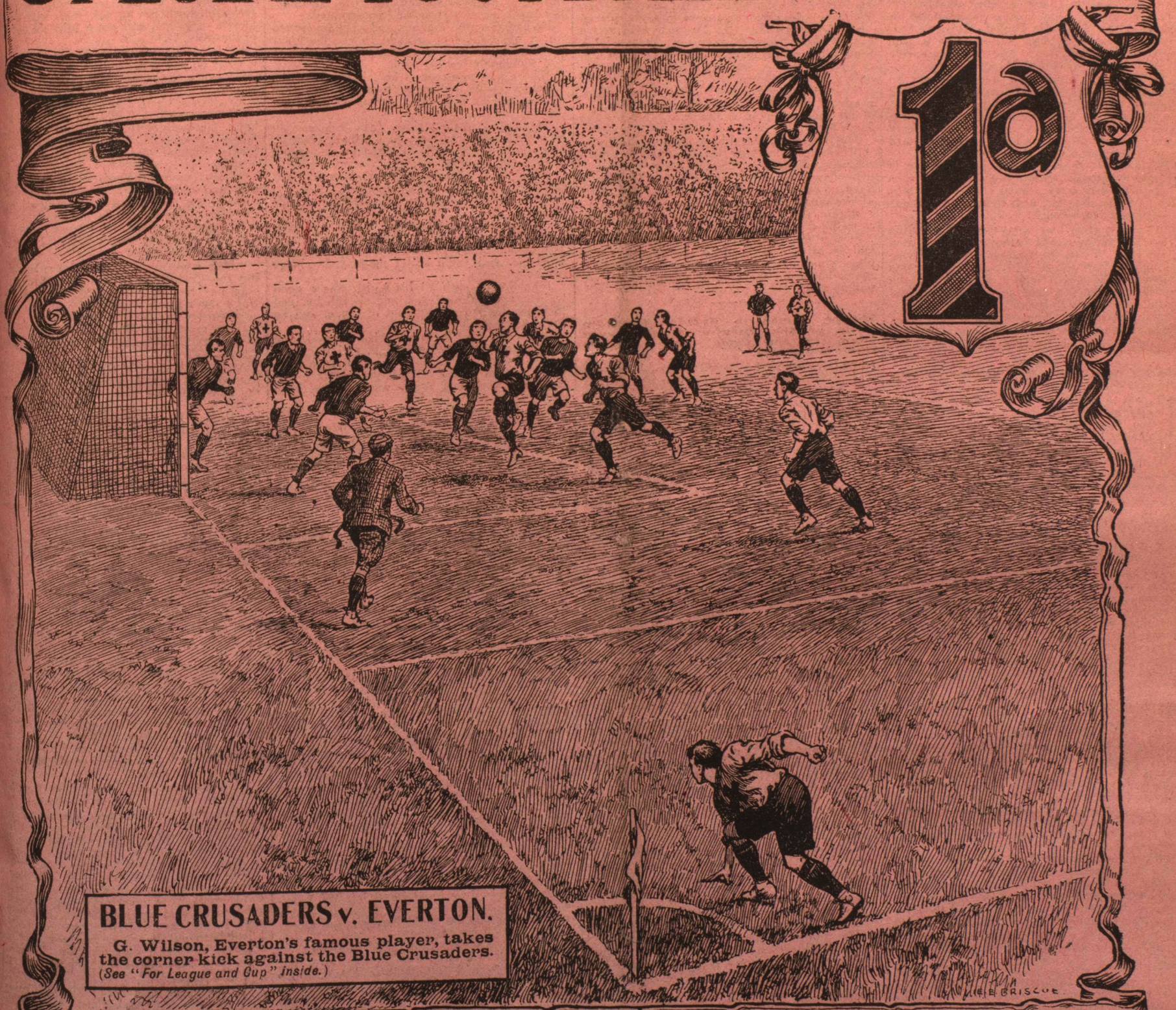


NEW TOM TARTAR TALE NOW STARTING.

The Boys' Realm.

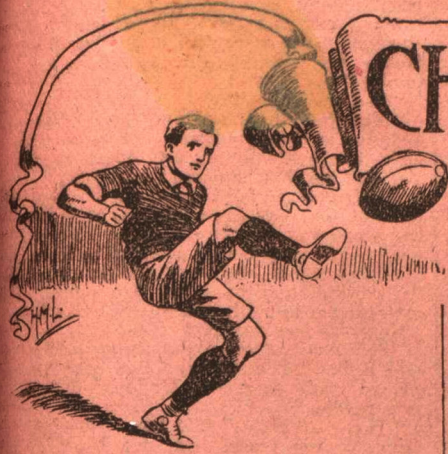
SPECIAL FOOTBALL NUMBER.



