# "THE MINERS' ELEVEN!"-Our Grand New Football Yarn Starts To-day!

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[Week Ending December 18th, 1920.

# THE BOY WITH FIFTY MILLIONS! VICTOR NELSON.



A Grand Story of the Adventures of a Boy Multi-Millionaire.

#### Don Darrel's Awful Peril.

The man who was dressed scholastic robes and disguised so like the kindly old Head of Eaglehurst School rightened his grip, and a great darkness descended upon the unfortunate Don Darrel.

The Boy with Fifty Millions ocased to struggle, and his body relaxed in

the impostor's clutches.

"This time there will be no mistakes made, you little whelp!" the man muttered, enatching up the unconscious boy, and swinging his hmp form over his shoulder. You are form over his shouner, bound on a trip to Kingdom Come, and our friend. Mr. Randolph Charmey, will co. for your and our friend. Gurney, will co-millions!"

Again he chuckled silently, as he moved with his burden towards the window.

Perhaps he was already anticipating what he would do with his share of the huge reward Gurney had pro-mised his gang when Don Darrel was

There is such a thing as "counting one's chickens" but certainly it seemed that nothing could save Don

True, in the dormitory, the whole Fifth Form was awake. But the juniors merely waited for Don Darrel to return to hear what had happened when he reached the study with the supposed Head. They little guessed that their comrade's life was hanging by a thread.

South, Losely, and Frank Philips had at first thought of following to

so uncarthly an hour. It would, thought the be time in the and dumped incereme openly admit an equal guilt, and request that stand in whatever they might

sort of wigging lay ahead. Thus, there was no hope for Don in

this direction. The bogus schoolmaster raised the window, and, taking an electric torch from his pocket, he flashed it thrice.

Almost immediately two dark orms, carrying between them a long ladder that would reach up to the window, detached themselves from the

The ladder was reared against the sill, and, throwing out his leg, the impostor clambered on to it, with Don still lying over his shoulder.

A few seconds later he joined the pair in the quad.

and damped unceremonously in the

A rug was flung over him, com-pletely hiding him from view, the slowly-halted leader of the trio took his place at the wheel, and, as tho other two sprang into the body of the car after Don, it glided away into the

For mile upon mile the motor journeyed, Captain Raymond showing that he was not only an expert chauffeur, but one who was open to take risks as long as he attained speed.

It must have thundered on through the night for fully half an hour, travelling into a wild and unpopulated part of the country. Captain Raymond slackened the breaknesk page only when they suddenly rounded a bend in the road, and ame in sight of a spot that was near their destina-

South. Losely, and Frank Philips had at first thought of following to the study, and frankly confessing that they were as much to blame for the organising of the "feed" as Don,

They had felt that it would not be "cricket" to allow him to bear the brunt of the Head's displeasure.

They had felt that it would not be brunt of the Head's displeasure.

The ladders but at the thought the boy made use of them to leave the place and come here. The real headmuster "-he chuckled cyrlly--"might find it difficult to convince people that it was not be who ordered the lad to leave the dormitory when his death is meaned into but that will be his look out, not ours. You did exceedingly well, Carson!"

· The man addresser was he who had made-up to look so the Dr. Harding, During the journey the car he had removed his flowing gown and re-placed his morrar-board with a dark

He had removed his wig and venerable side whiskers, rubbing into them some eccos-butter to loosen the grip of the spirit-gum that had adhered the false hair to his skin. More cocosfalse hair to his skin. More butter, generously applied, L: away all other traces of his recent dis-

He smiled grindy.

He smiled granty,
"Yes, I flatter mixelf all went
well," he said, with slight American
accent he had been able to master
when playing his part, "But it was
"the ald any." when playing his part. "But it we not hard to impersonate the old guy.

"Not for you, perhaps, though it would have puzzled me of our greatest actor, to me age . Carson, Captain Raymond returned. stage lost a master when on missed taking it. I'm thinking."

A smile flickered for a moment over

Julian Carson's pale, lean face, but it

was quickly gone. He was too old a crook to suffer from a swollen head. Years ago he had been an honest mun, and employed in a New York bank. But temptation had come. He had made a fatal slip, and had to fly the country for a while, with a result that he had sunk to a life of crime. and, finally, fallen in with the gang of crooks controlled by the dare-devil adventurer and villain, whom the police of America, England, and Europe had come to know as Captain Raymond.

The plot against Don Darrel that had been curried out to-night had been maturing for several days. The ex-bushranger had obtained a plan of the school, which appeared in its prospectus, and Carson had very carefully studied the positions of the various rooms, dormitories, and studies.

Disguised as a peddlar, another and lesser member of the band had gone to the side door of the school—the servant's entrance-and, getting rid for a few moments of a housemaid, to whom he was pretending he wished to sell cheap jewellery, he had contrived to obtain a wax impression of the key.

In the meantime, Carson had been hovering in the school's vicinity, and, as well as surreptitiously taking a snapshot of Dr. Harding, he had carefully studied his appearance, and mannerisms.

Once the gang had had made a duplicate key of the side door, the necessary robe, etc., and wig and false hair had been secured, it remained only for Carson to watch for his opportunity to trap Don Darrel.

It had come far sooner than any of the scoundrels had dered to hope. Don had played into their hands when he had organised his "feed" in the dormitory; and the crooks, who had been hidden, but not far away. saw him come into the road to watch the fun between Briggs and Mr.

From the shorter ladder, which had been on the opposite side of the quad wall, one of the scoundrels had seen Don, South, Losely, and Philips pass the hampers into the window of the dormitory, and afterwards follow themselves

It had been suggested then that a secret feast was in progress, and Car-son had hit upon the idea of boldly entering the school, passing himself off as the Head in the half-light, and entiring Don to the roal Dr. Harding's study.

In spite of having studied the plan of the school, he had felt very doubt-ful as to exactly where the doctor's sanctum lay, but he had got over this difficulty by curtly instructing his in-tended victim to "Lead the way!"

The road over the waste of gorse-bushes and grass rose abruptly. When the car glided up the incline, in the hollow of the farther side could be seen a bleak, ivy-covered house, standing in extensive grounds, and, beyond, half a mile in its rear, was the coast and the moonlit sea.

It was into the grounds of this mansion for it was large enough to be called that—that Captain Raymond guided the motor-car, after Carson had sprung down and unlocked the drive gutes.

The people of the few outlying cottages and farms in the neighbour-hood would have told you, had you made inquiries, that the grim-looking place was unoccupied.

And, until Captain Raymond had secretly rented it from the ostate agents in Lowestoft, who had it on heir books, such had been the case for more yours than most people who knew it could remember.

A mysterious murder had occurred there a cery long time ago, and ever since the house had had the reputa-

tion of being haunted.

Whether there was any truth in the eeric tales told of it does not effect. our story. Cortainly since Captain Raymond and his gang had taken up their residence there, they had heard nothing of the weird sounds, such as grosning and sighing, that local people told of with hushed voices.

The sound of the car's arrival was evidently heard by other members of the band, for a light showed in the hall, the front door was opened, and three men emerged on to the steps.

The car continued on past the house, and was finally halted at the edge of a large stretch of grass that had pro-bably formed tennis courts in the dim and distant past.

Captain Raymond, Carson, and the third man, whose swarthy skin, dark bair and moustache made him recognisable as the Spaniard who had loosed the tiger upon Don Darrel on the night of the lad's performance in the circus, alighted and turned to meet the others who had come from the house.

They were respectively the China-man, Li Fang, Randolph Gurney, and

a heavily-built man in blue mechanic's

a heavily-built man in blue mechanic's overalls whom Captain Raymond addressed as Jones.

"You've got him?" this man asked, as he came forward; and then, as the leader of the distardly combine answored in the affirmative, "Bravo! I have her all ready for flight."

"Get her out, then," Captain Raymond ordered. "The sooner it is over the better, for we can make ourselves scarce. For all we know, his continued absence from the dormitory may have become known to some of may have become known to some of the masters, and there'll be the deuce

the masters, and there it be the deuce to pay back at the school."
One and all turned to what had once been a pavilion. Its flooring and veranda were completely missing, and over its yawning front were hung long beaut templies. long, heavy tarpaulins.

There were dragged aside, and as the moonlight streamed into the partially ruined structure, a small monoplane was revealed standing

Between them the men ran the machine out on to the grass, and Captain Raymond signed towards the car. Understanding, Carson and the Chinaman went to it and brought the still unconscious form of Don Darrel from where it had lain in the tonneau. He was laid upon the grass beside the monoplane, and the Chinaman began to unwind a length of thin but power-

to unwind a length of thin but powerful cord from about his waist.

"Stop! There must be no tying
him up!" Randolph Gurney said,
speaking for the first time.

"What's that? No, no, Li Fang!"
Captain Raymond agreed, as he
caught sight of the cords in the
Celestial's yellow hands. "You fool!
It would spoil everything if he were
found with his arms bound! It has

found with his arms bound! It has got to look like an accident."
"Will it, do you think?" Randolph Gurney questioned, wiping away the beads of perspiration that had started to his brow, as he was gripped with sudden fear at the realisation of the terrible thing they contemplated.

"Of course it will, my friend !" Captain Raymond assured him, speaking quite coolly. "We shall place him in the cockpit of the plane and set it in motion By an electrical device attached to a clock-like arrangement, which is an invention of Jones here, the lifting planes will be elevated at precisely the right moment, and the machine will rise.

"She would continue to rise for an indefinite period but for the fact that her petrol tank has purposely been made to leak. Even as she is running along the grass and a moment later rising, her petrol will be dripping from the hole in her tank whence a stopper has been unscrewed.

"You see, it is all quite simple, though clever, guess you'll admit. When the petrol is exhausted, and its escape has been so timed that it will not last long, the monoplane must fall like a stone, and Don Darrel will be

It will be thought that he was monkeying with the machine, and, not understanding it, crashed with it.

The only mystery there will be is where the monoplane came from, and who is its owner; but, with a boy with his vast wealth, anything is possible, and it will probably be concluded that he secretly purchased it and came to disaster in making a

Randolph Gurney nodded, and

turned away, shuddering.

"All right," he said, "get it over!
I'll pay you the two millions I have promised when his death is confirmed and I come into his fortune; but I do not wish to see."

He turned upon his heels and went

He turned upon his heels and went quickly away towards the house.

"Oh, yes, my friend, you'll pay the two millions right enough." Captain Raymond sneered; and the others laughed. "We'll have a mighty lot more out of you, too, before we have finished with you! Is the rudder fastened so that the machine cannot appears Sath?" sworve. Seth ?"

The mechanic, Jones, nodded. a sign from Captain Raymond, the Spanish-looking man and Li Fang picked up Don Darrel and, climbing upon the muchine, seated his uncon-scious form in the cockpit.

"Ready!" Jones exclaimed, as the two leapt down, and he drew the plug from the doctored petrol-tank.

Captain Raymond gave the pro-peller a twist, and leapt clear. The engine burst into a roaring crackle, the machine quivered from stem to stern, then started forward.

Quickly gathering speed, it went loping away over the grass like a thing of life. Anxiously, the five men watched it, then exclamations of triumph broke from them as they saw that Seth Jones' invention was doing its deadly work, and that the mono-plane was leaving the ground Higher and higher and onward it

swept, until its graceful shape, giint-

ing silvern in the moonlight, was a thousand—two, three thousand feet above the ground, and growing ever smaller in the distance.

THE BOYS' FRIEND

And, as the machine flew parallel with the sea, Don Darrel continued to

recline limply in the cockpit.

He was surely rushing headlong to

death, knowing nothing of his awful peril; for it seemed that not even a miracle could save him.

Captain Raymond watched the machine through a pair of night-glasses until it disappeared in a bank of distant clouds.

of distant clouds.
"Exit the Boy with Fifty Millions!" he breathed grimly.

#### "Fifty Millions and Nine Lives!"

Don Darrel had been mercilessly choked into insensibility; but that was now the best part of an hour ago, and as the rush of clear, salt twanged air beat upon his face, he began to

At first he stirred only very slightly, then, with a low moan, he moved again, his lids flickered, and he opened his cyes,

At first his mind was a complete blank, and so dulled that he was in no state even to wonder why he was being borne along so swiftly, or to try to understand the meaning of the curious sensation he was subconsciously experiencing.

looked so like Doctor Harding, and who had suddenly attacked him in the real headmaster's study; and then, with a thrill of horror, he understood that this flight he was taking was intended for a flight of death.

The lad, as it will be recalled, had had a passion for books when on his ranch, and amongst them had been a very complete work on aeronautics, in which he had been deeply interested.

Ah! This must be the lever controlling the lifting planes, he decided -the "joystick," as it is called and, setting his teeth, he thrust at it.

For half a breathing space the monoplane seemed to stand still, as the elevators abruptly dipped. It lurched dizzily, madly, then rushed downwards in an insane, dreadful, hair-raising volplane.

Gasping for breath, Don steadied it

by means of the control-stick, making its descent more gradual. Through the clouds the monoplane leapt, and

Don saw the moonlit sea beneath him.

He was now only some cight hundred feet above the level of the sea, and the machine was racing down towards it at the speed of an express

He tried to stop her reckless descent and fly level, but, at last, his tuition and inexperience proved fatal.

of the waves. It was fortunate for him that the tide was receding and not coming in; for he frinted dead

His last thought before his eyes closed, and the all-enveloping blackness of unconsciousness again descended upon him was that, as well as having fifty millions, he must also possess nine cat-like lives.

#### The Great Donkey Derby!

Shortly before the first bell awakened Eaglehurst's juniors and others from their slumbers, Frank Philips was aroused by hearing a

Philips was aroused by hearing a continued rattling upon the glass of the Fifth Form dormitory window.

On sleepily getting out of bed and looking out, he found Don Darrel standing, fully-dressed, in the quad. The Boy with Fifty Millions was about to hurl more gravel at the pane, but dropped the handful of small stone, we he sayed the force of small stone, we he sayed the force of small stone, we he sayed the force of small stone. small stones as he espied the face of his chum peering out

Although he could hardly credit his eyes and believe that Don was really there. Philips got out the rope-ludder, opened the window, and, after secur-ing the ladder to Grierson's bed, flung its free end out.

By this time several boys had been aroused, and Don was met with a perfect fusillade of questions as he clambered, looking ill and white-faced, into the long room.

He urged them to remove all signs of the previous night's interrupted feast as quickly as possible, and, so far as the Head was concerned, to act as though his coming to the dormi-

s hough his coming to the dormatory had never happened and he knew nothing of the "feed."

Somehow, everyone in the dormitory, save Grierson, had grown instinctively to trust Don and do as he wished, and, with many willing hands working to that end, it was not long before all the "tuck" and remnants and remnants of tuck had vanished from view.

Every junior in the dormitory was bursting with curiosity as to what had happened when Don had gone to the supposed Doctor Harding's study. But he would answer no questions then, and it was not until morning school was over and the half-holiday for the sports had commenced that Don took his especial chums into his confidence.

If any other boy but he had told them such a story, they would have jeered at him and ragged him. But they just had to believe Don Darrel, and, fearing that further attempts might be made upon his life, urged him to seek police protection. Don, however, still fearing for his

freedom if his guardian came to know of his several narrow escapes, would not hear of this, told them to keep the whole sinister business to them-selves, and went on to narrate what had happened after he had dragged himself ashore and fainted.

himself ashore and fainted.

He had no idea how long he had remained unconscious. When he had regained his senses, he had found himself lying high on the beach with the near far away. To cut a long story short, he had managed to drug hunself to a fisherman's cottage, had knocked up the inmates, and, loud-mocked up the inmates, and, loudknocked up the inmates, and, leading them to believe that, during a moonlight and midnight row, his bout had capaized, asked that they would dry his clothes and allow him to sleep for exactly as long as it took them to obtain a car from the nearest garage.

Fortunately Don's pockets had not been touched, and he had a large sum of money upon him, which, when he produced it, carned all his wishes prompt respect.
The car he had hired had brought

him back just in time.

And now, as the school sports were comprised of contests of the usual nature, we will let it suffice to say that in due course they were completed, and the event to which every soul in Earlehorst had looked forward for weeks was announced other words, Don Darrel's £1,000 Donkeys' Derby. The dear old Head, who was with

his wife and Mr. Farmer in the few reserved seats that had been creeted, chuckled with delight, and clapped

his hands as the donkeys paraded.

At last Don Durrel's chums and Chuta marshalled the sixty candidates into line, and the great moment came.

Crack!

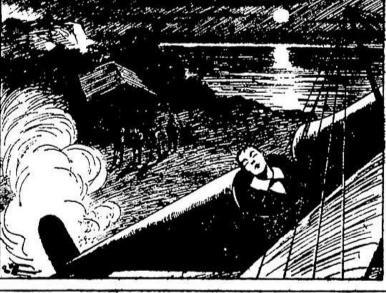
From the distance came the report of the revolver, and -"They're off!" went up from some

five hundred throats as one.

The great Donkeys' Dorby had

commenced! Who would win! How would it end? Councillor Spriggs, for one, would have hopped out of his "judge's box" and run for his life could he have known!

(Another exciting instalment of this splendid tale in next Monday's Boys' FRIEND.)



A FATEFUL FLIGHT! The monoplane soured upwards with the unconscious form of the Boy with Fifty Millions in the cockpit, bearing him to what fate?

A matter of ten to lifteen seconds passed, and the monoplane continued to rush onwards and up, ever upwards, with Don lying himply in the cockpit, his head lolling to one side, and his eyes glazed and vacant. And all the while the precious petrol was dripping out of the tank and bringing

im nearer to destruction.

For with the elevating planes raised, as they were when the engine ceased to run, the 'plane could not possibly right itself, and would there-

fore drop like a plummet.

Captain Raymond's plan was fiendish in its cunning, yet there was at least one point that the scoundrel had not taken into consideration—the formation of this part of the coast.

It curved in a sharp sweep some twenty miles away from the lonely house whence Don had been sent on his terrible flight, curved inward, so that the monoplane, continuing a per-fectly straight course because of its fixed rudder, was soon flying over the

And presently Don Darrel, beginning to regain control of his faculties, suddenly began to ask himself what was happening to him, and sat up-

right.
It did not take the boy long to realise that he was in an aircraft, and only a moment later he had discovered that it was a single-seater. and that he was alone in it, with it sweeping continuously upwards.

Into his brain rushed recollection—
As he reached it, Don Darrel was the memory of the man who had just able to drag himself out of reach

Instead of bringing the "joy-stick" back towards him, making an error, he thrust it in the opposite direction, and redoubled her terrific downward plunge. The next second he had lost all control over the machine, and she was performing a sickening nose dive towards the phosphorescent waters

Down, down she whizzed, and it was only just before she struck the the surface that Don partially fell, partially hurled himself from out of the cock-pit. He struck the water the fraction of a second after the monoplane, and went rushing through the depths, breathless, little short of Unconscious.

He had not the power, for the moment, to help himself, and it was enused his descent to stop, and he was rising naturally towards the surface, that he managed to exercise willpower and feebly make an effort to quicken his rising.
When his head parted the waters

he spluttered out water and drew a gasping breath of air into his almost bursting lungs. He had the presence of mind to turn over on his back; and thus he rested, weakly keeping him-self floating until he had regained a little wind. Then, still floating upon his back, he begun to propel himself towards the shore, which was only some fifty yards distant.

