

THE DISGRACE OF TOM BOND. (SEE OUR NEW SCHOOL SERIAL.)

THE BOYS' FRIEND 1^d

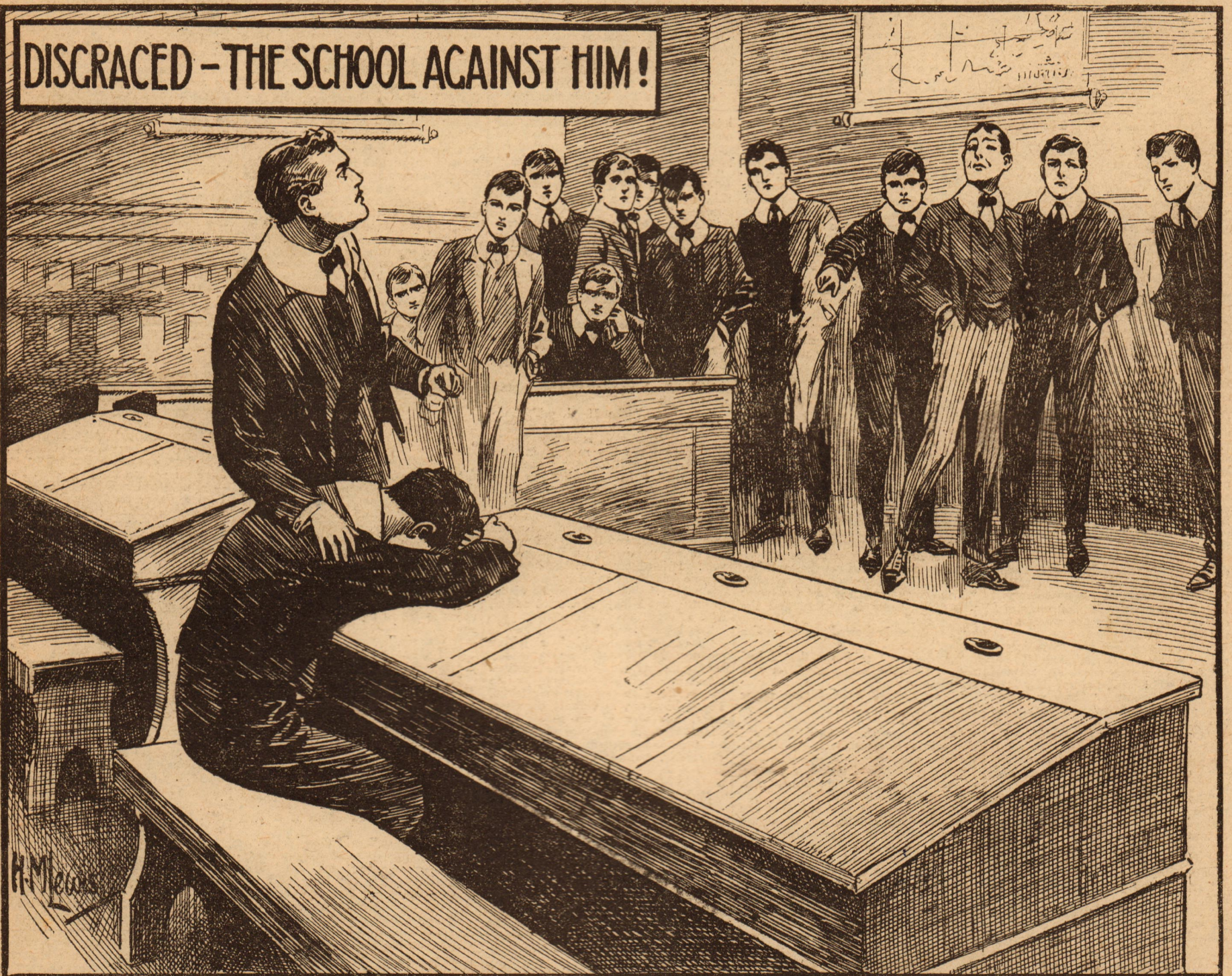
EVERY TUESDAY.

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

No. 524.—VOL. XI. NEW SERIES.]

ONE PENNY.

[WEEK ENDING JUNE 24, 1911.]



The Headmaster's Inquiry.

THE Head walked to Mr. Poot's desk, and laid on it the bundle of examination papers. Then he turned to the boys, who had risen at his entrance.

"Sit down," he said quietly.

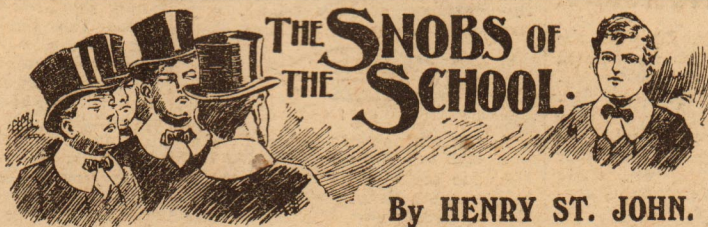
He waited till the shuffling and bustle of movement was over.

"I understand, Mr. Poot, that you have already brought this matter before the notice of your class?" the Head asked.

"I—er—oh, I just—I merely mentioned that I believed that something was wrong!" Mr. Poot said uneasily.

"Have you explained the position of matters thoroughly to the boys?"

Do Not Miss a Line of this Stirring New School Serial.



THE SNOBS OF THE SCHOOL.

By HENRY ST. JOHN.

A Full Introduction for the New Reader Appears on the Next Page.

"No—that is to say, I scarcely know whether I have or not. Practically, I believe, I have," said Mr. Poot.

"Surely," the Head said in a very low voice, for Mr. Poot's ears alone, "you can tell me at once whether these boys know the facts or whether they do not?"

"I think I may say that they do," said Mr. Poot.

"Then you have gone into the matter with them?"

"Ye-es," said Mr. Poot.

The Head frowned. Mr. Poot's manner was shifty and unsatisfactory. A keen judge of men as well as of

boys, the headmaster felt that there was something unreliable about Mr. Poot. Now he turned to the boys.

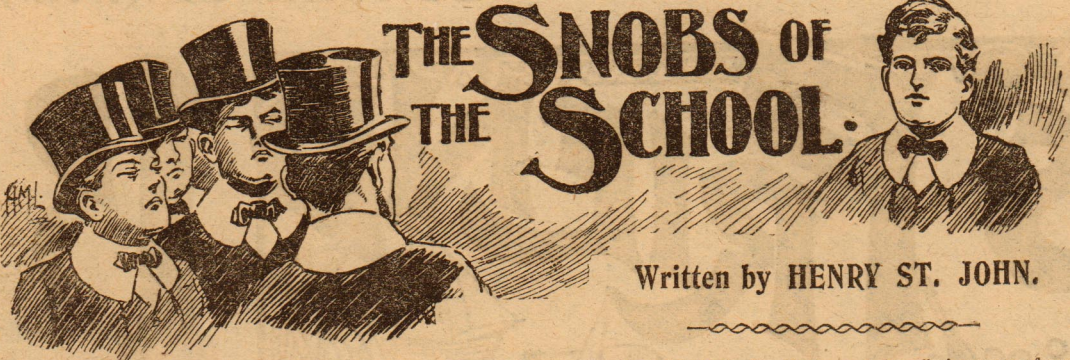
"Mr. Poot has reported to me," he said, "the result of the examination. He has placed the papers you have filled up in my hands, selecting three for especial notice. One of these

papers contains correct replies to every question asked, another gives eighteen correct answers out of twenty-five, the third gives sixteen correct answers. There are other papers that are creditable to those responsible for them, several not so creditable. But, on the whole, I think that they prove satisfactory progress. As Mr. Poot has reported to you, no doubt, I promised to present to the boy responsible for the most satisfactory paper a gold medal to commemorate the event. That medal has been won by Thomas Bond, whose paper is correct in every detail. But—and this I deeply regret to say—considerable doubt has been thrown on the genuineness of Bond's paper.

"It is, I must admit, remarkable that any boy could answer every

(Continued on the next page.)

A SUPERB NEW SCHOOL SERIAL. YOU CAN START READING IT NOW.



The First Chapters Specially Rewritten for the New Reader.

This grand school serial opens with a heated argument between Lord Worthingford, a very wealthy peer, and Mr. Middleton, a highly prosperous merchant who has risen from the ranks. Lord Worthingford declares that a gentleman must be born and bred high up in the social scale—he must be the descendant of a line of gentlemen, but Mr. Middleton does not agree. His opinion is that a boy in the lowest station of life can become a gentleman.

The outcome of the argument is a wager of £10,000, Middleton and Lord Worthingford agreeing to submit their differences to experiment. They find

a homeless newsboy,

whom they christen Tom Bond, and send him to St. Aloy's College, where the peer's son and the merchant's nephew are being educated.

(Continued from the previous page.)

question as set down correctly. I myself fear that I could not have done so. It is more remarkable still that Bond's should be the correct paper, as Bond, Mr. Poot has reported to me, is backward, and considerably behind the rest of the Form in his studies. How, then, does it come that Bond's paper is so good? I have here the paper in my hand. There are twenty-five questions to each of which is the correct reply.

"Now, I am very loth to accuse any boy of dishonourable and mean conduct. I do not accuse Bond, and I hold him innocent of wrongdoing until it has been proved that he is guilty. Therefore, I congratulate you, Bond, on the success of your paper."

Tom rose to his feet. He was white and trembling. But the headmaster did not fall into the common error of seeing guilt in what was merely an attack of nerves. The most innocent have often had the appearance of the most guilty. It is usually the guilty and hardened criminal who is devoid of nerves, and therefore cuts the best figure when under examination.

"Well, Bond, you wish to say something?" the Head asked.

"I—I want to say, sir, that—I didn't answer those questions. I only answered three or four; the rest I couldn't manage. I can't understand how it is my paper is filled up, and I can't understand how the answers are the right ones."

"You admit that you were incapable of answering the questions."

"I didn't answer them, sir, because I couldn't. I tried to, but they beat me!" Tom cried. "They were too hard; I didn't know how to answer them."

"Come here," the Head said. He held the paper out to Tom. "Is this your paper, or is it not?"

"It—it looks like the one I had, sir," Tom said.

"Looks like it! Either it is your paper or it is not. Is it your paper? Take it and look at it. Look at the answers that you yourself know you set down."

Tom studied the paper for a minute, then handed it back to the Head.

"It isn't my paper at all, sir," he said.

"Really," said Mr. Poot, with a laugh. "I think I can prove—"

The collegers arrive at St. Aloy's to start the new term, and Tom Bond finds a true chum in Ned Middleton, while the Hon. D'Arcy Abingdon, Lord Worthingford's son, proves to be a snob.

Mr. Poot, an unscrupulous master, who is most pleasant and amiable to sons of aristocrats, treats lads of more humble birth with disdain. He learns the history of Tom Bond, and imparts the news to Abingdon.

Tom is made the fag of

Jukes, the bully senior,

and it is through this pugnacious youth and Abingdon that he meets with a great many of his troubles.

Behind his title, and all that he professes to be, Lord Worthingford is a scamp. If he loses the wager he has pressed upon Mr. Middleton he will not know where to find the money, and, on the other hand, the £10,000 would enable him to keep up his name and appearance. He goes down to

St. Aloy's, and, by offering sums of money, lures his son and Mr. Poot into a scheme to bring disgrace upon Tom, and to get him expelled from the college before the end of the term.

Mr. Poot works a very cunning and dastardly plot upon Tom by setting the collegers an examination, and afterwards accusing Bond of thieving the paper bearing the correct answers from his desk. The master announces

Tom's dishonourable action

to the whole class, and then places the matter in the hands of the headmaster.

"With regard of the matter I spoke of before breakfast," says Mr. Poot, "I have now laid all the facts of the case before the headmaster, who himself will deal with it. He will—"

Mr. Poot pauses. The door opens, and the Head, in cap and gown, enters.

(Now read this week's fine chapters.)

later. This paper of Abingdon's, that contains eighteen correctly answered questions succeeds. I congratulate you, Abingdon, on your success!

"I am sure your father will be pleased to hear of it, and I present you with this, with my best wishes for future successes."

The Head took a small leather case from his pocket, and handed it to Abingdon, who took it, bowing low.

There was some applause, led by Grovington, but it was by no means general.

"Grovington, you hold the honourable position of second place," said the Head. "I congratulate you, too. I am pleased to see that you have given your attention so closely to your studies. Your paper is a great credit to you."

"Thank you, sir!" Grovington stammered.

"And now," the Head said, "we must return to this paper which Bond now repudiates. It is impossible, of course, to leave the matter in this extremely unsatisfactory position. Bond denies having filled in this paper. If there is any truth in his denial, then who filled it in?"

"May I call your attention, sir, to the fact that Bond handed the paper to me himself, and that it did not go out of my possession till I gave it to you? It is absolutely impossible that anyone but Bond could have filled in this paper—unless, of course, he wishes to infer that I did," Mr. Poot added, with a laugh.

The Head frowned.

"I cannot regard this in a joking manner, Mr. Poot. Someone has been guilty of dishonourable conduct. I had prepared a set of questions to put to Bond to test his knowledge. These, however, in view of his statement, are now of no use. Bond admits that he could not answer the questions, and states that he did not. Yesterday, before the papers were handed in, he made a similar statement to Middleton."

Middleton stood up.

"He told me, sir, that he couldn't answer the questions. He said they were all beyond him, and that he had only attempted to answer about four; the rest he hadn't put any replies to at all."

Middleton sat down.

"We now come to another matter," the Head said. "The fact that Mr. Poot's examination paper, with the

length and sewn along the two long sides.

Corks are of great assistance, and they are so cheap—4d.—that no runner—when actually racing, anyway—should deny himself them.



Fig 1

A cork with elastic fastened end to end, to secure it to the hand.

As for socks, some runners prefer to dispense with them altogether, but this is scarcely wise, and when practising they should always be worn. A well darned pair will be likely to set up blisters or soreness.

These complaints, the former especially, are the runner's bugbear,

answers complete, was stolen from his desk. Till this is cleared up, suspicion rests on the whole class; particularly, I am sorry to say, on those boys who have been most successful with their papers. Bond, I ask you, did you or did you not take that paper from Mr. Poot's desk?"

"I did not, sir," Tom said, in a loud voice.

"I suggest—" began Mr. Poot. The Head waved his hand.

"One moment, please, Mr. Poot. Did any boy among you," the head asked, "take that paper, either with a dishonourable motive in view, or by way of a joke—a poor joke, yet excusable? If the boy will admit his fault he will lessen his offence."

He paused. There was no reply.

"It only remains, then, that a search shall be made for this paper. I regret the necessity of exposing any boy here to the indignity, but it is absolutely necessary that the matter should be cleared up, affecting, as it does, every boy in the Form. Presuming that the paper was taken from a dishonest motive, I will have the rooms and possessions of those boys whose papers are most successful examined. I regret the necessity for this, and I wish you all to understand that this search does not imply suspicion. The matter must be cleared up. It is, of course, possible that the paper has been destroyed; in which case my work is rendered so much the more difficult."

"Middleton, you will please go to the Sixth Form class-room, and ask Hayward, Jukes, and Bentley to come here."

There was silence while Middleton was gone. The Head sat down, and seemed to be lost in deep thought. His brow was wrinkled, the expression on his face was grave. Then the door opened, and Middleton returned, ushering in the three seniors.

Briefly the Head explained to them. A paper was missing. Mr. Poot described the paper minutely.

"I wish you to make close and thorough search for it in—to commence with—the rooms of Bond, Abingdon, and Grovington," the Head said. "If any of you three boys have any boxes or drawers or other receptacles locked, kindly give the keys to Hayward."

Grovington and Abingdon handed over their keys.

"I've got nothing locked up," Tom said.

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Tom in Disgrace.

"If I might be permitted," Mr. Poot said, with a little show of anxiety, "I would suggest that the search is not restricted to boxes and drawers. There are many other hiding-places in a room, such as the chimney, behind articles of furniture, even under the carpets?"

"We'll search the place thoroughly, sir," said Hayward. "We shan't leave any likely place."

"When you have completed your search of those three rooms, please come to me in my study," the Head said.

"Yes, sir,"

The three seniors went out, and the Head rose.

"As it may take some time, Mr. Poot, it would be as well for your class to continue. When the report is made to me, I will return."

He went out of the room, and instantly the hum of voices filled the class-room.

"It's come to something now to have one's room searched as if one was a common thief," Abingdon said angrily. "My people would feel pleased and proud about it if they knew."

"Same here," said Grovington. "They may search my room everywhere as much as they like," Tom said confidently. "They will find nothing there. I can't understand it. The more I think the more worried and puzzled—"

"Silence!" said Mr. Poot. "To your work at once, all of you!"

In his study the Head sat waiting and thinking. The whole affair was unsatisfactory in the extreme. Bond had at once admitted his incapability of answering the examination questions. The test was therefore useless. Bond had denied that the paper was his, he had given some ridiculous answer to one of the questions—it seemed impossible that he could have invented these ridiculous replies on the spur of the moment.

But no one had touched his paper but himself, he had handed it to Mr. Poot. The Head realised that he was face to face with one of the most extraordinary and difficult problems he had ever been called upon to unravel.

"I must proceed with great care, lest injustice is done," he thought. "There must be no injustice. To this boy it may mean his whole future career. It may mean the difference to him between a return to the life he has known or an honourable career, with the support of such a friend as Mr. Middleton. No. Injustice in such a case is too terrible to think of—"

There was a tap on the door.

"Come in," said the Head.

The three seniors entered. Hayward was holding a paper in his hand, he laid it on the Head's desk.

"This is the paper, I think, sir?"

The headmaster took the paper up and opened it. Yes. It was the paper beyond the shadow of a doubt. For some moments he was silent; he almost dreaded to ask where and how the paper had been found. At last he put the question.

"We found it in Bond's room, sir, hidden under the carpet near the door!" Hayward said quietly. "Is there anything else, sir?"

"Nothing, thank you—nothing," the Head said.

In Bond's room, hidden under the carpet near the door!

But in spite of this, was the boy guilty? the Head wondered.

The Head did not go immediately to the class-room. He wanted time to think over the latest development of the affair. The paper had been found under the carpet in Bond's room. Circumstantial evidence pointed to Bond being guilty of stealing the paper for the purpose of answering his examination questions.

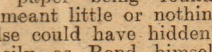
The case against Bond was this, the Head summed up: Mr. Poot stated that he had seen Bond out of his room, and evidently having been downstairs after eleven o'clock on the night on which the paper must have been taken from his—Mr. Poot's—desk. Bond had handed in to Mr. Poot a paper that was entirely correct and which, in the ordinary way, he could not possibly have done unassisted. The missing paper had been found in his room hidden under the carpet. Surely the evidence was black enough, the Head felt. Anyone might be excused for at once coming to the conclusion that Bond had been guilty of theft and dishonesty in filling his paper.

There was another side to the matter, however, which slightly counter-balanced the strong evidence against him. It was the fact that Bond had told Middleton that he had not been able to answer four-fifths of the questions, and had not attempted to do so. A boy who had cribbed his answers would probably pretend to make light of the questions, and state that they had been easy to him. Bond had at once declared that the paper produced was not the one he had given in to Mr. Poot, and so had made the test that the Head had proposed useless.

The paper being found in his room meant little or nothing. Anyone else could have hidden it there as easily as Bond himself could. Lastly, would this boy, who had known the depth of poverty, hunger,

(Continued on the next page.)

Blisters are often the result of badly fitting shoes. Shoes are important. Spiked running-shoes are all very well for the cinder or grass track, but useless if practice be on the roads. The best shoe you can have is a laced leather shoe with a low heel for this work, and be sure they are not too narrow—a frequent fault. (Fig. 2.)



The style of shoe to wear for running.

If you have to use ordinary canvas and indiarubber shoes, place a straw sock inside—one that won't shift.

(Another Running Article next Tuesday.)

THE A B C OF RUNNING.

A Useful New Series. By PERCY LONGHURST.

FOR the jersey the ordinary white vest is sufficient, and those with the short sleeves are preferable.

A sweater to put on at the end of the run is useful but not imperative. At the conclusion of the practice there ought not to be any standing about, as that means possible chills; but between sprints when resting an overcoat is quite as good as a sweater.

No one will ever take harm if, when finished running, there is taken without loss of time a good rub down with

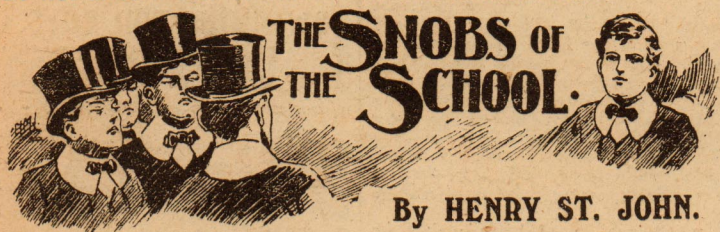
a fairly scrubby towel. But place the feet to the height of the ankles in cold water, in any way obtainable. This is a tip few are acquainted with.

And never get into your ordinary clothes when very hot. Cool down first, either by walking about or other gentle exercise. Plenty of trouble result every year on account of neglect of this simple fact.

Friction gloves for hand rubbing down after running are good. They are easily made out of a strip of rough towelling, eighteen inches long and six inches wide, folded across the

A SUPERB NEW COALMINE SERIAL STARTS IN NEXT WEEK'S "BOYS' FRIEND." IT IS ENTITLED "DON O' DEEPMOOR." AND IS WRITTEN BY ALLAN BLAIR.

Do Not Miss a Line of This Grand New School Serial.



(Continued from the previous page.)

cold, and want be so foolish as to risk a return to his previous unhappy life, and jeopardise his present and his future prospects, for the sake of gaining a medal worth scarcely more than a few shillings?

Carefully, at length, the Head reviewed the situation, and he came to the conclusion that the bulk of the evidence was strongly against Bond. He was sorry for the boy, deeply sorry; but it did not seem possible that Bond could be entirely innocent. If the paper which he had disowned was in reality not the one he had handed in to Mr. Poot, what had become of his paper, and who had manufactured this new one, and how had it come into the possession of Mr. Poot?

To suspect Mr. Poot himself of actual dishonesty in the matter never entered the headmaster's mind. If he had believed Mr. Poot capable of such an action, if he had thought for a moment that Mr. Poot could act in such a manner, he would not have kept Mr. Poot in the school for another hour. Mr. Poot had come to him with good recommendations and credentials. He had been here a year, and though the least satisfactory of the undermasters in many ways, the Head had never and could never suspect Mr. Poot of downright dishonesty!

"I am sorry," he muttered, "very sorry for this boy. I wish for his own sake that his innocence could be proved, or I wish that his guilt could have been made more manifest. It is a distressing and worrying case, and I must act for the best and in the interests of all."

He looked a little fagged and very grave when he entered the class-room with the paper in his hand.

"The—the paper! It is found, then?" Mr. Poot cried, almost as soon as the Head had entered the room.

"You seem to recognise the paper with ease, Mr. Poot!" the head-said.

"Oh, no, sir!" said Mr. Poot eagerly. "But seeing you with a similar paper in your hands, I jumped to the conclusion that it was the missing one. Possibly I am wrong?"

"You are not. This is the missing paper. It has been found!"

The boys held their breath, and waited expectantly and anxiously.

Abingdon's mouth twice twitched, he looked the most nervous. Tom Bond's face was expressive only of relief and satisfaction. The paper had been found, therefore he was cleared, as it could not possibly have been found among belongings of his. So, with a feeling of relief, he waited to hear the headmaster's further statements.

"The paper has been found, and, I deeply regret to say, in the room of one of the boys—the one most under suspicion—the paper was found hidden under the carpet in Bond's room!"

Not Bond's room! Surely he had heard wrongly. Not his room!

Tom's first feeling was of stupefaction and wonder. The Head had made a mistake. It could not have been in his room.

There was a murmur from the other boys; indignant glances were flung at Tom.

"Bond!" the Head said sharply. Tom rose to his feet.

"I—I don't understand, sir," he said, in a bewildered way. "There is some mistake, it—couldn't have been found in my room, sir!"

"I regret to say, Bond, that Hayward reported to me that it was found hidden under the carpet close to the door in your room," the Head said slowly.

"Then—then someone put it there—someone who wants to do me harm!" Tom cried passionately. "I did not—I have never touched the paper—never seen it. It is not true—think what you like!" he burst out—forgetting the position of the man he was speaking to; forgetting everything but the sense of injustice, the overwhelming despair that had come

to him. "I—I don't care; it's not true. I did not put it there!"

