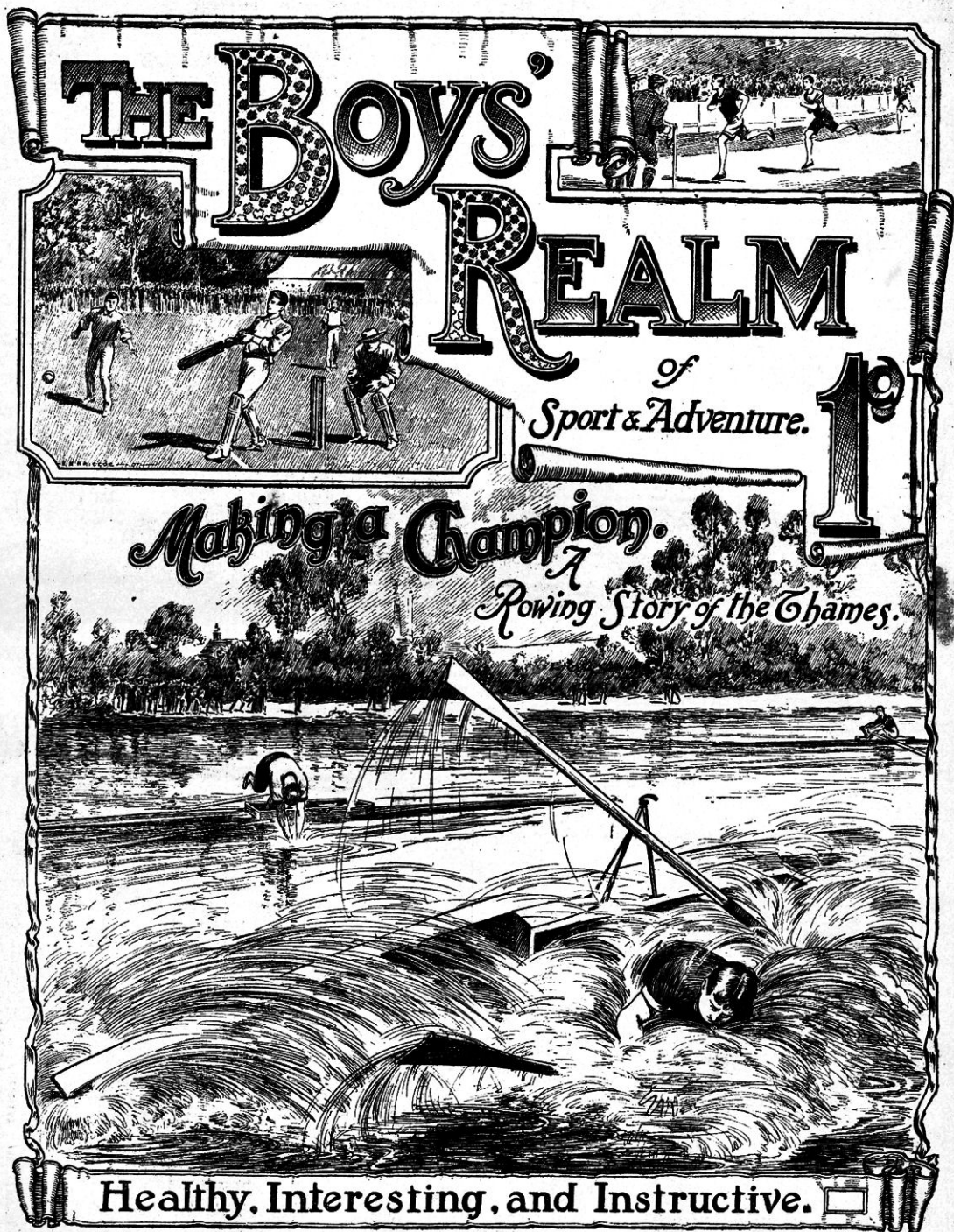



MEDALS AND DIPLOMAS FOR YOUNG ATHLETES. (SEE INSIDE.)



THE BOYS' REALM

of Sport & Adventure. 19

Making a Champion.
A Rowing Story of the Thames.



Healthy, Interesting, and Instructive.

MAKING A CHAMPION.

A ROWING STORY OF THE THAMES.

BY ARTHUR S. HARDY.

THE 1st CHAPTER.

THEY were humiliated—Alfred Hall Gives some Candid Advice.

SN'T that Stanton out there?" a group of four seated within the club-room of the Cygnet Rowing Club boathouse at Putney...

Yes, that's Stanton, right enough?" responded Edgar Grice, in reply to his club mate Heaton's question.

Spring had changed into summer, and Arthur Stanton, leaning back in a deep-seated cane armchair, glanced with blinking eyelids across the river to where the green of Ebury Park was visible.

Arthur Stanton was a young gentleman of means, with a mad passion for sculling. His one great ambition was to win the Cygnet Cup in an up-river race, to further this ambition he had joined the Cygnet Rowing Club.

Such success had not come to him. Though possessed of amazing strength, his weight, and his disposition to put on flesh on the slightest provocation...

sculling, prevented his ever getting fit enough to scull his best, or from pulling his weight.

Stanton, a fancied sculler, and a good-natured, generous fellow, accustomed to speak his thoughts without reserve, he had frequently boded to get a man who did not understand him had got into the habit of regarding him as a young, vigorous fool, and Arthur Stanton was the butt of the club-room.

The good fellow didn't mind being twisted a bit by the way, as he was not the attacks his club mates would have been the first to resent it, and there would have been no result but to get up with your chaffing, and set out for his row down the Thames upon ebb and flood each day as regularly as clockwork.

He felt sure that one day he would succeed. But he had often chatted with Gardner, Guy Mickels, Fox, and Kelly upon the aquatic and his, by a judicious remark, he had had ability that he refused the assistance of a professional coach and so, with faults in style that increased his cutting, he pulled his small craft jerkily along the stream to the no small delight and amusement of the members of the Cygnet who had chosen to make him his comrade.

Arthur Stanton was not popular. He had inherited a fortune of £40,000 from his father, and his money was always ready to do him good in the course of a few years.

He was not yet twenty-four years of age, and he had the success in his abundance, he had had himself, and his easy and unsuspecting manner rendered him an object for jealous envy among his comrades.

As he was a good chap. The professionals who looked after the boats and the boathouse loved him. He always had a sympathetic word for them. He was always ready to do some good for them; and he tipped better than anybody else attached to the Cygnet.

There was one professional, Alfred Hall, an ex-winner of Doggett's Coat and Badge, a young man of twenty-two, who would have laid down his life for Arthur Stanton.

When Hall had married, a year before, on any viceroy means, Arthur Stanton, without a second thought, had abandoned his boat on the neighbourhood of Putney, and had presented it to the newly-married couple as a wedding present.

Alfred Hall was only waiting an opportunity to show his gratitude. That opportunity, though he hardly dreamed of it as he busied himself with his boat, was to come.

For Grice and his friends, was soon to come. "I tell you what it is," said Sydney Heaton, as he sat with a group of his club mates.

"I'm sick of Stanton and his sirs, Grice. I wish to goodness we could get him out of the club-room for good."

"I don't think it's a good idea," said Sydney Heaton, as he sat with a group of his club mates.

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and again when he had gone up to Rugby. Fat he was still, and his boyish face and ruddy cheeks looked strangely out of place surmounting his huge frame.

"You're coming on in your sculling, are you not?" said Heaton, with a wink at his friend Grice.

"Well, I really believe I am," answered Stanton, with a grin. "I don't think I've done so badly."

"I'm sure I am," said Stanton proudly. "I'm wouldn't think of letting the chance pass."

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hot for him in the club that he'll be jolly glad to get you."

"I don't know about that, sir," chimed in Alfred Hall, who was sitting next to him.

"It seems to me that Mr. Stanton kept the club going by subscribing heavily to the building-fund when we had the new boathouse-room, and I don't think we should have given him more prizes if he hadn't given so many last year. The club would feel a great deal better."

Grice dashed angrily. Alfred Hall's words went home to him, for neither he nor Heaton had ever been asked to contribute to the fund.

"Look here, Hall," said the club's champion sculler indignantly. "your place is to look after the members, and to see that the interests of the members, and mind your own business. What- ever we may think right to do, you have no call to question it; and I tell you what, if you continue to give advice where it is not wanted, I shall complain to the club's committee, and we will get another professional to look after us. There are plenty of them about, and you would be only too glad of the job—do you understand?"

"I'm sure I do," answered Alfred Hall humbly; and after casting one glance in Arthur Stanton's direction he turned on his heel and went out of the club-room without another word.

On the following Saturday evening, there was a record gathering of members at the Cygnet boathouse.

It was said that the fat youth had put in an astounding amount of practice during the week, and that Alfred Hall had been out with him, and giving him the best advice, in order to get him into something like shape for the race. But it was also well-known that the unsucc...

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his pupil, the waterman was quick to notice that he was not in the best of health.

distress, whilst Edgar Grice, who had never varied his stroke for an instant, was sculling Alfred Hall's boat with a steady, strong stroke.

Grice was content to permit his rival to do the leading until the mark was reached, and then he would give his effort, and began to go up hand over hand.

Realising the danger of defeat, Arthur Stanton struck a blow to abandon the rhythm of his stroke, with the result that between the jerks the craft buried her nose deep in the water, and she was almost swamped.

She lost way between each of the strokes, and Grice, who was far too good a waterman to let his opponent get the lead, was not slow to take advantage of the opportunity.

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Arthur Stanton gazed at the waterman with wide-open eyes.

"You're not serious, are you, Hall?" he said, a spark of hope rising in his breast.

"Dead, bed-rock serious, sir,"

"Explain."

"Well, sir, at the start of the race to-day, when I remembered what I had told you and sculled as a man ought to scull, by reason of your greater strength you pulled right away from Mr. Grice."

"On surferance."

"Fardon me, sir, he was doing all he knew. But now, you see, you weren't fit, and as soon as the strain came you could not respond to it. Your diet was all wrong. You couldn't row. Your muscles were encumbered by their superfluous fat. They're dead quick. Then you fell into the old jerky style that would lose

Of the preliminary heats for the Diamonds rowed the day before, Edgar Grice, the popular Cygnet man, had romped in an easy winner from Otto Hagan, of America. The time had been very fast, and the Diamonds were looked upon as a certainty for him.

The other heats had been well contested, and some good men were left in, but the times had all been considerably lower than that of Grice's heat, and some of the competitors had been well pressed, too.

The surprise entry for the regatta was that of Arthur Stanton, of the Cygnet Rowing Club, whom Grice declared to be an outsider, not good enough to win a race at a fourth-class regatta; and the surprise of the meeting so far had been Stanton's refusal to row over when his opponent, Danes, had insisted that he put in an appearance, owing to a flaw in his

A round of handclapping came from down the course.

Why?

As the sculler drew nearer the reason was apparent. Arthur Stanton, once so clumsy a sculler, was moving with an ease and grace, and upon as even a slide as ever had been seen at Henley. The feather was carried right to the end of the aving forward, and the scull blades were turned crisp and clean, taking the water at the same moment, and drawn through with such a correctness that would have satisfied an expert.

Gone was all Arthur Stanton's fat, and only a tall, brawny athlete remained, such an athlete that Britain might well be proud of, and the members of the Cygnet stared aghast.

He flashed past the winning post amidst a storm of applause, and at once ran his boat into the raft, and got ashore.

There Alfred Hall was awaiting him.

"Do you think I'll do, Hall?" asked the gentleman, with a genial smile lighting up his handsome features.

"Do, sir!" answered the waterman proudly.

"You're going to surprise Henley, that's what you're going to do. Grice is in your heat, sir. Don't spare him. Remember how he had you over that race to Chiswick."

"I think I can turn the tables this time," remarked Arthur Stanton grimly.

"Don't get carried, sir," said the waterman warningly. "Remember Grice is reckoned to be the best class man in the race, and you won't have anything to give away. Remember the points I've taught you, and above all don't run into the piles or the booms. He won't spare you if you do."

"I'm bound to remember all the points," laughed Arthur Stanton, as he made his way towards the cold shower. "You've driven them into me, Hall, until they are part and parcel of myself."

On the course meanwhile Arthur Stanton's form had quickly been forgotten, though one or two men still praised the young Cygnet man's style, and excitement was soon raised to fever pitch by a fine race between Leander and the Selatins in what the Green Challenge. Leander won by three feet after seemingly being well beaten.

Then the Nyctols, the Ladies, and the Vigilant were rowed for, and yet another heat of the Diamonds.

This was won by Bulwer, a London Rowing Club man.

It was not until the close of the day's racing that Edgar Grice and Arthur Stanton went down to the starting post for their heat. Grice looked anxious, and ever again turned to regard his erstwhile despised opponent critically. What he saw did not tend to render him more confident. Stanton's style was perfect. Still, Grice had had pounds and pounds in hand at their previous meeting, and he was not disposed to look forward to defeat yet.

"I'll bet you fifty pound I beat you, Stanton," he said, in order to try and screw his courage up.

and Grice was glad, for he would not care for a real hot tussle in that tropical heat.

Some delay was made at the post owing to Grice's extra caution. It was plain he feared his man, and he overhauled his slide, his straps, and his oarlocks carefully before he signified that he was ready.

Down the course hundreds of people had left, making their way to the station in order to avoid the crush, for they reckoned Grice a certainty for this heat of the Diamonds. They regretted for ever afterwards that they did not see the race.

Hall's instructions to his master had been: "Let him get away, sir, and row a waiting race. Scull him down. You will find it pay, avoid the crush, for he thinks he has won the race and finds, too late, that he has shot his bolt. You're strong enough to do it, sir."

Therefore at the pistol, though he got away smartly, Stanton did not put so much into it as Grice, nor did he row so many strokes in the first minute, and Grice at once slowed up with the lead.

Grice's eyes blazed with triumph. He had the pace of his rival! Still, when they had passed the island—and do what he would he could not get more than a length and a half away—Grice began to feel a trifle anxious. On they swept, the sculling of both men rousing the crowd to admiration. Of the two, Stanton was the prettier sculler to watch, Stanton, whom no one outside a rowing club had ever heard of, and everybody attached to one had always ridiculed! The big, bony man was sculling in true professional style. Presently, turning his head, he saw Grice yaw a bit asthwart the stream. It was time for him to make his effort.

