2 New Serials! & 8 Complete Stories!







1st CHAPTER King John's Plot.

FIGH-O: said Allan-a-Dale, sitting up with a yawn and stretching his arms to their fullest extent 'Tie a beautiful world, after all's said

It was Enstertide, which fell early April that year, and the woodland

was looking its best.

The sun was just rising, and Allana-Dale sat on his bed of leaves watching the great red orb roll slowly above the distant tree-tops, turning gold and yellow as it cleared the thin mist that lay in the valley.

All sound above the control of the control

yellow as it cleared the thin mist that lay in the valley.

All round about him his brother outlaws lay stretched in slumber, each man with his bow boside him and his wallet for a pillow.

Allan groped among the leaves until he found one of last year's accura, and taking eareful aim, he flung it at Madeap, the jester, who was lying on his back, smoring loudly.

It fell into his mouth with a plop, and woke him up, spluttering.

"Come along, lazy one!" said Allan, springing to his feet. "Art for a swim this morning?"

"Ay, marry, that am I!" said Madeap, surreptitiously appropriating one of Leoffric of Leicoster's shoes, which that worthy had kicked off in his sloop.

that wormy seeds sloop. Madeap suddenly bounded up like a ball, and flung the shoe with all his might, but, Allan dodging eside, it fell with a sounding thwack on Friar "back's shaven pate."

fell with a sounding thwack on Friar Tuck's shaven pate.

The good man murmured "Benedicite!" and snored louder than ever, and the two friends ran off laughing down the glade.

The earth was carpeted with yellow primroses, the grass was green as, whereald, and all diamonded with glittering dewdrops; and sitting down on a fallen log, they flung off their jerkins and untied their boso.

The clear brown streamlet widened

thought of moving, set out with long, lithe strides towards the birch wood.

The ground was blue with wild hyscinth, and underneath their shoes of untanned deerskin the dead leaves of yester-year crunched and crackled, so that as they approached the wreath of smoke they had to exercise the grounds caution.

They crunt newstated as hands and

greatest caution.

They crept upward on hands and knoss until they reached the top of the bank, which at that place was well serconed by bushes, and peeping down they saw three armed men sitting bands a fire, which one of them was feeding from a pile of brushwood.

They had made their camp in a sandy hollow not twenty yards from the high-road, and tethered to the roots that protruded from the bankside stood their horses with the girths unalecked.

May the black that the care the

side stood their norms who was an alacked.

"May the black death seine these puking pilgrims and messly merchants who have kept us out of hed all night!" said one of the mon. "Tis well enough for my lord to lie on his couch of down with no thought for us who rust our harness in the night dows to no nursees!"

Peace, grumbler (* said one of his companions. "We should have had rich pickings if the "Peace, grumbler!" said one of his companions. "We should have had rich pickings if the cavalcade had come this way; but methinks they have taken the other road, fearing, no doubt, to fall in with Robin Hood and his rascals, of whom rumour hath it that he hath left the Yorkshire moors for Sherwood once more,"

"Marry come up!" said the third speaker. "Bold Robin of Sherwood Forest would think twice did he but know the guest we have at Swanloy-hurst,"

hurst,"
The other two looked at him.
"What mean you, Walter?" said one of them. "He cannot be of verygreat estate, since he came with but four attendants."
"If you had been in London town as I have, John of the Sword," said the third man, amiling contemptuously, "you would know the King of England when you see him!"
"How?" cried the other two, "Mean you that our guest is King John himself?"
"Ho is none other," said the soldier

me a fallen log, they flung off their or a fallen log, they flung off their perkins and untied their hose.

The clear brown streamlet widened into a deep pool as it swung round a limit of a more pool as it swung round a limit of the mext minute its surface was broken by two heavy plunges, which throw up the silvery spray in a luge shower as Allana-Dalo and Madcap dired in.

"Ah," said Allan, as he cause to the surface and dashed the water out of his eyes, "what life so free as that of the bold forester! The baron in his castle known no delight to equal this."

"No: it is well enough in the summer-time I grant you," said Madcap, climbing on to a boulder covered with volvet moss. "But hold, Allan, what is that smoke rising yonder? Methinks we have had neighbours in the night and not known it."

Allan awam to the rook and stood upon it—s perfect model for the sculptor, as he shaded the sun from his eyes and followed the direction of the jester's finger.

"How now!" he muttered. "This they had soon drawn on their hose of Linoola green, gartered it with the leathern thongs, and donned jerkin, and hood, and, taking up their bows, without which he true forester everthought of moving, set out with long, lithe strides towards the birch wood.

ing from one end to the other? I like not the business," said one of his componions.

"Nor I," said the wolder: "but we are Pornfrey de Portinbras' men, and must do his bidding. Since the roques are not here, we shall see naught of them till noon: so let us back to the ambush at Longley Bottom, which were the instructions we received."

They rose to their feet, and leaving the fire to smoulder, mounted their horses and rode away.

"By our Lady of Charity," cried Allan-a-Dale, when they had goes, "here is strange news for Robin! Come, Madenp, we must rim swiftly as a red buck!"

They spring down the bank, and in ten minutes reached the glade where the outlaws were now astir and proparing to break their fast.

When Robin Hood heard their tale his frown became black as a thunder-cloud, and a murmur west through the listening band that was like the low roar of distant surf boiling on the sand of the seashore.

"Then has it come to this," he cried.—"that the King of Merrie England has turned robber upon the highway? Gadzooks! I am in the mind to square accounts with him upon this business, for John and I have many an ancient score to settle!"

"The sharne of it," cried Friar Tuck, his tremendous voice bellowing through the glade.—"to attack pil-

"The shame of it," cried Friar Tuck, his tremendous voice bellawing through the glade—"to attack piligrims upon their way to our Lady's shrine! Robin, we cannot suffer this. Does anyone know how many rufflens ride under the banner of Pomfrey de Fortinbras!"

"Ay, that do !!" cried several volces. "Since he married the widow of Swinleyhurst he hath kept a troop of eighty, for the most part old retainers of Sir Humphrey de Brionne, who took service with Fortinbras after the baron's death."

Robin paced backwards and forwards thoughtfully for a few moments, and then he said:

and then he said :

and then he said:

"Go, Allan-a-Dalo, swift foot to Bollingwood, and tail our old comrade Guy what you have beard. Say also that Fortinbras is out of his reckoning, since the pilgrims are not due to pass this way until to-morrow. I will meet him at the White Oak at the hour of noon to-day: meantime, we must lie concealed. Moreover, there are show to meand and many a thorn-rent jerkin that needs the needle after our long march from Barn-loy-dale. Heigh-o I for the good days of King Richard! His brother John is but a sorry knave!"

Before Robin had done speaking, Allan-a-Dale was speeding away through the fame.

Allan-a-Dalo was speeding away through the forest, startling the dest from his covert and the wild boar from its lair.

from his covert and the wild boar from its lair.

It was a lovely April morning. Overhead was a bright blue sky, across which the south wind was rolling huge masses of cumulus cloud. The turf was springy beneath his loot, the bracken was unfolding its fronds, and the sweet scent of the spring woodland seemed to pervade the air.

Allan-a-Dale heard and saw and smelt all these things without realising them, for his mind was set on the coming advanture, which he knew would be a desperate one, and his thoughts went back to the old days, when he and Guy of the Greenwood had had such glorious times together, and to those more seemt days but a year or two back when Basil Butterfly had been his comrade.

He had not gone very far when the note of a hunting hern came on the wind, followed soon after by the baying of hounds, and before he had accomplished another mile a magnificent stag broke without warning from a coppice of young beeches and went bounding down the green vista before him.

"Belike as not," said Allan-a-Dale

bounding down the green vista before him.

"Belike as not," said Allan-a-Dale to himself, "King John goes a-hunting to-day." And the thought had barely entered his mind when he heard the trample of hoofs and the voices of men speaking loudly close at hand.

He slipped into the centre of a hollow tree, and from thence he saw John,

was wearing a plain tunic of Eluc clots, and might have passed for am ordinary gentleman.

"Ho, ho, Master King," thought Allan-a-Dule, "you little kmow what a rod lies in pickle for your shoulders, for I doubt not Robin Gondfellow has already devised a brave scheme."

When the cortege had disappeared among the trees Allan-a-Dulle slipped forth from his concealment and once more sped upon his way.

Upon the battlements of Bolling-wood Castle, Guy of the Greenwood, whom doubtless my readers have not forgotten, was walking with his arm resting on the shoulders of his gallant cequire, Basil Butterfly.

"Ha, lad," said the young baron, "tis on a more like this than I fook forth over yonder waving woods in all their spring beauty and almost sigh that I am not a careless formster once more !"

North."

Basil started, and looked -down the winding path that led to the little village and the forest beyond it, and there he spied a figure im Lincoln green footing it right deftly towards them.

unero he spied a figure im Lincoln green footing it right deftly towards them.

"Why, marry, here councth a forester!" he cried, ."Amd hark he soundeth the old blast upon his bugle-horn!"

It was indeed Allan-a-Dale, and quickly descending the steps that led to the green court of the outer 'alium, Guy unhooked the wicket himself, and followed by Basil, went forten to meet his old companion.

followed by 15asts, went sown to his old companion.

The greetings over, Allan'm tale was soon told, and then the red blood surged into the young haron's handsome cheeks and the veins satood out unon his temples

some cheeks and the veins stood out IDDD hit tomples.

"By the rood," he cri-ed, "not only will I meet gallant Robin at the White Oak at mid-day, but o ld Robert of Rouen shall ride at my back with fifty mounted spears. I came not a snap of the finger for King John, and half the barons of England think with me. But come, old friend I We do but wait the summons to Breek our fast, and I will wager that no bread has passed your lips this mearning."

As Guy led the way, and Hossi linked his arm in that of Allam-a-Dale, more than one of the grooms and men-at-arms who were already astir about the stables cried "Welcome!" to the young forester, remembering well the stirring scenes through which they had passed together.

They did not sit long at meat, for the news Allan-a-Dale badl brought was too serious in all consciences.

"Tis treason, my lord," said old

was too serious in all consciences.

"Tis treason, my lord," said old Robort of Rocen, whose board was now snow-white, but whose eye was as keen and his grip as firm in the saddle as in the old days when he ta-ught Guy all the secrets of the tilt-yeard—"tis treason to take up arma against the King, yet my old head goes with your young one in this matter, and if this thing were known I doubt not John would lose his crown within a week."

"Alas!" said Guy, "th cre is no time to acquaint others of his fell purpose, but we must do our best to thwart this outrage, which is san offence against our Lady herself. I know against our Lady herself.

ing from one end to the other! I like not the business," said one of his companions.

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They sprang down the bank, and in They sprang down the bank, and in They sprang down the bank, and in Allan-a-Dale, "you little kmow what to minintes reschad the clade where the increase and rode away.

"By our Lady of Charity," cried Allan-a-Dale, when they had goose, ""Ho, ho, Master King," thought the sum glittering on their hand their head of the finery in the sum of the great usually hedeeked himself, the King and might have passed for am ordinary gentleman.

"Ho, ho, Master King," thought they had goose, as a ever, And now, friend Robert, get the lade under arms; and perhaps 'twere well that his counsel will be wise as ever. And now, friend Robert, get the lade under arms; and perhaps 'twere well that his counsel will be wise as ever. And now, friend Robert, get the lade under arms; and perhaps 'twere well that my colours did not appear in this business, at least for the present. So let them mount in plain armour, with no prumes or falfals of any sort."

The old man-st-arms stode away upon his mission, and about cloven of the great usually hedeeked himself, the King and his fingers itched to fit an arrow to the string and foather a cloth-y ard shaft in the cruel upper lip, the slight will be wise as ever. And now, friend Robert, get the lade under arms; and perhaps 'twere well that his counsel will be wise as ever. So the them arms; and perhaps 'twere well that his fingers itched to fit an arrow to the sum arms; and perhaps 'twere

The villagers flocked to their doors, The villagers flocked to their doors, erying: "Long live our good baron!" but for once the young lord took no notice, but broke into a fast trot as he took the road to the forest.

The roads in those days were at the very widest but eight feet from eide to aids, with no attempt at paving of any eart.

any sort.
Luckily there was very little wheeled traffio, but even mounted tra-vellers found it difficult enough to get along when a string of perhaps forty or fifty heavily-laden pack-horsos had passed by, churning the mud up in wet weather, and the dust

more spring beauty and almost sight that I am not a careless forester once more!"

"And I, too, my Lord G uy," said the tad. "I sometimes wender whether you would not guess rightly whither I had gone if some day you found that I was missing."

Guy laughed merrily.

"You rogue," said he: "I should soon be after you to bring you back. But our talk minds me that we have heard naught of Robin since—the oaks turned golden. He tarries king in the North."

Basil started, and looked and together once had passed by, churning the mud up in wet weather, and the dust in dry.

The cavalcade soon left the highway, and plunged by a bridle-path through them and thicket: startling the bird-horn and thicket: now crossing a patch of smult sward, now grossing a patch of smult sward, now grossing in the feat was missing.

Wyou rogue, "said he: "I should soon be after you to bring you back. But our talk minds me that we have therefore the feat with a should of welcome.

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A Visit to the Monastery

T was a picturesque sight, if one could only have peoped through the bramble and witnessed it unobserved.

unobserved.
Guy and Robert of Ronca, with the outlaw and his two followers, sat in a group at the foot of the White Oak, while at a little distance away Besil Butterfly and Allan-s-Dale lay on the green sward chattering gaily where the little brook went gurgling slong the hollow at the bottom of the slone, the measurement of the little process. slope, the men-st-arms stood by their a. which eropped the fresh young

The council was a long one, but when **dyidoos to the antookers that** that

by ideas in the content that they had decided upon some plan, and, beckening Allan-a-Dale, the outlaws strode away at a quick pace, and were soon lost in the tangled undergrowth.

Guy cast one lingering glance round the glade he knew so well, and, calling his men to horse, rode back to Bolling-wood Castle, and silence once more reiened around the White Oak.

The squirrile gambolied along the branches, the blue jays flew screaming backwards and forwards, a wood pigeons was cooing loudly somewhere out of sight, and there was nothing on that bright spring day to denote that great happenings were on the eve of taking place.

Two brown-frocked monks, mounted upon sleek mules, rode into the little village of Beechholm just about the time of sunset, and behind thom, porhaps a hundred yards or more along the road, a wandering minatrel followed them, journoying in the same direction.

them, journeying in the tion.

The village street was busy, for there had ridden into it not long before a company of twenty merchants, and with them a band of pilgrinus, to the number of fully a hundred and fifty.

These latter had gone up to the monastery, which was built on rising ground above the village, and some of the merchants had gone with thom, while the rest filled the little inn to overflowing.

ur best to overflowing.
Accommodation for travellers was scanty in those days, and there were

OUT ON THURSDAY—The Mammoth Easter and Spring Fiction Double Number of "The Union Jack," containing Two Grand, Long Complete Novels. 2d. .

few inns, but the good monks opened their hospitable doors to all and sundry, saving rogues and vagabonds, and every saving rogues and vagabonds, and every one was welcome to enter, provided he was equally willing to take his departure on the third day.

If he made any denur, the sturdy brother who held the office of porter put him out by the shoulders, but that did not often happen.

One of the mounted monks, a very stout man, who had his cowl drawn well over his face, made some inquiry of the first person he month.

One of the mounted monks, a very stout man, who had his cow drawn well over his face, made some inquiry of the first person he met, who pointed to the monastery, whereupon the stout monk thanked him and rode with his companion up the hill.

The wandering ministrel went streightway to the inn, and long after sunset his instrument could be heard by the village churls who gathered round the door to listen while he played and sang for the amusement of the travellers within, who threw him money from time to time.

"Ah, welcome, brothers," said the porter at the monastery gates, "though, by St, Christopher, I hardly know where we can bestow these for the night. Our house is full of a goodly train of pilgrims, who go to pay their Easter vows to our Lady of Beverley."

"We shall take up but little space, good brother," said the stout monk, "since we stay not for the night; but tell me who is the chiefest man

Easter vows to our Lady of Beverley."

"We shall take up but little space, good brother," said the steut monk, "since we stay not for the night; but tell me, who is the chiefest man in authority among the pilgrims, and "—he added, under his breath—"I pray he may prove a soldier rather than a churchman."

"Why, my Lord Abbot of Beaulieu is surely of the greatest consideration amongst them," said the porter; "and next, Sir Thomas le Broton, a pious knight, who was with King Richard in the Holy Land."

"Then Sir Thomas le Breton is our man," said the stout monk, dropping to the ground like a sack of flour, and towering a good head above the porter, who was of no small build, "Say that two brethren would have speech with him on a matter of great moment which will not brook delay, and oblige me, brother, by not peeping so curiously into my hood, my face is not to be seen for the present."

The porter laughed, for the strange monk's voice was mellow and good humoured, and, bidding them enter, he clattered away in his sandalled shoon in search of Sir Thomas, whom, he said, was then at meat, leaving one of the lay-brothers to conduct the two mysterious visitors to a pleasant chamber that overlooked the garden.

Sir Thomas le Breton was not long

pleasant chamber that overlooked the garden.
Sir Thomas le Breton was not long in coming; he was a short, broadshouldered man, who had laid aside his armour and wore a surcoat of yellow leather about which his aword was girt. That weapon Sir Thomas never abandoned.
His face was thin and burnt a curious dusky red by the sun of the East, and from temple to chin it was deeply furrowed by the scar of an old scimitar alash inflicted by the hand of Saladin himself.
"God rest you, brothers," said the Crusader; "it puzzled me mightily what you can want with me."

"Twill puzzle you more, Sir Knight, when you have heard all," said the monk, who had not yet spoken; "we have come to warn you not to continue upon your way until another day

has passed."

"Ah," said Sir Thomas, "If there is danger in the path that must not turn us aside; moreover, we have little enough time as it is to reach the shrine of our Lady on the blessed Easter Day."

"You have not heard all, Sir Knight," said the other monk, whose enormous bulk had already attracted the soldier's attention.

Sir Thomas smiled, and the setting sun which glowed full into the chamber gave a red sparkle to his eye, "I can hear no more," he said, "unless it be that Robin Hood the

Outlaw hath been seen on the road we must traverse; and yet, if all accounts be true, he would scorn to molest piterims. His prey, the rogue, is more generally a rich baron riding scantily attended."

"You say well," said the silent

aded."
You say well," said the silent k; "but what if I tell you that in Hood himself now stands before monk :

looked from one to the other, he became convinced that danger there was, and that of no common sort.

"You are surely the holy man of Copmanhurst, whom the vulgar call Friar Tuck t" he said, admiring the enormous stature and brawny muscles that filled out the brown frock.

"I am indeed that unworthy man, Sir Knight," said the friar, with a twinkle in his eyo, "though I fear me you have heard naught good of me but stout blows."

"And what better, friend, does a

"And what better, friend, does soldier wish to hear? True, thou a

soldier wish to bear t True, thou art somewhat an indifferent churchman; but enough of that. What is this you tell me of King John t"

In a few words Robin made him acquainted with all they had learned, and at the name of Swanleyhurst the Crusader started.

"Tarry hero for a moment's space," he said abruptly; "there is one who travelled with me who must hear this story, too. Nay, he is a good soldier, and you need not scruple to speak before him."

Sir Thomas le Breton presently

seriore him."
Sir Thomas le Breton presently returned with a thin, gaunt man, hollow of eye and cheek, and, like himself, bearing the imprint of the sun of Palestine.

Palestine.

"Now, Sir Outlaw," said he, resting his hands upon the cross-hilt of his sword, "tell me of Swanleyhurst, for that place concerns me more just for that place now than an any spot on the

"There is little to tell of Swanley-hurst, sir," replied the outlaw, "save

same tent, braving the same dangers, and fighting valiantly as became soldiers of the Cross, until he fell away from the path, lured by the wines of Damascus and the fever of gambling. In vain I reasoned with him; in vain, when he set forth to return alone, did I ride after him and exhort him to remain stedfast to the oath he had taken. He turned upon me like a lien, wounded me sadly, and left me for dead in the desert sand, to fall a prisoner in the hands of the Ethiopians, who nevertheless proved kinder than a false friend. Long have I deemed him dead, for few tried to cross the desert alone and survived; but now I learn the deeper blackness of his treachery, for I am Roger of Swanleyhurst!"

His listeners started with amazement, and then Robin spake.

"Sir Knight," he said, "we are indeed well met, since I come to bring you the revenge that alone can release you from your vow. I am but a plain-spoken man and an outlaw, as all the world knows, yet have I at

bring you the revenge that alone can release you from your vow. I am but a plain-spoken man and an outlaw, as all the world knows, yet have I at my back nigh upon fourscore strut bowmen of the best, and fifty mounted speem, whose leader for the present must be nameless. I pray you give heed to my counsels, and we will give these rogues so profitable a lesson that they shall never want for another one."

one."
Robin Hood's plan was this:
It was perfectly plain that the king and his wicked favourite, De Fortinbras, intended to ambush the train of pilgrims and merchants, and rob

Norman love song to the company in the inn when the hoot of arm owl fell

the inn when the hoot of arm owl felt upon his ear.

In a moment one of the strings snapped between his fingers—perhaps he had given it too sovers a pluck—and, looking ruefully at his instrument and then at the company, he got off his stool, saving:

ment and then at the company, he got off his stool, saying:

"Tarry yet a little, my massters, and I will try to repair the damage." And going out of the room, as if in search of something, he slipped out into the roadway, where he was joine-d by his leader.

comething, he slipped out into the roadway, where he was joine-d by his leader.

"Allan," said Robin Hood, as they turned their backs upon thee village and walked away in the darkmess side by side, "all goes well. Pay heed to my instructions, and get thee back with them to our comrades in as short a time as fleet foot may carry thee. Let every man disguise himself so he resembleth anything rather than what he is. They are to play the part of pilgrims, yet must each one be well armed, and all who can do so let them hide their hows beneath their gowns. One hour before sunrise they must be yonder at the monastery gate; in the meantime, let word be carried to Bollingwood bidding friend Guy and his following lie beyond the thicket of whitethorn where the path winds out of Longley Botto m, there to wait for the sound of my horn. And now, away, Allan, and God speed thee and all of us, for there will be peril with the dawning of tomorrow's day."

The night had set in black as pitch

her once well-filled coffers were drain-ing low and that many of her broad acres had been mortgaged to the Lombard usurers.

ard usurers,

Riot and revel were the order of the
av under the rule of Pomfrey de

Riot and revel were the order of the day under the rule of Pomfrey do Fortinbras, and more than once Dame Ediths had bethought her of seeking the protection of the good Sisters of a nunnery some eight leagues away.

She was up betimes on this particular morning, the saddest Easter she had ever known, and stood looking sorrowfully through her lattice as the mists rose from the moat and the beams of the rising sun pierced the woods with shafts of fairy gold.

Her lord and master had not sought his couch that night, but had sat up in the hall beneath with four strange guests who had arrived the day before. There was some mystery about their

in the hall beneath with four strange guests who had arrived the day before. There was some mystery about their coming, and one who seemed to be the chiefest in rank among them had eyed her insolently with a bold glance that brought the hot blood to the cheek even of her brutal husband.

"Alack and foul fall the day that my good Roger departed on his hopeless quest! King Richard's zeal broke many a woman's heart, but he came back again, while my man——."

She looked down as a footstep sounded below, and Pomfrey de Fortinbras went forth from the door which was immediately beneath her chamber window.

His gait was a little unsteady as he pressed his hands to his brow like a man whose head is heavy with strong liquor.

"Ho, there i" he called. "Not yet

"Ho, there?" he called. "Not yet awake, you lazy dogs! The sun is up, and we must be in the saddle in an hour! Come from your kennels, or I will whip you forth!"

This gentle adjuration brought several men running hastily from one of the outhouses, their hair dishevelled, and straw clinging to their jerkins, while at the same time innumerable dogs began to how! and bark.

"To horse, brutes, and that right soon, if ye would not be flogged till the blood spurts!" continued their amiable lord, as the fresh morning air revived him. "And do not forget that your faces must be covered for the work we have on hand. None must be able to swear to us when the Sheriff of Nottingham gets wind of the business."

The Lady Editha felt a tremor run-through her limbs at these strange

What manner of work could this be

words.

What manner of work could this be that demanded concealment from the eyes of other men? Not honest work, she thought; and, bending forward, she leaned out of the window and spokdown to her husband beneath.

"What brings my lord abroad so carly betimes when he has not sought his couch the night?" she said.

He started at the sound of her voice, and she fancied, and truly, that his face paled as he looked up at her.

"Work for men's hands and not for puling women to meddle with," he retorted, after a pause. "Get thee the dagain, Editha; this cool air will spoil thy beauty—though, by my troth, there is little loft to spoil now."

"My lord knows best whose handiwork that may bo," she replied sadly.

"The neglected flower soon, withers, and the wife who sobs half the night through must soon show grey hairs amid the gold."

"Hark ye," snarled Pomfrey de Fortinbras, coming directly under the wife who sobs and the wife who so the started of the side with the wife that the sound the wife who sobs half the night who sold and the wife who sobs half the night who will be suited the side with the wife that the sound the wife who sobs half the night who sold with which the sold with the wife that the sound the wife who sold and the wife who sold half the night who sold with which the wife that the sound of the wife that the sold when the wife that the wife that the wife that the sound of the same and the sold wife that the sold when the wife that the wife that the wife the sound of the sold wife.

"Hark ye," snarled Pomfrey de Fortinbras, coming directly under the window, "the wife that obeys not her lord must be treated like a disobedient hound and be well whipped. I bid thee to thy room, and there to stay, else—" The savage said no more, but struck his thigh with the whip he carried, and his look was sufficient.

sufficient.

The Lady Editha left the window, just as John, whose step De Fortinbras had heard approaching, came to the door, and with blinding tears in her eyes she sought her own chamber with a growing resolve in her heart to leave the rufflen for good and all.

"I will wait until they be ridden forth," she murmured, "and then, if they have left no horse behind them, I will fare on foot to the nunnery and take sanctuary where he can never trouble me more."

She did not see the mustering and the mounting, the tightening of girths, the hasty quaffing of ale and mead in lieu of breakfast, the faces blackened with charcoal from the embors, and the defile out of the cleared space in front of the house.

cleared space in front of the house.

The dull thud of their horses' hoofs sounded hollowly on the wooden bridge, the sunbeams shone upon helm and hauberk, spur, and sword boss; and then, with King John and the Norman soldier at their head, they broke into a trot, and disappeared down the aisles of the wood in the direction of Longley Bottom.



Robin sped a shaft under the neck of Pomfrey's horse, which pierced John's steed to the heart.

liege, the king, in this wanton attack

liege, the king, in this wanton attack upon your party."

"And who, pray, may the Lord of Swanleyhurst be t" said the gaunt man, grasping the guard of his sword with such a grip that his knuckles grew quite white. "I am but lately from abroad, and thought that Swanleyhurst had lost its master."

"Ay, that it had," said Rotin, "until it found another one! "Tis a rich estate, and such things do not lie long fallow in England. Sir Roger died during the last Crusade, and Dame Ediths, his wife, married a Norman soldier of fortune, yelept Pomfrey de Fortinbras."

A curious sound, like the angryich of the missing the last than the state of the missing that the said than the said the s

A curious sound, like the angry sigh of the wind in the branches on a winter's night, broke from the lips of the gaunt man, and his eyes flashed

fire.
"And doth he use her well or ill ?"

monk; "but what if I tell you that monk; "but what if I tell you that monk; "and doth he use her well or ill ?" Robin Hood himself now stands before you to warn you that the King of England is your enemy!"

Both monks flung back their cowls, and Sir Thomas le Breton, recoiling a step, laid his hands upon the hilt of his aword.

He saw before him a handsome, open-faced man, brown-haired and bearded, his ruddy check speaking of health and fresh air.

The face of Robin's companion you know almost too well to need its description; but the huge, goodnatured features wore such an earnost expression, that, as the Crusader

"And doth he use her well or ill ?" he said, speaking very distinctly, and riveting Robin with his piecring gaze.

"If folks lie not," said the outlaw, "the poor lady hath cause to regret their union, for 'tis said he useth her union, for 'tis said he useth extending union, for 'tis said he useth her union, for 'tis said he useth he

them, allowing all the blame to fall on | but it was all one to Allam-a-Dale the outlaws.

Robin proposed that he and his band should disguise themselves as band should disguise themselves as pilgrims and join the train, the women, and those too infirm to defend them-selves remaining behind at the

monastery.

At a little distance from the place of ambush the Baron of Hollingwood, with his fifty horsemen, would wait in readiness, should their help be needed, and the attack would give the injured Lord of Swanleyhurst an opportunity of confronting his false friend Fortinhras.

bras.

Friar Tuck was ready with weighty arguments to forward the plan, but

they were not needed.

That King John would be there in person mattered not one whit in the syes of the two knights; he would be certain to take himself off at the

be certain to take himself off at the first discovery of the stratagem. And the red rim of the sun had scarcely disappeared below the horizon before Rooin himself left the monastery gate, leaving the friar behind him.

Still wearing his monk's freek, with the cowl drawn well over his face, Robin swung down the hill, and as he made in the direction of the hostelry yet another scheme entered his active brain, a scheme so daring, and so freught with possibilities, that he came to a stand in the gloaming, and smote his broad chest with clenched fists as if to child the tumultuous beating of his heart. ind the red rim of the sun had scarcely isappeared below the horizon before toom himself left the monastery gate, saving the friar behind him.

Still wearing his monk's freek, with the cowl drawn well over his face, tobin awung down the hill, and as he hade in the direction of the hostelry et another scheme entered his active or another scheme entered his active or another scheme entered his active or another scheme on stand in the gloaming, and smote on a stand in the gloaming, and smote his broad chest with clenched fists as for to chide the tumultuous beating of his heart.

Allan-a-Dalo was singing a gay

Ha liad gans almost before Robin missed him, slinging his instrument upon his back and striking straight across country for the outlaws' lair,

THE 3rd OHAPTER. Lady Editha's Resolve.

HE dawn broke gray amd sullen round the old Saxora homestead of Swanlavhuset

stead of Swanleyhurst.

The house itself, long and low and built of sun-dried clay in a fr=amework of oaken beams, had been crected among its barns and outhousses upon an island of considerable systems.

The island owed its origin to an

an island of considerable extend.

The island owed its origim to an artificial moat, which, since the days of King Alfred, had served as a protection against an attack by an enemy, and upon its surface already, preening their white feathers, floated the graceful swant to which the place owed its name.

ANOTHER FINE NUMBER NEXT WEEK, containing further Long Instalments of our Grand New Serial Stories. Order Your Copies in Advance.

 THE KING'S RANSOM. (Continued from the previous page.) ****************

Longley Bottom was a shallow valley bordered by a swift running stream. The road dipped sharply into it on the south side, and, after winding among thick clumps of gorse and thorn, rose through a narrow, gorge-like opening and passed away northward. In the middle of the valley another road forked at right angles and crossed a bridge in the direction of Merley Abbey, which could be seen on the hill to eastwards.

to eastwards.
All was peace at Merley new since
Anselm had perished at Hollingwood,
and the gentle White Abbot ruled in
his stead.

nnd the gentle white Aboot ruses in its stead.

Beyond the gorge, about half a bow-shot away, stood the thicket of whitothorn of which Robin Hood had spoken, and thither, soon after sunrise, came Guy of Bollingwood and his retainers, all clad in plain armour, with no device to betray them.

Guy stationed them out of sight at the back of the thicket, all of them in their saddles, and, dismounting himself, he and Basil Butterfly went forward to the edge of the little copse and lay down among the undergrowth, from whence they had a fine view of the valley apread out below them.

"Now, lad, we can see all and any

from whence they had a fine view of the valley apread out below them.

"Now, lad, we can see all and any who come by yonder roads," said Guy. "This minds me of my old forester days, when the green sward was my pillow and the lattice of boughs overhead my counterpane."

They had not been very long in that place when Basil said, "Look!" And there, sure enough, coming over the opposite edge of the valley, rode a clump of spears.

"This looks like business in very truth," said Guy. "I had not expected them yet awhile; see, they are the rufflens of De Fortinbras, and they divide, some going down to the bridge, where there is shelter; a good dozen have turned off into the wood by the roadside which the pilgrims must pass, and the rest come on hither, doubtless to conceal themselves among these birches below us."

He was right; and so near did the main body approach to where they lay hid that they could hear the rough

He was right; and so near did the main body approach to where they lay hid that they could hear the rough jokes of the coarse Norman soldiery.

And now a dreary wait ensued, hour after hour went by, and Basil's impationee was becoming almost unendurable when, from a belt of young trees on the other side of the Bottom, and arm waved comething white—evidently the signal that the prey was in sight.

was in sight.

Pomfrey de Fortinbras, who was with the main body in the gorge, now rode among his men, and they heard him warn them that on no account was any blood to be spilled.

"Re member" he said, accompanying his words with some terrible Norman oaths, ""tis the merchante we want; they are the crows worth plucking, the pilgrims may go hang, and will scatter like a flock of sheep when we show our noses."

Guy and Basil exchanged a smile of triumph.

of triumph.

"The braggart makes over sure"
whispered Guy; "there will be more blood spilled than he wote of; hat now we will return to our troop to are doubtless very weary by the

w no are doubtless very weary by this time."

They glided cautiously back and gained their horses unseen; the ruffians in the valley had no inkling of the vengeance that lurked in their rear, and had not had the thought to nost a single senting!

while from the bridge there galloped yet another band of disguised horsemen; truly a very complete and terrible ambushment.

Still the merchants did not draw rein, and two men in armour with closed visors pricked their horses with the spur and rode a pace or two forward. They were Sir Thomas le Breton and Roger of Swanleyhurst, and Sir Thomas, opening his helmet, lifted up his voice and spake.

"How now, sira," he cried; "back a little from the road, I beg of you, for we are bound upon a holy errand."

"Go upon your way," replied Pomfrey, "we make no war on pilgrims, but would have a word with these sleek merchants and their money-bags. On, boys, and scatter these pious folk; no doubt the shavalings of the abbey yonder will give them ehelter. Now, messires, unbuckle your wallets and no bones about it, if you would save your hides; if you make any resistance, my men shall cut you into collops with their stirrup leathers."

"By my halidom," cried Sir Thomas, "who art thou who speakest so loud, and doeth this foul thing upon the highway?"

"I am Robin Hood, if thou wouldst know," replied Pomfrey de Fortinbras, "so stand aside, old man, I do not wish to use thee roughly."

A single voice from the middle of the pilgrims rose up in a burst of merry, mocking laughter, and in an instant gowns and hoods and disguises were flung aside, and, instead of the band of pious votaries from whom they had expected no resistance, there, in the dappled sunshine of the April morning, stood the lads in Lincoln green, and the man who had laughed came striding carefeesly forward to where the Norman robber eat spell-bound on his horse.

"Back, my liege," whispered Pomfrey to a man in a blue surcoat at his elbow, "you can pass behind

"Back, my liege," whispered Pomfrey to a man in a blue surecast at his elbow, "you can pass behind my spears and gain the gorge unobserved."

observed."

King John, who had turned ashen white behind the false beard which disguised him, wrenched his horse round and spurred away, but not before Robin's quick eye had marked his disht.

round and spurred away, but not before Robin's quick eye had marked his flight.

Up to his lips went the bugle-horn, and three clear blasts did be blow.

It was a signal that had a double meaning, and in an instant the air resounded with the twang of bowstrings, and a roar of rage went up from the baffled brigands.

"Upon them, boys," cried Robin.

"Spare not a mother's son of them!"
And quick as a flash of thought the rogues were fighting for their lives.
Robin's arrow feathered itself in the throat of a burly man-at-arms.

He hesitated to make a target of the King of England, although the world would have been well rid of a bad man: he had other thoughts in his head, and, fitting another arrow to his string he kept his eye upon the blue figure spurring up the gorge.

Then a smile spread over his face as he saw John rein in and come galloping back, for over the crest of the hill poured a surge of mail-cled horsemen, with a thunder of hoofs and a hoarse shout of triumph.

"Quick, Allan, Little John, and you, friar—yonder is our prey, and have him we must!"

And the four outlaws, disengaging thomal of intercent the flying king.

thomselves from the moles, apod

Infinitely the finite interest the flying king.

But Pomfrey de Fortinbras had already seen John's peril, and, reining his horse out of the press through which Roger of Swanleyhurst was making violent efforts to reach him, he coursed to John's help.

his horse out of the press through which Roger of Swanleyhurst was making violent efforts to reach him, he spurred to John's help.

"Over the bridge, my liege!" he shouted, forgetting for the moment how necessary it was that the king should not be recognised. "Seek sanctuary at the abbey yonder, and we will keep the passage. To me, Raoul, to me, Walter—all of you this way!"

It was a bold attempt, but it was destined to be presured with.

plucking his sword away and transferring his dagger to his own belt; and then he held him by the sleeve of his gown, fuming all the while that the custody of his prisoner was losing him the joy of as fine a fight as he could have wished for.

have wished for.

It all happened in so short a space of time that Pomfrey de Fortinbras alone witnessed John's capture, and since ill news never comes singly, according to the old proverb, Pomfrey himself found his own hands remarkable full ably full.

"Hold!" cried a sepulchral voice behind him as Allan-a-Dale skipped nimbly aside to avoid a terrific sword-thrust, and the next moment a grip of steel had closed upon the Norman's wrist, and a man, who had ridden ye alongside him, was gazing through the bars of his helmet with eyes that burned like living coals. "False friend, and have I found thee "" said the voice, as the horseman flung up his own visor and exposed his thin, sunburnt visage to the Norman's gaze. "Have you forgotten Roger of Swanleyhurst so soon 1"

An unearthly sound burst from the

of Swanleyhurst so soon 1"
An unearthly sound burst from the to disengage his wrist by a sudden wrench; but, releasing it, Roger of Swanleyhurst dealt him a buffet with his maited glove that flung him half out of his saddle.

"I could slay thee where thou sittest, Pomfrey de Fortinbras," he said, dropping his visor again; "but I am no murderer. Take thy sword, and may the saints watch over us, for one of us dies to-day!"

He reined back his horse as he

one of us dies to-day!"

He reined back his horse as he uttered these words, and those of the outlaws who were within earshot drew aside to give them room.

Basil Butterfly, who was returning from a victorious charge with half a dozen of the Bollingwood men, after driving eight of Pomfrey's followers to their death in the swift river, pulled up to watch, and one by one Guy's spearmen, having disposed of their adversaries, came up and joined the circle, until a great ring had been formed, in the centre of which the two combatants rode warily round and round.

round.

Over his hanbork of jazerant armour, or overlapping rings, Roger of awantey-hurst wore a crimson silk surcoat with a large white cross on the breast, the mark of the English Crusader, which made him a conspicu-

Crusaier, when made him a complex-ous figure.

His charger also bere housings of crimson on which the white cross was displayed, while at the saddlobow hung a steel mace.

hung a steel mace.

"By my halidom," said Robin in Little John's car, "he hath the bearing of a gallant soldier, while the other knave sitteth his horse more like to a sack of flour than one who hath been trained to arms."

Pomfrey de Fortinbras had not yet recovered from the shock of finding Roger of Swanleyhurst alive, and the cold sweat poured down within his closed helmet till he could scarce see his adversary.

closed belimet till he could scarce see his adversary.

Then on a sudden, like a man awaking from a dream, he plunged the leaf-shaped spurs into his horse's sides and, with a wild shout, the two combatants met, hewing and alashing at each other for several minutes until they were fain to cease from very weariness.

After a pains for breathing space, Roger of Swanleyhurst began the attack; but as their swords met with a clanging ring, like the hammer of a blacksmith upon the anvil, Roger's blacksmith upon the anvil, Roger's blade flew into three pieces, and for an instant he was at his enemy's

suffine in the valley had no inkling of the vergeace that furthed in their rear, and had not had the thought of the vergeace that furthed in their rear, and had not had the thought of poet a single sentine.

Tower the hill into the Longley Bottom wound a little cavalende of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants on breakback, followed the mind the composition of merchants of merchants of merchants on the mind the m

business!"
The outlaws lowered their weapons

as one man.

Nevertheless, many of them stream away up the valley-side, fe-arful that the coward might escape his just punishment, for he was mounted on a lighter horse than the Crussader, and had already gained some start.

THE 4th CHAPTER

King John's DownWa't.
OMFREY DE FORTINBRAS
made a falso start at the
outset. outret.

The river and the road that wound beyond it seemed for an instant to offer a better chance of escence; but, reflecting that he had mande bitter enemies of the good monks, who were more than likely to bar their door upon him, he spurred up the hill along the path by which the mocak pilgrims had come.

Every yard of it was strew n with the dead and dying of his company, for the vengeance of Guy and the outlaws

the vengeance of Guy and the outlaws had been sharp and sure; one man slone of all that ruffian crew-escaped, and he, blundering into a quagmire, perished miserably.

Pomfroy's tongue cloves to his mouth; his brain was in a whirl, and his heart seemed dead within him; while behind him his ear e-aught the galloping thunder of the "Crusaler's horse and a low hun of e-xcitement from the onlockers.

It was a race for life. If he gained

from the onlookers.

It was a race for life. If he gained the top of the rise in safety he might pet win it, and, once in thes island of Swanleyhurst, where a handful of retainers still remained, he could raise the drawbridge and stand a siege of seven duration. of some duration.

Ent the fater had willed it otherwise, and as he looked over his smoulder he saw the crimeon surcoat descripsaw the crimson surcoat drawing nearer and nearer.

nearer and nearer.

It seemed as if the Crusauder's coal-black steed gained upon him with every stride, while his own horse, blown by the terrific pace ton which he had forced it, was snorting bells of foam from his nostrils im evident

He checked it savagely and wheeled

distress.

He checked it savagely and wheeled it round.

He would gain some slight advantage from the fact that the road was steep at that place, and, shourtening his reins, he was about to p-lunge the spure in and hurl himself upon the oncoming pursuer, when serrange thing happened.

From behind a whin-bush, where she had crouched with beauting heart and straining eyes, the Lacily Editha rose to her full height, the sum shining upon her golden hair.

"Beware, false man t" sho cried, for she had recognised her husband whom she had so long thought deads. "False perjurer, harm enough hast thou done with thy lying tongue!"

Pomfrey's horse, startlect by the sudden apparition, swerved and tried to turn, bringing his rider's Bridle arm 100 mills the Uniseder.

to turn, bringing his rider's worlds arm towards the CRISGOAT.

"Die, dog, die!" cried Roger of Swanleyhurst, and, raising himself in his stirrups with the asteel mace high above his head, he brought it down with such terrific forces upon his mortal foe that the good helmet cracked in twain and the head within it!

dashed through the watching ring in abject flight.

A score of bows were raised, a score of feathered shafts were drawn in an instant to the ear-tip, when stout Sir Thomas le Breton shouted:

"Hold! Roger of Swæmleyhurst hath a right to the last word in this business!"

The outlaws lowered their weapons as one man.

him, bare-headed in mock reverence, stood Robin Hood; while, motionless and silent as the trees about them, the rest of the band stood, mute witnesses of the extraordinary scene.

"By my halidom, fellow!" exclaimed the king, his cruel face purple with anger. "Hast thou the insolence to think of holding your Sovereign to ransom?"

We lieve has a short memory."

ransom?"

"My liege has a short memory," said Robin. "Was not your own brother, the good King Richard, held to ransom, too, and did you busy yourself to set him free? Oh, you may scowl. John of England, but facts are stubborn things. To ransom art thou held. My only difficulty is to fix a sum sufficient. It must be a high one, else would my liege be sick at heart, thinking we placed too little value upon his carcase?"

The king choked with impotent passion.

passion.

"Listen, caitiff!" he said, when he had recovered himself. "You have me in your power, there is no gainsaying it, but it matters not what sum you name, since I have not a silver penny in my treasury, and I know not one in my realm who would advance a great to free me.

He spoke with such bitterness and such obvious truth that Robin was fain to believe him, and the outlaw's

face grew grave.

"Frier," said he, "bring parchment and write."

Tuck.

"Frier," said he, " pring parenticular and write."
"Nay, Robin," cried Frier Tuck,
"now thou hast me upon the hip.
I can write my name on another man's pate with my quarter-staff so clear that all the world may read it, but there my skill ends."
"He shows!" cried Robin. "Who

that all the world may read m, but there my skill ends."

"Ho, there!" cried Robin. "Who among you hath penmanship and the wherewithal to exercise it?"

A young man—Jenkin by name—stopped forward, binshing as he did so, for the clerkly craft was looked upon as somewhat beneath the dignity of a man in those days and only befitting the monks and scriveners.

"I can write, master," said Jenkin, producing an ink-horn from his girdle and fumbling in his wallet, from which he drew a scrap of parchment.

"Then sit you here and set down my words," said Robin, raising his voice. "Art ready?"

"Ay, that am I," said Jenkin, looking up from under his brown hair which hung in a tangle over his brow.

"Then write I, John, King of England, do swear by these signs and tokens that Robin Fitzooth and his tokens that Robin Fitzooth and his companions shall go free and unmokested throughout my realm for the space of a twelvementh and a day which said permission I do now give in lieu of ransom; and let all sheriffs, officers of the law, and such-like knaves take heed how they disobey this mandate. Hast done? Then, boy, dip thy pen carefully into the ink and hand it, with due grace and reverence, to our liege the king, who will affix his Royal signature to the document and make it law."

