# Coming! STUPENDOUS ATTRACTIONS! (See Inside.)

# "FRANK RICHARDS' SCHOOLDAYS!" IN TWO WEEKS' TIME!

No. 843, Vol. XVII. New Series.]

ONE PENNY. [Week Ending August 4th, 1917.



# THE CAD OF ROOKWOOD CETS A DOSE OF HIS OWN MEDICINE!

# ORNINGTON'S

A Magnificent New Long Complete Story, dealing with the Adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co. at Rookwood School.

> BY OWEN CONQUEST.

The 1st Chanter Morny's Way.

"Morny here?"
Lattrey of the Fourth asked the question, as he looked into Study

No. 4.

It was tea-time, and Peele and Gower, Mornington's study-mates, were there, with dark and discontented expressions on their faces.

Mornington, the dandy of the Fourth, was not to be seen.

"Where's Morny?" asked Lattrey.

Peele gave a grunt.

"Talking to Erroll and Jimmy

Three jur the beeches, of terms.

Jimmy Silve Mornington.

Lattrey grand turned

"I left'e Peele. "M on cricket.

into the junior eleven, if he can, for the Bagshot match, He's throwin' us over."

"Isn't he coming in to tea?" asked Lattrey.

Peele shrugged his shoulders

Silver," he replied. "They're down in the quad."

"You can see 'em from the window, if you want to see how chummy they are," said Gower with a sneer.

Lattrey crossed to the window and glanced out.

Three juniors were chatting near the beeches, apparently on the best of terms. They were Kit Erroll, Jimmy Silver, and Jimmy's old rival, Mornington.

Lattrey gave them a bitter glance, and turned back into the study.

"I left 'em talkin' cricket!" said Peele. "Morny's gettin' very keen on cricket. He's goin' to squeeze on cricket. He's goin' to squeeze on cricket. The said sarcastically. "We're waitin' for him."

"Nothin' much to wait for," grunted Gower. "We're goin' to what's come over Morny. You know how he used to chortle at the grub rules. Well, he says now the grub rules are goin' to be kept in this

me!"

"It's that rotter Erroll," said Gower. "Before he came, Morny was one of us—a bit ahead of most of us. Cricket!" Gower gave a snort of angry contempt, "What's that? Kid's game! Morny wastin' his time on cricket—and advisin' us to do the same! Us, you know!"

"This won't do!" said Lattrey.

"You've said that before. You can't stop it."

"You've said that before. can't stop it."

"I'm going to try," said Lattrey between his teeth.

He moved restlessly about the study.

Lattrey, the blackest of the black sheep at Rookwood, could not quite understand the change that was coming over Valentine Mornington, and it irritated him all the more because he could not understand it.

The supercilious dandy of the Fourth had been the leader in alt the shady escapades of the Giddy Goats of Rookwood, till of late.

And Morny, who was rolling in wealth, was too valuable a pal to be lost by that select circle.

The three juniors looked round sullenly as Mornington came into the study at last.

He was looking very cheerful.

"Hullo, tea ready?" he asked.

"If you call it a tea!" grunted Peele. "There's nothin' here but the regular allowance."

"Hard lines!" grinned Mornington. "But no harder on us than anybody else. Try cricket, old scout. It makes the war-bread go down like toffee."

"Hang cricket!"

Mornington laughed, and sat at the table and helped himself to bread and cheese. He ate that plain fare with a keen appetite. His chums watched him, in angry silence.

"Is that all you're goin' to have?" asked Peele at last.

Mornington nodded,

"Then you can have it to yourself," snapped Peele, and he went out of the study, followed by Gower.

Mornington shrugged his shoulders, and ate bread and cheese. He seemed amused by the irritation of his friends.

Lattrey remained in the study with him, watching him.

"Had your tea?" asked Morning-

Lattrey remained in the study with him, watching him. "Had your tea?" asked Morning-

"Had your tea?" asked Mornington.

"No."
"Pile in, then—only get your own bread. Not allowed to stand that, you know." Mornington laughed. "These grub rules are a corker, ain't they?"

"Do you mean to say you're goin' to take any notice of them, more than you can help?" asked Lattrey, eyeing him.

to take any notice of them, more than you can help?" asked Lattrey, eyeing him.

"Certainly. Isn't it a merry patriotic duty?"

"I've never noticed you look at it like that before."

"Erroll's been jawin' me, you see. He's pointed out the error of my ways." Mornington chuckled. "Cricket instead of food-hoggin', what?"

Lattrey's eyes glittered.

"Are you always going to do as Erroll tells you?" he sneered.

"Why not? Saves the trouble of thinkin'."

Mornington finished his bread and

Mornington finished his bread and

thinkin'."

Mornington finished his bread and cheese, and rose. The dark look on Lattrey's face evidently amused him.

Morny was not an easy customer for even the cunning cad of the Fourth to deal with. It was useless to seek to "put his back up" by sneering at Erroll's influence over him. Morny enjoyed parading Erroll's influence, as it were, for the amiable purpose of irritating his pals.

Lattrey controlled his temper, with an effort.

"Well, sit down, Morny," he said.
"Got the cards here?"

"Cards!" repeated Mornington.

"Yes—you remember I was going to show you how to play poker."

"Poker!" yawned Mornington.

"It's a ripping game," said Lattrey.
"Beats bridge and banker hollow. A real game for sportsmen."

"Another time," said Mornington, taking his bat from a corner.

"Where are you going?"

"Cricket practice!"

"Look here, Morny, I've put off something else to come here."

"Sorry! You shouldn't have—I

(Continued on the next page.)



never do," said Mornington coolly. "F'rinstance, I'm not goin' to put off

cricket now.

rinstance, I'm not goin to put on cricket now."

Lattrey's eyes flamed. Mornington's cool insolence was hard even for him to bear.

"Has it struck you that fellows may get fed up with your cheek, in the long run, Morny?" he asked.

"Let 'em."

"You may find yourself cut, if you keep on like this," said Lattrey savagely. "You can't ride rough shod over your friends."

"Cut away!" grinned Mornington."

"My dear chap, you wouldn't cut me. You'd never find it in your heart to drop my acquaintance."

"My dear chap, you wouldn't cut me. You'd never find it in your heart to drop my acquaintance."

"Don't be too sure of that!"

"I'm quite sure of it," said Mornington coolly. "You wouldn't quarrel with anybody better heeled than yourself, Lattrey."

Lattrey flushed with rage.

"You think everybody wants your filthy money," he said bitterly.

"A good many fellows do—an' I knew you do. That's why you're goin' to teach me poker."

"Mornington! You cheeky cad——"

"Oh, cheese it. As a matter of fact, I'm goin' to pay for the lessons, and I'll have 'em when I choose. I don't choose now."

With that, Mornington walked out of the study with his bat.

Lattrey stood quite still, his lips set in a tight line, his eyes like pinpoints, glittering like steel. He drew a deep, deep breath.

Lattrey of the Fourth was not sensitive, but Morny's words would have penetrated the thickest skin. At that moment Lattrey hated Mornington more than he hated Erroll or Jimmy Silver, or any other fellow in the wide world.

#### The 2nd Chapter. " N.Q."

"N.G."

"I'm ready, Master Mornington."
A Third-form fag looked into the study, while Lattrey was still standing there, with glittering eyes and elenched hands, a prey to savage rage and hatred and all uncharitableness.
The fag was "Erbert," of the Third, the little waif who had been brought to Rookwood by Mornington, and was paid for there by Morny's guardian. He was called Murphy on the school books.

"Aint Master Mornington 'ere?" asked 'Erbert, as he saw that the occupant of the study was Lattrey.

"No, confound you!" growled Lattrey. "What do you want?"

"Master Mornington told me he wanted me to bowl to 'im, sir," said 'Erbert, looking curiously at Lattrey's furious face. "Has he gone down to the cricket, do you know?"

"You're fagging for Mornington?"

furious face. "Has he gone down to the cricket, do you know?" "You're fagging for Mornington?"

"Step in a minute, kid," said

Lattrey.
'Erbert hesitated a moment, Lattrey.

'Erbert hesitated a moment, and then stepped into the study. The fag did not like Lattrey of the Fourth. 'Erbert's feelings towards his benefactor amounted almost to worship, and he resented Lattrey's evil influence over the reckless dandy of the Fourth. Lattrey kicked the door shut.

"You fetch smokes into the school sometimes for Morny?" he remarked.

"I 'ave done so," said 'Erbert, after a pause. "You know that."

"And you've taken messages for him to the Bird-in-Hand."

'Erbert nodded.

He knew that Morny's shady associate was aware of the fact, so there was no reason for not acknowledging it.

"Morny gives you a written note

it.

"Morny gives you a written note sometimes, I think?"

"Yes."

Lattrey drew a quick breath,

"You don't have any too much tin,
Murphy," he said, in a very friendly

tone.
"I'as enough," said 'Erbert. "Sir Rupert Stacpole sends me an allow-ance, same as other chaps in the Third, through Master Mornington's history."

kindness."
"Still, it's none too much, especially now tuck is at war-prices. How would you like a quid?"
"I'd like a quid all right," said Erbert, in wonder.

## MORNINGTON'S FOE

(Continued from the previous page.)

He could not suspect Lattrey of intending to "tip" him a "quid." Lattrey was not generous in money matters.

matters.

To his astonishment, Lattrey took out a little case, and flicked a pound note from it, and held it up.

"There's the quid!" he said.

"That's for you, kid, if you like—I only want you to do me a little favour."

favour."
'Erbert looked dogged at once "You can put it away, sir," he said quietly. "I ain't doing nothing of the kind. I does everything Master Mornington tells me, but I ain't fetching smokes or carrying messages for you or no one else. It's agin the rules of the school, and I won't do it."

"I don't want you to, you young fool." Lattrey laughed slightly. He was not likely to put anything into writing, to be taken to a place like the Bird-in-Hand Inn. He was a good deal worse than Mornington, but he was not quite so reckless. "I've no messages for you to take. The fact is, the next time Morny gives you a note for Joey Hook or anybody at the Bird-in-Hand—"He paused.

"Yes," said 'Erbert.

"I want you to bring it to me."

"Oh!"
"In case Morny is writing anything

"Oh!"

"In case Morny is writing anything that would be dangerous to him, if the paper got left about, I mean," said Lattrey, eyeing the fag narrowly as he spoke. "Morny is reckless, as you know, and he might put something in writing that would give that shady set a hold over him. I really want to take care of him—only he's so independent that a chap can't give him advice. But we should all feel it very much if he were found out it very much if he were found out

and sacked."

'Erbert did not speak.

"You're grateful to him for what he's done for you, Murphy. If you do as I tell you, you may be saving him from getting the chopper. You'll do it?"

from getting the chorit?"

'Erbert gave a bitter smile.
Lattrey had made a mistake in offering the fag money. But for that
appeal to his cupidity, 'Erbert might
have trusted his explanation.

"Well?" said Lattrey, with a smile.

"I can't do it."

"Why not? It's for Morny's sake,
you know."

you know."
"'Ow do I know?" said 'Erbert

"'Ow do I know?" said 'Erbert grimly.
"You can take my word, as Morny's friend."
"You ain't a good friend to Mornington, like Master Erroll," said 'Erbert. "'Ow do I know what you want 'is paper for? Anyway, I shouldn't show anybody 'is letters without 'is knowin'. He wouldn't forgive me if I did, and it would be a mean trick, too. 'Ow do I know that you don't want to get a 'old over him yourself, like you say those blokes might."

Lattrey started. The keen-witten

over him yourself, like you say those blokes might."

Lattrey started. The keen-witted little waif had read his thoughts as if they were written in an open book. "You cheeky young hound!" he exclaimed, starting forward. But he controlled his savage temper with an effort. "Look here, Murphy, it's for Morny's sake—it may save him from the push, if I keep a friendly eye on his correspondent with shady cads like those sporting touts at the Bird-in-Hand—they might keep a letter of his as a hold over him—"

"So might you," said 'Erbert coolly, "and you're more likely to do it."

colly, "and you're more likely to do it."

Lattrey ground his teeth.
The fag's opinion of him was not flattering, but it was well deserved.

"Then you won't do it?" he asked between his teeth.

"No, I won't!"

"I'll make it two quids—"

"You can keep your quids," said 'Erbert scornfully. "I know where you get your quids—you win them from Master Morny at cards. I ain't going to give you his letters, but I'm going to warn 'im that you're trying to get 'old of them, and put 'im on 'is guard."

'Erbert opened the study door with that. The next moment he was torn back by a savage clutch on his collar, and Lattrey's furious fists were beating on him. The cad of the Fourth had lost all control of his temper now. He lashed at the fag with savage force.

'Erbert kicked and struggled and

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'Erbert kicked and struggled and elled.

"Yow-ow-ow! 'Elp! Yah!"

"Hullo!" The Fistical Four were

force.
'Erbert kicked and struggled and yelled

coming along from the end study, on their way down to the cricket after tea. Lovell and Raby, Jimmy Silver and Newcome, stopped at once. "Hullo! What—"
"Elp, Master Silver!" panted Endert

Erbert

Jimmy Silver did not need asking tw

twice.

He rushed into the study and collared Lattrey. His chums were only a second behind him.

Four pairs of hands fastened on the cad of the Fourth. He was swept off his feet, and he smote the study carpet with a thud.

Lattrey uttered a fiendish yell as he sat down.

"Now, you rotten bully!" said Jimmy Silver sternly. "Now you're going to have a dose of your own medicine." going to medicine.

"Let me go!" shrieked Lattrey furiously.

"Not till you've had your dose."

"Yarooh! Oh, oh, oh!"
The Fistical Four rolled Lattrey over, and, with cheerful determination, rubbed his nose in the carpet. Jimmy Silver picked up a stump, and laid on six of the best, Lattrey being in a very good position to receive them.

them.
'Erbert looked on, grinning.
He had been hurt by Lattrey's savage attack, but certainly he had not been hurt so much as the cad of the Fourth.
"That's a lesson, Lattrey," said

the Fourth.

"That's a lesson, Lattrey," said
Jimmy Silver, pitching down the
stump. "You'll get another if you
ask for it! Ta-ta."

The Fistical Four left the study
with the fag. Lattrey sat up, his face
white, his breath coming thick and

Matters were not going prosperously with the cad of Rookwood School. His luck was out!

#### The 3rd Chapter. Morny Loses His Temper.

"Well bowled, Morny!"
It was Jimmy Silver who spoke, in hearty tones.
Kit Erroll was at the wicket, and Mornington of the Fourth was bowling to him, when the Fistical Four arrived upon Little Side.
Morny was in great form.
Erroll's wicket had gone down, though Erroll was a very good bat. Conroy took his place, and Jimmy Silver watched, with interest, Morny's bowling against the Anstralian.
Conroy was one of the best bats in the Fourth, but he was not quite equal to playing Morny in his present form.
The third ball sent his bails flying.

form.

The third ball sent his bails flying.
"By gad, Morny's improving," remarked Lovell. "I'll give him a trial. Chuck us that bat, Conroy, if you've done with it."

Conroy nodded, and passed the willow to Lovell. Morny grimed as Arthur Edward Lovell took the batsman's place. Since Morny had chummed with Erroll, he had been on better terms with Jimmy Silver and

better terms with Jimmy Silver and Co., but he was still very much up against the four.

against the four.

He put all he knew into the next ball he sent down. Lovell put all he knew into his guard, too; but the leather curled round the bat, and the off stump was whipped up.

"How's that?" chuckled Mornington.

"How's that?" chuckled Mornington.

"How's that?" echoed Townsend and Topham and Smythe of the Shell and the rest of the nuts, who were looking on.

"Jolly good!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Try Rawson."

Tom Rawson, the scholarship junior in the Classical Fourth, took his bat to the wicket. Rawson was a solid, stolid batsman of the stonewall variety, and could generally be depended upon to keep his end up.

Morny's bowling was brilliant, there was no doubt about that, but Rawson, in his quiet way, faced it steadily, and knocked away ball after ball.

ball.

"Well hit, Rawson!"

"Well stopped!"

Mornington's face changed. He had been enjoying the practice, so far. He liked the limelight, and he liked to hear his name shouted on the cricket-ground. So long as he was triumphant, his good-humour had no limits.

'swank," was of no use as a

"swank," was of ho decreted the cricketer.

Morny's bowling fell off in quality as his temper rose.

It became faster and more erratic, and Rawson played it more easily than ever. Rawson was grinning

and Rawson played it more easily than ever. Rawson was grinning now.

To his quiet, sedate mind there was something ridiculous and amusing in the resentful annoyance of the defeated bowler.

Jimmy Silver knitted his brows.

He had been thinking of Morny as a rod in pickle for the Bagshot Bounders in the next match. But as he watched Morny's face now he was changing his mind. Mornington was making himself ridiculous, as well as spoiling his bowling, and Jimmy knew how a Bagshot crowd would have cackled, if they could have seen such an exhibition on their ground.

"Silly ass!" commented Raby.

"Swanking duffer!" grunted Newcome. "Why, he's simply chucking the ball! Call that bowling?"

"Keep your temper, Morny!" yelled Higgs of the Fourth—a remark that made Mornington all the angrier. It was followed by a loud laugh.

Mornington cast a savage look at

angrier. It was followed by a load laugh.

Mornington cast a savage look at the onlookers.

It was bitter enough to his lofty pride to find that he was being laughed at for a childish exhibition of temper. He had drawn it upon himself, but that did not make it any pleasanter.

self, but that did not make it any pleasanter.

Kit Erroll had a troubled look.
His sincere friendship for the dandy of the Fourth did not blind him to Morny's faults, and he was feeling keenly the ridicule his chum was bringing upon himself.

He had urged Jimmy Silver a dozen times to give Morny a chance in the Junior Eleven. Morny deserved it, on his form. But what was the use of a cricketer who could only keep his temper so long as he was winning?

"My hat! Call that bowling?" ex-

only keep his temper so long as he was winning?

"My hat! Call that bowling?" exclaimed Van Ryn. "For goodness' sake, chuck it, Morny!"

"He is chucking it!" said Pons, with a chortle. "You can't call it anything else. Give somebody else the ball, Morny."

Mornington gave the Colonial juniors a fierce look. He sent down the ball again with savage force, and it rose from the pitch like a bullet and caught Tom Rawson on the shoulder with a heavy shock. Rawson uttered a sharp cry of pain.

Whether Morny had done that deliberately, or whether it was simply rotten bad bowling due to his temper, was not clear. But the result was the same—Tom Rawson was hurt. He dropped the bat, and came off the pitch.

"Clumsy fool!" said Oswald.

pitch.

"Clumsy fool!" said Oswald.

"Clumsy rotter, you mean!" exclaimed Lovell.
hurt Rawson."

"Faith, and it looks like it!" exclaimed Flynn. "Morny, it's a sneaking Hun ye are!"

"Rotter!"

"Dash it all, be fair!" exclaime Erroll. "Morny didn't mean that-it was an accident."
"Rats!"

"Rats!"

"You can bat to Morny, then, if you like!" said Rawson savagely.

"I've had enough of his bowling. Better let him take your wicket, or you'll get a crack like this!"

Mornington strode off the pitch.

"It was an accident, Rawson," he said, his eyes gleaming.

"Well, I've had enough of your accidents," said Rawson, rubbing his shoulder. "You won't catch me batting to you again in a hurry."

Mornington clenched his hands.

"Do you dare to say I did it on purpose?" he cried.

"I dare say anything I choose!" retorted Rawson contemptuously. "I don't say that, because I don't know. But if you didn't do it on purpose, you did it because you were in a rotten temper, and didn't care where the ball went; and it was because you couldn't take the wicket. You wouldn't have done it if you hadn't been a silly, swanking cad!"

"Hear, hear!" said Lovell.

"You rotten scholarship bounder!" said Mornington thickly. "You dare to talk to me, you poverty-stricken ead!"

"Shut up!" said Jimmy Silver

ead!"
"Shut up!" said Jimmy Silver

"Shut up!" said Jimmy Silver
savagely.

Mornington turned fiercely on the
captain of the Fourth, but Erroll
slipped an arm through his, and drew
him away. He gave Erroll a fierce
look for a moment, as if about to turn
on his own chum, but he restrained
himself and left the field with him.
A derisive shout from the juniors
followed him.

"Hang them!" muttered Mornington. "Hang them all!"

Erroll set his lips a little.
He would not argue with Morny in
his present frame of mind, but his

"Well, well! Never mind Morny.
I know you're potty on that subject,"
said Jimmy, with a smile. "But what
is it you've come about?"

"It's about Master Mornington. I
—I want to ask your advice, sir."

"Good! No charge! Only, if you
call me 'Sir' again I'll pull your
ear! Go on!"

"You chipped in when that beast
Lattrey was a-'ammering me, sir!"
said 'Erbert. "He'd asked me to do
something, and I wouldn't."

"Quite right! Don't ever do any
thing Lattrey asks you."

face expressed pretty clearly what he was thinking.

Mornington jerked his arm away.

"You're down on me, like all the rest?" he snapped.

"Why can't you keep your temper, Morny?"

Morny?"
"Oh, let my temper alone!"

