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TWO LONG, COMPLETE STORIES!

The Boys' Realm.

His First Term! A ROLICKING SCHOOL TALE

By JOHN E. FINNEMORE.

(A synopsis of the previous chapters appears on the next page.)

The Final for the Cup.
"BEHOLD the day!" cried Teddy Lester, as he leapt out of bed on the morning of the great cup-tie, and rushed to the window to see what the weather was like.
"How goes it, Teddy?" said Ito, sitting up.
"Nothing to grumble about," replied Teddy.
"It's very dim and misty, but that means only a little fog up from the sea. If the sun once gets up and shifts it, and I think it will, we shall have a jolly day."

Two hours later Teddy's anticipations proved correct. Slowly a red winter sun rose up, peered through the fog, and began steadily to thin it. By mid-morning, the sun was shining brightly, by midday a most glorious day had opened out, bright, clear, bracing, with the turf dry and firm and springy, every condition which one could hope for on the day of a big match.

Jayne's House seethed with the most intense excitement. The fifteen were the idols of their comrades, and hopes and fears were about

(Continued on the next page.)



Grey's back took a shot at goal from mid-field, and brought it off—a magnificent drop, and well worthy of the cheers which greeted it.

STORIES OF SPORT & ADVENTURE.

Our Grand, Long, Complete Novel.



The Melthorpe Match or the Winning Goal By Popular CHARLES HAMILTON.

The Day of the Great Match.

HAVE you done your imposition, Forrest? Dick Forrest stopped as Herr Blaum's unpleasant voice fell upon his ears. He coloured slightly as he turned towards the German master of Nettleswood College.

room with clenched hands and set teeth. He had never liked Herr Blaum, but he felt that he hated him now. 'Hallo, Dick!' Jim Lester, Dick's chum and study-mate, put in his head at the door. He looked at Forrest in astonishment.

'Am I to understand, Forrest, that you appeal to me against your master? As a matter of fact, Herr Blaum has more than once complained to me of your neglect and want of attention. I have not the slightest doubt that your detention is just. You can go!'

Dick Takes French Leave. 'HERE are you, Forrest?' Came the captain of the Nettleswood First Eleven, put his head in at the doorway. 'Why the dickens aren't you ready? The brake's at the door.'

It was quite possible that the suspicious master would pay another visit to his study later on, but that was a risk he could not avoid. In a few minutes Dick had climbed out of the window. A few minutes more, and he had scaled the ivy-clad wall, and stood in the road.

The Football Match at Melthorpe. 'HURRAH!' The brake had stopped at the Melthorpe ground and the Nettleswood men were alighting as the bike came into view, whizzing along like an arrow, and the whole team burst into a cheer at the sight of Dick Forrest.

CLUB NOTICES. LONG LIST OF CHALLENGES.

Continued from page 479. RUGBY F. C. want matches with clubs (age, 15-17) within four miles of Warrington. Apply, A. Jeffs, 55, New Road, Latchford.

PERTH ROVERS F. C. (15, medium) require matches away in Dec., Jan., and Feb. Singles accepted. Within a radius of five miles from Plaistow Station.

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NEXT WEEK, 'Pete's Fights,' by S. Clarke Hook, will appear.

In dribbling the ball Dick had no equal at Nettlewood, and now he showed his quality. Two Melthorpe men were close upon him, but he simply went round them, and left them staring, and the next moment he dodged a half, and made a break for the goal. Right upon him rushed the Melthorpe backs, and with a fine pass Dick sent the ball to Carne at centre. Carne streaked for goal and shot in the leather, only to have it fisted out by the Melthorpe custodian. But the next moment the Nettlewood inside-left was upon it, and had slammed it into the corner of the net.

"Goal!" A tremendous shout greeted the feat of the visitors, and announced far and wide the first blood to Nettlewood. "Good for you, Dick!" said Carne, as they walked back to the centre of the field. "Hoskins took that goal, but we owe it to you."