The Head waited patiently. He was analysing the boy's outburst. Was it the outburst of injured innocence or was it the defiance of one who had been convicted of dishonesty? For a moment he wavered, wondering and doubting, his keen, far-seeing eyes on the boy's face.

"I may say," he said slowly, "that I place little value on the finding of this paper in your room, Bond. It would have been almost as easy for someone else to put it there as for you yourself to have done so. It does not prove your guilt, Bond!"

"I am not guilty. It can't prove my guilt, sir, because I am not guilty," Tom cried.

"Really," Mr. Poot murmured, the barefaced audacity of the boy is beyond—"

He was silenced by a glance from the headmaster.

"Bond, I have very carefully and fully considered this matter. I have weighed up all the evidence both for and against you, and I cannot blind myself to the fact that the suspicion of having acted dishonestly is very strong against you—very strong, indeed. At the same time, I am not yet satisfied that I have absolute proof of your guilt. Unpleasant as it is for all concerned, the case must stand as it does at present until further light can be thrown on it. I can only say, Bond, that if you can clear yourself it will give no greater pleasure to anyone than to me. Meanwhile, I regret to say, that I must suspect you of dishonesty."

"Oh, sir—sir, believe—believe me!" Tom cried passionately. "It is useless for you to declaim your innocence, Bond. It must be proved, and until it is proved, you remain under a very dark cloud of suspicion. Once more I will ask the whole class assembled here—Is there one boy among you all who can throw any light on this matter? If there is, I ask that boy, in the cause of justice and right, to speak out fearlessly, even if he himself is guilty. His honesty now will mitigate his offence very considerably."

The Head paused and waited while a minute passed in deathly silence.

"I am sorry," he said quietly. "Mr. Poot, I fear that suspicion points strongly against this boy, Bond. But at the present it is nothing more certain than suspicion. If anything further, either for or against this suspected boy comes to

your knowledge, please report to me without the delay of a moment. Bond, you may resume your place."

"I—I want to say this—I will say it!" Tom cried. "It is wicked and unjust!"

His voice broke. Tears filled his eyes. But the Head, without a glance or another word to him, had gone out of the room.

"And so the truth comes to light!" said Mr. Poot, with a snigger. "Just as I expected and anticipated. In the words of the old saying, one cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. From the gutter one can only expect the morals of the gutter!"

"Shame!" said Ned Middleton stoutly.

Mr. Poot started. "Shame!" said a voice from the other end of the room.

Mr. Poot turned. "Shame!" said another voice in the opposite direction.

For a minute voices coming from every part of the room cried "Shame!" It was one of Pinkerton's best efforts.

"Silence!" roared Mr. Poot. "Who dares to say 'Shame'?"

"I do!" "I do!" "I do!"

The voices came from everywhere at once.

"If this continues, I will keep the whole class in to-morrow afternoon!" Mr. Poot shouted. "Silence at once! Bond, you are convicted—"

"He isn't!" said Ned Middleton. "The Head himself said he was only under suspicion! That isn't conviction, sir!"

"Middleton, your championship of this boy is of little credit to you!"

"And your persecution of him is of less credit still to you!" said a voice.

Mr. Poot stamped his foot with rage.

"The whole class shall be punished!" he shouted. "Silence at once! Middleton, you will take five hundred lines, for impertinence and defiance to my authority!"

"Five hundred lines because I don't believe Bond is guilty!" said Ned stoutly. "All right, sir! It's about as just as suspecting Bond of the theft of your paper!"

"You will stay in the whole of to-morrow afternoon!" Mr. Poot said.

Ned said nothing. He had the Head's permission for to-morrow afternoon, and had no intention of informing Mr. Poot about it, nor of jeopardising it.

During the remainder of morning school Tom sat silent, thinking nothing of what was going on about him; deaf to the continual sneers that Mr. Poot could not refrain from indulging in at his expense.

To-morrow Mr. Middleton was coming, and this was the news that he would hear. Mr. Middleton would know that he was suspected of dishonesty; Mr. Middleton who had done so much for him, who had spoken to him as no one had ever before spoken, who had seemed to trust him and have faith in him, would trust him no longer; his faith in him would be killed, and he had done nothing. He was innocent. He clenched his hands tightly. The

mental agony that he was enduring was well-nigh unbearable. He had been told that he must clear himself. The headmaster had told him to clear himself of this suspicion. But how could he? How could he succeed when the headmaster himself had failed to find out the truth?

Maddened and despairing, Tom sat plunged into a misery and grief too deep for words. It was not that he feared for his future; he had managed to live before, he could live again somehow. He could go back to the old life—he could fight his way again as he had fought it before. He could, if it must be so, starve as he had starved before. He could again find a bed by the dark river, or in some cheap lodging-house. It was not all that that he feared; it was the loss of Mr. Middleton's faith in him that wounded and stung him, and brought desperate thoughts into his head.

School was over, the class was dismissed, but he sat there, knowing nothing of what was going on around him.

Mr. Poot, with one final jibe at him that had fallen on deaf, unconscious ears, had gone out of the room.

A babel of voices had broken loose. They were talking of him, but he did not know it. Then suddenly a hand touched his shoulder, and he awakened with a start, and looked up into Ned Middleton's kindly and anxious face.

"Old chap, I don't care a hang what they all say," Ned said; "I don't believe you did it!"

For a moment Tom looked at him, his mouth twitching; for a moment he fought down the uncontrollable impulse. Then suddenly he broke down, sobbing and covering his face with his hands.

"Look at him howling now!" sneered Abingdon. "Look at the dirty little thief snivelling!"

"Hold your row!"

Ned's voice and face were so fierce that D'Arcy started back in alarm.

Ned Middleton stood with his hand still on Tom's heaving shoulders. Unconsciously there was in the boy's bearing an air of protection. He was Tom Bond's champion, and he was not afraid that the rest should know it.

"Nothing has been proved against Bond," he said, "and I know Bond well enough now to be certain he didn't do it. It's some dirty plot against him. I don't pretend to know who is guilty, but I'll swear it is some blackguardly plot, and if I find out—and I'm going to find out—there's going to be a hot time for someone. As for you, you dirty little brute—" Abingdon took another step backwards. "You may be the son of a lord, and you may have blue blood in your veins, but you are the rankest rotter I know! We all know what you are, and you'll know what I am if you ain't careful! You chaps"—he turned to the others—"nothing is proved against Bond; the Head himself has said so. He only said that Bond is under suspicion till the truth is proved. I don't believe Bond did it. Poot and Abingdon and his gang do, because

they want to, and because it's possible they know more about it than we do!"

"What—what do you mean?" Abingdon gasped.

"I mean that you are a dirty outsider," Ned cried, "and you are capable of any mean, dirty, under-hand business! You can go and tell your dear friend Poot what I say! I dare say you will, in any case. You are welcome to him, and he's welcome to you! You chaps, I am for Bond. I don't care if I'm alone, I'm going to stick to Bond; and I believe he is absolutely innocent of it all."

"So do I," said Pinkerton heartily. "I don't think Bond's built that way. There's some plot in it all, and I'm with you, Middleton!"

"You are a decent chap, Pink," Ned said quietly.

Gifford rose awkwardly from his place, and went over to Tom. He didn't say a word, but he held out his hand, and Ned Middleton's eyes glowed.

"Good old Gif!" he muttered. "I knew you'd stick to him!"

"It seems, you chaps," said Bibby, "that either Bond is guilty of being a dishonourable bounder, or else someone else is guilty of trying to blacken Bond's name, in which case someone else is a sight more dishonourable than Bond himself could be. I don't pretend to know the truth about it any more than the Head does, but I know a bit about Bond by this time—seen a good deal of him since he came to St. Aloy's, rubbed up against him, and that sort of thing, and I agree with Pinkerton—Bond ain't built that way. Until it is proved that he is a rotter, I ain't going to believe it!" He strolled over to Tom, and sat down on the form beside him, and brought his hand down on Tom's knee with a loud smack. "Buck up!" he said. "We are going to see you through, Bond, somehow!"

"Touching, ain't it?" said Abingdon, with a sneer. "Quite—"

"I'll be doing some touching in a moment!" Ned said fiercely. "I'll tap that blue blood of yours, you bounder, if you don't dry up!"

Again Abingdon subsided, with a look of alarm on his face.

And now another voice was raised. It was the voice of Cocoloo.

"I done know much 'bout dis business," he said. "Can't make out what it am all 'bout. But I tink dat Bon' am de betterest boy in dis school! Tink dat Abingdon dirty chap! Done like him! Tink dat Grobington, him as bad, if not worsen! Huh! Tink I like betterer Bon'! Cocoloo pulled out his fine gold watch, and looked at it. "Not got no time now," he said; "but after dinner tink it good plan some ob us go down to de village"—he paused, and looked up at the bust of Sir Walter Scott—"down to de village, and hab treat—tuck-up, blow-in—what you call de ting—hey?"

"Good idea!" said Pinkerton.

"Dat all right!" said Cocoloo. "Got to 'bey my fader's 'pirit. Him say dat Abingdon no good! My fader him remarkable cleber man; him know eberyting. After dinner we go and hab jolly good tuck-up!"

Ned Middleton slipped his hand through Tom's arm, and led him away.

"Old chap, I know what's hurting you most," he muttered. "You are thinking about what the governor will say."

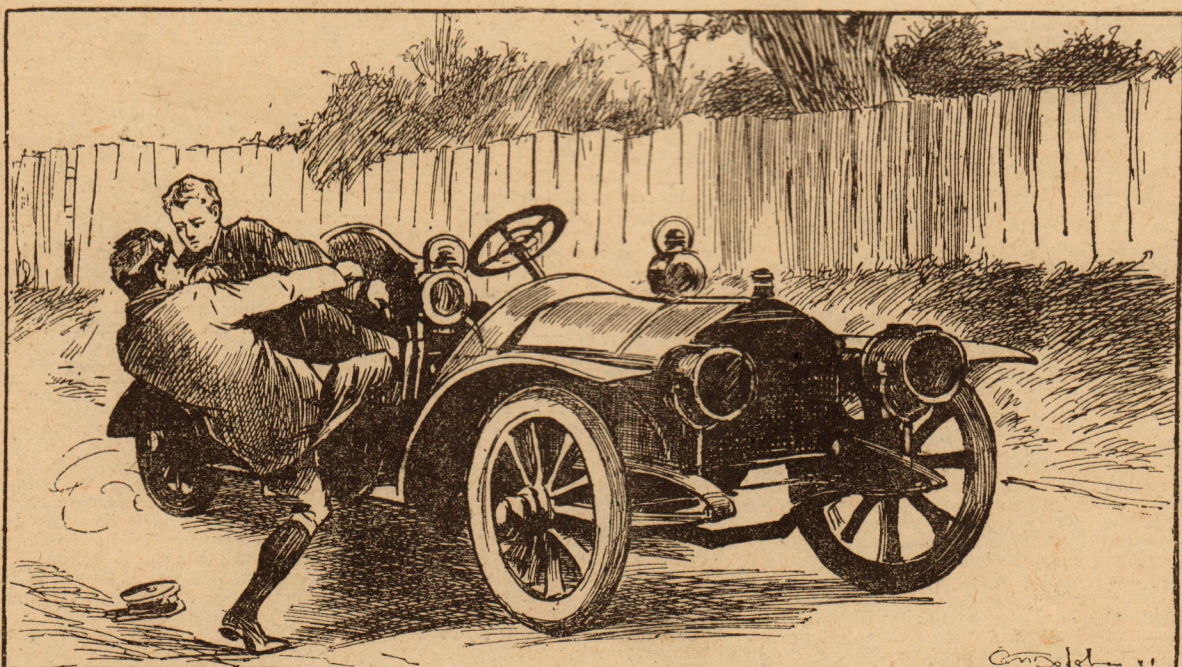
"It's all I care about!" Tom cried passionately. "I'd sooner lose everything in the world, every chance as I am ever likely to get, than he should think bad of me!"

"He won't," said Ned quietly. "Trust me, old chap; I'll make it all right with him!"

"You're the best friend a—chap ever had!" Tom said, with a break in his voice.

"Rot!" said Ned. "I'd be a rotten sort of chum if I didn't stick to you, wouldn't I? Somehow, old man, you'll pull through. Buck up! Remember, you ain't standing up against it all alone!"

(In next Tuesday's fine number of THE BOYS' FRIEND another grand long instalment of this school serial will appear. "Don o' Deepmoor" will also commence.)



Halford laid a heavy hand on Harry's shoulder. "Now, then, get out!" he cried hoarsely. (A dramatic incident from "King of the Road," Henry St. John's superb motoring story, now commencing in "The Boys' Realm Sports Library." A grand number now on sale. Price 3d.)



YOUR EDITOR'S DEN

I would like all my readers to look upon me as their real friend, someone to whom they can come for help and advice when they are in doubt or difficulty. It is never "too much trouble" to me to be of use to my boy and girl friends if they feel they would like to write to me.

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 readers who write to me, and who enclose a stamped envelope or postcard, may be sure of receiving a prompt and kindly reply by post.

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

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"LONG LIVE THE KING!"

THIS number of THE BOYS' FRIEND is published at the beginning of one of the most important weeks in the history of this country, the week which is to witness the Coronation of his Gracious Majesty King George V., and of his consort Queen Mary. Naturally, in the heart of every lad who reads this paper the most loyal sentiments are felt, and I am sure that all my friends will join me in wishing most sincerely and fervently long life and much happiness to our King and Queen, and also that during their reign this country shall see as prosperous, contented, and peaceful a period as has ever fallen to the lot of any nation.

I remember in one of Longfellow's poems a line which ran thus, "The happy island danced with corn and wine!"—a symbolical expression of peace, contentment, and prosperity—and I am sure that all of you will join with me in hoping that the Coronation of King George V. will mark the opening of such a period of happiness for our kingdom.

"DON O' DEEPMOOR."

In next Tuesday's issue of THE BOYS' FRIEND a new serial by our old friend Allan Blair will start. It deals with coal-mine life, and the hero is a Scots boy who comes to Lancashire. For this reason alone, apart from the fact that the story is an intensely interesting one, my North-country readers ought to find it attractive. I can certainly state the opening instalment is one of the best it has ever been my good fortune to read, and I hope those of my boys who do like a good stirring story of pit life will do their best to spread the fame of the good old "Green 'Un" abroad.

I know I have lots of friends—I know it very truly—and I know that when I ask them to do something for me I can rely upon getting it done. Not only is this true of the very wide circle who read my paper, and who have been reading it for many years past, but also in the narrower circles of my private and business life. So I feel quite confident in asking my chums to do me a little turn, namely, when they have read next week's number to pass it on to some chum of theirs who is not one of our readers.

PHYSICAL CULTURE.

I wish that every school in the country gave a larger part of its time to physical culture and drill. From my point of view, there is nothing better for a boy than to be taught how to keep his body in good health, and to learn how to execute orders smartly. The spirit of discipline is one of the most essential things in the world, essential because it makes for happiness, because the man who is capable of carrying out orders smartly is qualified to give orders, and learns to be content to accept instructions of his for-the-time-being superior.

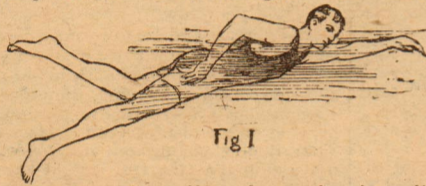
Besides, I am certain that if physical culture were more generally taught to boys, it would do a great deal towards adding to the backbone of our race. I am tempted to make these remarks because I so often get letters from lads who want to go in for exercise, and who don't know how to set about it.

Now, had they been taught at school there would be no difficulty; and I am quite certain of one thing—that if half an hour a day were given to physical culture and taken from some other subject the boy would not be one whit the worse when the time came for him to leave school.

W. C. B. is a Yorkshire reader who says he is eager to become stronger, and wants me to tell him how to manage it. My correspondent has an idea that in order to become strong one must spend a lot of money on apparatus.

This is not really so; the necessary apparatus for physical culture consists just simply of a body free from any organic disease, such as a weak heart. Then all that need be done is to follow the many lessons which have been given in THE BOYS' FRIEND and its companion papers. Every exercise for dumb-bells can be carried out without them; all my reader needs to do is to get a bit of old broom-handle, cut off two short pieces to hold in his hands, and grip these tightly when going through the exercises.

W. C. B. also tells me that he is too young to join a gymnasium, being only fifteen. I do not agree with



Showing the leg action when swimming with the trudgeon stroke.
(See our Swimming article on this page.)

him, and if there is a gymnasium in his district, I certainly advise him to see the person in charge, and endeavour to join. He should also go in for swimming. It is one of the finest exercises for developing the body all round.

HONEST CRITICISM.

It is this same friend of mine—W. C. B.—who has a complaint to make, and he is backed up by another reader—W. A. F.—who also criticises THE BOYS' FRIEND.

I am very sorry that they should do so, but, as I have always told my friends, I welcome honest criticism. THE BOYS' FRIEND is published to please its readers, and unless it publishes the stories they want, it is not fulfilling its purpose. Because of this I always ask my friends to write to me if they see anything they don't like, or if there is any kind of story or article they want. Just let them send me a line, and if it is reasonably possible I will gratify their desires.

Now, W. C. B. says that the school stories have been very much alike lately. I think his criticism is quite true, and he will find that when Mr. St. John's story finishes shortly its place will be taken by a school tale of quite a different type.

My other friend—W. A. F.—says that in my "Den" I always very strongly condemn racing and gambling. "Yet," he continues, "you publish stories dealing with horse races!"

Well, I suppose I must plead guilty to this; but my point is as follows: When I am asked for advice about racing, I always say that the man who imagines he is going to make money by backing horses is a fool, and the boy who thinks so is just as big a fool. You don't stand a chance, and I suppose that, apart from the bookmakers, not one man in a million who bets on horses ends up with a profit at the close of the year.

Besides, the amount of time and attention given to the so-called "finding of winners" if devoted to improving oneself and one's knowledge of a trade would inevitably end in a surer and more substantial position. So, from the point of view solely of one's advantage, it is much wiser to leave racing alone. My friend will find that when I have published stories about racing they have been mainly instrumental in exposing the

tricks which seem inseparable from this sport.

I am much obliged to both of my friends for their criticism, and I can assure them I will lay it well to heart. I am not above receiving criticism from my readers; on the contrary, I welcome it, because THE BOYS' FRIEND is published for their benefit, and it is my duty to give them the reading matter they most like.

"SAMMY'S" CHEERFUL LETTER.

"Sammy" is an old friend of mine, who writes me a very interesting letter about himself, and lots of other things. First of all, he says that a little while ago he read a letter from a boy, who complained that he could not get any friends. Now "Sammy" confesses to me that he was in much the same position until he joined the Boy Scouts.

He has rather a high idea of a chum, and he says that most boys are all right so long as everything goes smoothly, but if a chap happens to be down, or in a temporary difficulty, or if you ask these fellows to do something just a little bit out of their way, as a rule, they find they have something else to do.

"Sammy's" idea of a pal—and he tells me he does try to carry out his own theory—is a fellow who always has a warm smile and a friendly grip of the hand; who is always willing to do you a good turn, and never behind time; the sort of fellow who doesn't ride on when you have a puncture; who, whatever he does or says, considers you first.

Well, I quite agree with my correspondent. I think we all wish we could find a pal who, whatever happened, would never turn on us, but I am afraid that few of us are fortunate enough to light upon those real solid friends who stick to you through thick and thin. The boys, men, and girls who find them are very lucky.

Still, I am glad to think that at least one of my readers is working on this plan, the plan which I have always described as that of "playing the game," doing to others exactly as you would like them to do to you, and whether we have friends now or not, if we play the game, we shall soon gather round ourselves friends who act on the same principle.

My friend "Sammy" sends me a copy of the "Second Hampstead Monthly Gazette," which is the organ of the Boy Scout Patrol to which he belongs. It is quite a decent production, and reflects much credit on its editor, who happens to be "Sammy." I shall always be very glad to hear from him.

FROM A LEEDS MOTHER.

Really, I did not know I had such enthusiastic friends, but on perusing the letter from "A Leeds' Mother"—which I have taken the liberty of printing in this issue, in addition to another one—I must say I am quite touched by the delightful loyalty and friendship which many of my readers and their parents display towards me. Because this letter is absolutely genuine, and because it comes straight from the heart of a mother of a group of my readers, I feel quite justified in publishing it, so that all who care may read it.

"Dear Editor,—Will you kindly allow me a little space in your most valuable paper, THE BOYS' FRIEND? I have read several most shameful, disgusting letters which have been

sent to you concerning the dear old paper, but this one I have just read that 'Disgusted, Though Amused,' has sent in has fairly made my blood boil. If it is not asking too much of you to send me the filthy cad's address (The letter was anonymous.—Editor), I will write him such a letter that would make him feel like what he is—a most cowardly cur. I should think the papers he is interested in are some sporting print or gambling paper.

"My opinion of him is that he dare not read THE BOYS' FRIEND because in it he would find that his duty was to obey his parents, which he does not, and also in trying to encourage his younger brother to do the same. I would tell him this. I have four sons, and I am proud to think that they all love to read the 'B. F.' because in it they learn to do all that is good and right and noble. In it they learn to live good, honest lives, doing all they can to make everyone happy.

"Dear Editor, I hope you will not take any heed of such trash as those letters contain, as they are only low, degraded, weak-minded brutes that are void of common-sense that would dare to insult those who are trying to lead them in a right way. You have my best wishes for the success of your most valuable paper. I have had the pleasure of reading it now for the last twelve years, and I will defy anyone to come and tell me one word that has ever been published that has not been full of good sound advice, and I have great pleasure in reading the splendid stories that appear in it each week. I think they get better. There are good lessons for both young and old to learn, and until my dying day I shall always find room for the dear old 'Green 'Un'.

In conclusion, I say God bless you in your noble work, and may He spare your life still to hold up the dear old 'Green 'Un,' in spite of all such dirty cads as 'Disgusted, Though Amused.'—I remain, yours sincerely,

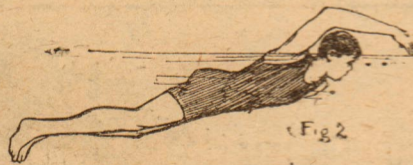
"A LEEDS MOTHER."

ON GIVING ADVICE.

C. N. rather takes me to task for giving some advice to a girl on the subject of Confirmation, though he admits that what I said on the occasion in question was quite right. If that is so, I don't see why I should be criticised, nor do I honestly see why I should not be consulted upon some question concerning the spiritual welfare of my reader's soul.

Although C. N. writes quite pleasantly, he makes a somewhat un-Christian suggestion when he says that I might be of a different denomination from the reader who asks my help, and because of that give advice which was not proper.

My friend, C. N., seems altogether to have forgotten that an editor of a non-political paper has no political beliefs, nor has an editor any sectarian adherences in the editorship of his paper. He is just a sensible, kindly man, whose best endeavours are used in giving the safest and most sound advice to those of his friends who write to him for it. I



Bring the arm well over the head when using the trudgeon stroke.
(See "Swimming for Boys," on this page.)

don't think anyone can ever hold me up to criticism for the advice I give in this paper. It is always free from bias of any kind, and in the best interest of the reader concerned.

AN OLD READER'S LOVE TROUBLE.

A friend of mine has apparently fallen in love, but the girl who attracts him has not yet been introduced to him, and he wants to know how to make her acquaintance.

He says every time he meets her, which is not very often, she always smiles, and looks round at him.

Seeing that my friend has met this young lady several times, I think that next time she smiles at him he should raise his hat, and pass the time of day. Probably a happy acquaintanceship will be the result. As they live in a small town I do not see any objection to their making friends in this way.

YOUR EDITOR (H. E.).

SWIMMING FOR BOYS.

The Trudgeon Stroke.

By J. G. B. LYNCH.

THE trudgeon-stroke is one of the most popular, especially for medium distances in racing. It may not be quite so fast as the side-stroke, but it is less tiring on the whole, and if used correctly will cover a greater distance in a shorter time than the breast-stroke and that on the side alternately.

This stroke should be learnt only when you have acquired a first-rate knowledge of the breast-stroke, and thus have perfect confidence in the water. Even then it is not at all a bad plan to get some friend to support you with

a stout rod and line

from the bank. This is not for the purpose of holding you up in the water, but to check you directly you show signs of a wrong movement.