"Oh, let my temper alone!"
"Morny—"
"Do you think I hit Rawson with
the ball intentionally, then?"
Erroll shook his head.
"No. But as Rawson said, you
didn't care where it went—"
"Same and the last of the last

"No. But as Rawson said, you didn't care where it went—"
"So you agree with that scholarship cad?"
"Rawson isn't a cad," said Erroll quietly. "He's one of the best, and it's caddish to throw his poverty in his face, Morny."
Mornington's eyes glittered.
"Thanks! That's enough!" he said, between his teeth. "If you think so much of Rawson, you'd better go and chum with the fellow, and leave me alone!"
And the dandy of the Fourth strode away, leaving Kit Erroll with a very dark shade on his brow.

#### The 4th Chanter. Uncle James Gives Advice!

Jimmy Silver & Co. were working at their prep, after the cricket, when there was a tap at the door of the end study, and Erbert of the Second Form looked in.

Form looked in.

Jimmy gave him a kind nod.

"Trot in, kid!" he said.

"I come to speak to you, Master Silver," said 'Erbert, hesitating. "I—I'll come in again if you're busy."

"Don't call me Master Silver, you young ass! My name's Jimmy Silver. And I'm nearly done. Sit on the coal-locker and wait a minute."

on the coal-locker and wait a minute."

"Orlright!"

'Erbert sat down, and waited till the Fistical Four had finished their prep. Lovell and Raby and Newcome quitted the study to go down to the Common-room, leaving Jimmy Silver alone with the waif of Rookwood.

wood.

Jimmy yawned, and pushed his books away, and rose.

"Go it, kid!" he said.

Jimmy Silver, in his character as Uncle James to everybody in general, had been very kind to the little waif, who often cover to the order to the first cover to the order to the said.

had been very kind to the little waif, who often came to the end study for advice, and sometimes for kindly help with difficult lessons.

Rookwood School was very different from the salubrious quarters at Dirty Dick's, off the Euston Road, which had once been poor 'Erbert's home, and he had much more to learn, in various ways, than the average fag at Rookwood.

Mornington meant to be very kind to him, but he had many occupations, and he often forgot the little fag for weeks together, and 'Erbert would not trouble his patron. The little waif had a keen sensitiveness of feeling that the superb Morny never even suspected.

waif had a keen sensitiveness of feeling that the superb Morny never even suspected.

But there was a hearty cordiality about Jimmy Silver that encouraged 'Erbert to bring his little troubles to the end study. He was always good-tempered, and he was always patient, and he would always have gone a mile out of his way to help a lame dog over a stile.

"Pile in, my pippin!" said Jimmy Silver, as the fag hesitated. "What's the merry trouble? Keep smiling, you know. Been fighting again with Jones minimus of the Second?"

"No, Me and Jones is great pals now," said 'Erbert brightly. "So's me and Snooks. I don't get on with Tracy minor, that's all! But he ain't a fightin' sort."

"Then all is calm and bright in the halls of the Second—what?"

"Yes!" grinned 'Erbert.

"But you've come across a deponent verb, and it's doubled you up?" asked Jimmy Silver. "Trot it out, and we'll double up the deponent verb."

"Tain't that, Master Silver. 'Tain't

out, and we'll double up the deponent verb."

"Tain't that, Master Silver. 'Tain't them blessed verbs this time. It—it's about Master Mornington!"

"Oh, Morny!" Jimmy Silver became serious. "I've told you before, 'Erbert, what I think about Morny making you fetch smokes for him!"

"He don't make me, Master Silver!" said the fag eagerly. "He wouldn't ask me if I didn't want to!"

"Well, well! Never mind Morny. I know you're potty on that subject," said Jimmy, with a smile. "But what is it you've come about?"

"It's about Master Mornington. I—I want to ask your advice, sir."

"Good! No charge! Only, if you call me 'Sir' again I'll pull your ear! Go on!"

"You chipped in when that beast Lattrey was a-'ammering me, sir!"

Jimmy. "Give him a wide berth. He's not wholesome!"

"I know he ain't, Master Silver. An' I wish Master Morny wasn't friends with him neither. He don't mean any good to Master Morny. But—but—— Course, sir, if I tell you wot's worrying me, you won't say nothing?"

"I won't say anything, if that's what you mean."

"Yes, sir! Well, sir, Master Mornington sometimes gives me a written message to take to a place—some place—"'Erbert stammered.

"The Bird-in-Hand!" growled Jimmy Silver. "I know!"

"Lattrey asked me to 'and him the next letter Morny give me to take there," said 'Erbert. "He says, says he, it was to see that Morny didn't write anything that might get him into trouble. But—but I don't trust Lattrey. He's a bad egg!"

"Quite right!"

"He said some shady rotter at the Bird-in-Yand might keep Morny's

"Quite right!"

"He said some shady rotter at the Bird-in-'And might keep Morny's paper to keep a 'old over 'im!"

"Likely enough!"

"But—but I figured it out, sir, that that's what Lattrey wanted Morny's letter for 'isself."

"My hat!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

Silver. Silver.

"He don't like Morny, though they're friends," said the fag shrewdly.

"He makes a lot of money out of 'im. I know that! He hates Master Erroll, who's a good pal to Morny. I know he's afraid of Morny chucking him over, and I believe he wants to get a 'old over Morny."

"Very likely. Don't do as he asks you, anyway."

"Very likely. Don't do as he asks you, anyway."
"I ain't going to, Master Silver. But that ain't all. Suppose he had a letter like that there, it would do Master Mornington a lot of 'arm if it came out—to the 'Ead or the Formmaster—wouldn't it?"
"Might get him the sack!" agreed Jimmy Silver.
"And then Morny would be under Lattrey's thumb?"
"I suppose so."

I suppose so."

Lattrey's thumb?"

"I suppose so."

"Well, then, as he can't make use of me to get 'old of a paper like that, he may try some other trick," said the fag. "And—and I was a-wondering, Master Silver, if I ought to warn Morny? Course, I don't want to make trouble atween friends, an' I don't want to be tellin' tales. But—but s'pose Morny, in a careless way, wrote somethin' that Lattrey got 'old of, and—and kep'—" He paused, his eyes fixed earnestly on Jimmy Silver's face. "Morny's so careless, sir. He might let Lattrey get a 'old over 'im like that, and then—then he wouldn't never be able to throw Lattrey over if he wanted to."

"My hat!" murmured Jimmy Silver, staring at the fag.

He did not doubt that the keenwitted little waif had read aright the cunning scheme in Lattrey's brain. Lattrey's hold on the richest junior at Rookwood was very precarious. Morny was very unreliable, and Erroll was doing his best to win him from shady pursuits. It was only too likely that Lattrey was seeking to strengthen his hold upon his associate and dupe.

"So, pr'aps you'll advise me, Master Silver," 'Erbert went on.

likely that Lattrey was seeking to strengthen his hold upon his associate and dupe.

"So, p'r'aps you'll advise me, Master Silver," 'Erbert went on. "I—I don't like to seem to be tellin' tales and making trouble; but—but don't you think Master Mornington ought to know what Lattrey wants?" "He ought to chuck up playing the giddy ox!" growled Jimmy Silver. "But, as he won't do that, he ought to know that his precious pal is trying to serve him a dirty trick. You'd better warn him."

"Erbert rose from the coal-locker.

"Thank you, Master Silver! I—I thought I'd ask you first. You think I'd better tell Morny wo Lattrey wanted?"

"I think you'd better!" said Jimmy, after a pause. "Morny has a right to know. He's fool enough to land himself into anything."

"Thank you, sir!"

The fag quitted the study, relieved in his mind. He placed great faith in Jimmy Silver—much more than in Morny—in spite of his unbounded admiration of the dandy of the Fourth. Jimmy smiled as he went down to the Common-room to join his chums. He rather fancied himself in the role of Uncle James, giving sage counsel to youths in trouble.

And he felt that he had done Morny a good turn, and though he was not feeling very friendly towards.

Morny just then, he was glad of it. He did not want even a reckless scapegrace like Mornington to fall into the clutches of a scheming, unscrupulous rascal like Lattrey of the Fourth.

The 5th Chapter.

A Startling Revelation.

Tubby Muffin smiled a genial smile of welcome as Mornington of the Fourth came into the first study. Lattrey, Tubby's study-mate, was there, finishing his prep. He did not even look up. But Tubby was all smiles.

smiles.

"Come in, old chap!" said the fat Classical affectionately.

Mornington gave him a cool stare.

Tubby's affection was founded upon Morny's ample wealth, but it was not in the slightest degree reciprocated by the dandy of the Fourth.

"You can cut off, Muffin!" said Morny curtly.

"Eh?"

"Cut off! I've come here to said.

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Cut off! I've come here to speak to Lattrey.

"Oh!" "Outside!" said Mornington.
Even the worm will turn, and Tubby Muffin, instead of cutting off, gave a snort of indignation.
"Cut off yourself, you snob!" he said independently. "You're not going to turn me out of my own study!"

that you were a sneakin' cad!" went on Mornington. "I've been friendly with you because I've a queer weak-ness for the company of rotters and out-and-out rascals!"

"Take care what you say!" muttered Lattrey.

tered Lattrey.

"It's my way," said Mornington. "I chum with Towny and Toppy, a pair of vicious duffers; and Peele and Gower, a pair of vicious rascals; and you, worse than the lot of them put together! I find you all rather amusin'. As for you, of course I knew you were after my money all the time, and I never bothered. It doesn't hurt me to lose a few quids at banker and bridge, and I dare say you're hard up an' want the money."

Lattrey's eyes glistened like a rat's.

you're hard up an' want the money."

Lattrey's eyes glistened like a rat's.

"But that's comin' to an end now,"
added Mornington. "I was a fool
ever to speak to a fellow of your sort.
I knew you were a schemin' cad, but
I didn't know what a dangerous
scoundrel you were."

"Take care!" muttered Lattrey,
clenching his hands almost convulsively.

sively.

"What else are you?" sneered
Mornington. "You wanted to get
somethin compromisin written in my
hand, to hold over my head, to make
me dance to your tune—what? That's
what lawyers call blackmail. You're
a blackmailin' scoundrel, Lattrey!"
Lattrey made a step forward.

will come down off your perch some day, Mornington, I can tell you that. Your money! You've shoved your money at me pretty often. Your money!" He burst into a bitter, sarcastic laugh. "Your money, you heggar!" money "He burst moon money!" He burst moon was turning to the door, having said his say. But he turned back at that.
"What did you call me?" he

"What did you can asked.

He was not angry, only surprised and amused. Truly, "beggar" did not seem quite the description to apply to the richest fellow at Rookwood, who had more fivers in his pocket-book than any other fellow had half-crowns.

"Beggar!" repeated Lattrey.
"Beggar and impostor! That's what

had half-crowns.

"Beggar and impostor! That's what I call you! Money—your money! You haven't a cent in the world. Every shilling you spend is some-body clse's money. And if that somebody else claims it, what are you going to do then? You'll lose your fine feathers. You may be glad to speak to me then, you swanking pauper!" "Pauper!" repeated Mornington.

pauper!"

"Pauper!" repeated Mornington.

"Yes, pauper! You like me to
believe that you didn't know it!"
sneered Lattrey. "You didn't know
I knew it, certainly!"

Mornington looked at him in

wonder.
"Have you gone off your rocker?"

"Beggar!" exclaimed Lattrey fiercely. "Beggar and impostor! That's what I call you! Money—your money! You haven't a cent in the world! Every shilling you spend is somebody else's money!"

"Get out, Tubby!" said Lattrey,

"Get out, Tubby!" said Lattrey, rising.
"Look here—"
"I'll kick you out if you don't!"
"I'll kick him out, anyway!" said Mornington.
Tubby Muffin dodged out of the study and fled. Mornington closed the door after him, and turned to face Lattrey.

Lattrey.

The latter eyed him sneeringly.
"I've no time now for poker," he

"I've no time now for polici, said.
"Thanks! I haven't come to play poker, dear boy!" said Mornington.
"I've come to tell you what I think of you!"
"You needn't trouble!"
"You want to get something in my writing," said Mornington—"something addressed to Joey Hook, or a chap of that kind, that would get me into trouble if it came out. You asked young Murphy to sell me out."
"Did he tell you so?" sneered Lattrey.

Lattrey.

"Yes; to put me on my guard."

"Well, it's a lie!"

"It isn't a lie," said
Mornington calmly. "Erbent distriree Gift.
be given
cost to all
sond 26&
. Danks
If-Guinea
who prohroad I/.
Lo Cersondoa, S.

"I knew all the time

Mornington stood cool and calm, his face scornful, quite prepared for an attack, and welcoming it. But it did not come.

"Come on, if you choose!" said Mornington coolly. "I'm feeling just inclined to wipe up your study with you, you treacherous cad!"

Lattrey's eyes burned, but he did not come on.

with you, you treacherous cad!"

Lattrey's eyes burned, but he did not come on.

"After this," continued Mornington, "you can give me a wide berth. I'm going to drop your acquaintance, dear boy! I'm goin' to warn the other chaps what to expect from you—what kind of a pal you are, an' what it may cost them if they trust you. Savvy?"

He smiled grimly.

"You're a criminal, Lattrey, that's what you are! Goodness knows where you come from. From a family of criminals, I should say. But that kind of thing won't do for Rookwood. It may be all right in the reformatory you ought to belong to, but it's not quite good enough for Rookwood. You'll have the exceedin' kindness not to speak to me any more, and to keep your distance. I fancy the other fellows won't want much to do with you, when they know the kind of game you're prepared to play. I'm sorry I sha'n't be able to learn the wonderful game of poker from you." He laughed satirically. "You've seen the last quid you're goin' to see from me!"

Lattrey drew a deep breath. "Keep it up!" he nuttered. "You

he asked calmly. "I don't see how you can know anythin' about my affairs, anyway!"

"You see that I do!"

"Not at all. Unless you're mad, you're dreamin'," said Mornington.
"But you're going to explain, Lattrey. What do you mean by what you just said?"

Lattrey gave him a hard, searching look.

you just said?"

Lattrey gave him a hard, searching look.

"You mean to say that you don't know?" he asked at last.

"I know you're talkin' out of your hat! That's all."

"By gad!" Lattrey breathed hard. "Then your guardian's kept it dark from you. Sir Rupert Stacpoole hasn't told you—"

"Told me what?" exclaimed Mornington, a vague sense of uneasiness creeping over him, in spite of his scornful disbelief. "What do you mean? Out- with it!"

"That you're a beggar!" Lattrey enunciated every word with slow relish. "That you haven't a quid in the wide world of your own money. That every shilling you spend may have to be accounted for if the right owner turns up, and he will—he will!"

Mornington searched the hard, bitter face with his eyes. There was intense earnestness in Lattrey's look. He was telling the truth, or so he believed. The dandy of the Fourth stood very still.

Could there be anything in it, he

stood very still.

Could there be anything in it, he was wondering.

"Tell me what you mean, Lattrey?" he said at last, and his voice was very low and quiet.
"I'll tell you fast enough. You stand to inherit twenty thousand pounds a year when you're twentyone. What?"
"That's so though I don't see how

pounds a year when you're twentyone. What?"

"That's so, though I don't see how
you know it!"

"You see that I do know it. And
the Mornington estates—yours, if
your cousin does not turn up; but
whose, if he does?" grinned Lattrey.

"My cousin?"

"Your cousin, Cecil Mornington,
the heir of your father's elder
brother," said Lattrey. "And you
never knew?"

"It's a lie!" said Mornington.

"I have no cousin Cecil!"

"Your uncle never told you?"
Lattrey laughed. "No. I dare say
old Staepoole thought it wouldn't
make you exactly happy to know the
facts, and Cecil Mornington may
never turn up. So he never told
you."

He laughed.

you."

He laughed.
"My father and his brother are both dead," said Mornington. "I was my father's only son, and his brother had no children. So I always believed."

both dead," said Mornington. "I was my father's only son, and his brother had no children. So I always believed."

"Your father's brother had a son. He married late in life, and his son is younger than you. That son was lost when he was a baby, and never found. But there has been search going on for him for ten years, and it's still going on. Sir Rupert Stacpoole is still paying the inquiry agents who are searching for him. If he's alive, he will be about twelve years old now. And why shouldn't he be alive? And if he's found, he takes everything—everything." Lattrey gave the dandy of the Fourth a gloating look. "You're left a beggar—your father was a beggar, dependent on his elder brother for an allowance. Old Stacpoole knows it. You'll be dependent on him for the bread you eat, if your cousin turns up, and he will!"

"And how do you know all this?" asked Mornington quietly.

Lattrey & Co., the inquiry agents," he said coolly. "That's how I know."

"Your pater's a sneakin' detective, you mean," Mornington's lip curled. "Do inquiry agents confide matters of this kind to their sons?"

"Ha, ha! I imagine not! But there's precious few things went on at home that I did not know about, all the same!"

"I see! Followin' in your father's footsteps like a sneakin' spy. What!"

"Put it like that if you like. You see that I do know it."

"I shall ask my guardian if it's true."

"Do!" sneered Lattrey. "You'll find that it is!"

see that I do know it."

"I shall ask my guardian if it's true."

"Do!" sneered Lattrey. "You'll find that it is!"

"But whether it's true or not, you've no right to know anythin' about it," said Mornington, his eyes glittering, "an' whether I'm goin' to be a beggar or not, I don't allow a sneakin' spyin' cad to call me one. Put up your hands, Lattrey! I'm goin' to thrash you!"

The dandy of the Fourth came on as he spoke.

Lattrey put up his hands quickly. But his defence did not save him For five minutes there was a trampling and scuffling of feet in the study, and fierce panting and gasping. Then Lattrey lay on the floor on his back, knocked completely out. He blinked at Mornington through half-closed eyes, with blood on his face, groaning.

Mornington gave him a contemptu-

groaning.

Mornington gave him a contemptuous look, and left the study.

#### The 6th Chapter. A Change of Prospects.

"Let me alone, confound you!" Peele and Gower looked darkly at

"Let me alone, confound you!"
Peele and Gower looked darkly at their study-mate.

It was the day following Mornington's interview with Lattrey of the Fourth. He had not spoken to the new junior since.

All that day Mornington had been in a thoughtful and irritable mood. He said to himself a dozen times that he did not believe a word of Lattrey's story. But, in spite of himself, belief crept into mind.

Lattrey could not wholly have invented such a tale.

But if it was true—
If his wealth, his prospects, everything depended upon whether the right claimant to the Mornington estates was found?

What then?

It haunted Mornington.

What if he was, as Lattrey sneeringly declared, a beggar? He had always been used to plenty of money—more money than was good for him. To be poor—poor like Rawson, whose poverty he had ungenerously thrown in his teeth, poorer than Rawson, for Rawson had gifts, brains.

retaliation.

get out."

Was it true?

"Oh, shut up!"
"Leave him alone," growled
ower. "I'm sick of him! Let's

get out."

The sulky nuts left the study, and Mornington was alone.

He remained in the armchair, his legs stretched out, his hands driven deep into his pockets, thinking, with a deep pucker in his brow.

Was it true?

He had written to his grandlen to

Was it true?

He had written to his guardian to ask him. He expected that Sir Rupert Stacpoole would come down to Rockwood. Until he came Morny to the compact that then?

Rupert Staepoole would come down to Rookwood. Until he came Morny would not know.

But if he knew—what then? Knowing it would not alter the facts. Did his wealth, his consequence, his position in the world, depend upon a mere chance? Might it all be swept away in a moment by circumstances over which he had not the slightest control?

It was a bitter thought to the prond-spirited junior.

There was a tap at the door, and Erroll looked in. He glanced rather doubtfully at Morny. They had not spoken since they had parted in anger the previous day, after the scene on the cricket-ground.

Erroll was not a fellow to bear

the previous day, after the scene on the cricket ground.

Erroll was not a fellow to bear malice, and he was quite ready to go on as if nothing had happened, if Morny had got over his tantrums. But had he?

Mornington gave him a dark look for a moment, but then his face cleared.

"Come in," he said.

"Coming down to the cricket, Morny?"



## **MORNINGTON'S** FOE!

Published Every Monday

(Continued from the previous page.)

"And you never gave a thought to tin, did you?"

Erroll flushed.
"You think too much about your money, Morny," he said. "You surely can't imagine that I gave it a thought?"

"I know you didn't! You wouldn't think any different of me if I lost it?" said Mornington, eyeing him.

Erroll laughed.
"Not much danger of that, I suppose," he said. "I can't imagine you without plenty of money."
"I can't, either; but it might happen."

without plenty of money."

"I can't, either; but it might happen."

"What rot!" said Erroll. "Your money isn't invested in shoddy companies, is it?"

"It's a landed estate, worth twenty thousand a year, and no end of tin in ready money in the bank," said Mornington. "Something to swank about—what? But suppose it all melted away, like fairy gold?"

Erroll looked at him sharply, and then closed the door of the study.

"Has anything happened, Morny?" he asked. "Tell me, if it has. Whatever should happen, you know I'm your pal."

"I do know it," said Mornington, with a nod. "So I'm goin' to tell you. You won't jaw about it, of course. Listen to this!"

Erroll did not interrupt him once as he related what Lattrey had told him the previous day. His face became very grave, however.

"Well, what do you think, Erroll?" concluded Mornington.

"I'm afraid there's something in it, old chap," said Erroll. "Lattrey

Was it true?

Morny was in no mood to be troubled by Peele and Gower, and when they proposed a game of nap after tea, he burst out on them savagely. He had not spoken a word during tea. He made up for it now.

"Give us a rest! Hang your cards, you measly, blackguardly rotters! Don't play the giddy ox now! Clear out, and let me alonc."