"I will none of it!" exclaimed John hearsely.

"I will none of it!" exclaimed John hoarsely.

He made a snatch at the parchment, but Jenkin was too quick for him, and in his anxiety to preserve it from destruction, he dealt the king a buffet on the cheek which toppled him backwards over the tree-root to the prehounded delight of the outless. the unbounded delight of the outlaws,

who howled with laughter.
That was why the young outlaw
was ever after known as JenkinSmack-John.

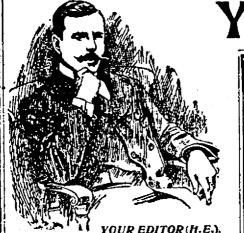
Smack-John.

In vain did John glare at the circle of faces which surrounded him and cut aff all hope of escape, until finally, with a very bad grace, as indeed he did everything during his life, he seized the pen and signed the writing.

Years after he must have thought of that day, when, with the stern barons round him as the outlaws had been, he wrote his name on the scroll of the Magna Charta!

Mounted upon one of the borses they had taken from the Norman band, the king wended his way to the nearest town, escorted by ten of the lads in Lincoln green until he came within, sight of its walls.

OUT ON THURSDAY—The Mammoth Easter and Spring Fiction Double Number of "The Union Jack," containing Two Grand, Long Complete Novels. 2d.



Controller of

THE BOYS' FRIEND - Tuesday.
THE BOYS' HERALD-Thursday. THE BOYS' REALM - Saturday.

OUR DOUBLE NUMBER.

ITH this issue I place in the hands of my supporters
the promised Easter
Double Number of THE Boxs'
FRIEND. As they will see, it is packed from cover to cover with good stories; in fact, this Fiction Double Number of THE BOYS' FRIEND seems to be the best value for money that I have ever

best value for money that I have ever given.

It is certainly a new idea for The Boys' l'riend to publish a double number consisting of fiction only—with hardly any articles or other features—so that those of my friends who like good yarns can show their appreciation of this double number by passing it on to their chums who are not at present readers of our paper.

Among the many interesting features to be found in this double number I would like to draw special attention to "Storm Island," by Allan Blair, a new serial chronicling the adventures of two boy Crusoes; and also "Circus Pete," being a new sories of complete stories dealing with this famous character, whose jokes and adventures bring laughs to the lips of many hundreds of thousands of British boys each week.

Pete is the most popular character in boys' fiction at the present time, and the "Circus Pete" tales will be found not only as funny as the Pete stories that have appeared in The Boys'

the "Circus Pete" tales will be found not only as funny as the Pete stories that have appeared in THE BOYS' FRIEND, but I think a great deal funcier. If you know a boy who is fond of Pete and his adventures, tell him about this new series of stories starbing the company of the period of the peri about this new series of stories starting in this number of THE BOYS' FRIEND.

A FORTNIQUE'S TIME.

I have much pleasure in announcing that very shortly I shall commence in The Boys Friend a splendid new school story by Maxwell Scott, entitled

YOUR EDITOR'S DEN.

four Editor is always glad to hear from you about yourself or your favourite p_aper.

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If your letter is not replied to here, it may be answered in "The Boys' Herald" nex# Thursday, or "The Boys' Realm" next Saturday.

"THE CAPTAIN OF ST. NINIAN'S."

Mr. Maxwell Scott is, of course, best known as the creator of Nelson Lee, detective; but I think my friends will find "The Captain of St. Ninian's" one of the most fascinating school yarus that have ever appeared in our paper. Cortain of one thing I am, and this is that Maxwell Scott has never written a better story, and I know all my friends will enjoy it heartily.

I have several other new things in preparation for The Bors' Friend, but of these I shall give details shortly. Meantime, I think the old paper is keeping up its reputation for good stuff, and beats anything published on the market in imitation of or rival to it.

BOY WITH YELLOW TEETH.

A BOY WITH YELLOW TEETH.

League Member No. 40,556 lives at Henley, and he asks me to tell him of something that would improve the colour of his teeth, which have latterly gone very yellow.

The best plan I can suggest to my friend is the application of a toothbrush and some carbolic or other tooth-powder regularly every night and morning. Let him give his teeth a good scrubbing, working the brush not only across his teeth from right to left and vice versa, but up and down, so that the brush gets into the little crevices and interstices between the teeth.

teeth.

If he treats his teeth like this every night and morning, in a short time he will find their colour improve, and remain so as long as he practises this very cleanly habit.

PAGE FOR MY READERS BY MY RE .DERS.

A. C. makes a suggestion, which he says he and his friends have decided ought to be carried out. He tells me that he thinks I ought to set aside a page of The Bors' Friend each week which shall be filled by the contributions of my readers, and that the writer of the best story on that page should be awarded a prize.

I am afraid that my friend is rather young—certainly too young to have realised that his suggestion, if it were carried out by a paper like The Bors' Friend, would not be a success, for this reason, that I do not suppose I could possibly fill a page of The Bors'

"THE CAPTAIN OF ST. NINIAN'S."

Mr. Maxwell Scott is, of course, best known as the creator of Nelson Lee, detective; but I think my friends will find "The Captain of St. Ninian's" one of the most fascinating school yarne that have aver appeared in our paper. Cortain of one thing I am, and this is that Maxwell Scott has never written a better atory, and I know all my friends will enjoy it heartily.

**FRIEND cach wock with as good stuff as I get from my regular professional contributors. Again, there are thousands of boys who do not care to read the work of other boys, no matter how meritorious it may be, and these other boys would rather read a good story by a regular author, and would freent my devoting a page of a paper like The Bors' Friend—in which space is so valuable—to the writings of their fellow-readers, even if they were good enough to be published.

So, A. C., much as I appreciate your this comma after the figure fellow-readers would object.

So, A. C., when as I appreciate your thing a unsecussion this subject, or lass probably be spoken to by a superior for neglect to put this comma after the figure fellow-readers would object.

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So, A. C., much as I appreciate your thing the matter than the subject, or lass probably be spoken to by a superior for neglect to put this comma after the figure fellow-readers would object.

So, A. C., much as I appreciate your thing the matter the number of the subject, or lass probably be spoken to by a superior for neglect to put this comma after the figure fellow-readers would object.

Porsonally my reader is against the subject of the most figure fellow fellow fellow fellow fellow fellow

HOW TO KEEP WATER OUT OF THE ARS WHILST SWIMMING.

A "Constant Reader" asks me to tell him how he can keep water out of nis cars whilst he is swimming. The best plan is to plug both ears up with a little cottonwool dipped in sweet oil. If the cars are firmly plugged in this way they will probably be protected from the water during the time my friend is swimming. Care, however, must be exercised in plugging the ears, not to ram the cottonwool in too tightly, or, on the other hand, not to place it in too loosely, because in either case the result would be unsatisfactory.

But if, as I say, the plugs of wool are carefully placed in the ears, after having been steeped in a little sweet oil, they will remain in, and keep the water out.

WHICH IS THE BEST PAPER?

John Kinsella is an Aston reader, who asks me to tell him which is the best paper, "The Boys' Realm," The Boys' Feinn," The Boys' Feinn," The Boys' Feinn," The Boys' Feinn," The Boys' Feinn, or "The Boys' Feinn, or "The Boys' Feinn in this order because he thinks that "The Boys' Realm" is the most popular paper, The Boys' Feinn next, and "The Boys' Herald" third.

I am very much obliged to John Kinsella for his opinion; but I am afraid that on the score of circulation, at any rate—and that is surely the best test of popularity?—The Boys' Feinn is easily first, "The Realm" is second, and "The Boys' Herald" third.

ANSWERS

One of my friends, whose initials are H. II., asks me to tell him whether it is correct when writing an address to put a comma after the number which indicates the number in the address, 2, Carmelite Street, would it be correct to put the comma after the 2.

It is evident that my young friend has either been having a usercussion on this subject, or has probably been spoken to by a superior for neglecting to put this comma after the figure which indicates the number of the house in the street, and mow he is anxious to get an author itative decision on the question.

Personally my reader is against putting a comma after the number of the house, and he wants me to tell him whether he is right.

I am afraid my decisiom will be against my young friend. It is essential and proper punctuation to place a comma after the number of the house when the number is used in connection with the address. For instance, it is more correct to put 2, Carmelite Street, than 2 Carmelite Street.

DOES HE READ TOO MUCH?

A friend of mine, who sigens himself "Faithful Reader," and who lives at

A friend of mine, who sigms himself "Faithful Roader," and wine lives at Crauncy freath, asks me whether think he is reading too mauch. The list of papers which he reads is as follows: The Boys' Friend, "The Marvel," "The Boys' Herald," "The Union Jack," "The Sun day Companion," "The Pluck Liberary," and "The Girls' Friend."

It seems to me that here my friend has a pretty extensive list off literature of a good all-round sort, because my friend reads not only Lue Boys' Friend," The Boys' Herald," "The Union Jack," "Marvel," and "Pluck" Libraries, and "The Girls' Friend," but also "The Sumday Companion," a very excellent fournal indeed. I am afraid, however, that my young friend is reading too much, because I find that three days of the week he works until eight welcock, on Thursday he gets a half-haoliday, on Friday he works till 9.30 p.m., and on Saturday till eleven. In these circumstances, I think my friend is reading too much, and I would therefore advise him to drop one or two of the journals.

journals.

As my reader can see, this advice is against myself, because all the publications he mentions are published by the Amalgamated Press.

I think my correspondent can keep his "Sunday Companion" for Sunday reading, but perhaps if he w-ere to drop

"The Union Jack" and "Pluck" he might case up the amount of reading he is going in for; but this is a question I must leave him to decide for himself. Certainly I think he ought to knock at least two of the papers off the list.

FEW "DONT'S" FOR RABBIT KEEPERS.

I think there must be a good many readers of The Boys' FRIEND who are rabbit-keepers. If there are not, I can assure all my boys that rabbit-keeping is a very interesting and amusing hobby, which can be carried on at quite a small cost.

One of my old readers when

one of my old readers, whose initials are "L. S.," and who lives at Chipping Norton, sends me a fer "dont's" for rabbit-keepers, which I am sure they will appreciate. As my reader has been a keeper of rabbits for ten years he knows something of the subject, and those few tips which he gives will be found well worth bearing in mind by every reader who keep these very pretty pete:

"Don't breed with your does till they are six months old, or you may expect them to be careless mothers.

"Don't lot a doe bring up more than four young in a litter, as they are then likely to be stronger and to grow quicker.

"Don't breed with your mablite."

nkely to us should have rabbits when their fur is coming off, or the young will always have rough coata.
"Don't overcrowd, especially during the warm weather, or you will have diseases such as scurvy and snuffles among your rabbits.
"Don't give green food wet, but dry and fresh.

among your rabbits.

"Don't give green food wet, but dry and fresh.

"Don't feed your pets more than three times a day—morning, noon, and night.

"Don't give all dry food one meal and all green the next, but give equal quantities of each. Always keep regular hours for feeding.

"Don't part the young till they are at least six weeks old; then take the mother from them, and leave them in the old hutch.

"Don't be in a hurry to breed with the doe agam, but give her time to get her strength back again.

"Don't keep your rabbits in small hutches. Have large and roomy ones, so that they may have plenty of exercise."

YOUR EDITOR (H. E.).

YOUR EDITOR (H. E.).

Daily Mail.

SPECIAL NEW SERIES OF ARTICLES.

AT THE STARTING-POST.

CAN WE HELP YOU IN THE RACE OF LIFE? ¥34343434343404040404040404040404040

T is a great pleasure to find so many young fellows really anxious to do the very best for themselves and not afraid of working to that end.

"League Member."—You are only 17. It is quite clear to me what you should do. Stick where you are, and work hard for the Civil Service. In private employment a clerk's post is insecure, and when lost it is hard to get another. At King's College, I believe, there are classes for Civil Service, but join at once The Boys' Friend Correspondence College. Mind, at once. Strike while the iron is hot. Take at least Course I. Also II. and III. if you have the time. I wish when I was your age I had had such advantages as these classes afford. Write to the Secretary, Civil Service Commission, Burlington Gardens, W., for regulations for Clerkships, 2nd Division. It will be sent free. Writing good.

"Loyal Reader, L. F. G."—If you were younger I should say read pre-

Mercantile Marine Office, having nothing to do with anyone who has not B. T. on his cap, with a crown between. B. T. stands for Board of Trado. The utmost you will be called upon to pay would be five shillings. You should get at least 10s. a month as boy. Four years at sea, and then you can go in for second mato's certificate. I have known lots of fellows with only a Board School education who have got their master's ticket easily. Of course, after a voyage or two you would become an ordinary seaman, with from 30s. to 50s. a month. Your friend who wants to be a pilot should go with you. A pilot must have see experience; that stands to reason.

"B. Rifkin" should write to the

experience; that stands to reason.

"B. Rifkin" should write to the Secretary, Institute of Chartered Accountants, Moorgate Street, E.C. Also to the Secretary, Society of Accountants and Auditors, 4, King's Street, Cheapside, for their regulations. You will have to pass preliminary examination, serve an apprenticeship, and pass professional examinations.

"J. F. P." desired.

examinations.

"J. E. P." desires to become a prison warder. Age must be between 24 and 42. The physique should be that of a policeman or a matured soldier. Your letter shows you could pass the easy examination. Write to the Secretary, Prison Commission, Home Office, and you will learn what chance there is of an appointment. Use foolscap with a margin, and say

all you need in no few words no !

all wall made in an iow world as possible.

"Sidney Clark."—Of c=ourse you are not too old. There are—schools in London, but don't go to one until you are sure it is a bona mide affair. My advice is, go to time nearest garage and ask for information. Most men are ready to answer a civil-spoken young fellow.

"Otto Gurnnett."—It is your duty to cultivate any talent wou have; start work at the evening classes of the nearest art school. Provisionally, you might set before yo-urself the idea of becoming an art temacher at a school of art, and work for the necessary certificates. Mixing with teachers and pupils at a school, you will find your feet, and perhaps hear of a better opening than them of art teacher.

"J. Sullivan" desires to become a

your feet, and perhaps Frear of a better opening than them of art teacher.

"J. Sullivan" desires to become a bandmaster, and ultimatelly a professor of music. Bandmaster and professor of music strikes me as rather widely divergent b ranches of the musical profession. To become a bandmaster you should join a band first. To become a preofessor of music you will have to be proficient in other instruments than a cornet. In either case, you will also have to work hard at the bookwork and pass examinations for diplomas. Trinity College, London, holds examinations and grants diplomas. As a beginning, write to the secretary for prospectus, etc.

"A Derbyshire Readler."—You

though by all means use your sparetime to improve your mind. That is how the labour candidates got where they are now. Though you are not young enough for Civil Service, take Course I. in THE BOYS' FRIEND Correspondence Class. Afterwards Course III. They will teach you a great deal. Become a subscriber to "Harmsworth Solf-Educator" (7d fortnightly). Read all the articles, and see if there is not one or more courses of lessons you would like to take up—say a language or a science. If, for the sake of more money and "someone," you go down the pit, you need not stop there always. You will not need if you study hard.

"R R Waya" should join the

the pit, you need not stop there always. You will not need if you study hard.

"R. B. Wave" should join the nearest art school, and work hard in his spare time. If he can do good work, the master will either be able to tell him what his next step should be, or direct him where to get information. Of course, he would take the first convenient opportunity of telling the master what his ambition is.

The readers of The Boys' Friendare cordially invited to send and ask any questions similar to those answered above. The letter should be addressed:

be addressed: "Starting Post,"

THE BOYS' FRIEND Office, 2, Carmelito House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.

OUR WEEKLY CALENDAR: TUESDAY.

TUESDAY. | WEDNESDAY. | THURSDAY. | FRIDAY. | THE BOYS' FRIEND. | THE MARYEL LIBRARY. | THE BOYS' HERALD. | THE LIBRARY.

SATURDAY.
THE BOYS' REALM,
PLUCK, AND JESTER.

Deleclive-Warder Maxwell Scott's Stirring New Story of the Adventures of the Famous Detective and His Pupils.

The First Chapters Re-written.
CONVICT named Nathan Grimshaw, immured in Greystones Prison, had ed in the abduction of a child, and that fact had just recently come and that taot had list recently come to light, after the lapse of fifteen years. Nelson Lee was engaged by the child's mother (Lady Arkle) to find out where her son was at the present time, and the great detective had entered the prison as a warder so that he might be able to hold converse with Grimshaw, and thus get at the truth of the matter as to where Lady Arkle's son was to be found.

found.

Nelson's Lee's investigations revealed many things. He found that Lady Arkle's son was at school at St. Ninian's, where his pupil Nipper was being educated; that the boy was known as Bob Unwin; that the man who had adopted him years before—Philip Unwin—was imprisoned in Greystones Prison through no fault of his own; that a man named Pringle—since deceased—was the guilty party; that Warder Kemp of Graystones was a wrong 'un; that a convict named Grimshaw had originally kidnapped Lady Arkle's boy; and that the crime had been instigated by Lady Arkle's brother-in-law, whose son was also a echolar at St. Ninian's, and who had stepped into his brother's shoes—there being no known heir.

Nelson Lee, having placed before

Nelson Lee, having placed before the governor of Greystones Prison un-deniable proof of Philip Unwin's in-nocence, went to tell that worthy the

nocence, went to tell that worthy the good news.

The detective hurried off to the infirmary, where Unwin was acting as "hospital orderly." On entering the "association ward" he perceived Unwin in the act of applying a bandage to a patient's head; and as he walked across the ward he was amazed to discover that the patient was Grimshaw.

Noison Lee Misses an Important Clue.

" ALLO You've not been long in coming back to hospital!" he exclaimed. "What's the matter now?"

"Ho was set on by the other convicts, as they came back from the quarry this morning," said Unwin.
"What for!"

What for?"
That's wot I'd like to know,"
when Grimshaw. "You'd better growled Grimshaw.

ask Warder Kemp!"

"He seems to think that Kemp was responsible, in some way, for the attack," said Unwin, with a smile. "Of course, that's absurd! Kemp found some tobacco which the convicte had hidden in a sand-heap, and, so far as I can gather, the other convicts thought it was Grimshaw who had ancaked. That's why they attacked him."

"And Kemp never blew his whistle fill they'd knocked me over the edge of the quarry," said Grimshaw, with a vindictive gleam in his cyes. "And when he found as I wasn't dead he looked as pleased as if somebody 'ad hit 'im in the mouth! Oh, yus! I can see as far through a brick wall as most folks, and all I've got to say is that if Kemp didn't egg on the lags to attack me, he was mighty sorry as they didn't do for me. I saw 'is face when he found as I was alive, and faces sometimes speak louder than The detective started as a new

Unwin, when he had finished his bandaging.

"Yee," said Nelson Lee. "I want a word with you in private. I've some good news for you."

"I think I know what your good news is," said Unwin, as he followed the detective to the other end of the ward. "In fact, I've know it for over a fortnight. The Home Secretary has decided to release me, on ticket-of-leave, at the end of the present month."

The detective smiled.

month."
The detective smiled.
"You will be released before the end of the month," he said; "probably before the end of next week."
"How's that?" sakd Unwin, in sur-

bably before the end of next week."

"How's that?" askd Unwin, in surprise.

"But you're not going to be released on ticket-of-leave," said Nelson Lee, ignoring the question. "You're going to be set free unconditionally."

"Why?" gasped Unwin, turning pale with excitement. "Has anything come to light—"

"Your innocence has been proved," said Nelson Lee; and he forthwith related the whole story of his visit to the Mariners' Rest, his discovery of the papers, the loss of the cash-box, and its subsequent recovery by Bob.

"The governor will send the papers up to London to-night," he concluded. "Unfortunately, to-morrow is Sunday, so I don't suppose the Home Secretary will see them until Monday. But on Tuesday, or Wednesday at the latest, the order will come for your release, and you will leave the prison a free man, without a stain on your name!"

Unwin broke down, and wept like a

child.
"How can I ever thank you for done for me, Mr.

"How can I ever thank you for what you have done for me, Mr. Lee?" he said; for the detective had revealed his identity to him.

"Don't thank me," said Nelson Lee, who, now that he had told his good news, was anxious to go back to Grimshaw and try an experiment on which he had decided. "The person you've got to thank is your own son!" Unwin smiled through his tears, and a tender expression crossed his face. "Heaven bless the lad!" he said eoffly. "It was a lucky day for me when I adopted him!" repeated the detective. "He isn't your own son, then!"

"Adopted num.
tective. "He' isn't your own
then!"
"No," said Unwin. "My wife and
I adopted him when he was a few days
old. And who do you think is his
father? You'd never guess!"
"No, I dare say not," said Nelson
Lee, moving away. "That's the
doctor in the next word, isn't it? I

I saw Sir Edwin this morning," he d; "and what do you think he told

me! They want to get rid of me! I'll—I'li—I'.

He paused. He remembered that Kemp had said that all arrangements had been made for his escape. If he revealed his secret to Nelson Lee all hope of escape would be gone for ever. And Nelson Lee might be wrong, after all. Kemp might not be playing him false. Before he burnt his boats behind him, he had better wait until he had had a chance of speaking to Kemp.

"Yoe," said the detective eagerly. "You were going to say that, now you're convinced your co-called friends are playing fast and loose with you, you'll tell me what I want to know. What did you do with Lady Arkie's boy, and where is he now?"

Grimshaw opened his mouth and shut it again. Then a look of determination crossed his face.

"If comething doesn't 'appen afore next Wednesday," he said, "I'll tell yer everything?"

And then the doctor enflered the ward, and Nelson Lee was compelled to withdraw.

The One-Eved Transp

The One-Eyed Transp.

"ELL, Bob, my isoy, you'll remember this afternoon as long as you live, I should think," said Nipper, when Nelson Lee had taken his departure from Deepwater Cove "You bet I will!" said Bob, whose face was radiant with happaness and triumph. "By Jove, it makes me go cold all over when I think how jolly near I came to missing it sail!" said Dick. "How!"

"Missing it all!" said Dick.

triumph. "By Jove, it makes me go cold alt over when I think how joly near I came to missing it sall!" "Missing it all!" said Dick. "How?"

"I didn't want to come to Deepwater Cove a bit!" said Bob. "In fact, I'd made up my mined to walk over to Hampton Wingrave, and have tea at Plumtree Farm."

"And not a bad idea, either," said Wagstaffe, whose mouth began to water at the remembrance of the luscious honey and hot, buttered cakes, and creamy milk which he and his chums had so oft-en wolfed at Plumtree Farm.

"When you follows suggested coming to the Cove for a swim," continued Bob, "I'd half a m ind to tell you that I wouldn't come w ith you."

"Good job for you you didn't!" said Dick.

"And a good job for your father, too!" said Wagstaffe. "If you hadn't come with us, you wouldn't have found the cash-box, and the proofs of your father's innocence would have remained at the bottom of the sca for ever and ever. Amen!"

"That's true enough," said Nipper. "At the same time, as Wag say, there's a lot to be smal for tea at Plumtree Farm. Wheat do you say. Shall we carry out Bob's idea now? It isn't four o'dock yet, so we'll have heaps of time Eo walk to Hampton Wingrave, have tea at the farm, and walk back to the school before call-over."

"I'm game!" said Wagstaffe.

"Ditto!" said Dick.

"Bame here!" said Bob.

And, without any further ado, the four boys dressed themselves, climbed to the top of the cliff, and started out for Hampton Wingrave, have tea at the farm, and walk back to the school before call-over."

"I'm game!" said Wagstaffe.

"Ditto!" said Dick.

"Bame here!" said Bob.

And, without any further ado, the four boys dressed themselves, climbed to the top of the cliff, and started out for Hampton Wingrave.

As previously mentioned, Deepwater Cove was a favourite resort of bathers; and about two bours after Nipper and his chums had Eaken their departure, the neatly-attired and dapper-looking figure of Monsieur Hachette, the French-masser at St. Ninian's, came sauntering down the road, with a couple of to

A few minutes later another figure

A few minutes later another figure came sauntering down the road—the figure of a ragged and disreputable-looking tramp, whose dirty, unshaven face was rendered still more unatractive by reason of the fact that he had lost one eye.

"Wot-to!" he murmured, halting at the stile, and fixing his solitary optic on the cove below. "This looks a bit of orlight! Gent in the water, clothes on the bank, me up 'ere! Snuffy, you're in luck!"
He clambered over the stile and crept down the narrow, winding path, hiding behind a bush whenever Monsieur Hachette turned his glance towards the shore.

At last he reached the rocky ledge on which the swimmer had left his clothes. To have rifled the Frenchman's pockets there, when at any moment Monsieur Hachetto might have turned round and perceived him, would have been to have courted detection.

The one-eved tramp had a better.

have turned round and perceived him, would have been to have courted detection.

The one-eyed tramp had a better plan than that. Snatching up the Frenchman's coat and waistcoat and trousers, he spun round on his heel, darted up the path, and succeeded in reaching the stile without Monsieur Hachette having seen him.

"That was neatly done, though I see it wot shouldn't!" he murmured, as he scrambled over the stile. "Now, let's see...."

He paused and caught his breath, for at that moment he perceived a party of half a dozen warders coming up the road from the direction of Greystones.

Amongst them were Warder Kemp and Nelson Lee; and they were on their way to Cleveden Station to receive a batch of new convicts from London.

Dropping the Frenchman's clothes into the ditch, the one-eyed tramp sat down on the top of them, and pretended to be busily engaged in mending the string by which his dilapidated boots were laced.

When the warders had passed, he rose to his feet, and was about to rifle the Frenchman's pockets, when a couple of ladies hove in view round a turn in the road, about fifty yards away. They were lady artists, who were staying in Cleveden, and they were coming to sketch at Deepwater Cove.

"Drat 'ami' growled the tramp." There's no peace for an honest bloke in this part of the world! I'd better take the clobber with me, and find some quiet spot farther along the road."

And, with this reflection, he gathered up the Frenchman's clothes, and walked rapidly away in the

the road."

And, with this reflection, be gathered up the Frenchman's clothes, and walked rapidly away in the direction of Greystones and Hampton

and walked rapidly away in the direction of Greystones and Hampton Wingrave.

In the meantime Monsieur Hachette had finished his swim; and almost at the same moment as the warders marched past the stile, at the top of the path, the Frenchman hauled himself out of the water, and discovered, to his dismay, that his coat and waisteest and trousers had mysteriously disappeared.

For the moment he could scarcely credit the evidence of his senses. He gazed around him with a dull, be wildered stare, peered into the sea, glanced behind the neighbouring hushes, and explored the orevices of the rocky ledge. He picked up his shirt and vest and pants, his boots and socks, his Panams hat, and examined each separate article, one by one, as if he expected to find the missing garments concealed inside. Then a wall of despair burst from his lips. At last the appaling fruth dawned on him. Somebody had stolen his suit, and St. Ninian's was nearly three miles away.

Had it been dark there might have been a chance—a feeble chance, it is true—of his reaching the school without being seen. But it was broad daylight, and this was the eighth of July, and the sun did not set till a quarter-past eight.

To remain where he was till ten or eleven o'clock at night—by which time only would it be dark enough for his purpose—was obvously out of the question. To attempt to reach St. Ninian's half-dressed was equally out of the question. What should he do?

A moment's reflection supplied the answer. He would put on such of his chief.



shoulders to his ankles, he started to climb up the path, and had almost reached the top when he was horrified to see a lady's hat above the top of the hedge.

With a gasp of dismay, he hastily concealed himself behind one of the hushes, and no sooner had he done so than the two lady artists previously mentioned, halted at the stile.

Both were maiden ladies, of uncertain age, and each of them carried a folding camp-stool, a paint-box, a sketch-block, and an umbrella. Miss Binkie was the name of the elder; Miss Wimpole of the younger.

"Ah, thank goodness, there's no-body here!" said Miss Binkie, as she gazed down at the cove. "It is such a lovely afternoon that I feared we should find some horrid men or boys bathing here!".

They clambered over the stile, and began to descend the path. Monsieur Hachette held his breath in an agony of suspense, hoping and praying they would pass his hiding-place without discovering him.

In one respect his hope was fulfilled. They did not discover him; but, to his horror, they halted just in front of the bush behind which he was crouching.

"I don't think we shall find a better view than this, my dear," said Miss Binkie. "We ought to be able to make a lovely sketch of the cove from here. Don't you think so?"

"Yos," said Miss Wimpole. "I don't think we can improve on this."

They unfolded their camp-stools and sat down, with their backs to Monsieur Hachette. For nearly half an hour they painted away in comparative silence; then—

Bzz-zz-zz An inquisitive bee circled round Miss Wimpole's head, intent on

BZZ-ZZ-ZZ I An inquisitive bee circled round first Wimpole's head, intent on xamining the artificial flowers in her at. Bzz-zz-zz I

"Shoo! Go away!" cried Miss Wimpole, starting back in alarm, and all but falling off her stool.

Bzz-zz-zz!
With an angry buzz, the startled bee described a wider circle, caught sight of the crouching Frenchman behind the bush, and settled on the tip of Monsieur Hachette's ear.
"What was it, my dear?" inquired Miss Binkie, looking up from her skotch.

ekotch.

"A horrid bee!" said Miss Wimpole, resuming her painting. "I thought I was going to—"

The rest of the sentence was drowned by an anguished howl, and the next instant, to the lady-artists' stupefaction, a weird-looking figure—the figure of a dapper little Frenchman clad in an enormous bath-towel, holding one hand to his ear, and dancing like a cat on hot bricks, leaped up from behind the bush.

"An escaped lunatie! We shall

leaped up from behind the bush.

"An escaped lunatio! We shall both be murdered in cold blood!" screamed Miss Wimpole. And she sprang to her feet, wringing her lands, and filled the air with earsplitting shrieks of "Murder! Police! Help—help!"

Miss Binkie, being more strongminded, snatched up hor umbrella, and brought it down, with a resounding whack, on the Frenchman's thinly-protected shoulders.

"Lunatio, or no kinatio, I'll teach

"Lunatio, or no kinatio, I'll teach aim to frighten two lone and unpro-tected females!" she declared vali-antly. "Take that, you monster, and that, and that!"

that, and that!"
It was in vain that Monsieur
Hachette tried to get in a word of

xplanation. Whack,

Hachette tried to get in a word of explanation.

Whack, prod, whack! Prod, whack, prod!

Mfs Binkio's blood was up, and her umbrella played about the luckless Freuchman like a rapier in the hands of an expert swordsman.

At last, half-crazy with pain and anger, the Frenchman gathered up his skirts, or, rather, his towel, and took to his heels up the winding path in ignominious flight.

As he scrambled over the stile at the top of the path, his eyes fell on the red-tiled roof of a little roadside farm, about three-quarters of a mile away, on the road to Cleveden.

The sight inspired him with new-

of course—the woman screamed. Then, evidently sharing Miss Wimpole's belief that the apparition was an escaped lunatic, she charged Monsieur Hachette off his feet, by the simple expedient of ramming the fluffy end of the mop into the pit of his stomach; and, as the Frenchman rolled over on his back, she flung the contents of the pail of water over him. What would have happened next, if the woman had been left to herself, it is hard to say; but, at that moment Mr. Rigg, alarmed by the house.

"What on earth is the matter?" he

"What on earth is the matter?" he gasped.
"Matter enough!" replied the woman, brandishing her mop in the face of the prostrate Frenchman.
"Hore's an escaped loonatic trying to break into our ouse. I caught 'im in the act, and—— Ah, would yer?" Moneieur Hachette had tried to scramble to his feet but a judicious prod with the mop sent him sprawling on his back again.
"Mistaire Rigg—Mistaire Rigg"

on his back again.

"Mistaire Rigg—Mistaire Rigg!"
he wailed. "Is it zat you do not
know me? I am Monsieur Hachette,
of St. Ninian's!"
The farmer started at the sound
of the Frenchman's voice, and
pushed the woman aside.

puened the woman aside.

"It's old Hachot-face!" he gasped.

"He must be drunk, or off his nut!
Keep back, Sarah, and let me talk

After that, of course, the Frenchman's troubles were at an end. Half a dozen words of explanation sufficed to tell the farmer what had happened; and three-quarters of an hour later as the boys of Mr. Rant's house were trooping down to call over, they were amazed to see their highly-respected teacher of French in a suit of corduroys

teacher of French in a suit of cordurous three sizes too big for him dart upstairs and dive into his study.

Held Upt
HEN Nelaon Lee
returned to the governor's office, after his inter-

office, after his interviews with Unwin and Grimshaw, he found the governor hard at work, writing his report on Philip Unwin's case.

"Woll, how did Unwin take the news that his innocence had been establi-hed?" asked the governor.

"He was simply overwhelmed," said Nelson Lec. "He wept like a child, especially when I told him that it was his own son who had bow containing the proofs. By the way, where are the proofs now?"

"Drying," said the governor," and

"Drying," said behind the butter governor, and he pointed to a heap of papers, interleaved with sheets of blotting-paper. "They'll be dry by the time I've finished this report, and all the documents will go up to London by this evening's post. Where did you find Unwin?"

"In the association ward."

"In the association ward."
"Then you saw Grimshaw, I pre-

Mass, prod!

Mass Binkio's blood was up, and her umbrella played about the luckless Freuchman like a rapier in the hands of an expert swordsman.

At last, half-crazy with pain and anger, the Frenchman gathered up his skirts. or, rather, his towel, and took to his heels up the winding path in ignominious flight.

As he scrambled over the stile at the top of the path, his eyes fell on the red-tiled roof of a little roadside farm, about three-quarters of a mile away, on the road to Cleveden.

The sight inspired him with newborn hope! Mr. Rigg, the tenant of the farm, was one of those who supplied St, Ninian's with milk and butter. Surely he would befriend one of the St Ninian's masters, and lend him a suit of clothes?

Inspired by this hope, Monsieur Hachette scurried along the deserted road, turned in at the farmyard gate, and was about to knock at the door of the house, when it was suddenly opened from the inside, and a woman appeared with a pail of water in one land and a mop in the other.

At the sight of Monsieur Hachette—who was still arrayed in his towel,

OUR WEEKLY CALENDAR:—

Tight head a rather intereating interview with him—an interview with him and end."

"That's good news! Has Grimshaw told you how he taunted me with the fact that he had discovered the where-abouts of Lady Arkle's boy!"

"Well, when I saw Grimshaw in the infirmary, I went up to him and asked him what had happened, to which he replied that I'd better ask Warder Komp."

"You needs'! Cale yellow on the sawe to do you here the boy is?"

"Well, when I saw Grimshaw, I pre-sum'?"

"Well,

blow his whistle till after the convicts had hurled Grimshaw into the quarry, and from one or two other facts which Grimshaw observed, he has got it into his head that Kemp would have been very pleased if he had been killed."

"How absurd!"

"I don't know about that. If Kemp and Sir Edwin are in league, as I suspect, and if Sir Edwin has really discovered the whereabouts of Lady Arkle's boy, they have no further use for Grimshaw. In fact, his continued existence is a positive source of danger to them."

"Humph! I didn't think of that."

"But I did. And after I had told."

source of danger to them."

"Humph! I didn't think of that."

"But I did. And after I had told Unwin of his good fortune, I went back to Grimshaw and had a chat with him. First of all, I asked him if he knew who I was, and he said he had known for some time."

"The dickens!" said the governor. "Who told him!"

"Kemp. You remember that affair in the stone-yard, when Kemp was stunned? You remember he was carried into this room, and you and I, believing he was unconscious, spoke freely of my suspicions and plans? Well, Kemp recovered consciousness while we were talking, and heard nearly every word we said!"

"The dickens!" said the governor again. "Well, what else did Grimshaw say?"

"I told him I had met Sir Edwin, and I told him what Sir Edwin had said. I pointed out to him, as I have just pointed out to him, as I have just pointed out to him, as I have just pointed out to you, that if Sir Edwin had discovered the whereabouts of Lady Arkie's boy, it was extremely probable that he and

come down to Eastbourne om Tuesday

come down to Eastbourne om Tuesday night.

"Which reminds me," he continued, "that I promised Unwin to write to his wife and tell her the good news about those papers. He wants her to come down to Cleveden to meet him when he c-omes out. When shall I tell her to corne?"

"She'd better be here om Tuesday morning," said the governor.

"You think Unwin will be released on Tuesday?"

"Yes," said the governor glancing at his watch. "But if you've a

on Tuesday?"
"Yes," said the governor glancing at his watch. "But if you've a couple of letters to write, you'd better be writing them at once for you haven't too much time. It's ten minutes to five."
"But the post doesn't leave till

minutes to fire."

"But the post doesn't leave till six," objected the detective...

"True," said the governor. "But there's a batch of convicts arriving from London by the train which is due at Cleveden at six fortw-five, and I want you and Kemp to take a squad of warders to meet them, so you'll have to leave here by half-past five."

"In that case," said Nelson Lee, "the sooner I get my letters written the better."

The sooner I get my letters written the better."

He left the governor's coffice, and returned to his lodgings at the foot of the hill. Having written his letters, he posted them in the private box at the prison gate; and at halfpast five, in company with Kemp and four other warders, he start-ed out for Cloveden.

It should here be explained that the nearest post-office was at Cleveden, four miles away. Every afternoon, at half-past four, a "rural postman" started out from Cleveden on an eight or nine miles round. From Cleveden he walked to Hill-

The road from Grevatones to Cleve-The road from Greystones to Cleveden, as proviously mentioned, skirted the edge of the cliffs and ran past Deepwater Cove. It was a lonely road at the best of times, and on this occasion the postman did not meet a single soul until he had covered half the distance between the prison and Deepwater Cove.

He then perceived a disreputable-looking individual squatting under one of the trees by the side of the road with a small heap of clothes at his elbow.

road with a sman nonhis elbow.
It was our old acquaintance, the
one-eyed tramp.
He serambled to his feet and
sauntered into the middle of the

It was our old acquaintance, the one-eyed tramp.

He serambled to his feet and sauntered into the middle of the road.

"Say, cully, wet time is it?" he asked, planting himself in front of the postman.

The latter eyed him nervously, not to say suspiciously.

"About quarter-past six," he said.

"About!" said the tramp scornfully. "That ain't near enough for me. I want Grinidge time, I do! Ain't yer got a ticker!"

"Er—no!" faltered the youthful postman, trying to push past him.

"Now, wot's the good o' tellin't tartydiddles?" said the one-eyed tramp, barring the way. "As if I couldn't see yor watchchain. Come now! Out with yer turnip, and tell us the k'rect time."

The postman began to fumble for his watch. At the same instant the tramp whipped out a briar-pipe, which he had found in Monsieur Hachette's pocket, and grasping it by the bowl, as if it were a revolver, he thrust the black vulcanite mouthpicce into the postman's face.

"'Ands up!" he hissed. "'Ands up, or by 'okey I'll put a bullet through yer 'ead!"

Never for a moment did the postman doubt that a londed revolver was levelled at his head. His face turned green with fear, his knees knecked togother, and his teeth chattered like castanets.

"'Ands up!" said the tramp, and the postman held up two trembling lands.

"Right about face, march!" commanded the tramp, pointing to the

lands.

"Right about face, march!" commanded the tramp, pointing to the tree already mentioned.

Shivering with fear, the postman staggered to the foot of the tree." Stand with yer face to the tree," said the tramp; "I'm goin' to tie yer up! And remember, if yer utter a sound, there'll be a bullet in yer brain afore yer know wot's 'urtin' yer!"

The postman turned round, with his

The postman turned round, with his face to the tree; and in little more time than it takes to tell, the tramp relieved him of his bag, out off the strap with his knife, and bound his victim to the tree-trunk.

His next proceeding was to open the bag and turn it upside down, when out fluttered a goodly pile of lotters from Hillfoot, Hampton Wingrave, and Greystones.

The big official-looking envelope, containing the proofs of Phitip Unwin's innocence, was the first thing that attracted his attention; and in eager, avaricious haste he tore the envelope open and turned out its contents.

and in eager, avaricious haste he tore
the envelope open and turned out its
contents.

"Pah! Only papers!" he growled
in diagnat. "I made our there'd he
sumfink worth 'aving in this!"
He dropped the papers to the
ground and proceeded to open the
others letters. His "catch" was not
a great one. Three postal orders,
cach of them for less than a sovereign; two cheques, which he
promptly flung away; and a broken
stylographic pen, were all that rewarded his search.

"Crikey! It's time we 'ad this 'cre
fiskle reform!" he growled. "There's
no money in the country nowadays,
it seems! Fifty letters, and only
two pound five in the lot! 'Owever,
it's better than nothing."

He glanced at the litter at his feet
—torn envelopes, the proofs of Philip
Unwin's innocence, letters from
farmers and official documents from
Groystones.

"I'd botter burn 'em," he mut-

latmers and others, Nelson Lee's letters, and official documents from Greystones.

"I'd botter burn 'em," he muttered, with a vague idea that by so doing he would destroy all traces of his crime.

He scraped the papers together with his foot, until they formed a convenient heap; then he struck a match and set them ablaze. And at that moment the governor of Greystones was saying to Philip Unwin:

"The proofs of your imposence are now on their way to London. You'll be a free man on Tuesday!"

(Another exciting Instalment of



The figure of a dapper little Frenchman, clad in an enermous bath-towel, holding one hand to his ear, and dancing like a cat on het bricks, leapt sup from behing the bush.

"I don't know, but I think I can guess."
"Can it be that he is hoping to escape before next Wednesday?"
"I don't know if he actually hopes to escape, but I think that's what he meant. That is to say, I think he intends to tell Kemp that if he isn't out of prison by next Wednesday, he'll tell me everything."
"Then he'll tell you everything!" said the governor confidently. "I pledge my word that he won't escape by Wednesday, or any other date. You. You're quite right. Your work is nearly at an end!"
"That's what I think," said Nelson Lee. "In fact, I'm so sure I shall know all on Wednesday morning that I'm going to write to Lady Arkle, by this evening's post, and ask her to

Kemp would be only too glad if Grimshaw were dead. 'They have no further use for you now,' I said, in effect. 'They certainly won't trouble now to help you to escape, so you may as well make a clean breast of the whole affair, and tell me where the boy is.'"

"What did Grimshaw say to that?"

"For a moment I thought he was going to tell me everything. In the end, however, he contented himself with saying that if something doesn't happen before next Wednesday, he'll tell me all I wish to know."

"If something doesn't happen before next Wednesday,' repeated the governor. "What did he mean by that?"

"I don't know, but I think I can guess."

"Can it be that he is hoping to escape before next Wednesday."

face that bore no little resemblance to that of a sheep.

On the day of which we write, he arrived at Greystones purectually on the stroke of six, half an hour after Nelson Lee had loft.

Nodding to the sentry on guard outside the gate, he unlocked the post-box and took out a double-handful of letters, including the detective's letters to Lady Arkio and Mrs. Unwin, and a big official-Looking envelope, addressed to the Home Secretary, containing the proofes of Philip Unwin's innocence and the governor's report.

The canvas bag, which was slumg over his shoulder, he locked the beax, nodded to the sentry again, and trudged away in the direction of Ckevedon.

Inow on their way to London. You'll be a free man on Tuesday!"

(Another exc ling instalment of this grand detective story will appear in next week's BOYS' FRIEND—

la.)

OUR WEEKLY CALENDAR: TUESDAY.

TUESDAY. | WEDNESDAY. | THURSDAY. | FRIDAY. | SATURDAY. THE BOYS' FRIEND. | THE MARYEL LIBRARY. | THE BOYS' HERALD. | THE UNION JACK | THE BOYS' REALM. | THE BOYS' REALM. | THE BOYS' REALM. | THE BOYS' REALM. | PLUGK, AND JESTER.



The 1st CHAPTER A Desperate Venture.

HE Yechants were up, and the thermometer was down-down at fifty below freezing wint and over all the land lay the

point—and over all the land lay the bitter darkness of the Arctio night.
That the Yechant Indians should have been on the war-trail at such a season needs explanation. Two hundred miles to the north a whaling ship lay crushed and helpless on the edge of the Polar ice, with two-thirds of her crew in the grip of scurry, the second mate with a smashed thigh, and the remainder frost-bitten and half starving—unless help could be got they were doomed from.

Men.
News of this had filtered southward by means of an outcast Eskimo, who had passed it on to a half-caste tribe in winter quarters, who, in turn, had passed it to the Yechants. Also, the tale ran that three men, more daring rhan, the rest, were pushing south through the darkness to seek aid from the big chief at the Hudson Bay Company's outpost; and that these three

through the darkness to seek aid from the big chief at the Hudson Bay Company's outpost; and that these three had sledges on which were steel axes, knives, and above all, rifles—beautiful rifles which would shoot incredible distances.

The great ambition in life of a young Yechant brave is to possess a gun of his very own, and to this end he will make any sacrifice—for the owner of a gun is of necessity a better man than he who has to be content with the ancestral seal-lance and bow and arrow. Moreover, a Yechant is by nature treacherous and a thief.

Twenty hours after the news had come in, a party of young bucks numbering close on fifty, all fully armed and wrapped to the eyes in the face of a wind that cared like hot iron. Each man on his webbed snowshoes, squat, stunted figures, shuffling and stumbling through the timber belt. Half a kneen of the swiftest and most enduring had been despatched ahead to find and cut the trail.

