

NEW SCHOOL TALE STARTS TO-DAY.

The Boys' Realm

of Sport & Adventure.

1^D

TEDDY LESTER'S CHUMS.

A TALE OF STAPTON SCHOOL. BY

JOHN FINNEMORE.



Curzon came headlong to the ground, and rolled in a furious, bellowing heap at the feet of Mr. Jayne.

A SPEED

A STORY OF THE BROOKLANDS RACING TRACK BY A.S.HARDY



Onward the car ran until it reached the end of the embankment, then over top into the sand at the bottom, finishing the run upside down.

THE LAST CHAPTER

At Brooklands—The Brothers—Concerning a Bridge Debt—A Match Made, and a Fortune at Stake.

IN the paddock at Brooklands Henry Fordyce, a handsome youth, who had left Oxford but twelve months ago, but who had seen much trouble since then, owing to the death of his mother and father and the loss of most of his fortune, stood talking his mechanic, Bruce, as the latter carefully surveyed the newly-constructed, 50-h.p. Cyprus racing motor that had just been run down from the Cyprus Motor Works at Acton, the first car the company, which was financed in the main by Henry Fordyce, had built.

The Brooklands track was deserted. The evening was cool. It was an excellent opportunity for trying the car. If they had waited weeks they could not have found more ideal conditions.

"Well, is everything right, Bruce?" asked Henry Fordyce presently.

"I think so, sir," replied the mechanic. "I'm very well, then. We had better make a start."

He sprang to the starting-handle himself and gave it a turn. The motor roared instantly and throbbed merrily, shaking the chassis until it trembled. Henry Fordyce got into the driving seat, and was just about to throw in the clutch when there came a strident p-p-p, p-p, p-p, p-p, p-p, p-p, from some distance away, and the next moment a motor-bicycle came up with a ruck, and a youngster, cleverly drawing it to a stand beside the racing car, leapt off. He was heated from his ride, and covered with dust.

"I thought you were never coming, Jack," said Henry Fordyce, giving the boy a quick, reproving glance. "You have a bad habit of always being late. You must break yourself of that. It doesn't matter so much in itself, only it is an index of carelessness and slackness in other things that I don't like to see in a brother of mine."

"I'm sorry, Harry," answered the lad, who looked pale and worried. "Only I was foolish last night. I sat up late playing bridge with Arthur and his crew, and lost a lot of money, and I couldn't sleep when I did turn in. I felt too upset. But I had to come down here and tell you, because—"

He paused, and looked at Bruce, the mechanic, doubtfully.

"I'd like to have a talk with you on the quiet," he added nervously. "Henry Fordyce drew his younger brother away."

"Now," he said when at length they were out of earshot, "tell me what the trouble is, Jack. How much did you lose? Come—out with it! There's no good to be gained by beating the bush."

The boy hung his head, and a deep flush warmed his pale cheeks.

"I've lost £300," he murmured. "It's all the money I've got, and more besides. It was cruel of me, Hal, when we are both practically broke, and you've just put nearly all the money you've got into this motor business. I was mad. I must have been mad, or I wouldn't have done it. Now you can bully me as much as you like me. Don't spare me. Say what you like to me. I shan't mind, for I deserve all I can get."

Henry Fordyce looked quietly at his brother and laid a hand on his shoulder.

bury's acquaintance now, and promise me that you will go straight for the future."

Jack Fordyce seized his brother's hand and clasped it affectionately.

"I will, Hal!" he cried. "I meant to give up all that sort of thing long ago, but something always interfered. I hate the whole gang of them. You'll have no cause to worry about me after this, I promise you."

"That's right, Jack," said Henry, smiling, though his heart was heavy; for, with a thousand and one reasons, and weighing upon him, he did not know where he was to get the money from to pay Arthur off. "Let's try and forget it."

He now started to return to the car, but ere he could reach it a grey racing car of low, rakish, powerful build dashed into the paddock, and the driver sprang from its seat, whipping the goggles from his face as he did so.

Henry Fordyce instantly recognized George Astbury, the very man his younger brother had been speaking of.

The yellow car had been built for Astbury, who was a daring and unscrupulous motorist, by firm of Messrs. G. Co., on the condition that he should put up some fine performances on it. They had also presented Astbury with £500, and a driver sprang from its seat, whipping the goggles from his face as he did so.

To all intents and purposes George Astbury was a professional. He made a living by his wits. It was his general extravagance and prodigality that rendered him poor, and he had lost his father's £500 a year insufficient for his needs, and forced him to have recourse to the G. Co. cards, but at a billiard table, and that however skillfully an opponent might play at bridge he stood no chance to win, and Jack Fordyce's losses were easily understood by his brother.

Seeing the brothers together, George Astbury went up to them with a broad, good-humoured smile on his handsome though somewhat shifty face.

He did not think either of the Fordyces had much money, but they were honourable men, and would pay their debts. Besides, Henry had embarked upon this motor venture, and there might be something in the new Cyprus. The Western was a good venture, too, and Henry Fordyce on his brand-new Cyprus should do anything sensational, it would cut the ground from under Astbury's feet, as it were.

The boy's public would probably only remember the car that made the sensation. Therefore, Astbury was anxious to know whether Henry Fordyce was a straightforward and honest, and rob him, fleece him as you choose?"

"I need not have continued playing," said Astbury truthfully. "I told him he had better leave off."

"Knowing full well that his pride and his courage would force him to continue. I know the George Astbury. You told him he had better leave off. It was in your own flat. Did you make him leave off by stopping the game?"

"The man flushed crimson to the roots of his hair. His hands clenched, the veins of his neck stood out in thick cords. He would have struck Fordyce if he had dared, but he knew

better. He realized that he would have no chance with that calm, determined, resourceful youth. He burst into a laugh.

"I'll make you pay for that, one of these days, Fordyce," he said. "Meanwhile, I shall expect to be paid, or I'll blacken your brother's name in every club in London."

"I shall have some difficulty in paying you," Fordyce went on. "I have little ready money now, and my brother's banking-account is almost down to zero. You see, I am frank with you. Look here, tell you what I'll do with you. I'll match the Cyprus car here against your Western, £600 to £300—double or quits—the race to take place on Saturday fortnight. What do you say to that?"

Astbury sneered.

"You've got no money, you say," he said. "Well, that secures how I that you will be able to pay me the £600 if you lose."

"You have the goodwill of the Cyprus Works—plants, material, buildings, motors and all."

"You'll put that in writing!" said Astbury, giving a furtive glance at the mechanic, whilst he began to rapidly review the situation.

"Certainly!"

It would be a good thing for Astbury, the latter thought, that he had bought the Cyprus—and he had no thought of losing—he would have done something tangible to please the Western people, and he would be able to bleed them for a bit. He would also get a hold on Henry Fordyce, whom he had always hated and feared. He would put on the screw then, and would ruin him—ruin him! Yes, he would win the match with the Cyprus. He took a quick glance at Bruce, the mechanic, and knew instinctively that the weak-looking youth would be readily bought by a bribe, if the bribe were good enough to beat the Cyprus.

He looked good enough to beat the Cyprus, but he would see that it was tampered with so that it would not give of its best in the match. He would kill the Cyprus from the very start.

"Well, I don't know," he said, appearing to hesitate. "It seems to me that that arrangement is all to your advantage. But I'll tell you my intention and make the match if you'll also have a side bet on cash, for say, £50. But you must give me a loan on that property, mind."

"Very good," answered Henry Fordyce; "it shall be done. Come to my solicitor's office in Chancery Lane—Phillip Mortimer & Co.—tomorrow, and we'll arrange everything."

"I'll be there. What time—eleven o'clock?"

"Eleven o'clock will suit me precisely."

With that Henry Fordyce turned away. His brother Jack went to him as he got into the car.

"What have you done, Hal?" he cried.

"Saved you, and made the Cyprus, I hope," answered the elder brother, setting his teeth upon his hand. "We must start all over again—that's all, Jack."