#### THE THREADS OF THE STORY.

DON DARREL, a lad of lifteen, inherits from a stranger, whose life he saves, the atupendous fortune of lifty million pounds. With this he intends to give up his ranch in Mexico, and como to Britain and go to school. The disinherited heir to the fortune, RANDOLPH GURNEY, is plotting to do away with Don, and so recure the money for himself. On arriving in Britain with his faithful haif-caste servant CHUTA, and his dog, SNAP. Dou goes to Eagleburst School. Soon after arriving at the school Don buys a circus so that the local crippled children shall have some enjoyment.

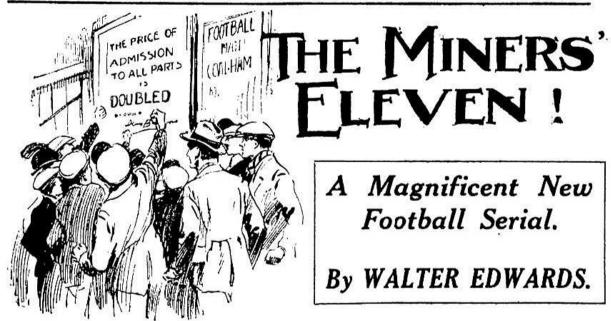
Several vain attempts are mode on his life by the emissaries of Gurney. Don Darrel gets up a Donkeys' Derby. Briggs,

the school-porter, and Mr. Woggle, a villager, enter for the great race, among many others. These two try various methods of injuring each other's mounts. Darrel, however, prevents either of them having an unfair advantage in this manner by buying each a new donkey on the day of the race. On the preceding night Don Darrel gets up a dormitory feed, and in the midst of this the hoys are interrupted by someone they take to be the headmaster. Confronted by this man in Dr. Harding's study, Don disman in Dr. Harding's study. Don dis-covers it is really one of his unknown enemics. The man flies at him, and ho feels his senses slowly leaving him.

(Now read on.)

## A SPLENDID NEW STORY OF A YOUNG CAPTAIN AND HIS ELEVEN!

Published Every Monday



# A Magnificent New Football Serial.

# By WALTER EDWARDS.

#### The 1st Chapter. The Profiteers!

Every alternate Saturday evening found twenty thousand persons in Coalham Town suffering from sore throat, though the fact must not throat, though the fact must not be attributed to a periodical epidemic of bronchitis, mumps, whooping-cough, or any similar ailment.

As a matter of fact, the extensive and prosperous mining centre was in

the throcs of football fever, and the fortnightly pilgrimage to the football ground at Slag Heap had become a ritual which no able-bodied sportsman would have dreamed of fore-

going.

The miners flocked to the ground en masse, and their shouts of en-couragement, decision, and occa-sionally vituperation could be heard in all quarters of the town, for Coal-ham took its football seriously, whole-locatedly. heartedly.

The club, started some few seasons before by Stephen Bulford, a mine manager, had taken but one season to establish itself, and from that time enwards it had attracted the cream

of local talent.

To play for Coalham was the cherished ambition of every youngster for miles round, although many an aspirant knew no more about soccer than did the little china dog on the corner of his mother's parlour manufactures.

Coalham became a power in the Midlands, and then, as though to crown the club's success, Stephen Bulford introduced his nephew, a

sturdy youngster of seventeen.

Jack Vernon came straight from school, and his clean cut factics and almost uncamy knack of finding the net from seemingly impossible angles, not from seemingly impossions angles, combined with a magnetic, quiet personality which stamped him a leader of men, had resulted in his being elected manimously to the captaincy of the side.

He was the junior member of the team, yet he speedily proved his worth, and became the pivot from which all movements of attack ema-nated. Furthermore, he taught his men the art of penetrating the enemy defence with deft, understanding touches.

Jack Vernon became the backbone of the team, the leader, an ideal cap-

Yet, despite his popularity with his men and the hero-worship of the crowd, the youngster remained his modest, efficient self; and the team, with such a leader, became invincible.

Jack had found life at Coalham Town very strange at first. He missed the care free life of his school and the companionship of his churns. The change of atmosphere was drastic, revolutionary, for he had thought that he had nothing in common with the grimy, coal-stained toilers who tramped to and from the pits.

But the youngster was wrong, for no iron bond- that of sport--bound him to the miners and supplied the interest in common.

All Coulimm Town loved the great winter game, and so did Jack Ver-non. And when he eventually turned out for the Town and displayed his prowess—his remarkable turn of speed, his clever passes, his inspired dexterity with the leather—the miners rose to him as one man and took him to their hearts.

And from that day onwards Jack

was happy.

Five days a week he spent in his uncle's office, and Saturday found him leading his men to victory.

It was an ideal life for a healthy, sport loving youngster, and he soon

settled down to the changed order of

things.
Coalham Town F.C. became a team Coalham Town F.C. became a team of giants, and whenever they played at Slag Heap the ground was packed to capacity long before the whistle shrilled for the kick-off, and hundreds of discomfited partisans had the gates closed in their faces.

In a word, the club was thriving, and its amazing prosperity was due, in the main, to Jack Vernon and his understanding of his men.

Stephen Bulford, the chairman and chief shareholder of the club, did not realise this poignant fact; or, if he

realise this poignant fact; or, if he did, he made no mention of the matter, neither did he give his nephew the slightest praise or encouragement.

with the other, and the total number of goals in any one game had never

But this season, with Jack Vernon on the top of his form and the other players in the pink of condition, the local sportsmen felt certain that their pets would give Merton Craye a "real good licking," as they phrased

All roads leading to the ground were thick with miners, all of whom were discussing the forthcoming game from all angles, and it was perfectly obvious that not one of them gave a thought to defent.

Jack Vernon felt much the same way about mutters, for his men had improved out of all knowledge during the past month or so.

nothing standing where he was, so he thrust his sturdy shoulders forward and commenced to force his way

"Make way there!" he cried.
"Make way!"
Heads were turned in his direction at the sound of his voice, and a combined cry went up.
"Here's Jack! Here's Jack Ver-

non!"
"Make way for the lad!"
A path was made for the youngster, and, slowly but surely, and not without delays, he eventually found him-self outside the gates of the ground. The crowd was still shouting hearsely. and it was not until his eyes rested upon the large printed notices which were pasted over the turnstiles, that Jack understood the reason of the up-

He stopped dead in his stride, and remained like a man turned to stone. His face paled, and his eyes stared fixedly at the lettering, for, printed in bold black capitals, was the following notice: ing notice:

"THE PRICE OF ADMISSION TO ALL PARTS OF THE GROUND IS DOUBLED.

(By order) STEPHEN BULFORD."

Jack Vernon rubbed his eyes in sheer amazement. The very idea was unheard of -unwarrantable. The club had never been so prosperous in the whole of its history, and yet his unclo --who was the moving spirit amongst the directors--had doubled the prica of admission.

It was a scandal-sheer profiteering in sport !

"What do you make of that, lad?" yelled a voice; and Jack Vernon's face flushed crimson.

His jaw set, and his lips formed a thin, straight line, but he did not really.

Instead, he strode towards players' entrance.

"I'll see about this!" he muttered grimly.



THE PROFITEERS! "And suppose I inform you that it is our intention to go through with our new scheme eh?" sneered Bulford. "Then I shall resign from the club right now," replied Jack Vernon quietly.

Not that the youngster expected praise; he considered that he had merely done his duty as skipper of the

One Saturday afternoon, early in December, Jack left his lodgings and turned in the direction of the footballground. The youngster looked the picture of fitness as he swung along, his face flushed with health, and his eyes holding that clear light which spoke of perfect physical condition.

A snatch of song parted his lips as he covered the ground, and he modded in friendly fashion to anybody who greeted him.

All the town seemed to be making for the ground, for the occasion was a match of the war-to-the-knife

Coalham was opposed to Merton Conham was opposed to Merton Craye, a team which invariably put up a good, bustling game of tricky, forceful football. The two clubs were sworn rivals, for neither team had ever been able to gain a really decisive victory. The fortune of war had first been with one side and then

The crowd grew dense youngster neared the ground, and when he was within thirty yards of the gate he was held up by a phalanx of yelling miners.

The din was almost deafening, and Jack could see from the expressions upon the coal-grimed faces that something serious was amiss. The men, consumed with excitement and anger, were shaking their fists and waving sticks in a threatening manner, and sticks in a threatening manner, and the name that appeared to be on every lip was that of Stephen Bulford, Jack's uncle.

"Come out and face us, you dirty profiteer" roared a stentorian voice.

"Come out, Bulford! Tell us what you mean by it, you unsportsmanlike hound!"

Jack, packed in the crowd, his arms wedged to his side, listened with surprise and apprehension stamped in-

delibly upon his clean-cut features.

What could be wrong? he wondered. Why were they so enraged against his uncle?

He knew that he would learn

#### "Rush the Gates!"

Once inside the ground, the first person Jack encountered was his incle, whose cadaverous face looked livid but determined. The eyes— which were set too close together were glinting with either rage or ex-citement, and the chin was set determinedly.

Jack strode up to Stephen Bulford. "What is the meaning of this, sir?" he asked, checking the hot words which flew to his lips.

The man flushed at the blunt ques-

"Since when have you had the right to question me?" he demanded acidly. "Must 1 come to you and ask advice as to how I shall run my club?"

He glanced at his wrist-watch significantly.
"The best thing you can do is to get along to the dressing-room and change," he continued. "You haven't

got too much time." Jack Vernon coloured to the roots

of his hair, and hesitated for an instant. His uncle's tone of voice was not pleasant to hear-it was harsh, almost contemptuous.

He was about to make a heated reply, when the angry din increased and became a deafening volume of sound.

Jack looked meaningly into his

uncle's shifty eyes.

"I fear there'll be trouble, sir," he said. "The best thing we can do is to start the match as soon as possible, or else the crowd inside may get out of head." of hand."

Stephen Bulford nodded.
"Perhaps so," he returned ungraciously. "I'll see to it at once."
He turned on his heel and strode away towards the dressing-rooms, followed closely by his nephew, and the maddened cries of the indignant and enraged mob outside the gates, the rough element that refused to pay the

The injustice of the affair did not strike this particular section of the crowd; it simply wanted to incite a

increased price of admission, and was ripe for any trouble that might come

Bulford lost no time in getting into touch with the referee, whilst Jack joined his men, who had already

changed into their playing things.
"This is a fine old how-d'-yer-do, isn't it Jack?" asked Webster, the goalkeeper "What is your uncle thinking about "

Jack Vernon shook his head help-

lessly, and slipped off his jacket.

"Blessed if I know, Jin," he returned, shrugging his broad shoulders resignedly. There's one thing I will prophesy, however, and that is that there'll be trouble to-day -lots of

"You're rie there, old man." said Morton, Jack's inside right, "There's a rowdy mob outside that a ready for a 'rough house.' "Sure, and I guess the gays have got a grievance, put in Brant, who had a harmless little habit of using Americanisms, "If those fellers rear up on one car, they'll sure get that Great War of ours looking like a dog-fight!"

Jack Vernon smiled in spite of him-

Jack Vernon smiled in spite of him-

self. "Sure thing, Steve!" he agreed whimsically.

The door opened, and the referee popped a rather seared face into the

"You fellows ready?" in asked.
"We want to start at once."
"The boys are ready, old man, returned Jack, "and I sha'n't be a moment"
"(fined!" said the efficient "It

"Good!" said the official. "It seems to me that the crowd on the embankment is ripe for mischief.

Looking worried and apprehensive, he disappeared, and a few seconds later Jack led his men on to the field, to be greeted by a derisive round of cheers from a section of the vast

"Hurrah! Bravo!"

"Give 'em a cheer, "Three cheers for Eleven!"

Jack Vernon's lips set rightly as the insulting words came to his ears, and a flush made his cheeks born.

"The Profiteerra' Elecent The name ate into his brain, and in a flash Jack realised that the crowd had a perfect right to so christen his team! For the club w prosperous—wealthy and yet his uncle had doubled the price of admission to all parts of the ground.

The youngster's first in the ways to

The youngster's first in .se v gather his men together and walk from the playing-pitch; but a moment later be dismissed the idea. for he knew that to cry mutch off would mean rioting bloodshed.

So the youngster set his teeth, and determined to thrush the matter out with his uncle after the match.

Merton Craye took the field, and was greeted with prolonged cheers. "Give 'em' what for, Merton!"

roared a thousand voices.
"Whick the profiteers!"
The visitors' skipper punted a ball

towards the vacant roal, and his men spread out to take a few pot shots before the game started. The referee examined the nets, and

then strode briskly to the centro-line. He put his whistle to his lips preparatory to summoning the rival skippers, and was about to sound a blast when his whole body stiffened.

and he remained as a person petrified.

For the cries of the mob, which held the snarl of a wild beast as an underlying note, came from the direction of the gates and a second later a deafening crash made the air vibrate. Then came the splintering of wood, and a roar of vicious triumph. The mob had "rushed" the gates'

Cries of pain and alarm, blended with wild shrieks of anger, came to

83

Jack Vernon's ears, and the cold hand

of misgiving gripped his heart. He know that it would be touchand go as to whether there would be A riot; and he knew that if the whole crowd get out of hand, it would not be content until it had wrecked the ground and wreaked a terrible vengeance upon Stephen Bulford.

Bulford had already realised this fact, and some minutes before he had telephoned to the police asking for teinforcements. And luck was with him, for, even as the tall wooden gates were swept off their hinges, large numbers of uniformed police-men dashed up to the ground in taxiand were soon mingling with the lighting, yelling mob.

Theirs was a horeulean task; but, slowly and patiently, they restored some sort of order.

The ground was packed to overflowing by this time, and the latecomers swarmed over the roof of the stands, perched themselves upon the advertisement boards, and clung pre-cariously to any object from which they could get a glimpse of the playing pitch

But for the excited and derisive yells, it seemed that the crisis was passed, and the referee decided to start the match without a second's delay.

The two skippers were called to the centre, where they shook hands in the

approved fashion.
Up went the coin-glinting in the

rays of the watery sun.

Jack Vernon won the toss, and decided to play with his back to the

The players crossed over and took up their respective positions. The referee shot an all-embracing glance round the field, and then:

Pheep! The Merton centre-forward touched the leather to his inside right, who travelled a couple of yards, tricked Green, and then parted with the ball to his winger.

This worthy, a stocky, red-faced youngster, with bow legs, snapped up the pass and was away down the wing with the speed of light. One man after another he beat with seeming ease, and then, when he had reached the corner-flag, he slammed a perfect centre clean into the mouth of the home goal. "Heads!" roared the crowd; and

quite half a dozen players leapt for

the twirling sphere.

Their efforts were in vain, however, for Webster, with a prodigious leap, managed to get his big first to the ball, and sent it hurtling towards the centre line, where it was snapped up by Jack Vernon.

The youngster trapped the ball with

perfect ease, and then swung round upon his heel and made a bee-line for

the visitors' territory.

His face pale, his lips set in a grim, straight line, his eyes lixed chead, he drove straight through the defence. The ball was, to all intents and purposes, glued to his too. Time and again he was charged off the hall—only to regain it by what appeared to

be sheer magnetism.
On, on he careered until he found himself confronted by two mussive backs, who bore down upon him like miniature tanks.

Jack Vernon waited until they were almost on top of him before he parted with the leather, when he slipped it between the two men.

They both turned at once and raced towards the elusive leather, but Jack Vernon, straining every nerve, and putting on a wonderful spurt, beat them by a matter of inches.

The goalkeeper, who had been dancing about like a cat on hot bricks,

saw in a flash that his charge was in

imminent danger, and he rushed out.
But only to be beaten.
The leather was pushed between his gs, and the next moment the skippe the home side "cake-walked" the

ball into the net
It had been a wonderful effortsomething unprecedented, even at Slag Heap-and the mass of sportsmen, forgetting for the moment their grievance against the club, let out u full throated roar of appreciation. "Jack's the boy!"

"Well done, youngster!"
"That's the stuff to give 'em!"
Flushed and happy—his troubles forgotten in the excitement of the play-Jack Vernon trotted back to the centre, his men fairly hugging

him, cut route.

They wrung his hands until they ached, and the thumps he received threatened to knock every ounce of wind out of his body.

"Hold on, you tame idiots!" he protested feebly. "I'm not a giddy punching-bag, you know!"

Cheers and counter-cheers resounded round the vest enclosure, and the dim tild the vest enclosure, and the din did not subside until the whistle sheilled for the restart.

The Merton Craye eleven looked

grim and earnest as it lined up, for this early set-back nettled them more than a little. They had come to Coal-ham Town with a particularly strong side, and the very least they hoped to take back to Morton was one point. And yet they were a goal down in

the first minute or so of play!

The centre-forward, a raw boned, broad-shouldered Scotsman-a veritable giant-looked really vicious, and his jaw, which might have been carved from granite, was thrust for-ward with the aggression of a battleship's prow.
He tupped the ball struight out to

his left-winger, who scuttled a few yards along the line and centred, the ball landing upon the Scot's head. Straight ahead it went, the centro-

forward following it, and again he headed. Always torging forward, im-pervious to the charges he received, he managed to get his head to the leather live times in succession-and the fifth time saw the ball flash straight into the corner of the net.

Merton Craye had equalised, and with an effort that deserved the yells of delight with which it was received. The supporters of Merton Craye be-

"Donald! Donald!" went up the frenzied cries. "Scotland for ever, my wee bonnie laddie!"

The "wee bonnie laddie!" smiled grimly as he ambled upfield.
"There's another reprise present

"There's another comin', never fear!" he murmured.

The big Scot had not the infalli-bility of Old Moore, however, for half-time came with the scores still standing 1 -1.

Lemon-time passed all too quickly for the players, although the specta-

The play was fast and furious right from the blast of the whistle, both teams straining every nerve to notch

another goal.

The ball travelled from one end of the pitch to the other with almost incredible speed, and time and again it seemed that one side or the other must take the lead.

But it was not to be, for the final whistle found the home cleven swarming round the Merton goal like flies, Again and again the leather had hurtled forward, and Coalham Town had done everything but score in the last minute of the memorable match.

Morton slipped his arm through Jack's as the two chums walked from the fald.

the field.
"Well?" he queried. "Do you think we should have won, old man?" Jack Vernon looked thoughtful. "I think we should have done so,

but for that rumpus before the game," he returned. "I think it up-set most of us—put us off our play!"

Morton nodded
"You're probably right, Jack," he said slowly; "but still we've got a chance of beating 'em at Merton next Saturday!"

The youngster did not answer for a moment, a fact which puzzled his companion.

"You'll have a chance of beating 'em," he said at last, and in a tone which Morton did not understand: "but whether I shall be with you I can't say."

#### The 3rd Chapter. The Ultimatum.

A dead silence reigned in the stuffy little board-room of Coalham Town F. C., and every eye was fixed upon the cadaverous features of Stephen Bulford as he rose from his chair at

the head of the table.

The manager looked round at his co-directors, and there was a stub-born, uncompromising light in his eyes which many of them know-and

Bulford's thin lips were twitching unormo himself with an obvious effort. He gave a short cough, and then commenced to speak in harsh, deliberate

"I have called you gentlemen togother that we may discuss the dis-graceful scenes which took place this afternoon," he said. "When I decided to double the price of admission, I naturally expected a little mild bostility from a section of the crowd and —"

"And you got it, Bulford!" interrupted Grayson, the butcher. Bulford scowled.

