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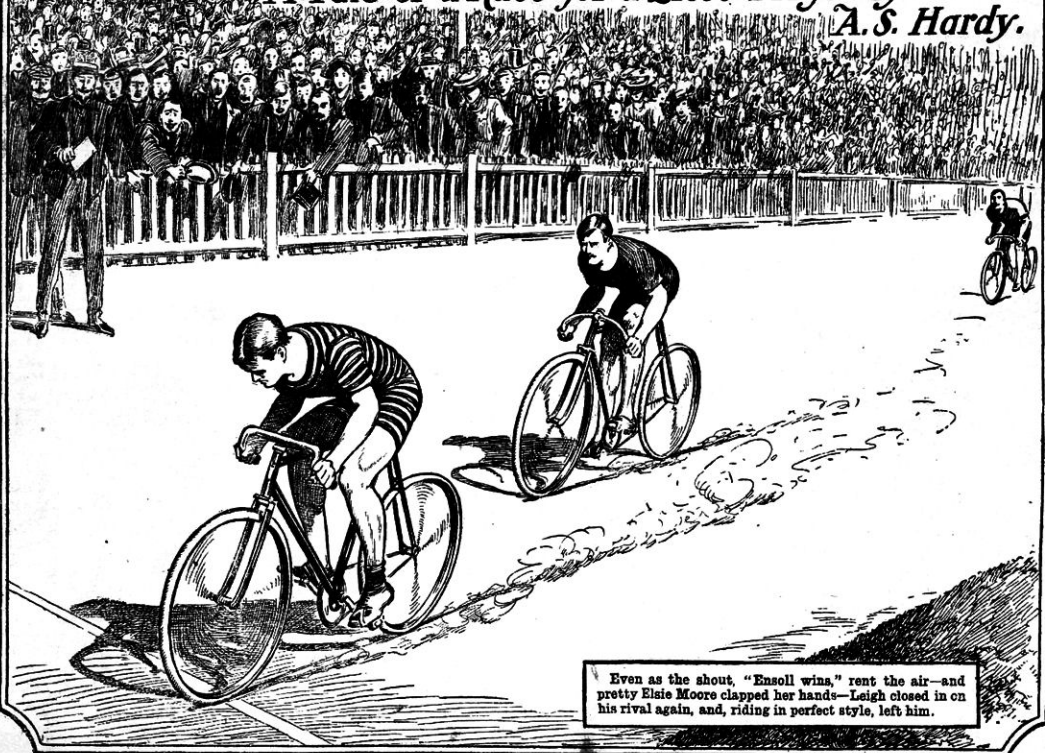
The Boys' Realm

of Sport & Adventure

1^d

THE PHANTOM CYCLIST.

A Tale of a Race for a £1000 Prize. By A. S. Hardy.



Even as the shout, "Ensell wins," rent the air—and pretty Elsie Moore clapped her hands—Leigh closed in on his rival again, and, riding in perfect style, left him.

THE FRENCHMAN'S UNUSUAL SILENCE.

A Tale of a Race for a £1,000 Prize. By A. S. HARDY.

THE 1st CHAPTER.

The Fancy-dress Ball—Some Club Matters... The night of the Fancy-dress Ball was a very successful one...

It seemed as if the majority of the dancers intended to keep it up until the small hours of the morning...

"Good-boy, you chaps!" he said. "You'll excuse me, running away, won't you, but notching upsets me so much as being out late...

Philip Harker, one-time racing crack of the Normans, was sitting in the front row...

"All right, Harry," he said. "And, mind, year after year we win the Ashington Cup, this year you've got it, Ennoll will make it yours of property...

"All right, old man!" Harry said. "I'll win the Castleton Cup all right enough for you...

As Harry Leigh, continuing on his way with a merry goodnight, sprang down the iron steps towards the door...

As Harry Leigh, continuing on his way with a merry goodnight, sprang down the iron steps towards the door...

"Good-evening, Miss Moore," said Harry, stooping and giving his hand to the girl...

"I have nothing to say to Mr. Harker," she said in a low voice...

Harry Leigh let her go. What was the use of making a row about it when she could not fit to black Philip Harker's boots?

tion from the club? He would not be believed, and so infuriated was the pretty girl with Ennoll...

"Four Philip has got to wait until time proves me wrong," he said in a muttered voice...

"I've got my racing bicycle here, Will," laughed Harry Leigh. "At this time of night the country roads are deserted...

"How about your legs?" said the secretary, pointing to the girl's cast-iron gaiters...

"You look very artistic!" laughed Will Donham. "What a get-up! Those false eyebrows at a treat..."

"No one will see me as it is," said Harry Leigh. "And I shall cover the three miles in no time..."

Well, De Lange usually takes a lung-copier to the time of night before he retires to rest...

A few swift turns of the pedals carried him beyond the village street of Kesterton...

The swift rust extinguished his light. But as he was about to make a start for the time of night, and as no policeman would be likely to interfere with him...

Presently he topped the brow of the hill, and shot down the incline towards Kelly's Corners...

It so happened, however, that the French racing crack, who had just been riding a Ludge a short while before for his nocturnal spin...

He had turned his bicycle into a support, and was leaning against the framework, as he glanced along the road towards Kelly's Corners...

In the east the moon was lazily rising, and the atmosphere was a beautiful one...

And well he might, for as he looked it seemed to him that a phantom figure suddenly glided out of the pines at Kelly's Corner...

De Lange's hair stiffened upon his head, and he was creating a new record in a mile away...

The Frenchman heard the world's record pace along the hard flint road.

THE 2ND CHAPTER. The Race—De Lange will not accept Harry's Apology—La Savatte and La Besse drop the Gaiters—The Mortimer—An Astonishing Proposition.

"Of course, when he had turned the corner into the main road, Harry Leigh had at once caught sight of De Lange...

Harry Leigh knew what had happened then. The Frenchman had taken him for a ghost. No half-surely he would have been so bold as to kick from the Frenchman's left foot...

Harry Leigh stood over him, waiting for him to rise. "Do you want any more," he asked, "or have you had enough?"

"You are the best man," said De Lange, gripping him by the hand in true British fashion...

"I'm sure I don't wear any make-up, monsieur," said Harry, with a smile. "But that the Frenchman threw his arms about his neck and kissed him on both cheeks...

"If you'll excuse me," said Harry, "I have some way to go yet, and I'll get along, besides, I couldn't go visiting in this costume, could I?"

It does not matter," was the reply. And De Lange pushed him in through the gates, for the house outside the entrance to which they stood was Holly Lodge...

"I will make you pay for that. You mad, must be locked up," said Harry, spluttered. "I'll make you pay for that. You mad, must be locked up. Vere see your light?"

"You couldn't make me do anything, monsieur," said Harry Leigh, still politely. "If I didn't wish to, but as I must confess I am not so very strong..."

"I'm sorry, monsieur," said the Normans' secretary, who had been waiting for him. "Believe me, I had no intention of so doing. I am sorry."

"It is not enough yet you apologise!" cried the Frenchman, who had been waiting for him in his rage. "I am so great De Lange. All the world has heard of me. You beat me on the road on ze bicycle, and I make you pay for that."

"Upon my word," cried Harry Leigh impatiently, "you are a bit unreasonable, monsieur. You are a bit unreasonable, monsieur. You are a bit unreasonable, monsieur."

In moment, however, he had called his scattered senses together and risen to his feet. There was De Lange manœuvring about in front of him, shifting his feet like lightning...

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Harry Leigh knew enough of the dangers of the sly devil to be careful to keep out of reach of De Lange's feet.

That was two grotesque figures—De Lange crouched in his tight-fitting racing-costume, and Harry Leigh in his white silk devil's robe.

He came in close, lunged out with his feet, but missed, owing to Harry's dodging, and the next moment he was on his hands and knees on the side of the head, he in his turn lay in the dust, wondering what had happened.

Harry had all his work out to guard the ball, and he had not time to get up. He kicked from the Frenchman's left foot in the small ribbing him untold agony, and a right uppercut, received smack on the nose, caused Harry to stagger.

But he kept cool, and after landing home well once or twice, he measured his distance from the goal. When he saw that the man came rushing forward, he got home on the point of the jaw, and De Lange dropped the ground, and lay there, knocked out by the blow.

Harry Leigh stood over him, waiting for him to rise. "Do you want any more," he asked, "or have you had enough?"

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wind; but though he was behind me, he overtook me, and beat me—yes, beat me before the mile was passed. It was wonderful, amazing, extraordinary! It was wonderful, amazing, extraordinary! What a man to beat an Anglaise braggart Ensell in so great a race as to be ridden in Paris in July!

"Do you mean what you say, De Lange?" said Hugh Mortimer, regarding Harry Leigh more closely. "Would you have any advice that I might dress as he is, fairly and squarely beat you?"

"Oh! And I was affrighted!" "Oh, that might have upset you, and caused you to ride more slowly."

"Non, non! It made me ride faster!"

"You are sure?" "Of course, monsieur! Ah, what a rider is this man! I could make of him a champion of champions. You sent for me to discuss the likelihood of my hosting an Anglaise Ensell, and you see now you should employ, but this man, with so working feet, he es magnificient!"

"Sit down, Leigh," said Hugh Mortimer cheerily. "Harry was surprised at the turn the conversation had taken. He noticed that the Mortimer family were all looking at him with a somewhat disconcerting stare. The reason was apparent when the elder of the brothers spoke again."

"Leigh," he said, "before I go any farther, I should like to know whether Ensell is a particular friend of yours. I know you were water-meters of the same age as Ensell is the sort of fellow who loses the friendship of all who know him if given time enough, it is possible you had that friend Ensell?"

"No," said Harry bitterly. "He wronged my dearest chum, Philip Harker, our present captain of the Nomads, and he is a water-meter."

"I think there is one of us has any fond feeling towards him now." "Hugh Mortimer breathes a sigh of relief."

"It is as well," he said, "that you should hear it, because I can speak freely to you now, which would not have been the case had you been in France. I have known the man, it is Leigh, that Ensell, who had entered into a business arrangement with us to ride Mortimer's ventures by means of my brother, and who received a rather large sum of money from us in consequence, has been systematically riding a race machine and my brother, who has received big sums from some Continental firms likewise. Unfortunately, I cannot get the name of him, but I think it is Ensell, and I have had De Lange over here to see me, looking upon him as the man most likely to defeat Ensell. He has been very good to me, and I mean. He scarcely thinks he is good enough. Now he tells me you have beaten him. That sounds promising. He comes to me, and says that you can come to me, and that you are a better man than De Lange, will you place yourself in my hands, and those of the trainer whom I will appoint, and do your best to win the great £1,000 race for us?"

Harry Leigh glanced at Hugh Mortimer in amazement. "That means I shall have to turn professional," he said.

"Of course." "But I am proud of my amateur status. Besides, I should lose any chance I have of winning the Carleton Cup."

"But I mean it. He is a man enough to win it if he can get on paper properly," said Hugh Mortimer. "I know what has been upsetting him. We gather a lot of news in our business which no one would wish would ever reach us. His love for Miss Moore and Ensell's treachery have pressed on his mind to such an extent that he hasn't the heart to race."

Harry Leigh was more amazed than ever, for what Hugh Mortimer said was true. He had seen Harker train with you, under the care of the man I shall appoint," cried the manufacturer of bicycle tyres eagerly. "Let him see that you have a big chance of beating Ensell, and robbing that scoundrel of his prestige, and you will find he will soon be himself again. And as for Miss Moore, I think she will have much affection for Ensell left when she sees him defeated on the race-track, and discredited in name as well as fame."

Harry Leigh was silent for quite a long time. "But I don't know what to say," he said at length. "I can't think I am as good a man as you would like to make out, though, of course, I know you ride for the money, and I don't mind the fall of last year. Will you give me time to mull over this?"

"Certainly," was the quick reply, as Hugh Mortimer cordially shook hands with the hand of De Lange, you show your friend and erstwhile enemy out. And, mind, Leigh, I look upon you as a stranger, and I shall be glad to think of what a lot you will be wiping off the slate if you succeed in robbing Ensell of his one great ambition—the winning of the £1,000 prize."

THE 3rd CHAPTER.

At the Paris Velodrome—The Result of the Race of the Carleton Cup—Some exciting Heats—The final of the £1,000 Prize De Lange's Self-Sacrifice—Harry Leigh Defeats the Favorites.

"SAY, Elsie, here's the news! Well, I'm blessed! I never should have thought it!"

"Elsie Moore, who, with a sunshade held in her right hand to protect her pretty head from the sun, sat in the reserved enclosure of the New Velodrome in Paris on the Sunday afternoon when the greatest event of the cycling year was to be raced, looked up at her brother in surprise."

Bertie Moore had brought Elsie over to Paris on purpose for her to witness the downfall of Ensell, the man upon whom she had begun to entertain her young affections, and whom she regarded with a strength of hero-worship that was the despair of Bertie as well as of those of whose she knew her."

She had treated poor Phil Harker very badly, and all because of this handsome, reckless, unscrupulous, not-to-be-won-by an Ensell, who, to speak plainly, was a thorough-paced rascal, and least calculated of all men in the world to make a woman happy."

"What is it, Bertie?" asked the pretty girl, replying now to her brother's question.

Will Benham, our secretary, has just called to put up some words of the race for the Carleton Cup. By Jove! Who would have thought it!"

"What is it, Wallace has won, of course," said the girl. "I knew he would. Since Ensell left there isn't a man in the club to touch him."

"I don't know about that," responded her brother. "There seems to me more than one. Wallace has only finished third. Baker was second. Why don't you think he won?"

"Not Phil Harker?" said the girl, with a scornful curl of the lips.

riders were already stationed. He evidently regarded himself as the centre of attraction in the racing that day.

"As the pistol went off the four riders got under way. Ensell was content to keep in the rear. They crawled round for the first lap, then Fillette, a Frenchman, dashed ahead, making the pace a cracker. Harker and hatter the race went until the bell rang, and then Ensell, coming wide on the outside, showed him class he was by leaving his comrades behind as if they were standing still, and winning the race sitting up. It was one of the finest exhibitions of riding ever seen on that or any other track, and remained some old stages of the days when a class man had been able to make mere backs of his field in the same way."

Arthur Ensell deserved the hurricane of applause which greeted his effort.

In the second heat, De Lange turned out, with Harry Leigh also as one of the competitors. De Lange was looked upon as Ensell's most dangerous rival, and a likely winner of the first prize, but of Harry Leigh, the old Britisher, who had adopted a tiger-like costume of yellow and black stripes, which was grotesque and striking in appearance, little was known."

"Why, that's Harry Leigh!" cried Elsie Moore, with wide-open eyes. "I noticed the name in the programme, but, of course, I could not think it was our Harry turned professional."

"What!" said she with a half-sneer. "What?" said his brother Bertie. "You don't like professionals, then, Elsie?"

"How about Ensell? He's a professional, isn't he?" "He is different," answered the girl defiantly. "He is a champion."

Bertie Moore smiled, but said nothing. He, Phil Harker, and Will Benham had been posted daily as to Harry Leigh's progress under the supervision of De Lange and a man

Lange had the satisfaction of finding themselves in the final.

It was not until the evening when the great final was run. The rest of the racing on the programme had been interesting, but overshadowed by the coming of the big event. There had been a sharp shower of rain, which made the concrete surface of the track a little more dangerous to ride upon. When the riders turned out, Ensell was seen to be looking a little anxious. He had a straw tucked between his teeth, and he was extra careful in his riding, as if he were looking into the slots of the pedals. He had drawn the inside berth, and seemed satisfied. Next him was De Lange, and then again Harry Leigh. Ensell was not so much as he had been, but he was certainly treated an old Nomad comrade's riding in the race at all. Besides, he had seen the Mortimers, whom he had treated so shabbily, making a fuss of Leigh, and he realised when it was almost too late that the £1,000 on which he had been basing extensive calculations might not become his."

"Ensell," said Harry Leigh, leaning over in his saddle. "You remember how shabbily you treated poor Phil Harker? You remember how you broke your word with the Mortimers? You remember how, in the past, you were almost always the loser? Well, now you are going to wipe all that out today. I've trained specially to beat you in this race which is the only and sole reason why I'm going to ride the time winning post is reached."

A furious reply hovered on Ensell's lips, but he had to restrain it by hearing the starter cry, "Are you ready?"

Therefore he gritted his teeth and said nothing."

Off round the bond went De Lange like lightning, with Harry Leigh frozen at it were, upon his back wheel. So fast did they go that the spectators were unable to see. Ensell could not prevent their swooping down in front of him and robbing him of the inside berth."

Still, there was yet a long way to go, and Ensell was a cunning and experienced rider. He did not mean to let this pair get away. But De Lange rode hard, and the Frenchman was riding a race of pure self-sacrifice. In their runs together, it had been demonstrated beyond any possibility of dispute that Harry Leigh was the faster, better, and cleverer man, and De Lange's mission was merely to make the pace."

He did, and such a cracker, too, that soon these three riders had left the other three behind, for there were six going in the final.

It would enable him to slip past Leigh in the last lap, at the last bend, and win."

But faster, and more fast, did De Lange ride; and at length, at the bell, he sprinted like a veritable champion. But his hard work had told its tale, and ere half the lap had been ridden, both Ensell and Harry Leigh were in front of the last bend but one, then passed Harry like a flash. But only for a moment. Ensell was not to be so easily routed the air—and pretty Elsie Moore clapped her hands—Leigh closed in on his rival again, and riding with perfect style, he managed to show over the line three lengths ahead. He had avenged the Mortimers—he had avenged his friend, and he had won the £1,000 prize."

In the fall of the autumn, two riders, a girl and a youth paused when riding down a leafy lane, and alighted from their machines. Just as the sun was sinking. The man was Philip Harker, captain of the Nomads, the girl was Elsie Moore. The old resentment and ill-feeling between them had vanished. He took her hand tenderly in his."

"Elsie," he said, "I love you! Have you forgiven me for any unkindness I may have been guilty towards you in the past?"

"It is you who must forgive," said she, lowering her head. "Oh, Phil, I can't help caring what a lot you owe to Harry Leigh. Our whole happiness!"

"And the success of the old club," said the Nomad's captain proudly. "For though Harry is a professional, and can't ride now, his help came when the club was in a bad financial state and about to break up. The Mortimers, too, were helped by his aid."

"So they ought to be," said the girl. "For didn't Harry make their tyres famous all over the world?"

"He has her hand again in his, but hearing the sound of approaching wheels, the pretty girl quickly withdrew it."

"Here comes the Ensell," she said. "Here comes all the club boys!" THE END.

SPORTING LIFE.

A wonderful Novel of School Life, of Cricket, and of Adventure at Home and Abroad.