Precisely at that time, three worn, haggard men, their faces grey-black with oil and filth, were fighting their way inch by inch down the map. The leader, Captain Johnson, was the whaler's skipper. The second was a Finn called Marsen, a cheery, silent man of infinite endurance, but now far gone with frost-bite. The last was a youngster—the ship's boy—Billy Meers by name. He had been

man of infinite endurance, but now far gone with frost-bite. The last was a youngster—the ship's boy—filly Meers by name. He had been chosen for two reasons—his light weight, and his wonderful gift of managing the dog-toams.

They had left the ship soventeen days—soventeen interminable days of bitter struggle against darkness, sold, and privation.

At first over the floo-ice they had managed fairly well. Then had come a terrible blizzard when the hare idea of travel had been impossible, and Marsen endeavouring to save a sledge from disaster, land slipped through rotten ice, and the frost had got him before they could build a fire and throw the ice from his mocassins and leggings.

By sheer stress of circumstance they had been compelled to abandon more than half their outfit, and were residuced to one sledge drawn by eight Husky dogs.

Captain Johnson was leading, whip in hand; now cheering on the team with a shout of encouragement, now plying the whip fiercely across the Finn's back and shoulders as he lay huddled on the after end of the sledge, to prevent him being overcome by drowsiness and falling into a sleep from which there would be no awakening.

Captain Johnson haked for the

"Con't make much further of it | wolf father, ending in a sharp, enap-without camping, Billy. How's the | ping bark.

ngs?"
Meors shook his head doubtfully. Meers shook his head doubtfully.

"Played right out, sir. They're willing enough, but two of 'em have got sore feet, and the short rations are telling on them."

The captain sighed wearily, and suddenly grabbing a handful of snow, rubbed his nose furiously—just in time, for it had begun to deaden.

"How many miles d'ye reckon we've done to-day?"

Billy shook his head, and the Finn groaned with the pain of his open wounds.

Billy shook his head, and the Finn groaned with the pain of his open wounds.

They had been travelling for, as near as they could guess, fifteen bours without a break. On good, hard-packed, open snow they might have done nearly fifty miles in the time. As it was, they had been fighting, struggling, and dragging over the worst of bad going, and nearly all of it had been on a steep upward slope. Over and over again a specially impassable stretch had compelled them to make wearisome circuits, regaining the trail half a mile further away after hours of teil.

"I make it anywheres between twelve and fourteen," said the captain.

toin.

Less than a mile an hour; and there were three-and-twenty lives dependent on their speed.

"Come along, boys," he said at last, "drag her out again. If the chart's anywhere about right, we can't be more'n ten miles to the Mucklaw river, and then there's plain sailing ahead."

He turned on to the trail once more, and

He turned on to the trail once more, and Billy Meers, with a crack of his whip and a "Hi! get up there, Mush!" restarted the worn-out dogs.

The leader, a big, tawny-coated fellow with thick fur and a bushy tail, sprang forward in the traces, snarling at the others to see that they din't malinger;

and, is Billy broke that frozen fast, they were off again—the Finn being prodded and beaten into wakefulness.

Two hours later they camped on the others of a timber bold.

being prodded and beaten into wakefulness.

Two hours later they camped on the edge of a timber belt. The captain busied himself erecting their small explorer's tent, whilst Billy unhitched the tired dogs, and hacked them off their portions of dried fish and soal meat with an axe.

So utterly done up were they that they lay where they fell—he had to bring their food to them. The three men feasted riotously on the last of the occoa, some ship's biscuit, and strips of seal meat thawed over the lamp, then they huddled together under the skins to sleep—the sleep of exhaustion.

THE 2nd CHAPTER Long Odds.

T was Sandy, the team leader, who saved them from being rushed unawares by the Yechants. It was in the darkest hour of all the dark hours which comes before

the finn's back and shoulders as he lay huddled on the after end of the sledge, to prevent him being overcome by drowsiness and falling into a sleep from which there would be no awakening.

Captain Johnson haked for the hundredth time, utterly exhausted.

wolf father, ending in a sharp, anapping bark.

The captain and Billy Meera, dozing uneasily under the sodden skins heard it, and struggled instantly to their. feet. Marken heard it, and because he couldn't rise, crawled to the tent-flap on hands and knees. They knew Sandy, and knew that the wolf-howl meant that something was amiss.

"Moose!" whispered Marsen hoarsely, grinning, in spite of his pain, at the prospect of fresh meat.

The captain nodded, and grabbed his rifle, as Marsen sank back with a barbed arrowhead in his throat.

"Indians, by gum!" roared the captain, as a second arrow-shower came flickering out of the tree-belt.

Billy Meers sprang for his Winchester, kicked open a box of cartridge was a blank, but the heavy bullet of the third drove clean through two men and wounded a t-hird. The range was murderously short.

A dim shadow moved amongst the blacker shadows of the trees. The captain raised his rifle and fired.

sant travel and lack of food, and the cold and the darkness of the Arctic winter had laid hold of them, but they flung themselves down on the snow behind the cover of the sledge, and waited for what they were convinced must be the end.

"Marsen!" acked the captain laconically

must be the end.

"Marsen!" acked the captain laconically.

"Gone, poor chap!" answered Billy, jamming in another cartridge as best he could with frozen fingers and stiffened mittens.

"Good-bye, old man," as id the captain again. "We'll try not to let 'emget us slive. I've heard—" He broke off short. "My moor men! They'll be waiting for Lis-waiting till—till the supplies give out.

The Yeebanks were gathering in two parties—one on either side of the doomed camp. They were preparing to fight as their ancestors shad fought before them for untold generations. The surprise having failed, a volley of arrows, another from the second party, and then a combined rush.

Billy watched his men closing in then he raised his Wanchester, rested the barrel on the near sledge runner, and fired. He had never fired at a man target before. The experience was new, and he mistrusteed himself. One of the leaders—a b road-shouldered fellow with a spear, spun round and dropped, writhing.

Flick, flick, flick came the arrows. pattering on the canvas cowerings and

Standing astride the captain, Billy reopened fire just as

It was Captain Johnson. Badly wounded though he was, he had managed to reload his magazine, but had no longer strength to shoulder the heavy weapon. Billy stooped and grabbed it, dropping his own. Then, standing astride the captain, he reopened fire just as the rush came; but this time the Yoehants had lost heart, and did not press the attack with anything like their former fierceness. Billy was growing sick and dizzy, but he managed to keep his feet, and they dwindled away on either side, and botted for cover, leaving three more men dead.

The strain over for the moment, Billy Moors collapsed heavily on to the sledge, still clutching the rifle.

"How goes it, Billy" asked the captain huskily, and fainted before he could get an answer.

THE 3rd CHAPTER,

A Dach for Safety.
ILLY MEERS kicked with his mocassined feet against the sharp corners of the sledge to keep himself awake. In his mocassined feet against spite of his efforts, however, his eyelids drooped heavily, and the sud-den silence and the cold were numbing him into insensibility. He was unuttorably tired. A faint whine brought him to with a jerk, clutching his rifle nervously. I wenty paces away on the snow he could direly make out a cowering form. It was Sandy, the team leader, coming cautiously back to camp with his fellows behind him, bristling with fear and sniffing at the blood-tainted air with inquiring noses.

Billy sat upright and called to him softly. Sandy raised his head, and advanced gingerly, one foot placed exactly before the other, leaving a single trail—the trail of the wolf in time of danger.

Again Billy called him and coaxed

Again Billy called him and coaxed him, and Sandy with his six followers came in obediently, recognising his

sind, and sandy with his six followers came in obediently, recognising his voice.

Slowly and painfully Billy rose and harnessed them in the traces. Sandy in front, as leader by right, and so on down to Spitz, a big, white dog with heavy shoulders, whom he put in the dead one's place as wheeler.

With an effort of which he would not have believed himself capable, he half dragged, half tifted the captain's senseless form on to the sledge, recklessly throwing away their scanty remaining equipment, and strapping the rugs in their places.

The tent he left standing. It was neck or nothing, and every ounce of weight would voll.

A final adjustment of the straps and buckles, then, revolver in one nand and the big, heavy-thouged whip in the other, he swayed his weight then to the left, and broke it free from the grip of the frost. The dogs, understanding, strained at the traces, and the light sledge slid forward on to smoother ground and gathered pace, Billy showing from behind. He gave one glance round him, then the big whip cracked like a pistol-shot. "Mush!" he yelled, as the dogs leapt forward, and he flung himself on the after chd of the framework.

There came an answering yell from

the dogs leapt forward, and he flung himself on the after chd of the framework.

There came an answering yell from the woods, and stunt, squat figures darted out to intercept him. Two he dropped with the revolver, and one more, who rushed him at close quarters, he blinded with a slash of the whip over the face and eyes.

Flick, flick, flick whizzed the arrows, but the pace was too hot, and the dogs, terror-stricken, and going for every ounce left in them, raced headlong down a steep incline behind the tree belt, the sledge swaying wildly from side to side. Through a break in the trees he caught a momentary glimpse of a long, white streak far below, and breathed a prayer of thanksgiving as he clung on with both hands, for the streak was the smooth frozen ice of the Mucklaw, and the road to help and safety.

Twenty-five miles down from the point he struck it at lay the outpost of the Hudson Bay Trading Company, and he covered the distance in under four hours, for the ire was clean and smooth as glass.

It was the howling of the dogs that An answering shrick told that the bullet had gone home, and that the bullet had gone home, and that the world was rid of one Yechant marauder for good.

He was not a good shot—few sailor, men are—but for once, at any rate, he had hit what he aimed at. The crack of the rifle caused a series of subterranean explosions in the open space before the tent, as the startled Husky dogs sprang out of their anowbeds, and stood facing outward, growling and bristling.

Another volley of arrows stretched one of them on the ground, and the rest took to their heels in mad, terror stricken flight.

Captain Johnson and Billy Mccrs were left alone with a dead comrade to face a couple of score Yechant bucks intent on plunder and murder. They were left alone with a dead comrade to face a couple of score Yechant bucks intent on plunder and murder. They could see them now, dwarfed and stunted, stealing over the snow from their shelters, tough, viry little nen with slanting cycs and high, cheek-bones. Each armed with spear, club, or bow, and evidently intent on a rush.

"Down with you, Billy!" said the captain. "Down with you, behind the sledge, and take em as they come. If thoy get into us, give 'em the butt!"

They were both weak from incesting the first instant bill weight behind the sledge, and take 'em as they come. If thoy get into us, give 'em the butt!"

They were both weak from incesting the first instant bill weights belind the sledge, and take 'em as they come. If thoy get into us, give 'em the butt!"

They were both weak from incesting the first instant billy feb a plucking at his furred legggings, and a rich was thrust upwards into his hand.

Stantist the stanting core and high the sledge, and take 'em as they come. If thoy get into us, give 'em the butt!"

They were both weak from incesting the captain. "Down with you, behind the sledge, and take 'em as they come. If thoy get into us, give 'em the butt!"

They were both weak from incesting the captain. "Down with you, behind the sledge, and take 'em as they come. If they

OUT ON THURSDAY—The Mammoth Easter and Spring Fiction Double Number of "The Union Jack," containing Two Grand, Long Complete Novels. 2d.



AN ENTRANCING LONG, COMPLETE STORY OF AN EASTER AT SCHOOL.

By Charles Hamilton.

Dick Brooke never looked forward to the school vacations with the same pleasant anticipations as the other looya. There was no going home, no kind, welcoming face for him. His holidays were spent at the school, and, much as he loved Chilcote, he found it deadly dull while his school-fellows were away.

Now, as he stood watching the pigeons in the quad, he heartily wished that the holidays were over, and thought disconsolately of the fortnight yet to run. He little dreamed at that moment of the strange ovents that were to happen at Chilcote before the new term commenced.

A forcible slap on the back, which-sent him at a run down the stops, interrupted his meditations.

If Arrah!! exclaimed a merry voice. "Ye look as if ye had the hump, Dick, my boy!"

Dick gasped, but he grinned as he looked at his chum. The veriest misanthrope could not have remained dopressed in the presence of the merry Irish lad; and Dick was very far from a misanthrope, being a hearty, wholesome British boy, with no nonsense about him.

"It's a bit rotten without the follows," he said, "but I'm glad to see your old mug about the place. Paddy. You've nearly dislocated my spinal column."

"You were looking down in the mouth, and I thought I'd liven you up a bit," grinned Pat. "Cheer-loo! I'll race you to the gates."

"Right-ho!"

And away they went helter-skelter. The gates stood open, and Dick, reaching them first, went through the gateway with a rush. The next moment there was a collision and a yell. A man who was just turning in from the road met Dick coming full tilt, and had no time to get out of his way. The impact flung him back into the hedge on the other wide, and Dick staggered back, but Pat caught him by the collar and saved him from falling.

"Oh, my Aunt Matilda!" gasped Dick. "I'u awfully sorry, sir. I didn't see you."

The man scrambled from the hedge with a scowl. He looked breathless and considerably ruffled. He was not a prepossessing individual. He was a tail, spare man, with a thin

a little anxiously—"they nin't all away, are they?"

"All except the German master, Herr Bebel."

The other gave a chuckle.

"That's the individuoal I want to see, young gentleman. Where is he?"

"Go up to that does and

he."
"Go up to that door and ring,"
said Dick, pointing, "if you really
want to see him. But unless you
really have business with him, I'd
advise you to let him alone. He
isn't a pleusant man to disturk."
"I reckon he won't mind an old
friend like me," said the other, with
a peculiar grin. "But, if you'll excuse me, young went, will you tell me

a peculiar gein. "But, if you'll excuse me, young gent, will you tell me your name? I seem to know your face."

"My name's Dick Brocke, but I've never seen you before."

The man gave a great start.

"Dick Brocke! Look 'ere, was your father a master at this 'ore school once?"

"Yes," said Dick wonderingly.
"He was master of the Fifth, but that was years ago. What do you know about him?"

"Oh, nothin'," said the man—"nothin' to interest you!"

And he turned away, and walked towards the door Dick had indicated. The chums watched him till he was admitted and the door closed behind him.

Encounter.

AT GERALD looked at Dick with a rather comiant

"I say, I should like to know what

ICK BROOKE stood at the door, looking out into the quadrangle at Chilotote. It was a bright, sunny April day, and the birds were twittering in the old olms, but Dick Brooke's face wore a shade of gloom.

The school had broken up for the Easter holidays, and the boys were dispersed to the four corners of the kingdom. The class-rooms were empty, the old quad silent and deserted. No merry shout rung from the playing-fields. Of the multitude of boys who thronged Chilecte during term time, only two were left behind—Dick Brooke and his chum, Pat Gerald.

Even the doctor was gone, with his family; and of the masters, only Herr Bebel, the Gorman master, remained. And, lonely as Chilecte was, Dick would have greatly preferred Herr Bebel's room to his company

Diok Brooke never looked forward to the school vacations with the same pleasant anticipations as the other boys. There was no going home, no kind, welcoming face for him. His holidays were spent at the school, and, munch as he loved Chilecte, he found it deadly dull while his school-follows were away.

Now, as he stood watching the interest of the company was a her stood watching the company and the proper in the outed he heartily. The form and the proper in the outed he heartily in the outed he heartily

did he never once write to the son he had left behind in England?

It never occurred to Dick's mind that there might be any motive for his father's conduct that would not bear the light. There was little suspicion in his nature, and his trust in his father was complete. But he was puzzled and distressed, though he said little of it.

"It's jolly mysterious," commented Pat. "Still, I suppose he has his motives, whatever they may be. Come along, Dick, let's have a run through the Priory Wood, and then we can explore the ruins."

"They're out of bounds."

"In term time. Ordinary rules don't apply to kids who are loft behind during the vac. If you doubt me, you grinning gossoon, as k the Head when he comes back, Now, come along."

And Dick, nothing loth, starfled off with his chum, and in a few mainutes they were in the shades of the Priory Wood.

In ancient times Chilcote Priory, as it's name indicated, had been a

Wood.

In ancient times Chilcote Priory, as its name indicated, had been a religious establishment, and a great part of the old priory was still standing, and the more habitable portion was in use. Some of it was in ruins, and some so shaky that the doctor had placed it out of bounds, for the boys own sakes. There were stories told among the Chilcote boys of hidden passages and sceret chambers which roused keen curiosity, and made the more adventurous lacils long for an opportunity of exploring the forbidden precincts. But the decetor's word was law.

A gate gave access to the runins on

word was law.

A gate gave access to the runins on the side of the school, but it was always kept locked. They could be reached from the opposite side by the path through the Priory Wood. The chums were soon following them path, having little fear of being "spotted" in their little adventure, for the German master showed nost the slightest interest in their doings at any time. He was supposed, by the absent doctor, to exercise some supervision over them, but, as a master of fact, he ignored them altogachier.

As they passed through the wood, Dick several times glauced cumiously among the trees, and at lamst he stopped.

"Look here, Pat," he excl-simed, "there's somebody following manning the stopped of the stopped of

"Look here, Pat," he excl=aimed,
"there's somebody following us
through the wood. I haven't been
able to see him, but I've heard him
several times."

"I thought I heard something,"
agreed Pat. "Perhaps it was some
animal."

Dick shook his head. He was convinced that someone was following
them, and skulking through the trees
instead of coming by the path. As
he stood listening, there came a

rustle near at hand, and Dick sprang suddenly through a cluster of brambles, determined to know what it meant.

"Hallo! Who are you?"

A man was springing away to elude him, but seeing that he was caught he stopped, and reluctantly turned to face the boy. He was a dapper little man, dressed in cycling clothes, which did not become him very well. He looked at Dick in some confusion.

"Hallo!" he said. "You startled me."

"Hallo!" he said. "You startled me."
"What are you following us for?"
"Yos. Don't you understand plain Euglish?" snapped Dick.
"Who are you, and what's your little game? Don't you know you're trespassing here?"
"What about yourself?"
"That's different. I belong to Chilcote. Look here, my opinion is that you're up to no good, and the sconer you get out the better!" said Dick bluntly.

The man looked at him in a doubtful sort of way, the ghost of a grin lurking about the corners of his mouth.
"Very well my lord" he said

The man looked at him in a doubtful sort of way, the ghost of a grin lurking about the corners of his mouth.

"Very well, my lord," he said, with exaggerated humility. "But I am looking for a friend of mine, and perhaps you'll tell me if you've seen him—a tallish sort of fellow, with a brown moustache. Have you seen him?"

"No, I haven't," replied Dick shortly.

The man hesitated a few moments: then, with a short nod, turned and walked away towards the road.

Dick and Pat continued their way. There was a high fence to be crossed before the ruins could be entered, but that did not delay the 'boys long. In a few minutes more they were standing amongst the masses of crumbling masonry which were they destination.

"I say, look out!" said, Pat. "The dector's right in calling this place dangerous. That old wall, for instance, will come down if you breathe on it. Ah, here's the steps, and they look about the rottenest part of the whole shoot! But we are bound to look into the vault, if only to brag to the other chaps when they come back."

"All right," grinned Dick.

"Halle! What's that?"

It was a sound from the gloupy opening that yawned at the bottom of the crazy steps. There was someone in the vault!

For a moment the chums looked at each other in amazement. Then Dick made a gesture of comprehension, mingled with annoyance.

"It's that chap again! He must have doubled back after we left him in the wood, and dodged in first, somehow."

"Well, we'll soon have him out."

They ran down the steps rather

"Well, we'll soon have him out." "Well, we'll soon have him out."
They ran down the steps rather recklessly. The fallen masonry had left the vault partly uncovered, and a sort of twilight reigned there. Dimly enough the boys made out a figure, but it was not the figure of the man they had seen in the wood. "Show yourself!" exclaimed Dick. "What are you doing here, who ever you are?"

There was a strange cry from the

gloom.
"Dick!"

"Dick!"
Something in the voice thrilled Dick to the very core of his heart.
"Who are you?" he asked unsteadily.
A tail, stalwart form came swiftly forward. Two hands were placed on the boy's shoulders, and a haggard face looked into his own.
"Dick! My boy!"
And Dick understood, and, with a great gulp in his throat, he cried out the one word:
"Father!"

Herr Bebel's Unwelcome Visitor.

ERR BEBEL, the German master at Chilcote, sat in his study. The window of the room commanded a view of the quadrangle, and as he sat there and quadrangle, and as he sat there and smoked a big pipe, the German saw the chums of Chilcote start their race to the gates. He scowled as his glance fell on Dick Brooke. He seldom saw Dick without scowling. The German master seemed to have an instinctive dislike for the lad who was liked by exercise at Chil. was liked by everyone else at Chil-

"Ah, that boy!" he muttered.
"He becomes more like his father
every day. Ach! perhaps some day
I will drive him forth as I drove his father!"
And Herr Bebel's little piggy eyes
glittered at the thought. A few



minutes later his teeth shut hard on the stem of his pipe. His eyes were fixed upon the figure crossing the quadrangle towards the house. The moisture started out on his forehead. "Kelly! How dare the fool come here? What does he want?"

The German rose hastily. For some moments he stood in uneasy doubt; then, appearing to take a resolution, he quitted the room, and harried down to the door, which he opened before the visitor could ring. The man with the scarred cheek stared at him, and grinned. "Hallo, old partner!" he said cheerfully "Are you glad to see me? But of course you are. You wouldn't dream of going back on an old friend. That wouldn't be like Fritz Bleibach."

old friend.

Fritz Bleibach."

"Silence, you fool!" hissed the German, his face contracting. "Come

German, his face contracting. "Come in."

The visitor, with the evil grin still on his face, followed the German to his study. The master closed the door, and then faced the man, his features dark with anger. Kelly—as the Herr had called him—sat down in the German's confortable casychair. He met Bebel's angry look with a stare of cool impudence.

"What do you want here?" hissed the German. "You must know that it is risky to come? What will people say to such a visitor?"

"You were glad enough to see me once," said the visitor. "When you had work you wanted me to do, I was as welcome as the flowers in May, want I, Bleihach?"

"It you use that name again I

Wash't I, Bleimach?"

"If you use that name again I will strike you down."

"All right. Don't get ratty!" Tho man's manner was a little more subdued; in spite of his impudence, he seemed to have some fear of the burly German. "You can bo Bebel, or Babble, or anything else you like, so long as you make yourself useful. I was useful to you onee."

"You had half the thousand posteds."

ormds."
I don't deny it, but I ran all the isk. However, that's an old story. It was brought into my mind freshinst now because I met his son at the rate. I didn't know his boy was at the control of th

Chilcote."
"Whose boy?" snarled the Ger-"You know whom I mean, Julian

"You know whom I mean. Julian Brooke's."

"The doctor was fool enough to take charge of the boy when Brooke fled. Ho porsists in believing in Brooke's innocence. They were friends at college."

"And the boy—does he know the truth?"

"Not a word. He was too young at the time to know, and he has never

been told."
The other looked at Herr Bebel in

The other looked at Herr Bebel in strprise.

"You astonish me. Knowing your mature as I do, I wonder you have mover enlightened him; or, at least, let it out among the other boys."

The German smiled grimly.

"I should have done so; but Dr. Mannering is no fool; he would have discovered that it was my work, and I should have had—"

"The order of the boot, eh? I quite understand. And it wouldn't sait you to leave Chilcote. It is such a snug retreat for a man for whom the Berlin police have been looking these ten years."

"How do you know that, you spying hound? How do you know my name?"

Kelly grinned.

ing hound? How do you know my name?"

Kelly grinned.

"I did not know it ut the time of our former little transaction," he replied. "But since then I have had information; one lives and learns, you know. For one thing. I wondered why a man of your abilities—in a certain direction—should be willing to settle down for years in a quiet hole like this. I knew you must have some very powerful motive. I asked questions, and put two and two together. I know you now like a book. If you went back to the Fatherland you would spend the rest of your natural life within stone walls. You naturally prefer Chilcote. It is not quite so retired, but much more select—"

"Hold your tongue! And this discovery you have made, what use do you intend to put it to?" The German's eyes were gleaming dangerously. "What do you want here?"

"Accommodation" gripped Kelly."

gerously. here?"

"Accommodation," grinned Kelly.
"Don't be afraid, I'm not after your money; though when I leave you I shall expect a few pounds to start me on my way. But, for the present I simply want bed and board. To be plain, I've got to lie low for a few weeks, and what quieter spot could I find than Chilcote? I knew you generally remained at the school

during the holidays, so I had no doubt I should find you here. How much more is there of the Easter holidays?"

holidays?"

"Just a fortnight."

"Then for a fortnight you can consider me your guest. I will clear out before opening day, and I won't ask you to introduce me to the doctor or the other masters." Here the rascal grinned. "You see how reasonable I am. Of course, you can put me up."

am. Of course, you can put me up."

"It is impossible," said Herr Bebel. "If the police are looking for you, how do I know that they may not trace you here? Suppose they should do so, and an arrest were made in the school? I should be ruined; it would be utterly impossible for me to remain. You must see that."

that."
Kelly shrugged his shoulders.
"You must take your chance of that, old hoss."
"I tell you, I will not. That is not all; the police once here, they might be carious about the man who gave shelter to a fugitive from justice; they might ask themselves whether I was quite what I seemed, and then—"

whether I was quite what I seemed, and then—"
"Then it would be rough on you, I admit. But it can't be helped. You've got to put me up, and that's the long and the short of it."
"If you refuse to go—"
"I do refuse, and that's flat."
"Very well," said Herr Bebel; "yon know I am in your hands, but you will be sorry for this."
There was a sharp ring at the bell below. Kelly, with the unquietness of the habitual criminal, started at the sound. The Herr, who wondered whom it could be, opened the door,

of

LEARY

(complete in six instalments), starting in

This picture depicts a thrilling incident in

THE . . .

sarial story

PADDY

THE

BOYS'

REALM NEXT SATURDAY-14.

CASTAWAY: A new short

son alone at that moment. Neither Dick nor his father noticed him go. For some minutes there was silence. But the pleasure of again seeing his father, the father he had thought of so much during the long years of his absence, was soon mingled with wonder and uncasiness. Dick could not fail to see that there was something hidden, something stealthy, in this mysterious return of his father to Chilcote.

Chilcote.

"Dad!" The old fond, childish word came unconsciously from his lips, and it brought the tears into Julian Brooke's eyes. "Dad, why are you here? Why didn't you come up to the school?"

"Then you do not know?"

"Know what?"

"Why I left Chilcote."

His tone struck a chill to Dick's heart.

"I don't understand vou, father, I thought you had an appointment in Africa."

The outcast gave a groan.

The onteast gave a groan.

"Ah, I should not have come! But all these years I have been an exile, and I hungered for a sight of my boy! I could not endure it any longer! I came back to England, but I did not mean you to know, Dick. I waited until the Easter vacation, when I knew the school would be deserted. I intended to watch for you, to see you from a distance, to assure myself that you were well. That would have been enough for me. Then I would have gone; you would never have known." you would never have known.

He broke off with a sob in his throat. Dick listened like one dazed. What did it all mean? What horrible mystery was here?

"Oh, dad!" A sob choted the boy's voice. "I never dreamed of this. But I'm glad you told me, and glad you came hack. But—" He broke off, as a new terror cisailed him. "You are in danger!" "Yes, yes; I had almost fo-gotten it. I thought that after all these years I should be safe. But I was recognised in London, and Fix, of course, guessed that I should make for Chilcote. He has followed me, and in Chilcote Lane I saw him again. That is why I came Ento the ruins to hide. When I heard your step I thought it was the detective." "Then—then he must be the man I met in the wood," faltered Dick. "He asked me if I had seen a man with a brown moustache—he must have meant you."

Juian Brooke shivered.
"Yes; he will track me dowen. He never forgave me for escaping him before."

"He shall not!" cried Dick. "Dad,

before."
"He shall not!" cried Dick. "Dad, "He shall not!" cried Dick. "Dad, you must know all about these ruins, as you lived at Chilcote. You can easily manage it, at least, as long as the Easter holiday lasts. There's unly the Gernan master here, and he takes no notice of what we do. You don't mind my telling Pat Gerald the facts? He has seen you, you know. He is as true as stmel; the best chum a fellow ever had. He refused an invitation for the holidays so as to stay and keep me company."

"Do as you think best, Dick," said Julian Brooke. "With all my misfortunes, I thank Heaven for a noble soll and only if it should built dis

son, and only if it should being disgrace upon you shall I regret my return."

Pat Gerald was waiting for Dick at the top of the steps. It was half

ing how his words made a hidden listener tremble on the other side of the bed-room door. "Perhaps you can help me, Herr Bebel."

"I hope so," said the Herr, with a bow. "Please be a little more orghist"

a bow. "Please be a little more explicit."

"You remember, of course, the affair of Julian Brooke?"

"Certainly."

affair of Julian Brooke?"

"Certainly."

"He escaped me by the skin of his teeth," said the detective, with a gleam in his eyes. "I am not used to being done, and I made up my mind to get even with him." He saw the look of wonder the German could not suppress. "Julian Brooke has returned to England."

Herr Bebel gave a start.

"You have come to Chilcote looking for Julian Brookes?" he said, with a deep sigh of relief.

"Yos. I thought he might have run down here to see his son. That was no doubt his object in coming back."

"Are you quite certain he has come

back."

"Are you quite certain he has come back?"

"I saw him by chance, but I am quite certain of what I say. I should know him anywhere. I have had reason to remember him. Then you have not seen him, sir?"

"Certainly not. If I saw him, I should immediately give information to the police. You may be quite sure of that."

"If he should communicate with the boy, no doubt it would come to

the boy, no doubt it would come to your knowledge?"
"I shall keep my eyes open now

that you have warned me. Where should I be able to send word to you?"

should I be able to send word to you?"

"To the Black Bull in Chilcote. I shall stay in the neighbourhood for some time—until, in fact, I am sure that Julian Brooke is not lingering about the school."

And the detective, after a few more words, took his leave. Herr Bebel was glad to see him go. Kelly opened the bed-room door and came back into the study.

"So it was not me he wanted. I heard all he said. Do you think Brooke has really come back to England?"

"I should hardly think he would be see as he."

neard all he said. Do you think Brooke has really come back to England?"

"I should hardly think he would be so rash. Fix has never forgiven him, and he has Brooke on the brain; it's the wound to his professional vanity that rankles," said the German impatiently. "But he is going to remain spying round Chilcote, so you must see for yourself that it is impossible for you to remain here. He might come upon you at any time."

"I can disguise myself," said Kelly coolly. "My experience on the stage in my early days had often stood me in good stead—notably on an occasion you wot of. You ought to know better than anybody else how I can make up." He grinned maliciously. "You wouldn't like me to tell that story to Detective Fix. You must do your best for me."

"You are determined to remain?"

"I have no choice. I tell you they are hunting for me," said Kelly impatiently.

"Very well. But look here, it will not do for you to remain in the school. There is a secret chambor in the old priory, the existence of which is known only to some of the masters at Chilcote, and they are all away. There you will be secure. I will get bedelothes and other things yon will want there, after dark to night, and a supply of food and tobacco, and a lamp. Will that enter are "

mas beating with the thought of defonding his father against his enemies.

All thought of exploring the ruins was, of course, dropped no-w. The boys crossed the fence and made their way through the wood.

Dick explained to Pat what he had learned, and when he had finished, the true-hearted Irish lad gripped his hand.

"Of course he was innoccnt, Dick, and it will be proved some day," he said simply. "Wo'll keep who secret between us, and I'll help you outwit that detective bounder. What does he want to come poking about Chilcote for? Mr. Brooke can easily lie low for a few days, if we get some of our grub to him."

"I don't want to drag you into it, Pat," said Dick hesitatingly.

"Well, you're going the right way to make me do it. I'm with you, I tell you, through thick and thin, and that settles it, bedad."

An Excursion by Night.

ERR BEBEL roso as the detective entered, and greeted him politely. He was nervous and ill at eas-e, but he did not allow his manner to bertay him.

"I have come to Chilcote in search of somebody," said Fix, little dream.

Fiction Double Number of "The Union"

A PERCHANNA -"THE CASTAWAY." A TALE OF PADDY LEARY.

not without uneasiness himself since not without uneasiness number since the coming of his unwelcome guest. He heard the front door open, and the sound of a voice.

He steepped quickly back into the study, his face blanched white.

"What is it?" whispered Kelly, startled by his look.

wnat is it?" whisp startled by his look. "Fix!" "Fix, the detective?" "Yes."

"Fix, the detective?"
"Yes."
"Already!" Kelly cast a wild glance round. The maidservant was heard ascending the stairs. "What can I do?"
"Ho may not be here for you," muttered the Herr hastily. "He would hardly come alone. Get in here!" He opened the door of his bed-roon. "Keep quiet, and I will do my best for you."
"And for yourself," said Kelly, with a threatening look. "If I go, you go!"
"Get in, and silence!"
The bed-room door closed on Kelly, and the Herr turned away in time to meet the servant and tell her to show the visitor up. He had relighted his pipe, and was his usual cold and composed self when Detective Fix entered the room. the room.

Father and Son.

ATHER!"

Dick repeated the word, in amazement and joy, as he looked into the haggard face before him, in the dim light of the vault.

Pat Gerald, with a quiet sten, passed up the stone stairs again. He knew it was best to leave father and

"Dad! Tell me all. Whatever happens, I am glad I found you."
"You must know now," said his father sadly. "I wished it to be kept from you till you were a man. But now you have seen me here, I can only tell you."
"Tell me, tell me!"
"You will believe that I was innocent? Dick, I seft Chilcote with a stain upon my name."
"Father!"
"There was a forgery; the name of

stain upon my name."

"Father!"

"There was a forgery; the name of one of the governors of the school was forged to a cheque for a thousand pounds. Some exercise paper, with the name of Richard Doyle scribbled on it, as if for practice, was found in my study. The cheque was made payable to me, and a man supposed to be me cashed it. Dick, it was some wreich diaguised to resemble me. You believe me?"

"Need you ask?"

"No, no; I know I need not. But I cannot clear myself, Dick. The world believes me guilty; only Dr. Mannering retains a belief in my innocence."

"God bless him!"

Mannering retains a belief in my innocence."

"God bless him!"

"Ah, that is my prayer, too. When—when it happened, you were in the country, and by the time the doctor had you brought to Chilcote, it was possible to keep it from your knowledge. I fled to escape arrest."

"But the real forger—who is that?"

"I do not know. I sometimes have suspected Herr Bebol, for he always hated me bitterly. Yet I may do him an injustice. I do not know. My poor boy, it is a terrible shadow to bring upon your young life. But you believe that I was innocent."

an hour before the boy came up, with the tears wet on his cheel-s. Yet there was a light in his eyes his chum had not seen there before, his heart was beating with the thought of defending his father against his enemies.

OUT ON THURSDAY—The Mammoth Easter and Spring Fiction Double Jack," containing Two Grand, Long Complete Novels. Number of "The Union and made them into bundles. They were hidden under the beds in the dormitory, and the boys waited impatiently for the hour of the planned

At nine o'clock they went to bed At nine o'clock they went to bed. The housekeeper had usually come to see the lights out, as the German master did not choose to take the trouble. Dick was rather surprised, therefore, to see Herr Bebel come into the room. With a gruff goodnight, the Horr turned out the gas and left the dormitory, and the door what.

and left the dormitory, and the door shut.

"I say, Dick, do you think he smells a mouse?" whispered Pat. "The spalpeen hasn't shown up before to see lights out."

"Yes; I don't know what to make of it," said Dick. "I don't see how he can suspect anything. Anyway, we must go."

The boys waited for half an hour. Then the whole building seemed to be silent. They rose quietly and dressed themselves, putting on soft slippers instead of boots. Dick opened the door. All was dark and still. Taking their bundles, the chums stole down the stairs, and into the room by the window of which chains stole down the stars, and into the room by the window of which they intended to get out. Nothing barred their path; and in a few min-utes more they stood in the open air. Only one of the great range of windows was lighted, and that was Herr Bebel's. The blind was closely drawn

drawn.
The chums, of course, had no intention of making the detour through the wood now. They made direct for the gate which gave the nearest access to the old priory. They ex-pected to have to climb over it; but, to his amazement, Dick found it un-

"What can that mean, Pat?" he whispered. "Has someone—"Pat's hand on his lipe stopped him.

There was a footstep on the other side of the gate, and the boys, with hearts beating wildly, crouched back into the darkness as a man came through the gate.

A Living Tomb.

OELLY looked inquiringly at the German as he camo back after seeing "lights out" in the dormitory.

"Coast clear?" he asked.

"Yes. I have seen the boys safe to bed, and the housekeeper is in her room. Come."

The two men left the study, leaving the light burning, and the German led the way to the gate giving access to the ruins. He unlocked it, and they passed through. The German's eyes were gleaming strangely in the darkness, but his companion saw it not.

man's eyes were gleaming strangely in the darkness, but his companion saw it not.

"Careful now," said Bebel, flashing the light of a dark lantern upon the steps of the vault. "The stair is as rickety as it can be. The boys are not allowed to come here, for fear of breaking their limbs. Careful."

He led the way gingerly enough down the steps, and Kelly followed. They stood in the vault, now black as Egypt. The lantern-light dimly showed the arches of a succession of similar vaults stretching away into ebsenrity.

Kelly shivered.

"Ugh! It is like a tomb!"

The German smiled grimly.

He flashed the lantern upon a wall of solid stone blocks. His right hand went slowly up the wall, feeling. Kelly watched him curiously. Suddenly there was a long, groaning creak, and one of the huge blocks of stone rolled away. A black aperture was revealed.

The German stooped his head, and strode in Kelly followed. They

was revealed.

The German stooped his head, and strode in. Kelly followed. They stood in a chamber with walls of stone, reeking with damp. The air was as fresh as in the vault, showing that there were some hidden means of ventilation. Kelly shivered again. Herr Bebel set down the lantern, and with assumed carelessness moved by

Herr Bebel set down the lantern, and with assumed carelessness moved between him and the door.

"I can't stick here," said the man abruptly. "I didn't expect anything like this. It would give me the horrors. As a last resource, perhaps; but not unless I am forced. Let's get out of it. It's like a grave."

"Heavens! Look there!" cried the Herr, pointing.

Kelly, startled, turned to look in the direction indicated.

The next instant the German sprang upon him, and with a swift shove sent him sprawling on his face on the stone floor.

on the stone floor.

Before he could rise, or realise what had happened, Bebel had sprung back into the vault. There was a click, and the stone had rolled back into its

Kelly scrambled up with an oath. He glared round in search of the

door, but the stone blocks of which the walls were formed all presented the same appearance. Which of them had opened, he could not even guess. At first he was slow to realise the truth, but suddenly it dawned upon him in all its horror. "The villain!" he gasped, white to the lips. "He has shut me in here to die!"

The thought made him frantic.
He hammered on the hard stone with his fists, he yelled and shouted and stamped, and only the insensible stone flung back his cries. He raved like a madman within the narrow confines of the stone prison, till he sank down exhausted on the slimy floor.

He was buried alive!
He knew it, and he knew that there was no hope.
He sat like one in a dream, overcome with the terror of it. His eyes were fixed upon the lantern. When that was burned out, he would be in

Darkness-the darkness of the

tomb!
This stone cell was to be his grave!
Like one fascinated, he watched
the light, which slowly grew dimmer
as the minutes passed. Slowly, yet
perceptibly, as the oil was exhausted.
Strange, mysterious shadows danced
on the walls as the flame flickered
and fell. It seemed to the wretched

possible that he suspected the presence of Julian Brooke in the vaults, and had been there to look for him? Was that why he had come to make sure that they were in bed before quitting the house?

the house?
Dick's face set.
"We must go on," he said briefly.
And Pat nodded assent. Both the chums were intensely anxious to see the hidden man in the vault, and discover if all was well with him. Dick climbed the gate, and Pat passed the bundles to him, and he dropped them down on the other side. Then he gave Pat a hand up, and a minute later they were making for the stone stair. stair.

Not until he had felt his way to Not until he had left his way to the bottom did Dick venture to light the bicycle lamp he had brought with him. When it was burning, he glanced round the vault. Pat joined him, and they passed on to the second one. Then a figure came into

when he sent them away, and there were tears in his eyes as he specke.

The chums hurried back to the school. The light was still tourning in the German master's study, and they saw the shadow of a passing figure on the blind. The coast was clear, and they reached the dormitory without discovery.

But ere be got into bed. Dick

But ere he got into bed Dick Brooke fell upon his knees, and with the tears wet in his eyes, prayed for the safety of his father. And he rose from that prayer, feeling strengthened and comforted.

Run to Earth.

NOTHER day dragged by at Chilcote. It was the first time in Dick's life that he had borne the burden of a real secret, and he felt it keenly. It required an second one. Then a figure came into the civole of light.

Julian Brooke was deadly pale.
"I am glad you did not come sooner," he said. "Did you know that the German has been here?"
"Then it was Herr Bebel?"
"Yes; he passed close to us at the gate. He didn't see us, though," said Dick. "What did he want here?"
"I cannot say. When I heard effort to go through the owdinary business of the day without betraying himself. And it seemed to him that the German master was in an unusual mood, and paying him a good deal more attention than usual. At first he thought it was simply h is own nervous fancy; but after a while there could be no doubt of it. For late in the morning Herr Belbel sent for the chums, and after telling them that they had had too much i dleness effort to go through the ordinary

The moon was glimmering from amidst fleecy clouds, and they could see their way clearly. The huge masses of masonry loomed up ghost-like in the moonlight. Suddenly, as they reached the stone stair leading down into the darkness, Dick stopped and clutched Pat by the arm. His face had gone suddenly white.

"Did you see that?" he scarcely breathed.

"What was it?"

"I'm cortain I saw a figure skulk-

"What was it?"

"Yhat was it?"

"I'm certain I saw a figure skulking yonder, behind that wall."

"My hat! Was it Babble?" muttered Pat, in dismay.

"No; it was a little man. But I may have been deceived by a shadow," Dick added doubtfully, as he ran to the wall, and saw that there was no one in sight. The shadow of a tree fell upon the spot, and it flickered as the branches swayed in the wind. "Yet I'd almost swear that I saw a grouching figure for a that I saw a grouching figure for a second."

Pat was inclined to think it was his fancy; but the matter was too serious for chances to be taken, and the chums hunted through the ruins for ten minutes or more in scarch of a possible intruder. But they found no trace of anyone, and at last they gave it up, Dick almost convinced now that the moving shadow had deceived him.

They passed down the stone stair, and stood in the vault. Dick called out softly. His father's voice replied, and there was a gleam of light. Dick started when he saw his father's face. The imprisonment in the vault was telling terribly on Julian Brooke. His face seemed to be strangely old

and worn.

He was glad to see the chums,

and worn.

He was glad to see the chums, almost painfully relieved to hear their voices after the long and terrible silence.

"I heard you moving about in the ruins before you came down," he said quickly. "Is anything wrong?"

"I thought I saw someone watching us," said Dick. "But I think it was ordy a shadow."

"You are not sure?" Julian Brooke's face was dark and troubled. "I am uneasy about what Fix may do. When you saw him before how was coming to these ruins, you told me, and it looks to me as if he suspects I might be hidden here. Hart!"

There was a sound, unmistakably a footstep, above. The three gazed at each other with blanched faces. Mr. Brooke bent towards the boys.

"I will hide. If it is the detective, try to bluff him. There is the sceret chamber here; he can know nothing of that. You understand?"

The boys nodded; their hearts were beating so hard that they could not speak. Julian Brooke stepped quickly to the well and felt for the noving block. Not the faintest suspicion had he of the secret hidden beyond it. For the thick walls of colid stone had stifled all Kelly's wild cries, and not a sound of them had been audible in the vault. the vault.
The stone rolled back. The chums,

The stone rolled back. The chums, to whom the secret chamber was unknown, stared at the aperture with keen interest. Suddenly, from the dense darkness within, a wild, white-faced figure leaped, and dashed past them with an unearthly shriek.

Mr. Brooke staggered back, and be kers evided out in their terror. The

the boys cried out in their terror. The lantern went with a crash to the ground, and the vault was plunged

stock still in the blackness stood the three, petrified. What was that awful creature that had suddenly burst upon them from the secret

chamber?
There was a rattling of falling stones. The creature, whatever it was, was bounding up the stairs, and another wild shriek rang out as it vanished into the open air. A shout above followed, then a step on the stair, and the gleaning of a lantern into the vault.

Detective Fix, lantern in hand, stood looking down at the three forms revealed in its rays.

Arrested.

arms and calmly met the gaze of the detection ULIAN BROOKE folded his of the detective. He knew that all was lost, but his courage did not fail him. The chums made a mo-tion as if they would spring upon the detective as he advanced into the vault. But Mr. Brooke's glance restrained them.

Fix's expression was triumphant, but a little puzzled.

"You are my prisoner, Julian Brooke," he said. "I stad my suspicions, and I am glad now that I watched the ruins to-night. Will you surrender quietty?"

"Yes," said Julian Brooke. "Let



With a yell like a wild animal Kelly flung himself at Herr Bebel's throat.

man that ghostly hands were stretch ing out to seize him, and he shud-dered and whimpered with miserable

A last flicker, and sudden darkness!