Peele gritted his teeth.

"By gad, I'm getting fed up with you, Morny!" he said savagely. "I sha'n't stand much more of your airs and graces, I warn you!"

"Oh, shut up!"

concluded Mornington.

"I'm afraid there's something in it, old chap," said Erroll. "Lattrey couldn't quite have made up a yarn like that. But your guardian will tell you, when you ask him. But I don't think you need feel alarmed. If the kid was lost ten years ago, and hasn't been found, there isn't much chance of his turning up now. It's a queer state of things, but it's not likely you will ever see your Cousin Cecil. I—I don't know whether you want to—"2

He hesitated.
Mornington laughed sarcastically.
"Of course, I ought to be eager to have him found, and restored to his rights!" he sneered.
"No, I don't think that could be expected of you," said Erroll quietly.
"Luckily, it doesn't depend on you, either way."
"I wish it did!" Mornington. He hesitated.

"I wish it did!" Mornington gritted his teeth. "I'd make jolly sure that Cousin Ceeil didn't turn

"He it did I should be a beggar as

'If it did, I should be a beggar, as ttrey says—a miserable worm like

Rawson—"

"Rawson isn't a miserable worm, Morny. He's quite as happy as you are, in his own way. He's going to work his own way in the world; and, to come down to facts, that's a bit more manly than living in idleness on dead men's money. It mightn't be a bad thing for you to have to fend for yourself, instead of browsing on other people's work."

"What rot!" said Mornington.

Erroll was silent.

"All the same, I think I could face it." said Mornington, after a pause.
"I like money and comfort, but I've got some grit, too. But, by gad, how the nuts would stare! I should lose a lot of charmin' acquaintances at this school!" He laughed bitterly.

"They'd give me the go-by, an' no mistake!"

mistake!"
"There's one pal you wouldn't lose,
Morny."
Mornington smiled.
"An' that one's worth all the rest,"
he said. "Well, I'm not goin' to
brood over it. I'm goin' to shove it
out of my mind till I see my
guardian. Let's get down to the

"Good!" said Erroll, relieved.
The chums of the Fourth went
downstairs, and passed Lattrey in the
lower passage.

Lattrey gave Mornington a quick

look.

The dandy of the Fourth passed him without a glance, looking as cool, as cheerful and as supercilious as of old. Whatever he felt inwardly, he did not intend to give the cad of the Fourth a triumph over him.

Lattrey looked after him darkly as he sauntered out into the quadrangle with Erroll.

He had lost Manington. All was

He had lost Mornington. All was over between him and the Dandy of the Fourth. And, so far as he could see, he had not even succeeded in making Morny troubled and disquieted.

"Hang him!" muttered Lattrey between his teeth. "If—if his cousin could only be found, that would bring his head down a bit lower. If only—"

Lattrey's mutterings were inter-rupted as the Fistical Four came out with their bats. Lattrey was in the way, and the quartette walked into him. They went on their way, smiling, leaving the cad of the Fourth sitting on the steps, his face black with rage with rage.

#### The 7th Chapter. A New Leaf.

Mornington's handsome face wore a very thoughtful expression as he walked down to Little Side with Erroll.

a very thoughtful expression as he walked down to Little Side with Erroll.

Lattrey's story was true—in its main facts, at least. He felt it to be so. And the uncertainty it introduced into his future was troubling. It would have disturbed most fellows' equanimity. But Mornington, slacker as he often was, blackguard as he generally was, dandy and nut as he always was, had grit.

He found a peculiar sardonic amusement in contemplating the change in his condition, if the rival claimant should be found.

Smythe of the Shell, and Towny and Topham, and the rest—he knew how they would freat him. Their friendship was of the fair-weather sort. They had no use for a pal who was down on his luck.

The nuts would give him the "go-by"—fellows like Peele, in fact, would rejoice over his downfall. The best he could expect from any of them was a supercilious pity.

If he received any sympathy, it would not be from them, but from—he smiled as he thought of it—his old rival, Jimmy Silver, and very likely Rawson, the scholarship fellow. They would feel for a chap who was down.

Jimmy Silver, whose enemy he had always been—Tom Rawson, whom he had called a scholarship cad, and twitted with his poverty!

Erroll "ohe broke the silence at last—"I've been a silly fool, old chap!"

Erroll looked at him. He was aware of that fact.

"I've been a silly fool, old chap!"

chap!"
Erroll looked at him. He was aware of that fact.
"I think Lattrey's done me good with his precious

yarn," said Mornington "It seems to have Mornington "It seems to have opened my eyes—to some things. You never preach at me, old scout, but I know what you think. Look here, I'm goin' to have a jolly good try to—"He paused, and laughed. "I'm goin' to try to cut out a rather different line. I've been wastin' my time playin' the fool with those duffers. By gad, I'm not quite the important fellow I thought I was! There's goin' to be a bit of a change, Erroll."

"Yes?" said Erroll.

"Hallo, Morny!" Smythe of the Shell bore down upon them. "I've been lookin' for you. Come on!"

"Where?" asked Mornington.

"Cheery little party in the study," smiled Adolphus. "Howard and Tracy, and Townsend and Topham, an' you, old chap. Smokes galore, an' a merry little game. You come, too, Erroll."

"Thanks, I'd rather not!" said Erroll drily.

"Oh, buzz off an' play cricket, then!" said Adolphus. "You're comin', Morny?"

"No, I'm not comin'," said Mornington. "I'll give you a tip instead, Smythey."

"Eh? Racin's stopped!" said

Eh? Racin's stopped!" said Smythe.

"I don't mean that kind of tip, fathead!" Mornington grinned. "My tip is this—chuck it!"
"What?"

"Chuck playin' the giddy ox!"

"Chuck playin' the giddy ox!" said Mornington, enjoying the astonishment in Smythe's somewhat vacant face. "When you're smokin', Smythey, you don't know what a ridiculous ass you look!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"When you're playin' cards you think you're awf'ly sportin', but you're not. You're only a shady ass!" said Mornington. "I'm goin' to chuck it. You do the same, old chap, an' try to cultivate a little hoss-sense!"

"You cheeky ass!" gasped Smythe.
"I'm really self-denyin' in givin'
you this tip. I've found you no end
entertainin' with your sportin' ways,"
said Mornington calmly. "You're no
end of a funny merchant, Smythey,
when you're paintin' the town red.
You're as good as a comic paper without knowin' it. Chuck it, old chap,
and I'll find somethin' else to amuse
me in dull times."

Mornington walked on, leaving
Adolphus Smythe stuttering with
wrath.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were already

wrath.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were already on Little Side, and some of the cricketers looked rather grimly at Mornington. His exploit of the previous day had not been forgotten. Unheeding the looks of the Classical juniors, Mornington came up to Rawson, who was talking with the Fistical Four.

son, who was talking with the Fistical Four.

"Excuse me a minute!" he said.
Rawson stared at him.

"I owe you an apology," said Mornington, while the chums of the Fourth stared at him blankly. "I hurt you yesterday. It was an accident, but it was owin' to my rotten temper, just as you said."

"My hat!" ejaculated Rawson.

"I'm dreaming!" murmured Lovell. "Morny talking like a decent chap! Pinch me, somebody!"

"I'm sorry it happened, Rawson," continued Mornington. "I called you names afterwards. It was caddish, and I'm sorry. I can't say more than that."

"I suppose you're not pulling my leg?" gasped Rawson.
"Not at all. I'm serious. I apolo-

gise."
"All serene!" said Rawson.
Mornington took the ball, and went
on to bowl to Erroll, leaving Jimmy
Silver & Co, blinking.

"Something's happened to Morny-said Raby, in wonder. "Dash it a perhaps we've been a bit hard c him. Fellow can't do more than ow un."

pernaps we've been a bit hard on him. Fellow can't do more than own up."

"We'll see how he shapes now," remarked Jimmy Silver, his fixed intention with regard to Mornington beginning to waver a little.

Mornington was bowling in great form. There was no doubt that he was a bowler any junior team might have been proud of—at his best.

Jimmy signed to Van Ryn to take the bat, and the South African junior went on. Van Ryn's batting was as good as any in the Fourth, and ke stood up to Morny's bowling without turning a hair.

Whatever Mornington sent him he sent back, and half a dozen overs ended with the same result.

Then Mornington threw the ball to Oswald, and came off. He paused to speak as he passed the Africander at the wicket.

"Good man!" he said. "I'm goin' to keep on till I can take your wicket,

the wicket.

"Good man!" he said. "I'm gein' to keep on till I can take your wicket, old scout! Try you again later."

"I'm your man!" grinned Van Ryn.

Ryn

Ryn.

Jimmy Silver gave Mornington a peculiar look. A momentary suspicion had come into his mind that the dandy of the Fourth was playing a part. He knew Morny's duplicity of old.

But Morny's face, was quite frank

old.

But Morny's face was quite frank and cheerful, and in spite of his doubts, Jimmy could not help being convinced. He joined Mornington and Erroll when they left the field after the practice.

"Not booked up for Wednesday, Morny?" he asked.
"No."

"Care to play in the Bagshot match?"

"My hat!"
Erroll's face lighted up.
"Morny's worth his place," he
aid. "He'll be a rod in pickle for

Erroll's face lighted up.

"Morny's worth his place," he said. "He'll be a rod in pickle for Bagshot, Jimmy."

"That's why I'm asking him," said the captain of the Fourth.

"I'm your man!" said Mornington, with a smile. "I had a little engagement on for Wednesday, but, as it happens, I had already decided to put that off permanently."

"Good! Only"—Jimmy paused a moment—"no more smokes between now and Wednesday, Morny. You've got to be fit."

"I've given up smokin'."

"Oh, my hat!"

"An' if you want a pack of cards, quite good, an' a set of bridge markers, I've got some you can have—as a present."

"Put 'em in the fire!" said Jimmy Silver, laughing. "I don't quite make you out, Morny, but if you mean business, I'm jolly glad."

That evening the cricket list for the Bagshot match was posted up, and the name of Mornington was in it. Lattrey had the pleasure of reading Mornington's name among the others, and the additional pleasure of seeing the dandy of the Fourth in deep discussion of cricket with Erroll and the Fistical Four, all apparently on the best of terms. Lattrey did not look as if he enjoyed the pleasure.

THE END.

(Another magnificent long, complete tale of Jimmy Silver & Ca. in next Monday's issue of the Boys' FRIEND, entitled: "The Missing Heir:" To avoid disappointment, you must order your copy in advance.)

# "Coming down to the cricket, Morny?" Mornington laughed. "I'm not thinkin' of cricket just now," he said. "The fellows are going down to practice," remarked Erroll. "If you want to go—" "Not if you want me, Morny. Don't be so touchy." "I'm a touchy ass!" said Mornington. "I'm a purse-proud, swanking idiot, Erroll, and I wonder you were ever ass enough to pal with me!" "Wha-a-at!" "But you did," said Mornington. FACTORY TO RIDER Packed Free. Carriage Paid. Thirty Days Trial. WEAD GOVENERY Flyers Dunlop Tyres, Brooks' Saddles, Speed-Gears, etc. £4 = 10s. to £7 = 19s. EASY PAYMENTS FROM 7/- MONTHLY. Free Art Catalogue and Special Offe MEAD Cycle Co. Inc. Dep. 129 11 Paradise St., Liverp

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## A Grand New Series, introducing - - -DICK and FRANK POLRUAN, and OLD JOE TREMORNE.



## This Week: THE DEATH CHARM!

The 1st Chapter. The Magic Death.

"Rummy sort o' chaps, these landers!" remarked Joe Tremorne islanders!" remarked Joe Tremorne one morning, shortly after his elevation to the kingship of Lirikiri. "Here, because I am forced to blow half a dozen of their best and biggest war-canoes to pieces wiv little black sticks of dynamite, they go and make a potentator ov me!"

Frank Polruan, who had been recliming on a grassy knoll watching the natives at work building an island palace for their august sovereign, covered his hand with his mouth and stifled a yawn.

"The poor fellows had no option, Joe. They were cute enough to realise that unless they got on the right side of you, with that case of dynamite you had discovered in the hold of the wreck, you could blow the whole blessed lot of them to smithereens. I don't suppose they made you king, either because they liked you particularly, or because you're especially good looking." And he winked covertly across at Dick Polruan, busy carving a shark's tooth with a razor-like edge of metal.

Joe Tremorne sat up and inflated his chest.

"It's becos I ham what I ham they

carving a shark's tooth with a razorlike edge of metal.

Joe Tremorne sat up and inflated his chest.

"It's becos I ham what I ham they crowned me king!" he said pompously. "Now, see here, young Dicky my lad, I don't want any of yore side grins. I'm hemperor of this yere island, and don't you forget it! I've been dead tired o' hearing young Pie blowing hot air about his dad, what is a sorter kingummytight over a lot of iggerant black fellers in Africy—which dud country I wouldn't touch with a pitchfork—"

"Why, Joe, you big untruther, you always used to say you liked Africa better than any other country in the world!" chipped Frank.

"That was before Pie came out of it!" excused Joe, colouring furiously. "Anyways, I'm boss here, and as soon as my palis—"

"Your hut, you mean."

"No; my palis is finished, I mean to be crowned in state."

"What with?" asked Dick. "Your old brass lamp turned upside-down."

The sailor shook his head, and lit his pipe thoughtfully.

"Nothing brass is good enough to go on my napper," he mused. "Not so likely! When old Joe is crowned he won't be crowned with base metal. It's gotter be silver or gold, and as we haven't got a gold'un, I shall hev to collar a silver rone."

"A silver crown! Whose?" the boys asked together.

Joe grinned with evident satisfaction.

"Why, Pieface's, of course! Thetellers how! of his what he took off

Joe grinned with evident satisfaction.

"Why, Pieface's, of course! Thet silver bowl of his, what he took off the sideboard from Mister Gardareco's when we wus all chasing round after the Luck o' Polruan. It's goin' to be mine—mine! D'you hear? And what Joe, King of the Lirikiris, says, is law, and doan you forget it!"

Dick rolled over on his side, and, putting his hands to his mouth, formed a trumpet, and shouted to the black boy just disappearing among the trees, on the far side of the broad clearing.

"Hi, Pieface, old son of a gu!! Here's Joe talking about sneaking your silver pot! You'd better hide it before he lays his thieving old claws on it!"

The black youth, even if he heard

before he lays his thieving old claws on it!"

The black youth, even if he heard the shouted words, paid no heed to them. His attention was otherwise very much engaged, for a little distance from him, two young men had come face to face in a narrow glade, and their manner towards each other was certainly curious.

One of them was rather a decent little fellow, the nephew of the chief who had resigned his position as head of the islanders to give place to Joe Tremorne.

The other, a strapping, tall, fine figure of a man, whose back was turned to Pie, the black boy did not know. In fact, he paid little heed to him.

him.

All his attention was riveted on the chief's nephew, who halted suddenly before the big islander, stared at him for several seconds with fear-distended eyes, then, throwing up his arms, shrieked wildly, and dashed away at breakneck speed among the trees.

With a shout the big man went after him, and in a very little while the forms of the two runners were swallowed up by the dense foliage.

Picface's usually humorous face looked grave. He swung slowly round, and made his way back to the spot where Joe and the two chums were sitting.

spot where Joe and the two chums were sitting.

"Well, Fuzzywuzzy, what are you looking like a warmed-up corpse about?" asked Joe, taking his pipe from his mouth.

Pie shook his head, and pointed towards the wood.

"This chile not likums somedinks what he hab seen—oh, yes!" he said, in sober tones. "Likkley feller, old chief's fabourite, muchy frightums—oh, yes!"

Joe grunted with more than customary vigour.

"What nonsense are you talking

customary vigour.

"What nonsense are you talking now?" he demanded. "Jest like you, Pie, fancying you know more about these islanders than what ole Joe does, who's sailed the Southern seas man and boy for ninety years, and can speak three hunnered and seventy-eight diff'rent langwidges. Bah! These natives fellers, I know 'em backwards."

But Pieface only shook his dark head.

Bah! These natives fellers, I know 'em backwards."

But Pieface only shook his dark head.

"Not likkums what this babe had seen. Dead eyes in that boy's face," he said. "Chuckums up arms, and cry out. Yes, him a deader for sure! Other man lukkums—bad magic look—chief's boy shriek, and bunky doodlums off. One day him come to harm from other man."

Joe sat up, and pointed at the black with the broken stem of his pipe.

"No, see here, towsley-knob, I don't want any o' them weird stunts being talked about on this yere island what I'm king of. The chief's nevvy's all right, an' I'll prove it to you. Jest run along and bring him to me, and I'll find out why the other fellow frightened him, and what made him run away. Now then, Dick and Frank, buzz off!"

Glad of something to do to occupy their time, the two boys rose to their feet and joined the black, who, without another word, swung on his heel, and walked thoughtfully in the direction of the forest.

"Massa Joe, he doan unnerstand," said Pie, after a while. "Black man, brown man, red man, yellow man, all dem fellers different to Englishums, yessums, oh, what? Know magic, lots of magic. In Africa, the ju-juman, he jes' look at you, and you curl up, what? Dat poor boy!"

Dick laughed.
"I suppose he's all right, Pie, and as the other chap was bigger than

Dick laughed.

"I suppose he's all right, Pie, and as the other chap was bigger than him, like as not he was frightened of him, so ran away. Anyhow, when we get him in front of old Joe he'll be able to tell the tale, and as Joe is king he can straighten the business out."

out."

Frank Polruan was closely watching the black's face. There was such an expression on it as he had never seen there before.

In a way, it almost suggested fear, for every now and then Pie would glance furtively about, contracting his muscles, and holding himself on the alert, although the forest glades were radiant with sunshine and gay with the songs of birds.

"Dis way, dis way, Massa Frank," he explained, pointing to an open track which sloped gently towards the higher ground of the interior.

"Chief's nephew, him stand here. Big feller man on dis spot, wid his backums to me. He look at littler fellow, who turn screaming away. Yes, he do, in dis directums."

Frank was not quite so reliable a tracker as Pieface, but the marks on the yielding grass and soft ground were plain enough for him to follow with ease.

For half a mile they pushed forward, every now and then stopping to call the chief's nephew by name.

Coloured parrots and parakeets, and birds of gay plumage flew screaming away in clouds, but no human voice answered them.

Dick halted suddenly, and pointed to the bole of a tree.

"See! Someone has climbed this trunk! Perhaps he's in hiding. I'm going up."

going up."
Before Frank could stop him he had

"Has he been killed, or some-

"Has he been killed, or something?"

"Don't think so. Didn't see any wound on him. Besides, he's got all his fighting gear with him—a sort of tomahawk in his right hand, which lies across his chest, two spears, a bow, and some arrows near by. He looked for all the world as though he died in his sleep."

"The look of the big, bad man!" said Pie, in hollow tones. "The evil look killed him!"

Frank turned sharply.

"Don't talk such rot, Pie! There's no such thing. A look can't kill. Someone must have shot him with a poisoned dart. We'd best bring Joe along, Dick, and hear what he has to say."

None too sorry to get away from the

along. Dick, and hear what he has to say."

None too sorry to get away from the spot, the boys hurried back, and related the discovery to Joe.

The sailor listened in silence.

"Don't believe a word of it!" he growled at last.

"Don't fash yourselves. Leave me to get to the bottom of this business."

"Chief's nevvy, him die, too, oh, yes!" piped Pieface gravely.

Joe scowled.

"Silence, slave!" he roared. "That feller's all right, and I'll bet twopence to a tin trouser-button I'll find out how the man in the tree came to turn up his toes."

#### The 2nd Chapter. An Island Mystery.

An Island Mystery.

Although Joe took a keen delight in making fun of the black boy, right in the back of his cunning old head he had a most profound respect for all foreign races, a respect born of long contact with men of all colours in every part of the globe.

"Them has hain't white skins has dark minds," he reflected grimly, as, with a Service pistol—the cartridges for which by this time were effectually

Ah, the frightened chap went this way, and so did the other!"

Joe proceeded with extreme caution

Joe proceeded with extreme caution now.

"Tisn't like walking down the Strand at dinner-time!" he muttered.

"Like as not some kind-'earted gentleman may be watching me from behind a tree, and telling himself what a nice Christmas dinner I'd make well roasted and basted. Oh, my! What sort o' picture-palace stunt hev I stumbled on now?"

Well might the sailor be amazed, for the scene before him was one of the strangest he had ever lit upon.

In a little open space, surrounded by emerald-green foliage, two figures stood facing each other. The back of the taller and more powerful was turned to Joe. The face of the other he recognised at once as that M'tapa, the head-man's wealthy young nephew.

nephew.

And M'tapa was corpselike, quaking with fear. His large eyes were distended, the perspiration ran in little rivulets from him, and all the whine uttered the most fearsome groam. In some way, the other was working a dreadful spell upon him. Facing M'tapa at his full height, he stretched out his right arm, at the same time turning his face away and uttering curses.

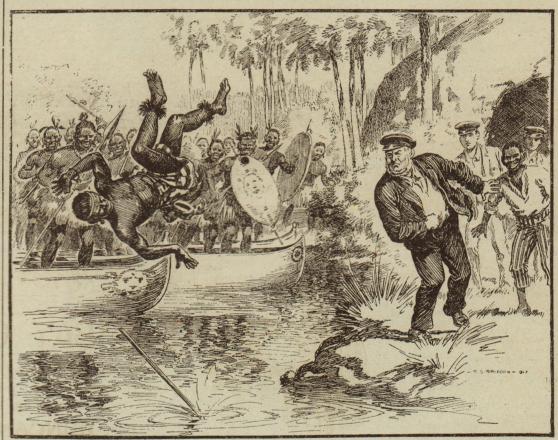
curses.

