

Golden Goals!



By WALTER EDWARDS

THE FIRST CHAPTER

THE WILL TO WIN

I GAVE instructions that I was not to be disturbed, Terry!"

There was a note of mild protest in Professor Craig's voice as he looked up from his writing, and his manner suggested that he was not altogether at ease. "I will see you after dinner," he added, tossing a half-smoked cigarette into the fireplace.

The youngster in the doorway said nothing as he ran his clear eyes round the bare walls of his father's study. The book-lined walls of the comfortable "den" had fascinated him for as many years as he could remember, but now the rows of shelves were empty. He was quick to notice too, that the valuable little etching by Corton was missing from its honoured position over the fireplace. The atmosphere of the study was no longer mellow and friendly; it had no more character than an empty barn.

A small fortune is the offer made to Terry Craig and his enemy, "Fruity" Carstairs, for the one who can score the most goals in a game. Yet despite the fortune at stake, Terry plays for the success of the team; "Fruity" for himself. Who wins?

"What I've got to say cannot wait, dad," said Terry Craig quietly. He closed the door, walked across the shabby carpet and faced his father. "We're going to hammer this thing out—at once!" he announced.

Sighing softly, the grey-haired professor pushed his papers aside and sat back in his armchair.

"Exactly what do you mean by that, my boy?" he asked, with a peculiar smile. "If it's a matter of money——"

A hard kind of laugh broke from Terry Craig.

"Yes, it's a matter of money, dad," he said,

"for I see it all now. I know what kind of a blind, selfish rotter I've been for the last few years. I know what sort of a cad——"

"Come, come, my dear boy!" broke in Professor Craig, half-rising from his chair. "What has come over you—what are you talking about?"

"You know exactly what I'm talking about, dad!" The youngster's

voice was low and tense as he took a firm hold upon himself. "I'm not blind, and I'm not altogether a fool, yet it has taken me nearly a week to find out that we are as hard up as people can be."

"Come, come!" protested the professor, a tinge of warm colour creeping into his thin cheeks. "Matters aren't nearly as bad as that, Terry! Times may have been a little difficult during the past year or so——"

"A little difficult!" echoed Terry, with a mirthless laugh. "You've had to sell the books you loved more than most things in the world, you've had to part with the etching, you've given up cigars——"

"My—er—throat, my boy," put in the professor. "I—er—found that I was smoking too much——"

"It's no good trying to fib to me, dad!" cried Terry, flushed and moist-eyed. "You've made all these sacrifices in order that I might stay on at Stonebridge, and you know it. It wasn't fair to mother, dad; it wasn't fair to yourself, and it wasn't altogether fair to me. Not that I don't appreciate all that you've done. A fellow never had a more generous and unselfish father and mother! But you must know how I feel about it. I could have left school two or three years ago——"

"That is where we fail to see eye to eye, my boy," declared the professor, in quiet tones. "You are young, with your life before you, and you will doubtless have your share of worry and trouble all in good time. So we decided that you should stay on at Stonebridge, and I must say that you have justified the decision!"

"Just because I was captain of Rayner's House and skippered the school soccer eleven?"

"You are a fine all-round athlete," said the professor, a great rowing-man in his day, "and it is a grand thing to

start the battle of life with the will to win and a sound body! Our sacrifice, as you are pleased to call it, has been no hardship—no true sacrifice ever is—and you will oblige your mother and myself by saying no more about it!"

"Well, perhaps I won't say much about it," returned Terry, "but I shall never forget it till my dying day." He squared his shoulders and gazed round the bare apartment. "I'm going to have those shelves filled again," he announced; "I'm going to have another etching over the fireplace, and I'm going to see that you have a supply of your favourite Havana cigars every month. And if there's anything that mother wants—well, she's only got to say the word! I'm going to repay you for the years you scraped and saved to keep me at Stonebridge. First of all, though," he added, some of the boyish enthusiasm dying out of his voice, "I've got to find a job of work! But that shouldn't be difficult!"

"The Head's report should carry weight, my boy," said the professor, "and your athletic record cannot do you any harm! But it's going to be a hard fight——"

"That's the sort of fight that suits me down to the ground, dad," laughed Terry. "Don't worry about me! I can get in touch with plenty of Old Boys who are making good in business, and I ought to be able to squeeze in somewhere or other! All I want is a start, dad!"

"That's the spirit, my boy," smiled Professor Craig; "but it would have been much easier for you had I not lost most of my capital in the North Borneo Mines crash a couple of years ago! Still, we must make the best of things, Terry! Don't forget what I said about a healthy body and the will to win!"