Darkness and silence!
The wretched man made no sound The wretched man made no sound now; in the droad darkness he feared the sound of his own voice. He knew his doom; he was sick with fear at the thought of it, yet he half longed for death to end his terrors. What was left to him now? To pray! But he dared not. A prayer had not passed his lips since childhood, and now, in the hour of his dire anguish, the words would not come. the words would not come.

A Mystory.

O return to the chuins. As the gate swung open, they erouched down against the wall, as far as they could from the gate. The night was dark, and the shadow of a building, too, fell darkly there. The man who came through the gate, locked it after him, and passed on without seeing the crouch

ing forms. Not until the footfalls had died away into silence did the chums venture to move. Then Dick crept closer to Pat.

"You saw him?" he breathed,

"Yes."

"It was Horn Patall!"

"It was Herr Bebel."
"I am sure of it."
The chums were silent with dismay. What had the Herr been doing there at that time of night? Was it

them come, I thought it was you two; but the German spoke on the stair, and that warned me of danger, and I crept away down to the sixth vault. I could not see him from there, and I cannot guess why he

came."
"Was anybody with him, then?"
asked Dick, in amazement. "He
passed us alone." The boy gave a
great start. "Then the other is still
here, and he will see us."
Mr. Brooke pressed his hand to his
heart. The strain of his terrible
aituation was telling upon him
heavily.

heavily. "He can't be here," muttered Pat. "We should have seen him. Be-sides, why should he hang about here in the dark? He must have left the

in the dark? Ho must have left the ruins by another way, through the wood, perhaps."

"Ah, yes, that's it!" exclaimed Dick, in relief. "Now, dad, we've brought you some things to make you comfy. I shall leave the lantern, and Pat has a bottle of oil. And I've brought you some books out of the library; they'll never be missed before we return them. Now to make a cosy corner in this dreary hole. Oh, how I wish you could come up Oh, how I wish you could come up to the school!"

And when the chums had finished, it was really a "cosy corner" they had made in the gloomy retreat of the outcast. Coverings, and food, and light, at least made the lot of the unhappy man more endurable. But, horrible as the loneliness was to him, he would not allow the chums to

remain very long.
"God bless you, my boys," he said,

lately, gave them some German work to do. This was distinctly an in-fringement of their rights, b-ut they raised no objection, and went to their

"What is the bounder up to, Dick?" said Pat. "He wants to keep us busy, and he hasn't let us out of his sight this morning. What's his little game?"

Dick shook his head.
"I cup't imaging. He can 't know

Dick shook his head.

"I can't imagine. He can 't know anything about dad, or he would give him up to the police. And what could he have wanted in the priory last night? The man who was with him must have been the chap we saw come in, who stayed all day; but he's not here now. Why on earth should he leave the school by way of the ruins, and why did they go down

he's not here now. Why on earth should he leave the school by way of the ruins, and why did they go down into the vault?"

"It's a holy mystery, and no mistake. But old Babble is certainly keeping us under his eye, and this beastly Deutch is simply to keep us occupied. Still, I suppose he will relax it a little after lights out, and we agreed not to go to the priory before then."

The day was a long and weary one to the chums. Perhaps it was just as well that they had the le ssons to help pass the time. But night came at last, and again the German appeared himself to see their light out.

When he was gone, Dick cropt out to the head of the stairs, and heard him go into his ctudy and shut the door. Ten minutes later the chums had left the school by the window they had used the previous ni-ght, and were en route for the ruins.

ANOTHER FINE NUMBER NEXT WEEK, containing further Long Instalments of our Grand New Serial Stories. Order Your Copies in Advance.

##<>>>>>> THE CHUMS OF CHILCOTE.

(Continued from the previous page.)

these boys alone. They have done nothing but give me food, and you need bear them no marice now that you have me."

need bear them no mance now that you have me."

The detective nodded.

"Quite so. They are plucked ones, and, to tell the truth, I am sorry my duty compels me to take you. But you baffled me, and this time it is my turn. But in the name of wonder, who was it just rushed by me like a madman? I thought for a minute it was you; he was about your figure, Brooke,"

"I don't know," said Julian Brooke, with a shudder. "I had just opened the secret door, as you see, and he burst out; he must have been imprisoned there. Yes. He must be the man who accompanied Herr Bebel here last night, and who did not return to the school with him! The German must have shut him up in the secret chamber."

"Hum, that will want looking

in the secret chamber."

"Hum, that will want looking into," said the detective. "No wonder he's as mad as a March hare if he has been shut up in that black hole for twenty-four hours. Now, Mr. Brooke, I know you, and I you give me your word not to escape I will spare you the handouffs."

I give you my word," said Brooke quietly.

"I give you my word," said Brooke quietly.

"Inen I shall put up at the school with you for the rest of the night, and borrow some vehicle to take you to the station in the morning," said Fix. "Please come."

Brooke accompanied him without another word. The chums followed in silent, miserable dismay. Dick's heart was full almost to bursting. This was the end, then!

He could not speak. The tears ran silently down his cheeks as he followed his father and the detective to the school. Pat could not say a word no comfort him. What comfort was there for the unhappy lad?

As they crossed the quadrangle, Pat caught sight of a lurking figure under the elms, and started. It was undoubtedly the man who had escaped from the secret chamber. Detective Fix rang the bell, and asked to see Herr Bebel. It was some minutes before the German appeared. He seemed tranquil enough, but his eyes were very restless. He stared at Brooke and the chums as he came into the hall. eyes were very restless. He stared at Brooke and the chums as he came into the hall.

at Brooke and the chums as he came into the hall.

"What does this mean?"

"Look out!" yelled Pat.

The warning came too late.

A wild figure burst in at the open door, into the lighted hall. A man whose clothes were covered with slime, and in whose eyes the light of madness shone! With a yell like a wild animal, he flung himself at the German's throat.

Burly man as he was, Herr Bebel was borne backwards to the floor with a crash.

was borne backwards to the floor with a crash.

"Help, help!" gasped the German, in a stifled voice.

In a moment Julian Brooke and Fix sprang to the rescue.

Kelly was seized and dragged from the prostrate German, who lay dazed the Chums of Chilcote.

THE END.

(Next week THE BOYS' will return to its usual a price—16 large pages—1d.)

and half-senseless. Another thirty seconds and he would have been a

seconds and he would have dead man.

The madman ceased to struggle. As he looked at Fix a gleam of recognition came into his eyes, as if he detective's face recalled his wandering senses. He clutched the detective by the arm and spoke in a hearsombiener.

whisper.

"Don't let him escape! It's Bleibach, the German forger. Do you hear? He shut me up in the stone cell to die."

stone cell to die."

Then, as the horrors of his imprisonment rushed into his poor, disordered brain again, he began to wander and babble disconnectedly. But Fix's eyes were gleaming, and he sprang upon the German as he staggered up. The handcuffs were clinking upon Herr Bebel's wrists as he gained his feet. His face was convulsed with rage.

"You dare not arrest me," he panted. "The word of a madman."

"I have Mr. Brooke's word that you shut him up in the cell," replied Fix cheerfully; "that's enough to arrest you upon, my friend. We'll see later about the rest. But my opinion is, that if you turn out to bo Bleibach, the forger who has been wanted so long, why Mr. Brooke's case will want looking into again, and it may turn out that that was a little bit of your handiwork."

Dick gave a gulp. The detective's moult sawn libra a mlanm of light in

Words came like a gleam of light in intense darkness. Was it possible, then, that what had happened was all for the best, and that his father's name was to be cleared at last?

Cleared at Last.

ETECTIVE FIX'S words proved prophetic. Kelly's recovery was slow, but long before he was fully recovered he had fully confessed the truth. The prison gates were wide open for him, and he was determined that the heart less wretch who had doomed him so pitilessly should not escape. The whole story of the cowardly deed was told; how Bebel had forged the cheque, and placed the paper with Richard Doyle's name scribbled upon it in the study of the master of the Fifth; and how Kelly, accustomed to making up, from his experience on the stage, had disguised himself as Julian Brooke and cashed the cheque. Bebel, or Bleibach, went to his well-deserved punishment. He received no pity, and he deserved none.

From that Easter holiday dated From that Easter holiday dated Dick Brooke's happiest days. For now that Julian Brooke's name was cleared, he could not refuse Dr. Mannering's pressing request to resume his old place at Chiloote, and soon after the commencement of the new term, he was once more master of the Fifth, and in his Form—and, needless to say, much to his satisfaction—were the Chums of Chilcote.

(Next week THE BOYS' FRIEND will return to its usual size and

STIRRING NEW ADVENTURE-DETECTIVE STORY.



Chapters written for New Readers.

WISH we'd waited for them.

"WISH we'd waited for them, sir," said Tinker.

The youngster spoke unconsciously in a whisper.

It was dim twilight. The sun had sank helow the tops of the forest trees. They were standing in a clearing in the Indian reservation of the United States of America. Blake was consulting a pocket-compass. United States of America. Blake was consulting a pocket-compass. Tinker was holding both horses. The air was hot and close. Not so much as a leaf stirred. The silence was deep, vast, overpowering. No wonder the youngster's voice was hushed and low!

"Well, we shall have to make the best of it!" said Blake cheerily.

"Will you try to go back, sir!"

"No good, that," was Blake's answer.

answer,

"And you must go on?"

Blake smiled as he shook his head.

"We must wait here till morning, or till the others come up with us. There is no great hardship in spending a night in the open. Build a fire, and picket the thorses. There is nothing to book scared about, young 'un."

fire, and picket the horses. There is nothing to kook scared about, young 'un.'

The others were the remainder of the party who had set out with Blake to quell an uprising amongst the Crowfeet Indians. The great detective had been approached by the American Ambassador when taking a brief holiday at Brighton, after having concluded his work in connection with the Great British Railway, and had been offered the princely sum of £200 per week and all expenses paid to cross the herring-pond and endeavour to stamp out crime on the vast American continent.

Blake had had many magnificent offers made him, but none quite so princely as this. The prospect of having some thousands of trained, oute, keen, cool detectives under his sole command was thrilling. The very immensity of the task was intoxicating.

He accepted the offer, and, with Tinker, his boy-assistant, he journeyed to the United States to commonce his new duties.

The moment the vessel came to anchor in the bay, a fast tug steamed alongside, and one of the President's secretaries stepped on board.

A special train awaited them, and in a quarter of an hour Blake, Tin-

ker, and the secretary were hurrying shoreward on the tug, under full steam.

A special train awaited them, and without a minute heing wasted, they were speeding across the Continent on a journey that would occupy them two days and nights, bound for the Indian Reservation at Oklahoma.

A rising of the Crow-feet Indians had saddenly occurred—as already related—for no known cause. The country over an area of five hundred square miles was in a state of terror and panic. Some thousands of Indians wore on the warpath. So and panic. Some thousands of Indians word on the warpath. So oritical and so hazardous was the situation, that it was felt that unless something could be done to stop the movement, until an overwhelm-ingly strong military force could be collected to crush it, there would be another of those appalling massacres which have occurred only too frequently in Indian warfare.

This was the mission -entrusted to Blake:

This was the master Bake:

"Stop them, quiet them, allay their excitement as best you can. We must have a week."

So ran his instructions = and surely in a new and strange country

no man in a new and strange country had ever been confronted with a more formidable task.

no man in a new and strange country had ever been confromted with a more formidable task.

Knowing that speed was the crucial factor in the success of his mission, Blake had pushed forward with Tinker on the two freshest horses, hoping to get into touch with the Indian camp before nighatfull, but in his haste he had missed the trail, and lost his bearings. He spoke more choorfully chan he felt, but that was on Tinker's account, for the youngster was completely knocked up by the long day's hard riding.

"But won't a fire indicate our whereabouts?" the boy murmured, in tired protest.

"That's what I want 't for."

"No; to our party."

There was a snap in Blake's tone which silenced further objection, and soon a blazing fire of dry sticks and brushwood was flaming in the centre of the clearing. Blake made Tinker lie down, and in ten mirutes he was fast asleep.

"I will wake you when it is your turn to watch," he said.

Blake, with his revolver in his hand, stood by the fire for sonne time, but presently he said down. The day's exertions had told on him more than he knew. Yet he was brisk, alert, and vigitant. The lighting of the fire

was a danger, but he had decided upon it deliberately. It was more important that his own party should find him quickly than that a band of prowling Indians should be attracted to the spot.

Then he was startled to find himself nodding, and got up and walked about. He strained his ears to catch a sound, and his eyes to penetrate the dense forest growth; but neither eyes nor ears detected anything, and prosently he sat down again.

Two hours passed. He had not closed his eyes nor relaxed his vigilance for a moment.

closed his eyes nor relaxed his vigilance for a moment.

"Paleface, don't move!"
But Blake did move. He was on
his feet in a second. And from the
edge of the clearing there stepped
forth into the light shed by the fire
a ring of braves, each with a musket
to his shoulder—every muzzle levelled
at this breast and covering him.

There was something horribly weird
in their silent-footed approach, their
hard, expressionless faces hideous
with war-paint, and their absolutely
motionless attitudes.

Wew readers may continue from this point.

(New readers may continue from this point.

THE 4th CHAPTER Lightning Glance and Watchdog.

T must have been at least half a minute before anybody spoke, half a minute in which Blake's acute brain had time to review

acute brain had time to review the situation from every aspect. He was aware now that he had been guilty of an imprudence in separating himself from the rest of his party—that he had not merely jeapordised the success of his mission at the very outset, but that he had by his over-confidence actually thrown away his own and Tinker's life to no purpose.

away his own and there is no purpose.

It was impossible to glance round at that grim circle of silent figures, each with his levelled musket prossed to his shoulder, and not realise that his fate was sealed unless his wits could contrive some method of escape.

And then another thought occurred to him—a thought that was even more bitter than the prospect of impending death.

ponding death.

What would people say at home at this brief and inglorious career of his in America?

In America?
In a certain senso the honour of the British Flag was in his keeping. He had come there to uphold the traditions of British pluck and provess, to prove that British brains were some-

(Continued on the next page.)

♣◆郑◇康〈郑◇郑◇郑◇郑◇郑◇郑◇郑◇郑◇郑◇郑◇郑◇郑◇郑◇郑◇ 越交遊 The Art of Metal Working.
By H. S. COOPER.

小个图个图个图个图个图个图个图个图个图个图个图个图个图个图个图个图 This series started in No. 247 of THE BOYS' FRIEND, and back numbers can be obtained by ordering through any newsagent.

A little careful levelling from the front will be all that is required, so far as the background of this fingerplate is concerned, and the worker, having satisfied himself that he can do nothing more to improve his work, may now remove it from the coment if the latter is perfectly cold. If, however, the metal shows a disinclination to leave the cement owing to the undercutting, which to a certain extent forms a grin on the with do nothing more work, may now remove it from the cement if the latter is perfectly cold. If, however, the metal shows a disinclination to leave the cement owing to the undercutting, which to a certain extent forms a grip on the cement, the gas flame must be brought into play, and very carefully moved over

the surface of the metal.

the surface of the metal, heating it gradually, with overy precaution against damaging the metal itself, until the cement underneath has become quite warm and semiliquid, when the plate may be lifted, and the cement allowed to flow back on to the block.

The finger-plate is now to be

with

a fresh rag.

Now take a clean rag and some turpentine, and wash off all trace of oil, and finally polish with a clean soft cloth or leather.

To preserve the polish thus obtained, the plate may now be lacquered. A very suitable preparation may be obtained from any cycle shop in the form of a colourless spirit varnish or lacquer, which is sometimes used to protect the handle-

bars and plated parts of a bicycle. The work must be very even, so that no smears or streaks are visible.

All that is now left to do is to drill or punch the hole to take the screws to fix the plate to the door. If a drill is not available a sharp bradawl may be used. Tap the holes with a hammer at regular intervals—about six holes will be necessary—and then clean off the rough edges of the holes on the other side with a file.

This completes the finger-plate, the cost of which, in zine, has been about twopence, and which, if well and carefully worked, should command a sale at, at least, half-a-crown or more, according to the quality and amount of work that has been put into it.

So far we have treated only of zine, but what has been said of zine applies also to the other metals, brass and copper. Except that he

extreme caution

necessary in using heat to zine is not necessary with these other metals, as they are not liable to burn or melt.
Copper or brass should be bought whenever possible in sheets, or in parts of sheets, and not cut from the roll. It should be ordered "soft rolled"—that is to say, free of temper—and should be in thickness "eight-metal gauge."

If it is not possible to obtain the

metal soft-rolled, the cordinary, or bright, rolled variety will do; but it must be softened befores attempting to work it. This is done by cutting off the necessary-sized piece, and putting it into a bright, clear fire. When thoroughly red-hot all over, it is withdrawn, and placed in the hot ashes to

cool very slowly.

This takes all the temper, or hardness and springiness, out of time metal, and makes it ductile and easy to work into design.

The heating will, however, have discoloured it, and it with need to be secured with the bath-brick and oil, or with a piece of fine emery-paper moistened with oil, and rubbed in a circular direction until the metal is quite clean and moderat ely bright.

If it is at all out of slape, it must be flattened before transferring the design to it. There are many ways of doing this. The expert can do it with a hummer or mallet, striking the metal wherever he deems it necessary. But this is a risky metahod for the novice, who will accomplish his end better in the following manner:

Lay the metal on a perfectly level

that one side of the wood is quite smooth and level, and lay it on the metal; then with a hammer or mallet tap the wood .

shifting it about until the motal gradually becomes flattened out. This is a very simple method, and avoids all danger of hammer-marks on the surface.

avoids all danger of hammer marks on the surface.

As I have before stated, in working brass and copper there is always a likelihood of the background becoming indented, and its regularity of surface spoiled. If the work of raising from the back has been very carofully done, then there may be little or no necessity to touch the background; but the design is generally made more effective when the hackground has been matted over. This matting, besides throwing up the design, also tends to take out, or, at any rate

conceal any irregularity

doing this. The expert can do it with a hammer or mallet, striking the metal wherever he deems it necessary. But this is a risky method for the novice, who will accomplish his end better in the following meanner:

Lay the metal on a perfectly level surface, such as a table-top; take a small square of wood about an inch thick and four or five inches square—the exact size does not matter—see

**Conceal any irregularity of the surface.*

For the purpose the useful tool with partern has been done, and before the plate has been removed from the coment after the finishing from the front.

To be continued in next week's BOYS' FRIEND.

OUT ON THURSDAY—The Mammoth Easter and Spring Fiction Double Number of "The Union Jack," containing Two Grand, Long Complete Novels_ 2d

thing more than a match for Yankee

thing more than a match for Yankee outeness.

How miserably he had failed! How the American newspapers, many of whom had shrieked over the appointment of a Britisher to a position of such vast authority, would scoff and jeer and gloat over his rapid downfall!

What a termination to a life which had been a succession of continuous and almost uninterrupted triumphsto die in the backwoods, and be the laughing-stock of a whole continent!

It was this thought, far more than the apprehension of a cruel death, which nerved him to make a supreme effort to save himself. He must do something which would impress these Indian braves with a sense of his superior power; but how—what? His nimble brain was at full stretch during that fateful half minute. An idea came to him—an idea which startled him, an idea which he decided in a trice to cast the whole hazard of his fortunes.

"My redskin brothers are welcome to my camp-fire," he said, in calm,

in a tree to cast the whole hazard of his fortunes.

"My redskin brothers are welcome to my camp-fire," he said, in calm, unhurried accents. "I was coming to them, and instead they have come to me. It is well. Let us sit down and talk. I have much to tell them."

And so saying, he pocketed his revolver, moved a pace or two nearer to the fire, threw on an extra log to the figures, and thon calmly lay down at full length beside the blaze.

Tinker all this time had not stirred. He seemed to be sunk in a profound shunber, which was more like death than sleep.

than sleep.

Would the redskins accept Blake's

invitation ?

Would the redskins accept Blake's invitation?
Everything depended upon that.
It was a moment of intense suspense. Then the brave who was in command made a sign, and the whole formidable circle moved iorward from the edge of the cleaning and gathered round the fire; but their muskets never left their shoulders, and never ceased to be pointed at Blake's head. The brave squatted down opposite him. Boyond the original challenge, "Paleface, don't move!" he had not opened his mouth.

Now he spoke again, but there was little comfort in his words.

"I am willing to hear what you have to say, but I would tell you that your death was decided upon two days ago by Hawkeye, the great chief of the Crowfeet. If you will talk, I will listen; but presently you must die."

"To whom am I talking?" inquired Blake unconcernedly.

"To Englewing the son of Hawk.

"To whom am I talking?" in-quired Blake unconcernedly.
"To Eaglewing, the son of Hawk-

quired Blake unconcernedly.

"To Eaglewing, the son of Hawkove."

"The future chief of the Crowfeet?"

"Even so, paleface."

"Ah," said Blake, looking at him commiseratingly, "I am sorry—I am sorry! Eaglewing is a fine warrior, I can see it—he is flect of foot, his limbs are strong and supple, his eye is keen, his hand is quick and sure; but he will never, never live to be the great chief of the Crowfeet. I am sorry that so noble a young warrior should be cut down in the prime of his early manhood; but I see no hope for him—no hope."

And Blake's voice broke, and quavered with woe and sorrow.

"So young, so noble, and so soon to die—poor Eaglewing! My heart is stricken with grief for him. I would save him if I could, but——"A forlorn and gloomy shaking of the head concluded Blake's sentence. Now, although it is the pride of the redskin to betray no emotion of any kind under any circumstances whatever, it comes as a distinct shock to have one's death confidently predicted in such definite terms as those; and, try as he might, Eaglewing could not corecal his uneasiness. His clutch on his musiket stiffened, the nerves at the corners of his mouth twitched, and his eyes slightly protruded. It was all over in a moment, and he had recovered his usual composure. But Blake knew he lad made an impression, and was quite satisfied.

"Eaglewing wonders how I know this," he went on. "Shall I tell him?"

"The paleface perhaps expects to fulfil his own prophecy—we know he has a little gun," smiled Eaglewing.

The little gun was, of course, the revolver.

"Nay, look, Eaglewing; the little gun is yours! I clasp my hands

The little gun was, of course, the revolver.

"Nay, look, Eaglewing; the little gun is yours! I clasp my hands behind my head and bid you take it from my pocket. I am amongst friends; so that it is of no further use to me. But you, who have many enemies, had best take it—it may help you. Take it, Eaglewing!"

Eaglewing hesitated, expecting some cunning guile, and then with a quick movement reached forward and plucked the revolver out of Blake's pocket. Blake remained absolutely

motionless. When he had got the revolver, Eaglewing looked rather ashamed of himself for his suspicions.

"My prophecy has nothing to do with myself," continued Blake calmly." Eaglewing's death will be compassed by those who he thinks are his friends."
The young warrior again looked

by those who he thinks are his irrenal.

The young warrior again looked startled, but again quickly recovered himself.

"Does the paleface mean by these to the queried contemptuously, waving his hand towards the grim circle of braves.

"Re no means; but by those who warned

"By no means; but by those who told him of my coming, who warned him where to find me, who lied to him that I was an enemy."

Eaglewing's astonishment was now whell was the statement when the statement was now whell was the statement when the statement was now whell was the statement was now when the statement was now where the statement was now where the statement was now when the statement was now when the

Eaglewing's astonishment was now wholly undisguised.

"I would hear more," he stammered.

"You shall hear all," was the instant response. "You have a letter in the pouch at your belt."

Eaglewing elapped his hand to his pouch, thinking that some corner of the letter must be showing. But there was not a serap of it visible.

His amazement deepened at such uncanny knowledge. He looked positively seared; while the circle of braves uttered a simultaneous grunt of astonishment. They thought that this cool paleface, whom they had been despatched to kill, had the power of seeing right through a double thickness of leather; and if

Eaglewing from the treacherous palefaces who seek to destroy him. My
enemies are his enemies. Presently he
shall take me to his father, the great
chief, Hawkeye, and then we will talk
again. For the present it is enough.
The traitors will destroy themselves."
"But how did the paleface know?"
gasped Eaglewing.
Blake smiled.
"The magic of the palefaces is as
superior to the magic of the redskins
as a repeating rife is to a how and
arrow. That is all I can tell Eaglewing. And now shall we journey on
to the great chief, Hawkeye?"
Blake rose, The young chief remained squatting on his heels. The
circle of muskets was still pointing
unwaveringly in Blake's direction.
Eaglewing was profoundly uncomfortable, for his odders had been to kill

unwaveringly in Blake's direction.

Eaglewing was profoundly uncomfortable, for his orders had been to kill Blake. What should he do? That confident prediction of his early death, combined with Blake's uncanny knowledge of the letter, had shaken him. But orders were orders, and so—what should he do?

Blake lay down again.

"Very well, we will pass the night here, and in the morning we will journey on to Hawkeye. Eaglewing prefers it. Let it be so. To me it is nothing."

And he stretched himself out levily.

nothing."

And he stretched himself out lazily, turned over on his side, and apparently composed himself to sleep,

brother who sleepeth. And after-wards we will journey on to my father,

brother who sleepeth. And afterwards we will journey on to my father, Hawkeye."

"Ah, good, good!" grunted the warriors in instant approval—"the scalp of his brother that sleepe-th."

They were unanimously of the opinion that it would be safer not to kill a man of such strange powers as Blake, but that there could be no danger in slaying Tinker.

"Hawkeye must have a scalp!" they chorussed.

Had Blake won his life at the expense of Tinker's?

For a moment he was aghast at Eaglewing's proposal, and at a loss how to deal with it. And Tinleer remained to all appearance, fast saleep.

But the next moment the latter proved himself very much awake.

"I, too, have a little gun, Eaglewing! Behold! Nay, do not move! And bid your braves not move, for assuredly if they do, my brother's prediction of your early death will be instantly fulfilled. I can sleep and still hear, just as my brother can see a thing even when it is hidden. Hawkeye must be content with some other scalp than mine, unless he would wish to lose his son."

And Tinker's feigning of sleep had been so well done that his studden intervention was distinctly startling. Slowly and gradually he had been working his revolver out of his pocket.

"I was wrong," said Eaglewing humbly.
"Yes, you were very wrong; but unsay those words, and we will let it pass."

pass."
"I will not take your brother's

pass."

"I will not take your brother's scalp."

"Good; then we are indeed friends. Let your braves lower their muskets and sit down, so that we can talk in peace. My brother will put away his little gam. But I will just say this, that nothing could have saved Eaglewing if he had slain my brother."

Eaglewing made a slight gesture, and the braves sat down.

Blake's consummate coolness, backed by Tinker's ready wit, had carried the day. In a moment pipes were lighted and passing from hand to hand. It was the great act of Indian friend-ship. For that night, at least, Blake and Tinker were safe.

"I shall call you Watchdog," said Eaglewing, gravely pointing his pipe first at Blake and then at Tinker.

"They are good names, Eaglewing, and we will accept them."

Tinker was beginning to enjoy himself. Watchdogs certainly seem to hear in their sleep, and his name was both an honourable and appropriate one.

Soon they were all talking freely.

one.
Soon they were all talking freely.
The letter, whose contents Blake had guessed, was handed to him to read.
He showed it to Tinker, and they con-

ferred in whispers.
"But how on earth did you guess it,

This was the question the youngster had been dying to ask for ever so long.

"It was just a bold guess, Tinker, that's all you can say for it, but it was a very reasonable one, after all. We lost the trail, and we ought not to have lost it if we'd been put right at the start. The others could have easily found us if they had wanted to, for our horses were not so much fresher than their's. It is a bad business altogether. My appointment has naturally created a lot of jealousy, but I never thought it would come to this. You see, the fellow actually offers fifty dollars for my scalp."

"Which of them is it, I wonder?"

"I can't tell, because I don't know the writing, but probably they are all implicated."

"You can ask Eaglewing."

"You can ask Eaglewing."

"No; I'd rather not do that. He thinks I know all about it."
Blake became thoughtful.

How could he fight crime and the police as well?

Presently he turned from the consideration of general matters to that of the Indian rising.

The rising had come as a profound surprise to the authorities, for the Indian tribes had given no trouble for years. sir?"
This was the question the youngster

Quite suddenly they had gone on

unte suddenly they had gone on the warpath.
Why?
The thing was inexplicable unless the rising had been fomented from the cutside. It looked like it

His own escort had been in com-munication with Eaglewing and his

band.

Perhaps there were others.

What was their object? How could they benefit?

And at this point Blake's reflections were cut short by Tinker suddenly jumping to his feet and exclaiming:

"Hark!"

The Indians caught the alarm only

an instant later.

"Watchdog is right — someone comes," whispered Eaglewing.

How Black Juan Overstepped the Mark, and Got Himself in Trouble.

Lake and Tinker were standing in the shadow of the forest-trees just beyond the advance of the cleaning. The west

ing in the shadow of the forest-trees just beyond the edge of the clearing. The redskins were grouped in negligent attitudes about the fire. The pipes circulated from mouth to mouth, and a gentle lum of conversation prevailed. It looked as peaceful an encampment as anyone might wish to see.

Into it out of the darkness of the forest there suddenly stepped Black Juan, the Mexican guide, the man who had been commissioned to lead Blake to Hawkeyo.

The United States Indian police are recruited from men of all nations. There are Spaniards, Mexicans, helicastes, Poles, there are a few Russiana, a few Hungarians, a sprinkling of Irishmen, and of native-born Americans. The life is wild and hard. Desperate affrays are frequent. For the most part they are men who have failed at other callings—men who value their own and other lives cheap, who fight recklessly, drink recklessly, die recklessly, and who are only kept in order by the iron discipline which their officers impose upon them.

SALE THE SALE OF T WHI PARTY TO THE P "I shall call you Lightning-Glance, and I shall call you Watchdog," said Eaglewing, gravely pointing his pipe first at Blake and then at Tinker.

must be something more than

so, must be something more than human.

"And I can tell Eaglewing what is in the letter," proceeded Blake, in his calmest manner. "It tells him that I have come as an enemy to Hawkeye, and to the warriors of the Crowfeet nation; it tells him that those who sent it are his friends; it tells him that this morning I shall be directed by a false path so that I may lose myself in the forest; it tells him that those who were with me will give him many dollars for my scalp; it tells him—— But I have told Eaglewing enough to show him that I know all about the letter, although I have never seen it with my eyes."

Blake ceased. He knew his battle

Blake ceased. He knew his battle

was almost won.
"It is all true?" stammered Eagle-

wing.
"Of course it is true. How should treachery win? I have come to save

" Paleface ! "

The young chief started up and spoke eagerly.

Blake took no notice.

"Paleface!" he called again more

"Paleface!" he called again more urgently.

Blake gave vent to a loud snore.
"Paleface! Paleface!"

And now there was a note of real anguish in the calling voice, and Blake condescended to open his eyes.

"What's the matter!" he murmured drowsily.
"I must take a scalp to my father!"
"Eh!" Blake hadn't bargained for this. "Not at all necessary," he added hastily.
"But it is so, You have predicted my early death, and it will happen if I do not obey my father's commands. He will slay me himself. You see, I must have a scalp. I cannot take your's; I do not wish to take your's. But I must have someone's. Therefore it shall be the scalp of your

When he spoke, there it was covering Eaglewing. It looked exactly as if the revolver had flown to his hand of its own accord. Not a man had seen its own accord. Not a man had seen him make the slightest sound or stir.

Even Blake was astonished.

"You will have to find some other scalp. My brother is quite right, Eaglewing."

"I am caught in a great difficulty,"

scalp. My brother is quite right, Eaglewing."

'I am caught in a great difficulty," replied the young chief simply. But it must be said to his credit that he did not flinch from Tinker's wea pon.

'You are," said Blake drily.

'The paleface who can see things that are hidden will help me. He is my friend; he has said so."

'Yes," said Blake; "but you make it very hard to help you. My brother, who can hear in his sleep, is also your friend and yet you tall a bout taking his scalp. Is that the act of a friend? How could I ever afterwards feel friendship for Eaglewing if he had slain my brother?"

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WEDNESDAY. | THURSDAY.

FRIDAY.

SATURDAY. THE UNION JACK
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PLUCK, AND JESTER.

Black Juan was a fine specimen of them. He excelled as an Indian fighter. He despised the redskin whom it was his business to help keep in order. In guile he had nover met his match amongst them. With a brace of six-shooters in his belt the word "fear" had no meaning for him.

him.

If "Hallo, hallo! A fine watch you keep!" he shouted as he strode up to the fire, "Suppose! I been out to ki!!, Eaglewing, eh? How many braves would your band have numbered by now? Dead, stark, the lot to them! Hey, hey, hey! You are a poor secum!"

The insolent sweeger of the strong to the stark of the poor secum!

and the haughty arrogance of his walk, and the haughty arrogance of his boaring could not have been exceeded. Howas a master talking to slaves, a tyrant talking to bumble vassals. His language speaks for itself, and shows how little he understood the real character of the Indians, who, whatever their fanits, are punctilious in the matter of politeness, and cannot be tamed by mere bluster and bravado.

"Well," he continued—"well, have you earned that fifty dollars? Whore are the scalps? Forty dollars for the man, and ten for the kid! That's what I promised old Hawkeye. Curse ne if I'm not sorry I didn't take on the job myself! I've had all the trouble. The insolent swagger of his walk

job myself! I'vo had all the trouble. Who'd havo known? We could have blamed it on you on you redskins afterwards. Durned foolishness, Durned foolishness, I call it; but the others were stuck on, getting rid of them that way, and wouldn't listen to me! Fifty dollars! It is a fortune for seum like you!"

And he produced a smallish hag of money, and shook it till the coins chiuked.

"Sit down, then

"Sit down, thou Black One," said Englewing courteously.

Not a man in the circle had moved, not fer one moment had the pipes ceased to circulate. While Black Juan had been actually talking they had intermitted their conversation. hut conversation, but directly he had finished the gentle hum of converse broke out afresh. It would have been impossibe to signify in a more marked man-

This question he put into words.
"What have you skunks been up

to?"
"Sit down, thou Black One," repeated Eaglewing courteously.
"Answer my question!"
"Sit down, and then we will talk."
No one could have spoken more courteously and politely than Eaglewing.

wing.
"Not I! I don't sit down with red

wing.

"Not I! I don't sit down with red vormin. Have you earned the fifty dollars I told you about?" And again he chinked the bag of coins.

Englewing turned pointedly to his neigbbour and began talking to him, utterly ignoring the scowling Mexican. Blake and Tinkor, who were noting every incident of the strange scene, couldn't help admiring Englewing'e remarkable composure and dignity, and contrasting it with Black Juan'e coarse and shifty swagger. The one was a gentleman, whatever the colour of his skin; the other was a blackguard, in spite of his claim to be of white blood.

And now what was Black Juan going to do?

He hesitated the laughed a level.

sion, pushed into the group round the fire, kicked the Indian who sat next to Eaglewing aside, and sat down in his place.
"Durn your silly customs." he said:

his place.

"Durn your silly customs," he said;
"but, curse me, if I don't humour you
for once! Well, here I am! Let's
palaver and get it over. Have you
carned the fifty dollars, or have you
not? Yes or no, you skunk? Lot's
have a plain answer, and speak the
truth if you know how to!"

"Now Black One, you may pay me the fifty dollars," smiled Eaglewing.

"No doubt—ho. ho!—no doubt I can. But have you earned them, you wily seum? No work, no pay. Ever hear of that rulo? You'll have to get up bright and early to get the better of Black Juan. Show me the sealps, and you shall have the shiners."

"I have something better than scalps to show you."

"Better than scalps?"

Eaglowing smilingly produced Blake's revolver.

"The paleface's little gun," he said.

"Well. I recken if you've get that you've earned your pay. Lomme look at it!"

Well, you're a rum lot! Just as like. You've got their horses, 10U

Black Juan hitched himself on to

Yes," said Eaglewing. "Do you want to sell 'em?

"I think not, thou Black One."
"Oh, all right, keep 'om; I don't want them. And look here-give me back that bit of writing I sent I can't."

What do you mean, you can't?"
I haven't got it."
What have you done with it,

then 1

"It is somewhere in the woods. How should I know that my brother would wish to have his writing back again?"

again ?"

"Of course you couldn't; you haven't sense enough to know it, you silly red 'un. Well, I'll let you know when there's another job on. I'm off."

off."
And, turning unceremoniously away, he strode towards the edge of the clearing.
But there he paused. He paused as if he had forgotten something.
He came back a little way. He began to speak.
"Oh, I say, Eaglewing—"

replied; no one betrayed anything that could be construed into a that could be construed into a semblance of fear. Perhaps Eaglewing's head did turn in the direction where

head did turn in the direction where he had last seen Blake disappear, but he did nothing more. It was by Blake's orders that he had received Black Juan in the way he did, in order that Blake might have convincing proof of his treachery.

And now those orders had turned out to be his death-warrant. Well, it couldn't be helped. He was a fatalist, as are all Red Indians. What is fated to happen will happen. The only thing left for him and h is braves to do was to meet their doom with that stolid indifference, that proud and dignified disdain, which constitutes in their eyes the highest form of heroism. "Step out, one at a time—you first, Eaglewing; wo'll make a clean job of it."

Eaglewing stepped clear of the group, his hands extended above his head.

head.

Rlack Juan's six-shooter followed his every movement.

The other four troopers warily watched the rest.

"Now, then, about that scalp. Where's the bodies?"

"On the edge of the clearing."

time gone. From the fire to the edge of the clearing was a distance of about twenty yards. Jake had been gone two minutes. "Well haven't are formal."

two minutes.

"Well, haven't you found them yet?" be called.
There was no answer.

"Jake, havon't you found them?
Jake!" he called, more perempterily.
Still no answer.

"You have lied to me, you red vermin," he said savagely.

"I have not lied to you. The bodies Why should!

"I have not lied to you. The bodies are where I told you. Why should I lie? Am I not as good as dead? Your brother has not looked in the right place."

"You'll be wishing you was dead presently," snarled Black Juan in really.

presently," snarled Black Juan in reply.

"Hore you, Pete," he shouted the next moment: "you go and have a look. No, wait! Collect those muskots, and chuck 'em away. And there's a six-shooter that belonged to Blake somewhere. Put 'em well out of reach of that seum in case they taks it into their heads to be obstreperous. Two can watch 'em easy then."

Pete, who was a half-caste, collected the muskets and dumped them in a heap some dozen yards away. Ho thrust Blake's revolver into his own belt. Then he lounged off to the edge of the clearing, just as Jake had done.

"Is he going right?" demanded Juan.

"Is he going right?" demanded Juan.

Juan. "Yes," said Eagle.

Yes," said Eagle wing.

There were no more questions. A deadly stillness settled over the clearing. Pete could be heard trampling on dry twigs as he pushed his way through the brushwood. Once he stumbled and fell over something, but he must have immediately got up again, he must have immediately got up again, for the trampling sounds were instantly resumed. Then at last he called out:
"I've got 'em 1"
"Scalped?" domanded Black Juan.
"Better bring 'em into the light, hadn't I?" was the reply.
"Yes; best to make sure."
"Where's Jake?"
"A bit farther on."
And then a voice

And then a voice called:

called:
"Jake, I've got
'em' Come, along
here!"
Now, Black Juan
had his back turned
to the spot where
Eaglewing had said
the bodies were, and
so had the other two so had the other two troopers who were guarding the group of redskins round the fire. Obviously, they could not take their eyes off their prisoners, and obviously, therefore, they could only be guided by sounds as to what was happening behind them.

But naturally they had no uneasiness. Jake and Pete had been sent to find the bodies, Pete had found them.

They could now be heard dragging them towards the fire. The process was, of course, rather slow.

Black Juan became a little impatient.

Don't be all night about it!" he

"Don't be all night about it!" he growled.

And then he called:

"Pick 'em up, can't you? It'll be quicker than draggin' them!"

"Wo're coming!" answered a husky, panting voice.

The steps perceptibly quickened.
Black Juan heard them close behind him. They came nearer, and nearer, and nearer. He longed to turn his head, but dared not.

It was annoying. He felt euriously afraid. He began to wish he hadn't worried about the bodies. It was strange to fool like that. He couldn't understand it. And why didn't Pete speak?

mnderstand it. And why didn't Pete speak?
"Curse you!" he oried, "are they scalped or not?"
And the answer came in this fashion. The cold muzzle of a revolver was screwed into the back of his neck.
"No, Black Juan—no; they are not scalped!" And the voice was Sexton Blake's!

(Another enthralling instalment next



Out of the darkness of the forest there suddenly stepped Black Juan, the Mexican guide;

"Ho, ho! You are afraid, are you?"
"I would prefer not," repeated Eaglewing courteously.
"Well, I guess, that's about the last thing that blanned cuses Blake would have parted with, so I suppose he's stiff. What sort of a fight did he put up?"
"There was no fight, thou Black One."

"There was no One."
"No fight?"
"We came with silent and stealthy feet, and caught them sleeping."
The Mexican's mouth breadened into a brutal grin.
"And made an easy job of it, you red joker—scalped them as they slept, eh? Oh, I know you—no wisk, no danger, no warning—jumped red joker—scalped them as they slept, eh? Oh, I know you—no risk, no danger, no warning—jumped on 'om out of the dark, and sent 'em to the Happy Hunting Grounds before they'd got their eyes open. Guess you've been enjoying yourselves. Well, here's the shiners."

And he dropped the bag of coins at Eaglewing's feet.

The latter made no movement to pick it up.

"Ain't yer goin' to count it?" demanded the Mexican.

"Why should I insult my friend by counting it?" was the immediate response. "Would my hrother deceive me? Are we not friends? Have we

to do?

He hesitated; he laughed a loud and scornful laugh; he very estentationally lossened one of the six-shooters from his belt; and then, with an air of amusement at his own condescen-

And then in a flash both his sixshooters were out, one in each hand, and levelled at the group about the

and levelled at the group about the fire.

"Hands up, you red skunks! My men are on you!"

And at the same moment there was a crash from the left, and four troopers sprang into view. Each carried a repeating rifle. The Indians held up their hands. They were taken completely by surprise. Blake's prediction had come true. Eaglewing's life was at the mercy of those whom he had thought his friends.

"M'yos," sneered Black Juan, as he came forward to the fire, "you've this time.

"M'yes," sneered Black Juan, as he came forward to the fire, "you've bin and done for yourselves this time, you beauties. We are police, we are. You've murdered a white man, you beauties. We are police, we are.
You've murdered a white man,
you've gene on the warpath with your
silly tomahawks and your tin-pot
nuskets. Your lives are forfeited.
Our orders was to shoot, and we are
going to. Killed our chief, you have—
our chief what was sent to stop your
silly war-dancing. It's our duty to
avenge him. Wo'd be sacked if we
didn't. A fine chief he was—a
Britisher, come all the way from
England on purpose to show us how
to fight you red skunks. Irreparable
loss to us—he, he! Ain't it, lads—an
irreparable loss?"
And he chuckled with enjoyment silly tomahawks and your tin-pot inuskets. Your lives are forfeited. Our orders was to shoot, and we are going to. Killed our chief, yon have—our chief what was sent to stop your silly war-dancing. It's our duty to avenge him. Wo'd be sacked if we didn't. A fine chief he was—a Britisher, come all the way from England on purpose to show us how to fight you red skunks. Irreparable loss to us—he, he! Ain't it, lads—an irreparable loss?"

And he chuckled with enjoyment of his own grim irony.

And no one said anything, no one

"Well, you know differently now, "yes."

"Yes, I know differently now," said Eaglewing.

"What have you done with the letter?"

"It is there."

"Yes."

"Hen you told me a lie ab out it?"

"No, I said it was somewhere in the woods; it is."

Black Jnan couldn't think of any more offensive questions to ask for the moment, and it suddenly occurred to him that Jake was rather a long.

"Behind you!"
"Go and see if he's lying or not, Jake. There's enough to watch that mossly crowd. And look here, you mongrels, if a hand drops, or even so much as quivers, there'll be a bullet hole through somebody's skull."
The warning was totally unrecessary. The redskins sat absolutely still, with their hands held aloft.
Jake lounged off to the point indicated to find the bodies.
Black Juan resumed his questioning of Eaglewing.

of Eaglewing.
"You treated me like dirt whon I who !"

came to you first—why?"
"Did I? I don't know," was the tranquil response.

"Thought you could afford to be independent, perhaps—ch?"

"I don't know."

"Well, you know differently now,

The Twentieth **Century**

By ALLAN BLAIR.

Crusoes.

AUTHOR OF MANY POPULAR STORIES.

THE 1st CHAPTER.

Scuttling the Gaspard — The 1wo Stewaways — Lashed to the Mizenmast — The Return of the Boat.

PHE hig sailing-ship Gaspard rolled gently in the long swell of the sea. She was outward bound from London te Callao, on the coast of Peru, with a mixed cargo of Birmingham, Sheffield, and other

But the ill-fated vessel was never destined to arrive at Callao, for at the very moment our story opens she was in the hands of a merciless, imminous crew

minimous crew. Two days befere, the captain and first and second mates had been brutally murdeted, and consigned innecremoniously to an ocean grave. Just new her decks shewed a confusion of men hurrying hither and thither laden with stores, which, placed close te the hulwarks hard by the duvits by some, were transferred by others into two beats ready for lowering. lowering.

The vagabond crew were about to scuttle the ship.

Backwards and forwards, from them to stern of the vessel, stored a luige, swarthy man, who seemed to be in command.

hings, swarthy hat, who seemed to be in command.

