

Free Picture Coupon  
No. 8.  
Available till Monday  
January 30, 1911.

# THE BOYS' FRIEND 1<sup>d</sup>

EVERY TUESDAY.

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

No. 503.—VOL. X. NEW SERIES.]

ONE PENNY:

[WEEK ENDING JANUARY 28, 1911.]

\*\* An introduction for the new reader appears on the next page.

**The Truant Recaptured.**  
THEY had nearly reached the village when Cyrus suddenly started and glanced behind him.

"Listen," he said, in an agitated whisper. "Don't you hear somebody running down the road?"  
"Yes," said Hodgson, turning round and peering through the darkness. "I can see 'em, too. Two boys they are."

"They're after me, I expect," said Cyrus excitedly. "I didn't tell you before, but I've run away from school. They must have missed me sooner than I expected, and they've come to fetch me back."

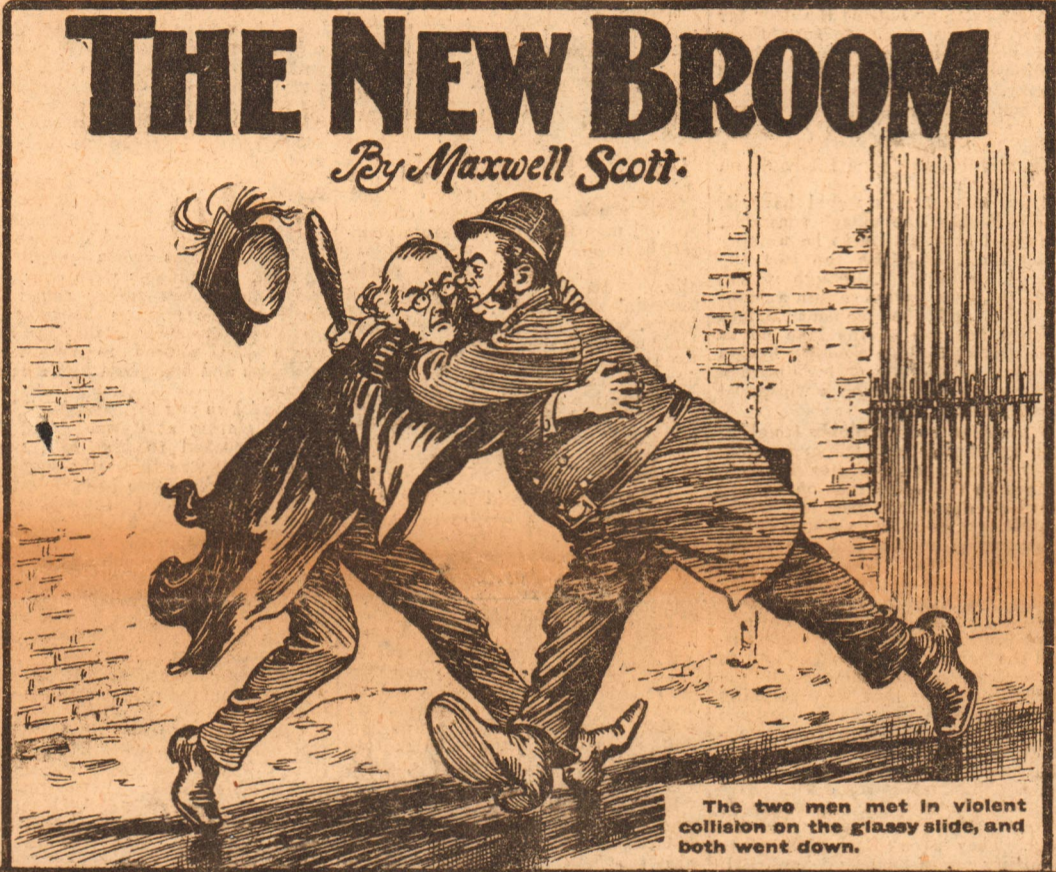
Hodgson crushed back a venomous imprecation. Was his nice little plot to be frustrated at the last moment? Was he to be cheated of the prize just when he was flattering himself that he had secured it? It was galling, exasperating, maddening.