And he drove the car out of the paddock, on to the track. Jack stood waiting in a fever of impatience for the car to come to Brooklands when he saw it dash into sight, and fly wildly away along the inside of the basin, to disappear in a cloud of blue smoke and dust and a hoarse, thunderous roar of the exhaust, his heart leapt high.

Why, the Cyprus motor was a mad success! He needed, George Astbury's name on of the same name move round the track at Brooklands at such a pace. He glanced sideways at the mechanic, as the latter sat in his car watching the Cyprus. He was so fast that it was as though Astbury was pulling at his moustache thoughtfully.

THE NEXT CHAPTER.

Troductory—The Surrey Stakes—The Cyprus

THE Saturday after the trial of the Cyprus motor found that car entered for the Surrey Stakes of 200 sovereigns, and added to a sweepstake of 10 sovereigns each for starters only. Weight was restricted to 200 pounds, and the distance was to be a little over twenty-nine miles. Besides the Cyprus, the Western was running, driven by Bruce, and a DeGorge; of these the lightest weight was the Cyprus, the others totalling a few pounds each.

Astbury was delighted. He wished to see what the Cyprus was worth, in view of the race match on the following Saturday week. He would be able to feel a great deal more secure, as he reckoned, and he did not mean to be beaten in that, either.

Astbury, of the type of men that never, since, after a late night spent in gambling, as usual put in an early appearance at Brooklands, where he found his car ready, tuned up to the moment, and the first trial was to be made there in the Surrey Stakes or not? That was the question he asked himself. Well, he would let Bruce Fordyce's mechanic first.

Neither Henry Fordyce nor the mechanic were to be seen. It was the opportunity Astbury wanted.

He went to Bruce, and smiled at him.

"You're a fine, hard-working sort of lad," he said, knowing how much praise was valued by the boy, and feeling a great deal more man. "I should have thought you would have been able to find a better job than with Mr. Fordyce."

"What's the matter with him? He's a good master," growled Bruce; but there was a downward set of the lips as he spoke, which was not a happy Astbury that Bruce was open to temptation.

"Oh, yes," he answered lightly, "Fordyce is a good master, but he's a bit of a tight-fisted fellow. But you don't stand much chance with this company, Bruce. They are bound to go smash. We've got inside information, and I know that they haven't got the material to make a bad time. Besides, after the race to-day, and the match, in which the Western is bound to win, we'll will the Cyprus Motor Company be worth?"

"They pay me pretty well for what I do," retorted Bruce, rubbing the parts more briskly and more vigorously than his hands.

"That may be; but there are others can pay better. What would you say to joining me with a pound a week increase to your wages, and a lighter time and more important racing to do?"

"Thank you, sir," answered Bruce. "I'll bear your offer in mind when I leave Mr. Fordyce's service."

Astbury had won fifty pounds overnight, and he had got in the pocket of his coat, and felt in a gleeful mood. He took a ten-pound note out of his pocket.

"Here you are, Bruce," he said. "Take this for a start, and get to do with it, sir!" he asked doubtfully.

"Well, I'll tell you what to do," answered Astbury. "You take the motor to pieces, give it a first class cleaning, and get it to run the best to get it to run well to-day. I like to play the game fair. I shall turn out in the Surrey Stakes, and we'll arrange everything."

That Astbury was all that he claimed to be may be said to be gravely open to doubt; but that as it may, when he had walked away, with the motor to pieces, and the parts of the engine to pieces. He had out the exhaust, and inlet valves. He put in new springs. He had the carburettor, and the parts of the engine, he did everything as Astbury had said to make the motor go.

But as it is a doubtful point that taking a motor to pieces when it is doing well ever does it any good, of course, of course, when the whole engine is thoroughly cleaned of a clean, and the combustion imperfect—how may be said to have done nothing to improve the engine.

Bruce had nearly completed his job, when Henry Fordyce appeared. The owner of the motor had got into the parts to see how thoroughly cleaned and replaced them, with the result that the motor runs more perfectly than ever.

"De you pay any attention at all to racing news? Do you study the running of cars in these races?" asked Fordyce, angrily.

Lagden was now bowling from the other end to Marabam, and Kit Valance was at mid-off, watchful for chances. And at the third ball of the over the chance came. Marabam hit a little too high, though it is safe to say that any fieldman, but Kit would have regarded it as a most possible chance. Marabam was one of a fieldman is to attempt impossibilities if necessary, and Kit went for the ball—and caught it.

There was a faint creak as the hand of the fieldman met the ball in full flight, and closed upon it with a puff of iron. And then a roar! "Well caught!"

"Bravo!" "Good indeed!" An storm of hand-clapping. Good sportsmen were the men of Kent, and though it was their county captain who had been caught out, they heartily cheered the splendid catch. Marabam left the wicket, and the board showed 13 runs for the Kent captain. Hardinge was next man in. He took four of the rest of the over, and then Kit Valance was given the bowling again, and bowled to Luis's wicket.

Hush put up a good defence, but the bowling was too much for him. He did not venture to run, and merely made a quiet attempt to let the over prove a maiden, but he was not to escape so cheaply as that even.

The fourth ball escaped his bat in some manner, and Marabam, who had been sworn that he hit just where the ball was, hit his bat over the empty air, and the crash of a falling wicket told him where the leather had gone to. He glanced down at it in dismay.

"Out!" There was no gaining that word of doom from the umpire. He made away to the pavilion, the second of the Kent batsmen to earn the unenviable duck's egg.

"Frank Woolley came to the wicket. Now Frank Woolley was expected to make a stand against the bowling of the Loamshire champion at all events."

The young Kent colt, splendid with both bat and ball, took his place at the wicket and faced the bowling. He was a little nervous at the task, but he did not quite know how extremely difficult it would be. Kit Valance was on his feet. He meant to take the wicket, if it was within the bounds of possibility to do it, and he put all he knew into the next ball.

Down it came, a balling modestly, which had proved fatal to many a batsman, afore Frank Woolley, and was destined to prove fatal to many a batsman after him.

There was a shout from the spectators. "Bowled!"

There was no mistake about it. That clack had been the signal of a falling wicket, and the balls were on the ground. Frank Woolley was out.

The young Kent colt, like a true sportsman, left the wicket cheerfully enough, and gave Kit Valance no cause to be perturbed. Blaker came out of the pavilion.

The crowd were silent with expectation now. After the bowling of Frank Woolley, first ball, they were prepared for anything. It was just as well that they were, for Blaker's fate was destined to be as hard as that of the young colt.

Kit Valance was evidently out for scalps, and the last ball of the over took Blaker's leg stump fairly from the ground, and laid it down with a bang.

"Bowled!" "The hat trick!" "Hurrah!" Kit Valance had performed the hat trick against the champions! Three successive wickets had fallen to his bowling! No wonder the crowd cheered and clapped. Sensational cricket is rare enough in modern days, but Kit Valance was given the credit, and he went toward them for coming to see Loamshire play.

"Bravo!" "Well bowled!" As Blaker walked away to the pavilion, and Fairiservio came out to take his place, the ovation for the hat trick was still in full swing. Colonel Hilton looked on with interest. Mully clapped her little hands. Kent were five down for 17 runs now, and that collapse of a batsman at the wicket was encouraging to the Loamshire men.

Loamshire's prospects had been gloomy enough, but Kit Valance had caused them to brighten considerably. The result was made by the later batsmen it was certain that Loamshire would be left with only a small total of runs to be made, and in the absence of Arthur Lovell would not be so much left.

"Good indeed!" exclaimed the colonel. "How well Kit Valance shapes to-day! It is almost as if he was showing such splendid form to make up for the loss of Arthur Lovell. Joy, I believe we shall pull off the match after all."

Tweedie was bowling to Hardinge now. The cautious Scottish professional did not see the Kent batsman much chance to score off his bowling, but at the same time he was not able to touch the wicket.