A man with a saturuine face he was, with red-rimmed eyes that shot furth out glances wherever he went, a black moustsche and goatee, and thick hair shining with oil.

In his care glistened large, smooth rings of silver. Ficroe words and savago threats came frem his tongue; while now and again, with his eye to a telescope, he would scan the vest expanse of the Pacific, over which the dusk was new falling.

At length a scantan approached him.

him. "Frisco Jake," he said, "every-

thing's ready."

The swarthy man growled out nn unswer, gave a final order, and moved quickly towards the fore-

moved quiskly towards the forceastle.

An augar had been placed there in readiness, and this 'Frisco Jake now took up, moving towards the scuttle.

While these hasty preparations were going forward above decks, there were two persons down below who were quite oblivious of what was about to happee.

Two boys they were—Dick Farley and Aleo Winter. Stowaways both, they were at this mmeat eroushing in silones ameng the general cargo in the forepeak of the hold.

Dreary had been the voyage since, npon that fateful day which seemed as eternity ago, they had smuggled themselves aboard the Gaspard as ehe lay in the London Dooks, bound they hardly knew whither.

How they had passed the time, how they had endured the darkness of the days and nights, they hardly knew. They had slept, of course, and they had talked in whispers lest an echoing tone should lead to their botrayal; but for the most part silence hall attended their presence.

Fearful the hours they had sat, haggard and weary, bstening as the storm-swept sea pounded the Gaspard's timbers, and caused every rih to groan and every plank to wheeze out weird sounds as if the ship were a living thing stung by a thousand furies.

Such nights and such days had

furies.

Such nights and such days had been their lot, each as it came suggesting itself as the end of all things, so fearents were the aspects of the

so fearsoma were the aspects of the terrible storm.

But now all was changed. Gradually tha hurricans had abated its fury, weakened, and at length died down, to be succeeded by calmer weather.

Just now, as the boys rese to ease their examped limbs, the ship was folling but little, while the gurgling calcum.



lap, lap of the ocean against her sides scemed but as the laughter of the waters, and, though harsh, was not unmusical.

It was a luxury to stand up and stretch their limbs, and the two boys indulged in it for some minutes.

Suddenly Dick Farley gave vent to a loarso whisper of alarm.

"Down, Aleo-down and quiet, for your life!"

"Down, Aleo—down and quiet, for your life!"

Twe bogrimed faces ducked, and four begrimed hands pressed against the water-casks instantly, as they bobbed out of sight.

Only just in time, for at that moment a hurly figure awang himself down into the hold through the forescuttle, and, halting with his leastern aloft, stared forward.

It was 'Frisco Jake!

The rays split the darkness with a fan of light, and showed an auger in the soaman's other hand.

Breath!esely from their place of concealment Dick Farley and Alec Winter gazed at him. Never before had they witnessed such dastardly work as was new in pregress.

But at the sight of this man's face they shivered wbore they erouched, for it was the face of a fiend bent on fiendish work.

fiendish work.
Yet the young stewaways date not ery out or interpose a hand to prevent the execution of the diabolical

They were aboard the Gaspard without a right, and well they knew that no mercy would be extended to them if their presence were de-

Presently the man stepped to the outer wall of the vessel, hard by the bulkhead, and with his auger began

to bore low down.

Dick Farley's hand jumped to his

"Look!" he said, in a horrified whisper. "Look, Alce!"
"What's he doing!"
"Disk! face was white and his?

Dick's face was white, and his heart beating wildly, as he whispered

heart beating wildly, as he whispered back:

"He is scuttling tha ship, I think! I've read of such menetrous acts. See how the water's pouring in through that hole he's bored; and now he's at work on a nother!"

"What'll happen?" gasped Alec.
"Only one thing can happen," Dick answered, in an awed tone. "In a few hours the hold will fill with water, and tha ship will sink!"

"Heaven save us!"

In silonce they watched the man for some miautes; then at length Dick whispered:
"See, he's finished his horrible task, and is going; and he's leaving his lantern. Thank Heaven for that! We may be able to de something to

whis lantorn. Thank Heaven for that!
We may be able to de something to seve ourselves. He's scrambled into the fo'e'le again."
"What cas wn do. Dick? What do yen think is happenin'?"
"Only one thing can be happening. Letten to that!"
Dick bold up his hand. The two boys strained thair ears. Above the coaseless ewish and gurgle of the water and the low groating of the vessel's timbers, another cound, muffled by distasce, could be heard—the sound of oars rattling in rew-locks.

the sound of oars rattling in rewlocks.

"It's as I thought!" Dick cried.

"They've taken to the boats.
They've scuttled the slip, and are deserting her, Quick, Alee, there's nut
a moment to lose! We must do what
we can te stop the rush of water.
Look about for something to plug
these holes."

"How will this do?" exclaimed
Alee, stooping after a few seconds'
search and taking np a lump of
eakum.

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"It's caulking—the very thing!" eried Dick eagerly. "I'll see what we can do now!"

He hacked away with his heavy boot-heel at a thin lath of wood nailed to a packing-case, which split under his vigorous kicking.

"Now, Alee, lend a hand here!" he said, breaking the lath into several pieces across his knee. "Help whittle these things down as quick as whittle these things down as quick as

you can!"
Alee whipped a clasp-knife from his pocket, and in desperate heste did the other's hidding.

the other's hidding.

Dick ecized the first length of lath, as it was pared down to the necessary size, and wound around it some of the cakum; then, crossing to where the water was gushing in through the augar-holes, he inserted in one of thom the thin end of his improvised wedge, screwing and pressing it with all his force till the caulking held tight. tight,

all his force till the caulking held tight.

Back to Ales with a staggering bound for another plug, which he dealt with similarly. So he worked with hereulean estrength and energy till all the holes were stopped.

Pausing at longth then, he heaved a sigh of satisfaction as he swept the light of the lantern over his work.

"Brave, Diok—hrave!" Alee eried, as be stood beside his chum. "There's no water comin' in new."

"No, there isn't," snewered Dick; "aud thank Heaven fer that! But goodness only knows how long those plugs will held. They're in as firmly as I could fix thom. I could have driven then further home with a mallet; but we'll have to rest satisfied with them as they are, I s'pose. And now, Alee, we'll make a meve."

"Where to, Dick?"

"Up on deck, maybe; anyway, we'll go from here."

"Oh, you needn't worry, Aleo. They've all sheered off, right enough. They're not likely to hang about on what they think is a sinking ship; but we'll be cautious, in case they're not clear yet. Come on!"

Dick Farloy waded past the hulk-head through the water that had stready rushed into the hold.

"There's nobody above in the fo'u's'le," he muttered. "I ran't hear a sound. It ought to he safe enough for us to venture."

And up he clambored through the scuttle, followed by Alee,

No sign of life was there in the

No sign of life was thoro in the forecastic. The hunks were empty, while a row of hammedas swing mournfully, with a weird, ghostly suggestion about them, as if they knew they would never be occupied again. again,

A snit of oilskins hanging from a peg made both boys shiver, so like a mun upon a gibbot did it look.
"Not a soul about!" said Dick." We'll go on deck."

And cantiously, looking and listen-ing with all thoir might, they passed through the hatchway.

thero, right against the mizenmast!: Can't you make out a figure?"
Alco Winter screwed up his face to pierco the gathering gloom.
"I see him'! he answered. "He keeps in one position, and his hands are close to his side."
"Yes, yes; I see that, too, Alco! The man's bound, and can't move. The others must have turned against him, and loft him here to die. Come on, Alco; we need have no fear. He'll prove no enemy of ours; quite the opposite." ne opposite Dick Far

Dick Farley jumped erect, and hurried towards the spot. "Hallet" he sang out, boldly

enough.

The man lashed to the mast rolled his oyes in a startled fashion. It was the only sort of movement he could make, for he was bound hand and foot, while over his mouth was fastened a gag of leather.

A great, hearded, massive man of mighty limbs he was, with face tanned like saddle-leather; a man of prodigious breadth of shoulder and depth of chest, whose enormous strength must have given infinite trouble to those who had ultimately bound him.

Dick leapt forward, and with his

Dick Isapt forward, and with his knife cut the cord that held the gag in place. The sailor—for such he plainly was—gave a grean of relief.

"Thankee, muto-thankee!" he hurst out, in a veice that seemed to come up from his sea-boots, as Dick set to work to sever the bonds which secured him. "Whales and white-bait, but it's a treat to get that lump o' leather out o' my mouth! It's the first time as Soloman Grim's bin trussed up like a fow! wi' the asthmy!"

"What's happened? Who did this te you?" asked Dick, as he slashed through the last of the confining

through the last of the confining bonds.

Salomon Grim shut an angry glance to starboard, and shook his list at the sea.

"Who done it? sez you. Why, them skunks ubound the long boat yender! I dunne yo, mates—never clapped eyes on ye afere—and on ye've come 'sro's beyond my reckenin' altogether. Stewaways, are ve?" he went on, as Alec Winter broke in with word of explanation.

"Well, thun, ve've stowed yerselves away to some good end, anyways, and Selemon Grim's mortal grateful to ye!" He stretched out his cramped limbs as he spoke, and then shock himself. "But we ain't got no time fer chin-music!" he want on suddenty. "D'ye know wet's 'appened te this ship? She's bin scuttled, and yender goes the skunks as scuttled er! But sho's fillin' fast, mates, all the time we're talkin', and—"

"Net filling as fast as yeu think, ing with all their might, they passed through the hatchway.

Lifeless the main-deck. Coils of repe and odds and ends were littered about in confusion, pointing to the hasty departure of the crew.

All around them the occan stretched away, terrifying im its calm inmensity. The two boys turned and stumbled aft, the gathering dusk making progress to those mansed to the rolling ship slow and uncertain.

Suddenly an exclamation of alarm hurst from Dick.

"Cronch down, Alco-crouch down! I heard a voice, There's someone on heard, after all I"

They dropped where they stood, listening hard. A sound, inscherent hut startling, came towards them, "It must be a man; and he seems to be greamin'!"

"Yes," assented Dick, " greaming as if he's in pain. Something mest be wrong. I womler—Alee,! ik

"Rate of starboari, and shook his fast at the sea.

"Who deno it? sez you. Why, them skunks ubon'd the long beat youlder! I dunne yo, mates—nover clapped eyes on ye afere—and 'ow ye've cnms 'sre's beyond my reckonin' altogether. Stewaways, are ve?" he wend on as Alee Winter broks in with word of explanation.

"West, thun, we ve stowed yerselves and Selemon Grim's mortal grateful to ye!" He stretched out his cramped limbs as he spoke, and then shook himself. "But we ain't got no time fer chin-music!" he want on suddenty. "D'ye know wet's 'appened te this ship? She's bin seutled, and yender goes the skunks as sentited ser! But sho's fillin' fast, mad—"

"Yes," assented Dick, " greaming as if he's in pain. Something mest be wrong. I womler—Alee,! ik



"Land! Land-el" cried 8ol Grim. "Heaven be praised, there's land in sight!"

guickly related to Solomon Grim that had been done.

For the Saitor, with one of his strange that the strang

the companion-ladder. Then 'e sprung at me in the dark wi' this, and stuck it 'tween my shoulder-blades. That's wot druv me to do wot I done to him?"

him."
Solomon Grim groaned egain, and reeled where he stood. Even in the gloon the two boys could see that his face was drawn, and quivering with pain.

"I—I think I'H lay down for a spoll," he murmured, his deep voice weakening. "This stab is a givin' me jonnick."

onnick."
"You must have the wound washed!" cried Dick, alarmed at the sailor's sudden weakness. "Come, Aleo, take his other arm, and we'll help him down to the captain's cabin."

Solomon Grim drew himself erect.

"Not for a minute—mustn't go below for a minute," he said. "The boat—we must look for the longboat fuet!"

fust!"
And, although he trembled violently, the plucky sailor drew out the
night-glass from a pocket in which
he had placed it and swept the ocean
—not only to starboard, but all
around, for he could not be certain
whether, in the calm, the unsteered
ship had vecred round and changed
her course.

No sign of the longboat or any
other craft was to be seen.

dered at, therefore, that now the op-portunity offered for a good meal, they should avail themselves of it to the fullest extent.

Nor was Sol Grim much behind them in this respect. He, too, it appeared, had suffered some privations during the last day or two, and the food was as welcome to him as it was to his young companions in distress.

when at length the repast was finished, and he lit his pape, the big sailor seemed to be much better. His wound, fortunately, was found to be not so serious as it had first looked, the knife not having penetrated very deeply, after all, owing to its having slid through the flesh in a lateral direction. The blade had touched no vital organ, and it was soon seen that a quick recovery might be looked for. Soi Grim's strength and constitution were so wonderful, indeed, that within a couple of hours he was well enough to give Dick and Alec an account of what had happened.

The crew of the Gaspard had, it

count of what had happened.

The crew of the Gaspard had, it appeared, been a very mixed one, comprising as it did Dutchmen, Scandinavians, and other foreigners, with only two or three En glishmen.

This motley crew had been subjected to a more than usual amount of bullying and ill-treatment at the hands of the captain and the first and

In return for his confidence, Dick Farley and Aleo Winter recounted to him their own brief history. Both boys had been born and bred in a little town upon the Norfolk coast. Both had been left orphans at quite an early age. Perhaps it was this similarity of circumstance that had bound them so closely together, for now their friendship was of the staunchest. staunchest.

staunchest.
Though in some respects their characters differed, yet in one direction they resembled cach other closely. For years both had longed for a life of adventure. Many a time, playing upon the beach at home, they had gazed out, watching the stately ships go past, and had longed for a life in lands beyond the sea.

As the years went on, this passion

As the years went on, this passion had increased, until, friendiess and alone, save for each other, and with next to nothing to the them to the place where they had lived all their days, they had decided to see the world. And one day they had puttheir decision into operation. They had tramped to London with but a shilling or two in their pockets, and had made their way to the docks.

There, after one or two futile attempts to conceal themselves on other vessels, they had at last found an opportunity of stowing themselves away in the Gaspard's hold.

Their intention had been to show

Their intention had been to show themselves on deck when the ship was a low days out at sea; but, gathering something of the character of the captain from his loud, bullying voice and his foul language, which penetrated frequently even to their hiding-place, they had altered their programme.

Stowed away there in the hold, living on the meagre fare which chance threw in their way, they had remained concealed till that fateful moment when they had seen the man enter with lantern and auger.

enter with lantern and auger.

"Oh, so you see him come in, and you see him bore the 'oles?" exclaimed Sol Grim, who had listened with the utmost interest to the latter part of the boys' story, "Wot sort of a feller were 'e?"

"A bigboned, swarthy man," answered Dick, "with thick black hair and moustache, and wearing rings in his ears."

his ears."
"Ha! And they were big silver rings?"
"Yes, very big; nearly as big round as shilling-pieces." Alec Winter

chimed in.

Sol Grim clenched his fist and smote the air.

smote the air.

"'Frisco Jake, for a thousan'!" Sol Grim cried. "The hound! 'E were the one as 'led the mutiny. 'e were! Calls' isself a Englishman, though I doubts if 'e's got enough British blood in his ngly carkis to fill a teaspoon! So that were the feller! I thought as much! 'E were the one as turned t'others agen me, and if 'e could 'ave got his way, 'e'd 'ave knifed me there and thou! Well, it ain't very likely as me and 'Frisco Jake'll meet agen in this world, and I'm sartin sure I don't want to be where 'e is in the next; but if ever we do come face to face—why, then it's death for me or him in a brace o' shakes!"

Ominous words, and sharp-edged the wish for vengcance they betokened.

Ominous words, and sharp-edged the wish for vengeance they be-tokened.

Full of grave import for the future, too; for Sol Grim and 'Frisco Jake were fated to cross each other's path in strange, unlooked-for fashion; to match his great strength each against the other when at length they should come to grips. come to grips.

图 图 图 his mouth was fastened a gag of leather.

A great bearded man of massive limbs was lashed to the mast, while over

"She's gone," Grim muttered.
"The cravens in her have sheered off, not carin' wot becomes o' them they sent back to the ship. Well, it's like 'om; and if the whole bitin' of 'em goes to the bottom, 'ere's one as won't weep no tears for 'om. Now, mates, if you'll lend me a 'and, I'll turn in for an hour. I shall be all the better for a rest arter this 'ere the better for a rest arter this 'ere scuffle."

the better for a rest arter this 'ere scuffle.'

Each taking an arm, Dick and Alec ted the big sailor below. In the captain's own bunk they placed him, took off his coat and shirt, and bathed the wound, binding it up afterwards. Having done which, they set about getting a meal, the wounded man telling them where provisions were to be found.

The scuttling crew had apparently ransacked the enddy stores pretty thoroughly, but there was still plenty left, and it was not very long before quite an appetising meal was spread upon the cabin table.

To this Dick and Alec did more than ample justice. Their food during the voyage had, as a matter of fact, been of a most meagre and monotonous kind. Stowed away down in the hold, the two boys had fived entirely on water and ship's biscuits—a case of which, by some means or other, had found its way among the general cargo. It is little to be won-

nd mates. For a time the men

second mates. For a time the men had borne it quietly enough; grumbling among themselves, truly, but showing no signs of opens rebellion.

As the voyage progressed the persecutions by the three officers increased, until one day, after rounding Cape florn, matters had reached a tragic climax. The crew had agreed to mutiny, and, acting up to their agreement, had nurdered the officers out of hand, deciding then to scuttle the ship, and escape in the boats.

Solomon Grim had been strongly opposed to the spilling of blood. He had taken no part in it, neither had he, on the other hand—so sudden was the attack—been able to take steps to prevent it. On learning what had been done, however, he spoke out with such boldness of spirit that there and then the crew decided that he should share the fate of the three officers.

should share the fate of the three officers.

Death was to be the roward of his opposition; but instead of murdering him on the spot, it was decided to leave him aboard after souttling the ship, and so let him meet a torturing death by drowning.

Thus it came about that, after a desperate struggle, he had been overpowered, bound, and gagged, lashed to the mast, and left to meet what seemed to be an inevitable doom. How he was saved from a death that seemed certain, we already know.

THE 3rd CHAPTER.

Adrift on the Ocean-Alarmed in the Night-The Gaspard Strikes a Rock - 'To the Boat! To the Boat!"

LEAR and beautiful broke the morning. The long swell upon the sea of the previous night had died down, till now, with no breath of wind stirring.

now, with no breath of wind stirring, the water looked like a great sheet of glass, whose green lightened to a shimmer of silver beneath the eastern splendour of the rising sun.

Dick Farley and Alco Winter had shared the night watches between them, one relieving the other, at the suggestion of Sol Grim, who lent his big silver timekeeper for the purpose, at the cnd of four hours.

The two boys were early on deck being joined soon after by Solomon Grim, who was a great deal better after his night's rest. The big sailor, with a telescope obtained from the captain's cabin, scanned the sea in every direction in search of a sail. But there was none in sight. But there was none in eight.

OUT ON THURSDAY—The Mammoth Easter and Spring Fiction Double Number of "The Union Jack," containing Two Grand, Long Complete Novels. 2d.

Now, for the first time, Dick and Alec began to realise the frightful peril of their position. Events had fallen so think and fast upon them during the previous night that reflection had been harred by the necessity of action. Now, however, it was different. The eight of the descrited ship, drifting aimlessly upon the face of the calm, untroubled see, brought with it a sense of desolation.

True it was that as long as the calm weather held they would be safe enough, for Sol Grim now deecended to the hold to inspect the dastardly work of the scutlars. He found that the plugs which Dick had inserted in the holes had served their purpose well, all things considered; but fashioning more effective wedges, he drove tham vigorously home with a mallet, and rendered the Gaspard as tight as a cooca-nut.

This made them all more easy in mind. But upon the boys there began to settle a feeling ef gloom, which deepened and deepened to the horders of despair.

If a gale should come! They ahivared at the thought. So larga a ship as the Gaspard, alose-recfed though she was, would be entirely beyond the control of three hands. Their one great hops was that they might be picked up by some passing vessel; and, for this purpose, a signal of distress was run up.

"Some ship will be sure to see It," Dick murmured.

And with this hops the two boys cansoled themselves.

The boat which had been hitched alongside by the returning sailors was hauled up, to he of use in case of omergency should the Gaspard begin to take water sgain.

Weary enough was the day, spent for the most part by the two heys in scanning the eceau's mighty arrange in search of a sail. But hour after hour passed, with nothing to reward their sonstant vigilance.

Down the west the sun moved in all his majesty, sinking lower and lewer till he was but a rim of rod gold upon the horizm; then, endden and swift as a child closing its eyes in sleep, he sear into a purple bed of cloud, suffusing it with a ragged ridge of crimson and orange.

Night fell, hringing with it its d

once.
How long he had slept he did not know, but he awoke to a realisation that something had happened. A loud, terrifying, echoing crash had shook him out of slumber, and tha Claspard was trembling in every mank.

shook him out of slumber, and the Chepard was trembling in every plank.

At the same moment there was a clatter of heavy footsteps down the companion-ladder, and in rushed Sol Grim, shouting at the top of his voice:

"Up, lad—up, for the love of Heaven! The ship's struck on a

rock!"

Then he hastened away, with waving arms and wild, excited shouts, to warn Aleo.

In a minute the two lads, partly dressed, hurried upon deck to where Bol Grim was waiting, hard by the dayits.

davits.
"The boat—the boat! We must take to the boat!" cried the sailor.
"It's our only chance!"

(Another enthralling insta ment of this grand new adventure story will be published on Tuesday n. xt.)

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Jack, Sam & Pete's Quest. A TALE OF FUN AND ADVENTURE. THE BEST OF SUCCESSION OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPERT

The End of the Quest.

AVING gained the top of the stairs, Pete tupped at the first door he came to, and entered the room.

entered the room.

It was a small attic. Seated at a table, on which was a dim oil-lamp, was a young woman hard at work sewing. Har features were regular, but her face was haggard now through want. In the small apartment was a bittle boy of about eight years of age, and Pete slowly snook his head and sighed as he gazed upon that scene, for by the woman's sad, wan face he read the tale of poverty in all its lurid light.

There was a hunted, hopeless expression in the young woman's eyes as she glanced at him with a startled gaze.

gaze.
"Has Mr. Carter come with you?"

"Has Mr. Carter come with you?"
she murmured.

"He's outside now, my dear," answered Pete. "Here, Rory, go and play wid dat little boy. Stop outside for two free minutes, boys."

Without waiting for an answer, Pate shut and locked the door.

"Do you know what I hah come for, my dear!" he inquired.

"Yes; my—these few poor things, and to turn my—my boy and me into the street."

the street."
"Tink I look like a man dat would

do dat?

"I suppose you must get your hiving. I don't blame you."
"I suppose you must get your hiving. I don't blame you."
"(icolly! You may start blaming me when I get my living dat road. Is Carter a hard landlord?"
"Yea. But he leta me run into debt, because he knowa I pay whan I can get the money. I never can get what I owa him now—not get it and feed my boy."
"Seems to me you hah been feeding dat boy botter dan yourself. Still, I suppose dat's natural. Dore's only one ting you'm get to say before I start talking—dat is, you don't tink I'm a bad man?"
"I do not. If your employer has

tink I'm a bed man?"

"I do not. If your employer has ordered you to take my eticks, you have no choice in the matter."

"Yah, yah, yah! Tink I'd hab a mighty big choice in da matter, too! Suppose you don't know dat I can tell your fortune?"

"I know it—oh, I know it! May Heavan halp me, for my boy's eake!"

"Steady, deret Don't you dare to cry."

cry." I rhink my tears are all dried

"I rinnk my tears are all dried up."
"Well, dat's a mercy, at any rate. Dey nober do any good when dey are wet. Tink I'll start wid te sing you a bit about de past. Gib ma your left hand."
"You can tell me nothing. The

wet. Tink I'il start wid tealing you a bit about de past. Gib ma your left hand."

"You can tell me nothing. The past I know; the future no man can tell—nor would I dare to hear it if you could."

"Come, my dear, gih me your left hand. Dat's sensible! M'yes! Married when you were nincteeu?"

"Yes. But how did you know?"

"Yes. But how don't suppose I'm gihing away my secret tika dat?

Your name is Maggie. Learnt dat easy. Your husband was a sailor."

"He was: and a botter husband no woman ever had."

"He might hab turned out had if he had not boen wrecked."

"It is fa se!"

"Now. don't you go so fast, my dear."

"Mr. Carter is waiting."

"Well, we don't mind him daing dat. Now, let me see. I tink a dog somes in dis case, Seems to me you'm frightened oh Rory; but your boy can romp wid him as much as he likes. I'm Pete, and bef Rory and me are fond ob ohildren. Well, we will say a big dog fi-w at your infant, Yeu went to save him, and got bitten on da left arm. Why, dere's de

eve him, and got bitton on da left arm. Why, dere's de scar!"
"How did you know

this?"
"Bort ob detective work,
my dear. Now for your
name. You must tell me

name. You must tell me dat."
"Maggie Thorn."
"Maggie is de short for Margaret."

"Yes."
"What is Thorn de short for?"
"Thornton. I did not wish my husband's name to be known, in my poverty. He was the son of a well-to-do farmer. I was penniless, and his father cast him off. They-his father and stepmother—hated me. His father died, leaving all he had to his second wife. Within a year she married again. This was before I lost my husband."
"And his name was?"
"Tom Thurnton. I nsed to teach in the Sunday-school. But who told you about the sour upon my arm?"
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"Tom Thurnton. I nsed to teach in the Sunday-school. But who told you about the sour upon my arm?"
"Tom You wan sure. The rent is aix shillings. I'm going to let Carter in. How much rent do you owe him?"
"I have three-and-ninepence. The rent is aix shillings. But if I get this work done by next Wednesday I shall bave ten shillings."
"Den you want some money for living?"
"Yes. I could pay him two-and-sixpence to-day, and six shillings on Wednesday."
"No. He will turn me out."
"Suppose yon try him. Come in. Carter, old hoss! Seems to be some mistake hare. Consader dat matter mentioned ail off. Skill, dis poor woman happens to be able to pay some ob your rent."
"I nust have it shill, dis poor woman happens to be able to pay some oby our rent."
"I nust have it shill."
"I cannot pay!" sobbed Maggie."
I can pay you half-a-crown now and six chillings next Wednesday."
"No; I won't do it!" cried Carter.
"I will turn you out of the place! I have been far too easy with you already, and these are the thanks I see."
"Have pity, for my child's sake!"
"Pity be hanged! You aither pay or go! That's business."
"Orae, dat's business."
"Corse, dat's business."
"You should be and the doorway, "but I'm inclined to tink you will Shall hab aneder talk wid you just directly, Maggie. You wait here till we come back, which will be in about half an hour. Die is de way downst

Maggie. Xou wait note back, which will be in a hour. Die is de way downstairs, Carter! Nume, you eau't tumble while I bab got you by de back ob de neck! Now, den, you rascal! Wa promised you fifty pounds if dat turned out to be the right woman. It is do right one. You stole a five-paund note from me, so here are nine me, so here are nine fivers."

"I want six weeks"

"Nunnot Five

weeks'."
"There will be six weeks in a few days."
"Yes, and dere will be seven next week, and eight de week after. But I ain't paying dem. Five six chillings, Jack!"

"Thirty shillings."
"It's downright wonderful how you make dose calculations is your bead."

your head."
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"What are you goffawing at? Thirty shillings for you, Carter.
Dis is de way out ob
de building."
Carter was quite
satisfied with that arrepresents and know, have

satisfied with that arrangement, and, knowing the neighbourhood well, he thought the sooner he got out of it with all that money in his possession the better it would be.

He had scarcely gained the alley, however, when an Irishwonan rushed towards bim.

"Here's the spalpeen!" she yelled.
"I'll teach the likes of him to turn a poor, weak women into the streets, and so I will! Come on, Salt"
"Let's pay the brute!" shricked Sal. "Come on, alt of you !"
"Yah, yah, yah!" reared Pete, as about half a dozen infuriated women rushed at Carter.

The Irish lady smeshed his tail hat flat with har first. Sal gave him one in the eye and tore him down the face.

in the eye and tore him dlown the face.

She was a big woman, and, judging by the way she hammered Carter, was very strong.

"Help! Help!" he howled.

"Yah, yah, yah! Oh, grelly! I ain't helping dat little tot!" reared Pete. "Yah, yah, yah! Mind dey den't hurt you, Carter!"

They rolled him on the ground, and appeared to be determined to tear his ciothes from his back. The scramble only lasted a few minutes; then his assailants belted.

"Yah, yah, yah! Just kook at dis

omy lasted a few minutes; then his assailants bolted.

"Yah, yah, yah! Just look at dis \$62 footow, boys!" footod Pets. who was really glad at the rough treatment Carter had received. "Say, old hose, ain't is damp sitting in dat mud! Goliy! Dey hab clawed you, Carter! You'm worse scratched dan a dog who has taken an underneas bite ob a frisky cat. Yah, yah, yah!"

"Why did you not come to belp, you villam?" groaned Carter.

"Didn't tink dose ladina wanted much help," observed Pets. "But here comes a bobby; p'r'aps he will help you."

"I've been robbed!" howled Carter, leaping to his feet. "Fury!

nere comes a booby; p'r'age he will help you."

"I've been robbed!" howled Carter, leaping to his feet. "Fury! Every panny of my money has been stolan!"

"Yah, yah, yab!"

"If you laugh at me I'll be the death of you!"

"Yah, yah, yah! You "do amuse me, my poor, dear old hoss!"

"I have been assaulted and robbed, constable!" howled Carter, stamping about in his impotent fury.

"Hava you lost much!" inquired the constable, with examperating calimiess.

"Much! Of course I have!

"Much! Of course I have!

Fury!"
"What do you call much—five shil-

what do you hanged! I have "Five shillings be hanged! I have been robbed of over fifty pounds!"

"Phow! It's not safe to come down here with all that money in your pockets. I can see you have been assaulted."

been assaulted."
"Yesh, yah, yah! He does took rader like it, don't he, Bobby. Looks almost as if he tad been in a railway accident, or a motor smash-up. Yah, yah! Talk about moulting lowls!
"Have they been throwing something over him!"
"Only demselves! De oder is milk. Yah, yah, yah! I upspilt dat ober him."
"The gent don't appear to have been fortunate to-day. Do you think you could identify your assailants!"
"One of them went hy the name of Sal. Another was an Irishwoman."

"That won't help us. There's hundreds of Sals about this part, and there's thousands of Irishwomeu."
"Then how am I to get my property back?"

perty back?"

"Yah, yah, yah! How do you tinkhe's going to do dat, constable?"

"Blost if I know! But I should say he wouldn't get it hack. You see, I know a bit about the inhabitants in this pert, and they are fivthey are mortal fly. Was the integral and they are """."

" Yos."

"Well, that makes it a bit better.
You had hest give me the numbers of
the notes, and I'd make inquiries."
This was not at all satisfactory to

Carter. It sounded so fearfully hopeicss. And he loved money so dearly that the toes of twopence would have oner the toss of twopence would have been a great trial to him. The loss of fifty pounds was unbearable.

"You have the numbers of the notest" he said, turning to Pete.

"Eh!"

"The numbers of the notes, fool!"
"Yes, dero were some numbers on

de notes."

"Where are they?"

"What—de notes?"

"You hockbeed!" howied Carter,

"No! Where are the numbers?"

"On de notes, old hoss!"

"You have a copy of tham?"

"What should I copy notes for?

De words on dem are all de same."

"The numbers are not."

"Nunno! But dey are too mighty long for me to copy."

"Didn't you keep the numbers?"
inquired the constable.

"It ain't likely!"

"Well, whore did you get the notes?"

notes?"
"Do bank, I 'spect. Might hab got some from Jaok."
"There is not the least chance of tracing the numbers," said Jack."
"We have been travelling about, and I got a circular letter of credit." I don't even know what particular banks they were drawn from."



"Yah, yah!" roared Pete, as about half a dezen infuriated women rushed at Carter.

ANOTHER FINE NUMBER NEXT WEEK, containing further Long Instalments of our Grand New Serial Stories. Order Your Copies in Advance.

"Then you're floored, sir," said the

constable. "Yah, yah, yah! You tink his chances ob recovering dose notes ain't good?"

chances ob recovering dose notes and good?"

"Well, I don't know about them being good; but, you see, he hasn't got any chances."

"Yah, yah, yah!"

"You seem glad."

"T'n downright, mighty glad, Bobby! Yah, yah, yah, ! I'm so glad dat I'll gib you dis sovereign for your troubte."

dat I'll gib you dis sovereign for your trouble."

"I'm much obliged," said the man of law, slipping it into his pocket.
"But d'm not allowed to take any-bihing like this, so you'll excuse me refusing it."

"Yah, yah, yah! Suttinly! You'd setter buzz off home, Carter."
"How can I go home like this, you willy rascal?"
"Dunno. But I don't see how you'm going any oder way."
"Lend me five pounds."
"Numo!"
"I haven't got a penny. The hags

"Nunno!"
"I haven't got a penny. The hags have robbed me of every farthing!"
"Yah, yah! It serves you right! How many hab you robbed?
You hab turned starving women and children into de streets. Now, deu, find your way home widout a penny in your pocket, for you'll get none from me."
"May my curse fall on your head!"

find your way home widout a penny in your pocket, for you'll get none from me."

"May my curse fall on your head!"

"Dunno, but seems to me your curse is a lot more likely to fall on your own head. Your curse, old hoss, is de lub old floney. Starving women and starving little children are as anoting to you. You must hab your rents, and dey can go into de streets."

"There's the workhouse."

"Yes; but people willing to work should neber hab to go dere."

"You work a lot, don't you?"

"I don't work any. Still, I did, and hard, too, when I had to get my thing. De Government ought to find work for ebery man and woman wanting it, and dey oughtn't to say dere shall be no sweating, den take contracts at a price dat dey know won't leabe room for fair wages. As for dose who can work and won't, dey ought to be sent abroad and made to work. Now buzz off! I hope de day ain't far distant when you hab to pull down ebery one ob dose slums you own and get de rents ob mansions for dem. I'm only a black nigger, and noting to be proud ob at dat; all de same, I wouldn't change places wid you, old hoss! Nunno, I wouldn't change places wid you. Golly! I'd rader change places wid Rory. Buzz off!"

"My friend," exclaimed a young would be prough the greater.

off!"
"My friend," exclaimed a young curate, pushing through the crowd that had assembled, "I know that man, to my sorrow! I know his tenants, I have listened to your words."
"Eh?" exclaimed Pete, fixing his

"Eh?" exclaimed Pete, fixing his eyes on the stranger, whom the constable saluted.

He was a young man, with earnest grey eyes, with a sorrowful expression in them, which should not have been there at his time of life, except that his work amongst these starving poor was so very sad, and he so poor was so very sad, and he so utterly helpless to relieve their awful

"I said I had listened to your words."

"Il said I had distened to your words."

"Tink words am mighty cheap."

"Perhaps. But it occurred to me that yours were earnest words."

"I'd like to alter dis."

"So would I. Heaven knows that! A few men cannot alter it—cannot alter the poverty."

"Suppose dey can't," assented Pete, slipping his arm beneath the young clergyman's and marching him away. "I'm Pete, Jack and Sam are behind us."

"Well, I'm Charles!"

"Den look here, Charlie boy, we free hab got de means ob doing a little help where you know it's deserved. You see, we don't know, and gibing two-free shillings away ain't much use."

"Indiscriptionally perhaps not

You see, we don't know, and giving two-free shillings away ain't much use."

"Indiscriminately, perhaps not. Still, two or three shillings help our work. Ah, if only all those who could afford it would help us with a shilling! Ilow can the rich sit down to their sumptuous meals knowing little children are starving?"

"Don't see dat matters so long as doy gib away. 'Spect dey do gib."

"Some—many, perheps: but not all."

"Well, it's a mighty difficult ting to know how to work it. Still, I'm going to gib you a hundred pounds for people in need."

"Yes. I tink Jack and Sammy will do de same: See, boys, I'm gibing a hundred pounds to dis gentleman for de women and little children. Tink you would bof like to do de same?"

"Of course I would," said Jack.

"I reckon I'm the same way of thinking," said Sam, pulling some notes from his pocket. "Twenty fivers will do it. There you are, Pote."

"Here are mine," said Jack.

"Tink you'll find dat little lot correct, Charlie boy. Golly! Take dem. Dey won't burn you. We got dat money honestly."

"I'm sure of that, but—"

"Den stick to it. De ting ain't no benefit to you."

"It is. Ah, if you only knew how this will help my cause!"

this

"It is. Alt, if you only knew how this will help my cause!"
"Den buzz off and help your cause."
"I want to find words—"
"Golly! What's de good ob words?"
"My dear boys, I want to think

"All right, Charlie, old hoss. If a man wants to tink, he's best left alone. Dis way, boys!"

Then Pete belted, leaving Charlie standing on the pavement with a blank expression on his face and three hundred pounds in banknotes in his hand. However, he was perfectly safe. Those poor people knew him, and he knew them. They would never rob him.

and he knew them. They would never rob him.

About half an hour later Pete ascended the stairs to Maggic's lonely attie. He carried a two-shilling box of chocolates. Jack and Sam, who followed, carried an extraordinary lot of things, because Pete had landed them with his big parcels. Sam grumbled, but Pete only told him not to be lazy.

"Hellup!" exclaimed Pete, entering the room. "Why, here is Charlie! How did you come here, old hoss?"

order. I remembered it by muscles. Come and help me unload dis little lot, Tom; but, mind, you ain't to eat a single mouthful ob pastry till you'm had some chicken."

As Pete chatted away he unloaded

As Pete chatted away he unloaded the good things.

Poor Maggie looked quite happy as she watched her little son eat; and had it not been for her visitors she would have paid little attention to her own meal, notwithstanding her late hard-ships.

As for Tom, he had never eaten such a dinner before in his life a dinner before in his life, and, being a sturdy, healthy lad, thanks to Maggic's tender care, he did ample

'Mind smoking, my dear?" in-

quired Pete.
"If I did I would not tell you so,"
said Maggie, smiling. "But I do

not."
"Bery well. Try one ob dese

"Bery well. Try one ob dese cigars, Charlie."
"Thank you!"
"Now, den, Maggie! Dat boy is a credit to you. Suppose I gib him a start in life?"
"Oh! Can you mean it?"
"Dere's only one ting I should feel inclined to start him in."
"What is that?"
"Should make him a sailor."
Maggie's face turned deathly white, and there was an expression of despair in her eyes as she gazed at Pete.
"He is all I have to love on earth, Pete," she said.
"Eh? You'm got to tink ob de boy. It ain't going to remain an ordinary sailor; he's going to hab facilities to

"Sure about dat?"

Certain sure."
Well, I want to see de captain."
Then you can't."
I ain't going off dis vessel till I

do."
"Haw, haw, haw! You ain't?"

"Haw, haw, haw? You a mt?"
"Nunno!"
"Hi, Bill—Tom! Stop a bit, though. The captain is dead—died three days ago—and we buried him at sea. Sad, wasn't it?"
"Mighty sad. Did he die of low-drophobia?"
"Haw, haw, haw! You a mt?"
"Mighty sad. Did he die of low-drophobia?"
"Haw, haw, haw! You a mt?"
"Mighty sad. Did he die of low-drophobia?"
"Haw, haw, haw! You a mt?"

He died of yaller fever, and its

"He died of yaller fever, and its catching."

"On hose, put dat sovereign in your pocket, and lead me to de captain."

"Shiver my timbers! It's a good 'un, too! But you ain't going to harm the old man?"

"We'm mighty good friends. I'm tinking of asking him to take a lad aboard his vessel."

"And I may have this thick 'un?"

"Dat's yours."

"This way, mate! You see, the old man don't care to be worried. You know him?"

"Yes."

"Ain't he splendid!"

"Dere's few better. Dat's why I'm asking dis favour. Hurry up! We hab only got two-free minutes."

"That's his cabin."

Pete entered it. "The old man' was certainly under thirty-five years of age, and he was a fine, handsome man, bronzed by tropical suns and a life on the occan." "Why, my dear old Pete," he cried.

the ocean.
"Why, my dear old Pete," he eried, grasping that worthy's hand, "I'm

"A brave heart, Pete? You think I keep a brave heart? Why, lad—you are a lad to me—at nights I sob in my cabin like a little child!"

"Now, ain't dat mighty ridiculous?"

"Suttingly it is. You can't alter tings cat hab occurred. Dey'm all for de best. We can't see it so at de time. Jack says dis is right, and, mind you, dat man is bound to be correct, dough I don't tell him so. Now, all dat has happened is de bery best for you. If you hadn't had any trouble in dis world you would hab ported your helm and sent your vessei to port, hauled."

"Here, you know more about the

"Here, you know more about the sea than that?" said the captain. "How the thunder can you send your vessel to port when you port your helm? But is there no hope, Pete?" "I dunno. Dat's for you to say. What's de time, old hoss?" "Five minutes to eleven." "Golly! I believe you are right, old hoss. I shall be back in five minutes." "an right, old chap. I'll be here.

old hoss. I shall be back in hye minutes."

"An right, old chap. I'll be here. You can bring the youngster."

Pete hurried up, and as he reached the vessel's side he saw Jack, Sam. and Maggie, with her little boy, who was playing with Rory, awaiting him.

"Dis way, my dear." said Pete, placing Maggie's arm within his. "De inferior cattle follow on. I hab made arrangements for your boy to go to sea de next voyage ob dis vessel. Best for him, you know. Hallo, dero! Below! Brace up your timbers and shiver your anchor chains!

"For Jack's come home from sea once more,

once more, And browned and bronzed is he.'

"How's dat, captain? What do you tink ob dat little lot, Tom Thornton? Dere's Maggie, your wife! Dere's Tom, your husband, my dear! Yah, yah, yah! And here's young Tom, de

'Maggie!" gasped the young cap-

sanor:

"Maggie!" gasped the young captain.

"Tom " panted Maggie.

Then she was clasped to her husband's broad breast, and, as he pressed his lips to hers she could say nothing.

Pete turned away, and, pulling out his knife, carved "P E T E" in huge letters ou the side of the captain's cabin. He appeared to be very much interested in his work.

"Maggie," cried Tom, "while this vessel floats that name shall appear thore; and if she floats when I die, as I trust may be the case, that name shall be cut out and nailed upon my coffin lid!"

The captain had got his little son on

shall be cut out and nailed upon my coffin lid!"

The captain had got his little son on his arm, while his other arm was round his wife's waist.

"Lassie," he exclaimed, "for all these weary years I have searched for you. No effort on my part has ever been spared, but all seemed hopeless till I met my old chum, Pete. He and his friends offered to go in search. I do not know how they found you. Until I clasped you to my breast I did not know that you were found. My stepmother told me you were dead, but I did not believe it."

"She thought I was dead, dear Tom," answered Maggie.

"I advertised in every paper," said Tom.

"I advertised in every paper," said Tom.
"Ah, Tom, I saw no papers! I could not spend money that way. It has been a hard struggle—a fight for bread."
"Maggie, what can I say? I would have given my life for you. You would not doubt it if you knew all I have done to find you, for I never believed my stepmother's assertion."
"She did not know my address. Tom. I thought that you were dead, and cared for nothing more, except our boy. But must we be parted again?"
"I'd leave the sea first! But there is no need for that. We sail a few days hence. Why not come with me, Maggie?"
"Aut little Town"

Maggie?"
"And little Tom?"

Maggie?"
"And little Tom?"
"Of course. Haven't I got lo make a sailor of him? You will never want again, dear Maggie. I am captain of this vessel, and part owner. Will you come, little wife?"
"Of course I will, dear Tom! But what can we say to Pete and his friends?"
"Nothing—absolutely nothing, because words could never express our gratitude. But they shall give us a send-off, if they will."
"Golly! Ob course we will, Tom," said Pete. "Now, you and Maggie want to hab a long talk, so we are going; but we will come back for de send-off. And, mind, I neber got your letter. But dat don't matter now."
Thus Jack, Sam, and Pete's Quest was ended.

(Another "Circus Pete" story next



Pete shook his head and sighed as he gazed upon the sad poverty in all its lurid light.

"Un the stairs, my dear fellow. And I have only just arrived. Knowing that Mre. Thorn was in distress, I came here to help her, through you."
"Nunno! She don't need any help. I'm going to look after Maggie. You must do de helping somewhere else. I'm going to help dat girl off de face ob de arth, and shove her on de water." water.''
'' How?''

"How?"

"Dore's two-free ways ob doing dat. Might chuck her ober London Bridge. Come here, you saht Is your name Tom? M'yos! Well, dat's right. Now, try some ob dese chocolatecreams. We'm going to hab a late dinner. Romp down your parcels, boys. Dere's a chair for you, Charlie."

Charlie."
"I mustn't stay."
"Eh? I dunno how you are going," said Pete, locking the door and putting the key in his pocket. "Yah, yah, yah: You'm caught in a trap. You hab got to hab dinner wid us."
"Well, I should certainly like to do

rise. Might command a vessel one

"Could you, do you think— If we were not parted."
"I'm talking 'hout de boy. We hab to consider him."
"What should I answer, sir?" murmured Maggie, turning to the young clergyman.

