THIS MARVEL Contains a TOM SAYERS, The Great Boxer and Popular Actor, by A. S. HARDY.



The object of THE BOYS' FRIEND is to Amuse, to Instruct, and to Advise Boys.

No. 487.- Vol. X. New Series.]

ONE PENNY.

[WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 8, 1910.





Being a Grand New Serial of the Great Detective, and His Assistants Tinker and

The opening of this story finds Sexton Blake, the famous detective, with his young assistant Tinker, on the night previous to their embarkation to East Africa on a pleasure shooting trip. At the very last moment this long anticipated holiday is chandred.

Sexton Blake and Tinker,

disguised as navvies,

obtain employment in the workings of this great scheme at Redeliff Dale. This village is better known by the fancy name of "Ginger Town," and the famous detective and his assistant get lodgings at the cottage of Job Peckchaff some distance away from

of Job Peckgaar some distance away from the workings.

Black Jock is an exceedingly harsh and suspicious foreman, under whom Tinker is working. In the night the work of months is mysteriously made a complete wreck, and the machinery put in a dishevelled conthe machinery partial dition.
So far, Sexton Blake has not struck

the slightest clue to the mystery

he has come to solve, and nothing but ruin stares Sidney Temple in the face.

The detective, now known as Bob Packer, is promoted to ganger, or sort of petty foreman. A huge pump is employed to keep clear any water that fights its way past the dam of the river.

The detective finds the engine-minder drugged and

clear any water that nguis its way past the dam of the river.

The detective finds the engine-minder drugged and senseless. He then catches the enemy actually at work throwing vitrol over the bearings of the great shart of the pump. A terrible struggle ensues, and the marauder flies, while Sexton Blake miraculously escapes death.

He returns to the helpless engine-minder, and while attending him Sidney Temple appears on the scene. The pump is again set in motion, but the rush of water is threatening destruction with horrifying swiftness.

and while above a speak of the pump is again appears on the scene. The pump is again set in motion, but the rush of water is threatening destruction with horrifying swiftness.

The fires are banked up, and every moment the water is threatening to dash into the furnaces and cause a mighty explosion.

Into the furnaces and cause a mighty explosion.

Tinker, sees that the only way of securing Blake's escape is to let the flood into the tunnel. By means of a keg of powder and fuse, he blows away part of the bank, and with the rushing water he is carried away under ground. He is discovered where Pedro had left him on high ground clear of the swirling water, and is now recovering from his terrible experience.

"And, by jinks, a dark plot it is!" exclaimed Tinker, while he and Sexton Blake sat together in the bed-room.

"One of the darkest I ever set myself to solve," said the great detective.

(Non read the plendid chapters below.)

(Now read the plendid chapters below.)

Tinker Makes a Dangerous Enemy.

HERE are several in it, no doubt, but there is one doubt, but there is one master-brain at the back of it all." continued Sexton Blake—"a villain whose cunning is only axcelled by his sleepless malice. Nothing short of the absolute ruin of Sidney Temple's great work will satisfy him. And that will depend upon you and me, Tinker. He is bound to achieve it if we fail."

"We have never failed yet, sir," Imker proudly reminded him.
"No, but this is going to be a close call, lad," said Blake gravely. "You must hurry and get well, so as to be back at work speedily. I have urgent need of your help."

"I'll be as right as rain when I've polished off that bit of steak," cried Tinker, as Mrs. Peckchaff came back bearing a steaming dish.

And polish it off he did, in a way that made the good little woman gasp, and filled Sexton Blake with delight.

"A boy who can eat like that isn't going to lie in sick-bay much longer," he muttered delightedly, as he rose to go. "Tinker will soon be back in the fighting-line."

Next morning saw Tinker back at work. Sexton Blake, who was now on the day-shift for a time, would have taken Tinker into his the saket.

Read the Thrilling, Long, Company with a basket o' fazle comes Daft Davy, with a basket o' fazle!"

"Daft Davy" came along; a queer figure, all legs and wings like a gueer figure, all legs and wings like a queer figure, al doubt, but there is one master-brain at the back "continued Sexton Blake

own gang, and given him only light work at first, after his recent illness, but Tinker would have none of it.

"I am all right-ho," he said, "and I'm not going to take on anything soft, like a sick schoolgirl. I'll stand my graft full up to the top, same as the rest of 'em."

So he took his former place in the gang under Black Jock — another thing that made Blake rather uneasy, for he strongly doubted if that sour individual had by any means forgotten the trick Tinker played him that morning to save Job Peckchaff from an ugly fight, with the "sack" to follow.

And Blake was right. Black Jock

to follow.

And Blake was right. Black Jock had not forgotten the incident.

But though he had his suspicions, he could not be sure who was responsible for it; so suddenly had it come about that he was not certain whose barrow it was that had knocked him off his pins and tilted him into the bucket of the travelling crane.

him into the bucket of the travelling crane.

He could only nurse his wrath and make covert inquiries. But although several of the men and boys had seen the whole thing, they were staunch, for they liked Tinker, and they didn't like Black Jock.

But the foreman never relaxed his efforts to find out. And his chance came at last.

Tinker, with some half-dozen other boys, had been put to his former work — that of wheeling barrowloads of earth along the gangway of planks to the trucks on the line of rails.

It was a warm autumn afternoon,

planks to the trucks on the line of rails.

It was a warm autumn afternoon, with a dry, dusty wind blowing, and wheeling the heavy barrows was thirst-provoking work.

"Gosh! Reel sif I could lower a gallon of somethin' cool and wet,!" remarked one of the boys, dropping the handles of his barrow and gasping like a trout on a sandbank.

Tinker, who was next him in the line, nodded. He was feeling that way himself. So were the others, and many a longing eye was turned towards the tower of shanties where there was a small tuckshop established that sold everything, including ginger-pop, and lots of lovely, sticky, fizzy drinks in bottles.

But that was half a mile away, and it was more than the game was worth to leave the line even for a minute. Black Jock hovered about, with an eye everywhere. And he had a nasty way with him.

So they licked their dry lips, and shoved the barrows along down the

nasty way with him.
So they licked their dry lips, and shoved the barrows along down the line of creaking planks.

Presently one of the boys let out a yelp of delight.

"Luck-ho!" he shouted. "Here comes Daft Davy, with a basket o' fizzle!"

"Give us another punny, then," said Daft Davy, slewing the basket round the other side of him.

"Ain't got one: pay yer termorrer," said the big fellow, trying to snatch a bottle.

"Nae, nae!" piped Davy, in a tone of fear—he was a long, lank, sickly sort of chap—"nae—nae! Mither said I wasn't to trust ony of ye. Ye swallers the pop and forgets the punny. Ye can't 'ave nane if ye doan't pay."

The big fellow glared angrily out of his small, piggish green eyes.

He was known as "Slimy Sam," and his character was a nasty mixture of bully and sneak. He bullied the boys—for he was the biggest amongst them—and sneaked about the men. And being, for some odd reason, a bit of a favourite with Black Jock, he managed to do a lot of mischief in that way.

"Give us a bottle and shut yer mouth!" he growled threateningly.

Daft Davy, locking badly scared, backed away. But the big lout was too quick for him. He snatched a bottle from the basket, then giving it a kick, sent it flying off Davy's arm, scattering its contents—bottles full and empty, cakes and apples—all over the dusty ground.

The poor simpleton gave a howl of dismay, and then began to blubber like a child.

Slimy Sam laughed, and began guzzling the stolen pop.

"You mean, cowardly brute!" cried Tinker, striding up to him with clenched fists and eyes flashing.
"You deserve a licking for that!"
Slimy Sam threw away the empty bottle and glared at the speaker. He had never tested Tinker's fighting powers as etc but he looked an easy pon, being flearly a flead shorter than himself, and a lot under his yeight. "Wot!" he grunted. "Was yerfalkin' to me?" Yer wants a bung on the nose to knock the check out o' yer—sh? An' there yer are!"

He aimed a vicious blow at Tinker's face. But it did not get there. Sweeping it lightly and easily aside, Tinker planted his own fist full upon the bully's snub nose.

It was no light tap, and Slimy Sam went down under it, big though he was. And there was something so satisfying about it that he stayed down rather than risk another. The

They scuttled back to their barrows in short order. Tinker going last, and a little more leisurely. Daft Davy snatched up as much of his ruined stock as he could, and made off like a rabbit when a dog

Had Tinker looked back—which he did not think of doing—he might have got a warning hint from what

Slimy Sam picked himself up and as Black Jock arrived on the scene. The foreman demanded of him—but not in the same fierce tone he would have used to the other boys—"What wan been up to?" For there Slimy Sam picked himself up just Black Jock arrived on the scene. have used to the other boys—"What ave you been up to?" For there was a trickle of red from the slimy one's nose.

The lout mumbled some lying answer as he mopped his nose with his cuff. His small green eyes were gleaming with revengeful malice.

He drew closer to Black Jock, and said something in whispers, ending by pointing to Tinker, who was the last of the retreating line of boys.

The burly foreman started, and sent a glare after Tinker that would have warned him indeed had he seen it.

it.

"Sure?" he said.

"Dead sure," answered the sneak.
"I seed it all with me own eyes."

"Well, get back to your work and hold your tongue," grunted Black Jock, turning and striding away.
That evening, at knock-off time, he came up to the group of boys as they were preparing to troop off home.

"Stop a bit," he said. "I want one o' you to take a barrow up to the toll-house yonder, alongside the tram-road, and fetch away a load of pick-heads to be re-pointed. Here, you new boy, you'll do! It won't take you more'n half an hour."

This was to Tinker.

He spoke far more civilly than usual, and Tinker, who had forgotten all about the affair of the travelling-crane, had no suspicion even then.

He was not quite fit yet, and the day's work had been a heavy one. It was after hours, but he was never a grouser, and answered "Ay, ay, sir!" cheerily enough, as he took up the handles of his barrow once again and set off.

It was getting dusk when he started, and he did not notice that Black Jock also set off at the same

and set off.

It was getting dusk when he started, and he did not notice that Black Jock also set off at the same moment, taking much the same direction, too, but a slightly different route.

Neither did he mark the trium-phant grin on Slimy Saur's ugly face as he turned away with the other

phant grin on Slimy Sau's ugly tace as he turned away with the other lads.

The tool-shed which the foreman meant was nearly half a mile down the valley, far away from the main works, and in a lonely spot at that hour, when the day workers had gone home, and the night-shift not yet come on.

It stood close to the tram-line on which ran the trains of trucks conveying loads of stone from the distant railway. They were drawn by a wire cable worked from an engine-house at the far end of the line.

Near where the tool-shed stood the tram-line ran through a deep cutting, with sheer sides, and just wide enough to allow the trucks to pass through.

This little bit of explanation will help the reader to understand the grim affair that was so soon to follow. Whistling cheerily, Tinker trundled his barrow along until he got to the shed. He half-expected to find someone there to help him. But there was no one, and the spot locked mighty bare and lonely.

But Tinker was not the sort to trouble about that.

Opening the shed door, he went inside to get his first batch of pickheads. It was pitch-dark in there, and he thought of striking a match to see if there was a lantern or a bit of candle.

But before he could draw the box

But before he could draw the box from his pocket, a heavy hand scended upon him, and his shou was seized in a grip of say

In the Hands of a Ruffian.

INKER gave a startled cry, and his unseen assailant made no effort to silenge him. When no effort to silence him. was there to hear in that lonely spot?

no effort to silence him. Who was there to hear in that lonely spot? He struggled gamely, but in vain. His powerful captor easily dragged him outside the hut into the waning light.

Then Tinker saw that he was in the hands of Black Jock.

Well did the burly foreman's nickname fit him then. His swarthy features were black indeed—black with fury and revengeful malice, long repressed, but to be gratified at last. It was not that he had come to any harm by Tinker's trick; it was the indignity, the wound to his sullen pride in his great strength and power of inspiring fear. The men had seen him sprawling like a maimed frog in the bucket of earth, and he had heard many a sly jest about it since.

He, who reckoned on quelling the biggest man under him by the mcre power of his eye, had been made a laughing-stock by a boy.

All this boiled within him now, and made him sour, sullen, and brutal at the best of times, little better than a fiend; cruel and merciless, equal to any savage deed.

Tinker read this in his eyes all too well.

He remembered now, too late. But

He remembered now, too late. But surely, he thought, the man cannot bear such malice just for a boyish trick!

bear such mance just for a boyish trick!

He was soon undeceived.

"So it was you who played that lark on me—you, you cub, who dared to do it—ch?"

Black Jock hissed the words in a voice low and hoarse with passion.

Tinker made no answer.

A lie, even if it would have served him, was altogether out of his line. The could never look Sexton Blake in the face again and own that he had saved himself by a lie.

Instead, he made a gallant struggle to get free.

to get free.

It was quite useless. At the best he would have been but as a child in the hands of that burly giant. But now he was still weak from his recent

illness, and spent with the day's heavy work. The effort soon exhausted him, and Black Jock held him easily with one powerful hand. With the other he took off the heavy belt from around his waist.

"Do you know what I'm going to do?" he said, in that same low, horrible voice. "I'm going to teach you a lesson that you'll remember—ay, and bear the marks of—if you live to be an old man! I'm going to thrash you so that you'll crawl away from here like a worm that's been under heel. You may how! if you like; it'll be music to me, and there's none else to mind it."

Tinker set his teeth hard. He was not of the sort to how!.

But he fought with all his remaining strength to tear himself away, or at least escape some of the merciless shower of blows that now descended upon him, the ruffian wielding the heavy buckled belt with the full power of his muscular arm. But the brute held him as he might have held a terrier by the neck, at armslength, and struggle as he would, he could not avoid one of those cruel strokes. "Hang you! I'll draw a cry from you yet, you cub—or kill you!" growled Black Jock, enraged at his victim's dogged silence, and striking harder still.

In the midst of it there came a ringing shout from the hillside near: "Desist, you scoundrel—desist! You brute, you shall pay dearly for this!"

It was the voice of Sexton Blake. No mere chance had brought him there. Missing Tinker, who was to have joined him after work to go home together, he asked about him, and learned from one of the men that the boy had been sent by Black Jock to the tool-shed down the valley.

It was a strange order at that late hour, and Blake's suspicions were at once aroused:

He set off immediately for the tool.

nour, and blake's suspicions were at once aroused.

He set off immediately for the toolshed—to arrive, as he feared, too late. For Tinker dropped limply from Black Jock's hand, as, startled by the shout, that ruffian let go his hold and turned to face the new-comer.

Fresh fury blazed in his eyes as h saw who it was. For he hated the new foreman with all the hate of his warped and savage nature; hated him for his popularity with the men, and his cheery, genial manner, that contrasted so markedly with his own sullen, brutal bearing.

But there was nothing genial about Bob Packer now.

His face was terrible in its stern anger as he strode up to Black Jock and exclaimed, in a voice of thunder-depth:

depth:
"Brute! What have you done to

"Brute! What have you done to that boy?"

"I've thrashed him!" growled Black Jock, in fierce defiance. "And I've not finished with him yet!"

He actually raised the belt again to strike at the prostrate lad, who was now trying feebly to struggle up from the ground. Blake closed in and struck him upon the chest. It was no light blow, for there was anger as well as the full weight of a powerful arm at the back of it.

Black Jock, giant though he was, staggered back several paces and almost fell.

But he recovered his balance by an effort, and with an inarticulate cry or howl—more like that of a wolf thau a man—sprang upon the detective, and launched at him a perfect torrent of blows with his mighty fists.

Any one of them might well have proved fatal had it reached its mark. But Blake stepped back, avoiding some and guarding the others with the ready skill of one of the finest amateur middle-weights of his day.

After that first blow he kept purely upon the defensive, stopping or dodging each furious drive, and making no return. For he well knew that no sort of blow would tell upon this rough and hardly giant but one-a knock-out, grim, well-placed, and decisive.

So he bided his chance, letting his

decisive.

So he bided his chance, letting his adversary wear down his strength

So he bided his chance, letting his adversary wear down his strength with fearful slogging.

And fearful it was. For the ruffian, hitting only to kill or maim, rained his blows in breathless succession, and cach with the force of a pile-driver.

pile-driver.

It was not a pleasant scene, or a fight to describe in words. For it was the battle of two strong men; the one filled with just anger, the other with savage hate.

Black Jock's blows, when they got home—for Blake could neither guard nor avoid them all—fell with hollow thuds, sickening to hear.

Blake managed to keep his face and head untouched, but his chest and sides came in for many a cruel drive

Popular Boxer-Actor, by Arthur S. Hardy, Marvel—Price 1d. Read the Thrilling, Long, Complete Tale of this Tom Sayers!

that resounded like the thud of a

Pavior's rammer.

No man, not in the pink of condition, as he was, could have endured that terrible punishment for half a

As it was, the detective had to retreat inch by inch to minimise the force of those terrible lunges, for the giant's length of reach was enormous.

A Fatal Warning.

HIS brought Blake — unconscious of his new peril, for he dare not for an instant turn his head—nearer and nearer to the brink of the cutting where the tram-road ran twenty feet below.

road ran twenty feet below.

Tinker had now got upon his feet, and was standing—staggering with weakness—watching the fight, and looking every moment to see Blake give the knock-out blow. For he well know the great detective's skill with his fists, and never doubted it would come. Suddenly he realised Blake's peril.

lake's peril. Half dazed with pain and weakness. the boy's usual caution was absent. He shouted with all the breath he

He shouted with all the breath he could command:

"Look out, sir! The cutting behind you!"

It was a fatal mistake.

Startled by the shout, Blake turned his head, and instantly received a fearful drive from his adversary's fist full upon the temple. He reeled backward half a dozen paces to the very brink of the cutting, seemed to hang upon the edge a breathing space, then fell with uplifted hands into the darkness below.

Black Jock remained motionless for a moment, in the very attitude in which he had struck that dastardly

moment, in the very attitude in which he had struck that dastardly

a moment, in the very attitude in which he had struck that dastardly blow.

Then, as though even his callous and brutal heart was dismayed at its consequences, he took a step towards the brink of the cutting, but halted half-way, and turning upon his heel, strode off into the gathering dusk.

Tinker gave a gasp of horror, and forgetting his pain and weakness, staggered to the edge, and kneeling, peered down.

It was nearly dark below, for the narrow cutting was some fifteen or twenty feet in depth, but all too clearly he could distinguish the form of Sexton Blake lying across the near-side rail, quite motionless, as though stunned—or perchance dead!

A few inches above his head cheeped and rattled the wire cable that drew the trucks.

It was in motion, and a dull rumbling sound in the distance told Tinker that a train of loaded trucks was approaching the cutting.

Despair like madness worked in the boy's brain.

What could be do—what could be

boy's brain. What could he do-what could he

do?

There was no one in charge of the train of trucks, the cable being worked from an engine-house upwards of a mile away, and automatically stopped at their journey's end; no driver to whom he could shout or signal to stop the waggons in time.

time.

And even if he could get down the almost perpendicular sides of the cutting, what could he do then?

There was no dragging the helpless man out of harm's way; as before stated, the trucks had bare clearance between the sides of the cutting and no more. To risk it was only to imperil his own life as well to no purpose

no more. To risk it was only to imperil his own life as well to no purpose.

All this flashed swiftly through the lad's brain—cleared magically now in the face of that terrible emergency.

Then a wild impulse came to him and made his heart leap with hope.

He remembered having seen a pile of planks lying not far from the tram-road as he was wheeling his barrow there. They lay at some distance up the line in the direction from where the trucks were approaching, at a point where the cutting was not quite so deep.

He hurried thither, staggering and stumbling in his frantic haste. And the rumbling of the heavy loaded trucks, sounding nearer and nearer, spurred him on.

With strength given by desperation alone he hauled the topmost plank—a heavy balk of timber—off the stack, and dragging it to the edge of the cutting, shoved it over. It fell, not as he had hoped, across the rails, but uselessly, lengthwise between them!

The failure maddened him. There was but one chance now, one only. And that forlornly desperate.

He swung himself over the edge of the steep clay bank, and then let go, sliding, glancing, and bumping down it sheer on to the metals below.

Dizzy with his swift descent, half blinded by the shower of dust and small pebbles he had loosened as he came, he still had sense enough to grope for the plank, and still enough of desperate strength to haul it out from where it had fallen and drag it across both rails under the cable.

Then he staggered back, flattening himself hard against the clay wall some thirty yards away.

Pent in that narrow space the rumble of the oncoming waggons, loaded with blocks of stone, beat upon his ears like the crash of artillery, stunning him, and making his senses reel. They came swiftly, for the cable was running fast.

Now he could see the foremost of the trucks as they rounded a curve—now it was so close that he could count the rivets on the iron plates in its front.

Would it merely drive the plank

Would it merely drive the plank aside and rush on, with the others behind it, to where Sexton Blake lay helpless, at the mercy of those iron

helpless, at the mercy of those fron wheels?
Crash!
The front wheels struck the plank with a dull, crashing sound, and he saw the foremost truck rear up. The cable snapped with a report like a gun, and went hissing through the air, making lightning-flashes as it spun away into the darkness. Then the truck seemed to leap from the line sideways, crashing deep into the bank not ten feet from where he stood.

The two next it instantly over-turned, the granite blocks rolling out of them with a sound of thunder.

But the deadly wheels were harmless now. The peril was past!

Filled with joy at the success of his desperate expedient, but still trembling between hope and fear—for it was likely enough that Sexton Blake had been killed by that dreadful fall—Tinker made his way down the line to where the detective lay.

To his unspeakable relief, he saw Blake raise his head as he approached.
"Are you badly hurt, sir?" he anxiously asked. "It is I—Tinker!"
"Ah—I fell, did I not?" murmured Blake, making an effort to rise. "That terrific noise just now—was it an explosion, or thunder?"

Tinker briefly explained all.

"Ah! A narrow escape!" said the detective, but coolly, for his calm self-possession was returning fast. "Then I owe my life to you once again, Tinker! But let us get out of this!"

But this proved to be no easy matter.

Blake, although not seriously injured had slightly sprained his ankle.

But this proved to be no easy matter.

Blake, although not seriously injured, had slightly sprained his ankle, and found himself barely able to stand. It was obviously not possible for him to scale those steep sides, nor was Tinker able to help him, being in a queer plight himself.

Then they saw lights glancing down the line, and heard the voices of men approaching.

A small party, headed by Sidney Temple, now came up, some bearing.

A small party, headed by Sidney Temple, now came up, some bearing lanterns in their hands. The snapping of the cable had, of course, given warning of some mishap to those in the engine-house, and they had turned out to examine the line. Temple, who chanced to be about at the time, had joined them, fearing that his enemies had been at work once more.

"This is the place!" exclaimed the young engineer, holding his lantern aloft. "The trucks have been derailed. See, they are piled up here! And.— Ah! Who's this?"

Sexton Blake hobbled forward and briefly explained, leaving it to be inferred that his fall was an accident, for he did not want the story of his fight with Black Jock to get abroad among the men.

But later that evening lying some

agnit with Black Jock to get abroad among the men.

But later that evening, lying comfortably on a couch in Temple's office in Ginger Town, he told him the truth, for he wished to relieve him of any fear that this new mishap was the work of his secret enemies.

It was one of the few mistakes that the great detective ever made. For Temple, without saying anything of his intention, discharged Black Jock upon the following morning, thereby, as events soon proved, adding a dangerous ally to those already leagued against him. leagued against him.

Tinker is Tempted and Falls,

NE Sunday morning, a little later than these events, Bob Packer "did himself up' go a-visiting.

go a-visiting.

The invitation, which came through Sidney Temple, was a great honour in its way, for it was from Sir Richard Blaise. And Sir Richard was a great man in that part of the Midlands.

He was a self-made man, but a fine fellow, whom success had failed to spoil.

spoil. He had worked his way up from

next to nothing to become a wealthy man, knighted by Royalty for his munificent gifts to charities; mayor of the chief of the three towns which the great new scheme was to supply with water, and was altogether a power in the whole district.

That great enterprise had been chiefly of his own promoting, and it was by his influence that it had been placed in the hands of. Sidney Temple.

remple.

"For," as he had stoutly declared,

"Temple is the man to carry this
thing out if anyone can. He is only
a young chap, it is true, and he hasn't
done anything big as yet, but he is the
man for us, for he's got grit as well as
hrains!"

man for us, for he's got grit as well as brains!"

Sir Richard worshipped such men. So the young civil engineer and he became great friends. Sidney Temple was a frequent visitor at the knight's fine house near Redeliff Dale, and Sir Richard often came to inspect the progress of the great work.

In these visits he often encountered Bob Packer, and the new foreman took his fancy mightily. He was much struck with the man's clean,

the workmen in Ginger Town in the morning, and in the afternoon thought he would go for a stroll. Pedro, of course, wanted to go with him, but Tinker declined his company reluctantly.

"N-no, old son," he said. "I'm going up to the woods, and there are bunnies and things in there, and you'd be dead sure to go nosing after 'em, and most likely get a dose of No. 1 shot in your hide from some keeper's gun. Just you stay where you are."

So he set forth alone.

It was a lovely autumn afternoon, and the woods, when he reached them, were delightfully peaceful and quiet.

As a matter of fact, it was a bit too peaceful and quiet to sure and the woods.

quiet.

As a matter of fact, it was a bit too peaceful and quiet to suit Tinker.

He enjoyed it all right at first, for he had never before explored the neighbourhood so far away from the works, and it was all new and fresh to him, and he liked Nature very much; but he was only a boy, and the old lady, taken all by herself, was a bit too slow and quiet for him

Become Your Own Printer.

A Magnificent Outfit for BOYS' FRIEND Readers, Containing 228 Letters, Stops, etc.

WHAT THE OUTFIT CONTAINS-

Superior Solid Rubber Type (as shown below), One Polished Wood Single-Line Holder, One Polished Wood Two-Line Holder, Inexhaustible Stamping Pad, Type Tweezers, and full directions for use.

in a Strong Box.

AAAaaaaaBBbbbbCCcccDDddddEEEeeeeeeeFFfff filGGgggHHhhhhhlliiiiiiJJjjKKkkkkLLIIIII.MMMmmm mmNNnnnnnnOOooooPPpppQqqRRrrrrrrrSSSssss sssTTTttttttWUuuuuVVvvvWWwwwXXxxYyyZZzzz №11222844550677889900///// ¥

This sketch shows the contents of our Printing Outfit on a greatly reduced scale,

HOW TO GET AN OUTFIT:

Collect SIX coupons from this week's number of THE BOYS' FRIEND. Then get a Postal Order for Sixpence and Three Penny Stamps; stick the stamps on the postal order; send the coupons, postal order and stamps to "The Bonus Department," THE BOYS' FRIEND, 23, Bouverie Street, London, E.C., enclosing your name and full address, and in a few days you will receive, by post, this beautifully-made printing outfit as described above.

