

“OMAR THE MAGNIFICENT!” Our Great New Adventure Story, by Famous Maurice Everard, in this issue.

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THE BEST BOYS' PAPER IN THE WORLD!

[Week Ending August 19th, 1922.]

FORCED TO FIGHT!

A STORY of the CLEAN-SPORT CRUSADERS by Walter Edwards.



SPURNED BY THE CHAMPION!

Joe Blackman glanced from Kerrigan's handsome face to the outstretched hand before him. "What's that for?" he asked, deliberately folding his great arms. (An incident from the magnificent boxing story included in this number.)

SOME NARROW ESCAPES FOR JIMMY SILVER & CO. IN—

WASHED OUT!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

(Author of the Tales of Rookwood appearing in the "Popular.")**The 1st Chapter.****The Camp by the Sea!**

"Thalassa!" exclaimed Arthur Edward Lovell, both pathetically and dramatically. "The giddy sea!" said Jimmy Silver, less poetically.

Five dusty and rather tired schoolboys came round a bend in the chalky lane, and the wide blue sea burst upon their view. Jimmy Silver & Co. had been tramping for a good many hours in chalky dust and blazing sunshine. The sudden sight of the sea had much the same effect upon them as upon the retreating Ten Thousand of ancient days, hence Lovell's classical ejaculation.

"Looks jolly decent, doesn't it?" said Lovell. "Just what we want—a plunge, to clear off this thumpin' dust!" Now I know what those giddy old Greeks felt like when they saw the sea after hoofing it across Asia Minor!

"Kim on!" said Raby and Newcome together to the pony.

Trotsky, the pony, stopped. Perhaps he was stopping to contemplate that fine view of the sea. Or perhaps, he did not care for the sea at closer quarters.

Trotsky had a way of stopping when he was specially desired to put his best foot foremost.

"Move on, you brute!" hissed Raby.

"Kim on, Trotsky!"

"Oh, push him along!" said Lovell.

Putty Grace lifted a cricket-stump out of the little baggage-cart.

He did not use the stump—that was not necessary.

Trotsky was a most intelligent animal, and the sight of the stump was generally enough for him. As soon as it was produced, Trotsky would buck up to save unpleasantness.

Trotsky moved on slowly, and the baggage-cart rumbled after him on its two wheels. In a few more minutes the Rookwood tramps were treading on shingle.

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

The sea-breeze blew in the heated faces of the Rookwood holiday-tramps, cooling and invigorating.

Jimmy Silver looked up and down the shingly beach.

"I wonder where we are exactly?" he remarked. "According to the map—"

"Somewhere in Kent, anyhow," said Lovell.

"Must be somewhere near Hythe, I think," said Jimmy.

"Not very near, as it's not in sight," said Putty Grace. "Anyhow, we can camp here if we want to."

"Yes, rather."

"Nobby place for a camp," said Lovell, his eyes glistening. "If we buck up, there will be time for a bathe before dark. Doesn't seem to be anybody about, and none of their dashed notice-boards. If I ever become Prime Minister I shall make a law against sticking up notice-boards where fellows want to camp."

Arthur Edward Lovell spoke with feeling. The chums of Rookwood had been on their holiday-tramp for a week now, and the number of notice-boards they had discovered was enormous. Quite a large proportion of their fellow-citizens seemed bent on impressing on the general public the unpleasant fact that trespassers would be prosecuted.

On this blazing August day the Co. had been looking for a camp for hours, and they had observed a number of extremely suitable spots. Each suitable spot, however, was barred to stray campers.

So the Rookwood juniors had really begun to feel very like the retreating Ten Thousand, who had nowhere to rest their weary heads.

"Keep smiling!" said Jimmy Silver cheerily. "Everything comes to him who waits!"

"Must be a jolly life, then, to be a waiter!" remarked Putty Grace thoughtfully. Putty was never too tired for a joke, good or bad. But the Fistical Four did not always appreciate Putty's humour. It fell upon deaf ears now.

Lovell was already unharnessing Trotsky. Jimmy Silver turned the tent out of the baggage-cart. The sun was sinking low, and there was not much light left for camping.

"Simply a nobby place for a camp!" Lovell declared again. "By the way, though, Trotsky can't eat shingle, I suppose. There ought to be some grass for him."

"Give him some oats for to-night," said Jimmy Silver. "There's some in the cart."

"Good!"

"Isn't this a bit close to the sea for camping?" asked Putty.

Lovell grinned.

"Do you think the sea-serpent will come out in the night?" he asked.

"Or the merry old shark?" chuckled Raby.

"Nunno! But—"

"Lend a hand with this gear, old chap, and never mind 'butting.'"

"But—" said Putty dubiously.

"Lend a hand, ass!" said Lovell warmly.

"Have I got to handle this stuff on my own, while you butt like a billy-goat?"

"But—"

"There you go again!"

"But," roared Putty, "what about high-water mark?"

"Which?"

"Hadh't we better be careful to camp above high-water mark?" demanded Putty.

"We don't want a sea-bathe in the middle of the night, I suppose!"

"Is the sea out now?" said Lovell, looking round at the stretches of sand beyond the shingle. "Yes, I suppose so."

"Well, there's high-water mark. Can't you see that ridge where the water's banked up the shingle at last high tide?"

"That looks like it!" agreed Newcome.

Putty still looked dubious. But Putty had a way of looking dubious when Arthur Edward Lovell made his positive statements. Lovell, perhaps, erred a little on the side of positiveness.

"Is that high-water mark?" asked Putty.

"Is it?" snorted Lovell. "Haven't I told you it is?"

lent the Rookwooders for their holiday travels, was a distinctly useful article. It was small and it was light—small enough to follow bridge-paths and even footpaths, light enough to be lifted by a combined effort over such an obstacle as a stile. But its stowage capacity was great, and its set of lockers held almost everything imaginable. The Rookwooders had all the "traps" with them that they needed for comfortable camping, and plenty of other things—and a good supply of provisions.