"You bet I won't, dad!" laughed the youngster, gripping his father's outstretched hand. "The fight's on!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER

A JOB AT LAST

WEEKS dragged by, and slowly but surely it dawned upon Terry Craig that no employer was likely to get killed in the rush to secure his services. The few business

had skippered Stonebridge soccer eleven did not even enter into the scheme of things.

Terry Craig was having a rough passage, but he kept pegging away.

He sought out a number of Old Boys who had gone into the City, but none seemed able to find a post for the inexperienced youngster who had scored the winning goal in that great game between Stonebridge and Ram-bourne. There appeared to be no openings—for the time being, at any rate. The Old Boys made a note of Terry's address, saying they would



"Good-morning, Fruity!" said Terry, striding forward with outstretched hand. Mr. Stephen Carstairs lifted a flabby countenance and stared fixedly at his smiling visitor.

men who gave him a minute or so of their valuable time did not seem to be particularly interested in either his sound body or his will to win; what they wanted to know was what else he had to offer for a weekly wage? Which was a very considerable snag, of course, for Terry knew nothing of shorthand or book-keeping, and even ordinary office routine was a mystery to him. No one asked him about his athletic prowess, and the fact that he

drop him a line should anything suitable turn up.

But nothing did turn up.

Then, in sheer desperation, the youngster decided to swallow his pride and call upon "Fruity" Carstairs.

"Fruity," nephew of Sir John Critchell, the famous shipping magnate, was a couple of years older than Terry, and there had been bad feeling between the two since Terry's earliest

days at Stonebridge, when two years made a lot of difference. Fruity, on his part, had taken an immediate dislike to the new kid with the quiet manner and steady eyes, and he had lost no time in "taking it out" of the new boy. Later, in the years that followed, Terry had put up with a lot from the big fellow, and then had come the memorable bare-knuckle fight, when Terry had given the beefy, red-headed bully the licking of his life in Cutler's Copse; and from that moment Terry Craig was bullied no more. But Fruity Carstairs could neither forgive nor forget, and he never lost an opportunity of making things unpleasant for his enemy.

Then, to cap it all, Terry had been given the centre-forward position in the most important fixture of the year, the game against Rambourne. Terry having been given his place in the school team, Fruity had to watch the game from the touchline, and the fact that the new centre-forward scored a brilliant goal that made the game safe for Stonebridge was positively the last straw, so far as Fruity was concerned.

Terry continued to play for the first eleven, and a few months later Stonebridge saw the last of Fruity Carstairs.

Terry stayed on for another eighteen months, and during that time some of the seniors heard from Fruity.

The big fellow made it abundantly clear that he was doing great things in shipping circles, that he was the pillar of the Critchell Line, although rumour had it that he was under-secretary to his uncle, Sir John Critchell.

But that was just like Fruity.

There was a thoughtful expression in Terry Craig's brown eyes as, following his decision, he made his way towards the shipping offices in Leadenhall Street. Personally, he felt no

shade of animosity against Fruity; rather did he wish to have a talk and laugh over old times. And he hoped that Fruity, now a successful business man, would feel much the same way about things.

"After all, we're not schoolboys any more," mused Terry, passing up the broad stone steps of Critchell House. "Anyway, here goes!"

A notice-board informed him that the Critchell Line occupied the whole of the first floor, and on reaching the landing Terry found himself confronted by a door marked "Inquiries." Opening the door, he walked across to the polished counter and announced that he wished to see Mr. Stephen Carstairs on most important business.

"Fill up one o' these forms!" ordered a young clerk, with a superior air. He was a youth of about Terry's own age, and he seemed to resent the latter's breezy manner. "Mr. Carstairs is busy to-day," he added meaningly.

"That's all right," returned Terry easily. "He'll see me!"

The clerk was absent for the greater part of ten minutes, and when he returned there was a curious expression upon his pale face.

"Mr. Carstairs will see you in a minute or two," he announced.

"Thanks," nodded Terry, well pleased with the way things were going.

Five minutes ticked away, ten minutes, fifteen, and Terry was still sitting on a hard form beside the counter. He looked up at the moon-faced clock upon the wall; tried to catch the clerk's eye, but without success. At last, at the end of twenty-five minutes, he pressed the brass bell.

"Do you think Mr. Carstairs has forgotten all about me?" he asked of the clerk. "I've been admiring

the scenery for nearly half an hour, so do you mind telling him that I'm still alive?"

There followed another period of waiting, but at length the clerk said that Mr. Carstairs had two minutes to spare.