REMEMBER: 9d. and Six Coupons for This Unique Outfit.

sober bearing, and his blunt but shrewd manner of speech. Bob Packer impressed him as something out of the common run of workmen, although, of course, he had not the least idea of his true identity.

"That new foreman of yours is a man after my own heart," the knight remarked to Sidney Temple, after one of these visits. "Bring him along to my place some Sunday to spend the day, will you? I'd like to have a long chat with him. That fellow's got no common set of brains in his head!"

Temple just managed to repress a

head!"
Temple just managed to repress a smile. Sexton Blake's brains were pretty good!
Thus the invitation came about, and on that particular Sunday morning Bob Packer gave his square blue jaw an extra scrape, put on a whiteybrown, home-washed collar that Mrs. Peckchaff had "got up" for him, and set forth in a cast-iron-looking suit of black clothes, appearing the very picture of the respectable working-man in his Sunday best.
Tinker, not being included in the invitation, was left to his own resources. Thus the invitation came about, and on that particular Sunday morning Bob Packer gave his square blue jaw an extra scrape, put on a whiteybrown, home-washed collar that Mrs. Peckchaff had "got up" for him, and set forth in a cast-iron-looking suit of black clothes, appearing the very picture of the respectable working-man in his Sunday best.

Tinker, not being included in the invitation, was left to his own resources.

He attended an open-air service to

He soon had enough of kicking the rustling brown leaves about in the dim russet aisles, and began to long for something more exciting.

Presently he came to a wall skirting the wood. It was a good, high, solid sort of red-brick wall, that looked as if it were there to take care of something particularly good on the other side.

Tinker no sooner saw that wall than he felt he would just die if he didn't look over it.

Being as agile as a monkey, it was not a difficult matter to him to clamber up and hook on to the broad mossy top with his arms, and look over. look over.

boughs of a small tree just at the edge of the lawn, a few yards beyond the laurel hedge.

Tinker was a true son of Adam!

He had plenty of money to buy apples—as a matter of fact, he could have helped himself to all he wanted from the trees in Mrs. Peckchaff's garden—but he no sooner set eyes on these particular apples than he knew he wanted no other kind on earth!

He simply must have one!

He told himself it was stealing—and on Sunday at that—but all the same, one leg would go over the wall. The other followed, and he found himself in the ditch.

It seemed a pity to go back without just having a lock at the apples after that. They were so near!

He peeped through the laurelhedge. There seemed to be no one about, and, at any rate, he could easily bunk back if anybody came along.

He pushed cautiously through the

along.

He pushed cautiously through the

He pushed cautiously through hedge.

Then, to his surprise, he found that the apple-tree wasn't so very near after all. It was a good distance back on the lawn, near the front of a small summer-house, or rustic arbour.

Still, it was rotten to go back, having come so far. He would just see if they were Blenheims—they looked like it.

A moment or two later and he

see it mey were Blemeins—they looked like it.

A moment or two later and he stood under the tree.

They were Blenheims, and just about as ripe as they could be. It was a sin to leave them ungathered—they were spoiling!

He took one—then saw a better one higher up, and took that. Three more tumbled down in the shaking, and he thought it would be wrong to leave them on the damp grass for the slugs to get at, so he took them.

Then, with his jacket pockets bulging, he thought it about time to go.

Just then a gentleman and young lady stepped on to the later from some path through the he had not noticed, and halted retween him and his line of retree "Blow those apples!" mutt Tinker. "Wish I hadn't seen 'e But recentance came too late.

"Blow those apples!" muttered Tinker. "Wish I hadn't seen 'em!" But repentance came too late. He was nicely cornered!

It was no use trying to hide behind the tree. It was only a very youthful tree, and its trunk was no bigger than his own arm.

There was nothing for it but the summer-house—if he could only reach it unseen.

Heard in Hiding.

UCKILY, the couple had halted with their backs towards him. He did not wait for them to

with their backs towards him. He did not wait for them to turn round.

Stooping low, he took a little noiseless run, and dodged round to the back of the summer-house. A big climbing rose-tree covered the rear of the little building, and Tinker squeezed in behind it. The flowers were gone, but the leaves were still upon it, growing dense, and so were the thorns, as large as salmon-hooks and quite as sharp.

Presently the couple turned round, and came straight towards the summer-house.

He recognised them both. The gentleman was none other than the Hon. Ralph Ardoise, the driver of the dogcart, with whom he had that unpleasant encounter on the morning of his arrival in Redcliff Dale.

"The Gipsy Squire," as he was locally called—perhaps because of his singularly dark complexion, perhaps from the fact that he actually had Romany blood in his veins—was attired in riding-dress, which became his tall, slender, yet athletic figure right well.

The young lady was Miss Maggie Blaise, daughter of Sir Richard. She

his tall, slender, yet athletic figure right well.

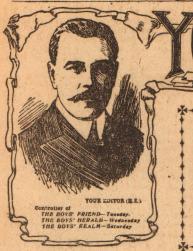
The young lady was Miss Maggie Blaise, daughter of Sir Richard. She was about twenty years of age, slight and graceful as a fairy, and remarkably pretty. Tinker had seen her once or twice before, when she visited the works with her father.

"Will you not sit down, Miss Blaise?" said Ardoise, pointing into the summer-house with the handle of his whip. "I have a few more words to say, and I beg of you to hear me. I will not detain you long."

The girl bowed slightly, and reluctantly, very reluctantly, Tinker thought—for he could see them both easily through a chink in the boarding—entered with him and sat down, but as far from him as the limited space would allow.

Tinker hated to play the eavesdropper, but he could not help it. To leave his hiding-place and try to cross the open lawn was too big a risk.

(To be continued next Tuesday.)



I want all my boys to look upon me as their firm friend and adviser. There are few men who know boys as well as I do, and there are no little trials and troubles, perplexities and anxieties, in which I cannot help and assist my readers.

Write to me whenever you are in doubt or difficulty. Tell me about yourself; let me know what you think of THE BOYS' FRIEND. All boys who write to me, and who enclose a stamped envelope or postcard, may be sure of receiving a prompt and kindly reply.

kindly reply.

All Letters should be addressed: The Editor, THE BOYS'
FRIEND, 23, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.

** The contents of this number copyrighted in the United States of America.

NEW STORIES.

EXT week I shall have very much pleasure in printing the opening chapters of "Yorkshire Grit," a tale of the wool district. It is written by Mr. Stacey Blake, who is quite well known to readers of THE BOYS' FRIEND. Most of them may not know however of them may not know, however, that Mr. Stacey Blake has had a pretty adventurous career. He was born in Bradford, and he knows the

West Riding, every inch of it, with all the thoroughness of a Yorkshireman who loves the county in which he was born. He is "real Yorkshire," is Mr. Stacey Blake, and it is a real Yorkshire tale that he is going to give my friends this time. On this account I hope my supporters will rally round me, and help to spread the fame of this tale.

Although Mr. Stacey Blake was born in Bradford, after some years he moved to Nottingham, and there he became a lithographic artist—i.e., his work consisted of drawing pictures and designs on stone for the purpose of being printed in colours afterwards. His health failing him, however, he took to long-distance cycling when the great boom in cycling occurred nearly twenty years ago, and rode to St. Petersburg. Further, he rode across Morocco, travelled from Paris to Athens, and on one occasion penetrated 150 miles into the Arctic Circle. He was the first cyclist to undertake these adventurous rides.

On another occasion he travelled all over Spain on a bicycle with the late very famous artist. Tom Browne, who died so sadly and suddenly a brief while ago.

A few years back he devoted himself to story writing, and he has publised books and stories in all kinds of papers. He wrote for The Boys' Friend recently "Wilbur Wright's Apprentice," a story which most of my chums will remember quite favourably.

In the new serial which starts next week Mr. Stacey Blake goes back to his own county, and because of this, and because of the subject of the story, I think he is going to score a very great success. Anyway, I feel certain my friends will like the openchapters of "Yorkshire Grit" when they appear next week.

But this is not the only item of interest in The Boys' Friend. I have persuaded Mr. Eugen Sandow, the famous health culturist, to write a new series of health and strength articles for our paper.

Eugen Sandow is an old friend of your Editor's, and he is well-known to everyone in the country as one of the finest specimens of physical manhood that we have ever hadburther, Mr. Eu

It is pitiable to me to see so many puny. narrow-chested cigarette-smoking lads about the streets. If they only knew the pleasures of being well and strong—of having muscles that are hard and yet texible, of having bodies something nearer the model which the Almighty designed, shapely, clean and healthy—more of them would abandon all their bad habits, and would certainly take up the proper development of their bodies with enthusiasm. I hope these articles by Mr. Sandow will de much to spread physical culture among my boys. It is pitiable to me to see so many

Another attractive feature commencing very shortly is a new series of short stories entitled "The Lads of London." This series will deal especially with every phase of boy life in the great metropolis, and I think my friends will find it extremely interesting reading.

CANNOT CONCENTRATE.

J. A. is a boy who tells me that he is very downhearted over the fact that whatever kind of reading he takes up it does not interest him at all; in fact, he says, he cannot fix his mind on anything, not even his work. My young friend is suffering from what I might call "dispersed energy."

from what I might call "dispersed energy."

He has got into the habit of going through life very slackly, and what he has to do is to pull himself together, and start his first lesson in concentration. It must, of course, be on simple, ordinary things to begin with, and then gradually, as he finds he can keep his mind fixed on a given thing and bring all his thoughts to bear on it, let him tackle the more important subjects; after a while he will be able to write to me and say that his inability to interest himself in the things which concern him has disappeared altogether.

Let him try it for a week or two, taking the simple tasks which he has to accomplish from day to day. Let him throw the whole of his attention, the whole of his mind into them. At first it may be difficult, but "practice makes perfect."

WANT BOYS TO WRITE TO ME.

J. H. opens his letter with a sentence which I want to get into the mind of every reader of The Boys' Friend. He says, "Knowing you den't mind boys writing to you and then goes on to ask me a question which I will answer later.

J. H. is quite right. I not only don't mind boys writing to me, but I want them all to do so. I don't care how many letters I get in the week; in fact, the more I get the better pleased I am.

Of course, I cannot promise to answer every letter in the paper, but whenever advice or information is urgently needed, all my correspondents have to do is to slip in a posteard or a stamped addresed envelope, and I will see that the reply they want is sent off to them promptly.

Now to return to J. H.'s question. He wants to know the proper way to keep a football.

It is rather late to ask this question, as it is one that is usually put to me at the end of the football season. When not in use, a football is best kept slack, and in order to improve it and keep the leather in good condition, a little olive oil should be rubbed into the cover occasionally. The ball should be well cleaned after use, and a little oil rubbed in.

A SMOKER.

"I am a new reader, and also a member of the League of Boy Friends," says F. H. K. in his letter to me, "and I am sorry to say that the one thing which tempts me most is smoking, because when I am out with my mates, they laugh at me for not smoking."

Of course, they will, F. H. K., because they haven't any sense, because they are stupid enough to think it manly to smoke—just as though a boy could not be a decent, sensible, clean-living lad unless he smokes! There rever was such rubbish talked in all this world as is talked by the boy who smokes, and jeers at the boy who smokes, and

Most boys smoke, not because they like it, but simply because in doing so they think they are showing what fine, clever young fellows they are. The bulk of them know quite as well as I do that smoking doesn't do them a bit of good. If they have ever gone in for any serious athletic exercise they know perfectly well that smoking leaves them in a bad condition; that if they play football they cannot run as fast as they did before they smoked, that if they box, or run, or cycle, or swim, or do any form of athletic exercise, smoking damages their wind and renders them less vigorous than they would be had they never smoked.

Now, every boy knows this, and I

be had they never smoked.

Now, every boy knows this, and I would ask F. H. K. the next time his chums jeer at him to show them this paragraph, and ask them if they can honestly deny the truth of it, and if they can produce an athlete who can tell them that smoking does not affect his wind, and does not damage his physical condition.

Every boy who makes a regular habit of smoking so many cigarettes a day is really stupid, because he is not doing himself a scrap of good, and is wasting money on a habit which he can easily do without.

Now, F. H. K., don't you mind if the boys do laugh at you. After all, you are scoring, because by not smoking you are snowing that you are master of yourself, that you can say. "I will do this," and do it; or "weet' the this," and do it.

say. "I will do this," and do it; or "weer! the this," and not do it.
Don't mind a laugh or two,
F. H. K. Your friends will very soon get tired of it when they see their laughter does not produce the effect they want—that is, to make you smoke.

AN UNLUCKY BOY.

One of my friends—who, let me say straightaway, has my very sincere sympathy—tells me he has had the bad luck to have three consecutive attacks of bronchial pneumonia, with the result that for two years he has been unable to attend school. He says that all he can occupy himself with at home is reading, and he wants me to give him some advice.

He leaves me in a certain amount

ing, and he wants me to give him some advice.

He leaves me in a certain amount of doubt as to whether to regard him as an invalid, or as a boy who, owing to sickness, has missed two years' schooling

I am very sorry for my young friend. As he lives by the seaside, I advise him to live absolutely in the open air, and to sleep in the open air. If when he first commences to sleep in the open he wraps himself up very, very warmly, and protects himself from the weather, after a little while he will be able to sleep comfortably and healthily, and he will find, too, that his lungs will improve in strength.



Further, I would advise him to practise some breathing exercises. Let him stand in the open air, lifting up his hands until they touch over his head, and take in a good breath—not too deep at first as it might strain his lungs and cause him inconvenience. Having taken the breath, let him gradually and slowly lower his arms until they touch his thighs, at the same time blowing out the breath from his lungs.

Then let him slowly lift his hands again above his head and take another breath. He should do this ten or a dozen times, as time goes on, adding five to the number of each exercise—i.e., when he first commences exercising he should raise and lower his hands ten times, doing this two or three times a day for a week.

this two or three times a day for a week.

The next week he should repeat the exercises fifteen times two or three times a day, and the third week let him make it twenty; he will find that his lungs are gradually becoming stronger and more elastic, and his physical condition is improving, until at last he will be able to take in a good, deep breath and exhale it slowly.

I am afraid that the fact of my correspondent being such a victim of lung trouble will necessitate his seeking an open-air life. He might find work as a motor-driver, a traveller, a gardener, or in any calling which compels him to be cut of doors most of his time.

WOULD-BE ROVERS.

WOULD-BE ROVERS.

Three of my young friends write me a letter in which they tell me that they want to know how to become trappers. They have made up their minds to lead a roving life in the backwoods of Canada, and they ask me to tell them how to realise their wish.

Well, let me first of all tell my young friends that a trapper's life is a hard and a dangerous one, because he gets busy in the most perilous season of the year in wild countries. In Canada, for instance, the bulk of a trapper's work is done in the winter time, when to get lost in the snow—a danger which is very easily brought about—is a far more serious thing than it sounds.

But long before these lads could become trappers they would have to learn a very great deal of the eraft of wood and field, of plain and mountain; and such knowledge is not picked up in a few days, a few weeks, or a few months. Moreover, whilst the life is certainly a roving one, it is at the same time a hard, and more or less precarious one.

If my young friends really wish to become trappers they will have to emigrate to Canada, and, by gradual experience of the country, work out to the backwoods, and, little by little, pick up the knowledge which will qualify them for such a calling.

There is often a good deal of work to be done by young men in the lumber camps in Canada. This work consists of the felling and hauling of trees, and every winter an enormous amount of it is done in Canada. The pay is fairly good, amounting to as much as a dollar and a half and two dollars a day. The work is hard, but the life is simple and healthy.

OUT OF HIS FATHER'S CONTROL

"Pit Lad" is a boy who wants me to tell him what age a boy should be out of his father's control, and can

to tell him what age a boy should be out of his father's control, and can claim his own wages.

The legal age at which a man attains his majority is 21, when, in the eyes of the law, he becomes an adult; but in ordinary practice, the moment a boy can support himself, he is practically out of the control of his parents, because he can leave them, and fend for himself, and do what he likes with his money.

It seems to me, however, that behind these two questions there lies a kink of some sort. My young friend has probably being having trouble at home—possibly he has resented the fact that he has had to hand over his wages to his father. If this is the case, "Pit Lad" should not be too hasty in any action which he has been contemplating. If he has any grievance, he should try to talk it over in a quiet, sensible fashion with his father. He should remember that his parent is a great deal older than himself, and knows more of the world; and, as a rule, fathers are not unjust to their sons. If my young friend has any personal grievance, let him not act hastily, but take my advice and try to arrange matters on a friendly basis.

YOUR EDITOR (H. E.).

YOUR EDITOR (H. E.).

BOXING NOTES.

How to Tackle a Bully.

T falls to the lot of almost every-one during their boyhood to have to try and defend himself against someone bigger and stronger, and, therefore, a few notes on such unequal contests should prove valu-able.

against someone bigger and stronger, and, therefore, a few notes on such unequal contests should prove valuable.

In the first place, remember that a bully is hardly ever a good boxer; for if a boy learns to box he respects himself, and cannot descend to hitting people much smaller and weaker. So the small boy must make up for his size and lack of weight by scientific knowledge.

Be first. Directly you see that your big opponent is going to try and hit you—go in and hit him. By this means you will, as the saying goes. "Take the wind from his sails" at once. If he is a coward—and most bullies are—he will immediately give in or run away when the small boy meets the enemy more than half-way.

Next, remember that in fighting a bigger man than yourself you have one stupendous advantage—you can reach his "mark,"

or "wind," much more easily than if he was your height. Aim there, and you may win outright.

The bully probably will swing his arms all ever your head and body in a bewildering style, but one which you can very easily avoid. He will never hit straight, for that is only taught by boxing.

Whatever you do, don't try and close with him or wrestle. Fight him out when he tries to come too close, but don't let him get too far away or his "reach" will tell. That is to say, his arm being longer than yours, he will be able to hit, while you can only guard.

Don't waste time trying to hit him on the face until he is tired. Persevere with the right to the "mark" and ribs, and plug away with the straight left to the same quarter. Dart in and out, being very quick on your feet, and always recollect that quickness will come more easily to you than to him. In this way you will soon tire him out, and then you can finish the battle with two or three hard blows on the face. Above all, keep cool, and think hard all the time, and never get flurried, never let your man get you against a wall or in a corner.

SOME GRAND TIPS ON KEEPING FIT.

LWAYS sleep with your window open, even in winter.

Fresh air prevents disease, and keeps the lungs healthy.

Make breakfast your principal meal, and never be so late in rising that you have to hurry through it. Eat well-cooked porridge every morning in the winter.

When you feel tired and run-down purchase a small bottle of quinine and iron tonic. Iron is wonderful in its power for bracing the system. Never eat heavy suppers, if you want your sleep to be refreshing. A cup of hot cocoa is most soothing at night.

If you eat an apple every morning before breakfast it will do much to keep you fit and well.

Never sit about in wet boots of damp clothes. So long as you can keep on the move you are not likely to take so much harm from wet garments.

Indian clubs, not too heavy, should be used by hear in well and real single process.

Indian clubs, not too heavy, should e used by boys who would have good

be used by boys who would have good health.

Early to rise and early to bed is a maxim all growing boys should follow.

Cold baths are excellent for tough, wiry fellows, but I do not advise them for weakly boys. In the case of the latter, a tepid bath should be equally beneficial.

Look after the teeth; they have a most important bearing upon one's general health. Brush them at least once daily, and if any decay do not hesitate to have them attended to by a dentist. Such prompt treatment will save you pounds in the end.

Tobacco in any form is injurious to growing boys. To young men who feel they must smoke, let me advise a pipe and pure tobacco. This is far less harmful than cigarettes.

"After dinner rest a while; after supper walk a mile." This is an old adage, but a very true one, that all boys should follow.

THE END.

THE END.

(More splendid articles next Tuesday.,



Our Grand New Series of Complete Stories.

A FIGHT WITH THE FLAMES.

ARTON," said Mr. Gaythorpe graciously, "the tide
has turned; ill-fortune no longer dogs my footsteps to cast me upon the hard rocks of pauperism. new sun shines brightly upon the business which advances in a-er-

wave of prosperity along the smooth road of success. By which involved speech he meant

to imply that mainly through Jack's up-to-date methods the business had been saved, and was rapidly becoming

a prosperous concern.

a prosperous concern.

It was a Thursday, and the shop had closed at two, but Jack had stopped behind to assist his employer in going through the books.

"I'm very glad, sir," he said.

"Yes, Carton, it is a good thing for us both. I'm not denying that I owe a good deal of the success to you, and you will not find me ungrateful. I hope at the end of the month to pay you the money I owe you, and to raise your wages to a pound a week."

Jack's heart leapt, for he knew how useful extra money would be at the moment. The next day his mother was going into the country to stay with some people that she had known as a girl, and Jack was anxious to give her a surprise by finding a pleasanter place than Dewson's Dwellings for her to return to.

"I'm very grateful, sir," he said

"I'm very grateful, sir," he said quietly. "I want to get on, and I mean to do it. I think we can still buck things up. I'm thinking out a scheme now, but I'd rather not talk about it until I've got it all fixed up."

about it unit. The graph of the process of the proc

Thanks to Jack's idea of the biscuit boom, Gaythorpe had begun to go ahead; two messenger boys were necessary now instead of one. Gaythorpe's biscuits had caught on; people talked of them, recommended them to their friends, and they had become the "thing" in the district. Jack heard that the people at the Stores were furious, for the makers under their contract with Gaythorpe had refused to supply them, and the grocer found that orders arrived from places that he had never dreamt of doing business in.

doing business in.

At last Jack finished his work, and turning up the collar of his coat when he found himself out in the drizzling rain of a cold winter's afternoon, he hurried home.

"Mother." he gried sitting the collaboration of the c

hurried home.

"Mother," he cried, sitting down to tea, "this is our last evening together for some few weeks, and we must have a jolly time. Gaythorpe has just told me that he is going to give me a rise, and—well, things are

going finely, mother, and we must celebrate the event."

celebrate the event."

His mother was tired, but she smiled at his enthusiasm.

"Where can we go, Jack? The theatre would be too late; I'm not strong enough for late hours."

"Oh," said Jack quickly, "we'll go to the new picture theatre. I see they've got a fine show on, and the sixpenny seats are like stalls in West End theatres. We'll do the thing properly, mother, and go in the best seats."

seats."

Then they hurried over their tea, talking of Mrs. Carten's visit to the country, of their future prosperity, and of the things they would do when Jack had climbed a few more rungs in the ladder of success.

But little did they think how quickly their castles in the air were to be brought tumbling to the ground.

"By Jove, mother," cried Jack, as they came out of the picture theatre into the High Street, Stoke Newington, just after nine that night, "there's a fire somewhere close at hand! Look at the red glare!"

hand! Look at the red glare!"
People were standing staring at the red glow of the sky, or hurrying towards where they judged it to proceed from.
Clang, clang, clang!
A great red motor fire-engine thundered past, and then, closely following it, came an escape, and then another engine.
"Fire, fire!"
The cry seemed to echo or account.

The cry seemed to echo on every side, the terrible cry so full of menace that strikes a chill, and at the same time a strange excitement in the heart of even the most hardened.

"The engine's stopped!" cried Jack. "The fire's in the High Street. We'd better cut down the side roads, mother; we shall never get through the crowd. Hallo, there goes another Clang.

clang, clang, clang!
Starting horses, eager, brasshelmeted firemen, a shower of sparks,
and another horse-engine had dashed
past to fight the all-devouring flames.
A policeman came running along
the pavement, evidently making for
the police-station to summon assistance to keep back the rapidly-growing
crowd.
"Where is it."

"Where is it?" shouted a man, who was running along just past the boy and his mother.
"Gaythorpe's the grocer's!" shouted the constable, as he hurried along.
Jack stopped as though shot.

Gaythorpe's—the grocer's!"

His employer's shop was on fire; the shop that he had dreamt of one day being part proprietor was in the grip of the fire fiend. Mr. Gaythorpe and his family might be in danger!

He—

"Yes, yes!" said his mother. "But Jack, you'll be careful, won't

"I'll be careful, mother!" cried the boy; and the next instant he was tearing along with the others towards the scene of the fire, his heart beating quickly, and a vague sense of coming trouble in his mind.

Some distance from the shop it be-

quickly, and a vague sense of coming trouble in his mind.

Some distance from the shop it became difficult to make any progress, for a huge crowd had collected, lines of the huge electric trams were held up, and the few police already on the scene had great difficulty in controlling the excited throng.

Jack pushed his way through, and saw smoke rolling from the front of the shop and the windows of Gaythore's residence above it. Every now and then a tongue of flame darted out. There was a crackling of wood, and every now and then a loud crash of falling iron or timber, but above all came the hiss of water as it met the flames.

Working his way through the densest part of the crowd, Jack reached the edge, and found himself near a big policeman, who was heroically endeavouring to keep back the eager people who continually swayed backwards and forwards.

"Let me through, please," he said.
"Let me through, please," he said.
"Can't help that," said the constable shortly.
"No one's to pass

"Can't help that," said the constable shortly. "No one's to pass here. You just stand back, young-ster!"

ster!"

But Jack had no intention of standing back. He saw Mr. Gaythorpe, as pale as death, soaked with water, and wringing his hands in the peculiar manner that showed he was the victim of some great excitement or worry, talking to a police-inspector. The fire-escape still rested against the burning walls, and a fireman was coming down with Mrs. Gaythorpe, who had evidently fainted.

He stood in the front of the growd.

He stood in the front of the crowd, and then, as a lane was opened to admit a doctor to the hose-covered circle in front of the blazing shop, he took a quick glance round and slipped in behind them.

in behind them.

"Is there any hope of saving the place, sir?" he gasped, reaching the frantic grocer.

"No, none!" cried Mr. Gaythorpe, "They tell me the place will be gutted. All they are trying to do is to save the shops on either side! Tm a rumed man-armine safe!

Jack took a glance round, and saw that the people from the draper's shop on one side, and the tobaccomist on the other, were hurrying out with such things as they could carry; the walls were already scorched, and the palefaced people collected in little groups and stared fascinated at the

shooting tongues of flame that licked the premises.

Then came a sudden roar from the

"Look at the dawg!" cried a harsh ice that Jack heard above every-

thing else.

He raised his eyes to the room above the burning grocer's shop, and saw a dirty white dog standing on the window-sill of the second floor, terrified of the flames, but equally terrified of the jump into the street.

Snuffler!
Snuffler, the mongrel bull-terrier, his faithful companion on many a weary tramp through the streets; Snuffler, who had licked his hands, and in his dumb way cheered him when he had felt like sinking beneath the weight of his basket in his errand-boy days. Snuffler was to be burnt to death!

He dashed from Classical street.

to death!

