?"

As he spoke he whipped a pistol out of his pocket. Like lightning the lawyer hurled himself at the banker, and tore the weapon from the man's grasp before he had had time to fire it off, to summon the aid that would rush to him at the sound of the report.

Baffled in this intent, the banker endeavoured to yell out for assistance. Carfax's hand sought his windpipe. And Hugh, unable to remain passive longer in his hiding-place, leapt forward to the fray and came to the aid of Carfax.

Between them they speedily overpowered the banker. They forced him to his feet and so into a chair. Then Carfax held the pistol, of which he had possessed himself, at the banker's head.

"The fat is in the fire now with a vengeance," muttered Carfax hoarsely. "We've gone too far now to go back. I take it this pistol is loaded."

But Medwin Vane was not beaten yet. Ruffian though he undoubtedly was, he was no coward. Before either of the others could stop him he had opened his mouth and given vent to a yell that seemed almost too piercing, too strident to have issued from human lips. Hugh dashed at him and choked back further utterance with a strength that would not be denied.

But surely that cry must have been heard without.

"You must make a dash for it," Carfax whispered in his ears. "You must escape at all hazards. I'll not go back. I've burnt my boats behind me anyhow now, and you may as well make a bid for liberty. For Heaven's sake cut for it!"

There was that in his voice that Hugh felt he could not—must not—withstand. And besides, no matter what might happen, liberty was after all sweet. Better to be a homeless, penniless beggar in the streets of London than a convict eating out his heart in that vile tomb of human aspirations—the prison on the moor.

Hugh hurled his uncle to the ground with a crash, though I doubt whether he realised what he had done, and dashed through the door out into the outer office and so down the stairs that led into the street.

Yet if, as Medwin Vane had said, there were spies of the banker on guard outside, how could he hope to break through the cordon placed to watch for his exit?

John Carfax, with a grim laugh, pounced down upon the prostrate body of the overturned banker, and sat astride the man's form.

"We'll give him a certain amount of law," he said sternly. "I'll admit that I've burnt my boats behind me, Mr. Vane. But I don't think you hold all the trump cards in your hand in spite of everything that has happened here to-day."

Yet what would be the upshot of that recent episode John Carfax did not care to ask himself at that moment. It looked exceedingly probable that not only would Hugh Vane be recaptured ere long, but that he would be flung into goal himself for conniving at the escape of the convict. And with both Hugh and himself in prison, how could they hope to combat successfully Medwin Vane, the rich and unscrupulous banker. For who would take the word of a convict and a

The Ordeal of Hugh Vane

(continued from the previous page.)

comparatively obscure lawyer against that of one of the—presumably—richest men in the City of London, a man who had financed Royalty itself on more than one occasion. That was the question that burnt itself into Carfax's mind as he sat astride his enemy.

And the answer he dared not attempt to give—as yet!

Medwin Vane lay passive. Indeed, he was powerless to do aught save glare up into the lawyer's face, for physically he was no match for his wily little opponent.

And although Carfax held him powerless as far as muscular resistance was possible, he had still the use of his tongue. And burning, fierce words left his lips.

"You are only making matters worse for yourself, Carfax," he ground out. "You have, as you have just admitted, burnt your boats with a vengeance. My men are waiting for Hugh Vane outside in the street. I dare swear that he is already a captive. You have had a hand in shutting many a man up in gaol in the course of your life. It will doubtless be a novel experience for you to taste the sweets of prison yourself. You have played into my hands with a vengeance. I am perfectly content to lie here and bide my time. I am not going to try and offer resistance. I only hope that someone will come in here and be a witness of your gross act of lawlessness. The longer you sit astride me the better for my plans."

Even as he finished speaking the door of the room opened and Carfax's clerk, white of face, with a valise in his hand—the bag Hugh had left at the hotel off the Strand—sided into the apartment.

Carfax leapt to his feet, took the bag out of his subordinate's grasp, flung it into the safe, and banged to the great door of the big strong-box. For he knew that there might be evidence of use to Hugh Vane within that small cowhide bag. And he registered a silent oath that come what might he would ensure the safety of the only weapon he possessed to help him to fight the desperate battle for Hugh Vane the convict.

Medwin Vane scrambled to his feet.

"You have had your innings, Mr. Carfax," he said, as he walked towards the door, "it's my turn now. I suppose you know what I'm going to do. I'm going to call a policeman and give you in charge. And the charge will be that you have aided and abetted Hugh Vane, convict, to escape from capture. Do I make myself sufficiently plain?"

"Quite," retorted the lawyer cheerfully, "and I will admit that you have the laugh of me now. But the game's not over yet, Mr. Medwin Vane. I may have a card or two up my sleeve that will be worth something when the time comes to produce them"—was it fancy, or did he see a sudden look of something like fear cross the banker's face?—"openly. And if you want to give me in charge, well, I'm ready for you."

He turned to his clerk.

"I leave you in charge here," he said quietly to the man. "Perhaps it would be as well for you to lock up the office and go home." Then he looked at Medwin Vane once more. "Suppose that we go and find a policeman," he said softly, without the faintest trace of fear in his voice.

And side by side the two men passed out of the office that had been the scene of so stirring, so unusual an episode.

The Hue and Cry Once Again—Hugh Vane's Flight.

HUGH VANE sped down the stairs that led from Carfax's office to the street below like a madman. Yet ere he had reached the bottom of the flight he pulled himself up abruptly. He recalled the admission Medwin Vane had made to Carfax, which he himself had heard while crouching in the safe, that there were men on guard outside, waiting to pounce on the fugitive should he appear.

Forewarned was forearmed. Medwin Vane had not bargained that his nephew would overhear his confession. Hugh gritted his teeth together. He was not beaten yet. He had not gone through all that he had done in the last few hours to allow himself to be coolly taken prisoner again without one last desperate bid for liberty.

Nor was that all. Carfax had been sufficiently implicated already. Were the convict to be apprehended when leaving the lawyer's premises the case against Carfax, black enough now in all conscience, would be still blacker.

For a brief moment or so therefore Hugh hesitated, revolving in his mind what course of action would be best for his chance of escape. Not that there seemed much hope for him anywhere. Medwin Vane had been foiled once. He would take care that his nephew did not give him the slip for the second time. Delay was as dangerous as undue haste. The hunted man

stole onward, and so reached the door leading into the outer air.

The portal was ajar. He stole up to it and peered through the chink. His eyes narrowed ominously. Two men, big, burly ruffians at that, were standing side by side on the edge of the kerb, their faces turned towards the entrance to the lawyer's chambers.

An instant more, and Hugh had flung open the door, and silently, swiftly, dashed out into the open, straight at the two men, who were utterly taken by surprise at this unlooked-for attack.

They had evidently expected to see him come slinking out of the place totally unprepared for any attempt at recapture. They could not have known of his hiding in the safe, of his overhearing Medwin Vane's assertion that his seizure must be an absolute certainty.

Straight at them he dashed, with the memory of his old Rugby football days strangely insistent within him as he did so.

Like a mad bull he charged at the pair of bullies. They went to the ground, strong men though they were, beneath the impetus of that fierce rush.

As they fell one of them yelled out:

"Stop him! Stop him! It's Hugh Vane, the escaped convict!"

Scarcely twenty yards away from the spot was a policeman on point duty. Hearing this startling cry, the constable ran forward, blowing his whistle as he ran.

And then, as if by magic, the quiet square seemed suddenly transformed into a place alive with human beings. It was as though a hive of bees had been suddenly overset to let loose its occupants with extraordinary celerity.

moreover, who had no friend to whom he might turn, no hole into which he might creep, nothing save his own muscular young frame and unquenchable courage.

He turned down a side-street, and found himself in the Strand, in the thick of the great tide of traffic ebbing east and west of him. Without pausing for a single instant, he plunged into the midst of the crowd of vehicles thronging the roadway, dodged beneath the head of a cab-horse, escaped the wheels of a bus by a miracle, dashed past the upraised hand of a constable, and so reached the other side, blind to aught save the need for escape.

Was it fancy or did he hear the roar of his pursuers in his ears? A man thrust out a leg to trip him up. He must have leapt five feet in the air, darted on at top-speed, and turned down the first side-street that presented itself.

His heart sank within him as he did so; for he discovered that he was at the beginning of Waterloo Bridge.

The bridge! A long, straight road flanked on either side by the stone parapets, below which the dark, dull river swirled sullenly towards the sea, to plunge into which would mean a fate even more horrible than must be his should he fall into the hands of his pursuers.

His breath came and went in thick, fierce sobs. It must be remembered that it was some time ere decent food had passed his lips. The poor meal he had partaken of early in the morning at the miserable dwelling of Gregory Dent, the gutter-merchant, was but a poor preparation for the strenuous tax imposed upon his being now.

What would Gregory Dent think of him? He

ning his thoughts flew back to a kindred occurrence, one that had been the first scene in the drama that had led up to the present situation. For a moment he thought he must have been dreaming, that he was really back on Dartmoor once again, standing in the quarry as the mist rolled up from the sea, the mist into which he had dashed with the wild hope of escape to goad him on to the desperate enterprise.

But no, it was no dream! History had repeated itself with that dramatic unexpectedness that is nevertheless a thing so often to expect. Once more the fog had come to his aid when most he stood in need of it. Once more no miracle had occurred, but a simple happening that might take place at any time.

Yet how different was the situation now from what it had been that eventful day when he dashed out of the quarry, and so met Silas Gotherby on the Horrabridge road; Gotherby, who had made him his heir, who had left him his millions, who had aided him to escape with so complete an acceptance of the situation.

Well, he was a hunted fugitive now as he had been then; but with a difference. Gotherby had pressed a thousand pounds into his hands, and now he had not a penny in the world. He was penniless, friendless,—and a millionaire! Surely the situation was without precedent in any man's history!

Yet even as he stood there undecided in the murky gloom, he heard all around him the evidence of the hue-and-cry out against him.

"He went down here!" "Confound the fog!" "It's as bad for him as for us!" "He can't be far off!" "Spread out across the roadway and beat for him!" These and like

remarks he heard passed from mouth to mouth. A grim smile crossed his face. What would his pursuers think could they know that he was within touch of them?

He crept cautiously forward. The next moment he had cannoned violently against the form of a man. Instinctively he flung his arms round the man's waist and hurled him to the earth.

The unknown went to the ground with a shrill scream of fear.

"He's here! He's here!" he yelled. "He's just tried to kill me!"

The effect of the cry was amazing.

The crowd surged wildly, blindly, in the direction whence the sound had come. The fog was now so thick that you could literally have scarcely seen your hand before your face. Before the luckless being who had felt the strength of Hugh's muscles could struggle to his feet, another man had tumbled over him.

Chaos reigned! Men went to the earth grappling the one with the other, each thinking that he had got hold of the runaway, each possessed with terror at the thought that he was face to face with a desperate character; for by this time the runaway had been endowed with a ferocious strength that had magnified like a snowball as the hunt had grown thicker and thicker with the additions made to it en route.

From the opacity came hoarse guttural shouts and shrill cries of fear. It might have been a scene out of some dreadful nightmare. Hugh felt the hair on his scalp stiffening. And all these unseen men, all this struggling crowd of humanity, was swayed with but one idea—to hunt him down to his death, to run him to earth.

He moved blindly, gropingly, forward away from the scene of the fierce conflict, caring not whether he went north, south, east or west, so long as he could find some hiding-place into which he might crawl.

At last his fingers encountered hard stone. He had struck the side of the low wall shutting off the Embankment from the river, and could hear the dull gurgle of the river as it slid past the base of the stonework.

Keeping close against the parapet, he went forward with what speed he could. Fixed plan he had none. He only knew that the hue-and-cry was out—that ere long all London would be ringing with the news that Hugh Vane, convict, had been found in London, that every policeman, every detective, in the metropolis would be hot on his tracks.

His thoughts turned towards his mother at Richmond. Should he endeavour to reach Richmond while the fog held? At any rate, he might procure there food, rest, a change of raiment, a little money! And he could run no greater risk in the Surrey borough than he did where he was at present.

He crept on along the fogbound pavement.

The fog wrapped everything round as though with a mantle.

But stay, what was that? The pat-pat of feet behind him caused him to crouch back against the wall, his nerves strained anew.

Somebody brushed past him, followed by yet another figure, though what manner of folk they were he could not tell.

Then a cry rang out in his ears, a cry that seemed to freeze the blood in his veins, so near was it, so insistent.

"Help! Help! I am being murdered!" With a yell he dashed off in the direction of the sound.

(This magnificent story will be continued in next Thursday's issue of THE BOYS' HERALD. Remember that a sequel to "Always Honest" starts in this paper in three weeks' time.)



"Stop him! Stop him! It's Hugh Vane, the escaped convict!" The cry went up, and after the luckless Hugh raced in full pursuit a determined crowd of men and boys.

Windows were flung open, heads popped out, from the various offices and buildings in the street men poured tempestuously, forgetting to don hats or overcoats in the mad excitement of the hunt that had been so quickly set on foot.

There is nothing in all the world that stirs men's blood so much as a man-hunt. Years of civilisation, of culture, of law-abiding security, have done much to destroy man's primitive appetites. But we are, after all, all of us possessed of the primitive instincts of our early forefathers.

"Stop him! Stop him!" the cry went up.

"After him! After him!"

No one stopped to think that whatever might be the true facts of the case the quarry they had set themselves to run down was a human being like themselves, a man with all the attributes that they themselves possessed. He was no fox, no wild beast to be run to death with sticks and staves, but a human being. And Hugh Vane, as he squared his shoulders, and dashed madly onward, knew that he was, in all probability, racing for his life. The crowd behind him seemed to have lost all human semblance. Surely they would tear him limb from limb were they to capture him.

Oh, the hideous injustice of it all! That he, Hugh Vane, innocent of any crime, a young man just on the threshold of life, should be forced to fly like a fox who hears the baying of the hounds at his back! Nor was that the complete tale of the horrid irony of his plight. He was rich—rich beyond any dream he had ever had of wealth. And his millions were useless to him. He was to all intents and purposes a pauper—a pauper,

had time to allow that thought to pass through his mind. What, indeed? Maybe the gutter-merchant would read of his capture in the paper and would understand; for he had little hope of now getting free.

Still he sped on doggedly, gamely. So long as breath remained in his body, so long as his limbs could bear him up, he would struggle on.

Suddenly he saw out of the corner of his eye the head of the stairs that lead down from the bridge on to the Embankment. To turn, to speed down the stone steps, even though the yell of pursuit rang loud in his ears and he knew that his feat had been observed, was the work of an instant.

And the movement was undoubtedly the best he could have effected; for the press of his hunters was by this time extraordinarily thick. A mass of writhing, yelling humanity leapt solidly towards the narrow entrance obtaining to the stairway. Each man fought to be first down the steps. Hence the result was that the mouth of the passage became choked with the human flood.

