

SOUTH AFRICA v. ENGLAND AT THE OVAL. (See Below.)

GRAND INTERNATIONAL NUMBER

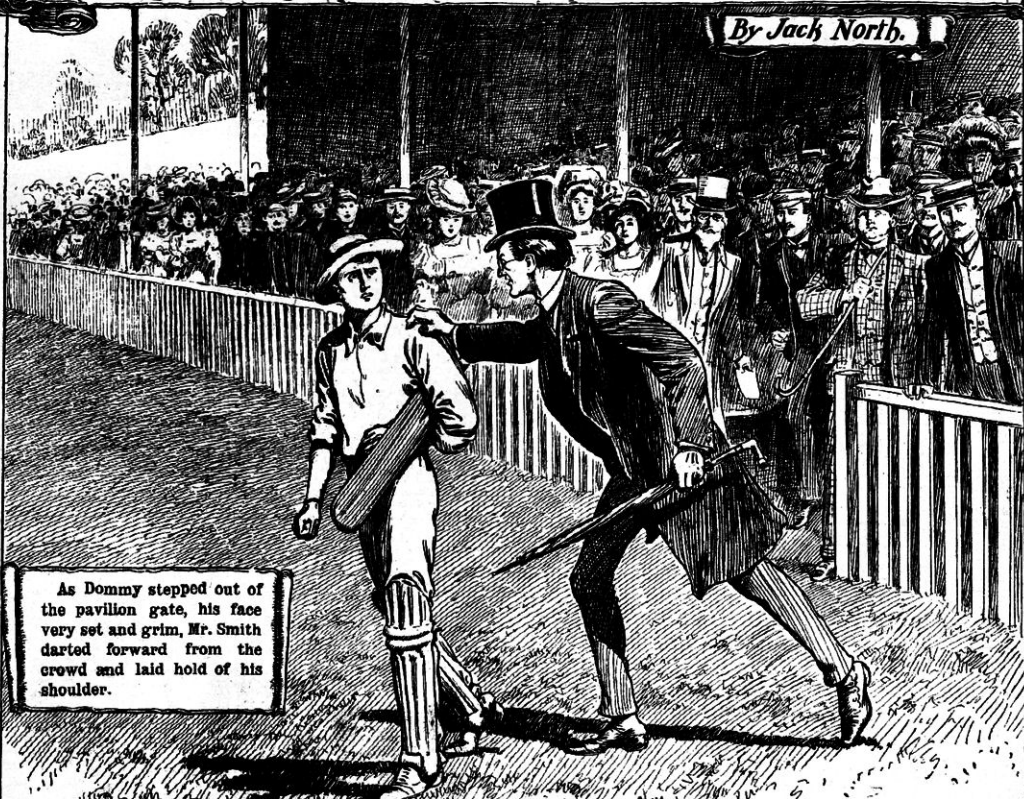
THE BOYS' REALM

of Sport & Adventure

1^D

A Young Afrikander *A Tale of the Test Match.*

By Jack North.



As Dommy stepped out of the pavilion gate, his face very set and grim, Mr. Smith darted forward from the crowd and laid hold of his shoulder.



Dommy's Miracle

A Gale of the Best Match. By Jack North.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The South African Selection Committee.

IT WAS the Friday evening before the third Test Match, which was due to begin at the Oval on the following Monday, and during the course of the game against Essex that day the Colonial party had suffered a great disaster. Not that they had been beaten; on the contrary, Essex would have to do something quite phenomenal on the morrow if victory was to be the country's. But Shalders, batting in his finest style, and well over the century, had had to retire hurt, with a small bone in his left hand broken by a ball from Buckenham, and there was little prospect of his being able to play again during the tour.

This would have been a grievous matter at any time; but circumstances made it far worse just now. For when the selection committee had met the evening before, their choice for the Test Match team had been made within five seconds, for the simple reason that they had only eleven men available. Stanley Snooks had been taken ill during his visit to Ireland, ten days earlier; Robinson, the reserve wicket-keeper, had a broken finger, and Aubrey Faulkner and Smith had both been badly hurt in the last match.

"You'll have to play yourself, George," said Sherwell to the manager. "I can't quite see myself playing in a Test Match, my boy," was the reply. "If you happened to be playing Cornwall or Cumberland, say, and were a man about, I wouldn't mind turning out. But to play against England—well, I'd better even play a man short than carry an absolute passenger. What's the matter with asking John Hooper?"

"Crowfoot" replied Sherwell. "I found out when he was, and wired to him a couple of hours ago; but he can't possibly turn out." "Mr. F. J. V. Hooper, the old Cambridge heavy-weight boxer and cricket ball, is a South African."

"What of Charles Llewellyn?" "Hampshire was his off-and-you can't name them. I felt pretty cheeky about asking, I can tell you."

"You've been doing some looking round already, haven't you?" "Yes, Hoskin, the Rhylles boy, out of Oxford."

"Yes. If he was up at Oxford just now he'd get his head of him, it's the Tongue-faciatum you know, and I can't begin to find out where he is."

"If he's as much as that; but there is a schoolboy in England just now who fits for Test Match cricket; Dominic Mayall's the lad!" "Yes, Jim; but what he bats well, and is a grafter in the field; but says about his nerves?" "That's his god, sir. I don't believe you can do better than play him."

"Wait a moment, Hathorn. If it's Long Vacation for Oxford, it's summer holidays for me, poor young buggar. My word, I guess he'll catch at this chance!" "What's the address?"

"Dominic Mayall, care of Sylvester Smith, Esquire, The College, Christiane. But I'll wire, if you like. I know the young un's father, and he and I got quite chummy up at Sunderland."

"Easily enough. He's had to stay at the school, poor young buggar. My word, I guess he'll catch at this chance!" "What's the address?"

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"Yes, sir, the Head allowed me to go an' play at Sunderland, even though it was durin' term."

"I consider that the Head acted—but never mind that. Mr. Harlow is not here, is it?" "I'm for me to decide; and I say unhesitatingly that I shall not allow you to go!"

"But that hardly seems fair, sir. Would your mind writin' to the Head an' seein' what he says? I heard you say the other day you had his address; or, if you'd give it to me, I'd wire, an' save you the trouble."

"I will not give you the address, and you certainly will not go to London to play in this match. Your friend Mr. Harlow, sir, what ever his name may be, might have known better than to ask you! Go to your study to once!"

"I certainly will not play in this match, won't I? That's all you know about it. Sissy Smith," muttered Dommy to himself, as he returned to his study. "If you'd let me see the Head, an' if he refused, I would have been different; but you won't even give me his address, 'cause you know very well what he'd say. It's just your nasty, putrid, mean spite!"

"Your friend Mr. Harlow, sir. Pretends he doesn't know old Hathorn's name, the bouncer! 'P'raps he don't, though I'm sure he would on his hat, wouldn't he? 'Tint's a month ago since he gave me three hundred lines for not knowin' who Haulha, the boy who was in the club, had been dead an' buried for centuries!"

"Back in his den, he packed his cricket-bag, an' ran down stairs to his room. 'Didn't I know I was quite so short as this!' he muttered. 'Nine an' fourteen ha'penny, an' he was far to Ruston's corner, an' he was that meek walkin' part of the way. Then there's a tannor to come out of it for a wire to Hathorn. I can't possibly borrow from any of the boys, 'cause they'd be sure to get through the vac. It's a low game borrowin' from youngsters like that. Let's see how far I stand!"

A careful reckoning showed him that his money would take him to Watford, whence he would have some chance of reaching the South African's quarters in London.

"Train at 10.15. I ought to be gone," he said, and he turned to go. "Wait a minute, Sissy. I must cut out by the window, an' across the playin' fields."

He carefully lowered his precious cricket-bag by a rope, and then, getting out of the window, let himself down until he hung full-length, with his hands clutching the sill, and lightly dropped, landing on his feet like a cat.

Then across the playing-fields he sped, and in ten minutes he was at Watford. After due consideration he took a ticket to the junction twenty or thirty miles away, with the idea of throwing the housemaster off the scent should he make up his mind to look for him.

To most town-hill and many public school-boys the money difficulty would have seemed a matter of course. Dommy had a good watch, which he could easily have pawned in the first town he came to; but fortunately the boy's experience of life did not include pawnshops, and that device never occurred to him.

In other respects he showed himself sagacious enough, though. He would not wire from the station, for he had not a farthing, and he should inquire there; he waited until he reached the junction. Then he telegraphed to Hathorn, and he had his bag sent by the South County Cricket Ground, at Leyton.

"They'd be sure to have left the hotel before this," he thought. "I should feel quite comfortable until the train had come in and carried him away. There was a place about half a mile outside Watford, where the railway ran side by side with the road. The college stood just in the angle where the road turned away to the left. Dommy had a good figure of Mr. Smith lurking along the dusty road."

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Sissy Smith "in Pursuit."