BLUE CRUSADERS v. EVERTON.

G. Wilson, Everton's famous player, takes the corner kick against the Blue Crusaders. (See "For League and Cup" inside.)

STORIES OF FOOTBALL & ADVENTURE.



THE 1st CHAPTER.
On the Rugger Field.

FOU! "Foul!"

The shout rose, and swelled to a mighty roar round the football-field at Carbrooke.

It was a clear, bracing October afternoon, and the two Houses of Carbrooke College—Dawson's and the New House—had met each other on the Rugger field.

The House were in fine form. Each had a fair sprinkling of players from the school first fifteen. Mr. Meredith, who captained the first fifteen on match days, was acting as referee in the House match.

There was a large crowd round the ropes, watching the game with keen interest. Pat Molloy, the finest three-quarter in the first fifteen, was the skipper of the New House, and his feats had again and again evoked bursts of cheering. Edgar Devigne, of Dawson's House, also a first team player, had coiled the ball and was off with it, and Pat Molloy was after him like a shot.

There was a buzz as Pat, with a splendid spurt, flung himself on Devigne and brought him down with his deadly tackle. The ball rolled on the ground, and Pat sprang to it. Devigne was on his feet in a flash, an ugly look upon his face. It was evident that he had lost his temper, but his action the next instant took all by surprise. Just as Pat was on the ball, Devigne kicked him savagely, and he went to the ground with a crash.

It was then that the shout rose and swelled round the field.

"Foul!"

The shrill note of Mr. Meredith's whistle was heard amid the angry shouts of the crowd, and play was instantly stopped.

Pat was struggling to his feet. Arthur Blane ran forward to help him. The captain of the New House was deadly pale, and his lips were twitching with pain, but he was still master of himself.

Mr. Meredith was upon the spot in a moment. His flashing glance was fixed upon Edgar Devigne, who stood with a sullen expression upon his face.

"Devigne! How dared you! You are a disgrace to the side!"

"It was an accident!" muttered Devigne.

"An accident!" thundered Mr. Meredith. "How dare you say so? A more cruel and deliberate action I never saw! I had observed that you were losing your temper for some time, and I had my eyes upon you. Molloy, you will have to go off the field. You are too hard hit to finish the game."

"I'm afraid so, sir," said Pat. "But don't be too hard on Devigne. He was hasty, but I'm sure he didn't mean to hurt me."

"You are too confiding," said Mr. Meredith. "It was Devigne's intention to hurt you as much as he could. Devigne will leave the ground, and he will leave the school fifteen also."

Devigne turned pale.

"Do you mean that, sir?" he muttered hoarsely.

"I do. You are a disgrace to the side. This is not your first offence. But this is no time to discuss that matter. Leave the field!"

"But—"

"Leave the field, I tell you!" cried Mr. Meredith.

Devigne sullenly turned and walked away towards the pavilion, his face dark with rage and chagrin. A loud "Boo!" greeted him from the crowd, even from his own House-fellows. He scowled savagely at them, and disappeared. Pat Molloy followed more slowly, leaning upon Arthur Blane's arm.

The game was resumed, and Pat watched the finish. When it was over, Mr. Meredith joined him. The master was looking anxious.

"How do you feel, Molloy?" he asked. "It will be a serious matter for Carbrooke if you should be badly crooked with the St. Kit's match coming off so soon. We must have you in the side when we meet the St. Kit's fifteen."

Pat smiled cheerily.

"I shall be all right," he exclaimed. "It was a bad kick, but I don't think I shall feel the effects of it after to-morrow."

"I am glad of that, especially as we shall be playing without Devigne."

Pat's face became very grave.

"You are determined upon that, sir?" he asked. "Devigne is a fine player, and it will not be easy to replace him."

"I don't know about that, Molloy. There are several players in the second team who are coming on very finely," said Mr. Meredith.

CHUMS OF CARBROOKE

Fine Long, Complete Tale of School and Football.
By CHARLES HAMILTON.