Ere the foremost of the pursuers had managed to force their way down the steps and continue the chase, Hugh was at the bottom, and in the comparatively quieter waters of the Embankment.

And then, with amazing suddenness, as is so often the case in London in winter-time, there rolled up from the river a mighty wall of thick fog that settled down upon the scene like a horrid yellow blanket, blotting out everything as though a giant had suddenly drawn a mantle across the dull grey of the picture.

Hugh stopped still in an instant. Like light-



A NIGHT OF PERIL

A Stirring Long, Complete
10,000 Word Story.

By the Author of "The Boys of Winbury College."

The 1st Chapter.

Workless—Mark Stevenson Makes an Acquaintance—A Strange Proposal.

"ARE you on the look-out for a job, my lad?"

Mark Stevenson started and flushed eagerly as he swung round on his heels and faced the person who had so unexpectedly addressed him—a short but sturdily-built man, with a sprinkling of grey in his dark hair, and a pair of keen grey eyes twinkling from behind his gold-rimmed glasses.

"Are you on the look-out for a job?" he repeated. "Because, if you are, I think I might be able to put something in your way."

Mark's heart beat fast, and his face—which just before had been pale and anxious—reddened with hope. Had his luck turned, after all, he wondered?

A moment ago and he had been pretty well desperate. For nearly three months—ever since the failure of the big mercantile firm in which he had held a junior clerkship—he had not earned a penny. Times were bad, work scarce, and in spite of excellent references no berth had offered itself, and on the previous evening he had parted with his last farthing! An advertisement seen in a free library had sent him hurrying to a big suburban shop, where two or three salesmen were wanted; but he had arrived only to find that others had been earlier than he, and that the vacancies were already filled. And it was just as he was turning away from the building with a sinking heart that the words with which this story opens fell upon his ears.

"I—I should be glad of anything just at present, sir," he stammered eagerly. "I've been a clerk; I can give you good references. But there's nothing I wouldn't turn my hand to if you know of anything."

"Quite so!" said the stranger, smiling. "That's the right spirit, Mr.——"

He broke off, and looked at his companion.

"Stevenson—Mark Stevenson!"

"Stevenson; thank you! My name is Holt. I hope," he went on pleasantly, "that you will excuse my addressing you with so little ceremony; but I could not help hearing what that fellow said to you as I was passing—that you were too late, and that they had already engaged the people they wanted, so I naturally jumped to the conclusion that you were on the look-out for work. And as I am on the look-out for someone to do a job for me, why, I thought I would see if you cared to take it on."

His quick eyes, as he spoke, had been scanning Mark from head to heel, and it was plain that no detail of the lad's face or dress escaped him—that he read clearly enough the story written on Mark's thin, anxious face and well-worn clothes and boots.

"I—I'm very much obliged to you," Mark said haltingly. "What is the job, sir?"

"Don't thank me too soon," Holt replied; "it is quite possible that when you have heard more about it you may not care to undertake it. But supposing we turn in here and have a bit of lunch, and talk the matter over while we are eating?"

He halted as he spoke before the door of an Italian restaurant. Mark hung back, unwilling to accept hospitality from an entire stranger. But Holt would take no denial, and thrusting his arm into young Stevenson's, almost pushed him through the glass doors. It was early yet for lunch—between eleven and twelve—and the place was empty as Holt led the way to a small marble-topped table at the further end of the restaurant.

"We won't talk business till we've had our lunch," he said laughingly, as he gave the waiter the necessary orders. Mark hoped that his new acquaintance did not guess how hungry he was; but little escaped Holt's shrewd eyes, and it is probable that he had more than a suspicion that the lad was enjoying the first square meal that had passed his lips that day.

He himself ate little, merely toying with the food upon his plate in order to keep Mark company; and a keen observer might have guessed that, in spite of his apparent coolness, he was consumed by no little anxiety.

"Now, then," he said, as Mark laid down his knife and fork; "if you are sure that you won't have any more we will come to business. I told you that I had some work to offer you, I may add that it will be well paid. I shall require your services for one night only—to-night. But for

that one night's work I am willing to offer you the sum of ten pounds, five pounds on your agreeing to undertake the job, the other five pounds when you have completed it—that is to say, to-morrow morning."

Mark's eyes opened widely. Were his ears deceiving him? Ten pounds—a fortune to him in his present circumstances—for one night's work! He was too much astonished to speak, and Holt, after a quick glance round to see that no one was within hearing, went on:

"I will be frank with you, Mr. Stevenson—as frank as I can be, that is to say, for the circumstances of the case preclude my being quite open with you. You will have to take the work to a certain extent on trust. I cannot give you my reasons for employing you as I intend to do, and if, after having heard all that I am at liberty to tell you, you prefer to refuse, why, we can just shake hands and part without ill-feeling on either side."

He paused for a moment to light a cigarette, and then continued quietly:

"What you will have to do, if you decide to take on the job, is this. You will have to travel to-night to a place a short distance out of London, and then—not earlier than twelve o'clock—you will have to make your way to a certain house which I shall describe to you. This house is at present unoccupied, but I shall give you a key and you will be able to admit yourself by the front door. You will enter a certain room—I shall, of course, furnish you with a plan of the building—open a cupboard, and take out what you find in it. That done, you can leave the place and return to London. I will arrange a meeting with you, and pay you the remainder of what I owe you. That is all you have to do, Mr. Stevenson. What do you say? Are you willing to earn the ten pounds, or are you not?"

And Holt blew out a puff of smoke and leaned back in his chair, smiling in seeming carelessness, as he watched the blue rings slowly ascend towards the ceiling.

"Don't hurry yourself," he went on calmly, as sheer astonishment kept the lad silent. "I am quite willing to allow you time to think over my proposal; it sounds an odd one, I know."

Mark Stevenson's first idea had been that his companion was out of his mind; but there was no hint of insanity in Holt's keen grey eyes and calm, collected speech. But if the man was in his right senses, and if the offer was made, as it appeared to be, in sober earnest, what then could be the meaning of it? It was no good asking Holt for the explanation which he had said that he was not at liberty to give, and in vain Mark racked his brains for a solution of the mystery.

"I can see that you are puzzled," Holt continued, smiling; "but then, you know, I warned you that you would be. Come, it is a very simple thing to do, isn't it? A very easy way of earning a ten-pound note—to walk into an empty house, open a cupboard, and then walk out again."

"What is it I am to bring you out of the cupboard?" Mark blurted out.

Holt shrugged his shoulders.

"I do not know myself," he replied; "in fact, it is quite possible—more than probable—that you will have to bring me nothing; for the simple reason that there may

be nothing in the cupboard. I must, of course, trust to your honour to make a thorough search; but if the shelves are empty, why, you will have done your work just the same, and you will only have to come back and tell me so. No doubt you are wondering why I do not undertake the job myself; but, as I told you before, I cannot give you the reasons for conduct which must seem very mysterious to you. You must be content to know that there are reasons, and strong ones, which prompt me to act as I do."

"And you say the house I am to go to is empty?" Mark asked slowly.

"It is empty—has stood empty for some time. Are you afraid to go there?"

There was a faint ring of amusement about the question that brought the blood rushing to Mark Stevenson's cheeks. He looked the questioner full in the face.

"No, Mr. Holt," he said quietly, "I am not afraid to go to an empty house alone."

"Then what are you afraid of?"

"You must forgive me if what I am going to say sounds rude or suspicious, but you must remember that this is the first time we have met, and that I know nothing about you," was Mark's reply. "I am afraid of being mixed up—"

He hesitated, and Holt completed the sentence for him.

"In some shady transaction—eh? In some business which might bring you into the clutches of the law—is that what you mean?"

"Yes, that's what I mean."

Holt laughed cheerfully.

"Mr. Stevenson, as you say, you know nothing of me, and therefore I shall not be offended if you refuse to accept my assurance that you run no danger of being interfered with by the police while you are on my errand. All the same, I give you that assurance on my word of honour. Further, I can tell you that, if you do find anything on the shelf of that cupboard, it will not only be an object of very small value, but it will be lawfully mine. Does that make your mind easier?"

"Come," he went on, as Mark still hesitated. "I see you are not inclined to earn my ten-pound note, Mr. Stevenson, and that being the case—"

why, I can only thank you for the pleasure of your company, and say good-morning!"

And, pushing back his chair from the table, he began to rise to his feet.

Involuntarily Mark made a gesture to stop him. The memory of his penniless condition, the thought of what ten golden sovereigns would mean to him, flashed through his mind, and, added to his pressing need of money, a natural impulse of curiosity and adventure urged him to fall in with his companion's mysterious proposal and undertake the midnight errand.

"Well," smiled Holt, "have you changed your mind?"

Mark hesitated but for an instant only, then he nodded.

"You will undertake the job for me?"

"Yes."

"Remember that I can tell you nothing more than I have told you already."

"I will do what you want," Mark replied slowly.

"Good! I am sure that I can trust you to carry out my instructions exactly and honestly. I am a good judge of character, Mr. Stevenson, and it was your face that made me speak to you just now. One thing more. You understand, of course, that this business is not to be talked about, even the little you know about it. Will you give me a promise of absolute silence upon the subject until, let us say, midday to-morrow—twenty-four hours from now?"

Now that he was fairly embarked upon the adventure it was no good haggling over minor details, and, after all, as Mark reflected, twenty-four hours was not a very long time to be committed to silence. He gave the required promise, therefore, and this time without any hesitation.

Holt nodded approvingly.

"Good!" he said again. "Now the bargain is concluded. I was to pay you the first instalment of your salary, you remember, as soon as we came to an agreement. There it is!"

And he handed a crisp five-pound note across the marble-topped table.

The lad's fingers trembled as they closed around it. Half an hour before starvation had seemed to be staring him in the face, now food, shelter, clothing, all were within his grasp in the shape of a crackling Bank of England note.

"I trust you completely, you see," Holt said, as the lad pocketed his treasure.

"Nothing would be easier than for you to pocket that note and walk off without carrying out your share of the bargain. But I have an eye for faces, as I said just now, and I don't think you are that sort."

"I hope not," Mark answered, reddening.

"And I am sure you are not," the other replied lightly. "Well, Mr. Stevenson, now that we have concluded our business there is no need for me to detain you any longer. I don't require your services till to-night. Will you meet me at King's Cross Station at ten o'clock, outside the third-class booking-office? Then I will give you the further information you will require for your expedition, and see you into your train. Mind you are punctual to the minute. I shall be waiting for you at ten."

He held out his hand as he spoke, rose from his seat and paid the bill, and a moment later he was hailed a passing hansom.

As he watched it disappear round the corner Mark asked himself if the whole interview had not been a dream. It was only the feel of the five-pound note in his pocket that convinced him of the reality of his unexpected adventure.

(Continued on the next page.)



Mark sprang from the roof. He alighted, not on the ground, but on one of the scoundrels who had been waiting below to intercept him.

The 2nd Chapter.

The Mysterious Errand—At King's Cross Station—The Walk from Hatfield—The Cottage—The Invisible Enemies—A Struggle for Life.

THE more he thought about the strange errand on which he was to set forth that night the less did Mark Stevenson understand it. And, as well may be imagined, he thought of little else for the remainder of the day. But in vain he racked his brain for any explanation of Holt's extraordinary conduct—he could hit upon none that seemed probable.

One consideration reassured him, and that was that Holt had only pledged him to silence for four and twenty hours. Had he been about to engage himself in any criminal transaction, he reasoned to himself, his strange acquaintance would hardly have given him leave to talk about it on the following day.

Long before the day was over he found himself anxiously awaiting ten o'clock, and he was at King's Cross Station a good twenty minutes before the appointed hour.

Nor was Holt unpunctual. It still wanted some seven or eight minutes to ten when Mark Stevenson saw him hurrying along towards the booking-office, casting quick, anxious glances from side to side as he came. His eyes lightened as they fell upon the waiting Mark.

"That's right; you are punctual," he said approvingly. "Wait here a minute while I get your ticket."

"Where for, I wonder?" Mark thought curiously. His curiosity was soon satisfied; the ticket which Holt thrust into his hand was a third-class for Hatfield.

"Hatfield—that is where I am to go?" he said.

"Yes; do you know the neighbourhood at all?"

"No—never been there in my life."

"That doesn't matter; you will have no difficulty in finding your way with the help of the map I have brought you. You will understand that I should prefer your errand to be kept as secret as possible, and therefore you will not ask to be directed if you can possibly help it. But it ought not to be necessary. See here."

As he spoke he unfolded a carefully drawn map, with the town of Hatfield and the roads around it plainly marked upon it.

"The line of red ink is your route," Holt continued. "You see, you follow the main road out of Hatfield for about a mile and three-quarters, then turn off here to the right along a lane till you reach the house. It will probably take you over an hour to get there from Hatfield Station, so you should be there about midnight. The house itself—cottage I ought to call it, rather—stands a little way back from the road; so as there will be no lights in it, you must keep a sharp look out for it—there is no moon to-night. It is on the left-hand side of the lane, and has a small wooden gate which lifts with a latch, and leads into the garden. Here is the key of the front door; it will turn easily, and there is no bolt. And here is a plan of the house itself. It is a back room on the ground floor that you have to enter—the room on your right as you stand with your back to the front door. I have marked it with a cross. There are two or three cupboards in the room, but the one you have to open is a small corner cupboard between the window and fireplace. I have put a cross against that, too. Now, is all that clear to you?"

Mark nodded.

"Yes, perfectly clear," he said slowly. "And after taking out whatever I find in the cupboard, I can leave the house?"

"Certainly; as soon as you like. You will not be able to get a train back to London until the morning, of course."

"No, of course not. And where am I to meet you to-morrow?"

"Let me see. Shall we say here, at King's Cross, at nine o'clock? This is your train, I think—yes. You have the plans and the key all right—ah, and here is a box of wax matches and a candle-end. You will want them when you get into the house. Good-bye—till nine o'clock to-morrow morning."

And Holt held out his hand, gave a friendly shake to the lad's fingers, and, with a final nod, moved off along the platform. But from his seat in the train Mark Stevenson thought more than once that he could make out his mysterious acquaintance standing near the ticket barrier.

"Waiting to see me off safely," the lad commented to himself. "Well, he needn't be afraid; I'm not going to draw back now."

It was with a sense of relief that he felt the train glide out of the station, and realised that he was fairly started on his strange errand. He was alone in the carriage, and drawing out the map of the roads round Hatfield and the plan of the house, he spread them out upon the seat and studied them till he had his route by heart. When the train pulled up at Hatfield Station he had no need to ask his road; and he stepped out briskly through the streets of the now silent town.

Soon he had left the town behind him, and only the country, dark and still, lay before him. As Holt had said, the night was a moonless one, and even the stars were only occasionally visible through a break in the clouds. As he tramped along between the black hedges on either side of the road the gloom had its effect upon Mark Stevenson's spirits, and more than once he found himself wishing, with a tremor of nervous dread, that his task had been accomplished, and that he was walking back to the station instead of away from it. He did his best to keep his spirits up, but it was a difficult job. He tried to whistle, but the sound seemed

only to accentuate the darkness and loneliness, and he soon gave up the attempt and plodded on in silence.

