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Special Boxing Article By 'Boy' M^c Cormick.



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THREE HALFPENCE.

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Saved By His Chum!



A TIMELY WARNING!

Erroll's eyes swept over the open heath, and he gripped Mornington's arm fiercely. From the direction of the village several constables were approaching the bungalow. "You fool!" muttered Mornington. "Do you know what you are risking by coming here?" "I know!" replied Erroll. "Come, Morny!"

The 1st Chapter. Trouble Ahead.

"Has Morny come in?"
Jimmy Silver looked in at the door of Study No. 4, as he asked the question. There was rather a grim expression upon Jimmy's face.
Kit Erroll was alone in the study, looking out of the window into the dusky quadrangle. He glanced round and shook his head.
"I think not," he answered. "He's not here, anyway!"
"He's missed calling-over," said Jimmy.
"I know."
"You don't know when he'll be back?"
"No!"

"I'll wait for him, if you don't mind."
Erroll looked worried, but he nodded assent.
"Sit down, then!" he said.
Jimmy Silver took a seat on the corner of the table. Erroll resumed staring out of the window, evidently in a glum mood. There was silence in Study No. 4.
A fat face looked in at the doorway a few minutes later, and the silence was broken by Tubby Muffin's fat chortle.
"I say, Morny's come in!" chuckled Tubby. "Bootles is jawing him no end for missing call-over! He, he, he!"
"That's nothing to cackle at, you fat duffer!" snapped Erroll.

Tubby Muffin seemed to think that it was, however. He chuckled again.
"We could hear Bootles in the passage," he said, "and Morny was cheeking him! Morny's come back in a jolly bad temper. I say, Erroll, why did Morny miss the cricket match this afternoon?"
"Go and eat coke!"
"I believe he's got the cane!" said Tubby. "Serve him right, you know. I heard a swishing in Mr. Bootles' study. He, he, he! Yaroooooh!" roared Tubby, all of a sudden, his fat chortle changing into a roar of anguish.
A grip of iron was laid on Reginald Muffin's neck from behind, and he was spun away from the door of Study No. 4.
Bump!

Tubby Muffin sat down in the passage with a loud concussion, and a louder roar. Valentine Mornington, who had pitched him out of the way so unceremoniously, strode into No. 4.
Mornington's handsome face was dark and sombre, his eyes glistening under his knitted brows. He gave Jimmy Silver a far from cordial look. Tubby Muffin blinked into the study.
"Yah! Rotter!" he howled.
Then, as Mornington swung angrily round, Tubby took to his heels and vanished.
"Had your tea, Morny?" asked Erroll mildly.
"No—I don't want any. Do you want anything here, Silver?" asked Mornington abruptly. "I'm not in much humour for company."

"I suppose you've been licked for cutting call-over," said Jimmy.
"That's my affair."
"Well, if you've been licked, I'll speak to you another time," said Jimmy, slipping from the table, taking no notice of Morny's unpleasant manner. "I'll look in again, Morny."
"You needn't!" said Mornington.
"If you've got anything to say get it off your chest, and have done with it. I warn you that I don't intend to be lectured, though, if that's what you've got in your mind. I'm not inclined to be trifled with just now!"
Jimmy Silver shrugged his shoulders.
Valentine Mornington was plainly in the worst of tempers; but his black looks had no terrors for Jimmy Silver. In fact, Jimmy's own temper was



SAVED BY HIS CHUM!

(Continued from the previous page.)

rising a little at Mornny's mode of address.

"If you'd rather have it now, Mornny!" he began quietly.

"Oh, get it over!"

"I will, then," said Jimmy Silver. "You cut the match with the Moderns this afternoon, Mornny. It's the second match you've cut since you were elected junior captain."

"Is that your business?"

"Yes, rather! I've stood aside to give you a chance to make good as skipper," said Jimmy Silver, "but there's a limit! There was a time, Mornny, when you were about the blackest sheep at Rookwood—"

"What?"

"We all thought that was over and done with. Now it looks as if you're dropping into your old ways again!"

"It's kind of you to take such an interest in me," sneered Mornnington, "but I think I mentioned that I don't want any sermons!"

"I'm not going to give you a sermon; but to talk plain sense. If you choose to play the goat, it's your own affair, and you can go to the dogs your own way, I suppose!"

"Thanks!"

"But it's not good enough for the junior captain of Rookwood," said Jimmy Silver calmly. "I needn't go into details, Mornny; but it's plain enough that you're playing the goat again, and under the circumstances, you ought to resign the captaincy. A gambling plunger isn't good enough for the job, and you know it!"

"You mean that you want the job again?"

Jimmy flushed.

"I meant to stand aside, and I've stood aside," he answered. "I've backed you up, and you know it! But when you're throwing your duties aside in the most flagrant way, for the sake of playing the goat, it's time somebody put his foot down. Do you think I don't know that you went out to gamble this afternoon?"

"I don't care what you know!"

"Very well. I want to ask you one question—are you going to be a junior captain, or are you going to be a giddy goat? You can't be both!"

"I'm goin' to please myself!"

"That isn't an answer!"

"It's all the answer you'll get from me," said Mornnington, throwing himself into the armchair. "Go and eat cake!"

Jimmy Silver compressed his lips.

"I don't want to quarrel with you, Mornny," he said. "I'd be only too glad to see you playing up, and I'd back you up no end. But I can't stand aside and see everything going to pot while you play the goat. If you won't do the decent thing, it's up to me to see that you don't do any more harm. You know your duty as skipper, and you don't do it. You don't even turn up to cricket practice now, and you're getting into rotten form, so that you wouldn't be much good even if you took the trouble to play in the matches; and you've stopped doing even that. It can't go on!"

"Is that all?" yawned Mornnington. "If it is, will you give me a rest?"

"Mornny!" murmured Erroll.

Jimmy Silver looked at the new junior captain, and his look was very expressive.

"You mean to keep on like this, then?" he asked.

"I don't mean to give an account of myself to anybody—least of all to you!" answered Mornnington.

"Very well! Then I'm up against you!" said Jimmy Silver. "That's a plain warning, Mornnington!"

"Rats!"

Jimmy Silver clenched his hands. Mornny's manner was very hard to bear with patience.

"And now," continued Mornnington, rising to his feet, "I've heard enough, and you can get out, Jimmy Silver!"

"You cheeky cad!" exclaimed Jimmy. "I've a jolly good mind to punch your head before I go!"

"Go ahead, if you prefer to leave this study on your neck!" answered Mornnington, with a sneer.

"By Jove!"

Jimmy Silver made a stride towards the dandy of the Fourth, and Mornny's hands went up promptly enough to meet him. Kit Erroll rushed between before a blow could be struck on either side.

"Stop it!" exclaimed Erroll sharply. "Clear off, Jimmy—and you, Mornny, don't play the fool!"

"Look here, Erroll—"

"Oh, dry up!" snapped Erroll.

Jimmy Silver left the study quietly enough. He did not want a fight with Mornnington; he had come there to warn him, and he had warned him. The dandy of the Fourth threw himself into the armchair again, his eyes fixed loweringly on Kit Erroll.

"So you're takin' Silver's side, are you?" he said.

"Oh, talk sense!" said Erroll. "Silver's right, in every word he's uttered, and you know it. You're not doing your duty."

"By gad!"

Mornnington burst into a laugh. It was unusually plain speaking from his chum, and it rather amused him.

"If you don't want to do a captain's duty, you can resign," said Erroll. "Why don't you do it?"

"No fear! I'm stickin' to the job. Swank, you know," said Mornnington coolly. "It's my weakness. Besides, I'm not goin' to be bullied. And I'm not goin' to be preached at. That's a tip for you, Erroll."

"I'm not thinking of preaching at you, Mornny; I know it wouldn't be any good," said Erroll sadly. "I wish you'd be more sensible. What's the good of playing the goat as you're doing now? I'm quite sure that you've lost your money this afternoon."

"Right on the wicket."

"Well, that must be an end. Now you've sold your bike, you won't be able to raise any more funds."

"The wish is father to the thought!" grinned Mornnington. "Well, yes; I'd rather see you stony than playing the goat like this."

"Well, I'm stony—no mistake about that," said Mornnington, with a shrug. "Luck has been against me. But I can raise the wind right enough. You forget that I've got a cousin in the Second Form here, and young 'Erbert would lend me the boots off his feet if I asked him."

Erroll started.

"You're not going to borrow money from 'Erbert, Mornny?"

"Why shouldn't I?"

"You couldn't repay it, for one thing, if you lose it."

"'Erbert won't dun me for it, if I don't."

Erroll drew a deep breath. The shocked expression on his face drew a mocking laugh from Mornnington.

"Shocked—what?" he asked.

"Yes," said Erroll quietly. "I never thought you'd have fallen as low as this, Mornny."

"Well, you've found me out, then," sneered Mornny; "and now you've found me out, the best thing you can do is to drop my acquaintance."

"I sha'n't do that."

"You will if you can't keep off sermons," said Mornnington. "I'm fed up—with you as much as with Jimmy Silver! Hang you both!"

"Mornny!"

"Oh rats!"

Mornnington strode out of the study, and closed the door with a slam.

The 2nd Chapter. The Lowest Depths.

"Oh, Master Mornny! Course I will—anything you like!"

Jimmy Silver started.

It was the following morning—Sunday—and the Fistical Four were sauntering in Little Quad after service. Lovell, Raby, and Newcome were talking—at the same time—and Jimmy Silver was listening. The opinion of the Co. was that it was high time that Mornnington was "shifted" out of the junior captaincy, and they were glad to see that Jimmy Silver showed signs of coming round to their opinion.

From under the trees by the archway came the voice of 'Erbert of the Second Form—otherwise Mornnington II. The chums of the Fourth could not help hearing it as they strolled by.

"Can you manage ten quids, 'Erbert?"

"Cert'nly, Master Mornny."

"Don't call me Master Mornny, you

young ass. Don't you know that you're the rich relation now, and I'm a dashed poor relation?"

"Oh, Master Mornny! I never wanted the money," said 'Erbert. "I'd 'and it all over to you with pleasure, if I was allowed. And I've got a lot saved up, sir, and it's all yours if you want it, and I'm only too glad."

"You're a good kid, 'Erbert," said Valentine Mornnington, with a touch of remorse in his tone. "I'm a beast to take your money."

"It's yours, sir."

"But I'm goin' to settle up, 'Erbert—Hullo!"

The Fistical Four came in sight through the trees, and Mornnington stopped abruptly.

Jimmy Silver & Co. walked on. The expressions on their faces showed plainly enough what they were thinking—indeed, the contempt in Arthur Edward Lovell's speaking countenance would have pierced the shell of a tortoise.