The teams lined up again, and Melthorpe kicked off. The faces of the Melthorpians were grim and determined. They found their opponents of a better quality than they had anticipated, and they were determined to "buck up" and see that the Nettlewood success was not repeated.

With the wind in their favour they brought the play into the visitors' half, and soon a tussle was raging in front of the Nettlewood goal.

Time and again the leather went in, only to be sent out again by the Nettlewood goalie, who did his duty nobly between the posts.

At last the ball came out to Dick, and he was off with it. But the Nettlewood champion was a marked man, and before he was over the line he was charged off the ball, and went heavily to grass. He was up again in a flash, but the Melthorpe men had gone forward with a rush, and left him out of it.

Right onward the Melthorpians worked their way, and at last Nettlewood was forced to concede a corner, and there was a hush of excitement as the kick was taken.

Hilton, the home captain, was on the watch, and the ball came to him. The next instant it shot from his foot, and the Nettlewood goalie caught it at too late, missing it by a fraction of an inch; but a miss was as bad as a mile.

The ball lodged in the net, and the Melthorpe crowd cheered wildly.

"Goal—goal! Hurrah!" The teams had equalised now, and the game was twenty-five minutes old. Both sides were breathing a little hard as they lined up again.

Play had been fast and furious, and had told upon them; but they were still quite keen and plucky. Some midfield play followed, till at length the blue shirts came swarming into the Nettlewood half once more, and again the visitors' goal was besieged.

Strive as they would, the Nettlewood lads could not drive back that vigorous attack, and soon a mighty shout announced that Melthorpe had taken a second goal.

Carne set his lips as he and his men faced the music again.

"It'll be different when we change ends," he muttered to himself. The wind was, in-

deed, a big advantage for the home team. But the Nettlewood fellows continued the struggle gamely.

"Good old Dick!" It was a sudden roar as the scarlet shirts were seen to make a break goalward, with Dick in the lead, the ball at his feet.

The Melthorpe defence seemed unable to stand against him. He went through halves and backs like a knife through cheese.

"Goal!" the Nettlewood crowd yelled, as the leather flew from his foot. But they yelled too soon.

It was a splendid shot at goal, and would have beaten the goalie all the way, but the wind swerved the ball upon one of the goal-posts, and it rebounded back into play. In a flash a Melthorpe back had sent it to midfield.

It was cruel luck; but it could not be helped. The game went on, the scarlet shirts falling back before the vigorous attack of the blue-and-white. It was getting towards half-time now, and the home team were still two to one. The Nettlewood crowd looked anxious.

"Buck up, boys!" exclaimed Carne. "And the 'boys' bucked up."

With an irresistible rush they broke through Melthorpe, and fairly rushed the ball to the home goal. Dick centred to Carne, who sent the ball in. Out it came again, fisted high, to find Dick Forrest's head ready for it. Right into the net it went, beautifully headed, and the Nettlewood partisans roared and stamped.

"Goal—goal! Hurrah!" Pheep went the whistle, and the teams scampered merrily off the ground.

"Good!" cried Carne, thumping Dick upon the shoulder with vigorous approval. "Good! If we held our own with that beastly wind against us, what shall we do in the second half?"

"We shall lick them!" said Dick, with conviction. "You bet!" cried Carne gleefully. "Hallo, Lester, what's wrong with you?"

Jim Lester had suddenly burst into the dressing-room with a face the picture of dismay.

"Oh, I say, you chaps, it's all up!" he gasped.

"What do you mean?" "He's come."

"Who's come?" "The doctor!" And the Nettlewood lads looked at each other in dismay.

Bad Luck for Nettlewood.

HERR BLAUM had had his suspicions about Dick. He had left the detained boy working quietly in his study, but about half an hour later the German master strolled that way again, to assure himself that Dick was still there.

He looked into the study, and saw that it was empty. A savage gleam came into his little narrow eyes, and his sour face grew sourer.

"So he has broken bounds," said the German to himself.

