

SMYTHE'S UNWELCOME DOUBLE!

(SEE THIS WEEK'S GRAND COMPLETE STORY OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL.)



The BOYS' FRIEND 1^{1d}/₂

TWELVE PAGES!

No. 972. Vol. XIX. New Series.]

THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending January 24th, 1920.

The Boy Without A Memory!

By Owen Conquest.



ROUGH JUSTICE!

Lovell stood on one of Smythe's legs and Raby on the other, while Newcome sat gracefully on his shoulders. Jimmy Silver wielded the cricket-stump, and the voice of Smythe of the Shell was raised in lamentation! Jimmy Silver heard the door open, but he did not see the awe-inspiring figure of the Head! So he simply called over his shoulder: "Buzz off! We're whacking Smythe!"

The 1st Chapter Something for Smythe!

Thwack!
And a loud yell.
Dr. Chisholme paused in surprise.
If the Reverend Head of Rookwood had visited the Fourth Form quarters oftener, he would probably not have been surprised at hearing a yell from the end study.
But in the passage where the Classical Fourth lived and moved and had

their being, the Head was an infrequent visitor, an exceedingly rare bird.

The reverend gentleman did not know that his unusual and unexpected appearance in that quarter caused dismay, indeed, consternation.

He did not know that a warning whisper of "Cave!" ran along the passage when he was sighted on the staircase. He did not know that Conroy, who was changing out of footer

rig in his study doorway, made a sudden bolt for cover, and rolled into his study tangled in trousers. He did not know that Peele, who was smoking a cigarette by the window, jammed it hurriedly into his pocket, and stood in growing horror as the lighted end gradually burned through his jacket lining. He did not know that Higgs and Putty Grace, who grinned sheepishly at him as he passed, had been engaged in desperate combat while he

was still in the offing. Many things went on in Rookwood that the Head did not know.

But when, in his stately progress along the silent and respectful passage, he arrived at the end study, he knew that trouble was going on in that celebrated apartment.

For the door of the end study was closed, and the warning "Cave!" had not reached Jimmy Silver & Co. in their quarters. And there was no

time for any fellow to cut in and warn them. The Fistical Four of the Fourth pursued their occupation, whatever it was, while the reverend and terrifying gentleman bore down upon their study. And their occupation seemed to be of a strenuous nature, and distinctly unpleasant to somebody. For somebody was yelling furiously.

Thwack!
"Yoooop!"



THE BOY WITHOUT A MEMORY!

(Continued from previous page.)

"Give him six, Jimmy!" That was Lovell's voice, quite audible to the Head as he paused in his surprise. "Yow-ow! Leggo, you rotters!" That was the voice of Adolphus Smythe, of the Shell. What Smythe of the Shell was doing in a Fourth Form study was not clear, except that he was getting a licking there. There was no doubt about the licking. Thwack! That was the sound of a cricket-stump, evidently landing upon trousers. "Yow-ow-ow!" Smythe's voice again. "Good!" Raby's voice this time. "This will do you good, Smythe! Don't be such a cad, you know!" "Or such a snob!" said Newcome. "Yah! Oh, lemme gerrup!" "But you've only had four out of six, Smythe!" This was Jimmy Silver's voice. "Steady!" Thwack! "Help!" "Bless my soul!" said the Head. He strode forward and threw open the door of the end study. Quite a surprising scene met his gaze; surprising to the Head, that is. Probably it would not have surprised anyone else at Rookwood. Adolphus Smythe of the Shell was extended on the study carpet. He was spread-eagled there, face down. Lovell stood on one of his legs. Raby on the other. Newcome sat gracefully on his shoulders. Jimmy Silver wielded the cricket-stump. The Fistical Four seemed to find the thing amusing. Adolphus Smythe found it anything but that. But Smythe's point of view, naturally, was rather different from that of the Fistical Four. There is a great distinction between the active and passive voices of the verb "to whack."

Jimmy Silver heard the door open, but as he had his back to it, he did not see what an awe-inspiring figure appeared there. So he simply called over his shoulder: "Buzz off! We're whacking Smythe!"

"Silver!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Jimmy Silver jumped almost clear of the floor as he spun round. He knew that awful voice.

The voice of the great, huge bear in the fairy-tale was "not a circumstance" to it.

"The—the Head!" babbled Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Oh, crickey!"

"Oh!"

"Ah!"

The Fistical Four, with breathless ejaculations, faced the awful vision in the doorway.

Smythe rolled over on the floor and sat up.

Dr. Chisholm surveyed the scene with a glance that struck terror to the end study—not easily terrified as a rule.

Jimmy Silver blinked at the Head as he might have blinked at a gorgon. The Head appeared a good deal like a gorgon at that moment; but Jimmy did not feel like a Perseus. He felt more like one of the fabled gorgon's hapless victims that were turned to stone.

Silence reigned in the end study for a second; a silence that could be felt.

The Head broke it.

"What does this mean?" he inquired.

Jimmy Silver & Co. blinked helplessly at one another. No answer was forthcoming.

"Get up, Smythe!"

Smythe got up.

"Is this a case of bullying?" The Head's voice rumbled like distant thunder. "Have I, by sheer accident, come upon a case of rank hooliganism in the Fourth Form of Rookwood School?"

"Nunno, sir!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"What were you doing to Smythe?"

Really, it was a superfluous question. The Head knew perfectly well what Jimmy Silver & Co. had been doing to Smythe. But he seemed to expect an answer.

"W-w-w-whacking him, sir!" mumbled Jimmy.

"I am aware that you were beating him, Silver!"

"Ye-es, sir!" gasped Jimmy.

He did not add that, in that case, the Head needn't have asked. Arguing with a headmaster was never any good.

"And why," said the Head, "were you beating him?"

No answer.

"I am waiting," the Head remarked icily, "for a reply."

Jimmy Silver blinked at his chums again. But they could not help him. What was the good of telling the Head that they were beating Smythe of the Shell for his soul's good? That he had asked for it, and wouldn't be happy till he got it?

The Head turned to Smythe, as the Fistical Four seemed to be tongue-tied.

"What was the cause of this unseemly scene, Smythe?"

Adolphus gasped.

As the injured party, Smythe ought to have been willing to explain, but he wasn't.

"I—I—" he stuttered.

"Well?"

"I—I don't complain, sir!"

"Quite so, Smythe; but I have asked you a question, and I expect an answer."

Smythe's eyes rolled helplessly. Evidently he had a great reluctance to explain why the Fistical Four had been whacking him.

"Why are you in this study, Smythe?"

"I—I came to speak to Silver, sir."

"To quarrel with Silver?"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"You came on a peaceful visit to this study?"

"Ye-es, sir."

"And then you were treated as I saw?"

"Ahem!"

"Kindly answer me, Smythe."

"I—I may have said somethin' Silver didn't like, sir," stammered the unhappy Adolphus.

"What did you say that Silver did not like, Smythe?"

Adolphus writhed.

"Just a—a—a remark, sir, that's all! I—I don't mind, sir. I—I'm not complainin'."

But the Head, having arrived on that extraordinary scene, was there to see justice done. If the Fistical Four had been guilty of bullying, there was severe punishment in store for that happy band. But the Head—who was known to all Rookwood as a "downy old bird"—was beginning to suspect that the punishment he had witnessed had been justly administered—that, in fact, Smythe of the Shell had asked for it. And he meant to know the facts.

"Will you be kind enough to tell me what was the remark you made to Silver which led to this unseemly disturbance, Smythe?" asked the Head, with polished politeness but iron determination.

Smythe breathed hard.

"I—I may have made a remark about young Nobody," he mumbled.

"Whom?"

"Young Nobody, sir."

"Do you mean the unhappy lad to whom I have granted the shelter of Rookwood until his family can be communicated with, Smythe?"

"Ye-es, sir."

"Indeed! And what was the remark?"

Smythe wriggled.

"If you do not explain fully, Smythe, I shall conclude that you have been speaking of that unhappy lad with malice and ill-nature, and have, in fact, deserved the punishment you have just received."

Smythe was silent.

"Very well," said the Head. "You may go, Smythe. You will take five hundred lines of Virgil. I shall speak to your Form-master."

"Yes, sir," gasped Smythe, and he made his escape.

The 2nd Chapter.
Under Jimmy's Protection.

Jimmy Silver & Co. stood silent. They were wondering uneasily how the affair was going to end. Adolphus Smythe's punishment was just, otherwise the Fistical Four would not have administered it. But they hardly expected a mere headmaster to have sense enough to see that. But the headmaster of Rookwood evidently possessed more sense than the heroes of the Fourth gave him credit for.

His glance at the chums was now quite benignant.

"I came here to speak to you, Silver," he said.

"Thank you, sir!" gasped Jimmy. "M-m-may I—I offer you a chair, sir?"

"You may, Silver."

Jimmy did.