Mornny turned crimson.

His recklessness had brought him low—so low that he despised himself; but the contempt of the others was still more bitter.

"Oh! Eavesdroppin'—what?" he exclaimed.

Lovell turned sharply.

"I heard!" he answered. "You know I couldn't help hearing, as I was passing close to you. Now you're borrowing that kid's money to lose in gambling. You're a hopeless cad, Mornnington. You ought to be kicked out of Rookwood!"

"Hear, hear!" said Raby.

"You let Master Mornny alone!" exclaimed 'Erbert of the Second, firing up at once. "Tain't your business, anyhow."

"Come on!" said Jimmy Silver quietly.

The Fistical Four went their way, and disappeared through the arch into Big Quad.

Mornnington looked on at the fag with a gloomy brow.

"Don't you mind them, Master Mornny," said 'Erbert.

"I don't!" muttered Mornny. "But—but—Oh, dash it all!"

"I know it's all rot," continued 'Erbert. "You ain't going to gamble, are you, sir?"

There was an anxious note in little 'Erbert's voice, however.

"Suppose I am?" snapped Mornnington.

"Oh, sir!"

"You'd better keep your money, kid."

"No fear, sir! Arter all, why shouldn't you 'ave a flutter if you want?" said 'Erbert loyally. "A gentleman like you, sir, ain't like the other blokes."

Mornnington winced.

"Lovell was right!" he said moodily. "I ought to be kicked out of Rookwood. I should be if the Head knew. But—but I shall settle this up, kid—luck can't go against me all the time. It can't! I shall screw out of Tickey Tapp all I've lost, and more."

"I'll fetch the tin now, sir."

"After dinner will do."

"Orl right."

Valentine Mornnington nodded to the fag, and walked away, his hands driven deep into his pockets.

His face was moody.

There were excuses for the reckless fellow, in some ways. Mornny had been the richest fellow at Rookwood before his fall came—before his lost cousin had turned up, and the great Mornnington property had passed to him as the rightful heir. And a

chance had come—what Mornny believed to be a chance at last—of restoring his fallen fortunes. At the secret gaming-den, run by Tickey Tapp in the bungalow on Coombe Heath, the infatuated junior hoped to "break the bank"—the delusive hope that has led many a reckless plunger to ruin. It was wrong—wickedly wrong—but the old reckless instincts had revived in Mornnington at the thought of it, and all other considerations were thrown to the winds.

And instead of winning he had lost incessantly at Tickey Tapp's roulette table—as he might have expected, if he'd known more of the shady side of the world. Mr. Tapp was not in the business for his "health," and it was not likely that he could live upon losses. Swindling is the inseparable associate of gambling, and although Mornny was not aware of it, Mr. Tapp's roulette-table was arranged to bring up the numbers at Mr. Tapp's own sweet will. Roulette was supposed to be a game of chance; but it may safely be said that roulette never is, and never was, played as a game of chance. It is played to win money from foolish punters, and it answers that purpose admirably. Mornny's eyes would have been considerably opened if he could have examined the construction of Tickey Tapp's roulette-table.

But he was not thinking of that. He was thinking how cruelly luck had been against him—how his most careful calculations had come to nothing.

Mornnington's brow was moody when he came in to dinner.

Erroll looked at him rather anxiously across the table, but Mornny did not catch his chum's eye.

After dinner Erroll joined him in the passage.

"Coming out?" he asked.

"No."

With that abrupt answer Valentine Mornnington turned away, and went to join 'Erbert. A few minutes later, with the fag's savings in his pocket, Mornnington started for the gate.

Jimmy Silver & Co. saw him go.

"On Sunday, too!" said Lovell.

"Perhaps—" began Jimmy Silver.

Lovell interrupted him.

"Perhaps he blowed! You know what he's going out for. And that cad's junior captain of Rookwood—that's the fellow! He's got to be sacked out of that, anyhow!"

And Jimmy Silver was silent.

The 3rd Chapter.

Tracy Makes a Discovery.

"Dash it all, not on Sunday!" Adolphus Smythe of the Shell made that observation. And Howard nodded assent.

Tracy of the Shell looked obstinate.

"What does it matter?" he asked.

"My dear man," said Adolphus, "there's a limit. I know it's hard cheese. Twice we've been goin' to sample the roulette at Tickey Tapp's bungalow, and twice we've been sheered off by that cad Mornnington."

"The coast's clear to-day," said Tracy.

"Very likely; but, dash it all, there's a limit! I'm not goin' there on Sunday."

"Oh rot!" said Tracy sulkily.

"There's such a thing," said Adolphus loftily, "as good form, Tracy. I like a flutter as well as the next man. But gamblin' on a Sunday is dashed bad form, and I'm not goin' in for it."

"I must say I agree with Smythe," remarked Howard. "It will keep, Tracy."

Tracy grunted.

"Since that cad Mornny's been captain, he's meddlin' with everythin' of the kind," he said. "He actually stopped us near Tickey Tapp's place the other day, an' sent us back, threatenin' to report us to Bulkeley. Now we've got a chance—"

"Chuck it!" said Adolphus.

"And I've got a suspicion," went on Tracy. "There's been a lot of talk about Mornny lately. While he's down on the Giddy Goats, it looks a great deal as if he's playin' the Giddy Goat himself. I half suspect that when we found him near the bungalow the other day, he wasn't lookin' for us, but was goin' there himself!"

Smythe whistled.

"That's rather thick!" he said.

"Well, I suspect it. It's just in Mornny's line, as he used to be. Now, I'm goin' to risk a visit to-day," said Tracy.

"If I find Mornny hangin' about, I'll tell him what I think—and sharp, too! Will you fellows come?"

"Not on Sunday."

"Oh rats!"

Allan Tracy turned on his heel, and went out of the gates by himself.

Even Smythe of the Shell had his limits; but Tracy did not agree. He was keen to try his luck at Tickey Tapp's table, and he was determined that it should not be put off any longer.

He walked away down Coombe Lane, and turned into the footpath through the wood.

As he entered the leafy path in Coombe Wood he gave a start.

Ahead of him, under the trees, was a well-known figure—the elegant figure of Valentine Mornnington. Mornny was standing, with an expression of impatience on his handsome face, in talk with Kit Erroll. And Tracy stepped from the path into the trees at once. He did not want to be observed.

There was a bitter expression on the Shell fellow's face.

He more than half-suspected that Mornnington was a visitor at the bungalow himself, while exercising his authority as junior captain to turn back the Giddy Goats from such pursuits. And that thought made Allan Tracy feel very bitter indeed.

Keeping away from the path, Tracy of the Shell moved on quietly through the trees, and drew near the spot where Mornnington and Erroll were standing. He was curious to hear what was being said, for the attitude of the two juniors was a plain indication that Erroll was seeking to restrain his chum, and that Mornny's impatient temper was rising. As he came behind the bushes close by the path, Tracy caught Mornny's voice, raised a little in anger.

"You don't know anything about it, Erroll! You're talkin' out of your hat. Give us a rest, for goodness' sake!"

"Listen to me a minute or two, Mornny," came Erroll's quiet tones. "I know more about it than you fancy."

"I don't see how you can," sneered Mornnington. "You're too good to have played roulette, I suppose?"

"I never played it, certainly. But I've seen it played."

"You have?" ejaculated Mornnington, in astonishment.

A pained look came over Erroll's face. Through the interstices in the bushes Tracy was watching them curiously as he listened.

"You know I had some rather strange experiences before I came to Rookwood, Mornny," said Erroll. "I don't like speaking of that time, or thinking of it. But now—"

He paused. "You know, old chap, that for a time I was with a rascal-called Gentleman Jim, who had taken me away from my father. The man was a rascal in every way—a thief and a gambler. At one time he ran a roulette bank, on Monte Carlo lines—secretly, of course, as it is illegal in England."

"Oh!" ejaculated Mornnington.

"Foolish fellows used to come to him to play," continued Erroll. "I have seen them, sometimes. I've seen them calculating the run of colours and numbers, and so forth, the fools! For I knew the secret, Mornny. I've seen the roulette-table when it wasn't in use. And I tell you, old chap, that the croupier can bring up any numbers he pleases."

"It's impossible!"

"Not impossible, Mornny—easy! I've seen Gentleman Jim practising with the wheels when the punters weren't there. He used to make me call out numbers for him to turn up on the wheel, as an exercise of his skill."

"Oh, gad!" muttered Mornnington.

"But even swindling to that extent was not enough for him," said Erroll, "and he had a contrivance fixed under the table, worked by the foot,

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to stop the wheel any moment he chose. As a rule, he depended on his skill in turning the wheel. But in exceptional cases—when there was a heap of money on the board—he used that contrivance to make sure of a win. He was afraid to use it too often, lest it should be detected; but it was always there if he needed it.

"And you've seen it?"
"I've seen it. I tell you, Mornny, if a player could dodge the cheating of the croupier, by placing his stakes after the wheel has started, he can always be beaten by secret trickery. Dush it all, old man, do you think that professional gamblers can afford to play fair? A run of luck on the side of the player might break the bank at any time, if they played a square game. They couldn't afford to, if they wanted to."

"I've heard of the bank bein' broken at Continental casinos."

"You mean you've read cunning advertisements, for that is all such reports are."

Mornington was silent.
"Apart from it's being wrong and rotten, Mornny, you're throwing your money away," said Erroll.
"Oh, hang it all!" exclaimed Mornington irritably. "The man you speak of may have been a swindlin' hound, but they're not all the same. Tickey Tapp's bank isn't the same."

"But—"
"I'm going to try my luck, anyhow. I don't believe half you say, Erroll; you're prejudiced. Look here, come with me. It isn't far. It's the first bungalow past the wood—Heath Bungalow. I can get you in. Come with me, and try your luck, too."

"I wish you'd come with me, Mornny—back to Rookwood. This sort of dingy fooling isn't good enough for you."

"Oh rats!"

Mornington turned and strode away up the footpath, to end the discussion.

Erroll looked after him with a troubled brow, and walked slowly in the same direction.

In a few minutes Mornington was out of sight.
Behind the bushes, Tracy of the Shell grinned, and resumed his way through the wood.

He was sure now of what he had only suspected before.
Mornington was a regular visitor at Tickey Tapp's gaming table, and that was why he had turned the Ciddy Goats back from the bungalow—because he did not wish them to discover him there.

He would not turn Tracy back this time.

The cad of the Shell hurried on, and came out into the footpath again when he was well ahead of Erroll, and hurried along the footpath towards the heath.

As he emerged from the wood, at last, upon the open heath, in sight of the bungalow, he sighted Mornington.