Hardinge gained a couple of runs for the over. Then the field crossed again, and Kit Valance resumed the bowling with a will to face him. Fairiservio kept his end up well, and gained 3 for the over.

The Kent players breathed again. It seemed that the tide of defeat was stemmed at last, and the innings looked like lasting; but the result was only for a few minutes. Fate had heavy blows yet in store for the men of Kent.

The runs were added slowly, between Fairiservio and Hardinge, and when the score was at 23 Hagdings was caught out in the slips by Tweedie, by a ball from Geoffrey Lagden.

The board now displayed the figures: Six for 23, last man 2.

All hopes of equalising the score by their first innings was abandoned by Kent now, but hope of victory was not gone yet. The men of Kent had four more wickets to fall, and they were determined to make it a fight to a finish.

It wanted yet half an hour to lunch-time, and the Loamshires were beginning to hope to see Kent all down before the interval.

But the most anxious amongst them did not expect what was to come.

The score was at 32 when Kit Valance bowled to Fairiservio, with Seymour at the other end. Fairiservio was on the alert, as usual.

But the champion Loamshire bowler was on the warpath, and alertness could not save the batsman from a ball that came down with a twist on it that seemed magical.

Clack! Down went the middle stump and the balls. "Out!" And the crowd shouted: "Well bowled!"

Fairiservio went back to the pavilion, to be replaced by Hutchings, and a cheer greeted the appearance of the mighty hitter of the hot county.

But there was bad luck in store for the Kentish giant.

Kit Valance took his little run, and seemed

ignorant, but he faced the bowling with a steady pluck.

Kit Valance prepared to deliver the fourth ball of the over. All eyes were upon him. Thousands of eager watchers hung breathless upon his movements.

It was a swing of the arm, and the ball, for good or ill, has sped!

Clack! Humphreys has played at the ball, or where he believed the ball to be, which is rather a different matter, and the nimble leather has broken in in a most unexpected way, and eluded the sweep of the willow.

"Out!" The fourth wicket down to the fourth successive ball! The hat trick outcome!

The crowd cheered and clapped frantically. And Kit Valance's comrades crowded round him, and shook hands with him, and slapped him on the back in their delight at his splendid play, forgetting all thought of distinction between professional and amateur, every feeling mobbish feeling lost for the time, at least in keen admiration and comradeship.

Kent were all down in the second innings for 32.

The cricketers adjourned for lunch and congratulations at the sudden close of the home innings.

Colonel Hilton gripped Kit warmly by the hand as he came into the pavilion in the midst of the delighted Loamshire men.

"You have saved the match," he said. "And his prediction proved to be correct, for

A fortnight more passed before he was able to dispense with the crutch. Even then he was by no means fit to resume his place in the Loamshire team.

The county cricketers in the cricket world were moving on, while Arthur Lovell chafed impatiently at being compelled to stand aside from the county.

Six county matches were played while Arthur Lovell remained out of the team, at the Loamshire pavilion. In those six matches the Loamshire team learned how terrible was the loss that had fallen upon them in the disablement of Arthur Lovell.

But for the presence in the team of the best bowler of the season, it is certain that Loamshire would have sustained a serious and crushing defeat. As it was, although the batting was decidedly weak, the bowling was so strong that the county were able, to some extent, to keep their end up.

The matches were with Surrey at the Oval, with Essex at Letchworth, with Lancashire at Old Trafford, and with Yorkshire, Warwickshire, and Gloucestershire at home on the county ground at Loamchester.

The match with Surrey was hopelessly lost, Loamshire being defeated by an innings and a wide margin of runs, before a crowd of ten thousand had gathered to witness the contest.

At Leyton, however, the somewhat weak Essex team fell before the Loamshires, who won by 25 runs. It was a severe game, however, and Kit Valance contributed the chief part to the victory.

At Old Trafford Loamshire drew with Lancashire, the rain of the third day coming down in torrents and making it impossible to play out the match, a result which was fortunate for Loamshire, who had been led to get four wickets—a hopeless task with the batting they were able to put up. It was the luck of the rain, and the rain, which during the 1907 season, had at least served Loamshire a good turn.

The home match with Yorkshire in Loamchester drew the home second innings being only half finished when the stumps were drawn at the end of the third day's play.

At Archeshire no rest to his defeat at the Loamchester ground, a result entirely due to the Loamshire bowling, which again was principally contributed by Kit Valance.

Gloucestershire came next, and after a struggle right up to the close of time on the third day, Loamshire won by a single run, the last Gloucester wicket falling just in time to a ball from Kit Valance.

The last two matches were witnessed by Arthur Lovell from the pavilion. Lovell, by this time being something like his old self.

He had resumed practice on the Loamchester ground, his hands, of course, being greatly out after his long rest.

But as soon as he began to practice it was seen that he had not lost his old mastery of the throw, or his leather. The old leather came back to his hands, and though he was not yet fit for a county match, it was certain that as soon as he was fit, he would again be the heavy scorer of old.

No one was more delighted with his return to cricketing form than Colonel Hilton, unless, perhaps, his daughter Moll.

During Lovell's illness, Moll had been all kindness.

She had seen to it, with a woman's delicate care, that he wanted for nothing, and during his convalescence she had more than once come to see him with her mother.

Those visits were bright intervals in a period otherwise very dark for Arthur Lovell.

It was exparting to lie idle on the summer days, or to lounge in the pavilion watching others play, while his county drew matches where victories were wanted, or won by the narrowest possible margins.

But if these days were not very pleasant for Lovell, neither were they for the man who had caused his illness. Geoffrey Lagden, Arthur Lovell's brother, had hoped to achieve his ambition at last.

He had always considered that he was over-shoulder high for the county, and he was given a chance, he could do as much for Loamshire as his rival.

But it did not come about. Lovell was, it is probable, indeed, was a fortunate circumstance for Lagden in one respect. It prevented the otherwise inevitable inquiry into the matter, as to how he had come to be out of the game. A chance, he could do as much for Loamshire as his rival.

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Lovell being disabled, and his captaincy necessarily at an end, the incident was dropped, and he was left to his own devices, and a charge of deliberately failing his side in the match.

It was just as well, for though Arthur would never have receded from the position he had taken up, the county committee would have considered as "not proven," a result which would have been a disaster to him.

So it was allowed to drop, though it was remembered by many that Geoffrey Lagden had been out of the game for some time, and he sometimes received unpleasant reminders of that humiliating experience.

(Another thrilling, long instalment of this splendid tale of county cricket will appear in next week's issue of THE BOYS' REALM. Place your order with your newsagent at once.)



Arthur's clonched fist shot out like lightning, and Geoffrey Lagden went flying. He came to the ground with a crash, and at the same moment Colonel Hilton came out of the pavilion.

to turn himself into something like a Catherine-wheel for a moment. Then the ball came down like lightning.

Splendid batsman as Hutchings was, he was not prepared for that ball, and his balls were on the ground in a moment.

"Out!" It was a novel experience for Hutchings of the run to be out of the ball, and he stood surprised as he wended his way back to the pavilion.

The crowd cheered and clapped. They were buzzing with excitement now.

Was it to be another hat trick? Many of them knew that in the Loamshire v. Yorkshire match, Kit Valance had performed the hat trick twice in a single innings.

Was history to repeat itself here? Also for the men of Kent, it was to be even worse than that.

Hubble was next man in. He came in and took his middle with the air of a man prepared to do or die.

A breathless hush fell on the crowd as Kit Valance gripped the ball and took his run. A deep-drawn breath as he swept his right arm up and over, and a yell as the wicket was seen to fly to pieces the next second.

of the collapse of Kent left Loamshire only 29 to go in their second innings, and, even deprived of their champion, they were capable of bigger things than that.

In the afternoon, Loamshire batted, and the required number of runs cost them only five wickets.

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Arthur Lovell Losses His Temper. THE day that followed were dark days for Arthur Lovell. It was a week before he was able to leave his bed, and then it was only to move about with the aid of a crutch.

THE LAST CHAPTER.