"This is no time for levity, Gray-son," reproved the manager, with asperity. "To continue. The scenes both shocked and surprised me; but they have put my back up!"
"You mean that you will continue

to charge the increased price of admission?" asked a mild-locking little man on Bulford's right.

The manager's face flushed, and he brought his fist down upon the table

with a thump.
"I do, sir!" he returned, working

himself into a passion. "By what right do these hooligans dare to dictate to me about the affairs of my club? The club's mine-my own property—and I shall run it as I think fit! What's more, those who don't like to pay the increased prices can stay away and patronise the rival

He gave a sardonic smile as he said

the words.
"We have the only team that is faithful for miles playing 'class' football for miles round, and so we've every right to charge what we like for admission to the ground! We hold the whip-hand?"

"Doesn't it seem a bit like pro-fitteering?" put in Grayson timidly. Bulford turned upon him in a flash.

"Profiteering! Bah!" He snapped his fingers. "What do I care whether it's profiteering or not? We're out to make money easily, and if we can get it from these fools who struggle and fight to get into the ground-well, we'll do it! The business this afternoon is a storm in a teacup, and our

## TEN SHILLINGS FOR YOU!

NO ENTRANCE PEE! No Impossible Conditions!

Just send us your idea of the conversation of the man at the other end of this telephone communication. Number each "answer" to correspond with the swer" to correspond with the "question," and the reader who sends in the most accurate solution, in the opinion of the Editor, will receive a cash prize of 10s. Address your solutions, "The Editor, the Boys' FRIEND, Gough House, Gough Square. E.C. 4." and mark the envelope "Telephone Competition No. 7." Closing date, Monday, December 20th, 1920.

Here is our side of the conversation:

versation:

1. "Hallo! Jimmy there?"

2. "Harry speaking."

3. "Right!"

4. "Hallo! That you. Harry, old son? How goes it!"

5. "Same here. Let me see, There's something I wanted to sale you. Wait a minute..." Wait a minuteask you.

6. "Yes, perhaps I can; but I haven't told you yet..."
7. "Oh, all right! No hurry. I

say, I've got it. Huve you got your H.A. yet?" 8. "You haven't? Goe! You're unlucky! I've got mine this morning. Brown sent it up early

9. "Yes, topping. I was surprised. I thought it would be jolly good, but this takes the bun. Chock full, and good stuff, too.

There's a section all about—"
10. "Yes, that's right; but how

did you know—"

11. "Oh, I didn't know he had one. What's he think of it?"

12. "Well, he's quite right. It is

splendid-worth the money, and more besides! Have you done anything about getting yours

13. "Mind you're not too lute, then, old mun. They'll be get ting scarce soon because of Christ mas. I should get en to old Brown right now, if I was you." 14. "Good! That's it! Well. I must buzz off now. See you some

time soon. Ring me up when you get it, and let me know what you think of it, will you?"

15. "Right! Good-bye!"

supporters will soon settle down to th new order of things and pay up cheer-

fully.
"What's more," continued Bulford,
warming to his subject, "it isn't
unlikely that I shall raise the prices a
bit more later on! The mob did a lot of damage this afternoon, but, as true as my name's Bulford, they shall pay for it—right to the last farthing!"

He paused, and no dissentient voice broke the silence. Bulford always got his own way at the meetings, and to-day proved no exception. There was day proved no exception. There was a strain of the bully in the man which enabled him to subjugate the direc-

tors.
"I thought I'd call you together to tell you that the revised prices stand, and if there's anybody here who has anything to say upon the matter, I will be glad if he will do so in the will be glad if he will be glad if

without any unnocessary delay."

His harsh voice died away, and silence settled upon the little board-

Bulford looked at the men seated round the table, and the suspicion of a contemptuous smile twisted his lips.

"We all agree, then?" he asked. And a clear voice answered:
"No, we do not all agree!"

The voice came from the end of the room, and every eye turned in that direction, to rest upon the clear-cut features of Jack Vernon, the cuptain of the eleven!

Not a word was spoken for some seconds, and then Stephen Bulford found his tongue.

"What is the meaning of this intrusion?" he demanded angrily. "How dare you come into this room without permission?"

He spoke to his nephew in much the same manner as he would have used to a menial, and the youngster flushed.

"I have come here to have a little chat with you gentlemen!" said Jack quietly, advancing a few steps into the room.
"Well say what you've got to say

"Well, say what you've got to say and get out!" returned Bulford, an ugly look in his close-set eyes. "We've no time to waste."

"I sha'n't keep you long, uncle, said the youngster. "I have come here to give you my opinion of this latest profiteering scheme of yours!"
"How dare you talk to me in that
manner, sir!" thundered Bulford.

"I am going to dare many things, sir!" returned Jack Vernon cooliy. "As captain of the team, I protest most emphatically against what is nothing more nor less than a disgraceful ramp! Football is a sport, and footballers, for most part, are sportsmen, and it goes against the grain to be exploited by a crowd of money.

grabbing persons-

"You refer to us, I presume?" put in Stephen Bulford icily. Juck Vernon shrugged his shoulders and met his uncle's blazing eyes unflinchingly.

That is for you to decide," he said quietly.

And suppose I tell you that it is our intention to go through with our new scheme, what then?" queried

"Then," said Jack at once, "I shall resign from the club!"
Stephen Bulford nodded his head.
"Ah! That's it, is it." "Ah! That's it, is it?" he said, with something like a suarl in his voice. "Well, let me tell you this! No sooner do you resign than I wash my hands of you and I put you out, mack and comp!" neck and crop

You mean that you'll sack me?"

asked Jack steadily.

"I do!" came the reply "Now what have you to say?"

"This," returned the youngster;
"I wish to resign at once—on the

"And I accept your resignation," said Stephen Bulford. "Furthermore, you need not put in an appearance at the office on Monday morning! Any money due to you will be sent by post!

Jack nodded.
"Thank you!" he said coolly. And Bulford flushed.

Get out, you brat!" he thundered. "Get out, you brat: he thundered."
"Get out, and stay out! I never want to see you again!"

Jack Vernon moved towards the

door.
"There's one thing I should like to mention before I go, sir," he said

quietly.
"Well, say it and get outside!" snarled Stephen Bulford.

"It may interest you to know that it is my intention to start an opposition football club in Coalham!" said the youngster, with a smile.

He opened the door and passed

from the room, leaving in his wake a crowd of dumb-struck men, who stared at each other in utter bewilderment.

(Another splendid long instalment of this grand football yorn in next Monday's Christmus Number of the Boys' Friend.)



#### BUMPER CHRISTMAS **NUMBER I**

EVERY BOY WHO WANTS-

# A FEAST OF FICTION

this Yuletide, must secure a copy of the "GEM." There is a splendid complete yarn of Tom Merry & Co., entitled: "A Christmas Bombshell,"

which is certain to entertain and thrill you. Also the first instalment of a splendid new school serial, "The Feud at St. Katle's,"

And Another Splendid Art Picture for Your Den.

Don't miss this Wonderful Number of the "QEM."

#### **的形式医院经验的现在分词不够的的现在分词形式** HEALTH AND EXERCISE. 43 全年存在在各种的的各种的的的的的的的

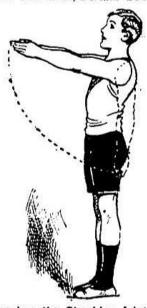
Training for Football.

I'm going to tell you how to get into training for the winter game, and in case there are some who, as soon as they see the above heading, think, if they don't say, "Why training? Can't I enjoy a game of footer without going through the fag of training?" I'm giving in advance ing?" I'm giving in advance the

Of course, you can play footer without training for it. You will enjoy the game. But-and here's the truth I want you all to believe-you won't play such a good game if you don't

train, and you won't get so much enjoyment out of it.

You don't train. You play. You get on all right for the first twenty minutes. The first month of the season the games aren't so hard and minutes. The first month of the season the games aren't so hard and fast, and for a bit your wind is all right. But before half-time whistle you feel glad there'll soon be a rest. Before second half is well started it's a case of "bellows to mend." have a stitch; your legs feel tired, your feet heavy. Are you playing as well. Are you getting as much fun out of the game as would be the case if you were feeling still fresh and brisk? Not much, I think. You begin



Loosening the Shoulder Joints and Adding to your Reach.

to wish you'd indulged in a couple of nights a week of running, not running races, but slow, steady, jog-trotting that gets your wind in prime order, limbers up the leg and thigh muscles, and gives you the ability to keep going strong and fast until the last whistle blows.

The first hour gone and you're feeling uncomfortable—aches and pains creeping round your loins, the You have of the back, and your ribs. the notion you could neither give nor take a vigorous charge. You wouldn't feel that way if you'd put in a few weeks of ground exercises—five minutes twice a day—working those muscles that are now complaining of the undue work they're getting.

Stiff Joints. Why are some fellows so loosely put together that, being able to twist their limbs into all sorts of uncomfortable. looking knots, their pals say they're "double-jointed," while others are so stiff as to make these feats impossible to them?

Because they're born that way. Because with the one the muscle-ends, which are called tendons, and cross over a meeting-place of two bones (which is a joint), are elastic and pliable; and, also, because the strings called ligaments, which form a fustening between the bones that make a

joint, are more tightly stretched in the case of the stiff-jointed. Here is a movement that is good for loosening the shoulder-joint, and thereby adding a bit to the reach.

Stand upright and lift the shoulders as high as you can. After holding position a while, without bending the back, thrust the hands alongside outside of thighs and as far downward as you can. Carry out the arms for you can. Carry out the arms for-ward in line with mouth, and by foreing the shoulders, but not bending the body, try to gain an inch in reach.

Hey horefrend

(Another splendid Health and Exercise article in next Monday's BOYS' FRIEND.)

"Oh!"

"Ouooch !"

#### COMPLETE STORY OF THE FAMOUS CHUMS OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL!



"Ocooch!"
"Yaroooh!"
"Bless my soul! What-what!
Upon my word! Grooogh! Gerroft!
Oh dowr! How dare you—
Mmmmmmmmmm:"

Four dutiful pairs of hands grasped the master of the Fourth. The little gentleman was dragged,

#### The 1st Chapter. Jimmy Silver is Wanted!

Squash!

Tubby Muffin meant that snowball

for Jiminy Silver.

It was like Muffln's cheek, of course, to hurl a snowball at the captain of the Fourth; and it was still more like Muffin to land the missile

more like Muffin to land the missile upon the wrong party.

Jinmy Silver was standing on the School House steps, engaged in a debate with his chums Lovell and Ruby and Newcome. It was a half-holiday at Reokwood, and a keen winter's day. There was snow in the quadrangle, deep. Snow was piled up against the trunks of the ancient beeches, the branches of which shivered, leadings, in the wind. And the Fistical Four were debating whether their leisure time could be better spont than in a raid on the whener their leisure time could be better spont than in a raid on the Moderns with snowballs. A final bust-up, as Lovell expressed it, to wind up the term and give the Moderns something to remember them by during the Christmas holidays.

And then Tubby Musin happened

along with his snowball.

Tubby rolled that snowball with care, and knowded it hard in his fat hands with a twinkle in his round eyes. He took careful aim at Jimmy syes. He took careful aim at Jimmy Silver, whose profile was turned to him. The snowball was destined to land upon Jimmy's right oar, and squash there, greatly to his surprise. But its destiny was never fulfilled.

It whizzed from Tubby's fat paw, and missed Jimmy Silver's nose by about a world.

about a yard.

Shout a yard.

Naturally, meeting with no resistance, it whizzed on.

But every bullet, it is said, has a billet, and the same applied to Tubby Mullin's snowball. For Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth Form, came out of the big doorway at that moment in coat and hat and muffler, and his chubby face was exactly in the line of fire.

Squash!
The snowball landed fairly upon
Mr. Bootles' nose.
It squashed there.
"Oh! Ah! What—what—ah"
ojoculated Mr. Bootles.
He set down suddenly

He sat down suddenly.
It was quite a surprise to him. The most venturesome spirit among the Rookwood juniors never ventured to snowball a master. Mr. Bootles had emerged all unsuspicious of peril. The sudden concussion on his respected nose fairly bowled him over,

He sat down, and remained scated for a fraction of a second-not more. For the steps were slippery. Having reposed gracefully on the top step for the thousandth part of a second,

Mr. Beotles shot down the steps.

Jimmy Silver & Co. stared at him.

The happening was too sudden for them to lend their Form master a band.

for Tubby Muffin, he stood done, blinking at the sliding Form-master with distended eyes.

"My hat!" ejuculated Lovell.

"Oh! Ah! Ow! Oooooch!"

Mr. Bootles landed at the bottom

of the stops, where the snow was thick and deep; the flakes were still falling. Mr. Bootles sat in the snow, and grabbed wildly at hat and spectacles. "Coooch!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Jimmy ilver. "You've done it now, Silver. Muffin :"

"You shricking ass!" gusped Raby.
"Oh dear!" stuttered Tubby.
He found the use of his legs suddenly and fled. Mr. Bootles sat and spluttered. And Jimmy Silver & Co. rushed to his aid.

In their dutiful eagerness to lend pid, they forgot that the steps were

It was only a momentary forgetful-

ness, but it was enough.

Four juniors came whirling down on Mr. Bootles, landing on him and rolling him headlong in the snow. There was a chorus of exclamations.

"Someone hurled a missile at

Minimummimmin:"
The juniors scrambled up. They were rather quicker upon their feet than Mr. Bootles.
"Oh, my hat!" stuttered Jimmy Silver. "Sorry, sir! We-we were coming to help you—"
"Sorry, sir!" spluttered Lovell.
"Bless my soul! Oh dear! I-I-I am quite breathless! I-I fear I am injured! Bless my grough!—soul! Oh! Ah! Help me up, Silver! I-I find it difficult to—to rise! Oh dear!"
Four dutiful pairs of hands grasped was throwing snowballs in the quad, sir," said Jimmy "Must have hit you by accident, sir."

"A most reckless -grough!-pro-ceeding, to hurl snowballs near the-ococh!-house!" gasped Mr. Bootles. "I shall inquire for the ow!-delin-T shall inquire for the owi-defin-quent, and punish him severely! Meanwhile, Silver— Wow! I was about to go to the station at Coombe, Silver. Oh dear!"
"Yes, sir."
"To meet a relative who is coming

BY OWEN CONQUEST.

that he did not glance towards the cane on the table.
"Silver!" stuttered Mr. Bootles, at

lust. "Yo-cs, sir."

"Hem! I-I think somebody was-

to stay with me for a few days—in fact, until the Christmas vacation begins," said Mr. Bootles, "My—ah!—nephew, Captain Digby—groogh! I cannot proceed to the station,

I mention this because you may notice — Oooooch! Now go at once, my dear boy; I am much obliged to you."

"Certainly, sir."

Jimmy spoke more cheerfully now.

He was quite willing to give up his half-holiday for the sake of a gentleman in khaki who was suffering from man in khaki who was suffering from shell-shock.

The Fistical Four quitted the study, leaving Mr. Bootles wrestling with a tremendous sneeze.

#### The 2nd Chapter, The Old Boy.

Jimmy Silver & Co. put on their caps, and started across the quadraugle. The snow was still coming down in heavy flakes. It was the first snow-fall of the winter at Rookwood, but it was a long and heavy one. It had been coming down since

dawn.

"Poor chap!" Arthur Edward Lovell remarked. "If he got shell-shock in the war, and hasn't recovered yet, it must be a prety bad case. We'll come with you, Jimmy, and help you look after him."

"If the poor chap suffers from depression, we might have him in the

pression, we might have him in the end study and cheer him up," remarked Raby. "We'll ask him to tea some day, and I'll do some of my comic recitations."

"Might make him worse."

"Look here, Lovell--"
"Well, old chap, you know what

your comic recitations aro—"
"You silly ass—"
Whiz, whiz, whiz! Smash!
From the direction of Mr. Manders' house came a volleying of snowballs. Tommy Dadi & Co., of the Modern Fourth, had spotted the four Classicals on their way to the gates.

gusping, to his feet.
He was a shocking spectacle. - all Millim Countries of Manufacture (All All Comments of the Comments III MARANANINI PARA

THE FATAL SHOT! Whiz! The snowball caught Mr. Bootles full in the face as he descended the Bohool House steps. The Fistical Four were amazed. They could scarcely believe that even Tubby would dare to snowball a master!

Snow smothered him from head to foot; the buttons of his cont had burst, and his hat had fallen under him with

and his hat had faiten under him with dire results to the hut.

He leaned on Jimmy Silver and Newcome, and spluttered.

"Hehelp me into the house!" he managed to articulate.

"Yes, sir."

"Certainly, sir!"

"So sorry, sir!"

"So sorry, sir!"

With great care the Fistical Four piloted Mr. Bootles up the steps—upon which the Form-master trod very gingerly—and into the house. They pavigated him to his study, and anchored him in his armchair before the fire.

Mr. Bootles sat and gasped for breath.

The roll down the steps had not hurt the Fourth-Formers, but Mr. Bootles was not of an age to indulge

in such gymnastics with impunity.

Jimmy Silver & Co. would have retired from the study, leaving their Form-master to recover at his leisure: but Mr. Bootles made them a sign to

They remained-in some trepida-

It certainly wasn't their fault that Mr. Bootles had taken his tumble, there was no telling what view a Form-master might take of anytum quantity, and it was quite possible that Mr. Bootles might find solare in cauing them.

They waited for him to recover breath. They were relieved to see

Silver. I am too -oooooh!- too up-set! Will you have the kindness to proceed to the station--ow, oh dear!--and meet my relative, and ooooch!" Mr. Bootles wound up with a

Jimmy Silver & Co. exchanged a rather dismal look. The snowball raid on the Modern juniors was evidently "off." For a Form-master's request amounted to a command.

"Oh, certainly, sir!" said Jimmy, with all the cheerfulness he could muster.

muster.

"Mr. Digby arrives by the three train," said Mr. Bootles. "You will a sh!—explain to him that—grough!—I have been prevented from e-e-coming—atchech!—you will bring Captain—atchoooh—"

"Captain whom sig?"

Captain—atcheoooh—
"Captain whom, sir?"
"Atchooh! Captain Digby, you will—groogh!—bring him to the school—groogh! Kindly go at once, or you may be too late. Oh dear!

Do not lose a moment! Jimmy Silver & Co. turned to the

"Stay

sneezo.

The juniors turned back. "Captain Digby has been on active service," said Mr. Bootles, succeing. "He has suffered from—

The sudden fusillade smashed right and left on the Fistical Four. "Give 'em beaus!" roared Tommy

Dodd.

"Oh, my hat!"
"You Modern rotters---" Lovell grabbed up snow to return

the fire. "Hold on!" exclaimed Jimmy

Silver, fielding his cap, which had been knocked off. "No time for rags now. We're in a hurry—"
"We're not going to give Modern cads best!" roared Lovell.
"Came on ass!"

"Come on, ass!"
Whiz, whiz! Smash! Squash!
Quite a little army of Modern
juniors advanced upon the Fistical Four, and snowballs rained on them. But Jimmy Silver, for once, turned his back upon the enemy, and scudded out of gates. Lovell hurled one snowball which landed in Tommy Dodd's eye, and followed him with Raby and Newcome. The Moderns crowded the gateway after them, crowing with victory.

"Never mind those bounders," said Jimmy Silver, turning up the collar of his coat. "Buck up!"