"But in any case it will be impossible to play Devigne. This is not the first time he has disgraced himself by showing bad temper on the field of play. It's bad enough here at Carbrooke, but what would the St. Kit's men think of us if one of our players fouled a man of theirs in the same manner?"

"It's a pity he can't be depended upon to keep his temper," said Pat. "Perhaps if you gave him a good talking to, sir—"

Mr. Meredith shook his head.

"I am convinced that it is the wisest course to exclude him from the first team—at least, for the rest of this season," he said. "I am sorry to disagree with your view, Molloy, but I have made up my mind. He needs a lesson, and that will be a severe one. It will very probably do him a great deal of good."

Mr. Meredith nodded and passed on. He left Pat with a rather troubled countenance. That Devigne's sentence was just Pat could not deny, but he had doubts about the result of the match with St. Kit's with Edgar Devigne left out. But the football master's will was law, and Pat Molloy had no choice but to acquiesce.

THE 2nd CHAPTER. Devigne's Punishment.

EDGAR DEVIGNE'S doom had been pronounced. None could question the decision of Mr. Meredith, who was the master in charge of football, and captain of the first fifteen. But Devigne did not take his exclusion from the team tamely.

His first step was to appeal to Pat Molloy. He disliked Pat intensely, especially since this unlucky happening on the Rugger field. He had been himself entirely to blame, but that did not make him any the less bitter against Molloy. But for the sake of keeping his cap in the first fifteen he was willing to put his dislike and his pride in his pocket.

"I wish I could do something for you," said Pat, sincerely enough. "We want you over at St. Kit's on Saturday, and I've already spoken to Mr. Meredith about you."

"You've got more influence with him than anybody else has, Molloy. I think you might be able to do something."

Pat shook his head.

"I've tried Devigne, but it's no good. He's as firm as a rock."

"Try again," urged the other. "You know I didn't mean to hurt you, Molloy. It was an accident."

Pat coloured.

"You don't believe me?" said Devigne savagely, as Pat did not reply.

"Well, I must admit I don't, Devigne," said the Irish lad frankly. "You lost your temper, and fouled me. I bear you no malice, but it was unsportsmanlike, and I don't wonder that Mr. Meredith's afraid that you might repeat the thing at St. Kit's."

Devigne sneered.

"Now you've said it out," he exclaimed, "I know how much your intercession was worth. Most likely you tried to make it worse for me."

Pat looked at him calmly.

"You're a cad to suggest such a thing," he said. "But I can make allowances for your disappointment. It's no good talking, however."

And he turned and walked away.

Devigne cast a bitter look after him. He would have liked to pick a quarrel with Pat Molloy there and then, but he had a wholesome respect for the finest athlete in the Upper Forms at Carbrooke, and he knew too well how such a quarrel would end.

"Hang him!" he muttered. "I dare say he could do something for me if he wanted to, but he won't, or he can't. I'll have to try the beast himself, so here goes, though I don't suppose it will lead to anything."

A few minutes later he knocked at the door of Mr. Meredith's study. The master's deep voice bade him enter, and Devigne went in with a sinking at the heart.

"Well, Devigne, what can I do for you?"

Mr. Meredith's voice was cold and uncompromising. Doubtless he guessed the boy's errand, and was prepared for him.

"I want to make an appeal to you, sir, to alter your decision about excluding me from the first fifteen," said Devigne, as meekly as he could. "I admit I acted badly in the House match, but I was excited, and—"

He broke down under the master's calm, penetrating eye.

"You lost your temper, Devigne," said Mr. Meredith. "You have done so before, and I have more than once spoken to you about it. But it has done you no good."

"I shall be more careful, sir—"

"I am afraid I cannot trust you, Devigne. If you were to be guilty of some piece of hooliganism at St. Kit's, and bring disgrace on the school colours, I should only have myself to blame, if I let you play after what I have seen. I am sorry to disappoint you; but you have only

yourself to blame, and there is nothing more to be said."

And Mr. Meredith turned to his books again, very clearly intimating that the interview was at an end.

Devigne left the room, his heart black with hatred.

After closing the master's door, he paused for a moment outside to shake his fist at it.

"Hang him!" he growled. "I'll pay him out for this somehow, and Pat Molloy, too! Hang them both! I shall have to give up the St. Kit's match, but I will make them sorry for it!"

He went down the dim corridor with a gloomy brow. The early October evening had set in, and the gas was not yet lighted. At the head of the stairs he stumbled for a moment, and caught at the banister. He steadied himself, with a grunt, and went down. Suddenly a gleam shot into his eyes.