Never for an instant losing his beautiful even swing, he quickened and at the same time lengthened his stroke, and before Grice had realized the change in the position of affairs, Stanton was alongside, sculling beautifully, and right in the centre of the stream.

How the people shouted! Grice began to stare. Stanton quickly responded, and the big man's boat forged ahead.

A foot! A yard! A quarter of a length! Half a length! One length! A length of daylight between!

Stanton was winning anyhow. The roar of the people clustered at the finish could be heard, and, setting his teeth in determination, Grice went in chase. He began to gain, but it was his last effort, and, quivering presently, Stanton drew right away, until, fifty yards before the finish, Grice, with a groan, released his grasp of his sculls and toppled forward in his seat, completely rowed out.

And the rest? Well, Stanton won the final for the Diamonds in hollow fashion, and returned to Putney the hero of the Cygnet.

Grice had to pay for the dinner to the club, but so disgusted was he that he resigned his membership, and so long as Stanton entered for any regatta so would he scratch, for he dared not meet his conqueror again.

And when Alfred Hall who had made a champion of Arthur Stanton? Well, he serves

CLUBS IN "THE BOYS' REALM" FOOTBALL LEAGUE.



QUEEN STREET JUNIOR GUILD F.C.: See, Mr. Owers, 27, Kild Street, Woolwich.

even a champion. He rase, Grice had the pull of you there. He has style, sir; there is no mistake about that. But you'll beat him, if you leave yourself in my hands."

"Get rid of your fat first, sir. You're not saying this to comfort me?"

"Did you ever know me tell anything but the truth, sir?" asked the young waterman, hurt.

"I don't say things merely to please my patron."

Arthur Stanton opened a while.

"You saved my life, Hall," he said presently.

"I shall never forget that. I'll place myself in your hands. What am I to do?"

"Get rid of your fat first, sir. You can't row. I can't, lad. It's constitutional. The faster I work it off, the faster it comes again."

"A rowing diet, sir," said Alfred Hall laconically.

"Well, you'll get rid of it for you, and then you can begin to think about sculling."

"Go to Llandrindod, in Wales, and take the special diet and the water there. In a fortnight you won't know yourself, sir. I remember when Mr. Murray Carson, the actor, wanted to get his weight down in order to play 'Captain Kettle' at the Adelphi Theatre, that he went there, and when he came back and played, he was so small that the critics were astounded, and wouldn't for a time believe that it was the same man. You ought to have seen what he got off himself, sir. You know, I'll make a champion of you soon enough, sir, when you come back."

Arthur Stanton broke into a broad smile, and offered the young waterman his hand.

"As soon as our dinner at the Carlton is over, Hall," he said, "I will go, and if you can do anything with me afterwards, I shall not forget you, I promise."

"Please don't say anything about that, sir," answered the young waterman, flushing. "I want no payment but your good word, sir."

rowing-shell. Arthur Stanton had appealed to the regatta committee, it was said, for the race to be postponed until the next day, in order to give the Dane a chance. It was sporting of him, at all events, and Stanton made countless friends, especially among the fair sex, by his chivalrous action.

But now the rumour got abroad that the Dane's boat could not be got ready, and Stanton had at length, reluctantly though, decided to row over. He came paddling along down stream, amongst the craft at the course was cleared, and members of the Cygnet Rowing Club, who had not set eyes on him since the night of the diamond race, met at Carlton Hotel, stared in amazement.

Here was a change indeed! What did it all mean? And Hall, the professional, had resigned his position at the Cygnet Club a month ago, too, and had not been seen either. Mystery of mysteries!

Heaton, who was standing with his chums Mr. Rogers and Pearson upon the lawn at Fawley, stared at them in amazement.

"Good gracious," he gasped, "Fatty" has got it! By Jove, he evidently means business. He's rowing in the name of the Cygnet, too. Grice was laughing and sneering at him last night, saying that he would bring the club into ridicule by his rowing what he makes of it. I don't look much like it. If I look for anything he looks fit enough to win."

The others acquiesced, and they waited in silent impatience for Arthur Stanton to come along. Presently they were joined by Grice, who was clad in white flannels, and wore the Cygnet cap and blazer. The champion sculler looked fit to row for a kingdom.

"Seen Stanton?" asked Heaton, regarding him curiously.

"Yes," was the short answer. "Went to the dressing-rooms just now to wish him good luck. That's happened to the beggar? Where have his fat cheeks gone? He looks quite and some. He's as hard as nails. Suppose he's sculling just as clumsily as ever. Upon my word, I don't know what to make of it. I don't say, I know I'm drawn against him in the next heat."

"He shall soon see what he's worth," responded Heaton, setting his Zeiss glasses upon the island far down the river.

"He's here he comes," he said presently. "And he seems to be moving, too."

The sculler was coming along, with the umpire's launch directly behind him. His sculls were taking evenly and nicely, and he was keeping a course as true as a die.

"He won't do that in the race," said Grice, shutting his eyes and winking.

Arthur Stanton was indulging in a long opener. His early morning practice had not been sufficient for him, and he wished to test what sculling was like in the full glare of the sun.

CLUBS IN "THE BOYS' REALM" FOOTBALL LEAGUE.

"No bet. I can't bet in money," was the quick reply. "I'll tell you what though, Grice. I'll bet you dinners for the club at the Carlton if you like. Champagne, you know."

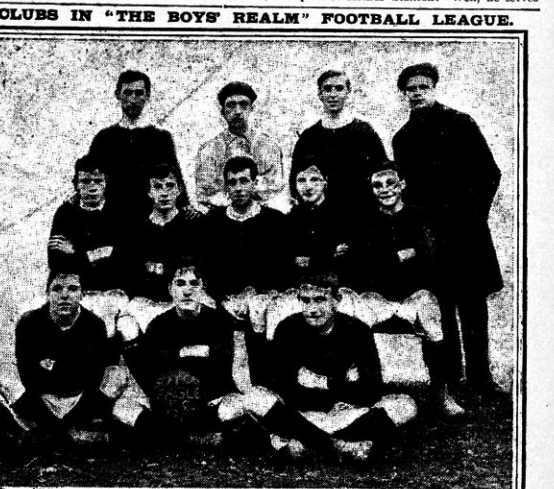
"That would mean good dinners more than fifty pound, yet Grice took the bet."

"All right," he said, though he didn't at all like the prospect in case he lost, for the money meant a lot to him.

The sun had by this time lost its fierceness, and two masters—his club and Mr. Stanton—and his future in the association. His loyalty, and his great ability both as sculler and coach, stand out a shining example to all other watermen upon the river.

THE END.

(Next week a fine comical running tale by Jack North will appear.)



SOTON EAGLE F.C.: See, Master O. Pienry, Eagle House, Palmerston, Southampton.

THE 2nd CHAPTER.
Grice is Surprised and Suffers Defeat.

It was Henley time, and the regatta course looked a picture. There had been no rain, and so the racing of the opening day, and the spools at Fawley Court and all along the bank, with their flowering gardens of roses, presented a magnificent picture, restful to the eye. Behind the booms were crowded more boats than the regatta had hitherto known of, and stationed at their moorings, for which the bank had been excessively high, were some of the finest houses in the Thames ever seen.

Bands played on some of the lawns, streams of people lined the banks wherever possible, and with the sun shining down from above, upon white-clothed men and women, upon brilliantly coloured sunshades and cushions, the scene was one long to be remembered.

In no other country in the world could such a gathering be got together. There was a sun haze upon the green hills that formed a background when looking down the straight regatta course towards the island, and the racing was in full swing.

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THE END.

(Next week a fine comical running tale by Jack North will appear.)

FROM YOUR EDITOR'S CHAIR.



Latest Portrait of YOUR EDITOR (H. E.).
 Controller of
THE BOYS' REALM—Saturday.
THE BOYS' FRIEND—Tuesday.
THE BOYS' HERALD—Thursday.

Your Editor is always glad to hear from you about yourself or your favourite paper. We will answer you by post if you enclose a stamped addressed postcard or envelope. Write to him if you are unable to do so, or if you have any ideas for our paper. All letters to be addressed to the Editor of THE BOYS' REALM, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C. If your letter is not replied to here, it may be answered in "The Boys' Friend" next Tuesday, or "The Boys' Herald" next Thursday. THE BOYS' REALM will be sent post free to any part of the world on the following terms: 12 months, 7s.; 6 months, 3s. 6d.; 3 months, 1s. 6d. All orders payable in advance by British stamps. Postal Orders or Money Orders to be sent to the Publisher, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.

Criticism From a Lincolnian Chat.

FROM JOHN F. P., one of my many chums who reside in Lincolnshire, I have received a rather long, but interesting letter. My friend tells me that he has been going to write to me for three years past; and besides being a reader of "The Boys' Friend" for five years, he has read "The Boys' Herald" and this paper since the issue of their first numbers. That stamps John F. P. as a loyal supporter of my papers, and as one whose criticism is to be taken seriously.

John F. P. sends me that I invite criticism at all times, and I thank John F. P. most sincerely for his letter. It is by the study of the letters from my chums, who have the best interests of their favourite papers at heart: that I am able to remedy any weak points that may show themselves, and altogether do my utmost to satisfy and please every reader. That is the spirit in which I take criticism. It is favourable or unfavourable, but periodicals.

My friend complains that some of my chums ask absurd questions, which I answer upon the Chat page. He also grumbles that the recipe for re-enamelling a bicycle has appeared so often in THE REALM. The space is so often useful in THE REALM, that I cannot give up to something more useful.

Now, in this matter I think my friend is just a wee bit selfish. An editor's duty is to endeavour to please not one reader individually, but as many as possible in every way conceivable. That I have succeeded in this effort, succeeded, beyond the efforts of all other editors of boys' papers—is shown by the huge circulation of this paper. In running THE BOYS' REALM, in answering my readers' letters on the Chat page, I do not consider one reader, I consider them all.

When a reader writes asking me to tell him what to do with his yellow teeth, I tell him of a cheap preparation which will make them white. I do this not for his benefit alone, but for others who, seeing the recipe, will straightway commence cleaning their teeth, which they would not have done if the paragraph had not been printed. Again, I printed the recipe for re-enamelling a bicycle on several occasions, because at the beginning of the cycling season so many of my friends who had destroyed the copy of the paper containing the original recipe, were asking for it. I have had over a score of letters inquiring for this information in a single day. Should I be acting in the best interests of my friends were I to refuse them this information because it has appeared before?

John F. P. need not read these paragraphs when he sees them in my Chat on this page. He will find good value for his penny in other parts of the paper. John F. P. pays one penny for his weekly copy, but every issue

costs me in salaries to my staff, payments to authors and artists, and in printing and publishing expenses, over £500. As I said, I think my friend is just a little bit selfish. He may not want a remedy for discoloured teeth or a recipe for re-enamelling a bicycle, but very many other readers do. Remember this, my friend, and think a little more kindly of the readers who possibly are younger and not so well informed as yourself.

John F. P. asked me not to regard his criticism as the outcome of bigoted ideas. I do not. May I hope, in return, that this reply to his letter will be accepted as my defence to his statements, and that there is not the slightest trace of ill-feeling in the matter. Again, my friend, I thank you very heartily for your most interesting missive.

OUT FRIDAY, JUNE 7th.

TWO MORE NEW ADDITIONS TO
"The Boys' Friend"
3d. Complete Library.

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A Complete Story of the Famous Detective,
 HOW HE DISCOVERED AND ADOPTED
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"THREE BRITISH BOYS,"

A Splendid Complete School Tale.
 By MAURICE MERRIMAN.

PLEASE ORDER YOUR COPIES TO-DAY.

He Wants to Become a Policeman.

A LONDON reader of THE BOYS' REALM, whose name is not as I, F., wishes me to give him some information as to the means of entering the Metropolitan Police Force. The following particulars will, I am sure, be read with interest by not only my friend, but by other readers:

In order to enter the police force the primary qualification is a good character. In most towns the standard of height is 5ft. 6in. A medical examination is stipulated, and is somewhat similar to that undergone by recruits in the Army and Navy. The other qualifications are simple reading, writing, and arithmetic, with special regard to spelling. If the candidate is accepted, he spends a period of time on probation, and then makes a declaration that he will serve the King dutifully and loyally.

The Metropolitan Police Force pay commences at 24s. per week, with an increment every two years until 30s. is reached. The uniform is provided, and consists of two pairs of boots, a tunic, a helmet, and two pairs of trousers each year, and an overcoat every three years.

The rules of the Force are very strict with regard to breaches of discipline.

Detectives are a distinct class, having their quarters at New Scotland Yard. They are selected from the police, and are chosen for their intelligence, aptitude for teaching children, superior education, and knowledge of foreign languages. They receive salaries according to their talents.

Application for admittance to the Metropolitan Police should be made to the local station or to the Chief Commissioner, New Scotland Yard, S.W.

In provincial Forces, application should be sent to the head constable of the district.

My Brief Reply Corner.

W. Thompson, 171, Moorland Road, Spott, Cardiff, would like to exchange a postcard of Cardiff Rugby Football Club, the Springfield vanquishers, for a portrait postcard of the Newcastle United Football Team.

A book dealing with Ji-Jitsu can be obtained (S. D., Runcom), of Messrs. Spalding, Fother Lane, London. Its price is 1s.

You might find the whereabouts of your aunt who lives in Belfast, P. B., Bethnal Green, if you were to insert an advertisement in either the "Belfast Weekly News" or the "Northern Whig." If you sent them a letter, enclosing a stamped envelope, they would tell you the cost of such an advertisement.

YOUR EDITOR (H.E.).

Daily Mail.

It Starts Next Week.