Leaving the Moderns still crowing, the four Classical juniors hurried on

service," said Mr. Bootles, succing.
"He has suffered from—
Groococch!"

"From—from what, sir.
"Atchooh! Shell-shock, Silver, and he is not yet quito recovered. I am in hopes that a few days at Rook, wood will- groocococch!—will cheer him up, and—and— Ow, ow! He suffers from deep depression of spirits.

the four Classical juniors hurried on through the suow towards Coombe.

It was heavy work, tramping through the lane, with the snow over their boots, but they trudged on manfully, It was not the way they would have chosen of spending a half-holiday, but they were quito cheerful about it, being interested in Mr. Bootles' nephew, and very sym-

pathetic. It was a little difficult for he healthy, cheery schoolboys to comprehend exactly what shell-shock was like; but they know that it was something exceedingly unpleasant.

The train was puffing in the station when they reached Coombe, and they

hurried in.
There was no khaki to be seen in the station, but it occurred to them that Mr. Bootles' nephew had probably been demobbed long ago, and

would be in civvies.

A well-built young man in an overcoat and soft hat was standing in the station vestibule, looking about him. He did not bear much resemblance to the plump little Form-master, but Jimmy guessed that this must be Mr.

Digby.

That's the merchant," said Jimmy in a low voice. "We'll ask him, any-

They scanned the young man before

They scanned the young man before approaching him.

He looked about twenty-eight or thirty, and was good-looking, with a rather bronzed complexion. But the expression on his face was more noticeable than anything else. It was darkly sombre, and looked as if a smile had never visited it; and the eyes, a little sunken, had a strange and restless light in their depths. It was evident from the young man's manner that he was expecting somemanner that he was expecting somebody-doubtless his uncle. The Fistical Four closed in on him at last, and raised their caps together, as if

moved by the same spring.
"Excuse me, sir," said Jimmy
Silver, with great politeness, "Captain Digby, I believe?"
The young man nodded without

speaking.
"We've come to meet you, sir, and take you to Rookwood. Mr. Bootles had a little accident just as he was starting, so he sent us. I'm Jimmy Silver, of the Fourth Form," added Jimmy.

The young man glanced at him. Then he nodded again, still with-out speaking, and walked out of the station with the four juniors.

The village street was white with snow, that gleamed on every roof and wall. The old station back, usually visible there, was not to be seen now; it was under shelter somewhere, and the driver was warming his circulation at the Red Cow.

"You'd like to drive, sir, or walk?"

asked Jimmy. "Rather slow work driving in the snow."
"Walk!" said Mr. Digby.
He had a pleasant, musical voice, but he did not seem much given to

using it. He could scarcely have been more laconic.
"Right-ho, sir! This way."
They started down the village

street.

Mr. Digby walked with a springy, soldierly stride, and the juniors had to break into a trot occasionally to keep pace with him.

keep pace with him.

Jimmy had relieved him of his bag, and Lovel! of his rug, with great politeness. They were prepared to talk cheerily on the way to Rookwood School; but the dry manner, and the grim silence of the young man rather froze them off. However, they couldn't make it a funeral march, as Lovel! said afterwards, and Jimmy Lovell said afterwards, and Jimmy tried his hand at conversation.

You Digby?" Rookwood, know

A nod. "Your uncle's our Form-master, sir."

Nod. "The fellows like him no end," said Lovell.
Mr. Digby walked on.

Mr. Digby walked on.
"You came to visit Mr. Bootles
once before, I think, sir," said Newcome, feeling that it was up to him to
do his bit. As a matter of fact,
Arthur Newcome had never even
heard of Mr. Digby before that after-

noon.

A shake of the head.

"Perhaps you're an old wooder, sir?" suggested Raby.

"Yes."

The young man spoke at last.
"Oh. good!" said Jimmy. He thought he understood now why Mr. Bootles supposed that a visit to Rook-wood School would cheer up the invalid. Staying among the cheery surroundings of his boyhood might be

just what he needed.

"You'll find Rookwood a bit changed, sir," said Jimmy. "There's a Modern side to the school now. They teach German and stinks there."

A faint smile flickered over Mr. Digby's pale face.

Jimmy felt encouraged.

His description of the Modern side at Rookwood, where they taught German and chemistry, had at least brought a trace of a smile to the invalid's sombre face.

"We have had no end of rows with the Modern cads," said Lovell. "The

bounders were snowballing us when we came out. I dare say we shall find a crowd of them waiting for us when we get back."

No reply. The Fistical Four tried several times again, but no remark was to be

drawn from Mr. Digby.

He seemed plunged in sombre thought, and scarcely aware that the juniors were with him, as he tramped on through the snow.

They reached the gates of Rook-wood School at last.

As Lovell had anticipated, a crowd of Moderns were Moderns were ready for them when they came in, and as soon as the party appeared in the gateway the snowballs began to fly. Tommy Dodd & Co. did not observe for the moment that there was a stranger with the

Whiz, whiz, whiz! Smash! Crash!

Look out, you silly asses!" roared Lovell.
Mr. Digby started as a snowball

caught him on the ear, and he stag-He seemed to wake up suddenly

from his gloomy reverie, and, after a startled glance round, his manner

"Hallo! Snowballin'!" he ex-claimed. "This is like old times! Give 'em beans, my boys!" To the astonishment of the Fistical

Four, the young mun stooped to the snow, gathered up handfuls, and began to return the fire of the Moderns. Jimmy Silver & Co. wore not long

in following his example. Whiz! Crash! Smash! The Moderns had drawn back a

little as soon as they perceived the stranger. But as soon as they saw stranger. But as soon as they saw him taking part in the combat they came on again hotly. Snowballs whizzed through the air in showers.
"Go for 'em!" roared Lovell.

"Down with the Moderns!"

"There's one for you, Doddy!"
"Yooooch!" spluttered Tonmy
Dodd, with his mouth full of snow.

"Hurray!"
"Pile in, Classicals!" yelled Jimmy Silver, as Mornington and Erroll and Conroy came speeding across the quad to take part in the combat.

Rawson and Oswald, Van Ryn and Pone, and a dozen more Classicals came tearing up, and reinforcements also arrived for the Modern side, and in a few minutes a battle royal was raging.

In the midst of it Captain Digby was hurling snowballs with as much vim and enjoyment as any junior there. His handsome face was flushed, his eyes sparkled, and he was evidently enjoying himself. But the the Classicals were driven right up to the School House.

"Back up!" roared Mr. Bootles'

nephew.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Hurray!"
Whiz! Whiz-z-z! Crash!

There was a step in the doorway, and the august figure of Ir. Chisholm, the Head of Rockwood, stood in full view. The Head gazed at the excited scene with a grim eye. Snowballs were falling in the doorway. The Head had a narrow escape from one or two.
"Boys!"

"Oh! The Head!"

The Moderns melted away in the snowy distance at once. The Classicals tried to look as if snowballing was the last thing they had been thinking of that wintry afternoon.

Mr. Digby hurled a last snowball after the fleeing enemy, and gave a loud laugh as it knocked Tommy Dodd's cap over his eyes. Then, as if surprised by the hush round him. face to face with the Head.

#### The 3rd Chanter. Up to the End Study!

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

The Head gazed at Mr. Bootles' nephew in astonishment. Mr. Bootles' nephew gazed back at him.

For a moment the young soldier looked like a schoolboy "caught out" by his headmaster.

He flushed guiltily.

"Upon my word!" said Dr. Chisholm.

The juniors looked on breathlessly. In a moment more Mr. Digby was himself again. The flush faded from his bronzed cheek, and the old sombre look returned to his face, the old restless, haunting look to his eyes. He raised his hat gravely to the Head

of Rookwood.
"Mr. Digby, I think?" said the Head.

"Yes, Dr. Chisholm."

Published

Every Monday

"Pray come in!"

That the Head was surprised, if not scandalised, by such boyish conduct on the part of a young man who had been a distinguished soldier at the front in the late war, the juniors could see easily enough. Jimmy Silver & Co. did not share his

that Mr. Digby, once he had woke up, was no end of a sport.

"After all, the Head can't cano him," said Lovell, as the young man disappeared into the house with Dr. Chichule.

Chisholm.

Jimmy Silver chuckled at the idea.

"Where did you drop his bag, Jimmy?"

"Blessed if I know! Near the gate, I think."

"Better look for it. And his rug's

somewhere, too."

The bag and the rug were retrieved, and the chums carried them into the School House, Jimmy tapped discreetly at Mr. Bootles' door. "Come in!"

Mr. Digby was with his uncle; his interview with the Head had apparently been short. But there was trace of boyishness about him now. His face was sombre, almost haggord in its look. He did not smile at the juniors, or seem to observe their presence in the doorway. It was evident that he was plunged again in the black fit in which they had found him

at the station. "What is it, Silver?" asked Mr. Bootles, sneezing. His nose was very red, and he looked as if he were

catching a cold.
"Mr. Digby's things, sir.
"Oh, very well! Place them on the

table. Thank you. Silver."
"Not at all, sir!" The juniors quitted the study, still without a glance from the sombre young man who was standing before the fire, very erect, with his heels together and his chin up. He looked every inch a soldier, even in his quiet civilian clothes; but the sombre grim-

ness of his face haunted the juniors. It seemed like a lamp from which the light had gone out. The Fistical Four repaired to the

end study for tea, and over tea Jimmy Silver wore a thoughtful look. He was, in fact, thinking deeply, and his expression showed that he was indulging in one of what his com-rades termed "Undo James' big thinks."

Lovell & Co. winked at one another, and Arthur Edward Lovell playfully ladled mustard upon Jimmy's muffin -so that there was something in the nature of an explosion when Jimmy

nature of an explosion when Jimmy took a bite at the muffin.

"Yurraghh!" spluttered Jimmy.

"Ha, ha. ha!" roared Lovell and Raby and Newcome.

"What silly ass—— Groogh! You thumpin' chump. Lovell! Ow! I've a jolly good mind to—— Groogh!"

"Where were your thoughts, old chap!" asked Arthur Edward Lovell blandly. "I thought I'd wake you

blandly. "I thought I'd wake you up, you know!"
"You silly ass!" growled Jimmy Silver, mopping his smarting mouth with his handkerchief: "I was think-

"I knew that by your scowling." said Lovell. "Something up against the Moderns? If it's a stunt, get it off your chest. We'll give you a hearing, though I don't suppose there's much in it."

"Ass! Bother the Moderns! I was

thinking about Mr. Digby."
"Oh, Digby! What about him!" "Oh, Digby! What about nim:
"Sooms a decent sort of chap," said
Newcome. "Something amiss with
his nerves, I reckon. He's got the
blue devils—and got 'em bad!"
"That's it!" said Jinmy. "De-

pression, you know—it often comes with shell-shock. It's a bit of a sticker in his case; he must have been demobbed some time ago. Bootles thinks he wants cheering up. And that's what I was thinking. You noticed how he played up when we were snowballing the Moderns."

"Yes, rather!" said Lovell, with a chuckle. "He seemed to drop off about a hundred years."

"Well, that's what I was thinking of," said Jimmy Silver. "The Head came down on him like a cold douche. Of course, the Head means well; but a headmaster can't help being a bit of an extinguisher. It's in their of an extinguisher, nature, you know."

"They can't help it," agreed Lovell

sagely.

"And Bootles," pursued Jimmy Silver thoughtfully—"Bootles is noend of an old trump, and he's going to cheer up the young man if he can;

but, entre nous—"
"What the thump do you mean by ongtray noose '?" demanded Lovell,

mystified.
"Between ourselves, you ass! Don't you know your French-"I don't know yours!"

"Ass! Between ourselves," con-tinued Jimmy, "Bootles is a bit of an ass. He isn't calculated to cheer a fellow up when he's down on his luck. He's a bit of a bore, you know. He will very likely take Digby to the Sixth Form debating society-"Poor chap!"

"And talk to him about that edition of Horace he's been busy on for

"I'd rather have shell-shock my-

"But his idea is all right. Digby wants chearing up." said Jimmy Silver. "And I think we're the fellows to do it."

"Little us?" grinned Raby.
"Little us!" said Jimmy serenely.
"We're rather cheery merchants ourselves, you know, and it's catching. The motto of this study is 'Keep smiling!' If we can make him smile and keep him smiling, the trick is done. We're going to cheer up the captain—see?"

Might have him here-" said

Raby. "Certainly

"And some of my comic recita-

Jimmy Silver coughed.
"You saw how he cheered up over the snow-fight? Well, what's happened once, can happen again. It's as plain as anything that he was a boy once, and he hasn't quite grown out of it. We'll have him to tea first-"

"If he'll come—"
"Of course, fathead. We might jape him, you know." said Jimmy Silver thoughtfully. "No end of fun in that. We'll begin with ten in the study to morrow, and a choice selecof cheery conversation-

"Who's going to ask him?" asked Raby doubtfully. "I will!"

And Jimmy Silver did.

After tea, he looked for Mr. Digby, He found that the visitor had been accommodated in the Oak Room, in the School House, which was not far from the junior quarters. To the Oak Room Jimmy repaired, and tapped on the door.
"What is it?" came a voice from

within.

Jimmy turned the handle. But the door did not open; it was secured. Evidently the captain was "sporting his oak.

"It's me," said Jimmy, diffidently and ungrammatically—"Jimmy Silver, you know."
"Well?"

"I-we-that is- I was going to ask you, sir, if you'd care to come to ten in our study to-morrow." stummered Jimmy, not very much en-couraged at having to talk through a solid oak door.

"Thank you, no!" "Oh!"

Jimmy Silver retired.

It was a check, at the beginning. But it was not checkmate; and Jimmy Silver did not abandon his meritorious scheme of cheering up the captain.

#### The 4th Chapter. Quite a Oheery Boheme!

Mr. Bootles' nephew was an object of considerable interest to the Rook-wood fellows during the next few

But they saw little of him.

If he found any cheering or solace amid the scenes of his boyhood, the captain did not betray the fact in his looks or manners.

He evidently loved solitude, and he took his walks in the most secluded spots, often in the abbey ruins, or along the snowy towing-path by the

If he appeared in the quadrangle, it was when the fellows were in class,



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**SPORTS for BOYS** 

The Great New Sports Weekly,

and then he would somotimes saunter under the leafless old beeches, his hands driven deep in his pockets, and his brows knitted in a straight line; has face almost expressionless, and what expression there was, sombre

and grim.
He lunched and dined with the Head, and Jimmy Silver could not help thinking, sometimes, that Dr. Chisholm must find him rather a skeleton at the feast.

Sometimes, however, he went for long rambles in the country, and lunched at wayside inns, and did not return to Rockwood till after dark. For whole days the Rookwooders would see little or nothing of him.

On other occasions he kept to his room, sporting his oak, and not even looking up when the maid brought in

lunch or tea.

All the Lower School took an interest in him, little as they saw of him, and there were few fellows who were not willing to join in Jimmy's noble idea of cheering up the unhappy

young man.
For a handsome, stalwart young fellow, under thirty, to be continu-ously in the grip of a black melan-choly, was rather puzzling to the juniors, and certainly stirred their sympathy.

Mr. Bootles was evidently very much attached to his nephew, and very concerned about him. He tried to get him to dine in Hall with the school, but Mr. Digby declined that opportunity of enlivening company. As Jimmy Silver had foreseen, Mr. Bootles brought his nephew to a meeting of the Sixth Form Debating Society. Mr. Digby's expression during the sitting was glummer than ever; but that was perhaps not to be

wondered at.
Jimmy came on him one day in the old school library, and found him poring over ancient manuscripts with some slight appearance of interest. Jimmy was in search of a book, and he coughed twice, to give the captain

a chance of observing his presence.

Jimmy was prepared to bestow
upon the melancholy young man
some cheery and genial conversation.
But Mr. Digby did not even look up. He must have heard the cough; but,

apparently, he did not want the cheery conversation.

Except on that occasion of the snow-fight, pobody had seen the dark cloud break from his face.

Jimmy Silver was a kind-hearted youth, and he was very sympathetic towards the young soldier. He was determined that the end atudy, at least, should spare no pains to cheer him up. With that purpose in view. him up. With that purpose in view, he took counsel with Tommy Dodd, of the Modern side.

The rivals of Rookwood were quite in accord with regard to the captain. Tommy Dodd was as sympathetic as Jimmy. And he agreed that what the young man wanted was "waking up." He agreed, also, that "waking up." He aureed, also, that a really humorous "jape" was very likely to be the very thing to do it.

"You see, he ought to be amused," said Jimmy Silver.
"Exactly," agreed Tommy Dodd.
"If the weather gets better, you Classical chaps might put in some football, and ask him to come and watch you. That would amuse anybody!"
"Look here Doddy."

Look here, Doddy-"It would make a cat laugh!" said Tommy Dodd, "so-

"Don't be a funny ass. Doddy!" said Jimmy Silver. "This is a serious matter! I've got an idea of a funny jape—" funny jape-

"Going to ask him to one of your Shakespearian performances?" asked Tommy Dodd innocently.
"Fathead! Be serious! Now, you

Modern bounders, learn all sorts of rot we don't have on the Classical side!" said Jimmy. "You understand rubbish about electricity and things-

Tommy Dodd sniffed.
"I'd rather be able to put up an electric bell than jabber Greek!" he said disdainfully.

"The question is, can you put up an electric bell?"
"On my head!"
"It wouldn't be any use on your head. I want it stuck into the Oak Room!"

"There's a bell there, isn't there?"
"Yes, but you see—" Jimmy
Silver began to explain, and Tommy
Dodd listened, at first in wondering
surpaise, and then chuckling.
"What a stant!" he ejaculated at

inst.
"It would be no end funny!"
"It would!"
"It would!"

"Bound to cheer him up!" said Jimmy Silver.

"If he's got any sense of humour," agreed Tommy Dodd. "Anyhow, it will wake him up."
"And you think you could do it?"
"Easily. I can get the stuff from

the workshop. Only a yard or two of

flex wanted.
"What the thump is flex?"

"The insulated wire that electricians use, you ass!" said Tommy Dodd. "What on earth do you stick Dodd. on the Classical Side for, Silver? You don't learn enough there to be a plumber!"

"Well, I'm not going to be a plumber, that I know of. You buzz off to your merry workshop and get the checks—did you say checks?"
"Flex, ass!"
"Woll, get it, and I'll see if the coast is clear."

The coast was clear. Mr. Digby was out of doors on one of his solitary and melancholy rambles. The door of the Oak Room opened to the touch. It was a very pleasant room, with high windows looking on the old beeches, and a merry fire blazing

in the wide, old-fashioned grate.

Before the fire was a big, deep armchair, in which poor Mr. Digby spent hours and hours staring at the fire. His next repose in that armchair was not to be as peaceful as usual, however, owing to the unselfish efforts of two juniors to cheer him up.

There was a large, flat cushion in the seat of the armchair, which just filled the seat and fitted to the sides. It caught Jimmy's eyes at once, and he similed with satisfaction.

"That's the spot, Tounny!"
"Hear, hear!" chuckled Tominy

For the next ten minutes, Toning Dodd was basy using the flex, and the scientific knowledge he had accumulated on the Modern side of Rook-wood. Jinany Silver-asked if he could help, and Tommy replied that he could help best by keeping his chin quiet and standing clear. Tommy's proceedings looked rather mysterious to the uninitiated eye.

Mysterious to the unmittated eye.