He dashed from Gaythorpe's side towards the fire-escape, which stood against the window next to the one at which the dog was whining pitifully. The firemen were either unaware that he stood there, or else too much occupied in their endeavours to save the shops on either side to pay any attention to the mongrel.

As he reschool to the course of the cours

grel.

As he reached the ladder a police-inspector dashed towards him.

"Come back, you young fool!"

"I'm going to get the dog!" cried Jack, and before anyone could prevent him he was dashing up the ladder. He had only mounted a little way when the heat singed his hair and eyebrows, and a great cloud of smoke nearly choked him.

"This won't do!" he muttered, and stopped to tie his handkerchief over his mouth to keep the smoke from his lungs.

Then Snuffler saw him coming, and

trom his lungs.

Then Snuffler saw him coming, and began to run up and down the sill, barking wildly.

A dull roar came from the crowd below, that looked a great black mass before a background of red.

"He's going to certain death!" cried one of the chiefs of the fire-brigade. "Pull back the escape; it's the only way to save him!"

But his instructions came too late. Jack had sprang in through the window against which the fire-escape rested and disappeared amid a cloud of smoke.

"Put it at the next window!" came the order, though the majority of the crowd doubted if the move would

be any use.

Jack found himself panting for breath in the burning room. The heat scorched his flesh, and he felt that he must sink to the floor, but he struggled to the open door, caught a

glimpse of the raging inferno beneath him from the landing, that threatened every moment to give way, and then, with smarting eyes and heaving chest, gained the room in which the dog was

a prisoner.

He saw the fire-escape against the window, and by a great effort shook off the feeling of taintness that had seized him. He dashed to the window, caught the dog up under one arm, and stepped on to the escape.

Mechanically he went down a few steps, then a red mist came before his eyes; he heard a great roar of cheering, then a sudden silence, a crash of falling masonry, and then—darkness.

"Bravo, young 'un!" cried a voice, and Jack, looking up with puzzled eyes, saw a burly fireman bending over him holding a flask to his lips. Then a rough tongue licked his face, and he saw Snuffler thanking him in the only way he knew for risking his life for his.

life for his.

Gradually he realised what had happened. A large force of police now kept back the steadily-decreasing crowd, and he was lying in the road near the ring of police. By valiant efforts the firemen had saved the shops on either side, but of Gaythorpe's shop all that remained was charred, blackened ruins.

charred, blackened ruins.

The police-inspector who had tried to stop him came up.

"You've got some pluck, youngster!" he said admiringly. "I'm hanged if I'd have cared to risk my life to save a dog. How do you feel now? Walk home—eh?"

"Rather!" said Jack, staggering to his feet. "I'm all right now."

But, after finding out that no lives had been lost, and that Gaythorpe had gone to some friends who kept a neighbouring china shop, it was a very feeble boy who staggered to Dewson's Dwellings.

Snuffler followed close at his heels.

It was a strange gathering that met in the best parlour of the proprietor of the neighbouring china shop soon after nine the next morning. Jack after nine the next morning. Jack Carton was one of the last to arrive, for the surface burns that he had received kept him awake until the early hours of the morning, and his mother, finding him sleeping at the time he should have been in the ordinary way at breakfast, had not the heart to disturb him, knowing that all routine would be upset that day. day

And it was upset in a startling

manner.

Mr. Gaythorpe told his assistants that the cause of the fire had been discovered to be due to mice in the cellar gnawing at some wax vestas which he stocked, and that he would undoubtedly receive the insurance money.

undoubtedly receive the insurance money.

But, unfortunately, he was underinsured so far as stock was concerned, and he had decided that he was too old to make a fresh start. Therefore, he would pay each one two weeks' wages and regretfully dismiss them, retiring somewhere to live a quiet life on the money he had saved, and what he would obtain from the insurance company.

"Carton," he said brokenly, as he and Jack were left alone, "I feel most sorry for you. You did your best to help me, and but for this fire we should have built up a fine business; but there it is, and it can't be helped. I shall pay you the money I owe you as soon as things are squared up, and I will speak most highly of you to anyone you send to me."

"Thank you sir!" said Jack dully

squared up, and I will speak most highly of you to anyone you send to me."

"Thank you, sir!" said Jack dully, vaguely realising that his dreams of the future were but dreams, and that he was one of the vast army of unemployed again.

"Come and see me to-morrow," went on Mr. Gaythorpe. "I hardly know what I'm saying now; the whole thing was so sudden. I'm sure you'll get a good job easy enough."

Jack went out, and Snuffler followed him. The boy was lost in a gloomy chain of thought until he reached Dewson's Dwellings, when he suddenly remembered that his mother was leaving for the country, and he must pretend to be cheerful at all events.

He stooped and patted the dog on

He stooped and patted the dog on

He stooped and patted the dog on the head.
"We'll win yet, Snuffler," he said quietly. "The world's a big thing to conquer, but you've got to keep up your pluck!"

THE END.

(Another "Ever-Ready" Jack story next week in THE BOYS' PRIEND.)



Snuffler saw Jack coming, and began to run up and down the sill, barking wildly. "He's going to certain death!" cried one of the chiefs of the fire brigade. "Pull back the escape, it's the only way to save him!"

A Superb Series of Articles Specially Written for THE BOYS' FRIEND by the World-Famed

HOW TO DEVELOP MUSCLE.

OT so many years ago a delicate little lad of ten was taken to Italy by his father, and was much impressed by the finely-developed forms of sculptured figures of ancient athletes in the art galleries at Rome and Florence.

of ancient athletes in the art galleries at Rome and Florence.

The little boy never forgot those muscular figures, and intended one day to become strong like them. He exercised at the gymnasium, but made vere little progress until he was eighteen years old, when he commenced to study anatomy. His studies enabled him to build up a system of exercises which gave each individual muscle a movement, and developed each part of the body in perfect proportion.

In three years' time—when he was one-and-twenty—our delicate little lad had become famous for his strength, had defeated the man who was regarded as the strongest man in the world, and had secured an engagement at £150 a week to exhibit his feats of strength.

Such is the brief story of my life until I brought before the public the Sandow system of exercise, which is now practised daily by some millions of persons in every country in the world.

It is not my

world.

It is not my intention, however, to worry you with the accounts of what I have done. I merely wish to show you that heen show you that what has been done once can be done again, and I will show you ex-actly what move-Exercise 1.—Ready
Position.

Page of time.

Actly what movements I performed to build up my strength, and how you can effect a marvellous improvement in your muscular development in a wonderfully short

velopment in a wonderfully short space of time.

You will not be asked to carry out a huge number of intreate, monotonous movements, and live on special diet. I only want you to give me from five to fifteen minutes first thing in the morning, and do just what I tell you. You will find the work easy and pleasant, you will look forward to it with eager anticipation, and you will soon enjoy the realisation of better-developed arms, a bigger, stronger chest, better-shaped legs, and perfect physical fitness.

Exercises for the Bicens and

Exercises for the Biceps and Triceps.

We will begin with the arms, and I will give you two movements to perform which will increase the size of the biceps, strengthen and fill out

the triceps, and also give you a better forearm. The movements should be performed fairly slowly, and on no account "jerk" the movements. Concentrate your mind on the

account "jerk" the movements.

Concentrate your mind on the muscles brought into play, and think of nothing but "arms, arms, arms" all the time you are exercising. At the end of a week you will find an improvement in your arm measurement, and you will be able to set the muscles "as firm as a rock."

Here are the exercises. Read them over carefully, and fully understand them before commencing work:

EXERCISE 1.—READY POSITION.

Turn the inner side of the arm fully to the front and press the upper arm against the side.

against the side.

MOVEMENT.—Raise the right hand to the shoulder, exercising full tension all the way, straighten out the right arm again, at the same time raising the left arm to the shoulder. Muscles: Biceps and Triceps.

EXERCISE 2.—READY POSITION.

Turn the outer side of the arm to the front with the knuckles upward.

Turn the outer side of the arm to the front with the knuckles upward.

MOVEMENT.—Same as in Exercise 1, bringing the knuckles close up to the shoulders.

Note.—In Exercises 1 and 2 the upper arm must be pressed close to the side throughout the exercises. Muscles: Biceps and Triceps.

Exercise with the window wide open—keep out of a draught, though—strip to the waist, and stand in front of a looking-glass, if possible, to aid you in fixing the mind on the muscles exercised. Perform each movement about a dozen times, and immediately after have a quick cold bath or a sponge-down, drying the body vigorously with a rough towel till the skin glows.

If you cannot exercise in the early morning, do so later in the day when most convenient, but never exercise

within two hours of a meal—this is most important.

In order that you can see how quickly your measurements increase, I give below a measurement form, which I advise you to copy out on a sheet of paper, leaving thirteen blank spaces on the right-hand side, in which to enter your progress every week. When the form is full—at the end of three months—you will be amazed at the improvement, provided you have carried out my instructions accurately—and they are not very difficult so far, are they?

(Another splendid article by Sandow next



IMPORTANT NOTICE.

In order that every reader of this article may benefit from the exercises given above, arrangements have been made to give every boy a free trial of Sandow's world-famous springgrip dumbbells, and for full particulars see announcement on page 302.

SANDOW'S MEASUREMENT FORM.

Exercises Commenced.....

Measurements.	1st Week.	2nd Week.	3rd Week.	4th Week.	5th Week.
Age how there was the con-	me interior	the sales	Sind of	and the very	444
Weight					
Height		*******	contries		
Neck					
Chest Contracted					
Chest Expanded					
Upper Right Arm					
Upper Left Arm					
Right Forearm					
Left Forearm					
Waist					
Right Thigh					
Left Thigh					
Right Calf					
Left Calf					

THE TRIALS AND TROUBLES OF A BOY SCOUT. Our Helpful Series That Will Interest All Boys, Whether Scouts or Not.

Map-Making.

LOT of chaps have written in to me about map-making. They are nearly First-Class Scouts, have passed most of their

tests, but doing the necessary sketchmap stumps them.
"I don't know how to set about it," says one. "I can draw a decent enough map from a copy, but when it comes to making one of the actual ground I'm walking on, I'm fairly done!"

Well, here are some tips that may

done!"
Well, here are some tips that may help you.
In the first place, do not attempt to draw a map of a square piece of land about three miles across. It is practically impossible to anyone without instruments, unless he has been trained to it. I always teach my boys to draw simply the road they go along, and the ground, say, a couple of hundred yards on either side of it.
This is the sort of map that Army scouts are sent out to prepare. And I am quite sure that if it is well done—that means accurate, clear, and neat—any scoutmaster would pass it for the First-Class Test.
But even with a road it is not easy to get all the turns and fwists in it right. You find, as you get towards the end, that you have got this bit of road too long and the other too short—this one pointing too far north, and this one too far east.
But you can make the job a great deal easier by using what is called "The Straight Road Mcthod."
It is a system used by the Cayatry in

deal easier by using what is called "The Straight Road Method,"
It is a system used by the Cavalry in India, and is very simple indeed.
You start out with a notebook, the pages of which you rule up as in Fig. 1. The middle space represents the road you are on, the space either side of it represents the ground one hundred, two hundred, three hundred yards on either side of it, as the case may be.

may be.

In the road, at the bottom of the first page in your notebook, you put the direction in which the road is going when you start off. Then every time it turns you just jot down the time it turns you just jot down the frection it takes in the same way. You don't draw the turn to right or left in your notebook—you don't do that till you make your completed map later on. You just jot down "Direction N.E.," or whatever it is, in that middle column, and go straight on.

when another road turns out of your road, to right or left, you mark that down, on the proper side, with the compass directed in which way it points, and where it leads to. Rivers, bridges, railways crossing the road, you also mark in the same way. Tram lines, too, and telegraph wires should be put in.

Hills the road passes over you mark with a line along the roadside, show-When

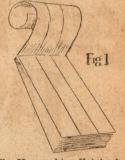
ing where the bottom comes, the crest, and the bottom on the other side.

If you can make a good guess at the

side.

If you can make a good guess at the gradient—say one in seven—put that down. If not, put just "steep," "very steep," or "gradual," as the case may be. (There is a formula for working out gradients, but it is too mathematical to put in here. If any of you would care to know it, just drop me a line.)

Things on either side of the road—houses, farms, woods, crops, orchards,



The Map-making Notebook.

hills, churches, forges, railways, rivers, ponds, post-offices, anything almost that is likely to be there next time you

hills, churenes, lorges, railways, livers, ponds, post-offices, anything almost that is likely to be there next time you pass—you put down in the side columns—on the right if you find them on the right-hand side of the road, on the left if they are on the left.

Just a little hint here. Never put down anything on the side of the road till you come up abreast of it. Things look in quite different positions when they are a little way ahead.

Now, for marking distance. Doing a rough map like this, you fellows ought to travel at about three miles an hour. That's a mile in twenty-minutes. So every twenty minutes put a short line on your road in your notebook just after the last note you made, and call it a mile.

Remember that it does not matter a button how much space a mile takes up in your notebook. In one mile tou may have enough things put down to fill three pages. Let 'em do it. In the next there may not be a thing to note. Put your mile-mark bang next to the last one. It's only when you come to make out your finished map—I'm coming to that later—that each mile must be the same length.

This, of course, is a rough way of calculating distance, but it works out pretty correctly, and you are only doing a rough map. Nobody expects you to get your mileage mathematically exact.

Look Out for the Cover of the MARVEL.

An Extra Long, Complete and Thrilling Tale of

SAYERS.

THIS WEEK!

TOM SAYERS **GREAT** BOXER HAMMERSMITH THE POPULAR BOXER,

FAVOURITE ACTOR.

ARTHUR S. HARDY

Is in the Library

ON SALE THIS WEEK.

Two long, complete tales in this week's MARVEL of Tom Sayers and Jack, Sam and Pete.

Tom Sayers! Read the Thrilling, Long, Complete Popular Boxer-Actor, by Arthur S. Hardy, Marvel—Price 1d.

YOU CAN START READING BELOW



INTRODUCTION FOR THE NEW READER.

Philip Ashley is a brilliant lad at the buncil School, but has declined an offer

also engaging the lad's mother id housekeeper. its, light-hearted and jubilant, ney to Rayton; but on the way

a terrible revelation

another, turns out hypocrite.

hypocrite.

the train clear of Highfield stirs up trouble; but Phil and holds him in check till tion some more Raytonians

e newcomers are friends of Mortimer's, when they hear Phil's story they ten him." The Blot," ter being treated with much snobbish-phil arrives at Rayton College, and is Mortimer's fag.

all arrives at reavon con-ortimer's ag. the enters the school plots onesty, ctc., are laid for him, and er does all he can to get Phil dis-

Andread aced. Philip is working up for the Beresford amination, and he is raked out of his cret study in order to keep watch while ortimer and his companions play cards.

secret study in order to keep watch while Mortimer and his companions play cards. This Phil refuses to do.

He is just descending the stairs with the intention of discovering a new studying place, when Sir David Rendle drives up to the college on a surprise visit.

Philip rushes up to Mortimer's study to give him warning, while Sir David is closely following up the stairs.

Mortimer goes out to meet his uncle in order to detain him, while Philip is left to hide the cards.

For a moment he was panic-stricken, and he had barely time to thrust the cards into his jacket-pocket ere Sir David, still grasping his nephew's hand, walks into the study.

(Now read the splendid chapters below.)

A Cruel Slander.

"CAN'T stay very long," Sir David was saying, as he entered the study. "I've an entered the study. "I've an important engagement in Highled this evening, and I ought really to Barnby. B have gone straight back from Barnby. Being so near to Rayton, however, I couldn't resist the tempta-tion to run over and see you and Ashley."

however, I couldn't resist the temptation to run over and see you and Ashley."

"I'm very glad you did," said Mortimer. "You couldn't have given me a greater treat. How long can you stay?"

Sir David consulted his watch. "Half an hour at the most," he said. "Can you put up with me for so long as that?"

"My dear uncle!" protested Mortimer, with an oily smile.

"You're sure I'm not interfering with your arrangements?"

"You're sure I'm not interfering with your arrangements?"
"Certain," said Mortimer. "I've nothing on this afternoon."
"Then you and Ashley come with me," said Sir David, "and I'll give you half an hour's run in the car. It's a new car—I only got it last week—and I'd like you to see how sweetly she goes. We can chat on the ways and it will be better than sitting in this stuffy study."
"Delighted, I'm sure!" murmured Mortimer.

"Delighted, I'm sure!" murmured Mortimer.
"Come along, then," said Sir David. And, linking his arms in those of Philip and Mortimer, he conducted them to the car. "Well, now, and how do you like Rayton College?" he said to Philip, as the car swept down the drive. "Are you

glad or sorry that you

came?"
"I am glad," said
Philip truthfully.
"I had a letter from
Mr. Walker a few days
ago," said Sir David. ago," said Sir David.
"He speaks very highly
of your work in Form,
and says you stand or your work in Form, and says you stand quite a good chance of winning the Beresford. He also mentioned, by the way, that you had received your First Eleven colours."

Eleven colours."

"He has me to thank for that," said Mortimer.
"I told Merrick, our captain, what a splendid bowler Ashley is; but Merrick is rather a snob, and because Ashley isn't—er—well off, you know, Merrick didn't want to give him his colours. However, I insisted, and in the end Merrick had to give in."

give in."
This barefaced falsehood, This barefaced falschood, this grotesque perversion of the truth, almost took Philip's breath away. But he had many similar falschoods to listen to before the drive came to an end; for Mortimer, knowing that Philip would not betray him, lost no opportunity of impressing on his uncle how good he had been to Philip; how he had befriended him and helped him with his work, and protected him, and done everything in his power to make Philip's life at Rayton as easy and pleasant as possible!

"You're a good boy, Godfrey," said Sir David. "Ashley ought to be very grateful to you for all you've done for him."

"Oh, I don't want any thanks!" said Mortimer loftily. "It is a real pleasure to me, my dear uncle, to help anyone in whom you are interested."

It was very hard for Philip to keep silent while Mortimer.

It was very hard for Philip to keep ident while Mortimer lied in this ablushing fashion. At times he had o bite his lip to prevent himself pursting out with an indignant lenial. But the hardest trial had yet o come.

to come.

On the way back to the school a sudden puff of wind blew Philip's cap off. The chauffeur promptly pulled up, and Philip, jumping out before the car had quite stopped stumbled forward, and fell on his hands and knees.

It was not at all a serious fall, and Philip was not hurt in any way; but as he dropped on his hands and knees a couple of cards were jerked out of his pocket, and fell fluttering into the roadway!

The reader knows that the

roadway!

The reader knows that the eards were Mortimer's, and that Philiphad hurriedly thrust them into his own pocket in order to shield Mortimer, and to prevent Sir David seeing them on the study table. But Sir David, of course, did not know this. Seeing the cards fall out of Philip's pocket, he naturally thought they belonged to Philip, and that Philip was in the habit of playing cards.

Philip was in the habit of playing cards.

Philip himself never noticed the two cards, but after he had picked up his cap and had climbed back into the car, he was struck by the changed expression of Sir David's face. For Sir David hated gambling in any form, and it grieved him to discover—as he thought—that a young boy like Philip had contracted such a vicious habit.

But Sir David was not the only one who saw the cards fall out of Philip's pocket. Mortimer saw, and he also saw that his uncle saw, and for a moment he feared that Sir David would say something to Philip about the incident, and that Philip would say that the cards were Mortimer's.

Sir David, however, decided not to

would say that the cards were Mortimer's.

Sir David, however, decided not to say anything to Philip until he had questioned Mortimer. And, in order to make an opportunity of questioning Mortimer privately, he turned to his nephew when they reached the school, and asked him if there was a telegraph-office in the village.

"Oh, yes!" said Mortimer. "Do you want to send off a wire?"

"Yes," said Sir David. "I want to wire to my secretary, telling him that I may be a few minutes late for my appointment. May I write the telegram in your study?"

"Certainly!" said Mortimer.

He led Sir David up to his study. As neither of them asked Philip to accompany them, he remained downstairs, wondering why Sir David's manners towards him had so suddenly changed.

"He was as jolly and as friendly."

as could be until my cap blew off," he mused. "Since then he has hardly spoken to me, and has kept looking at me as though I had done something to grieve him. I wonder what it means?"

Linstairs as soon as Mortimer and

something to grieve him. I wonder what it means?"

Upstairs, as soon as Mortimer and Sir David reached the study, Sir David closed the door, and laid his hand on his nephew's shoulder.

"Godfrey," he said, in a troubled voice, "does Ashley play cards?"

Mortimer dropped his eyes in pretended embarrassment.

"You saw it, then?" he said.

"Yes," said Sir David. "I saw the cards fall out of his pocket when he stumbled. Does he play cards?"

"I'm sorry to say he does," said Mortimer. "I've spoken to him about it times without number, and I've begged him to give up the evil habit. But, you know, my dear uncle, you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, and you can't make a gentleman out of a charwoman's son. Ashley was brought up amid low surroundings, and he has contracted low habits and low tastes which, I'm afraid, he'll never shake off!"

shake off!"

"I can't tell you how grieved I am
to hear this," said Sir David. "I
didn't think Ashley was a boy of that
kind. Does he play for money?"

"I believe so."

"With whom does he play?

Surely there aren't any other boys
at the school who gamble?"

"Oh dear no! I think he plays
with the farmers' sons and the village
boys, and people like that."

"Do the other boys know of this?"

"Yes."

"They don't approve of it, of
course?"

"Pallar at "!"

"They don't approcure?"
"Rather not!"
"Rather not!"
"Then Ashley is not popular with his schoolfellews?"
Mortimer shook his head.
"None of them will have anything to do with him," he said. "In fact, I think I'm the only boy in the school who ever speaks to him!"
"Perhaps that's because he is a poor boy?"
"Vahody ever thinks

"Perhaps that's because he is a poor boy?"

"Not at all. Nobody ever thinks of that. And it isn't only because he plays cards with the villagers that he's so unpopular. The boys might overlook that, but—but—"

Mortimer feigned to hesitate.

"But what?" asked Sir David.

"I don't like to tell you," said Mortimer. with pretended reluctance.

It seems like sneat is "My dear Godfrey," said his uncle affectionately, "nobody could ever accuse you of being a sneak. What were you going to say?"

"If I tell you, will you promise not to tell anybody else"

"Yes."

"And you won't tell Ashley I told you?"

"Cestrainly not!"

"And you won't tell Ashley I told you?"

"Certainly not!"

"Well, I'm very, very sorry to tell you that Ashley is a thief!"

"A thief!"

"Yes. He stole a five-pound not belonging to a boy named Heath. He was seen comin' out of Heath's study, and the note was missed a few minutes later. He was charged with the theft, but denied it. Afterwards, however, he was caught in the act of hidin' the note in another boy's box. As you had sent Ashley here, and as I didn't want your name to be associated with a public scandal. I persuaded Heath, with great difficulty, to let the matter drop, and not report it to the doctor."

Sir David paced the room with agitated strides.

"A gambler and a thief!" he said.

agitated strides:

"A gambler and a thief!" he said.

"It would break his mother's heart if she knew! I must speak to him—plead with him, beg him to mend his ways."

A look of alarm crossed Mortimer's face.

ways."

A look of alarm crossed Mortimer's face.

"But you promised not to tell him what I told you," he said.

"I won't tell him you have told me anything," said Sir David; "I'll talk to him of the evils of gambling, and I'll tell him how shocked I was to find that he goes about with a pack of cards in his pocket. I'll urge him to make a full confession of his misdeeds, and then I'll appeal to his better nature, and beg him, for his mother's sake, to reform before it's too late."

"I wouldn't do that," said Mortimer, who was desperately anxious to prevent Sir David seeing Philip again lest Philip should reveal the truth. "It wouldn't do any good, I'm sure."

"I must see him before I go," said Sir David. "Please go down and send him up to me. Don't come back with him, as it will be better for me to speak to him alone. Hurry, my boy, for I must be off in ten minutes at the least!"

Mortimer hesitated for a moment; then a sudden idea occurred to him.

"If you'll write out your telegram," he said, "I'll take it down at the same time, and send the porter down to the village with it."

Sir David wrote the telegram, and Mortimer went downstairs with it. Philip was in Big Room.

"Here," said Mortimer, handing him the telegram, "cut off down to the village with this as hard as you can run! Sir David wants it sent off at once."

Philip, only too glad to be of service to Sir David, hurried off. Mortimer waited ten minutes; then he returned to his study.

"I've given the porter your telegram," he said, "but I can't find Ashley anywhere. One of the boys says he saw him making off in the direction of Rayton Wood. I expect he knows you saw the cards fall out of his pocket, and he's keeping out of your way for fear you lecture him. Shall I send one of the boys to the wood to see if he can find him?"

"Oh, no! It's too late now," said Sir David. "I must go now. I'll run over again by-and-by, if I can find time, and then I'll talk to Ashley. In the meantime, you'll keep an eye on him, won't you, and do your utmost to break him of his evil ways?"

"My dear uncle, of course I will!"

evil ways?"

"My dear uncle, of course I will!"
said Mortimer.

Two minutes later Sir David was
speeding down the drive in his car,
muttering sadly to himself:

"A gambler and a thief! And I
would have done so much for him if
only he had kept straight! Now, I
fear, I shall have to wash my hands
of him!"

Holoroft's Ride.

T was six o'clock in the morning.
Behind a clump of bushes, midway between the school buildings and the river, four boys were crouching. Two of them held a

crouching. Two of them held a tattered goal-net; the third and fourth each held a length of rope.

The four boys were Tubb, Card, Rigden, and Pritchard. It was not often that they left their downy couches so early as this, but on this particular morning they had a purpose in view. And that purpose was revenge!

The reader will doubtless respectively.

particular morning they had a purpose in view. And that purpose was revenge!

The reader will doubtless remember how Holcroft hoodwinked Tubb and Cord at Bernby Hall, and turned the tables on them. Neither Tubb nor Card was the sort of youth to take a thing like that "lying down." After much earnest cogitation, they had concocted a scheme for "getting their own back," as Tubb expressed it, and they had secured willing helpers in Rigden and Pritchard.

The whole scheme hinged on the fact that Holcroft was in the habit of going down to the river at six o'clock every morning to bathe. And it was for Holcroft that the four conspirators were now lying in ambush.

"I don't believe he's comin'!" growled Rigden presently.

"It's early yet," said Tubb. "It heard the clock strike while we were crossing the quad."

"He must be havin' an extra forty winks this mornin'." suggested Card.

"Well, if he doesn't come soon—" began Rigden, when Tubb clapped his hand across his mouth.

"S-sh! Here he comes!" whispered Tubb. "Be ready!"

Holcroft, all unsuspicious of the plot against him. came whistling down the path. The morning being oppressively hot, he had not troubled to don any outdoor garments. Pyjamas and bed-room slippers were his sole attire, unless one includes a towel, which was slung round his neck.