Dr. Chisholm sat down, the four juniors respectfully standing, waiting for the verdict, as it were. But the Head made no further reference to the whacking of Smythe. That matter seemed to have passed from his mind.

"I came to speak to you about the boy you brought to Rookwood yesterday, Silver," said the Head. "Mr. Bootles has told me what you told him. You found this boy wandering on the heath?"

"Yes, sir."

"You interfered between him and a ruffianly man who appeared to be in pursuit of him?"

"Yes, sir."

"You did quite rightly in bringing him to the school," said Dr. Chisholm. "It was the proper step for you to take, Silver."

"Thank you, sir!" murmured Jimmy. "We—we thought you would approve, sir, in the—circumstances. And—and as the chap was so like Smythe to look at, we thought Smythe might know something about him."

"That has not proved to be the case, however?"

"No, sir. Smythe's never seen him before."

"Has Smythe spoken to this boy?" asked the Head.

"I—I think so, sir."

"Does he feel the same sympathy towards the unhappy lad that I believe is felt by most of the Rookwood boys?"

"I—I—I think he doesn't like him very much, sir," stammered Jimmy. "The chaps have been rather chipping old Smythe about it, sir—making out that the kid is a relation of his, as they're so alike."

"Why should Smythe mind that?" Jimmy coughed.

"Well, the chap is rather—rather tattered, sir; and—and Smythe thinks he's a tramp, or something."

"I see. However, the boy is no tramp," said the Head. "I have questioned him very closely, and the school doctor has examined him, and it is clear that he has been subjected to ill-usage and hardship, and the shock he has received has caused him to lose his memory. Dr. Bolton has hopes that he may recover completely when his health is restored, and he may then be able to tell us his name, and acquaint us with his story. Kindness and care are what he chiefly needs now; and for that reason I shall allow him to remain at Rookwood, and attend classes here, until some discovery can be made. I have learned from him that he has been at school before, and that he is quite able to take his place in a junior Form here. I am, therefore, placing him in the Fourth Form; and my

object in coming to see you in your study, Silver—"

The Head paused a moment.

"Yes, sir," murmured Jimmy.

"My object is to tell you that I think of placing him in this study for—"

"Oh, sir!"

"For the time that he remains at Rookwood. After consultation with your Form-master, Mr. Bootles, I am of opinion, Silver, that you may be relied upon to treat this unfortunate lad with kindness and consideration, and to afford him any protection he may need—"

"Oh!"

"The scene I witnessed when I arrived here, Silver, made me think for a moment that I was mistaken."

Jimmy was silent.

"But on consideration, Silver, it confirms me in my opinion. As the new boy is in a somewhat delicate state of health, Silver, he will benefit by the care of a thoughtful friend, and such, I think, you will be to him."

"I—I'll try, sir!" stammered Jimmy.

"Thank you, Silver!"

The Head rose.

He gave the Fistical Four a gracious smile as he quitted the study.

The Co. looked at one another.

They did not venture to speak till the Head's footsteps died away on the staircase at the other end of the passage. Then Arthur Edward Lovell made the remark:

"Well, I'm blowed!"

"The Head," said Raby sagely, "is a downy old bird. He sees things, you know. He knows as well as we do that Smythe is down on that poor kid, and was saying rotten things about him, and asked for a study whacking. And he knows that we won't let Smythe rag him."

Jimmy Silver nodded.

"All very well," granted Lovell. "But we don't want five in a study. I'm sorry for young Nobody, but we—"

"It will only be till his people are found, though," remarked Newcome.

"Yes, that's so."

"Dash it all, we're bound to stand by him," said Jimmy Silver. "I don't know what it's like for a chap to lose his memory, but it can't be pleasant. And he seems a decent kid, too."

"Oh, he's all right!" said Lovell.

"We'll make him welcome," said the captain of the Fourth. "We'll treat him well, and perhaps we can cure him among us. More likely than old Sawbones, I think."

"Yes, rather!"

The study door reopened, and the fat face of Tubby Muffin looked in, greatly excited.

"I say, what did the Head want?" chirruped Tubby.

"Oh, just dropped in for a chat!" answered Jimmy Silver carelessly.

"Gammon!"

"We're on rather chummy terms with the Head, you know," explained Arthur Edward Lovell. "We rather pull together."

"Look here, what did he want?" asked Tubby. "I thought it was a licking; but I didn't hear any howling."

"You'll hear some soon, if you don't take your face away!" said Lovell darkly.

"I say, young Nobody's coming up the passage," said Tubby, changing the topic. "I say, he's in Etons now, and looks quite respectable. Smythe's awfully wild at fellows saying he's a relation of his—"

My Dear Jack,
Have you heard about the wonderful offer in this week's Young Britain. There are 5 new serials, a topping Free Art Plate, and a big Competition with over 100 Prizes. The 1st Prize is £50 or a Motor Scooter. I'm going to try for it. Why don't you?
Yours,
Billy
P.S. Young Britain comes out on Thursdays, Price 2d.

The 3rd Chapter.
No Clue!

The next day the new junior took his place in the Fourth Form of Rookwood.

He was the object of much curiosity there.

Mr. Bootles was very kind to him; and all the fellows followed the Form-master's example in that respect. Even Higgs, the bully of the Fourth, moderated his usual manners and

customs a little. Even Peele and Gower were considerate.

The strange misfortune that had befallen the new junior touched the imagination of the Rookwood fellows. To lose one's memory was, they all agreed, a "jolly queer" thing, and not a pleasant one.

The new boy bore his misfortune with a quiet patience and fortitude which the juniors considered showed that he had plenty of pluck.

He fell into the ways of the Fourth at once.

It was clear that the Form work was not new to him; every item of it, though it came newly to him, awoke some chord of memory and was familiar at once.

That seemed to argue in favour of Lovell's theory; and the juniors agreed that if someone by chance mentioned his name before him, the new fellow would know it, and regain his lost identity.

Fifty fellows, at least, had asked him whether his name was Smythe, prompted by his resemblance to Smythe of the Shell. But his name was not Smythe; though he admitted that the name was familiar and that he must have heard it before. Somewhere in the hidden past he had known or heard of a Smythe.

And that confirmed the general impression that he must be a relation of Adolphus—an impression not shared by Adolphus himself, and which he indignantly repudiated.

In class that morning, Lovell sat beside the new junior, and interrupted lessons every now and then with some question such as:

"Is your name Jones—Robinson—Huggins—Buggins—Wiggins—Snooks?"

Arthur Edward seemed really inexhaustible.

But to each question the new junior responded only with a smile and a shake of the head.

"You are speaking, Lovell!" said Mr. Bootles, at last.

Lovell looked up.

"Only asking the new chap if his name is Staggers, sir," he answered, with an air of conscious virtue.

Mr. Bootles coughed.

"Kindly do not ask the new boy in class whether his name is Staggers, Lovell," he replied.

"No, sir! But it just occurred to me that his name may have been Hooker—"

"Really, Lovell—"

"Or Smike—"

"You will kindly let the subject drop till after lessons, Lovell!" said Mr. Bootles, with asperity. "Otherwise, I shall cane you."

"Oh!" said Lovell.

And he let the subject drop till after lessons; but as the Fourth went out of the Form-room that morning he tapped the new junior on the shoulder, and demanded:

"Is your name Asquith?"

And the new junior grinned and shook his head again.

"I believe I've heard the name," he answered; "but it's not mine."

"Oh, you've heard it?" exclaimed Lovell, thinking that he was on the scent.

"I think so."

"Well, then—"

"Fathead!" said Jimmy Silver. "There's some political johnnie of that name. I've seen it in the papers."

"Oh! So have I, now I come to think of it," admitted Lovell. "I say, kid, is your name Armitage?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Or Belknap?"

Jimmy Silver marched the new junior out into the quad before Lovell could get any further along the alphabet.

What to call the new junior, as he possessed no name of his own, was rather a puzzle at first; but the juniors fell into the habit of alluding to him as the "Kid"—excepting Adolphus Smythe, who referred to him with scorn as "Young Nobody."

The Kid looked very cheerful in the quad with the Fistical Four. Their kind friendship was very grateful and comforting to him.

The chums of the Fourth took him down to the footer-ground, and they made the discovery there that he could play footer. He showed considerable skill at the game, too, which was a gratifying discovery to his new friends.

As they came back to the School House for dinner they fell in with Smythe of the Shell, walking loftily with his friends Howard and Tracy.

Smythe gave the new junior a scornful glance.

He would probably have added scornful words, but he had not forgotten the lesson he had received in the end study the day before.

The Kid paused and glanced at him rather timidly, and then came up to speak to him.

"Excuse me, Smythe—" he began.

Smythe eyed him haughtily.

"Don't speak to me!" he snapped.

The new junior coloured painfully.

"I don't mean to give offence," he said quietly. "You must have noticed, Smythe, how like you are to me in looks."

"I haven't!"

"The other fellows have, then."