So dark was it that he actually overshot the entrance to the lane along which he was to turn, and had to retrace his steps to find it; and some time before he reached the cottage he judged that midnight must have passed.

He was half ashamed of himself when he found that, as he neared the spot, he was shaking from head to foot.

"What was it that he was afraid of?" he asked himself angrily. "Had not Holt expressly said that the place was empty? And what motive could a man who had been an utter stranger to him until that morning have for exposing him to any danger?" With an effort he pulled himself together, and strode on until his eye caught the dark outline of a roof against the sky.

"There it is!" he whispered, half aloud. "And now for the gate."

He felt his way along by the hedge until it came to an end and was replaced by a wooden paling; and a few paces further on his hand came in contact with the gate. A cold thrill ran down his spine as he unlatched it and began to walk along the gravel path that led to the house.

As Holt had said, a cottage would have been a better description of the building; so much, at least, Mark could make out in the darkness. It was a square, good-sized cottage, with a considerable strip of garden in front, and from its darkened windows there came not the faintest sign of life. Feeling his way along the overgrown path Mark reached the door, paused for a moment, and then, while his heart beat quickly, inserted the key into the lock. It turned at once, and easily, and the door swung back on its hinges with a loud creak. Inside it there was nothing but darkness, and Mark, before he entered the passage, took the precaution of striking a match and lighting the bit of candle with which Holt had provided him. He had to make two attempts before he got it alight, for a puff of wind extinguished his first match; but when once it had flared up he saw before him a narrow passage leading to the stairs, and with a couple of doors on either side of it.

"The second door on the right-hand side," he muttered to himself, as he made his way along the passage, shielding the flickering candle with his hand. "I suppose it is unlocked, as he hasn't given me a key for it."

He had actually laid his fingers upon the handle, and was in the very act of turning it when he stopped short, catching his breath. For above his head a board had suddenly creaked.

"Was it someone moving about overhead?" he asked himself, while his heart beat fast. He stood for fully a minute listening, turning towards the stairs, and more than half inclined to mount them and investigate the upper landing before entering the ground-floor room. Then, remembering how often he had heard a board creak in the silence of the night, he resolutely opened the door and walked through it, intending to carry out Holt's injunctions and then get away as fast as possible.

There was no need for him to refer to his plan; he had it by heart, and walked straight across the room to a little cupboard situated in a corner between the window and the fireplace. A glance round showed him that the room was absolutely empty of furniture—judging by the neglected look of the damp walls, it had been empty of it for some months, if not for years. The shutters were fastened on the outside of the window, and the place smelt close and earthy.

The cupboard was not locked, and opening it Mark saw before him a small triangular space with a couple of shelves in it. The top one was empty. He bent and peered into the lower one; it was absolutely empty likewise.

"That's a rum go!" he muttered. "So I've come all the way for nothing, after all. Queer! What the dickens does it all mean? Well, I suppose I can be off now. Hallo!"

The last exclamation was caused by the draught from the door, which he had left open, blowing out his candle, and leaving him in utter darkness. He felt for the match-box, which he had returned to his pocket, and was just about to draw it out, when—for the second time—he started and held his breath.

For from the staircase there had come another loud creak, and as he listened breathlessly Mark could have sworn that footsteps were descending the stairs—footsteps that were muffled, but which were yet distinctly audible in the dead silence.

For a moment he hoped against hope that he was mistaken; then he knew that he was not. Slowly and cautiously the footsteps were nearing the bottom of the staircase.

The house was not empty, after all!

Mark stood motionless, his fingers on the match-box. What was he to do? If he were discovered he would be taken for a thief! And it flashed through his mind, with a start of horror, that perhaps, after all, Holt had sent him on his mysterious errand to play the part of a thief! If so, and he were caught red-handed, of what avail would be his explanation? Holt would certainly not come forward to clear him, and he—Mark—did not even know where to find him.

All these thoughts chased each other through the lad's head one after another during the few seconds in which he stood motionless and silent, listening to the muffled sounds that came from beyond the door, and not daring to strike a light lest a gleam should betray his presence.

For a moment he thought of making a dash for the window, but remembered in time that it was closely shuttered. It would be impossible to open it without attracting the attention of the person or persons descending the staircase.

It seemed to him hours that he stood there, his ears on the strain, listening, listening, listening.

Slowly but surely the faint sounds drew nearer. Now he was sure that one of the boards outside the room in which he stood had squeaked under the pressure of an approaching foot! Whoever it was who was nearing him he carried no light; not the faintest gleam broke the darkness beyond the door, which Mark knew that he had left wide open.

A feeling of awful, unreasoning terror gripped him as he stood, scarcely daring to breathe, and listening to the stealthy noises. And when at last he heard, or fancied he heard, the sound of breathing in the doorway, he almost shrieked aloud. It was not that Mark Stevenson was in any way lacking in personal courage, but the mystery which surrounded his strange errand, the stealthy approach of his unseen enemies—if enemies they were, the knowledge of his loneliness in that silent house, all combined to shake his nerves.

At length, feeling that he could stand the suspense no longer, he determined to make a dash for the door, and, if possible, reach the garden, and then take to his heels.

And he was just about to make a spring across the floor, when, suddenly and without warning, from the open doorway a brilliant shaft of yellow light from an open lantern shot into the room, and for a moment almost blinded him as it struck him full in the eyes. Involuntarily he staggered back against the wall, and as he did so, a sharp exclamation in a man's voice—an exclamation of surprise—was followed by the crack of a revolver, and a bullet grazed the lad's shoulder!

Instinctively he dashed towards the spot whence the shot had come, with a wild idea of getting to grips with his unseen enemies, for beyond the glare of the bullseye all was darkness, and he had caught no glimpse of them as yet.

He had a vague idea that someone shouted, "Why, t'aint him, after all!" that a second shot rang out, and then that he was wrestling with someone into whose arms he had rushed as he stood in the doorway.

He heard a sharp oath as he tore himself free and darted along the passage to the front door. He had left it open, but it was closed now—closed

and locked! He wrenched at it for a second, then turned and darted back along the passage for the stairs.

But his enemies barred the way. One holding the lantern, the other already lifting the revolver for another shot.

It was fortunate for Mark Stevenson that the space between the front door of the cottage and the foot of the stairs was so short; also, that the small width of the passage prevented the two men from standing abreast. The foremost, who held the lantern, thus impeded both the aim and the view of his fellow with the revolver, who could only fire over his shoulder. This accounted for the third shot missing Mark's head, though only by a hair's breadth, as he literally leaped at the bearer of the lantern, with a force that sent him reeling backwards against his companion.

There was a short sharp struggle in the darkness, for by a well-aimed kick Mark had extinguished the lantern, and then somehow or other the lad found himself past his enemies, and dashing up the stairs to the upper floor.

As he reached it, he plunged blindly forward with outstretched hands, stumbled against an open door, flung it open, rushed through it, and slammed it behind him; and, feeling for the bolt, shot it, just as the handle was seized and turned from outside.

The 3rd Chapter.

The Escape Through the Window—On the Roof—A Leap for Life—The Case—Hidden in the Ditch.

GASPING for breath, and shaking from head to foot, Mark Stevenson stood leaning against the door—safe for the moment. But it was for the moment only. The door was quivering and shaking beneath the blows that were being showered upon it from the outside.

With hurried fingers the lad snatched out his box of matches and struck a light. As it flared up, he looked round the room in which he had taken refuge.

It was empty—absolutely empty, and wall and roof looked even more decayed and neglected than those of the room downstairs. The solitary window was boarded up with three or four strips of planking; the door, his only defence against his enemies, did not look as if it could stand a long siege—in fact, as Mark stood staring at it in dismay, one of the panels cracked ominously, and a long split appeared down the middle of it.

There was no time to be lost. Flinging down the expiring match, Mark rushed to the window, and clutching the topmost plank nailed across it wrenched at it with all his strength. For a moment it held, then, with a rending sound, the nails that secured it began to tear through the rotten woodwork of the window-frame. Another wrench, and the whole strip of wood came away in the lad's hands, leaving a small aperture at the top of the window.

Hurling the plank behind him, he gripped the second strip, and tore at it. But, to his dismay, he found that it was far more securely fastened than the first one, and yielded not an inch to his utmost efforts. And from the door behind him there came another loud crash, and a shout of triumph from the man beyond it.

Evidently it was yielding; already the light was streaming into the room through the shattered panels. It was useless to try and enlarge the opening he had already made. Small as it was, he must try to get through it and drop from the window into the garden below.

Springing upon the ledge, he thrust down the window, and put his head through the aperture. The difficulty was to get his shoulders to follow. The roof above sloped down to the window; he gripped the gutter with both hands, and strove by main force to haul himself out into the open air.

And, for the first time in his life, he found himself regretting his size—his broad shoulders and well-developed chest—as he felt himself tightly wedged between the planking and the upper part of the window frame, gasping for breath and unable to move an inch either backwards or forwards. He would be caught—caught like a rat in a trap—when the door swung off its hinges and his enemies rushed into the room.

The horror of the thought revived his almost exhausted energies. With a mighty effort he clutched once more at the leaden gutter above him. The edge of it cut into his hands, and every muscle on his arms stood out like iron. He felt the board beneath him crack—the clothes were actually torn off his back—and then suddenly he found that he was struggling through and sitting on the edge of the planking. But at the same moment the door of the room gave way altogether; there was a yell and a crash and a sound of hurrying footsteps, and an outstretched hand actually gripped him by the foot. How he managed it Mark never knew; but with a mighty effort he wrenched himself free, and, somehow or other, and at the imminent risk of falling head over heels to the ground below, he half leaped and half pulled himself on to the sloping roof above him, and crouched there, breathless, but, for the moment, out of reach of his enemies, whose exclamations of disappointment and fury came to him plainly from the window only a few feet below.

For a little while he half sat, half lay on the sloping tiles, completely exhausted by his struggle; and had the two men who were on his track been able to reach him at that moment, he would have been perfectly incapable of offering the slightest resistance to them. It was fortunate for him that for a minute or two they were too much enraged by their prey's escape to do anything but stamp and rage inside the window.

Their senses soon returned to them, however; and when they did, they promptly rushed

NEW FOOTBALL COMPETITION.

FIVE SHILLINGS A GOAL FOR A CORRECT FORECAST.

RULES AND CONDITIONS.—The following Second Division Matches will be played on SATURDAY, February 17th, 1906. The goals made by the whole of the Winning Clubs in these matches will be added together, and a prize of **FIVE SHILLINGS A GOAL** awarded to the reader whose forecast is found to agree most nearly with the actual results. What Readers have to do is to strike out the Names of the Teams they think will lose. If they think any match will result in a draw, strike out neither. Forecasts must be made on the Competition Form given herewith. Competitions, marked on outside of envelope, "Twelfth New Football Competition," should be sent to "The Competition Department," THE BOYS' HERALD Office, 7, Watlington Street, London, E.C., so as to reach us not later than first post, Saturday, February 17th, 1906. Any forecasts received after that date cannot be included in the week's Competition, and will be disqualified. The Editor's decision must be considered FINAL, and all competitors who wish to enter for the Prizes can only do so on this understanding. In the event of the winning forecast being sent in by more than one reader, the weekly prize will be added to or divided, at the discretion of the Editor. Matches postponed or abandoned will not be taken into account in awarding the prizes. Another Competition will be announced Next Week.

THIS	BRISTOL CITY	v.	LEICESTER FOSSE.	THIS
IS	BURNLEY	v.	BARNSELY.	IS
THE	BURTON UNITED	v.	CHESTERFIELD TOWN.	THE
FORM.	CHELSEA	v.	LINCOLN CITY.	FORM.
CUT	GAINSBOROUGH TRINITY	v.	HULL CITY	CUT
IT	GLOSSOP	v.	BRADFORD CITY.	IT
OUT.	GRIMSBY TOWN	v.	CLAPTON ORIENT.	OUT.
	LEEDS CITY	v.	BURSLEM PORT VALE.	
	MANCHESTER UNITED	v.	WEST BROMWICH ALBION.	
Name				
Address				

down into the garden in order to cut off Mark's retreat should he try to drop from the roof. And from his perch on the tiles the lad heard them as they emerged into the open air and ran round the building.

He crouched down against the roof hoping to avoid their eyes; but in this he did not succeed. One of them promptly ran down to the garden gate, and, holding up the lantern, turned its light on to the roof; and a shout told the lad that he had been discovered. In a flash he realised his danger. The light from the lantern was resting full upon him, and he would make an easy mark for a shot.

And it was lucky for him that he realised his peril in time. At a shout from his fellow scoundrel the man with the revolver came running round from the other side of the building; but he had to go some distance down the garden path before he could bring his weapon to bear on the roof, and Mark Stevenson made good use of the delay. Scrambling up the roof he clutched at one of the chimneys and swung himself round it on to the opposite slope just in time, for a shot from his enemy's weapon flattened itself against the chimney at the spot where his head had been a second before.

It was lucky for him that the house, small as it was, was irregularly built, a couple of small rooms having been added on at the back to the original structure. By stepping down the roof of the main building at the point at which it was joined by the roof of the outbuilding and flinging himself flat, he knew that he must be perfectly invisible from the garden, and that the only way by which his enemies could get him would be by pursuing him to his place of refuge.

He had no doubt that this was what they would do. Nor was he mistaken. He heard their voices below in hurried consultation; then he made out that one of them was moving away, the other doubtless remaining on guard below lest he should attempt to drop to the ground and make his escape. Crawling stealthily to the edge of the roof he peered over the gutter, and could just make out a dark figure standing motionless below him, when he drew back at the sound of returning steps—steps accompanied by a dragging noise, as if something were being hauled along the gravel pathway.

"A ladder," he guessed instantly, and with a sinking of the heart. Nor was he wrong. Again there was a whispered consultation, in which Mark caught only the words, "keep a look-out for him in case he jumps"; and then the two men began to rear the ladder up against the house. Involuntarily he shrank further back, and as he did so one of the tiles on which he laid his hand shook and rattled. He seized and pulled at it, and it came away in his fingers. He gripped it tightly—it was a weapon, if a poor one—and, raising his arm, crouched in readiness for the coming attack.

He thought for an instant of seizing the top of the ladder as it struck the gutter and trying to hurl it on to his enemy; but remembering that it would probably be held from below, and that he should expose himself to a shot, he refrained, and waited breathlessly till he should have one of his foes at least within striking distance. And he did not have long to wait. The ladder was no sooner in position than it creaked beneath the weight of ascending steps. A moment more the outline of a head was visible above the edge of the roof and against the sky.