As he approached the clump of bushes, he broke into song.

As he approached the clump of bushes, he broke into song.

"'The flowers that bloom in the spring-tra-la!"

he carolled blithely,

"'Give promise of merry sunshine.
We welcome the hope that they bring, tra-la!
As we merrily dance and we sing, tra-la!
Of a summer of—' Jeerusa-lem!"

over like a ninepin. Lowering his head, he butted Pritchard off his feet, but even as he did so, Tubb and Card leaped on him from behind and flung the goal net over him.

It was in vain that Holcroft fought and struggled. The only result was to entangle him more completely in the meshes of the net, while his four captors, joining hands, danced around him and howled their derision.

"Reminds me of that johnnie we saw at the circus last year," said Tubb. "The chap that tied himself up in knots, you know, and couldn't

up in knots, you know, and couldn't until himself!"

untie himself!"

"To my fancy," said Card, "he's more like a bluebottle strugglin' to get off a fly-catcher!"

"Nothing so pretty!" declared Rigden. "He reminds me most of a worm squirmin' on a fish-hook!"

"I'll give you fish-hooks when I get out of this!" howled Holcroft, making another desperate effort to disentangle himself.

"Take care old man!" mocked

"Take care, old man!" mocked Tubb. "Don't excite yourself too much. It might bring on another fit, you know, like you had at Barnby Hall!"

Holcroft gnashed his teeth in im-

potent rage.

"Help! He's goin' mad again, like he did at Barnby Hall!" bleated Card, clinging to Tubb in pretended terror. "It's the hydrophoby! Look how he's frothin' at the mouth! Listen to him barkin'!"

Holcroft was not barking, but was yelling for help 'at the top of his voice.

voice.

"Rescue! Rescue!" he bellowed.
"Paulites! Rescue!"

"Naughty boy!" said Tubb,
pulling up a handful of grass and
pushing it through the meshes of the
net into Holcroft's mouth, "If you
shout so loudly as that you'll wake
some of the children. And, my word,
won't they be cross if you spoil
their beauty sleep!"

"I'll spoil your face when I get

"I'll spoil your face when I get out of this!" spluttered Holcroft. "You've said that before," said Tubb calmly.
"And I'll say it again!" roared

"And I'll say it again!" roared Holcroft.
"Do!" said Tubb. "Say it as many times as you like, We don't mind, do we, chaps?"
"Not a bit," said Card. "But tempus fudges, as the poet says. Up with him!"
"What are you goin' to do?" demanded Holcroft, as they raised him from the ground, net and all, and carried him into the field at the back of the fives-court.
"Attendez et vous verrez! (Wait and see!)" said Pritchard.
Holcroft let out an ear-splitting yell.
"Mercy!" he shrieked. "Spare

"Mercy!" he shrieked. "Spare me! Have pity on me! I can stand anything but that—anything but that!"

that!"
"Anything but what?" asked
Rigden innocently.
"Pritchard's French!" said Holcroft. "Drown me, shoot me, hang
me, torture me—do anything else you
like, but for pity's sake don't let
Pritch talk French at me! Such
fiendish cruelty is more than I can
bear!"

Pritch talk french at me! Such fiendish cruelty is more than I can bear!"

"Think yourself jolly smart, don't you?" growled Pritchard, flushing to the roots of his hair.

"It's envy, dear boy!" said Tubb consolingly. "He's jealous of your Parisian accent, that's all!"

On one side of the field, which adjoined the main road, a strip of turf had been taken up preparatory to levelling operations, and several barrow-loads of sods had been piled up in a heap.

On the opposite side of the field a donkey was grazing. His name was Billy, and he belonged to the school, his principal duties being to pull the cricket-roller and to bring up luggage from the station.

"You catch the moke," said Tubb to Rigclen, "while we get this chap ready."

"What are you goin' to do?"

to Rigden, "while we get this chap ready."

"What are you goin' to do?" demanded Holcroft again.

"For one thing," said Tubb, "we're goin' to give you a free ride on Billy. For another, we're goin' to play Aunt Sally with you. If you're still alive when we've finished our game, we're goin' to duck you in the river!"

In spite of the lure of a handful of

Of a summer of——' Jeerusalem!"

His carol ended in a startled gasp, for at that moment Tubb and Card, carrying the net, rushed round one end of the bushes, and Rigden and Pritchard rushed round the other!

No breath was wasted in idle words. Clenching his fist, Holcroft sprang at Rigden and bowled him

the river!"

In spite of the lure of a handful of lump sugar, several minutes elapsed before Rigden succeeded in catching the donkey. By that time the other three had disentangled Holcroft from the net, and had bound his wrists with one rope and his ankles with another.

"We'll have to untie him when we get him on the moke's back," said Rigden.

"Of course," said Tubb. "But we had to tie him up to begin with to keep him quiet. Now, then, all to-

They hoisted Holcroft on to Billy's They hoisted Holerott on to Biny's back; then, unfastening the rope which bound his ankles, they forced him to sit astride, passed the rope under the donkey's stomach, and lashed his ankles together again.

"Shall we untie his wrists?" asked Pritchard

Pritchard.

"We'd better," said Card.

"Unless he has the use of his hands to hold on by he won't be able to keep his seat when Billy begins to trot. He'll slide off sideways, and, as he'll be held fast by the ankles, he might get seriously hurt."

When Holcroft's wrists had been unbound, and the four boys had armed themselves with tufts of grass and lumps of soil, Card gave the donkey a dig in the ribs, which caused him to break into a trot.

The moment Billy began to trot the unfortunate Holcroft was jerked forward, and only saved himself from slipping off the donkey's back by throwing his arms round Billy's neck and clinging fo him for all he was worth

and clinging to him for all he was worth.

Unaccustomed to being embraced in this way, Billy showed his disapproval by flinging up his heels, whilst at the same moment a clod of earth, thrown by Tubb, rattled Holcroft in the ribs, and knocked most of the breath out of his chest.

'Oh, well played me!' cried Tubb.

"A bullseye at the first shot!'

"Rats!" cried Card. "That was no bullseye! It was only a magpie, or an inner at best. See me score a bull!"

Card's aim was better than Tubb's

or an inner at best. See me score a bull!"

Card's aim was better than Tubb's had been. The clod smote Holcroft on the side of the head, and evoked a howl which so startled Billy that he broke into a furious gallop.

After him raced the four boys, shying lumps of turf as they ran. Many of the missiles, it is true, flew wide, but a goodly number landed on Holcroft's thinly-protected form, each "hit" being greeted with shouts of delight by his tormentors. "Say, old man, isn't it about time you had another fit?" cried Tubb, as he plugged up Holcroft's ear with a well-aimed lump of clay. "Or another attack of hydrophoby?" jeered Card, as he landed some hard turf on the nape of Holcroft's neck. "When this you see, remember me!" sang Rigden, planting a clod between Holcroft's eyes.

Suddenly, in the midst of this novel game of Aunt Sally, a figure appeared at the gate which led from the field to the road—the uniformed figure of a very fat and very red-faced man with carroty hair and leads.

faced man with carroty hair and beard.

It was Enoch Blobs, the village constable. He had been out all night, and was on his way back to Rayton, when, as he neared the gate already mentioned, he heard the braying of a donkey, the thud of galloping hoofs, and the shouts of Tubb and his companions.

"It's some o' them himps from the school!" he muttered. "Chasin' the donkey round the field, they are. But I'll chase 'em!"

Swelling with importance, he strode to the gate and opened it. At the sight of the donkey careering madly round the field, with Holcroft clinging to his neck, and the four boys racing after him and pelting him with turf and lumps of earth, Blobbs nearly had a fit.

"Step that!" he bellowed stalking

and lumps of earth, Blobbs nearly had a fit.

"Stop that!" he bellowed, stalking into the field and leaving the gate open behind him. "Stop it at once! This is hassault an' battery within the meanin' of the statoo, an' likewise crocelty to hanimals. In the name of the lor I calls upon yer to—"

The sentence ended in a startled gasp. Billy had seen the open gate. He was as tired of the "game" as Holcroft was, and, perceiving a way of escape, he headed for the open gate at whirlwind speed.

"Shut that gate!" roared Tubb, as he and his three chums dashed after Billy. "Shut that gate! He'll be out if you don't, and then the fat'll be in the fire!"

Blobbs turned and waddled back

The next instant Tubb was lying on his back on the ground, with Blobbs on the top of him, and the donkey, braying joyously, was cantering down the road in the direction of the

village.
"Ow! Ouch! Grr! Get off my chest" gurgled Tubb, struggling in vain to wriggle from under the burly

constable.

"I'm done for now!" moaned Blobbs, feebly waving one hand.
"Pull him off, you silly cuckoos!" gasped Tubb. "He's flattenin' the life out of me!"

"Killed in the hexecution of my dooty!" murmured Blobbs.

"Get up, you old lunatic!" cried Card. "You're not hurt!"

"I'm sinkin' fast!" sighed Blobbs, turning up the whites of his eyes. "Good-bye, kind friends! Tell my mother that my last thought was of 'er!"

Card grabbed him by one arm and Rigden by the other, and dragged him to his feet; then, leaving him staring vacantly around him, and tenderly rubbing the pit of his stomach, the four boys dashed away in pursuit of Billy and Holcroft.

By that time Billy had reached a point about midway between the field and the village. Hearing no sounds of pursuit, he had dropped into a trot and had finally come to a halt. When the four boys came in sight of him

shop, was taking down his shutters when Billy came trotting down the street. Except for Jeremiah and Billy and Holcroft, the street was

deserted.

"Mussy on us!" gasped Jeremiah, pausing with a shutter in his hands.
"A donkey with a boy tied on its back! I 'eard as a circus was comin' to Rayton some time this week. This must be— Well, I'm blest!"

Tubb and his three perspiring chums had suddenly hove in sight. Jeremiah recognised them at once.
"It's another of them schoolboy tricks," he mused. "Well, well! What'll they be up to next, I wonder?"

What'll they wonder?"
At that moment Tubb, who was about twenty yards behind the donkey, caught sight of Wragg.
"Hurrah! Now we'll catch him!" he cried. "Stop him, Jerry!" he

ed. Stop wot?" cried Jeremiah. The donkey, of course!" sh shouted

Jeremiah shook his head.
"Not me!" he said.
"I ain't

insured."

"Coward!" howled Tubb.

By that time Billy, who had subsided into a sober trot, was almost opposite the tuckshop. Perhaps he thought the open door was the door of his stable. Perhaps he was attracted by the savoury odour of

the luckless tuck merch merchant was

the luckless tuck merchant was dragged down the street, bellowing at the top of his voice.

In the meantime Tubb and Card and Rigden and Pritchard were rapidly gaining on the handicapped moke; and just as Holcroft had decided he could bear the strain no longer, just as he was about to loose his hold on Jeremish's coat-collar, the four chums dashed up with a whoop of triumph. And while Tubb and Rigden held Billy's head, Card assisted Jeremiah to resume the perpendicular, and Pritchard unfastened the rope which bound Holcroft's ankles.

Jeremiah was not a bad sort, after the and considering what he had

the rope which bound Holeroft's ankles.

Jeremiah was not a bad sort, after all; and, considering what he had undergone, it was really very generous of him to accept five shillings in return for his promise to say nothing more about the matter.

"But it was worth it," said Tubb, as he and his chums walked back to the school. "We've taught the bounder a lesson that he won't forget in a hurry, and I'm willin' to bet that Holeroft and his crew will leave us alone for the rest of this term, at any rate."

Nobody took the bet. And this was fortunate for Tubb. For, if any, one had taken up the challenge, Tubb's meagre store of pocket-money would have been still further diminished.

diminished.

Costumes had been hired from London, and there had been some talk at first of hiring scenery, too. Lack of funds, however, had prevented this, and it had been decided to rest content with a pair of homemade draw-curtains for the front of the stage, and a couple of large coloured tablecloths for the back.

Hogan had volunteered to help to rig up the platform which was to serve as a stage, and to assist in the fixing of the curtains and so forth. And then, on the Wednesday morning, the great news had been broken to the rest of the school by means of the aforesaid announcement, which ran as follows:

"R.A.T.S.

A New and Original Melodrama, entitled 'THE PIRATE'S REVENCE,'

By C. J. Tubb, Esq.,
Will be Produced for the First Time
by the Members of the Above Society,
in the Third Form Class-room
(kindly lent for the occasion by Mr.
Walker),

AT FOUR O'CLOCK THIS AFTERNOON.

Doors open at 3.30.

Admission BY TICKET ONLY which may be obtained Free of Cos from Messrs. Tubb, Card, or Rigden.'

As already stated, this announcement caused quite a sensation among the juniors. Until it appeared, none of them had ever heard of the "R.A.T.S.," and Tubb was bombarded with questions and applications for tickets.

"Say, old man, it isn't a fake, is it?" asked one junior anxiously.

"Of course it isn't," said Tubb.

"There'll be a real performance, with a stage and footlights and costumes and scenery, and all the rest?"

"That's so, sonny."
"Tell me," said another, "how long has the society been in existence?"

tence?"
"Oh, quite a long time now!" said
Tubb airily.
"Why do you call yourselves the

Rats

"Why do you call yourselves the Rats?"
Tubb looked at him suspiciously.
"What are you gettin' at?" he growled.
"That's the name on the bill."
"Rats!"
"Yes—that's what I said—rats! It's on the tickets, too. Look!"
Tubb glanced at the ticket, and then it dawned on him that he had not been particularly happy in his choice of a title for his new society.
"Oh, that doesn't mean rats!" he said awkwardly. "It's the initials of our society—the Rayton Amateur Theatrical Society."
Holcroft did not see the announcement on the notice-board until after early school.
"Admission by ticket only," he said to Rutherford. "You twig what that means?"
"No "said Rutherford.

"Admission by ticket only," he said to Rutherford. "You twig what that means?"

"No," said Rutherford.
"It means," said Holcroft, "that they don't intend to let any of our set in to see their giddy show. It's a dodge to keep us out."

"Oh, I don't think that!" said Rutherford.

"Well, go and ask for a ticket," said Holcroft. "Then you'll see whether I'm right or not."

Rutherford hurried off in quest of Tubb. He found him sauntering across the quad, arm-in-arm with Rigden and Card.

"I want two tickets for your show this afternoon, please," said Rutherford politely. "One for myself, and one for Holcroft."

"Really!" said Tubb.
"Indeed!" said Rigden.
"Anything else?" inquired Card.
"Am I to understand, then," said Rutherford, "that Paulites are to be boycotted, and that only Walkerites are to be admitted?"

"Guessed it in once!" said Tubb.
"Guessed it in once!" said Tubb.
"Guessed it in once!" said Tubb.

Rutherford, "that Paulites are to be beycotted, and that only Walkerites are to be admitted?"
"Guessed it in once!" said Tubb. Rutherford returned to Holcroft, fuming with rage.
"The beastly bounders won't give me a ticket," he said. "They're not goin' to admit any but their own crowd."
"I told you that was the delay."

crowd."

"I told you that was the dodge," said Holcroft. "They want to keep us out, for fear we'd rag 'em and spoil their show, but"—he solemnly winked one eye—"it'll take more than Tubb and his crew to keep me out!" he said.

"You mean to go?" said Rutherford.

ford.

"You bet!" said Holcroft. "And you shall go, too, dear boy! And if we don't smash up their giddy showwell, you can punch my head!"

(Another ripping instalment of this grand achool tale will appear next week.)



The well-aimed clod smote Holcroft on the side of the head, and evoked a howl which so startled the donkey that it broke into a furious gallop. After him raced the four boys, shying lumps of turf as they ran.

again he was contentedly cropping the herbage by the roadside, and Holcroft was trying, with small success, to untie the rope which bound his

Hurrah! There they are!" cried

Tubb.

Billy pricked up his ears and glanced round. At the sight of the four boys, he uttered another defiant hee-haw, and once more broke into a gallop.

Just round the next corner a cart, leden with county will care.

of the lor I calls upon yer to—

The sentence ended in a startled gasp. Billy had seen the open gate. He was as tired of the "game" as Holcroft was, and, perceiving a way of escape, he headed for the open gate at whirlwind speed.

"Shut that gate!" roared Tubb, as he and his three chums dashed after Billy. "Shut that gate! He'll be out if you don't, and then the fat'll be in the fire!"

Blobbs turned and waddled back towards the gate. But Billy was too quick for him. He reached the gate six yards ahead of the panting constable; and then, with a triumphant hee-haw, he dropped his head between his forelegs and lashed out with his heels.

Luckily, Blobbs was too far behind to be seriously damaged. Billy's hoofs just gave him a playful tap on the bottom waistcoat button, but the force of the kick was enough to send Blobbs reeling back into the arms of Tubb, who was close behind him.

freshly-baked bread. At any rate, whatever his reason was, he suddenly swerved to the right and made straight for the shop door.

Jeremiah was an old man, but there

denly swerved to the right and made straight for the shop door.

Jeremiah was an old man, but there was nothing wrong with his lungs. The yell of fear which he let out might have been heard half a mile away. And he not only yelled, but he dropped the shutter, which so startled Billy that he spun round like a teetotum, and was about to break into a gallop again, when Holcroft, with the energy of despair, shot out his hand and grabbed Jeremiah by the collar of his coat.

Now Jeremiah, having only one sound leg and one wooden one, was not very steady on his pins at the best of times. But even the steadiest of men would find it difficult to preserve his equilibrium if he were suddenly clutched by somebody on the back of a donkey that was in the act of bounding forward.

The result of Holcroft's action in the case of Jeremiah Wragg was that Jeremiah was violently jerked off his feet; and as Holcroft held on to his coat-collar, with a vicelike grip, Billy's projected gallop was nipped in the bud. Billy could gallop fast enough with only Holcroft on his back, but he could not do so with the dead weight of Jeremiah's body dangling, so to speak, at the end of Holcroft's arm. He did his best, however, and for fully twenty yards.

The R.A.T.S.

XACTLY a fortnight after the events related in our last chapter an announcement appeared on the notice-board at Rayton College which caused quite sensation in the school, among juniors,

Rayton College which caused quite a sensation in the school, among juniors, at any rate.

As previously mentioned, Tubb had made many attempts to start an amateur theatrical society at the school, but always, for one reason or other, the project had fallen through.

Now at last, however, Tubb had realised his life's ambition. At last he had succeeded in inducing about a dozen of his schoolfellows to form themselves into a society, and to elect him as their president and stage-manager. At last "The Rayton Amateur Theatrical Society" was no longer a dream, but a reality. At last, and best of all, a play which Tubb had written—"The Pirate's Revenge"—was about to be performed in public!

With unusual modesty the members of the R.A.T.S.—the initials were unfortunate, it must be admitted—had shunned publicity, and had shunned it so successfully that there were not six persons in the school outside the ranks of the society who knew of its existence until the above-mentioned announcement appeared on the notice-board.

By the Clever Author of "Sunken Millions," etc., etc.



Our Stirring New Poor Boy Serial. surprised to see a great motor-car approaching. Several recognised it as that which had been attacked on the night preceding the commencement of the strike. As it drew up at the door the footman got down and knocked, whilst from inside stepped a slight girlish figure in a plain grey dress. Mrs. Bristowe herself opened the door, and at once recognised the car and the servant. Before the latter could state his business the girl came forward.

could state his business the girl came forward.

"You are Mrs. Bristowe," she said, holding out her hands. "I have heard so much of you! My name is Helen Thwaite-Harty. Perhaps the Dod—I mean, Mr. Postern, has told you of me? May I come in?"

Mrs. Bristowe made way for her, and showed her into the little sitting-room. A sudden pang of unreasoning jealousy shot through her as she took in at a glance the sweet beauty of the girl's face, with those large blue eyes, softly-curving cheeks, and rich sunlit hair clustering about the smooth brow."

rich sunlit hair common smooth brow.
"Yes, I have heard of you," she answered almost grudgingly, "Please answered in."

FOR NEW READERS.

This is our superb new poor boy and railway story, in which you read of JACK POSTERN, otherwise "The Dodger," who, through lack of parents and home, has become a railway waif, hanging about stations, carrying bags, and doing any odd job to earn an honest penny. Mrs. BRISTOWE, the widow of an unscrupulous railway clerk, who lost his life under tragic circumstances. He was the accomplice of

accomplice of 'RELLY, a real bad lot, who, with Bristowe's aid, attempts to rob the North Briton express of specie.

The Dodger is seized by Bristowe in a railway goods shed, and is convicted and sentenced to five years in a reformatory for loitering. While in the shed, however, Jack overhears a plot between Bristowe and Rip Kelly, and it is his intention to expose their villainy.

He escapes from the reformatory, and raises an alarm of the intended robbery, and Rip Kelly is captured with the specie in his bag.

Our young here is after

his bag.

Our young hero is offered a berth on the railway, and, there being few positions open to him at the time owing to his poor education, he becomes a van-boy.

He goes to live with Mrs. Bristowe (whose husband has since died), and is kindness itself to her—inducing the railway company to give her a stall at the station.

As time goes on Jack earns promotion, until he eventually has charge of a parcels office.

office.

One day, however, an insured parcel is lost, and Jack, almost demented, goes in search of it. His quest takes him to a lonely moorland cottage, and there he falls into clutches of kip kelly.

The Dodger receives fearful injuries in the wreck of the boat train, and is not expected to live.

He fecovers, however, and is sent by the railway authorities in search of the Duke of Dublin's daughter, who is missing. The siril is discovered.

of Dublin's daughter, who is missing. The girl is discovered.

Sir John Willet, the manager of the railway, blames Jack Postern for the lost parcel, and refuses to pay him the £1,000 for the recovery of the duke's daughter. Owing to this injustice and meanness, the Dodger claims the reward, and in consequence of this he is dismissed from the service, and Mrs. Bristowe is also removed.

quence and Mrs. Bristowe is also removed.

This action causes a great stir among the railway workers, who set fire to the depot. The great blaze is got in hand, and the Dodger begs of the riotous workmen to make for their respective homes.

He is threading his way through the groups of workmen, when suddenly, without the slightest warning, he is struck down.

"It's the Rip, as I live!" came the cry, and many others took up the shout.

"After him!" "Catch him!" "It's the Rip!"

(Now read this week's instalment.)

The Runaway Excursion.

SCORE of persons dashed off in hot pursuit of the Rip, whilst others removed the prostrate form from the road, and crowded round in eager efforts to revive it.

"Better let them know round in Calgate Street," said a woman's voice among the throng.
"Who'll go?"
"You had better, Saunderson," answered someone; "you know them best."

answered someone; you know thembest."

And as the pursuers one by one returned breathless, to explain that the Rip had got clean away, Saunderson moved sadly off to break the news to Mrs. Bristowe.

That vaccing every paper in the

Mrs. Bristowe.

That evening every paper in the country was full of the stirring events at Calworth. The Dodger's part in the proceedings figured largely. Under the heading "Later" came the news of the cowardly attack that had been made upon him. In the first accounts he was reported killed, but among the stop-press items it was stated that his injury was not so serious as at first feared. He had been taken to his home, but was still unconscious.

It was midday next day when the group outside the little home in Calgate Street, waiting anxiously to hear the result of the doctor's visit, was

As they entered the room, Mrs. Bristowe stood in an expectant attitude, as if waiting to hear the object of Lady Helen's visit. The latter was not long in explaining.

"I read of the wicked outrage on Mr. Postern," she exclaimed—and the colour came and went in her cheeks as she spoke, whilst her pretty lips

olour came and went in her cheeks as she spoke, whilst her pretty lips twitched as she framed the words. "I felt I must come to see if I could do anything for him. I owe my life, my reason—everything to him." There was a note of deep anxiety in her voice as she spoke. "I told father I must come, and he quite agreed. Do you mind?"

Mrs. Bristowe looked at her intently for a moment. Then the sweet, simple sympathy of the girl overcame her. She fell a victim to that subtle charm that had woven its spell so potently about the Dodger. "Of course not," she answered at last.

spell so potently about the Dodger.

"Of course not," she answered at last.

"I want to nurse him myself. May I?" said Lady Helen.

Mrs. Bristowe protested at first, but finally consented conditionally on her being allowed to share in the duty.

"But," she went on, "I hope there will not be much nursing needed."

At the words every spark of colour fled from Lady Helen's face. She went white to the lips as an awful fear seized her. Next moment the blood rushed through her veins again, as Mrs. Bristowe said:

"He is not nearly so bad as was at first thought. I will go up and tell him you are here."

Meanwhile Lady Helen gave directions to the footman, who brought out from the car a bag and other packages, and when Mrs. Bristowe returned, Lady Helen ran forward to meet her.

"I have brought quite a hospital

returned, Lady Helen ran forward to meet her.

"I have brought quite a hospital with me!" she exclaimed brightly.

"And I am afraid I came prepared for a long stay. May I have my bag brought in?"

Upstairs the Dodger lay propped up in bed, a deathlike pallor on his face. He had recovered consciousness the previous night. The skull had not been fractured, as was supposed, and there was no reason that in a day or two he should not be about again. When Mrs. Bristowe brought

him the news of Lady Helen's arrival a momentary flush rose to his cheeks and he caught his breath, "You never told me how pretty she was," said Mrs. Bristowe a little reproachfully. "I think she is simply sweet!"

weet!"
The Dodger looked her squarely in
the face, with a happy, grateful

the face, with a happy, grateful smile.

"Yes, she is all that," he said simply. And then he waited in a fever of excitement until he heard Lady Helen's steps upon the stairs.

He could hardly control himself to speak naturally as she entered the room.

speak naturally as she entered the room.

"You are my patient now!" she cried almost gleefully, as she came across to him and took his outstretched hand. She pressed it in simple friendship, as she had done on Bramley Flat. "I owe so much to you that, although it is a horrid thing to say, I feel quite glad to have the opportunity of being able to nurse you."

She spoke in little, quick, nervous, jerky sentences, and the Dodger found difficulty in framing words to

found difficulty in framing words to answer.

"Oh, you must not do that! I could not hear of it!"

"Oh, but I must—and shall!"
And so she installed herself as his nurse, and, little by little, during the course of the day, she learned from the Dodger the whole of the men's side of the great dispute. It bore no resemblance to the accounts that had reached her before, all coloured by the prejudice of her uncle, the chairman of the company. He, in his turn, it is only fair to say, had been misled by the permanent officials.

By degrees, as she listened, she came to understand the years of tyranny and oppression which these men had patiently borne—the injustice, the wrongs that had been done them, the misery they had endured, and her young heart swelled with sympathy.

In simple phrases the Dodger

endured, and her young heart swelled with sympathy.

In simple phrases the Dodger painted word-pictures of the bleak and barren homes, denuded of their furniture and of their little possessions, fireless and cold; the cry of the hungry children; the tired, starving wives, and the weary, distracted men.