Jimmy Silver had the great gift of forethought, which came in very useful now. There was nothing like firewood to be seen on the shingle—but there was a faggot in the baggage-cart, as well as some cut logs, which Jimmy had laid in stock at the last village. So there was no difficulty about a camp-fire—excepting the difficulty caused by the ocean breeze, which blew out Lovell's matches as fast as he struck them.

Lovell was lighting the fire—he was quite an industrious youth, and he had an inward conviction that he was the only fellow in the party who really could do things. He always had doubts about a fire that was lit by anybody else. Putty offered to lend him a hand, but Lovell declined aid.

"You see, we want to get the fire going!" he explained.

"You don't seem to be getting it going, old bean!" Putty remarked.

"I sha'n't be any quicker if I'm interrupted by silly asses!" retorted Lovell.

And he struck more and more matches.

"Let's sit round and watch," suggested

Lovell was about to growl out an indignant refusal, but fortunately he thought better of it.

"You might have done that already!" he grunted.

"Well, I offered to help, and you—"

"For goodness' sake, Putty, don't argue and jaw, when I'm waiting for you to hold up a ground-sheet."

Putty closed one eye at the other campers, who grinned. But he forbore to argue with Arthur Edward, who was getting a little excited. He held up the ground-sheet to keep off the wind, and Lovell—on second thoughts—dashed some of the paraffin from the can over the faggots and the crumpled newspaper under them. To his great satisfaction, the fire flared up at last.

"It's going!" said Lovell. "You needn't stand there, Putty, like a graven image, with that ground-sheet! The fire's all right."

Which was Arthur Edward's way of expressing his thanks for assistance! Putty obediently dropped the sheet, and the sea-breeze blew hard right into the fire. It flared up high, to Lovell's great satisfaction; but the flame, after flaring, suddenly went out.

"Well, my hat!" exclaimed Lovell, in great exasperation.

"The fire hadn't quite got a hold, you know," said Putty. "The wind's pretty strong."

"If you hadn't dropped the sheet just then—"

"You told me to!"

"Of course, you must argue and jaw!" said Lovell, with bitter sarcasm. "The question is, do we want any supper, or are we going to hang around listening to Putty Grace arguing and jawing?"

Whereupon Jimmy Silver & Co., being too hungry to display further patience, took a hand in the proceedings, and lighted the camp-fire. Arthur Edward Lovell shrugged his shoulders, and watched them with a satirical smile, without the slightest expectation of seeing the fire burn. To his surprise, it burned quite nicely, and once it was fairly going, the breeze only stirred it to greater activity.

The iron stewpot was slung over glowing embers, from which sparks flew far and wide over the shingle. It was quite

Putty rose to his feet, and looked away towards the sea. Through the darkness he caught the glimmer of starlight on curling waters, touched into broken lines of silver. He strolled out of the camp, sleepy as he was, towards the sea.

"Hallo! Going to have another bathe?" bawled Lovell. "Mind you don't fall in, fathead!"

Putty did not heed. He tramped through the shingle, down to the soft sand that was churning under the lapping water. Lovell burst into a chuckle.

"Poor old Putty's afraid of the tide," he remarked. "We're miles above high-water mark—yards, at least."

"Not much difference!" murmured Newcome.

"Oh, rats! Putty's as nervous as a giddy old hen," said Lovell. He looked round to make sure that Putty of the Fourth was not within hearing. "I'm jolly well going to give him a lesson. As soon as he's asleep I'll mop some water over his chivvy, and he'll think the tide's coming in over the tent."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I suppose we're pretty safe here?" said Jimmy Silver, looking round. "It would be no joke—"

"I tell you it's all right," said Lovell. "I looked out high-water mark, and it's that pebble ridge yonder—not a drop ever comes past that. You can see where the sand's piled up."

Jimmy Silver was too sleepy to argue the point, though later on he had reason to wish that he had not left the decision to Arthur Edward Lovell. Putty Grace came back through the darkness.

"Tidal wave coming?" asked Lovell cheerily.

"The tide's turned," said Putty.

"Anybody got a 'Daily Mail'?" asked Lovell.

"What on earth do you want a 'Daily Mail' for?"

"To sign the insurance coupon before we're all drowned," answered Lovell humorously.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I leave it to you," said Putty. "But if I'd pitched the camp, I'd have pitched it a good dozen yards further up the shore."

"Take your giddy blankets, and walk a mile inland!" suggested Lovell. "You'd be almost safe there. Still, there might be a landslide—or an earthquake."

"Oh, let's turn in," said Raby. "I'm simply nodding off."

The Fistical Four turned into the tent, and Putty stood looking round him thoughtfully before he followed. He was tempted to take his blankets further up the beach, and camp in the open air. But he let himself be influenced by the prospect of Lovell's derision in the morning—if after all it was all right; and he followed the Fistical Four into the tent at last. And in a few minutes more, the five Rookwood juniors were fast asleep.

The 3rd Chapter.**Wet!**

Splash! Swish! Swooosh!

"Oh!" roared Putty of the Fourth, suddenly awakening from balmily slumber.

He started up blindly in the dark. Water had dashed over his face—and startled him out of his sleep. He awoke to an instant realization of his fears—the tide was on them! Putty dashed the water from his eyes with his hands and yelled to his comrades.

"Wake up! Turn out! The tide's on us."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

To Putty's amazement, he was answered by a yell of laughter from the darkness.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell.

"You silly ass!" shrieked Putty. "I'm wet already—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, what's the thumping row?" came Jimmy Silver's sleepy voice.

"The tide—"

"A bucket of sea-water!" roared Lovell.

"That's all! I've just dabbed Putty's face with a little water! Ha, ha, ha!"

"What?" howled Putty.

Jimmy Silver & Co. gave a sleepy chortle.

"All serene, Putty," chuckled Jimmy. "Only one of Lovell's fatheaded jokes. It's all right."

Putty breathed hard. He was a great humorist himself; and like many great humorists, he did not wholly appreciate humour when he was personally the object of it.

But he realised that it was a false alarm, and he groped round him—noting he was wet but his own face. Evidently the tide had not after all reached the tent.