By A. S. HARDY.

See

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CLUBS IN "THE BOYS' REALM" FOOTBALL LEAGUE.



NEWBURY JUNIORS F.C., Runners-up BOYS' REALM League (Junior Division), 1906-7. Secretary, Mr. A. N. Waldie, 23, Craven Street, Newbury.

"Yes," he replied. "Harker won easily, and in the fastest time the race has ever been run in."

A mighty cheer went up, for nearly every member of the Nomads, who could come over to Paris to see Harry Leigh meet Ensell in the big event at the New Velodrome had crossed the line to witness the race, and the announcement they caused the very roof of the stand to shake with their cheering."

As for Elsie, she lowered her sunshade and dug the ferrule on her foot into the wood in front of her in a thoughtful kind of way. But she said nothing."

"He will win! Ensell is bound to win!" cried the girl indignantly. "Some of us made up our minds a month or two ago that he should not. There are at least two men in today's race who will give him a dose of his own medicine. Ensell's heart will fall him in a tight finish. He's got no pluck."

"You don't have?" said the pretty girl, her tears welling into her eyes. "Nobody can say he's not a magnificent rider."

Her protest was drowned in the burst of applause which greeted the riders who turned out to contest the first heat of the £1,000 mile. Amongst them was Arthur Ensell, clad in a scarlet racing suit that became his handsome figure very well. He rode once round the three-lap concrete track, bowing to right and left, and waving his hand with a characteristic with him. They banded his machine back to the starting-place, where three other

named Hampden, a professional trainer, who had had some of the best riders in the world through his hands, and from those reports they had been able to deduce the fact, barring accidents in the big race, either De Lange or Harry Leigh must win."

"It's rough though," muttered Bertie to himself, "that they've met in the same heat like this. It makes Ensell's chance all the rosier."

There was no time for further reflection, for at that moment the pistol cracked and the four riders got away."

Elsie had decided to take but a languid interest in this most uninteresting heat, but what Harry Leigh had seen her to open her eyes wide with surprise."

De Lange went away as if the race were a quarter-mile sprint. Harry Leigh kept right upon his back wheel, and the two, taking the others by surprise, open out a big gap at once. The fact of the matter was that as only the two had been admitted to the final, and as Harry Leigh wished De Lange to be in that race to bring him along, the pair had decided to cut their way up between them and the same amazing pace was kept to, until both were half a lap ahead of the others, and going as nimbly as ever. The bell rang, and then Ensell, with a mighty effort, put his best against De Lange, and won by two clear lengths on the line."

De Lange threw away the race by pacing Leigh, and the girl looking a little uneasy."

"He knew our Leigh was the better man, and didn't want to win, for in any case, Leigh must be in the final if we want Ensell beaten, said his brother."

The girl bit her lips, but did not answer. The time, 1 minute, 31.5th seconds, however, made her open her eyes. Ensell had won his heat in 1 minute, 59.5th seconds, and

In the remaining heats, Leigh's time was never even approached, and both he and De

EVERY THURSDAY. ONE PENNY. Every Tuesday.

Look Out for a New Slatton School Story Shortly.



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

Special Attractions for Next Week.

I AM glad to inform my readers that I have secured two splendid complete stories for next week's issue of THE BOYS' REALM. One of them is entitled "The Salt Water Chumponship," written by A. S. Harby. It will be found a grand tale of water polo, and calculated to fascinate every lad, no matter whether he takes interest in aquatic or not.

The other story is a tale of thrilling adventure, specially written by clever Martin Shaw, and is entitled "A Man's Ingratitude," and I can assure all my friends that it will repay them for the time and trouble expended in its perusal.

How to Become a Jockey.

ONE of my Staffordshire friends, who signs himself H. P., wishes me to tell him in the columns of THE BOYS' REALM how to become a jockey. Well, first of all, I am going to advise my reader not to become a jockey, because personally I do not think that jockeyship, although a very clever and plucky business, is altogether the most praiseworthy occupation that a boy can select; secondly, because I think that jockeys are held open to enormous temptation, and, unless a boy has strength of mind, rarely finds in a lad, he is likely to succumb, and the result, of course, will be moral downfall.

OUR LEAGUE CORNER.

SECTION 1. Application has been made by THE LEWISHAM AND DISTRICT CRICKET LEAGUE for a Boys' REALM Trophy, and Your Editor has decided to present one to that organisation at the close of the cricket season. The number of clubs affiliated to this league is ten; the Secretary being: Mr. M. Coes Richardson, 29, Radford Road, Lewisham, S.E.

THE TRONBIDGE AND DISTRICT CRICKET CUP COMPETITION have also sent in an application for a Set of Silver Medals. In this case the League is already in possession of a cup, so that Mr. H. Bowen, the Secretary, limited his application to one set of medals. His address is: The Folley, Broseley, Shropshire. Your Editor has granted his application.

The following clubs in the Leagues mentioned have been awarded Cricket Bats for the best performance on Saturday, June 15th:

OSWALDTHISTLE AND DISTRICT LEAGUE. St. Andrew's C.C.—Sec. (of Longway), Mr. R. Broughton, 4, Mait Street, Accrington, Lancs.

FROM YOUR EDITOR'S CHAT.

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 envelope. Write to him if you are in trouble, if you want information, 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 Thursday, or "The Boys' Herald" next Thursday. THIS is my plan will be sent out on the following terms: 12 months, 1s. 3d.; 6 months, 7s. 6d.—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.

all, have to serve an apprenticeship as stable lad, looking after harnesses. At first his duties will consist of all the drudgery of stable work, cleaning out horses' stalls, making up their beds, cleaning harness, and feeding the animals at their regulation times.

After a time he will be promoted to riding the horses at exercise, and from this to riding them in trials and on the raccourse are but steps in his career.

To seek a berth he must consult the sporting papers, like the "Sporting Life" and the "Sportman." In these he will find the advertisements of the trainers wanting lads, and when he sees a likely advertisement he must apply, stating his age, height, and weight, and giving a character, or if he is near a training establishment he should make application to the head groom.

How to Increase the Height.

THE following interesting letter has been sent me by one of my staunchest and most reliable correspondents, and is of the valuable information he provides, and also for the very kind and encouraging remarks he has written to me ever since I was a boy. By doing so probably saved my life. Everbody used to tell me I should never reach the age of eighteen, but that I would die at a very young age. I have passed that age by one year.

"Dear Sir,—I notice that in last week's number of THE BOYS' REALM, June 15th, that H. W. of Kirkstall, and several other readers, desire to increase their height. I have studied and practised physical culture ever since I was a boy. By doing so probably saved my life. Everbody used to tell me I should never reach the age of eighteen, but that I would die at a very young age. I have passed that age by one year.

"My father was sixteen my height was 5ft. 3in., and now I am nineteen my height is 5ft. 9in. When I was small, being 5ft. 4in., and my mother is 5ft. 2in. I have also studied the physical formation of the body, and I have always found it growing exercises very valuable in increasing the height and keeping the body erect.

"The real reason why so many people are under height is because their muscles are too weak to hold the body erect. The backbone, or spinal column, is made up of a number of small bones called the vertebrae. These bones are joined together by a band of cartilage, which acts as a buffer, and also absorbs all the vibration and shock when we jump or move in any way. The vertebrae are very often crumpled together, and the cartilage is pressed close up.

To increase the height, the cartilage must be loosened and made pliant. The muscles of the back between the shoulders should also be developed, for they help to keep the body erect by keeping the shoulders well back and the chest out.

Exercises should be performed until tired, with the exception of Ex. 1. If they are practised regularly and properly, they will increase the height from one to two inches.

Ex. 1. Sit on a chair, with arms folded, placing both feet beneath a table, or end of bed. Bend slowly backwards until the head touches floor. This exercise should not be done in any traces.

Ex. 2. Lay face downwards on floor, both hands held to sides. Stretch the hands out and stretch out in front of head. Return hands to sides, and repeat.

Stand erect, both hands clasped behind back. Take a deep breath, pressing the hands as far forwards as possible. Raise on the toes at same time, and throw the head well back.

Ex. 4. Stand erect, with hands by sides. Stop and stretch the floor with finger-tips, feet on sides and continue till body is upright position, arms held out in front of body, head held down between the upper arms. When the arms are held overhead, a downward pressure should be given, and the head be pressed backwards and downwards until they reach the sides again. Raise on toes when the arms are pressed back. Exhale, and repeat.

"Hanging by the hands from a bar or the top of a door, and putting up the chin (it is level with hands) are also valuable exercises for increasing height. I hope the exercises given will be found valuable to your readers.—Yours, for health and strength, W. B."

The Finest Detective Story Ever Written.

MY friends know that I am not given to boasting, and that when I say a story is excellent, they know it will be excellent, and that no one can say otherwise. As the Editor of the most successful boys' paper in the world, and also as the Editor of the largest number of boys' papers ever issued from one office, I think my friends will admit that I am one to form an opinion upon a story.

"Well, then, I say that "The Iron Hand," the new serial story from the pen of Mr. Maxwell Scott, is the finest story ever written. It is exciting—I have read few tales more so; it is dramatic; and it catches the interest from the start to finish of every instalment. When it is considered that it is written by an author who is a pastmaster in the art of detective story writing, and that it deals with the fas-

SECTION 2.

Your Editor has adjudged the following clubs to be the winners of our prizes having already received a prize.

JUNIOR DIVISION. Eastworth C.C.—Sec. & W. Walker, 394, Hawthorne Road, Juddville, Liverpool.

SENIOR DIVISION. Northgate White Star C.C.—W. Smith, 2, Chain Street, Gratton Road, Westgate, Bradford, Yorkshire.

The following are one or two letters from the secretary of clubs which have already received a prize: "Dear Sir,—Many thanks for the bat received last Saturday, also for your congratulations." "Our fellows have not yet had a knock with the presentation bat, I shall be glad of good performance with my name. I shall be glad to see it."

"Again thanking you on behalf of the above club, I am, dear Sir, Yours faithfully, "HARRY G. DADLEY, Hon. Sec."

"67, Mozart Street, Liverpool."

"Dear Sir,—I have just received the pads on behalf of Alliance C.C. I wish to thank you very much. Don't think our fellows could be more pleased, even if they had won the league. The pads are of excellent quality, and I am sure they will do you good. Give my thanks to your good lady. As secretary of Alliance C.C. I have offered the pads to the members of my club, and I am sure the members of the REALM at the close of the season. I am glad to hear you have a good idea, as it will cause a dead more interest in the team."

"Again thanking you, Yours respectfully, "D. THADDEUS, Sec. Alliance C.C."

inating subjects of a powerful secret society, an airship, and the experiences of three detectives—Nelson Lee, a Seaman, and an Irishman—my friends will understand the reason for my enthusiasm with regard to this exercise.

If you have heard the stories of Sherlock Holmes and Martin Hewitt, you'll like this story of Nelson Lee, entitled "The Iron Hand," ten times better. So that I advise all my friends who want to read the finest detective story ever written to go all new to the following terms: 12 months, 1s. 3d.; 6 months, 7s. 6d.—payable in advance by British stamps. Postal Orders or Money Orders to be sent to the Publisher, my companion paper.

How to Use the Punch-ball.

THE punch-ball is one of the most excellent methods of improving oneself in the art of boxing. It is used at the same time obtaining very healthy exercise. A friend of mine, whose initials are T. R., asks me to give him some information about the proper way to use a punch-ball. To do so how would take up too much of my space, but I may tell my young friend that the best course for him to adopt is to get a book entitled, "How to Box, and Win," price 1s., which can be obtained through any newsagent. This will give him all the information he requires.

Breathing Through the Mouth.

ONE of my Irish readers, who hails from Dublin, tells me that he finds it rather difficult to breathe through his nostrils, and he wants me to tell him whether breathing through the mouth will injure his lungs.

There can be no question that the most healthy method of breathing is through the nostrils, for he can adopt it to get a book entitled, "How to Box, and Win," price 1s., which can be obtained through any newsagent. This will give him all the information he requires.

Another advantage which nasal breathing gives us is that the finger passes which the air has to traverse before it reaches the lungs in cold weather enables it to get warmed, and thus a risk of irritating the lungs by a sudden draught of cold air is avoided. Of course, there are thousands of people who, owing to some defect in the nasal passages, breathe through their mouths. This is a bad habit, and it is well to know that the mouth, and what is more to the point, do not seem to suffer any damage therefrom. Still, nasal breathing is the better method, and where it can be adopted it most decidedly should be.

YOUR EDITOR (H.E.).

DAILY MAIL.

"46, Forster Street, Roker, Sunderland, June 18th, 1907.

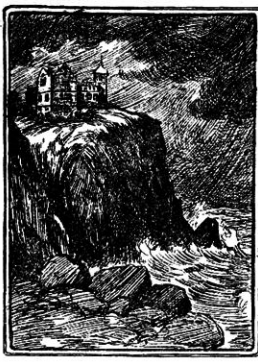
"Dear Sir,—I'd like to thank you for which accept the hearty thanks of Dore & Institute, C.C. We have used it this afternoon, and have proved it to be a good driver. Yours sincerely, "B. TAYLOR, Sec."

OUR FOOTBALL LEAGUE.

On another page will be found a preliminary announcement concerning our first Football League. Every member of a football club who wishes to join further, should keep his eyes open for forthcoming announcements from the League, and should be prepared to make a contribution towards the League, which will make his readers open to a splendid football match when he proceeds to it. It is really an extension of the FOOTBALL LEAGUE. REALM last season, in giving away silver cups, silver medals, and a football broadcast. This enterprise on the part of a football club shows the staff in their attempts to still further popularise the grand old sport—football.

But during the coming season THE BOYS' REALM has something better still to offer its readers. No club that is not a single football club can afford to have learned about the amazing facilities offered in the football by THE BOYS' REALM, will not make up his mind that his club shall participate in the football of good things provided.

Footballers for their own sake, carefully work out columns for full details of our gigantic and daring football scheme for the coming season.



THESE ARE THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS IN THIS FINE NEW STORY.

JACK JAUNTY, a lad of unknown parentage, who, as a baby, was cast up on the shores of an island off the village of Sternsraiz.

THE STRANGER, a curious character who resides alone on an island called the Bowl. He it was that rescued Jack Jaunty from a watery grave. Fourteen years have since passed away.

BOB BAXTER, an old fisherman, in whose charge the Stranger put Jack Jaunty until he was old enough to be sent to the School on the Cliff at Sternsraiz. That is where we find him now.

PETER PINNICK, a moose, unobscurable fisherman, who nurses an imaginary grudge against the Stranger and against Jack Jaunty.

DAN CALLIS, **AARON DOWNY**, **GERARD INGLIS**, and **NICKIEY HOPKINS**, pupils at the School on the Cliff.

Our story opens on a warm sunny day. Dan Callis, a pupil at the School on the Cliff, and a bully, is daring another lad, Gerard Ingles, by name, to descend the Scramer's Cliff. Jack wants him not to do so, but a little later the lad is discovered on a ledge half-way down the face of the cliff inaccessible. From this perilous position he is rescued by Jack Jaunty.

A stranger arrives at Sternsraiz that afternoon, and picking up an acquaintance with Peter Pinnick, a surly fisherman, questions him about Jack Jaunty. This obliged against his will to tell the man all he knows.

Soon after a new boy arrives at the school. His name is Peter Pinnick, and he makes a bad impression on the other boys.

Jack Jaunty, in his chums, play a joke on Peter Pinnick, who swears revenge. Jack makes friends with some new arrivals at Sternsraiz, Mr. Belton and his two daughters. He takes them for a tour of inspection around the cliffs.

Mr. Ferrula and Mr. Reddick, two under-masters at the School on the Cliff, are rivals for the affections of Miss Harrison, the governess of Mr. Belton's two daughters.

This is the cause of much bad feeling between them. Mr. Belton's two daughters attempt to seduce the Royal Island, and when in danger of drowning are rescued by Peter Pinnick, who is greatly elated, and tells Jack Jaunty about his bravery.

(Now read this week's installment.)

THE 17th CHAPTER. Who Wrote that Letter?

THE general opinion of the girls' adventure did not exactly coincide with that of Mrs. Bonnington.

On the point of the risk they had run everybody but the above-said Mrs. Bonnington agreed that the girls had shown a lot of pluck. They were not likely to consent it again, for, for both were convinced that they had narrowly escaped a watery grave, and suffering from exhaustion they were obliged to remain at home for several days.

Miss Harrison, however, walked abroad alone, and it chanced that on the following Saturday—she being with the boys—she chose to stroll inland in the direction of a wood about a mile from the shore. It was a weird-looking spot, for the lime-trees, subject to much ill-sage from the wind, leaned in every possible direction but the right one, and the branch tips being broken in hundreds of places, the woods grew in very jagged forms. By day there was a half-rutted look about that wood, and at night it had the appearance of a witch's haunt.

Miss Harrison walked along slowly, reading a book, as was her wont, and thought little of the things around her until she heard a rapid footstep in the rear. As it sounded like that of a person wishing to overtake her, she looked back and saw in the distance a figure with a ghost-like expression on his ample face.

He was bounding rather than walking along, and his intention was obviously to overtake her. With a faint smile, closed the book.

"Now for a martyrdom," she softly said.

Hard walking makes stout people short of breath, and Mr. Ferrula had to yield to the laws of Nature. When he came up he had no breath, to speak of, left. His eyes were wide and staring, his face panted and gasped like a small steam-tug, and was altogether a frightfully unpoetical object.

"I fear you are being harrowed," Mr. Ferrula said Miss Harrison. "Pardon me, but ought not a man of your age and—ah—build, to take things more leisurely?"

"Miss Harrison," said Mr. Ferrula, "I would rather not discuss my age and build.

THE SCHOOL ON THE CLIFF.

A Magnificent New Story of Stirring Adventure.

By E. HARCOURT BURRAGE.

Phew! Give me a moment, so that I may speak clearly and to the edge of the wood, and there Miss Harrison stopped.

"Now, Mr. Ferrula," she said, "I hope you are in a condition to explain what you want with me."

"Is it possible," he exclaimed, "that you do not know?"

"I did know," she said, "there would be no need for me to inquire."

"True," said Mr. Ferrula. "Well, let me come to the point at once. Why did you ask me to come to the Cliff?"

Miss Harrison started, and a look of utmost amazement spread over her face.

"Ask you—to come to the Cliff?"

"Yes."

"But," Ferrula, may I ask if you have taken away your senses?"

"Indeed, I have not," he replied. "Here—may I have the letter somehow?"—he was feeling in his coat-pockets. "Oh, I forgot!"

He thrust his hand into his waistcoat and brought out a small chamois bag, suspended by a piece of string around his neck. That bag had been hanging over his heart.