He spoke of incidents which wrung her heart as of trifles of everyday occurrence. Unconsciously, he gave her a vivid impression of the gloom and misery among the whole of the working population of Calworth.

Late in the afternoon, she felt she could bear it no longer. This was the cause in which the Dodger was every day risking his life! From that moment it was her cause too. She must do something to help. She would write to her father about it.

As Jack heard her—for he had no notion of how his words had impressed her—a great wave of admiration surged through him.

In answer to Lady Helen's letter, the little duke himself appeared in Calgate Street next morning, and made his way, chattering as ever, direct to the Dodger's room.

"May I come in?" he said at the door; and, without waiting for a reply, went on: "I hear from that erratic young girl of mine that nothing will please her but to take a hand in this strike, and she wants you to see her uncle. Now, you know, he is not my brother—only my sister's husband—and I will not be answerable for him. He is not in the least like me. You won't find him exactly friendly towards you. The thing is to get him to know you. But in the meanwhile I want to warn you that he looks upon you as a sort of cheap rascal. He spends most of his life nowadays softly swearing at you under his breath. My opinion is that he would not in the least object to paying a handsome sum to anyone who'd quietly take you off and shanghai you on a desert island. Don't, for goodness' sake, tell him that I said all this. I only want to warn you as a personal friend."

So far the Dodger had not been able to get in a single word, and a great part of what the duke was saying was so much Greek to him. He him that I said all this. I only want to warn you and me and the bedpost, I have a very shrewd suspicion that if you once get hold of him you won't let go your hold until you have got what you want, whatever that may be. I don't understand this strike business a lot. It seems a great pity to cause a lot

writing. "What is it you want?"
The Dodger walked across to the large mahogany roll-top desk, and, before replying, took stock of the man who, he instinctively felt, was his adversary.

before replying, took stock of the man who, he instinctively felt, was his adversary.

The little duke was certainly justified in saying that his brother-in-law was not like himself.

Lord Trimley was a large, full-bodied man, with a heavy black moustache, bushy black eyebrows, a round bald head, steel-grey eyes, and a prominent chin. He was immaculately dressed in a well-fitting morning-coat, with a white waistcoat, although it was mid-winter. His whole appearance spoke of a business-like ability.

"I have come to see you about the strike," the Dodger said at length.

Lord Trimley deliberately finished the letter he was writing, slowly wiped his pen, laid it down, and then turned in his swivel-chair and looked up.

"Indeed! Have you? And whom

up.
"Indeed! Have you? And whom
may I have the honour of address-

The Dodger knew that Lord Trimley was perfectly aware who he

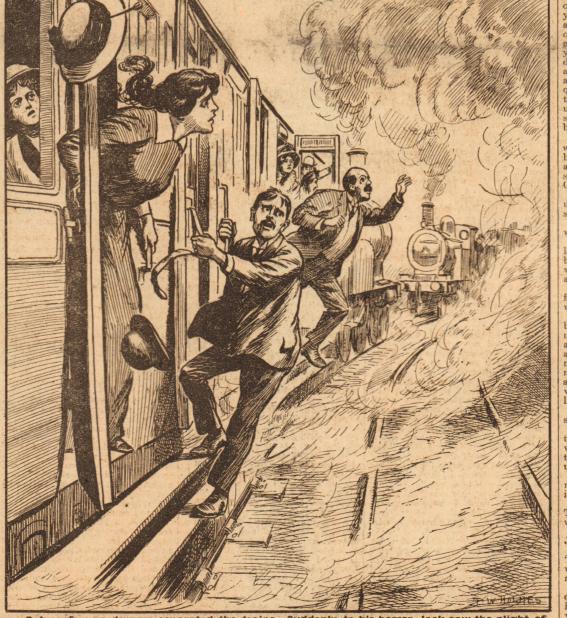
Trimley was perfectly aware who he was.

"My name," he answered, "is Jack Postern."

"Oh!" exclaimed Lord Trimley.

"Then you are the individual to whom we are indebted for this monstrous outbreak?"

"That," replied the Dodger very quietly, "is no doubt the account that has reached your ears. I came to see you because I hoped that, as head of this great organisation, you might care to know the truth."



Only a few yards now separated the trains. Suddenly, to his horror, Jack saw the plight of the pacie-stricken passengers in the runaway excursion. Next instant, a woman leapt from the train and fell sprawling on the permanent-way,

00000000000000000 THE RAILWAY WAIF. (Continued from the previous page.) 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

Lord Trimley's lip curled in a perceptible sneer.

ceptible sneer.

"I know well," the Dodger went on, ignoring his scornful attitude, "that in all probability the truth has never reached you. You are, of course, dependent for information on the very persons who are responsible for the acts that have led to what you call 'this monstrous outbreak."

It was evident that the Dodger's calm outspokenness startled Lord Trimley.

Trimley.

In a very few words, despite the constant interruptions and jibes of his polished opponent, the Dodger laid out all the facts of the case, shirking nothing, blinking nothing. His account was absolutely impartial; he frankly admitted the errors of the men in leaving work without notice, and also their culpability in the lamentable attack on the company's premises.

lamentable attack on the company's premises.

As the Dodger finished, the chairman put him through a sharp, pointed, cross-examination. Jack faced it unflinchingly. The great man made a number of notes, both during the telling of Jack's story and during the cross-examination, and then came a long pause.

"So this is your account?" asked Lord Trimley. He would not admit that he was swayed by it. "Well, and perhaps you will now inform me what your wishes may be?"

The Dodger produced from his pocket the original memorandum of demands that had been drawn up by the men's delegates. Quite calmly he bent down and picked up a pencil off the chairman's desk, scratched out one item in the memorandum and substituted another.

The item he crossed out was his present and that which he

The item he crossed out was his own reinstatment, and that which he added was the retirement or dismissal of Sir John Willet. He initialled the alteration, and handed the memorandum to Lord Trimley.

"These," he said, "with a slight alteration, are the demands which the general manager originally refused to listen to. They would, I believe, be accepted by the men as a basis of settlement. But please understand that I do not pretend to speak authoritatively for them. If would, however, endeavour to use my influence to get them to accept such terms."

would, however, endeavour to use my influence to get them to accept such terms."

"Indeed! Would you?" sneered Lord Trimley. "That, of course, would be exceedingly kind of you. I notice that you are so lenient as not even to insist on his dismissal. I am sure he will appreciate your generosity. May I inquire whether you have any objection to my continuing as chairman? Perhaps you may require that office yourself."

"Not at all, Lord Trimley," answered the Dodger, looking him full in the face. "Who the chairman may be makes very little difference to the men, though I can quite understand that it is very important to the success of the railway.

"It is no question of spite or ill-feeling. It is simply our firm conviction that under Sir John Willet the present troubles will never satisfactorily be smoothed over. I would also point out, what will probably appeal to you as chairman, that under Sir John Willet the business of the company can scarcely be said to have prospered. Such incidents as the wreck of the American boat-train, the disappearance of Lady Helen Thwaite-Harty, and the many robberies on the line, cannot have done the railway good."

"And how, pray," retorted Lord Trimley, "is Sir John Willet answerable for these? You don't suggest it was he who had the boat-train wrecked, or Lady Helen kidnapped, or—"

"Of course, I do not," broke in

"Of course, I do not," broke in the Dodger. "But surely his own first rule of railway management

applies."
"What may that rule be?" asked
Lord Trimley.
"'When there is trouble, the man
in charge suffers,'" quoted the

"'When there is trouble, the man in charge suffers,'" quoted the Dodger.

"And a very good rule, too," answered the chairman.

"Perhaps," the Dodger replied.

"But only so long as it applies impartially to all alike."

There was another long pause.

"Have you anything more to say?" the chairman asked at length.

"Nothing," replied the Dodger.

"Except to urge you, in the interest

of the company, to give what I have already said full consideration."
"I have already done that," answered Lord Trimley. "Goodmorning!"

And so the interview ended.

It was with a heavy heart that the
Dodger made his way back to Calgate Street.

A sense of depression settled down on him. He had promised the men that within a week from the riot at the junction the company should listen to them. That week expired on the following day. Never yet had he broken his word with any man. But what chance was there now of

had he broken his word with any man. But what chance was there now of his being able to redeem his pledge?

The night post brought a letter from Harty Towers, a renewal of the invitation, couched in terms of frank good-fellowship from Lady Helen. He could not now welcome that letter with the same enthusiasm that he would have in other circumstances. Almost wearily he set himself to reply to it.

Lady Helen insisted that Mrs. Bristowe and he should not longer defer their promised visit, and unable even to find a reasonable excuse for longer putting off, he wrote promising to come the following week.

week.

Far into the night he lay awake, racking his brain for some solution to the problem that confronted him. Morning was far advanced when the noise of heated discussion in the room below awoke him. For some moments he sat up listening. Then he recognised the voices of the Union delegates.

Hurriedly slipping on his clothes, he went down to meet them. As he entered the room they sprang to their feet.

"Well done, Dodger!"

"By George! You're a marvel, Postern!"

"How on earth did you manage it?"

"You're a statesman, young man!"
He stood bewildered by the tumult of greeting that met him.
"What's it all mean?" he asked.
"What have I done now?"
"Done!" answered one of the representatives. "Have you not heard? We are to meet the chairman at mid-day to-day to discussmatters, and he particularly wishes you to be present also."
The Dodger could scarcely believe his ears. A great load seemed to slip from off his shoulders. His whole heart sang for joy. So his efforts had not been in vain after all.
That the interview was a memor-

That the interview was a memorable one, its purport was best summed up in the words which the secretary of the union used at the mass meeting of the strikers that night:

of the strikers that night:

"I do not say that I see eye to eye
with him, but give Lord Trimley this
credit—he is not ashamed of owning
when he is in the wrong, though
naturally he wants to put the best
face he can on the company's climbdown. The terms he offers are fair
and reasonable. He has conceded
nine out of the twelve points
demanded by Jack Postern, and the
main point is that Sir John Willet
goes. You would be fools not to
accept."

And so the strike was over. With

goes. You would be fools not to accept."

And so the strike was over. With tumultuous cheers for the Dodger, that great mass-meeting resolved on the acceptance of the company's terms, and the following day the men returned to work.

Next day a messenger arrived, to say that Lord Trimley would like to see Jack.

The chairman looked up as he entered, and there was a moment's pause, after which the two eyed one another as if seeking to gauge their respective strength.

Lord Trimley was the first to speak. "You're satisfied now, I suppose," he said; and although the words sounded caustic, the tone in which they were uttered was very different from what he had used at the Dodger's first visit.

"Not quite," answered Jack. "The men have gained nine points out of twelve, and, of course, I'd have liked it better if they had got the lot. But they were wise to accept."

"Well, it is over now," said Lord Trimley; "and I nope we have heard the last of it."

"So do I, with all my heart," responded Jack.

"What about yourself?" asked the other.

"I shall try to get some job or the other.

"What about yourself?" asked the other.
"I shall try to get some job or other with the Midland or the Great Central," he replied quite frankly.
"You do not seem to have any doubt about getting one," commented Lord Trimley.
"I have very great doubts, but I must do my best."

"Would you like to stay with the Great Provincial?"
"I'd give my soul to stay," said the Dodger, with a curious catch in his voice.
"Well, by Jove, you shall!" the chairman answered, with a touch of genuine feeling. "You have proved yourself a man. But for you, things might have been much worse for the company. I frankly recognise this, and I now offer you the position of assistant to the new traffic superintendent. You are too good a man for us to lose."

intendent. You are too good a man for us to lose."

Jack was speechless with astonishment and emotion. He stood for a moment, his upper lip quivering ominously.

That he should come back to the company, his company, in a position of responsible control, seemed almost too good to be true. He could scarcely believe his ears.

Lord Trimley noticed the lad's emotion, and gauged it at its true worth. His whole life had been spent in reading men, and he was not above admitting when he met his match. Above all, he knew how to appreciate the deep feelings of a strong character. He turned away for a moment, and then, suddenly rising, held out his hand.

"Then I may take it it's settled!"

moment, and then, suddenly rising, held out his hand.

"Then I may take it it's settled!" he exclaimed. "I am glad to have you as one of my chiefs!" And he shook the Dodger warmly by the hand. "We shall meet, I believe, at Harty Towers next week."

One of the first steps that it fell to the happy lot of the Dodger to take was to instruct Mr. Thompson to renew the agreement with Mrs. Bristowe, and so once again her well-known stall—a very landmark to travellers at Calworth Junction—took down its shutters, amidst the repairs and rebuilding that were rapidly removing all traces of the great conflict between Capital and Labour.

On the Tuesday of the following week Lab

Aabour.

On the Tuesday of the following week Jack and Mrs. Bristowe started o pay their promised visit to Harty Towers. Poor Mrs. Bristowe was all excitement and nervousness as they were received in the great hall of that historic seat. There were few other guests staying in the house at the ime, and Lady Helen by her sweet sharm, and the old duke by his genial implicity, quickly set her completely it her ease.

simplicity, quickly set her completely at her case.

The Dodrer never for one moment felt a track of percoussess until he found himself actually shaking hands with his hostess, and then once again as before in her presence, he found himself strangely tongue-tied.

She greeted him with open-hearted pleasure.

"I am so glad you have been able to come!" she exclaimed. "Now you will be able to rest from all your exertions. I read all about the settlement of the strike. It was magnificent of you."

"It was magnificent," he answered; "but not of me. It is your doing, Lady Helen, entirely, and you know it."

Lady Helen, entirely, and you know it."

"Oh, no, indeed it was not; I was only your pupil."

"Then all I can say is that the master has much to learn from his pupil. Without you it would have been impossible."

Whilst he was talking, Jack was conscious that a tall, military-looking man, with a heavy black moustache, bushy eyebrows, and keen grey eyes was watching him narrowly.

"Let me introduce you to Captain King," said Lady Helen; "this is the famous Mr. Postern, to whom we all owe so much," she added, turning to the individual in question.

"Delighted, I am sure," said Captain King, bowing stiffly; "I have heard all about you."

There was a strange, menacing significance in the way he uttered the words.

"Not so much to hear, I am

inficance in the way he uttered the words.

"Not so much to hear, I am afraid," replied the Dodger.

"Oh, I would not like to say that!" said the other in the same hard tones.

Instinctively the Dodger felt that this man was his enemy. His manner, without being actually rude, was, to say the least of it, offensive.

"If you had listened to Lady Helen the last few days," he went on bitterly, you would not say that."

"Really, Captain King!" exclaimed the object of his remarks, almost sharply. "Please remember that I am present."

"Oh, I have not forgotten!" he retorted, with a sneer, and turning on his heel, left.

"Sorry," said the Dodger simply. "I am afraid I ruffled him." Lady Helen looked down at her tea.

"I do not know what is the matter with him," she said quietly; "he

has been so funny the last few days, I cannot make him out."

The Dodger noticed her slight embarrassment, and it was not lost on

barrassment, and it was not lost on him.

"So that's the way the wind blows," he commented to himself.

The three days passed all too quickly, despite the constant irritating taunts and sneers of Captain King, who lost no opportunity of impressing upon the Dodger the difference in their stations in life. Never once did he allow his good humour to be ruffled by the other's slights. Yet on every occasion he managed to disarm his adversary's taunts and turn aside their point by quick-witted jests.

And all the time he was conscious that he was under the close observation of the old duke, who viewed with undisguised appreciation Jack's quickness of wit and imperturbability of temper. He watched with amusement the little comedy that was being played out before him. He had recognised from the moment that Lady Helen had returned after her disappearance that the Dodger was likely to play an important part in her future.

So far from letting the prejudices

pearance that the Pocket for play an important part in her future.

So far from letting the prejudices of his caste lead him to resent the fact, he had deliberately set himself to study the situation before arriving at a decision. As each day saw the open friendship between Lady Helen and the Dodger growing stronger, he made no attempt to interfere with the natural trend of events.

When Jack and Mrs. Bristowe returned to Calworth, he found plenty to occupy him in the enormous responsibilities of his new work.

Suddenly one day the station-master burst into his office.

"There is an excursion run away down the up-line," he exclaimed excitedly.

Jack jumped from his place.

down the up-line," he exclaimed excitedly.

Jack jumped from his place.

"The 8.55 out of London," explained the other, "was hung up on the top of the grade at Upton to let a down express by. Something must have started her. They telephoned from Jossington to say she is coming uncontrolled on the up main, and, of course, the up North Briton's due in ten minutes or so. I have signalled for a clear line right through to Kenley."

In an instant the Dodger realised the situation. From Upton, twenty-two miles to the south of Calworth, there is not a single food of up grade.

The line comes down from the Skegly Ridge by a series of down grades and levels the whole way to the junction; then a further slight down-grade leads to Braxtead, and then comes the "nine-mile-straight" of Bramley Flat.

then a further slight down-grade leads to Braxtead, and then comes the "nine-mile-straight" of Bramley Flat.

The excursion had been side-tracked, then, when no doubt the driver and fireman had left the cab to oil and inspect, the train must have taken charge, and it was now dashing onwards in its mad flight towards the junction.

Each second it must be gathering speed; in a few moments it would be racing through the maze of points at a terrific pace. If it safely negotiated that network, it would dash on unchecked down to Braxtead and across the Flat, and ere long it must crash head on into the North Briton. There was nothing to check it. The first upgrade was 1 in 107 for half a mile near Kenley; then came flat, then another slight up-grade, and so the line worked by easy stages out of the hollow in which Bramley Flat led.

All this flashed across the Dodger's mind. Instantly seizing up his cap, he raced along the platform to where an empty local was standing in a bay.

"Tell them to give me a clear line up main from Kenley to Byfield," he shouted to Mr. Thompson as he ran.

"Where's your fireman?" he called to the driver as he reached the waiting train.

"Gone to his tea," the man answered.

"Then you must fire for him," Jack replied; and jumping in the cab, called out to a porter: "Run to number six cabin, and tell them to switch me on to the up main without delay."

He backed the train out of the bay and on to the up main.

switch me on to the up main without delay."

He backed the train out of the bay and on to the up main.

"What in Heaven's name do you mean to do, sir?" asked the driver, in tones of obvious alarm. The news of the runaway train had spread like wild-fire, and everyone in and about the station knew of it.

"Stop that excursion," replied the Dodger, as he brought the engine to a standstill just beyond the points.

"All clear, sir," sang out the driver. Jack was "sir" now, by virtue of his position.

Throwing over the reversing handle, the Dodger pushed the starting-lever a notch or two across the are with a whirr of skidding wheels, the engine began to pick up its load. As it got under way, Jack pushed the lever further and further across. Gradually the empty train gathered speed.

speed.
She had a climb before her, but the load was light. Jack held his hand over the edge of the cab to estimate the rate at which they were

estimate the rate at travelling. "Thirty-five to thirty-eight," or mented the driver, judging solely long experience.

mented the driver, judging solely by long experience.

"About that," replied the Dodger, and began to open up the throttle. Gradually the coaches behind began to rattle and sway at the unaccustomed speed. The engine leapt and jolted as they raced along the flat to Naughtley. With screeching whistle they tore unchecked through the little station, bumping over the points.

"Four minutes," said the Dodger,

points.

"Four minutes," said the Dodger, looking at his watch. "And say four minutes from when the excursion started to when I heard the news. We'll sight her on the upgrade out of Thoston." Scarcely had they clattered through the station he spoke of ere far away on the top of the next incline the runaway train came into view.

the next incline the runaway train came into view.
"Brakes, quick!" he roared out, and at the same instant he shut off steam, and threw the reversing-lever over.

steam, and threw the reversinglever over.

The train slowed with a sudden
jerk, brakes squealed, and a long
string of sparks flowed up from the
wheels. The train ran skidding
along the rails for another hundred
yards, polishing the metals smooth
as glass.

"Off with the brakes!" commanded the Dodger, almost before
she came to a standstill, and simultaneously he moved the startinglever a notch. Impotently the
wheels spun round on the polished
rails.

The driver sprang to the sandbox
controller, and a jet of sand was
strewn on each metal.

"Open her steadily, sir," he said,
"or the wheels'll never bite."

But even as he spoke the engine
began to move, pushing back the
train behind it. Nearer and nearer
came the runaway at terrific speed.
Slowly—incredibly slowly—Jack'
strain rathered way again. Anxionsly
he peereds through the circular light
at the oncoining excursion.

It send inevitable that in another
second it must crash into them. It
was gaining on them every second.
But every second they themselves
were increasing their speed. The
runaway was not gaining so rapidly.
On, on they raced, the empty
train rushing backwards being overhauled foot by foot by the flying
excursion. Little by little the distance between them was reduced.

Suddenly to his horror Jack saw
that the frightened passengers in the
runaway train, already alarmed at
the speed at which she was travelling, and leaning excitedly from the
windows, had evidently mistaken
what was happening to them. It
appeared to them that a terrible
collision was about to take place.

Above the noise, the clatter and
roar of the two racing trains, no
houman voice could make itself
heard. He was powerless to stop the
poor panic-stricken creatures.

He saw first one and then another
of the doors in the runaway train
open. Each in its turn, as it was
caught by the draught made by the
terrific speed, was snatched from the
hand that opened it, and wrenched
backwards with a crash. Next instant a woman leapt shrieking from
the permanent-way, where she
rol

in the both

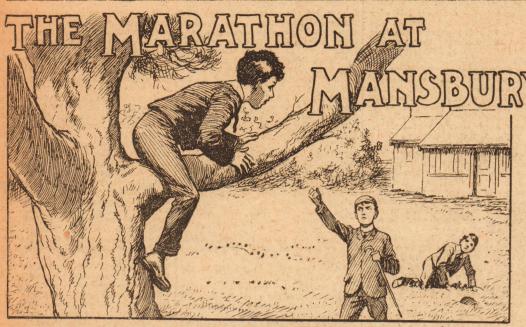
And then a new fear suddenly seized the Dodger.

(Another splendid instalment next Tuesday in THE BOYS' FRIEND.)

Read the Thrilling, Long, Complete Popular Boxer-Actor, by Arthur S. Hardy, Marvel—Price 1d. Tom Sayers!

them.

It was a challenge the workers were not slow to accept. They liked a bit of fun as well as the schoolboys, and Jack's missiles were returned with



A Grand Long, Complete Story of School Life and Adventure. gates to the small town of Mansbury had to be traversed for some three or four hundred yards, and as the Rivingtonians ran and frisked along it kicking the snow as they went, they saw coming towards them a crowd of workers from the town. This included men and boys of all ages; residents of a little village called Easton, most of whom were employed on the new railway-station being built at Mansbury. Jack Harold, who was in front of the boys' party, was seized with the spirit of mischief as he saw the villagers approaching. Stooping down, he quickly made a couple of snowballs and let fly into the middle of them.

THE 1st CHAPTER.

An Exciting Announcement, O there was to be a marathon race at Mansbury! Yes— that was the news that spread through the school that memorable Saturday morning, and it formed the chief topic of conversation among the majority of the three hundred and fifty boys there assembled.

fifty boys there assembled.

It was only a runour at first, but it soon received official confirmation. For at twelve o'clock that day, when morning lessons were over, the boys found a notice of the games board in the quadrangle setting forth particulars of the contest.

It appeared that an old Mansbury pupil, a great athlete who had won the mile championship at Stamford Bridge, had offered a silver challenge cup for an annual long-distance race, to be run on the last Saturday of the spring term.

cup for an annual long-distance race, to be run on the last Saturday of the spring term.

The challenge cup, of course, would be the property of the school, to be kept in a place of honour in the rearding-house of the winner, but the latter would receive for his own keeping a gold medal as a memento of the occasion.

"Further particulars," the notice said, "would be duly announced."

After a great deal of scrummaging—for everyone was eager to read the notice—Jack Harold, of Rivington's, and his chum Peter Morley, contrived to get in front of the board, and read what was set forth on it. Having done so, they elbowed their way out of the throng of boys and proceeded to discuss the matter.

"It don't say what the distance is," said Jack. "A real marathon race is ever so far, isn't it?"

"Over twenty-six miles," answered Peter, who made athletics of all kinds a special study. "But ours won't be so long as that, I'll bet. You see, they call them marathons now at almost any distance."

"I don't suppose we shall be allowed to go more than five or six miles."

"Why not? The Crick at Rugby"

"Why not? The Crick at Rugby is nearly thirteen, and I guess we can run as far as they can. But that's the longest school race there is at present."

"Well, if it's anything like a really long distance, Merton should win it. Nothing ever seems to tire him."

"Yes," assented Peter, "I should think he's got the best chance. But you can't always tell in these long races."

This was a sample of the conversation that was going on all over the school. Everyone was anxious to know what the distance was to be, and nearly everyone thought Merton would win.

Harry Merton was eighteen years of age, and one of the biggest and strongest boys in the school. He was in the cricket and football elevens, and was good at all manly sports. And in the class-rooms, too, he was both diligent and successful, though he did not rank among the eleverest boys at Mansbury. He was a jolly, open-hearted, generous boy, popular with all except certain jealous rivals, and a few more who constituted rather a bad set.

The leader of this was a boy named Horner, of about the same age as Harry. The son of a wealthy retired bookmaker, he had inherited his father's cuteness without his honesty,

The boys of the two Houses were extremely disappointed, for it seemed as if a precious Saturday afternoon-would as if a precious Saturday afternoon-town desired by wheavier and heavier, it occurred to some of them that, even if they could not play football, they could get some fun in other ways.

By three o'clock, when the game should have commenced, the playing-fields, and all the countryside, were covered with a mantle of snow inches thick.

"Snowballing's the only thing to-day," said Merton, as he surveyed the scene. "We'll take Bolton's on at that, if they lower to be wasted. But as the snow-fall grew heavier and heavier, it occurred to some of them that, even if they could not play football, they could not play football, they could get some fun in other ways.

By three o'clock, when the game should have commenced, the playing-fields, and all the countryside, were covered with a mantle of snow inches thick.

"Snowballing's the only thing to-day," said Merton, as he surveyed the scene. "We'll take Bolton's on at that, if they lower to some of them that, even if they could not play football, they could not play football, they could get some of them that, even if they could not play football, they could not play football, t

his love of gambling without his love of sport. Allowed ample pocket-money, he practised in a small way a system of usury among his fellow-pupils, and would lend small sums to boys who needed them at exorbitant interest.

Occasionally, too, he would induce others to bet with him, and generally managed to win their money. Of course, this sort of thing would not have been allowed at Mansbury had it been known, but it was all done secretly, and not even his victims would ever have told tales. And as he was a clever and good worker in school hours, and apparently a quiet and well-behaved lad, he was thought highly of by the masters, who little suspected the harm he did in the place.

place.

As soon as he heard of the marathon race, he made up his mind to turn it to his own advantage. Not by competing in it and winning—that was quite out of his line; but he saw a chance of making a great many bets, and that was all he cared about

many bets, and that was all he cared about.