To make sure he looked about the school for Dick, and soon satisfied himself that the boy

was indeed absent. In the course of his inquiries he learned that the school porter, returning from the village, had seen the boy scorching away towards Melthorpe on a bike. Full of sullen anger, the German master took his way to the doctor.

"Forrest gone!" exclaimed Dr. Mordaunt. "Surely you must be mistaken, Herr Blaum. He would never dare to break bounds with such effrontery, after I expressly told him that I upheld your decision."

"He has gone, sir," said Herr Blaum, glad to see the Head's anger rising. "Raggles says he saw him cycling towards Melthorpe."

The doctor's eyes flashed. "Then he has gone to the football match, in spite of both of us. Such a breach of discipline shall be visited with the direst punishment. Let me see, what is the time?"

He looked at his watch. "Herr Blaum, there is time to fetch him back. He must not be allowed to play in this match in defiance of orders. Please tell John to put the pony to the trap at once."

"Certainly, sir." The German master hurried away, with a gratified smile upon his face.

Dick Forrest was to be disappointed, after all, and the master who hated him gleefully anticipated his dismay when the doctor should appear on the football-field, and order the culprit to return to Nettlewood.

Very quickly the trap was ready, and the two masters mounted into it. The doctor himself took the reins, and the vehicle rattled away at a lively pace towards Melthorpe.

The doctor's face was set with anger. He felt that his authority had been defied, and he was grimly determined to make an example of the boy who had defied it.

The trap bowled along swiftly through the autumn afternoon, and at last the tower of Melthorpe School rose into view over the brown trees. From the football ground came a ringing shout that reached the two masters at a distance.

"Goal!" But the cheering had died away before the trap drove up to the ground. The field was clear, and the players were in their quarters for the brief rest. The doctor, regardless of the dismay his arrival excited amongst the Nettlewood boys, inquired for the Nettlewood

dressing-room, and made his way there at once, with Herr Blaum at his heels.

He was preceded, as we have related, by Jim Lester, so that his appearance did not take the footballers entirely by surprise.

Yet they stood silent and dismayed at the stern face of the Head of Nettlewood stared coldly in upon them.

"Forrest!" "Yes, sir," said Dick quietly. "You have left Nettlewood against my express orders."

"Not your orders, sir. Herr Blaum's." "Did I not tell you that I upheld Herr Blaum in this matter?"

Dick was silent. "What excuse have you to offer for your conduct?"

"It was Herr Blaum's spite," said Dick desperately. "He—"

"Silence! How dare you! Follow me at once!"

And the doctor turned majestically to stride away.

"Oh, sir"—it was Carne who spoke, in utter dismay—"won't you let Forrest stay and finish the match? He—"

The doctor turned again, and his stare was disconcerting; but the captain of Nettlewood stuck to his guns.

"We've barely kept our end up so far, sir, and without Forrest we are done for. It's the biggest match of the year, and Melthorpe beat us last time. They will crow over us like anything, and—and the credit of the school's at stake, sir."

"I am sorry, Carne, that the credit of the school should suffer," said Dr. Mordaunt icily. "I sympathise with you keenly, but the discipline of the college must be placed before every other consideration. To allow a wilful defiance of authority to pass under my very eyes would be hardly possible, I imagine."

Carne was crushed. In dead silence Dick changed his things, and joined the doctor outside the pavilion. The utter dejection and misery of the boy's look touched the doctor somewhat, but he was inflexible. He gave one glance at Herr Blaum, as if expecting him to say something. Any other master at Nettlewood would have taken pity on Dick, and have begged him off, and then the doctor could have gracefully yielded. But no such thought was

(Continued on the next page.)

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NEXT WEEK, "Pete's Fights," by S. Clarke Hook, will appear.

The Melthorpe Match. (Continued from the previous page.)

in the German's mind. He only thought of wreaking his spite upon the boy for whom he entertained an unreasonable hatred.