A Dark Outlook—The Challenge—Tom's Fearful Predicament.

“WHAT are our chances of licking ‘em?”

“We sha'n't lick ‘em! They're too good for us. Jerome House has got a better eleven than we can put into the field, and leaving that, they can give us points, though not in fielding, perhaps. Besides,” added Dick Marsh, of Eversley College, “I've got a bowler, Simons, is by all accounts a marvel. Only entered the school last term. A treasure, they say he is. Can send a ball down you can scarcely see, and the next day you might catch it in your hat, but more dangerous than the first. No; we are going to be thrashed this time.”

Marsh was the captain of the Eversley first eleven. He wouldn't have unbared his despondency to anyone except Daventry, who was his close chum. Five minutes ago he had informed Weary, his best bowler, that Jerome House was going to receive the most complete, humiliating, all-round, speech-paralyzing licking it had ever had the misfortune to run up against in a cricket match. But that was to give Weary heart.

Daventry, who was sitting on a field gate, kicking his heels against the bars, answered:

“If Dering comes off—”

“Ah, there you speak!” interrupted Marsh. “Tom is capable of making his hundred. But then, he is wretchedly inconsistent. One day he plays an innings of one hundred, and the other he is a schoolgirl grin to see. But, of course, we can't lose his out.”

The great cricket match with Jerome House (School—no rival academy ten miles distant—was to take place in three days' time. Jerome House had an excellent eleven, and was said to be the strongest team in the county. This position was largely due to the deadly ferocity of a batsman named Tom Dering, who made the stoutest batsmen tremble. It was generally felt that the eleven which succeeded in lowering the colours of the Eversley eleven would earn for itself imperishable honour.

“Well,” said Daventry, after a silence, “we can only hope for the best, and that is all.”

At the moment a small boy was running round the corner with such a yell of excitement that Daventry neglected his own advice by having ignominiously backed the gate.

“Have you heard the news?” cried the small boy in almost a shriek.

“Speak, demented worm,” said Marsh sternly.

“Tom Dering is to fight a duel!”

This astounding piece of information failed to excite the interest it might be supposed to have possessed. The school, that is, the ordinary encounter with pistols or rapiers was mooted for a moment. Duelling was just then in slight favour at the school, and the terms of each combat were peculiar. A quarrel between two boys was not followed by the throwing off of coats and instant recourse to bare fists. Just now this was not considered good style. A friend of one of the aggrieved parties would bear to the other a formal challenge, which consisted in the sending of some more or less foolishly and reckless feat. The challenger laid the rights of naming this feat, and the toss of a coin decided who was to carry it out. Great sensations had arisen from this practice. Hadlett minor, when he quarrelled with Wilson, found himself obliged to remain under water for seventy seconds. The row between Burton and Marsh resulted in the latter having to spend a most uncomfortable five minutes in a mud-hole that contained a bad-tempered bull. And so on.

This duelling novelty had reached the ears of the Head, Dr. Redmayne, who was determined to stamp it out before any of his pupils obliterated their existences by something extra daring.

And now here was the startling news that Tom Dering, the hope of his school in the great forthcoming cricket match, was involved in a challenge.

“I won't have any of this rot, so such a time,” exclaimed Marsh angrily. “Who's the row-with, young 'un?”

“Billy Bitmead,” answered the small boy, shaking with excitement.

“Then Billy Bitmead will be hit!” said Marsh, in a rage. “Come on, Daventry! I mean to stop this.”

Led by the small boy, they raced towards the school. On the verge of the playing-field they perceived a group of boys, with Dering and Bitmead in the centre of the circle.

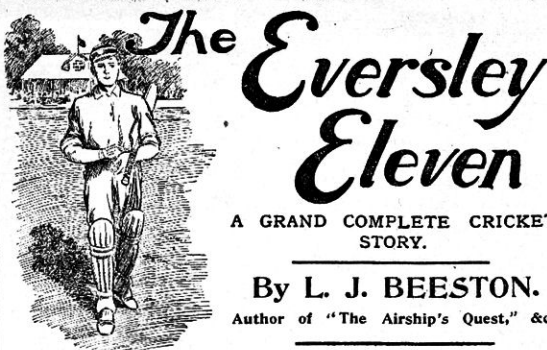
“Stop all that!” shouted Marsh, running up.

“Ye're over late, my friend,” said Mr. Whittle, a Fifth Form Scot. “Ta business has been settled. Billy challenged, and Tom has lost.”

“What's he pledged to?” shouted Marsh, facing the challenger.

There was a silence. Bitmead looked rather nervous. None of the excited spectators appeared anxious to enlighten the questioner. “What conclusion did the fool propose, Tom?” repeated Marsh.

“I've got to climb Maresfoot Spire,” answered Tom quietly, though he turned rather pale.



A GRAND COMPLETE CRICKET STORY.

By L. J. BEESTON.

Author of "The Airship's Quest," &c.

“What?” exclaimed Marsh wildly. “You'd do nothing of the sort!” he added with grimaces.

“He's bound to, in honour,” cut in Hadlett minor. “Don't you interfere, Marsh.”

“Look here, you fellows,” expostulated the cricket captain despairingly. “You'll agree with me that this choice bit of lunacy must be put a stop to!”

There was no answer; neither the least encouragement in any of their faces. Marsh groaned.

“You're sending Dering to his death, you idiot!” roared his turning savagely upon Bitmead. “No one ever got succeeded in climbing the spire.”

“Then the more honour to Tom if he does!” retorted Hadlett.

“Honour be jiggered! He will fail, and be picked up an indescribable mass of splintered bones!” groaned Marsh.

Even this pleasant forecast failed in its effect.

“Let me alone, old chap,” said Tom Dering. “After all, I've long wanted to climb Maresfoot Spire. My head is pretty cool, you'll allow.”

“And what about this match?” cried the cricket captain. “You can't play for us with a pair of broken legs or a bent spine!”

This seemed indisputable.

“Play against Jerome House first,” insisted Marsh. “make fifty runs, and afterwards you can climb to the moon for all I care.”

“Selfish devil!” said Hadlett. “If Tom's wise he'll climb the spire first. How can you

expect a man to play in an important match with such a thing hanging over his head?”

Marsh made a gesture of rage and turned away.

“I shall tell the Head,” he said to Daventry. “You dare not! I mean, you really mustn't!” beseeched Daventry. “An affair of honour, you know—”

“I shall go straight to the doctor's study!” interrupted Marsh, with firmness. “This has got to be stopped!”

And to the doctor's study he went.

The Head listened in stern silence. He made no comment; only, when Marsh had finished, he said:

“You have done the right and sensible thing in coming to me. I will see Dering without delay.”

Ten minutes later the doctor got the astonishment of his life. He had summoned Tom before him, and requested from that individual a promise to abandon his mad idea. But, though Tom was the very essence of respect and humility, he declined to give his word. At first the doctor boiled over with rage; then he perceived that his pupil was labouring under a mistaken sense of honour. His sentence was decisive.

“Disobey me, Dering,” said he, “and I shall expel you from the school at once. You understand?”

That was all. And Tom understood. The Head never went back on his word.

Tom explained the situation to Bitmead. He could not have made a worse enemy. Bitmead was a bully and generally detested. Tom had once thrashed him for ill-treating a small boy, and the tyrant never forgot or forgave the offence. He now refused to listen.

“You can back out of it if you like!” he sneered, in the presence of half a dozen others. “And you probably will.”

“If you think I'm afraid!” began Dering, turning fiery red under the other's contempt.

“That remains to be seen!” retorted Bitmead. “This is an affair of honour, between gentlemen. I have nothing more to add.”

With those haughty and scathing words Bitmead gave his ultimatum. And Dering, mad to think that such a cad could call him a coward, flung up his hands to the skies, and went straight off to climb Maresfoot Spire.

Marsh happened to be with the party. He had only to look at Tom's white, set face to see that he had further encouragement was out of the question; so he resolved to go with him, to look after him as much as possible.