The letter herein contained, he said, as he opened it, was sent to me by you.

Miss Harrison shook her head.

"What! It should not send it?"

"Of course, Jack," he said.

"Odd—and yet—the writing—"

"Let me look at it, Mr. Ferrula."

He handed it to her, and she read it with a frown. It was called immovable.

"And you really thought I wrote this?" she said calmly. "Really, it does not do much credit to your judgment or to your estimation of me!"

"It is not your writing, then?" he exclaimed, as the perspiration beaded his forehead.

"No, of course not. The Christian name is not mine, either. It is written by some person who knows very little of me."

"I do not know," he said, then at the sky; then at the wood; and finally gave vent to several gasps.

"I am—general has done this!" he said.

"I do not think the author of this practical joke," said Miss Harrison; "but, really, you ought not to have been taken in by it, Mr. Harrison."

"May I ask what your name is, Miss Harrison?"

"Oh, certainly—Irene! Nothing very striking, is it?"

"It is very pretty," said Mr. Ferrula pathetically. "Oh, Irene—"

"Now, Mr. Ferrula," said Miss Harrison, "I won't have it. You are old enough to know better than to go into all this sort of nonsense. Your love for me, as I suppose you will call it, is quite hopeless—if from no other reason than the fact that I am engaged."

"Engaged!" muttered Mr. Ferrula. "Oh, dear—if I had but known it from the first!"

"You could not have known it, as I did not know it myself. It is only a matter of a few days ago. But you must excuse me if I do not tell particulars. Take a gentle walk and get cool. I fear you are not constituted to endure much excitement."

She glided inland, and he was left alone—alone with his misery!

"I thought I saw it all the other day," he gasped, "but I was wrong. But I know it all now. He triumphs, but not for long. If I slay him at the altar, I will check his happiness—use R—scatter it to the winds! Ha, ha, ha!"

The sound of his own voice broke up his meditations, and, raising his eyes, he saw half a dozen of them running towards him. They had their eyes on the ground, and he knew they were playing hare-and-hounds. They were looking for scent. Nickiey Hopkins, Edgar Brev, and Gerard Ingles were among them, and talking off in the distance were half a score others. Perceiving the tutor, they ran up to him.

"Have you seen Jaunty, sir?" they asked.

"No," was the gloomy reply.

"He is here to-day," said Nickiey, "and is giving us a regular lesson."

"We all have our lessons," said Mr. Ferrula gloomily, as he stooped to pick up the letter which he a moment before had dropped.

Nickiey caught sight of it, and burst into a laugh.

"Pray," said Mr. Ferrula, "what is the matter with you?"

"Nothing, sir," replied Nickiey; "at least, not much. There's some scent. Follow up, Tally-ho!"

And away he went, leaving Mr. Ferrula to his gloomy meditation.

The tutor saw it all. Reddick had written the letter in mockery, knowing all the while that he had gained the heart of the governess. It was a base, unmanly thing to do, and Mr.

Ferrula earnestly wished that he would one day fall into the Cliff and break his neck.

That evening the Scramer came over from the Bowl, and when Jack returned, after having led his pursuers, he found Bob Baxter waiting for him.

"You are to go aboard for a few minutes, Master Jack," he said.

A message from the Stranger had in it all the potency of a monarch's request, and Jack tired as he was, set out at once.

"How is Jim?" Jack asked, as they descended to the beach.

"About the same," replied Bob; "but a bit more restless, I fancy. He's taken to fashioning a sort of club with his jack-knife. We took it away for a time; but the doctor says he's harmless enough, so we let him have it again."

"But he must be making it for some purpose," said Jack.

"Heaven only knows!" replied Bob, shaking his head. "We go by what the doctor says, you know."

Jack did not exactly agree with him, but he would not say anything to that effect, because Bob had a faith in the doctor which it would be unkind to shake.

Bob by this time had got his boat out, and Jack stepping in, away they went to the Scamers, which had been brought up before the wind about a quarter of a mile from the shore. The Stranger was awaiting Jack, and received him with his accustomed cheerfulness.

"Come down below," he said. "We must have a short chat together. Bob can look after the yacht."

Bob not only could, but would gladly do so, as he expressly said. Jack and his friend descended to the miniature cabin, and the door being closed, the tutor said:

"I intended to have sent for you yesterday, but I awaited this morning's letters to see if I had occasion to do so. Have you had any strangers in Sternsraiz lately?"

"None that I know of," replied Jack. "We have a new boy, but, of course, he doesn't count."

"I am not so sure of that," said the Stranger thoughtfully. "What is his name?"



Jack looked up, and saw the drummer's legs working convulsively. "Keep still," he cried, "or you will turn the drum over!"

"Mark Ricketts."

"Hunt!" said the Stranger. "Assumed, should say. Where does he come from?"

"I don't know," replied Jack.

"Does he never speak of home?"

"Never."

"Of friends?"

"No."

"But he has letters like the rest?"

"I have never seen any," said Jack.

"Very curious," he remarked the Stranger, "and I think; we ought to know something about him. Ah, you look surprised, Jack; but I am getting interested in the movements of the wind!"

"It does seem strange to hear you talking in that way," replied Jack.

"Well, don't mind that, Jack. What I want you to do is, find out all you can about this Mark Ricketts."

"How, sir?"

"In any fair way. Don't, of course, play the spy; but I need not tell you not to do that; you would not. I know. But just ascertain all you can concerning him in a straightforward manner. I am not, as you may guess, actuated by ill-feeling."

"I am sure of that, sir."

"My motive," continued the Stranger, "may be made clear to you one day; at present I would rather not say anything about it. You must grant a little pocket-money."

"I have some left from your last gift," said Jack.

"But you must have some more," was the reply; "for I tell you, Jack, that it is just possible we may not see each other for some time—I am not sure, but it is possible—and should I not hold any communication with the mainland, do not be alarmed. Good-bye!"

He crossed Jack's hand, placing within it five sovereigns—a very large sum for a boy to possess. Jack did not attempt to thank him with a flowery speech, but simply said he was grateful for so much kindness, and took his leave. The first object he and Bob took notice of on shore was Peter Pinnick, in a state of inebriation.

THE 18th CHAPTER. A Rough Wooer.

PINNICK was not only rolling, but also laughing, and he was proclaiming to all who cared to hear his merits as a man.

"Here I am—a hero," he was roaring—"a savior of party girls, with a mean old fellow for a father who thinks twenty pounds squares the job. I like that. Why, I've a right to marry one 'em, although I be a bit up in years. But a man of forty odd ain't old yet. Hallo, young Jaunty!" he cried, espying Jack. "Where have you been?"

He was standing at the bottom of the pathway, so that there was hardly room for Jack to pass and ascend the cliff.

"Please stand aside," said Jack.

Look Out for a New Slatton School Story Shortly.

The School on the Cliff.

(Continued from the previous page.)

"Stand aside for you!" exclaimed Peter Pinnick, "like that. Why, you whelp, you mean, nasty bogger, I say." He raised his clenched hand as if to strike the boy, who was pushing him, when a thousand fires sprang up before his eyes, and he fell in a heap upon the sands. Bob Baxter had hit him somewhere about the head—it does not matter where—and he brought about a mental chaos, extremely painful and bewildering.

"Go on, Master Jack," said Bob. "He's good to be civil to his betters. I'll know the reason why, I may tell 'ee," whispered Bob, as Jack moved forward. "That I gave him the knock as much for the young lady's sake as your own. He marry an angel, and only a girl too. Hang me! The next time I hear him say it I'll kill him outright."

"Mr. Redditch, may I have a word with you?"

"If you if you like, sir."

In a chime the two tutors had met, and now stood glaring at each other with all the deadly rival hatred born of love for woman.

"Redditch," said Mr. Ferrula, drawing in a deep breath, "there are some things which a man can bear, and other things which he cannot bear. Among the latter I'll name the violence of your movements. At least, so thought Mr. Ferrula, as he got upon his feet and glared at his rival. Mr. Redditch proceeded to knock the sand off his clothes, with a feebly smile.

"Ferrula," he said, "we have been making asses of ourselves about a woman who does not care a fig for either of us."

"Redditch," said Mr. Ferrula, with emotion, "don't try to humbug me."

"My dear fellow, I'm not dreaming of such a thing. We have both been made fools of. You were sent to the Cliff in the morning, and I was sent to the North Spur in the evening."

"Then you had a letter?"

"I had."

"Have you got it with you?"

"I have."

And Mr. Redditch, in proof thereof, drew out the letter and handed it to his brother tutor.

It was a precisely similar letter to the other,

barring the appointed place of meeting, and now it was the turn of Mr. Ferrula to slowly smile.

"You have seen her?" he said.

"I have," replied Mr. Redditch.

"And shown her this letter?"

"Yes."

"What did she say?"

"Very much what she said to you, I guess, Ferrula. This is the work of some fondish boy. It is a lie."

"But, there are tricks in everybody's mind," said Mr. Redditch, "and it is in yours which it is. The greater part of the little boys write so much alike."

"Let us go back to the house; the class-room is empty now, and we can then compare these letters with the criticisms of the respective boys. We are sure to find out who has done this deed."

"And having found him out he shall suffer," Ferrula said grimly.

The two victims of the practical joke walked off together, and after a short delay the ferns were parted, disclosing the faces of two boys. They were Nicky Hopkins and Will Radford, who had been wandering in the chime and hidden themselves on the approach of the tutors.

"Well," said Nicky, "you are in for it. Redditch will be sure to make out your writing."

"And won't Ferrula make out yours?" replied Will.

"I don't know, but I'm in for it in every writing, are there? And we thought ourselves so very clever. I wonder what they will do to us?"

"Make things pretty warm for us," replied Nicky. "Got any money?"

"A little."

"Then let us go to Daddy's and have some ginger-beer."

Daddy was an endearing epithet bestowed upon the aged keeper of a small general shop in the one end of the village, where it was the least accessible to the inhabitants. Daddy was no parent, but a single old man, given to long hair, and dressed in a manner conspicuously of his class of business having made him independent to a painful degree.

They had entered the shop the old man, who had the appearance of a Viking chief of the sea in reduced circumstances, left off weighing sugar and bent his bushy brows on the two boys.

"Well," he said.

"Two bottles of ginger-beer, please," said Nicky. "And let us have two that pop a bit."

"You've got to take 'em as you can get 'em," replied Daddy, as he groped under the counter. "Specially when there's a run on an article."

He brought up two of the familiar none bottles, and handed one to each, counting him for a glass. One was standing on a box of dried fish, and it looked as if it stood in need of a dash of gin.

"I'll drink mine out of the bottle," said Nicky.

"So will I," said Will.

"So will I," said Will.

"So will I," said Will.

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"So will I," said Will.

KING CRICKET.

A Fascinating New Story of County Cricket.

Specialty 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. He became a professional. His uncle is ruined by James Ladden.

KIT VALANCE, Loamshire's best bowler. He first comes to notice in the Colts' match, before he takes Arthur Lovell's wicket. Later he becomes Arthur's firm friend.

LEN VALANCE, Kit's twin brother.

GEOFFREY LADDEN, an amateur and a good bowler. He becomes a professional, and is ruined by his hatos and endeavors to injure. He is Arthur's rival for the hand of Molly Hilton.

MOLLY HILTON, a beautiful girl.

JAMES LADDEN, who has ruined Arthur's uncle.

BLANE, Captain of Loamshire, and the steady friend of Arthur and Kit. He is Molly Hilton's cousin.

POPNONY, Geoffrey Ladden's friend, and a man of similar character—snobish to a degree.

brought their sisters and their cousins and their aunts to see how Loamshire opened the match against the visitors from the equator. There was a buzz of cheering as the two captains, Kit Valance and Geoffrey Ladden, stood up against their bowling. Lovell. You will have to look out for Kotze's lightning ball, and Schwarz's grovelling.

Arthur laughed lightly.

"Not to-day, Kit, I think, at all events. The South Africans are going in first, and I fancy they'll hold their own for a bit. But mind, we expect the hat-trick again from you, though I don't suppose you will do it twice in one innings again, as you did against Yorkshire."

The young bowler smiled.

"I'll do my level best, Lovell. I want to see you too to-day."

And they went to their respective positions.

Harding, the new Loamshire skipper, was an amateur, and he had once seen play with Geoffrey Ladden and his set. He was a plain, quiet, sensible man, a good cricketer, and a look and a bowler. He was not a batsman, but he did not care two pence for any player's special claims, so long as the side got on. He was a good bowler, and he had been down to bowl the first over, and he intended Kit to bowl as many as he was capable of. There was no question of leaving the bowler's position, and it had been done by Popsonny in the match at Bradford.

Glady enough Kit Valance grasped the role and ran again ere the ball came in from, and eager to try conclusions with the men who had moved down Warner's team in South Africa, and had already made their mark in England, he had plenty of time to think.

He sent a couple of trials down to Tunstall, who was keeping wicket, and then Sherwell in one way, and then Kit for South Africa, and Kit prepared for business.

The first over was bowled from the pavilion end against the visitors, and it was a masterpiece. Kit Valance took up his position, and kept a straight bat, and played the first over with cool confidence.

"How are you testing him, and he found him equal to the test. The Africander skipper did not hit out, but contented himself with stopping; he balls, and he was covered by a man. Then Geoffrey Ladden went on to bowl against Schwarz.

Schwarz opened a well-known figure in Middlesex, and played up finely for South Africa against Ladden's bowling.

He stopped a couple of balls, as if to take the measure of the bowler, and he let himself go, and then he began to hit.

Away went the leather, past the reach of the batsman, and the South African's point and cover-point, and the South African's ball came in from the country, from the same hand of Arthur Lovell straight to the wicket-keeper.

Schwarz was back on the cross in time, and the ball was tossed again to the bowler, while the scorer started putting up the figures for South Africa.

South Africa had made a start, and they soon showed that it was only an earnest of what was to come.

Schwarz hit out twice again before the over came to its final end, and a 3, the last with the last ball of the over, so that when the field crossed he still had the bowling.

The captain of the visitors covered the fine start made for South Africa. Schwarz had taken 7 for his side, and it was a good beginning.

Then Schwarz?

"Bravo, Reggie."

And the South African batsman smiled as he heard his sister's cry.

The bowling was recommencing from the pavilion end now, and Kit Valance had the ball, and he was covered by a man. He was bowled by Ladden, trying to take the measure of the batsman. Now he was bowling with all the skill he could throw into it, and it was clear that his bowling was troubling Schwarz.

The old Middlesex player faced it pluckily, and he was covered by the covers.

He was bowled, and he was covered by a man. He was bowled, and he was covered by a man. He was bowled, and he was covered by a man.

Schwarz looked at his wrecked wicket, and Kit Valance took the umpire.

"How's that?"

"Out."

And the only possible verdict, and Schwarz carried his bat back to the pavilion, and Tancred came out to join Sherwell at the wickets.

The first instalment took Geoffrey Lovell distinguished bowler, and he was covered by a man. He was bowled, and he was covered by a man. He was bowled, and he was covered by a man.

Len Valance, Arthur's boom chum, has a twin brother named Len who is not a credit to his family. Ladden and his low interest in the South African match. It was for a time an open question as to who would captain Loamshire, for Blane was nothing like well enough to play for the county. The selection finally fell upon Harding.

Harding was a quiet fellow, a very steady batsman of the county, and he was covered by a man. He was bowled, and he was covered by a man. He was bowled, and he was covered by a man.

A goodly crowd of Loamshire folk watched for them at the railway-station, and escorted them to their hotel in Lomechester on the evening of their arrival, and there was a cheer for the strangers from afar who had heard Leicestershire, Essex, and the M.C.C.

Strangers, indeed, all of them were not, for of the fifteen South Africans nine have been in England before, and such names as Hathorn, Tancred, and Schwarz were not strange to English ears, and Vogler, as all the world knows, on the ground staff at Lord's last year.

Strangers, or old acquaintances, they were equally welcome to the cricket-lovers, and speculation ran high as to whether they would succeed in beating Loamshire, or whether the home team would inflict upon them their first defeat.

Monday morning was bright and dry, and the ground was in the best of condition. The two grounds were eager to see the opening of the three days' struggle between the county and the good fellows from the far-off colony.

The list of players on the visiting side was eagerly scanned. The team was the same as that played in the first match at Lord's, with the exception of Kotze taking the place of D. Snook. The names read off: Sierwell, Tancred, Vogler, Hathorn, Nourse, Kotze, Faulker, and Schwarz.

It was a fine team, and capable of giving the Loamshire men their hardest fight so far of the season.

The first day was one or two changes in the Loamshire team. Chichester and Maynard, who had made so poor a show against Yorks in the previous match, were dropped, and two reserves taking their places.

The pavilion enclosure was as full as the six-story green in the first day was crowded. Colonel Hilton was there, and so was Molly. Pone Blane was a great deal better now, but he was unable to get down to the ground to see the match, much as he would have liked to do so.

Gay was the scene in the bright June morning. The ground was crowded with straw hats and the bright headgear of the gentler sex, for many of the Loamshire cricket-lovers had

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Geoffrey Ladgen bowled again against the South African captain. He could not succeed in touching his wicket. Sherwell piled on 10 for 6, and the South African score was now 17 for one.

Then Kit Valance went on to bowl against the South African skipper. Colonel Hilton leaned forward a little in his seat in the pavilion, watching with all his eyes. "I like Sherwell," said the old county cricketer remarked. "But I fancy he will not stand up long against Valance's bowling."

Molly nodded her flaxen head. "I don't know but that," laughed the colonial. "I hope not, certainly; but even if he is not very good, he will give you splendid performance at Bradford last week, against such batsmen as Yorkshire put into the field, I should not be surprised at anything."

The Springbok skipper stopped the first ball, and then ran a 2, and then another 2, right over the boundary. The crowd cheered as the ball was thrown back by a spectator and returned to the bowler. The fifth ball gave Sherwell 2. Down came the last ball of the over, a tempting slow one, that Sherwell well succeeded in hitting out at. He did it, as he repeated it.

For there was a peculiar twist on that ball that only Kit Valance could give it, and he gave it a strong curve. Wickets, and broke in true for the middle stump.

Clack! Sherwell looked round in dismay. His middle stump was out of the ground, and his wicket looked toothless and forlorn.

"How's that?" roared Loamshire with one voice. "I swanned and returned the drive right over the boundary."

"The crowd cheered as the ball was thrown back by a spectator and returned to the bowler. The fifth ball gave Sherwell 2. Down came the last ball of the over, a tempting slow one, that Sherwell well succeeded in hitting out at. He did it, as he repeated it."

"Yes; I thought you would find him so," he replied. And we are going to give you as well as time as you can get. "We are ready for it," said the South African skipper, laughing.