"By Jupiter, I'll do it! If I cannot play St. Kit's, he shall not, either!"

A plan had flashed into his mind—a plan by which he could safely accomplish the revenge he longed for—and his eyes were gleaming now with vindictive satisfaction.

THE 3rd CHAPTER. Who Was the Culprit?

HALLO! That's curious," said Pat Molloy.

It was a couple of days later.

Arthur Blane, his chum and study mate, looked up from Euripides.

"What's curious, Pat?" he asked.

Pat was looking about the study with a puzzled glance.

"Why, I uncorded that hamper an hour ago, and left the cord lying on the floor. I had to get down to the footer, so I didn't stop to put anything away. Now it's not here."

"Somebody wanted some cord and commandeered it," said Blane carelessly. "Like their cheek, though, nosing into our study while we're out!"

"I should say so!" Pat exclaimed. "However, it's of no consequence, I suppose."

He drew out his books, and settled himself to work on the other side of the table. But he had scarcely commenced when a loud cry rang from the corridor, followed by the sound of a heavy fall.

"Hallo! What's that?" exclaimed Arthur, jumping up. "Somebody trying to break his neck down the stairs, I suppose."

The two boys rushed out into the corridor. It was very dusky there, and Pat struck a match as he hastened towards the stairs. It was well that he did so, for the flare showed him a cord stretched across from side to side, on the edge of the landing. Had he not seen it he would have been hurled down the stairs.

He caught Arthur and jerked him back in time.

"Stop a moment, Arty. There's a cord across the landing."

"A what?"

"Some silly ass has been playing a dangerous joke. Look!"

Pat struck another match, and lighted the gas near the head of the stairs. Then, taking out his penknife, he cut the cord, and the two chums hurried down.

"The silly cuckoo who put that cord there ought to be jumped on!" said Arthur wrathfully. "Why, a chap might break a leg or an arm!"

It was evident that somebody had fallen over the cord and gone headlong down. Fortunately the flight was a short one, the stairs taking a curve, and so the fallen man had not gone the whole distance to the next floor below.

There were already a dozen or more persons coming up the stairs to ascertain the cause of the alarm, and as Pat and Arthur came down they heard a general exclamation of "Mr. Meredith!"

The master gave a groan, and tried to rise, but sank back again.

"It's all right," he said faintly. "Nothing serious, I think; but my leg is twisted a little. Someone placed a cord across the stairs at the top."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Dr. Russell, the headmaster of Carbrooke, hastening upon the scene. "Who could have played so senseless and dangerous a trick? Kenyon, please remove the cord at once."

"I have already done so, sir," said Pat Molloy.

"Ah, very good! Don't attempt to rise, Mr. Meredith. We will carry you to your room. Your injury may be more serious than you deem."

The master was carried to his bed-room and laid down. Though he bravely controlled himself, it was evident that he was in great pain. His right leg lay useless.

A doctor was speedily summoned, and his face was grave as he examined the master's injured leg.

Mr. Meredith looked at him anxiously.

"Don't say that I shall have to lay up, doctor!" he exclaimed. "Shall I be able to play in the Rugger match on Saturday?"

"Certainly not," he replied. "There is no serious injury done, but it will be necessary for you to lay up for at least a fortnight. If you attempt even to walk under that time, I will not be answerable for the consequences."

"I suppose you know best," said Mr. Meredith, with an attempt at cheerfulness. "I shall obey you, of course, doctor. But this is a blow to me."

The news of Mr. Meredith's mishap caused a feeling of dismay in the school when it became known. Carbrooke would have to meet St. Kit's without their captain, it was clear and the school's chances of victory were greatly reduced.

"Still, Pat Molloy will make a good skipper," said Edgar Devigne; "and, for my part, I'd rather be captained by one of ourselves than by a master."

And it appeared pretty certain that Pat would have to lead the school fifteen to the tussle at St. Kit's.

Meanwhile, Dr. Russell was making a strict inquiry into the affair. The headmaster was deeply incensed, as was natural, and he was determined to make an example of the culprit when discovered. But the discovery was not easy to make. Every boy belonging to the New House was questioned, and one and all denied any knowledge of the occurrence. As it was against the rules for boys belonging to one house to enter the other, except for some special reason, the doctor did not think of connecting the occurrence with any inmate of Dawson's House.