The footsteps caught Mornny's ear, and he turned, a dark look coming over his face at the sight of Allan Tracy. He strode up to the Shell fellow.

"So you're here again!" he said. "Clear off!"

Tracy smiled evilly.
"I'm goin' in," he answered.
"Let's go in together, old top! I know what you are here for. I'm on the same game. Coming?"

"What?"
"Coming?" grinned Tracy.
Valentine Mornington did not answer.

He seemed taken aback, and his eyes gleamed at the Shell fellow with menace in them.

"You're goin'—where?" he exclaimed at last.

"Into the bungalow."
"You're not!" said Mornington quietly.

Tracy laughed.
"I think I am," he answered.
"Don't come the captain with me now, Mornny; it won't work. That chicken won't find, old top. You've been there yourself—many a time. You were goin' there when I met you here the other day. I suspected it afterwards, an' I know it now. Report me to Bulkeley, if you like—or to Mr. Bootles—or the Head. I'll report you at the same time. See?"

And Tracy laughed again, quite enjoying the situation.

Mornington did not speak.
His eyes were glittering, but the Shell fellow did not heed his threatening look. He felt that he had the whip hand.

"You've been playin' us for fools," he said; "playing captain and keepin' us in order—by gad! And all the time you've been gamblin' in Tickey Tapp's den yourself. My word!"

"Not all the time," said Mornington quietly. "Only the last few days, Tracy."

"I don't care! I'm goin' to do the same, and I defy you to interfere with me again."

Mornny's hands clenched.

"Will you let me pass?" asked Tracy.

"No."

"You're goin' to try to stop me?"

"Yes."

Tracy set his lips.

"I know your game, and you've admitted it," he said. "Yet you think you're coming the captain over me, all the same."

Mornington nodded.

"Why, you—you cheeky hound!" shouted Tracy, in rage and indignation. "Get out of the way."

"You're going back, Tracy."

"No fear."

"As junior captain, I'm bound to keep you out of such a den as Tickey Tapp's," said Mornington coolly. "I may let duty slide in some ways, but not in every way. See? You're goin' back."

"I won't! And if you interfere with me, Mornington," said Tracy venomously, "I'll go straight to Bulkeley of the Sixth, and explain to him."

"What proof will you give?"

"Proof?" repeated Tracy.

"Yes; Bulkeley will want some proof before he takes any notice of a yarn like that."

"Why, you—you—" stammered Tracy.

Tracy's furious fist crashed into Mornington's face, and the junior captain staggered back with a cry.

The next moment he straightened up and was springing forward.

The mark of Tracy's blow showed red on his cheek, and his eyes were glittering with passion.

Mornington's temper, never perfect, had been sorely tried during the past few days, and now it was at its worst. And Tracy's blow had stirred up all the bitterness in his heart.

He attacked savagely.

Tracy, almost equally enraged, gave blow for blow, and for a couple of minutes he held his ground.

But there was no resisting Mornington's furious attack.

The Shell fellow was driven back and back, till he was under the trees of the wood again, and all the time Mornington was raining fierce blows upon him.

A powerful drive sent Tracy spinning at last, and he rolled gasping at the foot of a tree. Mornington's eyes gleamed down at him.

"Get up, you cad!"

Tracy groaned.

"Do you want any more?" asked Mornington between his teeth.

"Hang you! No!" gasped Tracy.

"I'll make you suffer for this!"

"Get up and go, or I'll begin on you with my boots," answered Mornington contemptuously.

Tracy dragged himself to his feet.

"Do you think the police wouldn't like to know what's going on at that place?" sneered Tracy. "Mornny's there with a gang of gambling outsiders, breaking the law. Let him wait a bit. I'll make him sorry he's laid his hands on me, the cad!"

"Tracy, stop—"
With a sneering laugh Tracy turned off the footpath and plunged through the wood, taking the shortest cut towards Coombe.

Kit Erroll stood rooted to the ground.

There was no mistaking the malicious determination of the cad of the Shell. What a more decent fellow might have done from a sense of duty, Tracy intended to do from malice; but it came to the same thing. It meant a police raid on Tickey Tapp's headquarters—and Mornington was there!

Erroll felt his brain whirl as he thought of it.

Mornington—taken by the police in the midst of a gang of shady, disreputable gamblers, at an illegal roulette den! The thought almost stunned him.

It meant disgrace, ruin, certain expulsion from Rookwood, with every circumstance of shame and ignominy! It meant that, without the shadow of a doubt, to any Rookwood fellow found at Tickey Tapp's den.

Mornington had gone his way with

green cloth, and the game was going strong when Mornny entered.

The dandy of Rookwood came up to the table.

"Make your game, gents!"
Coins and currency notes fluttered on the board. With a twist of his hand, Tickey Tapp sent the wheel spinning, and spun the little ivory ball in the opposite direction. Most eyes were fixed on the spinning wheel, growing more eager as it slowed down, and the ball spun past the little numbered pockets.

On the green cloth of the table were yellow numbers, corresponding to the numbers on the wheel. The number of the pocket in which the ball finally rested was the winning number, and the unthinking punters fondly imagined that it rested there by chance. On one number—17—a wealthy punter placed a five-pound note, and, if 17 came up, Tickey Tapp was bound to pay him £175 by the rules of the game—thirty-five times the amount of the stake. And, as a few such coups would have cleared Mr. Tapp out of all his resources, it was pretty certain that such a win would not happen often, if it happened at all.

Mornington, mindful of what Erroll had said, in spite of himself, watched the turn instead of playing.

The wheel slowed and slowed, and the ball dropped into a pocket. It dropped in at 5—a good distance from 17 on the wheel. Tickey Tapp had not run the remotest risk of 17 turning up a winning number.

Mornny's brow clouded.

The incident bore out Erroll's statement that the croupier was able to turn up whatever numbers he chose, from skill and long practice at spinning the wheel. Sometimes, doubtless, he blundered, but, as a rule, he could rely upon his skill. He did not need to exert it always. When most of the numbers were covered, it was enough to let the ball run by chance, for it was certain then that, whoever won, the bank would win more. There could only be one winning number, and there might be thirty-five losing ones, as well as zero. But when a large and reckless stake portended danger to the bank, the croupier called upon his skill.

Mornington's hand was in his pocket on the banknotes little Erbert had lent him, or, rather, given him. But he did not draw out the money.

In spite of the fever of gambling that burned in his veins, Erroll's warning weighed upon him. To play and lose was one thing, but to throw his money into the grasp of a swindler was quite another; that was not even gambling—it was sheer imbecility.

And Mornny resolved to watch the game a little before he played. It was the dawn of returning good sense.

"Make your game, gents!"
Tickey Tapp had taken in his winnings—a considerable sum, including the five-pound note of the wealthy punter. He had the ball in hand, ready for a new spin.

Mornington stood motionless, watching.

The room was hot and stuffy, the windows covered with dark curtains to prevent possible observation from without. There was a cloud of cigarette-smoke in the air. Somehow it was borne in upon Mornny's fastidious mind, as never before, in what dingy surroundings he was finding himself. Next to him stood a fat man, evidently a bookmaker, who was warm with whisky and perspiration. Mornny moved a little away from him. The scales seemed to be falling from his eyes. Somehow the roulette-table was losing its fascination already.

Money showered on the green cloth again.

Tickey Tapp's patrons evidently had "money to burn." Without it, it was not much use visiting Mr. Tapp. At the roulette-table only ready cash was admitted.

The wheel was spinning again, and the ball revolving. Among smaller stakes, there were three fivers on the table—on numbers 17, 18, and 36. And it was zero that came up.

Mornington's frown deepened.

In the next round the fat bookmaker placed a five-pound note on zero. And zero came up again, and Tickey Tapp passed a bunch of banknotes to the winner. There was a murmur round the table, and Mornny started.

But at the same time—his eyes opened now, as it were—he caught the furtive smile that passed between Tickey Tapp and the bookmaker.

And he understood.
The two were confederates in the game, and the pretended punter was allowed to win to encourage the others. Tickey Tapp's banknotes had been paid over to an apparent winner, but they were still "in the business."



TRACY TURNS INFORMER!

Tracy halted as he met Erroll face to face on the path. "Your pal did this!" muttered Tracy. "By gad, I'll make Mornny sorry for it!" "Where is he now?" asked Erroll uneasily. "At Tickey Tapp's bungalow, and I'm going to the police-station!"

"You're known to be a liar," said Mornington. "Bulkeley himself has punished you for lying. Your word isn't worth much, old scout."

Tracy trembled with rage. He realised that if Mornington chose to deny his accusation, he had no proof of it to offer. He did not hold the whip-hand so effectively as he had supposed.

"Mind your own business, then," he muttered. "You're goin'. Why shouldn't I go?"

"Because I won't let you," answered Mornington. "Never mind whether I'm goin'—I sha'n't take the trouble to argue with you. But you're going back to Rookwood, you measly cad—and sharp!"

Tracy clenched his hands and strode on. He was in too great a rage to feel, at the moment, his usual fear of Mornington.

Mornny caught him promptly by the shoulder.

Whether it was a lingering sense of duty, or simply his repugnance to have Tracy's eyes upon him while he was standing at Tickey Tapp's green table, the junior captain was quite resolved that Tracy should not enter the bungalow.

"Let go!" panted Tracy thickly. "Get back!"

With a look of bitter malice at the junior captain he limped away up the footpath.

Mornington watched him till the thicket hid him from sight; then, with a contemptuous smile, turned on his heel and strode swiftly towards the bungalow.

"Oh gad! Ow!" mumbled Tracy, as he dragged himself along the footpath. "Oh! By gad, I'll make him repeat this—and I know a way. Ow!"

"Hallo! What—"

Tracy halted as he met Kit Erroll face to face on the path. Erroll stared at his bruised face.

"Your pal did this," muttered Tracy. "Mornny, by gad! But I'll make him sorry for it. Oh! Ow!"

"Where is Mornny?" asked Erroll uneasily.

"Gone into Tickey Tapp's bungalow to gamble," hissed Tracy. "He's beaten me off, the cheeky cad! But I'll make him sit up for it! Let him wait a little."

"You're not going to sneak at Rookwood!" exclaimed Erroll.

Tracy gave a bitter laugh.

"No; Mornny's pointed out that that cock won't fight. I've thought of something better than that. I'm going to the police-station."

"What!"

wilful obstinacy, flouting his chum, scorning his good counsel, reckless of the consequences. But he was still Erroll's chum, and it was of his good qualities, not of his reckless folly, that Kit Erroll thought then.