Instantly Mark swung himself up upon his knees, gripping the tile with his hands, and brought it down with all his force upon his enemy's head. There was a yell as the man fell backwards, measuring his length on the gravel pathway. He clutched at the ladder as he fell, his frenzied jerk dislodged it, too, from its place, and it toppled over beside him. The lad saw at once that he should never have a better opportunity of escape, for he judged that it was the fallen man who had the revolver in his possession. He leaped to his feet and sprang to the ground, a good twenty feet below.

As luck would have it, however, it was not the ground upon which he alighted. The second scoundrel, who had been standing at the foot of the ladder while his companion mounted it, sprang outwards to avoid the latter's fall; and it was right upon his shoulders that Mark Stevenson leaped. The two went over with a crash into a thick-set currant-bush at the edge of the path—luckily for them both, for their fall was somewhat broken by it.

Mark, who had naturally fallen on the top, was the first to regain his feet, and tearing himself free from the clutch with which the other tried to detain him, he darted off round the house and down to the garden gate. As he went he was conscious at every step of a sickening shoot of pain in his left foot; but he ran on, well knowing that death might be the penalty for a moment's halt, rushed through the gate, and along the lane by which he had first approached the house.

For the first minute or so he hoped that he might be unpursued, that both his enemies might be too severely injured to take up the chase; but he soon found that he was mistaken. He had not gone fifty yards along the lane before he heard the garden gate swing, and looking back over his shoulder, saw a light dancing in the middle of the roadway. For a few seconds it remained almost stationary, then suddenly there was a shout, and it came hurrying along towards him. Though he did not know it at the time, the direction of his flight had been betrayed by his footprints in a heap of mud at the side of the road, which was wet with recent rain. The deep imprint of the toe had showed his pursuers at once that the prints had been made by a running foot; and, sure that they were on the right track, they darted off in pursuit along the lane.

The perspiration poured down Mark Stevenson's face as he rushed blindly on. But for the twist that he had given to his foot in falling, he

would have had hopes of making good his escape. But each step was agony, and it seemed to him that the pain got more excruciating with every second. He could not go on for long like this, he knew. Already he had stumbled more than once, and he felt his pace was getting slower with every moment, and that his pursuers were gaining upon him with every yard. Soon the light from their lantern would reveal him to their eyes, and then it would be all up with him. He expected every second to hear the shout that would tell him that he had been seen.

But that shout had not yet reached his ears when he set his injured foot on a stone which rolled from beneath it. A sharp exclamation of intolerable pain broke from his lips as he stumbled and pitched headlong on to his face at the roadside. For one terrible instant, as he tried to rise, but found it impossible to put his wrenched and twisted foot to the ground again, he gave himself up for lost; then, seeing that there was a fairly deep ditch at the side of the lane, he rolled himself bodily into it, into the midst of a damp tangle of mud, weeds, and nettles.

He hardly dared to hope that his stratagem would be successful, and that his pursuers would pass him without seeing him; but to his astonishment and relief they hurried by without halting an instant. They had, of course, no idea that their prey had been injured by his daring leap from the roof of the house, and naturally imagined that he would trust to his speed to carry him out of their reach. The lane, as they knew, went straight on to the high road without a break in the hedges on either side of it; and they were therefore straining every nerve to come up with their victim before he



Suddenly from the open doorway a brilliant shaft of light from a bullseye lantern shot into the room. Then came the crack of a revolver, and the bullet just grazed Mark's shoulder.

reached the Hatfield road, where he might easily give them the slip in the darkness. Thus they pushed on at the top of their speed, without stopping to flash the light of the lantern from side to side; and, luckily for Mark, the noise of their own hurried footsteps had drowned the sound of his fall.

The lad drew a deep breath of relief as he saw the reflection of the lantern vanish round a bend in the lane and heard the echo of their tread grow fainter and fainter on the still air. Had he been able to walk, nothing would have been easier for him than to make his escape in an opposite direction; but another effort only showed him the utter hopelessness of attempting to set his foot to the ground. There was nothing for it, therefore, but to lie where he was in the hope of escaping the observation of his enemies when they returned from their fruitless chase along the lane. As far as possible he hid himself among the dank weeds and nettles; and, shivering with cold, he crouched in the mud at the bottom of the ditch.

More than half an hour went by in complete silence; and then the voices and footsteps of his returning enemies struck upon his ears, and the flash of their lantern became visible round the bend of the lane. They were returning far more slowly than they had gone, and their tones soon showed that they were in no very good temper. In fact, long before they reached the spot in which Mark lay crouching breathlessly, it was plain that the pair of scoundrels were quarrelling violently.

"What did you want to fire at him at all for? We'd have done much better to get hold of him and make him own up what he'd done with the rest."

"Didn't we agree that we were to shoot him at sight?"

"Yes, because we made sure it was Barrow; but when you saw it wasn't Barrow—"

"I fired before I saw who it was; my finger was on the trigger before you turned on the light. Besides, we should never have got back what he's taken. You bet he had got it off his hands, the young devil, before he came for the last lot."

"Well, we'd have made him share up the cash, anyway."

"All very well to talk like that now," sneered the other. "Why didn't you think of it before—you were keen enough to have his brains blown out a little while ago. And, anyway, it's no good talking now about what we ought to have done. The young cub has got clear away. There's only one comfort, and that is, that he daren't split to the police. But how he came to know the swag was hidden behind the sliding panel beats me. Barrow's not the man to talk. If he'd wanted to steal a march on us, he'd have done it himself—he wouldn't have shared it with anyone."

Their voices died away, and Mark Stevenson, who had not dared to move a muscle as they passed him, drew a long breath of relief. He was safe now, he hoped, until the morning. Believing that he had outstripped them, his enemies had no doubt returned to the cottage.

The 4th Chapter.

Help at Last—The Arrest—The Sliding Panel—The Mystery Solved.

BUT although he believed that he was secure from immediate peril, Mark realised that his position was still one of no little danger, besides considerable discomfort. He was literally tied by the leg. He tried crawling on his hands and knees along the lane, but each movement caused him intense agony, and after he had almost fainted from pain, he gave up the attempt, and huddled himself under the hedge once more, nursing his

along the lane. For an instant it flashed through Mark's mind that the new-comer might be one of his enemies; but, as the man drew nearer, his fears were relieved by seeing that it was a farm labourer probably on his way to his work. He hailed him eagerly, and the man halted in astonishment as his eyes fell on the dragged, shivering figure sitting in the ditch.

"Hallo! What ha' you been up to?" he asked suspiciously.

In a few words as he could Mark explained that he had sprained his ankle badly, and that he was anxious to communicate with the Hatfield police as quickly as possible. Unfortunately his new acquaintance was a man whose mind worked slowly, and who was inclined to look upon any unusual event with a large amount of suspicion; and he stood for fully a quarter of an hour in the road asking question after question with aggravating slowness before he would consent to take any steps. His first suggestion, indeed, when he found that Mark could not walk, was that he should knock at the neighbouring cottage door to see if there was anyone about—he had heard, he said, that it had been taken by some strangers. And Mark's horrified request to him not to do anything of the kind only acted as a spur to his curiosity, and set him off on another string of questions. It was very plain that he did not believe a word of the story he heard, and the lad was more than half afraid that he would be left to his fate by the suspicious rustic. However, the promise of five shillings induced the latter at last to tramp off at smart pace in search of a conveyance of some kind. The farm at which he was employed was about a mile further on, he told the lad, and he had no doubt that the farmer would, for a consideration, allow the use of his trap into Hatfield.

Mark breathed more freely when the man had gone, though he was by no means free from anxiety yet. The sun was fairly up now, and if an unlucky chance were to bring his enemies down the lane before the arrival of the cart, his predicament would still be a dangerous one. But luck was on his side for once, and though it seemed hours to him before he heard the welcome sound of wheels, they came at last.

The farmer himself was driving the trap. The only thing he had been able to make out from his man's rambling story had been that someone had hurt his leg, and wanted to be driven to Hatfield. He was a kindly, sensible man, and he soon had Mark arranged as comfortably as possible at the bottom of the spring cart on a truss of hay, which he had thoughtfully placed there before starting. But, in spite of all his care in driving, the jolting was agony to Mark, and the good-natured man, seeing the torture he was being caused, drove him to his own house instead of to Hatfield, and, while his wife was attending to the patient's injured leg, went on to the town himself and called at the police-station. Further, before setting out for Hatfield, he despatched a couple of his men to keep an eye upon the cottage and follow anyone who should leave it.

A good bed and a comfortable breakfast had made Mark a different creature by the time the farmer returned from the town, with the local inspector of police seated beside him; and he was able to tell his story clearly and coherently.

The inspector was plainly puzzled and a little doubtful; but as Mark declared that he had been shot at, there was no other course left to him but to arrest the inhabitants of the cottage on the charge of attempted murder—if they were still within reach. He had brought one of his men with him in the trap, and accompanied by him, the farmer, and one or two of his hands, he promptly set off upon what—in his heart—he regarded as likely to turn out a wild-goose chase.

Mark, however, was pretty sure—after the conversation he had heard in the lane—that his two enemies, believing themselves perfectly safe from denunciation by one whom they took for a fellow-scoundrel, would have seen no necessity for taking flight.

And events proved that his guess was a right one. The two men, tired out by their fruitless chase of the night before, were still asleep in one of the upper rooms of the cottage when the inspector's knock was heard upon the door.

(Continued on the next page.)

INDIGESTION

Is the most prolific cause of disease in the human body. Almost any ailment may follow in its wake!

BILIOUSNESS

Is one of the most common consequences, and is almost certain to be followed by

CONSTIPATION.

You can cure them all with

The 2/6 bottle contains Three Times as much as the 1/1½ size.

MOTHER SEIGEL'S SYRUP.

They kept their heads, however, and affected intense surprise at a police visit; but not for very long.

Having effected their arrest, the inspector went straight to the cupboard which Mark had described to him, and the dismayed look on his prisoners' faces as he did so showed him that he was on no false trail. The shelves were as empty as they had been on the preceding night, and the official sought in vain for any trace of the sliding panel of which Mark had spoken.

But the hollow ring of the planking at the back of the cupboard convinced him that it was there all the same, and he had one of the boards wrenched out, and from the open space thus revealed he drew out two or three canvas bags of different sizes. Untying the string that secured the mouth of the largest, he plunged his hand in, and the little crowd of onlookers literally gasped as he withdrew it full of a glittering heap of diamonds.

The inspector's eyes glistened as brightly as the jewels that were trickling between his fingers. "The Bond Street jewel robbery!" he cried triumphantly. "If these aren't Hawker and Stein's diamonds, I'm a Dutchman!" "What!" asked the farmer incredulously. "The Bond Street robbery, that happened three months ago? You don't mean to say we've had all them diamonds and rubies hidden down in our parts?"

The inspector nodded, as he rapidly surveyed the contents of the bags.

"No doubt about it. These are Hawker and Stein's, sure enough! An opal and diamond pendant; a ruby heart—yes, I remember the description of 'em! How they came down here we've got to find out yet, but I don't suppose there will be much difficulty about that now."

The inspector was right. The two prisoners, who were marched in sullen silence into Hatfield, and there committed to the lock-up, soon came to the conclusion that their best chance of lightening their forthcoming sentences would be by making a full confession of the whole transaction.

Three months before, they had effected the daring burglary by which Messrs. Hawker and Stein, the famous Bond Street jewellers, had been robbed of stock to the tune of over ten thousand pounds, and the proceeds of their theft they had concealed in the empty cottage which one of them had taken under an assumed name, intending to leave the jewels there until the first activity of the search was over and they could dispose of them without awakening suspicion.

As both of them were old offenders, however, and had already served sentences for similar crimes, they judged it better to keep out of the way for a little while, and accordingly left England for three months. On their return, they went straight to the cottage, and what was their horror and amazement to find that their secret hiding-place had been opened during their absence and fully half of their plunder abstracted.

Their suspicions fell upon a former accomplice of theirs—a man named Barrow—and, naturally enough, since Barrow was the only person besides themselves who knew of the existence of the sliding panel, he must have guessed where they had put their plunder away, and, having ascertained that they were out of the way, had calmly helped himself to it. The pair swore vengeance upon him for it, and vowed that he should pay for his treachery with his life.

How Barrow had obtained his knowledge of their intentions they never knew; but in all probability, having learned of their return, he had set a spy to watch them. And he knew his former associates well enough to be sure that they would never rest until they had made him pay in blood for the trick he had played them.

It was then that he cast about for some means of throwing the suspicion of the theft upon someone else. He knew that the thieves had taken up their quarters in the tumbledown cottage, and it struck him that if they could catch someone else, seemingly in the very act of burglary, the innocent thief would pay the penalty that had been intended for him, and thereby save him from the vengeance of his former accomplices.

It was therefore with the idea of sending Mark Stevenson to his death, and thereby saving his own skin, that he had accosted the lad under the name of Holt, and despatched him upon his mysterious errand. He knew that, even if Mark were not shot at sight by the infuriated thieves, his protestations of innocence would be of no avail when he had actually been discovered at the door of the cupboard which concealed the secret hoard. And how nearly his fiendish plot had succeeded, the reader already knows.

It was not until some few days after Mark's mysterious adventure that the whole story became clear. The thieves' confession had put the police on the track of Barrow, alias Holt; and, after his arrest, the tale of his treachery was gradually pieced together. Not only that, but—though he had found means of disposing of a large portion of his plunder—some of the twice-stolen jewels were found in his possession.

As for Mark Stevenson, though it was several weeks before he was able to set his foot to the ground again—weeks during which he was nursed with the greatest kindness by the farmer and his wife—he had on the whole no cause to regret the peril through which he had passed.

Messrs. Hawker and Stein, overjoyed at recovering over half of the property that they had given up for lost, not only paid to Mark the reward they had advertised, but offered him on his recovery a situation in the employment of the firm. And Mark, now high in his employers' confidence, dates the upward turn of his fortunes from his night of peril.

THE END.

(Next Thursday's issue of THE BOYS' HERALD will contain a specially written 10,000 word complete tale, entitled "Shadowed by Two." It is a story no boy should miss.

THE BOYS' FRIEND = = (and BOYS' HERALD) = = Correspondence College.

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT BY YOUR EDITOR.

I have made an addition to the B.F.C.C., an addition which is as unique, and quite as helpful, as the College itself. I have given instructions to the Principal of The Boys' Friend Correspondence College to start an

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HOW TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER.

The Second of a Series of Interesting and Instructive Articles on Military Life.

Advantages of Volunteering.

WE CAN make a selection from bayonet exercise, sabres, foils, and boxing. Competitions are held at the close of each season in these, and prizes await the successful competitors.

If particularly skilful he may be selected to take part in a military tournament; and this is a high honour, as he would then meet the cream of the military talent.

In his regiment he will find sufficient recreation to take up all his spare time, if he should feel so inclined. In addition to what has been stated, there are the reading-room, canteen, billiards, shooting, swimming and football clubs, concerts, dances, and dinners—all of which the recruit will find enjoyable, and participation in which enables him to get to know his comrades, and be known.