"Die! Before the sun sets thou must die, M'tapa!" he said. "The 'Vele' has slain you!"

He held out towards his luckless victim an object of native workmanship, like nothing so much as a baby's wicker rattle. This was the dreaded Vele, or death-charm, which, by the power of suggestion or self-hypnotism alone, causes the death of thousands of superstitious South Seas Islanders every year.

every year.

The object was held between the second and little fingers of the Veleman's left hand.



"Now then, Mala, my lad," exclaimed Joe Tremorne, raising his struggling victim high above his head,
"out you go into the middle of the hot spring!"

swung himself hand-over-hand, until his slim form was lost to view in a bower of leaves. The waiting two heard the scraping of his feet against the bark, and then dead silence, followed by a crashing of wood and a shower of twigs and leaves, and, to their amaze, Dick seemed to drop right out of the sky, and to land in a ball at their feet.

"What ever's happened?" cried Frank, rushing to his chum's rescue.
Dick sat up, looking very white, and he raised a shaking hand above his head.

"Up there in the branches is a dead man!" he muttered.
A silence fell upon them. They

man!" he muttered.

A silence fell upon them. They stared from one to the other in dulled

stared from one to the other in danshorror.

"Who is it—the chief's nephew?" asked Frank, at length.
Dick shook his head.
"No. A great big man. I haven't seen him for a long time. He used to gather the cyster-shells for the chief, and store them down by the lagoon. He's lying up there, propped in the fork of the tree. At first I thought he was asleep. When I shook him I found he was dead!"

dried—in his hip-pocket, he pushed his way along the track which the boys had left only a few minutes before. "Young Pie's fair mazed over this 'evil look' business; and, 'atween me and that there tree, I wouldn't be surprised if someone on this island wasn't up to monkey tricks on his own account."

This view was strengthened when Joe came to examine the figure in the tree. The man—a fine, healthy specimen of an islander, who should have lived at least another forty years—had met his end in some mysterious fashion which had left no trace behind. Of wounds there were none. Of signs of poison none, nor of disease.

The poor fellow had just died in the

The poor fellow had just died in the rime of life, apparently without

Joe looked grim when he reached the ground once more.

"Twist my mainbraces, Pie was right, after all!" he reflected. "I'd like to find out the name and group of the fellow who scared the chief's nevvy. Shades o' Nelson, I'll call him up, and put him in the 'A' class!

Seeing that M'tapa was under the influence of the Vele, the holder swung half-round, keeping the death-charm behind his back, but still pointing to the quaking youth.

"Thou art accursed!" cried the rascal. "Only a few more hours of life are left to thee. Even now the hand of death is upon M'tapa. Before the rising of the moon the great warriors of Lirikiri will take thee to their keeping. Behold the power of the sacred death-charm!".

Moans broke from the wretched man. He fell on his knees, and, moving in a half-circle, dragged himself towards the Vele-man, to whom he extended his arms beseechingly.

"Oh, mine enemy, remove the Vele or I die!" he cried.

The other merely hissed out more curses, and made a movement with the Vele towards his victim's left and right breast.

He touched, too, his knees, his toe-joints, his temples, the small of his back, and his shoulder-blades. After which, with a chuckle of triumph, he slipped the terrible Vele into a tiny cloth bag, and disappeared amongst the bushes.



So far, Joe had been too interested a spectator to interfere, but now, as the frightened youth rolled on the ground, crying with terror, the sailor came into the open.

"Nothing for you to worry about, old sport," he said cheerily. "Just get your pins to the vertical, and you'll be as right as ninepence. That ju ju fellow can't hurt you. Here, I say, what the dickens are you up to?"

An ear-splitting yell burst from M'tapa, who leapt up, and, flinging his arms wildly above his head, dashed for the forest.

Before he could reach the trees, however, he was down again, his feet and hands clawing at the soft earth.

The sailor-man ran towards him, but while still ten yards separated them, M'tapa stiffened, lay still a moment, gave one or two convulsive kicks, and, rolling over on his face, remained quite still.

Joe was white-faced as he turned the native on his back.

"Dead! Dead!" he gasped. "Dead as a doornail! Killed by the fear of the Vele! I wonder why the Veleman did it?"

"Joe! Joe! Where are you?"

It was Frank's voice which sounded through the trees.

"Here," he answered. "What's wrong?"

The boy pointed to the northern fringe of the wood.

There, he answered. What's wrong?"

The boy pointed to the northern fringe of the wood.

"Pie has found five more of the islanders dead among the trees."

Joe's jaws snapped.

"Like this one, I guess?"

"Yes, just the same. How did he die?"

"Yes, just the same. However, it is die?"
"The Vele man got him, killed him by magic, feared him up so much that his heart stopped. It's a favourite wheeze with some of these medicine johnnies. They work the stunt to get all their enemies out of the way. But why should Mala have killed M'tapa?"

M'tapa?"
"Bothered if I know!" replied
Frank moodily. "Sure it was

"Dead certain! I saw his face as he ran away. He's a bad man, and, as king of the island, I shall punish him."

him."

They moved off towards where the new huts were being built, Joe occupied with the responsibilities of his new position.

In a little while Frank broke in on his thoughts.

In a little while Frank broke in on his thoughts.

"I say, Mr. Fishpingle, what can have happened to Dick? I told him not to go too far away until you had got to the bottom of this business, and he's disappeared."

Joe looked angry.

"Don't bother me, boy! Think I can keep the young varmint in my pocket? I've got a big bundle to face, and you whelps must learn to fry your own bacon!"

It wasn't often old Joe looked so genuinely concerned.

"What's the difficulty?" Frank asked.

The sailor's gruff voice dropped to

The sailor's gruff voice dropped to a whisper.

"We've got to fight the Vele-man, because once that fellow starts putting terror into these superstitious islanders, we're all as good as dead men. Now, find Dick, and tell him what I've said."

Frank turned away. A little distance off all was very quiet. A

men. Now, find Dick, and tell him what I've said."

Frank turned away. A little distance off all was very quiet. A great loneliness began to settle on him. In his mind he felt ill at ease. Evil, in a very dangerous form, was afoot on the island. It had affected too many; nine men cut off in their prime by the "death magic." Dick must be warned to take care.

All through the afternoon, until the sun began to drop in a copper-hued sky below a fringe of palms, Frank searched high and low for Dick.

His quest was vain. He and Picface had vanished, utterly and mysteriously, and only the Vele-man, perhaps, could tell what had become of them.

#### The 3rd Chapter. The Shrine of Skulls.

There was one spot on Crusoe Island which none of the four adventurers had ever visited. To them it was taboo—forbidden, even as it was taboo to all the natives.

Formed at the southernmost extremity of the creek, and hidden from prying eyes by an enveloping screen of dense, tropical foliage, it consisted of an immense mound, some ninety

or a hundred feet long and thirty feet high, raised about the level of the water, and built entirely of human skulls.

the water, and built entirely of human skulls.

The natives called it "Akabi," or "the shrine," because of a curious wooden monument raised in the centre to their god, supposed to protect them in battle.

In reality, the whole structure was nothing more than a grisly memento of the thousands of islanders who, attacking Lirikiri from the sea, had fallen before the defenders, and left their own heads to whiten in the burning sun.

To this dread place Dick, while waiting for Frank's return, had been induced to go by the curious Pieface.

"You come along wid me," said Pie, laying his finger alongside his nose. "Me show you much strangum things, oh, yes, better than those tree fellers."

Dick followed.

Dick followed.
Pie had got the boat all ready in the creek, and the two pushed off. They went down with the tide, and, steering through a channel in the reef, shot suddenly through an opening in the wall of grinning skulls.
"There, now, what you thinkums?" asked Pieface, lighting a candle.
"Much big thief-man somewhere, yes!"

"Much big thief-man somewhere, yes!"

He pointed to shelves ranged round the walls—shelves that were stacked with copra, soya beans, coral, and mother-of-pearl.

"My hat, there must be thousands of pounds' worth here!" gasped Dick.

"Stacked quite recently, too. I wonder who by?"

Pie nodded.

"Nebber mind. We find out soon.

Now, through dat opening to the hot bath. What—what!"

Before Dick could recover from his surprise the black had pulled the boat into a second chamber, the roof of which had gone.

They floated on the surface of a tiny lake, from which a warm, mist-like cloud rose slowly, and vanished in the dry air.

Dick trailed one hand over the side.
"Why, the water's hot!" he cried.
"Nicee warm bath!" said Pieface
joyously. "Big fire under the sea!"
"No; it's a hot spring, which wells
out somewhere from under the island.
'Sh, Pie! Keep still."
Above the dull boom of the surf
they caught the splash of a canoe's
paddle.
Dick allowed the boat to drift back
towards the secret store-chamber.

towards the secret store-chamber. Then, gripping against the skulls, he peered round the corner.

On the glassy surface flooding the secret store a canoe was rocking, and upright in it stood Mala, the Vele-

man.

His evil-looking face was wreathed with self-satisfied smiles, which broadened as he bent down and lifted from the bottom of the cance, loaded almost to the gunwales, the personal belongings and effects of the man he had slain.

belongings and effects of the man he had slain.

There were strings of coloured beads, pieces of crudely-worked gold and silver ware, several small bags of seed-pearls, objects in sandal-wood, and a large collection of choicely-carved native weapons.

Dick could hardly conceal his excitement; but Pieface laid a warning hand on his shoulder, and they watched in silence.

From shelf to shelf Mala passed, loading his ill-gotten gains upon the special shelves set apart for them; which task done, he wrote something on the wall, and paddled swiftly out through the entrance.

Soon the boys emerged and passed into the store-chamber.

On the rounded surface of a skull, yellow with age, were these amazing words:

"Clear before next moon. Entire contents to be credited Peterson, Dolman's Wharf, Sydney."

"Good gracious!" Dick exclaimed.

"Who ever would have thought a Lirikiri islander understood good English?"

"No one," replied Pieface crisply.

"Dis chile not such big fool. You wait and see Hallo!" Here conges.

Errikin islander understood good English?"

"No one," replied Pieface crisply.

"Dis chile not such big fool. You wait and see. Hallo! Here comes ole Daddy Bushy-beard and lil Massa Frank. Mornin', sea-lion! Sorry no stale fish to gib away. You go begging in anudder street."

"I'll beg you!" shouted Joe, raising himself into the cutter. "Nice sort o' hide-and-seek game this is! Frank and me hev been searching all over the shop till we picked up your tracks by the creek, and guessed you'd made for here. Don't you understand what you've done?"

"Nothing, except enjoy ourselves," laughed Dick.
"You have," responded Joe grimly.
"You've come to a place which is taboo. And, hark! By growling Cæsar, we'll be lucky if ever we leave the place alive!"

The 4th Chapter. Joe Turns a Brown Man White.

Joe Turns a Brown Man White.

Mala had seen the white king of Crusoe Island and one of his friends making for the creek.

He drove his canoe a little way upstream, and crouched in it under the overhanging foliage by the bank.

What followed filled him with fear.
The two whites plunged into the creek, and swam with the outgoing tide, and, successfully negotiating the boil of the reef, struck out a becline for the Shrine of Skulls.

A gleam of joy illumined Mala's dark eyes. He landed higher up, and dashed at full speed towards the village.

Straight into the hut of the headman he rushed, and, going down on one knee, cried in a loud voice:

"O chief, the white-faces from over the sea have set at naught the law of taboo. They have defiled the Shrine of Skulls by their presence, and the wrath of the great God will come upon us!"

A score of excited natives had gathered about the spot, and from

a score of excited natives had gathered about the spot, and from them great shouts of anger went up which swiftly brought hundreds of men crowding in.

"Let the war-gongs be sounded, O king, and the evil whites be killed!" counselled the cunning Mala.

"Then shall the great Chief of Lirikiri once more rule his own people."

"But the black fire-sticks?" questioned the head-man. "They will assuredly slay us!"

Mala knew that the whites had none with them when they swam the creek.

"My magic will prevail over theirs," he proclaimed. "Let all your young men arm themselves, or these people will bring ruin on us. Is it not true, O brothers?"

A chorus of assent answered him. The luckless whites could have done nothing worse than to violate a tabooed spot.

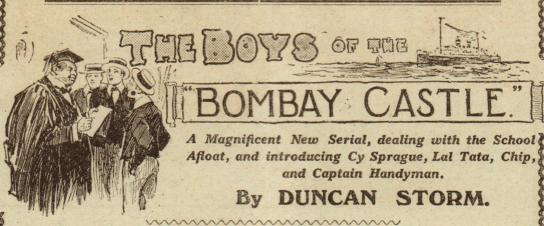
The luckless whites could have done nothing worse than to violate a tabooed spot.

"To death with the pale-faces!" they shricked, and the noise of their angry crying rolled in a deep volume of sound to the sea.

In a few moments the clearing was thronged with armed warriors clamouring for vengeance.

The head-man rose.

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"As Mala says, so shall it be!" he cried. "Nothing but trouble, death, and disease has visited us since the white men came. Sound the battle-gongs and beat the drums of war! Those who have set foot on Akabi shall surely die!"

With horns blowing and tom-tomoratiling the war-cances were manned, and, driven by scores of paddlers, the long boats soon reached the place of skulls, which they surrounded.

At this juncture, Joe, who happened to glance seawards, saw them. "Nice sort of pickle you've landed us into, Dick!" he growled. "Eight hundred yelling fiends all round us, and not a single popgun between us! Push her back, Frank, through the opening there. What's that? All clear to the sky? Right! I may get a chance to talk 'em down."

They shot across the placid surface of the hot lake, and Joe climbed out. A roar of rage greeted his appearance on the forbidden place.

"Death to the defilers of taboo!" shrieked the islanders, and arrows started to twang viciously around.

"Death to the whole lot of you if you don't get rid of your Vele-man!" bellowed Joe in a thunderous voice. "He slays your young men to possess himself of their goods. Let Mala step forward and answer me."

"Yea, let Mala speak," cried the chief.

At that, much jabbering followed. while Joe folded his arms and looked

"Yea, let Mala speak," cried the chief.

At that, much jabbering followed. while Joe folded his arms, and looked down upon the sea of fierce, painted faces undismayed.

Mala was a cunning rascal. He realised instinctively that it was touch and go with him. Either he would be exposed by the white men or he would win through, and his power over the superstitions, ignorant islanders would be boundless.

"Mala will speak," he shouted, springing up and eyeing evilly the grey-haired sailor-man. "More, he will meet the white king face to face, and slay him with the power of the Vele."

This was a good line to take, for all

This was a good line to take, for all the natives were afraid of the Vele.

"Fire ahead, then!" cried Joe.

"Touch me with your Vele if you days!"

dare!"
In a flash Mala answered the challenge. He leapt ashore, and darted forward, holding the Vele out at arm's-length.
Instead of avoiding it, Joe, to the horror of the islanders, seized it and tossed it into the water. Then he dropped flat on his face allowing Mala to sprayl on top of him.

Instead of avoiding it, Joe, to the horror of the islanders, seized it and tossed it into the water. Then he dropped flat on his face allowing Mala to sprawl on top of him.

It took Joe just about fifty seconds to get such a strong hold on the powerful Mala as made the wretch shriek for mercy.

"I'll let you see how much an honest British sailor cares for your rotten old Vele!" yelled Joe. "Now then, Mala, my lad, out you go into the middle of the hot spring!"

Swiftly he raised his struggling victim, and, swinging him round once or twice, shot him far out.

Mala turned somersaults in the air, and vanished with a dull splash. A cloud of steam rose slowly from the disturbed water.

Pieface peered down.

"Lookums, Joeyman! See what happens, yes. All the brown comes off the ju-ju man!"

"So it does!" cried Joe, as Mala rose to the surface. "By my great aunt Matilda, he's piebald!"

In very truth, the Vele man presented a strange appearance, for the hot water had fetched brown stain off him in great patches. He scrambled ashore, revealed as a white man, who all along had masqueraded as a Lirikiri islander.

"You skunk!" cried Joe, seizing him by the neck. "You're nothing but a thieving trader who's wormed your way among these savages, stained and dyed like one of them, to rob them of their possessions!"

"Mercy!" cried the unhappy wretch, falling on his knees.

"As much mercy as you showed to the poor fellows you killed with your Vele. Oh, chief, this is a bad white man. He has slain your young men with evil magic, and stolen their goods. You'll find them hidden in the cave of skulls, ready to be shipped across the sea. I, your king, give you permission to deal with him. No more shall the Vele trouble your island. I have spoken!"

In the eyes of the simple natives Joe had changed a brown man into a white man. That was enough. A great shout of joy went up. In very truth he was a great and wonderful king!

THE END

(Another magnificent long, complete tale of Dick, Frank, and Joe in next Monday's issue of the Boys' FRIEND, entitled: "The Blackbirders!" To avoid disappointment, you must order your copy in advance) you must advance.)

THE RED CARAVAN.

-000-

Jack Robinson,

Rob Roy MacGregor,

Larry O'Rourke,

Johnny Jones,

Roly Poly, the fat boy,

and

Ben Brace, an old sailor. A Magnificent New Series of Complete Stories. By RICHARD RANDOLPH.



BLUE CARAVAN. -000-

THE

Dick Kent.

Sydney Hobart,

Victor Hale,

Walter Graham,

Nap, the black boy,

and

Gamaliel Game,

the janitor.

The 1st Chapter.

Roly's Eggs.

Roly's Eggs.

"I've been done down!" howled Roly-Poly Tregwidden.

"Nothing new in that, is there?" asked Graham lazily.

"Sure, not a bit of it! Roly's the sort that's always after being done down. He goes about asking for it," said Larry O'Rourke.

"Phew! There's a very nasty smell, whatever," remarked Johnny Jones.

Larry O'Rourke.

Jones.

Larry O'Rourke, who had been lying down at Graham's side, turned over. He saw a bowl in Roly's hand, and he jumped to his feet.

Roly was sniffing at the bowl, and the look upon his face suggested that the smell failed to please him. It was the same smell which had caused Johnny Jones' remark.

And Larry knew that bowl. Wherefore Larry jumped up in all haste.

It had been he who had discovered the value as missiles of the bad eggs which had played so important a part in the rout of the lord of the manor and his minions, as Dick Kent called them.

in the rout of the lord of the manor and his minions, as Dick Kent called them.

Above the laager on the hillside the flag which Jack Robinson had made out of a blazer of the Crofton colours still floated gaily.

Six hours had passed since the attack made by the scratch army of Mr. Absalom Arkitell had been beaten off, and the enemy had not shown up again. But watch and ward had not been allowed to get slack.

Between the two carts which helped to form the front of the laager Hobart and Hale sat together, their legs dangling down the slope, their eyes ever on the white road below.

Between them was a pair of field glasses, and from time to time one or the other would raise these to his eyes.

or the other would raise these to his eyes.

So, before they took up the watch, had Jack Robinson and Dick Kent sat there together, waiting for "the coming of the chariot of Sisera," as Dick said.

Roly thought cooking more important than anything else in life, or almost anything else. He had lately had a new idea upon this subject, and was rather disposed to thin now that a really ripping girl—such as Lena Ware, who was the very good chum of them all—might be of more importance even than cooking.

But Lena was not there, and a fellow must eat. No one was more fully persuaded of the necessity of eating than Roly.

He liked his grub good and in plenty.

He fixed his grub good and in plenty.

Roly had fetched the eggs when Jack Robinson had commandeered them as hand-grenades.

But he had not fetched them all. He could not believe that they were all bad. It might be true that even a fresh egg was a useful missile. But fresh eggs as missiles seemed to Roly a sinful waste.

So he had kept back à few—those which looked at a glance least hopeless. And now, being minded to make a Yorkshire pudding, he had broken one of them into a basin.

The result was almost beyond description. Roly had a momentary feeling of sympathy even for the enemies of the caravanners in the horrible fate they had experienced in coming into contact with such eggs as this.

Also, Roly felt angry. It was not

Also, Roly felt angry. It was not at all reasonable to blame Larry O'Rourke for the badness of those

eggs.
But Roly did blame him.
He came nearer, and there was
something threatening in his attitude.
Larry ought to have tried extra
civility. He made a bad break when
he said:

"Here, I say, keep off, ye fat spalpeen! I'm not going—"
"Yes, you are!" howled Roly.
He dashed the contents of the basin full into the face of the junior from County Cork.

"Ow! Ow! I'm suffoca Grooh! Yow!"

"Ho, ho, ho!" roared Graham.
"You fat idiot! You cheeky worm! Grooh! I—"
"Ho, ho, ho!" roared Graham

"It was your own fault, you ass! And don't you just look funny with a yellow nose! Ha, ha, ha!" chortled Roly.

Roly.

"'Tis a liar ye are, an' the truth is not in ye!" howled Larry. "'Tis not my own fault at all, at all, but the wicked spite of ye, ye fat rascal! And it's not the colour I'd be after minding, though it's not the fashion in noses, but the smell. Sure, there never was another egg after being

a transport of affection he was rubbing his face upon Johnny's.
"Ho, ho, ho!" roared Graham

This Week: HOLDING THE FORT!