MR. SMITH may have been a well-meaning man in general; but he had certainly never given Dommy any fair play. He was well aware that the Rev. John Harlow, Tutuستان's general and respected headmaster, would have conceded to the boy's request without any demur. He told himself that that was merely because the Head was weak and foolish, and that, as he stood for the time being in Mr. Harlow's place, it was for him to do as he thought best; but he knew at heart that this was mere juggling with his conscience, and now that Dommy had taken matters into his own hands, he was quite as much upset as the rest of us; and the Head would say as the lad's defiance of his authority. He wished now that he had said yes; but, as he had said no, it was determined that the boy should not get the same what.

"The matter would be sure to come to the Head's knowledge, so that there would be no chance of any such surreptitiousness to be troved, Mayall should not have the satisfaction of getting his own way."

"I should have been there two hours before he could get a train, so he turned back to the school after he had seen that which bore Dommy just him. He packed his cricket-bag, an' ran down stairs to his room. 'Didn't I know I was quite so short as this!' he muttered. 'Nine an' fourteen ha'penny, an' he was far to Ruston's corner, an' he was that meek walkin' part of the way. Then there's a tannor to come out of it for a wire to Hathorn. I can't possibly borrow from any of the boys, 'cause they'd be sure to get through the vac. It's a low game borrowin' from youngsters like that. Let's see how far I stand!"

Arrived at the junction, he could learn nothing more, for he had not had time to get a ticket to Watford had gone to his dinner; but Mr. Smith thought it did not matter much. He knew the boy had gone to London, and he was sure to get there. It did not occur to him until he reached Euston that he did not know where to find the boy. Since that time, he has been asked there informed him that the Australians put up at the Inns of Court Hotel, and that "he should fancy that the porter would be able to give him some information as to where Mr. Smith dined and stayed, an' a groveller—Mr. Smith disliked and feared persons—and was referred by some factious personage to the Savoy."

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"That little pig Wray did go an' sneak!" he thought. "I reckoned the young beast would when he called out to me to ask where I was going, but the bag as I passed over the playin' fields!"

He put his head out of the window, and Mr. Smith saw him at once. "Step, Mayall! I command you to stop!" he yelled wildly.

"I'll pull the communication-cord, sir!" he yelled. "But I don't think it'll do better. I haven't got enough money to pay the fine."

"The train bore him out of sight of the preceding figure in the road, and he flung himself back in the seat and fairly roared with laughter. "He'll be a raw," he said, regaining seriousness. "But the old man won't expel me, anyway. I'm jolly sure he'd have let me go if he'd been here!"

THE OPENING CHAPTERS IN BRIEF.

CHOTA LAL NATH CHANDRA DAS, an Indian prince, and a new boy at St. Ninian's School, who is placed in the Fifth Form. He is the possessor of a big diamond globe, which contains a mystery.

OTTO HEINRICH, a mysterious German, who arrives by boat, means to steal the globe.

ROBERT HAMILTON, Nelson Lee's wards.

DICK STARLING, Gardner, Procter, Russell, Arkle, pupils at St. Ninian's School.

Otto Heinrich, the mysterious German, becomes acquainted with the boys of the school. Being of the same nation as the other boys, he is able to pass himself as an old man, and stays with Fraulein Hoffman as her uncle. He does not allow that he is Heinrich, and hides to her the mystery surrounding the gold pocket which is in his possession. Fraulein Hoffman is astonished beyond measure to meet her brother Karl, whom she thought to be captive in a German prison on a charge of treason. He tells her that he is in the care of the gold pocket, which contains a minute plan of a German treaty which is being sent to the British Government.

He breaks into St. Ninian's the same night, and endeavours to steal the globe. He is present in the nick of time by the appearance of Nipper and Dick. Dr. Shuttleworth now places the pocket in the hands of the boys, and tells them that he is the key of which is only known to himself and his two wards.

Unwished for, luck Fraulein Hoffman manages to get hold of the key-ward which opens the safe, and she immediately sends it to the boys.

Lal sees Karl Hoffman in the village, and recognises him as the man who had been expelled from the school a few days previously. He admonishes him, but the German movement catches Lal unawares, and stuns him with a blow of his fist.

(Now read the next week's instalment.)

The Theft of the Pocket.

W HILST Fraulein was examining Lal, he heard the sound of approaching wheels coming down the road. Following with excitement, he snatched up Lal's key and, accompanied by the convict of his coat, and hastily dragged him down the passage into the yard at the rear of the cottages.

When the dogcart had gone, a dogcart rattled past the cottages and vanished round the turn in the road. There were no more signs of the man who had been expelled from the school and the other was Nelson Lee.

When the dogcart had gone past, Karl Heinrich heaved a sigh of relief, then he gazed at the huddled heap at his foot and ruefully scratched his head.

"What is this that has happened," he growled. "Of course, I was bound to stop him following me, but I didn't want to do him any serious harm. I wonder how much he knows. If I were sure that he had not discovered who I am, and where I'm lodging, I'd carry him into the middle of the road, and leave him there, as the first passer-by to find."

He pondered for a moment or two; then he checked his head. "I don't intend to afford to take any risks," he muttered. "It would ruin all my plans if he were found, and recovered consciousness, and told the police. He would be bound to secure the pocket. I should have been better pleased if he had left me alone; but, since he has chosen to follow me, he must be allowed to do so, to prevent him interfering with my plans. The only question is, what shall I do with him? I might as well get rid of him in the yard, and as he did so his eyes fell on the mouth of an old well which had formerly supplied the cottages with drinking water.

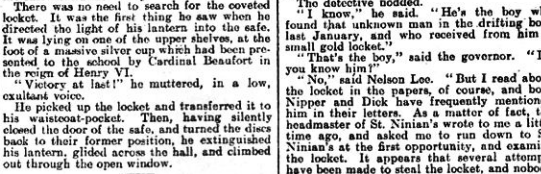
"The very thing," he exclaimed. "He'll be quite safe there, and it's a hundred to one there isn't enough water in the well to drown him. He is probably recovered consciousness by to-morrow morning; but by that time I shall have secured the pocket, and shall be on my way to London. He won't be able to tell anybody of the matter when he recovers consciousness, of course, but as soon as I reach London I'll send an anonymous letter to the headmaster of St. Ninian's, telling him that the boy who was expelled in that way shall prevent him interfering with my plans without leaving myself open to a charge of murder."

Meaning thus, he dragged the unconscious boy across the yard, raised him in his arms, and dropped him into the mouth of the well.

St. Ninian's School



BY POPULAR
A TALE OF MYSTERY AT
ST. NINIAN'S SCHOOL.
MAXWELL SCOTT.



Nath Chandra Das, who is studying at St. Ninian's," he said, turning to Nelson Lee. "He's the son of the Rajah of Tanjore, whom I met when I was in India many years ago."

"The detective nodded. "I know," he said. "He's the boy who got that unknown man in the drifting boat last January, and who received from him a small gold pocket."

"That's the boy," said the governor. "Do you know him?"

"Of course," Nelson Lee. "But I read about the pocket in the papers, of course, and both Nipper and Dick have frequently mentioned the name of the boy. As a matter of fact, the headmaster of St. Ninian's wrote to me a little time ago, and asked me to run down to St. Ninian's at the first opportunity and examine the pocket. It appears that several attempts have been made to steal the pocket, and nobody can imagine why."

"I accept Sir Shrewsbury's invitation up to the present, but now I am in this neighbourhood, and have finished my work on the Tudor case, I shall probably do so to-morrow. In the meantime, what is Lal, as Nipper calls him, doing here at this hour of the morning?"

"I must see him at once," said the governor. "He turned to the warden.

"Where is the boy he asked.

"He wanted to walk back to the school as soon as he had recovered from his faint, but the warden insisted on keeping him until he'd sent you that the boy was here."

"Quite right," said the governor. "You'll come with me?" he said to Nelson Lee.

"Five minutes later the two men entered the porter's lodge, which was just inside the prison gates. Lal was sitting in a wooden chair, looking very white and shaky, and plastered with mud from tip to toe."

"Now tell us what's happened," said the governor, who had introduced Nelson Lee.

"In a few words Lal told them of the affair in Mr. Rant's study, after which he described how he had recovered the unknown burglar in the village; how he had shadowed him; how the man had outwitted him; and how he had lost consciousness."

"When I came round," he continued, "I found I was lying in a disused well, which was three parts full of mud and slime. I tried to climb out, and although I tumbled back about a dozen times, I managed it at last. I then set out for Ninian's, but just as I was passing along the road, the unknown burglar happened, but I think I must have fainted. However, I'm all right now," he added cheerfully. "I don't think I can think of anything better to be getting back to the school."

The governor laughed.

"The governor was going to get back to St. Ninian's," he asked.

"Walk of course," said Lal.