After about three months' instruction as a recruit, an examination is held in musketry, and after passing this he is dismissed to his company.

He will then make the acquaintance of his immediate officers and comrades, and the nights will be divided between drill and lectures.

He has now completed his education as a recruit, with the exception of "class firing" on the ranges, and this will be dealt with later.

Joining a Company.

Having passed the preliminary stage of his recruit life, the day comes when he puts on his uniform for the first time and joins his company.

Perhaps the occasion may be a battalion parade, or simply a company "march out." The latter is most enjoyable, and will be a revelation to the recruit, who has up to this time been practising the manual drill and various evolutions under the command of the staff-sergeants.

Perhaps the affair will be confined to his own company, or possibly it may be an inter-company arrangement.

Each company vies with the others in making these outings as interesting, instructive, and amusing as possible.

Train is generally taken to some place in the country, and if skirmishing is to be the order of the day, part of the force will detrain at one station, and the remainder at one a few miles further on. They will then move towards each other, scouts being thrown out, and endeavour if possible to seize bridges, means of communication across rivers and other suitable spots, so as

to delay the advance

of the other party. Blank ammunition is served out, and the recruit when firing should be careful not to blaze away his cartridges recklessly, but invariably to select some object to aim at, and endeavour to estimate the distance the object is away from him.

This he will find splendid practice, and the sergeant in command will give him valuable hints on both points.

Every movement that is made will be instructive, as he will be putting into practice what up to now has practically been only theory to him.

He will see how it is possible to take large bodies of men through crowded streets, on to railway platforms, into trains and out of them, and at all times, by a few simple words of command, each man will be able to find his place in the ranks and to accommodate himself to the various movements and obstacles he may meet without confusion or delay.

He will take his

first lesson in scouting

which is very important work in active and mimic warfare.

Each company has so many recognised scouts, and these are called out on manoeuvres, and are, of course, the "eyes" of the regiment. He should endeavour to become one of these, as the work is most interesting. They are given greater freedom of action, and there is more scope for the exercise of intelligence and acumen, and a clever scout is the pride of his company.

If the manoeuvre has ended in an attack, he will enjoy himself mightily; and he should take careful note of how the older and more experienced men go into action, and endeavour to follow their example.

The experienced Volunteer—

—and perhaps there may be some in his company who have seen active service—will take advantage of every bit of cover available. He will never uselessly expose himself to the enemy's fire, but will creep through woods, follow the shelter of hedges, and, where necessary, dash across the open in short, sharp rushes, dropping to the ground to fire, but always advancing, and keeping in widely extended order.

If the movement is well carried out, the recruit will find this quite exciting, and he will to some extent experience the feelings that a soldier has in actual warfare.

(Another of these fascinating articles next week.)

Nature and Her Children:

A New Series of Clever Story-Articles by the Author of "The Man with the Gun," etc., etc.

A Fight in the Tunnel.

M R. POLECAT was out on a night raid. Some rabbit-warrens were claiming his attention. Into the nearest hole he passed. Suddenly, as he ran along the dark tunnel, there was a violent scuffle in front of him; there followed a few seconds' struggle, one single, hopeless squeal, and then—silence. The polecat stopped abruptly. There was something about this which he did not understand. It was evident that something had killed his rabbit. What was it? He stretched his long neck forward in the darkness and sniffed audibly, and that which he could smell had the effect of enraging him. For it was the big dog-stoat, the largest furred vermin in all that wood, which now barred the polecat's way.

There was nothing for it but to fight this stoat.

The polecat

made up his mind to this fact without hesitation, which showed a readiness to fight upon any and every occasion. With a silent rush, quick as a flash of lightning, he launched himself upon this new foe, and, quicker than the eye could follow, moved the stoat. The latter had never met such a terrible opponent as this, and his instinct told him that he had at last met more than his match; yet, with the courage that marks his race, he fought on grimly to the end.

A Night Excursion.

Three evenings later, when the shades of night had fallen, when the moon shone through the branches of the trees, casting a delicate tracery on the ground beneath, the polecat again left his new lair for food. But he was not alone this time; his wife and family of three-quarter-grown, fierce youngsters followed him. Above them, to the north, the still, brooding mountains, their home, reared their heads in majestic grandeur.

The old polecat left the copse and proceeded cautiously across a field of oats; then along a copse-hedge, which might be handy for future inspection, as he noted many rabbit-holes. After a while he came to the gate of a rick-yard by a farm. Here he fell in with—or, rather, out with—a buck-rat, which paid for the fact with its life. Indeed, the rick-yard was alive with rats and mice, which fled before these apparitions in brown as before a plague. But the strangers were after higher game to-night, and troubled not about the puny scuttlers.

Now, it happened that the farmer was awake, and hearing

a noise in the fowlhouse,

he hastily slipped on some clothes, and, armed with a stout stick, ran out to see what was wrong. He had no lantern, as the moonlight was strong, and he expected to see nothing larger than a stoat. He flung the fowlhouse door wide open, and out of the black void within a dozen fowls fluttered forth and blundered about in that blind state of abandon which is peculiar to fowls and sheep. Then a long, low shadow slid out, at which the farmer aimed a hasty blow; but the shadow leapt back into the darkness, and at the same time it uttered

a strange, low cry

which was answered from several places at once. Something came gliding round the side of the fowlhouse. The farmer's stick came whistling down upon it, but the creature sprang to one side, receiving only a graze instead of a death-blow.

Again that plaintive, low cry sounded about him. The next instant the night seemed full of long, dark creatures, which sprang up at him from out the darkness. With a shout of pain and anger he lashed frantically at one which hung on to his leg, and shook the beast off. There was a slight pause, and then they came at him again from all sides. They scrambled up his legs, and hung to his jacket, or sprang like dogs, always striving to reach his throat. Time after time he hurled them to the ground or shook them loose. One had received

the full weight of his stick,

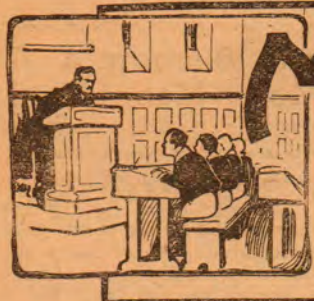
and lay quite still. But the survivors always returned to the attack with that swift, silent, cold-blooded pertinacity which terrifies.

Like a flash the man realised that he was in grave danger of his life. He was already losing blood fast from several wounds. He might turn faint, and fall. And then—

He gave three frantic bounds, and ran madly, blindly—ran as he had never run before—like a hunted animal. For a few seconds the soft pattering of small feet followed him; but he gained his house, and, shutting the door behind him, sank down exhausted.

Next morning he found that the creature he had killed was an old male polecat, and in a trap he had set for rats he came upon another of his enemies—this time an old female. He never saw the rest of the gang again; they had no doubt scattered after losing their parents.

(These interesting series of articles will be continued in THE BOYS' HERALD—1d.—every Thursday.)



MASTER and PUPIL

TRUE STORIES OF SCHOOL LIFE
by GECIL HAYTER

No. 3.—THE BULLY.

The 1st Chapter.

A Hamper From Home.

ERNEST ST. MAUR was a big, overgrown lout of seventeen, still in lower school, in spite of a dirty smudge on his upper lip which he was pleased to consider a moustache, and generally rather dirty about the hands; to add to the evil, he had persuaded an idolising widowed mother to procure for him a doctor's certificate which rendered him exempt from nasty, rough games.

Captains and secretaries of football and cricket, learning this last, shrugged their shoulders contemptuously, and left him severely alone. He had no possible interest for them.

Consequently, not having attained to the dignity of a study, he was left to loaf about deserted class-rooms and big school at leisure. After two terms he found this rather a dull proceeding, and began to yearn for amusement. Twice his house-master had driven him out with scathing words to watch matches. On the second occasion, Ernest St. Maur, grown wise, contrived to set up such a racking cough that he put in four days malingering in the infirmary, and lived on the fat of the land.

At the end of his first year he found a kindred spirit, Woodin, a dark, swarthy, square-built boy, who had picked up a considerable stock of undesirable knowledge under a private tutor, and had been passed on to college to have it kicked out of him.

Before half the spring term was over the two were as thick as thieves, and serious trouble began.

Small boys were occasionally found blubbering miserably in corners, unwilling or afraid to give any adequate reason when questioned. Others glowered—dully resentful—yet afraid to offer open resistance. Woodin and St. Maur were artful in their generation, and though their reign was a reign of secret terror, they managed to stand fairly well with unsuspecting class-masters, and always had a civil word for upper school and prefects.

Officially, of course, fags were denied them—in fact, they were liable to be fagged themselves, only their size made the idea absurd; yet fags they had, by virtue of the stronger hand. Moreover, they raided lower school hampers shamelessly, the owners standing by with sickly grins or half-hidden tears of rage.

One cold Saturday afternoon, the afternoon of the Blandford match, the pair were, as usual, sitting over the fire at the upper end of the big school just below the dais, when Dawkins minor, a small boy in the Lower Third, came in, whistling. The room was getting dusk, and he had no idea that there was anyone about. Excitement ran high over the Blandford match, and everyone who could get there by hook or crook was out on the footer field. Dawkins minor had been kept in, doing lines, for throwing ink-balls in twelve o'clock school, and was about to refresh himself with sardines, cocoa, and raspberry jam.

Still whistling, he vaulted over some forms, opened his desk, and pulled out a kettle and the requisite luxuries.

"Come here!" said a voice from out of the dusk. Dawkins minor knew it well. His heart sank, and the heavy desk-lid fell with a slam.

"Noisy little brute, come here!" said the voice again.

"Please, St. Maur, I can't! I've only just finished my lines, and—"

There was the sound of a chair being hurriedly pushed back, and the clatter of an overturned form.

"Catch him, Woodin, he's bolting for the door!" sang out St. Maur.

Two seconds later, Dawkins minor was seized by the back hair and came down on the floor with a resounding thump. A sharp kick which caught him on the thigh-bone stirred him into renewed activity.

"Get up, you cub, and come when you're told! Hallo! Hallo, what's this? Jam, sardines! Greedy little beast, you've had a hamper, and never owned up! You know the rules? All hampers are to be brought to us unopened!"

"Ah—h! Don't, Woodin! Please, don't! You'll break my arm!"

The cry died away into a whimper.

"Serve you right if I did! Shut up that confounded row! Here, St. Maur, the little brute's had a hamper, and never told us! What shall we do to him?"

"Bring him here!"

Woodin grabbed a fresh tuft of hair, gave it a deft twist, which nearly pulled some out by the roots, and ran him up the long school-room into St. Maur's arms.

The latter caught him a stinging cuff on the side of the head, and, with a "Clumsy young ass," shoved him away.

"Go and bring out everything in your desk! Everything, mind! If you leave so much as a penholder I'll make it hot for you!"

Dawkins minor obeyed sullenly, with quiver-

ing lips. He was a tidy youngster for a lower schoolboy, and had spent an hour that morning, setting his desk to rights—a fact St. Maur was well aware of.

The first load was brought and deposited at St. Maur's feet on the floor—three sardine tins, jars of bloater and other pastes, jams, a large cake with a slice missing, a box of figs, and other delicacies.

"Bring the rest! Bring everything!"

Dawkins minor, sick at heart, produced more treasures—two piles of books, a writing-desk, a pencil-case, and a newly-skinned mole tacked out to dry on a board.

Your artistic bully knows the value of mental as well as physical torture. St. Maur eyed the assortment coldly, and stirred things up with his foot. Woodin annexed the cake and figs. St. Maur two pots of paste.

"Disgusting the way these kids are pampered nowadays!" said he.

Woodin nodded between mouthfuls. A much be-gilt calf-bound book caught his eye. He pounced on it gleefully.

"Eric, or Little by Little," he read; then, turning to the first page—"Historical prize, Lower Third, Charles Edward Dawkins." Oh, ye gods and little fishes! and made as though to throw the book on to the fire.

Dawkins minor flushed.

"Don't!" he pleaded.

"Don't, Woodin dear!" mimicked St. Maur. "Make the little beast stand on the desk and read it! It's as good as a play. Read it out, you skunk!"

Dawkins minor was deftly assisted to a desk, via Woodin's boot, and told to read.

Tearfully he did so, in a quivering, squeaky treble.

"What rot!" said St. Maur, and heaved a dictionary at him.

The flat of the book caught him on the side of the head and nearly sent him backwards, head over-heels. But he knew better than to stop unbidden. Meanwhile, St. Maur and Woodin played football with his treasures. School-books and exercise-books went tumbling through the dusk to the far corners of the room, followed by sardine tins, a jam-pot shattered against the corner of a desk, and Dawkins was ordered to mop up the mess, under pain of having the jam rubbed into his hair.

Meanwhile, Woodin, with a hot poker, scrawled a large, straggly D over the be-gilt calf binding of the prize, and St. Maur broke open the writing-desk and poured the contents on to the fire.

That was the finishing stroke. The meek spirit of Dawkins minor flashed out into a fit of mad but utterly futile rage, and he flew at his tormentors tooth and nail.

It was only a flash, however; his arm was caught and twisted till his back bent with the pain, and white-faced, with set lips, he collapsed on the floor.

"Cheeky little ass!" roared St. Maur. "We'll teach you manners. Woodin, old man, fetch along my catty with you—and there's a bit of box rope in the locker!"

The 2nd Chapter. Punishment.

In a trice, Dawkins was trussed face downwards over a heavy desk, tied securely by wrists and ankles.

"Bags first go!" cried St. Maur. "Half-a-dozen each!"

The swanshot caught the tightened seat of Dawkins minor's breeches with the intolerable pain of a hornet's sting, and a squeal of agony rang out; a second and third followed, and the squeal rose to a wailing shriek.

"Shut your row, you little sneak!" said Woodin apprehensively. "Hold on, St. Maur. If he yelps like that, someone'll hear! Untie him, and haul him into the Upper Fifth recess. I'll soon stop his howling!"

The luckless Dawkins was unbound and hustled into a new place of torture, secure from observation.

"Now, then, you cry-baby, you shall have something to squeal for! Think you're being

bullied, do you? We haven't begun yet. Let's give him stripes!"

They gave him stripes. He was laid on his back on a form—his gown wrapped round his head, and whilst Woodin sat on his stomach, St. Maur held his legs and rapped him consistently across the shins with a sharp-edged ruler. It doesn't sound a great deal, but after three or four minutes the pain becomes excruciating—also it has the effect of leaving no outward and visible mark.

Then they gave him screws, and screws hurt more than stripes. In the midst of them Woodin stopped suddenly.

"Look out, the young ass is fainting."

"Rot, he's only shamming. I'll soon liven him up. Give me the ruler again."

"Don't be a fool," said Woodin sharply. "Here, you little beast, get back to your desk and stop blubbing. If you so much as whisper a word we'll half kill you next time. And say 'thank you, Woodin.'"