"That which your heart prompts."
"You can and will raise him from this misery, Pete?"
"Dat's so."
"Then I will never stand in his light."

light."
"Dat's a brave girl. But see you dis, Maggie. Dere's no necessity to trouble ober what ain't happened in dis world. Maybe I may chauge my mind in de morning. He's too young to be a sailor vet, you know; and I ain't got de inclination to take all you lub from you. Nunno! Still, Jack and Sam will come here to-morrow, and you must go wid den 'bout making Tom a sailor. Is dat settled?"
"Yes."

"Yes."
"Den good-night, my dear, and you keep a brave heart. Come along, boys!"

"Yes."
"Den't matter weder you like or not. You'm got to hab it. Clergymen ain't allowed to fight; besides, you coudn't fight free men. I hab brought some knives and forke and glasses, in case Maggie was short ob dem. Cold fowls here. Ham here. I forget what dis shaky-looking ting is called. Oh, I disrenaember. Dat's muscles!"
"Ha, ha, ha! You mean brawn," said Jack.
"My remembering cistern again. sailor, stepping forward. "We don't Dat cistern is always getting out obwant any hands."

downright glad to see you. I knew you would come when I wrote, but hardly expected you so soom. I see, lad--I see how it is."
"Where dere's life dere's laope."
"Yes. That's what makes us go on living."

living."

"Talking 'bout anoder matter, do you tink you could place a likely lad aboard dis vessel for me? He's mighty

young."
"Is's a rough-and-tumble life, Pete."

"You've risen in it."
"Not as high as you've risen out of "Dat was chance."
"So was mine, I expect. Still, I'll do my best for the youngster. How old is be?"

do my best for the youngster. How old is he?"

"Bout—well, he aln't struck ten."

"I say, that's too young to send a lad to sea!"

"Not if de captain looks after him."

"But what about his teaching?"

"He has been well taught. You could help him on."

"Why, so I could, old chap—so I could. Ay, and so I would! She's a staunch little craft, and I have some shares in her. Yes, I could help a lad on. A likely lad is he?"

"You'n guessed first time. Well built, and, like me, good-looking."

"So long as he has a heart like yours I don't care for his looks. Trot him aboard. But that will do later. Sit down, Pete."

"Fine ting to be captain and part owner ob a vessel like dis," observed Pete. "Fine ting to keep a brave heart above it all."

OUT ON THURSDAY—The Mammoth Easter and Spring Fiction Double Number of "The Union Jack," containing Two Grand, Long Complete Novels. 2d.



THE 1st CHAPTER. Two Clerks—Holiday Plans-Ben's Tomptation.

T was six o'clock of an April T was aix o'clock of an April evening, on the Thursday before Easter, and the rays of the siuking sun, shining over the towers of Westminster and aeross the curve of the Thannes to the City, brightened even the dingy offices of Mr. Brook Gantheny, the weakthy East India merchant of King William Street, F.C. and the Hawtherns, Hampstead Mr. Ganthony was still in his private-toom, husy with a pile of account-books; but most of his staff of clerkshad finished their duties and gone home, unly two remaining in the outer office.

At ten miautas past aix, Alfred Nash, a youth of nineteen, flung his pen into a tray, and with a sigh of content olimbed dawn from his stool. Having changed his coat, and picked up his hat and stick, ha hesitated for a moment, stroking a budding moustacha. Then he atopped ever to the desk where sat the junior clerk, a lad of seventeen, with a frank and pleasing face that showed signs of worty. Ben Marker bletted an envelope, and glanced up at his companion.

"Are you off?" he inquired. evening, on the Thursday be-

volope, and gianced up at his companion.

"Are you off?" he inquired.

"Yes, I'm off," said Alfred.

"Good-bye to work till next Tuesday merning. I'm going to have a ripping time, if the weather holds good. But why are you looking so glum?"

"I didn't know I was, Alt."

"Welt, you are. You ought to be cheerful, with four whole days to do nothing in. Look here, I'm fixed up for the next two days, but I haven't plaaned anything for Monday. What do you say to joining me in a trip to Hampton Court?"

"I only wish I could; but, you

Hampton Court?"
"I only wish I could; but, you see—"Ben stopped.
"I den't see. I mean to stand treat, old fellow, if you'll let me."
"That's awfully good of ynu," said Bon, flushing a little. "But I ean't go, Alf, really I can't. That's straight. I—I have something clee to de."

to de."
"Promised your best girl, sh?"
said Alf. "Then I'm not in it."
And with a laugh he took himself

said Alf. "Then I'm not in it."
And with a laugh he took himself off.

Five minutes later Ben bad finished his work, but he still sat at his desk, with a sad and wistful expression. He was thinking sf all the pleasures that more fortunate people weuld enjoy between now and Tuesday, and he could not help cavying them. He longed for a hniiday himself, if it was only a trip to Hampetead Haath, or to Kew Gardens, hut he felt that his spare time ought to be better employed.

He had nothing to do as yet—his statement to Alf had not been quite correct—but, if possible, he meant to find seme amployment, during Friday, Saturday, and Monday, hy which he could carn a little extra money. And money was badly needed at his humble home in Clerkenwell, fer his father, and his twe elder brothers. Jerry and Herbort, had been eut of work for weeks, and still had no prospects of getting any.

For a month nearly every penny of the young clerk's salary had gone to the support of the family, which included an invalid mother and a sister aged nine; but that had not sufficed to keep poverty from the door, and new, to make matters worse, Mrs. Marker's physician had prescribed cortain things that Ben was unable to buy.

This state of affaire was not known at the office, or suspected by Mr.

This state of affairs was not known at the office, or suspected by Mr. Gantheny, for the lad had pride of the right sort—not the false kind, as we shall see—and he had kept his wurries to himself. He could have asked a stranger to give employment to his father and brothers, but he would not appeal to his employer. Ile knew, moreover, that the merchant had no vacancies at present. "I can't waste these three days," he told himself. "I must get something to do, if I only aarn a few shiftings. But what is it to he?"

That will do," broke in Mr. Ganthony. "My cab, Marker." "I will fetch it at once, sir," replied the lad. And be hurried off with his head full of his extra-ordinary project.

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The Second Footman ordinary project. "I will fetch it at once, sir," replied the lad. And be hurried th This state of affairs was not known

sat puzzling ovor it, growing more despondent as he realised that he had but a slim chance of making a profit out of his helidays. A telephone-hell out of his helidays. A telephone-bell rang, and fer a moment Mr. Ganthony was heard talking at the instrument. Then he opened the door of his private-room and looked eut. "I thought you had gene, Marker," he said. "I want to speak to you." "Yes, sir." And the lad obeyed the summins.

"I thought you had gene, Marker," he said. "I want to speak to you."
"Yes, sir." And the lad obeyed the summuns.

Mr. Brook Gantheny was a targe, florid gentleman, with a benevolent face that did not helie his nature. Personal attention to business had been that secret of his success, and on his desk, strapped together, were three nr feur account-books which he meant to take home with him, as he was in the liabit of deing at weekends. He frowned slightly as he observed that the junior clerk's clothing was threadhare.

"You may call a hansom for me, Marker," he said. "My carriage will not he here to-day. And then I wish you would go to a registry-office, the address of which I will give you, and ask if they can supply a second footman. But I fest it will he uscless to send you. It is not likely that I can get a man at such short nutice, and for so shert a time."

"De you need one, sir?"

I de, and at once. My wife has just telephoned to me that our second footman was taken suddenly ill and had to go heme. He was under notice to leave, and a new man is to take his place noxt Tuesday morning. Mcanwhile, I must bave somebody else, for I am giving a dianerparty to-morrow, and en Menday evening we held a reception."

"You want a man for only four days, sir?" inquired Ben, his face flushing as a beld idea occurred to him.

"That is all—until Munday avening."

him.
"That is all—until Munday aven-

ing."
I suppose be would have to wear livery, sir!"

livery, sir!"
"Of course. That is understood."
"And what would his duties be,

"Anything that he was told to do.
It is tight work. But why do you sak, Marker? Do you bappen to know of any person who would suit me?"

"I de, sir," replied Ben, after a brief hesitation. "I know a man who would he glad to come. He is a young man, not much older than me."

is a young man, not much eiger man me."

"What is his name?"

"Tom Joicey, sir. I can recommend him, sir, and so can my father."

"Your father?" exclaimed Mr. Ganthony, with a look of surprise.

"Has the man arer worked for him?"

"No, sir; not exactly that," the lad answared. "But—but my fether knaws him well, and can give him a good character."

"What experience has the man had?"

bad?

had?"
"Not much, sir; but he is honest
and willing."
"Humph!" muttered Mr. Gauthony. "I hardly know what to say.
But I have no time to waste at
registry-offices. You may tell Tom
Joicey to present himself at my residence at seven o'clock to-morrow dence at seven o'clock to-morrow morning, Marker, and if he proves a capable person, I will pay him a couple of guineas, under the circum-

couple of guineas, under the circumstances."

"Thank you, sir," Ben said eagerly.. "I am vary grateful to you, sir—I mean that Tom Josepy will be grateful," he added confusedly. "I am sure he will——"

"That will do," broke in Mr. Ganthony. "My cab, Marker."

"I will fetch it at onec, sir," replied the lad. And be hurried off with his head full of his extraordinary project.

"It's marvellons what's as picked up," said Perks, the first footman. "E knews

Marker, alias Tom Joicey, who at the moment was polishing brass upstairs.

The young clerk's plan had begun well, and it promised to end well. Since Friday morning he had filled the post of second footman at the Hawthorne, doing all sorts of odd jobs, even the most menial, with an alacrity and willingness that had won good epinions for him.

Clad in a sint of livery, and disguised by a very slight moustache, he had more than ence been face to face with Mr. Ganthony, who did not dream of the lad's identity.

It was a humiliating position for Ben, and he felt the sting of it; hut he had stifled his pride for love of his mother.

me nau stined his pride for love of his mother.

Ille short term of service had now nearly expired. In a few more hours he could go home, with a couple of guineas in his pocket, and to morrow merning he would he at his desk at the merchant's office in King William Street.

Street.

Mr. Ganthony hail a large circle of friends and acquaintances, and at seven o'clock in the evening the Hawtherns was thrown open for the reception, which was to include music and dancing, and claborate refreshments.

Guests arrived in a stream.

Ben was at the beck and call of the butler and the first footman, and during the evening he was kept constantly busy.

He often got a glimpse of the suspected man, and at length, finding an opportunity, he ventured to question the butler.

"Can butler."

in the butler.

"Can you tell me who that waiter is, Mr. Lohb?" he inquired.

"His name is Rickett," replied the hatler, "and that's all I know about

him."
Then he has never been here be

fore?"
"No; this is the first time they've sent him. Queer eyes he's got,

Joicey."
"That's just what struck mie," said Ben

Ben.

He did not relax his vigilance, though he deuhted if there was any need for it. Half an hour later, when most of the guests had crowded to the drawing-room to listen to a famous Italian tener, Ben came up from the kitchen with a tray of slasses.

glasses.

Looking into the dining-room as he came along the hall, he saw that Mr. Rickett had disappeared; and then, as he glanced up the wids staircase, he fancied that he saw a shadow flit

he fancied that he saw a shadow flit round the landing.
"Could that have been Rickett?" the lad asked himself.

He was more than suspicions. For an instant ha hesitated. No other servants were near, so he hastily placed the tray en a chair, and glided up the staircase to the first floor.

floor.

He slopped, seeing nobody, and then erept along the corridor. He heard the Italian singer below, and suddenly, above the rich notes that filled the house, he caught a sharp click and a grating noise.

The sound came from a door on his left, and there he paused for a moment. Then, noiselessly oponing the door, he stepped over the threshold,

ment. Then, noiselessly oponing the door, he stepped over the threshold, and beheld a startling eight.

The room, a small apartment lined with books, was Mr. Ganthony's private study. A coal fire was hurning in the grate—it was a chilly evening—and a shaded electric lamp showed a man standing by a roll-top dock, which he had just forced epen.

man. "What are you doing here?"
Let me go, or "li kill you!"
"I won't ict yeu go, Stephen Fendall!" gasped the lad, who knew the truth now. "Help-help!"

dall!" gasped the lad, who Law the truth now. "Help—help!"
With that, a museular hand fastened on his throat, and he could make no further outery. The two scuffled to nnd fro, fighting deseporately, until they tripped and fell, when they rolled over the floor and collided with a table containing books, which was upset with a crash! Alarmed by the noise, fearing that it would be heard above the singing. Stephen Fendall now thought only of escape; but he could not hreak away. Ben pluckily held to his prisoner, though the grip on his throat was suffocating, and when the etruggle had lasted another minute, and the lad was about exhausted, Mr. Ganthony burst into the room, followed ind was about exhausted, Mr. Gar-thony burst into the room, followed by the butler and footman. The com-hatants were quickly dragged apart, and hauled to their feet. "Why, surely this is young Markert" exclaimed the astounded merchant.

"And this is Stephen Fendall, sir!"
cried Ben. "Don't you recognise
him? I've had my eye on him all the
evening, and I fellowed him up here.
I caught him in the act of tearing
the leares eut of one of your accountbooks—"

books "That's a lie masked waiter. lie!" raved the er. "It was the

"I believe Marker!" broke in Mr "I believe Marker!" broke in Mr. Canthony. "Take this secondred downstairs, by the hack way!" he edded to the servants. "Look him up securely, and then fetch the relies!"

edded to un up securely, and then securely, and then securely. The butler and footman left the room, with Stephen Fendall in their grasp, and when the door had been closed the merchant turned to Ben.
"Now for your explanation?" he said curtly. "So you are Tom Juicey, the second footman."

"Now for your explanation!" he said curtly. "So you are Tom Jaicey, the second footman."
"Yes, sir, I am."
"And you have been employed in my house under false pretences. What does this masquerade mean? Why have you played such a trick?"
"I—I didn't mean any harm, sirt" faltered Ben. "I will tell you all' about it, and I hepe you will forgive me. My father and two brothers have been out of work for weeks, and money was scarce at home, and—and I wanted to earn some during the holidays; but I didn't knew how, net until you spoke of wanting a second footman, and then—then I told you about Tom Joicey. That was the only reason, sir. I've been a good servant. I wouldn't have dared to do it, sir, hut, you see, my mother is—""
The lad's voice choked, and his eves

The lad's voice choked, and his eyes

The lad's voice choked, and his cyca filled with tears.

"My mother has been ill for a leng time," he continued, struggling with his emotion, "and ahe gets better very slowly, and the doctor said if we wanted her to be well and strong again she must have port-wine, and chicken, and things like that; but we couldn't afford it, air, and that is why I was tempted to—"

"I forgive you freely i" exclaimed Mr. Canthony, as he clasped the lad's hand. "You are a braw, courageous hey, with no false pride about you. I admire you for it, Marker. That'e the way to rise in life. And you have done me a great service hy frustrating Stophen Fondall's revenge, for those account-books are of priceless value."

Mr. Gantheny passed, tool out a

shose accounts of the state of

pound notes to the lad.
"There you are," he said. "There's an Easter egg for you, and it has been well carned; and hereafter your salary will be increased by fifteen shillings a week. But why didn't you telt me that you were in such straits at home? I would gladly have helped you. Send your father and brothers to me to-merrow, and I will find employment for them in the warehouse."

warehouse."
"Oh, sir, how can I thank you?"
cried the lad.
"Den't cry, Joicey." said Mr.
Ganthony. "Joicey, ch? Ha, ha!
A good juke. I've half a mind to
keep you on as second footman!"

An hour later, after Stophen Fendall had been taken to the police-station and the guests had all gone, a hansom cab rattled away from the Hawthorns, bound for the bumble litth villa at Clerkenwell; and in the cab, no longer wearing the livery of menial servitude, was Ben Marker, the happiest lad in all London.

THE END.

THE END.

(Two fine, complete stories on Tuesday next).



Mr. Ganthony burst into the room, follow d by the butler and foot-man. The combatants were quickly dragged apart.

notorcars.

Several waiters had been engaged, and one of these, a slim, clean-shaved man with grey oyes, had attracted Beu's attention from the first, for the man atrongly reminded him of Stephen Fendall, who had been Mr. Bet's attention from the first, for the man strongly reminded him of Stephen Fendail, who had been Mr. Ganthony's bookkeeper until a year ago, when he had been dismissed for dishonesty.

He might have turned waiter, and he could have come to the Hawthorns without much fear of recognition, since he had formerly worn a heard and moustache.

on foot, some in cabs and carriages and many in electric broughams and in his hand he held one of the mernotor-cars.

Several waiters hed been changed, and one of these, a slim, clean-shaved man with grey oyes, had attracted Bou's attention from the first, for the man strongly reminded him of Stephen Fendall, who had been Mr.

eried.

The startled waiter swang round with an oath, dropped the book, and struck at the lad, who ctulched his descending arm and lessened the ferce of the hlow, which, however, brushed off his false moustache and revealed his features in the glow of the lamp.

"It's Ben Marker!" smarled the

CUR WEEKLY CALENDAR:— TUESDAY.

TUESDAY. | WEDNESDAY. | THURSDAY. | FRIDAY. | SATURDAY. | THE BOYS' FRIEND. | THE MARVEL LIBRARY. | THE BOYS' HERALD. | THE UNION JACK | FLUCK, AND JESTER.



Brief Summary of the Previous Chapters.

OLLY REDCASTLE was a youth very fond of practi-cal jokes. That was bis only fault, for otherwise he was a staunch British lad of the type of which Britain is proud. But these practical lokes ware so troublesome to his father that he sent him to a school kept by a certain Dr. Quilter, who was noted all over the land as a boy-tamer. On his way to this school

boy-tamer. On his way to this schoot
—which went by the same of Austin
Towers—Dolly met with two chums
who had as great a love for mischief
as he himself possessed.

The three determined to make
things hum at Austin Towers. This
determination was certainly carried
out, and beth heys and masters soon
looked on the three as a typa of boy
with which thoy had never before met.
Dolly's stepbrother, a youth named

with which they had never before met.
Dolly's stepbrother, a youth named
Algernon, did all he could to get the
Ind into trouble. His latest piet was
the bribing of a men named Marten
to make Dolly drunk.

This Marten succeeded in dning,
and Dolly was found helplessly orunk
by Dr. Quilter and his father—Col.
Redeastle. But, thanks to the efforts
of his two chums, Dolly was cleared
of all guiltiness. But for reasons of
his own the lad would not allow his
friends to expose Algy. So Marten
bore the brunt of Colonel Redeastla's
wrath.

Later, Matten thought of a plan whereby be might get even with Dolly.

(Now commence instalment below.)

Two £5 Notes

ARTEN'S hands clenched till his knuckles were white. Then he pulled himself together again, and grow calm once more, and his eyes, that had been filled with rage, regained their usual cunning look. He looked all the more dangerous; the Iury of the tiger had given way to the cunning of the ape. ning of the ape.

ning of the ape.

"I've been making a fool of myself," he murmared. "There's avery good chance here, if that—that
—"he could not find a word evil
enough for Dalton—"don't change
his mind. He'll see Black Jack before the day's out."

Marten stood and thought for some
minutes his ever closing up to mere

minutes, his eyes closing up to mero

himself.

"It'll come off; and it's safe for me, I recken! Now this is n job that needs money."

He want round to the back of the stables and took out a greasy pocketbook. There were four banknotes in it, amounting to £20. The Orphanage had not acquired the whole, after all, for these romained from some other ventures of Marten's, including Algy's former payment, four days before.

before.

"All that's left!" said Marten grimly. "He's robbed me of the others, but I don't grudge these to wips the score out! I'll tear plenty mere of 'em off Chilterlow, once that young hound's out of the way! It's warth payin' for, if anything evar

Breathing heavily, Marten put the notes back, and walked out across

notes back, and walked out across the square.

"Jesse Quorn still looks after the horse, an' I nover knew him refusa a job with money in it. He's broke now, he usual. Besides I've got that bit of a hold ever him yet, and he won't go back on me; he daren't!" Marten, still thinking husily, turned up between two of the buildings that formed the big square where the auction mart was held, and reached a loag row of stables just beyond. There was scarcely anyhody about there, and Marten went up to a door marked No. 19, and looked over the open top of it.

A sharp-faced, shifty-cyed stable-hey of about eighteen came to the door. He was es swarthy as an Italian, and evidently lund gipsy blood in bim. If so, it did little credit to his race, for he looked little better than an animal, if his low fore-head and slack mouth were anything to go by.

eredit to his race, for he looked little better than an animal, if his low forehead and alack mouth were anything to go by.

"'Atlo, Mart!" he sald, with a swift glance, "who's bin twistin' your tail? You looks fit to jeb a knife into a cove!"

"How do yau knew I've had trouble?" said Marten; for ho was now outwardly calm, however much the fires of rage hurned within. "Don't you be too sharp, Jesse, or you'll get hurt!"

"Whatcher come for?" was all Jesse replied. "Never knew yon to turn up without wantin' somathin'!"

"For a look at your handsome and engaging features, and the pleasure of your palite conversation!" said Marten sardonically. "Are you still-looking after Black Jack?"

"You bet I am!"

"He as nigh as a toneh had the guv nor last week. The old 'un was lookin' at Jack, whe was faced renad in 'is stall, when suddenly ont goes beth Jack'a fore-hoofa like aledge-'ammers. They missed by an inch or two, or the guv nor 'd bin planted hy now! Jeek tore the seat out of Tim Brown's breeches yeste reday! If the oloth 'adn't given way, Tim 'd he in the morthary! Law, I did larf!"

"His temper don't improve, then! How did lee kill that groom last summer, d'you know!"

"Course I do; I was there! Jack grabbed him by the neck, an' started pile-drivin' him. 'E didn't look like a man when the 'oss' 'ad done with 'im!"

Jesse related Hus aneedolo of the famous man-killer as a great joke.

"That sounds promping." said

im!"

Jesse related this anecdolo of the famous man-killer as a great joke.

"That sounds promising," said Marten. "I wonder he doesn't do the same by you."

"Garn!" relorted the slableboy.

"I'm the only bloke alive can handle im; we're like brothers, Jack an' me. If I left, they'd 'ave to shoot 'im! I dessay they will some day. The old 'un only keeps him for a curiosity like."

"Is the horse savage to day?"

like."

"Is the horse savage to day?"

"He's allers savage, don't I tell
yer! Why, yesterday I ketched a
stray dorg an' put it in his stall, an'
Jack tore it to bits with 'is teeth an'
oofs till you couldn't ha' told wot it
was! Haw, haw, haw!"

Marton's cres glittered as he looked
at the boy. He lowered his volce a
little.

little.
"Suppose a stranger went into his stall to-day! Suppose he were locked in?"
"He'd serve 'im like he did the

dorg"
"The the man wouldn't get out

dorg."

"The—the man wouldn't get out alive—sh?"

"Not its, that's a cert! You pop in, an' I'll lay 't thousan' to three, he finishes you inside a minute!"

"Thanks, but it's no bet. But look here, Jesse. What if the stranger came here alone to see the horse? Could you find a way to get him into Black Jack's loose-box, and helt the door on him?"

Marten's eyes hurned so botly and his voice was so low, that Jesso stared at him curiously.

"What I say. Just cast your eye over these."

Marten took out two crisp five-pound notes, and slowly opened them. The stablebey's face lit up with an avaricious gleant. He had nevor ownad the quarter of such a aum in his life.

"You can ponch those, Jesse, if you de what I tell you."

The swarthy youth looked sideways at the notes.

"Jest tell us what the game is.

at the notes.

"Jest toil us what the game is, an' bew you reckon it's to be done," he said, under his breath. "I'm game, but I don't want to swing for it!"

"Rot! Look, Jesse, between those buildings there, down in the square where the auctioneer is. D'ye see tha old gant with the white moustache? It's some way off, hut you've got quick eyes. An' d'ye see that young"—Marten choked; he could not find a word to his tongue—"that hrat beside him?"

"Ay, I de!" replied Jesse, who could just see Dalton standing beside his father, watching some colts that were being sold.

"You'd know him again?"

"Anywheres!"

"It's pretty sure he's coming here to see Black Jack later on. If he should happan to get locked in the herse's loose hex and left to take his chance, these bits of paper are yours, Jesse!"

"Ah," said the stableboy, with an

chance, these bits of paper are yours, Jesse!"

"Ah," said the stableboy, with an ngly grin, "hand 'em over to me, Mart! I'll manage it?"

"No fear! You'll be paid when the job's done! You know I always fork out straight, Jesse. Here's two quid for a sweetner, to show it's all square. It'll only be another victim of Black Jack's!

Jesse nodded.

"You do nothing. Al! you need is to gat him inside, the horse'!! do the rest! There won't be any evidence; he'd no business to go in Jack's stall'the only thing I'm afraid of is that two pals of the cub may come with him. If they do, you must manage to separate 'em, an' get him in alone."

"I'll do it come'out!" revised Jasse.

to separate cu, alone!" replied Jasse.
"I'll do it some'ow!" replied Jasse.
"I'll do it some sorceigns. "I'll!"

"I'll do it some ow!" replied Jasse, pouching the two sorereigns. "It'll be a bit o' spart for Black Jack!" he added, grinning.

"It will! How do you mean to gat the hey into the stall? He may refuse to go."

"Easy! I'll swop the 'osses over; put old Simple Simon into Jack's loose-hex, an' Jack into Simple Simon's. The name-plates are over the troughs. Then I'll get 'im into the Simple's loose-hex along with Jack. You leave it to me, Mart; I'll manage it!"

"You're sharp enough," said Morten, with an approving ned. "Take care you don't go hack on me!" he added ominously. "No tricks, Jesse. Remember, I've got my thumb on you yet!"

"That's all right. You kaep those two flimsies ready; I shall want 'em afore the day's cut! And nuw you'd better alear off, an' not he seen talking to me."

Tho two rascals winked and parted. "I wish," murmured Martan to himself, as he laft the stahles, "I dared take Chittorlow into the game an' touch him for it. He stands to win most when it's dono; but he might shy at this, and it's not the sort of secret one can trust a fool with! I'll squeeze him afterwards. There's times when revenga tastee even bettar than cold cash!"

"ACK yer fancy, gents!
Which cup is the pea
under! There's no 'umbug about me; I'm a blessed thief,

Portland fer 'ousehreakin'! Now then, where is it?"

The little tin cups were changed round dexterously on the wooden tray that served as a table, and the old, old game of thimble-rig was open to anybody who had a few shillings to lose.

The sharp-looking gentleman, with the anciant top-hat cocked over one eye, dropped a pea on the table, popped a thimble over it, moved it in and out among the other two thimbles, and challenged the world to say which thimble the pea was now under. A fair-sized crowd was before the table, which stood well outside the grounds where the horse sale was going on. on.

going on.

"It's under the left-hand one," murmured Tommy to Dalton, for the three chums were watching the business with their usual air of bland patronage. "My heagle keyo foliowed it!"

"You let it alone, dear boy," said Dalton. "We don't want our half-crowns to join those of the noble army of mugs!"

"I am't goin' to!" replied Tommy.

A stout young miller, in a floury coat, who had been watching very keenly, put down his half-crown, and named the loft-hand thimble. The gentleman in the top-hat lifted it, and showed there was no pos underneath.

gentleman in the top-hat lifted it, and showed there was no pea underneath.

"Then where is it?" said the miller, in a rage, as his half-crown was awept away.

"Ere it is, me lord," rejoined the thimble-rigger, raising the right-band thimble, and showing the pea.
"Them bonny blue blinkers o' yours weren't quite sharp enough! 'Ave another go, like a real sportsman!"

The miller tried again, and a third time, being in an obstinate mood, and each time his half-crown was annexed by the gentleman in the hat.

"The crowd fought sliy after this, till a simple-looking countryman tried his luck, and won three half-crowns running, lost a fourth, won two more, and retired rejoicing. Then there was quite a rush of enstom, and five or six rustics lost half-crowns, the thimble-rigger and some friends behind him meanwhile keeping a sharp look-out fur the police.

"The unmitigated mugs!" murmured Montagua. "Don't they see those fellows whe wen are confederates of the old bird whe's workin' the thimbles?"

"I thought this game was dyin'out," said Tommy. "E verybody must know it's a dud!"

"It flourishes in rural districte like this. The simple natives of the soil like to be doggish, an' risk their half-crowns."

"The beanty's taken about three out?" said Montague. "It carehts"

erowns.

most when it's doon; but no his shy at this, and it's not the sort ecret one can trust a fool with! squeeze him afterwards. There's se when revenga tastee even bettar a cold cash!"

The Man-Killer's Stalt.

ACK yer fancy, gents!

Which cup is the pea under? There's no 'umaheut me; I'm a blessed thief, me hrother's doin' nine year at

"So it isn't under any of the thimbles?" said Tommy.

"That's it. They do it very neatly, and keep the pea hidden. Then, when he pretonds to show it under one of the other thimbles, ho brushes it off his nail as he raises the thimble, an' there it is. Heads I win, tails you lose!"

"Ho!" said Montague thoughtfully: "likewise ha! It's like that, is it? Btand by me, you chaps, an' support me if I faint. I'm goin' to have a half-crown's worth."

"What for? Don't be an ass, Monty!" said Tommy anxiously.

But Montague pressed forward to the little table.

"Walk up, me noble young sportsman!" said the gentleman with the hat cocked over his eye. "Down with yer 'alf-dollar, an' win ofic from poor oid Billy Beach!"

"Put a good one alongside it," said Montague; "none of your snides! I'll make it five shillings if you'll let me lift the thimble I choose myself!"

"Wot-ho! Here's a young dook thinks he's eaught us out without our mar!" rejoined the gentleman in the lop-hat. "Five bob be it then. 'Ere you are. Lift the thimble, an' welcome!" Ha laid the little pill down. "Now, me lord, keep yer eyee on the pea. Now it's covered. You'know it's there, don't yer? One-two-three!" He moved the thimbles in and out. "Now, then, whish does yer worship choose?"

This one," said Montague, placing his finger on the middle

to see.

crowd. Everybody craned their necks to see.

"This one," said Montague, placing his finger on the middle thimble. With a quick movement he knocked beth the other two thimbles over. "It isn't under either of those, so this must be the one," said Montague blandly. "You can lift it yourself if you like."

There was a moment's surprised pause, and the thimble-rigger, looking very black, swore a great oath. But from the crowd came a sudden burst of applause and a roar of laughter.

"Well done, kiddy! Pipped him fairly! Shew the pea an pay up, old bettle-nose! Good for the young 'un!"

'un !'

The thimble-rigger, angry as ho was, dared not hesitate. To show no pea undor the third thimble would be to give himself away, and probably be mobbed by the crowd. He lifted the thioble with a grow! The little pill lay there, sure ecough, and Montague swept up the half-crowns. As he did so and atepped hack, he found himself surrounded by three shabby ruffians, one of whom thruly his face into the hey's with a savage gesture. They were the thimble-rigger's confederates.

"Bail out that five blo', or we'll

his face into the bey's with a savage gesture. They were the thimble-rigger's confederates.

"Bail out that five blo', or wo'll put yer think you're goin' to play the funny business on us?"

"Here, come off there!" exclaimed Dalten and Tommy, hurrying to thair chun's resoue. "Leave him alone, you brutes!"

Dalton forced his way between. The three rogues turned savagely on the beys, who would have come off hadly but for a cry that was heard from the thimble-rigger's table.

"Nix! Here's the rozzers!"

Two constables were seen rapidly walking towards the orowd, and in a moment the thimbles and tray had vanished, and the gentleman in the top-hat was vanishing through the throng. Two of the boys' assailant followed suit. The third, who had first spoken, gripped Montague's arm with a grow!, but Montague drove an elbow into the man's ribs with a force that left him doubled up and gasping, and, darting under his atm. escaped with his chums.

"Here you are, lads! Calch!" he eried, at the same moment jerking one in the half-crowns he had won to an old beggar who was bobbling past, and the other to a ragged urchin, who fled away whooping with joy, thrusting the unexpected gift into the pooket of his tattered breeches.

"An' that's all right!" observed Montague, strolling heads to the

joy, thrusting the unexpecten guinto the pocket of his tatlored broeches.

"An' that's all right!" observed Montague, strolling back to the square with his chums. "One oan't stick to money made in that way, dear heys; hut it worried the gontloman in the hat, an' pleased the old man an' the kid, so we're all happy."

"Very neat," agreed Dalton. "One quite enjoyed seein' the thimble-rigger epen his mouth so wide, only it was sort of lucky for us, I fancy, that the men in blue turned up just then. We might have had our physiognomies obliterated, so to speak."

"To tell the truth, I'd forgetten the chap might have some bullies to back him up," returned Montague;



The stable-boy received a loft-hander stretched him flat o

"but all's well that ends well, as Billy the Spearshaker anso re-marked. There's your govarnor, Dolly. Ho looks as if he wants to stand us some grub. I can see it in his ove."

stand us some grub. I can see it in his eys."
"They serve a very gaed sart of high tea in the luncheon-tent yonder," said the colonal, when they joined him. "You'd better come with me and taka a table. I don't jatronise teas myself, and I've got to go and settle with the auctioneer for two nags I've bought. Be you three had better wire in while I'm zwsy."
They fulfilled his ideas to the letter. It was an excellent tea, and they spent some time over it. Daltos, who had finished first, looked at the clock.

the clock.
"I say, you chaps, the governor will have to be drivin us hack as soon as he's paid up. I want to see that famous horse before we go—Black Jack, or whatever they call him, Short and Riller!"

"Plenty o' time for that," said Montague, with great indifference; cating a custard puff. "Have another tart, Tommy?"

another tart, Tommy?"

"I axpect he's like any other horse," said Tommy; "but one doesn't get grui like this every day. Beats Rogers's bollnw!"

"You're a pair of gorging hogs!" said Dalton, who had eaten so much he could hold no more. "You think of nothing but your unholy insides. You haven't any fine feelings. I mean to see that gee!"

"All right. You go an' find where he is, au' then come and take us, "said Tommy, attacking his ninth cheese-cake.

for!"
Daitou walked out, and, after making one or two inquiries that led him wrong, found a groom who directed him.
"Black Jack? Ho's in the long stable, door No. 19 air. Jesse Quern's got charge n' him."
Dalton thanked him, and made his way to the place. Leaning over the

way to the place. Leaning over the lialf-door of No. 19, he found Jesse, chawing a screw of tohacco, for no smoking was allowed in the stahles.

chawing a screw of tohacco, for no smoking was allowed in the stahles.

"Is this whore Black Jack hangs out?" asked Daiton.

Jesse, who had watched the hoy approaching, scanned him with his cunning little eyes.

"Ay," he said—"'tis."

"Are you his groom?"

"I ham!"

Daltou inoked with interest at the only living being, as he had heard, whom the black stallion would allow near him. He did not admire Black Jack's taste.

"Can I see the borse?"

"No," said Jesse carelessly. "I reeken not. I ain't supposed to let strengers in by rights."

"If a boh would he any use to you—" said Daiton, who was eager to view the man-killer.

"Oh, if you put it like that," returned Jesse, pocketing the shilling which Dalton produced, "somm on in!"

He opened the abor. Dalton

In !"

He opened the door. Dulton found himself in a well-built stable, with a wide altoy-way running down it, and every stall and loese-hex had its own door, with bars on the upner part, to shut it off from the alley. It was a regular racing stable, and over avery water-trough was the name-plate of the herse that lived there.

Incre.

Jesse led the way a few doors up, and halted before a loose-box.

"There y'are, governor," he said.
"There's the 'oss that's killed two men an' orippled more, an' I'm the enly chap livin' that can go leto his stall an' came out on me feet!"

Dalton looked through the bars. He saw a large hlack harse munching his oats quietly. Beyond his size there was nothing remarkable about him, and a mure peaceable-looking, ordinary sort of animal cauld hardly be found. Yet the

plate over his trough certainly bora the name "Black Jack" in large lettors.

"That !" said Dalton.

lettors.

"That!" said Dalton. "Why, he looks as quiet as a meke!"
The stable-boy grinned.

"Yes, he dn. But I'll lay six to one if you go into his stail you won't come out alive, for all that! Will yer try it!"

"No. By what I've heard of him he's a sertainty," returned Dalton, who had been hrought up among horses, and knew that looks are not always much to go hy; "but hn certainly seems as quiet as a sheep."

"Ay, an' he'd go on lookin' so until you got fairly in reach o' him, then you'd learn somethin'!"

"Let's see you go in."

The stable-boy did so. He patted the horse and arranged his halter, and the animal scarcely noticed him.

"It isn't much of a bob's worth," grumbled Dalton; "stil, I'm not goin' to let him practise on ms, though I could hardly believe he's vicious, except that I've heard it so often."

"Looks often belie osses, sir," said Jesse, watching Dalton's face.

"Looks often belie of Looks, sir," said Jesse, watching Dalton's face. "Why, thera's the old imple now-hoxes lower down-'e looks as if 'e could eat yer without sait. There ain't a wickeder-lookin' 'oss in England, an' with 'e's England, an' yat 'e'a quiet as a lamb, an' my govornor's little gal o' sixteen rides 'im."

govornor's little gal o'
sixteen rides 'im."

"Let's have a look at
him," said Dalton.
He was taken to
another loose-box. The
hame over the trough
was "Simple Simen,"
but as Dalton looked in
through the had never
seen a name fit worse.

"My eye!" he said.
"He looks a terror, sn'
no mistake!"

The inmate was a black
horse, not so hulky as
tha other, but very handsome, with a glossy cost,
and an eye that warned
the whole world to stand
off. It was the eye of a
demon, and as the beast
caught eight of Dalton
he rolled the white of
that eye hack, and
atreckhing out a snaky
head, bared his great
teeth to the gums in a
hideous way.

Used as he was to
horse, it mads Dalton
shiver.

"Ay, 'e sin's pretty, is

shiver.

"Ay, 'e ain's pretty, is he?" replied Jesse; "but just look 'ere."

The horse was loose in the hex. Jesse entered, and the vicious-looking brute ran to him, whinnying, and nuzzled his waistcoat affectionately. The stable-boy pulled his ears through each hand, and smacked him about to make him show himself, all of which was taken meakly. The

him about to make him show himself, all of which was taken meekly. Jesse es me out again.

"There," he said; "an', mind yer, that 'oss don't know me, like t'other one does. Quist as a kitten, an' such a beautiful face an' actinn! Would yer like to try 'm, sir'! If yer'll apring me another beh. I'll pep a saddis ou an' you can ride 'im round the square an' back."

Dalton's eyes glistoned. The viciousness of its looks he cuite for-

entified. The next instant the loose-hox gate was slammed to and holted, and the stable-boy vanished. "Hi?" cried Daltoa. "What are you about? You've locked me in!

you shout?

The Only Chance,

ALTON flung himself back-wards in the very nick of time, and so near was the encounter that one steel-shod hoof grazed his chin as it whizzed past and crashed into the door. The great

orashed into the door. The great teeth clashed together a foot short of his skull.

In that single moment the whole truth came to Dalton like a flash. It was plain enough—he was alone with the man-killer—the hrute from whose stall no man might hope to

for another deadly kick, Dalton threw himself upon them and clung with all his might to the hocks.

It is a desperate ramedy, and one that needs a bold heart and a steady nerve to attempt, but Dalton did it. There was an instant's respite, and then, with a frenzied squeat, the stallion lashed out madly.

Daiten was flung up with a jerk that threatened to send him flying, hut he kept his grip, his Iegs locked to those of the horse, and came down with them. Again and again Black Jack kicked furfuusly, plunging and anapping like a mad creature.

anapping like a mad creature.

Had Dalton been but a foot or two away from those hoofs, so as to catch the force of the blow, the life would have been beaten out of him at the first kick, and the brute would have mangled his body. But clinging to the hocks, as high up as he could hold, they only flung him up and down without striking him, and were hampered by his weight.

ing them back. "We must tackle the brute! Tommv—"

ing them back. "We must tackle the brute! Tommy—"
He flung the door open with a jerk, just as Black Jack lashed cut, and the exhausted hey, who could hold on no longer, loosed his grip. Consequently he was sent flying through the door as he let go, and fell in the alley-way. Black Jack span round with a squeal of triumph, to rush out after him.

"Shut the door!" orled Montague, as he and Tommy slammed it just in time, shooting the bolts just as the stallion charged it with a force that made it shiver. The boys turned thatily to Dalton, who lay behind them.

"Are you hart Dalton!"

"Are you hart, Dolly?"
"No," pauted the boy; "don't think so-bruised a good hit, an' the wind knocked out of me. Help me no!"

mp?'
They were astonished to see him stand, for the sight was such a terrible one when they arrived that they thought Dalton must be half

terrible one when they arrived that they thought Dalton must be half killed.

"Great Scott! You must be damaged somewhere!" exclaimed Montaguo, hadding him hy the arm.

"Be careful, old chap!",

"No; I'm not hurt. I'll be fit as ever, as soon as I get my wind hack. It was a bit exhaustin', that's all. You see, I hung on to the beggar's logs before he got a kick at me, so I was only chucked up an' down for a spell. It's the only thing to do when you're set on by a horse in his stall, if you can't get out."

"My auut!" said Temmy. "I shouldn't ilke to try it."

Montague and Tommy were too astonished to understand what had hapened.

"But how the deuce did you get

happened.

"But how the deuce did you get into such a hat, old chap? Is that Black Jack, the man-killer, in there? You can't have been ass anough to climb in an' tsckle him!"

"No." said Dalton grimly, brushing himself down, "I was locked in."

"What! Who by? I say, the name over the trough ain't Black Jack, it's—"

"I know. The feller—"

"I know. The fellow who locked me in must have changed the horses, so as to give Black Jack a chance at

me."
"But what for? Who the dickens did it?

As the words left Montague's lips, Jesse Quern anddenly came round the sorner of the stalls, and as he caught sight of the boys, and met Dalton's eyes, he started hack in amazement and terror.

"Ah!" said Dalton, stepping quickly towards him. "You may well look like that, you murdering sweep! Come hers! Step him, you chaps—that's the fellow that locked me in!"

chaps—that's the fellow that locked me in!"

"Out o' my way!" cried the stable-hoy hearsely, as Montague and Tommy darted behind him to cut off his retreat. "Whateher up to?"

"You're going to answer to me for locking me in with Black Jack!" said Dalton grimly. "I don't know what harm I'va ever done you, that you should want me killed; but I'll do you some now! Put your hands up!"

The stable-boy gave vent to au oath, and rushed at Dalton. Being a good head taller, he reckeded on au easy victory. He was all the more aurprised to receive an astonishing left-hander of the real Redeastle hrand, that stretched him flat on his back with a force that shook all the teeth in his head.

reeth in his head.

For a moment he lay as if stunned.

Then, lenping to his feet, with a wild cry, he snatched up a stablefork that leaned against the wall, and rushing at Dalton, drove the steel prongs with all his force at the boy's chest.

(This fine school story will be continued on Tuesday next. Tell your chams about it.)



was flung up with a jork the out he kept his grip, his legs l threatened to send him flying, ked to those of the horse.

escape alive. The swarthy stable-boy had locked him in with Black Jack—decoyed him in, and left him to his fate.

"Come back, you hound!—Come back!" shouted Dalton at the top of his voice.

There was no time for either

"Come back, you hound!—Come back?" shouted Dakon at the top of his voice.

There was no time for either speech or thought. The demon of a horse came at him again, and this time, swiftly as Dakon tried to dodge, the great teeth met over his shoulder. They missed the ficsh but caught the boy's cnat, and the cluth tore out bodily. Dakon staggered bank, and the great hind-hoofs lashed out with deadly force.

The first rush of the attack was so sudden and furious that Black Jack over-reached himself, and missed his mark both times, so agile was the boy. But to go on dodging was hopeless; the savage hind-hoofs were lashing out murderously, and in that confined hox it was impossible to avoid them long. In his despair, Dakon took the one solitary way by which a man has a chance to save his life in such a case.

There was no time for hasitation. As Black Jack lowered his bind legs

There was no time for hasitation. As Black Jack lowered his bind legs

"Help! Help!" yelled Dalten, with all the force of his lungs. "Help! Is there no one! Quick, or I'm done for!"
Ho shouted at the top of his voice, the words jerked cut of him is the struggio. The ramping brute of a stallion, in a frenzy at being baulked, squsaled, and bucked, and plunged. Dalton was out if reach of its hoofs and teetb, but the strain was terrible, and twice he was nearly flung off the hocks. To lose his grip meant death; yet he knew he could hold on hut a few seconds more.

"Help!" he cried hoarsely. Then, as his strength began to fail him, a sound was heard that gave him new hope. The door down the alley-way was flung open, and somabody ran in.

"Dolly! Was that you shouting!"

iu.
"Dolly! Was that you shouting?"
soid a voice. "Where are you?"

"Dolly! Was that you shouting?"
ried a voice. "Where are you?"
"Here! Quick?" gasped Dalton.
Two pairs of legs came running
down the alley towards the uproar in
the loose-box, and a mornest later
the faces of Tommy and Montague
were seen at this bars of the door.
"Great Heavens!" gasped Montague, tearing at the bolts and shoot-

"Great Heavens!" gasped Montague, tearing at the bolts and shootarrangements for matches

This is a matter that should be taken in land early, for a really useful man will speedily have all his fixtures for the season arranged so that the members will have plenty of time to know what the matches are, so as to select those they want to play in.

play in.