His mind was quickly made up. Of the danger to himself he hardly thought; his only thought was to save Mornington, if he was yet in time. And as Tracy of the Shell tramped away through the wood, Kit Erroll broke into a run along the footpath, and he was heading for Tickey Tapp's bungalow on the heath.

The 4th Chapter. The Green Table.

"Make your game, gentlemen!"
A fat, coarse-featured man droned out the words as he sat before the roulette-wheel.

Mornington of Rookwood pushed aside the hangings in the doorway, and entered the roulette-room as Tickey Tapp was speaking.

Tickey Tapp glanced at him as he came in, and gave him a friendly nod. He recognised one of the best customers of his peculiar business.

There were a dozen punters in the room already, gathered round the

SAVED BY HIS CHUM!

(Continued from the previous page.)

Mornington had been determined not to listen to Erroll's counsel; he had been determined to fling consideration to the winds. But he could not help himself.

The warning had taken effect, and he could not help it; his natural strong sense would not allow him to be deceived now that his eyes were opened.

He felt a sickening at the heart. The glamour of the game of chance was gone now—now that he knew it was not a game of chance at all, but a deliberate swindle which was worked as an absolute certainty—for the bank.

He felt disgust and contempt for the obtuseness of the punters, who could not see what was so plain to him, forgetting that a very short time before he had been as blind as the rest.

He still watched, without playing. Some of the punters, he noted, seemed to have lingering doubts, in spite of themselves, for they were careful to place their stakes after the wheel had started, and the croupier had taken his hand from it.

There was only one reason why they should do so—a lingering doubt that the croupier could control the wheel. After he had taken his hands from it they felt safe to stake.

Morny found himself watching one of those cautious punters. He was a young man with a vacant face, a fair moustache, and an eyeglass, evidently wealthy. He had lost again and again, and now he was playing for larger stakes, and carefully refraining from placing them till the wheel had started.

But he continued to lose. Once or twice, when he threw on a pound note, he won. But when he played with fivers and tenners he had no luck. The explanation was simple enough. Tickey Tapp could afford to leave sovereign stakes to chance, but he could not afford to pay out hundreds of pounds.

Some secret contrivance, invisible to the players, existed, which enabled Tickey Tapp to control the wheel surreptitiously up to the very moment that it stopped.

Mornington's lip curled. His money remained in his pocket. He had come there to gamble, not to throw his banknotes away; and now he knew that by placing them on the green cloth he was throwing them away as surely as if he had dropped them into one of the old quarries on the heath.

The knowledge that the game was "rigged" did what appeals to his better nature had failed to do. Morny was "fed up."

But with that feeling there came shame for what he was doing—shame at his vile surroundings and the wretched greed that had brought him there.

And this was Sunday! A hot flush came into Mornington's cheeks. He made a step towards the doorway. And as he did so there sounded through the room a loud knocking.

Knock, knock, knock!

The 5th Chapter. Saved by His Chum.

Tickey Tapp started to his feet. Knock, knock!

The wheel was revolving, but no one regarded it now. For at the sound of the loud and insistent knocking one alarming thought was in all minds.

"The police!" The hangings at the door were pulled hastily aside, and a startled face looked in, the face of the doorkeeper of the bungalow.

"What is it?" muttered Tickey Tapp.

"The police!" muttered Mornington, and his heart was like lead within him.

Tickey Tapp hurriedly followed the man from the room. Mornington caught the doorkeeper's hurried whisper.

"There's a young gent, sir. He says the police—"

Tickey Tapp looked back from the doorway. "Calm yourselves, gentlemen! There's a way out in case of need. No one need be alarmed."

Then he disappeared. Mornington followed him down the passage.

In the little hall of the bungalow a junior in Etons was standing, and Mornington uttered an exclamation as he saw him.

It was Kit Erroll.

"What the—" Tickey Tapp was beginning.

Mornington ran forward. "Erroll, you here? Are you mad?"

"I came to warn you, Morny—"

"But, the police— For goodness' sake, clear—"

"I've come for you—"

"Look 'ere! Wot does this 'ere mean?" interrupted Tickey Tapp. "You've been hammering on the door till you was let in, young feller. Now, wot do you want? You've come to give us the office—"

Erroll gave the sharper a stare of contempt.

"You!" he said scornfully. "I'd be glad to see you in the hands of the police, more than glad! I've come to warn my friend. Morny, come with me at once. Tracy's gone to the police-station, and they may be here any minute now!"

"By gad!" muttered Mornington. "So we've been given away, have we?" muttered Tickey Tapp savagely.

"You have, and serve you right!" answered Erroll coldly. "I hope the police will be here before you can escape. Morny, come—come; there's not a moment to lose!"

He turned to the door.

The doorkeeper had put on the chain after admitting Erroll, and the Rookwood junior removed it.

"Come!" he said.

"Better keep in cover if the beaks are about!" said Tickey Tapp.

"There's another way out."

"Keep it for your rascally associates!" said Erroll. "There's still time. Morny, come—come!"

He threw open the door.

Mornington followed him from the bungalow without a word. The door was slammed after them, and the chain rattled into its place.

Erroll's eyes swept over the open heath that glistened far and wide in the afternoon sunshine. From the direction of the village two or three police helmets could be seen bobbing amidst the gorse. The police were coming already!

"You fool, Kit!" muttered Mornington. "You fool! Do you know what you're risking by comin' here?"

"I know! Come, Morny!"

Erroll took his chum's arm in his grasp, and started towards the wood. Morny ran with him, without protest.

Every minute was precious now, for if the police arrived it was certain that they would stop anyone seen leaving the bungalow.

But there was still time.

The two juniors plunged into the shades of the wood, and the thick trees swallowed them up and concealed them. Then Valentine Mornington stopped.

"Come on, Morny!" urged Erroll. "Rookwood's the safest place now. Some of the cads there may talk if the police—"

"They won't be nabbed now," said Mornington coolly. "There's a secret way out, and they've had warnin'."

Erroll bit his lip hard.

"It was for your sake I came, Morny," he said. "For the rest, I'd be glad to see them taken!"

"They're no worse than I was."

"I don't agree with you, Morny. But come on—come on—"

"Let's wait and see what happens. We're safe here, old top."

Mornington clambered upon a branch, and looked out over the heath. In the distance, towards the village, appeared a policeman's helmet. Mornington drew a deep breath.

The police had lost little time in acting upon the information given them. A little later, and all would have been lost—for Mornington! Erroll's warning had come in time to save him!

He dropped from the tree. "Come on!" he said abruptly.

The chums hurried along the footpath. What was happening at the bungalow they did not know, and they cared nothing. Whether Tickey Tapp and his honourable company had escaped in time, or whether they were rounded up in the gambling den, was a matter of small moment. The two juniors were thinking of their own narrow escape.

They hurried on in silence. Not a word was spoken till they reached Rookwood. Jimmy Silver was standing in the gateway, chatting with 'Erbert of the Second Form.

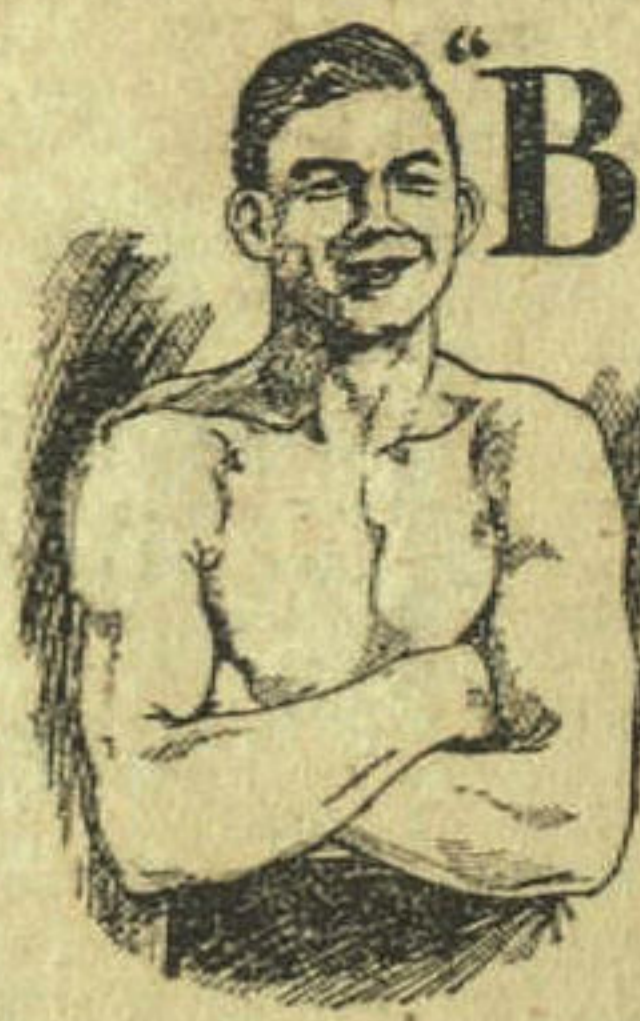
'Erbert looked up quickly at Valentine Mornington.

Morny came up, unheeding the dark frown that gathered on Jimmy Silver's brow.

"I—I've been waitin' here for you to come in, Master Morny," muttered 'Erbert. "I—I—"

Mornington smiled. "I've got something here for you, kid," he said. "I find I sha'n't want

(Continued on page 371.)



BOY MCCORMICK TALKS ON BOXING!

Personal Hints from the Light Heavy - Weight Champion of Great Britain.

"BOY" MCCORMICK.

Holder of Lord Londale's Championship Belt.

SOME FAVOURITE BLOWS USED IN MODERN BOXING.