The first position that you should assume is lying flat on the water, practically on your face; if anything, you should be a little inclined to the left. Your legs should be stretched out straight behind you and your arms in front, the palms of your hands a little scooped and turned slightly outwards.

The action of the legs should be up and down in the water, and not as in the breast-stroke. This action is sometimes called

the "scissors kick,"

as the movement is not unlike the opening and shutting of a pair of scissors. If you are on your left side, let us say, you should bring up the right leg with an unbent knee, just as though you were walking, and then let the left leg meet it, bending it only at the knee and not at the hip.

In order to make the arm-stroke effective you should roll your body over from side to side, according as you require to use the left arm or the right. The stroke in question is an over-arm one, and each arm works alternately. You should bring your arm out of the water with the

elbow slightly bent,

plunge it in again as far as you can reach over your head, and finish with a digging motion, scooping the water away beneath you. In this stroke you should remember one most important thing, and that is to bring your arm right up over your head and not at all to the side, as in the side-stroke.

Another thing to bear in mind is that you must have your face under the water most of the time. At the end of each stroke let your mouth come just out of the water to

get a breath of air,

and then empty the lungs through the nostrils under water. This comes quite easily after a little practice.

It is essential that you should never hurry your stroke. This applies to any branch of swimming, but rather especially to the breast and trudgeon-strokes. Pace comes from perfect movement, and until you have made quite sure of the ease with which you can make each separate part of a stroke, you should not attempt to go fast. After that you will find that swiftness comes naturally.

In the trudgeon-stroke you should move the arm first—that is to say, the right arm if you are starting on your left side. Follow that with the opening of the legs for the "scissors kick," shutting the legs as the right arm finishes the stroke. Then use the other arm, and as that begins to scoop the water beneath it, begin again with the first arm.

When you are in training for some race, you should give a certain time of practice to each stroke. Have

a friend on the bank

who will keep time for you with a watch. Give, for example, five or six minutes every day to the breast-stroke, which is by far the most important. Then try the side-stroke for a rather less time. Before going on to the trudgeon it will be a good plan to rest yourself by a turn on your back. If you happen to be really exhausted—though you should never allow yourself to get to that stage in practice, of course—you will do well to lie on your back and merely float for a while. This will give a perfect rest.

THE END.

(More grand swimming articles shortly in THE BOYS' FRIEND.)

A SUPERB NEW COALMINE SERIAL STARTS IN NEXT WEEK'S "BOYS' FRIEND." IT IS ENTITLED "DON O' DEEPMOOR." AND IS WRITTEN BY ALLAN BLAIR.



YOU'D better leave off, Master Joe. You know your father doesn't like you skylarking about in the shop!"

"Who do you think you're talking to—charity brat?" snapped Joe Turnbull, a snub-nosed, sandy-haired boy, as he attempted to twist a heavy Dutch cheese on the point of a knife-sharpening steel in the manner of a juggler.

"I can't help it if I was brought up in a workhouse," replied Will Shaw, his face growing scarlet. "I'm only telling you for your own good. If you drop that cheese you'll spoil it, and your father will be very angry."

"Rats!" sneered the grocer's son. "I shall do as I like. I don't care any more for father than I do for you!"

Will Shaw, in a white cotton jacket, shrugged his broad shoulders and went on weighing up pounds of lump sugar.

Some three months before John Turnbull had agreed with the guardians of the little town of Gardstone to take Will Shaw into his employment, and teach him the grocery and provision business. There was to be no salary for a year, but John Turnbull was to provide food and sleeping accommodation for his assistant, whilst the guardians undertook to supply Will Shaw with clothing.

It was hard, tedious drudgery from seven in the morning till ten at night, working for a miserly, nigger-driving employer and his bully of a son; but Will Shaw's life had never been an easy one, and he took hardships, and even blows, without complaint, as if it were his lot to bear them.

Turnbull's grocery and provision stores was a double-fronted shop with two counters. The workhouse boy was at work at the grocery side, whilst Joe Turnbull juggled with the Dutch cheese at the butter and bacon counter.

It was a sunny morning, and John Turnbull, a lean, sour-visaged man, was busy opening cases in the cellar. "Bet you couldn't do it," grinned the grocer's son, giving the cheese an extra twist. "Old Cinquevalli at the Varieties last night was doing it just like this, only he had three heavy cannon balls. Oh, crumbs, look at that!"

The point of the steel suddenly shot through the centre of the cheese, which broke in two, one piece crashing down into a case of eggs, which John Turnbull supposed his son to be sorting, and smashing half-a-crown's worth; the other went flying off at a tangent, knocking over a pyramid of tins of potted salmon.

"I told you you'd do it, Master Joe," cried Will Shaw, trembling violently. "Master will say it's my fault now. Oh, look, look! Those salmon tins!"

The cheese had knocked off the two top tins, which had fallen on to a pile of bacon, but the workhouse boy's quick eyes had detected that the whole pile was now tottering.

Joe Turnbull stood staring at the smashed eggs. Looking up, he saw the tottering pyramid of salmon tins and sprang to save them. They stood on a shelf forming a back-ground to the window. But his efforts only assisted the catastrophe! As his fingers went out to grasp them, his foot slipped on a piece of fallen butter, and his head shot like a battering ram into the middle of the pyramid.

"Crash." Like a centre-forward aiming at the goalie, half a dozen salmon tins shot off the shelf at that terrific butt. Smash they went through the window into the street!

"Oh, dear," cried Will Shaw, hurrying to the bacon counter to pick up Joe Turnbull, who had fallen across the shelf and was sobbing like a baby. "There'll be an awful row when master—"

"Awful row! I should think there will be, you clumsy, thieving, homeless brat," roared an angry voice.

The workhouse boy had got his arms around Joe's waist, when, turning sharply, he espied his employer standing at the end of the counter glaring at him with a beet-root-red face.

"Get out of it, you hulking, over-fed loon," shouted the grocer, seizing Will by the shoulders and hurling him to the other end of the shop. "Dry your eyes, my poor boy," he added, in a kinder tone. "I know very well how it happened! Those guardians will have to pay. I—"

"But—but, sir," began Will Shaw. "It wasn't—"

"You young criminal," bellowed Mr. Turnbull, dashing at the workhouse boy. "How dare you interrupt me! Get outside and pick up my property. I'll slash you for this. You'll live on bread and water for a week."

Will gathered up the pots of salmon and returned to the shop. Mr. Turnbull seized him by the shoulder, and dragging him into the shop parlour, belaboured him with a stout walking-stick till his arm was tired.

Will Shaw bore his punishment without a murmur, though every muscle in his body seemed to ache. Joe Turnbull had recovered from his fright and even stood grinning at him.

"You vile young vagabond!" panted the grocer. "I'll teach you to deliberately waste my property. I'll— He did do it, didn't he, Joe?"

"Yes, father," came the lying response. "More his fault than mine."

Will Shaw reeled back with open mouth. He could scarcely credit his senses.

"I didn't do it!" he gasped. "It wasn't my fault at all! I was weighing up sugar when—"

John Turnbull would not allow him to proceed.

"You dare to stand there, you barefaced rogue, and tell me such lies," he snarled, rushing at Will again.

The workhouse boy's patience had given out at last. He kept quite still as the grocer leapt upon him. As the stick rose in the air, he snatched it from the other's grasp. Amazed at this unexpected rebellion, the first

Will had shown, Mr. Turnbull gaped like a codfish, then he danced round the little parlour to a lively tune, as the workhouse boy brought the stick sharply down on the fattest part of his master's anatomy.

"Ow—wow—help! Murder! Police! Stop him, Joe!" yelled Mr. Turnbull.

"Master Joe," however, thought fit to crouch in a corner, and Will Shaw did not cease belabouring his brutal employer until the stick broke in two.

"Now, you'll have to find somebody else to starve and beat," cried Will Shaw, flinging Mr. Turnbull on top of his son. "I'm going away."

And just as he was, capless, and in his white cotton jacket, he stepped out of the shop into the Gardstone High Street.

For half an hour he kept briskly on. No one had ran after him. No one had called him. He was in the open country now, yet his excitement had not all disappeared. He had acted on the impulse of the moment. Never for an instant before had he thought of taking to flight, or of complaining of the grocer's ill-treatment.

Now, as he sank in the shade of an old elm, and grew calmer, he reflected on the sudden turn in the current of life.

"Daren't go back to the guardians after this," he murmured. "I promised them to be honest and straightforward and obedient, and I've kept my promise. But they wouldn't believe me. And I daren't go back to Mr. Turnbull. I wonder if they can put me in prison for what I've done? Wouldn't be worse than what I've gone through at Mr. Turnbull's, anyway. If they only leave me alone, I'll get work somehow."

It was delightful to sit on the turf in the cool breeze, and listen to the singing of the birds, and to sniff the sweet scent of the country, after the years he had spent in the barrack-like building of Gardstone Workhouse, and after his more recent experiences in Mr. Turnbull's employment.

"I'll get on all right, if they'll only leave me alone," he mused, with growing optimism. "I'm strong and willing, though Mr. Turnbull would never admit it. Somebody will give

me work for a bit of food and a place to sleep. Ah, if only I could get work in the fields!"

He yawned. He had been up since six that morning, having had to scrub the floor and counters of the shop before opening time. His bed was on straw in the cellar amongst the empty cases. His back slipped from the tree trunk on to the soft turf. In ten seconds he was fast asleep.

"Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud!" Will Shaw raised himself to a sitting position, and rolled his knuckles in his eyes. How long he had slept he had not the faintest idea.

"Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud!" Again came the noise which had disturbed him. It sounded like heavy footsteps. At first he thought it was someone in pursuit of him, and he struggled to his feet in a perspiration of terror.

"Hi, hi, hi!" came a faint call over the breeze. "Stop her!"

Then it suddenly occurred to the workhouse boy what those noises were that he had heard. They were hoofbeats. A horse had bolted and was rapidly approaching the place where he stood.

He ran out into the road, and peered beneath his palm.

Sure enough, round a bend in the lane a horse was galloping furiously, amidst a cloud of dust. On its back was a lady, clinging dangerously to the frightened creature's mane.

For several moments Will stared hopelessly. He meant to try to stop that horse, but he knew nothing about horses. He had never even had his hand on one's back. He wished he knew the proper way to tackle it in case anything should happen to make the creature still more frightened and still more imperil its rider's life.

The horse came within a dozen yards of him. He could see the foam about its nostrils as they emitted great jets of steam. Its eyeballs were glazed and bright. And on its back was not a lady, as he had thought, but a young girl, whose pretty face was white with terror, and whose golden hair streamed out behind her.

The sight stirred the lad to action. Scarcely knowing what he was doing, he ran forward and outstretched his arms.

After that things acted with lightning-like rapidity. Will received a terrific butt in the chest that seemed to knock all the life out of him. Involuntarily his hand clutched at the head rein, and the animal, slackening with a new terror before that white jacket, danced round in a circle.

Will hung perilously by the side of those beating hoofs. He had no knowledge of what he was doing, yet he still clung on to the leather. The horse was rearing and bucking, and the girl upon its back was screaming with fright.

Yet the terrified animal's flight was checked. Will recovered his wind, and got on his feet once more.

"Can you jump?" he gasped. "Can't hold him much longer." For a moment the horse ceased plunging through sheer exhaustion. The pretty girl, encouraged by her rescuer's words, took advantage of the opportunity to spring from its back. With a little cry, she pitched forward on to the turf as the animal again resumed its tantrum. Lightened of the weight from its back, off it sped again.

Will Shaw tried to run with it, found it impossible, and, suddenly releasing his hold, shot forward on his face. He was badly scratched about the face, and partly stunned by the fall; but before he could rise, he felt a gentle touch on his shoulder.

"Oh, it was so brave of you!" said a sweet voice. "I do hope you're not hurt! Tilly, my horse, was frightened by a steam-roller. My father is coming along in his motor. You must come home with us, and see a doctor."

Will struggled to his feet, and shook the dust from his mouth and forehead.

"I'm all right, miss," he said awkwardly. "Just shook up. Soon pull round. Better be moving—"

His eyes had become misty, and he reeled a bit in the hot sunshine. A motor-car pulled up a couple of yards away. He did not see it. A soldierly, distinguished-looking man leapt out and clasped the girl in his arms.

"Thank Heaven you're safe, my child!" cried Major Murray. "This brave fellow stopped the horse. By Jove, the poor chap's fainted!"

Will Shaw had fallen on his knees, and was about to collapse in the road, when the motorist whipped him up in his big arms and laid him carefully on the seat of the big car.

A quarter of an hour later the workhouse boy opened his eyes to find himself lying upon a couch in a cool, luxuriously-furnished room. Major Murray, his wife, a sweet-faced, grey-haired woman, and the girl he had rescued were in the room.

"Keep still, my brave boy!" exclaimed Major Murray. "There'll be a doctor here in a few moments. After he's seen you, I'll run you home in my car."

The word "home" brought back Will's position to him like a cold douche.

"Won't be any need, sir," he replied, getting unsteadily to his feet. "I've got no home—not now. No need for me to see a doctor either. I'm all right."

"No home," repeated Mrs. Murray tenderly, putting a restraining hand on his arm. "My poor boy, what do you mean? You risked your life to save my daughter's. It is our duty now to do you a good turn."

The kindly way of the motherly woman deeply touched Will's heart. He had never known a mother's love. Very few people were even kind to him. That sweet face seemed like an angel's.

His first impulse was to rush away out of the house, to keep his troubles locked in his own breast; but he could not help himself. Before long he had told his listeners the whole of his life story from the moment he had entered the Gardstone Workhouse, an orphan of five, until his dramatic departure from John Turnbull's employment that morning.

"If your story's true, my boy, you've had a rough time of it," said Major Murray. "I'll make inquiries. In the meantime, you'd better stop here for a bit. There'll be a cricket-match on the big field after lunch. Know anything of cricket?"

"We had a team at the workhouse, sir," replied Will timidly, "and—and I was captain. I should like to see it, if I may."

"Certainly you may," said Dorothy Murray, smiling sweetly at him. "I expect father's wondering if you'd play for his team. He's two men short."

"I daren't ask the lad," said the major. "He's too knocked up."

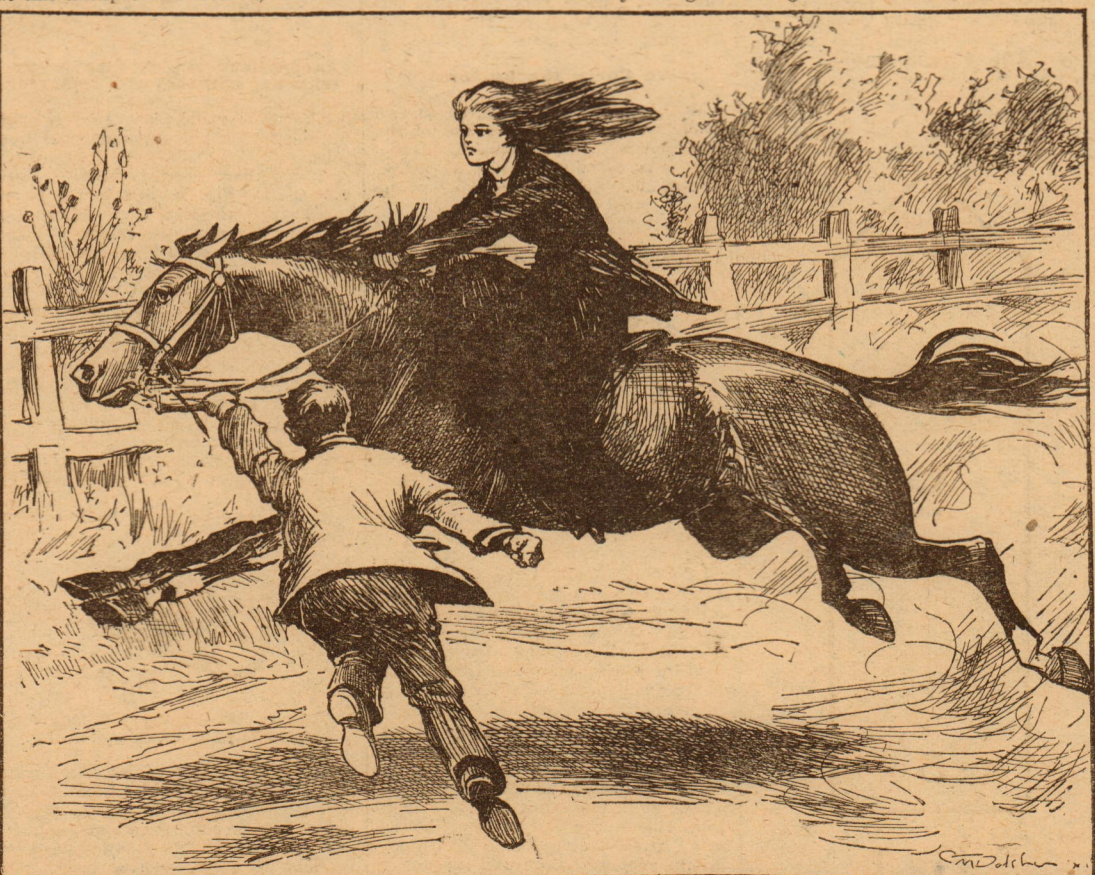
"Indeed I'm not," said Will, with such a pleading appeal in his honest eyes that the big soldier laughed. "We'll see after the doctor's had a look at you," he replied. "You've got a nasty cut on the temple."

But the doctor's verdict was so favourable that after Will had eaten a good meal in the servants' hall, the major took him along to an upper room, and gave him a suit of flannels.

"They're my boy's things," he said. "He's at college now, but he's about your size. When you're ready, come down to the big field for a bit of practice."

There was little of the appearance of the workhouse boy in Will Shaw when he stepped into the field a quarter of an hour later. His face

(Concluded on the next page.)



The horse came galloping madly on, and a young girl clung to the frightened creature's mane. Scarcely knowing what he was doing, Will dashed forward, his hand clutched the head rein, and he hung perilously beside the fast beating hoofs.

was frank and regular, though a bit pinched, and his body had the makings of an athlete, if it was rather on the lean side.

"You'll do, my lad!" cried Major Murray, when, at his host's request, Will batted against the balls the major sent down. "You're as good as any of us, I can see."

"Every year daddy has one of the M.C.C. elevens down to play the team he gets up," explained Dorothy Murray, strolling to Will's side. "This year we've got an awfully weak side. Ah, this must be the visiting team."

Major Murray won the toss, and sent his side in first. Will was eighth man, and he sat on the grass beside Dorothy, watching the game with a heart that was too full for speech.

The team that had come from Lord's was a weak one, it is true, but all the same, they were far better players than the majority of Major Murray's friends. When the score stood at about fifty, it came to Will's turn to bat. At the other wicket, Major Murray, who had gone in first, had scored over twenty.

"Good luck!" cried Dorothy after him. "Help father to make a century."

Will was decidedly nervous as he took centre, but he survived the over, and then, as Major Murray began hitting out, and he had to cross the pitch with him, his confidence returned.

Sixty went up, and then seventy, and the little crowd of onlookers began to cheer, whilst the M.C.C. captain rearranged his bowlers and began to get anxious.

Will was the dark horse of the match. Nobody knew anything about him outside the Murray family, and as time and again he drove the balls of an old county professional player to the boundary, the liveliest curiosity was manifested in him. No one suspected that he was a workhouse boy who had run away from a brutal master.

When the score reached 108, Major Murray was bowled. He made forty-two, but Will kept his wicket safe until the end came at 147, when his score was fifty-nine.

A round of hand-clapping and cheering greeted the youngster as he carried out his bat.

"I've never seen a youngster play better," said Mr. Mead, the M.C.C. captain, putting his arm in Will's. "You've got a fine style, and you ought to play for your county. I suppose you're a public school boy?"

"I don't understand you, sir," stammered the workhouse boy, a bit embarrassed before the kindly eyes of the cricketer.

"Oh, he'll be playing for the county before long!" cried Major Murray, hurrying up. "I'll see to that."

Dorothy Murray ran to meet Will. "It was just grand to see you slogging the balls all over the field," she cried delightedly. "Oh, I'm so glad now old Tilly, my horse, ran away. Father says he's discovered a genius."

"Oh, I was very lucky with several strokes," replied Will, blushing at the compliment. "But I tried hard. You've all been so kind to me."

It soon came to the M.C.C.'s turn to bat. Will added to the laurels he had gained by his smartness in fielding, saving a lot of runs, and catching three batsmen out in the innings. And eventually the crack team had to retire beaten by over sixty runs.

Immediately the tea was over, at which both teams sat down, and which Will thought the jolliest affair of his life, Major Murray went off in his motor-car to Gardstone.

Will was being escorted round the peach-houses by Dorothy when he came back.

"I've seen the guardians, my boy," said the old soldier, "and I've also paid a visit to Grocer Turnbull. Your employer sees now that he made a mistake. He's anxious to take you back again. Will you go?"

The workhouse boy's face fell. "If you desire it, sir," he began, "though I—"

"It's a shame to torment you, my boy, after all the hardships you've experienced," said the major kindly. "I wouldn't let you go back to that cowardly grocer for a hundred pounds. I felt like horsewhipping the fellow as I listened to him. I haven't forgotten you saved Dorothy's life this afternoon. You'll stay here until you care to leave. I can find plenty of jobs to keep you busy. Besides, I've promised Mr. Mead to introduce you to the captain of Leamshire, who wants promising young batsmen very badly."

And he hurried away before Workhouse Will could stammer out his thanks.

THE END.

Cycling for Boys.

The Rust Demon. By Our Cycling Expert.

ONE of the advantages of buying a good bicycle in preference to a cheap one is that the nickel-plating will be much better on the more expensive mount, and more able to withstand the rust.

The plating of the cheaper machine may reflect the sun like a looking-glass for the first few weeks, but rust will soon appear unless the machine receives very careful attention.

Plated wheel-rims and spokes are a nuisance—nothing more or less. They look no nicer than rims which are enamelled, and sooner or later,

view, the saddle springs and frame are also keen sufferers from rust. The metal is eaten into unobserved, and finally the springs snap.

The best way in which rust can be prevented is by examining the machine at frequent intervals, and removing every suspicion of redness with

a woollen rag

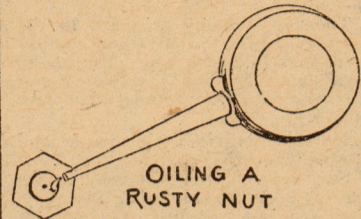
saturated with paraffin oil. In this way you banish the rust before it has time to do harm. The longer it is left, the deeper will it bite into the plating, until, when it has penetrated into the actual metal, nothing can remove it.

If you are not prepared to devote much attention to cleaning the machine, the next best thing is to cover all the plated parts with a thin coating of vaseline. No moisture will then reach the metal. Dust and mud will adhere to the vaseline, however, and naturally this will have an adverse effect upon its appearance. Should you wish to make it spick-and-span for a particular ride, the vaseline can be wiped off in a minute, and the plated parts will show their original brilliance.

The plate parts usually vaselined are wheels and spokes, hubs, brake-fittings, saddle-springs, chain-wheel, and cranks. Treating the handlebars in this manner is unnecessary, because not even the most neglectful cyclist objects to rubbing down his handlebars when they are wet. Moreover, being in such a conspicuous place, the grease would almost certainly soil the rider's hands and clothes.

In all circumstances, however, it is advisable to vaseline the fitment which secures the bell to the handlebar.

If the handlebars do become rusty, the defect can be hidden by covering them with electrician's tape, or with special handlebar rubber—



OILING A RUSTY NUT

When a nut becomes immovable through rust, put a little oil upon it.

generally sooner, the rust demon attacks them. If your wheels are plated, you must wipe them down after every ride over wet roads, and

storing the machine

in a place which is even slightly damp will be fatal to them.

Second to plated rims come the brake fittings. These are so exposed that it is small wonder rust affects them. The nuts are particularly liable to turn red, and are then difficult to tighten or release. When a nut becomes immovable through rust, put a little drop of oil upon it. This will often assist in its removal.

Although partly concealed from

How to Make a "Housewife."

An Article for Boys Who Camp, and for Boy Scouts.

EVERY scout, and every other fellow who goes to camp in any sort of way, ought to learn how to mend his clothes, equipment, and so on.

If you are in camp and you tear your shirt, say, on a tree branch or a bit of barbed wire, or your belt snaps, there's no one there to do it for you, so you've jolly well got to mend it yourself.