The annual football match with St. Mark's College had just taken place, and, knowing the latter were a strong side, he had gone about offering to bet on them.

Needless to say, there were many boys patriotic enough to back their own school, and he had no difficulty in making his wagers. When the match took place, then, he wanted his own school to lose, and was delighted when it had done so.

Needless to say, such a boy was not popular; he had very few friends, hardly one real friend in fact, but he had several boys more or less in his power through their owing him money, and he preferred that to friendship.

It was now February, and football

money, and he preferred that to friendship.

It was now February, and football and cross-country running were the two chief sports of the season. The rivalry between the various Houses in these things was very great, and even the prospect of the new marathon race did not diminish the keen interest taken in the football ties for the House Challenge Cup.

On the afternoon on which our story opens, Rivington's House was to play Bolton's, and a very close game was expected. Unfortunately, however, the weather was most unpropitious, and a heavy fall of snow came on soon after twelve o'clock. It soon began to look, in fact, as if football was out of the question.

The boys of the two Houses were extremely disappointed, for it seemed as if a precious Saturday afternoon were to be wasted. But as the snow-fall grew heavier and heavier, it occurred to some of them that, even if they could not play football, they could get some fun in other ways.

By three o'clock, when the game should have commenced, the playing-fields, and all the countryside, were covered with a mantle of snow inches thick.

"Snowballing's the only thing today," said Merton, as he surveyed

as the ammunition was raging, and the white missiles almost darkened the air.

It was great fun!

A Fight in Earnest.
HE two sides were about evenly matched in point of numbers, but, the schoolboys numbers, but the schoolboys were perhaps the better throwers. They would probably therefore have got the best of it in any case, but before the contest was half over, they received overwhelming reinforce-

ments.

The boys of Bolton's House, also on their way to the football-ground, came rushing round a side turning which joined the main road, and finding snowballing going on, they at once took a hand. They had taken the unlucky villagers in the rear, so the latter were between two fires. This was more than they could stand, so they made a wild rush to escape, by dashing through the Rivington boys.

by dashing through boys.

These opposed their progress, and some of the men, getting banged with snowballs as they were, lost their temper. Leaving the snow alone, they commenced hitting out with their fists, and very soon free fights were going on in several places at once.

were going on in several places at once.

Harry Merton found himself singled out for attack by a big, strong labourer, who wore a red muffler round his neck. The two had been carrying on a duel with snowballs for some time quite good-hamouredly, but just as the man, whose name was Dasent, made his rush to get past the boys, a rather hard snowball thrown from behind caught him on the ear, and made him furiously angry.

He rushed at Harry, who seemed to be the leader of the first lot of boys, and struck out a terrific blow, which the lad only just avoided by leaping back in the nick of time. Angry at the attack, Harry rushed to return it at once, but his blow was easily parried, and Dasent nearly knocked him down with a heavy thump on the chest. This steadied

Soon a battle royal with snowballs st the ammunition was raging, and he white missiles almost darkened he air.

It was great fun!

THE 2nd CHAPTER.

A Fight in Earnest.

HE two sides were about evenly matched in point of numbers, but the schoolboys are perhaps the better throwers.

Harry, who realised at once he had a skilled and dangerous, as well as powerful, antagonist to deal with.

As a matter of fact, Dasent was recognised as the strongest man at the railway works, and a boxer of no small skill, so much so that he had even thought of going in for "the business" professionally. But Harry who realised at once he had a powerful, antagonist to deal with.

As a matter of fact, Dasent was recognised as the strongest man at the railway works, and a boxer of no small skill, so much so that he had even thought of going in for "the business" professionally. But Harry who realised at once he had a powerful, antagonist to deal with.

As a matter of fact, Dasent was recognised as the strongest man at the railway works, and a boxer of no small skill, so much so that he had even thought of going in for "the business" professionally. But Harry who realised at once he had a powerful, antagonist to deal with.

As a matter of fact, Dasent was recognised as the strongest man at the railway works, and a boxer of no small skill, so much so that he had even thought of going in for "the business" professionally. But Harry was a powerful, antagonist to deal with.

if he wasn't so powerful as Dasent, he was more active, and just as brave.

It was evidently a "battle of giants," and the others, leaving their own lesser scuffles, crowded round the two champions to watch the fray.

It would not be pleasant to describe the interchange of blows and their effects. Suffice it to say, that Harry Merton, though twice knocked off his legs, stood up gamely, and got home several severe blows on his antagonist, whose anger, curiously enough, seemed to have evaporated, and whe was now fighting with a broad grin on his square-jawed visage. Even a crashing blow in the mouth which he received did not stop that grin, though it made it decidedly weird to look at.

received did not stop that grin, though it made it decidedly weird to look at.

They had been fighting same three or four minutes—a long time when hard blows are being exchanged with bare knuckles—when a loud voice rose in the air, and the throng of boys was parted by a big, burly man forcing his way among them.

It was Dr. Perry, the Headmaster of Mansbury!

"Stop!" he cried. "Leave off at once! What does this fighting mean? Who are you, sir?" he added, seizing Harry by the arm and whirling him round.

No wonder he did not at first recognise who it was he had seized, for, truth to tell, Harry's face was sadly bruised and swollen.

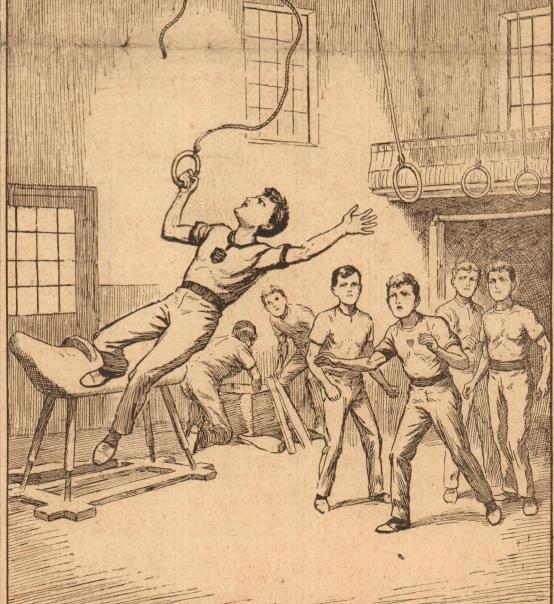
"Why, if it isn't Merton!" ejaculated the doctor. "What do you mean, sir, by this conduct?"

Before Harry could answer, Dasent stepped forward.

"It was all my fault, guv'nor," he said to the doctor. "I hit 'im first. We were snowballin', and I lost my temper!"

Dr. Perry looked at him in silence

temper!"
Dr. Perry looked at him in silence
(Continued on the next page.)



Immediately Smithers' weight came on the ring the rope parted, and with a startled cry the unfortunate lad fell heavily to the floor. He still grasped the ring in his hand, as he landed sideways, and almost at full length, on the bare boards.

"Yorkshire Grit," A Superb New Mill-land Story of a Boy's Fight Against the World, Next Tuesday.

by Stacey Blake, commences in THE BOYS' FRIEND

for a moment. He, too, was a good deal battered, and with his swollen mouth, looked anything but hand-

"Well, well!" said the doctor.
"That alters the case, of course,
You're a good sportsman, my man,
to take the blame as you have done.
But it's a pity you should have
injured each other in this way; and,
of course, I can't permit fighting,
you know."
"We sha'n't fight no more, sir,"
said Despot. "A good fight makes

injured each other in this way; and, of course, I can't permit fighting, you know."

"We sha'n't fight no more, sir," said Dasent. "A good fight makes friends, they say, and me and this young gentleman will be friends in future. Give us your hand, lad," he added genially to 'Harry. "You're a good-plucked 'un, that you are, and I hope I ain't hurt ye?"

"Not much," answered Harry, shaking his hand cordially, "though you hit pretty hard, you know."

"We'se friends, anyway?"

"Rather!" said Harry.

And so they separated with a final handshake, Harry, at, Dr. Perry's request, returning with him to the School House, where his face was bathed and himself lectured on the evils of fighting, and Dasent to his village home, quite as greatly surprised at having found a focman worthy of his steel. And he meant what he said about their being friends, as before long he had the opportunity of showing.

The snowballing contest between the two Houses did not come off after all. Most of the boys had had enough of snowballing for one day, and what with the battle between Harry and Dasent and the newly-arranged marathon race, they had plenty to talk about till teatime, and after that games in the play-rooms or books in the library made them forget the cold and dull weather

after that games in the play-rooms or books in the library made them forget the cold and dull weather outside, where the snow had turned to rain, making the football-fields a wide expanse of slush.

The Hatching of a Plot.

AMES HORNER was also a member of Rivington's House, and he was a really a likely and he was a really and he was a really a likely a li and he was exceedingly cheerful that evening. For some reason or other he hated Harry Merton, and the sight of the latter's bruised face

the sight of the latter's bruised face gave him great pleasure.

When he heard some other boy praising the plucky way Harry had stood up to the big labourer, he sneered contemptuously.

"Bah!" he said. "Why, if he'd known anything about boxing at all, he'd have knocked out that clod-hopper! Why, he had several chances of an upper-cut he never took at all!"

"Didn't know you were such an expert, Horner," said a boy named Reeves, a friend of Harry's. "You seem to know all about it. Pity you didn't fight Dasent instead of Merton!"

"Well, I shouldn't have missed my chances like Merton did!"

Well, I shouldn't have missed chances like Merton did!"

"Well, I shouldn't have missed my chances like Merton did!" answered Horner.

"You might give us a few tips," said Reeves, smiling. "I've got a set of gloves in my study. Let's have a round or two."

But this wasn't at all what Horner wanted. He could boast a good deal better than he could box, really. "Sorry!" he said. "I sprained my shoulder a bit the other day—"

"Ah, I thought you'd find some excuse!" put in Reeves contemptuously. "But I wouldn't gas quite so much if I were you."

And he turned away, leaving Horner to continue his excuses and bragging to a select group of satellites. Very soon their talk turned to the forthcoming marathon race.

"I'm going to make a book on it."

"I'm going to make a book on it," said Horner. "If any of you fellows want to back your fancy, I'm your

want to back your fancy, I'm your man."

"I expect it's odds on Merton," said one of his listeners.

"Very well, then," said Horner, "you back him. I'm willing to lay anyone two to one he doesn't win."

"I don't mind taking that," said the other—"to half-a-crown."

"Done!" cried Horner, making a note of the bet. "And if anyone else wants the same odds he can have them."

them."

A little later Horner was alone them."

A little later Horner was alone with his one particular crony—a short fat, dark boy named Morris.

"Pretty risky of you to lay against Merton," said this boy. "I don't see who's to beat him."

"Don't you? Well, he's not the only good runner at Mansbury. How about Tomlinson? And Egan? And Sutcliffe?"

"None of 'em have a chance

"None of 'em have a chance against Merton."
"We'll see. Any way, Merton

won't win; you can take that from

"I don't see how you can prevent

"I don't see how you can prevent him."

"Well, I will prevent him, if necessary. I'm sick of the fellow's name! It's always Merton, Merton, Merton! Look here, Morris, you get all the fellows you can to put their money on him. You shall stand in with me, and we'll make a pretty good thing of it."

The upshot of their talk was that Morris agreed to "stand in," as Horner put it, and it was quite understood between them that no means should be spared to prevent Merton winning.

means should be spared to prevent Merton winning.

What precisely their plans were to be they did not then decide; there was plenty of time to concoct them before the race, but it was clearly determined that Merton should be prevented—if necessary by foul means—from gaining the prize and its attendant honours.

The following Wednesday the football grounds were in fair order, and the postponed match between Rivington's and Bolton's House took place.

The two sides were really well-matched, and a great tussle was expected. There were therefore quite a lot of spectators, including most of the boys who were not engaged in other games.

Harry Merton was captain of Rivington's eleven, and his place in the field was centre-forward. Though very clean and the field was centre-forward.

most of the boys who were not engaged in other games.

Harry Merton was captain of Rivington's eleven, and his place in the field was centre-forward. Though very clean and tricky with his feet, he played a dashing game, of the kind associated with the Corinthians, and was always likely to score a point by individual brilliance.

The opening stages of the game were rather in favour of Bolton's, on the whole a bigger and heavier team—a team, moreover, rather inclined to play a rough game.

In the first few minutes they pressed severely, the backs and goal-keeper of Rivington's being hard put to it to prevent their scoring, but beyond a corner, nothing came of their opening rush, and it was some time before the Rivington forwards got a chance of taking the war into the enemy's camp.

At length the onslaught of the Boltonians showed signs of slackening, and Reeves, the outside-right of Rivington's, took the ball some way down the ground before passing neatly to Harry Merton, who dashed towards the Bolton goal, finishing up with an oblique shot at it which the custodian just saved.

Harry had felt a bit stiff at first, as the result, of course, of his encounter with Dasent, but he was now warming to his work, and, well fed from either side, he kept the Bolton goalie very busy indeed. And at length, nimbly avoiding a charge from two opponents, who crashed into each other and both came to cearth, he sent in a lightning shot which registered the first point to his House, whose supporters yelled lustily.

The battle continued with undiminished keenness, and the ground was now centines, and the ground was now centines and the ground

which registered the first point to his House, whose supporters yelled lustily.

The battle continued with undiminished keenness, and the ground was now getting a bit greasy in places. Several of the players were well coated with mud before half-time was called.

After that it became evident that Rivington's were the better stayers, the heavier Bolton boys suffering more from the increasing slipperiness of the turf. So Rivington's gradually got the upper hand, and the score stood at three to nil in their favour with five minutes more to go.

Then Harry, who was certainly in the wars just now, had a bit of bad luck. Taking the ball swiftly along, he over-kicked it a little, and seemed likely to lose it to Morgan, the Bolton back. But dashing on like lightning, he just got there simultaneously with his adversary, and both tackled at the same instant.

Harry got the ball, and turned it, but as he did so Morgan's toe caught him on the shin a resounding whack that stopped his career at once.

It was a pure accident, and luckily too late in the game to matter much, but, in view of the marathon race, decidedly unfortunate.

Horner, who was looking on, and who had already booked several bets about the race, was delighted as he saw poor Harry limping painfully off the field.

"I wish he'd broken his leg!" he said genially to Morris. "Still, this'll lame him a bit."

But there was plenty of time before the race yet, although several boys had already begun to go into training for it—by avoiding the tuckshop, depriving themselves of their pudding at dinner, and so on.

But, indeed, the ordinary life of a public school, with its games and exercises and its regular hours, is in itself a useful sort of training, and most of the boys at Mansbury were always pretty fit.

The details of the course were now made known. It was from the school gates through Easton and Loburn to Smithbourne, a place about four and a half miles distant, then back to the school gates—nine miles in all, and

Smithbourne, a place about four and a half miles distant, then back to the school gates—nine miles in all, and a good, hard, nearly level road all the way. A splendid course for a long race, all agreed.

Harry's most dangerous rivals were the boys Horner had mentioned—Tomlinson, of Bolton's House, and Egan and Sutcliffe, of Wilkins'. These were all known to be good runners, especially the first-named, and the Bolton House boys, at any rate, felt sure he would win. In any case, a good race was to be expected. Tomlinson was in deadly earnest, and set about his training very carefully. More so than Harry Merton, who, as a participator in all the school games, was less able to devote himself entirely to the big race. Still, these games, in which Tomlinson took no part, kept him very fit, and he managed to get in a good practice run every now and then.

As the time of the race drew near Horner had quite a lot of bets entered in his book. Of course, only a few of the boys were so foolish as to wager at all, and even then everyone did not back Merton; but several did, and he was soon able to inform his friend Morris that if Harry lost—as he said he surely would—they would make quite a good haul.

In all this business he ran no risk.

Harry lost—as he said he surely would—they would make quite a good haul.

In all this business he ran no risk. As each boy registered his bet he had to deposit the amount of his stake with Horner on the understanding that he would get it back with his winnings—if there were any—after the race. Horner had no fear, then, of anybody not paying him.

"Now, look here," he said to Morris one day, "we sha'n't get any more on worth speaking about. I've figured it out. If Merton doesn't start, or if he loses, we make about eleven pounds, no matter who wins. That's all we shall get if Tomlinson wins; more if anybody else. Now, it's about time we looked after Mr. Merton. The race is a fortnight to-day, you know."

"Well" said Morris, "what are you going the?"

"That's just what I've been thinking of, and I've thought of one plan worth trying fa begin with."

von going it do?"

"That's just what I've been thinking of, and I've thought of one plan worth trying to begin with."

Morris was all eagerness to learn what it was. The prospect of winning a share—even a small share, for he knew Horner would not give him a great one—of eleven pounds or more was something very pleasant to him, even if his schoolfellows were to be cheated of their money to provide it.

to be cheated of their money to provide it.

"Yes," went on Horner, "I've thought of rather a good plan, if you've got the pluck to carry it out."

"Me!" cried Morris, surprised, and none too pleased that the dirty work should fall on him. And yet, what else could he have expected? And what else did he deserve, for associating himself with schemes of cheating at all?

"I can't do it," said Horner.

ing himself with schemes of cheating at all?

"I can't do it," said Horner.

"It must be done by a fellow who goes to the gymnasium—and I daren't suggest it to anyone else. Besides, you're standing in with me—don't you forget that!"

Morris did not forget it, but for the moment he almost wished he was not standing in. He felt sure something diabolical was going to be proposed. And he was right.

"Look here," proceeded Horner, "to-night's Wednesday; you're in the last evening class at the gym. Now, the first class after morning school to-morrow is our House team for the tup—Merton, of cobrse, being the leader. He leads everything, hang him!"

"Well?"

leader. He leads everything, nanghim!"

"Well?"

"Well, when your class is over this evening, don't come out with the rest. Go and hide in one of the cupboards till Saunders is gone."

"What for?"

"I'll tell you. As soon as Saunders has gone, you've got something to do. You know the rings? Well, you've got to cut one of the ropes, and—"

"But," interrupted Morris, they're eight feet from the floor. can't reach them. Besides, what's he use?"

the use?"

"Do wait! You can get the steps, can't you? Stand under one of the rings—not an end one, say about the third or fourth—and cut through the rope, all but a single strand. Then

take a bit of sacking—I'll give you that—bind it round the cut, and it won't show unless anyone looks very hard, which isn't likely."

"But why?" insisted Morris.

"Why, to bring Merton a cropper, of course. He's the leader, isn't he? He sets the exercises; he'll swing on the rings first. When he comes to the one you've cut, down he'll come—crash! And, mind you, he'll be swinging at the time."

"But," urged Morris doubtfully. "it's frightfully risky. It might kill him."

"But," urged Morris doubtfully,
"it's frightfully risky. It might kill
him."

"Rubbish! They're only eight
feet up, as you said. No fear of
killing him, but he'll get a jolly old
thud, and the chances are he'll
damage a leg. And then—he can't
run in the marathon."

"I don't like it," said Morris.
"Suppose it was twigged? We
should be expelled."

"How can it be twigged, unless
you go telling anyone? Only you and
I will know."

"But how am I to get out of the
gym afterwards?"

"Through the window. They're
no height from the ground. And I'll
keep watch outside, and tell you when
to come out."

Morris had plenty more objections
to make before he consented. But
they were all overruled by the mastermind of Horner, who, as a matter of
fact, had the other completely under
his thumb.

So the plot was laid, and Harry
Merton was in grave danger of serious
accident, for there could be little
doubt that he would be the victim,
and a fall from a swinging ring on
to the hard boards of the gymnasium
floor was bound to be a very
dangerous matter.

THE 4th CHAPTER.
An Accident in the Gymnasium.

An Accident in the Gymnasium.

S the time drew near for its execution, Morris liked his task less and less.

He was really afraid the results might be more serious than Horner imagined; and besides, he had no grudge personally against Harry Merton. Moreover, he still had sufficient patriotism to like his House to triumph in the various school competitions, and he knew that if Merton was injured, Rivington's would have small chance of winning either the Gymnastic Cup or the football competition. As to the marathon race, of course, it was important for him that Merton should not win that, because of the share he had in Horner's bets.

On the whole, he wished heartily

cause of the share he had in Horner's bets.

On the whole, he wished heartily that Horner had thought of some other way of putting Merton out of the contest. For if he should be caught in the act he proposed to perpetrate, or if he should be seen leaving the gymnasium after he had perpetrated it, he would be in a bad way indeed. And there was a risk, in spite of Horner's easy assurances to the contrary.

But he was in Horner's power. He owed him money which he could not pay, and that was not the worst. As treasurer of the chess club of the House, he had charge of certain monies, and these, though they did not belong to him, he had used for purposes of his own. His only chance of putting the matter right at the end of the term was to either win money through Horner or borrow from him again.

So, hardening his heart, he resolved

through Horner or borrow from him again.

So, hardening his heart, he resolved to carry out the plot arranged.

His gymnasium class—the last of the day—ended at seven o'clock, and supper in the House was at eight. When the exercises were over, the boys hurried to the dressing-room and changed into their ordinary clothes. He dawdled purposely, and they had all left before he put on his coat.

they had all left before he put on his coat.

The gymnastic instructor, Sergeant Saunders, was standing at the outer door, prepared to lock it when all his pupils had departed. He failed to notice that Morris was not among them, but before locking up he turned into the building and gave a hurried glance round.

Morris, concealed in one of the cupboards, heard him enter the dressing room, and his heart stood still for a moment. But the sergeant, seeing no one in the room, passed out again, and a minute later Morris heard the outer door closed, and the key turned in the lock.

He waited a little lest the sergeant should return for anything, and then set about his evil work.

Carrying the steps into the main building, he placed them under the fourth ring from the end, and then ascended, knife in hand. Very carefully he severed the rope, leaving the

iron ring hanging by a mere shred or two, and then, as Horner had directed him, he covered the cut with a small piece of sacking, and bound it round with twine.

Looking from below, the place was hardly noticeable; but the ring, of course, would be torn from the rope by the slightest pull. Merton seemed quite certain to come to grief, if, as was likely, he should be the first to exercise on the rings on the morrow. His work accomplished, and the steps returned to their place in the passage, Morris ran up to the gallery, round which the windows of the gynnasium gave light to the building.

To open any of them from within was the work of a moment, but before doing so, he listened carefully for the signal Horner was to give him.

It came soon, a low whistle, and

before doing so, he listened carefully for the signal Horner was to give him.

It came soon, a low whistle, and then Morris, knowing from this that the coast was clear, opened the window. It was about a dozen feet above the ground outside, but such a drop to one used to gymnastic work is nothing serious, and he reached the earth quite safely.

Horner was waiting for him, and the pair immediately ran off, taking a back way to the school buildings.

"Look there! Who's that?" asked Morris anxiously, pointing to a small boy who was tossing up a ball about fifty or sixty yards off.

"Oh, I don't know! Some kid," answered Horner lightly. "Anyway, he didn't see you come out." No; but he's seen us now," said Morris.

"Not he besides a kid like that!

"No; but he's seen us now," said Morris.
"Not he—besides, a kid like that! What does it matter?"
But Morris was decidedly alarmed. A guilty conscience makes cowards of us all.

As anticipated by Hopper—indeed.

as was inevitable—the first class in the gymnasium after school the next morning was the Rivington House team, due to practise under Merton's

morning was the Kivington House team, due to practise under Merton's leadership.

They began with exercises on the horizontal-bar, and then proceeded to the parallel-bars and vaulting-horse. After that, the rings claimed atten-

horizontal-bar, and then proceeded to the parallel-bars and vaulting-horse. After that, the rings claimed attention.

Harry Merton took his station at the starting-point, and was about to lead off the exercise, when Saunders, the instructor, called to him. He had been unpacking some Indian clubs, which had just arrived.

"One moment, sir," he said, "before you begin. Do you mindlooking at these clubs a moment? They're not the weight we ordered."

"All right," answered Harry.
"Then he added, turning to another boy, a strongly-built, heavy lad named Smithers: "I say, Jack, don't wait—you put 'em through this, will you?" And he turned to join Saunders.

So Smithers seized the ring Harry had been holding and swung off. Though so thickly built, he was an active and graceful gymnast.

From the first ring he swung prettily to the second, pulling himself up to the half-arm as he grasped it, then repeated the process to the third, and then again to the fourth—which Morris had cut.

Immediately his weight came on the ring the rope parted, and with a startled cry the unfortunate lad fell heavily to the floor below to the horror of his friends. He still grasped the ring in his hand, as he landed sideways, and almost at full length, on the bare boards.

The great force of the blow came on his right hip, but after that had struck, his head shot back, and hit the floor with a crash. It was a truly terrible fall, and he lay still, white and unconscious, as Harry and the instructor came rushing up.

"Rope broke!" cried the latter, "Impossible!"

For a moment or two, however, no one bothered about the rope. One of the boys was sent off on his bicycle.

"Impossible!"
For a moment or two, however, no one bothered about the rope. One of the boys was sent off on his bicycle for the school doctor, another for water, and the rest looked on with anxious faces, as Harry and Saunders raised the injured gymnast, and endeavoured to restore him to consciousness.

ness.

After a while Smithers moved slightly, and moaned.

"Thank Heaven, he ain't dead!" said Sergeant Saunders. "I was mortal afraid he was!"

"Shall we move him?" asked

"Shall we move him?" asked Harry.

"Better do nothing till the doctor comes," answered the sergeant.

"But how did it happen? That's what beats me!"

"Why," cried one of the boys, "the rope's been cut!"

"The rope cut!"

"Yes—look! And just tied up with string!"

"Who ever can have done such a cowardly thing?" asked Harry.

Jack Harold, though only a small boy, was one of the gymnastic team, and he answered the question boldly. "It's Horner, I'm certain!" "Horner!" cried Harry. "Why should he? How do you know?" "I don't know for certain," said Harold, "but I'm sure he did it, and it was meant for you!" "Meant for me?" asked Harry, puzzled.

"Yes—he's got a lot of bets on the marathon race, and he'll lose a lot of money if you win. And he's tried to prevent you; he knew you'd be here, and he knew you'd use the rings

"And so I should have done,"
mused Harry, "if I hadn't been
called away. But no—it's impossible,
Harold! I can't believe it!".
No, nor he could. But there were
plenty who did besides Harold, for
Horner's evil reputation was known
to many.

Horner's evil reputation was known to many.

And when, later on, it was noised about that little "Tot" Perkins had seen Horner and Morris near the gymnasium the evening before, the suspicions became very strong indeed—so much so that they reached the ears of the House-master, Mr. Rivington, who had been naturally much shocked by the accident.

He sent for Horner and Morris, and questioned them closely. Horner admitted that he had been near the gymnasium—he had, in fact, he said, gone to meet Morris: but, he urged, that was no proof of his guilt. He denied all knowledge of the matter, and vehemently protested his disgust at the outrage.