And he went to the pavilion, and warned White to come on next, to look out for a slow ball with a very Dickens of a twist on it, if he had to face Kit Valance's bowling.

"We are ready for it," said the South African skipper, laughing. And he went to the pavilion, and warned White to come on next, to look out for a slow ball with a very Dickens of a twist on it, if he had to face Kit Valance's bowling.

Arthur was a good change bowler, and he went on to do his best in the next five minutes. He kept the Afriender busy, but he was not able to touch his wicket; but as the over gave the visitors only 2, Arthur did very well at the wickets, the innings went on undisturbed for some time, the runs going up slowly but steadily.

South Africa were at 50 when the ball came down to White which he had promised to look out for when Sherwell warned him in the Pavilion.

He was certainly looking out for it, but that did not help him much, for the ball curved in, and he was the guest of the middle stump out of the ground in a twinkling.

"One!" he nodded, and carried his bat out for 20. The South African figures now read—50 for three. Just man 20.

Hathorn came in to join Tancred, and was dismissed at point by a fine catch by Geoffrey Ladgen. And now Tancred's time was coming. Ladgen bowled the next over, and Kit Valance finished at mid-wicket. Twice the South African batsman scored a boundary, and at the third ball he thought to do his best.

The ball came straight as a die, and Kit, who was at mid-on, made a leap for it like a kangaroo, and caught it with one hand.

There was a ringing cheer round the rails. "Bravo, Valance! Well caught!"

"Nurse would have been in his place. His place was taken by Nurse, and Nurse proved a regular pillar to his side, keeping up his wicket against his bowling of Kit Valance. Tweedie, Ladgen, and Watson were the batsmen.

When Nurse's individual score reached 50, interest redoubled round the match ground. He was the highest score yet made, and as Hathorn had not been idle in the meantime, the South African score had gone up to a high figure.

With 120 for four wickets, South Africa was doing well, but just before lunch Hathorn was clean bowled by Tweedie, so that at the interval the figures were—120 for five.

After lunch South Africa resumed batting in fine form. The score was at 130 when Nurse was out for his last over, and he was left the field with a total of 58 to his credit.

It was pretty certain that it would not be a "centuries" match, and that the score was likely to be a big one.

But now Kit Valance showed a little of his splendid quality as a bowler. Kotze was at the wickets with Faulkner, and Kotze had put on 10 runs, increasing the South African score to 150 when he was out. He was out straight for his middle stump, and whipped it out of the ground. Vogler, the old Lord's man, and one of the best in the county, was out, and Kit Valance and Vogler kept their ends up well, and the score slowly but surely crept up, while

for a long time the bowlers laboured in vain to displace them. Faulkner was out at last, L.H.w., and Sinclair joined Vogler. The afternoon was wearing away, and the sun sinking in the West, over the wide green fields and woods of Loamshire.

On the cricket ground the game was watched with keen interest. It began to look as if the South African's innings would last over to the second day of the match. The Loamshire men were determined that it should not if they could help it.

"Don't let it last over to-morrow, Valance," said Harding, with a smile. "And Kit nodded. He meant to do his best to dismiss the visitors before stumps were drawn for the close of the day's play."

But against the obstinate defence of Vogler his splendid bowling failed for the time. The over proved a maiden, but it left the Afrienders still in possession of the wickets. Then an over from Geoffrey Ladgen gave them 8, and when the ball was given to Kit again, there remained three minutes before Fair Time stopped in.

"One hundred and ninety-eight for nine!" Kit's eye caught Arthur Lovell's for a moment. Then he threw all his know into the bowling. The ball was cut away by Vogler, and he was out before it came in.

Kit bowled the next ball to Sibley Snook. "Sib" hit out at it, a tremendous drive that

was worth a hundred and eighty for nine!"

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he found that he had all his work out to keep up hisumps against the goodies. Arthur Lovell's caution in playing Schwarz's bowling, but he now found that caution was very necessary.

He drew a breath of relief when the over finished and his stumps were still intact. He had never faced any bowler exactly like Reggie Schwarz before, and he wanted time to get his own.

And now Arthur Lovell was beginning to score. An over from Kotze gave him 11, and he drew a breath of relief when the field crossed and Schwarz recommenced at the other end.

One of two, three slow balls, which gave Arthur in turn a 2, a 4, and another 2. Then a puzzling googly—and there was a shout of surprise from the crowd.

Clack! Arthur Lovell's grip tightened on the cane handle of his bat, and he looked down at his wicket.

One of the stumps was reclining at an inebriated-looking angle, and the balls were in the hands of the batsmen.

Arthur Lovell had been clean bowled by Reggie Schwarz!

"How's that, umpire?"

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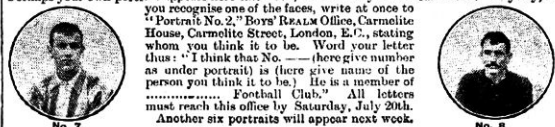
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OUR NEW COMPETITION.

WHO IS IT?

That's all we want to know.

Below are the portraits of six enthusiastic footballing readers of THE BOYS' REALM. Do you know them? To the reader who identifies any one of them, and whose letter is the first correct opened, a prize of five shillings will be awarded. There are no other conditions. Perhaps your own portrait appears here this week, or that of your bosom friend. Anyway, if



Another six portraits will appear next week.



sent the ball right away towards the long-field like a bullet.

"Another boundary," muttered Colonel Hilton, gnawing his moustache. "And no time to bowl another ball. The South Africans will get to-morrow."

Molly clapped her little hands excitedly. "It's not a boundary! Look at Arthur Lovell!"

Lovell was in the long-field, and he was after that whizzing ball like a shot.

"Oh! well! he's a grand ending." But what had he no chance? He was running like a C. B. Fry in his best form. Now he was backing-backing away under the ball, closer and closer to the boundary. Was it a catch? No! the ball would not fall within his reach!

"Back, back—his hand in the air, his shoulders against his eyes fixed on the round, dark object that was swooping down! Beyond his reach—no—a thousand times no! He must not see his own stick and a kiss— and then a tremendous roar."

"Caught!"

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"Caught!"

too, the over ended without a single run being scored.

Geoffrey Ladgen, looking from the pavilion while he waited for his turn, sneered. "Sibley Snook to take the next over, and Tunstall scored four off his bowling, and then a single, which brought Lovell opposite to the wicket."

Schwarz was bowling against Lovell again, and Lovell was stopping ball after ball without venturing to hit out.

"It's no good taking risks at first with a bowler like Reggie Schwarz at the other end," said Tunstall, as he shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, Lovell certainly does not seem inclined to take risks!"

The over ended, and it was another maiden. Sibley Snook to take the next over, and Tunstall scored four off his bowling, and then a single, which brought Lovell opposite to the wicket."

Lovell received two balls from Sibley Snook, and each of them he cut away over the boundary, showing that he was getting into form.

Fortescue grinned at Geoffrey Ladgen. "What price that, Ladgen? What about the rest care now?"

"I'll not bet," said Ladgen. "I've never seen Reggie Schwarz before."

"I give him one minute!"

"Next man in, Ladgen," said Harding, the new Loamshire skipper, looking at him. Ladgen nodded.

"I've never played anything quite like that before!"

"I'll look out," said Ladgen. He spoke carelessly enough; but when he arrived at the wicket and faced the bowling,

Clean Bowled!
"AN IN!" said Sherwell, the South African skipper, when he tossed the ball to Reggie Schwarz.
It was the second day of the match on the Loamesthorne ground, Loamshire v. South Africans. The first day had been wholly

Look Out for a New Slatton School Story Shortly.

KING CRICKET.

(Continued from the previous page.)

gallantly, and stealing a run here and there. His partner might have done the same, and prolonged the life of the innings over lunch, at least; but the South Africans were too ambitious.

He began to score, and 10 rewarded his efforts; and then he hit out to a tempting slow ball from Schwarz, and landed the leather right into the hands of Vogler.

"How's that?" shouted the old player of Lords, holding up the ball.

"Out!" Wealthworth was indubitably out. The Loamshire innings was over for 127; Kit Valance not out.

The morning had sufficed for the merry men from South Africa to finish off the home innings; the South Africans were now about the visitors in high spirits. The home team were not quite so cheerful. It was pretty plain that the South Africans were aware of the strength of an ordinary county side, and that Loamshire would have a hard fight to hold their own.

The South Africans go ahead.

WEALTHWORTH was going down here again. Kit Valance asked the question abruptly, with a dark shade coming over his face. The ball had been brought to the young bowler in the pavilion, towards the end of the lunch interval, and he had gone out to meet his scapegrace brother in a room at the corner of the ground. He was annoyed to see Len again, and did not pretend to be otherwise.

"Why do you want?" he went on. "Why do you keep on coming here? You've done enough mischief already, I should think. You've ruined my dinner, and now you're here."

"I want to see Lovell," he explained. "I sent the note to you, because I want you to arrange it. That's all I'm asking of you this time, Kit."

"You can't see him," said Kit curtly. "Why not?"

"Because he has already refused to meet you, and he's not the fellow to change his mind without good reason."

"I don't see how the reason good enough, when a fortune hangs upon it," said Len Valance. "I tell you I can help him to regain the fortune James Langley robbed his father of. I tell you I can make him a rich man."

"Yes, by spying on your employer and then selling his secrets," said Kit disdainfully. "I warned you that Lovell wouldn't have anything to do with it. And he won't! He has already refused to see you, Len, and it's no good your trying again."

"I have gained some more information since I told you that," said Len. "What was only suspicion before is certainty now."

"It makes no difference. Lovell will not have a hand in any kind of dirty work. And that's your own doing, in plain English."

"You have to meet a rebel with his own wits," said Len. "I don't ask Lovell to do anything risky. And there's a fortune at stake."

"And to come to the point, I suppose you mean to get the work with, or something of that kind?" exclaimed the young cricketer impatiently.

"Is that it?" "Well, I think a fortune is worth a few pounds, isn't it?" said Len sulkily.

"Yes," thought you were coming out, that," said Kit. "Well, Lovell is as poor as I am, and he has no money to advance if he wanted to—and he's a chasn."

"He could borrow it of Colonel Hilton." "Oh, dry up," you make me tired, James Langley robbed his tell you Lovell refuses to have a hand in anything of the kind, and he refuses to meet or speak to you."

affair at Taunton. You and your rascally friend might as well nearly lost Loamshire an important match. He has overlooked it, because you're my brother, and he's my friend, but it won't be safe for you to meet him. He's said that he doesn't want to see you. If you force yourself upon him, I won't be answerable for the consequences."

"And what are the consequences likely to be?" asked Len, with a sneer. "Anything very terrible, because I will give you a hiding, as you deserve," said Kit bluntly. "Now, take warning by that, and don't be a fool."

"In all probability he will give you a hiding, as you deserve," said Kit bluntly. "Now, take warning by that, and don't be a fool."

"He might find Jack as good as his master, if he tried that game," he said, with sulkiness. "It would be useless."

"Then you won't speak to him?" "Will you, or won't you?"

"Well, I won't, if you want it plainly," said Kit, and he turned and walked away towards the pavilion, where the Loamshire men were preparing to take the field.

Len looked after him, with a glint in his eye, and a faint expression upon his face.

"He won't help me!" he muttered. "But I will see Lovell! I can meet him when he leaves the ground, at all events. Kit can't prevent me."

And having come to that decision, the dingy scapegrace munged with the crowd that was already circulating round the railings to watch the commencement of the South Africans' second innings.

Kit re-entered the pavilion with a clouded brow. He knew his brother's obstinate nature, and he feared that Len would make attempts to speak to Arthur Lovell, and induce him to enter the scheme he had planned.

Lovell, for Kit's sake, had exercised great self-control in dealing with the scapegrace; but if his patience was tried too far, it might fail him. Only ill could come of a meeting forced between the two; and Kit could not help thinking that Len meant to force one.

Lovell glanced at Kit curiously, as the young bowler came into the professional's room in the pavilion.

"Anything wrong, Kit old fellow?" "No!" said Kit, making an effort to speak earnestly. "I'm all right. Do you know who goes in first for the Springboks?"

"Sherwell and Vogler, I believe. You will be wanted to bowl."

"Yes, yes," said Tweedie, the Scottish professional of the Loamshire team. "You are the only bowler they are nervous about, Valance. I heard Sherwell himself say so. Complimentary to me, too."

Kit laughed. "Well, I suppose I shall give them something to be nervous about," he remarked. "They are a splendid team; a fine, all-round set of cricketers. I fancy they will walk over most of our county sides, and it will be a feather in Loamshire's cap if we beat them."

The crowd buzzed with interest as Harington, the Loamshire skipper, led his men out to the field, arrayed in white, with the blue Loamshire caps. Sherwell, the South African skipper, opened the second innings for his side with Vogler, the old groundsman from Lord's.

Kit was put on to bowl the first over. The meeting with his scapegrace brother had somewhat disturbed Valance, and he felt from

worry on his mind, he was some time in settling down to his usual form as a bowler. His bowling had lost some of its sting, and the South African captain, who received the first over, knocked the ball all over the field.

Tweedie changed the bowling, without much success against the batsmen from the velvet. Geoffrey Langdon and Arthur Lovell, in turn tried their hand, and still the batsmen remained immovable at the wicket. Kit had bowled two overs, and still the wickets had remained unscathed.

Meanwhile the South Africans were scoring. By two's, and three's, and four's, the score was mounting up, and the telegraph-board showed 50; and the batsmen seemed as fresh as ever.

It was evident that Sherwell and his comrades of the willow were in fine form, and many of the South African side were walking about the ground, or resting under the trees, and waiting a long wait before they were called upon, if they were wanted that day at all.

"They are getting set, now," Geoffrey Langdon remarked in an undertone to Harington, as the field crossed over. "How long is this going to last?"

Sherwell tossed the ball to Kit Valance. "Do your best, Valance," he said.

Kit nodded. He went on, determined to back up his own bowler, and to get rid of Sherwell, and he threw all he knew into the net over a 2, and a 4, and three—clack! There was a shout of delight from the crowd.

"Bowled!" "Well bowled!"

Sherwell's wicket was a wreck. The deadly batsman had been dismissed at last, and Loamshire looked up again. For now that Kit Valance had his hand in, as it were, showed that he had not lost his old power with the leather.

His very next ball clean lashed Hordern, who came on in place of Sherwell, and again the Loamshire crowd shouted and cheered.

"Bravo, Valance!" "Give us the hat-trick!"

Kit smiled. He meant to make it the hat-trick if he could, but when he saw Schwarz come out to the vacated wicket he had little hope of it. And he was right.

The next ball did not take a wicket, but was out over the boundary for 4, and from that Reggie Schwarz began to score.

When the figure reached 100 South Africa were still only two down. With the score at 110 Vogler was caught out by the stumps by Tweedie from a ball bowled by Arthur Lovell. His place was taken by Nourse.

And the runs mounted up, Nourse and Schwarz backing each other up splendidly, and making the runs with tireless rapidity.

The score was at 140 when Nourse was tempted to hit out at a tempting ball from Kit Valance, which curled under his bat and knocked his wicket into a wreck.

Nourse went back to the pavilion, and Sinclair passed him coming out. Sinclair stood the bowling well, and sent the last ball of the over into the long-field with a terrific swipe, and the batsmen ran, and ran, and ran.

Arthur Lovell, who was sliding down in the long-field, dashed after the ball, and his hand closed upon it.

His eye went back in a flash to the pitch. Schwarz was almost home, but Sinclair still wanted a yard or more to the crease from the outstretched end of his bat.

The ball flew from Arthur's hand like a bullet in the same second, as it seemed, that he recovered it. Not to the wicket-keeper.

Straight at the batsman's wicket it went—a tremendous throw—from the country—but it was successful.

There was a crash of the ball on the stumps, and the batsman recoiled to pieces, and then the bat of the Africander clumped on the crease. The crowd yelled joyously.

"Out!" said the umpire. It had been a narrow miss for Sinclair, but the injury was as bad as a mile in his case. He had no more to do but to accept the umpire's decision, and walked away with his bat under his arm, and Sibley Snooks came out to join Schwarz.

The new batsman from the Africanders was now 155 for five wickets. The golden June afternoon was wearing away, and the rains round the metropolis and the Loamshire were beginning to cast long shadows.

Still, the batting went merrily on. And now at last Schwarz's fate was upon him. A baffling googly, very good imitation of his own ball which had brought down Arthur Lovell's wicket in the Loamshire innings, came down from the hands of the Africander. Schwarz missed it, and down came his bats.

"Out!" "Well done, Schwarz!"

"Bravo, Reggie!"

And the batsman from South Africa slightly raised his cap as he walked to the pavilion in acknowledgement of the plaudits of the crowd.

Six down for 136. Last man 90! Four more wickets to fall, and the remaining five batsmen were Kotze, White, Tattersell, Sibley, Snooks.

It was Tattersell who now came in to join Sibley Snooks at the wickets. Both of them were very good imitations of the bowler, knocking it into every quarter of the field, and running up the score right merrily.

Kit Valance had been heavily taxed since the afternoon, and his bowler's part had fallen upon him, and his bowling was losing its sting now. Harding observed it, and champed his teeth. He felt that the South African bowlers seemed able to touch the wicket of either Tattersell or Sibley Snooks.

The score for the second South African innings was now greatly in excess of the first dinner with four wickets yet to fall. The Loamshire bowlers, such as they were, had borne the heat and burden of the afternoon, were to have a rest at last.

The light was growing paler, and the fixed hour for the drawing of the stumps put a period to the South African title of success. He had a very good innings, and he had borne the heat and burden of the afternoon, were to have a rest at last.

"That's zaved our bacon!" he remarked, as he joined Colonel Hilton in the pavilion, when the day's play had closed.

"By Jove, sir, the South African bowlers are a good deal for any county team to chew, and so instead of the Colonel nodded.

"Valance's bowling does not seem so dangerous as usual," he remarked. "I fancy you gave him a little too much towards the end of the day."

"I think so, too, sir; but he was our only man who could touch them. It will be different in the morning. Valance will be as fresh as a new daisy, and he will get a good share of the work of the wickets left over from today."

"I hope so. South Africa are already quite a good deal ahead, rewarded the Colonel; and I didn't like the idea of playing for a draw. Unfinished matches are always unsatisfactory, to my mind."

Meanwhile Arthur Lovell and his chum were exchanging comments as they changed their clothes in their quarters.

"What do you think of our chance of beating the Springboks, Kit?" Arthur asked, as he speared over his heated face.

"Fair," replied Kit reflectively. "It will be touch and go to-morrow. I think, and it would take a wizard to tell how the match will end."