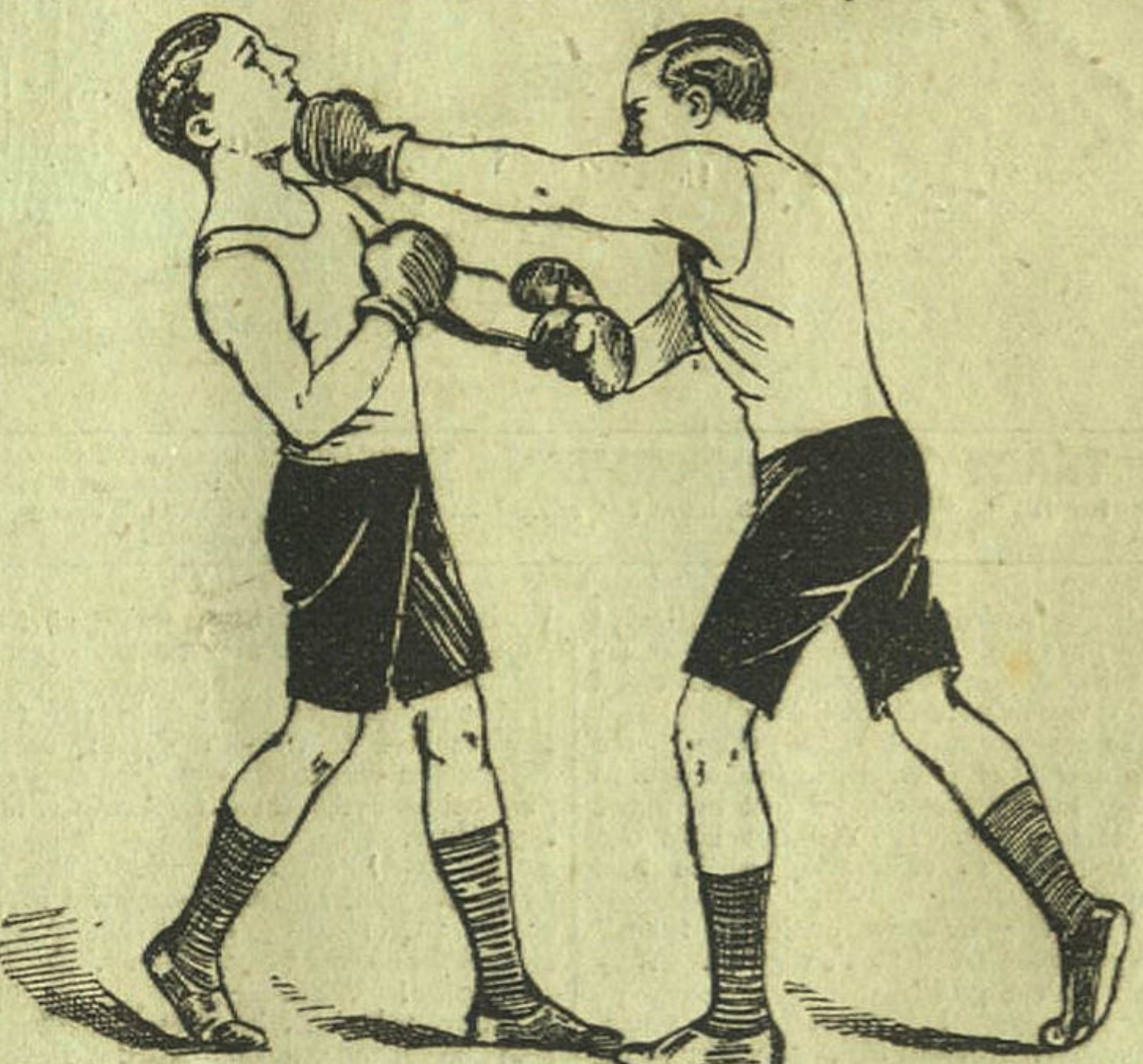
In introducing to your notice some blows that are more or less used by present-day exponents of the "noble art," I should like to impress upon you the fact that it is not wise to specialise in any particular one. I am going to repeat once more that it is absolutely necessary to vary all your methods in boxing. By specialising in any particular blow, or using one as your favourite punch, you are likely to get into that nasty habit of being a "one punch boxer." An opponent, without overworking his brain, would soon discover that you rely principally on a certain punch, and would accordingly set his plans to defeat your object. As soon as he has found ways and means of avoiding that punch, you will find yourself as like to a battleship without a gun, and will be considerably disconcerted.

In starting, I will take the right-arm parry and the left to the face. As your opponent leads off with the left, guard with your right, and immediately counter with your left to the face. This is the first counter in boxing.

THE RIGHT PUNCH TO THE RIBS.

This blow, which is very useful if performed in the proper manner, will, in nine cases out of ten, send an adversary clean off his feet. Wait for him to lead off with his left, parry his blow with your left, knocking his arm a trifle upwards, and you will find that you have exposed the whole of the left side of his body. Bring your foot a trifle forward as you send your hand to his ribs (side) thus catching him off his balance and sending him over.

Another good move is to draw your opponent by sending a left swing to the jaw and missing intentionally.



Quickly reverse the position of the shoulders and send your left straight to the jaw. (See accompanying Article).

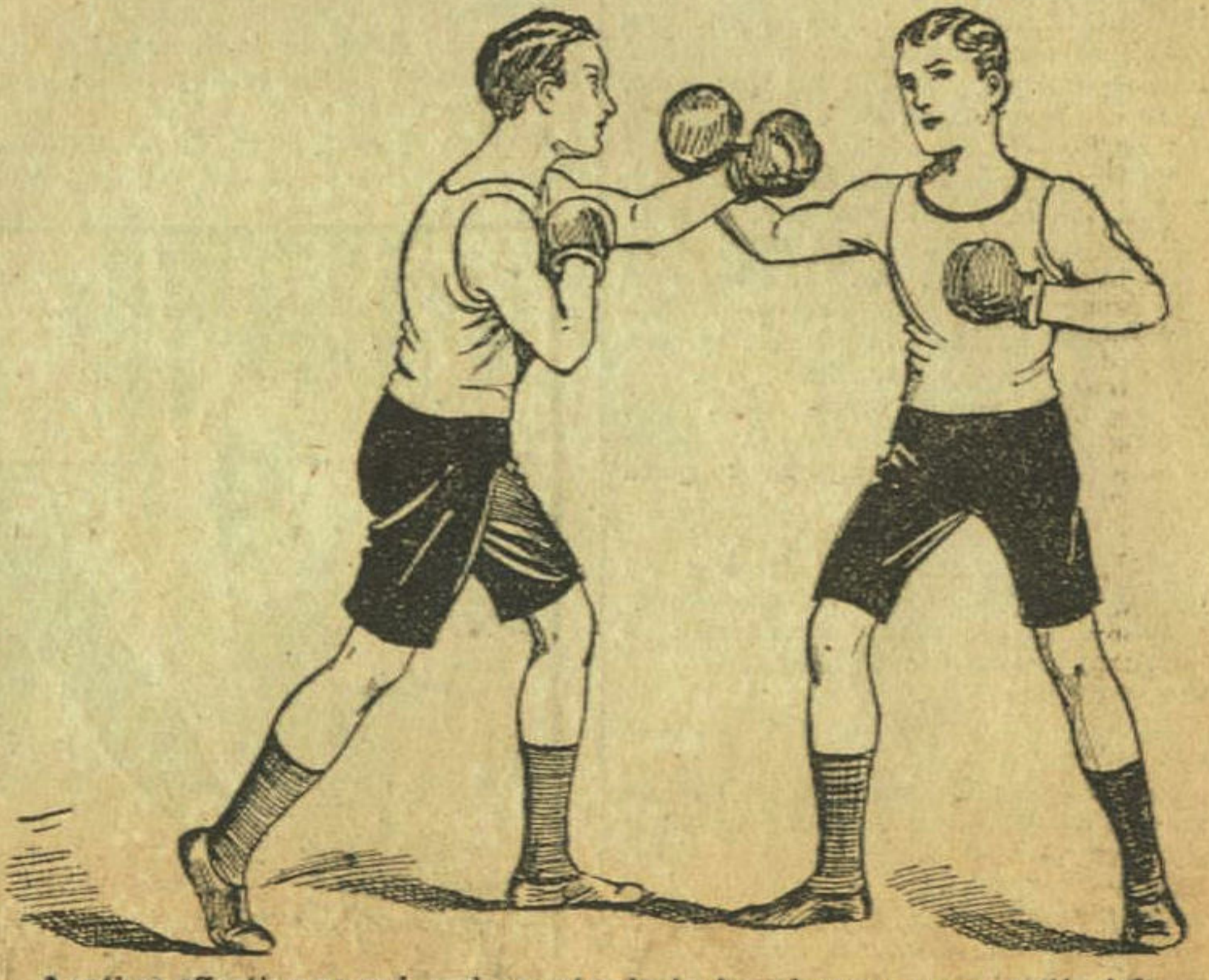
He will inevitably come forward to counter, and will be surprised with a jarring punch to the jaw, if you will only bring your hand back in the reverse direction to which you started your swing. Remember to hit backwards with the knuckle part of the glove.

THE RIGHT CROSS COUNTER.

This punch is likely to end any combat, providing you have judged your distance and timed your blow. Wait for a left lead, slip same to your right, and quickly bring the right shoulder round, sending your right over his extended left arm to the jaw.

By catching him on the angle of the jaw you will have found the "point," and most likely put him to sleep for a brief period.

Another effective guard and counter is to knock his left lead aside (to your left) with the right hand, turning your shoulders in the process so that your right shoulder is in advance of



Another effective guard and counter is to knock your opponent's left lead to your left with the right hand, turning your shoulders in the process.

the left, and your left hand well back. As soon as his left has passed you, quickly reverse the position of the shoulders and send the left straight to the jaw. In knocking the blow aside, you want to time yourself so that you catch him near about the wrist with your right palm; this will spin him slightly off his balance and turn him round a trifle, exposing the left side of his jaw where your counter should

holding his left in readiness to follow up his right swing.

THE STRAIGHT LEFT TO THE BODY & THE LEFT TO THE JAW.

These blows can be brought into use either as counters or by taking the initiative yourself. You can wait for your opponent to lead off with his left, and parry with your right, sending the left straight to the body as you step in, and then with the same hand hooking him clean to the jaw over his right guard. The first punch to the body will make him gasp, drop his guard a trifle, and bring his head forward to meet your left hook that is on the way. He is running into this latter blow, and this makes it doubly punishing—in fact, with sufficient force, will probably knock him out.

If you are attempting this blow without a lead, just step in with the left foot confidently, and send the left straight to the body as indicated, and then hook the same hand to the jaw.

These are the blows that are chiefly used in boxing, and you will do well to practise them very carefully at first with a friend, not forgetting the

slightest detail, and in time they will come automatically to you.

You will notice whilst you are going through the different counters and leads how essential it is to get that mechanical turn of the shoulders when you are delivering blows. To get home your counters it is necessary to use up the whole of your reach, and you will find that without following these instructions, your attempts will seldom reach your opponent, and the few times they do land, little power will be behind them.

Remember always that the force of your punch comes from your body, and not from the large muscles you may happen to possess.

Always poise yourself comfortably upon your feet, and move freely and easily upon your toes. Don't waste too much energy by sparring round your opponent unnecessarily. That's all right for exhibition boxing, but not for the real thing. A point to be remembered when practising side-stepping is not to cross the legs. If this is done, you can imagine what a splendid opportunity it presents to your opponent if he is at all sharp, and a knock-down is the general result. This mistake is made time and again by beginners.