"I agree with Lal that he ought to return to St. Ninian's as soon as possible," he said.

"They're sure to be very anxious and alarmed about you at the school, and I don't like to keep them in suspense until to-morrow morning."

"Then you think I'd better take him back now?"

"Yes; and I'll come with you," said Nelson Lee.

"Again Lal protested that he was quite able to walk back to the school, but the two men merely laughed at him; and a quarter of an hour later the governor and Nelson Lee, followed by the crack of a revolver.

"Get a Thief to Catch a Thief!"

IT has already been described how Otto Heinrich, by examining Fraulein Hoffmann's letter, discovered that she had written to her brother telling him what the key-ward of the safe was, and urging him to come to the school, as the word would be changed on Saturday.

As the letter was written on Wednesday night, and would not be received by Karl until Thursday morning, Heinrich decided he must make the attempt to secure the pocket either on Thursday night or Friday night. As the reader knows, he decided to make the attempt on Thursday night.

When Heinrich had spelled out the words on the envelope, he discovered that the man had deceived him, a spasm of unaligned fury distorted his face. Presently, however, his features relaxed, and his thin and cruel lips half parted in a grin of triumph.

"So I've only to keep watch on St. Ninian's to-morrow night and Friday night!" he muttered to himself. "I've only to wait until Herr Karl has broken into the big dining-hall, and opened the safe, and secured the pocket! And then..."

He chuckled softly to himself, and replaced the blotter on the desk. Then he put on his hat, went for a stroll, and did not return until half-past eight next morning until seven in the evening Fraulein Hoffmann was called to the school by the arrival of an assistant German mistress. When she returned to her cottage, she was surprised to find Heinrich waiting for her.

"I've just received a telegram from the German ambassador in London," he explained. "He wishes to see me at once, as some important business has occurred in connection with the embassy. I am leaving Clevedon by the 7.45, which will land me in London about a quarter to eleven to-morrow. As you know how long I shall be away, but, of course, as soon as my work in London is finished, I shall come back here and resume my quest for the pocket."

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for Karl, and that the latter would give up the locket without compelling him to fire. Hearing that Karl's blow had caused the revolver to explode, however, the mischief had been done; and there was nothing to be gained, therefore, by refraining from firing again.

It must not be supposed that Heinrich argued all this out in the deliberate fashion in which it is here set out. But that was the conclusion at which he instantly arrived at; and as Karl lodged past him and fired his heels, Heinrich, availing round on his heel and fired a second time.

The bullet struck Karl between the shoulders. With an appalling shriek he fell to the ground, and fell, writhing, to the ground. Quivering with excitement, Heinrich darted towards him and fell on his knees by his side. With trembling hands he unbuttoned Karl's coat; but ere he could plunge his fingers into the waistcoat-pocket where the locket lay, Nelson Lee dashed into the fire-escapement and the governor of Greystones at his heels, and Lal a little way behind.

With a cry of mingled fear and baffled rage, Heinrich sprang to his feet. Scarcely had he done so ere Nelson Lee's hands were at his throat. For one brief instant the two mingled in a struggle; but the doctor, armed with a hurraic effort, born of the strength which comes from despair, Heinrich hurled the detective and the chief of the fire-escapement hands, and dashed out of the fire-escapement with the fleetness of a hunted hare.

The Truth at Last.

"You stay and attend to this fellow!" cried the governor excitedly. "We'll go after the other chap!"

Without waiting for Nelson Lee's answer, the governor started in pursuit of Heinrich, whilst Nelson Lee knelt down beside Karl, who had fainted from loss of blood and set to work to revive him.

In the meantime the reports of the two revolver-shots had awakened everybody in the street, and whilst Nelson Lee was endeavouring to steady the detective's hands and to steady Karl's shoulders, two half-dressed school-boys rushed into the fire-escapement in a state of great excitement, and uttered a cry which the other was Dick; and their bewildered amazement when they saw Nelson Lee may be imagined.

"The gunner?" gasped Nipper. "You here! When did you come? What's happened? Who is this? Great Scott! It's that fellow who looked after Mr. Otto Heinrich and who has been having another try to steal the locket!"

Nelson Lee began to explain what had happened, so far as he knew what had happened, but before he had spoken a dozen words Dr. Bluntner and Mr. Rant arrived, and were quickly followed by an excited crowd of boys, most of whom were in their shirts and trousers only.

"What's gone wrong, as the reader may imagine, was quite as astounding to see Nelson Lee as Nipper and Dick had been. He bombarded the detective with a stream of questions, whilst Nelson Lee was trying his best to answer them and to attend to the wounded man at the same time, the governor and Lal returned with the locket, and the detective had accepted it.

"I wonder who he was?" said the Head.

"He was Otto Heinrich, sir," said Lal promptly.

"Otto Heinrich?" cried twenty excited voices in the same breath.

"Yes," said Lal, "I spotted him as soon as I saw him; and this chap—pointing to Karl—"is the fellow who broke into Mr. Rant's study this other week."

"So Hamilton says," said the Head.

"There's no doubt about it, sir," said Lal.

"Not a bit!" rejoined Dick and Jack Bluntner, who were standing quite close.

"I spotted him first in the village," said Lal. And he briefly described how he had observed Karl, how he had outwitted him and stung him, and how he had escaped and made his way to Greystones Prison.

"What do you make of the affair?" asked the Head, turning back to Nelson Lee.

"I am a confederator of his," said Lal on the conclusion of Lal's story. "What do you think has happened? We have known for some time that Heinrich was plotting contrivances to secure the locket, and when this young fellow came into Mr. Kant's study a fortnight ago and tried to steal the locket, we naturally concluded that he was a confederator of his. But I saw that two men were in league, why did Heinrich shoot him?"

"I don't discuss those questions afterwards," said Nelson Lee, who by this time had succeeded in stanching the bleeding from Karl's wound. "In the matter of this young fellow, nothing has been done to carry this young fellow to jail, and send for the doctor as quickly as possible," he said, "he is seriously injured, but I think," he asked the Head, "that Karl had been sitting on the couch in Mr. Kant's study and a messenger had been despatched for the village doctor."

"He's done very, I'm afraid!" he said. "In fact, I shall be very surprised if he lives till daybreak."

While they were waiting for the doctor, the Head told Nelson Lee of the various attempts which had been made to steal the locket, and of the mystery that surrounded it.

"I am very anxious for you to examine it, and also to see what you can make out of it, in your desire to steal it," he said. "It is now in the big safe in the dining-hall. May I fetch it and

show it to you while we're waiting for the doctor?"

The detective assented, and the Head departed. Five minutes later he came back with a white scarf face.

"It has gone!" he said, in an agitated voice. "The safe does not appear to have been tampered with, and the windows are open, and the locket has disappeared."

Before Nelson Lee could offer any comment on this startling announcement, the doctor arrived. He examined Karl, and confirmed the detective's opinion.

"Nothing can be done for him," he said. "He is dead."

"Do you think he will recover consciousness before he dies?" asked the Head.

"The doctor has no opinion on this point, for at that moment Karl heaved a long-drawn, fluttering sigh, and opened his eyes, and spoke a few words, spaking in German, he asked for water; and when he had moistened his lips from the glass which Nelson Lee handed him he turned to the doctor, and, still speaking in German, asked—

"Is there any hope for me?"

"Whilst there's life there's always hope, you know," said the doctor evasively.

Karl knew what that meant. He closed his eyes, and two big tears trickled down his cheeks. He raised his eyes, and looked up into the doctor's face again.

"Send for my sister," he said, in a low voice. "Fraulin Hoffmann. You know where she lives?"

"Your sister?" exclaimed the astonished doctor. "Are you Fraulin Hoffmann's brother?"

"Yes," said Karl. "And—and I should like to see her once more before I die."

When a messenger had been despatched to the little cottage on the Hill Road, Nelson Lee sat down beside the couch and took the dying man's hand in his own.

"My name is Nelson Lee. You are the only person who can throw any light on this tragic affair, and you shall be free to proceed to the village on the events of the last few weeks. You are dying. Secrecy can avail you nothing now. You help us to solve the mystery of the locket?"

"What do you want to know?" asked Karl.

"Did you see Otto Heinrich who shot you?" asked Nelson Lee.

Karl nodded.

"Why?"

"Because I wouldn't give him the locket."

The detective started.

"Then the locket must have been in your possession at the time," he said. "Now I begin to understand. It was you who opened the window in the dining-hall? It was you who hid the locket from the safe?"

Again Karl nodded.

Heinrich was lying in wait for you outside, and when you climbed out of the window he asked you for the locket. When you refused to give it up, he shot you?"

"Did he get the locket when he had shot you?"

"I don't know. I remember nothing after hearing the crack of his revolver until I opened my eyes and found the locket in my waistcoat-pocket when I took it from the safe. If he didn't get it, it will still be there in his pocket; and I cannot move them. Feed in my powder, and see if it is still there."