"That's what I was thinking. If we don't take their wickets pretty early, Sherwell is pretty certain to declare during the next day, so as to have a chance of finishing the match; but I think you'll take them, Kit."

"I shall try."

When they left the pavilion the two chums separated. Kit had found an old acquaintance in one of the South African players, and he went to speak to him before he left the ground. Arthur Lovell quitted the ground alone, feeling that he was dying sunset, so that Kit would overtake him.

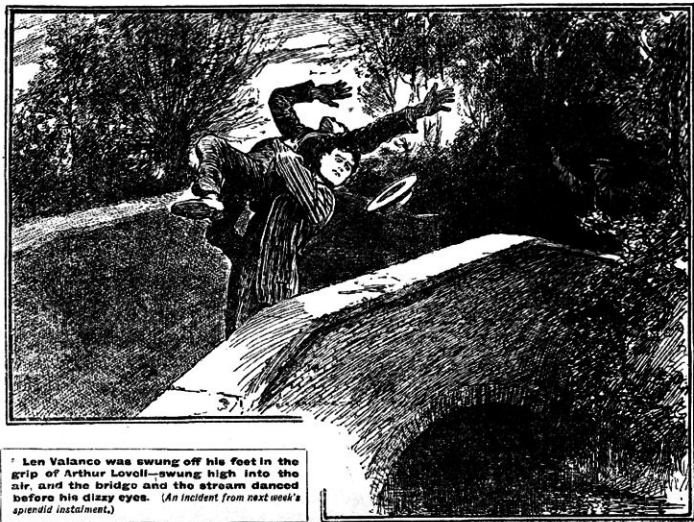
He stopped at a little rustic bridge in the lane, where the road crossed a little stream, and stood there leaning on the low wall parapet, expecting that Kit would soon come along. He looked up at the sound of a step. Then a dark form crossed the path.

It was not Kit; but from the likeness of the new-comer to Kit Valance, Arthur knew at once whom it was. He knew again the mocking face, the unsteady eyes, the generous, the daring blackguardism which marked Kit's scapegrace brother Len.

Valance went to speak to you, Lovell," said Len.

And he stepped on the little bridge beside the young cricketer, resting his hand on the low parapet, facing Arthur Lovell, unconscious or heedless of the anger gathering in Arthur's face.

(Another absorbing, long instalment of this splendid story of County Cricket will appear in next week's BOYS' REALM.)



Len Valance was swung off his feet in the grip of Arthur Lovell—swung high into the air, and the bridge and the stream danced in his dizzy eyes. (An incident from next week's splendid instalment.)



A STARRING STORY OF CRICKET BY JACK NORTH.

THE 1st CHAPTER. A Double Bot-back for Beaumont.

IT HAD been a deep hush in the great hall of Westlands School as the headmaster ascended his rostrum and settled his gold-rimmed glasses upon his high aquiline nose.

It had been eagerly expected for the last week or more, and the suspense had put steel more strain upon the relations between two of the fellows in the Sixth, already strained almost to snapping point.

Well, that was the school's acknowledged leader, alike in class and in the playing field. Between them was supposed to be the Vallens Scholarship.

But they were the school's acknowledged leaders, alike in class and in the playing field. Between them was supposed to be the Vallens Scholarship.

"I have this morning to make an announcement that I believe to be eagerly anticipated," began the Rev. Jasper Maule, fluttering the paper in his hand as he spoke.

"What's the old donkey think he's doing with all that dictionary talk?" whispered Rutley to Beaumont.

Rutley was chronically impatient. He was the cleverest of the Westlands team, and it was said of him that he had never been known to sit at home to three successive balls from a slow bowler.

"Speak generally, the result of the examination has qualified—may I say—two boys for the scholarship. I repeat that I will not long lose you in suspense.

"You are all naturally anxious to know who won the scholarship. I repeat that I will not long lose you in suspense. The maximum of marks obtainable was 1,200. One boy scored 1,157, and takes the first place.

"Rutley," said Mr. Maule sharply, "are you unwell?" "Yes, sir—I mean no, sir—it was only—"

"Please be good enough not to interrupt me again. As I am about to say, the winner of the scholarship, the boy who scored over 95 per cent. of the maximum number of marks is—"

It was out at last! Vin Beaumont was beaten then! His face went red and then pale. He looked resolutely turned away from his successful rival while the others rose so loudly and strongly that it seemed as though they would lift the roof of the hall.

The cheering rose again, but in smaller volume. Vin Beaumont was hardly the popular character that he had been when the form began.

"Third, Frederick Hazell Rutley; fourth, John Severn; fifth, Thomas Gordon Wild; sixth, Stephen Cranford. All of these have done well, and I tender them my congratulations on the manner in which they have acquitted themselves. The remaining two—Herbert Tylor and Oswald Peter Churchward—have, I must confess, disappointed me.

"I have another announcement to make," went on the headmaster; and this, too, is an important one—in its way, almost as important as the scholarship result. It is within the knowledge of most of you that for some few seasons past we have sent a challenge to Mallhurst College to meet us on the cricket-field.

"By this post I have received from him a most kind and complimentary letter. He writes as follows: 'I am glad to hear of the decline of our school on the ground—as inadequate one, to my mind—has our school is not a public school.

"No, sir," he said, almost before he had time to put to run his eyes over the short note; "they'll play us! And they want to play on the county ground, if we'll agree. They have settled it all with this county committee.

"I don't know what you mean by that. I see, sir, this is grand news, isn't it? Nothing was more evident than that Mr. Maule was as pleased as the boys.

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"That also seems good to me. Boys, I do not think that any of us would find it easy to work today, after such exciting news as the result of the scholarship, examination and the arrangement of this match. I give you a whole day's holiday. Demure!

"Isn't it glorious, old man?" cried Rutley, slapping Beaumont on the back. "He's almost cursed with an angry look. You hardly expect me to feel so enthusiastic about 'em beaten, I should think?"

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good of a scene of this sort?" groaned Rutley. "Jim Ellison came back slowly. He had no wish to be on ill terms with Beaumont. They had been good enough friends once, though never close enough to admit tamely to insult.

"You're a confounded liar, then, if you want it again!" "There was a hush in the crowd around, broken by the smack of Jim's open hand upon Beaumont's face.

"You'll be sure, Fred?" asked Beaumont, of Rutley. "Yes, but I don't like this a bit, old man! What did you insult him for? Ellison's a rare good chap. I love a fight in a general way; but I hate the notion of you two squaring."

"The light will come off, whether you second me or not." "I'm in pain! But I believe you've taken on something a bit too big for you, Vin. Ellison's been having lessons in boxing for months past; and he's no odd smart with his fist."

"Boxin' ain't quite the same thing as fightin'!" "Well, I can't see much difference, if a chap's got his heart in the right place. It was right, as was very soon made evident. From that time Beaumont's luck, but accidents, was just nil. He fought pluckily, but without any science, weak speaking of.

"The chance came pretty early in the third round. There was no spunk of cruelty in Jim Ellison's nature. His reason for dallying was a very different one. He wished so much to mark or hurt his rival more than was absolutely necessary; and so he waited his chance to deal a blow that should be a permanent one."

"I'm afraid he'll be lookin' round for a chance to get even with Jim. An' when you're feelin' ugly, Tyler ain't the best chum you can be marchin' round with."

"What's he taken up with Tyler again?" "That's a bad sign. He's like Harry Carey's chickens, that outsider—he spells a-o-r-n!"

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THE LAST INNINGS

(Continued from the previous page.)

run out to the hundredth part of a run—that's about seven inches, near as I can make it. What's Jim's game?

Total, 540, innings, fifteen; no out; average, 22.56. That makes them so close that if they have only one innings each in the last match, an 'Jim scores 20 to Beaumont's 22' is a fair bet, though I should do if I were you, Vin!

"An' 'Severn Vin scored 23'?"

"Severn worked it out quickly. 'Then he'd be talked by just that hundredth or two we were talking about!'

"'Jigger' decimals, anyway! 'What about the bowlin'?"

"'Jim's taken one wicket more, but he's about a tenth of a run behind on the average."

"Well, if I were in your place I'd put Rutley on instead of that cad Ellison. Rutley bowled jolly well in the practice game on Saturday, an' Ellison didn't even trouble to turn out."

"You know as well as I do that he couldn't hold it. If he had been there I guess old Froop's analysis would have been a bit spoiled."

"Well, if I were in your place I'd put Rutley on first, anyway; an' I'd go on at the other end myself, an' bowl like a demon!"

"I'm not a bit, think I can see you bowlin' like a demon!"

Tyler scowled. He was in the eleven, and couldn't clearly see the occasional effort of a bowler were more of the most futile description.

"You might try it, anyway."

"What in 'twould you do about the battin'?"

"Put him on 'er instead of No. 3."

"But the other fellows would have something to say about that!"

"You can easily hatch up a tale good enough for them. Say you wanted a good man to strengthen the tail."

"The fishy suggestions, Bert—no quito in my line, I think."

"Oh, well, let that lot carry off both the prizes. 'He beat you for the scholarship. He beat you in 'twould die aforeward. It won't hurt you to suffer a couple more defeats at his hands. I don't care, anyway!"

Beaumont did not reply; but the cunning, unscrupulous suggestion of the other fellow lingered in his mind. The cricket captain cared at least as much about the winning of the prizes as he did about pulling the match, and preserving the school's unbeaten record for the season.

Did he care more? That was a question he could hardly have answered himself. The match would show, perhaps. And meanwhile the poison that Tyler had instilled into his mind was working.

THE 3rd CHAPTER.

The Match.

THE great day had come; and the county ground at Halescote was filling rapidly. In an ordinary way, a match between two schools would hardly draw a big gate. Eton v. Harrow at Lord's is the exception which proves the rule; and even that is more of a society function than a match.

But there were special circumstances which helped to attract a crowd in this particular case. The school boys were having a brilliantly successful season; and throughout the shire, cricket enthusiasm was at white heat. That these two schools had never met before, and both were entering the lists as undefeated teams. Last, and perhaps most potent reason for the attendance, was the fact that free show, no gate-money was being charged!

"Don't you feel nervous about playin' before a crowd like this, Jim?" asked Jack Severn, as the Ellison at the end of the pavilion and watched the people streaming in.

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"Oh, I don't know. Not very, I think. What about yourself?"

"That's a different thing. I haven't the responsibility you have. Practically the fate of the match, from your point of view, depends on what you do."

"Don't you believe it, Johnny! It may all hang on your stone-walling tactics yet."

"I lost 'em," said Severn. "You've won the last look at the 'legger's face—an' at Cranston's. You couldn't make any mistake about it could you?"

"You had just tossed for choice of innings, and the Westlands man had called correctly."

"Oh, yes, we'll bat first!" they heard him say; "then he ran up the steps into the pavilion, and sat down to write out the batting-list."

"Severn, Beaumont," he began, and then stopped, the pen poised in his hand. Should he do as Tyler had counselled, or should he not?—At a moment he hesitated, then scrawled "Ellison," and followed with "Barr, Cranfield, Rutley, Churchward, Wild, Tyler, Browne, Delling."

"For the moment, at least, he had conquered temptation. Jim was to go in first wicket down, his usual place."

But he did not open astutely. Severn got one too good for him in Cranston's second over, and retired for 4. The next ball he was out, as usual, by a well-played 33. Barr retired after one ball only; but Cranfield settled down to play. He was not quite at his best. When he had scored 33, however, a marvellous catch in the slips sent him back.

He was busy with pencil and paper directly. When he had finished his calculation he put both away and said nothing to anyone, and then returned to the field in ten minutes by a liberal use of the long handle.

"Well, how do they stand now?" he asked, seating himself by Severn's side.

"Go to go to the third place of decimals to calculate the difference between them!"

"That's ahead them!"

"Beaumont."

"When? Well, I hope one or other of 'em will put both ahead them!"

"The innings are Cranfield and Churchward being the only others to reach double figures. This was hardly the sort of total that the Westlands boys were accustomed to, but then the Mallhurst bowling and fielding was of the best."

Would theirs prove as good? Matters looked hardly so bright as he seemed to think. In half-past one, seven of the Mallhurst bowlers had fallen in 95. Cranston and Doubleday each having contributed about 40. But after lunch the tide turned. Tyler occupied the seat next to him and was continually whispering suggestions, until Rutley sat on him heavily for his breach of decent manners—Beaumont took off Ellison, who had taken five of the seven wickets, and put on Wild.

And he did not wait long; but the captain secured the three that were outstanding, and came out with a bowling analysis not far from as follows:

"They wouldn't have got as many if he'd kept Ellison on," said Barr to Severn and Rutley. "It was a big mistake taking him off, to my mind."

The other two looked at one another. Neither quite believed that it had been an error of judgment.

"But it's brought him behind Jim in the bowlin'," said Severn, when Barr had moved away. "His five wickets cost 65, Jim's only 50."

"Yes. But if Ellison had been kept on it might not have been five all, you see. He's a little more disgrusted with his chum. He felt still more so when he walked up to scan the order of going-in list for the second innings."

"Severn, Beaumont, Cranfield, Rutley, Churchward—Why, where was Jim's name?"

"There it was—at No. 7! Honest Fred Rutley went hot-foot to find his captain and chum."

"I want a word with you, Jim."

"I've a word with you, Jim. And Fred was looking up from the pad he was buckling, but not meeting Fred's eyes fairly and squarely."

"You don't mean 'em, then, as you wouldn't like that!"

"What on earth are you gettin' your rag out about?"

"I give you know! Anyway, if you'll come behind the pavilion, I'll tell you."

Beaumont came, very unwillingly.

"Now that that made you shift Jim Ellison down to No. 7?"

"An I captain or are you?"

THE 4th CHAPTER.

The Last Innings.

BARR had batted very chakily at the outset; Rutley's attack and his own conscience were troubling him, but after being missed off an easy catch at point—the ball was in the air, but he thus far—he pulled himself together and settled down to read good cricket.

For the Mallhurst bowling was deadly, and their fielding, bar that one bad miss of Doubleday's at point, was equally good. The wicket-keeper, Churchward, and Tyler left, put a man among them having reached double figures. The bowler, on the other hand, took a new ball, and was bowled first ball, and tried hard to persuade himself that he was glad of it; and Churchward was run out through a splendid conversion, Ashton, from the very farthest corner of the ground.

Ellison joined his captain, whose score now stood at 45, while the total was only 53. Beaumont had hardly counted on this. When he had put Jim's name down for No. 7 he had never thought but that his own innings would have finished before his rival came in. It upset him to have the fellow he had treated unfairly opposite to him. He had only scored three runs, but he had a good innings to his account, when he played forward at the ball from Castlemole, which broke in from the off, and he had a good innings to his account.

Six wickets were down for 56, and Westlands' chance of winning the game had grown very small. The captain, on the other hand, to mid-off, and retired with a round 'un against his name, they looked smaller. But now Wild came in, and backed Jim up gallantly. Long before the end of the innings, the photograph-board moved merrily. Wild was getting most of the bowling, and was making a splendid conversion, Ashton, who had batted so well before during the whole season; but then, he was just the right type of fellow for the occasion, and he was taking wickets in after days into leaders of forlorn hopes.

How the cheering rolled when the hundred out, and the stiller roll when he was unpaired. It was now only the Westlands who were cheering. A very considerable section of the crowd had grown keen on seeing "the little fellow" get his innings out, and he had averaged all through, were a couple of years older, and somewhere near a couple of stone heavier, he would have been a star.

But at 108 Wild had to go. Of the 52 put on he had scored no fewer than 37; and the crowd roared to him as he ran back, flushed and bright.

The two fellows left were distinct tail-enders; and Jim Ellison did all that he could for them. He was not a batsman, but he often while he had it. But Browne only stayed five minutes; and Delling, after seeing Jim hit the top of his innings, and just under a second ball sent down to him. The total was 140, and Jim took out his bat for a hard-hit, chanceless 40.

Might have been a hundred more, if he'd only gone in in his right place," groaned Wild.

"Well, you've won the lastting prize, old man! Did you see that?"

"I suppose so," replied the captain. He was feeling a bit sick with himself.

"Well, you do make that out, Tyler?" asked Severn.

"Why, you said yourself that there wasn't a tenth of a run between them after the last ball. You were at 48 and Ellison only 40, so Vin must be ahead!"

"You've forgotten that Jim was not out."

"That alters the matter entirely, and makes him 44 and Ellison only 40, and just under a half—two clear runs ahead!"

The captain's face flushed with shame and anger. He knew well enough that Severn was right, and he realized that he was hoist with his own petard. He had sent Jim in late, and so Jim had not had time to get a good innings, and he had a lot, not counting a no-out innin' in the divisor," said Tyler sulkily.

"So it is," agreed Severn equably. "Let's leave out the no-out innin' from the divisor, and you see. If one doesn't count 'em, the average is just under 38, and Jim's just on 42!"

"I've a word with you, Jim. And Fred was looking in for the bowlin'," whispered Tyler to him, as they went out to the field.

Mallhurst wanted only 150 for victory, and when he had made 150, he was not to be taken then. They were all well. He was then they used. Hope of a fine struggle grew higher, however, when Jim caught and bowled Cranston, of the Westlands, and then he had only scored 6, and still higher when, 20 runs later, Beaumont did the hat-trick, clean bowling Doubleday and Ashton, and getting a century's stump.

A little later the captain took off Jim and put on Wild. There seemed some excuse for it, for he had a good innings, and he was not to be taken then. He had been the best wicket on the side; and though he had not got another, he had looked better than any of the others. He was not to be taken then, and he was not to be taken then. He was not to be taken then, and he was not to be taken then.

Beaumont knew, and half the other fellows knew, that if the bowling prize had not been at stake the change would never have been made. Jim had made a mistake, but he was not to be taken then, and he was not to be taken then. He was not to be taken then, and he was not to be taken then.

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Beaumont went, pale and miserable-looking. He had made a mistake, and Fred was not to be taken then, and he was not to be taken then. He was not to be taken then, and he was not to be taken then.

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Beaumont knew, or thought he knew. He had no doubt—at any rate, he told himself there was no doubt—that Jim had made a mistake, and he was not to be taken then, and he was not to be taken then. He was not to be taken then, and he was not to be taken then.

Jim had been just about to say how sorry he was for the mistake, but he had not time to do so. He had no doubt—at any rate, he told himself there was no doubt—that Jim had made a mistake, and he was not to be taken then, and he was not to be taken then.

Again Wild had failed to take a wicket, and most of the ball had come from him, and Westlands' chance was slipping away. Walton and Lambidge were well set, and the score was close on 200, and the Westlands were out.

Beaumont looked round at the end of an over, and tossed the ball to Rutley. Ten minutes later an astonishing change had come over the side of the field. He had then had, had clean bowled three men, and got two more caught in the slips, and Mallhurst would have been out, and another over would have been needed. That meant that it was his last over. He sent down a ball breaking in from the leg.