But the New House boys asserted their ignorance of the affair with an earnestness and uniformity that puzzled the headmaster. He believed at first that the cord had been placed on the stairs by some practical joker. But later he came to suspect that it might have been a deliberate outrage, specially aimed at the master who had fallen a victim to it, for the talk of the boys that Pat Molloy would captain the team in the place of the disabled master soon came to his ears. He knew how that proud position was coveted, and an unpleasant suspicion rose in his mind.

He sent for Pat again.

"I understand," he said, watching the boy's face keenly, "that you came out of your study upon hearing Mr. Meredith fall?"

"Yes, sir."

"Yet you did not fall over the cord as he had done?"

"I struck a match and saw it, sir."

"That was very fortunate," said the doctor, somewhat drily. "Have you any idea to whom that cord belonged, Molloy?"

"Yes, sir," said Pat, flushing. "I have looked at it, and it's the same cord I took off a hamper early in the evening. Someone took it out of my study while I was absent."

"Indeed!"

Pat coloured more deeply under the doctor's piercing glance. He had an uneasy feeling that there was suspicion in the doctor's mind, and the thought wounded him deeply; but to the headmaster's eyes his manner hinted of conscious guilt.

"You may go, Molloy," said Dr. Russell abruptly. "The whole affair will be inquired into, and the guilt fastened upon the guilty person, and that person I shall expel from Carbrooke! You may go."

Pat left the study. His brow was gloomy when he returned to his own quarters, and Arthur Blane looked at him in amazement.

"What on earth's the matter, Pat?"

"I fancy the doctor suspects me of having had a hand in the affair, Arthur."

"What rot! He ought to know you better. But it was deuced unlucky that the bouncer, whoever he was, took the cord from this study," said Arthur thoughtfully. "Some of the fellows have been remarking on that already. It's—well, awkward!"

THE 4th CHAPTER. The Doctor's Sentence.

UPON the following morning, when the whole school was assembled, the doctor made an announcement which caused a thrill of dismay to pass through the boys of Carbrooke. As the author of the previous night's outrage had not been discovered, and as he had not confessed, the holidays of the whole school were rescinded until the truth should become known.

Until the culprit confessed or was discovered the boys of Carbrooke were strictly "gated." There was a buzz in the hall as the doctor concluded his brief, cold announcement—a buzz which had not the slightest effect upon the headmaster. He was not an unkindly man, but he was of a hard, determined nature, and was not to be moved from his purpose once his resolve was taken.

The buzz died down as Kenyon, the captain of Carbrooke, stepped from the ranks of the Sixth. The doctor was turning away, but as Kenyon stepped forward he paused. It required some nerve to face the doctor's calm, penetrating gaze; but the captain of Carbrooke took his courage in both hands, as it were, and spoke up manfully.

"If you will allow me to speak, sir—" he began.

"Certainly, Kenyon! What have you to say?"

"If we are gated on Saturday afternoon, sir, that means the cancelling of the match with St. Kit's," blurted out Kenyon.

"I am aware that the football match with St. Katherine's College, and probably several

more matches, will have to be cancelled," said the doctor, in his calm, measured tones. "That is an additional reason why the author of the outrage, which all must condemn, should stand forward and confess."

"But if he doesn't, sir, are we to cut the match?"

"There appears to me to be no other course open, Kenyon."

"The Saints will say that we are afraid of them, and have funk'd the match," said Kenyon desperately. "If you could let us off Saturday, sir—"

"I have made known my decision," said the doctor, in freezing tones. "I am not likely to alter it for the sake of a football match. When the culprit is discovered the interdict is removed. That is all."

Kenyon stepped back to his place. Every face was dismayed; but there was no more protesting. The doctor's will was law in the little kingdom over which he ruled. There were gloomy faces in Carbrooke College that day.

Most of the fellows were of Kenyon's opinion. The St. Kit's match was always a tough one to the Carbrooke lads, and the balance of honours was on the St. Kit's side. It was pretty certain that if they had to wire that the match was off the Saints would suspect that they had funk'd the test.

That was a bitter reflection to the Carbrooke boys. And the knowledge that the culprit for whose sake they were thus humiliated was in their midst, preserving a cowardly silence, irritated and angered them. After school there was a meeting in Kenyon's study of nearly a dozen members of the upper Forms, to consider the matter, and the meeting agreed unanimously that every effort should be made to discover the rascal.

"But who could it have been?" said Kenyon savagely. "I wish I knew! By Jove, I'd scalp him if I knew!"