"What rot!"

"You cheeky ass, Smythe!" exclaimed Lovell hotly. "You know it's the case. You're as like as two peas, excepting that the Kid looks a decent chap, and you look a born idiot and snob!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Adolphus glared, and came very near punching Lovell's nose. Fortunately for him, he did not come too near that proceeding. Lovell's nose would not have suffered so much as Adolphus'.

"I think we must be related, as we are so alike, Smythe," said the new junior. "You know, I have lost my memory. If it is possible that you know something of my people—"

"I don't!"

"But—"

"And don't want to!" added Adolphus, with a sneer.

"You must have some relations

Reginald Muffin of the Classical Fourth felt angry and aggrieved.

He was standing before the cupboard door in Smythe's study—and the door was locked.

That afternoon, in the school shop, Tubby's greedy eyes had watched Smythe of the Shell as he laid out a whole ten-shilling note in purchases. And those purchases, evidently, had been placed in the study cupboard—to wait there till tea-time. Apparently Smythe was standing a tea that day on an unusual scale. And, to Tubby Muffin's delight, Smythe had come out of his study afterwards and walked down to the gates.

Reginald Muffin of the Classical Fourth was not likely to lose an opportunity like that!

He felt that Smythe deserved to be raided.

The sins of Smythe were many. He had cuffed Tubby Muffin after missing a cake only a few days before. Just as if Tubby was capable of bagging a fellow's cake! As a matter of fact, Tubby had bagged it; but he felt indignant at the suspicion, all the same. Smythe couldn't really know that he had bagged it, and he had no right to suspect Reginald Muffin without evidence. He was a suspicious beast.

Besides, he was a beast in many

ways! He smoked in his study—strictly against rules. He was down on the new kid, who was a harmless enough fellow and had lent Tubby a shilling. Taking one consideration with another, as the song says, Tubby felt that Smythe thoroughly deserved to have his feed raided.

Having satisfied himself on this point—it did not take him long—Reginald Muffin nipped into the study.

And then he found the cupboard locked, and the key gone!

"The suspicious rotter!" Tubby murmured, in unspeakable indignation. "Just as if he suspected that a fellow might be after his grub! Low, I call it!"

Tubby regarded the cupboard wistfully with greedy eyes, like a podgy Peri at the gate of Paradise.

He glanced at the poker. But burglary was rather too risky, on reflection. Yet to leave the feast there—waiting for Smythe's return—was impossible! Tubby could not drag himself away.

He was still contemplating the locked cupboard when footsteps came along to the study door. Along with them came the sound of a voice:

"This way!"

It was Smythe's voice!

"Oh, lor!" gasped Tubby.

Smythe had caught him—or would have caught him in another minute. But Tubby, in direful anticipation of what would happen if Smythe did catch him, made the most of that minute. One wild glance round the study, and then Tubby Muffin's plump form vanished under the table. That table was covered by a very handsome cover—everything in Smythe's study was handsome. The cover was long enough to hide most of the fat form of Muffin as he crouched under the table.

Muffin crouched there, with his knees drawn up to his chin, palpitating. If Smythe found him—

The door opened.

"Here you are, father."

Tubby Muffin groaned inwardly.

He had concluded when Adolphus Smythe started for the gates that the dandy of the Shell was going out. Instead of which, it was clear now that Adolphus had only gone to the gates to meet his father, evidently paying him a visit at Rookwood that afternoon.

Doubtless that unusually magnificent spread was in honour of the parental visit. And while the spread was being partaken of above, Tubby Muffin was to have the pleasure of crouching below, not even able to share the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table.

Tubby suppressed his feelings. He debated in his fat mind whether Smythe would refrain from kicking him because his father was present—and decided that Smythe wouldn't. So he sat tight.

There was a murmur of voices, but Tubby did not heed the conversation between Adolphus and his father. Generally he was inquisitive, but just now he was not interested—all his thoughts were of himself and his extremely uncomfortable position.

He wondered how long this was going to last. Worst of all, he was likely to be late for tea in his own study—besides missing Smythe's tuck, he would miss his own tea! The way of the transgressor was uncommonly hard this time.

A pair of boots, adorned with white spats, were planted close by Tubby, as Mr. Smythe sat down. Tubby just dodged them. A more elegant pair of shoes were planted on the other side of him, and Tubby just dodged them, too. He seemed likely to come to grief among the footgear of the Smythe family.

Smythe pater and Smythe filius were having tea, and the somewhat fat and wheezy voice of Smythe pater ran on almost incessantly. And Tubby's attention to the conversation was suddenly roused as Adolphus ejaculated:

"Ten thousand pounds?"

"Yes, my boy."

"That's a lot of money, father."

"It will be yours when you come of age, Adolphus," said Mr. Smythe, "provided that your cousin, Charles Clare, is not found."

"That's jolly odd, sir!" said Adolphus. "I've never seen this chap Clare, but I remember hearing his name mentioned. I thought he was at school somewhere."

"Quite so. He was at Lynton."

"Isn't he there now?"

"No. That is the very peculiar part of the story," said Mr. Smythe. "I came down specially to see you about the matter, Adolphus, as it appears clear now that your cousin will not be found. Doubtless he has met with some accident, and has died. Of course, I am grieved to think so."

"Oh, of course!"

"As I had never seen the boy, however, I find myself able to think of the misfortune with fortitude."

"H'm!"

"As you know, Adolphus, we have never been on terms of intimacy with the Clares. And when the boy was left an orphan, his father's will left him to the care of the headmaster of Lynton, instead of in my charge. Naturally, I was sorry, as the boy was very ill-provided for. I should, of course, have felt it my duty to take charge of him, as he was your mother's nephew. However, it was not required of me. The headmaster of Lynton, an old friend of Mr. Clare, accepted the charge cheerfully; and no communication passed between the boy and me."

"I think I remember hearin' something about it, father. Will you have another cup of tea?"

"Thank you! Now, from that time to this I confess that I have not given Charles Clare a thought," said Mr. Smythe. "His existence was recalled to me when your Uncle Richard, your mother's brother, died in South Africa, and his will was made known. By the terms of his will his money was to be equally divided between Charles Clare and yourself, Adolphus. He considered that your

elder brother was already sufficiently provided for. The sum amounts to ten thousand pounds."

"Ah!"

Tubby Muffin was listening with all his fat ears now.

And he thought he detected a rather curious change in the tone of Adolphus Smythe.

A very odd thought had come into Tubby's mind as he listened, and he divined that the same thought had occurred to Adolphus.

Mr. Smythe went on.

"Your Uncle Richard's will was made years before his death. It provided that his fortune should be equally divided between you and your cousin, Charles, if both were living; otherwise, the whole sum was to go to the survivor. If your cousin is not found, therefore, you will inherit the ten thousand pounds."

"He—he's supposed to be dead?"

"Certain legal steps will be necessary for his death to be presumed," said Mr. Smythe. "But that will be only a matter of form if he is not discovered, which seems now to be hopeless."

"But—but what can have happened to him?"

"That is a mystery. I have visited the headmaster of Lynton, and learned all that he could tell me. It appears that Charles Clare left the school one half-holiday to ramble in the woods. As he did not return he was searched for, and later the police were called in. The search, in fact, has never ceased."

"And he hasn't been found?"

"No. His cap was picked up on the beach at low-water, but no other clue was discovered. It is presumed that he was cut off by the tide at the foot of the cliffs and drowned. That is the only possible presumption in the circumstances, although the Lynton headmaster has not given up hope, and thinks it may be a case of kidnapping. That, of course, is nonsense. No one would be likely to kidnap the boy. There was no object."

"I—I suppose not."

"Not at all. But the headmaster attaches some importance to the fact that a ruffianly man, with a broken nose, was seen in the neighbourhood about the same time, and afterwards disappeared. It appears also that a flashily-dressed stranger was seen in the village, where he passed a number of counterfeit currency-notes. There is not the slightest shred of evidence to connect either with the missing boy; but the Lynton headmaster appears to have been attached to Clare, and he refuses to give up hope that he may yet be living."

"But—"

"But it will not be difficult to have his death legally presumed," said Mr. Smythe. "And your uncle's fortune will come to you when you are of age, Adolphus."

"Not before, father?"

"Certainly not!"

"I—I suppose I could borrow on it, though, if I wanted?"

"If you attempt to do anything of the kind, Adolphus, I shall request Dr. Chisholm to administer a very severe flogging to you!"

"I—I don't mean that, of course! I was only thinking—"

"Do not think anything of the kind, then!" said Mr. Smythe severely. "You have an ample allowance, Adolphus—more than sufficient, unless you are recklessly extravagant."

Smythe of the Shell did not answer that. It was not feasible to explain to his pompous parent that he was, as a matter of fact, recklessly extravagant, and that he owed money right and left. There were several gentlemen in the bookmaking and billiards-sharpening line who were anxious to see the colour of Adolphus' money.