Terry was conscious of a sudden quickening of the pulses as he was shown into an oak-panelled, comfortably furnished room. The imposing furniture was of carved oak, and a restful green carpet covered the floor. Seated at a massive roll-topped desk was a bulky individual who appeared to be clad in immaculate morning dress—tail coat, striped trousers, white spats, and a gardenia. From the neck up, all Terry could see was the top of a sleek red head, for the owner of the head was busily engaged in putting his flourishing signature to a pile of letters.

The visitor gave a slight cough as the clerk tip-toed out of the room and closed the door. Then, nothing happening:

"Good-morning, Fruity!" said Terry, striding forward with outstretched hand.

Mr. Stephen Sinclair Carstairs lifted a flabby, freckled countenance and stared fixedly at the smiling visitor through a gold-rimmed monocle. Fruity had never been a thing of beauty even to his particular cronies at Stonebridge, but now he was less lovely than ever, for he had put on a lot of weight since leaving school.

"Did I understand you to say—ah—*Fruity*?" he demanded at last.

"Yes, old man," returned Terry.

Fruity tried to look dignified, but the experiment was not altogether a success.

"I—ah—don't quite follow you," he said frigidly, reaching for the slip of paper on which Terry had written his name and other particulars. "You are Crag?"

"Craig!" corrected Terry, wondering if the whole business was a leg-pull. "We were at Stonebridge together, you know. That's how the 'Fruity' slipped out! I thought you might remember Terry Craig!"

A ripe flush overspread the flabby face of Fruity Carstairs; his small eyes narrowed as he sat back in his padded armchair.

"Ah, yes, I do remember you—er—vaguely," he said, his shrewd gaze taking in every detail of Terry's attire. The youngster was not actually shabby, but there was just that little something about him which suggested that the world was not treating him as well as it could have done. "What can I do for you, Craig?" asked Fruity, almost pleasantly; but a nasty gleam crept into his light blue eyes.

The great moment had come, and Terry, for once in his life, felt a shade of embarrassment. He knew what he wanted to say, but somehow the words wouldn't come. The idea of asking a favour of Fruity Carstairs went right against the grain, but the thought of his fruitless search for a job urged him to go through with it.

"I must remind you that I am a busy man, Craig," put in Carstairs.

"Quite, Fruity, quite," nodded Terry, preparing to take the plunge. "As a matter of fact, things have been a bit upside down with me since I left Stonebridge, and I've been wondering if you could put me on to a job of some sort. Anything will do, you know, just to start with. I'm willing to start at the bottom——"

"I'm sure that's very reasonable of you," said Fruity, "but we demand a certain amount of efficiency, even in our junior office-boys!"

It was Terry's turn to flush, but he managed to control the hot retort that leapt to his lips.

"I'm pretty quick at figures, and

so on," he said, "and I'd soon get the hang of things. Honestly, Fruity, things are pretty serious, for I don't want to sponge on the old people at home!"

"I see," murmured Fruity, with a slow nod of his sleek red head. "You'd rather come crawling round me for a job, even though you're not worth five shillings a month of anybody's money! What do you think this is, Craig, an institute for down-and-outs? You've been too big for your boots ever since you fluked your way into Stonebridge's first eleven, and I knew dashed well that you'd come a cropper before long! I've had a big score to settle with you for some time, and I guess this about squares matters. Now get out of my office and stay out, unless you want me to ring for the porter and have you removed!"

Terry Craig's face was unusually pale as he looked into the other fellow's mocking eyes, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that he fought down a desire to send his hard fist crashing into the flabby features. He knew that by making a scene he would not help matters, yet it went clean against the grain to take these insults lying down.

"I suppose I was a fool to come to you, Fruity," he said very quietly. "I ought to have known that you are the sort of vindictive, unsportsmanlike rotter who would kick a fellow when he's down!"

Again Fruity flushed, and Terry was surprised to see his thick lips stretch into a broad grin.

"Perhaps there's something in that accusation, Craig," he said, "so I feel inclined to change my mind about turning you down! Look here, I'll give you a junior clerk's job at a pound a week! What about it?" Then, as Terry hesitated: "It isn't a princely salary, but I'll bet it's more than you're worth!"

"I'm not disputing that, Fruity," smiled Terry, making up his mind. "A pound a week is better than nothing——"

"That's so," said Fruity briskly, "and you know the present state of the unskilled labour market." He wrote rapidly and handed a slip of paper to Terry. "Take this to Mr. Screen, the chief clerk, and tell him that you are to start in the morning!"

"I say, this is awfully decent of you, Fruity," began Terry impulsively. "I can understand about you feeling a bit sore about that——"

"That's all right," cut in the other, with a wave of his fleshy hand. "And——ah, Craig!"