"The detective deftly inserted a finger and thumb into the pocket, and—

"Yes, here it is," he said; and he drew the locket out.

"The Heaven he didn't get it, after all!" sighed Karl. "Now, examine the locket, and tell me what you make of it."

The detective opened the locket, removed the two glass slides, the photographs, and the lock of hair. He turned the locket over, and examined the front, and then the back.

"I have seen this locket before," he suddenly exclaimed. "A secret spring—oh? This grows interesting."

"What is the secret spring, the false back of the locket snapped open, and he drew out a small, round, gelatine film.

"Wonderful man," murmured Karl admiringly. "I see. What a pity they didn't baffling you. I see. What a pity they didn't send for you before?"

"I have not listened to those complaints. He was examining the gelatine film with the profoundest interest.

"This is a micro-photograph, isn't it?" he asked.

"Yes," said Karl.

"For moment longer—but only for a moment—Karl heitated.

"Ah, well," he said at last, "seeing that I have discovered so much, I must tell you all. It is a photograph, taken by a detective camera, of a secret treaty between Germany and Russia, which was signed last January."

And so at last the truth was out. And five minutes after the locket had been opened, and Fraulin Hoffmann returned into the room, flung herself on her knees beside the couch with a heart-pending cry, and threw her arms around her dying brother's neck.

And now we will leave them, for such scenes are too sacred for the prying eyes of strangers. It is enough to note that Karl, and Fraulin Hoffmann's spirit had winged its flight, and his heart-broken sister was sobbing in the arms of the Head.

(The concluding chapter of this splendid story will appear in next week's BOYS' REALM.)

THE BOYS' REALM FOOTBALL LEAGUE.

All About our STARTLING NEW PROGRAMME for 1907-8. SOLID SILVER CUPS, SILVER MEDALS, AND HUNDREDS OF MATCH FOOTBALLS TO BE GIVEN AWAY!

Your Editor is prepared to present a Large Number of Solid Silver Challenge Cups to Certain Bona-fide Football Leagues throughout the country. Secretaries of Football Club Secretaries are requested to draw the attention of their League Secretaries to this announcement now. Form of application will be found below.

- The following are the Conditions under which the Cups will be given:
- The League must play the game according to the Rules laid down by the Football Association.
 - Each League must be a properly constituted League in which the clubs engage in a genuine competition.
 - Each form of entry must be accompanied by full particulars of the competition, which must be of one season's standing, or if formed this season must be accompanied by proof that it is a genuine competition.

In connection with these great League Competitions for THE BOYS' REALM Challenge Cups we intend to publish records of the positions of the clubs in the various Leagues as the season progresses, and to award weekly prizes of footballs for good performances. Football Club Secretaries are requested to draw the attention of their League Secretaries to this announcement of Your Editor's splendid offer.

THIS FORM FOR FOOTBALL LEAGUES ONLY.

Name of League
 Year of Formation
 Number of Clubs in League
 Secretary's Name and Address

This form, together with full particulars of the League, to be addressed to the Secretary, THE BOYS' REALM League, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.

The following Leagues are being formed for the benefit of Unattached Clubs throughout the country—

- Section 1. "THE BOYS' REALM" LONDON LEAGUE.**
 TWO HANDSOME SILVER TROPHIES (Senior and Junior) for open competition.
 DIVISION ONE OR-NORTH. DIVISION TWO—SOUTH.
 Finals (Senior and Junior) in each Division to play each other at Close of Season for the Cup. The losing teams in the Finals to receive Solid Silver Medals.
 Average age of teams in Junior Division not to exceed fifteen. Average age of teams in Senior Division not to exceed eighteen.
- Section 2. "THE BOYS' REALM" SOUTHERN LEAGUE.**
 Open to any football club in the South of England, excluding Greater London.
 TWO HANDSOME SOLID SILVER TROPHIES (Senior and Junior) for open competition.
 Average age of teams in Junior Division not to exceed fifteen. Average age of teams in Senior Division not to exceed eighteen.
- Section 3. "THE BOYS' REALM" NORTHERN LEAGUE.**
 TWO HANDSOME SOLID SILVER CUPS (Senior and Junior) for open competition.
 Average age of teams in Junior Division not to exceed fifteen. Average age of teams in Senior Division not to exceed eighteen.
- Section 4. "THE BOYS' REALM" SCOTS LEAGUE.**
 Open to any football club in Scotland.
 TWO HANDSOME SOLID SILVER TROPHIES (Senior and Junior) for open competition.
 Average age of teams in Junior Division not to exceed fifteen. Average age of teams in Senior Division not to exceed eighteen.
- Section 5. "THE BOYS' REALM" IRISH LEAGUE.**
 Open to any football club in Ireland.
 TWO HANDSOME SILVER TROPHIES (Senior and Junior) for open competition.
 Average age of teams in Junior Division not to exceed fifteen. Average age of teams in Senior Division not to exceed eighteen.
- N.B.—These Trophies are only to be put up for competition on condition that a certain number of teams in each League compete for them, such number to be decided by Your Editor at an early date.**

RULES AND CONDITIONS.

- Only clubs which have been established at least one season (exclusive of 1907-8) are eligible to enter, and the respectability and standing of each club must be vouched for by some responsible person.
- Clubs desirous of entering one of the above contests must fill in the form below, and send it together with a list of their engagements, with the average age of members of the opposing clubs, and letters from the Secretary of the League, to the Secretary, Boys' REALM Football League, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C., as soon as possible.
- The Cup will be presented at the end of the football season to the clubs in each section which have the most points for a given number of matches. If two or more clubs finish with an equal number of points, the goal average shall decide the winners. The decision of the referees (Your Editor, the Secretary, and another) on any question of dispute in this competition shall be final.
- After the contest has started we shall, from time to time, publish tables showing the positions of the clubs at the time of going to press. Secretaries must, therefore, send in each week the full result of their matches, which result must also be accompanied by a notification from the Captain of the opposing team, signifying that the report is quite correct. These results must reach the Secretary of THE BOYS' REALM League at the above address not later than the Tuesday morning following the match.
- Such an invitation to enter one of the contests of the League into the bona-fide of the entering clubs and their fixtures.
- All matches to be played under the Rules of the Football Association.
- The Cups to be won outright. No club which has previously won a Cup will be allowed to compete again for a period of three years, although they may send in their reports in order to participate in our weekly award of Prize Footballs.
- Opposing teams must, in every case, be of the same average age.

THIS FORM FOR SINGLE UNATTACHED CLUBS ONLY.

Date Club

Playing Ground

Average Age of Members

Colours

The above club is desirous of entering THE BOYS' REALM League (Section), and the members agree to conform to the conditions governing the same, and to abide by the decision of Your Editor, the Secretary, and a referee in any case of dispute.

Secretary's Name

Address

New Readers May Start To-day!

THE BOYS' REALM OF CRICKET

A Fascinating New Story of County Cricket.

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



The Chief Characters in this Fine Story. ARTHUR LOVELL, Hampshire. He becomes a professional. His uncle is ruined by James Lagden. KIT VALANCE, Hampshire's best bowler. He first comes to notice in the Galle match, where he takes Arthur Lovell's wicket. Later he becomes Arthur's firm chum. LEN VALANCE, Kit's twin brother. GEOFFREY LADGEN, an amateur and a good batsman. He is Arthur's jealous rival, who he hates and endeavours to injure. He is Arthur's rival for the hand of Molly Hilton. A JAMES LADGEN, who has ruined Arthur's uncle. BLANE, Captain of Loamshire, and the steady friend of Arthur and Kit. He is Molly Hilton's cousin. PONSOMEY, Geoffrey Lagden's friend, and a man of similar character—ambitious to a degree.

and in his plain-spoken way he said as much to the Loamshire captain. "That was no accident, Lovell," the young amateur remarked. "If I were in your place, by Jove, there would be a row about it." Lovell smiled grimly. "There will be a row," he replied briefly. "All the better. It was an deliberate thing as I ever saw," said Fortescue. "The wonder is that the whole crowd didn't see it. I can't see what's the matter with Lagden to-day. He's on the warpath, and so mistake it." Arthur nodded, and passed on. He did not want to discuss the matter with members of the team. It would be time enough to talk about it when it came before the county committee. Lagden was facing the bowling of Frank Woolley now, but he did not stand long against it. He had effected his purpose, and sent the Loamshire captain back to the pavilion, and to his relief, he saw that the incident had passed without suspicion. But he knew that Lovell knew the truth; he knew that some other, at least, would guess it, and he was not easy in his mind. He could not help thinking of the reckoning to come, for it was too much to expect that Lovell would be silent after such an occurrence. And a batsman would his whole attention to face the bowling of the young Kent out.