"You silly ass, Lovell!" breathed Putty. "I've a jolly good mind to punch your silly head, for waking me up with your rot."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell.

"If you cackle again I'll punch your cheeky nose—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That does it!" snorted Putty, and he groped in the darkness, and captured a head, and punched.

There was a fiendish yell from Arthur Newcome.

"Wharrer you at? Leggo! I—I—I—I!"

"Oh, my hat! I—I thought it was Lovell!" gasped Putty.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Lovell. "Go it, Putty!"

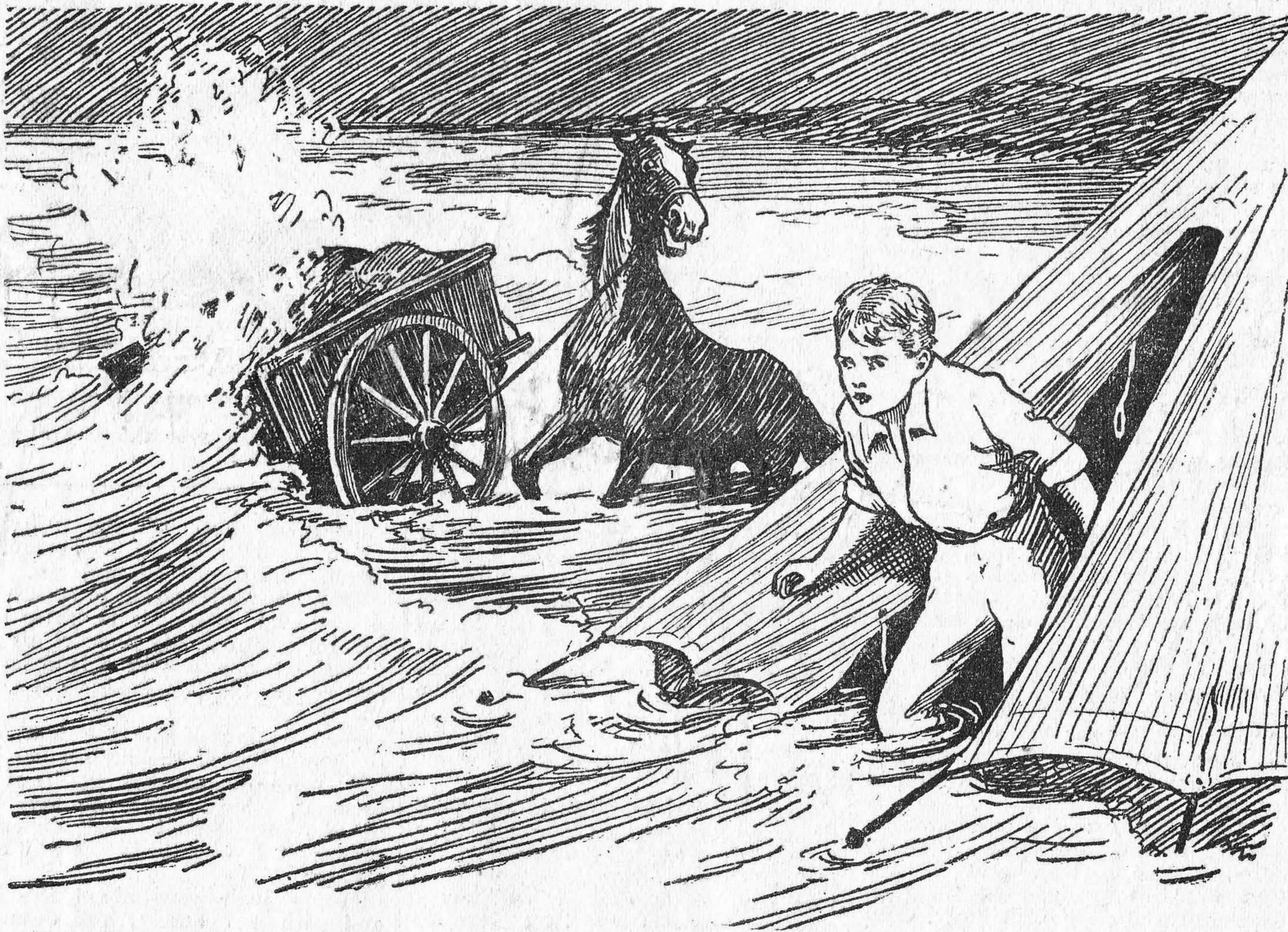
"I—I—I—I!" stammered Putty.

"Order!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "You're treading on me, fathead! Go to sleep, and punch Lovell's silly head in the morning."

Putty rubbed his face and hair dry, in indignant silence, and turned into his blankets again. The Fistical Four chuckled sleepily, and turned over to seek slumber once more. Putty followed their example, and he was soon fast asleep again.

Once more calmness and repose settled upon the Rookwood camp.

The juniors were thoroughly tired, and



CAUGHT BY THE TIDE! Jimmy Silver thrust his head and shoulders out at the opening and glanced round. What he saw in the starlight made him gasp. The tent was surrounded by water!

"Yes; but do you know?" asked Putty.

Another snort from Lovell. He was tired, he was dusty, he was hungry—three powerful reasons against indulging in frivolous argument.

"If you'd got any sense," said Lovell, "you'd see that that shingle-ridge is high-water mark; and we're yards and yards on the safe side of it. But if you feel nervous you can sit up to-night and watch for the tide. I'll swallow all that comes past the ridge!"

"What bothers me is that I might have to swallow it, if it mopped down on us in the middle of the night. I think—"

"Draw it mild!" said Lovell. "You don't, and you can't. All you can do is to make rotten puns. Give your chin a rest, old man, and let's get this tent up before it's dark. There won't be any tide up here, but there will be plenty of spray—when the water comes in as far as the ridge."

Putty still seemed unconvinced. But he ceased to argue, and lent a hand with the camping arrangements. And when the camp was completed, and Trotsky safely pegged so that he could not wander, the Rookwood juniors ran down the shelving sands, and plunged into the curling waves that broke gently on the beach, and thoroughly enjoyed the swim. After which they returned to camp, so hungry that even an advancing tide, or a tidal-wave, would scarcely have driven them away before supper.