Terry, on his way to the door, paused and looked over his shoulder.

"What's that, Fruity?"

"You will address me as 'sir' in future, Craig!" said Fruity.

"Very good——sir!"

And Terry went out and softly closed the door.

THE THIRD CHAPTER

TERRY, THE GOAL-GETTER

TERRY saw very little of Fruity Carstairs during the week that followed, but it was soon made clear to the new junior clerk that Fruity was a person of some importance. For one thing, he had a certain amount of "pull" and prestige as Sir John Critchell's nephew; for another, he was captain of the firm's football eleven. The mere mention of football made Terry sit up and take notice, as he phrased it, and after a day or so he started to make a few tactful inquiries about the strength of the side, and so on.

But the other clerks did not seem at all willing to discuss the matter with the new fellow, and it was soon brought home to Terry that he was getting the cold shoulder from every-



As the ball dropped towards the goal-mouth, several players jumped for it together; but it was the head of Terry that reached the leather and deflected it past the goalkeeper.

body. Furthermore, it was not long before he had very good reasons for knowing that Screen, the lantern-jawed chief clerk, had taken an almost vicious dislike to him. Time and again Screen reported him to Fruity Carstairs, and Fruity, an expensive cigar jutting from the corner of his mouth, seemed to take a sinister delight in giving the new man a dressing down in the presence of the smirking chief clerk.

But Terry Craig squared his shoulders and stuck it; that pound a week gave him independence of a sort. It was a tight squeeze, but he managed to live on that sum, and all the while he was looking round for another job. It was a stiff, up-hill fight, but the sort of fight that appealed to him. The one thing he missed was his football, and at last he managed to get an interview with Fruity Carstairs.

Fruity kept the youngster waiting

outside the door for over half an hour, and there was a mocking gleam in the big fellow's light blue eyes when at last Terry was admitted into his presence.

"I am doing you a great favour, Craig," said Fruity, "for it is not my habit to grant interviews to my office-boys! What do you wish to see me about?"

"The firm has a football team——" began Terry.

"Well, what about it?" demanded Fruity, with an unpleasant smirk.

"I was wondering if I could get a trial game with them," answered Terry.

"Which is like your confounded cheek, Craig!" declared Fruity. "You may have been a dickens of a whale in a school eleven, but we play an entirely different class of football! We've only lost three games during the whole season, and

we stand a good chance of beating the West London Bank in the City Cup final on Saturday week! As to giving you a trial game, you seem to forget that you hold a lowly position in the firm! Our players, men with responsible positions in Critchell's, have no wish to hob-nob with office-boys, and the sooner you forget that you are no longer the Big Noise at Stonebridge the better I shall like it! I am sorry that you thought fit to waste my time!"

The short interview took place on Friday evening, and on the following morning Sir John Critchell walked into Fruity's office, and nodded pleasantly to his nephew.

"By the way, Stephen," he said, "how's that new youngster shaping?"

There was genuine interest in the tone, and Fruity Carstairs shot a swift, shrewd glance at Sir John's rugged countenance.

"Craig's nothing to write home about, uncle," he said, with a supercilious smile. "He came whining to me with a hard-luck story, and I fell—as usual!"

"I like the look of the lad," declared Sir John, "for he's got the cut of an athlete! He carries himself well, and I'm willing to wager that he plays a useful game of football! Has he turned out for a trial game yet?"

Fruity gave a short snigger.

"That's a good one," he said. "I was at Stonebridge with him, and many a tanning he's had for refusing to turn out for sports! He funk'd soccer and cricket, and he used to fall sick at the mere mention of a cross-country run! He was the biggest washout in the school, and he got the cold shoulder from almost everybody! Then you ask me if he's turned up for a trial game! You are miles out in your estimate of Terry Craig, Uncle Lawson!"

"So it seems, my boy," murmured the shipping magnate, with a frown of disappointment and displeasure. "Yet I'm not usually far out in weighing up a youngster! I was hoping he might strengthen our side against West London Bank on Saturday, for we've got to lift the City Cup!"

"Don't worry about that, uncle," grinned Fruity Carstairs; "we'll be all over 'em! And you needn't think any more about Terry Craig, who'd run a mile from a footer match!"

Sir John's lips were set and stern as he nodded his fine head.

"I find it difficult to believe that, even now, Stephen," he said. "Young Craig doesn't look like a funk to me!"

"Well, there it is, uncle," returned Fruity, with a shrug of his beefy shoulders. "As a matter of fact, I very much doubt whether he knows that we've got a private footer pitch!"