I HAVE very great pleasure in announcing that in next Saturday's issue of THE BOYS' REALM the opening chapters of a stirring new school and adventure story will appear. The title of this yarn will be,

"THE SCHOOL ON THE CLIFF,"

and I can assure every one of my friends that it is going to score a marked success. I am absolutely certain of this fact, because as I read the story it thrilled me through and through, and I was not satisfied until I had read the very last word of the very last line. The central character is a lad named Jack Jaunty. This is not his real name—that will be revealed later on—it is the name he goes by throughout the greater part of the story. I am expecting that Jack Jaunty will very shortly be as much loved a character with my friends as Tom Tartar was when the story of his adventures was being told in these pages. So, my loyal friends, look out for this great new story on Saturday next, and let all your friends know that it is about to commence.

A Running Story.

I HAVE been asked by a large number of readers to publish a long, complete running story in THE BOYS' REALM. As I always endeavour to meet the wishes of my friends whenever possible, I have made arrangements that next Saturday's issue of our paper shall contain a long, complete running tale by Mr. Clement Hale, entitled

"THE SILVERDALE HANDICAP."

The other complete story in that number will be one of Mr. Graydon's popular "Off-Duty Yarns," published under the title of "The Begun's Treasure."

THE LEAGUE OF YOUNG ATHLETES.

A Great New Organisation affiliated to "The Boys' Realm," banding together Junior Athletes who have shown Marked Ability in given Sports by performing certain Feats set by the President.

To obtain a BOYS' REALM Diploma, and also to qualify for Membership of the LEAGUE OF YOUNG ATHLETES, readers must perform one of the following feats:

SECTION 1.—SWIMMING.

To any reader up to the age of 18 who can swim 100 yards will be awarded a handsome embossed Diploma stating this fact and making him a member of the League of Young Athletes. In addition, a BOYS' REALM Standard Medal will be awarded to any reader who can perform one of the following tests up to and including 100 yards, a Second Class Medal for the First Class Medal for 440 yards, in accordance with the conditions stated at foot.

Age 12-15.	
APPLICANTS MUST SWIM—	
40 yards in - - -	35 secs.
100 " " " - - -	1 m. 55 secs.
220 " " " - - -	4 m. 0 secs.
440 " " " - - -	8 m. 30 secs.

Age 16-18.	
APPLICANTS MUST SWIM—	
40 yards in - - -	30 secs.
100 " " " - - -	1 m. 30 secs.
220 " " " - - -	3 m. 40 secs.
440 " " " - - -	8 m. 0 secs.

SECTION 2.—RUNNING.

Age 12-15.	
APPLICANTS MUST RUN—	
100 yards in - - -	14 secs.
300 " " " - - -	45 secs.
440 " " " - - -	60 secs.
880 " " " - - -	2 m. 35 secs.
One mile " " - - -	5 m. 30 secs.

Age 16-18.	
APPLICANTS MUST RUN—	
100 yards in - - -	12 secs.
300 " " " - - -	38 secs.
440 " " " - - -	57 secs.
880 " " " - - -	2 m. 15 secs.
One mile " " - - -	5 m. 10 secs.

Application must be made on the Form below, and must be accompanied by details of the performance, vouched for by a headmaster, clergyman, trainer, or other responsible adult person approved by the President. A penny stamp for return postage must be enclosed.

THE LEAGUE OF YOUNG ATHLETES.

I (Name).....

(Address).....

desire to become a member of this Institution. Enclosed I send particulars of my performance.

To obtain a BOYS' REALM Standard Medal, in addition to the handsome Diploma awarded gratis, applicants should send Six of the above Forms cut from one issue of this paper. The necessary copies may be bought or obtained from friends.



ELIM TO THE RESCUE!

THE STORY OF A CRICKET MATCH
BY MARTIN SHAW



THE 1st CHAPTER.
Twenty Pounds Wanted at Once.

"I'M in a hole, Frank—a brute of a hole! I must have twenty pounds before to-morrow week; and if you can't help me, I don't know what to do."

Frank Lawson whistled shrilly, and gazed into his friend's somewhat pale, unhealthy face.

"What do you think, Harold?" he asked, with a mischievous laugh. "You know my affairs as well as I do, or ought to, considering you're a clerk in Willis's Bank and I'm ditto in the Old County. They may pay princely salaries to johnnies in London banks, but if Littleton be a fair sample of a country town, they don't mean one to grow fat on what they give you here. But what's the trouble? What do you want the money to buy for?"

Harold Livesedge hesitated; then he looked almost fearfully up and down the quiet, country lane along which the two bank-clerks were walking as though afraid that there might be some unseen witness of what he was about to say. Finally he entered:

"I'm a nervous hard up. I'd got into debt, and borrowed twenty pounds out of the bank. I can keep it quiet till to-morrow week. But this must be repaid, the cash by then the fat's in the fire, and—"

His sentence was eloquent enough. And, indeed, what need was there of further explanation?

Frank Lawson's usually ruddy face took on a pallid hue.

"What for?" he said. "But I didn't think it was as bad as that. Is there no one to whom you can go?"

"I haven't a thing in my possession that's worth as much. My old governor is as poor as a church mouse, and no convenient rich uncle such as you read of in stories, and I'm about as likely to come into any money as I am of inventing a flying machine. But I don't want to be me, or I'm ruined, and they'll send me to gaol!"

"Can't you get a tip for a horse race that'll be a good deal more with a fair attempt at a smile, or turn highwayman, or something?"

But it was plain that his comrade resented his efforts at witicism. "How can you talk like that, Frank?" he cried passionately. "I must raise the money somehow. I tell you."

"I must raise the money somehow," responded the other. "What an ass you were to steal the money, for it comes to that, seeing that you never had any prospect of paying it back!"

"A nice sort of friend you are!" replied Livesedge miserably. "He's a strong suggestion anything? I'd do anything to pay it back."

"Rob Peter to pay Paul, eh?" remarked Lawson cynically. "There, I'm really beside myself for you, old man. Let's see if we can't think of some way out of the hole."

They walked on together in silence for a while. Suddenly Lawson said:

"You know Denton—Howard Denton, the draper's son? Well, he's more money than brains, though he's as dense as can be thought of. Not that he'd give me the money, or lend it, for that matter. But he offered to bet me twenty to one in sovereigns the other day that Penwood would beat Littleton in the cricket match on Saturday."

"Well, of course he did," answered Livesedge, musingly. "But he's playing for Penwood. Considering that Pelham is about the best bowler in the county, and a very fair batsman, the match is a giveaway for Penwood. I don't see how that is going to help me."

"No," went on the other, "I dare say you don't; but supposing Pelham couldn't play, would that Littleton could put it off then, right enough?"

"Yes, and if Denton got to know that Pelham couldn't play, he'd be strong for me, wouldn't he? There's nothing to be got out of that quarter."

"I'm not so sure about that," pursued Lawson. "Look here, Harold, set your wits to work. Supposing we could contrive to get the bet taken up, and could then manage it so that Pelham didn't turn up in time to play. What would be wrong with our chance of netting more than twenty quid? I'd offer to lay Denton ten to one to give me as many chances. He'd rise to the bait like a trout to a fly; and he'd pay him enough if he lost. I'll say that for right. He's mean, and all that, but he's a sportsman."

A wave of colour flooded Harold's cheeks.

"But how on earth are we going to get Pelham out of the way? He's a strong fellow. We couldn't hope to kidnap him. That sort of thing only takes place in yarns."

"I'm not so sure," returned the other darkly. "I've got the pith of an idea; and I tell you this, Harold, that now the notion's come to me, I see a way of making more than a miser's able to find pounds over the business. Come back home to my digs, and we'll have a pow-pow. And keep your pecker up, old boy; I'll pull you out of the hole yet."

THE 2nd CHAPTER.
At the Tithe House.

THE cricket match of the year in South-shire was undoubtedly Penwood versus Littleton. It was only in the previous year that in that in which our present story took place that Penwood had lost the victorious colours of Littleton, who previous to that had been unbeaten for five years in succession.

And it was undoubtedly the advent of Dick Pelham to Penwood that had been the turning-point in the tide of defeat for the latter place, for Pelham was a cricketer of quite unusual calibre.

He had played for his University, and was undoubtedly one of the best and fastest bowlers in England. He had given up county cricket for two reasons.

Firstly, he had not the means to enable him to indulge in the game seriously as an amateur—he had a hatred of anything in the nature of vested professionalism—and secondly, he had come to Penwood in order that he might there amidst delightful surroundings and in a modest fashion, work at perfecting an invention he had long had in his mind—something more nor less than the perfection of an aeroplane, which he fondly hoped would be the first really serious contribution to the problem that had baffled scientists for so long—the problem of aerial navigation.

He had taken a little house with secluded grounds, and there he worked away at his hobby, taking relaxation from his labours in an occasional friendly cricket match.

If the aeroplane is a failure, he would say jokingly, "I shall turn professional cricketer."

This year the fixture between the two clubs was to take place at Littleton, on the beautiful grounds of Sir Robert Alford, himself at one time a fine cricketer.

Sir Robert prided himself on possessing one of the finest private grounds in England. It was due to his munificence and public spirit that Littleton town was able to boast so flourishing a club.

There was a man in Penwood village, a retired London tradesman, possessed of a competency that allowed him to live comfortably enough in the little place, who for some reason or other hated Pelham, though he was careful not to betray his innate dislike of the young man.

Pelham was deservedly popular in the

village, and Blaker—such was the name of the ex-shopman—had enough sense to keep his dislike to himself.

The day before the match Dick was somewhat surprised to receive a visit from Blaker, who appeared at the young man's house with a smile on his somewhat rufous, coarse-featured face, to deliver himself in the following fashion:

"I'm very keen on Penwood winning the match to-morrow, Mr. Pelham, and I shall consider it an honour if you will allow me to drive you over to Littleton in my trap. I should think you might prefer that to going over in the chattering bus with the rest of the eleven, and I've a no more mail'll take us over in no time. It'd be an honour to me if you'd accept my invite."

The man spoke with the utmost friendliness, and though Dick was slightly surprised at receiving the invitation, he was far too much of a gentleman to betray anything of his true feelings.

He accepted the offer with cordiality, and put Blaker's officiousness down to the fact that it would appear as an honour to him—Blaker—to be seen in company with one who was, after all, a man of no little note in the cricketing world.

The day of the match dawned fair and fine, an ideal summer day, with a faint breeze to temper the heat of the sun, such an one as to rejoice indeed the heart of the true cricket-lover.

The match was timed to begin at eleven o'clock. Punctually at ten Blaker, on the box-seat of a smart little gig, between the shafts of which was a raking, straggling mare, who gave evidence that she would indeed "take them over in no time," appeared at Pelham's modest abode.

They started at once. As they spun along the high-road Blaker said, with a smile:

"By the way, Mr. Pelham, what do you say to going by way of Honey-suckle Lane? It's only a little further, and we shall be sure to meet no motors that way. Besides, we shall pass Higham Tithe Barn, which is a fine specimen of such a place. If you've never seen it, you ought to. There ain't many of 'em left in the county."

"Excellent!" responded Dick, who was in the best of humours in view of the game before him, for he loved cricket, as should all Britisners worthy of the game; and there was some satisfaction in knowing that victory was to attend the efforts of Penwood it would be no little on account of his own prowess.

Neither did he notice the somewhat unpleasant grin that appeared on Blaker's face after his ready acquiescence to the ex-shopman's plan.

For how could he guess that there was anything sinister underlying Blaker's remarks.

He had no enemy in the world, as far as he knew. Besides, there was absolutely no reason why anyone should wish him harm.

Presently the pair found themselves driving along a leafy, sequestered lane. Blaker pointed ahead with his whip.

"Here's the barn," he said. "You can see it through the trees."

A tithe barn, it may be as well to explain, was in days gone by where the tenants of the lords of the manor on which the buildings were situated were wont to assemble to pay their tithes or taxes, and although there are numbers of the same old structures scattered about the country, they are no longer used for the original purpose for which they were destined, not only as a storehouse of grain, but also to receive tithes, as I have explained.

Higham Tithe Barn was a fine building of stone and timber, with a tiled roof, upon which the lichen grew, and gold and red, with here and there patches of green moss to add to the colour.

"Tally you what, Mr. Pelham," said Blaker. "Why shouldn't we get down and have a look at the old place? We can get in, and if you haven't seen the interior, you ought to. It's hundred of years old, and well worth looking at."

Pelham acquiesced in this suggestion readily enough. So Blaker led the way to a gate on the side by which the two men approached the old place, which was set in the middle of a field, ringed round by trees.

Not a soul was in sight. The spot was remote, and seeing that it was Saturday, no labourers were there, for it was pay-morning, and the lichen grew, and gold and red, with here and there patches of green moss to add to the colour.

Blaker pushed open the portal and entered the huge structure, Pelham at his heels. As the latter crossed the threshold, he became suddenly aware of two shadowy forms that seemed to spring at him from out of the gloom—it was dark within the barn. Before he could raise a hand in self-defence, he was dealt a severe blow on the side of the head with a sandbag, or some similar missile. He dropped to the ground like a felled bullock, and the consciousness left him.

THE 3rd CHAPTER.

IT was eleven o'clock, and the cricket field at Littleton presented a gay picture.

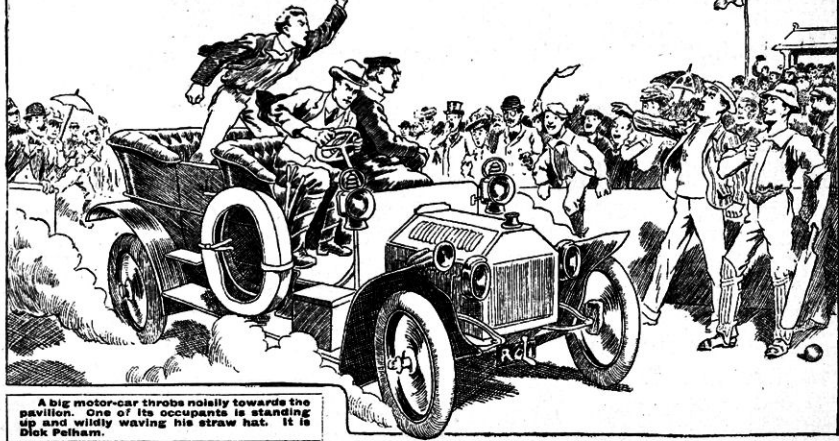
There was a big tent, where luncheon was to be served for the rival elevens, and all round the ground were the inhabitants of the two places, and, indeed, of the whole neighbourhood; for, as has been stated, the match was one of the functions of the year for Penwood and Littleton.