From the first week in May to the From the first week in May to the last in September, there will be a match each week. Early after the close of one season, the secretary commences fixing up for the next.

There is a great deal of sorrespondence, and the work is certainly not to be despised, as very likely there might be

a second elever involving another set of matches. So

choose a man who wilt be prompt in his replies to letters, and if there is a great deal of work there will be an assistant secretary who shall cummon committee meetings.

It is 'not too much to say that upon the secretary and captain the whole future of the alub depends,

Oue word of adviro as to your rules. State thin name of the club; have one with reference to the

with reference to the officers and their duties,

officers and their duties, and let the third rule deal with the subscription, and in many clubs, an entrance fee of one shilling, with two shillings and sixpence paid in advance, will be found sufficient particularly if the do not have to pay for the ground.

(To be sentinued.)

HOW TO FORM A CRICKET CLUB. BY ALBERT TROTT. THE FAMOUS ANGLO-AUSTRALIAN CRICKETER.

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club, it is in many ways a straightforward matter. It differs, however, very much according to whether you live in town or country, and for this reason: in the former you will probably not be able to have your own ground, but in the latter you would have plenty of op-portunities. In the one case—as, for

you want to form a sricket club, it is in many ways a straightforward matter. It is, however, very much according whether you live in town or any, and for this reason: in the er you will probably not be able to play on prepared and provided pitches in the parks and open spaces under the care of the London County Council, perhaps once a fortnight, and for this reason: in the er you will probably not be able to play on prepared and provided pitches in the parks and open spaces under the care of the London County Council, perhaps once a fortnight, and for which in some towns, your will have to pay a small fee. New, in the village, a pitch can usually be obtained free.

Having got your ground—and, by the way, if you want a County Council

pitch in London, your secretary must apply in November of each year to the Parks Committee at Spring Gardons—you should first start your club be: duh by

calling a meeting

of those interested, sarly in the year, and choose a precident, vice-precident, trossurer, a committee of five or seven, with a captain, vice-captain,

seven, with a captain, vice-captain, and secretary.

I think that the most important of these officers are the captain and the secretary. Now, the latter must be a man who has plenty of tact, and who is evar cheerful and who can inspire soufidence when a side is losing, as well as winning. Ha must be fair to all, treat them alike, and also write letters and make

ANOTHER FINE NUMBER NEXT WEEK, containing further Long Instalments of our Grand New Serial Stories. Order Your Copies in Advance.



A STIRRING STORY OF EASTERTIDE.

ALLAN BLAIR, BV

THE 1st CHAPTER. What Happened in the Lonely Barn.

AHERE was a decided limp about the boy's left foot every time he lifted it from the hard His face, too, looked pale and

And no wonder. Cleg Ross had walked far on this day and the day before, and had eaten but little. Runaways often have hard times upon the road, and Cleg was nothing else than a runaway. Something like twenty-four hours before he had left the home which had never been a home to himthe house of his stepfather and stepmotner at Portsmouth.

And now he was on the high-road—along which, before the days of railways, the coaches had been wont to roll—the old road that led to London. Cleg had lived at Portsmouth between four and five years. He had been born in Scotland, within a few miles of "Edinbro' Toon," and for the first few years his life had been a happy one. But then his mother had died, and his father, after a year or two, had married again.

Even then the by's life—apart from the loss of his dearest and best friend, his mother—had been bright enough, for between him and his father there was a bond of love which nothing could break.

Nothing? Yes, one thing. And it had come. When Clegg was eight years old death had visited his home once more, and had taken away his father. Very soon after that Cleg's stepmother had quitted Scotland for the South of England, where, two years later, she, in her turn, married again.

From the very first Cleg's stepfather

the South of England, where, two years later, she, in her turn, married again.

From the very first Cleg's stepfather —Jensen his name was—had shown a pronounced dislike for the boy. Time had only served to widen the breach, and during the time Cleg had lived beneath Mr. Jensen's roof his life had been one long round of harsh words, petty bullyings, and brutal thrashings.

The culminating point had been reached on the evening previous to that with which our story deals. For practically no fault at all Cleg had been beaten savagely by his stepfather. Striving hard to control his tears, the boy had snatched up his cap, and without more ado had rushed from the house, determined never again to return to it.

One solitary penny was all the wealth he possessed in the world, and this he had expended on a small loaf ere he had put more than half a dozen miles between him and Portsmouth town. He had been bungry, and had ate his loaf with the keenest appetite, walking bravely on after the frugal meal.

London, he had made up his mind,

ate his loaf with the keenest appetite, walking bravely on after the frugal meal.

London, he had made up his mind, should be his goal, though why he could not have said, for he preferred the country to the town at any time, and set greater store on the green, open fields than on all the bricks and mortar that ever defaced "desirable building sites." But he had to go somewhere, and so, like every other runaway he had ever read about, he set his face towards London.

And now here he was, twenty-four hours after his departure from home, still some thirty miles from the great City. He had slept behind a haystack on the previous night, and had slept soundly, protected from the chill of the April night by the warm rick. He had risen early, and all day long had tramped on through the sunshine.

But for the ever-growing feeling of hunger he would have felt comparatively happy. But when breakfast, and dinner-time comes and there is no breakfast.

Tea-time had come, too, but there was nothing to eat or drink for poor Cleg. Behind him, as he looked back towards the west, he had seen the sun disappear below the rising uplands. A sigh had escaped him then, but he turned his face once more towards London, and resolutely stepped out.

Weary and footsore, he limped worse and worse at every step, hie pace getting slower and his face growing more pinched and pale.

"The next best thing to something to eat," he muttered to himself,

"would be a good long sleep till the morning. I wonder if I shall be lucky enough to find another hay-stack? Hallo! There's a place that will do fine!"

He was rounding a bend in the road, and even as he spoke caught sight suddenly of a barn standing in a field a little way off the road. He made for it at once. Plainly, the barn had been used at some time or other as a stable. It was divided into two compartments. The larger part of it resembled a "loose box," while at the end, divided off by a partition that reached to within four feet of the roof, was a stall littered with dry straw, and fitted with a manger and a hayrack above. It was the very place Cleg at once made up his mind—the very place for a good long sleep—warm and dry, and likely to be free from interruption. With a eigh that, but for his hunger, might have been one of perfect contentment, he sank down upon the heap of straw. Tired out as he was, he was fast asleep within two or three minutes.

o of straw. Tired out as in was fast asleep within two or

the heap of straw. Tired out as he was, he was fast asleep within two or three minutes.

He awoke, not with that feeling of perfect refreshment after adequate rest, but suddenly and stupidly, as when one is rudely awakened before one's due time.

For a moment his eyes were heavy, his brain dull, and his hearing confused. But in a few ecconds these things passed away, and he found himself sitting bolt upright, listening and staring straight before him with all his might.

things passed away, and he found himself sitting bolt upright, listening and staring straight before him with all his might.

Voices—voices from the other side of the partition! Clearly and distinctly the sounds came to him, though the conversation was carried on in a low tone.

How long he had been asleep Cleg did not know. An hour or two must have passed, however, for through a chink in the barn wall he could see a star in the slate-hued sky. Night had come on, then, and it was dark outside. Inside the barn a feeble yellow light showed itself above the partition and got lost in gloomy shadows among the dark, cobwebbed beams in the roof.

But meantime the action of Cleg's eyes was checked by his ears. What was it these men were saying? Two voices there were, and it at once became plain that they were engaged in the discussion of some serious and sinister purpose.

"He ought to be here presently, Wicks. It's nearly half-past eight, and that's been about his time for the last two nights. I hope he's got the thing to-night. I'm getting a bit tired of this. We've spent nearly a week over the job already."

"Isn't it worth spending a week over, Hallard? Anybody would think from your talk we were engaged on a tuppenny-ha'penny job. The stone is worth seven hundred pounds, at least. That's what Sir Matthow paid for it at auction. I was there when he bought it. Reckoning it at that figure, and knocking off the fifty pounds which we promised the postman, why, there'll be six hundred and fifty to divide, and that won't be a had week's work."

"No; perhaps not." assented Hallard. "But listen! Isn't that the tinkling of a bievele bell? It must be

divide, and that won't be a bad week's work."

"No; perhaps not," assented Hallard. "But listen! Isn't that the tinkling of a bicycle bell? It must be the postman."

Cleg Ross, crouching there upon the straw behind the partition, had listened to this conversation with bated breath. Now the voices ceased, and he heard the soft step of one of the men across the barn, and then the opening of the door.

"An' it is you, Thorp! You've come at last. What's the news?"

"I've got it!" was the answer, spoken in a tone of subdued excitement. "It's in my bag, in a registered packet."

Not another audible word for a moment; only an eager mumble of satisfaction as the door of the barn was softly closed.

Cleg could restrain himself no longer. There was mischief afoot, that was evident. What did the strange talk of these men mean? He must find out.

was evident. What did the strange talk of these men mean? He must find

out.

They had started talking again in low tones, all three of them, and now there was a rustling sound as of papers being handled.

Silently Cleg rose to his feet, and,

hardly daring to breathe, climbed on to the manger and clutched with both hands the hayrack above his head. Then, turning his eyes, he looked over the partition.

Upon the ground knelt three men

Upon the ground knelt three men, one with a postman's cap on and a badge of office round the arm of his cost, showing that he was acting as an auxiliary postman. Before them was the postman's bag and a heap of letters, which the men were busily engaged in examining by the light of a lantern set near.

"Nothing else we want here," muttered Wicks—"nothing else worth taking, seemingly.

"Well, let's have a look at the packet, just to make sure we've got the right thing," said Hallard.

Wicks drew from bis pocket a small, registered packet, which he had placed there a minute before. He cut the sealed string and broke it open. A small cardboard box was revealed. Removing the cover from this, a layer of cottonwool showed. With eager fingers Wicks flicked it away. A gratified exclamation broke from the three men. Embedded in the lower layer of cotton-wool was a magnificent diamond, of great size and dazzling brilliance.

"That's all right," observed Wicks.
"Now we'll be going. We've plenty

"That's all right," observed Wicks.
"Now we'll be going. We've plenty of time to catch the nine-forty train from Birstham to town. We'll go

over the partition, Cleg Ross now looked on a sight such as he had never before seen. He saw the postman, still with that cunning grin upon his face, quietly submit while the other two rogues bound his arms behind him, secured his ankles with cords, and fixed the gag firnly over his mouth. him, secured his ankles with cords, and fixed the gag firmly over his mouth. That done, his clothes were besmirched with mud fetched from the field outside, while his peaked hat was smashed in as though by a blow, and thrown to the ground a yard or two from the prostrate form of the postman.

"Now, then," said Wicks, "we're all complete. You've got our address, in case anything happens and you want to write to us. We'll cut off. Good-night!"

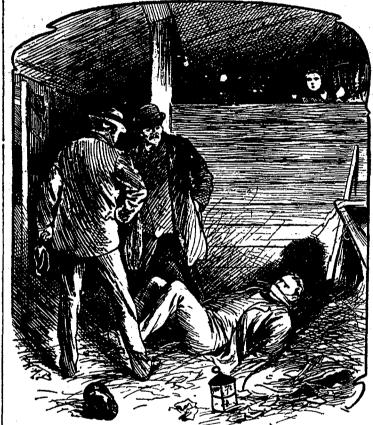
The gagged postman jerked his head in reoly, while the two men moved towards the door. A moment later and they were gone.

THE 2nd CHAPTER How Cleg Brought About the Arrest of the Thiovas.

B LANK amazement was on the face of the boy who had been an unseen witness of face of the boy who had been an unseen witness of these strange doings. The barn was in complete darkness now, for the two men had extinguished the lantern be-fore going. Robbery had been com-mitted, that was platu—robbery of an uncommon and ingenious character— and he had been a witness of it. What ought he to do? His mind was made

up at once.

The postman was safe where he was.
He would lie there, belpless to move, till someone should come and discover



Cleg clutched the hayrack above looked over t e his head with both hands,

noross the fields; it'll save meeting | him.

people."

"Here, what about me?" said the postman, with a laugh. "I've got fifty to come, ain't I? And then you've got to make me look like the victim of highway robbery with vi'lence. But before you start on that I'd like to handle the fifty quid."

Without a word, Wicks produced a pocket-book, counted out some banknotes, and handed them to the postman. With a grin, the latter pocketed them.

man. With a grin, the latter possesses them.

"Now, then, for the highway robbery business," he said. "You needn't treat me very bad. You sprung on me from behind—that's what I shall tell 'em—just when I was stoppin' to light my bicycle-lamp arter it had gone out."

"Where is your bicycle?" asked Wicks.

Wick

Wicks.

"Just outside the door," the postman answered, with a boarse laugh—
"lyin' in the field where the murderous vill'ins threw it!"

"Right! That'll do," Wicks said, with a nod. "Now we'll gag you and truss you up like a fowl in two ticks."

From a black bag, which he picked up from the corner, Hallard took out some cords and a gag of leather.

Peering with wide-stretched eyes

him. The other two men were going to catch the nine-forty train to London. From where—Birstham? Yes; that was the place they had mentioned. Perhaps, then, there was time to capture them ere they got away with the proceeds of the "put-up" robbery.

Cleg had clambored down among the straw again. Without a moment's further hesitation he made for the door. No need to be stealthy now. The postman could not move; he could not even shout, though he gave vent to a mumbling sound from behind his gag as Cleg quickly opened and shut the door of the barn behind him.

A bioyele lying on the ground caught the boy's eye at once. He picked it up and hurriedly wheeled it from the field to the road. He glanced around. Which way should he go?

Lights twinkling in a hollow a mile

Lights twinkling in a hollow a mile or so away on the London road decided him. Wicks and Hallard had said they would go across the fields. There was, then, no likelihood of his encountering them. Even if he did he would pass unsuspected, for in the darkness they would not recognise that the bicycle was painted red.

darkness they would not recognise that the bicycle was painted red.

It took him but a few moments to reach the first of the lights he had seen. A hasty-shouted inquiry of a boy as to the name of the place

elleited the fact that it was the town of Birstham. Another inquiry, and he learned where the police-station was situated. Straight to it he rode.

Breathlessly, and shaking all over with exoitement, he told hie story to the superintendent. That officer looked amazed at the boy as he began. Almost incredulous at first, he presently found himself believing.

"You will know these two men again?" he asked, when Cleg had finished his story.

Cleg nodded.

"I should know them anywhere," he answered.

"And you say they're going to catch the pine forty train to London?" Very

he answered.

"And you say they're going to catch the nine-forty train to London? Very well, then," the officer added, as Cleg gave another assenting nod, "you come along with me to the railway-station, and we may be able to clap our hands on these gentlemen."

He passed into another room, beckoned to a couple of constables, and without further delay set off with them and Cleg towards the railway-station.

station.

Acting on the superintendent's suggestion, Cleg Ross at first entered the station alone. There were but few passengers on the platform, and almost the first persons he caught sight of were Wicks and Hallard waiting for the London train, which was due in about ten minutes.

Swiftly Cleg glided back to where, under the shadow of one of the station outbuildings, he had left the officers.

"They're here, sir," he whispered to the superintendent. "They're sitting on one of the seats on the platform."

The anxiety which had been in the

ting on one of the seats on the platform."

The anxiety which had been in the officer's eyes disappeared in a moment. With Cleg directing them towards the spot where the two men were sitting, they entered the station by way of the booking-office. A sidelong glance through the window revealed wicks and Hallard only a few yards away. With one whispered word to his men, the superintendent darted through the door, followed by the constables.

There was no struggle to speak of. Wicks and Hallard were too overwhelmed with astonishment to offer any but the most feeble resistance, wist one cry of chagrin and anger, and the handouffs were clapped upon their wrists, and there they were, in safe castody.

Taking them at once into a weiting.

Just one cry of chagrin and anger, and the handouffs were clapped upon their wrists, and there they were, in safe casuady.

Taking them at once into a waiting room, the superintendent promptly searched them. From Wicks's pocket he drew out the little cardboard box. Opening it, the brilliant facets of the big diamond flashed on his sight. With a eigh of relief he placed the gem in his pocket, glanced at Cleg Ross with a smile, and murmured:

"All right, my boy! You've done somebody a good turn, I can tell you! Come along! We'll find out later who that somebody is."

Within ten minutes the party had arrived at the police-station, and the two prisoners were safely locked up.

In less than an hour after that the cells contained a third prisoner—no other than the postman Thorp.

Thorp soon realised that the game was up, and forthwith he made a clean breast of the whole business.

Wicks and Hallard, it appeared, were two well-known London jeweltnieves. By means known only to themselves, they had discovered that Sir Matthew Atherley, an eccentric old baronet living in the neighbourhood, had purchased a valuable diamond at a London auction. Instead of taking it home with him, he had sent it to a firm of London lapidaries to be cut. Further, the thieves had learned that the baronet, by an odd whim of meanness, intonded to save the expense of a personal messenger by having the gem sent through the post in a registered packet.

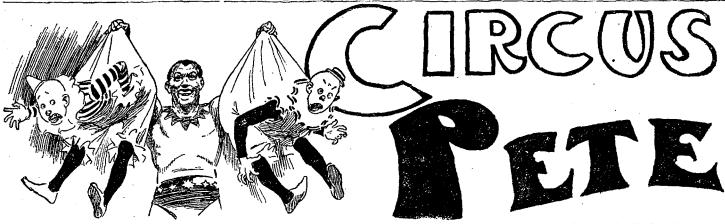
At first the thieves' purpose had been to make a really violent attack

sonal messenger by having the gem sent through the post in a registered packet.

At first the thieves' purpose had been to make a really violent attack on the one postman whose duty it was to deliver letters in that neighbourhood; but getting friendly with Thorp, who was acting as an auxiliary postman during the illness of the regular service man, they had found him to be of a quite unscrupulone and pliable nature, and the offer of fifty pounds had won him over as their accomplice. In due time, at the county assizes, the three men met with their fitting punishment. As to Cleg Ross, his prompt action earned for him quite a substantial reward. Sir Matthew Athorley, though ho might be eccentric, was not a man to overlook so great a service. Nor was his meanness, which we have hinted at, at all characteristic of the man. For when, a day or two after the robbery, he offered Cleg a situation on his estate, it was on such terms as made the boy perfectly satisfied with his immediate lot and his future prospects.

THE END.

OUT ON THURSDAY—The Mammoth Easter and Spring Fiction Double Number of "The Union Jack," containing Two Grand, Long Complete Novels. 2d.



Series of Complete Stories. By S. CLARKE HOOK. A Grand New

N Southampton landing-stage stood Pete, a negro lad.
Although so young, his tall
form was perfectly doveloped, and
there was a sign of strength in his

there was a sign of strength in his every movement.

"So dese are de Southampton Docks, are dey? Seems to mo rader too much sloppiness 'bout dem. Pir aps dat's de rain. I dunne how it is, but when a nigger lad works his passage ober, seems to me de captain night gib him someting to start wid, 'cos a bent halfpenny ain't much capital."

"Mind your pockets, Maria!" said a stout gentleman to a big lady who was standing near Pete, and had overheard his soilloquy. "Ah! Hang your box, fellow! I have damaged my

stout gentleman to a big lady who was standing near Pete, and had overheard his soilloquy. "Ah! Hang your box, fellow! I have damaged my shins against it!"

This latter was addressed to a clean-shaven, jovial-looking individual, who wore a tall hat very much on one side, an enormous gold watchchain, and smoked a big cigar.

"Sorry, dear boy!" he said. "You should look before you leap."

"You have no right to leave your chest there."

"Jest so. But, again, I have no strength to shift it. I am sorry the fact of your having barked your shins makes you growl and kick up a shindy; but I infinitely prefer your having done that to my higging that chest about."

"Tink you would like dat chest carried, sah?" inquired Pete.

"That is what I am waiting for; but it wants a couple of men-Well!"

Pete seized the heavy chest by the handle, swung it on his shoulder, and

but it wants a couple of men—Well!"
Pete seized the heavy chest by the handle, swung it on his shoulder, and crunched the big lady's bonnet, for she had got too close to the back of that box. She was evidently a lady of action and not words. Grasping her gamp more firmly, she emashed it over Pete's woolly Pate.

"Hi, golly! Where's all dis coming from?" roared Pete, slewing round and catching Maria's husband a fearful crack over the head with the back corner of the box. "Be a little less energotic, my dear. You'm hurting my noddle wid dat gamp."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the owner of the chest. "It's awfully funny!"

"I dunno!" growled Pete. "It don't feel so funny to me as it looks to you, old hoss. I neber was much at arithmetic, but I tink dere's some fractions in my head now."

"What's your name, lad?"

"Yete!"

"Well, Pete, my name is James

fractions in my head now."
"What's your name, lad?"
"Pete!"
"Well, Pete, my name is James
Travers, better known as 'Jimmy.
Cart that chest this way."
"I have been assaulted, fellow!"
roared the augry man, stepping in
front of Jimmy."
"Well, dear boy," exclaimed that
worthy, knocking the ash off his eigar,
"I don't suppose it's the first tame,
and I'm thumping certain it won't be
the last, if you don't get out of my
way. Come along, Pete!"
"Dis road to London!" bawled
Pete. "Make way for de sea chest.
By your leave, dere. Make way!"
And people made it, because Pete
followed Jimmy, who went at a fairly
good pace. Once or twice he turned
to glance at Pete, who kept close
behind him.

It was evident that Jimmy knew his

good pace. Once or twice he turned to glance at Pete, who kept close behind him.

It was evident that Jimmy knew his way about the place. He turned down several back streets, until at last they arrived at the outskirts of the town, and here he stopped at an open space, with a high hearding round it. Unlocking a door in the hearding, he directed Pete to follow him.

"Put the chest down there," he said, placing three halfpence in Pete's hand as he obeyed.

"Tank you, old hose! Dat makes twopence capital. We'm getting on. Good-night!"

"Come here!" cried Jimmy.

"Come here!" cried Jimmy.

"I have given you a halfpenny too much. Give it back."
"Golly! No fear. Dis child don't mind working hard to earn money, but he ain't such a mighty idiot as to return any dat he has earned."
"I'm glad to see you ain't quite a fool. Do you mean to say you are satisfied with three-halfpence for carrying that thundering thing all this way!"

"Don't see why not. It ain't taken me so mighty long, Mr.— Let's see, what was dat name?"
"James Travers, Esquire. Call me

Jimmy.

what was dat name?"

"James Travers, Esquire. Call me Jimmy."

"Well, Jimmy, old hoss, dis money is a lot to me; I ain't returning it."

"I'll punch your head if you don't!"

"Den start punching. I'd rader hab my noddle punched dan go to bed hungry, 'specjally as I shall do a bit ob punching back."

"Well, will you carry that chest for another mile for a penny?"

"Now you'm talking!" cried Pete, swinging it on his shoulder onco more.
"Lead on, Jimmy, old hoss! You'm a mighty good sort."

"I should be a mighty bad sort to pay a lad three halfpence for the work you have done, lad. There is half-acrown!"

"Keep it."

"Yah, yah, yah:" roared Pete, placing the chest on the ground. "Yali, yah, yah! 'Scuse me!"

Then he took a run forward, turned a somersault without touching the ground, and landed on his feet.

"You'm a downright good sort, Jimmy! Good-pight, old hoss, and Pete's best wishes go wid you!"

"Come back, boy! What are you going to do in England?"

"Unnno!"

"What have you done so far."

"Circus work."

"Do you know who I am?"

"Nunno!"

"Well, this is a circus, and I'm its sole proprietor."

"Do you know who I am?"
"Numo!"
"Well, this is a circus, and I'm its sole proprietor."
"Golly! Suppose you couldn't gib me some sort ob job?"
"What can you do, and how much do you ask?"
"Nuff for foed to start wid; den what I'm worf. Best try me as to what I can do."
"Any references?"

what I'm wow.
I can do."
"Any references?"
"What's de good ob dem?"
"Come this way. Never mind the

The circus proprietor—for such he ally was—led the way into a larger

really was—led the way into a larger booth.

"That's the circus," observed Jimmy, with some pride, "Now, then, tumble about! If you can really do anything, I will employ you, lad. I like you. Come here, Phow! You have some muscle. Thunder! Why, you are made of steel!"

Jimmy prodded Pete about. He punched him in the chest, and seized him by the muscles at the back by his shouacr-blades; then caught hold of his biceps.

shoulder blades, which his biceps, "Can you manage a bit, old hoss?" inquired Pete.
"Used to."
"Take a run. Hands on my shoulders. I get you by de wrists and balance you." balance you."
"I'm too heavy."

"Nunno!"
"You couldn't bear it, and I'd hurt

myself."
"Shouldn't tink so."
"I should. But hero

"Shouldn't tink so."
"I should. But hero goes. Ready!"
Guessed first time."
Jimmy dropped the stump of his cigar and stamped on it; then he carefully placed his hat on the floor, and, taking a run, leapt into the air as though to turn a somersault over Peto's head, on whose shoulders he placed his hands.
"Up we go!" cried Pete, grasping his wrists, and, raising him at arm's

"Backward turn, old hoss. Golly! You'm a good one at it, too. Yah, yah, yah! You'm landed on your hat!"

"Bust the hat!"
"Yah, yah, yah! Looks 'bout busted, too, I shouldn't wonder

"Help-help! Oh, Jimmy, help

"Tis the fair Rosamond!" roared Jimmy. "I'm coming to your aid."
"Fire-fire!"
"Where are you gir!?"
"Here! No, blockhead! Here!

"Where are you girl?"

"Here! No, blockhead! Here! Help!"

"Where can the wench be?"

"Here! Can't you hear me?"

"Of course I can hear you,.' growled Jimmy, rushing across the circus, for the voice came from the other side now. Then it appeared to come from his damaged tile.

"Well, I'm hanged!" he gasped, picking up the hat, which seemed to be shricking at him

"Yah, yah, yah!" roared Petc.

"What! You mean to say that's you—that you're a ventriloquist?"

"Golly, golly! You did look funny bolting across de ring after dat voice! I'm mighty sorry, Jimmy, old hoss; but when I had started you running alter dat voice, you looked so funny dat I hadn't got de heart to stop you. Yah, yah, yah! You dunno hew sorry I am!"

"You look it! But there's nothing to be sorry at. I can take, you 'on, without a doubt. Let's see. "Circus Petc, or the Black Diamond."

"Hadn't you best see what I can do first?"

first?"
"Fire ahead, Pete!"

"Tight-rope up dere, sin't it?"

"Yes. If you can do anything on that I'll have the nets stretched."

"Nunno! I'll show you a bit ob tumbline."

tumbling."
Then Pete went round the circus, which was a large one, and he finished

iength above his head, kept him up by walking up to Jimmy on his balanced.

Pete's boots.

"In dat case, we will try anoder turn. Dis way to London."

Pete grasped a rope, and drew himself up, hand-over-hand, until he reached the tight-rope which was stretched across the circus.

"Here, come down!" shouted

"Here, come down!" shouted Jimmy, mopping his hrow. "You'll fall."

fall."

"I don't tink so."

"Come down, I tell you!" he gasped, as Pete cautionsly raised himself upon the rope, using his arms in place of a balancing-pole. It looked frightfully dangerous, and it was; but Peta was very anxious to get employment, so ho was quite willing to take the risk.

ment, so ho was quite withing to take the risk.

Jinmy was a good-hearted man, and probably knew the awful risk far better than the daring lad.

"Will you come down?" bawled the excited showman, smashing out his crushed hat with his fist and placing it on one side of his head. "I won't employ you if you don't come down."

"See here, old hoss, I'm mighty certain you ain't going to employ a lad—specially a nigger—if he can't do a good turn."

"Phow! The silly rascal is giving me a good turn this time," groaned Jinmy. "Come down!"

"Links so?" inquired Pete, pretending to fall, and catching the rope with the back of his knee. "Tink dat will please de spectators?"

"I don't know," groaned Jimmy.
"But I'm thundering certain it does not please me. Come down, Pete lad!"

"Well, you see, it's dis way, Jinmy "shouted Pete, swinging to

lad!"
"Well, you see, it's dis way,
Jimmy," shouted Pete, ewinging to
and fro by the back of bis leg. "I
dunno dat I can come down much
furder widout hurting myself. Still, I
can have a try. Soft music, please!"

Pete placed the back of his heel of

Jimny was specified. His heart was throbing fast, and his reves tingled. His breath came in gasps.

"Tink dat will thrill deir little breasts, Jimmy?" bawled Pete.

"It's awful!" murmured Jimmy.
"I wish I had never met the villain!"

"Cos if dey want someting more exciting, I used to be able to hang by one heel," continued Pete. "I dunno weder I'm out ob practice, but we can easily see. Put de soft pedal ob de band down. Might play do 'Dead March in Saul.' Observe do one-heel hang."

Then I cte nung by one heel.

Jimmy was speechless. His heart was throbbing fast, and his nerves tingled. His breath came with long gasps.

"How's dat, old hoss?" inquired a voice, which appeared to come from Pete's boots.

tingled. His breath came with 1006 gasps.

"I dunno dat I can do much more on de tight-rope," observed Pete.
"Might swing a little—so; but you ought to hab proper shoes for dat work, 'cos you might slip. Now, den. We draw ourselves up—so, and do rest is easy!"

Pete caught the rope and swung himself up; then walked to the end, and, grasping the descending rope, slid to the ground.
"You young villain!" gasped Jimmy, shaking his fist in Pete's smiling face.

Jimmy, snaking his how...
ing face.
"Yah, yah, yah! Dat's just what
de people like, Jimmy."
"It's not what they are going to
have in my show."
"Eh! Don't you tink you can dis-

the free leg on the rope, then worked the other seg down until he hung over the awful height by the back of his heels, and his body swayed to and fro. Jimmy did not dare to speak. His breath came in gasse.

"The not what they are going to have in my show."

"Eh! Don't you tink you can disengage me?"

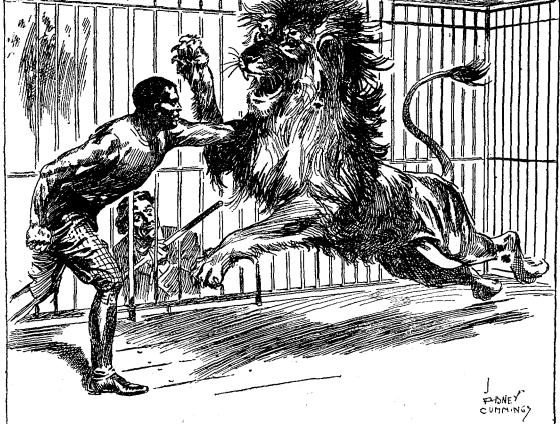
"Of course. I can take you on, but Well, I don't like what you have done, lad. I try to get an honest living, and no man in my employ shall risk his life. If I can't please the public without that they will have to go unpleased. Now, see here, lad. If you want a start, I'll give it to you. I'm annoved at your foolhardy work, but somehow I like you. You can have your grub and a quid a week on condition that when you get a better offer yon let me know, and if I can see my way to spring the same you stay with me. We don't need that in black and white. You are the black and I'm the white. If we are going to rogue each other a pieco of paper won't stop it."

"Golly! Dat's a mighty lot better start dan I expected, Jimmy!" exclaimed Pete. "Still, I tink I can earn it. If not, you hab de power to knock it off wheneber you like. Dere's two-free tings I can do dat I aln't shown you yet."

"Well, we won't bother about that now." said Jimmy. "I am going to have a good, square feed; then I will introduce you to the company, and show you the other boasts."

"Yah, yah, yah! Don't you like do company, Jimmy?"

"I don't like them when I haven't got enough to pay their screws; and (Continued on the next page.)



With all his strength Pete dealt the lion a blow on the chest with his fist. At once the brute

↑;~;~;~;~;~;~;~;* Circus Pete. (Continued from previous page.)

they don't like me, either, at times like that—at least, they don't judging by the things they call me. Now, there's a little hotel where I always stay when in this town. It's quiet and cheap; two things that are of importance. Then the cooking is good. Do you like good cooking?'

you like good cooking?"

"I dunno dat I'm mighty particular and dat score, so long as dere's enough

"I dunno dat I'm mighty particular in dat score, so long as dere's enough ob it."

"Ah! I play a pretty good knife and fork myself. We will have half-crown dinners, which means as much as you please."

"Goliy! Dey won't get so mighty much profit out ob my little lot," said Pete, with conviction.

"Well, that's their look-out. They must consider they are playing to a had house this evening."

"Oh, is that you, Jimmy?" inquired a young lady of decidedly prepossessing appearance.

"I have that honour, Rosamond."

"Honour, indeed!" exclaimed Rosamond, tossing her pretty head.

"Where are you going?"

"I sha'n't be long. I am going to show this lad about the place."

"That means you are going to have dinner. Take me with you. I'm frightfully hungry!"

"You may be frightful, but you can't be lungry, seeing the delicious food you get here."

"About as good as the lions'. I'm coming with you."

"That you are not! Do you think I want to be landed with a breach of promise suit?"

"As though I'd ever marry you!"

"I'll take particular care you don't, my dear! I have been a bachechor for forty years, and I am not going to be bothered with a wife at my time of life. Get out of my way!"

"I sha'n't!"

"Then take a week's notice."

"You'll take a box on the ears if you tak to me like that! I tell you!"

"Well, make haste and get ready, then. Come on, Pete! This way. Dodge down this street."

Jimmy went at a run, then he turned down another street, and, by a devious course, he made his way to his fayourite hotel.

"I always come here for peace and quiet," murmured Jimmy, glancing around to make sure Rosamond was not following. "You must keep this place dark."

quiet," murmured Jimmy, glancing around to make sure Rosamond was not following. "You must keep this place dark."

"Dat's all right, old hoss! Dey won't learn it from me. I can pay for my little tot."

"No; you are my guest. Two half-crown dinners, Richard, and look sharp about it, because we haven't much time!"

waiter eyed Pete dubiously.

The waiter eyed Pete dubiously. He knew from past experience that Jimmy was not a very profitable customer; neither did Pete's appearance favourably impress him.

"Two heavies!" he bawled down the speaking-tube.

"De order sounds correct," observed Pete. "I like dese go-as-youplease sort ob dinners. Here comes de soup—and here it goes, too! Hab two-free plates in readiness to follow, Richard."

"There's codfish to follow."

"Let two-free plates ob soup follow first."

first."
"Don't have too much soup," whispered Jimmy. "You wou't be able to get through the rest of the din-

to get through the rest of the dinner."

"Yah, yah, yah! Must be a
mighty large dinner if dis child can't
get frough it!"

"Bill," nurmured Richard down
the tuhe, "miss the fish. Boiled beef
and suety pluggers next. Plenty of
pluggers. If I can't check that nigger's appetite, it's a caution!"

But Pete's appetite wanted a fearful tot of checking. The way he
went into that beef made Richard
gasp. The dumphings seemed to have
no more effect on his appetite than
strawberry-ices would have done.

"Noder little lot of beef here, old
hoss!"

See here, you've had three plates

"See here, you've had three plates already!"
"I'm fond of boiled beef."
"You are so! There's roast beef and Yorkshire to follow."
"But I ain't sure I shall tike dat, and as I'm certain I like dis, we will hab some more."

and as I in certain 1 like dis, we will hab some more."

Pete did. He made Jimmy laugh, but Richard never so much as smiled.

"Dere!" exclaimed Pete. "Now I'm just in form for a good dinner.

After dat little stimulant to de appe-

tite I shall be able to eat in earnest

"We'l, I'm blowed!" gasped Richard. "P'r'aps Yorkshire pudding will finish him off. Two rousts, and piles of slabs and taters on one of 'em!"

ding will finish him off. Two rousts, and piles of slabs and taters on one of 'em!"

"What. comes next to de beef, Richard?" inquired Pete.

"Apple-tart."

"Pity to get off de meat so soon. Hitch me on two-free more plates. I like de pudding."

"I've noticed it. He ain't finished yet, mate."

"Well, see here, Dick," exclaimed the cook, "you'd best cut him off, 'oos there'll be a mighty row about this! The boss is always growling, as these half-crown feeds don't pay. I vow this one hasn't!"

"Waiter. I'm Mr. Morgan!" exclaimed the stout party whose head Pete had bumped on the landing-stage, as he entered the room accompanied by his wife Maria. "What have you got to eart?"

"Dere's some bery good boiled beef, old hoss!" observed Pete.

"I am not asking you, you insolent nigger!" cried Morgan.

"Have we to cat in company with a nigger?" demanded Maria.

"He'll be going directly, ma'am," said Richard. "At least, I hope so," he added beneath his breath.

"Boiled heef, carrots, and dumplings is good, sir."
"Yes; that will do for me," said

"Yes; that will do for me," said Maria.
"Same here. And look sharp about it!"
"Serve up de apple-pie, waiter!" ordered Pete. "I ain't much at apple-pie. Do you like it, Jinmy?"
"Never touch sweets," answered Jimny. "A little cheese, Richard." "P'r'aps you'll help the pie, sir?" said Richard, placing it before Jimmy. "Sorry, sir," he added, turning to Morgan. "Carrots and dumplings is off."
"I'm not eating boiled beef without. What else have you got?"
"Roast beef and Yorkshire pudding."

"Koast bee. ding."
"That will do," said Morgan, glancing at his wife, who nodded.
"Serve it up quickly."
In about a minute Richard re-

In about a minute Richard returned.
"Sorry, sir, but Yorkshire pudding is off. That nigger has been and wolfed it all. He's enough to breed a famine wherever he goes!"
"Disgusting mutton!" swarted

"Disgusting gluttony!" snarled Morgan. "Bring up the beef." Richard hurried to the speaking-

"Yes, sir!" answered Richard, hurrying back.
"I didn't call you, fellow!" said

tube. "Waiter!"

"Beg pardon."
"Waiter!" came a voice, which appeared to be Maria's.
"Yes, ma'am."
"I did not call you."

Richard was not a good-tempered man, and he was inchned to get angry now.

He hurried back to the speaking-

angry now.

He hurried back to the speaking-tube.

"Richard!" came a voice, apparently from the plasage.

"That's the boss!" oried Richard, rushing from the room.

Then voices appeared to be coming from all over the place, and Richard had no sooner entered the room than he fondly imagined his master was calling him again.

It now occurred to Jimmy that Pete's ventriloquism was causing the extraordinary disturbance, and he burst into a roar of laughter, which did not tend to improvo Morgan's temper. He expressed his opinion in pretty forcible language, too. At last, however, he got his dinner. Then he ordered apple-tart, old hoss!" said Pete. "I hab just yaffled up de last ob it. You must hab brem-cheese."

"I won't have bread and cheese!" howed Morgan.

"Den bring de old hoss a dog-biscrit, waiter!"

"Come down like

so?" inquired Peter pretending to fall.

Ha, ha, hal Here you are, ter," said Jimmy, handing him two f-crowns, "and there's twopence yourself. We will be back to-

half-erowns, for yourself.

if you had heard the character I had with him. The man I bought him from swore that chickens used to go in to feed with him."
"Yah, yah, yah! Did he feed dat lion on corn?"
"Blest of I know! But the fellow wasn't as truthful as he ought to be."

wasn't as trutinu as he be."
"Spect dat lion ain't been properly taught," said Pete.
"I don't know. But I never feel quite comfortable till Raja the tamer—he's a Spaniard—comes out of the cage. Between you and me, I believe the fellow is frightened of that lion."

lieve the fellow is frightened of that hou."

"Dat's de worst ting possible. If a lion knows you'm frightened ob him, he gets nasty directly. De proper way is to make him frightened ob you. First of all, let him know you hab got plenty ob strength, and ain't de least bit afraid, den make friends wid him."

"Rain always says he can quell

ant the least bit atraid, den make friends wid him."

"Raja always says he can quelt the ficrcest brute with his eyes."

"Yah, yah, yah! Dat ain't at all safe. I hab had a good deal to do wid lions, Jimmy, and hab come to de conclusion dat your voice is a lot more likely to quell dem dan your eyes. You ain't got to shout at dem, but just talk ordinary words. So dis is Nero, is it? Well, he's a mighty fine beast. I'll show you what I mean bout training dem."

"Here! What are you going to do?" demanded Jimmy, as Pete entered the small guard-cage, and fastened the outer barred gate.

"Going to make friends wid Nero," answered Pete, unfastening the inner gate.

"Spect you'll want me to perform wid him sometimes?"

"No, I sha'n't. You come out of Rother the lad!" Ha's going to

"No, I sha'n't. You come out of — Bother the lad! He's going to make my hair stand on end again!" "Hallo, Nero, old hose!" cried Pete, entering the monster's cage with absolute fcarlessness. "How are you dis evening? See here, if you start grewling at me I shall clump-you ober de head!"

Jinmy seized a long iron rod.

Jimmy seized a long iron rod.
He felt convinced a terrible tragedy
was about to be enacted, for Nero
growled ominously as he showed his
terrible frage.

growled ominously as he showed his terrible fangs.

"Now don!" cried Pele in a deep voice, which seemed to come from above them. "Come dis way. Do you hear me, Nero?"

Pete stepped forward, and the great brute uttered an awful roar, while its body quivered as he prepared to spring upon the daring lad who had ventured to enter his den.

"Look here, I ain't standing dat, Nero!" cried Pete, striding forward.
"Ah! Would you?"

As the terrible brute was in the very act of springing, Pete darted forwards, and gripped it by the throat, while Jinnny struck at it with the iron rod.

while Jimmy struck at it with the iron rod.

"Now, den, Nero," cried Pete, "just you behave yourself, else you'm going to get lurt! Just what I told you. Don't hurt him, Jimmy. You behave yourself, like a respectable lion, Nero, else dere'll be trouble in dis world. Don't you dare to growl at me, else I'll gib you a smash in de chest—so—dat you'll remember!"

With all, his abnormal strength

With all his abnormal strongth Pete dealt the infunisted brute a blow in the chest with his fist, and al-though it still lashed its tail, it ceased

for yourself. We will be back tomorrow."

"See here, if you bring that nigger
again, half-crown dinners is off. I
can take upon myself to tell you so
much. He's eaten about four pounds
of solid meat, to say nothing of pluggers, slabs, and a hole tart!"

"But. dear boy, you advertise
these dinners for half-a-crown."

"That's meant for human beings.
If you was to bring a boa-constrictor
we should charge extra."

"Yah, yah, yah!" roared Pete.

"Must say de dinner was all right.
I ain't got no complaints to make."

"No; but the boss will have a few
when he comes in. Next time you
come to this show, my lad, I'm putting you on piecework!"

"Dey don't seem to appreciate my
appetite, Jimmy."

"Ha, ha, ha! No. But let's get
back to the show. I generally like to
have a look round to see that the
animals are all comfortable for the
night."

"Hab you got any performing

to grow!.

"Walk round dis way, Nero!" cried Pete. "Do you hear me? Walk round. Golly! If you don't mind me I'll know de reason why! Dat's better. Yah, yah, yah! You'm walking as dough you were on hot bricks, Nero. What's dat? Anoter grow!? Now, see here, old hoss, you had better be careful 'bont dose growls, 'cos i won't hab dem. Dat's better. I ain't going to teach you anyting to-night, 'cos you'm got to get friendly wid me first. Now you shall hab a ohunk ob meat, 'cos, you ain't behaved so badly."

Pete slipped out of the

Pete slipped out of the cage, much to Jimmy's relief. But he entered it once more with a huge piece of meat, which he threw to

meat, which he threw to Nero.

"Here, come away!" gasped Jimmy. "You have frightened me to-night. All the same. I'm glad we met. Now I'll introduce you to the company, and I shall bill you as Circus Pete." night."

"Hab you got any performing lions, Jimmy?"

"Well, we've got Nero; but I have my doubts about the brute. He won't always do what he is told. In fact, the tamer sometimes daren't go in. He's a young lion. You would have thought he was a young lamb

"Here, come gasped Jimmy. "You have frightened me to-night, All the same. I'm glad we met. Now I'll introduce you to the company, and I shall bill you as Circus Pete."

(Another of these fine complete stories next week).

▼服令服令服令服令服令服令服◆服 🕸 CAMERA NOTES.

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※ Getting Ready.

OW that the spring is once more with us thousands of the readers of THE BOYS' hart of photography will doubtless be thinking of soon starting work for the season. Cameras, which have been stored away during the winter in dusty corners, will be looked up, developing dishes will be washed, bottles of ehemicals will be prepared and so on.

and so on.

In order to assist my young friends to turn out good pictures, I am going to give them a few hints which will be of value to both novices and those who have had some experience.

will be of value to both novices and those who have had some experience.

Overhauling.

In the first place, the young photographer who already possesses a camera which has been laid aside during the winter, should give it a thorough overhauling before taking any pictures. If he hus a hand-camera he should first of all give it a thorough cleaning with a white duster; then he should examine the interior, and carefully reblack any parts which may have worn white. The lens should be carefully cleaned, and the other mechanism, such as the shutter-changing apparatus, etc., should be thoroughly tested. Open the lens, and then look through the back of the camera and see that no speck of light can enter except through the lens.

Stand Cameras.

A stand camera should also be

back of the camera and see that no speck of light can enter except through the lens.

Stand Cameras.