Walton, fearing to let the tail-ender face Rutley's express again, hit out at it with all his force. It ran for him, but Jim Ellison had caught it at the stumps. He was not to be taken then, and he was not to be taken then.

"He'll never catch it! He'll just make a show of tryin' an' let it go," darted the quick, and he was not to be taken then, and he was not to be taken then. He was not to be taken then, and he was not to be taken then.

It was a pity that he could not have read Jim's mind. No least thought of bowling average or bowling prize was in it. Every faculty was concentrated on the winning of the match.

He meant to have that catch. It was no good to wait where he stood; the ball was rising too much. So he dashed out and jumped and grasped it, and held it, while the crowd shouted deliriously.

"Oh, well caught, sir!" yelled Beaumont, gushing all in his applause. "You've Wall caught, sir!" yelled the rest—all but sulky Tyler, who always hated Jim, though he scorned to show it.

Westlands had won the great match by one run! And Vincent Beaumont was utterly ashamed of himself and his meanness. Straight up to Jim he walked, and said:

"I've got to apologise to you, Ellison! I've played a mean game, and I've not been to the captain at all. I sent you in late, I kept you off bowlin', and now you've won the game for us with that splendid catch, when droppin' it would have given you the bowlin' prize."

"Would it?" said Jim simply. "Upon my honour, I didn't know that. But it wouldn't have made any difference. Don't say any more, old man. We've won, an' if you are willin' to be friends, I am!"

"You've got the bowlin' prize," said Beaumont, turning homeward way. Tyler looked up with a frown, and Severn, from his pocket-book, with a smile, and said: "That's just where you're off it, Tyler," he said.

"Who has, then? There ain't no! No question of a rotten not out here."

And I'm jolly well glad of it!" said Vincent Beaumont earnestly.

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(Continued from the previous page.)

usual, broke into a run, and on reaching Aberford made straight for Mr. Wynne Williams's house, since it was useless to go to his office at night.

The lawyer was an early riser, as they know, and they found him just about to make his coat at the gates, for the usual before-breakfast routine. The boys, however, were the boys obediently, and was glad to see them.

"On learning there was something important about the case, I'll be glad to see you to the stable, and asked them into the house."

"What we want to know, sir, is this," said Roddy, when they had entered the library. Can Kenyon Price stop the road to Bryn Y Garth?"

And he recounted what had happened the day before.

Mr. Williams smiled.

"Your bulldog will soon be quite famous hereabouts," he said. "See your great rival has the name of the red—oh! That's awkward."

"But isn't it a right of way, sir?"

"Certainly it is. There's no doubt about that, but it should be made much more traffic along it, but it's the way not only to your farm, but to the Pen Madog Moors beyond."

"I'm glad to hear of your good fortune, but what do you say, Mr. Price, may it be?"

"He can answer that best himself. I should think. Perhaps he thinks he's got a right."

"He'll be known jolly well to the road," murmured Tom.

"If he went to law with you, I dare say you would win. But that's not the way to proceed, and easily, too, even if you beat him."

"We don't mean to go to law, sir," said Roddy. "He's no right to stop the road, then."

"No right; but might may do it. He's got plenty of men, he can put up strong fences, and stop out the best of us. He'll be sure to do so. He's powerful, you know, and what do you say, Mr. Price, may it be?"

"There are two sides to that, sir," said Roddy. "We'll pull it out, and he'll be glad to see the police in an affair like that, my boy," said Mr. Williams; "they'd be glad to make a fine out of you."

"I see," said Roddy—at least, I suppose I do. Thank you, sir, very much! This is an awfully little thing to put you to the test of, and it won't be long now before we're able to pay it."

The lawyer laughed heartily.

"All we that bill off, my lads; don't you worry about it. You don't owe me anything."

"What's that?"

"That's the road news that Kenyon Price can't right the stop in the road. If he does, it'll be his money. The trouble is, nobody's much interested in the road but us. If he tried to stop one of the Aberford boys, he'd be there, there'd soon be a fuss. But nobody cares about the way to Bryn Y Garth."

"True enough, my lads," said Roddy. "Come on to our court now! Mornin', Terry!"

The boys received quite an ovation each morning when they rode to the mill, and had not by any means forgotten the affair of the Belgians.

"Hallo, my young shaft-jumper!" shouted Evan Howarth, one of the grudge hewers. "Was you had any more kick-ups in ter pit whastose?"

"If you does," said Jenkens, slapping Tom on the back, "we'll clear out any quantity of forencers for you, an' glad of the job."

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They hastened homewards, expecting to find fresh difficulties placed before them, and they were not disappointed. Half-way across the Old Meadow, they met the road, was a new fence of quite a different kind.

Instead of sheep-fencing, tall heavy posts, or piles, had been stepped deep in the ground, and across them were high with stout, log cross-bars. The cross-bars were wound and interlaced with barbed-wire, and the barrier was a most formidable one.

Roddy and Tom observed this from the bottom of the meadow. They did not go very close, for the fence was so high, and they whiskered stranger and the red-faced man caught sight of the boys simultaneously.

"Where's your dog, that red-faced man?" "There they are, the beauties!" said Roddy. "They've got the time."

"No; they seem to want to welcome us, too."

"That ain't so, an' as they've got the whole gang with 'em, we won't provoke hostilities, so to say."

"A scrap with that lot'd end in our gettin' smacked," said an Gripo auld' here!"

"All things considered," replied Roddy, "we'll skirr round 'em for once, an' see how they'll stand a one-day pluckin' the fruit till it's ripe! Come on!"

They turned and retraced their steps down the road, and crossed the barrier with a glad and for a few moments seemed inclined to give chase. But the young adventurers had a good reason for their change of mind.

"To reach Bryn Y Garth without going near there was a long job, for the way led over the stone, and the crossing called for water-courses, and very wet boots."

It was possible for foot-passengers, but the only road was a narrow one, and the water-courses travelled to Stave-Crow Farm was the one Kenyon Price's men were barricading. Hence they were rather late in reaching the cottage, but Dafydd was there, as usual, and had everything ready for them.

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having some silly objections about my pringing sheep here?"

"I don't mean that, say for you, an' moral principle, but I'll give you the only get it cheap, from a grazier. See?"

"He won't have a chance. An' do you think you could get a firkin of the an' a sack of dozen laves of bread?"

Dafydd whistled with surprise.

"Not by the road. You could hire Miller Vaughan's two mules, sling the things across 'em, pannier-fashion, an' bring 'em back."

"He will pull for sheep and ter beer, and kill them all off. It is a very cool plan, but I'll start at daybreak, and get it all done by noon."

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"Let's start right away. No use wastin' time," said Tom; and the pitmen agreeing to a man, or they started.

Aberford was soon left behind, and presently they were in the middle of a rich tract of the Old Meadow below Bryn Y Garth. The boys nudged each other.

"Right across the way, a few hundred yards in front, they saw the formidable barrier erected by Price's gang, who were stout at work on it."

"Phwat in the name av Auld Nick is that?" cried Pat Lloyd, and the pitmen halted and stared at the barrier.

"That," replied Roddy. "Oh, that's the little difficulty I spoke about. It's been put up by the grazier, an' it's a right of way, ever to travel along it any more. Now, are we goin' round, mates, or are we goin' thro' it?"

"Eh," cried Terry, as surprised as anybody, "to stop the road? Why, is a right of way, an' always has been! Who's put it up—an' what for?"

"I'll tell you!" called out Roddy. "Kenyon Price put it up; and he did it to spite us, so as to stop us from crossin' a rich tract of the world. The road's barred for good!"

An angry shout went up from the pitmen. "Here!" roared Luke Jones, pushing his way forward. "I say no man alive shall bar our road to me. We was from me, whastose?"

"No, no; I was understand!" said Dafydd. "He will pull for sheep and ter beer, and kill them all off. It is a very cool plan, but I'll start at daybreak, and get it all done by noon."

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LIFE SAVING:

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

First Aid to the Drowning.
ANYONE attempting to save life, and particularly those unacquainted with the proper methods of rescue and release as taught by the Royal Life-Saving Society, should exercise the greatest possible caution, and a rescuer who may be placed in jeopardy. The desperation with which a drowning man will catch at anything to be held, and the tenacity with which he may retain his hold, would make matters difficult if the rescuer lost his presence of mind and did not know how to effect a release. In my opinion, every boy learning to swim should also be taught the very simple methods adopted by the Royal Life-Saving Society, and so make him not only a good swimmer, but also secure him against the clutch of the drowning, which has so often been the cause of a rescuer being drowned. I therefore intend to explain to my readers how to take a drowning man who needs assistance, also how to make a release in the event of being clutched, but before doing so a few words are said regarding general preparations when about to attempt a rescue.

In the first place, before entering the water to give aid, one should remove as much clothing as possible, particularly the boots and outer clothing, as these greatly impede a swimmer's movements, especially the boots. The rescuer should also consider the possibility of landing as well as draw the attention of anyone who may be near, so that if any assistance he required it may be at hand, particularly when the person saved has to be resuscitated; but in all cases of rescue the chief point to be remembered is to lose no time, as the drowning person may sink, and not rise again. In that case it may be very difficult to find the object or locate the position, especially in tidal or running water, or even in still water covering a wide area.

The general belief that a drowning person must rise three times before he finally sinks is a fallacy. The question whether he rises once, twice, or at all entirely depends upon circumstances. He may happen to struggle to such a way as to cause him to rise many times; on the other hand the struggle may be such that it will cause him to sink immediately he falls into the water, for that reason every effort should be made to

Rescue aid

as quickly as possible.
 The next point to consider is how to approach and seize anyone struggling in the water. In such matters there is always an element of danger in being clutched, unless of course the rescuer has been properly instructed and has had considerable practice in making a release. If one is not sure of the correct method of release, it is best to make the approach from behind, and, if he be quiet, take hold of him by the neck and both hands, or by the arms, covering the ears of the drowning person with the palms of the hands, turn him sharply on to his back, and swim with the back-stroke,



ON DRIVING:

using the legs only, and carry him to a place of safety. The position described above is as in the accompanying diagram.

In carrying a person on the surface of the water, care should be taken to keep his legs well up on the surface, and the whole body as horizontally as possible. If the body be horizontal it will be much easier to move along, because the drag which results from a perpendicular position is avoided. The legs of the drowning person can be kept from sinking by the rescuer occasionally giving them a kick and propping them upwards. Very little effort is needed in order to cause the drowning person's legs to come to the surface, and if rain is taken to keep them up, no unnecessary labour will be saved.

I hope my readers will take care to practise the method illustrated in this week. Remember that practice makes one perfect.

(To be continued on Saturday next.)

THE A.A.A.:

Mr. A. A. ELSON, winner of over 200 prizes, gives readers full details concerning the work of the Amateur Athletic Association, and tells them how to join.

Handicapping under A.A.A. Laws.
AONE is more keen on obtaining information about a boy who has been handicapped and is waiting to see how he has been handicapped. He is all "on thorns" until he is in possession of this important news, for not until then can he estimate what are his chances of winning.
 The exact way in which handicaps are given under A.A.A. laws is as follows. On the form which the competitor sends in to the secretary of the sports, stating his desire to compete, the competitor has to set forth his previous performances. This information is carefully analysed by the handicapper, who also a handicap mark in accordance with the showings of such performances.

All open handicaps are made representing the present amateur champion at each event at the time the handicaps were made from the best man entering, much confusion ensued in ascertaining the relative value of the handicap marks allotted.
 The present satisfactory state of the handicapping question has not been achieved without preliminary rooting out of evils. The A.A.A. has cut down on the number and rigorously waded war against a certain section of athletes, whose delusion it is to **hothead the handicapper** by giving false and misleading information, for a favourite in each event, who has had a record of superior previous performances. Some entry forms, whose authors have been deluged with disqualification, have been masterpieces of cunning in the art of giving false information. The fraud invariably comes to light in the long run, and the offender quickly retires from athletic sports.

Although the handicapper is largely guided by the last performance at the particular distance shown on the mark, deducting from it the time of the winning runner, and, if so awarding the same one. It will readily be seen, therefore, that the handicapper must be a man of great skill and discretion in order to get a practical point of view, such as is obtainable only from an active participation in the sport.

As a contrast to the beautifully fair methods of handicapping under A.A.A. laws, take that of some of the meetings not registered by the Amateur Athletic Association.

It has been known for the handicappers at these meetings to give a favourite in each event, is placed on a mark sufficient to make him a sure winner, the arrangement being that the prize is divided between him and the handicapper. It is, obvious, therefore, unless something very unforeseen happens, the other competitor will be a sure loser.

Another thing which the Association has put its foot upon, is the practice which has several times been discovered, with drastic results to those concerned, of using a "crack amateur" appearance" money or expenses. The rule of the Association with respect to this is that no one may have his expenses paid to run at a meeting except at the A.A.A. championships, or in a bona-fide inter-town race. It is well known that he eagerly contended to compete at meetings on account of

his "gate" drawing abilities.

When an athlete, whose income was small, and was probably gained by steady work at a few six days a week, was found to be competing in various parts of the country, and widely different distances apart several times a week, and was practically doing nothing else for a living, the suspicion of an "appearance" has been aroused. It has been discovered before now that a well-known crack athlete, who had a reputation for honesty, and probably a sum of money besides, to compete at a meeting where his name has been extensively advertised as a certain performer in the Association, however, it was found, no matter how great his prowess in athletics.

It will be seen, therefore, that the Association is ever keenly on the look out for transgressions of its rules, and this is why track athletes under the A.A.A. laws are so pure, and the Association so much looked up to by all sport-loving people.

In conclusion, no boy who wishes to engage in track athletics can do better than to do so under the auspices of the Amateur Athletic Association, by joining one of the clubs affiliated to such Association, and as shown in previous articles.

THE END.

CRICKET:

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

Wicket-keeping.
THE man behind the stumps can tell how the batsman is playing better than anyone else. It is easy for him to find out
the weak spot in defence, and to give a hint to the bowler as to how he is likely to get rid of him.
 The indifferent man "behind the sticks" who mixes catches and gives bites is a weak side.
 In any club outside county cricket a wicket-keeper should have a long-stay with a fast bowler. More catches go to the wicket than to anywhere else, and more batsmen are dismissed in this way than any other, especially on good pitches.

The chief duties of a wicket-keeper are:
 1. To hold catches at the wicket.
 2. To stump batsmen who miss the ball.
 3. To run out the man who is batting when the ball is returned from the fielders.
 4. To stop blyes.

An extra duty may be when the ball is played by the batsman so that the wicket-keeper alone can follow after it and save it.

Some boys I have met forget the fact that if the bowler is to be successful byes it is the fault of the batsman.

the careless bowler.

who is always responsible for the loss of a ball by being in on the spot there will be very few extras.

My own opinion is that a bowler who wishes to occupy this position should go to Lord's when Middlesex are playing, and watch the way MacGregor gathers the widest return, and he knows how to pick up the widest throws.
 The great thing if you want to stump men is to run out. The way to do this is to be as near the wicket as possible—so that you can knock the balls off. The feet must be steady and fixed, or else the eye cannot follow the course of the ball right. When the ball comes to you, the hands should relax as the ball enters it, as it is more likely to stay where it is when the resistance to those that come out of relaxing saves the hands. With slow or medium-pace bowling, when chances are many in number, the ball may be taken close to the wicket to ensure a smart removal with the hands.

When shall you appeal?

If you are honestly doubtful as to whether or no a ball is out, you must appeal. If you are a public school boy who I know, often I have noticed school elevens are in the habit of indulging in the cry "Not out, and no appeal," and the shouts are loud and frequent—and often men are given out. On this occasion Robert Thoms, the greatest umpire, was standing, and one of the boys came out. At last Robert could stand it no longer, and he said, "Not out, sir—not nearly! It is the law, not pick it up, and the question should not have been asked!"

Appeals that are not honest spoil the game. Our novice will not find it easy to take the ball on the leg side, but the character of boys who could not take leg balls, and my advice to the young wicket-keeper is to pay more attention in his early practice to those that come over the wicket or slightly to the off. Do not worry over a few failures. Persevere and practise in games—not at the nets.
 Do not practice the off bowler's ball. If the hands are tender or bruised do not use them. Remember that a good wicket-keeper is worth his weight in gold, even if he cannot bat or bowl.

Slow Bowling.

The slow bowler is an indispensable acquisition to any cricket team, and he has more than the virtues of a fast bowler, but a great many more in addition. He must know how to place the ball, and have a good knowledge of length, quickness from the pitch, and character of bowing. He must also be able to deceive the batsmen with a high delivery that will break either way. The fast bowler is not a good bowler, unless he has an advantage, and that is, it offers more opportunity to the wicket-keeper for stumping.

Now, the slow bowler will often find that batsmen will try to take liberty with him, and especially in trying to hit his leg stump half-length. The fast bowler is not a good bowler, unless he is absolutely to leg, a stroke that he would never try if a fast bowler were on.

A slow bowler is most valuable when there is also on the field a fast bowler, as the contrast is very marked, and demands very close attention from the field. It is a good thing that the fast bowler is not a good bowler at the beginning of the innings; and I remember how powerful was the Essex attack when G. Bull and C. J. Partridge, perhaps the fastest bowler in England, used to commence the attack.

(To be continued on Saturday next.)

A FOOTBALL LEAGUE:

Mr. G. L. B. COVERDALE, the energetic Secretary of the East Riding of Yorkshire Football Association, gives Practical Hints on How to Form One.

Rules.
IN my last week's article I stated the preliminary which have to be gone through in forming a football league. For the benefit of new readers, I will this week repeat these in a condensed form.

Before anything is actually done in such a matter as this, a "feeler" should be thrown out as to whether the league will receive the sanction of the County Association. Upon this being ascertained, a circular letter should be sent to all clubs likely to join the league, calling a meeting of representatives of the practically important clubs. It is advisable to ask some influential gentlemen in the district—if possible, the local M.P.—to act as presidents of the league. Upon a meeting of representatives being held, suitable rules should be drawn up. Before I outline a set of rules which I think will be found applicable for any league in this country, with perhaps one or two slight alterations and additions. The rules, I may say, are chiefly those of the approved form of the largest county associations, and should commence as follows:

1.—This combination of clubs shall be known as the Football League, and shall be conducted subject to the rules, regulations, and bye-laws of the Football Association and of the laws of the game.

2.—The seat of this league shall be not more than miles (by the nearest road) from the league headquarters, and clubs can only join the league with the consent of the management committee.

3.—The annual subscription shall be cash in full, payable on or before the 1st of September.

4.—The league shall consist of not more than twelve clubs in one division.