Adolphus was not very bright in some things, but he knew that a fellow who was to receive ten thousand pounds in a few years need not be short of money.

Mr. Smythe rose from the table.

"I came down to acquaint you with your good-fortune, Adolphus," he said.

"Thank you, father! I'm jolly glad to hear it, of course. I—I suppose there's no danger of Clare turning up?"

"None at all, in my opinion!"

"He might have wandered away and—"

"Why should he?"

"Suppose—suppose he fell in with some—some ruffian, and got a knock on the head or something—"

"Then he would have been found."

"He might have lost his memory, or something like that—"

"What utter nonsense!"

"Of—of course! I was only thinking. But, of course, it's all right!"

said Adolphus. "Shall I come to the station with you, father?"



AWKWARD FOR TUBBY! Tubby Muffin made a dash under the table, and crouched there, with his knees drawn up to his chin, palpitating. If Smythe caught him in his study—Then the door opened, and Smythe's voice was heard. "Here you are, father!"

whose name is different from your own, I suppose?"

"Of course I have!"

"I may be one of them."

"Rot!"

"Will you tell me the names, so that I may possibly recognise my own?"

"No, I won't!" said Smythe. "You're no connection of mine! You're a rotten tramp, and you've shoved yourself in here under false pretences. I don't believe for a minute that you've lost your memory; I think it's all bunkum from beginning to end, and what you want here is most likely to steal the spoons! That's what I think! And you can put that in your pipe and smoke it, you nameless rotter!"

The conversation was not continued, for Jimmy Silver & Co. interrupted it at that point by collaring Adolphus Smythe and rubbing his nose in the quadrangle.

Then they went in to dinner with the Kid, leaving Adolphus spluttering frantically, in a frame of mind only suitable to an inhabitant of Hunland.

The 4th Chapter.

A Startling Discovery!

"Rotten!" grunted Tubby Muffin.

"My cab is waiting at the gates. You may come to the gates, my boy." Smythe pater and Smythe filius quitted the study. When they were gone Tubby Muffin rolled out from under the table, his fat face simply ablaze with excitement. "Phew!" murmured Tubby. "Ph-e-e-e-w!" And he rolled out of the study as soon as the coast was clear.

**The 5th Chapter.
A Rogue and a Fool!**

"Is your name Meggs?" Mr. Smythe heard Arthur Edward Lovell ask that question as he was walking down to the gates with his elegant younger son. He glanced at Lovell and his companion, the latter a very quiet-looking junior, with a rather sad cast of face. The clouded face broke into a smile as the junior shook his head. "Well, is it Wiggs, then?" "No." "Or Scoggins?" "No."

Arthur Edward Lovell was going on with his list as Mr. Smythe walked out of hearing, much to the relief of Adolphus. For reasons of his own, Adolphus of the Shell did not want his father to come into contact with the schoolboy without a memory.

Adolphus' face was dark with thought—not pleasant thought—as he walked down to the gates with his father.

There were strange and rather guilty reflections working in the mind of the dandy of the Shell.

"Is it known what Clare was like to-look at, father?" he asked, as the stout gentleman took his seat in the station cab.

"Yes, I was shown a photograph of him. He is like you, Adolphus."

"Oh!" "Quite like you," said Mr. Smythe. "Indeed, his photograph might be taken for yours. By the way, I noticed a boy just now who resembles you in the quadrangle. That is rather curious—"

"A new fellow here," said Adolphus carelessly.

"Oh! A Rookwood boy?"

"Yes. He's one of Jimmy Silver's set, in the end study."

Mr. Smythe nodded, and shook hands with his son, and the cab rolled away with him.

Adolphus stood staring after it for some time, his brows corrugated with deep thought.

Slowly he turned, and made his way back to the School House.

Lovell was still talking to the new junior, and Smythe, as he passed, heard him say:

"Is your name Dickens?"

Smythe stalked on.

Of all the fellows at Rookwood, in-

cluding the new boy, Adolphus Smythe was the only one who could have answered Lovell's questions. But he could have answered them now—and he knew it.

Tubby Muffin was lounging on the steps, and he watched Smythe come in, with a very curious grin on his fat face.

Smythe did not notice him. He went directly to his study, and shut the door. There, he did not sit down, and did not light a cigarette as usual. He paced to and fro in the study, his brows wrinkled, his lips twitching.

His thoughts would not rest. "I don't know for certain," he muttered. "I can't know! What I may happen to suspect isn't evidence. Besides, I hate the fellow!"

He set his lips. "He's a rotter! I've been ragged and chipped on his account. Hang him! I'm not bound to say anything. Besides, I don't know that it's the truth, either."

The study door opened, and Howard and Tracy came in. Adolphus spun round towards them with savage irritation.

"Pater gone?" yawned Tracy.

"Yes. Get out!" "Eh? Can't a chap come into his own study?" demanded Tracy, in astonishment.

"I—I've got a headache. Leave me alone for a bit—"

"Not specially anxious for your company, if you come to that," answered Tracy. "Didn't the pater tip you?"

"No."

"Old hunks! Come on, Howard! Adolphus has got 'em!"

And Adolphus' study mates cleared off, much to his relief. He did not want company just then.

He resumed his restless pacing of the study.

The path of honour and duty lay clearly before Smythe of the Shell, if he had chosen to see it. But he did not choose to see it; he was determined not to see it—determined, at least, not to follow it.

But that determination brought with it a sense of guilt that was extremely disconcerting.

Adolphus had plenty of petty sins upon his conscience; but hitherto nothing of such a serious nature. He was almost startled by the discovery of a vein of rascality in his nature, of which he had not before suspected the existence.

Tap! The door opened again, and the fat face of Reginald Muffin of the Fourth grinned in.

Smythe gave him a furious look. He was in no mood for Tubby Muffin just then.

"Get out, you fat rotter!" he shouted angrily.

Instead of getting out Reginald Muffin came in, and closed the door

after him. Smythe of the Shell advanced upon him with his fists clenched, and his eyes gleaming savagely.

"You fat rascal! What do you want here? I'll pitch you out, neck and crop—"

"Better not, old bean!" said Tubby. "It won't pay you."

There was a peculiar significance in Tubby's look and tone that struck Smythe. His hands dropped to his sides.

"What do you mean?" he muttered huskily.

Impossible as it seemed that the fat Classical could know anything of his affairs, Tubby's look sent a cold shiver of apprehension down Adolphus' back.

"I know what I mean," grinned Tubby.

Smythe's hands clenched again.

"I heard," explained Tubby calmly.

"Wh-a-at?"

"I was under the table." Smythe almost staggered.

"Under the table, while my father was here," he scarcely articulated.

Tubby Muffin nodded cheerfully.

"I heard every word, old top!" he remarked.

Adolphus Smythe sank helplessly into a chair. He could only stare at Tubby's fat, grinning face as if fascinated. Muffin knew. It was not only with his own conscience that Smythe of the Shell had to contend, then. There was Tubby Muffin's knowledge to be taken into account. For the moment, it was an overwhelming blow.

"You needn't pitch into me, old sport!" rattled on Tubby. "If you do, I'll go straight to Jimmy Silver and tell him. He, he, he!"

Adolphus breathed again.

"You haven't told?"

"No."

Smythe tried to pull himself together. He realised that he was giving himself away to the Paul Pry of Rookwood.

"There's nothing to tell, of course," he said.

"You seem jolly anxious about it, all the same," grinned Tubby. "Why didn't you tell your father about young Nobody?"

"Why should I?" muttered Smythe.

"You know who he is now," chuckled Tubby. "So do I."

"Nonsense!"

Tubby Muffin chortled.

"I tell you I heard all your pater said. Any fellow who heard him would have known at once who Nobody was. Dash it all! If Jimmy Silver knew you had a missing cousin, do you think he wouldn't tumble at once? All the fellows believe already that young Nobody is a relation of yours. But it's not known that you've got a cousin at school who's disappeared from school. Do

you think it isn't plain enough for a blind donkey to see?"

Adolphus panted, but did not reply.

It was plain enough, and he knew it.

"Why, you asked your pater yourself whether that chap Clare might have lost his memory!" said Tubby, grinning. "That shows what you were thinking."

"You spying cad!" hissed Smythe.

"Oh, draw it mild! I just happened to be under the table. I hope you don't mean to insinuate that I would listen!" exclaimed Tubby Muffin warmly. "If you mean that, Smythe, I'll get out at once! I've got something to tell Jimmy Silver that he might like to hear about his new pal."

Tubby turned to the door.

"Stay here!" gasped Adolphus.

"Certainly, old top, as you're so pressing!" said Tubby Muffin affably.

Smythe of the Shell looked at the fat Classical as if he would bite him.

"Of—of course, there's nothing in this," said Adolphus at last haltingly.