The 2nd Chapter.**Round the Camp-Fire!**

The little two-wheeled baggage-cart, which the kind-hearted Mr. Richards had

Putty of the Fourth. "This is worth watching."

Arthur Edward Lovell breathed hard, and started on a second matchbox. There was quite a fresh breeze off the sea, and a heavy murmur from the waves as they dashed and broke on the shingle. Every time Lovell succeeded in getting a match alight it was promptly blown out. Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome and Putty sat down round Lovell and watched him—which was rather exasperating to the fire-lighter. They were frightfully hungry, and the camp-fire was badly wanted to cook the supper. Four gentle voices urged on Lovell to renewed efforts.

"These rotten matches!" said Lovell, breathing hard. "Rotten foreign matches, you know; they ought to be kept out of the country. The blessed heads fly off—nearly got one in my eye! What are you silly owls blinking at?"

"Let me—" began Jimmy Silver.

"Do you think I don't know how to light a camp-fire?" asked Lovell.

"Well, I believe we've only got a dozen boxes of matches," said Jimmy, "and we shall want to light the fire again in the morning. At that rate—"

"Oh, dry up!"

Putty Grace rose from the shingle and went to the baggage-cart, and returned with a can of paraffin.

"You don't need paraffin to light a camp-fire," said Lovell.

"I don't," agreed Putty; "but you do, old chap."

"Look here—" roared Lovell.

"Suppose I held up a ground-sheet to keep the wind off?" suggested Putty gently.

dark now, and the murmur of the sea came through dusky gloom. One by one the stars came out in a calm sky.

An appetising scent of cooking comforted the hungry campers. But they were too famished to wait for the stew, and they started on hard-boiled eggs left over from the last camp, and cold potatoes, and huge slices of bread-and-butter. And when the stew was done, they ate that full justice, too. Tramping and the keen sea air gave them an appetite which Tubby Muffin himself would not have disdained.

After an ample supper the logs were piled on the fire, and the juniors stretched themselves on the shingle in luxurious ease. Strange lights and shadows were cast around the camp by the flickering flames. Trotsky, having negotiated his oats, lay on the shingle and regarded the fire with his usual thoughtful expression—occasionally testing his rope to make quite sure that it secured him from wandering. The baggage-cart stood tilted forward with its shafts half-buried in the shingle. Through the gloom of the summer night the deep murmur of the sea came musically. Down by the sea it was a little chilly in the wind, and the juniors were glad of the glowing fire.

"This is something like!" yawned Jimmy Silver. "I'm jolly sleepy! I say, this is a ripping way of spending a holiday!"

"Topping!" said Putty, echoing Jimmy's yawn. "Tip-top, in fact!"

"Lucky we've got the tent up already," murmured Raby. "I'm too jolly tired and sleepy to put it up now, after supper. What about turning in?"

"That does it!" snorted Putty, and he groped in the darkness, and captured a head, and punched.

There was a fiendish yell from Arthur Newcome.

"Wharrer you at? Leggo! I—I—I—I!"

"Oh, my hat! I—I thought it was Lovell!" gasped Putty.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Lovell. "Go it, Putty!"

"I—I—I—I!" stammered Putty.

"Order!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "You're treading on me, fathead! Go to sleep, and punch Lovell's silly head in the morning."

Putty rubbed his face and hair dry, in indignant silence, and turned into his blankets again. The Fistical Four chuckled sleepily, and turned over to seek slumber once more. Putty followed their example, and he was soon fast asleep again.

Once more calmness and repose settled upon the Rookwood camp.

The juniors were thoroughly tired, and

they slept as if for a wager, deaf to the growing murmur of the sea, and to a series of uneasy whinnies from Trotsky, who, instead of sleeping, was exerting himself, in vain, to get away from his tether.

Arthur Edward Lovell was the first to awaken.

Lovell had been dreaming, and gradually the idea of being splashed and wet mingled with his dreams. He seemed to be floating in water with his clothes on, in his dream; and gradually he passed from sleeping to waking, and realised that he was really wet.

Water was creeping round him and streaming into his blankets. Lovell sat up, startled, feeling wet all over.

"That silly ass, Putty!" he gasped.

His immediate idea was that Putty of the Fourth had retaliated his practical joke on him—on a liberal scale. But if that was the explanation, Putty had been very thorough; for Lovell was fairly swamped.

"My hat! I'll smash him!" roared Lovell. "This isn't a joke! Putty, you born idiot, I'll give you an awful hiding for this."

"Wharrer marrer?" murmured Jimmy Silver.

"I'm wet!" roared Lovell.

"Oh, go to sleep."

"How can I go to sleep when I'm swamped with water!" shouted Lovell, angrily. "That silly chump must have chucked two or three pailfuls over me."

"Hallo, I'm wet, too!" exclaimed Jimmy, starting into broad wakefulness. "Why, the place is fairly swimming."

"That idiot Putty—"

"What on earth's the row?" exclaimed Putty, waking up. "Hallo! I'm wet! Have you been at your silly tricks again, Lovell—"

"I haven't!" howled Lovell. "You have, you born dummy. You've swamped me, you dangerous jabberwock."

"Eh! I've been fast asleep."

"Haven't you swamped me with water?" hooted Lovell.

"Not unless I did it in my sleep," answered Putty.

"Well, somebody has—"

"Hallo, I'm wet!" exclaimed Newcome's voice. "Why, my blankets are simply soaked! Is it raining?"

"I'm wet!" shouted Raby. "Grooogh! I—grooogh—I've got a—moogh—mouthful of water—grooogh—salt!"

Jimmy Silver started up. The shingle under the tent was swimming with water. As he stood, it splashed over his knees. Outside the tent there was a sound of lapping water, close at hand. Evidently the flooding of the tent was not a practical joke, as Arthur Edward had supposed. Either there was a terrific downpour of rain, which had found entrance, or—

"The tide!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"The what?" ejaculated Lovell.