His open, candid manner quite con-

at the outrage.

His open, candid manner quite convinced Mr. Rivington, in spite of Morris's terrified looks, that they had been quite unfairly suspected, and he was glad of it, for Horner was, as has been mentioned, considered a quiet, well-behaved boy by the masters, who were quite in ignorance

quiet, well-behaved boy by the masters, who were quite in ignorance of his real character.

Meanwhile, poor Smithers lay in the infirmary with a badly-damaged leg, and, what was worse, a slight concussion of the brain. Morris's remorse was great, but he dare not express it, except to Horner, who only told him not to make a fool of himself.

"We've got to think of something else now," he said, "thanks to this, to prevent Merton winning the marathon. I'm not going to lose my money, I can tell you!"

A Narrow Escape.

ARRY MERTON suffered but little inconvenience from the kick he got at football. He was rather lame for a few days, and had to forgo his running practice, but that was all. But when he took to it again he moved as well as ever, and everyone but Horner in his House thought and hoped he would win the marathon. Horner affected win the marathon. Horner affected to believe that there were several setter runners in the school than larry, and continued to run him town and bet against him at every several to the several setter.

hetter runners in the school than Harry, and continued to run him down and bet against him at every apportunity.

This conduct made him more unpopular than ever in the House, for the boys could not understand his wishing a rival House to carry off the marghing trophy, and many uncomparation trophy, and many uncomwishing a rival House to carry off the marathon trophy, and many uncomplimentary remarks were made about him, some of which he overheard. When these were made by boys smaller and younger than himself, he took the opportunity of indulging his propensity for bullying, and many a youngster was sent howling away, with a pulled ear, or a twisted arm. Among those who denounced Horner most freely was Jack Harold. And one day when strolling in the chool field with a chum named Bevan, they discussed Horner's conduct very outspokenly indeed.

On the soft grass, the steps of anyone approaching them to listen could not well as a series of the could not well as a series of the country of the soft grass, the steps of anyone approaching them to listen could not well as a series of the country of the count

blissfu was v but there happened to be a couple of trees, and, reaching these first, Bevan scrambled up the nearest one hur-

trees, and, reaching these first, Bevan scrambled up the nearest one hurriedly.

"Come down at once, you young noodle!" roared Horner furiously. But Bevan was afraid to do so, and by way of reply, only scrambled higher up. Horner was no climber himself, and was unable or unwilling to pursue him. But he was thirsting for vengeance. "Come down," he cried, "or it will be the worse for you! I'll teach you to cheek me behind my back!"

Bevan had now seated himself in the fork made by the trunk and a long, decayed branch, and there he remained without replying.

"All right," said Horner, "I'll pay you later, my lad!"

Whereupon he turned to resume his attack on Jack Harold.

Jack ran towards the school. His idea was to draw Horner off, and so give Bevan time to descend and get off in safety. He thought more of his chum's safety than his own.

But Horner, suddenly realising this, did not pursue him more than a few yards. Then he turned back to the

But Horner, suddenly realising this, did not pursue him more than a few yards. Then he turned back to the tree, swishing a stick he carried to and fro in the grass, in the hope of finding a few stones to throw at Bevan.

evan. Luckily for that youth, there were

no stones about.

A few bits of broken wood, some of them of good size, were the only available missiles, and these Horner threw as well as he could. But he did no damage, and Bevan only sat still. He was in great terror, though, for he knew Horner would, as he threatened, pay him out later on. He had suffered at the bully's hands before.

At last Horner made as if he would

At last Horner made as if he would climb up after him. Bevan, so frightened that he could hardly hold on, went up a little higher, and Horner slid to the ground again. He was frightfully angry. Shaking his stick at Bevan, he vowed all sorts of vengeance, and then, to emphasise his threats, he threw the stick at the terrified youngster. It only just missed him, and Bevan yelled in alarm.

The stick, an ordinary walking-cane with a crook handle, came down, and Horner, taking careful aim, threw it again. This time it went wide of the mark, and much too high, and in its descent the crook caught in the partially-decayed branch before mentioned, about eight feet or so from the trunk, and there it hung.

Harold, from a safe distance, laughed heartily as he perceived this, which made Horner angrier than ever. But still he didn't, as Jack hoped, leave the tree and run after him.

At that moment a small boy came

him.

At that moment a small boy came up from another direction. He was a mischievous youngster named Tozer, who was always getting into scrapes for some reason or other, and he was also a distant cousin of Horner's. The latter knew he possessed a catapult, and that he generally carried it about with him, in defiance of the school regulations. "Come here, Toz!" cried Horner. "Lend me your tweaker, will you?" "Haven't got it with me," said Tozer, who mistrusted his cousin, to whom he had lent things before without getting them back.

whom he had lent things before without getting them back.

By way of answer, Horner pounced upon and seized him, and thrusting his hand into his coat-pocket, brought out a small but well-made catapult.

"You young fibber!" he said.

"Now, give me your marbles, or I'll twist your arm!"

Tozer reluctantly complied, and handed over about half a dozen common marbles, which he was wont to use as ammunition for his catapult.

Fitting a marble into the leather, Horner took aim at Bevan, who yelled for mercy.

treated to the trunk on Harold's in-

"Very well, then," said Horner.
"Look out!"

He fired a shot with the catapult, not aiming at the boy, but at the trunk just below him, against which the marble struck with a sharp rap.
Bevan nearly fell off the tree with

Bevan nearly fell off the tree with fright.

Jack Harold ran off towards the school. His idea was to get help, for he feared Bevan would be hurt. For Horner seemed quite reckless of consequences, and the damaged bough was fourteen or fifteen feet from the ground; moreover, Bevan was quite a little fellow.

Not noticing Harold's departure, Horner again called upon Bevan to "get a move on him."

In an agony of fear the youngster slowly moved along the bough. The one above it was quite short—it almost came to an end, save for a thin twig or two, just above where the stick was.

Bevan had progressed about a yard or so, when the bough he was standing on gave an ominous creak. He stopped, and then again began to retreat.

As he reached the safety of the

stopped, and then again began retreat.

As he reached the safety of the trunk, Horner sent another shot from the catapult. This time he aimed closer, and the marble hit Bevan on the sole of his boot. It did not hurt, but alarmed him dreadfully.

"I can hit you where I like, see?" said Horner. "Next time, I'll hurt. Now, will you go?"

"I don't believe he was cheeky!" retorted Harry. "Anyhow, I'm going to show you you can't risk fellows' lives with impunity!" And he snatched from the bully's hand the stick that he had just picked up from the ground, and proceeded there and then to lay it about his shoulders.

With a howl of rage and pain Horner fled, and Harry was too stiff and shaken to follow him.

THE 6th CHAPTER

An Attack on the Bully.

ITTLE Bevan, though not seriously damaged, was a good deal upset by the shock, and on returning to Rivington's House with Harold and Merton went off in

a faint. The matron was summoned, and the boy was taken to the sick-room, and there put to bed.

Neither he nor anyone else told about Horner's brutal conduct, but Jack Harold had decided very definitely that this should not go unpunished.

So he concocted a scheme of ven-geance, and obtained the promise of many of the smaller boys in the House that they would assist him in carrying it out.

That evening, after preparation, Horner was sitting with one or two chums in a corner of the play-room. They were discussing the chances of

"What do you mean?" roared the bully. "Be off with you!"

He was really more amazed than alarmed—so far.
"If you won't come," answered Jack calmly, "we shall have to take you."

alarmed—so far.

"If you won't come," answered Jack calmly, "we shall have to take you."

Horner rose from his seat, and rushed at him.

"You cheeky young cub!" he cried, aiming a vicious blow at Jack, which was easily dodged.

Immediately all the boys flung themselves upon him and bore him to the ground. His friends were too astonished to interfere, in spite of his yells for assistance.

"Quick!" cried Jack. "The string! Wind it round him!"

Then, in spite of the kicks and blows he showered wildly round him, Horner was encireled by the cord—round and round his arms and body several times, so that he couldn't move. Even now his friends did nothing—the enemy was too numerous, they prudently thought.

Horner was lifted and put in a wooden chair, to which he was securely bound, in spite of his fierce exclamations and threats of vengeance. Then Harold, taking the piece of chalk, and wetting it with water, rubbed it all over his face, and not very tenderly, either.

Next came some rather artistic painting of huge black eyebrows and very red cheeks. In the end, Horner, who had given up struggling, was quite unrecognisable, and looked so comic that even his friends laughed at him. Indeed, they were not friends, really.

Finally, and this was accomplished with some little difficulty, chair and guy were set on the big table in the middle of the room, whereupon Harold and all the others plied him with ink from squirts.

One or two other boys looked in and joined the throng of plotters, who were gazing delighted at their handiwork, but no effort was made to release the victim. And then at length the gong sounded for bed, and they all ran off, leaving Horner in his glory.

A little later, the assistant-master, who lived at Rivington, going his

length the gong sounded for bed, and they all ran off, leaving Horner in his glory.

A little later, the assistant-master, who lived at Rivington, going his rounds, entered the play-room, and found the poor guy as he had been left.

left.
At first he did not know who it was, but when he did, he was amazed, for Horner bore a good reputation among the masters, and Mr. Evers had no idea he was unpopular with the boys.

He leads not a precket-knife and cur.

with the boys.

He tools out a pocket knife and cur the string, and then assisted Horner to the ground. The bully was very stiff and sore, as well as plentifully.

the string, and then assisted Horner to the ground. The bully was very stiff and sore, as well as plentifully smeared with ink.

He declined, however, to say who had tied him up, and declared it was all a joke. Mr. Evers left it at that, and bade him get to bed as soon as possible.

The story got about all over the school, and he was much chaffed in consequence. His mind was greatly exercised as to how he could best exact vengeance against Harold and his other tormentors; but he thought it best to do nothing for the present. Harry Merton, he reflected, was leaving at the end of that term, and his protection would no longer be available for cheeky Jack Harold. For him, then, he would save up his vengeance. For the present he had other business on hand.

That was to win his bets, and see that Merton was not returned victor in the great race.

A Plot Baffled.

O the days passed, uneventfully for a time. Football went on as usual, but more and more

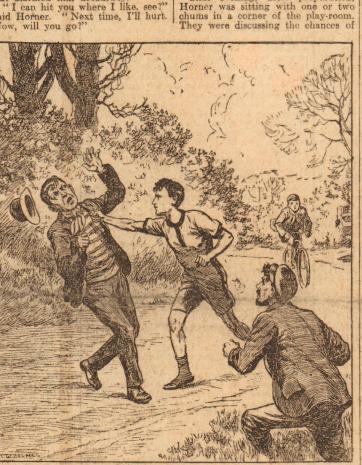
as usual, but more and more the marathon became the chief topic of conversation.

Several boys were training hard for the event, and Harry Merton became as fit as the proverbial fiddle. Every evening he took a good run, and once, accompanied by Jack Harold on his bicycle, he covered the whole course in good time, without being greatly distressed at the finish.

His rivals also were busy, and rumours reached Rivington's of a great trial run by Tomlinson, who was regarded by the boys of Bolton's House as the certain winner of the race. But Harry was not alarmed, though he recognised it would be no child's play to beat Tomlinson. And there were other dangerous competitors, too.

there were other dangerous tors, too.

On the whole, he was expected to win; but after the episode in the gymnasium several among the boys had an idea that somehow at the last he would be interfered with so as to prevent his doing so, and more than one of his friends counselled him to



Hitting out fiercely, Harry sent one of the ruffians flying, but the other seized and held him before he could repeat the blow.

Sobbing now, the small fellow onee again began his trembling journey along the bough. This time he kept on, though the bough again creaked where it had done before. Gradually he worked himself nearer to the stick. Horner keeping the catapult ready in case he again turned tail.

So engrossed were all three—the hully and his victim and Tozer—that none of them noticed the hurried approach of two others—Jack Harold and Harry Merton to wit. Jack had luckily found Harry coming out of one of the school-rooms, and begged him to come to the rescue.

"Don't shout," said Harry to Harold. "It might make him fall."

ently, they ran to the spot, as they did so there was a sh, and a wild shriek from a the bough snapped and he rds the ground.

as lightning Harry Merton forward to save him, and ll on his shoulder and chest ight bore Harry to the but Bevan's fall had been and he was really more d than hurt. He and Harry on the ground, and the latter mself considerably shaken by

"You cowardly bully!" he said.
"You might have killed the kid!"
"He shouldn't have been cheeky!" growled Horner.

the runners in the marathon rand Horner was booking a new

At the other end of the room various small boys were assembled, Jack Harold among the number. There were about a dozen of them, and Horner wondered what they were plotting. He had no idea, however, that he was the object of their discussion, or he would have felt decidedly uneasy.

Jack Harold produced from I pocket a long line of thick strin another boy drew from his a lump chalk and a box of particular a chalk and a box of paints, and a third had a bottle of ink.

"Go and get a glass of water, om," said Harold, to one of the oungsters. "Look sharp—he may Tom," said youngsters.

go away."
The boy ran off.
"Now," said Harold, "are you ready?"
another boy.

"Now," said Harold, "are you ready?"
"Yes," answered another boy.
"But how about those fellows with him? Won't they interfere?"
"We're too many for them if they do," said Harold. "But I don't think they will. They aren't so fond of him as you think."
"Well, then, are we ready?"
"Right-ho! Come along!"
The whole let ef youngsters, led by

The whole lot of youngsters, led by Harold, walked in a body across the room to where Horner and his friends were sitting.

"We want you, Horner, please," said Jack politely.

which sent poor Jack recently.

The turned his attention to Bevan, who, however, had taken to his heels.

There was no place of refuge near, moaned.

keep a sharp look-out. But he laughed at their apprehensions, and really could not think it possible that any fellow would descend to foul means to ensure his failure.

But he soon had to change this opinion, and to learn for certain that a dastardly plot was being hatched against him.

The race was to be run on a Saturday, and on the Thursday preceding he was strolling down the Eastern Road when he met his friend Dasent. They generally exchanged a few words when they ran across each other, but this time Dasent had evidently got something important to say.

"Mr. Merton," he said, "I'm glad I've met you. I should have come to see you if I hadn't."

"Why, what is it. Dasent?"

you. I should have come to see you if I hadn't."

"Why, what is it, Dasent?"

"Why, this race. There's some of 'em plotting to prevent you winning it."

"How do you know that?"

"Cause I overheard 'em. It's that oily-looking fellow, Horner, and a friend of his, smaller and very fat."

"That's Morris."

"Ah, that's the name—I'd forgotten it."

"Well, they were in the saloon of the Red Lion, and they were talking—"

"In the Red Lion!" interrupted Harry.

"Are you sure? Why, they'd get expelled if the doctor knew it. Tell me what they said."

"Well, it appears they'd lose a lot of money if you won, and Horner said you must be prevented at all costs. They're going to let you start all right, but it's my belief you'd be interfered with during the race."

"But how? There'd be so many people about."

"Yes; but not all the way. It's nearly five

about."
"Yes; but not all the way. It's nearly five miles out and home you've got to go."
"But there'll be stewards all along the

"But there'll be stewards all along the course."

"They can't be everywhere, sir. Is anyone going with you—driving, I mean, or cycling?"

"Some of the boys are allowed to cycle with the runners—one with each competitor."

"Who's going with you?"

"Why, young Harold."

"Is he a big, strong chap?"

"No; he's only fourteen."

"Then he won't do. Mr. Merton, I shall follow you myself. They can't stop me, can they?"

"Oh dear no! You can cycle if you like.

"Then he won't do. Mr. Merton, I shall follow you myself. They can't stop me, can they?"

"Oh dear no! You can cycle if you like. And it's awfully good of you."

"No, no, it isn't; but I like fair play. And I think I know what they're up to. I saw Horner speaking to a couple of fellows, rare rough 'un's, too, and give 'em money. And it's my belief that those two fellows will attack you. The most likely place is where the road turns just this side of Southbourne. The hedge is high there, and anyone coming round the turn first would be out of sight of the rest for a while. That's where they'll be, sure; but I'll be there, too, sir."

"Dasent, you're an awfully good sort. Thanks for warning me, and thanks for your help. I shall keep within sight of you all the way, sir. And I hope you'll win!"

So there really was a plot, of which Harry was to be the victim. That such a thing should happen at Mansbury was more upsetting to the lad than that it should be directed against himself. Horner and Morris, he felt, were disgracing the school, and he now felt certain that they also were responsible for the gymnasium outrage.

Saturday afternoon was ideal for the race. Calm and still, if a trifle cold, it was just the

sium outrage.

Saturday afternoon was ideal for the race. Calm and still, if a trifle cold, it was just the day for running.

At three o'clock the competitors were lined up by the school gates. There were twenty-seven of them in all. Behind stood an equal number of boys with bicycles, whose instructions were to follow the others without impeding any of them, each cyclist being in attendance on a single runner. The cyclists carried anything they or their runners thought might come in useful on the way, some having eggs beaten up in milk, some cold meat-juice, and so on.

come in useful on the way, some having eggs beaten up in milk, some cold meat-juice, and so on.

Harry Merton looked round to find Dasent among the throng of spectators, but he was not there.

At the start, Tomlinson took the lead, followed by Sutcliffe, Harry being content, for a time, with third position. This order was maintained going through Eastern, just past which place a boy called Jones, who ran with a long, low stride, dashed to the front. Harry spurted a little here, and, passing Sutcliffe and Tomlinson, ran for a half-mile or so just behind Jones. Going through Loburn, which was about half-way to the turning-point, Harry made a big effort, and passed Jones. Then for some distance he ran with Jones at his heels, till the latter slackened off a bit, and Harry, keeping at the same steady but swift rate, gradually went ahead.

Jack Harold, on his cycle, kept close behind him. By the turn, the bend in the road before Southbourne was reached, Harry was leading by two hundred yards at least, and Harold was about twenty behind him.

It was at this point the danger, if any, was to be feared, and as he turned the corner, where the tall trees would shut him out of sight of those following, he kept well in the middle of the road, and looked keenly about him.

And, as he half expected, his precautions were justified. But they were in vain, for simultaneously there sprang out of the hedge, on either side, two men, of rough and villainous aspect, just ahead of him. Without a word they rushed at him, and so swift was the onslaught that he could not manage to avoid both.

Hitting out fiercely, he sent one of the ruffians flying, but the other seized and held him before he could repeat the blow. Then the man he had struck rushed at him again, and he found himself struggling in the grip of two strong assailants.

Meanwhile Jack Harold was not idle. He jumped off his bicycle, and threw himself on one of Harry's adversaries, striking him as hard as he could. The man released Harry for a second, and, seizing Jack by the arm, dealt him a heavy blow on the side of the head, sending him reeling into the ditch.

All this had taken less time to act than to describe, and just as the ruffian who had struck Harold returned to the assistance of his partner, a loud shout was heard, and a bicycle dashed round the corner.

"Let him alone!" yelled a voice, which Harry recognised as Dasent's. And in another instant two powerful arms had torn Harry's assailants from him, and a huge fist had sent one of them sprawling. Dasent, who had been accidentally prevented starting with the others, had arrived in the nick of time.

"Run on, sir!" he cried to Harry. "I'll deal with these chaps! Don't lose any more ground, for Heaven's sake!"

"Thanks!" gasped Harry. To tell the truth, he was for the moment dreadfully pumped, for a struggle with two men when you have just run four miles and more is no joke. But he ran on, as Dasent bade him, though even as he started Jones and Egan came round the bend, and Jones, seeing how mear he was to the leader, made a dash to get in front. Harry was, for the time, too out of breath to prevent him, and was passed soon by both Jones and Egan, both of whom reached the turning-point at Southbourne of the return journey he only occupied fifth place. It was no use forcing the pace then. He resolved to go steadily fill he felt quite recovered, and then try and make up the lost ground.

Meanwhile, Dasent had lost no time in dealing with the two men. They knew and feared his prowess too well to offer any resistance as he bundled them one after the other into the ditch, where they remained while he extorted the truth from them. It was, briefly, that they were to have thirty shillings between them if they stopped Merton and hustled him enough to prevent his winning.

Horner had mercifully decreed that he was not to be unne

he had made bets with, to whom he was paying out money with a very black look on his face.

"You will please pay everybody, Horner," said Jameson, "and you will come to the Sixth Form room after supper."

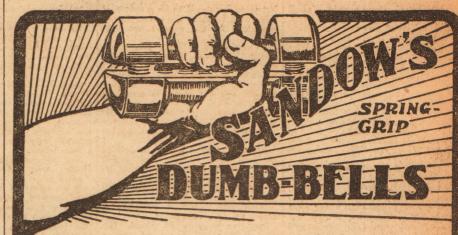
Horner realised that his plot was not only baffled, but found out, and was in a terrible state of fright and anxiety. But he dared not disobey the summons, and at eight o'clock knocked timidly on the Sixth Form room door. There he was informed that his villainy was known, and that his accomplices had confessed. He was given the choice between having the whole matter reported to Dr. Perry—in which case his expulsion from the school was certain—or of being flogged by the captain of the school in the presence of the Sixth Form. He was to decide in half an hour, and return with his answer.

But he did not return.

He was gone, nor was anything heard of him for some days. But at length, his money all spent, and in a wretched condition, he returned to his father's house, to that gentleman's great relief. But, needless to say, his career at Mansbury was ended.

Morris was practically "sent to Coventry" for a long time, but gradually, aided by Harold, who, like Harry, forgave him his share in the plots, and, freed from the evil influence of Horner, he retrieved his position, and became a useful member of the school.

As for Harry Merton, he has had many successes since that memorable Saturday, but never one on which he looks back with more satisfaction than his triumph in the first Mansbury Marathon. Needless to say, he did not forget Dasent's share in the matter, and, although their lives lie far apart, they have contrived to keep up the friendship they began so strangely, and to which Harry afterwards owed so much.



AMAZING OFFER

FREE TRIAL TO ALL

See Sandow's Article on Page 294. "The most wonderful strength-giver ever invented."

"Give more Strength in a week than any other method will in a month.

"The World's finest strength-producer."

These are the opinions of men whose names are known wherever the English language is spoken, and who are World-famous in the annals of Sport. They refer to Sandow's Spring-Grip Dumb-Bells, which are now offered to every reader of this journal on seven days' free trial without the slightest restriction. All you have to do is to fill in the coupon below—send no money—and the Bells will be sent you, carriage paid, by return of post.

With every pair we also send a Booklet of Exercises, showing in detail the way to perform each of the original exercises of the Sandow System, also a Chart showing how many times each exercise should be done daily, together with hints on how, when, or where to exercise, how to

take a cold bath, and other useful information.

THIS CHART CONTAINS ONE MONTH'S INITIATORY COURSE OF EXERCISES, SUITABLE FOR THE AVERAGE MAN OR YOUTH, AND IT HAS BEEN CAREFULLY PREPARED BY MR. SANDOW FOR PRESENTATION AND USE WITH EVERY PAIR OF THE GRIP DUMB-BELLS.

All these we are willing to send you on one week's free trial in order to carry out Mr. Sandow's expressed determination of bringing the priceless benefits of Health and Strength within the reach of everyone. For some months previous to their great fight, both Jeffries and Johnson had been using the Grip Dumb-Bells regularly, and so pleased were they with the progress they made that they consistent to be photographed using them. These photos show to what a pitch of perfection graphed using them. each man had been trained by this means.

Other great boxers and athletes have found the wonderful musclebuilding properties of the Bells to be unrivalled when training for any contest which calls for great strength and endurance.

Can any other Physical appliance show such a glorious list of users? No. Therefore, this Offer is unique and unprecedented.

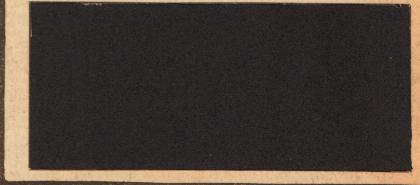
Use the Dumb-Bells for Seven Days according to the easy directions in the Charts, then, if you decide to keep them, send us a deposit of 2/6, and promise to pay the remainder of the price at the rate of 2/6 a month, or ONE PENNY PER DAY.

Nothing could be more simple, nothing more fair; we do not ask you to pay one penny piece until you are completely convinced that Sandow's Grip Dumb-Bells will double your health and treble your strength by using them for ONLY FIVE TO FIFTEEN MINUTES DAILY.

Every muscle and organ of the body is strengthened by the exercises; the Chest is increased, the arms made more muscular, special movements are included for leg development, and all the trunk muscles are "toned up" to the pitch of perfection.

TEST YOUR STRENGTH TO-DAY, use the Bells for a week and TEST YOUR STRENGTH AGAIN—you will be convinced of

their marvellous power.



PLEASE NOTE THAT A CRAND NEW YORKSHIRE SERIAL IS COMING NEXT WEEK IN THE B.F.

A Thrilling Serial of Battleship Building on the Thames.

ALLAN BLAIR.

A Long Chase. must return to moment when C moment when Captain Heggart's signals prompted Captain

the pursuit of the Mammoth, which,

the pursuit of the Mammoth, which, as we know, ended in her capture.

While the captain entered Southsea Castle to put the signals into operation, Dick and Ben waited outside.

About them crowded a great press of people. Suddenly Dick felt a touch upon his arm. He turned, to find himself face to face with a swarthy, bearded man, dressed in a blue suit and peaked cap, and having all the appearance of a seafarer.

"Sonny," said this man, in a whisper, "you don't recognise me?"

"Studgrave!" gasped the boy.
"I should never have recognised your face, but I'd know your voice anywhere. Fancy seeing you here! Where have you—"

"Not a word now, lad, but come with me at once—you and Ben. We've important work to do."

Studgrave was leading the way eastward. He halted outside some houses facing the sea beyond the ruined pier.

Studgrave was castward. He halted outside sements of the sea beyond the houses facing the sea beyond the ruined pier.

A man, dressed somewhat similarly to himself, came towards them.

"Well, Jadson," inquired Studgrave, "any news?"

"They're still inside. They've sent for a cab, so they'll be moving prejently. I've got another waiting over yonder, so we shall be able to fallow them."

over yonder, so we shall be able to follow them."
"Good! Then we'll wait here."
"What is it, inspector?" asked Dick. "Who is inside?"
"Lottray, and Hudd, and Mal-

"Lottray, and Huda, colm!"
"Good heavens! You on their track? How did you manage it?"
"I've been on their track for some hours past—ever since they came ashore. I saw the two seamen go and meet Lottray at Portsmouth Station."
"Why, so did we, if that man was Lottray."

now that quite well," smiled a couple of policemen! Jus I want!"

The was off in a moment.