He stopped in his flight, and stood rocking, his hands to his sides.

But his laughter ceased on a sudden.

Larry had gripped him.

"You rotter! Help-help, you fellows!"

fellows!"

"Not likely!" said Roly cruelly.
"Serve you right! You— Oh, stoppit, you wild beast! Yarooogh!"

Larry had darted from Graham to Roly now. The fat boy could not move fast enough to dodge him.
"I say, what's all this?" asked Jack Robinson, coming up with Rob Roy and Dick Kent.

They had been over the bill to

and Dick Kent.

They had been over the hill, to fetch water, and see that the horses were all right, and had only just returned to the camp.

"There ain't any left for you, I'm afraid, old chap," said Larry cheerily.

"They can't all be bad. Don't be so silly, Jack!" said Roly peevishly. "Now, I suppose, I shall have to break them all, and perhaps not find one good one among them."

"Then you'd better get a new supposer—one that's not as addled as that egg, for if you break as much as one more I'll—oh, hanged if I won't break your neck, or jolly near it!"

Roly looked sulky. He was keen on Yorkshire-pudding. And he had milk to make it with, or he would have soon. Nap had gone off to find a farm, and get milk.

In another moment Nap strolled into the laager with a large can of new milk.

"Hallo, Roly boy, whose funeral is it?" he asked, grinning.

Napoleon Bonaparte Widgeon and Roly were great chums, though they did belong to opposite camps.

"I say, Jack, there ain't any grub left—at least, scarcely any," faltered Roly.

"There was. But someone left the van open, and Cæsar and Pompey have got most of it. They're fighting over it now. Hark at them!"

Sounds of conflict came from a corner of the laager, where Cæsar, Uncle Ben's yellow dog, and Pompey, Gammy's tortoiseshell cat, squabbled over the stolen bacon.

"That were Pompey," put in Uncle Brace, the guide, philosopher, and friend of the reds, as unlike Gammy Game as man could well be. "Cæsar don't steal, messmates. I should say as he's trying to get it away from that pirate of a cat, an animal as never oughter be allowed off the ehain!"

"Sounds like Cæsar," said Jack

ehain!"
"Sounds like Cæsar," said Jack
Robinson, with evident sarcasm.
Everybody loved Uncle Ben, except
Gammy; but, in spite of proverbs, no
one loved Uncle Ben's dog.
"That seems to suggest Cæsar's a
retriever," remarked Dick Kent. "I
always thought of him as a miscellaneous dog. But we ain't likely to retriever," remarked Dick Kent. "I always thought of him as a miscellaneous dog. But we ain't likely to fancy the bacon much after Cæsar's retrieved it."

"There's plenty of bread, of course," Rob Roy said.
"There's some," answered Roly.
"Jolly stale, too."

"And cheese," said Graham.
"A pound or two. Not enough to go far."

go far."

"Bedad, we shall have to break another egg or two! They are after going far enough, and nobody with a nose on his face would want much to eat when he'd had a good sniff!" chuckled Larry.

Hobart had joined the group now.

"There must be heaps of tinned stuff," he said.

"We've two tins of tongue," said Nap.

stuff," he said.

"We've two tins of tongue," said Nap.

"Oh, I know that!" Roly said simply. "Of course, I took over all your stuff. But the only other tins are fruit, and that ain't very filling. I like pineapple no end, but—"

"You fat ass! How came you to let the stock get so low?"

"Don't you sling abuse at me for that, Robinson! flashed Roly.
"Everything ain't all my fault, I suppose, is it? How was I to expect this? There hasn't been a chance lately to lay in supplies. I meant to the first chance I got."

"Something will have to be done, and jolly sharp, too!" said the commander-in-chief. "We're not going to be starved out, and that's what it would come to!"

#### The 2nd Chapter. A Grub Expedition.

"I'll go and get grub," said Roly, with immense determination. "If you like, I'll go alone. But I'd rather have Nap with me, for it would be jolly hard work for one chap to carry all we want."

"Wouldn't you rader hab Peter, Roly boy?" inquired Nap.

Peter was Uncle Ben's mule. He was about as tractable and agreeable as most mules, which is not saying much; but it had occurred to the black boy that he could carry burdens more easily.

"No, I wouldn't!" Roly replied.
"I ain't sure I can manage Peter."
They started out without Peter.
Many were the adjurations bestowed upon them. Hale's was the briefest, and as much to the purpose as any.

"Keep your eyes skinned!" said the Canuck junior.

Jack Robinson drew on a scrap of paper a rough map of the way to Vernham, the nearest village.

"As if we were kids!" snorted Roly.

But Nap stowed the scrap of paper



Cæsar gave a low and angry growl, and Nap looked up, to see a face gazing at them through the opposite hedge.

quite so beastly in the niff of it as this one since the giddy worruld got on its legs and sat up!"
Graham and Johnny Jones were roaring. But their laughter ceased as Larry bore down upon them.
"Here, don't you come near me!" cried Graham, in alarm.
"Keep off, Larry! Indeed, whatever, if you put any of—"
"But I love ye both, me darlin's! The one desire of me yearnin' heart is to kiss ye!"
"Not with that nose—net on your life!" snapped Graham. "Keep away, you mad ass!"
"Ow! Yow! Yocoop!" roared Johnny.
Larry had got him. In what might have looked to anyone at a distance

And he had certainly got rid of the most of it.

"There's lots of niff, anyway," Dick Kent replied. "You're like the vase in the poem, Larry—a fellow might break and shatter it all he jolly well liked, but the scent of the roses would cling to it still. Only it ain't exactly roses in your case. Get further off, you—you smelling-bottle!"

"Have you idiots been wasting eggs?" demanded Jack Robinson.

"It was a bad egg, Jack," answered Roly, groaning, as he tried

eggs?" demanded Jack Roomson.
"It was a bad egg, Jack,"
answered Roly, groaning, as he tried
to cleanse his face.
"Ass! The worse it was the better
it was. And you've wasted it!"
"Wasted it be hanged! I wanted
to make a Yorkshire-pudding."
"What! With eggs like that?"

His cornflower-blue eyes were wide open, and under the coating of bad egg his face had grown quite pale.
"Oh, rot! There must be plenty."
"There was a great slab of boiled beef—jolly good stuff, too!" said Rob Roy.
"Well, there ain't now," replied Roly.

"Well, there ain't now," replied Roly.
Gammy Game, the traitorous old-janitor—Gammy travelled with the blues, at the command of the Head of Crofton, and very much to the disgust of the blues—had taken the boiled beef.

It was more than he could eat by far. But he had thrown away what he could not get outside of.

"There's lots of bacon," said Larry.

Roly.

But Nap stowed the scrap of paper carefully away.

By the time they reached the road



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which wound below the laager Roly was in a bath of perspiration.

"It's past five o'clock, Nap," he said. "Do you think we can get back before dark?".

"Not if we're going to crawl, Roly hov.!"

boy.!"
Roly groaned, and quickened his pace. It was Nap's eyes that were kept skinned. For all Roly knew, the minions of Mr. Absalom Arkitell might have been lurking behind any bush they passed.
But Nap saw no one who looked suspicious, and when they were half-

bush they passed.

But Nap saw no one who looked suspicious, and when they were half-way to Vernham he ceased to look out, for he did not think it likely any net would be spread thus widely.

"I say, Nap!"

Thus Roly broke a silence that had lasted fully five minutes.

"Well, Roly?"

"I wonder whether—it ain't so very far from here to Bardown Hall, is it?"

Roly's geography.

Roly's geography was not of the practical kind. He might be able to reel off the exports of Tierra del Fuego—if any—but he could not find his way about by a map.

"Not a thousand miles, but too far to go this afternoon."

"Oh! I hadn't thought of that! But—well, it wouldn't be a miracle if we were to meet Mr. Travis or Mrs. Travis, or—or Miss Ware, would it, Nap?"

"Ive known stranger things happen than meeting all three of them would be, Roly boy. Do you want to—"

"Oh it isn't your particular. I

would be, Roly boy. Do you want to—""

"Oh, it isn't very particular. I mean—well, it is, in a way—not meeting them. But, I say, Nap, I really believe Miss Ware likes me!"

"Couldn't be off it, Roly. Everyone does. You're the nicest old suetpudding that ever walked on two legs!"

"Oh, I wish you'd be serious, Nap!"

"Right-ho! I'll pretend this is a funeral, and I'm the deceased!"
"I don't call that being serious."
"Don't you? It don't sound very

"Don't you? It don't sound very gay to me."

"Miss Ware said I might call her Lena. And she called me Roly!"

"It-would have been rude if she'd called you Plum-duff, wouldn't it? And Lena's her name, I believe. If she'd told you to call her Ann Jane Jemima Augusta Arabella there would—"

"I won't say another, word if you."

Jemima Augusta Arabella there would—"
"I won't say another word if you rot like that!"

And Roly was really mortified. There was even a hint of tears in his bright blue eyes.

Nap squeezed his arm.
"Go on, old chap!" he said encouragingly. "I won't rot! And I'll keep it dark. I suppose you'll go bust, or some awful thing like that, if you don't tell someone."
"There ain't really very much to tell—not yet. I never liked a girl before—not like this. She really is a ripping— Why, there she is!"
Roly blushed as red as any peony.
"Hallo, you two! Where are you off to?" cried Lena Ware, pulling up the horse she was driving in a high dogeart.

dogcart.
She was the sister-in-law of Bernard

She was the sister-in-law of Bernard Travis, an old Crofton captain, who lived not far away, and was a staunch friend of them all. He was also no friend of Mr. Arkitell, their enemy, though that was not the fault of

though that was not the fault of Travis.

Lena Ware, at fifteen, was as full of fun and high spirits as any boy. She had very much a boy's way of looking at things. And Nap was sure that, though Roly was undoubtedly spooney on her, she was not spooney on Roly, or on anyone else.

Probably she liked Jack Robinson or Dick Kent best of the caravanners. They were both good-looking fellows, and quite her sort. But there would be no such nonsense in her liking for them as poor Roly dreamed of.

"We're going to Vernham—that's the name, isn't it, Nap?—to get grub!" answered Roly eagerly. "Oh, I say, Miss Ware—Lena—we've had a regular siege this morning! That Arkitell beast came along with a lot of men, but we drove them off!"

"I'm glad! I simply detest that man! Jump up, and I'll take you to Vernham!" said the girl.

"But it's out of your way, Miss Ware!" replied Nap.

"What's the odds? It won't take

But I can't wait till you've done your shopping and bring you back, for I have to pick up Bee some miles away."

It was of her sister, Mrs. Travis, that she spoke.

Roly got in front, of course. Nap, on the rear seat, folded his arms, grinned, and wondered whether he would be taken for a nigger-groom. On the whole, he thought not, as he wore an old Panama hat, a muchworn blazer, and flannels that were asking for the wash-tub. But Nap did not mind if they did.

He heard Roly telling, with great wealth of detail, the incidents of the attack. Now and then he added something himself. The girl's laugh rang out very often.

"Oh, I'm so jolly glad that they got Absalom!" she said. "Bee would tell me it's most improper; but the man is such—such an insect! He's a stinging one, though. You fellows haven't done with him yet!"

"That's what we all think," said Nap. "But we're not worrying any, as Hale says!"

"Hale does say something some-times, then?"

"Yes. He's like Balaam's ass, though; he ain't an often-talker!"
"Here we are! This is the best shop for groceries, because it's the only one," said Lena, pulling up. "Sorry I can't give you a lift back; but I promised Bee, and she's at one of those places where you get desperate if you aren't fetched away at the right time."

She drove off and Boly looked after

She drove off, and Roly looked after er, sighing heavily.

her, sighing heavily.
"It—it seems as if the sun had gone
out, Nap!" he said.
of the daughter going

"It—it seems as if the sun had gone out, Nap!" he said.

"Instead of the daughter going away," returned Nap, grinning.

The bags they had brought were soon packed—and beastly heavy, as Nap was told more than once. They visited the butcher as well as the grocer, who was also the baker.

"Tins and loaves are awful things to carry—so cornery!" said Roly.

"Especially corned-beef tins!" said Nap.

"Especially corned-peer this: sale Nap.

"We haven't got any. The Colonial chaps may eat it, but we don't. Jack Robinson says he don't like fingers in his grub."

"Unless they're washed, of course! I hope and trust you always wash yours, Roly boy!"

Poly only grunted. He was not in

Roly only grunted. He was not in a jesting mood.

a jesting mood.

"Nap, I must sit down for a bit—I really must!" he said, when they had covered about a mile. "I can't go any further without a rest."

The black boy was tougher than Roly, and not so fat by a long way.—But he also felt the need of a rest.

"I don't want to take you back in a puddle of grease, Roly!" he repiied. "We may as well sit down for ten minutes or so under this hedge. We're time to the good, through Miss Ware."

Roly's notion of sitting down was not exactly Nap's. Roly lay on his broad back, gave a fat sigh of contentment, folded his arms over his ample chest—rather low down—and snozed off at once.

Down the road showed a small cloud of dust. It drew nearer, and presently out of it came Cæsar, Uncle Ben's dog.

"Well, I'm hanged!" said Nap.
"He must have followed us all the
way!"

Cæsar often dogged Roly's heels, though it was generally believed that this was only because Roly was cook. Anyway, Roly had no faith in the theory that it was affection on Cæsar's part.

But he had not followed them. He had come upon them cuite by acci-

But he had not followed them. Fir-had come upon them quite by accident. Cassar had been chased out of the laager by Pompey, and had made tracks with a vague idea of finding another home—one that did not shift so often, and had no horrible cats in it.

His resolve had weakened by this

it.

His resolve had weakened by this time, and he welcomed the sight of the two boys. They were a link with his master, the one being Cæsar loved.

He crept to their side. But he snarled when Nap tried to stroke him.

snarled him.
Roly snoozed on.

The 3rd Chapter. In the Hands of the Enemy!

Cæsar gave a low and angry growl, and Nap looked up to see a face gazing at them through the opposite hedge.

seemed somehow familiar.

before he had time to look at it enough to make sure it disappeared. Nap shook Roly by the shoulder. "Lemme be! "Tain't——"
"But it is! We've got to take the trail this minute, Roly boy, or worse will happen!"

Roly sat up. "Why, here's Cæsar!" he cried, in

"The faithful animal—"
"Blow the faithful animal! I don't want the beast!"
"Get a move on you—do!" urged

"Get a move on you—do!" urged Nap.
"I ain't rested a bit! What do you keep looking up the road and down the road for, Nap?"
"It's too late now! Well, it would have made no odds, even if you had got up in less than ten minutes. Are we going to show fight or—"

But to show fight was pretty hopeless, and Nap knew it.
As for Roly, awakened suddenly from his sleep, he did not understand. Two men were hurrying towards them down the road, and one of the two was the tall gamekeeper, Graves. Another man came from the field opposite:

opposite:

It was he who had looked through
the hedge at them. This was the
groom, Bunker, who had not shown
himself very lionlike in the attack
of the forces of Absalom upon the

groom, Bunker, who had not shown himself very lionlike in the attack of the forces of Absalom upon the laager.

"What is it all about, Nap?"

"I'm afraid the garrison will go a bit short of food to-night, Roly boy. This is the scene where the bandits take the stout hero and his black chum prisoners."

As he spoke Nap thrust the bags they had carried well into the hedge behind. There was just a chance that the enemy might miss those; and it was better anyone should have them than the minions of the detested Arkitell, who had threatened to horsewhip all the caravanners.

It was useless to think of escape. Roly would have been caught in less than a hundred yards. Nap could have got clear away. But Nap never thought of leaving Roly.

The three men seized them roughly. Roly stared in bewilderment, even now failing to understand.

"Are you cubs comin' along quiet, or 'ave we got to tie you up?" asked Graves, with a very unpleasant grin.

"Coming? Where to?" inquired

grin. "Coming? Where to?" inquired

"The lord ob de manor's done took such a fancy to us, Roly boy, dat he's sent dese gemmen to ask us to his establishment," said. Nap coolly.
"An' de fancy goes so berry deep dat I t'ink we say 'No' all we like, but sayin' dat won't make no difference!"

But they can't do that!" cried ly, understanding now, and very

"But they can't do that!" cried Roly, understanding now, and very indignant.

"The man as was in the stocks was told as they couldn't put him there for what he'd done!" said Graves. "But he was in 'em!" "Was that Gammy?" asked Roly. For Gammy Game had been put in the stocks at Bardown Hall.

"No, it weren't," replied Bunker. "But you may see your Gammy afore long, if that thin-legged, potbellied, old specimen's 'im. He's been at the Arkitell Arms all day, an' when I saw 'im last they was jost a 'eavin' of 'im out!"

"Come along!" growled Graves. "This ain't no blessed swarry!" He scized Roly's shoulder again.

"Hands off!" snapped Roly.

"Will you come quiet, then?"

"May as well, Roly," said Nap.

"Till we see a bobby anyway!"

"It ain't no good you tellin' your tale to no bobby near 'ere," Graves said. "Your pal, Mr. Travis, don't carry no weight on this manor. What our boss says goes!"

"Then, as he says us, I suppose we'd better go," Nap replied. "No good struggling, Roly boy!"

Cæsar made to follow as they were marched away. Graves gave him a brutal kick, and he howled.

"Absalom is about the right master for you," said Nap.

"What d'yer mean?" growled Graves.

"He's a low, bullying brute, and real're another!" the black boy

"What d'yer mean?" growled Graves.
"He's a low, bullying brute, and you're another!" the black boy snapped.
Uncle Ben's yellow dog bolted, and Roly felt that something which had still bound them to their chums had given way. But he did not give way, and Nap kept his eyes open for any chance of appeal to some passerby.
This seizure was absolutely illegal

and unjustifiable. It was all the worse since Mr. Arkitell, as a magistrate, should have had some respect for the

But the man's ungovernable temper, and the almost feudal sway he exercised over his dependents, had made him a creature hardly to be made him a creature hardly counted sane.

counted sane.

There was no chance of an appeal. Graves was too wide for that. He marched his two prisoners into a field to a barn beyond. And there they were locked in while Bunker went to the manor for a trap.

And when the trap did arrive there was still no chance. They were driven across fields to the hold of Arkitell. A dozen times, and never without a grumble, Bunker got down to open gates.

At last they came out into a wide park, and saw ahead of them the roofs and windows of the great house where the tyrant ruled.

Mr. Arkitell must have been on the watch. As the trap drove into a paved courtyard, he appeared through an old mullioned gateway. "We've landed two of them, sir!"

said Graves.

said Graves.

The man's eyes gleamed with spiteful pleasure as he saw Nap.

Nap had not kept his tongue in leash when the lord of the manor had parleyed with the invaders. And Nap's was not a face one was at all likely to forget.

"Put them in the castle!" said Mr. Arkitell.

Arkitell

Arkitell.

"Dungeon, sir?" asked Graves.

"Yes, no—on the ground floor.
You have the key. I leave them in your hands," he said.

And he strode away, biting his lower lip in his wrath.

Graves did not look quite easy in mind.

"You brought this on yourselves, you kids," he said. "Our boss ain't you kids," he said. "Our boss ain't one to put up with no nonsense. He always have had his own way, you

see."

"This is where he strikes a rock, then," Nap replied coolly.

They were led out of the courtyard, and across a green space. In front of them now frowned the keep of an ancient castle. The lower part of this was in a good state of preservation, though above it was ruinous.

of this was in a good state of preservation, though above it was ruinous.

"This is your lock-up," said Graves, opening a door of oak at least an inch thick, and showing them into a stone-walled room of small size. "The furniture ain't very up-to-date, as you see. But I don't reckon the boss means to keep you 'ere for ever, so it don't matter much about that!"

Roly thought it did. The only furniture was a stone bench. He sank down upon that in an attitude of complete dejection as the heavy door clanked to, and the key grated in the lock.

"It's the sort of thing a man can't do, Roly boy," said Nap. "But this is a madman! Never mind, I saw Cæsar following us up. Never thought Cæsar had so much in him!"

"What's the good of Cæsar?" asked Roly hopelessly.

But Nap talked him out of the hopeless mood. It seemed queer to Roly but in a kind of a way Nap seemed to be enjoying himself. This was an experience, and it called for the use of one's wits. Nap liked experiences, and loved using his wits.

The one window in the room might have let Nap through but for its rusty bars. But it certainly would not have given Roly any chance.

At first the western aspect made the place as bright as such a den could be. But the sun had sunk, and only the afterglow remained in the sky, and the room was quite gloomy when Cæsar growled beneath their window.

He had followed them up as Nap had hoped. Or, rather, he had fol-

when Cæsar growled beneath their window.

He had followed them up as Nap had hoped. Or, rather, he had followed Roly, as much out of habit as anything, perhaps.

"But I can't see what good he's going to be to us," Roly said. "I ain't funking it, Nap; you know that. I wouldn't give in to that Arkitell rotter not for the finest feed you could put before me! But I'm quite faint with emptiness, and horribly thirsty."

"If I could only get at Cæsar I could send a message to the other fellows," replied Nap hopefully. "I think he'd tumble to it if I tied a paper to his collar. Cæsar ain't such a fool as he looks. But I can't reach him, not by a couple of feet."

"Hallo, dog! What you doin', eh?"

It was a voice outside, and a voice

It was a voice outside, and a voice that Nap remembered.
"Is that you, Noah?" he called softly.
"Who's that a-speakin' of my

Never mind the dog, and don't frighten him off. He won't bite you—at least, I hope not!"