The rival captains had tossed, and Littleton had won. The wicket being plumb and true, the winners had elected to bat first. Everything was ready for the start. Only Dick Pelham had not put in an appearance yet, and already speculation was rife as to what could have become of him.

The Penwood captain, to say nothing of his team, could not conceal their annoyance.

"This ain't like him," said Trevor, the Penwood skipper. "Let's hope he'll turn up soon. We can't keep Littleton waiting, though. We shall have to start without him, and James and Collins will have to start our bowling. If he doesn't turn up, I don't know what we shall do. We can't afford to give Littleton many runs, as it is."

However, as the minutes dragged on, and still Pelham showed no signs of appearing, a start was made without him, and a youth despatched to Penwood, six miles away, on a bicycle, to make inquiries concerning the missing cricketer.



A big motor-car throbs noisily towards the pavilion for its master, standing up and wildly waving his straw hat. It is Dick Pelham.

Are You Going to Join the League of Young Athletes?

mathematical master, and Mr. Wimple's rival for the hand and heart of Fraulein Hoffmann.

On the way to the house, Mr. Trig was extremely short-sighted—wailing also, no doubt, to his agitation—on falling at first to perceive the body of the assassin. As he came stumbling down the path, he suddenly pulled up and turned round. He staggered back a yard or two, then he halted again. Finally he threw up his hands with a gasp of despair, spun round on his heel, and came running down the path again, beating his fists on his breast and uttering the most hideous groans.

Suddenly he caught sight of the five boys. "Away!" he cried. "Flee from my accursed presence! Henceforth I am to be a companion for innocent youths! The brand of Cain is on my brow! I am a murderer! An assassin! My hands are red with human blood!"

The five boys stared at him in absolute stupefaction. "A murderer!" gasped Nipper. "What—what has happened, sir?"

"I was murdered," said Mr. Trig, wringing his hands. "I slew him! His blood is on my head!"

"There did not seem to be any blood on his hands," cried the boys. Nipper began to think that Mr. Trig had suddenly taken leave of his senses.

"What do you tell us what has happened, sir?" he asked.

"He insulted me," said Mr. Trig. "I struck him. I did not mean to kill him. But I had underestimated my strength. I smote him, and he died!"

"Theophilus Wimple," said Mr. Trig. "The science master at the Grammar School. I came here to admire the beauties of Nature. Not an evil thought was in my heart. Mr. Wimple followed me. He asked me to dogged my footsteps. He overtook me near the old sand-pit. He was mad with jealousy. He commanded an explanation of my conduct with regard to—a certain lady."

"Fraulein Hoffmann?" suggested Nipper.

"Ah!" then Mr. Trig started. "Well, I happen to know that both you and Mr. Wimple have been paying court to the fraulein," said Nipper. "But I'm interrupting your story, sir. Mr. Wimple overtook you and demanded an explanation of your conduct."

"He insolently demanded that I should abandon my suit," said Mr. Trig. "His language was most insulting. In my anger I smote him. Smote him on the end of the nose. He—"

"He covered his face with his hands, as if to shut out the horror of the scene."

"Well," said Nipper. "You hit him—and then?"

"He recoiled and fell," said Mr. Trig. "I fell over him. He was most insensible. Fell into the old sand-pit. Nipper heaved a sigh of relief. "Is that all?" he asked.

"All?" said Mr. Trig. "Is it not enough? With one blow of my strong right arm I hurled him to his doom!"

"But how do you know you hurled him to his doom?" said Nipper, who now began to see beseech you to be generous to an opponent in the corner side of the sand-pit in pretty sure to be half full of snow. I think it's ten to one he didn't hurt himself at all."

"You think so?" said Mr. Trig eagerly. "Hear these few words, my boys! You have instilled a gleam of hope into my distracted breast. But, no! You only seek to comfort me. In the end you know that I am an assassin. You only seek to buey me up with false hopes."

"Well, we can soon see," said Nipper, struggling to get serious faces. "Come back to the sand-pit and—"

"No, no!" cried Mr. Trig wildly. "I have striven to go back. But the earth is so soft and sticky. My feet will slip, and I will fall here."

"You were turned to Bob."

"You and Wag and Lal stay here with Mr. Trig," he said, "while Dick and I go up to the sand-pit and find out what has really happened."

"Right you are," said Bob, with a wink. "Sing out, if you need any help."

"I'll be jolly awkward for Pizgy if the Pimple is seriously injured," said Dick, as he and Nipper hurried up the path.

"Injured your grand old man," said Nipper. "The sand-pit's more than ten feet deep,

and there's sure to be four or five feet of snow in it. He'd fall as softly as if he'd fallen on a pile of feather-beds. Probably he has crawled out by now, and we shall meet him round the corner."

But Nipper was wrong. No trace of Mr. Wimple was visible when they rounded the corner; but on hastening to the edge of the old sand-pit they perceived a sight that was almost as north-provoking as the scene which had greeted them in the lodge on the previous night.

The Challenge.

AS Nipper had predicted, the sand-pit was half full of drifted snow, which, being soft and feecy and loosely packed, had offered but little resistance to the weight of Mr. Wimple's pudgy form. When he had fallen into the pit, alighting on his back, he had sunk into the snow to a depth of eighteen or twenty inches. His subsequent struggles to extricate himself had caused him to sink still deeper, and when Nipper and Dick peered over the edge of the sand-pit all that was visible of the unfortunate science master was his head and shoulders, two waving arms, and a pair of writhing feet.

"Help—help!" he spluttered, on catching sight of the two chums. "You are St. Ninian's boys, I perceive, but you will not on that account desert me in my hour of need. I implore you to forget past animosities. I beseech you to be generous to an opponent in distress. I entreat you to assist me out of this morass."

"That's all right, sir," said Nipper, as he picked up a fallen branch which lay half buried

in the snow on the edge of the pit. "Hang on to this, and we'll soon have you out."

Mr. Wimple clutched the end of the branch, and after one or two failures, the two boys hauled him up to the path.

"You believe, no doubt, that this was an accident," he said, when he had overwhelmed them with his thanks. "You suppose, no doubt, that I fell into that pit. You are mistaken. You are labouring under a delusion. It happens to be one of our masters. In fact, I think he's treated you most disgracefully, and if you like to go and punch his head we'll form a party and see fair play."

Mr. Wimple evinced no eagerness to accept this invitation. Fisticuffs were not his strong point.

"I don't think I'll do that," he said. "No, I didn't think I'll punch his head. It would be more dignified, I think, to treat him with silent contempt."

Then he'll go and brag to Fraulein Hoffmann that he knocked you head-over-heels into the sand-pit, and you crawled away like a beaten cur," said Nipper. "Of course, you know your own business best, but if I were in love with a lady, and my rival treated me like that, I'd have my revenge, or perish in the attempt!"

"But—I do not like the idea of demanding my revenge by engaging in a vulgar bout of fisticuffs," said Mr. Wimple.

"Then I'll tell you what you can do," exclaimed Nipper, as a glorious idea flashed into his mischievous brain. "Send an ultimatum to him—I'll take it now—and challenge him to a duel with pistols, unless he sends you a written apology, and renounces all claim to Fraulein Hoffmann before six o'clock to-night!"

"Challenge him to a duel!" gasped Mr. Wimple. "Good gracious! He might accept the challenge!"

"Oh, you don't know Mr. Trig!" said Nipper, warning to his idea. "He's the most frightful coward you ever met!"

"And think what a score it would be for you if you got the apology," added Dick, entering into the spirit of the joke. "You could show it to Fraulein Hoffmann, and it would dish Mr. Trig's chances for ever."

Mr. Wimple evidently found the prospect alluring.

"You are sure he won't accept the challenge?" he said, turning to Nipper.

Nipper grinned deliberately. "If you could see what a funk he's in at the present moment," he said, "you wouldn't need to ask such a question."

"Then I'll do it," said Mr. Wimple valiantly. "Lead the way, and I will cast the gauntlet of defiance at the ruffian's feet!"

"No, you won't," said Nipper. "These affairs are always managed by second; you know. I'll be your second. You stay here while I deliver my challenge. I'll be back in a minute with Mr. Trig's reply. You stay with Mr. Wimple, Dick."

He winked at Dick, darted round the corner, and returned to where Mr. Trig was waiting with Wagstaffe, Bob, and Lal.

If he had thought there was the slightest risk of your accepting his challenge he would never have challenged you. He simply wants to frighten you into giving him an apology which he can show to Fraulein Hoffmann."

"Do you really think so?" said Mr. Trig eagerly.

"I'm sure of it," said Nipper. "If you accept his challenge you'll give him the biggest shock he's ever had in all his life."

Mr. Trig's courage returned by leaps and bounds.

"So ho! That's his little game, is it? He's puffing out his chest. He thinks to frighten me. I'll teach the cur a needed lesson. His threats shall be his own lead. I'll lead him and say that I hurt his challenge back into his artificial teeth!"

"Meaning to say," said Nipper, "that you'll meet him in Coulter's Coppie at half-past six to-morrow morning."

"Well—er—you can say so, of course," said Mr. Trig. "I'm not sure that I can't be to be cowed by his empty threats he will—er—let the matter drop."

"Will you act as Mr. Trig's second?" asked Nipper, turning to Bob.

"Like a bird!" said Bob, grinning from ear to ear.

"I—er—desire you to refrain from exasperating my opponent," said Mr. Trig nervously. "Tell him, of course, that I accept his challenge; but I don't want you to do so politely as you can. If he offers to withdraw his preposterous challenge you will accept his withdrawal at once—at once, you understand."

"Not you, Mr. Trig," said Bob. "Come along, Nipper."

The two boys returned to Dick and Mr. Trig. "Mr. Trig has appointed me his second, sir," said Bob gravely, doffing his cap. "He authorizes me to set out for your second, and will meet you at Coulter's Coppie at half past six to-morrow morning. Pistols for two and coffee for one."

Mr. Wimple nearly fainted. He clutched Nipper wildly by the arm, his challenge; but he wouldn't accept the challenge!" he moaned. "See what you've let me in for! Oh, what shall I do now—what shall I do now?"

"Just do nothing, sir," said Nipper, with a reassuring wink. "He's only bluffing. He keeps on bluffing, and he'll climb down at the last minute, you'll see."

"But—suppose he doesn't climb down?" growled Mr. Wimple.

"Well, you've gone too far to draw it," said Nipper. "Think of Fraulein Hoffmann! Would you like her to hear of this? You've challenged your rival, and when he accepted your challenge, you hadn't the pluck to meet him. If you, you'd be the laughing-stock of the school."

Mr. Wimple sat down on a snow-clad border by the side of the path and covered his face with his hands.

"Oh, why was I ever born?" he wailed. "Why did I let you persuade me to do this? When I see the sill. I should faint if a pistol went off whilst I was holding it!"

"That's just your moodiness!" But perhaps it'll never come to a meeting. Perhaps Mr. Trig will send you an apology. If he does, you'll be your second, and I'll see you through, whatever happens. If Mr. Trig doesn't apologize I'll call for you at your room about a quarter past seven to-morrow morning. I've a brace of pistols belonging to the gun'vor, and I'll bring them with me. An revoir!"

Before Mr. Wimple could call them back, the two boys turned on their heels and rejoined their rival, and when he accepted your challenge, you hadn't the pluck to meet him. If you, you'd be the laughing-stock of the school."

Mr. Wimple sat down on a snow-clad border by the side of the path and covered his face with his hands.

"Ultimately, however, by impressing on Mr. Trig that his rival was merely bluffing," and would probably "climb down" at the last minute, the five boys managed to get him safely back to the school, where, concealing themselves amongst the trees, they loaded the pistols with blank cartridges, and Dick and Lal shall take their post—er—your second, and I'll see you through, whatever happens. If Mr. Trig doesn't apologize I'll call for you at your room about a quarter past seven to-morrow morning. I've a brace of pistols belonging to the gun'vor, and I'll bring them with me. An revoir!"

"This is the biggest scoop we've had this term," chuckled Nipper. "It's too good to keep to ourselves. We'll pass the word round to all the other chaps in the Fighting Fifth, and we shall see how many cones of thornes amongst the trees. We'll load the pistols with blank cartridges, and Dick and Lal shall take their post—er—your second, and I'll see you through, whatever happens. If Mr. Trig doesn't apologize I'll call for you at your room about a quarter past seven to-morrow morning. I've a brace of pistols belonging to the gun'vor, and I'll bring them with me. An revoir!"

"Little did he think as he uttered these words what a tragic sequel the duel was fated to have. (This popular school serial will be continued in next week's BOYS' REALM.)"



The hook gave way, and Wagstaffe dropped with a sickening squelch on the top of Dick.

You Must Read This Grand Athletic Tale!



KING CRICKET!

A Fascinating New Story of County Cricket.

Specially Written for THE BOYS' REALM by One of Our Most Popular Authors.



The Chief Characters in this Fine Story.

ARTHUR LOVELL, Loamshire's champion batsman...

KIT VALANCE, Loamshire's best bowler...

GEORFFY LAGDEN, an amateur and a good bat...

JAMES LAGDEN, who has ruled Arthur's uncle...

BLAKE, Captain of Loamshire, and the steady friend...

PONSONEY, Geoffery Lagden's friend, and a man...

ARTHUR LOVELL, Loamshire's champion batsman...

Kit Valance has a rival man, thus putting him of his form...

Arthur realizes that he can no longer retain his position...

Kit Valance has a twin brother who is not a credit to his family...

Loamshire get the best of the first day's play...

In desperation Len, with the aid of a confederate...

Loamshire get the best of the first day's play...

Loamshire get the best of the first day's play...

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movements, and the Loamshire skipper sought out the young professional to question him.

"I believe you left the ground with him last night, Valance," said Blane. "Do you know where he is now?"