Lovell did not flinch. "I asked me, sir, what my intentions were, and I have told you. I have stated what I believe to be the truth. I am ready to say it again before the committee. The matter may be kept from outsiders. Between ourselves it will have to be settled." "Yes, that is true." "Lagden deliberately threw away my wicket. There is no mistake about it. Others saw it as well as myself." "I saw no accident," said the colonel stiffly. "I certainly thought that it was an accident, and considered Lagden very clumsy." "If you are determined to keep to that opinion—" "I can do nothing else, since it is the truth." "I can do nothing else, since it is the truth." "I can do nothing else, since it is the truth. Lagden has his faults—grave faults, I acknowledge—but I cannot believe him capable of such treachery." "Lovell did not reply. But his expression showed that his opinion was not in the slightest degree altered by the vehemence of the colonel. He knew that Lagden had acted deliberately, and he made up his mind as to what he would do, and this time there was no going back for him. He was captain of Loamshire, and as captain he intended to scratch Lagden's name off the list and finish the match without him. Nothing the colonel could say would alter his resolution a second time. He would yield again, and regretted it. He would not yield again. Colonel Hilton looked into his face, and read there his grim determination, and realised that argument would be useless. A dark shade came over the old county cricketer's brow. He was not accustomed to opposition, and although in theory he fully admitted the right of a cricketer captain to act exactly as seemed right in his own eyes, in practice he expected to be consulted and considered to a very large extent. He could not—or, rather, would not—believe that an amateur of the Loamshire team could have intended to betray his side, and a good deal of pugnamy was stirred in his breast by the firm stand Lovell took upon the matter.

The first instalment tells how Arthur Lovell distinguishes himself in the Galle match, in spite of the efforts which Geoffrey Lagden now forth to keep him in the shade. Soon after, a change in his fortunes necessitates his forfeiting his status as an amateur and turning professional. Kit Valance, Arthur's bosom chum, has a twin brother named Len, who is not credit to his family. Lagden loses Len Valance to injure Arthur in such a manner as to make it impossible for him to play in the next match against Yorkshire. Len makes a bad blunder, and strikes down Blane, the captain of the county team, with a foul blow in the dark, mistaking him for Arthur. Blane is unable to play in the next match against Yorkshire. Ponsomey is appointed in his place as captain. Ponsomey is a keen player, and has to resign his captaincy, as he is not fit to officiate. Arthur refuses the honour, and to Colonel Hilton's chagrin, resigns to play for his amateur club. He is afterwards decidedly the better of the score, defeating the home county by a large majority. Arthur and Kit break friendship through the agency of Kit Valance. During the next match with Hampshire, Harding, the Loamshire captain, falls in a wicket, and is long making it impossible for him to play for some time. The matter is abandoned, and the captaincy of Loamshire to Arthur Lovell, and he presents on him the county. On hearing of his appointment, Arthur hints to Arthur that his services will be obeyed. The following day the match with Hampshire, and Lagden, by his insinuation and faulty play, rouses Lovell's anger. Lovell orders him off the field. At the conclusion of the match, Arthur and Kit quarrel, and but during the Loamshire innings, when the amateur shows his true class, and the Loamshire captain is dismissed, and causing the downfall of the wicket.

(How read this novel's instalment.)

ALL Down for 190. ARTHUR LOVELL strode into the pavilion on the Tonbridge ground, his face pale and set. He did not speak. "It was useless to speak. The mischief was done now, and he felt that he had only himself to blame. For the second time he had yielded against his better judgment, and for the second time he had had to suffer for it. For the colonel's sake he had departed from his resolution. He had played Geoffrey Lagden, and Lagden had repaid him by direct treachery. He had been weak, weaker than a cricketer should be. He should have stood firm, and the result, what he might have expected. Many a curious glance was thrown at Lovell as he entered. Everyone seemed to know that he had noted the incident on the pitch, and wondered at Geoffrey Lagden's extreme elusiveness. Few suspected that it was anything more than that they were in the presence of the expression upon the Loamshire captain's face as he brought in his bat after a splendid innings, which had been cut short by the action of his partner at the wicket. There was no reason why Lovell should not have walked on to the end, and been out at the close of the Loamshire innings, and a second century might very possibly have rewarded him, but for Geoffrey Lagden. But that could not be helped now. Lagden was skill at the wicket, and Arthur Lovell was out for 142. Kit Valance was next man in. He glanced curiously at Arthur as he passed him. His glance showed that he, at least, knew the truth, that Lagden's action had been no accident, but was planned to show the fall of the Loamshire captain's wicket. The Kent bowlers resumed their attack, while the cricketers were in a buzz of comment upon the loss of Lovell, and remarked upon, that Kit Valance gave the amateur a very wide berth in making his first run of fifty runs. "Extremely clumsy of Lagden," Colonel Hilton remarked to Molly. "I should never have expected such a thing of him." "Molly nodded, without speaking. She did not believe that it was an accident, but that Lagden had purposely sent his captain out, and the girl's heart was full of indignation. Fortescue was another who guessed the truth,

and in his plain-spoken way he said as much to the Loamshire captain. "That was no accident, Lovell," the young amateur remarked. "If I were in your place, by Jove, there would be a row about it." Lovell smiled grimly. "There will be a row," he replied briefly. "All the better. It was an deliberate thing as I ever saw," said Fortescue. "The wonder is that the whole crowd didn't see it. I can't see what's the matter with Lagden to-day. He's on the warpath, and so mistake it." Arthur nodded, and passed on. He did not want to discuss the matter with members of the team. It would be time enough to talk about it when it came before the county committee. Lagden was facing the bowling of Frank Woolley now, but he did not stand long against it. He had effected his purpose, and sent the Loamshire captain back to the pavilion, and to his relief, he saw that the incident had passed without suspicion. But he knew that Lovell knew the truth; he knew that some other, at least, would guess it, and he was not easy in his mind. He could not help thinking of the reckoning to come, for it was too much to expect that Lovell would be silent after such an occurrence. And a batsman would his whole attention to face the bowling of the young Kent out.

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The Oval Cricket Ground, the home of the Surrey C.C., where the great Test Match against the Old England, and he departed from the wicket without having broken his duck.

The last man in came out of the pavilion with his bat. "It was close upon time now for the stumps to be drawn, but there was time for Fielder to take another wicket, as it proved. Wentworth, who was last man in, faced Fielder's bowling for a single over, and the last ball went off his bat fairly into the hands of Marsden, the Kent captain. The Loamshire scores now totalled 190. They were six runs behind Kent on the first innings, the champions having knocked up 196. With the fall of the last Loamshire wicket play ended for the day. "The hopes of the Kent cricketers were high for the following day, but doubt and discord were present in the Loamshire camp. Kit Valance Makes a Discovery. OLIVELLE HILTON suggested at his grey mustache that he should say to the captain. "I cannot credit it, Lovell! A Loamshire cricketer—a gentleman player—deliberately sent out his captain! The colonel's manner and tone were very decided.

"Then you have just put your mind, Lovell!" said the colonel stiffly. "Yes, sir." "And you have decided—" "I am quite aware of that, said Arthur, with a slight curl of the lip that added to the irritation of the county manager. "And you are prepared to face adverse criticism of the bitter kind?" said the colonel tartly. "I have no other choice." "You have the choice of playing Lagden." "I have my duty to do to the county and to myself. I gave him a second chance, and he has taken a foul advantage of it. But I am quite in your hands. I know your position is a difficult one, sir, especially considering James Lagden's influence in the club. I am quite ready to resign." "That is impossible—for the present, at least." "Then it is a question of choosing Lagden or me, and you must decide for yourself," said Arthur Lovell. "I have been patient—so patient that those who dislike me have taken

advantage of it, and never expected me to resist. If I am to be captain of Loamshire, I must be obeyed by the team. Otherwise the captaincy is only a farce. But there is one point you may count on. We must not see Lagden. I think it quite possible that we shall win in the last innings without all our wickets falling, and the general public, at least, must be led to believe that the captain would have been played if we had wanted him."

"On the other hand, we may need every man at the finish." "In that case, I can only say that it is wiser to play a man short than to play a proved tractor. The colonel made an irritable gesture. "I tell you I cannot believe that of him!" "Unfortunately, there is no doubt in my mind. The captaincy is already buzzing with the incident of Lagden being ordered off the field. I suppose you do not want a reputation of someone of that sort? There has been several chances, I should think."

"Quite enough," said Colonel Hilton. "In fact, too much. You may not be aware of it, Lovell. The captaincy of his friends has not been without complaints to make." "Indeed," said Arthur indifferently. "I am not so much interested in the pavilion that you, Lovell, have determined to pass over the amateurs as far as possible, and make it a professional's game—indeed, I think it is a pity that you, when he explained the team against Yorkshire." Arthur Lovell shrugged his shoulders. "No," said the colonel, raising his tones a little. "I do not believe it, Lovell; but I mention of someone of that sort? There has been several sides."