"Tide! Rot! How could the tide touch us, when we're miles above high-water mark?"

"Putty was right after all—"

"What utter rot!"

"Fathead!" roared Jimmy Silver.

"Can't you see the tent's flooded?"

"How can I see anything in pitch dark?"

"Can't you feel it, then, ass?" Jimmy Silver groped to the tent flap, and tore it open. "Oh, my only hat!"

A swamping rush of water caught him at the knees, and sent him staggering back into the tent. There was a breathless yell from the other fellows, as the wave subsided over them, drenching them in every spot where they were not already drenched.

"Why, what—what—" spluttered Lovell. Even Arthur Edward could no longer doubt.

Now that the juniors were wide awake, they could hear, and heed, the shrill cries that came from the tethered pony. Outside the tent there was a ceaseless rush and dash of water. The shingle under them was alive with moving water, and their feet sank deep into it as they staggered about in the dark.

"The tide!" gasped Putty. "Caught in the tide! Oh, you asses—"

The tide was not only coming in, but it was coming in hard and fast—and it was only too sorrowfully clear that Arthur Edward Lovell had been mistaken about high-water mark. The tent had been pitched well within the reach of the sea at high-tide—in spite of Arthur Edward's absolute positiveness that it hadn't!

Only the froth of the incoming waves had reached the camp at first, and soaked through the shingle. But solid water followed, and followed fast. While the juniors were still groping blindly in the darkness, the water was over their knees, and the tent itself began to shake and reel, as the pegs came loose in the drenched shingle.

Jimmy Silver got his head out at the opening, and his startled glance swept round. Luckily, the stars were bright, and gave a light over sea and shore.

What he saw in the starlight made Jimmy Silver gasp.

Seaward was a boundless extent of rolling waves—rolling and booming over one another in the sharp breeze from the ocean. Round the tent the waves rolled and broke, and landward they ran on for a dozen yards farther, breaking in foam. The tent was completely surrounded by water, and at any moment it might "go."

Trotsky, half-buried in water, and quite buried when an extra large wave rolled in, was trampling round his peg and squealing frantically. The baggage-cart had sunk deeper, and was full of water from the breaking waves.

Jimmy Silver seemed to be looking out on a world turned wholly to water and foam.

"Good heavens!" he gasped.

"Is—is it the tide?" stammered Lovell.

"Get outside!" yelled Jimmy. "For

goodness' sake get a move on! Never mind your clothes—never mind anything—we shall be drowned in another minute."

"Great Scott!"

The juniors plunged wildly out of the reeling tent. They were only just in time. A high roller, driven by the wind, came swamping in, and it broke over the tent and the juniors with a terrific crash. The tent crumpled up under it, and went flying on the wave, and five breathless and scared juniors were hurled headlong on the shingle, and the wave passed right over them.

The 4th Chapter.

Something Like a Wash-Out!

"Oh!"

"Ooooooh!"

Overwhelmed by rushing water the five juniors were swept away, rolling and sprawling in a wild mingling of shingle and sea. Jimmy Silver came with a bump on something hard, and threw out his hands and clutched and held on. The wave passed on, spreading over the beach and subsiding, and his head came out clear.

He was clinging to the baggage-cart, which swam with water. It was too deeply rooted in the sand to shift, however. Jimmy stared round him dazedly. Lovell had hold of the pony's tether. The peg had come out, and the pony and Lovell went swamping away up the shelving beach together. The tent had disappeared; but Jimmy Silver caught sight of three heads dotting the foam. Then another heavy wave came rolling in, churning up the shingle and swamping over his head.

He clung desperately to the cart and waited for it to pass.

It passed and spread, higher and higher up the beach. Jimmy Silver was clear again, and he panted for breath. He realised that the baggage-cart was not a safe refuge—it would soon be entirely covered with water. And when the next roller came heavily in, Jimmy let go his hold and went with the wave.

It bore him whirling away landward, through shallower water, and he clutched and caught at shifting shingle, trying to get a hold. The subsiding wave left him sprawling breathless.

He scrambled and staggered to his feet, and scrambled landward, the stones crunching and shifting under his feet in pools of water.

The next wave rolling after him gave him a gentle lift, and then he staggered beyond the reach of the sea.

He stood in safety at last, under the gleam of the stars, drenched and dripping, half-choked by the sea-water he had swallowed. He rubbed salt water out of his eyes and blinked round for his chums.

"Here you are, Jimmy!" gasped Lovell. "Where are the others?"

"There's Raby—"

Raby was sitting on the shingle above the margin of the lapping water in a dazed state, gasping. Newcome came tramping along the sands, streaming. The Fistical Four were all safe.

"Putty?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

"Can't see him—"

"Must be safe—we're all here—"

"Putty!" yelled Jimmy Silver in alarm.

And his comrades shouted with him above the roar of the incoming sea.

"Help!"

It was a shout that echoed back. A dark object was beating and flapping on the water—the dismantled tent. And Putty's shout came from it. In the dim, uncertain light it was difficult to make out; but Jimmy discerned Putty of the Fourth at last, struggling amid the wreckage of the tent. Apparently he was caught in the wreckage, for he seemed to be unable to detach himself and swim for it.

"The whole thing will come ashore!" breathed Lovell. "Bound to."

Jimmy watched with breathless anxiety. A rolling wave caught the tent and rolled it shoreward, and the Fistical Four stood ready to rush to their comrade's help. But a whirl of receding water caught the tent again and swept it out, and Putty of the Fourth with it, struggling.

And after it, on the retreating wave, went Jimmy Silver, without stopping to think. By luck he bumped into the tangled tent and ropes and blankets, and he shuddered as a rope tangled round his leg, and kicked it away in haste. Floating on turbid water, he stared for Putty, and found him—clinging to the tent-pole, his face white and almost rigid. Jimmy's grasp was on his shoulder the next moment.

"Putty!" he gasped.

"I'm caught!" panted Putty Grace. "There's a dashed rope caught round my waist. I can't get it loose! Look out!"