"Perhaps something of the kind may have crossed my mind, but, of course, there's nothing in it. But—but I don't want my affairs chattered all over Rookwood, and that nameless cad makin' out that he's a relation of mine."

"Of course, you don't!" chuckled Tubby Muffin. "You don't want to whack out ten thousand quids with him."

Adolphus winced.

"If you'll hold your tongue, Muffin—"

"My dear chap, if you ask me as a pal, of course, I sha'n't say anything!"

"I—I do, then?" gasped Adolphus.

Tubby waved a fat hand.

"All serene! Rely on me! I say, Smythe, old bean, could you lend me a quid?"

Then Adolphus understood. Without a word, he placed a pound-note in Reginald Muffin's fat hand. Reginald Muffin bestowed a fat wink on him, and rolled out of the study.

Adolphus Smythe was left alone with his thoughts. He did not find them pleasant.

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY!

Another grand, long complete story of the Chums of Rookwood, entitled:

"SMYTHE'S NEW PAL!"

By OWEN CONQUEST.

Order next week's issue of 'The Boys' Friend' in advance.

GOOD STORIES!

"Can one person unite opposite qualities in himself?"

"Certainly. Can't he be dense and transparent at the same time?"

Tramcar Passenger (angrily): "Look here! Do you think my feet were made for some idiot to stand on?"

Straphanger (coolly): "Yes; that is what I supposed!"

First Tramp: "It's no good calling at that house. Them people's vegetarians."

Second Tramp: "That so?"

First Tramp: "Yes; and they've got a dawg that ain't!"

Collector: "Why haven't you paid your gas bill?"

Consumer: "The light was so very poor I could not see to read the account."

"This cod is short weight, my dear."

"There! I knew that dealer had something fishy about his scales."

Bill (watching his master's guest): "Mighty bad shot, ain't he?"

Jim: "Yes; that's why I gave 'im blank cartridges."

He (loftily): "My mind is a book of mazy thoughts."

She (innocently): "Bound in calf!"

"But if your mother does odd jobs to support the family, what does your father do?"

"Oh, he gets the jobs for ma!"

Judge: "Why did you rob this man in broad daylight?"

Prisoner: "Well, you see, my engagements for night-work were all made."

"Every time I see my grandfather's wooden sword I want to go to war?"

"Well?"

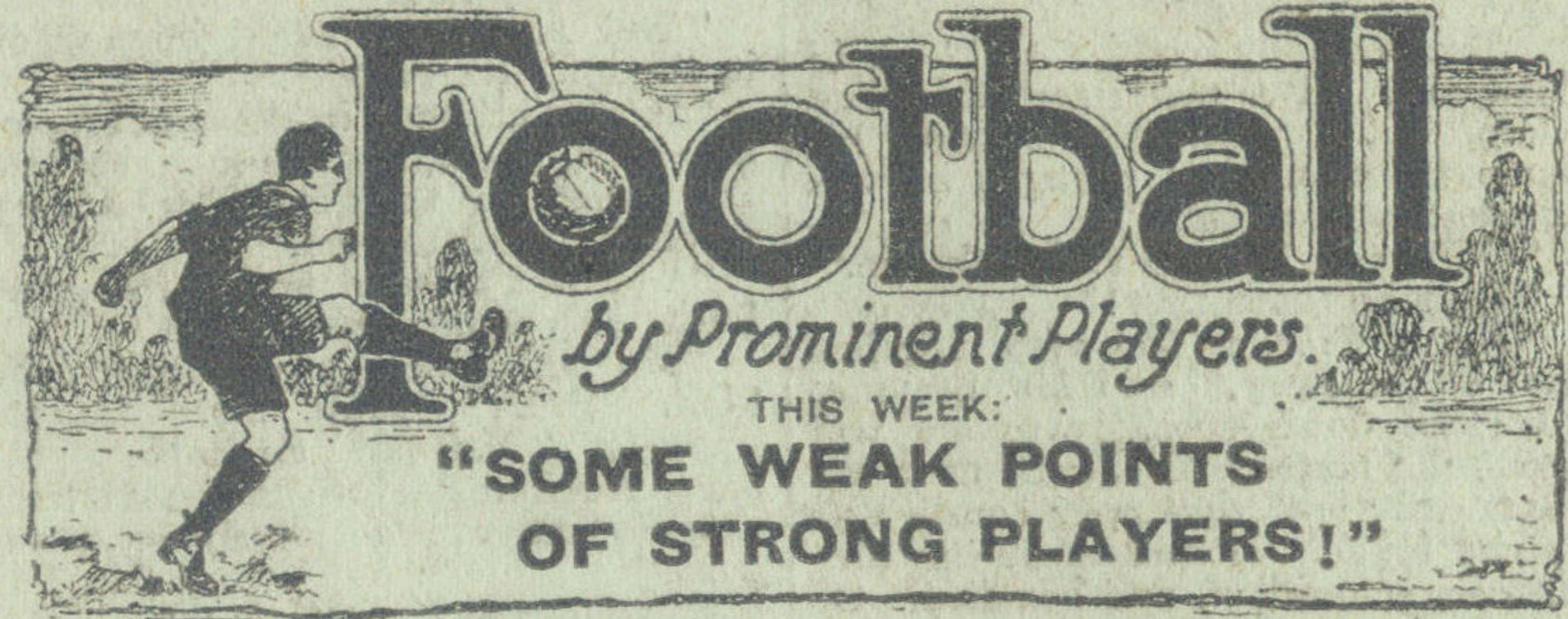
"But every time I notice grandfather's wooden leg I cool down!"

The Navy (to district health-officer): "Please, sir, I've come to give yer notice that my darter, age three, is sufferin' from measles, as required by Act of Parliament!"

"I saw Tom in the procession today. Is he a member of the band now?"

"No; the regular cornetist is unwell, and—"

"Ah, I see; merely substi-tooting—eh?"



"SOME WEAK POINTS OF STRONG PLAYERS!"

By JOHN WALKER.

The Popular Full-back of Middlesbrough and Scottish International Fame.

It is said of present-day football—and I think with a certain amount of truth—that what we are lacking in most of all is players of outstanding merit. In other words, we have plenty of players of average class, but the real tip-toppers are few.

Probably the advent of the war has had something to do with the present scarcity of tip-top men, for it must be remembered that in the years when football clubs would have been bringing youngsters along, developing them, and making them into first-class players, these youngsters were fighting for their country. And many of them, alas! fell in the great grim game of war.

So now we are at the reconstruction period again, when we must pursue with added eagerness the hunt for new and promising material, out of which we shall collect our International elevens of the future.

It occurs to me, therefore, that if I tell of some of the most prevalent weaknesses of strong players I may help some budding Internationals to avoid some pitfalls by the way. It is certainly a fact that in the course of my experience in first-class football I

have come across quite a lot of men who have only escaped being really great players because of some little weakness in their armour.

To start at the beginning, few of the non-playing people have a proper conception of the part played by the temperament in this matter of big football. There are really quite a lot of players in first-class football who, to put it in common language, haven't "the pluck of a mouse." This is obviously quite a big failing, and one might imagine that it would prove an absolute bar to first-class pretensions. But it does not always prove so. They manage to get on, even to reach first-class, but that habit of "funking it" does mark the dividing line between some men of average class and real outstanding merit.

Another big failing is the inability properly to control one's temper. I suppose if you are made without a lot of pluck it isn't very easy to be plucky on the field of play or elsewhere, but in the matter of temper I am quite sure that every youth ought to be able to overcome this failing by the exercise of will-power.

It is an undeniable fact that loss of

temper impairs a player's effectiveness very considerably. A player out of temper is a weak player; there's no getting away from that. These men who get "out of temper" on a slight provocation soon become known, too.

In my experience I have more than once come across cases where a particular player has set himself out to "ruffle" the rather hasty temper of another player, because the former has known full well that he had only to get the latter's "rag out" to reduce his effectiveness by about fifty per cent. No, on the football-field you must learn to control your temper.

Dirty work should not enter into the game; but if it does leave the low-down tricks to the other fellows; you just keep on playing the game, confident that the slide which goes on the principle of taking the man and leaving the ball is bound to lose in the long run. The game, and nothing but the game, must be the first motto of the player who hopes to win right to the top, and he must keep that motto steadily in front of him through fair weather and foul.

Then there is another weakness—very nearly a fatal one—which affects some individual players, and, worse luck, affects whole teams, and that is faint heart.

There are some men, and some teams, who seem to lose all heart if they are called upon to play an uphill game. So long as they score the first goal they are all right, and they go ahead like the proverbial house on fire. But if their opponents get in the first blow they are done—all the steam and fight seems to be knocked out of them.

If you want to rise in the football profession, get into the habit of playing well with your back to the wall—be a fighter. A football match is never lost till it is won. In other

words, a contest is often turned round by men and teams who have got the fighting spirit—who never know what it is to be beaten, and who will never acknowledge themselves beaten until the final whistle has gone.