He grabbed Cyrus by the arm. "Run!" he said hoarsely. "Faster! By hook or crook, we must get into my 'ouse before they see you."

But it was then too late. The two boys—who were Philip and Rigden, as a matter of fact—had already seen Cyrus, and had recognised him.

"Hi! Sharpe!" shouted Philip. "Stop! I've something to say to you!"

Cyrus would probably have pulled up, but Hodgson insisted on dragging him along. At every stride, however, the two boys gained on the fugitives;  
(Continued on the opposite side.)



The two men met in violent collision on the glassy slide, and both went down.

and at last, realising that the game was up, Hodgson dropped Cyrus's arm and came to a halt.

"Was yer callin' to us?" he asked innocently, when Philip and Rigden dashed up, panting and out of breath. "Oh, it's you, is it?" said Philip, with a scornful curl of his upper lip. "I didn't recognise you till you spoke."

He turned to Cyrus. "I can't congratulate you on your choice of a companion," he said. "Do you know who this fellow is?"

"No," said Cyrus sullenly. "His name is Hodgson," said Philip. "He's the landlord of the Blue Boar, and one of the dirtiest ruffians in Rayton. It was he who tried to swear away my character last term, and it was only through Sir David's clemency that he wasn't prosecuted and sent to gaol. I don't know where you picked him up, or where he was taking you, but you can take my word for it that if we hadn't spoiled his little game he would have robbed you all ends up before he let you go."

"Look 'ere," said Hodgson furiously. "If yer think I'm goin' to stand 'ere an' be insulted by a kid like you, you're jolly well mistook!"  
"I don't wish you to stand there," said Philip coolly. "The sooner you get a move on, the better I shall be pleased."

"I 'aven't done nothin' wrong," said Hodgson. "I met this young gent up the road, an' he said he wanted to go to Barnby to catch the London mail, so I offered to drive him there for ten bob."

"Well, he has changed his mind,"  
(Continued on the next page.)



Mr. Sopworth tripped over the cord, and dived headforemost into the bathroom, where he fell into the sitz bath on the floor.







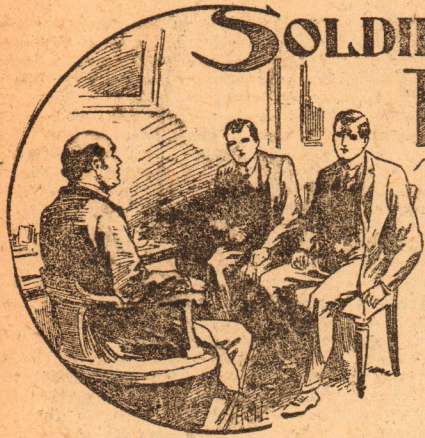












# SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE.

A Superb New Serial,  
Specially Written for THE  
BOYS' FRIEND by that  
Well-known Globe-trotter  
and Author, STANLEY  
PORTAL HYATT.

\*\*\*\*\*

## JUST TO INTRODUCE TO YOU

Dudley and Marcus Scarfield, who are travelling northwards in Africa on the track of Mr. Douglas, a hunter, who is beyond the pale of civilisation, and who holds the papers referring to an invaluable invention their father has left to them.

By getting these papers they become immensely rich, whilst if they fail to recover them they will remain poor, so that they are straining every nerve to reach their father's old friend.

Joseph Scarfield is their cousin, who by fair means or foul is also trying to find Douglas. Up to the present he has mostly employed foul means—in fact, he

leaves no stone unturned

to gain his ends.

Amous is a native who has attached himself to the brothers, and he is a friend indeed.