But Fruity was wrong for once.

Leaving Leadenhall Street at one o'clock, Saturday being a "half day," Terry set off at a brisk pace for Kennington, where Critchell's had their footer pitch. His idea was to see for himself how the team shaped, and deep down within him was a hope that he might get a game, the firm having no fixture for that afternoon.

The ground adjoined some public playing fields, and Terry's eyes lit up as he paused on the edge of the dusty square and watched a crowd of working lads who were "picking up" sides for a scratch game between themselves. Piles of coats took the place of regulation goalposts, and only four or five players sported jerseys; but enthusiasm was there in plenty. At least half a dozen games were in progress—noisy, rough, kick-and-rush stuff, for the most part—but the right spirit was there all the time.

His toes itching, Terry watched the animated scene for some time; then, a ball coming his way, he judged his kick with nice precision and sent the leather hurtling to the far side of the pitch.

And that kick settled matters.

Striding across the dusty square, he approached the band of young men who were "picking up" sides.

"Is there any chance of a game?" he asked, addressing a lanky, red-eared youth in skimpy shorts and a bright yellow jersey.

Lanky and the others regarded the neatly dressed stranger with suspicious, half-resentful eyes. Terry was not the usual type of youngster who kicked a ball about on Kennington Marshes, and Lanky jumped to the conclusion that there must be a catch in it somewhere.

"Do you reely want a game?" he demanded, a threat in his tone and manner. "Or is this your idea of a little joke?"

"Of course I'd like a game," declared Terry, with a smile. "There's nothing I want more at the moment! How about it?"

"Sure, mate," nodded Lanky. "I'm a man short, so you can play on my side! Wot's yer position?"

"I usually play somewhere in the forward line," answered Terry, "but it's all the same to me!"

"Inside-right suit yer!"

"Down to the ground!"

"That's the stuff!" grinned Lanky. "Wot about taking off yer 'quaker oat'?"

Terry was already slipping out of his coat, and by the time he lined up he had much in common with the other players. With his shirt-sleeves tucked up above the elbow, and his collar, tie and waistcoat removed, he looked eager and ready for anything; and no sooner did the whistle shrill than he snapped up a pass from

Lanky and went away down the field with a turn of speed that brought a wild yell from the sprinkling of spectators that had gathered on the edge of the field.

"Up, up!"

"Go through with it!"

Tackled by a stocky, red-headed little whirlwind, Terry pushed the ball out to "Smudge" Griffin, on the wing, and "Smudge," having made rings round a big-limbed labourer, streaked away to the corner flag and put over a centre that dropped within a yard or so of the goal-mouth.

"Eads up!"

"In with it, Smiffy!"

A shout of excitement went up from the onlookers as several players leapt for the ball, and it was the dark head of Terry Craig that reached the leather and deflected it past the clutching hands of the wild-eyed goalkeeper.

"Goal!"

Trotting across the pitch, "Smudge" Griffin shook hands in professional style, and it was to a rousing yell of encouragement that the ball was set in motion once more. Terry appeared to be a marked man from that moment, for he could scarcely move a yard without finding two or three "shadows" upon his heels. And he was soon to learn that these Saturday afternoon footballers knew more than a little about spoiling tactics.

The other side began to press hard, and the heated scrimmage that took place in front of the goal-mouth was anything but a peace conference. Rough and ready methods were employed, heavy charges were given and taken as a matter of course, and it was not until the goalie had at least a dozen players piled on top of him that the referee—a bow-legged little man in a bowler hat—thought it about time to blow the whistle.

"Goal kick!" he announced briefly—and that was that.

The ball went out to the right wing, and "Smudge" Griffin beat the left-half for possession, and pushed over a pretty pass to Terry. Tackled by a scowling young coal-heaver, Terry tapped the leather to Lanky, and Lanky returned it almost at once.

Giving a swift glance round as he pounced upon the pass, Terry went away on his own in a way reminiscent of his Stonebridge days. Covering the ground with a curious, swerving movement, he beat man after man with what appeared to be perfect ease, and a shrill yell of excitement broke out when he finished up by tricking both backs and scoring a second goal with a hot shot that skimmed through the dust with a terrific speed which gave the custodian not a chance.

"G-o-a-l!"

"Well done, stranger!"

"Hi, young fellow!"

It was a stentorian voice that rang out above the din and reached Terry's ears, and on swinging round he saw a tall, well-built man beckoning him from the edge of the playing pitch. The stranger was a man of about fifty, quietly dressed, with an air of authority about him.

"Were you calling me, sir?" asked Terry, racing across the pitch.