5.—The annual general meeting shall be held between the 14th and 31st of May in each year, to which each club in the league shall be entitled to send two representatives. At this meeting—of which each club shall have 7 days' notice—the secretary's report and the treasurer's audited-balance-sheet shall be read.

6.—The officers of the league shall be a chairman, treasurer, and secretary. These, with one representative from each club in the league, shall constitute the committee of the league. Five to form a quorum. The officers shall be elected at the annual general meeting.

7.—The committee shall conduct the business of the league. They shall convene meetings at any time they may deem necessary, hear protests and complaints, and shall have power to impose fines and suspensions and deal with any offending club or clubs, player or players, or officials, as they think fit, and shall have power to deal with any matter arising out of the competition not provided for in these rules.

8.—Each club shall play home and away matches with each other club during the season. In the event of any club failing to play its full strength or to keep its engagement without giving a satisfactory explanation, it shall be fined a sum not exceeding (say 5s.) and pay to the complaining club such compensation as the committee shall see fit, or be otherwise dealt with as the committee may decide.

9.—Should any club be unable to keep its home fixture owing to its field being engaged, or from any other similar cause, the opposing club must have at least five days' notice of such inability, when the ground must be reversed, or, in default thereof, the matter shall be dealt with by the committee.



A drive to cover.

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(To be continued on Saturday next.)



A TALE OF NIPPER AT ST. NINIAN'S SCHOOL.

BY POPULAR MAXWELL SCOTT.

THE OPENING CHAPTERS IN BRIEF.
CHOTA LAL NATH CHANDRA DAS, an Indian prince and a new boy at St. Ninian's School, is in possession of a certain gold locket, around which centres a mystery.
OTTO HEINRICH, a mysterious German, who strives by all means to obtain possession of the gold locket.

ROBERT HAMILTON (Nipper), Nelson Lee's wards.
DICK WHARLING
GARDNER, **PROCTOR**, **RUSSELL**, **AREBE**, pupils at St. Ninian's School.
 Gardner is in difficulties with a bookmaker, and the mysterious German, knowing that the boy is near the place where Lal has concealed his locket, offers to pay the lad's debts on condition that he obtain it for Gardner, in desperation, consents to do so. That night Nipper and his comrades raid on the inmates of a private house at St. Ninian's. Their way is hindered by a noise in his study, and throwing the door open discovers a stranger removing the locket from his hiding-place. Gardner explains why he took the locket, and Nipper very generously lends him a five-pound note, first extracting a promise from him that he will do no more plundering.

When Heinrich, the mysterious German, becomes acquainted with Fraulein Hoffmann, a mistress at a girl school in the village. Being of the same nationality the sides with him. Heinrich designs himself as an old man, who stays with Fraulein Hoffmann her uncle. He decides to take her into his confidence, and relates to her the mystery surrounding the gold locket, which is in Lal's possession. **Two roads are now before him.**

The German's Story.
 "HAT I am about to tell you," Otto Heinrich began, "forms one of the most interesting chapters in the secret history of our beloved Europe. It is known at present to no less than half a dozen people, and if it came to the ears of the British Government, it is more than likely that Germany would be plunged into the horrors of a long and sanguinary war; whilst it is absolutely certain that out of the most cherished ambitions of our beloved Kaiser would be shattered like a house of cards. Before I tell you my story, therefore, I must ask you to pledge your sacred word of honour that you will not breathe a syllable of what I am going to tell you to any living soul."
 When Heinrich Hoffmann had given the required pledge, he smoked in silence for a moment or two, and then resumed.
 "At the beginning of this year," he said, "a secret treaty was concluded between Germany and another power, whose name it is unnecessary to mention. It is enough to say that it was aimed against Great Britain."
 "At that time there was living in Berlin a British political spy named John Oxley, a man of great courage, but with all his virtues he could not learn the purport of the treaty."
 "But John Oxley was a man hard to beat when he had once set his mind to a thing. It was in which I need not describe, he wormed his way into the confidence of one of the secretaries in the Chancellor's office, and by means of judicious bribery he induced this man to allow him to see the treaty for half a minute."

"The treaty was engrossed on a single sheet of vellum, and Oxley was armed with a powerful detective-camera in the hands of his walking stick. With a single click he had secured an snapshot of the treaty—a micro-photograph, in fact, no bigger than your finger-nail."
 "But that was not all," he inquired Fraulein Hoffmann. "Nobely could read a photograph as small as that."
 "Not with the naked eye," said Heinrich; "but Oxley had taken the film and printed a print a positive from it, and it would then have been the easiest thing in the world, with the aid of a microscope, to read every word and letter of the treaty."
 "To resume my story, Oxley was in the habit of wearing, suspended round his neck, a small gold locket, which I have just mentioned nothing but a photograph of his dead sister and a lock of her hair. As a matter of fact, however, it was a secret room in the wall of the locket which could be opened by pressing a hidden spring."
 "When Oxley had taken his snapshot of the

treaty, he returned to his rooms, accompanied by his German confederate. Having developed the film, he did not trouble to take a print of it, but placed the film in the secret recess in the back of the locket. He then paid his confederate the sum agreed on, and left by train for Ostend, with the object of crossing to England and handing his film to the British Government."

"An hour or two after he had left Berlin, his confederate was seized with remorse. Hurrying to the Chancellor's office, he made an honest confession of the whole affair—told about the photograph and the locket—and then committed suicide by blowing out his brains in the presence of the Chancellor."

"Knowing all the Kaiser's hopes would probably be dashed to the ground, and that Germany would be drawn into the war, the British Government, the Chancellor promptly set the wires to work, and Oxley was arrested at Hamer Station, on his way to Ostend. At least, an attempt was made to arrest him, but he managed to give his captors the slip; and, after an exciting chase, he ultimately reached Hamburg, where all trace of him was lost."

"By this time the whole police force of the German Empire was on the alert to capture him. All roads that crossed the frontiers were strictly guarded; all trains and vessels leaving the country were closely watched; all outgoing letters and parcels were submitted to a rigorous examination."

"In view of these precautions, it seemed impossible that Oxley could get out of the country without being detected; but he did! There was lying at that time in the harbour at Hamburg a small British cargo-steamer named the Spearmin. She was bound for Cardiff, in Wales, and twelve hours after she had left Hamburg we learned that Oxley had swum ashore at dead of night, and had bribed the captain to smuggle him across to Cardiff."

"But he never reached Cardiff. The Spearmin left Hamburg on the sixteenth of January, and on the night of the eighteenth a violent storm broke out in the English Channel, and ragged for most of the following day. Many vessels were wrecked, and amongst those which were reported to have foundered with all hands was the Spearmin. You can guess with what joy this news was received in Berlin. Oxley had been drowned! His locket was at the bottom of the sea! The secret of the treaty was safe."
 "Alas! a rude awakening was in store for us! On the twenty-second of January an article appeared in the Daily Mail relating how a schoolboy at St. Ninian's—a young Hindoo, named Chota Lal Nath Chandra Das—had discovered an unknown hady-nigger man, drifting in a water-logged boat; how this shipwrecked sailor, as he was supposed to be, had given the remainder of the night to the locket which he had torn from a ribbon round his neck; how he had been in the act of telling the boy where to take the locket, when the boat capsized, and neither man nor boat had ever been seen again."
 "Again you can guess what our feelings were. For the published description of the man

in the boat, and the picture of the locket, left no room for doubt that the man was John Oxley, and the locket was that in which he had hidden the photograph of the secret treaty."

"Luckily nobody but ourselves suspected those facts. But think of the danger in which we were put, if Oxley had been discovered. The back of the locket might be accidentally discovered, in which case the film would be found, and our secret was blown, and the text of the treaty would be revealed."

"At a hurriedly-summoned meeting of the trustees of the Kaiser, it was unanimously resolved that immediate steps should be taken to secure the locket before its secret was discovered. At the Kaiser's own request I was entrusted with the locket, and entrusted to me, and within an hour of receiving my instructions, I was on my way to London."

"He then described the various attempts which he had made to secure the locket, and how they had failed."

"To the best of my belief," he continued, "the locket is still at St. Ninian's. Where it is hidden I do not know, and that is why I require your aid."
 "In what way?" she asked.

"If you encourage Mr. Trigg, and make friends with him, he will, I am sure, get secure through him an introduction to Lal, as the schoolboys call the young Hindoo. If you can gain the boy's confidence, you can lead the way to the locket. I have already mentioned your adventure with the shipwrecked sailor, and you can ask him to show you the locket. If it is in his possession, you can have your rest ought to be easy for a clever woman like yourself!"

"It seems mean that I could steal the locket from under your nose," she said.

"But I don't!" he interrupted. "There's no need to steal it. I'll describe it to you, as Oxley's confederate did, and you will explain how the secret spring is worked. Then, when Lal hands you the locket, you can turn away for a moment, and take the locket back to me, for instance, as if to examine it more closely—press the spring, secure the film without disturbing you, and hand the locket back to me."

"Yes, I think I could do that," she said.

"I know you could," he said. "The question is on one condition," she replied.

"Again that queer look fitted across Heinrich's face."
 "I know what you mean," he said. "On condition that I pledge my word to secure a free pardon for your brother, who is now in prison for betraying official secrets to a foreign Power."
 "Yes," she said.

"I have already accepted your condition. If you wish me to do so, I accept it again."
 "Then I will do as you wish," said Fraulein Hoffmann. "And with that she bade good-night, and went to bed, leaving him to finish his cigar."

"An excellent woman!" he murmured, blowing out a filmy cloud of smoke. "A most excellent woman! Very clever in some ways, but very simple in others. If she only knew her Love on Skates."

LOVE ON SKATES.
 AFTER Nipper had driven Fraulein Hoffmann home on Saturday evening, as already described, he drove down to the police-station and reported to the constable the description of the fugitive to all the surrounding towns and villages, and then went up to Padley Wood and took possession of the cottage and its contents."
 But nothing came of these proceedings. The stolen bicycle was afterwards found on the outskirts of Tunbridge Wells, but nothing of an incriminating nature was discovered at the cottage, and all the efforts of the police were confined to a search of the warehouses of Otto Heinrich.

Needless to say, the affair created an immense sensation at St. Ninian's, and little else was thought of for some few days. Then on Wednesday morning an iron frost set in; on Thursday night the ice on the river was reported to be strong enough to bear. The next day the boys of St. Ninian's were too busy polishing up their skates, in preparation for Saturday afternoon, to think about Otto Heinrich and his doings.

In addition to the river, there were several other places in the neighbourhood where skating could be enjoyed when the conditions were favourable. Perhaps the most sought-after of these was the pond near the Rectory, the pond of the rectory, which was most favourably known as the Rectory Pond.

At the end of the season was most strictly preserved—that it is to say, it was not open to the general public. But whenever the pond was closed, some way was contrived, contingent from the teaching-staffs of the three local schools—St. Ninian's, the Grammar School, and Cambridge House.

Some of the most favoured of these favourites with the rector, had often been invited to join these skating parties, and consequently they were not surprised when a note came from the rector on Friday night, addressed to Nipper, and couched in the following terms: "The pond is in ripping condition. We've invited few on their look on the ice to-morrow afternoon, from two to seven. We shall be glad, if you and Starling will accept an invitation, and if you're good, will stand you tea."

The two boys, of course, accepted this genial invitation, and on Saturday morning, at ten o'clock, on Saturday, followed by the envious glances of their less favoured chums, they trudged off to the pond.

Most of the guests had already arrived when they reached the pond, and skating was in full swing. Many familiar faces met them, and among the first to greet them was Mr. Wiggle, a twitching fat-trimmed cotton, was gliding to and fro on the polished ice, with a grace and an skill that evoked their unbounded admiration.

"By Jove, he can skate, can't she?" said Dick, as he and Nipper were putting on their skates.

"Not half!" said Nipper. "But where are Piggy and the other boys? I don't see them. I wonder how they have got to be here to see to their—Wot! There they are!"

He pointed to the other side of the pond, where Mr. Wiggle and Mr. Wimple were standing side by side on the bank, were alternately scowling at each other and fumbling with their skates, and Mr. Wimple, who had just arrived, and each was straining every nerve to get his skates on first, in order to reach Fraulein Hoffmann before his rival.

"That's the way it was won by Mr. Wimple. That is to say, he was the first to finish buckling on his skates. With a smile of triumph he strode on his feet, but even as he stepped out with his right his left foot slid under him, and he sat down with a thud that made him more sore than he had ever known before. "His hat! More haste, less speed!" chuckled Mr. Trigg. "The race is not always to the swift."

With a contemptuous glance at his fallen rival, who was making frantic but ineffectual attempts to get up, Mr. Wimple stepped on to the ice. Then a look of pained surprise spread over his face, for his left foot slipped, and he fell backwards. He whistled his right side away to the west. With a determined effort he brought his errant feet together, but no sooner had he brought them together than he fell headlong towards the north, and he fell with a great and mighty splash.

How he managed to regain his feet he never knew. But he did, and what is more, he actually contrived to flounder across to Fraulein Hoffmann, who was looking on in surprised surprise. He appeared to be waiting for him.

"Good-afternoon, Mistress Trigg," she said, with an arch smile. "I am so glad to see you so glad."

Blushing furiously at this unexpectedly cordial reception, Mr. Wimple essayed to bow. But his feet were so numb that he could only a practised skater can bow with safety, and Mr. Trigg was not a practised skater by any means.

As the upper part of his body inclined forwards the lower part shot backwards, and he fell on his back. He was so sore that he could not so hard, his nose would probably have bored a hole in it. As it was, the ice remained unguned, and he was merely flattened to the level of his cheeks.

By that time Nipper and Dick had danced their skates, and witnessing Mr. Trigg's downfall, they hastened to his assistance and helped him to his feet.
 "What a surprise," their surprise, Fraulein Hoffmann exhibited neither amusement nor vexation at the antics of her would be wooer. On the contrary, she was very sympathetic.
 "You had not—how you call it in English?—found your feet yet?" she said, smiling on Nipper.
 "Yes, I have found them. I'll take your arm, until you to the ice has grown accustomed."
 Before Mr. Trigg could comply with this request, Fraulein Hoffmann was only too eager to do. Mr. Wimple came being across the pond with the speed of an express.
 "I'll help you to slip with my vigorous push in the direction of Fraulein Hoffmann. A stiff breeze was blowing from the north. It was in this instant that Mr. Wimple sailed along the gleaming ice at a pace which well-nigh took his breath away.
 "Look out!" yelled Nipper. "You'll be

FOOTBALL SEASON, 1907-8.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO SECRETARIES OF LEAGUES AND UNATTACHED FOOTBALL CLUBS.

Register Your Club or League at Once!

During the coming football season a large number of Solid Silver Cups, Silver Medals, and Football Trophies will be given to certain Football Leagues and Unattached Clubs throughout the country. Therefore, League and Club Secretaries are requested to send at once full particulars of the League or Club to which they are attached to the Secretary of THE BOYS' REALM Football Club, 2, St. Mark's Church, St. Martin's Street, London, E.C., and full particulars will shortly be sent to their private address.

Full details will also be published in the course of a week or two in the pages of THE BOYS' REALM, and readers are requested to draw the attention of their football friends to this paper.

into us in a minute if you aren't careful! Pull up, man! Pull up!"

"Oh, that's all right, Mr. Wimple. 'Help, help! Somebody stop me! Oo-oooh! I'll be h—!'"

As the rate of ten miles an hour, he crashed into Mr. Trigg from behind. With an ear-splitting yell, Mr. Trigg shot forward like a ball from a cannon's mouth. By a miracle he contrived to preserve his balance, and impelled by the momentum of the shock, and backed by the wind, he went sailing across the pool in the direction of the notice-board bearing the ominous word "Dangerous!"

"Hi! Hi!" yelled the rescuer. "The ice won't hold! Come back! Come back!"

But Mr. Trigg could neither "pull-up" nor "come back." With feet close-pressed together, with arms outstretched, he held on to his course and near to the board.

The Locker Mysteriously Disappears.

OFFENSIVELY the pond was nowhere more than five feet deep, and almost before the startled spectators had reached what had happened a head bobbed up through the hole in the ice—a head that had once adorned with a glossy black wig, but whose only adornment now was an intricate network of dark brown mud and light green slime.

A pair of shoulders followed the head, and then followed the torso, two wildly-waving arms festooned with clinging weeds.

"Help—help!" spluttered Mr. Trigg, dabbing the muddy water from his eyes and puffing out a stream of mud. "I am perishing! My wife is hanging by the tenderest shreds—I mean, my life is hanging by the slenderest shreds—help—help—help—help, or my doom is sealed!"

His appearance and his accents were so mirth-provoking that many of the spectators, including Nipper and Dick, burst into a fit of unfeeling laughter.

Wimple in particular appeared to derive an especial amount of satisfaction and amusement from his rival's ignominious humiliation.

"He, he, he!" he chuckled, turning to Fraulein Hoffmann.

"Isn't it comical to see a man who can do anything so funny in all your life? It's as good as a pantomime!"

To his mortification and chagrin, Fraulein Hoffmann was smiling at him with a contemptuous glance; and then, without a word, skated across towards the scene of the disaster.

"Miss Hoffmann—Fraulein—come look!" cried Nipper, pointing after her and catching her by the arm. "The two wigs were over there!"

"Yes, if you go near him!"

"Let me go!" she panted, with a well-earned air of mischief.

"No, no! My friend Mein friend is in danger, and you—you only laugh, and say it was your fault. You must help me! My friend may drown. You had no hearts. You are cowardly! Let me go! If you go towards me, I shall tell you to go to hell!"

Nipper's wits were sharper than those of most boys of his age, but he was not slow to see that the German's clever acting, if thought she really cared for him. He thought she really did, and he loved her in danger, and was willing to risk her life to save him.

"We were a lot of benevolent souls to laugh!" he said, in a conciliatory tone. "But his job in the slightest danger really! The police are here, and the rector and Colonel Trevor are bringing a ladder. They'll soon have him out, without our help."

Nipper's prediction was correct, for a few minutes later—the ladder having in the meantime been slid across the ice until Mr. Trigg was able to grasp the end of it—his head and arms were dragged out of the hole and hauled into air.

"This is an eye-opener, and no stiddy error!" said Nipper, at all at ease in his hurried trip to Mr. Trigg's side and begged him to assure her he was not seriously injured. "Did you ever dream for a minute that she cared two straws for you?"

"I didn't," said Dick. "But it's evident she does."

The two boys were not alone in this opinion, which was further strengthened when Fraulein Hoffmann declared that she herself had been so much affected by the accident that she thought she would go home. Accordingly, when Mr. Trigg had been dispatched to St. Niman's in the rector's brougham, Fraulein Hoffmann made her adieux to her doctor's wife, and returned to her cottage on the Hillfoot Road.