Did space permit, I could tell you

JOHN WALKER.



Who contributes this splendid footer article especially for readers of the BOYS' FRIEND.

of wonderful matches in which I have taken part which would show you the value of "sticking it"—matches which have been snatched from the fire after they had seemed hopelessly lost. But without going into actual instances, you will know quite well what I mean. Cultivate the never-say-die fighting spirit; it is very often the difference between an ordinary and a great player.

It might be imagined that the use of both feet would be an indispensable qualification for a player in the first class. It isn't, and I could tell you of many men who have what we call "one leg and a swinger." They can use the left foot or the right, but they can't use both.

Don't make any mistake about it, though, they would be ever so much better players, and ever so much more useful to their side, if they could use both feet. Think of the occasions in the average match when, no matter what position you play in, it is an advantage to be able to kick with either foot. And if my young readers find themselves getting into the habit of using only one foot, I strongly advise them to pull themselves up and practise kicking with the other. That is the secret of all-round ability—practice.

Incidentally, in this word practice you have the secrets of the makings of all really great, as distinct from merely average, players. Strengthen the weak points about your play by practice.

If you are a half-back who can tackle well, but can't distribute the ball with equal success, practise passing along the ground. If you are a forward who can dribble into good scoring positions, but are weak in shooting, practise shooting. For it is as true to-day as ever it was that practice alone makes perfect.

Don't imagine that because you have played a few good games, or have climbed several stages up the ladder, that you know everything there is to know about the game. It is always possible to learn new tricks and to strengthen weak points.

John Walker

THE MISSING HEIR!



A Grand, Complete Story of
CHUNKY TODGERS'
Latest Escapade.
By **MARTIN CLIFFORD.**

The 1st Chapter.

Going to the Jews.

Chunky Todgers, of Cedar Creek School, trotted up the trail to Thompson on his fat little pony.

It was early afternoon; and the Cedar Creek fellows were at lessons in the lumber school; and Chunky Todgers certainly ought to have been at lessons also.

But more important matters than lessons were uppermost in Chunky's fat mind that afternoon.

Frank Richards & Co. missed him from his usual place in class; and Miss Meadows inquired after him severely, without eliciting any information. Chunky Todgers was playing truant; and not for that afternoon merely. Chunky had shaken the dust of Cedar Creek from his feet for good—as he believed, at all events.

There was a very determined expression upon Chunky's fat face as he rode into Main Street, in Thompson.

He was not going home; along with Cedar Creek School, Chunky had shaken the dust of the Todgers' homestead from his feet also. After that day the Thompson Valley was to see him no more.

He halted at the door of a little frame-built office in Main Street.

There was no name over the office; but the occupant was well known. It was Mr. Solomon Isaacs, a gentleman who did most of the financial business of the frontier town.

Mr. Isaacs sat in his dusky little office like a spider in his web; and his threshold was worn by the heavy boots of miners and cattlemen who were in hard-luck. Mr. Isaacs held mortgages on many a farm and homestead up and down the valley; he had a half-interest in a score of claims in the foothills; and a score of gold-seekers in the Sierra were financed on "grub-stakes" by the enterprising Mr. Isaacs. Mr. Isaacs did less work than any other citizen of Thompson, but he had more dollars than any dozen of the other citizens.

All sorts and conditions of visitors dropped in at Mr. Isaacs' office to "raise the wind"; but certainly Mr. Isaacs had never received so unexpected a visitor as he received that afternoon.

So far, he had not numbered a Cedar Creek schoolboy among his many and varied clients. Chunky Todgers was going to give him the chance to do so.

Chunky tethered his pony to the post outside, threw open the outer door, and rolled in. Mr. Isaacs' clerk, an exceedingly sharp young gentleman who hailed from Chicago, stared at him, while he picked his teeth with a pen.

"Waal?" said Mr. Isaacs' clerk, not at all impressed by the visitor. The fat schoolboy did not look like "business."

"Mr. Isaacs at home?" asked Chunky.

"Sure."

"I guess I want to see him."

"Message for him?" asked the sharp young man. "I guess you can give it to me."

Chunky shook his head.

"I want to see Mr. Isaacs on business," he explained.

The sharp young man smiled derisively.

"I guess you can want!" he answered. "You vamoose the ranch, and don't play any of your jokes hyer."

Chunky threw up his chin, and transixed the sharp young man with a haughty glance.

"None of your cheek!" he said.

"Hey?"

"Perhaps you don't know whom you're talking to," said Chunky.

"Fat Jack, of the Bonehouse?" inquired the sharp young man.

Chunky flushed with wrath. "You cheeky jay!" he exclaimed indignantly. "You stow your chin-wag! I'm going in."

And Chunky rolled across to the door of the inner office, tapped, and went in, leaving the sharp young man staring.

Mr. Isaacs looked up from a mass of papers at his roll-top desk. His black eyes glittered at Chunky over his glasses.

"Vat is it?" he inquired. "I am very busy! You should not come in like zis."

Chunky closed the door after him.

"The mystery of my birth is now revealed," he explained.

Mr. Isaacs gave a jump. He whirled round on his chair, and drew a ruler a little nearer, as if he thought that a weapon might be necessary.

Chunky had expected to impress Mr. Isaacs with his dramatic announcement; but, as a matter of fact, he only gave Mr. Isaacs the impression that he was wandering in his mind.

"My cootness!" said Mr. Isaacs.

"I'll explain," said Chunky Todgers cheerily. "Frank Richards showed me that ad. the other day. He guessed it was for me. Bob Law-

least of all to Mr. Isaacs, who was a shrewd man of business and had no use for romance.

Chunky rattled on cheerily, heedless of the business man's amazed stare.

"You see, it's come out now! My name is really Arlington, and I'm going home to claim the estates."

"My cootness!" said Mr. Isaacs again.

"But I require money!" added Chunky.

"Oh!"

"All the chaps in the books I've read go to the Jews when they're hard up," continued Chunky. "That's why I've come to you, Mr. Isaacs."

"My cootness!"

"Name your own figure," said Chunky generously. "I don't expect to be let off lightly. Ten per cent., hey?"

"Bless me!"

"Fifteen per cent., if you like," said Chunky Todgers recklessly. "I shall shortly be in possession of the estates—"

"Vat estates?"

"The Arlington estates, you know. I'm off to Montreal to see my lawyers—"

"My cootness!"

"I want a loan of about ten thousand dollars!"

Another jump from Mr. Isaacs. "I could do with one thousand!" added Chunky hastily.

"And vat security do you offer for tat loan?" inquired Mr. Isaacs, with deep sarcasm.

"Oh, I'll sign anything you like!"

"My cootness!"

"Well, what do you say?" asked Chunky.

"I advise you to go back to school, and not to be a silly young donkey!" said Mr. Isaacs.



LOST ON THE PLAINS!

The sound of the pony's hoofs drew the attention of the solitary camper, and to Chunky's horror, he caught the glimmer of a pistol-barrel in the firelight. "Who's there?" called out a sharp voice. "It's all right" gasped Chunky. "D-d-don't shoot! It's only me!"

"Business, Mr. Isaacs," he explained.

"I have no piziness with school-boys," said Mr. Isaacs.

"Just you look at that!" answered Chunky.

He laid a folded newspaper on the desk before the astonished Mr. Isaacs, indicating a marked paragraph with his fat forefinger.

Mr. Isaacs blinked at it. The paragraph was an advertisement, and it ran:

"IF MARMADUKE FITZROY ARLINGTON will communicate with Messrs. Have & Hookit, Montreal, he will hear of something to his advantage."

Mr. Isaacs read the advertisement, and blinked at Chunky Todgers.

"Vell?" he said.

"That's me!" announced Chunky.

"Vat!"

"Me!"

"I do not understand you," said Mr. Isaacs. "I have seen you before, and I tink your name is Todgers."

Chunky smiled.

less thought so, too. So did Beauclerc. You see, it's pretty clear. Hitherto I have been known by the name of Todgers."

"My cootness!"

Mr. Isaacs blinked.

He had seen Chunky about Thompson before, and knew his name; but he did not know that Chunky was a romantic youth who lived in the land of dreams. Chunky was the most regular customer of the circulating library at Gunten's store, and his favourite literary fodder was the romantic novel. Chunky had read about so many missing heirs that they had, so to speak, got into his head; with the result that the humorists of Cedar Creek had easily pulled his leg to the extent of making him believe that he was a missing heir himself.

True, Frank Richards & Co. had repented of their little joke when they found that Chunky was taking it seriously. But then it was too late. The idea was firmly fixed in Chunky's mind, and it was not to be eradicated.

But if it appeared probable to Chunky Todgers, it did not appear in the least probable to anybody else;

"What?"

"Jake!" called out Mr. Isaacs. The sharp young man looked in.

"Show dis boy out!"

"But—but—but, I say—" stammered Chunky, in angry astonishment.