"Come!" said the doctor coldly. And Dick followed the masters towards the trap which was waiting. They mounted into it, followed by hundreds of eyes. The story was by this time all over the field, and a general groan of disapproval followed the trap as it moved away down the road.

It passed out of sight of the football field, and now the time for the resumption of play drew the attention of the spectators back to the field. The Nettleswood men went on one man short, and in very depressed spirits.

The change of ends brought the wind in their favour, and had their ranks still been intact, there is little doubt but that they would have walked over the opposing team. But the loss of Dick Forrest, and the gloom which the incident had cast over his comrades, took the backbone out of the team. Hope of victory there was little or none, and that knowledge was dispiriting in the extreme.

Carne made an effort to buck up his men, but they responded very half-heartedly. With the wind in their faces, the Melthorpians again and again charged over the Nettleswood half. But for the soundness of the Nettleswood goalie, they would have scored at an alarming rate; but fortunately, the man between the posts did not share in the general "rot" which seemed to have set in in the Nettleswood ranks.

But the Melthorpe attack was not to be denied for long, and soon a loud shout announced that the ball was in the net.

Five minutes later Melthorpe scored again.

They now stood at four goals to two, and what fragment of hope the Nettleswood men might have had left had vanished.

Carne was furious, and his anger had some effect upon the men, and they bucked up a little, and the tide of defeat was stemmed for a time. But no goal fell to Nettleswood; it was all they could do to keep their own citadel intact.

Thirty minutes of the second forty-five had ticked away, and then the Melthorpe crowd shouted with delight over another goal for their side.

Five to two! Nettleswood settled down to defeat, and it seemed certain that the remaining fifteen minutes would see the most crushing defeat inflicted upon them that they had ever sustained in their football career.

The Pluck of Dick Forrest. DICK FORREST sat silent and depressed as the trap bowed away down the road. The sight and sound of the football field vanished behind him.

The doctor and Herr Blaum were also silent. The former was feeling that perhaps he had been a little harsh with Dick, and his thoughts towards the German at his side were none too cordial.

The trap rattled on, and approached the narrow bridge over the Char. In that stream, in the summer days, the boys of Nettleswood were wont to bathe and fish; but now, swollen by autumn rains, it rushed with an angry murmur under the little bridge.

Zip! Zip! As the trap rattled on the bridge, the horn of a motor sounded on the other side, where there was a sharp turning. A car came buzzing into view, and it shot upon the bridge at the same time as the trap.

The doctor gripped the reins. Herr Blaum turned a sickly white. There was barely room for the car to pass without touching the trap, but the motorist steered with great skill and nerve, and the thundering Daimler went by with a rush and a roar, leaving the trap untouched. But the pony, frightened out of its wits, was rearing and plunging madly, and barely had the motor-car passed, when the animal plunged frantically against the slight wooden parapet of the bridge, and the next moment the pony, the trap, and its occupants were in the water.

The catastrophe had been so sudden that none of the three had been able to make a movement to save himself. Before he knew really what was happening, Dick Forrest found himself in the water, which buzzed in his ears and closed over his head.

Dick was a splendid swimmer, and he struck out at once and came to the surface. He was near the shore, and in a few seconds he had scrambled out of the water. The doctor was clinging to a mass of reeds, and Dick, without an instant's delay, gripped him and dragged him to firm land.

"Thank you, Forrest!" gasped the doctor. He rubbed the water from his eyes, and looked round him. The pony and trap had been swept

through the bridge, and the animal was swimming. But where was Herr Blaum?

"Help! Help!" It was a faint, gasping cry from under the bridge.

"Good heavens!" cried the doctor, in blank dismay. "He will be drowned! Herr Blaum will be drowned!"

"Help! Help!" It was clear that the German had caught hold of some projection under the low arch of the bridge, and equally clear that he was unable either to climb out of the water or to swim. The doctor looked round him wildly. He could not swim a stroke, and there was no help at hand.