"Yes," nodded the stranger, his keen gaze upon the youngster's flushed face. "Your name is Craig, is it not?"

"Yes, sir," answered Terry, in surprise. "But——"

"I am Sir John Critchell," cut in the famous shipping magnate brusquely. "Report at my private office at ten o'clock on Monday morning!"

Then, with a brief nod, he swung round upon his heel and strode away.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER

THE CUP FINAL!

THE week-end was anything but a pleasant interlude for Terry Craig, for he felt sure that Monday morning would find him looking for another job. Sir John Critchell meant to fire him; there could be no doubt about that. Not that he had done any harm in playing a scratch game with Lanky, "Smudge" Griffin, and the others; at least, not so far as he could see. They were all good chaps—a bit on the rough-and-ready side, perhaps—and he wasn't ashamed of being found playing football with them. What was more, he meant to point that fact out to Sir John. The firm didn't own him—for a pound a week!

It was in this frame of mind that he made his way to the great man's private office on Monday morning. A smooth-voiced secretary said that Sir John would see him at once.

Seated at a table near the window, with his broad shoulders hunched and his lean jaw jutting, the shipping magnate looked a formidable figure as he fixed his steely eyes upon the youngster who did not hesitate to meet his steady gaze.

"Sit down, Craig!"

Somewhat puzzled, Terry obeyed the quiet command, and a moment later the door opened and Fruity Carstairs strolled into the room. Fruity's freckled brow creased into a puzzled frown as he caught sight of Terry; there was a questioning light in his washed-out blue eyes as he looked from his enemy to the granite-faced man at the table.

"Craig in trouble again, uncle?" he asked, with an oily smirk. "He ——"

"Sit down, Stephen!" ordered Sir John.

Fruity was a very puzzled young man as he obeyed the curt command.



"Hi, young fellow!" Terry was being congratulated for scoring a second goal when the stentorian yell reached him, and on looking round he saw a well-built man beckoning to him from the edge of the playing pitch.

Sir John ran on:

"I have been in touch with Stonebridge over the week-end, Craig," he said, "and I learn that you skippered the first eleven during your last season at the school. Also, I understand that you left with a very excellent athletic record."

Slowly the rich colour had ebbed out of Fruity's flabby countenance, and he was about to blurt out something when his uncle lifted a restraining hand.

"I asked my nephew about you a day or so ago, Craig," continued the shipping magnate, "and it seems that he must have got you mixed up with another fellow."

"Yes, that is so, Uncle Lawson!" broke in Fruity. "I had another chap in mind all the time. Strange the tricks a fellow's memory gets up to—what?"

"Yes, very strange," agreed Sir

John Critchell, his hard gaze upon the big fellow's moist countenance, "So I may take it that Terry Craig was not a funk and a wash-out and all the rest of it when he was at Stonebridge? I might even go so far as to suggest that he was the best forward the old school has had for years?"

Fruity shifted uneasily and rolled his thick neck inside his collar.

"He was certainly pretty good," he growled, at length, "but nothing to write home about!" Then: "Hang it all," he exploded, "has the mealy-mouthed rotter been whining to you because I wouldn't give him a trial——" He broke off, realising that he had given himself away. "I mean, uncle, he came pestering me when I was up to my eyes in work, and I told him I'd attend to him later."

"Do I understand that he asked

for a trial game and that you turned him down?"

The millionaire's voice was harsh as he put the question.

"Well—er—no, not exactly, sir," returned Fruity, his ears going red, "but I guessed—that is, I mean, if he'd only said the word——"

"He didn't say the word, eh?" cut in Sir John, with a shrewd smile.

"That surprises me, for he had to go elsewhere for a kick-about on Saturday afternoon. And he played a fine game in fine company. I liked the look of your pals, Craig; sportsmen to the core." Then, turning to the wide-eyed Fruity: "Seeing that Craig didn't say the word, Stephen, I'm going to say it for him. He is going to turn out for Critchell's against the West London Bank on Saturday next."

"What?" It was a shrill bleat that broke from Fruity Carstairs. "B-but you can't do that, uncle! It's out of the question! I mean, he hasn't been with the firm for more than five minutes——"

"He has been with the firm for over a week, which means that he is eligible to play for us," declared Sir John Critchell. "I say that Craig is going to turn out, so there is no more to be said! I am determined that Critchell's shall lift the City Cup this season——"

"That's all very well, uncle," broke in Fruity, "but what's the use of importing new blood on the eve of the final? Craig will mess up everything, put the whole forward line out of gear! As I've said before, he plays a fair game on his day, but Saturday may find him clean off colour, a complete wash-out!"