Under the cushion on the armchair was placed a large, flat bell-push, and from the bell-push an insulated wire ran down the leg of the chair, and disappeared under the hearthrug.

From under the hearthrug it

From under the hearthrug it emerged at a distance, and was slipped

under the corner of the big fender, emerging thence close to the wall beside the fireplace.

The electric fittings at Rookwood had been added some centuries after the house was built, and the result was that the wires ran outside the walls, carefully concealed in corners. By the side of the heavy, massive mantelpiece, a half-concealed wire randown from the bell-push, and disappeared in the floor.

peared in the floor.

Close to the floor, Tommy Dodd scratched the wire clean with a pen-

knife.
Separating the two wires contained in the insulator, he jammed a piece of cork between them to keep them separate, and then joined up his own

double wire to them.

In the corner, under the shadow of the massive mantelpiece, Tommy Dodd's work was quite invisible save to a searching eye.

Tommy rose to his feet with a chuckle.

"That's all right !" he said. " Now anybody sitting in the armchair will press the bell-push under the cushion which will have the same effect as touching the button on the wall. See? Either will ring the bell downstairs and bring up Tupper."

Jimmy chortled. "It's bound to tickle him?" he said.
"Well, it ought to?" said Toniny
Dodd reflectively. "He will laugh
no end when he finds out how his leg's been pulled. At least, he ought to Better clear now," suggests Jimmy Silver suggested

They cleared. An hour or two later they observed Mr. Digby crossing the quadrangle to the School House, his eyes fixed on the ground. apparently unconscious of his surroundings. They watched him disappear into the house. Arthur Edward Lovell came out in a few

"He's gone to his room," he said.
"He looks awfully down!" "He looks awfully down!"
"He'll be woke up soon." said
Jimmy confidently. "Poor chap! I
don't mind how much trouble we take
to stir him up a bit."
"I--I wonder if ho'll like it,
though?" said Lovell, in a reflective

sort of way.
"Well, you never can tell; but
we're doing our best!"
"That's so!" agreed Lovell.
And the juniors felt that they
couldn't do more.

#### The 5th Chapter. The Mysterious Ring!

Mr. Digby threw himself into the armchair before the cheery fire in the Oak Room, and sat there with a look of lassitude and fatigue, staring at the flames.

The regions below stairs were too far off for the young man to hear a

bell ring there; and naturally, he hadn't the faintest suspicion that a flat bell-push was placed under the cushion he was seated upon.

He stared gloomily at the fire, the corners of his mouth drooping, his whole attitude one of deep despondency. It was his nervous system that was out of gear—the inferno in Flanders had left him a weary legacy. Whether his pervading gloom was likely to be dispelled by the extraordinary methods adopted by the young sympathisers, was a question. Jimmy Silver & Co. were doing their best, with the best intentions in the world, and it had not dawned upon them that it was possibly a case of fools rushing in where angels feared to tread.

There came a discreet tap at the door, but the young man, plunged in gloomy reverie, did not hear it. The tap was repeated, and the door opened to admit the chubby face of Tupper, the page. Tupper was startled almost out of his wits the next moment. From the stalwart figure in the armchair there came a sudden hoarse cry "Shoot, you fools! Why don't you

shoot?

Tupper jumped.

"Sus-sus-sus-sa-sir!" he stammered. Mr. Digby sprang to his feet. His pale face was suddenly flooded with be had been in Flanders again, with the hell-on-earth raging round him, and he had forgotten time and space. He was crimson as he met the startled stare of the fat page.

"What do you want?" he snapped.
"You rang, sir!" babbled Tupper.

"I did not ring!"

" Oh, sir!"

"Shut the door!"

Tupper retired and shut the door. In the kitchen, a few minutes later, he confided to the cook that "that there young Digby was fairly off is onion." The cook said he "was a pore, dear young man," and inquired, with bitterness, why they hadn't hanged the Kaiser according to promise. She opined that it was only votes they wanted. "and aving got the votes, they didn't mean to ang the Kaiser no more than they mean to ang you, Tupper," And the housemaid said it was a shame.

The delinquencies of politicians, who promised to hang Kaisers, and failed to hang thom, were discussed in the kitchen at some length, till the discussion was interrupted by the buzz of an electric bell.

"That's the Oak Room!" said the cook. "Go up, Tupper!"

Tupper went up.

He tapped at the door of the Oak
Room and opened it. Mr. Digby was in the armchair again, and he rose sharply as the page presented himself, with an angry glance of inquiry.

"You rang, sir!" said Tupper, in astonishment.

"What do you mean? I did not

"B-b-but you did, sir!" babbled Tupper. "The bell rang an ceful long time, sir; jest as if you was a-keeping of your finger on it, sir!"

"Nonsense! I did not ring!"

"B-b-but, sir-" Go away

Tupper backed out.
"Says he didn't ring!" Tupper said to the cook below. "That's the second time. Why, there goes the blooming bell again!"

Buzzzzzzzzz!

" Go up again, Tupper!"

What's the good of going up, when the bloke says he didn't ring, after I've climbed all them stairs?" said Tupper resentfully.

"You do your duty, my boy!" said the cook. "You ought to be glad to wait on the pore young man!"

"Well, so I am!" said Tupper.

"I'd walk a mile for 'im! But it sin't no good going up and down. ain't no good going up and down stairs for nothink!"

The bell was still buzzing, as if a

continual pressure was kept upon it; as indeed was the case. Tupper hurried off in a state of resentful bewilderment.

Mr. Digby leaped from his chair in

great irritation as the page put his shock-head in at the door.
"You rang, sir!" "Is this a practical joke?" demanded Mr. Digby savagely. "What do you mean by continually coming here and saying that I rang, when I have not touched the bell at all?"
"You—you ain't touched the bell!"

"You—you an't touched the bell!"
gasped Tupper.
"Certainly not!"
"Then it's ghostses!" said Tupper.
"The bell was a-ringing like anythink downstairs, sir!"
"Nonsense!"
"You—you don't want anythink, sir?"
"No! Go away!"

"Werry good, sir!"

Published

Every Monday

Tupper retired, and Mr. Digby threw himself into the chair again, with an angry, moody brow. It was incredible that the house-page should venture to play practical jokes upon him; yet there seemed no other ex-planation—to Mr. Digby. While Tupper was in a state of utter bewilderment, for as he went to the regions below stairs, he heard the buzzing of an electric bell, and the voice of the

"Why don't you go to the Oak Room, Tupper, and see what Mr. Digby wants?"

"I jest been!" howled Tupper. "And which he says as how he hasn't rung the bell at all, and ain't even touched it!"

Wby, it's ringing now!"

"How, it's ringing now!"

"I can 'ear it," said Tupper. "I ain't deaf! He's orf his bloomin' onion—that's what's the matter with 'im! Pulling my leg!"

"Go and see what he wants at once!"

With a groan, the hapless Tupper retraced his steps up the long staircaso. He tapped at the door of the Oak Room once more, and opened it. There was an exclumation of anger within.

"That boy again! Whatgasped Tuppor.

"I did not ring!" roared the captain. "If you enter this room again without my ringing for you, I will box your ears!"
"Oh lor!!"

Tupper jumped out and fled. Mr. Digby paced the room with knitted brows. This peculiar persecution was worrying him; but, at the same time. it was driving the haunting visions from his mind, and angry annoyance was a change from black, brooding despondency.

While he paced the room there was peace in the kitchen, but when he threw himself into the armchair again Tupper had to start once more on an upward journey. It was with fear and trepidation that the page ap-proached the door of the Oak Room and tapped.

"You rang, sir—"
Mr. Digby leaped from the armchair, strode across the room, and
caught Tupper by the collar before

he could escape.
With his free hand he caught up a

With his free hand he caught up walking-cane.
Whack, whack!
"Yaroooch!" roared Tupper.
"Elp! 'Elp! He's potty! 'Elp!"
"My dear Digby—"
It was Mr. Bootles' voice in the doorway. Mr. Digby released the hapless Tupper, flushing.
"Excuse me, uncle! This foolish boy has been playing a series of absurd practical jokes—"

"I sin't!" howled Tupper. "I wouldn't go for to do no such thing. I says he rang, and the cook'll say the same, and Selina, too. I come up 'ore hovery time ho rang, and now he pitches into me!"

I did not ring!" snapped Mr.

Digby.
"Tupper, you must not contradict!"
"Ob last!" gasped Tupper. "But "Oh, lor'!" gasped Tupper. "But I've got hears on my 'ead, sir!" "Leave the room, Tupper!"

Tupper was glad enough to got out of the Oak Room. He retired below to retail his injuries in thrilling tones. Mr. Bootles stepped into the Oak Room, and closed the door after the

#### The 6th Chapter. Very Cheerful!

" My dear Frank."

Mr. Digby stood on the hearthrug, his eyes glistening with anger, as Mr. Bootles sat down in the armchair. "Well, uncle?"

"You did not—ahem—ring?"
Mr. Digby gave a short laugh.
"I do not think I am off my head,
sir!" he said. "The boy has been
playing foolish tricks—"

Tap! "Come in!" said Mr. Bootles. It was Selina, the maid, who opened the door. Tupper had flatly opened the door. Tupper had flatly refused to answer any further summons to the Oak Room. "Not if it's the blessed push!" Tupper said emphatically. And so Selina came. "You rang, sir," said the maid. "Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr.

Bootles. He had feared for the moment, that his nephew's peculiar illness had taken an alarming turn. But now he was accused of ringing the bell himself. Mr. Bootles waxed wrath. "Selina! This is absurd! What do you mean?"

"Why, the bell's ringing now!" exclaimed Sclina.

"Bless my soul!"

Mr. Bootles jumped up.
"There must be something wrong with the bell!" he exclaimed.
"It's stopped now!" said Tupper's

voice from somewhere below.
"I did not rine. Selina," said Mr.
Bootles mildly. "The bell appears
to be out of order." He sat down
again. "Please—"

again. "Please-"
"It's a-ringing agin!" Tupper's excited voice up the stairs.
"Now you can see for yourself,
Selina! He'll say he never rang, he
will!"

gracious!" ejaculated Good Selina.

Captain Digby gave a start.
"There's something queer about his," he said. "The bell rings when you sit down, and stops when you get up. I remember I was seated each time that— Let mo look at that chair, uncle. There's a trick somewhere!"

Mr. Bootles rose from the chair, and the buzz of the bell below ceased,

Frank Digby turned back the cushion.
"My hat!" he ejaculated.
Mr. Bootles' eyes almost started through his spectacles at the sight of the flat bell-push in the armchair seat, and the wire running from it

under the hearthrug.
"Upon my word! What—"
Mr. Digby burst into a laugh.
"It's a trick!" he said. "Some

humorous youth in the school, I suppose—a practical joke."

But Mr. Bootles did not laugh.
He gazed at the bell-push and the wire with thunder gathering on his

"Bless my soul! Some disrespect-ful young rascal! I will inquire into this! I will—"

He hurried from the room. Selina retired, smiling. Captain Digby detached the bell-push from the arm-

chair, smiling, too.

Jimmy Silver had certainly succeeded, to some extent, in his amiable little scheme he had made amable little scheme—he had made the captain smile. Unfortunately, he hadn't made Mr. Bootles smile. And it was Mr. Bootles that Jimmy had to deal with.

Ten minutes later two very serious-looking youths stood in Mr. Bootles' study, casting unoasy glances at the cane in the Form-master's hand.

Mr. Bootles fixed upon them his most magisterial frown.

"Silver! Dodd!" he boomed.
"You were seen near the Oak Room
this afternoon. I have no doubt
whatever that it was you who played an absurd trick upon my nephew, a guest in this house!" "Hem!"

"Ahem!"
"Do you deny it?" exclaimed Mr. Bootles.

"N-no, sir! But—"
"I shall punish you severely!"
"We-we—" stammered Tommy

"We-we were trying to cheer up the captain, sir!" stuttered Jimmy Silver. "Just a lark, sir!"

"Bless my soul! You play absurd tricks upon an invalid, and tell me you were only trying to cheer him up!" ejaculated Mr. Bootles. "Are you out of your senses, Silver?"
"Nunne, sir! But—"
"Hold out your hand!"
"Oh dear!"
Suith amigh amigh!

Swish, swish! When the cane had done swishing. Jimmy Silver and Tommy Dodd limped out of Mr. Bootles study. In the passage they clasped their hands in anguish, and stared at one another speechlessly.
Tommy Dodd was the first to find

his voice. "You howling ass!" he gasped. " Ow!"

"You burbling, frabjous chump!"
"Look here—"

"You—you Classical jabberwock!" hissed Tommy Dodd. "Let me hear of any more of your stunts, that's all! Ow—wow—wow!"

And Tommy Dodd marched off, squeezing his hands in won. And Jimmy Silver squeezed his, and grunted dismally.

For some time after that Jimmy Silver did not expend much thought on cheering up the captain. He badly wanted cheering up himself.

THE END.

Be sure you read the Grand Christmas Tale of Jimmy Silver & Co.innext Monday's BOYS' FRIEND, entitled; "The Phantom Abbot."

#### A SPLENDID STORY OF STIRRING ADVENTURE & PERIL IN WILD AFRICA!

# THE LEAGUE OF THE STAR AND CRESCENT!

By JOHN S. MARGERISON.

#### INTRODUCTION.

INTRODUCTION.

DICK MURRAY, a midshipman on board H.M.S. Firecat, has orders to bring a derelict yawi safely to Gibraltar. With his second, an Irishman of the name of CASKY and a crew of some eighteen British sailors, he mans the salvaged vessel, the Maria Dolorosa. They find some plans to a secret hoard of money, deposited by the Kaiser in the late war, which documents are eagerly sought after by a secret sockety whose sign is the Star and Crescent. The crew of the Maria Dolorosa land on the coast of Africa, where they discover is situated the headquarters of the league they are trying to avoid. During a fight which casues, Dick and his men are shown a way of escape by Yussuf, Dick's servant. This leads to the great fortress which commands the whole town. The Britishers take charge of the fortress, and prepare to resist the onslaught which the Moors are about to make. Moors are about to make.

(Now read on.)

#### The Attack I

Dick turned and cast a swift eye over his defences.

All machine-guns, load :" he cried.

"Hold your fire!"
The place was filled with a series of faint clicks as the machine-gun drums were pressed into place, and the weapons were trained through the now opened slits in the armour upon the crowd. Every blue acket—and they manned a dozen of the guns between them—could see the forces which were opposed to the Firecats, and each one grinned in anticipation

of a roully good fight. Like waves on a sea-shore the grey-robed masses advanced, the older men leading, supported by the real soldiers, and the youths and boys in receive. From the upper windows of the houses, women and young girls leaned, shouting encouragement to the Moors, and shaking their fists threateningly at Dick and his fol-

Suddenly, as at the word of com-mand, the first rank of the grey, on-rushing mass flung itself to the earth in the very centre of the square, and, Tying down, loaded its rifles. Then, like one, the weapons came up to the present, each man taking careful aim at the loopholes through which the grim noses of the machine-guns now

"Steady lads!" cried "They're just about to open fire!"
Casey grinned, and clicked over a switch, and immediately the steel shutters of the loopholes slid noise-lessly and swiftly into place, just as they had been intended to do by their original designer. At the same moment the sound of the rifle volley came from the outside, and the men could hear the nickel-exated bullets spattering against the steel walls and shutters like raindrops against an ordinary glass window.

The shutters clid back, and again Dick was able to see the attackers As the first rank reloaded, the second opened fire, and so short was the range and so excellent was their aim that fully half the bullets this time sang through the open shutters, and brought up with faint "phuts" against the far steel wall, dropping harmlessly on to the gun positions

and the floor.
"What a murthering match we could have with that crowd packed like berrings in a canteen box, mused Casey, as he watched the remainder of the Cadi's horde advance to the futile attack. "Sure we'd waste no lead if we shut our eyes and blazed away into the thick of 'em; and them seems workers at the and them saucy wenches at the winders would be so busy crying for their sweethearts and husbands they'd have no time to shake their fists and call us names. And I never did like being miscalled by a potticoat, white or nigger colour, sor."
Dick smiled and shook his head.

"We sha'n't fire on them yet, Casey," he said. "It would be too much like murder. But if they don't soon realise that we're impregnable. I'm afraid I shall have no option. I rife practice? I see your old friend Hadji is in the crowd around the Cadi, with his head bound up, so you couldn't have done worse than crack

his skull last night. Here, take these glasses, and look for yourself."

The Irishman took the glasses, and

peered intently into the crowd. Then, handing them back, he took up his rifle, peered along the sights quite openly, in utter disregard of a swarm of Moorish bullets that buzzed around his ears like bees-for the enemy could see his head at the look-out aperture, and had taken instant advantage of the target it presented—and finally pressed the trigger. Dick, watching, saw Hadji suddonly coase talking to the Cadi, saw a look of surpriso cross the Moor's face, as he clapped a hand to his shoulder and

then totter and fall.

"Bullseye, Casey!" said Dick approvingly. "That's given them something to think of. Hallo! There's that officer of the guard trying to climb the ramparts. He won't do any harm if he and his tribe win into the courtyard, but to have them too close will be somewhat uncomfortable for us. Lads, get your rifles, and do a bit of practice against the next Bisley meeting. We can't let there beggars have thing all their own

There was a small cheer, as the impatient mon, whose fingers had simply itched to feel their triggers. set aside the more deadly machine-guns for the time being, and unslung their less formidable weapons. And now the humming of the enomies' bullets was punctuated by the sharp crack of the Britishers' weapons, and though Dick's men, thanks to the protection of the steel armour and the narrowness of their loopholes, were still untouched, three or four Moorish soldiers soon found that it would have been wise for them to withdraw from

the fight a little sconer.
"I thought the rifle play would stop them!" muttered Dick. "But it doesn't seem as if I'd thought right. Hallo! The Cadi's got himself a horse-a fine animal, too, 11c's riding this way. They are bringing up a standard. Crikey! It's the standard of the League—a silver star and crescent on a red ground. This is a shindy-a real war. Makes me feel a little bit like what Horatius must have folt when he guarded the bridge and gave Luna hard steel to bite on. Here's twenty men or less against twenty thousand-long odds enough. And yet, by the strangeness of Fate, we can laugh at the whole affair. We're properly bearding the lion in his den; and a jolly good den it is,

His eyes lit up with the exhilaration of the fight, but he didn't allow his enthusiasm and excitement to run away with his commonsense. stood, his fingers opening and closing with the itch to come to grips with his foe, he was watching all that foe's movements. He noted how the two waves of riflemen who had opened the ball had swiftly fallen back when they found the quarry could bite; he watched how the Cadi called all his captains, and how, apparently in answer to his orders, the grey coated masses closed on the centre in one

compact mass.
"There' evidence of German training in that mass formation, sir!" said Weardale, a seaman who had been at Antwerp with the Royal Naval Division. "I wouldn't mind betting they've had Huns to teach 'em to fight."

"Well, we've whacked Hun teaching before to-day," said Dick, with a grin. "And, as things stand, I think we can do so again. They've got as much chance against us as they would have if we were aboard Firecat and they in open boats. But, from what I can see, they mean business this time. They're going to try and overwhelm us by sheer numbers.

Woll, thank Heaven we've get machine guns to answer that challenge with. Get your drums ready, lads, and fire with my orders!"