Never thrust the chin too far forward. It may look aggressive, but there again, if your opponent is sharp, it offers such a tempting bait for the knock-out. Keep it sunk fairly well on the neck. I should like to say a few words on self-control, which is so very important a factor to the boxer, and should be cultivated from the beginning. Temper very seldom triumphs over a cool and level-headed opponent, and, as is often the case, meets its just reward. Box for the sport of the thing, and if you get hurt take it smiling.

In the concluding article next week I intend to give you some advice on training for boxing that will help you a great deal both with regard to your abilities and your health in general. It is necessary to be fit morally and physically to become an able exponent of the great sport of self-defence, and the hints that I will give you will help you in an appreciable manner to attain that fitness.

Boy McCormick



ON THE HIGH SEAS!

A Grand, Complete Story of
the Chums of Cedar Creek, on
Holiday at the Sea.

BY...
MARTIN CLIFFORD.

The 1st Chapter. In Merciless Hands.

Dawn flushed upon the wide waters of the Pacific.

A glimmer of light on the seas, a rosy flush in the eastern sky, and then the red sun was above the waters, and it was day.

Frank Richards & Co. were still sleeping.

They had slept little during the night, while the brig Ocean Queen was ploughing her way westward over the wide ocean. But towards dawn, the chums of Cedar Creek, overcome by weariness, had sunk into slumber in their chairs, their heads resting on their arms on the cuddy table.

There was a step on the companion-ladder, and Benedetto, the Italian, came down.

The dusky face of the Italian showed signs of weariness; he had not closed his eyes that night. But weary as he was, the mutineer of the Ocean Queen was keenly on the alert.

His revolver was stuck in his belt, ready to his hand if he needed it—and it was likely enough that he might need it at any moment. Single-handed, the mutineer had taken command of the brig—and he dared not sleep. His dusky face wrinkled into a grin as he looked round the cabin.

The three schoolboys, sleeping at the table, were not the only occupants. The mate of the brig, and two seamen, lay on mattresses on the floor, bandaged and helpless. Frank Richards & Co. had done what they could for the victims who had fallen under the Italian's revolver in the struggle for the brig. Wun Pang, the Chinese cabin-boy and cook, was seated near the wounded men, rocking to and fro, and rubbing a huge bruise on his pigtailed head. He blinked at the Italian with a look of terror, but Benedetto paid him no heed.

"Wake up!" Frank Richards started out of his sleep.

He rubbed his eyes, and stared rather dazedly at the evil, mocking face of the mutineer.

For the moment it was difficult for Frank to remember where he was; and he expected to see round him the familiar walls of his room at the Lawless Ranch, in the distant Thompson Valley of British Columbia.

But the dusky face before him recalled him to himself.

He started to his feet, his eyes gleaming.

Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc awoke at the same moment and rose. They eyed the mutineer grimly.

Benedetto touched lightly the butt of the revolver in his belt. It was a hint to the chums of Cedar Creek to be careful, and it was not lost on them.

The mutineer was master of the situation.

In the skipper's state-room, Captain Finn still lay unconscious from the terrible blow the ruffian had dealt him in his slumber. His revolver was in Benedetto's possession—and it was the only firearm on board the Ocean Queen. And the Italian had already proved that he was a dead shot.

"Buon giorno, signorini!" grinned Benedetto.

The schoolboys did not answer.

"Ah! You are sullen!" said Benedetto. "It will not serve you, signorini." He touched the butt of the revolver again. "I am master here. You have seen me shoot!" He made a gesture towards the mattresses. "Do you wish to join them?"

He smiled, as the chums of Cedar Creek were still silent.

"There is no other firearm on the ship!" continued Benedetto. "There was a rifle, and the mate's revolver—I have dropped them into the sea. You understand? Every life on board is at my mercy. On shore, in Canada, you know what awaits me."

"A rope!" growled Bob Lawless savagely.

Benedetto nodded.

"E vero!" he assented. "And so you understand, signorini, that I shall not stick at trifles. Cospetto! You have seen that already! The brig is shorthanded now—and I shall require your services on deck, now that I am in command of the ship. You will turn to, and pull and haul with the crew. You understand? Otherwise—"

He tapped the revolver again. "We understand," said Frank Richards curtly. "You have the upper hand now, Benedetto."

"I mean to keep it! The brig will serve my turn, and land me somewhere on the coast of California, where I am not known. For some days I shall need it. After that, you

Benedetto can get ashore; he dares not go near a port."

"What a life—while it lasts!"

"We may turn the tables on him yet."

"Hush!"

Benedetto came out of the captain's state-room, which opened upon the cuddy.

He called to the Chinese.

"Wun Pang!"

"Allee lightee!" whimpered Wun Pang. "Me comee."

"Breakfast."

"You bet—me gettee—allee light."

There was no doubt that the Chinese would obey the orders of the new commander of the Ocean Queen. He was trembling in every limb as the black eyes of the Italian glittered at him.

Benedetto can get ashore; he dare



SURPRISING THE MUTINEER! Closer and closer the boatswain drew, and the crew watched him in tense silence. If the Italian slept one minute more—the big boatswain crept nearer, marlinespike in hand, but at the next step there was a sudden move from the Italian.

can go where you please. But if you raise a finger against me while I am aboard I shall shoot you down like a dog. Keep that in mind."

The Italian passed on, and entered the skipper's state-room.

Captain Finn still lay unconscious in his bunk.

Frank Richards & Co. looked at one another as they heard the Italian in the skipper's state-room at work. He was breaking open a locker, and they could guess that he was in search of plunder. The mutineer did not mean to leave the brig empty-handed, when he made his escape from her.

"The awful rascal!" muttered Beauclerc.

Frank Richards clenched his hands.

"He's got to be downed somehow," he whispered.

"Take care, old chap; he means what he said. There's been proof enough of that."

"I know!"

Bob Lawless made a grimace.

"I guess this is a tophole holiday for us!" he said dismally. "I never reckoned on this when we came away from Cedar Creek School for a holiday by the Pacific. I—I say, I guess I've landed you fellows in this! It was my idea to have a run down the coast in a tramp brig—and this is how it is turning out."

"It may turn out better yet," said Frank. "It will be some days before

turned to the deck, making the chums of Cedar Creek a sign to follow him there.

The 2nd Chapter. Playing 'Possum.

Frank Richards & Co. looked round them as they came out on the deck of the Ocean Queen.

The wide Pacific lay glistening in the morning sunlight, and a light breeze played over the waters, and filled the patched canvas of the old ocean tramp. The brig moved through the waters due westward, and the Canadian mountains had long sunk out of sight below the horizon. Round the vessel lay the waste of waters, with a sail or two dotting the blue in the distance. Benedetto rapped out an order to the man at the wheel—a Mexican half-caste. The Italian was very careful to keep out of hailing distance, and as far as possible out of sight of any other vessel.

There were five men on deck, including the helmsman—all that remained of the crew. Two lay wounded below in the cuddy, with the mate. And the seamen had evidently given up any idea of disputing the Italian's authority. Most of them were dagoes, and though quick enough in a quarrel, with fist or knife, they were not of the kind to resist a resolute and merciless ruffian like Benedetto. He was prepared to shoot them down at a sign; and they knew it.

Benedetto fixed his black eyes upon the chums of Cedar Creek.

"Yes," said Frank.

"Take your truck into the fore-castle. You will berth forward with the hands now."

"Oh!" said Frank.

"Get the wounded men moved into the fore-castle also. And the sooner the better."

"They are better where they are," said Frank anxiously. "There's precious little room in the fore-castle, Benedetto, and it may be dangerous to move them."

Benedetto shrugged his shoulders. "Obey my order!" he answered.

"But—"

"Listen to me, signorino. I shall not repeat my orders to you. Take them into the fore-castle, or throw them into the sea, if you choose; but the cuddy must be left clear."

"Very well!" said Frank quietly.

The Italian's orders had to be obeyed. Frank Richards could guess his object easily enough. He intended to have the after part of the brig to himself, for safety's sake.

The crew lent assistance, and the wounded men and the unconscious captain were brought up and conveyed into the stuffy fore-castle, and laid in the bunks there. Then the schoolboys took their own bags into the fore-castle. Only the Chinese cook remained in the cuddy; from him Benedetto had nothing to fear.

The Italian descended for breakfast, the hapless Wun Pang waiting on him in fear and trembling.

The crew muttered together on the deck while he was below, and one of the half-castes showed a knife, and his teeth at the same time. But they

One of the crew was beginning to move stealthily towards the motionless Italian. It was the boatswain—a big, broad-shouldered New Englander. He had a marlinespike in his hand. If he came within reach of the sleeping Italian, it was clear enough what he intended to do.

The chums of Cedar Creek watched him.

None ventured to make a movement, lest the Italian should awake. Benedetto did not seem conscious of his danger.

His head remained sunk forward, and his breathing was regular; his face was in shadow, but his eyes appeared closed.

Closer and closer the boatswain drew, silently, and the crew watched him in tense stillness.

Frank Richards could almost hear his heart beating as he watched.

If the Italian slept one minute more

The big boatswain was within six feet of him, the marlinespike gripped in his powerful hand. But at the next step there was a sudden movement from the Italian.

His right hand swept up, with the revolver in it.

Crack!

The boatswain staggered back with a cry, and fell upon the deck, the marlinespike crashing to the planks.

"Oh!" panted Frank Richards.

Benedetto sprang to his feet, the smoking revolver in his hand, and his glittering glance swept along the deck.

There was a mocking grin upon his swarthy face.

He was prepared for a rush, but the rush did not come. The half-caste seamen scuttled forward.

Bob Lawless clenched his hands.

"Playing 'possum!" he muttered between his teeth. "It was a trick—he was never asleep—"

The Italian laughed lightly.

"Richards!" he called out.

Frank approached him.

"Pitch that carrion into the sea."

"What?"

The wounded boatswain was groaning at Frank Richards' feet. The ball was in the shoulder, and he was completely disabled.

"Throw him overboard!"

Frank's eyes flashed.

"I shall do nothing of the kind," he answered, setting his lips. "Are you mad, Benedetto? Do you think you can make me into a murderer like yourself?"

The revolver rose to a level, and Frank Richards felt a sickness at the heart as he looked at it. He was looking death in the face. But nothing would have induced him to obey the savage order. The wounded boatswain groaned again.

For a moment the Italian looked as if he would pull trigger. But perhaps some recollection crossed his mind that it was Frank who had helped to save him from the sea—or perhaps he remembered that the brig was dangerously short-handed now. He lowered the revolver with a light laugh.

"Carry him away, then," he said.