"Goot-afternoon!"

The grinning Jake dropped a bony hand upon Chunky's shoulder, and led him out. He deposited Chunky in the street, and closed the door on him.

Chunky Todgers stood and blinked at the office door.

"Going to the Jews" was always the resource of the reckless heroes of his novels. Somehow, it did not seem to "pan out" in Chunky's own case. It was possible that Mr. Isaacs did not believe that he was in reality the heir of Arlington.

"Well, my word!" ejaculated Chunky, in disgust.

He had to get to Montreal to see his lawyers, and he had a quarter of a dollar in his pocket! Evidently a quarter of a dollar would not see him from British Columbia to Montreal.

On the very verge of fortune, Chunky was baffled by the shortness of cash—

a shortage he had often experienced before, though not so seriously. What was to be done now?

Chunky rolled into Gunten's store to expend the quarter on maple sugar, and to reflect upon the situation as he devoured it.

The 2nd Chapter.

Frank Richards & Co. Chip In!

"Chunky!"

"Here he is!"

"Chunky, you ass!"

Frank Richards & Co. rode into Main Street as Chunky Todgers emerged from Gunten's store.

The chums of Cedar Creek jumped down at once and surrounded him.

"Hallo, you fellows!" said Chunky. "I guess I'm glad to see you. I've been trying to raise the wind for my journey—"

"You silly jay!" roared Bob Lawless.

"Miss Meadows was waxy about your missing school!" said Vere Beauclerc.

Chunky Todgers sniffed. School seemed to him a very small matter just then.

"Blow school!" he answered.

"You'll get into a row!" said Frank Richards.

"Rot! I'm off to Montreal!" answered Chunky calmly. "I sha'n't ever see Cedar Creek again!"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Frank.

"I guess I should be half-way to Kamloops by this time if I could have raised the wind," said Chunky Todgers. "Old Isaacs refused to lend me any money on my expectations!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've tried to make a raise out of old Gunten, but he didn't see it."

"On your expectations?" gasped Bob.

"Yep!"

"Oh, great gophers!"

"Now, you galoots ought to stand by a chap!" said Chunky Todgers persuasively. "I'll remember you when I'm home. I'll have you all at the castle next holiday!"

"What castle?" shrieked Frank Richards.

"The Arlington mansion, I mean."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I dare say I could do it on fifty dollars," said Chunky. "You ought to be jolly glad of the chance of helping a long-lost nobleman to come into his title and estates!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you're only going to cackle, you can go and chop chips!" exclaimed Chunky indignantly. "I suppose it's jealousy. I must say I'm surprised at it in you. I thought better of you!"

"Chunky, old man," said Frank Richards, trying to be serious. "don't play the goat! We showed you that advertisement for a lark—"

"Rats!"

"You know jolly well that you're Joe Todgers!" roared Bob Lawless.

Chunky shook his head.

"Nothing of the kind. You said at first that the advertisement was for me."

"We were only pulling your leg, you jay!"

"Rot! You've changed your tune since, but that's only jealousy!" said Chunky calmly. "I'm going to Montreal to see my lawyers. Will you lend me some money?"

"No jolly fear!"

"Then I'm going, anyway!"

Chunky climbed on his fat pony, and the chums of Cedar Creek stared at him and at one another.

That Chunky Todgers was nearly every kind of an ass, they knew already; but it was a surprise to them that he was an ass to this extent.

But the fact was that his present delusion was a realisation of Chunky's day-dreams, and nothing would have induced him to part with it.

"Where are you going now?" exclaimed Beauclerc.

"Kamloops," answered Chunky. "I can ride there. I guess I can sell my horse for enough to pay my fare on the cars to Montreal."

"Oh dear!"

Bob Lawless gave a snort.

"You're jolly well not!" he exclaimed. "You're going home, Chunky."

"I guess I can do as I like!"

"Then your guesser is off the mark. You're going home, and we're going to see that you do."

And Bob Lawless caught hold of Chunky's rein.

Chunky Todgers crimsoned with wrath.

The noble blood of imaginary Arlingtons boiled in his veins.

"Unhand me!" he exclaimed.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Instead of unhanding him, Bob Lawless kept hold of the rein, and mounted his own horse.

"Come on, you chaps!" he said.



THE MISSING HEIR!

(Continued from the previous page.)

There was little doubt that the attempt was due to the machinations of some scheming plotter—no doubt a wicked uncle. And if Mr. Todgers was warned of his intention, doubtless he would chip in also,

and perhaps more effectively, Chunky repudiated the bare idea that that stout and quite commonplace gentleman was really his father. At first he had been disposed to believe that Mr. Todgers was a faithful old retainer who had brought the heir of Arlington to the Canadian West to save his life from wicked machinations. But now he was convinced that Mr. Todgers was a tool, or myrmidon, of his supposed wicked uncle; it was, in fact, as clear as daylight to Chunky.

So he made the best speed he could on the southward trail, to place himself beyond the reach of pursuit.

But Chunky was very sleepy, and he was very hungry. He thought almost as much of the supper-table at the Todgers' homestead as of the marble halls of the Arlingtons.

Indeed, he was rapidly getting into the state when he would have exchanged any number of marble balls for a solid corn-cake and a slice of cold beef.

To add to his difficulties, he found that he was not sure of the way, once he was beyond the precincts of Thompson.

He knew that he had to pass through Silver Creek to get on to the Kamloops trail; but it was being borne in upon his dismayed mind that he had missed the trail to Silver Creek.

He looked for the ruts of the post-wagon in the prairie; but he did not find them, which showed plainly enough that he was off the trail.

The discovery that he had missed the way was a crushing blow.

He stared round him in the deep gloom, in the hope of seeing the light of some lonely farmhouse; but there was no light to be seen.

He was alone on the plain, with only a few leafless trees nodding through the gloom to keep him company.

"Oh dear!" said Chunky. He spent an hour or two in riding to and fro, seeking the trail, but without finding it. At the end of that time he had to acknowledge that he was lost.

He had long ago munched the last chunk of maple-sugar from his pocket, and he was ferociously hungry, and he was almost nodding in his saddle.

Suddenly he uttered a joyful exclamation.

A flickering light winked up in the darkness in the distance. "Thank goodness!" ejaculated Chunky.

He turned his pony joyfully in the direction of the light. He hoped that it came from some building where he could obtain shelter for the night; but as he drew nearer he saw that it was a fire on the open plain. Some late traveller was camping there.

Chunky's pace slackened as he drew nearer to the fire.

It glowed and blazed close beside a big tree that stood lonely in the plain, on the bank of a little creek. He could see a moving figure in the light, apparently engaged in cooking a meal.

Thoughts of robbers flashed through Chunky's uneasy mind. It would be a deplorable ending to his adventure if he happened upon a horse-thief, and was left dismounted on the wide prairie.

But the desire to see a human being in that wide solitude, and, above all, the desire to share a supper, urged Chunky on.

He drew nearer to the fire. The sound of his pony's hoofs on the plain drew the attention of the camper, who turned suddenly from the fire. To Chunky's horror, he caught the glimmer of a pistol-barrel in the freelight.

"Who's there?" called out a sharp voice.

"It's all right!" gasped Chunky. "D-d-don't shoot! It's all right—only me."

"Come and show yourself."

"I'm c-c-coming!"

The sight of the pistol would have driven Chunky to flight, in spite of his desire to share the traveller's supper, but it was too late now. He ambled on to the camp.

As he halted by the fire he blinked uneasily at the camper.

He saw a young man, rather tall and well-formed, with a face that

had once been handsome, but which showed only too plainly the traces of hard and reckless living.

It was not a friendly face. Two sharp, suspicious eyes scanned the scared and hapless Chunky.

Then the young man grinned slightly, and returned the revolver to his hip-pocket.

"All serene," he said. "I guess you're harmless."

"Quite!" gasped Chunky.

"Lost your way?"

"Yep."

"Young idiot!" said the camper, turning back to the fire.

There was a savoury scent of frying bacon, and it tickled Chunky's nostrils in an almost agonising manner.

"I-I say—" he began.

"Well?"

"Can I camp here?"

The young man glanced at him again.

"You can if you like, I guess," he said.

"I-I-I'm hungry."

"Plenty for two," said the camper.

"I say, you're the real white article," said Chunky Todgers gratefully, and all his doubts of the stranger vanished.

The stranger laughed, a laugh that Chunky did not quite like. However, he was too hungry to think much about his companion. When the bacon was finished, he sat down to supper with his entertainer.

The fire burned low, and Chunky made a movement to put some more brushwood on it. His companion stopped him.

"Let it alone!" he said curtly.

"It's cold," hinted Chunky.

"Let it alone, I tell you!"

"Oh, all right!"

It occurred to Chunky that the man was not anxious for the fire to reveal his camp; and indeed, there was a certain stealthiness about the stranger that revived Chunky's uneasiness, now that his appetite was relieved and he had leisure to observe.