"The question is, who had a spite against Mr. Meredith?" said Arthur Blane. And his glance lingered for a moment upon Edgar Devigne, who was present at the meeting. Devigne caught his glance, and his own eyes sank.

"Is it certain that the cord was intended for Meredith?" said Montague, of the Sixth. "It might have been just a practical joke, not directed against anybody in particular."

Arthur shook his head. "The cord wasn't there a few minutes before," he replied. "I know, because I came upstairs only five or six minutes before it occurred. You know, Mr. Meredith was bound to come out of his study at seven, and the cord was put there just in time to catch him."

Again his glance went towards Devigne. This time the latter met it boldly.

"I fancy Blane knows more about the matter than he says!" he exclaimed.

There was a buzz at once. "What do you mean, Devigne?" exclaimed Kenyon. "Explain yourself!"

"I mean that we all know whom the cord belonged to that was set there to catch Meredith. It belonged to the fellow who becomes captain of the fifteen in Meredith's place!"

A painful pause followed Devigne's words. The same thought had been in more than one mind in a vague sort of way; but Devigne had put it crisply and clearly. Devigne saw the impression he had made, and he went on with more confidence:

"We want Pat Molloy to explain how his cord happened to be used, and how he happened not to fall over it in the dark as Mr. Meredith had done."

"You cad!" broke out Arthur. "If Pat were here he'd answer you sharp enough!"

"But he isn't here," said Devigne, with his unpleasant smile. "Let him come and answer. I'm not saying anything against him. I only think the evidence looks pretty black, and that he ought to be asked to explain it away."

"I think so, too!" exclaimed Kenyon decisively. "You'd better go and fetch Molloy, Blane. The sooner this is cleared up the better!"

"I'll fetch him soon enough," said Arthur disdainfully. And he hurried out of the study.

A few moments later the door opened, and Pat Molloy entered. He was slightly pale, but quite calm and composed.

"You want to speak to me, Kenyon?" he said.

"Yes," said the captain of Carbrooke grimly.

THE 5th CHAPTER.
Ragged by the Form.

EVERY eye was turned upon Pat Molloy. He looked at Kenyon, and his glance did not waver. He was much calmer than Arthur, who was angry and indignant.

The captain of Carbrooke spoke crisply. "We want you to explain some things, Molloy. How did your cord come to be used for the trick that was played on Mr. Meredith?"

"It was taken by someone from my study."

"Without your knowledge?"

"Yes. I missed it a few minutes before the accident to Mr. Meredith. I had just come in from Big Side practice."

"You came in after Blane?"

"Yes; a few minutes."

"Then you must have passed over the spot only a few minutes before Mr. Meredith took his tumble there?"

"Four or five minutes, I suppose."

"So you were the last on the spot?"

"I suppose so."

"And when you came out, after Meredith had tumbled down, you didn't fall over the cord. You seemed to know it was there."

"I struck a match, because the corridor was

dark, and Ruggles had not lighted the gas. That was how I came to see the cord."

"You must admit that circumstances are against you," said Kenyon drily. "All these coincidences make the story a little bit too thick, Molloy."

"Do you mean to say that you doubt my word?"

"Well, yes, I suppose I do."

"Then you're a cad!" said Pat hotly. "You've no right to doubt it!"

Kenyon sneered. "I fancy every fellow has a right to doubt a liar," he replied; "and that you're lying, Pat Molloy, seems pretty clear to me. What do you chaps say?"

"He's guilty!" said Devigne impatiently. "That was clear all along! The only question is, what's going to be done?"

Pat looked at his accuser. Devigne met his look with a sneering smile. He felt that he held the winning cards now.

There was a buzz of excited talk, everybody speaking at once, till Kenyon called for silence.

"The doctor says we are gated till the rascal is discovered, or confesses," he said, when silence had been restored. "We have discovered him, and now he has got to confess to the doctor. Are you ready to do that, Pat Molloy?"

"As I am not guilty I am not likely to confess," said Pat contemptuously.

"You are guilty, that's clear enough. We can't denounce you to the Head, as that's against all the laws and traditions of Carbrooke. You must confess; and, if you do so, the doctor will very likely put that to your credit, and not expel you. Of course, you will get a flogging, and serve you right!"

"It would serve me right if I were guilty, but as I happen to be innocent, I have not the slightest intention of confessing."