Jimmy could only cling, as a rushing wave caught the tent again and the whole thing went reeling and rolling up the beach. The waters seemed to be boiling round him. Lovell and Raby and Newcome came trampling through the foam, but they could not reach the tent—it went out again on the water, with Jimmy and Putty. And the soaked canvas was sinking and dragging them down.

Jimmy drove down under the water and groped for the rope that held Putty a prisoner. Somehow, it was tangled right round the junior, as tightly as if tied in a scientific knot. Jimmy dragged at it fiercely, but there was no loosening it. He came up again half-suffocated. The tent was not being driven shoreward now. It was being sucked out in an eddy, and the beach looked distant to Jimmy's wild glance round. The bare thought of being whirled out into the rough, rolling sea sickened him. Putty put his mouth close to Jimmy's ear, to speak in the roar of the waves.

"Cut off! You can't help me! Clear!" Jimmy did not answer; but he did not think of obeying the injunction. It was sink or swim together for the Rookwood juniors.

"If I only had a knife!" he groaned.

Something gripped Jimmy in the swirling water—Lovell's face loomed over his shoulder in the starlight. Something flashed white—it was an open clasp-knife in Arthur Edward's hand. From the beach Lovell had seen what was wanted.

"Give it to me!" panted Jimmy.

He gripped the knife from Lovell, and groped round Putty again. With his head under water, half-choked, dazed, and dizzy, he sawed at the circling rope. It parted.

Putty's movement told Jimmy Silver that he was free. A moment more and the three juniors were fighting their way shoreward. Shifting shingle swirled treacherously under their feet, and an eddying wave caught them and drove them out; and then a heavy roller came thundering in, lifted them, and swept them up the beach. All three of them were too dazed and dizzy to do anything but sprawl helplessly in shallow water, but Raby and Newcome rushed to them and grasped them. With a last effort

the juniors staggered out of reach of the next wave that came swamping in. It flooded round their knees and sucked at them, but they staggered out of its reach, and sank down on the shore in safety at last.

There they lay, how long they never knew, too exhausted to move, dizzily watching the sea breaking at their feet, and churning up the shingle into little hillocks.

Jimmy Silver was the first to move. He staggered up, with spray raining on him.

"Better get out of this!" he gasped.

And the juniors tramped higher up the beach, beyond the fall of the spray. A glimmer of pale rose on the horizon announced that dawn was at hand. And never had the sunrise been so welcome to the Rookwooders.

The 5th Chapter.

After the Wash-Out.

"Pretty state of affairs!"

Thus Arthur Edward Lovell.

It was a bright, clear morning, and the sun was already hot. The warmth was very grateful and comforting to the soaked juniors.

They fairly basked in the sunshine as it grew stronger and stronger. The danger of the night was past, and they were recovering their usual spirits. But their situation was quite dismaying.

The tide was turning; but it was likely to be some time before their night's camp was uncovered. Whether the baggage-cart was still there, they could not tell; they could only hope that it had sunk too deep in the wet sand for the waves to detach it and bear it away. There was no sign of the tent—and Trotsky had long since vanished.

Jimmy Silver rose at last and stretched himself.

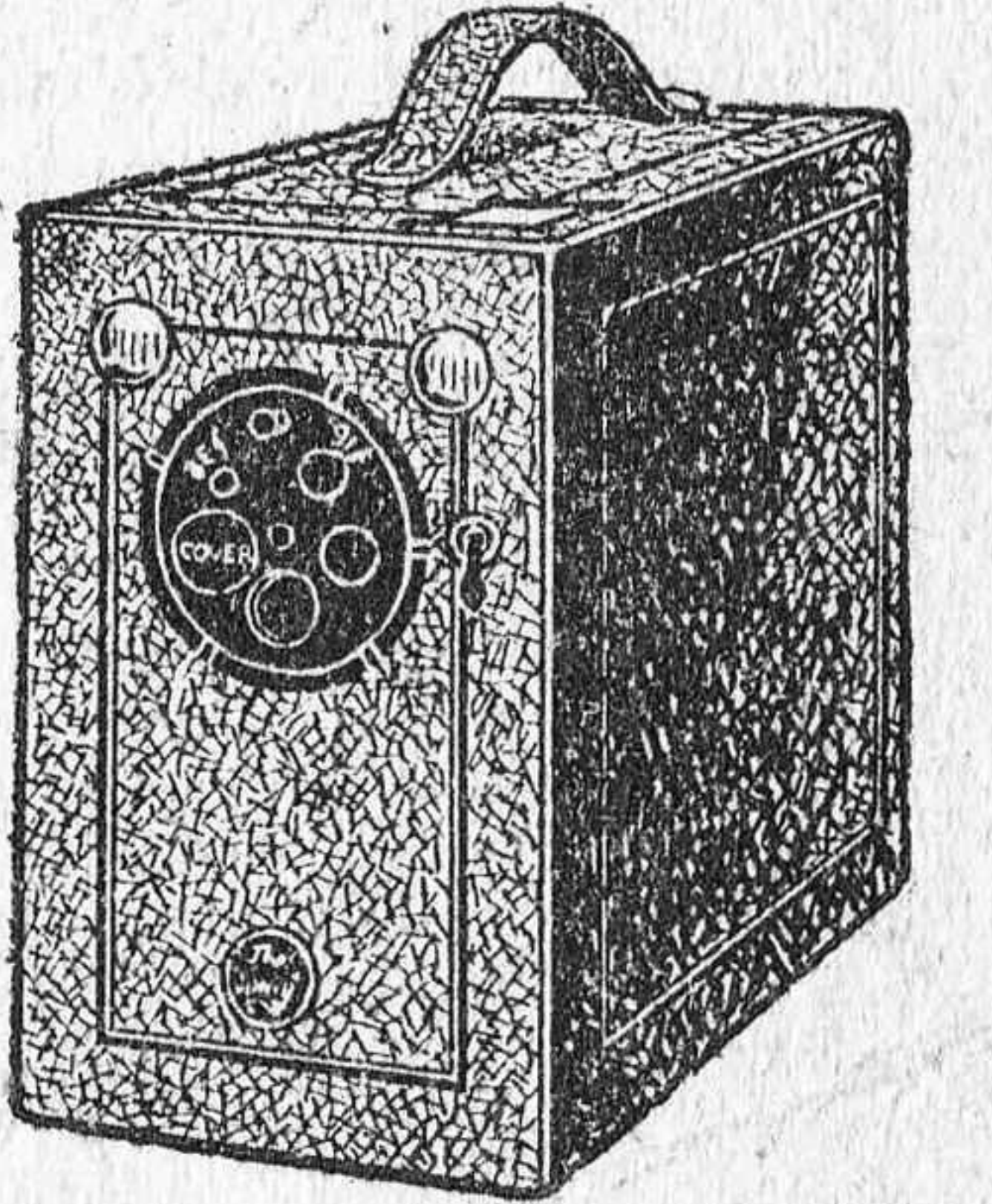
"Keep smiling!" he said, as cheerfully as possible. "Might have been worse. We came jolly near getting drowned."