Valance shook his head. "Isn't he on the ground?"

"I shouldn't be inquiring after him if he were!" replied Blane, rather tartly.

"Well, I haven't seen him this morning, and it's most punctual and reliable of fellows. As it is possible that any accident can have happened to him," said Blane, looking decidedly worried.

"I don't see what can have happened."

"Where did you leave him last night?"

"We strolled into the country by and parted. I believe he went straight home."

"No; he couldn't have, for I hear that he hasn't been home all night."

Valance began to look serious.

"I say, Blane, that's bad. Surely nothing can have happened to him? We should have heard something of it by this time, I should think."

"Yes, I suppose so."

Blane walked away with a troubled brow. Where was Arthur Lovell? What did his strange absence from the match-ground imply? If it meant that Loamshire's best bat was to fail his side, as their best bowler had done, the match was as good as thrown away.

What could it mean? Lovell was the last man in the world to fail his side in an important match if he could help it. Had there been foul play?

Had Blane caught the peculiar look in Valance's eyes at that moment he would have had little doubt upon the latter point.

The traitor smiled sardoniously as he looked after the worried Loamshire skipper.

Not the faintest suspicion was there in Blane's mind that he had been speaking, not to Kit Valance, but to his twin-brother Len, who had so successfully personated the young bowler and brought Loamshire to the verge of defeat.

"Have you seen Lovell, Blane?" asked Colonel Hilton, as the Loamshire captain entered the pavilion. "I hear that he is not on the ground."

Blane shook his head, with a very disturbed expression.

"No, sir. He is certainly not on the ground, and I hear that he has been away from his quarters all night."

"That is very strange. Where is Valance? He should know."

"I have just spoken to him, and he knows nothing of Lovell's movements since he parted with him last night."

Colonel Hilton knitted his brows.

"It's a beastly bother," said Blane. "I intended to open the innings with Lovell. I wanted some good batting at the start to put heart into the side. Our failure yesterday had a very bad effect on the team. We want 154 to win, and we shall have to fight for it."

"But what can be the cause of Lovell's disappearance? If an accident had happened we should certainly have heard something of it."

"It is inexplicable, unless there has been foul play!"

"The colonel started."

"Do you suspect foul play, Blane?"

"I don't know what to suspect. But you know what Lagden said—that bookmaker fellow is down here, and has been getting at Valance. I am convinced that Valance's bad form yesterday was not by chance. Without proof it would not be fair to find him guilty, and I know a man cannot always be at the top of his form. But yesterday's display put my faith in him to a very severe test. If there was foul play there, there may be in other directions, each."

The Loamshire skipper jerked his thumb towards a man in the front line of the spectators, some distance from the pavilion—a red-faced man, in a white hat.

"Who is that?" asked the colonel.

"Sharp, the bookmaker. Lagden pointed him out to me. Is he here to watch Loamshire's defeat—does he know anything about it?"

And the Loamshire captain gritted his teeth.

"Perhaps we are taking too serious a view of the matter," the colonel remarked.

"Lovell may turn up all right; there is yet time. Does he know that he is down first on the list?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Then I cannot understand it, unless, as you say, there has been foul play. If he has been giving us this anxiety for nothing, I shall speak very sharply to him about it!" the colonel said, compressing his lips. "But—but I can hardly think he is in fault. It would not be like him."

"Very unlikely," Blane looked at the clock. "I shall have to make a change in my plan. Lovell cannot go in first. If he arrives I shall send him in later. I will open with Ponsoney and myself."

"If the worst should happen, Blane—if Lovell should not turn up at all for the match—what do you think of Loamshire's chances?"

"Nothing," said the captain tersely; "we haven't a chance."

"It's a bad look-out."

"We made 290 in our first innings, and Blane's Lovell knocked up 140 of them. The other fellows had 150 between them. We want 164 to win to-day. You can work that out for yourself, sir."

"Well, we can only hope for the best, and that he will turn up. If he went in as last man, it would be better than nothing, and there's heaps of time for that."

"I intended to send in Valance last, because I have a feeling that he means to throw a wicket away!" said the captain. "If he played us false yesterday, he will do the same to-day. I shall partner him with our weakest bat, so that he can't do much harm. I hope Lovell will come. Hang it all!"

And the cricket captain turned away, worried and wrathful.

"Hallo, Blane!" said Lagden cheerfully. "Lovell doesn't seem to be here. Is he on the sick-list, or what?"



Kit was out of the cellar in a twinkling and was in the field. Then took place a Titanic struggle.

"I don't know. Ponsoney, get your pads on!"

"I thought Lovell was going in first with you, skipper!" said Ponsoney, looking up from a concentration with which he was watching the play.

"So did I," growled Blane. "But as he's not here he can't go in, can he?"

There was a gasp of exclamation from the amateurs of the Loamshire team.

"Do you mean to say that he's failed us?" exclaimed Lagden. "Well, all the credit is a chap who puts to play not turning up for a match! By Jove!"

"There's been too much fuss made of the bounds," said Ponsoney, "that's all at the bottom of it. It's got into his head."

"Oh, rot!" growled Blane. "Something has kept him away, and if it isn't that it's not his own fault. Anyway, there's no time for talk, and we can't wait. He can go in later. I want you to open the innings with me, Ponsoney."

"Right-ho!" said Ponsoney. "I'm your man!"

"But, I say, the committee ought to take note of this," said Lagden. "You'll report it to them, of course, Blane."

"Where was I away, and I'm not asking for any suggestions just at present!" said the Loamshire captain grimly.

And Geoffery Lagden bit his lip, and let the subject drop.

It was high time for the innings to open. The crowd were showing signs of impatience.

Where was he? And if he came in time to take part in the match at all?

These questions weighed upon the Loamshire skipper's mind as he took his place at the wicket and prepared to face the bowling of Lewis.

But he was too good a cricketer to allow himself to be worried by such trifles. Blane could always be relied upon to keep his end up and put on a good number of runs for his side.

Ponsoney, when he chose to exert himself, was a fine batsman, too; and so the Loamshire innings opened in very good style.

It was a sunny, cheery morning, with a fine weather was lasting through the match, much to the satisfaction of the spectators.

The batsmen were very busy, moving down trials over the level green, and away went the batsmen running.

Blane and Ponsoney watched from the pavilion with a shadow on his face. Loamshire was opening well—but where was Arthur Lovell? Without their champion bat, the visiting team were in a very bad way, and the number of runs to win. That hard-fought match would count as a defeat for Loamshire, after all.

Where was Arthur Lovell? The Loamshire skipper was doing very well. But his time was coming. Blane was bowling when the Loamshire score stood at 20. Blane hit out at the ball, and the next moment there was a shout of excitement round the field:

"Palairat—Palairat!"

"Blane made a grimace. The leather was in the hand of the handsome captain of Somerset, who tossed it up and caught it again with a smile.

"How's that?"

There was only one possible answer to that question, and Blane put his bat under his arm and went away to see to it.

Geoffery Lagden already had his pads and batting-gloves on. Blane gave him a nod, and he went through Arthur Lovell's batting. That was true. But he hoped to win it without Lovell.

He had every confidence in himself. The failure of Valance's bowling on the previous day had shattered Loamshire's own prospects, and brought the cricket within sight of defeat.

A fine display of batting would save them. Lovell would have saved them had he been about, but the matter taken care that he should not be there. Could Lagden do it?

He meant to try. The red-faced man in the white hat saw him come on, and grinned. He believed in Geoffery Lagden joining in the plot, that the Loamshire man wanted his own side to lose, for some underhand reason, and it had not occurred to him that Lagden's desire was to distinguish himself by winning after getting rid of his rival.

Mr. Sharp had a disappointment, and a heavy loss at that day if Geoffery Lagden could bring it to pass.

But could he?

That remained to be seen. Lagden began well. The first over against his wicket was a maiden, but after that he began to score.

Braund, Lewis, and Martyn tried their skill

"Have you seen Lovell?"

Blane, as we have said, was looking anxious. Arthur Lovell was not yet on the ground, though a time was being made for the day's play to begin. Blane had sent a groundsman to his quarters with a note, and as Arthur had answered that note, he was not there, and had been absent all night.

Kit Valance was the likeliest of the Loamshire men to know something about Lovell's

KING CRICKET.

(Continued from the previous page.)

upon him, but he was on his mettle as he had seldom been before, and he stopped everything that was sent down to him.

Loamshire stood as it should be when Ponsonby was clean bowled by Braund. Tuntall came in to join Lagden, but he knocked up only five runs before he was caught out. Then Twocedee came in to take his place. Twocedee was a fine bowler, as we know, but very ordinary bat. He was stumped by the wicket-keeper, Newton, in attempting his sixth run.

The Loamshire wickets were going down at a rate that was quite alarming to the captain, who was waiting in vain for the arrival of his bats.

The only hopeful feature of the innings, so far, was Lagden's batting. The Loamshire captain was so sure of himself that he thought Blane had not the slightest hope that Lagden would succeed in pulling the game out of the fire.

As he seemed to be in extra special form, he might knock up sixty or seventy, but that he would go beyond the latter figure Blane did not think.

Fortescue joined Lagden at the wickets. Fortescue excelled chiefly as a stone-waller, and Blane was a man at wearing down the enemy's bowling.

Lunch was close at hand now, and the interval Blane best took advantage of for Arthur Lovell, but the young professional had not put in an appearance. It was certain now that something untoward had happened, and Colonel Hilton sent the two Loamshire Tanton police to ask them to look into the matter.

But the colonel and the Loamshire captain felt that it was impossible that Lovell would leave them in the lurch in this way if he could possibly help it.

Something had happened, and both suspected foul play. Yet neither lost the faint, lingering hope that the Loamshire champion might yet turn up in time that was fitting.

When the cricketers knocked off for lunch the Loamshire score stood at 70.

The batting had been very poor, and the bowling had been better than either of the previous days. The unexpected prospect of victory made the Somersetshire bowlers buck up, and the fielding was particularly good.

With the exception of Lagden, not out at lunch, Loamshire had done little.

Nine, four runs, and he wanted to win, and the best Loamshire men were out. The hopes of Somersetshire were high. At lunch there was only one Loamshire batsman left, and that was the absence of Arthur Lovell.

There was he? Geoffrey Lagden and his set himself at the idea of an accident or foul play. They did not say so in as many words, but they hinted pretty plain that Lovell had either fallen or been through sheer carelessness, or else had been got at by someone interested in the defeat of Loamshire.

"Not that it may matter much to us," said Ponsonby, with a shrug of his shoulders. "Hang it, I have always been of the opinion that you are always very fond of the game, and received every encouragement from both my parents. The time I am now speaking of was very lenient with me in my studies on account of my cricketing abilities. If I hope in this should meet his eye he will forgive this allusion. We always had good pitches to play on."

"And liked!" asked Blane sweetly. "I believe that amateurs could keep their eyes against any team."

"Well, I think they could," except in special rare cases," replied the Loamshire skipper. "Take the professionals out of the Yorkshire instance, and what would you be left? As for what you say about a county being represented by gentlemen, any fellow who has a chance of making a good score is a gentleman, and any other fellow who runs him down because his name isn't in Burke or in the London Directory is a common skipper."

"It was a snob," said Ponsonby, with a sneer. "It was a snob, in what I was going to say," replied Blane, looking him full in the face, and then turning on his heel.

Ponsonby flushed red. "Oh, don't mind him!" said Lagden carelessly. "He's out up at Lovell not appearing for the match. He has always backed up those bouncers Lovell and Valance through thick and thin, and, naturally, he feels a bit savage when they fail him like this. It shows everybody that he was in the wrong all the time, you see."

Ponsonby laughed. "I dare say that's it, Lagden," he supposed I was a snob, but I don't think so. But, I say, this match looks like being a nail in the coffin of Lovell and Valance, don't you think so?"

"It looks like it, and I shall be glad, for one! The county team will be all the better because bouncers outside of it we could only manage to fool Hilton and the committee to see it in that light."

And a good many heads nodded assent. The no-toppers of the county cricketers took the field again. Lionel Palairud led out his men to field, and the Loamshire batsmen were sent to bat.

"Play was slow and eventless for some time. Lagden batted cautiously, determined not to have his chance by snatching at shadows. There was a good deal of snatching at shadows, which had often helped Arthur Lovell to win for his side. He was of too cold and cautious a nature to take any risk, and a batsman who wanted to be quite safe every time was not likely to pile up runs very rapidly against the Somersetshire bowlers."

The crowd were beginning to look bored and to crack jokes, after the manner of a cricket crowd, concerning the play. There were remarks of the order "Lovell and Valance in the pavilion enclosure, and inquiries from the "suspicious" as to whether the batsmen were to be allowed to see the batsmen who wanted to be quite safe every time was not likely to pile up runs very rapidly against the Somersetshire bowlers."

The crowd went up slowly. The afternoon was wearing away, and Loamshire were down to the figures of 100 and the even 100, of which fifty belonged to Geoffrey Lagden.

The spectators were getting impatient now at the prospect of an unfinished match, after the brilliant play of the first two days.

As the sun sank towards the west, the Somersetshire men seemed to "buck up" with over-increasing energy, while the Loamshire play was decidedly better.

Blane looked at his watch, and then at Colonel Hilton, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Sixty-four to get to win," he said. "Arthur Lovell could do it, yet; and I hate playing for a draw. But—"

"He will not come!" "No; I suppose we may as well give up all hope of his coming." "There was a shout from the field. "How's that?"

Another Loamshire wicket down. Seven wickets down now, 100. Chichester came in, and Lagden had to lookling again. Clack! "What was that?" "It was a cunning ball from Braund. Lagden had played cautiously—perhaps a shade too

cautiously, which is quite possible. At all events, there was his wicket in pieces, and the exultant "How's that?" ringing in his ears. "Oh, he's lost!" Lagden turned perfectly pale.

Out! It had come at last. The blow had been sudden, just when his hopes were highest. His innings had been a long one, but he had only fifty runs to his credit. Fifty was a good figure, but where was the century he had been aiming at? He had been a successful victor that he was to have brought about?