"Let him live! I think these rogues have had their lesson!"

Frank drew a deep breath.

The Italian turned away, rolling a cigarette, and the wounded boatswain was carried to the fore-castle. A little later, Benedetto sat in the shadow of a boat swinging at the davits, and closed his eyes again. But he was not likely to be attacked this time. The crew of the ocean tramp had learned that the mutineer slept with one eye open, and whether asleep or awake, Benedetto was not likely to be attacked again.

The 3rd Chapter. A Desperate Attempt.

The day passed in a shimmering blaze of heat on the blue Pacific. Frank Richards & Co. worked with the remainder of the crew, at the orders of the Italian; but there was little to do but trim the sails. One of the half-caste seamen was kept at the helm, and the brig rolled and ploughed on her way southward. Sails appeared in the distance, but the watchful Italian avoided coming near them.

Dusk set in at last, and relieved the heat.

Captain Finn had recovered consciousness, but he was ill in his bunk in the fore-castle. The chums of Cedar Creek spent a good deal of their time in tending the skipper and the wounded seamen. The state of affairs had been explained to Captain Finn, but he was too badly hurt to think of making any attempt to recapture his ship. All the wounded men were badly in need of a doctor's care, but there was no chance of that till land was touched—perhaps, indeed, not then. Frank Richards & Co. were in dread that one or another

were alert and obedient when Benedetto appeared on deck again.

The Italian glanced at the sea, and up at the sails, and rapped out orders to the crew. The course of the brig was changed again. Now that the vessel was far out of sight of land, she was put upon a southerly course, the Italian's intention being to run her ashore in some lonely part of the coast of Oregon or California, and escape with the plunder he had secured.

What happened to the brig or her crew after that he did not care.

As the sun rose higher, blazing heat poured down upon the Ocean Queen. The Italian stood leaning upon the taffrail, his eyes alertly about him. But weariness was evidently gaining upon him, and Frank Richards & Co. noted it with satisfaction. Sooner or later the rascal must sleep, and then

Benedetto slid into a sitting posture at last, his back against the taffrail, and his chin dropped on his breast.

Whether he was asleep was uncertain; but his eyes were closed now, though the revolver was now in his hand.

Frank Richards glanced at his chums.

"There are marlinespikes here," he said in a low voice. "What do you fellows think—"

"Look!" muttered Bob.



ON THE HIGH SEAS!

(Continued from
the previous page.)

of them might sink under his injuries, and that the shadow of death might fall upon the Ocean Queen. But as yet the worst had not happened.

Glad enough were the chums when evening descended upon the ocean; the twilight quickly deepening into darkness. With her lights glimmering into the gloom, the brig forged on. Benedetto was still on deck, peering occasionally into the shadows of the sea. Frank Richards and his chums drew forward, near the foremast, and spoke together in low tones.

"This can't go on much longer," Frank muttered. "There will be death in the fore-castle if the men there don't get proper attention. Something's got to be done, you fellows!"

"The crew won't raise a finger again," said Vere Beauclerc.

"Not likely, I guess," remarked Bob Lawless. "We've got to handle the dago, if he's going to be huddled at all. We could make the land in a few hours, if we got rid of him. But how—"

Frank Richards wrinkled his brows. He was getting into a mood of desperation, as were his chums. The three schoolboys were in a mood to take risks, if there was any hope of success. Indeed, as matters were, their lives were not worth much, for at any time the reckless mutineer might break out into murderous ferocity. During the afternoon he had been below several times, and the schoolboys had heard him rummaging for valuables.

"The brute won't even close his eyes," muttered Bob Lawless; "or if he does, we can't tell if he's asleep. I guess it's no go, Franky. Can't argue with a loaded revolver, in the grip of a crack-shot like that dago. It's only asking to be drilled."

"I wonder—" muttered Frank.

"Well?"

"When he goes below again—"

"Harder to tackle him below than on deck," said Bob, with a shake of the head. "He would have us at his mercy there."

"I wasn't thinking of that. I was thinking that when he comes up the companion-ladder—it's dark now—the moment he puts his head out on deck—"

Frank paused.

Bob's eyes gleamed.

"I—I wonder!" he said. "If we failed—"

"If we failed, it's death!" Frank Richards shivered a little. "But it may be that, anyway. How do we know what he intends? When he runs the ship ashore, what may he do then?"

"He will vamoose, I reckon."

"And leave us to set the police after him?"

Bob started.

"By gum! I guess—"

"You've seen what a villain he is. He's much more likely to scuttle the ship, and use his revolver on us, than to leave us to help bring him to justice."

"The awful villain! I guess it's likely enough."

"We'll try your scheme, Frank, if we get a chance," said Vere Beauclerc quietly. "The lives of everyone on board may depend on it."

"That's what I was thinking. Get hold of something to use as a weapon, and keep it hidden."

"Right-ho!"

The chums separated; they did not wish Benedetto to observe them talking together too much.

They were in a subdued mood—but quite determined. Life or death hung upon a chance now, and they were quite ready to take the chance.

Bob Lawless found an iron bolt, which he concealed about him, and Frank a short, thick billet of wood. Vere Beauclerc slipped into his pocket a big clasp-knife belonging to the boatswain. So far as they could prepare for the struggle, they had prepared. It only remained to watch for their opportunity.

The opportunity was long in coming. Benedetto seemed in no hurry to go below.

Master of the brig as he was, his situation was full of terrible peril, and he realised it clearly.

The crew remained on deck; the fore-castle was crowded with the wounded in the bunks; and, besides,

Benedetto did not allow them to go off watch. His rest in the afternoon seemed to have refreshed him, and he paced the after-deck tirelessly, occasionally rapping out a direction to the half-caste at the wheel. Wun Pang, the Chinese, put his pigtail out of the companion, and announced that supper was ready, and then at last the Italian went below.

In the glimmer of the stars Frank Richards & Co. exchanged a quick look. The hour had come.

The chums of Cedar Creek were tired, but they did not think for a moment of sleep. Before their eyes closed again their fate was to be put to the test. They stole quietly aft, and gathered round the companion-hatch. Inside the companion a small lamp was burning, and Bob Lawless silently extinguished it.

Then the schoolboys waited. The few members of the crew on deck had observed their action, but they did not speak, or make a movement. If the chums of Cedar Creek tackled the mutineer, they had to tackle him by themselves—though, doubtless, the knives of the half-castes would be ready if they succeeded.

They waited with beating hearts. Below, they could hear the Italian in the cuddy, and occasionally his voice was audible, snapping an order to Wun Pang. The scent of a strong cheroot came from below at last. Benedetto was smoking one of the captain's Mexican cheroots after his supper. They heard him push back his chair and rise from the table.

"Now!" whispered Frank Richards.

"Hush!"

The footsteps of Benedetto were heard below. They heard him mutter to himself in Italian, doubtless because the light in the companion was out.

Then his footsteps came up the ladder.

In the shadow of the hatch the chums of Cedar Creek waited, their weapons in their hands, their hearts thumping.

Benedetto stepped lightly out on deck.

Crash!

The iron bolt, in Bob Lawless' hand, crashed fairly in the dusky face of the mutineer, and he reeled back with a scream of pain.

His revolver was in his hand the next instant.

But before he could use it, Frank Richards struck with the wooden billet, and the Italian's arm dropped paralysed to his side.

Crash!

The deadly weapon dropped to the deck, and exploded there, the bullet whistling away harmlessly.

Benedetto was staggering, but he half-recovered, and plunged towards the revolver. Beauclerc struck at him with the clasp-knife as he did so, and the blade hacked along the Italian's shoulder. Benedetto leaped back, lost his footing, and rolled down the companion-ladder, landing with a crash at the bottom.

The 4th Chapter.
Cornered!

Frank Richards made a spring for the revolver.

It was that deadly weapon that had made the mutineer master of the brig—and now it was out of his hands!

Frank caught it up with throbbing heart.

"He's coming!" panted Beauclerc.

"Stand ready!"

"Give me the shooter, Frank—"

Frank handed the revolver quickly to Bob Lawless. The Canadian school-boy gripped it, and his finger was on the trigger. Benedetto, hurt as he must have been by his fall, was coming furiously up the companion-way, and as he appeared in sight, there was a gleam of steel. His knife was in his hand, and savage fury in his face.

Bob Lawless did not hesitate.

The mutineer had no chance of using his knife.

The moment he appeared in sight Bob Lawless opened fire with the revolver.

Crack, crack, crack!

As fast as he could pull the trigger Bob Lawless pumped out the bullets. There was a yell of agony from the Italian, and he disappeared into the companion again. The first bullet had struck; the other two crashed into the woodwork over his head as he disappeared.

The chums heard a fall below and a groan.

"I guess that lets him out!" panted Bob.

Groan!

"Come down and collar him!" exclaimed Frank.

"Hold on! The pesky skunk may be playing possum again—it may be a trick to get us in his reach!" exclaimed Bob hastily. "Remember his knife!"

Frank Richards stopped in time.

"You're right, Bob."

"Cospetto!" The furious voice of the mutineer came from below. "But I will kill you for this—cospetto!"

And he groaned again.

The seamen were coming aft now. As if by a miracle, their dreaded enemy had been beaten, if not overcome, and they were ready to help. The four half-castes had their knives out.

But as they looked into the darkness of the companion they paused. The Italian could be heard moving below; he was wounded, but he was evidently not disabled. The glimmer of light from the cuddy lamp was suddenly extinguished. In anticipation of an attack, the Italian had plunged the cuddy into darkness. And no one cared to tackle the desperate man in the darkness of the close quarters below.

"We've downed him, anyway," said Frank Richards, with a deep breath of satisfaction. "Keep the pistol handy, Bob!"

"You bet! He gets the lead through his cabeza, if he shows it over the level of the deck," said Bob.

"I've got two bullets left, and one will be enough for Mister Benedetto!"

Leaving his comrades to watch for the Italian if he should emerge, Frank Richards hurried forward. He entered the fore-castle, and found Captain Finn sitting up in a bunk, aroused by the firing. Frank hastily explained what had happened.

"Jerusalem!" said Captain Finn. "I guessed I never reckoned you youngsters would have handled that bulldozer like that! I guess I'm obliged to you, sonny."

"The ship's yours again now, captain," said Frank. "Do you feel well enough to get on deck?"

"I guess so!"

Captain Finn clambered out of the bunk. His bearded face was pale, and his head was swathed in bandages. But he walked steadily enough as he came on deck. The news that the mutineer had been defeated, and that he was in command of the brig again, seemed to have given Captain Finn new life. He proceeded aft, where Bob and Beauclerc were watching the companion—and Benedetto's voice could be heard below, muttering curses in his own language.