"Jolly near!" said Raby, shivering.

(Continued on page 60.)

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STICKING IT OUT

By ERNEST SCOTT

(Continued from page 58.)

And Len could run. "Here tha are, Lowden!" The ball came to Len across the turf—never rising so much as an inch—right to his feet!

Len was facing his own goal at the time. He trapped the leather, however, and spun round. Then he was off like a shot from a gun.

His opponents knew him as a dangerous man by this time, and they were after him. Also the two backs were between him and the goal, and rapidly closing in.

Len took in the situation at a glance. It was quite useless to shoot from this point. He must get nearer, and he must beat one of the backs at least.

"Go on, Lowden! Stick to it! Let's 'a' another goal!"

"Pass out to t' left, man!"

"What's t' matter wi' t' right wing?"

It was the usual advice. Every spectator thought he—or she—as the case might be, could give the right advice. But Len had long since realised the futility of taking notice of those who were watching.

The wingers were rushing forward to take the ball in their stride; but the opposing backs were now placed in such a position that an immediate tackle would be the result if the ball went either to right or to left.

So, running the risk of being called selfish, Len stuck to it, and ran on.

He knew that the accusation would only be likely to be levelled against him if he failed to do anything. If it came off, everybody would say that he had done absolutely the right thing.

All these thoughts went through his brain in a flash, and then one of the backs was upon him.

A slight tap to the right, a kick forward, and Len had beaten him fair and square.

But the other realised the importance of this. This chap was a dangerous shot. If he got anywhere near the goal a score would be the result, and two points, since they were so near to the end of the game.

"Not if I know it!" he muttered, and dashed after the lad.

They closed in on Len as he rushed into the penalty area—the two backs—and Len went to the ground, with his two opponents beside him. It was a perfectly legitimate charge he had received, however, and a claim for a penalty was negatived by a vigorous shake of the referee's head.

That was the position—the three of

them on the ground, and the ball beside them.

In a fraction the goalkeeper dashed out from between the sticks with the intention of picking the ball up and kicking away.

There was no time for Len to get to his feet. He just remained prostrate; but he slightly turned his body, and, even as the goalie was stooping, he swung his right leg round and kicked.

The sphere eluded the 'keeper's eager fingers, and rolled—quite slowly and sedately—towards the net, seemed to hesitate for a second almost on the line, as though undecided whether to go in or not, and then rolled over.

Not more than three or four inches, but sufficient. The whistle went, and the referee's hand was pointing to the centre of the field.

Perhaps a lucky goal—but splendidly worked for, all the same—and a goal that would have been impossible of achievement if Len had not kept his head in the last moment.

The two backs and the goalkeeper, carried away by disappointment, blamed each other, and perhaps the goalkeeper might have been a little quicker. Once Len had taken that kick from the ground, however, they were beaten.

It was the hat-trick for the boy, and the winning goal! And there was a scene of great enthusiasm at the close. One and all, they agreed that young Len Lowden, whatever his father was, had played a rattling good game for his side, and that he was deserving of all praise.

In the dressing-room Len was further congratulated, and Brigson did not dare to venture to sneer on this occasion.

He knew that if he had done so he would have had all the rest of them on to him.

As it was, Tom Dabley came up and touched him on the shoulder.

"Just listen to me, my lad," he said. "Tha've played t' last game that tha ever will play for Colville's."

Bert shook himself free.

"I tell thee 'twas no foul!" he said.

"And I tell thee tha't a liar. It was a foul, and one o' t' dirtiest I 'a' ever seen. Tha fouled one o' thy own side, because tha wert so mad that he was doing well. Tha didn't want that. A proper rotter tha art, and I'll see tha never kick a ball for t' team again!"

"Tha will?"

"Ay!"

"Tha'rt not everyone!" Bert said defiantly. "There's t' committee to be consulted!"

"If t' committee are proper sports—as I think they are—tha'll agree wi' what I say."

"And I suppose tha'rt going to

mak' a big fuss o' Len Lowden now? Tha'rt going to overlook t' fact that his father's a gaolbird, and that he's a spy, and—"

"He's a good player, and he behaves himself as a gentleman on t' field, which is more than tha can do. Now buzz off as quick as tha like!"

It had not been a successful day for Bert. Outside the dressing-rooms a crowd of fellows and girls were standing, waiting for the players to come out.

And Bert was greeted with a storm of hisses and catcalls. It was no good him trying to speak—they would not listen to him. There was no possible excuse for what he had done. As for his guilt—well, they had seen with their own eyes.

"We don't want such as thee in t' team, Brigson!" one girl cried out. "Tha'rt a disgrace to it! Tha'rt a disgrace to t' mill as well!"

Brigson gets the Sack!

The servant shook her head.

"I'm sorry," she said, "but Mr. Warner is out."

William Griffen scratched his chin—which seemed to be a habit of his when in doubt or thought.

"Did he say when he would be back?" he asked. "He made the appointment himself; he was expecting me."

"He told me to say that he had been called away on important business if anyone should call," was the answer.

A slight pause. Then:

"All right, my girl," Griffen said. "By the way, you look a very smart and intelligent young lady. I suppose you can be trusted to deliver a message correctly—eh?"