A sickening feeling came over him. He was out! The fact was he had known his doom from the first. He had been conscious that he had plotted for nothing, for worse than nothing, for he had not succeeded in saving his side.

Yes, lost for Loamshire, for Arthur Lovell, the only man who could have saved the side, was far away, a helpless prisoner, by his instrumentality.

And even Geoffrey Lagden was sportman enough to feel a pang of misery and remorse now that the truth was fully borne upon him, through the mist of self-conceit, unmistakably, that he had robbed his side of a certain victory.

But he had no time for such thoughts. But, his underlip so bitterly that the blood came, he slowly turned towards the pavilion, rage and indignation in his breast. He had failed. The blindest conceit could not comfort him now. He knew that he had failed, where Arthur Lovell would have succeeded, if he had been there.

Eight Loamshire wickets down for 100 runs. And one of the remaining batsmen was the man Blane had chosen to lose the lands of the play his side false. And there was still over half an hour to play.

Lagden reached the pavilion, and Blane, with a shrug of the shoulders, signed to Valance to go on, when there was a sudden sound of commotion.

The Loamshire captain gave a quick start. Lagden turned round, pale as death, a savage blaze in his eyes. "What was that?" said those well-known tones, bringing suddenly, unexpectedly, a gleam of hope to Loamshire in that dark hour of impending defeat?

To Save His Side. THE long day, which passed with so much ill-luck for Loamshire on the Tanton Hill cricket-ground, dragged by nearly to the two prisoners in the lonely cottage. In black darkness, unconscious of the flight of time, the two cricketers resumed, while the heavy hours of that day rolled by.

Only once since Arthur Lovell had been brought there had the cell been visited by the kidnappers. They had come to loose the hands of the prisoners, and to bring them food and drink, only bread and water, but very welcome to the captives when they arrived at night.

Two men came in, but as they carried no light, and the cellar was beyond the reach of that, it was impossible to see whom they were.

Whether the ruffians were still capable of some feeling of pity, or whether Len Valance, who had been so badly treated, while the comrades should not be treated too badly, the comrades did not know; but the cords round their wrists were loosened for them to be free to eat, and left so.

The captors did not speak a single word. Whether night had passed and it was day, whether they had been in the cell for hours, they could not even guess. The closing door left them to solitude and silence again.

If it had not been for the cords which released their hands, and then they ate and drank, and felt the stronger for the meal.

"We have a chance now," Lagden said. "He set up in the darkness, and began to pick at the rope round his ankles. "At least we can free ourselves."

WALTER HEARNE. Up to the time I was about sixteen years of age my cricket was strictly confined to casual games on a waste piece of ground in my native village. I had not been a regular player for many years to come.

Up to the time I was about sixteen years of age my cricket was strictly confined to casual games on a waste piece of ground in my native village. I had not been a regular player for many years to come.

Almes immediately on the formation of this club my brother Herbert and I showed form good enough to become the stock bowlers of the team. Indeed, so successful were we that, I believe, in one season we bowled unchanged throughout all the first innings of our oppo-

"True. But if there were any chance of our getting out of the cell, they would not have left our hands free," replied Arthur. "It seemed only too true."

"But there was a chance they have overlooked," said Kit quietly. "At all events, we will do what we can."

The ropes were knotted tightly round their legs, and the unfastening of them was a long and weary task. But it was accomplished at last, and the two cricketers were free to move, first to exercise and restore the circulation to their cramped limbs.

Lovell struck a match, and the light flickered on dirty, damp brick walls and a muddy earthen floor. Over their heads was the floor of the room above, thick planks on rafters, a flight of shaky steps led up to the trapdoor which gave access to the cellar.

Lovell ascended the steps and tried the trap. It was as firm as the door, and it was made to open upwards, and was now evidently secured by a bolt on the upper side, and probably by some heavy article of furniture placed across it.

Lovell, bracing himself under it, put his shoulder to the trap, and exerted all his might to get it to give. He strained his arms, and the veins stood out on the young athlete's face like whipcord, but the trap did not budge.

Hardly a crack came from the wood, and Lovell's strength gradually relaxed. Exhausted, panting, he creaked down the wooden steps, and leaned against the wall of the cellar, trying hard to breathe.

"It is useless," he said huskily. "It is as firm as a rock." "I will try," said Kit.

He ascended the wooden steps, and crouching on the second from the top, put his back under the trap, and strained his hardest to force it up. He had no more success than Lovell had when the wood above was immovable. There was a creaking sound from the wood, and that was all. With his brain almost swimming from the way in which he had tried, he creaked away, and sat on the steps, panting.

The effort had been in vain. The two cricketers were helpless prisoners in the cellar underneath the Red Cottage. "I thought it," Lovell said quietly. "They would not have allowed us to use our limbs if they had been so sure of us."

A long, gloomy silence followed his words. The position of the prisoners was less uncomfortable than it had been; but, so far as escape went, there was no help as well as being still lying bound upon the earth.

"If we only knew the time," said Kit huskily, "we could have had a chance, but it was over—whether it was won or lost! How long have we been here? It seems weeks, but it may be only hours or even one day."

Kit's eyes had been looking down. Lovell had been broken in the struggle when he was seized, and so he could not even tell how long he had been in the cell. He had been four hours in that desolate den. As Kit had said, it seemed weeks, but it might be only hours, that Lovell had been there. In the silence, the darkness, the stillness, it was impossible even to guess at the flight of time.

"They can have no object in keeping us prisoners here, unless they wish to see us die. It must still be Wednesday, Kit, at the latest Wednesday night."

"If I suppose so. Oh, the soundness!" Kit groaned with teeth. They shall pay dearly for this, once we are free again!"

During the long hours they had lain bound the comrades had compared notes. Arthur (Continued on the next page.)

HOW LEARNED TO PLAY CRICKET.

Fine New Series of Articles Written by Famous Welders of the Willow.

AS we follow the doings of the premier cricketers of the day, as recorded in the newspapers from time to time, the thought must occur to many of us, "How are these great cricketers brought to the game so well?" Realising this, a representative of THE BOYS' REALM has approached their great cricketers to find out how and where they learnt their cricket, the following being their replies:

No. 1.—JACK SHARP. My first recollection of the game of cricket was in the large background of my father's park at Hildesheim, when I was about 10. I was always very fond of the game, and received every encouragement from both my parents. The time I am now speaking of was very lenient with me in my studies on account of my cricketing abilities. If I hope in this should meet his eye he will forgive this allusion. We always had good pitches to play on.

which, I think, is a very important matter in the making of a young cricketer. When fourteen years of age I played with the colts of Herefordshire against the county. I scored 100 for the county, and as you may guess, very proud of this performance. Through the recommendation of an old friend I was sent to the secretary of the club, who received an engagement with the Liverpool Cricket Club at Aigburth. This was after I had played with Herefordshire for two seasons, when I had been a professional, a course I have never regretted.

I was with the Liverpool club one season, and while there I shall never forget the kindness of Mr. E. G. Selman, who was the secretary of the club, who was the direct means of my going to Leyland, the late Mr. J. Stanning's training school for cricketers. I was very fortunate in having improved my cricket. Of Mr. Stanning's kindness for the game everyone in this part of the country is aware, and none appreciates his kindness and the great interest he took in all his professionals more than I do. We had good practice pitches, good bowlers, and a first-

class coach like Allan Hill, the great Yorkshire bowler, so we had plenty of chance to improve and to play for the county.

WALTER HEARNE. Up to the time I was about sixteen years of age my cricket was strictly confined to casual games on a waste piece of ground in my native village. I had not been a regular player for many years to come.

ments in all matches. Our cousin G. G. Hearne was about this time in his prime, and my two brothers, Herbert and Jack, and myself all went to play for the county. I was six miles, to see him play in an M.C.C. eleven that was matched against a local twenty-two. This was the only time that I saw him, either of us had even seen a good-class bowler.

During the luncheon interval we each sent a few balls down to him, and he was seeming to be in the best of health, and if he could get us an engagement for the following season, we would accept. Our answer need not be long, but the next day, I had my men installed under ground, and had net-bowler to Streatheam C.C., where I had the advantage of some useful hints from Fred Jones.

In the following year I was engaged as groundsman for the Gravesend Club, where I was to be in charge of the club, and I was also helped to develop my bowling. I was also asked to play for the Kent Colts v. the Eleven, and took two wickets. In 1884 I was engaged by the Kent Colts, and played for them in the St. Lawrence Ground, Canterbury, and it was here I first met the late Harry Bass, who was very kind to me, and gave me many hints and advice. The year 1887 was the first year I played for Kent.

WALTER HEARNE.

knew how Kit had been entrapped by his scapegraw brother's letter; and he had told his comrades of the day's rickety and the supposed failure of Valance's bowling.

Arthur had known of Kit's twin-brother and doubtless had had it not been for the presence of the young Loamshire bowler nor he could hardly have credited that he had been so deceived by a resemblance. But, as a matter of course, with the real Kit a prisoner in the cell, along with him, he could have no doubt upon the subject.

Now that he knew the truth, he understood how that he deeply puzzled him before—the inexplicable failure of Valance's bowling in the first innings. Some chance, he had stoutly refused to believe that his chum could be guilty of betraying his side; but, now that that he found that the bowler was a traitor imprisoning Kit, he thought that the bowling had been purposely bad.

And there was a deep, angry indignation in Lovell's breast. Kit's brother as he was, Len Valance was likely to have a rough time of it if ever the young Loamshire got within hitting distance of him.

Kit began to yell the cellar impatiently. Thinking of the match going on on the Taunton ground, of his rascally brother imposing upon the Loamshire team, and of the way away the game, and of the obloquy that would fall upon himself in consequence, made the young bowler too restless and furious to keep still.

Arthur, Lovell stood thinking, trying to think some plan of escape. He could think of nothing. He started to open the door, but he had made a free examination of the cellar. There was no opening save at the trapdoor. The walls were of solid brick. The floor and the ceiling were of planks laid over rafters, and about a couple of feet over his head. Chance of escape there was a definitely none.

"Fury!" cried Arthur, at last. "Oh, that I had those soundrels within reach! I say, Kit, let us have another try at the trap. I can get it open. Let us see if we may be able to see it together, and make some impression on it."

"No harm in trying," replied Kit, but without any real hope. They ascended the flight of wooden steps. The steps were hardly wide enough for two to stand abreast. With a great deal of difficulty they managed to get into the room to brace their selves together under the trap.

"Now!" muttered Arthur. And then the words they threw their whole strength into a tremendous effort.

The trap cracked and creaked, but did not budge. Harder and harder they strained; another creak, but nothing more. A footstep sounded above, and there was a knock on the trap.

Arthur, with the futile effort, the comrades ceased it. The knock was repeated, and then came a voice, evidently from a man with his mouth full of tobacco.

"You may as well chuck that, you fools! You can't get out. You'll be set free when the match at Taunton over; it won't be long now."

"You heard that?" gasped Arthur. "The match is not yet over; if we could get out, we should be able to get in, and we should feel something else slightly just now; you more effort, old man, if it kills us."

"Yes," said Arthur. And again they put forth their strength in a terrible effort. Was something giving? Alas! it was not the trap. There was a crack, a creak, and the comrades felt as though they were flying downward, to fall bruised and shaken on the floor of the cellar, hurting their limbs considerably in the descent.

They hardly knew what had happened for a moment. Then Arthur limped painfully to his feet.

"Are you hurt, Kit?"

"Only a knock or two. The steps have given way."

"Yes, and the last chance is gone."

Arthur Lovell struck one of his last matches. Overhead the trap was as firm as ever. On the other side of the door, the sound of the steps did not force up the trap, but it had displaced the flight of steps, which was merely a kind of broad wooden ladder fastened in a sloping position over the trapdoor. The latter it was now impossible to touch.

"The crash had doubtless been heard from above. For of the comrades, and the sound of chucking in the room overhead. Kit gave a groan."

"It's all up now."

But a sudden flash darted into Arthur's eyes—the flash of a new idea—of hope!

"Kit! It's a chance—it's Providence! Kit, look here."

He stooped and picked up one of the two long, broad side-pieces between which the wooden steps had been fixed. Two of the steps were yet fastened to it.

"Do you understand?" cried Arthur, his eyes blazing. "Kit, examine these carefully. They are a plank form above our heads, and with weapons like this—"

No more words were needed; Kit sprang to seize a similar fragment. The next moment terrific blows were crashing, between the rafters, on the planks over their heads.

The force of the blows was within two feet, easy reach for an assault. The boards were stout and strong, but they were not made to stand an attack like this. The heavy beams of the roof were within the strength of powerful arms, crashed up against the planks with terrific force.

There was a cry of alarm in the room above.

Little heed did the cricketers pay to that, little thought to their captors. They were only too anxious to get to close quarters with the soundrels.

"Crash! Crash! Crash!"

A long, terrific groan, and one of the planks went through. A glimmer of daylight came down into the cellar through broken wood and torn oeilcloth. A quavering voice was heard above.

"Stop it! Stop it, do you hear, or I'll shoot!"

It was an empty threat, but even otherwise it would have had no effect upon the young cricketers, fierce and determined now with the hope of escape.

"Crash! Crash! Crash!"

The boards were breaking through on all sides. Lovell dropped his bat and caught at one of the planks with his hands, and swung himself up. There was an aperture ample large enough for him. A rough-looking fellow dashed at him with a chair caught up by the back to strike him down.

Lovell, with a tremendous spring, gained the upper floor, and, dodging the descending chair, he closed with his foe.

"Kit! Kit!"

"I'm coming!"

Kit was struggling with a powerful ruffian, and another was rushing upon him. Kit was out of the cellar, coming to his comrades' aid, and he was taking in the second round with a strength and determination there was no gaining. Right round he whirled, and, with his feet crashing through the floor, he smashed the floorboards.

The soundrel went through into the cellar, and lay there groaning.

Arthur Kit turned to Lovell's aid. The ruffian was holding his own, but with two against him he was soon dragged down, and sent headlong on top of his confederate in the cellar below. Lovell gripped Kit's hand. From underneath came a chorus of groans and curses.