Not far from Maresfoot Marsh confessed to a sneaking delight in the thought that the famous spire of Maresfoot church, which had baffled more than one climber, might now be scaled by an Eversley House boy. Also he did not know of the threat of expulsion hanging over Tom's head.

In an hour it would be dusk. The big, historic church was deserted. No one perceived the hard-climber who ascended the spiral stone stairway to the foot of the spire, which rose to an apparently needle-like point from a six-foot wide stone gallery, surrounded by a low parapet.

Tom Dering looked up the immense, tapering column of stone blocks, surrounded by a low parapet, and he calculated that it was visible for half a dozen miles round. He took off his hat leisurely.

At irregular intervals, projecting a few inches from the wall, was a row of iron spikes fixed for all time in the stonework. These were for the use of the steeplejack when he was at work on the tower, and were also for the weather-vane. Strong arms, long legs, and a nerve of steel were needed to draw oneself up from one to the other of these projections; but they were the only means of ascent.

To reach the first Tom would have to climb upon one of the buttresses at the four corners of the gallery. He proceeded to do this. For one frightful second he looked down, with folded arms, into the profound void of space below. Then he turned his eyes to the right.

A groan of agony burst from Marsh, who turned his head away.

Then Tom faced the spire. It rose a hundred and fifty feet from the gallery. A slight spring took him to the first of the iron projections. For a moment he hung there, then he pulled himself up. He gained the second—the third.

Not a sound came from those who watched him, whose heads were bent with a growing horror. He was proceeding to do this. For his hold and fall backward, nothing could save him from striking the parapet of the gallery and being hurled to the ground.

Higher and higher! He was getting on grandly. Marsh was wiping his forehead, down with his handkerchief, and saying to himself: “We ought never to have let him go!” he groaned. “Bitmead, if he comes down alive I shall regard it my special privilege to give you the thrashing of your life for this!”

Suddenly a deep gasp went up. Tom had actually reached the summit of the spire. Round this iron rail, fixed to the stone by stanchions, ran the entire circle. For Tom drew himself upon this rail. He leaned forward upon the huge golden ball, revelling and steeching himself. A strong wind was blowing. He would feel the spire trembling.

Marsh sat down. He was really too weak to stand. He buried his face in his hands.

Presently Tom stooped for the rail. In doing so he was compelled to look through the abyss of air under his feet. For an instant his nerves were shaken. The next moment the gust of space made his brain reel, his heart almost stop. The vane over his head cracked dismally as the high wind swung it to and fro. Far down some large bellows blew. It looked as small as a bat.

Then Tom recovered himself. He gripped the iron rail, let himself hang, when he felt with his feet for that last iron projection which must now be the first to help him in his descent.

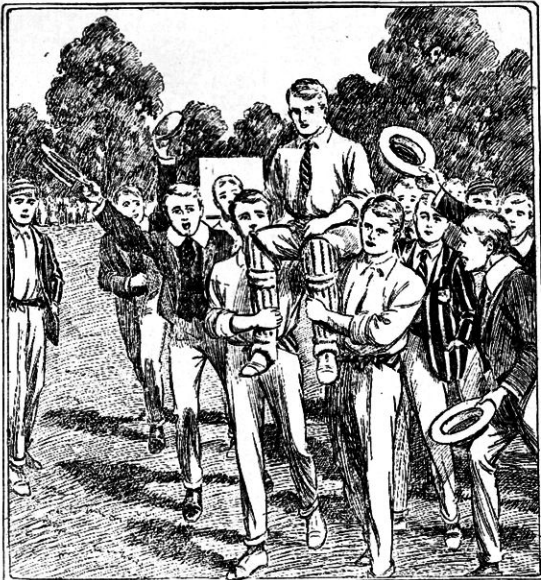
He could not find it!

He shifted his body slightly to the left, still feeling with his foot for the projection; but in this he made a terrible mistake. He should have moved to the right!

Bitmead dropped down in a dead faint. Hadlett minor was leaning against Wilson for support. The latter tried to shout explanations to Tom, but his voice, hoarse and husky with agony, could not carry up that enormous precipice of stone.

Tom was still moving to the left, hand over hand, along the circular rail, feeling blindly with his feet for the iron projection, and not finding it. It was evident that he would have to complete the entire journey round the summit of the spire. Could he hold on?

(Continued on the next page.)



The match was won! Tom Dering was carried shoulder high to the dressing-tent. There he met the doctor, who shook his hand with a hearty grip.

ANSWERS
ONE PENNY.
Every Tuesday.

SWIMMING:

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

THE speed of the shark is to that of the frog, so that a swimmer attains a pace by the crawl-stroke to which can be attained by the breast-stroke. The frog thus stands as the representative of the breast-stroke...

Independent Action of Limbs.

On the other hand, in the crawl-stroke there is no opening of the legs or drawing up of the knees, as in the other strokes. The body is almost flat on the surface of the water...

Less Resistance.

The advantage of this stroke is that less resistance is offered to the recovery of the limbs. In the breast-stroke, due to the legs, as well as the arms, being out of the water during a portion of the recovery stroke...

If one can make the arms and legs act at different times to each other, one could thus obtain a continuous forward stroke of the four limbs in rotation, and thus avoid the great dead point one observes in the breast-stroke...

Practising the Crawl-Stroke.

The best way to practise, the kick for the crawl-stroke is first to get together the feet and the arms, and to take hold of the steps or rail, and lay the body straight out on the surface of the water...

Combination of Hands and Feet.

In order to learn to combine the legs and hands, the learner must proceed gently. First he will lay upon his breast, then he will strike with his right foot and pull with his left hand, and vice versa.

(This splendid and instructive series of swimming articles will be continued in next week's BOYS' REALM.)

CYCLING:

Mr. A. E. WILLS, the holder of a world's record for cycling, tells readers how to excel at this magnificent sport.

Unregistered Meetings.

THE young rider who desires to compete in an open cycle race must take care first of all to ascertain that such race is held under the rules of the National Cyclists' Union...

There are athletic meetings dotted about the country which cycling events form part of the programme. The prize is not always a cash one, and this fact may therefore be misleading to the young amateur who desires to compete in such meetings...

Occasionally the good thing comes undone, but this is very rare, and as a rule it is had business for anyone, conspicuously or unconspicuously.

The "fun" commences. If it is not possible to pocket or hopelessly shut him in, he will be allowed over, or will have his wheel flogged, even though it involves a double fall...

do not say that all unregistered meetings are to tempt fortune in their midst. One secures, fair play at any meeting under N.C.U. rules, and plenty of good sport all over the country.

What on this subject of the N.C.U., it would perhaps be as well to state that the laws of the Amateur Athletic Association permit only pure amateur cyclists and pure amateur runners to compete at meetings held under their license.

(To be continued on Saturday next.)

CRICKET:

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

Long-On and Long-Off.

THOUGH I have fielded in most positions of late years, I have not often had to be in the deep field. But I do believe that a good man who is fond of fielding will do well anywhere.

There are two positions in "the country" which are important. The one on the on side is called long-on, and the other on the off side is called long-off.

It must be remembered that long-on may be placed anywhere from the on-side of the bowler's end to the off-side of the bowler's end.

Mastery of this position is at a great discount, and if you want to know what it is to feel thoroughly tired out, all you have to do is practise one of the great players of whom I have spoken.

No one would dream of occupying this position unless he can throw well. Very few men that I have met can throw very far, but every boy can return the ball quickly, and this is what prevents batsmen from running.

(To be continued on Saturday next.)

CHARITY CUP:

Mr. G. L. B. COVERDALE, Hon. Sec. East Riding of Yorkshire F.A., sends to found a Charity Cup Competition.

A Charity Cup Competition.

ASSOCIATION football has done a lot in the cause of charity, and rightly so. A charity cup competition should be in existence in every district, and so many districts one or more such competitions should be in existence.

At the present time it is the Senior Clubs that are to be found figuring chiefly in charity cup competitions, for the simple reason that a senior club has greater draw-ings than there are other clubs.