His temper was not improved by his rough handling. His eyes gleamed as he wiped the stream of red from his nose with his handkerchief.

"Hold him!" he exclaimed. "We'll teach him if he can defy the Form! Hold the brute! By thunder, we'll rag him till his mother won't know him!"

Pat was helpless, with a pair of strong hands gripping each limb, and an arm tight round his neck from behind. A strap from a trunk was fastened round his wrists, binding them tightly together, and then his ankles were secured in a similar manner.

Devigne was on his feet now, his eyes ablaze with rage and malice. While the boys were hesitating as to the exact form the ragging should take, Devigne was ready with a suggestion.

"Shove him in front of the fire, and pull his trousers tight to his legs!" he said. "Give him a toasting, and he'll cave in sharp enough."

Some of the boys hesitated, but most of them were too incensed to stop and reflect. Pat was dragged to the fireplace. It was a chilly October evening, and a fire was burning brightly there. The lad was forced down in front of it, and Devigne stretched the cloth tightly across the limbs in order to make the torture more acute.

Pat struggled madly, but he could not release himself. The pain made his face go white and ghastly, but he did not cry out. He set his teeth hard, and bore it. But at last flesh and blood could stand no more, and a cry burst from him.

Kenyon started forward and dragged him away from the fire.

"Hang it, chaps, this is going too far!" he exclaimed.

"Rot!" snarled Devigne. "He hasn't had half enough yet!"



The door had suddenly reopened, and Arthur Blane appeared, dragging a diminutive fag of Dawson's House by the ear.

Every brow grew dark at this, as it seemed to the meeting, obstinate defiance.

"Very well," said Kenyon, between his teeth, "you refuse. Then we shall have to jolly well make you!"

Pat gave a shrug of the shoulders, and turned towards the door. Kenyon made a sign, and two or three fellows put their backs against it.

"You're not going out till this matter's settled!" said the captain of Carbrooke grimly. "We're not going to lose our holidays and scratch half a dozen fixtures because you're afraid of a flogging, Pat Molloy. If you don't choose to confess for the good of the school, you'll have to be made."

"I'd like to see you make me confess to what isn't true," said Pat.

"By Jove, we'll rag you till you do!" exclaimed Kenyon. "You ought to be sent to Coventry, but the matter's got to be settled before Saturday. We're going to play St. Kit's by hook or by crook. I tell you plainly, that if you don't confess to Dr. Russell, you are going to have a high old-time! You understand, Molloy. Confess, or be ragged! What do you say?"

"I've given you my answer."

No more words were wasted. Half a dozen fellows closed in upon Pat. Arthur Blane sprang to his side, but was dragged away, thrust out of the study, and the door locked in his face.

Pat struck out fiercely enough; his temper was roused, and his blood was up, and he was in no mood for tame submission. Devigne received a right-hander between the eyes, and rolled under the table, and Kenyon went reeling before a rap from Pat's left. But the odds were too heavy against him, and he was seized and borne to the floor, and pinned down, in spite of his struggles.

"By Jove, he's game!" gasped Montague. "Keep still, you beast!"

Kenyon staggered to his feet.

Kenyon pushed him roughly aside, and bent over Pat. The boy was gasping with the pain, almost fainting. Kenyon called for water, and dashed it in his face.

"Will you confess now?" said several voices. "No!"

There was an angry murmur, but Kenyon silenced it.

"Let him alone. He's had enough. We'll give him the night to think it over."

THE 6th CHAPTER.
Arthur Discovers the Truth.

NEXT evening, as Pat sat in his own quarters, still feeling somewhat sore, his door was opened, and seven or eight fellows crowded in. He rose and faced them. Kenyon was at their head, with Devigne close behind.

"What do you want?" said Pat.

The question was needless. He knew well enough what the visit of the "raggers" meant.

"Molloy, it's no good fooling. You've got to make it possible for us to meet St. Kit's," said Kenyon abruptly. "Are you going to do it?"

"I can't."

"You can if you like, as you know very well."

"Put it that way if you like," said Pat wearily. "I feel the scratching of the match quite as much as you do, but you won't believe me."

"Scarcely. If you defy us we'll make your life not worth living at Carbrooke—Hallo!" The door had suddenly reopened, and Arthur Blane appeared, dragging a diminutive fag of Dawson's House by the ear. "Turn that fellow out!"