"Free Kit! There may yet be time! Come!"

There seemed to be no one else in the cottage. Kit turned to the open air, taking in deep draughts of it with a keen satisfaction. His was reddening the west. The day was drawing to its end, but there was still an hour at least left in the night for cricket. Unless the Loamshire wickets had fallen very fast, the match was not yet over.

Lovell led down to the road. The long imprisonment had told upon them, yet at that moment they felt fresh, keen, fit for anything. If only they could get into the field in time to play, in time to baffle the dastardly plot, and save Loamshire from defeat!

"It! It was a big—very big if you were any other man, but by walking, no conveyance, not even a human hand in sight."

The dawn horn spoke down again. It was too late!

Zip, zip!

Took, took!

Arthur Lovell made a movement to one side of the road as he heard the horn of an approaching motor-car. But then a new thought flashed upon his mind. He was not to be taken for the centre of the road and held up his hand. A powerful Mercedes car was sweeping down towards him, and he saw no chance to stop, but to stop, or to run over the young cricketer.

"What the—?" he began.

Arthur did not heed his horn. He had thought of a last chance, and he sprang on, but all there was left for him. He hooped to the side of the car. A gentleman was looking out to see why the chauffeur had not made an attempt to stop, and he fixed an astonished gaze upon Lovell.

"What—the what—the?"

"I do not know, sir," said Lovell, speaking quickly but respectfully. "But I want to ask a favour of you. My friend and myself belong to the Loamshire team, playing Somerset at Taunton, and we have been kidnapped by a gang of soundrels, and have just escaped, too late to get to the ground."

"I am sorry to hear of it, and I am sorry for the sake of fair play and the good old game!"

He waited in tense suspense for the reply. The man was a stranger to him, but such an offer of help he could not refuse to a sportsman. The motorist's face expressed blank amazement for a moment, then it broke into a smile.

"Jump in!"

Away went the car, the two cricketers in it.

"Bravo!"

The cricket ground at last, and a shout ringing from it. The game was not yet over at all events. The car jerked to a stop.

"The car is not a motorist."

"Goodness you, sir!" said Arthur Lovell, as he jumped out, and Kit echoed his words. The motorist smiled and said in a tone of a speed more moderate than that at which it had arrived.

"Lovell!"

Lovell's name was called out by a dozen voices. He ran swiftly into the pavilion.

"Am I in time?"

Kit was at his heels. Blagden turned towards them in amazement. Lagien was just throwing down his bat.

"Am I in time?" cried Lovell again.

"Yes," shouted the Loamshire skipper, "in time to save the side. No time for words. You've got to change like lightning. You're next man!"

To save his side! With sixty-four to get in half an hour. Could he do it?

(To be continued on Saturday next.)

OUR LEAGUE CORNER.

SECTION 1.

As announced in previous issues of THE BOYS' REALM, Your Editor hereby offers to present a large number of Solid Silver Challenge Cups as permanent trophies to bona-fide Cricket Leagues in the British Isles. Not only Silver Cups, but Solid Silver Medals will be presented to each of the members of the winning teams, and to each of the members of the running-up teams of the Leagues to which the Silver Cups are awarded. Application should be made now.

The President (Your Editor) has already promised to present the following Trophies and Medals—

Solid Silver Cup and Two Sets of Medals to THE SOUTH LONDON CHURCH OF ENGLAND CRICKET LEAGUE.

Headquarters—The Cecil Rooms, Woolwich Road, London, S.E. The Schools, East Greenwich, S.E. Secretary—Mr. S. H. H. The Schools, Greenwich, S.E. President—Rev. Cecil de Carteret, M.A. Assistant Secretary—Mr. George Lee, 18, Creed Chairman—Rev. W. G. Carpenter, A.R.C. Place, Greenwich, S.E.

Solid Silver Cup and Two Sets of Medals to DUNDEE & DISTRICT FIRST-CLASS JUNIOR CRICKET LEAGUE.

President—Mr. C. Duncan (Clydesdale X.I.) Secretary—Mr. J. A. Reid (Belmont), 12, Vice-President—Mr. J. W. Coates (Taybank X.I.), Belfield Avenue, Dundee. Treasurer—Mr. J. Winter (Clydesdale X.I.)

Solid Silver Cup and Two Sets of Medals to PARK & DISTRICT JUNIOR CRICKET LEAGUE.

Secretary—Mr. H. B. Winrow, 26, Waverley Road, Liverpool.

Solid Silver Cup and Two Sets of Medals to BLACKBURN & DISTRICT SUNDAY-SCHOOL CRICKET LEAGUE.

President—Mr. A. Yarborough, Esq., Secretary—Mr. H. Walker, Junr., 53, Whistley New Road, Blackburn.

Solid Silver Cup to BEARWOOD & DISTRICT LEAGUE.

Secretary—Mr. R. Wheeler, Sabrina House, St. Matthew's Road, Smethwick.

Solid Silver Cup and One Set of Medals to THE MERSEY CRICKET LEAGUE.

Secretary—Mr. T. G. Hughes, 68, Waverley Vale, Liverpool.

Solid Silver Cup and Two Sets of Medals to EAST LONDON CHURCH CRICKET LEAGUE.

Secretary—Mr. W. E. Pepper, 24, Arbery Road, Bow, E.

Solid Silver Cup and One Set of Medals to SUNDERLAND & DISTRICT NONCONFORMIST CRICKET LEAGUE.

Secretary—Mr. A. E. Pink, 50, Hastings Street, Sunderland.

Solid Silver Cup to SWINTON & DISTRICT CRICKET ALLIANCE.

Secretary—Mr. F. Phillips, Ebenezer Cottages, Charles Street, Swinton, Rotherham.

Two Sets of Medals to ST. CLARE CUP CRICKET LEAGUE.

Secretary—Mr. Geo. Such, one of Mrs. Maynard, 31, Kompehead Road, Camberwell.

Prizes of BOYS' REALM CRICKET BATS have been sent to the following Clubs in the League mentioned. The Secretaries of the latter having nominated them as the winners thereof.

EAST LONDON CHURCH LEAGUE. ST. ANNE'S OLD BOYS' C.C.—Secretary: Mr. H. E. Newell, 41, Lookley Street, Limehouse, E.

DUNDEE & DISTRICT LEAGUE. TAY BANK XI.—Secretary: Mr. J. G. Smith, Brothie Place, Broughty Ferry.

SECTION 2.

Two Solid Silver Cups for Senior and Junior Clubs.

SOLID SILVER MEDALS for each Member of the Winning Club and Runners-up. A HANDSOME CRICKET-BAT will be presented to Every Club Entering Some Time During the Season.

(a) Only clubs which have been established at least one season (exclusive of 1907) are eligible for entry, and the respectability and standing of the club must be vouched for by some responsible person.

(b) Two clubs have two or more teams, only the premier team matches will count.

(c) Clubs desirous of entering this contest may make application now. In doing so a list of their engagements between the dates mentioned above, with the average age of the opposing clubs, and a letter from the president of the club, should be sent to the Secretary, Boys' REALM Cricket League (Section 2), 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.

(d) The Cup and Medals will be presented at the end of the cricket season to the clubs in each section which Your Editor, the Secretary, and another umpire consider to hold the best records in the matches played between the dates stated above.

(e) Strict investigation will be made by the controllers of the League into the bona-fides of the entering clubs and their fixtures.

(f) All matches to be played under the Official Rules of Cricket.

(g) The Cups to be won outright.

(h) Opposing teams must, in every case, be of the same average age.

(i) The Junior Cup to be competed for by clubs whose members' average age does not exceed 15 years. The Senior Cup to be competed for by clubs whose members' average age does not exceed 18 years.

List of Clubs which Have Already Joined Section 2 of Our Cricket League.

JUNIOR DIVISION.
 Blythburn Town Old Boys (West Ealing).
 Primitive Juniors (Middletown).
 St. James's Club (St. Pancras).
 Wington Juniors (Wington).
 St. Jude's (Sheffield).
 Wilton Juniors (St. Pancras).
 Excelsior C.C. (Holland Park).
 Walsingham C.C. (Southampton).
 Kirby Juniors.

SENIOR DIVISION.
 Camden C.C. (Camden Town).
 St. James's Club (St. Pancras).
 Victoria C.C. (Camden).
 Wesley C.C. (South Ealing).
 St. Jude's C.C. (Southwark).
 St. James's Club (St. Pancras).
 White Star C.C. (Barnaby).
 Lovely Lane C.C. (Warrington).

Prizes of BOYS' REALM Cricket Bats have been awarded this week to the following clubs, these having, in Your Editor's opinion, put up the best show on Saturday, May 4th:

JUNIOR DIVISION—MALMESBURY C.C.
 Secretary—Mr. E. Hase, 7, Havelock Terrace, Southampton.
SENIOR DIVISION—NORTHGATE WHITE STAR C.C.
 Secretary—Mr. W. Smith, 2, Chain Street, Gratton Road, Worsgate, Bradford.

RUNNING:

Mr. A. A. ELSON, winner of over 200 prizes, gives readers the benefit of valuable experience gained during his long career on the cinder-path.

Middle Distances. (Continued from last week.) THOSE who know their own weakness in running are usually aware of the fact that the field before the final stage of the race is entered upon, but this requires a big outlay and sacrifice of strength, probably as a critical part of the race. If the final stage of the race is sure of his final sprinting power, he should lay well up with the leaders, and nurse himself for the final stage of the race, not doing not to allow the opposition to take him by surprise. Once the "jump" into the final stage of the race has been taken, the competitor should maintain this right to the end, or at least until it is perfectly certain that all opposition is over. A race may be often lost by a runner just before the finish, because which is a dangerous practice, particularly on grass, on which another competitor can come up from behind and win the race.

Training for the Half-mile. My method of training for a half-mile was as follows: In the first stages of preparation I did nothing but short sprinting, striding through the 150 yards at least once a day. Gradually the distance covered was increased, so I felt capable of going on further and further until I had reached a distance of 300 yards. This procedure would be carried out until a limit of 600 yards had been reached, and this distance I would be able to accomplish in one or two hours. The faster the runner is by virtue of gradual nursing retained my speed at the shorter when covering the longer distance—that is, about the same power was being acquired without loss of speed. Very occasionally I would jog a mile, and once a week, a full half-mile trial against the wind would be made, and this would be done. Although most of the work was done at 600 yards and lesser distances, I never once found myself tired in any way through the whole distance at racing speed. Once the half-mile of condition is reached, the heavy work should be continued with the younger school of athlete, and also if public racing is being attempted once or twice a week. One of the main essentials to success in middle distances is to maintain the plenty of vim and strength, and he must be careful when once racing has been commenced to refrain from over-exertion.

Throwing away his energy in practice, simply because he "feels like running." It usually takes from five to six weeks to get into thorough trim for a middle-distance race, and the first three weeks of the race are the next study. To know when one has arrived at the tip-top of form is to be wise. To be overtrained is infinitely worse than to be under of condition. Witness the anxiety and careful nursing of the Oxford and Cambridge Eight as a day of the contest draws near. It is the coach's special study to so time the training that his charges reach the acme of condition simultaneously with the date of the contest. I would advise the runner to refrain from too little of the hard preparation work. I have indicated in my own method of training. It is a natural thing to be over-zealous, but due regard should be given to the fact that those in their teens have not that physical endurance which comes with years. At the same time, it is much easier for the youngster to get fit than for the man advancing towards the close of "athletic years." It is as well to

take a slight ease just prior to the decision of the event trained for. How long this ease should extend depends upon the degree of fitness of condition of the runner. It is better to be over-trained before contesting an important event, or when an arduous programme has had to be undertaken, than to be under-trained. A series of races on the Continent terminated five days prior to the date of the first event. I was one of the contestants in the North Sea, I felt it advisable to rest for a few days, my destination, at least three days beforehand. Arrived there, I took nothing but slight walking exercise, and only once put on my spikes to test the track. In the contest itself, an important one, I succeeded in fighting out an exciting finish, after a terrible ding-dong race throughout the full half-mile it was run over. I was chief guest at the banquet given in my honor, and in the morning had a long journey to Holland, where I won three other races. I was again for the evening, and I left next morning for Brussels, a long way from the place where, on the day following my arrival, and after much sight-seeing, I was again returned to the winner at half-mile races.

I believe, however, that had I not been careful in resting and nursing myself after having once arrived at the acme of condition, I could not have carried through such a strenuous programme. In middle distances an inch added to the stride makes a gain in the race. A longer stride may be acquired by a fair practice, but to overstride is exhausting, and one must be in endeavoring to improve in this direction.

(To be continued on Saturday next.)

SWIMMING:

Mr. WILLIAM HENRY, Secretary of the Royal Life-Saving Society, coaches readers in the important arts of Swimming and Life-Saving.

The Overarm Stroke. (Continued from last week.) IT will be observed that when the top hand and arm are being returned for the next stroke the under arm and hand is performing the positive stroke, or when one arm is pulling the other is being recovered for the next stroke. In practicing the above stroke, the learner should take particular care of the top hand, and in this way to prepare for the leg stroke, which, in the case of the correct overarm stroke, is entirely different to the ordinary breast stroke. In the breast stroke the legs are kicked outwards wide apart, rights and left; whilst in the overarm stroke the legs are moved as in walking or taking a long stroke or step—that is to say, one leg is kicked towards the front, and the other backwards, both being brought together in line with the body. In giving particulars of the action of the arms for the overarm stroke, I stated that the upper arm act independently, and that the upper arm should be bent at the elbow. It should also be remembered that the stroke should not be made too long, either at the beginning or at the finish, and that the power of the arm stroke is greatest when the hands are passing the face and chest. The stroke with the hands should be finished with a flick or jerk. When the upper hand is passing the face and chest. The stroke with the hands should be wide apart, ready for the closing kick at the moment when the hand is about to be lifted out of the water opposite to the water.

A careful observer at the baths will note that the above description does not agree with the



BIRDSEYE VIEW OF THREE POSITIONS IN THE OVER-ARM STROKE. (See Swimming Article for Explanation.)

action of the majority of swimmers. Most side-stroke swimmers pull with the upper arm at the moment when the legs are closing, but those who make

one fastest times, and have won most of the English Championships, adopt the method I have described, as the movement helps greatly in averting the dead point, which is so very noticeable when the overarm is pulled together with the closure of the legs.