Travelling with a prospector, the boys reach Fort Busi, where they have a terrible encounter with Matabele savages and Trek Boers who are making an attack upon the British fort. When at last the battle on the veldt is over, and the savages and Boers retire, Dudley and Marcus proceed on their journey, and reaching another lonely station, find that Joseph is still leading in the great race to reach Douglas first.

The boys proceed on their journey northwards, and some days later when crossing a river they are attacked by a tribe of Arabs, whose appearance in that part of the country is mysterious. Later, the boys and their companions discover the elephants' death-place in the jungle. The vicinity is a veritable boneyard, and they find a huge pile of ivory tusks worth thousands of pounds.

"Who stacked that ivory?" inquired Kerridge, the prospector, who is travelling with the boys.

"The Arabs, boss," says the native, Amous. "This is what they have come to fetch."

(Now read the splendid chapters below.)

## The Great Sabi.

**H**ARRY COLLINS may have been a scoundrel—in fact, he was a scoundrel of the first water, robber, traitor, and would-be murderer—but he was also a man of dauntless pluck and iron determination. When he told Joseph Scarfield that he was going on, at all costs, to find John Douglas he meant what he said, and he meant, too, that Joseph should go with him.

What that journey involved for Joseph no words could ever tell. It was one long nightmare of horror, of weariness by day and dread by night. He could not shoot, but he felt that even the possession of a fire-arm would have given him some little sense of security; but, as it was, their only weapon was the one rifle which Collins had brought with him, and the stock of cartridges for that was very small.

Several times, when lions were prowling round their camp at night, Joseph had begged his companion to fire a shot and scare them off, but Collins had always refused.

"They'll take the niggers first," he had remarked; "and I'm not going to waste a cartridge in that way. It's your own fault. Just fancy bolting without a rifle! You had yours and a belt full of cartridges beside you on the waggon. It would serve you right if the lions got you—though it doesn't suit my purpose that they should do so."

Joseph shuddered.

He had never imagined that one man could fear another as greatly as he feared this partner of his. He was so completely in Collins's power. He could not speak a word of the native languages; he had but the remotest idea of where they really were. They just seemed to be going on and on, getting deeper into the wilderness every day, and it was no part of Collins's policy to enlighten him on any point. Joseph's questions met with the curtest of answers, many of which were absolute insults.

Their horses had both died as a result of the tsetse fly bites, and they had been forced to go on foot. Their only kit consisted of the blankets they had taken away from Mackay's store and such food as Collins had been able to buy from the natives.

The latter treated them with scant courtesy, knowing by experience—or, at least, by hearsay—that white men of any standing did not travel across the veldt without stores and equipment.

At the first kraal they struck after their horses had died the headman did not even offer the customary presents. His two sons had worked in the Barberton mines, and had told him much concerning the ways of white men.

"These are thieves, fleeing from the police," he said; "certainly they are not chiefs of any kind. The sooner they leave here the better!"

So he refused point-blank to supply them with more than a few cups of mealie meal and an old fowl. Even for these he charged them outrageously.

Collins swore volubly. His usual custom was not to pay a native for anything except in blows, but now he realised the weakness of his position. The savages were well armed and suspicious, ready to fall on Joseph and himself at an instant's notice; so he had to smother his wrath—or, rather, to vent it on Joseph later.

When he asked for a guide and another man to carry their blankets the headman frowned.

"All my young men are away," he said. "Some are fighting the Matabele, others are at work in Johannes or Barberton."

The white man bit his lip.

"How much do they want to go with us to the Great Sabi?" he asked. "The Great Sabi! That is far indeed! They would not go so far as that; but, for a pound each, three might go with you to the Lundi River, where you could get other carriers."

Collins scowled. The price asked was outrageous; but he had to consent, at the same time registering a mental vow never to pay the wages.

Possibly, however, the chief read something of what was in his mind, for he said suavely:

"The young men will want their money left with me, so that they may be sure of it when they come back."