Rules.

1. The competition shall be called "The Charity Cup." It shall be conducted on the knock-out system, and all its matches shall be played in accordance with the rules, regulations, and bylaws of the Football Association.

2. The terms of the competition shall be (see 2d. 6d.), which must be paid before the draw is made.

3. The cup shall be open for annual competition amongst the affiliated clubs within a radius of — miles from —

4. The management shall be in the hands of the following officers, hon. secretary, hon. treasurer, one representative from each competing club, and a representative from the Football Association.

5. The draw shall be so arranged that, if possible, no bye occur after the first round. Clubs not drawn in the first round shall be exempted from the first round.

6. No player shall play for more than one club during the season in the competition, and each player shall have a bona-fide residence within 5 miles of his club's headquarters.

7. In the event of a player being registered for two or more clubs, the secretary of the club to which he is registered shall notify the player concerned, requesting him to confirm in writing one or the other of the registrations.

8. The management committee shall have the power to exempt any clubs from the qualifying rounds (should these be necessary). The clubs so exempted shall be exempted from the first round.

9. Referees shall be appointed by the local authorities, and shall be paid by the home team. The committee shall choose neutral linesmen for the semi-final and final games.

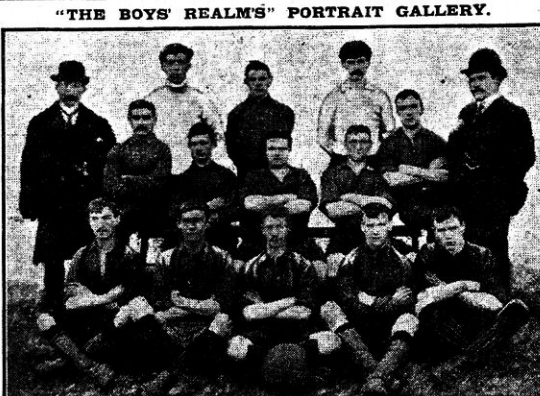
10. In case of any dispute as to the field of play or appointments, objections must be made to the secretary not later than three days (excluding Sunday) after a match. In the event of the objection not being sustained, the tie to be forfeited.

11. The amount set up to the semi-finals the home club shall forward to the treasurer on behalf of the charity fund, at least (say one-third) of the gross receipts remaining after deducting the following expenses—viz., billeting, printing, referees' fees and railway fare, and expenses of the local committee.

(The remainder of these rules will appear in next week's issue of THE BOYS' REALM.)



A practice spin at half speed.



"THE BOYS' REALM'S" PORTRAIT GALLERY.

PHENIX TEMPERANCE A.F.C., LIVERPOOL.

Secretary, Mr. J. H. Darwee, 134, Smithdown Lane, Liverpool.

Powerful New Football Story by A. S. Hardy Starts in a Fortnight's Time.

THE FIGHTING FIFTH.

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

By Popular MAXWELL SCOTT.

The New Rajah of Tanjore.

"YOU have a microscope, haven't you?" said Nelson Lee to Nipper, as he and the two boys left Mr. Ran's study.

"Well, seeing that you gave it to me, you ought to know," said Nipper, with a laugh. "Let's go up to your study, then." Nelson Lee sat on the edge of the bed and examined this photograph as soon as possible.

Followed by Nelson Lee, Dick, and Lal, Nipper led the way to the study, where, dimmed under the light, and Nipper turned the microscope.

Having placed the film on the stage of the microscope, beneath the lens, the detective studied it attentively and in silence for nearly half an hour.

There was a curious look on the detective's face as he removed the film from the stage and carefully replaced it in the locket.

"It strikes me, young man," he said, turning to Lal, "that you'd do a better night's work to-night than you have any idea of at present."

"How? What do you mean?" queried Lal, in an astonished voice.

"You're the eldest son of the late Rajah of Tanjore. I believe," said Nelson Lee, as he placed the locket in his purse.

"The only son?"

"In the natural course of events," said Nelson Lee, "you would have succeeded your father; but a distant relative of your mother's, Mr. Golab Singh, seized the throne immediately after your father's death, and has occupied it ever since."

"But," said Lal, with more than a trace of bitterness in his voice. "My mother appealed to the Indian Government, and afterwards to the British Government, to drive the usurper out, and she died, however, before Golab Singh had them over to his side, and, instead of giving me my just rights, they have been known to give them to the new Rajah of Tanjore. But what has this to do with the locket? What did you mean by saying I had done a better night's work to-night than I imagined?"

"The detective hesitated for a moment. "I'd better say no more at present, for fear of giving false hope," he said, "but I think, when the British Government have read this secret treaty. However, I'm letting my tongue run away with me again. Good-night. I must go now and have a chat with the Head."

Before they could question him he was gone, and that was the last they saw of him that night.

Next day, after having evidence at the inquest on Karl, the detective left for London, taking the lock with him. Up to then nothing had been heard of Otto Heinrich; and it may here be added that nothing more was ever heard of him in England, or elsewhere.

"Good-bye for the present, my lads; and, if you can't be good, be as good as you can!" Nipper, Dick, and Lal, on the platform of Clevedon Station. "I shall interview the Foreign Secretary to-night, and show him this photograph, and then we will see what we can do."

Five minutes later the detective and the lock were on their way to London.

Those of my readers who have read the account of a certain case which Nelson Lee investigated on behalf of the Lawpore Football Football Club, will be reminded in "The Boys' Realm" under the title of "The Football Detective," will remember that the late Rajah of Tanjore, who was the first to start amateur sports in the country, played for the Rovers in the Final Tie for the English Cup at the Crystal Palace.

They may also remember that it was stated in the account referred to that Nipper and Dick, by special permission of the headmaster of St. Ninian's, came to London and were met by Nipper.

It was on the Thursday before the match that Nipper received the first letter he had had from Nelson Lee since he returned to St. Ninian's, and even then it was only the briefest note, with no mention of the lock or the secret treaty.

"Dear Nipper," the detective wrote, "just a line to tell you that I'm playing at the Palace on Saturday. I thought you'd probably like to go to the match, so I've written you a few lines worth by some post as this, asking him if you and Dick and Lal may come up to town by the first train on Saturday morning, and return by the last night. If convenient, I'll meet you at London Bridge, so be sure to look out for me. As ever—Yr's (Yr's) X."

It was on the following Monday and accordingly the three boys left Clevedon at six o'clock on Saturday morning, and arrived at London at ten o'clock. Nelson Lee, with his motor, and a few of his friends, they all sat down to a sumptuous breakfast in the dear familiar rooms in Gray's Inn Road.

"I'll be glad to see you," said Nelson Lee, as they sat down to breakfast. "It will be quite soon enough if we leave London at once,

so what do you say to a spin in the car meanwhile, and an early lunch at the Trocadero?"

The three boys approved of the programme, and after a delightful run across Hampstead Heath, they returned to the city, and ultimately landed them at the famous restaurant.

Shortly after half-past twelve they took their seats in the car again, and a few moments later, to their surprise, the car stopped in front of a handsome building in Whitehall.

"Hallo! Why are we stopping here?" asked Nipper. "What's this place?"

"This is the India Office," said Nelson Lee, as he stepped out of the car and signed to the boys to do the same. "The office headquarters of the Secretary of State for India."

"But why—what—where are we going?" stammered Nipper, as they entered the building.

"I have an appointment with the Secretary at one o'clock," said Nelson Lee, with a twinkle in his eye. "Come along."

Wonderingly they saw him hand his card to an official, who presently conducted them into the presence of the famous statesman who controls the destinies of our Indian Empire.

"So this is the young prince, is it?" said the Minister, when Nelson Lee had introduced the three boys. "And these are your wards? Fine boys."

"My yes!" said Nelson Lee. "If their behaviour were as good as their looks I should have named them after me."

The Minister laughed; then, after gazing at Lal, he turned to the detective again.