The learner will also observe that the action of the legs in the overarm stroke is entirely different to that used for the breast stroke. In the former, the top leg is brought forward and the under leg is brought back, similar to taking a long forward stride; but in the breast stroke the legs are kicked wide apart to the right and left. To perform the leg kick for the overarm stroke properly much practice is necessary, and the best way of learning this kick is to turn on the side, and

take hold of the rail which is fixed round most baths with the upper hand, and place the lower hand on the wall of the bath about eighteen inches below the upper hand, and then pull the feet outwards on the surface in a straight line. Now open the legs wide apart, by pushing the upper leg forward, keeping it straight, and the lower leg bent at the knee, and brought backward in the position of Fig. 1. The next movement is to close the legs with as much force as possible, by bringing the upper leg back in line with the body, and at the same moment straightening the lower one in line with the body, and the feet are being closed each other about six inches. The effective part of this stroke comes when the whole of the feet and the upper leg and the front of the lower leg as they are being closed with a swirl, thus sending the body forward.

(To be continued on Saturday next.)

CRICKET:

Mr. ALBERT TROTT, the famous County Cricketer and Coach, gives some very valuable instruction to Ambitious Cricketers.

Captaincy. (Continued from last week.) A MONG BOY captains, J. N. Crawford, at Repton, left behind a great example; while R. E. H. Baily impressed everybody with his tact and skill in handling his side two or three years ago at Lords. Success is given to few men who remain at the head of affairs as long and as happily as Lord Harris did when he led Kent, or Mr. John Dixon, when he commanded Nottingham. Both gentlemen were idolised by the cricketers who served under them, and the cricketers were never weary of telling you endless stories of the kindness and interest Mr. Dixon took in their affairs. He mastered the great difficulty of how to break down the reserve which too often exists between amateur and professional, and was a true friend in the hour of failure and shortcomings as well as on every other occasion. The boy captain has undoubtedly a very hard position indeed, but he may, if he will, learn a great deal of leadership, just as he may of batting or bowling. It is often my lot to go to schools, and one can tell from the way in which a school finds that kind of captain they have. He has unlimited power, and like Noble can make a weak side stronger than it is, and he has to bear especially when a club has a weak eleven, and is to meet stronger opponents.

Sometimes it will be his lot to play against a good side, whose efforts in many directions have been spoiled by the fact that they have an indifferent and incompetent leader. The captain of a school is responsible for the game throughout the whole school, and must see that it is played properly, so that younger

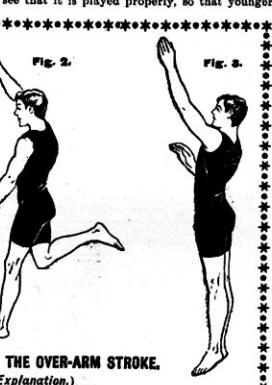


Fig. 4.

boys of promise may develop their ability and recruit the team in future years. A few hints, then. First, choose for your captain, one who thoroughly understands the rules, and has judgment, good temper, fairness, and tact. If you can get all these combined in one capable wicket-keeper, it will be found a great advantage. From that position, he will be able to direct, unobscured, the movements of the field. He must not mind trouble, and should be the earliest at practice, and also first on the ground on the day of the match.

One of the best captains that I ever knew was always to be seen on the field at least two hours before the game commenced. It was always a pleasure to go there; everything was ready, a start was always made in good time, and besides, it is only courteous to the visitors to be there to receive them. More than once I have seen even a county captain go on the ground some time after the game has commenced, and it is a pity that it is not finished, when perhaps he has had his mind on the defeated side, not even remaining to take a farewell of the other captain.

There is certainly one of the captain's duties to go and look at the wicket on which the game is to be played, so that, if he is successful at doing this, the result is to know whether to take first innings or not. If the weather is fine, then go in first if you get the chance; if it is wet, as a rule, put the other side in.

Sometimes you will get what is called a "ferry side," which may shine out on the ground for a short time, and then become hard and dry again; or it may dry slowly without the sun helping it at all, and the result is that the pace of the ball will vary tremendously. It is a golden opportunity for the captain if he has the right sort of bowlers, and knows how to use them. Again and again, on what is called a sticky wicket, I have seen a very powerful side dismissed for a small total.

(To be continued on Saturday next.)

ROWING:

A FAMOUS OARSMAN, and member of a well-known London Rowing Club tells our readers How to Excel at this Grand Pursuit.

The Recovery. (Continued from last week.) IMMEDIATELY following the finish comes the recovery, and here again most oarsmen acquire faults of style which are easily corrected by the difficulty experienced by the beginner in trying to disengage his oar-blade from the water at the right time. The beginner has been told to keep his oar-blade flat until he has got to disengage his oar-blade; but he quickly discovers in practice that if he follows instructions, and does not disengage his oar at the correct moment, the oar-blade will strike his body very violently, and he will catch an undesirable crab.

Naturally, he looks for an easy way of avoiding this, and he will be sure to be bent towards the finish of the stroke, allow his blade to get lighter and lighter as his arms come into the chest, until at last, as the hands touch, the blade is completely inverted. This does not escape the trouble in this way, he will, if he keeps his blade well covered, avoid the danger by not pulling too hard, and by using the muscles of his arms and shoulders. If these faults are not promptly eradicated the oar will be a constant source of trouble. It is possible for a man to become a good oarsman, even with some such fault in part remaining, so the disengagement of the oar from the water is a most important part in rowing, and good finish and recovery so essential to good rowing, that it seems a pity that it cannot be acquired at the outset by the ambitious young beginner.

Three Distinct Movements. The oar-blade is disengaged from the water effectively by the use of the arms, shoulders and forearms sharply, these working from the elbows as a pivot. No other muscles should be particularly concerned in the recovery. The drop of the hands and forearms is followed immediately by the play of the wrists, which means the oar is turned on to the feather. The wrists should be kept in a constant pushed away, which straightens the forearms. Here are three distinct movements; but they should be made to form one continuous motion if a good recovery is to be required. There should be nothing jerky about them at all. The use of the wrists should be noted. The wrists play a most important part in the recovery than do the hands.

As the arms are being straightened on the recovery, the oar-blade must be kept on the right height—viz, two or three inches, not more, above the surface of the water.

During the stroke the oarsman must be kept quite straight, but not stiff or rigid. The oarsman must feel as if he had nothing more to do with his oar until he has turned it square and dropped it into the water for the beginning, and drop it into the water for the beginning.

The beginner will find in making the recovery that the oar-blade of the oar is disengaged from the water the oar-blade of the stretcher will cease, and he will feel inclined to pull in the recovery of the body by pulling at the straps of the stretcher. But he must beware of continuing this pull too long; it must cease directly the slide forward.

Having in the foregoing articles fully explained the various points of the stroke, the faults that a beginner is likely to acquire, and the way in which they can be avoided, I add a few very valuable hints to the man who wishes to become a good oarsman. A beginner should never commence rowing upon a sliding seat, but should use a fixed one. Not only will this give him one fixed seat that he can rely on, but it will also save him the trouble of having to change the seat and how to use his weight properly.

It is most important that the oar should be pulled in the recovery, and it is better for the novice if he rowlock, it is a bit stiffer rather than the reverse. When he gets into the boat for the first time, he should be sure to get his feet and his seat, and with his body held erect. Then, before he takes an oar into his hands, he must be sure to get the oar-blade flat according to the rules already laid down. The oar-blade should be held in such a position that all the work has to be done by the body swing supported from the stretcher. The beginner should get from his oar-blade all his power, and he must never depend upon the stretcher.

The strength of his arms. When he thinks he has sufficiently mastered the body swing to take a further step, he must learn to grasp the handle of the oar in the position heretofore explained, with the fingers with the thumb underneath, and rowing with the oar-blade flat upon the water, his wrists will be as low as is convenient—well below the level of the oar-blade on the oar ought to be a handsbreadth apart.

He must bear in mind that the grasp of the oar should be as good as it is tight; and so, when the oar is turned square, the wrists, particularly the inside one, will be well arched. The wrists will be rendered supple, and the body properly supported, by turning the oar on and off the feather a number of times.

(To be continued on Saturday next.)

THE FIRST CHAPTERS IN BRIEF

Roddy Owen and Tom Hughes, two Welsh colliers... The only other property left by the late Matthew Matthews is a place known as Starve-Crow Farm...

In this story Mr. David Goodwin tells in his inimitable way how two colliery lads climbed the ladder to fame and fortune notwithstanding the many efforts their unscrupulous enemies put forth to prevent their doing so.



A MAGNIFICENT TALE OF COLLIERY LIFE. By David Goodwin.

Jerry Shows Signs of Nervousness.

RODDY rushed at Grippe with great force... "Sit on that ruffian. I want to make sure Grippe can't get any of that vile stuff!"

for my dinner, only it's gone bad, and I was just going to throw it away!... "You will, an' you'd better do it quietly. I can make you with the greatest ease, Jerry, an' I'm goin' to."

The Emotions of Jerry.

"COME, buck up," said Tom, never imagining that Roddy was serious... "You've got one minute to make up your mind! Say his captor."

"I'll show you in a minute. We'll hold a little court-martial all on our own... "What was he up to?" said the surprised Dafydd, bringing the prisoner along willy-nilly.



The bucket, high up against the pulley, reversed itself just as Mr. Sulpy passed underneath, and down came a black avalanche of train-grease upon the viewer.

didn't you have a hand in that vile affair in the Aberford yesterday? You know well it was no accident!... "I never done it!" cried Jerry, trembling.

WITH PICK & LAMP.

(Continued from the previous page.)

as yet, and the chums presently found Rhys by the... "Hallo! What are you up to?" said Roddy.

"What's happened?" Rhys was asked, that is all, replied Rhys bitterly.

"Facked!" exclaimed Tom. "Yes indeed, I went to Mr. Sully yesterday in her office, and asked him very politely if he would let me put again at your stall, because I work much better there."

"Whew!" said Roddy. "The sweep! You've been an' done it, though, Rhys. I never thought he'd fire you out, though, for a little thing like that."

"He was got a spite against me and my uncle, you know," replied Rhys. "He like to have an excuse to sack me, but I think it was chiefly because I wanted to put for you. And they will not get me a job anywhere else either, because Sully's worth his nose for them."

"It's just what the beast would do!" said Tom indignantly. "We know that was well enough. What are you up to with that crane-bucket, though?"

"If Sully must sack me, I like to give him a little reminder before I go," said Rhys, with a grin. "There is some coal-dust in ter boots of this bucket, and I mean to use it. I was a cool worker, and sacked for nothing, so he shall see."

Tom looked at the bucket, which was a large sheet-iron receptacle for workmen on a gimbal, so that it could be turned upside-down on its own pivot to empty its contents. Then he looked up at the crane, at the office, and smiled mischievously.

Not far away stood several kegs of half-liquid train grease. Tom walked over to them, took one up, and poured it into the crane-bucket, stirring in afterwards a few gallons of water from the tanks.

"I say, what are you about?" said Roddy. "Got a line on the bucket?" inquired Tom of Rhys. "Yess; here it is." "Hoist away, then."

Up went the bucket to the top of the crane till it reached the pulley-wheel, and then it stopped. The cord which Rhys had fastened to the bucket now hung down, and the pulley jerked it over one of the hooks on the side of the crane, so that it end hung down near the wheel, some distance away.

"That was fine!" chuckled Rhys. "I never thought of ter train-oil!" Now, if Mr. Sully

"I say, take care what you're up to, you two," said Roddy warningly. "It's all very well for you, but—"

"I told you I owed Sully one," replied Tom. "an' this looks like the time when he gets it under the collar. Anybody see us as work here? No? Hallo, there's Terry callin'!"

"Something urgent, maybe," said Roddy. "Come on, Tom, an' see what he wants."

The chums departed, and learned from Terry that they had been shifted to another part of the workings. The discussion of this kept them some time, and they forgot all about Rhys Evans. When they returned, they saw him standing just beyond the crane, and Mr. Sully, who had just arrived, had unlocked the office. He turned on the threshold and noticed the putter.

"Here, you," he called sharply, "didn't I tell you to take yourself off yesterday?"

"Yes inter," said Rhys coolly.

"Then what do you mean by showing your unwashed face here, you little rascal?" cried the wiper.

"My face was fery well washed," was Rhys's reply. He was about to move towards the side of the crane, when he saw that Tom had secretly got hold of the cord already, and was holding the end behind his back. Several pitmen standing by, stopped and grinned.

"You impudent little imp!" cried the wiper, striding towards Rhys. "You shall have a thorough good hiding on the spot, to teach you manners! Let me get hold of you!"

"Tom gave the cord a rousing pull as he lounged against the crane. The bucket, high up against the pulley, reversed itself just as Mr. Sully passed underneath, and down came a black avalanche of train-grease upon the wiper, making him yell and stagger, while a shout of laughter went up from the pitmen.

(Another fine local instalment of this magnificent colliery tale will appear on Saturday next, with the opening chapters of "The School on the Cliff," our great new story of adventure, will appear. Don't miss it.)

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CLUB NOTICES.

NOTICES AND CHALLENGES FROM READERS' OWN CLUBS. THESE ARE INSERTED FREE OF CHARGE.

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TOWER HAMILTONS C.C. (average age, 17; week) have several away dates open...

ST. JAMES'S JUNIOR C.C. (average age, 15; week) require home and away matches...

HUNSLT ALBION C.C. (average age, 14-16) would like to arrange matches with respectable teams...

ST. AUGUSTINE'S C.C. (juniors; average age, 15; week) require matches at home and short distance away...

ST. STEPHEN'S ATHLETIC C.C. (average age, 16; week) require away matches...

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REALM ATHLETIC C.C. (2nd XI) require a few good players, and also have a few open dates. Entrance fee, including cap, 1s. 6d. Apply to S. R. Fenton, 20, St. John's Villas, Highgate, N.

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