Dick Forrest threw off his jacket, and kicked his boots off. The doctor's hand fell upon his shoulder.

"Forrest, what are you going to do?"

"I'm going in for him, sir."

"I—I cannot allow you to risk your life. It is impossible."

"I must, sir, and I think I can do it," said Dick quietly.

The peril was terrible, for the water ran swift and deep under the bridge. The doctor stood hesitating, and Dick quietly stepped to the water and plunged in. In a moment he had been swept under the arch, and the doctor, with a groan of apprehension, hurried to the other side to watch for his reappearance.

It was gloomy under the bridge, but Dick caught sight of a white, agonised face. The German was clinging to a projecting stone, but his numb hands were slipping from their grasp. He no longer cried for help, for his strength was exhausted. Dick reached him with a few powerful strokes.

"Will you—will you speak for me?" he muttered eagerly.

"Himmel!" said the German. "I would do more than that, mein boy. You have saved my life." He turned to Dr. Mordaunt. "Herr doctor, you will pardon Forrest—you will allow him to finish the match?"

The doctor turned an anxious glance upon Dick.

"I am not likely to rouse Forrest anything, after what he has done," he said, in a voice full of emotion. "But, my dear lad, do you feel fit for a football match, after what you have gone through?"

"Fit as a fiddle, sir," said Dick eagerly; and then he coloured. "I mean, sir, I could play my best just now; I know our side is getting licked. Oh, sir, if you could only let me go! I can get a rub down in the dressing-room, and football is the very thing to take the chill out of me after that ducking."

"Then go, Forrest," said the doctor, pressing his hand.

The motorist stopped his car; Dick jumped out and raced for the field.

The Winning Goal.

FORREST! Forrest's come back!" It was a shout of mingled amazement and satisfaction from the Nettleswood fans as Dick suddenly and unexpectedly reappeared.

Not an instant did Dick pause to reply to the questions that were showered upon him.

He knew that the game could not have more than a quarter of an hour to go, and there was not a second to be wasted.



Back into his citadel went the goalie, ball and all, and the whistle went with a long shrill note. Dick Forrest had performed the hat trick!

He did not speak. The man was too frightened to heed or understand. Dick gripped him and drew him from the stone, and supported him while they drifted on the current from under the arch.

But getting him ashore was another matter. Gaily Dick struggled, but the current was strong, and the German was heavy and helpless. But at last, when the boy was almost exhausted, he got close enough to the bank for the doctor to grip his hand and drag him ashore.

The German was dragged from the water. He lay puffing in the grass, the water streaming from him. The pony had already been rescued lower down the stream by a farm labourer. The accident had got wind, and people were hurrying to the spot. Among them was the motorist who had inadvertently been the cause of the accident.

"Brave lad!" he exclaimed, grasping Dick's hand. "By Jove, it was the pluckiest thing I have ever seen. But you had better jump into my car, all three of you, and let me take you to the nearest place where you can dry yourselves."

"That's Melthorpe, the way you were going," said Dick.

A new hope had leaped up in the boy's breast. The good-natured motorist's offer was at once accepted. Delay might have been fatal. In a minute more they were whizzing away towards Melthorpe. The German soon came to himself. He had never completely lost consciousness, and he quite knew how much he owed to the boy he had so bitterly persecuted.

To do him justice, he was deeply moved and ashamed. He did not meet Dick's eyes, and sat quite silent with the motorist's coat about him. Melthorpe came into sight again, and Dick started as he heard a yell from the football field.

"Goal!" It was a Melthorpe shout; an announcement of defeat to Nettleswood. Dick's eyes sought Herr Blaum's face, and he saw how the sour visage had softened.

He made a bee-line for the Nettleswood dressing-room, and disappeared within it. Jim Lester was after him in a moment, utterly amazed, but ready to render any assistance that was wanted.

"Why, Dick, you're raked—" "No questions, Jim," cut in Dick quickly. "Give me a rub down, and help me to change, and let me get on the ground."