"He only knows what he heard Hoffmann say," replied the detective—"that is, he knows the tale we told Russia and Germany; then the Minister, pondering for a moment; then he laid his hand on Lal's shoulder.

"You will regard what I am going to say to you as strictly confidential," he said. "There are many reasons for my coming into full details, so I will content myself with saying that the film which was found in the locket contained a photograph of a secret treaty which Russia and Germany agreed to attack Great Britain in the autumn of this year. Russia was to have been the aggressor, and we had poured all our available resources into the hands of Germany to lead an army on those shores."

He smiled a complacent smile.

"The foregoing," he continued, "And, thanks to our fortunate discovery of the secret treaty—for which we are in no small measure indebted to you—you have been able to make such arrangements with France and Spain and the United States that our Russian and German friends have thought better of their little scheme, and have wisely decided to leave us alone.

"You are wondering, no doubt, why I have told you this. I will tell you. In the secret treaty there is a clause in which it is covenanted that Golab Singh, the Rajah of Tanjore, having agreed to aid the Russians in their invasion of India, shall receive, in return, a certain portion of the conquered country, the boundaries of which are all set out in the clause to which I refer."

"The beastly traitor!" exclaimed Lal. "Traitor indeed!" said the Minister. "While professing friendship for the British, and receiving favours at our hands, he was secretly conspiring with our enemies. However, he has received his reward. Golab Singh is still at large, but in due course will be disposed and banished."

"And then an injustice which ought never to have been perpetrated will be righted," he concluded. "The land which he has wronged you will be proclaimed the rightful Rajah of Tanjore."

"Hurrah!" roared Nipper and Dick, forgetting where they were. "Three cheers for the new Rajah of Tanjore!"

"My mother must know of this at once," said Lal, who had been listening to the conversation. "May I wire to her from here? She's in Paris at the present time."

"I wired to your mother yesterday," said the Minister. "She arrived in London this morning."

"In London?" gasped Lal. "Where is she staying—do you know?"

The Minister crossed the room and opened an inner door.

"Come in, your son is here," he said.

A quietly woman, dusky-faced and beautiful, walked quietly through the door. Lal sprang towards her with a glad cry of delight.

And so as the curtain begins to descend we see Lal folded in his mother's arms—wondering the joy that glazes on her long, dark, wavy hair. The Minister, who had pretended to be absorbed in some paper on his desk, and we see Nelson Lee and his two young friends, who had been waiting in the room, all looking up at the door, and our story is done.

—The "Iron Band," by Maxwell Scott, in THE BOYS' HERALD.

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 Boys' Realm Football Leagues throughout the country. Secretaries of Leagues desirous to possess one of these handsome Trophies should make application now. Form of application will be found below.

- The following are the Conditions under which the Cups will be given:
I. Leagues must play the game according to the Rules laid down by the Football Association.
II. Each League must be a properly constituted League in which the clubs engage in a genuine competition.
III. 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 football kit goods to performers. 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.
Finalists (Senior and Junior) in each Division to play each other at Glass of Season for the CUPS. 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" SCOTTS LEAGUE.
Open to any football club in the North of England.
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" IRISH LEAGUE.
Open to any football club in Ireland.
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.

NOTE—These Trophies are only to be put up for competition on condition that a certain number of teams shall compete for them, such number to be decided by Your Editor at an early date.

RULES AND CONDITIONS.

- (a) Only clubs which have been established as least one season (exclusive of 1907-8) are eligible for entry, and the respectability and standing of each club must be vouched for by some responsible person.
(b) Clubs desirous of entering one of the above contests must fill in the form below, and send it, together with the list of entrants, to the Secretary of the League, at the address of the opposing club, and a letter from the president of the club, to the Secretary, Boys' Realm Football League, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C., as soon as possible.
(c) The cups will be presented at the end of the football season to the club in each section which has the best record in the League, and another referee, controller to hold the best records in the first twenty-four matches actually played. It does not matter on what date the first match is played, Wednesday and Thursday clubs may compete. Points to be awarded only for the first two matches in each section.
(d) 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.
(e) After the contest has started we shall, from time to time, publish tables showing the positions of the clubs as the time goes on. Secretaries must, therefore, send in each week the full result of their matches. Loss results 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 Tuesday morning following the match.
(f) Strict investigation will be made by the controllers of the League into the bona-fide of the entering clubs and their fixtures.
(g) All matches to be played under the Rules of the Football Association.
(h) 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.
(i) Opponents 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
Secretary's Name
Address

THE SCHOOL ON THE CLIFF.

A Magnificent New Story of Stirring Adventure.

By E. HARCOURT BURRAGE.

"You ask me to make a promise, but first I will ask you to make one."

"What is it?"

"Will you try and lead an honest and better life?"

"I'm afraid that I've gone too far to let what you call respectable," Pinnick replied, "but there will be no harm in tryin'. I'll do my best. I've taken a lesson out of your book. You were accused of hammerin' me, and you here it like a gentleman—like a man!—like my suspicions you cracked my head, but I've my reasons to keep that to myself. Draw nearer, and let me whisper to you. They say that walls have ears, and sartintly 'stounshin' things do manage to get out of the police-cells."

Mr. Belton hesitated, and looked towards the cell door, though he scarcely knew why.

"I shan't bite or poison you," Pinnick said, "but, after all, it's natural that you should turn away from me. Come nearer, if you want to hear what I have to say. How am I to know the inspector ain't doggin' about outside?"

Mr. Belton hesitated no longer, and Pinnick began to talk rapidly in a low tone of voice, and his listener's face underwent a number of changes.

"Does Terrapin know of this?" he asked, as Pinnick finished.

"No. He thinks he knows who the boy is, and employed me to get him out of the way as best I could, and I'd had done it, until I found that he meant to put all the blame on my shoulders, and leave me in the lurch. Somebody employed him to come down here, but who it is I don't know, and never cared to ask."

"You have told me an astonishing story," Mr. Belton said. "Do you mean to tell me that you were at the Bowl the night when Jack Jaunty was washed ashore?"

"I do!" Pinnick replied. "I sneaked over in my skiff just on hour before the storm came in. The Stranger was living all alone, and I, well, I wanted to see if anything could be made out of him."

"Do you mean that you were jealous of Bob Baxter's good luck?"

"Never mind about that," Pinnick replied, wincing. "I went there to see if I could pick up a triffl, so there's an end to the matter, and you can snake whatever you like out of it."

Mr. Belton knew what the ruffian meant, and the softened expression of his face hardened.

Broken is the Plant that might have blossomed at night—A Terrible Discovery! Terrapin's Hiding-place—A Charge Dismissed.

YOU have shaped a bad course for yourself," Mr. Belton said.

"It's like this," Pinnick responded. "Some men are like good captains of vessels, who look after the charts and steer clear of danger. Others go sailing anywhere and anyhow, and strike upon shoals when I was a nipper. I'd no one to care for me, nobody to mark my chart, or to tell me when to take a reef in, set sail in a leaky boat, and the rough and tumble of the storms of life made me what you see me now."

"Well," said Mr. Belton, as he rose to go, "you have put your early history to me in your own way, but it is full of truth. As the twig is bent so the tree inclines."

He rang the bell, and the inspector opened the door.

"I suppose he has been coming the soft-soap dodge," the official said, as Mr. Belton reached the office.

"What he did say, I must keep a secret for the present; but this I will tell you. Stern-craig may look forward to some startling revelations."

The Stranger walked straight into the house, and, advancing to the couch on which Jack Jaunty was lying, took the boy's hand in his own and pressed it warmly.

"My brave boy!" he said, "it makes me very unhappy to see you like this. I arrived, alas! just too late to save you from this pain."

"I did not see you," Jack said, smiling.

"No; I did not show myself after the mischief was done. I saw the cowardly shot, Jack, and knowing that it had done but little injury, I took a path of my own to find Terrapin, hoping to bring him to bay single-handed, but I failed."