Every chap who goes to camp should have a "housewife"—pronounced "hussuf"—such as soldiers carry, containing needles, thread, buttons, and mending tackle generally. You can make one for yourself quite easily. This is how to do it:

First, get a piece of flannel ten

inches long and three inches wide, and cut it to the shape of Fig. 1. Then get a piece of American cloth and cut it exactly the same shape and size. Lay one on top of the other, and bind them together all round the edges with braid or ribbon about half an inch wide. Fig. 2 shows just how this is done. Stitch it with good strong thread.

My own "housewife," that I have found invaluable in no end of camps, is made of white flannel and black American cloth, bound with black silk ribbon. This is very neat and serviceable, but, of course, the colour of the thing doesn't matter a button!

To Carry the Cottons.

Well, now, at E (Fig. 3), about two inches from the square end of the "housewife," put a piece of elastic. This is to carry your reels of cotton, thread, etc. Sew one end down to the

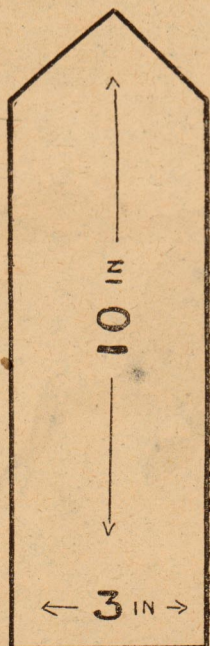


Fig 1

Showing the shape and size of the Housewife.

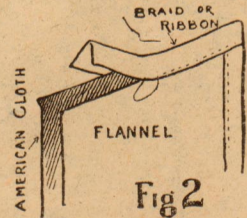


Fig 2

How to bind the edges of the Housewife with braid or ribbon.

edge of the "housewife," thread your reels on, and then sew the loose end of the elastic down to the other edge.

In a "housewife" the size I have mentioned you can carry three reels, and if you have one of white cotton, another of strong black thread, and the third of that fine strong twine used for sewing mats and things, you will be well provided for almost any emergency.

Now get a piece of braid or ribbon about an inch wide. Sew one end of it to the "housewife" at A (Fig. 3). Carry it down to the main part of the flannel at B, and stitch it there. This holds the square end of the "housewife" over, and makes a little nook for the reels of cotton and thread.

Now stitch the braid down to the flannel at intervals, so as to make loops for a pair of scissors, a thimble,

something like a cricket-bat handle—which is now on the market. But so far as appearance goes, these remedies are almost as bad as the disease.

There is only thing to do if the plated parts have turned rusty and you do not wish to have them re-plated by a cycle-repairer, and that is to enamel them all over, and thus make the machine an "all-black bicycle." Manufacturers are now turning out machines of this description, and the price of them is something in the region of ten pounds. When done by an amateur, the enamel is liable to chip, but it can



Rust is liable to get into the springs of the saddle without being observed.

easily be touched up. And black enamel looks nicer than red rust. Of course, the plating is the

chief sufferer from rust,

but there are two other parts of a bicycle which are attacked by it. These are the frame and the chain. The frame will inevitably become a brown-red wherever the enamel has chipped.

A rusty chain is a sure sign of carelessness, for if this important fitment is well lubricated, it will never become rusty at the sides. Finely powdered black-lead mixed with lard makes a good substitute for the proper chain lubricant, and it should always be laid on thickly, especially on a wet day. Don't grudge your chain its grease. A well-greased chain runs easily, and wears longer.

The reddest rust can be banished by rubbing with emery-cloth; but this is not a permanent cure, for after a week the rust will appear again, and be more prominent than ever.

THE END.

Upholstery for Boys.

How to Make and Mend Chairs.

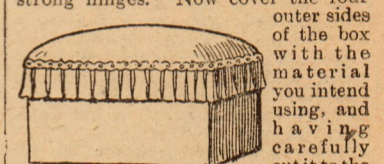
WHEN you consider the many possibilities there are in connection with this interesting work, it is to be wondered that a great number of you chaps do not make it your special indoor hobby for wet days when it is impossible to get outside.

The necessary outlay of money is not considerable, as the number of tools required is small—a hammer, saw, some strong needles and cotton, a Bradawl, tacks, brass-headed nails, pins, upholsterers' braid, and stuffing material—horsehair being the best, which can be obtained at a local upholstering firm for about 1s. 6d. per pound—but in most cases wadding will answer the purpose very well.

Velvets are very much used for upholstery, and if obtained stamped or embossed they are effective, but if considered too expensive, chintz or any ordinary material will do as well.

The beginner should look about him to see if there is a corner in the sitting-room that would be improved by an extra seat, and if so, a plain, large-sized box can be made into a useful as well as an ornamental piece of furniture.

You can purchase the box from your local grocer for a small sum, and your first step should be to join the cover to the box with a pair of strong hinges. Now cover the four



An Upholstered Box, described in this clever article.

outer sides of the box with the material you intend using, and having carefully cut it to the proper size, fasten it on at the four

corners with brass-headed nails. Then lay a fairly thick layer of wadding on the top of the cover—rather higher towards the middle, but see that it is not lumpy. This should be covered with a square piece of the same material, the edges turned in and fastened on with tacks.

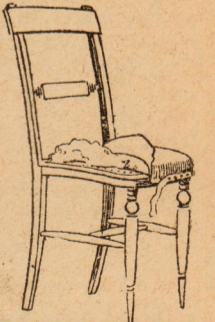
Now a frill should be made on a piece of broad tape to go completely round the box, and it will be advisable beforehand to get the exact measurement with a piece of string. The frill should be about quarter the depth of the box, and made of the same material as was used in covering it.

I would recommend you to ask either your sisters or mother to help you with this, as care should be taken to see that the pleats are even and securely stitched down. This should be pinned round the edge of the cover, and when in proper position should be hammered on with fine brass-headed nails. If the cover is not thick, it would be advisable to use a Bradawl beforehand in case the wood should split.

The work is now completed, and if placed in a corner it will be found a comfortable seat, and as the top lifts up, books or such articles might be safely kept inside.

An old chair is always a snitable article for re-upholstering, and we all know how easily cane-seated chairs become broken from rough treatment, or the covering of the ordinary armchair soiled. It would cost about 3s. to have the chair re-caned, whereas the work can be done at home in another, but as good a way, for about 6d.

First cut away all the ragged cane with a sharp knife. When this is done a piece of wood, such as the cover of a box, and about the size of the bottom of the chair, should be cut with a saw to the shape of the seat, and firmly nailed down. Then a layer of wadding should be arranged on it, as described before, and the material tacked down with the edges turned in. If finished off with an edging of upholsterers' braid or gimp, hammered on with brass-headed nails, it will look very well indeed.



Showing how to pack the wadding when re-seating a chair.

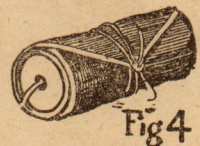


Fig 4

The completed Housewife makes a neat bundle when rolled up.

using leather instead of American cloth. But I wouldn't attempt this unless you can handle leather pretty well. It is no job for an amateur.

Next week I'll give you some tips on how to repair gloves, belts, and other things that get torn or broken in camp.

THE END.

THE END.

A SUPERB NEW COALMINE SERIAL STARTS IN NEXT WEEK'S "BOYS' FRIEND." IT IS ENTITLED "DON O' DEEPMOOR," AND IS WRITTEN BY ALLAN BLAIR.

He advanced towards the boy he had beaten, and held out his hand.

"I'm sorry if I hurt you," he said. "I see my quarrel is not with you but with someone else."

pudding grinned sheepishly, and was about to take the outstretched hand when a bullet-headed, black-eyed youth, who had been very busy in giving advice during the fight, sprung between them.

"Down him, lads!" he cried. "We ain't going to be crowded over by a lick-your-boots-sir papa's darling! Down him!"

It was evident that the bullet-headed lad was the leader of the rougher type of cleaners, for an angry cry went up, and Roy found himself confronting half a dozen or so lads evidently ripe for any mischief with no idea of sportsmanship or fair play.

It was Pudding who gave him the warning of an attack from the rear.

"Look out behind!" he called; and Roy swung round and sent an undersized youth who had been about to spring on his back flying. The next moment he was up against the wall of the engine-shed, his fists raised.

"Come on, you sportsmen of Mandale!" he cried.

And at his taunting cry several of the lads who would not descend to joining in such a cowardly attack, but at the same time were afraid to interfere, slunk away.

And the others "came on."

Even if Roy had been perfectly fresh it is scarcely likely that he could have put up much of a fight against the half dozen lads who, half mad with rage at the turn things had taken, and thirsting for revenge, dashed upon him; but as it was, hampered by his aching arms, the effect of the fall, and half-dazed by the unexpected and cowardly attack upon him, he knew he had a difficult task.

"Still, never say die!" he muttered grimly, as he met the rush. "I'll give some of those beggars as good as they give me, anyhow!"

The lanky youth who headed the charge—the leader of the gang for the present modestly remaining in the background—got a lot more than he gave. He had fully intended to hit Roy on the head, but that black curly head was slipped neatly on one side, and the next moment he got the full benefit of a smashing left-hander right on the point of the jaw.

He fell backwards against a friend, and Roy, seizing the opportunity, landed another fellow a blow on the side of the head that sent him staggering upon the other two, and all three went to the ground, a curious mixture of arms and legs, two of them crying out in pain and rage, the other unable to cry if he wished to.

For a moment the others drew back astounded by the fate that had overtaken their three comrades.

"This ain't a bloomin' fight," said one cautious youth, drawing back, "it's a bloomin' massacre, and your humble's had quite enough, thank you!"

"Come on, lads!" roared the leader, seeing his supporters wavering; the cowards because they feared this new boy, who so well knew how to use his fists, the better-spirited ones because they admired his pluck. "Surely you ain't goin' to give best to a cabin kid!"

This time the leader dashed into the fray, and, ably backed up by the others, they closed in upon the lad, and the bullet-headed youth caught him a savage blow in the mouth, to get his left eye closed in return.

"This is a bit warm!" murmured Roy. "Ah, would you?"

He was just in time to ward off a blow from the right, but the crowd were closing in now. He fought furiously to beat them off, but they drew in nearer. He could not raise his arm properly, he felt his breath coming in choking gasps, and then, still struggling, he was borne to the ground.

"Hallo, hallo! What's the trouble—eh?"

Tim Gosling, the big coalheaver, returning from his work, and taking the short cut by the engine-sheds, had seen the unequal fight from the distance, and though he did not at first recognise who it was being attacked, he hurried to the rescue determined to see fair play.

Only one of the excited lads heard his query. The others were too keen to wreak their vengeance on Roy, who they now felt they had completely at their mercy.

"Look out!" cried the lad who had observed Gosling as he promptly took to his heels.

But his warning came too late. The giant strode in among the struggling mass, two huge hands shot out, and the next moment two big lads were hauled out of the mass by their

collars, much as a terrier shakes a rat, and then thrown contemptuously on one side, as Gosling came to grips with two further victims.

"Now," he said, as he held them firmly by the collars, whilst the remaining couple bolted, "what's the little game—eh? Who's in charge of this circus?"

The two frightened lads were silent, and Roy, a bit dazed by the sudden onslaught on him, and aching in every limb, rose to his feet.

"It was a mistake on their part," he said.

"You're right there, laddie," said the coalheaver—"quite right, an'—Why, hang me, if it isn't the chap who held the horses this morning! There, that settles it. Come on, young 'un, an' see a couple of puppies drowned!"

"Oh, let them go!" said Roy, who bore no malice against the two white-faced, frightened young cleaners. "I think they've—"

"Not for his Gracious Majesty his very self would I let them go!" said Gosling firmly. "Wait a minute, though; it's the bullet-headed chap who's been making the trouble in the sheds. I'll let his pal go, but my black-eyed, beauteous boy, in the words of the poet, has got to go through it."

He released the younger of the two lads, who scurried away, and gave a sharp jerk at the other's collar.

"This chap," he said to Roy, as he pushed the bullet-headed lad in front of him, "has a nice, sweet disposition. A month ago he tried to drown a poor mongrel who got into his hands. I found him throwing stones at the poor little beggar in that ditch over there. I saved the tyke and took him home, but I couldn't catch our young friend here. Last week a fool of a magistrate let him off with a caution for kicking over a basket of eggs belonging to an old woman, who had tramped four miles hoping to sell them in the town. That's his idea of a joke. Now I'm going to have mine if I go to prison over it."

And the next moment Roy saw what Gosling intended to do. A few yards away was a wide ditch of stagnant water which was covered with a coat of green slime.

"Where he tried to drown the tyke," said the coalheaver meaningly.

The frightened captive saw the significance of the words, and commenced to struggle.

"My lad," said the big coalheaver genially, "you're goin' in that ditch, so it ain't no use makin' a fuss."

The engine-cleaner was helpless in the hands of the big man, and Roy stood fascinated as he bore him to the edge of the ditch, and then, suddenly catching him by the collar of the coat and the seat of his trousers, gave a heave and sent him sprawling into the dirty water.

The bullet-headed youth disappeared from view, to reappear a few moments later looking a pitiable object, covered with green slime, and struggling as though he were about to drown, though the water was certainly not more than four feet deep, and he made for the other side of the wide ditch.

Roy, having thanked the big man for coming to his rescue, parted with him, and set off for his lodgings.

"Life doesn't seem to be dull here," he said grimly. "What a knack I seem to have of making enemies! I've got two fellows up against me, and I reckon I shall have to keep my eyes open."

But he was counting without knowing of an enemy far more dangerous than the two youths at Mandale.

THE 8th CHAPTER.

Joseph Grainger's First Move.

"WELL, this is a hole!" said Joseph Grainger, glancing out of the coffee-room window of the George Hotel on to Mandale High Street. "I certainly don't envy my cousin his surroundings, but he may get dangerous—very dangerous. He's just the sort of chap who would have the luck to save an express and get his name into the papers. Not that I mind the papers booming him, for it gave me my idea, which, unless I'm greatly mistaken, is going to work out very well."

Joseph Grainger had at first been inclined to think that Roy at the very start would, in a fit of temper against discipline, give away the secret of his identity, or else get instantly dismissed for disobedience, but when, instead of hearing this, he

had heard that his young cousin, by wonderful presence of mind and pluck, had averted what had threatened to be a terrible disaster on the line, he had come to the conclusion that it was time he made a move, for once let the boy get a good start, and his task would become more and more difficult. Somehow or other he had to discredit Roy in his father's eyes and worm his way into his place.

At the George Hotel he was known as Mr. Gray, the reporter of a London daily paper, for it had struck him that by posing as a reporter he would be able to interview people without arousing suspicion, and in this way he might find someone who would be useful to him—indeed, he was patiently awaiting the arrival of young William Bolton, the ticket-collector, who, in the short interview he had had with him, promised to be a likely confederate.

A waiter tapped at the door and entered.

"There's a person of the name of Bolton wishes to see you, sir," he said.

"All right!" said Grainger. "Ask him into the smoking-room. I'll be there in a few minutes."

He kicked his heels about the coffee-room for nearly five minutes to impress the ticket-collector with a sense of his importance, and then walked into the smoking-room, which was empty save for the young ticket-collector, who was dressed in a vivid check suit, and was trying hard to appear quite at his ease.

"Well, Bolton," said Grainger, settling himself comfortably on a settee and lighting a cigar, "I'm glad to see you! Have a smoke?"

He extended his cigar-case, but the ticket-collector shook his head. He was by no means adverse to a mild cigarette, but he was afraid to tackle a cigar, and he wanted to keep his wits about him. It was strange that the young man should ask him to come to the hotel, and his cunning little eyes had discovered that Grainger was wearing a wig and a false moustache—a precaution that Grainger had taken in case he met Roy, but puzzling to Bolton, to whom he had been very friendly.

"What's the little game?" he asked with disconcerting frankness.

Joseph Grainger was startled. He thought he had played cleverly with this sallow-faced over-dressed youth, and was unprepared for the direct question.

"I don't understand you," he said feebly.

Bolton gained confidence from his manner.

"Then the quicker we understand each other the better," he said. "I'm up against this chap, and if you're of the same opinion, say so. You're no reporter. Any fool can see that. If you've got a scheme to upset the young London bantam, I'll

join in. If not, say so, and I'll quit."

Joseph Grainger's pimply face expressed pained surprise. He had thought it would be left to him to make terms, to break the news that he was willing to pay a very fair sum to get Roy into disgrace, but instead of dominating the situation, he found himself looking guilty before a young fellow who was very much his inferior in the company.

"As a matter of fact, it is about Allison that I want to see you," he said, and then came to a halt, wondering how to proceed. He had decided to say nothing about Roy's real identity, for it struck him that Bolton would not be likely to work against the boy if he knew that he was the general manager's son—in fact, he would be much more likely to toady to him.

"I suppose you've got your knife into him?" said Bolton.

"Yes, I want to see him disgraced!" cried Grainger passionately. "I want to see him kicked out of the company's service! The reason doesn't matter to you, but it's a good reason, and I'll pay you for any work you do—besides, it will pay you to get rid of him, for the chap's a spy."

"A spy!" cried Bolton, in some alarm.

"Yes," said Grainger. "I know a high official of the company, and I got it out of him. He's been sent down to make secret reports to the head office. Why, any fool can see that he's not an ordinary cabin-boy, and you'll find he's shifted round to different jobs, and you can bet that if he gets into your department he'll make things warm for you."

The lie had its effect on the ticket-collector. Before he had hated Roy as the fellow who had done his brother out of a job. Now he both hated and feared him.

"I'll do my best to get him kicked out!" he said hoarsely.

"Yes," said Grainger, "kicked out and disgraced, that's what we've got to play for, and if we work it properly we'll do it."

"It's easy to talk," said Bolton, "but how do you propose doing it?"

"Listen to me," said Grainger, in a low voice. "This chap keeps the train book in the South Box, doesn't he?"

"Yes."

"Very well. Now, he's only been here a few days. Supposing he was to make several mistakes—serious mistakes—in the times that trains passed the box, what would happen?"

Bolton's cunning little eyes gleamed.

"He'd get sacked for carelessness," he said. "They always watch a new lad like a cat watches a mouse. There was a cabin-boy at the North Box some months ago. He was promoted from a village cabin down the

line, and for the first few days he was very careful. Then one day he got interested in watching some platelayers at work, and didn't notice the time that the local came in from Calbury, so he put it down as coming in punctually, when it was five minutes late. He was sent packing as an example, for our local superintendent is a very strict coe."

"Good!" said Grainger, rubbing his thin white hands together. "Now look here. You must get Allison out of the box for a bit and keep Williams, the signalman, interested in something. There are heaps of ways of doing it if you use your wits. Then you must alter the figures in the train book."

Bolton started to his feet, his face white and frightened.

"I daren't do it!" he said hoarsely. "It's a serious thing. I should get sacked on the spot if I was copped!"

"But you won't get caught, you fool!" said Grainger. "It's this precious young spy who'll get sacked. It will be the work of a moment to alter half a dozen figures. They're easy to alter; it's not like writing words. Then what happens?"

Bolton sat down again, breathing heavily.

"If it could be done," he said, "it would be all over with the sneaking little toad. He'd be done for. The superintendent ain't the man to give chances. If it's true what you say about him being thick with the nobs in London, one or two mistakes might be overlooked, but they wouldn't wink at half a dozen, for it would show gross carelessness. Then he'd be reported and sacked in disgrace for a cert."

Grainger took out his pocket-book and drew out five five-pound notes.

"You see these?" he said, noting with delight the greedy expressions in the ticket-collector's eyes. "Well, they're yours on the day Roy Allison gets sacked from the Great Midshire Railway. Now you can go. I've given you the plot. If you play your cards cleverly we're bound to win."

Bolton staggered rather than walked out into the High Street, his brain in a whirl. Oh, he was a clever chap, that coe from London! It was a good idea. If only he could carry it out he would disgrace his enemy and earn twenty-five pounds.

But Grainger had talked about it being easy. He did not think the task set him was by any means easy. It might be easy to get Roy out of the box—he already saw a way to do that—but there was Williams to deal with.

He set off at a rapid walk for home, and just as he was passing a small newsagent's shop his eyes fell on the placard of an evening newspaper, and he gave a sudden cry.

"KENT v. SUSSEX FINE BOWLING BY BLYTHE."

That was the placard that caused his heart to leap and his eyes to gleam with malicious triumph. A strange thing to connect with a plot to ruin a fellow-worker, but in it he saw a way of dealing with Williams.

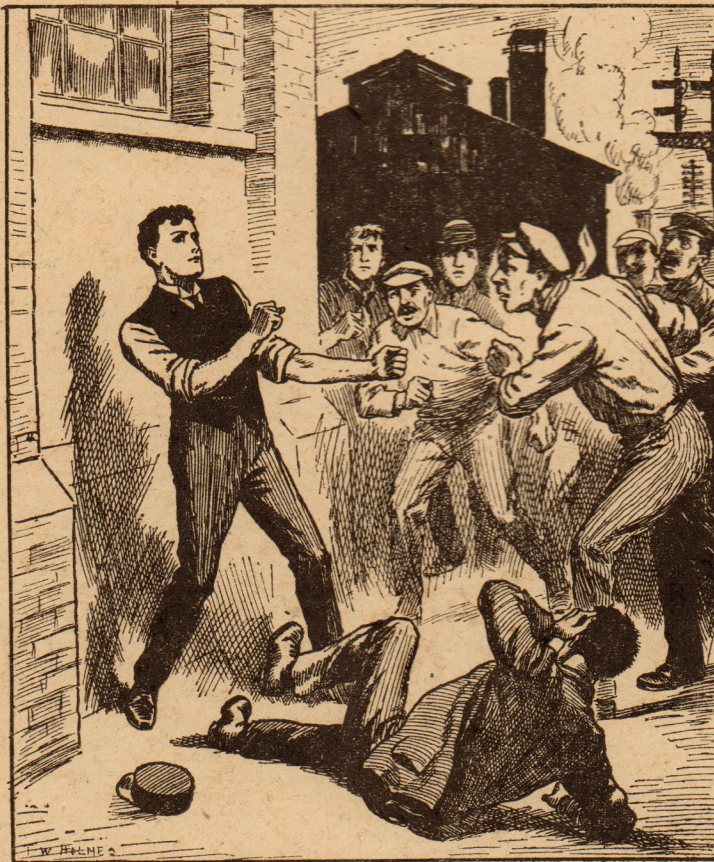
It was well known that the signalman was a great cricket enthusiast. As a young man he had played for Sussex, his native county, and though he had not been a great success, and had soon quitted the club to go on the railway, he still took a great interest in the doings of his beloved county.

Bolton chuckled as he strode home. "I've got it all now as plain as a pikestaff!" he cried. "I'll get father to telephone for the youngster just when I come off duty. The guv'nor's a boss man, and he'll have to go. Then I'll stroll along casually to the box. Old Cricket Williams don't like me, but when he sees I've got an evening paper he'll be all smiles. 'Good finish between Kent and Sussex,' I'll say, and how the old beggar's eyes will gleam!"

"Then I'll have 'em both. The old man can't look at the paper and watch me too. A minute at the train book, half a dozen figures altered, and the precious little spy is packed off!"