The garrison coased rifle-fire, as they once more swung the Lewis muzzles squarewards, the little bronzed circles menseing the Moors. Then, outside, a trumpet shrilled sud-Then, outside, a trumpet shrilled suddenly, and a wild yell went up into the air. A few riflemen discharged their pieces, and then fell an uncanny

as the grey coated ones fell to their knees. Even the Cadi and the captains joined in the prayers, their backs towards the fortress, while the red stardard of the League rose and dipped three times. A muczin on a minaret back in the town chanted some inusical words that Dick could not eatch, and the standard dipped gain. The Moors, having carried though this part of their procording to plan, now rose, at a swond blare from the aj . broke into a run, and a opa ked, secreed mass swept down Sparan

A Brutsh cite, makied and that was all. The M is, mad with the A British (die. rackied and that was all. The M rs. mad with the lust of battle yelled discordantly, and fixed their pieces harmlessly against the steel walls. There seemed little ore or method in their ourushing; they were lift a solid grey wave hurrying to smash itself against the ram arts of the world; they seemed to be the little that there was every to care little that there was every likelihood of their being killed or badly wounded in the attempt.

On they came, and Dick felt a queer cold feeling clutch at his heart. What if there should be some screet way through the ramparts some weak spot, whereby this grey horde could win rate the interior of the citade? In a hunder chand light it could only be a latter of moments before he and he gallant crew went under, for, wave as they were, odds of a thou-and to one were a little too heavy for victory to he assured. The Moors must not be allowed to come too close. On the realisation Dick acted.

Stand by!" His order was a wild yell, and the mattle lust rang in its every one. "Aim low, wasto no amon EHRE!"

The air thickened with the stuttering and stammering of the machinemutilation in a pitiless stream. was as if load was squirted from a dozen heseripes into that serried mass. The front r. iks, as the guns mass. The front r, iks, as the gons sweat their deadly muzzles fron, side to de, crompled up and fell where they fact the good and subsequent raths fell back little, terrified, dismayed, at this miden development. And then, as the machine guns commenced their dreadful spraying again, the gary crafted soldiers of the Star and Coscout fell back, turned, and made cartety like fiends. satety like fiends.

They never halted until they eaches the over of the streets, hough the machine-guns, after that irst terrible burst which had left the square with still figures, coased their ful tire.

and then, quite suddenly, with a white flag tied to a spear-shaft, and most tred on horses, unarmed, there came three men from the streets, and rode towards the still frowning fort.

Here they come to make terms, said Dick, peering through his glasses. The centre one is the Cadi himself, and, Casey, you are a rotten shot, after all—the chap on the left is the much battered Hadji. But who is tais chap on the right; I can't see his face properly?"

Then Dick started, and whistled, and nearly fell from his lofty perch with ast nishment. For the wind had suchienly blown aside the swathe of burnous that hid the third man's and revealed to the lad and the flicer was none other than their supposed friend and help

shirtwing the three mounted neross the square, the Inch flattering white eleth on the spear-shaft tree protection than a suit of a more plate. But, though they did not live, the bluejackets kept the neuzzles of their machine-guns trained on the trio, for, as Matthews said:
You never knows what those reffer coloured chaps il be up to, and it's always as well to be on the safe side."

Dick sheather his automatic, and Dick sheather his automated the alloyed his binoculars to fall to the alloyed his binoculars to fall to the alloyed their sling. Then, full length of their sling. Then, pushing aside the steel shutter, he steepped out in full view on to the little ironwork balcony on the outside of the wall.

At sight of him, the three men on who had by this time prived at a spot immediately outside the gate, remed in, and as Ahmed Pen Adeem shot a glange of hatred and malignancy at the slim figure of the lad. Yound the Moor dropped a little behind him, and Dick was surprised to see a luge wink pass from that dusky gentleman's face in his own direction. Cas , joining his master, guffawed at the sight.

"Tis a wink of another kind ye'll

wearing, Mister Yussuf, if so be as yo're trying to double-cross us," whichered the Irishman; and Dick, turning his head, could see the unholy highting light in the petry-officer's eyes. But before he could pass any

answering remark, the full voice of

Published Every Monday

"Greetings, oh warrior of few sum-mers but many strategies!" said the Moor. "Greetings and salaams! I come to offer thee and thy warriors terms of elemency, out of my great love for thee!"

"A lot of ice that love wouldcut.
I'm sure," was Dick's reply. "And
say, Cadi, don't you think you're
rather exceeding the bounds of a joke to come here and offer us terms? But let's hear what you've got to say. It may be amusing, and we haven't laughed for a long time. Say

on, Cadi; we've got plenty of time."
"Time to starve, and to have your throats cut!" snarled Hadji: but the

Cadi silenced him with a gesture.

"This do I offer these O Midshipman Effent" said the Cadi, butting in. "Thou shalt give up to me possession of the fortress, and hand over to use the secret writings we know of, and that by the time the sun reaches the mountide to day. That is what I require of thee. And if the fortress and the papers are again much by that time, then shall thyself and thy followers be allowed to return immolested to the house ye vacated last night, and there dwell in pouce and security till such time as it shall be decided what is eventually to be done with ye. Nor shall I reproach thee for the death of many of my followers, nor the wounds thou hast inflicted on as many more; they shall be as things that never were, and

your heart being warm for us, when we know full well that the minute we stepped outside those gates you and your mob would fall on us, and batter us to little bits, out of revenge. But, look here, you seem pretty anxious to get hold of this fortress again. We'll leave the papers aside for the moment, since, as I dare say you know, they are no longer in our possession, nor do any of us know where they may be hidden, though we have

n good idea. Here Die a good idea. Here Dick looked intently at Yussuf, whose face, however, showed no signs that the shaft had gone home. Indeed, he repeated his pre-

home. Indeed, he repeated his previous wink, and in answer Casey raised a fist like a leg of mutton, and shook it in the Moor's direction.

"Well, we'll give up your fort, Cadi," said Dick, after a pause.

"Don't look so pleased about it till you've hear all we've got to say. We'll give up your fort when you swear, by the board of the Prophet and on the open Koran -I believe these are two earts you Modung days. those are two oaths you Moslems dare not break-that you will not only set us all, unharmed, at liberty, and provide us with a fully-provisioned, fully-fueled, fast motor-boat to take us back to Gibraltar, but will also hand back to us the papers that have been the cause of all this fuss. There you are. Cadi-those are my terms. and you'd better fall in with them. No, don't imagine that you will be able to carry this fortress by storm: you've already had a taste of our

grin. said the Irishman, with a "And now, be off with ye, afore we forget that ye're covered by that dirty tablecloth and waste a bullet on ye're filthy ould careass! The fact is, we've got all the cards, and ye know it. Indeed, if ye don't see reason soon, we'll cut off the town's support of water—we're already holders of all the grub that ye haven't got in ye're dirty ould shops—and bring ye to ye're senses that way. If ye want to be rid of us in a pleasant manner. just ye carry out Lieutenant Murray's orders as regards the safe-conduct. the boat, and the swearing on the Koran, and we'll leave yo in peace. Believe me, 'twould be much better for ye to do that it'd save ye such heaps of trouble'"

Then, with a gesture to his com-punions, the Cadi record round his horse, and they raced across the town square back to their own people.

As the Cadi and his two followers rejoined the ranks of the men--Hadji, turning round and contemptuously casting into the square the white flag that had served them so well-the Moors swarmed round them.

Dick suddenly clutched Casey's arm. "Ladders!" he said. "They're going to try and take the place in the "They're style of the Middle Ages. Well, I think we shall be able to deal with that little matter presently."

Long steel ladders had been prowith these, a second rank of warriors,

HOW TO PLAY COTBALL An International. No Fancy Tricks on a Slippery Ground.

If, when you go on the field, you find that the surface of the ground is slippery, then make up your minds -every one of you-that during the match you won't try to radulge in fancy tricks. A slippery ground does not permit of players doing elaborate twists and turns. There is only one type of play which pays on such a surface, and that is the "straight ahead all the time" method.

Remember, too, that when the ball slippery, and the surface greasy, is slippery, and the surface greasy, it pays distinctly well to hustle the full-backs of the opposing side. Most full-backs will make a fairly goed clearance if they get their boot fair and square on a dry ball, and are given plenty of time in which to complete the clearance. But if the ball is slippery, and the ground treacherous, then full-backs are and to make mistakes. And if the forto make mistakes. And if the for-wards have followed up, they will be able to avail themselves of the blunders which are inevitably made by full-backs sooner or later.

As a matter of fact, following up is always worth while. Don't assume that the full back will make a good clearance. He may blunder. If he does not do so, it can't be helped; but if he does miskick, and you haven't followed up, it is clear that you won't be able to take advantage of the blunder. So keep on worrying, arrangally if the hell is climper. especially if the ball is slippery.

#### Keep Fit.

December is usually the period of the sesson when heavy grounds are experienced—days on which the mud lings to the hoots of the players. This, of course, makes football into This, of course, makes football into even harder work than it is at ordinary times, hence the special necessity for every player to go on the field in the very best physical condition. Don't imagine that you will be all right without looking after yourself. A thing which is worth doing is worth doing well, and, in order that you may be successful on the football field, it is imperative that you should be fit to stay the page. you should be fit to stay the pace right through ninety minutes of a gruelling game on a bad ground.

Many a match has been lost because a team, which was really better than its opponents, have been in such indifferent condition that they have been unable to last out the whole game. Start strongly, of course, and get one or two goals up before your opponents have settled down, if you can possibly manage it, but don't then assume that the game is all right, and that you can leave it to your defenders to pull the side through.

#### The First Half.

It is with the object of getting ahead in the first half of the game that most wise captains of football clubs decide to play with the elements in their favour if they win the toss. A following wind is a great advantage, and when your side has the choice of ends, always play with this wind behind you. It will help you to attack during the first hulf, and, provided that the strength of the competing sides is something like equal, your opponents will probably have to work so hard to keep you out during the first half that they will be feeling a hit tired when the second half is entered upon

There are also quite effective ways of using the wind, and forwards especially should bear in mind that there is a breeze blowing towards their opponents' goal, it should be used as a help to score goals. By that I mean that, with the wind behind them, forwards should avail themselves of every possible oppor-tunity for firing the ball towards the opposing goulkeeper. Shoot as often as you possibly can when there is a wind to give additional force to your shots.

The wind will, in addition to carrying the ball goalwards at a great speed, probably make it curl in such way that the goalkeeper will be deserved and herten. Put on full sail when you have the wind behind you, and lose no opportunity for taking a pot-shot at your opponents'

(More on How to Play Football" in next Monday's Boys' FRIEND.)



GIANT EYE! Dick and his men could not refrain from laughing foudly at the futile efforts of the attacking Moore on the outer shell of the steel fortress, shown clearly to them by the giant periscope. THROUGH CIANT EYE! A

thou and thine shall live under my

powerful protection in Eleazar"

"Very good of you, Cadi, I'm
sure," star Dick, "Really magnanmous, what? But suppose we decide
to stay where we are? What then?"
The Cadi's face became on the
instant a study in hatred.

"Then shall yo neither sleep nor
rest day nor night," he answered.

" My men shall attack ye at all hours, and keep ye so busy that your evelids shall become as lead, and your bodies suffer the tortures of exhaustion, of hunger, and thirst. And in the end, when ye shall have been worn out. then will I take each of you and put ye all to the torture by fire, and finally your heads shall be struck off and mounted on spear-heads, so that strangers coming to Eleazar shall see and take warning. That will I do if ye are obdurate, and so shall both the fortress and the papers come back to me in the end. So take ye advantage of my elemency whilst yet my heart is soft towards ye, and provoke me not by obstinacy.

He broke off short, for both the midshipman and the Irish petty-officer had thrown back their heads. and were laughing heartily.

"I thought your net would be funny. Cadi." said Dick, at last.
"And it's funnier than I expected.
Really, now, you must think we're simple, to be taken in by the tale of of time thinking out, Whiskers,"

mettle, and next time we perhaps sha'n't be so merciful."

The Moor threw up his hands in a

gesture of rage.

"Beardless boy," he snarled,
"thy days, even thy very hours, are
numbered. Remember that I told
thee about the explosives stored
below the fortress—remember that
the pressure of a hand on a firingand thou, and all thy band

minglo with the dust that blows in the wind. That shall be thy fate, and that this day. I have spoken."

"Here, hold on a minute, Cadi," said Casey, intercepting still a third wink from Yussuf. "You've overlooked one fact, sheik. You don't know where that electric-knob is, and you describe to the country of the country you daren't, for your very life, touch it without express orders from the chiefs of your league, who're hundreds of miles away."

The expression on the old Moor's face told that the petty-officer's shalt

had sunk home. He reeled back in his saddle, and would have fallen had not the ever-present Yussuf put out a hand to save him. His face went ashy grey under its tan, and he goggled at the speaker and the mid-

shipman. "Where-where learnt ye that?"

protected each by those miniature shields, sneaked out along the ground and reinforced their fellows. And, yard by yard, the thin line of steel approached the fort, rifles crackling.

And at last they won to the foot of the walls, and, the ladders, still operated from behind the shields, were placed on end. And then a strange thing happened—happened at Dick's orders, for the lad was bent on fooling the Moors now to the top of their bent. The aimour shutters awing to, and sealed themselves without even the faintest click, and the fortress presented a solid wall of steel to the attackers. Only, on the very top of the building, through a latelydiscovered periscope of huge size, the defenders watched the tactics of their antagonists.

This periscope, through a series of powerful lenses, threw on a wall, as a cinema lantern threws on a screen, an accurate presentiment of the happenings outside. And though these hap-penings were designed to inflict upon hemselves sudden and horrible death. these strange sailormen simply stood at their various posts and watched the display, roaring with laughter.

(Another lang instalment of this grand yarn in next Monday's Boys' FRIEND.

049

#### A LONG COMPLETE CANADIAN SCHOOL STORY!

Every Monday



A Grand Complete Story the School in the Backwoods.

# By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

#### The 1st Chapter. Honk's Latest Stunt!

Frank Richards was frowning.
His chums noticed it at once, when they came in from skating on the frozen creek, and met Frank in the playground of the backwoods school.
In a corner of the playground, by

In a corner of the playground, by the wood-pile, there was a little crowd of the Codar Creek fellows, and prominent among them was Bunker H. Honk, the youth from Chicago.

Master Honk, with his long thin nose blue with the cold, was addressing the other fellows in eager tones.

Frank was glancing towards him with a deep frown on his brow, when Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc came in, carrying their skates.

Bob clapped his cousin on the

in, carrying their skates.

Bob clapped his cousin on the shoulder, in his cheery way.

"What's the row? he asked.

"Not exactly a row, Bob——"

"Something's happened to disturb your lofty serenity, old scout," said Bob, laughing. "Have you been rowing with the Honk-bird?"

"Well, not rowing," said Frank, cautiously. "I've told him what I think of him."

Bob chuckled.

"I've only told him ports," he said.

"I've only told him ports," he said.
"It would take too long to tell Honky all that I think of him."
"But what's he done now, Frank?"

asked Beauclerc.

asked Beauclerc.
Frank Richards gave a grunt.
"He's getting up a sweepstake among the fellows—"
"Oh!" said Bob, his expression changing a little. "Is that it?"
"That's it," growled Frank. "He's selling tickets now at a quarter each. Miss Meadow would be no end annoyed if she knew."
"A sweepstake!" said Beauclerc.
"But there's no race going on at

"A sweepstake!" said Beauciere.
"But there's no race going on at this time of the year—"
"It's not a race. You can have a sweep on anything, of course. It's really a gamble," said Frank. "He's been explaining it to me. He's got fifty-two tickets to sell at a quarter of a dollar each—that's the number of course in a pack, you know. Ace of dollar each—that's the number of cards in a pack, you know. Ace of spades is the winning horse I mean the winning card—and there's prizes for the other aces. All the other cards are blank."

"Oh, I see."

"I guess——" began Bob Lawless, and he paused. There was a tinge of red in his bronzed cheek.

"There'll be thirteen dollars in the pool," went on Frank. "That's fifty-two tickets at a quarter each. Ace of

spaces a dollar each. That's the scheme."

"And what does Honk get for his trouble in gotting up the sweep?"

asked Beauclere. "Oh, nothing!" He's doing it for the sport of the thing, he says, and just takes one chance with the rest, putting in his quarter like all the others."

Beauclere raised his eyebrows.
"That isn't much like Honk," he rid. "I should have fancied he wanted to make a sure thing for himself."

"Well, that's what he says. Lots of the fellows are going in for it," said Frank crossly. "He's just been

bothering me to buy a ticket."
"What did you say?" asked Bob curiously.

"Something emphatic," answered frank. It's just gambling, and it isn't made any better by calling it a sweep. Of course, it's got to be kept secret. Miss Meadows would jolly soon put a stop to it if she knew. I don't like keeping beastly secrets, and rucelying about with a secrets. and sneaking about with something on my conscience."

" Hem !" "Houk started it while we were away in the north-west," continued Frank. "If we'd been here we might Frank. "If we'd been here we might have nipped it in the bud. But it's too far gone now. Nearly all the tickets have been sold, I believe. That ass Todgers stuck me for a quarter, to buy a ticket. I didn't know what he wanted it for. Hopkins has bought five or six, I believe. Dawson and Lawrence and Diaz have two each. Yen Chin has four."

Dawson and Lawrence and Diaz have two each. Yen Chin has four."
"There seems to be rather a run on them, I guess."
"Yes, Honk has only half a dozen left to sell," said Frank. "No good thinking of chipping in now, I suppose. But it ought to be stopped."

Bob Lawless' face, for some reason,

"I don't quite see where the 'of course' comes in," said Bob, a little tartly. "Honk says it's a bit of sport—"

"You've heard about it, then?"

"Well, he can say it's a bit of sport if he likes, but it's really gumbling, same as playing poker or fare, at the Red Dog in Thompson," said Frank Richards. "I told him

"Franky, old scout, you mustn't set up as a preacher, you know. There's Mr. Smiley at the mission, who does that stunt for this section, and you oughtn't to take his trade away."

Frank stared at his Canadian cousin.
"Bob!" he ejaculated.
"You see—" said Bob.

it's

had grown very red.
"You-you think
Franky?" he asked.

said Frank Richards.

He paused again.

" Well?"

Of course.

"Surc.

claimed Frank, as Bob Lawless hosi-tated. "I'm surprised you don't see

tated. "I'm surprised you don't see it, too, Bob."
"Well, perhaps I should, if I'd thought about it," said Bob candidly.
"But galoots act without thinking sometimes. You see, we haven't all your powerful intellect, Franky—"
"Don't be an ass, Bob, I'm not preaching, either. But I don't like having a rotten secret to keep from Miss Meadows. If it was all right, she wouldn't be down on it, I suppose; and you know she would be down on it."
"I—I suppose she would" said Bob thoughtfully. "I never—I never thought of it before, but—but I suppose she would."

were going in for it, and offered me

ticket. I took it, and here it is. Bob Lawless drew a shp of card-board from his pocket.

Upon it was written the number 35, with the initials in B. H. Honk's well-known straggling "fist" "B. H. H.

That entitles me to a draw, I've got to be on hand when the cards are dealt out in the old corral. If I get an acc-"

Frank smiled a little.

"So you're in it, Bob?"
"Yep."

"Yep."

"I wasn't preaching at you, old chap. But—I'm not going back on what I said. It's gambling pure and simple, though you never thought of looking at it in that light. And gambling's wrong. Now I've got that off my chest, I'll say no more about it."