Lovell was silent for a moment or two. "I am not so much interested in the pavilion that you, Lovell, have determined to pass over the amateurs as far as possible, and make it a professional's game—indeed, I think it is a pity that you, when he explained the team against Yorkshire." Arthur Lovell shrugged his shoulders. "No," said the colonel, raising his tones a little. "I do not believe it, Lovell; but I mention of someone of that sort? There has been several sides."

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Arthur Lovell knew exactly how the colonel would feel. He was not a man to add to his difficulties more than he could help. But Lagden's conduct had left him no choice but to act as he had now done. And, if his captaincy of Loamshire was to be anything more than a farce, if the county was to have any chance of beating the champions in this season, it was necessary for him to be firm. Lovell had changed his clothes after the match, and after the talk with the colonel he had gone to the ground for a stroll in the country. It was yet early in the evening, and the light, if not good enough for cricket, was ample for the purpose of seeing something of the beautiful Kent country. Near the pavilion he passed Kit Valance. The young Loamshire bowler nodded distinctly at Arthur, but said nothing. The smile of the beautiful Kent country was still there. The breach between the two champion cricketers of Loamshire seemed to have grown wider than ever, and seemed unlikely now that it would ever be bridged.

Kit could not forgive his erstwhile chum for his belief that Len Valance, the seapeeper, had made a foul advantage of it. But it was his lane upon Blane, the former county captain. Arthur knew it to be the truth. But could not be blamed for refusing to believe it of his twin brother, casual as he knew Len to be.

And so the colonel had fallen between them, and with every day that it lasted grew more and more. It had taken the Loamshire team surprised, first, for the two young professionals had always been on the best of terms. But they had become used to it soon enough, and Geoffrey Lagden, at least, was glad enough to see the breach between the two former county players. Kit Valance, like Arthur, intended to spend what remained of the daylight in a stroll, but he waited till Arthur was gone. The young bowler was in a depressed mood, and the spirit of the quarrel, the old friendship was strong and true in his heart; he could not have torn it out had he wished. But he was not alone. Arthur Lovell was more than ever in need of a friend.

And so the team against him, in the new and trying position of captain, and with at least part of the committee's hostile, Arthur's lines were cast in pleasant places. At such a time he could not be blamed for being comforted and strengthened by the advice and sympathy of a true friend. Kit felt it, and yet he could say nothing. But he was not alone. Arthur Lovell was more than ever in need of a friend. And so the team against him, in the new and trying position of captain, and with at least part of the committee's hostile, Arthur's lines were cast in pleasant places. At such a time he could not be blamed for being comforted and strengthened by the advice and sympathy of a true friend. Kit felt it, and yet he could say nothing. But he was not alone. Arthur Lovell was more than ever in need of a friend. He stroled away through the pleasant, shady lanes in the evening, and the sweet summer evening. The bulk of the work had fallen to Kit's day, and he was more tired than usual

THE REFEREE:

By Mr. G. L. B. COVERDALE, Hon. Sec. East Riding of Yorkshire F.A., and a member of the South Yorks Referees Examination Committee.

An Important Test. IAST week I referred to testing a candidate for refereeing for colour blindness. This important test, up to the end of last season, was not supposed by many county associations, but the Football Association now recommend that the test should be universally adopted. Personally, I consider it to be of great importance. The examiners should have either pieces of cloth or sheets of cardboard, about one foot square, and the colours should be red, green, blue, white, pink, yellow, and mauve. If a candidate is unable to distinguish these colours, he should soon certainly be disqualified. Sometimes it is extremely difficult for a referee with excellent sight to discover the transgressor, owing to the players' shirts being of somewhat similar colour, and for a referee who is colour-blind the task would be absolutely hopeless.

Shortsightedness may easily be tested by placing the candidate to read letters six to eight inches in diameter at about thirty feet. If he can do this easily it may be assumed that his sight in this direction is good for practical refereeing purposes.

Anyone who is affected with deafness to a marked degree should be asked to stand down and play the part of spectator, because if he is able to hear them, and thus trouble might ensue in the match in which he is officiating.

Examinees who are asked to perform these medical tests, will then undergo a rigorous cross-questioning on the laws of the game from the first to the fourth examining committee, each of which gentlemen will fire questions at him as quickly as the future "tooter" can reply. The candidate will be asked the size of the ball (twenty-seven to twenty-eight inches circumferenced), the weight of the ball (thirteen to fifteen ounces), the dimensions of the field of play, how the touch and goal-lines are to be marked, and what will be required to point out on the model board, which constitutes to the examiners the correct order of play, what are the various dimensions—i.e., penalty area, distance between the uprights, etc. Can the corner flag be removed? Is the purpose of taking a corner-kick?

When the candidate has had the above good gruel:

of questions of a similar character to the above, the examiners will proceed, by means of dummy questions, on the model board, to test him on the offside rule. Too much stress cannot be laid on this all-important rule. The candidate must be shown this rule in all manner of ways and positions. The great point to be noticed by the referee is not only the position of the ball, but where he is at the moment it is played by a player of the same colour. In the rush to get into the position of the field at every kick, referees will be tempted to look so intently fix each change in his mind.

An alteration has been made to Rule 6 by the International Board at their meeting at Oban on 8th of June this year, whereby a player, when he himself is in possession of the ball, is not to be considered as having been played or thrown in from touch by any ball which is in play. This alteration is of the same side, is not one of the great advantages, but to the referee it will mean that he must be more watchful than ever. The referee will have to know all these theoretical tests, the examiners will give him plenty of useful advice as to his conduct both on and off the field. The candidate who should now be qualified to take charge of a match, but his examination is by means of the model board. He will now pass the theoretical test. He will now have twenty-two players, he is apt to be an abject failure. This being so, the referee must know how to use them. He must know how to use them as spectators at his first two or three matches, thus being able to form an opinion as to how he should be used. If their conduct is favourable, the candidate will be duly registered with the English Football Association as a qualified referee. It will now be his duty to be able to assist to the class of match he receives to officiate at. For the first season or two he will only receive appointments of minor importance. His knowledge and experience of the game widens, so will the importance and the class of the matches to which he will be appointed. A good referee is the means of making a good match, and good matches means the success of Association Football.

(Next week "How to Found a Charity Cup Competition.")

THE SOUTH AFRICAN CRICKETERS:

A Chat about our Colonial Visitors, by ROBERT ABEL.

TWICE before South African cricketers have visited England, but now, for the first time, they are measuring their strength against that of the Mother Country. The following are the names of the Springbok team: From the Transvaal—G. A. Faulkner, C. E. Floquet, E. A. Halliwell, M. Hathorn, R. O. Schwarz, W. A. Shalders, P. W. Shervell, J. H. Sinclair, L. J. Tancred, A. E. Vogler, G. C. White. From the Western Province—J. Kotze, S. J. Snook, From Natal—D. Nourse, H. Smith.

It will be seen that eleven of the players come from the newly-acquired territories of the British Empire, but among them are four fresh faces, who will be familiar by their names only to the great majority of Englishmen.

J. H. Sinclair is well known to us, and has long been one of the pillars of the game in Johannesburg. He is the giant of the side, and for the last ten years has been the greatest all-round player that South Africa has produced, and fit for any side in the world. He bats in free, easy style, and standing nearly six feet, four inches in height, possesses an enormous reach; while, so far as his batting goes, he employs

a powerful back stroke,

which brings him many a run. As a bowler he makes the most of his reach, and varies his pace cleverly, while getting little work on the ball both ways.

The next player who is attracting a great deal of notice is E. A. Halliwell, the first best wicket-keeper of the day. His career must now be drawing to a close, but there are a large

number of cricketers who think that he is just about the finest exponent of stumping they have ever seen.

Mr. Hathorn is a batsman of a useful character, and has played many a good innings against English teams, and scored nearly 1,200 runs in a tour of three years ago. He has also an excellent record as far as the present season is concerned. A. E. Vogler is another very good all-round man. He originally became known to us as a capable performer with the bat in Natal, and came to England with the idea of qualifying for the county of Middlesex, and was given a place on the M.C.C. staff. His abilities were very apparent, and he at once did well in the best company. Mr. A. Bailey, M.P., that generous patron of Cape cricket, induced him to return to Johannesburg, and he has accepted a position which will enable him to play as an amateur.

W. A. Shalders, L. J. Tancred, and R. O. Schwarz have all been in the country before. Schwarz is a very useful bat indeed. The new men to us are C. E. Floquet and G. A. Faulkner. The latter only came into prominence about a year ago, but he has proved to be a batsman out of all knowledge, and finished last season third in the averages. Floquet is an utility man, whom many think one of the best of the younger men.

He is never depressed

by adverse circumstances, and just the sort of player to cheer up a side when things are going against them. G. C. White did only fairly well when here

THE OVAL:

A brief history of the historic ground on which the Great International Test-Match will be played next Monday.