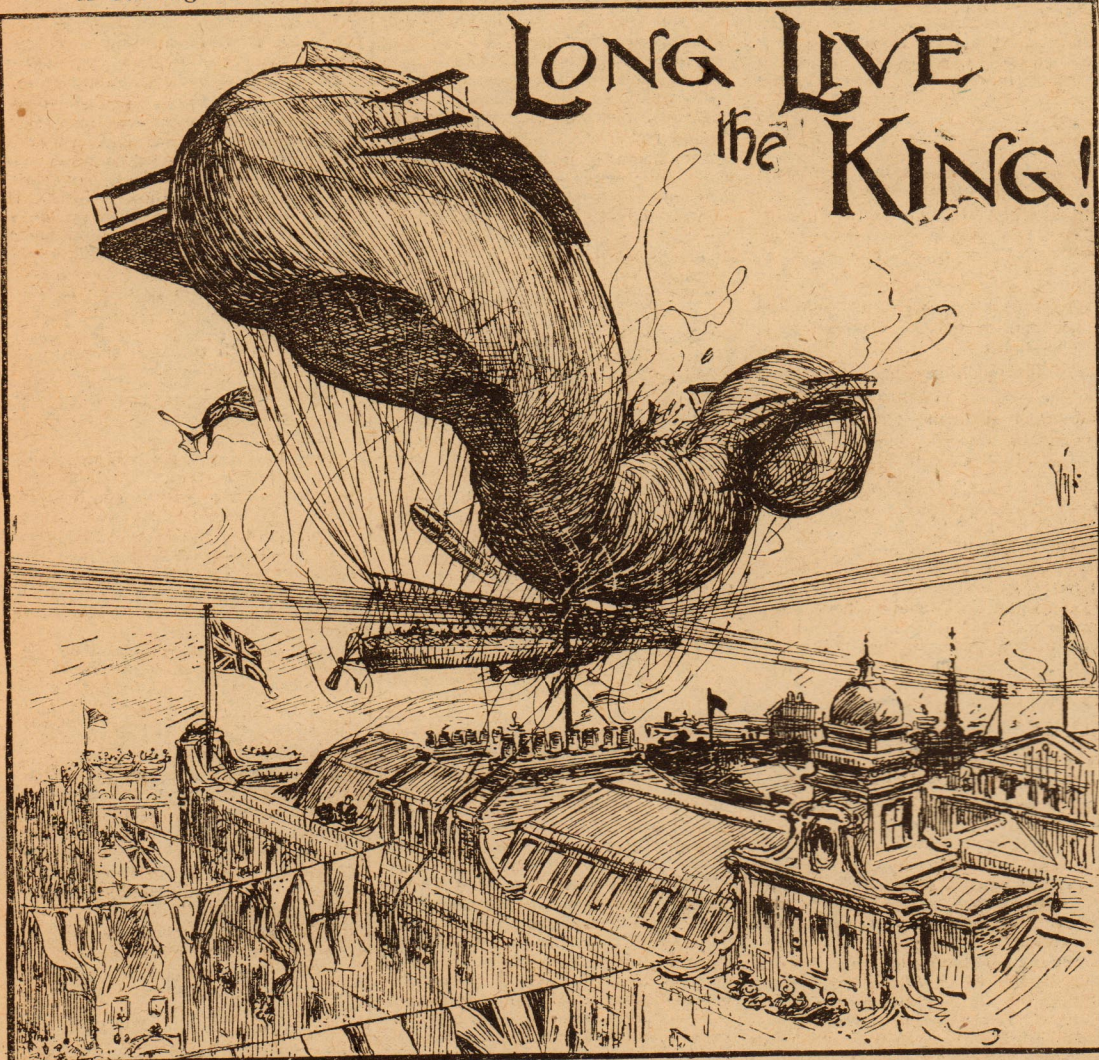
And that night he lay on his little bed unable to sleep, his face pale and his fingers clenching and unclenching in his excitement, but above all the thoughts of the sweet revenge he would obtain the big question always obtruded and spoilt half his delight: Would Roy Allison, and would Williams, the signalman, fall into the trap he was going to set for them?

(In next Tuesday's stirring long instalment of this new railway serial will be told precisely how the trap was laid, and what happened to Roy.)



Half a dozen of the cleaners rushed forward, and at a warning cry Roy swung round and sent a sturdy youth crashing to the ground. The next moment he was up against the wall with his fists raised.

A Stirring Serial of Nelson Lee and the Coronation. By MAXWELL SCOTT.



There was a moment of dreadful suspense, and in spite of the desperate efforts of the airship's crew, the terrible calamity was inevitable. There was a rush of escaping gas, and the vessel collapsed like a pricked bubble, and dropped with a crash on to a roof below.

New Readers Should Start Here.

This grand Coronation serial, introducing Nelson Lee, the famous detective, and Nipper, his assistant, opens with the kidnapping of Prince Alexis, the King of Moldavia's only son, who has come to London and taken up residence at Buckingham Palace to witness the ceremony of the crowning of King George V.

Count Marcovitch of Moldavia has been banished from that country for taking a prominent part in a revolution, and, with the object of forcing the King of Moldavia to grant him a free pardon, he has concocted a desperate plot. The count has kidnapped the Prince in order to offer the King the choice of either never seeing his son again or granting his demands.

The information of the kidnapping is not made public property, and his Majesty King George V., not wishing the news to leak out, summons Nelson Lee to the Palace, and commands him to investigate.

Count Marcovitch escapes

to his residence in Paris, from where he sends a man named Nadesco as an emissary to deliver his daring demand to the King of Moldavia at Palova.

The King of Moldavia pays a surprise visit to London, and in a conversation with him Nelson Lee becomes suspicious of Count Marcovitch. The great detective traces the address of the count's residence at 7, Carson Street, in London, but the count and his adherents escape.

the eve of Coronation Day,

and Prince Alexis has not yet been found. Nelson Lee receives a visit from Colonel Fitzwarren, who is in charge of the Military Airship Britannia. The airship is to escort the Royal procession from Buckingham Palace to the Abbey on the morrow, and the colonel obtains the promise of the great detective to accompany him.

A quarter of an hour later Nelson Lee and the colonel are on their way to Aldershot, neither of them dreaming for a moment what an important part the airship is fated to play in the search for Prince Alexis.

(Now read the splendid chapters below.)

The Coronation.

THE great day to which the whole Empire had been looking forward for more than a year had at last arrived.

To-day King George the Fifth, already crowned in the hearts of his loyal subjects, was to be anointed and invested with the symbols of his kingly office in Westminster Abbey.

It was a historic day for the capital of the Empire. For days past, as already mentioned, princely representatives from all the Courts of Europe, and even from far-away China and Japan, had been quartered in London, and had been quartered either in one of the Royal Palaces or

in one of the many private mansions which had been placed at the King's disposal.

The day broke fine and warm, with just sufficient breeze to flutter the myriad flags that floated from every public building and from countless private houses.

From daybreak onwards train after train panted into the great termini and discharged its load of country visitors.

Forty-five thousand troops, under the supreme command of Lord Kitchener, guarded the route from the Palace to the Abbey, and from the Abbey back to the Palace.

Most of these, of course, were British regulars, but there were also contingents from India, and from all the principal Colonies and Dominions. The Special Reserve and the Territorial Force were also represented, as were also—and this was a most popular feature—the Boy Scouts, the Gordon Boys' Home, the Boys' Brigade, the Church Lads' Brigade, the Catholic Lads' Brigade, and the Jewish Lads' Brigade.

There were contingents representing the Royal Navy, and here again the boys had not been forgotten, for the War Office had granted special permission for two detachments of the National Naval Cadets and a detachment of the boys of the Warspite to line the route on Constitution Hill. It was a great day for the boys of the Empire.

With Britain's defenders by land and sea thus ably represented, it only needed the arrival of the Army Air Battalion's famous airship, the Britannia, to complete this striking picture of the Empire's defensive forces.

She hove in sight, coming from the direction of Aldershot, about eleven o'clock; and, including Nelson Lee and Colonel Fitzwarren, she carried a crew of seven. The steadiness with which she flew and the speed with which she cleft the air, excited universal admiration, and her arrival was greeted with round after round of tumultuous applause.

Slowly, at a height of about a hundred feet, she circled twice round Buckingham Palace. Then, with the flag of the Empire fluttering proudly at her stern, she sailed over the route which the procession was to follow—along the Mall and Whitehall to the Abbey, back along Whitehall to Trafalgar Square, along Cockspur Street to Pall Mall, up St. James's

Street and along Piccadilly, and back to the Palace, via Constitution Hill.

Punctually on the stroke of noon the procession started, the airship sailing above the State coach and keeping pace with it. Nipper, of course, had seen the airship for some time before this, but it was not until the carriage in which he and three other Crown Princes were riding was passing through the Palace gates that he suddenly saw that one of the men on board the Britannia was Nelson Lee.

Nipper had not seen Nelson Lee since the day before, and consequently he knew nothing of the arrangement by which Nelson Lee had taken Lieutenant Campbell's place as one of the airship's crew. It came on him as a great surprise, therefore, to see the detective aboard.

"Great Scott! The gov'nor!" he exclaimed.

The words slipped out before he knew what he was saying.

"Scot!" said one of the other Crown Princes. "Is that the name of the commander of the airship? But why do you call him 'great,' and what is he 'gov'nor' of?"

Nipper reddened with confusion. He mumbled something inaudible in reply, and for the next few minutes he devoted himself to bowing furiously to the cheering crowds that lined the route.

"That was a narrow squeak," he muttered. "I nearly gave the show away that time."

Down the Mall and through the magnificent new Admiralty arch the stately procession slowly moved. Turning to the right, it traversed Whitehall and Parliament Street, and finally, after crossing Parliament Square, it reached the west door of the venerable Abbey.

Of the solemn and sacred ceremony which took place within those hallowed walls, this is not the place to speak at any great length. It is enough to say that Nipper, seated among the foreign royalties, had a clear view of one of the most impressive pageants he had ever witnessed.

He saw King George and his Queen kneel before the altar in silent prayer, and a few minutes later he heard the archbishop present the King to the assembled people with the words:

"Sirs, I here present unto you King George, the undoubted King of this Realm. Wherefore all you who are come this day to do your homage, are you willing to do the same?"

And the Abbey rang with shouts of "God save King George!"

Later, Nipper heard the King take the oath to govern his people according to the laws and customs of the Realm. He saw the archbishop anoint him with holy oil on the crown of the head, on the breast, and on the palms of both hands. He saw King George invest with the Imperial Mantle, with the Orb, with the Ring, and with the Sceptre. And, finally, he saw St. Edward's Crown taken from the altar and placed on the King's head.

When the King had been formally crowned, he seated himself on the throne which had been erected for the purpose; and then all the nobles present, beginning with the Prince of Wales and other royal princes, knelt before him and did homage. And when their homage had been performed, the drums beat and the trumpets sounded, and all the people cried "God save King George! Long live King George! May the King live for ever!"

Queen Mary was next anointed and crowned, and after a number of prayers had been said, and their Majesties had partaken of the Communion, the procession was reformed, and started back for Buckingham Palace.

On the return journey to the Palace a different route was followed from that observed on the journey to the Abbey. The former route was followed as far as Trafalgar Square; but then, instead of turning into the Mall, the procession wound by way of Pall Mall and St. James's Street into Piccadilly. The Britannia, with Nelson Lee aboard, again escorted the procession and kept pace with the State coach.

On the roof of a shop in Piccadilly a cinematograph-operator had stationed himself with his apparatus. As the carriage in which Nipper was riding was passing this shop, Nipper glanced up idly at the operator, and then, allowing his glance to travel down the front of the building, he surveyed the people who were seated in the various windows. Finally, his glance rested on the people who were standing on the pavement, in front of the shop, and even as it did so, Nipper started as if he had been stung.

Standing just outside the door of the shop—which was closed, of course—was a foreign-looking man, with a heavy black moustache. He was dressed in dark blue serge, and had a pink carnation in his buttonhole. His hat was of the kind known as a "Tribly," and in the side of it was stuck a small cock's feather.

The instant Nipper saw this man, he recognised him. It was the man he had seen go into the house in Carson Street on that memorable night when Nipper threw the smoke-rocket through the window.

Nipper, of course, did not know the man's name, but he knew he must be one of Count Marcovitch's confederates. The reader, however, knows his name.

It was Bratiano!

The Wreck of the Airship.

IT may be doubted if even Nelson Lee himself ever displayed greater presence of mind or more fertility of resource than Nipper showed in the face of this thrilling emergency.

Exactly a fortnight had elapsed since the house in Carson Street had been burnt down, and the count had vanished over London Bridge. Ever since that eventful night not only the police of the metropolis, not only the whole police-force of the British Isles, but the police of nearly every country in Europe had been searching for the count and his confederates, and had failed to find any trace of them.

And here was one of them! Here, within a few yards of Nipper, stood one of the count's most trusted adherents. What should Nipper do?

His first impulse was to yell to the soldiers who lined the route to seize the man and arrest him. An instant's reflection, however, convinced him that such a course would be most unwise. In the first place, it would result in Nipper being unmasked—that is to say, the public would learn that he was not Prince Alexis of Moldavia; and in the second place, even if the man were arrested, he would probably refuse to betray the count, and the hiding-place of the Prince would still remain an unsolved mystery.

No. Clearly, the thing to be done was to shadow the man, to dog his footsteps until he led his shadower to the house where the Prince was imprisoned.

But how could this be done? Nipper could not stop the Royal procession, and jump out of the carriage in his gorgeous uniform and shadow the man. And it would be equally futile to call one of the soldiers to the side of the carriage and instruct him to shadow the man. What was to be done?"

It was then that Nipper displayed his presence of mind.

Like all the rest of King George's guests, he had been provided with a programme of the ceremony at the Abbey. Before leaving the Abbey, he had folded up the programme and slipped it in the opening of the tunic of his uniform. Quickly he now drew it out, and on the margin of one of the pages, with a jewelled pencil, he scribbled the following note:

"Man I saw go into count's house a fortnight ago now standing outside front door of that shop in Piccadilly with cinematograph-operator on roof. Foreign-looking. Heavy black moustache. Carnation in buttonhole. Blue serge suit. Tribly hat with small feather at side. Suggest you land on roof and shadow him."

By the time he had finished his note, the front part of the procession had turned out of Piccadilly into Constitution Hill. The airship was still flying slowly over the State coach.

The three Princes who were riding in the same carriage as Nipper had watched him writing the note with considerable curiosity. But their curiosity changed to amazement, not unmixed with alarm, when Nipper, having finished his note, sprang to his feet, drew his sword, and waved it above his head!

"Prince! Prince!" gasped one of them. "What—what are you doing?"

"Signalling to the airship," said Nipper. "I have an urgent message for one of the men aboard."

The excitement among the spectators was simply terrific! They thought "Prince Alexis" had suddenly gone off his head!

On board the airship Colonel Fitzwarren was the first to observe Nipper's extraordinary antics.

"Great Goodness!" he exclaimed. "Look at Prince Alexis! What on earth is he after?"

Nelson Lee spun round, with a gasp of suppressed excitement. He divined at once that Nipper was trying to attract his attention.

"The Prince is signalling to us," he exclaimed. "Yes, I am sure it is to us that he is signalling. Let us go back and see what he wants."

Amid a scene of indescribable excitement, the airship veered round and flew back till it was over the carriage in which Nipper was riding.

"What is it, your Highness?" shouted Nelson Lee.

"I have a note for you," cried Nipper. "Come down lower and I'll hand it to you."

As the airship settled down through the air, Nipper pierced the programme on the point of his sword-blade; then, springing on to the carriage seat, he held the sword high above his head, so that Nelson Lee, reaching down, was able to grasp the programme and draw it off the end of the blade.

One glance at the pencilled words on the margin brought a flush of excitement to the detective's face.

"Very good, your Highness!" he called out. "Your instructions shall be obeyed."

He turned to Colonel Fitzwarren. "We must go back to Piccadilly at once," he said.

"Impossible!" gasped the astounded colonel. "My orders are—"

"Never mind what your orders were," interrupted Nelson Lee. "This is a matter of extreme urgency. I am not at liberty to divulge the contents of this note, but I give you my word of honour that it would be King George's wish, if he knew the circumstances, that you should immediately and unquestioningly do what I ask."

"If you give me that assurance," said the colonel, "if you will take all responsibility—"

"Yes, yes! That's all right," said Nelson Lee impatiently. "I'll take full responsibility. Now back to Piccadilly—across the corner of the park."

As this sensational incident took place in Constitutional Hill, none of the spectators in Piccadilly saw what happened. There was no excitement, therefore, but only mild curiosity, when the airship was seen to cut across the corner of the Green Park and fly back along Piccadilly, over the heads of the rear part of

Long Live the King.

(Continued from the previous page.)

the procession, in the direction of St. James's Street.

"Where do you wish to go?" asked the colonel.

The detective pointed to the cinematograph operator.

"I want you to land me on the roof of that shop," he said. "Never mind why. Ask no questions. Some day, perhaps, His Majesty may permit me to tell you the meaning of this strange affair, but at present my lips are sealed."

As the airship slowly manoeuvred towards the roof, the detective glanced eagerly down at the crowd below. Was he too late? Had the man gone? No! There he was, still standing outside the shop door, watching the rear part of the procession file past. There he was—black moustache, blue serge suit, pink carnation, trilby hat and feather all complete!

Suddenly shouts of dismay arose from the crowd, followed by a cry of alarm from the cinematograph operator.

"Look out!"

A sudden puff of wind had caught the airship broadside-on, and was driving her sideways towards a network of telegraph wires that crossed the roof.

There was a moment of dreadful suspense—a moment of desperate effort on the part of the airship's crew—then—

Srp-p-p!

The end of a telegraph post ripped into the silken gas-bag! There was a rush of escaping gas, a chorus of terrified shouts, and in less time almost than it takes to tell the airship collapsed like a pricked bubble and dropped athwart the roof, with the forepart entangled in the chimney-stacks and the rear part hanging down into the yard at the back of the shop!

Incredible as it may sound, nobody was injured; and by swarming down the ropes, which hung in a tangled network down the back of the building, the whole of the seven men who composed the airship's crew were able to reach the ground in safety.

Even in this moment of dire peril, the detective never for an instant allowed himself to forget the object he had in view, which was to get on the track of the man in the trilby hat before he was swallowed up in the crowd. Accordingly, the moment the detective's feet touched the ground, he loosed his hold on the rope by which he had swarmed down and darted to the back door of the building.

"Where are you going?" cried Colonel Fitzwarren.

Nelson Lee did not answer. Pushing open the door, which happened to be unlocked, he dashed into the building. By that time the people who had been sitting in the windows watching the procession were flocking downstairs to see what had happened to the airship. Among them was the proprietor of the shop.

"Hallo, sir! Hallo, sir!" he exclaimed, on seeing Nelson Lee. "Who are you, and what are you doing here?"

"My name is Nelson Lee."

"The detective!"

"Yes. Ask no questions now. I am acting on behalf of his Majesty King George. It is of the utmost importance that I should get out into the street in front as quickly as possible. Show me the way."

"You can't get out by the front

door," said the proprietor, catching the infection of the detective's excitement. "It's barricaded. But come this way."

He dragged the detective to a side-door, which opened into a narrow, covered passage leading into Piccadilly.

"This is your best way," he said.

Flinging a word of thanks over his shoulder, the detective darted down the passage. By that time the procession had passed and the street in front was blocked with a surging mob of pedestrians, who were almost trampling each other underfoot in their eagerness to catch a glimpse of the wrecked airship.

"I'm too late," groaned Nelson Lee. "It would be easier to find a needle in a haystack than to find the man in a crowd like this."

The thought had scarcely crossed his mind ere a thrill of exultation shot through his nerves.

Not more than twenty yards away, over the heads of the jostling crowd, he caught a momentary glimpse of a trilby hat with a small cock's feather stuck in the side!

Fiercely, almost madly, he fought his way through the mob. Nobody recognised him, nobody paid any attention to him, except to revile him for his pushfulness.

Again he saw the hat. It was only a dozen yards away now, and was drifting round the corner into St. James's Street. Then again he lost sight of it.

Hoping against hope, he struggled on; and on reaching the bottom of St. James's Street, where the crowd was not quite so dense, he was overjoyed to see, not only the hat, but the man himself. He had paused to light a cigarette, and at the same moment as Nelson Lee caught sight of him, he tossed away the match and turned along Pall Mall.

"So far so good," muttered Nelson Lee, with a sigh of relief. "Now that I've picked up the scent, it will be my own fault if I lose it again."

Now, the reader will doubtless remember that when Count Marcovitch decided to clear out of the house in Carson Street, he said to his adherents that he and Bratiano and Patakoff would go to the house in Bermondsey, where Prince Alexis was imprisoned, and would remain there till the yacht, which was then at Marseilles, had been repaired.

He further explained that the repairs were expected to take about a fortnight, and he added that in the meantime he would purchase a launch, and moor it alongside the wharf at the back of the Bermondsey house, so that it would be ready to convey the Prince aboard the yacht as soon as the latter arrived in the Thames.

Part of this programme had been carried out. A launch had been purchased and was now lying off the wharf at the back of the house. The yacht had been repaired, had left Marseilles, and was due to arrive in the Thames on the day after Coronation Day.

On the morning of Coronation Day—the day we are now describing—Bratiano had suggested that he and the count and Patakoff should go and view the Royal procession. The count and Patakoff, however, had not felt inclined to run the risk, and Bratiano had accordingly set out alone. As we have seen, he had taken up a position in Piccadilly; and when he had seen the procession file past, and had witnessed the wreck of the airship, he started off to walk back to the house in Bermondsey.

Needless to say, Nelson Lee knew nothing of all this. He did not even know Bratiano's name. He only knew that Nipper said this was the man he had seen go into the Count's house a fortnight ago. If Nipper was right, and Nelson Lee did not doubt it, it was evident that this man was one of the count's confederates. Therefore, the detective argued to himself, if he shadowed the man, there was more than a sporting chance that he would lead him to the place where the count was hiding and the Prince was imprisoned.

With this object in view he shadowed Bratiano along Pall Mall, along the north side of Trafalgar Square, and along Duncannon Street into the Strand. And then his shadowing came to a sudden and abrupt termination!

The Strand was crowded, and almost opposite the Savoy Hotel Bratiano was jostled off the pavement and pushed in front of a passing taxi-cab.

The driver of the taxi made a valiant effort to avoid running into the man, but the effort proved in vain; and the next instant, to Nelson Lee's dismay, he saw Bratiano swept off his feet and hurled, either dead or unconscious, into the middle of the road!

The Royal Progress Through South London—And After.

BRATIANO was not dead. He was not even seriously injured. But he had been stunned, and was unconscious.

An ambulance was quickly on the scene, and in this he was conveyed to Charing Cross Hospital. Nelson Lee followed him there, and after the doctors had examined Bratiano and he had been sent up to the wards, the detective sent in his card to the chief casualty surgeon, Dr. Jeeves, and requested an interview.

"You know who I am, I suppose?" he said, when Dr. Jeeves appeared.

The doctor glanced at the card in his hand and smiled.

"I should think there are very few people in London, or in England for that matter, who do not know the name of Nelson Lee," he said. "What can I do for you?"

"You have just admitted a man into the accident ward," said Nelson Lee. "A man who was knocked down by a taxi in the Strand."

The doctor nodded.

"Have you ascertained his name?" asked Nelson Lee.

The doctor hesitated for a moment. "May I inquire why you ask?" he said.

"I am not supposed to give information about our patients to outsiders, you know—if you will pardon me calling you an outsider."

"I am conducting an investigation on behalf of his Majesty King George," said Nelson Lee in a low voice. "I was shadowing this man—never mind why—at the time he met with his accident. You will be rendering a valuable service to his Majesty by helping me all you can."

"In that case, any information I have is at your service," said the doctor. "But I regret that I cannot tell you the man's name. He is unconscious, you know, so he cannot tell us anything himself, and although we have searched him, there is nothing on him to afford any clue to his identity."

"Is he badly hurt?"

"Oh, no! Merely stunned. He will probably come round in a short time, but as a matter of precaution we shall keep him under observation for twenty-four hours."

"That is to say, you won't let him leave here until to-morrow?"

"Not unless he insists on going out in defiance of our advice. In that case, of course, we should have to let him go."

"I understand that. Will you do me a favour?"

"Certainly!"

"The hospital is on the telephone, and so are my rooms in Gray's Inn Road. I will go back to my rooms now, and I will remain there until I hear from you. Will you telephone to me at once, as soon as it is settled when the man is to go out? In other words, will you give me warning in time for me to get here and shadow him when he leaves?"

The doctor readily gave the desired promise, and Nelson Lee returned to his rooms, where he wrote out a detailed report of all that had happened and sent it by District messenger to Buckingham Palace.

In the meantime their Majesties had arrived at the Palace, where, at the earliest possible moment the King sent for Nipper and inquired the meaning of the scene which had taken place on Constitution Hill. Nipper explained what he had seen and what he had done, and he had just concluded his explanation when Nelson Lee's report arrived.

"So at last Mr. Lee is on the track of the scoundrels," said his Majesty when he had read the report. "This is the most encouraging news he has sent me since he started his investigations. To-morrow, with a bit of luck, we ought to hear news of the missing Prince."

In view of the fatigue which their Majesties had undergone in connection with the Coronation, no public festivities had been arranged for them that night. The King and Queen dined quietly with the members of their family, and as Nipper's attendance was not required, he donned his

ordinary clothes and slipped off to Gray's Inn Road.

Nelson Lee, however, had no fresh news to communicate. He had just telephoned to the hospital when Nipper arrived, and he had been told that "the unknown man" was still unconscious, but was showing signs of coming round.

"So I can do nothing at present," said the detective. "I must just stay here and wait until I hear that the man is ready to leave the hospital."