Bob Lawless stood twirling the cardboard slip in his fingers.

He was very uneasy.
Without giving any thought to the matter, the careless, good-natured rancher's son had "come in" to Honk's little scheme. Now that he was in it, he was not wholly inclined to listen to the voice of wisdom. His expression showed that he thought Frank was taking a rather too severe

view of a trifling matter.
"After all, it's only a game," he

"There's money on it,"

"There's money on it."

"Yep. But it's our own money; we put it up at a quarter of a dollar each, you know, and every fellow's willing to take the risk."

"It's gambling," grunted Frank; "and that kind of things makes bitter blood. Lots of the fellows can't really afford to lose even a quarter of a dollar. And they oughtn't to want to bag other fellows cash. And gambling leads to swindling; the two are always found together. I've are always found together. I've heard my father talking about the

Frank glanced at Beauclero in

"Here's a go!" he said ruefully.
"Now Bob's got his back up. I wasn't slanging Bob—only that sharp rotter. Heads." rotter. Honk.

"Bob will come round, he said, "He's acted rather carelessly, and he don't like being called over the coals.

"Well, I wasn't calling him over the coals, was I?"

"Ahem! Hallo, here comes Chunky!"

Chunky Todgers joined the two chums as Bob disappeared into the

schoolhouse.

There was a very sharp, in fact, greedy, expression on Todgers' fat

face.
"I say, Franky—"
"Hallo!" grunted Frank Richards.
He was feeling very ruffled and sore
just then — Bob's attitude worried
him He wondered, too, whether he him. He wondered, too, whether he had been a little "preachy." He had

not meant to be.
"Can you lend me another quarter,
Frank?"

" No."

"Woll, I guess you might be civil about it, anyhow," said Chunky. "Can you lend me a quarter, Beau-

"What for!" smiled Beauclere.

"What for!" smiled Beauclere.
"Honk's only got a few tickets left." said Chunky Todgers confidentially. "You know about the sweep, of course. Well, he's sold them up to number forty-eight. There's lifty-two in all. I want to take a second chance."
"Bats!"

"Rats!"
"You might lend me a quarter.
I'll atand you a whack out of the prize if I get it."
"If!" grinned Beauclerc.
"Well, the more tickets I take, the

more chance there is, you know," said Chunky Todgers. "I say, lend me a quarter..."
"Bow-wow!"

Frank and Beauclere walked away. Chunky blinked after them, and in a minute or so came puffing in "I say, Frank, will you lend me a

"I say, Frank, will you lend me a quarter to buy some maple sugar at Gunten's Store?" he howled.
"No!" snapped Frank, without turning his head.
A bell rang, and the Cedar Creek fellows began trooping towards the house for dinner. Frank Richards met Bob Lawless' glance as he came into the dining-room of the lumber school: and Bob's look was rather school; and Bob's look was rather grim. Evidently he still had a feel-ing that he had been called over the coals by his chum, and did not like

Frank's face was clouded during

dinner.

The thought that a coolness should The thought that a coolness should arise between him and his chum over a stunt of Bunker H. Honk's, was very exasperating. He was feeling inclined to fasten a finger and thumb upon B. H. Honk's long, thin nose, and twist it hard. But owing to that unfortunate difference of opinion, Bob seemed to be rather in the position of a defender of B. H. Honk

on this occasion, little as he liked tho astute youth as a rule.

Coming out of the dining-room after dinner, Chunky Todgers caught hold of Frank's sleeve.

"I say, Franky—" he gasped.
"Shurrup!"
"Will you lend me—"

"Will you lend me-

"A quarter—"
"Buzz off!
"To give to a poor, blind man!"

said Chunky Todgers pathetically.
"No!" roared Frank Richards.
He shook the persistent Chunky off.

and went out into the playground. Bob Lawless strolled in another

#### The 3rd Chapter. Frank Richards Gives in!

"I guess you'd better come into the scoop, Richards."
Frank Richards was following Bob

across the playground, and had nearly overtaken him, when the Chicago schoolboy came up briskly. Bunker H. Honk was always brisk, and generally in a hurry. He always had the air of a fellow who found life too both of the survey in the s short for his many interests. Though really what Honk had to be so busy

about was rather a mystery.

"Put up your quarter and take your chance with the rest," urged Bunker H. Henk, heedless of Frank Richards' frown. "I guess Miss Moadows won't spot this leetle stunt, if you're afraid of the schoolmarm."

"You silly ass!" growled Frank.

"You silly ase!" growled Frank.
"I'm not afraid."
"What's your trouble, then?"
asked Honk.

"Haven't you ever heard of a chep

And Bob Lawless walked away to the lumber schoolhouse, whistling. "Bob!"

The Canadian schoolboy did not look back as Frank called.

"That Chicago bounder ought to be scragged," said Beauclere,
"Hem!" nurmured Bob,
"Suppose we scrag him?" sug-

TROUBLE FOR THE SWEEPSTAKE PROMOTER! Many hands were laid upon the with the result that he was "up-ended" in the enow. The Cedar Creek fellows were in no mood to be triffed with, especially by the Yankee Bunker H. Honk!

gested Frank Richards, "You-you see--stammered

Bob. "What?"

rotten,

...1-1--"Get it off your chest, old man.

"I-I've taken a ticket, you see," blurted out Bob Lawless, with a very red face. "Oh!"

#### The 2nd Chapter. No Quarter !

Frank Richards coloured. In his wrath and indignation at Bunker H. Honk's latest stint, it had never occurred to him that his cousin and chum had fallen a victum

to that very cute youth's wiles.
"You!" he exclaimed.
"You're an ass, Bob!" remarked Beauclere.

Bob looked very uncomfortable. "You-you see--"
"I see it's a rotten game," ex- a sweep, and that most of the fellows

"I can't quite swallow that-with Honk in it." "Rats"

purely a matter of chance.

here-

"Look here, Bob--" "My dear chap," said Bob. "If you're going to do the Smiley stunt, I'm off. I have enough of it from Smiley to last me through the

gaming casinos in Europe; every one

of them a den of swindlers, where silly tourists go in to be fleeced."
"But there's no swindling

"I'm not so jolly sure of that. Honk expects to bug the prize, or ho wouldn't take the trouble to get the

Bob knitted his brows.

"Look here, Frank, I don't agree with you. The cards are going to be

dealt out, one to each chap, and nothing can be fairer than that. It's

not doing a thing because it's wrong?" asked Frank sarcastically.

wrong?" asked Frank sareastically. Honk grinned.
"I calculate that cuts no ice with me," he said. "Where's the harm in a little flutter? Your pard Lawless has taken a ticket. I've got only two more to sell, and the draw comes off to-day in the old corral. I want the hull caboodle to be sold before the draw or the vision will be smaller. draw, or the prizes will be smaller.
Come now, can't I interest you in a ticket for the Cedar Creek Sweep?"
"No, bother you!"
"I say, Honk, I'll take one!" sang out Chunky Todgers.
"""

"Got the spondulies?"

"N-nol But-"Then stow your chin!" growled lonk. "This hyer sweep isn't run 

"Go and eat coke!" said Frank, "What about you, Beauclere!" "Go and chop chips!" said Beau-

chere, laughing.

Bunker H. Honk gave a snort.

"Only two tickets left, and you two galoots are skeered to take them!" he exclaimed contemptuously. "It gets my goat, it do really! Jest as gets my goat, it do really! Jest as if you think Miss Meadows is watchin' you out of her window—"

"It's not that, you silly owl!" snapped Frank Richards. "I say,

Bob Lawless grunted. "I don't see why you can't take the tickets, you two," he said.

"But—"
"I've taken one, said Bob warmly. "Isn't what's good enough for me good enough for you?"
"Yes, of course. But—" stam-

mored Frank. "Oh, they're sure skeered!" said Bunker H. Honk. "If there's a row about it you'll be landed with the rest of us, Lawless, but Richards will be able to say that he wasn't one of Vah!

the naughty hovs! And Honk laughed derisively. Frank Richards flushed scarlet.

He knew it was weakness to be affected by such a taunt from a fellow like Honk; but it did affect him all the same. The thought of standing clear from a possible "row" in which his above would be "row" in which his chum would be involved, very uncomfortable one. He had in-tended to keep clear of the precious "sweep" from a sense of what was right, certainly not from fear of the consequences.

But if Bob was in it-Frank felt in his pockets for a quarter."

"Give me the ticket!" he said

graffly.

B. H. Honk smiled genially.

"Now you're talkin!" he said.

He packeted the quarter, and handed Frunk, in exchange, a slip of eardboard hearing the humber 51. Frank slipped it into his pocket, knitting his brows as he did so.

Without a word, Vere Beauelere handed over a quarter to the Chicago schoolboy, and received a slip numbered 52.

Bunker II. Honk grinned with satis-

faction.
The "draw" had been fixed for that day, after lessons, and although there had been a rush on the tickets at first, Houk had found the last dozen or so rather difficult to dispose of. so rather difficult to dispose of. There were plenty of fellows at Ceduc Creek with too much "hoss-sense" to risk their pocket-money in a gamble. Now the whole of the lifty-two tickets had been disposed of, and Bunker Hill Honk had the total sum of thirteen

dollars in his pockets.

According to the terms of the sweep, it was not to remain there, unless Honk himself drow the booky

In that, he was to stand precisely the same chance us the rest.

But Frank Richards had his doubts. It did not seem to him probable that so exceedingly sharp and business-like a youth as Honk would take the trouble and risk of getting up the sweep for nothing.
Somehow, B. H. Honk intended to

The Chicago youth walked away, his thin nose elevated in the sir, with a strut of satisfaction.

Frank Richards & Co looked at one

another. "Now we're all in the soup, if it comes out," observed Beauclerc.
"Sink or swim together." said
Frank. "You needn't keep your silly

back up any longer, Bob,' Bob looked uneasy. "I guess I wish you hadn't come

into it," he said frankly. "I wish I hadn't either. I was a silly jay to let that knife-blade galoot jaw me over. I—I was in the wrong, Franky. I wish you'd kept out of the thing. There'll be a row if Miss Meadows spots it."
"We'll face the music together,

then," said Frank, as cheerfully as he could.

"Can't be helped now," said Beauclerc, "Come and get some snow-balling before lessons."

Frank Richards found some slight satisfaction in snowballing Bunker Hill Honk, and chasing that youth round the playground with snowballs.

Honk was wrathy and indignant. Snowballing was fun, but it wasn't buriness, and he lived for business. Dodging snowballs was an unprofitable waste of energy.

He found it necessary to dodge them, all the same; and he was quite breathless by the time the bell rang for afternoon classes.

Frank Richards had a very uncomfortable feeling as he took his place in Miss Meadows' class that afternoon in the lumber schoolhouse.

It was the first time that he had not cared to meet the calm, clear eyes of the Canadian schoolmistress.

He knew that the "little sweep" was wrong, and that he ought not to have joined in it. He had not even the excuse that he had acted thought-lessly, without realising what he was doing. doing. ... Ho had allowed Bunker II. Honk's

mocking banter to force him in, added to his desire not to appear to be judging his chum.

It was too late to think about it now, but it made him feel extremely uncomfortable under the eyes of Miss Meadows.

it came outlle could not help thinking of that. fully enough for any ordinary schoolboy escapade; but it was a different matter to face the music for wrong-

And the satisfied grin that haunted Bunker Honk's face that afternoon had a very exasperating effect upon him.

His yearning was stronger than ever to take Master Honk by his long nose and give that organ a pull.

However, that was clearly impossible in class, so Frank tried to dismiss the matter from his mind, and devote his attention to lessons. He succeeded so ill that he drew several sharp admonitions from Miss Meadows, and he was very glad when the school was dismissed for the day.

#### The 4th Chapter. Honk's Little Game!

"This way, you chaps!"
Chunky Todgers called to the Co.
cagerly, as Cedar Creek came out of the schoolhouse after lessons.

Chunky was twittering with eager-

He had great hopes of bagging the first prize—the magnificent sum of ten dollars—which would "see him through " in the matter of mople sugar for weeks to come. There were lifty one chances against

him, certainly; but so there were against anyone elso in the sweep. Only one fellow in fifty-two could draw the winner.

But somebody had to draw it, that was a certainty, and Chunky was

wildly excited over his chance.
"Never mind about your hosses now," continued Chunky. "We're going to the old clearing for the draw. Come on!

Frank Richards & Co. followed the

fat Chunky.

Quite a little army of Cedar Creek fellows poured out of the school gates. and entered the timber near the creek.

In the heart of the timber was the abandoned clearing, thickly grown with grass and bush, and in the midst it was the tumbledown fence of an old corral.

In the disused corral, a very secluded spot, the participators in the sweep gathered for the draw.

Bunker II. Honk was not punctual, Most of the ticket-holders were on the some before the youth from Chicago Chunky in an appearance. Todgers experienced the pangs of anxiety and doubt.

"If that blessed Yankee has aloped with the pool!" he murmured. "I say, Franky, do you think he's sloped

with the money?

Frank Richards laughed.
"No. you ass; that would be a bit too palpable. I should think. The fellows would take it out of him to-morrow."

"So they would!" agreed Chunky, ith a nod. "He wouldn't dare! with a nod.

But why doesn't he come? "Here he comes! "said Bob Law-

less at last. "Buck up, Honk!"
The thin figure of Bunker Hill
Honk came through a gap in the old

corral fence. He nodded and grinned to the crowd of expectant schoolboys. There

were nearly twenty fellows present,

and all of them held their tickets in their hands, and their faces were eager. Harold Hopkins, the fellow with most money at the backwoods school, had no fewer than eight cards in the draw. Yen Chin had four tickets in his yellow paw. Several fellows had two or three each. Frank Richards noted the cagerness outher faces—and in the cagerness. on their faces—and in many faces there was a glimmer of greed as well as of cagerness. Mean passions that might never have awakened otherwise, had been brought to light by the lure of gambling, by that desire, never totally absent from the human breast, of getting "something for nothing.

Frank was not feeling eager; he was only feeling angry and ashamed. He knew that he ought not to have been there, and that it was a weakness to fear the imputation of being "preachy." That was an epithet which might be thrown at any fellow's head who did what was right. But he was glad that he was standing by Bob.

all the same, in case there was trouble.
"Get a move on, Honk!" chirruped
Chunky Todgers. "We've been waiting for you, you slacker!"
"I guess I'm ready. All of you got
your tickets?"

"Yep!"
"Sure!"

"Buck up!"

"I guess there's no hurry," drawled Honk. "The draw won't take long. I've got the spondulics here "—he slapped his pocket—"and

hyer's the keerds."

He took a well-worn pack of rather greasy cards from his pocket.

The crowd eyed him almost hungrily.

"Now. I guess you know how the riffle's worked," said Honk. "I deal a cord out for every ticket. Ace o' spades takes ten dollars from the pool, and the other three aces a dollar each. Catch on "

"Yes, yes!"

"Cut the carkle!"

"Cut the cackle!"

"Deal, you galoot!"
"Hold on a minute. Honk!" said
Frank Richards quietly. "How
many tickets have you taken yourself?"

'Only one, I guess' "Then you take one card?"
"Correct."

"Are you dealing to yourself first?" Nope. I'll deal you first if you

like, if you're awfully keen."

"Hold on! As the chap who got up the sweep, you're entitled to draw the first card," said Frank, eyeing

him narrowly. "I guess I'm not shoving in first." said Honk. "Now, then, hvor's year

keerds, you galoots---'Stop!" said Frank "Look here, Richards -- " began Hopkins.

"What's the game, Frank?" asked Bob Lawless uneasily.

"I'm not going to interfere," said Frank Richards quietly. "But I suppose all the fellows want a fair

"I guess so," remarked Lawrence. "Let Honk say when he is going to deal his card," said Frank.

"What does it matter?"
"Let him say!"
"I guesa wo're wasting time," said
Honk. "We didn't come here to
listen to your chin, Richards. Now,

"Give yourself the first card, said

Frank quietly.

"Why should I" snapped Honk.

"Simply because you don't want
to," answered Frank coolly. "If you don't know how the cards are going, why shouldn't you be willing to take the first card? It's as good as any other, isn't it?"

"I-I guess——"

"You don't think the cards are stocked, Richards?" exclaimed Dawson.

"I believe that rogue has arranged the pack to suit hunself!" said Frank coolly. "I believe that's the only reason why he's taken the trouble to get up the sweep at all. He wouldn't do it for nothing."
"Oh Jerusalem!"
"It's a lie!" yelled Honk furi-

ously.
"Why can't you take the first card for yourself, then?" asked Frank sarcastically. "Because you've arranged the ace of spades somewhere else in the pack!"

There was a murmur from the crowd of schoolboys.

"Take the first card yourself. Honk!" exclaimed Bob Lawless. "If you haven't stocked the cards, it's as good a chance as any other." good a chance as any other."

Bunker H. Honk breathed hard

Bunker II.
through his nose.
"I guess I'm running this show!"
he exclaimed. "Galoots that don't he exclaimed. "Galoots that don't like my way of running it can step out." out."
"Money back?"

pool."
"Not good enough," said Frank
Richards. "You're pulling our leg,
Honk—or trying to."
"Stow your chin. Richards. do!

"Stow your chin, Richards, do! You make me tired," said Honk. "Now, I'm goin' to deal with these hyer cards, leaving myself till last.

"You're not!" Frank Richards grasped Bunker H.

Honk's wrist with a grip of iron.
Honk struggled angrily,
"Loggo!" he roared.

"Look here, Richards-" ex-claimed half a dozen voices. Frank Richards did not heed the

exclamations of remonstrance from from the eager and angry gamesters. With a grasp that Bunker H. Honk

could not resist he forced open the enterprising youth's hand and showed the card at the bottom of the It was the acc of spades!

## The 5th Chapter.

The Winning Card! "The ace of spades!" shouted Bob

Lawless.
"The winning card!" "Honk, you rotter—"
"Honk, you rascal—"

There was a roar. It was only too clear now why Bunker H. Honk had declined to take the first card, and why he had intended to deal himself last. The winning card was placed at the bottom of the pack in readi-ness to be dealt to the astute Honk.

An excited crowd of schoolboys sur-rounded the exposed schemer. Half a dozen angry fists were shaken in his

leun face. "Is that plain enough?" asked Frank Richards, letting go Honk's

wrist.

"I guess so," said Bob Lawless.

"It was a plant all along!"

"A swinule!" said Beauclerc.

"Honk, you rotter—"

"I—I—I guess—" Even Bunker

H. Honk's impudence almost failed him at that moment, so complete was the exposure. "I-I Of course, I-I never knew that the acc of

spades was at the bottom of the pack!"

A howl of derision interrupted him.
"Gammon!"
"Spoof!"
"Why couldn't you take the first card, then?"
"I-I guess—"
"It's a swindle clear enough" said

"It's a swindlo, clear enough," said Bob Lawless, "and it serves us right for having anything to do with a rotten stunt like this! I guess you were right, Franky-gambling and swindling are born twins."

"I I guess it was a square deal!" painted Honk. "How could I know? I couldn't know the pesky keerd was

"You put it there!" yelled Chunky Todgers. "I-I didn't! "I-I--" Honk

stammered.
"I guess we can work this all right," said Tom Lawrence. "We'll right," said Tom Lawrence. "We'll shuffle the cards, and somebody else can deal them. We're not going to

can deal them. We're not going to trust them in that coyote's hands."