But Dawkins minor was too far gone to speak; he could only sob convulsively, and staggering blindly to a dark corner, he buried his head in his hands, worn out with continued pain, and went instantly into a deep sleep.

Then it was St. Maur's turn to look a bit scared.

"I say," he began, after inspecting his victim, "I s'pose we haven't overdone it, eh?"

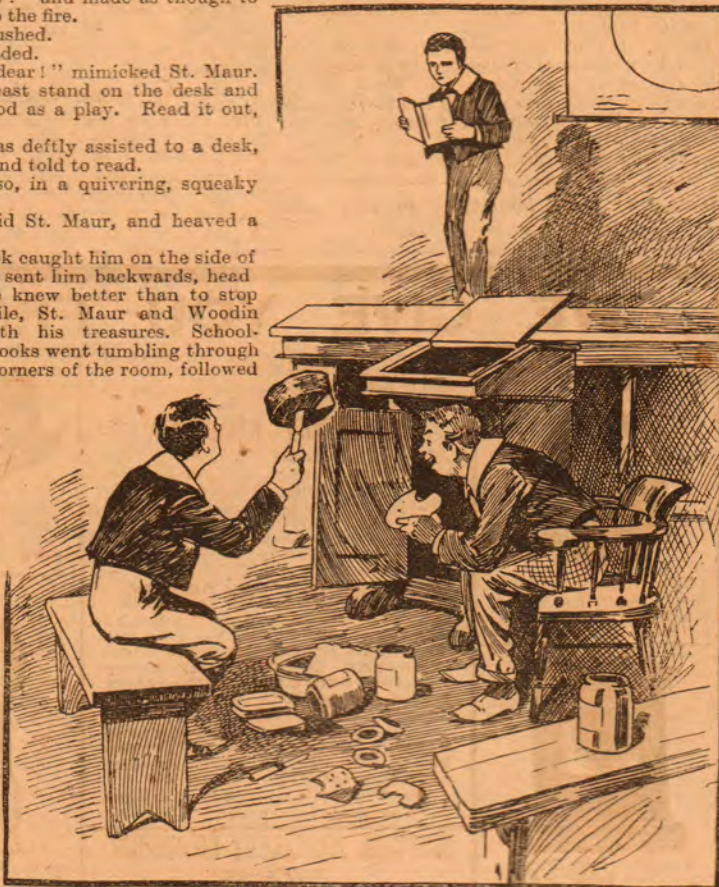
Woodin shook his head.

"I've seen 'em go like that before. He'll be all right when he wakes up. Bit dazed and stiff. Cheeky little brat. Do him good. Cave, they're comin' in from footer. We'd better bunk, in case."

After tea a junior came scurrying into big school just before prep., bawling:

"Dawkins! Da—awkins minor! Anstruther wants you in studies. Where are you? Da—awkins! Hallo!" He had stumbled up against the object of his search, still sleeping soundly at a corner desk, and promptly shook him back to life.

Dawkins minor woke with a shiver and a start.



Dawkins minor was deftly assisted to a desk and told to read. He did so, while Dawkins and St. Maur helped themselves gleefully to the contents of his hamper.

"Here, hurry up, old man! Anstruther wants you. He's in a deuce of a wax—you didn't get his cream for tea. Golly, what's up? You've been blubbing. Hurry, or you'll get socks."

Anstruther was senior pup (prefect), and Dawkins minor was his study fag.

"Here, you imp," cried Anstruther, as a timid knock sounded on his door. "What the deuce do you mean? I told you I wanted six penn'orth of cream and a Genoa cake. I'll—"

He stopped, catching sight of a white, nervous face.

"What's the trouble, anything wrong?"

Anstruther was a good-natured chap, though careless and apt to be impatient.

"No; I—I—I forgot. I—I'm very sorry."

"So you ought to be. Hold on. Come here! Stand under the gas. Humph!" Anstruther treated him to a long and critical inspection. He knew the signs well. He'd been a junior himself in the very worst time, when bullying was

pull up your trousers—higher, above the knee. A series of angry livid marks showed on either shinbone. "Ah-h, poor little beast, you have had it bad. Turn round."

Dawkins minor obeyed, and Anstruther, with a practised eye, noted other livid marks behind each ear. He frowned. School tradition was dead against bullying. A good healthy kicking or a licking with a fives bat were useful stimulants,

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and did no harm. Ragging was a tonic, but systematic bullying was considered bad form.

"That'll do; you can go. I want my study swept out to-morrow," he said shortly, too wise to ask questions or expect an answer. Sneaking was the one deadly sin, and he knew perfectly well that Dawkins minor would have undergone a study licking rather than speak up. But for the next few days he kept his eyes open and held several confabulations with Hunt, the second prefect and captain of football.

On the following Wednesday, after twelve o'clock school, a whisper got about that something was amiss.

Anstruther took the roll as usual, and when the last "adsum" had been said, instead of hurrying down from the pulpit in big school, he held up his hand.

"Lower Third stay in their places, please. St. Maur—Woodin, I want you in Upper Fifth recess. Clear out, the rest of you."

Whispering and muttering, the school tramped heavily out to squash-racquets and punt-about, a junior prefect heading them on and preventing the curious from lingering near the windows. Hunt remained with Anstruther. Both looked grim, and Lower Third stared in obvious perturbation.

"St. Maur and Woodin, take off your gowns! Lower Third, here, please!" The order came sharp and crisp, and with a clatter Lower Third surged forward.

"I find there's been a lot of bullying lately, and that those two chaps there are responsible for it. I don't want to ask questions, and I don't want to have to call a prefects' meeting, so I think this will be the simplest way out. You see these two. They've given most of you a pretty bad time. Now go and take it out of them. Hunt and I are here to see fair play."

Lower Third hung back abashed.

"Hurry up! It's fair play, they're big enough to tackle a dozen of you apiece."

For an instant longer they held back, St. Maur and Woodin eying them white-faced and scared; then, headed by Dawkins minor, they surged up and the fun began. There was hardly one of them who had not had his bad hour, and the ice once broken, they went for the two bullies like a pack of bull-terriers.

Forms and benches were flung this way and that, a panel or two were cracked, and a window pane gave with a tinkle of shattered glass, Hunt and Anstruther looking on as judges at a tournament.

"Stripes!" shouted Anstruther above the din, as soon as each bully was down, with three or four joyful and excited youngsters on his head and chest. "Harder—lam it in, you little idiots!"

For three minutes by the watch stripes were gleefully administered.

"Screws!" said Anstruther, and they were duly and efficiently screwed till they yelled for mercy.

"Hold up; that'll do! Now then, Lower Third, line the gangway. St. Maur, Woodin, you will run the gauntlet until I give the word to stop. It'll do you good to have a taste of your own treatment. Don't blubber like that. Run, I tell you, or, by jove, I'll come and start you myself, and you'll be sorry."

Six times up and six times down they made their way, whilst Lower Third gleefully plied rulers, knotted box rope, and racquet handles. They were beginning to enjoy themselves.

At the sixth turn Anstruther stopped them.

"Dry up, and get out to punt-about, you young ruffians. Put that ruler down, Dawkins; you needn't fag again this term. St. Maur, I take you as my fag. See that tea is ready at five sharp, and mind the muffins are hot, or I'll give you six with the bat. Woodin, Hunt takes you for this term. You will both play in the junior game this afternoon, and keep on doing so until you are given leave off. What's that? Doctor's certificate be hanged. I'll look after your health. Stop snuffling and clear out."

"I think that meets the case," he added in an undertone to Hunt. "Don't envy 'em much myself. They won't do any more bullying for a bit. I'll play you twenty up at racquets, old man. I've booked the court, and there's just time before lunch."

Dawkins minor put away his ruler, slammed down the desk, and went out whistling with his cap on the back of his head, which was insufferable cheek for a Lower Third boy.

(Another of these fascinating school tales will appear in next Thursday's BOYS' HERALD. Don't forget to tell your chums about the magnificent sequel to "Always Honest," by Your Editor and Allan Blair, which starts in this paper in three weeks' time.)

CHIP-CARVING.

A New Series of Interesting and Instructive Articles.

A Neat Picture-Frame.

THE accompanying design is for a picture-frame, and contains a chip-carved rosette at each corner, and a V-shaped cut decorating the intervening spaces.

The dimensions, of course, vary with the size of picture or photo to be framed; but for a cabinet photo a margin of at least two inches should be left.

To begin work, the wood should be carefully planed up, and should be about 1/4 in. or 3/8 in. thick, and of holly or sycamore. A soft piece of black walnut, or even satin walnut, could be used if a dark frame is liked best.

The centre space should be

cut out with a bow saw,

or, if not available, a few holes bored with a large centrebit will soon effect a clearance of the unnecessary wood. Trim up the edges with a chisel, and then cut out the rebate on the inside, as shown in section in the drawing. This should be done with a chisel.

Having prepared the wood, mark out the rosettes. This is very simple. First draw the circle, and divide it into six parts by stepping-off length of radius on the circumference. Divide these spaces in half again, and then

bisect the remaining spaces

to give the necessary twenty-four marks. Then, placing the compasses on each of these marks, and opening out to centre, the curves will be easily drawn. Slice out the cuts on the slant, first cutting down the division in each case to avoid cutting into the next ridge. The corners of the square are easily done, carefully marking out as shown. The V-shaped cuts will take some careful work to get them true, and the novice will be well advised to practise the

use of the parting-tool

on a piece or two of odd wood until he gets the necessary practice to ensure a straight cut.

Many similar designs may be worked in combination with the parting-tool, and those of my readers who are good at freehand will find ex-

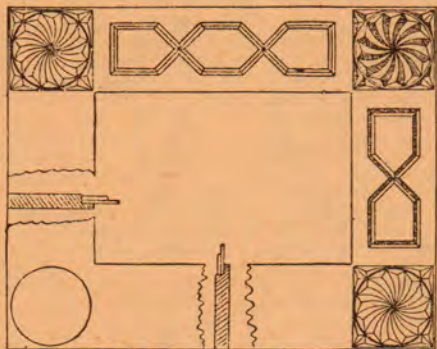
cellent scope for utilising their talent in this direction.

In making up picture-frames of this description a disadvantage is that the wood often warps, and to avoid this it will be advisable to screw on some pieces, across the grain, at the back. This will in a great way

prevent warping

and probably spoiling the work.

An alternative design could be worked up by leaving the corners projecting out a little—about a quarter of an inch. This would mean cutting out a quarter of an inch from each



Design for a chip-carved picture-frame described in this article.

side, and reducing the space between the rosettes to 1 1/4 in. instead of 2 in. In this case the V-shaped cuts should be drawn in the centre of the space.

Another way of finishing it would be to reduce the rosettes and run a V-shaped cut as a border, about a quarter of an inch away from the edge, both inside and outside; or, if this is too difficult, a one-eighth of an inch chamfer would look well.

The making of such useful articles as this should be a means of providing any boy with a fair amount of pocket-money. Work neatly done and carefully finished will command a sale anywhere. Even if you cannot dispose of your chip-carvings amongst your own personal friends, you ought easily to be able to do so by taking them round to local shopkeepers.

(Another of these interesting articles will appear in next week's issue.)

Papier-Mache Work:

How Boys can Take Up an Instructive and Remunerative Hobby.

2.—AN ORNAMENTAL FLOWER-POT.

Covering the Jar.

HOW long it will take the paper rounds to thoroughly soak will naturally depend on the power of the blue liquid; and this will be more a matter of how long the copper-turnings have been left to brew in it than anything else.

When the paper begins to go pulpy it is taken out again, round after round. As each comes out from soak it is plastered on to the side of the jam-jar we are using as the foundation on which to work.

Each round must be made to overlap the next, and this in turn is almost covered by a third, which also overlaps it a trifle. So you continue, until at last the whole of the outside of the jar is completely covered with paper.

Now you go over the whole again, covering both sides and bottom with the

chemically treated rounds of paper,

and keep on and on until such a thickness has been built up as you deem sufficient. Then the whole is turned upside down and set aside to dry, which it must do naturally, and without the aid of artificial heat.

When it is dry it will be found that the surface has settled down into a sort of hard cake, from which it is quite impossible to peel off a single round of paper, and this notwithstanding that no sort of adhesive was used in the previous work.

All the paper has, in fact, gone to form a substance which is capable of holding together like strong cardboard, and far less easily injured by water.

We have only to get the jam-pot out from the inside of it for our work to be complete. If this does not come out easily, one or two sharp taps on

the papier-mache covering

with a hammer will break the pot, without injuring the papier-mache, and it will then be easy to remove the pieces.

Now comes the task of ornamenting. This may be done in any manner that takes the individual fancy of the maker of the article. A coat of varnish completes the whole.

How to Become a Motor-Man.

[CONCLUDING ARTICLE.]

Side-Slip and How to Avoid It.

AT the first symptom of side-slip the driver must withdraw his clutch, thus temporarily disconnecting the power of the motor, and at the same time steer his car in the direction in which the skidding is taking place. An experienced motor-man, who knows his car, is invariably able to do the right thing at the right moment, and thus avert trouble.

Schools and Driving Certificates.

Schools of motoring have been mentioned, and before this series of articles is brought to a close it is necessary to utter a word of warning on this subject. Many of the teachers of motoring who advertise so lavishly in the newspapers are to be avoided, as are also the "certificates of proficiency" they are so ready to supply to their pupils. Indeed, so bad a name have many of these "professors of automobilism" made for themselves by their slipshod teaching that their certificates are in many quarters regarded with unconcealed contempt. At the same time, it is only fair to say that there are several genuine and well conducted motoring schools in London and elsewhere. At the Battersea Polytechnic special motoring classes are held, and an excellent course of tuition is afforded at the motor school recently established by the West End Motor Company, with Mr. Alec Ross as principal. It is a very general practice at all these establishments to give the actual driving tuition in the streets, so that the pupil may gain confidence by driving amid the actual traffic; but in at least one case a special private driving track is provided. This is in connection with the Motor Academy in Boundary Road, Notting Hill, London, W.

Automobile Club's Examinations.

But wherever or however the budding motor-man completes his education he would certainly be well advised to go in for the "driving and proficiency examinations" of the Automobile Club of Great Britain and Ireland, whose certificate naturally carries greater weight with employers than any guarantee granted by private individuals. Full particulars can be obtained from the Secretary of the Automobile Club, 119, Piccadilly, London, W., to whom the applicant should send a stamped and addressed envelope for reply.

THE END.

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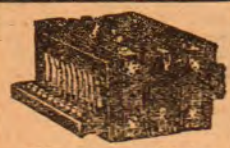
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"Always Honest."

A Great Human Story of Real Life.

By HAMILTON EDWARDS (YOUR EDITOR) AND ALLAN BLAIR.

I Talk to My New Friends

FOR years Bob Welford and Walt had been waifs of the London streets, till one day a rascally ex-solicitor came along with a fortune belonging to one of the lads. Now, in reality, this fortune belongs to Bob. Yet Crane—the solicitor—for purposes of his own, brings forward Walt as the rightful heir.