"And then you'll resume your shadowing?" said Nipper.

"Such is my plan."

"When do you think he'll leave the hospital?"

"Possibly to-morrow morning. More probably to-morrow afternoon. Certainly not later than to-morrow night."

Nipper heaved an envious sigh.

"I wish I could come with you and help you to shadow him," he said.

"Don't you think I might?"

"It depends on when he leaves the hospital," said Nelson Lee. "It has been arranged, I understand, that you are to accompany their Majesties and the young Princes in their progress through South London to-morrow."

"I'd gladly give that up," said Nipper eagerly.

"I dare say you would," said Nelson Lee. "But you have your part to play, as I have mine to play, and your part is to keep up the delusion that Prince Alexis is still a guest of the King and Queen. The papers have announced for some time that Prince Alexis would accompany their Majesties in their progress, and if you were to absent yourself it would probably give rise to inconvenient inquiries."

"Well, look here," persisted Nipper, "after the procession to-morrow the King and Queen are going to dine with Sir Edward Grey at the Foreign Office. Prince Alexis hasn't received an invitation. There'll be nothing for me to do after the procession is over. If that fellow doesn't leave the hospital until after the procession, can I come with you then?"

"Certainly!" said Nelson Lee.

Next day was in many respects a replica of Coronation Day. The composition of the Royal procession was different, the route it traversed was different, and the object in view was different. But there were the same crowds in the streets, the same universal gaiety, and the same lavish decorations, a feature of which was the use of garlands of laburnum and wisteria, which were not only rain-proof, but fireproof. There was the same display of military force, too, but on this occasion there were ten thousand more soldiers and Boy Scouts than there had been on Coronation Day.

The moment Nipper found himself inside the Palace after the procession and safe from public observation, he dashed up to his private apartments, tore off his uniform, slipped into civilian attire, and hurried off to Gray's Inn Road.

"Is the guv'nor in?" he asked, meeting Mrs. Jones, the detective's landlady, at the door.

"Yes," she replied. "He hasn't been out all day."

"Hooray!" shouted Nipper. "Then I'm in time!"

He bounded upstairs to the detective's sitting-room. Nelson Lee—inscrutable man!—was amusing himself by working out a difficult chess problem. He was smoking furiously, and the atmosphere of the room could have given points to a London fog.

"Phew!" gasped Nipper. "Trying to kipper yourself?"

"Doing my best!" laughed Nelson Lee.

"Any news?"

"Nothing of importance. They telephoned from the hospital shortly before noon saying that the man had recovered consciousness. They reported that he said his name was Hoffmann, and that he lived at a certain address in Houndsditch."

"False?" said Nipper.

"Both name and address," said Nelson Lee. "About three they telephoned again to say that he had decided to go out about six, but a few minutes later they telephoned that he had changed his mind. He felt very queer in the head, he said, and he thought he'd stay in bed till the feeling passed off."

"Waiting until it's dark?" suggested Nipper.

"That's what I make of it," said Nelson Lee. "I don't expect to hear

from the hospital again until to-night."

The detective's expectation was fulfilled, for it was nearly eight o'clock before the telephone-bell once more whirred out its insistent summons.

"The man says he has decided to stay until to-morrow morning," said Dr. Jeeves. "My own opinion is that he's bluffing. I suspect he means to wait until very late to-night, and then to insist on taking himself off. Of course, it's against the rules for a patient to leave at that time, but if he insists, I can't very well detain him by main force, can I?"

"Not very well," said Nelson Lee. "I think the best plan will be for me and Nipper to come to the hospital, so as to be on the spot if your suspicions prove correct."

"Just what I was going to suggest," said the doctor. "My room is at your service."

The detective rang off, and telephoned for a taxi. Then he and Nipper drove to the hospital, arriving there about half-past eight.

"No, he hasn't gone yet," said Dr. Jeeves, as he took them up to his room. "On the contrary, he seems to have settled down for the night. When last I was in the ward he appeared to be fast asleep, but, of course, he may only have been pretending to be asleep."

For three hours the detective and Nipper sat in the doctor's room chatting to their host. At half-past eleven the detective turned to Nipper.

"I think you'd better return to—you know where—now," he said. "Your absence will be making them anxious. I'll wait here a little longer—though I hardly think the man will go out now—but you had better—"

He was interrupted by a hurried knock at the door.

"Come in!" sang out the doctor.

A night nurse opened the door.

"Oh, if you please, Dr. Jeeves," she said, in an agitated voice, "that man Hoffmann, who was admitted yesterday afternoon, insists on going home. I think he must be slightly delirious, though he has been quiet enough until now. I've told him that it is impossible for him to go out at this hour of the night—that it's against the rules—but he simply won't listen to me. In fact, he has got out of bed and is dressing himself. What am I to do?"

The doctor winked at Nelson Lee; then turned to the nurse.

"All right, sister," he said. "Don't worry about the fellow. If he wants to go, let him go."

"Do you really mean that, sir?" she asked in amazement.

"Yes," said the doctor. "Let him go."

Completely puzzled, the nurse withdrew and returned to the ward. The moment she had disappeared Nelson Lee rose to his feet and picked up his hat.

"So your suspicions were well-founded," he said to Dr. Jeeves. "But why has he waited until now, I wonder?"

"I expect he thinks it will be easier for him to avoid observation now it's dark," suggested the doctor.

"If that is the case," said Nelson Lee, "it means that he suspects that he is being watched."

"Humph! I hadn't thought of it in that light," said Dr. Jeeves. "If he is on guard, it may not be an easy matter for you to shadow him."

Nipper laughed.

"He'll have to be a smart chap to give the guv'nor the slip, darkness or no darkness," he said. "But hadn't we better be getting ready for him?"

"We had," said Nelson Lee. "Good-night, doctor, and thank you for all your help!"

The detective and Nipper then hurried downstairs and posted themselves outside the hospital, to wait for Bratiano's appearance.

They had not long to wait. In fact, they were only just in time, for they had scarcely taken cover ere Bratiano came running out of the hospital, as if he were afraid that somebody would follow him and drag him back.

Finding that nobody followed him, he halted at the corner of Agar Street and the Strand and lit a cigarette. Then, turning up the collar of his coat, he walked briskly up the Strand in the direction of Temple Bar.

"Now, for it!" whispered Nelson Lee to Nipper. "Come along!"

(How Nelson Lee and Nipper shadowed Bratiano, and the exciting adventures that followed, will be told in a stirring long instalment in next Tuesday's BOYS' FRIEND.)

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THE RED SEA ROBBERS.

A Thrilling, Long, Complete Story of Ching-Lung and Gan-Waga the Eskimo.

Written by SIDNEY DREW.

THE 1st CHAPTER.

Tells How Thomas Prout, Esq., Obtained a Crate of Eggs—One at a Time.

THE rigging of the yacht quivered and trembled in the baking air, and the metal-work was as hot to the touch as an oven door. Aft the awning had been fixed an electric fan, and was working, but the air it stirred was dry and blistering. Three men reclined there in deck-chairs. A few miles eastward a ridge of brown cliffs showed plainly in the clear light, and beyond them rose the yellow sandhills that bordered the vast Arabian desert. One of the men whose feet alone were visible to his companions as he rested on the table was speaking lazily. "You fellows know all about it," he said. "We've knocked up and down the world together, and we haven't kept our eyes shut. The average person thinks that the slave trade is as dead as Julius Cæsar in these days of flying-machines and wireless telegraphy. They have an idea that a little of it may go on in the wilds of Central Africa, but they never dream that it is still a big and paying business."

"Of course, we know it goes on, Ching," said Rupert Thurston, "but I hardly thought there was money in it with five or six gunboats always on the watch. Give me another glass of iced lemonade, Prout. I believe the more you drink the hotter you get."

Prince Ching-Lung, the Chinese millionaire, removed his feet from the table and sat erect.

"We'll get along towards Suez if you fellows like," he said. "As we hit on the subject of slave trading at breakfast, I thought you'd like to see a bit of the real thing. It's the right time of year, and we're pretty close to the proper place. If it's too hot for you, say the word, and we'll try and make some sort of a breeze by going full steam ahead. I'd like to introduce you to El Azur. He's a handsome, fearless rascal, and the Egyptian Bank would cash his cheque for a hundred thousand pounds on the nail. He has made it all out of black ivory, and they haven't caught him yet."

"What a queer lot of acquaintances you have, old man!" laughed Thurston. "We're in no hurry, and quite at your disposal. You promised to have me in London on the Eighteenth of May, and I hold you to that. In the meantime, do what you like with me."

Ching-Lung took up a pair of field-glasses and scanned the shore.

"Now, Tom," he said to the burly sailor, "we'll see if El Azur is at home. There isn't air enough to shake a feather, so we'll use the helio. My Arab friend can talk English as well as I can. Get the instrument."

For several minutes the mirror flashed and winked without response. Then a bright point of light showed in a dip of the sandhills, and quivered back an answer. The three men read the Morse code easily.

"May your illustrious shadow increase. I shall send a boat an hour before sunrise, and horses will await you. I have no bottled beer. It is the hour of siesta. Farewell."

"So he isn't a true Mussulman, by honey!" grinned Prout. "They ain't supposed to drink beer. I always fancied they guzzled sherbet and lemon kali, and fizzy stuff like that. Will you go, sir?"

"I wouldn't miss seeing a real live slave-trader for gold, Tom," answered Thurston. "I hope it will be cooler 'ere. If it isn't, I sha'n't have any shadow left, for I'm melting away at full speed."

"By honey!" chuckled Prout. "I only hope it'll melt Gan-Waga to a grease-spot the size of a threepenny-bit. I haven't seen that murderin' Eskimo for nigh on twenty-four hours, and life has been a joy."

"Neither have I," said Thurston. "He must feel it terribly. Go and find him, Tom!"

Ching-Lung was returning to

England from China, and he had picked up Rupert Thurston and Prout at Colombo. His inseparable friend Gan-Waga, the Eskimo, had been to China with him, as had also Benjamin Maddock, Barry O'Rooney, and Herr Schwartz, the prince of cooks. Whether ashore or afloat Ching-Lung, as befitted his high rank and vast wealth, travelled in luxurious style, and his fast and seaworthy yacht, the Yellow Dragon, was a floating palace.

Prout went into the smoking-room to help himself to a cigar, and discovered Benjamin Maddock.

"Seen the blubberbiter, Ben?" inquired Prout. "He's gone and got mislaid some'ow."

"And a good job, too, souse me!" growled Maddock. "I'm boiled myself, Tommy, but I ain't grumblin'. I'd bear twice the 'eat if it keeps that boulder quiet. He can't stand it, and I'm 'appy!"

"Well, Mr. Thurston asked me to cruise round and look for the atrocity," said Prout, selecting a cigar. "I guess he's down in the refrigerator. We're goin' a trip ashore about moonrise. Shall I give Gan your love?"

"Yes, and a couple o' black eyes if you likes!" answered Maddock kindly.

Prout descended. There was no fire in the cook's galley, and Herr Schwartz sat there asleep with his head on the table. Prout poured a jug of water over him, but he only murmured something about sausages for breakfast, and slumbered on. Then, taking down a key, Prout descended still lower.

"By honey!" he remarked. "If it warn't for the smell o' meat, this would be the best place aboard."

It was cool enough down there. Carcasses of beef and mutton hung in rows from hooks, and on the marble slabs lay fish and poultry of all kinds, kegs of butter, and boxes of eggs. As Prout switched on the electric light, he discovered the object of his search, the great and only Gan-Waga.

Gan-Waga was reclining in an empty egg-crate, with a bundle of sacks for a pillow. The box was only large enough to contain his plump body, so he had to lie with his legs out. His feet were bare, there was a peaceful smile on his fat, olive face,

and a gentle snore rippled from his little snub nose. The floor was strewn with eggshells, showing that the Eskimo had not been starving himself.

"Beautiful dreamer, wake unto me!" warbled Prout. "Ere, wake up, by honey, wake up!"

He tickled the soles of Gan-Waga's feet, and Gan wriggled and awoke with a yell.

"Dat only yo', hunk?" he asked, blinking his beady eyes. "What yo' wants, hunk, ugly faces?"

"We was hopin' you were dead, Gan," said Prout cheerfully. "They'll be disappointed, by honey, 'cos they were arrangin' a lovely funeral, and the sharks are waitin' in shoals. It's unkind to the sharks, Gan!"

"Yo' justs go aways and minds yo' own silly businesses!" said the Eskimo, yawning. "What fo' yo' wants to wakens me up, hunk? I all butterful asleeps, and dreamin' of nicebergs and blubber. Takes yo' old fryin'-pans faces home and strike matches on him, or I soon make a butterful flooner of yo', ugly!"

Prout smiled. The Eskimo did not seem to be in a cheerful temper. He came from a land of ice and snow, and the fierce heat of the Red Sea affected him more than it affected the others.

"Now, look 'ere, don't you be so polite, oil-tank!" said Prout. "Mr. Thurston sent me to find you, and, by honey, you've got to show up on deck. He wants to see you, and you'll go if I have to carry you."

Gan seemed highly amused. He put his hands on his plump ribs and laughed.

"He, he, he, he!" he chuckled. "So you takes me by violentnesses, hunk? Ho, ho, ho, ho! Oh, don'ts make me laughs, Tommy! Yo' never catch ole Gan-Waga on decks to frizzles. Go and tells Rupert Thurston to hangs himself down sides up. And get outs of my room-beds, yo' ole frump! Get outs quick!"

Thomas Prout winked and spat on his hands. Thurston had not asked him to produce the Eskimo, but it was not pleasant for a man of his size to be jeered at and defied. He hooked the box away with his foot, and spread out his brawny arms.

"Now, blubberbiter, are you

comin' sweet and quiet, or must I carry you?" he asked.

"I'm nots going at all, yo' ole walrus!" roared Gan-Waga. "Get outs of my room-beds!"

Prout made a dash at him, but Gan, though plump, was nimble. Before Prout could turn, the Eskimo had dodged away, and a half-frozen chicken skimmed past Prout's ear. Knowing the accuracy of the Eskimo's aim, and not wanting to be hit by a leg of mutton or a sirloin of beef, Prout clutched at the box, intending to use it as a shield. Like lightning it was whisked out of his reach.

"Eggses all butterfuls and fresh, all new-laid to-morrow mornings!" sang Gan-Waga. "Haves a nice butterfuls fresh eggs, Tommy. Ho, ho, ho, hoo! Kersplash! Rights on the bulseye! Ha, ha, ha, hah!"

"Wow!" yelled Prout in horror. "Murder!"

He reeled as an egg smote him on the side of the head and broke. Then came a second and a third. Gan very seldom missed, and Prout was a big target. Prout put his head down and charged. The eggs rained from the Eskimo's hand like bullets from a Maxim-gun. Leaping on the slab, Gan-Waga picked up the crate from which he had been obtaining his ammunition. Half-blinded, and thinking only of coming to grips, Prout rushed on.

"Haves alls de butterfuls new-laid eggses, Tommy!" shrieked the Eskimo. "I nots greediness, Tommy!"

And then Gan-Waga turned the box over and pressed it down hard over Prout's head and shoulders. Prout slipped, and fell on hands and knees. Strangled grunts and muffled howls came from beneath the box. Seizing a codfish by the tail, Gan-Waga got in three or four lusty blows before Prout could free himself from the box, and its crushed and clammy contents.

"Oh mi, oh mi!" roared the Eskimo, as he caught sight of the yolk-stained apparition. "Why yo' do dats, hunk, Tommy? Yo' all yellowness, Tommy. Ho, ho, ho, hoo! He, he, he, hee! Yo' gone and bended all de butterfuls eggses, Tommy, and dat wastefulness. Ho, ho, ho, ho! Yo' just likes a patter puddens. I tink I go now, 'cos yo' makes me laughs, Tommy. Good-byes!"

Gan-Waga blew a few parting kisses and waddled away. Uttering a groan of anguish, the egg-stained mariner staggered to his feet. His neat white suit resembled an omelet, and when he shook himself he caused a sticky rainstorm.

"By honey!" he moaned. "Oh, by honey!" "Elp! What 'ave I been doin'?" Tell me, somebody! I is it eggs?"

He picked a few shells out of his hair and looked at them in a dazed, confused way. Then a shriek sounded. Herr Schwartz, the cook, stood in the doorway, and the cook's

little eyes were almost starting out of his head. In his hand he held a chopper.

"Ar-r-r-r!" he screamed. "Vat is it I shall see ven I look? Ach, mine eggs—mine lofely eggs! Who is it? Ach, vicked groundrel! You smash mine eggs und rub them all ofer yoursellf. Sbeak, and dell who you are, or mit dis chopper I vill cut off der head of you!"

"Chop away, cook, by honey, chop away!" said the mariner wearily. "I don't mind. Gan-Waga done it. I don't want to live no longer. I'm too wet and sticky. Oh, by honey, by honey, get along wi' the chopping!"

Very pleased with himself, Gan-Waga remained in Ching-Lung's cabin until Prout got into a bath, clothes and all, and the mess had been cleaned up, and then that merry Eskimo returned to the cold-storage room, and sank again into a soft and happy slumber.

THE 2nd CHAPTER.

In Which Ching Lung Capsizes His Hydroplanes, and Gan-Waga Starts to Cluck.

THE crew of the Yellow Dragon consisted almost entirely of Chinamen and lascars. The

Chinese were picked men, who had sailed with the prince before, and they were perfectly loyal, and excellent sailors. The chief engineer was Scotch—just the man to stand no nonsense from anyone, and to deal with a mob of lascars stokers and firemen. Ching-Lung captained the yacht, and Benjamin Maddock acted as navigating officer.

"Hang it all, Ching," gasped Thurston. "Everthing is red hot. My skin's beginning to tingle all over."

"I hope you're not in for a dose of prickly heat, old chap, for it's abominable," said Ching-Lung. "I'd suggest the refrigerator, but it's a bit too much like a butcher's shop. Did you ever float on a calmer sea? Would you like a blow—a real breeze?"

"I'd like a snow blizzard, Ching." "I can't give you that, but I can give you a blow. Have a turn in the hydroplane. There she hangs, just as she did when I left Southampton. I've never had her in the water since I left England. She's been looked after though. Where's Maddock? Hi, Maddock! We want the 'plane launched."

Maddock briskly gave his orders and the hydroplane was stripped of her coverings and lowered into the water. She was twenty-six feet long, broad in the beam and flat-bottomed. In the well there was room for five or six passengers.

"She looks like a mover," said Thurston. "We'll see what she can do. Don't wreck me," he added, pointing to a dark, curved fin that was slowly cutting the water astern. "I don't object to sharks when they're a long way off. Anybody else going with us? Ugh! Look at the brute. He's watching us."

They could see the shark like a great dark shadow in the glassy water.

"I'll get a shark hook, souse me, and a lump of pork, and try and catch that minnow," remarked Benjamin Maddock. "You've got more petrol than you'll need, sir, and I wish you a pleasant trip."

Ching-Lung set the powerful motor going. Presently the boat began to gather speed and the engine rattled and banged. A white wash of spray rose on either side, and the hydroplane lifted her nose out of the water and rushed ahead like an express train. Thurston felt a breeze at last and drank it in.

"Glorious!" he shouted. "What is she doing now, Ching?"

"Thirty-six miles an hour. I'll get five and forty out of her or smash her."

"Smash away then. I'm beginning to feel alive at last. Except for the row, it's glorious."

Thurston glanced back at the yacht through the smoke from the exhaust. So great was the speed that the vessel seemed to be racing away from them. Five minutes later Ching-Lung slowed down.

"Phew! That was a rare sprint," said Thurston, "but I'm nearly deaf. It's noiser than a boiler factory, Ching. Did you do your forty-five?"

"No, only touched the forty," answered Ching-Lung. "There's a bit of a current against us. I shall do it going back or bust up something. Hold your hair on, my boy, for you're going to feel a draught."

Once more the engine roared and rattled like a battery of guns, and



Maddock spun round, and to his amazement he saw a crowd of Arabs swarming over the stern rail. He seized a fire-bar and faced the savage lascars, who levelled their long pistols at him.

"Don o' Deepmoor," ALLAN BLAIR'S New Coalpit Serial, Next Tuesday's BOYS' FRIEND. commences in

They could only obey. In a few moments their arms were pinioned. "If you will give me your word not to leave the camp for three hours," said the Arab, "I will have the cords removed."

"I'll see you hanged first!" said Ching-Lung through his teeth.

El Azur shrugged his shoulders, and strolled off whistling. The four prisoners were pushed into the tent. Two Arabs, nursing rifles, squatted down opposite them, and the sound of El Azur's tuneless whistle almost maddened them as he paced the sand in the moonlight. The Arab was making his boldest bid for fortune, for the strong-room of the Yellow Dragon contained a hundred and fifty thousand pounds in bar gold and coin.

"Arrah, wwhy did Oi ever lave swate Ballybumion and go to say?" sighed Barry dismally. "Faith, av Oi only had me ten fingers on the neck of that baste, Oi'd— Turn out the other way, darlint. Oi'm good."

He stopped struggling with the cords as his eyes encountered the levelled muzzle of a rifle, and groaned.

THE 4th CHAPTER.

The Capture of the Yacht—A Swim for Aid—Rescued—Conclusion.

WITH the yacht swinging lazily at her anchorage, and a white moon shining above a glassy sea, Maddock's thoughts were far removed from any notion of danger or treachery. The big shark was still prowling round the Yellow Dragon, but it declined the bait of pork. Ritchie, the engineer, smoked a squeaking pipe, and drank neat whisky without blinking.

"Yon's the wickedest coast in the world, Ben," he said—"full of treachery and cruelty. Ah've sailit oop and doon this auld globe, but Ah'd leefor be wrecked on Borneo or New Guinea than on yon rocks. Those Arabs are waur than cannibals."

"Oh, heres we go gatherings nutses in May, nutses in May, nutses in May," trilled the voice of Gan-Waga. "Oh, heres we go gatherings nutses in May at sixty o'clock in the mornings."

"Choke it off, choke it off!" growled Maddock. "That pipe o' yours gives me pins and needles in the neck."

Gan was feeling much better now that it was cooler. He planted himself close to the engineer, and took a bite from a tallow candle.

"Wow! Gang awa, ye disgustin' villain! Ye'll mak' me sick!" roared Ritchie.

"O-oh, it butterfuls!" said Gan-Waga, smacking his lips. "Yo' nots know what's goodness. If you' eats a few taller cangles, yo' soon get more fatness. Yah! Dat ole shark, he still waitings at the cottage gates. I go in and tickles him ribs with a knives, only I too tiredful. What yo' gotted on de hook, hunk? Hi, yo' down deres with the teeth! Haves a bites at dat, it most deliciousness."

He gave the line a shake, and to the amazement of Ritchie and Maddock, the shark turned on its side and took the bait. Luckily the rope with its six feet of chain near the hook had been made fast. Then came a scene of wild confusion, and the monster plunged and strained, and lashed the water into fleecy foam.

"Hold tight and work him for'ard!" yelled Maddock, as they clung like grim death to the line. "We don't want a mess 'ere, souse me! Get all the slack you can, and recve it through a block. I'm glad we've got the beast, for I can't stand a shark 'anging about a ship. Get along, get along!"

"Oh, heres we go gatherings sharkses in May," warbled Gan-Waga, "at ninety o'clock in the migglo of the nights. He found a bigs hard bones in dat niceful pork, hunk? Oh, what a larks to catch a sharks in the darks! I tink he got the toothaches insider his face, hunk. Yo' gots dat lines ready, Ben? Now, yo' yaller images, he pulls him out by de roots. Yo heave! Yo heave! He's coming!"

Six lusty Chinamen pulled their hardest, and hauled the monster high and dry. They scattered in all directions as the line broke, and the brute came down with a run and a tremendous thud.

The Chinamen, usually quiet and stolid, shrieked with excitement and joy, for they thought a slice of shark a dainty dish. Stokers rushed on deck armed with fire-bars and shovels.

"Don't be so rufeful to the poor thing," grinned the Eskimo, as they

belaboured the shark. "Ain't dey a lots of cowardly custards to hits him when he down, hunk, Ben? Ho, ho, ho!"

All the men had crowded forward, either to help or to look on. It was not a very pretty sight, but Ritchie and Prout stood by while they were cutting up the shark to prevent any quarrelling over the division of the spoil. There was nothing curious in the stomach except part of a woman's shoe, which had probably been flung from a steamer, and a bundle of newspapers tightly wrapped round with string.