"Do you mind chancing that, sir?"

Terry was smiling as he put the quiet question to Sir John Critchell.

"You can rest assured that I'm going to chance it," declared the

shipping magnate, "and you two fellows are going to get the chance of a lifetime! Listen! To the one of you who scores the greater number of goals on Saturday I am going to give a hundred-pound note, a block of shares, and a promise of speedy promotion. I am a millionaire, so I can afford to indulge in a harmless whim now and again—and this is one of them! It isn't very difficult to see that you two don't hit it off, so I'm giving you a chance to prove who's the better man. Also, I want to make sure of the City Cup!"

Terry Craig scarcely knew whether he was on his head or his heels when, three minutes later, he left Sir John's private office; and on the following Saturday, as he changed in the dressing-room, he still found it difficult to believe that so much was at stake. A hundred-pound note, a block of shares, and speedy promotion! And all he had to do was to score a few goals! He and Fruity were to fill the inside forward positions, so each would have an equal chance of finding the net.

Well, that arrangement suited Terry down to the ground, and he was smiling with quiet confidence as he and the other players followed Fruity on to the field.

The Bank team looked a hefty lot in comparison to their opponents, and the game was no more than three minutes old when it became abundantly clear that they were out for an early lead. Throwing their full weight into the attack, they went down the field with a beautiful passing movement, swinging the ball from wing to wing, and a mighty roar went up from their supporters when their outside-left slammed in a tricky cross-shot—and found the net!

"Don't worry, boys! We've got the great Terry Craig with us!"

A mantle of warm colour overspread

Terry's cheeks as the taunting remark reached his ears, but he did not give Fruity Carstairs the satisfaction of making him look round. And if Fruity thought he was going to put Terry off his game he was making a big mistake. So much Terry told himself as, to a thunder of hoarse cheers, the players trotted up the field and lined up for the restart.

Kettle, the Critchell centre-forward,

supporters. "Get rid of it, Carstairs!"

But Fruity was deaf to the wild shouts, and he merely grinned when the back robbed him and sent the ball hurtling up the field.

A powerful return kick from a Critchell defender dropped the leather within Terry Craig's radius, and there was a characteristic gleam in the youngster's dark eyes as he pounced on the pass and went off with that



Man after man "Fruity" dribbled with the ball. Then taking his kick on the run, he beat the goalie with a shot that flashed into the net.

touched the ball to Fruity Carstairs, on his left, and Fruity barged ahead, sent the opposing man staggering, and went away, covering the ground at a good rate for a fellow of his build. Beating the Bank centre-half, he carried on until a towering back bore down upon him, and then, unquestionably, was the time for him to get rid of the leather. Both Kettle and Terry were unmarked at that particular moment, and the former clapped his hands to attract Fruity's attention.

"Pass, man!" yelled the Critchell

peculiar swerving movement so well known at Stonebridge. Once properly in his stride, there was no stopping Terry, and the shot that found the net was a red-hot snorter that flashed beneath the bar with the speed of an express train.

"GOAL!"

"Well done, Craig!"

"Good kid!"

Fruity's flabby countenance showed no signs of pleasure as the players

lined up, and no sooner did the whistle shrill than he plunged into the enemy ranks, relieved the inside man of the ball, and went away on an individual run that brought round after round of applause from the crowd. Man after man he beat with seeming ease, and he even managed to slip between the two giant backs who bore down upon him.

Then, taking his kick on the run, he beat the goalie with a rising shot that beat the goalie all the way and flashed into the net.

"GOAL!"

"Good old Fruity!"

"Up, up, Critchell's!"

No more goals were scored that half, and the second session was drawing to a close before the Bank found the net from a corner-kick. Most of the play took place in mid-field, and for long periods on end the custodians had nothing to do. Both Terry and Fruity Carstairs were marked men, and all their attempts to break away ended in failure. The Bank skipper seemed to be content to play on the defensive, with a special eye for Critchell's inside forwards, so Terry and Fruity weren't allowed to move a yard unless accompanied by hard-eyed, grim-faced young men who stoutly refused to be shaken off.

Then came the last desperate bid.

With only a matter of seconds to go, Terry gave his guardians the slip, darted across to the wing, and snatched up a short pass from the wing man; then, setting off at a hot pace that left his "shadows" standing, he swerved in towards the goal area, to find that a burly back and the centre-half were almost on top of him.

"Shoot!"

"Take a shot! Chance it, kid!"