With the greatest reluctance Collins paid over three of Joseph's sovereigns; then for another sovereign he got a stock of meal, sweet potatoes and monkeynuts, and half a dozen fowls—the ordinary market price of which down there would not have exceeded four shillings in all.

"We shall soon get through your money at this rate," he remarked grimly to Joseph, who groaned inwardly.

The route Collins had decided to take was very different from that chosen by Kerridge, although both parties were making for the same point. Whilst the prospector went round the eastern end of the great dry stretch of bush veldt, which extends southwards from the Lundi River, Collins decided to go to the west of it, skirting its edge, risking an encounter with a raiding-party of Matabele and with local natives, who had thrown in their lot with the Matabele. Consequently, for much of the way his path and that of the boys' lay a hundred miles, or even more, apart, which accounted for neither hearing a rumour of the other.

Collins watched his three carriers carefully. He was certain that they intended to run away at the first opportunity, and equally certain that he was going to prevent them from doing so.

The first night they camped at a little kraal in the bush veldt, and, without a word of excuse, he drove his savages into the strongest-looking hut, despite the protests of its owner, and himself slept across the doorway outside. Joseph had to turn in where he could, and finally discovered a fairly-sheltered spot under the eaves of the headman's hut, where he dozed until about three a.m., when, with a sudden change of wind, a rain storm broke, and he was drenched.

It was a miserable task starting out in the chilly morning air, without even so much as a cup of tea to warm them, and with the certainty of being utterly played out at the end of the day's trek.

Yet it was the same day after day. Joseph's boots were wearing out fast, his feet were covered with broken blisters, every bone in his body ached, yet Collins kept him at it, just as he kept the carriers to it.

It spoke eloquently for Collins's strength of character that he was able to make them go on. After the first day he had got his three natives down to a state of dull submission, and all thought of flight had gone out of their minds. They felt sure that, were they to steal away, this terrible white man would overtake and kill them.

The country was horribly mono-

tonous—grey bush veldt of the most dreary type, water was scarce, villages few and far between, though lions were very plentiful.

Twice Collins shot small buck, and they had a change from the diet of tough fowl and mealie meal; but without flavouring of any sort—even salt was scarcely obtainable—the meat seemed tough, almost repulsive.

Still, the longest stage must have an end, and at last they were on the ridge whence they could look down on to the valley of the Lundi.

The carriers heaved great sighs of relief.

"There is the river we promised to bring you to, chief," they said to Collins. "You see the line of green trees? At the foot of that big kopje, the M'Bendese, is a kraal—Bota's. From there it is four days' trek to the Great Sabi River."

Collins grunted.

He was very glad to be through that last stretch, for now he was getting into a country he knew of old; but he did not trouble to say so much to Joseph.

At midday they reached the river-bank. The bed at that point was about half a mile wide, but the stream was nowhere deep. It was the first really fresh water they had struck since their horses died and the first actual river, and the cool freshness seemed to take half the soreness out of Joseph's feet. He felt he would like to paddle in it all day.

On the opposite bank was the kopje of which the carriers had spoken—the M'Bendese—immense, forbidding, covered with bush, amidst which the vast baobab-trees and bright green aloes stood out with startling clearness. At its foot they could see the smoke rising lazily from the native village.

They climbed up the bank, went a hundred yards down it; then Collins gave a whistle of surprise, for just in front of them, surrounded by a strong scherm of thorn-scrub, a waggon was outspanned. One white man was sitting in the back of the waggon-tent, with his legs dangling down, cutting up some tobacco, whilst two more were standing against the back rail, deep in conversation.

A couple of dogs rushed out to greet the new-comers, and the men at the waggon looked round quickly.

Collins turned to Joseph.

"Now, be careful what you say!" he whispered fiercely. "One of those looks like John Douglas—the elder one. He might easily have trekked across from the Sabi. Leave the lying to me."