And over the shiny water, propelled by long sweeps, crept a couple of large boats. Only three men were visible in each. Over a spar rigged to a short mast hung their harmless-looking fishing-nets. No one noticed them. Even had Maddock sighted them his suspicions would not have been roused. He would have shouted that he wanted no fish, and told them to sheer off.

A terrific roar from the engineer gave the warning, and his ever-ready revolver spat smoke and flame.

"Hoots, mon, we're boar-r-red!" he shrieked. "Pirates! We're boar-r-red!"

Maddock spun round with the crack of the revolver in his ears, and for a moment he seemed paralysed. To his amazement he saw a crowd of swarthy Arabs swarming over the stern rail.

"Fire the gun, Gan!" he shouted. "Charge! At 'em—at 'em! Wake up, you yellow brutes—wake up!"

Maddock was weaponless. Ritchie was always armed, for he had to deal with a rough crowd, and had to be prepared for rows. Maddock seized a fire-bar and led the charge. Ritchie had emptied his revolver. He tumbled forward on hands and knees, and a Chinaman fell over him.

"Into the sea w' the lot, Ben!" cried the engineer, raising himself and cheering feebly. "Ah'm sorry to be oot o' the fun, but Ah've stopped a bullet, worse luck to it!"

The Chinamen showed pluck, but they had nothing but knives and the shovels and fire-bars they had snatched from the lascars. The Arabs rushed forward, yelling savagely and snapping their long-barrelled pistols. Maddock groaned as he cracked a man's skull with the fire-bar. The brass signal-gun boomed. Maddock had told the Eskimo to fire it to warn Ching-Lung and Thurston. The pirates could not be tribesmen of the man the prince had gone to visit, he thought, and there was a chance that some of El Azur's men would put off to their aid.

"Fight, you dogs—fight!" he yelled, but it was all over.

He was asking too much. The cowardly lascars had scuttled below. Four Chinamen were down, and the rest bolted. Maddock felled another Arab. Then his weapon was wrenched from his grasp, and a blow from the butt of a pistol dazed him. A burning sensation in his mouth revived him. Two Arabs were holding him while a third was trying to pour raw brandy down his throat. Maddock spat the scalding liquor out.

"I want the keys!" said a voice in English. "You know where they are—ch?"

By the light of a single electric-lamp Maddock saw the steel door of the strong-room in front of him. The speaker was a grey-bearded man, wearing gold-rimmed spectacles.

"I haven't got the keys!" said Maddock fiercely. "I don't know where they are, and if I did, souse me, I wouldn't tell you! And I reckon you'll break your finger-nails and teeth afore you get through that door. 'Ave a go at it, you scum of the earth! I don't mind looking on and grinning!"

It was a poor sort of grin, for Mr. Benjamin Maddock was the most miserable man alive just then. He did not mind his aching head. Whatever happened he was everlastingly disgraced. The night was clear, and he had no excuse for being caught napping except that thrice-accursed shark.

"You are not lying?" said the bearded man. "What rank do you hold here?"

"Navigating officer. Till you and your vermin arrived, in full command," said Maddock.

"Then you are not likely to have the keys. You are only a sub-bordinate."

Maddock grinned again, but on the wrong side of his mouth. They had been searching the ship for keys; they tried dozens, but not one would fit. They attacked the door with coal-hammers and crowbars until their arms were tired. The tough steel refused to yield.

"Nothing weaker than dynamite for that," thought Maddock. "Oh, shoot away, souse me!"

One of the Arabs had found a revolver. He blazed six cartridges into the lock, but the door was as firm as ever. Acid and a blowpipe, and the brains of a skilled London cracksmen might have succeeded, but El Azur's followers had met with more than their match. They drew back, and the spectacled man stroked his beard.

"My orders, navigating officer," he said, "tell me to do as little damage as I possibly can. There is much treasure in there."

"You seem to know all about it," growled Maddock.

"Something like one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. Yes, we are well-informed. If we had time I would send for further instructions. It seems a pity to run this fine yacht aground and blow her up. Can you do anything to prevent such a calamity? She must have cost a great sum of money."

"She did," said Maddock shortly. "Twice as much as you'll ever get out of her."

"Must we wreck her then, and blow her up? Have you nothing else to suggest? I don't wish to wreck her."

"Look 'ere," said Maddock grimly, "I'm a Britisher, sailin' under the Chinese flag. It don't matter a rap what flag we fly, for piracy is piracy, and every nation in the world has agreed to put it down. My chief, Prince Ching-Lung, is ashore. I've

a rocky headland that stretched out blackly into the sea, a long four miles away.

"She's there, right 'nuff," he muttered; "can smell her. Got proper tides, too. Tink I chances it."

The next moment he was swinging by his hands from the hawser. He dropped into the water without a splash, and dived as only Gan-Waga could. Making sure that he was out of pistol shot, he rose, and swam as only Gan-Waga could swim. The drift was with him. Solitary and alone, his tireless right arm rose and fell. Only once did he pause to suck in the air.

"Yoop!" he grunted. "Dat alls butterfuls. Can smell her morer. If she stop, it all's good 'nuff butterfuls. If she nots stop, den I go ashores and find my Chingy. Ho, ho, hoo! Good ole noses!"

He had turned the point of the headland. Only half a mile away a vessel had come to anchor. Gan-Waga swam faster still.

"Aho-o-oy!" roared Gan-Waga. "Yo' sling a lines, and 'blige a gentlemen. Will yo', hunk?"

"'Ere, dash my buttons," said a voice, with a strong Cockney accent. "if there ain't a cove overboard arstin' for a rope! 'Old up, cocky, and sing out! Where are yer, old sport?"

There was a rush of footsteps, and a line was thrown. A dapper lieutenant rushed from below. Gan-Waga gasped out his story. Then they were shaking hands with him,

he thought he was face to face with a ghost.

"Ho, ho, hoo!" laughed the Eskimo. "Yo' needn't look so funniness, Ben. I jstz fetch the pommecans to gets yo' out of troubles. Yoop! Dis the gentlemen with the gold laces and buttons. Ohmi! I frightful tiredness, so I tink I have some cangles fo' supper and go to beds. What yo' do withouts yo' ole Gan-Waga, hunk? Oh, my noses—my butterful noses! He the bestest smeller on earth. Good-nights!"

"Useful sort of fellows to have that," said the lieutenant, as he shook hands with Maddock. "Any damage?"

"Not much," said Maddock. "They've winged five of our men, and we've settled two of them. I'd like to borrow your doctor. Ours turned queer, and we had to put him ashore at Colombo. We carry a Chinese doctor for the crew, but our engineer is white, and he likes a white man to carve him about."

Ritchie had nothing worse than a splintered shoulder-blade, and he was soon made comfortable. The lieutenant laughed when Maddock told him where Ching-Lung and Thurston had gone.

"They won't come to any harm," he said. "El Azur does not bear malice. He's a blackguard, but he takes a beating like a sportsman. You ought to be thankful it's no worse. That Eskimo of yours is a fine chap, and he arrived just in time. As you have friends ashore, I'll land a party, but I've about as much chance of catching any of those rascals as I have of being made an admiral next month."

"I'm much obliged to you, sir," said Maddock gratefully. "But who told 'em we'd got treasure aboard, souse me? They named the very sum, and it's a mighty big one."

"That I can't tell you, Mr. Maddock. And I'm wasting time. I'll see you again, I hope."

He jumped into a boat, which darted shorewards.

Herr Schwartz, the cook, had slept through it all. He was still sleeping when Gan-Waga, on his way to his bed in the egg-box, looked into the galley to see if there was anything nice there to eat. The cook's arms rested on the table, and his tired head rested on his hands.

The Eskimo smiled. He gently put a couple of saucepans on the table and placed a tea-tray on them, the head and shoulders of the slumbering cook being underneath the tray. Then, with great skill, he piled up a column of tinware on the tray. When he had finished the column nearly reached to the top of the galley.

Gan winked a wicked wink to himself, and went softly away.

A long hour passed. At last the sight of the returning boat gladdened Maddock's eyes. He scanned it through his glasses. They were moving very slowly, and seemed to be towing something.

"Souse me! What have they got in tow?" he muttered. "It's some-alive, but they wouldn't make prisoners swim. What the—'Ere, Ling-Su, you fat rascal, take the glass! What have they got astern?"

Ling-Su, the Chinese quartermaster, gazed at the advancing boat.

"Tink we gettee sling outee," he said softly. "Makee two horses swim. Ho, yes; see allee plaine!"

"Souse me, you're right, Chink!" said Maddock. "They are horses, and we shall want a sling, so hop!"

The boat came nearer, and Ching-Lung's voice hailed them. After some trouble, two dripping Arab horses were hoisted aboard. Ching-Lung was laughing. He gave Maddock a slap on the back.

"Never mind, Ben," he said merrily. "I know all about it! We tumbled into the trap, too! But the beggar was as good as his word. He promised me two horses, and when he had to bolt he left them for me. And we're going to have a supper to celebrate the event. Tell that cook of mine to wake up his staff, and give us the best we've got! Now, lieutenant, welcome to my little boat! Where's that splendid, fat, ugly, plucky scoundrel of an Eskimo of mine? I want to hug him!"

There was the sound of a crash and a succession of piercing yells. Herr Schwartz had awakened, and brought Gan-Waga's pile of hardware down on his terrified head. Gan-Waga, laughing wildly, flung himself into Ching-Lung's arms.

"Oh, Chingy!" he gurgled. "Ho, ho, hoo! I tink ole Schwartz gone and dropted someing."

THE END.



Before Prout could free himself from the box, and its crushed and clammy contents, Gan-Waga blew a few parting kisses and waddled away.

failed in my trust, through being a careless fool, and I don't care a tinker's toss what you do to me! Take it or leave it, souse me! I've finished!"

There were tears in his eyes, but he chuckled as two of the Arabs knelt and emptied their powder-flasks at the bottom of the door. Leaving room for the train, they raised a pile of sacks of flour and dragged Maddock out. He heard the splutter of the explosion, and saw the smoke rolling up. Then they tied him firmly to the rail, and left him to his bitter thoughts.

Presently a few sparks shot from the funnel. They were raking up the furnaces. If the fiends ran the yacht aground, they could blow up the strong-room at their leisure. While she was afloat in deep water it would be too risky a proceeding, for she might go down, and take the treasure with her. He wondered what had become of Ritchie and Gan-Waga. He was tied in such a way that he could only look aft.

"And Gan," he groaned. "What have they done to poor old Gan?"

Gan was in the bows, crouching down under the shadow of the steam-winch. He kept dilating his nostrils and sniffing in the air like some animal. A babel of voices rose from the fo'c'sle, where the crew and stokers were huddled like sheep. Gan-Waga rose cautiously, and stared across the shining water. Again he sniffed in the air. He was staring at

and patting his wet back. Presently his Majesty's gunboat Sunbird, Lieutenant Hollanby in command, was steaming ahead as fast as she could go. It was not particularly fast, for, naturally, the British Government does not bury her best vessels in the Red Sea just for the fun of catching a few miserable slave-traders.

"Oh, heres we go gatherings pirates in May, pirates in May," warbled the merry Eskimo. "Oh, my butterfuls ole noses! I not see yo' smoke, but I smellses him. Ho, ho, hoo! Yo' gives 'em socks, hunk?"

"If we can only get near 'em," chuckled the lieutenant. "But they're shy birds. There she is!"

The lieutenant was right. They were very shy birds. They scented danger afar. The keen-eyed Eskimo could see them tumbling over the side of the yacht into their boats. A gun crashed out, and a bursting shell quickened their flight. Those who were left behind dived into the sea, and Gan-Waga felt quite sorry he had caught the shark. Then the bell tingled, and the gunboat slowed down.

"Ready, there! Lower away!"

Gan was the first in the boat and first to gain the deck of the Yellow Dragon. The frantic Chinamen were howling and yelling, and burning joss-sticks to celebrate their unexpected rescue. They had freed Maddock. Maddock glared at the Eskimo as if

A Trek-Cart for Boys.

And How to Make It. By GEO. P. MOON.

FIGURES 1 and 2 give a side and end view of a transport cart which has many good features. It is as light as is consistent with the necessary

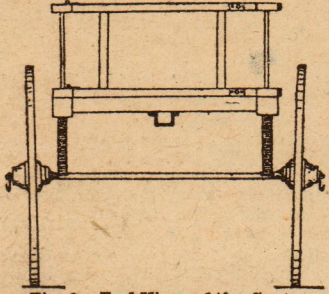


Fig. 2.—End View of the Cart.

degree of strength. The wheels are detachable from the axle, and the drag-pole, sides, and ends are detachable from the body of the cart, as Fig. 3 illustrates. The sides and ends form two light ladders, each 6ft. long. The dimensions of the cart body are 4ft. 6in. in length, and 2ft. 8in. in width—which should provide ample carrying room for a patrol's camping kit and personal luggage with careful packing.

Fig. 4 shows the framing of the cart body, viewed from the top.

We should tackle this first of all. Properly speaking, it should be constructed of ash; but if the cost has to have a voice in the matter, we may use good, sound yellow deal. Still, ash is advisable.

For the side pieces of the frame we shall need two lengths of 4ft. 6in. long and 3in. wide and deep; for the ends, two 2ft. 6in. long, 3in. wide, and 2in. thick; for the middle length, one piece 4ft. 1in. long, 6in. wide, and 1½ in. thick.

All these dimensions are after planing, so if you purchase the wood in the rough allow ¼ in. for this operation.

Well, now let us suppose that we have got all these parts cut to length, and ends and sides correctly squared, the problem before us is to unite

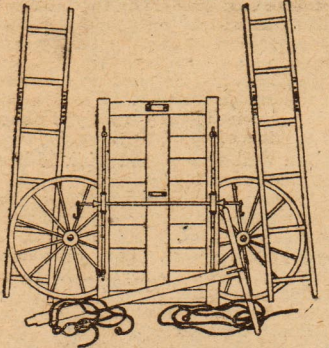


Fig. 3.—Showing How All the Parts of the Cart Can be Detached.

them in a workmanlike fashion. I refer you to Fig. 4 once more.

The joint connecting one with another is a tenon and mortise. I'm sorry, but we cannot get out of the job, no matter how troublesome it may be; no other joint will hold the parts together so securely.

Look at Fig. 5: this shows a tenon of an end length and the mortise to receive it cut in a side piece.

Starting with the tenon, pencil the lines shown in Fig. 6, using the greatest care. The shoulder line is 2in. from the end; the other line divides the thickness of the wood exactly in two. With a tenon saw cut along these lines, with the result as seen in Fig. 5.

Then we take one of the side lengths of the framing and mark the position

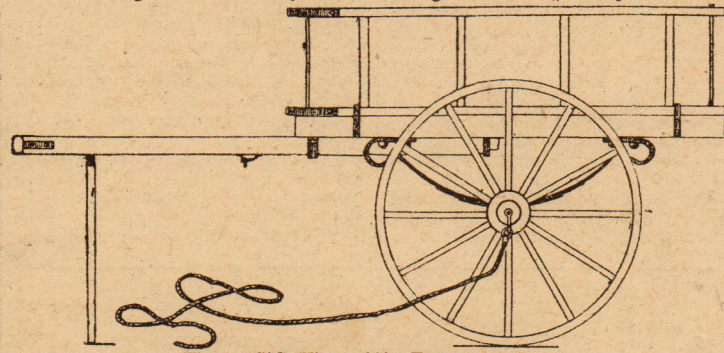


Fig. 1.—Side View of the Transport Cart.

of the mortise upon it; Fig. 7 illustrates these guide lines. Those that cross the face of the wood are 3in. from each other, and the nearest is 1in. from the extremity of the

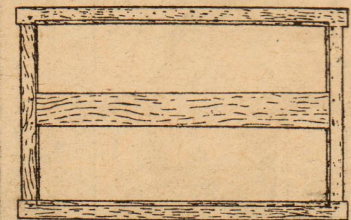


Fig. 4.—The Frame of the Body of the Cart.

length. The others are exactly 1in. from each other and the edge. The oblong thus pencilled indicates the situation of the mortise, which is to be 2in. deep.

Have you a brace and bit? If so the work will be made all the easier, for you can remove nearly the whole of the waste stuff by means of this tool, and will need the chisel and mallet only for cutting the sides. When performing the latter operation, mind that the chisel is held absolutely perpendicularly. And mind also that you keep inside the guide markings, or the mortise will prove too large for

the tenon. Take your time, letting your motto be "Accuracy, not expedition."

When the mortise is completed, try to get the tenon in place. Probably the latter will require a little shaving down. Remember it must fit tightly

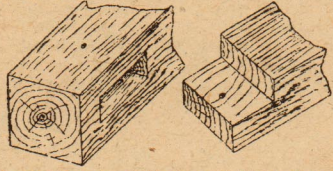


Fig. 5.—Joint of End and Side of the Framing.

enough to need knocking in, but avoid overdoing the tightness or you may split the wood.

Separate the parts, and bore a ¼ in.-hole right through the side in the middle of the mortise (Fig. 5). Then hammer in the tenon once more, and with a piece of sharp wire scratch the outline of the hole upon the latter. Knock apart and bore a similar hole through the tenon, but just a shade

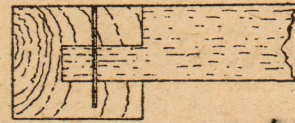


Fig. 8.—Section of Side and End Joint.

on the side pieces; ½ in. deep and wide on the ends. Pencil these two distances from the edge, and proceed to cut the wood out with chisel and mallet. Fig. 10 will tell you how to set to work. This done, pin the frame together.

Eight pieces of grooved and tongued board ½ in. thick and 2ft. 4in. long, will be needed for the body. Screw to the ledge and middle beam.

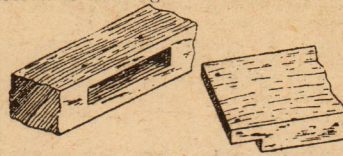


Fig. 9.—Joint of Middle Beam and End.

I have said that the sides and ends of the cart form a couple of ladders when removed from the body, and as this is a novel feature I must explain more fully, and have recourse to a diagram or two.

Fig. 11 shows a ladder—composed of a side and an end of the

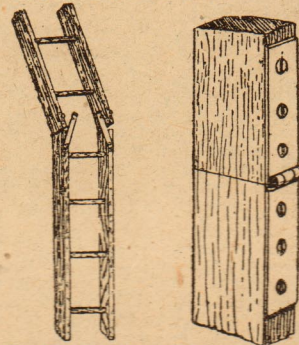


Fig. 11.—The Ladder Composed of the Side & End of a Cart.

Fig. 15.—The Hinge of the Ladder.

cart. The upper part forms the end, being hinged to the longer so that it may be bent at right angles for this purpose. When on the cart the upper extremity fits in between the sides of the other ladder, as Fig. 12 illustrates, being secured in that position with a couple of metal pins, as will be explained later.

Fig. 12 also shows you how the ladders are secured to the cart. An L-shaped piece of ¼ in. iron 1in. wide, the legs 3in. and 4½ in. long, is screwed to the sides of the frame at four points—two on each side—one of the legs

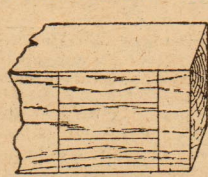


Fig. 7.—Guide Lines for the Mortise.

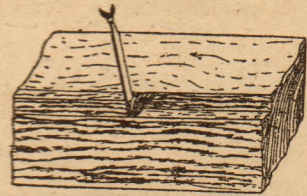


Fig. 10.—Method of Cutting Out Ledge for the Boards to Rest Upon.

(the shorter) parallel with the top of the side and 1½ in. above it. Fig. 13 gives an enlarged view of this detail. The side of the ladder is pushed under the metal leg, and is thus held im-

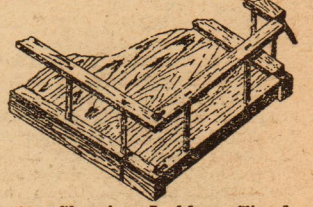


Fig. 12.—Showing Ladders Fixed on the Cart.

movably erect. When the short or upper part of the ladders are bent across the ends and pinned, you will see there can be no side-play. And there can be no end-play either, because the irons are so placed that they are in contact with a ladder step, the irons of a side being both nearer to the ends or to the middle than the steps in question.

Let us next construct the ladders, taking the longer half first. For the sides we shall need two 4ft. 3in. lengths of sound, knotless yellow deal, 3in. wide, and 1½ in. thick, and four pieces of the same wood for the steps, each 1ft. long, 3in. thick, and 1½ in. wide. For these latter we must cut mortises right through the sides (Fig. 14), and secure the steps by driving a nail into each through the edge of the side. Fig. 14 also shows this detail. The top and bottom steps are 6in. from their respective ends, and the others are arranged an even distance apart, as Figs. 1 and 2 illustrate.

The other part of the ladder is similarly constructed. Here the sides are 2ft. 2in. long, and the steps are two in number. The latter are also 6in. from the ends.

(To be concluded next Tuesday in THE BOYS' FRIEND.)

Fig. 13.—Showing Ladder Grip.

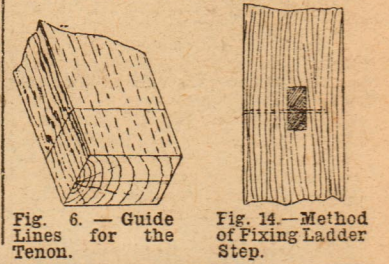


Fig. 6.—Guide Lines for the Tenon.

Fig. 14.—Method of Fixing Ladder Step.

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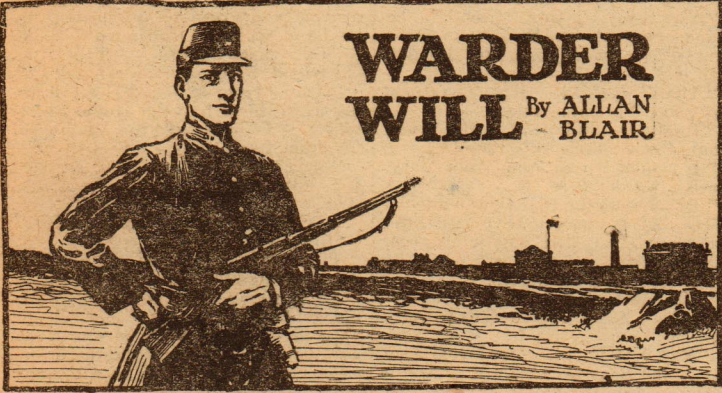
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CONCLUSION OF OUR GRAND PRISON DRAMA.



The First Chapters Specially Re-written for the New Reader.

BRANDON LYALL is a millionaire, who possesses the large Wyledon Friars estates in Sussex. He has adopted WILL GOSS, a young lad who is the hero of this grand story.

One night Chauncey Wildhood is found down to death, and Brandon Lyall is arrested for the terrible crime, and afterwards sentenced to penal servitude for life. Will is distressed over what has occurred, and, feeling positive that his uncle is not guilty, makes up his mind to become a prison warder, so as to be near his benefactor.

He comes in contact with Dick Emery, a young warder, who is being transferred from Norrington to Rockland Prison, and who is dissatisfied with his billet. Will bribes the young warder to let him take his place, and under the name of Dick Emery he

enters Rockland Prison

as a warder. Misfortune seems to enwrap Will on all sides. One or two unscrupulous warders learn of his secret and close relationship with his uncle. They are afraid to report these circumstances, however, because they know that Will can expose their own villainy.

Brandon Lyall makes a daring and exciting escape from prison, but is recaptured, and there seems no hope of Will getting his uncle from this gruesome place. Lyall is taken before the local magistrates and visiting justices. He is accused of breaking away from prison and foully attacking a warder, and is sentenced to twenty-one days solitary cells, and

thirty-six lashes with the cat.

Warder Will forces Chief-warder Mayle to transfer him to separate-cell duty, so that he may be able to see his uncle. Making his way towards the cells at night, Will hears the wailing and crying of Bernard Seagrave, a young convict, and entering his cell, the young warder learns that Mayle is continually inflicting horrible and dreadful sentences upon this sick convict without reason and without the permission of the governor.

Angered at the scoundrel's cruel and illegal treatment, Will dashes off

to the governor's house,

and is in the act of pulling the bell when he is wrenched back with a violent jerk. His adversaries are Mayle and Warder Warrilow.

Will, however, exposes their atrocious cruelty upon Seagrave, and his adversaries seeing that he has let them down do not hesitate to make Will's secret known to the governor, and our hero is ordered to be placed under arrest.