A stand-camera should also be thoroughly tested before being used. If you possess one, first thoroughly examine all the parts to see that they are in working order, and then fix it on to the tripod, after seeing that the latter is all right. Next rack out the bellows to their fullest extent and carefully examine it by putting your head under the focusing-cloth, and looking through the eamera with the lens open. Very often a pin-point, through which the light can enter, will be found in the leather, and this must be at once stopped. Fix in the focusing-glass and thorough focus objects near and distant, and thus satisfy yourself that this is all right.

In the case of a stand-camera the dark slides should also be thoroughly tested. I remember some years ago at the commencement of the season thoroughly overhauling my camera and putting everything perfect, and then taking half a dozen pictures. Judge my astonishment when I found each of the negatives had an unsightly streak right across the plate. Of course I immediately knew that the light had in some way found the plates, but I could not discover for some time how the plates had become spoiled. I reexamined the camera and thoroughly overhauled the dark-room, and so on, until at last I speedily discovered that a tiny slip of wood had in some manner got loose.

In order to make sure that a dark-slide is absolutely light-tight, it is a good plan to fill it with unexposed plates, and then leave the slide about in daylight for an hour or two; then develop the plates. If any light gets in the plate will be forged. On the other hand, if the slide is perfectly light-tight, the plate will be perfectly light-tight, the plate wi

MOTHER SEIGEL'S SYRUP

CURES

BILIOUSNESS CONSTIPATION HEADACHE **PALPITATION NERVOUSNESS** DEPRESSION BLOOD IMPURITY LIVER TROUBLE

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Number of "The Union



THE 1st CHAPTER. Adams Rejected—Jully N et 7 man—Nearly a Fig. t — A Thre

Henry Adams said earnestly, with just the suggestion of a quiver in his deep voice.
"Yes, Harry," the girl answered,
sectionsly, the unsteadness of

THE 1st CHAPTER.

Rejc cted—July N 1 Trustear.

N' you mean it, lass?'
Henry Adams said earnestly, with just the suggesquiver in his deep voice.
Harry,'' the girl answered, eriously, the unsteadness of more pronounced than the the man's.

O stood at the gate of an old near the hour of sunset. The Revenue officer looked none to pleasant. His jaw was set hard, the corners of his mouth twitching.

"I'd advise thee to keep hands off me, Nat Trueman!' he said sharply.

"I'd advise thee to keep hands off me, Nat Trueman!' he said sharply.

"An' for why?'' Nat asked, with a laugh, as if he failed to understand the threat.

"For your own safety—Jolly Nat," Adams succeed. her voice more pronounced than the quiver in the man's.

The two stood at the gate of an old garden, near the hour of sunset. From where they stood a white road ran down to the harbour of Treferne, the mouth of which was guarded on both sides by the high rocks that had form the timbers of many a stout ship asunder when she had failed to make the harbour.

By the edge of the water, so near that they seemed to be in danger of being washed away at the first high tide, a score or so of cottages, white-walled and red-roofed, stood nestling together. It was above the roofs that showed the masts of a lugger or two and the slender spars of a Revenue cutter. cutter.

It was to the latter craft that the man talking earnestly to the girl by the gate evidently belonged, for he was in the uniform of a Revenue officer, and his kindly, if not handsome, face was seamed and tanned by the wind and water.

"Can't ye think it over again, lass?" he urged. "I know that I'm a rough chap, not over-liked by the boys round here on account o' my carling, but I did think that ye looked at me wi' kinder eyos—"

Madge Tregarth held a hand up lastily to stop the man's words, and her pretty face wore a look of sadness that was not often to be seen upon it.

ness that was not often to be seen upon it.

"You mustn't say any more, Harry," she said quickly. "I can't marry you, though I like you well chough in other ways. I can't!"

A hard look orossed the face of the Revenue officer, and his right hand touched the cutlass hanging at his lip.

"Av. an' I know who stone re-

Revenue officer, and his right hand touched the cutlass hanging at his hip.

"Ay, an' I know who stops ye loving me!" he said, a hoarse note creeping into his voice. "It's Nat Trueman—jolly Nat Trueman, as all the loafers round these parts call him—fisherman, fighter, smuggler." "No, no!" Madge cried, in quick protest. "Not smuggler, Harry." Harry Adams's face looked very lard now. He and his ship had been at Treferne for a matter of six months—sent there to suppress the smuggling which was known to go on year in and year out on that part of the wild Cornish coast. He had met with little or no success; yet he did not regret—or had not until the present—that he had come, for he had met Madge Tregarth, and, like many a man isi the village, had learnt to love her.

Now she had refused him, and he knew why. It was Nat Trueman who had won her heart. And, perhaps, it was not surprising. A fine face and form were his, he owned the best lugger in the harbour, and it was well known that he kept an account at a bank, like a gentleman of quality.

As for the rumour that he was a smuggler—well, even the squire vas not averse to having a hand in that, if circumstances offered a fair chance of success.

Harry was about to repeat his pre-

of success.

Harry was about to repeat his proposal, when a heavy hand dropped on his shoulder, and he was jerked away from the girl so violently that he nearly lost his balance.

"How now, Revenue man?" a deep voice sneered. "This isn't snuggled lace or spirit, therefore it don't concern you."

A Short, Complete Story. By a Popular Author.

evenue M

The speaker was Nat Trueman, and as fine-looking a man as one could wish to see. Six foot in his stockings, broad in proportion, and with a kind, though determined, face that would have won the heart of most girls. His costume was simple, smacking both of the sea and the land. His breeches were good, and tuckled with silver at the knee; his coat was blue, with anchors on the buttons; hat he had none, post by considering his brown curly hair

Adams succeed.
This was too much for Trueman, and, with a quick jerk, he drew his heavy cut-

lass.
"Draw!" be cried.

"Draw!" De cried.
"Draw, vou red-ooated
King'- hound!"
Adams was no
coward, as more than
one sharp tursde with one sharp tussle with daring smugglers had proved, and before the taunt was finished his

proved, and before the two two spinled his we spon was not, and he sprang forward to the attack.

He was nearly as powerful a man as the reputed smuggler, while his skill was well known, so that the fight was like to be a severe one.

With a cry of alarm, and risking her body at the points of the angry men, Madge Tregarth leapt between them, and Nat only just turned his blade aside in time to avoid inflicting an ugly blow upon her.

"Out of the way.

ing an ugly blow upon her.

"Out of the way, girl!" he commanded sternly, laying his left hand upon her shoulder.

But he flung her arms round him, clinging hard, so that he was powerless.

"No, no, you shall not fight!" she panted.

"Nat, don't fight, if you love me!"

Nat Trueman disengaged busself gently but firmly from the girl's arms, and thrust his cutlass back into its scabbard.

"There will be other chances, Revenue officer!" he said between his teeth. "One o' these dark nights may find the two of us on a strip o' the wet beach, an' then we'll see who'll win!"

Adams sheathed his own weapon, and there was an ugly smile on his

Adams sheathed his own weapon, and there was an ugly smile on his

lips.

"Ay, we shall meet," he agreed, ** 85 "as ye say, some dark night—a smuggler's night, Jolly Nat—an' then I'll see if I can't dap ye into gaol; for, split me, if I wouldn't rather see ye transported for smugglin' than

ve transported dead?"

Without another word the Revenue with the walked and walked without another word the to the officer turned on his heel and walked quickly down the hill towards the village and harbour.

village and harbour.

Madge Tregarth watched him go, and a shudder convulsed her.

"He'll do thee harm, Nat!" she sobbed. "Why—why can't ye stop this smuggling?"

"It's a man's right to run against the King and his curs!" Nat Trueman answered. "Let him earn his money, 'etead of taking it from honest sailors and the like, who don't see why they should pay more for

their 'baccy an' spirits than their real cost. As for Harry Adams, he's tried to lay me by the hee's long enough, yet we're circumvented him. Bah! He's like a man lookin' for a needle in a haystack, an' as helpless as a ship without a rudder! Have no fear."

while this conversation was in progress the Revenue officer, a black look on his face, strode down to the village, and turned into the first building that he reached, which happened to be the village inn, bearing the eign of The Jolly Sailors.

One or two sturdy men, fairly recking of the sca, were lounging in the tap-room, and they eyed Adams with none too friendly a glance as he passed through into the bar-parlour. Scarce had he entered this place than a short, very fat, white-faced man entered.

"I give you good-morning, Master Adams!" he said deferentially.

"Ay, and naught else, master land-lord," the Revenue officer growled, then lowered his voice and looked round sharply, as if to make sure that he could not be overheard. "Hast thought over my offer?" he whis-pered.

While this conversation was in pro-

than likely that it was a smuggler's

THE 2nd CHAPTER.
The Signal—Landing the Cargo
—A Surprise—Nat Trueman a
Prisoner—'Twixt Love and
Duty—The Revenue Man's
Onoice.

NSIDE the harbour of Treferne the waters were pretty smooth, though a stiffish sea was break-

it burned and liared, it seemed more than likely that it was a smuggler's signal.

Near in the centre of the harbour lay a small schooner that had but just run in under shortened canvas, as if for shelter, and her auchors had been dropped. Scarce had she found her moorings, and the last yard of canvas had been snugged down, than a heavyish galley, rowed by half a dozen men, came alongside.

"Martin!" a voice called from the galley, and there could be no mistaking the full tones of Nat Trueman.

A man's head, crowned by an aucient three-cornered hat, was thrust over the bulwarks of the schooner.

"Yo bawl like a sou'-wester, Nat!" the man growled. "Ain't there King's hounds eno' about ter make ye silent as a dead calm?"

"Yo need not foar Master Adams an' his men," Nat answered contemptuously. "There's the signal'—he pointed at the flaring beacon—"that they're pursuin', an' they won't find as it's a will-o'-the-wisp kind o' business

A shot or two whizzed through the air, only to find a billet in the waters of the harbour; then the smugglers were racing across the beach, forsaking their cargo, the Revenue men at their hark hark

though a stiffish sea was breaking at its mouth. The night was dark, too, so dark that the few lights in the vallage could not have been seen by anyone in a boat out in the harbour. Yet on the other side of the harbour, burning bright, and showing plaining enough for all the blackness, burned a beacon. It was plain that it had been kindled on the top of the cliffs that held the waves back from the harbour, and, considering the coast upon which it burned and tared, it seemed more than likely that it was a smuggler's

were racing across the beach, forsaking their cargo, the Revenue men at their heels.

All but one of the smugglers disappeared into the darkness. The solitary exception was Nat Trueman, who stumbled, almost fell, and only recovered himself just as Adams, cutlaes in hand, leapt towards him.

"We meet as ye eaid!" he cried, as the blades clashed together.

"An! well met, too!" Trueman answered boldly.

Both men were handy with their weapons, and steel rang against steel with a speed and sharpness that dazzled the eye.

Time after time the blades met, throwing out sparks into the darkness, and help came to neither man. Smugglers and Revenue men were by now at the top of the cliffs, to which the flight and pursuit had led them.

Fighting furiously, Adams forced Trueman back a step or two, with diastrous results to the smuggler. The latter's heel struck a small rock, and he pitched back heavily, knocking his head against another rock, and lying half stunned. With the spring of a panther the Revenue officer was on the fallen man, and had knotted a stout cord round his wrists and ankles before he could recover. When he rose from completing the task he laughed triumphantly.

"Who wins Madge now, Jolly Nat?" he sneered.

"Keep her name off thy tongue!" the smuggler answered savagely.

"Keep her name off thy tongue!"

"Keep her name off thy tongue!" the smuggler answered savagely.
"Not I—" the Revenue officer began; but his words broke off short in his throat as the figure of a woman, brushing past him, threw herself down beside the prisoner.

It was Madge Tregarth, her face pale as death, but with an eager sparkle in her eyes. Her fingers fumbled at the cords which bound her lover.

"Nay, lass," Adams said, in a softer voice, gently drawing the girl to her feet, "I cannot allow that; he is my prisoner?"

The girl threw up her head proudly and faced the Revenue officer.

And yet ye said that ye loved me, Harry," she said, in a strangely firm voice. thought-,, Adamsstam-

"I thought—" Adams stammered; then pulled himself together.
"I am in the service o' the King, and I ha' but done my duty."

"Duty!" the girl sneered. "Have we no duty to those we love—to those we say we love?"

A troubled look came into the Revenue officer's eyes, and, for the first time, he did not look pleased at his canture.

his capture.

hat would ye have, lass?" he

"I would be have, lass?" he asked hesitatingly.
"I would have ye set Nat free," the girl answered boldly.
"He is the prisoner o' the King."
Adams muttered. "It is but duty done."

done."

He was beginning to realise that even the capture and transportation of Nat would bring Madge no nearer to him; he was learning the strange ways of women when they love.

"Prisoner of the King!" Madge Tregarth cried. "Ay, it is well to the behind that. Ye call it duty; but think of the other duty—to your friends. What is Nat's capture to the King but just the imprisonment of one more subject? Think ye his reign will end if ye set him free?"

"It is my duty." Adams muttered

"It is my duty," Adams muttered again, his voice hoarse and catchy. Nat Trueman was sitting up now, his senses fully returned, and he smiled bitterly.

"'Tis true," he said. "Best go home, hass—an' thank ye! Let him do his duty!"

There was silence for a minute or so, during which Adams looked from the prisoner to the girl, and a sigh escaped him. With a sudden movement, as if fearing to repent, he drew his cutlass and cut through the smuggler's bonds. With a cry of amazement, Nat Trueman leapt to his feet and seized the Revenue officer's haid. hand.
"Ye'ro a man!" he cried.
"A traitor!" Adams muttered

hand.

"Ye're a man!" he can with the control of the man's a-m; and, turning, he saw that there were tears of gratitude in her eyes.

"Not to love, Harry," she said softly. "An' surely thou dost not love the King as thou lovest me?"

With a quick movement Adams took the girl's hand and kissed it.

"My first duty is to my queen!" he caid softly.

(Two fine complete stories next Tuesday.)



The figure of a woman brushing past the Revenue officer threw horself down beside the prisoner. It was Madge Tregarth, her face pale as death.

ear.
"I raise it to a hundred guineas, master landlord," he said, "'sides which, there's the Government reward o' twenty, which ye shall claim instead o' me."

The white face of the land ord took on a highly nervous expression, and he wiped his bald head with a red handkerchief.

"Fifty guineas is fifty guineas, Master Adams," he whispered, "but I fear I risk my life if I give ye the office; while——."

The Revenue officer touched the man sharply on the shoulder, and spoke with his lips close against his ear.

"I raise it to a hundred guineas, "Steady, lads!" Nat whispered, as

showe with his tips close against his ear.

"I raise it to a hundred guineas, master landlord," he said, "'sides which, there's the Government reward o' twenty, which ye shall claim instead o' ine."

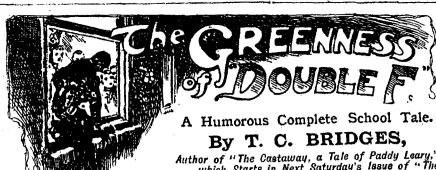
A look of greed flashed into the little eyes of the landlord, and once more he looked round sharply.

"To-night," he whispered. "Signal-lights t'other side o' harbour to mislead ye. While ye have gone wi' the cutter, the stuffil be landed jest inland o' the vilage, at the point we know as Dead Man's Rock."

For a moment Adams looked into the eyes of the landlord, and he saw that the man spoke the truth.

"Good!" he said shortly. "By tomorrow ye shall have earned the reward. And he strode out of the inn.

ANOTHER FINE NUMBER NEXT WEEK, containing further Long Instalments of our Grand New Serial Stories. Order Your Copies in Advance.



THE 1st CHAPTER.

The New Boy.

7 HEN I got back at the be ginning of term and found a new kid had got found a new kid had got the next bed to me in B Dormitory, I tell you I was pretty sick. Of course, I knew old Bellamy was leaving; but we all expected that Griffith, or one of the other chaps, would be shoved up out of C Dormitory, instead of having a new kid chucked in among a lot of fellows who'd all been at Hilbrook a year or more.

However, a fag might come in handy, and I made up my mind to sit on him well from the beginning. Nothing like starting early to knock the nonsense out of new kids.

"What's your name?" I said.

He looked at me in a vacant sort of way. He had the rummiest eyes you over saw—goggley, like a tadpole's. "What's your name, you young ass?" I repeated.

"Finden," he answered. And then, still staring at me: "With two 'F's,'" he said.

For about ten seconds no one said northing. They were too surprised.

For about ten seconds no one said Then Bishop—who has the bed the other side of mine—gave a sort of

Then Bishop—who has the bed the other side of mine—gave a sort of gulp.

"Ffinden, with two 'F's'! My aunt! What a name!"

The new kid got rather pink in the gills. But he still stared at us.

"There are some Findens with one 'F,'" he remarked. "We spell ours with two."

"Good old Doubte F!" sang out Collins from the far side of the room. And blessed if Ffinden's ever been ealled anything since but Double F.

Next morning Bishop caught me up as I was cutting across the quad to brekker.

"I say, Tappy"—my real name's Tnpson—"that double-'effed' aristocrat wants sitting on! What are we going to do about it?"

"Look out! Here he comes!" I said; for just then I saw Ffinden coasting along towards us out of the tail of my eye.

"I say, where's the dining-hall?" he asked.

A gorgeous idea struck me all of a sudden.

gorgeous idea struck me all of a

A guiged sides state me as of a sudden.

"You don't go into the dining-hall!" I said, looking as surprised as ever I could. "Don't you know new boys always have brekker with the Head their first morning?"

"Oh, I didn't know," he said.

"It's a rule of the school," put in Bishop, looking as solemn as an owl.

"You see, the doctor always puts new boys through their paces the first morning. Then he tells you what Form you're to go in, and all the rest of it."

of it."
"But no one's told me to go," objected Ffinden.
"Haven't they? The Head always sends old Thompson, his butler, round, Haven't you seen him?" I

round. Haven't you seen min:
asked.
Ffinden said he hadn't, and wanted
to know where he was to go.
We said we'd show him the way.
He followed like a lamb. Bishop and
I were simply bursting, but we managed to keep it in till we had taken

him through the school buildings round to the private door.

"Just ring," said Bishop, as solemn as anything. "Otd Tommy will show you in."

Off walked Ffinden, and Bishop and I hooked it for all we were worth up into our dormitory. We could see the door from there.

We were just in time. Tommy was opening the door as we got to the window. He's a fat, shirty old chap, and can't see a joke to save his life. He was in his shirt-sleeves, and had a green-baize apron on.

We could see by his face he was awfully riled at being rung up in the middle of his early-morning work. We were so near we could hear quite well.

well.
"I've come to breakfast, please," said Ffinden.

Tommy glared.
"Coome to breakfast? W-what do ou mean?"

"C-come to breakfast? W-what do you mean?"

"T've come to breakfast with the doctor," returned Ffinden, looking rather surprised.

Tounny went purple.

"Breakfast with the doctor! I'll teach you to come a-ringing me up from my plate!" he roared, and made a grab at Ffinden.

Ffinden jumped to one side. Old Tommy caught his foot on the scraper and took a regular header, hitting the grass with a thump that knocked all the wind out of him.

Would you believe it? Ffinden stopped and tried to pick him up! Tommy got on his feet somehow or other, and, my aunt! wasn't he mad? He gave a regular howl, and went for Ffinden. Ffinden turned and ran for his life, Tommy, with the green-baize apron flapping after him, in full tilt.

How we laughed! I was almost

baize apron flapping after him, in full tilt.

How we laughed! I was almost too weak to stand. But the best was to come. Just as Ffinden reached the archway which leads under the school buildings, who should come striding along out of it but the doctor himself, in cap and gown, just as he had left the Sixth Form room. The top of Ffinden's head caught him just about the third button of his waistcoat.

It didn't quite knock him down, but it bagged his wind, and he staggered up against the walk and gasped. It was too much for us. We both chucked ourselves down on the nearest beds and rolled and roared till the tears ran down our cheeks.

the to tears ran down our cheeks.

y the time we'd picked ourselves up the show was over. The doctor and Tommy and Ffinden had all

We wiped our eyes and went to brekker.

THE 2nd CHAPTER. The Doctor Arrives.

UR small jape had been such shining success, a shining success, and Ffinden seemed so jolly green, that Bishop and Collins and I made up our minds to invent some-

thing new and better.
We thought of a whole lot of dodges, but none of them seemed up to much, until Bishop said:
"Why not have a dormitory feed?"

"What's that got to with Double F?"

"What's that got to do with Double F?" asked Collins.
"Why, he'll have to take up the subscrips. and get the grub, of course." course

"That's no special gybe," said Collins.
"Anyone can go down town and buy the grub and smuggle it up to dormitory in a cricket-bag."

Author of "The Castaway, a Tale of Paddy Leary," "My good Golliwogs, which Starts in Next Saturday's Issue of "The Boys' Realm." Id.

| him through the school buildings round to the private door.
| Just ring," said Bishop, as sold solemn as anything. "Cid Tommy will show you in."

Off walked Ffinden, and Bishop and of the master's garden. The dear Double F shall then descend a rope from the window, fetch it, and send it up."

from the window, fetch it, and send it up."
Collins grunted,
"Any ass could do that!"
"Yes; and any ass—even you—could pull the rope up, and douse the lights, and let on that old Dobby is in the dornitory."
"And leave Double F to wander alone in the dark in the garden! Chuck her up!" shouted Collins.
"That's the ticket! But, for goodness' sake, don't make such a row! We don't want everyone to hear."
Poor old Double F, he took it all

Poor old Double F, he took it all in like a cat lapping milk! Actually seemed rather pleased about the rope and dark-lantern business. Thought

seemed rather pleased about the rope and dark-lantern business. Thought it romantic, I suppose.

We ordered a collection—a bob a head all round. Double F put all the names down in an exercise-book, and stuck "pd." to each name. He was the greenest kid you ever saw!

We told him what to get. The usual thing—Madeira cake, sausage rolls, and raspberry-vinegar. We stuffed him up with a tot of rot about the riskiness of it, and how careful he must be not to let anyone see him, and told him how strict old Dobby was, and how he near killed a chap with a cane because he caught him grubbing after lights.

He seemed pretty scared, but he said he would "carry through the enterprise at any cost." He aiways talked like that.

We meant to have a good feed, besides getfing a rise out of Double F, so we took jolly good care to choose Saturday night, when old Dobby—Dobson's our house-master—always has a game of whist in common room, and leaves his house to Bagster, who's as deaf as a post, and never cares how much row you kick up.

The rope was made of box-cords,

ster, who's as dear as a post, and never cares how much row you kick up.

The rope was made of box-cords, and tied to the big washstand in the middle of the room. Our dormitory is on the first floor, and it's not more than twenty feet down to the ground. Bishop patted Double F on the back, and said that he admired his pluck. He told him he'd have to be jolly careful not to make any noise, and to hide in the shrubs if anyone came along, and finished up by saying:

"What you've got to look out for specially is old Jeremy, the Head's buildog. He's loose at night."

So he was; but unless the wheezy old beast could climb the six-foot wall of the doctor's yard he wasn't likely to do Ffinden much harm.

Double F looked in a proper state of funk by the time he'd got on the window-ledge. He had a dirty-clothes bag and two sponge-bags thung round his neck to bring the grub back in a try was heastly dark outside, and

bag and two sponge-bags thing round his neck to bring the grub back in. It was heastly dark outside, and drizzling rain.

Bishop gave me a dig in the ribs.
"Think of him dodging round in those beastly wet laurels!" he chuckled, as we let Double F down.

He got to the ground all right, and

gave us the signal—oue pull on the rope. We heard him tiptoeing away

gave us the signal—oue pull on the rope. We theard him tiptoeing away in the darkness down below.

Of course, you know our game was to turn out the gas, and shut the window, and give a "cave" signal. Then poor old Double F would be left to wander round in the dark.

We simply chortled to think how scared he'd be, expecting the Head, or old Jeremy, or something to come after him every minute. Besides, of course, he'd known that if Dobby came, he would see that his bed was empty, and act accordingly. We'd pointed that out to him carefully before he went.

fore he went.

Just to be sure that Bagster didn't Just to be sure that Bagster didn't happen in on us unawares, we'd put a kid called Mason out in the passage to keep cave. Would you believe it, Double F was hardly out of hearing before Mason came cutting in in an awful hurry. "Cave! Dobson!" he called, and simply scootled into bed.

Bishop said he was a light and

in in an awful hurry. "Cave! Dobson!" he called, and simply scootled into bed.

Bishop said he was a liar, and chuoked a boot at him. But Mason swore it was true. And, by Jove, the next thing was Dobby's slippers shuffling along the passage!

The light was out in half a jiffy, Bishop jammed the window down, and we nipped into bed like streaks. Next minute Dobby himself came in. I could see he was a bit suspicious; but everything was so jolly quiet, he couldn't well say anything.

He came prowling round the dormitory, holding his candle up over his head in a rum way he has. He was shining the light on everyone's face to see if they were asleep or not.

All of a sudden Dobby took a sort of dive, and went over flat on the floor with a most awful crash. The candle went out, and we heard the stick clattering away along the boards.

It struck me all of a heap. It was

boards.

It struck me all of a heap. It was that beastly rope. Bishop had shut the window on it, and, of course, fixed it tight between the window and the wash-lockers.

THE 3rd CHAPTER. "Double F" Scores.

DON'T know exactly Dobby said. Bishop, who was nearest, said it was a swear

II nearest, said it was a swear word. I don't wonder if it was, for the boards are beastly hard.

None of us made a sound; we were too scared. Dobhy's a terror when he is in a real wax.

We heard him get up slowly. Then he struck a match, found his candle, and lighted it again. I watched him with one eye half open, and, I don't mind telling you, his face made me feel queer.

mind telling you, this lace included feel queer.

But he didn't say a word. I really believe he was too wroth. What he did was to examine the rope, and then follow it up to the window. He laid his candle down and opened the window. At that very moment I saw the rope jerkeds from outside.

Double F had got back, and was waiting.

Double F had got back, and was waiting.

Dobby saw the jerk, too, and began pulling in the rope hand-over-hand. It came up quite easily. You see, we had arranged for Double F to send the grub up first in the bags.

You ought to have seen Dobby's face when the dirty-clothes bag came up, stuffed full! A week's allow-ance of a whole dormitory buys a jolly lot of grub.

Dobby untied the bag from the rope, loosed the string from the neck, and opened it.

What happened next was simply too awful for words. There was a terrifio flapping, and a huge, coalblack bird came out of the bag like a Jack-in-the-box and went slap into Dobby's face.

Dobby's face.

Dobby let out the most frightful
howl you ever heard, and staggered
back, caught his knees, and went flop
on to Bishop's bed.

Our beds are pretty strong; but

Dobby weighs about fourteen stone, and something had to go. There was a terrific crack, and Dobby and Bishop and a lot of beddothes went rolling over together on to the floor, all tied up in a heap.

The great black bird came fluttering across the room straight towards me. I don't mind birds—ordinary birds, that is—but there was no picture in the natural history anything like this one, and I simply hooked it for all I was worth.

The other fellows were just as scared as me, and every blessed one of them jumped out of bed. Some cleared out of the room into the passage, and some got under their beds.

Everyone was yelling and tumbling over themselves in their hurry to get away from it, and the row was something awful. In about ten sees, the whole of C Dormitory came piling in to see what was up. Even Bagster heard, and he came scootling in, and lit the gas.

Just then the bird fluttered up on the top of the wash-lockers, flapped his wings, and let out a most terrific crow.

It was nothing but one of the doctor's Cochin China cocks, blackened all over with soot.

all over with soot.

We didn't say anything, but some of us thought a whole lot. The "C" chaps began to roar with laughter.

Just then Dobby managed to get clear of the remains of Bishop's bed, and came striding out. He looked simply awful. All of his face that wasn't black with soot was purple with rage.

wasn't black with soot was purple with rage.
"Who is the author of this abominable outrage?" he roared.
No one said a word. The "C" chaps cleared off as quick as ever they could.

Dobby glared round a moment, then made a dash out of the room. Bagster went after him. He was grinning like anything.

"He's gone for a cane," said Bishop.

Bishop.

He was black as a sweep, and so was his bed—at least, what was left of it. There was soot all over the dormitory. You never saw such a filthy mess in your life!

I said, "Let's catch the cock." So we cornered it, Collins and I, and shoved it out of the window.

Just then Dobby came back with his cane. As they say in novels, "We will draw a veil over subsequent proceedings." Collins, Bishop, and I got it hottest.

will draw a ven over subsequently ceedings." Coffins, Bishop, and I got it hottest.

The first thing Bishop said after Dobby had gone was:

"Sling us the rope. I'm going to pull Double F up, and work off the steam on him."

At that very moment the door opened, and in strolled Double F, calm as you please.

Bishop hopped out and went for

Then Bishop got the surprise of his life. Instead of funking him, old Double F stood up as cool as any

tife. Instead of funking him, old Double F stood up as cool as anything.

"You dry up, Bishop," he said.
"If you touch me, I swear you sha'n't have a single slog of cake!"
Bishop shut up like a knife.

"You don't mean to say you've got the grub?" he gasped.

"You bet!" said Double F.
And, by Jove, he had! The whole outfit, and a whacking great coid plum-pudding into the bargain, which he'd had sent from home on the q. t.

When we'd got the stuff all shared out, Bishop couldn't help eaying:

"You'll have your turn with Dohby in the morning."

Double F grinned.

"I'm not so jolly green as you think. I got leave from him after prep. to sit up for an hour to-night. You see, I happened to pass your study the other morning when you were talking, and I took my precautious accordingly."

THE END.



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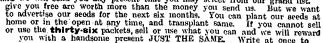
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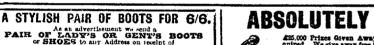
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MARCHAND KNIGHT.

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istances.

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HIS FIRST COMMAND.

THE 1st CHAPTER. His First Command

"WISH you luck with her, my lad," said Captain Scott heartily, as he wrung Bob Thorne's hand; "she ain't much of a ship, but it's a bit of luck, I can tell you, to put three bars of lace on your cuff at your age. Why, how old are you?

you?"
"Twenty-two, sir!"
"By George, it's nearly a record!
Why, I was turned thirty before
I got my first command; but they
do things quicker nowadays. I found
you a first-class officer when you
were mate with me, an' you've got
your master's ticket all right."
"And you can bet I'll be proud to
meunt my own bridge, sir," laughed
Bob. "The Cygnet may be a poor
old tub, as you say, but she's more to
me than a Cunarder—being my first.
I can tell you, I was surprised when I
got the berth!"
"And so was I," murmured Captain

the berth!"
And so was I," murmured Captain
tt. "I hope there's nothing fishy Scott

Scott. "I hope there's nothing fishy about it."

"What, sir?"
"A rotten ship an' a rotten firm, my lad. Stephanos & Co., isn't it?"

"Yes," said Bob stiffly, "my owners."

onner

Ah, you keep your weather-eye ng, my boy! Get out of it as soon "Ah, you keep your weather-eye lifting, my boy! Get out of it as soon as you can. Make a good voyage of it, an' then you can try for a better berth. I know the firm is a British registered one, but they're Greeks, an' shady at that." The skipper pulled himself up suddenly. "There, I'm talking too much. Just forget what I've said, Bob—I meant nothing. These libel laws drop on a man if he lets his tongue go. I'll belay my jaw."

he lets his tongue go. I'll belay my jaw."
"Well, sir, you've had more experience than me," said Bob, who hardly knew what to make of this; "if you can tell me anything—"
"No, no, my lad, I've said more than's safe already. You keep your eye lifting—there's a tip for you, an' it's all you'll get out of me. There go your things ashore. Do well for Stephanos & Co. this trip, and you'll be able to get something better, thought by the process to where his own ship lay Docks to where his own ship lay

Bob made his way along the Barry Docks to where his own ship lay taking in the last of her freight.

Captain Scott's words made him think a good many times on the way. He had a big respect for his former skipper, and was not far wrong in believing there was very little about ships and ship-owners that Scott did not know. And the old man had certainly hinted that Stephanos & Co, were not what he called "up to Dick,"

Dick."

It was certainly rather strange that they had engaged so very young a skipper as Bob Thorne, with the ink hardly dry on his master mariner's certificate, gained by hard working at the exams. But Bob was too pleased at getting a vessel to be put out of conceit with his first command.

"Shady? What did he mean by that? I saw young Stephanos, the junior partner; I've got all my orders—a freight for Madeira. There's nothing shady about that. Shady? Skittles!"

Bob's step became brisker as he

Skittles!"
Bob's step became brisker as he neared the dock quay, where the Cygnet lay. He swelled with pride as he stepped aboard her. She was only an old, rusty, iron tramp of bately 800 tons, under-manned and under-prejuged.

harely 800 tons, under-under-engined.

The last of the freight was being winched aboard by the derricks under the charge of Bob's staid, old first mate, John Heron, who was old enough to be his skipper's father.

As the young ship-master stepped aboard, the chief engineer, a dour, very capable Scot named McIvor,

aboard, the chief engineer, a dour, very capable Scot named McIvor, came up from the engine-room.

"Woll, Mac, have you shipped your second yet?" said Bob, who had entrusted the choosing of his subordinate engineer to the chief.

"I have not," said McIvor grimly, "and I'll-have yo to know that to find a second engineer at a little over the wage of a greaser is sheer nonsense. He'll no be worth very muckle when we do get him at you price."

price." I don't fix the wage, Mac. The owners 'll have to find him if you

don't," replied Bob; and he went to his quarters in the chart-house to propare his papers for clearance.

He had not been at this very long when there came a tap at the door.

Bob called to the visitor to enter, and in walked a tall, very quietly-dressed man of about forty, with a grey moustache.

grey moustache.
"Captain Thorne, I think," he said.

THE 2nd CHAPTER

The Stranger's Warning.

ES," replied Bob; "I'm

very busy just now. Will you tell me your name

and business?"

"My name is John Jones," said the stranger, seating himself.

Although he said it quite seriously he seemed to imply that it was not his name at all, and that he would rather not introduce himself,

"Will you allow me to shut this porthole?" he said, "there is rather a draught. And this one too? Thank you!"

There was no draught, and it was

Thank you!"
There was no draught, and it was rather hot and close.
It seemed to Bob that
Mr. John Jones was more anxious not to be overtheard than to get out of a draught.

heard than to get out of a draught.

"I will come to business at once," said the stranger, with a smile, and speaking in a curiously low voice.

"The Oygnet is bound to Maderia?"

"Yes,"

"If she arrives there safely I am empowered

safely I am empowered to promise you the sum of £100."

Bob stared at him.

Bob stared at him.

"Do you represent Stephanos & Co. ?"

"No." said the stranger, "quite the contrary. But the sea is full of perils, you know—especially between here and Madiera."

He looked so hard at Bob that the young skipper wondered what he meant. Then Bob suddenly remembered a curious fact. The Cygnet was insured as far as Madeira, but not beyond.

"Great Scott! What does this mean?" said Bob. "Are you from Lloy—"

"Seah!" said the

whirl He

Bob. "Are you from Lloy—"
"S-sh!" said the stranger, holding up his hand. "We will mention no names."
Bob's head was in a whirl. He knew the Cygnet was an old boat.
If she was well insured, and happened to be lost before the insurance ran out, it would be a very good thing for her owners.

ran out, it would be a very good thing for her owners.

"Look here," said Bob hotly, for he was a blunt fellow, "do you mean to hint to me that my owners have insured this vessel highly, an' engaged me because they think I'm too big a fool to run her to Madeira without wrecking her? Because if so, just eay it out loud, an' I'll wipe up the floor with you till—"

"Stop, stop!" said the stranger mildly. "My dear captain, I never dreamed of such a thing. I know you can take her to Madeira, and far be it from me to hint anything against anybody."

"You do mean it though all the

that——"

"I take the Cygnet to Madeira."

"And I offer you an extra bonus of \$100 for that very thing. My agent will pay it as soon as you reach Palmas."

"Easily-carned money."

aimas.
"Easily-carned money."
"Perhaps a little more difficult than
ou think," observed Mr. John Jones

you think," observed and blandly.

Bob remembered Captain Scott's warning. He thought of the master mariner's "ticket," new and safe in his chest, and how his one desire was to keep it "clean."

""" bear anything you have to

keep it "clean."
"I'll hear anything you have to say," he said to the visitor.
"I'll put it in a few words," said

John Jones. "You have no second engineer. The chief can't get one at the wages offered. But you'll have one before you sail."
"Of course."
"When he comes, watch him."
The stranger rose to go.
"Is that all?" said Bob.
"Thut's all," replied John Jones.
"If you watch him carefully enough you'll get £100 at Palmas."
"It's a lot of money."
The stranger turned.
"It will be cheaper," he said, "than paying thirty times that sum."
And opening the chart-house door, he left the ship.

THE 3rd OHAPTER.
The Machine That Tick
THIRTY times £100," mured Bob to himself, as he again, but did not look at them, "£3,000—just what the Cygnet's insured for, as I happen to know."

sured for, as I happen to know."

He knitted his brows.

"It's as clear as mud. That chap represents the underwriters who've insured the ship, and whether they're right or wrong, they believe Stephanos & Co. mean to get the Cygnet lost an' claim the £3,000. They've smelt some game out evidently, an' believe somebody'll be put abourd to hoodwink me an' wreek the ship. They know they couldn't get a skipper to do it unless he was a shady one, an' shady skippers don't look well in an insurance case. Mr. John Jones hinted

But although all things went smoothly, and although in his mind Bob had almost acquitted Bennett of any evil intentions, he did not relax his precautions. For all that, it was

peculiar manner.

That part of the ship was deserted at the time, and the your skipper had been down to inspect himself the Cygnet's plates, which were enough to keep any ship-master in an anxious state. Coming up, he saw Bennett walking rapidly and stealthily down the alley-way with a large bundle under his arm.

and we'll see what you've been up to.
This way, Mr. Heron." grimly, "just walk inside with meand we'll see what you've been up to. any evil intentions, he did not relax his precautions. For all that, it was mainly an accident that at last put him on the scent. Bob was bold, fearless, and a remarkably cool hand, but he was not cut out for a detective, and it was mere chance that, happening to see Bennett quit his second engineer's cabin some days afterwards in a very peculiar manner.

It was a curious sight that met them.

The room was lined with wooden matchboarding, and on the farther side, upon what was the ship's skin, was fixed a thing like a large coffeccanister. It was held securely to the matchboarding by nails driven through little eye-bolts round its sides, and had evidently just been fixed up. From it came a sharp, regular ticking, like that of a cheap clock.

"Ah," said the mate coolly, "that's the game, eh? Hold him tight, sir! That's an infernal machine, timed to go off at will, and it's already started."

"In a quarter of an hour it'll explode!" Cried Banvett, strugding

down the alley-way with a large bundle under his arm.

The bundle was wrapped in cocoamatting, and was carried very gingerly. Its bearer dived below actively, believing himself unseen, and Bob gained the lower deck by another way.

All the young captain's suspicions were aroused again. He followed Bennett cautiously, keeping well back in the gloom; and the engineer quickly made his way through the bulkhead door into the main hold, the after part of which was empty.

To Bob's surprise, the man entered a small room which was partitioned off against the bulkhead. It had ironplate walls and a door, and had once been used as a sort of strong-room. It now contained nothing—absolutely nothing.

That's an infernal machine, timed to go off at will, and it's already started."

"In a quarter of an hour it'll explode!" cried Bennett, struggling.

"Oh, you fools, take me out!"

"Don't be in a hurry," said Bob,

"I'll deal with you presently. Mr.
Heron, take that screwdriver and get the thing off the wall, and we'll chuck it overboard."

"No, no, no!" screamed Bennett frantically. "If you try to lever it off now, if you disturb it at all, it'll explode at once and blow us all to mincemeat!"

"That's a lie, or you couldn't have fixed it up there."

"It wasn't going then. I've started the clockwork since I put it up, and any disturbance now will spring it before its time!"

"Then get to work and stop it, if you want to save your neck."

"I can't! Nothing can save the ship! Come on deck quickly; we shall have time to get away in the boats before she sinks! We should have time after the explosion! But if you touch it now you will blow us to atoms!"

"I suppose, sir," said Heron thoughtfully, "he ought to know."

"Quite so," returned Bob. "It's your machine, and you ought to know, no doubt. You say there's no way to save the ship. I'm going to lock you in here till you find one. If you don't manage to stop the machine before the ten minutes is up, I'm afraid this is the last infernal machine, you'll have a chance to make."

"Necessity," said Bob, as he flung the scoundrel back into the room and locked him in—"is the mother of invention. If any man can save this ship, you'll do it, I think. If not—Come along, Heron."

The yells and hammerings on the door filled the whole hold as the skipper and mate hurried on deck. The prisoner did not seem to be using his wits as yet.

Bob took charge of the bridge.

"Meron earnel of the bridge.

"Meron earnel on the bridge.

The engineer tried to resist, but Boh dragged him bodily in, and Heron

ught the lamp.

t was a curious sight that met

prisoner did not seem to be using his wits as yet.

Bob took charge of the bridge.
He gave his orders with great coolness.

"Mr. Heron, clear all the davits and have the boats ready to lower. Let all the men take their stations, and warn the engine-room staff to be ready to come on deck. Bring me the cashbox that holds the ship's papers."

The crew carried out the orders with surprise, but alacrity. Madeira was already in sight on the horizon—a couple of hours' voyage. But none on deck, except the quiet mate and the cool young skipper on the bridge, knew the peril that threatened the ship.

cool young skipper on the bridge, knew the peril that threatened the ship.

The minutes dragged on. Silence had fallen on the ship; the surprised crew were still standing by the boats. Yet the fatal shock did not come.

Nearer and nearer grew the coast of Madeira, and the pôt of Palmas was in plain view. Mr. Heron first broke the silence.

"Half an hour gone, sir."

Bob drew a long breath of relief. He called the quartermaster to the wheel, and beckened the mate below into the hold.

"It seems Bennett has found a way," he said. "Let us see."

They opened the locked door. In a corner as far from the contrivance on the wall as possible, huddled the form of the second engineer—a gibbering madman, his reason gone.

As for the infernal machine, it had stopped of its own accord.

As for the infernal machine, it had stopped of its own accord.

"I have £100 here for you, which my principals in London have wired me to give you, Captain Thorne," said the fat little agent in the office at Palmas; "and they wish me to say that if you'd like a berth from a better firm than Stephanos & Co., they'll get you the command of a new 1,500 ton steamer that's just been launched at Belfast." Here's your £100, Captain Thorne. Good-day." THE END.

(Another complete story of "Circus Pete" on Tuesday next.)



In the corner of the room was the huddled up form of the second engineer a gibbering madman.

at the second engineer. The way things are now, Stephanes & Co. are pretty sure to have to supply one of their own choosing." Bob folded his papers and took his

Bob folded his papers and took his cap.

"Stephanos & Co. are my owners. A ship-master's got to be loyal to his owners, so I'll believe nothing against the firm. But if my first ship's wrecked it'll queer my ticket for good; so I'll keep a pretty smartish watch on Mister Second Engineer, whether or no." Considering it was two days more before the Cygnet sailed, and her second engineer did not join her till an hour before sho weighed anchor, not much was seen of him till the ship was out of dock and hustling down the Bristol Channel. But Bob observed that the now-comer brought two singularly large dunnage-sacks with singularly large dunnage sacks with

singularly large dunnage-sacks with him.

"A second engineer don't want so much clothes as all that," said Bob to himself, "and I'm blessed if I like the look of the beggar either."

However, anything more innocent than the actions of Mr. Benjamin Bennett—which was the engineer's name—could not be imagined. He was a gruff, bulky, silent man, who attended to his duties strictly, although McIvor vowed he knew little of them, and was only fit for a greaser.

Bob watched him very cautiously. He was anxious not to let the man know there was any suspicion of him; but he took care to account for Bennett at all hours, arranging his own affairs

at all hours, arranging his own affairs to suit the watch.

On the third day out, Bob began to think the suspicions of Mr. John Jones had been ill-founded.

"What on earth can the fellow be up to?" thought Bob.

The glimmer of a lamp from the little room showed that Bennett needed

light for whatever he was doing, and then came the sound of gentle hammer-

ing.
"It seems to me," murmured Bob,

"It seems to me," murmured Bob,
"I'd better have a witness to this."
He silently withdrew, and found on
deck Heron, the elderly mate, whom
he took aside, leaving the quartermaster in charge.
"Mr. Heron," said Bob, "I'll be
obliged if you'll take off your boots
and follow me below quietly an' vory
quickly. There's a curious gaine
being played, which has a good deal
to do with insurance money, an' I
want you for a witness."
Mr. Heron whistled. He was a man
of actions, not words, and he followed

of actions, not words, and he followed Bob at once. They made their way quietly till they were in view of the little room.

quietly till they were in view of the little room.

"Who's in there?" asked the mate.

"Mr. Benjamin Bennett."

"Phew! I never cottoned to that chap, sir. Insurance, you say? Well, they're rummy owners—yours an' mine. Is he scuttlin' the ship with a centre-bit?"

"No. We should out their way.

a centre-bit?"

"No. We should find that out an' stop it in time. I don't know what the dickens it is, but we'll know in a minute. Edge up a bit nearer that door."

The slight noise in the room ceased, and Bennett crept out.

A gasping cry escaped him, for he ran right into the arms of the stalwart young skipper, who held him in an iron

grip. "Mr. Benjamin Bennett," said Bob