"I'm running this sweep!" roared Honk indigmently.

"You're not!" said Lawrence coolly. "Hand over the cards!"

"Lwoy'!" howeled Houle

coolly. "Hand over the cards!"
"I won't!" howled Honk.
"Then we'll jolly soon take them
off you!"
"Yaroooh!" roured the hapless promoter of the sweep, as three or four fellows collared him at once.

The cards went to the ground in a shower, and Lawrence gathered them

up into a pack again.

He shuffled them, and two or three other follows shuffled them in turn. Honk's face during the process was

a study.

The certain prize he had promised himself was becoming a most uncertain matter now.

With the cards well shuffled, he stood as much chance of bagging the ten dollars as any other fellow, which certainly was not good enough, from the enterprising Chicago youth's point

"I guess this lets me out," he said savagely. "It's all off, and the money will be handed back. I guess I'm not risking a quarter—I mean I—"

"It's not all off, and you're going to risk your quarter with the rest!"
said Lawrence coolly. "Now, who's
going to deal?"
"I tell you——" howled Honk.
"Shut up!"

Lawrence dealt out the cards one by one, a single card for each ticket. Hopkins had a "hand" of eight, but his expression showed that there was no see among them. Yen Chin gave a plaintive howl, as he found himself in possession of four queens.

Bunker H. Honk received a card

"Sure not. The dollars are in the and turned it up eagerly; it was the seven of hearts.

He gave an angry miff. "I guess it's all off!" he said doggedly.

There was a sudden howl of delight from Chunky Todgers. He held up the acc of clubs. "That's a dollar for me!" chortled

Chunky.
"Here's the ace of hearts:" said

Dawson. "And here's diamonds!" said Law-

"Who's got the ace of spades?"
"Here!"

Vere Beauclere held up the winning

"Lucky beggar!" said Lawrence. "Anyhow, it was a fair deal!"
"I guess I don't recognise this liver deal!" yelled Bunker H. Honk.

eal! yelled Bunker H. Hon! And I'm not handing out the dibs! "Shell out, you cad!"
"Nope! I guess—"

"Up ond him, and drop it out!" said Bob Lawless "Ha, ha, ha!"

A dozen hands grasped Bunker Hill Honk, and he was promptly up-ended.
And he gave a violent howl of anguish
as his hard head clumped on the
harder earth. A good many articles
rolled out of his pockets into the

"Yow-ow-ow-woop! Leggo!'-

shricked Honk.

"Are you shelling out?".
"Yow-ow! Nope!"
"Roll him in the snow!"
"Hear hear!" "Hear, hear!"

"Yurrggghhhrhghgh!" Honk's re-marks became inarticulate as he was rolled vigorously in thick snow, amid shouts of laughter. Ha, ha, ha!

"Ha, ha, ha."
"Now, you pesky rotter—"
"Gerroocogh! I guess I'll shell
out!" wailed Bunker H. "Honk.
"Leggo Let up, you galoots!
Yurrrgghghghhh! Let up! Don't I
keep on saying I'll shell out?
Groococogh!" Bunker Honk sat up breathlessly in the snow and "shelled" out. He was in haste to do so, lest a worse fate

should befall him. The winners duly received their prizes, and Bunker H. Honk watched

them with anguish in his lean face.
He had taken the trouble, and taken the risk, of getting up that sweep, with the result that he had failed to bring off the intended swindle, and had lost his own quarter into the bargain. It was not a result that could be considered pleasing by a business-like youth. But, certainly, it was as much as he deserved.

"You follows liber to the control of t

"You fellows like to ride as far as the mission?" asked Vere Beauclere, turning to his chains with the ten dollars in his hand.
"The mission! What for?" asked

Bob.
"To put this ten dollars in the collecting box for the Christmas

Frank Richards laughed.

"Jolly good idea!" he said. "Good for you, Cherub, old man! Chunky. are you going to put in your dellar?"
"I'll think it over," said Chunky
Todgers generously. "Two got to be Todgers generously. "I've got to be off now. I want to drop in at Gunten's Store."
"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was pretty certain that ther, would not be much left of Chunky's dollar for the Mission Christmas Fund after he had paid his visit to Gun-ten's Store in Thompson.

The crowd of schoolboys dispersed from the old corral, leaving Bunker H. Honk with a face of woo. But when Frank Richards & Co. brought out their horses for the ride home. they found Master Honk waiting for

them in the trail.
"Beauclere, old scout!" said Honk, in a most cordial tone. "Hallo!"

"I guess I'm going down the mission way." said Honk confidentially. "I reckon you want to get home. I'll—I'll take that ten dollars to the box at the mission for you, if you like."
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess I mean the straight goods, you galoots. I guess—Yaroooop!"

Three riding-whips curled round Bunker H. Honk's thin legs at the same moment. He jumped, away, roaring. And three cheery youths rode away for the mission, leaving Bunker H. Honk shaking a lean first at them, and still roaring.

Make a point of reading "Frank Richards' Christmas Story" in next Monday's BOYS' FRIEND, which will be a

#### SPECIAL CHRISTMAS NUMBER!

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A FINE TALE OF THE ADVENTURES OF A TROOP OF BOY SCOUTS!

#### THE MISSING SCOUTMASTER. By ROSS HARVEY.



THE ACT OF A MADMAN! The masked man, infuriated beyond all reason, hurled the old-fashioned outlass at the boat's crew when the latter were quite three hundred yards away.

#### INTRODUCTION.

TED MARTIN, patrol-leader of the Otters, and his second in command, kitto, with the patrol rescue a blind sailor named CAPTAIN BOWERS from a small island, where he is ent off by the tide. Following on this the Otters and a patrol of Girl Guides, under the command of MISS BETTY HANSON, take part at a tournament. Wilson gives a licework display; the scouts and guides give a display; of conteraft. Mr. Hendron is kidnapped, a d-the patrol determine to discover him. This they are successful in, and rescue him from a raft on which he has been set adrift. Whilat walking home from visiting the Robins, Ted suddenly gives the order to "Take Cover."

temptation to ask questions. Patrollender Ted Martin had seen some thing, and that was all that mattered to the rest of the Otiers.

to the rest of the Otters.

A moment or two passed in breathless suspense, then Ted's voice sounded in another whisper.

"Can any of you see anything down there by the first of the chain of rocks running out to the island?" he breathed. "Down to the island?" he breathed. "Down to the shadow look like the author of a man? or rocks running out to the island;
he breathed. "Doesn't that shadow
look like the outline of a man?
There! Didn't it move then?"
"Ye.," whispered Kitto. "It is a
man, Ted. Pity the moon sn't
shining!"

"It will be in a moment!"
Jack Kitto glauced up at the sky, and The Masked Man Again!
Silently the scouts dropped down flat, lying there in perfect stillness, and not one of them yielded to the good luck, would be in the shado

thrown by the sandhills when the moon did break through the clouds.

There was not much chance of any of them being seen, Kitto reckoned.

Before he could whisper this to Ted the moon shone quite brightly, showing that Ted had not made a mistake. There was a man down there by the rocks, in a crouching position.

"He's wearing a black mask, Ted,' Kitto breathed.

"And he's got a cutlass, came the nawer. "Jack, it's the man who put answer. "Jack, it's the man who passup such a fine fight against that gang of sailors."
"Not a doubt of it."

Kitto was breathlessly excited, but it was not for him to make sugges-tions. Ted Martin was in charge of tions. Ted Martin was in charge of the Offers, and Ted could be relied upon to give quick, sensible orders

when they were required.

They came now in crisp sentences.

"Wilson, you heard what I said to
Kirto just now?"

"Yes—"

"Then show your worth as a scout by crawling away without being seen," answered Ted. "The moment the rocks can't possibly see you, jump to your feet and run like the wind back to the camp. Tell Mr. Hendron what is happening, and he'll give you fresh orders." you are certain that man down by

Tenderfoot Wilson made no answer, but he showed that his tenderfoot days would not last so very much longer by the silent, clever manner in which he crept away. Even the scouts who were close to him scarcely saw him move, yet it was only a saw him move, yet it was only a minute or two before young Wilson was on his feet and running hard

across the sandhills.

Ted Martin and the others lay where they were, motionless and

The masked man was still down there by the rocks watching and wat-ing, and the minutes shipped by. Nearly five of them must have gone by when Kitto caught Ted's arm in

a tight grip.

Isn't the
Ted? bor out to sea,

Yes. Just crawling along, isn't

she?"
"Making for White Gull Island,"
answered Kitto. "Ted, things are
going to happen to-night!"
A thrill ran through all the scouts.

then a sharp ore out through the air. The masked man by the rocks had

sprung to his feet, for he had seen the boat creeping so slowly and silently through the water.

Just for a moment he stood there,

a tall, gaunt form of a man, then a cry of the most amazing fury rang from his lips, and he rushed on to the chain of rocks. By springing reck-lessly from one boulder to another, he was making a tremendously fast journey out to the island, until sud-denly he pulled up dead. Ted Martin was on his feet at

Kitto, the tide's too high for him to get out to the island!"

"Yes, it would be," gasped Jack.
"That's what he's stopped for. My
hat! He's raving like a madman!"
The Otters stood there, watching in

bewilderment.

The masked man showed up quite The masked man showed up quite clearly against the sky-line, his old-fashioned cutlass slashing in the air as if he were attempting to terrify the crew of the slowly moving bont, then, in his fury, he flung the old weapon at them when the boat must have been distant by three hundred varies.

It was the act of a man infuriated heyond all reason, but in Ted's eyes it was about the best thing that could

have happened in the world.

Of course, the masked man might still have another weapon, but that terrible cutlass had gone, at any rate, and Ted was in the mood to take

"Down to the rocks, you chaps, he cried. "Mr. Hendron will be along in a minute or two, and we've got to prevent the masked man coming ushors." ushore. "Ted!"

Kitto spoke quickly, although he was not scared himself. He was thinking of the rest of the patrol, for many of the Otters were not very old, and Jack Kitto hadn't forgotten that tremendous fight the masked man had put up against overwhelming odds.

The half protest came too late, though, for Ted Martin was already racing down to the rocks, and it was at that moment the boat disappeared altogether. It had rounded the island on the south side, but whether the crew were landing or not, there was no saving.

no saying. Still, Ted wasn't thinking about the boat or its crew very much; it was the masked man who claimed his for he had wheeled suddenly round.

He did not appear to have seen the scouts, but he was coming back towards the shore just as fast as he

"Down on the sand again," jerked out Ted, "Mind! We've got to stop him somehow."

Just a trace of a shudder ran through Jack Kitto.

There was something almost uncarny in the way that masked, gaunt form was coming towards them-springing wildly from rock to rock, risking being flung into the sea with risking being flung into the sea with every step he took, then Jack's nerves steadied.

He edged a little nearer to Ted, and waited in breathless silence, while

a cloud drifted in front of the moon and the sudden darkness blotted out everything.

The Mystery Deepens ! "Get rendy, Kitto!"

Ted Martin whispered the warning, and almost as the words left his lips. the masked man sprang from the last of the chain of rocks. Even while he was still hanging in the air Ted and Jack were on their feet, both anxious to put themselves in front of the younger scouts.

"Collar him Ted. "Look though!" suddenly flashed for a knife,

The patrol-leader of the Otters streaked forward as he spoke, and, with plack that amounted to recklessness, grappled with the masked man as he landed on the sand.

Alone Ted would never have had the slightest chance of making a capture, of course, but he wasn't alone by any matners of means. Scarrely had he got his arms about the mysterious individual when Jack the mysterious individual when Jack Kitto came to his aid, and the rest of the Ottors were only seconds later.

A shout of amazement mixed with fury rang out from the masked man, and he began to fight after the manner of a wild animal—in a way the like of which Ted Martin had mayor seen before never seen before.

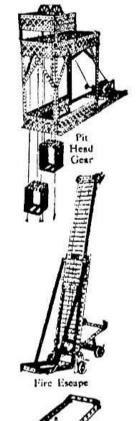
The man tore and scratched with

The man tore and scratched with his finger-mails, and hacked with his heavy boots, and almost at the first attack Tod realised the truth.

"Kitto, he's a lumatic!"

The words were gasped out by the patrol-leader, and Jack never doubted the truth of them. He was just as certain as Ted was that this was not a same man they were alternating to a sane man they were attempting to

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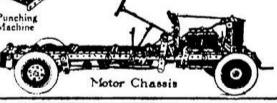
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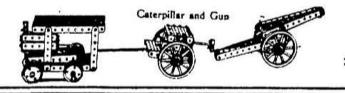
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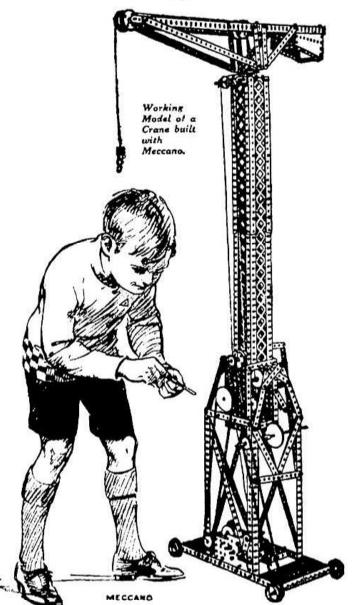
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capture, and the second in command

gritted his teeth.

A heavy blow in the face had sent him staggering backward, but he rushed to the attack again, then the rest of the Otters made their weight felt. With one combined rush the patrol flung themselves upon the maniae, and he went down fighting and shricking.

It was a pretty awful scene, and one that many of the scouts shuddered about long afterwards; at the time, though, excitement carried them through, and although Ted and Jack were a good deal knocked about, they got the unfortunate man down.

From the moment they had realised that he was insane, and therefore not responsible for his actions, they had done their best to hurt him as little as possible, but the capture had to be made. Panting and gasping, the scouts got the man down on his back on the sand and held him there with all their weight.

They had just succeeded in doing that when Tenderfoot Wilson brought Mr. Hendron running to the spot, and the scottmaster flashed on a light from a powerful electric-torch. "Good gracious, Martin! What has

happened?

"The masked man, sir, panted Ted, "He's-he's maniac, and we've got him!"

Mr. Hendron swept the light down on the scouts' capture, and it needed only a glance to show that Ted Martin Lad not made a mistake. The man, whoever he was, was a raving lunatic.

Take his mask off, Kitto!" cried

Mr. Hendron excitedly.

But already Jack was fumbling with the strings that secured the black mask to the manuals face. He got them united at last; then in that circle of electric light the mask was wrenched away, and the Otter Patrol were staring down in utter amazement at a face that was as well known to them as any of their

Published

Every Monday

"Mr. Quaife!" gasped Ted Martin. "The owner of White Gull Island!" cried Jack.

And that was all that was said for a moment or two.

The surprise was a tremendous one, for instead of clearing up the mystery of the island, it seemed only

to increase it.

That Mr. Quaife, a respected and well-known local man, could be the mysterious masked individual who had flung Ted Martin into the sea for no apparent reason, and had made a prisoner of Mr. Hendron, was beyond them all, although, of course, his insanity might account

for his extraordinary actions.
"But there's more behind all this than the acts of a madman!" cried Mr. Hendron. "Captain Bowers and his friends aren't mad as well. Wilson, you left my message at the police-station?"

"Yes, sir!"

And the police will be able to

find this spot all right?"

Before the tenderfoot could answer the last question, three police-constables came harrying across the sands, and Mr. Hendron was very brief with some sharp orders.

"All you need trouble yourselves about for the moment, constables, is that this man has lost his reason. You must take him to the station, and keep him under constant guard."

"But -but it's Mr Quaife, sir!" gasped one of the policemen.
"I know; and you can see for your-self that he is insane!" replied Mr. Hendron. "Get medical attention

to him at once, and I will be along at the station very shortly to explain all

"Yes, sir," answered the constable.
"We had a watch there until last
night, and then decided that it was
a waste of time. Mr. Quaife told us
he'd leave a couple of his own men
there, and we thought that was the
best thing to do."

" I see !"

Mr. Hendron stood aside, while the constables persuaded Mr. Quaite to rise to his feet, and the unfortunate lunatic appeared to have grown a great deal calmer.

He spoke once or twice in quite his ordinary voice, and raised no objection to going away with the policemen, and the Otter Patrol watched him go.

As the little party disappeared in the darkness Mr. Hendron turned quickly to Ted.

"Now, tell me exactly what hap-pened," he exclaimed. "You say Quaife was crouching on the rocks as if watching for someone-

"Yes, sir; and a bout came creeping along towards the island."
flashed Ted. "Of course, we couldn't see who was in her, but I believe they handed on the south shore of the island.

For a moment or two the scoutmaster did not speak.

He was staring out towards the island, for something of an extra-ordinary nature was happening on White Gull Island.

Then a startled cry rang out from Ted:

"The island is on fire, sir!" (More of this exciting tale in next Monday's Boys' FRIEND. )

that has happened. Has the guard been removed from the island?"
"Yes, sir," answered the constable.

Write to me whenever you are in doubt or difficulty. All tetters should be addroxed: "The Editor, the Boys' Pairno, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4." is one which is looked forward to all the year round-the grand Christmas

It is my custom to save up something very special for this issue, and this year is no exception to the rule.

In next week's issue, therefore, will appear a long instalment of one of the finest football serials ever read. It is entitled:

"THE MINERS' ELEVEN!"

and is written by Walter Edwards. that famous author of sports stories. Mr. Edwards does not require any introduction to my readers. Beyond saying that he has surpassed himself in the writing of this story, I will not attempt to anticipate next Monday by telling you about "The Miners' Eleven." If you like football, you'll like Walter Edwards' new story.
Christmas without ghost stories

would be almost as blank as Christmas without Christmas-pudding. Mr. Owen Conquest has turned up with a magnificent story entitled

"THE PHANTOM ABBOT!" in which the famous chums of Rookwood. Jimmy Silver & Co., have a real Christmas adventure.

The next item on a superb programme is the story of the School in the Backwoods, and is entitled

"FRANK RICHARDS' CHRISTMAS STORY!" By Martin Clifford, I am sure you can readily appre-ciate how much the boys who live in

Our next issue of the Boys' FRIEND | the backwoods of Canada look forward to Christmas, with its holiday, opportunity for fun and feasting, and the chance of "letting themselves go." This is another story which will appeal to you all, my chums.

Then there will be extra fine in-stalments of our grand serials:

"THE BOY WITH FIFTY MILLIONS!" By Victor Nelson,

"THE LEAGUE OF THE STAR By John S. Margerison,

and "THE MISSING SCOUTMASTER!"
By Ross Harvey.

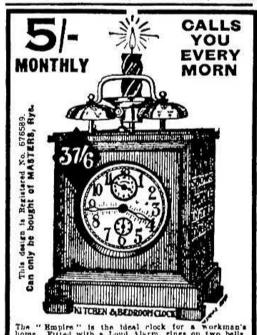
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I want you all to make a point of going in for our great new competi-tion in next Monday's grand Christ-mas number of the Boys' FRIEND. This is an entirely new and original This is an entirely new and original competition for any boys' paper, and is going to make a hit. It is to be run in conjunction with our great companion paper, the "Boys' companion paper, the "Boys' Herald," and these will be twelve cosh prizes and tuck-hampers given away EVERY WEEK!



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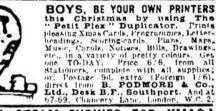
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