## The Elephants' Boneyard.

**T**HE discovery of the immense pile of ivory absolutely staggered Kerridge and his companions, but it is safe to say that for the space of several minutes it

seemed of less importance than a discovery which Dudley made.

"Water!" he cried. "Look, there is a little pan of it here!"

Only those who have been really thirsty can know what the agony of it is. Consequently to the majority it may seem almost incredible that the boys and Kerridge and Amous should have left the ivory, left the great bull elephant, and hurried to the pan, or pool, of muddy water on the far side of the open space. They knelt down, and having no cup or pots, lapped it up, and then they filled their hats with water and bathed their faces. After that they went back to the ivory, breathing heavily, like men who have just come through a crisis.

Kerridge stood very still, and stared at the pile of tusks.

"Ten thousand pounds' worth, at least!" he said after a long pause.

The boys gasped. Ten thousand pounds' worth, and all theirs just for the trouble of taking it away!

"Are you sure?" Marcus asked breathlessly.

"I'm sure it's not worth less," Kerridge answered. "Look at the size of most of the tusks, even the cows' tusks! Some—the very old ones—may be spoilt, but most are perfectly sound still. Phew! What a boneyard!"

He was quite right. It was a boneyard indeed. The ground was simply littered with immense bones, some still fresh and white, others grey and crumbling. Dudley tried to count the number of vast skulls, out of which the builder of the heap had pulled the tusks, but he soon gave it up. Then they examined the giant they themselves had killed.

All four bullets had struck him in the neighbourhood of the ear, but it was impossible to decide which had been the fatal shot. The important fact was that he lay there, a vast mountain of flesh with a pair of tusks worth well over a hundred pounds, and that, incidentally, he had led them to a fortune.

"The carriers will get full of meat—very full!" Amous remarked. "How they will gorge! I wonder where we shall get other carriers to take all this ivory away before the Arabs come? Certainly it was they who piled it up. I suppose one of their rubber-hunters found the place, and they will be here to-morrow."

The Basuto's remarks recalled the others to the needs of the present. They were in Africa, where "findings are keepings." They had found the ivory, and they were not going to give it up, least of all to those Arabs who had made such an unprovoked attack on them.

"Certainly they will be here to-morrow," Amous repeated calmly, "and we cannot get it away by then. It needs many carriers—hundreds of them, and it will take days to muster them."

Kerridge sat down on the fore leg of the dead elephant, and pulled out his pipe, which he filled slowly.

"Yes," he said at last, "you're right, Amous. It'll be touch and go to get this fortune away into British territory. I wonder where those carriers of ours are—if they'll turn up?"

"I don't see that six of them will help much," Dudley began a little impatiently, but the prospector cut him short.

"Does any of us here know where the big villages are?" he asked quietly. "No. Well, those carriers will be able to tell us what we want to learn. Ah, here's one of them!"—as a breathless native, carrying the boys' blankets, emerged from the tunnel-like entrance.

The new-comer gave one glance round, gasped, and dropped his pack, an example which was followed by his five companions who were close on his heels.

"Ho! You jungle folk!" Amous cried to them angrily. "Has an evil spirit bitten you, that you behave so foolishly? Have you never seen the bones of elephants before? Come forward now! The white men would ask you questions."

The carriers picked up their loads and obeyed. They had kept up on the spoor well, feeling certain that at the end of the chase there would be a great feed of elephant meat. To be sure, the meat was there, and already their mouths were watering, yet the place itself was uncanny. It must be haunted by the spirits of the dead monsters, and the ghost of an elephant was not a thing to be regarded lightly.

They put down their loads, went to the pool, and drank slowly and moderately, as is the way of a thirsty savage, who understands the danger of long draughts. Then Amous began to question them.

"Where is there a big village—"



As soon as he had fired, Dudley jumped to one side, fully expecting, however, that the buffalo would turn also, for he did not know what effect his shot had had. Yet the animal went straight on, and actually blundered into the tree under which Dudley had been sitting.