The County Ground of the Surrey C.C. It is generally supposed that Hambledon is the birthplace of cricket, and that the C.C. was formed before the Hambledon Club was heard of. It is with the home of the first-named club that we are dealing to-day—that famous ground, which was known as Kennington Oval, whereon many a historic match has been fought in the past, and on which, on Monday next, the South Africans will face England in the third great Test match.

The Oval belongs to the Duchy of Cornwall, and is, therefore, the property of the Duke of Wales. It was once originally a market-garden, but it was turned into a cricket-ground away back in the year 1845. Previous to this, Kennington County had no ground, as it was the only place where the game could be played, and it is safe to say that most of the cricket included in thereon was extremely primitive.

In 1845, the Montpellier Cricket Club,

which had been in existence since 1726, and which until then had been playing on the ground adjoining the inn—known as the Beehive and Cricketers—held a meeting, with the object of forming a county cricket club, and acquiring the Oval as a playing-field. The treasurer, Mr. W. Baker, entered into negotiations with the Duke of Cornwall, and as the club's headquarters, whereas there were great rejoicings. No time was wasted in transferring the headquarters to the market-garden into a cricket-ground. At that time it was bounded by light hedges, and it was not until the early fifties that it was properly fenced in. Our present King has always been very interested in Kennington Oval, and how much the Surrey Cricket Club owes to him can only be known to those who have followed its progress for a number of years in its management. The Oval soon became a recognised institution, and its popularity increased, and a commodious pavilion should be built. The credit for this enterprising undertaking must be given to Mr. William Barrup, the honorary secretary. Mr. Richard Roberts, one of the oldest members of the club, was responsible for

the erection of the pavilion,

which fulfilled its purpose admirably for quite a long time. During the early years, Surrey cricket declined terribly, but there was always an appreciative and enthusiastic following, and it was at the Oval, even during the darkest part of its history. The balance sheet of the club could hardly make ends meet. Things were gradually improving, and it was about this time that the first few rows of seats were covered in.

In the summer of 1856 it was decided that the Oval should be reserved for cricket only, and that no football should be played there during the coming winter. Since that time there has never been a football match played there, and, so far as one can see, there is no likelihood of such a thing taking place.

The Surrey C.C. has made great progress of late years, and they now possess a pavilion second to none in the country. A picture of it appears on another page. They could be little else but that the ground will be packed with eager sightseers on Monday next, when England faces South Africa, for the first time since the latter was first heard of when fought at the Oval, but none have created more interest than the one now about to take place.

What will we do, we wonder? (The Besley Eleven, and "A Speed Test," are the titles of the two special long, complete tales which will appear in next week's issue of THE BOYS REALM. Order your copy now.)



Back Row—A. D. Nourse, H. Smith, W. A. Shalders, M. Hathorn, G. A. Faulkner, G. Allison. Second Row—J. H. Sinclair, R. O. Schwarz, Rev. Robinson, P. W. Shervell, L. J. Tancred, A. E. Vogler, J. J. Kotze, Front Row—S. J. Snook, G. C. White, S. D. Snook.

over here, and his invaluable slow leg-breaks make many a batsman unhappy. He is a lot of victims. Then there is Vogler, whom we know something about. He gets better every season. Nourse is also very useful in this line, and causes a first-rate change. G. A. Faulkner is another man who has taken a lot of wickets, and Mr. P. F. Warner considered him on many occasions more difficult than any other.

S. J. Snook, G. C. White, and C. E. Floquet can also bowl, and there is no lack of variety. Looking over the composition of the side, they are certainly much stronger in every way than any previous team who have visited here, and it is not surprising that they have done so well since their arrival on these shores.

On Monday next the last of the great test matches will be played, and there is considerable excitement as to the issue. Many have predicted the downfall of the Mother Country, but personally I do not think so. However, time will show whether my opinion is correct. I am looking forward to England's seeing a notable victory in the last great match.

(Among the numerous attractions which next week's BOYS REALM will contain are the opening chapters of a splendid new school serial, entitled "Teddy Lester's Crusade." Owing to this fact, I foresee a great rush on the issue for next week, and would advise all my readers to order their copy in advance, and thereby avoid all chance of disappointment.)

THE BOYS' REALM

THE CHICK ON THE CLIFF.

A Magnificent New Story of Stirring Adventure. By E. HARCOURT BURRAGE.

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

THORNHILL UNITED END XI (average 16). All dates open.—Apply to H. Hunt, 6, Canal Terrace, York Road, Kings Cross, N.

VICTORIA ATHLETIC F.C. (average 17) require matches home and away for next season. Nearly all dates open.—Apply to H. Cooper, Secretary, 10, Abbot Terrace, Gilling Wood Road, Sutton.

ST. JOSEPH'S F.C. (average 14) require matches home and away for next season. Nearly all dates open. Prefer to play clubs at Balham, Mitcham, Tooting, Clapham, Epsom, Ashted.—Apply to H. Cooper, Secretary, 10, Abbot Terrace, Gilling Wood Road, Sutton.

WANTED, matches for coming season for Hammer-smith District Alliance, Division I. Club. Private fixtures, etc. Action. Also good center-forward and back. Subscription.—Write to Hammoth, 17, Dorville Road, Hammer-smith.

CLARENCE A.F.C. (age 14-16) require dates for the coming season with local clubs.—Apply to Secretary, H. Brown, 3a, Upper Accommodation Road, Hammersmith.

TROY TOWN ATHLETIC F.C. (average 17. medium) require matches with respectable clubs in Rochester and district for 1907-8. Apply to W. Bennett, 7, Orange Hill, Deptford, S.E.

THE SWALLOW F.C. (14-15) require matches home and away.—Apply, by post, to W. Groves, 12, Portland Road, Salford, London.

LYNDEN ROYERS F.C. (17, medium). All dates open. Home and away. Found and away.—Only respectable clubs need apply. Also a few players required.—Write to Mr. E. G. C. White, 27, Shirley Grove, Lavender Hill, Battersea.

ALL SAINTS F.C. (average 14, weak) have a few dates open. Lower than usual season.—Apply to F. Newman, 240, Huntley Street, W.C.

ST. LUKE'S JUNIORS A.F.C. require fixtures for the coming season within a radius of ten miles of London. Apply, giving address, to Hon. Secretary, 13, Kingsland Road, Canon, Cardiff.

MAURICE HOSTEL F.C. 4TH TEAM (average 16, weak) want matches home and away for next season. All dates open. Home: November 28th, January 11th, March 28th. Away: November 23rd, December 25th, February 22nd.—Write to Mr. E. H. Blythe, 10, Fenchurch Street, London.

FOLLY RANGERS F.C. (17, medium) want matches away from home, within five miles radius of Walthamstow. All dates open. Home: November 23rd, December 25th, February 22nd.—Write to Mr. E. H. Blythe, 10, Fenchurch Street, London.

ST. BARNABAS F.C. (16, medium) require matches home and away for next season. 1907-8. Only respectable clubs need apply. Also a few players required.—Write to Mr. E. G. C. White, 27, Shirley Grove, Lavender Hill, Battersea.

ST. MICHAEL'S F.C. (average age 17) weak require matches home and away for the season 1907-8.—Apply to F. A. Neville, 62, North Street, Maida Vale.

LLEBODD SWIFTS F.C. want home and away matches with junior teams in Camarvonshire for next season. Grounds five minutes' walk from Bethesda Station.—Apply to W. Jones, 7, Porth, Llanelli, near Barmor, North.

ST. HUBERT'S F.C. (Practically) winners of Perthshire Football Association Cup, 1906-7. (Age 14-15) are open for all dates except August 28th, September 7th, 14th, 21st, and October 5th. Home: January 11th, 18th, 25th, February 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, March 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th, April 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, May 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th, June 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st, July 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th, August 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th, September 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, October 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th, November 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, December 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, January 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th, February 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, March 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th, April 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, May 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, June 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th, July 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, August 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th, September 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st, October 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th, November 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th, December 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, January 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th, February 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st, March 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th, April 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th, May 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, June 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th, July 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th, August 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With Ropes and AMP.

A Magnificent Tale of Colliery Life.
By DAVID GOODWIN.

THE FIRST CHAPTERS IN BRIEF.

Roddy Owen and Tom Hughes, two Welsh colliers, are the heirs of a certain Matthew Mathews, who was the rightful owner of the Abertoff and Coed Coch Pits, with these pits a place called Starvehow Farm. The boys, having been asked from Kenyon Price's employ, go and take up residence at the newly worked shelter on this farm. Here they meet a wonderful little Welsh noddler boy named Dafydd Rice, with whom they become firm friends.

What exploring their property they come across an old shaft, and they descend. They are astonished at the richness of the seam of coal 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 Coed Coch Colliery. He is taken on, and Tom Hughes with him. The boys set at once set to work as before, and make no little surprise at the large amount of coal tallied to them each day. In the evenings they return to Starvehow barn.