"The sight of you makes me feel better," Jack said. "Please tell them that I am not hurt, and that my wound is a mere scratch. I want to get up; Mark Ricketts is missing, and—"

"I have seen him," the Stranger interposed. "I met him wandering about the seashore in a lonely fashion, and he seemed to be meditating. Well, I did not like the expression of his face. Jack, do you know who this boy really is?"

"Yes! He confessed to me that he was Terrapin's son, but that the lawyer had given him

an assumed name, and put about a rumor that he was a ward in chancery.

"Jack," said the Stranger after a pause, "you must keep yourself quiet to-day, and come over to see me to-morrow at the Bowl. The Seemew will call for you to-morrow noon. I have seen a London, an important business, and—perhaps I shall have some strange news to tell you."

Before Jack could question him any further he was gone. Our hero had never seen his friend so reticent before, nor so full of thoughts. "To-morrow," the last said, "I am to go over to the Bowl and hear some news. What news? The Stranger looked at me in a peculiar manner as he spoke. Perhaps he had discovered something about the mystery connected with my birth and parentage. But how can I expect such a thing when so many years have passed. I have seen a London, an important business, and—perhaps I shall have some strange news to tell you?"

Jack informed Mr. Donnington that the Stranger had seen a London, and Nicky Hopkins was despatched in company with Bob Baxter to find the fugitive. But their search soon came to naught. Nobody had seen Mark for anybody like him. The only information they received was from a round-eyed, chuckle-headed youth, who said that a young boy was lying in a sick bed, but when asked what he was like, remarked that he didn't know, as all boys were so much alike.

Mr. Donnington was being utterly useless, and after wandering about, up hill and down dale, they returned, footsore, weary, and joyless.

Mr. Donnington stood at the door, and as he saw that Mark Ricketts was not with them his face lengthened considerably.

"Some mischief must have happened to him," he said.

Bob Baxter tilted back his sou'-wester, and said:

"It's my opinion, sir, that he's run away," he said. "I've noticed him a long time, and he always looks a little queer."

"Bless me!" gasped Mr. Donnington. "It is preposterous to think that I can allow anybody to get away from my house without anything happening to the boy. I shall be put to no end of trouble. Perhaps accused of cruelty to my puppy."

"Perhaps he has gone for a soldier," observed Mr. Redditch, who came up at this moment.

"This remark so exasperated Mr. Donnington that his face became absolutely contorted in the endeavour not to fly into a temper.

"Perhaps you will tell me where there is a recruiting sergeant in Stern-craig? And if there were such a person, do you think that he would employ a boy?"

Mr. Redditch took the end of his nose between his finger and thumb, and mentally confuted several courses of military matters as was not very extensive.

"Well, he said, "I may be wrong." Then, as a brilliant idea came upon him to strike him, "Perhaps he has taken a boat from the beach and escaped to France."

Mr. Donnington spun round on his heels like a top-stone.

"Mr. Redditch," he said, "will you kindly take a walk to get your thoughts into shape? I am afraid that your mind is in a confused state."

Mr. Redditch took the hint, put on his hat, and departed like a man wounded from a distressing dream, and was not yet quite awake. Turning his footsteps seawards, he saw the tall figure of the lawyer, who had returned to Stern-craig, and her two young charges. The fond, sympathetic heart beating beneath Mr. Redditch's waistcoat was not to be denied.

To his delight he saw Iroquois and Laura leave their governess and wander down the sand, rendered hard and smooth by the tide, in search of sea-shells.

But this was merely a ruse on the part of the young ladies. They had seen Mr. Redditch approaching, and as they stood upon the shore they giggled in the expectation of being witness to some capital fun.

Miss Harrison, as soon as she was conscious of the presence of Mr. Redditch, turned in the direction her pupils had taken; but the love-sick tutor was not to be denied.

"The sting of Cupid's dart was still in his heart, and rankled there with ever-increasing rage, and he tried to step out of the way, and why should he not press his suit?"

Miss Harrison, he said, as he overtook her, was an unexpected pleasure. "I hope you enjoyed your visit?"

"Very much indeed, thank you," she replied, distantly. "Good-morning, Mr. Redditch! It is time that the young ladies and I returned to the Folly."

"But is there need of such hurry?" the tutor said. "I did hope to have the honor and—the exquisite pleasure of having a few words in your private company."

His face turned all sorts of colours when, after an effort to suppress her mirth, she turned her head aside and laughed. The laugh was a musical and delicious, but, withal so scornful and exasperating, that it almost maddened him.

Before he could speak, she was face to face with him again.

"Mr. Redditch," she said, "I will be plain with you, and I hope that you, as a gentleman, will refrain from reproaching me again."

"Annoying you, Miss Irene—"

"Please do not call me by my Christian name, and do not call me by my name, unless one man in the whole world I permit to address me



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 Stern-craig.

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 Stern-craig. That is where he and him now.

PETER PINNICK, a morose, unscrupulous fisherman, who nurses an imaginary grievance against the Stranger and against Jack Jaunty.

DAN CALLIS, **ARON DOWNEY**, **GERARD INGLIS**, and **NICKY 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 dating another lad, Gerard Inglis, by name, to descend the Seemew's Cliff. Jack warns him not to do so, but a little later the lad is discovered on the cliff halfway down the face of the cliff inaccessible. From this perilous position he is rescued by Jack Jaunty.

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

Jack makes friends with some new arrivals at Stern-craig, and Mr. Belton and his two daughters, Iroquois and Laura.

Peter Pinnick and two strangers make an unsuccessful attempt on Jack Jaunty's life. The police are set on their track, but they only succeed in capturing Pinnick.

Jack has an altercation with Mark Ricketts's father who is staying in the village under the name of Terrapin. The man has a gun in his hand which goes off, and wounds Jack in the leg. Mr. Terrapin denies, pursued by Bob Baxter and a crowd of villagers, who he manages to elude. Mr. Belton is summoned to the justice-station by Peter Pinnick, who declares that he has something of importance to reveal to him.

(Now read this week's instalment.)

Peter Pinnick is interviewed.

PINNICK! the warden said.

"Well," growled the prisoner.

"Mr. Belton is here."

"I am ready to see him."

"You'll find a hell which you will ring when you want to come away," the inspector said. "We generally allow twenty minutes, but I won't disturb you if you wish to stay a little longer."

Mr. Belton thought that five minutes would be ample in such a place, but he made no remark, and entered the cell as soon as the door was opened to admit him. Pinnick was sitting upon a bench, with his feet up, and at night, and he bestowed a surly nod upon his visitor.

"There's room for you if you care to sit down," he said. "Oh, you'd rather stand! Well, do as you like, I suppose," he added. "You wondered what on earth I sent you for."

"I must confess that I was surprised."

"I want you to see me at liberty," Pinnick replied, and went on to say that he had a letter.

"I am afraid that the law must take its own course," Mr. Belton said.

"Both the law!" Pinnick rejoined. "Just listen to me. I want to go to talk about that Jaunty chap. I've done with Terrapin, and I mean to make it hot for him."

"I am afraid that he has made it hot for you, as you call it," Mr. Belton said. "He has shot Jack Jaunty!"

"What?" Pinnick cried, starting up. "Is that Jaunty chap dead?"

"No, only slightly wounded."

Pinnick, breathing hard, sat down again.

"If you wish to speak about the lad, you had better send for the Stranger," Mr. Belton said. "He arrived at Stern-craig to-day."

"Not I!" Pinnick responded. "I don't want anything to do with him. I hate the sight of him, because he aggraved me from the moment that I'm saying too much. If I speak out, and tell you summat that that Jaunty chap and you know, will you promise not to press the charge again me?"

Mr. Belton remained silent, turning the matter over in his mind. Presently he said:



"Hallo! Pinnick cried, as the stone fell back with a crash, 'somebody has robbed me! I hid the letters away with my own hands, but they ain't here now!" (See next week's instalment.)

Powerful New Football Story by A. S. Hardy Starts in a Fortnight's Time!