It is not long before poor, honest, hard-working Bob finds out that the money which weak-willed, foolish Walt is flinging about so recklessly, and is being robbed of on every side by men like Crane, Sir Seton Renfrew, and others, should have come to him; but, almost friendless as he is, and practically penniless, how can he hope to obtain his rights?

Acting in concert with the villains surrounding Walt are two arch-villains, the Vampire and Rudford, who have murdered a confederate named Mo Crooks, because he was about to turn traitor to their cause.

Through the machinations of Bob's enemies the lad is continually losing his situations, and on several occasions his life is threatened. At last, however, his luck seems as if it is about to turn, for he receives a satisfactory reply in response to his repeated applications for work. Punctually at the appointed time Bob puts in an appearance at the office of a Mr. Foldwinter, by whom he is engaged. Unknown to Bob, Mr. Foldwinter is an engraver of spurious Bank of England notes, and is, moreover, a member of the Vampire's gang.

Meanwhile Foxy Pike still pursues his course of robbing Walt Dyson. He takes him to a betting club, where he induces Walt to put his money on horses which have no earthly chance of winning. By an accident, however, Walt wins a large sum of money, and the proprietor of the betting-club, to avoid paying up, pretends that the police have raided the place. Walt, therefore, has to leave without receiving his money.

By his employer Bob Welford is sent with a packet of forged banknotes to the house of the Vampire. As he stands without the door he hears a voice which brings back to him the recollection of an incident which had happened on the night Mo Crooks was murdered.

From this point my new chums can take up this enthralling tale.

YOUR EDITOR (H. E.).

Bob Meets the Vampire Face to Face.

THERE was a pause of a second or two, during which the Vampire opened the packet and pocketed the contents.

He turned upon Bob with a smile that was intended to be ingratiating.

"So you come from Mr. Foldwinter?" he said. "You work for him, I s'pose? How do you get on with him, my dear?"

If Bob heard the words, it was only in a dull, mechanical fashion. No heed did he pay to them. His brain was hard at work as his eyes remained fixed on the door through which Rudford had disappeared.

"Who was that man?" Bob's voice was hard and monotonous as he asked the question—the voice of one making a great effort to control a deeply-felt emotion.

"Man—man? What man, my dear?" There was a strange jerkiness in the Vampire's tone.

"The man who went out by that door as I came in," Bob answered. "I think I recognised his voice."

"Eh—you think!" The words seemed to jump from the Jew's throat involuntarily. There was a sudden flash in his steely eyes—a flash of fire. But he checked himself, and rubbing his skinny hands together, added with an attempt at a light tone: "A funny man that, my dear. I surance man, he is. Pr'aps you've seen him before. Goes everywhere, he does, trying to get people to insure their lives and their houses. Always bothering me, my dear, and he'll come again to bother me. You heard him say so, didn't you? How do you get on with Mr. Foldwinter?"

Bob was not satisfied. In his mind he was still connecting the voice of Rudford with the attack upon himself near the canal. Ignoring the Vampire's last question, he said as much. The old Jew turned his face sharply away, and paced the room.

"The canal! The canal!" he murmured to himself. "The boy remembers, and he recognised Rudford's voice!"

He thought in silence for several seconds, afraid to look at Bob lest the great fear that was within his heart should reflect itself in his eyes. At length, with a great effort, he again found his utterance. Ignoring Bob's reference to the canal, he rattled on quickly:

"Very good sort of man—Mr. Foldwinter! I s'pose you find him so, my dear? Yes, a very good man, though pr'aps a little strange. You like working for 'im, I dare say?"

"Oh, yes," answered Bob. "I like working for him. He has been very kind to me."

The Vampire breathed a little more freely. He began to think that he had turned the boy's thoughts from Rudford. He had an idea in his

mind. Often he had speculated as to how much Bob Welford really suspected of the facts in connection with the fortune which Walt Dyson was spending. A favourable opportunity for questions seemed now to present itself.

"Very kind to you, is he, my dear? Ah, yes, good man Mr. Foldwinter—very good man indeed. You live with your father and mother, I s'pose?" Bob shook his head.

"I have no father or mother," he answered quietly. Then after a moment's pause, he added: "At any rate, as far as I know, I don't remember my parents at all, and had always thought that they must have died when I was a baby. But lately—lately I have sometimes thought that my father might be alive."

"Yes, yes, my dear," said the Vampire, rubbing one hand slowly against the other. "But if he is alive, why doesn't he—?" He broke off abruptly, checked in his speech by a glance at the boy before him.

Bob was staring hard at the curtained door upon the other side of the room.

"That man!" he gasped out. "That man, again! What is he doing?"

"What do you mean, my dear?"

"The man who was here when I first came in, and whose voice I told you I recognised. He looked in through the curtains a moment ago, and then dodged back when he saw I had caught sight of him."

The Vampire swung round on his heel. Bob did not see the fierce light that came into the Jew's eyes—did not see the hard expression of his mouth as his jaws snapped together. The old man shuffled over to the curtains, put his head through them, looked to the right and to the left, and then pulled the door to.

"There's nobody there, my dear," he said, controlling with an effort his shaking voice. "You must have been mistaken."

"I wasn't! I tell you he was there!" Bob's manner was vehement. The Jew could see that he was excited. Little could come of his questioning the boy further just then. It would be better, he felt, to get him out of the house as soon as possible.

"Good-bye, my dear," he said. "You will be wanting to get away, I expect. I hope you will do well at Mr. Foldwinter's. Stick to him, my dear. He's a good man—a very good man. Good-bye, good-bye!"

He had taken Bob by the arm, and had led him out of the room and along the passage. He opened the door. Bob with a rigid expression on his face, stepped out and walked away.

The Vampire closed the door softly and bolted it. What a change came over him then. In an instant the serene demeanor he had assumed vanished; the calmness fled from his eyes, giving place to a wild, angry, distracted look. Quickly he shuffled back to the room, and over to the further door.

"Rudford!" he called out huskily.

In two seconds Rudford, with dark and scowling visage, stood beside him.

"You're a fool!" hissed the Jew. "A fool to look in at the door as you did just now! That boy saw you!"

"Yes, wither him!" Rudford stormed out. "But it's you that's the fool! I heard every word; I was standing behind the curtains all the time. When I looked through I had it in my mind to come in and take him by the throat and squeeze the life out of him! He's dangerous—d'you hear?—more dangerous than anybody else!"

The Vampire nodded his head vigorously.

"You're right," he said. "He remembered your voice and talked about that night—you know the night—when you and me—"

"Ain't I told you I heard everything!"

thundered Rudford. "Ain't I said he's dangerous? He suspects—do you hear me, you old wolf?—he suspects me! He's gone away now, and he'll think it over, and think it over, and then—then he'll go to the 'tees! Pity I didn't throttle him that night and treat him as we treated Crooks!"

"Hush, hush, my dear! Not so loud! The boy wouldn't be able to swear to you. He didn't see your face that night—remember how foggy it was. Don't worry about him. You'll be safe—quite safe!"

"If I ain't," rejoined Rudford in cold, deliberate tones between his clenched teeth—"if I ain't, then you ain't! If one of us is took the other goes with him. Understand that! My game is your game—don't forget it!"

A convulsive shudder ran through the Vampire's limbs at the other's words. Again there was that strange groping of his skinny fingers about his neck, as if he feared a rope might even now be there. With a tremulous movement he shuffled over to a cupboard, took out two tumblers and a brandy bottle. He poured out some of the raw spirit, and taking up one of the glasses raised it to his dry, quivering lips.

"Rudford," he said, "we must talk things over. I don't think there's much danger. It was only your voice he said he thought he remembered—your voice, not your face. I told him you were an insurance agent. Ha, ha, ha! I think of that, my dear, an insurance agent! I said you insured men's lives—he, he, he! If I'd said you insured men's deaths, then—"

"Silence!" cried Rudford, with a horrible gleam in his eyes. "Not another word on that! This whelp is dangerous, I tell you! We've got to make up our minds what to do."

Rudford was right. Bob Welford's mood just



"Ha! Good-mornin', Mithter Dython!" greeted Solly Izzard, holding out a fat, bejewelled hand. "There's a little account to be thettled in your favour, ithn't there?"

then was a source of the greatest danger to them. As the boy walked away from Stepney Green, past St. Dunstan's Church, and made in the direction of Commercial Road, his brain was in a state of seething turmoil.

That voice! It belonged, without any manner of doubt, to the man who had clutched him by the throat on that foggy night. And the man was one of two who had been carrying something heavy in a large sack. Just such a sack as had come to light, attached to the floating body of the dead man in the canal. What was the connection between the man whose voice he had just heard and the dead man?

Despite all their efforts, the police had up to now been unable to solve the problem which the tragic discovery in the canal had put before them. Bob had made up his mind now what to do. He would go at once and consult his friend Constable Cave.

Arriving at the Commercial Road, he boarded a tramcar. He soon reached the police station, and was fortunate enough to find Cave reading a newspaper in the recreation-room. The constable jumped up as Bob entered, and shook him cordially by the hand.

"Hallo, young 'un!" he greeted. "What brings you here? Got any news? Judging from your face, you might have seen a ghost!"

"I believe I've seen a murderer, or someone connected with a murder!" responded Bob.

"Eh—what's that?" The constable was all eagerness now. "What d'you mean?"

"You remember that affair on the canal bank, when I saw two men carrying a big sack between them?"

"Remember! I should just think I do remember! One of the men got hold of you and threatened to choke you, didn't he?"

"Yes, that's just it," answered Bob; "and I believe I've seen that man to-day!"

"You've seen him! When—where?"

"Less than an hour ago, at a house in Stepney Green."

Constable Cave looked hard at Bob for several seconds. Then he took hold of the boy's arm and pushed him into a chair.

"Bob," he said, "I can see that whatever's happened has upset you more than a bit. Sit down there and tell me all about it."

Bob told his story. Cave listened intently, and remained thoughtful for a time after Bob had finished. When at length he spoke his voice was serious.

"I've no doubt you're right, Bob; you seem so certain about the voice. But it's unfortunate you didn't see the man's face that night. You see, the identification of a voice is very little to go on; but still, there it is—it's something, and we must make the best of it. I'd like to take this job up myself—there would be promotion in it, for a certainty—but I mustn't; they wouldn't allow me to. This is a job for the C.I.D. I must tell Sergeant Prinder at once; I'll go down and see if he's in."

The detective-sergeant was in. Cave found him in the office, and returned presently to ask Bob to accompany him there.

Bob went down and, for the second time, told his story.

Sergeant Prinder listened with the closest attention. Then, having put several questions to the boy, the answers to which, with the other information, he noted down, he closed his pocket-book with a bang, replaced it in his pocket, and said:

"Very good! I think at last we've got what may turn out to be a tangible clue! That house in Stepney Green—you must show me where it is. We've got to keep an eye on the place, and on the people who live there."

Walt Dyson goes again to the Eagle Club, and Receives a Large Sum of Money

"FOXY, my dear," said the Vampire, sidling up to Pike, who was sitting in the long room alone, Walt Dyson having gone out by himself. "Foxy, my dear, here's the packet for Solly Izzard. It came a couple of hours ago."

"Oh, Foldwinter's sent the flimsies, have he?" returned Foxy, opening the large envelope and fumbling at the sheaf of bogus banknotes. "I s'pose I shall have to go along to the club and arrange with Solly about 'em?"

"Just so, my dear, just so! Solly's a good and honourable man, you know, and he ain't going to keep Walter waitin' any longer for his money! He, he, he! Much good notes like them will be to Walter when he does get 'em!"

"Look here, Vampy, my old duck, that's just what I don't understand about this business! If Solly shells out six hundred and thirty pounds' worth o' duffin' notes, it'll be more'n a bit risky for a pie-can like Walt to have 'em about him, won't it? He might try to pass some of 'em, and so blow the whole bloomin' gaff!"

"We must take care he don't do that, my dear!" answered the Vampire, with a hideous smile. "All I want is, for Solly to settle with him so that you and him can go and play the same game over again when he gets hold of that eight hundred pounds from Bellersby. If Solly didn't pay up over the other day's bettin' there will be no persuading Walt to back horses at the Eagle again."

"But you ain't said now how you're goin' to stop him from tryin' to pass the flash notes," said Pike.

"Leave that to me, my dear, leave that to me!" answered the Jew, tapping his beak-like nose with his finger. "His won't be the first pockets I've arranged to have picked, will they?"

"No, you're about right there, Vampy! I think I wigs your little game now. All right, I'll go along and see Solly Izzard now."

Pike had stuffed the packet of bogus banknotes into his pocket, and rose to put on his hat and coat. A few more whispered words with the Vampire, and then off he started for the Eagle Betting Club.

He was away some two hours, and when he did come back, found that Walt Dyson had returned in the meantime. Walt was seated in a chair, his hands deep in his pockets, his chin sunken upon his breast and a look of utter dejection upon his face.

"Freeze me," exclaimed Foxy, as he burst into the room, "here's a happy home! Here's a welcome! Here's a bright and smilin' face waitin' for me! You ain't down in the dumps, not 'arf, you ain't! You ain't got a fit o' the blues, you ain't, oh, dear, no! What's wrong, old sport?"

"Everythink's wrong!" answered Walt sullenly. "Ere, arter bein' done out o' more'n six 'undred quid by that bloke Izzard, old Bellersby—the lawyer as I've bin drawin' my brass from—wouldn't let me 'ave none to-day!"

"What!" exclaimed Foxy Pike, his face falling at the news. "He's jibbin', is he? I thought you said you was to have another eight hundred pounds one day this week?"

"Yes, that's what 'e promised; but when I went up for it to-day, 'e puts me off and wouldn't part wi' a single quid! But I'll 'ave another go

ALWAYS HONEST.

(Continued from the previous page.)

at him to-morrow; 'e's got to pay out, that's what 'e's got to do!"

"In course he have!" assented Pike. "And if he's a-goin' to act on the cross—why, you'll have to talk to Mister Crane about it. Crane's the bloke to see you righted! But about Solly Izzard, Walt; you're a bit hard on him, 'pon my Sam you are!"

"Ard on him!" repeated Walt. "That's good, that is, considerin' he refused to pay me my winnin's!"

"But he ain't refused to pay, Walt! He'll part all right directly you asks him!"

"Why, what d'yer mean?"

"Well, to tell you the truth, I've just been to the Minorities to see him. And what do you think? Such a lark! Ho, ho! There wasn't a raid at the Eagle 't'other day, arter all! That turnin' out o' the lights was all a barney! Some o' the members just done it for a lark. They thought it was a rare joke; though there wasn't much sense in it, if you ask me. Solly's still there, and he's carryin' on business as per usual."

"And is 'e ready to pay up?" Walt asked eagerly.