"Bet you he will!" said Roly.

"Cæsar's a beast!"

Noah had been among the forces brought by Arkitell to attack the laager. He was a red-headed youth of about eighteen, and he had plainly taken the attack as a game.

The caravanners had noted his pluck. He alone had shown much. And when they had captured him had done no worse than set him rolling down the slope below.

Somehow Nap felt sure that Noah was not hostile. How far he would prove friendly was another matter. It depended greatly upon how much he feared his master.

His grinning face appeared at the narrow window.

"Why, you're two o' them caravanners!" he said.

"That's so!" answered Nap.

"Can you get us out?"

"Dunno why I should! Master's orders as you're there, I reckon!"

"But you're a decent chap!" said Nap.

"Well, I 'ope so. Meanin' as

Nap.
"Well, I 'ope so. Meanin' as master ain't, I reckon!"
"He's a rotter! Look here, will you take a message for us to the

"He's a rotter: Look here, with you take a message for us to the camp?"

"Well, all accordin'ly. I'm goin' there soon. A gang on us. Night attack, you know. Regular fun it will be, eh? But I don't see much chance of bein' able to deliver no message!"

So Arkitell meant to make a night attack! If only the garrison could be warned. That was the first thought in Nap's mind.

"Is the dog still there?"

"About 'arf a dozen yards away," answered Noah. "An' he's a-scowlin' at me 'orrible."

"He don't mean anything," said Nap. "If I write a few lines, will you fasten the paper to his collar, and let him go? That will give us a sporting chance, anyway!"

Nap was not wrong in his notion that Noah had the spirit of a sportsman in him.

"Well I got to catch 'im first.

man in him.

"Well, I got to catch 'im first.
But I'll do it, s'long as you promise
as you won't say a word about the
attack to-night."

The rustic was in earnest. He might not hold his side in the right; but in his rough way he was loyal to

It was not disloyalty to help the prisoners to send tidings of their plight to their chums; it would have been to let them send word of the

"Honest Injun!"

"Honest Injun!"

"That's good enough for me," replied Noah. "Them as fights fair mostly keeps their words."

Roly had pencil and paper in one of his pockets, and Nap scrawled a few lines, telling of their capture and where they were imprisoned, and also, as well as he could, of the exact place where the provisions might be found.

"You can see it if you like," he

found.

"You can see it if you like," he told Noah.

"Don't wanter, noways! Your word does me. Look 'ere! 'Anged if I wouldn't let you out, on'y I knows as old Gravy's got the key, an' it's no go. I'm fed up wi' King Absalom!"

The next few minutes were arrived.

Absalom!"
The next few minutes were anxious ones. Noah had a way with dogs, it seemed. But Cæsar was no ordinary dog, and he took some coaxing. He tried to bite when the paper was being fastened, but Noah baffled him. him.

him.

"The dog's orf," Noah said at length. "But I wouldn't bank on 'im carryin' of the letter. Never mind! I dessay you'll 'ave comp'ny by the mornin'. The boss reckons as he's a-goin' to capture the 'ole gang. I dunno. Mebbe—mebbe not!"

the 'ole gang. I dunno. Mebbe—mebbe not!'

And with that Noah went, and the two prisoners were left to ache on the hard bench, and hope for the best.

#### The 4th Chapter. The Night Attack.

Jack Robinson, Dick Kent, and Hobart were strolling along the road leading to the village. The glow had almost faded out of the sky, when on the road ahead they heard the pattering of feet, and a small yellow shape became discernible in the gathering gloom.

"Why, it's Cæsar! I wondered where the beggar had got to!" said the leader of the reds. "He often follows Roly."

Cæsar halted; but he growled when they came nearer.

"There's something tied to his collar!" cried Dick Kent. "I'm going to get it!"

"Better let me. He's more used to

name?"
"Come close up to this window!



(Continued from the previous page.)

me. But he'll try to bite, whoever it is!" Jack Robinson replied.

With a sudden deft movement Hobart caught the dog by the neck and held him firmly. In another moment Nap's note was in the hands of Jack Robinson. And Cæsar had not done more than snarl.

"Got a match, Kent? I can't read it without."

Hobart produced an electric torch, and all three read together.

"Absalom's minions have nabbed us, and we are shut up on the ground floor of the castle ruins on his lordly premises. But don't go to the police. Don't even go to Mr. Travis. If we can't escape we will stay here until you chaps come to the rescue. I can hold out, whatever they do, and if Roly gets too hungry he can cut a chop off me. You will find the grub in the hedge close to a milestone, and exactly opposite a white gate.—N. B. W."

"Just like Nap!" said Dick Kent.
"He's right, by Jove! We're at war with Absalom, and it's up to us to lick him without any help!"
"That's so, Crusoe," said Hobart

gravely.
"The thing is, what are we to do

Go and rescue them, of course!"

"Go and rescue them, of course!"
Dick Kent answered.
"Not so sure," said Hobart.
"The grub can wait, can't it?"
"It ain't the grub he's thinking of, Kent, though we're bound to get that. We shall need it."
"If we go straight off there, Dick, we may be playing Arkitell's game," Hobart said slowly. "I feel middling sure he'll try a night attack."
Jack Robinson nodded.
"Then we've got to leave Nap and Roly."

"Then we've got to leave Nap and Roly."

"They won't mind—not much, anyway. Let's go and get the grub."

There was not much difficulty in finding the stuff Nap had stowed away. It seemed as though no one could have passed, for it was scarcely hidden. But perhaps the folk of the neighbourhood were unusually honest.

honest.

They were adjusting their burdens to their backs when Cæsar, who had condescended to turn back with them, barked loudly; and they looked round to see the lights of a dogcart close at hand.

"Hallo, there!"

The high-stepping horse was pulled to.

"Why, it's Mr. Travis!" cried Dick Kent in surprise.
"And Miss Ware!" cried Jack

Robinson. "Yes; I had to come!" said the

girl.

"Lena has told me all about the attack. She heard it from Roly and young Widgeon, whom she saw this afternoon. To tell you the truth, I was getting anxious, and my wife thought it well I should drive over and make sure you were all right," Bernard Travis said.

"We've all right give but Arkitell.

Bernard Travis said.

"We're all right, sir; but Arkitell has captured Roly and Nap."

"What! You don't mean he's gone as far as that, Robinson? I will go there at once, and insist—"

"We'd rather you didn't, sir, please; rather every way. Nap says so. He says let's put it through ourselves," replied Dick.

"Bravo!" cried the girl, clapping her hands.

open sky, with blankets wrapped round them.

round them.

They tumbled up at once.

"But indeed I do not see—"

"I do, Johnny!" said Dick. "The tarpaulins—that's 'the dodge! You did enough thinking of the danger. I've got the remedy."

All hands made light work of lifting the inside wheels of a van so that one side of a strong tarpaulin could be placed under them. The weight of the van would keep that side fixed. The other side was fastened securely to the tops of the wheels.

As with one van, so with the other, and a vulnerable spot in the darkness was made safe.

In the hush that followed the return

In the hush that followed the return of the rest to their turfy beds, Dick Kent's sharp ears caught the sound of wheels in the valley below.

"I think they're coming along, Johnny!" he said. "Wake the other chaps. I'm going down there."

He had stolen away in the gloom before Johnny could protest.

The rest were awakened, and all preparations for the defence that needed yet to be made were made. But this went little farther than the assigning the defenders to their posts. Everything else had already been done.

Then they waited.
Presently up through the shadows came Dick Kent.

came Dick Kent.

"All for Crofton!" he said quietly as Graham challenged him.

"All for Crofton! Pass, friend, and all's well!" answered the South African junior.

"I think it's going to be!" said Dick, in subdued exultation.

Dick,

"Johnny, I could hug you! You saw the weak spot, and it's that very way they mean to try. Absalom ain't the complete ass one might take him for. He's sending them up to crawl under the vans, some of them, while the rest swarm up the slope and try to rush the open space between the two carts. They won't risk the narrow pass again." narrow pass again.

the two carts. They won't risk the narrow pass again."

"How do you know, Dick?"

"Heard him giving the orders, Hobart, old scout!"

"Sure, it's the broth of a boy you are, Richard!" said Larry.

"But we don't want to be in the soup, and we shall be if you talk as loudly as that, ass!"

"What's the order of battle, Jack?" asked Rob Roy.

"We must alter it a bit now we know just what to expect. You between the carts with the tent-pole and pot. Uncle Ben with his pole at the narrow path. We can't afford to be sure that they won't try that. Hale and I, with the eggs, stand by Rob Roy. The rest for head-punching. Let them get to the tarpaulin, and then punch for all you're jolly well worth. They won't wait for much of that."

"Faith, the more of it they wait for the better we'll like it!" answered

"Faith, the more of it they wait for e better we'll like it!" answered arry, grinning. "Shush! I believe I can hear

No one else could at that moment.
Not a glimmer of light showed in the camp. The little garrison waited, aimost breathless.

Then from below came stealthy sounds—clumsily stealthy, for the midnight marauders were no Red

Indians, able to move in crafty

Indians, sile to move in charge silence.

Stumbles were heard, and the sounds of collisions in the dark. But there were few mutterings. Absalom's forces believed the camp asleep, and hoped it would stay so till they were well inside.

Heavy breathings on the slope now, the shuffling along the ledge which the vans shut off!

"Oh, hang that dog!"

It was the voice of the tyrant himself! Cæsar had barked, and he had betrayed his presence in his wrath.

"Good egg!" whispered Jack Robinson.

"Hope not!" replied Hale, and

Robinson.

"Hope not!" replied Hale, and hurled one in the direction from which the sound had come.

It was not a good egg. At least, Mr. Absalom Arkitell did not appear to find it to his liking. Very much at a venture Hale had hurled, but he knew the lord of the manor must be in front. in front.

It was a surprise that he should have attempted the slope. No one could hope that he would present his august head for punching under the vans!

august head for punching unus.

"Faugh!" roared the tyrant. And then he roared other things best not to set down.

There was a desperate scrambling rush up the slope in front. But the attack there was more or less a feint. It was by the other way that the assailants really hoped to win in.

And now the moment of their disillusionment had come!

To-Hobart fell the honour of hitting the first head as it made a vague bulge in the tarpaulin. He punched hard.

"Ow-yow! Oh, dear, dear!" yelled someone.

bulge in the tarpaulin. He punched hard,
"Ow-yow! Oh, dear, dear!"
yelled someone.
Pandemonium followed.
Against the chest of the lord of the manor Rob Roy planted a common tent-pole with a pot tied to its end, and backwards toppled the great man, and, with words of wild wrath, he went rolling down the slope.
After him—nay, over him—rolled Williams, the fat gardener; and rolling went Graves, howling horribly; and rolling went half a dozen more; and upon them showered those terrible eggs, and some hit, if all did not; and behold, the attack on the slope had been repulsed!
Hard and fast those within punched at every bulge that showed itself in the tarpaulin. Caught in a trap. If failing to realise what had happened to them, the men who had tried for entry by that way were easy victims. They got in one another's way. They howled and swore and barged. They were a beaten crowd from the first moment.

Yet one won through. Noah of the red head had brains in his fiery poll. He lugged out a knife, and slit the tarpaulin, and forced his way in.
But none followed. They had had enough—more than enough. As fast as they could scramble out they made of off.
Noah was left a prisoner. He did not appear to be greatly downcast.

In next Monday's splendid tale of the boy boxer, Bob Travers gets a real chance—a chance to meet a boxer of class. Naturally, the chance greatly appeals to Bob, and he goes into training for the match.

Bob's opponent, however, although a fine boxer, is an unscrupulous rascal, and when he sees that he has no mean opponent in Bob, he fears defeat, and adopts underhanded means to prevent his own downfall.

The fight takes place, and when Bob's opponent is victorious in the very first round, the crowd are amazed. But then they receive a great surprise, the nature of which you will learn when you read next Monday's fine tale.

Noah was left a prisoner. He did

Noah was left a prisoner. He did not appear to be greatly downcast.

"They'll be a-gettin' of the rough side of King Absalom's tongue," he said. "I'm as well out on it."

"Think they'll come back?" snapped Jack Robinson.

"If he can make 'em But he won't."

He could not make them it seemed.

Just recently I have received a large number of letters from readers, praising Mr. Maurice Everard's "Crusoe Island!" stories. The majority of my chums consider these stories are the best that Mr. Everard has written. I am glad to learn this, as I know for a fact that Mr. Everard has written. I am glad to learn this, as I know for a fact that Mr. Everard is working his very hardest to make these tales a real success.

Next Monday's story is well up to the usual standard, and in it Joe Tremorne holds his first parliament on Crusoe Island. The natives demand presents from Joe, and as poor old Joe has no presents to give away, the little party of adventurers are in a great difficulty.

You will read with great enjoyment how Joe gets over the difficulty, but I can assure you that many exciting events take place ere this is done.

"THE SECRET CITY!"

Jour Cally Don't miss reading this fine yarn!

# "THE SECRET CITY!" By Duncan Storm.

"THE BLACKBIRDERS!"

By Maurice Everard.

Next Monday's instalment of this story will be the last, but quite one of the best. No doubt many readers will be sorry to come to the end of this story which has had such a popular run, but I am confident that "The Boys of the Bombay Castle," due to start the week after next, will prove a worthy successor to "The Secret City!"

NEXT MONDAY! "UP AGAINST A

TYRANT!" Magnificent Long

Complete Tale of The Rival Caravanners By

SRICHARD RANDOLPH

## STUPENDOUS ATTRACTIONS!

Bernard Travis and the girl did not go up to the laager. But it was a fair question which of them had the strongest desire to help the caravan-ners against the renewed attack they

"As a sportsman, Doggy, you couldn't do anything else," said Lena as they sped away. "I am glad to have your approval, my dear," Travis replied.

In the laager Hale and Larry O'Rourke stood the first watch together. They peered through the gloom at the road below. But their watch ended without event.

Then Dick Kent and Johnny Jones came on guard.

"Kent," said Johnny, after a long silence, "it would be very awkward, however, if they thought of crawling in under the vans."

My word, Johnny, how was it ne of us thought of that?"

Without a moment's hesitation Dick gave a cry that woke the camp. No tents had been pitched. The boys lay on waterproof sheets under the

Stories That Will Create a Sensation!

The issue of the Boys' Friend on sale on Monday, August 13th, will be one of the finest issues of the B. F. ever put upon the market. It will be an issue that will make the Boys' Friend more popular than it is at present.

present.

In two weeks' time you will have the unbounded pleasure of reading the first grand, long opening instalment of our long-promised serial.

## "THE BOYS OF THE BOMBAY By Duncan Storm.

During the last two years Mr. Duncan Storm has written regularly for the Boys' Friend, and I am glad to be in a position to say that his stories have proved immensely popular, and that he is greatly admired by all my readers.

In "The Boys of the Bombay Castle," Mr. Duncan Storm strikes a new vein entirely. There is something very fresh about the idea of the story, and I am sure that it will appeal to every one of you.

The Bombay Castle is, of course, a ship, but instead of carrying cargo or passengers, it will be used for the school affoat. The school will be in the charge of Captain Handyman, who, although a stern, disciplined man, is a splendid character, and I am confident that the part he plays in the story will make most fascinating reading.

Lal Tata will take up the rele of

am confident that the part he plays in the story will make most fascinating reading.

Lal Tata will take up the role of assistant-master, and Tom and Fred Morton and Chip will be scholars. Just fancy "Ole Lal," as Chip calls him, having to control some hundred irrepressible schoolboys. There will be no lack of humorous incidents in this new tale.

The other great story due to appear the week after next is entitled: selves," replied Dick.

"Bravo!" cried the girl, clapping her hands.

"But you don't realise what you're up against! This fellow has played the tyrant till—"

"He's pretty much off his rocker," put in Hobart. "Oh, we know that, sir! But he's carried the affair outside the law now, and—"

"That's where it suits us to meet him. And we'll lick him, too!" Jaek Robinson said in tones of ringing determination.

"I won't interfere if you ask me to stand aside," said the old Crofton skipper.

"That's what we want, sir. If you weren't a magistrate yourself—"

"I'm hanged if I don't wish I was back at Crofton, a boy again, and with you in this! But can't I do anything to help?"

"If you'd give us a lift as far as the foot of the downs—"

"Oh, that goes without saying! will no doubt be very eager to become Jump in!"

assistant-master, and Tom and Fred Morton and Chip will be scholars. Morton and Chip will be scholars. Morton and Chip will be chip calls him, having to control some hundred irrepressible schoolboys. There will be no lack of humorous incidents in this new tale.

The other great story due to appear the week after next is entitled:

"FRANK RICHARDS' SCHOOL-DAYS!"

By Martin Clifford.

Although this story deals with school life, it will be an entirely different yearn to the Rookwood stories, and "The Boys of the Bombay Castle," Frank Richards, as I have told you before, is the ever-popular author of the tales of Harry Wharton & Co. Every reader of the Boys' FRIEDN will no doubt be very eager to become Jump in!"

Frank Richards, especially when I tell you that the greater portion of his school life was spent in Canada.

This story will contain numberless japes and wheezes, but the outdoor adventure will be of a thrilling nature, and will come very fresh to all of you.

Can reckon that there are any amount of exciting incidents in this story.

By Herbert Britton.

In next Monday's splendid tale of the boy boxer, Bob Trayers gets a

adventure will be of a thrilling nature, and will come very fresh to all of you.

Don't forget, my chums, these two stories will appear in a fortnight's time. Tell all your chums about these splendid attractions, and persuade them to order their copies of the Boys' Fatend without delay. Failure to do this will be bound to bring about bitter disappointment.

### FOR NEXT MONDAY.

#### "THE MISSING HEIR!" By Owen Conquest.

I do not think I am wrong in saying that of late the stories dealing with the Rookwood chums have been more interesting than ever. Next Monday's tale makes a splendid successor to those which have gone before

cessor to those which have gone before.

Once again we find Lattrey and Mornington at loggerheads. Lattrey is determined to bring about the fall of Morny, and he is playing his cards in a very cunning manner. Mornington is very much inclined to disbelieve Lattrey's yarn about the missing heir, but in next Monday's tale his guardian, Sir Rupert Stacpoole, corroborates it.

ms guardian, Sir Rupert Stacpoole, corroborates it.

Morningten has his faults, and many of them, but as readers of the Boys' Friend know, he has pluck, and is always ready to face peril for the sake of others.

In our next story, Morny goes to the rescue of a junior who is in danger of being drowned. He gets the junior to the bank, and then he makes a startling discovery. The fellow he rescues is none other than the missing heir, the fellow on whose fortune he has been living for so many years.

I wonder whether you can guess who the missing heir really is? On no account should you miss reading this story. It is full of interest from start to finish.

this story. It

#### "UP AGAINST A TYRANT!" By Richard Randolph.

The above is the title of next Monday's magnificent long, complete tale of the Rival Caravanners. It is a ripping story, and deals with the rescue of Nap and Roly from the clutches of the rascally Arkitell.

Of course, the rescue is not an easy one by any means, and, therefore, you

# BOB TRAVERS' HONOUR

A Splendid Complete Story of Bob Travers, the Boy Boxer. By HERBERT BRITTON.

## The 1st Chapter. On the Road.

On the Road.

It was night, and all was quiet on the country road leading to the town of Midchester, save for the sound of horses' hoofs beating softly and regularly on the road.

There must have been some ten horses altogether, and each horse was drawing a heavily-laden waggon.

The waggons belonged to Joe Barnett, the boxing showman, and sleeping quietly in the caravans were the boxers who were attached to Barnett's booth.

All the boxers, however, were not

nett's booth.

All the boxers, however, were not asleep. It was necessary that at least one man should keep awake and look after the horse who was drawing

look after the horse who was drawing his waggon.

Thus we find Bob Travers, the boy boxer, sitting on the driving-seat of the rearmost waggon, and holding the reins lightly in his hand.

Bob was feeling very tired, for he had had a busy day, and now and again he dozed off, to be awakened suddenly by the caravan jolting over a stretch of rough ground.

The whole atmosphere seemed to breathe peace, and it was hardly thinkable that any form of villainy could disturb the peaceful countryside by its presence.

by its presence.

And yet, just at a moment when Bob Travers awoke with a start from a fitful slumber, a villainous act was about to be committed not half a mile distant from the travelling cara-

a hout to be committed not half a mile distant from the travelling caravans.

Bob was in a dozing mood and the thought that anything untoward was about to occur never entered his young mind. Could Bob have known what was to happen in the next hour or so he would hardly have felt in the mood for dozing off again.

How long it was before he was again awakened Bob never knew. The fact remains, however, that he started up suddenly from his sleep and gazed round him in surprise.

Everything seemed strange to the young boxer. What it was he could not make out for a moment. Yes, he was in the caravan, but—Ah, he had it! The caravan had stopped. It was pretty evident that the horse had taken an example from its driver and dozed off!

Bob was fully awake in an instant, and with a pull of the reins and a click of the tongue he had started the horse into motion once more.

How long had the caravan been stationary? wondered the boy boxer. And how far were they behind the preceding caravans?

Bob looked at his watch and observed that it was half-past two in the morning. That did not guide Bob much for he did not know what time he had dozed off.

The young boxer had just urged the horse on at a quicker pace, when suddenly his eyes fell on something that caused him to utter an ejaculation and to sit bolt upright.