"Stop a minute!" exclaimed Arthur exultantly. "I've got something to tell you. I've

been making inquiries over at Dawson's. I smelt a rat, and now I've proved it. Edgar Devigne, what were you doing in the New House the evening Mr. Meredith took his tumble?"

"I—I wasn't—"

"Yes, you were; and Jones, here, saw you; and you've been bullying him ever since to make him hold his tongue! Speak up, Jones! We'll all see that he doesn't hurt you!"

The frightened fag blurted out his tale. The faces of the boys grew dark as they listened. Every eye was upon Devigne, and his expression was enough to prove his guilt. The looks upon the faces round him were enough to unnerve the coward, and he burst into denials, soon contradicted himself, and finally broke down.

Kenyon's face was very grim.

"So we've suspected the wrong person," he said drily. "I understand now why Devigne was so ready to accuse Molloy. Pat, I beg your pardon."

"That's all right," said Pat. "I admit that things looked black. As for Devigne, he'll settle this matter with me."

"He'll settle it with all of us!" said the captain of Carbrooke. "Devigne, are you going straight to the doctor to confess the truth, or shall we give you some of your own remedy? A toasting will do you good!"

"Let me alone!" yelled Devigne, as the fellows closed round him. "I'll—I'll confess! I—I—Let me alone!"

"Come on, then!" said Kenyon relentlessly; and the whole body of "raggers," with Devigne in their midst, marched away to the doctor's study, and did not leave the rascal till he had entered the dreaded apartment.

And that the confession was duly made was soon evident from the howls of anguish that proceeded from the sanctum of Dr. Russell.

THE 7th CHAPTER.
The Rugger Match.

PAT MOLLOY was cleared, and the culprit being now known, the doctor's interdict was recalled. Devigne had led the doctor to believe that he confessed voluntarily, and so he was not expelled; but the flogging he received lingered in his memory for many a long day. And the detestation his treachery had excited among his Form-fellows was so strong, and so plainly shown, that he was glad to leave Carbrooke at the end of the term.

The wire, of course, was not sent to St. Kit's. Instead, the football team went over in their brake, and as their captain went Pat Molloy. And though the absence of Mr. Meredith, of course, weakened the fifteen, they were, upon the whole, the strongest team Carbrooke had ever sent to St. Kit's; and their hopes were high. Substitutes for Mr. Meredith and Devigne had been found in the second team, and of good quality.

Pat's look was proud as he led his men to the field at St. Kit's.

And what a game that was! Two fifteens, in fine fettle, faced each other in the clear, cold October sunshine. So good were both, that no advantage was scored by either side till the first half was drawing to a close. Then Pat, breaking away from the Saints, raced forward and grounded the ball over the line; and though Carbrooke did not succeed in converting the "try," they were three points up when the whistle went.

When play recommenced the St. Kit's team worked for all they were worth. A try and a dropped goal soon gave them seven points, and their supporters cheered.

The Carbrooke lads made desperate efforts to get level, but in vain.

Cheers burst from the home crowd as another try was taken by the Saints. It was successfully converted, and the score jumped to twelve. But this success of their opponents seemed to inspire the Carbrooke men instead of dispiriting them. Five minutes later Arthur Blane scored a goal from a splendid drop-kick, and after that Kenyon scored a try.

Carbrooke were now ten to St. Kit's twelve, and it was close upon time. Now the Carbrooke lads missed Mr. Meredith; but Pat Molloy was resolved to fill his place well, and to pull off the victory in spite of Fate.

From a scrum close to the Carbrooke "twenty-five" the ball came to Montague, at back, and he sent it to Pat. That was Pat's chance—and the last chance of Carbrooke. He was off like lightning, and dodged in succession three eager Saints who would have stopped him.

A roar rose from the Carbrooke fellows round the ground.

"Good old Pat!"

Another cheer, as it was seen that he had tricked the half rushing upon him. Only the full-back was in his way now, and he was not quite equal to the occasion. He made his tackle; but Pat was like an eel to hold, and the next instant the full-back was staring after the lithe figure that tore on and grounded the ball only a couple of yards from the posts.

The Carbrooke crowd roared. The kick was easy, and Pat took it himself, and the leather sailed gracefully over the bar.

The whistle went. The game was ended. Carbrooke were victors by fifteen points to twelve, and Pat was seized and carried shoulder-high off the field, with ringing hurrahs. The school colours had been carried to victory by the boy who had been ragged by his Form.

THE END.

(Next week "Two Lads of the League," by Sidney Drew. Don't miss it!)