Warder Poland who has previously worked hand in hand with Mayle and Warrilow, at last finds that he has in them two vicious enemies, and casting his old life of dishonour to the winds he turns his mind to right and proper actions.

He writes a letter to Mr. Chapeldale, the Home Secretary, and this gentleman, stirred by the contents of the communication, at once travels to Rockland Prison

(Now read the stirring concluding chapters.)

The Secret of Seagrave.

CAPTAIN GAGE had been surprised to hear of the Home Secretary's intended visit. He was to be vastly more surprised now that that young and very energetic Minister had arrived.

In clear and very lucid sentences he quickly apprised the governor of the object of his visit.

He had received a long statement from Warder Poland. That statement was of a startling character. It set out in full detail a rascally plot that had for some time been afoot.

It concerned Bernard Seagrave. That young lad had been put in prison on a charge of having poisoned his elder brother in order to secure the great property which belonged to that brother. The evidence which had been the chief means of convicting him of the terrible crime had been that given by a certain Colonel Flax, who had acted as guardian to both the boys.

Now, according to Poland's statement, this Colonel Flax had, after poor Bernard Seagrave's coming to Rockland, entered into a vile con-

spiracy with Chief-warder Mayle. This conspiracy was to so treat young Seagrave as to wreck his already delicate constitution, and so bring about his early end.

The object of this was manifest. As well as being guardian, Colonel Flax was next in succession to the property. The elder brother was already dead. Only get Bernard out of the way, then, and he would succeed to the Seagrave money and estates.

A big money bribe had won the chief-warder over. He, in his turn, had taken Notch, Hulls, and Warrilow into his confidence, and, in a lesser degree, Poland.

Between them these unscrupulous ruffians had grossly ill-treated young Seagrave.

"As a matter of fact," the Home Secretary said, after detailing these and other things, "I am strongly of opinion that Bernard Seagrave is here wrongfully."

"You mean, sir," said the astonished governor, "that you believe him to be innocent?"

"I am practically sure of it. Oddly enough, I was investigating the matter prior to the receipt of this statement from Warder Poland. Some days ago certain information reached me which forced me to the conclusion that Colonel Flax had given perjured evidence at the trial. He had also suborned other witnesses. He is a rare ruffian, with an infinite belief in the power of gold and his ability to corrupt other people, but I think his reign of bribery is over."

"How do you mean, sir?"

"I mean that Colonel Flax has, by my instructions, been placed under arrest."

"For perjury?"

"Yes, and for more—for the murder for which Bernard Seagrave was convicted. Soon we shall know for certain whether our suspicions are justified. If they are—and there is very little doubt about the matter—Bernard Seagrave will at once be released and recompensed as well as it is possible to recompense anybody who has been falsely convicted."

"But now to the immediate business in hand. I want to see Chief-warder Mayle first. After him I wish to see Warders Notch, Warrilow, and Poland. Hulls, I understand, is dead?"

"That is so, sir. Anonymous

information reached us which caused us to search a certain old mill in this neighbourhood. Under the wheel we discovered not only Warder Hulls, but a prisoner named Baylis, who had escaped."

"Send for the others, then—Mayle first."

But Mayle was nowhere to be found, nor was Warrilow. Close search was made for them, but no sign of them could be discovered. The fact was that, scenting mischief on hearing of the coming visit of the Home Secretary, Mayle and Warrilow had decamped in a hurry. For the time being they had escaped, but later on they were to be recaptured and made to suffer the penalties of their wrongdoing.

But meantime Poland appeared. He was a very picture of dejection, but he gave his evidence without reserve, though not without shame at the part he himself had played. By word of mouth he bore out every statement he had made in his letter.

Principal-warder Notch was the only other available man. Had he been in good health, he, too, doubtless would have skipped, but he was still ill from the injuries he had received on the occasion of his being buried alive.

His bedside visited by the Home Secretary and the governor, there was nothing else to do than to make a clean breast of the whole matter. He corroborated Poland in every particular, and gave some additional information as well.

Apart from that, he explained how he had come by his injuries. He cleared Brandon Lyall from the charge of having injured him, and gave a description of Caleb Bagshot, who was the real culprit.

The upshot of all this, and of further inquiries which took place later, was that Bernard Seagrave was released and Colonel Flax put upon his trial.

Proof of his guilt was overwhelming, and in due course he suffered the extreme penalty of the law. Mayle and Warrilow, on being captured, were later on arraigned with Notch and Poland for conspiracy.

Mayle, Notch, and Warrilow "got it hot"—fifteen years each, most of which was subsequently served in the very prison where they had so long exercised their tyrannous sway.

Poland was treated differently, and, indeed, deserved to be. He was sentenced to six months' hard labour only, it being recognised that his part in the plot had not been so prominent as the others, and that it was through him that the whole thing had been exposed.

Manson Gives the Game Away.

BUT the Seagrave episode, albeit important, has been but a side issue in this our story now drawing to a close.

What of the leading characters in it? What of Will Goss, of Brandon Lyall, and the others whose destinies we have watched?

To follow their lives in proper order we must go back to the day we have just referred to—that on which the Home Secretary came to Rockland.

Will, it may be remembered, had

been ordered to be given into the custody of the police. Owing to the great man's visit and Captain Gage finding his mind very full of other matters, this order was not insisted on. The matter was shelved pending inquiries into more urgent matters.

Will Goss was thus left free, and a very fortunate thing it was, for even while the Seagrave inquiry was proceeding a most urgent message arrived at the prison for Will Goss. It was addressed to him openly, and not in the name of Emery.

It came from a dying man—no other than Manson, the ex-footman. He was lying at a neighbouring farmhouse suffering from grievous injuries, from which the doctor said it was impossible that he should recover. He had been attacked on the high road overnight, and only with difficulty had been able to stagger to the place that now sheltered him.

The message urged Will Goss to go to him at once. If possible, Brandon Lyall was to go too. What Manson had to impart concerned the convict closely, but, in any case, Will Goss was to bring with him some independent witness.

The message startled the young warder. He determined to go at once. It was out of the question for his uncle to accompany him, he soon discovered, and he was at a loss as to whom to ask to accompany him.

He did what, in the circumstances, was the wisest thing—he went into Sarmouth, the neighbouring town, and consulted a solicitor.

Without hesitation Lawyer Goy agreed to accompany him. He was a big, cheery-looking man with a face with far more sympathy in it than that of the average man of law.

Together they drove to the farm where Manson was staying. They found him lying very pale and ill, with the doctor and the local clergyman by his bedside.

He had already made a statement, which the clergyman had committed to writing and the dying man had signed.

"Mr. Goss," said the parson as Will entered and introduced himself, "there is great news for you, great news for your uncle. My dear young friend, Brandon Lyall is an innocent man. He never committed the murder with which he was charged."

"I never thought he did," answered Will, "but it is splendid to hear that someone else believes in his innocence."

"I do for one, and the doctor here for another. We have proof of it. The poor man here is dying. He has made a statement. It proves your uncle to be innocent, and a man named Caleb Bagshot to be guilty."

"Bagshot guilty! Did he, then, shoot his comrade Wildhood?"

"The statement," cried the clergyman excitedly—"the statement! Read it, read it, and you will see!"

He thrust the paper into his hand.

Will and Mr. Goy read it together. It told the story of the murder and of things that had gone before it. It went back to that night when Bagshot and Wildhood had first

visited Wyledon Friars. It related the scene in the chalet, and it showed how Manson, turning eaves-dropper, had overheard the episode of the blackmailing. He made no use of his knowledge then, nor had he any intention of ever doing so.

But later on he fell into evil ways. He gambled, lost heavily, and got into debt. How to meet his liabilities was more than he could determine. A means seemed to offer when for a second time he found that Wildhood was in England.

He learnt of Lyall's visit to him at the neighbouring town, and he guessed its object. Some time before Will Goss started out to meet his uncle Manson had betaken himself to Blacklake Wood.

There he saw Chauncey Wildhood. There also, quite separate from him, he saw Brandon Lyall.

He saw a third person too—Caleb Bagshot, with a gun in his hand. Screening himself behind some bushes, he saw Bagshot approach Wildhood. He heard high words between them, and then of a sudden he saw Bagshot raise the rifle and fire point-blank.

Back toppled Wildhood into the lake, and away hobbled Bagshot as fast as he could. Just as Manson thought of advancing towards the dead man running footsteps broke on his ears. A minute after, and

JUST OUT!

3

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Brandon Lyall came into sight. He approached the margin of the lake, gave one look at the moonlit face of the dead man, and then, like one demented, disappeared into the wood.

He kept silent as to what he had seen for his own wicked purposes, for by this time he had made up his mind to a certain course of action. He knew that Bagshot possessed some secret hold over his master by which he could obtain money from him. Now he—Manson—had obtained a similar hold over Bagshot. He could force the one-legged man to share his blackmailing secret with him on pain of giving him up for murder. It did not occur to him at the time that if Lyall was condemned to death the chance of getting money out of him would vanish.

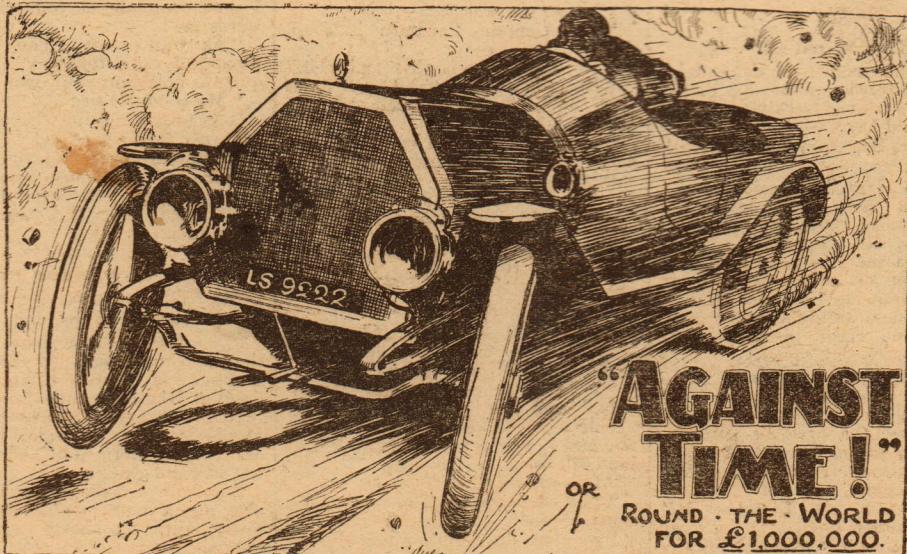
Afterwards, when he did realise this, it was too late to tell the truth to the police, for by then he had given his evidence, and to alter it would be to open himself to a charge of being an accessory to the crime. He had perforce to keep his mouth shut.

As soon as he could he sought out Bagshot and came to terms with him. Their first task was to get possession of the papers which Brandon Lyall had written, and this they did in the way we know.

When Lyall was condemned to death it seemed as if all their evil schemes would be defeated, but with his respite came a fresh chance for them. If they could but contrive

(Continued on the next page.)

Round the World for a Million!



STARTS IN THIS WEEK'S "BOYS' REALM,"

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WARDER WILL.

(Continued from the previous page.)

to set Brandon Lyall free they could start their scheme of blackmail, and so enrich themselves. The outcome of that resolve was the attempted rescue at Furzehill.

That failed, and afterwards all their efforts were directed to enabling the convict to escape from Rockland. In this scheme the presence of Will as a warder seemed likely to favour them.

But meantime there had been a quarrel between them. Both were greedy, and both wanted the entire profits of the blackmailing which was to follow for himself. It was a similar disinclination to share the proceeds that had led Bagshot to murder Wildhood.

Between Bagshot and Manson began a long and strenuous struggle for the possession of the incriminating papers. Their possession was vital to Manson, and he did all he could to retain them.

With Bagshot their actual possession did not count. He knew at first-hand the real facts of Lyall's past history, and Lyall knew that he knew. It was only necessary for him, then, to prevent Manson or anybody else retaining those papers, and thus help to ruin his own chances of extorting money. Of the upshot of the struggle between them we already know.

The reading of Manson's statement occupied some little time. When at length it was over Mr. Goy gripped Will's hand.

"My dear young friend," he said, "this is conclusive. Your uncle's innocence will be established easily now, and soon he will be a free man."

"Yes, his innocence of the murder will be established," Will repeated, with shining eyes, "and he will be a free man."

But a smothered sigh followed his words. There was that other charge hanging over him—the affair of the diamonds. If Caleb Bagshot were arrested for the murder of Wildhood, would he not at once tell the story of Lyall's past, and give his own incriminating version of it? His uncle would be cleared of one terrible charge, but he still might not be a free man.

Accompanied by the solicitor, he at once returned to Rockland Prison.

His request to see Captain Gage

maunder of the truth must come out, too."

Will touched his uncle's hand in sympathy.

"What will be the result if it does?" he asked.

"Heaven alone knows, my dear lad! If only they would believe me! If only they would believe that I did not forsake Captain Fairburn intentionally, and that I went away because I heard he had already made good his escape. But they won't believe that. It is more than I can expect. They will look upon me as a traitor. Taking the diamonds was the fault I committed. That was my crime, and my fatal mistake. After that, they will assume I was capable of anything."

"But, dear uncle, you returned the value of the diamonds."

"Yes, to their full value, and with interest added. But I fear that will not count. Ah, Will, I am thankful that my name has been cleared of this foul murder, but I fear—I fear it will not mean my freedom."

"Hope for the best, uncle. That is what you told me to do once. Hope and pray for the best!"

At this moment the cell door opened, and a warder appeared.

"So you're together," said he. "Well, that's lucky. You're both wanted immediately in the governor's room."

Will and Brandon Lyall exchanged a glance.

"Come on, uncle," the lad said, "with no attempt to disguise the

relationship now. "I'm sure something important is going to happen."

He was right.

The governor was awaiting them. So was the Home Secretary. The latter rose as they entered and heard their names announced.

"So you are Mr. Brandon Lyall," he said, in a friendly voice; and, turning to Will, added:

"And you are Will Goss, Mr. Lyall's nephew. Ah, you needn't worry; I know all about it. Mr. Goy has explained everything. You came here in a false name so as to be near your uncle. That was wrong, of course, and you have laid yourself open for punishment. But I think it probable that you have suffered enough already, and I do not feel disposed to advise the Treasury to take any action against you."

As to you, Mr. Lyall—he advanced towards the convict with outstretched hand—"there have been some remarkable developments in your case. Evidence has come to light which was hidden from us before—conclusive evidence. It proves that you are an innocent man. Mr. Lyall, you have suffered a great wrong. But from to-day such reparation as can be made will be made. I am happy to tell you that as soon as certain formalities shall have been completed, you will be a free man."

Brandon Lyall bowed his head.

"You don't seem over delighted," put in the governor somewhat tartly. "Any other convict receiving a free pardon would have—"

The Home Secretary broke in with a frown:

"Captain Gage," he said sternly, and with a look which made the governor quake, "you have no right to address Mr. Lyall like that. There was a sneer in your tone, and a suggestion of contempt in your manner. Knowing that Mr. Lyall is an innocent and deeply-wronged man, you have no right to adopt that attitude."

"I—I beg your pardon," stammered the abashed governor. "I only meant that I should have expected to see the prisoner—that is, Mr. Lyall—grateful to yourself."

"No gratitude is due," said Mr. Chapeldale coldly.

"Nevertheless, sir, I tender it," broke in Brandon Lyall. "I am most deeply and sincerely grateful for the prompt way in which you have inquired into my case and given me the benefit of your discoveries. If I am not very demonstrative, it is because I have something very serious upon my mind."

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"I—I beg your pardon," stammered the abashed governor. "I only meant that I should have expected to see the prisoner—that is, Mr. Lyall—grateful to yourself."

"Mr. Lyall, you speak gravely."

"Ah, sir, I am, truly enough, innocent of the grave charge for which I was sentenced to penal servitude for life, but I am not yet a free man. I am set free, only to find another very serious charge hanging over my head."

"Another charge!" cried the Home Secretary. "What on earth can that be?"

"You have been so kind, sir, that I am emboldened to ask permission to tell you my story."

"Do so, by all means. If I can help you, believe me, I will. In any event, rest assured I shall respect your confidence."

"I doubt if you will find it possible to do that, sir. You would, I think, deem it imperative to report the matter as a public duty. But that shall not deter me from telling all. I am ready to face the consequences of my past misdeeds."

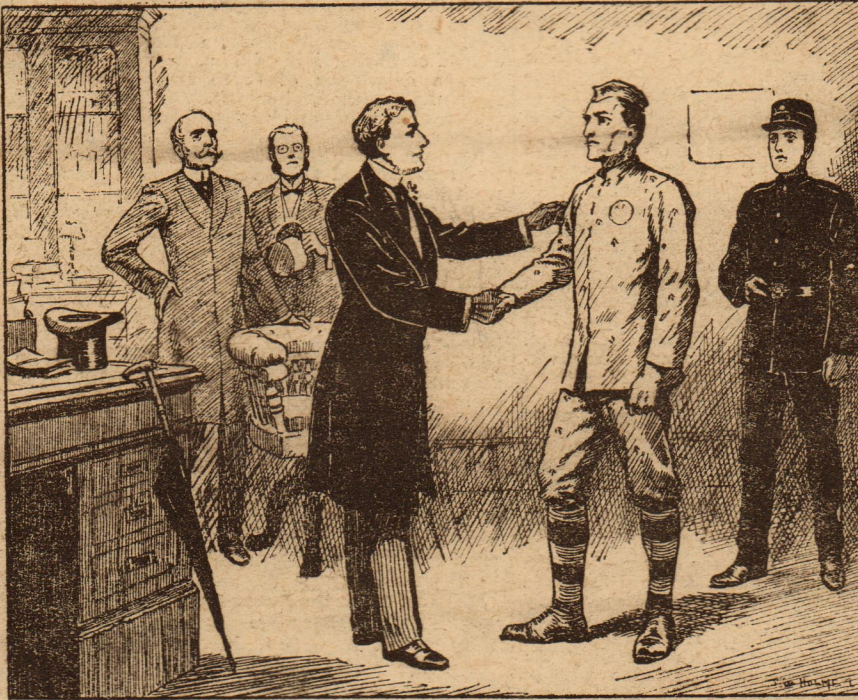
The Home Secretary looked at him, and in his face saw something that he liked.

"You are a brave man, Mr. Lyall," he said. "Tell me everything."

So, in accents that were now and then broken, Lyall told him of the affair of the diamonds.

"I took the precious stones, sir," he concluded. "That was my crime, which I admit with shame. But I did not betray Captain Fairburn. I respected and liked him too much for that."

Mr. Chapeldale listened intently. When Lyall had finished, he said:



"Evidence has come to light which proves that you are an innocent man," said the Home Secretary to Brandon Lyall. "You have suffered a great wrong, and soon you will be a free man!"

"Your commanding officer was a Captain Fairburn. What was his Christian name?"

"Eric, sir—Captain Eric Fairburn."

"As I thought," said the Home Secretary, smiling. "Mr. Lyall, it will be a surprise to you to learn that Captain Eric Fairburn is my cousin."

"Your cousin!" cried the astounded Lyall. "Captain Fairburn was your cousin, sir?"

"Is—is, not was?"

"But Captain Fairburn is dead, sir."

"No, indeed, he is alive and well."

"But the news was brought to us that he had been killed by the Kaffirs."

"It was so reported in England at the time, but the rumour was afterwards proved to be false. Captain Fairburn is alive and well, and in England; but he is Colonel Fairburn now."

"Thank God!" murmured Lyall fervently. "Thank God he is still alive! How I wish—oh, how I wish that I could see him!"

"You shall see him, my friend. You shall see him. You shall come to London with me to-day."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Chapeldale," said the governor, who was visibly annoyed at the way the Home Secretary was ignoring him. "But that will be impossible."

"Indeed, why?"

"The regulations. The regulations say that—"

"So they do. But, after all, the regulations are my business. I believe I am at liberty to frame or amend them at will?"

"Ye-es."

"Very well, then. I waive, in Mr. Lyall's favour, whatever regulation

might otherwise prevent his accompanying me to London."

"You, my young friend," he added, turning to Will a moment later—"you will come to London with us."

"That," cried the wrathful governor, "is impossible!"

"Really! And what is the insurmountable obstacle this time?"

"I cannot spare him from duty. He is a warder here."

"But I thought that since you had discovered he was here under false pretences, you had suspended him from duty?"

The governor bit his lip.

"He must remain here, sir. His case must come before the Visiting Justices."

"Ah, that is the procedure," said the Home Secretary calmly. "And is there an appeal against any decision they may arrive at?"

"Yes, of course, stammered the governor, "there is an appeal to yourself."

"Very well. You yourself, Captain Gage, complained to me about Will Goss. You charged him with coming here under false pretences. I have admonished, but acquitted him. By coming to me, you elected to come to the final court of appeal first, and thus waived your right to bring him before the justices. I think that is all."

"Not quite, sir," thundered the governor. "I think you have been guilty of the greatest discourtesy towards me. One gentleman should

See him to-night!"

"By Jove, I will! I'll telephone him, and if he's disengaged, I'll ask him to come and dine with us here."

Lord Saxonhall was disengaged, and he came to dinner.

Brandon Lyall and Will Goss stayed, too. Colonel Fairburn declared that he wouldn't stay unless they did.

So the rare spectacle was seen of a convict partaking of a convict breakfast in the morning, and on the same night sitting down to dinner with two Cabinet Ministers.

A rare spectacle! A commoner one is to see dining with Cabinet Ministers wealthy adventurers who ought to be eating convict breakfasts in a convict prison. 'Tis a strange world.

Never was a greater wrong put right, once it had been ventilated, than this one. Brandon Lyall was acquitted on all counts, and the War Minister undertook that everything should be made right, and the old-time warrant against him withdrawn. After all, the only wrong he had done had been in connection with the diamonds, and he had refunded more than their value years ago.

In due course of time, Caleb Bagshot was found guilty of the murder of Wildhood, and suffered the punishment he richly deserved. The fate of Mayle and the other rascally warders we already know. Captain Gage was removed from the governorship of Rockland, and retired into obscurity. Not utter obscurity, either, for only last year he might have been seen at Ascot.

In the grand stand? Not quite. His gambling habits at last brought him down to his proper level, and his place is among the crowd nowadays, selling race-cards. He no longer lords it over corrupt warders, no longer cries: "Silence! To the dark cells with him!" A different cry is his these times. A plaintive wail:

"Correct card, gents, a tanner each!"

"Oh, a strange world! A strange, strange world, that oftentimes pays out vice with relentless hand.

And truth, and patience, and honesty, and true repentance oftentimes get their reward.

So to-day, in peace and happiness, Brandon Lyall and Will Goss live once more at Wyledon Friars. They are happy in each other's affection, and they are beloved by the whole countryside.

They have visitors often, and not the least welcome in Colonel Fairburn, who, although his superior officer, had always looked upon Sergeant Landon as a friend. Another visitor is Bernard Seagrave, his tendency to consumption happily averted by a long sea voyage taken immediately after his release from prison.

They have a steward at Wyledon Friars. A splendid and most conscientious worker. We know him. He used to be a warder. Poland is his name. On completing his six months, he was met at the prison gate by Brandon Lyall and Will Goss, and offered on the spot the appointment he has filled so ably ever since.

The sun shines upon our friends at Wyledon Friars, and in that cheerful aspect let us bid them farewell.

THE END.

Don o' Deepmoor.

A Stirring New Coalmine Serial, by ALLAN BLAIR, Commences Next

Tuesday in "The Boys' Friend."

was answered by a message that it was impossible. He was deeply engaged with the Home Secretary.

"The Home Secretary here!" exclaimed the lawyer. "Why, all the better! We shall be able to get this business cleared up, and dispense with any amount of red tape."

He wrote a somewhat lengthy note, in which he explained a good deal of what had happened, and sent it in to the Right Honourable Loston Chapeldale.

An answer came back speedily. The Home Secretary would see them immediately. He would also see Brandon Lyall.

But before this something else had happened. While the lawyer was writing his note Will had made his way to his uncle. To him he had related all that had occurred. Lyall listened to the story intently.

"It is what I always thought, dear Will," he said. "I always suspected that Bagshot knew more of the crime than he ever admitted. But I had no proof. And the fact that he had incriminating knowledge of my past, made me hesitate to draw attention to him in any way. But now the truth of the murder is out, and the re-