Work now starts in earnest at the Bryn y Garth Pit, however being proffered from the village. During the work they meet a man who tells them of the discovery of a seam of coal beneath the pit, and the result, which they find to be a large seam of coal, suddenly heard, and a huge flood of water sweeps down the gallery, carrying all before it.

(Now read this week's instalment.)

DANGER. RODDY'S shaft was drowned in the roar of the water that overwhelmed him. He was only conscious of being struck as if by a great cushion. Then the water closed over him, and hurled in his ears, and he felt himself being swept onwards like a straw.

Like a stone to the surface, gasping, and flung out an arm. It knocked against the coaly wall, and showed him the pace at which he was being borne along, though all was dark. He struck out with both arms to keep himself afloat, and heard the roar of the front of the flood rolling along. He could see nothing. Somebody was gurgling and spluttering close by, and he thought he heard Terry's voice. Then a hand clutched him in a wild, convulsive grip, and Roddy, having no mind to be pulled down and drowned by anybody, struggled and struck with his right arm, and only just managed to free himself.

"Tom, Tom!" he shouted. "Where are you?"

There was no answer. "We're done!" he thought wretchedly—"the mine and us, too!" The water'll jam us against the roof, and we shall be drowned like rats!"

To Roddy, and to the others, they seemed to have been struggling for life in the darkness for an age, so little can the brain judge how time passes in moments of great stress. In truth, it was not more than thirty seconds that the water first came down upon them, and even as Roddy was giving up hope—for the water was deadly cold and numbing—he saw a gleam of light ahead. The shaft was open.

Tom's voice was heard calling out eagerly somewhere in front, and Roddy's heart gave a sound of joy, for he had almost feared Tom had succumbed. The long rope, a few feet all, was too great length, and soon the light showed him Terry Lloyd and Fiuellen close by him. Flourishing a hand round the rope, and a couple while in front Tom was already whirled into the open shaft-bottom. A moment or two later they were all there.

The shaft was an extraordinary sight. It was filled with bubbling, swirling water up to within a foot of the roof's mouth, and it was full of fellows and putters nearly as good as them. They were clinging to a couple of ropes hanging from the top, and to each other. The roof of the shaft was being struck and splashed with a couple of men in it, and Jenkins—one of the heavers—stretched out a hand and caught hold of Tom as he tried to get up. "Catch on here!" he cried. "Heavens, lad, but I was glad to see you! We could not get up for long road against the flood, but we thought it would save you down. There comes ter other young boss!"

"Who's here? Are there many lost?" was Roddy's first cry, and the pitmen, one by one, a hand to him and drew him to the side. In a few moments all those who had been in the upper part of the shaft were round the water, which was still swirling roughly round the shaft, and was scarcely rising there, for it was running away fast down the opposite road, which

sloped downwards, and had been shored and braced with struts and timbering, for it was not considered safe to work it.

"There was nobody down there?" cried Roddy.

"Nay, sir; not a soul!" replied Jenkins. "The roof of us all came out from ter roads when we heard ter wator, and being close to it quick, but Haynes an one of ter putters was knocked down and stunned as the wator drove them against ter shaft side. So we kept them up, and ropes was let down at once from above, and we sent ter two hurt men up in ter basket. There is nobody missing."

"Thank Heaven for that!" said Roddy fervently. "Here comes the basket down again. Swing it in, an' send up a couple of the younger putters first—the poor little beggars' hearts periash. How bitter the water is!"

"Nay, you an' Tom Hughes go up first. You had best ter worst of it, an'—"
"Obey orders, an' send up those putters!" cried Roddy sharply. "Are you boss here, or am I? We don't leave till we see all the hands out! Look alive, there!"

Two of the putters, whom Roddy saw to be blue with cold, were quickly wound aloft, and after them went Pat Lloyd and the young heaver Fiuellen, who had had an exhausting time of it in the "long road," being poor swimmers.

The "horse-gin" was a blessing that day—it worked much quicker than the crane had done. Two by two the pitmen were sent up to the top, and when anyone suggested that the boys should go, Roddy "snapped his head off." The young partners remained below, getting some sort of foothold on the sides of the shaft, and keeping hold of the rope. It was surprising how cold and chilly was the water-logged shaft, while a blasting summer sun was scorching the outside world.

"There goes our colliery!" muttered Roddy, his teeth chattering as he looked at the scething water, which now swamped all traces of their work.

"We can thank Kenyon Price for it," said Tom gloomily. "If we're beaten, it's he who's beaten us. I'll bet anything that shaft of his up the hillside has tapped this water and sent it down to flood us!"

"That's the cause of it, for a thousand, though I wouldn't believe it before! If it's done on purpose—which is likely enough—they

must ha' managed to spy on our mine somehow. Else how would they know about that fissure in the seam?"

"They've learned about it, no doubt. 'Speet they struck an eny it when they sunk their own shaft, an' guessed it ran right along the seam into ours."

"There's no question about a thing like this. They must have got a blessed clever engineer or expert!"
"Swim out," said Tom; "here's the basket." They climbed into it, very cold and stiff. "As to the engineer," added Tom, as the ascent began. "Dafydd's son him there, an' knows his name. He told it me before we came down to-day—Ellerby, I think it was; but I never heard of him."

"That 'ere!" exclaimed Roddy. "Well, he is a clever engineer—none more so; or, at least, he has been. But he's a drunken scaramouch as well, an' never can keep a job, though he would be the best. The Wyward Colliers sacked him."

"Well, then, it's clear enough Kenyon Price has brought him to do the job," said Tom wearily. "an' he's done it. Still, don't let's despair. We may get the better of this yet."

Roddy made no reply, but his thoughts were gloomy enough. Water, the one thing that ruins so many promising coal-mines, was a big foe to fight in any circumstances. But the Bryn y Garth Pit, absolutely flooded out from end to end, looked utterly hopeless.

The basket was swung in at the shaft's top, and the boys were both relieved to be in the open sunshine again, though their hearts were like lead in a bad.

"This is a bad business, Roddy," said Terry Lloyd, even his Irish cheeriness damped and put off, "an' 'tis mortal squary for you we all are."

"Ay," said Roddy, squaring his shoulders, "but it might have been far worse, Terry. Have you called over the roll?"

"We have, an' there's every man here. The two that was knocked on the head ha' got over it—they was only stunned a bit."

"Come forward, mates," said Roddy to the men. "It's no time to talk of little things like goods an' money lost. Let's go on our knees here by the shaft, an' give thanks that we're alive!"

They knelt at the word, all that rough assembly, dripping and exhausted after their struggle with death, and heartfelt was the

prayer of gratitude they offered, bare-headed: and on their knees, at the mouth of the pit.

"And now," said Roddy, as they rose, "you'll see how we'll get on. We'll have more to be done to-day. 'Better go home, mates, an' get dry clothes an' a meal. You can't be helpin' us any more, an' I don't know whether there'll ever work in the Bryn y Garth again, which I doubt. But we'll see you don't lose."

The citizen departed, after they had expressed their sympathy for the boys. Dafydd was a wise comforter, and said nothing, but walked with them in silence to the cottage.

How Hope Came Back.

TOM and Roddy doffed their wet clothes and towed them out till their skins glistened and the numbness was dispelled. Then, slipping into dry things, they made their way back to the shaft again. They lay down at the edge and discussed the situation.

"We might have known those brutes on the hill were up to mischief," said Tom. "There must be some way to undo it, though."

Roddy shook his head. "There's no way out but a quarter as badly flooded as this abandoned for good," he said; "an' by wealthy companies, who could spend any amount of money on the machinery for pumpin'! It's only throwin' your cash down a well. An' you can't be wot in a divn'-suit!"

"Yes, with a head over the shaft's rim, and peered down. A raw, wet smell, most discouraging, came up from below.

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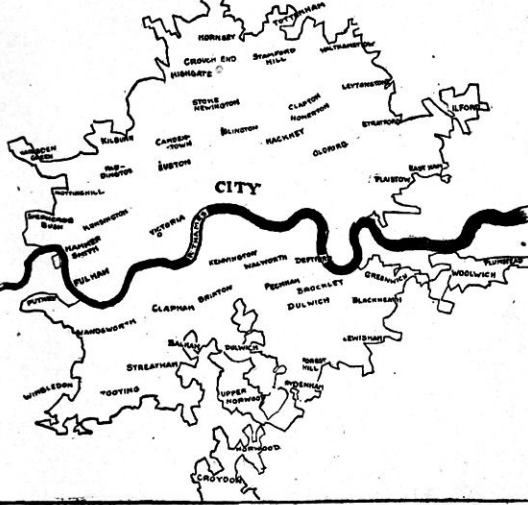
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"THE BOYS' REALM" FOOTBALL MAP.
Showing how London will be divided into two sections—North and South.