"Splendid!" said Otto Heinrich, when she had told her story. "Everybody will now believe that you are in love with this ridiculous creature, and this accident gives you a perfect excuse for going to St. Niman's to inquire how he is. And if you act as well as you have acted this afternoon," he added, "you'll have no difficulty in making Mr. Trigg inquire how the young Hindoo who has the locker."

Meanwhile, Nipper and Dick were still marveling at their discovery that Fraulein Hoffmann—as they thought—was in love with

Montague Trigg. And their wonderment was fully shared by Wagstaffe, Fob, and Lal, when the two chums returned to St. Niman's at the conclusion of the skating-party, and related what had happened.

"Good!" bellowed beauty and the beast, it simply isn't in it," said Bob. "Fancy a pretty girl like Fraulein Hoffmann being smitten at a variegated lake Piggy! Dash it all, I can't believe it!"

"It's a fact, all the same," said Dick. "What's more, if Nipper hadn't stopped her, she'd have tried to rescue Piggy herself. I tell you, she's a brick!"

"She is indeed!" said Nipper.

"She must be," said Lal; "and I, for one, am sorry we ever resented Piggy. If she really is in love with him."

"So am I," said Bob; "and the others expressed the same opinion."

They were sorer still when, later in the evening, a rumour spread through the school that Mr. Trigg, as a result of his immersion, was dangerously ill. On making inquiries of Mr. Rand, however, they ascertained that the rumour was false, or, at any rate, greatly exaggerated, the fact being that Mr. Trigg was suffering from nothing more than a severe chill, in consequence of which the doctor had ordered him to keep his bed for a day or two.

Next day was Sunday, and after dinner the five chums reassembled in their study, and proceeded to discuss their programme for the afternoon.

"You can leave Lal and me out of the discussion," said Bob. "We're engaged this after-

noon. I've had a date with her, and I'm not going to let her down."

"Nothing to do," Lal told her the whole story.

"Wonderful!" she exclaimed, when he had finished. "A Var a romance! Var a mystery! Oh, how I would like to see her locker! May I?"

"She'll show it to you with pleasure," said Lal.

"But I haven't it here, if Mrs. Shuttleworth will excuse me half an hour, I'll fetch it."

"Certainly," said Mrs. Shuttleworth readily.

Lal left the room and repaired to his house-mate's study, where Mr. Rand was indulging in a Sunday afternoon snooze.

"Sorry to disturb you, sir," said Lal apologetically; "but Fraulein Hoffmann is here, in Mrs. Shuttleworth's drawing-room, and I've been telling her about the locker, and she'd like to have a look at it, if you've no objection."

"Not at all," said Mr. Rand, with a sleepy yawn. "You know where it is. Get it yourself."

Lal crossed the room and pressed the spring of the locked recess. The panel instantly flew open as before, and even as it did so a cry of startled amazement burst from Lal's lips.

The recess was empty. The locker had disappeared!

"It isn't here, sir!" he gasped. "It's gone!"

"Gone?" cried Mr. Rand, leaping to his feet, now thoroughly awake. "What do you mean, boy?"

"I've stared at the empty recess, and then at Lal."



Blowily but irresolutely the great car moved backwards tumbling Mr. Watson off his feet and causing the three old men to muddle together in the ditch with cries of alarm.

"You've been here unknown to me, and taken the locker away!" he exclaimed.

"I don't know. I haven't!" said Lal indignantly. "I've never been in this room since I put the locker in the recess in your presence."

"Nonsense!" demanded Mr. Rand.

"Nobody, sir," said Lal. "You told me not to say anything about it to anybody, not even to Nipper and I have not."

"You must have told somebody."

"On my word of honour, I haven't."

"To the best of my belief, you and I are the only persons in the world who know of the existence of this secret recess. Tien where has the locker gone? Who has taken it away from here?"

They discussed the mystery of the locker's disappearance for several minutes, without being able to even hazard a guess at its solution. Then Mr. Rand went off to consult the Head, and Lal returned to Mrs. Shuttleworth's drawing-room.

"It's gone!" he blurted out, as he entered the room. "The locker, I mean! It's disappeared! Somebody must have stolen it!"

"The lock of bitter disappointment which crossed Fraulein Hoffmann's face was quickly followed by one of suspicion and doubt."

"Is the truth, of course," said Lal, in an injured tone. "The locker was hidden in a certain place, known only to Mr. Rand and me, and when I went for it just now, it wasn't there. But it is as puzzled as I am, and he's gone to ask old Shuttlecock if you see Dr. Shuttleworth—if he hadn't better send for the police at once!"

Fraulein Hoffmann was as puzzled as Mr. Rand and Lal. She knew that Otto Heinrich had not stolen it, and she knew that nobody else who would be likely to wish to steal it. Who, then, had taken the locker?

"I must tell Heinrich of this at once," she mentally determined, and she knew that in his loss, she took her departure and returned to her cottage.

"It's a mystery!" said Heinrich, when she had told her story. "The boy was advised—probably by Mr. Rand—not to show you the locker. It hasn't disappeared. Nobody has stolen it."

He clenched his fist and smote the table.

"And I'll find it yet!" he exclaimed, with a furious oath, "they may lie as they like, and hide it where they will, but I'll find it yet!"

A Famous Victory.

THE REAT sensation at St. Niman's when the news became known that the famous locker had mysteriously disappeared, led to most schoolboy sensations, however, it was not of long duration; for the following Saturday was the polling-day for the Convey Council and the election of a school representative to act at St. Niman's had become, not who had stolen the locker, but who would be elected.

"I think he can, but it'll be a near thing!" said Sergeant Quiggin, who came up to the school on Saturday afternoon.

Nipper and Dick from Mr. Boswell. We shall need every vote we can get, better, or else we'll be a long way from being 'ere to-night," he continued. "You'd like to see Mr. Boswell to look that unseemly kid-walloper from the Granmar School, would you?"

"Of course!" said Nipper. "We've done a bit in that direction already."

"I know you 'ave," said Sergeant Quiggin. "An' I see to Mr. Boswell's credit, he's got a good many votes."

"Dang me, them's the two young gents to 'elp us to-morrow!"

In the same breath Nipper and Dick were asked to go to the polls.

"Well, it's like this," said the wicket. "A lot of the voters live out in the country, and they won't come to Clevedon to vote unless we fetch 'em an' drive 'em back, and we've got to have a conveyance. Colonel Trevor, of the Grange, 'as offered Mr. Boswell the loan of 'is motor-car, but 'as a shower of 'is and there's nobody in the village knows 'ow to 'andle a motor-car."

"So, Mr. Boswell sees 'e knows that you and Master Starling 'ere are in the 'abit of drivin' 'is car, and he's offered 'em to 'ave 'em at 'ome; so he's sent me to ask you if you'll take charge of 'is car to-morrow, and 'elp us bring up voters from the country?"

"Will a duck swim?" cried Nipper, with a sparkling eye.

"You bet we will!"

"Rather," said Dick. "But we'll have to get 'em from the bank. Come on! Let's go and 'ear him now!"

"I'll be ready for 'em—lucky for Mr. Boswell, too, as events turned out—Mr. Rand has just finished an excellent dinner, and was in one of 'is most gracious moods."

"Help Mr. Boswell—certainly!" he said. "After the empty which Mr. Stuart-Urelin has displayed

towards St. Niman's, it behoves us to do everything in our power to prevent him chaining a single governing body. If you wish to spend your half to-morrow in helping Mr. Boswell, I have no objection whatever. On the contrary, I commend you for your resolution."

"We shall require extended leave, sir, of course," suggested Nipper.

"That's rather a long time, but what time does the poll close?"

"It opens at eight in 'is morning and closes at eight at night, sir," said Nipper.

"Well, you may have the morning off of course. But you've got to get up at five after school-bell-borne dinner, if you wish and you needn't return until half-past eight. That will be all right, Mr. Boswell might say to the close of the poll."

"And it is that all the leave we may have, sir?" asked Nipper.

"All? What more do you want?"

"Well, sir, they're going to count the votes to-night, after the close of the poll, and we'd naturally like to stay and hear the result."

"That's rather a long time, but that is the result expected to be known?"

"About ten o'clock, sir."

Mr. Rand hesitated for a moment.

"All right, but you've got to get up at five, and have leave till half-past ten."

Next day, accordingly, as soon as second school-bell rang, the two boys trudged up to the Grange, where they found that Colonel Trevor was somewhat dubious at first about trusting his car to two such youngsters, but they soon made him see that he had no grounds for his misgivings, and twenty minutes later the car was at Mr. Boswell's committee-room, where Sergeant Quiggin gave them a first list



The angry pitmen made a break for Kenyon Price as he reined his horse hastily back.

THE FIRST CHAPTERS IN BRIEF.

Roddy Owen and Tom Higgles, two Welsh colliers both, are the sons of a certain Matthew Mathews, who was the richest owner of the Aberfeld and Good Creek pits. But these colliers are in the hands of a man named Kenyon Price, who, by foul means, disgraced the late owner of them, and Roddy and Tom are determined to wrest them from his grasp.

The only other property left them by the late Matthew Mathews is a place known as Star-crow Farm. The boys, having been evicted from Kenyon Price's employ, go and take up residence at the little wooden shelter on this farm. Here they meet a wonderful little Welsh mountain boy named Dafydd Kees, with whom they become firm friends.

When the colliers find their property they come across an old mine-shaft, and that they discovered. They are astonished at the richness of the seam of lead beneath, and realize that with the necessary capital they could easily become rich men. They decide that they will set to work and save sufficient to start mining operations.

Roddy applies for a job at the Good Creek Colliery. He is taken on, and Tom and Dafydd with him. The boys are at once set to work at the lower, and some fine finds surprise at the large amount of coal hidden to them each day. In the evening they return to the mine-crow Farm.

Roddy has a row with some Deafian miners who have a spite against him. They are driven off by Terry Lloyd, a lively fellow, and depart with many threats for the future.

Much to the boys' surprise Kenyon Price invites them over to his house to have a little private conference. He mentions the seam of coal which runs through their land, and proposes to find the capital to start work on it on the following day. The boys refuse contemptuously, and Kenyon Price orders them to leave his house.

A few days later in the mine Roddy is astonished at a strange voice which utters from a crevice in the roof of a working. It is evident that the crevice extends to the surface of the ground, and that someone is talking to him from above. The mine boys set forth to look for the upper end of this natural speaking tube. Tom, his faithful follower in all the following day the boys lie in wait for the young speaker, who turns out to be Mr. Salk, the head-viewer of the mine. They have a word with him, and set the boiler of the engine on their way home they meet Dafydd, who seems greatly surprised, and requests them to come and look at a certain piece of ground called the Old Meadow.

(You read this week's instalment.)

the travellers, was a notice-board, with the announcement freshly painted on it:

PRIVATE ROAD.
NO THOROUGHFARE.
Trespassers will be Prosecuted with the Utmost Rigour of the Law.
By Order,
KENYON PRICE, Esquire, J.P.

"Great grubs!" said Tom. "Look at that!"
"Yes, indeed, look at it," said Dafydd.
"What was your think of it—eh?"
"Jinnin!" exclaimed Roddell, picking up a jagged lump of rock. "I'll show you what I think of it!"

He hurled the chunk of rock with unerring aim. It struck the notice-board with a resounding bang, and the staff and board were shivered and knocked flat.
"Good show!" said Dafydd; and he laughed aloud as he saw the notice-board keel over and fall. Roddy walked to the boy and, putting one hand on the other, vaulted easily over it to the other side. The others followed him.

They were hardly over when a long-legged, stocky person, with a pair of side-whiskers, looking rather like a gamekeeper, came over the stone wall that bounded the Old Meadow, and strode angrily towards the boys.
"Here's someboddy who owns the earth," said Tom. "P'raps the notice-board was dear to him. Let's have what he's got to say."

"They had no difficulty in learning it, for the stranger's voice was loud enough, and he began talking while still fifty yards away. The boys waited for him coolly.
"What are you doin' here?" he cried, in a nasal voice.
"Admair' the view," said Tom. "Ain't the sunset lovely. These f'rew clouds—"

"Who knocked that thin notice-board down?" growled the stranger, pointing to it.
"It is!" replied Roddy.
"Ha! It was you, was it?"
The gamekeeper, or whoever he was, looked so if he were about to strike Roddy, but suddenly changing his mind, pulled out a notebook and a pencil.

"What's your name and address?" he said fiercely.
"Do you want to know who I am?" inquired Roddy.
"Yes, all three of you?" roared the man, slapping his notebook down.
"Oh, but Joyce, don't you know me?" said Roddy. "I'm Lord Bryn. This is the End of Garth," he added, with a wave of his hand to the left, and that's Baron Dafydd, scotch of Garth Castle. You know Garth Castle, don't you?"

The stranger was aghast for a moment. Then, frothing with rage, he gripped the ash-bar, and he cried with teeth set up.
"If you think you can play the fool with me, I'll show yer!" he cried, striding up to Roddy, who flushed, and held up his hand warningly.

"Steady, now," he said quietly, "or you may be making a fool of yourself in a minute."
"There was something in the boy's young hewer's attitude that made the man pause. He looked at the three, and decided they were too many for him. They stood their ground as if every one willing to die for 'em, and he said:
"Makin' a fool of myself!" he cried furiously.
"You'll soon find—"

"Yes, as big a fool as Kenyon Price is making of himself when he thinks he can stop this road," said Roddy.
"You'll be sorry you said that, ye young runagate!" exclaimed the man, "when we come up there an'—a—' Good! now, what's that?" he said hurriedly, starting, and looking in the direction of the farm, whence the redoubtable bulldog came racing down the Old Meadow towards his masters, just as he could tear.

"Another blessed rood!"
"Yes; that's Sir Crowley Grippe, a descendant of the noble Stick-to-em family," said Roddy; "and he gets a grip of your pants he won't need any introducin'. It ain't everybody he takes a fancy to, an' I can see from here he don't like the look of you."
"It'd be a rare thing if he did," said Tom, eyeing the stranger.

The man with the whiskers took one waverin', doubtful look at the dog, and then turned and ran.
"You'll pay for this! I'll have yer up for it!" he cried, over his shoulder.

It was one of Grippe's rules, if he saw anybody running away to run after him. It was a dog of few ideas, but he considered the act of running away to be suspicious, and that no respectable person would do that. Consequently, he gave a grunt, and set off in chase of the fleeing stranger.

Luckily for himself, the man had a good start, and his legs came out from him at a rapid speed. Grippe's legs were short, and spring was not his strong point. The man flew over the stone wall—a really magnificent jump—and sped down the field to Grippe, finding himself outdistanced, and having seen the stranger fairly off the premises, came back, panting and wagging his tail. The three chums sat down on rocks and laughed till they felt quite weak.

"He's had a run for his money, anyhow," said Tom, stepping out for home, again. "That was one of the men who put up this fence, I suppose."
"Most likely the head of 'em. One of K. P.'s estate men," said Roddell. "He didn't know any better. He's not straight home to see some of this barrier before we go on."

They pulled down the three hurdles that crossed the road itself, and threw them down by the side. Then they went straight home to the cottage, had a wash in the brook, and then tackled the dinner, which was simmering in the big cooking-pot.

"That's all right, so far," said Tom; "but it looks pretty serious, don't you think? Kenyon Price wouldn't try barrin' the road like that unless he thought it was all right for him."
"He owns all that land, was he not?" asked Dafydd. "You mean he had bought it?"
"Yes, he has."

"And you will be able to do nothing with your coal here, if ter road cannot be passed along."
"He hasn't bought the road, though," said Roddy; "he can't."
"That's right," suggested Tom, "it's not a regular high-road, kept up by the rates. It's only a sort of track."
"That's all right, so far," said Tom, "but it's a pretty serious matter, an' that's quite enough," Roddy replied. "He evidently thinks he can stop it, though."

"If you suppose it's all bluff, or does he mean to stop it, we'd better take this gate down to his back, too. How'd you expect to get at him?"
"It's not to be done, an' I mean to see we get it done. We've got to make sure how we stand, first. That's the only thing I'm worried about. Leave it till the morning."

The boys were not a little more out of Roddy, who brought out his books and settled himself down to read. There were also many calculations to make, and he had several catalogues of things with the prices of them, which he needed to buy to start work in their own pit. There was very nearly money enough now. Tom, however, was rather hurried about the bearing of the road, and thought his partner's calculations looked like counting chickens before they were hatched, since the afternoon's adventure. But Roddy went on with his work in perfect calmness.

"Suppose K. P. has us arrested for trespass?" suggested Tom presently.
"Don't interrupt a chap. I shall have to add up this column again."
They turned out earlier than usual next morning; and after a brisk bathe in the salmon pool, they noticed that, early as it was, several

men were on Kenyon Price's ground, further up the slope, very busy about something. "Let's go and see what they're up to," said Roddy; and he led the way to the farm's boundary. A little watching soon convinced him.
"They're gettin' ready to sink a bore-hole," he said. "to try for coal."

"They was doing the same thing in several places over the hill," said Dafydd. "I mean to tell you, but for affair on ter road put it out of my head."
"Were there, though?" said Tom. "D'you think you'll get a run of 'em?"
"I don't believe it a bit. They might strike just the jag end of ours, though, on their land."

"That'd be awkward, wouldn't it?"
"I don't see what harm they could do. But if there's any chance, they'll do it, you may be sure they will. I must look to an eye on 'em, specially if they sink a shaft."
"Nearly time to start," said Tom, glancing at his watch. "We shall have to hurry over breakfast. Got our grub packed, Dafydd did so?"

They set out for Aberfeld soon afterwards, and passing through the Old Meadow found the hurdles and notice-board were still down, as they had left them. When they were half-way to Aberfeld, however, they met a gang of eight or ten men coming up the hill, and with them was the lanky, whiskered stranger of the evening before.

Accompanying him, ahead of the rest, was a burly, red-faced man, who walked with a rather a bullying swagger. The boys had not seen him before. The person with the whiskers seemed to be in a hurry, and Tom and Roddy, and making some remark to his companion, began to stride towards them.

Roddy Prepares a Feast.

THE red-faced man called him back, however, and they went on their way, conversing as they went, and evidently arguing about something. The rest of the gang were quiet workmen and navvies.
"That looks as though it's our point to the Old Meadow to do a little more fencing," said Tom thoughtfully. "The best-faced chap seems to be the boss of the gang. I don't like his looks."

"We'll find out how things stand before we do anything else, I vote," said Roddy. "Stick the pace on, an' let's make for Lawver or Williams. We can't hold it in the hill, and with them, who's had been travelling faster than—"

(Continued on the next page.)

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