"Give me the shooter, kid!" said the skipper.

Bob Lawless handed it over.

"There's two cartridges left, sir," he said. "Benedetto's got the rest about him, I guess. It can't be reloaded."

"I guess one will be enough if I get a bead on him!" said Captain Finn grimly; and he shouted down the companion, "Benedetto! You black-visaged swab, tumble up!"

A deep curse from below was the only answer.

"Will you tumble up, Benedetto?"

"No, signor."

"Wait there till daylight, then, and I calculate we'll rout you out, you murdering dago! You're going ashore in irons, after all, Benedetto!"

"Credo no, capitano," came the Italian's reply. "The irons are not forged that will hold me!"

"I guess we shall see about that. We're going to head for Vancouver, Benedetto, and I reckon we shall see Canada at dawn. Put that in your pipe and smoke it, you mutinous thief!"

The captain stepped back.

"I reckon we're not going to give him a chance with his knife," he said. "Batten down the hatch!"

"Good stunt!" said Bob.

The hatch was closed and battened down.

It was impossible now for the Italian to come up to the deck if he wished; not that it was likely he would run the risk. Without a firearm, he was at the mercy of the crew, and they would certainly have shown him no mercy. He was too dangerous to be attacked in the cuddy in the dark, but he was as good as a prisoner there. His teeth were drawn.

Captain Finn, in a state of great satisfaction, in spite of the aching in his head, gave orders to his crew, and the course of the brig was changed once more. Frank Richards & Co. laid down to sleep in some canvas on deck with light hearts. When the sun rose again they hoped to see the mountains of Canada on the eastern horizon.

Below, there was no sound from the mutineer.

It was possible that his wounds had overcome him, or that he was sleeping. Somewhere below, too, was Wun Pang, the Chinese, doubtless hiding in terror in some obscure corner. In the glimmer of the stars Frank Richards & Co. slept the sleep of deep fatigue.

The sound of knocking roused them from slumber later in the night. They started up.

Knock, knock, knock!

"It's the Italian!" exclaimed Beauclerc.

The knocking proceeded from the companion hatch. Captain Finn walked towards it, with a grim smile.

"Signor!" came in a shout from below.

"Belay, there, you dago trash!"

"Ah, it is you, capitano! I will make terms with you!" came the Italian's voice, muffled by the closed hatch.

"I guess I'm not making any terms with a dago mutineer!"

"Listen to me, signor! Give me a boat, and I will leave your ship!"

The captain grinned.

"You'll leave my ship in irons, Benedetto, when we drop anchor in port!" he answered.

"Cospetto! But I am not taken yet, signor."

"You're welcome to the cuddy till the morning! Then I guess I'm coming down for you, and if you don't surrender, you dog, I'll shoot you in your tracks!"

And the captain walked away, without paying further heed to the Italian.

"I guess Mister Benedetto is feeling where the shoe pinches now!" grimaced Bob Lawless. "His jig is up, I reckon."

And the chums of Cedar Creek settled down to sleep again.

They did not waken again till the rosy dawn was flushing over the Pacific. As they turned out Bob Lawless pointed to the eastward, with an exclamation of great satisfaction.

"Land!" he said.

Dim in the distance the mountain summits barred the sky. It was many a long mile distant, but it was land—Canadian land. And it cheered the hearts of the chums of Cedar Creek to see the misty summits against the sky.

"And now for Benedetto!" said Bob Lawless.

The 5th Chapter.

The Last of Benedetto!

Captain Finn called the hands aft as the sun rose higher and daylight streamed down upon the seas. The hatch was opened, and the skipper looked down into the companion-way.

The revolver was in his hand now.

"Benedetto!" he shouted.

There was no answer from below.

"Benedetto, tumble up!"

Silence.

"I guess I'm coming down for you, then!" called out the captain. "Lift a finger, Benedetto, and down you go! That's a warning!"

"Hallo, he's coming!" exclaimed Bob Lawless.

There was a scuffling of feet below, but it was a pigtailed head that rose into view.

"Get out of the way, Wun Pang!" growled the captain, as the Chinaman scuttled on deck.

"Me so frightened!" gasped Wun Pang. "No sleep! Hidee in coal lockee! Pool old Chinaman flighten!"

"Where's Benedetto?"

"Me no savvy."

"Haven't you seen the Italian since dawn?" asked Frank Richards.

Wun Pang shook his head.

"No see," he answered.

Captain Finn looked puzzled.

"I guess he can't be in hiding," he said. "There's nowhere for him to lie in ambush, the skulking sea-lawyer! Anyhow, I guess I'm goin' down to rout him out some!"

"And we're after you!" said Bob Lawless.

"You youngsters had better keep out of danger, I calculate."

"You may want our help, captain."

Captain Finn grunted, and began to descend the companion-way. Frank Richards & Co. followed him, each of them with a weapon in his hand. A couple of the crew followed, armed with capstan-bars.

Desperate as the Italian was, he had little chance of resistance now. There were enough to deal with him, even if he escaped the captain's revolver, which was not likely.

The cuddy was deserted.

The table was littered with captain's stores, which the mutineer had apparently turned out, and the fragments of a meal could be seen; but there was no sign of the mutineer.

"Keep your deadlights open!" said the skipper abruptly. "I reckon the

pesky polecat is hiding in some corner, ready to jump out with his sticker. Don't give him a chance!"

"You bet!" said Bob Lawless.

Every eye was wary as the search began for the Italian.

The state-rooms were examined and the lazarette, and every possible corner where Benedetto could have hidden himself, but the Italian was not discovered.

But Frank Richards noted that the cabin window was open, and he looked out at the sea creaming away in the wake of the Ocean Queen.

In the woodwork there was a stain of blood.

"Captain Finn!"

"Waal?"

"Look here!"

"Jehosophat!" ejaculated the skipper.

The searchers gathered round the cabin window. The bloodstain told its own story; it indicated where the Italian had climbed out in the hours of darkness.

"He's gone, then!" muttered Beauclerc.

Frank Richards shivered a little as he gazed down at the sea deep below. Evidently the Italian had taken to the water, knowing that he had no means of escaping arrest in the morning. Had he plunged down to his death in the deep waters, or with some vague hope of reaching the land, and yet escaping?

It was impossible to say. But it was certain that he was gone, and the deep Pacific held the secret of his fate.

Captain Finn nodded his head with grim satisfaction.

"I guess the pesky varmint preferred Davy Jones' locker to a rope on shore," he remarked. "I reckon he's taken some food with him and a flash; that's what he's been turning out my stores for, I calculate. But he couldn't swim leagues of the Pacific. I guess he's gone down, and a good riddance to him for a mutinous dog!"

And Captain Finn put his revolver in his pocket, and returned to the deck. Frank Richards & Co. followed him more slowly.

There was little doubt as to the fate of the mutineer.

He had entrusted himself to the sea as a last chance, perhaps not aware of the real distance of the brig from land. The risk, great as it was, had doubtless seemed better to him than the certainty of being sent on shore in irons as soon as the brig dropped anchor, to take his trial and his just punishment.

"I guess he had pluck, anyway!" Bob Lawless remarked. "I suppose there's a bare chance he might be picked up at sea?"

"Not much," said Frank, "especially wounded as he was. I'm afraid I can't feel very sorry for him."

"I guess not. Still, he had plenty of pluck."

The chums of Cedar Creek returned to the deck in a thoughtful mood. Whatever had been the fate of the mutineer, he was gone, and there could be little doubt that the blue waters of the Pacific had closed above his head for ever.

The following day the Ocean Queen dropped anchor in Canadian waters, and glad enough were the chums of Cedar Creek to set foot on dry land again. They remained some days at Vancouver, and then journeyed northward to Pacific Point to finish their holiday by the sea. And in the cheery days that followed they soon forgot their tragic experiences on board the ocean tramp. And when the time arrived to return to the Thompson Valley and home, they boarded the cars on the Canadian-Pacific in cheery mood.

"I guess we've had a good time," Bob Lawless remarked, when, on the last day of the journey home, they rode up the Thompson Valley trail. "We got more than we bargained for, but we came out right end up. We shall have a yarn to spin the fellows at Cedar Creek next week."

And a few days later Frank Richards & Co. rode up the familiar trail through the timber to Cedar Creek School, and their school life commenced once more.

THE END.

DON'T MISS
NEXT WEEK'S STORY OF
FRANK RICHARDS & CO.Entitled
"THE HONOURABLE ALGERNON!"By
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**SAVED BY HIS
CHUM!**

(Continued from page 364.)

your banknotes after all. Thanks all the same!"

"Oh, Master Morny! But——"

Mornington thrust the notes into the fag's reluctant hand.

"It's all serene, kid. I sha'n't want them," he said. "Go and lock them up at once!"

"Orl right, Master Morny!"

Valentine Mornington walked on

with Erroll, leaving Jimmy Silver staring after him blankly.

There was a curious expression on Erroll's face. Morny's action had surprised him, as well as Jimmy Silver.

"Time for tea, I think, old top!" yawned Mornington.

"Yes, old chap."

The chums did not speak again till they were in Study No. 4. Erroll lighted sticks in the grate, and shoved the kettle on them, Mornington watching him with an odd smile.

"Well?" he said, as Erroll looked up.

"Well?" said Erroll.

"Do you know that you're a thump-in' fool?"

"I hope not."

"You are, an' no mistake about that. Suppose the beaks had been a little quicker, and you'd been nabbed at Tickey Tapp's show along with me? We should both have been expelled from Rookwood!"

"I know," said Erroll, in a low voice.

"And yet you risked it?"

"Yes."

"Well, you're a thumping ass! And a jolly good pal!" said Mornington, his tone changing. "Erroll, old chap, I've been a beast—a regular

beast! There's a bad strain in me somewhere, and it works out at times. I suppose I can't help it."

"Try!" suggested Erroll, with a smile.

"Everythin' you told me about that rotten game is true, and even if it wasn't, what was I doin' there, anyhow?" muttered Mornington. "If it's any satisfaction to you, Kit, I'm ashamed of myself."

"If that's all over, Morny——"

"It's all over, Kit. Honour bright!"

"Then there's no reason why you shouldn't make a jolly good success

as junior captain," said Erroll brightly.

Mornington shook his head.

"I've been thinkin' about that," he said. "I know what I ought to do, and I'm goin' to do it. But never mind that now. Let's have tea."

And Mornington and his chum sat down to tea in a more cheerful mood than either had known for some time past. The clouds had rolled by in Study No. 4 at last.

THE END.

(Another long complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co. next Monday, entitled "A Surprise for the School!" By Owen Conquest.)