Not a hundred yards away from the caravan was a house, and silhouetted against the buff-coloured blind of a downstairs room were two struggling figures.

What mysterious happenings were taking place in the lighted room?

Bob did not waste any time in idle thought. He pulled the horse up sharply, and, jumping down from his seat, rushed to the door of the caravan and pulled it open quickly.

"Billy, Larry, Dick!" he exclaimed.

"Hallo! What's the matter there?" came the sleepy voice of

"Billy, Larry, Dick!" he exclaimed.

"Hallo! What's the matter there?" came the sleepy voice of Larry Green in reply.

Bob Travers struck a match, and as the light illuminated the small caravan three sleepy-looking figures rose in their beds.

"Wake up, for goodness' sake!" said Bob excitedly. "There's something happening in a house not a hundred yards away that wants looking into!"

"Faith, an' we're the chaps to look into it!" said Larry Green, jumping out of bed and slipping on his clothes quickly.

"Hurry up, then," said Bob, "else

into it!" said Linguing on his crossing out of bed and slipping on his crossing quickly.

"Hurry up, then," said Bob, "else it may be too late! I wouldn't have woke you chaps up, only I saw two figures struggling behind the blind of the window, and I reckoned I shouldn't stand an earthly chance if I interfered alone!"

"Sha'n't be a minute, Bob!" said little Billy Brand, who was Bob's closest chum.

Billy was true to his word, and in less than sixty seconds he jumped down the steps of the caravan, to be followed an instant later by Larry Green and Dick Hartley.

"Now, then," said Hartley, gazing around, "where's the murder being dene?"

"Now, then," said Hartley, gazing around, "where's the murder being done?"

"I didn't say anything about murder," corrected Bob. "I said—Look! There they are again!"

"Where?" asked Larry Green.

"Over there!" said Bob Travers, pointing towards the house where he had seen the silhouetted figures on the blind. "Look! Can't you see those two chaps struggling?"

"Be jabbers, I can!" said Larry excitedly. "Come on, ye spalpeens!

This is where we play our part!"

The Irishman quickly broke into a run and headed for the house, with Bob, Billy, and Dick following quickly at his heels.

It was really a very short run to the house, and in less than a minute the four pulled up before the lighted window.

The next instant two figures had

the four pulled up before the lighted window.

The next instant two figures had darted out of the doorway of the house, and started to tear down the lane for all they were worth.

"After them, Hartley—and you, too!" ordered Bob Travers. "Don't let them get away, whatever you do!"

do!"

"I'll go as well!" said Larry.
"They look pretty hefty customers, and if they show fight Dick and Billy won't stand much of a chance. You keep yer eyes on the house, Bob, me bhoy, and if there are any more of the bounders inside, try and keep 'em at bay until we come back!"
"Right-ho!" exclaimed Bob. And he prepared to enter the house.
Next moment a piercing whistle broke from the two men who had dashed down the lane. The whistle was evidently a signal, for while he stood in the open doorway Bob heard the sound of a body being thrown heavily to the floor, and a man came rushing out of the lighted room.
Immediately Bob brought his fists up to the guard, and as the fellow dashed towards the doorway he lashed out with his left, and sent the man recling to the floor.
"Ow! Yow-ow!" yelled the man. Bob Travers threw himself upon his fallen adversary, and as his fingers gripped the man's arms the young boxer realised to his regret that his captive was a fully-grown man, with more strength than he.
This fact, however, did not deter Bob. He hit away with all the force he could muster at the man's head, hoping against hope that he would be able to gain the upper hand.
"Help!" he cried at the top of his voice. "Help!"
But no assistance came, and, having recovered from the shock of the blow which Bob had dealt him, the man commenced to hit out determinedly at the young boxer.
Bob managed to clude the full force of some of the blows, but weight was against him. The man gripped hold tightly on Bob's left hand, and although he struggled manfully to pull it free he was unsuccessful.

He hit out resolutely with his free hand, but this in its turn was gripped by Bob's antagonist, and the hopelessness of his position became evident to the young boxer.

Bob knew only too well that the man had committed some fell act, and the desire to take his adversary prisoner was very strong in him.

If only he could secure the use of his hands, if only—Oh, how the man gripped! It was like a grip of iron, and, pull and tug as he would, Bob coul

Bob's wrists, and, swinging out his leg-of-mutton fist straight from the shoulder, sent the young boxer hurtling to the floor, where he lay in a semi-conscious state.

The blow had been a terrific one, and Bob's head had come into severe contact with the floor. Nevertheless, some five minutes later he rose to his feet in a dazed condition, and gazed around him.

The dawn was slowly breeking in

The dawn was slowly breaking in the east, and as he filled his lungs with full breaths of the fresh, country air Bob's strength gradually came back to him.

air Bob's strength gradually came buck to him.

The light still burned in the room of the house in which Bob had seen the struggling figures, and it was towards this room that he wended his way as soon as he recovered from the knock-down blow.

Bob reached the threshold of the room, and as he gazed inside a gasp of amazement sprang from his lips.

In the centre of the room lay the unconscious form of a man of about middle-age, and the scene was one of complete disorder. The place had been ransacked, and the contents of drawers and cupboards were strewn all over the floor.

Bob gazed at the unconscious man, and observed a severe cut on his head. Bob soon obtained a glass of water, and commenced to bathe the wound.

The cold water acted quickly upon

wound.

The cold water acted quickly upon

"Did you catch them?" exclaimed ob excitedly.
"No," explained Dick Hartley.

Bob excitedly.

"No," explained Dick Hartley.

"I've never seen two chaps run so fast. We must have chased them for quite three miles. But they knew the lay of the land better than we did, and we couldn't gain on them."

The man listened intently to Hartley's explanation.

ley's explanation. "You didn't catch them, then?" he

"You didn't catch them, then?" he asked.
"No," said Hartley. "I'm sorry to say we didn't."
"The rogues!" exclaimed the man.
"To treat a man of my age in such a brutal manner! They've robbed me of all I possess—robbed me of the money which I've carefully saved all my life. Oh, dear! What am I to do?"

all my life. Oh, dear! What am I to do?"

Bob Travers and his friends gave the man sympathetic looks. There was no doubt that the man had experienced a serious loss, but what could they do to help him?

Bob summed up the situation in a minute, and, explaining to the man who they were, and where they were going, he offered to inform the local police of the robbery.

The man, whose name was Graham Bray, was extremely grateful to Bob for his offer, and, having recovered considerably from the blow on his head, insisted on getting the boxers something to eat.

During the meal Bray bore his loss very well, and told the chums the reason for his being in the house alone.

His wife had died some years presented the same and his only son hearing.

alone.

His wife had died some years previously, and his only son, having emigrated to Canada, he had become very quiet in his habits, and the idea of going to live with friends had not appealed to him.

During his lifetime he had accumulated a large stock of silver, and had kept all his money in a small safe in the dining-room. This had now

"No," said Bob Travers, thinking of Graham Bray's misfortune, "but

4/8/17

"Oh, hang your 'buts'!" exclaimed Hartley. "You'll get laid out for a cert to-night if you don't get any sleep! Buzz off, for goodness' sake, and get between the sheets!"

Bob thought that Hartley's advice was worth taking, for he immediately made tracks for his caravan, and was soon between the sheets and fast asleep.

made tracks for his caravan, and was soon between the sheets and fast asleep.

It was not until five o'clock in the afternoon that Bob awoke, and ther it was to learn from Dick Hartley that all attempts to get on the track of the thieves had met with failure.

The local police had scoured the neighbourhood, and had made inquiries all over the place without getting the slightest clue.

"Well, I'm jolly sorry!" said Bob Travers. "It'll be rotten for the cld chap if he doesn't get some of his belongings back!"

"You're right, Bob, old son!" said Hartley. "But we can't do anything more now, Joe Barnett will soon want us over at the booth. We must make another search in the morning."

"Yes, we'd better," said Bob gloomily. "Now I'm going to get something to eat. See you presently, Hartley!"

"Rightho!" said Hartley.

And he took his departure.

Bob Travers went over to the refreshment tent, which was kept by Billy Brand's father. He had just finished his meal, and was making tracks for the booth, when a fellow of his own age came striding towards him.

"Your name Travers?" he asked.

him.

"Your name Travers?" he asked.

"Quite right!" answered Bob.

"Well," said the other, "I was told to give you this by a gent in the town."

town."

Bob took hold of the small parcel which the boy handed to him, and before he could question the latter he had gone off at a run.

The boy boxer looked at the parcel in surprise. He inspected the writing on the outside, but could not recognise it. Who ever could have sent the parcel?

The only way to discover this was to open it, and Bob forthwith pro-ceeded to remove the wrappings. He soon undid the string, and then, as the contents of the parcel were re-vealed, he gave an exclamation of sur-prise

prise.

For the parcel contained a solid silver cigarette-tray.

Bob was amazed. But he was still more amazed when he read the letter which accompanied the article. For this is how the letter ran:

"Dear Bob,—I am enclosing herewith the cigarette-tray as promised. The other things will follow as soon The other units as convenient. "Yours in haste, "CHARLIE P."

Bob read the letter, and re-read it a dozen times. To say that he was puzzled is to put it mildly.

Who ever was Charlie P., and why had he sent him the cigarette-tray? Bob was a non-smoker, and therefore the article was of no use to him. Had he smoked he would hardly have appreciated the cigarette-tray, seeing that the sender was an unknown person to him.

And then, again, what was meant by the other things that were to follow as soon as convenient? It was a mystery, and completely baffled Bob.

The young boxer began to debate

follow as soon as convenient? It was a mystery, and completely baffled Bob.

The young boxer began to debate in his mind what he should do with the article, when he observed that crowds of people were congregating outside the boxing-booth, and realised that the time had arrived for him to change his things.

He forthwith deposited the cigarette-tray in his caravan, and then changed into his boxing-clothes. A quarter of an hour later he was standing on the rostrum, and for the time being had dismissed the mystery from his mind.

Joe Barnett commenced to address the crowd, and issued challenges on his boxers' behalf. He announced that Bob Travers would box anybody under nine stone for the sum of five pounds, the contest to be one of six rounds of three minutes each.

Immediately Joe Barnett finished his announcement there was a movement in the crowd, and a fellow in ragged-looking clothes came rushing up the steps leadingly. "Let me box 'im. I'm 'ard up, guv'nor, I' am, and if only I could—"

"All right, my boy!" said Joe Barnett in a kindly manner. "You shall have a chance, but don't get too excited. You'll find the dressing-room round the corner."

The fellow made off, and when Rob. (Continued at joot of page 60.)

"You villain!" cried the man, pointing his finger at Bob Travers. "Arrest him, constable! Take him in charge for theft with violence!"

the unconscious man, and he slowly

the unconscious man, and he slowly recovered his senses.

His eyes opened, and he gazed vacantly at Bob, as the latter endeavoured to pour some water between his pale lips.

"You villain!" exclaimed the man suddenly. "You thief! Leave my silver alone! How dare— Oh!"

The man broke off abruptly, and sank back into Bob's arms. The young boxer continued to bathe the man's face, and a tinge of colour gradually made its appearance.

The man's eyes opened again, and he gave Bob an inquiring look.

"What—what are you doing here?" he asked in broken tones.

"I saw you struggling with somebody," exclaimed Bob premptly, "and I came just a little too late to

"I saw you struggling with some-body," exclaimed Bob promptly, "and I came just a little too late to be of any use."

The man glanced round the room. "Ah!" he murmured. "The villains! They've stolen all my silver, and—yes, they've broken into my safe and taken all my money. Good heavens! What am I to do?"

"Keep quiet," urged Bob quietly. "Don't get excited, or—"

"How can I keep quiet?" cried the man, staggering unsteadily to his feet. "The scoundrels! Where have they gone? There were three of them, and—"

"My friends have gone after them," said Bob. "Let's hope they'll— Here they come!"

At that moment Larry, Dick, and Billy came rushing breathlessly into the room.

all gone—had been stolen by the scoundrels to whom the boxers nad unsuccessfully given chase.

At length the meal came to an end, and then Bob and his chums bid the man good-bye, at the same time offering to do all in their power to get on the track of the thieves.

othering to do all in their power to get on the track of the thieves.

The 2nd Chapter.
Captured in Time.

When at length Bob Travers and his chums reached the town of Midchester, it was to find Joe Barnett, the boxing showman, in a state of great anxiety.

"Where ever have you been?" inquired Barnett.

Bob Travers explained.

"Well, I expect you're pretty tired after all that excitement," said the showman. "You'll want to sleep all day, and—"

"No, Mr. Barnett," interjected Bob. "We—"

"Tch!" exclaimed Joe Barnett, with a wave of the hand. "You needn't worry yourselves about doing any work to-day. We shall be able to get the booth up all right without your help. You have a good sleep, and get yourselves fit for the show to-night!".

"But what about searching for these thieves?" asked Bob.

"Leave that to me!" said Dick Hartley willingly. "I've had some sleep, and an hour or so in the afternoon will soon put me right. You're the worst of us all, Travers. You haven't had a wink of sleep!"

A Magnificent Story of Thrilling Adventure in the Far East, introducing Cy Sprague, the Famous American Detective.

By DUNCAN STORM.

THE FIRST CHAPTERS.

Published Every Monday

TOM and FREDDY MORTON journey to India to visit their father, but find on arrival that the latter died

journey to India to visit their father, but find on arrival that the latter died some weeks previously. The boys fall in with CHIP PRODGERS, a young street arab, who is a member of the Indian Secret Service. Subsequently, they meet DAVID STRONG, the chief of the Service, who enrols them as members. Later CY SPRAGUE, the famous American Detective, and LAL TATA join the party.

Cy Sprague learns of the whereabouts of the Secret City, and the little party set out to exterminate the place and capture the chief.

The arrive at Cashmere, and from there they travel by boats; but Chip, Lal Tata, and the two boys are separated from the main body by a storm.

Lal Tata, Chip, and the boys are about to be put to death, when the priest sees three perpendicular tattoo marks on Chip's forehead. The Red Llama falls on his knees and worships Chip, and acknowledges him as the great Delai Llama, whom they have been waiting for to come to life again. Chip fills this new role well, and the priests in procession make their way to the Secret City, bearing Chip in a gorgeous palanquin. The boys and Lal Tata are treated as friends of the great Delai Llama, and later on the procession come across Cy Sprague and the rest of the party, who take the hint, and follow on behind.

(Read on from here.)

(Read on from here.)

#### Cy Means Business.

Chip, in a sense, was a prisoner in that gorgeous silk-lined, red-lacquered palanquin which was borne on the shoulders of eight sturdy priests.

These were yellow llamas, who ware related to the sturby priests.

orne on the shoulders of eight sturdy priests.

These were yellow llamas, who wore robes of bright orange, and they had been picked up on the road two days after the events narrated in the preceding chapter.

There were forty-eight of these sturdy bearers altogether, and they worked in relays of one hour each.

Those who were not carrying the palanquin marched ahead in a sort of band, playing on the priestly shawms, or trumpeters, or beating cymbals, gongs and drums, to announce that the Delai Llama was coming. coming.

Chip, the Delai Llama, whispered through the palanquin that the band was worse than the worst town band he had ever heard.

His friends were allowed to walk by the litter and to converse with him through the curtains, but he was not allowed to eat in their company, and Cy Sprague whispered that it would be as well if they all showed him the same respect as the Thibetans did.

So when Chip alighted from the gorgeous palanquin at the end of the various stages, the whole of his party gravely prostrated themselves before him.

Chip was a sight worth seeing in

Chip was a sight worth seeing in these days. Every day he wore a fresh robe, a gorgeous Chinese robe, stiff with gold embroidery.

Sometimes he would be dressed in blue from head to foot in robes covered with great sprawling dragons and mystic characters. Sometimes his robes would be flame-coloured.

His closely-shaven head now showed the three mystic red lines on his forehead which, since the boys had known him, had always been covered by the fringe or forelock which Chip called his quiff.

Now he looked for all the world like some young Buddhist priest.

Chip was in rollicking spirits, and tickled to death by this great adventure.

He knew that he was being carried direct to the city which was so mysteriously hidden away behind the white walls of the snow-capped mountain ranges, and that, in that city, he would be counted as master.

Bit by bit he had won from the Red Llama the secret of the city which was unapproachable, save by those who knew the key to the approach, and bit by bit he communicated this to Cy Sprague as he walked



Cosh! The snowball burst in a cloud of white on the neck of the Llama, causing him to give a shout of surprise.

by the side of the palanquin up the |

by the side of the palanquin up the steep mountain paths.

It was hardly likely that any of the yellow llamas who were carrying the litter would have the slightest knowledge of English; but Chip was careful to wrap up his words in a veil of the London slang that was natural to him, and the American slang which he had picked up from the cowboys.

"That you, Mr. Sprague?" he

"That you, Mr. Sprague?" he asked, through the curtains of the palanquin.

"That's me, your Holiness!" replied Cy, laughing.
Chip's hand was thrust out of the curtains.

replied Cy, laughing.

Chip's hand was thrust out of the curtains.

Cy laughed again at the sight of the hand. Chip's fingers were so stiff with rings that they could barely close upon the packet of cigarettes for which he was asking.

Fifty thousand pounds would not have bought the priceless array of emeralds, sapphires, and rubies with which the boy's fingers were loaded.

Inside the litter Chip lit up a surreptitious cigarette.

"I'm getting wise to the lay out, Mr. Sprague," said he. "We are eight days' march from the Secret City now, an' the ole Red Llama chap—ole Took 'is 'Ook—'e sez we shall soon be reaching the bit of the road that's a bit up an' down. The ole Wowser sez that you've all got to be blindfoldered when we come to the ticklish bit of the road, 'cause there's only two persons in this party that's allowed to see it."

"And who are those?" asked Cy.
"One's 'im and the other's me!" replied Chip calmly. "There's only three people that's allowed to 'ave the secret of the road to the Secret City, and I'm one of 'em. Bit of oright, ain't it?"

Cy whistled under his breath. Chip was getting ahead with a vengeance.

"Ole 'Arry Jobson, as I call 'im—

Cy whistled under his breath. Chip was getting ahead with a vengeance.

"Ole 'Arry Jobson, as I call 'im—the Red Llama—is getting confidential long o' me," continued Chip from behind the curtains. "He's palling up to me all 'e knows. Wants to keep on the right side of me, Mr. Sprague, you see. I think 'e's workin' up to tell me that if 'im and me gets together, we might upset the potato-can of the other chap—the third chap that knows the secret of the road."

"And who is this other chap?" demanded Cy.

"Come nearer to this ole egg-box," whispered Chip. "I've got 'is name at last—he's the party we are looking for—a Chinese prince, and son of the old Dowager Empress of China. But

I've got to whisper it low. It's death even to mention 'is name, and it's as likely as not that these 'ere Yellow Perils who are carryin' the palanquin may be his spies."

Cy put his ear close to the heavy silken curtains.

Chip did not pronounce the name. He spelled it in English letters. "H U N-L A T-S E N," he breathed in a whisper that was barely audible, even to Cy.

"H U N-L A T-S E N," he breathed in a whisper that was barely audible, even to Cy.

Cy muttered an exclamation of astonishment.

The name that Chip had spelled was a man for whom he had long been looking—one of the most dangerous characters within the ken of the secret police of the world.

As remarkable a character as his mother, the woman who had ruled the teeming millions of China with a rod of iron for so many years.

"So that is the fellow!" he muttered. "I've been wanting him for years. He was in the East Side coining case, eight years ago, in New York, and there were two men murdered by him. He's as dangerous as a mad cat, and as tricky as a snake. You'll have to get up early in the morning, Master Chip, to upset that lad's potato-can!"

"But what was he doing in New York?" asked Chip greatly interested.

"What is he doing up in this country?" replied Cy, by way of answer. "You bet that whatever H L Sis working, he's on a big thing, and that he is working evil. He was chased out of China because he made it too hot to hold him. He was chased out of America because he was wanted by the police, and since then his hand has been appearing everywhere.

"I can now see how he has got this Secret City business to work! Somehow or other, he learned that these old priests who live up in these mountains by the thousand in their big monasteries, had stumbled on an enormous deposit of gold, a reef hidden away in the heart of mountains which would make the South African Rand and the Australian gold fields a small proposition if it were properly worked and developed."

Chip laughed.

"That's true." said he. "Ole

goid fields a sman proposition in it were properly worked and developed."

Chip laughed.
"That's true," said he. "Ole 'Arry Jobson says that up in the valley where the Secret City stands, the gold sticks in the rock like plums in a cake."

in a. cake."

"These priests wanted to keep the gold quiet!" said Cy. "They knew very well that if it were discovered that a huge goldfield lay up here on

the roof of the world, nothing on earth would prevent the great gold rush of all the adventurous spirits who follow the gold. Then it would be all over with their Forbidden Land and their Secret City, and the rest of it. It has always happened that way." that way. "What

that way."

"What are you goin' to do with this 'ere Hun-Lat-Sen when you get your fist on 'is neck?" asked Chip, in a low tone.

"Do?" replied Cy.

Then his face set, and the sunbrowned hand that rested on the red-lacquered door of the palanquin tightened till the veins stood up in knots.

tightened till the veins stood up in knots.