The fire died low.

"I-I guess I'll be getting on," murmured Chunky. "Thank you very much for the supper."

"Didn't you want to camp here?" asked the stranger, with a quick, suspicious look.

"I-I-I guess—"

"Stay where you are."

"Oh! I-I-I guess I'd rather be getting on—"

"You heard what I said."

"Oh! All—all right!" gasped Chunky.

And he stayed.

The 4th Chapter. Marmaduke!

Chunky Todgers was not feeling happy.

His meeting with the lonely camper on the prairie had been a boon, and a blessing; he had had a good supper. But he began to realise that he might have to pay dearly for that supper.

He wondered whether the stranger was a horse-thief or a road-agent; or what he was; it was pretty clear that there was something about him that would not bear the light.

He sat with his back to the tree-trunk, smoking a pipe, after supper, and Chunky watched him uneasily.

In the dying light of the fire he could see the man's face dimly; but not so dimly that he could not read in it the man's hard, desperate character. The man looked like a horse-thief in hard luck, though it was plain that he had once been something better. And his suspicious watchfulness seemed to hint that at the present moment he was something of a fugitive. His horse, tethered close at hand, was a valuable animal, with expensive trappings not much in keeping with the man's rough attire; and Chunky could not help guessing that that horse was probably very far from its real owner. He wondered whether his own pony was going to keep it company the next day; or rather, he felt pretty certain of it. Hospitality at a horse-thief's camp-fire had to be paid for.

But there was no help for Chunky now; he had landed himself in the spider's web, and he had to stay. He hardly dared make a movement under the suspicious eyes that watched him through the tobacco smoke.

"Where do you come from?" the stranger asked, breaking a long silence that had oppressed Chunky Todgers since supper. Sleepy as he was, Chunky was not inclined to sleep under those watchful eyes.

"Thompson!" answered Chunky, with a start.

"You're a good many miles from Thompson now."

"I-I'm going to Kamloops."

"Oh gad!"

That ejaculation surprised Chunky a little. Folk in the Thompson Valley did not say "Oh gad!" It smacked of the Old Country.

"You're English?" asked Chunky.

"Yes." The man knitted his brows. "Don't ask questions. So you're going to Kamloops? You'd better turn back to Thompson. You can walk it in the morning. You can't get to Kamloops on foot."

"I-I-I've got my pony—"

"You won't have a pony to-morrow," answered the stranger briefly.

"Oh dear!"

There was another silence.

"I-I say—" began Chunky.

Todgers again. "I-I-I want to get to Kamloops to-morrow—it's important. I-I'm going east to claim a fortune. I guess I can make it worth your while to show me the way to Kamloops."

The man stared at him.

"What the thunder do you mean?" he snapped.

Chunky felt in his pocket for the Kamloops paper.

He nourished a hope that when the horse-thief knew who he was, and what glorious prospects awaited him, he would change his intentions. Chunky was prepared to make him generous promises.

"What's that?"

"Look!" said Chunky.

He stirred the dying fire, and pointed out the marked paragraph.

The horse-thief glanced at it carelessly.

Then he gave a sudden start.

To Chunky's amazement, he snatched the paper from his hand, and fairly devoured the paragraph, reading it over and over again to himself and muttering indistinctly.

"By gad!" The astonished Chunky caught the words. "By gad! Of all the queer chances—by gad!"

"You understand it?" asked Chunky. "You see what that means."

The man stared at him.

"Ay, I guess so!" he answered.

"How the thunder did you know that this would interest me?"

"I-I didn't; but, you see, I'm the chap."

"What?"

"I'm the chap mentioned there!" exclaimed Chunky, with some elation. It was evident that he had made some impression upon the horse-thief. "I'm going to Montreal to see the lawyers."

"Oh gad!"

"When I come into my estates, I'll reward you, if you help me as far as Kamloops," said Chunky Todgers.

The man stared at him blankly.

"Are you mad?" he demanded.

"Nunno."

"Then what the thunder do you mean by saying that you're the chap advertised for in this paper?" demanded the man.

"I-I am, you know," stammered Chunky. "I-I'll explain. You see, from my very earliest days, I've had a firm belief that I was not what I seemed—"

"What?"

"I knew there was a mystery attached to my birth," said Chunky. "I knew I wasn't a Todgers. Anybody could tell it by my appearance. Don't you think so?"

The man only stared.

"Frank Richards showed me that advertisement," rattled on Chunky. "He thought I was the chap. I knew it must be so. You see, it explains everything."

Still the man stared blankly.

"Do you read novels, young 'un?" he asked suddenly.

"Yep."

"About missing heirs and so forth?" inquired the stranger. And to Chunky's surprise, he saw that the horse-thief was grinning.

"Yep! I read every blessed book they get in Gunten's circulating library," said Chunky. "I'm keen on it, you know. I guess I've learned a lot of life from it."

"The sooner you unlearn it the better for you, I guess," grinned the stranger. "So you've started off from home in the belief that you're the Marmaduke Fitzroy Arlington advertised for in this paper?"

"Correct!"

"You young idiot!"

"Oh, I say!" murmured Chunky.

"You'd better take the trail straight back home," said the man. "I'll see you start in the morning. And you can go on your pony."

"But I-I—"

"I guess I sha'n't want to rope in that critter now," said the horse-thief. "Not since I've seen this paper. I guess I wish I'd seen it before, and I'm much obliged to you, you silly young idiot!"

Chunky stared at him. He could not make head or tail of the horse-thief's cryptic remarks. What difference seeing the paper could have made to him, Chunky could not even guess.

"I-I say, I don't savvy!" gasped Chunky. "I tell you I'm the chap advertised for there—honest Injun—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the horse-thief. "The man advertised for here is thirty years old."

Chunky jumped.

"You—you know him?" he stammered.

"As well as I know myself."

"Oh dear!" gasped Chunky.

Todgers. "I—I supposed—I—I thought—are you sure—"

Chunky's air-castles were toppling over. If Marmaduke Fitzroy Arlington was thirty years old, certainly Chunky Todgers could not possibly be Marmaduke. The horse-thief chuckled as he watched Chunky's fat, dismayed face.

"But—but look here, p'raps you're mistaken," stammered Chunky. "What do you know about Arlington, anyhow?"

The horse-thief grinned. "I know he left England ten years ago, after getting into trouble," he answered, "and this advertisement can only mean that his people are willing to give him another chance. And I guess he's going to take it. I guess he's fed up with horse-stealing in the West, and I reckon he'll be glad to get fairly out of reach of the sheriffs by taking the cars East. Savvy now?"

Chunky leapt to his feet.

"You—"

The horse-thief nodded.

"That's it!" he answered coolly. "I guess I've never looked at the papers, or I might have seen this before. You've done me a good turn, and I'm glad you happened along, you young ass—and I guess I'll let you keep your pony. I've enough dust to see me through to Montreal—which is lucky for you. Savvy now?"

Chunky Todgers could not reply.

He could only stand and stare at Marmaduke Fitzroy Arlington; while his air-castles tumbled in ruins round him.

The 5th Chapter. Chunky's Return.

The next day a fat and weary youth rode into Thompson town on a fat and weary pony.

Chunky Todgers had returned. Southward in the valley, a jubilant horse-thief was riding for Kamloops on a stolen horse; on his way to take the cars for Montreal, and call upon Messrs. Have & Hookit to hear something to his advantage.

Chunky's adventure had not been without result—so far as the genuine Marmaduke Fitzroy Arlington was concerned. That reckless wastrel had certainly heard of something to his advantage—through Chunky. But the hapless romancer of Cedar Creek rode wearily homeward in a sadly deflated state.

It was high noon when he arrived at the Todgers' homestead; where there was a very painful explanation with Mr. Todgers.

Chunky did not go into details—he did not dare to acquaint Mr. Todgers with the fact that he had suspected him of being a myrmidon. For it was only too clear now, even to Chunky, that he had been dreaming dreams; that he really was the son of the Western farmer, and not of a missing marquis; and that his name really was Joseph Todgers—merely that and nothing more.

The loss of his romance was more painful to poor Chunky than the family cowhide—though he found that painful enough.

That afternoon he reappeared at Cedar Creek; where there was another painful explanation with Miss Meadows.

Frank Richards & Co. were glad enough to see him back; but it was some time before Chunky confided to them how his remarkable adventure had ended. And instead of receiving sympathy, he found that his explanation was received only with hilarious chuckles.

The Co. advised him to give up Gunten's circulating library, and to give missing heirs and rightful marquis a wide berth, which really was good advice. But Chunky did not take it. His dream had been shattered; but he found comfort in the adventures of lost Sir Charles and Lady Gwendolins.

THE END.

THERE IS ANOTHER SPLENDID BACKWOODS STORY NEXT MONDAY,

entitled:

"Frank Richards' Ghost!"

Don't Miss It.