The girl grinned.

"I've delivered a decent few in my time," she said.

"Very well, then. Tell Mr. Warner that Mr. Griffen—Mr. William Griffen—will call upon him on Monday at the same time. If Mr. Warner is not able to see me then I shall be compelled to take the steps I have contemplated without any further discussion with him. Tell Mr. Warner that, will you?"

"Ay, I will."

"Thank you!"

He raised his hat to her and went away, and she stood there for a bit staring after him.

"I wonder what t' game is?" she murmured. "He knows summat about t' master, that's sure enough. Wonder what it is?"

There was a small report about the football match in the local paper on Saturday evening, and a rather more extensive one on Monday.

Len was well spoken of. It was stated that Colville's had got more than a promising centre—they had got the finished article.

"Lowden is speedy, he passes well, and is a really fine shot. Also, as his last goal proves, he keeps his nerve; he has a wise head on young shoulders. He will score a lot of goals this season if he keeps free from injury."

Len read this to his mother with

pardonable pride, and Mrs. Lowden looked and felt immensely pleased.

"I only wish I could have been there to see you play, dear," she said. "I would have done if I had been a bit stronger."

"Never mind, mother," Len replied. "You'll see plenty before the season is out, I'm hoping."

"Was Mrs. Colville there?"

"Yes. And her daughter Ida."

"You didn't see them?"

Len shook his head.

"Oh, no; they were in the stand!" he replied. "I don't suppose they take a great interest in football."

Ida did, if her mother didn't. And Mrs. Colville had not been there for nothing on this occasion, either!

After the dinner-hour on Monday she went to the room that was always reserved for her as a private office at the mill, and, saying nothing about it to Silas Warner, sent for Bert Brigson.

And nothing could have been curter than the way she treated that young man.

"I have made inquiries about you, Brigson," she said. "I may say that I was present at the match on Saturday, and I was disgusted with the way you behaved. It is such conduct as that that brings the whole mill into disrepute. I will not have it. You are a dangerous character, Brigson; and I have found from your over-looker that you have been late three times recently."

Bert began to whine.

"I couldn't help that, ma'am," he said. "I—"

Mrs. Colville waved a hand.

"That is quite sufficient," she interrupted. "Go to the cashier and get your money. You are dismissed!"

There was such an air of finality in her tone that Bert realised that it would be useless to protest. He had got to go.

And, since he had nothing further to gain, Bert changed his tactics.

"I've got Lowden to thank for this!" he said. "T' spy has been oop to his tricks again! But it won't end here—"

Mrs. Colville touched a bell.

"I want you to get out of this office—and the mill—within five minutes!" she said. She looked up as a clerk entered. "Take Brigson to the cashier," she added; "see that he gets paid, and see him off the premises. He is dismissed!"

"Very good, ma'am."

There was no help for it. Bert Brigson had met his just desserts at last.

The mill was closed against him!

"Ay, but I'll get back there!" he muttered. "I'll see Warner! He'll 'a' to tak' me back! If he doesn't—if he refuses—he'd best look out for himself!"

And so that same evening Brigson made his way towards Silas Warner's house, little guessing of all that was to happen there—of what he was to stumble upon!

(What is it that Bert Brigson is about to discover at Silas Warner's house? On no account must you miss next Monday's instalment of this industrial story!)

WASHED OUT!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

(Continued from page 57.)

"Lucky Lovell came along with that knife!" remarked Putty Grace. "Better still if we'd camped above high-water mark."

"We won't leave it to Lovell another time!" grunted Newcome.

Arthur Edward snorted.

"I was jolly sure that, that shingle ridge was high-water mark," he said.

"You always are so jolly sure, old chap!" remarked Raby.

"My idea is that the tide's come in farther than usual this time," said Lovell obstinately. "As a rule—"

"Rats!" said Jimmy Silver tersely. "You were a silly ass, Lovell, and so were we to leave it to you."

"Look here—"

"Anyhow, no good jawing," said Jimmy. "Let's look for Trotsky, and when the tide's down we must save what we can of the outfit."

Hunting for Trotsky kept the Rookwood juniors busy for some hours. They were ravenously hungry; but there was nothing to eat. Trotsky was sighted after an hour's search, but he seemed unwilling to be caught. He led the juniors an infuriating dance up and down and round about for quite a long time. But for the rope still trailing from his neck, he would probably never have been caught at all; but, fortunately, Jimmy Silver succeeded at length in capturing the whisking end of the rope and hanging on to it. After that Trotsky was compelled to listen to reason.

Trotsky was led back in triumph; and by that time the juniors found their camp uncovered by the receding tide. To their great satisfaction, they found the baggage-cart safe and sound, though more than half-buried in sand. They scrambled round it and dug it out, and Trotsky was secured to it, and the cart was dragged out.

Everything in the baggage-cart was soaked, but there were tinned things, and on these the juniors made a late and famished breakfast. Then they tethered Trotsky securely and went to hunt for the tent, hoping that it might have been cast ashore somewhere. They found it at last—high and dry on the shingle, half a mile away. A good many things were missing, but the tent was there, and that was a great comfort.

It was late in the afternoon when Jimmy Silver & Co. were prepared to start on their travels again.

"And we won't camp by the sea any more!" Jimmy Silver remarked thoughtfully, as he took charge of Trotsky's head to lead him on. "Too jolly exciting!"

"All right if you're careful to keep well above high-water mark," said Lovell.

"What!"

The juniors looked at Lovell. They glared at him. Evidently Arthur Edward was quite himself again.

"Oh, bump him!" said Raby.

"Here, hands off! Wharrer you mean? I—you—yooop!" roared Lovell, as he was collared by his indignant comrades and duly bumped.

And Arthur Edward Lovell was silent for at least five minutes as the Rookwooders marched on their way.

THE END.

(*"Rough on the Rookwooders!" is the title of next Monday's grand story of Jimmy Silver & Co. on their holiday tramp. Through the troublesome Trotsky, the Co. have the pleasure of meeting an old friend.*)

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