"And didn't speak to us?"
"I thought it better not. I heard you arrange to go and inform Captain Heggart. I left you to do that while I followed Lottray and the other lot. They're in that house now."
"Are you going to take them?"
"Not yet, sonny. I want to know where Jelfer is first. If we capture Lottray, the Yank will scoot; whereas if we give the Chinaman a little more rope, he may lead us to where the other is. But no more talk now. See, they're coming out of the house."

A cab had drawn up a minute or

A cab had drawn up a minute or two before, and now from the door issued Lottray and the two scamen. "Go to the General Post Office first," Lottray whispered to the

Jadson, who had kept close up to them, heard the order. As the cab drove off, he ran back to Studgrave and told him what he had heard.

A gleam of satisfaction came into Studgrave's eyes.

"Post-office, eh? Going to send a message then, most likely. Come along. We mustn't lose sight of them."

And Studgrave led the way to the

In a very few minutes they alighted ome little distance from the post-

office.

Ahead of them the other cab had stopped, and they saw Lottray step out and enter the post-office. After him went Studgrave.

Dick, and Ben, and Jadson saw Lottray emerge presently, and engage in conversation with Hudd and Malcolm for a minute. Money seemed to change hands.

Hudd and Malcolm turned to go.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Jadson.

"They're separating. Won't do to lose sight of them. I'll follow them. You wait here, and tell the inspector where I'm gone. Ha! There are a couple of policemen! Just the men I want!"

A minute afterwards Studgrave came hastening up.

"All right," he said eagerly.

"Wired to Jelfer, and I've got his address. But where's Jadson?"

Dick explained.

"All right," said the inspector.

"There's Lottray gone into that public-house, so perhaps Jadson will be back in time to come with us after all."

Jadson was back in less than five

Jadson was back in less than five

minutes.
"Well, what about Hudd and Malcolm?"

Malcolm?"

"They're in charge. It was the only thing to do, sir. They might have separated, and I couldn't have followed them both. I've told the police not to let the arrest become public news until they hear from you. Hope I've done right, sir?"

"Quite right. There's Lottray coming out and getting into that cab. We must follow him."

He stepped up to the driver.

"We've got a long chase, my man, I believe. Is your horse a good 'un?"

"Best cab-horse in Plymouth, sir."

Best cab-horse in Plymouth, sir,'

Best can-forse in Flymouth, sir, said the driver proudly.

"That other cab, that's just moving off—I want you to keep it in sight. You'll be well paid for your trouble."

"Then consider it done, sir. There ain't a hoss in Portsmouth as'll get away from mine with anything like an equal load."

"But the loads are not equal."

"Not in number of people, maybe, sir, but mine's a keb, not a shaky old 'earse, and drivin'll count for summat. Have no fear, sir, we shall be in at the death."

The first cab moved off, and the second followed.

"You spoke of a long journey,

second followed.

"You spoke of a long journey, inspector. Where are we going?"

"To London, sonny."

"To London! What! By road? It's over eighty miles!"

"Well, Lottray intends to go by road, so we must follow him. Look at that. It's a copy of his message to Jeffer."

Dick read the slip of paper which he detective handed him.

"Jelfer,
"Wrenhurst Farm,
"Nr. White

"Nr. Whitstable."
Returning London to-night. with you to-morrow morning as early as possible. Everything satisfactory,"

with you to-morrow morning as early as possible. Everything satisfactory."

"Well, we know where Jelfer is now," Dick said. "But what's the meaning of this going by road?"

"Too late for a train, that's all, my boy, and Lottray doesn't care to risk staying in Portsmouth till the morning. He mayn't travel by road all the way, though. He may break the journey and catch a train somewhere on the way."

They passed through Cosham presently, and over the Portsdown hills. The road now became more lonely. Near Horndean the first cab pulled up at a wayside inn.

Halting a little distance off, the pursuing party presently saw the horse being changed.

Studgrave whistled.

"We must wait till he's off, and we must change horses too," said he. On the London side of Petersfield the first cab halted again, and for a second time the horses were changed. Studgrave and his party waited as before, then, as the first cab moved off, they drove up to the inn door.

"We want a fresh horse," Studgrave said to the landlord. "Can you let us have one?"

"Sorry, sir, but it's impossible. The only horse I've got fit to travel has just been hired by another gentleman."

The detective bit his lip.

"The is autward" and he in an

man."

The detective bit his lip.

"This is awkward," said he, in an undertone. "We must go on as well as we can to the next village."

"Why not turn back to Petersfield, sir? You can get a horse somewhere."

sir? You can get a norse somewhere."

"I dare say, Jadson, but the London road divides here. One goes to London through Farnham and Aldershot, the other through Godalming and Guildford. We must make sure which one Lottray takes."

On again in pursuit, but at a disadvantage, as was quickly to be seen, for the leading horse, whipped up to showing his best speed, soon began to extend the distance dividing the two cabs. The horse in the rear cab was a willing beast, but he was jaded by this time, and certainly would not be able to go much further at the pace set. must rest him and get

another!" exclaimed Studgrave, leaning anxiously out of the window and staring forward along the road. "Lottray's gaining on us grey second. Ah, here's a village abstad of us! Perhaps we shall be able to get a fresh horse there."

It was not easy, however, and by the time they had substituted a fresh animal for the one between the shafts. Lottray had long ago got out of sight, and had taken a long lead.

"We must make up for lost time now," the detective said, as they started off again.

At quite a good pace they reached Liphook. Then, however, they had to slacken down to negotiate the long and stiff ascent towards Haslemere. Not that they could afford to waste much time, either, for of the cab they were pursuing they could see nothing. All the news they could get of it was from a tramp, half-asleep at the side of the road, who told them that another vehicle, very much like their own, had passed him "like a fireengine nigh on half an hour before."

"He must be wrong, I think, as to time," muttered Studgrave. "Still, we were delayed a bit at the last-change, and no doubt he's got a good lead."

"Time we changed again, sir."
Jadson said, his head out of the other

"Time we changed again, sir," Jadson said, his head out of the other window. "Our horse is beginning to

"We shall be in Haslemere presently, I think, and we'll change there."

there."
But they went on without sign of a town appearing.
"Must have taken the wrong road," muttered Studgrave. "I don't know this part too well. Any sign of a village, Jadson?"
"None at all, sir. There's a steep hill, though."
Studgrave was craning his neck out

None at an, sir. There's a steep hill, though."

Studgrave was craning his neck out of the other window.

"Why, now I recognise the place," said he. "We've left Haslemere to our right. This is the road to the Devil's Punch Bowl."

"So it is!" Jadson said; and then exclaimed quickly: "And look there, sir, half-way up the hill, there's—there's the cab!"

"By jingo, you're right! It's stopped! It's half tilted over! Looks as if they've got a wheel off. Pull up'"—this to the driver. "We mustn't be seen. Quick, out of it! We'll travel afoot for a bit, and see what's happened."

But the sound of their horse's here.

happened."
But the sound of their horse's hoofs had betrayed their presence already. (Continued on the next page.)





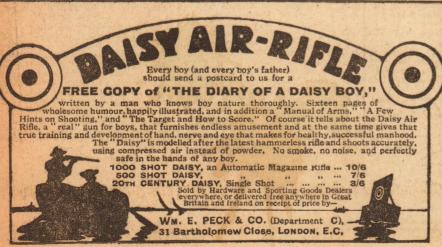
uncture-Proofer Duniop lytes, cosmers, from £2.15s. Cashor Easy Payments. Acaked Free Carriage Paid. Warranted 15yrs. Ten Days' Free Trial allowed. Write at once for Free Art Galalogue and letter Sample Machine. Write at once for Free Art Catalogue and Special Offer on latest Sample Machine.

MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. Z 128

11, Paradise St., Liverpool.



parcel. Write—National Fretworkers' Assoc Dek 4, 63, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.







A smart, manly moustache speedily grows at any are by using "Rousta," the only true Houstache Forcer. Remember, Success positively guaranteed. Boys become nen. Acta like marie. Box sent in plain cover for 6d. and 1d. for postage. Send 7d. to J. A. DIXON & Co., 42, Junction Road, London, N. (Foreign Order 9df).



THE "LITTLE SPITFIRE" AIR RIFLE



The most accurate air gun. Shoots alugs, darts, or shot with terring force, and is guaranteed to kill at long range. Specially adapted of garden or saloon practice, bird and rabbit shooting, also for bottle an target practice. Securely packed, with sample of shot; postage 5c extra. Illustrated List, id.—B. FRANKS & CO., Gun Mauufasturers, Empire Works, Carolina Street, Birmingham.

Applications with regard to Advertisement Space in this paper should be addressed: Stanley H. Bowerman, Advertisement Manager, THE BOYS' FRIEND, Carmelite House, E.C.



The cab ahead was at a standstill—there had been a breakdown, Lottray and the driver were even at that moment engaged in trying to tighten the loosened axle.

Suddenly at the sound of another horse, down the hill, Lottray sprang to his feet.

The moon, coming out of a hitherto dark sky, enabled him to recognise two, at least, of the alighting figures.

With a snarl of rage, he gave one glance at them, and then at once breasted the hill at a run.

"Quick!" Studgrave whispered hoarsely. "After him, or we shall lose him! Never mind about his driver; he's only a hired man, and not one of the gang."

Even as he spoke, the detective led the way up the steep hill. After him came Dick and Ben and Jadson. His fears that they might lose their quarry were far from being ill-founded. The place where they were was one of the loneliest spots conceivable. The road up which they were speeding ran round to form a rim to that wild and weird, scooped-out hollow known as the Devil's Punch Bowl. It lay upon their left-hand, grim and forbidding, and all overgrown with a tangle of broom and gorse, furze and heather.

Lottray had secured a lead of perhaps a hundred and fifty yards. It was evident, however, by his laborious movements, that he could not maintain that lead. As a matter of fact, he had been drinking a good deal, and was generally very much out of condition.

Dick and Ben, running ahead, had already drawn to within eighty yards of him

of condition.
ick and Ben, running ahead, had
ady drawn to within eighty yards

already drawn to within eighty yards of him.

Hearing them so close, Lottray turned, hurled a wild, defiant curse at them, and abruptly leaving the road, dived in amongst the furze.

As he climbed up the gorse-clad knoll, he could hear them close upon him.

him.

Ben was foremost; he was, indeed, within fifteen yards of the man, and was pulling himself up the steep incline by clutching at a tangle of roots growing out from the sides.

Lottray saw his peril. He had by this time gained a fairly level eminence some distance up. Secure for a moment there, he turned at bay.

A wild gleam was in his eyes, his face was torn with awful fear and

A wild gleam was in his eyes, his face was torn with awful fear and baffled rage.

From an inside pocket of the loosely-fitting coat he was wearing he snatched out something.

It glistened in the moonlight.

It was a revolver!

Taking only a hasty aim, he pulled

Taking only a hasty aim, he pulled the trigger.

Bang! A sharp report split the silence of the night, and found a weird echo among the lonely hills.

With a groan, Ben Muggett slipped back, and rolled down two or three paces.

A burst of demoniacal laughter came from Lottray as he turned and climbed higher out of sight.

Dick sprang to Ben's side, while Studgrave and Jadson came running up, too.

Studgrave and Jadson came running up, too.

"Are you hurt?" Dick asked, in deep anxiety.

"No, no, not a bit. I only pretended he had hit me. 'Twas a dodge so that he shouldn't fire again, that was all. Leave me here a bit, and you all go on."

There was a look in Ben's eyes that told Studgrave the lad had an idea. Apart from that, there was no time for dallying.

"Come on." he said; "we mustn't

"Come on," he said; "we mustn't lose him now."

All three of them moved a little to the left along a path winding round the knoll.

Gaining the Gaining the top of it, they stopped

the knoll.

Gaining the top of it, they stopped dead in astonishment.

For there, half standing and half lounging against the obelisk marking the place of a tragedy of some years ago, was Lottray.

In the moonlight the natural yellow of his face seemed to show through the stain he had put upon it. His almond-shaped eyes, all redrimmed and bleared, had a glare in them like that of madness.

If Lottray was mad, it was with a madness of despair. He recognised all his pursuers now, saw that at last they had run him to earth, and that the game was up.

Nevertheless, he was resolved to sell his freedom dearly.

With an upward sweep of his arm he pointed his revolver straight at them.

"Don't come near me!" he yelled.

"The first who does approach, dies, and the second, and the third!"

Studgrave and his two companions had halted at a distance of a dozen paces.

"Better rush him, hadn't we, sir?"

paces.
"Better rush him, hadn't we, sir?"

muttered Jadson. "It may mean a bullet for one of us, but we must

muttered Jadson. "It may mean a bullet for one of us, but we must chance that!"

"No, no!" whispered Studgrave; "take no chances. I'm not afraid, but he might wing the lot of us, and get away after all. Besides, there's— Let me deal with him!"

Studgrave's eyes had wandered beyond the obelisk to an obscuring strip of gorse trailing down the knoll on the other side.

From a break in the cover he had caught sight of a head and shoulders, and a hand waving as a mute signal. He noted it with satisfaction, but shifted his glance to the Chinaman at once. His wish now was to gain time—only a few seconds were necessary. He must do it by parleying.

"Lottray," he called out sternly, yet with apparent good humour, "you'd better give in. The game's up!"

"Not yet it isn't."

yet with apparent good humour, "you'd better give in. The game's up!"

"Not yet it isn't."

"But we're three to one."

"I've a friend here who's as good as the lot of you. He's a spitfire chap, too, as you'll see."

He raised his revolver again. The mad look in his eyes intensified. His forefinger curled round the trigger, the barrel pointed straight at Dick Elton, who had advanced a pace or two forward.

"Down, Dick, down!" roared Studgrave, almost too late.

For at that moment came a bang! Dick ducked his head in the very nick of time, and a bullet sped harmlessly over it.

The yellow hand rose and curved for the second shot, but that shot was never fired.

From behind where he stood the figure which Studgrave had seen among the gorse had advanced closer and closer. Even while Lottray was about to fire, he found the revolver suddenly dashed from his hand, and a pair of powerful arms thrown about him from behind. In a moment he was in the vicelike grip of Ben Mugget.

With a fearful snart, the Chinaman

him from behind. In a moment he was in the vicelike grip of Ben Mugget.

With a fearful snarl, the Chinaman turned to grapple with his foe.

Useless, however, to resist further. In less time than it takes to tell, Studgrave, Jadson, and Dick were upon him. A pair of handcuffs clicked upon his wrists, and a tough hempen cord was drawn about his ankles. In a minute he lay a helpless prisoner.

A minute after that, and he was

prisoner.

A minute after that, and he was being carried down the hill towards the spot where the cab was in wait-

ing.
Within half an hour Lottray was safely lodged in a cell at Haslemere Police Station.
His game was indeed up. He had bidden good-bye to freedom for ever.

Run to Earth.

N that old house hard by Whitstable Jelfer J. Jelfer awaited the arrival of his accomplice.

In that old house hard by Whitstable Jelfer J. Jelfer awaited the arrival of his accomplice.

Time after time he went to his watch-tower, and with the aid of his telescope scanned the long road for any sign of Lottray's approach.

From his own point of view it was a pity that, missing Lottray, he did not observe that some other men were approaching the house.

Six men, among them being Studgrave, and Inspector Posner, of Scotland Yard, and two boys, Dick Elton and Ben Mugget!

They were not very plain to see, for as they approached Wrenhurst Farm, they carne like scattered skirmishers, taking advantage of everybit of cover that the hill afforded.

It happened that while they were within two hundred yards of the house, Jelfer J. Jelfer took it into his head-to go out.

Waiting for Lottray had put rather a strain upon him, and the tension growing rather too much for his comfort, he had sought the fresh air.

Again from his own point of view, it was a pity.

Cute Yankee, you have ever prided yourself upon your cuaning, upon your cleverness, upon your foresight, upon your knowledge of every trick, not only on the board, but above it and beneath it! You have foreseen the possibility some day of your being visited here by the officers of the law. Accordingly, you have made preparations. That watch-tower of yours is also something of an armoury. It is provided not only with a telescope, but with guns and revolvers for keeping any chance foes at bay, and with a rope-ladder reaching to the ground. The precautions for defence, and for your own escape, if too hard pressed, have been taken with elaborate completeness.

Yet, oh, cunning and cute Yankee, because you are a mortal villain, your

ness.
Yet, oh, cunning and cute Yankee, because you are a mortal villain, your cunning is not infallible. From your birth up you have been destined

to make one stupid mistake. You are to make it now. You are making it now, as you walk down your little drive to pass out of your gate and walk slowly down the road. Your eyes are keen enough for the distant bend in the road, where you will catch your first glimpse of Lottray, should he come!

He will not come, for the reason that he is safely lodged in prison.

You do not know this—do not dream of it. Still less do you dream that Lottray's capturers are even now on your track. How you would tremble could your eyes but pierce that screen of bushes on the right, and that other screen of bushes on your left!

But they can't, and, moreover, you do not look that way. Your eyes are still fixed upon the distant bend in the road; your brain is full of thoughts of your own cleverness.

So that those figures steal out from behind the bushes without your

thoughts of your own cleverness.
So that those figures steal out from behind the bushes without your seeing them. They draw closer and closer to you; they are within twenty yards, ten, five!

Now you know of their presence for the first time. You turn. With hands held like claws you glare, and you bellow like some angry, frightened beast. And then—well, they are upon you; you are borne to the ground, and you are safely handcuffed!

A prisoner in the hands of the

A prisoner in the hands of the police without the least chance of resistance whatever!

3

NEW NUMBERS OF

"THE BOYS' FRIEND" 3D.

COMPLETE LIBRARY. JUST OUT.

No. 133-

"THE PRIDE OF THE TEAM."

A Splendid Long, Complete Tale of the Football Field. By MAXWELL SCOTT.

No. 134

"THE MILL-MASTER'S SECRET."

A Thrilling NEW Tale of SEXTON BLAKE, Detective. Specially Written for "The Boys' Friend" 3d Complete Library.

No. 135-

"THE MYSTERY MAN."

A Story of London's Lights and Shade By LAURENCE MILLER.

An inglorious surrender, surely, for one who had prepared so complete a defence!

Jelfer was taken to Whitstable Police Station by Inspector Posner and two other officers, afterwards to be conveyed to London.

Studgrave, with the rest of the party, entered the house. Armed with a search-warrant, they ransacked the place for papers that might throw light on the past doings of Jelfer & Co.

They were not disappointed. Had

might throw light on the past doings of Jelfer & Co.

They were not disappointed. Had Jelfer kept a veracious diary, he could not have left a more complete record of the gang's infamy than certain letters and papers furnished.

There it was, all in black and white, from the scheme for the attack—alas! all too successful—on Sir Garnet Royal, to the time when the Mammoth had put to sea.

By his own hand Jelfer had condemned himself.

"Studgrave," said Inspector Posner that afternoon as they sat together in the train on their way back to London, "will you ever forgive me?"

"Forgive you, old chap! What for?"

"Forgive you, old chap! What for?"
"For all my unfriendliness in the past. You've been badly treated, Studgrave. All your suspicions have turned out to be correct. We have absolute proof of the guilt of Jelfer & Co. They are bound now to reinstate you at the Yard."
"Well, I shall be glad. As to yourself, old chap, I bear you no ill will, and there's my hand on it.

But we've work to do still. We have yet to lay Cyrus Briant by the heels, though I'd willingly spare him for his poor uncle's sake."

though I'd willingly spare him for his poor uncle's sake."

"He has been spared for his uncle's sake," said Posner quietly.
"Why, what do you mean? Do you know where he is?"

"We have known for a long time past. He has been in the South of France, chiefly at Monte Carlo. That scoundrelly butler, Pyson, has been with him. Between them they have dissipated the money with which Briant absonded."

"But you'll have to take him now, of course?"

"I suppose we shall. There's

"But you'll have to take him now, of course?"

"I suppose we shall. There's another man we shall have to take, too—Admiral Ranchard. Jingo! What a scandal there'll be when his complicity is proved. But there's another little gang to be captured. According to these papers, Sir Garnet Royal was attacked by three men. They must be caught."

"They're already caught, I fancy," said Studgrave. "There can be but little doubt that the three attackers were Lottray and the two seamen, Hudd and Malcolm."

"What! The two men in custody at Portsmouth? Well, it's good to think they're safe, anyway. But

at Portsmouth? Well, it's good to think they're safe, anyway. But here we are at Victoria. We must get a cab for our prisoner, and drive to the Yard."

Great was the sensation when the news of the capture of Jelfer and Lottray became known. But it was greater still when later on that day Admiral Ranchard was arrested. Even his high position could not save him now, and he was destined to come to trial with the other villians whom he had aided and abetted.

villians whom he had aided and abetted.

But there were others to see after. Telegrams were accordingly sent to the police at Monaco and Mentone, to detain Cyrus Briant and Pyson, should they still be in the vicinity, until the arrival of officers from Scotland Yard.

These instructions the foreign

Scotland Yard.

These instructions the foreign police apparently tried to carry out, but they were to be frustrated.

Somehow or other the news of their impending arrest reached the ears of Briant and his fellow fugitive from justice.

Briant and his fellow fugitive from justice.

Utterly tired by this time of the terrible life they were leading, Briant was in favour of delivering themselves up to justice.

Pyson, however, was absolutely opposed to it. The mere suggestion drove him to ungovernable rage.

They were in the beautiful gardens of Monte Carlo at the time, and as they moved along one of the terraces two gendarmes heard them quarrelling. There was something in their tone and words that suggested something more than the mere disappointment of ruined gamesters.

At a distance the gendarmes followed. The quarrel between Briant and Pyson grew fiercer.

Just as the gendarmes were about to intervene, Pyson suddenly drew a revolver, and pointing it straight at his companion, shot him through the breast.

Pyson was promptly arrested, but

Pyson was promptly arrested, but a brief examination of Cyrus Briant was sufficient to show that he was beyond all human aid.

a brief examination of Cyrus Briant was sufficient to show that he was beyond all human aid.

He was not quite dead, however. Sufficient breath and strength remained to him to make a full confession of his past misdeeds.

With his dying breath he sent a message to his uncle, humbly entreating his forgiveness. That message also embodied a request that Sir Garnet Royal should apply to a certain bank in Paris.

When this application was in due course made, a sealed packet was produced. On being opened, it was found to contain banknotes amounting to the value of fifty thousand pounds. With the money was a note to Sir Garnet Royal, explaining that Cyrus Briant had won it as the result of a marvellous run of luck at the gaming-tables at Monte Carlo, and that he had put it on one side to repay his uncle at some future time. So at the last he was repentant, and death, which we so often look upon as cruel, came really as a merciful deliverance.

It saved Briant the pain of standing in the dock alongside his fellow-conspirators.

Those conspirators in due time received their well-merited punishment.

Lottray and Pyson were sentenced

ment.
Lottray and Pyson were sentenced to death for murder. Absolute proof of his complicity in the capital charge was not forthcoming against Jelfer. He, therefore, escaped with his life, but was sentenced to twenty years' penal servitude.

This fate was shared by Admiral

Ranchard, against whom treason was proved. But little less severe was the punishment meted out to Hudd and Melcolm.

the punishment meted out to Hudd and Melcolm.

Nor did those who, although taking no part in the villainous deeds with which we have dealt, but were yet connected with Jelfer financially, escape scot-free.

The group of American financial magnates who ran "Jellow's" were destined to receive a heavy blow, for when in due time the Ogre was launched and completed, and was found to be absolutely the finest battleship afloat, something unexpected occurred.

Even while the Yankees were patting themselves on the back and making up their minds that in future all the Admiralty contracts would come their way, the Admiralty promptly stepped in and confiscated the Ogre.

This proceeding took place with

the Ogre.

This proceeding took place without any violation of contract. For in the contract the British Government had, as usual, inserted a clause giving them the power of purchasing any vessel built in British dockwards

yards.

They more than took advantage of this clause in this case; for, it having been abundantly proved that the Ogre had been built from the stolen plans, the fate of the vessel was submitted to a court of arbitration.

Their award amounted to this:
That Jellow's must deliver up the
Ogre to the British Admiralty, and
must compensate them for all loss in
connection with the building of the
Mammoth.

connection with the building of the Mammoth.

And this they had to do, their only off-setting asset being the well-nigh worthless Mammoth.

Well-nigh worthless we say advisedly, because, although the hull of the vessel was fairly sound, it was discovered that not only were coal bunkers quite inadequate her internal fittings all wrong, but that all her guns had been so faked and weakened as to be liable to burst at their very first discharge.

The punishment of the millionaire syndicate did not end here, for the Chilian Government, for whom they had undertaken to build the Ogre. promptly sued them for breach of contract, and mulcted them in heavy damages.

damages.

It was enough even to smash syndicate of millionaires, and Jellow built no more ships either for Chi or any other government.

Their Thameside docks and an are to-day in possession of the Grea Marsh Company, who have so man ships to build that the extra space is absolutely necessary to them.

Our tale is all but done. The punishment of the wicked has been recorded, and it only remains to say how the virtuous were rewarded.

Inspector Studgrave was not only reinstated at Scotland Yard, but received promotion as a reward his inestimable services.

Ben and Dick both received the thanks of the Admiralty for the part they had played. Both at the present time occupy excellent positions in the Arsenal at Woolwich.

One shadow alone remained over

Arsenal at Woolwich.

One shadow alone remained over Dick Elton's life, but even that only lasted for a few months.

At the end of that time a surgeon at one of the London hospitals burst into sudden fame by his wonderful skill as an oculist. He was called to see Sir Garnet Royal.

A minute inspection of Sir Garnet's eyes suggested to him the possibility of a successful operation.

That operation was performed, with a result beyond all expectations.

After being blind, absolutely deprived of sight for many months. Sir Garnet recovered his power of

Sir Garnet recovered in poster seeing!
To-day his sight is as good as ever it was. He designs ships still, and only a few weeks ago, when his young friends—for they are friends in a very real sense—Dick Elton and Ben Mugget called upon him. Sir Garnet confided his latest secret to them.
"There is a revolution in warships impending, my lads," said he, as he

"There is a revolution in warships impending, my lads," said he, as he took out some plans from his bureau. "The days of steam are passing away. The battleship of the future will be motor-driven. Wise, then, is the government that does not build ships too fast, but bides its time, and while taking every precaution for national safety, watches the march of science, and marches steadily breast forward, alongside it."

THE END.

(Please tell your chums about "Yorkshire
Grit," the Grand New Mill Serial which
commences next Tuesday in THE BOYS'
FRIEND.)

Printed and Published weekly by the Proprietors, at 23, Bouverie Street London, England. Registered for transmission to Canada at Magazine Postal Rates. Agents for Australia; Gordon & Gotch, Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, and Wellington, N.Z. South Africa: The Central News Agency, Cape Town and Johannesburg.

Description, 78. per annum.

Saturday, October 8, 1910. Communications for the Editor should be addressed—"Editor. The Boys' Friend, 23, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.?"