"I am going to kill him!" replied Cy quietly. "I'm going to kill him before he gets his chance of murdering you—as he murdered my brother in New York. My brother was an officer of the New York Police, Chip, and he attempted to arrest this scoundrel singlehanded in a Chinese house down in the Bowery. But Hun-Lat-Sen had his gang around him, and they overpowered my brother and tortured him till he died. So I am going to kill this man, and for this reason I have come to India to track him down!"

There was a harsh, grating tone in Cy Sprague's voice which made Chip draw aside the curtain of the palanquin with the tip of his finger and peep at his companion's face as he trudged beside, the litter.
"Crumbs!" muttered the Delai Llama to himself. "This 'ere 'un is going to get his light put out! Cy means business!"

going to mmself. "This 'ere 'un is going to get his light put out! Cy means business!"

For the boy saw that in Cy Sprague's face there was death for the man who had murdered his brother.

#### The Gate of the Secret City.

Wilder and wilder grew the scenery as the little procession toiled up through the enormous mountain ranges, sometimes winding their way through narrow gorges where the rocks rose a thousand or two thousand feet overhead, sometimes crossing the immense shale slopes, which were spotted here and there with wide patches of snow, stretching down for miles.

patches of snow, stretching down for miles.

They were on the backbone of the world, and had reached an elevation of sixteen or eighteen thousand feet. It was mighty cold up there, and Fred and Tom were glad enough of the sheepskin coats which had been served out to the whole party.

The heats of the plains of India below had thinned their blood, and

the chill winds from the thousands of miles of snow-capped mountains bit and stung them.

Chip, in his palanquin, was "All right!" as he expressed it. The llamas wrapped him in heavily-wadded silken gowns, and supplied him constantly with foot-warmers heated by charcoal.

Up in this rarefied atmosphere the boys found themselves short of breath, and sometimes dizzy, by reason of the rarefied air.

But the Thibetans trudged along

But the Thibetans trudged along sturdily under the weight of the litter. This was their native atmosphere, and their lungs were adapted

litter. This was their native atmosphere, and their lungs were adapted to it.

There were men amongst them who, before this excursion, had never reached a sixteen-thousand-foot level in their lives.

Bit by bit Chip had charmed his followers by his gracious urbanity and condescension. He had entirely secured the affections of the Red Llama, whom he addressed openly as "Arry Jobson."

This was supposed by the red and yellow llamas to be a title of tremendous honour—a saintship, as it were, conferred on their superior, and he was now addressed by all of them with profound respect and veneration as "The most reverend Ari Yoops'n."

Sometimes they stayed at night in Thibetan llamaseries, huge monasteries containing thousands of monks, who came out in processions to meet the red palanquin, prostrating themselves before it, for the news had gone forth that the Delai Llama was dead, and Chip, therefore, was now reigning in his stead.

Here Chip was led into the great halls, censed with incense, bowed to, and kowtowed to, as he sat on the high throne, stiff with jewels and gold bullion.

This was hard work for Chip. He had to sit still sometimes for five

high throne, son a bullion.

This was hard work for Chip. He had to sit still sometimes for five hours on end, with the incense smoke tickling his nose, listening to the droning of endless chants, the beating of drums, and the braying of changes.

of drums, and the braying of shawms.

The constant stopping at these huge monasteries delayed their journey.

The eight days' march stretched to sixteen days, and they were still toiling through the valleys and over the snow-slopes that lay in the heart of the mountains.

Chip was heartily sick of being regarded as a supernatural being.

He wanted to get out of that closed-up, stuffy litter, which cramped and stiffened his limbs, and get down. He did one day, to the great wonderment of his following. They had dumped the litter on a snow-slope, and had stopped for the midday meal. It was a glorious day, and the sky around them was of an intense gentian blue.

From the spot where the litter was dumped was commanded such a panorama as had no equal in mountain scenery in the world.

For a hundred miles on each side stretched the boundless chain of the

tain scenery in the world.

For a hundred miles on each side stretched the boundless chain of the Himalayas, the pure snow-peaks stabbing the sky in glittering pinnacles. It was too much for Chip. Up here the air was like wine—clear, exhilarating, and sparkling.

The boys were sitting eating their meal when they saw a white, silk-clad leg, shod with gold-crusted sandal, step out of the litter.

Then followed a bundle of rose-pink robes, studded with gold and jewels, and out of this bundle stuck the bald head of Chip, grinning all over his face.

The Thibetans did not see him, for he had descended from the far side of the litter. They were gathered round a fire, which had been made of wood brought from below.

Chip rolled a snowball and winked at his pals. Then he rolled another and another and another.

Then, with an armful of snowballs, he retired again into his gorgeous litter.

"Now hors" said he "rou watch.

"Now, boys," said he, "you watch out an' see me give old 'Arry Jobson a snowball behind his ear!"

And sure enough he did.

The Red Llama was seated absorbed in contemplation, clicking the beads of his resary, when the curtains of the Holy One's litter were gently



pushed aside, and a well-directed snowball flew straight to its mark.

Towhall new strugger Cosh!

It burst in a cloud of white on the eck of the Llama, who gave a shout f surprise, and looked back as he leared the snow out of the scruff of

cleared the snow out of the scruff of his robe.

Now, although they live amongst the eternal snows, snowballing is unknown to the Thibetans.

Till Chip slung that snowball from the palanquin, it is doubtful whether a snowball had ever been thrown in the Forbidden Land.

The Red Llama was inclined to regard the lump of snow which had been hurled at his neck as a miracle. He was a great believer in miracles. But he was soon undeceived when Chip slipped out of the palanquin, and laughingly let the Red Llama have another in the neck.

Then he started bombarding his following of monks and holy men.

At first they were astonished, and wanted to prostrate themselves. But Chip let the Yellow Llama have one right down his back.

That made a young monk laugh. He was a very young monk, or he would not have dared to laugh in Chip's presence. The laugh spread. The yellow Chinese faces broadened into smiles.

All they knew was that the Holy The yellow into smiles.

All they knew was that the Holy One had condescended to become human. He had slung a snowball into the neck of the Most Serene Lord Abbot.

Into the neck of the Most Serene Lord Abbot.

A yellow llama rolled a snowball in imitation of Chip, and slung it at a red llama. The red llama responded, and soon there was a very pretty snow-fight going on between the yellow and the red monks.

Chip had them all on the go like a Sunday-school treat, and they thoroughly enjoyed themselves like a lot of children.

The snow-fight went on merrily, the yellow llamas taking it out of the red llamas.

Then a dreadful thing happened.

A misdirected snowball, flying out of the fray, caught Chip in the ear. In a second the whole lot of llamas,

red and yellow, were down on their faces, with a cry of horror, at the

faces, with a cry carried accident.

To have struck Chip was sacrilege, even though the blow was purely an

even though the blow was purely an accident.

Chip was unmoved.

He squatted on the snow, his robes sparkling in the brilliant sunshine.

The monks gazed at him spellbound.

They all agreed that Chip was "It!"

It was perhaps from this moment that the monks began really to adore

that the monks began really to adore Chip.

There was not one of those yellow-faced hooligans, bowing before him in the snow, who would not cheerfully have died for him.

And Chip, having signified his for-giveness, produced a bladder, and insisted on starting a game of football on the snow-slopes.

He stripped off his gorgeous robes, and put them down to make a goal-post.

Then he called up the Abbot, or Red Llama, and when that worthy man had prostrated himself six times, in accordance with the law, at Chip's feet, Chip tossed him for kick-off, and started the first game of football which had ever been played at eighteen thousand feet altitude in Thibet. Then he called up the Abbot,

The game was, as Chip said, between the Red Llamas and the Secret City United.

City United.

Chip played for the Secret City, but he soon got first goal, because no red llama dared oppose him; but when he approached, dribbling the ball—or, rather, the bladder—his opponents would insist on flopping down on their faces and worshipping him.

So Chip retired from the game, and the boys joined in. They soon found out that the Thibetan monks made good, hefty, rough-and-tumble players.

players.

Indeed, the game threatened to become a bit rough when a red llama, losing his temper, propped a yellow llama in the jaw.

The red llama was a bull-necked tough, with fists on him like legs of mutton, and the yellow llama, had

he lived in any other country than Thibet, would have developed into a champion weight-lifter.

But Chip saw the danger, and, sliding out of the gorgeous palanquin, which he had been using as a sort of grandstand for the football-match, intervened between the two, and repeated the lines of Doctor Watts' famous hymn:

"Let dogs delight to bark and bite."

"Let dogs delight to bark and bite."

The Thibetans did not understand what this meant. But they interpreted it as a peace-making blessing, and the two would-be combatants dropped on their faces and wanted to kiss Chip's golden sandals.

The old abbot was in eestasies, for, in throwing the snowball, and in starting the game of football, Chip had unconsciously realised two of the prophecies of the discovery of the new Delai Lama, which said that he would sport with snow and ice, and would make a jest of emptiness.

They had a splendid afternoon up there in the snow.

Chip forgot that he was IT, and, producing a mouth-organ, introduced the llamas to "My Little Grey Home in the West," and "Let's all go down the Strand."

Lal joined in the games. He taught the llamas all the games he knew, which were "touch," and "ring-a-ring of roses," and "oranges and lemons."

These were all nice safe games for the monks to play, for they could not

These were all nice safe games for the monks to play, for they could not play the rough, and lose their

the monks to play, for they could not play the rough, and lose their tempers.

The llamas enjoyed these hugely.

They were only kids' games. But we must remember that these men, living shut up from the world in their lonely monasteries, had never known a childish game in their lives.

The old Red Llama rubbed his hands with delight as he looked on at the sport.

Chip had got the whole mob going

the sport.

Chip had got the whole mob going like a Sunday-school treat in full swing, and, surrounded by an openmouthed mob of adoring monks, was dancing a Highland fling on the snow, accompanying himself with his mouth-

Strong Sahib, Cy, and the maha-jah watched him.

rajah watched him.

At first Cy was afraid that this revelation of the humanity of the new Delai Llama would be dangerous.

But Strong Sahib shook his head.

"Let the young rascal alone, Sprague," said he. "He has got this mob in the hollow of his hand. He has taught them new games, and they have never struck anything like this in all their lives. They think that

Chip is a divine creature, and if it comes to a scrap when we get into the Secret City, as it surely will, they will rise to a man and fight to the death for Chip if there's any attempt to harm him."

so all that afternoon the gorgeous, red-lacquered palanquin stood in the snow, whilst in the blinding sunshine the monks danced round in rings, shouting the choruses, without knowing it, of the latest music-hall and pantomime songs; whilst Chip, gorgeous in his robes of old rose and gold, marched round inside the ring, tootling away bravely on his mouthorgan.

At last the sun fell towards the west, and they descended into the valley beyond, the delighted monks making the echoes of the great gorges resound to the choruses of "Here we are again!" and "Fall in and Follow Me!"

and Follow Me!"

In the valley the dark blue shades of night were falling, though the high snow-crests above showed bloodred against the deep, clear sky.

As they advanced the enormous hills seemed to close over them, and the enormous stillness of the mountains, only broken by the occasional thump of a distant avalanche, fell upon them.

The monks became silent as the path grew narrower.

path grew narrower.

They were sad and melancholy. They knew that they were on the borders of the territory of the Secret

Soon the whole lot would be blind-folded, and they would pass through the secret labyrinth which led to the hidden city.

And the monks did not want to go back to their monasteries.

Chip had given them a new glimpse of life that afternoon.

He had taught them how to laugh and play and sing, and none of them had ever been so gay and happy and cheerful in all their lives before.

The gleen was at himself.

The gloom was gathering about the narrow gorge in which they were travelling when the procession came sudden stop.

to a sudden stop.

Before them rose a wall of rock, unclimbable and impassable, a sheer cliff of two thousand feet high, which blocked the gorge.

The Red Llama, who had been leading the procession, came back, followed by two monks, who carried small hoods, which were slipped over every man's head and sealed.

It was possible to breathe in the

It was possible to breathe in the hoods, which were like gas-masks. But no man could see.

whole thing's a mystery that I can for the life of me explain!"

"Mystery be hanged!" roared Graham Bray. "You are a liar as well as a thief, and—"

"Stop! That fellow is innocent!"

Bob Travers and his accusers looked round quickly, as the excited figure of Bob's recent opponent rushed into the room.

the room.

"What do you mean?" asked Graham Bray.

"Travers is innocent!" exclaimed the fellow. "He did not commit the robbery. I was one of the three."

"You!"

"Yes. I'm sorry to say that I'm not always honest, and when the chance came to lay me 'ands on a bit of silver I jumped at it. But I didn't mean to do any violence. That was Bruiser's work, not mine. I bar 'itting an old man, and when I told the Bruiser so, 'e ups and 'its me That was enough for yours truly. I took my 'ook at once after that, and I swear that when I've done my stretch for this job I'll run as straight as a die. I 'ad 'oped to get five pounds for beating Travers, and so get to London and make a fresh start. But my luck's been dead against me, and now I'm done. You can take me, bobby. I'm ready for the lock-up."

"Good heavens!" gasped Graham

me, bobby. I'm ready to.

up."

"Good heavens!" gasped Graham
Bray. "Is what you say true?"

"It is that!" said the fellow. "If
you care to go to No. 63, Breatron
Street, Midchester, you may find
your property. Mind, I don't promise. Bruiser may have made off
with it, but I know that 'e didn't intend to go till twelve to-night."

"What am I to do?" said Bray excitedly. "I can't tackle the man
alone, and—" or three of the boys

citedly. 'I can alone, and—"
"I'll get two or three of the boys to go!" said Joe Barnett, eager to get Bob cleared of all suspicion.

He left the room, and sent four of his odd men to carry out the task. Bob waited in the little room—waited in suspense for the men to return.

The monks were blindfolded first in this fashion, and a long cord was placed in their hands so that they could all follow the guide.

Then the Red Llama paused before ne maharajah and the little group

Then the Red Llama paused befthe maharajah and the little groof Europeans.

Lal acted as his interpreter.

"Tell the sahibs," said he, "there is the spot where all must blindfold save myself and the m holy—the Delai Llama. We ald may see the road by which travel."

"Ask him what this place is "s

'Ask him what this place is," said "Ask him what this place is," said Strong Sahib, looking up at the immense wall of rock which stood out black against the sky in which the stars were beginning to sparkle. "I call it World's End," he added. "I don't see how we are going any further."

Lal translated the question, and the Red Llama smiled grimly as he made his answer.

"This," said he, "is the gate of the Secret City."

They allowed themselves to be blindfolded in the hoods.

The cord was placed in their hands, and the abbot moved forward to the face of the cliff.

Chip, the only member of the party left unblindfolded, peeped out of the palanquin.

He saw the shape of the Red Llama move close under the face of the cliff, striking its face three times with the worked-iron pen-case that hung from his girdle.

Then there was a deep, grinding ash which echoed up the gorge like as sound of a rock-slide.

And, indeed, a rock-slide it was

And, indeed, a rock-slide it was.
Chip saw a huge mass of rock turn
and slide aside under the pressure of
the Red Llama's hands. How it
worked he could not divine, but a
huge mass of granite which weighed
at least a thousand tons had slid
aside like a door, exposing the dark
mouth of a wide tunnel.

Such was the approach to the

Such was the approach to the Secret City.

Lighting a lamp, the Red Llama picked up the end of the long cord and took the lead, and, guided by him alone, the little procession filed into the face of the enormous mountain mass.

(Another magnificent long instalment of this grand serial in next Monday's issue of the Boys' FRIEND. Order your copy in advance to avoid disappointment.)

# **BOB TRAVERS' HONOUR!**

(Continued from page 58.)

Travers entered the dressing-room five minutes later he found his opponent already attired in his boxing clothes.

He was pacing up and down the room, and seemed on tenterhooks to get into the ring. Joe Barnett looked in a moment later, and announced that the ring was ready.

The fellow turned quickly, and, without saying a word to Bob Travers, made tracks for the ring. In his time Bob had fought many fights, but he felt that he had never had such a queer opponent as this fellow.

The boxing showman soon announced particulars of the fight, and then the contest commenced.

Right from the first Bob held the advantage. His opponent was a good slogger, and that was about all that could be said for him.

He swung his arms windmill fashion, and put a deal of force into his punches.

All the same, Bob did not feel the weight of them. No matter whether he side-stepped, or dodged, or ducked, he had little difficulty in escaping lurt.

In his turn, Bob landed blow after

he had little difficulty in escaping hurt.

In his turn, Bob landed blow after blow on his adversary's face, and the the end of the first round the latter was puffing and blowing furiously, and one of his eyes was turning a peculiar shade of blue.

The second round was an entire repetition of the first. Bob's opponent swung his arms windmill fashion as before, and hit the air more times than he did Bob.

Bob smiled to himself, and took things easily. Now and again he darted in, and, timing his blows to a nicety, got home with good effect.

Towards the end of the round he

uppercut his antagonist, and sent him reeling to the floor.

The fellow remained down until eight was counted. Then he scrambled to his feet, and went for Bob with an almost mad expression on his face.

The call of "Time!" came just as Bob was preparing to deliver a straight left, and he went to his corner feeling as fit as if he was just about to commence fighting.

The third round proved a decisive one. Bob rained blow after blow on the fellow's face, and finished up with a left to the chin that his opponent could not withstand.

He went to the floor with a bang, and lay there without moving a muscle. The timekeeper commenced to count, but Bob did not hear his droning voice count the man out.

Bob's eyes were on the door of the booth. Some sort of disturbance was taking place, and when Bob heard his name mentioned he was all attention immediately.

The next moment a middle-aged

taking place, and when how a mame mentioned he was all attention immediately.

The next moment a middle-aged man came rushing towards the ring, followed at a more leisurely pace by a police-constable.

Bob gasped as he recognised the man. He was Graham Bray, the man to whose rescue he had gone that very morning!

to whose rescue he had gone that very morning!

"You villain!" cried the man, and he actually pointed his finger at the amazed Bob. "You base deceiver! Arrest him, constable! Take him in charge for theft with violence!"

"Great Scott!"

Bob could only gasp, and his head was in a whirl as he ducked beneath the ropes of the ring, and was led to Joe Barnett's private apartment by the man in blue.

Away from the arena, he recovered

himself a little, and faced his accuser confidently.

"What is the meaning of this?" he

exclaimed.

"You know very well!" cried Graham Bray angrily. "You—"

"I'll attend to this matter, sir, if you don't mind," said the constable, with an official air. "Now, Mr. Travers, I have a very unpleasant duty to perform. I have to arrest you on the charge of having robbed Mr. Graham Bray, and of having caused him bodily harm. Anything you—"

you—"
"B-b-but," stammered Bob, "I

"Read this," exclaimed Graham Bray, thrusting a letter in front of Bob, "and then perhaps you'll under-stand!"

Bob read the missive, and the amazement on his face could be clearly seen. This is how the letter

ran:

"Dear Sir,—I don't feel much like giving a pal away, but after the awful way in which he treated me, I feel that I must inform you of the name of the fellow who robbed you. His name is Travers, and he is working at Barnett's Boxing Booth, at Midchester. He'll probably deny having had a hand in the matter, but just you search his belongings for your silver cigarette tray, and you'll find what I say is correct.—Yours respectfully, "One Who Knows."

"Now, what have you got to say?" demanded Graham Bray.

"All I've got to say," said Bob firmly, "is that I'm absolutely innocent, and that you've been deceived."

"What!" exclaimed Graham Bray.

"I've been deceived, have I? Well, what have you to say to this?"

The man held up the eigarette tray which Bob had received only an hour or so previously, together with the letter which had accompanied it.

"I-I-I—" faltered Bob.

"Your precious pal has given you away!" said Graham Bray sneeringly.

ingly.
"My pal!" ejaculated Bob. "I

don't know the fellow, and I don't know the reason why he sent it. 'The whole thing's a mystery that I can't for the life of me explain!"

"Mystery be hanged!" roared Graham Bray. "You are a liar as well as a thief, and—"

the room. "What do you mean?" asked

His name was not cleared yet. Supposing the men returned to say that their search had proved fruitless? Then he would probably be taken in charge, and—

After what appeared to be an eternity of time to Bob, news was brought into the little room that the men were returning.

Bob's heart beat violently as he waited for the verdict. It came with a suddenness that almost struck the boy boxer spellbound.

The flap of the tent was parted, and in rushed the four men, each of them holding under his arm some of Graham Bray's lost property.

"Caught them nicely!" said Johnny Tring, laying several silver articles on the table. "They were just getting ready to buzz off when we nabbed them. They're under lock and key now, and I don't suppose they'll trouble you any more."

Graham Bray turned to Bob Travers, a look of thankfulness in his eyes.

"Travers, my boy," he said, "I'm

Travers, a look of thankfulness in his eyes.

"Travers, my boy," he said, "I'm sorry I mistrusted you—very sorry. Put it down to an old man's unreasonableness, and—and—"

The man held out his hand, and Bob took it willingly.

"Now," said Graham Bray, "I want you and your friends to come and have supper with me to-night. Will you?"

"With pleasure!" answered Bob for himself and his friends.

"Good!" said Bray. "Come as soon as you can."

Bob and his friends went, and, needless to say, they had a most jolly time.

needless to say, they may be time.

The next morning Bob's opponent of that evening was brought before the magistrates, and was given a light sentence. The Bruiser, however, was sent to prison for twelve months, and that was not less than he deserved.

THE END.

(Next Monday: "Bob Travers' Defeat!" By Herbert Britton, Don't miss reading it!)