"Right-ho!" said Jim cheerfully. And he set to to help with a will. Dick Forrest made a really lightning change. His wet clothes were discarded, he was rubbed down till he was in a warm glow, and then he donned his football things, and he did it in record time.

Meanwhile, Jim jerked out full information as to how the game stood in a few concise sentences.

Melthorpe were five goals to two, and the Nettleswood side were going all to pieces.

"You may be able to pull the game out of the fire, Dick," he said. "But you'll have to buck up. The fellows know you've come back, though, and I fancy they've put new life into them already. There's put new life into Hallo! What's that?"

It was a mighty Melthorpe shout.

"Goal!"

"Six!" groaned Jim. "We shall never do it!"

"We will," said Dick, between his teeth.

The teams were lining up again, and Dick Forrest ran lightly out and took his place with his comrades. Carne's eyes gleamed with joy, and from all the Nettleswood crowd a ringing cheer burst. Dick Forrest had come back, and his presence infused new life into the team. A wild hope of success, of a crushing victory from the jaws of defeat, rose in every heart, and animated the Nettleswood footballers.

With the strong wind behind them, they charged the Melthorpians, and swarmed into the home half. Away went Dick Forrest with

the ball, dribbling in his finest style, and streaking through the Melthorpe defence like lightning.

A tremendous shout burst from the Nettleswood partisans.

"Goal!" It was a fact: the ball was in the net, and Dick Forrest had placed it there. New life had come into the Nettleswood ranks; from the restart they were an attacking side, and the scarlet shirts were soon thick round the home goal again. Another tremendous roar! Right past the astonished goalie the leather whizzed again, to lodge in the net, and Nettleswood were one more to the good.

And soon a penalty kick gave Nettleswood another goal, this one taken by Carne. One more to equalise, two to win! Could Nettleswood do it? A quarter of an hour ago they seemed to be doomed to an ignominious defeat; now the smallest fag from Nettleswood on the ground was swelling with the proud anticipation of victory. Could they do it? Of course they could, and should, and would!

For Dick Forrest was playing up like an International, and his comrades were backing him up for all they were worth. And the new vigour displayed by Nettleswood seemed to demoralise the home team, already somewhat blown by a gruelling game. Again the scarlet shirts swept irresistibly down the field, and again the Melthorpe defence availed them nothing. Again the ball went whizzing into the net, and from the Nettleswood fellows a long sigh of relief came, as the thought passed through their minds that at the worst, now, it would be a draw and not a defeat.

But was it to be a draw? Play had been rapid, and there were two minutes to go.

In two minutes much might be done, and the Nettleswood fellows were to a man resolved that something would be done.

They worked the ball down the field with a splendid combined attack, and the Melthorpe defence was nowhere.

Dick had the ball, and he sent it in to Carne, who passed out to his left wing.

A Nettleswood forward slammed it in, but the goalkeeper sent it out again.

In again it went, and the goalie, springing forward, caught it in both hands.

It was upon the point of time.

But in a fraction of a second, ere the goalie could hurl the ball back, a scarlet shirt flashed forward, and Dick Forrest had charged the goalkeeper, who had incautiously advanced beyond his line.

Back into his citadel went the goalie, ball and all, and the whistle went with a long, shrill note.

But the blast of the whistle was drowned by the tremendous roar that burst from the crowd.

Dick Forrest had taken the winning goal; Dick Forrest had performed the hat-trick!

The Nettleswood boys shouted themselves hoarse and stamped and flung up their caps.

They invaded the field in a surging crowd, and laid hands upon Dick, and carried him round the field amid frantic cheers.

They set him down at last, and the hero of the hour hid his blushes in the pavilion. The game had been a splendid one, well fought out at the finish, and the Nettleswood fellows were justly proud of the forward who had captured the winning goal. It was long before the boys of Nettleswood ceased to talk of the exciting finish of the Melthorpe Match.

THE END. (Next week, "Pete's Fights," by S. Clarke Hook.)

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