Terry had a sporting chance of finding the net as the Bank men rushed down upon him, and he was about to try his luck when he glanced to his

left and saw that Fruity Carstairs was unmarked, with what looked like an open goal in front of him. This was a sure goal, and Terry hesitated; but only for a fraction of a second. In that short space of time all manner of tantalising thoughts raced through his mind; he thought of what the goal would mean to Fruity Carstairs—a hundred-pound note, a block of shares, a promise of speedy promotion; he thought of what Fruity's goal would mean to him—an end to his wonderful day-dreams, in which he filled his father's bookshelves, replaced the etching over the fireplace, and ordered the professor's monthly supply of favourite Havanas.

Terry was sorely tempted in that fleeting fraction of time, but that was all.

Drawing the defence, he beat first one man, then another, and the giant back was almost on top of him when he pushed the ball out to Fruity Carstairs.

"SHOOT!"

"In with it!"

"A-h-h-h-h-h!"

A long-drawn-out groan broke from the disappointed crowd as Fruity took a mighty kick and sent the leather soaring high over the crossbar, and the next moment the final whistle shrilled its message that denoted the end of full time. As the score was 2-2, extra time had to be played, and it was near the end of this period that Kettle managed to score the winning goal for Critchell's.

Both Terry and Fruity had a big hand in this goal. Receiving the ball from the centre-half, Fruity made ground. But near the penalty area his path was blocked by defenders, and Fruity slipped the ball to Terry. Terry ran a few yards, drew the Bank defence out of position, and then passed to Kettle. The opposing

goalkeeper never stood a chance of reaching the centre-forward's flashing drive.

A few moments later the final whistle sounded.

Fruity, swinging round upon his heel, a strange expression upon his freckled face, set off for the dressing-room; and close upon his heels followed Terry Craig.

They had the dressing-room to themselves as they faced each other, and Fruity looked pale and uncomfortable as Terry shot out a muscular hand.

"Thanks, old man," said the youngster. "That was sporting of you!"

The big fellow flushed, but did not meet Terry's steady gaze.

"Why thank me?" he growled, with a return of his old aggressive manner. "I don't know what you're talking about!"

"You can't get away with that, Fruity," smiled Terry. "You didn't try to get the goal that would have meant so much to you; you deliberately skied the leather over the crossbar!"

"Well, and what if I did?" demanded Fruity. "Why make a song about it? Look here, Craig!" His tone and manner changed as he looked straight into Terry's brown eyes. "It seems to me that we've never understood each other till this afternoon, and I don't mind telling you that I got a bit of a shock when you chucked away your chance of bagging the hundred-pound note and the rest of it; and you, on your part, must have got a big surprise when I did the only decent and sportsmanlike thing and shoved the ball over the bar! That clears the air, I guess, and later on we'll go along to Uncle Lawson and tell him we've decided to split the prize—fifty-fifty! Shake!"

THE END

ST. JIM'S JINGLES

G. A. GRUNDY

(the fool of the Shell)



"BREATHES there a boy with soul so dead
Who fails to worship Grundy?"
(Thus the sarcastic Lowther said
Whilst having tea on Monday.)
For Grundy thinks he's quite a King,
A giant, a Colossus;
And he'd be pleased as anything
If only he could boss us!

This burly member of the Shell
Was first at Redclyffe College;
A place where he did nothing well,
And gained but little knowledge.
He smote a prefect hip and thigh,
And caused a fearful flurry;
And this explains the reason why
He "packed up" in a hurry!

He's wooden-headed, dull, and dense,
And in his "upper story"
Sawdust you'd find instead of sense;
And yet he struts in glory,
And gives himself majestic airs,
And thinks himself fine and famous;
Yet everybody else declares
That he's an ignoramus!

To watch old Grundy playing games
Is quite an education;
Within his breast ambition flames,
And fierce determination.
Barging and charging like a bull,
And making fearful bellows
Of "On the ball!" and "Play up, School!"
He scatters all his fellows!

Pity poor Wilkins! Pity Gunn!
They have to share his study;
And when the match is fought and won,
And Grundy's tired and muddy,
They have to say, in duty bound:
"Grundy, your form is topping!
No finer player could be found
From Wayland unto Wapping!"

St. Jim's would be a sadder place
If Grundy wasn't in it;
He brings a smile to every face
A dozen times a minute!
He's as bombastic as can be;
We're half inclined to scrag him;
But, as his name is "G. A. G.,"
Perhaps we'd better "Gag" him!



The ruins of the old Greyfriars monastery still stand to-day, and they have been the scene of many thrilling incidents in Mr. Frank Richards' popular school stories. Above, THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL artist gives us his impressions of everyday scenes in the monastery four hundred years ago.