"Ready and willin'! He's been expectin' you to call for the brass! You come along with me to-morrow and good old Solly 'll pay out like a bird!"

They started out before noon the next day, and reached the Eagle Club just as Mr. Solly Izzard entered the big room to begin his betting business for the day.

"Ha, good mornin', Mithter Dython!" greeted the bookmaker, holding out a fat, bejewelled hand. "Come to thee uth again—eh? That remindth me, there's a little account in your favour to be thettled. We couldn't thettle it the other day 'cause of the thilly joke some of the gents played—pretendin' there wath a raid. But I darethay Mithter Pike'th told you all about it. Let me thee now; how much wath it?"

"I makes it six hundred and thirty pounds," answered Walt.

Solly Izzard was turning over the leaves of his betting-book.

"Ha, here it ith! Theventy poundth. Conjuror, at eight to one—five hundred and thirty poundth; and the theventy poundth thtake back makth it thix hundred and thirty poundth. Quite right, Mithter Dython, quite right!"

His hand dived into his breast pocket, and pulled out a wad of banknotes. Carefully he counted out the necessary amount.

"There you are, Mithter Dython, and a very nice little bet of yours, too!" he said.

Walt pocketed the notes with a careless air. He had been used to having big sums of money lately, but, all the same, he did not disguise his pleasure at having won so substantial a wager.

The tape-machine commenced to click just then. The names of the runners and riders for the first race of the day were coming through. Walt's eyes grew bright.

"Foxy," he said, "I've a good mind to play this up!" He tapped the pocket containing the banknotes.

A curious light came into Pike's eyes as he exchanged a significant look with Solly Izzard. Both would have liked to smile, but they checked their inclination to do so. The bare idea of having the bogus notes planted on them in the event of Walt's losing struck them as being rather humorous.

"Look here, Walt," said Foxy, taking his arm, "don't you do nothin' of the sort. My tip to-day is, leave 'em alone! After a big draw give the gee-gees a rest. All the big backers will tell you that. We'll just have one drink and then clear out of it."

The one drink became two, and then three—raw, fiery whisky that scorched their throats. At length, however, Foxy Pike induced Walt to leave the place. Once outside, they made straight for Tower Hill.

Behind them, on the opposite side of the way, two men followed at a discreet distance. There was nothing remarkable about the men. They were roughly dressed, but in that particular part of London there were plenty of men similarly attired. It was not strange, therefore, that Walt should be quite heedless of their presence, and he walked along feeling quite comfortable in the possession of his £30.

He would have felt far from comfortable had he been more observant. Could he have seen the play of Foxy Pike's hands behind his back as he walked alongside Walt, the latter's suspicions would surely have been aroused.

For without any manner of doubt, Pike, by means of those movements and one swift glance over his shoulder, was making signals to the two men. Clearly the signals were understood, for presently, when Walt and Foxy got into a cab, the two men got into another, which followed in the tracks of the first.

Foxy instructed the cabman to drive to Lincoln's Inn Fields, where the two youths duly alighted. Pike hurried to pay the fare.

"Bellersby's office is just along here," Walt explained, pointing forward. "I'll go in and see if I can make him part with some oof."

"Right you are! I'll wait for you, then," Pike answered. "I'll stroll up and down till you come out."

Walt turned on his heel, and in a few moments disappeared into the lawyer's office. At once Foxy Pike hurried towards an archway on one side of Lincoln's Inn Fields, at the entrance to Sardinia Street. Beneath this arch two men

were waiting—the same two who had followed in the cab.

"You marked him?" Foxy inquired.

"I reckon we did," answered one of the men.

"You'll know him again?"

"Know him anywheres—a bloke with a phiz like that."

"And you know what you've got to do?"

"Yus," answered the man with a nod. "We've got to follow 'im abart all day, an' to-night, when it's dark, we've got to down 'im an' get them notes away."

"That's it," said Pike, "that's the arrangement. But look here," he added, as if struck with a sudden idea, "you needn't trouble to wait about now. I shall be with the mug all the afternoon and most of the evenin'. I'm goin' to take him to the Alhambra to-night. We shall come out of there at ten o'clock to the very tick. I shall walk with him down to Trafalgar Square—the corner near the church steps, you know. You two be there and follow us, 'cause I ain't quite sure what we shall do after that. But I shall manage somehow or other to lose him. Then you'll be on to him as quick as you like, and get the notes away."

"Are we to out 'im?" asked the man who acted as spokesman.

"Well, just give him a clout, o' course, if he's aw'ard, but don't hurt him too much. He's worth more alive, I can tell you!" Pike's cunning eyes twinkled. "Now you two can push off. I'm going back to wait for the mug."

Without another word he turned and hurried

"Well, I 'opes 'e'll do jist what 'e likes wi' Bellersby, that's all," returned Walt. "I don't see the good of 'avin' a lot of oof if you can't touch it when you wants to."

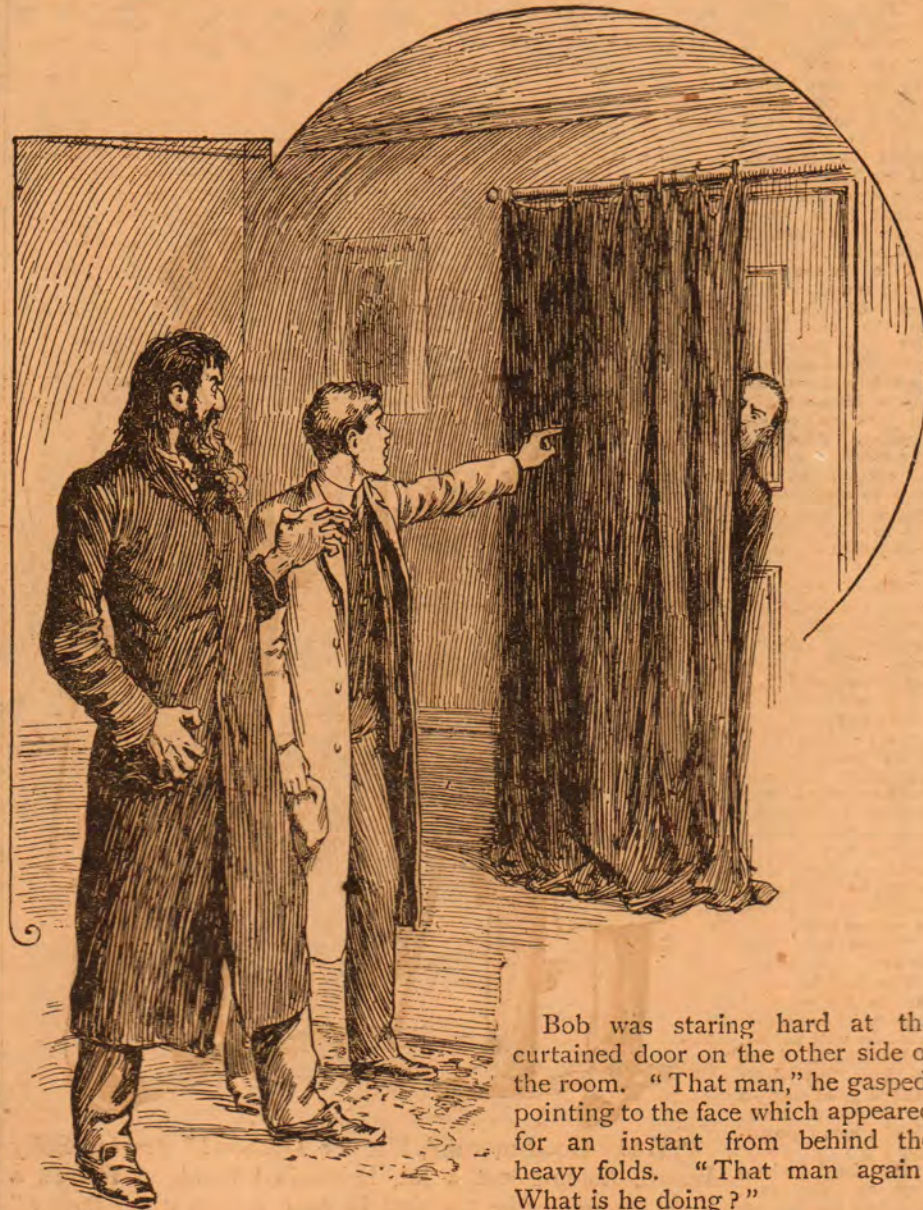
"Oh, that'll be all right, you bet. Cheer up, old sport! Look here, we'll have a bit of a evenin' out. We won't make it late, 'cause old Vampy might be getting anxious about us, but we'll put in an hour or two at the Alhambra. What d'you say?"

Walt was in that kind of mood when he wouldn't say much about anything. Whatever Foxy proposed he passively agreed to.

But it was far too early yet for the Alhambra; the place would not open for several hours. So the interval was filled up according to a programme prearranged by Pike. They killed time in a way all too common with those who forget that they are killing themselves, too. They went into a bar and ordered whisky; then into another bar and had more whisky. At length, after several visits of this sort, Foxy Pike—who managed to keep a tolerably clear head, although Walt was every minute getting more and more fuddled—suggested that it was time to make for the Alhambra.

They went, Foxy paying for two seats. The fact was peculiar that, contrary to his usual custom, Foxy had paid for everything on this day. He never ceased to impress upon his companion the necessity of keeping those notes intact and out of sight in his breast-pocket.

Inside the theatre Foxy gazed at the successive "turns" with huge enjoyment. There was



Bob was staring hard at the curtained door on the other side of the room. "That man," he gasped, pointing to the face which appeared for an instant from behind the heavy folds. "That man again! What is he doing?"

serious work afoot to-night, but Pike was used to such things. His close and continuous association with crime had drugged whatever conscience he may once have had.

As for Walt, the heat of the place made him drowsy. His faculties were numbed by the fumes of the whisky, and he slept. But before ten o'clock Pike nudged him. The two came out of the theatre by the Charing Cross Road exit, and walked across the road to St. Martin's Church just as the clocks were striking the hour.

"Wotcher goin' to do now?" Walt asked, in a thick voice.

"Oh, we'll just get a tiddley, and then toddle home. What do you think?"

Walt evidently did not think at all. Perhaps he could not. He just moved along with his companion to another tavern, and had more whisky.

As they emerged Foxy glanced keenly across the street. There were the two men whom he had spoken to earlier in the day, waiting. He made a signal to them—less secretly now that Walt's state minimised the probability of his seeing—and then moved off with Walt.

They got into a hansom presently, Foxy bidding the cabman drive to Commercial Road. As they

neared the end of Jubilee Street, Foxy prodded at the trap in the roof of the cab with his cane.

"Stop here!" he shouted. And the cabman pulled up.

"We'll get out here, Walt," said Pike, helping his companion to alight. "The walk 'ull do us good, and there's a near cut to the Green through there." He pointed to a street that ran off at an acute angle. "You get on, old chum. I'll settle with the cabby and overtake you in two ticks."

Walt staggered on drunkenly. Foxy Pike, having paid the cabman, took the opportunity of slipping away. He started to go homeward by another route, not however, before he had once more signalled the two men whom he now noticed stepping from the second cab a little way behind. He indicated to them the direction in which Walt Dyson had gone. The men understood thoroughly, and followed in Walt's wake.

The Attack on Walt Dyson.

BOB WELFORD had been once again to the police-station. Since his visits on the previous evening, the interest in the statement he had then made had grown much keener. Sergeant Prinder had entered into the matter with some spirit, and was now engaged in arranging all the facts of the case in order that he might pursue his investigations on a good and promising basis.

As to Constable Cave, he had for a long time been deeply interested in the case, and, as we know, had spent a good many of his spare hours in quiet and unostentatious search. Indeed, Cave's one regret was that, owing to his subordinate position as a mere constable, he was prevented from exercising that freedom of action he so ardently desired.

By the time Bob had finished his conference with the police, it was getting pretty late. He walked quickly along the Commercial Road, and, arriving at a certain point, turned off to the left, intending to make his way home through a maze of by-streets with which he was familiar. As you may be sure, the boy's mind was full of recent events; and not only of recent events, but of the whole sequence of happenings since that time when his old friend Walt Dyson had parted from him so unexpectedly.

Traversing a street—a street where both people and lamps were few—a sound, unusual and startling, pulled him up short in his walk.

A sudden shriek had come from somewhere ahead. Bob caught his breath, shaken out of himself by the cry of alarm.

Another shriek, a shuffling of feet, a murmur of harsh voices, a brutal blow, a fall.

Bob pulled himself together and rushed in the direction from which the sounds came. At a corner he turned and glanced down a narrow court. He started and cried out in alarm; then, regardless of his own danger, darted forward.

Two ruffians were bending over a prostrate figure in the middle of the court. With a hideous curse, one of them leapt to his feet on hearing approaching steps, and ran away. The other remained, his knee upon the chest of the figure lying in the road.

At him Bob rushed, and with a swing of his right fist sent the ruffian sprawling a couple of yards. But he, too, scrambled to his feet, and rushed off after his companion as he saw Bob throw himself down upon his knee beside the prostrate figure whom they had attacked.

From a neighbouring gas-lamp the yellow rays fell across the face of the figure which Bob was supporting. Bending lower, Bob peered at it. An involuntary cry—almost a shriek—escaped him.

"Walt! Walt Dyson! Good heavens, is it possible?"

Only a groan came from Walt in answer. His eyes could not be said to be open, even though the quivering lips were raised a little. Bob stood upright and lifted Walt up to a standing posture. But the latter's legs tottered as if he had lost the use of them. He would have fallen but for Bob's sustaining arms.

"Walt! Walt!" gasped Bob again. "Speak to me, dear old pal! Just one word to say you know me!"

But not a sound from Walt, only a spasmodic twitching of the lips, a whitening of the cheeks, a receding of the eyes, so it seemed, and then his head dropped—dropped right on to Bob's shoulder. He was unconscious.

There was no time to waste in words; a place of shelter and rest must be found for Walt. Bob lifted him in his arms. His mind was made up. His lodgings were close by. There he would take his friend.

Within five minutes he was there, staggering to the door beneath his burden. In another minute he had opened the door, had walked up the stairs, and had laid Walt upon his own bed. Once there he loosened his coat, waistcoat, and collar. Then with noiseless but quick footsteps, he fetched water, poured some of it down the unconscious boy's throat, and sprinkled some upon his forehead.

For a quarter of an hour he remained thus occupied, watching and tending his old-time friend. Then at last Walt opened his eyes.

(This magnificent serial will be continued in next Thursday's BOYS' HERALD. Remember, my friends, that the first part of the tale will come to an end in three weeks, and be followed by a specially-written sequel detailing the further adventures of Bob Welford and Walt Dyson. I am quite certain that my friends will find the sequel even more enthralling and fascinating than the first part, so do your Editor a good turn, and tell your chums this piece of good news. They will have cause to thank you for it. The title of the sequel is "Honesty Wins!")